



Whether you are a seasoned trade show veteran, or just planning your start-up's first show, improving your trade show booth shipping can help your company grow. Events are an excellent source of leads for both B2B and B2C companies. The power of great face-to-face interactions will help move your prospects through your sales funnel more quickly, bringing your team more revenue and wins. Developing great operating procedures and implementing some simple best practices can make your next show the best yet. Check out our list of best practices below and move forward with Approved.

## Take Advantage of the Advance Warehousing

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One of the common themes throughout this guide is going to be time. Efficiently utilizing time helps your exhibit shipping go from “just satisfactory” to downright excellent. A simple way to **improve your time management is through advance warehousing**. By shipping your trade show booth and promotional materials to a central location, you will avoid unnecessary charges associated with sending direct. Many events and host locations will charge exhibitors a fee for accessorial and detention of freight. Warehouse your materials with a trusted 3PL partner to eliminate these unwanted costs. Having your exhibit stored safely at a 3PL's facility will give them easy access for shipping to the venue.



Don't wait, track now. Track and trace your shipments early and often when they are in transit to the venue. Task one of your team members with providing updates to your staff on a consistent basis. By staying on top of where your goods are, any mishaps or misroutes will be easy to spot and will be more straightforward to fix. A great 3PL partner will provide these updates for you, so you won't have to go searching for the information you need. Work with your carrier to create a schedule for updates. Stay informed throughout the shipping process and ensure your booth arrives on-time.

## Reduce Your Shipping Costs

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Okay, this one is a bit of a no-brainer. But it is one of the most common ways companies overspend on their trade show budget. Reducing your shipping costs will significantly reduce your overall exhibitor spend. You can lessen your spend by following these simple rules of thumb:

### Distance

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Have a lot of shows in Las Vegas, but your office is in Maine? Search for a logistics partner more near the venue so the distance your display has to travel will be less. Fewer miles on the road (or in the air, or on the sea, or over the rail...) means fewer digits on your invoices.

### Size

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Minimize the footprint of your cargo. As we mentioned in our 5 Tricks to Save Money on International Shipping, the less space your freight takes up in a truck or container, the lower your charges. Design your display, so it breaks down into small, stackable pieces, allowing

your partner to maximize their space with other freight.

## Weight

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Using lightweight materials can help you secure better pricing from your transportation provider. For over-the-road freight, the weight of shipments is one of the most critical factors in pricing. Combine lighter cargo with smaller packaging, and you'll be on your way to your best trade show yet!

## Speed

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If you can, find a mode of service that will get your goods where they need to go without paying a premium price. Level of service is where the Advance Warehousing really comes into play. Instead of waiting and shipping your booth "just-in-time," schedule your shipments in advance so your carrier can find other shipments to pack, and maximize their revenue. The bump in a carrier's revenue will translate to more savings for you and your team.

## Find Perfect Packaging for Trade Show Booth Shipping

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The Approved Freight Team exhibits and attends shows all over the world. For these shows, our booth and promotional materials are the tools we use to make each event a success. Since our success is predicated on having our booth looking "spiffy," we work hard to protect our tools. Like any professional contractor or craftsman safeguarding your tools is vital to making money. Many exhibit design companies will provide flight ready cases for your displays. But if you are piecing together your booth, or want some extra custom protection, ask your 3PL partner if they can perform crating. Our team has experience in designing and crafting transport ready crates for trade show materials. Need some boxing for your trade show booth? [Contact us here and ask our team for a consultation](#)



“Time is an illusion...except in trade show booth shipping” Albert Einstein.

Okay maybe that isn't quite how the famous quote by Albert Einstein goes, but we think it gets the point across. Timing is the essential part of planning for your trade shows. Ship too early? You're going to pay fees and surcharges for storage. Ship too late? Your booth is going to look like your in the process of liquidating your inventory. Empty shelves and incomplete backdrops won't sell your widgets or services.

## Know Your Deadlines

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Trade shows are like any other large project. Phase planning and partnership with a 3PL partner can help you meet all of your deadlines with accuracy. We suggest using a project management tool like Wrike or Asana to help organize your team. These platforms allow you to invite anyone you are working with – even external partners like Approved – to your projects to help get everyone on the same page (literally).

## Know Shipping & Material Handling Processes

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Make sure you read the fine print in your exhibitor terms of agreement. If the show has hired an outside source for in-show labor, you may be responsible for a fee to utilize their equipment. Knowing the costs associated with in-show logistics will help you budget smarter.

## Label & Label & Label

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Did your Mom sew your name into your sweater as a kid? While this might have seemed excessive at the time, it's a best practice for trade show booth shipping. Label each piece of your booth, every box of materials, and all of your crates and packaging. The Approved Freight

Team color codes the pieces of our displays. Every part of the backdrop is blue, the podium is red, and our display mount and tower are yellow. This extensive labeling helps expedite assembly at the venue. Thus, leaving your team more time to network and plan for the event.

Always label your packaging and crates with contact information in case it is accidentally separated. Venues are receiving freight almost non-stop in the days leading up to the event. While most have stringent operating procedures, it is best to be safe, and make it easy to see which crate belongs where.

*See? Mom was just trying to protect her investment.*

## Have an “In-Show” Contact

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Having a partner on the ground at the show will go a long way in helping to make it a success. Reach out to event staff in the weeks leading up to the show and introduce yourself. Ask if there are any deadlines, rules, or information you should know. Let them know when your booth will be arriving and ask if you can receive a confirmation of receipt from their team.

## Know Costs and Surcharges

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Study your contracts. Nothing puts a damper on a great show quite like an unexpected invoice when you get back to the office. Carefully review each of your agreements with your team. Make sure each team member is familiar with the costs associated with furniture and amenity rentals at the show. With this in mind, decide what you need before the show and stick to the plan. Keep an eye on all changes to your event spend.





This last one is a best practice for all shipping. In logistics, data is king when it comes to accuracy and schedules. Make sure you ask what information your carrier requires. Check, double-check, and triple-check the information before sending it over to your contact.

We hope you have found a few ideas here in our Best Practices for Trade Show Booth Shipping which you can put into action for your next show. Approved Freight has a team of experts helping companies of many industries plan, ship and maximize their exhibits. If you have a specific question on any of the practices listed above or would like to run some ideas by our team, you can [Contact Us Directly Here](#)

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