

Budgeting Rules of Thumb

An exhibitor's guide to what things cost.

-- Carol Wilkie --

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Budgeting Rules of Thumb

An exhibitor's guide to what things cost.

By Carol Wilkie

How much will it cost you, roughly, to buy a new island exhibit? To send five people to Atlanta for four days to staff it? To pay forklift drivers, riggers and electricians to cart it around and set it up? And by the way, how much are you paying your exhibit house to store it? Are you getting a deal or the shaft?

Here's a handy guide with industry averages and rules of thumb for calculating the costs of all kinds of necessities. For exact figures for space costs, utilities and other such expenses, use the exhibitor manual for individual shows. **E**

*By Carol Wilkie, CTSM. Questions or comments?
E-mail editorial@exhibitormagazine.com.*

Exhibit Design and Fabrication

Average cost for new, custom construction:

Island: \$130 per square foot

In-line: \$1,230 per linear foot

SOURCE: EXHIBIT DESIGNERS AND PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION'S
2000 EXHIBIT HOUSE ECONOMIC SURVEY

Editor's note: Using winning bid figures published in 2000 and 2001 in EXHIBITOR's monthly "New Properties" column, we calculated an average cost of \$152 per square foot for island exhibits and \$145 per square foot for in-line exhibits.

Refurbishment

Crated: 15-20 percent of original price, per year

Uncrated: 25-30 percent of original price, per year

SOURCE: TRADE SHOW CONSULTING INC., SAN DIEGO

Taxes

You'll pay tax on materials used to build your exhibit. In some states, including California, you're taxed on labor, too.

Rental

Approximately two-thirds the purchase price (for one-time use at a show).

Promotion

Figure 8 percent of your overall budget for collateral materials, advertising and giveaways.

SOURCE: EXHIBITOR'S 2001 READER SURVEY

Exhibit Storage

Average per cubic foot: 17 cents

Cost range per cubic foot: 5 to 30 cents

SOURCE: EXHIBIT DESIGNERS AND PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION'S
2000 EXHIBIT HOUSE ECONOMIC SURVEY

Editor's Note: Some exhibit houses charge for unused space surrounding your crates and up to the ceiling. If you call them on it, sometimes they'll back off and charge only for the actual cubic feet your crates occupy.

Pull and prep: cost for the exhibit house to prepare your booth for shipment.

Average: \$59.50 per hour

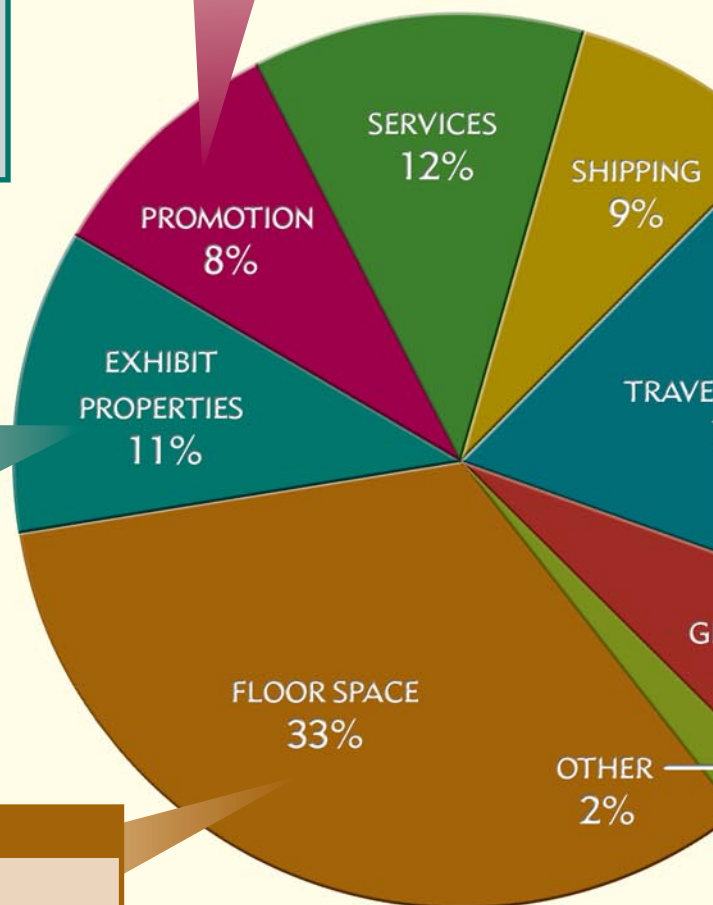
SOURCE: EXHIBIT DESIGNERS AND PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION

Floor Space

Average per square foot: \$20.97

Cost range per square foot: \$1.90—\$58.95

SOURCE: TRADESHOW WEEK'S SURVEY OF TOP 200 TRADE SHOWS, 2001



Installation and Dismantle (I&D)

