

investment in skills development. The size of staff-training budgets attests to their importance, be they allocated to national conferences, video conferences, regional focus groups, broadcasts or internet streaming.

• Pulling rabbits out of hats

Here I'm not only referring to that wow factor that leaves clients and guests musing - gee, that's clever, why didn't I think of that? - rather to diminishing budgets, matched by even greater expectations for something relevant, memorable and just plain awesome! In this context, handling brand touchpoints means engaging creative ways of presenting the message to the target audience. The days of longwinded events with tons of entertainment is relegated to history.

Today, face-to-face communication takes centre stage, supported by spectacular technology, designed to generate tweets and Facebook-interactions galore, celebrating the event - and of course, the brand experience.

Just as an acorn strives to grow into a mighty oak, every brand desires to be great and as event marketers our role is to assist our clients in achieving their goal.

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