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en el marco de Expoartesanías/98.**

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**Manila, Filipinas**

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## EL NEGOCIO DE LAS FERIAS COMERCIALES

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Por: Arturo Cruz Dimaano

Subdirector Ejecutivo, CITEM

Manila, Filipinas

En nombre del Centro para Exposiciones Comerciales Internacionales y Misiones, o CITEM, quiero agradecer a Artesanías de Colombia S.A., entidad del Ministerio de Desarrollo Económico por invitarme a formar parte de este evento.

Estoy muy complacido y honrado de compartir con ustedes nuestra experiencia en *el negocio de ferias comerciales*, que, en nuestro caso, es el de promover las exportaciones.

El concepto de las ferias comerciales como forma de promover productos o servicios, y de apoyar a las empresas para que se orienten hacia las ventas, las exportaciones y otras oportunidades de negocios, se ha convertido en una industria en sí misma. Cada país ha desarrollado de alguna manera su propia forma de manejar las exhibiciones comerciales. Este foro, por lo tanto, es un paso en la dirección correcta para intercambiar conocimientos y aprender unos de otros.

Mi presentación no va a tratar sobre el ABC de los diferentes pasos necesarios para el manejo de las exhibiciones. Se trata de mostrar el éxito sin pretensiones

como evento obligado en la guía de compradores.

Además, organizamos la participación del país en ferias en el exterior. Desde nuestra fundación en 1983, nos hemos concentrado en brindar a los exportadores filipinos los espacios en los que puedan emular con la competencia, y observar las tendencias de los productos.

Hemos ampliado nuestra cobertura para incluir la organización de seminarios y foros, otro espacio que nos permite capacitar a los productores : sentando las bases para penetrar nuevos y más amplios mercados; igualmente hemos fortalecido nuestra posición como un centro del diseño , líder en Asia.

En vista de la cambiante naturaleza de la competencia, consideramos mejor ajustar nuestra misión y desagregarla en temas específicos. Es por esto que, como agencia, junto con la industria exportadora, podremos estar en capacidad de responder a las cambiantes necesidades y requerimientos de los compradores y consumidores en el mundo entero.

Permítanme compartir con ustedes nuestra visión del mundo. Considero mejor que sepan de dónde venimos, y así no se confundan sobre el porqué hacemos las cosas en la forma en que las hacemos. Se que lo que hacemos, nuestros programas y proyectos, no son exclusivamente nuestros. Sin embargo, daría mayor claridad, por así decirlo, si describo los paradigmas por los que vivimos.

En primer término, reconocemos que el mundo es cada día más pequeño. Con la

tecnología haciendo todo posible sólo con presionar un botón o hacer clic en un icono, los tiempos definitivamente han cambiado. Ahora vemos una mezcla de culturas y estilos.

Donde existía únicamente el dólar como la moneda más importante, ahora vemos surgir el Euro compitiendo por la supremacía. Milán era la fortaleza del diseño. Ahora vemos países asiáticos haciéndole una sana competencia. Claro está, sus sensibilidades de diseño son muy diferentes.

Los ejemplos que he dado pueden haber simplificado las cosas demasiado. Hay distintos niveles de similitud, lo mismo que de diferencias. *El punto es: la globalización está a la mano*, está ocurriendo ahora. Antes la competencia era entre productos ; ahora la imagen y los servicios con valor agregado son muy importantes. Todo esto y más juega un papel decisivo cuando fijamos nuestras estrategias para la promoción de exportaciones.

Una regla general que seguimos, tanto en la participación en ferias, como en nuestra organización, es, "no vaya hacia generalidades". Esta es la razón por la que rara vez vamos a ferias generales, y tampoco las promovemos. Participamos en éstas sólo por compromisos de tipo político y demás.

Por qué? Porque consideramos que ya pasaron los días en que los comerciantes manejaban todos los rincones de un almacén. Hoy, los compradores están más enfocados. Tenemos un comprador para cada tipo de mercancía.

