

UFI Marketing Award 2012 Entry

YOUR Freeman Experience – an exhibit program featured at the 2011 International Association and Exhibitions and Events (IAEE) Expo! Expo! as well as the 2012 Exhibitor Show.

Objectives

The objective was to create an experience that confirmed for current customers and exposed new customers to Freeman’s integrated solutions for face-to-face and experiential marketing. The objective was two-fold: first, create more awareness around our complete portfolio of offerings and second, reinforce our positioning as the premier provider of integrated solutions.

For both events, we had a 20x30 space in which to create an experience that fully immersed attendees in what Freeman can accomplish for them. We couldn’t just *tell* them what we can do, we needed to *show* them and allow them to create the Freeman experience most relevant to their own vision and objectives. We also wanted to create buzz on the show floor and earn new business opportunities as a result of YOUR Freeman Experience at each event.

- Specific objectives for YOUR Freeman Experience at IAEE were to spend time with specific customers (show organizers) to expose them to Freeman services they hadn’t been utilizing and to spend time with targeted prospects whose relationships we wanted to nurture.
- Objectives for YOUR Freeman Experience at the Exhibitor Show were to demonstrate for existing and future customers how to tell a Brand story by engaging attendees in the experience and as a result, generate valuable leads.

Actions

To achieve the objectives, we needed to create a comprehensive experience that our audience would feel involved with before, during and after each event. This experience needed to be “all about you” – the customer. To do this, we came up with the following big idea:

YOUR Freeman Experience encapsulates the heart of what our business is about. Meaning it’s all about you, the customer. We’re creating brand experiences together. We listen to your needs. We put you first. And, we make YOUR Freeman Experience exactly what it needs to be – YOURS.

Taking this idea, Freeman’s creative team designed a 20x30 booth experience that could be customized for each visitor. Since every customer is different and would have different needs and challenges to discuss, our space needed to provide a variety of interaction opportunities.

The exhibit design was visually appealing and the focal part of the experience was the Freeman Experience Table. Located in the center of the exhibit, the Experience Table enabled visitors to literally create their own experience in the space. Visitors were able to select their favorite of four different elements in the booth. These included:

1. Canopy Color Wash - the canopy over the exhibit space was created using large Plexi cones that could be washed with four distinct colors of light, each providing a different feel to the exhibit.
2. Back Wall - four unique lighting effects could be projected on the back wall of the exhibit and attendees were able to select their favorite lighting effect on the back wall.
3. Floor Projection - projection on the floor enabled attendees to select from four distinct looks – leaves blowing in the wind, blue ocean waves, green grass wavering and a lavender field to create the anchor of the space.
4. Music Selection - four different compositions were offered so attendees could select their favorite sound to round out the experience – jazz, rock & roll, classical and country.

Once they had selected their favorite of the four elements, the Experience Table would change the entire look and feel of the space so each person could create their own unique environment using audio visual elements that Freeman provides.

In addition to the Experience Table, the exhibit contained three touch screen displays and seven iPads that allowed attendees to take self-guided tours through Freeman's brand pillars: Strategy, Creative, Innovation, Logistics. Within the exhibit, a sweets station provided attendees the opportunity to select their favorite mix of four branded candies that tied to each of the Freeman brand pillars.

To generate excitement before each event and to intrigue attendees about the idea of creating their own unique experience, a video invitation was created and sent via social media channels and email to target customers and prospects. The video, featuring Freeman employees who would be at each event welcomed attendees personally and shared subtle aspects of the experience they could create at the Freeman booth. Following each event, another video was sent to those who visited YOUR Freeman Experience thanking them for their time and inviting them to learn more at the Freeman website.

Results

Results for YOUR Freeman Experience at IAEE Expo! Expo!, December, 2011:

7% increase in qualified leads over prior year

Exhibit won Best in Show Award

Sales objectives were achieved including a 32% increase in attendance at evening customer event

Social media engagement increased significantly over prior year

Qualitative feedback via social media channels confirmed success of marketing campaign

Results for YOUR Freeman Experience at The Exhibitor Show, March, 2012

Exceeded sales goals by 5%

60% increase in attendance at evening customer event

Booked an account at the event with revenue potential of \$1M

Social media engagement increased significantly over prior year

Qualitative feedback via social media channels confirmed success of marketing campaign