

SHATTERING CONVENTIONS

PASSION
OBSESSION
CONVENTION



Conventions. Tradeshows. Expos. Every profession and obsession has them. While we all know about the cosplay craziness that is Comic-Con, just what goes on at the West Coast's biggest yarn and knitting confab? Or The World of Concrete in Vegas? Or Vent Haven, North America's annual gathering of ventriloquists. Yes, ventriloquists have their own convention. The new reality series *Shattering Conventions* takes you there and to every other expo center and hotel conference room where people put their passions on display.

Shattering Conventions explores the gatherings of niche subcultures such as furies and Steampunks, and then pivots to professional tradeshows filled with librarians and construction workers. Over the course of a season, we will discover that accountants can get just as obsessive as Bronies when they're all gathered in one place.

In *Shattering Conventions* everyone is a Trekkie for something.

WHY CONVENTIONS?

Conventions have been woven into the fabric of American life ever since our Founding Fathers stitched together our government at the Constitutional Convention in the summer of 1787. And so the country that was founded at a convention is now a nation of convention goers. We select everything from miracle cures to handguns to sex robots and even our presidential candidates at these neo-tribal gatherings where commerce and communalism collide.

As a result, tradeshow and conferences are big business and they're getting bigger. Capitalizing on our innate need to gather with people who share our interests, conventions bring millions of people and billions of dollars into cities such as Las Vegas, San Francisco and San Diego each year. The sheer variety of these events across the nation can supply gobs of material for season-after-season of hilarious yet educational television filled with compelling visuals.



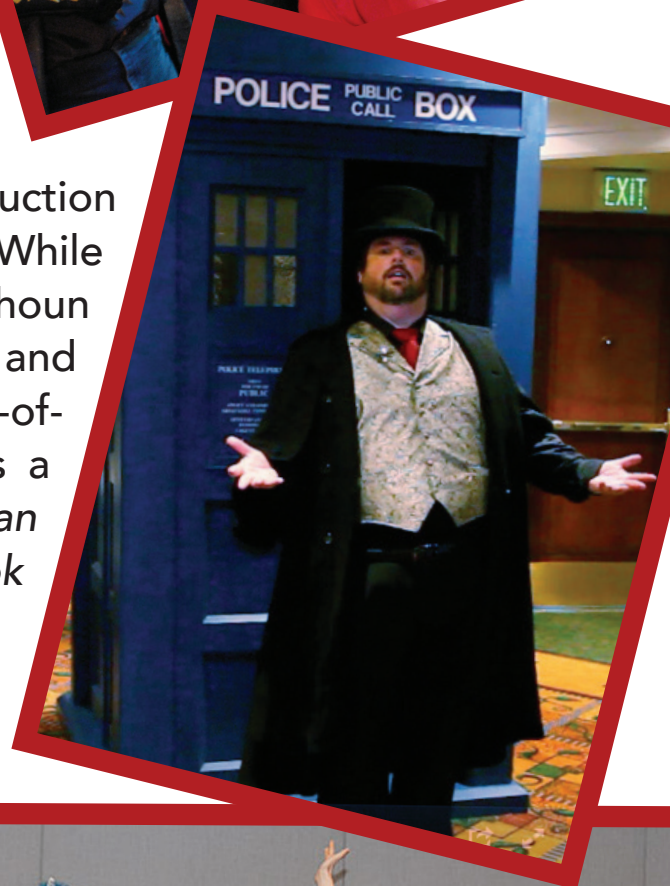
- ★ 225 million people in the US participated in 1.87 million conventions and trade-shows in 2012, according to the Convention Industry Council.
- ★ Conventions are a \$100 billion a year industry in the US that grew by 3% from 2010 through 2012.
- ★ Las Vegas, the city most associated with conventions, hosted over 5 million conventioners in 2013, a 3.3% increase from the previous year.
- ★ Attendance at the San Diego Comic-Con swelled from 126,000 in 2009 to 140,000 in 2010 despite a national unemployment rate of 10% at the time.
- ★ The National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM) Show in Anaheim drew a record-breaking 95,709 attendees in 2012, up 6% from 2011.

Covering conventions gives this production many potential promotional and business partnership opportunities with city convention bureaus, convention centers, hotel chains and convention organizers.



