

Closed to the Public:

The Impacts of Closing a Museum for Construction

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Executive Summary

The end of the 20th century marked the beginning of a multi-billion dollar building boom in the museum field. While in the past few years several major construction projects have been dropped or scaled back¹, the “Age of Expansion”² in the U.S. and across the globe has continued to produce new, renovated, and expanded museum spaces at a considerable rate. While the building trend is fairly recent, thinking about how facilities fit into the mission of a museum is not. In a 1917 essay, American librarian and museum director John Cotton Dana wrote that the worth of a museum “is not in direct ratio to the cost of its building . . . A museum is good only insofar as it is of *use*.”³

Nearly a century after Dana penned these words, museums are working to sustain and increase their usefulness to the public. Renovation and expansion projects offer the opportunity to extend the museum’s mission by increasing exhibition space, for example, or by adding and improving facilities for educational programming. A museum in the midst of a building project, however, must balance staying *useful* and open to the public, on the one hand, with completing the project in a safe, cost-effective, and timely manner on the other. In this study, I explore how and why museums make the decision to close their facilities during construction, focusing particularly on the impact the decision has on the museum and its audiences. I also pay attention to ways in which museums attempt to stay “open” to the public through alternate spaces, partnerships, and outreach activities.

¹ Morris, Martha. “Expansionism.” *Museum News*, July/August 2004. 30-35.

² Dan Monroe suggests that the “Age of Expansion” covers the period between 1995 and 2010. Monroe, Dan L. “View from the Top.” *Art Museum Network News*, October 2005.

³ Dana, John Cotton. As quoted in *Perspectives on Outcome Based Evaluation for Libraries and Museums*. Institute of Museum and Library Services (2000).

Much has been written in the past ten years about the building boom, about the architecture of the latest museum structures, and about the financial issues involved in construction projects.⁴ However, very little has been published on the fact that these projects often involve some sort of closure. The goal of this investigation is to present a comprehensive view of the issues surrounding closing a museum facility and to provide case study and best practice recommendation for museums considering such projects in the future.

In order to successfully recover from closing a building, museums must carefully plan and orchestrate the work of the museum in the name of the mission. Feasibility studies and strategic planning help to keep the organization on track while a marketing communications plan nurtures the institution's ongoing relationship with its constituents. Special events to mark the closing and opening of the building generate buzz and create fundraising opportunities.

Closing a museum facility impacts key stakeholders in significant ways. Visitors, members, researchers, staff, volunteers, sponsors, partners and affiliates, and local schools and businesses are all affected. A museum must work diligently to minimize the negative impact of closing in order for its overall building project to be considered successful.

Museums considering building projects can learn from the insight of other institutions that have recently completed similar projects. It is, therefore, to the benefit of all museums that institutions conduct and publish evaluations based on their experiences and suggest best practices to others in the field.

⁴ See, for example: Victoria Newhouse, *Towards a New Museum*, for architecture; Lord & Lord, *The Manual of Museum Planning*, for finances and project management; and major newspapers for general commentary on construction projects in the museum field.

Research

Because of the current museum building boom, my investigation concentrates on recent events; nearly all of the museums I analyzed closed or reopened sometime after 2000. While specifics how long and how much of a museum closes for construction varies by institution, all of the museums I chose to investigate shared similar challenges because of the special circumstances surrounding closing to the public. My investigation focuses more on projects in national and regional museums than in local museums and historical societies. With few exceptions, the cases I chose to study are found within the United States, though there are similar building trends happening in Canada, Europe, China, and elsewhere. Art museums outweigh other types of museums in my study; however, this imbalance is reflective of what is happening in the field (art museums are currently the fastest-growing segment of the museum building boom).⁵

In order to gain insight into the museum perspective on construction-related closing, I relied upon interviews with staff at seven different museums as well as information available on the Web sites of many cultural institutions. I interviewed representatives from a variety of geographic locations within the United States, though all were from an urban setting. I also tried to get a variety of viewpoints in terms of staff functions within the museum (e.g., department) as well as roles (e.g., leaders, management, and entry-level positions). (See Appendix A for a list of interviews that were conducted.) On museum Web sites, sections designed to meet the needs of the

⁵ Morris, "Expansionism."

press, to address questions about the building project, or to market a capital campaign were most useful.

To study the impact of a museum closing from the perspective of critics and of the public, I relied largely on newspaper articles covering museum closures and reopenings. Industry-specific journals such as *Museum News*, *Curator*, *ASTC Dimensions*, and *Art Museum Network News* were useful in gleaning information about trends and best practices. The observations and recommendations I put forth are based on this literature review, interviews with representatives from a handful of museums, and an examination of over thirty individual cases; they do not represent the findings of a scientific study.

Staying Open

The ability to stay open during construction depends largely upon the scope and scale of the project being undertaken, regardless of the type of project (i.e., renovation, expansion, move to a new building, or any combination of the three). A recent example of a museum that remained open during construction is the Minneapolis Institute of Arts (MIA), which will open its new wing, designed by Michael Graves, in June 2006. The expanded MIA includes a new 113,000-square-foot wing and 49,000 square feet of building renovation, increasing its exhibition space by nearly 40%.⁶ While the expansion did not require closing the museum, it did require shutting down certain galleries for short periods of time in order to protect the artifacts on display.

⁶ "M.I.A. Announces Grand Opening Celebration for Michael Graves-Designed Expansion." May 3, 2006. http://www.artsmia.org/press/view.cfm?PR_ID=123

Despite the fact that advertising was not scaled back during construction, overall attendance also decreased (by about 33% between fiscal years 2003-04).⁷ This decrease is due, in part, to a “lackluster” temporary exhibition calendar as well as to visitors choosing to wait for the new wing rather than deal with the perceived hassle of visiting a construction zone.⁸ Other examples of cultural institutions that have remained open during construction include the National Aquarium in Baltimore (expansion), the National Gallery of Art (renovation), the American Museum of Natural History (renovation), Montpelier (renovation), the High Museum of Art (expansion), and the Rijksmuseum (renovation).

Deciding to Close

“I felt very strongly that we should keep the museum open. It’s about not wanting to disrupt the relationship with the public, about keeping the habit of visiting the museum alive.” —*Katharine Lee Reid, former director of the Cleveland Museum of Art [which eventually closed under current director Timothy Rub]*⁹

“It’s very difficult to focus on operating the old Newseum and building the new one at the same time. We need to focus all of our energies on building the new Newseum.” —*Peter Prichard, president of the Newseum and Freedom Forum (announcing the closure in 2001)*¹⁰

The decision to embark upon a construction project comes with huge responsibilities, from capital campaign fundraising to the intensive work of planning and managing the project over several years. Ideally, the construction project is part of a larger strategic planning process, ensuring that the work is done in a focused and directed manner and that the project maximizes the ability to further the mission of the institution. The conception of the construction project varies from museum to museum;

⁷ Abbe, Mary. “Museum attendance is down; Construction deterred visitors, Walker and Art Institute officials said.” *Star Tribune*, July 23, 2004.

⁸ Minneapolis Institute of Arts staff. Interview by author, August 2005.

⁹ Bernstein, Fred A. “Renovation Question: Stay Open or Shut?” *The New York Times*, April 23, 2003.

¹⁰ “Newseum to close until new home complete.” *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, December 9, 2001.

sometimes an unexpected gift from a donor jumpstarts the process while, in other cases, the safety or comfort of a facility triggers the project. Regardless of the source of the idea, the input of the board, director, staff, donors, and the community on the proposed construction project (including a formal feasibility study) should be taken into consideration and integrated into a comprehensive plan for the institution.¹¹ The decision to build is often a popular one, benefiting from a collective sense of opportunity and the buzz of anticipation.

The decision to close during construction, on the other hand, is met with much more resistance. Arguments against closing fall into several categories: financial implications, public service ramifications, effects on the museum's support base, and inconvenience to staff.

