

Pieces of the Market Puzzle

Splits, start-ups and offshoots amongst industry trade show producers have created a plethora of choices for market-goers.



By Barb Kastens, Editor

For years, there were a number of constants in the world of equine trade shows. Among them were the Denver-WESA Market, always the granddaddy of them all, K.O.P., the predominantly English market in Pennsylvania and the Dallas Mega Market, a giant showcase of Western apparel. For manufacturers, exhibiting at one of these events practically guaranteed to put money in your pockets. For retailers, attending meant finding a huge variety of products under one roof.

In recent years, the constants have been replaced with, well, constant change. While the Denver Market continues to be grounded and successful, K.O.P. met with a much different fate after it was moved to Atlantic

City. Last spring, producer Morey Stein cancelled it until further notice and nothing has been heard since.

Stein's former partner, Kent Hopper, went on to form Hopper Expositions and produce shows of his own in Orlando, Baltimore and Indianapolis. The latter location severely impacted the long-running former Indy market, and in August of 2006 that event was also cancelled.

Another upheaval in the East centered around the creation of the American Equestrian Trade Association (AETA) in 2005. Months of turmoil between AETA board members and veteran show producer Jim Herbert resulted in AETA hiring Hopper to produce its shows, with the first in Orlando next February and then twice annually in Baltimore

thereafter. Herbert still produces his two shows in Richmond, Va., under the name of the International Equine Business Alliance Expo.

In 2006, the former Atlanta Market dropped off radar screens completely. Not willing to lose a show in the area all together, veteran multi-line representative Roger Tully created Western & English Atlanta.

Each of these shows and a host of others that exist in the industry have things that make them unique. Details follow, in order of show dates, about seven major markets in the United States and three abroad, along with a complete market calendar of all industry markets, including contact information and web sites. Read on to find the ones that suit your store's buying needs. > CONTINUED