

Eliminating Waste Before It Becomes Waste **MOLLIE SPILMAN**

There's more than one way to turn a show floor a deeper shade of green. Other winners may have come up with innovative ways to cut down on the waste that accumulates after a show closes. But Mollie Spilman has come up with a plan to not create the material that leads to the waste in the first place.

The Virtual Totebag was the brainchild of Spilman, president and CEO of BDMetrics. The goal was to eliminate – as much as possible – the attendee strolling the aisles of a show with a plastic or cloth totebag stuffed full of brochures, samples and pamphlets, much of which ends up in a hotel room wastebasket before the attendee even leaves for the airport.

Instead, the attendee receives a mobile code that exhibitors can then scan, allowing them to deliver material to the attendee's e-mail address instead.

"The average attendee produces 61 pounds of solid waste at a three-day conference, compared to 13.5 pounds during a three-day period at home," Spilman said. "This is an alternative to printing, shipping and distributing paper collateral."

Freeman Senior Vice President Michael Bruley said, "Mollie is really on to something here. It saves many, many trees."

Through an agreement with Freeman, the general service contractor is marketing the Virtual Totebag for BDMetrics. It's already in use at the **ISA Intl. Sign Expo** and several Reed Exhibitions shows.



Bruley pointed out that the technology does more than save the wasted material that attendees throw away before they even get home, it also saves on the printed material exhibitors must ship to the tradeshow site.

"That's a lot of material that is not being moved on skids and pallets," he added.

Freeman is marketing the technology to show organizers who then can offer it to their exhibitors. Besides the benefits to attendees and exhibitors, Spilman pointed out, it can position the show organizer as an industry leader in sustainability.