



## Home Show Prep

Leaves are blowing across lawns and piling up in the corners those gorgeous decks you built throughout the 2008 season - this can only mean one thing - It's that time of year again - It's time to get your ducks in a row for your local home and garden shows.

Here are a half dozen tips for making your home and garden show productive, your display a hit, and help you bring in great leads:

1. Make your display inviting. Help visitors see themselves owning a deck that you built. Your display can't show everything - so, pick a couple of things to showcase - maybe some eye-catching lighting, an arbor over custom seating. Even a small bubbler fountain or an attractive patio heater.
2. Get some color in there too - maybe an umbrella, or some potted plants. Remember that the season is Fall, not Summer - you can decorate your booth with typical tropical themes, or you can get visitors to think of buying NOW by using some of that fall foliage collecting on your deck as we speak. Add a pumpkin or two, and use colors that make visitors envision themselves having a deck at THIS time of year.
3. Don't block the door! You want them to come into your display, right? So, keep it open. Put any table with brochures back IN the booth to draw them in. Same thing with any goodies you care to have - if you have candy or a giveaway item in your booth, make it visible from the aisle, but only reachable when they enter the booth.
4. Engage your audience. Stand a foot or so into the aisle. Smile and greet passers-by. Verbally invite them into your booth with a friendly "hi, let me show you some of our work." You can hold something in your hand, like a deck board sample, or a decorative post cap. We all do better with the public when our hands are occupied. Plus it helps start a conversation. You can ask something like "what do you think of this color? (deck sample), or "if you were building a deck, would this post cap appeal to you?"
5. Have a "Show Special" and advertise it in your booth signage. People come to home and garden shows looking for a bargain - so give them one! It doesn't have to be expensive - it can be something like a free lighting package with a certain size deck order, or perhaps a small arbor, or some other creative accent.
6. Make a form to collect information on prospects. Be sure to include the all-important question - "when are you looking to build?" It will help you to know how to follow up with them. See sample form below.

Most important - put on a happy face. You're selling FUN after all

SHOW DATA COLLECTION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Ready to Build:  Now  Spring 09  Summer 09  Fall 09

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Install New Deck | <input type="checkbox"/> Replace Existing Deck | <input type="checkbox"/> Second Story  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shade Structure  | <input type="checkbox"/> Privacy Fence         | <input type="checkbox"/> Hot Tub       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fire Pit         | <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor Kitchen       | <input type="checkbox"/> Water Feature |

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

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