

DEBORAH DOOLEY

honor's project-honor's project

Honor's Project 2002

Learning the
Process of the
Exhibit Design
Industry

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PROPOSAL

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For my honor's project I designed and constructed an exhibit for Nan-Dool Kennels that was used at the Home Show/Business Expo. This show was held March 4.2000 and located in Forest Lake, MN. The purpose of this project was to allow me to experience, first hand, what it was like to work with a client and to gain a better understanding of the process/interaction between the different areas of the industry: sales, design, production, traffic and set-up. I divided the process of creating an exhibit into five categories:

Communicating with the client, Design, Construction, Evaluation/Observation, Changes.

1

Communicating with the Customer

(sales department)

- Contacting a potential client
- Meeting with the client and establishing the show parameters
- Meeting with the client and establishing a budget
- Meeting with the client to get to know their business and discuss customer specifications

2

Developing the Design

(design department)

- Drawing up preliminary design sketches
- Developing an estimated cost sheet
- Selecting and modifying the sketch
- Evaluating structural stability
- Create working drawings and revising sketches -revise sketches until client is satisfied
- Develop final design
- Review final design
- Draw final design
- Construct a simple 3-D model
-(contracted out)

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PROPOSAL

3

Construction

(shop)

- Document each step before, during and after completion
- Daily log of feelings, frustrations, obstacles, and how I overcame them
- Document with pictures or anything else relevant to the process
- Set-up- (on-sight set-up crew)
- Document problems and the modifications that were made to fix any problems that I encountered

4

Observations/Evaluations

(everyone based on performance and client feedback)

- Observe the show
- Observe other exhibits
- Observe my exhibit
 - do customers acknowledge it?
 - what captures their eye?
 - do they stop?
 - did they ask for information?
 - evaluate the show for number of attendees and exhibitors
 - conduct a survey
 - evaluate my exhibit: what did I like?

5

Conclusion/What Would I Change?

- I will reflect on the process
- What would I do differently?
- What lessons did I learn?

SALES

step

1

Communicating
with the
Customer

1st Client Meeting

First, I needed to contact potential clients. My client for my project was Nancy Dooley from Nan-Dool Kennels -my mom-. Before every meeting with my client I set up some objectives that I wanted to cover.

OBJECTIVES FOR FIRST MEETING:

- 1) Learn about her business
- 2) Discuss show parameters
- 3) Discuss client specifications
- 4) Decide on a rough budget

1st Client Meeting

OUTCOMES OF FIRST MEETING

Nancy is the owner and operator of a boarding kennel in Forest Lake, MN. She started the business with her husband in 1983. She mainly boards dogs and a few cats, but from time to time she has boarded other animals such as: ferrets, guinea pigs, sheep, and pigs. For the show, we decided to focus on the dog aspect of her business, along with the fact that it is a family owned and operated and located on the same property as their house.

The show parameters were a 10x10 foot aisle booth, and I could have electricity if I wanted it for an additional charge. The show dates, as stated above, were March 4 and 5 2000, with set-up starting at 9am and the show opening at 11am on the 4.

Next, we discussed the client specifications. We tried to figure out what Nancy wanted to get out of this show and what specific details she wanted to include. Now, Nancy had never advertised through a show before, so she really didn't know what she wanted to get out of it. It was rather difficult to work with her since she was indecisive. Our first brainstorming list of what we thought could be included in the exhibit was:

- Kennel sign/logo to be displayed
- Established in 1983
- Family owned and operated
- Serving the Forest Lake area since 1983
- Stud dogs/chocolate labs/lab puppies
- Customer's dog (name and picture of dog and date of when they started boarding)

She also made it clear that she did not have a lot of money to spend so she wanted to keep costs to a minimum. She was hoping around \$100 for the entire exhibit, but she was also willing to listen to any extra requests that I had since she did not know how much exhibits usually cost.

1st Client Meeting

MY OBSERVATIONS

This was a good start for me, since I now knew what my parameters were and I had an idea about what she wanted and how to work with her. Most of the list above was generated by myself, but towards the end of our meeting she began to get the hang of it and contributed the last two bulleted items. She did not know what she wanted to get out of the exhibit, nor did she know who she wanted the target audience to be. I left her with a little assignment for the next time that we met. This assignment was to figure out what she wanted from the exhibit, what specific facts she wanted to put in the exhibit, and what type of feel did she want: a fun, “cartoonish look” to her exhibit or did she want a serious, professional look to her exhibit? I also wanted her to think about if she wanted an interactive booth or if she wanted an informational booth.

objectives-objectives-objectives

SALES

2nd Client Meeting

OBJECTIVES FOR SECOND MEETING

- 1) Listen to Nancy's answers to the assignment I gave her
- 2) Figure out what she wanted in the exhibit
- 3) Talk about promotional ideas

objectives-objectives-objectives

2nd Client Meeting

OUTCOMES FOR SECOND MEETING

During our second meeting, we took our first meeting brainstorm list and decided what we wanted to keep, what we wanted to get rid of and what ideas we wanted to work with. We decided to keep the:

- Kennel sign/logo
- Family owned and operated

That was all that we kept from our first list. Our next brainstorming session went a bit more smoothly, since she now had an idea of what she wanted in the exhibit. She decided on:

- Nan-Dool Kennels
- A picture of the kennel building
- A picture of her animals
- An aerial view picture of her property
- The fact that her business is located on 80 acres
- The fact that her property borders Carlos Avery Game Preservation

She wanted to emphasize the fact that she owned the property on which the business was located, the fact that the dogs have 80 acres to run on, that the business family owned and operated and that the business atmosphere is extremely personable. We decided on using a previously made slogan, "Your Pets Home, Away From Home," as an idea for creating a stronger identity for the kennel. We debated between that slogan and an older slogan that she used in advertising when the business first opened, which was, "While you are away, your pets can play, at Nan-Dool Kennels."

Lastly, we talked about promotional ideas that we can do at the show. We came up with a few ideas of these promotional handouts and giveaways.

