

## NEW APPROACH

### MICROSOFT'S ALL-NEW EXHIBIT EMPHASIZES CLEAN LINES AND A FOCUS ON LIFESTYLE



Microsoft is wowing show attendees with a new exhibit representing a huge departure from years past. The all-new footprint reflects the tech giant's new focus on optimizing audience engagement at shows.

The 24,400-square-foot layout incorporates more open space to promote mobility and traffic flow, with the number of promoted products drastically scaled down from 136 demo stations last year to 30 to make the experience more manageable for the attendee. The anchor of the main area? In place of simple product kiosks are seven "collectives" organized by lifestyle, from

gaming to productivity to mobility. Plenty of soft edges round out a design that's all about being user-friendly.

"We wanted the booth to tell a story, to take the attendee on a journey through our product offerings and consumer narrative in a simple, sleek and compelling way," says Jen Mojo, marketing director for Microsoft's Entertainment & Devices unit. "It was important to us that we were able to voice a unified Microsoft story and branded messaging without losing the power of the individual product brands."

Overall highlights:

**The Nucleus.** This central area boasts a number of touchscreens, on which attendees can delve into products and services both represented and not-represented in the booth. To get started, users are presented with a screen showing an animated layout of the exhibit. Attendees touch to select a lifestyle group to explore. After selecting a scenario, they touch to drill down and explore specific products and

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## LAUNCH PAD

### PHOENIX TECHNOLOGIES DRIVES HYPERSPACE BUZZ ON AND OFF THE CES SHOW FLOOR

A great launch experience at a show like CES marries engaging in-the-booth experiences with unique off-the-show-floor touchpoints. A CES 2009 Daily Dose winner: Phoenix Technologies' HyperSpace launch.

The brand's Central Hall booth was designed and executed with the sole purpose of promoting HyperSpace, a service designed to allow users to avoid

slow Windows start-up times on PCs and have an instant-on, instant-off experience when logging on and shutting down computers. Design and build: Sparks (sparksonline.com).

"This is the most well-known event for innovative consumer technology products," says Richard Heitmann, vp-product management at Phoenix. "It's a perfect fit for HyperSpace."

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## CORNER POCKET

### DRAWING A-PLUS TRADE SHOW TRAFFIC TO C-PLUS BOOTH LOCATIONS

Less-than-stellar trade show booth locations are inevitable—after all, not every lottery goes in your favor.

But that doesn't have to mean that those booths tucked away in the back corner can't draw big crowds too. Here are five dials you can crank to compensate for a less-than-desirable footprint at the next show:

**Create Queues.** Use a promotional hook or a news-making event to get people lining up—even if you're in the back row, attendees will be drawn to the action.

**Get Attendees to Spread the Word.** Think about the premiums you're distributing.

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## THE TWITTERATI

### A SNIPPET OF YESTERDAY'S BEST CES TWEETS

@crowning: Ok, Consumer Electronics Show, you win: you are a monster big show... Feet, are you down there?

@pkafka: OMG I think I'm lost somewhere between Steve Wynn's two hotels. I am lonely and a little scared.

@tonycece: The innovations coming out of CES this year are amazing. It's crazy how quickly ideas advance.

@computertv: Day 2 at CES has been absolutely insane. I think my feet are going to fall off.

@bridgetztalk: The LG booth at this year's CES is awesome!

Follow us at [twitter.com/TechEM](http://twitter.com/TechEM) to receive pics, insights and more, live from the CES show floor. Tweet tweet!!



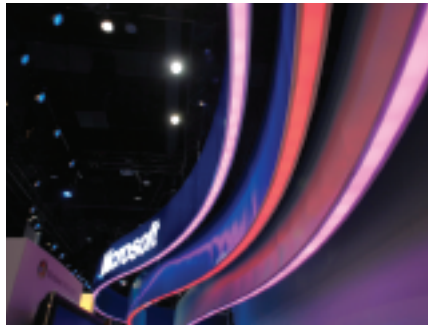
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services. In gaming, for instance, attendees are presented with a number of video vignettes depicting developers and Microsoft staffers in relaxed settings talking about the highlights of the Xbox 360 Live service and what they specifically like about the product. A quick tap of a home button allows attendees to exit out and start all over again. The point: Attendees are in control.

