THE EXPO BOOK

A Guide to the Planning, Organization, Design & Operation of World Expositions

In addition to this online publication,
The Expo Book is available in print
in issues of InPark Magazine (IPM).

To request a hard copy, send an email to
editor@InParkMagazine.com.

© 2008 Gordon Linden, All Rights Reserved

THE EXPO BOOK

A Guide to the Planning, Organization, Design & Operation of World Expositions

Chapter Three:
Going Into (and Out of) the Expo Business
Getting to Opening Day and Beyond

This much-needed business guide is intended primarily 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 in six consecutive installments of InPark Magazine (IPM), every other month from Nov 2007 through Nov 2008. If you missed a previous chapter, contact IPM to request a copy.

The Business Model

The business model for an international exposition is structured around two distinct yet highly interrelated phases of the overall undertaking. The first phase of the project encompasses the development and operation of the expo proper, which will run for three to six months. The second phase addresses the post-expo period: the long term outcome known as the expo legacy. [See Chapter Two for a detailed discussion of expo legacy.]

The success of an expo should ultimately be viewed through a long term lens, taking the first phase and the second phase together. It is important for the expo organization to know this and act on it from the earliest stages, and to share this perspective with the host community in order to generate the right kind of understanding and support for the project. By way of illustration, producing the first phase of the 1986 Vancouver Expo involved the assembly of a number of riverfront properties including railyards and sawmills, the development of temporary buildings and infrastructure to accommodate the expo, and the eventual redevelopment of the properties to accommodate new housing and commercial activities. Focusing solely on the cost/revenue picture of the expo proper, this first phase incurred some significant losses even with income from a Provincial lottery. However, when the second phase – the long-term redevelopment of the site - is added to the picture, the economic benefits of the overall project are outstanding, not to mention the fact that an important district in the City of Vancouver was recovered and dramatically upgraded.

That said, the financial model outlined in this chapter applies to the first phase only – the expo proper. It is intended to give an idea of the scope of work, and the resources and expenses involved in realizing the event with the best chances of success. The critical second phase cannot be modeled here because the legacy plan of each expo will be unique. An expo legacy can be almost anything: from a municipal park, to a trade fair (i.e. convention center) campus, to something else yet unforeseen that a future expo organizer will envision and create. The costs of land assembly and the long term development and operations benefits vary substantially from case to case, and expo organizers need to work with an economic consultant who has experience with this unique type of undertaking in order to develop an appropriate strategy and plan to capitalize on the dynamics of the process.

The expo business model takes into account all the costs and revenues associated with staging the event. On the cost side are the expenses involved in securing a site and providing the necessary facilities, equipment, services and attractions to accommodate a major visitor event. On the revenue side are all of the various sources of income that accrue to the event organizers. Cost components and revenue sources are also discussed here.

Construction
Excluding the costs of assembling land, which can vary substantially from case to case, a typical budget of construction costs to be borne by an expo organizer for the event consists of five major items: 1) site preparation, 2) site development and infrastructure, 3) buildings, 4) services and 5) site restoration.

Site preparation includes clearing and grading. Site development encompasses the installation of utilities (power, water, sewer, etc.), roads, walkways, lighting, and landscaping. Buildings include exhibitor pavilions, administrative offices and visitor support services such as restrooms and food/beverage facilities. The costs of providing indoor space are another factor that can vary significantly. If suitable structures are readily available on-site for these purposes - such as the exhibition halls and facilities at Hanover Expo 2000, which was held on the Hanover Trade Fair grounds - then the costs are obviously much lower than at expos for which buildings must be erected to provide needed space. Likewise, if the long term plan for the site is to retain structures for some later use, perhaps as a trade or convention center, then the costs of those structures can be amortized over many years. If, on the other hand, the structures are only to be used temporarily for the expo and afterwards are to be relocated or disassembled and the materials repurposed by others (to the extent feasible), then the economics are clearly quite different.

Services costs include architecture and engineering and project management. Restoration includes the costs of removing temporary improvements and making the site usable for the long term after the expo is over.

Capital Equipment
There is a substantial inventory of furnishings, fixtures, and equipment required to host an expo. Included are such items as office furnishings, entrance gate turnstiles, visitor facilities and support service facilities. Desks, chairs, file cabinets, work tables, beds, shelving and racks, computers, telephone systems, forklifts, air compressors and painting apparatus, saws and other carpentry tools, automobiles, trucks, golf carts, and other specialty vehicles such as ambulances and fire trucks, gas storage tanks and pumps, 2-way radio equipment, fire and security alarm systems, trash containers, hand carts and trash compactors are included in this cost category.

Equipment will also be needed for entertainment facilities, graphics, signage and wayfinding, street furniture, storage and distribution, security and medical, fire and emergency, solid waste removal and more. Based on experience at previous international expositions, some capital equipment costs may be significantly reduced through the implementation of an official supplier program. This program involves obtaining discounts on the purchase price of various products and goods in return for designation of the suppliers involved as "official."

Authors **Gordon Linden**, **Paul Creighton**
Special Contributor **Bob Rogers**
Editor **Judith Rubin**
Graphic Designer **Urso Chappell**

Revenue
The various sources of revenue that are typically generated by an expo are listed in the Expo Revenues pie-chart. The major source of income is visitor spending - for admissions and the purchase of goods and services. Virtually all of this spending occurs during the operation of the event and most occurs on-site.

