

# Making the Exhibit Process Hassle Free

As an exhibitor, you have a lot to juggle. In addition to managing the booth staffing schedule, giveaways, lead follow up plans, travel arrangements and customer meetings, there are many details involved in getting ready to exhibit at a show. When is the advanced order discount deadline? Have I ordered everything I may need for the exhibit? How do I get my exhibit to the show and back home again?

Most exhibitors are searching for complete show information and an efficient planning resource. Below are several tips, hints, and guidelines provided to help you, the exhibitor, save time and money.

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## **PRIOR TO THE EVENT**

*It is best to begin planning for an event between 45-180 days from the move-in date.*

### Scheduling

#### **Deadline Dates**

- Take advantage of advance discounts when ordering – most vendors offer discounts
- Order services and furniture before deadline date – [Freeman offers a 30% discount on advance orders](#)
- Order labor and cleaning in advance – rates are higher at show site
- Send shipments to warehouse and/or showsite before deadline date – shipments that arrive after the deadline date will incur an additional charge

#### **Labor - Installation and Dismantle**

- Move in – schedule labor at start of day if possible (8:00 am) – it is the only time the availability is guaranteed.
- Move out – schedule labor for will-call if you require labor on the day the show closes since you will not know what time your empty containers will be returned.

#### **Utilities – Electrical, Plumbing, and Air**

- Arrange for utility lines to be installed before carpet is installed
- Make a note on your carpet order form that electrical lines need to be down before carpet is installed
- Send diagram for utility layout at least 30 days before move-in date

**Target Dates and Move-In Dates** – When limited time is available for move-in, show management and the general contractor will implement a targeted move in schedule

- Have freight delivered on target date or during move-in dates
- Early, late or off-target shipments may incur additional charges
- Tight move in time? – Have shipment sent to warehouse so it is in booth upon arrival
- Need early move in? – Make request with general contractor
- Need target date changed? – Make request with general contractor

#### **Freight – Two Options for Shipping Freight**

- Advance Warehouse – [Freeman offers 30 days of free storage before exhibitor move-in](#)
- Directly to Show Site

#### **Benefits of Shipping to the Warehouse**

- Free storage for up to 30 days in advance of the show
- Priority delivery to the show
- Your shipment in the booth when you arrive

**Official Contractors** – the companies in your Show Manual are your show's official contractors, and their desk is located at the Exhibitor Services Center at the event.

- All other contractors (not in your show's Manual) are called Exhibitor Appointed Contractors (EACs).
- If you decide to use an EAC, complete the EAC form found in your Manual.
- It is your responsibility to ensure your EAC provides a certificate of insurance to show management and the general contractor at least 30 days prior to move-in.

### Travel Arrangements

- Arrive early and allow enough time to set-up
- Schedule departure and allow enough time for empties to be returned and booth material to be packed

### Checklist

- Ask for confirmation of advance orders, keep a copy for your records and bring them with you to the event
- Check on advance warehouse shipments
- Know weight of shipments to estimate budget
- Keep a record of tracking numbers and bring them with you to the event
- Special needs or have questions, contact your General Contractor, Exhibitor Services Department

#### TIP

**READ YOUR SERVICE MANUAL OR SHOW KIT.** Knowing show rules and regulations, such as labor jurisdictions, fire safety guidelines, etc. is critical when planning your exhibit.

## [Shipping and Material Handling](#)

**Material Handling/Drayage or Freight Handling** – At your event, the General Contractor is the exclusive provider of freight services (also referred to as material handling or drayage). Material handling includes unloading of your exhibit material, delivery of these properties to your exhibit location, storage and return of your empty containers and loading of your exhibit material onto your designated outbound carrier(s) after the event.

### Two Options for Shipping your Freight

- Advance Warehouse – [Freeman offers 30 days of free storage](#)
- Directly to Show Site

### Shipping Instructions

- Check move-in dates and target dates – ensure timely arrival of your materials at show site.
- Use labels provided in the kit – labels should contain the exhibiting company name, booth number, name of the event, facility and address.
- Materials should be boxed, crated or on skids.
- Consolidate small shipments into one larger shipment to avoid the minimum charge per shipment.
- Insure your materials from the time they leave your firm until they are returned after the show – it is suggested that exhibitors arrange all-risk coverage by requesting riders to your existing policies.
- Know information about shipments – delivery dates, carrier, PRO #, etc.
- Do not ship high theft items (i.e., computers, flat screen TVs, etc.) in original cartons – pack in plain cases marked “Exhibit Material”.
- Mark your bill of lading “prepaid” to ensure your exhibit materials do not arrive collect. Collect shipments will be returned to the delivery carrier. Prepaid designates that the shipping charges will be paid by the exhibitor or third party who shipped the materials.
- Alert your carrier as to the location and schedule of the marshalling yard, if all trucks must check into an off-site marshalling area. [Freeman does not charge a fee for checking into the marshalling yard.](#)
- Shipping your own carpet – load it last so it is first off the truck; if packed in a crate, label it as carpet.
- Make sure your carrier knows the name of the exhibiting company, booth number, show name and facility. This information will help avoid delays in delivery and pick up of your shipments.

