Audience Building:
Marketing Art Museums

October 2001

Smithsonian Institution
Office of Policy & Analysis
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Summary

In response to a request from the International Art Museum Division (IAMD) of the Smithsonian Institution, the Office of Policy and Analysis (OP&A) conducted a review of current practices in art museum marketing to general audiences rather than marketing to specific cultural or ethnic groups.

Museum marketing is unique because museums have a mission to educate the public as well as build audience and revenue. Art museum marketing is market driven and mission relevant. Marketing directors are working to make visits to art museums more attractive, accessible, and satisfying.

Art museum marketing is becoming more strategic and sophisticated as art museums are making greater efforts to increase public awareness and visitation. Admission revenues, marketing expenses, and operating expenses have increased more rapidly than attendance in major art museums since 1988. Museums are adopting sophisticated promotional tools such as direct mail and telemarketing that have been used successfully by for-profit businesses. They are also using more sophisticated and targeted advertising campaigns.

Art museum marketing directors observed that raising awareness is easier to accomplish through advertising than changing a museum's image held by potential visitors. Art museum marketing directors noted that newspaper advertising is very effective and should be complemented with other communication strategies. They observed that consistency and frequency are essential in advertising.

Target markets for IAMD museums include:
- Visitors to other Smithsonian Mall museums.
- Metropolitan residents.
- Mid-Atlantic residents.
- Organized groups.

- Parents and grandparents visiting with children.

Strategies that may significantly increase general public visits to IAMD museums include:

- IAMD should conduct market research on the image of IAMD art museums to appeal to a larger market.
- IAMD should consider establishing teams that understand different audience segments in planning the content, design and marketing of exhibitions.
- IAMD and Smithsonian senior management should commit the Institution to increasing awareness among Mall visitors through cross-mall, Smithsonian promotion, large banners, kiosks, and so forth.
- IAMD should promote group visits by working more extensively with tour operators, school, and youth groups.
- IAMD should increase local and Mid-Atlantic awareness of IAMD activities through coordinated and expanded advertising.
- IAMD should increase local awareness through more passive advertising (metro, billboards).
- IAMD should increase participation by offering, and promoting, even more non-gallery activities.
- IAMD should devote additional resources to expanding and emphasizing community relations.

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Background

In response to a request from the International Art Museum Division (IAMD) of the Smithsonian Institution, the Office of Policy and Analysis (OP&A) conducted a review of current practices in art museum marketing to general audiences rather than marketing to specific cultural or ethnic groups. This review included a review of general marketing and advertising literature, a review of articles about art museum marketing, and interviews with the marketing or communications directors in 18 art museums. (See Appendix I)

The role of marketing in art museums

"Museum marketing is unique because museums have a mission to educate the public as well as build audience and revenue."[1]

On its website, the American Marketing Association defines marketing as the process of planning and executing the conception, pricing, promotion, and distribution of ideas, goods, and services to create exchanges that satisfy individual and organizational objectives.[2]

Current trends in art museum marketing begin with experiences that are offered to audiences. According to Lawrence Fisher,[3] museum experiences are mission-based, have educational value, and further the museum's strategic goals. The experiences are audience focused and permit sharing with other people. The broadest definition of art museum marketing includes:
- Identifying leisure-time recreation needs and wants of potential museum visitors and other audiences, especially unmet needs.
- Identifying art museum experiences that can be matched to user needs.

- Identifying additional experiences that are compatible with the museum mission and resources.
- Identifying ways in which potential users can be informed about and attracted to museum experiences.
- Making sure that new, and returning, museum users are completely satisfied with museum experiences and amenities surrounding their visits.

During an interview, a museum marketing director said, art museum marketing is market driven and mission relevant. Marketing directors are working to make visits to art museums more attractive, accessible, and satisfying. All marketing directors stressed that the museum's mission comes first.

Exhibit 1: Some visitors may not feel welcome in all art museums

(Used with permission)

How has art museum marketing changed in recent years?

Art museums, as part of a larger industry, compete for the most precious resource in contemporary society, leisure-time. Competitors include other museums, ecotourism, travel, themed attractions, performing arts, shopping, exercise, and spectator sports.

As the costs of operating have increased in recent years, many art museums have become interested in attracting larger and more diverse audiences. More than a decade ago, most art museums were not concerned about stimulating larger audiences in the opinions of interviewed directors. They saw themselves as cultural islands that served the cultural needs of an elite audience. Art museum marketing is becoming more strategic and sophisticated as art museums are

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making greater efforts to increase public awareness and visitation.

- In 1989, the Association of Art Museum Directors annual salary survey[4] indicated that fewer than one-fifth of the member museums had a Director of Marketing (17%). The percentage nearly tripled by 1999 to 50%.
- Two-thirds of large art museums have directors of marketing as staff positions.
- Admission revenues, marketing expenses, and operating expenses have increased more rapidly than attendance in major art museums since 1988.[5] As a result, the cost of acquiring and serving art museum visitors is increasing. (see Exhibit 2) The average operating budget per visit has increased from $21 in 1988 to $46 in 2000, with both amounts expressed in constant dollars. Marketing, development and membership costs per visit have risen from $0.87 in 1988 to $2.94 in 2000.

