



## TEN YEARS OF EVENT MARKETER

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**TO SAY IT IS A YEAR OF BIG CHANGES** for the industry is an understatement. It starts out innocently enough—cool mobile technologies and social media are expanding the reach of one-time events. Brands are still spending big and going all out at trade shows and on tour. And green initiatives are inspiring marketers to spend a little more for an eco-friendly halo. And then [insert menacing music here] *it all changes*.

The banks, the auto industry, the housing market and, as a result, the entire economy blows up and falls out, driving marketers to look with more scrutiny than ever before at their spending (what's left of it) and their strategies (if they have one). Everyone from President Obama to members of Congress seems to have it out for the industry, blaming event professionals of every kind for the type of waste and excess that contributed to the economic fallout in the first place.

In just a matter of weeks, everything shifts forever toward more focused and lean programs that make measurable results the key to the future health of the industry. As a result, of the events of this year, virtual and hybrid platforms become both viable and necessary. And using them to help prove the value of events, along with a rock solid ROI strategy, becomes the imperative for all.





## TREND: ON-PREMISE EVENTS

The on-premise and nightclub marketing game has been formulaic for years, but now, it's evolving into a strategic and powerful ROI tool. The Drambuie Den leads the way with its branded lounges that immerse attendees in the spirits brand's lifestyle. Following suit, Hennessy brings its V.S. Cognac to consumers and teaches them how to make cocktails with its signature liquor.

"A lot of our event vendors are creating green teams and looking at a lot of the issues from an operational [standpoint] and how they can best support our events. We're seeing a lot more thought leaders from the partners and vendors we work with, so that's been great."

GINA BROEL, SENIOR EVENT MARKETING MANAGER, MICROSOFT

## TREND: MULTICULTURAL MARKETING

Appealing to different cultures is a key goal for any well-designed event campaign and brands are finally getting good at it. Verizon Wireless is exciting the Memphis African-American community about its new service with the How Sweet the Sound gospel festival, and Glidden, Wachovia and Sprint are all putting resources into appealing to the Hispanic community.



## TREND: HANDHELD DEVICES

Consumers want instant gratification these days, and smart brands are giving it to them. Brand ambassadors are toting handheld computers that scan attendee identification to streamline data collection, and for direct interactions with consumers, these devices are creating recipes for the Dairy Farmers of America and doing photo activations and autograph signings for NFL teams.

"It's not just an event concept we thought would be cool. When you take something from the DNA of your brand and blow it out, it becomes that much more impactful."

CRAIG JOHNSON, STOLI BRAND DIRECTOR, PERNOD RECARD

"We are constantly gathering information from consumers. During the event we look for those moments where we can exceed expectations and offer a surprise to a consumer and make that experience more fun for them. Post-event, if the consumer is interested in continuing the dialogue, we want to foster that and encourage that and do it quickly."

TOM SALKOWSKY, MANAGER-CONSUMER EVENTS, BMW

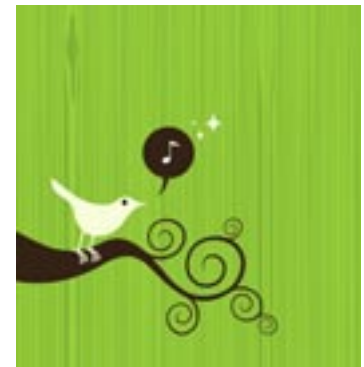


## TREND: GREEN ON THE GO

One of the biggest trends of the year is the drive toward eco-friendly tours. Everyone who is anyone is doing it, using biofuels and solar panels to fuel their rigs. Tide is recycling like crazy. Volkswagen is buying carbon credits. And the industry is working hard to create a green events certification. (Flash forward to 2012 and the thing finally gets finished. Seriously, five years for green events standards? Grass grows faster.)

## TREND: SOCIAL MEDIA

Marketers are just getting hip to the power of social media marketing this year, and EM notices. We clue you in about Twitter for the first time in February as early adopter brands like Cisco and Adobe create custom social media platforms and Nintendo and General Motors are realizing the burgeoning power of the blogosphere.





→ The Grand Ex-award winning Stoli Hotel is a trendy, chic and spectacular mobile vodka experience that is a huge hit for the brand. It's designed to position **Stolichnaya** as hip to the day and attractive to the urban professionals and influencers it targets.



→ The Starwood Four Points by **Sheraton** names its first chief beer officer through an online competition that drew 7,800 beer lovers from 30 countries to apply. The winner serves as the brand's key ambassador to consumers, employee educator and media spokesman. Tasty.

→ **Malibu** throws a Winter Beach party all across the U.S., hitting 16 markets throughout the winter to show consumers that it's not just a summer drink. The beach bashes are promoted days ahead of time with street teams of Caribbean dancers and drummers. At each party, guests get flip-flops and delicious drinks.

→ **Intel's** CES booth is a cool, blue example of exquisite design that exposes consumers to the brand's messages through tons of clever interactives, including a green-screen video activation that puts attendees into a five-sided green enclosure and creates a video that shows the participants flying through Las Vegas like superheroes.



→ The **Teva** Mountain Games in Vail, CO, launches high-flying fun for the 35,000 attendees and features killer activations by its sponsors, including a dog-friendly **Volkswagen** and outdoor showers by **Zest** soaps.

→ The **Cottonelle** Comfort Haven tour brings relief to sore bottoms, thanks to a 45-foot branded bus loaded with relaxation stations and plush massage chairs shaped like puppy paws, where attendees get shoulder rubs from certified massage therapists. We said *shoulder rubs*, sickos!





➔ **Microsoft** launches the Windows Family Portrait studios to bond with urban moms by giving them some memories, time with family and photos of the kids. Attendees get the free photo in exchange for setting up a Windows photo ID and the brand gets some great data.

➔ In the far North, uber-caffeinated **Jolt** cola activates the Summer Solstice in Barrow, AK, by renaming the town after itself on the longest day of the year and taking it over with sampling events, photo activations and a midnight softball tournament (in full daylight).



➔ Handmade natural cosmetics retailer **LUSH** gets naked for the benefit of retail partners in 27 markets to show off how pure and natural its products are. The naked brand ambassadors wore aprons, but some still had to get dressed if the cops got all prudish.



➔ **Bud Camp** is the biggest, most immersive brand experience of the year. The brand brings 186 Canadian men to a top-secret location in the Canadian wilderness, where they ply them with beer and babes and build a network of brand fanatics that spread the love all over the nation. EM tries, and fails, to get an invitation. Again.

➔ **Siemens** unveils the \$50 million Exiderdome, a mobile, three-story, 10,000-square-foot exhibit and meeting space, to impress current and future clients with the brand's engineering expertise and industry knowledge. It visits 12 locations in the U.S. and Canada before continuing to South America.



➔ To make a splash with consumers, **State Farm** rolls up on California car washes with giant bathtubs and cleans cars while giving consumers free cold drinks, cool gel eye masks and massages. Of course, brand staffers are on hand to talk insurance to all comers.

➔ To give guitar fans an inside look at its world, **Fender** launches the first-ever Fender University. The four-day seminar in California is open to any skill level and anyone who wants to put up the \$6,500 ticket price. The program is all about getting attendees an intimate feel for the brand. For \$6,500, that's a lot of intimacy.