THE SHOW

Standing out in any crowd, punk grappler-turned-journalist Bob Calhoun crashes a different convention in each 30-minute installment. Using event attendees as his spirit guides, Calhoun struggles and strives to join the subcultures that fuel the vendor-driven madness. In the process, he becomes a Steampunk, a Brony, a hardhat construction worker, and even a crazy knitting lady. While literally walking in other peoples' shoes, Calhoun gets tangled in yarn, hissed at by reptiles, and put through grueling workouts that his out-of-shape body isn't ready for. What results is a cross between Morgan Spurlock's *Inside Man* and *Dirty Jobs* with a little bit of *Comic Book Men* thrown in for good measure.



SAMPLE EPISODES

Steampunked: Bob goes from a Hawaiian-shirt wearing lout to a sophisticated gentleman when he gets a Victorian makeover at the Steampunk con in San Jose, California.

In Stitches: Bob gets entangled in the conflict between knitters and weavers at Stitches West, the yarn con and he learns how to knit at a strange, late night pajama party.

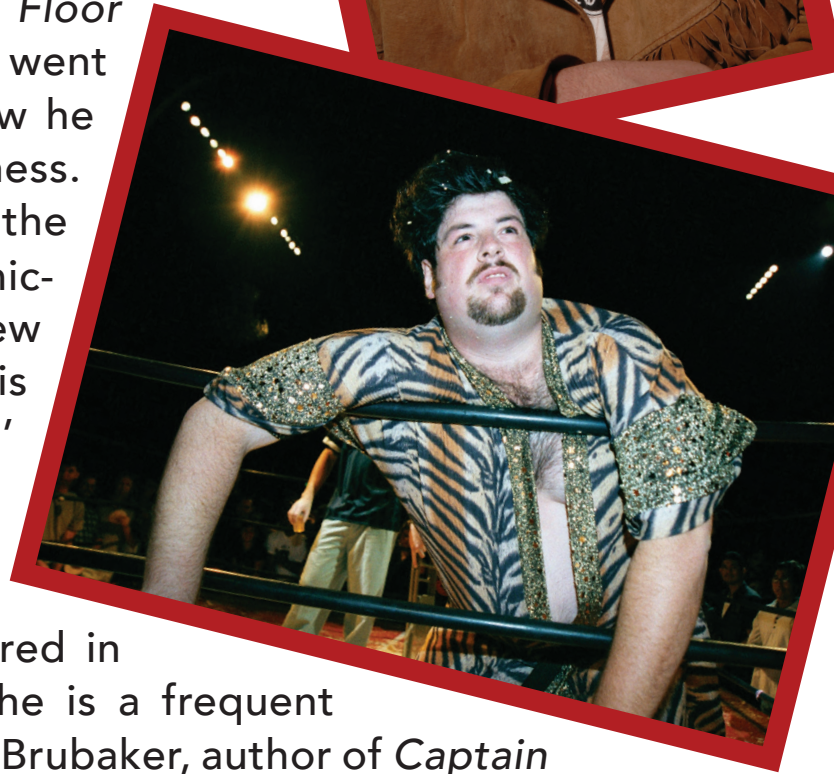


Other conventions we want to take you:

- ★ America's largest furry con
- ★ The Geophysicist congress where more beer is served than a brew fest
- ★ The Bridal and Wedding Expo
- ★ The ventriloquist con in Kentucky
- ★ The Sacramento Brony Expo
- ★ FitExpo—Northern California's biggest workout weekend
- ★ Con Expo in Vegas—the Disneyland for construction workers
- ★ Repticon—two days of thrilling reptiles and exotic animals
- ★ The ALA Conference—a paradise on Earth for the professional librarian

BOB CALHOUN-BIO:

Bob Calhoun is a former wrestler, peep show barker and ring announcer turned journalist. His punk-wrestling memoir, *Beer, Blood & Cornmeal* (ECW Press, 2008), is a national bestseller that WIRED.com calls "breezy and hilarious." For his latest book, *Shattering Conventions: Commerce, Conflict and Cosplay on the Expo Floor* (Obscuria Press, 2013), Calhoun went to every convention and tradeshow he could in a quest for his lost nerdiness. Along the way, he confronts the Westboro Baptists in front of Comic-Con, gets called out by Andrew Breitbart at a Tea Party rally and is chased out of a plastic surgeons' conference by security guards. Calhoun's coverage of Comic-Con, Star Trek Las Vegas and even the Republican Convention has appeared in Salon.com and Comics Beat and he is a frequent contributor to RogerEbert.com. Ed Brubaker, author of *Captain America: Winter Soldier*, calls Calhoun, "One part Hunter S. Thompson, one part Forry Ackerman."



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