![GES logo] **GES** | *Global Experience Specialists*

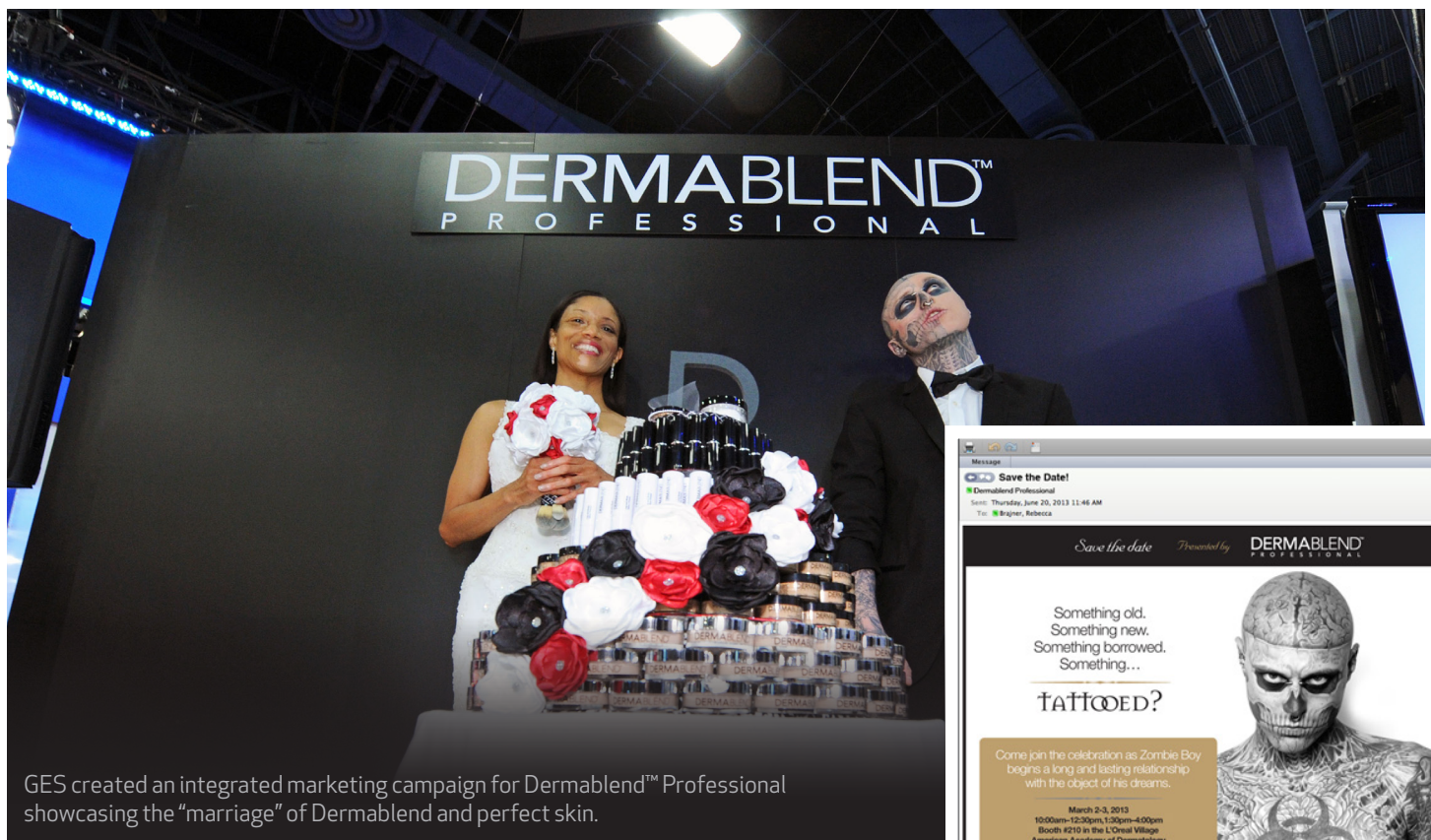The Art *and* Science of Engagement

2014 Trend Tracker
The third annual list of the top 50 trends impacting trade shows and events this year

Awarded Best in Show at LIGHTFAIR International. Designed by GES.

