

The following questions were submitted by attendees of the Texas Historical Commission's Museum Services Program webinar titled "Affordable and Transportable: Creating and Circulating Compact Traveling Exhibits." Following the webinar on Tuesday, October 6, presenter Melissa Huber, Director of Programs and Communication at Humanities Texas, responded to many of those questions; **the comments from Melissa Huber are in red below**. The webinar recording, slides, and handout are all available at [www.thc.texas.gov/museumwebinars](http://www.thc.texas.gov/museumwebinars) under **Archived Webinars → Exhibits**.

### **What vendors do you recommend for foldable display systems and pole-panel display systems?**

- For lighter-weight, prefab display systems (folding or pole-panel):  
Displays2go: <https://www.displays2go.com/>
- For heavier-duty, custom display systems (pole-panel):  
American Image Displays: <https://american-image.com/>  
Charles Dugan (Humanities Texas's vendor representative)  
(e) [charles@american-image.com](mailto:charles@american-image.com) (p) 360-519-4894

### **If an exhibition has a five-year lifespan, what is the average number of venues it can travel to in that time?**

- The rental period for our wall-hanging exhibitions is six weeks. Allowing for time in transit, wall-hanging displays typically travel to up to four venues per year (or twenty venues in five years).
- The rental period for our freestanding exhibitions is four weeks. Allowing for time in transit, freestanding displays typically travel to up to six venues per year (or thirty venues in five years).

### **Who is the vendor for your rotomolded cases? Can you please recommend a resource on crate construction?**

- Here are some of the vendors we use for rotomolded and ATA cases:  
<https://www.phillycase.com/>  
<https://www.calzoneandnavil.com/>  
<https://www.bannerstandstogo.com/parts-accessories/shipping-cases>  
<https://www.starcase.com/productcatalog>
- We build our wood crates in-house. There are companies (including art shippers) that will build crates, but you might find someone in your community (like a local woodworker or furniture maker) that could construct them for you for less. Our exhibitions technician Henry Levine ([hlevine@humanitiestexas.org](mailto:hlevine@humanitiestexas.org)) would be happy to talk with you more about the process, including recommendations for when you are shipping via commercial freight.

**What are dimension sizes that crates need to stay within to be able to fit through doorways at venues, elevator doors, etc.?**

- Our general rule is that cases or crates should fit comfortably through a standard American front door (36" w x 80" h).

**For cases/crates going to multiple sites over many years, how do you deal with the necessary shipping address labels? Do you ask the venue to remove them after arrival so that there is a clear spot for the new label for the next, onward shipment, to avoid even the remotest possibility that a crate will be sent to an earlier venue?**

- We do ask venues to remove the shipping label upon arrival. Near the end of the booking period, we send a new shipping label and packing slip in preparation for transit to the next venue (or back to Humanities Texas).

**We are part of a larger organization which has regularly controlled our web presence. We are very interested in using QR codes, but are concerned at the longevity of the links which may be out of our control in the future. Do you have recommendations? Can we re-program QR codes if webpages change over time?**

- Yes, you can reprogram a QR code if the link to the hosted content changes.

**For the Hurricane Harvey exhibition, were the panels wrapped in vinyl or direct print? Were the French cleats made of the same material?**

- The text panels were printed on 1/8" face mount acrylic with 1/2" MDF backers and 3/4" spacers and cleats. The photo panels were printed on 1/8" face mount acrylic with 1/4" sintra backers and 1/8" PVC cleats.

**In the photos, the floating mounted panels are sticking out quite far. Is this a special wide tape?**

- The floating panels have a 3/4" wood spacer on the back that gives the overall exhibition a bit more dimension. The French cleat (also wood) is the same depth as the spacer.

**With the pole-panel display assembly, is the height adjustable?**

- The current pole-panel display we use is adjustable with two height options, but this varies by product and manufacturer.

