

ExhiBits

INDIAN EXHIBITION INDUSTRY COMMUNIQUE

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Resilience in Turbulent Times

**Re-opening Exhibitions:
Getting Back in Action**

**Sustainable Exhibitions:
Towards Big Shifts**



IMPRINT

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PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE



S Balasubramanian
President, IEIA

Image Source: BIEC

Dear Readers,

The year 2020 was one of the toughest years for anyone in this world as everything came to a standstill and the first ones to get adversely affected were the Events and Exhibition industries.

COVID-19 impacted millions of business houses, entrepreneurs, startups, technocrats and the entire value chain of the Exhibition industry. As we entered into a new phase, we found alternative solutions to continue our journey in business, connect with people and the community and find ways to engage with them. Technology made this possible as we could exchange information and knowledge in the digital mode.

The Exhibition industry slowly started to adjust to the new normal and start functioning to keep themselves relevant in business. This gave a new dimension for the industry to consider organizing shows even during the most challenging of times to support the customers and keep the business running.

Indian Exhibition Industry Association (IEIA) remained committed to supporting all the stakeholders of the industry by seeking interventions from the Government. As a result

of our efforts, the Government accorded permission to restart exhibitions from October 2020 onwards and a few exhibitions and events were successfully organized in India.

As we moved towards the end of 2020, we saw some progress made by the scientific community by developing vaccines for coronavirus and India became a major supplier of vaccines to the world. This gave us a new ray of hope for things to be normalized. The ongoing vaccination drive will help in a quicker recovery of the Exhibition industry.

Moreover, the Indian economy has also got a booster shot with many leading domestic and global institutions forecasting a double-digit GDP growth in 2021-22. This would prop up the growth of various industries which would, in turn, help the growth of the Exhibition industry.

Although the dark clouds of the second wave of coronavirus are still hovering, I am sure that this will pass and things will be normalized by the end of this year.

WHO'S WHO DIRECTORY of the Indian Exhibition Industry

Get your Profile featured and Promote your offerings across key decision makers !!

* Complimentary copies of the Directory shall be sent to key Govt. Officials, Trade Missions & Consulates, Trade Bodies/Associations, Chambers of Commerce and all IEIA Member Organizations

* Complimentary Company listing for all IEIA Member organisations

For more information, contact:
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11

MAIN FEATURE
RESILIENCE IN TURBULENT TIMES

14

'SPARK' CONTEST
INDIAN MACHINE TOOL MANUFACTURERS' ASSOCIATION (IMTMA)
NUERNBERGMESSE INDIA
INFORMA MARKETS IN INDIA
DB SCHENKER

18

MOVER & SHAKER
V ANBU, PRESIDENT, UFI
DIRECTOR GENERAL & CEO
IMTMA & BIEC

22

RE-OPENING EXHIBITIONS – IEIA
MESSE FRANKFURT
BUSINESS WOMEN EXPO 2021
SARTHAK EDUVISION 2021
RIDEASIA 2021
INDUSFOOD 2021, SATTE 2021
CONVERGENCE INDIA & SMART CITIES EXPO



38

RE-OPENING EXHIBITIONS – IEML
THE SHOW MUST GO ON

40

BUZZ SESSION - SUSTAINABLE EXHIBITIONS
TOWARDS BIG SHIFTS

44

WOMEN LEADERSHIP
WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

46

CONFERENCE VENUE
FLOWING WITH THE TIDE

48

ONLINE INITIATIVES
INSPIRING INNOVATION



50

VIRTUAL PLATFORM
GROWING VIRTUALLY

53

HYBRID EVENTS
TODAY AND BEYOND 2021

54

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY
ACCELERATION IN DIGITAL ADOPTION

02 - IMPRINT
03 - PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE
05 - EDITORIAL
06 - NEWS INDIA

07 - NEWS ASIA
08 - NEWS AFRICA + MIDDLE EAST + OCEANIA
09 - NEWS AMERICA + EUROPE + LATAM

10 - CORPORATE NEWS
56 - IEIA NEW MEMBERS
59 - FAREWELL AND COMPANY INDEX

Reexplore, Reimagine, Reinvent!

Welcome to the first issue of ExhiBits in the new Financial year! We, at Magic Wand Media, are honored to take on the editorial responsibility of this publication from this issue onwards.

As new curators of the magazine, we immensely thank the Indian Exhibition Industry Association for placing their trust in us for reinventing the bimonthly. We take the opportunity to thank all those who have contributed and shared their valuable insights to put the present issue together.

In the making of this current edition, we had the chance to get a sneak peek at how the Exhibition sector has been braving all odds and bouncing back since the word 'Pandemic' became our regular vocabulary usage. It is awe-inspiring to know the way the Events and Exhibition industry never looked at COVID-19 as a paralyzing occurrence and constantly maintained a positive outlook, envisioning brighter days ahead with solid goals and a strong desire to attain them.

Today, exhibitions go beyond the discussions of dates, rates and space, and focus equally on safety, efficiency, and transparency. While in-person meetings and events were paused, the industry was overdriven with innovations to discover new opportunities to be more efficient and more effective in scaling up its business.

In the present issue, we have assayed to feature stories of grit and resilience of all those who proved that a fixed mindset is 'believing your qualities are carved in stone', while a growth mindset is 'the belief that your basic qualities are things you can cultivate through your efforts'.

We are committed to fostering conversations to bring forth the challenges and success tales of the industry through 'Your' own medium - ExhiBits. Your valuable opinion is what we value the most, so our inbox is always open at soumi.mitra@magicwandmedia.in

Stay well and connected!

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"One of the greatest discoveries a person makes, one of their great surprises, is to find they can do what they were afraid they couldn't do."
— Henry Ford

Image Source: Falcon Exhibitions

Lawrence Kuria,
President & CEO, B2B AfricaSooraj Dhawan, Director,
Falcon Exhibitions Pvt Ltd

Opening New Horizons in Bilateral Trade

Falcon Exhibitions has entered into a partnership with B2B Africa Ltd and offers engagement solutions to businesses in India and Africa. “There is a latent trade potential of \$100 billion between India and Africa, and it is high time that we create a structured business strategy for this. Once business communities in India and Africa begin engaging, trade is bound to grow both ways,” said Sooraj Dhawan, Director, Falcon Exhibitions Pvt Ltd.

Lawrence Kuria, President & CEO, B2B Africa, said, “We intend to organize over 25 virtual business missions in Africa this year together with Falcon Exhibitions.” The focus sectors would include Automotive, Construction, Medical, Food & Beverages, Agriculture Machinery & Agro Products, Toys, Printing, Garments, and many more. Africa has a good demand for industrial machinery, electrical and electronic equipment, and consumer goods, and India is a reliable supplier.

IGHF Delhi Fair Goes Virtual

The 51st edition of IGHF Delhi Fair, scheduled as an in-person event from May 19 - 23, 2021, has been canceled and will move on to virtual mode. The organizer of the event Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts (EPCH) took the decision due to the current pandemic situation in Delhi, NCR, which has seen a surge in COVID-19 cases.

Ravi K Passi, Chairman, EPCH, confirmed the cancellation, “Various State Governments have re-imposed lockdowns including complete shutdown on weekends. As the exhibition date

fell on a weekend it was undoubtedly challenging.”

The virtual fair will take place on the same dates. Although buyers and exporters from across the world were eager to participate in the physical fair, keeping in view the current situation, stakeholders decided to cancel the event at the IGF Fair Committee Meeting.

Dr Rakesh Kumar, Director General, EPCH, said, “Members were vocal for holding the virtual fair considering the advantages of virtual events during such difficult times. We expect around 1,200 exhibitors and 500 overseas buyers to participate in the virtual show.”

Leading Exhibitions Rescheduled

Several exhibitions in Mumbai have been rescheduled in the wake of the announcements and measures announced to curb the surging cases in the city. Bombay Exhibition Centre (BEC), which hosts all prominent exhibitions held in Mumbai, is acting as a COVID-19 care and vaccination center. The new measures by the State Government and the non-availability of venue space at BEC means that large-scale trade shows will have to wait for a longer time. Hence, Messe Frankfurt has postponed its physical trade fairs which were scheduled to be held in Mumbai in May.

Gartex Texprocess India (May 4-6, 2021), Screen Print India (May 4-6, 2021), ISH India powered by IPA (May 20-22, 2021), Media Expo (May 20-22, 2021) and LED Expo (May 20-22, 2021) are among the exhibitions that have been rescheduled.

While the Delhi editions of Gartex Texprocess India, Screen Print India, LED Expo, and Media Expo continue to be on schedule, the new dates for the Mumbai editions will be announced later.

BIEC Revises Show Guidelines

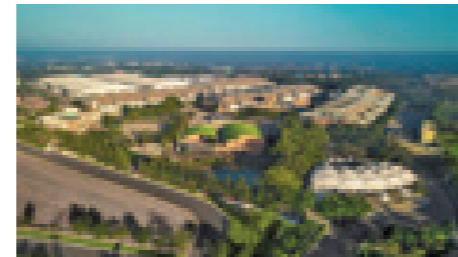


Image Source: BIEC

The Executive Committee of Indian Exhibition Industry Association (IEIA) held a meeting with Bengaluru International Exhibition Centre (BIEC) on April 8, 2021 to help its member companies in restarting exhibitions and events.

Agreeing to extend support to show organizers for restarting exhibitions, BIEC management has decided to relax its guidelines; it will not impose any penalty on the reduction of the space booked for shows up to March 31, 2022, provided it is intimated 15 days before the show buildup.

Exhibitions postponed from lean and semi-lean period to peak period will be offered at the agreed tariff during confirmation, subject to availability of dates. BIEC will provide a refund option to organizers who have been constrained to cancel shows due to COVID-19 and have no immediate plans to host the shows.

It was further decided to offer customized payment schedules, special pricing for new industry sector shows at BIEC, have special pricing for first-time show organizers, and support and liaison with the State Government departments for holding shows in BIEC.

CIMT 2021 Draw More Crowds



All Image Source: Magic Wand Media

The 17th China International Machine Tool Show (CIMT 2021) organized by China Machine Tool & Tool Builders' Association (CMTBA) in support with China International Exhibition Center Group Cooperation (CIEC) took place from April 12 - 17, 2021 at the China International Exhibition Center (new venue), Beijing. The theme of the exhibition was ‘Win the Smart Future Together’.

CIMT 2021 showcased the world's advanced manufacturing technologies and machine tool products and provided a platform to promote technical exchanges and business cooperation between China and the world.

ITEX & WYIE 2021 Rescheduled in December

ITEX & WYIE 2021, scheduled for May 27 - 28, 2021 in Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre, Malaysia, has been postponed to December 13 - 14, 2021 at the same venue in a hybrid format. The exhibition attracts the right target group in the science and technology industry. Investors, venture capitalists, manufacturers, entrepreneurs, distributors and the corporate sector will get significant opportunities to explore new business ventures. Industry stakeholders can discuss research work with academic institutions and explore possible tie-ups.

Last Mile ASEAN in July 2021



A hybrid format of exhibition as Manach Exhibitions Thailand has organized the 5th Last Mile ASEAN Conference and Expo from July 8-9, 2021 at Bangkok International Trade & Exhibition Centre (BITEC) to offer solutions for solving the long-standing logistics challenges faced by e-commerce players, retailers, post & parcel, logistics suppliers and delivery companies.

With over 45 exhibitors showcasing innovative technologies and products and over 35 conference sessions, the show promises to provide visitors ample opportunities for networking and gaining insights on technological innovations through live demonstrations of solutions.

Vietnam Expo 2021 Revive Ties

Vietnam Expo in its 30th edition at Hanoi International Centre for Exhibition from April 14 - 17, 2021 served as a vibrant platform for trade promotion activities. The exhibitors showcased their key products, new services and technologies and built a network with Vietnam's Manufacturing industry.

Organized by Ministry of Industry and Trade, the annual event facilitated to boost exports, develop Vietnam's domestic market, and expand and diversify trade promotion activities.

This was the sixth consecutive year that the ‘Invest in Vietnam’ booth cluster was placed in the center of the trade fair to introduce new policies on the investment in eight key industries from Yen Bai, Bac Ninh, Nghe An, Khanh Hoa, An Giang, Dong Thap, and Vinh Long provinces.

Manufacturing World Nagoya Ensures Safety



Manufacturing World Nagoya is Asia's leading exhibition showcasing all kinds of cutting-edge mechanical components, manufacturing services and IT solutions for the Manufacturing industry. The exhibition was organized by Reed Exhibitions Japan from April 7 - 9, 2021 at Portmesse Nagoya. The exhibition was held with all safety protocols to ensure exhibitors and visitors safety.

Manufacturing World Nagoya comprised seven specialized shows. These being Design Engineering & Manufacturing Solutions Expo Nagoya, Mechanical Components & Materials Technology Expo Nagoya, Factory Facilities & Equipment Expo Nagoya, Aerospace Technology & Components Expo Nagoya, Industrial AI/IoT Expo Nagoya, Additive Manufacturing Japan Expo and, Measure/Test/Sensor Expo. The next edition of the show will be held on April 13 - 15, 2022 at the same venue.

AMPA 2021 in New Format

The Taipei International Automobile & Motorcycle Parts & Accessories Show (AMPA) was held from April 14 - 17, 2021 at Taipei Nangang Exhibition Hall 1. The organizer, Taiwan External Trade Development Council, TAITRA, brought the best of virtual and physical worlds to enable industry peers to connect and conduct business without any hassles.

AMPA continues to be open from April 7 - May 6, 2021 providing exhibitors a platform to promote their products and services.

PCEC Resumes Physical Events

Western Australia's leading venue Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre (PCEC) championed the return of face-to-face exhibitions and corporate events by hosting more than 80 events in March this year.



Image Source: Magic Wand Media

It was a different story one year ago when the venue was forced to shut as COVID-19 entered the Australian shores. After adhering to safety protocols as prescribed by the Australian health department for 12 months, PCEC started holding events once again.

Some prestigious events such as the Australasian Oil & Gas Energy connecting the entire oil and gas supply chain; Underground Operators Conference on underground operational experiences in mining; The Perth Home Show featuring innovative home products; and The EveryWoman Expo showcasing health, beauty, fashion, food, lifestyle, fitness, and spiritual solutions for women were held at PCEC during March 2021.

Jurassic World in 6M Lego Bricks

Jurassic World, the blockbuster franchise from Universal Pictures and Amblin Entertainment, is being recreated from April 1 to May 31, 2021 at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre (MCEC).

Visitors can witness the largest Lego experience in the Australian history as Ryan 'The Brickman' McNaught unveils the epic. Over 50 large-scale dinosaurs, props, scenes and activities made from over 6 million Lego bricks will be on display. The show will also unveil the stories and characters from Jurassic World. Explorers can discover Isla Nublar, the science labs of the Park, petting zoo and pose with dinosaurs.

MCEC is following all safety protocols to ensure the safety of visitors during the show.

Saudi Franchise Expo 2021

One of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia 2030 Vision objectives is to develop non-oil business sectors, and Saudi Franchise Expo 2021, organized by Sunaidi Expo and Conferences from May 30-June 1 at Riyadh, is in furtherance to this objective.

The exhibition will offer an enormous platform for local, regional and international brands looking into franchising regionally and internationally. Aspiring business entrepreneurs can avail the right consultancies and educational programs to make real advancements in their businesses.

Securex South Africa 2021 Rescheduled

Africa's leading security and fire trade exhibition Securex South Africa 2021, at Gallagher Convention Centre, has been rescheduled from June to November later this year. The exhibition will now be held from November 16-18, 2021 at the same venue. A-OSH Expo & Facilities Management Expo will be held concurrently for the second straight year.

The show organizer Specialised Exhibitions took the uneasy decision to reschedule the exhibition following the negative effects of COVID-19 on the public health and the economy.

Commenting on the development, Gary Corin, Managing Director, Specialised Exhibitions, said, "The safety and well-being of our exhibitors, suppliers and visitors - and indeed the industry as a whole - is of paramount importance. Hence the decision to reschedule this range of shows to November."

Aviation Sector Awaits Airport Show Dubai

The Airport Show is Dubai's largest annual exhibition showcasing emerging aviation trends and advanced technologies that would be useful for building next generation modern airports.



