

Helpful Holiday Market Hints

From your Holiday Market Committee

Hint Sheet #1: Set Up & Booth Presentation

- ✳ Find a place where you can set your booth up ahead of time. Set up the lighting and display. Stand back and look at it from a customer's perspective, walk by and see what catches your eye. Think about how foot traffic will flow past your booth—where will customers see your booth from?
- ✳ Do all major booth construction in advance. **Use of power tools such as saws and sanders is prohibited inside the Exhibit Hall.**
- ✳ Booth height is limited to 10 feet in the Main Hall, 8 feet in Holiday Hall. Signs in the Main Hall may extend to 12 feet high. All aisle overhangs must be at least 7 feet off the ground. No roofs are allowed on booths.
- ✳ Booth lighting is essential. The lighting on site is inadequate and can cause colors to look wrong. Gooseneck track lighting from Jerry's or Brighter Homes is a good way to go, and more attractive than clamp lights. Consider also the color of the bulbs and how that might affect your product's appearance.
- ✳ Be careful how you point your lights. Don't blind customers as they approach your booth or look at your items.
- ✳ Have your electrical cords and connections properly figured out in advance (ask for a detailed electrical set up sheet if you are unsure of the rules). You are limited to 500 watts, and a single outlet.
- ✳ Raise your table height and get a tall chair so that customers don't have to bend over to see your product. Be sure you are sitting at their eye-level.
- ✳ Holiday booth decor is great, but make sure it doesn't overwhelm your products. Highlight your products, not your booth structure.
- ✳ Everything associated with your booth must fit inside the allotted space, including displays and chairs, so make space for yourself to sit. Also, plan a way to get in and out of your booth through the front. Don't depend on getting in through the back, or through your neighbor's booth.
- ✳ Have some display at the edge of your space, so folks can shop from the aisle.
- ✳ Sit in the corner, rather than the center of your booth, so you don't appear to be guarding your space and your stuff.
- ✳ Many areas of the room can get stuffy. Bring a small fan if you get easily overheated.
- ✳ If you have to move your booth mid show, remember you must dismantle your booth structure to move it.
- ✳ Bring your own booth sides and backdrop. You never know if your neighbors' will be compatible with your display or products. Bring a backdrop if your booth backs up to an empty space where the electrical boxes are.
- ✳ Plan for your display and booth to be self-contained. Don't depend on using your neighbor's booth structure to support your display.
- ✳ Remember that you have to take your display down eventually. Don't over-build and over-decorate.

Helpful Holiday Market Hints

From your Holiday Market Committee

Hint Sheet #2: Sales & Customer Service

- ✱ Pay attention to what is going on. Smile and stay awake!
- ✱ Be in your booth. Don't leave your shop looking unattended.
- ✱ Don't sit and read. Customers don't want to disturb you. Even if you look up and engage, you've already given an impression that you aren't interested in them.
- ✱ If you are bored, get up and fuss with your display. Dust, rearrange, in general look busy but not absorbed in your work.
- ✱ Have an informational opening remark to start the conversation with customers, saying something interesting about your work. Even if you say it a thousand times, each customer will only hear it once.
- ✱ Have visible price tags. Customers dislike having to ask about prices, and may just move on to another booth.
- ✱ Have a directory handy. It will help you help customers find where they are going.
- ✱ There's no weather inside. You can dress nicely.
- ✱ Have breath mints and a toothbrush in your Market gear.
- ✱ Don't let your friends hang out and chat. People don't want to interrupt your conversation - remind your friends that you are actually at work.
- ✱ Keep the conversation positive. Avoid asking your customers questions that can have a "no" answer, like "Can I help you?" Try "let me know if I can help you" instead.
- ✱ Make it easy for customers to see your products. Use lengths of PVC pipe on the end of table legs to raise the height of your tables.
- ✱ Don't stare at your customers as they are looking at your products.
- ✱ If a customer has disarranged items in your display, wait until they are gone to reset your display.
- ✱ "Did you make this?" does not necessarily mean the customer is ignorant, so don't take offense. It probably means they are trying to start a conversation with an easy question that has a "yes" answer. It could also mean that they are amazed that your product can be made by real people! Take the opportunity to start a conversation and make a sale.
- ✱ Consider bringing a high end, expensive item, even if you think it would never sell. Show your customers the depths and heights of your creativity and artistry, and who knows, it might sell!
- ✱ If non-shoppers standing idly in front of your booth is a problem, nicely get them to leave by going out and fussing with your display, or have a handy friend or neighbor pretend to be a customer that needs to be in that space.
- ✱ Shoplifting happens. Keep an eye on your cash and your electronics at all times. Groups of people may try to divide your attention so that one of them can steal. Step back so that you can see everyone and what they are doing.
- ✱ Unfold money when you take it, and don't be afraid to inspect bills. Look for the watermark, the embedded strip, or run a fingernail over the lapel of the guy on the front to feel for the engraving marks. You can also rub a dark area on white paper. The ink never completely dries, so it will make a mark.

Helpful Holiday Market Hints

From your Holiday Market Committee

Hint Sheet #3: Shoplifting & Security

- ✱ Shoplifting and thefts take place at Holiday Market, just like in any retail establishment. The first safeguard against this is awareness of who is around your booth at all times.
 - ✱ Shoplifters frequently work in pairs or groups - one engages you with questions or knocking something over while the other pockets items. When dealing with a group of customers, step back so you can see all of the people in the group. Chat with the whole group. If you are talkative they'll know you are paying attention.
 - ✱ Make a habit of watching people's hands. Watch for nervous body language or aimless dawdling.
 - ✱ Find a place for your cash that is not visible to customers and away from public areas of your booth. Fanny packs are a good way to keep your cash on you. Cash boxes are especially vulnerable during load in and out, and early in the morning and late in the afternoon.
 - ✱ Neighborhood Watch! Get to know your neighbors and keep an eye out for them and their stuff too.
 - ✱ Check over your display frequently, to be sure nothing is missing.
 - ✱ Plan to stay until after the building closes, after the sweep has cleared the building, around 6:20. Feel free to talk to anyone unfamiliar you see lingering around your neighborhood and remind them that the Market is closed and it's time to leave.
 - ✱ When closing, move vulnerable items away from the front of your booth. Use a booth cover and plenty of clamps to secure the front, or drape tables.
 - ✱ Don't leave anything valuable in your car. Parking lot thefts also occur.
 - ✱ If you would like, we can walk you to your car at night. Come by the Vendor Lounge for assistance.
 - ✱ What to do if a theft occurs? Get information about the theft, including a description of the suspect, to the Info Booth or Vendor Lounge right away. If possible, snap a cell phone photo. We will send a call out on the radio and have staff attempt to locate the person. Even if you discover the theft and have no suspect, please let the Vendor Lounge folks know so that it can be logged. We want to keep track of thefts, in case a pattern emerges.
 - ✱ Counterfeit money - always unfold money that is given to you and make sure the amount is correct. Along with looking for watermarks and embedded strips, you should always be able to feel etching ridges on the lapels of the Presidents. The ink never completely dries, so rubbing it on white paper should make a mark. If you feel uncomfortable or unsure about accepting large bills, they can always be traded for smaller cash at the Vendor Lounge by you or your customer.
- Extra: In case of Flu or Other Emergency**
- ✱ If you are ill, you can have someone sell for you. Please let the office know who will be filling in.
 - ✱ In case of illness or weather emergency that keeps you from opening your booth, please let the office know so we can cover and sign your booth for the day, or until you arrive.
 - ✱ Reminder from Mom: Eat right, get plenty of rest, drink lots of water and wash your hands or use hand sanitizer frequently.