

## Maximizing Exposure at the SIBA Discovery Show

If you are planning to exhibit at the upcoming SIBA Discovery Show there are some things you can do to make the most of opportunities the show provides to connect with booksellers. Having a strategy in place to draw people to your booth is important to making the show a success for you. Here are some steps you can take to maximize your exposure at #SIBA

### In Advance of the Show:

#### 1. Request a mailing list

Although it is difficult to obtain an attendee list before the event, if you are a member of SIBA you can request a mailing list of SIBA member bookstores at any time. The list includes both snail mail and email contact information. Use the list to communicate with booksellers in advance of the show. Reminding them of a booth signing or offering a small give-away they can pick up at the booth is an effective way to generate traffic to your exhibit space.

#### 2. Develop a 40-second pitch

An important part of your success on the show floor is your sales pitch. Prepare a 40 second pitch in advance so that when booksellers come by, in addition to having something to give them, you also know what you want to say. Ask yourself: What is the most important information they need to hear? Don't repeat the info that is on the giveaway, but add new information. One idea is to tell booksellers what kind of reader or customer will buy this book. "If they like A, B and C, they will love [your title]" OR "This isn't like anything else - imagine eating an orange for the first time - that is how this book makes you feel." You want something memorable and catchy. But your 40-second book pitch is the key.

#### 3. Submit your directory listing

Your table reservation includes a 50-word description for the show directory both print and online. Attendees use the directory to prioritize their time on the show floor, so take some time crafting your listing. You don't need to include info they can find on Google, you need information that will get them to come by the booth. Offer a prize giveaway or meet the author or get a freebie or learn a magic trick. Be creative and get your message out there.

#### 4. Take advantage of the Scavenger hunt

Your table reservation also includes free participation in the SIBA Show Floor Scavenger Hunt, so you will need 40 of the same item if you want to play. SIBA designed the scavenger hunt as a way to encourage booksellers to visit booths they might otherwise pass by. The show directory contains a page of items, and bookstores that collect all the items (all giveaways at exhibitor tables) become eligible to win a free trip to next years' show. Needless to say, bookstores are very motivated. By offering an item for the hunt, you guarantee that bookstores will come to your booth. Have your 40 second pitch ready and don't give them the item until they have heard the pitch. SIBA needs to know your item in advance, and if you can come up with an item that ties to one of your books, even better. Always looks to be memorable.

#### 5. Make your social network connections early

Here are the [bookstore members of SIBA](#). Go on Facebook and like them all. Say nice things

about them and let them know you will be at the SIBA Discovery Show and what your booth # is and that you look forward to meeting or seeing them again.

### **At the Show:**

#### **1. Table tricks**

As enticing as it is, there is more to a successful exhibit than a stack of books on a table. Make your booth look attractive and inviting. Have things going on. Engage with folks. Ask them to sign up for your email newsletter. Offer them a piece of candy. Keep that 40 seconds in your pocket at all times. Remember to have fun. Smile even when you're tired. Don't let the last person's attitude infect your encounter with the next person unless it was really good!

#### **2. Don't forget your raffle vouchers**

Every exhibitor receives a book of blank vouchers for the SIBA Buyers Raffle. You can sign and giveaway the vouchers to folks who visit your booth and it is up to you to decide what they need to do to receive a voucher. The raffle has a bookseller and exhibitor winner: the bookseller wins \$1000, and the exhibitor wins a free table at the next year's show. It's okay to make booksellers work for their vouchers. Many exhibitors give them for placing orders, or for staying to hear about a new program. It's up to the exhibitor. Decide in advance what you are going to require and have a clear explanation ready of what that is.

#### **3. Sharing the good times while they are happening**

Use your smartphone. Folks (mostly) love having their picture taken. Offer to take photos of friends together in front of your booth. Use their phone or yours. Better to use yours because then you get their info so you can send the photo to them. Have some props or a frame that promotes you and is fun for them. [Here's a sample on my FB cover page.](#) Post photos you take from the show and ask people to tag themselves.

#### **4. Complain to the right people**

Negativity does not sell books, so don't complain, except to each other, or to staff. Staff are the only folks who can fix problems and no one else wants to hear about them. If you have an issue at your booth talk to one of the SIBA Show staff stationed on the floor, or at the information/registration booth. They are dying to solve your problems.

### **After the Show**

#### **1. Follow up**

Follow up with everyone who is expecting to hear from you and write thank you notes to the booksellers who stopped by and left you their card or email. It's like writing thank-you cards for Christmas gifts—people appreciate being remembered and it keeps the lines of communication open between you and your new accounts.

#### **2. Be publically appreciative**

Tag people on Facebook that you met and thank them there. Post any photos you have and share them. Bookstores will appreciate the extra boost of visibility.

### **3. Keep SIBA in the loop**

Be sure to include SIBA when you are tagging and posting. We'll return the favor. The hashtag for the SIBA Discovery Show is #sibaXX (in 2015, that's #siba15). Here are our pages on Facebook:

[facebook.com/ReaderMeetWriter](https://facebook.com/ReaderMeetWriter)

[facebook.com/SouthernIndependentBooksellersAlliance](https://facebook.com/SouthernIndependentBooksellersAlliance)

We hope this is helpful! Feel free to send SIBA your own tips and tricks for making the most of a SIBA show.

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