

Major Trade Show Venues

Are we ready to Compete in a Single World Market?

Most of the significant world trade show events take place in five countries-Germany-USA-Italy-France-China - per UFI research. These five countries account for 64% of all major world trade show events conducted. These trade show/expo events represent the major market segments that are held in the key trade show *cities* within these *countries*.

We can break it down further to say that within each country only a few city locations represent the majority of the events that are conducted in each country. For Germany it is Frankfurt, Dusseldorf, Cologne, and Munich. For the USA it is Las Vegas, Orlando, and Chicago, for Italy it is Milan, for France it is Paris, and China it is

Shanghai, Hong Kong, and Beijing. Many other country/city expo locations are influential, but not to the degree that these big five country/cities do to influence the world of trade show marketing. In most cases, their strength, as an attractive event location, is their infrastructure-airport, local transportation access, hotel availability, size of expo center, local industries, city attractions, and emotional influences. Depending on the size of the show, emotional attractions can be locations like Hawaii or Puerto Rico, not really international, but a good first step in getting the attention of exhibitors to view as attractive. Unfortunately, view local buyers to market to and expand your business reach. International locations with a local economy truly offer greater opportunities to expand the sales reach.

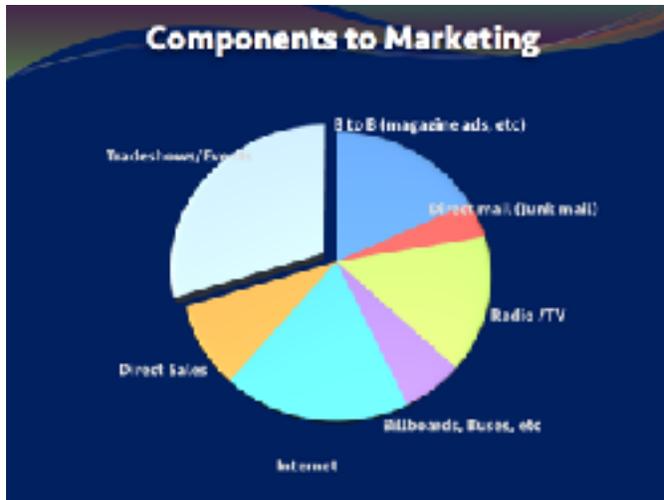
Each of these *key international cities* are positioned to handle and manage large groups of visitors for a 3 day event without concern about overload breakdowns within the city. Try and get a room in London during Wimbledon, or in Dusseldorf during Euroshop. The cities shut down. The *user-friendliness* and popularity of these world trade center cities are what makes their sites attractive, not the the country in which they reside.

Organizers can attract both exhibitors and attendees to world class cities for face to face marketing events to broaden their reach and deliver new sales opportunities.

Crossing borders is no longer a major concern when it comes to attracting valuable visitors to a primary, or secondary, trade event. Local attendees will still comprise the majority of visitors, but those exhibitors interested to increase their market share, or the strength of their network, will attend a major event dedicated to their specific industries. In spite of global conflicts, the world of trade is becoming a single marketplace, with select world cities being the epicenters of major trade activity. They are attractive because of the infrastructure they have created to make trade connections most convenient and delivering stalwart results.

As corporations analysis their marketing opportunities within the world marketplace, trade show marketing has become a major (and an expensive) tactic employed by world corporations to uncover opportunities and expand their growth with a global approach.





This approach can be risky if awareness and cultural differences are not taken into consideration when planning for an international event.

"In my book-Trade Shows from One Country to the Next, I review venues, regulations, exhibit design, and cultural differences for 45 different countries. Understand and respect what is different, and you are on your way to success," says Author- Larry Kulchawik.

During a recent seminar I conducted at Northeastern Illinois University, a student remarked- If 60% of world trade shows

are in select cities within five countries, why write a book that includes 39 other country/cities where activity is minimal? Why not focus on the six country cities only? A valid question, but short sighted as the world continues to evolve with new international marketplaces to consider. As exhibit managers or trade show marketing suppliers we need to *be ready* to hit the ground running to assist the companies we serve. We must be able to maneuver within the new marketplace locations that will grow over time. Just a few years ago, China and the Middle East were not even on our radar screen as viable trade show venue locations to consider. Now they are, and who knows what may happen in the UK or in Russia.

This shift in new, or old, venue locations will continue to unfold. Being ready to dance is an important first step for success when marketing internationally.

There is no right way, there is no wrong way, there is only a different way. Know and respect what is different and you are on your way to successful trade show marketing.

As the world moves closer to a single global marketplace, awareness and communication skills across borders will play a vital role in any companies global marketing success.



For more than four decades, **Larry Kulchawik** has been working in the trade show industry, specializing in international trade show marketing. Now, as principal of Larry Kulchawik Consulting, he is responsible for providing consultative advice to trade show exhibitors and suppliers for international exhibiting. www.larrykulchawik.com

Larry **Kulchawik**

International Trade Show Marketing Consultant