

Less is more!

This is terminology Specialised Exhibitions has become familiar with during COVID-19. Lockdown has brought most industries to a halt. Reaching out to our clients was imperative. We needed to strategise how to handle this situation. Our approach was “less is more” focusing on the distribution of factual, meaningful communication. We stopped all messaging through social media and bulk emails. Our strategy reverted from digital to “old school”, where clients and partners were contacted by telephone. Each client was handled with care, followed by regular staff zoom call meetings to unite the teams and give support. It has really been a time of connecting on another level and facing the storm together. Please read our stories below...

Electra Mining Africa

On Thursday, the 28th May Specialised Exhibitions released a press release that signalled the official cancellation of Electra Mining Africa 2020. Each exhibitor received an email providing them with two options to consider:

- Monies paid for 2020 can be transferred to the 2022 event. You will qualify for a preferential rate. In addition, you will maintain your current stand position
- Apply for a refund of monies paid for the 2020 event. Where monies are refunded, exhibitors forfeit any rights of first refusal to their current stand positions for 2022.

Exhibitors were also informed that they are free from their obligations of the signed 2020 contract and its associated terms and conditions. A SPOC (Single Point of Contact) team was then appointed to reach out and personally phone each exhibitor. They discussed the email and went through the two options in more detail. The team consisted of Charmaine Wood, Grant Bydowell, Andre Pieterse, Sonja van Rooyen and Mark Anderson. After a few discussions, a third option was put on the table for exhibitors to select. This option included transferring a 10% deposit on the new stand agreement for Electra Mining Africa 2022. The balance of the funds would be refunded.

Currently the SPOC team have managed to secure 16,272 sqm. The next task is now formalising contracts via PandaDoc. As of Friday 17th July, the numbers read as follows:

- Issued 7,303m²
- Contracted 6,072m²
- Total I & C 13,375m²

The general response from the exhibitors has been extremely positive, as these numbers reflect. There have been a few challenges as some companies are really struggling. The refund will assist them with their cash flow. Hopefully when we start returning to the new normal and businesses across the sectors start generating income we will see them retuning to Electra Mining Africa.

There are now 110 weeks to go until Electra Mining Africa 2022, AND WE CAN'T WAIT 😊

Propak Cape 2021

Propak Cape was scheduled to take place from 20 – 22 October 2020. However due to the current Covid-19 pandemic, we consulted our stakeholders about the way forward. The process led to a decision to postpone PROPAK Cape to 8 – 10 June 2021. Grant Bydowell and Andre Pieterse started communicating the new dates to exhibitors on 15th May 2020 and as they completed the exercise,

Keraysha Pillay went to the broader market by informing our media partners and associations. 148 clients including locals, agents and international companies were all personally contacted. Propak Cape 2020 was looking very healthy before the pandemic sitting at 93% sold on floor. Stakeholder understanding and support for PROPAK Cape being moved to 2021 has been positive and the sales team managed to retain 90% of clients, carrying their contracts over to June 2021. Sven Smit, Portfolio Director, assisted the sales team in navigating the associated challenges of a move of this nature and overall, it has been a serious result.

Securex, A-OSH and FM Expo 2021

The co-located exhibitions were originally scheduled to take place from 2 – 4 June 2020 but due to the State of Disaster declared in South Africa, the exhibitions were postponed to 18 – 20 August 2020. After closely monitoring the COVID-19 situation in South Africa and internationally and in discussions, a further decision was taken to postpone Securex SA, A-OSH & FM Expo to 1 – 3 June 2021. South Africa is currently in lockdown and the peak of infections are expected to be reached between August and September.

The team took immediate action and called all exhibitors to explain why we had to postpone the event. An overwhelming majority of exhibitors chose to support the 2021 event. The team had a few clients that cancelled due to the financial strain due to Covid-19, but they were able to retain most of these clients for 2021. Teamwork was the key to a successful result, with our Financial Director Johan De Bruyn also assisting in retaining a difficult client who had his mind set on cancelling. Across the 3 shows, we were able to retain over 95% of exhibitors, moving them over to 2021. We are currently over 70% sold for 2021 which is a serious result under the circumstances.

In conclusion, the sales teams have managed expectations and successfully transferred key stakeholders and clients over to the new dates. They remain fit during this time staying updated with industry trends and global news. They use this to leverage the marketplace as it slowly starts to open up for business.