Exhibit 2: Increases in costs and admission revenues per art museum visit: Standardized operating expenses, marketing, development and membership expenses, and revenue from admissions: 1998 to 2000
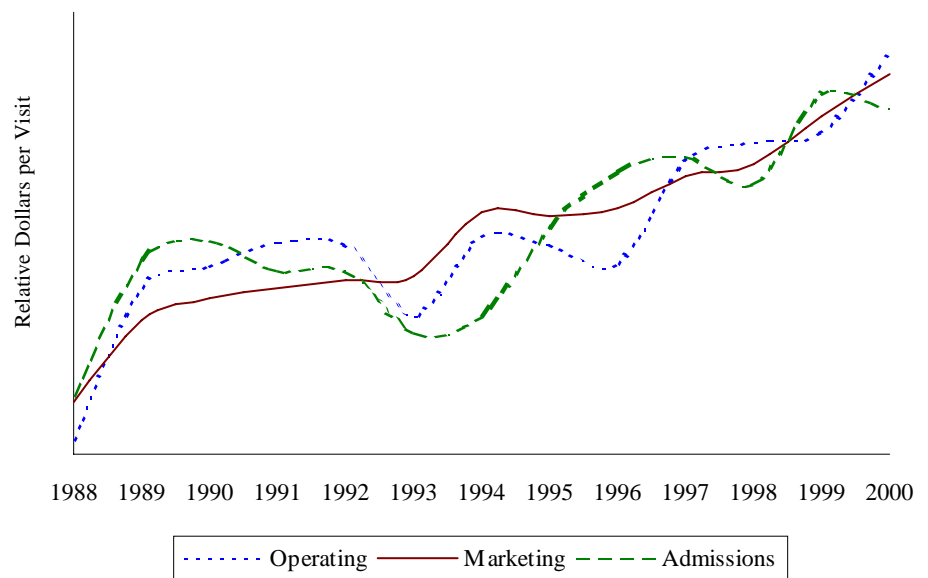
Note: All costs and expenses are expressed in 2000 dollars using the Bureau of Labor Statistics inflator.

Source: AAMD Statistical Surveys, 1989 through 2001

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Museums are adopting sophisticated promotional tools such as direct mail and telemarketing that have been used successfully by for-profit businesses. They are also using more sophisticated and targeted advertising campaigns while an older-style of promotion largely depended on free public service announcements (PSA) and word-of-mouth promotion.

- Art museums are conducting more market research on current and potential visitors and members including demographic and psychographic profiling of markets.
- Museums are targeting specific segments of the population with programs and activities, often not gallery based, and promotions. Examples of such activities include evening jazz and social events targeted towards young professionals or cruises targeted towards more senior members.
- Art museums have built new buildings with striking architecture as a means of attracting public attention.

Art museums have scheduled very popular exhibitions called "blockbusters" following the very successful Tutankhamun exhibition[6] in the 1970's. The Cézanne exhibition (1996) at the Philadelphia Museum of Arts[7] has been identified as a watershed exhibition for art museums. Some museums appear to regularly schedule Impressionist exhibitions to generate greater visitation. Blockbusters have increased audience demands. Scheduling very popular exhibitions has led to a boom-and-bust pattern of visits. They may have also contributed to an audience expectation that museum visits should be events.

- Blockbusters are believed to cause boom-and-bust cycle of membership when visitors purchase a membership to secure prompt or free admission to popular exhibitions. The Philadelphia Museum of Art tied a special membership category to admission to the Cézanne exhibition. Museum membership jumped by 52%. Retention of members who join to gain free or prompt admission may prove difficult. The Art Institute of Chicago reported 105,000 individual and family members in 1995. The number increased in the subsequent years to 149,000 in 1998. Two years later, membership had dropped to 119,000.[8]
- As one art museum marketing director said during an interview, "We are all suffering from "Blockbuster Hangover." It takes a long time and a lot

of effort to plan and stage a major exhibition so it is hard to keep doing them year after year. We want to market what we have, collections and permanent exhibitions."

Marketing's place in the art museum

Three patterns describe how marketing (and the director of marketing) fit into a museum's organizational structure depending on the span of responsibility assigned to marketing.

1. In the **Audience Centered** pattern, marketing typically reports directly to the museum director and has responsibility for functions that interact with the public such as communications, public affairs, and visitor services. Occasionally, membership also falls under marketing. More rarely, protection services (guards) or website managers report to marketing. In the Audience Centered pattern, marketing has become an audience advocate. This pattern tends to make the museum "outside-in" since potential visitors are more important in the selection, design and promotion of exhibits.

2. In the **Service** pattern, marketing is typically a lower level function frequently reporting to communications, public affairs, or development. Marketing plays a support role, rather than a lead role, in handling promotion of exhibitions and research in the Whitney Museum of American Art and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum. This pattern tends to make the museum "in-outside" since internal museum constituencies are more important in the selection, design and promotion of exhibits.

3. In the **Coordination** pattern, marketing reports to another function, such as communications. It is differentiated from the Service pattern because marketing also provides staff resources to an upper-level task force that meets to discuss (and coordinate) marketing and visitor service across the museum. The Metropolitan Museum of Art represents this pattern.

The Cincinnati Art Museum requires all staff to attend courses related to exhibits, collections, and visitors. The sequence of courses is planned to cover three years with continuing sessions for subsequent special exhibitions.

Attendance is part of the performance plan of every employee. The courses are recommended for volunteers. The plan of courses is presented in Appendix IV.

The Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh consist of four museums: a general art museum, a single-artist art museum, a science center, and a natural history museum. As a multi-facility, multi-disciplinary institution, the Carnegie Museums may provide a model for marketing that is responsive to individual unit needs as well as centralized concerns. Each museum has a marketing director and staff that report to the central corporate function headed by a vice president. The vice president reports to the president of the Carnegie Museums and serves on the senior management team. Marketing's involvement in exhibitions varies with differences in audiences and marketing needs across the museums. The six marketing staff serving the art museum fit the Service pattern while the nine staff in the Science Center fit the Audience Centered pattern better. The corporate office appears to fit the Coordination pattern at this time.

The Audience Centered pattern is newer, and, therefore, it is not possible to say that it is more, or less, effective than the other two patterns in building audiences.
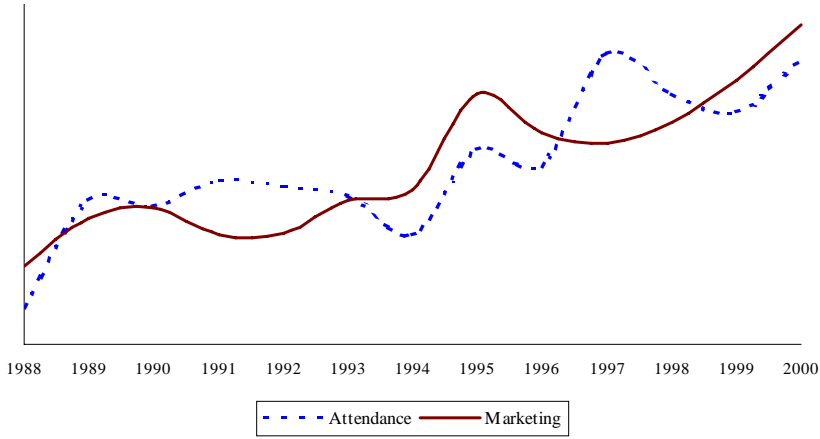
When does marketing enter into the exhibit process?

When marketing is a senior level department encompassing a broad range of the visitor experience (Audience Centered pattern), it enters the exhibit planning process at an early stage. Marketing frequently is involved in front-end evaluation, exhibit design, label design, provision of visitor amenities, and the environmental conditions in the exhibit. Marketing is a key player in exhibition planning at the highest level. Although marketing enters the exhibit planning process at a later stage under the Coordination and Service patterns, all three patterns have successfully generated visitation. Success in achieving visitation goals appears to be more a function of allowing marketing departments to control the deployment of advertising resources. Resources can be concentrated on exhibits with greater audience potential rather than spreading the resources across many niche exhibits. Marketing directors who felt successful preferred freedom rather than having their hands tied by budgeting marketing resources on

Exhibit 3: Correlations between marketing expenses and attendance: Metropolitan Museum of Art, Museum of Modern Art, and Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

Metropolitan Museum of Art

| 1988 | 1989 | 1990 | 1991 | 1992 | 1993 | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 |

- - - Attendance　——— Marketing

Museum of Modern Art

| 1988 | 1989 | 1990 | 1991 | 1992 | 1993 | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 |

- - - Attendance　——— Marketing

Los Angeles County Museum of Art

| 1988 | 1989 | 1990 | 1991 | 1992 | 1993 | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 |

- - - Attendance　——— Marketing
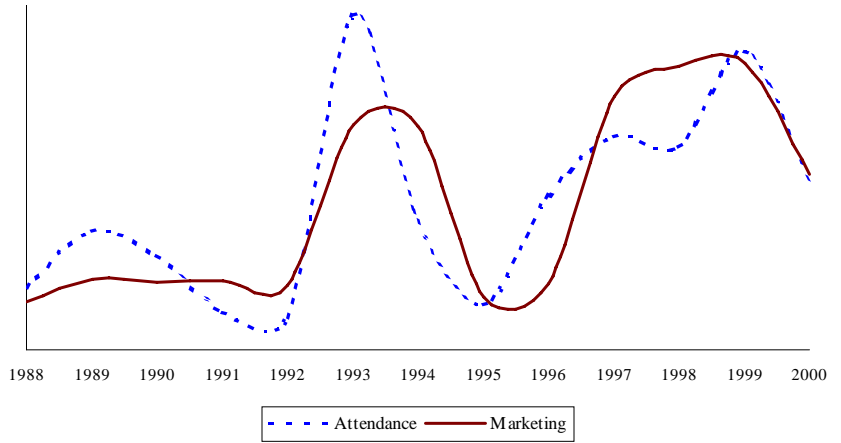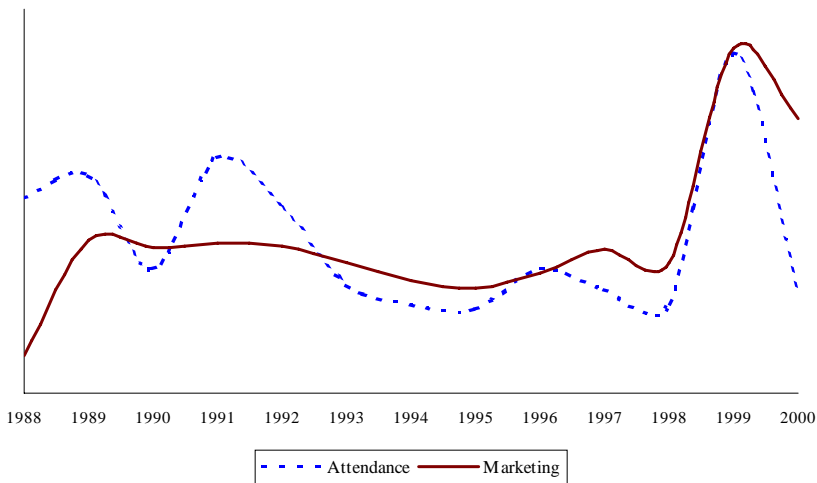
an exhibit-by-exhibit basis.

