

## **ABSTRACT**

**WITTEK, VALESKA VERENA MERCEDES. Assessing Experiences and Motivational Behaviors of Volunteers and Members at the Exploris Museum (Under the direction of Dr. Larry D. Gustke).**

Exploris is a medium-sized museum with a mission to teach its audience about cultures and social phenomena among societies. In its social responsibility of educating the community, Exploris faces a reality shared with other non-profit organizations that are forced to take on a more business-like approach in order to survive the harsh competition for governmental funding and to earn the patronage of the public they are serving.

The rapid growth of non-profit organizations in the United States of America has influenced the marketing strategies among executives in the independent sector for the past decades. Museums have to satisfy their audiences, including volunteers, members, and visitors in order to motivate them to return.

This thesis attempts to quantify and evaluate the volunteer and member experiences at Exploris. This qualitative study was executed through an online survey during a two-week period in the summer of 2004. The findings in this study were used to make recommendations for the recruitment of future visitors, volunteers, and members.

ASSESSING EXPERIENCES AND MOTIVATIONAL BEHAVIORS OF  
VOLUNTEERS AND MEMBERS AT THE EXPLORIS MUSEUM

by

VALESKA VERENA MERCEDES WITTEK

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Chair of Advisory Committee

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## BIOGRAPHY

The author of this thesis was born in Hilden, Germany on January 15<sup>th</sup>, 1977. From 1982 until 1984 Valeska Wittek lived in Torre del Mar, Spain where she attended school.

After graduating from boarding school with an A.A. in English in 1997, she studied translating at the *Englisches Institut* in Heidelberg, Germany, where she received her B.A. in Foreign Languages and Bilingual Studies in 2000.

The 2000-2001 academic year brought Valeska Wittek to Spain for intensive Spanish-language study in Santander. While in Spain, she was awarded a Leonardo da Vinci fellowship funded by the European Commission to study in London, UK, at the European College of Business and Management and to work as an IT research consultant for a technology firm called Context.

Valeska Wittek has been living in Raleigh, North Carolina since 2002. She began her graduate work in the department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management in the spring of 2003, and she has been working as a guide at the Exploris Museum in Raleigh, North Carolina for the past two years.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
<b>List of Tables</b>	vii
<b>List of Figures</b>	viii
<b>Introduction</b>	1
Exploris Museum, Raleigh, North Carolina	3
Purpose of Study	4
Definition of Terms	5
Organization of Thesis	6
<b>Literature Review</b>	8
Voluntarism	8
Non-Profit Marketing and Markets	15
Museum Markets	16
Member Markets	19
Summary	21
<b>Methodology</b>	22
Introduction	22
Online Surveys	22
Research Design	23
Sampling	24
Limitations	25
Research Questions	26
<b>Results</b>	27
Introduction	27
Section I – Volunteer Data	27
Respondents	27
Motivations for Volunteering at Exploris	31
Rating of Experience	34
Volunteer Experience	35
Section II – Member Data	40
Respondents	40
Motivations for Joining as a Member at Exploris	43
Frequency use	46
Volunteering	48
Rating of Experience	50
Visitor Experience	52

**TABLE OF CONTENTS (CONT.)**

Key Findings – Research Questions and Answers	56
Additional key Findings of Interest	57
<b>Discussion</b>	59
Introduction	59
Exploris Volunteers	59
Exploris Members	63
Recommendations for Future Research	66
Post-script Recommendations	66
<b>References</b>	68
<b>Appendices</b>	73
Appendix A	74
Introduction Letter for Volunteers	75
Reminder Letter for Volunteers	76
Volunteer Survey	77
Participation per day for Responding Volunteers	84
Appendix B	85
Introduction Letter for Members	86
Member Survey	87
Participation per day for Responding Members	95
Appendix C	96
Coupon	96

**LIST OF TABLES**

Table 1.	Response Rate for Volunteers	24
Table 2.	Response Rate for Members	25
Table 3.	Gender of Responding Volunteers	27
Table 4.	Ratings of Responding Volunteers	35
Table 5.	Gender of Responding Members	40
Table 6.	Use of Exploris	47
Table 7.	Ratings of Responding Members	52



## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.	Age Distribution of Responding Volunteers	28
Figure 2.	Household of Responding Volunteers	28
Figure 3.	Level of Education of Responding Volunteers	29
Figure 4.	Occupation of Responding Volunteers	29
Figure 5.	Household Income (per year) for Responding Volunteers	30
Figure 6.	Distance From Home to Exploris	30
Figure 7.	Nationality of Responding Volunteers	30
Figure 8.	Learning about the China On Tour Exhibition at Exploris	31
Figure 9.	Volunteer Experience of Exploris Volunteers	32
Figure 10.	Visitation of Exploris Before Choosing to Volunteer at Exploris	33
Figure 11.	Motivation for Volunteering at Exploris	33
Figure 12.	Interest in Volunteer Work for Responding Volunteers	36
Figure 13.	Responding Volunteers who did not Plan to Volunteer at Exploris After the Departure of the China On Tour Travel Exhibition	36
Figure 14.	Encouragement of Friends to Volunteer at Exploris	37
Figure 15.	Responsibilities of Responding Volunteers	37
Figure 16.	Inconvenience During Volunteering	38
Figure 17.	What to see More of at Exploris	39
Figure 18.	Rating of Availability of the Exploris Staff for Assistance	39
Figure 19.	Age Distribution of Responding Members	40

## LIST OF FIGURES (CONT.)

Figure 20.	Household of Responding Members	41
Figure 21.	Level of Education of Responding Members	41
Figure 22.	Occupation of Responding Members	42
Figure 23.	Household Income (per year) for Responding Members	42
Figure 24.	Nationality of Responding Members	43
Figure 25.	Membership in Years	44
Figure 26.	Membership Subscription of Responding Members	44
Figure 27.	Learning About Exploris Before Joining as a Member	45
Figure 28.	Motivations for Joining the Membership Program at Exploris	46
Figure 29.	Experience in Volunteering	48
Figure 30.	Volunteering at Exploris	49
Figure 31.	Responding Members who do not Anticipate in Volunteering at Exploris	49
Figure 32.	Interest in Volunteer Work for Responding Members	50
Figure 33.	Members' Most Favorite Aspect of Exploris	53
Figure 34.	Members' Least Favorite Aspect of Exploris	53
Figure 35.	What to see More of at Exploris	54
Figure 36.	Reasons for not Renewing Existing Membership	55
Figure 37.	Encouragement of Friends to Become an Exploris Member	55
Figure 38.	Rating of Incentives for Recruiting Friends as new Members	56

## **INTRODUCTION**

Museums play a key role in providing learning and recreation experiences for many Americans. According to the American Association of Museums (2004), there are 16,000 museums in the United States of America, and 90 percent of all counties have a museum. More than one-half of these do not charge an admission fee. In North Carolina, Wake County has eight museums, and new ones are being planned for the area (Greater Raleigh Visitors and Convention Bureau, personal communication August 7, 2004). As either public or private non-profit organizations, museums depend heavily on governmental funding, donations, earned revenues, and volunteers.

In North Carolina the number of 501(c)(3) organizations grew by 6.50 percent between 1992 and 1998, representing 6,056 non-profit organizations. Competition among non-profit organizations for funding and volunteers is extremely high (Kotler and Andreasen, 2003). Utilizing exemptions under section 501(c)(3) from state sales tax and property tax, the number of non-profit organizations in the US has grown from 276,000 in 1977 to 734,000 by 1998 (Independent Sector, 2001, personal communication August 4, 2004). Inclusion of the 23 additional 501(c) non-profit categories to the aforementioned sum increases the quantity of non-profit organizations to approximately 1,627,000 in the US (Independent Sector, 2001, personal communication August 4, 2004).

A medium-sized museum averages 125 volunteers, and those volunteers play a key part in the visitor experience. They help to deliver the museum's programs,

while visitors help to generate revenues by buying admission tickets. Although often desired for their unsalaried work, as an “extension of the paid staff” (Sinclair and McIvor, 1998, p. 19) volunteers lend credibility to an organization and serve as public spokespersons (Ellis, 1996). The vital role that volunteers play in the operation of a museum has caused forward-thinking administrators to value them as much as they value visitors and museum members.

In the past, many museums have responded to the social and cross-cultural shifts among the population. No longer are museums perceived as places of quietness and dusty glass cases; they are places that offer education and entertainment at the same time (McLean, 1997; Middleton, 1998). Today, museums are described as “civic institutions, centers of learning, protectors of artistic, historic, scientific and cultural heritage”, as well as major tourism attractions (<http://www.aam-us.org/aboutmuseums/whatis.cfm>).

A review of museum-specific literature encompassing administration, marketing, public relations, visitor experience, voluntarism, and governance leads to a conclusion that in order to survive the harsh competition, museum administrators and trustees have to apply a business-like approach and act “in a more commercial way” (Runyard and French, 1999, p. xiii). It is recommended that museums execute marketing audits, both internal and external, in order to assess their potential strengths and weaknesses. The audits should include annual visitor surveys, which are good, inexpensive, and manageable tools for investigating a museum’s position and trends. They serve to quantify the visitor experience and allow the museum

administrators to make long-term plans for attracting the public in the future by catering to their tastes (Runyard, 1994; Runyard and French, 1999).

Ultimately, it is the visitor, museum member, and volunteer who judge the museum's performance and make recommendations to the public. A good visitor experience is the start of a strong relationship with the public (Adams, 1983). Knowledge and information about visitors, members, and volunteers can be used to develop museum programs and marketing efforts.

### **Exploris Museum, Raleigh, North Carolina**

The Exploris Museum is one of eight museums in Wake County, North Carolina. Located in downtown Raleigh, Exploris defines itself as a global museum whose mission is *to engage people in our changing and interconnected world*. Exploris is a museum about cultures from around the world that offers hands-on activities and interactive exhibitions for audiences of all ages. Exploris is not a science museum. While science and technology museums target the inner workings of scientific phenomena, Exploris focuses on the inner workings of cultural and social phenomena. Exploris centers on the humanities and the social behavior of people. The museum teaches the public to appreciate differences and similarities among cultures and people.

The Exploris Museum opened to the public in 1999. The \$50 million privately-owned non-profit organization houses four permanent exhibitions in a 74,000 square feet building and operates on a \$5 million annual budget. Exploris consists of three

entities: the Exploris Museum, the IMAX<sup>®</sup> Theatre at Exploris, and the Exploris Middle School. It generates approximately 50 percent of its income from earned revenues such as ticket sales, membership fees, and store sales, while 33 percent comes from public funding and 17 percent from private sources.

Exploris is a medium-sized museum employing 62 full-time and 30 part-time employees, and it attracts yearly over 220,000 visitors of whom 56,000 consist of school groups. Exploris is guided by a board of directors numbering 30 trustees. By the end of 2003 the membership pool included 1050 households, and the volunteer pool amounted to 10 active volunteers.

The author of this thesis has been working closely with visitors, members, and volunteers for the past two years as a guide on a part-time basis at the Exploris Museum.

### **Purpose of Study**

Visitor tastes, expectations and demographics have evolved in the past and are likely to change in the future. It is therefore important to be aware of this shift in order to (a) evaluate what attracts visitors to museums, (b) determine what makes the visitor experience a positive one, and (c) develop marketing plans for the future. Annual visitor surveys are effective ways to track changes, and survey results should influence long-term decisions regarding the museum (Runyard, 1994; Runyard and French, 1999). While examining the volunteers' and members' experiences during their stays at the museum, Exploris can identify positive and

negative attitudes in order to improve the visitors' experience. Therefore, the purpose of the study reported in this thesis was to:

1. Identify what motivates people to volunteer at the museum.
2. Identify what motivates people to be members of the museum.
3. Measure volunteers' assessment of their experience with the museum.
4. Measure members' assessment of their experience with the museum.

### **Definition of Terms**

In order to facilitate the reading and understanding of this thesis specialized terms are defined here.

Museum: A museum is a permanent institution that, either as a publicly or privately-owned not-for-profit organization, displays educational or aesthetic exhibitions on a regular basis to the public (<http://www.aam-us.org/aboutmuseums/whatis.cfm>).

Motivation: The drive of motivation is the expressed need for human satisfaction. The motivation for an action is classified in a hierarchy of needs where physiological needs are at the base and social needs move to a higher level of needs (Maslow, 1970).

Volunteer: In the Anglo-Saxon vernacular the word volunteer refers to an unpaid worker of any age who contributes with his or her time, knowledge, and monetary

funds to an organization's vision (Dekker and Halman, 2003). This unpaid labor may not always be voluntary, however (Ellis, 1996).

Marketing: "Marketing is the process of planning and executing the concepts, pricing, promotion, and distribution of ideas, goods, and services to create exchanges that satisfy individual and organizational objectives" (<http://www.marketingpower.com>).

Survey: A survey is a collection of descriptive, behavioral, and preferential data from a sample group during a specific time at a specific place (Rea and Parker, 1997).

Public Relations: Public relations entail the verbal exchange of information and ideas between organizations and their corresponding publics. The goal of public relations management is to maintain a close relationship with the community in order to favor an organization's action. It serves as a mediator between institutions and the community where public relations often act as the reconstitution of a community (Banks, 1995).

