

# Sk Helsel & ASSOCIATES

Connecting Clients with Ideas, People, Media and Money

## Communications/PR for Frontier Tech Tradeshaw Exhibitions



Summer is high-season for conferences and trade shows. Conferences are my sweet-spot; I believe events are one of the most effective business development tools available.

This summer, I'm looking forward to catching up with colleagues at major events such as SIGGRAPH.

Conference trade shows and exhibitions are highly ritualized with roles, language, and patterns of presentation. We don't think about these deeper structures for the most part when we hit the glitz and light of the exhibit hall.

It is easy to forget that other members of exhibit teams have been acculturated in different environments-business, technical, ethnic, academic or research. Add the "econtone" of frontier tech with its rich hybridization between diverse communities--and you have an even more varied set of interaction and language patterns. Not all professions or cultures school their individuals in the art of the "sell," the "closing" the forward style of self-introductions.

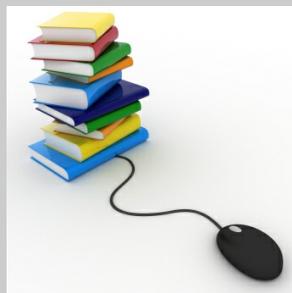
For maximum ROI from your exhibition, you want to give your team "cultural translation" skills. There are several ways to help your staff better represent your company at your exhibit booth.

### 1) Understand the Impact of Social Media on Tradeshow PR/Marketing:

Trade shows used to be strictly industry events, but that's quickly changing as advertisers want to be able to understand trends rather than just follow them. Vertical trade shows are evolving across the board--in every industry. Trade shows are still speaking to their respective industry communities. But more and

### Updates:

#### Teleseminar Alert



Stay tuned. We are working on a ConferencePR Teleseminar to help maximize your media coverage at your next tradeshow. Registration details to follow in the next few days.

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AH. . .

A testimonial from Jeffrey Jacobson of ConstructionVR:

After more 20 years working in virtual reality, I have been to over 200 conferences, trade shows, and other meetings. Every time I attend a VR track organized by Sandra Helsel, I am impressed with the quality and good fit of the speakers. She has deep knowledge of the people who can speak to the core scientific, technical, business, and artistic issues around this new new communication medium. Sandra is one of the few people in this business who Knows What's Going On.

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Click to read my article:  
[7 Benefits of Ethnographic PR](#)

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more exhibitors, must also be ready to speak to non-industry audiences who are receiving the event's streaming press conferences via Facebook. This means more and more you have to be able to communicate between two very different "cultures," i.e., that of your industry community and also the consumers of your industry's products.

## 2) Understand and work with the cross-cultural context of the event.

Frontier tech events are particularly complex and attract professionals from different regions of the world, different professions (investors, technical, academics, entrepreneurs, corporate reps, journalists). You need to get your authentic message and value across to these different audiences.

You want to make this an easy communication process for your exhibit staff. For example, I had several research scientists from a Singaporean group I was representing share with me that they felt hesitant to initiate conversations at other booths--so I went with them to open the conversations with potential partners. After my intros, and the researchers started talking to fellow technical researchers in the other booths, the conversations flowed and all was well.

## 3. Survey your exhibit team members and determine what they need from you to be more productive on the company's behalf while serving in the exhibit booth.

Think of this as need in terms of a mini-ethnography. You want to elicit the needs of your team and understand their worldview. Perhaps you will want to conduct individual interviews. You may prefer to design and use a formal survey document. It's my perspective that the direct person-to-person questioning will provide you with rich clues on how to help your booth staffers best navigate the conference floor on the company's behalf.

## 4. Share your business objectives for the exhibit and the conference with your exhibit booth team.

Employees of your company or members of your tech team may have been with your company for some time. But don't assume that means they automatically will understand what you want to achieve at the upcoming conference. You may want to position your company for strategic partnerships at the upcoming event or you may want to initiate sales or position yourself for an investment. You will want to share those kind of goals with the exhibit team. It will help them sift through the contacts they make and provide you with competitive intelligence related to your objectives and goals.

## 5. Plan and put the post-event process in place BEFORE the conference and exhibition actually begin.

The majority of the return on an investment of any exhibit comes AFTER the event in the follow-up with the meetings and conversations conducted at the show. Before the exhibit, draw up a plan for report keeping during the event. Have a plan in place to immediately swing into action with business cards and contacts.

## 6. Remember to enjoy the exhibit and conference, learn new ideas and widen your network.

**7. Call or email me.** ConferencePR/Marketing is my sweet spot. I've worked on the program side and the exhibit hall side. I can help you get a better Marketing/PR return from your next event.

Call me at 858-752-1212 or email me: [skhelsel@skhelsel.com](mailto:skhelsel@skhelsel.com) for a copy of my White Paper "ConferencePR."



Attend Rising Media's upcoming Virtual Reality Summit in San Diego December 14-15

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### Strategic Communication Defined:

Strategic communications is the critical thinking and vision required to inform and persuade an organization's stakeholders to act in a desired way in order to implement business goals. Communications must be managed strategically, targeted carefully and integrated seamlessly. Strategic communication depends on the systematic research, analysis, and insight prior to the execution of tactics, and a thorough evaluation and measurement of the results.

Source:  
Columbia University

### The Need for Strategic Communications in Global Trade

J.P. Morgan and the Brookings Institute recently engaged in a [Global Cities Initiative](#) and released a series of reports designed grow global trade. A key issue revealed by those reports is the need to "Tell the Story," to cut through the noise, ESTABLISH A CLEAR MESSAGE, and create global communications between all audiences vital to the trade corridors and ports of entry.

*SK Helsel & Associates is here to help you tell your story.*

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Stay tuned for the next issue of my SK newsletter. I'll be giving you an update on strategic communications from the frontiers of our global economy.

*Sandra*

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Sandra Kay Helsel, Ph.D.  
SK Helsel & Associates  
skhelsel@skhelsel.com  
858-752-1212 CA 520-390-8184 AZ