Making an Effective Poster
Why Posters?

• Too many papers, not enough time
  – used for at least 20 in medicine, 10 years in ecology → NOW in social sciences

• An effective, relaxed way to communicate

• Encourage discussion

• Performance anxiety

• Prestige: Posters vs Papers?
What you should be aiming for

- Conveying your message to maximum number of people
- Getting people interested in your research
- Engaging Discussion
- Not boring your audience
- Having fun, but not spending weeks on it
- A poster – NOT a paper!!!
- Punch line immediately; details in 5 min
The Essentials

• Figure out main points; make them easy to find
• Stay focused.
• Keep it simple! Edit out extra unnecessary details
• Use bold, large font, lots of graphics
• Plan on spending time on the graphics
• Get several people to edit for content AND style
• Make bold, simple statements
• *Show us, don’t tell us!!!!!*
The Components of a Poster

- **Title, Author Affiliation, No abstract**
- **Introduction**
  - make it snappy, inviting, provide context
  - include an inviting photo
  - < 100 words
- **Methods**
  - Gen. keep to min; ~ 100 words
  - Figures, photos
- **Results**
  - Text: strong statement about how great your results are & why. Refer to figures
  - Figures with titles and explanatory captions
  - Few words (~200), lots of figures
- **Conclusion**
  - Bullet if possible; set in larger context
- **Acknowledgments? Lit Cited? Further info?**
Title = informative
At least 36 font
Bold
No colons
One line
Centered
Font style: you choose
Choosing Title Font & Capitalization Styles

Choosing title font & capitalization styles

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Introduction

Houses were fundamental to cultural expression among Coast Salish groups in the lower Fraser Valley and its tributaries. The construction and continued maintenance of houses were material reflections of a household's social identity. In 2007, we completely excavated a small, isolated pithouse in the Harrison River Valley, the traditional territory of the Chehalis People. Two occupations, spanning approximately 300 years, suggest a long-term connection to place. The forms and contents of the successive structures allow for interpretations of the identity of the house occupants and their connection to the Chehalis people of today.

Excavating the Pithouse

- We excavated the entire pithouse depression during the 2007 field season

Two Occupations, Continuous Use

- Both occupations show continuous use with multiple rebuilding events
- Each occupation reflects consistency in external and internal design
- All houses in the earlier occupation had a circular plan with the same hearth and post locations
- All houses in the later occupation had a rectilinear plan with multiple hearths per location
- The change in house plans and occupations may be attributed to changes in the 1700s

The Setting

- The small, isolated pithouse is about 2.5 km from the nearest pithouse settlements on the Harrison River

Burning, Rebuilding and Change

- Early Occupation
  - Circular plan, one hearth location
  - Few artifacts, minimal refuse
  - Built on surface over shallow basin with rim
  - Burned at least two times, rebuilt ~4 times
- Later Occupation
  - Rectilinear plan, multiple hearth locations
  - Excavated into post-occupation flood deposit
  - No associated burning or major rebuilding
  - Large number of hammerstones (~23) suggests special purpose camp

Whose House Was It?

- Evidence from the early occupation is consistent with present-day community members' interpretation of the site as a shaman's house or spirit questing/training location (Stan Point, Willie Charlie, 2008 pers. comm.)
- The form and function of the later houses are also consistent with Chehalis oral history which describe small pithouses used as workshops for resource processing
- The archaeological record of this one house exemplifies both the fluid nature of cultural identity and the continuous relationship to place rooted in Chehalis oral history

Acknowledgements

Willie Charlie, Stan Point, Ryan Charlie, James Leon, Gordon Mohr, the Chehalis Community, the 2007 SFU Field School, Ray Carlson, SSHRC, Morgan Richter, Keith Thor Carlson, Nasiko Stith, Meghan Caldwell, Brian Rayden, Suzanne Villaneuve
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Results: Bold, Simple Statements

Ancient Settlements on the Harrison River, SW BC

Morgan Ritchie¹, Dana Lepofsky¹ Adrian Sanders²
1. Simon Fraser University, 2. University of Victoria

Introduction
The Harrison River, the largest tributary of the Fraser, was a transportation ‘gateway’ linking coastal and interior peoples. The Chehalis people occupied at least 13 settlements along the river and created a landscape that expressed ownership and control. These ancient settlements were situated densely and were linked politically, socially, and culturally. Many of them were comprised of both pithouses and plank houses and were flanked by burial mounds. Mapping and dating efforts demonstrate continuity in house styles and burial locations. The site of Higlem, the largest of these settlements, was occupied year-round and reflects the intensity with which the landscape was utilized.

Harrison River Corridor Settlements
- Pithouses (n=79) and plank houses (n=13) were situated on the Harrison river and adjacent sloughs
- Settlements provided access to resources, trade and movement
- Burial mounds are associated with larger settlements (n=7)
- Pithouses suggest settlements were occupied from at least 1,300 BP

Integrated Settlement Arrangement
- Settlements were connected by waterways
- Line of sight between most settlements facilitated communication up and down the river
- The arrangement of houses facilitated monitoring and controlling activities on the river

Long-Term, Year-Round Habitation at the Site of Higlem
- Plankhouses occupied by 1500 BP. Settlement size increases with addition of pithouses around 1200 BP
- Botanical and faunal remains in hearths indicate year-round occupation
- Formation of fire-cracked rock demonstrates long-term access to elevating houses above water table
- Modern and historic evidence of midden associated with plank houses. Ancient burial mounds mark the eastern cemetery.

