

# 5 Tips for Getting the Most from Trade Shows

Attending a trade show can be inspirational and informative. But if you arrive without clear objectives and a strategy for accomplishing them, you may end up leaving the exhibition hall wondering where all your time went. A little planning and preparation will go a long way toward maximizing your time at the event. Following this checklist will help you get the most from your next trade show experience.

- ❑ **Make a plan.** Determine which exhibitors you want to see and map out their booth numbers and locations. The trade show floor can be packed with distractions in all directions. Having a list of priority booths to visit can keep you on target. Many shows offer online planners to assist with this process. Once you've hit all the companies on your list you can explore the rest of the floor at your leisure.
- ❑ **Schedule appointments in advance.** Booths are often busy with people asking questions and vying for staff attention. If the exhibitor is expecting you, you'll be given priority over other booth visitors and it's less likely you'll have to spend time waiting in a line. You can email a company in advance from the online showroom to make an appointment.
- ❑ **Write down your questions before you arrive.** Know what information you need from each exhibitor and bring along a means to record exhibitors' answers.
- ❑ **Wear comfortable shoes.** Attending a trade show typically means lots of walking and standing. Make sure you have tried and true footwear to get you through the day. If you're attending more than one day, bring two pairs of shoes and wear them on alternate days.
- ❑ **Schedule a next step for after the show.** Often, you'll have additional questions or want more detailed information once you've returned from a show and had time to process the information gathered. Schedule a software demo based on your particular application, get a test cut of your part, or discuss machine considerations and pricing options with your local sales person.