**Photo Wall.** This low-key, subtle design touch drives home the new lifestyle focus. Photos of individuals using Microsoft products and services in a variety of settings are set on a black background, providing a nice juxtaposition against the white walls that blanket the overall Microsoft exhibit. A larger photo wall at the entrance of the exhibit digitally changes images every few seconds



and is a main attraction to draw in attendees walking by the booth.

**Meeting Space/Press Area.** One of the most impressive touches in the booth is one that most attendees will never see: The brand eschewed the typical trade-show approach for press and meeting space—

boxed-off walls and rooms in the rear—and went all out to create luxe rooms that allow for demos that truly reflect the focus of each of the product groups. In a gaming room, for example, Xbox consoles are set up amid modern daybeds, offering plenty of room for demos and chill time. Unique color palettes in each area further differentiate the spaces and lend the rooms a more permanent feel.

**Studio.** In addition, TV and web journals can take advantage of a unique opportunity on Microsoft's second level—a full broadcast setup allowing the press to film in a setting boasting a view over the CES show floor. Journals sign up for the space in advance and can just plug and play when it's time to film. The space gives reporters a great venue to film and offers Microsoft valuable free press.

## LAUNCH PAD PHOENIX TECHNOLOGIES DRIVES HYPERSPACE BUZZ

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Because the company launched the service at this year's show, the launch plan to get the word out about HyperSpace was designed to leverage as much buzz from the show as possible and break through the clutter that a show as big as CES commands. The solution? A booth that gives attendees a chance to get up close and personal with the service plus off-the-show-floor extras designed to engage attendees and drive them to the booth.

The exhibit itself features a number of demo stations at which attendees can use a laptop and experience HyperSpace by simply starting up and shutting down the system. Attendees can also pick up info to activate a 21-day free trial of the service. An educational presentation takes visitors through the finer points of the offering, and partners get some play via kiosks stationed in the rear of the footprint promoting applications created specifically for HyperSpace. The overall effect is seamless, educational and approachable.

But the marketing doesn't stop there. Elsewhere, the company is making connections outside of the exhibit. A HyperSpace commercial is playing on the monorail, targeting attendees traveling to and from the show. A coffee bar at monorail stops offers attendees a much-needed shot of java as they head out for the day. The brand is also driving more traffic to the booth by placing brand ambassadors in the South Hall, hyping the Central Hall experience and pointing attendees in the right direction.

## CORNER POCKET DRAWING A-PLUS TRADE SHOW TRAFFIC TO C-PLUS BOOTH LOCATIONS

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Handing attendees pins, lanyards or other items attendees will wear—and then giving people incentive to wear them—can help generate exposure for an exhibit throughout the hall. The key is a call to action to wear the branded item, for instance, if you're seen wearing it, you're eligible to win a door prize.

**Encourage Entry.** Even if your stand is in the convention hall backwater, booth design can still make a big difference. Keep the exhibit open in front and put activities and games in the back. It'll help get attendees to walk through the footprint instead of just picking up premiums as they cruise by.

**Sound the Call.** Make sure attendees know—before they get there—that although your exhibit might be tough to find, your brand really is at the show. A pre-show mailer a few weeks prior to the event can help. If an attendee list is unavailable, consider an insert in registration packs or a room drop at show hotels.

**Tap Speakers.** If someone from your company is speaking at the conference, have them mention that your company is an exhibitor and share the location and booth number. Attendees who like what they hear and want to learn more will seek out exhibitors connected to the presentation.

Signing up for exhibit space early and spending extra money can help exhibitors land primo real estate, but even those tactics don't always guarantee an A-plus space. A little creativity and resourcefulness will help reel in attendees, even if you've got a last-row location.

# OFF THE GRID

## IOSAFE'S GUERRILLA-STYLE DEMOLITION EVENT MAKES THE MOST OF THE MARKETING BUDGET

When Tech-EM's editors received iosafe's its first product demo invite, we had to bite:

"The CES people, for some strange reason, denied our request to have a 1,500-degree fireball and 10,000 gallons of water in the hotel lobby. They muttered something about lawyers, liability, blah, blah, blah. So... Plan B."

The company, which manufactures water and fire-safe external hard drives, whisked away reporters and key attendees in stretch limos to a rented house a few blocks from the Strip, and then proceeded to toss one of its drives in the pool, torch it in a custom backyard barbeque and then pop the inner motherboard back into a drive to show that the photos taken in the limo ride over still survived.

