

A Duty Free Marriage of 25 Years

ME Productions Celebrates a Quarter Century as Producers of Duty Free Stores' Annual Events & Galas

April 17, 2010 –

It's the silver anniversary of a long-lasting partnership between ME Productions, the Hollywood, Florida-based event production company and the International Association of Airport Duty Free Stores (IAADFS) annual 3,000-person trade show, welcome reception, and gala. For a quarter century, each show has been unique: dozens of themes, star entertainers, dynamic stages and details. This year's event was held at the Orlando World Center.

In its 42nd year, the IAADFS show is the premier event that brings together an international contingent of concessionaire and supplier members, duty free buyers from cruise ship and airline in-flight duty free stores, duty free border stores, Caribbean duty free stores, and non member airport duty free stores.

In 1985 the headliner was Aretha Franklin. In 2010 the headliner was the room. A massive lounge, created by ME transformed a 37,000 square foot space, able to seat 1,000 people, into the largest living room ever. The jumbo sized room of comfy chairs, varied height tables, and raised stage, was designed to get guests to log off smart phones and laptops and log into the event and each other.

"We stepped away from the traditional table, chair, stage layout and look," said Hal Etkin, ME Productions CEO. "A lot changes in 25 years. Computers, smart phones and lap tops can distract. This room with its lighting, entertainment, and décor was designed to keep people mingling rather than eyes set forward on a stage or on a screen, or downward to their i-phones. It was about strolling entertainers, no announcement. No loud music and overwhelming distractions."

"Throughout the entire event there was something to enjoy, either on the stage or with table visits by performers to personally entertain," said Etkin. Strolling entertainers included violins, guitar, jugglers, balancing acts, contortionists, illusionist and more. Distractions were limited by having the performers stop at tables rather than the traditional, all eyes on the stage, and disengaged from the social circle.

"A visually creative room that positioned people in round table comfort settings encourages more give-and-take," said Etkin. "It creates a dialogue opportunity that we don't get from a laptop. It's a lounge environment for a large group that just happens to have strolling musicians and performers."

To find out more about the IAADFS gala & show, or for information on how to create a super-sized corporate lounge event, contact Hal Etkin at ME Productions at (800) 544-0033, extension 121

...A lot has changed since 1985. We didn't plug in, tune on and log off. The corporate show still needs to remain personal ...,"
Hal Etkin



About The Duty Free Show of the Americas

www.iaadfs.org

The International Association of Airport Duty Free Stores (IAADFS) is an international trade association with approximately 500 company members. The purpose of the IAADFS is to promote the airport duty free industry as an important segment of the international business community; including Latin America.

About ME Productions

www.meproductions.com

ME Productions is Florida's largest, full-service Destination Management and Event Production Company specializing in award-winning national and international corporate events, corporate theater, staging, audio-visual, music and entertainment. For further information contact Hal Etkin at (954) 458-4000 or by email: hetkin@meproductions.com. The company web site address is www.meproductions.com