En Manila, nuestra Semana del Mercado para Regalos y Accesorios para el Hogar es nuestra mayor actividad cada año. Hacemos dos exhibiciones, una en abril y otra en octubre, que están por encima de nuestros otros proyectos. Al mantenernos enfocados hacia este sector, también señalamos directrices de diseño.

Establecer orientaciones sobre diseño a través de nuestro programa de consultoría es una de las funciones inherentes a CITEM, como agencia, cuyo negocio es la promoción de ferias comerciales. Este es un servicio que debe ser brindado a los expositores con el fin de ayudarles a competir en el mercado internacional.

Así, tenemos temas específicos para cada semana de mercado que nos dan las directrices para el desarrollo de nuestro material promocionales, y de los productos que deben ser puestos en vitrina en nuestros montajes especiales. Los primeros en el mundo en tener temas en las ferias comerciales fueron los asiáticos. Aunque otros pueden tener montajes especiales, nunca utilizan un tema en sus ferias comerciales.

En términos de los resultados socioeconómicos de las exhibiciones, cada Semana de Mercado contribuye con cerca de 96.0 millones de pesos filipinos (US\$2.4 millones) al gobierno anfitrión en forma de impuestos y ocupación hotelera, entre otros.

La última innovación que hemos añadido a nuestra Semana de Mercado es su

internacionalización. Como señalé anteriormente, la competencia es cada vez más dura. Por lo tanto, consideramos que lo mejor era que nuestros exportadores pudieran confrontarse con sus contrapartes. Empezamos en 1997, y hasta ahora, hemos tenido una buena respuesta.

Claro está que pronto estaremos introduciendo una nueva faceta a nuestra Semana de Mercado para que sea un destino más viable para nuestros compradores extranjeros. Vamos a hacer un nuevo lanzamiento en el año 2000.

Del "*look*" tradicional de nuestras artesanías hace más o menos 15 años, hemos evolucionado para desarrollar un *look* filipino en cuanto al diseño y estilo de nuestros productos de exportación. Simplemente utilizamos las destrezas existentes, la laboriosidad artesanal y los diversos tratamientos y aplicaciones de las materias primas, para vender en los mercados internacionales productos de gran aceptación.

Como lo expresan nuestros compradores, el alma del artesano filipino está siempre presente en nuestros artículos de regalo, accesorios para el hogar y en el mobiliario.

Como a lo lejos: así como es importante acoplarse a los requerimientos del mercado externo, un país productor de artesanías debe buscar un balance entre el aumento a las exportaciones y la preservación de las artesanías. Las naciones deben conservar sus tradiciones intactas para preservar su identidad cultural.

Y así, el reto más grande que CITEM ha tenido que afrontar en cuanto a organización de ferias se trata ha sido el ser anfitrión de la VI Feria Comercial Internacional del Pacífico Asiático, ASPAT '96 Manila, realizada del 5 al 11 de Noviembre de 1996. Esta fue organizada conjuntamente con la Comisión Económica y Social de las Naciones Unidas para Asia y el Pacífico, UN-ESCAP.

La primera edición de ASPAT se concentró en un tema específico -- mobiliario para el hogar con el tema EL Hogar Global. Para hacer de ASPAT '96 Manila una experiencia diferente, incluimos también actividades periféricas como un concurso de diseño de sillas, un foro sobre negocios y diseño, exposiciones especiales de Alessi y Shigeru Uchida como complemento a las ruedas de negocios. (*Alessi es un conocido diseñador italiano de servicios de té y café, y el Sr. Uchida es conocido como el maestro de las salones de té, parte de la arquitectura sagrada japonesa*).

Para el Foro de Diseño y Negocios reunimos a los editores de revistas internacionales como Marie Claire, Maison, Interni, Conde Nast, House and Garden y House Beautiful, entre otras, para que hablaran sobre los estilos de vida del próximo milenio.

Como ven, nos gusta poner las cosas en paquetes ordenados, grandes o pequeños. Así, queríamos que los compradores obtuvieran lo mejor de ASPAT: la mejor mercancía de la feria, las tendencias venideras en el foro, y una muestra de la creatividad tanto del Pacífico asiático, como de Europa, especialmente de Italia.