WHITE PAPER SUMMARY

The power of face-to-face marketing is being proven across corporate America as event departments fine-tune the art and science of experiential marketing. Event and trade show programs are now integrated within the rest of the marketing mix. Live connections are amplified online and on the ground. And the all-encompassing "brand experience" is being taken to the next level. Welcome to the third-annual Trend Tracker, produced by Global Experience Specialists (GES), once again providing you with a rapid-release checklist of trends. Go through the list and check-off the ones you're activating now. Circle others you know you should. And make a list of the ones you'll need to learn more about in 2014… and beyond.

GES created an integrated marketing campaign for Dermablend™ Professional showcasing the "marriage" of Dermablend and perfect skin.

2014: The Year Of Convergence

Brands are getting a boost from combining strategies on and off the show floor

Conference and event management in 2014 is becoming more efficient and more digital than ever as marketers look toward the convergence of app solutions and technologies that in the past functioned somewhat individually. The result is a trickle-down effect, where attendees are reaping the benefit of a personalized and more streamlined event experience.

Indeed, across all event types, user experiences and backend planning processes, the Year of Convergence is upon us. Marketers are trimming the fat to improve efficiencies in the planning process, and stretching dollars and show-floor experiences in equal measure. Designers are being pulled in earlier, and marketers are creating "multi-disciplinary" teams to make certain that their live presence at trade shows, events and conferences merge seamlessly with overall marketing strategies throughout the year. Individual marketing efforts are converging with broader brand campaigns and, in more instances than ever, are driven by the live face-to-face experience.

And as they continue to spend smarter, marketers are investing in assets that are reusable and draw attention through innovations in multi-user touchscreens and experiences that merge technologies like augmented reality and 3D projection mapping. They're still focused on that "wow" factor and want to leave a positive and lasting brand impression.

These are just a few of the industry-wide changes affecting event marketers now and in the year to come. Here, 50 top trends across budgeting and planning, marketing, technology and design. It's this year's Trend Tracker.

BUDGETING AND PLANNING

Sustainability is as much about spending wisely as it is about saving the environment, and event departments in 2014 are looking over budgets with eagle eyes to find redundancies and opportunities to reuse and repurpose materials. They're comfortable investing in assets that boost experiences for their target audiences, but they're savvy and want to know, in the big picture, what that return will mean for the brand and the budget.

"It's no longer about designing a booth and the client picking the prettiest picture," says Vin Saia, VP-client relations at GES, who specializes in healthcare events. "Companies want to know exactly how they're spending money."

More trends to watch in the budgeting and planning space:

01 TOTAL TRANSPARENCY

Marketers are under pressure to break down the cost structure of an event or exhibit space, right down to the most minute line items such as the number of carpentry hours, design hours and the cost of materials. It's not a trust factor issue, but a comfort level one, and marketers are looking to identify jobs to take in-house to save dollars. They want to see data organized and delivered in real-time so they can follow costs upfront, during and after a show.

02 VISIBLE ROI

Clients want the return on investment to be more visible than the actual design itself. They want to know why something is built, what purpose it will serve, how it will work on-site and then, how an agency will measure the success of that component. Function is driving design, not the other way around.

03 MORE DATA, MORE RELEVANCY

Companies are leveraging tools such as video analysis to literally get a play-by-play on the activity within their exhibit space. They want to know where attendees went inside the booth, what they looked at, what literature they downloaded and how much time they spent. All of this data, the likes and interests, are then factored into post-show marketing efforts so marketers can deliver a relevant message that reinforces the experiences attendees had during the live event.

04 REPURPOSING STRUCTURES

Exhibits are gaining new life after a show as companies are looking to repurpose components and install them at their headquarters to create executive briefing centers, or incorporating them into other aspects of their marketing programs, such as mobile tours. Designers are no longer thinking show-to-show, but about what other opportunities there are for exhibit components to be pulled apart and reused.

