



Is Face-to-Face Marketing “Old School”?

Are we trading real relationships for artificial ones?



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Extending Brands
into **experience**

“OLD SCHOOL” CAN BE DOWNRIGHT REVOLUTIONARY

The challenge of where and when to integrate digital and mobile technology into the marketing mix has become the key strategy for today's marketers.

Face-to-face marketing has been around since the 9th century B.C. when Carthage was first established as a trading post. Today's exhibit industry can trace its roots back to the medieval fairs of Europe and ancient bazaars of the Middle East.¹ For centuries, exhibitions and tradeshow have been a crucial sales and communications tool all around the globe.

When it comes to converting prospects into clients, cognitive studies have long shown that consumer purchase behavior (even in the B2B world) is driven by emotion. While a prospect may first analyze information about your offer from a distance—determining how your product is made or why your service is superior—relationships and trust are ultimately what will drive the purchase. It comes down to the simple fact that **people want to do business with people—not phones, apps or websites.**

The proliferation of digital and, in particular, mobile technology has dramatically influenced our 2017 marketing plans. It increases the need to both connect and engage in the right ways, with the right tools, and to deliver the right messages at every phase of the path-to-show: from pre-show, to the show floor, and even post-show lead retrieval. While technology has absolutely made connectivity at each phase easier, there is still one fundamental reality that technology alone cannot deliver: it doesn't build relationships. **And in the trade show world, relationships mean business.**

And while we think that both face-to-face marketing and technology play extremely important roles in the trade show path, it's important to define how and where each can be used to improve customer experience and sales.

Everything Old is New Again

“Why wouldn't we want to reach customers who spend time in the offline and online world, in each dimension?”

Dwight Griesman, Chief Marketing Officer, Forrester²

Most effective 2016 offline tactics³ ...

- Pre-show direct mail campaigns
- Networking
- Speaking
- Print Ads in previews, show directories and show dailies
- Sponsorships
- Press conferences, PR and earned media
- Post-show direct sales calls

... with 2016 tactics with the greatest commercial impact⁴

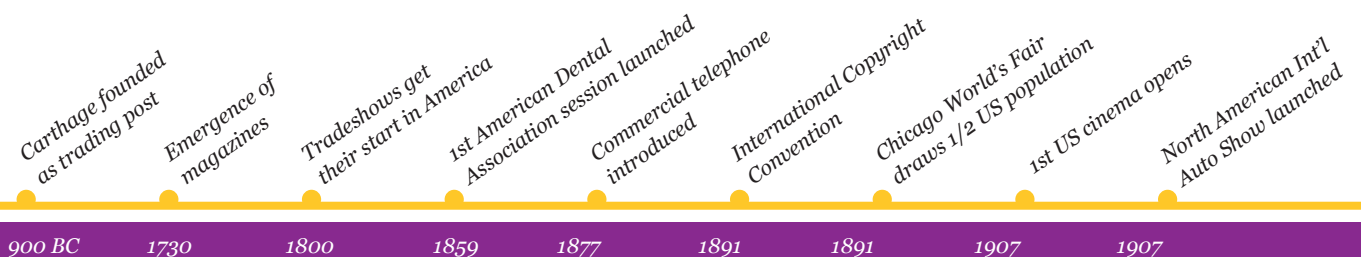
- Big Data (predictive analytics)
- Content marketing
- Digital Display
- Internet of Things
- Mobile marketing
- Social media marketing
- Wearables

Walt Disney was using what he called “synergy” in the 1950s and 1960s to drive The Disney Company forward using coordinated marketing efforts in print, television, movies, merchandising and his Anaheim theme park. Each part of the Disney marketing mix promoted other aspects of the mix that altogether built the Disney brand and revenue stream.

According to the 2015 Meaningful Brands research by Havas, **most people around the world wouldn't care if 74% of brands disappeared.**⁵ This is a startling statistic and a wake-up call for marketers. To make their brands customer relevant, today's marketers are focused on customer-centric marketing, the customer experience, customer journeys, customer insights and other ways of analyzing, attracting, delighting and obsessing over customers.⁶ What is the right mix of traditional and social media, digital, direct response and mobile? How do paid, owned and earned media interact?