Giving targets the chance to experience brands and products first-hand is what CES

is all about. But with this year's economic problems, big and small brands alike had to get scrappy—often moving the entire show floor activation off-site and paring down the invite list.

"For a small company, CES is a big expense," said iosafe ceo Robb Moore as he traveled with Tech-EM from the Las Vegas Convention Center to the event. By going guerilla and eschewing the show floor, the brand whittled down its investment from about \$50,000 to \$5,000, and saved even more costs by housing staff in the rental house used for the demo. Plus, the off-the-floor approach gave staffers rare one-on-one time during the limo ride with analysts, reporters and potential partners.

"For the amount of coverage and interest that can be generated, and the cost, this

makes the experience better for us," said Moore. The company gets even more bang for its buck by posting its eyebrow-singeing demo on YouTube.



## MARKETING LESSONS FROM THE SHOW FLOOR

Today's best practices: leveraging entertainment content for maximum effect, creating two distinct product experiences in one footprint and helping your customers unleash their inner Tommy Lee.

**Pioneer.** Creating attendee-relevant product line experiences while still being consistent with the parent brand's attributes and promises is the number one challenge at CES, where exhibitors often unload their entire inventory into booths. Pioneer pulls it off with aplomb. The exhibit is split into half—one side for car audio and the other, home audio and video. On the auto side, the look is gritty and rugged. The booth's structural elements include unfinished aluminum beams with exposed bolts. A "speakers of mass destruction" (the loudest subwoofers in the world) display wall features four subwoofers suspended by chain link to resemble wrecking balls. The effect is a preview of the brand's 2009 campaign aimed at younger buyers. Attendees can get into any of three cars pimped out with custom sound systems to blow their eardrums out. Inside a massive structure designed to look like a vault, the brand shows off high-end car audio products. Just outside the vault, consumers can get hands-on with one of the "aliens"—hand-fabricated navigation kiosks built from distressed aluminum and bolts. A short walk past the two-story backside structure (meeting spaces connected by suspended bridges) and

you're in the home audio zone. The same black and gray color palette with aluminum materials is made softer and more elegant with script fonts and floral motifs silk-screened on walls, and strands of smaller chain link suspended from truss to look like beading. TVs and home audio systems are displayed above sleek backlit product descriptions. A sit-down home theater demo rounds out the home audio experience. —*Booth 9827*

**Skull Candy.** Like Pioneer, Skull Candy broke up its booth space to create two unique brand experiences. But the company took a calculated risk by burying its better-known brand in back while featuring a new line exclusively in front. The brand highlighted its new line of affordable headphones called 2XL by branding the entire façade with graphics in the line's signature black, Kelly green and white color palette. The main attraction is the old school toy racecar track. Attendees can grab a remote control and race other contestants. Winners for each round get a new set of 2XLs. A live dj and emcee keep the energy high and crowds lining up to play. In the back of the booth, which is obstructed from view, visitors can check out the higher-end Skull Candy line. —*Booth 9827*

**Sony.** This year Sony transformed its theater into a "Jeopardy" studio to leverage the game

show's 25th anniversary. ("Jeopardy" is owned by Sony Pictures.) During the day, attendees are invited to come by, take a snapshot and check out the set specially created just for CES. On Thursday and Saturday, the show films its regular shows. On Friday night, it tapes a special celebrity edition featuring "Dancing with the Stars" host Tom Bergeron, "Weeds" star Elizabeth Perkins and comedian Aisha Tyler. The show will film a total of 11 episodes exclusively at CES. Just outside the "Jeopardy" set, attendees can step onto a circular platform, grab a free USB drive from a staffer and download free Sony Pictures programs at one of four touchscreen kiosks. —*Booth 14200*

**Roland.** Sure, Rock Band is fun if your only real musical prowess is pushing colored buttons. But for those with a few more skills, Roland's exhibit brings out their inner Tommy Lee. In the center of the booth, a chance to hop on one of five drumming stations to test your chops against Johnny Rabb, the world's fastest drummer. Even those without any drumming skills are compelled to stop and check out the improvisational concert being created by one master and those unleashing their inner rocker. At other demo stations, "Play Me!" signs encourage attendees to grab a guitar or sit at a piano and test out mini amplifiers or drum tutor programs. —*Booth 8853*

# DATA-MINING STRATEGIES

## FOUR WAYS TO MAKE THE MOST OUT OF SHOW ATTENDEE LISTS

When used effectively, a trade show's attendee list can be a powerful tool, driving attendees to your booth at the show and providing a quick way to contact those you might have missed on the show floor.