05 SUSTAINABILITY

We don't hear much of the buzzword "Going Green" these days, because today, it's about "sustainability." Marketers now embrace the idea of doing good for the environment—and their budgets—by repurposing materials and investing in big capital expenditures whose use can be stretched over time. With the rise of cross-platform, sophisticated apps and event Wi-Fi, marketers seem to finally be marching toward totally paperless events. Oracle OpenWorld has long embraced sustainability and even has a Green Virtual Team of internal stakeholders and vendors that create green performance indicators for the event. Event planners that have eliminated paper are even handing out tablets to attendees, on loan or as giveaways, to guarantee implantation and use of the event app—Hallmark did this at its Gold Crown Retail Summit, allowing attendees to take home gifted iPads to promote the brand's apps among consumers in their stores. Green is good, and saving green is good, too.

06 SCALING STRATEGICALLY

Companies are becoming hyper aware of the cost to reserve space at a show. While big players are continuing to make a splash at shows like CES, smaller brands are looking to scale back a bit in order to fully integrate a marketing campaign surrounding a show, diverting budget dollars toward efforts such as pre-show marketing. "It's not that marketing dollars are dwindling; clients are just looking at it a bit more strategically in terms of where or how we can start targeting people beyond the show floor environment," says John Woo, VP-design and creative at GES.

07 ONE-STOP SHOP

In addition to seeking budget efficiencies, marketers are looking for efficiencies in planning and are enlisting companies that offer a full spectrum of services. "In a survey of almost 1,000 corporate marketers, we found that marketers are looking for a partner that can serve as a 'one-stop shop' and manage all of their face-to-face events from design and installation to marketing and AV services," says Gina McDuffie, SVP-marketing at GES. The approach means fewer marketing staffers to keep track of multiple vendors, saving time, manpower and money in the process.

08 YEAR-ROUND FOCUS

Companies are putting less and less emphasis on the architecture of an exhibit and more on the content and delivery mechanisms. They're happy to invest, so long as the build supports the bigger picture. "Exhibitors are discovering that the true purpose of the exhibit is to communicate and to educate, and not to have this wonderful structure because, if the message is weak, the architecture doesn't matter," says Saia.

09 SMARTER BUILDS

Big heavy booths just don't fit the bill anymore. Fabric continues to be a stronger and stronger player in design discussions as a budget-friendly material that ships light and still looks sleek. But in addition to fabrics, brands are investing in solutions such as jumbo, multimedia-capable LED screens. They can divide a space well, they're less expensive in the long run—as opposed to paying for new builds each year—and they're more impactful.

10 SOCIAL ROI

Oh yeah, it's all about metrics—not just in evaluating the effectiveness of trade shows through traffic and lead retrieval, but in the social sphere as well. Solutions such as Inside Social are helping companies measure the direct impact that social sharing has on an event and the brand itself. Inside Social tracks shares, clicks, transactions, conversions and signups, all to measure the success of a campaign mapped against a company's specific objectives.

11 WIDE REACH

Marketers continue to turn to simultaneous events that in one swoop impact the masses. BMW turned to this strategy with the launch of BMW i3, its first all-electric production car, with three simultaneous press events in New York, London and Beijing. Samsung showcased its new Galaxy S4 phone in Canada with a three-city simulcast that featured, through holographic technology, the performer Feist at all three venues.

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MARKETING

As technological innovations in Near Field Communication and geo-fencing enhance the on-site experience for attendees, marketers are experiencing a bigger push toward personalization and content relevancy.

"Big Data is a bit of a buzz term right now but it's significant and only gaining in importance. Most marketers have access to more data than they realize, and possibly more than they want," says Gina McDuffie, SVP-marketing at GES. "The key is to not be overwhelmed, start small and focus on answering one question that will provide your company or client with the most value."

Thirteen top marketing trends shaking up the industry this year:

01 DESIGNING WITH PURPOSE

Designers are getting more information upfront and are being challenged to create environments that deliver on specific objectives, from initiating conversations and increasing dwell time to educating clients or consumers toward measurable results. Now, when clients are beginning work on their marketing campaigns, designers are at the table joining the larger conversation about how an exhibit design will project the marketing message and push attendees toward measurable behaviors and actions.

02 ON-SITE TIE-INS

Marketers, especially in the exhibit space, see value in face-to-face marketing, but they also want face-to-face marketing to integrate closely with their overall marketing efforts. For example, exhibitors are taking advantage of seminars to drive attendees to the booth, offering to provide a recording or copy of the presentation on a chip that can be picked up at the booth.

