

Tips for Preparing an Effective Seminar

*Robin Moody
Manager of Conference Programs*

So you've chosen to sponsor one or more on-floor seminars at NA 2010? Good for you! (Good for the attendee!) Here are some tips to help you get started on your presentation.

1. Do not use this speaking opportunity to deliver a commercial message.
2. Refrain from using superlatives to describe your company and products.
3. Avoid reflecting negatively on your competition.
4. Honor the published title and abstract of your seminar.
5. Employ seasoned, practiced speakers.
6. Prepare your PowerPoint presentation!
 - Do not crowd your presentation with too many slides. A good rule of thumb is one to three minutes per slide (making adjustments for videos).
 - Use dark background colors on your slides, such as blue, black or maroon. White or light-colored background hues are hard on the eyes.
 - Use white or yellow for your text. To make text easy to read, use Helvetica or Arial fonts in Upper/Lower case, saving all CAPS for emphasis only. (Bold face, underlining and/or italics can be used as well.)
 - Limit the use of animation to essentials only. For instance, having each and every individual letter "fly in from the right" on each and every bullet point takes up valuable presentation time.
 - Consider carefully the use of videos. What works on your system may not work on the theater equipment even with extensive testing.
7. Prepare an effective handout. The proper use of handouts is an effective way to enhance your presentation educationally beyond 45 minutes:
 - Handouts must be educational, strictly adhering to that which was presented.
 - A photocopy your slides is not an effective handout.
 - A technical paper complementing those slides is!
 - Marketing materials or giveaways are not allowed.
8. Above all, **please adhere to all deadlines** associated with providing presentations and other materials to MHIA in advance of the show.

Full details on seminar preparation can be found in the official Seminar Guidelines. If you have any questions in the meantime, please contact Robin Moody, Manager of Conference Programs by phone 704-676-1190 or via email rmood@mhia.org.