

Are You Not Entertained?

Pack Expo Las Vegas promises to be insightful and educational – and fun, too

Erik Schmidt, Assistant Editor

Like Moses descending from Mount Sinai toting a couple of stone tablets, Kate Achelpohl, director of member communications at PMMI and herald of all things Pack Expo, came hither proclaiming the four commandments of the forthcoming show:

Insights. Innovation. Interaction. Inspiration.

It was all very prophetic. Interestingly, the Pack Expo website actually lists *five* cardinal virtues. The final one was an odd omission in Achelpohl's royal decree, like a dirty little secret being swept under the rug. But there, at the bottom of the official site's "Why Attend" page, you can see the forbidden factoid in full bloom:

Entertainment.

OK, maybe we get it. On the hierarchy of a trade show's intrinsic worth, having a grand old time probably does fall slightly behind those other four noble merits. But—and this is a big "but"—Pack Expo (co-located with

Pharma Expo) takes place in Las Vegas, baby. You know, Sin City?—Neon signs, flashing lights, green felt tables, the Midnight Idol himself Wayne Newton, et cetera ad nauseam.

And right there in the middle of it all is Pack Expo.

So even though Achelpohl excluded "entertainment" in her marketing magna carta, trying to ignore its hovering, iridescent presence is like standing under the Fountains of Bellagio and trying to stay dry. We dare you not to be entertained while you're there.

In fact, emboldened by the spirit of Las Vegas, we *bet* that you will be.

Let the Cross-Pollination Begin

It should be noted first off that Pack Expo Las Vegas (Sept. 28-30) wasn't the first show put on by PMMI. Nor will it be the last (through February of 2017, PMMI will actually host five more global events).

But compared to the other shows' locations—Chicago, Philadelphia and

Mexico, all stellar venues in their own right, of course—this Pack Expo certainly shines the brightest, both literally and metaphorically.

"The growth of Pack Expo has been notable throughout its 59-year history," Achelpohl says. "Since PMMI introduced Pack Expo in 1956, it has evolved from a single show with 136 exhibitors, 5,000 attendees and 43,116 net square feet of exhibit space into a portfolio with more than seven shows in the United States and Mexico."

"In 1995, PMMI introduced the industry to Pack Expo Las Vegas (then known as Pack Expo West) featuring packaging equipment from 532 exhibitors and attracting 9,334 attendees. Exhibit space was about 200,000 net square feet—about a quarter of the size of this year's event. As the show has evolved, it has become an event that unites the processing and packaging supply chain, and where attendees can address a wide range of projects."

"This year, Pharma Expo makes its Las Vegas debut as a co-located event.

All photos courtesy of The Association for Packaging & Processing Technologies





PACK EXPO Las Vegas

September 28 – 30, 2015

Las Vegas, Nevada USA

ADVANCING PROCESSING & PACKAGING

Together, Pack Expo Las Vegas and Pharma Expo will draw more than 2,000 exhibitors and 30,000 attendees to more than 800,000 net square feet of exhibit space. With the co-location, there's a new level of opportunity to 'cross-pollinate' your thinking and draw inspiration from applications from outside your industry."

The show brings together a mass conglomeration of different industries, including beverage, branding, confectionary, dairy, food, personal care, packaging, pharmaceutical, processing and medical devices, among many others. Around and around they all spin, like a white ivory pill (typically made of power transmission mainstay Delrin, by the way) on a roulette wheel, seeking out agents of all shapes, sizes and colors.

What they'll find is Achelpohl's "Four I's".

Let's start with *Innovation*.

"Pack Expo Las Vegas is the event to attend this fall to find winning processing and packaging solutions from top-tier suppliers," says Achelpohl. "Alongside Pharma Expo, it's the most comprehensive event of its kind. It's an unmatched opportunity to access an extraordinary breadth of solutions and suppliers."

One of those suppliers is Emerson Industrial Automation, a company that serves a handful of represented industries at Pack Expo including process, packaging and pharmaceutical. Emerson is a "premier" exhibitor and will have one of the largest presences at the show.

