

# Center for Exhibition Industry Research



GEORGE P. JOHNSON  
experience marketing



Center for Exhibition Industry Research

EXHIBITION INDUSTRY  
FOUNDATION

## Digital + Exhibiting Marketing Insights 2009

*Marketers and Exhibition Management Increasingly Blend  
Live and Digital Media for Greater Performance*

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Brand marketers and their exhibition management counterparts are becoming increasingly conversant in digital media and adept in its usage. This is due to audience demand for information on a 24/7 basis, the availability of new networking formats, the need for advanced measurement and the pressure to reduce costs.

Adopting new technology and digital tactics to increase profitability and improve overall program performance is not new to exhibiting, however. These changes are part of the ongoing embrace of new communication tactics that have defined the exhibition industry since its beginning.

Smart marketers are beginning to realize that more than incorporating digital media for digital's sake, what really matters is how events and digital tactics converge to build and foster relationships with audiences. While exhibitions and digital media are indeed useful tools on their own, combining the two creates a potent strategy in the battle for customer acquisition, loyalty, and everything in between.

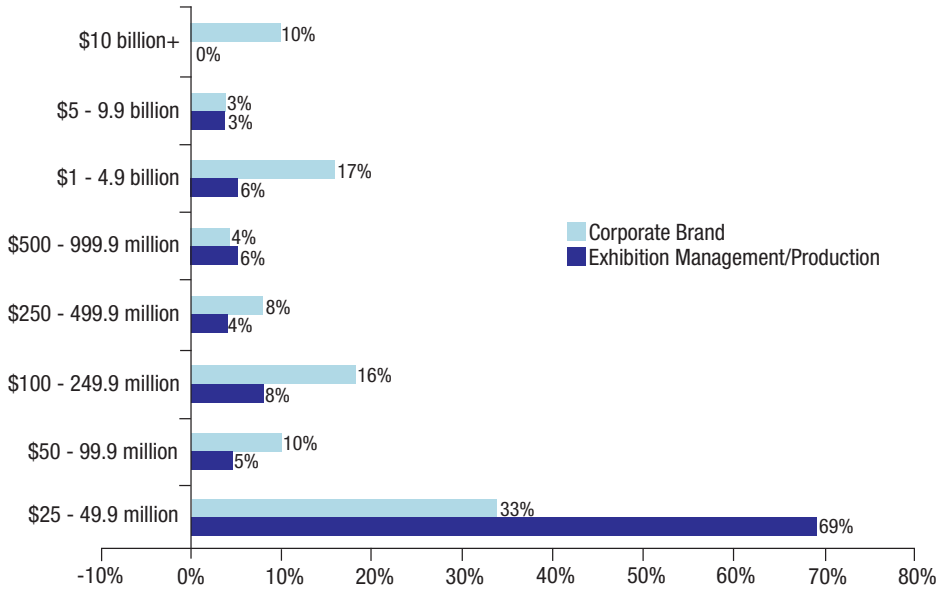
Co-produced through a unique partnership between industry research leader the Center for Exhibition Industry Research (CEIR) and worldwide experience marketing agency George P. Johnson (GPJ), and funded in part by the Exhibition Industry Foundation, this report is the industry's first comprehensive analysis of the influence of digital media on the exhibition industry.

Geared specifically for senior brand-side executives responsible for exhibiting budgets and the exhibition managers who produce events, this report contains benchmarking data which will enable these professionals to make more informed decisions about their use of digital media based on industry trends.

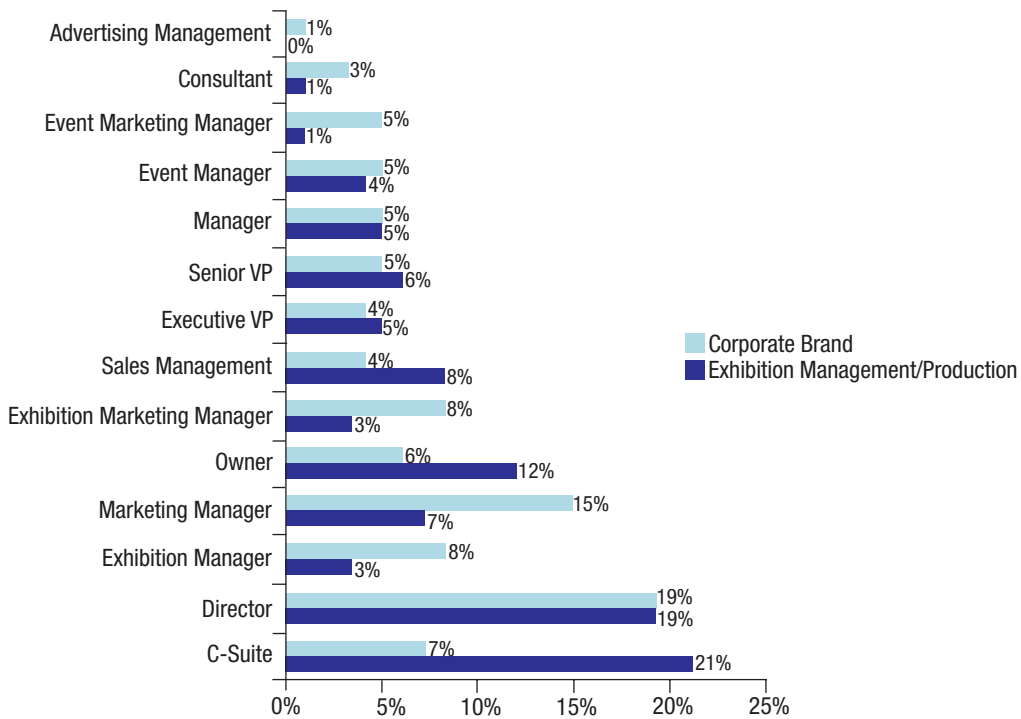
Special attention is being paid to framing digital media in such a way as to aid brand marketers and exhibition management in calibrating their offline and online promotional activities right now.