Decorators: \$57.25/hour/person
Overtime add 64%; Sunday add 82%

Carpenters: \$58.22/hour/person
Overtime add 53%; Sunday add 82%

Riggers: \$66.53/hour/person
Overtime add 58%; Sunday add 78%

Forklift with operator (for normal loads):
\$120.11/hour/person
Overtime add 40%; Sunday add 55%

Forklift with operator (for heavy equipment):
\$131.15/hour/person
Overtime add 36%; Sunday add 48%

Electricians: \$55.90/hour/person
Overtime add 77%; Sunday add 93%

Plumbers: \$56.74/hour/person
Overtime add 76%; Sunday add 92%

Vacuumping: 22 cents per square foot of exhibit space

SOURCE: TRADESHOW WEEK'S SURVEY OF LABOR RATES, 2001

Drayage

To advance warehouse: \$50.83 per CWT*

Direct to show site (crated): \$47.34 per CWT

Direct to show site (uncrated): \$64.84 per CWT

* Per 100 pounds

SOURCE: TRADESHOW WEEK'S SURVEY OF LABOR RATES, 2001

Average labor requirements (for exhibit only)

Island: One hour per 8 square feet

In-line: One hour per 10 linear feet

SOURCE: TRADE SHOW CONSULTING INC., SAN DIEGO

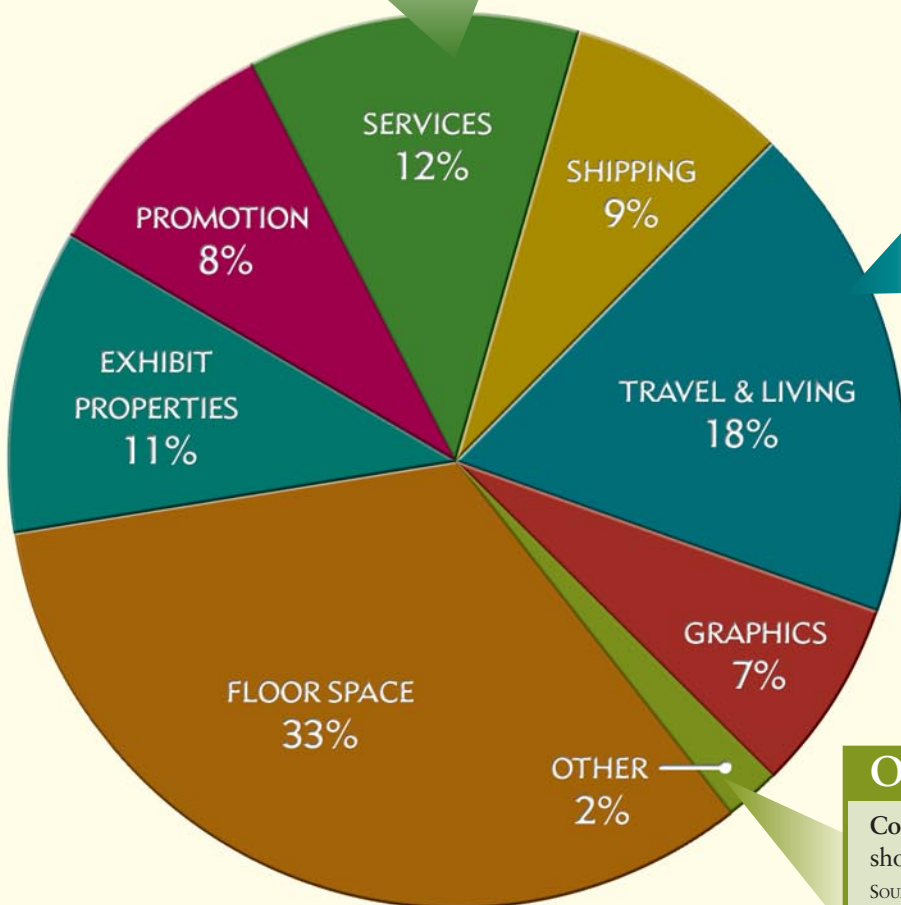
Travel, Lodging and Entertainment

Figure two staffers for every 50 square feet of open exhibit space.

Average per diem costs per staffer:

Atlanta	\$259
Boston	\$342
Charlotte, NC	\$213
Chicago	\$288
Dallas	\$202
Denver	\$234
Detroit	\$232
Honolulu	\$183
Las Vegas	\$158
Los Angeles	\$220
New Orleans	\$218
New York	\$289
Orlando, FL	\$208
Phoenix	\$200
San Francisco	\$249
Seattle	\$232
St. Louis	\$199
Washington, DC	\$269

SOURCE: SUCCESSFUL MEETINGS MAGAZINE



Average Exhibit Budget

SOURCE: EXHIBITOR'S 2001 READER SURVEY

Other

Contingency plans: Add 10 percent to your show budget for the unexpected

SOURCE: TRADE SHOW CONSULTING INC., SAN DIEGO

ROI research: 3 percent of total budget

SOURCE: EXHIBIT SURVEYS INC., RED BANK, NJ