**TIP**

During the time between delivery of your shipment(s) to your booth and when you arrive, your materials will be left unattended. It is recommended that you arrange for a representative to stay with your materials or that you hire security services to safeguard your materials.

**Tips to Reduce Material Handling Cost:**

- Consolidate multiple small shipments that arrive separately into one larger shipment to avoid the minimum charge per shipment.
- Do not miss your target date – if you cannot make your target date, contact the general contractor immediately – additional charges may be incurred for off target and late shipments.
- Schedule your trucks to arrive on time and during regular hours to avoid overtime rates.
- Three categories of freight:
  - Crated – skidded or in any type of shipping container that can be unloaded at the dock that requires no additional handling (no additional cost)
  - Special Handling – delivered in such a manner that requires additional handling, such as ground unloading, stacked and constricted space unloading, etc. Federal Express and UPS are included in this category due to their delivery procedures. (extra cost may be incurred)
  - Uncrated – shipped loose or pad-wrapped and/or unskidded without proper lifting bars or hooks (additional cost may be involved)
- Refer to your Exhibitor Manual for show-specific regulations. In some cities, you may carry your own items into the hall as long as you do not use any equipment such as handcarts or four-wheel dollies due to Union Labor regulations.

**TIP**

Material handling charges are based on the weight of your shipments, not on the distance of your booth space to the dock; and each shipment received is charged separately. **Freeman does not charge for shipments under 5 lbs.**

## Ordering

**Labor**

- Order labor before deadline date and take advantage of advance discount rates – [Freeman offers a 30% savings on advance orders place prior to exhibitor move-in.](#)
- Order labor in advance to avoid waiting for your labor at showsite.
- Labor and equipment orders are guaranteed only when requested for the start of the working day (8:00 am).
- Inform labor contractor of utilities ordered and placement.
- At the end of the show, request labor on will-call until your empty containers are returned.
- Be aware of overtime and double time hours – schedule straight time when possible.
- Labor supervision can be ordered if you will not be at the show site during move-in or move-out – [Freeman supervision is available.](#)
- Advance and show site orders for equipment and labor will be dispatched once a company representative signs the labor order at the Exhibitor Service Center or designated labor desk.

**TIP**

Notify the general contractor as soon as possible if previously ordered labor is not needed. Some contractors require a 24 hour notice; otherwise, there is a cancellation charge of one hour per person

**Union regulations vary from city to city regarding the installation and dismantle of your exhibit. Some cities have restrictions regarding the amount of work that exhibitors can perform – for example, some cities allow exhibitors to do work within the confines of their booth, if 100 square feet or less (10' x 10') and if the following conditions are met: \***

- Set-up can be reasonably accomplished in approximately one hour.
- No tools are used in the assembly or dismantle.
- Individuals performing the work must be full-time employees of the exhibiting company and carry identification to verify this.

(\*Does not apply to all cities)

**TIP**

**Advance and show site orders for equipment and labor will be dispatched once a company representative signs the labor order at the Exhibitor Service Center.**

### **Furniture and Furnishings**

- Order furniture and carpet by deadline date and take advantage of advance discount rates – [Freeman offers a 30% savings on advance orders.](#)
- Please notice if the exhibit area is not carpeted. Some events require booths to be carpeted. Exhibitors will either need to order carpet for their booths or ship their own carpet.
- Booth information, including the items that are included with the booth, is available in the Service Manual. Some shows include furnishings, such as chairs, table and wastebasket with the purchase of their booth space.
- Booth Cleaning – vacuuming and porter service must be ordered separately. Cleaning orders placed at show site may incur an additional charge.
- Carpet will not be installed in booth until electrical outlets have been installed.

**TIP**

**Remember to order visqueen to keep your carpet clean prior to show opening and carpet padding for extra comfort during the show.**

### **Graphics**

- **Minimum requirements for original artwork, such as logos, when Freeman is providing design and layout:**
  - 300 dpi resolution at a size of 8 x 10 inches (higher resolution files will result in improved final product)
- **Minimum requirements for final artwork that Freeman will reproduce exactly as provided:**
  - 100 dpi resolution at full size of actual finished product
- Artwork files that are of acceptable resolution as listed will typically be too large to send via e-mail. Files should be sent via overnight delivery on either a CD-ROM or a DVD. A printed hard proof needs to accompany the files.

