

# **The Role of Exhibitions in the Marketing-Mix**

Simon Damböck

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## I. Description of trade shows/exhibitions

### A. Definitions

The expression *fair* is one of the oldest in the English language. In the Middle Ages the word *feire* was adapted from Old French and in fact comes from Vulgar Latin *feria*, meaning *holiday* as well as *market fair*. This in turn corresponds with the Latin *feriae*, which came to mean religious festivals.<sup>1</sup>

During the 12<sup>th</sup> century, the importance of trade meetings increased. These fairs were held close to churches, because people visited places of worship regularly and in turn, visited the fairs customarily afterwards. So the meaning of both words was combined in the common language.<sup>2</sup>

*Trade shows can be defined as temporary, usually cyclically repeated events, where numerous exhibitors display the essential range of goods from one or even more branches of industry and primarily market them to commercial consumers, vendors or wholesale purchasers, while the goods are shown as samples.*<sup>3</sup>

The word *exhibition*<sup>4</sup> was first mentioned by reference of documentary evidence in 1649. It is also rooted in Old French and is a derivate of the Latin word *expositio* with the meaning of *displaying* or *putting on a show*.<sup>5</sup>

“Exhibitions are not just collections of interesting objects brought together at a certain place and time. They are human activities, human enterprises, and some of them very great and courageous activities, undertaken for definite reasons and in order to achieve certain specified results. They are a form of human intercourse, whereby the promoters

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Barnhart, Robert K, The Barnhart Dictionary of Etymology, London 1988, p. 366.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Walter, Rolf, Wirtschaftsgeschichte: Vom Merkantilismus bis zur Gegenwart, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Cologne 2000, p. 7.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. German Factory Act, [http://bundesrecht.juris.de/bundesrecht/gewo/\\_64.html](http://bundesrecht.juris.de/bundesrecht/gewo/_64.html), (accessed 05.02.04), § 64,1; see Morrow, Sandra L, The Art of the Show, Second Edition, Dallas 2002, p. 25; for constitutive features see Meffert, Heribert; Bruhn, Manfred, Dienstleistungsmarketing, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Wiesbaden 2000, p. 377; cf. also Meffert, Heribert, Grundlagen marktorientierter Unternehmensführung, 9<sup>th</sup> ed., Wiesbaden 2000, p. 741 following HASELOFF; see also Czinkota, Michael R.; Ronkainen, Ilkka A., International Marketing, Mason, Ohio 2002, p. 378.

<sup>4</sup> The terms *exposition* – *exhibition* – *trade show* and *trade fair (also fair)* are similar and used interchangeably in this paper; as described by MEFFERT, an unambiguous disassociation is not possible, cf. Meffert, Heribert, Grundlagen marktorientierter Unternehmensführung, loc. cit., p. 741.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Morrow, Sandra L., The Art of the Show, loc. cit., p. 11.

and exhibitors on the one hand communicate with the visitors on the other. And their results can only be told in terms of further human thought and activity.”<sup>1</sup>

According to MALERI and FALK, exhibitions are categorised as **services**<sup>2</sup>. They obtain a specific position from having particular tasks because of their unrepeatable uniqueness, since they serve a special purpose by combination of factors of production<sup>3 4</sup>.

## B. Types of Exhibitions

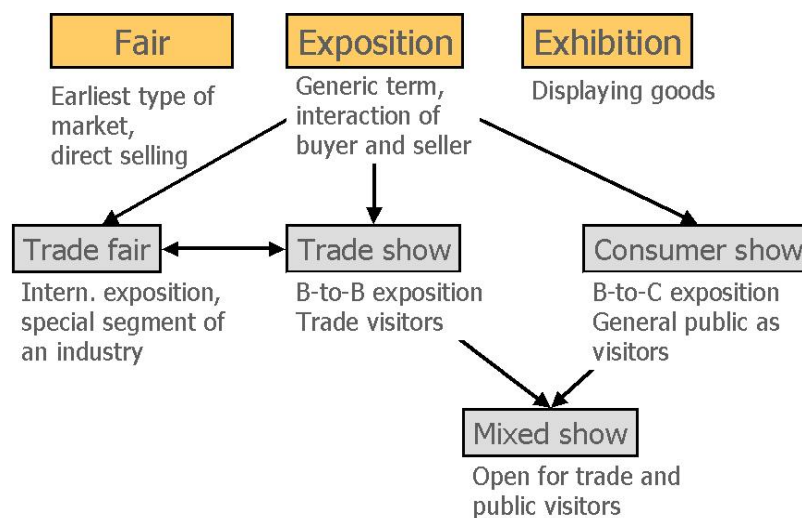


FIGURE I-1 Different Types of Trade Fairs [Source: Beier (2003), p. 2]

Firstly there are two classes that can be differentiated by the attendees:

The term **trade shows** (also *industry shows*<sup>5</sup>) is used to describe a type of gathering of business-to-business partners. Only a specific group of suppliers achieve contact

<sup>1</sup> Luckhurst, Kenneth W, The Story of Exhibitions, London 1951, p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> “A service is a deed, a performance, or an act that is essentially intangible and does not necessarily result in the ownership of anything. Its creation may or may not be tied to a physical product.” Kotler, Philip; Bloom, Paul; Hayes, Thomas, Marketing professional services. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. p. cm. Paramus, 2002, p. 237.

<sup>3</sup> Term *factors of production* see Lipsey, Richard G.; Steiner, Peter O., Economics, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., New York 1972, p. 171; cf. also Gutenberg, Erich, Grundlagen der Betriebswirtschaftslehre, vol. 1., Die Produktion, 22<sup>nd</sup> ed., Berlin, Heidelberg, New York 1976, pp. 298.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Selinski, Hannelore, Messe- und Kongressmarketing, Dissertation, Berlin, 1983, pp. 31.

<sup>5</sup> Caused by the problem of demonstrating the benefit of services regarding their intangibility (cf. Kotler, Philip; Bloom, Paul; Hayes, Thomas, Marketing professional services, loc.cit., pp. 12), former trade shows were only used to present industrial and consumer goods, that changed by high demand

to customers that deal in that particular industry. Market externals are not allowed to take part in the show, which increases the coverage of addressed and reached target groups.

**Consumer shows** are trade shows that are visited usually by the general public, for example home and garden shows and car shows. As a rule, at such shows, visitors pay an admission fee. There is direct selling of the displayed goods: consumers can take their commodities from the show directly to their homes.

A quite simple categorisation was given by BONOMA. He suggested a differentiation only between “selling” and “nonselling” trade fairs, avoiding a discussion of types, and emphasising the extremes of the possible range.<sup>1</sup>

Secondly, due to geographic categorisation, three types of trade fairs / exhibitions can be defined:<sup>2</sup>

**International trade fairs / exhibitions** typically have a substantial part of at least ten per cent of the exhibitors come from a foreign country and a minimum of five per cent of the visitors are foreign. One of the best known shows of this category today is, e.g., the CeBIT<sup>3</sup>, held annually in Hanover<sup>4</sup>: in 2001 of a total of 8,000 exhibitors, 3,000 were foreign and of 850,000 visitors 170,000 came from abroad.<sup>5</sup>

**National trade fairs / exhibitions:** participants here are not only from the vicinity of the fair ground - the catchment area is usually an entire country.

**Regional trade fairs / Exhibitions:** these are characterised by a majority of regional visitors . In most cases, these regional events are a type of consumer show.

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Sequel to footnote 5, p. 2: information on the service sector with its growing economical importance (cf. Meffert, Heribert; Bruhn, Manfred, Dienstleistungsmarketing, loc. cit. p. 377).

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Prueser, Sven, Messemarketing: ein netzwerkorientierter Ansatz. Wiesbaden, 1997, p. 39.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Meffert, Heribert; Bruhn, Manfred, Dienstleistungsmarketing, loc. cit., p. 378.

<sup>3</sup> See <http://www.cebit.com/> (acs. 12.02.04).

<sup>4</sup> Notice German spelling: *Hannover*.

<sup>5</sup> Statistical data from FKM (<http://www.auma-fairs.com/> (acs. 12.02.04), cf. <http://www.cebit.com/> (acs. 12.02.04).

Thirdly, some types of fairs can be distinguished according to the assortment of products or rather according to the sector:<sup>1</sup>

**Universal trade fairs** exhibit all types of products, consumer as well as investment goods, displayed without clearly defined target groups or target markets. Universal fairs are unusual today; normally the product offer is well-segmented.<sup>2</sup>

**(Multi-)branch trade fairs** show an appropriate range of goods relevant to a number of branches.<sup>3</sup>

The most important form of fairs today are the **specialist trade fairs / exhibitions**. These can be subdivided in four groups:<sup>4</sup>

- Fairs with a **functional orientation**: these offer alternative solutions for specific problems that can be appropriate to various branches, for example for waste disposal equipment.<sup>5</sup>
- Fairs for **specific types of customers**: these are conceived for one specific clientele that requires a range of solutions from various suppliers.<sup>6</sup>
- In comparison to customer-orientation the fairs with **orientation on supplier-groups** focus on exhibitors from specific supplier groups.<sup>7</sup>
- **Technology orientated fairs**: these cover innovations in a particular technical field, often drawing tremendous press and public interest and also becoming a meeting point for experts, often alongside congresses where developments in science and technology are discussed.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Meffert, Heribert; Bruhn, Manfred, Dienstleistungsmarketing, loc. cit., p. 378.

<sup>2</sup> E.g. Feria Internacional de La Habana (FIHAV), see [http://www.dtcuba.com/eng/buscar\\_reportajes.asp?cod=21](http://www.dtcuba.com/eng/buscar_reportajes.asp?cod=21) (accessed 20.02.04).

<sup>3</sup> E.g. BALTIKA, see <http://baltica.lenexpo.ru/en-about.htm> (accessed 20.02.04).

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Fleiss, Sabine, Messeselektion, Entscheidungskriterien für Investitionsgüteranbieter, Wiesbaden 1994, p. 74.

<sup>5</sup> E.g. EXPO AMBIENTE, see <http://www.fil.pt/> (accessed 20.02.04).

<sup>6</sup> E.g. DRUPA, see <http://www.drupa.com/> (accessed 20.02.04).

<sup>7</sup> E.g. Trasportlogistic China, see <http://www.transportlogistic-china.com/> (accessed 20.02.04).

<sup>8</sup> E.g. MediPhar Taipei, see <http://www.taipeitradeshows.com.tw/mediphar/> (accessed 20.02.04).

Finally, **combined trade fairs** and **virtual fairs** merit a mention:

**Combined trade fairs** are held together with other events such as lectures, seminars, (fashion) shows, special events and congresses. This combination raises visitor interest, driven by the high demand for information exchange and expert availability, the opportunity that several experts meet anyway can then be used efficiently. For example, the medical branch which has one of the highest needs for congresses, is served at the MEDICA<sup>1</sup> with an extensive supporting programme of speeches and debate forums.