Financial Implications

The financial implications of closing a museum building include the loss of earned income from admission, membership, shops, food service, and other amenities. On the other hand, keeping a museum open during construction often leads to reduced visitation, leading to a diminished earned revenue stream regardless. In addition, closing the museum often allows the construction project to be completed in a shorter amount of time, significantly reducing overall building costs. Savings may sometimes be found in reduced utility bills, decrease security costs, and other operating costs that may be temporarily reduced or eliminated while closed to the public. Memberships tend to decrease during a construction project regardless of whether the museum closes or not (though the rate of decrease is less for museums remaining open); however,

¹¹ Morris, "Expansionism."

memberships tend to increase greatly upon reopening a renovated or expanded building.¹² (See “Measuring and Evaluating” for more on this topic.)

Closing a museum facility has financial implications beyond the museum itself, with the potential to significantly impact the surrounding community, particularly when the institution stops drawing in a large number of visitors to the region or neighborhood. Even if a cultural institution remains open, however, construction may impact other local institutions and tourist destinations. The National Aquarium in Baltimore, for example, recently completed a \$66 million “Animal Planet Australia: Wild Extremes” addition while operating its existing facilities. Though open, the commotion of construction faced the public entrance as well as the rest of the popular Inner Harbor. As attendance fell at the aquarium (about 2% in summer 2004), so did attendance at nearby museums, restaurants, and hotels.¹³ Marketing staff at PassPort: Voyages of Discovery, an adjacent attraction, were concerned that tourists would postpone their travel plans because of construction delays at the aquarium. According to the owner of a nearby water taxi service, “When the Aquarium does well, we do well. We’ve never had a year when we did well and they didn’t.”¹⁴

Public Service Ramifications

While more intangible than financial implications, ramifications of a construction project on the museum’s ability to serve the public can be the most emotionally-charged. This is because changes in the way the museum serves its communities impact the museum’s ability to fulfill its core mission, its *raison d’être*. When a museum

¹² Indianapolis Museum of Art staff. Interview with author. April 2006. and Walker Art Center staff. Interview with author. August 2005.

¹³ Dash, Julekha. “Aquarium expansion delayed.” *Baltimore Business Journal*, October 8, 2004.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

is the only one in town or is the most significant cultural institution in its region, it can be very difficult for staff to feel justified in shutting down, leaving their audience's needs unmet. While the goal of the construction project is, ultimately, to better serve the museum's audiences, the institution is left to determine how to temporarily continue its service to the public without a facility. Museums have come up with creative ways to continue to matter to their communities, from renting alternate locations to expanding their remote outreach activities. (See "Variations on Closing" below for more on this topic.) However, according to Martha Morris, museums "need to consider seriously how much public service you will be able to continue to provide . . . do you want to curtail programming in order to concentrate resources on the facilities work?"¹⁵ Finally, by closing, the museum can complete its construction project much faster than if it attempted to stay open to the public. A faster timeline can ultimately mean far less inconvenience for the public than a prolonged project in which entrance locations continually change and it is unclear which galleries are open at any given time.

Effects on Support Base

In addition to the challenges of serving the public, a closed museum also has a tough time keeping its support base actively engaged. The institution also risks losing members, donor enthusiasm, and the goodwill of the local community. Membership perks such as free admission or discounts at the shop and food services are not applicable without a facility. Corporate sponsors are looking for opportunities to promote their brand and will look elsewhere if the museum is not generating public attention. While support may erode during the closed period, it can be mitigated

¹⁵ Morris, Martha. "Planning for Collections During a Building Project." In Lord, Gail Dexter and Barry Lord, eds. *The Manual of Museum Planning: Second Edition* (Walnut Creek: AltaMira Press) 2000.

through creative programs and partnerships. In the summer of 2004, Minneapolis' Walker Art Center turned their building closure in to an opportunity by hosting a series of "Walker Without Walls" events in its sculpture garden and surrounding grounds. Target Corporation, headquartered in Minneapolis and regarded for its local philanthropic efforts, funded millions of dollars worth of marketing for the series—from billboards, to signs on public transportation, radio spots, and magazine ads. Strategies such as the Walker Without Walls program, as well as the excitement surrounding reopening, can help diminish overall loss of support due to closure.

Inconvenience to Staff

While the public and other constituents may have some objections to temporarily closing a beloved museum, it is the staff and volunteers of the institution that will be impacted most deeply. Museums that close to the public for any extended period of time may need to let go of employees and contractors whose primary jobs are to interface with visitors; docent programs may need to be suspended. Difficulties such as construction noise, office moves, and disrupted access to collections, however, are characteristic of many construction projects, regardless of whether the museum closes or not.

Other Issues to Consider

Museums determining whether to close must weigh all of these financial implications, public service ramifications, effects on the museum's support base, and inconveniences to staff in order to make the appropriate decision. Other issues to consider are the safety and protection of the collection and of people (staff and visitors)

throughout the construction project. Many objects must be protected from vibration and dust as well as fluctuations in temperature and humidity. Fire safety, construction hazards, and other risks may require keeping people not related to construction away from work zones. Finally, in some cases the museum has no option but to close due to damage inflicted upon the building by earthquakes (e.g., de Young Museum sustained seismic damage in 1989), floods (e.g., Beauvoir, Jefferson Davis' home damaged in Biloxi during 2005's Hurricane Katrina), and other natural disasters (e.g., collapsed roof of B & O Railroad Museum in Baltimore due to snow).

Variations on Closing

"It was really important to us to stay open. There is a great love of the museum locally and regionally and there is a real danger of falling off the radar if you completely close."
—*Jessica Disanto, Communications and Marketing Manager at the Indianapolis Museum of Art, on the museum's decision to close only for short periods during construction*¹⁶

Once the decision to close a museum for construction has been made, the museum has several options beyond closing for the entirety of the construction process. The institution may choose to close only during key phases, to close only certain parts of the building during construction, or to utilize a temporary space. If the project is an expansion or a move to an entirely new building, the museum may only need to close for the duration of the move itself.

Closing Completely

Some museums choose to close completely in order to focus efforts on the new construction without the distraction of ongoing operation of an existing facility. The Newseum decided to close its building in Rosslyn, Va. in March 2002 while it prepared

¹⁶ Jessica Disanto. Interview with author. April 2006.

for a new building in Washington, D.C., scheduled to open in 2007. The Capital Children's Museum closed its facility in 2004 to begin its transition into a new, state-of-the-art building expected to open in 2009; the institution will be reborn as the National Children's Museum.

Other museums, like the de Young Museum in San Francisco, need to tear down their old buildings to make way for the new. The old de Young building, which lacked appropriate HVAC controls and offered cramped exhibition spaces, suffered damage in the earthquakes of 1906 and 1989. With the estimated cost of repairs and seismic retrofitting exceeding \$70 million, the trustees decided to demolish the building and build anew.¹⁷ During construction, the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco (FAMSF), which runs the de Young, was able to capitalize on the space at the Legion of Honor, another museum under its reign, to exhibit collections. The museum also rented a store-front to run education programs, brought outreach activities in to the public school system, and participated in partnerships with the Yuerba Buena Center for the Arts.¹⁸ Another example, the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History, scrapped plans to renovate its old building when it ran into a financial crisis and brought in new leadership to turn the organization around. The museum, which has run a surplus for the past two years, is now planning to tear down its existing facility and construct a \$65 million building in its place.¹⁹

Museums that have closed (or plan to close) their facilities for extended periods of time during renovation or expansion include: the Getty Villa (8 years, renovation/expansion), the Smithsonian American Art Museum and the National Portrait

¹⁷ Amelar, Sarah. "De Young Museum." *Architectural Record*, Nov. 2005, 104-115.

¹⁸ de Young staff. Interview with author. April 2006.

¹⁹ Vaughn, Chris. "New home planned for museum." *Star Telegram*, May 4, 2006.

