



Reverse Trade Show Planning Guide





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Planning Timeline

8 Months Before Event

- Board Selects RTS Chair
- Board Selects a Approximate Time Frame
- Begin Recruiting Committee Members
- Review Potential Venues & Begin Making Contact to Review Availability

7 Months Before Event

- Hold Committee Kick-off Meeting
- Receive Quotes from Venues
- Determine Communication/Marketing Timeline
- Begin Search for Keynote and Breakout Session Speakers
- Begin Recruiting Agencies and One-on-One Participants

6 Months Before Event

- Select & Book Venue
- Finalize Budget & Determine Vendor Pricing
- Create Event Schedule
- Release Initial Communication/Marketing to Vendors

5 Months Before Event

- Finalize Keynote and Breakout Speakers
- Meet with Venue to Discuss Catering, Decorating, & A/V Needs and Resources
- Finalize Entity Participants including One-on-One Participants
- Begin Determining Vendor Take-Away
- Set-up Online Vendor Registration

4 Months Before Event

- Open Vendor Registration
- Finalize Decoration & A/V Needs
- Receive Quotes for Vendor Take-Away

3 Months Before Event

- Finalize & Order Vendor Take-Away
- Finalize Catering Selections

2 Months Before Event

- Open Agency Registration
- Begin Recruiting Volunteers to Help with Day-of Activities

One Month Before Event

- Finalize Vendor & Agency Check-In Process
- Finalize Volunteer Responsibilities
- Print Vendor & Agency Name Tags
- Print Signage for Facility
- Print Entity Booth Signs
- Final Facility Walkthrough

Showtime!





Objectives & Goals

The Board of the Utah Chapter of NIGP should spend some time determining the objectives and goals of the reverse trade show. These objectives & goals should guide every decision the reverse trade show committee makes.

Questions for the Board to consider when setting objectives and goals of the reverse trade show

What are the purposes of holding a reverse trade show?

Create transparency with vendor community?

Raise money for professional development?

Provide vendors with access to smaller/rural agencies?

Provide continuing education to vendors/agencies?

Who are the target audiences of the reverse trade show?

How frequently should the chapter hold a reverse trade show?

What would indicate a successful trade show & how to measure that success?

Who will head the reverse trade show committee?

When will the show be held?



Our goals can only be reached through a vehicle of a plan, in which we must fervently believe, and upon which we must vigorously act. There is no other route to success.

-Pablo Picasso



Build the Team

Get ready to build a committee that is organized and communicates well!

A well formed committee led by a chairperson willing to help committee members use their talents will be the catalyst for a successful reverse trade show.

The committee chair is responsible for recruiting committee members and giving them the autonomy and freedom to excel. Active and regular communication is paramount to committee members being successful in their roles. Ensure they are well trained and have access to necessary resources.



The Ultimate Reverse Trade Show Committee

Reverse Trade Show Chairperson

Oversees all aspects of the RTS planning process. Chairperson reports to the Board and receives regular reports from committee members. Ensures Board direction & goals are met.



Venue Chair

Seeks potential venues and obtains pricing. Maintains regular contact with venue and ensures all obligations related to the venue are met.



Vendor Relations Chair

Oversees vendor registration and answers vendor questions.



Agency Relations Chair

Recruits agencies to participate in the show. Maintains regular contact with agencies, providing them with information throughout the planning process.



Speaker Chair

Finds high quality and engaging speakers for keynote and breakout sessions. Maintains contact with speakers and coordinates day of activities.



Catering Chair

Works with venue's preferred caterers to determine food options. Coordinates all day-of activities with caterer.



Audio/Visual Chair

Works with venue's A/V supplier to determine A/V needs. Coordinates all day-of activities with supplier.



Communications/Marketing Chair

Develops a marketing and communication strategy and timeline. Creates marketing materials for vendors and agencies.



Volunteer Chair

Recruits, coordinates, and trains day-of volunteers.



