

General Potter

OCTOBER 25, 1962

MEMORANDUM

NEW YORK WORLD'S FAIR 1964-1965 CORPORATION

Date November 2, 1962

TO: Vice Presidents and Consultants

FROM: Bill Berns



- Prepare reply for my signature
- Prepare reply for signature of
- Reply direct
- See me on attached
- Give me memorandum on attached
- Initial attached and return
- For your approval
- For your disposition
- For your information
- Note and send to General Files

All Offices
of Departments
of Out of Town Offices

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REMARKS

Observations of Seattle Fair by
Mr. Richard Dana of Young and Rubicam
Advertising Agency.

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TO YOUNG & RUBICAM:

Executive Committee
Contact Department
Merchandising Department - All Offices
Vice Presidents In Charge of Departments
Department Managers
Vice Presidents In Charge of Out of Town Offices

We have received many reports that exhibiting manufacturers at the Seattle Fair have been happily surprised at the great success of the Fair, and with that of their own individual exhibits.

In a letter to New York World's Fair Officials, William S. Street, former chairman of the Seattle Fair wrote:

"I want you to know that those companies who took exhibits in our Fair are extremely happy about it and some of those companies who turned us down are honest enough to confess they wish they had participated."

May I be bold enough to suggest that you and your fellow Board Members of the New York Fair should take heart in our success as it might be prophetic of what you can do with your Fair. One of the things we had to buck was the notion that Americans didn't like to go to fairs. If Seattle is doing anything good for the New York Fair it is certainly disproving that."

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One of our Y&R committee members, Richard Dana, recently went to the Seattle Fair and provides the following general observations on it. Details of individual exhibits will be made available on request.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

1. The Fair is a huge success. Attendance may well hit approximately 9 million for the total Fair period. Though small (74 acres) by comparison to New York Fair, visit is an interesting experience. The half dozen top attractions are excellent, but quality of exhibits is very disappointing, due undoubtedly to low budgets. Believe many exhibitors would have profited by doing more elaborate exhibits which would have gotten good attendance.
2. All types of people are seen in attendance; all income groups, all ages. During the day there is a high percentage of family groups. One can see well-to-do city folk, plus a large number of rural types (the latter are probably due in large part to the Seattle location). They generally seem to be a heavy spending audience, paying \$2.00 per adult for general admission, plus \$1.00 per person for many interior features.
3. Gained strong impression that Fair-going is a travel experience for great numbers of visitors. Repeatedly was told by Fair-goers that their visit was part of a travel tour. Planes, railroads, and highways very crowded. Principal trains all running double sections.
4. Was very impressed with fact that a Fair visit is very often a memorable experience. Aside from local visitors, travel element and vacation association surrounds visit with great excitement. Observed thousands of visitors upon arrival, noted great anticipation and delight expressed. Obviously, there were certain complaints and grumbles due to human nature.
5. As for living conditions, scarcity of rooms has been exaggerated. Situation is tight but not as difficult as generally pictured.
6. Informal surveys consistently revealed that highest percentage of visitors were coming from California and Canada.
7. Principal exhibits have very long waiting lines. This is partly due to their popularity, probably in some cases due to lack of foresight and budget problems. Other than the top attractions, access is generally fairly easy. Was greatly surprised by willingness of crowds to stand hour after hour, day after day with relatively little complaint. From discussions with many exhibit managers and guides was also surprised to learn that crowds are generally fairly easy to handle. It is open to question whether New York crowds would be equally docile.

8. One is constantly impressed with the superiority of a programmed exhibit. People in general appear hypnotized by film shows or by unusual devices such as those designed by Deskey for the "Century 21" show. Participating displays do not appear nearly so fascinating -- strange as that may seem. Beyond that, the participation type of shows do not handle the crowds in any great numbers.
9. The importance of a script in a programmed show impressed me greatly. In the science show, for example, the excellent scripts were an important part. A mediocre script (as in "Century 21" show) detracted substantially.
10. The narrators of the programmed shows generally sound all the same, and strangely enough practically "no names" are used.
11. The importance of proper sound baffles was evident. In the "Century 21" show the system worked well. In certain others, audio overlap was bad.
12. As for giveaway material, it was not used to any large extent. As previously stated, the Heinz Pickle Pin seems to be the number one attraction. Seattle Fair Authorities told me they had discouraged the use of much literature, in order to prevent littering the grounds.
13. As for titles of attractions, the catchy terms inevitably caught on: SPACEARIUM, SPACE NEEDLE, MONORAIL, GENERAL ELECTRIC LIVING, etc.
14. The importance of having capable, attractive guides was noticeable. For example, the boredom of the guides at "Century 21" show was frequently remarked upon by visitors. Also, supervisors at The Ford Exhibit stressed the value of having people from the sponsor's own company. The belief was they are often better informed and more conscientious than many outsiders.
15. Was surprised to see a fairly large number of blind and handicapped people. Did not see any wheel chairs going through crowded exhibits, but did see them to some extent on the grounds.

16. Noted surprising number of interiors that were very poorly illuminated. Would fear some inevitable accidents.
17. Saw evidences of importance of publicity in relation to attendance. This is seen in general Fair attendance. Also many experts point out that NASA pavilion could benefit by heavy publicity. If this is true in the small Seattle Fair, its importance will be magnified in New York. One becomes painfully aware of competing claims for your attention, while tramping through acres in the hot sun -- not to mention standing in line for hours at a time.
18. Strangely enough at Seattle weekdays are somewhat heavier in attendance than weekends. I was told this is probably due to the habits of local people who generally leave town on weekends.
19. The best time to see major exhibits without too long a wait is between the hours of six and eight PM; due to many families leaving by that time. Also, due to habitual eating habits in Seattle. This might not be equally true in New York.
20. Was strongly impressed with urgency of planning effective commercial portion of exhibits. Noted strong tendency of visitors to skip commercial displays unless they were quite ingenious. Obviously with long waiting lines, people will tend to save time.
21. It is difficult to find one's way about The Fair grounds; especially one the size of New York. Therefore, location of an exhibit is extremely important. Also it is important to maintain sight lines, so that a building can be spotted some distance away. Furthermore, this suggests heavy reference to building location in publicity and promotional material.
22. An entranceway is important in luring visitors.
23. Every day shows fresh evidence that, in attracting crowds, "THE SHOW IS THE THING". People will stay away from dull exhibits in tremendous numbers. People like novelty, something unusual, something eye-catching, something with an emotional response. This suggests constant scrutiny and refinement in our show planning. Each individual scene should

be studied to answer the questions "will it hold attention?" - "will it move people?" - "will it excite people?" - "will it be talked about?". The answers must be affirmative in order to get real attendance. If this is true in Seattle, one can imagine how true it will be in the competitive scene at New York. (Note: some 60 color slides of The Fair are available for viewing)

World's Fair Committee

Roger Frost
Henry F. Woods, Jr.
Clive Howard
Art Cady
Richard Dana
Wallace Kunkel
Robert Sarchiapone