

CTSM Candidate Portfolio

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Criteria #1

Vital Statistics

CRITERIA #1

VITAL STATISTICS

BIO

I've always been a bit... odd. Even as a child, some would say I was "thinking outside the box," with my unique approaches to school presentations or a creative streak that involved roping my friends into making humorous short films. But in all honesty, I'm not sure my process was "thinking outside the box" as much as just trying to figure out how to make the box cooler. A killer paint job, custom lining, secret compartment... you know, the best darn box on the block!

I was a child of the 70's & 80's in Louisville, Kentucky; a city big enough to have everything one might need and foster creativity, but not so large that you couldn't get anywhere you needed to be in less than twenty minutes. When it finally dawned on me in grade school that I would someday have to actually grow up and get a job, I turned to my role models for inspiration... Good ol' television and movies. At the time, I was obsessed with the portrayals of ad agencies in the 1980's as represented in such films as 'Nothing in Common' and 'Crazy People.' Professional adults paid to sit in a room and solve problems by spitballing creative ideas. That's exactly what I wanted to do when I grew up, and I maintained that singular vision throughout high school and college.

EDUCATION

I graduated from Western Kentucky University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Advertising with a minor in Marketing. I used my high school college credits to jump right into the program, finding myself studying mostly with students a year older than myself. I joined Ad Club and eventually went on to lead the student-run advertising agency, Image West.

During my time at WKU, I took a summer internship as a Marketing Assistant with Porter International, an industrial coatings manufacturer in my home town. It was a position created by a WKU alum who had recently started working there. I had my first taste of trade show culture when we took a field trip to Deckel & Money Penny Exhibits to review Porter's trade show assets. It was a whole new world. An ad agency where the ads were physical environments to walk through and experience in person. They had my attention.

INDUSTRY BACKGROUND

After graduation, I received a call from that same alum who was now working at Deckel & Money Penny (D&M). He was creating a new Marketing Assistant position there and wanted to know if I was interested. Unlike an ad agency, this would be a job right out of college that would actually pay me to work for them, so I said yes. I spent most of my time assisting the sales team with client and show research, writing RFPs and cataloging exhibit photos.

Then I had the chance to showcase my skills helping to manage one of the largest projects the company had ever mounted for one of their biggest clients, Brown & Williamson (B&W).

The event was called InfoMart. B&W wanted to create their own trade show with each of their brands and each department of the company getting a booth space. Over a two week period, all of their regional sales reps would travel to the event in Houston, Texas, to experience InfoMart. Our team handled every aspect of the show from the ground up. We mapped the show floor and met with each department head to develop a creative interactive experience that relates to what they do. Each brand of B&W product had its own brand manager and respective ad agency. For a standard trade show, it was difficult to integrate multiple marketing plans into a unified presentation, but for InfoMart, it worked to our advantage as we wanted each brand/department/booth space to have a unique identity. D&M proceeded to design and produce every exhibit in the show, as well as the pre-show team-building experience in an adjoining ballroom before entering InfoMart.

I was the Account Coordinator for this event, taking notes and keeping track of the individual needs for each department and brand to assist the Account Executive. I created a timeline for the process and eventually became the primary point of contact for both the D&M team and the client. The event was a huge success and I was given the opportunity to start taking on clients of my own, eventually becoming the Account Executive for Brown & Williamson.

I have been working at D&M for 26 years and now have the largest client list in the company with more than 25 clients. Some are small accounts that I grew over time, and many are legacy accounts awarded to me as my skillset developed and I was deemed worthy. Recently, I acquired several new larger accounts as another AE retired and management wanted to make sure those clients were being passed along to an AE with the knowledge and experience to meet their expectations for a seamless transition. Regardless of the client, the challenge of working for multiple different industries with a variety of exhibit space sizes and needs keeps the process fresh for me every day, and I love what I do.

JOB RESPONSIBILITIES

As an Account Executive, I maintain client accounts as well as seek out new sales opportunities. The bulk of my time is spent working with the D&M team of designers, logistics coordinators and the production team to fully service my clients' trade show needs. This may include not only exhibit design and construction, but also graphic design, field services, promotional items, special events, booth staff training, lead management and the development of interactive experiences to best engage their target market.

Through the logistics coordinators, we create annual show schedules for each client, accompanied by a calendar of deadlines for service orders for every show. I use these tools to develop detailed timelines and budgets to guide the client through the process.

After meeting with a client to determine their goals and objectives, I will work with the designers to develop a space study, floor plan, rendering and full design. These tools are used

to create new structures or repurpose existing properties to best accomplish the client's goals. Once the client is happy, I will coordinate with the D&M Production Manager, carpenters and Graphics Department to bring the design to life.

While making sure my existing clients remain successful is my primary goal, I am always searching to expand my client list with new accounts. I will review our local and regional markets for opportunities on a regular basis, as well as utilizing social media to spread the word about recent D&M projects or awards. However, I find most success with the referrals of our satisfied customers and marketing partners. A glowing endorsement is still the best publicity.

COMPANY PROFILE & HISTORY

Deckel & Money Penny was founded as a sign shop in 1964, but soon added carpenters as their clients' needs for trade show displays expanded. After more than 55 years in the industry, D&M is more successful than ever as a full-service source for trade exhibits, special events and unique interactive experiences. Many of our clients have been with us for decades, and some from the very beginning. These clients include GE Appliances, Chevron Lubricants, Samtec, American Air Filter, Rev-A-Shelf, Mahindra North America, and Zoeller Pump.

The subject of this portfolio is my client, Samtec, a leading manufacturer of custom electronic interconnect solutions for Big Tech and other industries. These products include IC-to-Board and IC Packaging, High-Speed Board-to-Board, High-Speed Cables, Mid-Board and Panel Optics, Flexible Stacking, and Micro/Rugged components and cables.

Headquartered in New Albany, Indiana, Samtec is a privately-owned company founded in 1976 by Sam Shine. Sam had been working for a mid-level connector company that decided to increase its market share by going public and switching to a more automated system of production. This forced their existing customers into larger minimum order quantities, long delivery lead times, unexpected price increases as gold was deregulated, and having to wait weeks for samples. Sam argued that this new business model was a detriment to the key selling point that differentiated them from the competition... service.

Sam suggested there was a niche market for a connector company that could provide custom product and superior service to both small companies needing small quantities, and larger companies needing product fast in production "line down" situations. With his employer firmly committed to their new business model, Sam decided to risk it all and start a company of his own.

Sam's gamble paid off as Samtec has grown to over 40 international locations with 6,000+ employees and revenue over \$800 million per year. Samtec prides itself not only with its customer satisfaction, but its employee satisfaction as well. Samtec is consistently recognized as one of the area's top places to work with an employee retention rate of 96%.

Sam Shine not only took good care of his customers and employees, he was also a well-respected philanthropist that gave generously to the local communities surrounding Samtec facilities. Sam passed away in 2019 at the age of 86, but his company continues to thrive and is more successful than ever.

With sales over \$800 million, Samtec may only hold a 2% market share in the highly competitive field of electronic interconnect solutions, but their niche focus makes them a vital resource for companies in need of custom components fast. While there are many major competitors in this industry, including Amphenol, Aptiv and Foxconn. Samtec's top competition is TE Connectivity and Molex.

Samtec adopted the mascot of a tiger because their corporate colors were orange and black, and both were known for their speed, agility, quickness and strength. When it came to their competition, Samtec was indeed a "different breed of cat."

"Samtec really is a different breed of cat!"
Sam Shine, Proprietor

Where else would you find every department with the same name?

- CUSTOMER SERVICE DEPT.** Production done here
- CUSTOMER SERVICE DEPT.** Shipping done here
- CUSTOMER SERVICE DEPT.** Accounting done here
- CUSTOMER SERVICE DEPT.** Engineering done here
- CUSTOMER SERVICE DEPT.** Quality Control done here

Each and every department at Samtec *really* carries the title "CUSTOMER SERVICE DEPT." And for a very good reason: Every member of the Samtec family sees his or her primary job as "Customer Service." We view our customers as our *only* reason for being in business. Everything you need—catalogs, samples, quotations, engineering data or shipment dates—is handled with an eagerness and personal interest in solving *your* problems. Large orders or small, they all receive the same Samtec **SUDDEN SERVICE**.

That's why people in our business have come to believe that "Samtec really is a different breed of cat."

Our customers, large and small, love it. Dozens of major, tough-to-satisfy OEM's have come to rely on Samtec for fast, dependable service. Try us when you need reliable electronic interconnects. You'll like our products, our **SUDDEN SERVICE** and our consistently competitive prices.

