

3 June 2020

#ExhibitionsDay

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Exhibitions Day Tip Sheet

Topic: New to Advocacy? Tips for Exhibitions Day
Presenter(s): Christina Jensen, Client Content Manager, CNTV
Josh Kagan, Exhibits Manager, ASIS International
Molly Hamill, CMP, CEM, Manager, Exhibition Sales, IAAPA
Carrie Ferenac, President & Co-Founder, CNTV
Roger Rickard, President & Founder, Voices in Advocacy

In this video, we learn about the basics of advocacy. CNTV's Christina Jensen spoke to Exhibitions Day attendees about the importance of advocacy and how to conduct yourself around elected officials. How to be an effective advocate? It's a question many people want the answer to. In this story, young professionals-- some of which are new to advocacy – share their experience and hear from an expert on what to say to elected officials!

Advocacy 101

Josh Kagan

Josh Kagan is an Exhibits Manager with ASIS International, but before making his way into events, he was involved in politics. He has worked in political campaigns, then a governor's office, back to a campaign and then worked in the United States Senate for about a year and a half then made his way into events.

Josh's Advice: "A specific ask is very important."

- When talking to lawmakers, come into the meeting with a general plan on how to communicate how exhibitions affect you, members of their constituency and people that live in their district and state. Lawmakers like to hear what the plan is and what you are asking them to do.

Roger Rickard's Tip: Tell the truth.

- "You gotta tell the truth! People get up there and they sometimes want to embellish things... tell the truth, build relationships, offer to be a resource, and know what you want prior to asking for it."
- "It's never been more important than this year simply because of the economic crisis and we know we are going to be slower as an industry more than anyone else because of large gatherings...this year, it's going to be new for everyone! So, whether you are a newbie to advocacy or whether you've been a seasoned veteran that has done other legislative action days, fly-ins on Capitol Hill, it really doesn't matter because this year due to everything that we're dealing with it must be a virtual event."

Molly Hamill, CMP, CEM

Molly Hamill of IAAPA says on June 3rd, she plans to call her representatives and use social media to connect!

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Power of Social Media

- “I can easily tweet out something to my local representatives and even federal representatives and tag them in it and tag staffers.”

Just a Phone Call Away

- “I’m very confident to pick up that phone... you know most people don’t expect young professionals to pick up the phone and call. I want to keep them on their toes and get them to communicate.”

Roger Rickard

What is it like when folks address members of Congress?

Of course, you got to be honest... because that is what they need to hear. Also be polite and professional as you tell your story about how the pandemic has affected you personally. It must be personal. That is the best way to communicate. They really want to know what their constituents are thinking.

I know it’s important to remind them they are constituents as well and to ask them something very specific right? Tell us about how important that is?

In congressional terms, they call that the ask - what do you really want? You really need to tell them exactly what you would like them to do. Whether it is to co-sponsor a bill or to make sure that they vote for a particular piece of legislation that we are supporting. They need to know that we need them to help us restart the exhibitions, meetings and events industry.

So that direct ask is very specific whether its sponsoring a bill or voting in a certain way. We got to remember that so that they know exactly what they want us to do right?

Clarity is key. Do not assume that they have caught the hint of what they want you to do. Be very, very specific. That’s what they are used. They need to know where you stand.

Often you will talk about backing up that ask. Tell me what information should we come armed with?

We are going to provide everybody with issue briefs on particular pieces of legislation as well as general legislative priorities. In that, we will have statistics on the size and the impact that exhibitions have on their areas. You are going to use the state’s statistics. We do not have it broken down into congressional districts. But most of these folks know and understand that’s how business gets conducted when it comes to exhibitions and events. Whether they have businesses that are buying and selling particular goods and services in that particular district, it’s important to use the statistics and the talking points. It will be as clear as can be for everyone.

What has worked in the past for Exhibitions Day? What are some tips that you have learned?

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Enjoy the experience. Remember they want to hear from their constituents. They want to know exactly what you are thinking and feeling so what you are doing today will really make a big difference. Remember you know more than your industry than they know about your industry.

Share your story! Don't forget to use the hashtags:
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For more information, visit www.exhibitionsmeanbusiness.org