The Audience Centered pattern underlies the operating philosophies of major themed attractions such as Disney World. This approach is often found in for-profit retail operations where it is believed to enhance profitability through customer loyalty. Office of Policy and Analysis staff were not able to demonstrate that the Audience Centered pattern generates a better visit experience and a "buzz" that encourages word-of-mouth promotion. This is partly because few art museums have adopted this philosophy (especially making marketing responsible for all audience contacts), and blockbusters create ups-and-downs in attendance that make the isolation of an underlying upward trend difficult. However, statistical evidence generally supports the hypothesis that money spent promoting exhibitions is correlated with increased attendance. Exhibit 3 presents historical trends in marketing expenses and attendance for three museums. An occasional popular exhibition may result in increased attendance without increased marketing, and the Art Institute of Chicago has experienced decreased attendance since 1998, even with increased marketing expenditures.

Art museum directors often attempt to wrap the marketing of a temporary exhibition in a cluster of activities or events to increase awareness and interest. Marketing begins working earlier and has a greater involvement in scheduling activities and promotions in the Audience Centered pattern.

The marketing plan for a current exhibition at the Worcester Art Museum, a medium sized museum that reported 141,000 visits in 2000, provides an example. "Modernism & Abstraction: Treasures from the Smithsonian American Art Museum" will be shown between October 7, 2001 and January 6, 2002. The first brainstorming session of the exhibition Marketing Committee was held on January 16, 2001. Brainstorming ideas, preliminary research with visitors, and interviews with marketing directors at previous venues suggested that the exhibition "carries the reputation of a Smithsonian exhibition. ... (artists included) are household names ... (and the exhibition) can be promoted as a retrospective on the century with tie-ins to popular American culture." There are 15 events scheduled around the exhibition. The event theme is a "Celestial Celebration - Meet the Stellar American Artists' of the Twentieth Century" with

the tone being "Excitement, retrospective, and patriotic." Target markets and media were identified. The promotion focused on the "Star" theme including putting neon stars on the Museum facade. The Worcester marketing plan lays out a detailed list of actions, dates, responsible staff members, and status. It also describes performance measures for the marketing plan. Five museum staff are identified as clients, and the marketing team includes nine division staff with assigned responsibilities. The marketing director from another museum said, it is important to have several staff working on an exhibition. As he said, "The more staff, the more ink the museum will get."

Promoting art museum activities

Three barriers discourage visits to museums such as the IAMD museums:
1. Physical accessibility - How difficult it is to get to the museum.
2. Image - Whether the museum is viewed as a worthwhile place to visit. Image includes the full range of expectations about potential experiences in a museum including physical and cultural accessibility, worthwhile exhibitions, and amenities
3. Awareness - Whether potential visitors know of the museum's existence or offerings.

Art museum marketing directors observed that raising awareness is easier to accomplish through advertising than changing a museum's image held by potential visitors.[9] Art museum marketing directors noted that newspaper advertising is very effective, although expensive, and should be complemented with other communication strategies. They observed that consistency and frequency are essential in advertising.

Newspapers: Print communications, especially newspapers, are the preferred means to increase awareness of art museums and to modify the museum's image in the public mind. Consumers have a more positive reaction to print communications than to radio or television.[10]

Marketing directors stressed that presence and repetition are very important in creating a disposition to pay attention to museum ads. Museum advertisements

have the greatest effectiveness and efficiency when they are placed in locations that are read by people who are already disposed to visit museums. Examples include the Arts & Leisure Section in the *New York Times* or *Washington Post*.

While most museums expend the greatest amounts of money on increasing awareness of special exhibitions, marketing directors said that substantial advertising about an exhibition based on high-quality museum collections may turn an exhibition into an event that draws large audiences.

Advertisements may be placed in national newspapers or professional magazines to show that an art museum is a major "player" to Board members or small niche audiences rather than to generate greater attendance.

Sponsored or shared advertisements paid for by corporate sponsors of exhibitions or museum friends are used by art museums to extend advertising budgets. Few art museums have used sponsored advertisements, or "cause" marketing, where the sponsor and the art museum both benefit (if their values are compatible) as extensively as other not-for-profit organizations.

Other Promotional Tools: While newspaper advertisements are believed to be the most effective and most efficient way to reach potential museum audiences, museums also use a mixture of other communication tools. These may be less expensive than a concentrated newspaper strategy and used either in conjunction with newspaper advertisements or by themselves. Again, art museum marketing directors emphasized the importance of a consistent look to reinforce advertising effectiveness. (See Appendix III for more discussion of print promotion.) Some examples of communication tools are:

> **Communications placed at or distributed by the museum**
> - Banners and other static displays on street poles and the museum building – very effective with potential visitors passing by.
> - Museum calendars and member newsletters – effective in reaching current, most loyal audiences.
> - Newspaper, radio and television articles – difficult for the museum to control.

- Inserts or postcards in newspapers such as postcards placed in the *New York Times* by the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago.

Passive display communication
- Billboards on streets or in subways - Create a large number of impressions targeting a broader audience than frequent museum visitors at a relatively high cost per likely visitor unless there are special arrangements.
- Mobile billboards - Signs on buses, taxicabs, and subways as well as wrapped buses and airplanes that appeal to the broader audiences targeted by static billboards, but at a greater cost.