Admissions
The largest single source of revenue by far is visitor admissions. Unlike a large sports event, such as the Olympic Games or World Cup, that derives the majority of its revenue from sponsors, an expo is very dependent upon success at the gate. Expo organizers have utilized a variety of ticketing strategies and pricing policies in order to maximize attendance, including season passes, two- and three-day tickets and night-only tickets. A large portion of attendance comes from the local community, and special promotions can be designed to maximize this.

Food and Beverage
Some international participants will develop and operate food and beverage facilities at their own expense; these are located within the individual pavilions. These facilities range from elegant, full-service establishments with entertainment and gourmet cuisine to simple snack bars or beverage carts.

Other food and beverage services include restaurants, cafeterias, snack bars, food carts and the like. Most expo organizers seek qualified concessionaires to provide these. The obligations of the expo organizers in the case of concessionaires extend to the provision of building space and basic utilities (power, water, etc.) for the duration of the event. In return for the opportunity to operate the food and beverage concessions during the expo, the concessionaire compensates the expo organization according to an agreed-upon formula which can be either a fixed fee or a percentage of revenues received during operation.

Merchandise/Souvenirs and Novelties
Most visitors will purchase some amount of merchandise while on-site. The Internet provides additional opportunities for online sales to people anywhere in the world. As with food and beverage sales, most expo organizations do not elect to go into the merchandise business themselves, but rather seek concessionaires who will take on the opportunity in return for some form of compensation such as payments based on a percentage of sales or a fixed fee.

Corporate Sponsors
Most expos can attract corporations to become sponsors of the event, paying fees for various categories of sponsorship which may include: official sponsor, official supplier, associate company, or collaborating company. Corporations may sponsor specific elements within the expo, such as a monorail or a specific building or area. In these circumstances, the contributions of sponsors are reflected as cost savings to the expo organization, reducing the construction, capital equipment, and operations costs budgets. These savings would, therefore, not be reflected as revenues.

Each of the sponsorship categories will be tied to a particular level of financial support (from the sponsor to the expo) and each will have a specific benefits package associated with it - such as the expo providing to the company a certain number of entrance tickets and the like. An official supplier program involves corporations providing needed goods or services to the expo at significant discounts or for free. It is also possible for the organizers to establish a private club on the exposition grounds to provide various services to corporate members, generating revenue through the sale of memberships to the club.

Expo Revenues

Licensing, Amusements & Entertainment
The licensing of an expo logo or trademark and official designations can also be a source of revenue. Each expo organizer has the opportunity to create a variety of intellectual properties such as a logo and related designations, a mascot, official music or song(s) which are used in various ways to promote and characterize the event. It is possible to license the use of the properties – on clothing, souvenirs, toys, etc.

Revenues can also be generated by visitors' patronizing ticketed rides and attractions. Attractions at recent expos have included a Ferris wheel, a bungee-jumping tower, and an arcade games area. Some expos have purchased or leased equipment and operated it directly while others have utilized the concessionaire approach. An amusement area is not a required element of an expo and there have been events, such as Expo 92 Seville, which had no amusement zone.

Revenues may also be generated by the sales of tickets to various shows and programs that are part of an entertainment program carried out throughout the duration of the expo, in various on- and off-site venues. An additional source of revenue is the sale of expo guidebooks. In addition to the sales of the books themselves, it is possible to place advertising or credits to sponsors in them to generate additional revenues.

Parking Fees & Other
Depending upon the site location, the availability of nearby land, and the public transportation infrastructure available to guests, employees and participants, it is probable that some amount of parking will be required which can generate some revenues. Typically, there will be some number of restricted parking spaces on-site which are allocated to the operators of the various pavilions, expo officials, and VIPs. Parking space will also be needed for management employees. Another source of parking revenues can be tour buses. Other potential revenue areas include broadcast and media rights and internet advertising.

Residual Sales Value
At the conclusion of the exposition, a substantial inventory of equipment and materials is usually available for reuse. If willing buyers can be found for the various items involved, substantial revenues can be recovered. The capital equipment acquired by the exposition can also be made available for resale. Some recent events have used Internet auctions to conduct sales of such items, thereby substantially enlarging the potential pool of interested buyers and enhancing the process of managing and disposing of inventory in a timely fashion.

Participants & Pavilions
The BIE expo format recognizes three main categories of participants at an international exposition: countries and international organizations, national participants and corporate participants. [Note: See Chapters One & Two for discussion of the BIE, or Bureau of International Expositions, the Paris-based entity that regulates world expos. Chapters Four and Five will address pavilion design, architecture, exhibit design and the guest experience.] There has been significant growth in the number of these various entities participating in expos over the years. Nations (BIE member states) and international organizations are considered as official participants while the others are unofficial. (See Expo Participants sidebar.)

International Participants

Quantity & Quality
Referring to the Expo Participants sidebar, the dramatic jump in the number of international participants registered in expos after 1988 is directly related to the changes in the world political scene including the establishment of newly independent states through the collapse of the former Soviet Union. For instance, Lisbon Expo 98 had more than 150 countries and international organizations participating, while Montreal Expo 67, although a very large expo by all indices, had just 60 foreign national governments.