WRITE TODAY for our new and complete 72-page catalog. It has been revised and enlarged to include many new products. And it contains complete specification data for fast, easy ordering. Get yours today.

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samtec SUDDEN SERVICE
 P.O. Box 1147 - 810 Progress Blvd., New Albany, IN 47150 U.S.A.
 Phone: (812) 944-6733 - TWX 810-540-4065 - TELEX 333-918

Samtec has the solution to your toughest board-to-board or on-board interconnect problems.

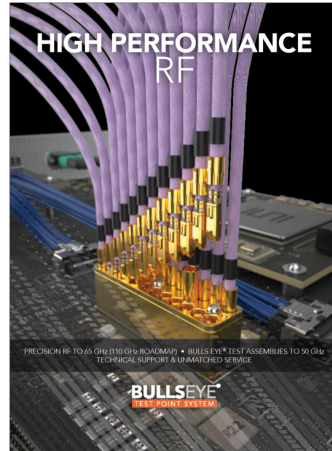
- DIP Sockets, Adaptor Plugs
- IDC Cable Strips with mating Terminal Strips
- .025" Sq. Terminal Strips with mating Socket Strips
- Machined Socket and Terminal Strips

SAMTEC AD FROM 1986

SAMTEC PRODUCT EXAMPLES

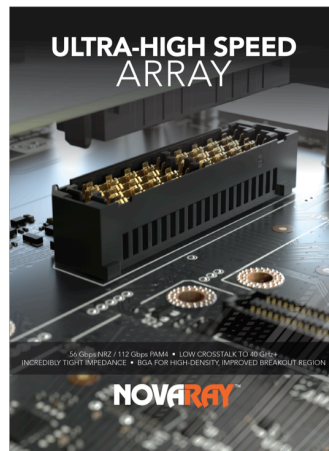
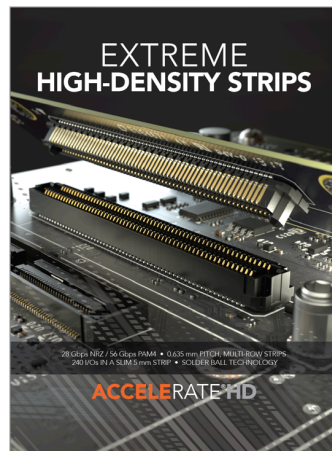
As a manufacturer of custom electronic interconnect solutions, it is difficult to easily describe Samtec's products or how they are used due to the vast differences in how each of their customers' electronic systems are utilized. The goal of these products is to make the systems run faster and more reliably. They also need to integrate newer and older equipment to keep their customers from having to replace seemingly incompatible machines as more modern components become available.

The high-density array designs and advanced cabling solutions within this product family enable optimized performance, compression interface, and high cycle count ideal for high-performance test applications.



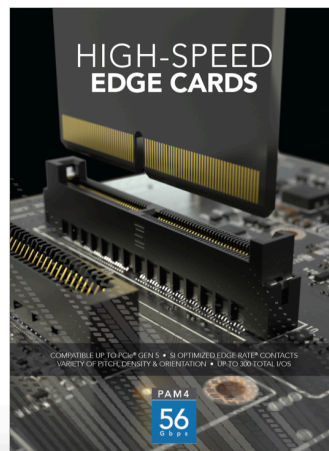
Designed for the interchangeability of copper and optical connectors, this system improves signal integrity and increases signal path length to meet today's data rate requirements.

Features Edge Rate contacts designed for high-speed, high-cycle applications. The surface of the contact is milled, creating a smooth mating surface which reduces wear on the contact increasing durability and cycle life.



Combines extreme density and extreme performance, which is critical as system sizes decrease and speeds increase. The fully shielded differential pair design and two reliable points of contact contribute to the industry leading 4.0 Tbps aggregate data rate.

Power interconnects designed to meet high current applications, and micro rugged interconnects for high-reliability, high-retention and high cycle life.



High-speed edge card sockets in vertical, right-angle, and edge mount designs with contacts optimized for signal integrity performance and cycle life



Criteria #2

Program Overview & Show Schedule

CRITERIA #2

PROGRAM OVERVIEW & SHOW SCHEDULE

Samtec participates in a varied schedule of tech-related trade shows throughout the year with a fair balance of small, mid-level and larger shows. Their booths range from 10' x 10' inline spaces for more regional events, to 10'x 20' inline spaces, 20' x 20' islands, 20' x 30' islands and 20' x 40' island exhibits for larger national shows. Industries of interest include Big Tech, medical, military, industrial packing and more.

Samtec has been a client of Deckel & Moneyppenny for more than 30 years, and we have been designing, producing and managing their exhibit program for that entire time. As Account Executive, I meet with my Samtec partners for each show, assess their needs and make updates to their exhibit properties as needed. This involves preparing the specific display they want to use, altering the structure or producing new graphics to tailor their marketing message, and shipping the exhibit and collateral to the event facility or advance warehouse. For the larger shows, the D&M Logistics team will also order all show services, arrange I&D labor, and sometimes send a supervisor to lead the labor team.

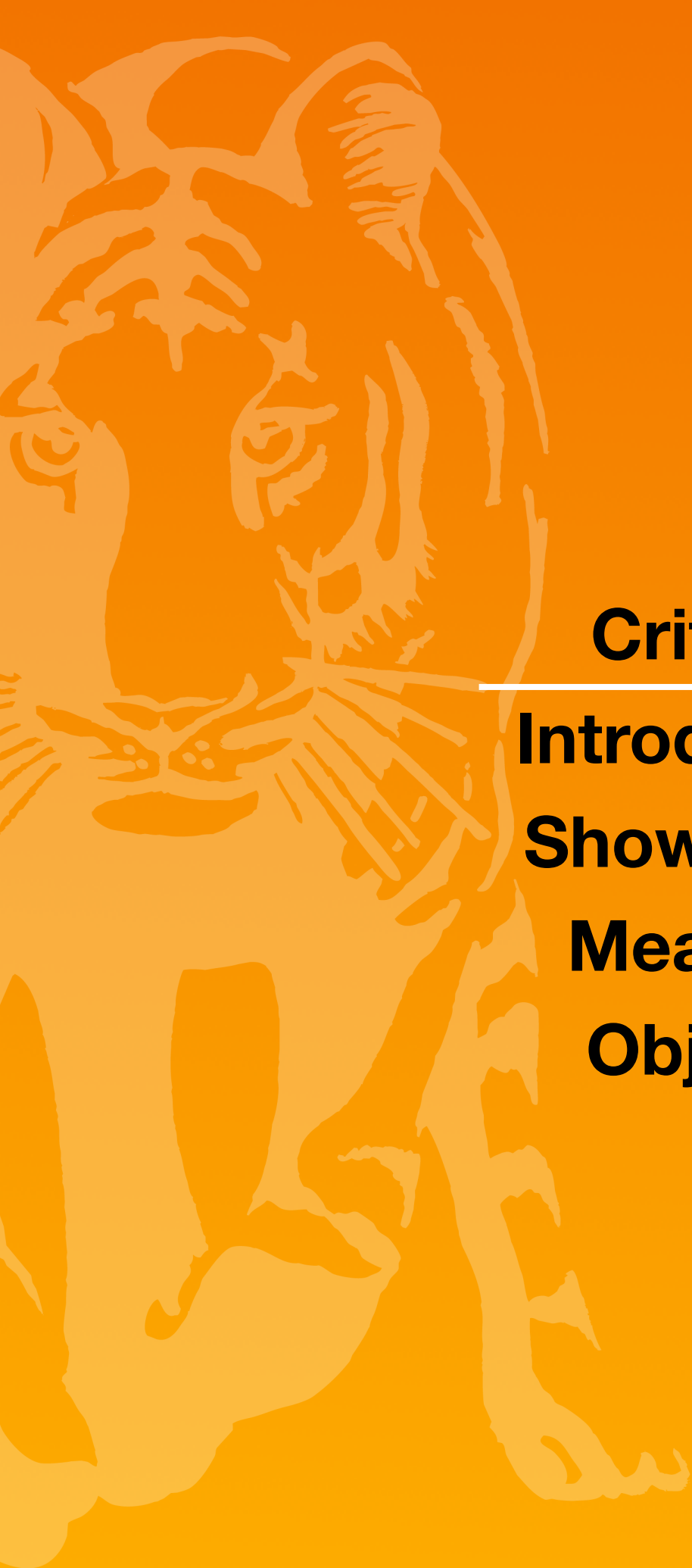
While most of Samtec's larger shows are consistent year after year, they like to test the waters with newer and smaller regional tech shows to see if they are profitable for the company. Likewise, as some of the small and mid-range shows become more profitable, Samtec will increase their exhibit size and start sending one of their larger exhibits. Several trade shows that started out as a 10' inline space now utilize a 20' inline or even an Island exhibit.

