

## **Background and situation in the end of 2006**

Expopage is a company that caters mainly Milan tradeshows since 2002 with web-based services.

Expopage pursues a full-service approach to offer value added to all stakeholders in tradeshows (visitors, exhibitors, organizer/fairground) on the base of the fact that any measure in favour of any one of the three main players will have an impact on the satisfaction of the others.

In the end of 2006, visitors of Milan tradeshows were able to consult the online catalogues of about one hundred tradeshows that were powered by Expopage. The service was available through the own website ([www.expopage.net](http://www.expopage.net)), the websites of the tradeshow clients (through “plug-ins”, for example: [www.bimu-sfortec.com](http://www.bimu-sfortec.com), [www.bit.fieramilanoexpects.it](http://www.bit.fieramilanoexpects.it) ), the Fiera Milano website ([www.fieramilano.it](http://www.fieramilano.it)) and various partner websites.

Between 2003 and 2006, Expopage launched a series of services for visitors synergetic to the core product, both freely available and accessible subject to registration/log-in. Some of these services were MyNotebook with tradeshow maps, possibility to make appointments with exhibitors, contact exhibitors in a privileged way, etc.

By the end of 2006, more than 230.000 visitors had registered to Expopage in order to use the value-added services. A large part of these visitors (26%) had registered to Expopage in synergy to the online-registration for tradeshows, a service delivered by Expopage to 21 tradeshows.

Up to the 2006, it had been policy to ask only minimal personal data for the opt-in. From the very beginning, however, it had been the intention of Expopage to launch services with increased value added and more interactive elements that would deliver a reason to users to complete their registration in a second moment. It has also been Expopage goal to launch paid services and contents for visitors.

In this context, the Expopage team mapped out the objectives and the action plan for the further development.

## **Objectives**

| <b>Objectives</b>  | <b>Method of measurement</b>   |
|--|--|
| 1) Reduce waiting time at event entrance   | - Number of trade shows using Expopage / Fiera Milano pre-registration system              |
| 2) Enable visitors to encounter more exhibiting companies in the same time   | - Number of active “My Notebook”<br>- Number of appointments requested through “My Agenda” |
| 3) Offer services that are perceived as useful by trade show visitors in the period between 2 editions of the same event   | - Number of monthly log-in<br>- Number of registered users who login at least once a month |
| 4) Enhance interaction between trade show visitors and exhibitors and among themselves by offering possibility for visitors to present themselves to the trade show operators’ community | - Number of published profiles   |

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|---|---|
| 5) Increase number of users who visit Expopage between two editions of the same event with the help of a dedicated Communication Plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Number of sent e-mails</li> <li>- Quote of e-mails opened by visitors</li> <li>- Quote of click through on e-mails opened</li> </ul> |
|---|---|

## **Actions**

1. Expopage has developed a real time integration between the **events pre-registration** system and the access control system of Fiera Milano, in order to allow visitors to pre-register online, from home or from the office, until the last day of the event. At the same time Expopage has pushed events organizers to a wider adoption of online pre-registrations. A double objective has been achieved: on the one hand a service improvement for visitors has been reached, on the other hand events organizers have access to a complete visitors database reducing paperwork.

See an example of an event homepage in [www.expopage.net](http://www.expopage.net), where visitors can start the pre-registration process:

[http://en.expopage.net/portal/tradeshows.do?tradeshows=WELLNESS%20Spa%20&TS\\_ID=514&](http://en.expopage.net/portal/tradeshows.do?tradeshows=WELLNESS%20Spa%20&TS_ID=514&)

2. Expopage has functionally improved some existing services to let visitors to make the most of their visit time at the event. In more detail:
  - a. **"My Notebook"** allows visitors to bookmark their preferred exhibitors and print pavilion maps with the corresponding location;
  - b. **"My Agenda"** allows visitors to arrange appointments with exhibitors in advance and manage and print the appointments agenda;
  - c. **"Event catalogue for palmtop"** allows visitors to browse the event catalogue on a palmtop, to find out more about the event, to see the pavilion maps, to search exhibitors or products, to locate exhibitors' booths and to manage the appointments agenda.

See the "For your trade fair visit" page:

[http://en.expopage.net/portal/pages/home2/per\\_la\\_tua\\_visita\\_in\\_fiera\\_milano.jsp](http://en.expopage.net/portal/pages/home2/per_la_tua_visita_in_fiera_milano.jsp)

*To download a catalogue for your palmtop and for your pc, we have credited the UFI ICT Award committee account with one credit for each product. Contact us if you need more credits.*

3. Expopage has developed a set of business services useful for visitors even in the time span beyond the event. In detail:
  - a. **"Dossier and reports"** about industry sectors, trends and specific topics, in order to be always up to date in one's field
  - b. **"Business and financial information"** to check the financial position of companies letting you concentrate your business on companies and suppliers with a solid position
  - c. **"Mail marketing campaign"** a service to reach a target audience of professionals among the Expopage registered users base. Expopage registered users are profiled upon their profile, online behaviour and interest in products and companies on [www.expopage.net](http://www.expopage.net).
  - d. **"Classified ads"**: to promote one's company news or to look for new partners or collaboration opportunities. Visitors can publish online classified ads visible by the thousands of professionals and industry sector operators who visit [www.expopage.net](http://www.expopage.net) every day.
  - e. **"Banner campaign"**: to get one's company noticed with online banners on those pages devoted to events and industry sectors of interest.
  - f. **"Online training"**: a set of online video lessons by the experts in marketing and communication to enrich one's professional skills.

