

Ten Tips for a Terrific Book Festival

Whether you are a first timer or an experienced book festival exhibitor, we have some tips to make your day at the Sonoma County Book Festival well organized, comfortable and rewarding!

1. **Set realistic expectations.** Exhibitors with more than one product generally sell more than those with just one book. One-product authors can benefit from more than just sales: meet and learn from other exhibitors, hand out your business card and flyers. You may make connections that will further your career or lead to future sales.
2. **Select the right equipment** for an attractive and functional booth. We offer rental tents, chairs, tables and tablecloths. If you are not bringing your own tent, **we strongly recommend renting a tent**, as afternoon temperatures can soar. Plan how your space will look and list what you need to bring... books, signs, informational fliers, banner, vase of flowers, other decorations. Attractive space attracts festival goers.
3. **Make your booth appear spacious and uncrowded.** Don't put too many products on one table; don't have too many people sitting at your booth—that can be intimidating for people walking by. If you have four authors, station only two at a time behind the table. Let others walk around or stand alongside.
4. **Be prepared for variations in weather.** Mornings are often chilly with fog; afternoons can reach 90 degrees or even higher. Bring a jacket, hat, water and any other clothing or items that can aid your comfort.
5. **Be an active exhibitor.** Don't just sit behind your table and text on your phone or talk to your partner. Engage people who walk by. Make eye contact. Smile. Say "hello" or "lovely day today" ...anything to show your interest in them and invite them to stop by your table.
6. **Spread the word in advance.** Let clients, friends, family and other contacts know that you are exhibiting at the Book Festival. Tell them your booth location and ask them to spread the word. Announce your participation on your Web site, through Facebook, or with postcards.
7. **Offer Festival attendees a good deal.** Put a sale price on your products...a Book Festival discount for people who buy that day, and make sure potential customers see it!
8. **Show me the money.** Decide whether you'll accept credit cards or checks. Bring a receipt book and cash drawer. If you are sharing a table with other authors, decide in advance if you will sell each other's books.
9. **Build your contact lists.** Provide a sign-up sheet for email or mailing addresses. Offer a small giveaway item for people who give you permission to contact them. Contact information can be useful for your future marketing efforts.
10. **Arrive between 8 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. to set up.** This schedule should give you enough time to walk around and see what else is going on, observe how other exhibitors use their space, and locate the nearest bathroom, information booth and other important features.

Most of all – have fun! We look forward to seeing you at the 2011 Sonoma County Book Festival!