

# How to make your exhibit stand out

In the last issue of *Home & Country*, page 10 featured a story on planning good exhibits. Here are a couple of follow-ups to that information.

If your display is at a fair or mall, chances are you are competing with many other displays to attract and hold the attention of the public. Ways to attract attention include:

1. **Lighting** — Accent lighting (clip on spot lights) helps to draw attention to select areas of your booth, even in a well-lit building.

2. **Demonstrations** — Audiences like to watch people doing things. Incorporating a demonstration into your exhibit will enable you to compete for the audience's attention.

3. **Promotional Items** — Give-away pencils, balloons, pens, recipes, fringe magnets, pins, etc. are ways of attracting people to your booth and then sending them away with a reminder of your message. Because promotional items can be expensive, you might use them as prizes for participating in a game or quiz.

4. **Games and Quizzes** — Ag Roulette, Tic-Tac-Toe or quizzes using computers provide a hub of activity. Depending on the questions asked, this can also be educational.

5. **Free Draw** — You can put together a selection of locally produced foods for a draw. Sometimes companies will donate a barbecue, microwave etc. for free draws in return for publicity.

6. **Exhibit Design** — Be sure your use of color attracts attention to the main focus, and does not compete with or over-power your message. A flashing light, revolving turntable or other moving item can also draw attention. Contrasting but complementary shapes, sizes and texture of objects on display can also have an impact.

7. **Actual Objects** — Using the "real thing" is more effective because it

appeals to all five senses! If you are using live animals, check with the public health department regarding regulations. DO not have a live animal at or near your display if you are sampling food. Recipes which are prepared and attractively arranged are

effective on display but should be covered with clear, transparent wrap or a plexiglass dome cover to protect food; change often for optimum appearance. When the "real thing" is not available or appropriate, consider a model of it, e.g. plastic egg.

## Thinking of building or purchasing an exhibit board?

A good exhibit board helps to give an exhibit unity, dimension and interest. It should be: self-supporting; a suitable size for allotted table or floor space; provide a frame for the exhibit; and block out distracting elements, so attention is focused on the message.

Things to consider when building or purchasing an exhibit board include:

1. **Function:**

- \* what type of visuals do you want to place on it?
- \* is it versatile (can it be adapted to be used as both a floor and table-top exhibit)?

2. **Cost:**

- \* what is the cost?
- \* does the amount of use it will receive justify the cost?
- \* will you also have to purchase visuals (added expense)?

3. **Reuse:**

- \* is the material durable enough to be reused?
- \* is it washable or easily cleaned?

4. **Color:**

- \* what color is the most versatile to use with the rest of the display?

5. **Weatherproof:**

- \* is it to be used indoors and/or outdoors?

6. **Stability:**

- \* can it withstand a lot of wear and tear?
- \* is it well-balanced (won't topple over)?

7. **Assistance:**

- \* is it portable (lightweight)?
- \* will you require assistance with putting up the booth and taking it down?
- \* can it be transported by car?

8. **Storage:**

- \* where will it be stored? How? By whom?

