Ohio School Boards Association
Capital Conference
Nov. 7-10, 2020
A virtual experience

Leadership for Learning
Virtual Trade Show

A how-to guide for exhibitors

Welcome!

We're excited to have you exhibiting at OSBA's first virtual Capital Conference and Trade Show.

As the world around us has changed and we all adjust to a "new normal," the very same is happening with our annual conference. We are proud to provide this online opportunity for you to interact with your current customers and generate more leads.

This guide is designed to help you prepare for the online show so you will have a great experience as an exhibitor. It includes:

- tips on setting up your booth
- promoting your presence at the show and reinforcing your brand
- how to staff the event
- ways to engage attendees
- more tips for a successful event

If you have any questions, please contact the OSBA team at (614) 540-4000. We are dedicated to working with you to ensure you have a successful virtual experience.

Thank you,

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Pre-event preparation

Like any trade show, the key to success at the virtual 2020 OSBA Capital Conference is preparation. This virtual event is a great way to promote your brand through digital marketing. It also is a chance to communicate and market in a new way. The virtual Trade Show gives attendees the ability to browse exhibitor booths. An exhibitor listing and category filters makes it easy to locate specific booths all with a click of the mouse. Nonetheless, promoting yourself as an exhibitor drives traffic to your booth to ensure you meet the customers you want.

Promote your participation
By promoting your participation, you will help ensure your current and prospective customers know they can find you at this event. It also provides an opportunity to drive awareness for your brand. Here are a few ways you can promote your brand and your presence at this online event:

- Email conference attendees an invitation to visit your virtual booth. As part of your investment you receive the pre-attendee list (must be registered by Oct. 16). Use this to your fullest advantage.
- Use a video message in your email to make your message more unique and personal.
- Use social media to promote your presence at the show.
- Use the pre-attendee list to set up meetings with districts prior to the event.
- Promote the fact you are exhibiting in your company blog, website or e-newsletter.
- Include a call to action to visit you and/or to schedule an appointment in your messaging.
- Consider sending a postcard or letter to current or prospective customers through postal mail.
- Plan for virtual chats or live video chats.

Add the show logo and the fact you are exhibiting to the email signature line for all your company associates. Visit **http://conference.ohioschoolboards.org/2020/for-exhibitors/exhibitor-resources** to download the image.

Helpful tip
Attendees can easily find exhibitors based on multiple search criteria. Clearly name the documents and files you upload to your booth so attendees can easily find the information they need when they are searching the content in your booth.

Boost your brand awareness

Consider a sponsorship opportunity at the OSBA Capital Conference and Trade Show. There are many ways you can boost your presence through sponsorship.

Visit **http://conference.ohioschoolboards.org/2020/conference-sponsorship** to see the great packages we have available.

As an exhibitor, you know how important it is to advertise your company. Check out these great promotional options to do just that.

- **VendorLink**
  Drive traffic to your website with this hassle-free, low cost investment.

- **OSBA Journal**
  The only education-related magazine sent to Ohio's leaders, featuring industry and legislative updates, member information, student and district achievement and more.

- **COVID Resource Vendor**
  Separated by category, we make it easy for districts to find what they are looking for as they navigate these uncertain times.

Setting up your virtual booth

Follow these step-by-step directions to set up your booth.

1. Reserve your booth space. Visit **https://exhibitors.ohioschoolboards.org/user/login** to book your booth if you have not already done so.
2. Review our tutorial video on how to set up your booth. The video is available at **http://conference.ohioschoolboards.org/2020/for-exhibitors/exhibitor-resources**.
3. You will receive an email to activate your account. Use the link in this email to create your online account through the event platform. This will allow you access to update your virtual booth.
   ● Be sure to review and complete each tab in your exhibitor portal.
   ● You may complete and/or edit these details by simply clicking "Edit Exhibitor Information."
   ● When you log in to the virtual event platform for the first time, please visit your virtual booth listing and ensure all of your details have pulled over correctly. You will not be able to access the virtual event platform itself until OSBA opens the platform up to you (you will receive an email with detailed log in instructions).
4. Upload files. You can upload your logo, videos and PDF files. Please reference the "Exhibitor marketing materials" below for details.

Exhibitor marketing materials

Exhibitors can provide their own marketing handouts and videos that attendees download and view. Marketing materials are uploaded into the Exhibitor Portal and must be enabled in the Exhibitor Setup tool.

Videos
Exhibitors can provide videos in one of two ways. The number of videos can be limited by the exhibit manager.