En lo que respecta a la organización de las delegaciones para la participación en ferias, quiero compartir con ustedes nuestro triunfo más reciente – ser Socio Filipinas en la Feria de Hannover '98, del 20 al 24 de Abril de 1998.

La Feria de Hannover es la exposición comercial más grande del mundo! Durante dos años nos preparamos para, por así decirlo, nuestro momento de gloria. Nuevamente formulamos un tema para nuestra participación, Socios en la Industrialización; e introdujimos ese mensaje una y otra vez.

Como Socio Filipinas, mostramos nuestro sector industrial, particularmente en el campo de la electrónica y telecomunicaciones, construcción, energía y minería, maquinaria industrial, materiales y transporte.

Socio Filipinas en Hannover fue una presentación completa de lo que es el país. Había componentes de cultura y turismo y un festival gastronómico. Hasta la fecha se han negociado cerca de 200 millones de dólares. Estamos a la espera de otras negociaciones iniciadas en la feria.

Fue también durante Socio Filipinas en el mes de Abril que hicimos el lanzamiento de nuestra imagen corporativa como país: "Filipinas, una elección inteligente". En la siguiente descripción de nuestras actividades, verán el porqué somos una alternativa de negocios segura y un proveedor confiable en Asia.

Todos nuestros proyectos, tanto en Filipinas como en el exterior, están orientados



por temas. Nuestros temas pueden variar, dependiendo del sector al que se dirijan. Por ejemplo, para regalos y accesorios del hogar, siempre enfocamos nuestras habilidades de diseño. En las ferias industriales, hacemos énfasis en la alta calidad de los servicios ofrecidos por un equipo bien entrenado de trabajadores y de profesionales.

Ofrecemos un paquete completo de servicios a nuestros clientes, los exportadores filipinos. Además de dar asistencia en el desarrollo de productos, tanto en la manufactura como en el diseño, complementamos nuestras actividades con campañas de publicidad profesionalmente diseñadas.

Nuestra relación con los expositores no termina con cada feria. Los acompañamos durante las negociaciones, dando asesoría cuando es necesario. Hemos estimulado la activa participación de las organizaciones industriales para que, conjuntamente con otras agencias del gobierno, promuevan el desarrollo de sus sectores en particular. Creemos que esto contribuye a que los industriales participen activamente en la gestión de su propio desarrollo y crecimiento. Después de todo, CITEM no puede hacer más.

Habrán notado que no me he referido a ningún problema específico. No crean por esto, que no los tenemos. Hay muchos problemas -- desde restricciones económicas, hasta exportadores poco colaboradores. Nuestra regla en CITEM siempre ha sido la de encontrar un camino alrededor de las dificultades. Me siento orgulloso al decir que más que nuestras estrategias, nuestro mayor atributo es nuestra gente.

Ciertamente las ferias comerciales son nuestro negocio. Manila F.A.M.E. se ha auto-sostenido por algunos años. Esperamos obtener el 100% de nuestras necesidades presupuestales en el término de 3 a 5 años. El negocio de las ferias comerciales nos ha favorecido, pero sin perder de vista nuestro mandato de apoyar a los pequeños y medianos empresarios de Filipinas.

Confío en que esta sesión haya servido de inspiración para ustedes. Ha sido grato compartir con ustedes nuestros triunfos como entidad encargada de la promoción comercial. Pero me siento aún mejor si han podido aprovechar algunos puntos que consideren valiosos.

Mil gracias y un buen día. Me complacería mucho responder a sus preguntas o aclarar algunos puntos relacionados con mi presentación.

Conferencia del Señor Art C. Dimaano  
Subdirector Ejecutivo de CITEM

Seminario sobre Artesanía y Mercados dictado en el marco de Expoartesánías/98.

Santafé de Bogotá , Diciembre de 1998.

