

# Conducting Marketing Research in Museums

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The Institute for Learning Innovation (ILI) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to understanding, facilitating and communicating about free-choice learning.

# What is marketing research?

Process of systematically gathering, recording and analyzing data and information about customers, competitors and the market.

Wikipedia, marketing research:  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Market\\_research](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Market_research)

# What is marketing research?

*Who are you trying to reach  
and how is it working?*

# Why do marketing research?

Our assumptions about what visitors want are often inaccurate...



and we can't afford to be wrong.

# Why do marketing research?

Sometimes we celebrate success...



when it's due to something else.

# Why do marketing research?

Knowing what sets visitors' expectations...



leads to more satisfying visits.

# Marketing research is used to find out...

Who and where are potential visitors?

How do you reach them?

What do they want?

Who is visiting, and why?

Who's not visiting, and why not?

What makes visitors want to come back?

How can you encourage positive  
word of mouth? (see [www.womma.org](http://www.womma.org))

# Marketing research in museums

- Segmentation studies
- Attitude, Awareness and Usage
- Branding studies
- Advertising studies
- Customer satisfaction studies
- Marketing exit surveys

Wikipedia, types of marketing research:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marketing\\_research#Types\\_of\\_marketing\\_research](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marketing_research#Types_of_marketing_research)

*Start with one question.*

Who is visiting the institution?



*(and what do you already know about them?)*

# What is an **exit survey**?

My working definition....

A survey or interview completed after the visit that covers many aspects of the experience as well as demographic and/or psychographic items.

# What is an **exit survey**?

*Finds out who's coming  
and what they think of the visit.*

# Common Topics in Exit Surveys

- Previous visitation
- Ratings of overall visit, areas
- Programs and exhibitions  
(influence of, popularity, ratings)
- Demographics (age, gender, group type)
- Psychographics (personality, values, attitudes, interests, lifestyles)
- Mission-related information
- Post-visit information

# Overview of Exit Surveys

- Breadth but not depth
- Complements other research, including exhibition and program evaluations
- Benefits many departments
- Should inform institutional decisions, not just marketing

## Identify and learn about specific markets...

Where and who are they?

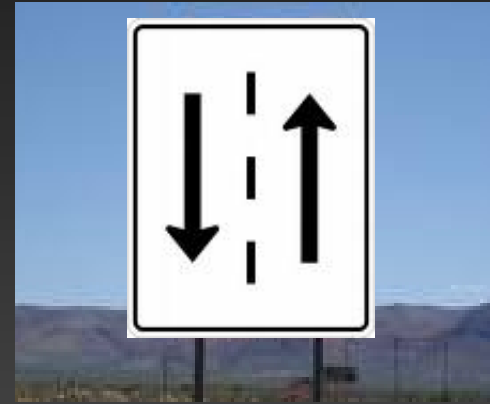
Do they know you exist?

What do they think of you?

Have they visited?

What differences and similarities are there between markets?

Marketing research,  
when used effectively,  
will help you to...



- better understand your audiences
- be more strategic in communications
- measure your impact
- make more informed decisions

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