**What is a general development budget for a panel exhibit?**

- This varies significantly depending on the scale and format of your exhibition. The budget also varies based on whether, for example, you can do graphic design in-house or if this is something you need to outsource. Please feel free to contact me if you would like to talk in greater detail. I'd be happy to help you come up with a general estimate that is appropriate for your organization.

## **What are your recommendations for incorporating AV into these traveling exhibits?**

- All of our exhibitions are a little bit different, but some display include an audio and/or video component. We do include CDs and DVDs with some exhibitions, but we do not provide the equipment to play audio or video on-site (speakers, screens, etc.). We are increasingly incorporating QR codes into our displays so that viewers can access audio and video on their mobile devices.

## **How can we market or find host places for a traveling exhibit?**

- If you are based in Texas, reach out to Humanities Texas and/or THC Museum Services. We may be able to connect you to organizations in our networks that would be interested in hosting your traveling display. If you have the resources, you might also consider promoting your resources at annual conferences (Texas Association of Museums, Texas Library Association, etc.).

## **Does Humanities Texas create any ancillary interactive content to go along with the traveling exhibits, such as activities for students?**

- Humanities Texas often provides supplemental materials with our displays, though it varies by exhibition. Some examples include posters, brochures, audio and/or video components, and K-12 curriculum.

## **Can you share information about grant opportunities for developing traveling exhibits?**

- You can learn all about Humanities Texas mini- and major grants on our website at <https://www.humanitiestexas.org/grants/apply>. If your organization is not located in Texas, we recommend reaching out to your state's humanities council.

## **How much time do you require between rentals?**

### **Does exhibits always go back to you for inspection before heading to next venue?**

### **Do you send the exhibits directly from one location to another or do you bring them back to your organization first?**

- When possible, we try to schedule exhibitions so that they forward ship from venue to the next without coming back to Humanities Texas in between. This is the most cost effective approach in terms of shipping. However, if the exhibition requires maintenance or repairs, we bring it back to our headquarters in between venues. Even when you have back-to-back bookings, we recommend scheduling two weeks for travel between venues in case of shipping or condition issues.

## **What are your rental fees?**

### **How much should we charge for a traveling exhibition?**

### **Does it make sense to charge a fee and let their institution print and mount the exhibition themselves rather than pay for shipping?**

### **If we want to travel an exhibition for a limited time (ex. during a centennial) how can we get the exhibit to the most people/locations and fundraise most effectively?**

- Humanities Texas traveling exhibitions generally range from \$500–1,500. These rental fees are based primarily on the cost of shipping. If you are only planning to circulate an exhibition for a short time, a pop-up banner or pop-up cardboard display may work for your purposes. We have had, on rare occasion, venues pay a fee for access to digital files in order to print and mount the display themselves. In these few cases, we are clear that the content may not be altered in any way and that the exhibition may only be on display for a specific amount of time.

### **If a venue needs to drop out, where does the exhibition go?**

- We ask that venues give us at least two weeks notice if they need to cancel or reschedule a booking. This gives us time to intercept the exhibition before it ships to the next location and/or to potentially find an alternate venue.

### **Does each venue pay inbound or inbound and outbound shipping?**

- Humanities Texas charges a single rental fee that includes shipping to and from the venue. The fee is determined at the time of booking and is based on current shipping costs to the venue's region. Our staff handle all shipping logistics and, at the end of the booking period, send the venue prepared shipping labels and packing slips.

### **Do you get regular updates on the condition of the exhibitions, or photos before packing unpacking at each venue?**

- With some exceptions, we generally do not require formal condition reports from each venue. We do ask that venues document and report any damage to the exhibition or crates/cases as soon as it is discovered. We also note that the venue should not attempt to make repairs to the display without first contacting Humanities Texas. If some element of the exhibition has been damaged, we will either advise the venue on appropriate repairs or send replacement panels or parts.

### **Can you share a sample rental contract, loan agreement, and booking calendar?**

- Please contact Melissa at [mhuber@humanitiestexas.org](mailto:mhuber@humanitiestexas.org) for examples of rental contracts, condition forms, partner loan agreements, booking calendars, etc.