



Poster making tips for professional conferences

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What is the purpose of a poster?

It is a distinct type of communication tool for sharing information.

It is a 'visual snapshot' of a key message that you are trying to convey.

It is NOT a 'cut and paste' from a paper or an oral presentation; nor can it contain the detail in either of those two mediums.



Audience & Message

Audience

- What are you making the poster for?
 - homogeneous or heterogeneous audience
 - be aware of your use of professional jargon

Message

- What do you really want people to ‘get’ from your poster?
 - identify the most exciting, relevant, and innovative aspects of your program that can be easily generalized



Now what should you think about?

- **The computer program you are using**
- **Style of poster**
 - one large sheet or multiple small sheets
- **Key elements to go on the poster**
 - requirements of the conference
 - key sections, text, figures, tables, charts
- **Overall layout of your poster**
 - left to right or key points centred
 - play around with laying out the key elements to see what is most effective



Text

Text

- Size - minimum 24 pt., 36 is better
- Font - keep it simple
 - Arial or Times New Roman
- Amount of text - think 'white space'
- Point form & bullets versus paragraphs
- Readability – most common is dark text on light background
- Handouts – use to provide detailed information
- Titles - usually 100+ font; can be a bit more creative in font
- Include authors and their affiliations



Graphics (pictures, figures)

- Graphics should illustrate and enhance key points
- aim for a balance of text and graphics
- If there is copyright or is a picture of a patient, client or staff, that you have written permission to use
- resolution: pictures from web are usually too low resolution for a large poster; digital camera pictures are good (unless the picture has been saved at a low resolution)



Logos

- Include your organization and any funders
- size and placement – not too big and generally in the corners
- Resolution – ensure that they are clear at ‘full’ size of the poster, not just on your screen



