

Exhibit

Description

The OST HQ exhibit is an 8 foot by 10 foot structure to which laminated graphics are adhered using Velcro. The graphics are designed to give an overview of the entire OST program (EMSP and Focus Areas). The graphics have been designed so they can be used for multiple conferences, but they can be modified for a specific conference if required. At appropriate venues, arrangements can be made to include with the exhibit a demonstration of the OST Web site and the Technology Management System.

Intended Use

The OST HQ exhibit is sent to selected conferences that are primarily attended by two of OST's audiences (technology users and/or technology developers). Appendix D (Conference Opportunities) of the *OST HQ FY00 Communication Plan* shows the conferences in which OST plans to participate in during FY00.

To the extent possible, the HQ exhibit is coordinated with the EMSP and/or Focus Area exhibits so that they can be co-located at a large conference or so that materials from one part of the program can be distributed at the booth of another if not all parts are represented at a given conference. Plans by HQ, EMSP, and/or the Focus Areas to participate in an upcoming conference should be shared on the monthly Communication Working Group conference calls.

It is recommended that federal employees with technical knowledge of the program staff the OST HQ exhibit.

Production

The OST HQ exhibit is designed, printed, laminated, and coordinated at HQ. EMSP or Focus Areas may be consulted to review draft designs.

Publications/Handouts

The *Initiatives* newsletter and OST's overview brochure are used as handouts with the OST HQ exhibit. *Initiatives* contains a card people can send in to be added to the mailing list. The OST brochure offers contact names for EMSP and the Focus Areas. The brochure also lists the OST web site. Rather than taking a large stack of other publications, sample copies are put on display. The person staffing the exhibit explains how conference participants can view the documents on the Internet or has visitors indicate on a sign-up sheet the documents they'd like to receive by mail. OST publications that are used as handouts or sample copies at a conference are indicated in Appendix D (Conference Opportunities) in the *OST HQ FY00 Communication Plan*. In FY00, OST HQ is introducing Post-it notes that have the OST Web site on them which

will be used as free handouts to increase traffic to the exhibit. Don't forgot to include shipping labels for returning undistributed publications and handouts.

Suggestions for EMSP/Focus Area exhibits

The following suggestions are for EMSP and Focus Areas that choose to support an exhibit. They are based on OST HQ's experience.

Targeting Conferences

It is important to be selective in the conferences to which the exhibit is sent because supporting an exhibit can have a lot of hidden expenses. Beyond buying a structure and designing graphics, other costs include travel and time to staff a booth, shipping the booth and handouts to and from the conference, and registration and rental fees. However, an exhibit used at an appropriately targeted conference can help a program effectively reach members of the targeted audience in an interactive setting.

Attracting Traffic

In order to attract visitors into a booth, develop exhibit graphics that have little text and large pictures. (Handouts or the person staffing the booth can provide details about the program.) Inexpensive give-aways also attract traffic and have been ruled allowable by General Counsel at Headquarters, provided that the cost is reasonable "in nature and amount [and] it does not exceed that which would be incurred by a prudent person in the conduct of competitive business." Also, keep in mind that booths that are staffed by a technically knowledgeable person attract more traffic and result in more meaningful interaction than those that aren't.

Publications/Handouts

It is recommended that small publications or handouts be sent to conferences along with the exhibit. People at conferences generally do not pick up large publications or handouts at conferences. They prefer small documents that can help lead them to more information after they get home. Don't forget to include shipping labels for returning undistributed publications and handouts.

Exhibitor Registration

Carefully read the exhibitor information provided by the conference organizers. Exhibitor information can be complicated and time consuming to read and understand all the details. The information varies from one conference to another. Don't hesitate to call the conference coordinators if the information seems unclear or fails to answer specific questions. Follow the instructions provided by the conference organizer to complete the necessary forms. In most cases, only rental of space on the exhibit floor and exhibitor fees are included in the initial payment. Additional exhibitor costs will likely include:

- Equipment rental to outfit the booth (table, chairs, carpet, computers, video replay)

- Material handling fees (union rules usually require exhibit hall staff to move boxes, exhibit cases, etc. between the loading dock and the exhibit space)
- Registration fees to attend conference sessions (exhibitors usually have access to the exhibit hall only)

Different vendors may provide the items above. The conference host may handle space rental and conference fees. A company that specializes in exhibit hall services may provide the other services.

As part of the registration process, a description of the booth is often necessary and will be included in the conference brochure. The following description has been used for past OST HQ exhibits: “The Office of Science and Technology manages and directs targeted basic research and focused, solution-oriented technology development programs to support the Department of Energy's Office of Environmental Management. Science and Technology programs involve research, development, demonstration, testing, and evaluation activities designed to produce innovative technologies and technology systems.”

Shipping Exhibit Materials

It is recommended that a freight carrier, such as Northstar Express, be used for shipping exhibit materials to a conference. Northstar can be reached at 1-(800) 787-1800. Check the yellow pages for other freight carriers. Freight rates are usually calculated based on the total weight of the shipment (regardless of the number of pieces being shipped), the number of days allowed for shipping, and the number of zones being crossed. Next-day service is available, but costly. Two-day and five-day deferred options are available and less expensive. Don't forget to include weight of the box of publications and handouts.

Ask the freight carrier for help with completing the bill of lading (shipping documents) for shipping the exhibit to and back from the conference. It is recommended that you give the freight carrier at least 48 business hours notice for a pick-up date and location. When arranging for pick-up to get the exhibit materials to the conference location, also arrange for pick-up at the conference site for returning the exhibit materials. Be sure to include return shipping labels. Pick-up is usually between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. unless otherwise specified. Extra charges are often applied for requesting a specific pick-up time. In addition, extra charges are usually applied for having the materials picked up inside rather than waiting outside. To avoid surprises, have the freight carrier send a list of their accessorial charges.

Exhibitor Assistance

If the person coordinating the exhibit and staffing the exhibit are different, the two need to work together to ensure they both understand the arrangements that have been made. The coordinator should provide the exhibit staffer with copies of registration forms, bills of lading, and other materials so he or she has proof of the arrangements that were made in case things are not done correctly.

The coordinator should also provide the exhibit staffer with instructions for set-up, staffing, break-down, and return shipment of the exhibit. Since requirements for specific conferences can vary widely, the instructions will likely need to be modified for different conferences. The coordinator should give a copy of the instructions to the exhibitor staffer in advance and also put a copy in an exhibit case to be shipped to the conference site.