"It's an important show for us because it serves a lot of the industries

that fall under the automation market," says Derek Thomas, director and brand officer for Emerson Industrial Automation. "So when we look at places to go where we're going to get the most impact and exposure from the show, this is a perfect venue for us.

"It's a large event and it's really a very diverse audience from executives to maintenance professionals and everyone in between. It's a chance to talk with our customers face to face about the challenges they're facing every day. It's also a forum for us to introduce new technologies or new things that we're bringing to the world.

That brings us nicely to *Insights*.

Pack Expo has multiple stages dedicated to giving attendees a better understanding of the available break-

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through technologies and techniques available to a variety of industries.

"Knowledge and understanding is the key to your success, and Pack Expo Las Vegas will open up doors to insights you can put into action," Achelpohl says. "Valuable hands-on educational opportunities, conveniently located on the show floor, tap into the knowledge base of the industry's most revered subject matter experts on breakthrough technologies and the latest regulations.

"Most of the educational opportunities are located on the show floor so you don't miss a minute of the action. Innovation Stage will occupy three stages on the Pack Expo show floor (Booths C-1041, C-1045 and C-1049) and a fourth in Pharma Expo (Booth N-559), all with free, top-tier, 30-minute educational sessions running concurrently throughout each day of the show.

"Pharma Expo will also feature a world-class conference program organized by ISPE. The Center for Trends and Technology, sponsored by Rockwell Automation and its Partner Network, displays the latest in emerging automation trends—supplemented by cutting-edge learning sessions. Other educational features include The Food Safety Summit Resource Center, brought to you by the Food Safety Sum-



mit and co-sponsored by GE, Clemson University's CU Shop, and the Reusables Learning Center, located in the Reusable Packaging Center."

We'll go ahead and combine *Interaction* and *Inspiration*, because participating and engaging in all the hands-on applications and conversing with industry experts will organically lead you from the former to the latter.

"When you're at Pack Expo Las Vegas, you'll be able to watch equipment in action and compare machines side-by-side to find solutions that apply directly to your production lines," Achelpohl says. "You'll connect with current and prospective suppliers, meet industry

peers and consult with experts. This is more than networking—you're interacting with your industry.

"With more than 40 vertical markets represented, Pack Expo Las Vegas and Pharma Expo will provide a broad range of ideas as well as technologies. It's a place for you to be inspired by applications outside your industry. This is that 'cross-pollination of ideas.'

Baby, What a Big Surprise

There's seems to be a cognitive dissonance when it comes to learning and leisure—and maybe that's why Achelpohl unknowingly trimmed Pack Expo's five essentials to four—but Pack Expo by and large understands that the two aren't mutually exclusive.

The educational opportunities are the meat and potatoes of the show, sure. But this is Vegas—expect entertainment to be peppered in heavily throughout the three days.

"The processing and packaging supply chain is dynamic and high-energy, and Pack Expo shows are the best place to experience that," Achelpohl says. "Equipment is up and running on every aisle, and people all around are talking and coming up with new ideas.

"But the buzz that runs through Pack Expo and Pharma Expo is more than the hum of machinery or chatter. It's vitality. Attendees and exhibitors are seeing new, innovative technologies, making new connections and learning



new things. It's an exciting place to be,"

Adds Thomas:

"It's always fun to see the innovation," he says. "Every year someone always brings something new and unique to showcase what's possible."

This year, Emerson hopes to be one of those companies pushing the boundaries and surprising the Pack Expo faithful.

"We're going to have a new machine that we developed with American Packaging & Plant Equipment," Thomas says. "It's a vertical machine that incorporates ultrasonic sealing technology. We really put a lot of our portfolio into that. We're going to be showcasing that, and it's really a new thing to the market and it's sort of our innovation along with APPE."

And if "innovative technology" doesn't put a grin on your face, you can always attend the Pack Gives Back charity event on Sept. 28, which will



feature a performance by prominent rock band *Chicago*.

We bet you can't help but crack a smile during "Saturday in the Park."

Unlike most well-wishing casino patrons trying to take down the house, we rather like our odds. **PTE**

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