

PACK EXPO, SEMA, AAPEX and FABTECH Cancel Fall Shows in Chicago and Las Vegas



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Due to governmental prohibitions and restrictions on gatherings, businesses and travel, along with the mounting uncertainty that safe and productive events during a pandemic are even possible, four large trade shows – PACK EXPO, SEMA, AAPEX and FABTECH – will not take place as planned this fall. Two of the events have announced plans to launch digital replacements. Here are the details.

PACK EXPO

On Aug. 5, PMMI, The Association for Packaging and Processing Technologies announced it will cancel the in-person [PACK EXPO](#) and [Healthcare Packaging EXPO](#), annual trade shows and conferences for the consumer and pharma packaging industries, respectively. Set for Nov. 8-11 at Chicago's McCormick Place, the collocated events were expected to attract approximately 45,000 packing industry professionals.

This is the first time PACK EXPO has been cancelled in its more than 60-year history, according to PMMI officials. In its place, PMMI Media Group will launch the virtual [PACK EXPO Connects 2020](#) from Nov. 9-13, which will feature live chats, live product demos, equipment and educational opportunities.

"For over six decades, PACK EXPO has been here to serve and connect the industry, and while the pandemic makes it impossible to meet in person this year, connecting the industry is still our top priority," said Jim Pittas, president and CEO of PMMI. "PMMI Media Group is putting all of the power of the PACK EXPO brand into fostering connections between consumer-packaged goods companies and suppliers by driving the entire industry to PACK EXPO Connects."

Much like the live event, PACK EXPO Connects will facilitate exhibitor and attendee interaction, present the latest trends technology and solutions in-action and offer premium, expert-led educational sessions and special networking events.

The in-person PACK EXPO and Healthcare Packaging EXPO will return Sept. 27-29, 2021, at Las Vegas Convention Center.

SEMA Show

Despite tenacious attempts to move forward with its massive automotive event as planned, the Specialty Equipment Market Association changed course and cancelled the [SEMA Show](#), an unprecedented move in the show's more than 50-year history. Originally set for Nov. 3-6 at Las Vegas Convention Center, the annual event for the automotive specialty equipment industry was expected to attract around 160,000 manufacturers and buyers.

Expressing concerns that event facilities and services will be unavailable by show time, mounting uncertainty rendered continuing with the event inadvisable, according to SEMA officials.

“The SEMA Show is committed to furthering businesses in the automotive specialty equipment market, and to providing manufacturers and buyers with the best opportunity to connect, promote new products and discover new trends,” said Chris Kersting, SEMA president and CEO. “While we are disappointed that circumstances prevent us from hosting the show in November, we look forward to getting everyone together in 2021 for another outstanding event.”

Meanwhile, the association is considering a possible virtual trade show with related live elements and will be working with industry members to determine interest levels on specific alternatives, according to SEMA officials. Meanwhile, full refunds for exhibitor booth deposits and attendee registration fees will be issued.

The SEMA Show will return to LVCC Nov. 2-5, 2021.

AAPEX

As the annual event for the automotive aftermarket industry that takes place simultaneously with SEMA in Las Vegas, [AAPEX](#) was scheduled to move forward Nov. 3-5 at Sands Expo and Caesars Forum Conference Center. Although organizers had been holding out hope for an in-person event, AAPEX 2020 will move to a virtual format with many of the show’s same elements presented digitally, according to an official decision announced on Aug. 5 by show officials.

According to AAPEX officials in a statement, “Given the State of Nevada’s recently announced long-term mitigation strategy for the COVID-19 pandemic, which has indefinitely prohibited events with more than 50 participants, and the severe limitations on international and domestic travel imposed in connection with the pandemic, unfortunately, the traditional in-person event cannot proceed.”

AAPEX 2021 will return to Sands Expo Nov. 2-4, 2021.

FABTECH

After extensive efforts to carry out the event as originally scheduled, [FABTECH](#) 2020 has been cancelled. The annual trade show for the metal forming, fabricating, welding and finishing industry was set to run Nov. 18-20 at Las Vegas Convention Center.

“We explored every option to find a way to produce this event in 2020,” explained Sandra Bouckley, executive director and CEO of manufacturing association SME, a FABTECH event partner. “Unfortunately, COVID-19 has created an environment that makes it impossible to hold the event. Our top concern is always the safety of our exhibitors, attendees, speakers, sponsors and employees, along with supplier partners and venue staff. While we didn’t want to have to make this decision, we have found that we have no choice.”

While FABTECH officials are evaluating other options to serve the industry, including “actively exploring enhancements to our digital experience that extend the knowledge-sharing and community building that make FABTECH unique in our industry,” according to an official statement, no plans for a virtual replacement have been announced yet.

In 2021, FABTECH will return as a face-to-face event with FABTECH Mexico, set for May 4-6 in the city of Monterrey in Nuevo León and FABTECH Chicago, planned for Sept. 13-16 at McCormick Place.

About the Author



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