Electronic media communications
- Radio advertisements or sponsorships - local National Public Radio (NPR) stations reach current audiences, while drive-time broadcasts, weather and traffic conditions sponsorship may reach new audiences.
- Television advertisements are considered to be a very expensive way to reach likely museum visitors.
- Web and other new-media approaches that are discussed later.

Database marketing, also referred to as customer relationship management, is a dominant mode of promotion in for-profit marketing.[11] A firm, like a supermarket or a bank, generates a database containing information about specific households such as address, ages, financial position, consumption behavior, psychographic information, and so forth. Potential customers are targeted with specific, individualized communications. For example, the interest rates on a credit card offer will vary for different persons (even in the same household). Graphics may be tailored to different recipients.

We found no museums that currently maintain a single in-house, relational database combining museum use, membership, catalog purchases, and contributions. Retail operations generally are separated from the marketing function in art museums. Several museums are preparing to move towards creating relational customer database that could be used in marketing. For example, the Museum of Modern Art uses a smart card to capture visit information, restaurant purchases, and store purchases by members. The

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, barcodes its cardboard membership cards. Barcoding will permit the capture of individual level data for members. The Whitney Museum of American Art now uses a plastic membership card that may be upgraded to a smart card. No art museum contacted during our review mentioned estimating the value of either visitors or members including acquisition cost, purchases, contributions, and servicing costs.

In general, museum marketing officers use a combination of communication approaches to reach target markets. Cost appears to be a primary driver of the communication choice, although more sophisticated marketing officers (especially those with for-profit experience) attempt to maximize the effect of media buys.

Are art museum membership and marketing linked?

Museum visitation is an important generator of museum members.
- People may join museums that charge admission to secure free admission to exhibits and discounts. Other people may join museums out of philanthropic objectives.
- Most art museums separate responsibility for marketing from membership and development.
- Earned income from admissions and income from memberships are normally separated in financial accounts. Admission fees that drive membership may reduce earnings in entrance charges while increasing earnings in membership income.
- The Detroit Institute of Arts, faced with declining membership in recent years, has tasked marketing to assist in membership growth. Such efforts may lead art museums to make marketing responsible for membership, at least lower-tier, general membership levels.

Where do the web and new media technologies fit into art museum marketing?

Few art museums are structured so that the museum's web site reports to the marketing officer. The Worcester Art Museum is one museum in which marketing controls the museum's web site with a goal of using the web to support marketing the museum. The Worcester website seems to be more user friendly, to the research team, than other art museum web sites. The Detroit Institute of Arts also recently altered its organizational structure so that the website reports to the marketing director.

- All age groups use the web and e-mail, however, it is more important, relative to print communications, for younger and more affluent potential visitors.
- The emerging technology of the web primarily is used as a low-cost vehicle to deliver information about museum programs and collections. As art museums integrate websites in a comprehensive marketing strategy, they will more consciously use the new technologies to maintain touch, at a distance, with museum visitors and friends.
- Some art museums allow visitors to send e-cards to themselves and friends. The e-mail addresses can be used for targeted messages.
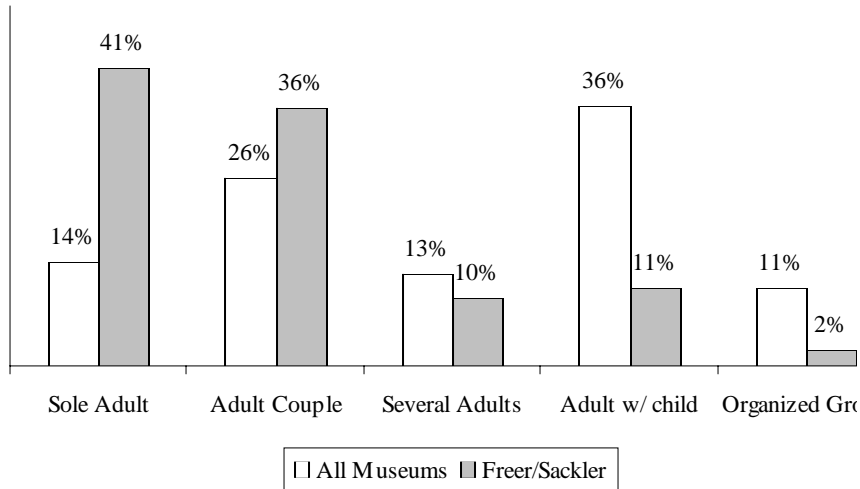
Smithsonian IAMD target markets

The IAMD museums currently serve audiences that differ from those served by the Big Three Mall museums.[11] As Exhibit 4 shows, the Freer and Sackler Galleries visits are twice as likely to be made by unaccompanied visitors as other Mall museums. Other Smithsonian Mall museums are more than three times as likely to be visited by adults accompanied by children. (See Exhibit 5) Other Mall museums are five times as likely to be visited by school, tour and other organized groups. Freer/Sackler audiences are more likely to be making repeat visits to the Smithsonian, but a first visit to the Galleries. Gallery visits are more likely to be made by people living in the metropolitan Washington area who are using the Gallery visit as general leisure recreation.