Quantity is important but quality and content of presentation also matter. High numbers of participants do not automatically create a more interesting event or even generate additional levels of attendance. Several reasons for this may be postulated including lack of experience (in designing and operating an exhibit), insufficient resources (both financial and human), and an inability to connect with the theme in a meaningful way (i.e. a land-locked country participating in an expo on the theme of the oceans).

Each country will plan, design, fabricate, and install its own exhibition, typically to be housed in a space

provided by the expo. (Some participants will design and build their own pavilions, but this has become the exception rather than the rule, even at larger events. At Hanover Expo 2000, participants had a choice of erecting their own pavilions or occupying space within the existing and new structures that are part of the Hanover trade fair campus.) The facilities provided by the expo organizers should be approximately equivalent in terms of physical character, quality and prominence on the site. Any major variation in the facilities provided may be viewed as giving a competitive advantage to a participant (and a disadvantage to another).

The basic function of the enclosed space is to house exhibits, administrative offices, an employee rest area, and, in some cases, a small merchandise area. In many cases, a VIP reception area is included to accommodate meetings and small social gatherings for country dignitaries and business persons. Also, some countries elect to develop and operate a restaurant as part of their exhibit.

The international pavilion area should be a major unit within the overall exposition site distinguished from the entertainment areas, corporate sponsors, and other functions in a manner commensurate with the official status of government representations. Larger pavilion spaces are generally occupied by more developed nations while smaller ones are occupied by developing countries. In some cases, groupings of smaller countries may be accommodated in one pavilion. It is desirable to locate the larger units in such a fashion as to act as anchor points with the smaller units interspersed around and near them.

The structures provided must meet all applicable building code requirements. Requisite services (power, water, telecommunications, etc.) must be provided and the enclosed spaces typically require air conditioning. The structures should be of a simple, accessible, modular design, permitting great flexibility in adaptation for exhibitions including modification of the facades. All pavilions should be easily serviced for delivery of goods and removal of trash and have good access for security, fire, and medical emergency purposes.

Corporate Participants
Corporate presentations are another important focal point of visitor attention and major corporate pavilions can be very well attended. Corporate pavilions are typically designed, built, equipped, and dismantled by the participants themselves. Since each corporate entity that develops a pavilion desires to convey a unique message to visitors, a variety of architectural and structural expressions are possible. Sites for the corporate pavilions are rented out by the organizers with services provided on a fee basis. As with the international pavilions, access and other operational requirements are important.

It is desirable to disperse major corporate pavilions throughout the site in order to avoid large crowd concentrations in one part of the site while other parts remain thinly populated. Because these buildings tend to have unique architectural and design features, careful siting can serve to make them landmarks within the exposition.

The participation of corporations as exhibitors is important to the overall content of an expo, but format and level can vary greatly from one event to another. At Lisbon 98, for example, there were just two corporate pavilions: Swatch and Unicer, whereas at Seville 92 there were several dozen. Japan's Aichi Expo 2005 had two zones for corporate exhibitors accommodating a number of large and well-attended pavilions. The motivation for companies to participate as exhibitors in a given location is primarily market-driven: that is, a corporation is certain to benefit from the attention it will receive at an expo in a large, active market.

Rather than mount its own pavilion, a corporation may elect to participate indirectly by having a presence within a national pavilion. Others may choose to provide sponsorship of one kind or another (see the Business Model section in this chapter).

Government Entities and Theme Pavilions
In addition to the pavilions for the foreign (i.e. non-host) participants, there will also be a national pavilion representing the host country, as well as a series of theme pavilions developed by the expo organizers. Government agencies, provinces/states and local government entities all represent additional candidates for participation. Generally, such entities develop their own pavilions, however, it is also possible that the organizers could develop some of these structures as part of the overall building program. Requirements are similar to those of corporate participants.

Space Rentals
One of the biggest costs of hosting an expo can be the provision of buildings to accommodate exhibits. In cases where participants choose to erect their own buildings, then these costs are borne directly by the participants. At expos where the organizers provide buildings, the costs are borne by the organizer who can then seek to recover some of the costs by charging rent to the participant who occupies the space. For BIE-member international participants, in order to attract numerous countries and reduce the overall costs of participation for these countries, organizers do not charge rent for a standard amount of space; if a participant requires a larger exhibition space, then some negotiated price for providing this may be in order. Prior to Taejon Expo 93, wherein this incentive was offered to attract international participants, organizers charged participants an amount which was intended to cover construction costs. For corporate participants who seek to utilize space provided by the organizer, a charge for space rentals is usually applicable. Here again, because the expo organizers wish to encourage a corporation's participation, the amount charged should not be so high as to either discourage participation or represent a burden which could take a toll on the quality of the exhibit and its operations. Depending upon the long term legacy plans for the expo site, it is conceivable that a corporate participant could undertake the building of space for its own account.

Government entities and expo organizers are usually quasi-governmental entities, and as such are typically provided space without charge or on some negotiated basis.