Graphics examples

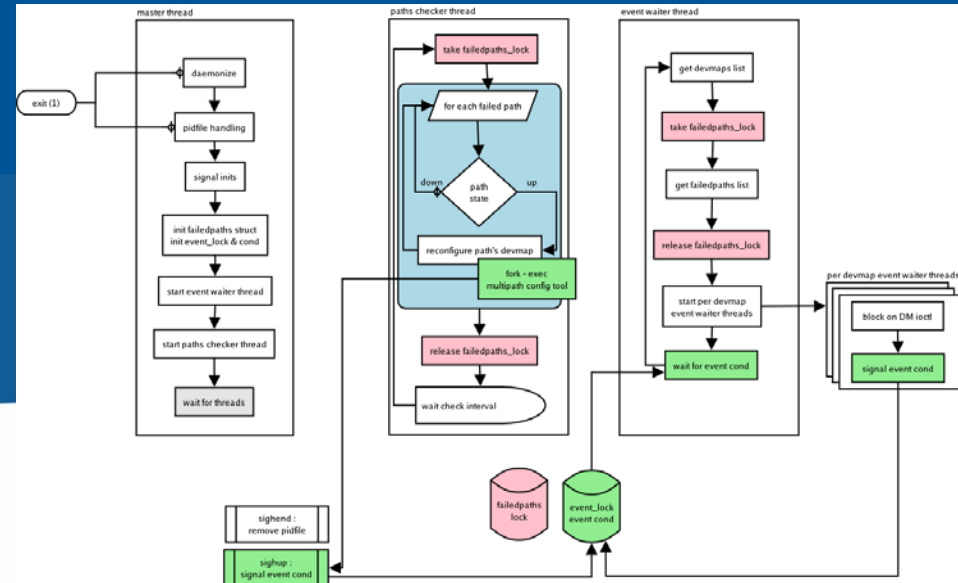


Blurry - poor resolution

Clear - higher resolution



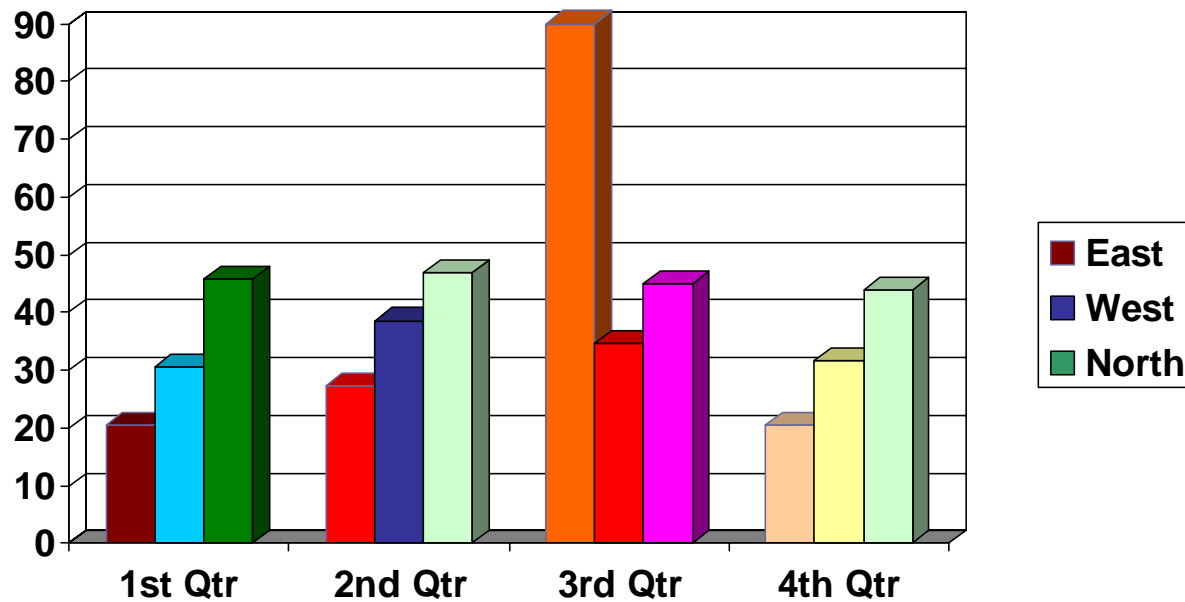
Font too small to read



Tables, charts & graphs

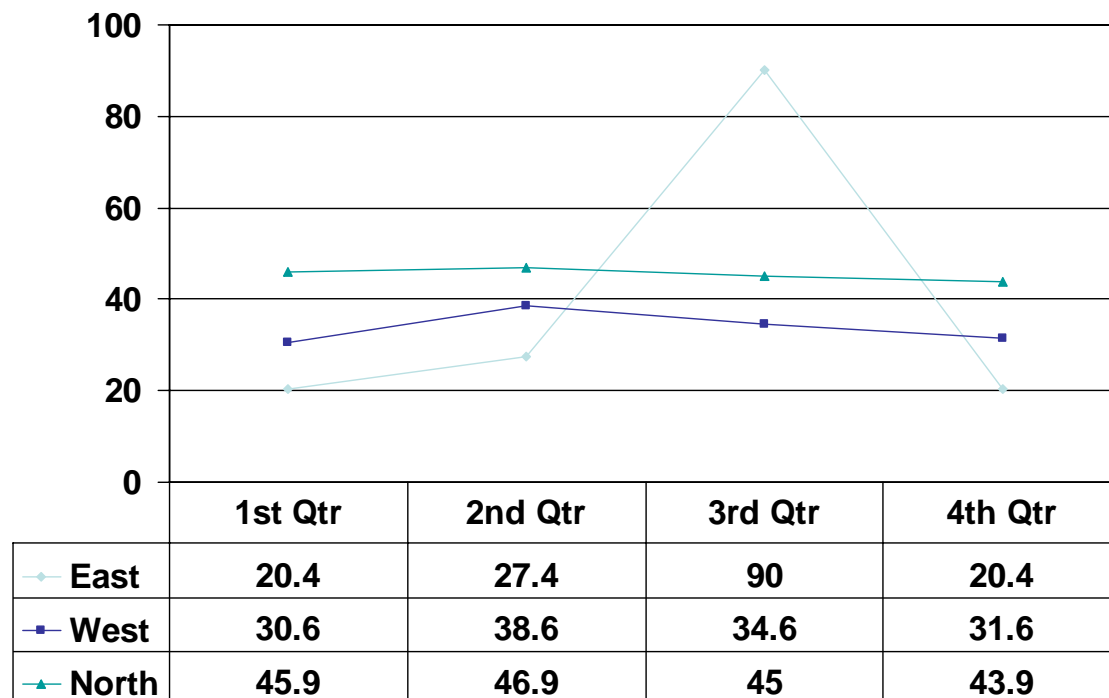
- These should not duplicate text
- Choose those that support the message for this particular poster ⇒ leave the rest off!
 - highlight the most important finding(s) so that the readers can find it easily
- Ensure the legends are brief but clear
- Use distinct colours for each data series
- Choose appropriate chart style for data being presented





These two graphs show the same data – which is more effective?

What bar colours above are most distinct from each other?



Colour

Background colour

- Readability of elements on the background colour
- Does it enhance the overall poster? Is it aesthetically pleasing/easy to look at?
- Most common - light colour background

Text colour(s), box lines, title colours

- Do they highlight or distract?
- Have you used them consistently?

