



EVENT REPORT 07.07.06 11:39 AM

Guests Trade Hi-Tech for High Style at Beach Bash

More than 1,500 attendees of Hewitt Packard's HP Software Forum 2006 convened on South Beach to enjoy their final night in town with an all-out beach bash.

Most of the forum was held at the **Miami Beach Convention Center**, but for the closing night reception, **Abby Dogum**, the conference director of **HP Openview Forum International** (a nonprofit user group that supports HP's Openview product), and **Michele Nessier** (of San Francisco's conference management firm **Action Motivation**) hired **Dan Vazquez** from **All Over Miami** to create a bash far away from the center's ballrooms. "The clients wanted a beach party, so we gave them the best South Florida has to offer set up directly on a stretch of sand in Lummus Park between Ocean Drive and Eighth and Ninth Streets," Vazquez said.

Guests were able to lounge and dine in three distinct areas, each with its own decor, cuisine, and entertainment—but before setup could begin, a 300-foot-long barrier was built, and a promise was made to the City of Miami Beach that all lighting would face away from the ocean. A bizarre customer request? Not really. The event took place during turtle nesting season, and the animals are attracted to the light. Once the area was safe for the native marine life, the flavors of South Florida were brought to life. Dividing each area were entryways made of brightly colored fabric attached to trussing that rose up into the sky, flanked by rectangular white tables decorated with large glass vases filled with colored water and floating candles.

The Latin Fiesta area exploded with color—trussing adorned with strips of red, purple, yellow, orange and turquoise fabric billowed in the wind. (Approximately 2,000 yards of fabric was used throughout all three environments.) Tables featured the same shades of linens and were topped with cigar box centerpieces and bright feather boas. Vazquez built a bar bordered by multicolored conga drums, and adjacent to the bar was a cigar factory façade with two hand rollers who gave out stogies all night. **Mena Catering** provided delicious Latin cuisine such as chunks of pork served in the actual roasted pig, plantain chips, black beans and rice, and seasonal greens with guacamole, red peppers, and corn. **Paella Party Creations** prepared an enormous nine-foot pan of the popular Spanish rice dish while amazed guests watched.

The next environment was an ode to South Beach, with a lounge-like setting complete with live flamingos (courtesy of **Parrot Jungle**, which also provided parrots and a baby alligator), bikini-clad models colorfully airbrushed by **Body Painting by Cee Jay**, and a stage area with a wall made from netting and inflatable beach balls. **Everlast Productions** provided all the audiovisual support, including 500 feet of truss, three stages, two 500-amp generators, and a 20-foot circular truss that lit a sand castle built by **Sentinels of Sand** during the event. Instead of tables and chairs, guests lounged on oversized cushy ottomans or wooden cabanas with accent throws and pillows. **Cold Stone Creamery** manned its make-your-own-sundae station, while Mena provided a dessert table with neon-lit trays filled with mini Key Lime pies, dulce de leche tarts, guava rollatinis, flans, and Caribbean bread pudding with caramel cream dipping sauce. The same bikini-clad models later retreated to the center of the dessert station and lay side-by-side, prompting plenty of photo ops.

The final destination for the evening was a Key West-themed area. A **Jimmy Buffett**-style band played classic tunes like "Margaritaville," naturally, and a lifeguard station façade in one corner doubled as a watering hole with tin buckets filled with bottled water. Tables received the same casual treatment with tropical-patterned linens and colorful pails of sand as centerpieces. Guests stood in long lines to fill up on Mena's conch fritters, curried chicken and beef popovers, vegetable paella, churrasco with chimichurri, jerk-seasoned chicken wings, and yucca fries with creamy cilantro sauce.

The sensory overload continued with a performance by **Skindo Brazil Show's** half-naked female carnivale dancers and *capoeira* experts.

By the time everyone was ready to be bussed back to their respective local hotels, the techies had a better understanding of what South Florida is all about.

—*Vanessa Goyanes*



A trussing system outfitted with surfboards was set up in front of a stage with a wall made of beach balls.



All Over Miami created three colorful environments throughout Lummus Park.



All Over Miami's custom bar, located in the Latin Fiesta section, featured multicolored bongos around its border.



Mena Catering provided Latin cuisine such as chunks of pork served in the actual roasted pig.



Paella Party Creations cooked up a paella on site in a nine-foot pan.



A cigar factory façade housed two cigar rollers who handed out stogies all night.



In the Key West-themed environment, All Over Miami set up a faux lifeguard station (with



Sentinals of Sand finished sculpting this branded sandcastle on site.



Models lounged on the dessert table, which glowed from the neon-lit trays.

an actual Miami Beach lifeguard).



The performers from Skindo Brazil Show gyrated to the Latin beats.

HP SOFTWARE FORUM
INTERNATIONAL CLOSING NIGHT
RECEPTION
LUMMUS PARK, MIAMI BEACH
THURSDAY, 06.22.06, 7 PM TO 10
PM

Audiovisual Production [Everlast Productions](#) ★

Catering [Mena Catering](#)

Entertainment [Skindo Brazil Show](#)

Event Design/Production [AOM Events](#) (formerly All Over Miami)