03 LINE ENGAGEMENT

There's no sweeter scene than a long line of consumers waiting to check out an experience, so why not take advantage of the opportunity to start engaging them before they've crossed into the footprint? Take waiting in line for Santa Claus—this past holiday season GES designed and produced 72" horizontal monitors with multiple touch points, which were housed in giant walk-through ornament arches in seven Westfield Malls. The screen allowed multiple users to "Trim-A-Tree" by dragging ornaments from boxes to a tree. Once fully decorated, the tree shook and the ornaments flew right back into their boxes. Think surveys or giveaway strategies and line up some in-line entertainment.

04 CONTEXT-BASED DATA

As marketers push toward personalization, they're turning to geo-fencing and indoor positioning solutions to monitor, in real-time, where an attendee is on the show floor and target them with relevant advertising or content. In turn, this technology is allowing marketers to measure traffic flow and dwell time, and even make adjustments day-to-day to improve the experience.

05 SOCIAL MEDIA INTEGRATION

Event management platforms are allowing marketers to make better use of the registration process with the integration of social media. Attendees are now helping to drive buzz and attendance for an event by sharing it automatically through tools such as InGo. Once on-site, marketers are leveraging technology to make social sharing instantaneous, like using RFID chips embedded in badges that, when scanned, push customized tweets or updates to the individual attendee's networks.

06 ENGAGING NEWBIES

Tradeshows and conferences can be an overwhelming experience for first-time attendees, so to ease their troubles, help them make the most of the experience and give them ample networking opportunities. Companies are engaging the "newbie" with their very own event micro-site pages. These platforms offer tips, posts from veteran-attendees and online communities, and are supported by on-site programs such as mentorships, newcomer lunches, meet-ups and designated happy hours.

07 INFLUENCER INJECTION

Companies are leveraging influencers more than ever to help promote and amplify show or event content before, during and after it wraps up through blog posts and live social media activity. Meta-tagging pixel tracking tools such as Meteor are also helping companies seek out and enlist influencers based on their networks and clout score. Some companies are even providing influencers with designated workspaces on the show floor.

08 SMARTER PLATFORMS

Marketers are seeking platforms that converge technologies to drive attendee experience. Take Vivastream, a platform that allows a brand to build a community of attendees around a show or event, where all the members' social media conversations are posted in one place. Or Socious, which helps brands foster a community of attendees outside of an event. "You're going to see a lot of upside adoption of these tools, as well as a convergence of these social media capabilities over time. It's not just about building a conversation at the event, or the ongoing community, it's about all three," says George Hines, CIO at GES.

09 VIRTUAL ENGAGEMENT

Both on and off-site, companies are turning to virtual environments to offer attendees another level of experience. For people who can't attend the show, you can create a virtual version of a booth and allow them to log in and explore the environment and even access content on demand. With all the hard work that goes into creating a show presence, why not make it last forever? Check out **ges.com/virtualexhibits** to learn more about this immersive online experience.

10 APPS AS GIVEAWAYS

Exhibitors in the healthcare industry are limited in what they can hand out as premiums, so marketers are developing exhibitor tools to appeal to the customer base with none other than patient apps. An example: a diabetes app that helps patients understand their condition, to access what the glycemic index is for certain foods or to track their diets.

11 STAND OUT PRE-SHOW PUSH

As marketers divide budget dollars toward fully integrated campaigns, they've got their eye on strategies to integrate technology into pre-show direct mail, whether through augmented reality or USB sticks embedded into postcards. But on the low-tech, creative side, there are even direct mail pieces that have flower seeds embedded in them, so the receiver can actually plant the entire mailer once they're done with it. "Tease people into coming and visiting the space," says Woo. "The more interesting and creative communications are, the more an attendee will be excited about what the show experience is going to be."

12 NO SEAT, NO PROBLEM

Seats for the Google I/O conference may sell out fast, but the brand continues to reach audiences of developers around the globe through digital strategies that allow them to tap into conference happenings and view content through YouTube and Google+. Developers who couldn't get a seat were invited to register for opportunities to participate in off-site networking events (350, across 85 countries). Google extended its reach by creating a network of ancillary events that complemented the mother conference.

