

## **Tradeshow Tips ~ Virtual Exhibiting in the Future?**

The sages tell us that nothing is constant in this world, except death and taxes. However, there's one thing that's inevitable that we all must face: change. Change comes whether we're ready for it or not, in every arena of our lives. And right now, we are going through some changing, challenging times.

This is also true for exhibiting as well. The way we're exhibiting today—gathering in central locations, where exhibitors and attendees alike travel hundreds of miles to engage in face-to-face marketing—may not necessarily be the way we'll be exhibiting in the future.

Rising costs and increasing security risks are two among a multitude of factors that make finding alternative exhibiting methodologies attractive to vendors and buyers alike. At the same time, staggering technological advances and an increasingly computer savvy public, makes the virtual sphere ever more appealing. The industry's taken a few tentative steps down this road before, but the time wasn't right yet. However, interesting developments from some corners of the web indicate that this may well be changing.

It's important to view these changes with a critical eye. It's easy to get caught up in all the hype and the hoopla, especially when the bright spotlights of media attention focus on one spot. However, not everything new is good. At the same time, not everything new is bad. The exhibitors who will not only succeed but thrive in the changing exhibiting environment will be those who keep an eye on changing trends, assess them carefully, and adapt quickly to new circumstances.

Yes the more things change, the more they remain the same. No matter how quickly you can adopt a new exhibiting model, you'll want to hold onto some core essentials. Remember, at the end of the day, the focus is still on connecting with your customer.

The crucial elements of exhibiting: engaging with visitors, asking questions and listening to the answers, working to help the prospects find the best possible solution to their problems—all of these will remain critical to your business success.

Information courtesy of Susan Friedmann, CSP, "The Tradeshow Coach".