Image Source: Magic Wand Media

Airport Show Hybrid+ will take place in the physical format at Dubai World Trade Centre (DWTC) as well as online from May 24-26, 2021. Peripheral events, Airport Security ME, ATC Forum, Global Airport Leaders' Forum and Women in Aviation, will be held concurrently.

The three-day event will be significant for airport and aviation professionals and tech leaders to address their needs and exchange knowledge whilst forging partnerships. It will also enable the aviation sector to bounce back from the crisis and succeed in today's newly disrupted and competitive world.

Texworld to Go Physical in July



Image Source: Messe Frankfurt GmbH /Jena Bascom Photography

Texworld New York City (formerly known as Texworld USA), organized by Messe Frankfurt, is one of the largest events featuring apparel fabrics. The exhibition will take place from July 20 - 22, 2021 at Javits Center, New York City.

The tradeshow will connect international textile manufacturers with the US buyers and provide a platform for product discovery, trend analysis and education. The event will unearth the latest trends from the Fabrics industry and will be a great networking forum for firms to increase awareness of their products. Exhibitors can endorse their brands to potential buyers including global suppliers, fabric buyers, designers, and fashion professionals.

Powering the Wind Energy Sector



Mexico Windpower, an international event for wind power sector in Mexico, has announced its dates for 2021. The tenth edition of Mexico Windpower will take place at the Centro Citibanamex in Mexico City. The event is being organized by the Asociación Mexicana de Energía Eólica (Mexican Wind Energy Association AMDEE), the Global Wind Energy Council (GWEC) and Tarsus Mexico.

Hannover Messe Unveils Future Business



Image Source: Deutsche Messe AG

(L-R): Dr Jochen Köckler, Chairman, Managing Board, Deutsche Messe AG, Hannover and Arief Havas Oegroseno, Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia for the Federal Republic of Germany at Hannover Messe 2021 digital edition.

The Hannover Messe Digital Edition showcased some important innovations in Mechanical and Electronic engineering and the Information Technology sector.

Dr Jochen Köckler, CEO, Deutsche Messe AG, presented his view on the show: "The positive response to the digital Hannover Messe exceeded our expectations. At the same time, we saw that a digital tradeshow cannot replace the magic of a physical event."

He cited that trust-building face-to-face discussions, concrete leads at the booth, hands-on product experience as well as chance encounters are missing elements when an event is held digitally.

During the five days of the show, 90,000 participants generated more than 3.5 million page views and submitted 7,00,000 search queries in the exhibitor and product search boxes. Additionally, the new conference and exhibitor live streams attracted approximately 1,40,000 views.

Expo Proveedores del Restaurante 2021

Expo Proveedores del Restaurante is the most important show in Northern Mexico focusing on the Foodservice industry. The twelfth edition of the show will be held from May 25 - 26, 2021 at Cintermex, Monterrey Nuevo León, México.

The expo will provide professionals from the Restaurant industry to meet, under one roof, the main suppliers of products and services such as frozen meals, agriculture products, meat, fish, glassware, electronics and many more. Expo Proveedores del Restaurante is also a unique platform to look for new suppliers and cement business relationships with existing ones.

Joining Forces for Ensuring Business Success



A first-of-its-kind global coalition has been formed to ensure the safety and success of communities as they restart their business operations. To mitigate the losses caused to businesses by the pandemic and aid a quicker economic turnaround, exhibition organizers and industry associations are forming a coalition to bring critical live event platforms back into the market with all safety protocols in place.

The coalition is led by UFI, the organizer of Global Exhibitions Day (GED), on June 2, 2021, and important industry associations such as SISO, and the world's leading exhibitions organizers like Clarion Events, Comexposium, Diversified Communications, Emerald, Informa Markets, Reed Exhibitions and Tarsus are joining forces.

"Exhibitions and business events are the fastest of all fast tracks to drive economic recovery after the pandemic. Small and medium-sized enterprises rely on these marketplaces to drive their sales. As an industry, we have systems and processes in place to provide safe platforms for face-to-face trading," said Kai Hattendorf, CEO, UFI.



Cathy Breden
EVP & COO
EIC 2021
Chair Elect
IAEE

Image Source: IAEE

Cathy Breden, EVP & COO, IAEE to Serve as EIC 2021 Chair Elect

The International Association of Exhibitions & Events (IAEE) has selected its Executive Vice President & Chief Operating Officer Cathy Breden CMP, CAE, CEM as 2021 Chair Elect of the Events Industry Council (EIC). In this role she will also serve as Treasurer and will move forward as EIC Chair in 2022.

Breden has served on the EIC board of directors since 2017 and has also served as Chair of the 2016-2017 Research Committee and on the 2010 CMP board.

Speaking about the development Breden said, "I am pleased to contribute to the advancement of the worldwide Events industry through my role on the EIC board and moving forward EIC's Vision 2025 Plan. The diversity of the board's members and the organizations they hail from allows for broad perspective and opportunity to serve the various communities of our industry honorably. This is particularly important in the year ahead, as our industry strives toward a full recovery from the challenges posed by COVID-19."



Gaby Appleton
Chief Digital
Product Officer
Reed Exhibitions

Image Source: Reed Exhibitions

Gaby Appleton Now Global Chief Digital Product Officer, Reed Exhibitions

Reed Exhibitions has designated Gaby Appleton as its first ever Chief Digital Product Officer. In this newly created role, Appleton will work across the global Reed Exhibitions business which spans across 22 countries and more than 400 events. She will oversee the company's digital strategy and execution and lead the RX digital community. She will report to Brian Brittain, Chief Operating Officer and Richard Mortimore, Chief Commercial Officer, Reed Exhibitions.

Commenting on Appleton's new role, Hugh Jones, CEO, Reed Exhibitions, said, "With Gaby's arrival, our talent, technology and intelligence will be able to

grow exponentially which in turn will deliver extraordinary new opportunities for our customers' businesses."

Sharing his thoughts, Brittain said, "Gaby has extensive experience in transforming businesses and driving digital innovation. This experience will be brought to bear on RX as we continue to build brilliant digital products for all our B2B and B2C events."

Speaking about her new role, Appleton said, "Now more than ever the power of combined face-to-face events and digital must come together to reboot and reconnect communities and sectors around the world, driving growth for all. I can't wait to get started."



Sonia Thomas
Former COO, UFI

Image Source: jwc GmbH

Sonia Thomas, Former UFI COO to Join jwc GmbH

Sonia Thomas, former Chief Operating Officer, UFI, is moving to jwc as a Senior Consultant. Thomas, who has had a long and distinguished career for 15 years with UFI, will begin her new innings with jwc led by former UFI President Jochen Witt from May 1, 2021 onwards.

Speaking about Thomas's appointment, he said, "We are extremely happy to welcome Sonia as our new team member. It is of highest importance for our organization to work with people who have the right fit in personality,

professionalism, and industry know-how. Sonia brings all of this and much more to our team."

Delighted to be part of jwc, Thomas said, "I had the pleasure of working closely with Jochen when he was the UFI President. We share the same values and work ethic. I also had the pleasure of working with Gerd Weber and Jimé Essink, the other two members of jwc board. Our industry is on the eve of recovery and there is much to do to assist our clients as they embark on the road to a new form of normality." **////**



Image Source: Magic Wand Media

RESILIENCE IN TURBULENT TIMES

The Indian Exhibition industry has stayed remarkably unflappable amid the current setback, demonstrating commendable resolve and resilience. To further build the morale of the industry, Indian Exhibition Industry Association (IEIA) organized the IEIA CEO's CONNECT & Exhibition Productivity Contest – 'SPARK' program on March 27, 2021 at Leela Ambience Hotel, Gurugram. The first post-COVID physical event was an initiative to bring together the industry players face to face for business discussions, knowledge sharing and networking that witnessed an overwhelming response from industry stakeholders hailing from all over the country.

IEIA, through the endeavor of the event, brought home the point that live physical events are the most effective platforms that stimulate business and trade.

Acknowledging the efforts of IEIA, Rajesh Agarwal, IAS, Executive Director, India Trade Promotion Organization (ITPO), in his address, said, "Small steps such as this would go a long way in building confidence. The year 2020 was a challenging one for the Exhibition industry since the solution to contain

the virus was about social distancing and exhibitions involve travel and physical interactions, making it difficult."

He added that ITPO will continue to facilitate more exhibitions in a seamless manner which will contribute to the growth of trade and commerce. "If more exhibitions happen, more trade will take place and more businesses will be conducted. As an organization, we aim to help the industry to hold as many exhibitions as possible."

S Balasubramanian, President, IEIA and Executive Director & COO, IMTMA and BIEC, highlighted the resilience demonstrated by the industry in facing the challenges head-on and moving ahead. "Today is a unique day for us as this is the first face-to-face meeting with the industry fraternity after the industry announced the restart. It is a refreshing moment

for me that we have come together today and are able to meet each other personally.”

Insightful Business Sessions

The event included two business sessions - ‘Exhibitions 2021 & Beyond - What Organisers are Planning?’ and ‘Doing Business with COVID’ moderated by Sooraj Dhawan, Director, Falcon Exhibitions Pvt Ltd and Gaurav Juneja, Honorary Treasurer, IEIA and Director, MEX Exhibitions Pvt Ltd, respectively.

The speakers in the first session included Rakesh Kumar, Director General, Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts (EPCH) and Chairman, India Exposition Mart Ltd (IEML); Yogesh Mudras, Managing Director, Informa Markets in India; Suparna D Gupta, CEO, G.S. Marketing Associates; and MB Naqvi, CEO, Media Today Group.

Naqvi presented his views on how his company converted the COVID-induced lockdown into an opportunity, “We did not forget 2020; rather we used it to upgrade our database with almost 20 specialized subjects.”

He spoke on Media Today Group’s ventures, “We are planning to launch Fresh India Show in the physical form in coming months, which had earlier been cancelled. Our other flagship shows India FoodEx and AgriTech India are scheduled to be held in August at Bangalore International Exhibition Centre (BIEC) in Bangalore.”

Elaborating on EPCH initiatives during the last year, Rakesh Kumar said, “We were the first in the country to organize the largest B2B virtual event for members in June last year.” He shared the Council’s plan to organize Indian Fashion Jewellery Expo, Home Expo, and Furniture Expo at the India Expo Centre, Greater Noida.

Revealing Informa Markets in India’s upcoming shows, Mudras said, “We are planning to host some large-scale physical events from September onwards. Some of these being Renewable Energy India Expo

at India Expo Mart, Greater Noida; Delhi Jewellery & Gem Fair at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi; Cosmoprof India at Bombay Convention and Exhibition Centre, Mumbai; CPHI India at India Expo Mart; IFSEC (South Asia’s Largest Security Expo & Conference) at Pragati Maidan; and INMEX SMM (South Asia’s Largest Maritime Expo & Conference) in October at Bombay Convention and Exhibition Centre.”

Highlighting G.S. Marketing Associate’s role, which has been organizing the India International Mega Trade Fair (IIMTF) for the last 18 years, Gupta said, “We organized IIMTF in Kolkata, Siliguri, Patna, Bhubaneswar and Lucknow. If the situation permits, we will organize IIMTF in Hyderabad and Bangalore as well.”

The second business session involved participation from the service segment, venues and technology companies. They shared their best practices around doing business in the COVID-19 era. Ravinder Sethi, Managing Director, R.E Rogers India Pvt Ltd; Varun Chhibber, General Manager, Leela Ambience Gurugram Hotel & Residences; Abhishek Kumar, COO, Grover Audio Visuals; and Sambit Mund, Head, Trade Fairs, HITEX Exhibition Centre; were the speakers in this session.

Speaking on his experience of handling a large-scale show during the pandemic, Sethi shared, “One of the major challenges when Aero India 2021 was announced was the visibility aspect as Aero India literally became an event the whole world was watching. The biggest challenge was to ensure not only logistics but also to maintain the COVID-19 protocols.”

Mund, who oversaw HITEX’s first event organized post pandemic in November 2020, said, “Our first exhibition organized in November was implemented for healthcare and infection control. In March, during the International Women’s Day celebrations, the second exhibition was organized which was a great success. We had 175 exhibitors and about 8,000 visitors.”



All Image Source: IEIA

Overcoming Challenges

During the event, the speakers deliberated upon the importance of the presence of overseas exhibitors and overcoming the challenges regarding travel to and within India. Rakesh Kumar pointed out that China was India’s biggest competitor, but most overseas buyers are now seeing India as an alternative destination and the current situation is a temporary phase which would get over in 2-3 months. He said that the interest will grow for exhibiting in India and procuring from India. Concurring with his views, Mudras said that overseas are very important, their presence is important as they bring innovative products for our domestic industries. For exhibitors who face travel restrictions, hybrid model will be explored.

Speaking about the progress in getting foreign delegates, Gupta said that during the year, events conducted post pandemic attracted participation of companies from 9 countries and anywhere between 15 - 20 states in different centres where they organized shows including Dubai, Bangladesh, Thailand, Iran, Afghanistan, Malaysia, Lebanon, Tunisia, Turkey and of course across all over India.

Naqvi shared that Media Today Group received considerable enquiries from Iran and Afghanistan for the event scheduled to be held in Bangalore. The Bangladesh Government is also in talks, and Italy and the US have also shown their interest.

‘SPARK’ Contest

A prominent highlight of the event was the Young Professionals - Exhibitions Productivity Contest - ‘SPARK’. IEIA held this contest to promote young talent and establish professional standards across the Exhibition sector in

India. Contestants from IMTMA and BIEC, NürnbergMesse India, Informa Markets in India, DB Schenker, Om Shakti Management, R. E. Rogers India and Viva Events Management Pvt Ltd presented their case studies on different topics such as sustainability, health and safety, customer engagement, waste management, change management, registration management and so on. The jury comprised of eminent personalities such as Arun Srivastava, Deputy Director General, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India; Gurvinder Singh, Director, Exhibitions, EEPC India; Rajiv Malhotra, CEO, Lotus Exhibitions & Marketing Services Pvt Ltd and Ruhail Amin, Executive Editor, BW Applause.

‘SPARK’ CONTEST WINNERS

Winner
INDIAN MACHINE TOOL MANUFACTURERS’ ASSOCIATION (IMTMA)

First Runner up
NÜRNBERGMESSE INDIA

Second Runner up
INFORMA MARKETS IN INDIA

Second Runner up
DB SCHENKER

Wrap Up

The IEIA CEO’s CONNECT & Exhibition Productivity Contest - ‘SPARK’ program turned out to be a significant networking and industry connect event for the industry players after a gap of over a year, creating opportunities to restart business discussions and plans for the revival of the industry. Rakesh Kumar welcomed the startups, who find it difficult to afford venue costs, to join hands and work out a model and organize exhibitions. This, he said, would go a long way in helping the growth and development of the Exhibition industry business. //



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Image Source: IMTMA

THE FUTURE IS GREEN

IMTMA's Ecodesign Concept is an initiative towards building sustainable stalls in its flagship IMTEX exhibitions that has been a huge success since its results have been as desired – to reduce, reuse and recycle the materials used.

The 75-year-old Indian Machine Tool Manufacturers' Association (IMTMA) has been organizing IMTEX for the last 50 years with its current location as India's largest exhibition center, the Bangalore International Exhibition Centre (BIEC). The venue is the first in the country to be LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified and has also earned itself an IMS certification, reaffirming IMTMA and BIEC's commitment to environment and health and safety aspects in the Exhibition industry and exhibition infrastructure.

Sensitivity to Environment

IMTMA's vision has always been to implement best practices in exhibitions with strong emphasis on sustainability. To realize this, the association aimed at discouraging usage of hazardous materials like POP, spray painting, flex etc.; reducing, recycling and reusing materials; saving time in stall building while bringing down intensive manpower.

The team involved zeroed in on a number of issues including the absence of common standard/guidelines for ecodesign stalls; non-availability of eco-friendly materials, practices, and health & safety measures; limitless time consumption in the construction of exhibition stalls and generation of large quantity of waste.

Finding a Solution

After brainstorming over a number of options, the team opted for one that aligned best with the association's vision, which is to initiate Ecodesign Awards in IMTEX exhibitions to encourage green stalls.

The concept of Ecodesign outlined five principles:

- Installation, and approach to dismantling and waste disposal
- Minimizing resource consumption
- Reducing pollution during set-up
- Causing minimal waste
- Promoting re-use

The strategy used to implement it included involving exhibitors proactively, ensuring every exhibitor participate, creating interest among exhibitors and stall constructors, having clarity in goals, using a process which is repeatable and scalable, and aligning to UN Sustainable Goals & UFI Initiatives.

