

Chapter Five: Building an Expo's Legacy through Architecture, Pavilion Design, and the Guest Experience

This much-needed business guide is intended to assist those who are involved in, or considering becoming involved in, a modern world expo whether as host, organizer, promoter, participant, sponsor, concessionaire, designer or contractor. THE EXPO BOOK provides useful information, guidelines, illustrations, facts and figures and relevant examples, gained through the authors' decades of experience advising the organizers of world expositions, Olympic Games and other mega-events. It is appearing online in six installments at www.TheExpoBook.com and print excerpts in IPM Magazine.

Optimizing Pavilion Crowd Flow

This section provides information concerning the internal design of individual pavilions and their capacity to accommodate visitors. The importance of these two factors, and their impact on the overall operations of an individual pavilion as well as the entire Expo site, should not be underestimated. When multiplied by many pavilions, these factors determine the overall capacity of an Expo to entertain, educate and otherwise engage visitors. If capacities are not matched to attendance, there can be serious negative impact on the visitor experience – the most obvious being unacceptably long waiting times at pavilions.

By way of comparison, the ride and show designers for theme parks have very specific visitor capacity goals in mind when designing a new attraction. The overall guest experience during a day's visit to a theme park is, in large part, measured by the number of rides/shows/attractions those visitors attend on an hourly basis. Overlong waiting lines at a theme park

can result in the park's struggling to capture repeat visitation.

Legacy factor

An expo doesn't have the luxury of thinking about 'next season,' so the negative effects – disappointed visitors, bad word of mouth, bad press – can be much more devastating, having a downward effect on visitor numbers and therefore income, and creating a perception that becomes a legacy.

The organizers of an expo are unlikely to be able to exert the same degree of control over the design of the individual pavilions as would the operator of a theme park. However, they can apply certain principles to the theme pavilions (designed and operated by the organizers) and work with exhibitors to encourage functional visitor flows. The net results can enhance the visitor experience.

The results of ignoring these fundamentals were readily visible at several pavilions of Lisbon Expo 98. The Virtual Reality Pavilion is one example. It presented a series of film/ride simulator experiences. Each lasted less than 10 minutes, including the transition time from one segment to the other. This was a very popular pavilion, drawing significant crowds from day one of the expo and was one of the few on-site attractions that required paid admission. Its hourly capacity was far too low for the amount of interest generated. On days of heaviest attendance, guests waited as long as six hours to gain entry, having paid for the privilege. The ripple effect of a situation like this is that visitors who wait in long lines for many hours are kept from visiting other pavilions and unable to otherwise enjoy their day at the expo. Moreover, many visitors being tourists, they may be unable to make up the time lost before departing the region.

Finally, a few weeks before Expo 98 closed, in response to these queuing problems, the operators of the Virtual Reality Pavilion implemented a program of timed tickets. They provided a window of time for purchasers to enter the pavilion and freed them up in the meantime to visit other attractions. This regulation of the pavilion's "pulsed flow" of visitors and has been implemented at numerous theme parks, museums and other visitor attractions around the world, was in this case an afterthought. But had there been more rigorous contingency operations planning for the pavilion, the situation could likely have been anticipated and accommodated from the start. (Timed ticketing is not necessarily a complete solution, however. Read on...)

Another example from Expo 98, the German Pavilion, provides a lesson on the problems associated with constrained visitor flow – a

classic bottleneck situation in which large crowds of people were obliged to be pulsed through a very small space in order to get to the main show. Visitors watched a brief, pre-show video while waiting to enter a simulated elevator that was designed to convey the impression of descending to an underwater research station. The capacity of the "elevator" was approximately ten persons. Additional capacity issues were created by one of the theaters, which presented a film about then-upcoming Hanover Expo 2000. Its capacity was approximately 20.

Following are some conceptual notes on the topic of visitor flow which provide a framework for thinking about this critical dimension of pavilion design. Two concepts are presented and discussed: pulsed flow and free flow. (A pavilion can, if appropriate, apply pulsed flow to some areas, and free flow to others.)

Photo by Urso Chappell

Expo 2008's Aragon Pavilion



Pulsed Flow v. Free Flow

Pulsing visitors through a pavilion involves admitting a specific number of persons to enter at a given time for the express purpose of viewing an exhibit or, in many cases, watching a media presentation. The period of visitation has specific starting and ending times. A pre-determined, maximum number of visitors enters the pavilion. The members of the group take their places to view a particular event and, upon its conclusion, exit the building or move on to another space within the pavilion. Immediately thereafter, the process begins anew with the next group. In many installations, the group waiting to be admitted is accommodated in a pre-show or preview area that provides an introduction to the upcoming material. The preshow helps to organize the lines of persons waiting and lead them to the next segment of the show in an orderly fashion.

In terms of delivering the exhibitor's message, the principal advantage of pulsed flow is that it permits a high degree of control in terms of what the visitor is exposed to and in what sequence. And from the viewpoint of crowd management, pulsed flow maximizes the number of people who can be accommodated in a given space, within reasonable limits.

