

Exhibiting

Exhibition analysis for the marketing professional

A royal brand

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Plasa show

Sound company, Adam Hall, exhibited at the Professional Lighting and Sound Association (Plasa) event at Earls Court. General sales manager, Rob Fricker, explains the concept behind the company's 'piano bar' theme.

How many times have you attended the show and have you any kind of cost saving agreements with the organiser?

Adam Hall has exhibited at Plasa for over 10 years. As full Plasa members we get a discounted rate for the space and the firm is also offered an early booking discount.

Did you try anything different at this year's show, from previous years?

We usually have a much larger stand and show our entire range of approximately 2,500 product. However, because of our commitments to other trade shows around the world and the cost of past shows, we made a brave decision to down-size the Plasa stand this year. We to concentrate on our new products. The problem is that our visitors are used to seeing the old stand, so we needed to create an eye catching concept, which is how the 'piano bar' theme originated.

Were there any unusual aspects of your attendance this year? How did you promote this?

Plasa is a sound and lighting show. Many stands have music based on the club scene performed by DJ's. We

wanted to offer a relaxing alternative. Managing director, Bob Mundy, and myself birthed the piano bar idea on the flight back from the Winter NAMM show in California earlier this year.

The original concept was to go completely 'Casablanca' with the stand design, with no products on show and just the use of graphics and our catalogue to represent the product range. However, it was important to maintain Adam Hall's corporate image, so the final design kept the piano bar theme with mirrored displays, skyline graphics and live pianist, but with a more 'Adam Hall's Piano Bar' feel, rather than the original Art Deco concept.

What are your objectives for attending the show and how does the presence fit in with your overall marketing strategy?

It's important for us to attend this



Last orders at the bar ladies and gentlemen

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show as it is the main UK platform for our industry. We exhibit to meet new overseas prospects, but this year I believe that overseas visitors were put off visiting the show by the unfortunate recent events in London. Adam Hall's new 'LD Systems' range of audio products was our focus this year, they are far more relevant to this show and the customers we want to attract.

Do you have any pre-show marketing for the event?

We sent editorial to the industry's press for their Plasa preview editions, inviting customers not to come to the 'Adam Hall Stand', but to visit the 'Adam Hall Piano Bar' instead. We also made some piano bar themed invitations, which we sent out with free passes for the show.

How did you decide on stand content and design?

We always have a pretty strong idea of how we want the stand to look, after all nobody knows our company as well as we do, so we did some initial sketches and then worked on the idea with our contactor, Arc Displays. The artwork was made by



Play it again Dave

Ricky Finch at Artomic, an independent graphic designer we have worked with for years on advertising copy, logos and the like. The finished effect was excellent, everybody who visited the stand commented on the image and understood exactly what we wanted to achieve from it.

What was your staffing strategy for the show? Did it work?

We have four key staff members, namely the managing director, operations manager, UK sales

representative and general sales manager, as well as sales managers from Spain and Denmark. We decided to keep in vogue with the stand and wore black dinner suits with black bow ties. This was also a great success, and everybody knew who we were.

What was the feedback like for the show and have there been any direct results?

It's too early to see what will come from it sales-wise, but the reaction from visitors and other exhibitors was fantastic. Visitors, exhibitors and members of the press caught onto the idea quite quickly and the stand filled up for our daily four o'clock 'Hill Street Blues' sing-a-long session.

Could you please elaborate on the identity of the pianist?

The pianist 'Dave Dulake' is an old friend of mine and a very well respected musician. We have been in many bands with each other over the past 20 years. Once we decided on the theme he was really the only choice, and we believe a part of the success of the show for us was down to his unbelievable talent, humour and repertoire. You can catch his band 'Virgo Intacta,' supporting the White Stripes in London in November.



Sing-a-long-a David Dickinson; marvellous