- Have a drawing for a free 3-day weekend of boarding-valued at \$42
- 10% off boarding if you make a reservation at the show
- Hand out business cards, brochures or dog bones

2nd Client Meeting

MY OBSERVATIONS

After our second client meeting, I had a better idea of what she wanted for the exhibit and what type of promotional work I needed to think about. So, with the information that I obtained from the previous meetings I was able to enter the design stage of the process.

DESIGN

step

2

Design
Stage

DESIGN

My first design was simple and to the point-a rough sketch is included. I used a simple three-sided backwall that could support itself with the middle wall being 2x the width of the side walls. I chose to keep the backwall clean with only including two visual pictures to stop the audience. I put the kennel name as the highest point on the exhibit and centered it so everyone would be able to see it. I put it in a dog bone shape for a fun, eye-catching look. I also thought it would be a good idea- the idea was Elaine Hoffman's to poke Christmas lights through the back of the letters to illuminate them. Under the name of the kennel, I decided to put the kennel sign. This is where I ran into my first problem designing. In exhibits, one always wants the name of the business to be the highest point, but if I kept the business name in the logo/kennel sign, then the dog jumping would be above the kennel name -see attached logo/kennel sign-. So I decided to take the name of the business out of the kennel sign/logo and place it in the dog bone. Then on the logo/kennel sign where "Nan-Dool Kennels" used to be, I inserted the words, "Family Owned and Operated." On the two side panels I decided to put the aerial view of the kennel property as a background picture. The points that I decided to bullet were:

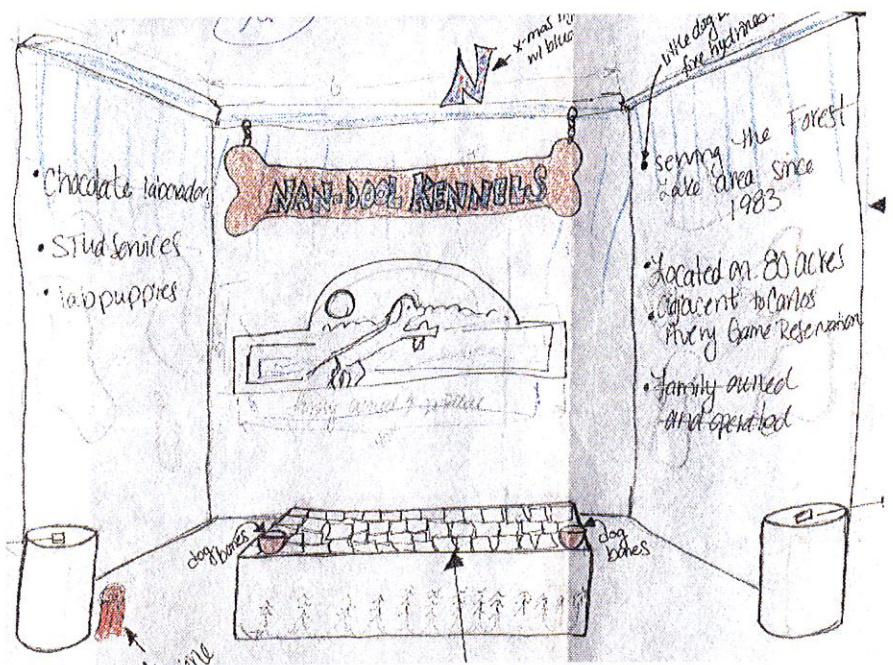
- Chocolate Labrador
- Stud Services
- Lab puppies
- Serving the Forest Lake area since 1983
- Located on 80 acres
- Adjacent to Carlos Avery Game Preservation

In front of the two corners of the exhibit I decided to put two cylindrical pieces so people wouldn't bump into the sidewalls and also to serve as a place to put the give-aways. The giveaways were going to be matchbooks and business cards. Centered in the front of the exhibit I placed a table with pictures of Nancy's dogs. On both sides of these pictures, I placed two bowls where dog bones would be placed. I also thought that it would be cute to add a little fire hydrant to the exhibit for a conversational starter.

3rd Client Meeting

THIRD MEETING OBJECTIVES

To discuss the first sketch and make changes,



sketch number one

3rd Client Meeting

OUTCOMES FROM THIRD MEETING

At our third meeting we looked at my sketch to see what changes needed to be made. She decided that she:

- Did want to keep the aerial view of her land
- Did not want the words "Nan-Dool Kennels" taken off of the sign and replaced with "Family Owned and Operated"
- Did not want the fire hydrant
- Decided to focus solely on the boarding aspect of her business- we took out the stud services
- Decided to keep the oversized dog bone idea
- Decided that she wanted Serving the Forest Lake Area since 1983

3rd Client Meeting

MY OBSERVATIONS

Today was a long process and semi-frustrating. Even though we came up with the above list, it was a rather difficult process. She knew what she didn't want, but couldn't tell me what she did want. So, keeping the design elements in mind, I revised the first sketch. I decided to place the kennel name back into the sign/logo, since after all a designer should never alter a logo. Now that the sign had the kennel name on it, I needed to move it to a central position in the exhibit so it would catch everyone's eye. Now that the sign was off of the backwall, I needed to fill the empty space under the kennel sign/logo. My ideas were to either place pictures of dogs, place a dog bone there, or use one of the slogans. I decided to fill this area with the slogan, "Your Pets Home, Away From Home." Also, with the sign off of the backwall, I lost some of my dimension, since I was going to have the dog 3-D. My next step was to then create a second sketch.