## **Organization of Thesis**

This thesis consists of five chapters and three appendices. Chapter one provides an introduction to the topic of museums, their assets and the increasing competition for funding and the public among museums. It also describes the



purpose of the study and offers definitions on specific terminologies used in this thesis. Chapter two reviews relevant and current literature related to voluntarism and the motivational behavior of volunteers and members. It also discusses reasons for museums to adopt commercial marketing strategies and the role of non-profit markets. The methodology of the research is reported in chapter three, including sampling procedures, data collection, the survey instrument, limitations, and research questions. Chapter four reports data analysis and findings. Chapter five presents conclusions and makes recommendations for improving the museum experience for volunteers, members, and visitors to Exploris.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Voluntarism**

There is no country in the world with a higher number of voluntary workers than the United States of America (Hodgkinson, 2003). According to a study of the Independent Sector (2001) in the year of 2000, 44 percent of adults in America, age 21 or older, volunteered for an organization. Likely explanations for this phenomenon are the economic and political ideologies of the United States compared to those in other countries (Dekker and Halman, 2003).

MacLeod and Hogarth (1999) argue that one major economic impact on the growth of voluntary action in the US was the privatization of many governmental agencies in the 1980s and 1990s. Social and health services previously executed by the government became the domain of organizations which depended highly on the voluntary support of the community. Jedlicka (1990) also states that “volunteerism is beginning to fill in the void created by the departure of government from the field of human services” (p. 43). Furthermore, the public encouragement and promotion of voluntarism in 1997 by the Clinton administration affected the steady increase of civic action in the United States (MacLeod and Hogarth, 1999).

Jedlicka (1990) claims that American society is a two-class system. Compared to other democratic countries, where highly imposed taxation prevents a society's segmentation into different classes, he affirms that American democratic values vanish in the pockets of corporate businesses where autocratic management

behaviors are routine. Although all Western European countries and more recently Eastern European countries have been sharing democracy as a common denominator with the US, the perception of voluntarism and the ascendancy of the state on its citizens is by far very different (Dekker and Halman, 2003). For example, the practice of voluntarism during the communist regime was regarded as obligatory work. The totalitarian government expected from its citizens, children and adults, to contribute their time in unpaid labor. It therefore does not come as a surprise that today the number of volunteer workers in former Soviet countries is constantly decreasing (Juknevičius and Savicka, 2003). Clearly, the approach of voluntarism among countries is different, especially with regard to its terminology. The German word *Ehrenamt*<sup>1</sup>, for instance, describes volunteering as *honorary work* (Dekker and Halman, 2003). Wolfgang Habermeyer (2004) describes volunteering or in other words honorary work as follows:

Honorary work is a performed activity that serves the general public and which, in its truest meaning, is not a remunerated service. Honorary work has to be distinguished from the honorary work of public office, and in the original meaning of the word, any work that counts

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<sup>1</sup> Ehrenamt, eine im Dienst der Allgemeinheit stehende und nicht im eigentlichen Sinn entlohnte Tätigkeit. Das Ehrenamt muss unterschieden werden in ehrenamtliche Tätigkeit in einem öffentlichen Amt und in das Ehrenamt im weiteren Sinn des Wortes, worunter alle unbezahlten Tätigkeiten für Vereine, Parteien oder sonstige Organisationen zu rechnen sind. Zur ehrenamtlichen Tätigkeit als Wahlhelfer oder Schöffe am Gericht ist jeder Bürger per Gesetz verpflichtet. Ehrenämter im weiteren Sinn werden von den Bürgern in der Regel selbst angestrebt und per Wahl oder Berufung bestetzt. Die ehrenamtliche Tätigkeit wird immer nebenberuflich ausgeübt; bei einer Tätigkeit in einem öffentlichen Amt wird jedoch immer eine Aufwandsentschädigung geleistet, die sich in der Regel nach dem beruflichen Einkommen der ehrenamtlichen Tätigkeit richtet. Auch bei nichtöffentlichen Ehrenämtern wie z. B. der Tätigkeit als Betriebsrat wird häufig eine Aufwandsentschädigung gewährt (Microsoft® Encarta® Enzyklopädie 2004).

all unpaid jobs for associations, parties, or other organizations. Every citizen is obligated by law to engage in honorary work as election assistant or as a juror. As a rule, honorary work is sought by citizens themselves and is filled either by vote or appointment. Honorary work is always executed extra-vocationally. However, if honorary work is being executed in a public office, this work will always be granted a financial allowance which usually supplements the occupational income of the honorary work. If the honorary work is being executed in a non-public sector like, for instance, in form of a *Betriebsrat*<sup>2</sup>, the honorary work is often reimbursed (Translation by Wittek).

Every society has its own interpretation of voluntarism, and being aware of the economic shifts and the increasing globalization in individual countries, scholars agree that “volunteers are attracted to particular organizations because they want to help achieve its objectives” (Dekker and Halman, 2003; Naisbitt, 1994; Pearce, 1993, p. 80).

Within the past decades, numerous articles and books on volunteer motivation have been published both in the United States and abroad. The literature on the motivational behavior of volunteers reveals the following statements: making a difference in the world, being a life-long learner, helping others in need, enhancing social skills, developing personal growth, sharing similar values with others, completing imposed volunteer hours required by other institutions (Ellis, 1996; Ilesley and Niemi, 1981; MacLoad and Hogarth, 1999; Tedrick and Henderson, 1989; Vineyard, 1984, 1993). Inter alia, Vineyard (1984) claims that people choose to

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<sup>2</sup> *Betriebsrat* is an elected liaison who arbitrates on behalf of employee unions but is salaried by the company.

volunteer because they want to find satisfaction in their lives, especially with regard to the 62 percent of Americans who are dissatisfied with their own work place. According to MacLoad and Hogarth (1999), self-education and the acquisition of new skills are an increasing motivation in volunteers. This trend is particularly evident among museum volunteers in the United States, where the concept of docents embodies this motivation. When joining the museum's volunteer or docent program, the volunteer or docent is to be expected to bring time, dedication, and intellectual curiosity with him/her (Goodland and McIvor, 1998). In a study by Cooper-Fleck (2001), museum volunteers were asked their reasons for volunteering at museums. Her findings further confirm the aforementioned hypotheses. Additionally, Cooper-Fleck (2001) found that people were more inclined to volunteer at museums where friends or family were affiliated.

The motivation behind volunteering has been researched in a variety of social settings where "motivation can be classified as either intrinsic or extrinsic, and as either egoistic or altruistic" (Copper-Fleck, 2001, p. 30). Johnston, Twynam, and Farrell (2000) agree with the above-mentioned theory, but their study indicates a further difference among organization volunteers versus special event volunteers. Furthermore, Ilsley's (1990) studies have shown that museum volunteers hold the highest level of commitment among all categories of volunteers.

The reasons why people choose to volunteer are infinite (Pearce, 1993). Yet, the reality is that people volunteer because they have been asked (Dekker and Halman, 2003; Pearce, 1993).

A variety of institutions make use of volunteers for different purposes and different tasks (MacLoad and Hogarth, 1999). However, numerous organizations underestimate the potential of unpaid workers while still believing in volunteers as a “second choice” (Ellis, 1996., p. 7). This trait is particularly obvious when investigating staff members’ opinions about using volunteers where “volunteers may take the job of professionals” (Ilsley and Niemi, 1981, p. 4) represents their number one fear. Organizations ought to be aware of the credibility volunteers can add to their organization’s visibility and perception of the public, in particular, “because volunteers represent the community from which they are drawn” (Tedrick and Henderson, 1989, p. 8).

In the museum world, volunteers account for a “significant part of the museum community. Volunteers are the ultimate frequent visitor. The growth of museums at the rate of one a fortnight in recent years is due mainly to the huge growth in voluntary trusts and ‘all volunteer’ museums” (Millar, 1991, as cited in Goodland and McIvor, 1998, p. 6). Unlike paid staff members, volunteers may criticize an organization’s concept or approach without the fear of being terminated. Possessing the advantage of being both insiders and outsiders at the same time, volunteers offer potentially valuable and conductive solutions. Additionally, a diverse volunteer pool adds to the uniform employee base which may lead to a broader perspective for museum employees (Ellis, 1996; Tedrick and Henderson, 1989).

A more economic view and business-like approach is taken by Seltzer (2001) in his book *Securing Your Organization’s Future*. This strategic fundraising guide for

non-profit organizations suggests ascribing “a dollar value to key volunteer labor” (p. 120). In other words, the unpaid labor performed by volunteers has to be valued monetarily. Seltzer (2001) gives two reasons for his approach: “First, budgets must accurately represent an organization’s personnel resources. Second, including the value of your key volunteers’ time increases your budget, and prospective funders frequently judge the significance of an organization’s efforts by the size of its budget” (p.120).

For the year 2000, the Independent Sector (2001) indicated an estimated value of 9 million full-time employees and an approximate dollar value of \$239 billion in volunteer labor in the US. According to McLean (1997), 10 percent of the total employees in American museums are volunteers. A British study by Goodland and McIvor (1998) showed that students represent 10 percent of the volunteer pool. Given that young people have a lot of leisure time, this figure illustrates a solid “potential resource for museums” (Goodland and McIvor, 1998, p. 7).

In order for institutions to keep their supplementary work forces and to recruit new volunteers, it is important for them to comprehend how the public perceptions of voluntarism and the volunteer demographics have changed. What used to be a leisure pursuit by a white, married, middle-class housewife, well-educated mother of 2.50 children, is now a career, knowledge, or social skill builder of males (42 percent) or females (46 percent), between the age of 30 and 50 years with higher education and higher income (Ellis, 1996; Ilsley and Niemi, 1981; Tedrick and Henderson, 1989; Vineyard, 1984). Further demographic findings of McLeod and

Hogarth (1999) indicate that the civic engagement of younger people in the US is on the rise and that “an increasing percentage of people who volunteer do not speak English as a first language” (p. 4). This shift clearly demonstrates the diversity among volunteers; but it also illustrates the sophistication that today’s volunteers bring with them. Moreover, volunteers need to be managed professionally (Ilsley and Niemi, 1981; Pearce, 1993). Therefore, organizations must be aware of this change and market their product to the right audience, especially since “people are not volunteering any less than they used to, but the number of organizations competing for volunteers, [customers, and resources] has grown dramatically in recent years” (Andreasen and Kotler, 2003; Tedrick and Henderson, 1989, p. 39).

This increase can be seen in the number of employees that the independent sector<sup>3</sup> produces. Counting 12.50 million employees in 2001, employment in the independent sector has doubled from 6 million employees in 1977. The average annual growth rate in employment for non-profits indicates 2.50 percent, whereas businesses and government show 1.80 percent and 1.60 percent respectively (“Giving and volunteering,” 2001). Although non-profit organizations are heavily subsidized by the government, generate revenues, receive donations, and enjoy other privileges, “nonprofits are challenged to meet important social services and value-expressive needs of communities and nations that are not met by the other two sectors” (Salamon and Sokolowski 2001, as cited in Andreasen and Kotler, 2003, p. 29).

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<sup>3</sup> The independent sector consists of 501(c)(3), 501(c)(4), and religious organizations.



## **Non-Profit Marketing and Markets**

It is obvious that the main differences between non-profit and for-profit businesses are their objectives. The private sector operates at a profit-making level, usually offering tangible goods and services. The non-profit sector is mission driven, always serving the public. The two sectors further distinguish themselves in their marketing approaches (Lovelock and Weinberg, 1984). Andreasen and Kotler (2003) argue that while the private sector makes wide use of commercial marketing concepts, the independent sector does not; and this is where the controversy begins.

Adopting a business-like approach in the non-profit sector represents an obstacle for many marketing administrators, since their organizations are not designed to “operate for profit” (Lovelock and Weinberg, 1984, p. 35). Sargeant (1999) states that non-profit organizations think of marketing as immoral and manipulative. Many non-profit organizations, in particular museums, ignore or simply oppose even the idea of researching their own institution and the public they serve (Andreasen and Kotler, 2003). The belief in product-oriented marketing rather than in customer-oriented marketing is still predominant among many non-profit agencies in the US (Andreasen, 1984). This attitude seriously needs to be addressed and changed in order for non-profit organizations to respond to the increasing competition (Andreasen and Kotler, 2003).

Zietlow (2001) urges non-profit organizations to “initiate or increase fees and start for-business ventures” (p. 39). One way to implement a different school of

thought would be through the introduction of social marketing. Andreasen and Kotler (2003) offer the following definition of social marketing: “Social marketing seeks to influence social behaviors not to benefit the marketer but to benefit the target audience and the general society” (p. 329). Since non-profit organizations are all about serving the public, this domain could easily be adopted in the independent sector (Andreasen and Kotler, 2003). While organizations ought to evaluate and re-think their position in the community, many administrators are convinced that they know what their public wants (Andreasen, 1984; Rosso and Tempel, 2003). This notion is very common among museum marketers who too often see themselves as educators rather than marketers (Andreasen, 1984). Kotler and Andreasen (2003) found in a study of museum directors the following characteristics compared to marketing practitioners:

- Less likely to have secured “information from [their] customers regarding what they would like [the museum] to offer”.
- More likely to see their product as desirable for everyone rather than as targeted at specific segments.
- Less interested in changing prices to increase revenues.
- Less willing to change their distribution strategy.
- Less willing in the future to “change the nature of the products and services [they] offer [their] customers” (p. 40).

