

Guide to Attending PACE Offshore Fairs

Offshore fairs are a great way to profile your institution in country. They enable direct contact with potential students and the opportunity to promote your brand and courses to a large number of visitors at one time, in one convenient location. Education New Zealand coordinates the presence of New Zealand education institutions at two types of fairs; New Zealand Education Fairs and commercial fairs. New Zealand Education Fairs are smaller scale events arranged specifically for our industry for students only interested in New Zealand education. Commercial fairs often have more visitors, are usually more expensive because of the cost of large scale promotion, and are attended by a wide range of countries. At commercial fairs, it is important for New Zealand to stand out from our competitor countries; we try to do this by arranging a visually stunning New Zealand pavilion. Numbers of visitors to commercial fairs are often in the tens of thousands, this sounds huge but realistically with so many attendants, only those that are truly interested in what you have to offer will spend considerable time at your booth. Some participants may measure the success of a fair by how many enrolments they receive as a result, please also consider the promotion of your own brand, the promotion of New Zealand as a study destination and time spent with industry colleagues and local agents which are also distinct advantages of 'being there'.

Pre-departure

Websites to check:

- www.educationnz.org.nz – for market reports, fair details, photos of previous fairs
- www.newzealandeducated.com – for country specific sites e.g. ...com/srilanka, com/malaysia
- www.marketnewzealand.com – for country briefs and city guides
- <http://weather.yahoo.com> – for expected temperatures
- www.xe.com – currency exchange

People to talk to for advice:

- A local mentor or contact from your region, perhaps a marketing manager from your local institute of Technology, Polytechnic or University who is experienced at attending fairs.
- Others in your area that may want to work collaboratively to promote your region?
- The ENZ Project Manager or staff who may have attended the relevant fair in the past. ENZ can also refer you to experienced travellers, or those who have been to a certain PACE event before.

Things to take:

Travel details, addresses, phone numbers, maps, flight details, insurance policy, plenty of business cards (e.g. approx 30 per fair day)

Professional clothes (shirt & tie/smart)

Casual clothes for travelling days

Professional Clothes Elaborated:

Smart - erring on the side of conservative

Suits

Certain Markets require closed shoes to be worn

Certain Markets require shoulders and upper arms to be covered

Promotional material to distribute

- One page short summary about your institution, preferably translated or include native language, comments by past student(s), easy to photocopy if necessary
- Simple brochure including contact details and photos of school
- Smaller number of full prospectus for very strong enquiries
- Contact details collection form (with fields for name, age/course of study, email address) for follow up by yourself or representative agent, see below example.
- Give-aways, e.g. branded pens, chocolates, carry bags etc
- Gifts for agents, if you think these are necessary in addition to the above give-aways

Be Prepared

- Think of the queries you are likely to receive and ensure you are aware of the answers. Have a fact sheet of current enrolments, nationalities, and an idea of what past students are doing now. Very academic students will be keen to know specifics, e.g. the most recent university entrance success rates of your year 13s. If it's particularly strong, make a graph to display this?
- Know the exact requirements of courses, the level of English required and possible pathways or stair casing options.
- Discuss with school management in advance the possibility of offering scholarships to open up the market, if the school has no current profile. It's difficult to make a start if you have no history with students of this particular nationality. Once you've had a few students you can leverage off them and their success in your marketing. If scholarships are an option, make definite decisions on the application criteria.
- Know whether your prices are likely to increase over the next three years, or how long they've been stable for. Prepare a price list if relevant including a breakdown of associated costs, accommodation options etc.
- Promotional material to decorate booth space:
 - Display stand featuring photographs of happy students / school name and logo / 'New Zealand Educated' brand? (Lightweight stands are easier to travel with)
 - Large, good condition posters, laminated for durability
 - Velcro dots/strips for affixing material to walls. This is much stronger than blu tak or cellotape, can be reused and looks neat.
 - Table cloth in school colours to cover the table provided or used as backdrop.
 - Photos of the students/school/region in hard copy or looped on a laptop
 - For further information on booth decoration and advice, please refer to <http://www.educationnz.org.nz/marketing/planforsuccess/PACEFairsCodeofConduct.pdf>

Agents can help greatly at an offshore education fair

Contacting Agents:

If you have no agent contacts in country, consider participating in an Inbound Agent Visit first if time allows, to establish agent relationships before travel. The travel then doubles as agent follow-up. Contact agents on your database letting them know that you'll be in the country, if possible arrange appointments at their offices before or after the fair, or estimate a quiet time at the fair and invite them to visit you there. If you are arranging agent meetings outside of the fair, allow at least 40 minutes in their office, and plenty of travel time in between.

Ask your best agent(s) whether they are able to assist with translation at your booth. During busy times you can both talk to visitors at once, when things are quieter you can teach them more about your institution. At the end of the fair they can be given the contact details of strong enquiries to follow up with, and any left over brochures etc.

If you have no agent contacts or alumni students to help on your booth, ENZ can ask the local NZTE office to contract someone to help. These will either be NZ alumni or agents. Be aware of the payment arrangements, in most cases you will need to pay them directly with cash at the end of the day. It is advisable to give cash in an envelope.

During the Fair

If there is a pre event briefing, make sure you attend, this could really help with market information and insider tips! If there is no official briefing, at least have a quick chat to the Education New Zealand or New Zealand Trade & Enterprise staff member in attendance. Make sure you know where the bathrooms are and if there have been any arrangements for refreshments and lunch, if there are, find out whether they include your agent/interpreter as well. Ensure your booth is set up and ready in time for the opening, this is sometimes the busiest time of the day. Make sure that boxes of material are neatly tucked away under a table, the booth looks professional and that no clutter is blocking posters or promotional material. Also keep your personal belongings hidden from view, handbags and digital cameras can sometimes disappear. Keep an eye on your supplies and make sure that you're not getting through things too quickly, but also you don't want to be left with too much stock at the end of the fair. If there are two of you on the booth and you can leave temporarily during quieter periods, take a quick walk around to check out the competition, perhaps take notes on what you could do better next time. Have a good chat to others in the New Zealand pavilion, get an idea of the others' strengths and what they're offering, and make sure they know the same for you. It helps if representatives can direct enquirers in the right direction if they ask for a course that you don't offer. As a last resort, direct students that you can't help back to the General Information booth.

Post Event

Attend any post event briefings being held. If there are no official debrief session, have a quick chat to the attending Education New Zealand or New Zealand Trade & Enterprise staff member find out their impression of the day(s) and give them your feedback. There will also be an evaluation form to fill out from ENZ on your return to New Zealand. Your feedback is critical on shaping future events and is very much appreciated.

If you have significant supplies of promotional material at the end of the fair, enquire whether your agent(s) would like it. Otherwise, anything left in your booth will be disposed of by the event organizers. It is not recommended to courier left over material back to New Zealand, is likely to be cost prohibitive.

Give your follow up sheet to your agent for action (if possible keep a copy for your own records). Take notes of any follow up you need to do on your return to New Zealand, and your immediate thoughts for your fair report, if you are required to write one.