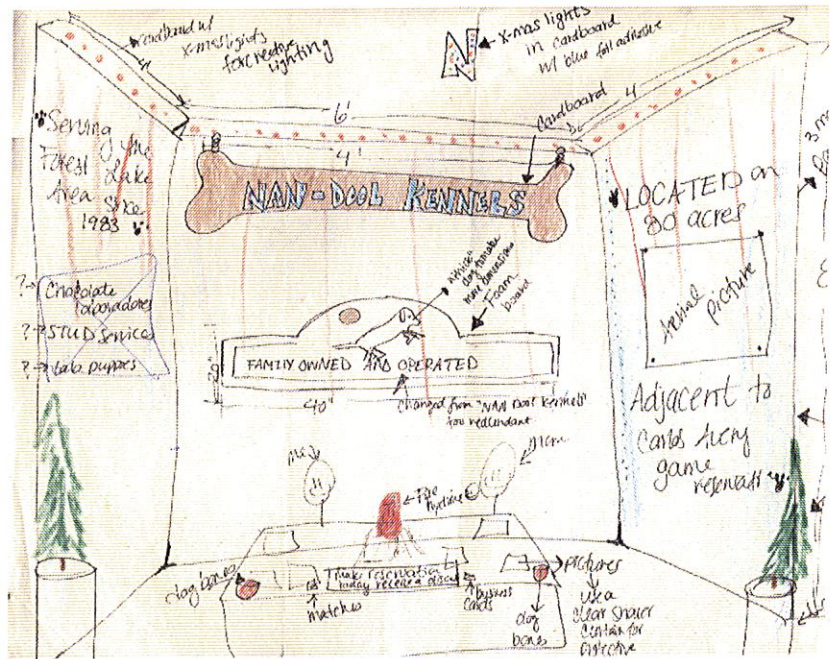
Since my client was unsure, I decided to revise the sketch my way. This was because I had reasons for placing certain objects in certain places. I knew that it was my job to sell my ideas to the client. For my second sketch, I kept everything the same, except for that I changed the two side walls from having the aerial view as a backdrop, to having it become a solid color and have single picture graphics of the aerial view. This was done for two reasons. First, the cost of having a large backdrop graphic was too much money for the allotted budget and secondly, the aerial view will now be more of a focus point as opposed to a background. The second sketch included dimensions and color to give Nancy a better feeling of what her booth was going to look like. I moved the fire hydrant to the middle of the table so that it would be seen better. After meeting with Elaine to get feedback, I decided to take her advice and move the free handouts closer to where the booth workers would be. This move was done because Elaine pointed out that people like free stuff and if they are not held responsible, they will take handfuls of free stuff without even looking at the exhibit. I kept the dog bones in the bowls and kept them in their same position. I added three other design elements to my design:

- Pine trees on top of cylindrical forms- to symbolize the wooded area where the kennel is located
- Lighting above the exhibit focusing downward to give my design another dimension.
- Using paw prints to bullet the information on the side walls

4th Client Meeting

OBJECTIVES OF FOURTH CLIENT MEETING

Review the second sketch and make revisions



sketch number two

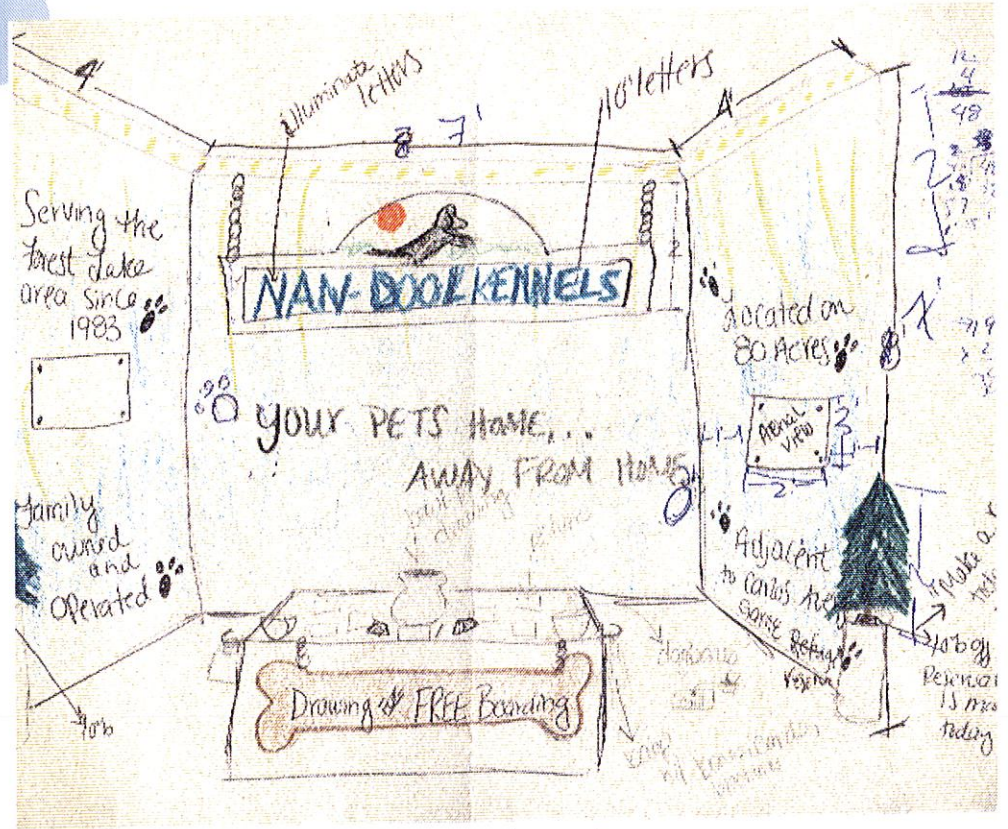
4th Client Meeting

This meeting proved to be the most productive. She told me exactly what she didn't want and what she did want. With that information I was able to come up with the fourth and final sketch, which she approved. In the final sketch I ended up putting the "Nan-Dool Kennels" back into the sign. I filled the empty space with the slogan, "Your Pets Home, Away From Home." I decided to make the two side walls symmetrical of one another, therefore I had two bulleted points and a picture on each side. The points that we decided on bulleting were:

- Serving the Forest Lake Area Since 1983
- Family Owned and Operated
- Located on 80 Acres
- Adjacent to Carlos Avery Game Preservation

She wanted to focus on the fact that her business was family owned and operated, so we chose to have a picture of her family on one side. On the other side we decided to place the aerial view of the land since she wanted to emphasize that it was located on a large acreage of land. During our second meeting she decided that she wanted to keep the oversized dog bone, so I decided to move that to the front of the table and use it to promote the drawing for the free boarding drawing. In class we learned that while people walk through shows they see many different exhibits and therefore the designer needs to figure out a way to make the audience remember their exhibit. I decided that the best way to do this would be to give away dog bones. Everyone loves to give their pets treats, and the dog bone are related to Nancy's business. The catch is making them remember where they got the bones from I decided to tie a business card -in a knot- to each bone. The knot will be used so the attendees can't simply rip off the card and throw it away, but rather have to cut it off. Even if they eventually do end up throwing the card away it wouldn't matter. See, the next time a person is looking for a place to board their dog, they will remember fighting with the dog bone and try to recall the kennel that gave the bones away. By doing this the client will have a connection with the kennel.