The Ecodesign Award Process

The team has divided the process into 5 steps. The first is Stage 1 for exhibitors that comprises evaluating raw space of the stall which should be a minimum of 30 sq mt. Stage 2 is for stall fabricators where the Ecodesign theme is evaluated. Then comes onsite fabrication evaluation involving installation, and approach to dismantling and waste disposal. The jury then evaluates the shortlisted exhibitors and presents the winners with Ecodesign Awards.

The Ecodesign concept was new for exhibitors and stand contractors of both 2019 show and 2020 as exhibitors and stand fabricators were different for individual shows. The resulting trend showed increased in planning, material reuse, energy saving and execution. The award participation increased by more than 50 percent in comparison to 2019. **////**

Challenge:

To develop a concept that suits best to the vision of IMTMA and also bring in a change in the Exhibition industry with the support of stakeholders.

Solution:

The Ecodesign Concept resulted in:

- Increased planning, material reuse, energy saving and execution;
- Reduction in dust and noise levels during set-up;
- The planned re-use of stand elements and the concept of minimal usage of material have been taken up in earnest;
- Increased usage of LED lights and electronic displays at the stands;
- Strong collaboration between stakeholders;
- Increased commitment towards health and safety.



Image Source: NürnbergMesse India

A RACE AGAINST TIME

This case study encapsulates myriad challenges and changes that were adopted by NM team in the crisis situation culminating to its successful digital edition of A.B.I.S 2020.

NürnbergMesse India (NM India) was planning an event in March 2020 to announce the launch of Asia's Broadcasting & Infotainment Show (A.B.I.S) that would combine The Broadcast India Show, the newly acquired SCAT India TradeShow, and the very first Content India Show.

The team was also simultaneously working on ensuring everything was on track for the show in October 2020 when COVID-19 struck, putting a grinding halt to the business in general.

NM India had a remarkable success with the physical edition of the Broadcast India Show 2019. The next show had to be bigger but with the lockdown being extended and uncertainty of the situation, the team went back to the drawing-board and started thinking of contingency plans for multiple alternate scenarios. By June 2020, they decided to explore a digital/virtual format for the show as a strong possibility.

Running Against Time

After much brainstorming, the team listed out the following features that were essential to provide the exhibitors with the best possible experience: 2D/3D model; VOD for conference sessions; Interactive, live chat & video calling option; AI-based matchmaking; Easy-to-use user interface; Customization ability; Adaptability; Cost-effectiveness; and Understanding sponsor concerns.

As an organizer, they had to also evaluate the Technical/IT infrastructure and support required to pull off a digital show. Some of the points discussed were: Data privacy & security/compliance; Data intelligence, report, analysis, algorithms; Server capability; Integration with other services such as registration, etc.; Mobile responsive site; Awareness about audience technology; Considering technological limitations.

The team had to learn the Swapcard platform first to convincingly explain it to their exhibitors, understand their sentiments and fulfill their needs. They were ready to troubleshoot at a micro level and provide extensive individual assistance to every exhibitor (pre, during and post the show) to ensure their outing at the digital edition would be successful.

Keeping Visitors Engaged

Another challenge was to keep the visitors engaged throughout their digital journey. Hence, the NM team created a multi-fold approach which included:

Creating a website solely for A.B.I.S 2020: We Go Digital Edition:

A seamless platform was the need of the hour which was well integrated with various social media and video streaming platforms for quick and easy access to webinars, social shares, and networking;

Updating individual websites: The integration of the digital platform with the standard website was the focus and redirected the users to the digital platform post the registrations;

Creating a content strategy promotional content: The team focused their attention on creating a serial content strategy that would provide all the info about the digital edition in addition to encouraging the followers to register and reshare the content with their connections. **////**

Challenge:

One of NM India's main challenges was changing the mindset of its exhibitors and making them switch from a physical event and invest in an unknown digital format.

Solution:

- After multiple platform demos, discussions and considerations on requirements, features, USP, pros & cons, etc., the team settled in on Swapcard for its digital show.
- With just about 3 months to the show, the team re-created all its marketing collaterals including brochures, exhibitor packages, partnership opportunities, Swapcard demo deck, visitor, and exhibitor walkthrough videos, among others.
- The show was a mega success and comprised of 25 Conference Sessions, 40 Product Live Demos, 6,000 Visitors on the platform at one given point in time, 300+ Brands on display, Attendee span on digital – well over 1 hour per visitor at any given of point, 2,000 pre-digital Meetings Requests/ Networking Sessions Requests, 225+ One-to-One Meetings, 100+ Video Chats and 800+ Video & Brochure Downloads.



Image Source: Informa Markets in India

SMALL CHANGES, BIG IMPACT

The country's leading exhibition organizer Informa Markets in India resorted to innovative approaches to minimize its carbon footprint and ensure a safe working environment for all industry stakeholders.

Established in 2006, Informa Markets in India (formerly known as UBM India) is the country's leading exhibition organizer, catering to a variety of industries and specialist markets including Manufacturing, Jewelry, Healthcare, Pharma, Food and Transport Logistics.

Issues Galore

The company found itself getting increasingly agitated over environmental issues such as global warming and India being one of the largest CO₂ emitting nations and it being part of the industry which was adding fuel to the fire. The industry workers' health and safety were prominent among the concerns.

The team consciously unearthed issues that could be addressed to reduce the industry's carbon footprint. They found out that (i) there was an increase in the number of bare spaces; (ii) 50 percent of elements could not be recycled; (iii) more trees were getting cut for procuring plywood; (iv) CO₂ emission was high due to high-voltage lightings; (v) Workers showed resistance in using PPE kits; and (vi) there were hardly any measures to curb injuries and health hazards.

Small Changes Matter Too

The team brought about the following changes – big and small – that led to unbelievable reduction in carbon emission. Instead of wooden stands only upgraded Octonum structures were used. Compulsory Shell Scheme was introduced for all booths below or equal to 18 sq mt with pop-up options. All auxiliary areas were to be constructed using Octonum structure. The maximum stand height was fixed at 4m. Only LED/

CFL lights, that too a maximum 100 watts LED bulbs, were allowed. Carpets in the outdoor, storage and dumping areas were reduced and reused. No construction was allowed inside halls with onsite options for minor cutting, sawing etc. Sweeping and spraying of water was done day and night to reduce pollution. Only industrial ladders were to be used in exhibitions. Online Exhibitor Manuals instead of printed ones, non-tearable badges instead of plastic pouches, eco-friendly exhibitor and buyer kits, re-use of Informa lanyards by asking visitors to drop it before exiting the venue, water kiosks instead of water bottles were introduced. Independent technical advisor was brought in to ensure structural stability. A dedicated Health & Safety manager was appointed to look after and monitor Health & Safety practices, onsite inspection, training to vendors, pre & post show reporting etc. **////**

Challenge:

To reduce carbon footprint and ensure workers' safety

Solution:

- Octonum structures instead of wooden stands saved 1,56,288 kg of plywood in a year.
- With height restriction up to 4m from the earlier 5m, the company reduced approx 300 tonne of additional wood being used for the construction of booths onsite. It has helped to control hazardous incidents that generally occur while working at a height due to unsafe working methods.
- Online exhibitor manual (Since 2011) and digital ops manual (Since 2017) by eliminating printed copies has saved many trees. As per the research, one tree costs approximately 8,300 paper sheets, so by eliminating printed copies, more than 330 trees have been saved.
- By restricting use of high-voltage lights for shell scheme booth since 2018, Informa Markets in India reduced its CO₂ emission by approximately 1,629 kg in 2 years.
- By eliminating use of PVC plastic pouch for all category of badges, approximately 21,000 kg of CO₂ emission per year has been reduced.
- Since the start of 2020, the company started using water dispenser kiosks by eliminating water bottles. With this initiative, it will be reducing 9,600 kg of CO₂ emission every year.
- The company has recently replaced Plastic folders for exhibitor kits with Jute bags/folders. This move will be reducing 3,100 kg of CO₂ emission every year.
- Using used carpets for outdoor areas, emergency exits, storeroom, cafeteria counter etc. and elimination of carpet in the convention center centre (since 2016) has resulted in 12,000 sq mt less use of carpet till date.

TOWARDS SMOOTH OPERATIONS



Image Source: DB Schenker

DB Schenker's in-house software GLOBUS and LIFT ensure smooth operations at exhibition sites by allowing exhibitors to place their bookings, request any special service they need, enquire about pricing, and check their order status.

Effective handling of resources, situations and delivering a top-grade customer experience is essential for the success of events such as fairs, exhibitions, sporting events, etc. DB Schenker has earned itself a name in the industry when it comes to delivering the best customer experience during special events through seamless operation.

Challenges in Site Handling

Traffic management is one of the challenges in site handling. Traffic must move efficiently and safely before and after the event. This requires effective planning and transparent communication among all the stakeholders. Customers need to be followed up on a timely basis to understand their requirements and plan resources accordingly.

Another crucial aspect of successful exhibition site handling is HSSE Policy (Health, Safety, Security and Environment). According to the company, HSSE training to manpower is imperative to avoid any fatal or unfortunate accidents and even achieve our sustainable development objectives.

Extensive HSSE training ensures that on-site team including drivers, labors, site supervisors are aware of safety protocols. Besides, the training also ensures that the team has all the necessary equipment on the site which includes personal protective equipment (visibility jackets, safety shoes, helmets, safety goggles, mask, and gloves).

The HSSE team also delivers first aid training and certification to all site managers. Temperature reading happens daily without fail and hand sanitizers are

available on every site.

Other concerns include:

- Long queues and wait hours at site offices for handling equipment and labor;
- Unbalanced utilization of MHE/resources and fluctuating demands and idle times onsite;
- Lack of awareness for health & safety risks at the show site.

Technology to Simplify Processes

DB Schenker has come up with a digital solution to traffic management problem through its in-house software GLOBUS and LIFT. These secured applications allow exhibitors to place their bookings, request any special service they need, enquire about pricing, and check their order status.

GLOBUS acts as a single global approach for customers for order entry to notification and settlement as well as it enables tracking and tracing from the point of departure up to the booth.

Similarly, LIFT (Logistics Interface for Trade Fair) is its Site and Freight Management Software which is operational 24X7. It allows transparent communication with exhibitors and event organizers regarding their requirements, pricing, billing, tracking and even placing special requests. **////**

Challenge:

To streamline traffic and provide a safe and secured environment for all the stake holders.

Solution:

- The company implemented in-house developed tech solutions – GLOBUS and LIFT – for Site Management and HSSE;
- To maintain a seamless traffic movement, a manual dashboard was built, and time slots were allotted based on the stall possession and exhibits volume;
- A 'Freight desk' was arranged to address various logistical requirement at the site and to accommodate vehicle traffic volumes;
- HSSE inspector and trainer were officially deployed to regularly brief site managers and manpower;
- Schenker android application was introduced to proactively reach out to users regarding the risks, best practices, and relevant advisories;
- Training from the Govt. Fire & Safety department was arranged;
- Basic first aid training and certification was provided to all site managers.

Building on STRENGTHS



Image Source: BIEC

In his exclusive interview with ExhiBits, V Anbu, President, UFI (The Global Association of the Exhibition Industry) & Director General & CEO, IMTMA (Indian Machine Tool Manufacturers' Association) and BIEC (Bangalore International Exhibition Centre), offers his view on the growth of the Indian Exhibition industry in the coming years, and sheds light on the support from the Indian Government in restarting physical exhibitions, the initiatives being taken by UFI to regain the exhibitors' confidence and the altered form of exhibitions in the 'New Normal'.

1. You have a rich legacy of heading organizations in the Exhibition industry for decades. Being elected as the first Indian to don the hat of President, UFI (The Global Association of the Exhibition Industry) since its inception almost 90 years ago, you have put the Indian exhibition fraternity on the global map. Kindly share your thoughts on how you perceive the growth curve of the Indian Exhibition industry in the coming years.

India's \$3.2 billion Exhibition industry has been evolving through innovations and transformations. The Exhibition industry business, which was growing at a rate of 8 - 10 percent annually, was hit by the pandemic since March 2020, suffering losses of over 90 percent of its

business. Though we still have concerns due to the second wave of COVID-19, the industry is optimistic that we will be able to restart exhibitions at the earliest.

The Indian Exhibition industry has immense potential to grow in double digits, not in terms of exhibitions alone but from all perspectives including infrastructure, services, conventions, and all other related services that supplement exhibition growth.

Currently, the exhibition infrastructure availability in India is just 4 percent of the overall capacity available in Asia. The exhibition infrastructure in India grew to a certain extent with newer venues of smaller capacities added in the last 10 years. However, the existing infrastructure available in India needs to further modernize and expand considerably. This is currently being addressed as few venues have already taken up this initiative such as Pragati Maidan and Dwarka in Delhi. India Expo Mart in Noida also took a similar step by expanding its capacity. BIEC (Bangalore International Exhibition Centre) also added modern halls of large size to its existing infrastructure. These efforts need to continue not just in major cities but also in the Tier 2 cities as well.

The Indian Exhibition industry can grow to a size of more than \$12 billion in the next 10 years. This could be achieved through identifying and holding new shows in some of the sectors with high potential. There is enough room for this industry to attract start-ups that are keen to organize exhibitions in new sectors. Further, existing exhibitions could be scaled up and turned into mega shows. Exhibition organizers in India could potentially look forward to working closely with foreign entities through joint ventures, mergers, and acquisitions. The Exhibition industry also needs to focus on people development and usher in cultural change through standardization of processes.

Focused and sustained efforts of association members, industry chambers and associations, government, venues, and all other stakeholders of the industry will help us to realize this. This, I believe, will enhance the quality of shows, and put the industry on a different pedestal in terms of being one of the top global exhibition-organizing nations.

UFI is tracking the recovery of exhibitions and business events around the world. Where shows have taken place, exhibitors and visitors have expressed their satisfaction towards attending the shows besides reporting good business.

As India's GDP reaches \$5 trillion by 2025, manufacturing would contribute \$1 trillion to the GDP, opening up avenues for many industries and supplementing the growth of the Exhibition industry.

2. How has been the support from the Indian Government and respective authorities to restart physical exhibitions?

The Exhibition industry went through a lean phase due to the global pandemic and it will take some time for it to recover fully from its aftermath.

The stimulus packages announced by the Government for various industries have been a breather for businesses. During the phase of restart, the Government extended its support to smaller companies - not just for manufacturing but also for other industries - which has been a welcome move as it gave relief to the small-time players in the Exhibition industry. We will see a complete recovery when physical exhibitions restart with active foreign participation.

A few exhibitions were held in the beginning of this year, signalling the return of face-to-face exhibitions. With the vaccination pace picking up, there is a strong undercurrent that exhibitions would make a strong comeback in the second half of 2021 and the industry may recover substantially by 2022.

IEIA (Indian Exhibition Industry Association) which represents the Indian Exhibition industry has made numerous representations to the Government to extend support for the industry. The Union Government responded by allowing exhibitions to restart with safety guidelines from October 15, 2020 onwards.

Some of the exhibition organizers have shown resilience to restart exhibitions, which is a great motivation for others to begin and bring the Exhibition industry back to its glory days.

3. Will financial incentive packages to MSME exhibitors encourage more participation in trade shows?

Yes, definitely. Incentive packages will encourage MSMEs to participate in product and technology related exhibitions (B2B exhibitions), both in India and overseas. It will help in strongly marketing their products and services, closely interacting with prospective customers to garner projects, establishing linkages, and expanding their horizons, especially in new product and technology developments. We have proposed the Karnataka Government to provide financial incentives to the tune of ₹ 1 Crore to



Image Source: BIEC

“One of the toughest jobs is to instil confidence in the minds of visitors and exhibitors, and once we succeed in doing that, exhibitions will happen, and we will see it coming back to pre-COVID days.”
– V Anbu

mobilize international exhibitors as this would encourage industrial investment, both national and international and enable technology development, design, new products and innovation.

4. As face-to-face exhibitions are reopening globally after the hiatus caused by the pandemic, please share the initiatives being taken by UFI to instil the lost confidence in exhibitors in terms of ROI.

As societies and economies suffer from the after-effects of the global pandemic, UFI is playing an important role in the recovery from it.

The Exhibition industry builds and runs marketplaces and meeting places of the world. Experts, sectors, and industries are connected through exhibitions and exhibitions are the fastest of all fast tracks to drive the much-needed economic recovery around the world.

