



**SPECIAL REPORT:** THE YEAR IN REVIEW

# **STAYING ALIVE**

EM's year in review provides a chronological look at more than 67 ways the industry turned a down economy into an opportunity to prove that live marketing is still alive and kicking

# Saying that this was one of the industry's toughest years on record would be an understatement.

First, the banking industry imploded on itself, sparking a domino effect of financial destruction that seemed only to gain momentum as the year went on. The first to get hit: creators of hospitality and recognition events.

Then, high-profile sports sponsorships came under fire, adding fuel to the public's outrage. Next came the exhibit freeze, as marketers canceled trade-show reservations and put booth builds on hold. As a result, attendance plummeted, too, sending entire economies, like Las Vegas', reeling. Many brand teams were forced to layoff their employees while on the agency side, some shops closed their doors forever. Indeed, there wasn't much to be happy about. But between the lines and behind the scenes, the actual work that did get executed was arguably some of the strongest ever unleashed. For many marketers, the economic implosion was a hard-won wake-up call that forced from the depths signs of growth, innovation and inspiration. More than 67, in fact.

What you're about to read is a monthby-month retrospective of the top trends that rose from the ashes in 2009. Twenty-two pages filled with examples of fresh thinking, unconventional ideas and a revived, almost ferocious pursuit of data that can prove the value of live programs to even the most skeptical of audiences. When staying alive was all anyone was trying to do, this industry made innovation its survival strategy. We present more than 67 tactics, concepts and downright brilliant trends that you-the event industry-brought to life in your darkest hour.

# THE YEAR IN REVIEW



# FREEZE AND FLASH MOBS

Mass Freezes and flash mobs pause and cause a commotion in train stations and other busy commuter hubs, and YouTube takes it worldwide. T-Mobile's flash mob of 350 dancers stops commuters in their tracks at London's Liverpool Street station. Sony puts nine brand ambassadors dressed as mannequins in Grand Central Terminal and other New York hot spots.

"When you have somebody to your home for a party or for dinner, you clean your house, you put away the clutter, you bring out your best stuff. You do the same thing on the trade-show floor."



VICTOR TORREGROZA, EVENT PROGRAM MANAGER AT INTEL (HOLDING HIS DOG)



# LESS IS MORE

Leading brands learn that bringing everything and the kitchen sink to trade shows muddles the strategy and overwhelms attendees. Marketers begin seeing tangible ROI increases by leaving the full product inventory back at the office. At the 2009 CES show, Microsoft goes from 140 to 32 demo stations and Intel scales back its demos from 42 to 24.



**3** AIR GUITAR Rock and roll video games are the number one interactive across events and trade shows with marketers tying into the red-hot Rock Band and Guitar Hero to draw crowds. Event attendees may look like complete imbeciles, but they're havin' a good time.

Despite a 22% drop in attendance, 2,700 companies and more than 110,000 attendees invade Las Vegas to promote their gadgets, gizmos and technology at CES 2009.

# SENSORY ADDITIONS Events add aroma, texture and

warmth to engage consumers. Stove Top and Tylenol heat up bus shelters in the dead of winter. Mini Cooper pumps the scent of fresh cut grass into its experiences. Kleenex Lotion Feelspace incorporates the smooth touch of running water, hand massages and other textural experiences into a tour traveling to 10 cities hyping a new facial tissue with lotion (it feels so creamy).





# NIGHTLIFE GETS **AN UPGRADE**

Spirit brands including Hornitos and its Garden of Agave tour transform onpremise activations into theatrical experiences complete with snake charmers, fire dancers, contortionists and other provocative elements as exotic as the drinks themselves. This ain't your dad's buy-back program.



# POP-UP PARTNERSHIPS Temporary retail envi-

ronments see a huge boom during a down economy (small budgets and an endless inventory of empty storefronts provide the fuel to the fire). Gap partners with Pantone to launch a colorinspired t-shirt line in its temporary retail space. Past partners include the African AIDS relief foundation (RED), and the French boutique, Colette.



# TV SHOWS GO EXPERIENTIAL "Burn Notice" hits bars

in 10 markets and "Big Love" brand ambassadors walk the streets of Chicago, Los Angeles, New York City and Philadelphia with "secret" thought bubbles suspended over their heads. The same people who say advertising works use live events to help push viewership? HAHAHAHA! Oh you're killin' us, people.



JANUARY

# BRANDS BEHIND BANDS

Emerging artists prove to be a direct line of influence to trendsetting consumers and brands take notice. Taco Bell buys late-night meals for indie bands and then showcases them at its activations including the Winter X Games. Dickies in March follows suit, outfitting up-and-coming bands in their gear at the South by Southwest Music Festival.



# FACEBOOK FRENZY

The connection to social media kicks into high gear. Brands start linking live events to branded Facebook fan pages. Frito-Lay's Race to the Fiesta Bowl cross-country challenge reaches fans via Facebook, generating more than 17,000 fans and thousands of page views, visitors, wall posts, usergenerated essays, pictures and videos.

# "Are the folks on the sales floor savvy enough and skilled enough to take those consumers that come in and engage them properly and convert them from interested participants into purchasers? I might not go to a retailer that doesn't have a more skilled, higher-end sales force."

# CONFESSION BOOTHS Rav-Ban steps

up its street activations at the Sundance Film Festival in Park City. UT. with Truth or Dare confession booths.





