

# Watching a Show Grow

Working as a one-source solution, we managed all aspects of this complex program to ensure a cohesive and successful overall experience.



## About the Client

Our client partner is the largest privately owned office products dealer in the United States.

For their annual sales convention and trade-show, we provided overall program strategy, online registration, hotel sourcing and contracting, food & beverage, hotel room block and meeting space management, entertainment themed events, A/V, electronic exhibitor service manuals, attendance tracking, award design and development, transportation and on-site staffing.

This is their single annual event that allows their sales team to actively engage with each other, with executive leadership and with both their vendors and end-user customers. Creative Group was recommended by a supplier partner of this company and has successfully developed, sourced, planned and operated this event for nine consecutive years.

## The Challenge

Our challenge was to develop and execute a complex, multi-faceted annual sales meeting and trade show with different audience components. The all-encompassing meeting brought together the entire sales force and vendor partners for three days, followed by a two day customer show. Over the course of the event there were 1,100 sales executives, 560 vendors, and 1,800 customers all participating in various segments of the event.

We knew the client would evaluate our overall success on the following criteria: our ability to design a cohesive total-event strategy and achieve flawless execution of overlapping components with a complex set of attendee needs.

## The Solution

We began by holding strategy meetings to develop benchmarks for the event. These included four areas of focus: agreeing on the client's goals and objectives; educating as to how to better support end customers; increasing networking opportunities with vendors and offering an opportunity to keep up to date with valuable industry information.

To further develop the relationship, we continuously researched innovations and cost savings measures to benefit our client and enhance the overall operational effectiveness of the program.

As a result of our focus on and understanding of our customer's goals, we were able to help increase attendance at this combined sales meeting/trade show from 300 to over 3,500 participants in a few short years. As the customer's business expanded, we partnered strategically to forecast future attendance and financial goals.

To keep attendees accountable, we developed a system to generate custom personalized agendas for sales representatives to ensure and track

maximum program participation. In addition to managing all standard meeting planning logistics, we oversaw the trade show and its exhibitors.

The exhibitor management included researching decorator/drayage suppliers, conducting an RFP process, selecting and contracting with the supplier and ultimately managing all elements associated with the trade show, including exhibitor communications.

## The Outcome

Creative Group, as a one-source solution, managed all aspects of this complex program to ensure a cohesive and successful overall experience. Our ability to manage all elements of this program in-house was a key selling feature to the client, as continuity increased the customer experience and reduced cost.

In the end, a top notch experience was delivered and results from post-program surveys reflect that 91% of the combined attendee types ranked the overall event as good/excellent.

We know we've "hit it out of the ballpark" when our customer sees us as an extension of their team. We have grown to understand their business and corporate objectives along with the nuances of the executive level stakeholders.

Our client liaison rated us Far Above Expectations (99%) on the customer survey. She also wrote: "Love you guys – another really impressive show!"