

to supplement the information in the news release. There are several kinds of fact sheets. You can write one for an upcoming event, for example, that uses boldface headings to give such basic information as (1) the name of the event, (2) its sponsor, (3) the location, (4) the date and time, (5) the purpose of the event, (6) the expected attendance, (7) a list of any prominent people attending, and (8) any unusual aspects of the event that make it newsworthy.

The “event” may be a community-wide activity, such as a Jazz Festival, but it could also be the grand opening of a facility for homeless youth. In another situation, the Field Museum of Chicago prepared a basic fact sheet about the opening of a new exhibit on maps. The fact sheet gave (1) the dates of the exhibit, (2) the number of maps on display, (3) a short description of some rare maps on exhibit,

(4) hours of the exhibit, (5) admission fees, (6) the museum’s address and telephone numbers, and (7) the corporate sponsors.

Another Chicago institution, the Shedd Aquarium, used several “fact sheets” to provide background information on an exhibit featuring 30 species of lizards. One fact sheet gave some “pop culture” facts about lizards. One bulleted item, for example, noted “In ancient Egyptian and Greek symbolism, the lizard represented divine wisdom and good fortune.” Another fact sheet, shown in Figure 6.1, was titled “Fun Facts on Lizards and the Ko-

► **FIGURE 6.1** Fact sheets can be compiled on almost any subject. This one, distributed by Shedd Aquarium in Chicago for its lizard exhibit, gives some basic background about the star attraction, a Komodo dragon. Note that bullets are used to give factoids that journalists may select to include in their stories.

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Fact Sheet



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FUN FACTS ON LIZARDS AND THE KOMODO KING

Did you know? Lizards will change their skin color to camouflage themselves, “bark” to attract a mate and even twist out of their scales or squirt blood from their eyeballs to escape predators! Check out the true colors of lizards at Shedd’s *Lizards and the Komodo King* opening Saturday, April 8. Find out why some lizards have “beards,” how some sleep in the treetops by their tails and much more!

Here are more fun facts about some of the lizards in Shedd Aquarium’s new special exhibit *Lizards and the Komodo King*, opening April 8:

Komodo Dragon

- The largest lizard in the world, the Komodo dragon, makes its first ever appearance in Chicago at Shedd.
- The actual saliva of a Komodo dragon harbors a fatal mix of bacteria that causes deadly infections and is just as lethal as the Komodo’s vicious bite.
- Although the toxic saliva of a Komodo dragon is lethal enough to kill its prey, Komodos are immune to other Komodo bites.
- Komodo dragons will devour its entire meal, even the hooves, horns, bones and hide. However, it will not eat anything inside the digestive tract of its prey and can go several weeks between meals.
- The real name for the Komodo dragon is Komodo Island monitor. A 1927 *National Geographic* article described the Komodo as a “dragon” and the word stuck.
- With hawk-like vision and unbelievable sense of smell, the Komodo dragon can see up to 1,000 feet away and can sniff out rotting flesh from miles away!
- Komodos have ancestors that date back more than 100 million years.
- The Komodo at Shedd gets his name, Faust, from the German-based legend of a man who sold his soul to the devil, but ultimately fell in love, thus discovering the full meaning of life. This broke his pact with the devil; consequently, Faust was believed to hold the power to control the devil.

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