

Trade Fairs Making War? Becoming the Reference Event for the Industry

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In this paper, we report a longitudinal investigation of the system of trade fairs in the European clothing fabric industry over the 1989-2006 period. We found that trade fairs are strategically employed by entrepreneurial associations to promote the national or local industry and to resist the forces of globalization. Our paper contributes to the literature on trade fairs by highlighting the role of trade fair organizers in the creation of value for exhibitors and by exploring the notion that more trade fairs may simultaneously and concurrently aspire to the role of event of reference in their industry.