



IT'S 2010 AND THE DECADE THAT ALMOST KILLED US ALL IS OVER. It's a new beginning and the top of the pops is Apple's brand new game changer, the iPad. As every tech-savvy consumer scrambles to get one, every brand marketer is dying to get a taste of its cool factor by putting the device front and center at every event they can. The fear of virtual events is subsiding, too. No more talk of all events being canceled "for all time" is heard around the water cooler.

But things are different than they used to be. The days of flying an entire sales force to Monaco for the Grand Prix, and incidentally having a few meetings and trainings, are over. Instead, companies opt for hybrid and satellite models, keeping most of the attendees at home or in-office, and turning the travel into an incentive for exemplary performance.

Bar codes are paving the way for RFID and, soon, NFC technology, while mobile apps are just now showing off how powerful and exciting they will become in the next few years. It's an exciting time, because it's only the beginning.





TREND: BAR CODES

These data collection gemstones finally poke some facets above ground, with Nike, Fox Home Entertainment and Toyota proving again and again the power of the simple-to-deploy bar code. And it's not just for behind the scenes, either, as super-early adopters start using them for ticket and attendance management, too.

“Engagement marketing is really able to reach people and give them an experience that is quite unique but also quite grounded in the Levi’s brand and our values. We get tens of thousands of really valuable intimate interactions in a physical environment.”

JOSHUA KATZ, HEAD OF COLLABORATIONS, PARTNERSHIPS & CREATIVE CONCEPTS, LEVI’S

TREND: APPS

This is the big year for the mobile app. Smart phones have finally made it into enough consumer hands that brands can count on them wanting and expecting an app to accompany any campaign. Tech research firm IDC calls 2010 a “watershed year” for mobile devices and brands like Microsoft, GM and Tide are among the first to get on board, and reap rewards.



TREND: AR & 3D

Visual effects are all well and good, but what brands want consumers to see is that little something extra. Enter Augmented Reality and welcome back, 3D. Statoil gets the ball rolling at its annual employee meeting by creating AR images of the brand’s energy innovations. And it just keeps on going with 3D’s big comeback thanks to brand marketers at Coke, Honda, Motorola and Visa who all activate programs with a 3D component.

ABOUT DELL’S SUPERPROM PROGRAM:

“From the start, the wish was to have an opportunity to watch it ripple, and we could see it in that virtual world ripple from the students’ entry to the amount of buzz going across the various social media and ultimately ending out in the general media.”

KELLY WILLIAMS, SENIOR MANAGER OF DELL UNIVERSITY AND EMPLOYEE PURCHASE PROGRAM MARKETING, DELL

“Obviously ROI is what drives a lot of the events that we do, whether it’s long-term ROI from a proprietary event or it’s a trade show where we’re signing contracts. But there is more of an understanding [among senior management] that there’s a lot going on behind that curtain.”

ANDY HOLTZMAN, DIRECTOR-GLOBAL MARKETING SERVICES, CITI



TREND: TABLETS

The touchscreen is still a hot commodity for event marketers, across all disciplines and markets, but the real impetus behind the movement these days is the portable touchscreen, otherwise known as the tablet. Yes, traditional touch surfaces are still hot and peaking in the amazing Intel Interactive Wall at Oracle’s OpenWorld in September. But the real love goes to Steve Jobs, Apple and the iPad. And it just keeps coming.

TREND: HYBRID EVENTS

As the world comes down off of its panic high, pure virtual events get recast as hybrids that mix live and online experiences, which is the approach Cisco takes for GSX, year two. Other brands realize that an always-on approach for content delivery and storage can be super useful, giving birth to the Pepsi Refresh Everything and Best Buy ideax.com platforms, in addition to foreshadowing the cloud computing craze still to come.



➔ Intel brings a CES attendee to tears upon his first sight of the Intel Touch Wall. The seven-foot square glass surface is loaded with multi-touch goodies that allow up to five users to go at it simultaneously. What a slut.

