



The Art of Smart Giveaways: How to Strategically Use Giveaways to Support and Achieve Your Exhibiting Goals

By Jefferson Davis

Tired of “freebee seekers’ and “trick or treaters” coming to your booth to fill up their bags with your promotional products? Then maybe it’s time you learned how to use giveaways in a **strategic** manner that more effectively supports your exhibiting goals.

Giveaways are promotional products you purchase and offer, send, or give to people to build and maintain relationships and motivate and reward for taking some action that is meaningful to your business.

Effectively using giveaways helps you catch attention, demonstrate your interest in them, and build their interest in you. Giveaways can motivate and lead people to action and reward them for taking the action you want. You can use giveaways to support your messaging objectives, differentiate your company, products and services and stand out from the crowd. Giveaways can also help create top of the mind awareness and build recall so they think of you when they are ready to inquire, evaluate or buy. Giveaways are also very effective in building and supporting on-going relationships.

Giveaways are best used for acknowledging relationships and increasing response rates to marketing and/or sales campaigns. To get the most bang for your buck, giveaways should be used selectively with people who offer and/or generate real value for your company.

The 5 Step SMART Giveaway Process

1. **Identify who you want you use giveaways with.** What is your relationship, what type of person is this and how many are there? Are you targeting Customers, Prospects, Suspects, Media, Sales reps, Distribution Channel Partner, who? Then, determine the common characteristics of your target. Consider their age range, gender, income, education level, job function and responsibilities, work environment, travel behaviors and so on. Finally determine how many are in the universe, how many are on your lists and how many you want, need and have the capacity to interact with. You can use the Exhibit Activity Level formula to determine capacity.
2. **Determine what action you want them to take and the value of that action to your organization.** Do you want them to call you, visit your booth, attend a session or event, schedule a presentation or demo, go to your website, complete a survey, participate in a needs assessment, or what? And what is this action worth to your company? Be sure to consider amount of business they give or could give, the average unit of sale, and the lifetime value of contact.
3. **Determine how much you are willing to spend per person per target group.** You want to spend enough to catch their attention, impress them and make them want to respond. While you may need or want to invest more, you can get a lot of good promotional products in the \$5 to \$25 range. Working in this range won’t break your budget and will help you fly under the radar of most corporate policies on accepting gifts.

4. **Set a giveaway budget and select a giveaway that meets your budget and makes sense for your target based on your relationship, your objective and your understanding of them.** Steps 1 through 3 gave you this knowledge already. Be sure to order enough products for everyone likely to respond -- plus a little extra.
5. **Determine your timing and methods for offering and delivering the giveaway.** You could use direct mail, email, print and or web advertising, telephone, in person visits or a combination of these media to offer the giveaway. The giveaway away could be sent pre-show, given to them at-show, and/or sent post-show. For maximum impact you might event use a combination or all three timeframes to deliver the giveaway.

Follow these 5 steps and watch your smart giveaway program will deliver substantial value to your exhibiting program.

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