

Freeman<sup>7</sup>

# Warning Signs: Contains Graphic Content

Turn heads with compelling exhibit  
signage and digital displays

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# Hello, leaders



## There's a reason realtors focus on curb appeal: First impressions matter

Your trade show booth design is your curb appeal. Make your design enticing, and people will line up in droves to see what's inside.

Design is at the center of an effective exhibit presence, especially when face to face at live events.

Graphics and digital displays are among the most compelling parts of a booth, so it's important to take a holistic approach to ensure a positive (and effective) attendee experience. This starts with strategic visual messaging that delivers on your organization's goals and brand promise. But just as important as what you say is **how** you say it.

Here are best practices, ideas, and visuals to inspire your next exhibit and some industry best practices for designing impactful messaging — both static and digital — to generate the buzz your brand deserves.



**Attendees ignore graphics that ignore them.**

Effective graphics draw attendees into your booth and provide an engaging introduction to your brand. There are many options available, from static fabric displays to digital touch screens and interactive ePosters — meaning there is something for every booth size and budget.



# Signage best practices

## Design

**Start at the top:** The human eye reads from top left to bottom right, typically in a Z or F pattern. Put your most important message on top to make sure it lands.

**Don't be subtle:** Bold images and clean text engage eyeballs. ALL CAPS may seem like a great way to add emphasis, but it's actually more difficult to read. And it can be interpreted as SHOUTING!

**Cut the chaos:** Choose sleek and simple fonts (sans serif typefaces are easiest to read), and avoid distracting backgrounds that hinder readability.

**Be iconic:** Unique designs, bold icons, interesting illustrations, and clear images create visual interest and facilitate easy communication across cultures and languages. Just make sure that the design/icon/illustration/image fits your brand story.

**Reach the whole room:** Even from far away, messaging that is readable can be effective. So consider distance and readability during the design process.

As a general rule, place important images and messages higher than six feet (think hanging signs), so they can be seen above the crowds. For supporting text, best placement is at eye level for attendees walking by.

**Hint** Step away from your booth and look around to make sure nothing is blocking your booth signage from any angle.

**Check the traffic:** Think about how people will walk through your booth and position your key messages in areas where most visitors will linger.

**Get lit:** Lighting can make all the difference when it comes to impact. Backlight your graphics and consider LED signage — see your exhibit transform into the most eye-catching place on the aisle.

## Pro Tip

Place your graphics order early! Give yourself plenty of time to make sure everything is ready to go.

**Lettering on signage should be at least an inch in font size for every 10 feet of viewing distance:** 1-inch font for a 10-foot viewing distance, 2-inch font for a 20-foot viewing distance, and so on. Inside the booth, smaller size text (try to keep a minimum 18-point font) can be placed where needed, at eye level.



**For example:**  
These 2-inch tall letters would be legible from 20 feet away.



## Signage best practices

### Messaging

**Keep it short:** You have less than 8 seconds to grab attention. Include a few key points, then save lengthy lists of features as talking points for your booth staff and follow-up messaging.

**Get personal:** Design messages with your audiences in mind. What is top of mind for them right now? What do they need? Once you have this info, you'll know which solutions to offer.

**Lighten up:** Audiences respond to casual, conversational messaging that feels relatable. Even using humor can be effective. Try something unexpected (and funny) — as long as it still aligns with your brand.

**Tap into emotion:** Create images and messages that inspire emotion and connection, rather than simply describing your product.

**Spur attendees to action:** Create messages that encourage visitors to interact with your brand (and display) and ask questions.



