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Presented  
by  
Tom Shay

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P.O. Box 128  
Dardanelle, AR 72834  
[www.profitsplus.org](http://www.profitsplus.org)

## **Making the Most of a tradeshow!**

Your reasons for attending this tradeshow:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

## **Getting the most from your time at this tradeshow**

1. Make a list of vendors you want to see
2. Walk the show floor
3. Prioritize
4. Create a partnership
5. Take breaks
6. Do one last walk-through

## **Heads-up for improving your work at the tradeshow**

1. Use your own purchase orders
2. Ask for dating—specify shipping
3. Ask for “co-op” advertising dollars and “slicks”
4. Ask for promotional help
5. Get the sales rep’s name and hold onto the price sheets

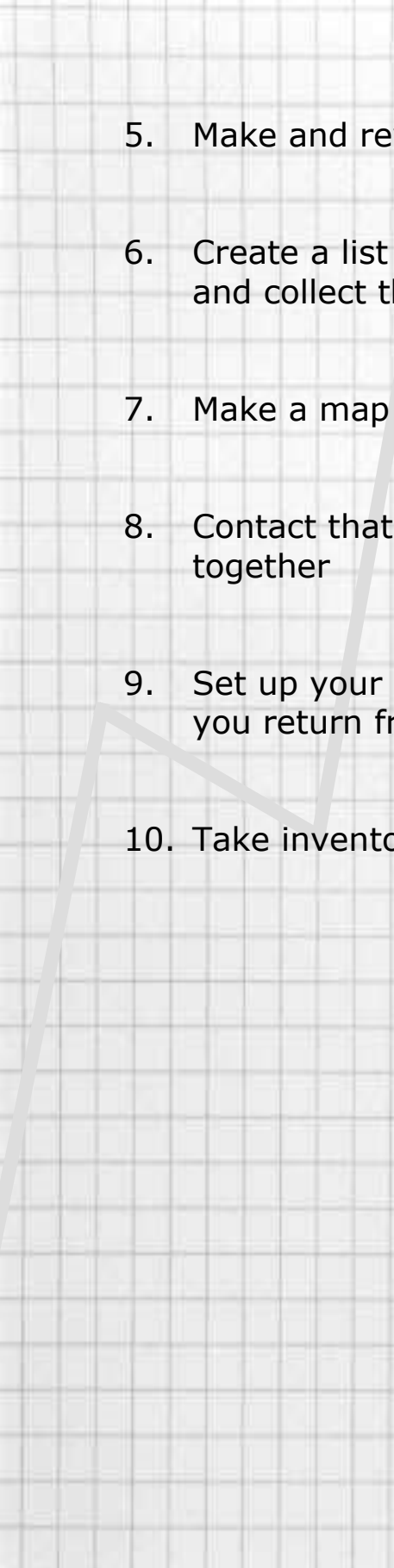
## **Getting the most from your time after this tradeshow**

1. Establish a number of hours each day/week to work on the show material
2. Create a series of folders according to: orders written, displays to build, orders to write, lines to consider

3. Create a ledger to total your orders written according to dollars, delivery date, and invoice due date—check your cashflow
4. Check your cashflow!
5. Create your advertising schedule from what you have ordered, making sure the ad slicks are attached or ordered
6. Decide where new items are going to be displayed
7. Keep track of what sold—sizes, colors, how many, location

## **Getting the most from the next tradeshow**

1. Prepare a list of the “A” items
2. Prepare a list of items of the “everyday-sale-price” items
3. Review and sort all of the mailings from vendors
4. Ask vendors who call on you to let you know of their show specials

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5. Make and review a list of what you bought at the last show
  6. Create a list of any vendors you are having a problem with and collect the necessary documentation
  7. Make a map of the show and where you want to visit
  8. Contact that other dealer and make your plans to get together
  9. Set up your store staffing so you are not overwhelmed when you return from the show
  10. Take inventory counts of items you plan to order



## **This little piggy goes to market**

**By Tom Shay**

### **SOUND ADVICE FOR BUSINESS**

Have you packed your bags yet? This writer has, as he will be speaking to and visiting with people at this event. Not only is it time to pack your suitcase, but it is time for businesses to be planning for the show. By planning for, going to, and executing a show plan you can do more for the profitability of your business for the next six months than by almost any other effort you can put forth.