UFI has advocated for governments to consider exhibitions and events as not generic mass gatherings but as organized industry gatherings.

We have demonstrated through exhibitions held in some of the countries, which were the first ones to do so post the pandemic, that events can be organized with health and safety measures in place.

The 3rd edition of the ‘Good Practice Guide: Addressing COVID-19 Requirements for Re-Opening Business

Events’ has been published by AIPC (The International Association of Convention Centres), ICCA (The International Congress and Convention Association) and UFI (The Global Association of the Exhibition Industry).

The report throws more light on how exhibitions can create the right environment for people to meet.

The Guide follows the series of COVID-19 related publications by the three associations, and it is being shared with the global industry community.

It continues to support their work to create conditions and safeguards that will enable the smooth reopening of their activities while observing the needs and expectations of relevant governments and health authorities.

UFI is tracking the recovery of exhibitions and business events around the world. Where shows have taken place, exhibitors and visitors have expressed their satisfaction towards attending the shows besides reporting good business.

The association is also working closely towards restart of exhibitions and exhibition economy. However, resumption of international travel is paramount not only for the Exhibition industry, but also for the global economic recovery. Once the travel restrictions are lifted, we can see seamless movement of people between countries for attending shows.

5. In the ‘New Normal’ era of in-person exhibitions, how can spatial planning, crowd monitoring and contact tracing tools facilitate exhibition organizers create safe environments at the venues for their exhibitors and attendees?

The Exhibition industry is sailing through tough times with mounting challenges when it comes to organizing face-to-face exhibitions in a world that is affected by coronavirus.

Focus on health and safety measures are paramount for an exhibition to succeed now and industry stakeholders realize this to be the ‘Job One’.

“Green exhibitions would be the next norm in the world, and we have already started moving in that direction through implementing few practices in our own shows like IMTEX.”
– V Anbu

Checking body temperature at entry points, compulsory wearing of masks, limiting the number of on-spot registrations (making all registrations digital), denying entry to participants coming from coronavirus hotspots, broad aisle spaces, dividing exhibition floor into zones, etc. will prevent overcrowding and minimize incidents of coronavirus spread.

To make events successful, exhibition organizers need to work closely with venues and service providers and find more practical and constructive solutions as we can no longer afford to be callous.

Stakeholders also need to make use of digital technology wherever possible to minimize overcrowding at venues. The industry also needs to adhere to the guidelines laid down by the Ministry of Commerce & Industry while conducting events.

One of the toughest jobs is to instil confidence in the minds of visitors and exhibitors, and once we succeed in doing that, exhibitions will happen, and we will see it coming back to pre-COVID days. For this, we need to inform, educate, and communicate that exhibitions are more focused and safer and gradually we will see such exhibitions happening.

We need to educate and inform the exhibitors and visitors about safety protocols that need to be followed from pre-event timeframe up to the conclusion of the exhibition. This is extremely necessary for people to follow.

6. As UFI President, kindly elaborate on any three global best practices that the Indian Exhibition industry should implement to be at par with its international contemporaries.

India has been in the forefront of developing technologies in some select industries such as space, nuclear, defence, medical, and a few others. We have done exceptionally well in these areas, and it now needs to further strengthen its base and focus on some of the unexplored industries where there is a huge need for technologies.

When it comes to the use of technology in exhibitions, India needs to travel a long distance to catch up with other advanced nations which have been using it to emerge as global leaders. The use of technology will lead to efficiency, charter the path for innovation, add value to the entire stakeholder community and give best outcome in terms of customer satisfaction.

The next aspect is the human resource development in the Exhibition industry. This would not just make the skilled workforce available for the industry, but will also lead to higher productivity, enabling the stakeholders and enhancing the quality of shows through the delivery of best services.

We are now living in a volatile world which could be hit by pandemics like COVID in future as well. The Exhibition industry needs to be much more agile and proactive in terms of its preparations to pre-empt the challenges that may arise. The factor of safety has become a priority for everyone to follow. This is not just a one-time exercise, it needs to be constantly practised with proper education, information and communication and one should remain committed to maintain the consistency while organizing shows.

I strongly believe that the next stage of exhibition development is to make exhibitions sustainable. We are responsible for protecting the environment and we need to do our bit by following good sustainable practices in the Exhibition industry. Green exhibitions would be the next norm in the world, and we have already started moving in that direction through implementing few practices in our own shows like IMTEX. Industry should also proactively think about these practices and follow them religiously.

Data has to be leveraged to excel in business since data is the new gold mine that all industry sectors are keenly focusing on it. Exhibitions generate ample data and analyzing, interpreting and bringing out tailor-made solutions from the data in hand is a challenge. The Exhibition industry needs to find ways to overcome these challenges in order to change the whole outlook of the industry in the future. ////



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GETTING BACK IN ACTION

Although the pandemic has made the Exhibition industry realize that a lot can be done digitally, opening up doors to opportunities for its stakeholders, the physical events are being sorely missed for their unique pros and, also, the handshakes.

Exhibitions and trade shows have evolved over the years, ushering in economic growth and progress for the industry, the society and the country. They have played a crucial role of showcasing the country's or any of its industry's best to the world at large and have proved to be an ideal conduit for networking and forging bonds.

Last year, the unprecedented situation emerged due to the pandemic witnessed a surge in digital exhibitions, impacting the Exhibition industry that largely relies on exhibitions in their physical avatar. The new normal of the virtual world opened up a plethora of opportunities for the participants. The stakeholders, however, have now begun to miss advantages of physical events and need them to be back in full swing soon.

Adventuring Face-to-Face

Physical exhibitions enable visitors to first-hand witness a technology, touch and feel the displayed products and build a relationship based on trust with sellers before taking a purchasing decision, resulting in business generation. Indian Exhibition Industry Association (IEIA) has been advocating for the return of physical shows in India. It has also run several campaigns such as #We Support Exhibitions and #Restart of Exhibitions in its defence to increase the morale of the Exhibition industry and instil confidence among businesses.

Riding through Losses

On an encouraging note, which would perhaps have wider ramifications, IEIA held its first face-to-face meeting with

the Exhibition fraternity after the restart was announced. Speaking at the IEIA CEO's Roundtable and Spark Contest, S Balasubramanian, President, IEIA said, "It was an unprecedented year for Exhibition industry which has a market size of over ₹23,000 crore and was growing at an annual rate of 8-10 percent just before the pandemic. The industry suffered loss of over 90 percent, but perceptions are changing with the Government allowing exhibitions to restart."

Association Initiatives

IEIA played a stellar role in engaging its members and the Exhibition industry during the Covid crisis last year. It organized several webinars, master classes, set up knowledge sharing platforms, and liaised with the Central and State Governments for availing support for the industry. The association formed sub-committees for advocacy and published updates on government advisories on its website. Many other leading organizations such as Indian Exhibitions, Conferences & Events Services Association (IESA), India Convention Promotion Bureau (ICPB), Indian Trade Promotion Organization (ITPO), and other leading sectoral associations too extended support to IEIA during the unsettling times.

Government SOPs

Earlier in January this year, the Government of India released the revised consolidated standard operating procedure (SOP), listing down the preventive measures to be taken while holding trade fairs to contain the spread of COVID-19. The revised SOP aims to minimize physical contact and maximize physical distancing among various stakeholders at an exhibition. The new SOP is effective from February onwards and needs to be strictly adhered to when organizing in-person events.

Working Resiliently

The Indian Exhibition industry facilitates both internal and external trade. Over 550 events are held annually that garner revenues worth around ₹23,800 crore, facilitating trade and business transactions for exhibitors' worth over ₹3 lakh crore besides supporting local and global value chains. Concluding his address at the IEIA Roundtable, Balasubramanian said, "Our spirits are high, and we and our industries are resilient and are working towards an effective revival."

At this juncture, it is extremely important that the Ministry of Commerce, Government of India accord the Exhibition industry some special attention as doing so will help trigger India's economic growth and uplift our sentiments by several notches. ////

MESSE FRANKFURT INDIA BEGINS SERIES OF LIVE EVENTS

Messe Frankfurt India organized back-to-back physical conferences under safety parameters and is taking affirmative steps towards resuming B2B physical platforms.

Messe Frankfurt India hosted its first series of live events in the form of NGV India Summit and Rail India in New Delhi recently under the safety parameters of 'MFI SafeConnect'. These standards are strictly aligned with the governmental guidelines and outline a careful personnel and customer safety plan with enhanced health, hygiene, and physical distancing measures.

Emerging Natural Gas Vehicle Industry

The Natural Gas Vehicle (NGV) India Summit held from March 4-5, 2021 was the organization's first physical event in the 'New Normal'. Attended by 125 industry experts and professionals, the event concluded with key takeaways for the Indian Oil & Gas industry. The summit was held at an ideal time, amid soaring petrol and diesel prices and focused on the importance of natural gas and its progress, challenges, opportunities, and overall acceptance of clean fuel.

Transformational Plans for Indian Railways

The fifth edition of Rail India conference, which was held on March 11-12, 2021, galvanized crucial discussions on the future of Indian Railways and facilitated intense networking. The session was inaugurated in the presence of industry stalwarts by a panel consisting of leading players in the industry and dignitaries from the Indian Railway sector. The two-day conference hosted 120 professionals initiating insightful talks on the topics of railway modernization, post-pandemic approach, digital transformation, and new investment plans for Indian Railways.

During the conference, Rahul Agarwal, Head of Infrastructure and Financial Investments, Invest India, asserted, "It is a great initiative by Messe Frankfurt India to organize and bring together the Railway sector through Rail India conference, especially as we are slowly emerging out of the pandemic. It will not only help the Events industry, but also help businesses get back on track and gain investments."

What's Next?

Messe Frankfurt India is bringing together the players from the Refining and Petrochemical sector under one roof at the fifth edition of 'India Refining Summit' to be held on March 25-26, 2021 in New Delhi.

Emphasizing on delivering safe and conducive environment for business exchange, Raj Manek, Executive Director & Board Member, Messe Frankfurt Asia Holdings Ltd, shared, "The goal was to ensure a safe setting for professional encounters - one that demonstrates how significant in-person business events are and how they can be held in compliance with the government's hygiene and safety standards." ////



Image Source: Messe Frankfurt India



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Image Source: HITEX

BUSINESS WOMEN EXPO 2021

FACILITATOR TO BOUNCE BACK IN BUSINESS

The biggest expo for businesswomen in India was jointly organized by Hyderabad International Trade Expositions Ltd (HITEX), Association of Lady Entrepreneurs of India (ALEAP) and Confederation of Women Entrepreneurs (COWE) with the support of Telangana Government, from March 6 - 8, 2021 at HITEX International Convention & Exhibition Center, Hyderabad.

Business Women Expo 2021 served as a significant platform for women to unearth new ideas, discover endless possibilities and get inspired to bounce back from the COVID-19 pandemic after-effects strongly.

Today in India, 20 percent of the total enterprises are represented by women entrepreneurs. Around 51 percent commenced their businesses between the age group of 25 and 35 while 16 percent of the largest segment of women entrepreneurs belong to the creative services category. Almost 10 percent of MSMEs are owned by women. Although women form a sizeable proportion of the workforce in several sectors, the reality is that they are still unable to realize their full potential, which becomes a challenge. Businesses have to create more conducive



Image Source: HITEX

environments for women to thrive and as this happens, more women entrepreneurs will arise on the business landscape.

The exhibition featuring 150 women-owned and related businesses was inaugurated by Kuna Shankar, Director, HITEX and Soudhamini, National President, COWE. Speaking on the occasion, Shankar said that women are the architects of the society and empowering women would make a lot of difference in their families, the society as well as the country. Adding to Shankar's views, Soudhamini said that real empowerment will happen when more opportunities are created for women to showcase their talent.

Discovering, Experiencing and Earning

Women entrepreneurs from SMEs and start-ups showcased their products and services and mentored women to take up entrepreneurship. For aspirants, the three-day event provided a great platform for enhancing their business acumen and opportunities. Concurrently hosted were India Lifestyle & Bridal Fashion Week Season 3 that brought India's finest designers to showcase their designs and collections. The 5th Avenue Lifestyle and Bridal Fashion Show was held as a part of this for fashion and jewellery designers to showcase their work. Alongside, Social Cause, a think tank NGO, organized a seminar on 'Women Entrepreneurs - Experiences, Challenges and Opportunities during COVID-19 and Beyond.'

Recognitions and Felicitations

Enterprising women contribute at workplaces, invest their time equally in rearing families, and serve the society as well, creating a measurable impact. COWE recognized and felicitated such women at the event. Bishakha Mahanta from West Bengal and Mamta Tanwar from Madhya Pradesh were among those felicitated. Both the women obtained training from Usha Silai School and went online first time during the coronavirus outbreak to market their products (women's clothes) through COWE's virtual mart.

These two successful women were identified by the Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI), an organization which acts as the principal financial institution for promotion, financing, and development of the MSME sector. COWE also presented the two women entrepreneurs with a cash reward of ₹10,000 for their success in digital marketing and setting a trend for others to emulate. ////

Winners of 'COWE India Excellence Awards'

Rachna Kalra from Delhi for her efforts in environmental protection and restoring and rejuvenating water bodies across India.

Madhavi Koppal of Roots Health Foundation from Andhra Pradesh for her work on screening and early detection of cancer.

Saradavani from Sarada Nursery Gardens in Andhra Pradesh for tree plantation and owning one of the biggest nurseries.

Komal Jain of Sow Fresh India, an agripreneur from Delhi, who has been promoting a concept called farm to form for growing organic produce and delivering it to doorsteps globally.

Dumma Annegowda of Sandeep Service Station for setting up a fuel station in a remote location and serving people in remote villages of Karnataka.

Sankari from Tamil Nadu for manufacturing healthcare products recognized by Khadi and Village Industries of India.

Harpreet Ahluwalia of Earthy Creations from Uttar Pradesh for her venture for eco-friendly gifting and gardening products.

Dr Chutra, a transformational coach from West Bengal, and Farha of Pink Pagdi from Telangana for excellence in wedding planning.

Jayashri Baheti from Telangana for her paintings based on life in rural India whose work was featured in the international arena such as United Colors of Benetton.



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Image Source: MMAActiv

SARTHAK EDUVISION 2021 CONCLUDES ON A HIGH NOTE

The Union Government has introduced the New Educational Policy for promoting an India-centric education system and converting India into a vibrant knowledge society. To realize this vision, Bharatiya Shikshan Mandal, in association with the University Grants Commission, Higher Education Commission of India, All India Council for Technical Education, National Board of Accreditation, Rajiv Gandhi Proudyogiki Vishwavidyalaya, MMAActiv Sci Tech Communications and other esteemed institutions, organized the Sarthak EduVision 2021.

Sarthak EduVision 2021 National Conference and Expo was organized in Bhopal from March 15-17, 2021 to shed light on the National Education Policy (NEP) and its implementation in the city.

Bharatiyata in Education System

Union Minister for Road Transport & Highways, and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Shri Nitin Gadkari; Union Education Minister Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank; along with Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan graced the event with their presence.

Many ministers from the Madhya Pradesh Government attended the conference. The event also attracted eminent educationists, teachers, and experts from across India who spoke on the need for implementing the National Educational Policy and establishing a sense of Bharatiyata in the Indian education system.

Establishing Self Reliant Bharat

Shri Gadkari stressed that the road to self-reliant Bharat goes through agriculture and rural economy. An education institute for development should provide technology and solutions according to the requirement of the country and work towards solving the problems. Economic development is necessary, but values must be developed along with it. To this Shri Chouhan added, "There are many dimensions in the National Education Policy, from ancient to scientific education. The objectives of education are to impart knowledge, and develop skills and the values of citizenship. This objective has been there in Bharat's soil for years." He

called upon the education world to think in the direction of making a self-reliant Madhya Pradesh and asked for suggestions.

Delivering the welcome address, Dr Sachchidanand Joshi, President, Bharatiya Shikshan Mandal, elaborated on the objectives of the event. Among those present in the program were Shri Mohan Yadav, State Higher Education Minister; Smt Yashodhara Raje Scindia, Sports and Youth Welfare Minister; Shri Inder Singh Parmar, School Education Minister; Sushri Usha Thakur, State Culture Minister; Dr Anil Sahasrabudhe, Chairman, AICTE (All India Council for Technical Education); Prof DP Singh, Chairman, UGC (The University Grants Commission); and Dr Sunil Kumar, Vice-Chancellor, Rajiv Gandhi Proudyogiki Vishwavidyalaya.

