



Informa Markets Drives Economic Recovery with Safe and Successful Return to the Show Floor

Informa Markets makes a customer-driven return to live events, driving economic recovery, connection, and innovation through a collaborative and foundational approach to safety

Orlando, FL — March 4, 2021 — As industries and economies around the world look for opportunities to rebuild business in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, Informa Markets, a global organizer who creates platforms for a wide range of industries to trade, connect and grow, launched MAGIC Pop-Up Orlando from February 9-11 at the Orange County Convention Center. The 'Pop-Up', a smaller scale regional version of their keystone fashion event which typically takes place twice-yearly in Las Vegas, Nevada was a comprehensive 'one-stop-shop' opportunity for various segments of the fashion industry, one of the many industries hit hard by the pandemic's devastating economic impact, to discover new brands, safely network with like-minded retailers, and generate much-needed revenue.

Informa Markets Fashion, the platform organizers' aptly named portfolio of menswear, womenswear, footwear and apparel sourcing platforms, surveyed customers in late 2020 to identify how best to fulfill the needs of the fashion community. The answer was a resounding desire from both brands and retailers alike to return to the show floor in Q1 2021, a critical buying time for the fashion industry. In response, Informa Markets moved forward with a hybrid approach, launching an online marketplace, MAGIC Digital, alongside a physical event in Orlando. While Informa Markets believe strongly in the virtual format as a powerful complementary tool and a long-term twin engine for their 450+ brands, interest in the physical event exceeded their expectations—recording an astounding 40% more registrations than anticipated for the Orlando show.

"The fashion industry is a very tactile one," said Kelly Helfman, Commercial President, Informa Markets Fashion. "Buyers need to see and feel fabrics. While digital is an incredible tool to maintain connectivity, and help qualify buying trends, the power of face-to-face will always be important—in-person interactions are really not replicable in a digital format. While data can help guide decision making, qualifying suppliers with potential customers isn't just a one-click experience—it requires deep understanding and relationship building in most cases. The past year has proven more than ever the

true value of human connection, and we've seen that reflected by the enthusiasm for, and success of, this event."



MAGIC Pop-Up Orlando featured a diverse array of up-and-coming designers and larger more established brands eager to connect with big box, online, specialty and boutique retailers, with the collective goal of reinvigorating the hard-hit fashion industry.

"We love MAGIC and are so happy to be back here," said Hanna Jung from By Together, a fashion wholesaler. "We have met so many new, diverse customers here in Orlando. The buyers were ecstatic that MAGIC came back into the market with this Pop-Up event."

But fashion is not the only sector eager to return to the show floor—it's a trend Informa Markets is seeing across the many sectors it serves. In May, Informa Markets will host a platform for the aviation industry, also in search of a channel for learning, innovation and discovery that reaches beyond the screen. And in June, the organizer plans to return to Las Vegas, home to many of the country's largest trade events, in response to similar enthusiasm from communities ranging from construction to cosmetics to recycling & waste.

"Our events are platforms to re-build and re-invigorate industries," said Nancy Walsh, President, North America, Informa Markets. "They serve a really important role in relationship building, in discovering innovation, and in revenue-driving for the communities they serve, especially when done in a safe and controlled way. That's not just the Fashion community that this event served, but communities spanning across Health & Nutrition, Brand Licensing, Construction, Aviation, and more. Almost every industry has been impacted by the pandemic, and our customers, many of whom are small business owners, truly believe these platforms are more critical than ever before."

These platforms' impacts, however, are not solely on their facilitation of growth and development of industry sectors. They also provide significant regional economic opportunity. The trade show industry is estimated to contribute \$2.24 billion in annual economic value to the city of Las Vegas alone, and a 2018 study showed that globally tradeshow bring an average of 303 million visitors to host cities each year, supporting 1.3 million jobs and generating \$136.9 billion in business sales. The pandemic's impact on

those working in the tourism and hospitality industry has been devastating, and trade shows support local economies, driving revenue to hotels, convention centers, and local businesses representing waiters, cooks, security providers, drivers, artists, printers, photographers, carpenters, laborers and more. In Orlando, the co-located event provided an estimated \$15.35 million in economic value to the city over the course of just 3 days.

“We are honored to have played a role in successfully hosting MAGIC Pop-Up Orlando. We are committed to keeping employees, guests and attendees healthy and safe at all events hosted at the OCCC, and we are thrilled to collaborate with organizers like MAGIC who share our commitment to safety,” said Mark Tester, Executive Director, Orange County Convention Center. “I experienced firsthand how dedicated the MAGIC Pop-Up Orlando team was to implementing measures to create a safe and controlled gathering, and we worked closely together to achieve that common goal.”

While industries and local economies are eagerly looking for opportunities to recover, safety remains a core foundational element of Informa Markets’ return to the show floor. Informa helped spearhead an industry-wide approach to safety at trade events, known as the All Secure Standard, which provides guidelines to ensure safety is prioritized at all trade events. The Standard was a collaborative effort that has been adopted across the majority of global trade show organizers with the support of events industry associations and key partners and has been objectively vetted by a team of medical experts. At MAGIC Pop-Up Orlando those guidelines came to life through open concept booths, widened aisles, 100+ hand sanitizing units and safety ambassadors, as well as mandatory mask-wearing, temperature screenings, and most notably, evidence of a negative COVID-19 test to enter the show floor—the first show of its kind to employ onsite testing in support of visitor safety.

In the weeks after enhanced safety measures, including testing, were announced, MAGIC Orlando registrations soared, signaling that communities are eager to return to the show floor, when both their safety and success are prioritized. While a testing requirement may not be necessary moving forward, Informa Markets sees a continued effort toward targeting qualified audiences and rigorous safety measures as a dual engine in driving economic recovery, not just for the trade show industry, but for the industries and communities they serve and the cities that host their events.

“I think it’s powerful that as an industry we have committed to the All Secure guidelines to ensure that we are approaching health and safety with the same rigor,” said Kevin Thornton, VP, Operations at Informa Markets. “Now, more than ever, it’s important for our industry to work together to prove that we can return to the show floor and that our communities can re-connect in secure ways. Testing may be an important piece of that, but long-term I think the value is really in our shared commitment to events that consistently value safety. Through our collective efforts, we have proven that live events are able to run with visitor health prioritized, signaling a real economic restart for the fashion community, the many other trade industries we serve, as well as the cities that host our events.”

In addition to returning to their larger keystone events in 2021, Informa Markets plans to host similar, smaller-scale regional pop-ups in cities across the globe as they begin their gradual return to face-to-face event experiences. The platform organizer also plans to continue a hybrid approach to events to enable broader opportunities for customers to engage and communities to rebuild, both online and on the show floor.

To learn more about the All Secure Standards, visit <http://www.informa.com/allsecure>. To learn more about testing, visit www.magicfashionevents.com.

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Informa Markets creates platforms for industries and specialist markets to trade, innovate and grow. We provide marketplace participants around the globe with opportunities to engage, experience and do business through face-to-face exhibitions, targeted digital services and actionable data solutions. We connect buyers and sellers across more than a dozen global verticals, including *Pharmaceuticals*, *Food*, *Medical Technology* and *Infrastructure*. As the world's leading market-making company, we bring a diverse range of specialist markets to life, unlocking opportunities and helping them to thrive 365 days of the year. For more information, please visit www.informamarkets.com.

MEDIA CONTACT:

Casey Clemenza

Global Director, Corporate Communications, Informa Markets

Casey.Clemenza@informa.com