## **Museum Markets**

The changing social environment, the increasingly diverse cultures, and the technological advancement in Western society, call museums to take stock of their

inventory and develop strategic marketing plans (Genoways and Ireland, 2003). Genoways and Ireland (2003) indicate that without the proper market research and audience segmentation, museums will waste their money and time to attract new visitors. Hooper-Greenhill (1994) puts it in perspective stating that “a public service will not be maintained if it is not used” (p. 54). The growth of museums in the US from 3,443 in 1960 to approximately 16,000 in 1997 shows a steady increase (American Association of Museums, 1976; “Museums working,” 2004). Not only does this create competition among museums for funding, it also leads to museums competing for the visitor’s leisure time which is declining among employed people (Davies, 1994, as cited in McLean, 1997). Visitors to the museum have different ideas and values about their leisure (Hood, 1982). This was found in a study by Hood (1982), in which she divided the museum audience into three different segments: the frequent participant, the occasional participant, and the non-participant. As a result of this segmentation, Hood (1982) discovered that each of these attendance groups seek different types of benefits and values during their leisure experience. Furthermore, Hood’s findings support Merriman’s (1989) claim that “the longer the formal education received, the more frequently visiting occurs” (p. 158).

In another study by Runyard and French (1999), visitors to a museum in the UK were asked when they are most likely to visit a museum. The results indicated a strong museum attendance (55 percent) during the visitor’s vacation time. This trend was followed by the statement “I tend to visit when there is a special

exhibition/lecture/event which interests me” (p. 273). The latter reason for visiting a museum was especially true for art museums, where travel exhibitions proved to attract crowds and audiences who traveled long distances (Andreasen and Kotler, 2003).

Museum marketers must be aware of the evolving demographics of their visitors. Cultural shifts, an aging population, and a rising number of retirees, for example, represent challenging hurdles for administrators to overcome. Museum administrators need to plan for their visitors (Hooper-Greenhill, 1994). Otherwise, visitors will not be able to understand and extract meaning from their museum experience (Hein, 1998). A response to the issue is given by Wilson (1991) stating the following:

Before we plan properly for visitors we need to understand what our visitors require. This means finding out about them, and their needs, and analyzing the information which we have gathered. Opinion research is only a means of gathering information. How it is analyzed and used is the business of the management of the museum. Opinion and market research should always be used as an aid to management not as a form of management. In other words, it is a misuse of opinion research always to do what the results of the research suggest that the public wants. The public may be asking for something which the museum cannot deliver, or through misinformation or prejudice they may simply be wrong. Research is simply a tool to enable us all to ask more questions, the answers to which help us to plan sensible courses of action. It enables us to establish both what the public wants which we can give them, and how great is the gap of understanding between the museum and the public (p.111).

## **Member Markets**

A further asset to a museum is a membership program (Angle, 1982). More than two-thirds of all museums in the world offer memberships (Official Museum Directory, personal communication September 14, 2004). Memberships are usually divided into different kinds of subscriptions from which individuals can choose (Slater, 2003).

In the UK, for instance, the word member is interchangeable with the word friend, whereas in the US, members take on a different profile compared to those of friends (Slater, 2003). This trait is determined by the level of financial contributions members, friends, or even patrons and benefactors participate in (<http://ncartmuseum.org/membership.stml>). Unfortunately, very little has been published about museum members, their motivations, and their impact on museums (Angle, 1982). The little research that has been conducted regarding members and their motivations behind joining a museum reveals free admission and the support of the community as primary reasons (Costello, 1983; Slater, 2003). What has been published in the past is either about individual museums or part of the broader museum literature (Angle, 1982; Slater, 2003).

Museum membership programs provide audiences with a variety of incentives such as free admission, special discounts in the museum store and café, member's previews of special exhibits, and invitations to exclusive workshops or lectures (Costello, 1983). These activities are distributed by the museum administrators in the form of special member calendars, annual reports, bulletins, and/or solicitations.

According to Costello (1983), the aforementioned tools are “the most important components of a membership program and...potential for education of the members” (p. 71). It is important that museum administrators understand and agree on the objectives of their membership program. Membership programs will not succeed, if they are primarily designed for generating revenue (Angle, 1982). Angle (1982) defines a membership program as follows: “A membership program ought to be the means whereby an interested group of people participate in the life of the museum and enjoy in-depth, behind-the-scenes relationship with its staff and collections” (p. 34).

Members contribute with their annual membership fee to the financial stability of the museum. This allows the museum to use the revenues for general operations (Perrot, 1992; Runyard and French, 1999). Far more important, however, is the role which the member plays. Either as an ambassador for the museum’s mission or as the liaison between the public and the museum, the member possesses the unique ability of portraying both (Hooper-Greenhill, 1994; Runyard and French, 1999). McLean (1997) agrees with the aforementioned scholars, adding that members are trusted exponents of the museum likely not only to recruit more members, but to become fundraisers as well. This trait is confirmed by Angel (1982) stating that “for every 100 members who join as a result of direct mail solicitation, another 25 persons join through word of mouth” (p. 33). Future fundraising potential regarding members is particularly relevant when considering Rosso and Tempel’s (2003)

estimate that approximately between \$41 trillion to \$136 trillion will be passed on from one generation to the next by 2044.

## **Summary**

The term volunteer has different meanings in different cultures. In addition, volunteer motivations vary from individual to individual, and volunteers have become more sophisticated over the course of decades. In the museum world, volunteers have become an integral part of the daily operations of a museum while demonstrating the highest level of commitment among all types of volunteers.

The literature also stated that demographic changes in the population and the growth of non-profit organizations will have an impact on the future of museums. Museums have to adapt and apply business-like strategies in order to overcome and manage new obstacles. Like their business counterparts, museums must make use of marketing research techniques, such as interviews or questionnaires, in order to understand the public they are serving.

Moreover, the reviewed literature stated that museums facilitate education and entertainment simultaneously. One of the most important aspects to the success of museums in an increasingly competitive environment is their ability to recruit and satisfy both their volunteers and members.

## METHODOLOGY

### Introduction

At the end of 2003, the Exploris museum was approved to host its first travel exhibition called *China On Tour*. The travel exhibition took place from April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2004 until August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2004. As explained in chapter one, the volunteer pool consisted of 10 active volunteers, and new volunteers had to be recruited for the China On Tour exhibition. The newly-recruited volunteers and the existing Exploris members served as the sampling frame for this thesis.

### Online Surveys

Online research is growing in popularity among businesses and institutions. One reason for this trend is the increasing access among consumers to computers and the internet. Either at the work place or at home, the use of computers is becoming an integral part of peoples' lives. Literature on the application of online surveys asserts that compared to mail, telephone, or personal interviews, online surveys are less expensive, more convenient, quicker, and more easily transferable into data files (Tasci and Knutson, 2003).



## **Research Design**

Two separate online surveys were distributed to a sample of Exploris museum volunteers and members respectively during the summer of 2004 (July 6<sup>th</sup>, 2004 to 16<sup>th</sup>, 2004).

The volunteer survey consisted of 31 questions, and the member survey consisted of 41 questions. The questions were of four different types: dichotomous questions, multiple response questions, Likert type questions, and open-ended questions. The last eight questions of both surveys contained the same demographic questions. The online presentation of the questionnaires was designed so that participants were required to answer every question, otherwise they could not continue with the survey. The questionnaires are shown in appendix A and B, respectively.

The surveys were designed using [www.createsurvey.com](http://www.createsurvey.com), a subdivision of TB Labs, LLC. This service allowed the author to create two complex, multi-page surveys in HTML format. Furthermore, the management system ordered the data into corresponding files. Both surveys were hosted by [www.createsurvey.com](http://www.createsurvey.com).

As an incentive to participate, the museum member or volunteer was presented a printable coupon upon completion of the questionnaire. A copy of the coupon is presented in appendix C.

The participants' IP addresses, although logged by [www.createsurvey.com](http://www.createsurvey.com), could not be accessed by the author, thus guaranteeing anonymity and confidentiality for the respondents.

## Sampling

On July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2004, the volunteer coordinator sent out an e-mail to 225 newly-registered volunteers at Exploris. The e-mail provided the recipients with a URL link to the volunteer online survey. A copy of this e-mail is in appendix A. One week later, on July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2004 a reminder e-mail was sent out to all 225 registered volunteers that boosted the number of respondents by 44 percent. A copy of the reminder e-mail is in appendix A. A copy of the histogram showing participation per day is in appendix A. A total of 10 e-mails were undeliverable. Registered volunteers include active, inactive, and prospective volunteers. However, the nature of the questions in the volunteer survey was such that only an active volunteer could have answered them. Answers from the survey questions confirmed that the participants represented only active volunteers. Table 1 indicates the response rate for volunteers.

**Table 1. Response Rate for Volunteers**

	Respondents	Non-Respondents	Total
Active volunteers	43	83	126
Total	34.00%	66.00%	100.00%

Simultaneously, on July 6<sup>th</sup>, 2004, the membership coordinator sent out 732 e-mails to member households. The e-mails provided the recipients with a URL link to the member online survey. A copy of this e-mail is in appendix B. The membership pool encompassed over 1100 households, but only 732 e-mail addresses were known. A copy of the histogram showing participation per day is in appendix B. A total of 13 e-mails were undeliverable. A reminder e-mail, similar to

the one that was sent out by the volunteer coordinator, was scheduled to be sent out by the membership coordinator, but was never sent. Table 2 shows the response rate for members.

**Table 2. Response Rate for Members**

	Respondents	Non-Respondents	Total
Members w. e-mail	121	598	719
Total	17.00%	83.00%	100.00%

Both online surveys and the printable coupon were taken offline on July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2004.

### **Limitations**

Conducting online research has several limitations such as the lack of random sampling, the coverage of errors (e.g. multiple responses from one or more persons), and lower response rates compared to other traditional modes (Tasci and Knutson, 2003). The response rate for both surveys was further influenced by the season. During this period of time people were less likely to be reached because families may have been traveling for summer vacations.

The lower response rate of 17 percent for members, compared to 34 percent for volunteers, could have been a result of the membership coordinator's reluctance to send out a reminder e-mail encouraging members to complete the questionnaire.

The list of Exploris members was not available to the researcher; therefore, it was not possible to compare respondent and population demographics.

**Research Questions**

The purpose of this research as outlined in the Introduction was to improve the visitors' experience at Exploris through an assessment of the volunteers' and members' experiences with the museum. Three specific research questions are listed below, and their answers are reported in chapter four:

1. What motivates volunteers and members to support Exploris?
2. How do volunteers and members get information about Exploris?
3. How do the permanent exhibitions impact the volunteers and members at Exploris?

## RESULTS

### Introduction

As indicated in chapter one, the goal of this research was to identify the motives behind members joining the museum and the reasons why volunteers work with the museum programs at Exploris. Moreover, the study determined the members' and volunteers' assessment of their museum experience.

Section I and section II of this chapter contain a descriptive analysis of the volunteer and member data, respectively. The sections are followed by key findings and answers to research questions.

### **Section I – Volunteer Data**

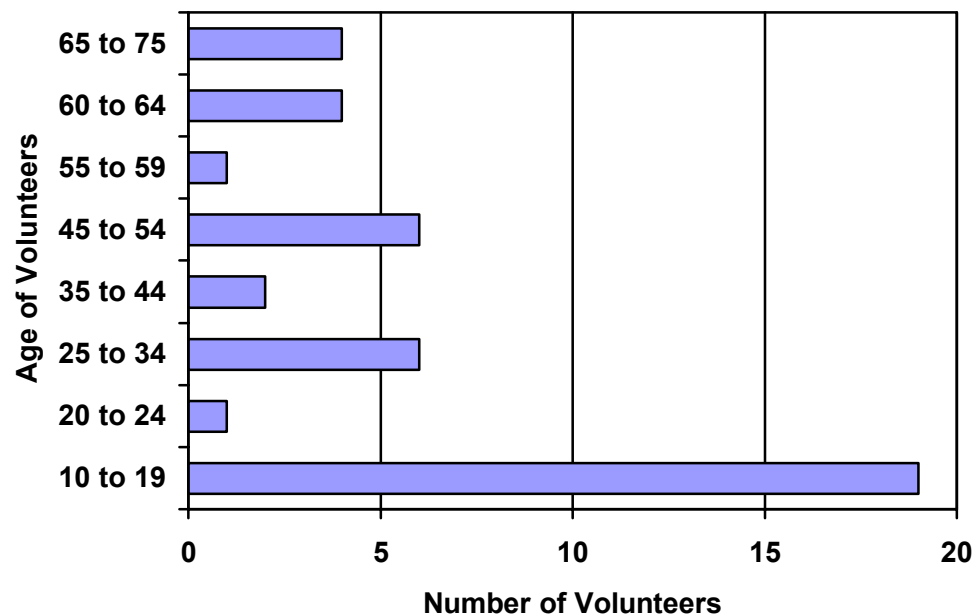
#### **Respondents**

Forty-three volunteers participated in the volunteer online survey of this study. The sample consisted of 17 males and 26 females. Table 3 shows the distribution of responding volunteers.

