

National Chiropractic Convention Goes Bust

Editorial Staff

Proclaiming itself as the "first ever Chiropractic Convention that has been designed by vendors for vendors," the 1996 National Chiropractic Convention, promoted by Phase II Marketing, made a number of impressive promises:

- "no charge for doctors, their staff, students, and the general public;
- guaranteed a minimum turnout of at Least 6,000 chiropractors, or we refund a portion of your booth price;
- over \$50,000.00 travel and product giveaways;
- extensive marketing and advertising ..."

For months, the event has been scheduled for the Atlanta Market Center and Inforum, free for all attendees, but with exorbitant booth space prices for the exhibitors:

10 x 10 booths at \$2,500

10 x 20 booths at \$4,500

20 x 20 booths at \$6,500

30 x 30 booths at \$15,000

40 x 40 booths (bids only - \$50,000 suggested)

Judging from the lackluster response from the chiropractic profession, many chiropractic vendors were unimpressed with the promises and unwilling to pay the high cost of exhibiting. No one seemed to believe that a convention in October could draw 6,000 DCs. At various other conventions, vendors even openly expressed their doubts that anyone would attend in the great numbers Phase II Marketing promised. A quick poll of veteran exhibitors made it clear that very few of them intended to exhibit in Atlanta.

However, as time passed and the interest level remained low, the booth space got cheaper. Four months before the seminar, vendors were offered a 15 percent discount. By September, rumors were that booth space could be had for half price.

On September 30, 1996, just six days before the start of this ill-fated event, Phase II Marketing sent a "To whom it may concern" letter explaining that instead of 6,000 DCs, only 1,821 had responded, and only 62 of the expected 300 booth spaces had been sold.

As angry exhibitors scrambled to cancel hotel and airline reservations, Phase II Marketing answered its telephone lines with only a recorded message. The last line of Phase II's announcement letter said it all:

"As a final result of this failure, Phase II Marketing, will be closing its doors, and filing for immediate relief."

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