2015 INTERNATIONAL CES
An insider’s look with FreemanXP
The International CES® showcases innovations that span from electronics to automotive, and from health care to entertainment. Owned and produced by the Consumer Electronics Association (CEA)*, CES is attended by a whopping 170,000 industry professionals, representing 40,000 international visitors, 6,500 media professionals, 3,600 exhibiting companies, and a record number of startups.

An astounding 82%* of Fortune 100 brands historically attend CES, demonstrating the event’s impact is much more than consumer devices. With wearables, health tech, and smart homes taking center stage, CES evolved from consumer electronics to the Internet of Things (IOT) — with every aspect of our lives moving toward a connected world. Not only that, but innovations in personal technology have paved new ways to engage consumers while creating infinite opportunities surrounding content, advertising, and data capture for brand marketers.

One might argue, CES has truly become one of the world’s largest live marketing channels. Here’s our inside look at the standout experiences and technologies of CES 2015.
WHO'S THERE
CES attracts a diverse group of attendees and exhibitors from around the world. Nearly half are senior executives, including 20,000* CEOs and company presidents who descend upon Las Vegas for a week packed with meetings, presentations, product launches, and VIP events.

In addition, CES draws an audience of retail buyers and deal-makers. More than 5,000 marketers, 29,700 entertainment professionals, and 3,000 new media professionals flock to the conference, and 30% are buyers.* New technology innovators and startups continue to be a growing segment at CES.
Here’s a breakdown of who we saw at CES:

**TECH CXOS**  
*CEO, CIO, CTO, COO, CFO*  
Predominantly male  
Fortune 500, average age is mid-50s  
Highly educated  
Full schedule of private meetings, VIP parties, and dinners all week  
Keynotes and high-profile appearances

**YOUNG EXECS**  
*Start-ups, Hipsters, Tech Geeks*  
Average age early 20s to low 30s  
Founder or developer of hot technology  
Digital and mobile focused  
Surrounded by entourage  
Participating in sessions/panels  
Living high roller life in Vegas

**RETAIL BUYER**  
*Big Box Stores, Niche Players*  
Predominantly male  
Representatives from Walmart to Costco to Best Buy to Target and everyone in between  
On a mission to discover the latest high-tech products to stock their stores  
Highly sought out by exhibitors  
Wined and dined all week

**CORPORATE MARKETING GURUS**  
Mostly male, but largest percentage of females at CES  
Average ages 35 to 54  
Mostly exhibitors on booth tour of duty  
Curious — seeking innovative marketing ideas and competitive insights  
Participate in sessions and panels  
Customer dinners and events  
Product launches and press events  
Working non-stop behind the scenes
MEDIA MAKERS
Journalists, Bloggers, Analysts, On-Air Personalities, Celebrities
Mostly male, except for infotainment outlets like Access Hollywood
All major tech and media outlets
Invitation-only press and product launch events
Behind the scenes access and tours
Private press lounges
Roving reporters
Celebrities as booth presenters and at private events

GADGET GEEKS
Engineers, Developers
Predominantly male
Large international contingency
Obsessed with technology
Completely absorbed in product demos
Work at Fortune 500 companies and startups
Tend to run in packs

DEAL SEEKERS
Biz Dev, Account Reps, Ad/Media Agencies
Predominantly male
Looking for next big sales opportunity
Entertaining clients
Seeking out key decision makers and the CXO crowd
Full schedule of dinners and parties

SHOW NAVIGATORS
Consumers, Small Business Owners, Ancillary Industries
Predominantly male
Strategically plan to cover every inch of show floor possible
Want to see and touch everything
Responsible for evaluating and comparing technology
Looking to be hosted at evening events
Serving a large population of diverse audiences is complex. CES addressed these challenges and harnessed new opportunities by offering companies many different options to create unique brand experiences. CES also introduced new formats to engage its emerging members, all with the focus of empowering attendees to discover new technologies.

Here are the top ways CES pulled it off:
THE SHOW

TOTALLY CONNECTED
Even with hundreds of thousands of concurrent product demos, and an additional 170,000 attendees carrying at least one device, Wi-Fi and cellular at CES was fast and always on, ensuring people could stay connected with new products, each other, their offices, and social networks.

MULTIPLE ENGAGEMENT FORMATS
Brands had many options to engage their audiences, including traditional booth spaces, meeting rooms, suites, ballrooms, outdoor showcases, and more.

