

Publications

From Worldcon Runners' Guide

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Publications

Progress Reports

Until the reports of the last six or eight months prior to the con, the main purpose of the progress reports is to keep up the public image of your Worldcon. Unless you have a large contingent of travelling fans on your committee (which is increasingly rare), the progress reports are all the contact most people will be having with your con.

It is traditional to publish names of new members in each progress report. When publishing membership names in progress reports, it is not necessary to publish numbers as well.

Souvenir Book

Due to the increasing complexity of Worldcon programming (and the late date at which it is usually finalized), combined with the increasing size of "program books," the program book has grown into a 150-200 page volume which is most certainly **not** convenient to carry around.

Mark Olson has suggested that it really should be referred to as the "Souvenir Book" since most people don't crack it open until after the convention.

The souvenir book should contain the following:

1. Masthead page, with name of convention, dates, guests, location, mailing address, email address.
2. Copyright notice.
(Suncon left theirs off; it was spotted by Greg Bennett at the last minute, and a rubber stamp was obtained, then all program books were hand-stamped!)
3. Committee and staff list.
This should be as complete and detailed as possible, and updated until the last minute the program book goes to press. Often this is the only public credit many con workers get. Each division manager must be kicked and pummeled into assembling and proofing the lists for their people.
4. WSFS Constitution, bylaws, business carried forward from the last Worldcon, and any known motions to be considered at this Worldcon (as of the deadline date).
5. Alphabetical list of members, with membership number and an indication as to who has attending and who has supporting memberships. City/state/country information noted if possible.
Some people feel that if member names were published in progress reports, the reprinting of all those names is a needless waste of space in the souvenir book. Others feel that the printing of all the names in one place in the souvenir book is a Good Thing, as it documents in the one publication that is likely to be kept by members exactly who joined that year.
6. A map of North America and the World, showing members from each location. For North America, give figures for each state and province.
7. List of past Worldcons, including year, name, chairman, guests, attendance.
8. List of past Hugo winners.
9. List of this year's Hugo nominees.
10. Introductory welcome from the chairman.
11. Photographs and bios of the convention guests.
If not, a full bibliography for each guest, at least provide a selected bibliography.
12. Photographs and bios of TAFF/DUFF winners, along with a short article on TAFF/DUFF.
13. Table of contents.
14. Index of advertisers.
15. Artist credits for artwork appearing in the book.
16. In Memorium page
This lists all SF fans, pros, and important people in pop culture, film/TV, etc. who died during the previous year. Most concons just list the names, but it would be nice if birth/death dates, and a line about the person's significance was included.
17. Lots and lots of ads to help pay for the thing!
18. Welcome messages from the city, Province/State authorities, Governor/Premier, Secretary, Minister of Science, etc.

Optional items

Depending on the size of the pocket program and the number of publications the concon wishes to produce, these items may need to go into another publication. The number of publications a concon wishes to produce is partly a financial decision, partly a decision based on what resources are available. But the information listed below does need to appear somewhere.

1. Program descriptions

A one-line program title is not enough to let people know what to expect. Usually, a paragraph of information is needed, along with a list of panelists and moderator. Sometimes the pocket program is designed to include this. If not, as complete a list should be printed in the program book.

The program book version can be done by topic, and actual times should not be included (that's the job of the pocket program).

2. Film program descriptions

Some conventions have a separate program for the film/video program. If this is not done, the program book should contain, at a minimum, a list of films booked as of press time (but not show times—that is for the pocket program.) If possible, a short description of each film, including year, director, writer, stars, historic significance, etc., should be included to whet people's appetites for specific films.

The actual schedule should appear in the pocket program.

3. Restaurant guide

Usually this is more useful as a separate publication that can be carried around. The program book might contain an article with detailed descriptions of some of the more interesting places to eat.

4. Tourist information.

What is local that's interesting to see. Rather than detailed articles (which belong in progress reports), you want digest type summaries, as people are not going to read detailed articles at-con. Some prefer that no tourist information be printed in the program book.

