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Cooperative 
Credit Union Association

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CU Marketplace Experience Debuts a New Style of Trade Show to the Credit Union Industry

Virtual and augmented reality are introduced as new tools for compliance and workplace training

May 3, 2019 (WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS) — Trade shows are the holy grail of American industries. From automotive to cooking and high-tech, they are classic expositions where industry and consumers intersect in a unique way to discover and inspect the latest and greatest. In the world of credit unions, trade shows are no different.

However, as trade shows tend to emulate a particular environment influenced by a crisscrossing grid of exhibitors and their company's displays, these shows might readily be classified as mundane and even run-of-the-mill.

Not so in the case of the recent *CU Marketplace Experience* presented by the Cooperative Credit Union Association (CCUA), a trade group representing its member credit unions across Delaware, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island. For CCUA, its mission was to infuse its trade show with a "marketplace experience" that would distinguish the day-long gathering from its counterparts in other industries. That meant finding ways to generate an "experience;" creating pizzazz, impressions, and memories for the more than 500 attendees who filled the meeting hall at the DCU Center in Worcester.

"Our member credit unions are at the heart of all we do, constantly motivating and inspiring us to deliver new levels of service and value," said Ronald McLean, CCUA's newly appointed President/CEO. "The goal of *Marketplace Experience* is not only to provide our member credit unions with resources and solutions to best serve their members, but also to deliver an *experience* of what's possible when certain technologies or cooperative values are embraced and encouraged within the day-to-day operations of a credit union."

The drive to inspire and make a difference in the lives of people was most evident at the beginning of the trade show day as attendees gathered to honor eight of their own—*Difference Makers*—employees and volunteers who strive to reach beyond the ordinary expectations of service, volunteerism and social responsibility. The awards breakfast was capped by a presentation of a ten-year-old girl, Addyson Moffitt.

When Addy Moffitt learned that kids in Africa were dying because they were drinking dirty water, she made the decision to do something. By running half-marathons and raising money through Team World Vision, Addy has raised more than \$80,000 for clean water for kids in Africa. Addy's story and her invitation to those at the morning gathering to simply say, "Yes" to one's dreams and aspirations, was for all, a remarkable and memorable challenge.

Recognizing the Credit Union Difference Makers and hearing the motivational words of Addy Moffitt set the table for the main course of the day—the *experience* that would come from the trade show and some 20 educational sessions hosted by industry experts.

To fuel an environment with pizzazz, impressions, and memories, *Marketplace Experience* tapped a Boston radio personality, Isaiah Moskowitz, who conducted casual and entertaining TV interviews throughout the day with exhibitors and trade show attendees. The “LIVE” interviews were displayed on a closed-circuit television system CCUA constructed especially for the occasion, which also showed recorded programming supplied by the exhibitors, giving them a new and additional channel to promote their brand and services.

One of the day’s most popular exhibits was Link to VR. Its founder and CEO, Ed Zemba, introduced scores of marketplace attendees to the world of virtual and augmented reality, illustrating—through an *experience* they received of the technology—the many ways virtual and augmented reality can be harnessed to drive workplace education, compliance training and marketing.

“This is technology, not of the future; it is here today,” noted Walter Laskos, CCUA’s Senior Vice President, Strategic Communications. “By using virtual reality to immerse an individual in a credit union branch as a robbery is underway, we can elevate training and information retention to new heights. Outside of the real-life experience, I know of no better way to heighten retention, awareness and knowledge of this kind of encounter; what needs to be done, what needs to be remembered for reporting to law enforcement, and what needs to be assured to maintain the safety of everyone present.”

Laskos pointed out that *Marketplace Experience* is among the first in the nation’s credit union industry to introduce its members to virtual and augmented reality, and to promote the value it can offer in training today’s Millennial Generation.

“The opportunities are endless,” McLean said. “By exploring ways to introduce VR and AR technology to enhance the performance of our member credit unions, CCUA remains faithful to its commitment to deliver the kind of value that helps credit unions rise above others in the financial services marketplace. Like Addy, we, too, must find the conviction to say, ‘Yes.’”

About the Cooperative Credit Union Association

The Cooperative Credit Union Association is a regional trade organization serving as the voice for nearly 200-member credit unions primarily located in the States of Delaware, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island. CCUA member credit unions hold combined assets in excess of \$45 billion and serve a collective membership base of more than 2.3 million consumers. On behalf of these member credit unions, CCUA advocates before Congress and state legislatures, regulatory bodies and to the general public through its *Better Values—Better Banking* consumer awareness campaign. In addition to advocacy, CCUA also engages its member credit unions with an array of industry resources, from compliance assets and marketing support to vetted products and service providers; educational workshops and conferences; and, a variety of communications, from a daily e-newsletter to simulcast video programs. For more information, visit www.CCUA.org.

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Addy Moffitt



Experience in Virtual Reality