

Enriching the Experience through Innovative and Creative Exhibitions

National Archaeological Museum Aruba

July 28, 2009

2 – 4 pm

Workshop Agenda

1. Introduction
2. Current trends and practices
3. Practical application of information
4. Case study: National Archaeological Museum Aruba

Who we are

- Maria Piacente, Vice-President, Exhibitions,
Lord Cultural Resources
- Yvonne Tang, Creative Art Director,
Lord Cultural Resources
- Erich Zuern, Producer, Xibitz

Museums & Cultural Tourism

- *Authenticity*: Museums are ranked as the most trustworthy resource among a list of information sources, including books and TV. (*source AAM survey*)
- *Rise in thematic and interactive museums* – dynamic and complex selection of subject matters and experiences at museums, e.g. tolerance, pop-culture, creativity.
- *Growth*: Overall growth in attendance and number of museums*, but **NOT** historic sites. There has been a steady decline in attendance. For example, New York Times reported that attendance at Colonial Williamsburg over last 10 years has dropped from 1.1 million to 710,000 and they are hosting fewer families than ever before. The reasons – perception, new museum types, quality of experience, competition, lack of funding.

**Interruption in growth immediately after 9/11*

What would you do
in your museum
if you had
no constraints?





Exploring current trends and practices in:

- Learning Styles
- Use of Collections
- Interpretation and Exhibition Design

Learning Styles



Appealing to Styles of Learning

Scientific research by Howard Gardner, of Harvard University, has identified 7 ways that people learn:

- Visual
- Verbal
- Logic
- Movement
- Reflection
- Social
- Sound

How We Learn – Visual

- Enjoys... looking at pictures, watching movies, drawing, designing and creating
- Learn best by... visualizing, dreaming, working with colors and pictures



ZOOM Kindermuseum



Frist Center for the Visual Arts

How We Learn – Verbal

- Enjoys... reading, writing and telling stories
- Learns best by... saying, hearing and seeing words



Peter Rabbit's Garden™



Balls Falls Centre for Conservation

How We Learn – Logic

- Enjoys... experiments, asking questions, exploring patterns and relationships
- Learns best by... classifying, working with abstract patterns, categorizing



EXPO 2000



Graz Kindermuseum

How We Learn – Movement

- Enjoys... moving around, touching and talking
- Learns best by... touch and movement, physical activity



How We Learn – Reflection

- Enjoys... working alone, pursuing their own interests
- Learns best by... self-paced instruction, reflecting and individual projects



NIHERST, Go Creative! Exhibition



Cleveland Museum of Art

How We Learn – Social

- Enjoys ... being with friends, talking to people and being part of a group
- Learns best by... sharing, cooperating, interviewing and comparing



Peter Rabbit's Garden™



NIHERST, Go Creative! Exhibition

How We Learn – Sound

- Enjoys... singing and humming, listening to music, playing instruments
- Learns best by... rhythm, melody, music



