

14 Trade fairs



International Trade Fairs are a proven #WORLDStage for global growth

Prepared by the Trade Fair Division of the German-New Zealand Chamber of Commerce.

In our modern society so much rotates around the Internet and social media, yet trade fairs continue to be an essential part of the global marketing strategy of successful companies. The sensory factor of touch and the ability to communicate directly, face-to-face, cannot yet be replaced by a digital presence.

Trade fairs remain the leading platform for companies to present their products and services, to show and see innovations, and to generate new business contacts.

To help you make the most of this fantastic platform, AUMA, the Association of the German Trade Fair Industry, has put together 10 steps to fair success.

Also included in this chapter are notes by Monique Surges, chief executive of the German-New Zealand Chamber of Commerce, who has 30 years' of experience with the German trade fair industry.

Step 1: Why choose a trade fair organised by a German Fair organiser?

Germany is the No. 1 trade fair centre worldwide in the execution of international trade fairs. Two-thirds of the leading global industry-specific trade fairs are held in Germany.

German trade fair organisers have developed a range of trade fairs, which are oriented towards the long-term requirements of industry and are further developed in close consultation with the participating sectors.

Step 2: Trade fairs as part of the marketing mix

In order to make a strategic decision regarding trade fair participation you will need to look at your marketing mix in terms of products, pricing, communications and sales channels. Trade fairs should not only be viewed as an efficient communications and sales channel. They also influence product and pricing strategies, and as information technology evolves, they naturally change too.

Step 3: Trade fair objectives for the exhibitor

Trade fairs and exhibitions fulfil all kinds of functions, allowing companies to achieve a wide range of aims:

- **General trade fair objectives** might be exploring new markets and discovering market niches, assessing the overall competitiveness, assessing export chances, assessing the overall industry situation, exchanging experiences.
- **Communication objectives** are likely to be expanding the list of personal contacts, increasing brand awareness, expanding press activities.

- **Objectives regarding pricing and conditions** might be testing out the responsiveness of pricing options – possibly establishing which currency the quote can be made in – for example USD or EUR.
- **Distribution objectives** will be establishing distribution requirements of clients to determine the most effective and efficient network. For New Zealand companies this is crucial information gathering – can a New Zealand company get away with shipping from New Zealand or will warehousing be necessary for shorter delivery times to satisfy the customers' expectations.
- **Product objectives** could be testing market reactions to products and services, or testing market reactions to a newly introduced product.

Step 4: Selection and decision-making criteria

In order to make good use of trade fairs as part of your marketing mix you need to make certain choices. We often hear statements such as "all our competitors are attending, so we have to be there too" or "our customers want to see us there". Both statements are worth taking seriously but are no basis for such a far-reaching decision – you need to go deeper.

Some suggested selection criteria are whether:

- Your company's situation and objectives correspond to the theme of the fair.
- Your range of products corresponds with the products in the nomenclature – the categories of products listed by the trade fair organiser.
- You can address relevant customer groups – particularly important is to consider whether you want access to trade only or wish to get feedback from the public.
- You are able to reach new target groups.



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