



COVID- 19: RESOURCE PAPER

Disruption in exhibition industry: The Organisers Perspective:

IEIA presents this resource paper covering the most frequently asked questions amidst the COVID-19 era. This is an extract from 'IEIA Webinar Series, Part- I' conducted on 02 April, 2020.

Q1. There is a sudden challenge thrown at businesses and no one knows how to face this challenge. What will happen in the near future? What is your micro-assumption?

- The exact socio-economic impact of the current situation caused by COVID-19 is still not completely clear.
- It has impacted the normal way of running businesses in unprecedented manner
- There is disruption in all spheres of life and business
- Most Q1 Q2 shows have been postponed or cancelled, causing tremendous impact and shutdown of the economy
- No infrastructure work, hotel bookings , travel etc. are happening except the work related to IT sector
- IT sector will see growth amidst this situation
- Normalcy will start returning from Q3 onwards
- Social distancing has become important
- Organisations should keep the company staffs well prepared and motivated so that when back we are ready to function
- After the crisis period, exhibitors will experience cash crunch, however, there will be an urge to perform better
- Exhibitions can play a big role in supporting business growth
- Technology is going to be a major addition and virtual mode will be explored more
- Newer ways of customer engagement will evolve
- Novel ways of money management will be a new feature
- Venues are providing infrastructural support to the government
- Corona has become one of the largest event
- Expo industry is badly hit and this impact will continue till Q2 and Q3
- Silver lining is that govt. is taking good steps
- Human resources in such condition also need to be used ideally by the organisations as they are bearing more expenses
- Bigger challenge for B2B Events as international traffic remains restricted
- Dates will be a challenge
- Post COVID , we should come up with a promotional campaign stating India is a safe destination for events and can divert China's traffic
- Working together will pave a better way



Q2. What do you think is the new normal, which exhibition organisers should get used to?

- Lots of businesses are being affected and disruption is evident
- It is important to do short, mid and long term planning
- Organisations need to assess their businesses and P&L and chart out the action plan for next 2 years
- Leaders from industry to play active role
- The situation will be marked by lots of changes
- New things will come into being like Social distancing, which is there to stay for a while
- Innovative marketing will come into being
- It will impact the advertising
- We will have to look for digital registration
- Too much of competition is likely to happen
- New technology will add to the cost
- Overheads will increase so costs management will be necessary, we will have to look at various costs and ways to control them
- There will be liquidity issues in the companies, so planning becomes essential

Q3. What are the expected changes in business approach in the exhibition sector in India?

- Business Contingency Plan is a must for all in such times
- Post Corona planning should be carefully done
- Changes in scheduling if shows from peak to other seasons

Q4. There are many MSME exhibition organisers who have been adversely affected by COVID 19. What are the measures they can deploy for sustaining their business?

- Look for channels to build resilience
- Come up with Reforms by considering your competitors behaviour
- Reimagine and Explore new avenues of business
- Plan your return on business carefully
- A lot of collaborations will be happening
- Organisers, Venues and supply partners may form new partnerships
- Working pattern will change
- It is a time for self -introspection within organisations , over staffing and over budgeting needs to be carefully taken care of and sustainable plans of business need to be formed
- New business strategy will be seen
- Change in the pattern of buying will be seen
- Buyers will first buy then sell

5. How easy it is for the exhibition industry to invest in technology?

- One has to opt for hybridised exhibitions and events
- Overall Cost incurred by the organisations will surely go up
- We have to look for offering 360 degree support and engagement with the customers
- Virtual mode will need to be explored more
- 30 to 40 percent reduction in space is likely to be seen
- We have to manage the work force, partners and consumers well
- With social distancing work from remote location may become the new thing and flexi working timing may also come into practices requiring investment in technology



Q6. In these critical times, when many show sizes will be shrinking, what are the priorities for a CEO?

- Careful Planning for business
- Cash flow management
- Cost benefit analysis to be done for each activity
- There will be increased competition which needs to be addressed carefully
- Come up with innovative ways of marketing
- Look for mobilising revenue through digital modes
- Travel & entertainment costs to be reduced

Q7. TWith so many events postponed, there will be a clash of dates and difficulty in finding suitable venues. How to address?

- This is certainly going to happen not only in Q3 and Q4 but will be extended to the next year as well.
- We need to find solution by way of time adjustments

Q8. What role are the exhibition organisers playing at this time? How are they connecting?

- Organisers are engaging one on one with our stakeholders and doing quality discussion.
- At the same time, it is a good time to taking feedback from the stakeholders
- There will be a lifestyle change we all might experience

Q9. Will the health and safety standard be the new challenge and impact the show?

- The nature of the shows will not be affected.
- However, it will certainly affect the shows.
- It will be good to formulate health and safety guidelines to be followed by the industry.

Moderated By:

Mr. Bhupinder Singh, Honorary Secretary, IEIA & CEO, MesseMuenchen India Pvt. Ltd.

Resource Panellists:

Mr. V. Anbu: Incoming President 2021, UFI & DG IMTMA

Mr. Rakesh Kumar: Past President, IEIA & DG, Export Promotion Council of Handicrafts

Ms. Sonia Prashar: Executive Member, IEIA & CMD, NuernbergMesse India Pvt. Ltd.

Mr. Yogesh Mudras: Executive Member, IEIA & MD, Informa Markets, India

Mr. Gaurav Juneja: Executive Member, IEIA & Director, MEX Exhibitions Pvt. Ltd.