



Exhibit Designers +
Producers Association

Global Insights

News, insights and trends for exhibit & event designers and producers worldwide

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President's Message

Dear members of the EDPA community,

As much of the country tried to shake the last grasps of winter well into spring, and we enter what is often the busiest time of year for our industry, it seems to be the right time to take a deep breath and reflect on the sustainability of our industry and our association. Our executive director Jeff Provost recently returned from the GMIC (Green Meeting Industry Council) meeting in Chicago where EDPA's newly appointed Chair of our Sustainable Exhibit Leadership committee, Tom Bowman of Bowman Design Group, was a featured speaker. The green conversation has moved far beyond the cliché of recycling and is taking a wider view that says businesses must be sustainable in all areas to truly meet the needs of every stakeholder from owners to employees to the local community. This theme of sustainability runs through everything EDPA is attempting to do for our members and the larger community so it was very exciting to see this potential for collaboration deepening.

I was recently at the CEIR (Center for Exhibit Industry Research) board meeting and I was pleased to see that they will be producing updated research later this year that speaks right to the value of trade show marketing as compared to other areas of the marketing mix. This is important as our clients are looking to our members to help them justify their participation in trade shows and they cannot sustain that effort without numeric justification. This is part of a larger effort by CEIR to work with all the stakeholders in the trade show community to build the case for the value of face-to-face marketing. I would argue that EDPA members have one of the most significant roles to play in this discussion as we work directly with the exhibitor and they are the engine that drives our entire industry. This means we must educate ourselves and our customers using the best available data.

As an association and as member companies we must keep asking where the industry is going and how are we going to evolve to meet the new challenges? From digital content and mobile technologies to the way tradeshow are organized, we need to make sure that we are equipped with the best information and the best ideas. It is only in this way that we will build a truly sustainable industry.

Justin Hersh, President
justin.hersh@groupdelphi.com

Welcome New Members!

EDPA welcomes the following new member companies who have recently joined (or rejoined). Please feel free to reach out to our new members and give them your special EDPA welcome!

A+E PROKAKI Ltd
 ABEX Exhibit Systems
 Acme Design, Inc
 Advent
 Agence Synapse
 American Convention Exhibitor Service (ACES)
 Apoyo Publicitario
 Armodilo Display Solutions
 Colorado Timberline
 Creating Your Design LLC
 Custom Prop Shop
 Ewert Design Group
 Expotechnik Group
 Expovorm International
 Featherlite Exhibits
 GARZAHOTH Expopartner
 Grupo Intermedio
 IIL Printing
 Imagen LLC
 Intelligent Lighting Creations (ILC)
 Laarhoven Design
 Laser Exhibitor Service
 Lilitab – Tablet Kiosks
 Maxibit
 MESSE HANWAY
 Mitsubishi Plastics Composites America
 Nolan Advisory Services
 Repeter Design Works
 SLIM Furniture
 Super Bright LEDs, Inc.
 The Freight Dude
 The Velocity Group
 Tridente Image Builders
 TS Crew

NOT A MEMBER YET?

Contact Member Development Manager
 Alex Chung atachung@edpa.com or
 203.899.8463 for all the details.



WELCOME

Dear EDPA Members and Friends,

What are Associations like the EDPA really for?

If you look up the word "Association" in a legal dictionary, this is what you'll find:

ASSOCIATION. The act of a number of persons uniting together for some purpose; the persons so joined are also called an **association**.

I've been thinking about this lately. Back in March at an otherwise very busy EXHIBITOR2013 in Las Vegas, we took time to talk to some of our EDPA members about their membership. We asked why they joined, why they continue to renew their membership year after year and asked several of them to answer the following question for us on-camera:

"What does your company value most about your EDPA membership?"

The thing that interested me the most during this is the many, and very different, ways that this question was answered by our members. Have a look at the completed video at, edpa.com/media. I think its five minutes of your time well-spent. After viewing the video ask yourself...

How would you and your company answer that same question?

Shoot me a quick email (JProvost@edpa.com) telling me your answer to this question. I'd love to know what it is about EDPA membership that YOU value. I will be collecting these testimonial quotes and gathering them for an upcoming project, so I thank you in advance for your thoughts on this.

Spring has sprung, and the second quarter of this year brings several EDPA projects together including our "EDPA @ EuroShop 2014" sponsor offerings, the closing of our annual (2013-14) membership directory and a few other partner marketing opportunities. If you haven't renewed or joined us yet, don't miss your last chance to be listed in the annual directory. Once it's published, it's consistently used and referred to loyally by our membership for an entire year. Contact Alex Chung (ACHung@edpa.com) for those details.

