

Bringing Your Brand to *North America*

This interactive, step-by-step guide can help make your U.S. trade show exhibit experience successful — complete with exclusive insider tips.

Click the tabs above to navigate 

Visit the FreemanOnline
Exhibitor Portal



Travel & Planning Strategy // Budget // Travel

STRATEGY

- Begin planning 45-180 days from the show's move-in date.
- Align event and organizational goals.
- Define target audience.

OUTLINE COSTS, INCLUDING

- Exhibit Space Rental, Booth Rental, or Purchase
- Show Services
- Travel Expenses
- Marketing Activations
- Sales Training

REMINDER: Secure visas for attendees not from Visa Waiver Program countries.

Click the tabs above to guide you through the information.

TRAVEL TIPS

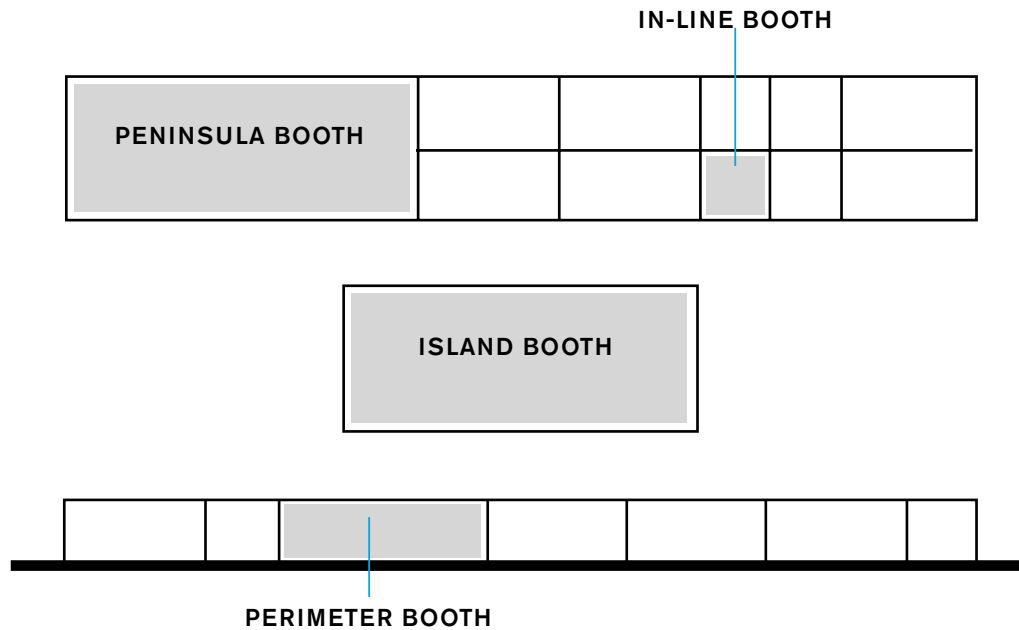
- Check passport validity and visas, if applicable.
- Alert your credit card company about international travel plans.
- Use local currency to avoid excessive exchange rates.
- Add an international mobile calling plan.
- Check local holidays that may impact travel.
- Arrive early to allow plenty of time for set-up.

Exhibit Options

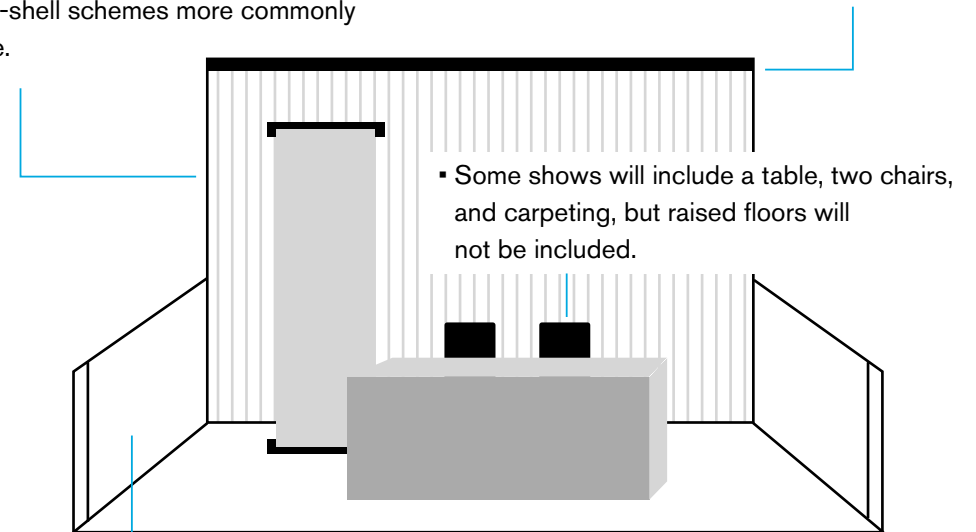
DIFFERENCES BETWEEN EMEA STANDS AND U.S. EXHIBITS

Most U.S. show organizers determine the baseline packages for trade show booths. Size and location options will vary.

