

General Exposition Services

THE TRADE SHOW SERVICE CONTRACTORS

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Shipping 101

M&A East
Loews Philadelphia Hotel
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Exhibiting at a tradeshow can be costly. When a company purchases a booth space, it is just the beginning of the expenses that typically include shipping freight, furniture rental, and material handling. The seasoned exhibitor can tell you that material handling, often referred to as "drayage," is sometimes the most costly item on the list. In many cases, the exhibitor is paying for surcharges he does not understand. By understanding what drayage is and how service contractors establish their rates, you will be able to save money by avoiding unnecessary charges. Outlined below are some of the most commonly asked questions about drayage.

WHAT IS DRAYAGE?

Simply stated, drayage is the moving of materials from point A to point B. Whether your materials are sent in advance to the service contractor's warehouse or directly to show site, they still need to get to your booth after the carrier drops them off. Paying for drayage entitles you to have your freight taken to your booth from the loading dock, empty containers stored during the show, empty containers returned to your booth at the close of the show, and your freight carried back to the loading dock and loaded onto the carrier at the conclusion of the show. Then you arrange for a carrier to pick up your exhibit materials for transport to the next destination. There is usually a 200 pound minimum per shipment charge for drayage.

CAN MATERIALS BE HAND CARRIED TO MY BOOTH?

In most major cities, union labor has exclusive rights to the loading dock. The total weight and size of the display plus the union regulations regarding drayage for that city will determine if items can be hand carried to avoid paying for drayage. However, if you think you can hand carry your display onto the show floor, it has to be brought in through the front entrance. To avoid any surprises or confusion, please check the union regulations in the Exhibitor Service Manual. If you hand carry your items, the empty containers may be stored during the show for a fee.

HOW ARE DRAYAGE RATES DETERMINED?

Since union labor is used to move freight, General Exposition Services must set the rate based on the labor rate in that city. Drayage rates also reflect the cost of empty storage space and the overall cost to produce the tradeshow. Drayage rates will vary depending on move-in and move-out times.

HOW CAN I SAVE MY COMPANY MONEY?

Read your Exhibitor Service Manual and pay close attention to the shipping instructions. Be aware of any surcharges that may be imposed for special handling or late shipments. Please pay close attention to deadline dates. If warehouse shipments arrive too early or miss the deadline date, there will be an additional surcharge of 25%. General Exposition Services usually allows shipments to arrive at the advance warehouse up to 30 days from the first move-in date.

SHOULD I SHIP TO THE ADVANCE WAREHOUSE OR SHOW SITE?

When possible, ship in advance to the warehouse. Even though the drayage charges are typically higher, there are benefits. You can confirm receipt of your shipment with General Exposition Services before the show, adding to your peace of mind. In addition, freight sent to the warehouse is unloaded prior to exhibitor move-in. Therefore, your freight will be in your booth upon your arrival. You can begin setting your exhibits as soon as you arrive, which can save you time and labor during set-up. It is worth the added expense in order to reduce problems at show site.

Exhibiting Company: _____

Booth Number: _____