# **EVERYONE TIES INTO "CHANGE"**

Barack Obama becomes the first African-American president. Tina Fey retires her Sarah Palin impersonation (for now). Pepsi kicks off its Refresh Everything campaign with New Year's revelers in New York, handing out buttons and noisemakers and, at four minutes to midnight, to the tune of John Lennon's "Imagine," releasing 1,000 balloons printed with its new logo and messages of hope and joy. IKEA launches an Embrace Change '09 promotion in Washington, D.C. with a full-sized replica of the Oval Office furnished with IKEA products.

JUDAH ZIEGLER, ASSOCIATE VP-RETAIL AND CONSUMER MARKETING AT SHARP. ON WAYS TO SHORTEN THE DISTANCE BETWEEN THE ACTIVATION AND THE CASH REGISTER



Microsoft's sleek and spacious meeting and press space at CES is a serious upgrade from the press tent in the parking lot (Hey, Jen Mojo and Kati Quigley, keep it up). With wood-floored hallways, modern furnishings, plasmas, gaming systems and sliding glass doors the space feels more like a high-end hotel than a high-tech demo space.



# THE REAL



vescent elixir on the ski slopes proving that there is nowhere sampling teams won't go.

Pfizer's 3D theater takes docs inside a heart attack. Who says b-to-b presentations have to be boring? Not Pfizer. Well done.







**GREEN GETS SERIOUS** It ain't just a fad, folks. Microsoft achieves the first U.S. Phase 1 certification to the BS 8901:2007 standard for sustainability for its Convergence 2009 event, which takes place in March.



Denny's serves up free Grand Slam breakfasts to two million people (including EM sales staffer Jeff Fortmann, who spilled syrup on his sleeve and then licked it off), creating long lines, 47 million hits to its website and \$50 million in media value. Moet & Chandon Oscar parties in Atlanta, Chicago, Dallas, Miami, New York City and Washington, D.C., give consumers the red carpet treatment.



# ALL A TWITTER

A little online site called Twitter starts making a name for itself. Some marketers say it'll never take off. Others laugh at the marketers who say it'll never take off. Brands including Oracle, Nike and IBM use it at live events to send attendees updates and track conversations in real time.



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At the South Beach Wine & Food Festival, Evian Natural Spring Water shows how fine water and fine dining go hand in hand by turning its tent into an educational tasting experience. "You hand over control of the relationship because they have the ability to opt in and opt out. We don't want them to opt out, so we're very careful about what we deliver to them in conversation."

> RICH KARLIS, DIRECTOR-SPONSORSHIPS AND EVENTS AT QWEST COMMUNICATIONS, ABOUT HOW THE COMPANY INTERACTS WITH ATTENDEES VIA DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY AT EVENTS



Pepsi's at it again with a Dear Mr. President campaign via street teams urging folks to share their hopes for 2009 with the new prez while handing out scarves branded with words of hope and optimism.

# **FEBRUARY**

Goodyear Feb. 1-4 holds its annual meeting for 1,300 dealers, even though its competitors had canceled theirs. It introduces 16 new products at production costs lower than last year.





**REMOTE CONTROL** The technology boom is just getting started as virtual and reality become one. Telepresence technology lets attendees beam into events via videoconference and becomes a viable option for small meetings and large events at Cisco.



**CELEBRITY CHEFS** Bam! Brands including Meow Mix. Robert Mondavi wines and Belk department stores spice up events with celebrity chef appearances.



Guinness petitions President Obama and



all over the nation (and your EM editorial team) spend the day drunk anyway.



## CELEBRITY DESIGNERS

Retailers do the same thing with hot designers. Example: Jonathan Adler creates spaces for Amex at Fashion Week and a chocolate suite for Godiva.

Spray 'n Wash hangs 1,000 t-shirts from the ceiling of Vanderbilt Hall in New York's Grand Central Terminal to tout a new bleach alternative product.



THE RETURN OF THE SPEAKEASY Remember, exclusive access doesn't really need to be exclusive. It just needs to seem exclusive. Got that? You sure? Ok here's an example: Thai liquor brand Mekhong leverages the air of mystery to connect with hardto-please hipsters and influencers. On-premise events are held in speakeasy-style bars complete with unmarked doors and back alley locations.



Sharp's associate vp-retail and consumer marketing, Judah Zeigler, plays hardball with his activation-to-retail strategy, skipping retail locations where the sales staff isn't up to snuff, requiring upfront inventory purchases by retailers, activating a dedicated subject matter expert team for key accounts and setting clear expectations with retailers about short- and long-term sales lift after the event. You may drive a hard bargain, Judah, but you've got one of the strongest event-driven retail sales machines in the industry. Retailers, we dare you to complain. We friggin' dare you!



# THE YEAR IN REVIEW



Inventive planners try and turn the most boring friggin' corporate meet-

ings into something attendees can stand to attend. Take Pecha Kucha: The 20-slides-in-under-seven-minutes format catches fire and becomes a

quick-fix for stale PowerPoint presentations.

FedEx Office Print and Ship Centers on March 10 offer free resume printing for job seekers.

"We're looking at everything more closely than ever, not only for return on investment, but return on objective."



LISA HOLLADAY, MANAGER-BRAND EXPERIENCE AT MERCEDES-BENZ



**PECHA KUCHA** 

EX Awards announced! Finalists named across 30 categories. The hate mail begins as 600 entries realize they got no shot at the prize. (It's a thankless job.)

Staples from March 2 to April 4 performs free PC tune-ups at its 1,500 stores, helping customers (realize their PCs suck and that they need new ones) during these challenging times.





96% of moms value recommendations from mommy bloggers.