Words of Wisdom

Alongside an exhibition based on the Gurukul education was inaugurated at the expo. The Gurukul exhibition portrayed the philosophy of Bharatiya education system and knowledge-tradition.

Nobel laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus in the Ahuti (invited talk) session said that students must rise and identify their own identity in order to help society with their energy. Echoing in similar sentiments, Dr Rajiv Kumar, Vice Chairman, NITI Aayog, shared, "There is a need for value-added education in the country. We should establish such an education system where every student is sensitive towards the surroundings and participates in the sustainable development of environment."

Prof Singh and Dr Sahasrabudhe highlighted the work being done by both institutions in the field of education from the perspective of NEP.

Eminent speakers presented their views on the challenges of online education. JB Nadda, Director, Consortium of Educational Communication, informed about the new requirements and facilities available for the digitization of textual content and online education. Major Harsh Kumar, Secretary, National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), provided an insight

into online education and NCERT's functioning. Dr Nageshwar Rao, Vice-Chancellor, Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), expressed his views on the need and limitations of online education. Dr Bharat Sharan Singh, Chairman, M P Private University Regulatory Commission, also shared his views in this regard.

Acharya Shrinivasa Varakhedi said Bharatiya languages should be encouraged. To which added Prof Venkateswarlu that parents' viewpoint has a particularly important role in choosing the child's language of education. According to Dr Santosh Choubey, Chancellor, Dr C V Raman University, there is no opposition to learning English in the National Education Policy. It is only a matter of giving preference to the mother tongue.

JK Bhanumurthy, Vice Chancellor, Central Sanskrit University, highlighted, "The world cannot achieve development and peace without following Bharatiya philosophy and thoughts." Prof Neerja Gupta, Vice Chancellor, Sanchi University, shared, "Even today, we are carrying the same education system that Britishers made, which is against our history. The three Presidency Colleges were established in Bharat in 1857, and even today hundreds of thousands of colleges are run in our country on the same model. But we should remember that the London University, which was associated with the Presidency Colleges' establishment, was closed for three years because it was considered impractical by the UK government."

Preparing for Tomorrow

In the three-day event, many other dignitaries presented their views on education. Several MoUs were signed between universities and institutes and more than 150 educational institutes, ministries and industries set up their own stalls in the expo. All the organizers, scholars, experts, demonstrators and other participating audience of this educational expo took nine resolutions for the implementation of the National Education Policy 2020. ////



Image Source: MMAActiv



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Image Source: UDAN Media and Communications



Image Source: UDAN Media and Communications



RIDEASIA 2021

A SIXER FOR EXHIBITION INDUSTRY

UDAN Media and Communications magnificently organized RideAsia expo, a flagship event for Indian and international industry for e-vehicle, e-bike, cycle, and sports & fitness equipment manufacturers, kick-starting the resumption of B2B events on physical platforms.

This was one of the biggest face-to-face events post coronavirus outbreak, in the new normal, abiding to all safety parameters laid down by the government. Exhibitors, service providers and visitors strictly adhered to the enhanced health and social distancing norms.

Plugging into the Future

The second edition of RideAsia expo (RideAsia 2021) was held at Pragati Maidan in New Delhi from March 19-21, 2021. The three-day expo provided promising prospects for customers to access the latest technologies, including electric versions.

User industries got a peek into the new technologies and products including cost-effective automation which would help them address their business challenges.

The expo showcased a wide range of eco-friendly products which would peddle the country to greener destinations that would be in sync with the Green India campaign of the nation.

Networking Aplenty

RideAsia 2021 was extremely important for bicycle and parts manufacturers as it brought everyone under one roof to trade. The expo provided an interactive platform for the 6,000 dealers and distributors and manufacturers to conduct business, diminishing the physical distance barriers between buyers and sellers.

The three-day expo turned Pragati Maidan into an epicenter for network building and on-spot business transactions. More than 250

exhibitors from across India (150 from bicycle and bicycle parts and 100 from e-vehicle, sports and fitness and toy industries) were in action.

Manufacturers and suppliers were able to connect with buyers from every nook and corner of India including many of their old associates, after about a year.

Speaking about the expo, GS Dhillon, Managing Director, UDAN Media and Communications, said, "The expo has increased awareness on the use of e-vehicles and provided knowledge on latest products and services." He further added that the Exhibition industry is finally moving clear of the unprecedented pandemic and focusing on business.

Concurring with Dhillon's views visitors said that it was a great initiative by UDAN Media and Communications to uplift the exhibition industry which had been adversely hit by the pandemic. Many felt that the event was a masterstroke for conducting business as expos such as these provide immense opportunities for stakeholders to lift their business by several notches at one go.

The Blueprint

UDAN Media and Communications will bring together players from e-vehicle, cycle, sports and fitness, and toy industries again next year. RideAsia 2022, along with concurrent Paddlers Show (bicycle expo), E-Wheels (electric vehicle expo), SPOFIT (sports and fitness expo) and Ride Ons (toy expo), will be held at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi, from February 26-28, 2022. **////**



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INDUSFOOD 2021 GENERATES PROMISING OPPORTUNITIES FOR F&B SECTOR

South Asia's largest integrated food and beverage show was held with élan by Trade Promotion Council of India (TPCI) signaling the return of safe face-to-face exhibitions in India.

With over 750 buyers from more than 50 countries, mostly from GCC (The Gulf Cooperation Council) and CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) regions, as well as from Europe, IndusFood 2021 was one of the first major events amid the ongoing pandemic with a significant foreign presence. Notably, the two-day trade fair showcased that safe exhibitions can be organized in India by following protocols.

Twin Shows on One Platform

Supporting Indian Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's 'Vocal for Local' call, buyers from many parts of the world participated in large numbers at the exhibition held from March 20 - 21, 2021 at India Export Mart, Greater Noida. The twin show, IndusFood F&B and IndusFood Tech, concluded positively with business deals worth more than \$1 billion.



Image Source: TPCI

IndusFood is the most comprehensive F&B marketplace in the South Asian region, showcasing F&B products, F&B processing, and packaging technology. The exhibition fuels the F&B business by facilitating connections between buyers and brands with outstanding services like international hosted buyer programs and online matchmaking programs, bridging relationships, and strengthening connections.

Show Inauguration

The fourth edition of the exhibition was inaugurated by Shri Pratap Chandra Sarangi, Minister of State for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) on March 20. DK Singh, Development Commissioner MSME; Mohit Singla, Founder Chairman, TPCI; Vivek Agarwal, Chairman, F&B Committee, TPCI; Abhishek Poddar, Vice-Chairman, F&B Committee, TPCI; and other dignitaries presided over the inauguration.

Significant Foreign Presence

The show attracted major footfalls from GCC and CIS regions with 150 and 100 plus global buyers, respectively. More than 80 buyers came from Europe and Africa while over 40 buyers were from the USA and Latin America. The UK alone reported more than 20 buyers. Participation from the ASEAN region was subdued despite the presence of buyers from Japan, Taiwan, Thailand, and Malaysia.

Buyer-Seller Meetings

Foreign delegations from African countries, European Union, Gulf countries, Bangladesh, Belarus, Nepal, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkey, the UAE, Uzbekistan and the USA conducted business at the exhibition. Prominent supermarket chains such as Nesto (GCC), Grand Hypermarket (GCC), LuLu (GCC), Savings (GCC), West Zone (UAE), Al-Safeer Hypermarket (GCC), Carrefour (GCC & France), X-5 Retail (Russia), Swapno (Bangladesh), Finest Superstore (Afghanistan), and many others participated in the show. Industry and MSME departments from Odisha, Haryana, Tamil Nadu and Jammu & Kashmir were also present.

Inking Futuristic Deals

Fifteen country-specific MoUs were signed during the exhibition. TPCI signed an MoU with Jammu Kashmir Trade Promotion Organization (JKTPO) for mutual cooperation in agro and food processing and promoting films and tourism. As per the MoU, TPCI will impart and deliver sectoral knowledge, research information, policy advocacy, and undertake marketing and developmental activities in the focus sectors. JKTPO and TPCI will also work together to enhance the outreach to the

larger international community.

TPCI inked another MoU with the Turkey-India Business Council of Foreign Economic Relation Board of Turkey (DEIK) and MUSIAD for strengthening business relations. Both the parties agreed to facilitate industry leaders to participate in buyer-seller meets and exchange information. TPCI also signed an MoU with Habron Chamber of Commerce, Palestine

Furthermore, food processing technology companies signed various MoUs during the show. Around 2,000 B2B meetings were held in the sidelines of the show. Important government institutions for food and beverage products, namely, FSSAI, APEDA, NAFED, Spice Board, Coffee Board and Tea Board, participated in the trade fair with their respective member exporters.

Road Ahead

India's F&B sector exports during April-December grew by about 10 percent and the exhibition which attracted overseas buyers is a strong indication of global interest for the Indian market. Despite the challenging situation of the Exhibition industry, TPCI went ahead with the show, strengthening the belief that exhibitions could be held in a safe environment. Retailers and buyers got substantial opportunities to learn, network and conduct business with new and returning exhibiting suppliers.

The next edition of IndusFood is scheduled to be held at India Exposition Mart, Greater Noida, from January 11-13, 2022. **////**



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(L-R): Pallavi Mehra, Group Director and Publisher-T3, Informa Markets In India; MP Bezbaruah, Secretary General, Hotel Association of India; Guest of Honour Dr Abdulla Mausoom, Minister of Tourism, Maldives; Chief Guest Arvind Singh, Secretary - Tourism, Government of India; Maneck E Davar, Chairman, Service Export Promotion Council; Jyoti Mayal, Vice-Chairperson, FAITH; and Yogesh Mudras, Managing Director, Informa Markets in India at the inaugural ceremony



Image Source: Informa Markets in India

Maldives; MP Bezbaruah, Former Secretary - Tourism, Government of India & Secretary General, Hotel Association of India; Maneck E Davar, Chairman, Service Export Promotion Council; Jyoti Mayal, Vice-Chairperson, FAITH; Yogesh Mudras, Managing Director, Informa Markets in India; and Pallavi Mehra, Group Director, Informa Markets in India.

Experts Opine on the Current State

Speaking at the inauguration of the event, Singh lauded the organizers of SATTE for their efforts towards reviving the Travel and Tourism industry which is the leading service industry of India and as per WTTC, contributed 6.8 percent of the total economy amounting to ₹16,681 billion. It generated 39,82,18,000 jobs which translates to 8.0 percent of the total employment of the Indian economy.

“Coming to strengthening the foundation of the industry, the Ministry has launched ‘Dekho Apna Desh’ campaign which has already organized more than 80 webinars. The website of ‘Incredible India’ has also been updated in multiple languages like Chinese and Arabic to facilitate a smooth flow of communication across multiple countries,” he added.

Initiatives like SATHI (System of Awareness Training for Hospitality Industry), SWADESH and the Incredible India Tourist Facilitator (IITF) Certification Programme have also been launched. The programmes aim at enhancing the overall experience of tourists by creating a pool of talented and skilled individuals in the Travel, Tourism and Hospitality industry. “We are positioning India as a center of Ayurveda, Yoga, Sidha, Naturopathy, which will be boosting the Wellness Tourism. The guidelines have already been drafted by the Ministry. The schemes have also been extended to wellness tourism providers,” shared Singh.

Mudras expressed his delight at the overwhelming response from the exhibitors and the support from authorities and tourism boards. “Exhibitions like SATTE will surely drive a positive tone among the associated stakeholders and industry players, while strategically strengthening ‘Atmanirbharta’ as envisaged by the Government. We are

SATTE 2021

REVIVING TRAVEL AND TOURISM INDUSTRY

Leading exhibition organizer Informa Markets in India held the 28th edition of SATTE, its first physical event in the pandemic status quo. Highlights...

Organized with a comprehensive line of best practices and safety protocols, the three-day event of SATTE 2021, held by Informa Markets in India, from March 24 - 26, 2021, at the India Expo Centre, Greater Noida, Delhi - NCR, was inaugurated by Chief Guest Arvind Singh, Secretary, Tourism, Government of India along with key dignitaries Dr Abdulla Mausoom, Minister of Tourism,



Image Source: Informa Markets in India

upbeat about the future and about the efforts we all need to put together for the revival," he said.

"Two common themes that have emerged are ensuring safe and sustainable growth and greater use of the latest technology solutions. These can be leveraged to build further inroads into niche, in-demand segments like domestic leisure business, and wellness and health tourism that we are also promoting at SATTE," he added.

With the current international air travel restrictions, SATTE has reoriented its strategy that is mainly focused on the domestic market along with select international destinations that have opened doors for tourists post the lockdown lift.

Addressing the gathering, Dr Mausoom said, "SATTE 2021 is a crucial way forward to move past the crisis, which will echo across the globe." He thanked the Government of India for its support, and the Indian tourists for visiting the Maldives and playing an important role in making it the next-door travel destination. By the end of this year, more than 3,00,000 Indian tourists are expected to visit the Maldives, which is a highest recorded number for any country.

He added, "Indians are hard-working individuals, be it IT professionals, doctors or the executive class. They all need a vacation break, and we are working to kickstart our North airport which will cut the travel time by 45 minutes for Indian tourists. Very soon, the Maldives is all set to become the first country to initiate Vaccine Tourism called as '3V' - 'Visit, Vaccinate, Vacation', which will give travelers the option to get vaccinated against COVID-19 in the Maldives and promote it as a safe destination for tourists."

Lauding SATTE for organizing the first physical show post-pandemic and facilitating the much-needed networking and business opportunity for the travel and tourism industry, Mayal said, "We need to move stronger and forward, learn from our past to pave the path of the present and to the future. In the current times, states like Jammu & Kashmir, Uttarakhand, Kerala and Goa have seen multifold inbound which has

boosted our morale. It shows that we are a resilient industry, an industry which can and will help itself nurture and grow."

Visitors from Near and Far

The much-awaited event witnessed participation from the cross-sections of the industry and garnered great support from the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India; Service Export Promotion Council (SEPC) of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry; Ministry of Ayush; and State/UT Tourism Boards such as Gujarat, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Uttarakhand, Kerala, Karnataka, Lakshadweep, Odisha, Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, to name a few. Uttar Pradesh was the 'Host State' for the expo.

International participants such as Nepal, the Maldives, Malaysia, Utah and Expo2020 Dubai also showcased their product profile to woo Indian travellers. Private players such as TravelBoutiqueOnline, ITC Welcome Heritage, My Value Travel, Tripjack, Youngistan Travellers, STS World, Destination India, Nix Tours, Hora Tourism, and Rayna Tours, amongst others, also participated this year.

Pointing towards the latest marketing efforts that Nepal has undertaken in order to revive tourism in the Himalayan country, Dr Dhananjay Regmi, Chief Executive Officer, Nepal Tourism Board (NTB), said, "In our efforts to revive tourism in Nepal under the new normal we are looking at opportunities where we can go and promote Nepal. SATTE has happened at the right time and has given us the opportunity to inform the trade that Nepal is open to tourism, especially for the Indians, and is also easily accessible from several border points by road along the Indo-Nepal border."

SATTE 2021 Features

The expo showcased unique features such as SATTE Virtual Zone, and the T3 Studio that enabled the exhibitors to communicate their services effectively to the buyers.

Alongside the expo, the SATTE 2021 conference presented a wide array of insightful sessions. There were panel

discussions on the unexplored domestic tourism, the impact of the pandemic on the international tourism, and adopting technology in tourism. There were interesting reflections on Religious Tourism, Wellness Tourism and Women in Travel along with destination showcases by Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Lakshadweep, and Gujarat.

Partners Matter

Over the years, SATTE has had the support of international and domestic organizations and associations. This year, the reputed list included the Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO), Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI), Association of Domestic Tour Operators of India (ADTOI), Travel Agents Federation of India (TAFI), Outbound Tour Operators Association of India (OTOAI), IATA Agents Association of India (IAAI), Hotel Association of India (HAI), Federation of Hotel & Restaurant Associations of India (FHRAI), India Convention Promotion Bureau (ICPB), Network of Indian MICE Agents (NIMA), Association of Buddhist Tour Operators (ABTO), Universal Federation of Travel Agents Association (UFTAA), Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA), Skal, and Enterprising Travel Agents Association (ETAA) to name a few. EQUATIONS was the NGO partner this year.

