

Conference Poster Guidelines and Tips

Contact Info: Normal Hall 120
812-237-2603
cirt-md@indstate.edu
www.indstate.edu/cirt/MD

Staff: Sarah Edwardson, *Coordinator, Interactive and Multimedia Design Services*
812-237-4629
sarah.edwardson@indstate.edu

Jayme Longo, *Academic Services Assistant*
812-237-2603
jayme.longo@indstate.edu

Matt Wilson, *Multimedia Designer*
812-237-2693
matt.wilson@indstate.edu

Questions to Consider Regarding Conference Venue

How much space is available for displaying your poster?

Are there specific requirements on the size of the poster?

- Majority of conferences have this information available on the Web

Will you have wall space or table space available?

- This will determine whether mounting to foamboard is necessary

If you have wall space available, how are you able to attach the poster to the wall (push pins, tape, Velcro)?

- Some venues are very specific on what types of materials can be used to attach your poster to the wall

What do they (the conference) provide for you and what do you have to bring?

- If you prefer a digital display or presentation, you may need to consider outlets, extension cords, easels, etc.

Will you be flying or driving to the conference?

- If flying, you may wish to purchase a travel tube for carrying your poster. If driving, you may instead wish to have your poster dry mounted to foamboard for easy set up. See specifics below for details regarding printing alone vs. dry mounting.

What type of poster can MD create and what size should it be?

MD encourages faculty and students to move into creating one large printed poster rather than multi-board presentations. It looks more professional and it is much easier to transport and set up at the event.

If you are traveling by plane, you may want to consider just having the poster printed and then you can roll it up and transport it in a tube. **MD does not provide tubes.** You can purchase a tube locally at Rapid Reproductions, Staples, or shipping supply companies. Make sure to ask the designer the final printed size in order to purchase a long enough tube. We usually suggest a 42" tube so you can use it for other posters in the future.

If you have table space available, you may wish to have the poster mounted onto foamcore in a tri-fold fashion. Planning for these folds in the beginning stages of the design is important.

If you would like for the poster to be mounted on foamcore for support, the largest we can mount is 42" x 92" (so pretty much any poster we print, we can mount). However, this size poster would be very difficult to handle, so we suggest a more common size (Example: 36" x 48", 36" x 56", 40" x 60").

If you are having your poster printed through MD, the largest we can print on the height is 42".

We prefer to print conference posters on a matte or coated paper rather than a glossy paper. There are benefits to both but the major drawback of glossy paper is that it often reflects light, leaving the poster hard to read from a distance or if there is direct light shining on the poster. The matte finish or coated paper also holds up better if it gets a little damp.

Lamination: MD can laminate your conference with a satin lamination material that will help reduce damage to your poster during transport and can make for easier handling with pinning up to a wall. Satin lamination will not reflect as much light as a high gloss print or lamination.

How much will the poster cost?

Conference poster design falls under "Academic Affairs," therefore, there will not be a charge for the poster or design time. See our charge policy for details.

What type of content should be included?

The faculty/student is always responsible for the content. The graphic designer is NOT the content expert and should not be expected to develop content or proof read provided content. Of course MD will read as much as we can and if we find a mistake, we will change it...but the faculty/student is responsible for the content being correct. The graphic designer will simply be cutting and pasting the information into the layout document.

The faculty/student must provide an electronic version of the content. We can retype headings, sub-titles, etc., but the body of the text needs to be provided to us in electronic form, meaning a Word file, editable PDF, or PowerPoint.

The following are only examples of the type of information that is normally included on a research poster:

- Project Title and Faculty/Student Name(s)
- Department/University
- Abstract
- Introduction
- Bulleted points with main subject areas
- Methodologies
- Conclusions/Results

- Further research questions
- References
- Tables/Graphs/Charts/Images
- **ISU logo (MUST ALWAYS BE INCLUDED)**

What about graphics/images on my poster?

Images can make your poster more visually attractive in a sea of other conference posters. Images and color graphics/text can help your poster stand out among others. We always encourage images to be included on posters, regardless the subject matter.

Remember that we are printing larger than the normal 8 1/2 x 11 sheet, so using the same size images on a letter size paper will not work for a 40" x 60" size poster. We cannot just simply enlarge images clipped from the internet. This will result in a very pixelated image and will not look attractive, plus it is illegal to simply copy the images off a website without the owner's permission.