**Table 3. Gender of Responding Volunteers**

	Male	Female	Total
Volunteers	17	26	43
Total	39.53%	60.47%	100.00%

Age varied from 14 to 75 years, with a mean age of 33 years. Figure 1 indicates the age distribution of responding volunteers.

**Figure 1. Age Distribution of Responding Volunteers**

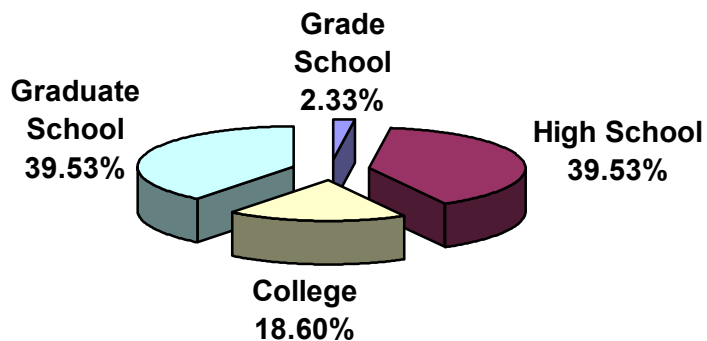
Out of the 43 volunteers, 17 were minors, while 74.42% were married couples with children (51.16%) and without children (23.26%). Figure 2 shows the household distribution of responding volunteers.

**Figure 2. Household of Responding Volunteers**

Married couple with children	51.16%
Married couple without children	23.26%
Female single without children	13.95%
Male single without children	11.63%
Female single parent household with children	0.00%
Male single parent household with children	0.00%

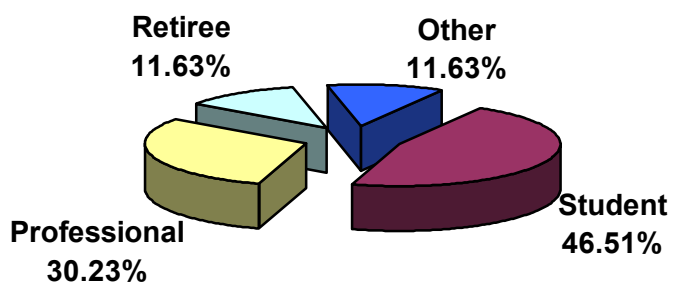
Most volunteers had attained an educational level beyond high school (58.13%). Figure 3 shows the education level of responding volunteers.

**Figure 3. Level of Education of Responding Volunteers**



Almost one-half of volunteers (20 participants) were students, primarily in high school (39.53%), whereas 5 volunteers were retirees, and 13 volunteers were professionals. Figure 4 indicates the occupation distribution of responding volunteers in percentages.

**Figure 4. Occupation of Responding Volunteers**



An approximate household income of \$50,000 or more before taxes was reported by 62.79% of members as shown in Figure 5.

**Figure 5. Household Income (per year) for Responding Volunteers**

Under \$10,000	13.96%
\$10,000 to \$29,999	13.95%
\$30,000 to \$49,999	9.30%
\$50,000 to \$69,999	16.28%
\$70,000 to \$89,999	4.65%
\$90,000 to 109,999	9.30%
\$110,000 or more	32.56%

A strong 81.39% of volunteers lived more than 11 miles away from Exploris.

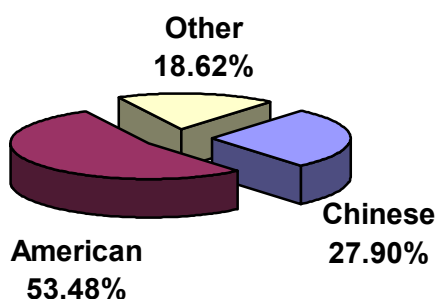
Figure 6 shows the distance that volunteers indicated from their home to Exploris.

**Figure 6. Distance From Home to Exploris**

Under 5 miles	9.31%
6 to 10 miles	9.30%
11 to 15 miles	39.53%
16 to 20 miles	18.60%
More than 21miles	23.26%

More than one-half of the respondents (53.48%) were US citizens, while 27.90% were Chinese. Figure 7 refers to their nationality.

**Figure 7. Nationality of Responding Volunteers**












Out of the 43 participants, 37 respondents identified themselves as Asians (86.05%).

### **Motivations for Volunteering at Exploris**

When volunteers were asked how they had learned about the China On Tour travel exhibition, 32.55% of the volunteers responded that they heard about the exhibit from an organization they belonged to. Another 20.93% of the volunteers learned about the China On Tour exhibit through a friend, and 23.36% heard from family members and educators. Volunteers did not learn about the travel exhibit from television, radio, or from colleagues. Figure 8 indicates how volunteers heard about the travel exhibition.












**Figure 8. Learning about the China On Tour Exhibition at Exploris**

Organization that I belong to	 32.55%
Friend	 20.93%
Other	 18.60%
Family	 11.63%
School/University	 11.63%
Internet	 2.33%
Newspaper	 2.33%
Television	0.00%
Radio	0.00%
Colleague	0.00%

People who used to volunteer in the past are likely to volunteer again (Vineyard, 1984). Most responding volunteers (93.00%) had previous experience with other volunteer programs, chiefly in the field of education and youth








development (21.94%), followed by arts, culture, and humanities (17.54%), and social services (13.16%). Figure 9 shows former volunteer experience from responding volunteers.

**Figure 9. Volunteer Experience of Exploris Volunteers**

Education and youth development	 21.94%
Arts, culture, and humanities	 17.54%
Social services	 13.16%
Leisure, recreation, and sports	 11.40%
Religious services	 9.65%
Health and wellness	 7.02%
Environment and wildlife	 6.14%
Societal and public benefit/human rights groups	 6.14%
Law and justice	 2.63%
None	 2.63%
Employment or economy	 1.75%










More than two-fifths (40.75%) of the volunteers visited the museum before they chose to volunteer at Exploris. This was followed by 28.40% of volunteers who attended the IMAX<sup>®</sup> Theatre and 17.28% who visited the museum store before volunteering. No volunteer made use of the facility rental. Figure 10 indicates previous attendance of volunteers.

**Figure 10. Visitation of Exploris Before Choosing to Volunteer at Exploris**

The Museum	 40.75%
The IMAX® Theatre	 28.40%
Museum store	 17.28%
Special events	 7.41%
Summer camps	 3.70%
Forums	 1.23%
Birthday parties	 1.23%
Facility rentals	0.00%

The most frequent answer for why volunteers had chosen to volunteer at Exploris was “I want to share Chinese culture with others” (41.85%). The second most checked response (13.95%) indicated that they had to volunteer as a requirement (for instance, as a requirement for Key Club membership). No response was given to the answer “I want a free membership”. Figure 11 shows the volunteers’ motivation for volunteering at Exploris.

**Figure 11. Motivation for Volunteering at Exploris**

I want to share Chinese culture with others	 41.85%
I have to volunteer as a requirement	 13.95%
I believe in Exploris’ mission and cause	 11.63%
I am a lifelong learner	 9.30%
I want to learn new skills	 6.98%
I want to meet new people	 6.98%
Other	 4.65%
I want to preview IMAX® films	 2.33%
I have volunteered in the past	 2.33%
I want a free membership	0.00%

## **Rating of Experience**

The volunteers were asked to rate their experience during their time as a volunteer on a 5-point Likert scale, with 5 being the highest satisfaction rating (1 means completely dissatisfied, 2 is very dissatisfied, 3 is satisfied, 4 is very satisfied, and 5 means completely satisfied). Five items were rated. The items included: employees, visitors, volunteers, programs, and the China On Tour travel exhibition. Ratings of responding volunteers are shown in Table 4.

Of all volunteers, 91.00% were either very satisfied (23.26%) and/or completely satisfied (69.77%) with the employees. Dissatisfaction with the employees was reported for 2.32% of volunteers.

The majority of responding volunteers (95.34%) were satisfied with the visitors. A tie between the two lowest rankings was observed at 2.33%.

Three-fifths (60.47%) of all volunteers indicated with the highest rating 5 their complete satisfaction with other volunteers. The lowest rating was a 3 given by 6.97% of responding volunteers.

The highest rating of museum programs was 41.86% and the lowest rating indicated a tie rating of 1 and 2 with 4.65% each.

Most volunteers (95.35%) were either very or completely satisfied with the China On Tour exhibit. No rating was given for 2 or 3. Only 4.65% of all volunteers were completely dissatisfied with the travel exhibit.

**Table 4. Ratings of Responding Volunteers**






Museum Aspects	Level of Satisfaction					Total
	1 completely satisfied	2 very satisfied	3 satisfied	4 very satisfied	5 completely satisfied	
<b>Employees</b>	2.32%	0.00%	4.65%	23.26%	69.77%	<b>100.00%</b>
<b>Visitors</b>	2.33%	2.33%	13.95%	41.86%	39.53%	<b>100.00%</b>
<b>Volunteers</b>	0.00%	0.00%	6.97%	32.56%	60.47%	<b>100.00%</b>
<b>Programs</b>	4.65%	4.65%	16.28%	32.56%	41.86%	<b>100.00%</b>
<b><i>China On Tour</i></b>	4.65%	0.00%	0.00%	27.91%	67.44%	<b>100.00%</b>

### Volunteer Experience

When asked if they felt they were properly identified as a volunteer rather than an employee 86.05% of responding volunteers answered “yes”. Volunteers were also asked, if they were interested in volunteering after the departure of the China On Tour exhibition, and 81.40% reported they would like to volunteer at Exploris.




The number one interest in volunteer work was teaching about China (30.66%). The least interesting work was assisting with the visitor service staff (10.67%). Figure 12 shows the different interest activities of the volunteers.

**Figure 12. Interest in Volunteer Work for Responding Volunteers**

I would like to teach about China	 30.66%
I would like to teach general topics in the permanent exhibitions	 24.00%
I would like to conduct demonstrations	 20.00%
I would like to work with administrative staff in the offices	 14.67%
I would like to work with the visitor service staff at the admission desk	 10.67%

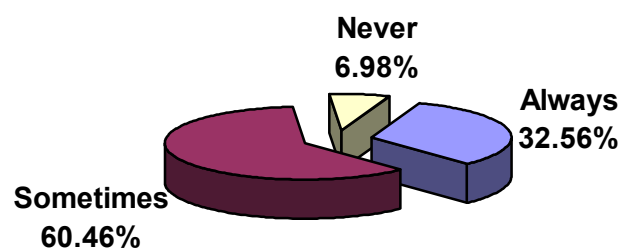
Those who did not choose to volunteer at Exploris afterwards (18.60%), stated that they were not interested in volunteering with the permanent exhibitions (30.00%) or that they had planned to volunteer for another organization (40.00%) as shown in Figure 13.

**Figure 13. Responding Volunteers who did not Plan to Volunteer at Exploris After the Departure of the China On Tour Travel Exhibition**

I plan to volunteer for another organization	 40.00%
I am not interested in volunteering in the permanent exhibitions	 30.00%
Other	 30.00%
I will have fulfilled my required community service	0.00%
I will have accumulated my 100 hours for my free membership	0.00%
I did not enjoy volunteering at Exploris	0.00%

When volunteers were asked “have you ever encouraged your friends to become a volunteer at Exploris”, two-fifths (60.47%) answered “sometimes”, 32.56% responded “always” and as little as 6.98% indicated “never” as shown in Figure 14.

**Figure 14. Encouragement of Friends to Volunteer at Exploris**



The volunteer responsibilities during the China On Tour travel exhibit were also identified. Most volunteers worked as translators (54.71%). Another 37.74% worked either as greeters or with the program carts (program carts are moveable stations that contain specific information about the topics of the travel exhibit). The responsibilities of the volunteers are shown in Figure 15.

**Figure 15. Responsibilities of Responding Volunteers**

I work as a translator	54.71%
I work at the program carts	18.87%
I work as a greeter	18.87%
I work behind the scenes in the administrative offices	5.66%
None of the above	1.89%
I work with the visitor service staff at the admission desk	0.00%

A great majority of the responding volunteers (97.67%) reported that the volunteer training they had received was helpful. They further found the received training manual (90.70%) to be helpful.

To determine if there were any inconveniences to volunteering at Exploris, the volunteers were asked to indicate such. The number one inconvenience for 49.02% of responding volunteers was parking. The second most checked inconvenience was choice of time (15.69%). The lowest cited inconvenience (3.92%) was insufficient breaks for volunteers. Figure 16 shows a list of inconveniences.