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20 DIGITAL MOM CAMPAIGNS Just like when you were a little

kid: Your mom still has all the power. To build credibility with household decision-makers, brands such as Huggies and McDonald's create unique live experiences and then invite socially active mommy bloggers to spread the good word online.



# MARCH



**21** SIGN-UPS TAP SOCIAL MEDIA Turnkey event registration services such as Event Innovation, Eventbrite and Eventbee leverage social networks to boost ROI.



**222** MUSIC AND It was the year that the phone and PDA companies literally bought themselves the music industry. The Grammy Celebration Concert Tour presented by T-Mobile Sidekick is one of several mobile companies that use music to connect with customers. Virgin Mobile launches a 32-date Britney Spears The Circus Tour in April. Blackberry sponsors U2 over the summer.



**233 GUERRILLA PROJECTIONS** Nothing is safe in the world of street marketing. The side of a building becomes the new billboard. For five nights projectionists visit high traffic locations in New York City to project a looping video of Red Bull's soccer team, the New York Red Bulls. "This generation is skeptical to marketing that appears to be inauthentic, shallow or selfpromoting. It seeks to be heard and be part of communities. Therefore, rather than focus on Huggies, we centered the program on listening to and recognizing today's mom."

CRAIG WANOUS, BRAND MANAGER AT HUGGIES

HP touts TouchSmart Desktop PCs with acrobatic performance artists storming Times Square.





Hardly a pop-up, Mattel opens a flagship \$30 million, six-story Barbie Dream House experience in Shanghai.



Kudos to Bank of America for raising the bar for the industry by stepping up and defending your marketing programs with hard numbers when marketers everywhere were taking the heat for their sponsorship and hospitality programs. The bank goes on the record to say that its NFL program produces \$10 in revenue and \$3 in net income for every sponsorship dollar spent. As a result, marketers in every sector are inspired to tighten up their own ROI metrics or create ROI programs if they don't already have them. (We know who you are and we're watching you.)





# THE YEAR IN REVIEW



# **BRANDED ACTS OF**

Random is fabulous, kids. Free cab rides from HSBC, free resumes from FedEx, free PC tune-ups from Staples and free coffee from State Farm. Just a few of the random goodwill marketing tactics used to engage consumers and build loyalty.

A mere 13% of 480 executives surveyed deployed real-time systems to collect and analyze customer feedback, according to a study by word-of-mouth consulting company Satmetrix. Jesus weeps.

"This is going to be the year when we buckle down and really figure out how we create a competitive advantage to drive business, and one of the ways we are going to do that is through customer experience."

LIZ MILLER, VP-PROGRAMS AND OPERATIONS AT CMO COUNCIL



**266** HOUSES One of the biggest trends of the year starts spreading like wild fire, as brands turn to intimate in-home events to build word of mouth. Socially active consumers throw the parties and then post photos and thoughts about the products on personal and brand-hosted blogs. Genius. Just genius.



**BRANDED HOUSES** Marketers at Vitaminwater, LG, Heineken and Fuze, to name a few, tweak the pop-up format to create their own super-cool "homes" for consumers and clients to hang in. Yo, where's our invite, homies?



Barnes & Noble promotes "Turnoff Week," to encourage families to turn off their TVs, computers and electronic games and read books instead. Ratings for "NCIS" double.

AARP and Walgreens launch a two-year national mobile health screening Wellness Tour, traveling to more than 3,000 communities.



# APRIL



**28** WALKING BILLBOARDS Branded buzz cuts and tattoos transform consumers into walking billboards for brands like Air New Zealand, proving that people will do anything for a free plane ticket. A scaled down New York International Auto Show takes place April 10-19 at the Javits Center. This dog steals the show.



"The virtual space is such a beautiful thing because it can be scalable for what you need it to be."



MARIE COTTRELL, EVENT MARKETING MANAGER AT HP

**29 WEBSITE UPGRADES** Event websites get an upgrade with social media tools, blogs and round-the-clock updates and help create seamless experiences between the real world and the web.



**300 INTERACTIVE STOREFRONTS** Carnival turns vacant storefronts into cell phone-driven motion-activated virtual fish tanks. Passersby dial an 888-number to create their own personalized fish and then use their phone's keypad to feed it and play with its appearance. Fun to watch. More fun to play with.

# Events such as Sundance and SXSW crack down on fringe activations and support official sponsors



EM announces the 2009 EX Awards for the best event marketing campaigns of the year. New Balance takes home the Grand Ex with a guerrilla campaign that gives its old brand new legs.



EM founder Kerry Smith discovers Twitter. "Did you know you can tweet things from your phone?" he asks. Yeah, *we know*. (Kill us now.)



DELIGHTING SUB-TARGETS Lysol discovers that 40 percent of NASCAR fans are women so it surprises visitors to the ladies room at major race events with a squeaky clean experience. Somewhere out there. a Purell marketing team cries that they didn't think of it first (had they known Swine Flu was going to explode six months later, they wouldn't have cried so much)

New Balance gives its brand a more youthful makeover with a 33-college, 11-market guerrilla campaign that mixes provocative postings in the college newspaper, overnight dorm sweeps, surprise product drops, wild postings, sidewalk stencils and bar promotions. The "LOVE/hate" program helps win favor with the brand's 18- to 29-year-old-demo and scores the brand a Grand Ex Award. Foot Locker loves the 31 percent sales lift. We love the suggestive personal ads, you dirty birdies.



AIRPORT

able to prevent your shampoo from clearing security, but they

can't touch event marketing.

