

How do visitors respond to co-produced content?

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 the audience agency

Understand who your audiences are.
Discover who they could be.

How are we exploring this question?

- What do we mean by content?
- What do we mean by co-produced?
- In-depth case study
 - Science Museum Information Age evaluation
- Reflective thinking
 - Museums Etc article

How do visitors respond to co-produced content?

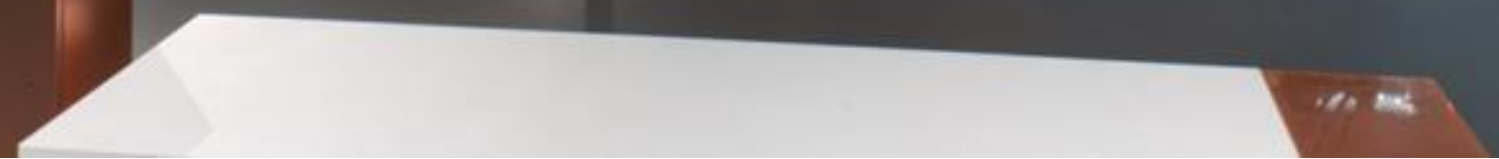
Why explore what visitors think?

Background about this gallery

- *Information Age* explores how communication and information technologies have informed lives over the last 200 years
- Science Museum hoped that collaboratively developed content would:
 - Add expertise
 - Bring more relevant experience and insight
 - Outputs which encourage visitors to make personal connections



BROADCAST






Instructions should be given
to the person answering the telephone.
The person who is speaking
should be given the name of the person
to whom the call is made.
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Why explore what visitors think?

For Science Museum and more broadly

- Co-production is not just about participant engagement or audience development
- Visitors = important stakeholder
- If content doesn't enhance visitor experience is co-production a valid or sustainable way of working?

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- Could Science Museum define what makes a successful visitor encounter with co-created content?
 - Could we develop a more informed approach to future co-creation work? Across the sector?

Information Age spectrum of participation

- ‘Equality not hierarchy’ - a range of approaches for developing co-produced content



Mobile phone use and value in East Africa



Samaritans and the influence of telephony



Methodology

- Evaluation
 - Small qualitative study
 - In-depth gallery interviews = 37 (30/45 min)
 - 2 discussion groups = 20
 - Both included self directed time in the Cell and Exchange zones
- Report & workshop for Science Museum
- Museum Etc article = greater reflection

What we explored with visitors

- Engagement with co-created content
- Value of non-museum voices
- Views about design and content of co-created content
- Recognition and visibility
- Recognition of the depth of partnerships
- Views about acknowledgement and understanding the process behind the outputs
- Inclusivity and diversity of the gallery; role of co-created content in this



What does co-produced content do for visitors?

- Lack of spontaneous engagement with this content, so little initial recognition of other voices
- Evaluation was more an exploration of the value of this content in principle

How does co-produced content enhance engagement?

- Demonstrating use of objects
- Added emotional depth
- Added authenticity
- Content more approachable & familiar - presented in everyday context of human experience
- Positive perception of SM for involving wider perspectives
- Content played a strong role in visitors saying the gallery was inclusive and diverse



Communicating the process of participation?

- How does the level of communication impact on visitors' engagement?
 - Understanding participation process = greater engagement (but info not sought out)
 - Acknowledgement information too embedded
 - Around half of visitors want some information - but not a lot
- Value of the embedded approach? A sign of success or a wasted opportunity?



Should co-produced content stand out?

- How does the extent to which co-produced content stand out as different impact on engagement?
 - They didn't stand out
 - Visitors wanted a visual marker (or some kind of consistent interpretative link)
 - Main narrative of the gallery not interrupted - even if there is a visual marker

Exploring a less embedded approach



In summary

