

The Automotive Hit Parade

What prompted over 10,000 exhibitors to spread themselves across 70,000 sq.m of Delhi's Pragati Maidan with a collective spend of around Rs 1 billion?

THERE IS SOMETHING otherworldly and magical about mega exhibitions. The moving lights and images, the unending flow of multitudes advancing like a conquering army, all these to the accompaniment of fast paced sound tracks, tend to blur one's sense of time. "Oh my God! It is 4.30 already!" is a common refrain. The whirl of action often leaves one wondering which day of the week the moment belongs to. Sucked in to the kinetics, one can get disoriented. Visualize this: You are talking to a visitor and then a tap on the shoulder and the hurried whisper: "Minister is in the next stall". Five minutes of frenzy later, one is left



with a vague sense of discontinuity ("Where was I?") - call it the clogged RAM (Random Access Memory - of the mind).

What prompted over 10,000 exhibitors to spread themselves across 70,000 sq.m of Delhi's Pragati Maidan halls with a collective spend of around Rs 1 billion? Visitors, for a short answer. Sector-specific shows like the Auto Expo bring together all its stakeholders, making it a convenient, cost-effective meeting point. List out all the visitors who mattered and were met. And imagine what it would have cost to meet all of them outside the Auto Expo and how many would not have been met at all! Exhibitions accentuate people's sense of inquiry. They seek information. That is a common denominator assisting communication.

Exhibitions are intrinsically egalitarian and

the winter attire shaped by this January's sub-zero temperature in Delhi masked the prince and the pauper alike. Even otherwise, one gets to rub some famous shoulders, often without realizing it. You cannot collect autographs at exhibitions but equally precious are memories and mental pictures to be unwrapped at appropriate times ("You know, when I finished explaining the product, Rajiv Gandhi smiled and said "Thank You. That was well explained").

The resounding compliments for our products cued some flashback. The silvery machines that floored visitors owed their rebirth after the last October's flash floods, to the Product Development team. (That their gleaming, healthy skin showed no after effect, is testimony to material and paint quality.) Then

the weeklong suspense during the transportation of the vehicles. Spare a thought for the team who managed logistics in Delhi. The Product Development team whose grasp of the local lingo weaker than the acquaintance of the new products with north zone's service team! In the dead of night, when two third of humanity was sound asleep, together they moved the vehicles from Faridabad to Pragati Maidan (Thank God for cell phones!) - along the highway, deserted but for the police check posts where vehicle documents are scrutinized. Only the HMV 6x6, distinctly army, got the right of way and an occasional salute.

And now to deliver on the promise ...

What is *your* bit?

Think about it.

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