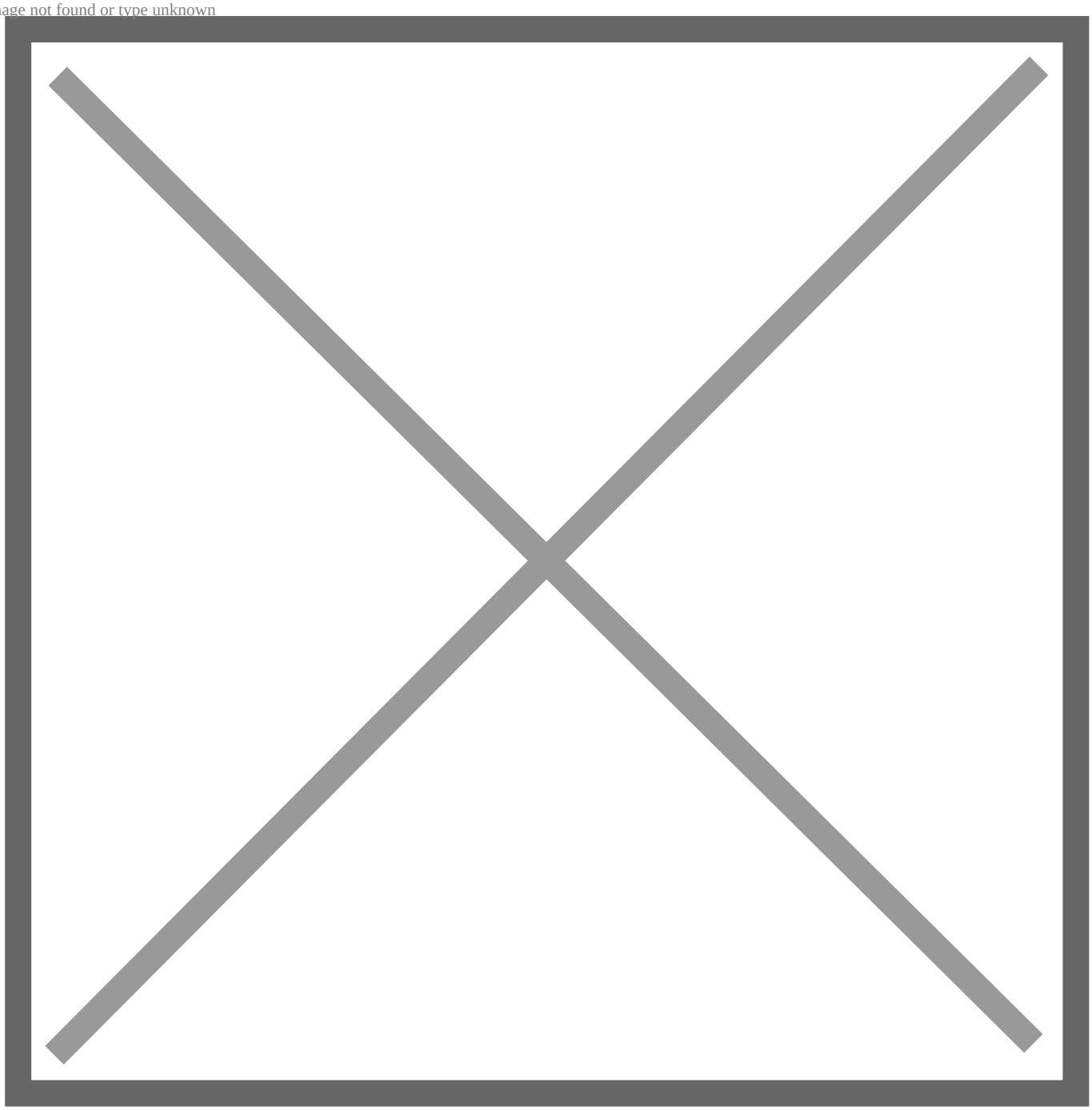
Preparing for Trade Fairs in China: Before, During and After Event Tips

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Participating in a trade fair is an effective way to explore a new international market. It helps your company better understand the market and its competitive landscape, enhance brand visibility, and find new clients or potential partners.

