WELCOME WALL EVALUATION

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GOALS OF THE WALL: What was the mural trying to achieve?

• To offer visitors “tips” for how to experience the museum.

• To make all visitors feel welcomed by creating the feeling of belonging (*this place is for people like me*).

• To suggest to visitors that there is no right or wrong way to use the museum.
EVALUATION: What did we want to learn?

- Did visitors notice the mural when they arrived?
- Was the mural seen as welcoming?
- How did the mural make visitors feel?
- How do visitors describe the mural?
- Did the mural match prior experiences or set realistic expectations for the museum visit?
**METHODS**: How did we collect the data?

**Dates**

Data was collected over four days:

- Thursday after Thanksgiving (11/23/18)
- Wednesday (2/27/19)
- Saturday (3/2/19)
- Sunday (3/10/19)

**Recruitment**

Visitors ages 12+ were randomly approached between the Ticketing Area and Membership kiosk as they entered the museum.
METHODS: Who did we talk to?

We spoke to a total of 56 visitors. (N = 56)

Gender
61% Females
39% Males

Age
13% teens (age 12 – 17)
25% young adults (age 18 – 29)
62% adults (age 30+)
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS
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DID VISITORS NOTICE THE MURAL?
- 52% of visitors did not notice the mural.
- First-time visitors were more likely to notice the mural than repeat visitors.

WAS THE MURAL SEEN AS WELCOMING?
- In general, the mural made visitors feel welcomed to the museum.
- No one said the mural made them feel very unwelcome.

HOW DID THE MURAL MAKE VISITORS FEEL?
- 55% of visitors felt confused, overwhelmed, or lost when looking at the mural.
- 45% of visitors felt positively when they looked at the mural, such as feeling excited to go inside or get a sense of what they would see or do.
HOW DID VISITORS **DESCRIBE THE MURAL?**

- Most visitors described the mural as showing endless paths and ways to explore, as well as what they’ll do or how they’ll feel inside the museum.
- Visitors also described the mural as having too much to look at.

DID THE MURAL **MATCH PRIOR EXPERIENCES OR SET REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS?**

- 80% of repeat visitors agreed that the mural matched their prior experiences in the museum, such as feeling encouraged to be curious, explore freely, and play with hands-on exhibits.
- The mural set realistic expectations for first-time visitors, 58% of whom expected from the mural that, once inside, they could explore freely and have a variety of interactive exhibits to play with.
- Some first-time visitors expressed concern that the museum would be hard to navigate or over-stimulating, based on what they saw in the mural.
Detailed Findings
DID VISITORS NOTICE THE MURAL?
**NOTICING**: Did visitors notice the mural on their way in? (N = 56)

We asked each visitor if they had noticed the mural when they walked in. Visitors did not define what noticing meant to them, so it could mean just glancing at it to examining it closely.

- 52% did NOT notice the mural.
  - Of these, 62% were repeat visitors
  - Of these, 38% were first-time visitors.

- 48% DID notice the mural.
  - Of these, 26% were repeat visitors
  - Of these, 74% were first-time visitors.
WAS THE MURAL SEEN AS WELCOMING?
GAUGING WELCOMING: Was the mural seen as welcoming? (N = 56)

Each visitor was handed a poster-sized version of the wall to reference during the interview.

- 36% of visitors felt **very welcomed** by the mural.
- 34% of visitors felt **sort of welcomed** by the mural.
- 25% of visitors felt **neutral**.
- 5% of visitors said the mural made them feel **sort of not welcomed**.
Most visitors* felt welcomed because they liked that the mural **encouraged action and free exploration**.

Some also felt...
- the mural had **artistic style**.
- the mural was **inclusive**.
- the mural **introduced what was inside**.
- the mural **looked inviting**.

* 31 of the 56 participants gave reasons for feeling welcomed.
WELCOMING: Select visitor quotes on feeling welcomed

• The mural encouraged action and free exploration
  – When you're here, there's no rules and that's nice.
  – I like the idea of many possible paths. It's an "anti-map". I don't like being told what to do (laughs).
  – It's an action thing. The cycle of curiosity (points to cycle). It's basically trying to state that Explo is an action. You're here to DO.

• The mural was inclusive
  – It's not restricted entirely to kids. It's built for them (kids) but that won't make it less fun for adults.
  – It's just black and white, but there's a real sense of all being represented. Kids, adults, people embracing it with open arms, people exploring. It seems inclusive.
The mural looked inviting
  – It’s like, "Come in!"
  – I feel like it's pulling you in.