Sincerely,

Jeff Provost
Executive Director, EDPA
JProvost@edpa.com



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TRENDSPOTTERS: GLOBAL TRENDS—JAPAN

TRENDSPOTTERS

By Pat Friedlander, Word-Up!

Exhibiting in Japan is a unique experience and it takes some expertise to have a successful experience. We talked to Chris Dorn, President of Idea International, about the realities of the experience.



Chris Dorn
President of Idea
International

Pat: You worked for a number of US exhibit houses before opening your business in Japan. What do exhibit houses in the US need to know before bringing a client's program to Japan?

Chris: The Japanese want to do business with people and companies that have integrity. If you exhibit at a show and the show didn't meet your expectations, don't write off the experience. The Japanese are cautious if they don't know you. When you exhibit at a conference, you need to have additional support – speakers, sponsorships and the like—to put the Japanese market at ease. While in China everyone is gung ho, the Japanese build relationships carefully. They appreciate attention to meeting Japanese tastes. Many of them do not speak English and saving face is important. They are very private people and do not like to stand out.

I would say that US exhibitors who are comfortable exhibiting throughout Europe should not think, because Japan is 'international' that the exhibiting experience is the same. For one thing, although hospitality is expected in the exhibit, no alcohol is served and the show hours are much more consistent with those in the US. Shows in Japan are often 3 days, running generally from 10 AM to 5 PM. Three days are set aside for installation, although the trend is toward two days which saves the organizers on the cost of the venue rental. Ordinarily there is only one day for dismantle—sometimes two for larger shows.

Pat: What are the top 10 things to keep in mind when you are planning to exhibit in Japan?

Chris: 10. Translate your graphics into Japanese and have a translator or multilingual hostess on hand.

9. Japan standard is 100 volts/50HZ. (Western Japan is 60HZ) You'll need an

adapter for European and North American style plugs. Limited electrical work is included in the application fees for package booths. Electrical work is primarily supplied by the venue and secondarily by the contractor in the booth. The work must be carried out or supervised by certified electricians.

8. Japanese show organizers are very strict about the use of copyrighted materials, so don't just assume you can play music or show films without the necessary permissions. Also, you cannot use head to head comparisons in Japan. Be sure to read the show manuals for similar caveats, and when in doubt, ask the organizer.

7. There is no VAT tax refund available. The national Japanese tax rate for all services and items supplied has been 5% but there has been a recent increase. The new bill increases the tax to 8% by April 2014 and to 10% by October 2015.

6. There are two types of labor in Japan: skilled and unskilled. There are two price points as well. A skilled laborer has tools and can do stand construction and modifications on site. Non-skilled labor is used for tasks such as packing and unpacking properties. There is a set fee for I&D.

5. There are unions in Japan, but the union wages are fixed by your contractor. There are no post-show surprises. Union labor hours are typically 9AM-5:30PM Workers are allowed two 15 minute breaks at 10 AM and 3 PM, with an hour for lunch. Overtime charges usually are set at 1 1/2 times the normal rate and begin at 6:30 PM. Weekends are billed at straight time.

4. Japan charges a recycling or disposition fee since exhibits are 'build and burn.' The fee varies according to the size of the booth and the amount of plastics and recyclable materials you have. Since storage space in environmentally controlled warehouses is limited and thus expensive, building new and reusing is usually not a viable option.

3. Fire codes are strict. Don't assume that because you have European and/or US fire certificates that you do not need to get approval in Japan. Confirm with show management in writing that your booth design meets codes and

regulations. That also includes getting approval for certain heights, depending on the show. One time we had to hack off 1/2 inch from 4 support pillars because an enforcer came by with a measuring stick that was exactly 4.5 meters. Luckily the design allowed it because he sat and watched us the whole time we were complying.

2. Truss systems are popular because they not only save space but they can be reused. With only a few exceptions (and then only for spaces that are 3000 Sq. ft. or more), we can't rig in Japan because of both earthquake regulations and cost. Rigging from a venue ceiling that is 100 feet in the air is next to impossible.

1. Be clear with your messaging and what it is that you are promoting. Put your new product or service front and center. The Japanese might look at your graphics or product display one day, and the next day they will ask for a meeting. On the third day, they will bring the big boss. The Japanese don't respond to in your face techniques. They are cautious and build relationships slowly.

Pat: You work throughout the entire APEC region. What differences do you encounter between countries?

