

UFI AWARDS 2024 _ Industry Partners
Synergy in Action: Honouring Collaborative Excellence

Company Name: Busan Techno Park(www.btp.or.kr) & VM Consulting (www.vmconsulting.co.kr)

Title of the entry: **Consulting Catalyst: Elevating a Local Shoe and Fashion trade show to Global Heights**

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Summary

Busan Techno Park in Korea, as a public institution established to support industrial technology development and innovation in the Busan area and trade show organizer, tasked VM Consulting to strategize for 'Passion and Fashion Busan (PF Busan),' a shoe and fashion industry trade show facing stagnation and declining participation. Through a three-phase process including situation analysis, future model proposal, and implementation guidelines, and leveraging cutting-edge AI for operational strategy prioritization, VM Consulting developed 20 solutions across marketing, operations, business, and B2C events after extensive consultations. The efforts led to a 50% increase in visitors, network expansion through global buyer invitations, and new value creation by integrating local cultural content and extending the trade show venue to local art galleries. This successful consultancy has paved the way for future B2B show, demonstrating VM Consulting's practical, actionable approach contributing to tangible success. Dedicated to solving direct industry needs and real-world challenges, VM Consulting provided practitioners with practical, immediately applicable solutions, thereby significantly enhancing the trade show's impact. PF Busan is now preparing to become an international business platform for the Busan shoe and fashion industry by 2024.

Project Background

VM Consulting, a specialist trade show and venue consulting, was commissioned by Busan Techno Park in May 2023 to develop operational strategies for PF Busan, a shoe and fashion trade show in Busan, Korea. The city of Busan initiated PF Busan 30 years ago to foster and support the local shoe and fashion industries. Historically, Busan's shoe industry was a leading export sector in Korea during the 70s and 80s, serving as a production base for global companies like Nike and Adidas. However, with the shift of manufacturing bases to countries with lower labor costs, such as Vietnam and China, since the 90s, Korea's shoe and fashion industries faced stagnation. Consequently, PF Busan saw a decline in participants and visitors, risking its stature as a professional trade show. VM Consulting embarked on this consulting project to address these challenges and transform PF Busan into a landmark industry trade show.

