

IFEMA transforms its installations for filming and advertising productions

The IFEMA exhibition center is currently the largest in Spain and offers excellent facilities to host all kinds of events, including special and large ones. Its design and versatility also places it as a venue that offers all the guarantees to carry out other activities beyond fairs, congresses and events, integrating in its portfolio all types of activities such as filming of commercials and television productions, among others. The large halls that make up Feria de Madrid and the exteriors that it treasures, make IFEMA an ideal space, allowing the conversion and transformation of its spaces into sets and stages with surprising sets.



IFEMA becomes a film set. The facilities offered by IFEMA represent an important advantage, such as its location for the filming of a television production or an advertising advertisement. “It is true that the facilities are prepared to develop events, but that does not exclude other activities. There are also many advantages offered by IFEMA from the support of the convention team, security management or logistics”, says Ander Zubiri Azcárate, head of locations of Grayskull, an advertising production company.



Hall 6 is transformed into an airport terminal. The latest challenge? To shoot an ad set in an airport terminal for a well-known brand with a soccer player. According to Ander Zubiri, “we needed a space that offered us size and an architectural base to shoot an advertisement that takes place in several different areas inside and outdoors, set in an airport terminal. So that it looks like an airport, we added decorations integrated into the structure to achieve the most credible result. And why was not it filmed at a real airport? “Considering the control we needed to have over space, it was unfeasible to try to get permission to shoot at a real airport. Therefore, the only location that met all the requirements we needed in Madrid was IFEMA”.

Details make a difference: adapting the setting to the production. The objective was to adapt Hall 6 to various scenarios through physical decorative elements, although digital elements were also integrated in the post production especially in the scenes shot outside, where elements of an airport were added. However, the base structure and elements of IFEMA, such as escalators, signage, etc. were taken advantage of, “although we had to add some elements that were indispensable, such as billing lines, luggage conveyors, armchairs, floor covered with carpet... Also inside the hall, we set up a room inspired in a house and an airplane cellar, since the protagonist of the advertisement went through different scenarios”, comments Ander Zubiri.

The biggest challenge: timing. “Undoubtedly, one of the challenges facing the production of an ad is timing. The IFEMA facilities are ready to hold events, and enable a lot of planning time. In the filming is more complicated, since we received the ok until filming began, we were granted two to three weeks. But in practice, it is made much lighter thanks to the personnel that IFEMA offers us, above all the security department and the person from the convention department.

Adapting the lighting. As if it were a TV set... Lighting is essential to shoot an ad, “there are many angles that are recorded with many cameras, and for each shot a different light is required. Therefore, the IFEMA base light had to be reinforced with light points that we designed specifically for filming”, says Ander Zubiri.

Filming equipment. Behind a large production there is a human team that coordinates and organizes the work. Ander Zubiri explains that “the producer offers a director and a production approach (budget, locations, times, etc.), and the producer is in charge of subcontracting the technical team, the equipment suppliers and the artistic team (actors). A total of 63 people were involved, between the production department, location, cameras, sound experts, electricians, art department, make-up artists and hairdressers, as well as cloakrooms, transporters and suppliers (21 in total), in addition to all the support staff of IFEMA.