Here is a look at Samtec's 2019 trade show schedule:

2019 Trade Show Schedule

Event Name	Exhibit Size	Show Dates	Location
DesignCon 2019	20' x 30'	Jan. 30-31, 2019	Santa Clara, CA
Medical Design & Manufacturing West	10' x 20'	Feb. 5-7, 2019	Anaheim, CA
Optical Fiber Communication Conference	20' x 30'	March 5-7, 2019	San Diego, CA
Association for Unmanned Vehicle Systems International XPONENTIAL	10' x 20'	April 30-May 2, 2019	Chicago, IL
National Association of Broadcasters Show	10' x 20'	April 8-11, 2019	Las Vegas, NV
Electronic Components & Technology Conference	10' x 20'	May 29-30, 2019	Las Vegas, NV
Sea-Air-Space Show	10' x 10'	May 6-8, 2019	National Harbor, MD
Electrical Wire Processing Show	10' x 10'	May 8-9, 2019	Milwaukee, WI
BioMed Boston Show	10' x 10'	May 15-16, 2019	Boston , MA
International Microwave Symposium	10' x 20'	June 4-6, 2019	Boston , MA
Peripheral Component Interconnect Special Interest Group (PCI-SIG) Conference	10' x 10'	June 18-19, 2019	Santa Clara, CA
International Symposium of Microelectronics	10' x 20'	Oct. 1-2, 2019	Boston, MA
Electronics Packaging Symposium	Tabletop	Sept. 5-6, 2019	Niskayuna, NY
SuperComputing	20' x 20'	Nov. 18-21, 2019	Denver, CO
DesignCon 2020	20' x 40'	Jan. 27-28, 2020	Santa Clara, CA

Due to the unusual circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, I have used the 2019 schedule leading up to the the focus event, DesignCon 2020. All other shows on their schedule for 2020 have been indefinitely postponed or canceled as of this time.



Criteria #3

Introduction to Show Focus & Measurable Objectives

CRITERIA #3

INTRODUCTION TO SHOW FOCUS & MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES

The trade show at the focus of this portfolio will be DesignCon, which took place on January 27-29, 2020, in the heart of Silicon Valley at the Santa Clara Convention Center. I chose this show because it is Samtec's largest and most important event of the year, and also because this was to be the debut of their new island exhibit designed to best facilitate their trade show needs. Samtec values this show because it meets the five critical steps for selecting the right show as detailed in **Session 20116: Selecting the Right Shows: The Critical Decision**, with a focus on Step 2: Customer and prospect research/feedback.

DesignCon is the largest gathering of chip, board & systems designers from major tech companies in the United States, but it started out much simpler. The first "Design Supercon" was a High-Speed Digital Symposium held in the Santa Clara Hewlett Packard office in 1989. It was considered a success and grew into a road show for the following several years before establishing itself as a destination trade show in 1995.

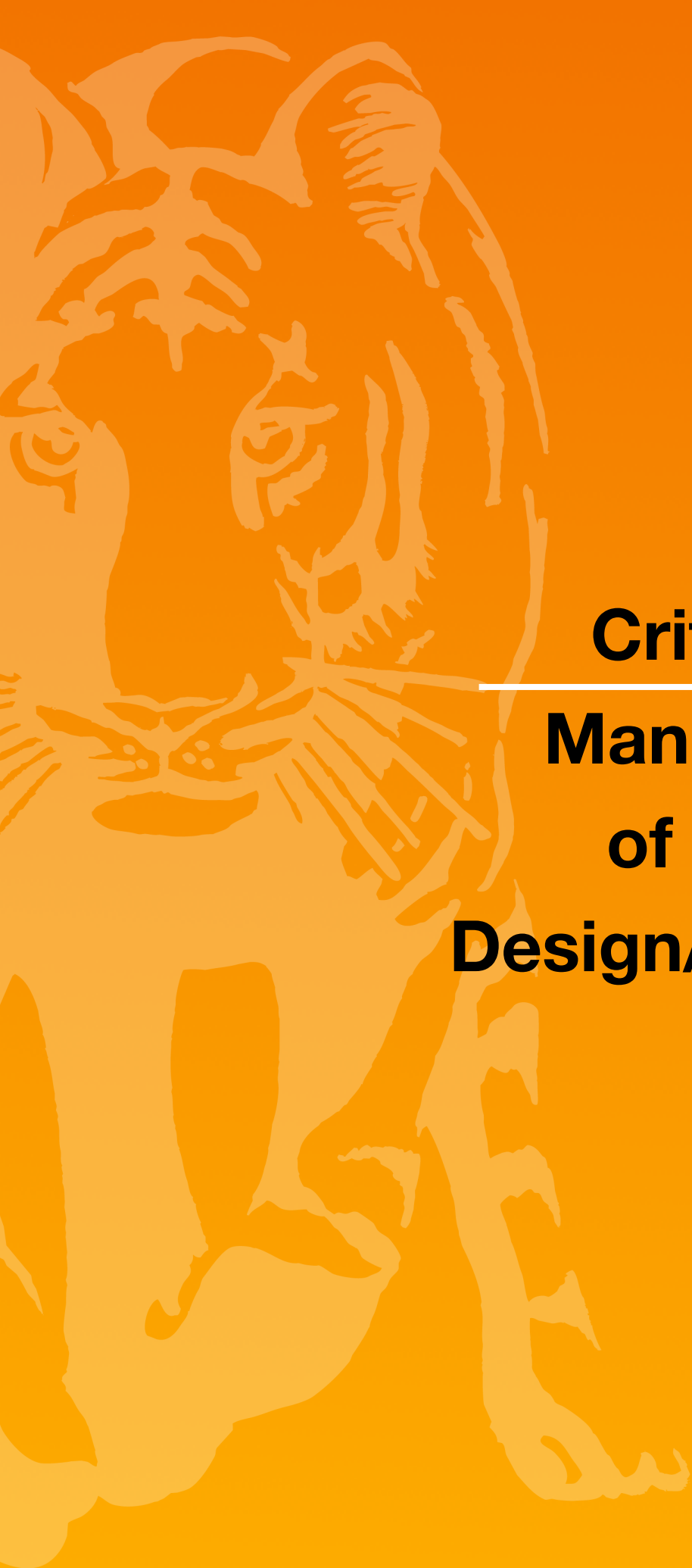
Today's DesignCon consists of three days of conference sessions with a two-day expo. The conference program covers all aspects of hardware designs with a focus on technical paper sessions, panels, tutorials, and boot camps. DesignCon has an average attendance of over 4,700 people, 77% of which are from California. Of these attendees, 86% will recommend, specify or make the final buying decision for their company. Having recently celebrated its 25th anniversary, DesignCon enjoys continued success with 90% of the more than 175 exhibitors reporting a positive return on their investment.

Samtec's booth space for the 2020 show was a 20' x 40' island, their largest exhibit to date. Their primary target audience consists of electrical and mechanical engineers, as well as systems architects. The goal is to get in on the ground floor when a company is building or upgrading their system so that Samtec's specialists can work closely with them to design custom high-speed and reliable connecting solutions to best meet the demands of their system's architecture.