Can you say, captive audience?

The TSA may be

# THE YEAR IN REVIEW





TRYVERTISING The strategy coined by trendspotting.com suggests marketers skip the street sampling and instead get samples in the hands of targeted customers and then elicit feedback from them through social media platforms.



InterContinental Hotels sets up a 42foot by 28-foot bed topped with 30 double mattresses for the biggest bedjumping event in the world.

Microsoft uses Twitter at its Canadian Leadership Summit (May 26 to 28) to spark conversations among executive attendees and the brand.



ARTIFACTS Traveling experiences turn into mini museums on the go. Disney kicks off its "A Christmas Carol" train tour to promote the 3D movie launch on Nov. 6. The tour features rare artifacts like Charles Dickens' fountain pen. Country Financial spends 2009 on tour with relics from the Titanic.



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CES may be a little soft, but Interop keeps on chugging, drawing crowds of IT professionals to İts annual show.

"Virtual is playing a huge role. Most of our top-tier, face-to-face events will have an online extension."



MARY FEHRNSTROM, SENIOR MANAGER-EVENT STRATEGY, CISCO SYSTEMS



Ford launches its Transit Across America Tour to connect its commercial van with small businesses.

MAY

"Event marketing and experiential marketing is still going to be very important but as marketers, we have to let the customer speak for our brand almost as ambassadors of our brand, because in general the public will respect the opinion of an outside person or entity more than they will our own company.

TERRY SHORROCK, DIRECTOR-SHOWS AND EVENTS, PANASONIC



MOBILE MOJO Mobile brands like T-Mobile, AT&T and U.S. Cellular drive data collection at events through cell phonebased games, scavenger hunts, texting contests and photo retrieval.

"We have to keep selling the value of what we do in event and sponsorship marketing. It's just about showing the revenue that we bring in and we have to be able to articulate, had it not been for this sponsorship or this event where we brought in these leads or we brought in these new customers, we would have missed out on the revenue."

> BOBBY WILKINSON, MARKETING MANAGER, STATE FARM

**TWEETUPS** Social media starts to move from cyberspace to

ground-level. DiGiorno launches a flatbread pizza by offering to provide free pies to

Twitter users at their tweetup events.

Data reveals that consumers 35 and older are the fastest growing segment on Facebook. The moms of EM's editors find new ways to guilt trip them into calling more often.

More than 11,000 hospitality industry honchos descend on the Hospitality Design Exposition and Conference at the Sands Convention Center in Las Vegas.

A new report says Twitter visits skyrocketed 1,400 percent since 2008.



While other auto brands sputter along in the slow lane and contemplate bankruptcy, Hyundai is on the move thanks to a mix of guerrilla car enthusiast events and targeted VIP and influencer programs. In a year that auto brands sink deeper into the quicksand, Hyundai is crushing it.

**CO-MARKETING** 

ner in a Play With Your Food tour.

# THE YEAR IN REVIEW



The sum is indeed greater than its parts. Brands pair up to get more bang for their marketing bucks. Example: Burger King and Kraft Macaroni & Cheese part-

"Insurance isn't a tangible product that consumers can sample and try, which makes these types of engagement experiences that much more important."

TODD FISCHER, MANAGER-NATIONAL SPONSORSHIPS AT STATE FARM, REFERRING TO ITS EX AWARD-WINNING CALL YOUR SHOT PROGRAM



Pop icons Michael Jackson, Farrah Fawcett and Ed McMahon die in the same week, proving that the celebrity death rule of threes exists.



**58** FREE PRODUCT Freebies reach the living room as Domino's supplies free pizzas to 2,000 in-home events, reaching 30,000 consumers on one day.

Ben & Jerry's Upside Down truck takes its new Flipped Out sundaes on the road.



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**RIDE AND DRIVE 2.0** Auto marketers recognize that five minutes behind the wheel ain't enough. Ford launches Fiesta Movement, giving new Fiestas to 100 bloggers, Twitterati, Facebookers and YouTube video stars for six months. Each driver's thoughts, exploits, photos and videos are posted at fiestamovement.com. The campaign will be remembered as one of the most innovative of the year.



EVENT MARKETER NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2009



# HOT MOMS

MILFS, cougars, Stifler's mom. Whatever you call women of a certain age who are working their mommy mojo, they're making a statement at events. On June 3, IFC looks for the Hottest Rocker Mom to drive viewership of its "Z-Rock" series. No, we can't make this stuff up. Yes, we giggled when we typed "MILFS." "At a time when people are strapped for cash, finding the King's wallet was a welcome surprise that offered a dose of comic relief with a reminder about Burger King restaurants' great Value Menu offerings."



CINDY SYRACUSE, SENIOR DIRECTOR-CULTURAL MARKETING AT BURGER KING, REFERRING TO ITS EX AWARD-WINNING WALLET DROP



Walmart brings 16,000 store associates to Bentonville for its three-day annual meeting celebrating \$400 billion in sales. Since the economy is still in the toilet, the brand features hometown talent and its own associates on stage to give the event a more appropriate tone.

"Responsible adults don't like to be penned up to have a beer. They go to these types of events to enjoy music and be free for a day and relax and we do our best to bring that experience to life on site."

CARTER ANGUS, MANAGER-EVENTS AND SPONSORSHIPS AT VIRGIN MOBILE, REFERRING TO ITS EX AWARD-WINNING VIRGIN MOBILE FESTIVAL

HSBC celebrates its Wimbledon sponsorship by setting up a branded grass singles court in New York City's Rockefeller Center.