Upload video
Upload a video to the exhibitor tool. File Types Accepted: .mp4, .mov, .avi, .mpg, .mpeg Max File size: 20MB Video Resolution: 480p, 720p, 1080p. Videos will be downscaled to 720p (HD).

Link video
If your video is already hosted on a web-based platform, simply provide the link to the video. No need to download/upload. Videos hosted on YouTube or Vimeo will be automatically embedded into the exhibitor virtual booth. Videos hosted on other platforms will be made available via a link.

Documents
Exhibitors can upload PDF documents or flyers for attendees to view and download.
File Types: .pdf only Max File Size: 10MB

Releasability
Although videos and documents will be made available only to registered attendees to the event, please be sure any documents you provide are publicly releasable and do not contain any confidential or proprietary information.

Technology requirements

- Be sure to have at least 1.8 Mb per second for download and 0.6 Mb per second for upload speeds for standard definition (3 Mb download and 1.5 Mb upload speeds for HD).
- Please close all browser tabs or pause software updates running in the background as this may slow down your processing speed.
- The platform supports Google Chrome, Firefox and Microsoft Edge browsers. If you are using an older browser like Internet Explorer, please upgrade to one of the browsers above for best experience.

The exhibitor experience

After logging in, attendees can enter various areas of the virtual OSBA Capital Conference from the Lobby.

They can enter the exhibit hall by clicking on the "Trade Show" icon in the middle of the lobby or in the left side menu.

Once an attendee has entered the Exhibit Hall, they can scroll through the listing of exhibitors, search for a specific exhibitor by company name or use the category filter to find exhibitors by product category.
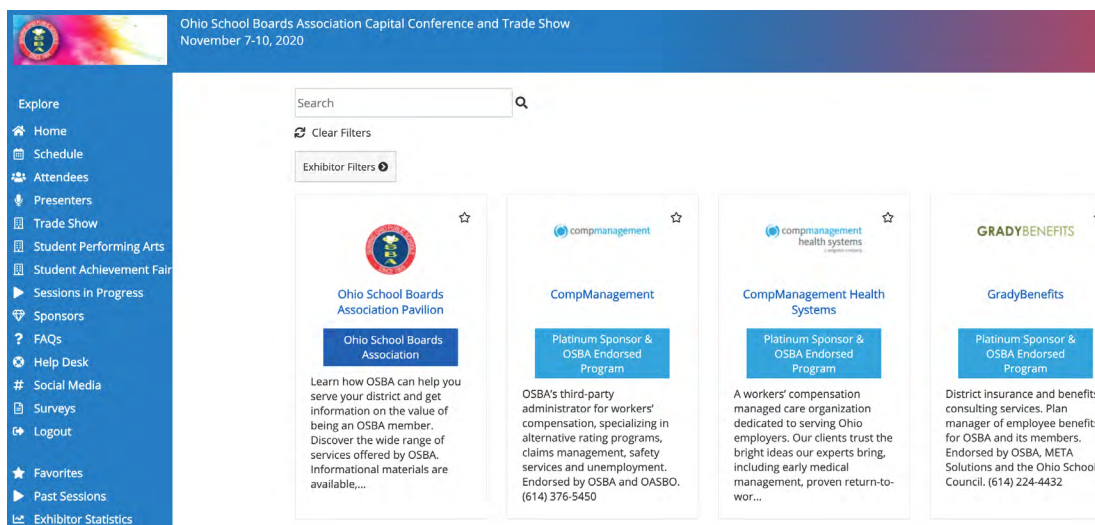
Reach out to attendees (attendees can be viewed under the "Attendees" tab in the navigation bar of the virtual event) to start a conversation, schedule post-event meetings, etc. When engaged in conversation with attendees ask them to drop their business card.

Instructions for entering your booth

1. Log in to the virtual environment. You will arrive at the Lobby.
2. Use the side menu or wall icons in the Lobby to enter the Trade Show.
3. Find your company's listing and click the link to open to the company detail page. On the lower right under the heading "Chat with us," click the "Manage booth staff" link. You can enable or disable yourself from the booth chats and from receiving chat notifications from attendees. When you are enabled to chat, your name and title will show under the Chat with us heading with a "Chat now" link.

Staffing a virtual booth

Staffing an online trade show is like an in-person event. You will want to have your sales team trained on your show goals and objectives, your new products and any special offers or engagement activities you have planned for your booth.

