

INDUSTRY TRENDS



INTERNATIONAL SIGN ASSOCIATION

The International Sign Association

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5 Benefits of Attending ISA Sign Expo 2018

Experience is a great teacher. So when it comes to learning how ISA International Sign Expo can build business, there is no one better to listen to than those who have done it in the past.

Here are five things you can do at ISA International Sign Expo 2018 that are sure to make your business grow:

GETTING *THERE!*

ISA International Sign Expo 2018 registration is now open at www.signexpo.org. The event is March 22-24, with education starting on March 21, at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando.



STATS • FACTS

An Oxford Economics report shows that for every \$1 invested in attending a professional event like ISA International Sign Expo results in



1

MAKE important connections.

With more than 20,000 attendees each of the last few years, the ability to make an invaluable connection is around every corner. Few know this as well as Michael Hage of All Signs Inc. “When I first purchased my business, we were just a small little sign company. **Because of all the relationships that I have made at ISA Sign Expo, I have grown it tremendously and am now doing national sign work.**”

Hage says the event gave him the ability to “put a name with a face.”

Many of those relationships have led to what he calls “lifelong friends” and “business partners that we do business with on a daily basis. It’s just invaluable.”

With more opportunities to connect with exhibitors and partners throughout the breadth of the sign, graphics and visual communications industry, ISA International Sign Expo 2018, offers more chances to make those connections.



2

DISCOVER new business.

The ISA Custom/National Networking event solves two important challenges: National companies can meet local installers in communities in which they work. And custom companies that install for national companies can expand the number of companies with which they work.

The networking event often leads to new business—as well as offers a chance to renew old acquaintances.

“As an installer for national accounts, sometimes we don’t see the people we’re working for,” said Corky Huston of Huston Signs. “The ISA Custom/National Networking event provides a chance to shake their hand and appreciate their work. A lot of those are the reasons you are in business every day.

It’s just a magnificent show and I recommend it to anyone in the industry.



ADVANCE on the career path.

Sean Hart of Selkirk Signs and Services applied for the ISA Elite program—which brings together up-and-coming leaders for education and networking—so that he could get to know others with “like-minded ambitions for their career paths.”

The Elite class meets for the first time at ISA International Sign Expo and again later in the year. But that first connection pays off, Hart said. “We can speak openly about our challenges and get feedback from each other. It’s been a great opportunity.”

Michelle Pedley of Sign Engineering Corp. also was an ISA Elite member. Her company had previous participants, so she knew some of what she was getting into. “I had heard such excellent stories from the previous members of the program and how wonderful of a bond they had created.”

She sees a direct correlation between the program and the ability to grow in her own career by “creating this platform of friendships and coworkers. Hopefully we can all find ways to help each other out in the industry, creating these lasting relationships where we can reach out to one another if we have any questions. When we know someone’s company, maybe that’s their strength, and they can help us out and guide us to make better decisions, to create partnerships, and continue to help us grow, hopefully helping us have very successful companies one day.”

Learn more about the ISA Elite program, or nominate someone for the class of 2018 at www.signexpo.org/elite.



CONNECT with partners.

With 20,000 attendees, exhibitors and suppliers have many potential customers to show new products to. Canon Solutions used ISA Sign Expo 2017 to introduce a new color 16x40 printer. “There are a lot of people coming into these shows looking for new technologies and new ideas,” said John Kaufman of Canon. “This has allowed us to get the message out.”

Kaufman believes attendees come looking for the latest products and having the opportunity to see the equipment in action is invaluable. “We run the machines during the presentation as well, and open up the drawers let them see inside of it and how the machine works. So it gives them a great opportunity to see the product.”

Ultimately, the goal of any new product is to “make money,” as Bryan Mandarin of Onyx Graphics said.

“We are really trying to invent things that will make a difference for business owners. **For us, ISA Sign Expo is the greatest opportunity for us to talk one-on-one with the customers, seeing how can we improve, what are we doing great, what they need.**”

Attendees should leave not only with a new product, but also with an idea of “how to improve your business,” Mandarin said. “There’s no better way to do that than to look for new applications, what’s changing in tools in the industry today, how do I improve my margins, what’s out there now that can change my business. It’s so easy to get caught up in daily business, being so busy to not have an opportunity to work on your business.”



FIND expansion opportunities.

The sign, graphics and visual communications industry is not only rapidly changing; it also is expansive. The sign, graphics and visual communications industry is diverse, from hand lettering to digital displays, from print to neon.

John Poiry of Stars, Stripes and Signs said attending ISA International Sign Expo is a way to stay ahead of the shifting business. “The whole industry is moving to where they can put things on and peel them off, decals/stickers, so we are moving our company to be able to do that. This was a great place to come and see what’s available; there is a lot available.”

His company came to ISA International Sign Expo 2017 looking for more insight into large format printing and new vinyls. “There is a vinyl for every application and this is the place to see it,” he said. “I am a hands-on kind of guy. If I can see it, then the wheels start turning and I have a lot more questions. It’s about talking to people rather than watching it on YouTube or reading the blogs. This is definitely what’s needed.”

John Crichton of Right Stuff was in expansion mode as well. “We’re here to check out sublimation printing and latex printing,” he said. “There are a lot of beautiful things here. I would recommend this show to anyone that is serious about getting really good at the field of graphic arts, the field of printing, all the related areas. It’s just a magnificent show and I recommend it to anyone in the industry.”

When it comes to growth opportunities, ISA International Sign Expo 2018 is clearly the place to be.