Make a Game of It
(and Use the Mobile Technology in Your Visitor’s Pocket)

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What is a game?

• **Structured Playing**

• Components of a Game?
  – A goal?
  – Rules?
  – Challenge?
  – Competition? Winning / Losing?
  – Interaction?
Components that Matter

• Goal – times 2!
  – What is the player’s objective?
  – What is the museum’s objective?

• Rules
  – More rules = more complicated
  – Think “helpful instructions”
It Has to Be EASY

Which would you rather do? Play this game?

INSTRUCTIONS
• INSERT COIN  • SELECT 1 OR 2 PLAYERS
• PAC AWAY DOT FOR 10 POINTS FLASHING ENERGIZER FOR 50 POINTS
• AFTER ENERGIZING PAC-MAN CAN ATTACK MONSTERS

EXTRA POINTS

 Scalia
100 200 500 700 1000 2000
Fantastic, but Easy?

Or do this activity?
Components that Matter (continued)

• Challenge – how much is enough?
  – Sense of accomplishment
    Consider optional help or hints along the way
  – Aligned with goals
    Remember learning objectives

• Competition? Winning / Losing?
  – Success is important
  – Not a test
  – Competition – OK, but there must be an incentive
Components that Matter (continued)

• **Interaction** – The Big One!
  – Without interaction, the best outcome is entertainment
  – Too predictable = less likely to play
  – Requirement: **Perception** that actions or choices matter

• Players must want to play!
  – Incentives
  – Drawing players in
OK, So How Do I Build One?

- Am I up to making a game? - YES!

- Should I use technology? – Whoa, let’s look at your goals first...but, YES, absolutely!

- Can I deal with “failure”? – prepare yourself
What are your goals?

• What do you want visitors to do?
  – See more exhibits
  – Spend longer at each exhibit
  – See all exhibits needed to tell a story
  – Make a connection with at least one exhibit
Get visitors to see more exhibits

• Perhaps a scavenger hunt
  – But, really, how fast do you want them to go?
  – Sounds like a fast game of I-Spy...with running!

What is the learning outcome?
Get visitors to spend longer at each exhibit

• Perhaps a *treasure* hunt
  – Involves a more in-depth look to find answers
  – Might require reading more
  – Might require completing an activity at certain exhibits

• Get them to think on their own
  – Leading questions
  – Easier to apply with group activities
Get them to visit all exhibits needed to tell the story.

• Perhaps a treasure hunt
  – Requires game to be aligned with the natural story told by the exhibits
  – Custom images to illustrate the story
    (These might already be on your signs.)
  – May need clues to match the signage of the exhibits
    or
  – Requires more creative work to setup
Get them to make a connection

• This can be a stand alone activity

• This can be done at little cost with little time.

• The mobile aspect -> reaching beyond the museum walls
Let’s Get Your Input

Next Up: The Process

Survey time!
The Process

• Identify goal/objectives
• Assess Resources
• Research (Borrow ideas)
• Test it out

  Learn

• Modify

• Change is good!
Resources

• Money – remember, time is money, too!

• “Technical” expertise
  – Ask for what you need
  – “small IT staff”, “I don’t know about technology”

• Staff / Time
  – Ask for what you need
Research

• Borrow ideas!

• Google search
  – “Den leader’s best fried”
  – Warning: “games” = “video games”

• What you will find on Pinterest
  – It’s not just food, crafts, and fashion
Test Subjects

• Your own kids
• Family day at the museum – not quite!
• Local scouting groups:
  Girls Scouts
  http://www.girlscouts.org/councilfinder/
  Boy Scouts / Cub Scouts
  http://www.scouting.org/localcouncillocator.aspx
The Learning Process

• Setting: An Art Gallery Art Class

• Objective: The use of lines

• Audience: Two age groups
  Grades K-2               Grades 3-5

• How used: As a “gathering” activity
What did we learn?

• People may not use things the way you think
More to Learn

• People’s perceptions may not match reality

• Your measurements may not be very accurate
  (Reflective questions are best left to older students or adults)

• You need to OBSERVE
Now for some Tips

• Did we mention borrowing?

• Always encourage visitors to share!

• Mix it up!
Mascots
Where will you spread your message?
You Need a Sign

There was an iPad mounted in the corner...the screen was blank

There were only 12 posts over the following 7 months

At least 12 people took photos while we were there that afternoon
What makes a good connection?

• Sometimes, just let your visitors decide.
Encourage visitors to share!

People will do crazy things!

Video opportunities
FREE STUFF!

• Audio tour
  – Do you have a smartphone? (and a contact number for your webmaster)

• Additional content
  – Images and text
  – MS Word: Save As...
    “Web page, Filtered”

• QR Codes
  – Google search: “free qr generator”
  – http://www.qrstuff.com/
Using Technology

Pre/Post-Visit
Vs
While at the museum

Easy to Change
(Well, it should be!)

Use it for good!
Thank you!

Questions welcomed

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