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# Developing Trade Show Objectives

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Any meaningful business objective needs to have five elements built into them to make them relevant. All must contain these SMART elements: **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**elevant, and **T**ime Dependent. For a trade show, the Time Dependent element is built-in.

Overall, there are also two main types of trade show objectives: Marketing objectives and Sales objectives. Marketing objectives are more global, subjective, and strategic. They are usually measured by visitor surveys and literature requests. Sales objectives are more specific, objective, and tactical. They are more easily measured because they are usually quantifiable.

Here's an example of an objective without these elements: "Communicate Our Company's marketing message." It's not specific (Which marketing message?), it's not Measurable (How do you know if you've been successful communicating the message?), it's not Achievable (Communicate it to whom, and to how many?), it's not Relevant (Not everyone is going to care about the marketing message), and it's not Time Dependent (When should I be able to finish communicating this message?).

Here's a better example: "At MHTS in Atlanta, increase awareness to our new product to 240 decision makers from companies with 100+ employees."

We also want you to design your objectives around the desired behavioral changes of visitors not just what you want the exhibit staff to do. You probably don't want to influence or communicate your message to every visitor, just the ones who fit the profile of someone who will eventually order your products or services.

Here's an example of an objective based on staff expectations and behavior, "Position the new product as the gateway to the Internet." A better designed objective is the one above, "At MHTS in Atlanta, increase awareness to the new product to 240 decision makers from companies with 100+ employees." It talks about what you want to change in the visitor's mind or in their behavior relative to your new product.

Here's an example of a visitor focused marketing objective: "Increase awareness of our new product for at least 240 corporate decision makers with buying influence from companies with 100+ employees."

Here's an example of a visitor focused sales objective: "Generate 200 qualified leads for our new product." A "qualified" lead is defined as a visitor with buying influence, budget, and reasonable buying time frame.

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