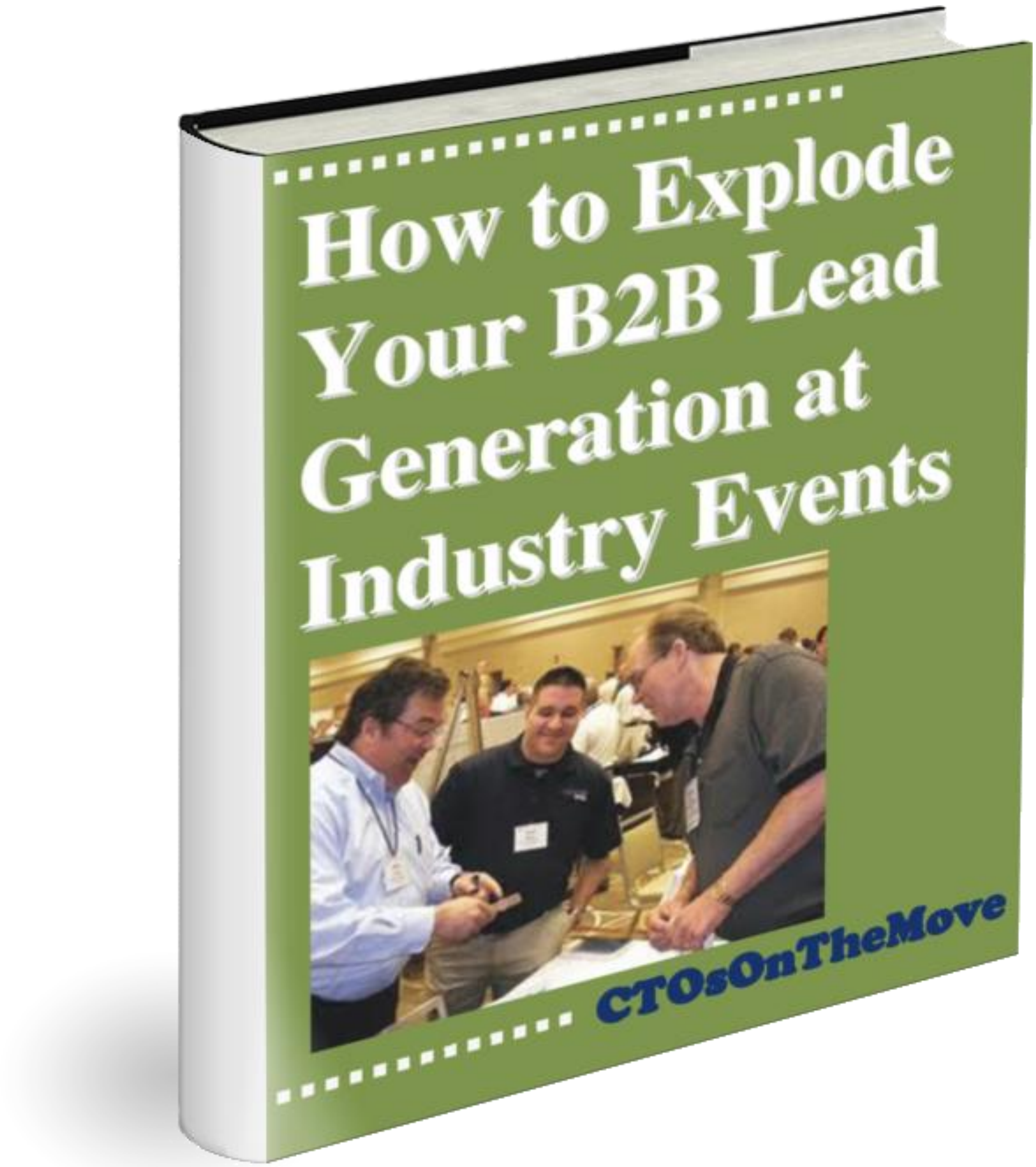

How to <u>Explode</u> Your B2B Lead Generation at Industry Events:

- Conferences
- Trade shows
- Executives Summits
- Seminars
- Expos

14 Advanced Techniques to Get 10x Sales Leads from Your Industry Events

If you are in sales, you probably attend a lot of industry events.

After all, what's better than face-to-face interaction with prospective clients, right?

Unfortunately, more often than not this wonderful opportunity, as well as untold $ marketing budgets, are going to waste.

Let me show you (stop me anytime, if this starts to sound too familiar to you):

Before the event:

- You scramble to print marketing materials, business cards and flyers. The last minute change of the corporate color from navy blue to turquoise doesn't help the matters.

- You other coast marketing team "forgot" to return the booth materials from their event to corporate HQ.

- You attend 10+ meetings internally to discuss strategy, wishes and hopes of every department in regards to the upcoming event.

- You realize that 50% of emails that you collected from the previous year's event are bouncing.