ZOOM Kindermuseum



Graz Kindermuseum

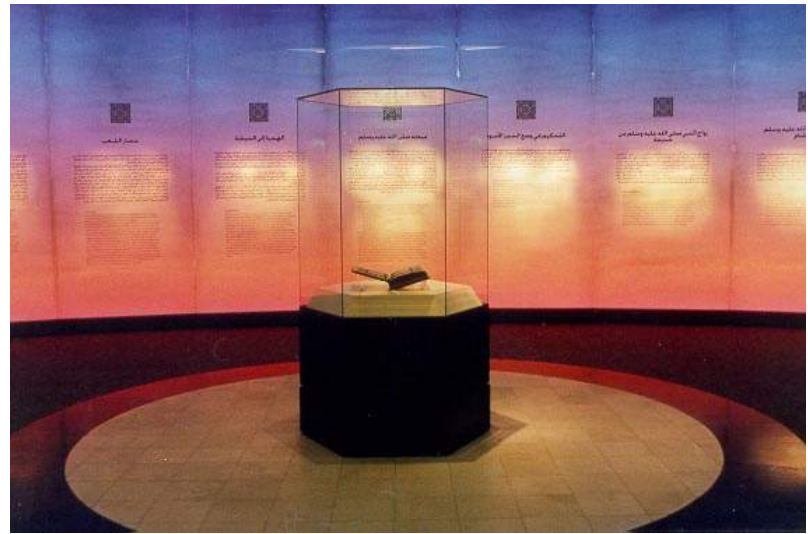
Use of Collections

Aesthetic Mode

- Focus on object



Burpee Museum of Natural History, "JANE: Diary of a Dinosaur"



Saudi Arabian National Museum

Context Mode

- Understanding culture and history by interpreting material culture
- Building context around artifacts
- Storytelling / Themes



Provincial Museum of Newfoundland and Labrador



Canada Aviation Museum

Processes Mode

- Using material culture to understand processes
- How things are made, how they work, or how something is done



Paper Discovery Center



Shalom Street

Interpretation and Exhibition Design

Creating Cultural Capital

xibitz
Experiential Spaces for Work and Life

Lord
Cultural Resources

Visible or Themed Storage

- Integration of research and programming – the public has access to process, collections and staff



Provincial Museum of Newfoundland and Labrador, The Rooms



Natural History Museum of LA County



Darwin Centre at the Natural History Museum, London

Personalized Visits with Devices

- Present exhibitions in alternative formats – cell phones, audio tours, comment stations

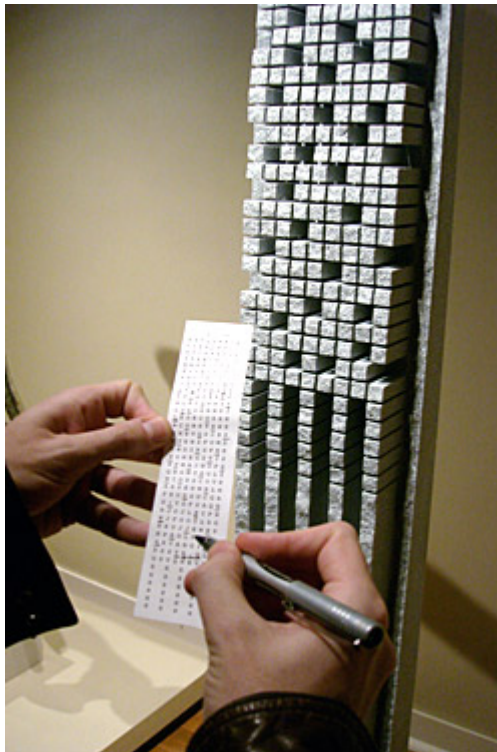


Integrated Media

- Creatively adapted media presented in multiple formats – interdisciplinary and inclusive



