

9 July 2017

Dear colleague

Charity Retail Conference: Exhibition 2018

Thank you very much for taking the time and trouble to exhibit at the CRA conference this year. We very much rely on you and your fellow exhibitors for the success of our event and really do appreciate your support.

Following a discussion at the Corporate Members' Advisory Group in December 2017, the conference documentation this year made a specific point of asking exhibitors not to break down their stands until the official end of the conference at 2:30pm on Tuesday 26 June.

Whilst many of you very kindly attempted to remain fully open until the appointed hour, we were disappointed to see that a number of our exhibitors started breaking down at lunchtime, or in some cases even earlier. This was particularly disappointing because:

- Many attendees had come to the exhibition over lunchtime and were disappointed to see not only that some of their target stands had disappeared, but also that the exhibition area resembled a building site. This did not reflect well on the exhibitors or on the CRA.
- The resulting breaking down resulted in a major health and safety issue, with a variety of equipment being scattered about the floor, over desks, in entrance ways, walkways etc.
- We had specifically agreed to the request of many of our members to have the extra hour after the finish of the conference, and it seems very odd that some of those selfsame people were then leaving early.

In many exhibitions leaving early is simply not an option – with exhibitors doing that being fined for being in breach of contract, and with security guards patrolling the exhibition to prevent this from happening. I have no desire at all to go down that route, but we simply must find a way of preventing this melee from occurring again. Accordingly, I have asked Susan to ensure that, next year (2019), any exhibitors found to be in breach of this condition will be refused entry to the 2020 exhibition. I have also asked Alex and Marie, the conference organisers, to ensure that sufficient staff are on hand to remind exhibitors of their responsibilities in this area.

I'm sorry to write in this vein, and I want again to re-iterate our thanks to those of you who did remain active until the end of the conference. I hope everyone will appreciate the importance of maintaining a professional and safe exhibition until the allotted end of the event.

With best wishes

Robin Osterley
Chief Executive

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