

Excellence in Exhibition Label Writing Competition

AAM Annual Meeting 2012

Excellent exhibition labels are clear, concise, and captivating. This combination is not easily achieved, and the writers and editors who craft the best label copy often go unrecognized. This competition is designed to showcase examples of great label writing, identify innovative approaches, highlight best practices, and help us learn from one another. It is sponsored by CurCom in cooperation with EdCom and NAME.

Competition guidelines

1. **Submission deadline:** Friday, December 9, 2011
2. **Eligibility requirements:** All exhibition label writers and editors are eligible to compete, including freelancers. Submissions must have been (a) on display in a museum gallery and (b) included in an exhibition that opened in the 18 months prior to this year's submission deadline. **Submitted materials must reflect the final label text, no exceptions.** Text used for prototyping or posted solely online is ineligible. Entries are limited to three per exhibition, so please consult with your collaborators before submitting.
3. Entries must contain all of the components listed in the submission guidelines (see next page). **After submitting an entry, you will receive an e-mail confirmation. If you do not hear from us within a week, please follow up with a telephone call.**
4. **If submitting by e-mail (preferred),** include "AAM label competition" and the name of your organization in the subject of your e-mail. Send submissions to nordstrom@chicagohistory.org.
5. **If submitting by mail,** send all components on a CD. All files should be easy to read when printed on 8.5" x 11" paper. Mail entries to: Chicago History Museum, Attn: Emily Nordstrom, 1601 North Clark Street, Chicago, Illinois 60614
6. A panel of four label experts, representing CurCom, EdCom, NAME, and the previous year's awardees, will determine which labels are recognized.
7. Winning entries will be on display in the Marketplace of Ideas at the 2012 AAM Annual Meeting and featured on the CurCom Web site at www.curcom.org. If attending the annual meeting, awardees are encouraged to join us at the Marketplace of Ideas to discuss their labels with conference attendees.
8. Please note: By entering, you are giving the competition organizers permission to publish your written work and photographs in material related to the competition, both online and in print.
9. **Questions?** Please contact John Russick (312.799.2172, russick@chicagohistory.org) or Emily Nordstrom (312.799.2144, nordstrom@chicagohistory.org).

**Excellence in Exhibition Label Writing Competition
2011 Submission Guidelines**

Submission deadline: Friday, December 9, 2011

Each submission must include the following components. Submit all of the contact, exhibition, and label information in a single, text-only Word document. If submitting more than one label from an exhibition, you do not need to repeat the contact and exhibition information. Incomplete submissions will not be accepted.

Contact information

- Contact name, title, phone number, and e-mail address
- Exhibiting museum name, city, and state

Exhibition information

- Title
- Date of opening (must fall within the 18 months prior to the submission deadline)
- Names of the writers and editors who worked on the project
- Target audience
- Description of the exhibition (100 words or less)
- Description of your label writing approach (one description per exhibition, 100 words or less)
In your description, consider these types of questions: What were your goals? What was your process? Why did you write it this way? What was most successful about this approach? Did you test your labels with visitors? What did you find?

Label information

- Identify the label type:
 - a. Introductory, *presents the basic themes of an exhibition*
 - b. Concept (e.g., a section or subsection label), *explains a specific topic or theme*
 - c. Instructional, *describes how to do something*
 - d. Object, *describes and invites investigation of an object(s)*
 - e. Other, *please explain*
- Include the label copy as it appears on display; retain type formatting (line breaks, all caps, boldface, italics, etc.) but do not break text into tables or embed images.

Images of label

Send images as separate files; do not embed them in your Word document. Files should be no larger than 10MB each.

- PDF of the typeset label (Note: This must reflect the final label copy; discrepancies between it and the text submitted in the Word document cause confusion and are likely to result in disqualification.)
- Photograph (high-resolution JPG) of the label on display

Submit materials to:

Chicago History Museum
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Chicago, Illinois 60614
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