Vendor/Agency Check-In Chair

Oversees the day-of check-in process for vendors and agencies.



Reverse Trade Show Committee Chair

Overview:

The Reverse Trade Show Committee Chair oversees every aspect of the reverse trade show planning, execution, and follow up phases. This person needs to have a firm understanding of the direction and goals of the NIGP Board and have the skills necessary to execute those objectives. This person should maintain a 50,000 foot level overview of the process while being able to understand each committee's roles and responsibilities. This person should be a resource to each committee member and should encourage each committee member to try new things, take risks, and feel supported in their efforts.

Specific Responsibilities:

- Recruit and train committee members
- Develop a timeline, with milestones, that meet the needs of the planning process
- Develop and maintain a budget and pricing structure to be approved by the NIGP Board
- Develop reverse trade show day-of schedule
- Lead regular meetings with committee members to follow up with assignments and provide resources to assist in assignments
- Provide NIGP Board with regular updates and seek assistance as needed
- Conduct evaluation after the event and provide information to NIGP Board.

Venue Chair

Overview:

The Venue Chair oversees all efforts related to finding, booking, planning and executing strategy with the event venue. This person can recruit additional volunteers to assist as needed and would serve as a committee chair over the venue.

Specific Responsibilities:

- Seek out and solicit pricing from multiple venues
- Ensure all contracts are signed and deposits paid
- Maintain regular and frequent communication with venue staff
- Determine catering and A/V contacts and provide information to catering and A/V committees
- Communicate venue expectations and requirements to the reverse trade show committee
- Determine if decorating (pipe & drape) will be used. If so, coordinate with decorating vendor
- Lead final walkthrough of venue with reverse trade show committee
- Coordinate with reverse trade show committee members where each activity will take place within the venue
- Prepare directional signage for venue

Vendor Relations Chair

Overview:

The Vendor Relations Chair oversees all aspects of vendor communication, registration, and question seeking. This person will be the one interacting most with the vendors prior to the event.

Specific Responsibilities:

- Work with Communications/Marketing Chair to ensure messages are being relayed to the vendor community through appropriate channels
- Create innovative ways to reach out and inform vendor community about the show in order to reach Board goals
- Develop in partnership with the reverse trade show committee a vendor registration strategy. This includes the appropriate channel for registration, dates of registration, cost and cost escalation, refunds, wait lists, capacity, etc.
- Regularly monitor and promptly reply to all vendor questions
- Develop a vendor take-away. This is some tangible product the vendor can take from the reverse trade show, for example, an agency directory
- Be the go to contact for any vendor related questions or inquiries.
- Develop and participate in vendor marketing strategies alongside communications/marketing chair
- Coordinate with Agency Relations Chair to develop one-on-one meeting registration and day-of process
- Coordinate with Vendor/Agency Check-In Chair to develop a seamless and efficient check –in process

Agency Relations Chair

Overview:

The agency relations chair oversees the recruitment of and communication with all state agencies prior to and during the reverse trade show. This person also oversees the recruitment of agency personnel to participate in one-on-one meetings with the vendor community

Specific Responsibilities:

- Work with communications/marketing chair to develop an agency recruiting strategy
- Create innovative ways in which to recruit agencies in order to reach Board goals
- Invite agency personnel such as directors and managers to participate in one-on-one meetings with the vendor community
- Develop in partnership with the reverse trade show committee the appropriate channel in which to register individuals to attend the reverse trade show
- Coordinate with the Venue Chair regarding the location of one-on-one meetings and agency placement in the showroom
- Create the individual agency placards for the reverse trade show floor
- Provide regular communication to participating entities about how to develop an inviting booth presentation
- Provide agencies with information regarding speakers and professional development during the reverse trade show
- Coordinate with Vendor/Agency Check-In Chair to develop a seamless and efficient check-in process

Speaker Chair

Overview:

The Speaker Chair oversees all efforts related to finding and securing speakers for a keynote address and breakout sessions. Speakers should be engaging, relevant, and appeal to both vendors and agency personnel.