Conclusions
- There is evidence for continual occupation of the Harrison River for at least 1,300 years
- The Chehalis people controlled the Harrison River through numbers, cohesion, and permanent occupation
- Today, the Chehalis people continue to live beside the Harrison River and maintain the connection to their ancestors by visiting the same sites, harvesting the same resources, and using the same burial grounds

Acknowledgements
Thanks to Willie Charlie & Gordon Mohs for sharing their knowledge and time. Thanks also to the Chehalis Indian Band & the 2007 SFU Field School MITACS and the FVAP SSHRC grant funded this project.
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Conclusions: Make it Snappy

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Harrison River Corridor Settlements

Integrated Settlement Arrangement

- Settlements were connected by waterways
- Line of site between most settlements facilitated communication up and down the river
- The arrangement of houses facilitated monitoring and controlling activities on the river

John Mack Slough Site showing houses oriented toward the river. Excavated trade beads shown in inset.

Long-Term, Year-Round Habitation at the Site of Higelem
- Plankhouses occupied by 1500 BP. Settlement size increases with addition of pithouses around 1200 BP
- Foundation of fire-cracked-rock demonstrates a long-term effort to elevate houses above watertable
- Botanical & faunal remains in hearths indicate year-round occupation

Conclusions
- There is evidence for continual occupation of the Harrison River for at least 1,500 years
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Acknowledgements
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Poster Layout

• Use “visual grammar” — guide readers to important parts

• Use column format when possible

• Use organizational clues

• Use “Reader gravity” (i.e., top to bottom, to top of next column to bottom…)

• Balance placement of text and graphics

• Use white space creatively
Visual Grammar: Graphic Hierarchy

# XX
My name
My place

substance X induces Y-cells

Context:
Y-cell require induction
substance X may be the inducer because:
we know virtually nothing about X,
but we had some on the shelf.

1. transgenics

2. in situ

3. cell counts

4. dose response

5. HPLC

6. discussion

Conclusions
lots of details, more on details. Lots of type.
1. lots of tiny type, lots of tiny type, lots and lots of tiny type
2. lots and lots of tiny type
3. lots and lots of tiny type
4. lots and lots of tiny type
5. lots and lots of tiny type
6. lots and lots of tiny type

big
medium
big
small
big
medium
Columns, Organizational Clues, Reader Gravity
Balance & White Space
Graphics & Color

• Follow all the principles of graphic design
  – minimize clutter/junk
  – color schemes that make sense & are consistent, symbols that make sense
  – Simple colors; dark on light
  – sufficient space betw. images & words
Fonts/Text

• Minimize text – let images, headings, & captions speak for themselves
• Large font (>24 font)
• Watch text size in figures
• Simple language, bullets, etc.
• Print on 8.5 x 11 – can you read it?
• Serif or not serif, that is the question?
Choosing Font Styles: You Decide

Author’s Name/s Goes Here, Author’s Name/s Goes Here, Author’s Name/s Goes Here
Address/es Goes Here, Address/es Goes Here, Address/es Goes Here

Introduction

First...
Check with conference organisers on their specifications of size and orientation, before you start your poster eg. maximum poster size; landscape, portrait or square.
The page size of this poster template is A0 (84x119cm), landscape (horizontal) format. Do not change this page size, MIU can scale-to-fit a smaller or larger size, when printing. If you need a different shape start with either a portrait (vertical) or a square poster template.
Bear in mind you do not need to fill up the whole space allocated by some conference organisers (eg. 8ftx4ft in the USA). Do not make your poster bigger than necessary just to fill that given size.

Tips for making a successful poster...
- Re-write your paper into poster format ie. Simplify everything, avoid data overkill.
- Headings of more than 6 words should be in upper and lower case, not all capitals.
- Never do whole sentences in capitals or underline to stress your point, use bold characters instead.
- Try using photographs or coloured graphs. Avoid long numerical tables.
- Spell check and get someone else to proof-read.

Method

Importing / inserting files...
Images such as photographs, graphs, diagrams, logos, etc, can be added to the poster.
To insert scanned images into your poster, go through the menus as follows: Insert / Picture / From File… then find the file on your computer, select it, and press OK.
The best type of image files to insert are JPEG or TIFF, JPEG is the preferred format.
Be aware of the image size you are importing. The average colour photo (13 x 18cm at 180dpi) would be about 3Mb (1Mb for B/W greyscale). Call MIU if unsure.
Do not use images from the web.

Notes about graphs...
For simple graphs use MS Excel, or do the graph directly in PowerPoint.
Graphs done in a scientific graphing programs (eg. Sigma Plot, Prism, SPSS, Statistica) should be saved as JPEG or TIFF if possible. For more information see MIU.

Conclusion

For more information on:
Poster Design, Scanning and Digital Photography,
and Image / file size.
Contact:
Medical Illustration Unit
Prince of Wales Hospital
Ph: 9382 2800
Email: miunsw@unsw.edu.au
Web: http://miu.med.unsw.edu.au

Acknowledgements

Just highlight this text and replace with your own text.
Replace this with your text.