

# GALA AWARDS



1 Take two: The Vok Dams team pulls in two Gala trophies.

2, 3 Fedoras from Sherman Specialty Co. and boas from Zucker Feather Products are the proper fashion statements for guests at the receptions and after-party.

4 Encore, encore!: Festivex Special Events wins in the category 'Best Corporate Event: Budget Under \$100,000' for the second year in a row.

5 Swingtime: Music from Latin Grammy winner Nestor Torres helps heat up the dance floor.

6 C'est si Bonny: Bonny Katzman shows off her trophy.

7 Dream team: Sean DeFreitas (left) and Harith Wickrema share the glory.

8 Duo for a trio: The EventWorks team lands two Galas.

9 Sweet smell of success: Meryl Snow of Feastivities Catered Events gets the nod in 'Best Floral Design.'

10 Drive to win: An event for automaker BMW proves a winner for The Event Co.

At top 'Wanted' posters salute the sponsors.

**FLY AND DRIVE** For some brands, the challenge is not repositioning, but making a long-standing image compelling once again. The Event Co., based in Munich, Germany, faced just such a hurdle last summer when the company was called upon to unveil the new BMW 1 series for 500 key account customers—fleet managers and buyers for large German corporations.

The 1 series represented a breakthrough for BMW—the first-ever compact model from the high-end automaker. And the fleet managers represented a jaded audience, long-accustomed to being wined and dined by automakers.

To shake up their complacency and reconnect them emotionally with the high-performance brand, The Event Co. created a dynamic event that kept both guests and cars on the move. The event, created with only four weeks' lead time, earned the Gala Award in January for Best Corporate Event: Overall Budget Above \$500,000.

On each of four Saturdays last summer, The Event Co. invited 125 guests to a refurbished terminal at Munich Airport at 6:30 p.m. Along with the predictable—aperitifs, finger food and speeches from BMW executives and engineers—the guests were treated to the unpredictable: a helicopter flight to a nearby airport. The 14 VIP helicopters constituted the largest fleet ever to take off from Munich.

Once at the airport, the event stayed on the move. Guests viewed a huge numeral "1" created by a synchronized driving



**Flying high: The Event Co. keeps the BMW brand exciting for sophisticated fleet buyers with a high-flying event program including a visit to a refurbished airport, a helicopter view of BMW 1 Series cars creating the number '1,' and some deft driving (clockwise from top left).**

display using 16 cars; the fleet then executed a series of flashy maneuvers, underscoring the pure automotive excellence behind the brand. Guests enjoyed champagne and an opportunity to chat with BMW experts before flying back to Munich for a party that didn't stop until 3 a.m. ■