What NOT to include in the program book:

1. Fiction.

While in general, this is a bad idea (it adds voluminous space with material that most people won't care about in the future when looking back), there are some exceptions, including:

- A. If the con ran a short story contest of some type, it is appropriate to print winning entries in the program book.
- B. If the Guest of Honor had a short story he wanted to appear in the program book.

Pocket Program

This has grown to be more and more of a pain in recent years, as the size and complexity of Worldcons has grown. The problem still is: how to have a publication which gives a day-by-day, hour-by-hour overview of what is happening, that will fit in a pocket? If not a shirt pocket (hah!), at least a back pocket.

Pierre's Principles of Pocket Programs

(by Filthy Pierre)

1. A POCKET PROGRAM SHOULD FIT IN THE POCKET

We guarantee: if your pocket program does not fit into a pocket (preferably a shirt pocket, but a jean pocket is technically OK), you will hear about it!

2. A POCKET PROGRAM SHOULD BE A PROGRAM

The pocket program should show all information (or as much as possible) that a con member will need to navigate and survive at the con. Remember, the pocket program will be carried around when all other stuff (program book, info sheets, etc.) has been left in the hotel room.

3. THE GRID IS GREAT

For easy reference, nothing beats having the programming laid out in grid form, with places listed versus times.

By suitable choice of type styles (lightface and bold, italic and vertical) and fonts, an attractive and readable package should be possible. Consultations should be held with the printer well in advance, using a rough, tentative program. The submission of the final program, and the actual desktop publishing/typesetting and printing, should be left as late as possible.

Pressure should be brought to bear on appropriate committee members to supply information on their events for the pocket program as early as possible, and progress should be tracked (and appropriate fires lit under appropriate people) at the highest level. As a "default," the publications committee should start with the information for each department that was printed in the last couple of pocket programs.

4. PLACES SHOULD BE IN THEIR PLACE

The rooms used by the con should be listed in order, as explained in the first page of introduction to the pocket program. This allows the grids themselves to serve as a rough map, showing which rooms are close to or far from others.

All of the rooms used by the con at any time on any day should be listed in a format like a two-page spread. Consistency is important to help fans find a given room. Note that the rooms listed should include those for standing functions (art show, dealers, etc.).

5. TIMES SHOULD BE TIMELY

Whenever it may not be clear when an event begins and ends (e.g., it runs over two or more time slots), put the times explicitly in the description of events.

When looking for models for pocket programs, the ConFrancisco pocket program stands out as the finest attempt in recent years to reconcile the problems with what to put in. It was 130 pages, 4 1/2" high by 7" wide, spiral bound on the left, and contained just about everything desired, and in a reasonable type size! Something on this scale is highly useful, and the cost can be brought down by selling ad space.

Items that must be in the pocket program:

1. Name of the convention, location, dates.
2. The usual boiler plate on Worldcon-related trademarks.
3. Copyright notice.
4. List of hours of operation for dealers' room, exhibits, art show, registration, gofers, information booth, daily newsletter, sales to members, child care, filking, gaming, con suite, masquerade registration, fan lounge, etc.
5. Floor plans of the various facilities used.
(preferably with an index of meeting room names, and the facility/floor they are located on)
6. Grid of all programming and special events, hour by hour, by day. Autograph sessions, too.
7. Film schedule

The above is what would fit into a "slim" version of a pocket program—one designed with minimal size and maximum portability. If you follow the ConFrancisco model, then you will also want to include the items below:

Items that it would be really, really nice if they were in the pocket program:

1. Speaker/participant index
This is so useful, but is almost never done! An index helps people to track down their favorite pro, friends, etc. Please consider doing this!
2. Table of contents (if the pocket program is large)
3. Convention address
4. Artwork to liven up the text, preferably humorous, and preferably related to the con or various areas of the con.
5. Badge wearing policies (for admittance to events)
6. Lost badge policy.
7. Plug for volunteers.
8. Smoking policy.
9. Alcohol policy.
10. Children policy (re unescorted, etc.)
11. Animal policy (guide dogs, snakes, white rats, etc.)
12. Weapons policy
13. Policy re the concom's right to pull badges.
14. A paragraph or two describing various convention events, including opening ceremonies, Guest reception, Dance, Masquerade, Regency dance, Hugo Awards ceremony, closing ceremonies, blood drive (if held), special lunches, other special events, etc.
15. Map of the downtown area around the con facilities.
16. Map and index to the dealers' room. If space permits, include a one-line description of the merchandise.
17. Descriptions of program items, including panelists and moderator, room and time.

