

How to be successful at a small events company

One of the more colorful characters in the events business is Lew Shomer, the President of Shomex Productions. Showmex is a company which runs diversity career fairs(<http://www.diversitycareerexpos.com>) among other entrepreneurial projects. Lew has been a prime mover of Comdex and was a former SISO President.

I was particularly interested to speaking to Lew as he has had a fair bit of success with his own company. I am always interested in discovering the secrets of running a small events business especially when you have big corporate competition.

What I am seeing over the course of writing these articles that event companies have many of the same issues, irrespective of the markets they serve. In the same way, small businesses have many of the same issues in being(remaining successful) which primarily are:

- You need to get constant business which is profitable and successful;
- You need to perform work with limited resources;
- You need to perform back office duties to maintain the business.
- The present eats the future, the present puts money in your pocket today, the future puts money in your pocket tomorrow(and the next day and so on).

The good news according to Lew is that face to face events are not going away, and if you like people, you're going to enjoy the work(most of the time), as good relationships with influential people are the key to success.

How else should you position yourself for success in small events company?

1) **Get used to fighting fires.** No matter what your plans, things can go wrong in the events business, especially on site, where you might not have a lot of time to set things right. Get used to this and take on your unexpected tasks with commitment and humor.

2) **Don't take no for an answer.** Working in any small business is tough. To succeed, you're going to need to be tenacious and persistent, especially as it relates to selling your wares.

3) **Do your homework.** Know your customers and even your customers' customers. Put your self in their shoes and offer them unrivalled opportunities for education, marketing excitement, and a highly energized and positive experience. Offer more value than your(bigger) competitors.

4) **Be Customer Service Oriented.** As I mentioned in a previous column (http://www.theeventdoctor.net/articles/SISO_Article_10.pdf), good customer service is expected, whereas bad is remembered and experiences relayed to others. Make sure you return calls within 24 hours to customers and give them better service than they expect. Remember you are looking for an advantage....

6) **Don't lose your sense of humor.** Most important, especially during the lean times. Look for ways to make the hum drum exciting!

Having a small company can be hard. Make sure you look at successful examples such as what Lew has achieved and keep it going, we're all in it with you!

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