

Events and Today's Marketing

Building Brand

Strategic Marketing at Trade Show Exhibits

Getting attention at an e-bodybuilding show is n Between appearances b bodybuilders,

fitness models and Arnold Schwarzenegger, attendees encounter some serious distractions while walking the aisle. management of Optimum Nutriti decided they needed to take their up a notch to build awareness of th nutrition products and the new O

Optimum Nutrition Tradesho Bob Corbett wanted the new exhibit target market of serious bodybu fitness experts, as well as regular wo "We wanted to showcase Optimun as a scientific brand with a classy m the booth," Corbett says.

Corbett chose The Tradeshow

CUSTOMER LOYALTY

As Maggie Wolfe marched down the trade show aisle at eBay Live!, eBay's annual customer event, the San Jose, CA, based company realized just how well it had met its strategic objective for the event: Create a customer community.

Wolfe and Brad Aspling, who met on eBay and even bought the engagement ring and wedding dress on the site, decided to hold their wedding — the ultimate community event — on the show floor at eBay Live! 2004.

This kind of commitment is exactly what the online-auction company is shooting for. Even a cultural phenomenon like

eBay — with net revenues of \$2.17 billion in 2003, its ninth year — faces the challenge of a constantly shifting base of customers, buyers, and sellers. And that's an expensive challenge. Bain & Company Inc., a Boston-based marketing and research company, has found that attracting a new customer costs five times more than keeping an old one.

Ben McConnell and Jackie Huba, authors of "Creating Customer Evangelists: How Loyal Customers Become a Volunteer Sales Force" (Dearborn Trade Publishing, 2002), believe "organizations that create customer communi-



Using Events to Build Customer Community

To create a community of customers who have almost nothing in common and who are scattered across the globe, eBay invites them to a get-together with classes, parties, and even a wedding. *By Charles Pappas*



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