The mural had artistic style
  – I like the sketch style. I like the mapping quality.
  – It is a cool graphic, it makes me think of sciences and it does LOOK cool so that makes me want to go in (to museum).

The mural introduced what was inside the museum
  – It's making me think about what I'm going to do. I'm already thinking about the mysteries behind the wall.
  – It gives you an introduction to what you're about to walk into.
**NOT WELCOMING:** Reasons visitors gave for feeling *less welcomed*

Most visitors* who didn’t feel as welcomed said there was **too much to look at** on the mural.

Others reasons included...

...the mural had **no clear message**.

...it was **hard to understand where to start looking** at the mural.

...the mural **didn’t say “welcome”** anywhere.

...there was **no color** on the mural.

* 20 of the 56 participants gave reasons for feeling less welcomed than they could have been.
NOT WELCOMING: Select visitor quotes on feeling less welcomed

• There was too much to look at
  – I was a little intimidated by the center part.
  – I'm kind of overwhelmed (by mural), we bypassed it.
  – Too complicated.

• The mural had no clear message
  – I don't understand what it's trying to tell me.
  – If you're trying to get to the welcome factor and engage people to come in, it gets lost with the messaging.
NOT WELCOMING: Select visitor quotes on feeling less welcomed, cont.

• It was hard to understand where to start looking
  – I don't know where to begin. There are too many things.

• The mural didn’t say “welcome” anywhere
  – It's not crazy welcoming. There's nothing word-wise to say you're welcome.
    It's telling you HOW to do something.
  – I didn't realize it was a welcome (sign). It reads to me like a very confusing map. Yeah, I'm lost.

• The mural had no color
  – Maybe it's the color, black and white, that's not very warm and inviting.
  – Well, you know, there's no color. No happiness. No anything.
HOW DID THE MURAL MAKE VISITORS FEEL?
GAUGING AFFECT: How did the mural make visitors feel? (N = 56)

We asked each visitor to finish the sentence, “When I look at this mural, I feel ____.”

- 45% said the mural made them feel *positive qualities*, like being excited, curious, or confused “in a good way”.

- 55% of all visitors said the mural made them feel *confused*, *overwhelmed*, or *lost*.

HOW TO EXPLORATORIUM
POSITIVE AFFECT: Reasons visitors gave for feeling positively because of the mural were....

...they got a taste of what’s inside.
...they were intrigued with the mural itself.
...it made them feel excited to go inside.
...it made them feel confused “in a good way”.

* 25 of the 56 participants gave reasons for feeling positively when they looked at the mural.
• Visitors felt that they got a taste of what’s inside
  
  – It just definitely evokes the feeling that you're going to see some different stuff in here that you haven't seen before.

  – I'm a maker. I love when things have that vibe. Seeing how you guys make things here. (gestures broadly to mural) This encapsulates people using the tools you have here. It's not a "look but don't touch" kind of place.

• Visitors felt intrigued with the mural itself

  – Curious. The way it's organized, the web form, I like it.

  – There's lots of words but you don't know the relationship between the words and what's in the museum. You see a word, but (I’m curious) which experiment does that word relate to in the museum?
POSITIVE AFFECT: Select visitor quotes on feeling positively, cont.

• Visitors felt excited to go in
  – Excited to see what's inside.
  – Excited about all the different things I'm going to experience with my kids and family.

• Visitors felt confused in a good way
  – The paths are confusing, but I feel like that's the point.
  – The whole thing is designed to be confusing. It's a maze of different things.
  – Like I'm inside of a map. [Was there anything confusing about that?] Yes, but in a good way.
**CONFUSION:** Reasons visitors gave for feeling *confused*

Reasons visitors gave for feeling confused, overwhelmed or lost when looking at the mural* were that...

...there was **no clear message**.
...the overall design was **too busy**.
...there were **too many lines and words**.
...the **middle section** was confusing.
...they weren’t sure **where to start looking**.
...they thought the **mural was an actual map**.

* 34 of the 56 participants gave reasons for feeling confused/etc. This percentage is higher than the total 55% shared on slide 21 because some visitors who did not say they felt confused/etc. did give reasons for confusion when asked the follow-up question, “And was there anything confusing about the mural?”
CONFUSION: Select visitor quotes on feeling confused

• The mural had no clear message
  – It doesn't make sense to me.
  – I still don't know what it's about. What's the message?
  – It's not directing you anywhere. "Shake, rattle, roll". What are you trying to tell me? Because I don't get anything out of this.

