

Choosing the Right Exhibition Stand Supplier

Nothing is more critical in an exhibition project, than making the right choice of exhibition stand supplier. Our guide will help you make this vital decision.

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Stephan Murtagh – Guest Contributor to Quadrant2Design

When I meet with clients about an exhibition they're considering attending, I will always ask them what other shows they are doing.

Often they will tell me "just this one – and more if this one goes well". Sometimes they will say they have two, three or more shows booked over the coming year.

The reason I need to know is because the days of 'build and burn' (building a stand for just one event) is dead and buried.

Why? Because it's a shocking waste of money and shreds an exhibiting company's sustainability credentials.

Clients are becoming more aware of the economic and environmental impact of this approach, and are looking for alternatives, whilst naturally wishing to still create beautiful exhibition stands.

For me, choosing an [exhibition contractor](#) comes down to 3 simple, but vital issues: Credibility, Modularity and Sustainability.

Credibility

I have worked with many contractors over the past 25 years and one of the first things I always ask them is "please show me work that you've done". As in every industry, there are people who talk a good game but don't deliver!



Quadrant2Design in Poole, United Kingdom



Quadrant2Design exhibition stand at the Toy Fair 2019

Another area of huge concern is the 'in-house principle'. Too many exhibition contractors are effectively brokers, who sub-contract out important parts of an exhibition stand design and build project.

This practice of 'subbing-out' is a real problem; you could effectively be 'in the dark' as to who is actually designing, printing, manufacturing and building your exhibition stand.

Unfortunately this 'sub-contracting' is all too common in the exhibition industry, and is to be avoided at all costs when choosing a supplier.

So don't be afraid to investigate, ask questions and find out more about the 'in-house capability' of the contractor.



Modular exhibition stand at the Beauty Show



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Stephan Murtagh

Questioning that teases-out valuable information.

1. What companies have they worked for previously? Ask to see examples of previous exhibition stands they've designed and installed.
2. Is every key stage and service in the process, performed 'in-house'?

3. What shows and venues have they experience of working at?
4. How do they measure the quality of their work?
5. Do they pre-build stands to check quality, fit and finish?
6. Do they collect and publish reviews from previous clients?
7. What are their environmental credentials?

To be honest, if they can't answer all of these questions to your satisfaction, you should be going elsewhere. You're investing substantial amounts of time and money, so you need to know the people you're considering working with are competent and professional, and are going to take the stress of the stand design and build away from you.

Modularity

When deciding on a stand contractor, you need to look at one that can offer you the versatility of different configurations for different shows using a [modular exhibition stand](#) solution.

When deciding on a [exhibition stand contractor](#), you need to look at one that can offer you the versatility of different configurations for different shows using a modular exhibition stand solution.

This will actually save you money over the longer term while giving your stands a consistent look and feel over different events – in other words a good modular solution gives you brand consistency.

For me modularity has number of other key advantages...

1. More versatility and reusability for future shows.
2. Cost saving over the longer term.
3. It's actually better for the environment.
4. Quicker build and break-down times post show.
5. You look different from your competitors and that's a good thing... because you are!

Sustainability

Sustainability is such a huge issue in this day and age and it's not just a concern for someone else to worry about! We all have a part to play and I'm constantly advising companies to communicate the 'sustainability message' to their clients.

One definition of sustainability is "the quality of causing little or no damage to the environment and therefore being able to continue for a long time" This is exactly what you want for your business, and by default your exhibition stand.

Summary

Credibility – gives you peace of mind!

Modularity – saves you money and allows you to convey a consistent corporate look.

Sustainability – Promotes you as a business that cares about wider environmental issues.

So do invest time in getting the right contractor for your business as it will pay big dividends over time and save you a lot of stress.

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