

Smart and Effective Service Designed For Tradeshow Success

For some companies, attending tradeshows is just a nice break from day-to-day business. Tradeshows aren't a key part of their sales strategy, but they still send a few representatives to staff a booth at a handful of shows each year, mostly to have a presence and get a look-see at what other companies are doing.

Other companies live and die by their tradeshow exhibits. Most of their annual sales are a direct result of the new products or services they have to show to prospects and customers in their tradeshow booth. Any trouble with their exhibit is going to create a lot of aggravation and anguish, and hit them squarely on the bottom line.

That's the situation for Umbra, a designer and manufacturer of home accessories. Umbra's name isn't familiar to most people, but its products are in homes around the globe. More than likely, you have a few Umbra products at your house as well. The company is the worldwide leader in casual, contemporary, affordable design for the home. Umbra offers products for every room, including picture frames, window treatments, kitchenware, tabletop accessories, bathroom accessories, decorative hardware and furniture.

Umbra uses its presence at tradeshows as an opportunity for customers to meet Umbra's managers and executives. And it works in reverse as well. "Tradeshows are a great opportunity for Umbra to make contact with the management and executives of many of our top customers," says Ron Dinderski, general manager of Umbra's U.S. operations. "When senior buyers and V.P.'s are discussing potential sales, it is important that everything is just right."

Umbra needs to be absolutely sure that their exhibits arrive at each tradeshow venue safely and on time. After experiencing a string of struggles with other transportation companies, Umbra finally found that Roadway and its Sealed Exhibit™ Service delivered the personalized, smart, and effective service they required.

Finally ... A Complete Exhibit Package

The critical role tradeshows play for Umbra made it doubly frustrating when transportation companies kept falling down on the job.

"We went through some really bad experiences," recalls Shawn Carberry, Umbra's fleet supervisor and tradeshow consultant. "Each time our exhibit came back from a show, we would get out the camera to document the damage. We'd have to physically inspect every crate, every component. It was just so time consuming."

When Jackie Minich, a Roadway senior account manager, approached Shawn, he gave her a shot at the business ... but expected her to fail. "At that point, I had an attitude towards transportation companies," Shawn says. "I told her she could try, but I was downright belligerent. Well, she took the challenge and ran with it. And at every step, the service from Jackie and Roadway has been beyond belief. Roadway really offers Umbra a complete package supported by expert service."

Complete Security and Protection ... Your Way

For Umbra, the right solution was Roadway Sealed Exhibit Service.

“With Sealed Exhibit, Umbra’s tradeshow booths, exhibits and products are loaded on a trailer and sealed behind a locked partition, then secured with tamper-resistant numbered rod locks,” explains Jackie. “No one touches that shipment again until it reaches the destination. That provides a high level of security, and reduces the chance of any handling damage.”

“The Umbra booth often includes very large, unique or oddly shaped items, things that don’t fit on a skid or in a crate,” says Jackie. “Sealed Exhibit Service is perfect for those items because we can load them in a trailer, secure them, seal them behind a locked divider and move them safely to the show.”

Umbra’s Ron Dinderski says, “We have a lot of one-of-a-kind pieces ... samples that are the only ones that exist. We really can’t take a chance on things being lost.”

Sealed Exhibit helps ensure that everything that goes on the trailer at Umbra’s Buffalo distribution center will arrive safely at the tradeshow.

Umbra has some huge booths, up to 1,100 square feet. For major shows they fill six trailers, while smaller shows may only require only one trailer. Umbra usually uses entire trailers, but many other Roadway tradeshow customers get all of the same benefits with less-than-trailer loads. The service is personalized for every customer.

“With Sealed Exhibit service, each shipment is segregated and sealed behind a tamper-resistant partition,” explains Jackie. “And these less-than-truckload shippers pay only for the trailer space they use. Whether customers have huge exhibits like Umbra’s or just a small booth, we can give the exhibitor peace of mind that it will arrive safe and secure.”

Tradeshow Expertise ... Simple, Smart, and Effective

Umbra and Roadway have both become tradeshow experts over the years, and that expertise helps ensure smooth operations ... from loading at Umbra’s distribution center until the exhibits are safely returned following the show.

“We do 25 tradeshows a year in various locations,” says Ron. “It helps that Roadway has good relationships with the convention centers. That helps to make sure that our shipments not only make it to the show but to our booth. We attend shows in the major markets like New York and Chicago. Getting in and out of those convention centers can be a challenge in itself. Roadway plays a big part in helping us through that.”

“Roadway expertise also pays off during booth setup,” says Jackie. “Working closely with the people at Umbra, we’ll load their shipments in a specific order based on what needs to be unloaded first at the show site. Then we work with the Roadway tradeshow coordinators on site to ensure that the trailers are delivered in the proper order, to the right dock door at the expected time.”

Exhibiting Excellent Service

Despite the best planning and preparation, things can still go wrong. When they do, Umbra knows that help is only a phone call away.

“Jackie is available for us seven days a week,” says Ron. “When there’s an issue on a weekend, we know we can pick up the phone and get it solved. Sometimes we’ll add something after we’ve already sent the trailer to a show. Sometimes we have to track something down after it’s left. Whatever we need, Jackie and the Roadway Customer Care Team are always there to help us.”