

# OPEN Insight:

LEVERAGING TRADESHOWS FOR  
MARKETING SUCCESS

FOR EXHIBITORS, ATTENDEES & ENTREPRENEURS

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**OPEN**

Calling all business owners.™

*in partnership with* **SEMA**  
AMERICAN EXPRESS

# Prepare & Prosper.

Last year American Express OPEN® followed two Cardmembers through their journey at the SEMA Show. Along with tradeshow experts, OPEN has created tradeshow best practices to help you make the most of your experience.

Tradeshows are high traffic and high stress, and using this guide can help you prepare for the connections you wish to make and the impressions you wish to impart.



## Exhibitor, Mark German

*Green Filter, USA*

As the CEO of three businesses, OPEN Cardmember Mark German knows how to leverage tradeshows in a tough economy. His automotive supply companies have been environmentally friendly since their inception eight years ago. Capitalizing on the current “green revolution,” he uses tradeshows to find and attract new customers.

## Attendee, Seth Gortenburg

*Chux Trux*

OPEN Cardmember Seth Gortenburg owns a truck and car modification company in Kansas City. Operating in an industry where new trends occur frequently, Seth attends tradeshows to stay one step ahead of his competition.

# Before The Show.

Major tradeshows can be overwhelming to attend without a plan. Going prepared with goals and specific expectations can make it highly worthwhile.



## ATTENDEE INSIGHTS:

Understand what the show has to offer and set goals accordingly. That way, you can make a plan and then execute it.

Offer incentives to your team to make contacts and identify smart growth prospects and possibilities.

Attend with a buying mindset. New products can mean new revenue streams and opportunities.

If possible, attend with someone familiar with the tradeshow scene for help navigating the system.

## EXHIBITOR INSIGHTS:

Plan. You are making countless first impressions.

Appearance is key. Select your booth with care and design graphics that stand out, attract traffic and educate your audience.

Set up meetings with prospective clients, buyers and valuable contacts before the show.

Be innovative in driving traffic and sales. Consider smart incentives for both staff and attendees.

For more information, visit  
[openforum.com/sema](http://openforum.com/sema)

# During The Show.

Tradeshows can be chaotic, and it's necessary to focus on your own tasks and goals— as well as the rhythms and happenings throughout the space.

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## ATTENDEE INSIGHTS:

Prioritize and manage your time effectively.

Divide and conquer with your team.

Choose seminars that match your business needs and team strengths.

Stay focused, get a few good ideas and move on.

Use showcases in order to be efficient.

Adjust your objectives for each day based on the previous day's events.

Avoid making snap decisions. Get as many opinions on products as possible.

## EXHIBITOR INSIGHTS:

Use showcases as a marketing tool rather than an opportunity to win a prize.

Be observant. There will be experienced and successful exhibitors that can provide good ideas.

Remember that success cannot be counted by the number of business cards you acquire.

Focus not only on attracting attendees, but also exhibitors; they're prospects as well.

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[openforum.com/sema](http://openforum.com/sema)

# After The Show.

Post-show, there is nothing more crucial than timely follow-up with the contacts you made. Confer with your team to glean learnings and instincts—and divide and conquer on actionable tasks.



## ATTENDEE INSIGHTS:

Schedule a follow-up meeting with your team to review the information everyone gathered during the day.

From the collective learnings, create categories and corresponding actionable steps to take.

Analyze the product purchases you made—as well as those you plan to purchase in the future.

## EXHIBITOR INSIGHTS:

Follow up! Let absolutely no contact go unpursued.

Organize your findings. Segment leads, prospects and partners.

Ask the show's organizers for a complete database of exhibitors and attendees.

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