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Meadowbrooke Gourds



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Tips & Tricks for Attending a Tradeshow Now



BY CINDY HENRY, IMC VICE PRESIDENT OF BUYER SERVICES

As you plan for IMC's winter 2021 markets in Atlanta and Las Vegas, here are a few need-to-know tips and tricks to make your pre-market and at-market planning process that much easier.

Planning and Preparation

Have a plan before attending the market. Do your research to maximize your time. Go to the market website, view market guides, and use the market apps to plan for who you want to see and what products you want to check out. Familiarize yourself with what's new before you're on campus. In Atlanta, the temporary exhibit locations have changed, while in Las Vegas, the Pavilions are gone, and all temporary exhibitors will be in the new Expo.

Make your market commitment. Pre-registration for our winter markets is required, even for return visitors. Register today for quick and contactless entrance upon your arrival. During registration, Atlanta Market will have sessions for which you will need to register, while Las Vegas Market will not. While you're pre-

registering, take the time to ensure IMC has the most up-to-date information about your store so you receive the content most relevant for your business needs.

Make your travel plans. Check out the market websites LasVegasMarket.com and AtlantaMarket.com for restaurant recommendations, parking options, and travel information and hotel reservations. Booking through IMC means not only that you get the best deal but also ensures that the hotel is following IMC's safety standards.

Use online tools to source and shop before and after market. Browse and buy online wherever and whenever you have the time! IMC's Market websites have exhibitor directories that are searchable by keyword and product category plus links to thousands of products available for immediate purchase through ShopZio, a B2B ecommerce marketplace, powered by IMC_di (IMC's Digital Innovations division). Reorder best-sellers online and save precious at-market time for discovery of new resources.

Make the Most of Your Time at Market

Make appointments with vendors you know you want to see at the show. This is particularly important during this time so vendors can appropriately schedule staff. You want to be sure they have time for you and that wait times are at a minimum.

Catch up on content. Take advantage of pre-show programming addressing color and design trends and consumer preferences, such as Las Vegas Market's FIRST LOOK Winter 2021 Gift webinar, which details both current — and coming — colors, patterns, finishes, and styles and explores post-holiday retail sales, summer celebrations, and gift-giving trends. Take particular note of webinars that help attendees prepare for market, such as Atlanta Market's "What to Expect at Market 101," which





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provides a market overview, as well as specifics about layout changes and Atlanta NEXT remerchandising, plus registration and Together Safely protocols.

Know your budget and track as you buy. Whether it's through a market app, your bookkeeping tool, or a piece of paper, keep a running total of what you're spending. You don't want to get home and find that you spent more than you wanted and have to cancel orders.

Tell vendors about your store when you meet. Give them key information, including price points, brands, and target audience, plus how COVID-19 has impacted your business. Then, ask them to show you what might work for you. You don't need to see all their product. Just ask what from their line will work best for your store.

Ask what's in stock. Inventory is an issue with some vendors this year. Ask them for ship times, fill rates, on-time delivery, backorder policy, and terms, in addition to in-stock status. Know what's available for immediate shipping and what's future shipping. To facilitate immediate delivery sourcing, IMC's Market websites also include "in-stock" filters for ShopZio-enabled exhibitors.

Ask vendors for show specials. Ask if they have special dating terms, discounts, freight, BOGO, or other offers for attending the show. After all, they want you to be there. It's the only place you'll see the line in its entirety.

Make time for discovery of new products. Check out new vendors and temporaries in addition to permanent showrooms. You may want to limit your time at market due to the pandemic, but don't forget to plan time for exploration and discovery.

Doing Business Together Safely

Following local, state, and federal guidelines as well as the advice of a top epidemiologist, attendees at all IMC markets will be asked to observe our Together Safely protocols, which include the required use of personal protective equipment (PPE), temporal monitoring, social distancing, occupancy control, hand sanitizing/cleansing, and significantly enhanced housekeeping. IMC's Together Safely protocols may require extra time as we move people through the new registration process, so plan arrival times accordingly. Be prepared for a safe market by viewing IMC's Together Safely webinar.

Atlanta Market is the industry's premier gift, décor, and lifestyle market. Housing the nation's largest gift product mix complemented by a broad selection of home décor, it features more than 8,000 brands across all categories. Held semiannually at AmericasMart Atlanta, Atlanta Market attracts retailers and designers from every U.S. state and more than 60 countries. Winter 2021 Atlanta Market runs Jan. 12 – Jan. 19, 2021. For more information, visit [AtlantaMarket.com](https://atlantamarket.com).

Las Vegas Market is the leading home furnishings and gift market in the western U.S., presenting 4,300+ furniture, home décor, and gift resources in an unrivaled market destination. Las Vegas Market features thousands of furniture, home décor, and gift lines, allowing for cross-category commerce among these industries. Winter 2021 Las Vegas Market runs Jan. 24 – Jan. 28, 2021, at World Market Center Las Vegas. For more information, visit [LasVegasMarket.com](https://lasvegasmarket.com). 