The flow of revenues to the expo organizers from the rental of participant space is conceptually similar to food and beverage and merchandise space rentals in that the participant is required, upon execution of the participation contract, to provide advance payments prior to taking occupancy. These advances assist the organizer both in ensuring the commitment of the participant and defraying the costs of providing the space.

Expo Participants, 1958-2010

event	participant countries	other official participants	non-official participants (corporate)	state, regional, local, etc.	total participants
Brussels 1958	51	6	81		137
Seattle 1962	24	2	79	3	109
New York 1964-'65	36[1]		70	25	131
Montreal 1967	55	3	23	13	94
San Antonio 1968	25	1	20	3	49
Osaka 1970	76	3	29	10	
Spokane 1974	10		47	7	64
Knoxville 1982	16	1	12	7	36
New Orleans 1984	25		10	13	48
Tsukuba 1985	47	37	28	1	113
Vancouver 1986	38	3[2]	9	50	
Brisbane 1988	35	2		4	41
Seville 1992	111	6	7	17	141
Taejon 1993	108	6	27		141
Lisbon 1998	148	11	6	9	174
Hanover 2000	155	17	11	1	184
Aichi 2005	120	4	9	3	136
Zaragoza 2008[3]	101	1	TBD	TBD	TBD
Shanghai 2010[3]	166	27[4]	TBD	TBD	TBD

[1]Note a BIE sanctioned event, [2]3 U.S. states,
[3]Scheduled to participate as of March 2008, [4]21+6 NGO's

Sources: guidebooks, organizer final reports, BIE. Please not that data provided by different sources is not always consistent due to different categorizations of participation. Some participants' exhibits were part of larger pavilions.

Organization

Why Expos are Different
Undertaking an international exposition can entail investments that exceed several hundreds of millions of dollars. It requires an extensive organizational effort to plan, design, construct and operate the needed facilities and services. The process demands a thorough understanding of the unique needs of this unique type of event.

Certain attributes set an expo apart from other types of mega-event:

To begin with, unlike the process of creating a major business wherein the ultimate goal is to create an organization which will function for many years, the organization of an expo must be designed *to go out of business successfully*.

Moreover, in addition to the many tasks required to carry out the event itself, the process of creating

the organization to plan and operate it is a major endeavor in its own right. It involves such tasks as recruiting and training human resources, developing schedules, budgets and other management systems, as well as coordinating and managing the many interfaces between the organization and the exhibitors, participants, concessionaires and others. Because of the need to simultaneously build the organization and carry out the work, organizers are in a highly demanding management environment that is in constant flux. Failure to maintain control and achieve progress at any given time can place the enterprise at serious risk.

In addition, each expo is a unique, one-time event subject to individual factors such as physical setting, long-term legacy plan, financial commitments, and the high expectations that surround a world-class event. The organizing committee must adopt an approach conducive to a six-stage development process: 1) Formative, 2) Organizational, 3) Planning, 4) Execution, 5) Operation, and 6) Demobilization.

If the organizational approach is not planned correctly from the outset, the organizers will be faced with the need for reorganization and restructuring, both of which are costly and time-consuming.

Typically, major infrastructure and urban facilities must be built for the event, within a strict timeframe. The expo organization must ensure that design and construction are carried out in a timely and coordinated manner so that the temporary works required for the expo can be put into place and tested to ensure their functional and operational soundness. Running out of time puts the expo at significant risk for additional expenses and operational difficulties

In addition to the many specific facilities and services which must be developed and operated, such as the exhibition halls and the transportation services, there is a plethora of "soft" requirements to be planned and implemented. Budget-wise, many of these - such as press relations or sponsor services – are relatively small, yet they are critical to the success of the operation.

The Six Stages: Change is Constant

The two Expo Organization charts and the Six Stages sidebar, along with the 168 Key Tasks sidebar, reflect the various stages of the project's development, from its earliest stage (Formative) through its conclusion (Demobilization) and the characteristics of the organization at each stage. An expo organization will evolve over a period of years, shifting to meet the particular requirements for different stages of activities. Certain types of staff will cycle in and then out as needs change.

Initially, staff will number fewer than 10 employees. At its peak, it will be several thousand. Then - Poof ! Out of business! While this organizational dynamic is easily portrayed in a diagram, this constant evolution is perhaps the greatest management challenge that the expo will face. Most people don't like change, but in an expo organization, change is constant.

The members of that initial small team can communicate easily among themselves. Decisions can be made relatively easily and consensus reached quickly. At this stage, there is not much of a formal organization and minimal need for management controls and bureaucracy. This formative "honeymoon" stage is both stimulating and rewarding for those involved because of the creative energy and enthusiasm that abound.

As the complexity of the undertaking grows, the goodwill and energy of that original team starts to become overtaxed and the need for a more formal organization becomes evident. At this point, an organizational chart is produced and, fundamentally, the organization begins to have a functional character with particular people being assigned to particular areas. Because the number of people remains relatively small at this stage – they can all gather in a large conference room at one time – the organization can still function without the more rigorous management control systems that will be needed in the future.

