

90% of Rand Show exhibitors set to return in 2019

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90% of exhibitors that participated in the 2018 Rand Show at the Johannesburg Expo Centre intend to participate in the 2019 event, citing significant improvements to the show as their primary reason for returning to Johannesburg's most iconic showcase.



This is according to a recent study conducted by Pulse Research, which noted a four-year high in exhibitor satisfaction after improvements in the show's quality.

"We've made major strides in ensuring that the Rand Show is as relevant to the immediate trade of exhibitors as possible," said Craig Newman, CEO of the Johannesburg Expo Centre. "Our annual family-oriented festival environment is the ideal opportunity for brands to reach a growing middle class from various parts of Gauteng, as well as Limpopo, Free State, North West, the Cape Provinces and even the SADC region."

The Pulse Research survey conducted nearly 500 individual interviews amongst visitors, suppliers and exhibitors during the 2018 Rand Show and the week afterwards. The most important finding was that exhibitor satisfaction in 2018 increased significantly on previous years' feedback as the festival delivered improved returns on investment for traders.

In 2018, the sale of merchandise became the primary reason for exhibiting at the Show, compared to previous years where retailers focused more on brand building and awareness. This resulted in higher financial returns and greater satisfaction among exhibitors, who have an average 9.5-year association with the show.

The Rand Show primary audience is families with parents aged 25 to 49 years who have children living at home, earning between R20,000 and R50 000 per household. This demographic strengthened to 75% of the Rand Show 2018 audience.

The study also found that 40% of the audience resides in the South Rand, East Rand and West Rand areas of Johannesburg, with Soweto declining as a source of visitors in relation to other locations. Interestingly, KwaZulu-Natal representation was boosted significantly due to media exposure and the 'Experience India' exhibit.

The SANDF exhibition was the overwhelming highlight of the show, appealing to all visitors. This was followed by the Naked Scientist, which had a strong appeal to young families. The House of Horrors was also well-received. The Route 66 Motoring Experience had a strong appeal among older males.

"We believe we've adapted the Rand Show format to appeal to a wider range of exhibitors and audiences alike," Newman says. "We are confident that we will see growth in visitors and brands offering unforgettable experiences in 2019."

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