Gallery (6 years, renovation), the Orangerie Museum in Paris (6 years, renovation), the Morgan Library and Museum (3 years, renovation/expansion), the Akron Art Museum (2 years, expansion), the Amon Carter Museum in Fort Worth (2 years, expansion), the Anacostia Museum and Center for African American History and Culture (2 years, renovation), the Currier Museum of Art in Manchester, N.H. (1 ½ years, expansion), and the National Museum of American History (1 ½ years, renovation).

Short-Term Closings & Phased Gallery Closings

Depending on the scope of the project, a museum may be able remain open throughout most of the construction project. This can be accomplished by closing only during key phases of the project or by phasing partial closures so that at least some of the galleries may always be open to the public. For example, the Detroit Institute of the Arts (DIA), began construction of its Michael Graves addition in 2001. Since then, the museum has closed once (in 2005), for five weeks, in order to save nearly a year of additional construction time. The museum chose August for its closing period, historically the slowest visitation month of the year for the museum. Before the new addition will open to the public, the museum will close again for a month in August 2006 as well as for a slightly longer period (4-5 months) in early 2007.

When it announced the closing schedule, the DIA museum prepared itself for a public outcry. Because of careful messaging and advertising, however, the public was sympathetic about the need to close for a short period of time. A blockbuster exhibition after the 5-week closed period, and a press conference to update the public on the status of the renovation, helped bring visitors back in September. Overall attendance, unfortunately, has gone down roughly 30% as compared to pre-construction figures.

DIA staff hypothesize that this decrease is due to the fact that the museum has closed individual galleries throughout the construction project. Pete VanDyke, communications coordinator for the museum, also has a hunch that the appearance of construction at the museum serves as a deterrent to those who would prefer to wait for the completion of the project before visiting.²⁰ A dip in attendance and membership was expected as part of the construction project, but the DIA felt it was worth the challenge in order to avoid closing. Staff felt it would be too much of a disservice to the public to close the only fine arts museum in metro Detroit (and one of the largest in the Michigan, and throughout the Midwest). These sentiments were echoed by staff at the Indianapolis Museum of Art.²¹

Based on the experience of other museums, the DIA expects visitation and membership to increase once construction is completed (by as much as 30-200% in the first year after reopening, and up to 15-90% in subsequent years).²² Museums that, like the DIA, have used a combination of closing for short periods of time and closing individual galleries include the Milwaukee Art Museum (5 months, expansion), the Indianapolis Museum of Art (5 months, expansion), and the Seattle Art Museum (1 year, expansion). Other museums that have kept closing time to a minimum include the Peabody Essex Museum in Boston (6 months, expansion), and the San Diego Natural History Museum (3 months, expansion). Museums that have remained open, but used the “phased” approach to closing individual galleries during construction include the Louvre, the Denver Art Museum, the American Museum of Natural History, the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, and the Minneapolis Institute of Arts. A final category of

²⁰ Detroit Institute of Arts staff. Interview by author. April 2006.

²¹ Indianapolis Museum of Art staff, interview.

²² Detroit Institute of Arts staff, interview.

museums able to minimize closing time are those who are able to keep their old building open while constructing a new one. The museum then can close only for preparation and implementation of moving collections and staff to the new building. Examples of museums that have closed (or will) in order to move from an old to a new building include the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco (1 ½ years) and the La Porte County Historical Society (estimate closing for 2 months).

Purchasing Alternate Locations

Museums can maintain a physical facility by renting or purchasing an alternative location during construction at its flagship facility. The most famous and comprehensive example of this approach was undertaken by the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), during the redesign and renovation of its midtown Manhattan building. In May 2002, the museum closed its Manhattan facility; one month later MoMA QNS, a temporary home in Long Island City, opened to the public. The facility in Queens, a repurposed staple factory, “served as the base of the Museum's exhibition program and operations” through September of 2004.²³ Two months later, the renovated Manhattan location reopened and the museum began converting MoMA QNS into a study and storage center.

²³ Press release. “The Museum of Modern Art Counts Down to November 20 Reopening in Midtown Manhattan.” June 30, 2004.



Figure 1: MoMA QNS; the new MoMA headquarters in Manhattan.ⁱ

The 25,000 square feet of exhibition space at MoMA QNS proved successful at drawing crowds. According to the American Institute of Architects (AIA), the satellite facility was designed to “support the museum’s preservation and research activities for 25 years; accommodate blockbuster exhibits without major structural changes as a temporary museum for two years; and provide a strong visual statement identity to maintain the museum’s public profile and membership while the headquarters was closed.”²⁴ In giving the project an award in 2004, the AIA jurists remarked that “MoMA QNS did all of that, plus it started the neighborhood’s evolution from industrial neighborhood to burgeoning arts community.” The facility saw more than 2,000 visitors per day (beyond expectations), with some blockbuster exhibitions bringing in 4,000 visitors per day. Finally, the AIA judges remarked that MoMA QNS achieved a 97% recognition level (determined via survey); this percentage is “higher than may of the established museums.”²⁵

While the MoMA QNS project appears to have been extremely successful, it is important to take into consideration the high cost of the project. MoMA acquired the

²⁴ The American Institute of Architects. “2004 Business Week/Architectural Record Awards.” <http://www.aia.org/SiteObjects/files/MoMAQNS.pdf>

²⁵ The American Institute of Architects. “Ten Projects that Illustrate How Good Design Achieves Business Objectives are Recognized with a 2004 Business Week/Architectural Record Award” http://www.aia.org/awards_bwar2004

facility for \$5 million and spent another \$30 million renovating it. Moving the artworks and other materials (one way) cost another \$20 million.²⁶ By purchasing the space, MoMA avoided rental fees for temporary exhibition space, and was able to repurpose it to other mission-central functions, however, the multi-million dollar price tag is out of the reach of most museums.

The Liberty Science Center in New Jersey has emulated MoMA's approach to an alternate location—but on a much smaller scale. A renovated historic railroad terminal, dubbed the “Riverside” facility, was made available to the center through a partnership with Liberty State Park and the NJ Department of Environmental Protection.²⁷ With 4,000 square feet of exhibition space, classroom facilities, and other amenities, the science center is able to continue serving the Jersey City community during its 2-year renovation and expansion project.

Maximizing Partnerships

In addition to purchasing an alternate location for exhibitions and programs while the headquarters facility is closed, museums can also rent facilities or partner with organizations with appropriate spaces in order to continue programming. The Walker Art Museum, for example, partnered with a local gallery on an exhibition of book arts and held performing arts and film events at a local YWCA. Walker staff experienced some problems with marketing and branding at alternative spaces but, in the end, agree that the public service provided is what matters most.²⁸

²⁶ Pollack, Barbara. “MoMA Makes its Move.” *ArtNews Online*, June 2002.

http://artnews.com/pastarticle.cfm?art_id=1136

²⁷ Liberty Science Center press release. “Liberty Science Center Unveils Plans for Major Expansion.” April 2, 2004.

²⁸ Walker Art Center staff, interview.

The Newseum also maximized its partnerships in order to continue to present programs in a strategic way. When the decision was made to close the museum facility, staff held a series of meetings to discuss the pros and cons of continuing programming. While the number of programs has been scaled back, the Newseum decided that in order to retain public recognition of the museum and its mission it was important to persist with events for the public.²⁹ Leveraging its ongoing partnerships with the Smithsonian Associates the Newseum has continued to provide programs and courses for the local D.C. metro area. An existing partnership with the National Press Club has enabled the museum to continue a series on major issues and trends in the news; these programs are routinely covered by C-SPAN and presented to a wide audience in their entirety. The museum also developed a partnership with the D.C. Public Library system to provide programs for elementary and middle-school students. American University, a long-time partner for the institution, continues to co-host a “Reel Journalism” film festival in affiliation with the Newseum. Over 100 programs have been staged since the museum’s facility closed in 2002, including events in partnership with the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, the National Postal Museum, the National Archives, the Library of Congress, the International Spy Museum, and local radio stations. The Newseum also uses traveling exhibitions and online activities to reach out to a national audience.

