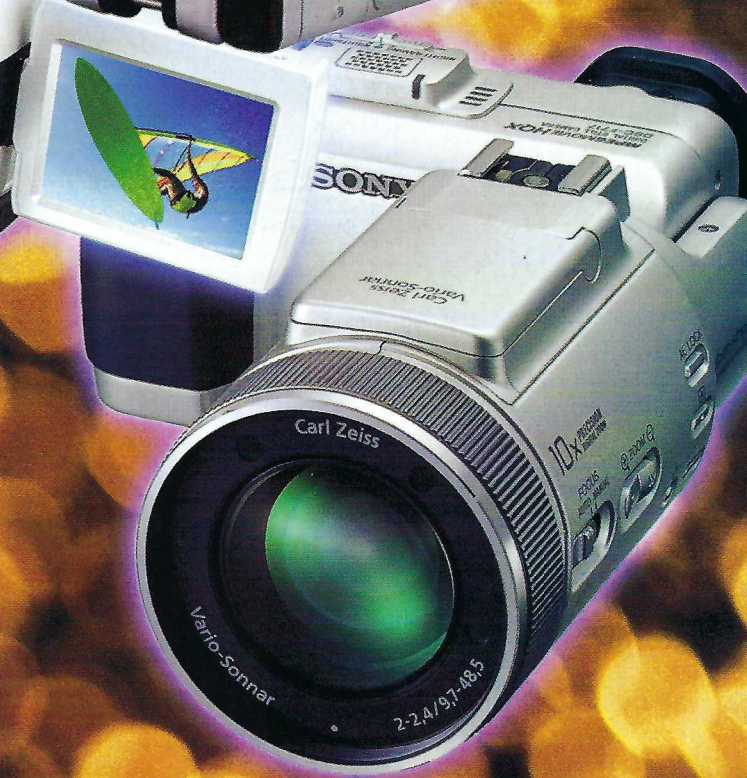
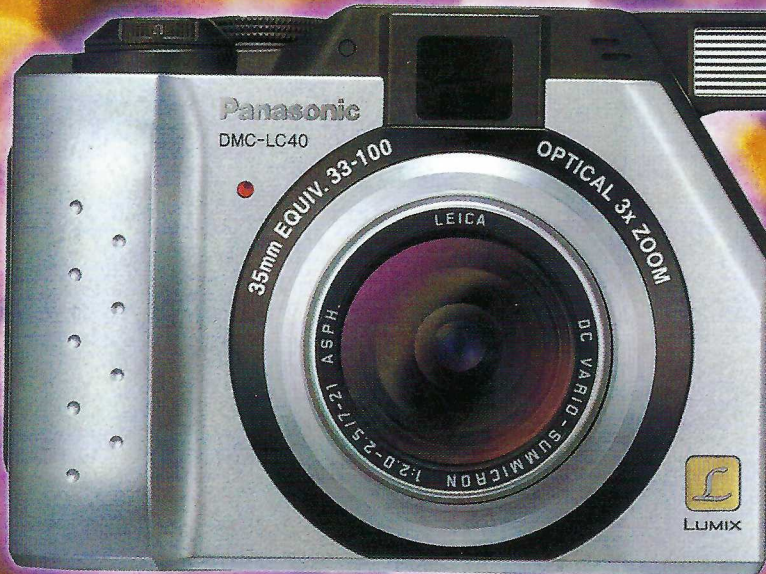


AudioVideo[®] INTERNATIONAL

A Dempa Publication

October 2002 • \$4.00



Digital Imaging Comes into Focus





TENT SALE!

IF CAR TOYS BUILDS IT, THEY WILL COME.... BY MICAH SHEVELOFF

Seattle-based Car Toys has created near-famous promotions in the form of tent sales, holding the festivities yearly in Denver, Portland and Seattle. During peak traffic hours on weekend days (the entire promo runs Thursday through Sunday), the retailer/installer clocks 400 to 500 people passing through the gate per hour. Some participating manufacturers have called it the best promotional event they have ever seen in terms of organization and overall execution.

"We have 40 to 50 associates working the sale at any one time,

and they rotate out for lunch, which we provide for them," detailed Theron Andrews, vice president of marketing at Car Toys. "We have various sales contests that we use to challenge our associates, and all sales data is analyzed via reports generated on an hourly basis. The tent sales are completely 'live' with our corporate headquarters," added Andrews, referring to a computer network that is set up in the tent and linked back to the Car Toys offices.