**Figure 16. Inconvenience During Volunteering**

Parking	49.02%
Choice of time	15.69%
Other	13.73%
I did not feel sufficiently challenged	9.80%
Choice of days	7.84%
I had insufficient breaks	3.92%
I felt overly challenged	0.00%
I disliked the exhibitions	0.00%
I did not enjoy working with other volunteers	0.00%
I did not enjoy working with the staff	0.00%
I did not enjoy working with the visitors	0.00%

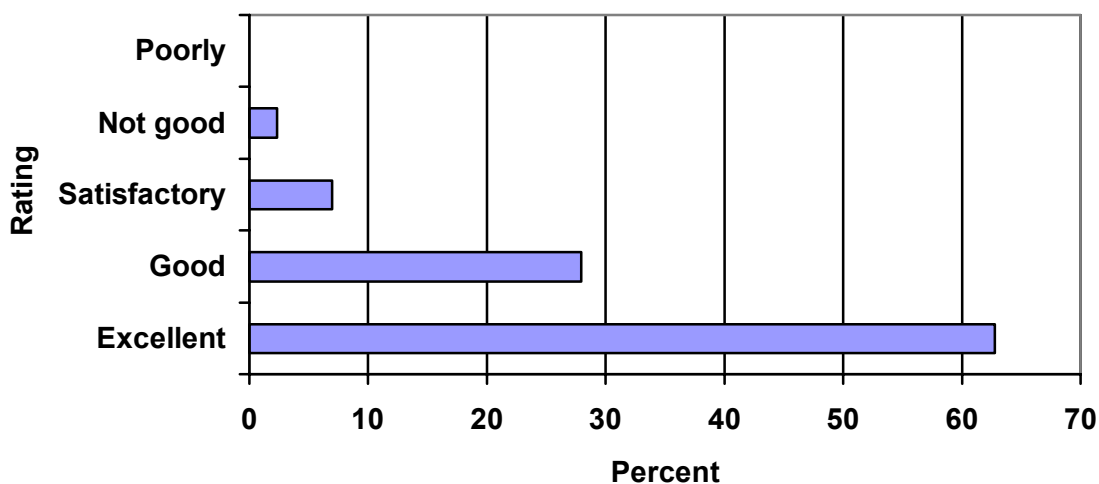
Volunteers were further questioned about what they would like to see added at Exploris. Slightly more than one-fourth (26.09%) agreed on wanting to see more artist demonstrations, while one-fifth (20.87%) wanted more forums, and 15.65% wanted more live music at Exploris as shown in Figure 17.



**Figure 17. What to see More of at Exploris**

Artist demonstrations	26.09%
Forums on global topics and current events	20.87%
Live music	15.65%
Presentations by community organizations	13.91%
Adult workshops and classes	12.17%
Frequent changes of IMAX® films	11 9.57%
None of the above	2 1.74%

The volunteers also rated the assistance provided to them by the Exploris staff. A majority of the responding volunteers (62.78%) rated the staff assistance as “excellent”. A small percent of responding volunteers rated the staff assistance as “not good” (2.33%). The ratings are shown in Figure 18.

**Figure 18. Rating of Availability of the Exploris Staff for Assistance**

## **Section II- Members**

### **Respondents**

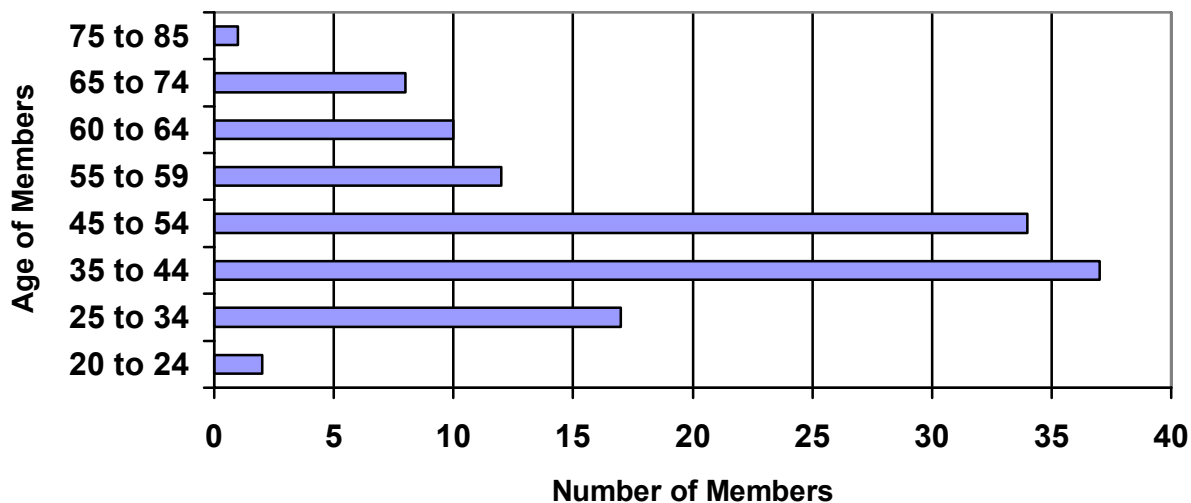
One-hundred-and-twenty-one members participated in the member online survey. The sample comprised of 39 males and 82 females. Table 5 shows the distribution of responding members.

**Table 5. Gender of Responding Members**

	Male	Female	Total
Volunteers	39	82	121
Total	32.23%	67.77%	100.00%

The age varied from 23 to 80 years, with a mean age of 46 years. Figure 19 shows the age distribution of responding volunteers.

**Figure 19. Age Distribution of Responding Members**



The majority of the responding members were married couples (76.86%) of whom 19.83% did not have children compared to the 57.03% of couples with

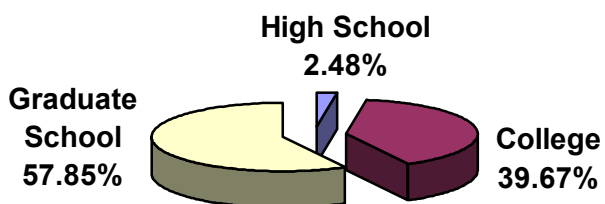
children. No “male single parent household without children” was contained in the sample as shown in Figure 20.

**Figure 20. Household of Responding Members**

Married couple with children	57.03%
Married couple without children	19.83%
Female single without children	13.22%
Female single parent household with children	5.79%
Male single without children	4.13%
Male single parent household with children	0.00%

Most members reported an educational level beyond College (57.85%). No member indicated Grade School as their last year of school. Figure 21 shows the level of education of responding members.

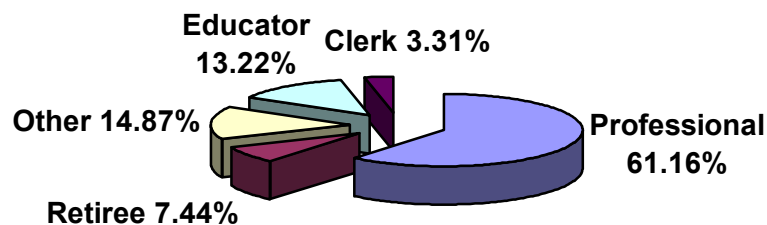
**Figure 21. Level of Education of Responding Members**



The vast majority of participants were professionals (61.16%), while 13.22% of responding members represented educators and 7.44% were retirees.

A small portion (3.31%) represented clerks, and the remaining 14.87% checked other as shown in Figure 22. A content analysis of written job descriptions were aggregated into general occupation categories from the US Census Bureau and experience.

**Figure 22. Occupation of Responding Members**



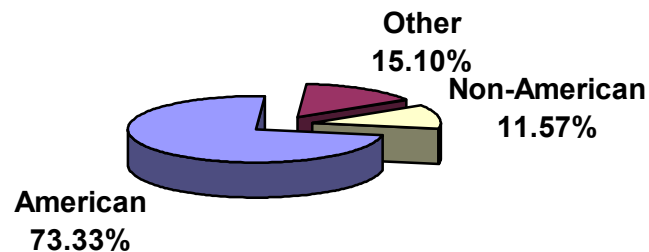
An approximate household income of \$50,000 or more before taxes (76.04%) was reported by members. The lowest income of under \$10,000 was reported by only 1.65% of responding members. Figure 23 shows the income distribution.

**Figure 23. Household Income (per year) for Responding Members**

Under \$10,000	1.65%
\$10,000 to \$29,999	4.13%
\$30,000 to \$49,999	18.18%
\$50,000 to \$69,999	12.40%
\$70,000 to \$89,999	17.36%
\$90,000 to 109,999	16.53%
\$110,000 or more	29.75%

Almost four-fifths of members (73.33%) reported that they are US citizens, while 11.57% do not have American citizenship as shown in Figure 24.

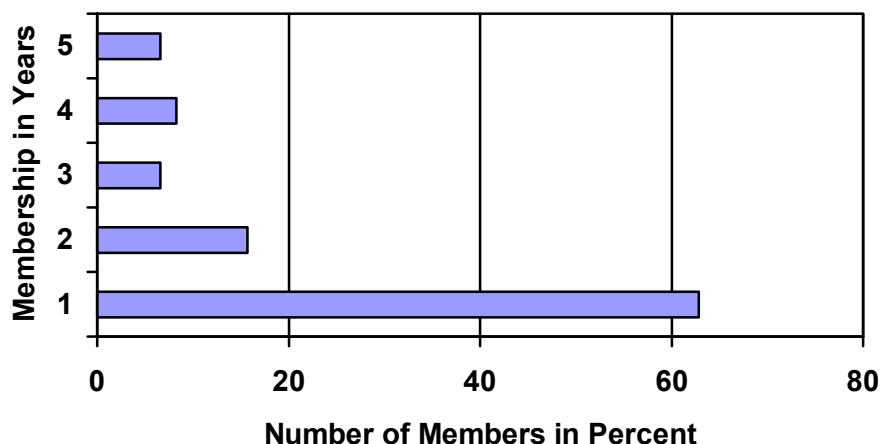
**Figure 24. Nationality of Responding Members**



Most members (89.26%) indicated their ethnicity to be white. African-American, Hispanics, and the other category each accounted for 2.48% of the responding members. Asians were 3.32% of responding members.

### **Motivations for Joining as a Member at Exploris**

When members were asked how long they had been a member at Exploris (in years), 62.82% stated “one year or less”. Only 15.70% were members for at least two years, and another 21.48% indicated that they were members for three or more years. Figure 25 shows the membership in years of the responding members.

**Figure 25. Membership in Years**








Over one-half of the members (50.42%) declared “individual/dual membership” as their membership category, and 46.28% had the “parent/grandparent membership” as shown in Figure 26.

**Figure 26. Membership Subscription of Responding Members**

Individual/Dual Membership	50.42%
Parent/Grandparent Membership	46.28%
Benefactor's Circle	1.65%
Patron's Circle	1.65%
Sponsor's Circle	0.00%






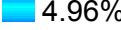
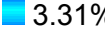
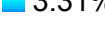
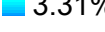
As shown in Figure 27, most members (45.45%) had first learned about Exploris through the media, and 30.58% had heard about Exploris through community contacts, such as friends, family, and university. No respondent reported the Yellow Pages as an information source. Learning about Exploris through a colleague represented the lowest response (1.65%).

**Figure 27. Learning About Exploris Before Joining as a Member**

Newspaper/Radio/TV	 45.45%
Other	 19.01%
Friend	 17.36%
Family	 7.44%
Kindergarten/School/University	 4.13%
Guide book	 4.96%
Colleague	 1.65%
Yellow Pages	0.00%

The most frequent response to the question “why did you become a member” was “being a member would allow me to visit Exploris as many times as I want” (27.26%). This explanation was closely followed by 21.49% who believed in Exploris’ mission and by 18.18% who wanted to support the organization. Figure 28 reports the responding members' motivations behind being an Exploris member.

**Figure 28. Motivations for Joining the Membership Program at Exploris.**

Being a member would allow me to visit Exploris as many times as I want	 27.26%
I believed in Exploris' mission	 21.49%
I wanted to support the organization	 18.18%
I wanted to preview IMAX® films	 9.92%
Other	 8.26%
I wanted to take advantage of the discount at Exploristore	 4.96%
The Membership was a gift	 3.31%
I wanted to learn more about the world	 3.31%
The Membership was tax deductible	 3.31%

### Frequency use

On a scale from 0 to 10, members were asked to indicate how often they made use of the museum, the IMAX® Theatre, forums, special events, the museum store, summer camps, birthday parties, and facility rentals.

Slightly more than one-fifth (23.14%) visited the museum twice a year, while 15.70% of the responding members indicated a museum visit once a year, or three times a year.

The IMAX® Theatre was attended between 3 to 4 times (38.84%) a year, while a non-attendance of 86.77% was reported for forums.



A substantial 85.95% of responding members did not attend summer camps, and 96.69% of the members did not use Exploris to host a birthday party.

### Table 6. Use of Exploris




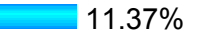
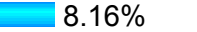
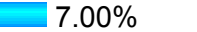
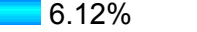

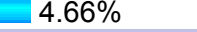
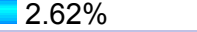
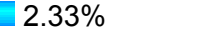
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## Volunteering

The attitudes of members about volunteering were assessed by having them answer six topic-related questions.