Specific Responsibilities:

- Seek out multiple speakers for keynote and breakout sessions
- Negotiate speaker contracts to ensure speaker budget is maintained
- Develop, with selected speakers, topics that are relevant and will appeal broadly to all reverse trade show participants
- Develop a sound understanding of all speaker needs including materials and A/V.
- Coordinate with A/V Chair regarding speakers' A/V requirements
- Coordinate with Venue Chair to determine appropriate rooms and signage for each speaker
- Determine a gift to be given to each speaker in appreciation for their time
- Coordinate with Volunteer Chair to ensure each speaker room has a volunteer available to introduce speaker and provide any emergency needs

Catering Chair

Overview:

The Catering Chair oversees the selection and organization of all catering related needs.

Specific Responsibilities:

- Determine, in concert with the Venue Chair, who the prescribed caterers are for the selected venue
- Determine with the reverse trade show committee the types and number of food options to be provided at the reverse trade show
- Work with caterer to create options that meet the needs of the show as well as the budget
- Present options to the reverse trade show committee and NIGP Board for selection and approval
- Communicate with catering staff the event schedule and when food options are to be provided
- Monitor food availability during the show to ensure constant availability

Audio/Visual Chair

Overview:

The Audio/Visual Chair oversees all efforts related to meeting the audio/visual requirements for the entire show

Specific Responsibilities:

- Determine, in concert with the Venue Chair, who the prescribed audio/visual companies are for the selected venue
- Coordinate with the Speaker Chair the audio/visual needs of each speaker
- Receive quotes from audio/visual companies approved by the selected venue
- Coordinate with Venue Chair to determine where audio/visual solutions will be placed
- Coordinate with Vendor/Agency Check-In Chair to determine needs for check-in
- Develop and implement a solution for webcasting speaker presentation to agencies unable to attend on site
- Monitor audio/visual needs throughout the day of the event to ensure smooth functionality

Communications/Marketing Chair

Overview:

The Communication/Marketing Chair oversees the development and implementation of an effective communications and marketing strategy.

Specific Responsibilities:

- Develop, in concert with the reverse trade show committee, a branding theme that will carry throughout the entire show
- Determine the optimal number of communications with vendors and agencies and when to release them.
- Coordinate with the Vendor Relations Chair regarding the appropriate channel in which to release marketing material
- Coordinate with the Speaker Chair and Agency Relations Chair to update marketing materials as speakers and agencies confirm participation
- Coordinate with Venue Chair to ensure signage meets branding theme
- Coordinate with Vendor/Agency Check-in Chair to ensure name tags meet branding theme

Volunteer Chair

Overview:

The Volunteer Chair will recruit, train and coordinate all volunteers needed for the day of the show.

Specific Responsibilities:

- Determine, in concert with reverse trade show committee, all volunteer positions needed
- Recruit volunteers from agencies
- Conduct trainings for volunteers to ensure understanding of volunteer requirements
- Provide assistance and resources on the day of the show to allocate volunteers where needed

Vendor/Agency Check-In Chair

Overview:

The Vendor/Agency Check-In Chair oversees all planning and execution of the day-of vendor and agency check in process.

Specific Responsibilities:

- Determine the best options available to create a seamless and efficient check-in process at the venue on the day of the event
- Coordinate with the Vendor and Agency Relations Chairs to gather the list of vendors and agencies set to participate
- Coordinate with Audio/Visual Chair should A/V requirements be needed during check-in process
- Coordinate with Venue Chair to determine location of check-in and prepare appropriate signage
- Create all name tags for vendors and agency participants

