

Tradeshows

Finding export sales at international trade events



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Hello, my name is Bob Erwin, and welcome to session 6a of Export-U. In this webinar we will explore the benefits and challenges of participating in international trade shows.

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This session has been prepared by the University of Georgia's Small Business Development Centers in partnership with the US Export Assistance Center in Atlanta.



Each year,

over 5000

trade shows take place all over the planet,

-CLICK-1-offering tremendous business opportunities. They can help you test the global market for your products, make export sales, or find overseas distributors and representatives.

The question is

-CLICK-1- How do you find the right show and then plan for success?



TRADESHOWS WHY GO?

- ✓ Test foreign markets
- ✓ Competitor intelligence
- ✓ New products
- ✓ Customers/ sales
- ✓ Reps/ distributors
- ✓ Support partners



Why should you go?.... Well, there are several good reasons.

First, shows offer a great venue for

-CLICK-1- testing foreign markets. What could be better than to put your product in front of hundreds, if not thousands of potential overseas customers? You can also gather a wealth of

-CLICK-2- intelligence on your competitors, and

-CLICK-3- introduce new products with bang. Of course, the primary mission of any tradeshow is to help you find customers and

-CLICK-4- make sales or develop business leads to follow-up later. Shows are also a great place to....

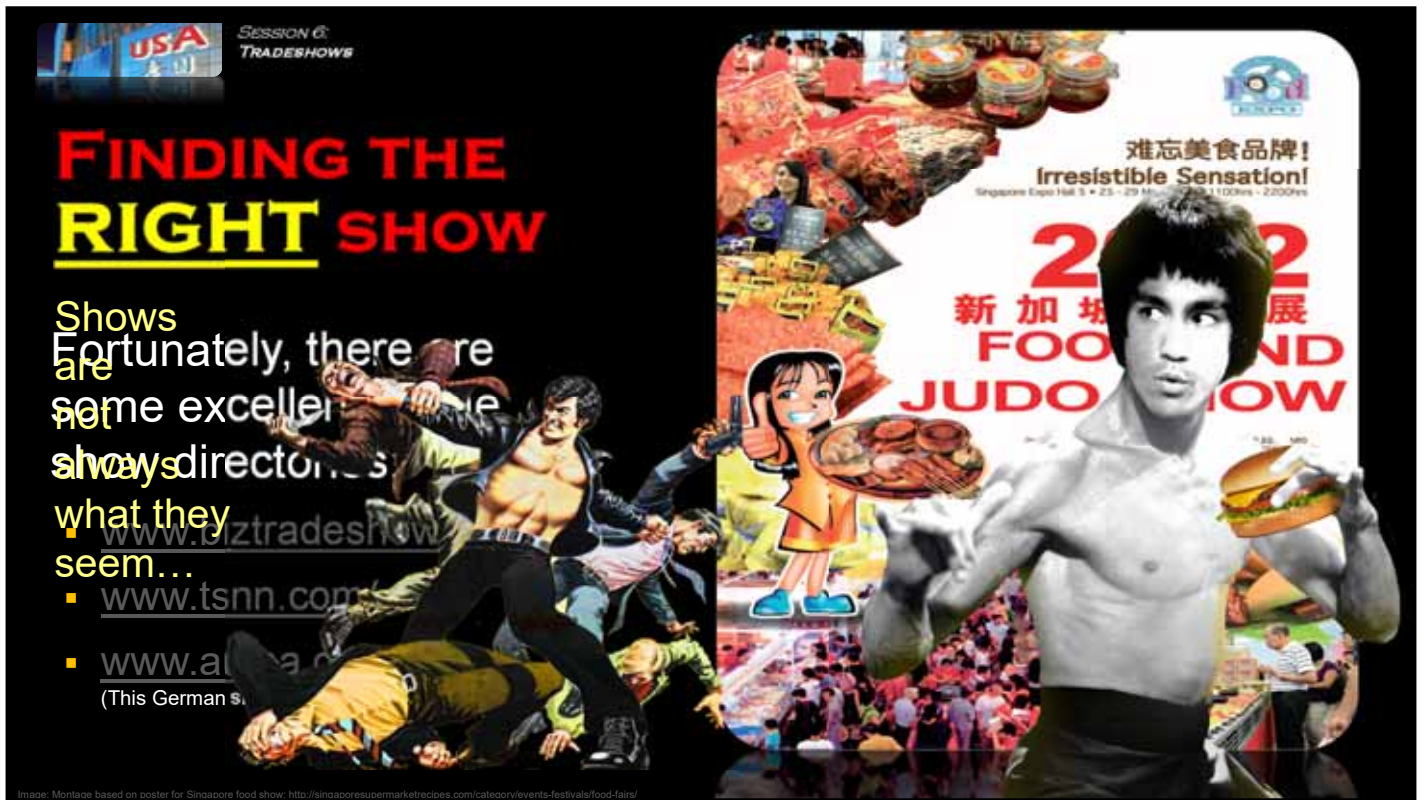
-CLICK-5- find new reps and distributors. And, one simple way to attract their interest is to put up a small sign in your booth that says you're looking. And, if you already have representation, it often makes sense to