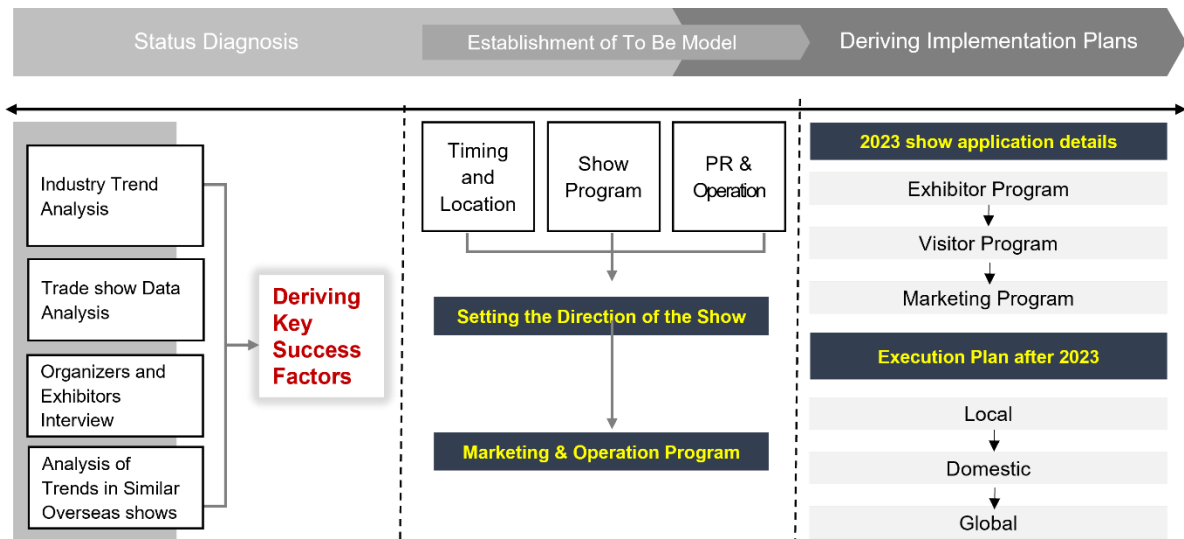
Challenges

PF Busan faced four main challenges: Firstly, the need for innovation in content planning to match the global shoe fashion industry's shift towards sustainability, comfort, personalization, and digital trends. Secondly, the trade show must present a clear theme and plan to set industry agendas annually. Thirdly, a unified operational strategy was necessary due to the division of organizing bodies into four entities: BTP(Busan Techno Park), KATTI(Korea Association of Tech Textile Industry), BTFA(Busan Federation of Textile & Fashion Industry Association) and BFTC(Busan Fashion Textile Business Cooperative). Lastly, it needed precise positioning to differentiate between

domestic and international trade shows.

Solutions

To address the four main challenges, VM Consulting designed and implemented a consulting process focused on practical, immediately actionable solutions. This is the key distinction of VM Consulting from traditional academic or strategic consulting firms, providing practical, immediately applicable solutions akin to a manual for practitioners. This approach underscores VM Consulting's commitment to addressing direct industry needs and practical challenges, showcasing a consulting style that not only strategizes but is also deeply rooted in real-world application. The following diagram organizes the entire process step by step.



VM Consulting's Proprietary Consulting Process (Source: VM Consulting)

As depicted, the first phase is the current state analysis, analyzing industry trends and past show data and conducting in-depth interviews with key participants and three organizing bodies. Insights were gathered through interviews with five prominent company representatives to understand trade show participation challenges and requirements and with representatives from three organizing bodies to discuss operational issues and future directions, leading to the identification of Key Success Factors (KSF).

Based on the first phase, the second phase developed the To-Be Model, proposing strategies for enhancing the show value and effective marketing and setting the overall direction with specific programs. Collaboration with a former executive from Accenture, a global consulting firm, and prioritization through ChatGPT-4 AI analysis were notable.

The final phase outlined step-by-step guidelines for implementing the proposed model. It offered a three-year execution plan to achieve the trade show's vision, making it easily applicable for organizers.

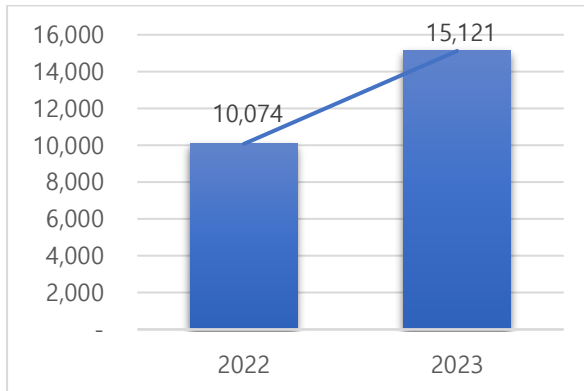
Over three months, VM Consulting proposed 20 solutions across marketing, operations, business, and B2C events, segmented by priority and urgency for implementation from 2023 to 2025.

Results

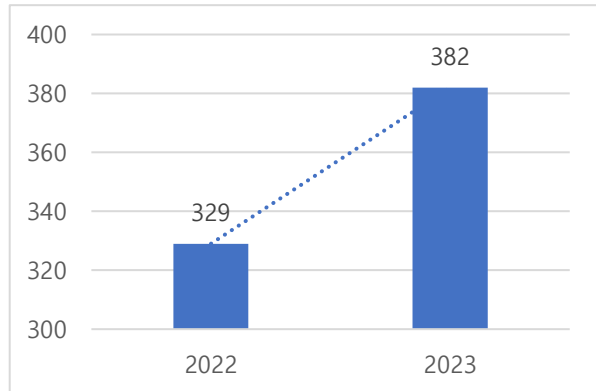
1) Establishing a Foundation for Consumer Goods Trade Show

Based on the consulting outcomes, PF Busan 2023 set its theme as 'The Dawn of Authentic Small Brands,' focusing on promoting and marketing small to medium-sized shoe, clothing, and fashion brands. This approach

led to a 50% increase in visitors compared to 2022 (from 10,074 to 15,121), with the proportion of visitors aged between 10 and 30 exceeding 55%, yielding successful results in actual satisfaction.