Recruiting Committee Members

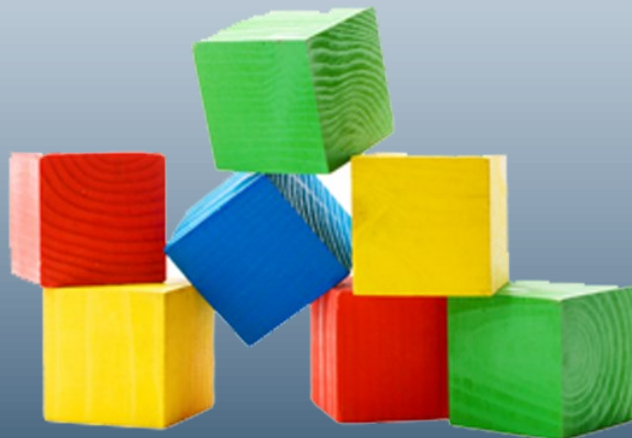
Bringing together great people to become members of the Reverse Trade Show Committee is one of the greatest tasks of the RTS Chair. The Utah Chapter of NIGP is filled with extraordinarily talented people who are willing to give everything they have. Below are some suggestions on how to seek out and recruit these individuals to join the team

- Ask for volunteers at NIGP and PEP meetings. Be sure that individuals have access to information related to the positions needing to be filled and the responsibilities associated with those positions.
- Ask for volunteers in the Utah Chapter of NIGP newsletter. This is a great place to include the positions needing to be filled along with the associated responsibilities.
- Reach out to former reverse trade show committee members. Many former committee members had a positive experience and may want to volunteer again.
- Seek out individuals with expertise. Be aware of individuals within the chapter that may have expertise in an specific chair position. For example, if there is an IT buyer that is savvy with audio/visual, reach out and ask that person to participate.
- Ask others for recommendations. Who do individuals know that may want to participate.
- Directly ask individuals to participate. People like to be recognized and involved. Directly asking individuals to participate may generate interest that may not have existed before. Be prepared with information regarding open chair positions and responsibilities.
- Ask directors and managers to “voluntell” people to participate. This creates instant buy in from agencies and volunteers are more likely to give everything they have because they are accountable to their manager for their performance.

“Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success.”

-Henry Ford

Be open to anyone who is willing to volunteer even if they don't want to volunteer for a chair position.



Committee Meetings

Committee meetings are integral to a well functioning process. Create a meeting schedule that works for the committee at a frequency dictated by the planning process. Most meetings can be done through conference calls thus creating less of a burden on committee members. Utilize Doodle or other scheduling programs to coordinate schedules so that the maximum number of participants can join. Agendas help committee members stay focused on milestones to be accomplished. Accurate and detailed minutes help committee members be accountable to the assignments and milestones that were discussed in meetings.

Utah Chapter NIGP Reverse Trade Show Agenda

Date:

Location:



1. Welcome by Reverse Trade Show Committee Chair
2. Committee Member Introduction
3. Scope of Reverse Trade Show
 - a. Objectives
 - b. Goals
 - c. Components
 - i. Reverse Trade Show
 - ii. Keynote/Breakout Sessions
 - iii. One-On-One Sessions
4. Committee Assignments & Responsibilities
 - a. Venue Chair
 - b. Vendor Relations Chair
 - c. Agency Relations Chair
 - d. Speaker Chair
 - e. Catering Chair
 - f. Audio/Visual Chair
 - g. Communications/Marketing Chair
 - h. Volunteer Chair
 - i. Vendor/Agency Check-In Chair
5. Timeline
6. Additional Discussion Points



Develop a Budget

The RTS Committee Chair is responsible for creating and maintaining a budget for the reverse trade show. Use the template below as a starting point as you craft a budget to be approved by the board. All budgetary decisions need to be approved by the board.

Budget Template	
Venue Rental	
Decoration (Pipe & Drape)	
Catering (Per Attendee)	
Audio/Visual (Includes related equipment rental, Wi-Fi, IT Support)	
Speaker Fees	
Speaker Gifts	
Vendor Take-Away	
Signage	
Vendor/Agency Name Tags	
Other	

Notes on budgeting a venue

The venue is often the most expensive single element of an event. Consider these tips for keeping costs down

- An out-of-the-box venue package, like one offered by a hotel, may be able to handle location, food, security, accommodation and transportation, and can coordinate third-party vendors like A/V and decoration. Working with a single entity gives you negotiating power.
- Some venues may give a discount if you pay on-site
- Work with a hotel's existing inventory for furniture, linens and table décor
- Order some food "by consumption", meaning that you will only pay if they are consumed. This will work for packaged items like snack and soda.



