

C. Professional Interest

While many conferences and some equipment exhibitions would have taken place in Vancouver in 1986 without the stimulation and direction of the Specialized Periods program, there wouldn't have been as many events, and they would not have been as varied or international in scope. Most importantly, the professional opportunities would not have been clustered by topic into 1-2 week timeframes so that professionals could take advantage of many professional events in a single visit to Vancouver, in addition to visiting the Exposition.

Most transportation and communications professionals who came to Vancouver during the Exposition were attracted by the 56 conferences and seminars that were included in the Specialized Periods. A rough count shows that approximately 12,000 delegates attended these professional events. Many conferences scheduled visits to relevant Specialized Periods exhibits into their programs.

Informal feedback from the organizers of events indicated a high degree of satisfaction with the exchange of ideas, the participation of international speakers and delegates and their own association with the Specialized Periods program. A number of organizers who sponsored conferences for the first time are considering continuing the tradition, a lasting legacy to the Specialized Periods program.

D. Public Interest

The goal of the Specialized Periods program was to focus on the professional audience as the target while recognizing that displays, demonstrations and special events would also have to be designed to interest the general public, as well. As the program unfolded, it became apparent that all on-site Specialized Period displays or events would be viewed by more members of the general public (approximately 20,000 - 30,000 per week) than professionals because of the sheer volume of people on site every day. So the need to orient displays and events to the general public was reinforced.

The Specialized Periods events which were of most interest to the public were those with active demonstrations (i.e. steam traction engines), vintage shows (automobiles, trucks and buses), competitions and rallies (international skateboard championships, Dragon Boat races, Formula 1 power boat races), displays connected with current events (Titanic) and the four main Special Events. The static, technical, professionally oriented equipment displays were the least popular.