I began working with Samtec on the concept of their new island exhibit eleven months prior to the 2020 show. This was just one month after the 2019 event and we wanted to get to work on how to improve their DesignCon presence while the results were fresh in their minds. Over the next several months, I worked closely with the Samtec Marketing team to identify objectives and set measurable goals in order to consider the new exhibit a success. This effort yielded the following:

DESIGNCON 2020 STRATEGIES AND GOALS

Strategy	Tactic	Assessment Method	Measurable Goal
Increase the number of qualified leads over the previous year	Introduce a new custom lead retrieval app and touchscreen monitor stations	Number of leads obtained in the booth	Increase the number of leads over 2019 by 10%
Increase the efficiency and frequency of product demos	Create more efficient demo stations and utilize a crowd flow that moves attendees to an info station following their demo	Number of demos performed during the show	Increase the number of demo engagements over 2019 by 10%
Increase brand awareness and visible presence on the show floor	Utilize backlit tower graphic and a backlit hanging sign to increase visibility	Post-show survey	Positive feedback on the survey over 90%
Increase traffic on social media related to the event	Promote new show blog that will be home to demo videos from the show floor along with videos of the Samtec conference presentations	Number of impressions, views	Increase the number of blog and video views over 2019 by 10%



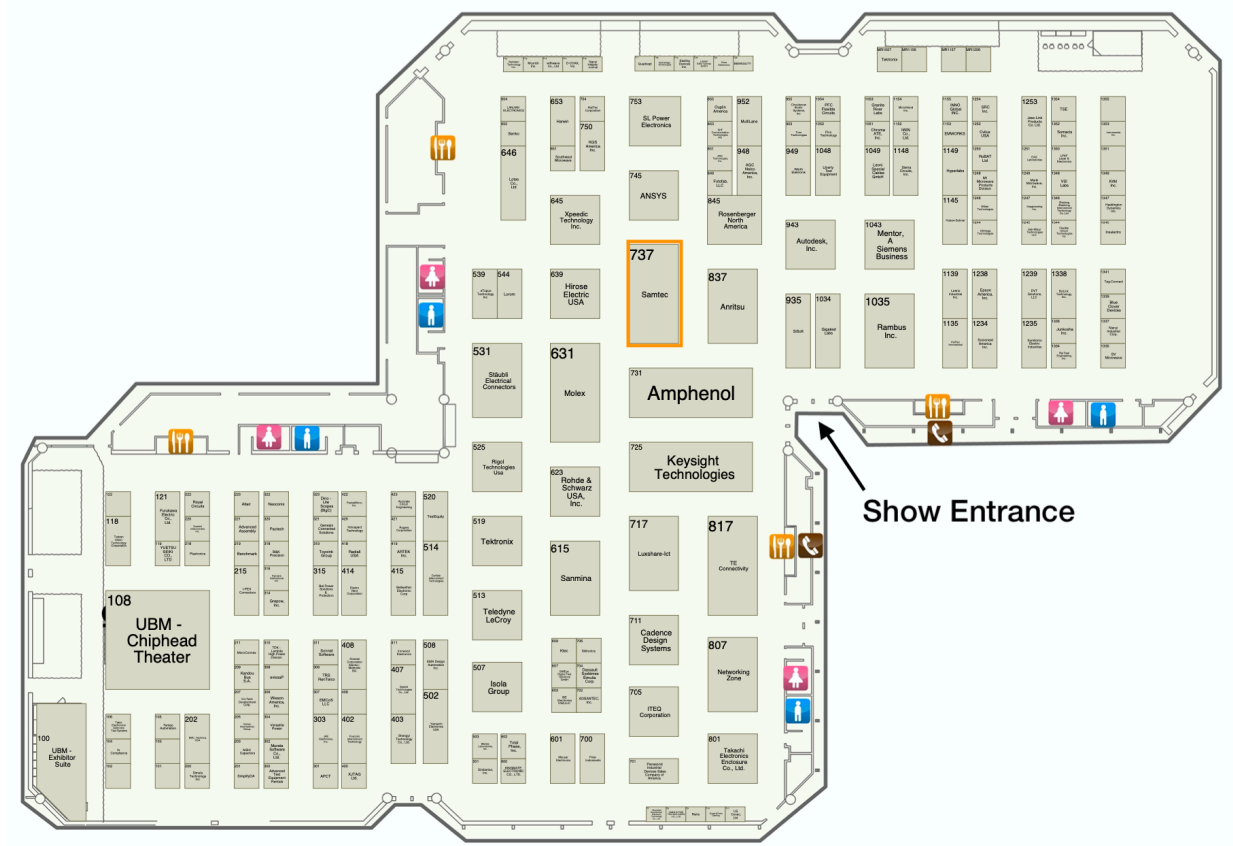
Criteria #4

Management of Exhibit Design/Production

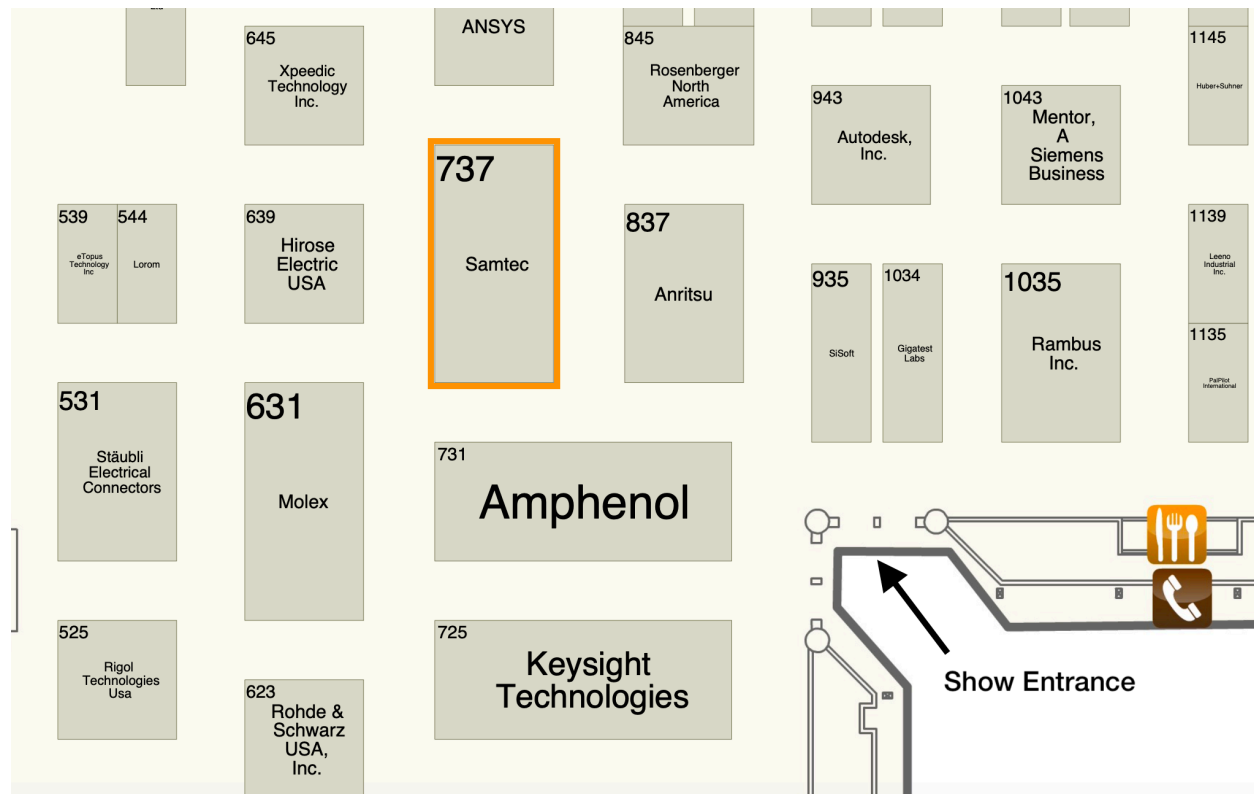
CRITERIA #4 MANAGEMENT OF EXHIBIT DESIGN/PRODUCTION

While Samtec has always maintained a prime location in the venue for DesignCon, they desired to be more visible throughout the show hall and to upgrade their interactive experience. The first step was to increase their 20' x 30' island space size from previous years. Using the techniques detailed in **Session 52115: Negotiating Skills to Win**, Samtec worked with show management to negotiate the largest expansion available to them without losing their prime location. This resulted in a new 20' x 40' island space in the same location just inside the main entrance of the show.