Sixty-three percent of exhibition management respondents and 41 percent of corporate brand side respondents maintain executive level titles. Thirty percent of corporate brand side and nine percent of exhibition management respondents represent companies that generate \$1+ billion in annual sales revenue. See Figures 2 and 3.

**FIGURE 2. Sample Demographics – Revenue**



**FIGURE 3. Sample Demographics – Title**



## Digital Media Taxonomy

For the purposes of this report, digital media includes the following tactics:

- E-mail marketing / advertising
- Online advertising (Banner Ads, search marketing)
- Audio downloads / podcasts
- Webcasts
- Online video
- Online games
- Web site/Microsites
- Social Media sites (Facebook, Linked In, Twitter, etc.)
- RSS
- SMS / MMS Mobility
- Virtual media/Virtual complements to live events
- Web based event management tools
- Blogs
- Google Adwords

Virtual Media Includes:

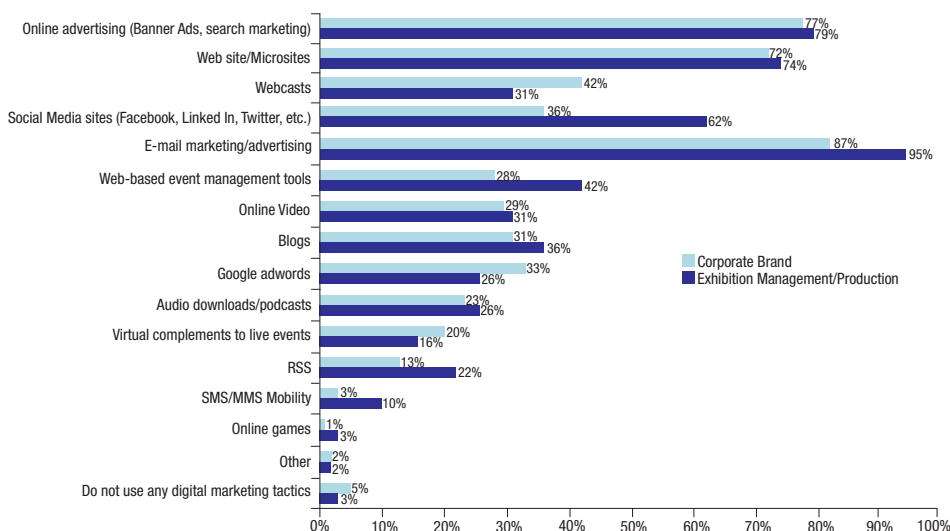
- **Webinars:** A seminar conducted over the Internet. In contrast to a Webcast, a Webinar is designed to be interactive between the presenter and the audience
- **Live Webcasts:** Live audio, video or multimedia distributed via the Internet or on digital networks. Webcasts can only be considered events when the content is live)
- **Web Conference:** A group meeting or live presentation over the Internet. Web Conferences use screen sharing accompanied by voice communication via telephone or VOIP. Text chat is sometimes used to complement, or in place of voice communication
- **Events in Virtual Worlds:** Meetings that take place in virtual worlds like Second Life. These can be as simple as a speaking opportunity, or as complex as a full-blown virtual conference, with robust multimedia, multiple speakers and sessions, networking opportunities, product demonstrations, virtual tours, etc.
- **Virtual trade show/exhibition:** Similar to a face-to-face exhibition but all elements are online. A virtual exhibition includes: an exhibition hall, a conference center for keynotes, panel discussions, and breakout sessions, a lounge for attendee networking and a resource center for distribution of content.

### Use of Digital Marketing and Best Practices

Exhibition management and corporate brand side marketers have unquestionably adopted digital media as part of their everyday activities. In general, the digital marketing tactics respondents use mostly include e-mail marketing/advertising, online advertising and Web sites/Microsites.

Looking more closely at the digital habits of each respondent group, as shown in Figure 4, corporate brand side marketers' use of digital demand generation tactics such as online advertising, webcasts, and Google ad words is slightly higher than their exhibition management counterparts.

FIGURE 4. Use of Digital Marketing



*For their part, exhibition management respondents outpace corporate brand respondents' use of social media.*

Corporate marketers are investing in banner ads or using proprietary content in interactive formats such as webcasts or event microsites as a means to amplify program messaging and foster deeper engagement.

For their part, exhibition management respondents outpace corporate brand respondents' use of social media. The divergence in each groups' use of this medium is likely due to the fact that event producers are relentlessly pushing to make a specific event the centerpiece of the community. Social media is a powerful platform upon which to build a 24/7 marketing program that is, in a sense, "activated" by the live experience. Meanwhile, corporate exhibitors deploy social media for numerous events, resulting in a more fragmented effort. (See Figures 5 and 6.)

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