There needs to be somewhere a detailed description of each program item and its panelists. If your pocket program can take the size hit, it belongs there. If you're trying for a minimal size pocket program, then this information should be in the Souvenir Book (with NO times/days listed!), and the pocket program version should simply be a grid with titles, and a section containing adds/deletes done since the program book went to press.

18. Food guide.
19. Concise descriptions (including phone, hours of operation, cost) of nearby tourist stuff to do.
20. Information on the local transportation system (buses, trains, cabs, trolleys, carriages, rickshaws, etc.) Also where to park.
21. Locations of nearby grocery stores, copy shops, costumer supply stores, banks, pharmacies, service stations.
22. Information on where automated teller machines are, and which cards they accept.
23. Emergency numbers for police, AAA, highway patrol, suicide hotlines, rape crisis, etc.
24. Space for notes to be written down. Also, if possible, pages or sections of pages to be used for each person to jot down his daily schedule (and party lists).

(Some of the above may duplicate what is suggested for the souvenir book. **So long as the information is identical**, it does little harm (and possibly some good) to duplicate items; consider it.

Food Guide

Fans want to eat at cons, and they want interesting food at low prices. Since most fans are not on expense accounts or writing off their trip, they look for value, and tend to avoid the expensive hotel restaurants who usually make out like bandits with large conventions.

For most attendees, it will be their first visit to that part of your city. One of the greatest services you can perform for them is to help them find that great meal with a good crowd of friends that will go down in fannish legend.

The greatest of all Worldcon food guides was the one George Alec Effinger did for the 1988 Worldcon in New Orleans. Those who have aspirations of doing a good job at writing a food guide would do well to study Effinger's effort.

A good food guide should have the following characteristics:

1. An extremely thorough listing of all eating places within an 8-block radius.
2. Outside of an 8-block radius, list the best of each type of cuisine the city offers, along with a guide to any special areas within a reasonable cab ride (Greektowns, Chinatowns, etc.)
3. Each restaurant listing should contain: type of cuisine, operating hours, telephone number, and some indication of how expensive it is. Most common cost guidelines in the US are multiple \$ signs, one for each \$10/person of a typical meal, and a cent sign for those few places under \$10. A truly superior guide will contain a couple of sentences to a couple of paragraphs on each place, noting house specialties and/or items to avoid.
4. 24-hour or late-night restaurants within walking distance should be noted.
5. A map of the 8-block radius should be provided, with all street names provided. Depending on how many restaurants are in that area, either place numbers on the map and reference each restaurant by number, or divide the map into grids and give a grid reference as part of each restaurant listing.
6. Any restaurants with dress code requirements should be noted.

7. Handicapped accessibility (or lack thereof) should be noted. How you wish to convey this information depends on what the situation is in the city.

The food guide should be assembled during the year prior to the con, and carefully reviewed by the committee no more than three or four months prior to the con. This is because restaurants close, and hours change. You want it to be as current as possible. Your local Convention Bureau will probably have sample publications that can give you a running start on the restaurants in the downtown area.

If you wait until too close to the con, it will end up getting slapped together, and will reflect poorly on your city. This really needs to be one of the publications that the largest amount of care goes into!

Checking out restaurants for the food guide is one way various departments and subcommittees can get together and have fun helping out in the overall con effort. Tip: design a restaurant evaluation form for concom to fill out when visiting restaurants in the vicinity of the con hotel. A lot of fun can be had with this.