• The mural’s overall design was too busy
  – Too much on the eyes. There was too much to look at.
  – There's just a whole lot going on and I don't know what to do with it.
  – Just that there's so much going on. You have to sit there and look at it. You can't just look for a few seconds. You have to study it.
CONFUSION: Select visitor quotes on feeling confused, cont.

- The mural had too many lines and words
  - More graphics, less words.
  - It’s a lot of lines and scribbles.
  - This (points to 3 Possible Paths) could have been done without so much... If you cut the number of lines in half, you could create the same thing.

- The mural’s middle section was confusing
  - This (cycle) makes sense but this (middle), what point are you trying to get across. It's a lot.
  - I don't know what all this is (middle). I understand Explo is a verb. I'm just trying to see the thought process of getting from here to there (points from left to right side of the mural).
CONFUSION: Select visitor quotes on feeling confused, cont.

• Visitors weren’t sure where to start looking
  – Everything looks the same, it's uniform. There's no starting point. I don't know where to start.
  – Where was I supposed to start? Where was I supposed to look?

• Visitors thought the mural was an actual map
  – We think there should be a certain path in a facility. Sometimes it's kind of a trade-off. If we choose this path, we might miss out. If there's only one path, I won't miss out.
  – It says “three possible paths”, but then it (middle part) is mixed up, so that's confusing for me.
HOW DID VISITORS **DEScribe** THE MURAL?
DESCRIPTION: How did visitors describe the mural?

We asked each visitor, “Can you briefly describe the mural?”

Most visitors said the mural...
    ...showed **what you’ll do** or **how you’ll feel** inside.
    ...showed **endless paths and ways to explore**.
    ...had **too much to look at**.

Others who described the mural said it...
    ...looked **disorganized** and/or **confusing**.
    ...looked **cool/fun/eye-catching**.
    ...looked **map-like**.
    ...showed **diversity**.
    ...**visually represented curiosity**.
    ...was mainly **for kids**.
    ...described the Exploratorium itself.
DESCRIPTION: Select visitor quotes on describing the mural

- The mural showed what you’ll do or how you’ll feel inside
  - It's kind of like going inside. [Say more?] All the different stations. Sometimes you're amazed, you figure stuff out, there's lots of learning.
  - Words of everything you're going to experience inside.
  - It's like a mind map of what you might experience in the museum, I suppose.

- The mural showed endless ways or paths to explore
  - Usually there’s a set path. This is telling you that there’s no right way.
  - You’re pretty free in the museum.
  - There's infinite ways to explore.
DESCRIPTION: Select visitor quotes on describing the mural, cont.

• **The mural had too much to look at**
  – *It's pretty hard to read. There's too many words.*
  – *A lot going on, and I'm not clear about what it's trying to tell me.*
  – *For me it's kind of chaotic, too busy. That's why I didn't sit and look at it.*

• **The mural looked disorganized/confusing**
  – *Like all the activities you could do, in a confusing org chart (laughs). I don't know where to start.*
  – *It would take me a long time to parse it. It's going 12 different ways at once.*
  – *It's confusing. I've never been here before. This is my first time.*
DESCRIPTION: Select visitor quotes on describing the mural, cont.

• Mural looked map-like
  – At first glance it looks like a map...but it's actually a map of what people are experiencing.
  – I think it looks a little like a map. Like finding Waldo.

• The mural looked cool/fun/eye-catching
  – It's very eye-catching. It's got a lot of imagination to it.
  – Thought it was captivating for kids, adults and seniors.

• The mural showed diversity
  – It's an interesting representation of people. There's someone in a head scarf.
  – (Mural shows) different languages.
**DESCRIPTION:** Select visitor quotes on describing the mural, cont.

- **Mural was mainly for kids**
  - It’s great for kids because they get bored with maps.
  - What I noticed was interactive words that would be really fun to a kid. "Jump" "Build". I also noticed "Break". I'm a parent, I'm tired (laughing).

- **The mural visually represented curiosity**
  - The cycle of your brain while you're playing and looking at things and observing and going through different cycles.
  - Like when you explore something you feel new things, like you're confused or intrigued.
  - Curiosity means many things to many people. Some people will be more interested in some exhibits than others. There's something for everybody.
• **Described the Exploratorium itself**

  – *What I get out of it is it's a museum that presents things in a different way.*

  – *I think it really sets the vibe of what you have going on here. I've been coming here since you were at the other location, since I was a kid. I love the hands-on nature of everything.*
DID THE MURAL MATCH PRIOR EXPERIENCES?
**MATCHED EXPERIENCES:** Did the mural match repeat visitors’ prior experiences? (N = 25)

80% of repeat visitors said they felt the mural reflected experiences they’ve had inside the museum, which were...

