



Beyond Badge Scanning:



Unlocking Trade Show & Conference
Revenue with Prospect Targeting

6 steps to transform random booth visits
into strategic sales conversations



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Imagine walking into a bustling trade show hall, surrounded by countless booths and attendees. Without a plan, it's easy to feel overwhelmed and unsure of where to start. This is where the power of data comes into play. By focusing on gathering company and prospect data before you arrive, you can transform your trade show experience from a chaotic guessing game into a lead-generating machine. Let's dive into how to leverage your ICP to source prospect data to supercharge your trade show success.

01 Choosing the Right Show: Your First Critical Decision

The journey to trade show success begins long before you step foot on the exhibition floor. It starts with selecting the right event to attend. This decision can make or break your entire trade show strategy.



When evaluating potential shows, consider your industry focus first and foremost. Where will your ideal prospects be gathering? A global behemoth like CES might seem appealing, but a regional industrial expo might yield better results if your target audience is mid-sized manufacturing firms in the Midwest.

Speaking of size, bigger isn't always better when it comes to trade shows. While large-scale events offer more potential contacts, they also present logistical challenges. You might find yourself racing between multiple venues, struggling to connect with key prospects in the crowd. In contrast, smaller regional shows often provide a more intimate setting, allowing for quality conversations and easier access to decision-makers.

Don't overlook the practical aspects of show attendance. Factor in travel costs, time away from the office, and the ease of navigating the event. A show that's a short drive away might offer a better return on investment than a cross-country flight, especially if you're just starting to build your trade show strategy.

For those new to the trade show circuit, consider starting with smaller regional events. These can serve as valuable training grounds, allowing you to refine your approach, perfect your pitch, and gain confidence before tackling larger national shows.



02 Sourcing Attendee or Exhibitor Data: Building Your Prospect Goldmine

Once you've selected your show, it's time to roll up your sleeves and dive into the data. This is where the real magic happens, transforming a generic attendee list into a targeted roster of potential clients.

Targeting Attendees

Targeting attendees, but the show isn't providing an attendee list? Don't worry. There's a powerful hack for generating your own list—and it will yield far better results than what you'll get from a broker peddling a list. Start with your preferred data tool (we like [Apollo.io](#)) and run a search for the persona that will be attending the show that matches your ICP. Job title and geography are often two of the most effective criteria to start with. You can then drill down into your ICP by layering on your target accounts or the industry and type of company you're targeting.



Summary

- **Collect Data:** Get the exhibitor list in a spreadsheet; use Upwork for data entry if needed.
- **Identify Leads:** Filter companies to match your target market.
- **Find Contacts:** Use tools like [Apollo.io](#) to locate decision-makers' contact info.
- **Adjust for Titles:** Consider job title differences across company sizes.
- **Refine Targeting:** Use regional and negative keyword filters to narrow your list.

This approach works especially well for events tied to professional associations or industries. Picture this: you're attending the Iowa Optometric Association's regional conference. You could pull the job titles of "optometrist" within a 180-mile radius of the show location. The secret to success with this approach is to message everyone on your list and ask them if they're attending (don't sell!). You'll be amazed at the response rate.

Targeting Exhibitors

If you plan to walk the show and target the people working a booth, start by obtaining the exhibitor list from the show organizer. This might come in various formats—an interactive map, a PDF, or even an old-school printed directory. Your goal is to get this information into a workable spreadsheet format. Don't be afraid to leverage resources like Upwork to help with data entry or web scraping if needed. Remember, the time invested here will pay dividends later.



With your raw data in hand, it's time to separate the wheat from the chaff. Go through the list and identify which companies align with your target market. This process might take time, but it's crucial to focus your efforts where they'll have the most impact.

Next, it's time to turn company names into actual human contacts. This is where tools like [Apollo.io](#) come into play. These prospecting platforms can help you find key decision-makers within each company, along with their contact information and social media profiles.

As you build your prospect list, keep in mind the nuances of job titles across different company sizes. A "VP of Sales" at a small startup might have equivalent decision-making power to a "Senior Sales Manager" at a Fortune 500 company. Think about including "gatekeepers" like executive assistants or project managers who might route your outreach to the right person.