Your host hotels should contain at least one restaurant that has been negotiated to stay open on a 24 hour basis for the duration of the con. Make sure your Facilities Liaison gets it into the contract.

Inexpensive restaurants within a two or three block area should be especially solicited to have special hours during the con, and to offer special coupons or discounts to members.—Perhaps even to advertise in the Souvenir Book or Food Guide. If you play your cards right, the Food Guide could be produced at no cost to the committee! In order to do this, however, you will need to have special solicitation letters (on committee stationery) put together several months in advance, and a major lobbying effort will have to be made.

This is because most restaurants in a downtown area are oriented towards lunchtime business for local office workers during the week. Those restaurants that usually orient towards conventions are those that are upscale and appeal to people on expense accounts. They simply *do not understand how we are different from normal conventions, and it will take a major effort on your part to convince them otherwise!*

You need to contact not just the shift manager of your targeted restaurants, but the general manager and possibly even the owners! If the restaurant belongs to a chain, the regional manager should be contacted as well! This whole idea of working with local restaurants requires *far* more work than most Worldcon committees think it does, and the usual effort is too little, too late.

Daily Newsletter

Format of Daily Newsletter

Three commonly-used formats have been done:

- a. 8 1/2" x 11"
- b. 8 1/2" x 14"
- c. 8 1/2" x 17", folded to create four pages

There are advantages and disadvantages to each. With 8 1/2" x 11", the newsletter staff often tends to put out an issue as soon as enough material arrives to fill one. With the four-page format, newsletters are needed less often but require more material.

Each issue should be printed on a different color paper, so that when fans see the newsletter, they can tell at a distance whether it is the issue they last read.

The layout should be convenient, consistent, and easy to read. The daily newsletter is **not** the place for a fan editor to try out avant-garde, esoteric layout techniques, i.e., it should **not** look like **Wired**. The emphasis should be on making it easy to skim.

Two of the most important items that need to run in a consistent location are the party list and program changes (see below.) Items that tend to run in most issues should usually be placed in the same location each time.

Grey-shading boxes and such should be minimized. Given the haste with which this has to be produced, it's all too easy for the grey shading to end up blotting out text or making it difficult to read.

Schedule for Daily Newsletter

Below is a **suggested** schedule for publishing, and typical items that would be in each particular issue:

1. Wednesday night/Thursday morning
 - Initial orientation.
 - Notice that badges are required, steenkeeng or not, and notice of the concom's policy on lost badges.
 - Weapons policy.
 - Lost and found location.
 - Newsletter schedule and where to drop off items.
 - Appeal for contributions; list types that are desired.
 - List of all publications available from the committee (pocket program, program book, food guide, film guide, video guide, children's programming, etc.) and where to get them.
 - Describe what a neofan is and point out where neofan programming will be.
 - Initial request for volunteers, with specifics on areas most in need of help.
2. Friday Morning
 - Thursday's final registration count.
3. Friday Evening
 - Results of preliminary Business Meeting.
 - Party list.
 - Warning that tomorrow is last day for site selection voting.
4. Saturday morning
 - Friday's final registration count.
 - Yet another notice re site selection, including hours.
5. Saturday evening
 - Results of main Business Meeting.
 - Saturday evening party list
 - Notice of the Hogo Ranquet location (see Elst Weinstein)
6. Sunday morning
 - Saturday's final registration count.
 - Award winners from Saturday night main event.

7. Sunday evening

- Site selection results, including statistics on the voting.
- Initial info on winning committee, including Guests, chairman, when/where registrations will be accepted, etc.
- Results from Sunday Business Meeting.
- Sunday evening party list.
- Highlights of Hogu Ranquet.

8. Monday morning

- Sunday's final registration count.
- Award winners from Sunday evening main event.
- Monday evening party list, including an explanation of what a Dead Dog Party is.
- Special thank-yous to newsletter staff from the editor.
- Gripe session explanation and location (with re-iteration of the weapons policy)

Depending on the amount of news available, the size of each issue, and the skills and determination of the editorial staff, two issues could be put out on Thursday and Monday, with the occasional Extra. Likewise, it is not uncommon for three issues per day on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday.