-CLICK-6- support your in-country partners by sharing a booth.



OVERSEAS SHOWS ARE **DIFFERENT**

- Metric
- ~~Pipe and drape~~
- More expensive
- Smoking allowed?
- ~~Card readers~~
- Longer hours
- Orders taken in booth



So, how do you find the right show?

-CLICK-1-

Shows are not always what they seem at first glance, so you need to do some homework.

To select the right show, you must first find out which events actually address your industry and target market.

-CLICK-2-

Fortunately, there's some excellent online tradeshow directories. Here are a few examples:

The last one is my personal favorite; it's run very efficiently by the German Tradeshow Industry Association.



On the German site, this is what the show search page looks like. You can select a date, the geographic location, and the business sector of interest.

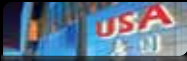


A search generates a list of events meeting your search criteria. Clicking on any one of the show links takes you to...

-CLICK-1- this page with specific show information. It identifies the organizers, products being displayed, as shows you the tally of exhibitors and visitors. This last bit of information is critical when you are comparing one event with another. And, it goes without saying that generally, shows with more trade visitors are preferred.

There is also a link to the show's own website,

-CLICK-2- which provides a wealth of additional information. Remember, if the site is not in English, you can always view it using the Google or Bing translation apps.



WHAT DO SHOW STATS MEAN?

Attendance: exhibitors & visitors

Growth or decline

Only count industry professionals

International visitors

Photo: http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/42/Main_stage_crowd_shot.jpg

These online directories also give you information to consider on the show's

-CLICK-1- attendance,

-CLICK-2- growth, the

As a side note: Check to see how many attendees are....

-CLICK-3- industry professionals, as opposed to the general public. Some organizers open their gates to everyone, in order to artificially pump up attendance data. But it is very unlikely that you will make sales these non-trade visitors..... Finally, data on the number of

-CLICK-4- foreign visitors shows the international reach of an event.

BUDGETING

- ✓ Booth rental and design
- ✓ Travel
- ✓ Staff labor
- ✓ Shipping
- ✓ Collateral Advertising
- ✓ Your time (incl. prep & follow-up)

Is it worth it?... (well maybe)



Photo: Generic image used on more than 100 sites throughout web.

Of course, a key consideration for any international trade event is its cost. And, there are a lot of show-associated expenses to consider, including...

-CLICK-1- booth rental,

-CLICK-2- travel,

-CLICK-3- staff labor,

-CLICK-4- shipping of your show materials,

-CLICK-5- collateral advertising, and

-CLICK-6- the value of your time spent preparing and following up the event.

-CLICK-7- Is it worth it? ...

-CLICK-8- well maybe. That's a question only you can answer, by weighing the potential sales generation against the cost of exhibiting. Sometimes, if you already have overseas representatives, you can significantly reduce travel costs by having them operate the booth.



THE VENUE

Paris?
(in Vegas)

- **Overseas:**
 - Customers are there
 - Shows commitment
 - Market intelligence
- **US:**
 - Foreign visitors?
 - Cheaper
 - Also US sales



Photo: Christopher Chan on Flickr, <http://www.fotopedia.com/items/61142664129>

Overseas shows are great because they take you right to

-CLICK-2- where your customers are. Participating also

-CLICK-3- demonstrates your serious commitment to the market and your representatives abroad, while providing some

-CLICK-4- invaluable market intelligence. But, some

-CLICK-5- US shows can be equally good for cultivating export sales, if they

-CLICK-6- attract a lot of foreign visitors. It also goes without saying that US shows are generally a lot

-CLICK-7- cheaper to attend. And, they let you

-CLICK-8- also cultivate US sales.



