

THE NAIA SHOW DIRECTOR'S BOOTH SLIDE SURVEY

December 2004

INTRODUCTION

No subject brings out a world of responses from artists doing shows greater than the subject of the booth slide. From conversations at the NAIA Artist Conference, to discussions on the NAIA Member Forum as well as postings from artists (newcomers and oldtimers) on other related discussion forums, the booth slide is a constant subject of query. For artists, it is a difficult and time consuming task to do a good booth slide. Since we do not stand still in our creativity, new updated shots should be done periodically. Then the questions come, should we just shoot it at a show under less than optimum conditions or should we stage it, controlling environmental factors, maximizing the viewing of the presentation and the work? Should we leave in all the bins and display components or show only a few works gallery style or salon style, even if this is not the way we normally present the work at shows? After all, the name of the game is being accepted and we do want to put our best foot forward during the jury process but on the other hand, if our photographic depiction of our booth display is not an accurate one of how we will present our work at the show, then are we giving the show what they really want during the jury process and the planning stages of their event?

We hope that this information will clear up some misconceptions and will add more knowledge as to how this slide is used in the overall jury process which we all rely upon for our continued success. As artists who do shows and directors who put on these events, we think you will find the comments interesting, informative and even sometimes baffling. We are sure that this will not be the end to this subject but perhaps a good place to start our discussion with show directors on how this slide can be used more advantageously within the art show venue. After all, it seems shows are utilizing this representational (booth/presentation) image to determine important criteria for their event but if the image is not a true picture of the presentation, how can the criteria be justified. It is also worth noting to show directors that the booth slide requirement, if required, should have some commonality and standardization because this is a major task for many artists and it is only done periodically. There is no way an artist can continue to create a booth slide of differing criteria for each show that they enter; there would be no time left to create and do shows, if this were the case. Each artist has developed their own style of presentation depending upon their work and their individual marketing decisions of their work; we

believe that this is what you want to see - their work - the nature, the quality, the quantity, the consistency, the cohesiveness and as it will be displayed at the event within reason.

HOW THIS SURVEY WAS DONE

First, it is wise to tell you how this survey was distributed. After this survey was developed and placed on our NAIA survey computer tool - called the "survey monkey", it was electronically transmitted to approximately 400 email addresses that we had for various shows across the country. Approximately 160 of these electronic transmissions kicked back to us immediately for one validity reason or another. We are pretty sure that the remaining 240 or so made it to their respective destinations. 67 of these shows or 28% of those solicited for their response completed the survey in late 2004. We do not know any further information on these shows but we do thank them for their input, candor and valuable information. We hope that the detailed information in this survey will be beneficial to artists who do shows and show directors alike, since we are all striving for the best.

We did know a few things for sure before beginning this survey. The booth image should not contain any names, faces, people, signs or other visual distractions in order to help the jury focus on the work. Past those things, we decided to ask and 67 Show Directors responded.

THE SURVEY RESPONSES

Does your show require a booth slide as part of the application procedure?

(67 respondents)

YES	53	79%
NO	14	21%

As we knew, most shows do request a booth slide but a few (14) of these 67 that responded answered "NO" they did not require this type of visual imagery for application. It was refreshing to see that many of these shows were primarily concerned with the creative excellence in the work, surmising that good work should equal a good presentation.

Why does your show NOT require a booth slide?"

I. The art work is the important factor for us. Most booth shots we have seen are not taken very well and doesn't serve much value.

To determine the scale of the work

39 (75%) 4 (8%) 9 (17%)

To ascertain how the final show will look once exhibitors are selected

27 (52%) 5 (10%) 20 (38%)

To assure the booth can withstand natural elements and crowds

10 (19%) 6 (12%) 35 (69%)

To verify that artist applicant has a complete body of work

39 (74%) 6 (11%) 8 (15%)

To compare work slides to the work shown in the booth slide for consistency

43 (83%) 5 (9%) 4 (8%)

To present a booth slide preview of chosen exhibitors to sponsors or potential

sponsors of the event

7 (14%) 3 (6%) 40 (80%)

To see how an exhibitor will present their work to the public

45 (85%) 5 (9%) 3 (6%)

To balance the show as to the type of work

12 (23%) 9 (18%) 30 (59%)

OTHER comments to the question, "Why does your show require a booth slide?"

