

INDUSTRY TRENDS

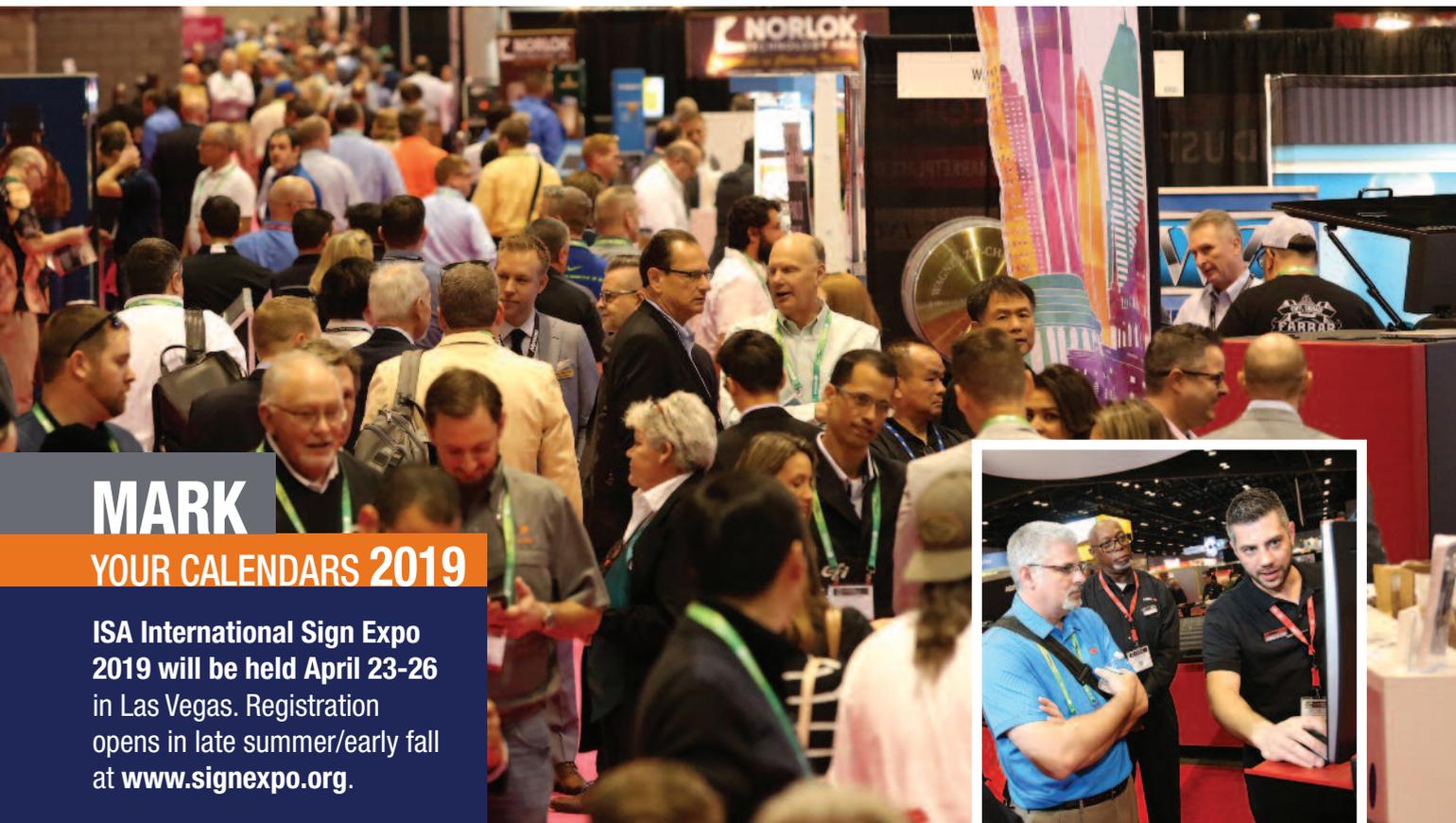
The International Sign Association



INTERNATIONAL SIGN ASSOCIATION

MAY 2018 EDITION

ISA Sign Expo 2018: Building Opportunities to Grow



MARK

YOUR CALENDARS 2019

ISA International Sign Expo 2019 will be held April 23-26 in Las Vegas. Registration opens in late summer/early fall at www.signexpo.org.

Where were you in late March? If you were in Orlando at ISA International Sign Expo 2018, you just moved your businesses miles ahead.

There is no substitute for the sign, graphics and visual communications industry's leading event and those who attended agree.

Seizing on Connections

With more than 20,000 in attendance, there was the opportunity to make a game changing connection at every turn. Perhaps it was introducing yourself to someone in an educational session. Maybe it was a link at an event like the ISA National Custom Networking Reception, which allowed local sign companies to build relationships with national sign companies who subcontract work. Or it could

have been with a new or existing vendor on the massive trade show floor—an expo with a larger-than-ever footprint.