4th Client Meeting



final sketch

CONSTRUCTION

step

3

Construction

getting started/pricing

Now that steps one (customer relations) and two (design) were complete, I was ready to go onto step three (construction). A little background about building exhibits for tradeshow. Depending if the exhibit is a portable exhibit or a custom exhibit, the methods of construction will differ. Nancy's exhibit would be classified as a portable exhibit and therefore it should be easy to set-up in a short amount of time, it should be relatively light weight, and the materials used should be cheap since they are mostly thrown away after the show. Lastly, everything needs to be functional.

This third step of construction was all new grounds for me. I knew how I wanted the exhibit to look, but I didn't have a clue as to how to physically build it. So, I went into this step open for ideas and suggestions from anyone who was willing to give them to me. I first went to Elaine who suggested that I used pegboard as my backwalls, since they were relatively self-supportive and were stable. Also, having pegboard would allow me to hang up my graphics by pegging them into place. The letters could be made individually, painted and also pegged into the backwall. I chose to make my letters out of and mount my graphics on foam-core board. The board is about an inch thick, a thicker pound paper on top and bottom, sandwiching foam in the middle. Now, that I knew method of creating my exhibit and the materials I was going to use, I could get started on the backwalls.

I priced out different supply stores and decided to buy my pegboard at UBC Lumber. Now, I didn't know anything about any of this stuff, so I was pretty disappointed when I was misinformed by the sales associate. He sold me white pegboard because it was smooth and I would only have to paint one coat of paint, compared to rough naturally brown pegboard where I would have to paint two coats of paint. After painting the boards, I discovered that I should have bought the CHEAPER brown board, because after painting the white, smooth board and allowing it to dry over night, the paint scratched away like wet nail polish. I asked Mark Schmidt, the model building professor, what he thought the problem was, and he told me that the board needed to be rough to hold the paint. Therefore, he suggested that I sand the board down so the paint would adhere better. I chose to let the board dry overnight and access the situation the next day.

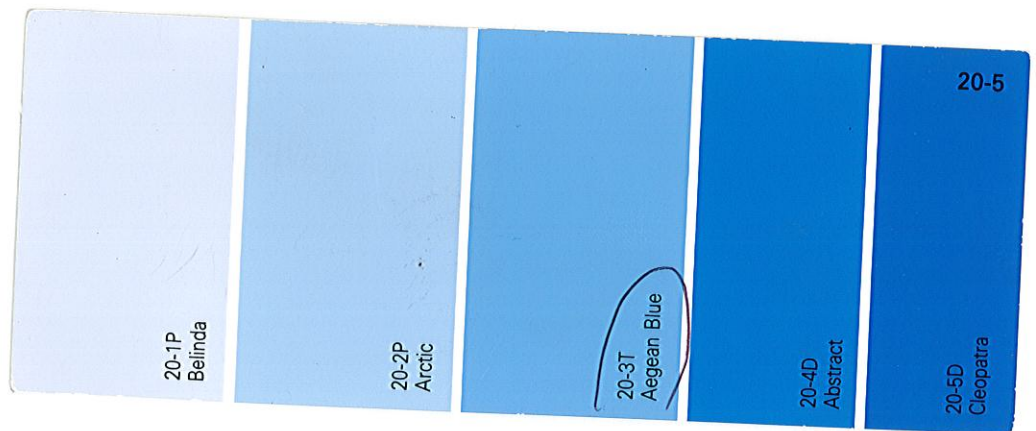
Next, the associate at UBC told me that I definitely needed

CONSTRUCTION

getting started/pricing

one gallon of paint, maybe two to properly cover the boards. I ended up buying one gallon, and later found out that I didn't even need a half gallon. The boards were 8 x 4 and they were heavy!!!!!! It was impossible for me to move them by myself and difficult to get anyone to help me. Once I bought the boards I brought them back to Bridgeman, only to find that there was really no place for me to work. Elaine helped me the best that she could, but my boards and I were constantly in the way. Needless to say, day one was extremely frustrating.

Day two was even WORSE!!!!!! I had a busy schedule with only a few hours throughout the day that I could work on my project. Well, much to my unhappy surprise, every time I went to work on my project, there was a class in the shop. I was even more frustrated when I realized that the paint scratched off even easier now that it was dry, but I put a second coat of paint on it anyway. And much to my surprise, it stayed!!! Unfortunately for my strict timeline, a second coat of paint was all that I accomplished on day two. Again, it was next to impossible for me to find someone who was willing to help move the boards out of the way for the night. I was so frustrated after day two, I wanted to quit!! I decided to take a few days away from my exhibit to regain my composure and positive attitude.



paint samples

kennel sign, logo & letters

The next step was to create the kennel sign/logo, the large dog bone and the letters for the text. I bought foam-core board at Office Max and I only encountered one problem, which was fitting the 30x40 into my little Neon. The next situation I encountered was that I designed the kennel sign too large, so it was unable to fit all the way onto the foam-core board. I solved this by simply re-dimensioning the sign so it was small enough to fit on the board. To recreate Nancy's kennel logo/sign, I printed a picture of it off of the company's website. I took the picture and placed it on an Opaque Projector, where I enlarged it and traced it onto the board. Creating the dog bone was a different process. I drew the bone shape free-hand and then just traced it onto the board. The letters were the most tedious of all. I went to the Super Lab and chose the font Cooper Black. I had to enlarge every letter so I could get the letters large enough to read at a distance. What was a little discouraging about this process was that I couldn't simply make 26 letters. I needed each letter to be present when I traced for spacing purposes. Therefore, I ended up making over 100 letters!!!! Once I got all of my letters printed off, I then had to cut them all out, so I could place them down to trace.