- Options typically include in-line (most common), perimeter, peninsula, or island. See diagram below for examples.



- The U.S. typically offers only pipe and drape, unlike the hard-shell schemes more commonly used in Europe.



- Side walls typically cannot obscure views.

Click the tabs above to guide you through the information.

RENT OR SHIP

Contact Freeman® for more information on the benefits of exhibit booth rental, including shipping, storage, customs fee elimination, and more.

TIP: Shipping an existing custom booth to the show may be more expensive than renting a booth locally.

Show Services **Pre-Show // At-Show // Post-Show**

Read the exhibitor services communications from the general services contractor producing the event.



EXHIBITOR SERVICES KIT / SHOW MANUAL

- A manual listing of the show’s official contractors will be located in your exhibitor services kit.
- Quick Facts, including all deadlines, are available on [FreemanOnline](#).



ORDER BY DISCOUNT DEADLINES

- Tip: Save costs on orders made through [FreemanOnline](#).



SHIPPING AND MATERIAL HANDLING

- Delivery options: Advance warehouse delivery or on-site delivery. Learn the difference [here](#).
- Material handling cost: Freight is weighed and billed at the dock or advance warehouse.
- Cost-saving tips:
 - Consolidate shipments; ship in crates or shrink-wrap to skids.
 - Ship to the advance warehouse up to 30 days before move-in to avoid additional charges.

[Learn more](#) about FreemanOnline and how we can help you.

Click the tabs above to guide you through the information.




SPECIALIZED TRANSPORTATION PROVIDERS

- Use carriers that specialize in trade show logistics.
- Bring a list of tracking numbers to the show.
- Ask Freeman for help — our team specializes in transportation, including multi-event ordering, storing, and shipping solutions.

TIP: Show security isn't responsible for guarding freight, so wait for your carrier to arrive, or hire a security guard.

Show Services **Pre-Show // At-Show // Post-Show**

Click the tabs above to guide you through the information. 



PRE-SHOW PREP

- Log in to [FreemanOnline](#) to view show information, orders, and show site services.



SET-UP & MOVE-IN DAY

- Align your set-up with the show's move-in hours — many U.S. events set specific times for booth installation.

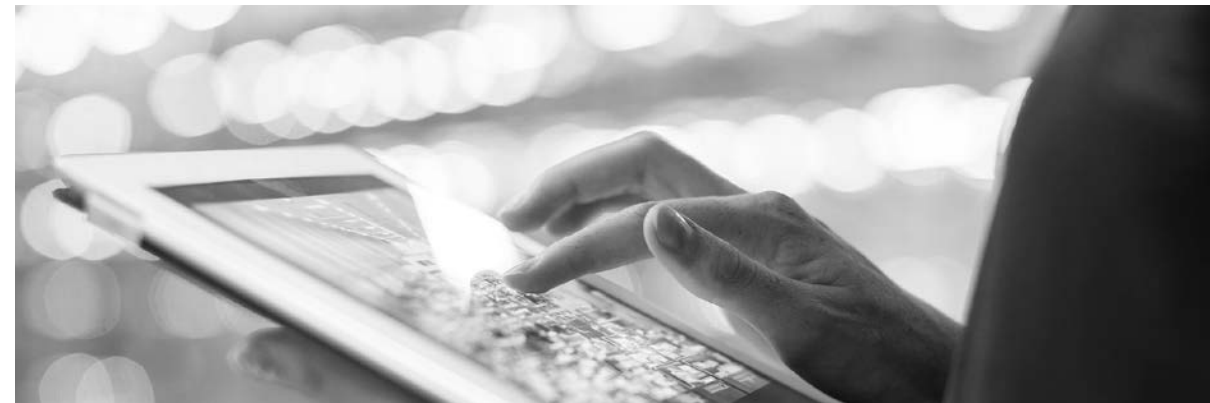
Upon Arrival at Your Booth Space:

- Inventory what was shipped and delivered.
- Visit the Exhibitor Service Center if anything's missing.
- Empty and label your containers; they aren't accessible during the show.

NOTE: Air conditioning and heating may not be turned on during move-in; dress accordingly.

Electrical Power Cords and Voltage:

- Exhibitors should plan for the difference in voltage. (110 volts vs. the typical 220)
- Most low-voltage electronics like laptops and phones will work with a U.S. plug adapter.
- Before arriving, share your plan for voltage needs and UL requirements with local event partners.