Next, the expo begins to focus attention and energy on planning for the event. The organization begins to take on an enhanced formal character because each specialized area needs to develop specific scope, schedule and budget plans. There emerges a greater need for more formal, frequent and clear communications between functional divisions or departments. Committees and task groups are formed. More staff and management positions are added, making it incumbent on expo leadership to inculcate newcomers with the original values and mission of the event and make them productive members of the overall team.

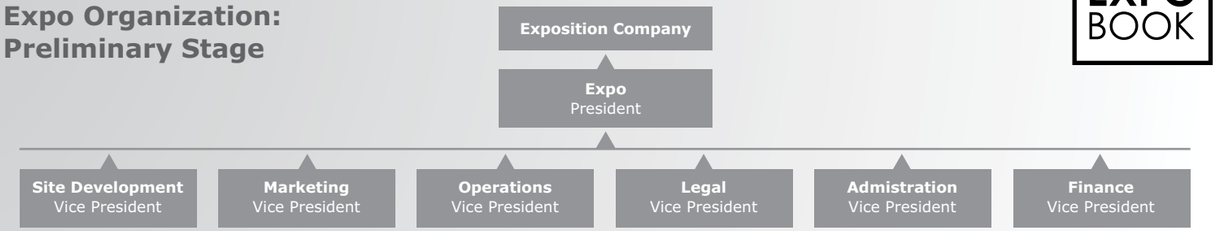
At some point in time – it varies from expo to expo, depending on specific conditions - the Execution phase begins. For example, the site may need to

Top 10 Most Difficult Questions Posed by Expo Participants

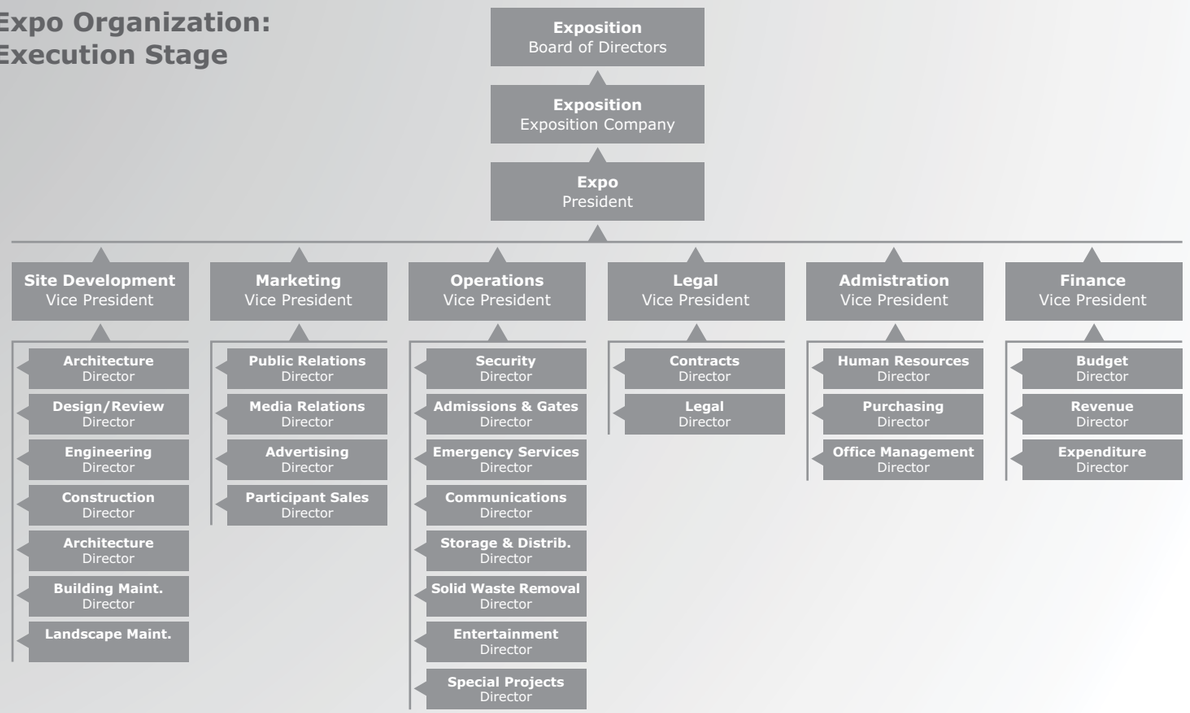
Expo organizers will hold a series of planning meetings to recruit participants, address their concerns and guide them through the process of creating their pavilions. Based on the authors' experience in the planning of several expos, here are some of the toughest questions that organizers should be prepared to answer.

1. Are planning and construction for the expo proceeding according to schedule? In which areas are the organizers ahead of schedule? In which areas are they behind?
2. How does the state of readiness of the expo compare to comparable previous events?
3. Can the organizer meet all of its commitments on time in order to be 100% complete on opening day?
4. Is the financing package for the expo in place and are the necessary funds committed for construction, marketing and operations?
5. What are the different sources of funding for the event? Is the total financing plan in place?
6. Which countries and corporations have signed a letter of intent to participate in the expo at this point in time?
7. Why would participation by my country at this exposition be especially important for us?
8. What procedures have been set up for cooperation between the City and the expo?
9. Is there a formal or informal agreement among the political parties, at the national level, to support the exposition?
10. If a different political party comes to power prior to the opening of the expo, can they cancel the event?