While Extras are a good idea if there is breaking news or simply too much material, it is best to keep Extras to a minimum, and instead to have fans expecting the newsletter at a given time, so they will get into the habit of looking for it first thing in the morning and before/after dinner, and not have to wonder about whether an issue has come out recently with important information.

Morning issues should be available by 9 am, no later than 10 am (ideally, they will have been put together the previous night.) Midday editions should be out around one or two (to catch people coming back from lunch.) Evening editions should be out around 5 or 6 pm (to catch people on their way to/from dinner).

Boilerplate Items to Include

■ Logo and colophon information

At the top of the first page of each issue should be the logo/title of the newsletter, along with the issue number, the date and time of distribution. Though the logo/title can be "artsy" depending on the artist who did it, the issue number, day of the week, date and time should be in a large, easy to read font. It should be immediately clear to the reader which issue is being viewed.

It is fannish tradition for each Worldcon to name its newsletter. Usually the name contains a direct or indirect reference to the host city; often the name also has a touch of humor in it. Examples: Lobster Tails (Boston), Daley Planet (Chicago, referring to their well-known mayor.) Many Worldcons have fan artists do stylized renditions of the newsletter title with accompanying artwork; fan artists are often amenable to doing this, as it gives them exposure. Be sure to credit the artist doing each issue's title.

■ Party lists

In order to help fans party-hop easier, party lists should be broken down by hotel, and within each hotel listed from the top party floor down. That way, the fans can figure at a glance which hotel

has the parties they want to go to first, and can take one elevator trip to the top, and use stairs (mostly) to walk down from one party to another.

Party lists are one of the most important things people look for. In general, issues containing party lists should place the party list at the beginning of the newsletter on the left side of the page, right below the colophon information. This also makes the list easy to refer to when people are carrying it in their pockets at night.

If possible, leave some blank space after the party list to provide room for fans to make their own additions as they are invited to private parties.

In issues with no party list, run a box in the lower left of the front page announcing when the issue with the next party list will be out.

- Changes/additions to programming, films, etc.

This is important information, second only to where the parties are. Normally, run it in the upper left of the first page, immediately after the party list (if any), or in the upper right of the first page, immediately below the colophon. If there are no new program changes, a boxed item in the lower right of the front page should announce this.

- Deadline for next issue, and anticipated distribution time.
- Corrections of any errors in the last pre-con progress report.
- Corrections of any errors in the pocket program.
- Results of each Business Meeting session and important items to be covered in the next session (and where/when it will be).
- Award winners for Hugos, Masquerade, Art show, etc.

Also award winners for any committee-sponsored competitions, e.g., trivia bowl.

- Where to get ice for parties.
- Special notices for events the committee wishes the attendees to take special notice of, e.g., Guest of Honor reception, meet the pros party, etc. Also thank-yous of people the committee especially wants to thank for helping out, or for a generous donation of equipment, etc.
- Crime reports. If there are reports of muggings, pick-pocketing, theft, vandalism, etc., the attendees need to know.
- Critical lost and found items: medication, wallets/purses, small children, etc.
- Requests for translators for non-English speaking fans who need assistance. (Russian and Japanese are the usual ones requested.) Don't run a generic request for translators—wait until you get a request.
- Listings of religious services organized for fans.

Where Christian listings are concerned, please verify that "Christian" means "run by someone from a traditional Christian denomination." There was an incident at a convention a few years ago where a "Christian" service turned out to be "Pre-Nicene Gnostic Christian," i.e., neo-pagan. Many people's feelings were deeply hurt; it was really ugly.

- Notices of banquet/special event tickets that are still available.

