

TOP 10

BRIDAL SHOW TIPS

Make your next show the most successful ever

1 DO YOUR RESEARCH

Before you start planning for the next show, get some ideas from other businesses. Go to a big bridal show to see how the most popular booths draw in the crowd. Take a look at setup, colors, presentation, personnel, freebies and promotional materials.



2 GET CREATIVE

Take all this research and brainstorm new ideas. Also evaluate your current booth. Are the colors dated? The setup cluttered? The traffic flow not flowing? Make the changes you can now, and make note of the ones you'll do in the future.

3 GET IT ALL TOGETHER

Make a setup checklist of what you'll need for every show: a variety of products to display, lighting to showcase products, fabric for tables and walls, music to set the mood, a banner to capture attention, floral arrangements, décor items, furniture, rugs, etc.



4 SPREAD THE WORD

Let people know you'll be at the show. Post to Facebook and Twitter. Email your list. Update your website. Purchase newspaper, business magazine and radio ads. Invite customers to visit your booth to meet you and see the products in person.

5 PLAN YOUR PROMOS

Print ahead plenty of bag stuffers, business cards, brochures, flyers and posters. Personalize unique and memorable items like candy bar wraps, magnets and sewing kits. Prepare your drawing and prizes. Offer free gifts or discounts for day-of-show orders.



6 COVER YOUR BASES

In addition to having staff at the show, make sure there are employees at your store to work with customers. Make your phone message and email automatic reply say you're at the show. Work with other business to promote each other at your booths.

7 KNOW YOUR PRODUCTS

Go beyond the basics. Tell the bride why she needs your products. Offer her a variety of options for personalizing her items to make them unique. Suggest a coordinating "suite" of stationery items, and show her how to create a look by using matching accessories.



8 DO WHAT THE PROS DO

Look your best. Dress the part. Portray confidence and knowledge. Stand, don't sit at your booth. Initiate conversation. Interact with brides, answer questions and guide them to contact you. Display a variety of products prominently and beautifully.

9 FOLLOW UP IMMEDIATELY

Create a database of the leads you gathered. Contact them within three days of the show with personalized postcards, emails and/or telephone calls. Offer a discount when they order. Announce the drawing winners on Facebook and Twitter to build traffic.



10 LOOK AHEAD

Make notes throughout the entire show. What worked? What needs to be changed? Did you have a great idea for the next show? Take action on these things after you've followed up on leads. Always improve.