

# Trends and opportunities for exhibitions in 2018

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The new year is almost upon us: budgets have been planned and exhibition calendars booked. The time is now to strategise how your display will stand out from the crowd. Here are the hottest exhibition trends forecast for the forthcoming year to ensure that your business will own the exhibition space in 2018.



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## Trend #1: It's all about technology

As a highly connected society, visitors are expecting information to be conveyed in novel and innovative ways. The information you deliver is equally as important as *how* you deliver it: attendees are looking to be wowed.

The good news, incorporating technology into your display doesn't need to be complicated to be effective. Your strategy can be as simple as including touch-screen interfaces or nifty devices like Bluetooth beacons to connect with consumer's devices. The benefit of this is threefold: attendees will be drawn to your stand, there is an opportunity to capture their data, and convey your brand's message in an innovative and exciting way.

## Trend #2: Natural wood

In order to juxtapose the sophisticated technology brought into your stand, one of the hot new trends of 2018 is to incorporate natural wood into your display. The effect is striking, especially when contrasted with more refined materials that are commonly used in exhibition stands.

## Trend #3: Take the hands-on approach

While technology is vital in attracting visitors to your stand, quality human interaction cannot be underestimated. An authentic conversation is still your most valuable asset. Your staff are, quite literally, the spokespeople for your brand and should therefore be well-versed in your brand story, warm, engaging and excellent listeners. A dynamic and interesting stand draws people in, while the people on-hand deliver a message in a compelling way to endear consumers to your brand.

## **Trend #4: Keep it eco-friendly**

Consumers at large are adopting a green lifestyle, therefore incorporating eco-conscious designs and decor, repurposed materials and energy-saving fixtures creates an impression with visitors who already have sustainability in mind.

## **Trend #5: Clever use of lighting**

LED lighting is hardly a novel concept, but the innovation driving it is. Custom lighting options are the name of the game, incorporating a range of intensities and colour options to create the right mood and effects. In previous years, lighting has been very monotone and one-dimensional. For 2018, expect ranges of softer lighting effects to create an ambiance.

## **Trend #6: Less is more**

The trend set by international exhibitors is that their stands contain fewer AV screens and marketing. By bypassing pamphlets, Powerpoint presentations and the like, the emphasis shifts to engaging with potential consumers and talking to them about their needs and interests. The focus is on making your exhibition stand a memorable experience.

Exhibition stands are no longer just a one-dimensional platform to sell your brand. In order to get people out of the aisles and into the booth, strive to create a memorable experience. Exhibitions are theatre; you're putting on a show. Each attendee is an audience member waiting to be enthralled. So, when you're creating an exhibition stand to put on a stellar performance, keep these six trends in mind.

## **ABOUT ADAM DEMBOVSKY**

Adam is a bigger picture thinker and serial entrepreneur. After completing a BCom degree, he went head-first into starting his own company from his friend's garage in Cape Town. He monopolised a gap in the market, which resulted in a 15 000% revenue increase and ultimately selling the business to a listed company. Dembovsky ventured into two businesses with highs and lows before discovering a gap in the market and a demand for retail and brand space construction.

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