- Requests for volunteers. These notices should be run several times, and include some humor if at all possible. Requests for volunteers for particular areas (e.g., Masquerade gophers) are especially important.
 - Volunteer requests should include mention of the tangible rewards available (if any—e.g., t-shirts, den access), and intangible ones (e.g., good way to meet people, round out con experience, give something back to fandom, etc.).
 - Emphasize no experience necessary.
 - If you can include a bit of humor, it helps make the ad more readable.
 - Specific instructions on where and when to report to volunteer should always be included.
- Special notices by the hotels, good (deals on ice, restaurant specials, extended restaurant hours) and bad (corkage rules, noise rules, etc..) Also stuff like special notices re how to expedite room checkout. If the hotel wants the newsletter to plug its concession stands, etc., it's a good idea to cooperate.
- Shuttle bus schedules and information.
- Registration figures for each day, both this day's and total, displayed in tabular form for easy reading. Include "as of". Example:

Friday Total

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----|------|--|
| Pre-registered who picked up badges | xxx | xxxx | |
| At-the-door new registrations | xxx | xxxx | |
| One-day memberships sold | xxx | xxxx | |
| Total | xxx | xxxx | |

- Last-minute masquerade notices.
- Special fan auction notices.
- WOOF notices
- "Hatched, matched, and dispatched"
 - Obituaries for fans/pros who died since the program book went to press.
 - Birth announcements
 - Engagement, wedding announcements.
- Advertising of material that the committee's Sales to Members department is offering.
- Coverage of opening ceremonies.
- Weather reports. The first and last issue of the day should contain critical weather forecast information: whether rain is expected and predicted high and low temperatures. Numbers should be provided in both Centigrade and Fahrenheit.
- Any critically important mundane news of what is happening in the real world. Usually this is stuff like deaths of famous people, high-profile resignations, invasions, etc.

Optional Items to Include

- Some parties have special features or special announcements. If space allows, it's a common courtesy to run descriptive items (within reason).
- Try to find out:
 - a. Oldest fan attending
 - b. Youngest fan attending
 - c. Fan attending who has been at the most Worldcons
 - d. Fan who had the most difficulty in getting to the convention
 - e. Most humorous/strangest button actually being worn.
 - f. Most humorous/strangest T-shirt actually being worn.
 - g. How many past Worldcon chairmen are attending

etc.

- Ask for "top 10 list" submissions a la Dave Letterman. There may be some usable submissions.
- Party reviews.

Make sure these are non-partisan, i.e., commenting primarily on neat things said or done at the parties, not hatchet jobs on groups that the writer doesn't like.

- Highlights of the Hogu Awards ceremony.

Contact Elst Weinstein for this.

- Encourage the various departments to provide interesting statistics, e.g., number of kegs of beer used by the con suite each night, number of panels/pieces of art in the art show, etc.
- Con Survival Tips:

Farber's Foot Saver Principle: Sit down whenever you have the opportunity. – Gary Farber

Murphy's Corollary #636-2: the shuttles will only run on time when you're not in a hurry. Be forewarned. – Ross Pavlac

Spike's Leap of Faith: When approaching a revolving door which has an open segment in front of you, do not stop abruptly and do not hesitate. Step inside or run the risk of being stuffed inside. – Spike Parsons

Fannish etiquette recommends spinning your propeller instead of tipping your beanie. – Marie Bartlett-Sloan

Never eat in an Asian cuisine restaurant where none of the staff is Asian. – Terilee Edwards-Hewitt

- Restaurant reviews or short recommendations.

The importance of this is directly proportional to the quality of the concon's food guide. In any event, reviews should be limited to restaurants that are close (walk or short cab ride), relatively inexpensive and/or specialty ethnic.

- Every couple of days, run the official exchange rates for local currency against US dollar, British Pound, Australian Dollar. If there are places that have especially good exchange rates, publicize them.
- Short definitions of fannish terms that are in common use: Smof, neofan, etc.
- If secrecy can be guaranteed, it would be nice to have an issue handed out at the end of the Hugo Awards ceremony as people leave, listing the winners. This might be able to be done by having the official list handed to the newsletter staff just as the ceremony is starting.
- Teasers for items in the next issue.

