

# TEN EASY WAYS TO REDUCE HASSLES

Do constant problems and Murphy's Law drive you to madness? Are trade shows so rife with problems that you're willing to wash cars for a living? Here are ten ways to reduce the hassles in your trade show life. Get busy!

1. Plan, organize, and research – you can't over-plan or over-prepare. Know your booth sales goals, company objectives, and everything management wants to accomplish at and through this event. Get to know the event, facility, city, and show management before you hit the road.
2. Outsource what you have no time to do, don't do well, or hate to do. It's cost effective and saves hats full of gray hair. And it's one way around that hiring freeze you've been fighting.
3. Delegate anything you can to assistants, subordinates, interns, admins, and in-house service groups. If this is you (everyone is delegating to you) see #2.
4. Reduce the variables – create exhibit packages for your sales team to select from. Put all your packages, graphics, giveaways, and literature on an internal website where they can choose from SIMPLE menus. Don't let others make your job more difficult than it has to be. You are in charge!
5. Find a friend – peer, exhibitor appointed contractor, supplier, show management staff, etc. Get to know somebody at your events so you can ask for help, directions, local resources, commiserate, or to have dinner and drinks with when the day is done.
6. Use your resources – check TSEA's resource guide ([www.tsea.org](http://www.tsea.org)) for suppliers in your area or in the event city. Or call a local or event city TSEA member to ask about suppliers, rental companies, resources, or the local Kinkos, Radio Shack, hardware, or graphics shop.
7. Know shipping – use a trucking company that knows trade shows and tell them you want confirmation of pickups and deliveries. This takes a big worry off your hands and you do nothing but answer the phone. Get basic insurance from them to cover incidental freight and crate damage.
8. Learn to file – if you're not making a 3-ring binder with pre-printed tabs for every show, get help! Ask a secretary to show you how to efficiently file everything from active event files to show book bones (the stuff you don't need) to archived events.
9. ID your crates or cases and list EVERYTHING that's in them. But use code words for laptops, PCs, LCDs, and other valuables. If you have

multiple exhibit properties or systems, pre-pack them in (packages – see #4) so they're ready to go. Remember a toolkit, cleaning kit, office and exhibit supplies, common literature, and setup drawings and instructions.

10. Just in case – give someone responsible a copy of the show info before you travel. If you get stuck in Detroit the show can go on without you – Responsible Person can fax the info to a labor company, exhibit builder, or friend to take over until you can get there.

Organization and planning are not difficult but you can't put things off or let the tidal wave of paperwork and information drown you. Ask other for help and learn how to manage by eliminating variables. In time, you will be master of all they throw at you.

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