

THE GLOBAL EXHIBITION MAGAZINE

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report

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At Experimenta, energy consumption is not only illustrated but tangibly explained.

Photo: Expotec

“Involve me and I’ll understand”

The more visitors are involved at the experience level of a trade fair stand, the stronger its effect on them. Interactive exhibits can have an illustrative and informative purpose or primarily function as an instrument for addressing customers.

Brands are much more than coloured signatures. They are platforms for addressing people emotionally and intellectually, on which consumers not only purchase something but also become active themselves. We call this form of increased involvement “experience marketing”, explains Carsten Nadler, key account manager at Impact Unlimited, Wil/SG. “Why is experience marketing so important? One simple reason: Wherever a brand not only informs but also involves customers, their

emotional attachment to a brand and recognition value is disproportionately greater – true to the Chinese proverb: ‘Tell me and I’ll forget, show me and I may remember, involve me and I’ll understand.’”

Involvement was also the objective of a special show during Olma 2009 staged by Impact Unlimited on the geothermal project of the city of St. Gallen. Based on the motto “Journey into the depths of the earth”, a lift took visitors virtually 4,400 m below the city. The “journey into the

depths of the earth” provided an experience for all the senses. The lower the lift seemed to go, the older the rock strata in which prehistoric secrets lay hidden. To reveal those secrets, the ride was interrupted several times. Films showed the passengers what creatures lived in the area of what is today eastern Switzerland several million years ago. At a depth of 4,400 m, amidst the bubble and spew, the lift reached the end of its journey. The passengers had now reached a rock stratum containing 170-degree hot water that would provide energy for the future geothermal power plant.

The installation became a real journey for anyone who did not allow himself to reflect on the possible or impossible but simply gave in to the illusion and said “I’d like to



Want to know more? It is important to address the visitor in a striking and charming way that arouses his curiosity. Photos: Fricke inszeniert

go down and experience and see everything that's down there." The aim of the designers was to create as authentic a journey as possible with the limited resources available using movement, images, sound and sensor technology. The intention of the ride was to excite the visitors and get them interested in the topic of geothermal energy - comprehensive information on the topic was supplied in an annexed exhibition.

Visitors to the Experimenta science centre in Heilbronn can experience first hand what energy generation means. On an energy bicycle created by Expotec, Mainz, anyone can generate energy through their own power. The cyclist pedals at full power for a whole minute. He or she can read how much energy they are generating on the adjacent display. At the same time, they can

find out from the adjacent showcases how much effort is needed to supply a monitor or a light bulb, for example. After one minute, the result is evaluated for the cyclist. In this way, energy consumption is not only illustrated but tangibly explained. But exhibits do not necessarily have to

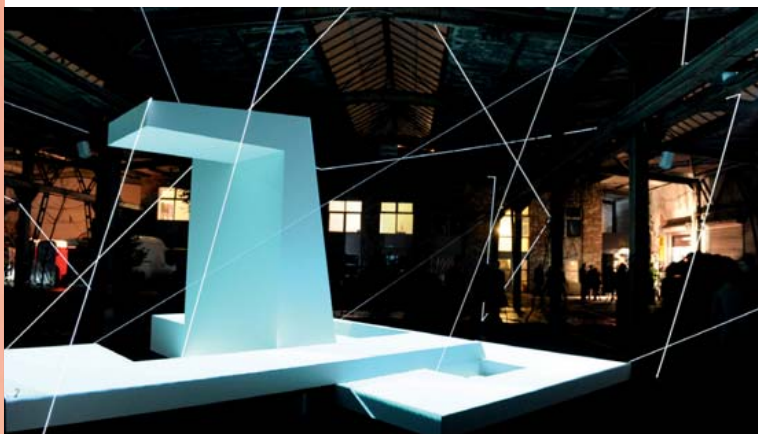
Exhibits can lure visitors to a stand in a charming way

convey a product or subject matter. They can make visitors inquisitive and lure them to a stand in a striking or charming way. "Interactive exhibits get a hold on the visitor without them noticing", reveals Joerg Hanke, marketing and project development, Fricke inszeniert, Börßum/Bornum. "Instead of the widely used but hardly ef-

fective phrase 'Can I help?', the exhibitor is offered an effective and direct opportunity to make contact. That's important because a trade fair must work from day one. Every hour counts." What is more, even sales professionals often found it difficult to address the visitor. "Many exhibitors see their product, their brand, as the most important thing", Hanke continues. "But we place the focus on addressing the customer. And often get spot-on results!"

A successful tradeshow appearance will stage both the brand and the achievements of a company for all the senses. Virtually all important communications disciplines are tested at the same time and place. To create a credible and effective appearance, all media and measures must be harmonised in an integrated approach. Fricke inszeniert is convinced of that. "But the most important factor is and remains the human being. On one side, you have the visitor who needs to be addressed, on the other side, the trade fair team as the critical point in initiating contact."

Fricke inszeniert develops "addressing tools" that ease the process of addressing the visitor and customer fundamentally and therefore make a considerable contribution to the success of the fair. It worked particularly successfully for the life insurer Cash Life at DKM a few years ago in Dortmund. The trade fair motto used was "Fill up with liquidity". A holistic stand concept



The aim of the installation for Dornbracht was to create a real virtuality that contrasts with the virtual reality we know. Photo: Meiré und Meiré

based on a US retro gas station. The individual components exhibition stand, team and product merged with the tool of address in the form of original petrol pumps to function as a single element.

Janssen-Cilag, on the other hand, wanted to market a blood thinning drug at the DHGO congress in Leipzig. Hand pads were used to explain the product. These were held freely in the beam of a hidden integrated projector and showed – as if by magic – writing, graphics, and film sequences. “Even visitors for whom the presented topic had no relevance were so fascinated by the hand pad idea that they looked at the presentations more than once just to try and understand the technology behind it”, Hanke says.

The project “Revolving Realities” implemented by Meiré und Meiré of Cologne for the sanitary fittings company Dornbracht works on a completely different level. Shown at Passagen 2010 which was staged concurrently with IMM Cologne, the in-



After a “journey into the depths of the earth” visitors could visit an annexed exhibition.

Photo: Impact Unlimited

stallation originates from Interpalazzo, a group of media artists. It plays with the perception of reality by allowing the visitor to experience a place and an object from scratch over and over again. By projecting the surfaces with different images, textures and animations, the object becomes the mirror of changing realities.

The installation was extended by a modular light installation that issued from the object onto which the images were projected. Threads of light were distributed over

the 600 m² outer surface and created a connection between the central installation and its surroundings. Impulses were picked up and relayed back into the outside space that transformed into a resonating body and entered into a reflective dialogue with the central installation. Marcus Schmickler composed a soundtrack for it. The object, space and observer formed a communicative whole – an extraordinary experience totally in keeping with the presented brand.