From brand management to customer communications to sales, today's marketers must integrate multiple media and environments to achieve maximum impact. Integrated marketing strategy is becoming more and more complex as technology driven environments such as the Internet and mobile computing merge with traditional media.

Research shows that companies using an **integrated marketing strategy when approaching their trade show and exhibition programs are more successful** than those who don't.⁷ An integrated marketing strategy employing consistent themes and branding through all communication channels is essential to maintaining a company's competitive edge. Integrated strategies include the use of pre-show, at-show and post-show marketing techniques. Traditional tactics, the Internet, and a myriad of other technologies are becoming an integrated, customer-facing whole.



How “Old School” is Face-to-Face Marketing?

Making a Case for Face-to-Face

40% of B2B exhibitors are participating in more exhibitions today than they were five years ago.

Marketing executives at exhibiting companies clearly understand business-to-business exhibitions offer unique value that other marketing channels do not.

A tradeshow is the ultimate opportunity to get lots of prospects and customers in the same room for face-to-face discussions.⁸

One third of the respondents to 2016 Successful Meetings trends survey said they planned to hold more virtual meetings in the coming year, compared to just 2% who will plan fewer.

Hybrid events were second, with nearly 17% planning more, and 2% planning fewer.⁹

Exhibitions are assigned high value by B2B marketers when it comes to the top ranked high priority sales objectives:¹⁰

- Existing customer relationship management/engagement
- Relationship management/engagement with key accounts
- New sales leads in general
- Relationship management/engagement with prospective customers
- New sales with existing customers
- Sales with prospective customers
- Providing support to distributors
- Growing sales leads in a new business sector
- Growing sales leads in a new region

According to Forrester's research, virtual events rank as the 2nd most important source of information when business decision makers evaluate technologies or services to purchase. The most obvious advantages of virtual trade shows are:¹¹

- Exhibitors can save a lot of money on travel, lodging, promotional items, and other costly expenses.
- The reduced cost of virtual exhibiting allows many more exhibitors to participate increasing the value of the trade show.
- Increased exposure. A physical conference lasts for one or two days; A virtual conference can last as long as there is demand.
- Virtual trade shows are interactive with full reporting and analytics.

National Association of Broadcasters Show launched

New York World's Fair shows television to public

Est. 10,000 TV sets in US

General Motors unveils the Corvette at NY's Motorama Exhibition

Int'l Consumer Electronics Show launched

TV programming delivered by satellite

200 computers are connected to the Internet worldwide

Cable shopping networks are born

EXHIBITOR Show launched

1927

1939

1943

1953

1967

1976

1982

1997

1997

How "Old School" is Face-to-Face Marketing?

Not a Choice of 'Either/Or' Smart Marketers Choose Both

Effectiveness of Marketing Communications Tactics In Achieving Company Objectives¹²

- In-person meetings 90%
- In-person corporate events 64%
- Public relations 61%
- Website 57%
- Mobile devices 56%
- Online meetings/forums 54%
- B2B exhibitions 53%
- Social Media 47%
- Sponsorships 45%

Since 2009, research has consistently found that digital strategies and tactics are complementary to face-to-face in business-to-business exhibitions. Used well, digital enhances attendee marketing effectiveness, maximizes cost-savings and is a mechanism for attendee engagement throughout the event lifecycle and beyond.¹³