# **THE BUSINESS OF TRADE FAIRS**

**By Arturo Cruz Dimaano  
Deputy Executive Director, CITEM  
Manila, Philippines**

**On behalf of the Center for International Trade Expositions and Missions, or CITEM, I would like to thank Artesanias de Colombia s.a. of the Ministerio de Desarrollo Economico for inviting me to be part of this event.**

**I am pleased and honored to share with you our experience in *the business of trade fairs*, which, in our case, is to promote exports.**

**The concept of trade fairs as a way of promoting products or services and companies for sales, export, and other business opportunities, has developed into an industry of its own. Each country has somehow evolved its unique way of managing trade exhibitions. This forum, therefore, is a good move in the right direction to exchange notes and learn from each other.**

**My presentation will not delve on the ABC's of or the various steps needed in exhibition management. It is about a developing country's unpretentious success in fighting the Goliaths in the field of trade fairs, especially for the handicraft sector.**

**What do we have to share with Colombia in the field of exhibition management? The answer is simple: our experience, which we have painstakingly nurtured and preserved over the years. It is an experience dispensed with fervors and not favors, which has earned for us the respect and admiration of our clients. This has greatly contributed to the many little successes we have made in the past.**

**This experience was borne out of resiliency, determination, *creativity*, and hardwork as a government agency willing and able to serve our clients. To do so, we have continuously re-invented not only ourselves but also what we do. This is the “twist” needed to accordingly respond to the changing trade environment, as well as the needs and requirements of our export sector.**

**But before I go on, let me tell you a little bit about CITEM. We are an agency of our country’s Department of Trade and Industry. And we are in the business of charting global success for our export industry. Well, we try very hard to.**

**We have been organizing trade fairs in Manila for the past 15 years or so; and our bi-annual Manila Furnishings and Apparel Manufacturers Exchange, or Manila F.A.M.E. for short, has been included in the buyers’ must-see shows.**

**Also, we organize country participation in fairs abroad. Since we were established in 1983, we have focused on providing our Filipino exporters venues where they can gauge their competition, as well as observe product trends.**

**We have expanded our coverage to include organizing seminars and fora, another venue where we are able to educate our manufacturers; laying the groundwork for penetrating new and emerging markets; and strengthening our position as a leading design center in Asia.**

**In view of the changing nature of competition, we deemed it best to adjust our mission and break it down to specifics. This is so that we, as an agency, together with the export industry, will still be able to respond to the changing needs and requirements of buyers and consumers all over the world.**

**Let me share with you our view of the world. I think it is best to let you know where we are coming from so that you will not be confused as to why we do things the way we do them. I know that what we do, our programs and projects, are not unique to us. Still, it would clear the air, so to speak, if I describe the paradigms we live by.**

**First of all, we acknowledge that the world is becoming smaller and smaller. With technology making everything possible at a push of a button or a click on an icon, times have definitely changed. Now, we see a merging of cultures and lifestyles.**

**Where there was only the dollar as a major currency, we now see the rise of the Euro to challenge that supremacy. Design used to be the forte of Milan. Now we see Asian countries giving them healthy competition. Of course, their design sensibilities are very different.**

The examples I have given may be oversimplifying things. There are still different levels of similarity, as well as differences. *The point is: globalization is at hand.* It is happening now. Competition used to be between products. Now, image and value-added services are major considerations. All these and more come into play when we plot our strategies for export promotion.

One general rule we follow in both trade fair participation and organization, is “do not go general.” This is the reason why we rarely join general trade fairs, neither do we spearhead such. We are seen in general trade fairs only to honor political commitments and the like.

Why? Because we believe that gone are the days when merchandisers handled all corners of a store. Today, buyers are more focused. We have a buyer for every type of merchandise.

In Manila, our Manila F.A.M.E. Gifts and Houseware Market Week is our major activity each year. We do two shows, one in April and another in October, on top of our other projects. In keeping with our focused approach for this industry sector, we also point out design directions.

Providing design directions, through our merchandise consultancy program, is a function that is contiguous to CITEM’s very existence as a trade promotions agency whose business is trade fairs. It is a service that needs to be provided to our exhibitors to help them compete in the international market.

