

ZAHRA MATSON, CMP

EVENT MARKETING LEADER

+1 619-944-1547
zahraamatson@gmail.com
Redmond, WA
www.zahramatson.com

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Seasoned event marketing professional with over 15 years of experience leading global event strategies and end-to-end execution for Fortune 100 companies. Expertise in developing scalable programs, managing multi-million-dollar budgets through creative problem-solving, stakeholder collaborations and operational excellence, enabling business growth through innovative event marketing initiatives.

EDUCATION

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE, MARKETING

Sonoma State University
Rohnert Park, CA

EVENT MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATION, EXTENDED STUDIES

University of San Diego
San Diego, CA

WORK EXPERIENCE

GE VERNOVA

July 2024 - Present

DIRECTOR, EVENTS AND EXPERIENCES | *Bothell, WA*

Develop and execute event marketing strategy aligned with company objectives. Lead the creation, design and implementation of engaging content for owned and third-party events; manage budgets and collaborate across various stakeholder teams. Measure performance and business impact to provide insights to leadership.

REASON FOR LEAVING: Layoffs have begun and with divestments in Marketing efforts, layoffs expected to impact Marketing team.

AMAZON

March 2019 – July 2024

- **HEAD OF GLOBAL EVENTS AND EXPERIENCES**
Amazon Project Kuiper, Redmond, WA | June 2023 - June 2024
- **SENIOR EVENT MARKETING MANAGER**
Amazon Alexa, San Diego, CA | March 2022 – June 2023
- **MARKETING PROGRAM MANAGER**
Amazon Alexa Automotive, San Diego, CA | March 2021 – March 2022
- **PROGRAM MANAGER, DIVERSITY CONFERENCES AND HOSTED EVENTS**
Amazon, San Diego, CA | April 2020 – March 2021
- **EVENT MARKETING MANAGER, THIRD-PARTY GLOBAL EVENTS**
Amazon Web Services, San Diego, CA | March 2019 – April 2020

ATTRIBUTES

| INTERPERSONAL

Team Leadership
Effective Communication
Collaboration
Adaptability
Inclusivity
Mentoring
Flexibility
Inspiring Teams

| OPERATIONAL

Performance Metrics
Stakeholder Management
Process Development
Vendor Management
Strategic Planning
Budget Management
Adaptability
Problem-Solving

AWARDS & ACHIEVEMENTS

| TOP 100 IN EVENTS

Black in Events Network
2024

HEAD OF GLOBAL EVENTS AND EXPERIENCES

Developed innovative, data-driven strategies aligned with business goals and execution of end-to-end execution for strategic events. Communicated complex ideas effectively to executives and stakeholders. Fostered inclusive environment. Drove revenue growth through creative event solutions and strategic partnerships. Adapted quickly to business priority changes and budget constraints.

Key accomplishments:

- Mentored a team that contributed to revenue/deal closure of \$15M in 2023.
- Due to 2023 success, marketing budget stayed flat, but event marketing budget increased by 77% through divestment in other marketing channels
- Led the building and development of Kuiper first Executive Briefing Center to provide customized technical demonstrations and facilitate pipeline conversions.
- Successfully built, created, and launched a scalable event program with an event team across various verticals, including B2B, B2C, Government/Public Policy, Regulatory, PR, Recruitment, and 1P events
- Centralized event metrics development and ROI reporting process
- Established baseline YoY goals and metrics development
- Implemented event technologies Cvent, JiffleNow, ExhibitForce

SENIOR EVENT MARKETING MANAGER

Collaborated with internal stakeholders on the creative design, development and implementation of the strategies to execute hosted and third-party large-scale events, conferences and activations aligned to overall Marketing goals.

- Partnered closely with external production agencies and service contractors. Coached and led a team of 9 direct reports to execute Amazon's 40,000 sq.ft onsite activation space and integrated event marketing plan at CES 2023.
- Managed 10+ different Amazon business lines and 50+ stakeholders (15-20 at leadership level) to create a cohesive experience across the Amazon brand at CES 2023
- Developed 2023 event program strategy for Alexa Smart Properties
- Led execution of Alexa Smart Properties event portfolio
- Executive collaboration with leaders on event objectives and business impact to influence the event strategy
- Regularly communicated comprehensive event strategies, project status updates, event recaps, and quarterly event reporting.

