

The Look of a World Trade Show in America

More and more trade shows held in the USA, as well as in the rest of the world, are international traveling events that are often managed by an international show organizer. As a result, the organization methods, show rules, and exhibit design styles for these world shows are different from a typical American trade show. These international events are sure not business for the American exhibit suppliers who assist their customers on the show floor. One such show was **World Routes 2014**, held at McCormick Place- West Hall in Chicago- Sept 21-23, 2014. Upon entry to the show hall it was quickly evident that this event looked a little different from typical American trade show events. **World Routes** celebrated its 20th year connecting world airline managers and coordinators to plan and improve air transportation to new global air routes. Airlines want to know more about the market first and then about the airports. World Routes is hosted in a different world location each year. The official contractor for this US event was Freeman, but the flavor of the show was distinctly different from other American trade show events. Note that American show organizers are also taking their events and methods abroad for shows held internationally. I suspect in due time we will all be borrowing a page from each other to organize and design trade shows the same and the market will dictate what they prefer.

The theme of my upcoming book, “ Trade Shows from One Country to the Next”, is- *there is no right way, there is no wrong way, there is only a different way.* Understanding and respecting trade show location differences is key to being successful in different world venue locations.

Here are a few of the differences I saw at this year’s World Routes Show-2014.

- All stands were in a metric size and not the same cookie cutter shapes
- The Routes exhibitor manual was written in British English. Same language, but different words-

<u>UK</u>	<u>US</u>
Stand dressing	Exhibit design
Build Up	Exhibit set up
Freight Lifting	Freight Handling
Shell Scheme	System rental from contractor
Collections	Removal of materials from hall
Stand Fitting	Exhibit materials for installation
Chalets	Non Exhibit meeting rooms
SPI (Stand Plan Inspection)	Exhibit Design approval
PCB (Permission to Commence Build)	Engineering approval
Complex and Non Complex Stand construction	Simple exhibit vs. custom exhibit

- Raised floors everywhere. This floor design element is intended to provide a stage of honor for the visiting guests, and not just a way to hide electric cords with cushy padding.
- Wall heights were permitted to 4m high (13’) and no hanging signs

- Cubic content rule created closed environments- most with private conference rooms.
- All exhibits had a bar and served food and drinks
- Many varieties of full wall graphic applications, but subtle use of company identity
- The World Routes Show organizers also arranged for private pre arranged meeting. This method for meetings proved most successful for the many international visitors.
- The host city provided a large meeting area for all to share and use.

Many of the stands at Routes Show were designed and managed by international exhibit suppliers who partnered with American suppliers. During the show I met with a number of fellow IFES members. **Justin Hawes** of Scan Display from South Africa attended the Routes Show to get fully familiar with the event as it will be held in South Africa next year.

I also met with **Krill Pavlosky** (formerly from Moscow) now employed with von Hagen Design in Germany. Krill managed four different stands with Duo Display in the USA- three stands from Russia, and one from the USA. Three Russian airports entrusted Krill Pavlosky to carry out their stand design and construction on a turnkey basis. Each exhibit included an exhibit attraction and an inviting reception area.

Von Hagen Design also won a bid against five US suppliers to build a stand for the **Detroit Metro Airport**. “Krill Pavlosky/ von Hagen Design, was the only company to propose an exhibit design beyond the norm and within the budget we set” says Joe Cambron/Director of Air Service Development at Detroit Metro. The exhibit design incorporated a mural backdrop and real American car frames to serve as a reception desk and seating areas. The exhibit was clearly Detroit!

With international trade shows comes international competition for exhibit design from around the globe. The world marketplace is here and growing. Stand design and builders now come from around the globe to produce their exhibit designs.

Why did it take so long for American car makers to match the quality and price of auto competitors abroad in the 90's? Today, auto design tends to copy each other and few cars sold are lemons. All manufacturers have all figured a way to provide acceptable car quality worldwide at an affordable price to satisfy the end users. The same will be true for international exhibit design and production. Solid IFES partnerships surely help to make design transitions easier and cheaper.