



## Making the Most of Your Vendor Booth

Welcome to the *Taste of Home Cooking School*, the Nation's #1 live cooking show! We're excited to partner with you and look forward to showcasing your business as a proud local sponsor of our program.

### Staffing

There are several ways to make the most of your vendor booth, but they all start with having knowledgeable and friendly people who will make a favorable impression of your business. Over 85% of show guests' first impressions are based on your staff. Remember, people buy from people! Train them, share your goals and get them to engage.

### Build Momentum Pre-Event

Most vendors think of an expo as an opportunity to meet new customers, but it's also an opportunity to engage with existing customers. We highly recommend promoting your participation to your existing audience before the show; it's a great way to secure an army of advocates on the show floor and highlight your support of a great community event. Tell your customers by hanging posters in your business, including a postcard in bags at checkout, sending a postcard in the mail, emailing your customer base or promoting via social media. Your event organizer can provide you with templates and collateral to promote your participation.

### Best Practices

You only have 5-7 seconds to catch a guest's attention. Make your first impression count! Here are some ways to create an attractive, memorable and productive exhibit:

1. **Set goals:** Plan your exhibit for the best results. Scale out the space before arriving onsite, determine your physical needs and determine the space you will need for demonstrations, customer interaction and sales. Then share your goals with your staff so they can help you accomplish your objectives.
2. **Signage:** Make sure to clearly identify your company and product. Place your signage at eye level or higher. Avoid unprofessional handwritten signs and vinyl banners. Show them your best image.
3. **Set the table:** Hide unsightly table legs, boxes, supplies and extra materials by draping tables to the floor with floor length linens or tables skirts.

4. **Save some trees:** Do not overwhelm guests with brochures and literature. Two-thirds of all brochures handed out to show guests are thrown away and forgotten. Meet your guests and hand them materials individually so that you make face to face contact.

### **Ideas to Drive Vendor Booth Interaction**

Here are some simple ways to make your booth stand out and draw the largest crowd:

1. **Spinning Wheel:** Spinning wheels always draw a crowd! People love the interaction and playing a game of chance! You can give away small branded items or coupons, but the best part is getting to spin the wheel!
2. **Guessing Jar:** Fill a jar with an item that relates to your business and ask visitors to the booth to guess the correct number to win a prize (e.g., a hair salon could fill a jar with bobby pins or hair elastics and offer a gift certificate as a prize).
3. **Name that Kitchen Tool Contest:** Display a unique cooking or kitchen tool and ask visitors to fill out a pre-printed information card and include their answer. From those who answered correctly, a winner will be drawn at a later date. Display the attractive prize at the booth to entice the visitors to enter the contest!
4. **Provide a Service:** Vision screenings, blood pressure screenings, one-minute massages, jewelry cleaning, even computerized hairstyle or eyewear analysis is fun! Be creative! Encourage your staff to interact with the visitors to maximize the experience.
5. **Photo Booths:** Get attendees to post photos about your business by setting up a photo booth. Photo booths can be produced through a variety of budgets, but a simple and low-budget way is to provide a few simple props and backdrop, a person to be the “photographer” and use attendees’ cell phones to snap photos. Ask attendees to share their photos via Facebook, Instagram and/or Twitter with a specific hashtag (e.g. #HandyHardware) and enter all participants in a drawing at the end of the night. You could also set up a monitor in the booth to flash the photos that people post throughout the evening.
6. **Provide a Resting Area:** Provide a pit-stop at your booth with a few chairs or tables for attendees to stop and rest. At some venues, the booth may be one of the only places where attendees can sit and relax before the show. This style of booth would be especially effective for spa, wellness or health-related companies who could brand the booth with relaxing or rejuvenating messages. Attendees will be grateful for the space and you’ll enjoy the powerful brand messaging with minimal effort. If you

have your logo and branding up, you won't even need to send someone to staff the booth! This type of booth may not be possible in all venues, so talk to your event organizer first.

7. **Mini-Speaker Series and Demonstrations:** Rather than a traditional booth space, set up 2 lines of 4 chairs and have speakers run a short seminar on appealing topics or demonstrations (2-10 minutes in length). Curious attendees will flock to the booth to see what is happening. You could do a "kitchen hack" series and demonstrate easy ways to save time in the kitchen. Home decorating, gardening, storage solutions and household cleaning tips are also popular and easy topics to demonstrate in short sessions. This type of booth may not be possible in all venues, so talk to your event organizer first.
8. **Product Sample:** Attendees love product and service samples! Sampling is a great incentive to drive more people to your booth and create buzz for your business.
9. **Product Launch:** Exhibitions are a fantastic opportunity to make announcements or launch products. One of the top reasons why people attend the vendor expo is to learn what's new in their area. Giving the insider scoop is a great way to capture the attention of attendees.
10. **Ask Questions:** Beyond a product launch, you could also solicit feedback on existing or potential products from attendees. Walking through a vendor expo can put attendees into a passive role, but involving the audience to give their opinion is a unique opportunity to get them to express themselves. You could ask attendees any sort of question related to your product, such as the best scent, flavor, color etc. Physical voting is easily done, or it could be another way to leverage social media to engage with attendees online via questions or polls.