



Is Our Industry Model Obsolete?

By Dan Cantor, President, EDPA

I am reasonably certain that our national economy will begin to significantly improve in 2010, and our industry will show signs of life as a result—but we have a choice to make at this moment in time. For our industry, we have the ability to choose between 1) a subdued recovery, dampened by the lackluster physical appearance and extraordinary cost of tradeshows; or 2) a robust recovery that is supercharged by a new business model from which exhibitors and all industry segments will benefit.

The EDPA positions on the business practice of packaging or bundling of "exclusive" with "non-exclusive" services, and the peculiar fees that lead to unpredictable show costs and exhibitor dissatisfaction, are well known. The marketplace does not reward this kind of activity for very long; consequently, we are confident that reasonable people can collaborate on a solution that facilitates fair competition among all designer-producers, including those that perform exclusive services in convention centers.

But our industry has a much bigger challenge: our business model is not globally competitive, and our industry will soon be in crisis as a result.

Exhibiting in convention centers outside the U.S. costs a fraction of what a similar appearance costs in this country. Global show schedules for U.S.-based companies have increased dramatically because of the relative strength of economies outside the U.S., but also because overseas events are far more cost effective. Without significant changes, this trend will continue, and each year event marketing professionals at U.S.-based companies will allocate more dollars to "outside the U.S." events, which are gaining in prominence. They will also allocate more dollars to virtual solutions, which are a necessary complement to live events, but are also replacing small tradeshows and private events at a significant rate.

Exhibitors can no longer juggle upwards of 30 different charges or fees, many of which are unpredictable (and very challenging for any budget-compliant event manager). We have to address floor-space costs, material-handling issues, venue restrictions, work rules and booth regulations, which make exhibiting in the U.S. unnecessarily restrictive and costly.

Each year, our customers opt for smaller, lighter, less-magnificent exhibit solutions because we use weight as the primary variable in the calculation of material handling charges. If we do not actively

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CONFERENCE PREVIEW INSIDE

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EDPA ACCESS 09
CONFERENCE & SHOWCASE

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KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



The HP Perspective: Rewriting the Rules of Trade Shows

Glenda Brungardt | Manager of Trade Shows and Events | HP



The New Exhibit Blueprint: Strategy Takes the Lead

Keith Goldberg | Senior VP-Client Strategy | EWI Worldwide

WELCOME



Dear EDPA Member
(and those who should and will be):

The last three months flew by, especially in your HQ's part of the world, (New England) where rain cut our already too-short summer nearly in half!

After good EDPA participation in London at Excite! and Paris at the IFES meetings in June, we came together again in Chicago at TS2 in July. Our "Power-of-3" new membership campaign continues, and if you want to know how to save 33% off your ACCESS 09 registration this year, ask any member (or me) about how it all works and we'll be happy to get you signed up.

And while we're on the subject of ACCESS 09, we have an extremely powerful theme and lineup for this year's event; it's called "INNOVATE" and it takes place December 2-4 in Palm Springs. We'll be coming together at the beautiful Renaissance Esmeralda Resort & Spa for three days designed to help you move your business forward through education, new workshops and the very best networking opportunities in our industry. Please visit edpa.com/access09 to register today.

Earlier this year we introduced EDPA's **Thought Leaders Forum**, and while we had real interest in the program, we also had some real price-resistance and shared your concerns about the investment in this economy. We have now revamped the entire **Thought Leaders Forum** around three working sessions; an October and November Webinar, followed by a three-hour live workshop programmed during ACCESS 09 in December. Designed specifically to help align you and your company as a thought-leader in your field for 2010 and beyond, this is a powerful way to position yourself in front of your competition. For more details on the new program, see this page. >>

I look forward to seeing you at the Esmeralda in Palm Springs for our ACCESS annual meeting and conference very soon.

Sincerely,

Jeff Provost
Executive Director | jprovost@edpa.com

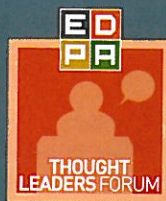
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collaborate to determine a better measure, we will continue to see tradeshow presentations become more lackluster, and the average size of events decrease. This trend will exacerbate the overall decline in tradeshows, simply because they will be less compelling and differentiated against online sources for information and engagement.

Soon, our municipal boards and legislatures will realize that their recently expanded convention centers are being negatively impacted by these trends, and they will attempt to exert more control—which will cause us to focus on their model instead of ours, and be less customer-focused. Think Wall Street, the auto industry, and health care reform; governments react when industries are not proactive.

The good news is that face-to-face marketing is a proven medium that deserves its place at the top of the marketing spend, second only to Web marketing. All industry segments acknowledge that the current model is problematic, and must be modified to enhance the viability of tradeshows. The EDPA is supportive of recent initiatives to develop industry best practices, and is actively engaged in dialogue with other associations and constituents—and encourages all interested parties to participate.

Let's continue the dialogue! Mark your calendars and register for the EDPA's ACCESS (Annual Meeting and Supplier Showcase) at the Renaissance Esmeralda Resort & Spa in Palm Springs (December 2-4), and join your peers for access to the best people, insight, ideas, case studies and incomparable networking, to drive your business in 2010 and beyond. See you there!



Thought Leaders Forum Builds Business & Reputation

There is limited availability for this fall's EDPA "Thought Leaders Forum," which winds up with a three-hour, live training workshop and critique at ACCESS 09 in December.

"The Forum is designed to identify and nurture leaders in our industry," according to Jeff Provost, Executive Director of EDPA.

The Forum consists of three workshops; one conducted online October 23rd, the second on November 13th, and the live presentation at ACCESS 09 in Palm Springs on December 2nd, led by the Event Marketing Institute's Managing Director, Mike Westcott.

"Thought Leaders are made, not born," Westcott said recently. "Through this Forum, we will help EDPA members develop and use quality educational content and thought leadership to grow their business; Learn to facilitate and speak at educational sessions for national and regional audiences; Leverage their special expertise to become an industry thought leader; and more."

Registrations are still being accepted for the Thought Leaders Forum. For full details and pricing go to EDPA.com/ACCESS09ThoughtLeaders.