Have your staff wear branded apparel and even have a coffee mug or cup with your logo on it, as this might be visible on screen if you are having live video chat with customers or if your staff participates in networking events.

Chat with attendees in your booth

When visitors enter a booth, they can engage in conversation with you and your team. They can join in a general booth chat. They also can click on specific booth staff with whom they want to chat, and that staff person will get a notification of the chat. If both parties agree, you can move this to a live video chat with a click of a button.

As a booth representative, you can download in real time who has visited/currently visiting your booth or who has dropped their business card. You can do this in your Exhibitor Portal or through the event platform under the Exhibitor Statistics tab.

Virtual conversation tips

- Ask attendees for their feedback on your new products, what they're seeing at the show, or a simple, how are you doing.
- Suggest the best datasheet, resource or video that will extend their learning.
- Encourage attendees to share their business cards so you can engage with them after the event.
- Monitor your booth's traffic and reach out to attendees who have visited.
- Upload your photo so attendees have a face to go with who they are chatting with.

Social media

Social media is an effective way to grow your brand following and promote your marketing message. Use your social media posts to promote your presence at the OSBA Capital Conference, new products being unveiled, sponsored education sessions or talks, giveaways or promotions, and more.

Extend your social media reach by:
- Using #OSBACC when posting about the event on any social media channel so attendees can find your posts
- Tagging OSBA in your posts so we can see what you are up to and so can our followers.

Find us on social media here:
- Twitter: **https://twitter.com/ohschoolboards**
- Facebook: **https://www.facebook.com/OHSchoolBoards**
- LinkedIn: **https://www.linkedin.com/company/ohio-school-boards-association/**
- Instagram: **https://www.instagram.com/ohschoolboards**
- YouTube: **https://www.youtube.com/user/OSBAVideos**

Marketing and promotion during the OSBA Capital Conference and Trade Show

One of the benefits of an online event is it is truly open 24/7, but that does not mean you must always have staff available. There are published show hours when activity is expected to be the greatest. These are the ideal times to have staff available to interact with customers.

The live event will be open Monday, Nov. 9, and Tuesday, Nov. 10 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. For a full show schedule, visit **http://conference.ohioschoolboards.org**.

Take advantage of other events to meet new people, network and engage with current clients:
- Attend networking events to connect with attendees.
- Go to a live education session and engage in the session chat.
- Use the conference chat feature to message current clients to share resources available in your booth that may help them.
- Visit the OSBA Pavilion to learn more about OSBA and what we have to offer.
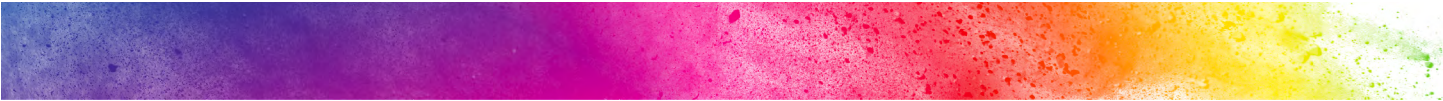
Driving engagement to your booth

The best way to generate engagement and traffic to your booth is to have compelling content. Virtual event booths can include any digital content including documents, videos, links to webpages and social media links.

Create opportunities to interact with customers when they visit your booth.
- Have a welcome video in your booth
- Offer a show special
- Develop a short survey for customers and enter anyone who completes the survey into a prize drawing
- Offer a prize drawing in exchange for a virtual business card
- During the show, take screenshots of activity in your booth and post it via social media

Post-event best practices

To get the most out of your investment in the virtual OSBA Capital Conference and Trade Show, create a plan to follow up with business leads in a timely manner after the event. You will have a booth dashboard where you can download the content for those who shared their business cards and for those who visited your booth. This data can help you with your post-event follow up.

Helpful tips for follow-up communications:

- Thank attendees for stopping by your booth.
- Keep the message simple and friendly.
- Reiterate any show special offers.
- Suggest a follow up phone call.

Conclusion

This virtual format will allow you to meet existing customers and meet new ones in an innovative new way. We hope the information in this guide helps you have the best virtual exhibiting experience possible. OSBA will be providing additional information on the event platform, so look for details on these opportunities to learn more.

Thank you for taking the time to plan your booth strategy for the 2020 OSBA Capital Conference and Trade Show. If you still have questions, please reach out to Wanda Bloch, OSBA marketing & trade show manager at (614) 540-4000 or wbloch@ohioschoolboards.org.