

# Dead No More: The Cultural Impacts of the Changing World Expos

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## 2010 SHANGHAI WORLD EXPO

**Theme:** Better City, Better Life  
**Duration:** May 1 - October 31, 2010  
**Location:** Shanghai, China  
**Visitors:** 73 million  
**Participants:** 250 Countries and Organizations  
**Cost:** \$55 billion (Some estimates go up to \$92 Billion)  
**Size:** 1305 Acres



### CULTURAL IMPACT: REBRANDING (Shanghai)

Combining this fair with the Olympics of two years ago, [...] China hopes to be regarded more favorably in the rest of the world for its economic and social development, for its hospitality to visitors from overseas, especially, for its efforts to find a congenial place in the community of first-world nations

- "Shanghai Rolls Out Record World Expo." CNN.com. April 30, 2010.

China worked to bring a more hospitable and welcoming image to its people, including the way the spoke, looked, and acted.

#### Language

- Moved away from use of British English

#### City Landscape

- Overall clean-ups and renovations



#### Model Resident

- Before the 2010 Shanghai World Expo, the government released an "Instructional Guide for Shanghai World Expo Residents"
- Contained facts and history of World Expos
- Included a list of 46 things to keep in mind as a resident in Shanghai
  - Be careful when crossing the street. Obey the rules of traffic
  - When on the escalators, stand on the right, walk on the left
  - Dress properly. Do not wear your pajamas when shopping
  - Watch your eating habits. Don't be too loud or drunk and don't waste food.
  - Be warm and friendly to foreigners
  - Respect celebrities

## WHAT IS A WORLD EXPO?

At one point, World Expos were regarded as one of three main international events of the world, on par with the Olympics and World Cup. With the history of what used to be called "World Fairs" dating back to 1851, World Expos are an important part of global history that not only introduced such important innovations as the Eiffel Tower, Seattle Needle, ice cream cone, and hot dog, but also united people from around the world. Lasting anywhere from three to six months, World Expos were the main event of the year and required years to plan. Governments spent considerable time, money, and effort on preparing their city for the arrival of foreigners. Yet, over the years, the hype and excitement seem to have significantly diminished, with many assuming World Expos to be "dead" or "obsolete."



In 1928, the Bureau of International des Expositions (BIE) was established and serves as the governing authority over all World Expos. The BIE defines an Expo as the following:

*An exhibition is a display which, whatever its title, has as its principal purpose the education of the public: it may exhibit the means at man's disposal for meeting the needs of civilization, or demonstrate the progress achieved in one or more branches of human endeavour, or show prospects for the future.*

## MY TIMELINE



Though Expos seem obsolete and less talked about these days, they are still very important in our world. These serve as platforms for countries to stand together in support of important and relevant global issues. They are one of the few, if only not only, places that bring together over a hundred countries and organizations in an act of cultural understanding, building and strengthening the relationships between countries.

## 2012 YEOSU EXPO

**Theme:** The Living Ocean and Cost  
**Duration:** May 12 - August 12, 2012  
**Location:** Yeosu, South Korea  
**Visitors:** 8 million  
**Participants:** 110 Countries and Organizations  
**Cost:** \$10 billion  
**Size:** 62 Acres



### CULTURAL IMPACT: REBRANDING (Yeosu)

Shanghai needed to rebrand its people, but Yeosu needed to rebrand itself, presenting itself as an international city.

Yeosu wanted to promote its own culture and place Yeosu on a more global level.

#### Language

- Limited English among Expo volunteers
- Presentations at Expo Pavilions were in Korean, not English

#### Culture

- Over 170 K-Pop (Korean Pop Music) performances

#### Global Issues

- Praised for sticking to the theme
- Brought to attention and addressed global issues like climate change and the protection of the ocean

### CULTURAL IMPACT: REBRANDING (Shanghai)

Country participants at the Expo also wanted to rebrand their image.



North Korea at the 2010 Shanghai World Expo

- "Paradise for People"
- Despite reported food shortages and economic failures, North Korea depicted itself as a peaceful and well-off country
  - Rainbows, angels, doves, innocent children, tranquil water, etc.

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