My next step after tracing everything was cutting this part was worse than painting the boards!!!! Foam-core board is hard to cut. I ended up spending endless hours, into early mornings trying to get these letters cut out. I tried using an X-acto knife, a carpenter's knife and finally ended up using scissors. The scissors were bad because it flattened the foam-core as I applied pressure to cut. Plus, the straight blade of the scissors made it hard to cut the rounded edges of the font that I chose. After I was done cutting, my edges were so rough I ended up going back with sandpaper to smooth them out. After many hours of blisters and cramped hands, I could start to paint the letters, kennel sign and dog bone.

Painting was my favorite part!! I used acrylic paint on everything. For the letters I used black and for the dog bone I mixed bronze and brown. The kennel sign/logo was painted with the actual colors of the original sign. Again, I ended up having to paint two coats on mostly everything. After I was finished painting I realized that the white core of the board was visually distracting from the actual signs, so I had to go back and paint the inside core. The foam was the hardest part to paint because the foam kept absorbing the paint. Upon completing this task, I went back to touch up the spots I missed with a black marker.

daily journal-daily journal-dai

CONSTRUCTION

kennel sign, logo & letters

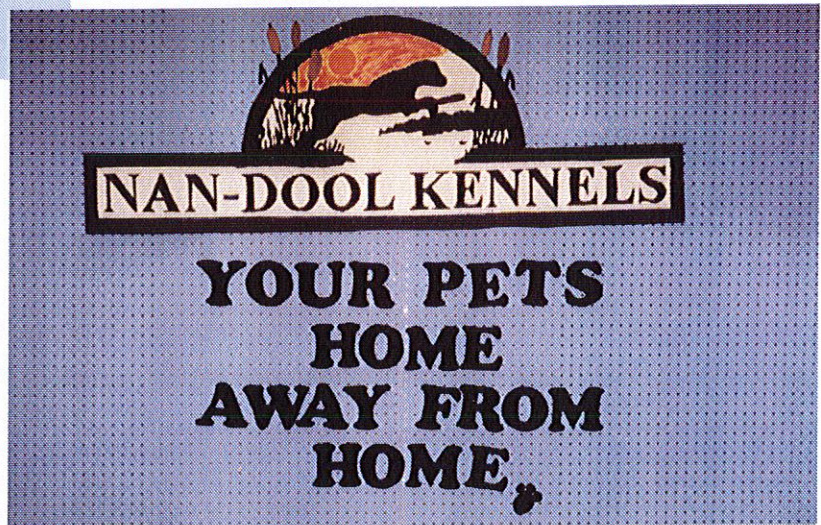
ABCDEFG

HIJKLMN

OPQRSTU

VWXYZ

cooperblack font



kennel logo/sign

sidewall graphics

Once the letters, dog bone and kennel sign/logo were completed, the only step left was to create the two graphics on the sidewalls. Nancy chose a picture of her family to emphasize the fact that the company is family owned and operated. She also chose the aerial view of her land to show that the kennel was located on 80 acres. The process I used to create the graphics started by scanning the pictures into Photoshop. I scanned them in at 600 ppi so when I printed them out, the resolution would not look pixilated. I had Mr. Steve Heriot, professor in the Industrial Technology Department, help color correct the photos. He took me through, step by step, and explained the concept of RGB and CMYK colors. After we color corrected the photos, we sent them to a large format printer. Now, I was told that it would take approximately 45 minutes to print each graphic. I was told that the graphics would be ready by 12pm on March 2- the day before I left to go down to the show. When I arrived to pick up the graphics, I discovered that they were not done. I stayed in the printing room from 12pm to 7pm waiting for Steve to figure out the printer and start the graphics printing correctly. This was the start of my first major breakdown. I was frustrated that the graphics were not done at the time I was promised, and I had an extremely difficult time getting people to help me get the printer up and the graphics printing. Now, when I started this part of my project, I called around to find the cheapest price for printing these graphics. Bemidji State's I.T. Department gave me the best deal by only charging me \$20 a print -for color ink and paper-. But, after waiting in the room for five hours on my 21 birthday, I began to think that other places in town would have met the deadline and created a professional looking graphic for a bit more money. At 7pm the graphics were finally going to be able to be printed. When they were printed, they had a magenta cast over them, which meant that the cyan ink was not working properly. This created unprofessional graphics, yet with my tight time line I had no choice but to accept these red tinted graphics.



final touches

My next step was transporting the exhibit down to the cities, which was a problem since I drove a little Dodge Neon. I ended up borrowing a friend's truck for the weekend so I could haul the large graphics, kennel sign/logo and dog bone. My uncle brought the peg boards down earlier in the week so my dad could hinge them together so they could be self-supportive. I drove down on the 3 -the day before the show- so I could finish last minute details. For the final steps of the process I used spray adhesive to adhere the graphics to the foam-core. This was done to make the graphics more sturdier and durable. Also, that day I tied business cards to dog bones as give-aways for the show. Everything was going well until I discovered that my dad had not hinged the pegboards together to create the backdrop of my exhibit. My dad told me that he would get the boards hinged before he left for work the next morning well, he was called into work that night and did not get them done. I was left with a situation that I did not know how to handle. I am good at design and am able to create concepts of how items should be built, but when it comes to the actual hammer and nails, I am completely illiterate. The next problem I ran into on the 3, was that Nancy did not get the pictures of her dogs to put on the tabletop as conversational starters. After that, I ran into the problem of getting my graphics to peg into the pegboard. My idea, which I borrowed from Elaine, was to take wooden dowels and hot glue them to the letters and graphics so they could be inserted into the holes of the pegboard. This did not work, the letters where spaced unevenly and they did not want to stay upright, so I borrowed an idea from my sister who works closely with her companies exhibit. She suggested using Velcro to fasten the letters to the board. This was a technique that I later found is the norm for tradeshow graphics. I worked all day and night velcroing the letters and graphics to the backwalls. Late on the night of the 3rd, I decided to get to bed and pray for the best the next day.

