

Journal House Returns to Davos as WSJ Expands Experiential Marketing

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Key insights:

- Publishers are increasingly entering the experiential space.
- Events are the fastest-growing part of WSJ's ad business.

The Journal House—The Wall Street Journal's big experiential marketing play—is returning to the World Economic Forum's annual meeting, kicking off Tuesday in Davos. This marks the second year the storied outlet has brought its traveling show to the global elite retreat in the Swiss Alps.

"It's a really vibrant, important part of our event strategy," said Josh Stinchcomb, chief revenue officer of the Journal and Barron's Group. "But it's also in service of our mission to bring people facts and very much a tactic to bring our brand, and what we do, to other parts of the world."

To one-up last year's version, execs designed the space to offer a VIP concierge service and more private meeting spaces intended to reach the luxury category of advertisers. "Also, very importantly, last year in Davos we had to suffer through with only British gin. But this year, we will have a gin selection from all over the world," Stinchcomb said with a laugh.

The hope is that more partnerships will arise from getting

people together in the same glitzy space. For example, a digital financial news show that Barron's Group and Nasdaq partnered on last year was actually discussed and agreed upon in Journal House.

A media company getting into experiential certainly isn't unique. Among traditional publications, The New York Times has evolved its niche food vertical into a ticketed event series, and some digital publications, like PopSugar, have combined fitness and celebrity speakers into their own ticketed (and branded) events.

Publishers will continue to diversify revenue streams with an emphasis on events, seeing experiences as a way to appease both advertisers with branded spaces and consumers who are willing to pay to connect offline.

In addition to the WSJ, other publishers that will be on the ground include Yahoo Finance, which will have live coverage from the summit.

"There's nothing quite like The World Economic Forum. For the week, Davos becomes the epicenter of business with candid discussions from the world's leaders across academia, business, finance, government and healthcare. It's a special week, and this year our live coverage will be even more robust," said Andy Serwer, editor in chief of Yahoo Finance, in a statement.

Journal House will make another appearance in Cannes this year, and again in Shanghai. In Davos, brands including SAP, Deloitte and Bank of America are returning to the pop-up, which has also attracted new advertisers this year like Canali, a luxury Italian fashion brand.

The company is also working on how it can have a presence at the Summer Olympics this year, as well as in Mumbai.

While Stinchcomb wouldn't give specific revenue numbers, he

did say that events represented the fastest-growing part of the company's ad business, growing at 20% year-over-year.

"It's a meaningful piece. And it's still growing at a faster clip than any other kind of ad revenue," he said.

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