

**1<sup>st</sup> February 2007**

**Comment on Institute of Practitioners in Advertising's (IPA) Bellwether Report**

**Events - Marketing's 'Significant Other' ?**

2007 looks like being a good year for marketing. The recent Bellwether Report predicts that budget setting across the whole marketing spectrum will be the most buoyant in seven years. The IPA's quarterly survey of marketing spend noted that improved business conditions have already seen marketing budgets stabilise in Q4 and spells out where it sees the action is.

The internet of course is identified as having by far the strongest upward revision and is now estimated to account for 5% of all marketing budgets. The other stalwarts in the marketing mix do get individual mentions, but there's a whopping 22% of marketing spend simply lumped under 'other' - quite a 'significant other'.

More than a fifth of the pie, and some would argue a quarter or more, is left floating in an actuary's no man's land. Sponsorship gets a mention, but what about event marketing? Let's hear about the oldest and some might say most effective medium of them all....

Many of the most innovative marketeers are making sure they're part of the action when it comes to events, exhibitions and experiential opportunities. Increasingly marketing strategies are combining online campaigns with live events – the only part of the mix not able to be replicated online. The O<sup>2</sup> Wireless Festival in Hyde Park last summer saw the sponsor take ownership of the live brand experience while using the opportunity to pamper its customers with added-value extras - their re-branding of the dome in the summer endorses O<sup>2</sup>'s commitment to live events. At the end of last year Channel 4 bought 50% of Taste Events, a high-profile programme of food & drink festivals, while Emap Communications have just snapped up Trades Exhibitions Ltd's Professional Beauty portfolio of live events in face of stiff competition.

Channel 4 Rights' Managing Director Michael Hodgson sees live events as a great way to give his C4 and programme brands the ability to create direct connection with consumers *"I believe a direct one-to-one relationship with a consumer is only going to become more important in a fragmenting digital world."* Derek Carter, Emap Communications chief executive commented of their recent acquisition, "It is consistent with our focus on bolt-on acquisitions in the fast growing events space."

Association of Event Organisers (AEO) member, George P Johnson's *EventView 2006* research (which surveyed 900 marketing managers across the globe) identified that 49% of respondents believe the importance of event marketing is increasing. According to the research, event marketing represents 25% of their global marketing budgets, and produces the greatest ROI. Another global study, by AEO member, the MICE Group *Experiential Marketing : It Works* revealed 62% of respondents predicting "experiential" to be one of the big marketing growth areas over the next five years. And that growth is already well underway, with 58% claiming to have increased experiential budget over the past two to three years.

The events industry is enjoying a great time as big new names recognise its power and the symbiotic relationship with new media has supported growth in recent years. So will marketing's 'significant other' have stepped out of the shadows by the time the next Bellwether report is put together? With marketing spend and economic growth predicted to exceed many people's expectations in 2007 the events industry says ignore us at your peril!

**By Trevor Foley, Chief Executive of Events Industry Alliance**

IPA advise that survey respondents tick an 'All other' box, rather than giving actual spend figures. The breakdown of 'All other' is:

Corporate hospitality  
Entertainment  
Exhibitions  
Conferences and seminars  
Sponsorship  
Promotional material  
Newsletters and other corporate literature  
Public relations  
Internet / e-commerce activities  
Market research

===ENDS===

---NOTES TO EDITORS---

**About the EIA: [www.eventsindustryalliance.com](http://www.eventsindustryalliance.com)**

The Events Industry Alliance (EIA) is the new marketing arm for the exhibitions and events industry, tasked with telling business leaders and media planners about the huge prospects for business growth through the medium of "Face to Face Marketing", and increasing recognition in Government of the considerable value of the industry to the UK economy.

This new body has been formed by and is equally owned by members of three associations that have increasingly worked together to speak with one powerful voice for the industry:

- The Association of Exhibition Contractors (AEC)

- The Association of Exhibition Organisers (AEO)
- The Association of Event Venues (AEV)

The EIA aims to:

1. Provide a single stronger voice for the industry
2. Better resource industry promotion activities
3. Enable greater sharing of information and intellect between existing association parties and new communities
4. Increase professionalism within and knowledge of the industry at all levels within member companies, In order that all members can run existing events more successfully and win more exhibition/event business.

For more information, visit the website at [www.eventsindustryalliance.com](http://www.eventsindustryalliance.com)

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**O2 Wireless Festival:** [www.o2wirelessfestival.co.uk](http://www.o2wirelessfestival.co.uk)

**C4:** [www.channel4.com](http://www.channel4.com)

**Taste Events:** [www.brandevents.co.uk](http://www.brandevents.co.uk)

**Emap Communications:** [www.emap.com](http://www.emap.com)

**Professional Beauty:** [www.professionalbeauty.co.uk](http://www.professionalbeauty.co.uk)

**George P Johnson's:** [www.gpjco.co.uk](http://www.gpjco.co.uk)

**MICE:** [www.micegroup.com](http://www.micegroup.com)