Want to continue to build? ISA Affiliated Associations host regional events this summer, which bring together those at the state or regional level. Find the list of ISA Affiliated Associations at www.signs.org/affiliates.

Capitalizing on Knowledge

Targeted education aimed at solving the pressing needs of sign company leaders. There was information on hot new areas of business. And inspiration from three Game Changer speakers—akin to keynotes—provided the spark to enhance business in 2018.

A few highlights:

“Leadership is a sacred trust,” said Shannon Huffman Polson, one of the first women to pilot an Apache attack helicopter and later an Apache platoon leader. “Leadership does not have to do with your rank or position or the number of direct reports you have. You’re a leader no matter what seat you sit in. You are a leader when you decide to lead, when you make the decision to own your own story and lead.”

When she became a first lieutenant, she quickly realized that along with the increased power came “the increased opportunity to take good care of your people.”

STATS • FACTS

11,000 Baby Boomers turn 65 every day, according to ISA International Sign Expo 2018 Game Changer speaker Kim Lear. About half of the

When leading her platoon, she focused on “muddy boots leadership,” getting to know the flight crew as well as the pilots. “Over time, I got to know these guys and to love them. Every single one of them had goals and dreams and ambitions. If I had not gotten myself out of the office and into the hangar floor, I would never have known who they were. I wouldn’t have been able to fulfill that sacred duty of taking care of your people, because I wouldn’t have known how.”

Chef Jeff Henderson detailed how he parlayed skills learned as a drug dealer who spent decade in prison into becoming a top chef. “You ever sit back and wonder how come some people make it and some people don’t? It’s the knowledge of the gift. God gave us all a gift. We were all born with it. The gift is never revealed until you have a certain experience

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He spent a decade in prison with white collar criminals and spent a lot of time learning from them about business and Wall Street. “It’s your job to build relationships with the subject matter experts that do it better than anybody in the world. What does he know what you don’t know? What puts him at the top of the game? Never chase money. You chase relationships. Relationships lead to opportunity and opportunity leads to the paper.”

With four generations in the workforce—Baby Boomers to Generation Z—capitalizing on key differences can make or break a company, says Kim Lear, researcher and trend spotter. “I’m sure a lot have had conversations on this topic of generations. It goes to a negative place very quickly. It’s about who had to climb up hills both ways and they’re stuck in their ways or who is an entitled brat. As we have the conversations on generations, it is not to make us nostalgic for the way things used to be, but to adapt to the way things are now.”

Lear talked about how situations had imprinted on each generation—and made them respond a certain way. Baby Boomers, for instance, were met with job shortages early on and learned that they had to work hard to stand out. “They transformed the American work

force from the 40-hour work week to the 80-hour work week.”

Gen Xers brought the idea of work-life balance while Millennials say, “I’ve got yoga at noon and I want to bring my dog in,” Lear said. “You have to recognize that the older generation never thinks the younger generation has a work ethic. This is just part of the hazing mentality that exists. We have new ways of working that are at our disposal that have fundamentally changed our work.”

Generation Z—born between 1996 and 2010—and therefore just starting to come into the workforce—is still somewhat unknown.

But this group is marked with a keen closeness to their parents—Gen Xers—and are what Lear terms the “DIY generation. They’ve grown up with YouTube and figure everything out on their own.” They also bring hope to the sign, graphics and visual communications industry. “They have a hunger and physicality along with tactile work,” Lear said. “This generation is resourceful and can do a lot themselves as long as they’re given resources. Being a place that diverse talent can flock to and thrive will be imperative for the recruitment and retention of talent.”

If you missed any of these—or want to share them with the staff back at the office—many of the education sessions from ISA Sign Expo 2018 will be offered as webinars in the coming months. See the list of upcoming webinars at www.signs.org/webinars.

Discovering New Products

ISA International Sign Expo is increasingly seen as the place for exhibitors to debut new products—and there were plenty of them at ISA Sign Expo 2018. From new print innovations to mind-blowing digital sign products, the event had something for everyone: high tech, low tech and everything in between. The ISA Sign Expo can help you recall some of those products, or learn about ones you may have missed on the tradeshow floor. Read it at www.signexpo.org/blog.

Connect with the nearly 600 exhibitors who participated at signexpo.org/2018-exhibitor-list/.

ISA International Sign Expo 2018 is in the books, leaving behind business-building ideas and strategies. Plan to grow more in 2018. Registration for ISA International Sign Expo 2019 will open in the late summer/early fall. Go ahead and set an appointment on your calendar to continue moving your business forward. | 