Venue

Venue selection is critical. Some components to consider when seeking a venue include:

- What is the exhibit booth capacity?
- What is the overall attendee capacity?
- Is there a space large enough to fit all attendees for a keynote address?
- Is there space to sit down for meals?
- Are there an adequate number of rooms for breakout sessions?
- How involved in the venue event manager?
- What is the payment schedule?
- Are there multiple catering companies that service the venue?
- Is audio/visual done in house or through a third party?
- What are the current available dates?
- Have similar events been held at the venue? If so, ask for references
- What is included in the rental fee? Tables, chairs, Wi-Fi, decoration etc?
- What type of insurance is required?
- Is security required?
- Is there ample parking?
- Are there hotel rooms close by for out of town guests?
- Are there food and beverage minimums?
- What layouts are available?
- Does the venue meet ADA requirements?



Venue Starters

Below are some event spaces within the Greater Salt Lake City area.

A. Ray Olpin Union University of Utah	https://union.utah.edu/
Element Event Center	https://utaholympiclegacy.org/element-event-center/
Grand America Hotel	https://www.grandamerica.com/meetings-events/
Hilton Salt Lake City Center	https://www3.hilton.com/en/hotels/utah/hilton-salt-lake-city-center-SLCCCHH/event/index.html
Little America Hotel	https://saltlake.littleamerica.com/meetings-events/
Marriott University Park	https://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/slcup-salt-lake-city-marriott-university-park/
Miller Conference Center	https://mbrcsbcc.com/departments/conference-and-event-center/
Mountain America Expo Center	https://www.visitsaltlake.com/mountain-america-expo-center/
Radison Hotel Salt Lake City Downtown	https://www.radissonhotels.com/en-us/hotels/radisson-salt-lake-city-downtown/meeting-events
Salt Lake Marriott Downtown at City Creek	https://www.marriott.com/hotels/event-planning/business-meeting/slcut-salt-lake-marriott-downtown-at-city-creek/
Salt Palace Convention Center	https://www.visitsaltlake.com/salt-palace-convention-center/
Sheraton Salt Lake City Hotel	https://www.marriott.com/hotels/event-planning/business-meeting/slcsi-sheraton-salt-lake-city-hotel/
Snowbasin Resort	https://www.snowbasin.com/groups-weddings/corporate-events/
Snowbird	https://www.snowbird.com/
Viridian Event Center	https://www.viridiancenter.org/



Speakers

A great keynote and breakout session speakers can set a strong precedent for how the time at the event should be used. Utilizing speakers is one of the best methods at your disposal for guiding the conversation and getting the participants to network.

Vet the speakers. Watch videos of their previous appearances to make sure they are engaging. You don't want to be disappointed when the well known speaker ends up being well versed but sadly unable to captivate the audience.

To land really good speakers, you'll need to impress upon them that this is the right event for them. Consider the following as you seek out speakers.

- What are the different ways you can compensate a keynote or breakout speaker? It can be as simple as payment...but a per diem or booth in the exhibition hall may go a long way too.
- Get their attention by providing a compelling snapshot of your audience. Remember, speakers, especially keynote speakers, are public figures who want to be able to talk to the public, and they are working on growing an audience of their own.
- Tell a perspective speaker why you want them *specifically*, make them feel welcome, and be clear upfront about compensation and expectations.
- Review possible topics with speakers, keeping in mind the dual audiences of vendors and public agencies.
- Great topics for the vendor community include how to do business with state agencies, step by step walkthroughs of e-procurement systems, and how to work pitch to state agencies. Personnel within state agencies are great resources for these topics and are generally willing to speak.
- Use the National Speaker Association and Speakerhub to access thousands of potential speakers. These resources are especially helpful for keynote speakers. Additionally, the NIGP NSite is a great resource to seek speakers that have worked well for similar functions.