Electronic and Other Outreach

A museum temporarily without a facility for visitors can look to outreach techniques already being used by in the field to reach out to national and international

²⁹ Newseum staff. Interview by author. April 2006.

audiences. Some or all of these techniques may already be in place at an institution, but the closed period provides an opportunity to increase the scale and intensity of outreach efforts. A popular way to maintain public access to collections is create a “greatest hits” show featuring the institution’s best-loved objects. The exhibition can be located within the museum’s open galleries (in a phased gallery-closing approach) or featured at a nearby location (e.g., museum, convention center, library, etc.) depending on the security and safety needs of the objects. The National Museum of American History, for example, is planning a “Treasures of American History” exhibition featuring 150 objects; the collection will be on view at the nearby National Air & Space Museum while the museum is closed for renovations. This approach, like many outreach activities, requires close attention to issues of branding so that visitors are not confused about where the collections come from. Whether the public understands the provenance or not, however, this method allows important cultural treasures to remain on view for the public’s enjoyment.

Increased outgoing object loans can help put artifacts on display in other museums when they are unable to be shown in their own home, bringing the collections to a wider audience who might not otherwise ever see them. Through its “Treasures to Go” program, at least 500 works from the collection of the Smithsonian American Art Museum (SAAM) circulated among some 70 museums during the renovation of its Patent Office building. Just as many works were also put on long-term loan. The National Portrait Gallery, which shares the building with SAAM, lent approximately 1,000 objects to other institutions and promoted four traveling exhibitions.³⁰

³⁰ Kernan, Michael. “Art’s Moving Experience.” *Smithsonian Magazine*, May 2000.

Other standard methods of outreach that can continue to be a part of the museum's activities without a publicly accessible facility include traveling educational kits for use in the classroom, publications, speaker bureaus, and conference presentations.

Increasingly, museums rely on the electronic outreach to connect with their visitors, provide educational experiences, and offer information on their collections and exhibitions. "Online exhibitions" do not have to be tied to exhibitions that have ever come together in the physical world. The Web offers museums the ability to provide immersive, interactive visits to its audiences in a cost-effective and far-reaching manner. Museums can webcast events to a wide audience or offer electronic fieldtrips and Web chats to engage students in the classroom. By producing engaging content for the Web, and offering ways for audiences to interact, the museum can maintain an important connection to its constituents. The Newseum, for example, hosts a popular online version of its "News Mania" game show, which is updated daily to reflect the latest news headlines.³¹ Other museums are exploring the use of cell phone audio tours to provide tours around the grounds of the closed museum facility as well as provide information about where to see traveling exhibitions or participate in other off-site events.

Museums and other cultural institutions have access to a wide array of tools for outreach during a facility closure. The only limits to maximizing these tools are the budget and the priority, set in the museum's strategic plan, that outreach will take for staff who are busy with the other important tasks of a museum construction project.

³¹ To visit the news trivia game: <http://www.newseum.org/newsmania/>

Planning

“As a kid I came to the Asian all the time . . . I wanted to say goodbye now because I’m concerned about its move downtown. . . . The park offers a space for meditation, but Civic Center is different. I don’t think I’ll go to the new Asian after it moves.” —*visitor Paul Monad on the closing of the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco*³²

Construction projects offer opportunities to reassess a museum’s mission, vision, and plans. As this quote from a visitor shows, change will occur not only from the point of view of the museum, but from the perspective of the visitor. Museum’s must *plan* for the changes that will come with a renovated, expanded, or new building in order to manage visitor expectations, guide the museum through transition, and maintain control of the museum’s market position.

According to information collected in Martha Morris’s 2002 survey of museums engaged in building programs, the most successful building projects “have a clear link to organizational strategic planning, support the museum’s vision” and “are keenly aware of the needs of their communities.”³³ The feasibility study and the marketing communications plan are of specific importance to the particular needs of a museum facing a closure.³⁴ Closures can also provide an opportunity to revisit the institution’s exhibition and collecting plans (also called the “intellectual program”).

Feasibility Study and Strategic Plan

The feasibility study for the building project should include estimates of future attendance and operating costs. The institution’s overall strategic plan for the duration

³² Bonetti, David. “Visitors say farewell to old friend.” *The San Francisco Chronicle*, October 8, 2001.

³³ As quoted in Morris, “Expansionism.”

³⁴ Other types of planning are critical for *all* museum building projects, including business plans, market analysis, staffing plan, fundraising feasibility studies, master planning, a building program, collection analysis, etc. The capital campaign is also a major component of most building projects. In the context of this investigation, I have chosen only to address those elements of planning that relate specifically to the closing of a museum.

of the building project must take in to account the impact of closing the museum on the organization's financial situation. While a feasibility study will verify community support for a building project, it is important to remember that a closure introduces another set of circumstances, perceptions, behaviors, and emotions in to the mix. By identifying key measures of success and developing a plan for collecting data *before* the building project, evaluation and assessment *after* the opening will be much easier. Within one year after (re)opening, the museum should revisit the figures from the feasibility study and strategic plan, conducting a benchmarking review of the museum's performance and, if appropriate, an assessment of the opportunities to improve performance and enhance revenue. (See "Measuring and Evaluating" for more on this topic.)

Intellectual Program

Because many building projects create new and more exhibition space, the closing and reopening of a museum can present great opportunities to revitalize the intellectual program of the museum. The important thing about the Detroit Institute of Art's (DIA) building project, according to communications coordinator Pete VanDyke, is not the architecture, it is what is happening inside with the art.³⁵ The DIA is changing the mindset of how the museum works—through "the Big Idea." While the museum is installing some of the artwork traditionally (i.e., chronologically and geographically) it is also creating suites of galleries with a "big idea" attached. By starting with the artwork, the museum is attempting to group artworks by the stories they tell, creating a better point of entry for the visitor without art-historical training. The renovation project provided a trigger for jumpstarting this work by forcing the deinstallation and

³⁵ Detroit Institute of Arts staff, interview.

reinstallation of the museum's collection. What has resulted is a more visitor-friendly way of interpreting the art and the formation of new cross-departmental teams (e.g., teams that include members from curatorial, public relations, development, conservation, and education departments from the outset). The reinstalled pieces at the de Young Museum are hung in a predominantly traditional manner but, similarly to the DIA, staff tried to experiment with some new ideas. Instead of having hard walls between collections, the museum created nexus points as an opportunity to talk about cross-cultural influences and narratives.³⁶

The de Young Museum also took advantage of the fact that their building project required moving all of the museum's collections out of the old building before it was torn down. According to Deborah Frieden, project director, "when you take apart your art storage facility it give you an opportunity to deal with the collections in ways that you don't when you're trying to operate the museum."³⁷ For example, "When you're paying the kind of prices you are to move stuff you want to know that piece is really still valuable to you. Because we are an old museum a lot of the collections in the early years were obtained before the institution was fully defined and so we had a lot of things that didn't fit in to the core mission any more." The de Young deaccessioned some of the objects that were no longer related to the mission of the institution. The museum also took the opportunity to improve its collections management systems. For example, 100,000 works on paper were bar-coded, had their records updated, and were digitally photographed. When everything was reinstalled in the new storage facility, the museum had a stronger and tighter registration program in place.

³⁶ de Young Museum staff, interview.

³⁷ de Young Museum staff, interview.

Marketing Communications Plan

"I had to scramble around and change everything to make sure we got here before it closed." —*Mary McGillicuddy, social studies teacher, before the closing of the Newseum*³⁸

In developing a marketing communications plan for the museum before, during, and after the closure, museum staff must first ask the following questions: What are our market objectives? What is our strategy to reach audiences? How will we know if we achieve our objectives?³⁹ What are the challenges and opportunities presented by this building project? Will we revise or expand the definition of our brand?

