



USAID
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**TRADE
HUB**
SOUTHERN AFRICA

SUCCESS STORY

USAID Helps Southern Africa Companies Get Ready for the Show

Preparing textiles and apparel suppliers for a successful Source Africa 2013



With 42 years of experience in the exhibition industry, trainer Joy Donovan gave suppliers at the workshop a comprehensive introduction to trade show strategy including five key points to a successful show:

Trade show strategy

Suppliers must determine their objectives in advance and focus their efforts accordingly.

Pre-show promotions

Pre-show promotions alone can improve trade show results by 300%.

Categorizing stand visitors

There are at least 13 different types of stand visitor. Suppliers must learn how to quantify visitors quickly and focus on their objectives.

Training staff

Staff must be trained properly in categorizing and handling visitors and keeping the stall focused on its objectives.

Lead management and post-show promotions

International research says that 80% of trade show leads are never followed up. Instead, suppliers immediately return to production and retailing.

www.satradehub.org

According to experts in the industry, trade shows are the #1 way to gain new business, making USAID's Southern Africa Trade Hub's annual Source Africa event in Cape Town a tremendous opportunity for suppliers in the region. However, experts also know that success at trade shows requires more than just showing up. To prepare exhibitors for Source Africa 2013, the Southern Africa Trade Hub conducted Supplier Training Programs in Lesotho, Mozambique and Botswana.

Hundreds of visitors streamed through the doors at Source Africa, the first pan-African Textiles and Apparel trade show of its kind. In addition to attracting buyers from around the world to the event, the Trade Hub worked closely with local partners to maximize the participation and success of suppliers.

In coordination with the Lesotho National Development Corporation (LNDC), the Mozambique Institute of Export Promotion (IPEX) and the Botswana Investment & Trade Centre (BTIC), the Trade Hub ran a series of workshops in the three countries covering all aspects of trade show participation, from pre-show strategy and booth preparation to post-show promotions and lead management. The workshops discussed negotiating with buyers, taking advantage of international tradeshow like Source Africa and best practices for exhibiting product.

Concentrating efforts on retailing at trade shows is a mistake that even major companies make. The Supplier Training Program encouraged participants, some of whom were preparing to exhibit for the first time, to approach Source Africa with a marketing rather than a retailing mindset. Since only about 20% of buyers immediately purchase on the spot, an attractive booth and on-the-spot sales are not significant factors in long-term success. Instead, the workshops trained participants on a more effective approach that emphasizes marketing: committing 25% of total exhibition budget to pre-show marketing 3-6 months before the show, 50% to the show and stall itself, and 25% to post-show promotion and following up leads. In addition to the group training sessions, the facilitator made site visits to over a dozen firms in all three countries to offer targeted analysis and techniques after looking firsthand at operations.

As facilitator Joy Donovan stated in the workshops, "Businesses fail not because the products are no good, but because the marketing is no good." With its comprehensive Supplier Training Program, the USAID Southern Africa Trade Hub and its local partners are supporting textile and apparel firms throughout Southern Africa to ensure that suppliers have the resources they need to encourage growth in this important sector.