Key accomplishments:

- Collaboration with director- level and above leaders to develop comprehensive event strategies led to executive alignment before milestone deadline, giving stakeholders 3 additional weeks for execution.
- Demonstrated ability to align diverse perspectives and priorities, crucial for managing complex events involving numerous stakeholders with competing objectives.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

| **Event Leaders Exchange**
2024 - Present

| **Club Ichi Event Community**
2022 - Present

- Showcased strong leadership skills in guiding teams through complex event projects, fostering collaboration, and maintaining high performance standards.
- Coached and inspired a team of 9 to exceed (>110%) all goals for lead generation activities, press coverage and pipeline generation
- Successfully navigated 38% reduced budget 8 weeks prior to the event with no negative impact to achieving goals.
- Managed integrated event marketing activities and onsite experience resulting in 10% revenue growth in sales across businesses as of December 2023.
- Increased attendance by 15% for Alexa's hybrid user conference for 600 in-person and 2500+ virtual attendees.
- Developed event program strategy for Alexa Smart Properties that resulted in over \$10M in opportunities from March 2023-June 2023.

CERTIFICATIONS

| **CERTIFIED MEETING PROFESSIONAL**
Event Industry Council
2007 - Present

| **HEALTHCARE MEETING COMPLIANCE**
Cvent
2016 - 2022

MARKETING PROGRAM MANAGER, EVENTS

Key contributor and communicator on strategic event planning and execution for global automotive industry event activations.

- Managed annual event budgets exceeding \$1.5 million
- Developed event marketing strategies
- Oversaw project execution for key industry showcases, including LA Auto Show, IAA Mobility, and Detroit Auto Show
- Led collaboration on strategic and tactical execution of CES 2022 for Amazon Automotive, in partnership with AWS, Amazon Ads, Alexa, and FireTV. Partnered closely with Alexa Event Lead on integration into 20,000 sq. ft. public exhibit.
- Led the management and execution of partner product launches, including GM and BMW press events
- Managed external vendors and partners

Key Accomplishments:

- Achieved 10% annual cost reduction through strategic planning and negotiation
- Exceeded annual lead generation goal by 8%
- Enhanced lead qualification accuracy by 25%
- Successfully pivoted to a virtual media and influencer event in December 2021 due to COVID-19 surge, resulting in 75% positive to neutral press coverage.
- Improved post-event ROI by 20% through recording and reporting on data analytics

INTERESTS

Healthy Lifestyle

Socializing

Reality TV

Great Food

Social Media

PROGRAM MANAGER, DIVERSITY CONFERENCES AND HOSTED EVENTS

Lead and develop a high-performing event team, ensuring strategic alignment, stakeholder collaboration, and effective execution of diverse corporate events.

Key Accomplishments:

- Successfully executed third-party events like Microsoft Ignite, AfroTech, and Grace Hopper and more in efforts of enhancing brand visibility and customer engagement to drive recruitment leads.

- Improved event execution agility and efficacy through strategic planning and process development.
- Cultivated a diverse and inclusive team environment, fostering innovation and collaboration.
- Developed and implemented strategic event briefs, aligning objectives with business and hiring goals.
- Enhanced executive communication and reporting processes, ensuring clear, concise updates to leadership.

EVENT MARKETING MANAGER, THIRD-PARTY GLOBAL EVENTS

Collaborate with Marketing Program Managers, Product Marketing, Brand and Creative, Legal, Finance and PR to develop event strategies, coordinate logistics, manage budgets, and adapt to changing circumstances for successful third-party event execution.

Key Accomplishments:

- Documented and implemented event execution standards and SLAs to provide cohesive strategies that increased AWS product awareness and drove customer acquisitions at global third-party partner and industry events, including VMWorld 2019, Dreamforce 2019, CES 2020, MWC 2020, HIMSS 2020.
- Reduced partner tradeshow spending by 20% through close expense monitoring and cost-effective solutions.
- Pivoted quickly during COVID-19, creating a scalable event program solution including an event playbook for participation assessment and onboarding materials.
- Implemented risk management strategies that recovered over \$750K in credits from canceled shows during the pandemic.
- Created a cohesive event experience across various third-party events through standardized processes and materials.

AVALARA

October 2018 – April 2019

Senior Marketing Manager, Events, San Diego, CA

Led execution of national and international third-party event sponsorships, introduced pre/post-event planning processes, and managed a \$1.5 million annual budget for industry and partner conferences like ShopTalk, WorkDay Rising, and National Association of Realtors.

EVENT AND TRADESHOW MANAGER

February 2017 – October 2018

Illumina, San Diego, CA

Developed and implemented event messaging and strategy for North American trade shows, integrating various marketing channels and managing a \$700K annual budget. As a result of contracting experience, hired full-time.

EVENT MARKETING SPECIALIST *HD Supply Facilities Maintenance* | January 2012- March 2014

EVENT MANAGER, *San Diego Convention Center* | October 2006 - November 2010

CONTRACTING AND CONSULTING

March 2008 – February 2017

- Illumina
- San Diego Tourism Authority
- Teradata
- Women of Color in Law