Many museums hire additional staff or contract with a consultant to help with marketing and rebranding efforts. The Indianapolis Museum of Art (IMA) building project includes three properties—the main museum complex, the Virginia B. Fairbanks Art & Nature Park and the Oldfields-Lilly House & Gardens. The new IMA brand is a way to encompass all three entities, with the museum as the anchor.⁴⁰ Working with the cultural arts marketing firm LaPlacaCohen, the museum totally rebranded itself during the construction. Research showed that people viewed the museum as an old, off-putting, unwelcoming sort of institution. Playing with the museum's initials, the firm created an ad with the headline "**I AM A NEW WORLD OF ART**" and has used "**It's My Art**" in additional advertising, on its Web site, and throughout the publications in the museum. The new branding is a hit and was awarded two prizes in the 2006 Museum

³⁸ Jenkins, Chris L. "Deadline at Newseum." *The Washington Post*, February 28, 2002.

³⁹ Adapted from May, Margaret L. LORD Cultural Resources Planning & Management. "Museum Institute at Sagamore: Developing Audience Experiences and Marketing."
http://www.lord.ca/Media/Artcl_Audience%20Development-MMay.pdf

⁴⁰ Indianapolis Museum of Art staff, interview.

Publications Design competition (for its retail shopping bag and its “Contemporary Opening” ad campaign series).⁴¹

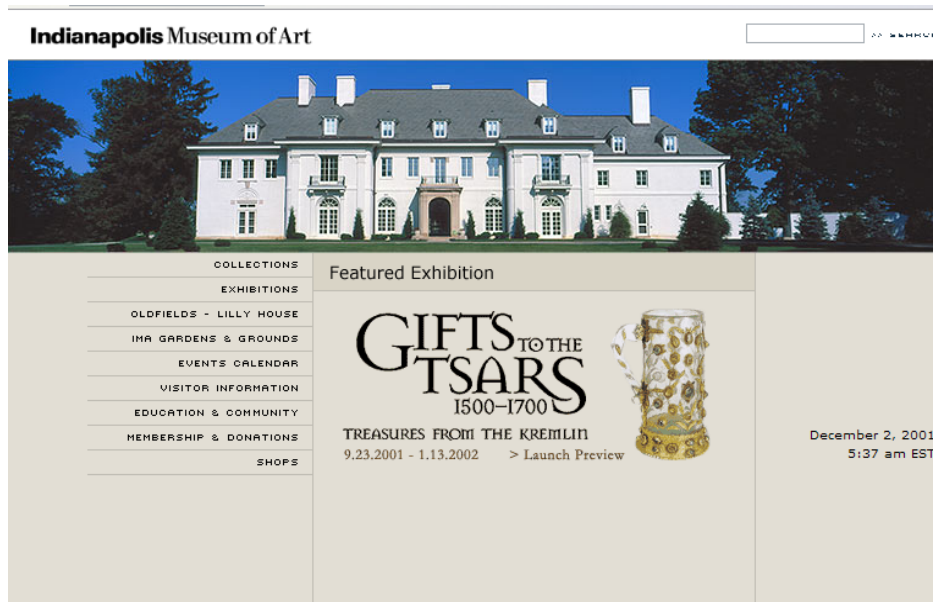


Figure 2: Old Indianapolis Museum of Art Web site homepage (January 2002).ⁱⁱ



Figure 3: New IMA Web site homepage.ⁱⁱⁱ

⁴¹ American Association of Museums. “2006 Museum Publications Design Competition Honorees.” http://www.aam-us.org/aboutmuseums/awards/pubcomp_large.cfm

Like the IMA, the de Young Museum also contracted an experienced marketing firm (Wolff Olins) to help with rebranding. According to project director, Deborah Frieden, “the new energy and vitality of the museum needed to be reflected through a branding campaign. . . the result is great. Part of it was getting the trustees to go through the process of defining the institution in six words. That process was incredibly helpful.”⁴²

According to DNA Design, the publishers of allaboutbranding.com, a brand is “a unique and identifiable symbol, association, name or trademark which serves to differentiate competing products or services.” It is “both a physical and emotional trigger to create a relationship between consumers and the product/service.”⁴³ In addition to its logo and letterhead, the museum should think of the entire visitor experience as part of its brand. Therefore, a museum’s brand includes:

- previsit- Web site, advertising, publicity, outreach;
- getting there- approach, parking, entry;
- arrival- queuing, coat check, information, ticketing, restrooms;
- navigation- signage, wayfinding, amenities;
- programs- orientation, exhibitions, events, education; and
- food and shopping experiences.⁴⁴

Because building projects often affect a majority of these experiences, the museum must think carefully through how the brand will and should change when the building (re)opens. The Milwaukee Art Museum actually turned its expansion into a new logo—a

⁴² de Young Museum staff, interview.

⁴³ DNA Design. “allaboutbranding.com glossary.”
<http://www.allaboutbranding.com/index.lasso?page=11,54,0>

⁴⁴ Adapted from May, “Developing Audiences.”

stylized depiction of the building's Burke Brise Soleil, a moveable, wing-like sunscreen unprecedented in American architecture.⁴⁵



Figure 4: The new Milwaukee Art Museum logo; a photograph of the Burke Brise Soleil, a unique moving sculpture.^{iv}

During the period without a facility, some museums that chose to continue to host a substantial amount of programming off-site (e.g., the Walker Art Center and the Cleveland Museum of Art) have developed a “traveling” identity.



⁴⁵ Milwaukee Art Museum. “The Building: Burke Brise Soleil (Wings).” http://www.mam.org/thebuilding/burke_brise_soleil.htm

Figure 5: CMA@ campaign for the Cleveland Museum of Art; Walker Without Walls portable off-site event marker.^v

Engaging marketing professionals to ensure that messages are clear, consistent, and compelling is critical to properly communicating the new museum to its audiences. A written marketing communications plan should include measurable goals, activities, and projected costs as well as address opportunities and threats.⁴⁶

Museums are increasingly using Web sites as marketing and information-dissemination tools to support construction efforts. As museums redesign their brands, they often take on completely redesigning their Web sites as well. In a paper that explores ways the Web helps museums carrying out an expansion, James Ockuly of the Minneapolis Institute of Arts found that museums often design special sections or even separate Web sites dedicated to the building project. Typical elements of construction-related Web pages include: a message from the director, architectural renderings, information on the architects, Webcams and photographs, and donation mechanisms.⁴⁷ Ockuly suggests that museums could do more to encourage smaller, open-ended donations online in addition to the major gifts that development staff usually focus on. Finally, he suggests that it is precisely when the museum's "physical environment is compromised" that the Web site must and should provide an essential "extension" of its own for the museum. The National Museum of American History's communications plan for transformation includes the creation of a dynamic site to showcase the

⁴⁶ Genoways, Hugh H. and Lynne M. Ireland. *Museum Administration: An Introduction*. (Walnut Creek: AltaMira Press) 2003.

⁴⁷ Ockuly, J., *Museum Expansions and the "Utility" of Web-based Public Information*, in J. Trant and D. Bearman (eds.). *Museums and the Web 2006: Proceedings*, Toronto: Archives & Museum Informatics, published March 1, 2006 at <http://archimuse.com/mw2006/papers/ockuly/ockluy.html>

renovation and plans for reopening, including a virtual 3-D walkthrough and progress reports.⁴⁸

In addition to a marketing communications plan, the museum must think through its public relations activities. Of particular importance with a building project is a plan for crisis management. According to museum experts Hugh Genoways and Lynn Ireland, a museum “must consider the possibility that a crisis will occur and that it will have to deal with negative publicity. The public relations professional . . . must work to establish relationships with the media that will enable the museum to address and overcome negative publicity without being on the defensive.”⁴⁹ With deadlines for opening often slipping in the construction field, it is important to be prepared to manage and promote positive messages to the public through the press.

In order to get the message of the day out to the public, Margaret May of LORD Cultural Resources Planning & Management recommends deploying a variety of methods including publicity, promotional materials, packaging, outreach, alliances, and partnerships.⁵⁰ In its experience getting the message across, the Walker Art Center found it much more difficult to keep national audiences informed about temporary closings than local audiences. The Walker worked with travel agencies, hotels, airports, and local tourist associations to get the word out. Rack cards were created that described ongoing off-site programs and emphasized the fact the main museum

⁴⁸ National Museum of American History. “Transformation Planning: Internal and External Communications Plan.” Internal memo. 2006.