Expo Organization: Preliminary Stage



Expo Organization: Execution Stage



The Six Stages of Expo Organization

Characteristic Stage	Time (years)	Personnel	Decision Process	Form of Organization	Modus Operandi	Management Control
Formative	-10 to -5	<10	total consensus	none	creative thought	none
Organizational	-5	<50	key personnel consensus	skeleton, functional	group thought, functional	none
Planning	-5 to -3	50<100	group thought/ consensus	full functional	committees, task groups, thinkers	minimal milestones
Execution	-3 to 0	100<1000	hierarchical with formal approvals	project matrix	doers, action oriented	formal and accountable (results)
Operation	0	1000<2000	decentralized formal approvals	minimum central, maximum distributed	problem solving, keep it running	exception reporting
Demobilization	+1	<50	dictatorial	project matrix	get finished, get out	formal and driving

be cleared and existing facilities demolished before any buildings or services needed for the expo can be started such as occurred in Lisbon 98, wherein an aging oil refinery had to be dismantled. In such a case, Execution commences several years earlier than if existing buildings were already in place that the expo could use for part of the event. Whatever the timeframe, the transition from Planning to Execution is dramatic and often difficult. The organization takes on another level of formality, and is increasingly focused on results. Individuals and groups are held accountable for their actions. In some cases, management and staff who have excellent planning skills and capabilities, and who have been with the organization for several years, find that the actual execution of their plans brings such a severe culture change that they are unable to function. Organizations that fail to anticipate the difficulties of this transition may face severe management crises.

Having successfully evolved through the Execution stage, the expo organization must now face the test for which it has long been preparing: Operations. Staff is increased in order to operate many of the various functions which take place just prior to and during the event. The roles and responsibilities of each person are well-defined and management authority and control allocated to the various functional areas. The primary goal is to successfully operate the expo during its pre-determined period of three to six months, and therefore the operational mode of the organization is to quickly address and solve any problem that may arise. This means that the authority to take action must be decentralized and that information about potential problems should come to the attention of the appropriate management as quickly as possible. This is accomplished through reporting systems that focus on *exceptions* to the normal operations as opposed to focusing on the normal operations. Because the expo is a one-time, finite event, it is important for the organization to do what it can to retain those people who can most effectively and efficiently operate it to the finish.

The final stage is Demobilization. Although the event is technically over, there remains a variety of significant tasks which require motivated, pro-active staff to wind up the affairs of the expo. The disposition of the remaining assets of the expo will also take place at this time and care and attention must be given to the secure transfer or sale of such to the appropriate, designated parties.

Hypothetical Ticket Sales and Attendance Scenario

Type of TicketSold	Number Sold	Site Visits per Ticket	Total Attendance
One Day	3,000,000	1	3,000,000
Three Day	2,000,000	3	6,000,000
Season Pass	200,000	20	400,000
Totals	5,200,000		9,400,000

Paul Creighton's 168 Key Tasks

The 168 tasks (see sidebar) necessary to develop and market and operate an expo follow the organization of the event from beginning to end. The major areas in the process are Site Development, Marketing and Operations. These three areas are supported by Legal, Administration and Finance which play major support roles in each of the three major areas. The "build it, sell it, run it" scenario applies throughout the entire process.

There are five essential activities which must be applied to each of the 168 tasks: 1) Budget: Each task must be budgeted from the standpoint of costing out every item necessary to complete the task. 2) Assign proper management responsibility to the individual who is in charge of carrying out the details of the task from beginning to end. (One individual can be responsible for more than one task.) 3) Assemble the needed resources. The cost of gathering and mobilizing resources has to be accounted for early on and fed into the task budget process. Site delivery has to be programmed. Adequate and well- trained personnel are part of the resource gathering. 4) Create a schedule for starting and ending the task. 5) Revenue production. If a given task includes revenue production, the estimated revenue must be determined and incorporated into the budget.

At the point that the task process is started, the basic support functions (Legal, Administration and Finance) must be in place to process the applications and details of going forward with the expo project. The developed task information can be forwarded to the three support divisions, which in turn can review, ask for revisions, etc. and monitor the fulfillment of the tasks.

Attendance Factors & Ticketing

As touched on in Chapter Two, estimating attendance at an expo is an inexact science subject to a variety of factors, many of which are beyond the control of the organizers. A thorough feasibility study is a must for producing responsible, realistic attendance projections. But it must also be kept in mind that the actions of the expo organization – how the event is created and carried out - sit high on the list of factors that will help or hurt the viability of those feasibility projections. It is critical to understand and communicate what the projections mean, and to support their attainment through creating a worthwhile event that provides a satisfying guest experience and is well-marketed. Here is a discussion of some crucial specifics.