**TIP**

**Order graphics prior to the deadline date for discounted prices. [Feel free to call the producing Freeman branch for additional information on file types accepted.](#)**

## Electrical Service

- The more information you supply, the smoother your installation will be.
- Floor plans/display diagrams – indicate where your outlets should be by using neighboring booth numbers as references.
- Approval to Proceed – inform the electrical department if you want your outlets installed before you arrive at the show.
- 24 Hour Power Order – order 24 hour power only for the outlets that require constant power.
- Regular show power is usually turned on 30 minutes before the show opens each day and turned off 30 minutes after the show closes each day. Power will be turned off immediately after final show closing.
- Make sure utility lines will be installed early before carpet is installed.
- Pre-wire as much of your equipment and exhibit as possible before you get to the show. Color code and organize all wires to minimize electrical service labor time on site.

## General Information

- Overwhelmed? Consider a rental exhibit program. If you are new to exhibiting or don't yet own a permanent exhibit, most service contractors now offer a wide range of rental packages that can be customized for your use and include set-up and removal, shipping, and other services.
- Order only the amount of services/utilities you need (i.e., electrical, plumbing, internet, telephone lines, etc.) Contact the appropriate supplier if you have any questions.
- Avoid making changes to your orders on site whenever possible. [Freeman does not charge for order cancellations](#); however, other vendors may charge a fee.

### TIP

**Rent a 9' x 10' carpet for a 10 x 10 booth – usually a booth's backwall will cover the rear one foot area. However, if you prefer to cover your entire booth, you may order custom cut carpet. PLEASE NOTE: Custom cut carpet may cost more.**

**FREEMAN ONLINE®** - Available for your convenience to order all [Freeman](#) services, view show schedule, print order forms for all vendors and more.

- Key Word Search for Events and Services
- Exhibitor Service Manual online with forms & links to other contractors
- Interactive Order Forms
- Exhibitor Wizard to guide you through the ordering process
- Material Handling Calculator so you may estimate these costs PRIOR to the event
- Show Information
  - Quick Facts – important show information
  - Move In/Out Schedule & Freeman Deadlines
  - Targeted Floor Plan
  - Contact Information for Show Management or Freeman Branch

## QUESTIONS ON FREEMAN ONLINE®:

**Freeman Customer Support Center**

**Monday – Saturday from 7 am – 7 pm CST**

**1-800-508-5054**

### TIP

**Freeman offers interpretation and translation services for 150 languages. Please call Customer Support Center at 1-800-508-5054 or your local Freeman office.**

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## Setting Up the Event

### Arrive Early

- Allow enough time to set-up.
- Bring copies of all your orders and confirmation numbers, plus the people you spoke to and their on-site phone numbers.
- Bring shipping information and tracking numbers.
- When you get to the show, get your badge from Exhibitor Registration; then find your booth and check the status of your display and the services you ordered.
- Locate Service Center locations and Show Office – these two offices are your main support centers while you are at the show.
- Follow guidelines for unloading privately owned vehicles (POV).

#### TIP

**ConciergeServices by Freeman™ is available at large events. Freeman also distributes a personnel flyer with names and phone numbers to contact for assistance.**

#### TIP

**Wear comfortable clothes/shoes during set-up. Air conditioning and heating are not turned on during move-in!**

### Empty Containers

- Place “Empty” stickers on your empty containers for storage during the show – Empty stickers can be found at the Service Center.
- Be sure to write your booth number, company and show name on the sticker.
- Do not place valuables in empty containers since they are not secured during the show.

#### TIP

**Questions about when your order will be delivered, freight delivered, or empty container return? Freeman publishes a show site delivery schedule.**

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## During the Event

- Review all invoices at show site.
- Confirm orders for dismantle labor if needed.
- Prepare your outbound shipping documents and labels in advance – [Freeman furnishes these shipping forms and labels at no charge.](#)
- Security guards are stationed at the exhibit hall doors. If you have something valuable in your shipment, it is advised that you wait for your carrier to arrive or hire a security guard.
- If you have products and/or items that you need to have access to during the show, these items can be placed in accessible storage so you can replenish your stock during the show.

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## **Close of the Event**

- When arranging for departure, allow time for empty containers to be returned.
- Empty containers are returned after aisle carpet is removed and may take several hours to complete. This is not a quick process. Please arrange your dismantle labor and travel arrangements accordingly.
- Remember to make outbound shipping arrangements. Materials left in the booth will be shipped by a carrier already on site. Missing information can cause additional time and money.
- READ YOUR MOVE-OUT BULLETIN. It contains important timelines and instructions.
- Bring your outbound shipping papers to the Exhibitor Service Center prior to leaving the facility.
- If using a carrier other than the general contractor, advise your carrier to check in by the designated deadline.

### **TIP**

**Keep your valuables (laptops, briefcases, purses) with you at all times, including during the tear down of the show. Do not leave them unattended in your booth.**