On the negative side, because there is a pre-determined maximum number of persons that can be accommodated during a given time period, the total design capacity of the facility is fixed, regardless of the number of persons waiting in line. For example, if the pavilion presents a 15-minute movie and the capacity of the theater in the facility is a maximum of 100 persons seated, the total capacity of the pavilion is limited to 300 visitors:

Creating a Message That Becomes a Legacy

Note: The following section is Part II of "A Design Primer for Expo Pavilion Sponsors," by BRC Imagination Arts president Bob Rogers. Part I was published in Chapter Four.

How to Select a Great Producer for a World Expo Pavilion

By Bob Rogers and the professional staff of BRC Imagination Arts, Burbank, The Netherlands, United Kingdom

The most critical decision in the creation of a modern World Expo Pavilion is the selection of the Attraction Producer, sometimes known as the Show Producer.

More than the architect, the project manager, the logo designer or even the site selection, the Attraction Producer provides the key element that makes the public want to visit your World Expo Pavilion. It is the Attraction Producer's work that determines if the pavilion is a hit with a long line of happy guests and a back room full of happy board

members or a dud with neither. It is the Attraction Producer's work that allows the owner's message to connect permanently with the audience or become lost.

The themed entertainment world is full of Attraction Production companies that claim to "do it all for you," but few can. They range from the best to the worst. But how do you evaluate them and tell them apart?

Here are 10 simple tests that will help you find a winner who can create a winning project for you:

1. Study the Business. The more you know about theatre art and commerce of World Expos, the better. Start with the assumption that you know nothing. Ask lots of "stupid" questions. Listen. When you read the trade magazines, learn to read past the hype. (Industry news is mostly hype.) Clip and save the articles and ads you find especially helpful.

2. Check for The Right Experience. Does your producer candidate have extensive experience creating successful World Expo Pavilions? You can't afford to pay for the mistakes a beginner often makes. Not so valuable: Experience in other fields, such as trade shows, traditional live theater,



Photo by Urso Chappell

Expo 2008's Bridge Pavilion

television, theatrical films or electronic games. Neutral: Previous experience treating your subject. It is easier to teach your subject to a good World Expo Pavilion producer than to get good work out of a mediocre producer who already knows your subject. Semi-valuable: Theme Park shows, provided they have an informational element and aren't empty-headed pure entertainment. (There aren't many like that.) The best: A proven track record for creating World Expo Pavilions, preferably in several different cultures, languages and continents. World Expo Pavilions come in three types: Corporate Pavilions, Country or Regional Pavilions, and Theme Pavilions. Look for experience with your type of pavilion.

3. Check Creative Credentials. Read the producer's reviews. Count their awards. Ask for videotapes showing their past projects. How many world fair pavilions have they done? What kind? Do you like what you see?

4. Look at their Client List. What kind of clients does the producer serve? Have you heard of these companies? Where are they located? Are there repeat clients? If there is any pattern that raises a concern, check it out.

5. Focus on Finished Projects. If a Producer's portfolio contains large numbers of renderings or images of models, ask to see pictures or video of the finished projects. Over-reliance on renderings and models in a portfolio may hint that the producer's designs are impractical and therefore don't get built, or that the producer was removed (why?) from the project before completion or that (very common) the finished project didn't look nearly as good as the artist's rendering.

6. Seek the Attraction Producer. Seek the company that thought up the idea and directed the other trades to turn the dream into a reality. Along the way, you may meet companies who might be excellent at providing parts of shows. You want to find the one who can help with the whole picture. You need the one who can create, assemble, coordinate, and integrate all the elements into a single, powerful force, and then warranty and service it throughout the Expo.

Imagine buying a computer one component at a time, sold to you by different people who each only understand their own component. Will this work when you get it home and try to plug it all together? A themed attraction is like this but vastly more complex: The idea may look great on paper

Loading Time	5 Minutes
Show Duration	15
Unloading Time	5
Total	20 Minutes per cycle or "pulse" = 3 cycles per hour

If the pavilion is open from 10:00 AM until 10:00 PM each day (12 hours), the maximum number of visitors per day will be 3600. If, during a given day, the exposition receives a total of 100,000 visitors, its maximum exposure - measured as a percentage of the maximum theoretical total number of persons who can visit the pavilion - is only 3.6% during that day. If the presentation in the pavilion is highly attractive, the pulse flow concept exacerbates the problem, since visitors will line up waiting to gain entrance: the longer the line, the more time required to gain entrance, although the waiting time will vary with respect to the total number of people at the expo during

the day and the number and capacity of other attractions that are available at the expo.

As per the foregoing calculation, with a daily attendance of 100,000 persons, 96.4% of the visitors will not be able to gain access to the pavilion. Therefore, the pulse flow concept may be a very inefficient method of accommodating large numbers of visitors.