DESIGNCON 2020 SAMTEC EXHIBIT LOCATION



DESIGNCON 2020 SAMTEC EXHIBIT LOCATION



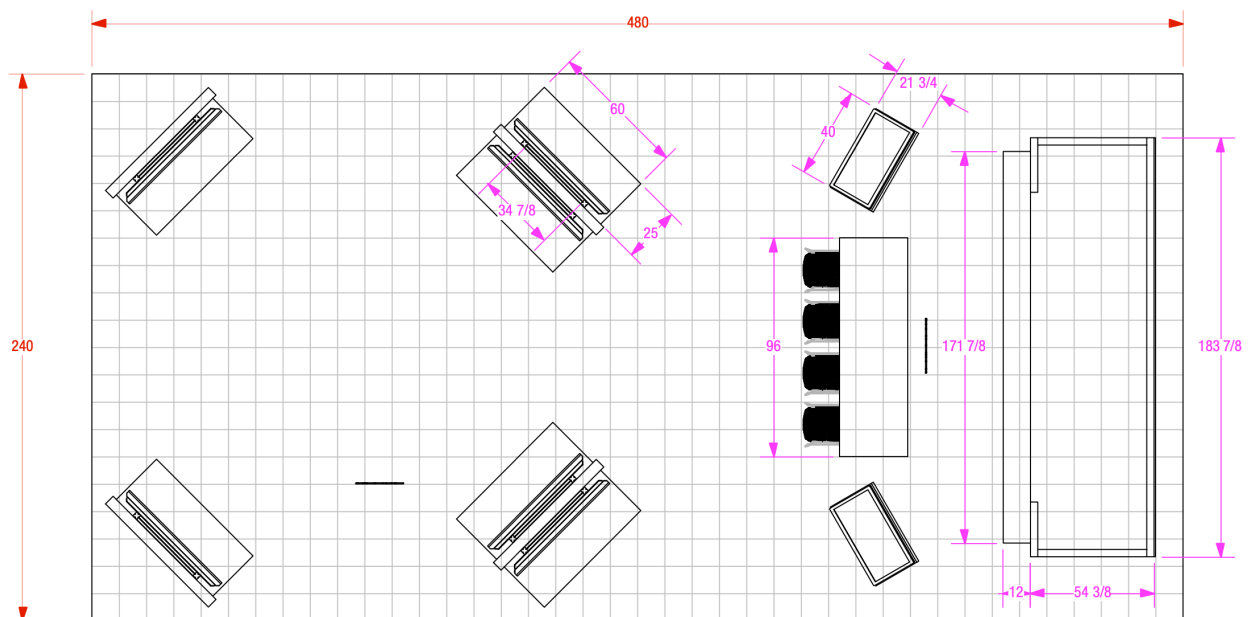
The next step was to maintain the functionality of the booth to feature multiple live demo stations, but to streamline the design to allow for more productive presentations and better crowd flow. This would also involve extensive booth staff training to ensure they facilitate the flow from station to station as efficiently as possible. As stated in **Session 21315: Beyond the Basics of Booth Selling**, staff accounts for 85% of your show success. This new traffic pattern included eliminating the traditional reception counter for a more universal information center to be the last stop for attendees. Along with these changes, it was also determined that the new exhibit structure should integrate opportunities for larger and more visible marketing messages.

When I first met with the Samtec marketing team in late February, 2019, we evaluated the success of the 2019 exhibit, and we discussed what could be improved and what they felt the competition was doing better. Over the following months, we carefully mapped out the objectives and goals of the new 2020 show and how the new exhibit could facilitate these needs.

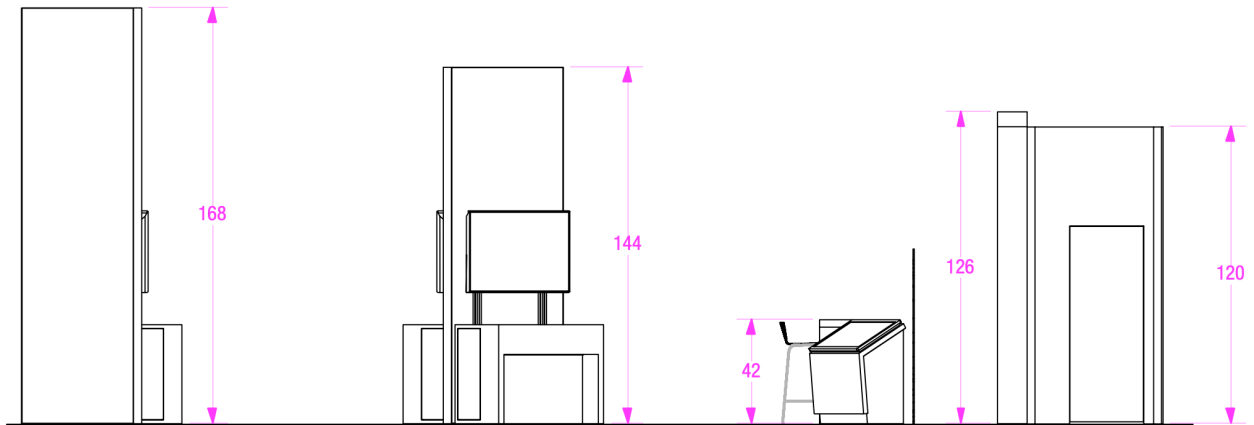
I then met with the Deckel & Money Penny team of designers to translate Samtec's needs into a working design. The criteria for the new exhibit consisted of the following:

- 20' x 40' island space with manageable crowd flow
- Replace carpet with a high-end faux wood floor
- Six product demo stations (if space allows)
- Information Center with desk
- Video wall
- Touchscreen monitor stations
- Large eye-catching graphics
- Storage for equipment cases and personal items
- Dynamic overhead signage

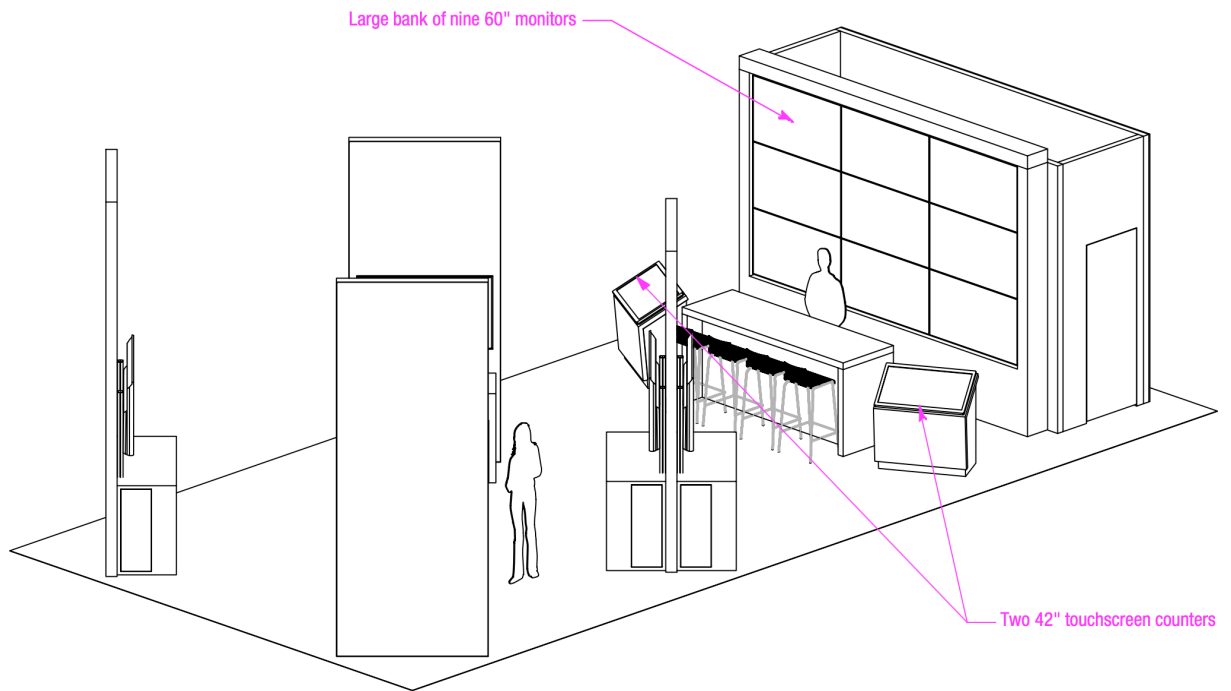
The design process started with a detailed space study to ensure there was enough room for the demo stations, Information Center and storage while maintaining the crowd flow necessary to meet the goal of increasing the number of live demonstrations per hour during the show. The integration of technology combined with a personalized experience was inspired by **Session 605: Elevate the Experience: The Intersection of Vision, Strategy & Technology**. Once Samtec was onboard with our solutions, the designer created dimensional drawings to show the unique elevations of the design. We then worked with the Samtec marketing team to integrate their latest marketing campaign and artwork into the exhibit graphics and messaging.

