



THE ECONOMY & EVENTS

By Kenya McCullum

With the current instability of the economy spreading with no end in sight, businesses all over the country are feeling the pain and have concerns about their future. Companies involved in the trade show industry are no different and as financial experts predict that the economy will not rebound any time soon, show organizers, sponsors and exhibitors alike are concerned about what to do next.

So far, the trade show industry is not in as much of a dismal position as other business sectors and if the past serves as a guide, the decline may not be felt for quite some time.

"Historically speaking, over the last half century, the industry has been slower to decline and has been somewhat resistant to these kinds of economic cycles because it is such a fundamental part of the distribution network," said David Korse, co-founder

of the Abilities Expo – an event that specializes in providing products and solutions for the disabled community. "It is not that the industry does not go down at all, but it goes down a little more slowly than the stock market does – so that is a good thing."

That is not to say that event organizers should not be concerned about how the economy will affect their shows. Some shows, however, may be hit harder and faster than others – such as those that are tailored toward showcasing discretionary purchases, like gift shows.

"Some of the consumer shows, like boat shows and maybe even automobile shows, might get hit harder because they are based on a discretionary purchase," said Korse. "For things like gift shows, people might spend less money on discretionary purchasing of gifts, therefore the stores that are in that market