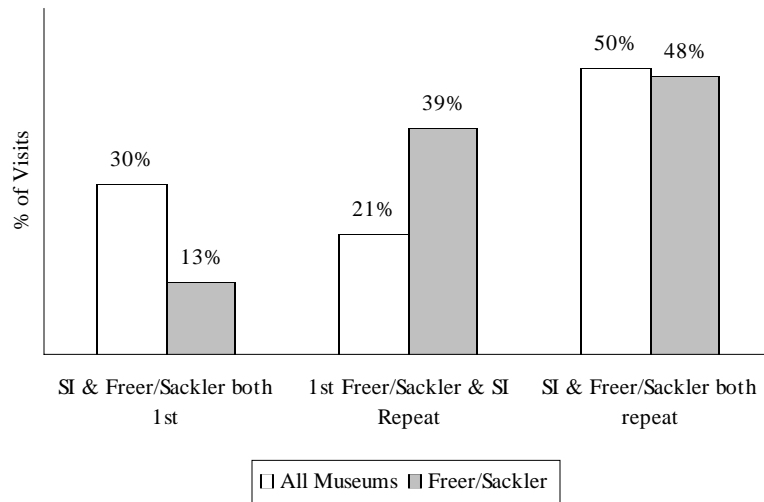These demographic and geographic differences, as well the culturally specific

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Exhibit 4:   Visit group composition: Freer/Sackler Galleries and other Smithsonian
Mall Museums

	Sole Adult	Adult Couple	Several Adults	Adult w/ child	Organized Gro
All Museums	14%	26%	13%	36%	11%
Freer/Sackler	41%	36%	10%	11%	2%

Source: Smithsonian Institutional Studies Office Report 97-3, Visitors to the
Smithsonian Institution: A Summary of Studies

Exhibit 5:   Repeat and first visits: Smithsonian Mall Museums and Freer/Sackler
Galleries

% of Visits

	SI & Freer/Sackler both 1st	1st Freer/Sackler & SI Repeat	SI & Freer/Sackler both repeat
All Museums	30%	21%	50%
Freer/Sackler	13%	39%	48%

Source: Smithsonian Institutional Studies Office Report 97-3, Visitors to the
Smithsonian Institution: A Summary of Studies

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content of some IAMD museums, suggest several target markets for IAMD museums:[12]

- **Visitors to other Smithsonian Mall museums** - According to the Smithsonian Institution Marketing Study (SIMS),[13] 40% of persons who visit science, natural history or history museums also visit an art museum sometime during the same year.
- **Metropolitan residents** - About one million local residents visit National Mall museums each year.[14]
- **Mid-Atlantic residents** - About 300,000 readers of *The New York Times* visit National Mall museums each year.[15]
- **Organized groups** - National and regional tour operators as well as local schools and community based organizations require significant lead-time and support in arranging visits, but constitute very large numbers of potential visitors.
- **Parents and grandparents visiting with children** - This audience includes both local, metropolitan residents as well as non-metropolitan visitors to other Smithsonian Mall museums.

Strategies to build IAMD general public audiences

Art museum marketing directors who were interviewed said that significantly increasing IAMD visitation will require attracting new audiences. They quickly suggested two strategies to significantly increase IAMD visitation, one tongue-in-cheek and one seriously:

- Schedule a Monet or major Impressionist related exhibition.
- Draw on the strength of the Smithsonian Institution brand, that is, on the Smithsonian's name recognition and caché.

The Smithsonian has one of the most widely recognized and most valuable brands in the United States. More than seven out of eight respondents in the 1994 Smithsonian Institution Marketing Study indicated an awareness of the Smithsonian. Few commercial brands are as widely known with the exception of brands like Coke, Disney, Microsoft, and Ford.

The report of the Smithsonian Institution Marketing Study[16] said:

Americans view the Smithsonian as unique. This theme relates both to the scale and centrality of the Institution and to the rarity of its collections. (p.15) … communications materials should reflect clearly, strongly and consistently the message which is already latent in the minds of Americans: the Smithsonian Institution exists to teach each generation about the meaning of being a citizen of this Nation.

Art museum marketing directors suggested that IAMD build its own sub-brand by drawing strength from the overall Smithsonian brand.

- Brand management needs to be a coordinated activity that centralizes marketing in IAMD. A centralized marketing function will have more resources to deploy and will be able to deploy those resources more effectively.
- IAMD marketing also requires support from the managers of the central Smithsonian brand to coordinate messages across the entire Mall. Advertisements that attract attention to an Air and Space or Natural History exhibition but then allow the potential visitor's eyes to wander to a graphic about an exhibition at an IAMD museum will increase awareness.

Significantly increasing general visitation, as distinct from ethnic specific visitation, will require increased marketing resources as well as efficient deployment of the resources since more visited art museums spend more on marketing.

- Combined, IAMD museums reported 1.6 million visits for 2000 in the Association of Art Museum Directors Statistical Survey. This reported attendance was exceeded only by the Metropolitan Museum of Art (5.4 million), the National Gallery (5.1 million), and the Boston Museum of Fine Arts (1.7 million).
- Combined, IAMD museums reported spending $1.8 million for development, marketing, and public relations. Respectively, the other three larger art museums reported spending $7.5 million, $2.8 million, and $7.7 million respectively.

Exhibit 6: Reaching new audiences may mean changing the museums' image.

