

New York State Fair & Pinckney Hugo Group win awards 2010-12-02



The [Great New York State Fair](#) and [Pinckney Hugo Group](#), of Syracuse, won four Hall of Honor Communication Awards from the International Association of Fairs and Expositions (IAFE) this week for best integrated publicity case study, best use of social media, best e-mail newsletter, and one of the best printed publications.

The IAFE Hall of Honor Communications Awards competition results were announced at IAFE's annual convention in Las Vegas. The purpose of the competition is to improve the advertising and publicity programs of fairs throughout North America by recognizing outstanding efforts.

The New York State Fair and Pinckney Hugo Group, its advertising agency of record, competed among events with annual attendance of 500,000 to one million people. The 2010 New York State Fair ended its 12-day run with the third-highest attendance in the event's 164-year history. A total of 999,845 people attended the Fair.

The New York State Fair received the following honors:

First place - Integrated Publicity Case Study

This award is given to the publicity effort that best demonstrates public relations strategies and tactics in a creative and integrated way. Since 2008, Director O'Hara has promoted the Fair by strategically visiting media outlets in several areas across Upstate New York during the weeks leading up to the Fair. The tour has resulted in significant news media coverage in areas that traditionally do not cover the Fair. During the 2010 tour, the director did television, print and radio interviews in seven targeted markets outside of Onondaga County.

This initiative has helped the Fair increase attendance, promote advance-sale tickets, increase the geographical diversity of Fair attendees and strengthen the Fair's image as an affordable, family oriented destination. More than 40 percent of all Fair attendees now travel from places outside of Syracuse and the outlying areas, compared to 25 percent in 2006.

"It's important for New York state residents to understand that this is not a regional fair, it is the New York State Fair and it belongs to everyone in New York state," O'Hara said. "Day trips to various cities and towns across the state have helped us educate people about how their areas are represented at the Fair and the types of entertainment and activities that take place at the Fair. The tour has proven to be very effective in welcoming people from throughout the state to participate in the New York State Fair."

First Place - Best Use of Social Media

For the second consecutive year, the Fair won first place for its use of social media including Facebook, Twitter, text messaging and other mediums to promote the Fair.

The Fair posted on its Facebook page regularly, often with more than 100 fan interactions per day. The number of its Facebook "likes" more than doubled from 18,000 at the end of the 2009 Fair to 48,000 currently. The Fair used Twitter to alert followers about Fair announcements and specials, and to promote contests and share videos. The Fair's Twitter followers more than doubled between the 2009 and 2010 fairs.

Text messaging was used to promote Grandstand concerts and as a medium for photo and trivia contests throughout the Fair. E-mail blasts and e-newsletters promoted Fair events and kept followers updated on Fair news. In addition, the Fair and Pinckney Hugo Group created an interactive map and an interactive "food finder" for the Fair's website. Pinckney Hugo Group also created a movie trailer previewing the Fair that ran in theaters throughout Upstate New York and a time-lapse video that showed 30,000 people filling Chevy Court, the Fair's free concert venue, on the day of a performance by the country group Lady Antebellum.

First Place - Newsletter (External) E-mail/Web

The Fair maintains a list of several thousand e-mail subscribers and keeps them informed of news and events at both the Fair and the Fairgrounds through a regular electronic newsletter. It was the second consecutive year that the Fair and Pinckney Hugo Group won first place in this category. For the latest concert announcements and Fair news, visitors can sign up for e-mail and text message updates at www.nysfair.org.

Third Place - Printed Promotional Material - Multi-page Publication

The Fair's annual Visitors Guide is distributed as an insert in regional newspapers, and is available on special racks in Thruway rest areas, grocery stores, tourist centers, colleges and other locations throughout New York state. More than one million full-color, 12-page guides were printed in 2010. The guides offer Fair concert schedules, descriptions of Fair events and attractions, money-saving tips, a Fair map and messages from sponsors.

About IAFE: The International Association of Fairs and Expositions is a voluntary, non-profit corporation that seeks to organize and improve state, provincial, regional and county agricultural fairs, shows, exhibitions and expositions. Members include state and provincial associations of fairs, non-agricultural expositions and festivals and individuals that provide products and service to the industry. For more information, visit www.fairsandexpos.com.

About the New York State Fairgrounds: The Fairgrounds, home of the Great New York State Fair, is a 375-acre exhibit and entertainment complex. A year-round schedule of Fairgrounds events is available on the [Fair's website](#). Visitors to the site can also sign up for e-mail and text message updates to get the latest news about events at the Fairgrounds or about the 2011 New York State Fair. You can also find [The Great New York State Fair on Facebook](#) or follow [NYSFair on Twitter](#).

About Pinckney Hugo Group: Pinckney Hugo Group is a full-service marketing communications firm providing strategic solutions for clients in a broad range of industries through strategic planning, creative, research, advertising, graphic design, media, direct marketing, public relations, social media, sales promotion and interactive development. Based on its creative ideas, the agency has gained a national reputation for transforming clients' businesses and brands. Inc. magazine included Pinckney

Hugo Group on the Inc. 5,000 list of the fastest-growing private companies in the country in 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010. For more information, call 315-478-6700 or visit www.pinckneyhugo.com.