1. To see the typical part that prints play in a booth of 2D work; we do not want to see bins of prints prominently displayed.
2. The "look" of the booth can be as important as the work itself - we must remember that visual is key here. Visual art, visual appearance, visual marketability and visual appealing.
3. Quality of work as judged by experts
4. I would think that shows requiring a booth slide wish to make sure that the booth appears like a "storefront" and reflects good taste so the show looks good.
5. The booth slide gives us MORE information than 5 slides alone can.
6. Often we find that the other slides show only the best work, usually high end. The booth slide gives us an idea of what will really be displayed and sold in the booth. We also accept a grouping slide.
7. To determine if they sell more than one medium of work - and to keep an eye out for that during the show.
8. To see if the exhibitor has an entire body of work of the same caliber as the individual piece presented. Also to see the creativity and eye appeal of the display itself.

9. To verify that the slides of individual pieces represent the complete body of work to be exhibited.
10. To make sure the booth is not too tall, too wide, or consists of a structure that is not a traditional booth, such as a chuck wagon, which has occurred.
11. Representative of the artist's composition and stands as a visual contract between the show and the artist. You will exhibit only that which you have juried.

We then asked for a selection between three (3) statements which BEST describes what should be included in the booth slide for their individual show and also gave them a chance to word their own statements on this subject. 35 of the respondents picked their selection choice and 16 gave us their own comments; a total of 51 responded to this question in some manner.

Which of the three statements below BEST describes what should be included in the booth slide for your show:

Choice #1

The slide should be photographed in an authentic show setting, capturing the way the booth looks during an actual event, including all work being displayed and all auxilliary booth components (bins, walls, pedestals)

30 respondents (59%)

Choice #2

The booth should be setup in a mock setting, including examples of all work to be displayed with all auxilliary booth components (bins, walls, pedestals) to "simulate" presentation during an actual event but using good lighting to maximize the visibility of the work.

5 respondents (10%)

Choice #3

The slide should be "staged" with work displayed in a minimal or salon style, using no auxilliary booth components, thereby optimizing the viewing of a few primary pieces of work (even if this is not the typical presentation used by the artist/artisan for an actual event).

0 respondents (0%)

OTHER

Individualized comments in regards to this question:

16 respondents (31%)

1. Photographed in an authentic show setting, UNLESS for a first-time artist, then in a mock setting, or even in a minimal style - depending on how the artists wish to represent themselves.
2. either one or two works for us --
3. clear picture of the craftsmanship
4. Whether photographed in an authentic setting or in a mock setting (we don't care which), it must show the proportion of work and all auxilliary components as it would actually appear at the show.
5. Booth setup is not as improtant as the actual scale and consistency of the work inside the booth. Booth slide should show work first, then tent display.
6. An actual setting or simulated works, as long as the display the jurors see is comparitive.
7. We need to see the work well and examples of everything being sold.
8. A combination of all 3 options; we like to work with our artists so that less experienced artists gain the benefit of more experienced artists, etc.
9. Authentic show setting is best, but for a new or first-time artist, a mock setting is ok, especially if they have no other way of representing themselves.
10. An authentic show setting is good. But we are not as concerned about the type of booth or display cases, but the actual artwork shows. We like to see a body of work.
11. Either of the first two options would work for our show. The quality and clarity of the photograph is more important than the setting. It is also important to show the auxilliary booth components.
12. The slide should be photographed in an authentic show setting, unless you don't have a slide of a show setting, in which case a mock setting is acceptable.
13. Artist make the decision
14. We accept mock settings
15. It does not matter, its not a fashion show, its a booth slide
16. doesn't matter

Does your show expect to see the same work -- not just consistent in style, but exactly the same -- in the booth slide as in the work slides submitted with the application?

53 total responses were received to this important question.

YES 11 responses 21% * *

NO 42 responses 79%

* * These responses are alarming and very disheartening since it appears to indicate how little these 11 shows know about our profession and how this is virtually impossible to accomplish if you are constantly creating new works without replication.

**Is an indoor booth slide acceptable for an outdoor show application?
Is an outdoor booth slide acceptable for an indoor show application?
(whichever applies to your event)**

53 total respondents

INDOOR BOOTH SLIDE FOR AN OUTDOOR EVENT (53 respondents)

OUTDOOR BOOTH SLIDE FOR AN INDOOR EVENT (39 respondents)

YES

11 responses 21%

9 responses 23%

NO

5 responses 9% * *

3 responses 8%

EITHER IS FINE

37 responses 70%

27 responses 69%

Comments from those responding to this question:

1. They tend to be graded lower than an outside photo
2. Different settings, different looks, different needs
3. Outdoor is preferred because it is more realistic to the actual setting
4. If it depicts the display as it will be shown at the outdoor show
5. If we layout a show based on an indoor slide, we have no idea of the dimensions of the person's canopy, what their outdoor presentation looks like, etc.
6. We do not prefer to see an inside booth photo as we are an outside show because we know they will need a booth top and will not have lighting
7. Need to be prepared for an outdoor show
8. An outdoor slide for one of our indoor events does not give us any idea what the artist's indoor setup looks like.