**Virtual fairs**<sup>2</sup> appeared when internet use became widespread and the demise of traditional fairs was considered inevitable. It was assumed that with a permanent presence on the world wide web, the usual trade show time and space factors could be eliminated. Just the idea that exhausting, expensive, long-distance travel could be eliminated caused much excitement. At any rate, it seems that the ancient character of fairs - the opportunity to look, feel and otherwise sense, in addition with personal contact - can not be replaced by a net-conference. Virtual fairs are still not able to displace trade fairs, despite improvements in internet technologies and user understanding of the medium.<sup>3</sup> However, while not a replacement, they are indeed an advancement to the traditional trade fair. Information on exhibitor location can be easily found in advance.<sup>4</sup> Informational material such as brochures can be accessed digitally, so visitors don't have to carry the extra weight home or back to the office.

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<sup>1</sup> See <http://www.medica.de/> (accessed 20.02.04).

<sup>2</sup> E.g. Virtual Trade Show, see <http://www.vts.com/> (accessed 20.02.04).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Robbe, Deborah, Exhibitions and Trade Shows, New York 2000, p. 4.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Fleiss, Sabine, Messeplanung und -kontrolle, in: Kleinaltenkamp, Michael; Plinke, Wulff (ed.), Markt- und Produktmanagement: Die Instrumente des technischen Vertriebes, Berlin 1999, p. 571; cf. also Kirchgeorg, Manfred et al. (ed.), Handbuch Messemanagement, Planung, Durchführung und Kontrolle von Messen, Kongressen und Events, Wiesbaden 2003, p. 809.

## II. Historical Development

Early forms of trade were primitive - they were a simple exchange of goods between farmers and artisans.<sup>1</sup>

In the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> century, the so-called medieval fairs were established at the region of Champagne. They became the most important meeting points for traders from central Europe, The Netherlands, France and Italy at that time.<sup>2</sup>

The enormous success of European trade shows reaches back to the days when the clergy and monarchies provided protection. At that time, the most devastating threat for trade was plunder, hence it was common for local lords to provide fair participants with secure escorts.<sup>3</sup>

The market places enjoyed privileges including special trade courts, military protection and of course tax exemptions which were granted by the emperor. Importantly, new forms of payment were developed such as the bill of exchange.

The growth and consolidation of pan-European trade was due mainly to the availability of goods and monetary practices, especially the possibility of trade credits.<sup>4</sup> Indeed the *Champagne-Fairs* were the most important centre of the money market, mainly influenced by the Italian merchants from the Lombardy area and of course by the merchant family MEDICI.<sup>5</sup>

The Cologne trade fair is an example of the fortunate connection between the economic growth of a region created by fairs and geographical advantage. In 1259 the city was granted preferential market rights to shipping goods (Rheinstapel<sup>6</sup>) on

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<sup>1</sup> Becker, Walter, *Messen und Ausstellungen – eine sozialgeographische Untersuchung am Beispiel Muenchen, Kallmuenz/Regensburg* 1986, pp. 19 –43, particularly p. 19.

<sup>2</sup> Especially Rouen, Saint-Denis, Troyes, Reims, Châlons-sur-Marne, Lagny, Provins were of importance. Cf. Ott, Hugo; Schaefer, Hermann (ed.), *Wirtschafts-Ploetz, Die Wirtschaftsgeschichte zum Nachschlagen*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Freiburg: 1985, p. 93.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Tietz, Bruno. *Fuer jeden Besucher das passende Angebot – Aus allgemeinen Messen werden Themenmessen*, in: Kueffner, Georg; Mortsiefer, Joachim, *Messeplatz Europa, Messen als Bestandteil des betrieblichen Marketings*, Frankfurt/M. 1990, pp. 89 –102.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. Ott, Hugo; Schaefer, Hermann (ed.), *Wirtschafts-Ploetz...*, loc. cit., p. 72.

<sup>5</sup>Cf. *ibidem*, p. 96.

<sup>6</sup> See <http://www.die-koelner.de/coellen/distadt/handwerker.html> (acs. 01.02.04).



the Rhine, a significant transfer route at that time. The grant was bestowed by an archbishop and was an acknowledgement of the city's importance.<sup>1</sup>

The Frankfurt book fair is an example of how international development was spurred by a trade fair. It was established in 1485 and grew to be an important meeting place for the printing industry. In turn, the printing industry was of pivotal influence on the development of knowledge in Europe. In 1764, the book fair moved from Frankfurt to Leipzig, where it remained until 1949. The location represented the increasing importance of trade with Western Europe, the East, the Orient and particularly with Russia. Today, the book fair, back in Frankfurt, is the most important meeting point for all matters concerning international literature.<sup>2</sup>

The largest known fair in Russia in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was held in *Nizhny-Novgorod*<sup>3</sup>, where mainly raw materials were traded. This fair was visited by more than half a million people, which means five times the city-population at that time.<sup>4</sup>

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, more than 95 percent of national industrial exhibitions were held in European cities and towns: few foreign exhibitors were allowed to take part. The first known real international exhibition took place in London 1851, where 14,000 to 17,000 exhibitors participated and more than six million visitors attended.<sup>5</sup>

American businessmen who were especially attracted to this exhibition, recognized the importance of adapting its concept to pan-American shows. This world exhibition was a very important influence on the American fair tradition.<sup>6</sup>

Big exhibitions were suspended during the First World War and most of them did not reappear until the end of the Second World War. The exception was the Leipzig fair which is said to be the only continuously held fair since the 12<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>7</sup> Before both World Wars, trade fairs were held even during periods of aggression because special protection that ensured economic transaction had been put into place.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Ott, Hugo; Schaefer, Hermann (ed.), *Wirtschafts-Ploetz...*, loc. cit., p. 97.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Nordmeyer, Helmut, *Frankfurt Trade Fairs*, [http://www.stadtgeschichte-ffm.de/download/chronik\\_3\\_e.pdf](http://www.stadtgeschichte-ffm.de/download/chronik_3_e.pdf) (accessed 01.02.04).

<sup>3</sup> Нижний Новгород (i.e. soviet: Gorky), see <http://www.novgorod.ru/english> (accessed 10.03.04).

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Becker, Walter, *Messen und Ausstellungen...*, loc. cit., p. 21; Cf. also Mathias, Peter; Polland, Sydney (ed.), *The Cambridge Economic History of Europe, Volume III, The industrial economies, Capital, labour, and enterprise*, Cambridge 1989, pp. 410 – 429, particularly p. 428.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Mathias, Peter; Polland, Sydney (ed.), *The Cambridge Economic History...*, loc. cit., p. 100.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Rydell, Robert W.; Findling, John E; Pelle, Kimerly D., *Fair America, World's Fairs in the United States*, Washington, London 2000, pp. 14 – 45.

<sup>7</sup> Mathias, Peter; Polland, Sydney (ed.), *The Cambridge Economic History...*, loc. cit., p. 101.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Tietz, Bruno, *Fuer jeden Besucher das passende Angebot...*, loc. cit., pp. 89 – 102.

In the past, trade fairs served mainly as platforms for the transaction of goods. Products exhibited were sold during the fair and the buyer took them home directly from the venue. The history of industrial fairs, however, shows that a significant change occurred.<sup>1</sup> In comparison to consumer fairs, goods exhibited at industrial fairs were merely displayed as samples. The attendee came to see different kinds of samples, collect information about innovations and order. The participant no longer bought goods and took them away as it had been the case at the traditional fair.

### **III. Benefits of Exhibitions**

The benefits of exhibitions can not be reduced to economic aspects alone. Secondary aspects such as improvements in technology, socio-cultural developments and political implications need to be considered when ascertaining their overall importance.<sup>2</sup> According to the marketing point of view, the following discussion will focus on economic aspects.

#### **A. Economical Significance of Trade Shows**

Today, some 16,000 trade shows world-wide create a value of \$50 billion per year.<sup>3</sup>

According to the Center for Exhibition Industry Research (CEIR), in 2000 a total of 13,000 exhibitions were held in the USA, attended by 125 million persons and including 12 million exhibitors. The resulting contribution to the US gross domestic income is estimated to be more than \$ 100 billion.<sup>4</sup>

“About two thirds of the world's leading trade fairs take place in Germany.  
About 140 international trade fairs and exhibitions with 160,000 - 170,000

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<sup>1</sup> The first official sample fair was held in Leipzig 1894. Becker, Walter, *Messen und Ausstellungen...*, loc. cit., p. 23.

<sup>2</sup> Peters, Michael, *Grundprobleme der Messerfolgskontrolle*, thesis, Frankfurt a. M. 1979, p. 10, following HUYNEN.

<sup>3</sup> Czinkota, Michael R.; Ronkainen, Ilkka. A, *International Marketing*, loc. cit., p. 378.

<sup>4</sup> The data is based on the 2000 North American census. The figure may not be directly comparable to others mentioned in this paragraph. The term exhibitions probably also includes consumer shows (confer paragraph I.B), but not only trade shows as defined. Cf. Morrow, Sandra L., *The Art of the Show*, loc. cit., p. 3

exhibitors and 9 - 10 million visitors are held every year. [...] Additionally there is a dense network of regional trade and consumer exhibitions that are an important supplement to the international trade fairs. About 60,000 exhibitors and 7-8 million visitors come together at these events annually. [...] All in all, exhibitors and visitors spend about 10 billion<sup>1</sup> a year on their trade fair commitment in Germany. The overall economic production effects amount to 23 billion. Around 250,000 jobs are being secured by holding trade fairs.”<sup>2</sup> German trade fair organisers have a yearly turnover of around 2.4 billion.<sup>3</sup>

The benefit of trade fairs is not restricted to the direct participants such as organizers, exhibitors, visitors and service providers. Indeed, there is a **radiation effect**<sup>4</sup> which allows numerous players who are indirectly related to join into a benefit-network. First of all, the authorities profit from taxes paid on economic activities related to trade fairs. Secondly, all hospitality service providers profit by an exponential rise in demand, especially the accommodation industry, hotels, transportation (public transportation, railways, taxis) and restaurants and other purveyors of food and drink. The multiplication effect increases the gain - taxis consume more fuel, petrol stations benefit, et cetera.<sup>5</sup> Additional money earned by employees and other workers will be spent in further consumption.<sup>6</sup>

## B. Importance for Exhibiting Enterprises

Every corporate activity must be determined by a cost/benefit analysis<sup>7</sup>; the costs for trade shows are one of the most significant items in marketing budgets.<sup>1</sup> Shown by the table below, the costs per contact at a trade fair are comparatively high:

<sup>1</sup> Currency is Euro, also in the following sentences.