**Thus, we have themes for each market week to provide us the direction for the development of our promotional materials, as well as products to be showcased in our special setting/s. The idea of having themes in trade fairs is a first in Asia. And, possibly, the whole world! Although others have special settings, they never use a theme in their trade fairs.**

**In terms of the shows' socio-economic impact, each of these Market Weeks contribute around PhP 96.0 M (US\$ 2.4 M) to the host local government unit in the form of duties and taxes, increased hotel occupancy, among others.**

**The latest innovation we added to our Market Weeks is its internationalization. As I pointed out earlier, competition is getting fiercer. Thus, we thought it best to expose our local exporters to their foreign counterparts. We started this in 1997, and so far we have been getting good feedback.**

**Of course, it is a given that soon, we will be injecting another facet to Market Week to make it a more viable destination to foreign buyers. We will re-launch it in the year 2000.**

**From the traditional look and appeal of our handicrafts some 15 years ago, we evolved a distinctly Philippine look in the design and style of our export products. We simply used our existing skills, craftsmanship, and diverse raw material treatments and applications to sell to the international markets products that are highly coveted.**

**As our buyers are wont to say, the soul of the Filipino craftsman is always manifested in our gifts and houseware items, as well as in our home furnishings.**

**As an aside: while it is important to cater to the needs and requirements of foreign markets, any handicraft-producing country must strike a balance between increasing export sales and craft preservation. Nations must keep their craft traditions in tact to preserve their cultural identity.**

**To continue, the biggest challenge CITEM had hurdled, as far as organizing trade fairs is concerned, was hosting the 6th Asia Pacific International Trade Fair or ASPAT '96 Manila on 05-11 November 1996. This was co-organized with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, or UN-ESCAP.**

**It was the first edition of ASPAT to focus on a singular industry -- home furnishings, with the theme The Global Home. To make ASPAT '96 Manila a different experience, we also added peripheral activities such as a chair design competition, a business and design forum, and special exhibits of Alessi and Shigeru Uchida to complement the business negotiations. (*Alessi is a well-known Italian maker of designer tea and coffee services while Mr Uchida is known as the master of tearooms, a sacred Japanese architecture*).**

**For the Design and Business Forum, we gathered the editors of top international magazines like Marie Claire Maison, Interni, Conde Nast House and Garden, and House Beautiful, among others, to talk about lifestyles in the coming millennium.**



**You see, we are fond of putting things in neat packages, big or small. Thus, we wanted the buyers to get as much as they could from ASPAT: the best merchandise in the trade fair; the coming trends in the forum; and a sampling of creativity from the Asia Pacific as well as Europe, particularly Italy.**

**As far as organizing delegations to foreign trade fairs is concerned, I want to share with you our recent triumph -- being Partner Philippines in Hannover Fair '98, on 20-24 April 1998.**

**The Hannover Fair is the world's biggest trade show! And for two years, we prepared for our so-called moment of glory. Again, we formulated a theme, Partners In Industrialization, for our participation; and we injected this same message over and over again.**

**As Partner Philippines, we showed our industrial sector, particularly in electronics and IT-related industries, construction, energy and mining, industrial machinery and materials, and transportation.**

**Partner Philippines in Hannover was a total presentation of what the country is all about. We had tourism and cultural components, too, as well as a food festival. So far, some US\$200M worth of business has been negotiated. We are still awaiting other prospects initiated during the fair.**

**It was also in Partner Philippines this April that we launched our corporate image as a country: *Philippines smart choice*. In all our upcoming activities, you will be learning more about why we are**

a sound business alternative as well as a reliable supplier in Asia.

All our projects, whether in the Philippines or abroad, are guided by themes. Our themes may vary though, depending on the sector concerned. For instance, for gifts and houseware, we always focus on our design capability. In industrial trade fairs, we emphasize the high-quality services provided by our easily trainable pool of workers, both professional and otherwise.

We provide a total package of services to our clients, the Filipino exporters. Aside from giving them assistance in merchandise development, both manufacturing and design, we also complement our activities with professionally done collateral and publicity campaigns.

And our relationship with our exhibitors does not end with each fair. We are with them through negotiations, providing assistance whenever necessary. We have continuously encouraged active participation of our industry organizations, in cooperation with other relevant government agencies, in the development of their particular sectors. We believe that this encourages industry players to be proactive in charting their own growth and progress. After all, CITEM can only do so much.