The timed ticket solution can effectively eliminate lines, but it doesn't alter the actual capacity of the facility and can still lead to a negative effect that colors visitors' perception of the entire expo. Here's how it works: If the presentation is highly attractive and a great number of visitors are on-site, the limited number of tickets available for that day are distributed quickly, likely within the first hour after opening. Many visitors will subsequently reach the pavilion to find that the entire day's allotment of tickets is already gone.

but can it really be done? Will the software work with the hardware? Will the various components of hardware work with each other? Will the hardware work in the facility? Can it be maintained? When it is finished, will the message have become lost? An experienced World Expo Pavilion producer will be thinking about, and solving all of these problems throughout the process.

Beware of designers who only design, but who don't produce. The pure designer presents two risks: 1) If they don't produce, they may have only a theoretical knowledge of costs. The only cost estimate worth listening to is a Guaranteed Fixed Cost quote from an experienced show producer who is ready to sign it and deliver it. 2) The pure designer may also have only a theoretical knowledge of technical feasibility or serviceability, which can lead to cost overruns and embarrassing technical failures. Protect yourself by hiring (from the very start of concept development) a World Expo Pavilion producer/storyteller who knows the costs and the technology.

7. Look for a Storyteller. Your Attraction Producer is your storyteller. You need someone who will be able to help you articulate your story and protect it during the production process, preventing the

distractions and pressures of the process from derailing your story.

Beware of "scene makers." These are often the companies that create special effects for feature films or create effects equipment for special venues. Sometimes they are the art directors who create or build the scenery. These folks are excellent at creating scenes, provided there is a Steven Spielberg or George Lucas to create and direct your story, but by themselves, the scenery makers aren't always good at creating and guiding your main story. Your Attraction Producer must be a storyteller, not just a scene maker.

8. Validate Credits. Stolen, false or misleading credits are legendary in this business. Unlike the theatrical film business, World Expo Pavilions, museums, aquariums, theme parks, themed entertainment and visitor centers have no agreed on standards regarding credits. It is not at all uncommon to find several companies all implying they did the same project. Often this is because the engineering firm, the machine shop, the carpentry shop, the concept designer, the lighting designer, the architect, and others, each had a small role to play, and so now each implies the whole show was "theirs," hoping you will assume they did it all. Buyer beware.

The more popular the pavilion, the greater is the probable disappointment to those who cannot gain entry. This degree of disappointment can affect the overall satisfaction level of visitors regarding the expo.

Pavilions that permit visitors to enter and move about the exhibit spaces on their own, for as long or short a time as they wish, are "free flow" facilities. The visitor can, according to his interests and the time available, customize his or her experience, passing quickly through areas of little or no interest, and examining more carefully that material which is particularly attractive.

For the most part, free flow pavilions do not generate long lines of people waiting to enter, because they accommodate greater numbers. That's because in a free flow pavilion, the amount of space devoted to exhibitry and presentations is lower relative to the amount of space allowed

for pedestrian circulation than it is in a pulsed space. Subsequently, in general the free flow concept reduces the potential for disappointment at not being able to enter a pavilion and heightens the overall satisfaction level of the visitor.

One drawback of free flow is that visitors will mass around the most popular exhibits, potentially blocking the circulation corridors and impeding the freedom of all to enjoy the display. It is important to anticipate this and provide adequate space for it. But, as the popularity of a given exhibit may not be known until the expo has been open several days, it is recommended that the spaces be organized in such a manner as to permit some adjustment of circulation areas to accommodate unexpected crowds.

In a free flow pavilion, the exhibition space can occupy 50% of the total pavilion, with the remaining

Does your candidate claim they have "former Disney designers"? Virtually every North American company in this business has "former Disney designers" working for them. The implication is that these designers have the secret Disney formula. The truth is that Disney employs thousands of people doing all levels of creative and technical design work from master planning theme parks to designing air conditioning systems or restaurant menu graphics. The fact that someone once worked for Disney could mean everything or nothing. Check them out. Ask for the name of a contact still at Disney who can confirm their experience. If in doubt, call Walt Disney Imagineering direct at (818) 544-6500 and ask.

9. Don't confuse hardware and software. The producers of attraction hardware are justifiably proud of their excellent products and technical innovations, and they often position themselves as one stop creative and technical sources but their vision of your story will be limited to what their hardware can do. "The man who owns a hammer sees every problem as a nail." Unfortunately their hardware will not, by itself, create your story any more than a projector can cause a movie. As a general rule, hardware companies all claim to be great software producers; as a general rule, they

never are. Your confidence in the entertainment value of their equipment is directly related to who will be creating and guiding the story, the setting and the software: the Attraction Producer.

10. Call Former Clients. The best Attraction Producers will eagerly give you lists of past projects and the phone numbers of their clients because they know the recommendations will be good.

Measuring the Success of an Expo Pavilion

"If you don't know where you are going, you are likely to end up somewhere else."

- Robert Mager

"We are lost, but we are making good time."

