



- Trends
- Benchmarks/Research
- Association Shows
- For-profit Shows
- Attendance
- Booth Sales
- Marketing/Promotions
- Exhibitors
- New Revenue
- Best Practices
- Cheat Sheet
- Show Management 101
- Operations
- Planning & Budgeting
- Site Selection
- Hotel Shows
- Contractors
- Consumer Shows
- Technology
- International

Advertise
with **EXPO**
Subscribe
to **EXPO**

CURRENT ISSUE

March 2009

Trade Show Best Practices: One-Stop Payment

AFCOM takes exhibitor payment — and management — to the Web

By Nancy Mann Jackson

For AFCOM, streamlined exhibitor management didn't just make exhibitors happy — it also helped the show build new revenue streams and grow its attendance and exhibit space. The association, which supports the data center industry, has generated nearly \$1 million in additional revenue in the three years since implementing its new online exhibitor system. And by investing that revenue into marketing and growing the show, AFCOM has increased its attendance by 60 percent and net square feet of exhibit space by more than 50 percent, from 20,900 net square feet in 2005 to 33,700 net square feet in 2007.

AFCOM's annual Data Center World show attracts 1,300 attendees and 700 exhibitors. Until recently, each exhibitor was responsible for numerous order forms, payments and communications, creating a logistics nightmare. "Our exhibitors were tired of logging into multiple online systems to place orders, and having to re-enter credit card and other data multiple times," says Jill Exhaus, CEO of AFCOM.

Show organizers wanted to simplify the process, gain control of exhibitor pricing and also create an opportunity to generate some new profits. Tired of chasing exhibitor orders and data, AFCOM implemented Tradeshow Logistics' TL Online system, which includes a one-stop payment solution and an online exhibitor manual. With the program, each exhibitor is provided with a single secure account for the show. The TL software allows the exhibitor to place one or more credit cards on file for use with all vendors in the show, including show management. The single account eliminates the need to enter credit card information multiple times, and provides exhibitors with a secure mechanism for making credit card payments to show vendors. Vendors can easily access their orders via the system and process exhibitors' payments.

The ability to control the payment system also allowed

Stay informed with Expo's
weekly e-newsletter:

EMAIL

Get daily industry news via
RSS [What is RSS?](#)

DOWNLOAD NOW
A free webinar on
show staffing

**TIPS • TRENDS
CASE STUDIES**

Presented by:

EXPO
CHEAT SHEETS

Quick and easy answers

Sponsored by the Las Vegas CVA

EXPO
Consumer

Union Primer

What every show organizer
must know about
the **myths** and **realities**
of exhibitions
and union labor

Launches
Acquisitions



AFCOM to add a new revenue stream by serving as the liaison between vendors and exhibitors, and retaining commissions from the sales. In addition, the system captures all exhibitor transactions, enabling show management to understand the full economics of their show and make pricing or service level adjustments from year to year.

The TL Online system also allowed AFCOM to automate almost all communication with exhibitors to take exhibitor sponsorship orders, lunch reservations, exhibitor badge requests and other orders. Now, all exhibitor forms are online and exhibitors routinely thank AFCOM staff for eliminating PDFs and the arduous task of filling out forms in longhand.

Exhibitors aren't the only ones who enjoy the online management system. AFCOM staff members say the tools save them time, eliminating the need to manually track and process a lot of exhibitor information. And show vendors appreciate the ability to receive real-time orders and run reports anytime, anywhere.

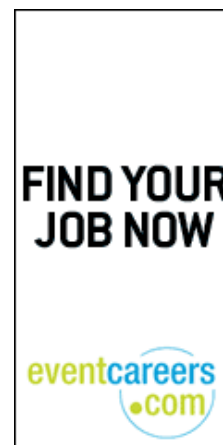
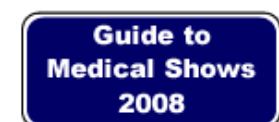
Nancy Mann Jackson, a freelance writer and editor, writes for a number of associations and corporations. Contact her at nancy@nancyjackson.com.

AFCOM's Strategy

GOAL: To take control of exhibitor pricing and management to streamline processes and increase revenues.

STRATEGY: Implement TL Online, an online exhibitor payment and management system that allows automated communication with exhibitors and lets exhibitors place orders and make payments online, while letting AFCOM control exhibitor pricing and retain sales profits.

RESULTS: Over the past three years, AFCOM has generated nearly \$1 million in profits from the new pricing model, and exhibitors thank show management for making the process so easy.



A Red 7 Media publication - 7015 College Blvd., Suite 600, Overland Park, KS 66211, USA
Tel 913.344.1376 — Fax 913.469.0806

© Copyright by Expo Magazine. All rights reserved.
[Privacy Policy](#)