➔ Twitter takes center stage when **JetBlue** uses the micro-posting platform to drive traffic to its street activations in New York City, where the brand hands out free tickets to destinations all over the world. The Tweetman Cometh.

➔ **LittleMissMatched** celebrates the grand opening of its Fifth Avenue New York City store with a parade of 500 consumers in September. The fans march holding signs while the brand holds the doors wide open.



➔ The U.S. sets out to count and collate its citizens, and the **Census Bureau** hits the road with the four-month-long Portrait of America tour, designed to encourage Americans, especially in high-risk groups, to take part in the survey.



➔ The reveal of the **Virgin** Galactic spaceship Enterprise kicks the year off right, showing the world, no, *the universe*, that economy be damned, we're back, baby! Also, it is one of the most spectacular new product launches since 2363.



➔ To celebrate the World Cup, **Coca-Cola** takes the FIFA World Cup Trophy on tour, visiting 85 countries before wrapping in South Africa and being deafened by vuvuzelas. Fans win tickets to the tour stops on bottles and cans of Coke, and more than 500,000 fans take part.



➔ South By Southwest storms into Austin again, and **Chevrolet** and **Camel** cigarettes steal all the focus with clever and sneaky deployments. Chevy gives out free rides in its coolest Camaros and 'Vettes and lets the consumers drive and ask questions, while Camel hides in an undisclosed location handing out free smokes and Snus tobacco pouches, creating lines around the block.



➔ **Kenmore** revamps its image with a new logo, product line and website, and pumps up the consumer excitement about the re-brand with a new experience, the Live Studio, where it showcases new products and delivers top-tier experiences, both live and streamed on Facebook.



➔ The Winter Olympics take over Vancouver, Canada for two weeks and the brands that really mean business zip up their parkas to party with the world. **Bell Canada** reinvents the sponsorship game, **Yahoo!** creates the epic Fancouver experience and the **Coke** Pavilion is carbon neutral but bursting with happiness.

➔ **Dell** proves it just knows how to give a program the business with the Dell SuperProm program. It drives excitement online before the event, pulls in serious p.r. value during it and sells itself in attention and viral love after the fact. All with social power.



➔ **Salesforce.com** launches its new cloud-based internal social media platform for customer use, Chatter. To introduce clients to the product, it leverages its long-standing Cloudforce tour, an international sales juggernaut that handles the launch with ease.

➔ **Electronic Arts** pumps up excitement for its FIFA World Cup South Africa Edition video game by setting a Guinness World Record in Trafalgar Square for the most players to compete in a single football (soccer) video game.

➔ **Lifetime** network hits three hot spots in New York City with its Makeovers on the Move tour to promote "Drop Dead Diva" and attract women while making them more attractive. Ba-dum-bum!



➔ **ION Television** brings its Greenhouse on Wheels to New York City's Flatiron Building and takes over the whole neighborhood with a climbing wall. It offers \$500 to the school of any kid who can make it to the top.



➔ **AT&T** goes all eco-friendly for Earth Day, powering its exhibits on the National Mall in Washington D.C., with solar energy panels and 28 charging stations for use by power-hungry political passersby.

➔ **Levi's Denim** launches its Workshops for Levi's Go Forth campaign in San Francisco's Mission District. The jeans brand creates the part pop-up, part do-it-yourself studio to bring the brand's values and defunct buildings to life in communities across the country.

➔ **Nike** creates a new legacy event called the World Basketball Festival along with USA Basketball and the FIBA World Championships. The event re-establishes Nike as the leader in all things sports sponsorship and creates some life-long memories for hundreds of kids.



➔ **Mattel** sets off across Canada to introduce kids to its cars with the Hot Wheels Color Shifters tour, a 50-market program that carries with it the amazing, full-sized color shifting Ford Mustang. And our jealousy.

➔ **Research in Motion** kicks the cool up a notch with its BBM Lounges in Los Angeles, designed to get Hollywood A-listers excited about the phone and its "always connected" cool.