⁴⁹ Genoways and Ireland, *Museum Administration*.

⁵⁰ Adapted from May, “Developing Audiences”

building was closed.⁵¹ Bus tour operators, school tour coordinators, and the travel industry must all be informed about what is happening at the museum.

Additional public relations methods employed by museums include press briefings, ad placements, media training for staff, and “hard hat” tours for members of the press. For example, the Walker Art Center helped staff to “tell the story” by providing them with talking points (“three-bullet elevator conversation points”) in order to communicate the new brand to others. The National Museum of the American Indian, prior to opening its new building, supplied media training for senior staff, giving them the opportunity to practice in front of a camera and to improve their public speaking skills.⁵² To be effective, museums must give the press what they need to produce the story, whether it be b-roll (i.e., images of the museum and collections for broadcast networks to use with stories), answers to frequently asked questions, fact sheets, or high resolution images of architectural plans. Being proactive will allow the museum to shape the story and build excitement.

Public relations outlets should include traditional media (e.g., newspapers, television, radio, magazines, and travel publications) as well as newer ways to reach out to the public (e.g., blogs). The museum’s Web site and e-mail newsletters should serve as a critical and cost-effective means of communicating with the press and other constituents.

Communications challenges for museums planning to close include timing, focus, and tone. Media announcements must be carefully choreographed to come immediately after informing staff and other key constituents of progress and decisions.

⁵¹ Walker Art Center staff, interview.

⁵² “Branding, Building, and Bashes: Capitalizing on Your Museum Expansion” session at the 2006 Annual Meeting of the American Association of Museums, Boston.

To maintain excitement about the project, communications should be focused on the impressive end-products of the building project and the ways in which visitors can remain engaged while the facility is closed (e.g., off-site events, traveling exhibitions). The need for a positive message, however, must be balanced with making clear the details of when and what parts of the museum will be off limits to the public. To maintain an upbeat appearance, the National Museum of American History plans to promote its collecting initiatives, new acquisitions, and conservation projects, keeping the museum in the public eye and making clear that the important work of the museum continues despite the closed facility.⁵³ The team at the Walker Art Center worked hard to promote the closing as the year of “limited access,” being careful not to focus on the word “closed.”⁵⁴ Finally, when addressing closure, it is important for public relations professionals to underscore the reasons for it (e.g., to maintain the safety of visitors and collections, to save significantly on overall cost, etc.).

The Indianapolis Museum of Art (IMA) found that messaging got tricky when it started opening and closing galleries and, later, the entire museum. According to communications and marketing manager Jessica Disanto, it was important for the IMA to “paint the picture that we were as open and accessible as we could be and that the visitor felt welcome, that the place had an easily accessible entrance . . . We tried to be as clear as possible about what was open, where to park, where to walk in. We had docents and front-line people ready and there to direct people to what they were looking for. Curatorial staff planned exhibitions and events to make sure that people knew that

⁵³ National Museum of American History, “Transformation Planning.”

⁵⁴ Walker Art Center staff, interview.

there was still plenty to see.”⁵⁵ The importance of timely progress updates in this type of intricately choreographed construction scenario cannot be underestimated. (See “Beyond Opening” below for more on the importance of an aggressive marketing and communications campaign during and after construction.)

Special Events to Mark Closing and Opening Dates

By hosting special events and celebrations to mark the closing and opening of the building, the museum can create opportunities to generate buzz, honor milestones, and thank its constituents. While these special events can be costly, they can also be vehicles for raising funds and for generating donor enthusiasm about future projects.

Closing

“People were sentimental. When we tore the building down, people hung valentines on the fence. But they knew it was going to be even better... and there are lots of other museums in town.” —*Deborah Frieden, project director for the New de Young Museum Project*⁵⁶

Museums often see a spike in attendance in the weeks prior to closing, particularly when the building will remain closed for an extended period of time. Some museums choose to mark the closing by hosting special events or offering extended hours, while others decide not to highlight the closing date at all.

In the case of the Walker Art Center, a 24-hour, all-night party was hosted to mark its closing in February 2004. The museum’s teen arts council planned events for the evening, including a band that performed during the entire event, a t-shirt making

⁵⁵ Indianapolis Museum of Art staff, interview.

⁵⁶ de Young staff, interview.

activity, and an art-making workshop. The next morning, about 150 dedicated people remained until the doors were shut to the public for the next 14 months.⁵⁷

The Newseum also hosted a series of special events and programs before permanently leaving its old facility in March 2002. The museum brought in Helen Thomas, the first special guest to have been featured at the museum years earlier, for an interview that C-SPAN carried nationally. While, for the most part, the final programs were similar to the family weekends the museum typically sponsored, a few of the programs explicitly looked back at what the Newseum had accomplished in its years of operation. The museum also offered extended hours for several weeks prior to closing.⁵⁸

Despite unpleasant weather, the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco saw 20,000 visitors during its “Five Final Days of Fun” in 2001.⁵⁹ The festivities included demonstrations of traditional crafts and henna tattoos, as well as music and dance performances. The National Museum of American History, while not planning any major special events for its upcoming closing in September 2006, is considering marking the occasion through photo opportunities and a ceremonial taking-down of artifacts like the flag that hung over the Pentagon after the September 11 attack.⁶⁰

Opening

“I’ve been waiting for this to open for years and years”—*visitor to the newly reopened and transformed Getty Villa*⁶¹

⁵⁷ Walker Art Center staff, interview.

⁵⁸ Newseum staff, interview.

⁵⁹ Bonetti, “Visitors say farewell.”

⁶⁰ National Museum of American History, “Transformation Planning.”

⁶¹ Boehm, Mike and Lynne Heffley. “Villa’s Reopening a Low-Key Marvel.” *Los Angeles Times*, January 29, 2005.

While not all museums commemorate closing for construction with special events, it seems that every museum finds a way to make a splash for opening a new, expanded, or renovated building. Grand opening celebrations offer the opportunity to draw in the media and the public as well as to honor donors, members, sponsors, civic and cultural leaders, museum staff, the board, and contractors.

When planning special opening events, museums should ask themselves the following questions: What are we celebrating? For whom? What are our staffing needs? The National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI), which commissioned a new building in 2004 held events on such a large scale (e.g., 200,000 American Indians participated in the Native Nations Procession) that they found it helpful to establish committees for each major event.⁶² In planning major opening events it is important to start early. The National Museum of the American Indian began drafting key messages for its grand opening 18 months prior.⁶³ Save the date cards were sent to the public a year in advance of the opening. A series of soft openings helped the museum to pinpoint problems with operating the new building before the large public opening. On its first day, NMAI was open for 24 hours. NMAI also deployed a timed-ticketing system to ensure that visitors who came from across the country would have the opportunity to enjoy the new building and exhibitions.

According to Elaine Heumann Gurian, editor of *Institutional Trauma*, “in the rush to acknowledge donors and trustees, staff are often forgotten or desultorily mentioned . . . Staff not only deserve our appreciation, it is an important ingredient toward building

⁶² “Branding, Building, and Bashes: Capitalizing on Your Museum Expansion” session at the 2006 Annual Meeting of the American Association of Museums, Boston.

⁶³ “Branding, Building, and Bashes.”

staff morale.”⁶⁴ Gurian recommends hosting a private opening for staff and their families as well as an invitation-only event attended by staff-selected professional colleagues at other institutions.⁶⁵

The Walker Art Center showed its appreciation not only to its permanent staff but to contractors by giving the latter free memberships to the museum for a year. The Walker also got creative with the hospitality and tourism industry by holding a breakfast for taxi drivers, encouraging them to suggest the museum as a destination for their passengers.