Tafelmusik at the Beijing Museum of Natural History



Smithsonian Institutions, *Ghost of a Chance*



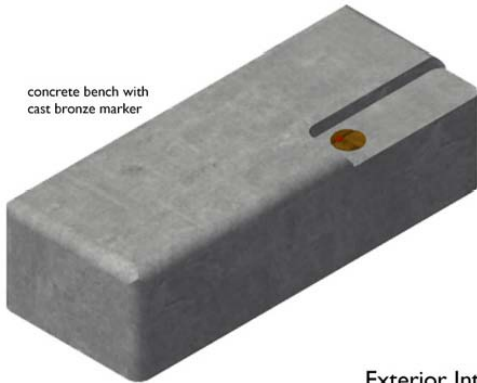
Constitution Hill, Johannesburg

Outdoor Interpretation

- Beyond interpretive signage
- Pathways with interpretation



concrete bench with
cast bronze marker

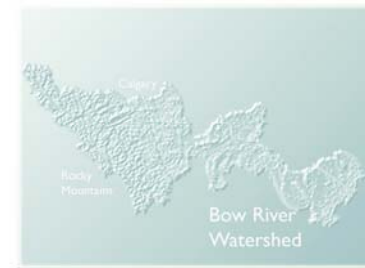


visitor receiving
up-to-date information
via text messaging
or voice recording

Exterior Interpretation



Bow River
watershed



etched map
on glass



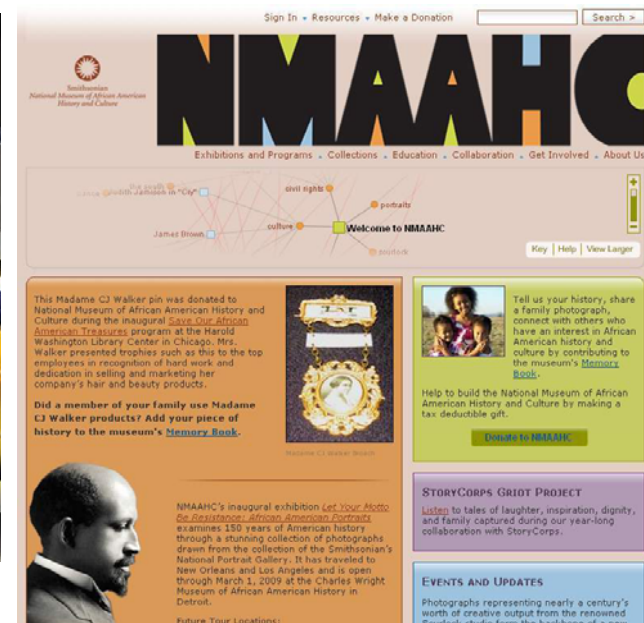
example of exterior
etched glass sign

Helping Visitors Connect

- Intimate, personal stories can help institutions come alive and create deeper connections with visitors
- Focus on human aspect, relevance
- Comparative strategies – gender and age roles, processes today and in the past



(left) Canadian Museum for Human Rights, (right) National Museum of African American History and Culture

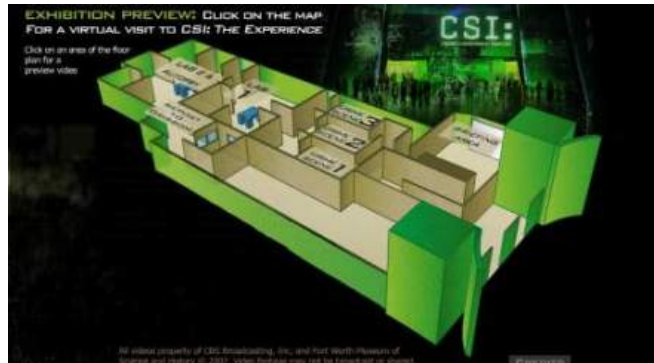


Multiple Perspectives and Experience Routes

- Providing exploration through different viewpoints or themes – history, perspectives or entry



Royal Ontario Museum,
Family Focus Panels



Singapore History Museum

CSI Traveling Exhibit

Learning Through Interaction

- Use of hands-on / minds-on activities
- Well-programmed technology



Peter Rabbit's Garden™



Balls Falls Center for Conservation



Houdini Museum

Sustainability

- Learning from the past, preparing for the future
- Environmental stewardship



Children's Museum Jordan – Educators and School Groups



Balls Falls Centre for Conservation, LEED Gold Certification

Direct Dialogue

- Engaging visitors by presenting issues and a place for their voice
- Exhibition as a forum



Constitution Hill, Johannesburg, South Africa

Power of Place

- The site as a powerful, immersive artifact
- History where it happened



(left) Eastern State Penitentiary, (right) Sawai Man Singh Town Hall

Strategic Alliances

- Leveraging local industries, community groups, heritage groups, societies
- Partnerships and collaboration with other institutions, events, collections, resources
- Media – social networks, print, television