Liaison With Other Departments

Other departments in the convention are quite often up to their elbows in alligators. When this happens, notifying the newsletter can fall to a low priority. Be sure to stay in touch with key areas of the con, and

if you haven't heard from them in, say, 24 hours, send a reporter over there to see if there are any updates.

Areas to be absolutely sure to keep in touch with include:

- Chairman
- Registration
- Programming
- Special Events

In particular, make sure you have specifically made arrangements to get hold of the Hugo Award results no later than the end of the ceremony. The newsletter should be the first people that the press release is handed to.

- Convention Services/Operations
- Hotel Liaison
- Site Selection

Make sure arrangements are made to get final counts ASAP.

Committee Reviewer

One of the problems facing the newsletter editor is that he is usually an out-of-towner, and hence did not attend committee meetings prior to the con. This makes him unfamiliar with committee policies and specific political hot buttons. Also, in the heat of putting newsletters together, poor word choices can be made accidentally, or a dubious source may submit an inappropriate (or inaccurate) news item that may set off nuclear incident if published.

As a safeguard against this, a concom can appoint one or more official reviewers. These individuals must be on pager, and are summoned when the newsletter is 100% complete and literally about to be handed to the printer. In most cases, this is not a great burden to the newsletter staff, and this system has prevented some embarrassing gaffes. It's customary for the newsletter staff to give the reviewers a couple of hours warning when an issue is almost ready.

Equipment for Daily Newsletter

With desktop publishing being widely available, fandom has come to expect at least minimal desktop publishing techniques for the daily newsletter.

The choice of Mac versus IBM-compatible, as well as the choice of word processing and/or desktop publishing package to use is a theological decision that must be made by the newsletter editor, in consultation with the newsletter staff. In general, choices should be made that use widely-known packages. If an exotic desktop publishing package that is only known by the newsletter editor is used, then you have just locked the newsletter editor into doing virtually all data input.

At least two personal computers and two laser printers should be used. This is important for two reasons:

1. one person can be laying out the current issue while another is on the other machine polishing a last-minute article;

2. if one of the PC's or printers breaks down, there is a backup. While it would be nice if the machines can be networked, this is not absolutely necessary.

If the newsletter editor is willing to bring in all needed equipment, great. The editor should then be sure that his insurance covers the equipment in case of theft or damage. If the editor cannot provide equipment, then the convention should rent equipment rather than trying to borrow machines from local fans. Why?

- If a fan's loaned PC is stolen or the hard disk is trashed, the fan will be put through much trauma and grief, and some files may never be restored. Insurance does not help bring back lost data.
- Loaned PC's can have bizarre equipment configurations, may not be compatible with each other, may be low on available disk space, may not have enough RAM memory, etc. TSR's and unique batch files may make the machine do surprising things when least desired. With a rental machine, the exact hardware configuration can be specified, and the machines are delivered in "vanilla" condition.
- Insurance is easier to obtain for rented machines; it's usually part of the rental cost.
- Getting a PC/printer serviced in a hurry can be easier with a PC rental company (assuming you try to find one that provides service on holiday weekends).

Be sure to spell check each issue. An inopportune typo ("Condigeo") may cause lots of laughs at your expense.

Printing Method

In ye olden days, mimeographs were the reproductive machinery of choice, and the daily newsletter was run off by the staff of the fanzine room, often with mimeographs supplied as free loaners by Gestetner or other large mimeo companies. The mimeograph, both in fandom and in the rest of the world, is now virtually dead. If you do have a fanzine room staff willing to do the newsletter on mimeo, be sure they have enough spare mimeos in case of breakdown.

If machines/supplies that are donated by corporations are used, make sure the agreement is in writing and includes guarantees of supplies. One year, Gestetner agreed to provide machines, which they did. They also promised to provide ink and supplies, and reneged on that because it turned out that Labor Day was the date for the annual inventory of the local Gestetner distributor. The con ended up using a local photocopy store.