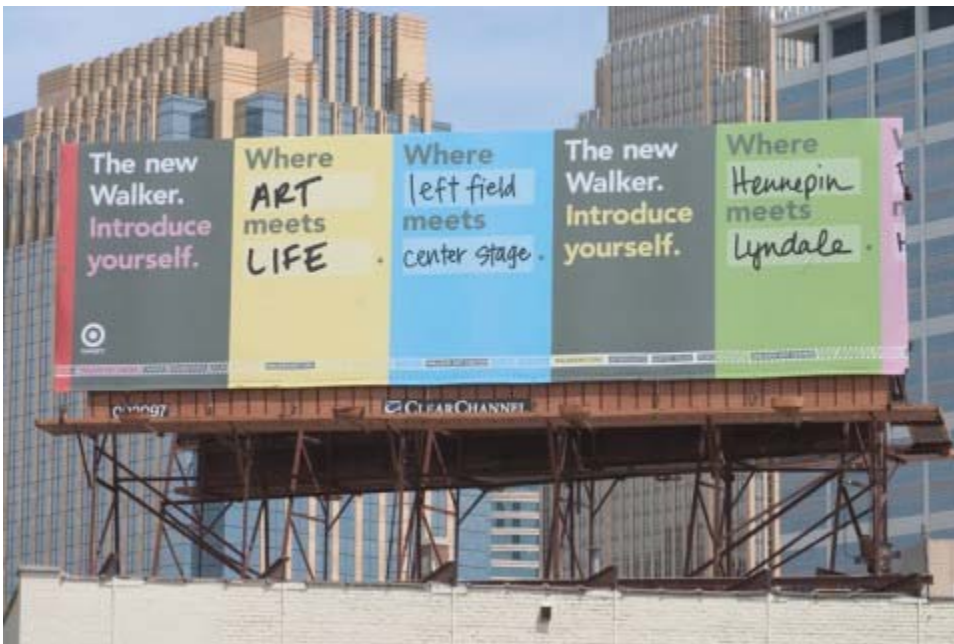


Figure 6: Walker Art Center “Introduce Yourself” campaign on a billboard.^{vi}

Developing a tag line for opening events can help to provide a consistent message as well as quickly sum up the key messages for your visitors. The Walker Art Center designed a series of “Introduce Yourself” ads to market their reopening. The

⁶⁴ Gurian, Elaine Heumann. “Moving the Museum: The Children’s Museum, Boston. In Gurian, Elaine Heumann, e.d. *Institutional Trauma: Major Change in Museums and Its Affect on Staff*. American Association of Museums 1995.

⁶⁵ Gurian, “Moving the Museum.”

Nantucket Historical Association developed the straightforward message “Newer. Bigger. Better.” for its expansion, while NMAI presented its new facility with “Welcome to a Native Place.” The Getty Villa, which displays Greek, Roman, and Etruscan antiquities, got clever with “We Came. We Saw. We Moved Back.” a play on Julius Cesar’s famous “Veni. Vidi. Vici.” message to the Roman senate. Choosing a media-friendly time for the opening (e.g., holidays and historical anniversaries) can help garner press recognition of the events. In addition to the celebrations designed for the public and invited guests, events targeted to local, national, and international media might include a press preview tour, a director’s media tour via satellite.

When the de Young Museum opened to the public in October of 2005 it remained open around the clock for 32 hours. Visitors flocked to festivities such as a dedication ceremony and ribbon cutting; family day and hands-on art activities, including a children’s treasure hunt; spoken word, musical, and dance performances; DJs and a dance party.⁶⁶ An invitation-only gala helped cover the cost of free admission and the open weekend festivities, with 3,200 guests paying \$250 a ticket to attend.⁶⁷ At midnight, guests were rewarded with a surprise performance by Cirque de Soleil.

The Asian Art Museum in San Francisco held a week of VIP events, including a “magical night filled with pomp and pageantry” during which tribute was paid to the mayors who lent the museum much needed support.⁶⁸ The Seattle Art Museum reopened to thousands of visitors with a Chinese lion dance, mural painting, a comedy

⁶⁶ de Young Museum Grand (re)Opening. <http://upcoming.org/event/32195>

⁶⁷ Bigelow, Catherine. “The New de Young: Museum throws itself a splashy reopening bash for art lover, thrill seekers and celebrity watchers.” *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 17, 2005.

⁶⁸ Zinko, Carolyne and Catherine Bigelow. “Toasting the Asian, at Long Last.” *The San Francisco Chronicle*, April 20, 2003.

performance, an evening DJ and dance party, and the opportunity for kids to try on inflatable sumo suits.⁶⁹

The Indianapolis Museum of Art's (IMA) opening weekend brought in double the projected number of visitors; free admission and great weather helped increase attendance. Because the museum reopened with only 2/3 of its gallery spaces open, the IMA offers visitors a "free return" ticket with every purchased ticket. This ticket can be used at any time in the future or can be donated back the museum, which waives admission for underprivileged visitors.⁷⁰



Figure 7: Performances at the opening of the Asian Art Museum in San Francisco;^{vii} Opening events at the de Young Museum.^{viii}

Although it has been partially open throughout the entire construction project, the Minneapolis Institute of Arts is still planning to host a bash in June 2006 when its new wing opens in June 2006. The weekend will include a pancake breakfast for the public,

⁶⁹ Romano, Benjamin J. "Asian art museum reopens; Celebration includes kids wrestling in sumo suits." *The Seattle Times*, January 22, 2006.

⁷⁰ Indianapolis Museum of Art staff, interview.

a full day of performances in the adjacent park, and free admission to the special Alexander Calder exhibition on opening day.⁷¹ For their reopening festivities in 2008, the National Museum of American History hopes to bring in celebrities who have donated objects to the collection, including sports stars and popular culture icons.⁷²

Beyond Opening

In addition to opening events and the spectacle of new or renovated architecture, revitalized and “blockbuster” exhibitions encourage traffic to the building and drive earned income. The Walker Art Center’s successful opening included a blockbuster exhibition of artworks by pop artist Andy Warhol (among many others) and the High’s record-breaking opening featured works by master painter Vincent Van Gogh. In order to encourage repeat visits and keep the community engaged after the (re)opening buzz has died down, however, museums need to maintain a dynamic program and support it with effective promotion. Leonard Aube, writing for the Association of Science and Technology Centers (ASTC), recommends that museums earmark half of their initial marketing budgets for efforts in months 15-24 in order to keep visitors around beyond the opening.⁷³ Because of the spike in attendance that many museums experience during the first few months after opening, Aube also recommends soliciting memberships with three-year duration. “By seeking a longer membership commitment when enthusiasm is high . . . you begin the process of turning benefits-driven supporters into mission-driven donors.”

⁷¹ Minneapolis Institute of Arts. “Grand Opening Day.” http://www.artsmia.org/index.php?section_id=78

⁷² National Museum of American History, “Transformation Planning.”

⁷³ Aube, Leonard J. “Smooth Passages: Ten Tips for Surviving the Transition from Capital to Operating.” *ASTC Dimensions*, May/June 2001.

In their 2003 study of science center expansions, Amy Gilligan and Jan Allen also found that “it is important both to advertise at as high a level as possible before opening and to continue advertising at a high level to sustain the increase in attendance . . . attendance will return to pre-expansion patterns after year one unless you are aggressive”⁷⁴ According to a former membership director at the Fine Arts Museum Houston, “once the building is open, it’s not exciting anymore. You need to back [it] up with exhibitions, programs, and whatever works to keep the community involved.”⁷⁵

Potential Negative Impacts on Stakeholders

While the focus of the decision to close and the target audience for marketing communications is often the museum’s general visitors, closing a museum facility can also negatively effect other important stakeholders. Unless steps are taken by the museum to mitigate negative impacts, the facility closure may be detrimental to local schools and businesses, researchers, staff, volunteers, sponsors, and affiliates.