Labor:

The U.S. labor market can be incredibly perplexing, with a labyrinth of customs, rules, and regulations. It is vital to understand the process.

In most venues, exhibitors must outsource these services to multiple union or non-union labor service providers, who will each send a proposal and invoice. The show's exhibitor services manual should provide more in-depth information about these requirements and guidance on overtime rates.

Invoicing & Payment:

- Invoices, outbound shipping information, and labels are delivered to your booth the day after the show opens.
- Be prepared. Payment is due before you leave the exhibit hall at the end of the show.

Show Services

Pre-Show // At-Show // Post-Show

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After the event, remember to:

- Confirm your dismantle labor order.
- Be patient. Depending on show size, it could take several hours for your empty containers to be returned.
- Complete the Material Handling Agreement(s) once your booth and shipments are packed.
 - Tip: Each outbound shipment destination requires a separate MHA.
- Label every container being shipped and notify your outbound carrier for pickup.
- Go to [FreemanOnline](#) to create, save, edit, and submit MHAs from any device.
Check the Show Quick Facts for date and time specifics.

NOTE: U.S. shows will often set specific time frames for booth dismantling.

Trade Show Lingo

Click the tabs above to guide you through the information. 

Advance Order — An order for show services sent to the general contractor by the advance order (discount) deadline. Usually less expensive than orders placed on-site.

Advance Warehouse/Receiving — Location set by show management to receive freight before start of show. Freight is stored at this location and then moved to the show at the designated time.

Boneyard — A specific area used to store extra furniture and any equipment not being used during show hours.

Dark Day — Terminology for a day during move-in or move-out of the facility when show site services are shut down.

Decorating — Dressing up exhibit booths with carpet, furniture, foliage, etc.

Double Time — Refers to a pay rate for work performed that is double the normal hourly rate.

Exhibitor Service Center — A centralized area where representatives of various show services can be contacted or located.

Exhibitor Service Manual — Manual containing general information, labor/service order forms, rules and regulations, as well as other important information pertaining to exhibitor participation.

Floor Manager — Individual representing show management who is responsible for overseeing all or part of the exhibition area. He or she is also available to answer questions related to the show floor, show hours, and show services and acts as the liaison between exhibitors and the general contractor.

Freight Desk — The area where inbound and outbound exhibit materials are handled at a trade show.

General Contractor — A company providing services to a trade show and/or its exhibitors. The general contractor is the official contractor designated by show management for a given show (also called General Services Contractor, GSC, or Official Contractor).

Installation/Dismantle — Also referred to as I&D. The set-up and tear down of exhibits.

Labor — Refers to contracted workers who perform services for shows.

Labor Desk — On-site area from which service personnel are dispatched.



Material Handling — Unloading your shipment, transporting it to your booth, storing and returning your empty crates and cartons, and reloading your freight or shipment onto your selected carrier at the close of the show. The MHA is your material handling agreement.

Official Contractor — Show management-appointed company providing services to a trade show and/or its exhibitors.

On-site Order — Order for services placed by the exhibitor with the general contractor after exhibit set-up begins and is usually more expensive than an advance order.

Overtime Labor — Work performed before 8:00 a.m. and after 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, and all hours on Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays (varies by city).

Pipe and Drape — Pipe material with fabric draped from it to make up side rails and the back wall of an exhibit booth.

Privately Owned Vehicle — A privately owned vehicle, such as a passenger car, van, or small company vehicle, as distinguished from trucks, tractor-trailers, and other over-the-road vehicles. Exhibitors with a POV should ask the general service contractor for unloading instructions.

Quick Facts — Essential show information at a glance, provided to exhibitors by Freeman.

Show Management — Company responsible for all aspects of the exhibition.

Show Office — The show management office at the event.

Straight Time — The hours considered normal business hours.

Target Date — The specified date and/or time to move a shipment into and/or out of an exhibit hall/show site.

Transportation/Shipping — The transport of your exhibit materials to and from the convention or event.

Union — An organization of workers formed to protect the interests and rights of its members. Labor unions provide venues with a pool of workers who are experts in various areas.

Work Time — Paid time that begins as soon as the workers report to the exhibitor; stops when the exhibitor releases them from work.

About Us

We make exhibiting
in North America easy.

Click the tabs above to guide you through the information. 

Our expertise translates to your success.

As a 90-year industry veteran, we have the insight and creativity to guide you every step of the way. No matter the venue we help you design, plan, and deliver immersive experiences for your customers.

Through comprehensive strategy, creative, digital, event technology, and logistics, we help organizations increase engagement and drive results in North America and across the world.

Ready to bring your brand to North America?

[Get in touch](#)