

## White Paper

# Get More Trade Show Leads With Twitter, LinkedIn, and Facebook

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**Want to use Twitter, LinkedIn, and Facebook** to get more leads in your trade show booth? Here's the long and the short of it.

There are two key strategies exhibitors can leverage with Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter for pre-show promotions: Either they reach out to **their own network** they've already built up over the long-term on those social networks, or rapidly **tap into groups** that already exist for their trade show on these 3 huge social media sites.



## Long Term: Build Your Own Social Media Following

The first strategy is a more long-term plan, because it takes time and effort to build up your own following, whether they are called fans and friends on Facebook, connections and followers on LinkedIn, or followers on Twitter. (A nuclear bomb's worth of electrons has already been consumed on how to best grow your army of social media followers, so I won't go into that here.) If you've already built up a following, then voila! It's a short-term plan for you.

When you have gained a group of followers, communicate to them before the show with a potent reason to meet you in your trade show booth, much like you would with other media. Overall, if your clients, prospects, and influencers are into social media, then building your own following is the way to go anyhow, and using your home-grown network for pre-show promotion is a bonus.

## Short Term: Leverage the Trade Show's Followers on Social Media Sites

The second strategy can be achieved in a relatively short time. It's to tie into the people who have connected to your trade show's presence on these big three social networks.

So for Facebook, it would be getting your comments, in-booth contests, or new product news seen on the show's Facebook fan or group page. For example, you can make a post asking people to come see you at your trade show exhibit, load up your product photos to the fan page, link to a YouTube video, or make comments to the news the show posts themselves.

For LinkedIn, within the trade show's LinkedIn group, you can post news items about your new products, or join discussions about what will be happening at the trade show. As an exhibitor, you will almost certainly be accepted to the show's group. If the show doesn't have a LinkedIn group yet, then ask the show to start one, or search using your industry keywords and find the best groups for your industry, and start a discussion asking who is going to the show you are exhibiting at.

For Twitter, leveraging the show's Twitter followers is achieved by sending tweets filled with great reasons to visit you at the trade show, and including in your message the hashtag for the show (like #CES for the CES show) and hoping you get read by attendees who are reading that hashtag Twitter stream. If the show

doesn't retweet your message, you can direct message the show's Twitter account, let them know you are an exhibitor, and ask them to retweet your message to share it with their followers.

Just remember that if you would consider a message to be spammy in email, it's even more so via social media, so tread lightly in these arenas.

### **Get More Visitors to Your Trade Show Exhibit**

My intuition says you will have greater interest from people in your own network (strategy 1), but fewer of them will be going to the show. You will have greater opportunity for new connections leaning on the show's network (strategy 2), but won't always have the power of an existing relationship, and will have to have an even more potent message to stand out — just like all pre-show marketing.

And while I've focused on the pre-show promotion aspect of leveraging these social media sites, because so many attendees will carry and view their smart phones right on the show floor, it applies to at-show promotions, too.

In the short term, you can leverage the group of followers already congregating online for the show you will be exhibiting at. In the long term, it's best to build your own tribe on LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter, and include your invitations to meet you at the trade show as just part of an ongoing conversation with them.

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