

How to deal “decorator inflicted” damages to booth properties:

We’ve all heard it, “Stuff happens...” especially when dealing with trade shows. Tight deadlines require everyone to work quickly and sometimes, in the rush for “efficiency,” people make mistakes and booth properties can be damaged.

If a show decorator (or show contractor) is responsible for damages to your booth properties, it is notoriously difficult to be reimbursed for any necessary repairs or replacements.

**Here are some tips on how to approach the claims process:**

Make show management aware of the situation immediately and document your actions.

Find any witnesses that may have been present during the time of damage, if you were not. Record their observations and collect their contact information.

Take pictures! As soon as possible and as many as possible.

Take an initial inventory of any damages that were incurred.

If any structural damage was done make sure it is safe to leave the remaining booth structure

Notify the floor manager for the decorator, whether it is GES, Freeman, etc. Make sure they are aware of all the details; how, when, who, what, why.

Make sure they get a copy of your pictures or take their own. Most decorators have a special “safety” position that handles claims. Make sure a report gets written up about the incident and that you sign off on the facts and get a copy. Make sure that the organization at fault admits fault, in writing! Involve your exhibit house or EAC- whoever may be there to assist on or off-site.

Many show decorators have a “Claims Team” that will provide you with paperwork and an official record of the incident. Make sure to get their business cards and follow up with your information.

Most damages occur during tear - down because of the speed most shows are dismantled, keep track of all damages during tear-down. Once the exhibit is home – do a dry run to assess and estimate additional nicks and dings. Keep track of man hours during the inspection and include them in the invoice to the decorator.

As quickly as possible invoice the decorator for the damages. Set-up a schedule to check in with the decorator so that the claim is not forgotten. Continue to pursue the claim until you have answers and/or a check.

If damages happen during install, a similar process should be taken but with an eye out for what can be done to get the show on the road, so to speak. Decisions will need to be made quickly: Can I still use the item for this for the show or must it be taken out completely? Does something need to be replaced, especially if structural? Most decorators have rental exhibits at shows- if they are responsible for the damages to a booth that can no longer

be used, ask the decorator to supply rental items for the show. Find a local graphics shop to rush produce graphics if needed. Or, overnight booth properties, product, graphics from home or your exhibit house.

If you have JC Rose & Associates on the floor, we will take care of the problem and minimize the headache.