

Chris Hughes

Brand Events was founded by Chris Hughes in 1999 with a mission to create great days out and build fantastic brand experiences.

His extensive experience in the exhibitions business began with the role of Director of Events at London's Business Design Centre, which he held for eight years launching shows such as Country Living Fair. Following this he spent three years as Deputy MD at BBC Haymarket Exhibitions where he launched BBC Mega Mela, Max Power Live and Vive La France.

Brand Events' first launch in 2000 was the The Vitality Show – a health and well-being event for women – the huge success of which created the platform for Brand Events' second and equally successful launch, the Outdoors Show in 2001. In Spring 2004 dmg world media (Daily Mail Group) bought both shows outright.

Meanwhile, the Brand Events team had developed a hugely popular dating event concept called Chemistry, which in a single year welcomed over 120,000 daters across the UK. Chemistry was also sold in 2004 to datingdirect.com, the UK's largest online dating site.

Launched in 2003, MPH is now a well-established event brand, offering a unique live motoring experience hosted by Jeremy Clarkson alongside a gallery of the world's top prestige and performance cars. Run in both London and Birmingham, negotiations are underway to create an international roster of MPH events from 2007 onwards.

Feeding the UK's growing interest in food, cooking, chefs and restaurants, Brand Events also launched Taste of London. Now in its third year and hugely popular, the event hosted 40 of London's finest restaurants along with around 150 fine food and drink retailers, again in Regent's Park. This event will continue to grow as will the number of regional Taste events following two successful 'Taste' launches this summer; Taste of Dublin and Taste of Birmingham. Channel 4 has now shares a 50% stake in the business, making it the first time in history to have such a joint venture. Taste is now exploring opportunities in international cities with a view to launching overseas in 2007.

Developing a passion for all things Italian, Brand Events launched London's largest celebration of Italy, La DolceVita in 2005 and this has now already grown into a new venue at Olympia.

In 2005, Brand Events acquired Toast, a unique festival concept bringing together the UK's New Zealand and Australian communities. Today Toast has grown into Europe's finest Festival of Australasian Food, Wine and Entertainment in its new home in London's, Regents Park.

Fulfilling the company mission, the Brand Events team has built up a range of high profile brand clients – including British Airways, M&S, Shell, Nike and Renault - whose involvement in their events has largely re-shaped the face of the consumer exhibitions industry in recent years.

Chris has led the team in many award-winning celebrations over the years including The Event Magazine awards for 'Best Consumer Exhibition' 2005 for MPH, and 'Best New Exhibition 2002' for The Outdoor show amongst many others.