

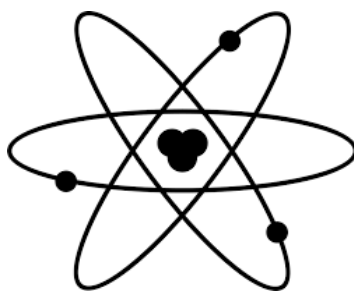
TIPS TO CREATE A SUCCESSFUL EXPO DAY EXHIBIT!

San Diego
FESTIVAL OF
SCIENCE &
ENGINEERING

A PROGRAM OF BIOCOM INSTITUTE



Saturday, March 7, 2020
10:00 AM - 5:00 PM



Just a few words about EXPO Day:

EXPO DAY is the Festival's signature event, with more than 130 local businesses, corporations, and organizations providing interactive, hands-on science, technology, engineering and math exhibits and activities to budding K-12 science lovers.

EXPO Day has over 160 exhibit spaces. These spaces are either tented (provide a given backdrop but are exposed to the elements) or non tented spaces (provide more shade and safe from the elements). Spaces are assigned by the EXPO Day committee based on availability and content.

We hope to attract more than 25,000 people to PETCO Park for the 2020 EXPO Day. On average, Exhibitors reported anywhere from 4,000 - 6,000 visitors to their booth over the course of the day!

The following document will provide you with some tips to enhance the planning, design and implementation of your exhibit and booth.

(Many of you have participated as exhibitors before and also may have great suggestions. Please forward them to hzimkin@biocom.org and we will incorporate them into the next version of this guide.)



TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL EXPO DAY EXHIBIT

Showcasing cool science doesn't have to be a daunting experience. Creating a fun booth that engages participants in the wonder of science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics can be easier than you may think. As you put together your exhibit or activity, have a look at the suggestions below to help guide you.

BE PREPARED

- **Recruit enough volunteers** to staff your booth in shifts, so that no one person gets burned out. Take breaks, visit the other exhibits, get food, or have some down-time away from the chaos of the Expo.
- At least **3-4 people should staff** the booth at all times to help with explaining and crowd control.
- Ensure volunteers **overlap shifts** so that they can share tips with one another. Matching outfits for your crew are highly encouraged!
- Try to **avoid too many handouts**. Not only are we trying to be conscious of our planet's resources and not waste paper, but too many materials can be overwhelming and distracting from the activities.
- Are you really **working within your booth size**? Remember everything must go in your booth, not behind or to the side. This includes water, giveaways, snacks, etc.
- **Don't forget your toolbox!** Be ready for weather, rain or shine the event must go on, bring sunscreen and/or jacket. Don't forget water for your volunteers, business cards, email sign-up sheets, zip ties, garbage bags, tape, etc.

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

- Because we are expecting large numbers of attendees, keep your activities efficient – prepare for **each activity to handle at least 3-5 participants at a time**. To keep a steady stream of visitors moving throughout the park, your activity should last no more than 5 minutes.
- **Don't forget about parents!** Engage them in your activity too or have staff available to talk to them while kids are exploring. This gives them the chance to go home and have conversations about what they learned.
- To welcome non-English speakers, try to find a **presenter who speaks Spanish** or another language and we will help advertise your activity as accessible to non-English speakers.

GRAB THEIR ATTENTION

- Think carefully about how you can get visitors **engaged with your activity immediately**.
- Allow them to make discoveries on their own. **Let visitors touch, feel, explore, and play** as you guide them through the science concepts that are being presented.
- **Smile!**





TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL EXPO DAY EXHIBIT

KEEP THEM ENGAGED

- Providing **hands-on activities and face-to-face interactions** are great ways to keep participants interested in your exhibit.
- **Ask questions** of all the visitors. What are they observing? Do they have any guesses on what they think will happen as they experiment? Let their curiosity drive your interactions.
- Tell kids and parents **what it's like to be a scientist!** Help them to see that science is a great career path.
- **Have an expert** on hand at all times. Let visitors meet a real scientist or engineer!



SIGNAGE & BRANDING YOUR BOOTH

- Utilize **prominent signage** for your booth. Tented booths can adhere signage to the tent. Non Tented booths can use free standing banners, branded linens, and/or attach banner to tables. *Please do not attach any banners or signage to PETCO Park walls or fixtures.*
- **Decorate** your booth to be visually attractive through table and tent decorations.
- **Matching outfits** for your staff and volunteers are highly encouraged. They let people know to whom to direct their questions. You may also consider buying EXPO DAY Festival T-shirts for your crew ahead of time.



•Everyone loves something free! Place **logos on giveaway items**. Items such as squishy little robots, mini binoculars, coloring pages, etc. **You should anticipate up to 4,000 – 6,000 visitors to your booth.** Stickers or any materials with adhesive backing, helium balloons, marking pens, chalk, and crayons will NOT be allowed to be distributed.

ACTIVITY SAFETY/NEEDS

- Keep in mind any **safety precautions for an activity** and plan accordingly if your booth requires lab coats, gloves or safety glasses.
- Hands-on activities can involve getting kids' hands

or clothing messy or dirty. Please **bring any necessary cleaning materials** (paper towels, trash bags, etc.) and safety equipment for your participants. Keep in mind you will have a wide range of children with a variety of hands-on/lab experience and kids love to dig in and get messy.

PUBLICIZE AND PROMOTE YOUR EXHIBIT

- Create a **Press Release** – Spread the word!
- **Spread the word** to your employees, customers, organization newsletter, and Board of Directors.
- **Social Media** – Announce your exhibit on your website, Facebook, Instagram, Blog



HELPFUL TIPS FOR YOUR STAFF & VOLUNTEERS

COMMUNICATE WITH YOUR TEAM

- Make sure to **tell your team the name of the Booth, Booth number, and where to park.** This will be provided to you in your confirmation packet in February.
- Make sure **everyone is well trained** beforehand.

STAFF & VOLUNTEER TIPS

- Keep some **experts on hand** at all times so that kids can “Meet the Scientist or Engineer.” Their expertise adds a unique level of teaching to your booth.
- At least **3-4 people should staff the booth** at all times.
- Have volunteers **overlap shifts** so they can observe the activity.
- Don't forget to **bring water and lozenges** for your volunteers who will be talking all day.
- Hand sanitizer, Kleenex, cleaning wipes, first aid kit, and paper towels.

WEB RESOURCES

- Still need ideas for your booths activity the following websites may help you:
 - HowToSmile.org - an **online catalog of pre-built activities** suited for this environment: <http://howtosmile.org/>
 - Science Buddies – **hands on science activities**: www.sciencebuddies.org

WE ARE HERE TO HELP

Please contact **Heather Zimkin** at hzimkin@biocom.org with any questions you may have.

We are excited to see the fun and interactive hands-on exhibit your organization creates for the the San Diego Festival of Science & Engineering EXPO Day! Thank you for taking your time and resources to make the 2020 Festival a HUGE success!