Paul Creighton's 164 Key Tasks of a World Expo

Government

Board of Directors

Commissioner General

Special Projects
opening ceremony • national days
special holidays • closing ceremony

Exposition Company
President

Participation
Deputy Commissioner General
international participation
general (special) regulations
college of commissioners general
participants' manual

Protocol
Deputy Commissioner General
BIE relations • accommodations
theme seminars workshop

Marketing

Public Relations
VIP club regional programs • community relations • relations with neighboring countries • public relations • print materials
Media Relations
preview center • information center • graphic services • media/ press center • broadcast services • flag plaza • in-house printing
Advertising
attendees • pre-fair ticket sales • tour packages • group sales • travel agents
Participant Sales
corporate pavilions • sponsorships • food and beverage • merchandise/souvenirs • official suppliers

Administration

Human Resources
hiring • travel • training newsletter • volunteers • accreditation badges • personnel files • clerical pool
Purchasing
equipment • supplies • inventory • official-supplier agreements
Office Management
office management • office supplies/equipment • janitorial • furniture • computer programs/ hardware • maintenance • mail room • telephones/faxes • telephone list

Finance

Budget
revenue projections • cost projections • task line-item reviews • budget management • weekly budget review against actual
Revenue
cash control • ticket control • billing • participant collections • revenue control • weekly revenue reports
Cost
cost accounting • risk insurance • accounts payable • accounts receivable • financial reports payroll • asset inventory

Site Development

Architecture
master plan • permanent buildings • temporary buildings • theme pavilions • service buildings • food and beverage • merchandise/souvenirs • feature structures
Design Review
participant liaison • design-review committee • special regulations • construction design • compliance permit application • flags/banners • signage • building codes • participant move-in
Engineering:
utilities • roads • walkways • service roads • lighting • permanent buildings • feature structures
Construction
utilities • roads • walkways • permanent buildings • temporary buildings • service buildings • feature structures
Building Maintenance
key control • janitorial service • building maintenance lighting maintenance • water/sewer maintenance air-conditioning maintenance
Landscape Maintenance
on-site furniture • on-site signage • fountains • ponds • trees • shrubs • grass areas

Operations

Security
parking areas • off-site/on-site • crowd control evacuation • lost and found • building security • site security • VIP security
Admission Gates
gate • ticket sales • ticket-taking turnstiles • attendance reporting • guest services • tours • VIP • will-call • attendee services • programs/site maps
Emergency Services
on-site medical • on-site tire department • hazardous materials • health and sanitation
Communications
on-site telephones/faxes • information booths • emergency communications • on-site video • off-site video
Warehouse Storage
receiving • participants' storage • on-site transport • supplier inventory • equipment • maintenance • post-expo asset disposal • expo storage
Solid Waste
on-site garbage • pick-up/waste containers • garbage storage • garbage transportation • recycling
Entertainment
amusement area • off-site cultural • on-site cultural • on-site parade • street entertainment • region entertainment • special entertainment events • theaters/amphitheaters. • night show

Legal

Contracts
contract formation • contract completion • contract schedule • contract records • government legal compliance
Legal
contract compliance • logo name enforcement • archives

Paul Creighton's list was previously published in World's Fair Magazine (now out of print), Vol. XV, No. 3.

Access and Egress
An important prerequisite to obtaining visitor attendance is the ability to accommodate major volumes of people – for example, 50,000 to 100,000 or more on a given day – with reasonably fast access to and from the expo site. For expos which take place over a period of six months, there are significant opportunities for visitors, providers of transportation services, and public traffic and safety authorities to address problems of peak activity or other access issues. (For the three-month events, stabilized patterns may not emerge.) In either case, it is important that adequate transportation infrastructure be in place to support the operation of private and public services. Inadequacies in road, parking or other fixed facilities will be fully tested by a mass attendance event.

Turmoil, Competition & the Press
International and/or domestic strife may affect attendance. For example, about two years prior to the opening of Seville Expo 92, the Gulf War significantly disrupted international participants' planning for the event. The conflict being relatively brief, both organizers and participants were fortunately able to quickly recover lost time and the event was not adversely affected.

Competition from other events has also been blamed by some as a reason for lower than projected attendance at an expo. The same year – 1992 – in which Seville hosted its expo, a smaller expo with an overlapping theme (Christopher Columbus: Ships & the Sea) was staged in Genoa, Italy - and Barcelona also hosted the summer Olympic Games. If such factors are not taken into account ahead of time, attendance projections are likely to be off. In fact, the Genoa expo received minimal attention and was "buried" by Spain's events. Genoa attracted the participation of 54 countries, but only saw 1.7 million in attendance while the Seville expo drew some 42 million visits.

More than one factor caused Expo 84 New Orleans attendance numbers to come in at roughly half of what had been projected (7.3 million vs. 14 million). New Orleans '84 was staged the same year that Los Angeles hosted the summer Olympic Games – two major tourist draws in two popular US tourist destination cities. Expo 84 was also hurt by press accounts that many of its pavilions and exhibits were still under construction after the opening of the event. As evidence of severe financial problems surfaced, media coverage took on a decidedly negative tone and exacerbated marketing problems.

Media reports can also affect attendance in a positive direction. In addition to a significant television marketing campaign directed at California, Vancouver Expo 86 benefited from very favorable media coverage prior to and early in the run of the event. This positive press and good marketing were credited with attracting many visitors who would otherwise have vacationed elsewhere. According to the official Expo 86 Final Report, the original target for California visits was 1.5 million and the final count, from California alone, was actually 2 million. The report also indicated that British Columbia Tourism reported a substantial number of new visitors to BC from the US.