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Strategies that may significantly increase **general public visits** to IAMD museums include:

- IAMD should conduct market research on the image of IAMD art museums. The image of IAMD art museums may need to be modified to appeal to a larger market by scheduling, titling, labeling, designing, and promoting exhibits, providing exhibit-related activities and events, and providing visitor support services.
- IAMD should consider establishing teams to understand each audience segment in planning the content, design and marketing of exhibitions. These teams would incorporate the interests of specific audiences, such as, art scholars, ethnic communities, schools, frequent art museum visitors, visitors with children, and infrequent art museum visitors.
- IAMD and Smithsonian senior management should commit the Institution to increasing awareness among Mall visitors through cross-mall, Smithsonian promotion, large banners, kiosks, and so forth.
- IAMD should promote group visits by working more extensively with tour operators, school, and youth groups.
- IAMD should increase local and Mid-Atlantic awareness of IAMD activities through coordinated and expanded advertising, especially in *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*. This strategy should include monthly full-page advertisement in *The Washington Post* presenting a calendar of IAMD featured exhibitions and programs followed by quarter-page advertisements weekly. Quarterly full-page

calendar advertisements could be placed in *The New York Times* followed by quarter-page advertisements two weeks later.

- IAMD should increase local awareness through more passive advertising (metro, billboards). One inexpensive, effective approach to increase local awareness may be to give free tee shirts (or other gifts) to opening day visitors at new exhibitions. The shirts could be paid for through corporate sponsorship.
- IAMD should increase participation by offering, and promoting, even more non-gallery activities such as "Art Night on the Mall" that increase awareness and encourage visits to the galleries.
- IAMD should devote additional resources to expanding and emphasizing community relations.

Endnotes

[1] Comment of interviewed art museum marketing director. Comments during interviews are not ascribed to individuals.

[2] Definition of marketing from the website of the American Marketing Association.

[3] Lawrence Fisher, Executive Director, The Barnum Museum, "Principles of Experience Design," presented at the annual meeting of the Association of Science and Technology Centers, 2000.

[4] Association of Art Museum Directors, "Salary Survey."

[5] Association of Art Museum Directors, "Statistical Survey." Information presented in this exhibit are averages calculated from the responses on 12 art museums. The museums were initially selected as the subset of museums that reported more than 400,000 visits in 1999. The set of museums was reduced to include only museums that provided data for every year between 1988 and 2000. Since reported figures occasionally fluctuated greatly from year to year, especially attendance, it was inappropriate to interpolate missing data for other museums. The museums in the calculation of averages were: Metropolitan Museum of Art, Art Institute of Chicago, Walker Art Center, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, National Gallery of Art, Museum of Modern Art, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Detroit Institute of Arts, and Phoenix Art Museum. The AAMD survey lumped expenses related to development, marketing, public relations, and membership in one expense category before 1997. Beginning with 1997, membership expenses were split into a separate item. The present analysis merged membership with the other expenses for 1997 through 2000. The average and standard deviations across the period (1988-2000) were used to standardize each statistic for presentation. Average attendance increased very little for these art museums between 1988 (1.5 million) and 2000 (1.6 million). Attendance at individual museums fluctuated greatly.

[6] *Treasures of Tutankhamun* originated at the National Gallery of Art (NGA). The exhibition was shown between 17 November 1976 and 15 March 1977. It subsequently toured to five additional venues. The NGA website describes the

exhibit. "This exhibition established the term 'blockbuster.' A combination of the age-old fascination with ancient Egypt, the legendary allure of gold and precious stones, and the funeral trappings of the boy-king created an immense popular response. Visitors waited up to 8 hours before the building opened to view the exhibition. At times the line completely encircled the West Building." Attendance was 836,000 over 117 days.

[7] The Philadelphia Museum of Art recorded more 546,000 visits to its Cézanne exhibition over 14 weeks in 1996 according to a press release on the museum's website. Philadelphia was the only United States venue for the exhibition. Museum membership increased by 52%.

[8] Miller and Berry have presented evidence that advertising is significantly more effective at raising awareness than changing image. Stephen Miller and Lisette Berry (1998).

[9] Edith G. Smit and Peter G. Neijens (2000).

[10] Database marketing often matches in-house data with commercially produced overlays based on address. The Smithsonian had such a database containing memberships, contributions, and purchases until 2000 (Smithsonian Marketing Database). An outside contractor maintained the database. Database marketing is used by some museum development officers. Some museums purchase direct mail lists from contractors as an attempt to reach specific target segments, such as public radio subscribers. Such lists have been used to promote specific exhibitions. Several museums said that different departments maintained discrete databases, however no museum claimed a full relational database covering all museum operations. No museum indicated that it currently uses datamining software. See Jackson, Rob, and Paul Wang (1994).

[11] Zahava D. Doering and Adam Bickford, with the assistance of Andrew J. Pekarik (April 1997) *Visitors to the Smithsonian Institution: A Summary of Studies*, Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, Institutional Studies Office, Report 97-3.

[12] Ethnic specific audiences are an important market for the International Art Museums Division. These are complex audiences that consist of many niche audiences that require very targeted marketing. Ethnic specific marketing is not considered in this report.

[13] William C. McCready (February 1995) *Smithsonian Institution Marketing Study: "The Smithsonian in the Minds of Americans," Final Report.*

[14] Information on *Washington Post* readers provided by the *Post*.

[15] Information on *New York Times* readers provided by the *Times*.

[16] McCready, *op. cit.*, p.19.