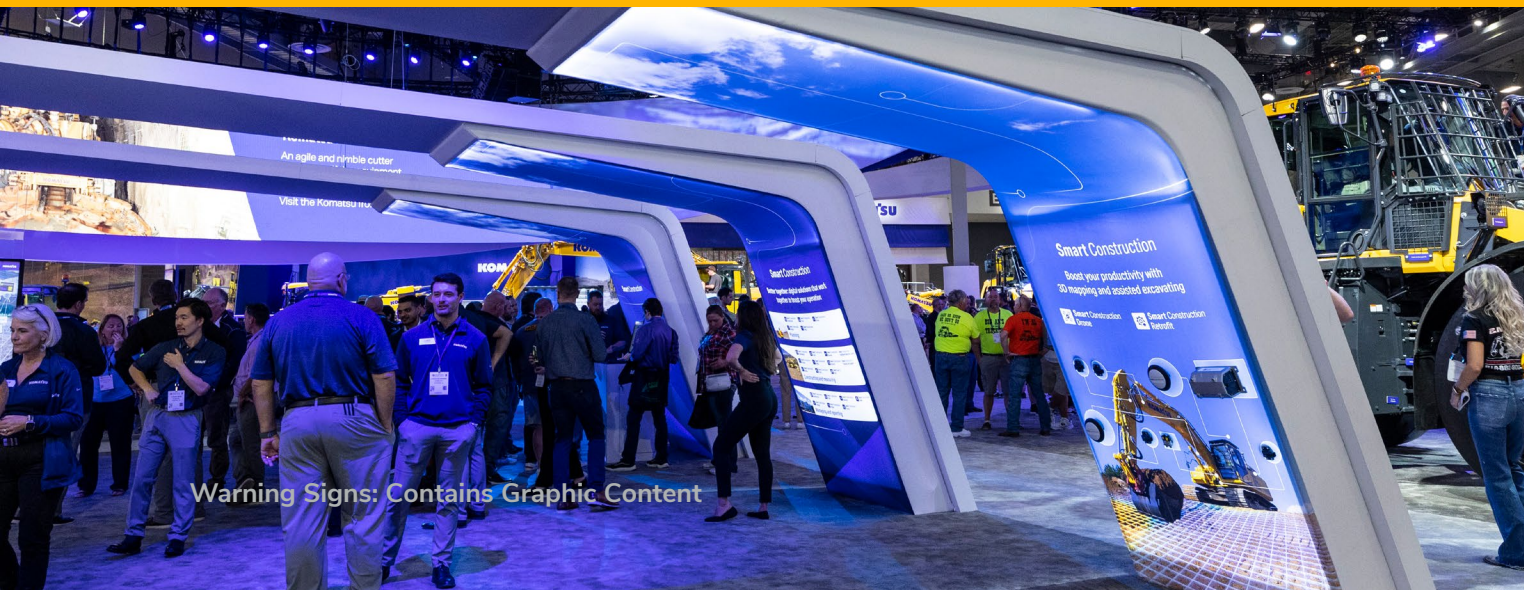
# Digital displays

A great way to modernize your booth is to incorporate LED displays. These modern displays use the same technology that makes your smartphone so crisp, clear, animated, and attention-grabbing. These compelling, energetic screens provide more effective and eye-catching branding than traditional, static displays.

[LED displays](#) can be incorporated into booth kiosks, display touch screens, and other structures, to offer audiences fun opportunities to interact with your brand.

When designing a digital screen, it's helpful to choose a single graphic theme (this could tie to a brand color, brand element, booth theme, etc.) to avoid visual

And don't forget the content! Work with your team and tech partners to design content that will engage and delight attendees, as well as expand your brand messaging in innovative ways.

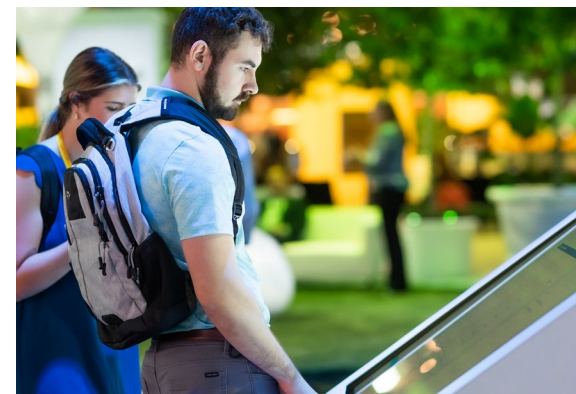


## Options for going digital



### Digital Signage

Display testimonials, answers to frequently asked questions, new product developments, key features and benefits, and more.



### ePosters

Bring key concepts to life for audiences with hands-on educational information with state-of-the-art touch screens or self-guided interactive kiosks.



### Custom Interactive Digital

Get creative from dual screen interactive displays to variable-sized video walls in customized patterns or shapes, made easy by today's super-cool tech.



## Benefits of digital displays

**Interactive:** Encourage attendees to touch, play, and engage with your display. Second screen bonus: Opt for virtual content so what's running on the in-booth display can also be played on visitors' mobile phones (and remote attendees' screens).

**Environmentally friendly:** Opting for digital signage will help reduce energy (with LED) and the use of printed materials, which will add to your sustainability efforts.

**Current:** Enable content to be updated in real time throughout the show. Update signage or images (so much easier than printing). Display schedules, promote special events (speakers, happy hours, etc.), and announce contest/raffle winners.

**Unique:** LED displays can convey motion and dimension in an otherwise flat space, adding what feels like depth or a 3-D effect. For example, they can create the illusion of fire, appear to hold water, look like a window to a sunny day outside, or showcase other unexpected visuals.

**Flexible:** Build digital displays as standard video screen rectangles (larger single screen or a wall of several screens), install them into creative elements like columns and totems (modern-day wayfinders!), or intermingle them with printed graphics and product display areas.

**Reinforce branding:** Designs can be customized to attract attendees and energize your space with recognizable elements, such as color schemes, brand themes, or animated logos.

**Engage while they wait:** If attendees are waiting for an expert, activation, or demo, plan ahead with interactive digital signage. Show content that can educate and captivate with useful information about products, services, or even something out of the box — consider local trivia, other fun quizzes, gamification, or any engaging hook.

**Demo the impossible:** Interactive digital displays enable you to showcase products that are too large, costly, or fragile to transport to the event.



## Be the best: digital displays done right

**Be relevant:** Choose the right content and get the message across with high-definition video, color contrasts, and concise messages.

**Be seen:** Identify the best locations that work for your brand and booth layout. Make sure the readability and visual elements can capture attention from various distances and angles.

**Be in tune:** Beware of competing sounds on the show floor, which are distracting to your team working the booth. And be aware of show guidelines or restrictions.

**Be inclusive:** Show various appearances. It's easier for attendees to see themselves as part of your brand story when they see people who feel familiar or relatable in your imagery.

**Be reachable:** Consider all customers and make sure anyone with accessibility needs can access and engage with your booth.

**Be real (time):** Update your messages on the fly to reflect constructive suggestions and feedback you receive on-site.

**Be memorable:** Choose an experienced event tech partner to help you design and execute compelling visuals and digital displays that benefit your brand and fit your budget.





## Design that pays

The good news about designing knockout trade show graphics and digital displays is that many options are more budget friendly than you may realize. Plus, you can spread the initial cost of design and fabrication over multiple shows.

What wows your visitors at one show can wow your visitors at another show. The initial investment pays off in an engaging, informational, and inspired booth that visitors see at every show you do.

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# Ready to create graphics that grab?

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