

Letter to the Editor

A Better Way to Present Posters

The proliferation of scientific research has made the presentation of all of this work at a scientific meeting an impossible task if one were to rely only on podium presentations and keep the meetings within a reasonably time frame. The concept of the poster session has allowed for a major increase in the dissemination of information at these conferences. This represents an almost irrefutable argument for continuing the use of poster presentations. The increasing number of posters at each meeting reflects their acceptance by the participants. We are in full agreement with the concept of poster presentations but feel that there is room for improvement in the implementation.

The problems that we find with poster sessions are as follows.

(1) There are so many that the space for meeting attendees to view them is decreasing. There is much unintentional pushing and shoving as people jockey in an attempt to read them. As a result, one either is being stepped on or poked or feels guilty about being in the way of other interested participants. This makes it difficult to read the poster in any depth. Also, the posters appear to be increasing in length (and therefore decreasing in the size of the print), which only compounds the situation described.

(2) After walking around for an hour or more in an attempt to find and read the papers of interest, fatigue often sets in and many good pieces of work often go unseen.

(3) Those of us who wear bifocals find it almost impossible to read a poster without bending over backward and, in

time, become quite uncomfortable. This certainly adds to the fatigue mentioned above.

We therefore propose the following.

(1) Have the authors prepare a reproduction of their posters which can be distributed to the attendees for perusal and reflection prior to the meeting. This does not require elaborate photographic equipment; it can be accomplished conveniently with a photocopy machine with size reduction capability.

(2) Continue the present poster presentation system. Since the attendees will be able to read the work in advance, they will be able to spend their and the presenter's time more fruitfully in a discussion of the work. Crowding will be reduced because visiting of posters will be more selective.

We hope that our suggestion will be implemented at least experimentally, perhaps initially for one section only. The booklet of poster reproductions should be offered for purchase at the time of advance registration for a modest fee to cover costs.

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Book Reviews

Pharmaceutical Dosage Forms: Disperse Systems. Volume 1. Edited by H. A. Lieberman, M. M. Rieger, and G. S. Banker. Marcel Dekker, New York, 1988, xvi + 524 pp.

This book is the first of a two-volume treatise on dispersed pharmaceutical systems. The emphasis of Volume 1 is the theoretical aspects of suspensions, emulsions, and colloids. These two volumes constitute part of the series *Pharmaceutical Dosage Forms*, which describes the theory and practice of pharmaceutical products.

Fifteen authors have contributed to produce the 10 chapters in this first volume describing theoretical concepts pertaining to disperse systems. Chapter 1 provides a brief but lucid introduction to interfacial and stability considerations of disperse systems. However, much of what appears in this introduction is repeated in subsequent sections of the book. The theory of suspensions is described in Chapter 2 and includes topics such as the properties of particles, the solid-liquid interface, and the preparation, stabilization, and rheological aspects of suspensions. Laser diffraction meth-

ods, which are eminently suited to the characterization of liquid and semisolid dispersions, are not mentioned in the extensive section on particle size analysis.

In Chapter 3, emulsion theory is related to the stability of both two-phase and three-phase emulsions. Colloid theory is reviewed in Chapter 4. Emphasis is given to the electrostatic and steric stabilization of colloidal sols and dispersions. The preparation of pseudolatexes is also described. This is one of the few chapters in the book which is supplemented with an extensive list of references.

Chapters 5 and 6 discuss pharmaceutical suspensions and pharmaceutical emulsions, respectively. Both chapters are comprehensive and well written, containing information relevant to oral, parenteral, and topical drug delivery systems. Further, both chapters describe the formulation, manufacture, properties, and stability considerations of these systems. However, it is the view of these reviewers that both of these chapters should directly follow, or preferably be integrated with, the earlier theoretical chapters on suspen-