

Sales & Marketing eBulletin

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Social Media Isn't Always Online

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We've all heard about how social media is shaking up the way we do business. The terms "word of mouth" and "viral" are spoken daily in Marcom departments worldwide. And it all seems to be associated with online activities.

We also know that, when everyone is going left, we might consider looking to the right. That's what Indium Corporation did at APEX, one of our largest trade exhibitions. Held annually in the USA, APEX brings together our (electronics assembly) industry's top technologists, business managers, technicians, suppliers, and media. In essence it is THE place to see and be seen. The question was, how could we stand out while sidestepping the traditional exhibit clichés?

Our answer to that question was THE BOX. We learned of a very simple, interesting, and practical tool that was previously unheard of in our industry. In essence this device, THE BOX, is a low-cost, highly-functional storage box on a wheelie cart. But it is much more than a box. This product can be decorated with a corporate logo, a message, anything that can be printed on cardboard (which it is). We decided to embrace the theme (think INSIDE the box) by designing our exhibit to resemble THE BOX, and to unleash hundreds of boxes on day 1 of the exhibit.

Unlike emails and YouTube addresses, this social phenomenon was REAL. It spread throughout the exhibit floor, was seen in the hallways and elevators in and outside of the exhibit hall, and was the talk of the show. It was even spotted rolling through several of our competitors' exhibits! People were talking about it during and even after the show. They were all released on day 1 but kept coming back every day of the show. Why were people talking about THE BOX? Because it delivered a unique WIN:WIN:WIN. Customers won when their ungainly briefcases were removed from their shoulders and placed securely into THE BOX. Their growing mountain of literature and samples acquired during the show were also stashed in THE BOX. And it all was effortlessly rolled back to their hotel rooms. What a contrast to all the schlepping that we are accustomed to! The exhibition won because the floor was filled with colorful, exciting eye candy that was the buzz. And, of course, the Indium Corporation won because our logo and colors were everywhere - including on people's lips and minds. Now that's a concept! Social media that involves real people talking directly to each other!