

WORKSHOP A1

GUIDEBOOKS

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After a short preliminary discussion the subject was divided into the following four basic areas for discussion:

- (1) Objectives of Guidebooks
- (2) Preparation and Content
- (3) Production
- (4) Sales

Objectives of Guide Books

The first topic was summarised as follows:

- (1) To act as a guide to the relevant museum's exhibits
- (2) To act as a memento or souvenir of the person's visit to the museum
- (3) As a means of raising funds for the museum

As a secondary objective it was felt that the Guide Book should act as promotional material to entice visitors to the museum.

Preparation and Content

This topic revealed many lines of thought influenced by the various situations of participating museums. The text should be concise and technically correct. At the same time it should not editorialise on the politics of the demise of the system that the cars came from, but describe the street cars in their element.

At this point of the discussion the possibility of two tiers of publication were raised - a cheaper edition for children and a more expensive type of book for adults. After discussion it was felt that the point would have to be decided by each museum on its merits but that a cheap type of publication could be useful.

It was felt that in the early development of a museum to describe the exhibits and objectives of the museum was best. As the museum progresses and reprints are done, information of the development of the museum be included, remembering that the book must be aimed at the general public, not just the "fans".

The updating of text and additional exhibits can be done by adding pages to the original layout either inside the covers or as additional centre-pages.

Photos: Photos should be clear and sharp; for best reproduction try to use photos of the exhibits in action and not the standard builders photo, remember trams and people go together.

Covers: It was generally agreed that although not necessary a colour cover was desirable from a sales standpoint, if designed correctly the block(s) could be used for postcards as well. The cover photo preferably of an exhibit that people can associate with the museum's home system.

Production

Decide on a page size both easy to handle as a book and compatible with the printer for production.

It was agreed that offset printing achieved the best quality and price structure. Paper quality is important to the finished product, slick or enamelled paper gives the best reproduction. Paper opacity is also important to prevent "bleed through".

Sales

It was generally agreed that most sales of guide books occur as people are leaving the museum, this probably is because most people call at the gift shop after inspecting (or riding) the exhibits. Outside sales tend to be limited to bookshops aimed at the "fan".

It was felt that as a guide book its price must be reasonable to attract sales.

A point to be watched was the trend with subsequent printings to increase quality and therefore cost with a consequent sales drop off as the price rises.