



GEORGE P. JOHNSON
experience marketing

Press Release

IBM AND GEORGE P. JOHNSON WIN EX AWARD FOR BEST ALL-VIRTUAL EVENT OF 2010

Event industry's top honor goes to IBM's on-demand Virtual Event Center

Auburn Hills, MI May 18, 2011 – IBM and its experience marketing partner George P. Johnson (GPJ) took home one of marketing's highest honors yesterday when it was announced that IBM's Virtual Event Center (VEC) won an Ex Award for the Best 100% Virtual Event/Expo. This prestigious win demonstrates the power of online experiences to engage customers, employees and partners at a time when marketers are seeking to leverage technology to deliver better results.

The VEC is part of IBM marketing's ongoing efforts to push the boundaries of its vision for a Smarter Planet and deliver better brand experiences to its global customer base. The robust virtual platform contains multiple interconnected experience zones pavilions, architected as a "campus environment" representing different areas of IBM's business, from which sales and marketing teams are launching customized turnkey events for targeted audiences and geographic locations.

Built in collaboration with GPJ on strategy and experience design, VSA Partners for creative and technology from Unisfair, the VEC is an always-on tool with more than 60 unique interchangeable environments, support for 16 languages, lead management, metrics and reporting, full integration with social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter and special support for hybrid events, in which the VEC neatly ties into physical experiences such as product launches, conferences, briefing centers and trade shows.

"The Virtual Event Center is another milestone in our ongoing effort to bring to life the promise of a Smarter Planet, this time through a web-delivered brand experience that helps businesses move forward regardless of where and when they interact with us," said Larry Cook, IBM's Manager of Events and Digital Metrics. "By empowering our audiences to participate and contribute to the experience, we are gathering insights and having the kind of high-quality interactions that advance business relationships and generate better business results."

The award was announced at the annual Ex Awards Gala at the Event Marketing Summit in Chicago and was received by representatives of both IBM and GPJ. The 100% virtual category is particularly competitive in the Ex Award program: IBM's VEC platform beat out other all-virtual programs submitted by top brands from around the world and from such diverse fields as healthcare, technology, automotive and financial services.

"It's certainly an honor to be recognized for the risk-taking, unconventional thinking, team building and collaboration that made the roll-out of the Virtual Event Center possible," said Fiona Bruder, Senior Vice President, Client Services for GPJ. "The hallmark of every great client-agency relationship is the ability to produce extraordinary ideas and make them a reality in ways that improve business performance. The VEC is setting a new standard for strategy, creative and execution globally."

About George P. Johnson (www.gpj.com)

GPJ is the #1 ranked experience marketing agency enabling leading brand marketers to create great ideas and bring them to life through integrated experiential programs that leverage online, mobile and physical brand interactions. Clients in technology, healthcare, consumer goods, finance and other fields rely on GPJ to help them compete more effectively on a global basis by creating and accelerating relationships with customers, employees, partners, media and other influencers. GPJ is part of Project: WorldWide, the leading independent engagement marketing solutions network (www.project.com). Follow GPJ at www.twitter.com/georgejohnson.

Contact:

Tom Maher
Director, Marketing Programs
PR and Corporate Communications
Project: WorldWide
email: tom.maher@project.com
tel: (617) 535-9820