Tourism

- Heritage Tourism
- Cultural Tourism
- Creativity Tourism
- Eco-Tourism
- Agri-Tourism
- Culinary Tourism
- First Voice
- Special Events



*Dolhuys, Museum Psychiatry, Netherlands,
Interpreted completely through story*



The **Waterloo County & Area Quilt Festival** draws over 35,000 quilters a year. The Festival was started by local quilt shop owners, museums and quilt guilds and now has over 40 events (such as workshops, fashion shows, teas, lectures, quilt auctions, merchant mall and exhibits) in 10 local communities. Over 4,000 volunteers work year-round to put the WCAQF together.

Building as a Portal

- As a hub, gateway or orientation



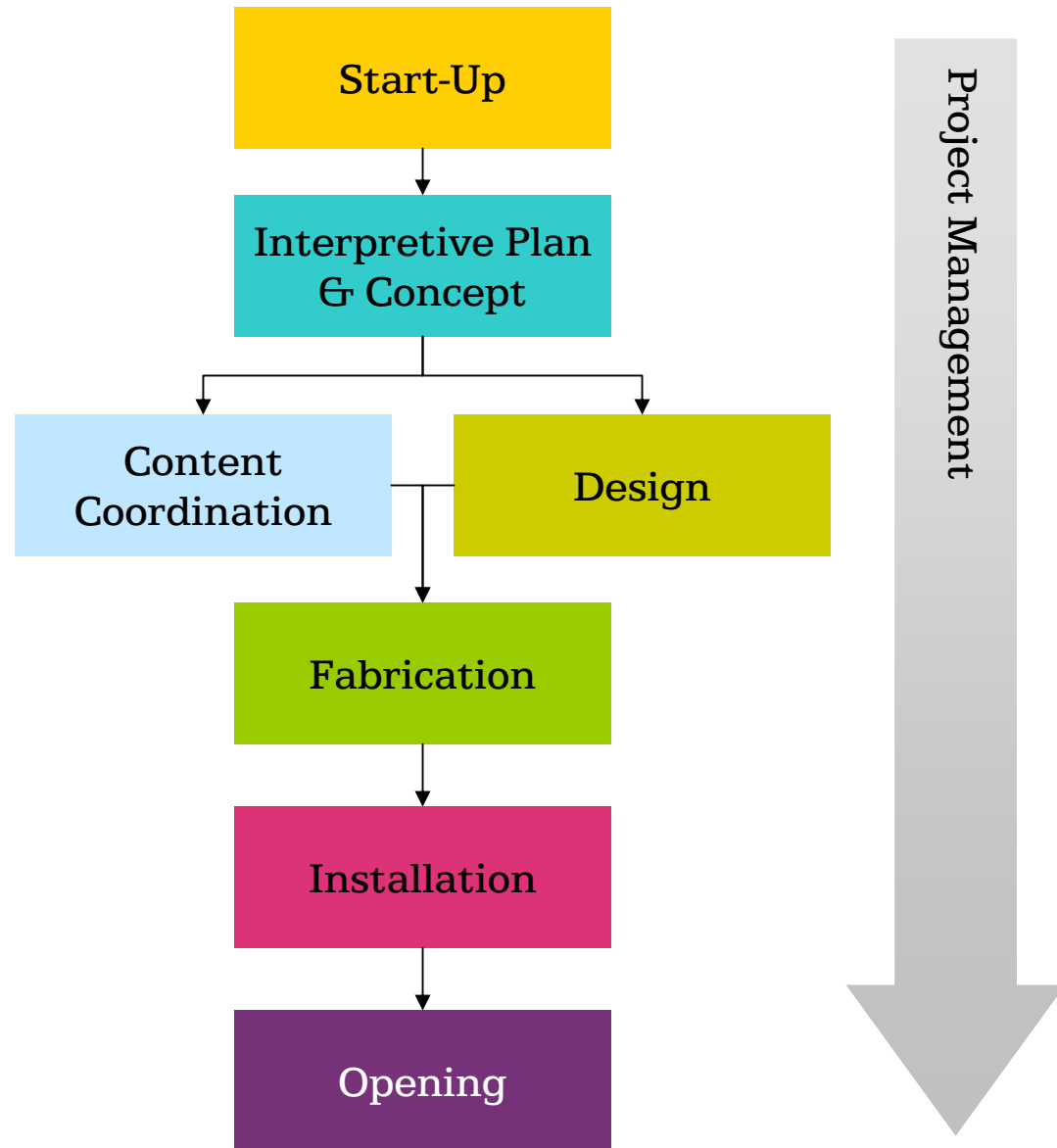
(left) Ladybird Johnston Wildflower Center,
(right) Balls Falls Centre for Conservation