13 DIGITAL CONTENT

As the paperless event concept continues to take hold in the industry, event planners and exhibitors are relying on digital delivery tools to easily transfer literature to attendees upon request. Attendees can access a kiosk or touch pad on-site, select the information that they want, or confer with a representative carrying a tablet loaded with brochures. The attendee is later emailed a PDF link to download directly onto their device.

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TECHNOLOGY

App creation has gone into hyper drive over the last few years, and now marketers are looking toward solutions that offer an all-encompassing approach—from registration and meeting scheduling to virtual communities and social media integration.

"As stand-alones in the field, tech solutions are crowded and the actual return that organizers and meeting planners are getting from these technologies has been mixed at best," says George Hines, CIO at GES. "There will be a convergence of all the different technologies to create smarter platforms to drive customer experience."

Here's a look at a few technologies leading the convergence trend:

01 SUPER WI-FI

Ever heard of Super Wi-Fi? It's the Federal Communications Commission's term for insanely fast longer-distance wireless access (up to five miles!) that uses "white space" between television channel frequencies, and is being opened up for licensing. How this will develop commercially is yet to be seen, but implementation is happening. (Check out Declaration Network's Q3 2013 announcement of plans to target underserved or rural areas: declarationnetworks.com/press-release-quickstart). Imagine the impact this would have in the event space through access to power-packed bandwidth.

02 NFC 2.0

Conferences and events are going paperless, but could they be going badgeless as well? Through NFC technology, our devices trigger the experience. Instantly check in. Bump phones with another attendee and instantly connect. For exhibitors, instantly capture foot traffic and leads. Samsung leveraged NFC at South by Southwest, placing TecTiles throughout Austin that NFC-enabled Galaxy owners tapped to receive offers from local businesses, and free rides.

03 3D PROJECTION ADD-ONS

High-tech tools are infiltrating the exhibit space, and event planners are going after a combination of technologies that, in the past, were used to individually (but at the same event) provide a more enriching experience for the consumer. Want to take an attendee under the hood of an automobile? Combine augmented reality and 3D projection—the vehicle becomes the "target" and through an iPad, an attendee can virtually watch the car's engine in action.

04 AUGMENTED REALITY

Unattractive QR "bar codes" are out, and augmented reality activated by a target is in. The technology is being used more robustly, and is being tied to downloadable apps. A target can be anything, such as a sticker. Point a mobile device at a sticker on your hand and suddenly you're viewing a rotable, 3D image. GES leveraged this technology for Tyson using AR and an LED wall to serve up Tyson's food on a digital tray (Check it out at ges.com/augmentedreality).

05 CHARGING AS AN EXPERIENCE

We've made it more accessible and comfortable for attendees, but now it's about charging as an event itself. A few ideas: a post-session charging chat with a featured speaker, allowing attendees to ask direct follow-up questions while tending to their devices; electrified meet-ups centered on a multi-player game experience, or a scheduled networking chat.

06 3D PRINTING

3D printers, once the stuff of tech dreams, are officially a reality (they're even at Staples). In 2014, expect to see innovations in the space evolve and spread. In the event world, think custom-engineered giveaways or sneak-peeks of new products created in smaller model formats. Perhaps consumers will engineer improvements to an existing product on-site, offering instant feedback through an engaging experience.

07 SMART GAMING

Gamification can be high-tech or as simple as incentivizing conference floor exploration. This year, it's about smarter gaming. For the Pulse conference, IBM promoted a new suite of product solutions by recruiting attendee "VIPs" who, through RFID-enabled credentials, checked-in at specified locations and sessions to accrue points toward prizes. Each check-in also activated custom content—links to exclusive content packages to download or share instantly.

08 TRANSPARENT SCREENS

Innovations in LCD and LED screen technology are transforming traditional, static product-display cases into interactive experiences that deliver content without the need for adjacent signage. "Translucent LCD's allow for viewing of an actual product with supporting media telling a supporting story," says Don Whittaker, VP-business development at GES. "If we can Hero a product and create a dimensional experience for the audience, it leads to a deeper engagement."

09 GOOGLE GLASS

Google Glass has only been available through the Google Explorer program, but event marketers are eying this wearable computer as a game-changer, affecting an entire experience with a complete virtual overlay—and brands are preparing for widespread release. Sherwin-Williams' ColorSnap app version for the Explorer program demonstrates Glass' seamless potential, as the brand generates a custom paint palette based on what the Glass user sees and snaps.