SATTE 2021 was supported by its AllSecure & Travel Safety Guidelines - a safety standard initiative by Informa to safeguard health and safety of the exhibitors, visitors, and its employees. These were in line with the government's guidelines to ensure a smooth, secured experience for everyone at the show. The expo went as smoothly as was planned and laid a concrete stepping-stone for the Travel and Tourism industry to proceed towards a balanced recovery. ////



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Image Source: Informa Markets in India



EXHIBITOR SPEAK

"For this year, UP Tourism is focusing on eco-tourism by promoting wildlife sanctuary destinations and Kaushambi and Sankisa as two major destinations for Buddhist tourism. The response that we received at SATTE was tremendous, and we look forward to participating in the expo next year as well."

Host State for SATTE 2021, UP Tourism Board

"All our associated hotel partners are banking on the idea of giving their customers an experience of relaxation with wellness. We have received a fairly good footfall at SATTE this year and look forward to the next year's event."

Sooraj PK, Information Officer, Kerala Tourism Board

"The response received has been better than what we expected. We had a couple of new launches like Fast Growing Hotels and Flights API Product; we also launched two new products for Railways and Cruises."

Hasan Patel, Director, Trip Jack

"EaseMyTrip has recently become the first online travel agency in the country to bring out its IPO and be listed on NSE/BSE platforms. This is our first physical event, and the SATTE team has done a commendable job and has surpassed our expectations this year."

Sanchit Chopra, Manager Tourism Board, EaseMyTrip.com

"Domestic packages are being promoted along with products of Russia and Uzbekistan since they are opening up for travel. SATTE has given us the right platform and networking opportunity to reach out to important stakeholders of the industry."

Amit Khanna, Sales Head International Air (India), Travel Boutique Online



Tech Summit Panel at the expo

Image Source: Exhibitions India Group



Innovative Solutions on display at the Startup Pavilion

Image Source: Exhibitions India Group

CELEBRATING INDIA'S DIGITAL TRANSFORMATIONS AND SMART CITIES INNOVATIONS

The 28th edition of Convergence India and 6th edition of Smart Cities Expo was organized jointly by India Trade Promotion Organisation (ITPO) and Exhibitions India Group from March 24 - 26, 2021 at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi. The event reiterated India's commitment to digital transformations and building smart cities in a post-pandemic world.

From transformative digital technologies such as Fintech, SaaS, IoT, Artificial Intelligence, Virtual Reality, and Blockchain to Gaming, startups in India are playing a key role in the country's economic growth. The concurrent exhibitions celebrated India's entrepreneurial spirit and its burgeoning startup ecosystem.

Kicking-off on a High Note

With 500 participating brands, over 50 conference sessions – both on-ground and virtual, and 250 eminent speakers on a vast range of topics, the event had everything that an aspirant was looking for. Creators and innovators shared their projects, knowledge, passions and insights and established connections under one

roof. Welcoming industry stakeholders to the expo, Chandrika Behl, Managing Director, Exhibitions India Group, pointed that the expo was significant this year for the industry and the country at large. With new normal there is an influx of technologies in day-to-day activities. Digital transformations are driving development and progress across industries and spheres of life will be instrumental for India's growth story. This carefully curated event will prove to be a catalyst in India's emergence on the global stage as a knowledge leader.

Starting Point

The Startup Pavilion, supported by Startup India featured over 35 startups across various segments of ICT and Smart Cities technologies, bringing to light new innovations this year, and promoting Government of India's initiative of Atmanirbhar Bharat. Solutions from the realm of smart cities, healthcare, robotics, intelligent building, energy, transportation, water management, gaming, and many more were on display. Startups such as Transight, Greatasthan, CoreIoT, Groupe Cahors, Panelstack, IIIoT Infotech, WebSoftIoT, among many others were in action.

This year's edition also featured a 'Startup Pitch' competition, sponsored by Incubation Centre, IIT Patna, across various sectors including Internet of Things (IoT), Automation, Mechatronics, Robotics, Medical Electronics, Industry 4.0, Smart Cities and other related ESDM (Electronics System Design and Manufacturing). Nimble Vision Pvt Ltd emerged as the winner while CorIoT and Swiftheal were the runners-up.

Mix of Digital and Physical Spaces

For the first time, the expo adopted a hybrid approach being simultaneously held in both physical and digital formats. Around 60 international brands joined virtually at this hybrid event, with interactive features including virtual booths, exhibitor meetings, exhibitor live chat, video calls and virtual room, exhibitor product marketplace, exhibitor lead capture, and more.

SCI Awards

The twin events concluded with the Smart City India (SCI) Awards. SCI Awards is a unique platform designed to felicitate, recognize, and encourage individuals, policy makers, companies, municipalities, government bodies and associations to illuminate the work done across both urban and rural sectors. It is a well-recognized industry platform with over 800 submissions reviewed by an eminent jury comprising industry veterans.

The award felicitation was graced by Chief Guest Shri Jibesh Kumar, Minister Department of IT, Government of Bihar.

The minister said that the expo deftly demonstrated that it was time to restart growth in the country with B2B exhibitions, and how trade events could be held with appropriate safety measures in place. He also said that India's IT and IT-enabled Services (IT-ITES) industry has the potential to be a driving force in harnessing new technologies, impacting all sectors including agriculture, health, education, manufacturing, and more; thereby creating significant employment and entrepreneurial opportunities in the country.

During the Smart City India Awards, the Guest of Honour, Smt Anju Bhalla, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Science & Technology, said, "The successful conduct of the event that culminates today is a harbinger of hope at so many different levels. Not just for the future of the smart cities but also for all the habitations of the country. It is very appropriately called the 'Convergence India' as we have seen convergence of so many different sectors of the economy coming together to present this holistic vision of a futuristic India."

Awards were felicitated to 19 city projects for their innovative solutions and contributions across various categories. Amongst the winners were Jabalpur Smart City Ltd for Kamaniya Gate/Ghanta Ghar, Jabalpur, in the category Heritage City; Dehradun Smart City Ltd for Migrant-Tracking & Health Monitoring System for COVID-19 in the category Health Project; Apollo Gleneagles Hospital Ltd in the category Green Building; Government of Telangana for Haritha Haram Project in the category Green and Clean City; ESRI India for Varanasi Smart City in the category Digital City; Jabalpur Smart City Ltd for Solar Rooftop Power Plant in the category Energy Efficiency Project, etc.

The 29th edition of Convergence India Expo goes on floor from March 9 - 11, 2022 at Pragati Maidan in New Delhi. ///



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India Exposition Mart Ltd (IEML) has been serving as an ideal platform for hosting events for a plethora of industries, consistently catering to the different requirements of all stakeholders. Here is knowing how the venue has adapted itself to the changed norms in this era of pandemic and upped its game in service quality, efficiency, and safety from Sudeep Sarcar, CEO, IEML.



Image Source: TPCI

THE SHOW MUST GO ON

Despite the pandemic and the ensuing lockdowns heavily impacting it, the Exhibitions sector has proven itself to be extremely resilient, adapting itself to the guidelines issued by the Centre and State Governments with the aim to facilitate safe exhibitions.

Venues make for a crucial bedrock for the Exhibition business, offering the much-needed ease to the stakeholders while conducting it. Sudeep Sarcar, CEO, India Exposition Mart Ltd (IEML), provides a valuable insight into the changes that the exhibition venue has undergone to ensure that it stays committed to addressing the needs of all the parties involved – investors, exhibitors, visitors and organizers.

The state-of-the-art, multi-functional venue in Delhi-NCR is renowned for its world-class facilities and safety standards that have proven itself favorable for hosting international B2B exhibitions,

conferences, product launches, promotional events and as a centralized contact point for overseas buyers and exporters for conducting business.

Safety Measures in Place

Since the Government of India granted permission to its exhibition centers to reopen, which was on October 15, 2020, with SOPs issued by the Department of Commerce, several exhibitions have occurred at IEML. Sarcar offers us a view into how the standards and protocols have been followed so far, “The issued guidelines for organizing B2B and B2C events were not only for venue owners or service providers. They were issued in toto and were to be followed point-wise by event organizers, venue owners and service providers. So, we had a task that could be performed only through our joint effort.”

“There will be a gradual recovery, and the process will need us to contribute and play our part; the organizers and the service providers need to come together to handhold each other, and, most importantly, give confidence to each other that it’s possible to hold shows.”

There is a specific procedure of seeking approval from the local authorities who are aware of the guidelines issued by the Ministry of Commerce. “For IEML, we held a combined meeting with the organizers and the service providers, and tried to understand the responsibilities and the ways to implement them in coordination with each other. Once we arrived at a procedure to follow the guidelines together, we annexed that as part of our SOP with the local authorities, following which we got the permission from them to organize the events in the safest manner possible. The success of IndusFood 2021 is the evidence that we had all the right safety measures in place,” he shares.

“The success also made us realize that collaborating, co-locating and merging our services with each other is the future,” he adds.

Role of Venue

When asked how a venue contributes to the success of a show or exhibition, Sarcar points out to the quality of the service offered at a venue which is a decisive factor for the ease of doing business experienced there. “IEML has always been a user-friendly venue. Our success is a testimony to this and the feedback that we receive from the organizers. However, this was the pre-pandemic scenario. Post-pandemic, there are several issues that we and other exhibition stakeholders, are all collectively facing.”

He enlists the issues starting with the travel bans by some State Governments and a few large companies, visa issues etc. “Our economy is another factor in organizing events,” he adds.

According to him, we need to go back a few years and repeat what we would do to grow, which is to collaborate. “Those collaborations were in terms of pricing, packaging distribution, delivery, people and process,” he states.

Another factor, he feels, is India is a heterogeneous country in terms of exhibitions. “In tier III cities, a 1,000 sq mt show is a big show, whereas in tier I cities, like ours, a 20,000 sq mt

assumes the same scale. And for the organizers, that are both local and international sector associations, different and tailor-made packages are needed for each of them to come on board so that they get enough bandwidth to organize the events,” he explains.

Nevertheless, Sarcar is optimistic that the sector will cross over to the other side. “There will be a gradual recovery, and the process will need us to contribute and play our part; the organizers and the service providers need to come together to handhold each other and, most importantly, give confidence to each other that it’s possible to hold shows,” he asserts.

Why IEML Stands Out

Taking pride in the major USPs of the venue, Sarcar highlights, “We don’t commit to things we cannot deliver. We are clear to the organizer what IEML is to deliver and the manner in which it will be delivered. Our deliveries are of the international standard. What our clients and their exhibitors experience internationally, they experience the same kind of services over here.”

Summing up, he shares, “Most important is the transparency in our services and the processes that we follow. We seamlessly deliver to the clients so they can concentrate on their own deliveries to their customers.”



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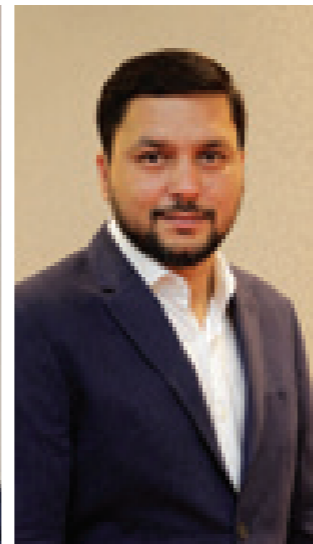
Gurvinder Singh



Yogesh Mudras



Raj Manek



Anuj Mathur

TOWARDS BIG SHIFTS

These are desperate times that call for being wise with our resources to stay afloat. The experts of the Exhibition industry have paid heed to this lesson the on-going pandemic has taught us, and acknowledge the fact that sustainability has now become a business necessity. Following is a round-up on their take on the current situation and the moves they plan for safeguarding the industry and its stakeholders for the coming uncertain times. Let's hear them out.

Extraordinary times call for extraordinary measures and the global pandemic has but necessitated some urgent modifications in the way exhibitions are organized. We are in a new normal, having lived through and experienced how a virus can cause normal global disruptions in the economy, the society and our lives.

Adapting to New Practices

The outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic has brought forth mounting challenges to the Exhibition industry. S Balasubramanian, Executive Director & COO, Indian Machine Tool Manufacturers' Association (IMTMA) and Bangalore International Exhibition Centre (BIEC) and President, Indian Exhibition Industry Association (IEIA), offers his view on the situation from his vantage point. "The pandemic has, more than ever before, necessitated the need for maintaining discipline while organizing shows. With new SOPs in place, use of masks, sanitizers, and PPE kits are expected to increase. Disposal of bio-medical waste and plastic garbage will among the significant challenges. Incineration is one of the possible solutions but that has its own challenges when it comes to safeguarding the environment."

According to Gurvinder Singh, Director, Exhibitions, EEPC India, it is imperative to get our act together to create a better future. "The lockdown had a huge impact on the economy. While India's GDP is predicted to contract in FY 20-21, a strong rebound in the form of growth of about 8 percent is projected for 2021-22. This interim phase is critical to learn, adapt, seek solutions and rebuild towards that vision."

The pandemic has resulted in an overall business loss of more than ₹1,25,000 crore, he informs, as no exhibitions were held since March 2020. "The entire spectrum of MICE accounts for the employment of 60 million people, of whom 10 million were directly affected by the COVID-19 crisis."

Sustainability is Key

Although virtual and hybrid events both existed pre-pandemic, none was as popular earlier. They, in fact, have emerged as a saving grace for the Exhibition industry. Yogesh Mudras, Managing Director, Informa Markets in India, reaffirms, "We believe hybrid events are the way to go. While the industry is keen to go back to physical events, the virus has not stopped inflicting a see-saw effect in terms of variants and waves. Digitally-amplified models could, therefore, be leveraged to help us stay engaged and connected to our stakeholders throughout the year."

In the current times of travel restrictions, delegates can login remotely



Image Source: BIEC

We educate the Exhibition industry stakeholders on environment-friendly practices during IMTEX and our regional shows. The results have been visible as with the increased push towards pre-fabrication there has been a considerable reduction in dust and noise levels during set-up.

S Balasubramanian
Executive Director & COO
IMTMA and BIEC
President
IEIA

Restarting exhibitions will strengthen Aatmanirbharta as envisaged by the Government of India. Exhibition organizers and suppliers will have to collectively share the responsibility of implementing and communicating sustainable practices.

Gurvinder Singh
Director - Exhibitions
EEPC India

and participate digitally. "Hybrid events also encourage reduction in carbon footprint, while building connections online," he adds.

Emphasizing on the need for sustainability practices at exhibitions, Anuj Mathur, COO, Reed Exhibitions India, states, "The pandemic has accelerated the adoption of sustainable practices in the Events industry. Sustainable events balance environmental, social and economic responsibilities and embrace practices that cut back on negative impacts and benefit stakeholders." He points out to the best practices being implemented by Reed Exhibitions amidst the pandemic. The company's digital platforms have played a significant role in facilitating business transactions. It has curated concepts like GoConnect 365, webinars, product showcases and knowledge series that have been critical in driving business and connecting communities.

Eco-friendly Events Needed

Messe Frankfurt Asia Holdings has integrated sustainable initiatives in its exhibitions and is cognizant of the impact of exhibition activities on the environment. Raj Manek, Executive Director and Board Member, Messe Frankfurt Asia Holdings, reveals, "One major point of concern brought to the forefront is 'stand construction' both

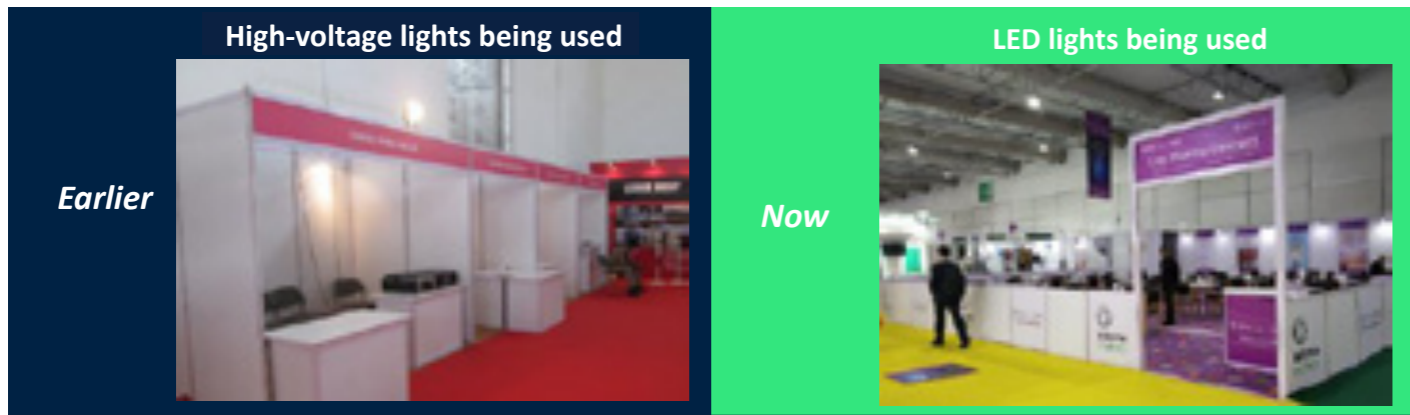


Image Source: Informa Markets in India

By restricting use of high-voltage lights for shell scheme booth since 2018, Informa Markets in India has reduced its CO₂ emission by approximately 1,629 kg in 2 years.