We asked a few specific medium/category questions which involved associative problems when trying to photograph a booth shot.

Some jewelers show their work only in display cases. Choose the statement below that best describes how your show prefers jewelers to prepare the booth slide.

(51 respondents)

Choice #1

Full booth setup as at a show, showing the work, the cases and the booth structure

41 responses 80%

Choice #2

A close-up of the display highlighting the jewelry cases and the work therein

5 responses 10%

Choice #3

Other methods - specified as below

5 responses 10%

1. Individual pieces
2. Booth setup is best, but of course for jewelry, a section of display with jewelry cases and work is fine. How does the artist wish to best represent oneself is the point for us
3. We wish to see individual pieces as well as booth set up for consistency and quality
4. Jurors seem to prefer the corner shot which whows a protion of the booth along with the display cases and presentation elements.
5. Photograph at an authentic show setting, capturing the way the booth looks during an actual event, with all presentation components

Eliminating all glare for 2D work under glass is virtually impossible. Additionally photographing a booth of 2D work straight on (from the front) shows only the back wall of work clearly. However, a side angle shot helps to reduce glare and includes two full walls of work within the booth. Is a side angle shot, showing two complete walls of work within the canopy acceptable for the booth slide of 2D artist?

(52 respondents)

YES	25 responses	48%
NO	7 responses	13%
EITHER WAY IS ACCEPTABLE	20 responses	39%

The Surveyors tried to determine some of the specific usages of the booth slide and how it related to an artist's score during the jury process.

Do you use the booth slide during your actual event for any purpose?
53 respondents

YES	24 responses	45%
NO	29 responses	55%

Please describe how your show uses the booth slide during the event.

(24 responses)

1. To match the work
2. Mostly to compare if the slide is consistent with what the artists actually brings to the show
3. To show the consistency to our onsite jurors between what was proposed/promised and what actually showed up
4. If we suspect submission of slide is significantly different that that presented, person may be asked to leave
5. Compare booth slide with actual display to see that the booth slide used to get in the show is consistent with the quality of the actual display that appears at the show
6. Verify submittal
7. If jurors have any questions on-site, we refer to the booth slide
8. We compare booth slides to the actual booth as a part of verifying that artists' slides accurately represent their work
9. Reviewing of the entire show before it opens to the public
10. Compare booth to slide, make note for future layouts
11. We have begun comparing how the booth slide during slide jurying compares with actual setup, such as my story about 14 unexpected Christmas trees
(NOTE: ??? - the surveyors did not receive the referenced "story")
12. If we have a concern about whether a booth is set up as it was represented on the application, we will pull the booth photo from our files and compare

13. If the Standards Committee has questions about the booth content
14. On-site review of work and booth slides
15. Used in validation
16. The booth slide as well as all the other slides is used where there is a "buy sell" or manufactured question
17. At the fair we compare the artist's slides to their work/setup to make sure it matches up
18. Verification of jury submissions
19. Site survey and inspection
20. If there is a "questionable" display, the jurors will review all the slides
21. We compare it and the sork slides to the actual set-up to confirm that work is as juried
22. We do a slide viewing during the show
23. Compare with booth that has been set up
24. As the visual contract between the show and the artist

Is the booth slide considered as part of the artists' overall score during the jury process?

(53 respondents)

YES	40 responses	75%
NO	12 responses	23%
BOOTH SLIDE IS SCORED SEPARATELY	1 response	2%

What are the major considerations used by the jury to determine the score for the booth slide?

(21 respondents)

RANKING SCALE:

10 = VERY IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION

1 = NOT AN IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION AT ALL

8 - 10 HIGHLY RANKED CONSIDERATION

5 - 7 MODERATE CONSIDERATION

1 - 4 LOW CONSIDERATION

Excellence & creativity of the work (17)

10 (59%) 6 (35%) 1 (6%)

An entire coherent body of work is presented (19)

12 (63%) 5 (26%) 2 (11%)

Consistency of work scale/type/quality as compared to individual work

slides (19)			
12 (63%)	4 (21%)		3 (16%)
Display provides an inviting presentation of work (17)			
12 (71%)	5 (29%)		0 (0%)
Work will fit in with the rest of the show (17)			
4 (24%)	8 (47%)		5 (29%)
Impact of the presented work within the display setting (17)			
7 (41%)	8 (47%)		2 (12%)
Marketability of the work (17)			
3 (18%)	7 (41%)		7 (41%)
A wide selection of sizes (17)			
1 (6%)	2 (12%)		14 (82%)
Good sturdy booth (17)			
2 (12%)	5 (29%)		10 (59%)
Other - described below (1)			
0 (0%)	0 (0%)		1 (6%)