Trucking parts manufacturer Navistar replaces its



annual trade show for the first time with a virtual event called Power Up, Expo 2009.



The Area 21 program for Smirnoff Vodka was just *sick*. The brand stages a mini festival within larger music festivals featuring surprise performances from bands that had been on the main stage earlier in the day. Other clever moves: a dj was perched above the bar so the closer you got to the bar, the closer you got to the music. Also, folks could roam the experience by connecting their Bluetooth devices to the Area 21 "hub."





**HOME TOURS** As many Americans plan "staycations" instead of vacations, home goods brands take their show on the road. The Haier Home Tour and Be Home-Goods Happy tour both launch in July. The DOE and its energy efficient appliance partners take a full-sized energy efficient home on a 17-date tour.

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Spending on sampling remains strong as M & M's launches an ice cream sampling tour, bringing 900,000 frosty treats to the masses. EM Features Editor Sandy O'Loughlin works the Grey Goose Lounge at the AT&T National Golf tournament. At the end of the day, staffers find her passed out on the 9th hole.

One of the original brands to punch into experiential marketing back in the '90s, LEGO kicks off its first mobile tour in six years. Welcome back, Vince! We put a little recipe for mussels marinara at eventmarketer.com/welcomebackvince for you.



**GRAME STRATEGIC BRAND AMBASSADORS** They're more than a pretty face. The people compiling the information at the show need to be smarter and more tech-savvy than ever before. Brands such as Borghese and Hyundai require event staffers to gather, measure and translate consumer data.

Turnaround times in the event industry erode quickly. Case in point: Sikorsky Aircraft builds a new 14,400-square-foot exhibit in five months and launches it at Heli-Expo on July 24. Dayum.



"We had this huge event in CES and we had never reached out to our online community. So we sent out invitations and they came and we really saw the virtual world come to life and people come together in real time."

BOB GREENBERG, VP-MARKETING AT PANASONIC NORTH AMERICA, ON WHAT HAPPENED WHEN THE BRAND INVITED ITS TWITTER FOLLOWERS AND BLOGGERS TO ITS CES BOOTH FOR THE FIRST TIME FOR A PRIVATE TOUR



EM does its own subways series and compares the new Yankees and Mets stadiums. The Mets scores a homerun. The Yankees, not so much. Just sayin.

JULY





State Farm's Bobby Wilkinson loses 100 pounds by creating a new event marketer diet. Editor's note: Yo Bobby, you lookin' hot, big boy.



# **43** SCALING DOWN Adobe and Intel scale down their events in the recession-sensitive market. Their top tips: be transparent with attendees, skip celebrity speakers, grant more access to in-house execs, combine events with another region or country and hire local musical talent.



**DASHBOARDS** Think of it as mission control for your laptop. Dashboards are high-tech interfaces that let you track your event programs and data in real time. They gain momentum as marketers are being asked to prove ROI for every expenditure.



To help Lance Armstrong further promote his Livestrong Foundation's message of hope,

Nike at this year's Tour de France commissions Pittsburgh-based robotics developer DeepLocal to design and build the Chalkbot. The pneumatic robot preceded the Tour racers throughout France, printing messages on the road as part of the longstanding road chalking tradition of the race.

EM writer Ken Briodagh joins the nerdfest at Comic-Con in San Diego. We don't hear from him for three days. Eventually we have to wire \$1,300 to bail him out of a Tijuana prison after he got into a fight with a 14-year-old Buck Rogers fan over which character is sexier: Wilma Deering or Twiki the robot. Saddest part: He voted for the robot.

# "One of the biggest attributes of our brand is slime, so we literally needed a vehicle that could deliver slime to kids in a fun and interactive way."

FRANK TANKI, VP-CONSUMER MARKETING AT NICKELODEON, REFERRING TO ITS EX AWARD-WINNING SLIME ACROSS AMERICA TOUR THAT DUMPED 50 GALLONS OF SLIME AT EACH EVENT





Can't find a sport that matches your corporate image? Hasbro's Nerf unit solved the dilemma by creating one of its own: Nerf Dart Tag. To give it an extra dose of legitimacy (think Frisbee Golf), it also creates an official governing body, the Nerf Dart Tag League (NDTL). The new sport sets off on tour this summer holding competitions in 15 markets, including five in conjunction with the AST Dew tour. Hasbro created the proprietary tour to drive sales but as the program evolves, it may also enjoy the perks of self-sufficiency, potentially using tournament entry fees to offset program hard costs, and opening events to additional sponsorship revenue and partners. What brand wouldn't love a program that pays for itself?



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EM's eco-friendly Kerry Smith-mobile hits the road. Okay, not really. But the all-electric Aardy brings more eco friendly options to the industry for brands like PopChips, which takes three Aardys on the road for its 300-stop summer tour. Isn't it too cute?

"The biggest challenge was to take a diversified group of companies and get us all on the same page. And even though the businesses were very different, make us look the same and work together as a team and show the rest of the industry that we were consolidated and truly one company."

LYNN LEACH, SENIOR MANAGER-TRADE SHOWS AND CUSTOMER RELATIONS AT SIKORSKY, ON JUST SOME OF THE CHALLENGES SHE FACED BRINGING A NEW 14,400-SQUARE-FOOT BOOTH LIVE IN FIVE MONTHS







**47PERMANENT BRANDED SPACES** Samsung and the U.S. Army stake their claim in shopping centers to build long-term relationships with target consumers. Army recruitment rates explode.

