



APPLE RINGS IN 2007 BY UNVEILING THE IPHONE, creating a stampede for the high-tech gadget of the year. The event marketing world gets techy, too. Event photo vendors are on the smartphone bandwagon, inviting customers to use their own camera-equipped mobile phones to snap photos and email them to a designated website, then log on to retrieve their shots. And now, having a website is no longer just a nice add-on to an event campaign—it's an expected part of the mix. HP staffers create a robust site, hp.com/blogs/sundance, that extends the impact of its sponsorship of the film festival, and Toyota's site, toyota.com/fjtrailteams.com, boosts the reach of its off-road events for the FJ Cruiser.

On the b-to-b side, new event platforms are hitting the market each day as virtual trade shows and conferences come to the fore. Besides Cisco, which jumped into online events in 1999 when its road show schedule topped an unwieldy 1,200 stops, brands such as Cruise West and Xerox are going virtual with weekly consumer webinars, online training programs and webcasting. Event registration gets streamlined with software programs that allow attendees to create their own agendas and perks such as early-registration discounts.

Marketers are evolving the medium on both sides, creating live programs that are becoming exponentially more efficient as they're becoming more effective. They have fine-tuned their spends and created effective strategies for getting more out of their event budgets. In sum, event marketing is on the upswing. Lexus and Red Bull create exhibits that borrow their look and feel from big city art galleries for a sophisticated ambiance; Stoli, UPS and Mountain Dew turn their brand heritage into retro-cool events that turn on consumers. Just like the iPhone!





TREND: SECOND LIFE

Linden Labs' virtual universe is home to a growing list of top brands, including American Apparel, Pontiac, Starwood and Toyota, and more are signing up to reach its tech-savvy users and sell virtual products like t-shirts and cars for virtual Linden dollars. Pontiac even stages a Second Life concert by Jay-Z at the site's Motorati Island. (Flash forward to 2012 and the platform is mainly home to perverts and geeks having their first sexual encounter. Uh, so we hear.)

“We are in the market every day measuring the effectiveness of the Olympics. I don't believe the age of long-term multiyear deals is gone, as long as you can demonstrate returns on that investment year in and year out, and as you build equity with those properties.”

MICHAEL LYNCH, SVP-SPONSORSHIPS AND EVENTS, VISA

“One learning we had from trade shows is that you really have to let the salesperson be in charge of the dialogue and the interaction. The last thing you want to do is just have [something] that is a one-dimensional or a one-directional communication out to the customer. What we wanted was a place where you can literally have an in-depth conversation, and where around that room you had content that supported the conversation.”

DIANA KLUG, DIRECTOR-MARKETING, BRAND PROMOTION AND CREATIVE SERVICES, BOEING



TREND: YOUTUBE

Brands from Jeep to Intel to Shell are getting on board and getting some play, whether they're creating the videos or letting their customers do it for them. At CES in January, Intel invites consumers to create their own commercials using an actual Intel TV spot for inspiration. The results: 190 attendee-generated videos log 20,000 views within four weeks after CES.

TREND: GREEN DESIGN

Timberland's booth at Outdoor Retailer Summer Market is one example of the growing green trend. Ninety-eight percent of the exhibit is built from earth-conscious materials. EM begins planning the first-ever Green Summit—the first conference that will discuss what it means

to create eco-friendly events—to take place in June 2008.



“Event marketing serves as the emotional connection between consumers and the company. The brand experience is now leading [our marketing], not advertising.”

DEBBIE ESTES, DIRECTOR OF MARKETING, BEST BUY

TREND: THE UNCONFERENCE

An idea born in the tech world where hackers and developers were bored by traditional conferences takes hold among mainstream brands, where content, schedule and speakers are created and managed on the fly. The only rule: no formal presentations and a free-flowing atmosphere. Examples: Disney's Pooh Camp in 2006, and this year's For Dummies book series unconferece in San Francisco.



TREND: VIRTUAL B-TO-B EVENTS

Conferences and trade shows move from the convention center to the computer screen as digital events become less of a novelty because of cost-effectiveness, reach and access to new audiences. Cisco now hosts 350 virtual seminars and events each year and this year moves into 3D presentations that work effectively on- and offline. It even holds a live event in conjunction with its Second Life territory.



→ **Del Monte** breaks a nine-month effort for Pup-Peroni dog snacks targeting man's best friends at dog parks, festivals, retailers and community events. After all, says the brand, "Dogs Are People, Too."



→ **Microsoft** rolls out Vista, Office 2007 with events in 74 cities. Launched in January and continuing through March, the campaign encompasses two road shows, one for larger businesses and a second for small and medium-sized companies.