COMMENTS *(includes additional comments from all respondents):*

1. Of course, coherent body of work, inviting, impact are important. Marketability, size?, etc. those are up to the artist
2. We look to plot the booths to contrast the art
3. No #10s available. We want our exhibitor's to have a professional presentation of their work
4. Quality is considered. If an item featured in the slides of individual pieces is minimally represented in the booth, or if there is an over abundance of an item in the booth, the jurors take note.
5. We do not score the booth slide, it is not shown to jurors, it is reviewed by the committee after all artists are accepted
6. I think the booth slide should be for recheck purposes, primarily

What factors contribute to "consistency" when viewing the booth slide with the work slides. Mark all that apply.

(47 respondents)

Size(s) of work shown

24 responses 51%

Type of work shown, including subject matter (2 D) or designs (3D)

45 responses 96%

Function or non-function

10 responses 21%

Complexity of work shown in techniques or styles

24 responses 51%
Other (please describe)
3 responses 6%

Other Comments:

1. Quality and balance of work in work slides must match quality and balance of work in booth slide
2. That the artist does consistently good work in how they wish to represent themselves as a whole
3. Individual pieces do not reflect the total art continuity of quality, a total booth slide will give the jury some idea of quality, but the total booth slide give a cohesive body of work view

How much weight does the booth slide carry as a factor for being accepted into your show? Measure all that apply.
(52 respondents)

Score has equal importance with scoring of other slides

17 responses 32%

Used only to break ties

5 responses 10%

Used only as a reference, not actually given a score

18 responses 35%

A poor booth slide could mean rejection of the artist

22 responses 42%

An excellent booth slide could be the deciding factor for acceptance

23 responses 44%

Booth is scored separately and represents a percentage of an artists' overall score

6 responses 11%

Other (comments shown below)

11 responses 21%

Comments:

1. An excellent booth could be a determining factor of acceptance between two equally scored artist
2. Not used for Scoring
3. The artist is given one score for all slides and statement. Judges are allowed to factor the booth slide or lack there of as they choose; it can be

a tie breaker and has more influence over some judges

4. Represents 20% of score

5. Answer Questions (?? Surveyors were unable to understand this answer ??)

6. It is used mostly as gauge of professionalism. The show itself needs to maintain a quality in presentation as well as creativity.

7. It is part of total score, but smaller percentage, also - if we do not clarify booth slide in prospectus, we will be doing so this year

8. All slides are viewed and one score is given. A good booth slide may help in raising the score, but not necessarily. Conversely, a bad

9. Artist is rejected if work quality in booth is not as shown in jury slides

10. The booth slide is not scored separately. The presentation, however, is considered in the overall score. Again, the booth slide gives the jurors a look at the body of work to be displayed

11. "Accepted" is not something the director can answer - Directors do not accept or decline the artist's participation

The Surveyors attempted to find out how much information was given to applying artists concerning the booth slide in the shows' prospectus.

Do you describe your specific detailed requirements for a booth slide in your prospectus?

(52 respondents)

YES 22 responses 42%

NO 30 responses 58%

Do you clarify your use of the booth slide in your prospectus?

(50 respondents)

YES 17 responses 34%

NO 33 responses 66%

Do you state that the booth slide is scored in your jury process in your prospectus, if that is the case?

(48 responses)

YES 26 responses 54%

NO 22 responses 46%

Surveyors Comments & Points to Ponder: It is apparent from many of the answers here and from comments artists make concerning their individual booth slide preparation that what a show wants in this regards, may not be what they are getting. There does seem to be some need for clarification from shows on exactly what the use and purpose is of the booth slide. Are they getting what they want in the booth slide for their purpose? Are they looking for "real" and getting "imaginary"? Can the booth slide be utilized more during the show so that unacceptable conditions, whatever they might be, can be corrected? Some artists feel that measuring for quality, consistency, presentation and cohesiveness during the jury process is, of course, important but should it not be as important or perhaps more important to measure these items during the actual event?

This was our first attempt in doing this type of specific issue in-depth survey with show directors. We're sure it's not perfect and hopefully our skills in data/information collection will develop as we grow as an organization. We hope to do more information, fact-finding surveys in the future so that we will be more knowledgeable about specifics that affect the lives of artists who do shows and add to their artistic, economical and professional success through this knowledge.

As we said in the beginning, we are sure that this will not be the end to this subject of booth slides but hopefully it will be a good place to start discussions amongst ourselves and with show directors on this important topic that we have wrestled with for years.

The NAIA Survey and Board Input Committee