Well, the day of the show arrived and my bad luck had not run out. When I woke up we ran into Menards to buy hinges and other stuff. When we went to take the boards out of the back of our truck, we realized that we had no place in the house to lay them flat so we could work with them. With booth registration time coming to an end, we threw everything in the back of the truck and went to the show. We checked in alright, but then we still needed to get the

final touches

boards hinged- neither my sister, mom nor I had a clue how to do this-. We went to haul in these large boards, one by one, and it was almost embarrassing because all the other booth staffers were looking at us as they easily set-up their displays in twenty minutes or so. The boards were large, heavy and awkward to carry. On-site we ran into the man who put the sewer system into our kennel building. He had his entire exhibit in a little suitcase on wheels. He wheeled his way to his spot, and set up his booth in about 15 minutes. After he was done with his booth, he decided to help us. He finished helping us bring in the heavy pegboards, and then he hinged them all together to create my backwall in forty-five minutes. He was a great help to me, for without him I would not have finished the exhibit for the show. Unfortunately for me, once he finished the show was officially starting. People were already walking through the show and my exhibit was just empty walls. I was scrambling to Velcro all of the letters and signs onto the backwall.

My second problem was that I misunderstood the show agreement. I thought they provided the table cloth cover, but when I arrived I discovered that I need to bring my own. This problem was solved by finding an old sheet in the back of the truck and using that in place of the table cover. My next problem was that I didn't have a chance to make the lights that were to be placed at the top of the three panel backdrop to illuminate the graphics. My solution to this was to simply illuminate them. They were not an important part of the exhibit, but rather a piece to add interest and depth. After the exhibit was finally up and we were settled, my next and biggest disappointment appeared. No one was interested in my exhibit. The showgoers simply walked past and smiled. My exhibit did not attract people, nor did Nancy book any reservations at the show. Many people simply took the dog bone, smiled and walked off fighting with the string to detach the business card. Reflecting back on the experience as a whole, the show itself was unsuccessful for Nancy and her business, but the experience was invaluable for me, for more reasons than I have yet to realize.

REFLECTION

steps

4

5

Evaluation
&
Observation

EVALUATION

I completed my project back in March of 2000. It is now February of 2002 and I am completing the written portion and defense part of this project. At first I thought it was bad that I had procrastinated this long to complete the project, but as I continued my education, and did my internship at an exhibit house (which I received solely because of this honor's project) I can now more fully understand what I learned and appreciate the lessons. It is hard for me to find a place to start when I reflect on what I learned from this experience. Especially since when I started I did not have any knowledge of this, so I learned everything!! I will start with the skills that I learned, then I will proceed with the lessons I learned.

Computer skills were probably one of the most valuable skills that I touched upon during my project. I learned how to scan pictures into computers (I used Adobe Photoshop) and I also learned about resolution (which is ppi-how many pixels per inch on your monitor, or dpi-how many dots per inch on your print-out). My main lesson about resolution was that I learned that the images on the web are only 72 ppi. Therefore, the Nan-Dool Kennels sign that I printed from the web page became blurry and almost unrecognizable when I enlarged it on the opaque projector. Once I had my pictures scanned in my next lesson came in a color correcting. Color correcting is a complex process that I only had a chance to touch upon. Sending files over to print to a large format printer was yet another aspect that I only touched upon, but later learned in-depth in class. As far as printing is concerned, I learned that RGB (red, green and blue) are the colors that one sees on the monitor. All of the pixels on your monitor are made up of these three colors; the same concept goes for television screens. CMYK (cyan, magenta, yellow and black) are the colors that most printers will use when they print. That was the extent of my computer usage, but (as discovered in the last two years) is the basis to design, especially graphic design, which I am now focusing on.

The next thing I learned about was materials. I became familiar with different materials and how they react to other materials, such as paint to pegboard and foamcore board; spray adhesive to different paper weights. The new materials I worked with were: foam-core board, pegboard, spray adhesive and dowel rods. I also used Velcro but never to hang graphics. With the material in mind, one lesson I learned was to pick materials that are lightweight and easy to

EVALUATION

transport, which I obviously learned the hard way. Also, one needs to think about how the exhibit is going to be stored. Right now the pegboards are sitting in our basement at home taking up space. The foam-core signs are up in the rafters trying to be preserved, but they keep getting broken. In my introduction to Exhibit Design Class, Mr. Jim McCracken talked about storage and the importance of taking that into consideration when designing. This lesson obviously did not sink in until I was stuck walking over these huge boards in my basement for an entire year.

One major skill that I learned through this project was customer service. I am still working on these skills, but I did learn that working with family and friends under non-professional circumstances can create headaches☹

The most valuable lesson I learned was how to evaluate success and failure. After the show was over I was disappointed with the outcome and felt as though I should attempt a second honor's project in hopes for better results. Later, Elaine pointed out to me that even though the exhibit didn't work out, the lessons that I learned were more valuable. Therefore, I was successful in the big picture since I didn't allow obstacles stop me, instead I learned from them. The first thing I realized is that I took on this project too early in my educational career. I didn't have the knowledge and skills, nor did I have the resources to create most of the items that were needed for the exhibit. This made it a difficult project for me to complete at that point in my career. I blindly led myself and learned as I went. I did not know the actual process, Elaine helped me, and I didn't know about all of the different steps that went into an exhibit. After this project I realized why it takes an entire team in a company to create an exhibit. It is almost too much for one person to do on their own, especially being uneducated with no resources. Yet on the other hand, one could say that this project was done at the perfect time in my career because it allowed me to teach myself before I learned the same lessons in class. This is good because I learn better from first-hand experience as opposed to sitting in lecture class. Also, I was able to learn the practical applications of the skills that I learned in class. Overall this project gave me an edge over my peers. While they were trying to figure out what our professors were teaching us, I had already learned it and knew the practical applications of it. Also, as stated earlier, this project was the sole reason for receiving my

EVALUATION

internship at Star Exhibits & Environments.