<sup>2</sup> Association of the German Trade Fair Industry (AUMA) (ed.), Profile, pamphlet, Berlin 2003, p. 3

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>4</sup> Viz. Input-Output-Model:  $X = (I - A)^{-1} Y$ ; X: total factor of output,  $(I - A)^{-1}$ : LEONTIEF-Inverse [A: matrix of input coefficient/technical coefficient matrix, I: identify-matrix], Y: vector of final demand (in this case: total spend on trade fair), see Traeger, Christian U.; Penzkofer, Horst, Produktions- und Beschaeftigungseffekte von Messen und Ausstellungen, in: Kirchgeorg, Manfred et al. (ed.), Handbuch Messemanagement, loc. cit., p. 143.

<sup>5</sup> LEONTIEF-multiplication process. cf. *ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> KEYNES-multiplicator. cf. *ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Lipsey, Richard G.; Steiner, Peter O., Economics, loc. cit., pp. 170.

<b>Advertisement</b> in trade and specialised papers (depending on circulation and target group)	€ 0,07 - 2,01
<b>Direct marketing</b> measure	€ 1,49
<b>Trade fair</b> / exhibition participation	€ 11,94
<b>Acquisition visit</b> (sales representatives) (at average 3-4 visits per day)	€ 99,19

FIGURE III-1 Different costs per contacts within inter media [Source: Kueffner/Mortsiefer, p. 18]

Nevertheless, medium-sized manufacturers or distributors take part at nine to ten trade shows per year.<sup>2</sup> This may be due to the fact that exhibitors address potential clients directly. This is the key advantage of a trade show and sets it apart from all other marketing instruments.<sup>3</sup>

Another advantage of trade fairs is the *transponding-and-delay effect*<sup>4</sup>: “An exhibitor may realize income from a show as long as 12 months after the close of a show, particularly at an industry show, when there’s no “cash-and-carry” activity as at a consumer show.”<sup>5</sup>

Manufacturers, especially car manufacturers, prefer trade shows for product launches.<sup>6</sup> In this way, the existing high public interest can be used<sup>7</sup> to meet objectives such as image-building, positioning and brand recognition.<sup>8</sup>

In the following cluster analysis results,<sup>9</sup> five categories of exhibitors are discussed, showing that there are various approaches, objectives and priorities to show participation:

<sup>1</sup> Viz. up to 35 percent of the annual promotion budget; cf. Kotler, Philip, Marketing Management, Upper Saddle River, New Jersey, 2000, p. 603.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Czinkota, Michael R.; Ronkainen, Ilkka A., International Marketing, loc. cit., p. 378.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Meffert, Heribert, Grundlagen marktorientierter Unternehmensführung, loc. cit., p. 741.

<sup>4</sup> Supplemental information from the trade fair to the visitor can influence decisions by an acceleration effect. cf. Prueser, Sven, Messemarketing..., loc. cit., pp. 55-56.

<sup>5</sup> Robbe, Deborah, Exhibitions and Trade Shows, loc. cit., p. 66.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Urban, Glen L.; Hauser, John R., Design and Marketing of New Products, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey 1993, pp. 530-557.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Meffert, Heribert, Grundlagen marktorientierter Unternehmensführung, loc. cit., p. 743.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Marquart, Christian, MesseManager, Konzept, Planung, Durchführung, Kontrolle, Ludwigsburg 2000, p. 35.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Ueding, Ralf, Management von Messebeteiligungen – Bericht auf der Basis einer empirischen Untersuchung, in: Meffert, H.; Backhaus, K. (ed.), Messemarketing im Wandel – Status quo und Perspektiven, Muenster 1997, pp. 34.

**Cluster I: The “hard sell exhibitors”** (18,5%) These types of exhibitors are completely focused on meeting sales targets. They prefer specialist trade shows with a homogenous group of exhibitors, where direct selling is common. Goals include achieving a set turnover, as remaining within the budget, especially in comparison to participation in other events. The larger the company, the higher the tendency to monitor the competitors.<sup>1</sup>

**Cluster II: “communication-oriented relationship-managers”** (28,6%) These exhibitors aim their efforts primarily at implementing communication objectives. They prefer international trade fairs that are accompanied by other events, all of which are informational in nature. They aim to demonstrate their ability to solve problems. Priority is given to analysis of protocols of conversation and structural composition. They are strong adherents to Customer Relationship Management (CRM)<sup>2</sup>.

**Cluster III: “competition-oriented representatives”** (16,1%) The smallest group of exhibitors in the clustering is only rarely concerned with specific goals. They prefer a position within a heterogeneous group of exhibitors and most often participate in national and regional trade fairs. They are willing to compete and watch rival activities closely, often adopting their tactics, especially stand design. Success is measured in terms of visitor numbers.

**Cluster IV: The “hybrid exhibitors”** (18,7%) These exhibitors do not set extraordinary goals, although employee motivation as a goal is common. They tend towards international trade shows because of their informational nature.

**Cluster V: The “ambitious regional exhibitor”** (18,1%) These exhibitors aim at merchandising their goods (emphasis on product-policy) and are very interested in creating a positive image. They are also very ambitious at evaluating success and compare the effectiveness of marketing tools

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Mortsiefer, J., Die Bedeutung von Messen und Ausstellungen fuer mittelstaendische Betreibe, Goettingen 1982, pp. 64.

<sup>2</sup> Constitution of the CRM-term cf. Schwetz, W., Customer Relationship Management. Wiesbaden 2000, p. 11-18; see also Blackwell, Roger D.; Minard, Paul W.; Engel, James F., Consumer Behavior, 9<sup>th</sup> ed., Orlando, Florida 2001, pp. 50-53, particularly p. 51

### C. Importance for Visitors

Visitors can be differentiated into four types<sup>1</sup>:

**Type A: intensive trade fair user (22%)** This type of visitor leverages trade shows as an important source of information, particularly current market developments.

Type A visitors are highly communicative, attend 21 exhibitions on average per year and every visit is planned in detail. In contrast to the other types, they tend to complete a sales transaction during the fair.

**Type B: special-interest trade fair user (24%)** These visitors prepare in advance and use their visits intensively, carefully considering products or services. Type B visitors do not transact business directly at the fair.

**Type C: the trade fair “stroller” (22%)** These visitors use trade fairs primarily as an instrument to observe the market. They have little contact with the exhibitor personnel and do not intend to buy.

**Type D: the pragmatist (32%)** These visitors do not have any specific aim such as transacting business or making a purchase. They are very passive, seldom stay for more than a day and are oriented to other sources of information.

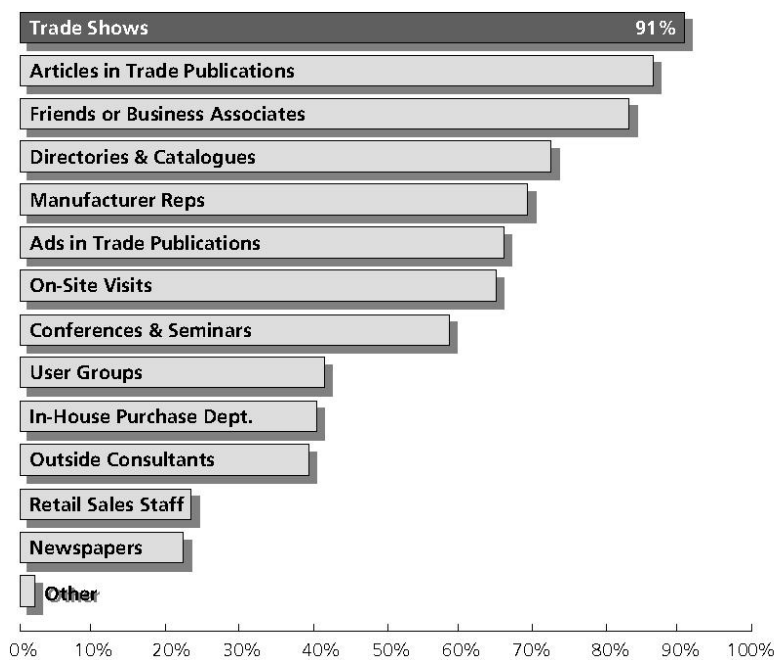


FIGURE III-2 Trade shows top list of information sources

[Source: Center for Exhibition Research, in: Montgomery / Strick p. 155]

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Anonymous, Trade Fairs and Trade Fair Visitors in Germany, Hamburg 1992, pp. 126 -131

Although show visitors use many sources of information, 48% of visitors reach a decision to invest on behalf of their companies directly at the fair.<sup>1</sup>

#### IV. Trade Fair Selection Factors

##### A. Information Sources<sup>2</sup>

Decision-makers and suppliers that share a mutual interest will inevitably select a suitable trade fair to attend. Statistics, product information and dates that help in choosing the right exhibition are available from multiple sources.

The **local authorities** and the national **governments** in nearly every industrial country offer trade fair support services. Development programmes and market research data can be obtained free of charge in most cases. In foreign countries, most embassies offer show assistance to their national companies.

The **Chambers of Industry and Commerce** and the **Chambers of Industrial Crafts**, as well as by national and international **Trade Associations** also offer assistance.

Professional **associations** play a major role in the exhibition branch<sup>3</sup>:

- The **Union des Foires Internationales** (UFI), established in Paris, is the leading umbrella organization for fair organizing companies worldwide. The UFI unifies important other associations with organizers and fair ground owners. As a networking platform, it stimulates communication between the members especially through several working groups and congresses. With more than 70 years of experience, UFI carries out studies about the trade fair industry and the research results can be used for marketing or educational purposes. As a representative of the trade fair industry, its responsibility is to provide added value.<sup>4</sup>
- One of the associate members of the UFI is the **Association of the German Trade Fair Industry** (AUMA) with its headquarters in Berlin. It provides all kinds of

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<sup>1</sup> Examination of SIEMENS AG at the CeBIT 2003, n=3,776, cf. Pracht, Sabine, Nach der Messe ist vor der Messe, Messeeffizienz, in: Hausmann, Martin (ed.), aquisa supplement Messeplanung. Wuerzburg, December 2003, p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Morrow, Sandra L., The Art of the Show, loc. cit., pp. 546 – 549.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Kirchgeorg, Manfred et al. (ed.), Handbuch Messemanagement, loc. cit., pp. 599.

<sup>4</sup> See <http://www.unfinet.org/> (accessed 01.03.04).

