How to Create an Attractive Poster

Essential Steps

1. What is your message?
   Who is your audience?
   What are your objectives?

2. How to create an understandable poster

3. How to use visual grammar
   A poster is a presentation, not a paper.

4. Auto-Evaluation
   Questions to « test » your poster: does it meet your objectives?
What is your message? Who is your audience? What are your objectives?
The complexity and appeal of the message depends on the target audience.

Objectives:
• To be acknowledged within your research community.
• To find research partners.

Title: same as published paper. This type of poster is explained by the researcher during a poster session.

Objectives:
• To be recognized by industrial partners and academics.
• To reach new target audiences.
• To explain the laboratory research.
• To find a job for yourself.

Title: appealing in order to capture and retain the attention of the reader. This type of poster is explained by the researcher.

Objectives:
• To explain your research domain.
• To attract new students.
• To reach the political and economic world.

Title: appealing to surprise and to attract new readers. This type of poster has to be understandable without explanation.

! Be careful: Do not use the same wording for all target audiences!
! Do not “Copy paste” from a publication!
How to create an understandable poster

Attractive posters encourage discussions and interest from others. The more carefully you arrange your information, the more quickly and easily it will be understood and the better effect it will create.

1) Title and Sub-titles
The title gives the main information (question, attract, surprise, or use humor).

The sub-titles show the poster’s organization and briefly explain the subject.

2) Hierarchical Structure
- Why
  - the interest of your research
- What
  - importance of your research
- Who
  - authors
- Story
  - the history of what already exists
- Benefits
- How
  - methods
  - actions
- Horizon
  - conclusion horizons opened by your research

Separate information visually:
- features - frameworks – colors
- Indicate the reading direction:
  - arrows - numbers

3) Only Essential Information
- Determine the key ideas.
- If necessary, make several posters to explain different subjects.

Develop several versions and delete each time the non-essential information.

4) Benefits
- Attract readers’ attention.
- Encourage discussion.

5) Conclusion / Horizon
- Give a memorable conclusion.
- Propose future prospects.
- Elaborate on ideas spelled out in the intro.
- Challenge the audience.

6) For More Information:
www.
Address / Contact
Annex : A4 paper and business cards for people to take away
How to use visual grammar
A poster is a presentation, not a paper.
A high-quality presentation helps to sell a concept.

1) Text
• Avoid long texts.
• Use short sentences.
• Emphasize key concepts.
• Use examples to illustrate research.
Vocabulary:
• Use simple and clear words.
• Avoid acronyms.

2) Visualization
• A roomy and colored presentation draws the attention and encourages reading.
• Apply a grid to align visual objects.
• Local background can give context and highlight important ideas.
• Avoid large areas of dark colored background, it wastes ink and warps the paper.
• Apply a uniform color code.

3) Illustrations
Graphs: simplify them to the maximum.
Include only absolutely necessary data.
Photographs: give the context, the scale…
Complex Equations, Formulas: only if necessary.

4) Size
• **Essential Title**: Arial 80 bold
• **Heading**: Arial 60 bold
• **Title**: Arial 40 bold
• **Sub-title**: Arial 30 bold
• **Text**: Arial 30

5) Printing
• **Posters**: Posters are typically made in A0 size for conferences
  84 cm by 118.8 cm
  33.07 in by 46.77 in,
Questions to «test» your poster: does it meet your objectives?

Do you want to test the impact of your poster? Answer these questions...

A. Read the posters with the eyes of the targeted audience.
What does he/she see and understand?
Ask other people, including your parents or children, to read and comment.

B. What do people read?

- Explanatory texts
- Illustrations, captions
- Intro, heading, conclusion
- Titles, sub-titles

Attention Span

Is the information clear?

C. Do not explain the details, convey a general overview.

Map showing electricity consumption in Europe
(better overview than a table of figures)

Don’t be too complex!
Stay outside of the problem.

D. Simplify the message.

Simplify in order to leave a lasting impression on the target audience.

! Use the same language as the targeted audience!