

# Sales **Q&A**



by Dan Cole

**Q** I have to work harder than ever to prove my show's ROI. What research or data should I be using? What other tips do you have about proving ROI to potential and existing exhibitors?

**A** First, let's not put the cart before the horse. What questions have you asked your exhibitors relative to ROI? For example:

- How do decision makers in your industry define ROI?
- How do they view trade shows?
- What other forms of marketing media do they utilize?
- Who are their target customers?
- What are their demographics?
- What are their objectives for the show?

Knowing this information will help ensure that you're gathering and presenting the right information to prove ROI.

Keep in mind there are still many decision makers who question the value of trade shows in general, let alone your event. For general data relative to the trade show industry, you can refer to the Center for Exhibition Industry Research (CEIR, [www.ceir.org](http://www.ceir.org)), which provides a wealth of information to demonstrate the value of trade shows in general.

Next, refer to your own demographics using an independent audit of your show's verified registration. The Exhibit Industry Audit Commission was established to promote the importance of audits in the industry, and they can provide assistance on how to audit your show. Armed with audited information, you can use demographics and other vital statistics to help answer some of the questions above.

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