- Yogi Berra

The first step in designing an Expo pavilion is to identify your criteria of success. If you are successful, how will you know it? How will you measure it? Knowing the answer to this question before designing your pavilion is like knowing what's on the final exam before taking the class. It tells you what is important and what's not. It sets all your priorities. It helps you select and create the right tools for your task. The alternative is to risk studying comparative literature all semester

50% dedicated to pedestrian circulation. In a pulse flow pavilion, with a correspondingly lower instantaneous (i.e. during a single presentation) visitor occupancy, the exhibit or show space could be 75% of the total, with the remaining 25% for visitor seating, standing, or circulation.

**Expo Buildings:
The Spectacle, the Practical and the Legacy**

Over the years, a wide variety of buildings and structures – from inflatables to geodesic domes – have been erected at expos. In fact, one of the great attractions of an expo, whose images survive the ephemeral nature of the event, is the spectacle of a wide ranging variety buildings and structures. Those that survive after the expo go on to other uses – either in place on site or reassembled elsewhere – and form part of the physical legacy. Those that are demolished become part of the historical legacy.

At the old “Universal” Category I events, for which individual countries were required to develop their own pavilions, participants expended considerable money and energy on devising unique, eye-catching buildings, some of which become enduring icons, even if the original was later torn down. Some notable and memorable buildings from past expos do survive to this day – such as Moshe Safdie’s Habitat, a housing complex built for Montreal Expo 67. There are other large, complex – and expensive – structures that were not retained and remain only in historical photographs and picture books.

Legacy factor

Expo architecture tends toward innovative, forward-looking and unique expressions of the individual cultures, societies and corporate organizations the buildings represent. Architect Zaha Hadid’s Bridge Pavilion for Zaragoza Expo 08 is already a

celebrated structure. This enclosed bridge spans the River Ebro and, designed as the showpiece of the event, appears to be living up to expectations. As expos in general are now taking place on a smaller scale overall, exhibitors will invest less in costly architecture, but the desire and effort – to create something innovative, arresting and iconic for the world audience – remain. The nature of expo buildings is changing, but it will continue to be something interesting, instructive and sometimes influential.

At smaller scale expos, the basic building structures are generally erected by the organizers. Exhibitors occupy modular spaces within these, applying their design teams to differentiate and fit out the internal and, to some extent, the external areas. While the objective of creating an attractive, individualistic statement for each exhibitor is the same, the resulting street and building scene is much more uniform in character than the grandiose

architectural mix seen at larger scale events. (Some designers welcome this, feeling that often, too much of a pavilion’s budget is spent on architecture and not enough on the exhibits inside.)

At Vancouver Expo 86, the organizers employed buildings which were non-standard (i.e. purpose-built with a unique structure and assembly). The cost of these temporary buildings exceeded that of standard, modular buildings and there were some waterproofing problems that gave rise to some minor damage to exhibits.

At World Expo 88 in Brisbane, Australia, the organizers, having observed the experience of Vancouver, utilized a building system which had several advantages over purpose-built structures. The participants could select one or more modules, and standardized system structural and wall/ceiling panels permitted quick