- information about the trade fair business in Germany, where about two thirds of the world's leading trade fairs<sup>1</sup> continue to be held.<sup>2</sup>
- Connected with the AUMA is the **Society for Voluntary Control of Fair and Exhibition Statistics** (FKM<sup>3</sup>). The FKM undertakes standardised analyses of various types of exhibitions world-wide, based on uniform guidelines in order to provide unbiased evaluations. Its publications concerning more than 400 leading audited events can be accessed free of charge.<sup>4</sup>
  - The **International Association for Exhibition Management** (IEAM) is an example of an organisation which assists ventures from abroad, in this case for American companies exhibiting in Europe.<sup>5</sup>

In addition to the professional organizations of the exhibition industry, **industry associations** play an important role because they are either trade fair organizers themselves or exert much influence. In any case, they usually know their markets very well and usually have superior data at their disposal (but often restricted to members only).<sup>6</sup>

Most trade **fair organizers** offer market research data about the events they sponsor. Some of them operate advisory offices in foreign countries.<sup>7</sup>

Numerous trade fair **internet portals** can be accessed, mainly operated by private commercial providers.<sup>8</sup>

Also local **tourist information office centres** often offer related support material.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Association of the German Trade Fair Industry (AUMA) (ed.), Profile, loc.cit., p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> See <http://www.auma-fairs.com/> (accessed 01.03.04).

<sup>3</sup> See <http://www.fkm.de/> (accessed 01.03.04).

<sup>4</sup> Similar information sources see <http://www.iaem.org/> Industry Information / Industry Info & News / Downloadable Resources / Auditing Organisations Europe (accessed 01.03.04), concerning trade fair auditing in the USA e.g. see <http://www.transfairusa.org/> (accessed 10.03.04).

<sup>5</sup> See <http://www.iaem.org/> (accessed 01.03.04).

<sup>6</sup> E.g. German Association of the Automotive Industry (VDA), see [http://www.vda.de/index\\_en.html](http://www.vda.de/index_en.html) (accessed 12.03.04).

<sup>7</sup> E.g. see <http://www.munichtradefairs.com/> (accessed 01.03.04).

<sup>8</sup> E.g. see <http://www.expodatabase.com/> (accessed 01.03.04).



## B. Selection Criteria

For visitors, after finding out which trade fairs deal with their field of interest, the ones with the best match must be identified. This can be easily done by checking out the trade fair catalogues or lists of exhibitors, which are available from the current organizers. If the range of goods of an offer is considered suitable, then the fair might be worth a visit. The presence of the market leaders is often named as being an important indicator for quality. Although that point can also be discussed as overvalued, in any case it is a pulling factor.

As a limitation factor, the costs of a visit must be taken into consideration as well as the personal time schedule, especially if more than one show finds personal interest. Connected with this item, the distance to the venue can become important, if a nearer adequate alternative is possible.

At big international shows like the Bauma<sup>1</sup>, restrictions like availability of accommodations can play a role, it is hardly possible to get a free hotel room in the surrounding of the fair, if reservation not have been done a long time in advance. So there is a request for careful planning in before start of the show.

It can be necessary to be able to get an accreditation as a specialised visitor at some fairs, otherwise entrance might be refused.

The same goes for exhibitors at specialised trade shows, as only companies are admitted to take part, whose offers match with the guidelines of the organizers. The area to rent is limited at every fair, and nevertheless in some cases there is a waiting list of interested exhibitors without regular places. As another point, a lot of pre- and re-organisation is necessary.<sup>2</sup> This costs internal resources which must be available according to the date of the occasion, peak times of production should be avoided if possible.

After a pre-selection, it is recommended to get a closer idea of the fit by first time taking part as a visitor. The most important requirement is to reach the intended target group. Therefore it is also necessary to face the competitors, because the target group is interested in a complete representation of product range. The trade fair strategy (cf. V.D) is an important factor to selection, belonging to the different

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<sup>1</sup> See <http://www.munichtradefairs.com/bauma/default.htm> (accessed 01.03.04), confer <http://www.bauma.de/index.php?id=18429> (accessed 01.03.04).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Meffert, Heribert, Grundlagen marktorientierter Unternehmensfuehrung, loc. cit., p. 743

intention between approaching new contacts or target groups or cultivation of existing contacts.

Concerning different costs for a participation, the own liquidity brought along should not be forgotten. A lot of the exhibition budget depends on the chosen venue, for example the strong varieties in space rental depending on different organizers as well as aspects of stand building in foreign countries.

## **V. Integrated Exhibition Marketing**

### **A. Specific Marketing Aspects**

Exhibitions are often reduced to being a part of the Communications-Mix.<sup>1</sup> This point has to be discussed, because from another point of view, they integrate main parts of aspects from other parts of the 4P<sup>2</sup>. In contrast to a closer examination, trade shows seen from an exhibitor's view, are often considered as an independent marketing tool.<sup>3</sup> Other authors<sup>4</sup> define trade shows /exhibitions as examples of Sales Promotion.

Despite the discussion of how to characterise them, the main aspect is that trade shows must be integrated adequately into a company's strategic marketing concept, and adjusted to the other tools, all other instruments can not be used without being adapted to the fair participation, because "Trade show participation is too expensive to be limited to the exhibit alone"<sup>5</sup>

On closer examination of the single parts of the marketing mix, some specialties can be brought out, which will show that trade fairs mix up with separate instruments and

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Lewis, Barbara; Litter, Dale, Marketing, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1997, page 57, cf. also Prueser, Sven, Messemarketing..., loc. cit., p. 54 following STROTHMANN.

<sup>2</sup> 4P: policy on price, product, pace, promotion i.e. these tools constitute the marketing mix, cf. Kotler, Philip, Marketing Management, loc. cit., p. 15.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Meffert, Heribert, Grundlagen marktorientierter Unternehmensfuehrung, loc. cit., pp. 718.

<sup>4</sup> See Unger-Firnhaber, Anne-E., Pull Strategies for Parts and Components Suppliers in Business-to-Business Markets, Dissertation, Sankt Gallen 1996, p. 193 following PETER and DONELLY.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Czinkota, Michael R.; Ronkainen, Ilkka A., International Marketing, loc. cit., 379.

can hardly be seen as independent without overlapping with other tools as advertising or promotion, actually, they are multifunctional.<sup>1</sup>

Concerning **Product-Policy**, usually a specific range of goods from the exhibitors portfolio is shown, which is thoroughly selected. Thinking about a product range with more or less equal goods, expert purchasers can not be impressed with the standards. Homogenous products are often of less interest than competitive features, therefore only some particular goods that are characteristic can make a deeper impression on visitors rather than being plentiful, where specials are rapidly being overseen.

In question of **Contract-Policy**, there are traditionally special trade show borders expected for the shown products. At industrial fairs, where investment goods are displayed and especially heavy machinery is extolled, the exhibited samples can be bought for a fraction of the regular price, to reduce the high costs of transportation back home to the producer.

Affecting **Distribution-Policy** trade shows can be seen as a special channel of distribution. Another point is that one position of the booth on the trade fair ground can have particular advantages over others. That aspect can be seen as a location advantage. If a stand is situated at a hidden corner of the hall with the longest distance from the main entrance, the possibility to attract visitors before they get tired is less than being that of a stand in the pole position of the first hall entered by visitors. It is also significant to be located at a competitive position in proximity to similar products – time of prospects is a valuable matter, especially if most of the important exhibits can not be found together at one spot. On the other hand, some exhibitors see it as a threat to stay face to face with the arch-rival, especially if they see their key-accounts two-timing with the newest innovations at the neighbours booth. Others like it to put the competitors into the shade, e.g. with a very lavish highly designed stand to present their products.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Fleiss, Sabine, Messeselektion, loc. cit., 1994, p.8.

At the matter of **Communications**, trade fairs have the appraisal to be the most important tool directly behind personal selling,<sup>1</sup> which is comprehensible when understanding communications in the meaning of the exchange of information.

As a basic communication model, a sender (expedient) sends an encoded message in a special channel to a receiver, who decodes the message.<sup>2</sup> Usually, the transmission of a message is limited to one way from the one who is advertising to the recipient. The effect can not be predicted with safety, because everyone reacts in a different way which might not be the intended. Typically, in business communication the reaction of the receiver can not be viewed in time, contrary to exhibitions, where it is possible to re-react in some situation. The visitor is an expedient too, his direct response can also be used as a source of information, critiques can be collected and evaluated, supply and market-demand can be compared directly to the needs, the exchange is very intense.

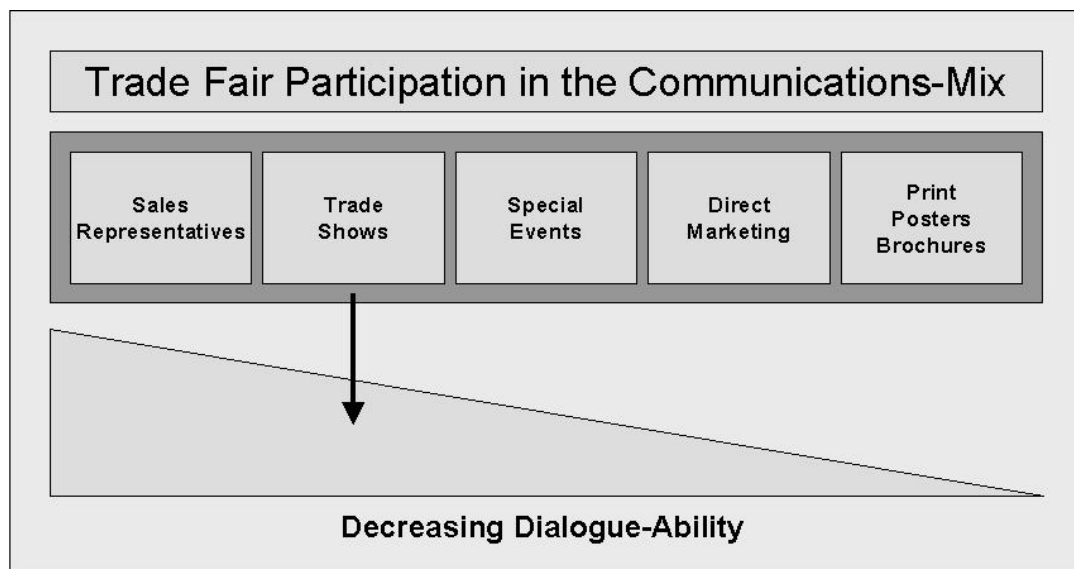


FIGURE V-1 Comparison of the Intense of Interactivity [Source: Beier (2003)]

To pass information is nowhere easier than at a trade show, where the products can not only be described, but also viewed and inspected. In spite, this could also be accomplished by a visit of producers and potential purchasers, but as an enormous advantage, the visitor can get a representative overview about plenty of different

<sup>1</sup> N = 1,105 examined companies, cf. Association of the German Trade Fair Industry (AUMA) (ed.), *Messefunktions- und Potentialanalyse*, AUMA edition Nr. 9, Cologne, Bergisch Gladbach 1999, p. 36

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Kotler, Philip, *Marketing Management*, loc. cit., p. 551.

offers in a short time. On the other hand, the surrounding of the displayed goods is optimised by the design of the stand, which allows the exhibitor to present advertising effectiveness at a maximum. The presentation can be emphasised by demonstration on the product or by special exhibition events. Under that condition, the customer's process of decision can be influenced in a positive way, especially at committees like *Buying Centres*<sup>1</sup>, to whom a harmonization-effect can be recognized at jointly trade show visits.<sup>2</sup>

The graphics below will give an overview about positioning of trade shows on the discussed issues, and as another factor, the limitation of availability is integrated, which will be discussed in detail in the next paragraph.