Virgin Mobile's signature music festival, held on Aug. 30, goes gratis this year in a move to position itself as a consumer champion.



Oscar Mayer wraps its Lunch Your Tummy Right mobile campaign that put Lunchables Combinations into the hands of kids at fairs and festivals across the country. The tour featured inflatable obstacle courses, hula-hoop and dance contests and other interactive games. But no weinermobile. Bummer.

# AUGUST

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**48 GADGETS** Cool high-tech tools like Chirpe, Minglesticks and Jagtag make events more fun for attendees and give event marketers everywhere gadget envy.







To drive awareness for its waxing services, Bliss Spas holds a daylong "Gorilla" marketing promotion in its hometown of New York City, offering coupons and specials at the spas and reminding women that it's a "jungle down there." Staffers in gorilla suits wearing bikinis (over the fur) take to the streets in protest of unkempt body hair.

> Sony Ericsson builds the world's largest tennis court and plays "football tennis" at the Pilot Pen tennis tournament at the Yale Bowl in New Haven, CT.



# **19** INFLUENCER UPGRADES Finding the cool

kids who will talk up your brand becomes the go-to strategy for building authentic word-of-mouth among younger, tougher-to-please consumer categories. Pepsi's AMP Energy drink gains momentum with its biggest influencer sampling program ever by tapping into local populations of djs, artists, emerging sports stars and fashion trendsetters in 25 markets.





We love this program. AMP Energy's influencer campaign includes a killer component that helps the brand win favor with customers in 25 markets—the mini fridge. Trendsetting streetwear shops, sneaker boutiques and action sportswear retailers submit their own custom design and AMP sends them a free mini-fridge featuring the shop's artwork on the exterior. The AMP team keeps the fridge fully stocked, retailers showcase their handiwork and the brand gets access to high-traffic locations and highly-targeted consumers. Good stuff.





BRIGHTSIDING With America's collective spirits in the dump, the pop psychology trend that suggests we look on the bright side of life becomes a marketing concept. So does the trend of turning ordinary consumers into living marketing campaigns. Example: Kodak's BrightSide tour features the Compliment Guys, two kids from Purdue who dish out compliments for fun.

Ann Taylor LOFT stores go on tour to build media attention for the brand's more youthful look and to attract a new, younger clientele.

"We found these guys on YouTube and noticed they have a huge fan following. We have a campaign launching this fall with the tagline, 'It's time to smile,' so we thought, what a great opportunity to get together with them, take their genuine sense of optimism and desire to make people happy and try to get them to as many people as possible."

> LESLIE DANCE, VP-WORLDWIDE BRAND MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS AT KODAK, ON WHERE THE BRAND GOT THE IDEA FOR ITS BRIGHTSIDE TOUR WHICH FEATURES TWO STUDENTS FROM PURDUE KNOWN AS THE COMPLIMENT GUYS

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700 retailers participate in Fashion's Night Out, Sept. 10, on the eve of Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week to support the industry and kick off the fall season. Anna Wintour is overheard asking, "What is this place?" when she arrives at her first stop, Macy's. (Okay, we made that up. But seriously, like she shops at Macy's? Bitch, please.)







# LIVE REINVENTION

Brands more and more turn to events to shake off old perceptions about their products. Cintas, the uniform company best known for its blue scrubs, shakes up its reputation with an upscale fashion show in Las Vegas. It is, dare we day, sexy.



VIRTUAL EVENTS LEVERAGE LIVE STRATEGIES To help ease the transition for first-time virtual event attendees, brands such as Ariba, ASI and Navistar turn to live event tactics. Top tips include: giveaway offers that encourage exploration of the environment, a 24-hour help desk, a guided tour, pre-show training via webinars and hybrid programs that mix live and virtual events.

# SEPTEMBER



**533 GREENWASHING** File this under the "Trends that need to die" file. Eco friendly tours may not be so eco-friendly after all. Many use gasguzzling flatbed trucks to haul biodiesel, electric and solar-powered vehicles from city to city, defeating the purpose entirely. What's worse, some have yet another vehicle that follows filled with alternative fuels. WTF?







**SCREENLESS GREEN SCREEN** No longer do your photo activation programs require the big stationary neon green curtain. Thanks to a ton of new technology, consumer photos can be taken anywhere and electronically manipulated on the spot to appear in front of any variety of backdrops. As an added bonus, attendees can customize the photos themselves, which means more time spent on the data collection website. Aw, snap! On Sept. 14, Cisco takes its annual sales meeting virtual for the first time in 20 years. Dubbed GSX, it becomes the year's biggest example of the proliferation of digital events (see pg. 16).

> "We wanted to show consumers that they never have to be without great coffee. We're trying to trail blaze in social media and this is just the first step in things to come for Starbucks in this space."

> > LARA WYSS, DIRECTOR-GLOBAL CONSUMER P.R. AT STARBUCKS



Starbucks concludes a 4,500mile, two-week, 33stop international tour designed to build excitement

for the official launch of its new instant coffee, Via, touted to taste the same as the brewed version.



It ain't easy telling 20,000 of your top sales people that there would be no recognition event this year. So Cisco created "The Threshold," an online scavenger hunt and puzzle-solving game that was designed to get the entire sales force excited about the event and tapped into their inherent competitiveness to pull them into the virtual environment. It began three weeks before the sales meeting and

ended on the last day of the event. The storyline: Someone stole a bit of Cisco technology and the company needs you to find the culprit. Clues to each step arrived via voicemails and emails, driving players into the virtual world. Some attendees may have been bummed about missing the chance to shake ceo John Chambers' hand, but when faced with the economic realities of cutting back on its live shows, Cisco found a way to talk to its audience in a relevant way (see pg. 20).