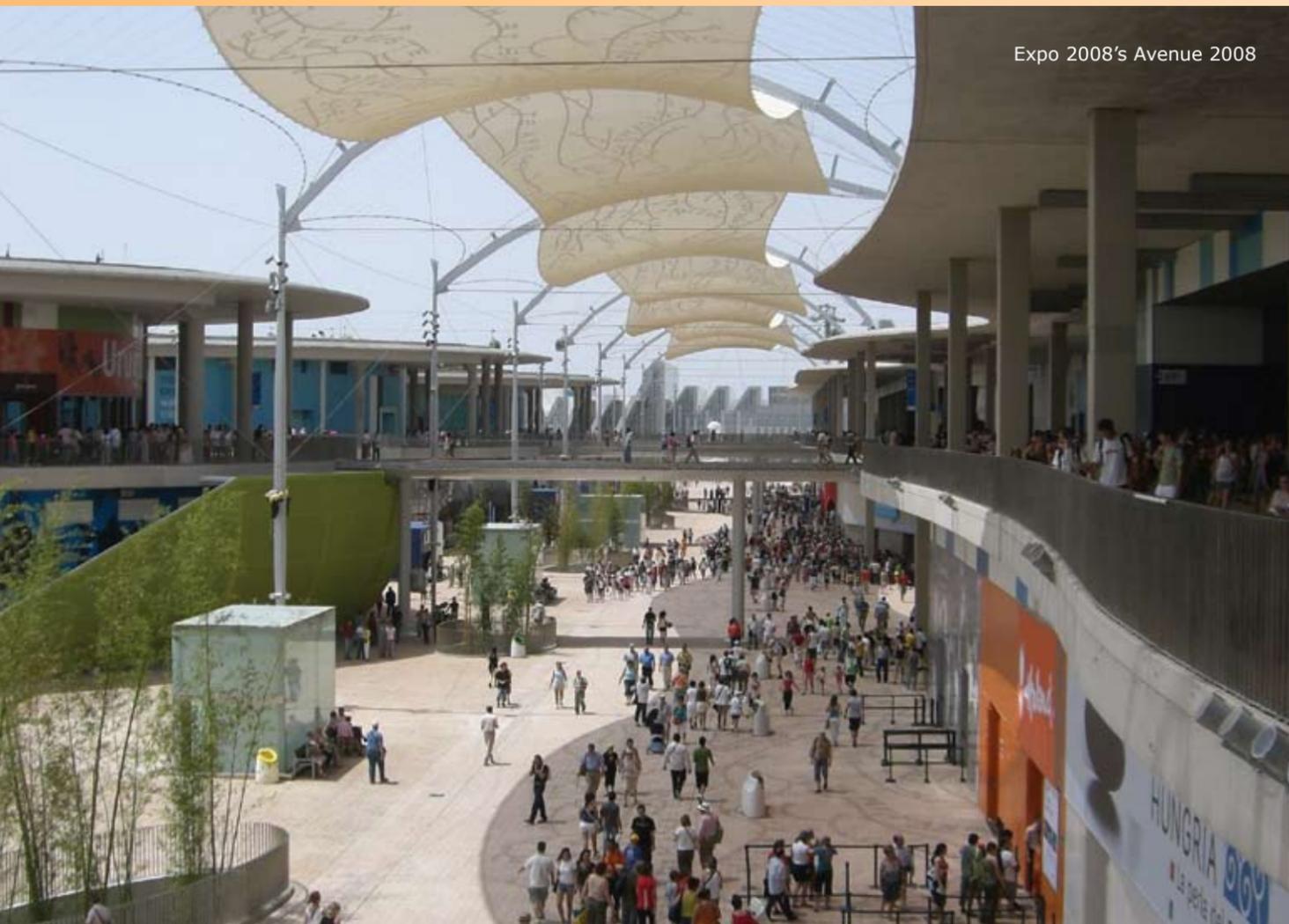


Photo by Urso Chappell

only to discover that all the questions on the final were about particle physics.

So how will you measure the success of your pavilion?

Each pavilion is unique so you will want to develop criteria specifically suited to yours. But to get you started, let’s take a look at some of the criteria others have used to measure their pavilion’s success.

Over the years, we have seen many different criteria applied to measuring the success of an Expo pavilion. Some are better than others. The worst thing you can do is have no criteria, or an extremely vague criteria or try to use all of these criteria. Poorly defined objectives, non-existent objectives, or too many objectives can lead to a directionless pavilion, a pavilion with no objective and no unity of purpose. Such a pavilion is usually a bore for the audience and a complete waste of money for the sponsor.

We don’t recommend all of the following metrics, but here is a preliminary list of metrics that have been used. Select and edit as you like.

► **Total Attendance** – How many people either came through the pavilion or experienced some part of it onsite at the Expo?

► **Percentage of Gate** – A frequently quoted percentage is “10% of gate.” This means 10% of the total attendance at an Expo. But this must be used with caution. If the total attendance of the Expo is 20,000,000 “clicks” at the front gate, a total pavilion attendance of 2,000,000 is a difficult, but often achievable goal. However, if total attendance rises, maintaining a 10% share of gate becomes harder and harder and more and more expensive. A good rule of thumb is 10% share of gate up to 2,000,000 total pavilion attendance and, after that, think carefully about how many you really need. Achieving a higher capacity is expensive and may not be your true priority.

► **Breakdown of Attendance** – We could want proof that your guests included some specific sub-group(s) of the audience, such as a percentage from within the host country, what other countries, or specific regions of the host country, etc.? A world Expo is always promoted as being a showcase to the world but, in fact, the attendance at most Expos is 95% local. That means 95% of all admissions came from within 100 miles of the Expo. Having said that, we would acknowledge that the remaining 5% international visitors may include some of your most important influencers and business contacts.

on-site assembly. Resale helped offset cost: after the expo, many of the buildings were sold for salvage and re-erected elsewhere around Brisbane to accommodate, among other uses, an auto dealership and an industrial park. Planning for this kind of physical legacy becomes more and more important as resources become scarce, waste is criticized and long-term environmental effects are also perceived as legacy. Expos increasingly adopt environmental themes and seek to set an example of sustainability and responsible development.

At Lisbon Expo 98, a "Category II" event, organizers provided two main types of space for participants. The first was within the buildings that now comprise permanent new trade and convention halls for the Lisbon Trade Fair. Other space was provided in temporary structures which were planned for relocation to nearby municipalities for sports halls.

Thus, the experience to the conundrum faced by organizers at expos as how to provide space for exhibitors has been answered in many ways, some more successful than others.