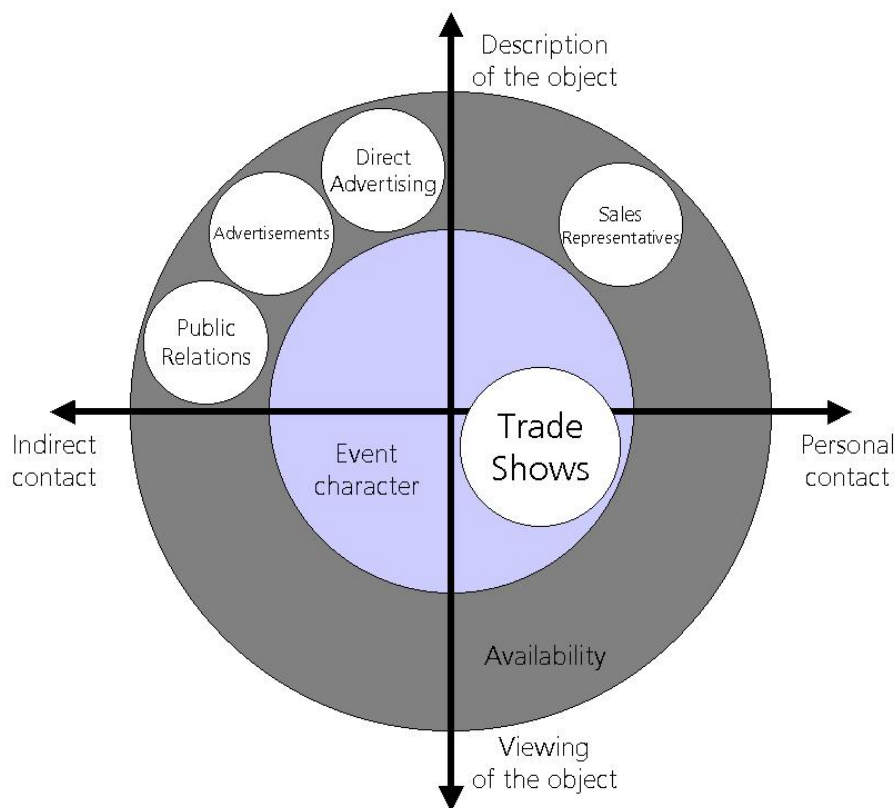


FIGURE V-2 Position of Trade Shows within Communications (Source: Adaptation to Prueser, p. 59)

<sup>1</sup> Terminus *Buying Center* see Kirchgeorg, Manfred et al. (ed.), *Handbuch Messemanagement*, loc. cit., pp. 1181 – 1195, particularly p. 1184, following WEBSTER F.; WIND, Y., *Organisational Buying Behaviour*, Engelwood Cliff, 1972.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Prueser, Sven, *Messemarketing...*, loc. cit., p. 58.

## B. Outstanding Marketing Function

A distinguishing feature of trade fairs is their conditional **indisponibility**.<sup>1</sup> This means, that the date and the place is fixed by the organizers, and can not be moved on the demands of a separate participant. Some fairs have appointed times by tradition, they often developed by experience of innovation cycles of the concerning industry and by the utilization of production capacities, where less busy times are used to prepare the peak times of manufacturing, also foreseen to the expected amount of orders around the trade fair. Nevertheless, sometimes important exhibitor groups are able to apply considerable pressure on the organizers because of the significance of their attendance.<sup>2</sup> Due to this, other marketing activities must be adapted to the fixed trade fair participation, which dates have to be considered especially for advertising campaigns. All marketing instruments suffer from devaluation caused by indisponibility, excepting only trade fairs, which are able to hypercompensate this flaw.<sup>3</sup>

The main reason for the existence of trade fairs can be found in the **lowering of costs of transaction**<sup>4</sup>. Such costs can arise from every influence factor around the conclusion of a sale, as search for gaining information, drawing up and entering contracts, legal advices, insurances, competition monitoring and process of necessary adoption. The cost reduction is based on the concentration of providers and attendees in low distance in a condensed time.

Trade shows are held at a location which is neither home territory of the exhibitor nor the visitor. The venue is a neutral area that makes it easier for the visitors to select freely the individual importance from a pool of information offers without having a feeling of commitment for the one from whom they request it. There is also

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Prueser, Sven, *Messemarketing*... loc. cit., p. 58, following STROTHMANN.

<sup>2</sup> Compare discussion about moving of the Book Fair from Frankfurt to Munich, cf. e.g. URL <http://www.publishingcentral.com/news.php?story=43> (accessed 10.03.04), also URL <http://internationalreports.net/europe/germany/hesse/2003/heresy.html> (accessed 10.03.04).

<sup>3</sup> Strothmann, K.-H., *Entwicklungsperspektiven des Messemarketing aus Sicht der Wissenschaft*, in: Meffert, H.; Backhaus, K. (ed.), *Messemarketing im Wandel – Status quo und Perspektiven*, Muenster 1997, p. 15.

<sup>4</sup> Terminus cf. Anderson, E., *Transaction Cost Analysis and Marketing, Transaction Cost Economics and Beyond*, Boston, 1996.

a simplification for the exhibitor because there are no interferences by daily duties at the companies' site.<sup>1</sup>

In many cases, a prerequisite for the usage of demanded services is that they can only be consumed at the place of their production. Due to this, the customer is forced by a **conditional locational pull**, which means that he is fixed belonging the place where the producer stays, this applies also to trade fairs.

### C. Accessory Activities

A highly discussed activity together with trade fairs at these days is the engagement of **special exhibition events**<sup>2</sup>. Serious visitors will recognise quickly, whether a special activity belongs to the contents which they want to sell, or if they are simply looking for attention. If there is no connection to the product, because of many such activities, the intended effect can turn into rejection. Inundated with impacts, every distraction is an irritation which causes tiredness which leads to a lower rate of reaction. The communicated contents must be integrated, suitable to used ways of messaging and the image of the expedient, and exhibition events must fit to the overall appearance at the fair.<sup>3</sup>

Besides this, classical accessory activities before, during and after a fair interfere with the success. In the pre-show-phase, the intention is to announce one's presence, so that one can be found there. Advertising in target group oriented publications is the most common way.

33% of the attendees visited exhibitors who did target based promotion before the show.<sup>4</sup> Therefore **Direct Mailing** as specialised form of advertising is used to announce that one is present at a show and is inviting to visit the booth conveyed through mail.<sup>5</sup> On selected interesting contacts, this can be emphasised by enclosure of free entrance cards (cost paid by the host).

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Unger-Firnhaber, Anne-E., Pull Strategies..., loc. cit., p. 197, following SHOHAM.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Goldblatt, Joe J., Special Events, Best Practices in Modern Event Management, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., New York 1998, p. 239

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Goschmann, Klaus, Erlebnisorientierung fuerht in die Sackgasse, in: Sueddeutsche Zeitung Nr. 39, Supplement Messen · Kongresse · Tagungen, Munich: Sueddeutsche Zeitung, 17.02.04, p. 18.

<sup>4</sup>Based upon a 10 years study by the Centre for Exposition Industry Research (CEIR). Cf. Robbe, Deborah, Exhibitions and Trade Shows, loc. cit., p 67.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Morrow, Sandra L., The Art of the Show, loc. cit., p. 98.

A variation often used on direct mailing is the attachment of adhesive **label signets** on every outgoing correspondence. These signets stick on the letter's header conspicuously announcing that the sender can be found at a specific trade fair, usually combined with the logo of the fair. The costs for this measure are very low, the attendance is high, but the radius to new contacts might be less.

**Advertising** is concentrated on specialised journals, but mainly big companies also place ads in daily newspapers that can be seen at motor shows, which are often used to present new car innovations also to a wide public. Not only in this case the interest of the press can be very high, to satisfy the information needs, therefore the orientation to **Public Relations** should have special attendance.

To accommodate the press, besides press conferences special **press-trays** are offered by the fair organizers which can be rented to place compact and more specific information there, the reporters can pick up the offered material comfortably even if they were not able to visit all stands due to lack of time.

With reference to **IT-Marketing**, the presentation on the internet is an obligation. Some exhibitors have extra **websites** for a trade show participation, others present individual pictures directly from the fair ground. Special **Email** newsletters can inform about recent occasions like daily sales figures. The label signet mentioned can also be attached in a digital form to every outgoing email, in any case the participation must be announced in the mail footer.

Requests of **International Marketing** can be regarded by multilingual stand personnel, which is well trained for dealing with foreigners, which must not only be at international fairs. This point directly correlates to **Personnel Marketing**, furthermore the selected stand staff should receive extra training not only for the special situation at exhibition characteristics to sales and psychology, but also for preparing to cope with the extraordinary physical effort caused by stress.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Schonert-Hirz, Sabine, Ueberlebenstraining fuer die Messetage, in: Absatzwirtschaftliche Gesellschaft und Deutscher Marketing-Verband (ed.), Absatzwirtschaft 12/2000, Duesseldorf 2000, pp. 102-105

<sup>2</sup> At personnel marketing, trade fairs also play an important role to recruit new staff, cf. Union des Foires Internationales (UFI); International Association for Exhibition Management (IAEM) (ed.). Fairs & Exhibitions, pamphlet, <http://www.iaem.org/> Industry information / Industry Info & News / Downloadable Resources / (accessed 12.03.04).



As mentioned before, the main aspect to all accessory activities must be the integration into the marketing strategy and a fit to the overall appearance of the company to enable maximum success.