Visits vs. Visitors
Visits does not equal *visitors*. This vital point is simple yet often overlooked. A total attendance number of, say, 8 million does not mean 8 million people, or even 8 million tickets sold – it means 8 million clicks of the turnstile. The same person may enter the expo grounds in the morning, depart in the afternoon, return in the early evening and depart again late at night, all on the same day. Understanding the likely attendance patterns will enable organizers to structure ticketing in an appropriate way, by, for example, issuing tickets that are good for multiple entries, three-day tickets, and season passes.

Consider the Hypothetical Ticket Sales sidebar. For the sake of argument, it assumes that all tickets for all categories are purchased and used, that the three-day and season passes are not shared among multiple guests, and that each ticket buyer uses his or her ticket the full number of times allowed. The total attendance or number of site visits resulting is 9.4 million. The actual number of tickets sold is about half of the total attendance: 5.2 million. For example, at Seville Expo 92, it was reported that each of the 300,000+ season pass holders attended the event an average of 64 times. This accounts for nearly 20 million of the reported 42 million in attendance.

There are significant economic implications of the same visitor making multiple visits to the site vs. the one-time visitor. The one-time visitor may have a high propensity to make several purchases of souvenirs and sample various types of food and beverage services with the foreknowledge that he or she will only be at the expo once. The visitor who makes multiple visits will have, in theory, a declining propensity to purchase merchandise items such as T-shirts and also to make repeat visits to the more expensive restaurants. However, in most cases, more visits generally translates to higher per-capita spending.

If the difference between *visits* (i.e. attendance) and *visitors* (people) is not understood by the organizers and the host community, then several errors in planning and delivery of facilities and services are likely to occur. For example, if the business community in a host city anticipates that the projected attendance translates directly into needs for hotel rooms, restaurants, and the like, then there will be an overreaction to the anticipated demand. This misunderstanding has led companies and individuals to make significant expenditures in anticipation of high demand which later resulted in major disappointment and, in some cases, financial difficulties.

A realistic understanding of attendance projections can also serve to reduce anxieties within the community about a variety of potential impacts, most notably traffic. With substantial repeat visitation, visitors gain experience traveling to and from the expo site, thereby reducing inconvenience caused by traffic congestion on certain routes at certain times of day. Also, as guests seek to minimize costs associated with travel to the expo, the market for transportation-related services such as parking will tend to moderate pricing, thereby reducing the potential for dissatisfaction among one-time visitors.

Season pass holders are almost always residents of the host community who perceive a season pass as a good value for them. They live nearby and, at little or no cost, can avail themselves of the opportunity to travel to the site on numerous occasions, and can have a variety of incentives to do so. Expo season passes were first introduced at the Spokane Expo 74 as a means of generating much-needed revenue prior to the opening of the event and were placed on sale in the fall of 1973. Experience indicates that attendees are drawn from both resident and tourist markets. However, all things being equal, the propensity for people to attend the event is greater if they live closer than if they live further away. As the travel time increases, visitor attendance declines; repeat visits also decline with distance. The upward boundary of a resident market could be defined as within a day's travel; any visitors coming from a time/distance greater than this would be considered tourists.

About the Contributors

Gordon Linden AIA, AICP is Manager of Planning and Urban Design with Parsons International, based in Dubai, UAE where he has responsibility for directing the planning of a variety of mega-projects in the Middle East. During his career, he has worked on numerous one-time events, including Olympic Games and International Expositions; recently he was part of a team assisting Toronto, Canada in assessing the potentials for hosting an Expo in 2015. Visit www.GordonLinden.com.

Paul Creighton is President of Creighton Management, Inc. in Olympia, Washington, a private firm specializing in recreational park development and world's fair development and management. Mr. Creighton has held management positions at numerous North American Expos and acted as an advisor to several Expo organizations in Europe, Asia and North America.

Expo Book editor **Judith Rubin** is a prominent editorial voice in the attractions industry and contributing editor to InPark Magazine. She was associate editor/associate publisher of World's Fair magazine from 1987 to 1995. Visit www.JudithRubin.Blogspot.com.

Urso Chappell is a San Francisco-based graphic designer and branding specialist. As a lifelong student of world's fair history, he founded ExpoMuseum.com in 1998. He was the winner of Expo 2005's international contest to design the Linimo maglev train exterior and has visited six world's fairs. Visit www.UrsoChappell.com.

THE EXPO BOOK
A Guide to the Planning, Organization, Design & Operation of World Expositions
Six Installments in
Six Issues of InPark Magazine
by Gordon Linden and Paul Creighton

Nov-Dec 2007	Chapter One: World Expositions Today
Feb-Mar 2008	Chapter Two: Putting It Together: Feasibility, Legacy Planning & BIE Approval
Apr-May 2008	Chapter Three: Getting to Opening Day: Operations & Organization
Jun-Jul 2008	Chapter Four: Design: The Guest Experience (Special contributor: Bob Rogers)
Apr-May 2008	Chapter Five: Design: Exhibits & Buildings (Special contributor: Bob Rogers)
Oct-Nov 2008	Chapter Six: Legacy: Closing & Transition to Post-Use

www.TheExpoBook.com