Following are brief descriptions and illustrations of some of the most common types of buildings found at world expos:

► **Soft Frame Fabric Structure:** This is basically a tent covered with fabric and supported with poles. Advantages include speed of erection and dismantling while disadvantages include the need for interior supports (which can interfere with utilization requirements), limitations on door and window applications, and, depending upon location, possible usage limitations during heavy rain/storm conditions. Typically, these types of structures are used for short periods of time during an expo, for a one-time purpose such as a reception, a special press conference, a temporary exhibit,

etc. The structure itself (i.e. internal supports and walls) is not typically used to support displays or other fixtures. Soft frames are the lowest cost of the temporary facilities and may be purchased outright, or leased/rented. Fabrics can be special ordered to incorporate logos, color and the like to create a more custom appearance.

► **Rigid Frame Fabric Structure:** This is a steel or metal frame, clear span, fabric covered structure. Advantages include: interior space is open and does not require intermediate, interior supports; windows and doorways may be placed in the walls, and it can be air-conditioned or heated. These structures can be erected in a matter of days and the practical limit of their use is up to more than a year, although in some circumstances they have been maintained for several years, in non-expo applications, such as for storage facilities. Some limited amount of equipment and fixtures can be supported by

the structure, such as light fixtures, audio speakers and the like. These structures are also economical when compared to the cost of permanent buildings and maybe be purchased or leased.

► **Lightweight Tensile Structure:** Among the most dramatic of the various types of structures which have been used in Expos are those involving the use of fabric which is stretched and secured in various shapes and forms. These types of structures, depending upon the life of the fabric, can be either temporary or permanent (i.e. up to 25 years) and permit shapes and enclosures that would not be feasible with standard building materials. The fabrics can be transparent, translucent, and be colored and/or decorated with graphics according to the specifics of the designer's requirements. Because these structures can achieve significant spans and be quickly erected, there is also some potential for cost savings over standard roofing and building approaches.

► **Outreach impressions** – When cultural groups from your province or country visit the Expo, either to perform or merely to see the Expo, they frequently use the pavilion visit as the triggering anchor for the tour. Once there, they may attend, speak at and/or perform at other functions. What is the number of total functions at which they performed, and what are the cumulative audiences at those functions? If an invitation to perform at the pavilion was what triggered their trip, you should be able to claim some credit for everything they did. Presumably a positive cultural impression of your country or province was achieved in each case.

► **Media Impressions** – What is the cumulative media circulation and/or audience impressions for all of the publicity and advertising? Although it is very old-school, a traditional way to measure this would be in total column inches of print media.

► **Materials Impact** – Quantify the take away materials and follow-up mailings that were used to reinforce the beneficial impressions made in the pavilion either with regular visitors, VIPs or officials.

► **Total Impressions** – In addition to all of the above, other people in the Expo region and throughout the world will have either read about

your pavilion or seen it on television, etc. In each case, this should have made a positive impression. How many?

► **VIP Count** – How many VIPs are exposed to the displays, messages and atmosphere of the pavilion, the VIP lounge, or both?

► **Meetings** – How many substantive meetings were conducted with how many VIPs?

► **Private VIP Hospitality Events** – As a subset of the above, how many meals or teas were conducted? (I have always theorized that if a major pavilion could magically get its VIP lounge finished well before opening, what a wonderful magnet that would be for events held prior to opening.)

► **Public Events** – What events took place at your pavilion? How many people attended?

► **Expo Functions** – How many major functions were held at the Expo, but outside of your pavilion, during the approximately 184 days of the Expo in which your pavilion had some presence?

► **Hot Ticket** – What percentage of all major official visits to the Expo included, or tried to include, your pavilion on their itinerary?

► **Superstar VIPs** – List by name the super VIPs who attended including royalty, heads of state, movie stars, CEOs of major international corporations, etc.

► **Budget** – Did the pavilion finish with a deficit or a surplus? If there was a surplus, how was it used? If a deficit, how was it covered? How did the above outcomes compare with other major international participants? With pavilions at other Expos?

► **Investment & Business Results** – Less than three months after it closed, the 1988 Queensland Pavilion reported that "already over A\$400,000,000 in additional investment inquiries has been identified as having had its genesis in the Queensland Pavilion. This does not include the A\$300,000,000 plus investment generated by the World Expo 1988 business features program which was also ensconced in the Pavilion." Along similar lines, you should seek to quantify in dollars the business value and the impact to the balance of trade attributable in whole or in part to your pavilion. Notice they said "investment inquiries identified," rather than investment confirmed and consummated.

► **Future Ambassadors** – Although often overlooked, your pavilion employees are a very

real resource for the future of your organization or your country. They are trained, tested and elevated by your pavilion. Each pavilion takes 60 to 100 of your best and brightest young people and gives them an intense six months experience on the frontlines of international cultural, political and entrepreneurial diplomacy. How can you quantify that?

► **Sponsors** – Number of sponsors who supported the pavilion.

► **Organizations** – Number of organizations who contributed to the pavilion.

► **Organizations Served** – Number and list of organizations and government offices who were helped or served by your pavilion. (If you wanted to pad this list, add the company names of all VIP guests.)