Members were asked to indicate their previous volunteer experience. The majority of members (94.18%) had volunteer experience, primarily in the field of education and youth development (21.88%), followed by religious services (18.37%) and the arts, culture, and humanities (11.66%). Volunteering in the area of law and justice was reported by the lowest percent of the respondents as shown in Figure 29.



**Figure 29. Experience in Volunteering**

Education and youth development	 21.88%
Religious services	 18.37%
Arts, culture, and humanities	 11.66%
Leisure, recreation, and sports	 11.37%
Social services	 8.16%
Environment and wildlife	 7.00%
Societal and public benefit/human rights groups	 6.12%
None	 5.83%
Health and wellness	 4.66%
Employment or economy	 2.62%
Law and justice	 2.33%




To the question “would you be interested in volunteering at Exploris”, 78.51% of the members responded that they were not interested in volunteering at Exploris because they did not have the time (47.57%) or because they already volunteered

for another organization (31.07%). Figures 30 and 31 show the distributions, respectively.

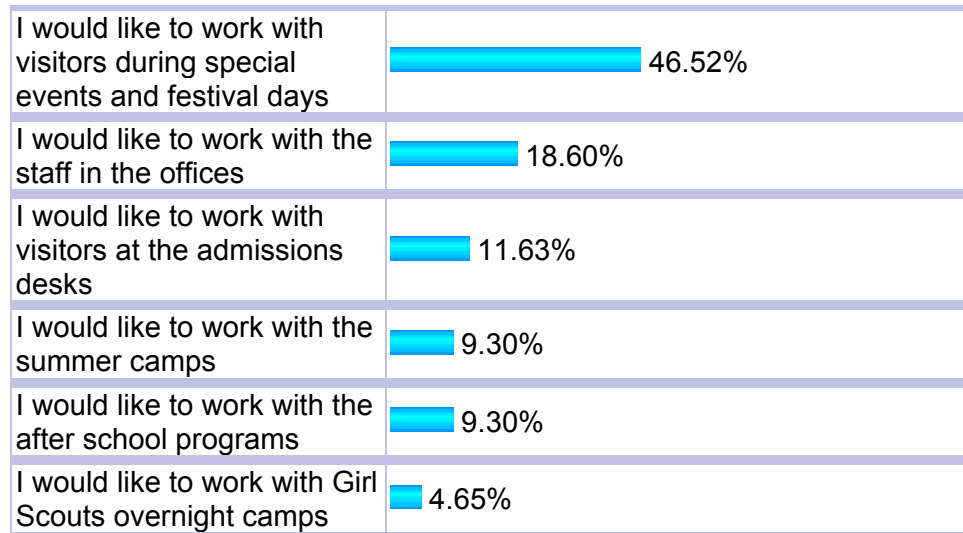
**Figure 30. Volunteering at Exploris**

Yes	 21.49%
No	 78.51%

**Figure 31. Responding Members who do not Anticipate in Volunteering at Exploris**

I already volunteer for another organization	 31.07%
I do not have time to volunteer	 47.57%
Other	 21.36%

Those members who were interested in volunteering at Exploris (21.49%) indicated a strong interest in volunteering for special events (46.52%). Members were least interested in volunteering with Girl Scouts overnight camps (4.65%). Figure 32 indicates the members' response towards volunteer work at Exploris.

**Figure 32. Interest in Volunteer Work for Responding Members**

When members were asked to indicate, if they had any persons in their household interested in volunteering at Exploris, the majority of 86.78% stated “no”. Furthermore, most members (84.30%) preferred paying for their membership rather than volunteering for 100 hours in order to receive a free membership.

### Rating of Experience

Members were asked to rate the experience they had during their last visit to Exploris on a 5-point Likert scale with 5 being the highest satisfaction rating (1 means completely dissatisfied, 2 is very dissatisfied, 3 is satisfied, 4 is very satisfied, and 5 means completely satisfied). The members rated seven aspects of their experience: the museum, the IMAX<sup>®</sup> Theatre, the China On Tour exhibit, printed materials, marketing of events, employees, and volunteers.

The last visit to the museum was rated 3 or better by the vast majority of members (90.91%). A rating of 4 was given by more than one-third (37.19%) of responding members.

The majority of members (61.98%) were completely satisfied with their last visit to the IMAX<sup>®</sup> Theatre, while 12.40% of the members rated their experience a 3 or lower.

More than one-quarter of the members (27.27%) rated the China On Tour travel exhibition a 4 or higher. A rating of 1 was reported for 15.71% of members. One-half (50.41%) of members were completely satisfied with the travel exhibit, and 22.31% were very satisfied.

When members were asked to rate the printed materials provided by Exploris, 33.88% were satisfied, while 49.58% seemed to be more than satisfied.

Over one-quarter (25.62%) of members were strongly dissatisfied with the marketing of events by Exploris. The most frequent rating (30.58%) was a 3, while 21.49% rated marketing a 4 and 22.31% rated it a 5.

When members were asked to rate the employees, 88.43% of members were satisfied with the employees.

Almost three-quarters (70.24%) of all members rated volunteers a 4 or better. Table 7 reports ratings of the various aspects of Exploris.













Table 7. Ratings of Responding Members

Museum Aspects	Level of Satisfaction					Total
	1 completely dissatisfied	2 very dissatisfied	3 satisfied	4 very satisfied	5 completely satisfied	
Museum	4.96%	4.13%	19.01%	37.19%	34.71%	100.00%
IMAX® Theatre	5.78%	0.83%	5.79%	25.62%	61.98%	100.00%
<i>China On Tour</i>	15.71%	1.65%	9.92%	22.31%	50.41%	100.00%
Printed Materials	13.23%	3.31%	33.88%	27.27%	22.31%	100.00%
Marketing of Events	19.83%	5.79%	30.58%	21.49%	22.31%	100.00%
Employees	2.48%	0.83%	8.26%	35.54%	52.89%	100.00%
Volunteers	12.40%	2.48%	14.88%	24.79%	45.45%	100.00%










### Visitor Experience

The members were also asked what was their most favorite aspect of Exploris. Travel exhibitions were the most favorite of the largest percent of the members (38.85%). This response was followed by special events with 14.88%, whereas the members' least favorite part of Exploris were the permanent exhibitions (31.40%). Figures 33 and 34 illustrate the responding members' ratings of their most favorite and least favorite aspects of Exploris.

**Figure 33: Members' Most Favorite Aspect of Exploris**

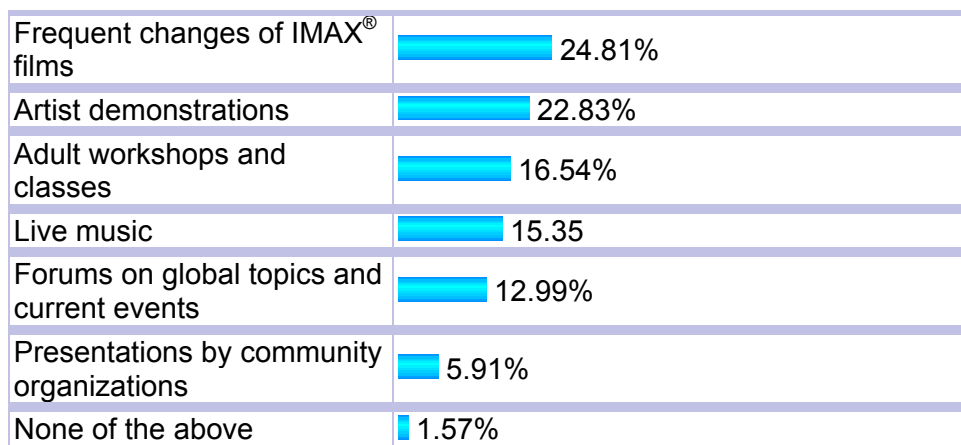
The travel exhibitions	 38.85%
The special events	 14.88%
Other	 9.92%
The mission statement	 9.09%
The museum store	 7.44%
The location	 4.96%
The permanent exhibitions	 4.13%
The weekend programs	 4.13%
The summer camps	 2.48%
The employees	 2.48%
The birthday parties	 0.83%
The forums	 0.83%
The flair	0.00%
The group programs	0.00%

**Figure 34. Members' Least Favorite Aspect of Exploris**

The permanent exhibitions	 31.40%
Other	 30.58%
The location	 14.88%
The birthday parties	 9.09%
The group programs	 4.96%
The summer camps	 2.48%
The forums	 2.48%
The flair	 2.48%
The mission statement	 1.65%
The museum store	0.00%
The employees	0.00%
The weekend programs	0.00%
The travel exhibitions	0.00%
The special events	0.00%

To determine program development opportunities for Exploris, the responding members were asked what they would like to see added at Exploris. More frequent changes in IMAX® films was selected by the largest percent of respondents (24.81%), while artist demonstrations ranked second with 22.83% of respondents. Adult workshops and classes ranked third with 16.54%. See Figure 35 for program opportunity listings.

**Figure 35. What to see More of at Exploris**



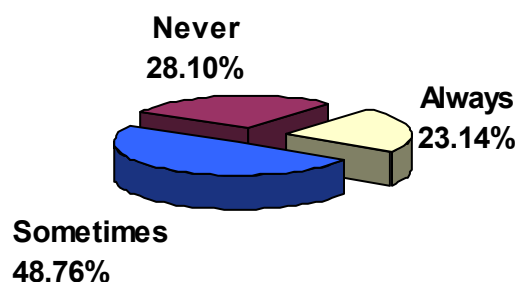
Membership renewal is important to Exploris. To determine a potential membership renewal rate, members were asked if they plan to renew their membership. Over four-fifths (87.60%) of the members are going to renew their membership, while 12.40% indicated no renewal. Out of those, 40.00% stated that they did not make use of their membership, and 46.67% indicated “other” as reasons for not renewing. Figure 36 shows the distribution of responding members who are not going to renew their existing membership.



**Figure 36. Reasons for not Renewing Existing Membership**




Other	46.67%
I do not make use of my Membership	40.00%
I am moving away	13.33%

Members were further asked, if they had encouraged friends to become members at Exploris. Slightly less than one-half (48.76%) replied “sometimes”, 28.10% said “never”, and 23.14% responded “always” as reported in Figure 37.

**Figure 37. Encouragement of Friends to Become an Exploris Member**

While Exploris would offer an incentive to its members for having recruited a friend as a new member, 60.33% answered that they preferred a gift certificate for the museum store or a gift certificate for the café (11.57%). The remaining 28.10% did not agree on any of the above-mentioned incentives. Figure 38 displays the members' opinion about incentives for recruiting new members.

**Figure 38. Rating of Incentives for Recruiting Friends as new Members**

Gift certificate for Exploristore	 60.33%
None of the above	 28.10%
Gift certificate for Exploris café	 11.57%

### Key Findings - Research Questions and Answers

This part gives information about the three research questions stated in chapter three. Recommendations for improving the volunteers' and members' museum experience, thus the visitors' experience, are reported in chapter five.

#### 1. What motivates volunteers and members to support Exploris?

The most reported motivation for responding volunteers was sharing Chinese culture with others (41.85%).

Members cited unlimited visitation privileges (27.26%) and believing in Exploris' mission (21.49%) as the principal reasons for joining the membership program at Exploris.

Members support Exploris fiscally, while volunteers support Exploris with their time.

#### 2. How do volunteers and members get information about Exploris?

While public relations plays an important role in the visibility of a museum, more than three-quarters of volunteers (76.74%) reported to have learned about

programs at Exploris through family, friends, an organization that they belong to, or school/university.

Most members reported to have first learned about Exploris through the newspaper, radio, or television (45.45%).

### 3. How do the permanent exhibitions impact the volunteers and members?

Nearly one-quarter (24.00%) of responding volunteers who are continuing their volunteer work after the departure of the travel exhibition, reported to be interested in working with the permanent exhibitions.

Members rated the permanent exhibitions as their least favorite part of Exploris (31.40%).

### **Additional key Findings of Interest**

Based on the responses of participating volunteers and members on both online surveys, seven key findings are reported in this section.

As discussed in chapter two, volunteer motivations vary from individual to individual. This characteristic was true for the 43 responding volunteers who indicated different reasons for volunteering at Exploris.

The majority of responding volunteers had volunteer experience prior to joining the volunteer pool, thus confirming literature finding, which reports that individuals who volunteered in the past are likely to volunteer in the future.

A further finding was that the ethnicity of most responding members and volunteers was Caucasian and Asian, respectively. With the majority of responding members being white, presenting an ethnically uniform group, the finding supports the idea that museum administrators need to market to different segments of the population in order to attract a more diverse group of visitors.

Despite the fact that the majority of responding members heard about Exploris through the media, they surprisingly showed the greatest dissatisfaction with the marketing of events, when questioned about their museum experience.

Another key finding showed that over three-fifths (62.82%) of responding members had their memberships for one year or less and that their most favorite part of the museum was the China On Tour traveling exhibition (38.85%).

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Introduction**

Since volunteers and members are the ultimate frequent visitors to museums, chapter five discusses their role, impact, and decisions that help to improve the visitors' experience and ultimately, attract more visitors to Exploris.

