

EXHIBITOR Magazine's 2nd Annual Portable/Modular Awards

Affordable to purchase, economical to own, simple to install, and infinitely customizable, today's portable, system, and hybrid exhibits are turning the industry upside down and inside out, while offering a high-quality alternative to traditional, hard-walled custom-built exhibit. And exhibiting companies large and small are employing these modular solutions for everything from tabletops and 10-by-10-foot booths to massive exhibits at major international shows.

That's why EXHIBITOR magazine launched its Portable/Modular Awards competition last year, to recognize the vendors and designers responsible for these remarkable exhibits, while also spotlighting what's possible within this realm. Our goal is not just to give winners a well-deserved pat on the back, but to simultaneously showcase the countless capabilities of portable/modular structures.

So please join us in congratulating the winners of our second annual Portable/Modular Awards, selected by a panel of marketing and design experts. These stunning systems not only raise the bar for our entire industry, but also prove that portability and modularity are not the only attributes of portable/modular exhibits.



Story Time

Best Fabric Exhibit

Exhibitor: USAI Lighting LLC

Design: FPM Design, Fishkill, NY, 914-299-4733, www.fpmdesignllc.com

Fabrication: Dimensional Communications Inc., Mahwah, NJ, 201-767-1500, www.dimcom.com

System: FabXFrame Systems LLC

Event: Lightfair International, 2014

Budget: \$250,000 – \$499,000

Size: 30-by-50 feet

Photo: Exposures Ltd.

There's something utterly magical about effective storytelling. In fact, for New Windsor, NY-based USAI Lighting LLC, an exhibit clearly organized into eight product-story areas wasn't just magical; it was an award-winning masterpiece that judges called "a study in color, form, and materials that was perfectly balanced in every way."

Comprising tensioned-fabric components, USAI's 30-by-50-foot exhibit for Lightfair International told the tale of the firm's innovative approach to LED lighting, which allows users to select the color and intensity of light to fit each specific area's — or each day's — needs. As attendees approached the structure, they discovered a series of walls towering up to 15 feet tall, which formed a perimeter around the space. Backlit acrylic panels in muted gold featured the USAI logo and highlighted the two main exhibit entrances.

Once inside the booth, visitors were immersed in a white environment peppered with pops of brilliant colors. Here, staffers guided attendees through the eight different areas, and revealed product stories ranging from an interactive demo of color-curve dimming to an educational display detailing how artificial light affects circadian rhythms in humans.

Each of the eight areas featured colorful graphics, photos, lighting, and product displays, along with recessed cubbyholes for collateral literature. While attendees could manipulate various dimmer switches, the lights in each story area also could be controlled from an iPad manned by USAI staff.

Fabric headers and carpet in the company's orange hue warmed and unified the entire space, while cheerful clusters of cylindrical, jewel-toned stools encouraged relaxed conversation. With its uncluttered interior, elegant color palette, and simple — albeit effective — graphics, the exhibit lured in attendees like a warm campfire on a cold night and told the firm's stories as masterfully as one of the Grimm Brothers.