INTUITIVE NAVIGATION
CES grouped major spaces by type, then product categories. Marketplaces provided community settings themed around hot topics.

A few speed tests on the show floor validated great connectivity for demos and attendees.

From large footprints to smaller booth spaces, brands had many options to showcase new technologies.

The Sands Expo was easy to navigate with clearly labeled sections including fitness, wearables, sensors, 3-D printing, and smart homes.
THE SHOW

EMBRACING NEW MARKETS
The new C Space generated a thriving ecosystem of creative communicators, brand professionals, and digital advertisers.

ENCOURAGING DISCOVERY
CES uncovered innovations and curated top trends as roving reporters conducted interviews with new and established brands on the show floor, while industry peers judged products preshow for the CES Innovation Awards.

PERSONAL ACCESS
CES created opportunities to get up close and personal with industry experts and celebrities through smaller interview stages and Gary’s Book Club, where top authors engaged in Q&A.

In 2015, Eureka Park was the largest its ever been, and held prime floor space at the Sands Expo Center.

In addition to outside media, CEA had a team of reporters covering every aspect of the show.

Smaller stage settings made the large show accessible for interactive sessions and autographs.
VIP EXPERIENCES
Optional white glove, behind the scenes tours helped attendees navigate the experience. Given in a group or one-on-one, the tours broke down the show through expert eyes so attendees could streamline their time.

AMPLIFYING OPPORTUNITIES
CES amplified the impact of the conference through extensive press coverage, great content, buzz-worthy moments, and social media. Highlights included seven keynotes in rotating locations that encompassed the whole show, providing share-worthy moments of live-streamed content.

CES’s Social Media Command Center encouraged and boosted social activity. Posts using #CES2015 were included in over 800,000 mentions*, surpassing 2014’s stats, which were seen by 40 percent of the world’s population.**

SUSTAINABLE FOCUS
Not only did CES focus on the attendee experience, the organization helped the community by working with Freeman and many exhibitors to donate materials post-event to local organizations including Habitat for Humanity, Opportunity Village, and Teacher EXCHANGE.

* Source: FleishmanHillard blog
** Source: CES Attendee Audit Summary Results 2014
The great news: the show floor is packed with back-to-back crowds on a mission to see the latest and greatest tech. The challenge: brands have to elevate the experience in order to attract the right audience and capture interest in a matter of seconds. Here are several examples of engagement tactics that stood out.
Throughout CES, companies created beautiful environments that brought brands to life in authentic and unconventional ways. Many used high-tech visual displays to capture attention by delivering content, while others went for unusual materials and locations to stand out.

**IMMERSIVE PRODUCT DEMOS**

Not surprisingly, product demos abounded. Not just a “try it you’ll like it” approach, brands excelled at creating experiential moments that generated excitement around products, changing attendee perceptions from mildly interested to must-have. Many brands used Oculus Rift and augmented reality experiences to attract attention.
What is it about exclusivity? It’s one method that always seems to draw a crowd. Appointment-only VIP tours and roped-off entrances were a sure way to attract interest at CES. FOMO (fear of missing out) is too much for most, compelling attendees to stand in long lines just to get a peek.

As we noted last year, brands continue to draw crowds and media attention with celebrity partnerships that showcase the latest and greatest products. This year, major brands brought in a range of star power, from 50 Cent to Neil Young, Ryan Seacrest to Shaq, to endorse products ranging from audio devices to proprietary smartphone gadgets to Under Armour gear.

Brands also sprung for private, exclusive performances by some of the world’s top artists such as OneRepublic, Train, DJ Tiësto, KISS, Snoop Dogg, Jason Derulo, and Neon Trees. Other “cool factor” performances included a variety of talents, such as a three-hour half-pipe showcase by European skateboarding legend Tony Magnusson.
TLC created a motion-and-movement-based activity, which simulated the experience of wearing their smart watch in the Color Run.

Treadmills and bikes were everywhere. Experience marketers, make way for the “lifestyle assessment” dashboard. These dashboards were red hot at CES and provide a way for attendees to feel part of the action.

Even for brands that decided not to do a demo, plenty of old-school audience engagement tactics worked well, including hands-on demos, spin wheels, and raffles. Who doesn’t love winning in Vegas?

USPS educated attendees about the “original connected technology” using a trivia game.