Four ways to take advantage of the list at your next show:

**Keep It Real.** Be sure the messaging is right and that you stick with info that's relevant. It makes more sense to interact with attendees on substance, rather than some kind of gimmicky promotion just to get them to the booth.

**Targeting.** Instead of sending mass emails to all attendees at last year's Consumer Electronics Show, Pentax Imaging sponsored an e-newsletter that the Consumer Electronics Association sent to attendees who indicated an interest in digital imaging. "We didn't receive a pre-show mailing list... but we did get our message to 23,000

prospects in a targeted area," says Bob McGrath, Pentax trade show manager. (The effort gave Pentax links from the newsletter to its website.)

**More Than Just Traffic.** While Hewlett-Packard uses pre-show mailers partly to drive attendees to the show, it also uses them to gauge brand awareness. The brand includes a set list of brand-image questions in mailings before an event, then checks back post-show with prospects who visited the booth to determine if their awareness or opinion of the brand changed, says HP event marketing manager Glenda Brungardt.

**Post-show.** Sending mass emails after a show usually isn't a priority—but the list still carries some weight. Logic chip maker Altera mines its lists for attendees who fit the company's customer profile but either didn't visit the booth or aren't already clients. "The list is turned over to our sales force, and they analyze it to find out which people are cus-

tomers," says Zoe Matlock, the company's senior trade show coordinator. "If they aren't customers, [we try to find out] who they are using, and how we can help them."



## THE LOOK AND FEEL OF CES: EXHIBIT DESIGN HIGHLIGHTS FROM DAY TWO

**Toshiba.** Graphics boasting red, black and grey rectangles and squares are recurring visual themes in this exhibit, starting with the white scrim fabric signage suspended above the perimeter. The space is divided into three zones: mobile storage and technology, digital home technology and picture enhancement technology. Black, self-illuminated ring structures decorated with the rectangular graphics are suspended above each zone, with cylindrical string curtains running through the center. A central presentation stage features an LED screen and padded bars for comfy leaning.—*Booth 12814*

**RCA/TTE Technology.** A big, red, high-gloss ID sign is suspended at the front of the footprint, flanked by two red fabric walls. Suspended chains draped from truss create the look of a tall box structure between the walls as they hang over meeting rooms below. Behind the fabric walls, the brand's TV monitors are creatively displayed on six freestanding red pedestals in rows of three, with the product name and information

printed on the sides. The presentation is understated, but stands out because it doesn't try and cram too many displays in the space. Planters with tufts of saw grass throughout the space are a nice touch, too.—*Booth 12125*

**NBC Universal.** A functioning TV studio inside the exhibit is up and running, and the Multimedia Lounge where bloggers are doing their thing live features white boxes with neon green shoots that look like futuristic plants. At the center of the space, a tall, tree-like truss structure sports flat-screen monitors at the end of its "branches." At the perimeter of the structure, touchscreen monitors and Microsoft Surface tables allow visitors to explore all of NBC Universal's programming offerings, and their selections are played on the monitors up on the truss. Next to this, six-foot-tall news tickers sprout sideways from the floor, running headlines in a variety of colors.—*Booth 12533*

**Gracernote.** A suspended, white fabric ID

sign wraps around the front of the footprint, decorated with the brand's name in black and "g" logo graphic in red. Smooth-edged signage and architecture are done up in red and white, with hanging signs and lifestyle graphics over zones for the brand's media monitoring, automotive, mobile entertainment and software offerings. The home solutions zone is built into a rounded-edged back wall structure that is situated in front of private meeting rooms.—*Booth 30333*

**BlueAnt Wireless.** Translucent, fabric scrim exterior walls feature super scale graphics of the brand's wireless earpieces in action. Inside, the space is done up in black and deep blue, with a central deck structure that houses a second deck meeting space. Demo stands line the backside of the fabric walls, while a black archway structure at the front of the booth is highlighted by internal blue accent lighting. Four freestanding demo kiosks are situated beneath the arch, standing out thanks to more internal blue lighting and monitors running product info.—*Booth 36526*