A group of people are gathered around a large table in a meeting room. They are looking at documents and a laptop, appearing to be in a collaborative discussion. The scene is slightly blurred, suggesting a candid moment in a professional setting.

Now what? How do you apply all this information?

- Exhibition Development Process
- Selecting and Hiring an Exhibition Team
- Budgets

Exhibition Development Process

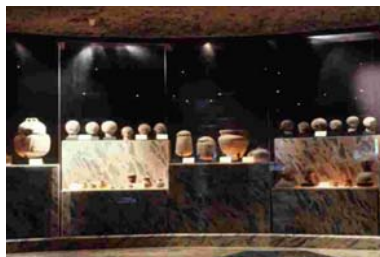


Organizing the Visitor Experience: Four Basic Experience Types

Four broad experience types to achieve a multitude of benefits:

- To add aesthetic variety
- To provide a range of experiences
- To appeal to different learning styles
- To ensure multiple levels of information, meaning and understanding
- To accommodate both the social and individual visitor
- To respond to the budget.

Didactic



National Museum of the Filipino People, Manila

Hands-On / Minds-On



Hong Kong Heritage Museum, Hong Kong

Multimedia



Peter Rabbit's Garden, Traveling Exhibition

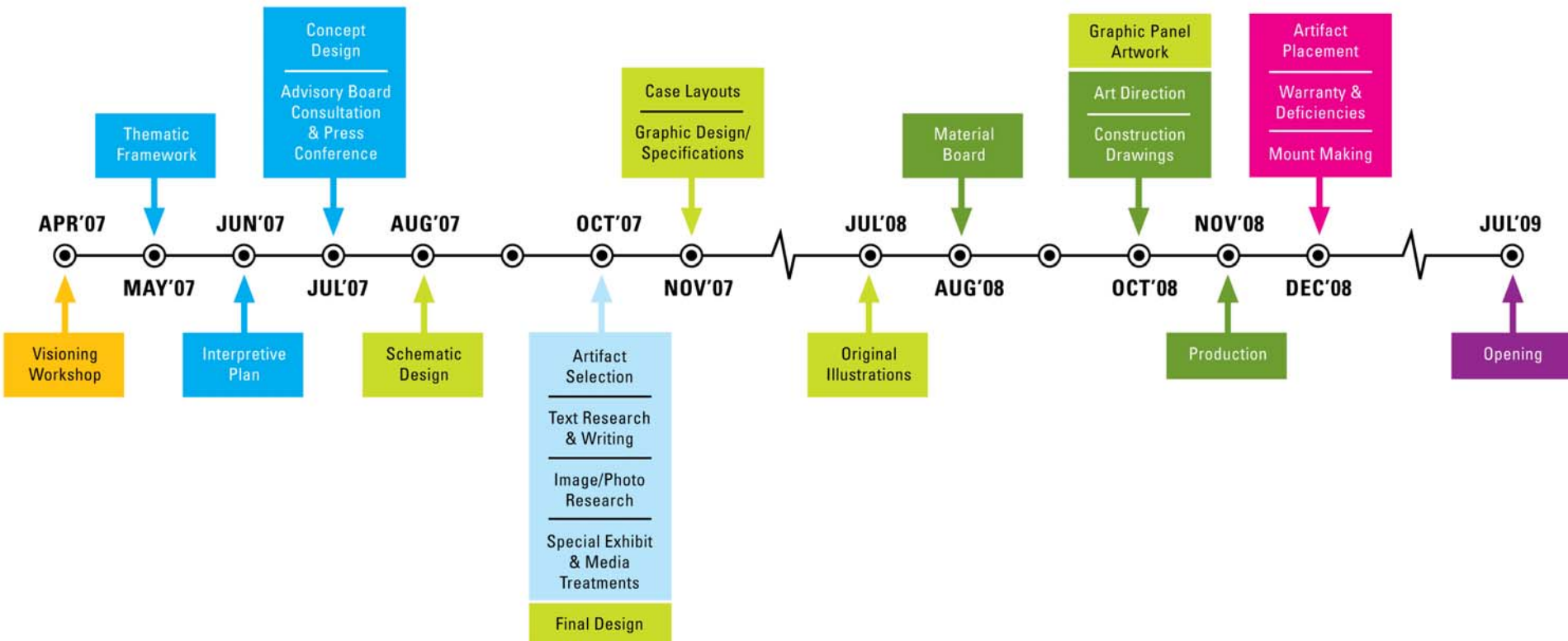
Integrated Environment



Hong Kong Heritage Museum, Hong Kong

Process & Deliverables

1. Start-Up ■ 2. Interpretive Plan & Concept ■ 3. Content Coordination ■ 4. Design ■ 5. Fabrication ■ 6. Installation ■ 7. Opening ■



How Can I Get All of This Work Done?

Selecting & Hiring an Exhibition Team

- Why hire an Exhibition Team?
 - Limited Staff Resources
 - Expertise
 - Knowledge Building
- Two most common paths
 - Negotiation
 - Request for Proposal

How Can I Get All of This Work Done? Selecting & Hiring an Exhibition Team

Negotiation

1. Seek out a firm that you trust whose work you know and admire.
