



SEMA SHOW TIMELINE

- 1963:** Specialty Equipment Market Association (SEMA) is founded.
- 1965:** L.A.-area promoter and automotive magazine publisher Noel Carpenter organizes “Speed & Custom Equipment” (SCEN), the first-ever speed and performance trade show. It was NOT sponsored by SEMA.
- 1966:** Noel Carpenter produces the second “Speed & Custom Equipment” trade show, with SEMA sponsoring the event and receiving a share of the profits for the use of the association’s name. While SEMA received a check for \$535, the event is NOT recognized as the first “SEMA Show.”
- 1967:** Noel Carpenter moves the “Speed & Custom Equipment” show to Las Vegas; Meanwhile, the first official SEMA Show takes place in January 1967, under the grandstands of Dodger Stadium in Los Angeles. The event, featuring 98 booths and approximately 3,000 attendees, was organized by Robert Petersen.
- 1974:** The SEMA Show moves to the Anaheim Convention Center.
- 1977:** The SEMA Show moves to the Las Vegas Convention Center. The city was chosen because it provided room for growth, has dependable weather, big-name entertainment and a world-famous location.
- 1988:** The idea of sectionalization is born, as exhibitors within the street-rod market are grouped in the “Street Rod Equipment” area. Since 2003, the entire Show has been sectionalized into specific market niches.
- 1992:** SEMA joins with other aftermarket organizations to consolidate fragmented trade show activities into one comprehensive week, aka Automotive Aftermarket Industry Week (AAIW). Set each year for the first week of November in Las Vegas, AAIW is now a key event in the automotive industry throughout the world.
- 2002:** The Las Vegas Convention Center completes construction on its expansion, opening up an additional 1 million sq. ft. of space in the two-story South Hall.
- 2003:** A vehicle Proving Ground is added to the SEMA Show, where attendees can experience exhibitors’ products in action. The track is the only place at the SEMA Show where vehicles are in motion.
- 2011:** The SEMA Cruise becomes a formal event, recognizing the organic interest from consumers who gathered to watch the vehicles exit the Las Vegas Convention Center on the final day of the Show.
- 2014:** A new event, SEMA Ignited, is introduced to connect consumers to the excitement of the SEMA Show. Billed as the official SEMA Show after party, the event is held Friday evening after the SEMA Show concludes. Vehicles, products, manufacturers and the mystique of the SEMA Show make their way out of the Las Vegas Convention Center over to SEMA Ignited, where consumers are able to get up close and be a part of the action. As part of SEMA Ignited, the winner of the first-ever SEMA Battle of the Builders is announced. The competition shined the light on vehicles builders and is the premise for a nationwide television special.
- 2016:** The 50th SEMA Show held since 1967 takes place, along with nearly 140,000 industry professionals from all over the world. To celebrate the 50th Anniversary, a commemorative 11’x143’ mural located in the Grand Lobby provides a pictorial timeline of the Show’s evolution and milestones.
- 2020:** Due to Covid-19 and concerns that event facilities and services would be unavailable, the SEMA Show was postponed until 2021. In its absence, *SEMA360*, an online trade event taking place Nov. 2-6, 2020, was created to provide the industry with a robust and viable solution for conducting business.