# **555 MARKETING** Hispanics are America's largest and fastest-growing minority demographic. More importantly, they spend more than other demos and feel good about it. Hispanic households spend from seven to 30 percent more at grocery stores than other segments and their con-

sumer confidence ratings are higher than

any other demographic.

# THE YEAR IN REVIEW

As an indication that the EM editors will do anything-and people, when we say anything, we mean anythingfor a story, senior writer Ken Briodagh embeds himself into a Harrah's event, right down to wearing a Speedo. The program offered a free room at Harrah's to anybody that walked by and a free suite to anybody that put on a swimsuit. Tagline: Suits for Suites. Get it? The top rated nudies then had their photos posted to the Internet, where people voted on the best. Sadly, our little Kenny (see pg. 52) didn't win. (Must have been cold that day, bro.)

**566 TREAT TRUCKS** Also known as food or ice cream trucks, these mini restaurants on wheels are the hottest thing going in New York and L.A., offering everything from schnitzels and dumplings to ice cream and Asian-fusion tacos. In the marketing world, the Olsen Twins' Treat Truck hits the Big Apple to promote their apparel at JC Penney. The LA Kings Hockey Team follows suit in November with a branded ice cream truck.



Jamba Juice's "Jambassador," also known as Bananaman, blends up feel good moments, distributing free MetroCards to thousands of commuters in New York City.



"If I compare the print ad expenditure to a rolling road show, the ROI on the road show is 10 times that of the ROI from a print ad. It's dollar for dollar."

> DAN CARROLL, VP-COMMERCIAL MARKETING AT ABB LOW VOLTAGE DRIVES



**STANDARM** WITTER 2.0 Marketers discover there are right and wrong ways to engage with Twitter users, or, "tweeps." Professional grammar and spelling–good; snarky comments and attempted humor–bad. Offering coupons, gift cards or other rewards–good; forgetting to have a hashtag (#) for your events–bad. Info that amuses, entertains or enriches your followers–good; shameless self-promotion– very, very bad. Keep it cool, my babies.



Ocean Spray on Oct. 6 erects a 1,500-squarefoot freestanding cranberry bog containing more than 2,000 pounds of cranberries in New York City's Rockefeller Center.

Miley Cyrus deletes her Twitter account despite protests from fans. "I just think kids all over the world could use a little vacation from cyberspace," she said after signing off for the last time. Loser.





All-natural athletic apparel company lcebreaker sets up a seamstress with a sewing machine in the window of New York City's Paragon Sports for eight days leading up to the ING New York City Marathon. Street teams in lcebreaker gear work the sidewalk in front of the window and invite marathoners and regular consumers alike to trade in their synthetic running shirts and watch as they are made on the spot into a running shoe bag.



**588 PERSONALIZATION** Consumers today don't want you to tell them how to think about your brand. They want to interpret it for themselves. Example: On Oct. 13, Yahoo! gives its iconic yodel back to the people and invites consumers to submit their yodel online or at live events in three countries.

"The Hispanic market is very localized and targeted as it relates to specific regions of the country. A cookie cutter approach isn't going to work."



# MOBILE TRADE SHOWS

As recession forces businesses to cut back on travel, companies like ABB are bringing the trade show to the people. The strategy is so effective ABB boosts investment in the program five-fold from 2008. Yo ABB, we like the way you roll–literally.





Yahoo! gives 100 consumers in London, Mumbai and New York City a chance to record their version of the yodel in a professional recording studio. EM executive editor Jessica Heasley works behind the scenes as a brand ambassador for the day and whines about how hard it was for weeks after. (Wuss.)





With the summer music festival circuit officially at an end, Toyota rises to the top to get our vote for best festival activation. The brand made connections with young, music-loving audiences by tapping into their passion for self-expression and offering handmade Shrinky Dinks, temporary tattoos and rustom silk-screened bandanas as creative takehome items. Tie-ins with local indie rock stations and live stage performances gave the brand a shot of extra credibility among attendees with fickle tastes (and they all have fickle tastes). As marketers learn to let consumers interpret their brands in their own way, Toyota does a great job setting the pace.

# THE YEAR IN REVIEW

**60 GUINNESS WORLD** Record EVENTS Nothing reels in a wide variety of publications like a world record attempt. Earlier in the

year, EA breaks the record for most air guitarists rocking out at the same time. Wise Potato Chips went for the most crunchers at once at a Mets Game this summer. And on Nov. 11 *Cosmopolitan* magazine and Maybelline celebrate Veterans' Day with a Kisses for the Troops stunt in NYC. The world record attempt garnered over 1,800 lipstick prints. In a related matter, EM's Chip Berry tries to break his own record of eating 68 buffalo wings within 30 minutes.



Event Marketer throws a Pre-Holiday Meet-Up in New York City. Two unidentified party crashers sit in the corner and eat all our chicken skewers, prompting EM senior writer Sonia Andresson-Nolasco to ask them to leave in Portuguese. Forget the Zohan. You don't mess with the Nolasco!

"We were doing a shotgun approach, 'let's do everything and see what's going to stick,' and it was too much information. It was okay to say, 'we're not showing that at this event this time.' It was using the metrics which we hadn't truly taken advantage of, and it was not that much money to actually get this [information], and it saved us a lot of money in the end."