#### **D. Stand Impact**

When visitors enter an exhibition hall, they are confronted with a load of different impressions. A visitor gives an average of 7 seconds of his attention to an object before he decides whether it is of further interest.<sup>1</sup> Within this short space of time, something has to be offered which awakes the customer's curiosity. Referring to the AIDA model<sup>2</sup>, this gaining of attention is the utmost condition for the necessary change in attitude or behaviour and the response of the target group.<sup>3</sup>

The purpose of a stand is to be a platform for information exchange and communication between visitor and exhibits or rather exhibiting companies. Therefore, the design must be orientated towards the specific aims for a trade show participation. That's why no standard solution can be defined because no two companies are alike and no two articles are identical.<sup>4</sup>

When exhibiting products, articles ought to be at the centre of attraction and interest. The idea of a stand is to underline the quality and the advantage of the goods, which are perceived by all human senses: seeing, touching, hearing, smelling (optical, haptical, acoustical, audit sense-impact). The advertising message should be focused on the centre of the product,<sup>5</sup> therefore, as a point in planning, the products could be hidden so that they have to be uncovered by the attendees to increase curiosity.<sup>6</sup> However, in any case the stand should not steal the show from the exhibits.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Robbe, Deborah, Exhibitions and Trade Shows, loc. cit., p. 47.

<sup>2</sup> Awareness/Attention, Interest, Desire, Action (AIDA)-Model. See Kotler, Philip, Marketing Management, loc. cit., p. 556.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 554.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Schirmbeck, Egon; Schmutz, Eduard, Messestaende, Temporaere Architektur fuer die Praesentation von Industrieprodukten und Dienstleistungen, Leinfelden-Echterdingen 1987, p. 7.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Reinhard, Edgar; Locher, Adalbert (text), Nomadic Architecture. Exhibition Design, Baden (CH) 1988, p. 75.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Reinhard, Edgar; Locher, Adalbert (text), Nomadic Architecture..., loc. cit., p. 89.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. *ibidem*, p. 235.

When depicting *services* (comp. paragraph I.A), because of their *immateriality*<sup>1</sup>, the goods can not be fully demonstrated. Appreciation of a company and its service offer to visitors depends strongly on the stand arrangement and design. The higher the grade of immateriality, all the more the claim for stand quality rises higher. The viewer's association grows with the possibility of assessing the quality of the service.<sup>2</sup>

The significant difference between a stand and the usual possibilities of visualisation is the enhancement from the second to the third dimension, that means also an extension to possible presentation.<sup>3</sup>

The representation style at a show must take into consideration the demands of all stake holders<sup>4</sup>, especially regarding the cost factor. For example if staff payment has to be cut, because of some vital situation in the company, then there would be absolutely no acceptance for a very expensive booth, even if necessary. On the contrary, many customers have certain expectations from 'their' supplier. As well known global players it is simply not possible to take part in a fair in a manner that is not appreciated in public image – if for instance the company is Microsoft<sup>5</sup>, then it will not underline the position as a market leader to be at an important IT-Fair like SMAU<sup>6</sup> with only 20 square meters pipe-and-drape<sup>7</sup> stand.

That also applies to the share holders: If dividends are not distributed to the extend expected, then the problems of acceptance of the need for adequate representation will be discussed even though anti cyclical action might be appropriate from an objective point of view.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Meffert, Heribert; Bruhn, Manfred, Dienstleistungsmarketing, loc. cit., p. 379, cf. also Kotler, Philip; Bloom, Paul; Hayes, Thomas, Marketing professional services, loc.cit. pp. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Prueser, Sven, Messemarketing. ..., loc. cit., p. 65. The same prerequisite is also valid for the selection of the booth-staff, cf. Meffert, Heribert; Bruhn, Manfred, Dienstleistungsmarketing, loc. cit., p. 380.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Schirmbeck, Egon; Schmutz, Eduard, Messestaende, Temporaere Architektur..., loc. cit., p. 7.

<sup>4</sup> About Stake Holders see Kotler, Philip, Marketing Management, loc. cit., p. 40

<sup>5</sup> Cf. <http://www.microsoft.com/italy/smau/> (accessed 12.02.04).

<sup>6</sup> SMAU: IT-Show, nearly half a million visitors to 3.000 exhibitors in Milan 1999, cf. <http://www.smau.com/> (acs. 12.02.04).

<sup>7</sup> Pipe-and-drape: simple stand construction, very common in the USA, example <http://gocrown.com/PipeDrapes/ExhibitBooth.html> (acs. 10.03.04).

Every appearance at a fair must be very strictly oriented to the company's CI/CD concept, it should reflect the company's reputation. If a company's logo is blue, it will hardly be noticed at a red-styled booth. OLINS brings it to the point:

“The fundamental idea behind a corporate identity programme is that in everything the company does [...] the company should project a clear idea of what it is and what its aims are. The most significant way in which this can be done is by making everything in and around the company – its products, buildings and communications – consistent in purpose and performance and where it is appropriate, in appearance too. Inevitably then, the visual elements that go to make up the corporate identity usually make the most significant impact.”<sup>1</sup>

The design of the booth should be deeply connected with the specific aims for the fair.<sup>2</sup> Thus the chosen strategy exerts influences to the stand design. If, in adaptation to ANSOFF, the intended aim is to penetrate a well known market with familiar products, the style of exhibition should be consumer-oriented. Therefore, to reinforce existing contacts, where intense talks in an unwind surrounding should have priority, a closed stand construction with spacious room for hospitalities is recommended. A pleasant atmosphere can be underlined by the affects of chosen material and effects: lighting, ceiling, walls, floor and techniques can deepen the communicational topic without bothering the overall impression.<sup>3</sup>

	Old products	New products
Old markets	<b>Market penetration</b> Consumer-oriented exhibition style	<b>Product development</b> Product-oriented exhibition style
New markets	<b>Market Development</b> Contact-oriented exhibition style	<b>Diversification</b> Advice-oriented exhibition style

FIGURE V-3 Field strategies for the market and exhibition style [Source: Beier (1997), p. 227]

<sup>1</sup>, Olins, Wally: The Wolff Olins guide to corporate identity. London, 1990, p. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Anonymous, Trade Fairs and Trade Fair Visitors in Germany, Hamburg: Spiegel, 1992, p. 33

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Beier, Joerg, The Design Demands of Trade-Fair Architecture versus Commercial Calculation, in: Schulte, Karin (ed.), Temporay buildings, Stuttgart 1997, p. 227.

The distinction of four different stand types is of importance because the type highly influences the architectural opportunities and has a high correlation to the traffic flow patterns. Sometimes the possible type is a guideline by fair organizers, with little possibility of choice, especially at events where the interest of exhibitors is higher than the available space at the venue. In most cases the form can be chosen, appropriate to the trade fair strategy, like transparency vs. decent profile. The form also makes a difference in the cost of square meter rental.

A **row stand** (standard booth)<sup>1</sup> is only open on one side, usually located between other row stands. With only one side open to the traffic, the row stand offers very few possibilities to enable attendees to enter, therefore it is known to be the cheapest form of stand to rent. But row stands must not be undervalued – the wider they are, the more they can also be attractive through their width or their depth.

A typical row stand is marked in the graphics below, number A13 (first circle at top).

**Corner stands** [perimeter (wall) booth]<sup>2</sup> finish a row-line so that two sides are exposed to crossing aisles. One of the closed sides is next to the neighbour stand, which can be another corner stand or a row stand. A typical corner stand is marked in the graphics below, number B12 (third circle from top).

The **end stand** (peninsula booth)<sup>3</sup>, open to three sides, usually faces a cross aisle, which allows to attract a high attentiveness. A typical end stand is marked in the graphics below, number C15 (fourth circle from top).

**block stand** (island booth)<sup>4</sup> surrounded by aisles and tough surrounded by traffic and tough means the highest possible attraction but also the highest costs (in rental and installation) together with the maximum freedom of individual design. A typical block stand is marked in the graphics below, number B17 (second circle from top).

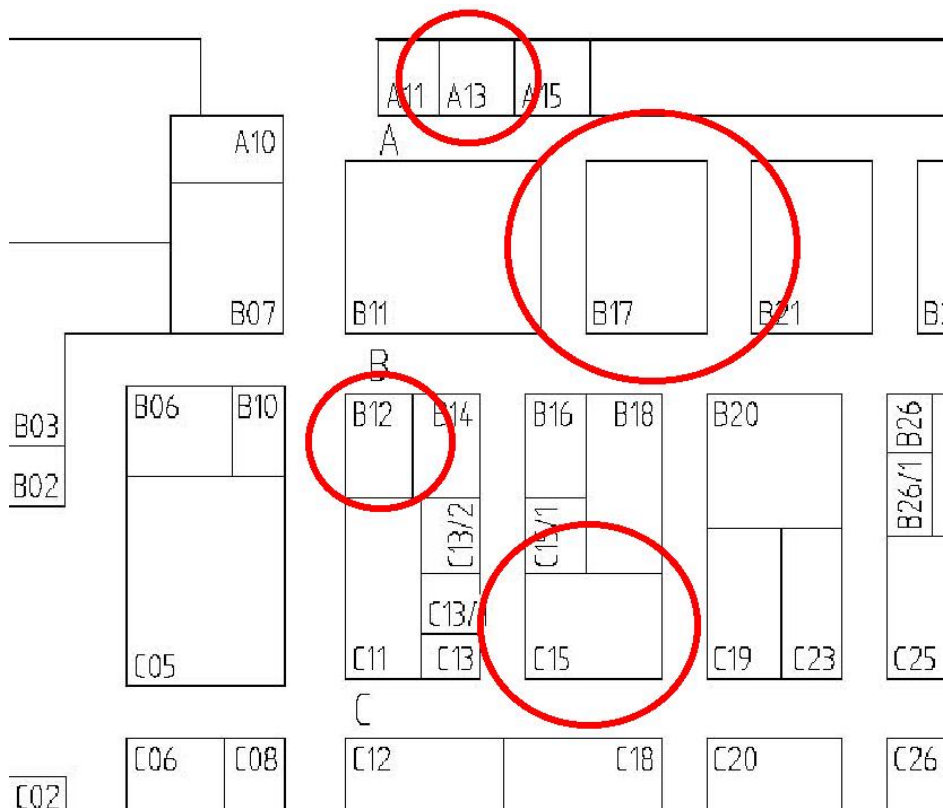
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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Robbe, Deborah, Exhibitions and Trade Shows, loc. cit., pp. 70.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. ibidem.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. ibidem.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. ibidem.



**FIGURE V-4** Different stand types [Source: based upon CeBIT 2004 Hanover, hall 19 (northern direction view), all rights reserved on original plans by Deutsche Messe AG, with friendly permission]

In addition special stand forms have to be mentioned, they can be found at industrial shows where the stand expenses are normally higher:

The **double floor stand** (two storey exhibit, double-decker-stand)<sup>1</sup> has at least two floors (seldom more), the ground floor is normally used for the product presentation while the first floor is reserved for conference facilities.

A **outdoor stand** is a stand located outside of an exhibition hall and is used for large products as e.g. machinery. If the shown products are weatherproof, their competitiveness can be stressed by having them presented in the open, to show their ability to environmental resistance. Other goods and the parts of the stand needed regardless of weather are usually housed in tent-constructions.