- g. **“Business Travel”**: a dedicated portal, [www.club.expopage.net](http://www.club.expopage.net), to road warriors who need travel, accommodation, car rental and limo service in their daily business. On [www.club.expopage.net](http://www.club.expopage.net) you can book flights, hotels, rent cars and limo services in a single solution and with special rates for Expopage users.

To give Expopage users a cheaper access to the above services, a paid premium membership has been created: “Business Club Plus”.

Taking into account that most of the [www.expopage.net](http://www.expopage.net) users are Italian (about 75%), we have made available all the services listed above in Italian and a few in English. Expopage goal is to develop the remaining services in English in the future based also on their relevance for foreign visitors.

See the “For your company” page:

[http://en.expopage.net/portal/pages/home2/per\\_la\\_tua\\_azienda.jsp](http://en.expopage.net/portal/pages/home2/per_la_tua_azienda.jsp)

See the “For your visibility” page:

[http://en.expopage.net/portal/pages/home2/per\\_la\\_tua\\_visibilita.jsp](http://en.expopage.net/portal/pages/home2/per_la_tua_visibilita.jsp)

See the “Business Club Plus” page: [http://en.expopage.net/portal/business\\_club\\_plus.do](http://en.expopage.net/portal/business_club_plus.do)

*We have credited the UFI ICT Award committee account with the Business Club Plus membership.*

4. Expopage has introduced business social networking features, **Opportunity Network**, that enable visitors to present themselves and their skills to the entire Fiera Milano events community. Expopage Opportunity Network allows visitors to:
- Publish one’s personal profile
  - Establish relations with other members of the network (visitors and exhibitors)
  - Contact other members of the network
  - Invite new members to join the network

By joining the Opportunity Network, visitors can promote themselves within a very professional environment, make their expertise known to others and open new business channels. They can give visibility to their business relationships with companies and broaden their network of contacts finding new opportunities.

See the “Opportunity Network” starting page:

[http://en.expopage.net/portal/pages/opportunity\\_network/on.jsp](http://en.expopage.net/portal/pages/opportunity_network/on.jsp)

5. To promote all the above initiatives, Expopage has built a communication plan that targets all the portal registered users. Our communication plan is based on e-mail marketing and provides for e-mail deliveries about the various services; the entire list of topics is covered by e-mails sent between two editions of the same event.
- > [Click here to see a planning example for a yearly event](#)

## **Results**

Here follow some metrics showing results and benefits achieved.

1. The number of events having **online pre-registration or pre-sale** increased from **21** in 2006, to **25** in 2007, to **30** in 2008.

The effect of **extending the pre-registration** during the event days can be seen taking Bit (International Tourism Exchange, from 21 to 24 February) as an example: in 2008, **23%** of online pre-preregistrations took place during the event days.

[> Click here for more details](#)

2. The number of active “My Notebook” increased from 24.436 at the end of 2006 to 36.705 at the end of June 2008. This is a 50% increase in only 18 months, on a base built in the 4 previous years (2003-2006).

[> Click here for more details](#)

The number of **appointments requested through “My Agenda”** increased from **3.630** in 2006 to **7.525** in the first half of 2008.

[> Click here for more details](#)

The growing use of Expopage services by visitors has also been appreciated by exhibitors. The number of **virtual e-booths with contents** uploaded by exhibitors (text, photo, video) is now 14.019 with an **increase of 11%** in only one year and a half. As a result, virtual e-booths provide more value to visitors therefore attracting more online visits.

[> Click here for more details](#)

3. Business services useful for visitors even in the time span beyond the event need a login authentication. A measure of these services usage can be given by the **number of logins made by visitors**.

The number of **users making a login** and the total number of logins **increased by 41% and 42%** respectively in the first half of 2008 compared to entire 2007.

[> Click here for more details](#)

(Please consider the seasonality of events that bring visitors to [www.expopage.net](http://www.expopage.net))

Looking at the logins done by visitors of a specific event (BIT, International Tourism Exchange, taking place in February) and their online purchases we can see that there is a **peak next to the event** date, but there is a baseline of logins and purchases throughout the whole year done by visitors interested in the services available on [www.expopage.net](http://www.expopage.net).

[> Click here for more details](#)

4. The **Opportunity Network** has been introduced at the end of 2007 and shows a steady and sustainable growth. At the moment there are more than **4.300** members.

[> Click here for more details](#)

5. The communication activity in 2007 was marked by an initial effort to **launch the new services**; therefore many communications have been sent to the whole registered users base. On the contrary, the communication activity **in 2008** has become more **focused on selected targets**.

This approach has reached the goal of increasing the click-through rate from **14%** to **18%**.

[> Click here for more details](#)