Agency Recruiting

Recruiting agencies is the heart of the any solid reverse trade show. It is important to begin recruiting as quickly as possible so that you can update your marketing material to vendors with the agencies that have committed. Oftentimes vendors will make an attend or not attend decision based upon which agencies have committed to attend.

Consider the following when recruiting agencies to participate.

- Provide a personalized, direct invitation to the director or manager of the agency. A personal e-mail or phone call will oftentimes receive a direct action on the part of the director or manager. It also helps them feel as though they aren't receiving a generalized, spam invite
- Let the agency understand what is expected of them and what benefits they will receive.
- Reach out to every type of agency. Cities counties, technical schools, and smaller state agencies are often underrepresented at state events.
- Announce the reverse trade show and the need for agency participation frequently. Take opportunities at PEP and NIGP meetings to recruit.
- Reach out to non-state agencies like the federal government or even companies that hold government contracts.
- Use PTAC as a resource. They have their own reverse trade show and have an extensive list of agencies which they invite.

Help agencies understand the following in order to have a success show

- How to register staff members for meals and breakout sessions
- What to bring to the reverse trade show as handouts to vendors
- How to interact with vendors and provide opportunities for the vendors to do business with the agencies
- Time they are committing to



One-On-One Meetings

One-on-One meetings provide a unique opportunity for vendors to meet directly with agencies. The vendor community finds these opportunities incredibly valuable and will usually register for the event just for these meetings.

Given the high demand for these meetings it is imperative that directors, managers and purchasing personnel are recruited quickly. All procurement personnel participating in one-on-one meeting should be in place prior to registration opening to vendors. This will allow vendors to know who they can meet with and sign up during the registration process.

Some items to consider when organizing and implementing one-on-ones:

- This is a massive draw for vendors and thus they will expect to meet with someone. Ensure that all processes for arranging the meetings are done fairly and transparent.
 - Each meeting should last no longer than 15 minutes and each director, manager, or purchasing personnel should not commit to more than 90 minutes. This will inherently create scarcity amongst the time spent with vendors thus it is so important to ensure the process is fair and transparent.
 - Consider a first come, first serve decision process when making appointments.
 - Allow vendors to select several agencies they would like to meet with and to prioritize them. This allows flexibility on the part of the reverse trade show committee when scheduling. If their number one choice is unavailable, move on to their next.
- Be sure to let the vendor know who they are meeting with and the time.
- Someone from the Agency Relations committee or a volunteer should be stationed outside the one-on-one meeting room on the day of the show to manage the vendors. They will arrive prior to their meeting hoping or more time, it is important to keep everyone on schedule.
- In the past, the State CPO has discouraged charging vendors for these one-on-one meetings as agencies need to always keep themselves open to opportunities to meet with vendors.



Vendor Registration & Communication

The goal of vendor registration is to create a smooth, accurate, painless process.

Event registration is notorious for going awry sometimes. This is simply because there are so many moving parts. You can combat this by testing the system many times and taking it step-by-step.

To mitigate these issues, be sure to choose a registration and ticketing tool that is designed for your needs. A pre-configured solution like Eventbrite or Showclix can work very well for most needs. The NIGP Utah website is also set up to handle event registration. Regardless of the registration platform, the registration page must be user-friendly and accessible on any device.

Some helpful items to consider when creating your registration page includes the following:

- Only ask for what you need. If your registration requests are detailed and long, fewer people will complete it (either because they don't wish to give that information or because there are more opportunities for the form to fail. More questions only add a barrier to registration.
- Include questions that add value to your current and future reverse trade shows. For example, ask registrants how they heard about the show. This can help prioritize marketing efforts next time.
- Optimize the confirmation e-mail. A standard confirmation will simply tell someone that, yes, they have successfully registered. But the confirmation is a great opportunity to prompt new fans to share their exciting news on Twitter or LinkedIn.
- Test the entire process over and over again. If the system has a bug that prevents people from registering, you're actively losing registrants. Regularly test the registration system all the way through with different web browsers and devices.

