

Design of a travelling exhibition “Synchrotrons and Industrial Innovation”

Thoughts on Shelton Fleming’s Design report

Introduction:

I have read the Specification for the Design of a Travelling exhibition, “Synchrotrons and Industrial Innovation” and also Shelton Fleming’s Design report in detail. I have listed below my comments and thoughts on the report and their various proposals:

- Shelton Fleming has provided:
 - A very complete and professional proposal which outlines their understanding of the brief
 - Incorporating several solutions, interesting ideas and thoughts on promoting Synchrotrons to the target audiences
- Reference to the consensus for solution No. 2.
This offers an ideal solution for a “Fast track visit” and a “Slow track”
The “Slow track” could give a more detailed insight into Synchrotrons however, be wary of:
 - Hidden costs related to initial content development and updating the different interactive presentations/technologies
 - Installation and set-up could be longer.
 - Operational “hic-cups”, related to inter-actives (computer crashes, dirty touch screens etc.)
 - Using too much advanced “Digital technology” means you are continually in the “Hands” of the “Creators/ producers”. Beware of cost implications.

Note: Globes not impressed by those in the Globe of innovation CERN, prefer flat screens, better resolution

- Branding:
Good flexible and practical ideas and solutions, taking into account the various potential venues, events and users.
- Structure:
Like idea of giving a “Direction” (entrance/ exit) to the exhibition, allows the contents to be “Structured” (introduction, story, conclusion). Not overwhelming, a light and modern design, incorporating easy and cost effective change of graphics/messages/corporate identity. Another advantage the system is “Modular” which will allow for the exhibition to be laid out with various geometries depending on the venue. The individual elements should also ideally be “Powered” individually; this will reduce cabling between the individual elements.
- False floor:
 - Advantages; covers unsightly flooring of the potential venues, outlines the area of the exhibition,
 - Hides unsightly cables etc. Could also give additional “Rigidity” to the structure.
 - Disadvantages; Costs related to initial purchase, installation/dismantling time, packaging, overall volume and weight of material to be transported.

▪ Logistics solutions:

- Production, logical to have the design and initial production managed by Shelton Fleming in the UK. This will ensure cost effective production, ensure the quality and respect of the overall planning and production schedule.
- A complete test installation should be programmed to sign-off and de-bug any problems before the exhibition goes on the road.
- Concerning the future management of the entire exhibition during its “Life cycle” special thought needs to be given to the practicalities and possible inconvenience of continually returning to the UK between exhibitions.
- However, concerning the updating and replacement of graphics and other exhibition content this should be managed by Shelton Fleming to ensure continuity within the exhibition.
- Booking system, this could be coordinated by one of the Institutes, ESRF or another, if Shelton Fleming are responsible for this there will be a cost implication. However, it may be an advantage to have a “Neutral” managing the exhibition rather than one institute.
- Cost of future venues, a delicate point, especially as the cost of will be assumed by different institutes depending on who is responsible for the organization of the event.
- Important to establish a “Cost” for each future venue with the “Agreement” that all partner Institutes accept this “Cost”. In addition it should be agreed that the exhibition is always taken as a “Complete entity” and not as individual elements. This is particular importance for the “Corporate image” of the exhibition and promoting Synchrotrons as a whole.

▪ Alternative logistical solution:

- Looking at the 11 participating Institutes it would seem more logical to opt for the alternative logistical recommendation, storing the exhibition in a centrally located European base.
- Espace Montage has been used by CERN over a number of years and they have assumed the installation and dismantling operations of the CERN Mini Exhibition Geneva.
- Shipping and storing by Espace Montage could provide a cost effective alternative.
- Shelton Fleming could liaise directly with Espace Montage and provide all refreshed / repaired and/or new graphics etc. Production in the UK will ensure continuity of the materials used.
- The other alternative supplier suggested, Mathys in Geneva are larger but would probably want to use their own workshops and graphic production unit if they were to assume the responsibility. This could result in a conflict of interest between Shelton Fleming and Mathys.

Conclusions:

A very complete and professional proposal offering different solutions and options for design, build, management and touring. These options should allow you to remain within your Budget.

Concerning the budget, during the design stage it is very easy to get carried away with interactivity and the use of modern technology etc. Beware of the hidden costs and the implications on the updating, installation and set up times. If installation is too long or requires too many people your touring costs will rise. You should try and keep the installation down to a day and half max, plus travel, ideally using a maximum of 3 – 4 people.

With respect to touring, this should not be forgotten a separate budget or cost should be established and allocated for travelling, ideally based on the cost/venue. The largest part of the cost will be the installation and dismantling operations (x days + x technicians), followed by their travel and finally the cost of shipment by road. A small budget should also be foreseen for repairs and updates.

Packaging should not be overlooked or forgotten either. The exhibition will be travelling around Europe to various events, institutions, and being stored in between venues, it is important not to overlook the importance of the packing. It not only protects the material during transport but will also help to keep the exhibition material in good shape during storage, and also more importantly “Clean”. This will help avoid extensive cleaning at each venue.

Finally a point related to the installation and dismantling operations, ideally it is best to use the same team each time. It will result in quicker installation and dismantling. The team will also take care of the material, as they will not want to be confronted with problems at the next venue. They will also use the correct packaging.

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