For most Worldcons nowadays, the printing method of choice is high-speed photocopier. Again, there is a tradeoff. The con can either rent a photocopier or make a deal with a local photocopy store (see below.) By renting photocopiers, the per copy cost can get quite low. If a rental is considered, make sure the following questions are answered satisfactorily:

1. Is repair service available?
2. Who else will be using the machine? If other departments need photocopies, where will they go?
3. Are sufficient toner and paper supplies being ordered? Can unused supplies be returned afterwards for a full refund?

Distribution Method for Daily Newsletter

There is a tradeoff here. The more places you distribute the newsletter, the more you will have staff tied up in running around and giving out copies. On the other hand, the newsletter needs to be easy to obtain.

If possible, the daily newsletter should be distributed in each hotel in which function space is being used, plus the convention center (if any.) That way, people who are working or attending stuff in that building will not need to leave the building to obtain newsletters. One of the distribution points should be the committee information desk. (The information desk should be the first place that new issues are delivered to, as this is the con's front line for having current information.)

In addition, copies of the newsletter should be taken to the following departments:

- Headquarters
If possible, a copy should be placed in everyone's mailbox.
- Program Operations
- Convention Services/Operations
- Registration
- Committee Den

If there are enough staff and if the physical layout permits, a distribution point at the entrance to the con suite should be considered.

If an Extra is being issued with truly critical news, it might be a good idea to have a staffer go around in areas where fans are congregating to distribute it as quickly as possible.

The first issue should be distributed at con registration as people arrive. If there are staff available, they should be greeting people as they arrive at registration and hand them the newsletter, so they have something to read in line. This helps to set a welcoming tone for the convention.

Putting a distribution point near the freebie flyer distribution area is probably not a good idea, since the newsletter could get lost in the crowd. Try to insure it has its own distinctive locations.

When deciding where to place distribution points in a given facility, the entrance to the dealers' room, entrance to the art show, and party board are good possibilities. Remember, these are all suggestions, subject to adjustment depending on the layout of your facility; don't overdo it on the number of distribution points!

Try an initial print run of 2000, and adjust up or down depending on the number of copies actually picked up. Note that it is traditional to over-print, so that fans can pick up the previous three or four issues if they have been away for a day shopping or touring.

There are two main options for how to place the newsletters for distribution:

1. On a table in stacks. Make sure they aren't next to other paper material so that it is obvious where the newsletters are.
2. On vertical pegboard stands, similar to the freebie table stands.

In either case, a large sign indicating this is a newsletter distribution point should be posted.

A special newsstand-type box can be cute, but does not easily allow for distribution of back issues.

Hoax Newsletter

It is traditional for a hoax newsletter to be produced at each con. The hoax newsletter parodies the title and contents of the official committee newsletter, and spoofs the concom and/or various pros/fans in attendance. It is rumored that this is sometimes put together on the very same equipment as the official newsletter, and often with the cooperation and active participation of the staff. No Comment.

Local Photocopy Stores

Both the committee and individual fans will need to do a lot of copying, and it will almost certainly be beyond the capabilities of whatever copiers are provided by and for the committee.

It will therefore be of high interest to inform the members of where the nearby photocopy stores are, particularly those that have good hours over Labor Day.

Even more than that, though, because of the huge amount of photocopying, the committee should endeavor to take competitive bids from local photocopy stores to see who will become the Official photocopy store for the convention. In return for the official designation, the store will agree to extended hours, and will provide a stipulated discount to committee and attendees, e.g., anyone who shows a con membership badge.

As an example of the savings that can result, a copy job was quoted at several copy stores in the area around the con hotel. The low bid was \$78 and the high bid was \$102. When the closest copy store to the hotel was informed that their bid was above average (\$96) and that we would of course be taking our business elsewhere, the copy center said, "Uh, what's the low bid? " When we told him, the manager paused for a minute and said, "we can match that." The result—both the lowest price and the most convenient location!

You see, the dirty little secret of these places is that making copies costs them almost nothing but amortization for wear and tear on the machines, and maybe labor (if someone has to work overtime.) On the job quoted above, paper accounted for about \$12 of the cost; the rest was for wear and tear, ink, and labor.

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