## Stand-up Labels
by Frank Madsen

Frank Madsen is President of Teller Madsen, Inc. In Chicago. He may be reached at fmadsen@tmexhibits.com.

Newberry Library's recent exhibition on Abraham Lincoln had many flat documents and books displayed in cases, as is typical for their collection. Viewers circulated around the freestanding cases. Flat documents with labels side-by-side can create difficulties in visual transition for the viewer, especially with several documents clustered together. Such a layout can also result in a very crowded case.

To improve the object/label relationship and provide more space in the cases, we created labels positioned at a nearly 80% angle immediately behind the item being described. We call them stand-up labels, although they are often known as tent labels. In this way, the viewer could glance down at the document and up slightly to read the label, much as one might view a two-page spread in a book that is oriented from bottom to top on facing pages. Label groups are centered back-to-back in the case like a spine. When the viewer looks up, the label itself screens the items and text on the opposite side of the case. It also adds a modest visual barrier to eliminate the distraction of those facing the viewer on the opposite side.

The text is 22 point Univers for easy reading, and the labels are positioned high enough with space below (about 9in. top to bottom) so that if the object in question is a book on a cradle, it does not obscure the text. The back-to-back labels were printed on heavy stock, scored by the graphic shop. We then bent the labels along the fold and attached a tapered strip of ½in. 'Gator Foam' with banner tape to make a 4in. base. This keeps the printed stock from bending over time and maintains a uniform shape for all the labels which range in width from 12in. to 42in. Using our stand-up design, the conventional footprint for such labels is reduced by about 75%. For one case with very large documents, and sheet music, the labels sit to one side of the case and are blank on the back. Our intern Claire Paolini gets credit for type layout as well as design for all graphic elements of the exhibition. *The exhibition closed in February 2010. The Editor.* ☀
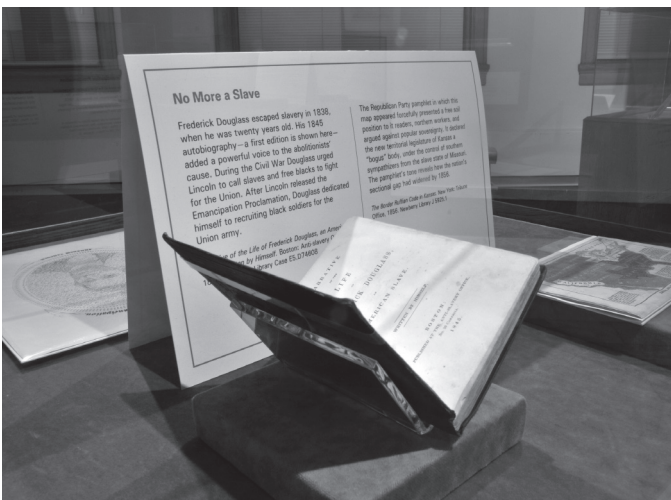
The viewer can glance down at the document and up slightly to read the label. Photo by Alan Teller, Teller Madsen, Inc.
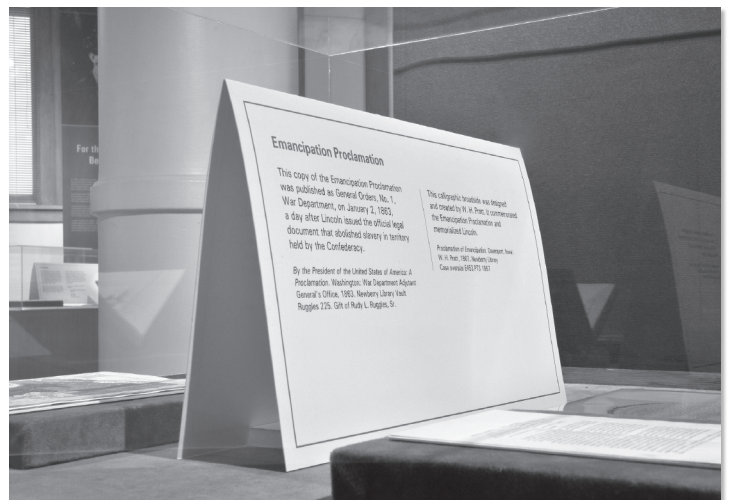
When the viewer looks up, the label itself screens the items and text on the opposite side of the case. Photo by Alan Teller, Teller Madsen, Inc.