This is probably a bold statement, particularly with the expenses involved in going to the event. After all, in attending there are: airfare, several days of hotel bills, three meals per day, perhaps some entertainment—and the extra staffing the business will need while you are gone. Obviously, you can save money by staying at home; but let's plan on making some money with this exercise. Here is the plan that one successful business has for this event.

This business owner starts by creating a list of the everyday sale-price items for her business. These are the items that are heavily advertised in her market. If you do not have such a list, stop right now and begin to create one. Just listen to the radio and television ads, watch the newspaper, and write down the items and prices of the items being advertised that you also stock.

An everyday sale-price list, properly used, can do a lot for the image of your business. A list will cost little to create and will provide long term results. You do not want to have a lower price in town on each of these items, but your price needs to be in line with the mass merchants and chain stores.

Shopping for these items at the show allows you to obtain the best prices. If you calculate your anticipated needs for these items and are prepared to write orders at the show, you can actually have a profit on items that you might suspect would otherwise be loss leaders.

Examine your orders written last year at the shows you attended to determine items that had a high percentage or complete sell-through. Are these items that you should again write orders for? Or were they items that were fashionable last year but not this year? From her experience, our retailer has learned to not get greedy and expect tremendous increases in sales. This year's best seller can easily become next year's flop as easily as it can become next year's repeat best seller.

Our business owner then checks sales from the previous season to locate which may have been ordered from a wholesaler on a "onesie" basis. Perhaps sales have been substantial enough to warrant ordering from the manufacturer to gain increased margin.

The business owner also places telephone calls to the sales representatives asking them to send catalogs for the product lines which will be shown at the show. She has found it easier to examine the product line and write some orders in her store *before* the show rather than writing all orders *at* the show. However, for some product lines it is often helpful to physically examine the item at the show. She still goes to each of the display areas, as often the manufacturers will have a last-minute addition of a new item.

Finally, she never goes to the show with a blank check. She plans her spending by setting budgets for basic lines, promotional lines, and a small budget for new items, as well as a small budget for the new manufacturer she locates at the show.



## **This little piggy goes to market** (continued)

**By Tom Shay**

### **SOUND ADVICE FOR BUSINESS**

As she departs for the show, she makes sure that all store operations are set to function properly in her absence. Her employees need to feel confident they can handle the store in her absence. She lets them know where to reach her in case of emergency but lets them know she trusts their decisions.

When she arrives at the show, she begins by walking through the show display floor before writing any orders. This way, she seems to find more of those new lines she hopes to find at the show.

As she wanders through the exhibits, she carries a notepad to list the manufacturers and locations she will add to her previously created exhibitor list. When she does begin to write orders, she works the show according to the departments of her store, making sure that she is finished with one before moving on to another department. She writes the orders at the show so that the copy she leaves with the manufacturer is complete. On many orders she adds, "do not partial ship" as well as "do not ship until" and a "cancel if not delivered by" date. She attaches the pages from the show catalog to the back of her copy of the order to give easy reference in case of disputed price or dating.

In the event of special prices or special terms given at the show, our retailer makes sure to write these, as well as the name of the sales representative, on the order. She said she finds this comes in very handy in case of a dispute with the invoice. She also takes to the show a list of manufacturers and wholesalers that have unresolved issues with her store, such as unpaid co-op advertising claims or invoice errors. That way, when she is getting ready to write a show order, she does have the sales representative's undivided attention.

She also checks the seminars schedule to determine which seminars she will attend—not just those she wants to hear, but those she needs in order to acquire additional management skills.

When she gets home, she reviews all of the orders, rechecks the total dollars spent at the show, and completes the necessary paperwork so that the merchandise can be checked in, price-stickered, and put on display as soon as it arrives. With seasonal merchandise especially, she often sends a postcard to her customers inviting them to come see the newly arrived selection.

At this point, she begins to make plans to implement these purchases into her advertising program and begins to feel secure that she has made a profit by going to the show. See you there!