10 OCULUS RIFT

Leading the charge in on-site virtual technology is Oculus VR's Oculus Rift, the virtual reality headsets for 3D gaming. Pharmaceutical companies are leveraging it to bypass tight regulations, for example, taking attendees through a simulated experience of a medical condition. In Q3 2013, Oculus VR announced at GamesBeat that it's bringing Rift to consumers through mobile gaming, developing a lighter mobile virtual reality headset using Android's device processor.

11 THE SNAPCHAT EFFECT

Snapchat allows users to spontaneously snap an image, add a caption and then instantly post it to a circle of friends. The catch—the image self-destructs within 10 seconds or less (or potentially, never—Snapchat is able to alert users that an image has been "screen captured," but the function is not fool proof). While seemingly of the moment, Snapchat-style strategies are on the horizon. Think rapid-fire location-based coupons, or sneak peeks of exclusive content.

12 LIVING SOCIAL WALLS

To boost digital conversations surrounding an event, marketers are turning to installations that trigger on-site interactions. At the Canadian International Auto Show, Chevrolet Canada activated a Twitter-enabled vending machine to promote a special edition Hot Wheels-inspired blue Camaro displayed in its exhibit. By tweeting to an event hashtag and brand Twitter handle, attendees were dispensed a collectible die-cast.

13 APP DRIVING EXPERIENCES

Event apps are evolving from schedule-planning functions toward engagement tools that allow attendees to interact with sessions or experiences live on-site. As sponsor of the Rolling Stones' 50 & Counting tour, Citi took fans closer to the band than they could have ever experienced before, offering breaking news, never-before-seen footage and an app feature that let the concert goers push song nominations to the band in real-time.

14 PINTEREST

This social media platform is a goldmine of recipes, fashions and DIY projects and as its popularity skyrockets, brands are scurrying to develop strategies. Fun fact: A study by Piqora found Pinterest pins last 1,000 times longer than a tweet or post. In the live event space, think sharing slides from presentations, or creating inner-circles of attendees via "private" boards.

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DESIGN

Pretty architecture gets the attention of attendees and creates a memory, but how memorable is the message that you're trying to get across to attendees?

"Companies are driving designers to elevate and evolve," says John Woo, VP-design and creative at GES. "It's no longer just about the structure, it's about what a structure is doing to enhance the message and reach target audiences."

Twelve design trends taking off in 2014:

01 DEFINED PRODUCT AREAS

Companies are designing booths with better defined product areas, with prominent signage, so that when an attendee visits the space they know exactly where they need to go to get the information they want on products being marketed. GES implemented this strategy for Philips at LIGHTFAIR International, paring down what was once 40 brands with separate exhibits highlighting the individual lighting fixture products into one massive booth featuring 12 marketing segments, that helped the brand position itself as a total lighting solutions provider (Check it out at **ges.com/lightfair**).

02 BEHIND-THE-SCENES, NO MORE

Event planners are embracing transparency (the ups and downs of event execution) and leveraging social media to trouble shoot. Tag reader not working? What's up with the Wi-Fi connection? Attendees are tweeting to event handles, and organizers are responding in real-time, out in the open. Cisco at its Cisco Live flagship event created a Social Media Command Center on-site that monitored engagement, lead-generation and served as a meet-up spot for attendees to network and charge devices.

03 MULTI-USER INTERFACES

Touchscreens are going big—really big—and rather than catering to just one user, they're engaging three, four, five attendees and more, all at the same time and on the same surface. At the Consumer Electronics Show last year, Verizon unveiled a touch-enabled wall that allowed multiple users to swipe and touch a graphic display designed to showcase what Verizon offers in fields outside of mobile technology, such as medicine and the automotive industry. The approach allowed attendees to individually access content about the brand that interested them, without having to wait their turn for the experience.

04 PHOTO OPS

Consumer-facing companies are moving away from the step-and-repeat and toward green-screen overlay technology and augmented reality-enabled experiences that allow an attendee to share and take home something unexpected and special. The delivery method continues to become easier with RFID triggers within experiences that post attendees' memorable moments automatically into their social feeds.