### **Exploris Volunteers**

People were motivated to volunteer at Exploris because they wanted to share Chinese culture with others as the results of question one, chapter four indicate. A relationship between this motive and the primarily Asian ethnicity reported in this study could lead to the speculation that volunteers chose to volunteer for Exploris because they felt culturally connected to the China On Tour travel exhibition. This result can be useful for future recruiting efforts, especially when new travel exhibits or special events that represent the culture of a certain ethnic group are being planned. In order to reach such a specific segment of the population, Exploris should market to organizations and institutions that share the same interests as Exploris. Inviting representatives from relevant organizations in order to discuss collaborative efforts is one way to spread the word in a particular segment of the population. Another way would be through direct marketing, since the majority of responding volunteers depended on information about Exploris from the community as described in the answers to the third research question reported in chapter four.

For instance, advertising of travel exhibits and volunteer opportunities at Exploris in ethnic-relevant newspapers and radio stations would be a good public relations tool for making Exploris visible and stimulating excitement among this segment of the population. Furthermore, Exploris should be present at cultural fairs in the form of a booth providing audiences with information material about upcoming travel exhibits and offering volunteer opportunities.

Four-fifths of the recruited volunteers reported that they would continue volunteering after the departure of the China On Tour travel exhibit. Of those, almost one-third said that they were interested in teaching about China, and nearly one-quarter showed interest in working with the permanent exhibitions as shown in Figure 12, chapter four. Knowing that a primarily Asian group represented the volunteer pool, one may conclude that there is a relationship between the responding volunteers' ethnicity and their interest in wanting to teach about China. Exploris could use this information for future ethnic-related travel exhibitions in the form of offering ethnic-related volunteer opportunities after the departure of a traveling exhibition. In this way the recruited volunteers would feel motivated to continue with their volunteer work after a travel exhibition had left. Using this information further, Exploris could create a volunteer teaching program in which the volunteers would have the opportunity to combine the Exploris curriculum and their interests. The creation of such a program should, however, be guided by a member of the program staff who evaluates the program and makes recommendations.

Nearly one-quarter of responding volunteers who stated that they wanted to continue volunteering after the departure of the travel exhibition desired to work with the permanent exhibits. This information can be useful for Exploris in the retention of special exhibition volunteers who might become day-to-day volunteers working with the permanent exhibits.

Additionally, the majority of responding volunteers reported previous volunteer experience with other organizations, primarily in the field of youth development and education. Using this information Exploris could advertise in their brochures or on their web page with slogans such as: "If you have volunteer experience in youth development and education, Exploris is the right place where you can build on your strengths". In this way, a connection between prospective volunteers and Exploris may be established.

Inviting educators from the area and presenting them with volunteer opportunities for themselves and their students should be considered as a potential recruiting technique. This is an opportunity since more than two-thirds of responding volunteers were students. Furthermore, throughout the reviewed literature it was stated that people volunteer because they have been asked ("Giving and volunteering", 2001). Therefore, Exploris should ask actively.

Volunteer recruiting sessions should be supported by either an introductory film or similar visual presentation illustrating Exploris' mission, goals, and volunteer opportunities. Furthermore, an enthusiastic volunteer speaker should be invited to

these sessions in order to speak about the benefits he/she has received by volunteering at Exploris.

Although retirees were a small portion of the responding volunteer pool, Exploris should capitalize on their potential as volunteers; especially since the aging population is increasing. Exploris should subscribe to national organizations such as the *American Association of Retired People*, *Volunteer Match*, and local senior magazines in order to offer volunteer opportunities. Additionally, Exploris should hold orientation seminars about the museum and volunteer opportunities at selected retirement communities. Inviting representatives from associations of retired professionals and introducing them to volunteer opportunities is another way to recruit retired people.

Volunteer programs, however, have to be managed strategically, and volunteers need recognition from the organization they are volunteering for (Vineyard, 1984). After the China On Tour travel exhibition departed, Exploris held for the first time a “volunteer appreciation day” where volunteers were rewarded for their outstanding work. A regular continuation of this and similar events is important for keeping and recruiting new volunteers at Exploris.

A volunteer newsletter could be a further communication tool which would keep volunteers informed and possibly spur excitement.



## **Exploris Members**

People were motivated to become members of Exploris because their membership allowed them to visit the museum as often as they want, as the answers to the first question in chapter four indicate. Comments in the open-ended section revealed that members joined the museum because of the China On Tour travel exhibit. This is very important because during the display period of China On Tour, museum admissions increased. Since most visitors see a membership as a product, they may be inclined to purchase a membership, rather than paying a higher admission in order to see the travel exhibition more than once. Exploris should sell memberships while the traveling exhibition is in residence. Visitor service staff should make visitors aware of memberships and discuss the savings of buying a membership rather than individual tickets.

Like volunteers, a membership program has to be coordinated carefully. In order to engage members actively in the museum, a quarterly newsletter designed for members should be sent to each member household. Personalizing the newsletter with an introduction by a board member and featuring interesting stories about upcoming events or issues is a manageable and effective way to interact with members. Newsletters are tangible and easily shared with other people in the community.

Despite the fact that the majority of Exploris members receive their information about the museum primarily from the media, as seen in Figure 27, chapter four, members showed the greatest dissatisfaction with the marketing of

events as a result of Table 7, chapter four. Diversifying the channels of media used to communicate with members is strongly recommended and could enable the museum to reach more than just a primarily white audience. It is suggested that the advertising of events, such as upcoming travel exhibitions, should be executed statewide and to bordering states. Convention bureaus, tourist information centers, and chambers of commerce statewide need to be provided with information in the form of brochures or flyers. For instance, the flyers should offer a 10% admission discount valid for the travel exhibit and be marked with a code. When the flyer is redeemed, Exploris can track the point of origin of visitors and use this information for future marketing efforts.

Furthermore, special stories about the travel exhibit should be featured in in-flight magazines and newspapers. Approaching radio stations about providing air time, public service announcements, and giving tickets away are good ways to publicize upcoming events. Exploris should contact travel writers and invite them to the museum to write an article about the traveling exhibition. Working with local hotels on offering visitor packages would also be another marketing option.

The members' least favorite part of Exploris were the permanent exhibitions as indicated in the answers to research question three, chapter four. This trend was further supported by comments of the members in the open-ended section of the online survey where members reported they were bored by the permanent exhibitions. This familiarity and possible boredom with the permanent exhibition may explain the low number of more than two-year members. The most reported

visits by members to the museum are two per year as shown in Table 6 chapter four. Since members are consumers and spectators simultaneously, they want to be entertained for their money value. Creating four new permanent exhibitions at Exploris may be one way to attract members and visitors to the museum, but it is certainly a very costly undertaking. A less expensive and more convenient idea would be the creation of an in-house rotating exhibition that would be lent to other museums, and in exchange, Exploris would receive an exhibition from another museum. The participation in rotating exhibitions would impact repeated visits from members and visitors to Exploris.

Special events such as artist demonstrations or live music are helpful to maintain a museum's visibility and to attract new and current members. As shown in Table 6 chapter four, however, more than four-fifths of Exploris members had not been to a forum within one year, neither had two-fifths of Exploris members attended any special event at the museum. These events do not attract members for repeat visits. Exploris needs to find out why members do not attend these events. Researching members' tastes and conducting annual visitors' surveys are a good way to learn more about the audience and provide information about visitor trends. For example, college interns could be used to conduct these surveys, or Exploris could apply for grant money to fund the costs for conducting the survey.

The members' most favorite aspect of Exploris was the travel exhibition as the results in Figure 33, chapter four show. Travel exhibitions are expensive, but a good tool to add variety and to encourage attendance of museum members and

visitors. Exploris should host travel exhibitions annually because they provide visibility for Exploris through the media.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

In order for Exploris to understand its social context within the community, it is recommended that the museum evaluates its position through internal and external marketing audits which would serve as the base for a strategic marketing plan.

The internal marketing audit would examine and measure the physical and perceived location of the museum, the visitor experience and the development of a visitor profile, the internal resources and communication, and the promotional program.

The external marketing audit would allocate the population and demographic trends, the economic environment, local planning, policy changes and funding environment, as well as local perceptions of the museum.

It is a premise that the analyses of the above-mentioned factors are executed regularly in order to determine and make long-term marketing decisions that make the visitor experience a positive one.

### **Post-Script Recommendation**

Before this study was planned, four components were discussed that would provide Exploris valuable information about its markets. The four components were: volunteers, members, visitors, and the general population. This thesis accomplished

gathering the information for two components. The third component, a visitor study, was launched during a two-week period in late July 2004 by Exploris. Having covered three out of four components, the author encourages beginning the fourth component, a general population study in early 2005. A general population study would give insight into why people visit or do not visit Exploris. Analyzing and comparing all four components will give Exploris a complete picture of the public that they are trying to reach, and it will help Exploris to develop a strategic marketing plan.

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**APPENDICES**

Appendix A	74
Appendix B	85
Appendix C	96

**APPENDIX A**

Introduction Letter for Volunteers	75
Reminder Letter for Volunteers	76
Volunteer Survey	77
Participation per day for Responding Volunteers	84

## Introduction Letter for Volunteers

Dear Exploris Volunteer,

The last few months have been very exciting as we have worked together to bring the *China On Tour* exhibit to Raleigh. We look forward to working with you into the future to bring the wonders of our changing world to life for our visitors.

As part of our efforts to continue to improve our volunteer program, we have produced a **Volunteer Survey**. The survey is a collaborative effort between Exploris and the department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Management at North Carolina State University.

I invite you to take a few moments to participate in this survey. Please click on this link [www.createsurvey.com/c/18951-3jQ1v2/](http://www.createsurvey.com/c/18951-3jQ1v2/) and fill out the survey by July 15<sup>th</sup> 2004. Your response will be treated confidentially.

Upon completion of the survey, you will receive a printable coupon valid for a cup of coffee or tea from Explorisstore as a token of our appreciation.

Again, thank you for your time and continued support!

Most sincerely,

Margaret Nuyten

Exploris  
201 E. Hargett St.  
Raleigh, NC 27601

Direct: 919-857-1014  
Volunteer Hotline: 919-857-1117  
Main: 919-834-4040  
Fax: 919-834-3516  
Email: [mnuyten@exploris.org](mailto:mnuyten@exploris.org)  
URL: <http://www.exploris.org>  
Call 919.834.4040 or visit [www.exploris.org](http://www.exploris.org) for more information!  
Exploris is a private non-profit dedicated to engaging people in our changing and interconnected world.

## Reminder Letter for Volunteers

Dear COT Volunteers:

This is a quick reminder to request your participation in our online Volunteer survey. I need your response by July 15th. In case you have misplaced the first request, the online address is:

[www.createsurvey.com/c/18951-3jQ1v2/](http://www.createsurvey.com/c/18951-3jQ1v2/)  
<<http://www.createsurvey.com/c/18951-3jQ1v2/>>.

If you have already completed the survey, I would like to thank you again for your gift of time. As I work to improve the Volunteer Program at Exploris, your feedback is important.

With best wishes,

Margaret

Margaret Nuyten  
Volunteer and Intern Coordinator

Exploris  
201 E. Hargett St.  
Raleigh, NC 27601

Direct: 919-857-1014  
Volunteer Hotline: 919-857-1117  
Main: 919-834-4040  
Fax: 919-834-3516

Email: [mnuyten@exploris.org](mailto:mnuyten@exploris.org)

URL: <http://www.exploris.org>

Call 919.834.4040 or visit [www.exploris.org](http://www.exploris.org) for more information!  
Exploris is a private non-profit dedicated to engaging people in our changing and interconnected world.

## Volunteer Survey



Please answer the following questions as accurately as possible. The information you provide will be used in order to improve and build on the existing volunteer program at Exploris. Your responses will be treated as confidential.

### 1. How did you learn about the 'China On Tour' exhibition at Exploris?

- ☒ Family
- ☐ Friend
- ☐ Organization that I belong to
- ☐ Colleague
- ☐ School/University
- ☐ Radio
- ☐ Internet
- ☐ Newspaper
- ☐ Television
- ☐ Other

### 2. Have you ever volunteered in the following area?

- ☐ Religious services
- ☐ Leisure, recreation, and sports
- ☐ Education and youth development
- ☐ Health and wellness
- ☐ Social services
- ☐ Arts, culture, and humanities
- ☐ Environment and wildlife

- ☐ Law and justice
- ☐ Employment or economy
- ☐ Societal and public benefit/human rights groups
- ☐ None

**3. Before you chose to volunteer for Exploris, have you ever visited or attended the following at Exploris?**

- ☐ The Museum
- ☐ The IMAX® Theatre
- ☐ Museum store
- ☐ Summer camps
- ☐ Forums
- ☐ Special events
- ☐ Birthday parties
- ☐ Facility rentals

**4. What makes you choose to volunteer at Exploris?**

- ☒ I believe in Exploris' mission and cause
- ☒ I want to learn new skills
- ☒ I am a lifelong learner
- ☒ I want to meet new people
- ☒ I want a free membership
- ☒ I want to share Chinese culture with others
- ☒ I want to preview IMAX® films
- ☒ I have volunteered in the past
- ☒ I have to volunteer as a requirement
- ☒ Other

**5. What are your responsibilities as a volunteer during the 'China On Tour' exhibition?**

- ☐ I work as a translator
- ☐ I work at the program carts
- ☐ I work as a greeter
- ☐ I work with the visitor service staff at the admission desk
- ☐ I work behind the scenes in the administrative offices
- ☐ None of the above



**6. Was the training you received helpful?**

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

**7. Were the printed training material and manual helpful?**

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

The following 5 questions ask you to rate your experience during your time as a volunteer on a scale from 1-5 with 5 being the highest satisfaction rate.

