

Poster presentations: If I can do then so can you!

Great news, if you're considering putting together a poster in a professional format it is easier than a do it yourself cut and paste poster!

Earlier this year my colleague and I took the plunge and put together a poster for the 2010 Respiratory Educators Conference in Wellington.

I had many reservations about the how to, what to do and then the how was I going to find the time in an already busy working day. However it was easier than I ever imagined ó it turned out to be a positive experience and one I would encourage others to take part in.

I hear so often that people don't enter posters because they are uncertain of how to put one together in the 'fancy' format. Rarely is it that the content is the issue. How sad that we are failing to share what wonderful things we are doing because we are uncertain of how to present our material.

So what's the big secret to poster creations?

Well, it's as simple as getting the poster template e-mailed to you (for us that was from University print in Dunedin www.uniprint.otago.ac.nz/). Basically it's a power point slide which you cut and paste your work into. The template came with suggestions for font layout, however you can pretty much do as you wish within the room of the slide. You can cut and paste your pics, choose colour as you wish and do a few versions of the same content all on your computer. In fact it is shockingly easy even for me, who isn't too computer savvy. Then it's a matter of sending your finished version by e-mail to the printing company you have chosen along with the size you wish to have the completed poster in. The company can guide you in all these decisions. For us the cost was less than \$150.00 and the finished version was just like the 'fancy' versions you see at other conferences! phew!

Content layout needs some consideration. I looked at other poster layout suggestions via google and at colleagues work. Although our body of work wasn't a research project we chose headings that included: background, aim, method, discussion, results of an audit on the work, conclusion and references.

My suggestion is to get on the phone to a local print shop and check if they can assist with a template then have a go. Learning how to do this will be as rewarding as the body of work you are presenting and you will wonder why you didn't do it sooner. Good luck!

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