



Planning a Successful Trunk Show Event

BACKGROUND

We recommend holding a trunk show a couple of times a year. They can be fun, build enthusiasm among your office associates and generate large dollar sales.

They also expose entire frame lines to your patients and prospective patients that decide to attend the event.

However, there are critical steps that are required for your trunk show to be a success. We have compiled this list with an explanation of why and how you need to incorporate these elements for success.

KEY ELEMENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL EVENT

1. **Adequate planning time** - To hold a successful trunk show event allowing for sufficient planning time is essential. We have determined that a successful event requires a minimum of twelve weeks for planning and promoting the event. (A complete checklist is included at the end of this summary report.)
2. **An adequate budget for the event** - While a successful trunk show can produce large volumes of sales, there are necessary expenses involved for promotion and catering. As with any other type of event, the more engaged and involved the office and staff, the more return a doctor will see on their investment. We'll explain what this means later in the report.
3. **Proper scheduling of the event date and time** - Picking a date is a critical part of the success of the event. It must be a Saturday event to reach its potential. You are asking consumers to put on their schedule attending your event, and there are fewer conflicts with their attending on a Saturday than if you plan for another day of the week. It should run from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Most people work Monday through Friday and will not take time off from work to attend your trunk show event, no matter how unique you think it might be. Also, at the end of their day, they are wanting to get home to family so trying to schedule a weekday evening will also not produce the optimal results.
4. **Proper brand selection of eyewear to feature during the event** - This is very important in building a strong sales performance. It is recommended that at least two brands are featured and extremely important that at least one of the brands have strong consumer recognition. While brands such as Smith Optics and Pro Design are well-known amount our profession, they are not brands consumers recognize. Brands with

high consumer recognition include Tom Ford, Christian Dior, FENDI, Marc Jacobs, Gucci, etc. Dr. Virani featured Tom Ford and Lafont at her trunk show. It is essential that the frame brand that is selected have enthusiastic, hard-working representatives who get along well with your staff. You don't want a frame rep to show up and sit behind a table in the corner. You want them to engage people who attend the event, encouraging them to "try on another." This is very important to the sales success of the event.

5. **Effective and multiple means of promotion** - A key advantage of allowing adequate planning time is that you can be very effective in building awareness of the event through promotion over time. The more time you have to promote the event, the less expensive the promotion. We recommend you allow for eight weeks to promote the event using the following forms of promotion communication:
 - A. **Targeted email** - Purchasing targeted email address enables you to promote your event by delivering an attractive and exciting announcement that allows the recipient to click to add the event to their calendar. This is also a very economical method of reaching qualified consumers with your message. We recommend purchasing 50,000 email addresses and delivering them over a four week period leading up to the event date. Dr. Virani and Nizar purchased 50,000 emails and mailed them over a four week period.
 - B. **Featuring the event on your office website** - Make a short video and post it on your office website at least eight weeks before the event. Post the event invitation promoting the event, and all that will be included.
 - C. **Internal patient communication** - Your current patient base is the best opportunity you have for building sales on the day of the event. By using a digital patient communication program (i.e., Websystem 3, Solution Reach, 4 Patient Care, etc.), you can target and communicate your event multiple times over a six week period leading up to the event. You can send numerous message graphics emphasizing the enormity of selection and the excitement and special features of the event.

In addition to multiple targeted patient emails, It is very effective for members of the office staff to identify patients who have purchased frames of the event featured brands over the past six to twelve months and personally invite them to see the full line of the frame brand. Many people to whom a Marc Jacob frame appeals will want to see more of the same frame line. It is likely that over the period of twelve months, there will be hundreds of patients who have purchased frames from the featured brands. This will both help to promote the event and communicate a personal and caring interest to your patients.

Another element is to have hand-out cards featuring the event with a date, time and graphically designed information to distribute six weeks before the event. The perfect size is a 5 x 7 postcard that a staff person uses to explain to the patient about the event and encourage them to plan to stop by and see the full line of the

Featured brand. They can also enthusiastically explain all that is planned to make the event fun and special. This form of personal communication is beneficial, especially if it begins six to eight weeks before the event. A typical established office will see 15 patients a day, six days a week or 540 people over six weeks and 720 people over eight weeks. If only 10% of the group attend from this means of communication, it is a good

result. Remember, they are likely to receive an email from you as well to remind them of the event.

- D. **Social Media promotion** - Offices who have put the effort in to build a large following of their Facebook business page will see this pay-off for creating awareness and interest in a special trunk show event. The same graphic ad that is used with the targeted email of consumers can be posted on your office Facebook page along with staff members commenting on how unique the event will be. A daily posting of different aspects of the event is very productive. Also using video clips to promote the brands and events are an effective way of building awareness and enthusiasm for your event.

You can "boost" the performance of your Facebook event ad by purchasing Facebook advertising. You set the total budget, select the audience you want to reach and Facebook offers it up to any user meeting your audience criteria. You can choose by zip code, gender, income and a selection of interests.

