



Reprinted with permission of *BtoB Magazine*

## Gates Corp. Uses Online Show to Capture Leads Virtually

By Mary E. Morrison, Contributing Editor, *BtoB Magazine*

Story posted: October 13, 2008

### HOW GATES USED VIRTUAL EVENTS

**Objective:** Gates Corp., a manufacturer of automotive and industrial products, was looking to generate leads and engage prospects.

**Strategy:** In May, the company participated in the 2008 Online Manufacturing WebExpo and Conference, an online trade show.

**Results:** Gates generated 123 qualified leads from the show, and the average user spent between 20 minutes and 60 minutes in its booth.

Denver-based Gates Corp. is a manufacturer of automotive and industrial products that targets original equipment manufacturer (OEM) designers. The company's power transmission division was looking to generate leads and engage prospects in a way that was difficult to achieve with traditional marketing campaigns.

Working with interactive agency 90octane, Denver, Gates participated in the 2008 Online Manufacturing WebExpo and Conference, an online show organized by Penton Media's *New Equipment Digest* and *Machine Design* magazines. The show, which took place in May, included a virtual exhibition hall where Gates and other companies had online booths. The event also featured several webcasts, one of which was sponsored by Gates.

Visitors to Gates' booth were greeted with an introductory Flash video, which positioned Gates as a provider of solutions, not simply products, said Kelly Hall, account manager at 90octane. Visitors could then browse various pieces of Gates content, such as white papers, case studies and brochures. They could also participate in an online chat with Gates employees, she said.

"This particular show allowed Gates to engage with prospects in a much more interactive and personal way than some of our other media tactics," Hall said. "It also allowed us to really focus on valuable content. It was a great medium to position Gates as an innovator and as a reliable source for information."

Gates also sponsored a webinar, *Designing Belt Power Transmissions Systems for Energy Savings*, during the online show. The presentation featured one of Gates' product application engineers and was followed by a live Q&A session in which participants could address specific questions or concerns.

"It was a great opportunity for us to get our engineers into the offices, if you will, of the customers," said Mary Ann Amari, advertising specialist for Industrial Power Transmission Marketing, Gates Corp.





The show and webinar provided Gates an opportunity to target prospects in various stages of the buying cycle, Amari said. “It was great for informing people about the possibilities in energy savings but also provided more details if they were ready to take the next step,” she said.

The online chat feature and webcast Q&A were particularly successful, Hall said. “The prospects were really highly engaged,” she said. The online booth also allowed visitors to link to landing pages and microsites for other Gates marketing, design tools and resources, Hall said.

Gates generated 123 qualified leads, Hall said, and the average user spent between 20 minutes and 60 minutes in the booth. “All of these people were contactable leads that we could follow up with postevent,” she said. “We were even able to start a sales conversation with one of our targeted *Fortune* 500 companies.”

Amari said she is especially pleased with how long visitors stayed in the webinar. “That really tells you very clearly that the content you're providing is what they thought they would get and what they wanted to hear and needed to hear,” she said. “It was nice to see people really stick in there, and pay attention and ask a lot of questions at the end. It was great feedback.”