“We have brought in sustainable practices such as avoiding one-time use cutlery, reducing and reusing carpets, using non-tearable badges, and eliminating the use of plastic pouches, resulting in a considerable reduction in our carbon emission.”

Yogesh Mudras
Managing Director
Informa Markets in India

in terms of quality and material. The pandemic has placed stronger emphasis on system stands as a sustainable alternative to the traditional stand building.” This reduces the number of stands built with raw materials and the amount of dust produced during the build-up inside the exhibition halls.

“There has been a paradigm shift in some aspects of material resource management such as LED lights, for stand illumination, have now replaced the fluorescent bulb, which is a huge step towards overall energy efficiency,” he adds.

A strategic decision has been made by the company to ensure that all its exhibition marketing material is ‘e-based’ and only a fraction is printed,

based on the sector audience or in case of necessity. This has not just simplified its operation processes but has also cut down on its paper wastage.

Reed Exhibitions also implements operational procedures that facilitate sustainability at physical events. “The motto is to reduce, reuse and recycle the available resources, drive sustainability and improve safety at every step of the event, from modes of transportation to catering at the venue,” Mathur states.

Mudras agrees, “If proper measures are not taken, exhibitions can have negative environmental consequences such as wastage of water, energy and materials. Therefore, making responsible decisions during planning, organization and implementation of an event becomes critical.”

For Balasubramanian, waste management is one of the primary concerns when an event is organized. Improper handling of waste generated during exhibitions lead to serious hazards to living beings and environment.



In 2019, able to reduce 9,600 Kgs CO₂ emission
Approx weight per 250ml bottle = 12 grams

Since start of 2020, Informa Markets in India started using water dispenser kiosk by eliminating water bottle to further reduce CO₂ emission, (BYOB –Bring Your Own Bottle).



In 2019, able to reduce 3,100 Kgs CO₂ emission
Approx weight per Kit folder = 100 grams

Informa Markets in India has replaced plastic folders used for exhibitor kits with jute bags and jute folders.

Image Source: Informa Markets in India

Building technology plays a key role in sustainable management of water and energy resources. Both our international and Indian technology fair brands such as ISH, Light + Building along with ISH India powered by IPA, Light India and LED Expo promote innovations in this segment.

Raj Manek
Executive Director & Board Member
Messe Frankfurt Asia Holdings

“We exercise global standards, protocols and best practices to mitigate environmental risk. Embracing complete digital registration process to eliminate use of paper forms, offering pre-fabricated ready-to-use and reusable booths to customers, and using minimum carpets and complete omission of plastic, are a few examples that demonstrate our commitment to reduce the carbon footprint.”

Anuj Mathur
Chief Operating Officer
Reed Exhibitions India

Handling different categories of waste in a sustainable and environment friendly manner is a challenge for the Exhibition industry.”

Communicating to a Larger Section

For successfully implementing and communicating sustainable practices, the exhibition organizers and suppliers must collectively share the responsibility. “The process must start at the conceptualization stage while preparing for the trade fair,” believes Singh.

Manek believes that suppliers should work together with organizers to identify eco-friendly and recyclable materials that can be used for stall set-up and branding, which can go a long way in reducing wastage.

Balasubramanian too agrees on the need to involve all exhibition stakeholders in implementing best practices in garbage waste. “We must incentivize solutions through awards and recognition, and perhaps certify events as sustainable events,” he suggests.

“Climate change is a reality and with our collective effort, we can implement green practices to foster sustainability within the industry. A small step of using electric vehicles as a mode of transportation at the venue is going to make a huge impact,” says Mathur.

Together We Can

The experts have brought to the table issues that we have almost always agreed upon but never been committed enough to address them. What the industry desperately needs now is a collective effort involving everyone in the value chain. First and foremost, we must bring in self-regulation, and, as we work together, the results will be there to be seen in terms of our positive contributions to global sustainability. **////**

SUSTAINABLE ACHIEVEMENTS

BIEC
IMTMA developed the Ecodesign concept during IMTEX 2019 which was continued in IMTEX FORMING 2020 and was well received by the industry. This initiative helped in creating awareness and encouraging the Exhibition industry to use environment-friendly materials for organizing shows. The results have been visible as with the increased push towards pre-fabrication, there has been a considerable reduction in dust and noise levels.

EEPC India
EEPC has been encouraging its SME participants to build eco-friendly stands and avoid extensive use of wood, board, etc. The company has also moved to CFL from high-voltage lighting, stopped using plastic covers for badges, reduced height for stand construction to 4m, etc. It has proven that though these steps may seem small, they can significantly impact the carbon footprint.

Informa Markets in India
Informa Markets in India has been at the forefront of implementing eco-friendly and sustainability initiatives such as bringing in online exhibitor manuals, which has saved around 320 trees; and replacing plastic folders with eco-friendly kits; using only LED/CFL lights; and using water kiosks instead of water bottles, thus reducing a considerable amount of carbon emission.

Reed Exhibitions
In the last three years, Reed Exhibitions’ marketing and operations teams have taken various initiatives to reduce its carbon footprint. Embracing complete digital registration process to eliminate use of paper forms, offering pre-fabricated ready-to-use and reusable booths to customers, using minimum carpets and complete omission of plastic, are a few examples that demonstrate its commitment to sustainability.

Messe Frankfurt
Messe Frankfurt has switched to green power, sourcing 100 percent of its electricity from renewable energy. The clean energy sources power trade shows booths, halls and exhibition grounds, enabling it to eliminate around 19,000 tonne of CO₂ a year. Messe Frankfurt’s Texpertise Network is promoting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) internationally in the framework of panel talks, press conferences, SDG lounges and more.



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Image Source: Kingsmen Fairtech Interiors

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Women have been ceaselessly striving to carve a place for themselves in the workplace, confronting gender inequality and proving their true worth. Recognizing the need to improve the gender ratio this year, we celebrate their standing in the Exhibition industry with the theme: #ChooseToChallenge.

“ One needs to have strong determination, self-confidence and an entrepreneurial spirit to achieve goals. It is also important for women to freely express their ideas and thoughts. They should have an unwavering integrity and commitment in whatever they do to succeed. ”

Pooja Kapoor
Managing Director
Kingsmen Fairtech Interiors Pvt Ltd

Although a lot has been achieved, more needs to be done to bridge the female-male ratio in leadership roles in the Exhibition industry, believes Pooja Kapoor, Managing Director, Kingsmen Fairtech Interiors Pvt Ltd. Taking us through her journey, which was paved with endless challenges, she shares her thoughts on how far women leaders have come in the industry and the gaps that need to be filled to facilitate women’s progress.

Changing Perspective

For someone with a rich legacy of being in the Exhibition industry for more than two decades, the evolution did not happen overnight. “Today, the outlook of Indian businesses towards working women has changed completely as against what it was 25 years ago,” states Kapoor reminiscing her journey. The working environment was different and there were elements in the situation that went against the women workforce in several ways. “The odd working hours, isolated far-off locations of exhibition venues, and the non-availability of public transport



Bagged Best Booth Design & Fabrication Award in SATTE 2017

Image Source: Kingsmen Fairtech Interiors

were some of the deterrents for women working in the Exhibition industry. With time, infrastructure has developed and, most importantly, there is a shift in the outlook with increasing acceptance of women as leaders in the industry, which was until quite recently, male-dominated,” she adds.

Today, businesses are keen to reduce gender gaps and bring more women into leadership roles. Enterprises believe that having females as leaders bring greater diversity in strategies, resulting in improved problem solving and greater business benefits.

Overcoming Obstacles

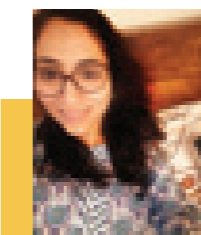
Kapoor points out that working in the Exhibition industry, though challenging, is quite rewarding too when it comes to ‘learning and earning’. Reflecting on the work demands of her earlier days, she says that during and while planning for events, early morning meetings and working late into the night used to be the norm. “Things have improved drastically now as show organizers arrange accommodations and vehicles for ferrying the exhibition team. This was not the case 25 years ago,” she shares adding that challenges are part and parcel of any industry. Her zeal for achieving success and creating better working conditions from the limited resources has helped her get to her present stature. This spirit has not only made her resilient, but has also provided her the much-needed confidence to overcome bigger challenges, she says.

Empowering Women Workforce

Building a thriving environment for all is the underlying philosophy of Kingsmen when it comes to empowering women leaders. Kapoor, as the leader of the organization, continues to connect with women who work with her closely and shares her personal experiences to help them manage difficult situations. “Experience is always the best teacher. The one thing I always advise my team members is to keep things simple and their confidence levels high, and use their skillsets to execute the tasks assigned. Kingsmen India will continue to support and equip women with skills and confidence at the workplace,” she adds.

Wooing Nextgen Women Leaders

New work practices that have emerged with the outbreak of the pandemic are expected to benefit women’s career trajectories in the long term. Although the numbers are less when compared to men in the senior roles, Kapoor feels that more women should consider joining the Exhibition industry. Women, she says, need to be innovative, adaptive to changes, and willing to take risks when needed. “Working in the Exhibition industry is demanding. There are no shortcut success mantras; it is more about the application of mind, and job aspirants need to have tremendous mental capabilities to emerge successful,” she emphasizes. With more and more companies consciously promoting diversity and inclusion, women are getting an equal platform in all aspects of the Exhibition industry – selection, training, and career growth. “Well, the expectations of performance from females will also be at par with their male counterparts, and rightly so,” she adds, summing up. ///



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FLOWING WITH THE TIDE

The Hospitality industry has always played a gracious host to the Events industry by offering its spaces and services to conveniently and comfortably hold events. Here is a look at how Taj City Centre Gurugram has altered its ways to service its customers in the highly changed current times...

The COVID-19 outbreak has had a serious impact on the Hospitality industry confronting it with unprecedented challenges. After a series of lockdowns that spanned months, the industry has finally resumed its operations while adhering to strict norms in order to ensure the health and safety of its customers.

Since hotels have been a preferred place for holding industry events, Sanket Chugh, Director of Sales & Marketing, Taj City Centre Gurugram, offers us an insight into the changed ways the hotel services its customers in conference halls and convention centers during the ongoing pandemic and the measures that have been put in place to prioritize their safety.

“In light of the current situation, there has definitely been a transition of banquet areas from a socially active to a socially or rather physically distanced space. It is our utmost priority to offer a seamless and safe experience to our guests. Our role, as pioneers of hospitality, is to ensure that we live our promise of Tajness - A Commitment Restrengthened, an assurance of augmented safety and hygiene protocols, with our delightful smiles beneath the masks and standing true to the legendary warmth and sincere care that Indian Hotels Company Limited (IHCL) is known for since 1903,” he notes.

Some of the concrete transformations that the hotel, including its banquet spaces, have gone under are:



Image Source: Taj City Centre Gurugram

- The site inspection of the venues has gone digital and the same is encouraged via sharing videos, photographs and even through webinars and video conferencing. Guests are welcome to visit the venue should there be a need.
- Digital menus are shared with guests during event detailing.
- Video conferencing with the chef is also organized for special recommendations.
- Use of digital technology for payments and billing, which is also a step towards reducing the use of paper.

Details Worked Out

Apart from the measures stated above, there has been a change in the hotel's style of service. “For instance, instead of service on circulation, we have moved towards the use of laufen trolleys for service of snacks; individual pre-plated portions of dishes; redesigned seating arrangements keeping physical distancing in mind; mandatory use of PPE (masks, gloves and face shields) by associates, guests and vendors; health declaration forms duly filled by guests and vendors; temperature checks for guests, vendors and associates; dedicated entry and exit for the event venues;

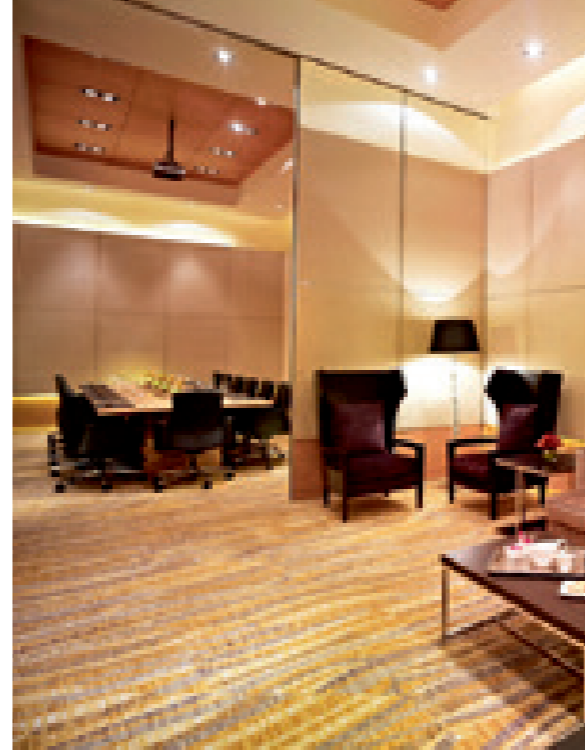


Image Source: Taj City Centre Gurugram

“In light of the current situation, there has definitely been a transition of banquet areas from a socially active to a socially or rather physically distanced space.”

Sanket Chugh
Director, Sales & Marketing
Taj City Centre Gurugram



signages in guest and associate areas to maintain physical distancing at all times; hand sanitization stations at all guest areas including banquets; easy access to sanitizing stations and PPE for associates; thorough disinfection of linens, furniture, furnishings, cutlery and crockery,” he informs.

Another highly important change that has been brought about is self-parking of vehicles by guests to eliminate the touch points.

If required the hotel also offers its guests hygiene kits that include masks, gloves and sanitizers. These measures are constantly monitored and audited by a dedicated, pre-identified, well-trained team of individuals from across departments.

Staying Sustainable

When asked how does the hotel implement best green practices during conferences/symposiums/trade shows in the Taj Gurugram property, Chugh explains, “At Taj City Centre Gurugram, we firmly believe that sustainability is the need of the hour and are constantly working towards the cause through various initiatives in our day-to-day operations across various areas in the hotel.”

According to Chugh, Taj has always implemented a mindful use of resources and hence been adopting sustainable business strategies. Sustainable practices include the elimination of plastic straws, cutlery, plates, stirrers and other such

items across the entire hotel including banquet spaces, restaurants and rooms. He adds, “We also offer our guests to place glass water dispensers with RO purified water at events as an alternative to PET bottles.” He enlists several conscious efforts that reflect Taj's sustainable approach in all the areas of serving its patrons. An enhanced focus is given on the mitigation of food wastage, use of LED lights for better efficiency, sensor lighting to save energy, dual water flushing systems to save water, water aerators to avoid wastage of water, a rainwater harvesting program and solar panels for pre-heating of water.

Being Eco-conscious

Earth Check, a leading benchmarking, certification, and environmental management program used by the Travel and Tourism industry has conferred a Gold Level Certification upon the hotel. “In the area of environmental responsibility, we have strengthened and refined our vision towards environment awareness and sustainability and endeavor to champion the following sustainable best practices: energy efficiency, waste management, air quality management and noise control, green-house gas emission management, management of freshwater resources, waste water reuse and management, conservation of the environmental ecosystem, management of social and cultural issues and land-use planning and management,” sums up Chugh. **////**

With a total banqueting area of 22,000 sq ft, Taj City Centre Gurugram offers indoor and outdoor venues including a pillar-less Ballroom spread over 4,555 sq ft with a clear ceiling height of 21 ft; Glasshouse with an area of 1,178 sq ft, a signature venue for gatherings energized with natural light.



