

# Reed Exhibitions Meets Audit Goal

BY MARGO MCCALL

Reed Exhibitions North America President Chet Burchett said his organization has met its goal to have audits performed at most of its U.S. shows.

“We’re doing what we said we’d do. Nearly all of our events this year are having third-party audits done,” he said. “We’re not doing this because somebody wanted us to do it. We’re doing it because we thought it was important.”

About a year ago, Reed Exhibitions North America announced its intention to audit nearly 80 percent of its shows. Since then, no other major show organizers have followed suit.

The Exhibition and Event Industry Audit Commission, an independent board that oversees tradeshow audit standards, lists only 46 audited 2005 and 2006 shows on its Web site. Thirty-five shows were audited by Exhibit Surveys, including 23 Reed shows. Another 10 shows were audited by BPA Intl. and one (Intl. CES) by Veris Consulting.

Besides Reed, for-profit firms that audit some or all of their shows include CMP Media, E.J. Krause de Mexico, Hall-Erickson, IDG World Expo, MP Associates, Natl. Trade Productions, PennWell, Post Newsweek and Red 7 Media.

The Telecommunications Industry Assn. has always audited **Supercomm**, and planned to do so for its **Globalcomm** replacement. And the American Institute of Architects has its annual con-

vention audited too. Even Microsoft hired an auditor for its **TechEd** corporate event.

Reed’s audited shows include many that in 2005 ranked on the Tradeshow Week 200. According to the EEIAC listing, Exhibit Surveys performed third-party audits for the 2006 **BookExpo America** (No. 91), **Global Gaming Expo** (No. 78), **Interpnex** (No. 114) **Intl. Vision Expo East** (No. 103), **Intl. Vision Expo West** (No. 164), **Natl. Hardware Show and Lawn & Garden World** (No. 22), **PGA Merchandise Show** (No. 39), and **SHOT Show** (No. 27).

The largest in terms of attendance is the PGA show, which draws upwards of 30,000 people.

Burchett said the **JCK Show**, a TSW 200 jewelry exhibition, isn’t audited because its security-conscious attendee registration process is already rigorous enough to yield solid attendance figures.

Rather than exhibitor demand, Reed’s desire to boost the credibility of exhibitions drove the audit campaign, Burchett said. “Most other channels in marketing have some kind of audit. It is part of a broader exercise in exhibitor value and customer ROI.”

Reed’s audit efforts began with pilot programs of three shows in 2004 and five in 2005. The audits are intended to increase customer value and help exhibitors justify their investment in Reed shows.

Although audits add to an exhibition’s cost, Burchett said it’s well worth it. “If we want our customers to invest in our events as the best possible marketing vehicle, we need to invest in our customers,” he said. **TSW**



**CHET BURCHETT,  
REED EXHIBITIONS NORTH AMERICA:**

“We’re doing what we said we’d do. Nearly all of our events this year are having third-party audits done.”