Visitor Comparison (Source: Busan Techno Park)



Exhibitors Comparison (Source: Busan Techno Park)

Additionally, various spaces were created to engage the general public, including a skateboard competition and shoe and fashion style zones, to spark interest among attendees.



PF Busan 2023 overview



Exhibitor Brand Forum

2) Restoration of Global Business Functions and Expansion of Distribution Networks

In 2023, PF Busan invited global buyers from countries like Japan, China, and Malaysia, including Jordan Hanauer, General Manager of Vans Korea, to unique venues in Busan including 'Museum One' for buyer meetings and reception events, providing an emotional experience unique to the region. Especially Hanauer told “It was my first time visiting PF Busan and I was really impressed with the overall quality of the trade show in the event. I think that there's a lot that we could accomplish together with PF Busan & Busan Techno Park.”

Partnerships with major distributors like online store Musinsa.com, SSG.com, and AK Plaza contributed to the continuous expansion of distribution networks for small brands. This approach increased the buyers' stay time by linking the trade show with local art galleries and industrial sites and offered opportunities for exposing local small brands to buyers, leading to potential business outcomes.



Buyers' networking event in local museum

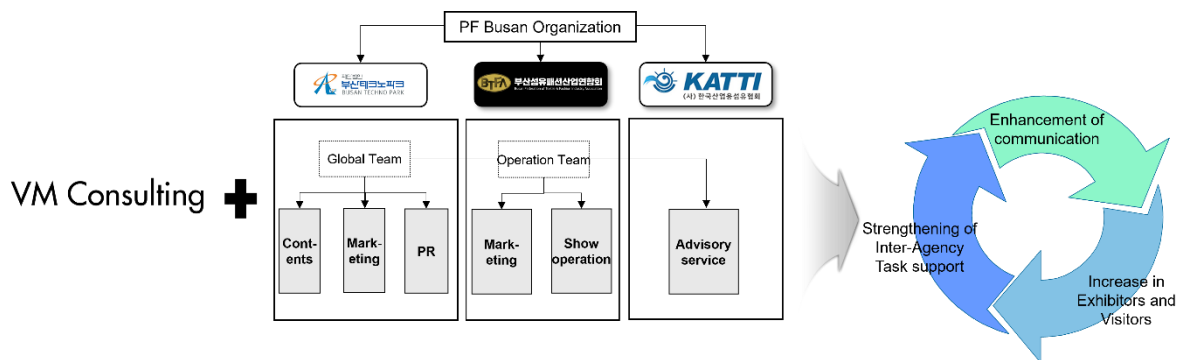


Buyer Industry Tour

Business Value of Consulting Outcomes

In 2023, PF Busan implemented VM Consulting's recommendations, creating business value in three key areas. First, it integrated previously separate shoes, textiles, and fashion domains into a unified model. Second, it laid the foundation for transitioning into a B2B specialized trade show. Thirdly, a strong trust relationship was formed between VM Consulting and the PF Busan organization, creating a successful case of collaboration between the trade show organization and an external consulting firm. This included:

- Creating a shoe, textile, and fashion content integration model, breaking down barriers within the trade show to form cohesive, themed areas that maximized synergies between participating companies and stabilized visitor flow.
- Establishment of a foundation for the leap to B2B specialized trade show, with the successful event serving as a basis for future strategy development. This involved a second consulting phase to analyze the show's outcomes and devise a detailed strategy, positioning Busan Techno Park and the Busan Textile Fashion Industry Association in roles that enhanced the show's business event capabilities.
- A strong trust relationship has been established between VM Consulting and the PF Busan organization, agreeing to build a continuous bond for future trade show growth. This signifies the importance of collaboration between the show organization and an external consulting firm to successfully transition the show and jointly pursue its continuous growth.



The close collaboration between VM Consulting and the PF Busan has led to continuous growth for the PF Busan.

Min Seong-gi, the team leader at Busan Techno Park, the organizing body of PF Busan, stated, "Thanks to VM Consulting's consulting, the 2023 trade show was able to conclude successfully," and added, "We will achieve continuous growth for the show through ongoing collaboration with VM Consulting."

■ PF Busan channels

- YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vRTqV_00ae8
- Website: <https://pfb.co.kr/>