Be sure to maintain communication with registrants leading up to the event. Without bombarding registrants with e-mails, keep them updated and remind them what they signed up for.

Ensure that the NIGPTradeShow@gmail.com account is regularly viewed and responded to. Attendees will expect prompt replies to their questions. This also helps to build show loyalty and excitement.



Communications & Marketing

The most successful event promotions start early and utilizes multiple channels. The event marketing mix may include solicitations on e-procurement sites, e-mail campaigns, traditional call-downs, social media and referrals.

Stick to a marketing timeline. It is a good practice to create a plan for which messages you want to share, with whom, when and how. The following is a suggested timeline to get the creative juices flowing on what may work best for the show:

Communication #1: Save-The-Date

Send this communication as far ahead of the event as possible—it's a great way to get a spot on the calendars of attendees who are the most likely to register. You'll be generating buzz about the show, and you can take this opportunity to ask for feedback about the agenda. Be sure to include the date and location, a teaser about any speakers (if selected at this point), and potential agencies that will be participating.

Communication #2: Early Bird Invitation

Send this communication around 2-4 months prior to the event. This communication should indicate the date registration opens, the "early bird" pricing if applicable, and any new details that have been confirmed about the show since the Save-the-date communication.

Communication #3: Early Bird Reminder

Send this communication about two weeks before the price increases. This can act as a final drive for attendees prior to a price increase.

Communication #4: Last Chance Tickets

Send this communication about two weeks before registration closes. This lets potential attendees know they have one final opportunity to register before the event closes.

Broadcast!

For this specific event, the single best way to communicate to the vendor community is through a solicitation on an e-procurement system such as the Utah Public Procurement Place or BidSync. Creating an RFI with information directing vendors to the registration website will generate more hits than any other marketing channel. Each of the communications listed above can then be added to the RFI as an amendment of some kind. That will generate new e-mails to the vendor community alerting them of new information.

Another way to market to potential attendees is to send a personal invite to the previous year's attendees. This indicates to these potential attendees that you value their previous participation. Ensure that this messaging includes new value added information so that they will see the benefit of attending the show again.



On-Site Readiness

Team Run-Through

During the walk through, go through the entire day and ensure that each team member knows their role and how to perform it. Walk through the event plan and confirm that every element is assigned to someone who is accountable for it. If you workshop potential problems at the walk-through, it will take the pressure off when they really happen.

Vendor/Agency Check-In

The check-in line is your chance to make a good (or bad) first impression. Attendees will be making judgments about the event as a whole based upon this process. Make this experience positive. Some things to consider when determining this process:

- Check-In staff should know the venue and the schedule well enough to answer every question. Volunteers should also be around the check-in area directing attendees and answering any questions.
- Offer beverages and snacks in the check-in area. Strive to make the area as warm and inviting as possible.
- Provide a schedule of the day's events and include a map of the facility. This will orient attendees and provide structure to their day.
- If check-in is done electronically, ensure that a paper back up is available should something go awry.
- Have blank name tags available to write on just in case unregistered attendees arrive or if there are any missing name tags.

Audio/Visual

Touch base with speakers and anyone else who is presenting publicly and determine that their A/V needs are met. If speakers plan to present from their own laptops, confirm what type of computers they have and add the necessary connectors to your supplies list. If speakers will be sending their presentation in PDF or .PPT format, require the final version 48 hours prior to the event. Test all projectors, microphones, audio equipment and technical connections.

Parking

Email the attendees an entrance map and any information regarding parking, particularly if it is tricky. Once attendees are on the property, volunteers or signage can direct them to the correct entrance.



Last Minute Tasks



Confirm the agenda. It needs to be consistent on the website and any printed material.