Fit tech companies like iFIT brought in fitness models to show off the integrated technology.
AUTOMOTIVE EYE CANDY

Concept cars, connected cars, and race cars were around every corner — demonstrating IoT-connected technology as well as providing irresistible eye candy. Cars drew in executives and technology geeks alike.

THE RISE OF THE SELFIE JOURNALIST

Just about everyone had a mobile phone or a selfie stick, leading to tens of thousands of unofficial roving reporters. Brands that created share-worthy experiences reaped the rewards as attendees self-broadcasted their interactions on social networks.
The technologies and platforms that debuted at CES in 2015 illustrate a roadmap for creating future brand experiences. Brands that stay in tune with the evolution of attendee expectations will truly break through the clutter while measuring every interaction.

Here is a rundown of the top technologies for event marketers at CES. Expect these to become part of your everyday life — and your events!
THE TECH

MOBILE-DEPENDENT
At the heart of it all is the mobile device. Consumers are tethered (by choice) to mobile devices, which are at the core of many technologies.

CONNECTED EVERYTHING
Connected homes, connected cars — there is a way to access, adjust, and report everything, fully contextualized through dependent scenarios.

Mobile devices were an essential component of many new technologies that debuted at CES.

Lowe’s Innovation Labs launched the Holoroom, where customers selected designs using augmented reality to view hundreds of options as if they were in the actual room.
WEARABLES

Sensors are lighter, smarter, and embedded in everything, and the “Fit-Tech” category is exploding as a result. Wearables are slowly but surely becoming fashionable and stylish, with exceptional ability to track activities that impact personal health, moving from basic stats like steps and calories to biometrics like temperature and pulse rates. This information can be leveraged at events to gauge audience excitement and level of participation.

AUGMENTED REALITY

Following Facebook’s acquisition of the technology, Oculus Rift is beginning to go mainstream. Two years ago, Oculus Rift was a new technology doing private demos. This year, Oculus Rift was one of the busiest booths on the floor, debuting a new prototype, Oculus Rift Crescent Bay. No doubt marketers will see more and more of the Oculus Rift technology used at events.

On the “smartglasses” front, several companies launched competitors to Google Glass, including Sony, Toshiba, and Epson. Some of these glasses include AR capabilities.

Sensoria created workout socks with sensors to determine if you are running properly and, if not, help correct it.

With the debut of Qualcomm’s Vuforia™ mobile vision platform, developers are empowered to build augmented reality (AR) applications for a new generation of digital eyewear.
THE TECH

ROBOTICS & DRONES
We saw a glimpse into our robot-filled future with a whole batch of functional robotics. From cute to downright creepy, the robots could see, hear, and interact with attendees. And from spiders to personal assistants to fully life-like, talking people, robots are becoming more useful and approachable. Drones also looked more agile and discreet.

3-D PRINTING
Immediate and custom, 3-D printing continues to evolve and provide unlimited opportunities to engage and create. The Makers’ Movement is very much alive with 3-D printing, which we saw with numerous 3-D printed food, fashion, and jewelry items printed right on the show floor.
THE TECH

HIGH-DEF DISPLAYS
While perhaps not the biggest buzz, visual technology continues to advance. Curved, high-resolution screens will give experience marketers the ability to display content in new and exciting ways.

BIG DATA
The proliferation of technology and devices means unlimited data to help event marketers measure show traffic or attendee engagement. As both devices and data from devices increase, prepare to answer questions about privacy and security.

Haier unveils its 105” curved LED TV with a resolution of over 5K (5120 x 2160).

SKULPT a better u provides consumers with the ability to measure muscle mass and provide your Body Mass Index (BMI).
CEA has expanded its community from consumer electronics into a playground for tech, health care, automotive, and marketing. The excitement of CES extends beyond new devices, technologies, and platforms; it provides an exciting roadmap of the evolving future of content, advertising, data capture, and brand marketing.

The 2015 International CES is one highlight among CEA’s yearlong program to serve its members. It keeps this vibrant community engaged through continued touch points focused on building industry awareness and advocacy, as well as launching new events around the world to continue to grow its global audience.
FreemanXP uses the power of social engagement to inspire audiences to action. Whether online or face-to-face, FreemanXP connects individuals and brands in ways that accelerate engagement and create transformational change on a global scale. FreemanXP is a brand experience agency within the greater Freeman organization, offering a full range of marketing solutions from strategy and creative services through event/production management and measurement.

For more information, visit www.freemanxp.com or follow us @freemanxp.

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