We always encourage faculty/students to provide any images they would like included on the poster, especially images they can take themselves. This is the best way to avoid copyright issues and to get the best end result. Another option is to use images taken by University Photography Services:

<http://www.isuphoto.smugmug.com/>

If you have an idea of the types of images you prefer, but do not have high enough quality images to provide, MD can select royalty free images to use on your poster.

We can also scan photos if you do not have them in digital format.

What if you would like to design your own poster?

We encourage faculty and students to take the initiative to design their own posters, however MD is here to provide that service. If a faculty or student wishes to learn how to create a poster on their own, there is training available within the Student Technology Resource Center and the software is available on select computers in the 24-hour computer lab and the STRC lab:

<http://www1.indstate.edu/cirt1/student/techresourcecenter.html>.

MD uses Adobe Illustrator and Adobe InDesign for poster creation and would encourage the layout be done in one of these design applications.

We use Adobe Photoshop to edit any images that will be inserted into the layout document.

If you do not feel comfortable using these programs, a large percentage of faculty/students design their posters using PowerPoint. PowerPoint is not a program designed for creating posters, however, there are still ways of using PowerPoint to achieve a high quality conference poster design. If you wish to design your poster using PowerPoint, you must setup your page size in the beginning to the appropriate poster size (typical sizes: 36" x 56" and 36" x 48"). Do not design the poster at the regular slide size, insert images, and expect the quality to be the same when printed and enlarged 300%+. PowerPoint will also limit your page setup size and will not create posters larger than 56" on the width.

If using a non-standard font, you may wish to send that font along with your PowerPoint file. If you are using Adobe software, make sure that all the images are embedded in the file, your text is converted to outlines, and that the *document color mode* is CMYK.

When submitting your file, it is always best to sit down with a designer and have them look it over on the screen for any general errors. You may even wish to print out a small proof before submitting your files, to proof read for mistakes.

Always check to make sure that you have included the “More From Day One” logo on your poster. The correct ISU logo must be somewhere on the poster in order for our department to do the printing. If it is not included on the provided file, we will insert the logo before printing and notify you of the change. Please refer to the University Design Standards for proper use of the logo:
<http://www1.indstate.edu/marcom/gi.htm>.



Contact the MD office via e-mail for University approved logo files.

When do I need to get my files to MD in order to meet my deadline?

If you wish for MD to design your poster, we ask that you submit your files via e-mail or in person at least 2 weeks prior to your deadline. The longer MD has, the better the quality of the poster.

If given less than 2 weeks to complete the poster design and printing, MD **DOES NOT GUARANTEE** that the poster will be completed by the deadline. Projects are taken on a first come, first served basis... so the longer the faculty/student waits, they are less likely to get their project completed by the expected deadline.

If you design your own poster, MD asks for 1 week before the deadline to print and/or mount the poster. Minor changes may need to be made and printing issues can always occur, so the faculty/student cannot expect to have their poster printed by their expected deadline if their file is not submitted at least 1 week prior to the pick-up date.

The Design Process

Step 1: Contact MD to discuss project needs and timeline. If you would like MD to design your poster, set up an appointment to meet with a designer.

Step 2: Meeting with designer... what you will need to bring.

- Sketch up a storyboard or poster mock-up on a scratch piece of paper. This will help you get a better understanding of the content you will need to provide and give the designer somewhere to start.
- Bring all content in electronic form (images/text). Either e-mail the content before meeting or bring on a flash drive or CD.
- Only include the most important content... not your entire research. Cut down your information before submitting to MD.
- If you have a color scheme in mind or a layout you prefer, discuss this with the designer at this time.

During your meeting, the designer will let you know when to expect a proof (all proofs will be sent via e-mail, usually in PDF or JPG format). A completion date will be agreed upon as well at this time.

Step 3: The designer may contact you with any additional questions. If charges are necessary, pricing information will be sent to you and/or your Administrative Assistant at this time. Final billing will not be sent until project is complete.

Step 4: A design proof will be sent to you via e-mail. You will then be expected to proof the design and contact the designer with any changes. Your project will not be printed until you have approved the finished design. If major changes are needed, the completion date may need to be adjusted at this time. Proof reading is not the responsibility of the designer. If errors are not corrected at this point, reprinting after the project is complete can result in charges to your department.

Step 5: Once all changes are made, your poster will then be printed, mounted, laminated, etc. This can often take several days, depending upon the number of pieces and MD workload.

Step 6: A designer will contact you once your project is complete. All projects can be picked up at the receptionist desk in Normal Hall, 120 (basement). If billing is necessary, an interdepartmental voucher will then be sent to your department.