USA
SESSION 6
TRADESHOW

US SHOWS:

INTERNATIONAL BUYERS PROGRAM

- Organized by USCS
- Register in advance
- Meet customers
- Meeting rooms
- **Free!**

International buyer programs are:

-CLICK-1- organized by the U.S. Commercial Service at some larger US shows. These programs are designed to connect you with potential business customers abroad. Typically, both foreign visitors and U.S. exhibitors

-CLICK-2- must register in advance for the program. Then, the Commercial Service schedules

-CLICK-3- meetings between you and potential foreign customers. They also provide

-CLICK-4- special meeting rooms, translators, and various other types of useful support during and after the event. And best of all,

-CLICK-5- there is no charge for this excellent service.



Group business trips

- Match you w/ with potential business partners
- May coincide with show

Types:

- **Horizontal:** all business types
- **Vertical:** industry
- **Political vs. business**

Trade missions are organized group business trips sponsored by government and industry groups. Well-run missions are carefully planned in advance to

-CLICK-1- match you up with potential business partners. And, they

-CLICK-2- may be scheduled to coincide with relevant tradeshows. There are all

-CLICK-3- types of trade missions, and some are much better than others.

-CLICK-4- Horizontal trade missions include all sorts of businesses, while

-CLICK-5- vertical missions have a specific industry focus. I should also note that some missions have a large

-CLICK-6- political component, which is not always bad, as long as there are also serious business opportunities.



HOW TO TAKE PART?

Walk the show?
Your own booth?
Group pavilion?
Catalog show?



Photo: <http://www.usatrade.com/usa-trade-2012/> Photo for image for download

There are several ways to participate in a trade show. You can just

-CLICK-1- just walk the show

-CLICK-2- exhibit in your own booth, or

-CLICK-3- join a group Pavilion.You can also participate very inexpensively through a

-CLICK-4- catalog show.



WALK THE SHOW?

- Inexpensive
- Good for market intelligence,...
- BUT...
- Can't show products/ literature



One relatively

-CLICK-1- inexpensive option is to simply walk the show. This often makes sense if you're just

-CLICK-2- gathering intelligence on the market and on potential competitors. However be careful, because many shows

-CLICK-3- won't let you to promote products or distribute trade literature if you haven't paid for a booth.



Exhibit on Your Own?

Makes a SPLASH in a new market

Your own space

Need adequate budget

Reserve space early for a good location



Should you exhibit on your own?

Well it certainly...let's you make a splash in the new market.

And, even a small booth

-CLICK-1- gives you a space of your own on the exhibit floor. But, creating your own booth can be expensive, so, you have to make certain that you have ...

-CLICK-2- an adequate marketing budget. Also, remember to

-CLICK-3- reserve your space well in advance to get a good location.



You may also consider joining a group pavilion. Typically, these pavilions are larger, command a better location, and have much higher visibility than a small independent booth.



PAVILION BENEFITS

- ✓ Convenient
- ✓ Finished space
- ✓ Furnishings
- ✓ Signage
- ✓ Meeting rooms
- ✓ Promotion
- ✓ Translators

Not always cheapest



Photo: EIE Paris 2011, <http://www.usda-france.fr/media/CP7E7029/4%20%5B50%28%5D/1.jpg>

Group pavilions also typically offer:

- click-1- convenient turnkey exhibitor packages, including a
- click-2- finished booth space,
- click-3- furnishings,
- click-4- signage,
- click -5- private meeting rooms,
- click-6- promotional support,
- click-7- plus translators, and other useful services. However, be aware that a group pavilion is
- click-8- not always your cheapest option. In this time of tight government budgets, some sponsors are forced to pass along most of their costs to you the exhibitor.



- **Organizers:**
 - Commercial Service
 - Dept. of Agriculture
 - Show Organizers
 - States
- **Local support:**
 - Embassy
 - Consulate
 - Trade office



Sometimes you may find that a group pavilion is an official "USA Pavilion." These may be

- Click- 1-...organized by the
- click –2- US Commercial Service, the
- click –3- US Department of Agriculture (food products),
- click –4- the show organizers themselves, or by
- click –5- state international trade divisions.

Generally, USA pavilions occupy very prominent real-estate on the show floor, and are well-supported by the organizer. Sometimes the exhibitors also receive

- Click-6- local support through the US embassy, consulate, or trade office.



It's relatively easy to identify events sponsored by the US Department of Commerce. You simply go to their website (Export.gov) , and use the pull-down menu under "Events" to select "Events and Trade Missions."

This should bring you to ...

-Click-1-

a page where you can search for shows by the country, industry, event type, keyword and starting date... Clicking on the search button...