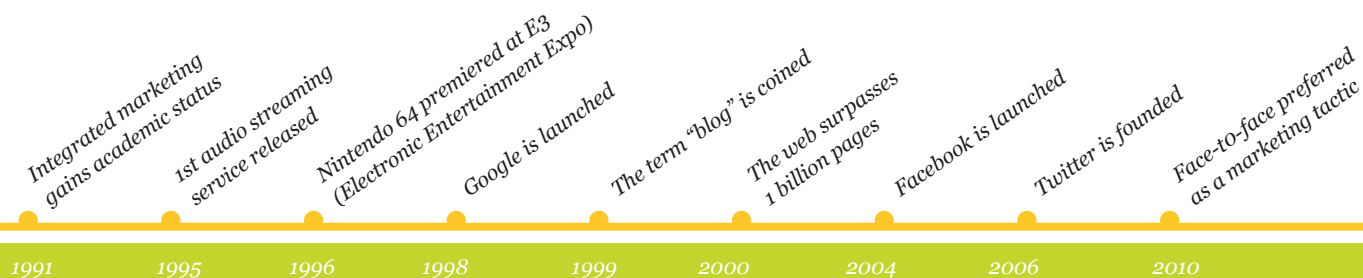
96% of attendees are armed with at least one digital device when they attend a business-to-business exhibition.¹³

Attendees are ditching their laptops in favor of mobile devices; they prefer digital content over paper handouts; they want to help shape the event experience through active participation and the majority are comfortable with the use of technology to track their movement on the show floor.¹³

While B2B marketers are juggling an onslaught of digital campaigns seeking customer connections through numerous online channels, a 40% increase of brand marketers participating in trade shows/exhibitions over previous years indicates that real-time interaction is on the rise. From a listing of 20 possible marketing communications and sales tactics, executives in a recent CEIR study ranked **B2B exhibitions second only to the company website as a primary marketing tactic.**¹⁴

For B2B marketers with products or services to market, the study found that 76% of executives surveyed agree that face-to-face exhibitions are invaluable in supporting the relationship management and engagement of existing customers.¹⁴

63% said face-to-face contact helps to nurture relationships and open up new sales leads.¹⁴ But the preference is to collect those leads in real-time along with other actionable data.



How "Old School" is Face-to-Face Marketing?

Integrated Marketing Measures Up

*Bottom Line:
Trade shows and business events are at their most powerful when they are part of an integrated go-to-market strategy.*

There is also a growing mandate to measure the outcomes of meetings, events and trade shows, to identify the practices that directly lead to greater learning or increased sales.

93% of CMOs say that they are under more pressure to deliver measurable ROI.¹⁵

Measurement is not just about offsetting the ever-increasing scrutiny from corporate finance departments. The information that results from gathering customer perspectives, analyzing the competition, event traffic and leads, both place-based and virtual is crucial in planning and developing future programs.

To best control and measure their results, marketers are consolidating their event and exhibition business with preferred vendors, seeking cost efficiencies, standard practices and well-managed event portfolios. To track, better understand and measure The Customer Experience is destined to be a 2017 mega technology trend.¹⁶

Technology now makes it relatively easy—and affordable—to collect data on attendees and analyze it in real time. This understanding of attendees' interests and behaviors facilitates the development of responsive marketing strategies, helping planners meet their objectives and ultimately increase the ROI of their trade shows and other events.

With **real-time information it's no longer a look in the rear-view mirror**, it's who is here now. Planners can get an honest look at an attendee's behavior while at an event versus just getting feedback from a survey.

Integrating tracking data with marketing automation tools is becoming more common and critical. Companies are now tracking a 360-degree view of their prospects. Did they visit a pre-show webpage? Did they download a whitepaper? Did they attend a webinar? How long were they on the exhibit floor? By pushing all those touch points to a marketing automation tool, a sophisticated attendee profile can recommend a targeted promotion or follow-up.

New tracking, measurement and automation tools can alert sales people as they walk on the show floor; tell them which of their customers are there now and in what areas of the exhibit they have been scanned, so they can have a meaningful engagement. So with that real-time data they can engage in a more meaningful way on site.¹⁷



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About MC² (MC “squared”)

Some of the best brands in the world rely on MC² for strategy, design, fabrication, logistics and audience engagement at some of the top shows in the world. Our account teams specialize in trade show and event marketing to bring the latest and most tested solutions to live events and trade show exhibiting. If your program includes international shows, major domestic shows and a range of smaller conferences, you can look to us to innovate, execute and manage your program.