- E. **Community directories and message boards** - Most every residential community have a community message board or directory. A little effort along with Google will lead you to those for your community. Here members of the community are keeping up with the goings on around them, and it is a great place to let people know about your event. Three or four of your staff members can post a notice of the event in such a way that they are simply getting the word out about something fun and relevant for people who live near and around your office. Often directories will offer a paid promotion on their site for nominal amounts of money.

- 6. **Event activities** - A successful trunk show event should be just that - an event. In addition to the two frame lines and motivated brand representatives, you can build fun for the day by including things like an assortment of food from local eateries, complimentary beverages, cosmetic make-overs and lens consultants from blue tech and photo-chromatic lens companies. Even people who offer personal services such as facials and spas are happy to participate if they can provide their services to the crowd. This also opens up a whole new customer base for you to send your message. Cross-promotion such as this is a powerful way of building the customer base of both services.

Another popular feature that helps to build excitement for the event is to hold a drawing for a number of appealing door prizes. Eight weeks before the event ask your patients to enter their name for a drawing that will be held during the event explaining they don't have to be present to win. Of course, you'd like them to be, and you'll enthusiastically encourage them to attend. You are using the door prizes to build interest and excitement. You also ask everyone who does attend to enter their name, and you will hold the drawing at the end of the event.

Great items to offer are iPads, Apple Watch, blue-tooth headphones, gift certificates to local restaurants (which some may donate for your event), gift baskets of TSO goodies such as coffee mugs, cleaning cloths, plano sunglasses, cleaning solution, gift certificate, etc. The more you can help promote local businesses with your door prizes, the more likely you'll get them to pitch in and offer something of value.

Decorating the event for fun is essential. Using helium-filled balloons in TSO's colors of blue and white are a great way to make the event festive. Also ordering cupcakes with the TSO logo are popular and unique ways of promoting the TSO brand. Make sure that everyone is wearing their TSO uniforms.

7. **Staff Preparation** - This is an essential part of a successful event. The staff is the ambassadors that will build the interest and enthusiasm for the event, and you must make the time to prepare and train them for the event. This should start at least ten weeks before the event with special trunk show training. The things that are important for them to know and do are:
- A. All of the details of the event especially the frame brands that are featured. You should have them meet with the brand representative and have them perform an "in- service" on the story of the brand. The more enthusiasm you build for the brands, the more they will be excited to share this with patients who visit over the eight weeks before the event.
 - B. Precisely how to invite patients to the event. Show them how to use the promotion card, what to say and how to communicate with excitement.
 - C. Make sure they are engaged on the day of the event to answer questions, offer service, provide free adjustments, present the frame lines, talk about lenses, introduce the lens company representatives and promote the door prizes.
 - D. They need to know what they are expected to wear and how they can best support the frame brands that are being featured.
 - E. You may want to consider offering a group incentive to staff members based on the sales for the day.
 - F. You will want to offer exams on the day of the event, but also offer to schedule exams for people who are purchasing frames later in the week. Many people will select the frames they want and then come back in a few days to take time for their exam. This is ok...and you can incentivize staff for promoting the scheduling of exams.

BUDGET

Summary of expenses and sponsorship contributions

Advertising and promotion \$2,000

Food and door prizes \$2,000

Also, you can receive financial contributions from various vendors such as Vistakon, Bausch & Lomb, Essilor, Blue Tech Lenses, Interstate Optical and Alcon. Their contributions can range from free product to pay for food items and gift cards.

Brands for Trunk Shows

Tier One Brands

- Marchon – Chloé, Diane von Furstenberg, Salvatore Ferragamo
- Marcolin – Tom Ford, Roberto Cavalli, Balenciaga
- Safilo – Fendi, Dior, Jimmy Choo, Marc Jacobs, Givenchy
- Kenmark – Vera Wang, Zac Posen
- Kering – Gucci

Tier Two Brands

- Marchon – Calvin Klein
- Maui Jim
- Costa
- Safilo –Kate Spade
- Kenmark – Lilly Pulitzer
- Lafont
- Etnia Barcelona
- REM – John Varvatos, Lucky Brand, Carolina Herrera
- Tura – L.A.M.B., Ted Baker, Lulu Guinness, Humphrey's
- MODO

Tier Three Brands

- Marchon – CK (by Calvin Klein), Nine West
- Marcolin –Guess, Candie's
- REM – Jones New York

Generic Call Scripts for Events

Patients who have purchased the Tier One Brand you've chosen for the event

[Good Morning/ Good Afternoon] this is [insert staff name] from TSO (location name). I am calling today because (doctor) wants to personally invite you to our (name special event here with the date and time). I see that you purchased [brand] glasses/ sunglasses around this time last year. And as a special thank you to our patients, we will be having the full line of [brand] at a discounted rate [insert price or percentage off]. We will have food from (name food the office has chosen) door prizes, and we're even raffling a (name grand prize here and any other specials you may be promoting). We would love for you to stop by and celebrate with us.

Patients that (Doctor's Name) recently saw within the last two weeks (AND received eyewear)

[Good Morning/ Good Afternoon] this is [insert staff name] from TSO (location name here).

