

nGn Case Study: Messe Berlin

VIRTUAL MARKETPLACES FOR REAL-WORLD PROFITS

HOW TRADE FAIR ORGANIZERS CAN BENEFIT FROM THE GLOBAL DIGITAL REVOLUTION

Messe Berlin is a key player in the global trade fair industry. As one of Germany's leading trade exhibition companies, it organizes more than 100 major events every year, many of them premier international expos, including the IFA World of Consumer Electronics Fair, International Tourism Exchange (ITB Berlin), International Green Week, and the International Aerospace Exhibition (ILA).

Messe Berlin was quick to recognize that the Internet is changing the behavioral patterns of trade fair visitors and grasp the new marketing opportunities this worldwide communication platform offered. To get the best possible professional support in this field, Messe Berlin went looking for a partner that could accompany it on the road into the Digital Age.

"WE HAVE TO OPEN UP A NEW CHAPTER TO THE FUTURE OF TRADE SHOWS TO COMPREHENSIVELY MEET THE BASIC DEMANDS FOR THE LATEST INFORMATION AND REAL TRADE THROUGH CONTEMPORARY MODERN MEDIA",

Messe Berlin CEO Raimund Hosch, 2001

Messe Berlin

Messe Berlin Facts & Figures 2008

Exhibitors	approx. 22,000
Visitors	approx. 2 million
Trade fairs	more than 60
Area	160,000m ²
Sales	€190 million

PRIMARY OBJECTIVE: TRADE FAIRS FREED OF THE CONSTRAINTS OF TIME AND SPACE

In 2001 Messe Berlin chose new generation network GmbH to serve as a strategic partner. nGn has established its name in the industry as a dynamic developer of innovative digital solutions. The young team at nGn impressed Messe Berlin with their proactive, cooperative style. nGn's core expertise lies in giving trade fair visitors and others online access to exhibitor and product information 365 days a year and combining this availability with profitable business models.

The competitive advantages of a trade exhibition company – established customer relations and experience in real-world industry marketplaces – can thus be used effectively on the Internet.



THE SOLUTION: INTEGRATE INTERACTIVE ONLINE PLATFORMS INTO TRADE EXHIBITION WEB SITES

The platforms developed jointly by nGn and Messe Berlin are profitable industry marketplaces in the virtual world. As the world's first trade fair organizer to use an online platform, Messe Berlin took steps to protect its business model under the name Virtual Market Place® (VMP). In the meantime, Messe Berlin has set up Virtual Market Places® for 19 trade events – with steadily increasing dynamics!



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AN EASY CHOICE: INTEGRATED ONLINE PORTAL OR INDEPENDENT SATELLITE WEBSITE

nGn offers two basic ways of setting up online portals: as an integrated solution or a satellite website. Integrated portals are created within the existing trade fair website. Visitors immediately associate these portals with the established trade fair brand. By contrast, satellite websites open in a separate window. This additional website has its own Internet address (URL) and can thus be marketed independently of the trade fair itself.

In both cases the trade fair site and the associated VMP are closely linked to each other. Search engines on exhibition websites are connected to the VMP, while links on the VMP take users to trade fair exhibitor and user information, registration, or ticket sales.

RELEVANT AND UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION INCREASES BENEFITS

It is especially important to ensure that the information and presentations on web portals is relevant and up-to-date. Otherwise, it is of no use to consumers, trade visitors, or journalists. On behalf of Messe Berlin, nGn collects information from exhibitors by telephone and e-mail (content production) and then updates its database several times a year. The staff may contact each exhibitor as many as 13 times! Exhibitors appreciate this outstanding extra service, the frequency of the contacts, and the management of the stored data.

Exhibitors submit data in a variety of formats during the content production process. The nGn team sifts through the different data media, uploads images, writes accompanying texts, and conducts searches for useful facts and figures. This manually generated content gives trade fair organizers a significant competitive edge because the quality of this pooled data is far better than that collected by automated search methods.

22,000 EXHIBITORS FROM 180 COUNTRIES – AND EVERYONE HAS A SAY!

The content producers at nGn have converted data from more than 22,000 exhibitors in more than 180 countries and processed this information into state-of-the-art online profiles for Messe Berlin. This includes exhibitors at leading trade events like ITB Berlin, IFA, InnoTrans, FRUIT LOGISTICA and ILA. nGn staff members communicate in more than 20 languages. When dealing with exhibitors from Asia, nGn employs its own Chinese, Japanese, and Korean native speakers. This ensures they not only speak the same language, but also understand the different cultures.





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VARIED APPLICATIONS, PRECISE BENEFITS – THANKS TO MULTI-USAGE AND MATCHING LETTER

Visitors to the online portal can register in their own login area to gain access to a wide range of useful functions. These simple and user-friendly tools enable visitors to send e-mails, arrange appointments with exhibitors, store data, set up reminders, recommend links, chat with other users within the frame-work of social networking functions, use job announcement portals and print information.

Matching letters have proved to be the most important function of the VMPs. These regular e-mails feature only those type of products each user indicated a preference for during registration. nGn sends these newsletters in the trade fair's name to all users registered on the VMP. As such exhibitors can use the matching letter to bind visitors to the portal long after the show is over.

IN OTHER WORDS: VIRTUAL MARKET PLACES® ARE YOUR GATEWAY TO A SUCCESSFUL FUTURE

Messe Berlin has been a satisfied nGn customer for more than eight years. In this time, 19 online trade fair portals have been set up. 22,000 exhibitors from 180 countries are presented on the Internet, more than 15 million search requests recorded, more than 43 million corporate product profile pages accessed at a rate of 3.6 million visits a year, and far in excess of 100,000 e-mail enquiries and appointments have been forwarded to exhibitors. These figures speak for themselves – and for the successful collaboration between nGn and Messe Berlin.

Understandably, Messe Berlin's success has been copied by many similar organizations. Today nGn's services are used by NürnbergMesse as well as Deutsche Messe AG, Hinte, and Messe Schweiz, English trade fair organizer Montgomery/Reed, US show organizers PennWell and Diversified, and even SES of Singapore.



“THE ENCOURAGEMENT WE HAVE RECEIVED FROM WELL OVER 20,000 PARTICIPATING COMPANIES PROVES WE TOOK THE BOLD STEP INTO THE INFORMATION AGE, UNCHARTED TERRITORY FOR THE TRADE FAIR INDUSTRY BACK THEN, AT PRECISELY THE RIGHT MOMENT”

Raimund Hosch, CEO Messe Berlin

**If you don't move with the times,
you get left behind.**