

PRESSRELEASE

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EXPOCAD VR²

**SMITH, BUCKLIN &
ASSOCIATES, INC.**



For Immediate Release

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Largest One Day Internet E-Commerce Event in Trade Show History

Chicago, IL - Smith, Bucklin & Associates (SBA), a Chicago-based association management firm, working in partnership with Applied Computer Technology, Inc. (ACT), makers of EXPOCAD, a graphical exposition management software, conducted the world's largest e-commerce event in trade show history on Wednesday, January 27, 1999. Using technology developed by ACT, EXPOCAD and EXPOCAD VR², SBA sold exposition floor space on the Internet to exhibitors of the North American Association of Food Equipment Manufacturers (NAFEM) trade show via the association's website (www.nafem.org/spacedraw). The one-day selection meeting drew 45 people in web-based attendance. Over 65% of the available booths for the NAFEM trade show was sold representing over \$3.2 million in revenue for the association. This easily surpasses the dollar amount of any previous one-day e-commerce event in trade show history.

SBA is using this technology to boost customer service to exhibitors of its client's shows and provide the increasing value-added services required in today's competitive trade show environment. Working with ACT and its own web development division, Neology, SBA developed an implementation plan that covered all possibilities and needs of their client. Exhibitors could choose booth space via the Internet, fax, or in person. This allowed exhibitors to choose the method that best suited their needs. Having the ability of remote booth space selection via the Internet is saving time and money. SBA estimates that NAFEM exhibitors realized a total savings of approximately \$68,000 in travel-related expenses as a result of the remote space selection technology.

Exhibitors could view the current floor plan using an internet browser and EXPOCAD VR² technology. Viewing the EXPOCAD system in person at the Fairmont Hotel was made possible by a high-resolution projection display. The projected floor plan indicated the sold spaces by coloring the sold booths in red. Six (6) networked workstations linked to the internet showed the live up-to-date floor plan to exhibitors selecting their space. Exhibitors choosing space on the Internet were able to pan and zoom the floor plan in real-time. Exhibitors could see where their competitors were located, booth sizes, and available booths. Booth space was sold at the rate of one exhibitor every two minutes including floor plan reconfiguration and company name placement onto the floor plan. Typical booth assignment procedures require multiple days to finalize an exhibitor's booth location as floorplans are faxed back and forth between show management and the exhibitors. In addition to providing timely, and almost immediate confirmation of exhibit location, EXPOCAD tracked total space sold, net square footage, booth inventory, cost/financial data, and exhibitor information.

The use of the EXPOCAD system facilitated the design of a legible, finished quality floor plan as the meeting was in progress. The task was previously done with a blueprint, max layout floor plan, white correction fluid, pencil, ruler and erasers. A finished floor plan was typically not available until several weeks later using previous methods. But with EXPOCAD, a current floor plan was created continuously as the space assignment process progressed and updated the NAFEM web-site live.

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Exhibitor's comments were extremely positive about the system. "I've been selecting trade show booth space for Libbey, Inc. for over 15 years and this space drawing was just excellent," said Michael Seymour, representing Libbey, Inc. "This format was more efficient and the new technology made the entire layout much easier to view. I have to commend everyone at NAFEM who put this together." Penny Hutner, President of ADVANCE TABCO, who participated via Internet said, "The process was very easy to follow, the technology was extremely easy to use and the remote capability enabled us to get a snap shot of the current floorplan from our home office. Additionally, we found it to be a significant member benefit because it saved our company the time and expense of flying from New York to Chicago to select space." Having the opportunity to select the location of their booth and limiting competitive pressure was appealing to all the exhibitors.

SBA and its use of EXPOCAD demonstrate its leadership in using technology to advance trade show management customer service and efficiency. The EXPOCAD technology in the space assignment process is highly efficient, cost-effective, and provides customer service that is a requirement in today's competitive environment.

"This is a real breakthrough for the trade show industry," said Brian Casey, Smith, Bucklin and Associates Director of Convention and Trade Shows. "Real time, on-line access to the floor plan, for space selection is a very new concept. Smith Bucklin is on the cutting edge of trade show technology. The remote-access offering will save exhibitors both time and money by allowing them to stay at their home offices to select space rather than requiring exhibitors to spend one or two day traveling to the space drawing host city."

"SBA's staff coordinated the NAFEM space assignment extremely well," said Rich Stone, VP Sales & Marketing for ACT. "EXPOCAD and EXPOCAD VR² has raised the bar in internet trade show technology. Today's event demonstrates that linking trade show sales to the internet has substantial advantages."

ACT, Inc. (Applied Computer Technology) has been in business for 13 years and is the producer and supplier of EXPOCAD and EXPOCAD VR². EXPOCAD is used on over 700 shows, 63 of the Tradeshow 200, and manages over \$500,000,000 in floor space. EXPOCAD is the world's #1 graphical database exposition management software.

Smith, Bucklin and Associates, based in Chicago since 1949 is the nation's premier association, convention and trade show management firm. SBA employs nearly 700 professionals who provide professional services for more than 200 clients. Clients include trade associations, professional societies, industry consortia, user groups and corporations.

Managing conferences and trade shows across the globe, Smith, Bucklin's Convention and Trade Show Division offers superior customer service and experience. SBA's Convention and Trade Show Division negotiates with 20 of the largest meeting facilities every year, serves over 200,000 attendees annually and more than 3,600 exhibitors each year

Neology Information Design is a division of Smith, Bucklin & Associates (SBA), headquartered in Chicago, IL. Established in 1995, Neology provides Internet hosting, web site design and management, and applications development services to over 75 organizations. Its suite of 20 Web-based products included *Event Wizard*, a comprehensive conference management and marketing application for event program distribution.

The Chicago-based North American Association of Food Equipment Manufacturers (NAFEM) represents more than 700 foodservice manufacturers of commercial/institutional foodservice equipment and supplies, including products for cooking, preparation, storage and table service. NAFEM member products account for more than 85 percent of North Americas' total annual foodservice equipment and supplies sales.

Additional information is available.

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