



Samsung at Marine Tech Korea 2014

# First Impressions Matter: Creating a visual impact *By Crystal Chu*

When it comes to tradeshow displays, the first impression is a lasting one. The design of a booth is critical for any exhibitor, and every little detail counts. Successful tradeshow displays should be able to capture the attention of visitors by creating a visually stunning yet interactive experience – the perfect mix of functionality and style.

Beyond just an aesthetic impression, a booth must connect with visitors by telling a compelling brand story. After all, tradeshow are excellent opportunities

for exhibitors to reach out to potential customers and stand out among competitors. From large bold graphics and multimedia displays right down to the exhibit space layout, these elements should be seamlessly woven together to reflect the brand's identity

## Less is More

Exhibition booths in Asia have also moved towards more open, de-cluttered spaces with clean geometrical and angular lines. For Asian

exhibitors in particular, booths are clearly distinctive with its signature color palette easily recognizable from afar. Samsung's 'blue band' is representative of the brand and is consistently reflected in all its exhibition booths. Recent trends in the Asian exhibition floor have shown the popularity of cooler-toned colors as well as solid colors that pop.

The key is to strike a balance between creating a simple, clean design while communicating the brand's message. At the end of the day, the look and feel of the display booth should be able to clearly reflect the

brand's positioning and image.

## Graphics

The use of graphics, when done well, can dramatically affect the number of visitors to a booth. In recent years, tradeshow have become more graphic than structural with exhibit graphic trends geared towards large bold graphics spread across expanse spaces to create a presence on the tradeshow floor.

"Flat design," an international design

trend that uses flat shapes and icons, is an emerging graphic design style in Asia. Favoring a simplified interface, it features the use of sleek 2D web design elements – rectangles, triangles and circles, without the use of gradients, strokes and shadows or anything else that implies three-dimensionality. It focuses on two main principles: simplicity and legibility – adding depth to design elements without causing a visual overload for the viewer. This minimalist style allows marketing messages to be effectively conveyed while still maintaining its visual appeal.

#### **Making a Statement**

Ensuring that your booth is visually prominent on the tradeshow floor is more than just an upsize. It involves creating a

physical environment that brings a brand story to life. A largely content-driven approach can reach out to visitors and enable them to understand the intended brand message. Apart from stunning visuals, the booth has to include elements of surprise and artistry to keep visitors engaged.

Replacing the typical booth with a structure that resembles an artistic installation is bound to draw visitors in while offering them a unique experience of the brand. This experience can be enriched by leveraging technology to enhance the brand story.

#### **Multimedia Technology**

Today's tradeshows are a digital multi-sensory experience with an array of elements such as

touchscreen tablets, video walls and multimedia displays. In order to succeed, exhibitors have to stay ahead of the curve and adapt to current trends of digital interaction at exhibitions. Although not completely new, digital interactive technology is now a key feature at tradeshows.

To draw traffic, many exhibition booths feature attention grabbing high definition (HD) video walls and multi-user touchscreen interfaces. Merging technologies such as 3D projection mapping and augmented reality are ways to drive the consumer experience. By creatively employing a variety of digital interactive technology, brands can achieve visibility while creating a tactile experience for visitors.

Ultimately, the booth should be viewed as a medium to highlight the brand and engage visitors. This goes beyond simply putting items on display and filling it with technological gadgets. The aim is to allow visitors to touch, explore and engage with the brand and leave with a memorable experience.

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