



SUGGESTED GUIDELINES

for

LOCAL AALAS BRANCH & DISTRICT MEETINGS

that involve

COMMERCIAL EXHIBITIONS

October, 2002

Introduction

The history of cooperation between exhibitors and Branches/Districts holding meetings with trade shows has always been remarkable and benevolent through the years. It is in that spirit of cooperation that the ATA has prepared this paper for scrutiny by host committees.

Exhibitors showing at trade shows anticipate that they will have an occasion to display their products and services as well as have an opportunity to maintain and develop new relationships with clients and potential clients. For that opportunity, they are happy to pay reasonable exhibit space fees.

Since the proceeds from rental of exhibit space for any meeting become a substantial financial contribution for the host organization, it remains important that a continuing dialogue is kept between exhibitor representatives and planning committees.

The exhibit area at trade shows should be an ancillary learning facility for all meeting delegates and afford a (win-win) equitable environment for both attendees and commercial exhibitors.

Exhibitor concerns concerning meeting deficiencies have been, until now, seldom voiced to incoming planning committees and some issues are annually replicated. The ATA represents most of the companies which regularly attend all such meetings, and, therefore, speaks for all exhibitors in terms of trade show equity. Listed below are concerns which the ATA has with local and district lab animal science meetings with trade shows, for which we offer suggestions.

While all of our concerns are certainly not present at all meetings, the list offers items of current concern and what we feel are good resolutions for an equitable association between meeting host organizations and exhibitors. There are a myriad of protocols and procedures already in place at all such meetings, which have been addressed and implemented. The list shows just those which need some additional focus at this time.

Concerns and solutions

1. **Overlapping of calendar dates for meetings.**

See attachment "A". For a great many years, the associations and districts holding annual meetings spaced out their meetings in such a manner that each was non-conflicting. As a result, commercial vendors had some calendar space between meetings for doing their normal business. We ask that planning committees consider and use the calendar time periods shown.

2. **The declining attendance at all such meetings.**

Expense cut-backs have affected all businesses and institutions. It is a fact that a great many persons who used to attend both the national and their local meetings, can now only afford one. Attendance suffers and the equity is lost in favor of the meeting and not the exhibitors. Special attention should be, therefore, made to exhibit space cost and perhaps using table-top space instead of expensive booths, to keep exhibit costs reasonable according to realistic attendance projections.

Smaller Branches may want to consider joining forces with others, to promote attendance for more meaningful meetings, as is being tried in the northeast this year. Some Districts already do this.

3. **Eliminate specific exhibitor-sponsored functions**

If additional funding, other than registration fees and exhibitor fees are required to produce a satisfactory meeting environment, it is better to increase those fees accordingly, rather than keep requesting extra funding from exhibitors. Thought perhaps should be given to obtaining donations from the companies in the host area who employ animals for research.

The reasoning for this argument is that all exhibitors should equally participate and equally share in any recognition of financial and technical support, i.e. exhibiting and participating in the program. For all delegates and commercial businesses, reconciliation of cost versus value is becoming a major issue in their sales and accounting departments.

4. **A standard or at least recognition of the need for some non-compete hours at such meetings, including the scheduling of breaks in the program.**

Where implemented, the value of planners leaving some time in each day for delegates to visit the exhibits, in addition to short coffee breaks, has proven to be very equitable and appreciated by all.

5. **Appropriate name badges**

The number of different existing name badge sizes and designs throughout our industry are as numerous as snowflakes. Name badges are very important and useful tools, but only when easily recognized and read, and not just made for security-at-the-door recognition. We suggest 3" X 4" with large text.

6. **The lack of planning consistency, from an exhibitor's point of view, from one year to the next for most meetings.**

The ATA will be glad to appoint an ATA member to any interested planning committee each year. The value of such an appointment is that the person will be versed in official ATA (exhibitor) needs, providing continuity and historical outlook strengths, as well as assisting site selection for adequate space and drayage options and capabilities.

7. Using a "trade show" concept, where vendors can give presentations and be as commercial as they like.

"Trade shows" are becoming more common. They are usually held prior to the meeting. At these shows, delegates can listen to presentations on new concepts, processes and products that they may be interested in. Speakers can make their presentations in the most favorable light, instead of having to be restricted to a "generic" level. Exhibitors are, after all paying for the privilege.

In summation

The ATA offers these suggestions as a way to strengthen and provide a positive experience for both the attendees and exhibitors now and in the future. We truly appreciate your planning committees' time and consideration on these issues. It is the ATA's sole intent to help and not dictate how future meetings can be successfully planned in order to provide maximum benefit to attendees and exhibitors alike.

EXHIBIT "A"

MEETING CALENDAR SUGGESTIONS

Preamble

Taking a look back in our history, the tabulation below shows approximately where we once were in terms of meetings and space between meetings. The historical calendar slots worked very well. Today, we experience overlaps in most months and prefer to see spacing as listed, as there are other events, such as Tradelines and institution-sponsored shows which many commercial companies want to attend as well, during any year. Also listed are suggestions for exhibit hall arrangement.

<u>Show</u>	<u>Calendar slot</u>	<u>suggested exhibit space</u>
LAMA	Feb/March	none (i/c for calendar reasons)
DISTRICT 4	early April	table top
MIDWEST	mid-April	table top
QUAD *	late April	table top
DISTRICT 5	early May	table top
TEXAS/LOUISIANA	mid-May	table top
DISTRICT 8	late May	table top
TRI-BRANCH	early June	booths
CALAS	late June	booths, table tops
CHICAGO/WISCONSIN	early September	table top
NCAB	late September	booths

* hoping that the first meeting in 2002 works to everyone's satisfaction