

# The Power of Integrating a Theme into Your Booth

By *Jefferson Davis, Competitive Edge*

An effective strategy to make your booth stand out from the crowd is to integrate some form of a theme into the overall exhibit and visitor experience. Themes not only help attract attention, but also create energy, fun, and excitement and help increase visitor memorability and recall.

The first place to start idea generation for your booth theme is to look at the show you are exhibiting at and see if you can piggyback on the show theme.

For example, for VMX 24, that the show theme will be...Show of Shows!

Below are ideas on themes and some suggestions on ways you could align with and leverage the VMX show theme. Keep in mind, you may not need to completely re-vamp your exhibit. It might be just adding a few elements in and around the exhibit.

If for whatever reason you are unable to tie into the show theme, here are several other ideas to help you create effective booth themes:

1. **Location** - Think about the city the event is being held at and what is unique about the city in terms of history, unique venues, and food. You might also use other types of location themes like camping, urban or industrial area themes and so on.
2. **Food/Beverage** - Because quality food is often hard to find in most convention centers, you'll never go wrong by offering food and/or beverages. Coffee, smoothies, cappuccino and craft cocktails are always big draws. Re-creating a small sidewalk bistro is a proven effective approach. To go with the show theme, you could have cotton candy, popcorn, or other fair foods
3. **Games** - Who does not like to have a little fun break in the hustle and bustle of walking a big tradeshow floor? Whether it's a competitive trivia type game, interactive A/V racing game, or a Pop A Shot basketball contest, or placing a few 80's pop video games like Pac-Man in the booth, this could be all it takes to draw more traffic. Carnival games would go well with VMX's show theme.
4. **Nature** - Nature is relaxing and integrating elements from nature in your booth can be a draw. Whether it is trees, plants, walls made of flowers, or running water ponds, or stepping stone walkways guiding visitors to your various solutions. There's always a way to bring a little nature into the booth.
5. **Charitable Causes** - Think about your target customer and their demographics and there's probably a charity that you can tie into. Whether it's animal protection, clean earth, or current tragic events like the Maui fires, tying into charities is a powerful way to show that you care about more than just your bottom line.
6. **Art** - Art-related themes could be as simple as displaying your products like works of art and elegant pedestals are framed pictures with spotlights. Perhaps you could create a museum tour experience through your booth.
7. **Pop Culture** - Music, movies, television shows, and errors like the 80s all provide ample opportunity for creating a fun and engaging experience.
8. **Materials** - Sometimes just constructing your booth of certain types of materials like wood, metal or glass can create a standout exhibit. Maybe you could have your exhibit built out of 100% eco-friendly sustainable materials.

**Jefferson Davis** of Competitive Edge is trade show productivity expert. Since 1991, his consulting and training services have helped clients generate over \$800M in combined results. You can reach him at [Jefferson@tradeshowturnaround.com](mailto:Jefferson@tradeshowturnaround.com)