The next lesson I learned was how to manage my time and work under a tight timeline. I accepted this project in the end of January, and by the time I got the project approved, I had about four weeks to meet with my client, design and construct the exhibit. Now, when I was actually working on this project I thought that it was crazy that I had to do this whole project in such a short timeline, and thought I it would never be like this in the real world Well, I was wrong. After working in industry I learned that it feels like finals week everyday!!!! My boss, Jodi Lewis, taught me a valuable lesson during my internship. She taught me that there is a triangle between TIME, MONEY and QUALITY. If one does not have enough time, the quality of the project will suffer. The same goes for lack of money. But if one has a lot of money and time, the quality will be better. I learned this lesson after I was put in charge of my own client, Opryland Hotels. I designed a booth, but since the client gave us limited money, the construction was of less quality. I was deeply disappointed Opryland too, because many of the elements that I had designed were not built. It was then that Jodi explained the triangle to me and I felt better about both my Opryland and honor's exhibit. I also learned that it is industry standard to have quick turnover rates.

The next lesson I learned is that everybody wants to be a designer. I was under the misconception that the client would tell the designer what they had in mind for the exhibit, and they would brainstorm together, but when it came to the actual design, the client would sit back and allow the designer to design. This is not the case. Nancy had never been educated in the design area, yet she was not only making minor adjustments, but she was also trying to design the exhibit too. That presents a problem because the customer is always right. Therefore if you do not have good customer relations and are not able to convince your client that the design needs to be your way for certain reasons, your name may be stuck with a bad design.

what would I change?

EVALUATION

The next part of my honors project is to answer the question, "If I could do this project over again, what would I do differently?"

Let me just start by making it simple and saying EVERYTHING!!!!

I would start with a better understanding with my mom/client. I would have drawn clearer lines between mom/client and daughter/designer. I would have tried to keep it more professional. After my internship I learned that clients, like designers, have deadlines as well. If the client does not send their files to the designer in time, they will either be charged extra or the files may not even be included. Plus, if the client makes any changes to the design after the predetermined time, again, late fees will be added. With my mom, she kept calling with design suggestions after we had finalized the design and I had started construction.

I would have also changed my design. There would have definitely been real dogs present so more people would stop to pet them, thus starting conversation with my client. Puppies would have been ideal, since everyone loves puppies. The next major component that I would have changed would be to move the table that crossed the front of the booth, because it separated Nancy from her audience. I would have also added some extra design elements to make the exhibit more interesting. One idea would have been to add dog prints to the floor, and having a collage of pictures to create more interest. I would have also taken advantage of the electricity because I noticed that the booths that had flashing lights or moving parts were the ones that mostly every showgoer stopped at. One last change I would have liked to have made would have been to have a podium or tall table for us to stand behind. By standing we would have sent the message that we were interested in the audience and that we were fun and outgoing. But, we sat behind this shorter table and gave the message that we weren't interested; it made us disconnected from our audience.

My next changes would be made in the brainstorming of the promotional ideas. I think that my idea was good, but I didn't fully develop it. The idea was that if people made reservations at the show, they would receive a certain percentage off. Well, most people don't go on too many vacations in the beginning of March, and everyone else doesn't have their plans finalized for summer vacations. After analyzing this, it was clear why no one made any reservations at the show. I should have designed a coupon that they could pick up and

what would I change?

use when they decided to make their reservations. I liked idea of having a drawing for a weekend of free boarding. Along with this, I would have had more interactive activities for the showgoers. One example would be to have a dog trivia game, or spin the wheel game. Another idea would be to have an oversized stuffed dog that people could get their pictures taken with. I noticed that the exhibits that had games and fun stuff to look at, attracted more attention.

Another aspect that I overlooked was that I did not educate the exhibit workers about the proper ways to work a booth. A few pointers would have been to stand up the entire time, which shows enthusiasm. Nancy sat the entire time, which I now realize was not a good thing. She had an excuse since her leg was broken. Also, she shouldn't have looked so bored and continued to read her book until someone stopped to talk to her. She should have made it a point to make eye contact with everyone who walked by, even if they were not coming to her booth. A HUGE lesson that I should have taught was to allow the show-goers to brag about their dogs. Everyone loves to brag about their pets, so let them, do not come back with comparison stories of your pets that make their pets look bad. Also, it is a good idea to dress in clothes that have the kennel name on them, or at least dress in similar attire to the person you are working with. This enables the show-goers to easily decipher who is who, and it looks more professional.

The next area that I would have made changes to would be in the construction process. First of all, I would not have relied on so many different people to help me, even if they offered. I learned that the only person that I can rely on, is myself, everyone who decides to help is a bonus. Other changes would have included a different choice of materials for the backwall; definitely not pegboard. I would have chosen something lightweight and easy to take down such as a fabric backdrop, similar to a tent. As stated earlier, pegging the letters into the board did not work. The Velcro on the other hand was definitely something I would keep, and after working in industry I learned that Velcro is the standard for hanging graphics. I liked how I used foamcore board to mount the graphics, but I should have only used the foamcore for mounting, not the letters. The foamcore board is hard to cut because it smashes down when you apply pressure. The letters could have been cut on a CNC machine or a laser cutter. Both involve drafting up the letters in AutoCAD and then programming the

what would I change?

machine, which was above my skill level at the time. After cutting out the letters, I would have placed vinyl over the top and cut off the excess with an X-acto knife. The graphics would have been printed on self-adhesive paper, mounted to Sentra and then laminated to make it more durable. As far as my dog bone and kennel sign/logo, I would have drawn them in Illustrator and then sent the files over to a vinyl cutter and have every color cut separately and then applied it to a substraight. The entire process would have only taken a few hours if I had an entire design team to help in the production. The process would have been a lot easier if I had resources like Star, but at least I learned a lot of valuable lessons the hard way.

I learned more from this project than I ever thought possible. I feel that every student in the Exhibit emphasis should have to design and construct an exhibit before graduation. The experience of working with a client and being forced to come up with your own methods with minimal guidance teaches one more than can be learned through any in-class lecture. Even though this project was stressful, I value the experience. If I had Star as a resource my exhibit would have looked more professional, but I would not have come away with so much knowledge which was learned from trial and error.