<sup>1</sup> See Morrow, Sandra L., *The Art of the Show*, loc. cit., p. 604.

Stand Areas:

a.) **Area of orientation**

For gaining attraction in many cases eye-catchers are used there. Many times towers are used as fixed and freestanding components for identification e.g. by presenting a logo that can be identified over a long distance or for the purpose of display.<sup>1</sup>

b.) At the **Area of demonstration** the advantage of the product should be pointed out. The individual products can be presented here to attendees by stand staff, this also offers the last chance for the first interaction between staff and visitors. The opportunity to get brief information or samples is expected by visitors.<sup>2</sup>

c.) **Area of consultation**

If the customer shows an obvious interest in the recommended commodities, then quiet and separated places removed from the usual trade bustle are suggested as a suitable place where negotiations and talks can be carried out without unnecessary disturbance. Ideal places are cabin lounges with conference fitting so that consolidate negotiations can be held.

The average active visitor remains 11,8 minutes at a booth,<sup>3</sup> so this little time has to be used very productively by both parties.

d.) The **Area of logistic** is not intended for visitors, it has a pure functional design and consists of storage rooms, small back office, kitchen, recreation and catering area for the staff. Furthermore, the size of the logistic area depends on the size of the stand, some smaller booths do not have the space for it. In most cases, there is just a little room for deposit of brochures and promotion material etc. The importance of the logistic area grows with the size of the stand, at larger booths it can be compared with the headquarters from where many duties have to be coordinated. If thinking about mega-shows such as CeBIT with stands of a size with more than 1.500 square meters, it is obvious that even simple distribution of information material can increase a challenge if plenty of sites demand for material at the same time.

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<sup>1</sup> Purpose of towers: compare Robbe, Deborah, Exhibitions and Trade Shows, loc. cit., p. 73.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. ibid., p. 71.

<sup>3</sup> N=3,776 visitors under surveillance at the CeBIT 2003. Cf. Pracht, Sabine, Nach der Messe ist vor der Messe, Messeeffizienz, in: Hausmann, Martin (ed.), aquisa supplement Messeplanung, Wuerzburg, December 2003. p 9.

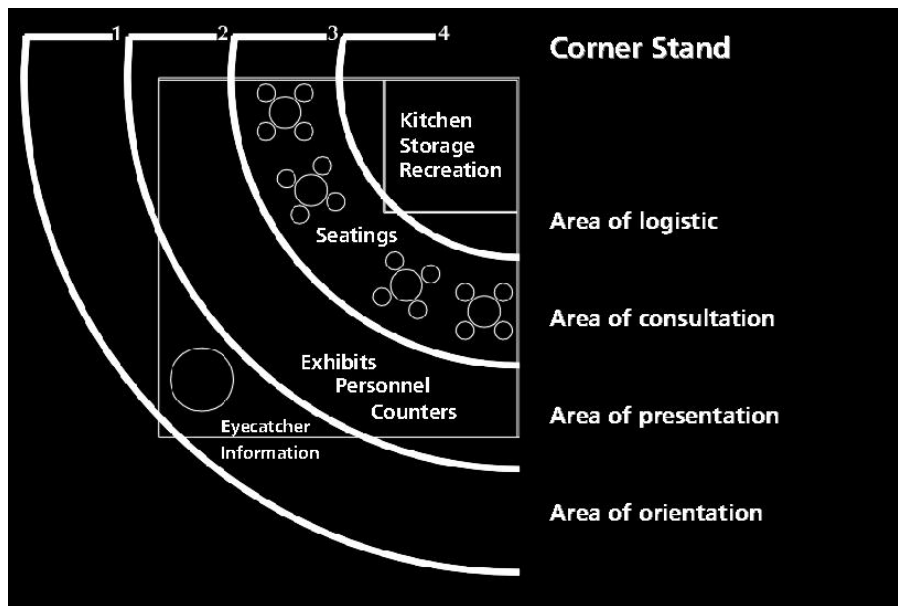


FIGURE V-5 Different Stand Areas

One other point while designing a booth considering the costs it is necessary that the booth plan allows the installation and dismantling quickly with the needed minimum of staff.<sup>1</sup>

Stands can be made of prefabricated construction material, with parts which just have to be put together. These kinds of **system stands** are typical for smaller booths with lower budget for the assembly, the needed material is more or less affordable, and very few staff without special construction skills are necessary. Compared to, **individual** (also **conventional**) **stands** which are especially designed and must be built by skilled workers where a wide range of materials can be combined and result in an impressive construction. This high flexibility which offers a variety requires special know how and higher budgets and also leads to higher awareness because of its uniqueness. Of course, booth styles can be mixed to a **combined stand**.

### E. Follow-up Measures

To stipulate the stage of stand dismantling as the condition when the work for a fair ends is the worst mistake to make and often made. Follow-up measures are treated like a stepchild. Therefore, SPRYSS recommends that the contacts won at a fair

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Reinhard, Edgar; Locher, Adalbert (text), *Nomadic Architecture...*, loc. cit., p. 61.

should be treated like valuable papers.<sup>1</sup> That means they should be handled with care, not only because they were very expensive to obtain, and they must be used immediately. It is essential to go into follow up measures as early as possible, to simplify the direct remind and to underline the service ability by fast reaction without time lag. The longer one hesitates, the more the danger of loosing the value of the “bonds” increases.<sup>2</sup>

Nearly every visitor sacrifices a part of his spare time at the show. He or she has to weigh up the opportunities given by the stands he/she could visit. By doing this it is a little success for the exhibitor, if his booth is selected. Every involved party knows about it, and as a measure of follow-up it is not just a question of politeness to thank important customers for their attendance, and personal telephone calls, in which further information is given, are a recommended way to do this.

The times when all visitors were over flooded with information are over. Today, nobody wants to carry thick brochures around the fair ground, throwing them into the rubbish afterwards without hardly having read them. Serious future customers expect selective mailed material made-to-measure and sent to their office, immediately after their return from the exhibition. Also follow-up visits by sales representatives are often welcome.

Detailed inquiries, especially orders, should be processed with priority, while debriefing and internal review must not be neglected, as to avoid the same mistakes as before, results should be fixed in written form.

## **F. Risk Management**

Trade Shows can be seen as special events because of the size of area they need, the amount of people who are visiting and meeting within a limited time at one place, so that trouble conditions can be expected.<sup>3</sup> At a big event like e.g. the COMDEX in

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<sup>1</sup> Spryss, Wolf M.; Falcke, Joachim, Messestaende muessen funktionieren, in: Absatzwirtschaftliche Gesellschaft und Deutscher Marketing-Verband (ed.), Absatzwirtschaft 10/2000, Duesseldorf 2000, p. 112.

<sup>2</sup> Therefore specialised suppliers offer trade fair system to deal with the won contacts. IT-Systems enable to address a contacted person by letter just in time at the day of the contact even before he or she returns from the fair to his working place.

<sup>3</sup> Tarlow, Peter E., Event Risk Management and Safety, New York, 2002. p. 230.



Las Vegas, were 200,000 visitors met in a space of 160,000 square meters within three or four days,<sup>1</sup> it is simply not possible to see all risk factors in advance.

First of all there is a large **commercial risk** concerning the return on investment, especially for the organizers of a trade show and for the exhibitors. Compared with the risk of those, there is hardly any risk for visitors, because costs for information, preparation, travel, hotel, follow up and loss of productivity during the stay at a fair can be ignored. Even if every single visitor is wasting his time because he has selected a wrong fair, which is of no interest for him or the company he represents, or where no interesting products and contacts for him which is of course improbable, his loss will have no relation to the efforts, which a lot of exhibitors invest each time.<sup>2</sup>

To take part at a trade fair is undoubtedly expensive, the average expense of an exhibitors per participation is 300,000 €<sup>3</sup>. Comparing the cost per thousand exposures of contacts within the media, other ways of contacting your clients might seem to be much cheaper at the first glance.

With the strength of this marketing tool (compare paragraph V) it makes sense to invest so much money on it, but on the other hand, however, if there are irritating factors influencing the success of the participation in a negative way, a lot of money can be wasted in a short period of time. To minimize potential risk, there is a obvious demand for detailed planning in advance based upon thorough feasibility studies which inevitably have to be done.

Another threat for the success of an event are difficulties which are completely beyond control. For instance **medical** problems such as the SARS<sup>4</sup>-Epidemic in the autumn 2003. The Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) and the China External Trade Development Council (CETRA) were forced to cancel four important

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<sup>1</sup> COMDEX Fall, IT-Show, Las Vegas, figures 1999 and 2000, <http://www.auma-fairs.com/> (acs. 12.02.04), inquiry for search key 'Comdex Fall', see also <http://www.comdex.com/> (acs. 12.02.04)

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Czinkota, Michael R.; Ronkainen, Ilkka A., *International Marketing*, loc. cit., pp. 136.

<sup>3</sup> Representative survey, n=500, October 2002, see Association of the German Trade Fair Industry (AUMA) (ed.), *Successful Participation in Trade Fairs*, Presentation, slide 20, available at <http://www.auma-fairs.de/> (acs. 15.02.04).

<sup>4</sup> Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), an atypical pneumonia of unknown aetiology. Cf. World Health Organisation (WHO) (ed.), *Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome*, <http://www.who.int/csr/sars/en> (acs. 12.02.04).

industrial mega-shows in Hong Kong and Taiwan caused by the infection risk<sup>1</sup>, and trade fair organizers throughout the world had to prepare special services especially for exhibitors and visitors from the effected regions.<sup>2</sup>

The number of visitors at the COMDEX Fall dropped from 250,000 people in 2000 to 150,000 in 2001, after constant growing rates in the years before. As the fair always takes place in the middle of November, it is likely that this enormous breakdown of 40 per cent was due to the occurrence of 9/11.<sup>3</sup>

Such disasters can not be included while considering a fair in advance, but it shows that there will never be such a thing as an absolute prognosis for the effect of a fair participation.

The same threat which can not be influenced comes from war risk, which also has to be mentioned in this context. As already said in paragraph II, the two world wars nearly stopped international exhibition business.<sup>4</sup>

The risk of war next to other **political risks** like revolutions, similar hostiles interventions by the government like confiscation, or unforeseen loss of a licence, always slumbers beyond scenes, they must be included in the preliminary decision of participating or attending a trade fair.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Spiess, Marianne; Mehta, Manik: Nach SARS- Turbulenzen langsam wieder zur Normalitaet, in: EXPOdata 7/8 2003. Zurich: Verlagsgemeinschaft EXPOdata, 2003. pp. 35

<sup>2</sup> E.g. [http://www.messe-muenchen.de/englisch/presse/news/sars\\_massnahmen\\_e.html](http://www.messe-muenchen.de/englisch/presse/news/sars_massnahmen_e.html) (acs. 12.02.04); e.g. [http://www.messe-duesseldorf.de/md/de/wir\\_ueber\\_uns/wir\\_hr\\_news](http://www.messe-duesseldorf.de/md/de/wir_ueber_uns/wir_hr_news) (acs. 12.02.04); e.g. <http://www.messe.ch/ca/y/buc/> (acs. 12.02.04).

