

Using Multimedia in Legal Proceedings

Visual Exhibit Considerations and Goals.

- Clear and Understandable Message. Ads on TV give a clear and understandable message. They are eye-catching and succinct. Your message should supply information as to the themes in your case as opposed to pure factual data. If possible, do not make the jurors draw their own conclusions from the graphic.



- Gestalt Grouping Principles. When we view a graphic display, we have a tendency to group or organize the elements on a chart. Some elements stand out and others become part of the background. It is important to ensure that the elements you want the jury to focus on and remember do not get lost in the background. If you put too much information on an exhibit, the jury will search through all the information trying to understand all the points and in effect diluting your message.

- Simple and straightforward. Do not overload the juror with too much information. Do not require them to read and select the information they will remember.

“By 9:00 am, when a typical trial jury begins to hear evidence, participants will have been exposed to 30

What this all adds up to is that today’s trial lawyers must try cases visually in order to win over increasing

Cues. People will immediately draw conclusions from seeing a graphic exhibit. Those conclusions and the theme should be reinforced throughout the trial with different witnesses or during different stages of the proceeding.

- Free of Distracting Information. Ensure that the exhibit does not distract or direct the jurors to points that are irrelevant. The jurors will lose the effect of your exhibit if they focus on something different.

- Attention Grabbing. Jurors will pay attention to something they are conditioned to or enjoy. Try to utilize their real life experiences to convince and persuade them. Use visually exciting graphics ? bold and distinctive shapes, use of color contrast, and familiar objects.

- Repetition. During different parts of a trial, reaffirm the general themes and conclusions you want them to draw.

- Color. Plan for cohesive color and style for all demonstrative evidence. This is helpful for organizing diagrams, charts, and other visual aids. Each important subject should have its own color code to present to the jury. For example, red might be used to show damaging testimony by opposing party. Blue might then be used to reflect one particular element in a case. Color can also be used to differentiate between elements in a presentation ? enabling comparisons and highlighting trends. Too many colors tend to dilute value.

- Support Data/Technical Data. Be sure and have exhibit data available. The scale, who drew it, whether the measurements were received from an expert, and who generated the definitions. For example, have a copy of the medical chart from which an enlargement was made.