Confirm times and details with speakers.



Provide caterers with the final count of attendees.



Go over any necessary equipment or materials lists.



Ensure the reverse trade show committee and volunteers have each others phone numbers should immediate assistance be needed.



Run through the check-in process one final time

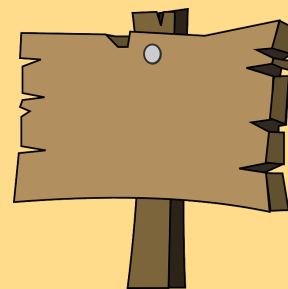


Write checks for any payments, such as speakers or venue, that need to be made on-site.

Signage

Utilize signage to provide directions to attendees at the venue. Consider the following signs at the venue:

- Agency table placards
- Directional signs to event space and break out sessions
- Signs for each room where breakouts will be taking place



Event Follow Up

Immediately After the Event

A successful event is the combined work of many people. A personal, warm, sincere thank you goes a long way toward giving a positive last impression, and helps build strong relationships for the next time around. Make it personal. It's appropriate to send a handwritten or personalized card to speakers, partners, the venue, team members, volunteers and agencies. If the committee opts not to send something physical, send an individual e-mail to each contributor. Don't send an impersonal mass e-mail.



Survey

Develop and send a survey to all attendees (both vendors and agencies) to assess how they view the success or failure of certain portions of the event. Post event surveys are absolutely critical at understanding how to create a better show the next time around. Utilize the survey responses in the After Action Review meeting.

Some questions to consider in the survey include:

How did you become aware of the State of Utah Reverse Trade Show?

How satisfied were you with the registration process?

How satisfied were you with the pricing of the event?

In regards to other trade shows of this scale, how did the pricing of this trade show compare?

How satisfied were you with communication regarding the event?

Did you attend any breakout sessions, other than the Keynote?

How satisfied were you with the check-in process on the day of the event?

How satisfied were you with the food and beverage offering?

If you participated in a one-on-one with a director or manager, did you find the experience to be valuable?

How satisfied were you with the trade show portion of the event?

How satisfied were you with the facility in which the event took place?

After Action Review Meeting

An After Action Review Meeting occurs after survey responses have been returned and includes the entire reverse trade show committee. The purpose is to review every aspect of the planning process to see what went right, what went wrong and what could be done next time to make the process more efficient.

Questions to consider and review during the After Action Review Meeting include:

Objectives & Goals

What were the original event objectives? Did we meet them?

Did the event fulfill all of its commitments to the vendor community? To agencies? To speakers? To the venue?

Venue

What worked with the venue?
What didn't work?

Was the venue personnel helpful? Were they able to deal with contingencies?

How was the communication with their third party vendors (catering, A/V etc)?

What aspects of a venue would you pay particular attention to the next time around?

Budget

What were some of the budget surprises?

Review each budgetary item and determine if there was a return on investment for the item.

Were tickets priced appropriately?

Team

Did every team member receive training and support needed throughout the entire process?

What worked with the overall team structure?
What could be improved?

What went well with recruiting team members?
What could be improved.

Speakers

Were the speakers effective at communicating a message that was relevant to attendees needs?

If breakout sessions were not well attended, what can be done to garner more interest & higher attendance?

Registration & Attendance

How did the number of attendees compare against goals?

How would you plan differently for food and beverage given the number of attendees?

What worked well with the registration process? What could be improved with registration?

What could be done to increase registration numbers and actual attendance the next time around?

What marketing avenues work well? Which provided little return?

What worked with recruiting agencies? What could be improved?

What worked with the One-on-one meetings?
What could be improved?

Agencies

What channels and initiatives worked well with agency recruitment?

What worked in communicating goals and objectives to agencies?

What training was provided to agencies regarding the show? Was it sufficient?

If One-On-Ones were performed, what benefit did agencies receive from the experience? Were agencies prepared and thoughtful about their time with the vendors?

How can the committee better prepare agencies next year for the show?