

Case Study



Future Truck

An Engineering Competition



CLIENTS: Ford Motor Company and US Dept. of Energy

AUDIENCE: 450 attendees including:

- ▶ College-level engineering students
- ▶ Automotive industry executives
- ▶ Government officials

LOCATION: Hyatt Regency, Dearborn, MI

SPONSORS: Ford Motor Company
US Dept. of Energy
15 other sponsors



SITUATION:

An automotive engineering competition sponsored by Ford Motor Company and the U.S. Department of Energy, Future Truck challenges student engineering teams from 15 universities across North America to re-engineer a Ford Explorer into a lower-emissions vehicle without compromising performance, utility, or safety. The teams had one year to apply cutting-edge automotive technologies, such as advanced propulsion systems and alternative fuels, to achieve the competition's objectives.

Reel Impact was contracted to produce the competition's awards ceremony at the Hyatt Regency in Dearborn, Michigan.

OBJECTIVES:

- ▶ To provide an exciting, high-energy program that recognized winning Future Truck teams and pay tribute to a key competition organizer.
- ▶ To create an entertaining atmosphere for government and industry sponsors to present awards and speak on automotive industry trends.
- ▶ To garner national recognition for energy research.



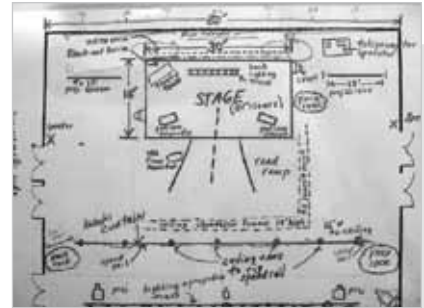
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APPROACH:

Hotel ballrooms are not structurally designed for live performances. In order to accommodate a performance, Reel Impact Event Services constructed a stage that provided the following:

- ▶ A "performance" venue
- ▶ A working "back stage" for housing a teleprompter operator, a stage manager, and a speaker ready room
- ▶ Improved viewing sight lines for people at the back of the ballroom
- ▶ A platform upon which to build a set.

The client requested a “rugged looking” set so we created faux boulders and a road-like ramp that tapered into a black, infinity background near the rear of the stage. The “road ramp” provided visual depth to the set and allowed groups of people to enter and exit the stage quickly.



Preliminary stage ground plan

Knowing that our audience was going to be tired after a 10-day competition, we created an attention-getting, high-energy element to open the show. This three-pronged approach included:

- ▶ A “voice of God” announcement
- ▶ A fast-paced music bed that builds and is edited to a “count down” style animation
- ▶ A surprise set reveal

We rigged a lightweight magnetic-release curtain called a kabuki from the ceiling in front of the stage. With a frontal lighting wash, the kabuki concealed the set and also served as a projection surface for the opening “count down” animation. Immediately following the count down, a switch was thrown dropping the kabuki, revealing the set and emcee.



Rigging

To maximize the impact and raise the production level a notch, we utilized a concert sound system with sub woofers, instead of the house ceiling speakers, and played up-beat filler music throughout the ceremony.

By providing presenters with rehearsal time with the Reel Impact speech coach and by utilizing a teleprompter, presenters were able to maintain eye contact with the audience during their presentations.



Stage

SERVICES PROVIDED:

Reel Impact provided full service event and video production for the Future Truck awards ceremony including the following:

Event Production

- ▶ PowerPoint design
- ▶ Speech coaching
- ▶ Production crew
- ▶ Photography
- ▶ Webcasting
- ▶ Audio visual technical design and equipment
- ▶ Set design, construction and strike
- ▶ Sound design
- ▶ Lighting design
- ▶ Professional emcee
- ▶ Image magnification
- ▶ Music selection and license fees
- ▶ Live direction of multi-camera, multi-source event

Video Production

- ▶ Research
- ▶ Client consultation
- ▶ Creative design
- ▶ Pre-production planning
- ▶ Scriptwriting
- ▶ Video production
- ▶ Graphic design
- ▶ Video editing
- ▶ VNR editing



Kabuki magnetic curtain



I-Mag

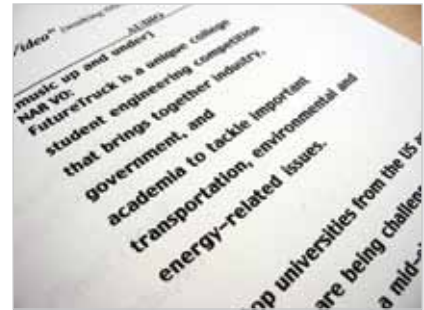


Video Crew

CHALLENGES:

Shortened Setup Time

Reel Impact had been given access to the venue during the weekend prior to the event, and then again 48 hours prior to the event. However, because the hotel double-booked their ballroom, we did not receive full access to the ballroom until noon on the day of our event. With the doors scheduled to open at 6 p.m. that evening, our setup time was drastically reduced. We built the set during the prior weekend then concealed it from the other group with pipe and drape. We were also able to hang the truss, lights, speakers, and projectors in advance. On show day, we drew up a crew chalkboard with assigned setup and testing duties.



Scriptwriting

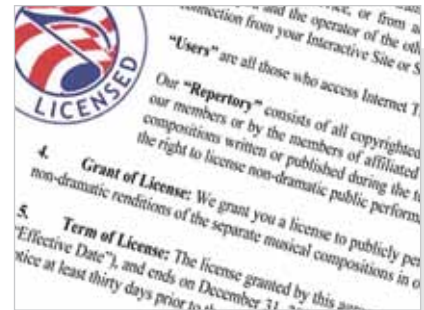
RESULTS:

We had to be well organized in order to complete everything and be ready at 6 p.m. And we were. Concluding the show ahead of schedule was also an indicator of its success.

All the sponsors gave high praise to the event. One sponsor commented:

“Hollywood is right here in Dearborn.”

“I felt like I was at the Academy Awards. It was outstanding.”



Music Licensing



Student Teams