

Walker Museum's Art on Call Case Overview



In May 2005, the Walker opened an expanded facility designed to be a model 21st century art center with audience engagement and experiential learning at its core. As part of the expansion, the Walker proposed a new model for the museum audio guide which could inspire and entertain as well as help visitors gain a better understanding of the Center's multidisciplinary programming.

The typical audio guide, even random access ones, have traditionally been primarily linear in format, moving museum visitors through spaces in a pre-determined sequence. For small to medium size museums in particular, such guides are problematic: expensive single-purpose

programs often captured in a proprietary format controlled by the company producing the tour; the inability to easily and instantaneously update information on an as-needed basis (that is, by the hour, day, etc.) from a remote central source; and the need for distribution areas and trained staffing within the museum. For the museum visitor, fees range from \$4 to \$6 per player, with limited distribution areas limiting spontaneity, training with a new technology product and unchanging information unattractive to repeat visitors. Using an industry standard Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system, Walker resources (scripted audio segments and event information), and the museum visitor's own cell phone, Art on Call (AoC) will provide an alternative audio guide at a fraction of the ongoing costs associated with traditional programs.

The visitor will gain greater access to a wide range of information, from objects in to Walker's collection, to artists' interviews, to a daily schedule of the museum's activities. Art on Call as audio guide will provide access to information by phone or website before and after museum hours while also freeing the visitor for more spontaneous visits to the museum. This "bring your own hardware" approach cuts costs to visitors and simplifies training while expanding the information available before, during and after visits. Working with Sandbox Studios, Walker staff will create, implement and evaluate a state-of-the-art audio information resource.

AoC will take advantage of the Walker's extensive archives and databases that have been created to manage event and collection information now





available on the Walker's Web site. The interpretative section of the project will have a maximum of 100 stops, consisting of 75% edited archives and 25% new narration of scripted material. In the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden and selected Walker galleries, 75% of the work on view will be represented, and 10% of that will be accompanied by "super stops" (tiered information with one or two additional audio segments). The desired outcomes are to inspire visitors to visit often, do more and deepen the visitor experience through learning about art.

Formally established in 1927, the Walker Art Center began as the first public art gallery in the Upper Midwest. The museum's focus on modern art began in the 1940s. During the 1960s, the Walker organized increasingly ambitious exhibitions that circulated to museums in the United States and abroad. The permanent collection expanded to reflect crucial examples of contemporary artistic developments; concurrently, performing arts, film, and education programs grew proportionately and gained their own national prominence throughout the next three decades.

Today, the Walker is recognized as a national leader for its innovative approaches to audience engagement. The Walker's annual attendance of 678,133 visitors (June 30, 2006) places it among the ten-most visited art museums in the nation.

Profiles of Stakeholders

These are fictional statements typifying attitudes and illustrating needs, not actual direct quotations.

New Media Initiatives Director

“This information on-demand approach lets visitors choose when and where, and in some ways how, to access information before, during and after a visit. We have control of what is available. A visiting artist interview can be added or an event changed within a matter of minutes and that new content is instantly available for all *Art On Call* users. And we lower our costs because the same material is used for different purposes.”

Visitor

“Visiting the Walker is always a surprise, and now the audioguide keeps up with the changes in exhibits. And it’s free! I just have to use my cell phone. And I don’t need to take the how-to tutorial each time.”

IMLS

“The Walker has a lot of experience involving visitors in exhibits and this program promises to provide a model for other museums to follow.”

Logic Model Worksheet

I. Situation: program partners and stakeholders	
What is the program's name ?	Art On Call
What partners are involved?	
Who are the program's stakeholders ? (Be sure to include yourself, your target audience, partners, funders and any other stakeholders.)	What does each stakeholder want to know?
Walker Board and Staff	Will Art on Call help us fulfill our mission? Will this reach more potential visitors and attract their attendance? Will AoC lower publicity costs?
Museum Visitors	Can I work the technology? Will this reduce my costs? Is it interesting and useful?
IMLS	Does Art on Call serve art museum patrons better than current audioguides or postings? Does this represent a viable national model?
Other Museums	Should we adopt this program?
II. Program planning: connecting needs, solutions, and results	
Who are the audiences ?	Potential and actual museum visitors
What are the needs of the audience?	Visitors to art museums want information that is engaging, inexpensive and technologically accessible.
What are some audience considerations ?	Visitors to the museum often have their own cell phones, with little or no training involved to enable use. They are available to deliver information inside exhibits and during hours of opening but also outside the museum 24/7.
What solution fulfills the needs?	Provide content-rich information about exhibits and events on the cell phones of visitors and potential visitors based on existing museum data and evolving opportunity.

What will be the desired results ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Visitors learn more from exhibits before, during and after attendance. •They use Art on Call to meet information needs about the Walker.
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III. Logic model summary: program purpose statement

We do what?	Develop and test an interactive voice response system (IVR) with audio segments and event information to be used as an audioguide for exhibits delivered on visitor cell phones.
For whom ?	Potential and actual visitors to the Walker
For what outcome /benefit(s)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Visitors report that learning about Walker Art objects was made easier because of IVR components. •Visitors consider the art museum experience more enjoyable. •Visitors increase use of WAC through increased visits or new activities.

IV. Program elements

Inputs	Outputs (or counts)
Data on existing items	At least 100 descriptions of current works on exhibit
IVR components	
Staff time for creating new content	
Activities	Outputs (or counts)
Create and test implementation of IVR system	
Input information for exhibits	Number of exhibit descriptions recorded
Create procedures for changing event notices and adding new information	Changing audio of current events
Evaluate usability	

Evaluate acceptance and use by visitors and potential visitors	
Services	Outputs (or counts)
Provide audioguidance 24/7 for pre- and post-visit access	Number of calls received by the system
Provide audioguidance for exhibits available on visitor cell phones	

V. Outcomes

Outcome 1: *Visitors report that learning about Walker Art objects was made easier because of IVR components.*

Indicator(s)	Applied to	Data Source	Data Interval	Target
The # and % of visitors who report that their learning at the museum was “easier” to “much easier” using IVR	AoC users	Exit Survey- 5-point scale question	Administered over a 3-day period	50%

Outcome 2: Visitors consider the art museum experience more enjoyable.

Indicator(s)	Applied to	Data Source	Data Interval	Target
The # and % of visitors who report that their experience was very to extremely enjoyable	Randomly selected AoC and non- AoC users	Exit survey – 5- point scale question	Administered over a 3-day period	70%

Outcome 3: Visitors increase use of WAC resources through increased visits or new activities.

Indicator(s)	Applied to	Data Source	Data Interval	Target
# and % of AoCusing visitors who report increased use of Walker (such as more visits, using website or AoC from off-site)	Random selection of respondents to AoC exit survey	Telephone survey of AoC users	3 months after AoC-using visit	50%
OR				
# and % of AoCusing visitors who report attending or using new services of WAC	Random selection of respondents to AoC exit survey	Telephone survey of AoC users	3 months after AoC-using visit	40%