Don't forget to use regional filters to ensure you're targeting prospects in your service area, and consider using negative keywords to exclude irrelevant leads. For example, if you're targeting corporate law firms, you might want to filter out personal injury practices



03 Organizing and Prioritizing Your Data: Bringing Order to Chaos

With your prospect list taking shape, it's time to organize this wealth of information into a usable format. Think of this as creating your personal trade show playbook.

Export your data in batches based on priority tiers. This allows you to focus your efforts on the most promising leads first, while still keeping track of secondary prospects. Then add your data to a mobile app like ShowScout, which allows for real-time updates and collaboration with your team while on the show floor.

Don't forget to include practical details like booth numbers. This seemingly small piece of information can save you valuable time navigating the show floor. It's also worth taking the time to verify email deliverability. There's nothing more frustrating than crafting the perfect follow-up email only to have it bounce back.

ShowScout

Navigate the event with precision & purpose.



Our powerful mobile app helps you effortlessly prioritize prospects, initiate discussions, capture sales insight, and close the loop on potential opportunities.

Say goodbye to:

- ✘ Wasting time with unqualified contacts
- ✘ Wandering aimlessly, hoping to bump into the right prospects
- ✘ Getting shot down when approaching a booth
- ✘ The chaos of scattered notes and misplaced business cards
- ✘ Manually entering business cards into your CRM after the show
- ✘ Poor follow-up with leads after the show

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04 Preparing for the Show: Turning Data into Action

Now that your data is organized and prioritized, you can start planning your trade show strategy in earnest. Your data is no longer just a list of names—it's a roadmap to trade show success.

Use your data to plan efficient routes through the exhibition hall, ensuring you hit all your high-priority prospects. Personalize your outreach based on the information you've gathered. Maybe you noticed a prospect recently announced a new product launch—that's a great conversation starter!

Keys to Success on the Show Floor

Prioritize Your Prospects

Not all prospects are created equal. Know which ones are your top priority and plan your time accordingly.

Met / Didn't Meet

Track who you've met and haven't met to ensure you capitalize on every opportunity on the show floor.

Opportunity Potential

After each conversation, rate the lead's potential to prioritize your post-show follow-up.

The ShowScout mobile app makes capturing this data on the show floor effortless!

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05 From Data to Action: Pre-Show Engagement

Don't wait until you're on the exhibition floor to put your data to work. The weeks leading up to the event are crucial for warming up your prospects and setting the stage for productive conversations.



This is where your meticulously sourced data truly shines. Armed with accurate contact information and insights about your target companies, you can begin a strategic pre-show outreach campaign. But in today's digital age, a single-channel approach simply won't cut it. To maximize your impact and increase your chances of breaking through the noise, it's time to embrace a multi-channel strategy that leverages every tool at your disposal.



06 The Importance of Multi-Channel Outreach: Casting a Wide Net

In today's interconnected world, relying solely on email outreach is a recipe for missed opportunities. Your trade show strategy should leverage multiple channels to connect with prospects.

Use LinkedIn to engage with potential leads before the show. Many people are more responsive here than through cold emails. Consider running targeted ad campaigns to warm up your prospects before you meet face-to-face. For those high-priority leads, don't underestimate the impact of a personalized piece of direct mail. In a world of digital noise, a physical letter can really stand out.

By diversifying your outreach, you increase your chances of connecting with prospects through their preferred communication channel.



SIMPLY STATED

Quality Prospect Data is Your Show Superpower

The difference between a successful trade show and a waste of resources often comes down to preparation. By investing time in thorough data preparation, you're not just creating a contact list - you're crafting a strategic blueprint for trade show success.

With your data-driven approach, you'll walk into the show with confidence, knowing exactly who to talk to and how to make the most of every interaction. Plus, the work you put into this data continues to pay off long after the show ends. You're building a valuable prospect list you can nurture throughout the year, turning today's trade show conversations into tomorrow's closed deals.

Armed with data and a solid plan, you're ready to transform your next trade show from a chaotic guessing game into a focused, productive endeavor. Here's to your trade show success!





Turn Trade Shows & Conferences into Your Revenue Powerhouse

LTO helps salespeople attend trade shows fully equipped to generate new business.

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