



NEW EXHIBITOR TIP SHEET

How to prepare for a book fair or salon du livre?

BEFORE THE INTERNATIONAL EVENT

- Search the catalogue of the book fair and schedule meetings well in advance, at least two months before the start of the start of the fair. Note, in some cases, book fair meeting requests may begin as much as four to five months in advance (e.g., Frankfurt appointment requests often begin in June due to the extended European summer holidays over July and August) Many international fairs also provide a Who's Who directory with the names and contact addresses of the key people in companies around the world who will be attending the event.
- Create a file of potential contacts throughout the year leading up to the fair.
- Mark any awards or achievements, including foreign editions you've already sold, that your books have received with a sticker to display on the book.
- Go to the fair's website and learn as much as you can about it and the resources it offers, in order to derive as much benefit as possible from the event. This includes reading up on the fair's newsletters if it offers any.
- Bring a good quantity of business cards with you and before heading for the fair jot your contact details for the duration of the event at the back of the card, such as your hotel location and phone number. Some rent a local cell phone, or buy a local SIM card, in which case it is useful to jot down this local cell number on your cards as well.
- Pick the right person to staff your booth. Key qualities to look for are: people skills, energy and knowledge.

- Read up on previous post-show reports to get a feel for where market interests lie and the direction they are moving toward.
- Ask AECB for a list of Canadian publishers who previously attended the Fair and contact information. Call one or two of them and ask for advice.
- Prepare a “visitor kit” if within your means, to hand out to every visitor to your booth. This package may include promotional items, your business card, a summary of your publishing company which delineates what you have to offer and what sets you apart. Depending on your objective, whether you are scouting authors or looking for distributors you may have to tweak the wording accordingly.
- Show that your firm is well “connected”. Offer your kit in digital media and include your trademark.
- Prepare Sell Sheets for each of the titles you want to present to prospective partners. If you keep the Sell Sheets in plastic sleeves in a 3-ring binder it is easy to show them to people and if you have extra copies to give one to the person with whom you are meeting. Make the digital shift and simply offer your editorial profile on digital media.
- Prepare a list of anticipated questions that you may encounter from your future clientele/contacts and have complete and clear answers ready.
- Promote your presence at the upcoming event. For example, update your present, local contacts with details concerning your upcoming presence at a fair/exhibition and extract as much word-of-mouth potential as possible. Some publishers announce their forthcoming attendance at an exhibition through pop-ups on their website, telling website visitors, when and where exactly they will be showing. Here is an excerpt from www.ala.org:

“Remember, your exhibit marketing program must begin long before the first attendee enters the exposition. The Center for Exhibition Industry Research (CEIR) reports that 76% of trade show attendees leave home already having decided which booths they want to visit. Make sure you are on their “must visit” list—start planning today!” (<http://exhibitors.ala.org/MW10/manual/faq/index.html#5>)

How to be efficient during the event?

DURING THE INTERNATIONAL EVENT

- Before heading for the fair jot your contact details for the duration of the event at the back of the card, such as your hotel location and phone number. Some rent a local cell phone, or buy a local SIM card, in which case it is useful to jot down this local cell number on your cards as well. Give your coordinates to the person responsible for the stand in order for us to be able to reach you easily.
- Inform yourself of any prospective speakers/information sessions at the fair and the subject of the lecture. Determine if the topic is of any interest to you and be prepared with any questions you may have.
- Be on time for each of your appointments throughout the day and every day. If you arrive at 3.15 pm for a 3.00 pm appointment then you only have 15 minutes left to conduct your business before the next person arrives for their session. You also need to allow for time to get to your next appointment. Please be realistic when you set up your appointments and plan your daily schedule.
- When someone hands you their business card, do not simply slip it into your card case, prepare a template with such fields as the name of the person you spoke to (since it may be a general business card), their title and the gist of what you discussed. This may be important when doing follow-ups. One seasoned exhibitor says she likes to tape each person's business card in a notebook and write details of their conversation below the card. A photo album with an area for notes is a very practical tool for building an event portfolio.
- For your personal health and survival – wear comfortable shoes, drink enough water, take a break and watch the world of publishing rush by as people from all parts of the world pursue their business.
- Look at the floor plan and exhibitor names and prioritize lists of who you must see, would like to see and may have an interest in, according to your end-goals. Some fairs have multiple halls that may take up to 20 minutes to walk between,

so you may wish to organize your appointments according to hall and booth location (if you are meeting on another's booth rather than your own).

AFTER THE INTERNATIONAL EVENT

- Devise a follow-up plan to keep yourself fresh in the minds of your contacts/leads. Here is an excerpt from the American Library Association's website:

“Collecting the data is only the first step in an effective lead follow-up system. Exhibitors are encouraged to have a post-show program in place before they leave for the Show so that leads can be acted upon immediately following (or even during) the exposition. Be sure to fill literature and sample requests within two weeks. The University of Massachusetts Center for Marketing Communications found that over 40% of prospective buyers received the requested material only after they had made a buying decision. Almost 20% never received anything. Don't waste this sales opportunity. With the proper follow-up plan, you can generate enough leads to keep a sales team busy with qualified prospects for months.”

<http://exhibitors.ala.org/MW10/manual/faq/index.html#26>

Online resources to read up on/consult:

-Frankfurt Book Fair:

http://www.baenschinternational.com/pdf/Guide_FBM_2005.pdf

-London Book Fair:

<http://leanmarketingpress.com/lean-marketing-press-authors/book-fair-virgins-part-1/>

-Center for Exhibition Industry Research: www.ceir.org