<sup>3</sup> Statistics and assertion to explain breakdown taken from <http://www.auma-fairs.com/> (acs. 12.02.04), inquiry for search key 'Comdex', see also <http://www.comdex.com/> (acs. 12.02.04).

<sup>4</sup> Mathias, Peter; Pollard, Sydney (ed.), The Cambridge Economic History..., loc. cit., pp. 100.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Czinkota, Michael R.; Ronkainen, Ilkka A., International Marketing, loc. cit., p. 136.

## VI. Evaluation of Participation

### A. Importance of Evaluation

Evaluation does not only play a role from the microeconomical point of view as from exhibitors and also visitors. Especially organizers<sup>1</sup>, associations, and authorities doing examinations about macroeconomical purposes.<sup>2</sup> Center of interest from a marketing point of view is the exhibitors' interests due to high expenditure.

Here, the need to measure success has increased in importance due to economical reasons like going global competition. Budgets for marketing activities are under stricter control.<sup>3</sup>

Maximum success of all marketing-activity can only be reached if a detailed marketing plan exists as a guideline for general and individual decision.<sup>4</sup>

Consequently, results of chosen methodology must be properly evaluated, in order to recognise whether the results and aims are suitable. In doing this, it is possible to improve and adjust where needed.<sup>5</sup> Theoretically, this can be transferred to every individual measure, like trade fair participation.

That is why it is astonishing that only 27% of the exhibitors do regular evaluation of success and one third neglect it completely. The other 40% only checks important events.<sup>6</sup>

One reason may be the prejudices like the assertion that it is not possible to measure the success of trade fairs because of so many determination factors, especially after-show-sales were the connection of influence on orders is not entirely obvious.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Greatest contribution to trade fair research is likely made by the organizers. Cf. Strothmann, K.-H. *Entwicklungsperspektiven des Messemarketing aus Sicht der Wissenschaft*, in: Meffert, H.; Backhaus, K. (ed.), *Messemarketing im Wandel – Status quo und Perspektiven*, Muenster 1997, p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Peters, Michael, *Grundprobleme der Messerfolgskontrolle*, loc. cit., p. 7.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Association of the German Trade Fair Industry (AUMA) (ed.), *Profile*, loc. cit., p. 5.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Hiebing, Roman G. jr.; Cooper, Scott W., *The Successful Marketing Plan, A Disciplined and Comprehensive Approach*, Lincolnwood, Illinois 1996, pp. 6.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. *ibid.* p. 241.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Association of the German Trade Fair Industry (AUMA) (ed.), *Ziele und Nutzen von Messebeteiligungen*, AUMA edition Nr. 4, Cologne, Bergisch Gladbach 1996, p. 8.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Peters, Michael, *Grundprobleme der Messerfolgskontrolle*, loc. cit., p.

Independently, some established pre-, during- and after-show methods described in the following as an overall view, which were developed because the obligation to evaluate can not be ignored so methods must be found, despite the fact that they cannot depict all factors.

Many other methods besides the ones mentioned exist, exemplary interviews of visitors and stand personnel, assessment of gained contacts, counting of visitors, traffic flow analysis, resonance to invitations, analysis of general statistics, turnover analysis.

## B. Efficiency Assessment

### 1. Code-Index-Analysis<sup>1</sup>

MEFFERT and UEDING<sup>2</sup> suggest the following methods by operation ratios to be able to compare on the one hand alternative trade shows with each other and on the other hand trade-show-participation with alternative marketing tools by a cost-analysis. To ensure full meaning, the data must be collected entirely and continually during several events.

$$(VI-1) \quad \text{ratio I} \quad = \quad \frac{\text{deal value at/connected with trade show}}{\text{costs of participation}}$$

$$(VI-2) \quad \text{ratio II} \quad = \quad \frac{\text{annual turnover of exhibitor}}{\text{annual costs of trade show participations}}$$

$$(VI-3) \quad \text{visitors value} \quad = \quad \frac{\text{trade show costs}}{\text{number of visitors}} \cdot 1,000$$

The index 1,000 is based on comparability to usual mathematical procedures as the common *cost per thousand exposures* rate.

$$(VI-4) \quad \text{contact price} \quad = \quad \frac{\text{trade show costs}}{\text{number of contacts at the booth}}$$

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Association of the German Trade Fair Industry (AUMA) (ed.), Ziele und Nutzen..., loc. cit., pp. 63

<sup>2</sup> Editors of the study, cf. ibidem, p. 63-66

Previous formulas are based upon a temporal comparison, for competing with figures from other marketing – instrumentals, the *sales efficiency quotient* may be used:

$$(VI-5) \quad \text{sales efficiency quotient} = \frac{\text{cost per contract at trade show}}{\text{costs per contract at other way}}$$

All the methods seen before are purely quantitative, therefore it is necessary to examine also the qualitative site. For remembering the orientation onto the reach to the intended target group, the following formulas are suitable:

$$(VI-6) \quad \text{specialist visitor cost} = \frac{\text{trade show costs}}{\text{number of specialist visitors}}$$

$$(VI-7) \quad \text{target group cost} = \frac{\text{target group specific costs of participation}}{\text{number of target group members at the booth}}$$

Each result in itself can only give a one-sided information which can not be used for interpretation. Every figure has to be integrated in a constant rating system, which should be adapted to the special needs of each exhibitor.

## 2. Contact Value Evaluation<sup>1</sup>

The *contact value evaluation* combines quantitative and qualitative aspects. All counted visitors at the stand are rated according to the significance on four items:

- duration of business connection (new/old business)
- descent (national/foreign country)
- competence (general management/employee)
- order activities (order/no order)

The worth of each aspect is expressed in points as a scoring model. The achieved figures can be set in relation to costs.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. ibidem, pp. 65.

The problem is that differences in the quality of orders are not be included, furthermore after-show-sales are not recognized. Despite its flexibility, the system can not be used isolated from other methods (contacts have to be contended etc.).

### 3. Balanced Scorecard

The *Balanced Scorecard*, developed in the 1990s by KAPLAN and NORTON, is in discussion about being an effective tool for evaluating success of trade fair participation.<sup>1</sup> The University of Chemnitz<sup>2</sup> invented a measuring-system based upon this method. Therefore strategic target aspects like the estimated number of contacts have to be taken into consideration as well as non-economic aims like qualitative and psycho graphical aims as fame, image and product acquaintance.<sup>3</sup>

For example of experience, SIEMENS<sup>4</sup> buildings technology department has developed a balanced scorecard system to measure trade fair efficiency. It compares success-factors with expenditure on evaluated debit and actual data. The system is still in the testing phase, but if it proves itself, it will be used at any trade fair.

	OPERATIVE DIMENSION		STRATEGIC DIMENSION	
	MONETARY	NON-MONETARY	MONETARY	NON-MONETARY
QUANT. DATA (HARDFACTS)	SALES RATIO (E1)	CONTACT RATIO (E2)	COMPETITION AND SPHERE RATIO (E3)	MARKET AND MARKET SHARE RATIO (E4)
QUAL. DATA (SOFTFACTS)	-	MARKET RESPONSE RATIO (E5)	-	IMAGE RATIO (E6)

FIGURE VI-8 Draft of instrumental set [Source: Kopecz (2003), p. 4]

<sup>1</sup> Kirchgeorg, Manfred et al. (ed.), Handbuch Messemanagement, loc. cit., pp. 870.

<sup>2</sup> See <http://www.tu-chemnitz.de/> (accessed 01.03.04).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Spryss, Wolf M., Mehr Transparenz wagen, in: Sueddeutsche Zeitung No. 46. Trade Fair Special, Munich, 25. Feb. 2003, p. V2/20.

<sup>4</sup> Department: SIEMENS Gebaedetechnik GmbH und Co. OHG, Karlsruhe.

## VII. Summary

Modern trade shows have developed from a long historical tradition, which mainly influenced the economical rise of modern Europe and the growing together of general trade between Europe and the Eastern world, mainly with the Orient.

Nowadays, exhibitions can be used as a powerful instrument not only within the marketing activities of exhibitors, but also as being an information and order platform for business-customers. The economic importance is also very high for related branches participating in the benefits through the caused turnover increase. The profit of trade shows is neither limited to exhibitors, which gain as much as the visitors, nor to organizers and service providers. Big numbers of subjects of a national economy participate in the upturn by trade shows.

Exhibition participation must be integrated into a whole marketing concept to use it in a maximum effective way. Supporting tools must be adjusted as well as the trade show concept must reflect the company's strategy. As a gathering by different groups of interest, "Companies must not only ask 'How can we reach our customers?' but also 'How can our customers reach us?'"<sup>1</sup>.

The way of recruiting contacts with the target group is remarkable, by the event character of trade shows high attention can be reached.

Disadvantages such as high expenditure at costs and utilisation of resources together with the problem of indisponibility should not be forgotten.

The results of participation must be evaluated thoroughly and conclusion drawn used to improve and ensure maximum return on investment.

As every good, trade shows are subjected to the product life circle, which brings with it that it is very difficult to see the recent stage and to give a prognosis for the future development. It can not be predicted whether there will be growth, saturation or when the stage of decline will be reached. Anyway, trade fairs kept importance for an atypical long period and as can be said from today's view, this will not chance medium-term.

Trade fairs still play an important role in the marketing, and they will do so in the future.

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<sup>1</sup> Kotler, Philip, Marketing Management, loc. cit., p. 550 [sequence of words changed, verbatim: "Companies must ask not only (...)"].

## Abbreviations

acs.	accessed
approx.	approximately
AUMA	Association of the German Trade Fair Industry
CD	Corporate Design
CeBIT	Centrum Buero · Information · Telekommunikation
CEIR	Centre for Exposition Industry Research
CETRA	China External Trade Development Council
cf.	confer
CI	Corporate Identity
CRM	Customer Relationship Management
ed.	edition / editor
et al.	et alibi / et alii
FKM	Society for Voluntary Control of Fair and Exhibition Statistics
HKTDC	Hong Kong Trade Development Council
i.e.	id est
ibid.	ibidem
IEAM	International Association for Exhibition Management
IT	Information Technology
loc. cit.	loco citato
SARS	Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome
UFI	Union des Foires Internationales
URL	Uniform Resource Locator
US(A)	United States (of America)
viz.	videlicet
vol.	volume
WHO	World Health Organisation



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