



scroope  
design

## **Museum Display Workshop Part One**

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## **Part One            Communicating with your audience**

Identifying the most effective and efficient interpretative approach- your objectives, who is the exhibition for, what will the exhibition say to your audience, how will the message/s meet your objectives and the needs of you audience

## **Part Two            Creating the Exhibition**

Translating the interpretative approach into a physical reality. the practicalities, budgeting, professional services and some further information sources

I hope you will get an understanding of the factors that impact on the creation an exhibition- budget being only one of these. And also see that there is a process common to all exhibitions, one that can help you make the best use of your time, money and resources and ultimately help create an exhibition that works for your audience.

## 1.1 Outline your objectives

**Objectives may include all or some of the following:**

- to communicate a particular story, event, social issue or skill**
- to communicate a process or a style of life**
- to create an educational resource**
- to create a “must see” attraction or cultural destination**
- to create a new experience within an existing site**
- to generate or increase revenue**
- to improve the performance of your site**
- to establish links with other complimentary sites**
- to improve your reputation**
- to reinforce the mission of your institution**

Consider:

- the ethos of your site/institution
- what resources do you have- staff, collection, information, money..
- other cultural or heritage or experience in your locality
- how unique is your site
- what have you got that others don't
- how well known are you
- why** people might come to your exhibition

**WRITE OUT 3 OBJECTIVES FOR YOUR EXHIBITION**

## 1.2 Identify your audience segments and their needs

	<b>People are/ have</b>	<b>Per 1000</b>
• Two thirds of committed cultural tourists work in professional or managerial positions. The average income of cultural tourists is one third higher than the EU average. (Source: European Travel Commission 2005)	Blind	1
• Globally, culture and heritage tourists include the full spectrum of ages. Two large segments are young people (20-29 years) and those in the 39-59 years age bracket. (Source: European Travel Commission 2005)	Cannot use fingers	1
• The average cultural tourist spends €70 per day while on holiday (compared to just over €40 per day or the city-break tourist).	Are dyslexic	10
	Wheel chair users	10
	Have low vision	13
	Reduced co-ordination	14
	Reduced strength	27
	Intellectually impaired	37
	Require walking aid	56
	Allergic	100
	Elderly	100
	Hearing impairment	140
	<b>Total</b>	<b>509</b>

The Centre for Universal Accessibility,  
University of Ulster

All audiences regardless require **ease of physical access; a non-threatening, safe and secure environment; clear orientation and guidance on how to make the most of their time.**

Some needs and expectations are specific to certain audiences:

### **School groups (with teacher)**

- Pre-booking service with advance information pack
- Visit duration 1.5 to 2 hours max
- Provision of small group activities with clear objectives and outcomes
- Relationship to school curriculum, post visit exercises
- Reward for attending/ partaking

### **Tourists**

- Links to other sites
- Coach parties – pre-booking service

### **Family**

- Family orientated activities

### **Active Retirement**

- One to one assistance, comfort/rest points

### **Special Interest**

- Accuracy, a research resource, access to detailed specialist information.
- Guidance post visit information sources

### **Small children (with adults)**

- Practical guidance and friendly assistance (not directives)
- “Positive Play” activity not based on a particularly right or wrong result
- Children can spend up to 40 minutes at one activity
- “Family” bathrooms, water fountains
- 40% are non-readers

### **In identifying audience also note:**

- are they seasonal
- how will they arrive to your site
- how many will arrive at one time
- how long will they stay
- where are they coming from and where are they going to next
- with coach groups a very important person is the coach driver (a much desired repeat visitor! ) Consider his/her needs also; to get a break away from everyone for a couple of hours, relax, make calls, even watch tv?
- how many will require some form of disability access

**WRITE OUT WHAT YOU MUST PROVIDE YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE WITH BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER THEIR SITE VISIT**

## 1.3 What will your messages be?

Messages can be ranked (or layered) in terms of importance

- Main:** one key message, the most important of the exhibition  
**Primary:** those the museum must communicate  
**Secondary:** those the museum should communicate  
**Tertiary:** those that would be nice to include\*

### Messages should

- make the point quickly,
- be relevant to your audience
- have something for all ages
- be memorable
- be clear
- link to each other and link to other programmes such as school curriculum.

### Consider:

- does your message rely on staff for interpretation?
- does it enable a number of different methods of interpretation?
- does the artefact collection support the message?
- does it require a lot or a little research?

**WRITE OUT THE MAIN MESSAGE AND TWO PRIMARY MESSAGES FOR YOUR EXHIBITION**

## 1.4 What would you like visitors to experience?

### Exhibitions are experiences.

What people do and how they feel and respond is as important as what they learn. While the 'experience' is individual, the qualities visitors look for are:

**Memorable**

**Authentic**

**Personal connection:** relevance to cultural background, social perspective, significance to personal life

**Social interaction:** sharing time, thoughts, ideas insights with family, friends, others

**Learning:** imagination, positive play, analysis

**Interaction:** exploration, discovery, challenge, reward

**Participation:** pleasure, fun, entertainment, novelty, surprise

**Reflection**

### Consider:

When visitors come

what do you want them to do?

what do you want them to feel?

When visitors leave

what do you want them to remember and to be thinking about?

**WRITE OUT WHAT YOUR TARGET AUDIENCES WILL GET FROM EACH MESSAGE (THE DESIRED EXPERIENCE)**

MESSAGES

VISITOR EXPERIENCE

## 1.5 How can you best use your resources?

Getting the best from your site, your collection, your staff, volunteers...

The ideal resource package for an exhibition would include educators, market researchers, visitor interviews and surveys, dedicated exhibition researchers, established relationships with other institutions for sharing information and borrowing exhibits and that extra money to create prototypes etc.

### **Making your site work**

- identify key rest points
- identify key views through a space, to the outside
- identify atmosphere, adventure, mystery

### **Making your collection work**

- displaying objects in isolation, in working mode, in groups
- displaying objects in contemporary context

### **Staff can deliver an experience through:**

- creating context
- storytelling
- presenting games and challenges
- giving demonstrations.
- ask the visitors questions about what they think, like, feel about something
- encourage interaction between visitors
- invite them to record their own memories in an exhibition.

### **Consider:**

- can you get additional material, advice and/or guidance from other sources such as local newspapers, other museums, schools, tourism agencies.



**WRITE HOW YOUR RESOURCES CAN SERVE THE MESSAGES, VISITOR NEEDS AND VISITOR EXPERIENCE**

	MESSAGES	VISITOR NEEDS	VISITOR EXPERIENCE
Staff			
Collection			
Others			

## 1.6 Now summarise

Give consideration to how the messages, the experience and use of resources will meet your objectives- increase revenue, improve performance, improve reputation.

**OBJECTIVES**

**TARGET VISITOR PROFILE AND THEIR NEEDS**

**THE MESSAGES**

**THE DESIRED EXPERIENCE**

**USE OF RESOURCES**

**At this point you have an interpretative approach for the design and implementation of your exhibition.**