2. Work together to clearly define roles and responsibilities.
3. Negotiate an agreement.



How Can I Get All of This Work Done?

Selecting & Hiring an Exhibition Team

Request for Proposal (RFP)

1. Create a written document (RFP) with these characteristics:
 - Clear definition of Scope of Work
 - Project background and work completed to date
 - Schedule
 - Budget
 - Defined process for evaluation and selection
2. Pre-select a small number of firms to directly receive the RFP
3. Advertise & distribute RFP additionally as may be required or desired
4. Review Proposals
5. Create short list
6. Interview
7. Negotiate an agreement

How Can I Get All of This Work Done? Selecting & Hiring an Exhibition Team

Advantages of Turnkey (Design-Build) Exhibit Development

- Enhanced Partnership Throughout Project
- Single Point of Responsibility
- Guaranteed Price
- Fewer Change Orders
- Proven Experience Record
- Saves Time and Money
- You Get the Best Value From Your Team

Budgeting for the Visitor Experience: How to Get the Results that You Want

Initial Budget Allocation

Experience types and budget ranges:

Experience Types	Square Foot	Square Meter
Didactic	\$200 – \$250	\$2000 – \$2500
Interactive	\$250 – \$350	\$2500 – \$3500
Multimedia	\$300 – \$500	\$3000 – \$5000
Integrated Environment	\$400 – \$800	\$4000 – \$8000

Budgeting for the Visitor Experience: How to Get the Results that You Want

Initial Budget Allocation

- Recommended range:
 - US\$200 – \$350 per Square Foot
or US\$2000 – \$3500 per Square Meter
- Exceptions:
 - Smaller Exhibitions (less than 2,000 sq.ft. or 200 sq.m.)
 - Exhibits of very large artifacts (Planes, Boats, Trains, Automobiles)