Appendix I: Museums and Organizations Interviewed

Art Institute of Chicago
Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh
Cincinnati Art Museum
Detroit Institute of Arts
Indianapolis Museum of Art
Institute of Contemporary Art
Los Angeles County Museum of Art
Metropolitan Museum of Art
Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
Museum of Modern Art
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts
Whitney Museum of American Art
Worcester Art Museum
North Carolina Museum of Art
Association of Art Museum Directors

Appendix II: Elements of an Audience Development Plan

Recent articles by G. Donald Adams in *Museum News* and Mary Kay Ingenthron in *History News* have described the market planning process. Kotler and Kotler also discuss market plans.

These steps in market planning include:

- Describing the museum's current visits.
- Segmenting the museum's audience into types of people making visits according to demographic characteristics (gender, age, education), geographic characteristics (residence, distance from the museum, workplace), psychographic characteristics (attitudes and affects) or lifestyles. Visitors also may be segmented by visit characteristics (visit group composition, length, purpose of visit, visiting in person or visiting via the web at a distance).
- Describing the inventory of museum experiences offered to visitors and matching the experiences with visitor segments to determine how well segments are served.
- Conducting comprehensive analyses of the external, competitive environment (opportunities and threats) and of the museum's internal environment (strengths and weaknesses).
- Determining new experiences that need to be developed to serve under-served segments or experiences that may need strengthening (target audiences).
- Determining how information about new or strengthened experiences can be effectively and efficiently communicated to target audiences.
- Preparing a communications plan that distributes a budget across selected media, advertising, and other communications.
- Setting goals for the museum's marketing effort and evaluating the plan's outcomes (number of visitors, store sales, attendance by specific target markets).

Marketing plans covering all activities are more effective since they permit integration and redistribution of advertising and other resources when appropriate.

Appendix III: Elements of a Print Promotion Campaign

Readers note and read museum advertisements in newspapers, especially special sections. Information in the Starch Readership Survey of the May 2, 2001 Museums special section of *The New York Times* provides valuable information about museum newspaper advertisements. For example, 91% of readers noted the Metropolitan Museum of Art's advertisement for *Jackie* in the special museums section of *The New York Times* on May 2, 2001. Three-quarters (76%) of the readers noted the Smithsonian advertisement for *The American Presidency* exhibition in the same section.

- The size of an advertisement in *The New York Times* is more important in remembering a museum advertisement and the percentage of readers who read the advertisement compared to its location in the paper. Full-page ads have the greatest impact.
- Marketing directors feel that museum advertising money is most effective when full-page advertisements are followed a few weeks later by additional smaller advertisements.
- Museum advertisements have the greatest effect when they draw on a common layout and graphic layouts. That is, advertisements are most effective when they reflect a brand image or integrated communications strategy.
- One advertising strategy that is believed to work is running a full-page newspaper advertisement with a museum calendar that emphasizes current exhibitions. The advertisement is more effective if it is tied to the Smithsonian basic brand.

Advertising research shows that the effect of print graphics depends on the personality types of readers such as the Myers-Briggs types. Readers with "sensing" and "intuitive" experience pay more attention to advertising messages using images compatible with their personality type, even when the text message is identical. Since 75% of the American public have personalities compatible with the "sensing" personality type, advertising content should be directed towards that type, although the "intuitive" personality type is more common among advertising creators.

Appendix IV: Cincinnati Art Museum (CAM) Audience Orientation

Core & Universal Programs required for staff and recommended for volunteers

Core Program Descriptions

Year 1

Aligning and Setting Our Goals for Visitor Service (2 hours)
   Workshop discusses the concept of visitor services using the big picture
   approach. The Mission of the Museum is also an integral component of this
   session by laying the groundwork for how the CAM views and responds to
   visitors.

How to Actively Engage a Diverse and Growing Audience (2 hours)
   Find out the meaning of diversity and why it is an important component of
   understanding the visitor and the workplace. This program relies heavily on
   group discussion and participation.

Emergency Procedures (1 hour)
   A CAM security supervisor will walk participants through our emergency
   preparedness plan. Participants will learn the procedures on handling visitors
   and themselves during different emergency situations.

Year 2

Advanced Visitor Services (2 hours)
   This session is a continuation of the program "Aligning and Setting our
   Goals for Visitor Service". The session is focused on practical tips and
   techniques for handling sometimes difficult visitors using scenarios.
   (Participants must have completed "Aligning and Setting our Goals for
   Visitor Service.")

Diversity 2 (2 hours)
   This session discusses how to improve communication with visitors with
   different types of disabilities. A discussion on the various amenities the CAM

has is also discussed in great detail. (Participants must have completed "How to Actively Engage a Diverse and Growing Audience".)

Permanent Collection Lectures (45 minutes to 2 hours)
> The Permanent Collection lecture series offers the opportunity to educate Museum staff and volunteers on the different collections at the CAM. Lectures will be given on specific areas of the collections and presented by CAM curators or docents. (Must attend one session.)

Year 3

Permanent Collection Lectures (45 minutes to 2 hours)
> The Permanent Collection lecture series offers the opportunity to educate Museum staff and volunteers on the different collections at the CAM. Lectures will be given on specific areas of the collections and presented by CAM curators or docents. (Must attend one session.)

National Speakers Lecture Series (1 to 2 hours)
> Staff and volunteers will be invited to attend lectures by nationally-known Museum professionals. The CAM will schedule these speakers at least twice per year either live or through long distance technology. (Must attend one session.)

Universal Programming

> The idea has been proposed to have mandatory training sessions on each major special exhibition for all staff and service volunteers. These sessions would be led by the curator or a docent trained on the exhibition. The session would also incorporate mini visitor services tips for the exhibition being discussed.

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