

1. COLLECTION OF SCIENTIFIC DATA

Usually the exhibit serves as a method of presenting the conclusions of research that the exhibitor has worked on for several years. If the data is old and has been published, reprints can be reviewed before exhibits are accepted. However, this is impossible with new data and the exhibit committee is forced to rely upon the abstract, the reputation of the exhibitor and the reputation of the institution from which he comes. The support for this research may have come from a pharmaceutical company but often it has come from several sources. Exhibits which serve as a review of a particular disease may have data that comes from several sources and not the research of the exhibitors.

2. DESIGN OF THE EXHIBIT

Exhibitors sometimes design their own exhibits but professional help is usually needed to have an exhibit that effectively conveys the message of the exhibitor.

3. EDITING OF COPY

Each exhibitor decides what is to go in his exhibit and has complete editorial responsibility for the text of both the exhibit and the brochure. Before an exhibit is made, it is customary to have the proposed copy reviewed by several people. If a pharmaceutical product or medical device is mentioned, it is especially helpful for the manufacturer to review the copy for accuracy, legality and clarity of presentation. This review of copy does not imply that the exhibitor has delegated editorial control or responsibility for the exhibit to anyone else. If this review did not exist, exhibitors might make what they believe to be honest statements about a product but which are more extravagant than the company would make. This editorial review helps to prevent errors and should be continued.

4. EXHIBIT CONSTRUCTION

A few exhibits are constructed at home with cardboard, wrapping paper and crayons, but these seldom receive enough attention to justify the time and effort of the exhibitor. Therefore, most exhibitors use professional exhibit makers to construct a free-standing, self-contained exhibit that will attract the attention of physicians.

5. SHIPMENT, SETUP, DISMOUNTING AND STORAGE

In most convention halls it is necessary for the exhibitor to hire members of the Teamsters Union to transport the exhibit to the designated space, union carpenters to set up the exhibit, and union electricians to screw in the bulbs and plug in the cords. Union personnel are also required to dismantle an exhibit. This is not only expensive but requires considerable experience and time on the part of the exhibitor to see that it is properly done. Many pharmaceutical companies have experts in this field who can do the job more efficiently than the average physician.

6. BROCHURES

Physicians wish a summary of many exhibits to review at leisure. If the material has previously been published, reprints may be used but the lag time between completion of a project and the publication in a medical journal usually makes this impossible. Some brochures are simply photographs of the exhibit, but most are more carefully prepared by an artistic and innovative printer. Pharmaceutical companies often obtain extra copies of those brochures that are favorable to their products and use this in their sales promotion. Brochures that contain material that has a substantial disagreement with the package insert cannot be used. Consequently it is desirable for the pharmaceutical companies to review the brochure before it is published.

7. PERSONNEL STAFFING THE EXHIBIT

For a meeting as large as the AMA it is necessary to have two physicians in attendance in order to keep the exhibit staffed at all times. In some cases, other