Budgeting for the Visitor Experience: How to Get the Results that You Want

Budget Affects

- Level of Interactivity
- Level of Sophistication and Finish
- Level of Media Integration
- Density of Exhibits



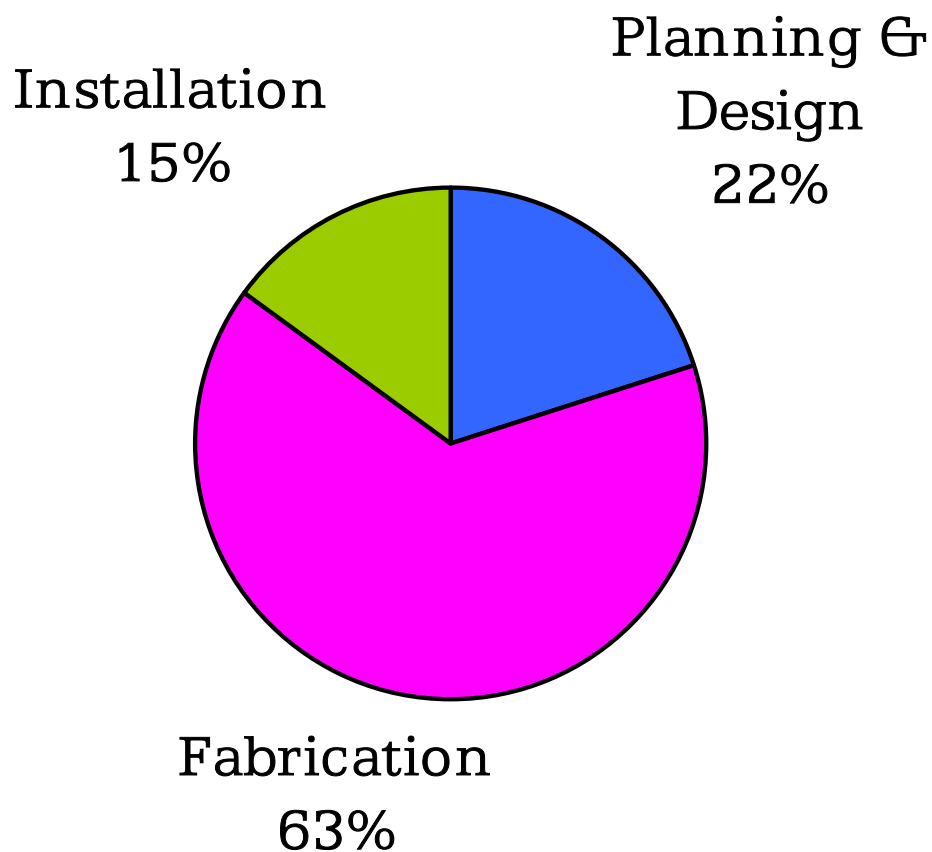
Shalom Street at the Jewish Community Center
of Metropolitan Detroit



Kohl Children's Museum

Budgeting for the Visitor Experience: How to Get the Results that You Want

Budget Allocation (average)



Budgeting for the Visitor Experience: How to Get the Results that You Want...

...with the budget you have?

- Anchor or “Wow” experience – spend \$\$\$ strategically, on a few new or flashy components
- Simple Activities – compare & contrast, learn more
- Programming – linked to design and experience
- Effective Design – range of experience types
- Changing Experience – varied or rotating exhibits

Questions?

A black and white photograph of a museum gallery. The room features large, multi-paned windows that look out onto a cityscape. The windows are filled with various images, including a stone wall, a building, and a circular emblem with the word 'SOMERSET' visible. Several people are seen in silhouette, walking and looking at the exhibits. The floor is polished and reflects the light from the windows. A semi-transparent grey banner is overlaid across the middle of the image, containing the text 'Lets take a walk ... it's time to explore!'.

Lets take a walk ... it's time to explore!