

Case Study: Integrated Marketing and Special Events

Marketing A Successful Supply Chain Event

The Opportunity

Penton Media Inc. publishes nine magazines covering the supply chain. Two years ago, it purchased an event management company that had a supply chain-related event in its portfolio. This acquisition was made to expand Penton's revenue-generating opportunities, and to strengthen its presence and position in the marketplace.

Penton's goal was to produce a successful, profitable event in 2001. Penton needed to sell booths to exhibitors for its trade show, which was to go on simultaneously with the conference. Lastly, it was critical to drive attendance to the conference and exhibition. MindShare Strategies' role was critical in helping Penton to achieve all of the above.

Target Markets

MindShare's primary goal was to attract attendees within these multiple target markets: Transportation, distribution, warehousing, material handling, facilities location, supply chain technology and e-commerce.

Goals and Objectives

MindShare Strategies was hired to help Penton Media meet these goals for Supply Chain Expo 2001:

- To market the value of exhibiting at SCE to potential exhibitors
- To ensure participation by conference attendees, exhibition attendees, and exhibitors to generate adequate revenue to support the event
- To promote SCE as a unique event that covers *all* segments of the supply chain (branding the event)

Solution Overview and Implementation

It was necessary to position SCE as an event that covered the entire supply chain, so MindShare developed a highly visual creative approach that showed all aspects of the supply chain—from e-commerce and manufacturing to warehousing, material handling, transportation, and distribution). MindShare developed a solid integrated marketing communications program using these tactics:

National Advertising. MindShare customized key messages to targeted audiences in 4-color full-page advertising placed in all Penton magazines (as well as sponsoring media publications) to speak to the unique needs of each readership. MindShare successfully placed more than U.S. \$1 million worth of advertising.

Direct Mail Campaigns. MindShare orchestrated the design and mailing of more than a quarter of a million brochures and postcards to potential attendees nationwide. For those who would find value in attending the trade show, MindShare sent brochures promoting this opportunity to prospects within driving distance of Chicagoland (a geographically focused 7-state area). To encourage participation, MindShare positioned several benefits to attending: a free Supply Chain Toolkit, access to all keynote speakers, networking opportunities, and the chance to win prizes by playing The Supply Chain Game (this was a colorful board game approach that encouraged people to network with exhibitors).

Titles of targeted attendees included these areas of responsibility: logistics and transportation, operations and plant management, warehousing and inventory management, IT, customer service, finance, and sales and marketing.

In addition, MindShare helped to secure and develop relationships with sponsoring regional industry associations, and helped to market booth space to exhibitors.



MindShare developed and executed a comprehensive direct mail campaign that involved mailing to more than 250,000 prospects.

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Partnerships with trade associations. MindShare developed several relationships with trade associations that have members directly related to the supply chain. To help these associations promote Expo 2001 to their members, MindShare provided ad slicks and inserts for their member newsletters, VIP passes for free admission, and printed brochures. Several groups successfully brought more than 30 of their members to the Expo.

VIP Passes for Exhibitors. MindShare encouraged all exhibitors to promote the benefits of Expo 2001 to their current or prospective customers and provided each exhibitor with 500 VIP passes and a sample cover letter to use to drive their most important clients to the show. More than 25 exhibitors participated, which helped to drive attendance to Expo 2001.

www.SupplyChainExpo.com. MindShare developed a comprehensive Web site, which featured:

- Extensive information about exhibitors who were participating in the trade show. This included a full description of the company exhibiting, contact and booth information.
- Conference details, with an interactive “Schedule at a Glance,” from which they could then click to see a full description of each session and bios of presenters.
- The SCE Virtual Press Room, where editors and reporters regularly visited to find posted press releases about new exhibitors and details about the conference pertaining specifically to the press.
- E-commerce and registration capabilities. In fact, more than half of all pre-registrations came through this Web site.

Media Relations. MindShare worked extensively with the industry and business media to achieve regular publicity through press releases. After sending individual press releases and aggressively following up with the media, MindShare was able to achieve an 80% placement rate in all targeted publications.

Prospectus Packet. MindShare developed a series of brochures (in print and in electronic format) to help exhibitors determine if they wanted to participate. These tools were provided to the Penton Media sales force. These promotional brochures emphasized the benefits to being an exhibitor at SCE, provided details about sponsorship and exhibiting opportunities, and the floor plan (so people could decide upon the placement of their booths). These brochures helped Penton to far exceed their goals of the number of exhibitors. In fact, in 2001 MindShare helped to secure a total of 130 exhibitors.

Evaluating Project Success

This event successfully generated registrants from all areas of the supply chain, from more than 200 companies. Demographics show these multiple categories each represent at least 15% of total attendees: warehousing, material handling, transportation, distribution, and technology. Through a solid integrated marketing communications program, MindShare was successful at generating 2,877 pre-registrants (which included all pre-registrants, on-site registrants, exhibitors, and media/press) and a total of 1,508 non-exhibitor registrants. The event attracted 968 participants as exhibitors—which is solid participation of people who used the event to promote their company's products and/or services. The event also attracted nearly 300 conference registrants, which created a good revenue stream for funding the overall event.



MindShare developed and managed a comprehensive, interactive Web site that included conference details, trade show features, a virtual press room, and e-commerce/ registration capabilities.

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Marketing For Results

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