

Your Evolving b2b Media Portfolio: The Role of Events

By John Failla, CEO, Tesoro Events

American Business Media's recent Forrester Research study documented the growing importance of face-to-face events for b2b marketers. Respondents to the survey identified face-to-face events as the most effective marketing vehicle for both building brand image and generating qualified leads. In addition to this qualitative measure, the accompanying chart, which I first saw in a presentation at the 2008 SISO CEO Summit by **Access Intelligence CEO Don Pazour**, provides quantitative evidence of the increasing share of face-to-face events in b2b budgets.

Data supporting the chart is culled from the **Veronis Suhler Stevenson** Commu-

nications Industry Forecast 2006-2011 (VSS is parent of **min's b2b** publisher Access Intelligence). In addition to documenting the ascension of trade shows to the number one channel for b2b media spending in 2007, it provides an indication of what the ideal b2b media portfolio mix should be to reflect marketer spending going forward. In 2011, b2b marketers are forecasted to spend 44% on events, 36% on print media and 20% on e-media. While this mix will certainly vary by vertical industry segment, it's clear that in virtually all industry segments b2b media companies should plan on driving a majority of their revenue from events and e-

ing considerable money on the table.

While most traditional b2b publishers have a dedicated plan established to achieve this transformation with e-media, fewer appear to have as strong a commitment to securing their fair share of marketer dollars invested in face-to-face media. In looking at the companies that have been most successful in navigating this transformation, they are consistently focused on profitably serving the needs of their markets with print, online and face-to-face products. They view their core brands as franchises providing branded information across many channels rather than any one media channel, and are equally committed to



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in a serious and strategic manner with conviction.

2. Establish dedicated leadership for the events business that has full ownership and accountability for the development, execution and results of the business.

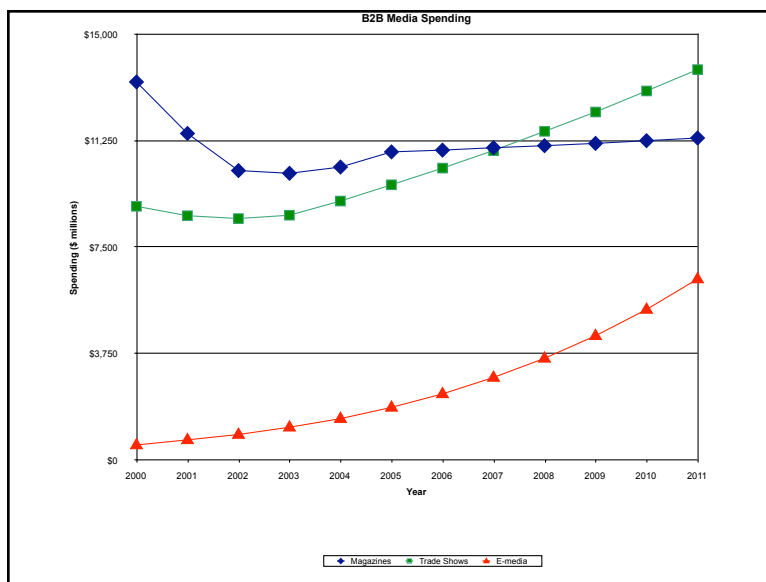
3. Evaluate and explore the full range of event models that can be profitably produced in your markets. Conferences, road shows, facilitated one-on-one meetings, traditional trade shows, awards programs and virtual events are all potential options that may be developed and executed profitably.

4. Above all else, establish an audience focus in order to develop events that will meet market needs or bring greater efficiency to existing product sourcing processes. Audience focus is at the heart of delivering superior ROI for attendees.

the development of compelling strategies and the necessary infrastructure to deliver value in each media channel.

To successfully develop the business potential of face-to-face events in a market, b2b companies should:

1. Choose to treat the development and execution of events as a core competence and make the same strategic commitment to building an events business as they make to build a meaningful e-media business. The key is to treat face-to-face media



This PowerPoint slide illustrates b2b media spending (in millions) on magazines (blue), trade shows (green) and e-media (red).

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