► **Merchandise Sold in the Shop** – A narrow way to think about retail is to classify it as crass commercialism. It is better to think of retail as your report card. As guests exit your pavilion, they vote with their dollars, telling you what moved them, what they personally identified with and what they want to know more about. If they came to identify more closely with your

► **Rigid Frame Metal Covered Structure:** This is essentially a metal building that is designed and engineered for permanent use but, in certain applications, is appropriate for temporary Expo requirements. The main advantage, over the fabric structures, is that the shelter provided is much more substantial and suitable for a range of uses. The time required to erect these structures is substantially greater than for the fabric ones and, depending upon the size, can take several weeks. As with any permanent structure, windows and doors can be incorporated with few limitations and the structural system (i.e. walls, columns, and beams) can support some displays, equipment and fixtures, etc. Assuming appropriate fire suppression equipment is available and building code requirements are observed, the buildings can accommodate food services (which may require gas or electrical cooking equipment). Virtually all suppliers of these types of structures operate

on a sale/lease basis and assume a permanent application. Therefore, if there were no legacy use for the structure after the Expo, then the organizers would need to demolish or otherwise dispose of the building. (photos of Brisbane, Lisbon food services buildings, etc.)

Building, Use and Occupancy Permits

The establishment of an effective and efficient permit system to address the public health and safety requirements of an expo has, historically, represented a major challenge for event organizers, participants and concessionaires as well as the host communities. A significant part of the problem is that an expo is a one-time event. Most communities do not have, on a continuing basis, the need to develop and maintain procedures and mechanisms to handle the number and type of permits and issues which are typically part of something of the scale and complexity of an expo.

Basically, Expos need a very fast and efficient method to have permits processed and issued. The typical permit process which most cities and governmental authorities have in place will be challenged to accommodate:

- The continuous changes that are taking place on the expo site which are generated by the participants needs and desires.
- The temporary nature of most of the structures and secondary utility systems.
- The number of building, use and occupancy permits. Experience at previous events has indicated that as many as 30 permits will need to be issued each day when construction reaches its peak.
- A great many inspections are required to verify that permit applicants are fulfilling the various building codes, etc.

In order to make the permit system function so that the expo can open on-time and 100% complete, the host city's Building Department and the expo site development department will need to form a committee consisting of approximately six members, three from each entity. The committee will need to reach agreement on the following general approaches to addressing the permit requirements for the expo:

- A modified building code, permit application and approval process will need to be developed and implemented for temporary buildings.

Going out of Business Successfully

This code, application and approval process will function apart from the city's existing systems and procedures; it will apply only to facilities at the expo. Upon the conclusion of the expo, the system is deactivated.

brand, country, or region, they might buy a hat or t-shirt. If they wanted to learn more, they might buy a book. The results of the shop should, therefore, be interpreted for their indications of changed personal connection.

► **Awards** – There is no official judgment of best pavilion by the IBE, but frequently there are multiple unofficial indications of popularity or excellence. (Usually there is a local equivalent of the "expanding strike zone" concept so it is very difficult for a non-local pavilion to win a top award ahead of the pavilions of the host country, host city or host province.) Examples of other awards, or third party endorsements, might include:

- Newspaper ratings or newspaper mentions as being among the top pavilions. (How many "Top Ten" lists?)
- Radio and television station interest.
- Frequency of mention on blogs.
- Number of requests for Easy Access.
- Thank you letters and letters of follow-up interest.

- Number of competing television, radio and other media outlets who either covered your pavilion in some way or requested materials
- **Length of Line** – During planning, every effort is made to provide for maximum capacity, and a long line is considered a negative. However, on opening day, a miraculous switch takes place in people's minds and suddenly a long line is a badge of achievement. Your pavilion will follow the same path. You will work like crazy to increase capacity and reduce your line, but later you will brag if you have a long line. What is the average wait? What is the maximum wait at the peak of the day, etc.? Whatever else you do, get a photo of a huge line in front of your pavilion. The photo should feature the long line, with the pavilion just barely visible in the distance, where the line seems to be headed. Believe me this, is the most important photo that you'll want later!
- **Ticket Scalpers or Line Standers** – In an entrepreneurial culture, someone will get the bright idea of scalping easy access itineraries or waiting in line on your behalf – for pay, of course. In that regard, how do you compare with the other pavilions? Who is the hotter ticket?
- **Audience Market Research** – The idea here is to interview guests before and after their pavilion

experience to quantify their change in knowledge or attitude toward your brand, region, country, or any of the message points in your pavilion.

- **Life After Expo** – Will your pavilion, the show or parts thereof have a life after Expo? What

secondary benefit spins off of those things?

Keep in mind that all of the above are abstract numerical measures. The highest objective of an Expo pavilion is personal transformation, which we will discuss another time.