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Image Source: Magic Wand Media

INSPIRING INNOVATION

Messe Muenchen India's move to digital platforms is a reflection of the Exhibition industry's innovative spirit and grit during these testing times.

As the coronavirus pandemic tightened its grip over the country, the Exhibition industry faced many unprecedented challenges. Owing to safety and restrictions levied on travel and mass gatherings, the industry had to cancel all its trade shows post March 2020. This tough call not only created a sense of fear and uncertainty but also affected buyers, sellers, and stakeholders alike. The lack of interaction, communication and business engagements further aggravated the situation.

Aware of these discrepancies in the market, Messe Muenchen India (MM India) decided to find innovative solutions to address these problems. After copious brainstorming, the need to digitize our mindsets was felt to channel our way through this 'new normal'. It is this realization that led the company to organize its first series of online webinars that commenced from April 13, 2020. The motivation behind this initiative was to provide a digital platform to various sectors to address their respective audiences, tackle queries and offer reassurance to its members.

A total of 37 webinars were held across industries where we cumulatively received 45,092 registrations and engaged with 21,626 attendees online. By connecting with over 10,000 attendees over Facebook Live and other social media platforms, we created our strong social media

presence. There were professionals from various verticals who participated in these webinars and were well received by key stakeholders and industry experts alike. Furthermore, the participation of Government representatives directed the Exhibition industry towards a common goal of sustenance and growth.

Attempts to Revive Industry

Comprehending the need to 'connect, interact and transact', Messe Muenchen India took another step towards reviving the Exhibition industry. We organized India's largest online expo Festival of Business where over 10 shows from 6 clusters took place from December 9 - 11, 2020. We received an overwhelming response with a total of 334 exhibitors from 16 countries, 1,800 solutions on display and 29 seminars, making it the largest online exhibition and gathering

“ One of the most important decisions taken by Messe Muenchen India was to build an in-house online platform despite the availability of many alternatives in the market. MM India's focus was on building digital competency to add value to customer requirements at a time when it was impossible to conduct on-site shows while resolving these key issues. ”



GaneshKumar Murugan
Head, Digital Business
Messe Muenchen India Pvt Ltd

of industry professionals. The primary aim of the show was to bring together all interconnected industries on one platform to form beneficial partnerships and rewarding synergies. The digital medium not only helped us to connect with our exhibitors and visitors, but further manifested our vision of conducting multiple shows simultaneously on one platform.

One of the most important decisions taken by Messe Muenchen India was to build an in-house online platform despite the availability of many alternatives in the market. We discovered that there were several pitfalls in virtual platforms operating in the industry. Some key issues that we faced were inadequate data privacy and protection; unavailability of a safe custody to hold valuable assets, artifacts, and conversations; as well as substance-style mismatch. MM India's focus was on building digital competency to add value to customer requirements at a time when it was impossible to conduct on-site shows while resolving these key issues.

We were astounded to receive a positive response from our visitors as they successfully navigated through the online platform. The participants were content to surf through a vast array of interrelated events that helped them to meet their requirements. They found the digital event seamless, organized, and complimented the ease of navigation. On the other hand, exhibitors were satisfied to receive a good response from buyers and were satisfied with the user-friendly interface. The online event served its purpose by bringing together potential buyers and sellers on one platform which led to fruitful business opportunities and networking.

Hybrid Events are Ideal

While there is still a disenchantment felt towards online exhibitions, I believe it has a long way to go. A hybrid business model should be adopted where on-site exhibitions are accompanied with online exhibitions for onboarding international members under travel restrictions or other local members who are unable to join the physical trade shows. Through this model, participants will be able to reach wider audience across multiple countries. With a wider reach, return on investments can also be capitalized on direct engagements. These are some essentials that would help us to find our path in the new normal. ///

GaneshKumar Murugan heads the Digital Business of Messe Muenchen India Pvt Ltd. He can be reached at info@mm-india.in



Image Source: Magic Wand Media

GROWING VIRTUALLY

With the industry increasingly pivoting to virtual events to connect with its audiences, there has been an exponential rise in the number of virtual event platform suppliers. An attempt to navigate their space...

There's no doubt about it that 2020 was the year that virtual events really took off. They boomed to a stratospheric level that was beyond everyone's wildest dreams only 12 short months ago, and became

so mainstream that at this point it would be difficult to find a single person worldwide who hasn't attended one in recent months. The global COVID-19 pandemic forced everybody – yes, quite literally everybody – online almost overnight, and for the foreseeable future, physical events were simply impossible to even consider hosting. There are indications that this is only the beginning with virtual events reportedly expected

to grow rapidly from \$78 billion today to \$774 billion by 2030 – a mindblowing tenfold increase which would surely have been ridiculed had it been predicted this time last year! So how has the industry responded to such an unforeseen surge in demand, and what solutions are out there to help organizers take their events from a hall to a screen?

Rise of Virtual Event Companies

There has been an almost endless amount of innovative event tech companies launched in the past year in response to the current situation, all

“ There's no doubt that physical events will bounce back strongly as soon as they are able to – most likely at some point in 2021 – and that they are still the overall preference in the industry. ”



Matthew Funge
Managing Director & Founder
Your Stand Builder

of which with the dream of becoming the one which finally makes a breakthrough with regard to emulating physical events in a virtual environment. Some of the solutions which have been released are highly impressive – built in a short period of time to meet the industry's needs right now, whilst at the same time, offering perfectly functional platforms, allowing people to continue to meet even in this 'new normal'. While most have been successful to some degree, there are a few which stand out among the crowd who have received enormous amounts of funding to further develop their service and lift virtual events to a new level never seen before. Let's take Hopin as a perfect example of this. Founded only in 2019, it has recently closed its third round of funding in less than a year! The funding rounds aren't small either – \$6.5m in February 2020, \$40m in June 2020, \$125m in November – proving an unprecedented appetite among investors to get involved in virtual events as quickly and as early as possible before they continue on their seemingly unstoppable growth journey. Hopin is currently valued at \$2.1b and the feeling around the industry is that it almost certainly won't be the last virtual event unicorn – and the evidence definitely appears to back this up.

Countering the Flip Side

While all of this sounds positive, and rightly so, there are unfortunately some drawbacks of such rapid innovation across the industry. The pace at which new companies are appearing and launching their platforms gives event organizers plenty of choice, but it also floods the market with so many options it can also become very difficult to make sense of which are the most suitable for a particular event. The question facing event planners now isn't 'is there a platform for my event?', but instead 'where and how do I find the best option for me?'. The market at the moment is a bit like venturing into the jungle without a map or guide to help you – you just go in blind and hope for the best. Sure, this could work out fine for you in the end but there's also a significant risk attached which shouldn't be ignored. When it comes to virtual events, the options at the moment are:

- Hop onto a search engine and search for companies to contact one-by-one, sending out the same, repetitive RFP and taking up hours of your day at the same time;
- Seek recommendations from your professional network – either colleagues or your LinkedIn network – asking for their suggestions based on their experiences for their event (which could actually have been totally different to the one you're planning).

Neither sounds ideal, does it? A better approach, surely, would be to have a trusted reference tool to assist you in making sense of the various



Image Source: Magic Wand Media

options, which allows you to find and compare them against your own needs before coming to an informed decision about which supplier to partner with.

Enter: Virtual Event Marketplace by the Virtual Events Institute!

This intelligent new service provides an ideal solution for the above problem by introducing a buyer-seller marketplace to the virtual event industry and actively matching event organizers with various virtual platform suppliers, to streamline the planning process and help them to identify the best solution for their requirements. It saves considerable time, and also has the ability to maximize ROI by ensuring the event will be as successful as possible by partnering with the most appropriate tech. An integrated review system allows the event planners to read feedback from each supplier's previous clients and to give added peace of mind when considering whether to partner with them. On the supplier side too, there are plenty of benefits – the platform allows

them to showcase their company to a worldwide audience of prospective buyers using the supplier profile pages, and delivers regular warm project leads directly to their email Inbox as soon as the requests are added to the site. It's truly a win-win deal, and goes a long way in revolutionizing the supplier sourcing process, which, despite still being new itself given the relative infancy of virtual events, is already seriously outdated.

In-person Events Still Preferred

There's no doubt that physical events will bounce back strongly as soon as they are able to – most likely at some point in 2021 – and that they are still the overall preference in the industry. However, one can't help but feel an irreversible shift has taken place which means that from now onwards, virtual will always play a major role in the worldwide events industry. Many have suggested that the hybrid approach will become the new 'go to' when it comes to events, and few who know the industry (and have experienced it in the past 12 months) would argue with this prediction. With this in mind, it's vitally important to adopt the correct approach to sourcing suppliers now, to set ourselves up for success later. Emails and phone calls to request quotes belong in the 90s and 00s. The future of event planning is almost certainly these innovative, tech-driven online marketplace platforms which are specifically designed to save users' time and money, and simplify such an integral part of the event preparation process. So many other industries have benefited from utilizing these impressive solutions already, and now it's our turn. ////

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TODAY AND BEYOND 2021

The breaking out of the pandemic compelled businesses to come up with innovative ways to survive and sustain without succumbing to the challenges it posed. The Event industry was no exception and evolved in trendy formats to meet the need of the hour through its new 'Hybrid' avatar.

The pandemic, followed by a global lockdown, presented an unanticipated set of demanding situations to the Event industry. In the blink of an eye, all Events physical exhibitions, trade fairs, conferences, and events were suddenly cancelled and postponed, leaving the stakeholders confounded. Though unsettling, every crisis creates incredible opportunities and leads to innovation, allowing innovators to think more freely to create an impactful change. In the wake of recent developments due to the COVID-19 pandemic, several event organizers explored new ways to bring people together.

Adopting Change

For the Indian Events industry, that Change was adopting the 'Hybrid' format that combines the best of virtual and in-person experiences. According to Statista, the revenue of the organized Events industry across India has been estimated to be more than ₹100 billion in FY 2021. The industry employs around 20% of India's workforce directly and indirectly and is a significant contributor to the Indian economy. As Indian Event Management professionals, we take pride in being champions of frugal innovation. We have re-invented and re-engineered ourselves into a new version.

Conceptualizing Experiential Ways

The Hybrid Event is a wonderful blend of a small crowd engaging with unlimited virtual guests armed with smart tools and leveraging the most from the virtual networking. The Hybrid Format is not just for the current times but is here to stay with virtual audiences, smart polls, online awards, walkthrough expos, gaming-based annual parties, and so on.

The 'Made in India' Hybrid Solution has arrived and is all set to reign over town halls to annual parties, boutiques to premium weddings, award nights to musical rhapsodies. The RoI of these Hybrid Events can be assessed from the crowd responses participating in these events.

Embracing Technology

Though there is a restriction of a large number of audiences in live events, the Hybrid Events are well curated with the state-of-the-art smart tools (like AI) that blend the real with the real-time. The events continue to evolve bridging the gulf between the experiences that physical and virtual audiences have. Presently Hybrid Events go beyond a live stream to engage both virtual and in-person audiences through chat, streaming, networking, and more.

From planning pre-event engagements to special experiences on the D-Day, the Hybrid Experiences have brought a whole new meaning to experiential events. The Indian Events industry professionals are transforming the landscape of events. In true spirit, they are the torch bearers of change who pre-empt and offer solutions that are globally competitive, wholesome, holistic, simple, economical yet powerful.

Quick adoption of technology and blending it into the event space has helped organizations like Media Point stay afloat. As an Industry first initiative, Media Point during the lockdown trained over 200 industry professionals on the new format of Hybrid Events. ////

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ACCELERATION IN DIGITAL ADOPTION

It is well acknowledged that innovation helps stay ahead of competition and adds value to business. The more innovative is your thinking, the better you can predict the changing market requirements. With digital technologies evolving faster than before, it has become imperative to have process and product innovation in place to optimize businesses.

The COVID-19-induced crisis brought a halt to our onsite shooting and video production assignments, as many events were postponed and shelved for an indefinite time. We had two choices before us - to despair or be determined to overcome the challenges. Unprecedented time calls for unprecedented measures. We stepped onto the uncharted territory and started experimenting with digital technologies to meet the changing requirements of clients.

Adopting New Ideas

Identifying the winds of change, we introduced an array of digital solutions to stay afloat in the face of adversities. Our post-webinar service 'The Webinar Studio' was introduced to visualize and design webinars. Keeping in mind the needs of our clients, we began curating customized content for captivating the audience's attention on digital platforms. The tailored content turned out handy not only for virtual conferences and exhibitions, but also for all promotional and marketing campaigns run by the clients on their social media handles and walk-through videos.

Diversifications Galore

We branched out into new businesses under the name of 'Blue Apple Weddings', which was started with an objective to capture memorable moments in a film format during weddings. Alongside, we delved into training through our new venture 'Blue Apple Edify' to impart exclusive practical training on video production with well-curated lectures.

Technology, a Key Enabler

The Events & Exhibition industry is presently leveraging the most from the digital technologies and embracing the 'New Normal'. The resilience and never-give-up attitude of the industry has introduced the hybrid format where the physical and virtual events merge together. In terms of demographic reach, hybrid events have an edge over traditional on-site events as the digital technologies enable to cater both the audiences / visitors / attendees - those who participate live as well as those who participate in their own way.

The use of digital technologies in events and exhibition industry helps to monitor registration, login, chat, viewing, downloading, and sharing processes of the attendees. The monitoring process facilitates post-event communication as the organizers can share customized content with the visitors / attendees accordingly. The growing acceptance of digital technologies by the Events and Exhibition industry is a testimony to hybrid events increasing the reach and gaining more attendees.

The latest digital technology trends bring in new experiences and create innovative platforms to interact and engage with the audiences in a more meaningful way. In the coming days, the digital technologies catering to the Events & Exhibition industry are expected to grow enormously and transform the user experiences. ////

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Farewell

The Journey Goes On...

नैनं छिन्दन्ति शस्त्राणि नैनं दहति पावकः ।
न चैनं क्लेदयन्त्यापो न शोषयति मारुतः ॥

The Verse 23 from Chapter 2 of Bhagwad Gita says - Weapons cannot shred the soul, nor can fire burn it. Water cannot wet it, nor can the wind dry it.



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Arun Bhalla
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Ankur Bhardwaj
Senior Manager
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Rajiv Kumar
Team Leader
D.B. Schenker

IEIA pays homage to four beloved members of the Indian exhibition fraternity who left for heavenly abode in April 2021. Sincere condolences and prayers remain with their bereaved family members to cope up with such an irreparable loss.

Company Index

ALEAP	24	Media Point	53
BIEC	06, 11, 18, 40	Media Today Group	11
Bharatiya Shikshan Mandal	26	Messe Frankfurt Asia Holdings Ltd	23, 40
Blue Apple Digimedia	54	Messe Frankfurt India	06, 23
DB Schenker	11, 17	Messe Muenchen India	48
Deutsche Messe AG	09	MEX Exhibitions Pvt Ltd	11, 56
EEPC India	11, 40	AMDEE	09
Exhibitions India Group	36	Ministry of Tourism, Government of India	11
EPCH	06, 11	MMAActiv Sci Tech Communications	26
Export Promotion Council	32	NürnbergMesse India	11, 15, 56
Falcon Exhibitions Pvt Ltd	06, 11	Om Shakti Management	11, 56
G.S. Marketing Associates	11	R.E Rogers India Pvt Ltd	11, 56
Grover Audio Visuals	11	Reed Exhibitions	09, 10
HICEC	11	Reed Exhibitions India	40
HITEX	24	Reed Exhibitions Japan	07
IEML	11, 38	TAITRA	07
ITPO	11, 36	Taj City Centre Gurugram	46
IEIA	03, 05, 06, 11, 22, 40	Tarsus Mexico	09
IMTMA	11, 16, 18, 40, 56	IAEE	10
Informa Markets in India	11, 14, 32, 40, 56	TPCI	30
jwc GmbH	10, 56	UDAN Media and Communications	28
Kingsmen Fairtech Interiors Pvt Ltd	44	UFI	09, 18
Lotus Exhibitions & Marketing Services Pvt Ltd	11	Viva Events Management Pvt Ltd	11
		Your Stand Builder	50

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