However, to leverage the experience to the best interest of your company, you need to develop a detailed plan and make careful preparation in advance. Here are a number of tips to help you get better prepared before, during and after a trade fair in China.

Before the Event

- Conduct a research to identify the leading trade fairs of your industry in China. If you need help in the research, contact our Business Development Team.
- Reach out to your regular customers and prospective clients to communicate your attendance to the trade show. Specify clearly your location and your booth number.
- Use a mix of creativity and effectiveness for your communication strategy. For example, use your company website, direct mailing, newsletters or purchase sponsorship packages from exhibition organisers.
- Translate marketing material in Chinese, as well as all the information regarding your company, products, location and booth number at the fair.
- Assign qualified staff at your booth.
- Get more than one sales person and provide translation services.
- Display models of your products, or graphically explain your technology to visitors.
- Identify and register the key IP assets. For further IPR issues related with trade fairs, see the Guide published by China IPR SME Helpdesk.

During the Event

- Train your staff. Review with them the marketing plan, the products to be displayed and the information that can be disclosed. Go through the selling and the leads qualifying processes, as well as all the other relevant aspects associated with the trade fair.
- Never leave your stand unstaffed. Make sure your personnel are regularly at your booth from the first to the last day of the exhibition supported by Chinese-speaking staff.
- Prepare a simple enquiry form in English and Chinese. And staple business cards on it.
- Visit the fair and get an overview of your competitors. Exhibitions are the perfect place to gain a picture of the competitive landscape from your industry. Review the exhibition catalogue and prepare to stroll the fair in advance.
- Take every visitor seriously. It is not uncommon at trade fairs in China to see visitors collecting a large number of information materials on behalf of large potential customers. However, your competitors may also send people to your booth to collect information.
- Visit the trade fair during the set-up phase and locate the IP complaint centre as soon as possible.

After the Event

Follow up on questions and potential leads. Send your potential clients a letter or a thank-you card, possibly with a product sample or a small gift.

Make sure you answer all the questions you have received. But act quickly. Leads will lose interest if not contacted a timely manner, and this can be very detrimental for your investment.

Therefore, it is highly recommendable to develop a post-fair marketing strategy well before attending the event.

About Official Country Pavilions

You can also benefit from financial and organisational support from your home countries by joining official national pavilions at trade fairs.

Much of the support is allocated through international trade funding assigned by almost all of the EU Member States in support of their national enterprise network.

As for China, the Country Pavilions are professionally organised by foreign trade companies, and exhibitors are provided with high-quality booth design “under one roof” (i.e. made in Italy, made in Germany etc. etc.) as well as with extra services, such as translation, match making meetings with some large customer, and others.

To join your country national pavilion you need to apply in your home country. The application procedures may take up to more than 4 or 5 months, so we suggest you to apply at least six months in advance.

If you need further advice on selecting and preparing for a trade fair in China, contact our experts.

About the EU SME Centre

The EU SME Centre in Beijing provides a comprehensive range of hands-on support services to European small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), getting them ready to do business in China. We provide support in four areas – business development, law, standards and conformity and human resources. Collaborating with external experts worldwide, the Centre converts valuable knowledge and experience into practical business tools and services easily accessible online.

From first-line advice to in-depth technical solutions, we offer services through Knowledge Centre, Advice Centre, Training Centre, SME Advocacy Platform and Hot-Desks. The Centre is funded by the European Union and implemented by a consortium of six partners – the China-Britain Business Council, the Benelux Chamber of Commerce, the China-Italy Chamber of Commerce, the French Chamber of Commerce in China, the EUROCHAMBRES, and the European Union Chamber of Commerce in China.