→ **Cartoon Network's** guerrilla marketing effort for Aqua Teen Hunger Force in January creates havoc in Boston by installing electronic boxes that are misconstrued as bombs, triggering a chain reaction that ripples throughout the city. Turner Broadcasting and agency Interference pay \$2 million in fines to Boston-area authorities. Turner's executive vp

Jim Samples resigns as a result of the incident. Guerrilla campaigns from here out undergo more intense internal scrutiny.



→ **Motorola** at the Super Bowl takes over 10 blocks on Ocean Drive in South Beach in the days leading up to the big game. The centerpiece of its presence is a 50-yard football field with a regulation goal post and video board footage of Super Bowl week activities and events. There also are passing, field goal kicking and receiving challenges, nightly water shows, an end-zone dance competition and football clinics led by pro players



→ **Time Warner** installs a Home to the Future four-level, three-week showcase in Manhattan's Columbus Circle. The interactive temporary environment shows off TW's digital products and services, putting them directly into the hands of possible future customers.

→ EM launches the Event Marketing Institute, a membership-based resource for the corporate event community with a mission to be a global authority on the role of live events in business marketing. Through comprehensive education, research and analysis related to emerging trends, and insights into event marketing strategy, EMI helps members overcome challenges posed by today's fragmented environment and utilize live marketing to drive accountable and profitable business results.



→ **Kellogg's** hits the road with a new eight-month Healthy Beginnings tour to promote Smart Start, Mini Wheats, Special K and All Bran to Hispanic consumers with stops in key markets and at grocery stores.



→ The **Bud Light Lounge**, the company's signature live mobile marketing initiative in a 3,500-square-foot environment served up in an 18-wheeler, is on course to hit 40 markets in 2007.



➔ The **Air Force's** Do Something Amazing mobile tour, which launched in April, reinforces its tech-focused message by testing new text messaging, Bluetooth and Quick-Response-Code tactics to engage cell-phone addicted 16- to 25-year-olds. It is the most technologically advanced, integrated mobile campaign ever done in the U.S.

➔ **Walmart's** annual shareholders meeting in Fayetteville, AR, tries a new approach that uses humor and a "Saving people money so they can live better" theme as a platform to focus on the positives while giving a nod to serious issues such as charges of discrimination, wages, healthcare and labor relations. Audience interaction is a key piece of the strategy, and EM is there to witness the whole she-bang (and crush on Jennifer Lopez backstage).



➔ **MetLife** launches Snoopy in Fashion, a group designer fashion show during Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week in New York City. Designers such as Betsey Johnson and Liz Claiborne create one-of-a-kind runway outfits inspired by the Peanuts characters created by Charles M. Schulz. MetLife streams the show live on its website, then in October auctions the collection on eBay to benefit Dress for Success.

➔ **Microsoft** partners with Live Nation, the largest concert promoter in the world, to promote Zune, its answer to the Apple iPod. Sponsorships at 28 separate music venues operating simultaneously throughout the summer from June to October showcase Zune at more than 800 live music events and reach more than 11 million music fans. Oh, Zune... we hardly knew ye.



➔ **Sun Microsystems** hosts an eco-friendly JavaOne conference (held in May at the Moscone Center in San Francisco) by tweaking its approach with small but integral changes that translate into big enviro-friendly results.

➔ **GE Water** in May launches its first-ever international road show, The World Water Tour, a series of three-day events targeting plant managers, bottling company execs and municipal waste managers, which will travel to eight countries this year. The tour replaces about 270 of the brand's 300 trade shows in its portfolio and builds brand awareness in targeted emerging geographies among customers who don't know GE or only associate the brand with light bulbs and appliances.

➔ **Stolichnaya** in May wows the Hollywood jet set with a 15,000-square-foot Stoli Hotel, based loosely on the opulence of old Russian hotels, but with modern flourishes. After playing host to 14 events in less than three weeks, it hits the road to New York City, Chicago and San Francisco in the year ahead.

➔ **Virgin Mobile** goes green at its annual summer proprietary music event during a steamy August weekend in Baltimore. Besides headline entertainment from the likes of Fountains of Wayne, Cheap Trick, Amy Winehouse and more, this year, the big push is to get concertgoers up to speed about the company's environmental agenda.

➔ **Dell** launches the Dell Urban Challenge, a scavenger hunt in nine cities across three time zones that involves more than 2,000 contestants, all on the same day. Two-person color-coded teams armed with game boards and directions follow clues to eight sites where they receive verification stamps. The winner takes home a Dell Inspiron 1521 notebook computer.

➔ **Delta** is back and the airline, which emerged from bankruptcy in April, wants New Yorkers to know it. The result: the Sky360 Lounge by Delta, a 3,500-square-foot space on the corner of 57th St. and Sixth Avenue that for six weeks gives the Big Apple a taste of the Delta experience in a fun atmosphere. Attendees sample the food, relax with free copies of magazines, recharge their phones and try out the refurbished business class seats.