Chris: There are so many differences that it would be impossible to list them all here. But let's start with materials, as an example. In Japan few manufacturers, the high cost of storage and high importation taxes limit the use of many materials we take for granted in many countries. In Japan there is widespread use of wallpaper. Higher recycling fees apply to the use of different materials which means paper is not only easier but also cheaper. In Korea, spray finishes are very good and produce results like you would get in a professional spray booth. China's highest quality work is with spray finishes and the lowest quality is with an emulsion paint finish, which looks similar to rolling paint on the walls of your house. The emulsion paint finishes don't meet the expectations of US customers. On the other hand, in Taiwan, laminates are very good and so is vinyl wallpaper. One time use is universal throughout the region except when you are using an aluminum extrusion system.

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SAVE THE DATE FOR ACCESS2013

SEE DETAILS ON PAGE 2

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Pat: *In your experience, what are the healthiest markets in Japan for trade fairs and exhibition?*

Chris: Consumer markets are very strong: life style products, interiors, cosmetic shows, and clothing. Travel shows are big; Japan has the largest percentage of people holding passports in the world. Other shows are cyclical such as those in the photo voltaic, solar, and semi-conductor industries. Outside of 3 or 4 large shows, medical shows aren't that prominent and tend to be smaller events with a private invitation list. Because Japan is a small country and because of the relationship culture, reps see the doctors one on one in offices and hospitals. One growing area is senior care because of Japan's aging population; 20% of the population is over 62 years old.

Pat: *Do you ever do events for exhibitors?*

Chris: We do events for customers, and that's a whole different animal. In Japan the number of venues is limited. When a customer comes to us three or four months out and wants to do an event, often there is not enough time to find a good venue. If you want to do an event in Japan, you have to plan at least six months out. Likewise, Korean options can be a challenging as well. On the other hand, China is very flexible and you can push the envelope on locale—anything from restaurants and hotels to high end art galleries.

Pat: *What is the one thing you are always telling your US customers?*

Chris: Japan is a wonderful country! Make the most of the opportunity when you visit. We encourage our customers to take advantage of our local knowledge and spend some time ex-

ploring the country.

Pat: *What challenges should US exhibit houses be prepared for when exhibiting in Japan?*

Chris: There are very stringent regulations since the earth quake two years ago. Venues became very strict on making sure that your booth, if its large enough, has enough emergency exits, on observing set back regulations, on having sides that are more than 50% open. People are much more attuned to the environmental possibilities, particularly at large public shows such as the Tokyo Game Show and the Tokyo Motor Show.

Pat: *How do you market your services to US exhibit houses? It must be difficult with both geography and time gap working against you.*

Chris: We have been fortunate in establishing relationships with US exhibit houses; it helps that I was in the industry here before I moved to Japan. We do a lot on Skype, we have a new web site, and I don't need a lot of sleep. Probably the most important thing we offer is the fact that we know what US exhibit houses are used to because we've been there, and we can help re-tool programs for Japan. Plus we understand all the jargon and nuances associated with the industry in the US. For instance, we know what drayage is when someone asks if that is part of exhibiting in Japan (it's not!). Belonging to EDPA and HCEA as well as attending US exhibit industry meetings and trade shows is invaluable.

Pat: *Okay, how does a nice boy from Iowa and a graduate of Bemidji State wind up owning a successful exhibit company in Japan?*

Chris: My parents were a host family to international students who often stayed at our house. One of these was a very nice Japanese girl who lived in our basement for a few months. We dated, unbeknownst to my parents, and ended up going to the same university. The rest is history.

Since junior high, I've been interested in Japan because of all the cool games and designs that came from there. After college I worked as a 3D designer at Derse under Russ Fowler and John Horne, and then I went to Exhibitgroup/Giltspur where I worked with Ann Houghton and Paul Fujihara. At EG, I began doing a lot of international work under SDD.

Eventually my wife and I sold everything we owned, kept our two cats and moved to Japan and lived with my wife's parents for a couple of months. My wife is an accountant and got a job quickly while I taught English until I built up my network. I started doing freelance design work for agencies like Ogilvy, Interbrand, and J. Walter Thompson, working on brands like Louis Vuitton, Prada and Chanel--high end brand design for stores and office spaces in Japan. I also did work for the state department. Eventually I was able to stop teaching English and opened Idea International where I like to say we offer "Peace of Mind, a Half World Away."

If you are interested in learning more about the EDPA International Chapter, please contact EDPA's Member Development Manager Alex Chung at ACHung@edpa.com or 203.899.8463.