...feeling **free to explore multiple paths**.
...seeing and playing with **many hands-on exhibits**.
...feeling **encouraged to be playful and curious**.
...feeling **welcomed to connect** with others.

20% of repeat visitors said that they felt the mural **did not** reflect the experiences they’ve had inside the museum because...

...the mural **didn’t relate** to what they experienced here before.
...the mural was **more chaotic** than what they experienced here before.
Visitors felt free to explore multiple paths

- It's certainly not linear inside. There's jumping point to point based on what sparks your interest.
- When we came last time, we went here, then there. We threw the rules out the window, which was nice for me.
- The roaming randomness.

Visitors saw and played with many hands-on exhibits

- A lot of the exhibits invited you to play with them. You didn't necessarily know what it was until you walked up to it.
- You do a lot of different things and experiments. It's (mural) reflective of that.
• Visitors felt encouraged to be playful and curious
  – ...the "play" element of it, the curiosity, are all things that are represented here.
  – We've done a lot of the verbs on there. We've explored and figured it out and been confused and done the cycle.
  – it's a place for fun, possibility, memories. This really symbolizes that.

• Visitors felt welcome to connect with others
  – I have an only child. When we're here, he always makes a friend. With kids cooperating and checking stuff out.
UNMATCHED EXPERIENCES: Select quotes from repeat visitors

• The mural doesn’t relate to what visitors experienced here before
  – I don't relate to the words you use. I see people, but not exhibits. I see a lot of people doing stuff. When I come, I don't interact with the people, I interact with the exhibits.
  – I've had more fun inside than the mural shows.
  – I kind of think of it as more of a science place, and doing things related to science. I don't quite see that in the pictures. The things I see in the pictures I don't see inside.

• The mural was more chaotic than what visitors experienced here before
  – The last time (I came to Explo), it was pretty organized. [And you don't see that in this mural?] No.
  – It looks jumbled. I'm a scientist...I don't look at science as being jumbled.
DID THE MURAL SET APPROPRIATE EXPECTATIONS?
NEW EXPECTATIONS: Did the mural set realistic expectations for first-time visitors? (N = 31)

Based on the mural, 58% of first-time visitors expected that the Exploratorium would have many things to see and interact with.

Some also expected....
...the museum will be thought-provoking.
...the museum will be fun.
...the museum is mainly for kids.
...museum activities are mostly about mechanics and physics.
...the museum will be confusing to navigate.
...the museum may be over-stimulating.
NEW EXPECTATIONS: Select quotes from first-time visitors

• The museum will have many things to see and interact with
  – I guess I'm going to learn about some things, but also interact.
  – I expect that it's going to grab my attention everywhere I look and lead me into all different directions.
  – Lots of different experiments to do. Lots of stuff you can do and touch. Not just read a poster on the wall (laughs).

• The museum will be thought-provoking
  – Some stuff will take longer to understand. We'll also take time to understand and learn things.
  – I think there will be lots of different exhibits or something like that, that we can interact with and think about things on multiple levels.
NEW EXPECTATIONS: Select quotes from first-time visitors, cont.

• The museum will be fun
  – A lot of fun. A lot of fun to explore.
  – Playful, creative, interactive.

• The museum is mainly for kids
  – I think it (Explo) is for kids more than adults. But we'll see.
  – I'm expecting there to be lots of things for the kids to entertain them.

• Museum activities will be mostly about mechanics and physics
  – Specific activities, like there'll be pedaling and tinkering. Lots of machine stuff.
  – Physics demonstrations. Different types of physics and mechanics.
NEW EXPECTATIONS: Select quotes from first-time visitors, cont.

• The museum will be confusing to navigate
  – Like I'd be walking around in circles and not be seeing everything I would want to see. I wouldn't call it negative. It would be disappointing if it wasn't laid out sufficiently, if I couldn't see everything I wanted to see.
  – A lot of things in an unclear path.

• The museum may be overstimulating
  – A lot of, like, stimulants I guess (makes gesture of things coming towards her eyes).
  – A lot to see. There's a lot to look at (on the mural).
Thank you!