SOLID VENDOR SUPPORT

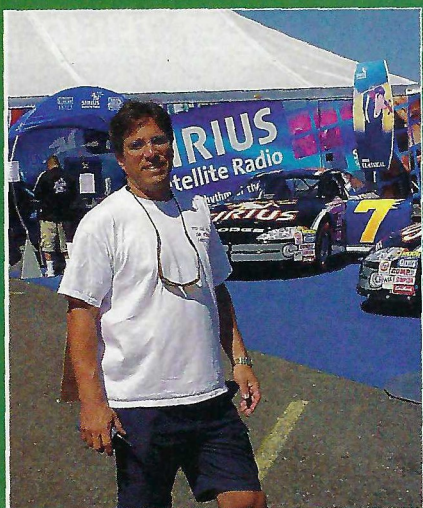
Car Toys' vendor partners are asked to step up and contribute as well, providing trade show-like booths stocked with goods under the big top. "We ask that they help staff the event, and work with our sales associates to assist consumers," said Andrews. The appropriate manufacturer's reps are also on hand, as well. The vendors are asked to create "deals" and bring promotional items and giveaways. "Anything to add to the circus-like atmosphere," commented Andrews.



CAR TOYS' DOWNTOWN SEATTLE STORE, IN THE SHADOW OF THE SPACE NEEDLE

Sirius and XM Satellite Radio were both on hand, although Sirius provided a massive and colorful display featuring their race car at the front entrance to the event. "Sirius has given us big support for our tent sales, and have really added a lot to the appearance as consumers are walking in," said Andrews.

One of the most astonishing aspects of the Car Toys tent sale was the number of radio stations that participated, and were scheduled to be on hand broadcasting live. "There will be 35 appearances by 17 or 18 stations at this event (Seattle), as most stations come on live two times. They also allow the Car Toys personalities on the air for 60-second seg-



CAR TOYS' CHIEF EXECUTIVE, DAN BRETTLER, AT ONE OF HIS STORE'S TENT SALES



ments, providing us an opportunity to promote whatever we feel needs a boost at that moment," Andrews reported. The Seattle event also featured two TV remote broadcasts. Andrews attributes this level of media participation to Car Toys' strength in the marketplace.

LOCAL STORES BENEFIT

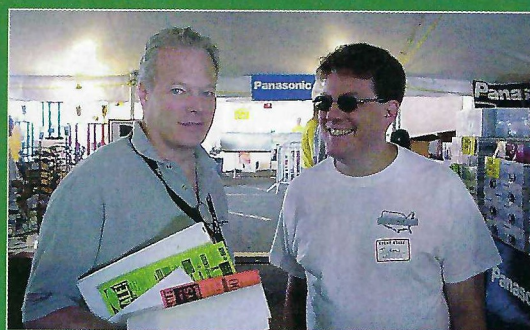
Another phenomenon related to the promotion is that Car Toys realizes an appreciation in its local-store sales volumes during the tent sale, and for several weeks following the event. One area of focus this year was to better merchandise accessories, making them more organized and highly visible. During the meetings in preparation for the event, management emphasized the importance of attaching acces-

■■■ **CAR TOYS SAYS IT REALIZES AN APPRECIATION OF ITS LOCAL-STORE SALES VOLUMES DURING THE TENT SALE, AND FOR SEVERAL WEEKS FOLLOWING THE EVENT. A LONG-TERM BENEFIT IS BRAND REINFORCEMENT** ■■■

sories to each sale, bolstering margins and profitability.

One of the most viable long-term benefits to hosting such an event is the brand reinforcement that happens as a byproduct of all of the radio advertising and the sale itself.

"Consumers see



CAR TOYS' JIM WARREN (L.) AND THERON ANDREWS



THE STORE INTERIOR IS BOTH WELL APPOINTED AND WELL ORGANIZED

our huge selection of products and the fact that we offer the best prices. They see that we have the support of our vendors and that our staff is knowledgeable. It creates a lasting brand image, the value of which is immeasurable," Andrews stated. Car Toys gathers together a strong team in order to staff the event, even if it means bringing employees in from another community. Car Toys provides on-site installation in a separate tent housing 20 installers.

Having a long-standing reputation in the wireless industry, the Car Toys tent sale also plays host to booths manned by Voicestream, Verizon, and AT&T. "The carriers have

a similar role to our other vendor partners, providing staffing for the event, promotion, and general support. The wireless carriers are an integral part of the Car Toys tent sale," said Andrews

"The mobile electronics industry (at around \$2 billion annually) is too small for the manufacturers to be held responsible for promotion on a scale such as Thompson, with the RCA Dome in Indianapolis," commented Jim Warren, vice president of merchandising at Car Toys. "The retailers must promote the category, and we have actually measured the spending per person (for mobile electronics) in the communities where we do our tent sales, and seen a substantial increase," he added. "Our promotional strategies are successful, and the tent sale is a big part of that."