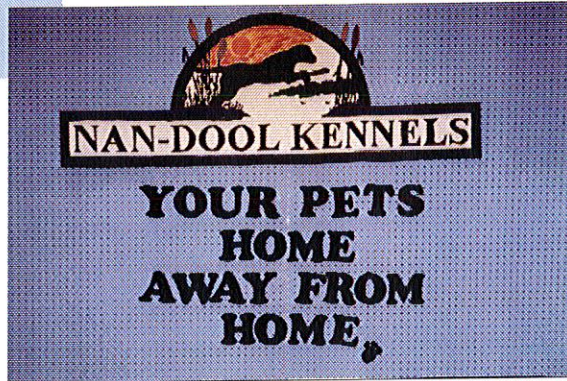
I feel that the number one lesson I learned was that I do not always need to be a perfectionist to be successful. In every project and aspect of life, things are not going to run as planned, but it is a matter of what you make of it. It all depends on if you learn from your mistakes or if you allow it to stop you. I learned that I need to take TIME, MONEY, and QUALITY into consideration when I design.

This written part of my honors project reflects the skills and lessons that I have learned thus far. As I am continuing through my education, I am still running across lessons that I learned while doing this project, but I didn't realize them until now.

NOILOS SOLUTION

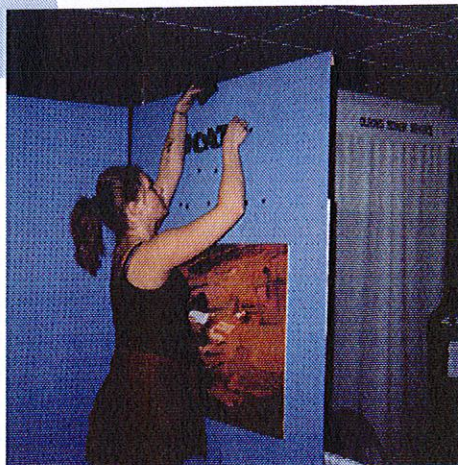
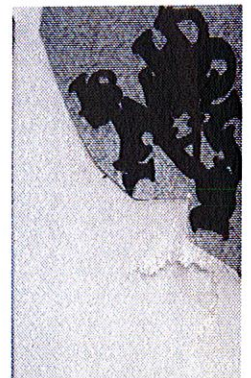
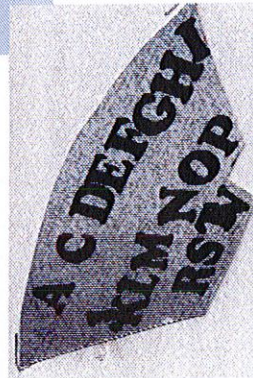
final solution-final solution

pictures from the project



The backwall of the exhibit at the show.

All of the letters that I cut and painted by hand. All of these letters were made out of foamcore board and were spread out all over my living room!!!!

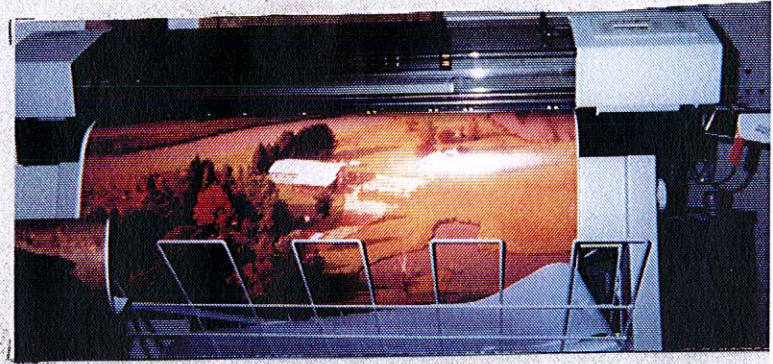


This is me putting up letters on the sidewalls at the show using velcro to make them stick.

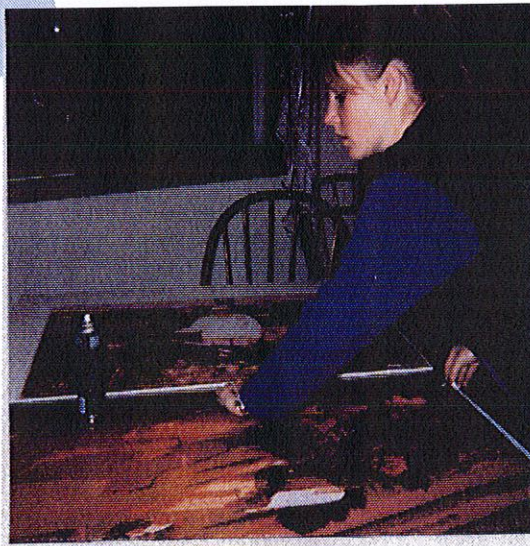
SOLUTION

final solution-final solution

pictures from the project



Large format printing of the graphics for my sidewalls.



This is me mounting the sidewall graphics to foam-core board with spray adhesive.

NOICTIONS SOLUTIONS

final solution-final solution

local newspaper

HOME SHOW/BUSINESS EXPO
2000
March 4th & 5th
Saturday 11-5 • Sunday Noon-4
Forest Lake High School

Supplement of: **PEACH THE TIMES**

Seminars		Company		Time	Length	March 4th		Company	Time	Length	CONCURRENCE									
Forest Lake State	Wanted just	11:30	5th	How To Create A Web Page	12:00	5th	The Program	12:00	5th	81	80	79	78	77	76	75	74	73	72	91
Business Solutions & The Internet For Home and Business	Technus	12:00	5th	How To Create A New Contract	12:00	5th	Wide Software, Inc.	12:00	5th	87	86	85	84	83	82	81	80	79	78	90
Adoption, Care & Behavior of your Dog	Bestmed	1:00	5th	Contracting for your Kids	1:00	5th	Dark Storage	12:00	5th	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	85
The How to Know a Contractor	Contract Alternatives	2:00	5th	Legal for Children's Liability Issues	1:00	5th	Professional	1:00	5th	33	32	31	30	29	28	27	26	25	24	83
Early Warning & Business Opportunities	Market Analyst	2:00	5th	What is What You Sell	1:00	5th	Co. Inc.	1:00	5th	33	32	31	30	29	28	27	26	25	24	84
Cell Telephone Sales	Knowledge Resources	3:00	5th	Accounts of the Home	1:00	5th	Word Bank	1:00	5th	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	82

The Forest Lake Times' advertisement/show program for the 2000 Home show/business expo.