-Click-2-

Opens this page with basic information on the specific show, andClicking the link there

-Click-3-

Opens the trade show's own website.



USDA PAVILIONS

- Food, farm, or forest products
- Operation similar to USCS
- Excellent value with USDA \$ support



Photo: RTPeat on Flickr



The US Department of Agriculture also sponsors trade events through its

-- click –1- Foreign Agricultural Service. These can be excellent choices if you're trying to

-- click –2- export food, farm, or forest products. They

-- click –3- operate in similar manner to those sponsored by the US Commercial Service, and may offer

-- click –4- excellent value because of financial support by USDA.



FINDING USDA SHOWS



The Department of Agriculture also allows you to search through upcoming trade and marketing events on their website.

You simply go to FAS.USDA.gov, and perform an internal search for “trade shows.”

-Click-1-

That brings up this screen with a link to their trade events database that

-Click-2-

looks like this. And...from there, you can open

-Click-3-

the show’s own webpage for the full details.



TRADE ASSOCIATION PAVILIONS

- Choose events with care
- Know their industry & export markets
- Services like USA pavilions... (but not always)

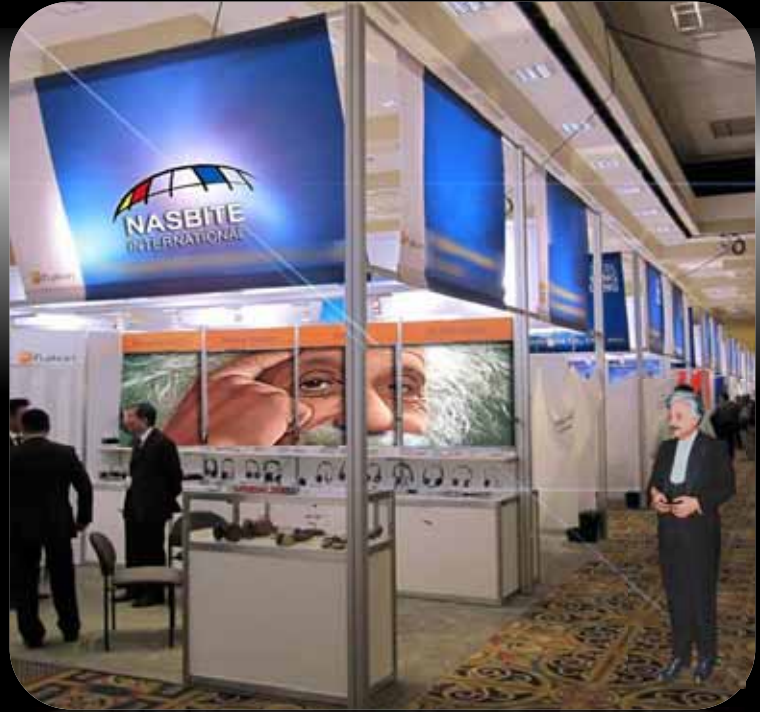


Image: Original fantasy montage

Some trade associations also sponsored group pavilions. Generally, you have to be a member of the Association, or purchase a membership.

Trade associations typically

-- click -1- choose their events with great care, because they

-- click -2- know their industry, and have a good understanding of export markets.

-- click -3- Pavilion support services are typically similar to those in USA pavilions, but not always.



You may also want to consider sharing a booth with another company.

Obviously this

-- click -1
reduces your costs, and it

--click-2
may enable you to take a larger combined booth. Sometimes a good arrangement is to

-- click -3

operate your booth in conjunction with your local partner or representative. There is a downside, however. Sharing a booth may

-- click - 4

dilute your company's graphic identity. And,

-- click -5

frankly, sharing a small booth can make the space very tight.

-- click -6

Clearly, the booth partners must also be very compatible.



CATALOG SHOW?

- Low-cost
- Literature displayed
staff take inquiries
- Not your own space
- Little marketing impact
- Get what you pay for



Photo: U.S. Commercial Service

Catalog shows are a

-- click -1

low-cost option. Where...

-- click - 2

your literature is displayed and show staff take inquiries on your behalf.

However, there are some serious shortcomings to this approach. First of all...

-- click -3

you don't have a space of your own to operate from. And, just having literature displayed on a rack often has....

-- click -4

little marketing impact.

The bottom line:

-- click -5

you get what you pay for.

Session 6a:
The End
Tradeshows



This is the end of session 6a of Export-U. In session 6b we will discuss the keys to succeeding at international trade shows.