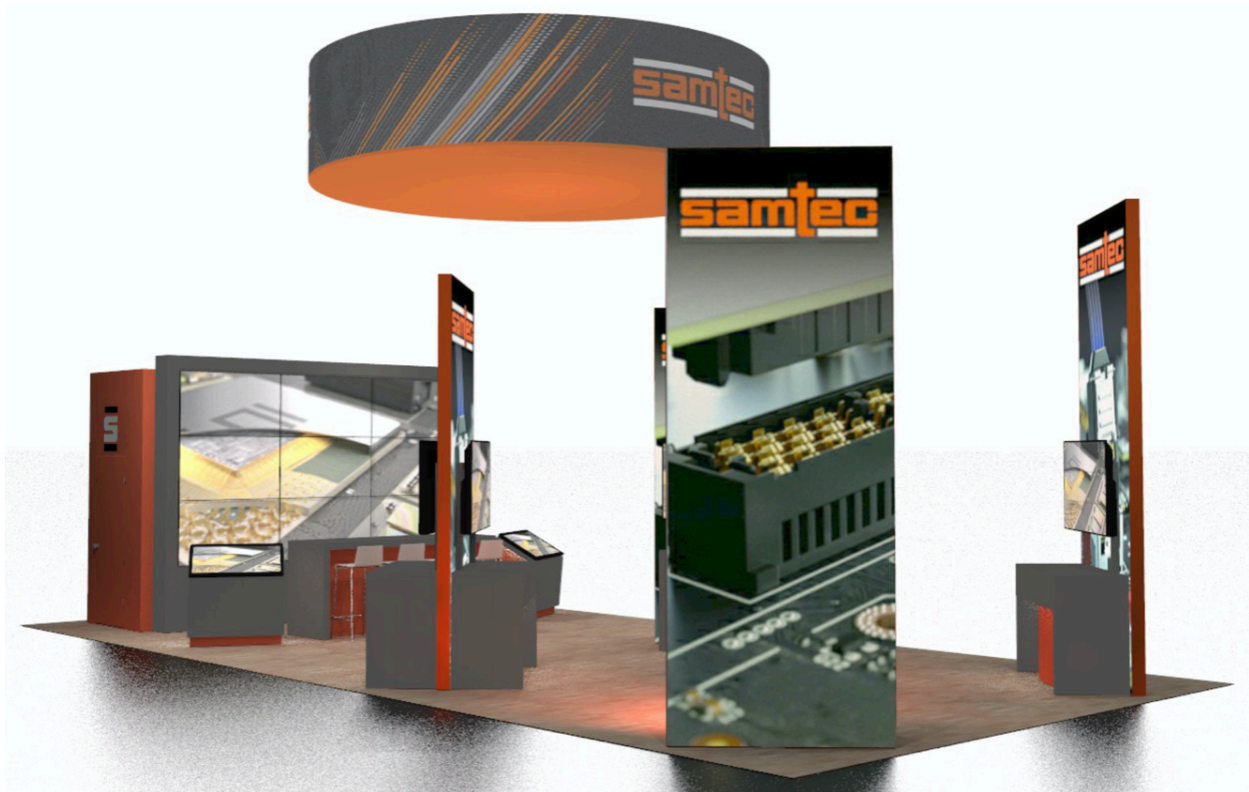


PLAN VIEW



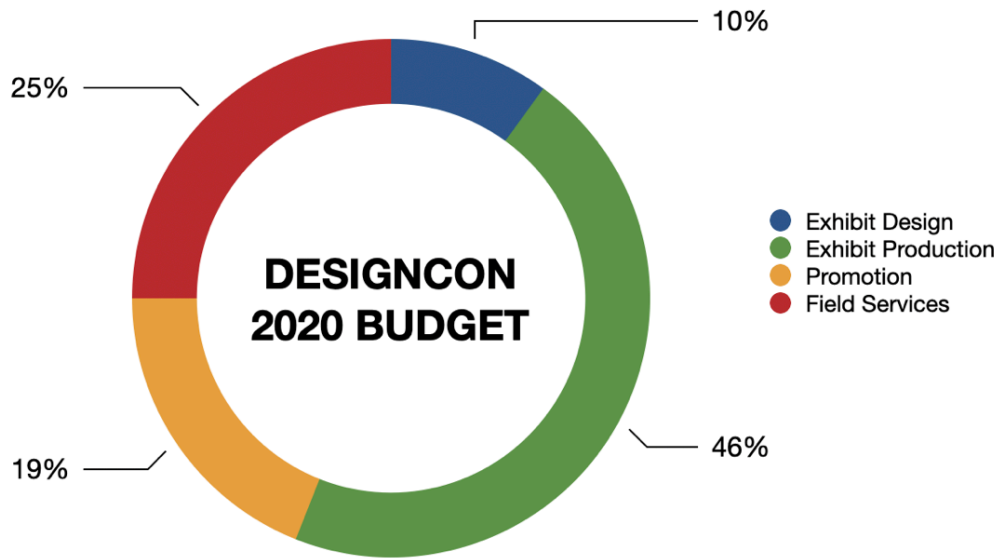
ELEVATIONS





DESIGN RENDERING

After some revisions, Samtec approved the design and I began working with the D&M Production Manager on a quote. The initial quote was over budget, so I met with the designer to find some middle ground to maintain as much of the approved design as possible while still making necessary cuts to better meet the budget. In the end, savings were found by having Samtec use another vendor that had redecorated their lobby for the video wall, and purchasing prefabricated touchscreen monitor stands. Such negotiating with vendors was a key part of **Session 20317: The Nuts & Bolts of Budgeting for Results**. These revisions went through the same budgeting process. Although the final quote still exceeded the initial design and production budget, Samtec was pleased enough with the exhibit concept to approve the quote.



DESIGNCON 2020 BUDGET

	Actual	Budget	Variance
Exhibit Design	12%	10%	(2%)
Exhibit Production	55%	46%	(9%)
Field Services	20%	25%	5%
Promotion	22%	19%	(3%)
	107%	100%	-9%

Once all was said and done, Samtec had a negative variance of 9%. They spent more on the exhibit design and production than they intended, but the additions of a video wall and touchscreen monitors were costly. While negotiating with another vendor helped to reduce costs, they still could not hit the original goal and opted to exceed the budget rather than eliminate these additions. D&M will usually add a contingency to all field service estimates, and in this case it worked in Samtec's favor as they saved 5% on their service costs. While the price of their sponsorship did not change, Samtec spent more than anticipated on the design and production of their banners and backlit graphics. Combined with the efforts to get their blog updated, they slightly exceeded their promotional budget.



Criteria #5

Management of Integrated Marketing Communications

**CRITERIA #5
MANAGEMENT OF INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS**

Samtec’s new island exhibit was just one part of their marketing plan for DesignCon 2020. As it was stressed in **Session 31515: Integrated Marketing Communications**, the graphics for the new exhibit would carry the same marketing theme being launched online, in social media and on sponsored graphics throughout the venue. This integrated marketing effort was titled “The Technical Renaissance”.

The related imagery and text for this theme was first introduced with a pre-show email blast to registered attendees. It was then carried through with social media posts before, during and after the show itself, as detailed in **Session 323: Advanced Learning Session: Attendee Trends: Social Media, Events & Exhibits**. Lastly, the message was integrated into all DesignCon sponsorship graphics and the post-show blog which encapsulated the entire experience.

Here is a summary of the communication methods used by Samtec at DesignCon 2020:

Communication Method	Rationale	Target Audience	Measurable Goals	Assessment Method	Results	Recommendations
Email Invitation	Wide reach with low cost	Registered attendees	33% open rate	Confirm open rate data	46% open rate	Continue email blasts & add clients to mailing list
Social Media: • Twitter • LinkedIn • Samtec Blog	Wide reach with low cost	Engineers; systems architects; DesignCon attendees	1,000 impressions; 1,000 views of demo videos	Confirm impressions data for each post	1,200+ Impressions; Videos averaged 2,000 views each	Continue social media posts; add Facebook; always include links to Samtec Blog
Sponsorship Graphics Throughout Venue	Increase booth awareness	DesignCon attendees	Awareness over 70%	In-booth survey question on touchscreen lead system	82% awareness	Continue sponsorship allowing for graphics throughout the venue

While each method had a successful outcome, it was recommended that Samtec expand their mailing list to include existing clients that are not registered attendees to drive more traffic to their social media and blog for updates. Also, they should add Facebook to their social media resources to extend their reach. Finally, a continued DesignCon sponsorship allowing for graphic placement throughout the venue to encourage more attendees to visit the booth.

Here is the initial email blast that was sent to registered DesignCon 2020 attendees prior to the beginning of the show:



**Samtec invites you to experience
innovative Silicon-to-Silicon solutions
at DesignCon 2020**

Samtec is prepared for the fast approaching technical renaissance with innovative Silicon-to-Silicon solutions that exceed standard connectivity demands with the highest level of expertise in the industry.