**8. Employees****9. Visitors****10. Volunteers****11. Programs****12. 'China On Tour' exhibition****13. How would you rate the availability of the Exploris staff for assistance?****14. Do you feel that you are properly identified as a volunteer rather than an employee at Exploris?**

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

**15. If you do not feel properly identified as volunteer, please indicate below what kind of identification you preferred:**

**16. After the 'China On Tour' exhibition leaves, are you planning on continuing to volunteer at Exploris?**

- ☒ Yes  
☐ No

**17. If your answer is YES, what kind of volunteer work would you be interested in?**

- ☐ I would like to teach about China  
☐ I would like to teach general topics in the permanent exhibitions  
☐ I would like to conduct demonstrations  
☐ I would like to work with the visitor service staff at the admission desk  
☐ I would like to work with administrative staff in the offices

**18. If your answer is NO, please indicate below why?**

- ☐ I am not interested in volunteering in the permanent exhibitions  
☐ I did not enjoy volunteering at Exploris  
☐ I plan to volunteer for another organization  
☐ I will have fulfilled my required community service  
☐ I will have accumulated my 100 hours for my free membership  
☐ Other

**19. Have you encouraged your friends to become a volunteer at Exploris?**

- ☒ Always  
☒ Sometimes  
☒ Never

**20. Did you experience any inconvenience while volunteering at Exploris?**

- ☐ Choice of days  
☐ Choice of time  
☐ Parking

- ☐ I did not enjoy working with other volunteers
- ☐ I did not enjoy working with the staff
- ☐ I did not enjoy working with the visitors
- ☐ I had insufficient breaks
- ☐ I did not feel sufficiently challenged
- ☐ I felt overly challenged
- ☐ I disliked the exhibitions
- ☐ Other

**21. What would you like to see more of at Exploris?**

- ☐ Artist demonstrations
- ☐ Live music
- ☐ Presentations by community organizations
- ☐ Forums on global topics and current events
- ☐ Adult workshops and classes
- ☐ Frequent changes of IMAX® films
- ☐ None of the above

The last few questions are about your household. Your information will be treated in strictest confidence. Your answers will be grouped with those of others to ensure anonymity.

**22. Your gender?**

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

**23. Your age?**

**24. Your ethnicity?**

- ☐ African-American
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ Hispanic (of any race)
- ☐ White
- ☐ Other

**25. Your nationality?****26. Last year of school?**

- ☐ Grade School (1-8 years)
- ☐ High School (9-12 years)
- ☐ College (13-16 years)
- ☐ Graduate School (17-21+)

**27. How far away do you live from Exploris?**

- ☐ Under 5 miles
- ☐ 6 to 10 miles
- ☐ 11 to 15 miles
- ☐ 16 to 20 miles
- ☐ More than 21miles

**28. Which of the following best describes your household?**

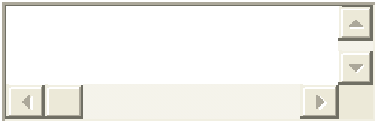
- ☐ Married couple without children
- ☐ Married couple with children
- ☐ Female single without children
- ☐ Female single parent household with children
- ☐ Male single without children
- ☐ Male single parent household with children

**29. What is your approximate household income (before taxes)?**

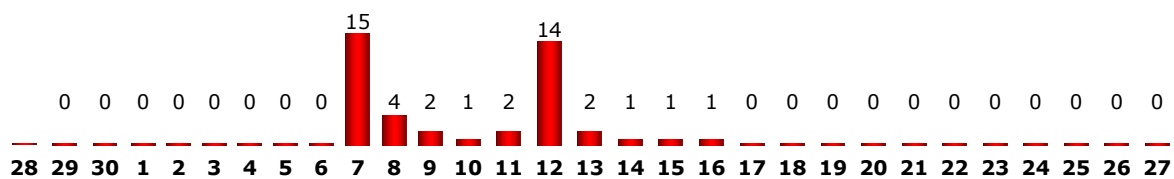
- ☐ Under \$10,000
- ☐ \$10,000 to \$29,999
- ☐ \$30,000 to \$49,999
- ☐ \$50,000 to \$69,999
- ☐ \$70,000 to \$89,999
- ☐ \$90,000 to 109,999
- ☐ \$110,000 or more

**30. What is your profession?**

**31. Please use the space below to write any comments about your volunteer experience at Exploris:**



### Participation per day for Responding Volunteers



**APPENDIX B**

Introduction Letter for Members	86
Member Survey	87
Participation per day for Responding Members	95

## APPENDIX B

### Introduction Letter for Members

Dear Exploris Member,

Thank you for your continued support of Exploris. We have seen many of you over the past few months at the China On Tour exhibition, at the IMAX® films, and at a variety of events celebrating the heritage and innovations of China. The last few months have been very exciting, and we look forward to bringing you additional outstanding exhibits, films, and programs.

As part of our continual efforts to improve our services, we have produced a survey to gain feedback from Exploris Members. I invite you to take a few moments to complete this web-based survey. Your input is invaluable as we continue to strengthen our program offerings at Exploris. Please click on the following link, <http://www.createsurvey.com/c/18957-7iIiqZ/>, and fill out the survey by July 15th 2004. You can be assured that your response will be treated confidentially.

Upon completion of the survey you will receive a printable coupon valid for a cup of coffee or tea from Exploristore as a token of our appreciation.

Again, thank you for your time and strong support!

Most Sincerely,

Anne Bryan  
President

\*\*\*\*\*If you would prefer not to receive e-mails from Exploris, please place the word REMOVE in the subject line along with your name. Thank you.\*\*\*\*\*



**Member Survey**

Since you have been chosen randomly from the Membership pool the following questions are addressed to the male or female head of the household. The questions are about your visit and experience at Exploris. Please answer each question to the best of your knowledge; this will help us to understand your needs and concerns. Your information will be treated as confidential.

**1. How long have you been a Member at Exploris (in years)?** **2. What kind of Membership do you have?**

- ☐ Individual/Dual Membership
- ☐ Parent/Grandparent Membership
- ☐ Benefactor's Circle
- ☐ Patron's Circle
- ☐ Sponsor's Circle

**3. Before you became a Member, how did you hear about Exploris?**

- ☐ Family
- ☐ Friend
- ☐ Colleague
- ☐ Kindergarten/School/University
- ☐ Guide book
- ☐ Newspaper/Radio/TV
- ☐ Yellow Pages
- ☐ Other

**4. Why did you become a Member?**

- ☐ I believed in Exploris' mission
- ☐ I wanted to learn more about the world

- ☐ I wanted to support the organization
- ☐ Being a member would allow me to visit Exploris as many times as I want
- ☐ I wanted to preview IMAX® films
- ☐ I wanted to take advantage of the discount at Exploristore
- ☐ The Membership was a gift
- ☐ The Membership was tax deductible
- ☐ Other

The next eight questions ask you how frequently you make use of the following at Exploris (per year):

**5. Museum**

 ▼

**6. IMAX® Theater**

 ▼

**7. Forums**

 ▼

**8. Special events**

 ▼

**9. Museum store**

 ▼

**10. Summer camps**

 ▼

**11. Birthday parties**

 ▼

**12. Facility rentals**

 ▼

**13. Are you planning to renew your Membership?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

**14. If your answer is NO, please indicate below why:**

- ☐ I do not make use of my Membership
- ☐ I am moving away
- ☐ Other

**15. Have you encouraged your friends to become a Member at Exploris?**

- ☐ Always
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Never

**16. If Exploris offered you an incentive for recruiting a friend as a new Member, what kind of incentive would you prefer the most?**

- ☐ Gift certificate for Exploristore
- ☐ Gift certificate for Exploris café
- ☐ None of the above

Now we would like to get your thoughts on volunteering

**17. Have you ever volunteered in the following area?**

- ☐ Religious services
- ☐ Leisure, recreation, and sports
- ☐ Education and youth development
- ☐ Health and wellness
- ☐ Social services
- ☐ Arts, culture, and humanities
- ☐ Environment and wildlife
- ☐ Law and justice
- ☐ Employment or economy
- ☐ Societal and public benefit/human rights groups
- ☐ None

**18. Would you be interested in volunteering at Exploris?**

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

**19. If your answer is YES, please indicate below what kind of volunteer work you would want to do:**

- ☐ I would like to work with visitors during special events and festival days  
☐ I would like to work with visitors at the admissions desks  
☐ I would like to work with the summer camps  
☐ I would like to work with Girl Scouts overnight camps  
☐ I would like to work with the staff in the offices  
☐ I would like to work with the after school programs

**20. If your answer is NO, please indicate below why:**

- ☐ I already volunteer for another organization  
☐ I do not have time to volunteer  
☐ Other

**21. Are there any members in your household that would be interested in volunteering at Exploris?**

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

**22. Would you consider volunteering for 100 hours in order to receive a free Membership?**

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

The following eight questions ask you to rate your experience during your visit at Exploris on a scale ranging from 1 to 5 with 5 being the highest satisfaction rate:

**23. Your last visit to the museum** ▼**24. Your last visit to the IMAX® Theatre** ▼

**25. The 'China On Tour' exhibition** ▼**26. The printed materials provided by Exploris** ▼**27. The marketing of events at Exploris** ▼**28. The employees** ▼**29. The volunteers** ▼**30. What is your favorite part of Exploris?**

- ☐ The mission statement
- ☐ The weekend programs
- ☐ The travel exhibitions
- ☐ The special events
- ☐ The birthday parties
- ☐ The location
- ☐ The flair
- ☐ The permanent exhibitions
- ☐ The group programs
- ☐ The summer camps
- ☐ The forums
- ☐ The museum store
- ☐ The employees
- ☐ Other

**31. What do you like the least of Exploris?**

- ☐ The mission statement
- ☐ The weekend programs

- ☐ The travel exhibitions
- ☐ The special events
- ☐ The birthday parties
- ☐ The location
- ☐ The flair
- ☐ The permanent exhibitions
- ☐ The group programs
- ☐ The summer camps
- ☐ The forums
- ☐ The museum store
- ☐ The employees
- ☐ Other

**32. What would you like to see more of at Exploris?**

- ☐ Artist demonstrations
- ☐ Live music
- ☐ Presentations by community organizations
- ☐ Forums on global topics and current events
- ☐ Adult workshops and classes
- ☐ Frequent changes of IMAX® films
- ☐ None of the above

As a reminder you have been chosen by random from the Membership pool. The last questions are about your household. Your information will be treated in strictest confidence. Your answers will be grouped with those of others to ensure anonymity.

**33. Your gender?**

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

**34. Your age?**

**35. Your ethnicity?**

- ☐ African-American
- ☐ Asian

- ☐ Hispanic (of any race)
- ☐ White
- ☐ Other

**36. Your nationality?**

**37. Last year of school?**

- ☐ Grade School (1-8)
- ☐ High School (9-12)
- ☐ College (13-16)
- ☐ Graduate School (17-21+)

**38. Which of the following best describes your household?**

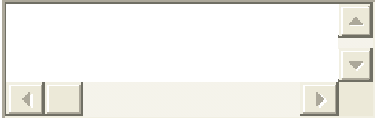
- ☐ Married couple without children
- ☐ Married couple with children
- ☐ Female single without children
- ☐ Female single parent household with children
- ☐ Male single without children
- ☐ Male single parent household with children

**39. What is your approximate household income (before taxes)?**

- ☐ Under \$10,000
- ☐ \$10,000 to \$29,999
- ☐ \$30,000 to \$49,999
- ☐ \$50,000 to \$69,999
- ☐ \$70,000 to \$89,999
- ☐ \$90,000 to 109,999
- ☐ \$110,000 or more

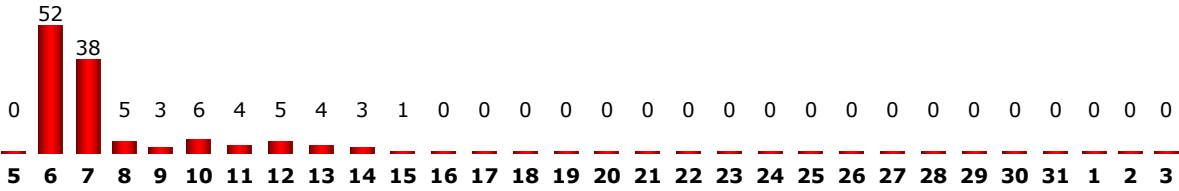
**40. What is your profession?**

**41. Please use the space below to write any comments about your experience at Exploris:**





Participation per day for Responding Members



## APPENDIX C

## Coupon