I am calling today because I see that you recently purchased [insert brand name] How are those glasses working out for you? Are you having any issues?

NO:

Great! I'm glad to hear it. Well, I am also personally calling you to invite you to (Name special event here). Our patient's satisfaction is one of our priorities, and we want to make sure you are taken care of. We will be having a (Name special event, date and time here). We're featuring the entire line of [brand] at a discounted rate [insert price or percentage off] we will also have food from (name food vendor), door prizes and we're even raffling a (name grand prize and any other specials). So we would love for you to stop by and celebrate with us.

YES:

I'm sorry to hear that. Please stop by at your earliest convenience and [address issue: fix, return, adjust] those glasses for you. Our patient's satisfaction is one of our top priorities, and we want to make sure you are taken care of. As a special thank you to our patients (doctor name) is personally inviting you tour (name special event, date and time). We will be having the full line of [brand] at a discounted rate [insert price or percentage off] we will also have food from (food vendor you chose), door prizes and we're even raffling (grand prize). So we would love for you to stop by and celebrate with us.

SPECIAL EVENTS CHECKLIST

	Date	Task
<input type="checkbox"/>	12 weeks out	Decide what type of event you want to hold (Anniversary, Patient Appreciation Day, Grand Opening)
<input type="checkbox"/>	12 weeks out	Identify the eye care vendors you want to invite to participate
<input type="checkbox"/>	12 weeks out	Set the criteria you will use to decide who to welcome to the event.
<input type="checkbox"/>	12 weeks out	Build an email list for all the people you plan to invite and make sure you know how to sort your patient database by the criteria you have set.
<input type="checkbox"/>	12 weeks out	Set the date or dates of your event and secure a commitment from the eye care vendors you would like to have participated.
<input type="checkbox"/>	12 weeks out	Set a budget for your event and determine how the investment will be spent.
<input type="checkbox"/>	12 weeks out	Decide what special pricing will be given to attendees.
<hr/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	8 weeks out	Create a promotion plan based on your budget using both traditional and digital media. Be sure to include social media and your digital patient communication system.
<input type="checkbox"/>	8 weeks out	Request artwork to be used in your promotion plan. Be sure to include thank you cards that will be used following the event. Provide final approval for the artwork and place any print orders that are necessary.
<input type="checkbox"/>	8 weeks out	Contact local media that you wish to use and determine the schedule of advertising you will use.
<input type="checkbox"/>	8 weeks out	Contact local businesses you would like to involve in the event.
<input type="checkbox"/>	8 weeks out	You may wish to use video to promote your event on Facebook or using your digital patient engagement system (Solution Reach, 4PatientCare, etc.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	8 weeks out	Send out your first communication to your invitation list promoting your event. This gives people plenty of time to note it on their calendar and plan to attend.
<hr/>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	6 weeks out	Start calling patients using the "Call Script" attached in this PDF. Make sure you let them know about the specials. Leave a voicemail if they do not answer. Special pricing will bring a larger crowd.
<input type="checkbox"/>	6 weeks out	The rest of your communication can be scheduled as part of the promotion plan you developed earlier. Many digital media can be scheduled so that you can "set it and forget it." Traditional media are given instructions as to which ads to run and the schedule is determined by your budget.

	Date	Task
<input type="checkbox"/>	3 weeks out	Contact all participating vendors to see if they have any questions or have any special needs for their part of your event. This might include extra tables or chairs.
<input type="checkbox"/>	3 weeks out	Local businesses may wish to have counter cards so be sure to get those from them.
<input type="checkbox"/>	3 weeks out	Order any specialty items you want to feature or hand out as gifts. You may want to create a unique "gift bag" that is given to those attending the event. You will want to allow a minimum of three weeks to order and receive these items. In some cases it might be four weeks or more.
<input type="checkbox"/>	1 week out	Make final arrangements for any materials or items needed for the event. This includes adequate practice brochures and extra business cards.
<input type="checkbox"/>	1 week out	Confirm any additional staff you may wish to schedule to help in providing service to the increased number of people attending the event.
<input type="checkbox"/>	1 week out	Notify your landlord of your event so that adequate security is available as well as the impact it may have on parking. Some centers do not have a lot of extra parking spots.
<input type="checkbox"/>	48 hours prior	Write a hand-written thank you card to all of the local businesses and services who helped make your event a success. This includes the vendors who participated with you.
<input type="checkbox"/>	4 hours prior	Meet with staff to review special offers or service procedures you are using. Ensure that you capture each customer's name and email address.
<input type="checkbox"/>	48 hours following	Write a hand-written thank you card to all of the local businesses and services who helped make your event a success. This includes the vendors who participated with you.
<input type="checkbox"/>	48 hours following	Send a digital thank you to all of your guests and customers who attended. You should already have their email addresses.
<input type="checkbox"/>	48 hours following	Hold a post-event review with your staff. Discuss what you did well and and those things that didn't go so well and decide how to improve for the next event.

By following this timeline and checklist, you can plan and hold a successful event. As you gain experience, you will be able to make your additions and adjustments. Keep this updated information handy and review it before planning your next special event.