

Evaluation of J. Paul Getty Museum's Gallery Cards

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Education

The J. Paul Getty Museum



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1-0. Introduction

Methodology:

In every gallery where a Gallery Card (GC) is located the evaluator conducted two one-hour sessions. During the sessions, the evaluator counted the number of people who entered the gallery, who looked at the GC, read the GC, and/or moved around the gallery with the GC.

This evaluation focuses on those GCs that are tied to non-rotational areas of the permanent collection (painting, sculpture, and decorative arts). The GCs in these areas are out on a continual basis and constitute a major part of the didactic content of those galleries.

Sample size:

2542 visitors



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1-1. General Review of Usage in Galleries Where GCs Are Located

- 2.2% of all visitors entering the gallery looked at the GC.
- 1.6% of all visitors entering the gallery read the GC.
- 0.3% of all visitors entering the gallery move around the gallery with the GC.

Comments

Very few visitors utilized the gallery card as an information resource. However, if the visitor discovered it, they tended to read it. But the gallery card users overwhelmingly read the card near its distribution point and did not move around or reference it as they looked at other objects in the gallery.



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1-2. Usage Based on Distribution Point

This section breaks down GC usage by the GC distribution point's location in the gallery. Below each distribution point is a list of the GCs that were included in the category and their gallery numbers.

Wall Mounted (mounted under an introduction panel)

Maiolica: Manufacture and Use (N103)

Looking at the Images of Saints (N202)

Creating a Devotional Sculpture (E102)

The Quest for Porcelain (S110)

Unlocking Furniture: A Look Inside (S111)

- 2.8% of visitors to the gallery looked at the GC.
- 1.9% of visitors to the gallery read the GC.
- 0.6% of visitors to the gallery moved around with GC.

Stand Alone Panel (in front of the gallery)

Salon from the Maison Hosten (S116)

- 4% of visitors to the gallery looked at the GC.
- 2.8% of visitors to the gallery read the GC.
- 1.3% of visitors to the gallery moved around with GC.

Bench Pocket

Italian Gold Ground Painting (N201)



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Solving a Painting's Mystery (N204)

Rembrandt and his circle (E205)

The Heights of Fashion (S204)

View Paintings and the Grand Tour (S205)

Why do paintings have frames? (W201)

- 2.4% of visitors to the gallery looked at the GC.
- 2.1% of visitors to the gallery read the GC.
- 0.1% of visitors to the gallery moved around with GC.

On the Wall (these are mounted low on the wall and not below an introduction panel)

Tapestry: Manufacture and Use (S102)

Chinoiserie and the French Passion for Far Eastern Imports (S106)

- 0.7% of visitors to the gallery looked at the GC.
- 0.7% of visitors to the gallery read the GC.
- 0% of visitors to the gallery moved around with GC.

On the Wall (mounted in the space between two galleries)

All That Glitters Is Not Solid Gold (S109)

Makers of Nothing, Sellers of Everything (S113)

- 1.2% of visitors to the gallery looked at the GC.
- 0.3% of visitors to the gallery read the GC.
- 0% of visitors to the gallery moved around with GC.



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Comments

Overall, the distribution points of Gallery Cards are well camouflaged. And, although this helps not to distract visitors' attention from the artworks, based on the data, it causes the GCs to be under used. GCs that are located in more visible places (i.e. stand alone panels, under an introductory panel, or in a bench) are read more often than those which are located in less visible places (i.e. lower on the wall or in the doorway between two galleries). It is also interesting to note that, although the percentage of visitors to a gallery who move around with the GC is low, this percentage drops to an even lower number when the GC is located at a place where it is inconvenient to stop—such as doorway. The users seem to prefer to read the GCs in more comfortable positions—like a bench. Note: the stand alone panel is located adjacent to a bench.



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1-3. Usage Based on Collection Areas

This section breaks down GC usage by the type of artwork featured in the card. Below each collection area is a list of the GCs that were included in the category and their gallery numbers.

Paintings

Italian Gold Ground Painting (N201)
Looking at the Images of Saints (N202)
Solving a Painting's Mystery (N204)
Rembrandt and His Circle (E205)
View Paintings and the Grand Tour (S205)
Why do paintings have frames? (W201)

- 2.4% of visitors to the gallery looked at the GC.
- 1.9% of visitors to the gallery read the GC.
- 0.1% of visitors to the gallery moved around with GC.

Decorative Arts

Maiolica : Manufacture and Use (N103)
Tapestry: Manufacture and Use (S102)
Chinoiserie and the French Passion for Far Eastern Imports (S106)
All That Glitters Is Not Solid Gold (S109)
The Quest for Porcelain (S110)
Unlocking Furniture: A Look Inside (S111)
Makers of Nothing, Sellers of Everything (S113)
Salon from the Maison Hosten (S116)



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- 1.4% of visitors to the gallery looked at the GC.
- 0.7% of visitors to the gallery read the GC.
- 0.1% of visitors to the gallery moved around with GC.

Sculpture

Creating a Devotional Sculpture (E102)

- 14.2% of visitors to the gallery looked at the GC.
- 14.2% of visitors to the gallery read the GC.
- 5.1% of visitors to the gallery moved around with GC.

Comments

As the installation of different collection areas impacts the GC distribution points, the above data in section 1.3 underscores the findings in section 1.2. The relatively high numbers of GC uses for sculpture may be caused by the distribution point location (under a panel) and by the distinctive character of the object (a life-scale saint).



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1-4. Usage Based on Color GC vs. Black and White GC

This section looks at GC usage organized by the color (or lack of) in the GC.

Color:

Tapestry: Manufacture and Use (S102)

- 1.2% of visitors to the gallery looked at the GC.
- 1.2% of visitors to the gallery read the GC.
- 0% of visitors to the gallery moved around with GC.

Black/White

The other 14 Gallery Cards

- 2.3% of visitors to the gallery looked at the GC.
- 1.7% of visitors to the gallery read the GC.
- 0.3% of visitors to the gallery moved around with GC.

Comments

Although limited, because only one color card was out during the time of this evaluation, this data seems to show that there is very little difference in usage of color GCs versus black/white GCs. However, an evaluation that included more color cards would yield more concrete results.