05 NO MORE INTERRUPTIONS

Cruise ships are doing it. Disney's doing it. To create seamless experiences for attendees within an event environment, companies are leveraging RFID technology and packing more data than ever into tiny chips embedded in things like branded wristbands, which in the case of Disney, are becoming something of a collector's item. From automatic social postings triggered by RFID detectors, to paying for meals, to being alerted that a line for a different ride is shorter than the one you're in, consumers—and attendees—are happy to trade a little data for interruption-free experiences.

06 UNLEASH THE UNEXPECTED

Digital signage, monitors and screens can turn an experience into something like that of Times Square, so designers are developing creative ways to "hide" technology and integrate it into the scenery so that attendees are discovering an experience rather than expecting one. Take an experience activated through an RFID chip embedded in a wristband: as an attendee walks by what may look like a tiled wall, suddenly all of those tiles, which are monitors in disguise, come alive.

07 SECOND SCREEN

Exploding onto the scene this year is the "second screen" phenomenon. Attendees are so glued to their devices, even while watching a live presentation (or at home, on television) that marketers are supplying them with a simultaneous engagement tool they can access on that device. For a National Geographic exhibit, GES created an Explorers App that acted as a scavenger hunt, incorporating games and augmented reality to guide and engage attendees through the experience (Check it out at **ges.com/earthexplorers**). "There are ranges of attendees: some really just want to breeze through an experience, while others want to know every single tidbit there is to know," says Robin Stapley, VP-design and creative at GES. "So, having an app allows people to play, but also to go deeper and learn something more if they choose." Other strategies: software tools such as NiceMeeting that allow conference session presenters to share slides and presentations in real-time, so attendees can follow-on with their device in-hand.

08 SHOWSTOPPERS STILL SWEET

At the end of the day, consumers and show attendees want to interact with something they couldn't ordinarily experience. This means that in some cases, bigger blowout-style booth elements can be better, as long as the high-impact design statement still resonates with the strategy behind it and supports an engaging experience.

09 TOUCH-ENABLED FABRICS

Fabrics continue to be a go-to material in the design and execution of exhibit spaces, replacing weighty wall structures and resulting in reduced drayage-related costs. The utility of the material is now being enhanced by not only creative design (in some cases, designed to look just like wood paneling), but by the integration of technology. For example, touch-sensitive fabric panels embedded with sensors that allow attendees to press on a graphic display and activate an experience.

10 REIMAGINED FOOTPRINTS

Convention halls are efficient, but they're rarely desirable environments on their own. Rather than take the space for what it is and always has been, brands are creating centralized, campus-style conference footprints that transform lifeless and cavernous halls into bustling urban centers. For Inforum, a corporate event that offers test drives of new products and technologies, GES took a "zone" approach with a floor plan that guides attendees to the products and services relevant to them—while avoiding those that are not (Check it out at **ges.com/inforum**).

11 GOING GLOBAL

As a result of the evolving global economy, marketers are continuing to design events that cater to international attendees. It's important to select a host city with an eye toward ease of access and travel, and one that has a vibrant cultural scene. On-site, brands are creating networking opportunities among international attendees. At the Worldwide Partner Conference, Microsoft created Regional Lounge spaces, represented by different countries that helped attendees gain perspectives from around the world.

12 ENDEMIC ENTERTAINMENT

Entertainment can change the often-monotonous tone of a meeting or event. Make it relevant to the products on offer at the event and you've got a home run. Since Apple's departure from Macworld/iWorld, organizers have recreated the show as a technology arts festival with the addition of experiences such as an iPhone film festival that premiered films entirely on iPhones, and Indie Innovation, a band competition among musicians who recorded music on their iPhones.

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GES helped rAndom International defy nature to create an indoor rainstorm at MoMA in NYC.

EXPO 1:
New York
Rain Room
Created by
Random International

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ABOUT GES

GES is a global event marketing company with a long history of connecting people through live events. Clients depend on our 3,000 passionate employees throughout the world for unparalleled service and consistent execution of breakthrough experiences that excite and engage. We generate a competitive edge and measurable return for clients by partnering with them to blend the art of high-impact creativity and innovation with the science of easy-to-use technology, strategy, and worldwide logistics. For more information, visit **www.ges.com** or the GES blog at **defyingconvention.ges.com**.

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