> ROCER MAY, SENIOR DIRECTOR-MARKETING AT SIEMENS, ON HOW SURVEY DATA LED THE COMPANY TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF WORKSTATIONS WITHIN ITS FOOTPRINT FROM 36 TO 15

IN-HOUSE

get serious about their eco-efforts and bring on full-time sustainability officers.

**GREEN TEAMS** Brands and agencies alike



80

Burger King activates its Futbol Kingdom program for Hispanic soccer players and fans. Just one more way the King brings his "your way" mantra to life.



**62** CUSTOM SILK-SCREENING With the help of designers and street-style artists, marketers transform the old branded t-shirt into a vehicle for consumer engagement and self-expression. Pepsi's AMP Energy rolls out custom silk-screening teams at its events and lets attendees pick the designs for their shirts. (Many wear them the same night. When's the last time you saw that?) Toyota keeps lines long all day at its festival activations with custommade silk-screened bandanas.

# **NOVEMBER**



LEGO launches its first-ever LEGO KidsFest, a three-day family event designed to bring the LEGO world to life through interactive, creative and educational activities. The show runs Nov. 20 to 22 at the Connecticut Convention Center in Hartford.



# **EXTREME EXPERIENCES**

The smarty-pants' over at Bud Camp may have perfected the immersive, all-inclusive consumer experience, but they're not the only ones whisking people away on exotic branded weekends. Air New Zealand matches singles up online and flies them to New Zealand on a Matchmaking Flight. Drambuie's Pursuit promotion flies a select group to Scotland to navigate a challenging 100-mile course that traces the spirit brand's history.



**64** FLASH NIGHTS Think of them as pre-promotions with a lot more sizzle. Stolichnaya's 10-week, multi-city Moskova Affair tour gives target audiences a sneak preview of upcoming performances in the days before the main event.

"It was a cost-cutting initiative at first, when a decision was made to cancel all internal events or transition them to virtual. Our story now is that it's no longer about the cost, it's about the opportunity to innovate, too."

ANGIE SMITH, MANAGER-GLOBAL SALES EXPERIENCE, GLOBAL SALES OPERATIONS AT CISCO SYSTEMS, ON THE COMPANY'S FIRST-EVER GLOBAL SALES EVENT, CISCO GSX Goldman Sachs launches "10,000 Businesses," an initiative giving \$500 million to help small businesses recover from the recession—and apologizes for its role in the financial crisis. Apparently they don't feel bad about getting flu shots before everyone else, though.





Red Bull sends its Facebook fans out into the real world to solve clues that lead to Red Bull Energy Shots in its social media-driven grassroots program, Red Bull Stash, which kicked off Oct. 13 and wrapped Nov. 5. Fans started on Facebook, plugged in a zip code and then searched for stashes in their area. Once a fan found a stash on the map, all that was left was to solve the clue and get there first. Whoever reached the stash first snagged the drinks and headed online to put in a code and make the claim. There hasn't been a more innovative use of Facebook and real-world brand experiences yet. Red Bull, you gotta be drinking your own product. Game on.

# THE YEAR IN REVIEW

A sneak preview of some of the things we'll be talking about in 2010.



**655** BLOGGERS GET SERIOUS Thanks to new rules by the FTC, brands and bloggers will need to be a whole lot more transparent about their relationships online. Break the rules and the feds could lay a \$16,000 fine on you. Bloggers everywhere prepare to go back to being the unpaid nerds living in their parents' garage that they were before.



Will the H1N1 virus spread throughout the event industry? No one knows for sure, but the producers of CES and the annual AVN Adult

Entertainment Expo are rethinking the fact that their events overlap. (They both run from Jan. 7 to 10, 2010.)



**Social MEDIA GETS TACTICAL** Now that the newness has worn off, marketers are recognizing that some social media platforms are better suited to certain objectives and demographics than others. Example: Starbucks' VIA mobile tour leveraged the talents of the brand's on-board staff–a full-time comedian and a social media expert–via webisodes on YouTube and frequent Twitter updates. ESPN.com focused only on Facebook and Twitter to sustain long-term communication and interest among fans during the NBA's off-season. The tighter the social media strategy, the better the results, folks.

Reebok wraps up its Try-On Tour, a mobile experience that had women slipping into its new EasyTone shoes. The shoes are made with a built-in balance ball technology in the sole that tones key leg and butt muscles with each step taken while wearing them. The tour traveled the East and West Coasts, hitting malls. retailers and other high-traffic areas.

**666 DATA REMAINS** Old school collection techniques like post-show surveys, along with new high-tech qualitative tools like face recogni-

tion software will give marketers

more options than ever for track-

ing attendee behavior and data.

DECEMBER



"When we look at deals like the Mets deal, there has to be a strong purchase component involved. I think that the brands and properties who build good, creative partnerships where they think outside the signage and activate in the most intelligent way are going to be the ones that succeed and get money and grow their sponsorship portfolios and their businesses."



JUDAH ZIEGLER, ASSOCIATE VP-RETAIL/ CONSUMER MARKETING AT SHARP



EA Sports will attempt to keep American consumers fit through the holiday season with two pop-up training centers in Boston and San Francisco. Consumers can swing in to check out the brand's customizable fitness video game Personal Trainer for Nintendo Wii, make reservations for one-on-one training sessions and borrow video games to take home. The state-of-the-art gyms opened on Sunday Nov. 15 and will be open until Dec. 14. Free fitness training? A cool place to work out? We predict this thing is going to trim a couple of pounds off at least a few couch potatoes. Who says exercise and gamers don't mix?