You may have noticed that I did not delve into any specific problem. Do not be misled into thinking that there are none in our turf. There happens to be a lot -- from monetary constraints to uncooperative exporters. Our rule in CITEM has always been to work our way around any difficulty. I am proud to say that more

than our strategies, people power remain to be our biggest asset.

Surely, trade fairs are our business. The Manila F.A.M.E. has been self-liquidating for a number of years. We expect to earn 100% of our budgetary requirements I 3-5 years. By that time, the business of trade fairs has become us but without losing our mandate to help the small and medium enterprises in the Philippines.

I hope this session has been inspiring for you. It feels good to share with you our triumphs as a trade promotion organization. But I will feel infinitely better when I know that you have picked a valuable point or two.

Thank you very much and good day. I am most willing to answer your questions or clarify some points regarding my presentation.

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**It was the first edition of ASPAT to focus on a singular industry -- home furnishings, with the theme The Global Home. To make ASPAT '96 Manila a different experience, we also added peripheral activities such as a chair design competition, a business and design forum, and special exhibits of Alessi and Shigeru Uchida to complement the business negotiations. (*Alessi is a well-known Italian maker of designer tea and coffee services while Mr Uchida is known as the master of tearooms, a sacred Japanese architecture*).**

**For the Design and Business Forum, we gathered the editors of top international magazines like Marie Claire Maison, Interni, Conde Nast House and Garden, and House Beautiful, among others, to talk about lifestyles in the coming millennium.**

**You see, we are fond of putting things in neat packages, big or small. Thus, we wanted the buyers to get as much as they could from ASPAT: the best merchandise in the trade fair; the coming trends in the forum; and a sampling of creativity from the Asia Pacific as well as Europe, particularly Italy.**

**As far as organizing delegations to foreign trade fairs is concerned, I want to share with you our recent triumph -- being Partner Philippines in Hannover Fair '98, on 20-24 April 1998.**

**The Hannover Fair is the world's biggest trade show! And for two years, we prepared for our so-called moment of glory. Again, we formulated a theme, Partners In Industrialization, for our participation; and we injected this same message over and over again.**

**As Partner Philippines, we showed our industrial sector, particularly in electronics and IT-related industries, construction, energy and mining, industrial machinery and materials, and transportation.**

**Partner Philippines in Hannover was a total presentation of what the country is all about. We had tourism and cultural components, too, as well as a food festival. So far, some US\$200M worth of business has been negotiated. We are still awaiting other prospects initiated during the fair.**

**It was also in Partner Philippines this April that we launched our corporate image as a country: *Philippines smart choice*. In all our upcoming activities, you will be learning more about why we are a sound business alternative as well as a reliable supplier in Asia.**

**All our projects, whether in the Philippines or abroad, are guided by themes. Our themes may vary though, depending on the sector concerned. For instance, for gifts and houseware, we always focus on our design capability. In industrial trade fairs, we emphasize the high-quality services provided by our easily trainable pool of workers, both professional and otherwise.**

**We provide a total package of services to our clients, the Filipino exporters. Aside from giving them assistance in merchandise development, both manufacturing and design, we also complement our activities with professionally done collateral and publicity campaigns.**

**And our relationship with our exhibitors does not end with each fair. We are with them through negotiations, providing assistance whenever necessary. We have continuously encouraged active participation of our industry organizations, in cooperation with other relevant government agencies, in the development of their particular sectors. We believe that this encourages industry players to be proactive in charting their own growth and progress. After all, CITEM can only do so much.**

**You may have noticed that I did not delve into any specific problem. Do not be misled into thinking that there are none in our turf. There happens to be a lot -- from monetary constraints to uncooperative exporters. Our rule in CITEM has always been to work our way around any difficulty. I am proud to say that more than our strategies, people power remain to be our biggest asset.**

**Surely, trade fairs are our business. The Manila F.A.M.E. has been self-liquidating for a number of years. We expect to earn 100% of our budgetary requirements in 3-5 years. By that time, the business of trade fairs has become us but without losing our mandate to help the small and medium enterprises in the Philippines.**

**(end)**