At the event:

- You chase the box with the most important presentation that by mistake was mailed to a concurrent event taking place in Hawaii.

- You fend off herds of free-loaders with duffel bags trying to snatch your free t-shirts when no one is looking

- The people you are trying to engage at the booth invariably turn out to be press, competitors, students looking for a job, free-bee chasers, day dreamers and vendors trying to sell you something.

- You hang out with your colleagues and occasionally say “hi” to a current or former client passing by.

- You attend a few keynotes where you sit in the dark or, best case scenario, munch on an omnipresent grilled chicken breast at $.39/lb, while listening to some overpaid bozo mumbling about strategy, integration and goals.

- After the main sessions, you hang out with your colleagues at the hotel bar and trade war stories or complain about the inefficiency of it all.

After the event:

- You spend two weeks in your off-time tabulating and uploading to CRM the 250 business cards you collected at the event and then after another two weeks you hire a call center in an exotic yet cheap locale to call them all.

- You tally up the results 5 months after the event and find out that after spending $50,000 on sponsorship, booth, travel and an untold number of hours at the conference you have:

  - 3 paying clients with scared eyes looking for an excuse to cancel

  - 15 “strong” leads who requested additional information, never to be heard from again or in varying stages of “phone tag” game.

  - 350 leads from relevant companies yet who are not senior enough or in non-relevant departments all together to be considered a valid prospective client for you.

  - 3,500 “other” leads with yahoo.com and aol emails

If any of the points above sound familiar to you then the following 13 advanced ninja techniques are for you:

Before the event:

1. **Make a list of 20 of your prospective clients** – leads, strong opportunities and cold calls. Reach out to them with:

"Hey, I'll be at the ABC event Mon-Wed and would like to chat with you on how we can help you with your new CRM initiative (___ substitute for what you are pitching).

Let me know 2-3 days/times we can chat for 10min". Send this out 3 weeks before the event.

2. Lie, cheat or steal but do **get the list of attendees and speakers** from the event organizers. Cross-reference this list with your 20 names from the previous point and add 20 more new prospects.

Reach out to them with:

"Hey, I've noticed you are attending XYZ event that we happen to be sponsoring.

I know you guys are working on your new ERP implementation and I want to share a private case study of one of clients who just did that, with key take aways.

I hope this would help…"

3. Hop on the **news train**.

Leverage press releases and company announcements.

Find out how the trade show organizers are working with media, to whom they are reaching out. Find out how you can cross-promote and/or be included in the list of sponsors.

4. **Social Media** – find out what # and @ exist for the event on Twitter.

If none – create them.

From that point on, tie all your Twitter activity to these tags.

5. Plan your time around **your prospects peak availability.**

Believe me, your potential clients will be busy running from one keynote to another, catching up on email from the office, putting out impromptu fires and more… they will NOT have time to idle chat with you at the booth.

Plan accordingly and try to engage them before, after the event or at least in the off-hours (think breakfast or post-event meetup) – you will have a better chance.

6. **Plan pre-party and after-party** – I am not suggesting high-jacking main events here.

I am saying - preemptively engage and tie-up people you'd like to be in front of.

So that they don't RSVP to your competitor first.

At the event:

7. Create a spreadsheet with your **40 names and create your goal for each one**. Your goal should naturally be moving your prospect down the selling funnel.

For one, it could be setting a teleconference, for another – scheduling a demo, for a third – to speed up the final approval.

When you do your mini-meetings keep in mind that your only objective is to get to that point “B”.

8. **Schedule your meetings**, back-to-back, if you have to.

Three best strategic locations: the bar of the hotel where all attendees are staying; the coffee shop across the street from the main conference building and a coffee concession stand at the conference.

Tip your waiters in ADVANCE so they treat you like royalty. The person you are meeting with will think you invited them in your private club.

9. **Go through your sales pipeline.** Invite, if possible, all prospects with 50% or better chance of closing, to the event.

This face-to-face interaction may close the deal or at least fast-track the sales cycle.

After the event:

10. Since you are dealing with 40 people and not 250 you can **do all follow ups at once** ON THE WAY from the conference. Don't wait a second longer because once you get back to the office your pile of "fires to put out" issues has been building up. You won't have time.

If the event is multi-day, do you follow ups in tranches:

"Hi, Jane – it was awesome to catch up, congrats on your promotion by the way. As we discussed, Tuesday next week works great for a demo. Could you lock in 2pm spot for me?…"

11. Schedule several follow up email and telephone campaigns immediately after the event.

12. Those who did not close as clients transfer to the nurturing email campaign so they can continue to receive helpful and valuable information from you couple times a month.

Next year when the time comes for the next conference they will be your best friends.

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So compare before-and-after here: before you were chasing lukewarm leads who already moved on.

Now you 1) enforced your relationship with a face-to-face connection and 2) moved 40 opportunities closer to the finish line.

So who's the champ now?