Jan 28 - 30, 2020 | Santa Clara, CA
Santa Clara Convention Center

REGISTER NOW

Register for your free expo pass or get 20% off a conference pass at designcon.com/SPECIAL | **Promo Code: SPECIAL**



Here are examples of the social media posts on LinkedIn prior to DesignCon 2020, during the show, and after the event:

 **Samtec Inc**
37,960 followers

We're excited to be at DesignCon. It's an opportunity to present our newest products, technologies, and solutions. Even if you're not going to DesignCon, click here to see a list of Samtec demonstrations, papers, and products: <https://lnkd.in/ehChWGx>




DesignCon 2020: A Technical Renaissance
blog.samtec.com

 **Samtec Inc**
37,960 followers

Cutting edge new products, 112 Gbps demos, and knowledgeable associates -- visit Samtec at DesignCon booth 737.
[#DesignCon](#)




DesignCon 2020 - The Samtec Blog
blog.samtec.com


 **Samtec Inc**
37,960 followers

Two [#DesignCon](#) in-booth demos tomorrow: Correlating Data at 112 Gbps PAM4/53GHz (Keysight booth 725, 3:00pm Wednesday) and Direct Connect To Silicon Package (Samtec booth 737, 5:00pm Wednesday)

If you're arriving tomorrow, don't forget there's a Samtec Tessie the Tiger in your DesignCon Conference Attendee Bag that you receive at the registration desk.

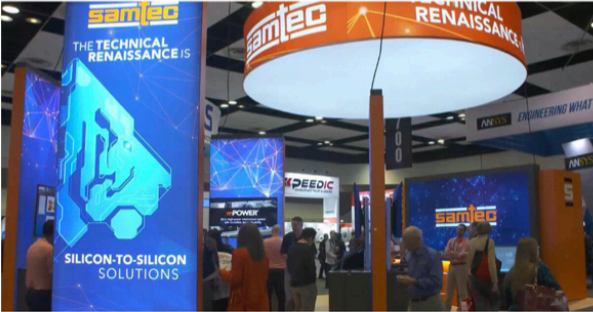


DesignCon 2020: A Recap
blog.samtec.com

 **Samtec Inc**
37,960 followers

DesignCon 2020 wrapped-up a few weeks ago and we've gathered a few key observations and takeaways from a connector manufacturer's perspective: <https://lnkd.in/eQF9FGW>

What were some of your key takeaways?



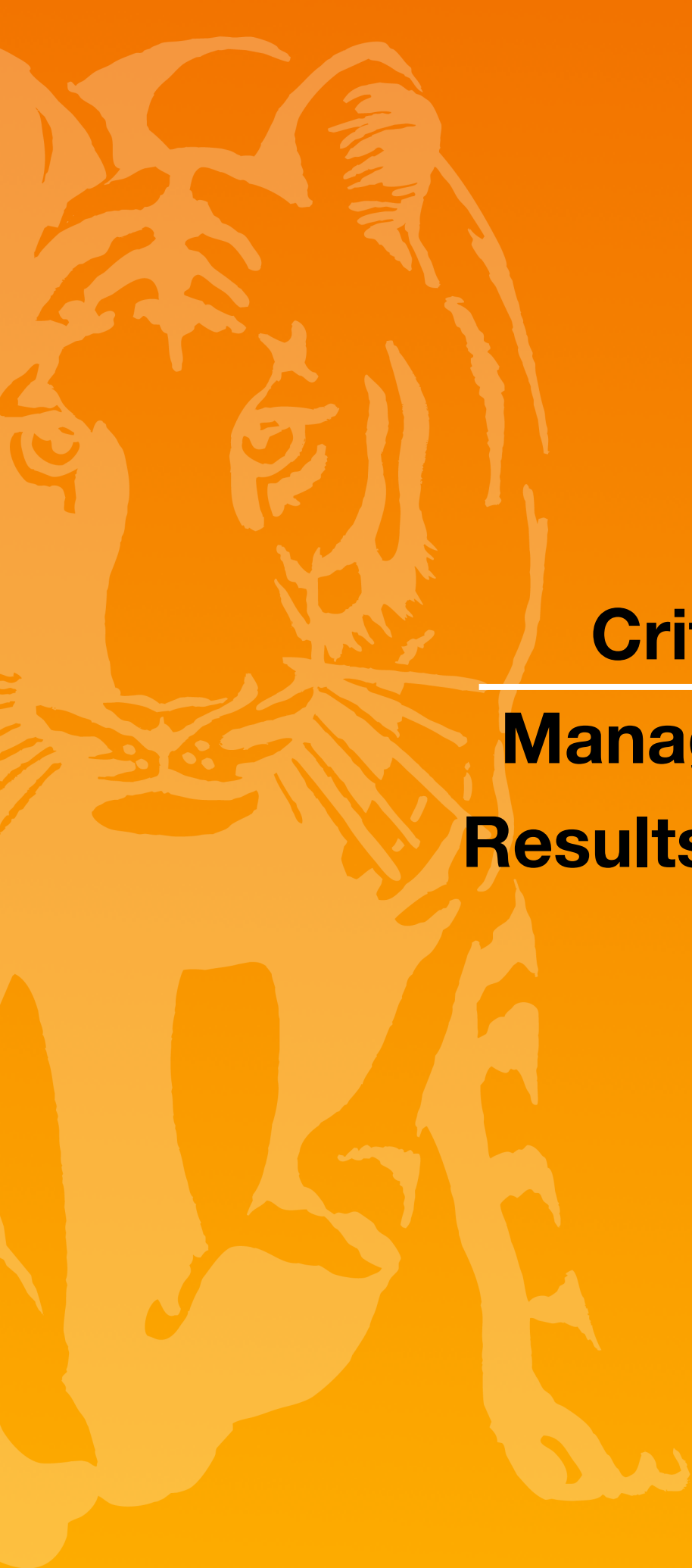
DesignCon 2020: A Recap
blog.samtec.com

Here is a sampling of banners and lightbox graphics displayed throughout the venue as part of Samtec's sponsorship of DesignCon 2020.

The large horizontal banner greeted attendees near the entrance to the venue for maximum impact as soon as visitors arrived.



The three smaller vertical graphics were used as freestanding lightbox towers near the registration area and the entrance to the show itself. This allowed for a call to action to visit their exhibit as they entered the show hall.



Criteria #6

Management of Results Reporting

CRITERIA #6
MANAGEMENT OF RESULTS REPORTING

Samtec’s new island exhibit and marketing strategy for for DesignCon 2020 were both a complete success. Here are the results of the objectives originally presented in Section 3, along with recommendations for how to proceed for future events:

Strategy	Tactic	Assessment Method	Measurable Goal	Results	Recommendations
Increase the number of qualified leads over the previous year	Introduce a new custom lead retrieval app and touchscreen monitor stations	Number of leads obtained in the booth	Increase the number of leads over 2019 by 10%	14% more qualified leads over 2019	Continue to use the new app & touchscreen entry terminals. Fine-tune the app to narrow the information gathered. Make the info center even more of a destination.
Increase the efficiency and frequency of product demos	Create more efficient demo stations and utilize a crowd flow that moves attendees to an info station following their demo	Number of demos performed during the show	Increase the number of demo engagements over 2019 by 10%	30% more demo engagements over 2019	Maintain successful crowd flow that allowed for efficient demos. Continue utilizing the info center for FAQ & collateral, freeing up demo stations.
Increase brand awareness and visible presence on the show floor	Utilize backlit tower graphic and a backlit hanging sign to increase visibility	Post-show survey	Positive feedback on the survey over 90%	98% positive feedback on post-show survey	The new exhibit was a hit. Continue developing strong messaging & graphic appeal for the exhibit structure & sponsorship graphics.
Increase traffic on social media related to the event	Promote new show blog that will be home to demo videos from the show floor along with videos of the Samtec conference presentations	Number of impressions, views	Increase the number of blog and video views over 2019 by 10%	1,200+ blog Impressions for an increase of 20% 2,000 average views for each demo video for an increase of 25%	Continue to promote the blog before, during & after the show on all social media. Add additional media outlets including Facebook.

The crux of the new island exhibit design was to better facilitate the efficiency and frequency of product demonstrations within the booth space. The exhibit outperformed expectations as it increased demo frequency by 30%. This was thanks to a structural design that created a more open and friendlier space for the demonstrator to connect with attendees as stressed in **Session 31115 - How to Grow Your Brand: Incorporating Brand Marketing into Your Exhibit Program**. It was also helped by an improved traffic pattern combined with proper booth staff training to filter crowds to the Info Center for followup questions and additional information, including lead acquisitions. Based on this success, Samtec will continue utilizing this floor plan and process for future events. They will also evaluate additional ways to benefit from the interaction with attendees at the Info Center.