Photo by Urso Chappell



Expo 2005 Closing Ceremony

► The committee will prepare a comprehensive package outlining the necessary temporary code provisions, the permits application process and the approval process; this package is then submitted to the appropriate city authorities for review and approval.

► Upon approval, the Committee assumes the authority to issue permits, enforce the temporary building codes and issue the use permits, etc. The Committee is then empowered to initiate activities, acquiring the necessary human and technical resources and facilities to carry out their duties.

The Expo Building Codes and Permit Authority will need to be located in an office on, or adjacent, to the expo site, in premises which are not directly attached to the expo organization's offices. These offices should be convenient to site development personnel, contractors, architects and others who play a significant role in the site development process.

This approach separates the permitting and approval process for the Expo from the on-going city process, thereby avoiding the potential problems associated with a dramatically increased workload and ensuring that the unique requirements of the expo can be addressed quickly and efficiently. This is not to say that the city has avoided or otherwise dodged responsibility

for protecting the health and welfare of its citizens, expo visitors and participants. Rather, an appropriate vehicle has been established wherein the temporary requirements of the expo can be addressed within the context of an expeditious, highly focused process. If an approach similar to the one outlined above is not pursued, then the expo organizers run a substantial risk in placing participants, exhibitors, concessionaires and others in a potentially confrontational situation with city authorities. By way of example, it has been reported that all of the building permits required at Seville Expo 92 were signed by the authorities the night before the expo opened. The lesson of this experience is that the "standard" permitting process suffered a complete breakdown in accommodating a major megaproject.

Inside the buildings: The Expo's human resources

The most important element of the production and operation of a world class exposition is the employee. An expo is comprised of literally millions of personal contacts over the period of organizing, operating and dismantling. These contacts are all made by human beings. The expo employee is the person who leaves a favorable or unfavorable impression on everyone he meets or does business with in the course of the event. He or she is literally on stage during the entire process. Therefore, the employee must receive proper orientation and training about the overall expo, in particular, what his or her role is in achieving a successful outcome.

An expo is basically a gigantic stage show that is presented to the public for three to six months. Months and years of preparation are necessary for the show to be successful. Everyone involved has a particular place on the stage: a routine that they must master and lines that they must deliver. Timing and professionalism are essential: doing the right thing, in the right place at the right time.

All new staff employed directly by the expo organizers should receive a complete orientation. This is especially true as the operations staff is assembled some months prior to the event. It is also important for the in-house expo team to receive

an orientation, as this is the initial point of entry into what will hopefully be a rewarding team effort over a number of months. The human resources department should conduct this program, with the following objectives:

orient the new employee to the expo environment

convey an understanding of the organization of the work force

identify the employee's role in task formation and execution

distribute the rules and regulations of employment

Like an elaborate theatrical production, an expo has thousands of behind-the-scenes support people who must work to keep the show that is an expo running for the public, in an exciting and vibrant manner. These are the equivalent of a theater's stagehands, lighting people, scenery riggers, ushers, ticket sellers, etc. Or compare it to an army: for each person on the front line, there are five behind providing support. Or to an iceberg - of which four-fifths of its mass are underwater and unseen, the equivalent of the large support staff behind the expo - vital, but rarely visible.

A copy of the site master plan should be given to each new employee so that they can become familiar with it. Regardless of their specific area of assigned work, each employee must be in a position to function as a representative or ambassador for the expo - and therefore all employees should have certain general information. This is good public relations at its best. While some staff positions begin as entirely internal to the expo organization, it is often the case that roles will shift as the organization transitions from planning and building mode to operations mode. Thus, all employees should be trained in how to maintain a professional appearance and demeanor, to be friendly and helpful, and what to do in an emergency.

There should also be an employee handbook that outlines responsibilities, rules and regulations, payroll procedures, equipment maintenance, site admissions credentials and so forth.

About the Contributors

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Bob Rogers is the Chairman of BRC Imagination Arts-planners, creators and producers of presentations for world expositions, museums, corporate image centers and theme parks around the globe. BRC's trademarked Scholarship and Showmanship approach has been responsible for ten highly successful world expo pavilions and consulting on a half dozen others.

Since it was founded in 1981, BRC has been honored with over 250 international awards for creative excellence, including two Academy Award Nominations and twelve THEA Awards for Outstanding Achievement in themed entertainment, including the 2007 Thea Award for Lifetime Achievement. Visit BRC Imagination Arts at www.BRCweb.com.

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Wonder Circus Electric Power Pavilion, Expo 2005



Photo by Urso Chappell

THE EXPO BOOK
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by Gordon Linden and Paul Creighton

Chapter One: World Expositions Today

Chapter Two: Putting It Together: Feasibility, Legacy Planning & BIE Approval

Chapter Three: Getting to Opening Day: Operations & Organization

Chapter Four: Design: The Guest Experience (Special contributor: Bob Rogers)

Chapter Five: Design: Exhibits & Buildings (Full version special contributor: Bob Rogers)

Chapter Six: Legacy: Closing & Transition to Post-Use

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