

KEYS TO YOUR SUCCESS AT CES -- PLANNING, PREPARATION, PATIENCE

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Depending on how you approach them, events like CES can be a tremendous opportunity, a waste of time, a challenge, disaster, torture or the most profitable time you've spent all year. You--and nearly 250,000 manufacturers, dealers, corporate buyers and interested bystanders will converge to buy, sell or just see what's new.

It's enough to test the endurance, strength, perseverance, patience, stamina and organizational abilities of the best people in the industry.

The biggest mistake most people make is that they don't take maximum advantage of the shows they attend.

Study the CES listings and floorplan to make maximum use of your time.

At least a week before the show, develop your show calendar of meetings. Prioritize the companies you're going to visit at the show.

Use your daily calendar and floorplan to plan your hours, days and evenings.

Mix and match your priorities to group your booth visits and save steps.

With all of the booths to cover, you need the most comfortable shoes possible. When you walk on concrete and thin carpet all day, your feet are subjected to unbelievable punishment.

Before you go out in the evening, give yourself a 30-minute breather. Take a shower and soak your feet in cool water for a few minutes. You'll "almost" feel like a new person.

The only way to survive a trade show as large and as important as CES and be at your best during the show is to get enough sleep and eat and drink in moderation.

While many feel that a drink before hitting the sack at night will help you sleep, the truth of the matter is that alcohol is actually detrimental to your sleep.

Keep a close eye on your purse or wallet when you're in a crowded elevator or waiting in

one of the taxi lines.

You even have to be careful in the men's and ladies room. Your coat or purse can disappear in seconds.

Talk to show veterans. They've learned how to pace themselves and how to zero-in on their particular areas of interest while looking for new possibilities.

With a little planning and preparation, you can take advantage of the tremendous opportunities that are available and still enjoy yourself.