The new touchscreen kiosks utilizing the custom Samtec lead retrieval app also exceeded expectations by increasing the number of qualified leads by 14%. The placement of these kiosks at either end of the Info Center desk proved to be an asset as well since all visitors were funneled to this area before leaving the exhibit space. Along with capturing contact information, the app included a few multiple-choice questions to specify attendees' product interests and gauge their awareness of promotional signage tied to Samtec's sponsorship. For this show, that awareness was 82%. Having proven to be an upgrade over past lead retrieval methods, Samtec will fine-tune this app to gather even more pertinent information, including additional questions regarding social media awareness, while remaining user-friendly for attendees.

The use of social media to promote their presence at DesignCon, as well as their blog featuring more detailed information and videos of the onsite product demonstrations, was also considered a successful use of the medium. Samtec increased their impressions by 20% and averaged a record 2,000 views for each video posted on their blog. This show marks the most they have used social media to promote DesignCon. As a result, their post-show evaluation report recommends that they not only continue this exercise, but expand to additional social media platforms including Facebook.

Lastly, a post-show survey confirmed that Samtec enjoyed a much-improved brand awareness on the show floor thanks to their new exhibit design integrating large backlit graphics, a 20' diameter internally-lit hanging sign, and a video wall featuring professionally-produced product-related content at the Info Center. They received high marks on their visibility and messaging, as well as their use of promotional banners and backlit graphics throughout the venue as part of their show sponsorship. Moving forward, Deckel & Money Penny will work closely with Samtec to continue to develop eye-catching graphics for the island exhibit, and to maintain an orientation to allow for ideal visibility. Samtec will also continue their sponsorship with DesignCon to ensure they keep vibrant messaging throughout the show hall and lobby.

The one negative issue we faced in this process occurred during the onsite setup of the exhibit. When we started to hang the new internally-lit overhead sign, show management informed us that it was a violation of the show manual's fire code. Having carefully studied the show rules prior to purchasing this sign, the D&M team was confident no such regulation was listed.

We spoke with DesignCon management in a conference call, along with a representative from Samtec. The onsite D&M supervisor hosted the call in the booth space. The DesignCon team admitted that the rule change was new as a result of a fire at the 2019 show, and they failed to make the change to the show manual. Remembering the lessons of **Session 52115: Negotiating Skills to Win**, I requested that due to DesignCon's oversight, Samtec be allowed to use the sign for the 2020 show with an agreement that it would have to be modified for future events. Show management agreed and the issue was resolved.

The final results of the DesignCon show objectives, along with a summary of the exhibit and staff performance and future recommendations for improvement, were presented to Samtec management in a post-show meeting per **Session 40216: Basic Project Management & Reporting Skills**. The meeting served as a recap of 2020 as well as the first steps for planning DesignCon 2021.



Criteria #7

Conclusion

CRITERIA #7

CONCLUSION

Samtec's participation in DesignCon 2020 was a complete success. Having carefully evaluated their needs, as well as a detailed study of the strengths and missteps of their prior exhibit designs, Deckel & Money Penny and Samtec worked closely together to create their most successful exhibit to date. The newly designed backlit towers, hanging sign and video wall created a noticeable presence and positive buzz on the show floor. Inside the booth, improvements to the product demo stations combined with a traffic flow and strategy to funnel visitors to the new Information Center worked perfectly, resulting in a record number of qualified leads via their added touchscreen monitors and customized lead retrieval app.

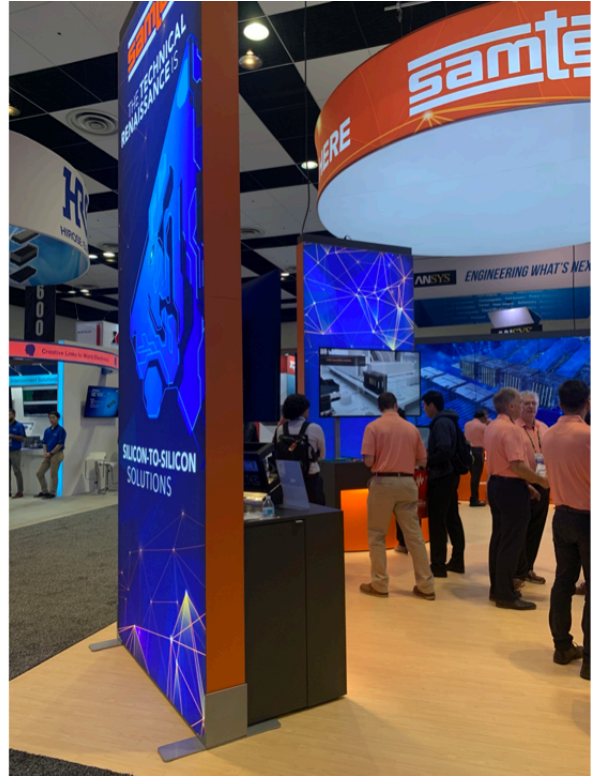
In evaluating the performance of the exhibit and staff after the show, we identified areas for improvement, focused primarily on the interactions at the Information Center. While this area functioned as intended, its success opens up opportunities for an even more productive experience for future shows. Such opportunities include Q&A presentations with Samtec experts, and more personalized one-on-one demonstrations of new products. The structure allows for enough flexibility to customize that experience from show to show. We also studied how the staff can better utilize the tools that the exhibit provides to them to enhance our strategy for 2021. One such change will involve more permanent staffing at the Information Center to integrate the additional interactions listed above, as well as helping visitors navigate the touchscreen monitors. Developing a strategy must include a clear understanding of your strengths, weaknesses and opportunities, as detailed in **Session 30816: Business Marketing Strategies & Trade Shows**.

This experience with the CTSM program has allowed me to not only assist my client Samtec with their new exhibit at DesignCon, but to enhance the presence for all of my clients at Deckel & Money Penny. Having been involved with such a varied list of clients participating in trade shows of all sizes spanning multiple industries, I find that the education I have received from this program is both universal and essential to every event. Booth spaces and show rules may vary among organizations and venues, but the knowledge and experience I have gained as a CTSM candidate have proven the core principles of a winning trade show program will always succeed when applied properly. I look forward to the challenges I will face as a CTSM representative as I continue to work with my clients to mold and enhance their trade show programs to new heights.

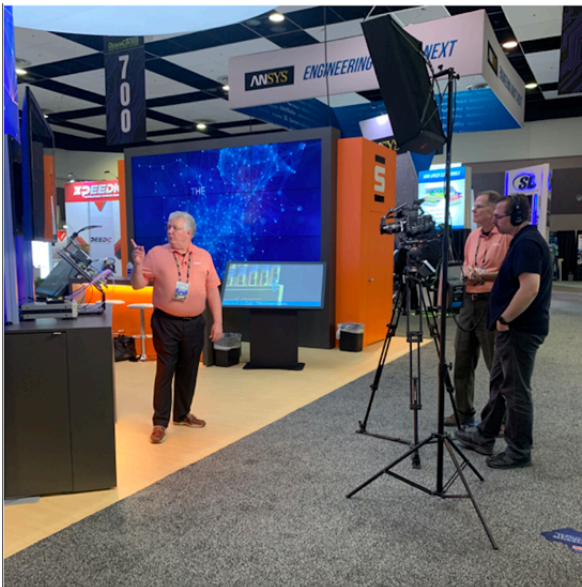
PHOTOS OF FINAL SAMTEC DESIGNCON 2020 EXHIBIT



Front right corner of the exhibit. Backlit tower in the foreground with internally-lit sign overhead. The video wall is visible in the back right.



Backlit tower on the left front. Demo stations with monitors about the towers.



Filming one of the product demos for the Samtec blog. The Information Center with video wall and touchscreen monitors in the background.



A large graphic on the aisle side of the Information Center storage room.

Session References

Required Sessions

• 20116: Selecting the Right Shows: The Critical Decision.....	13
• 52115: Negotiating Skills to Win.....	16, 30
• 21315: Beyond the Basics of Booth Selling.....	17
• 20317: The Nuts & Bolts of Budgeting for Results.....	20
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• 605: Elevate the Experience: The Intersection of Vision, Strategy & Technology.....	18
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