

2008 HCEA Meeting News

Case study to examine building a global brand

A challenge for many companies to become competitive is that they must build a consistent global brand image. A case study of how one company is successfully doing that will be presented today. The session will showcase the American Medical Systems (AMS) global branding strategy and how an international network of vendors helped AMS implement the strategy. Workshop 1A, "American Medical Systems: Executing a Global Brand," will be presented from 12:45 to 2 p.m. in Room 255A by speakers representing AMS, General Graphics Exhibits (GGE) and OCTANORM Service Partner International (OSPI).

"A lot of companies compete in the space where AMS competes, and some are very large. AMS has an extensive international program, and building brand consistency through exhibits is very important. AMS correctly perceives that exhibits help it compete with those larger companies," said Pat Friedlander, the president of Word-Up! and the moderator of the session. Brad Clift, global event marketing manager at AMS, will discuss its strategy, which includes giving each of its international offices a "canvas" where they can present a consistent brand image, Friedlander said. "On the canvas, certain things must be included, but AMS allows the offices to choose from many acceptable options to make the canvas culturally significant to their markets. The program allows the choices of different service levels so that offices can maintain brand consistency within the budget parameters. The program encourages choices and local differentiation," she said. "AMS calls this 'centralizing to decentralize.'"

The challenge outside the US is to find vendors who can do the job you want them to do." A key to the implementation of the system is working with partners around the world. The workshop's other two speakers, John Moyes and Susan Ginwala, both of GGE, will discuss how the company helped AMS implement the program and how OSPI facilitated the process. Besides being a principal at GGE, Moyes is a member of OSPI's executive board.

"The way OSPI functions is that it gives companies like AMS access to certified providers around the world so that many of AMS providers and partners come from within the OSPI network," Friedlander said. "For a company to be an OSPI member, it must have a certain amount of Octanorm (an extruded aluminum system) inventory and have expertise in the certification program. These Octanorm components can be used to make the exhibit look consistent from place to place all over the world."