Local Schools and Businesses

“I wish I could go to Manhattan with MoMA”; “It will affect everyone a little bit . . . they will be missed.” —*neighborhood restaurant owners on MoMA’s departure from Queens*⁷⁶

While MoMA QNS was open to the public as a temporary exhibition space (2002-04) nearby museums in Queens (e.g., the P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, Isamu Noguchi Garden Museum, and the Sculpture Center and the Museum for African Art) saw a steep rise in attendance. This increase in visitorship was especially apparent during record-breaking blockbuster exhibitions at MoMA QNS like 2003’s “Matisse

⁷⁴ Gilligan, Amy and Jan Allen. “If We Build It, Will They Come? A Study of Attendance Change after Expansion.” *ASTC Dimensions*, March/April 2003.

⁷⁵ Sabulis, Tom. “High’s growth reflected in bigger budget.” *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, June 30, 2005.

⁷⁶ Aradillas, Elaine. “Museum’s Neighbor’s Say Goodbye.” *The New York Times*, October 3, 2004.

Picasso.”⁷⁷ When the attention turned back towards Manhattan, however, nearby shops, restaurants, and cultural institutions suffered the ramifications.

Just as a closed museum can leave a gap in the local neighborhood, however, efforts can be made by a newly-opened museum to bring in new foot traffic and corresponding income. In 2003, the owner of a store near the about-to-open Asian Art Museum in San Francisco told a reporter: “We’ve been having sort of a revival [in the neighborhood], and we think the museum will breathe even more life into the area.”⁷⁸ The museum has done its part by working with hotels and other arts organizations on the tourism front.⁷⁹ Staff at the museum, whose audience is split evenly between tourists and locals, say that there have been some changes to the neighborhood, including new restaurants and shops, however, “real change will probably occur slowly over time.”

As the importance of education in the mission of museums has increased in the past several decades, museums have made strides in connecting with local school districts. A shuttered or partially-closed facility can make serving this audience more difficult. The Detroit Institute of the Arts (DIA), for example, has had to cut school groups drastically during construction because it is unable to fit large groups of children in the museum at one time.⁸⁰ College attendance at the MIA decreased during construction because local professors rely on the artworks in some of the shuttered the galleries for their in-museum lectures. To combat this issue, the “most frequently

⁷⁷ Berger, Joseph. “Queens Ponders Post-Modern Life.” *New York Times*, May 16, 2003.

⁷⁸ Lynem, Julie N. “Nearby businesses ecstatic over Asian; market shop owners hope for arts boom.” *The San Francisco Chronicle*, March 18, 2003.

⁷⁹ Asian Art Museum of San Francisco staff. Interview by the author, May 2, 2006.

⁸⁰ Detroit Institute of Arts, interview.

requested objects” were all placed in one gallery to remain on view throughout the project.⁸¹

Other External Constituents

Other important stakeholders who will be affected by construction at the museum’s facility include researchers and other museums and cultural institutions. Whenever possible, museums should attempt to maintain access for researchers and scholars to its collections, archives, and staff expertise during construction. If physical obstacles stand in the way to continued access, a concerted effort to digitize collections and create online access could assist in meeting the needs of this audience. Another audience that will suffer from impaired access to the museum’s collections are affiliated museums that rely on collections of large institutions for exhibitions. When museums are forced to impose loan moratoriums during construction, peer institutions will have to look elsewhere for resources. Finally, object donors and exhibition sponsors may be upset when the artifacts go off display and exhibitions close. While the needs of the museum must take precedence, wherever possible steps should be taken to alleviate discontent on the part of these important long-term stakeholders.

Staff

“I wanted to keep curators happy and busy. I didn’t want them sitting in their offices eating twinkies.” —*director Sherri Geldin on why the Wexner Center for the Arts rented gallery space for exhibitions during renovation*⁸²

“A lot of staff are lowly paid, but they love being around the artworks. Now that they’re away from the museum, they feel kind of deprived of their purpose.” —*employee of Smithsonian American Art Museum, on the impact of renovations on staff*⁸³

⁸¹ Minneapolis Institute of Arts staff, interview.

⁸² Litt, Steven. “Expansion will include frustration at museum.” *The Plain Dealer*, April 3, 2005.

⁸³ Bernstein, “Renovation Question.”

Museum staff are on the front lines of the frenzy that accompanies construction projects. Their efforts, workspaces, and habits are intruded upon during the upheaval and museums must strive to keep morale up and motivation high in order to prevent institutional momentum from decelerating. Challenges to meeting this objective include the fact that people take changes to their physical environment personally, that staff workloads and pressures will be high, and that times of transition are always demanding. In addition to these trials, few staff members will have prior experience with a building project to help them cope. The best way to approach the construction endeavor is as a learning experience for everyone involved.⁸⁴

Elaine Heumann Gurian, editor of *Institutional Trauma*, through her involvement in moving the Boston Children's Museum to its new location in 1979, learned that sharing information with staff is not dangerous and is, instead, "a helpful, not destructive, activity. Facilitating access to information allowed staff to trust that decisions were not arbitrary and that their concerns would be heard and respected, if not always agreed to."⁸⁵ In order to discourage rumors, the National Museum of American History is also working to keep staff in the know by conducting briefings to staff about announcements just prior to sharing them with the media.

Museums may face any or all of the following challenges throughout the building project: staff cuts, increased workload, additional facilities to manage (e.g., off-site storage, off-site exhibition space, off-site event space), reduced amenities (such as flush toilets, in the case of some staff at the Indianapolis Museum of Art), as well as general confusion and disorder. With cramped and makeshift office space, the

⁸⁴ Based on interviews with staff at the Walker Art Center, the Indianapolis Museum of Art, and the Detroit Institute of Arts by author.

⁸⁵ Gurian, "Moving the Museum."

construction at the Indianapolis Museum of Art impacted staff in a very physical way. A constant delivery of messages were sent by the person serving as liaison between staff and construction workers, with information about everything from where to find the staff entrance today to how to navigate the construction zone to get where you needed to go.⁸⁶ Despite these challenges, opportunities also exist, the most important of which is the ability to test new ideas and modes of working. According to Gurian, museum staff will collectively go through a predictable emotional cycle according to the different phases of the building project.

Figure 8: The emotional lifecycle for staff undergoing a building move⁸⁷

beginning	during	after
excitement unrealistic optimism disbelief skepticism detachment	helpfulness creativity hard work humor fatigue frustration anger	pride diligence nostalgia lethargy disillusionment depression anger agitation

If overall emotional health within the organization can be established, the building period can be a great time in the lifecycle of a museum to focus on teambuilding and to celebrate milestones.

The de Young Museum, for example, committed to keeping all staff directly employed by the museum.⁸⁸ Because the museum did not fill vacant positions, however, staff had to work harder. Project director Deborah Frieden believes that,

⁸⁶ Indianapolis Museum of Art staff, interview.

⁸⁷ Adapted from Gurian, "Moving the Museum."

⁸⁸ de Young Museum staff, interview.

despite the stress, the building project provided an enormous opportunity to do something really significant and this was really exciting for staff as well as demanding.

The Newseum offered staff a generous buy-out program rather than imposing layoffs, and at least one staff member was retained in each department to continue research and development for the new museum.⁸⁹ Staff reductions were supplemented by putting money in the budget for contactors as needed and, in fact, many former employees served as contract employees at one period of time or another. While staff remained in their current offices in Rosslyn, Virginia, the work of the staff shifted in focus from ongoing care for a museum to a concept and design phase. Staff members are enthused about the opening and are beginning to get anxious about getting everything in place for the 2007 opening of the new facility.

Staff at the Walker Art Center originally intended to do less programming while the building was closed and use the time for research, staff sabbaticals, and planning. Instead, the Walker Without Walls series ended up exceeding the amount of programming that is done during a normal operating year. Trying to do everything at once led to staff fatigue and many people leaving right after the opening of the museum. This exodus of staff post-opening is something that was mentioned at several other museums—whether it be that staff learned new skills and wanted to move on to other opportunities with more responsibility or simply that they were stretched too thin and it was time for them to move on. Others like the challenge of the fast pace and do not feel as enthused when the project is over and the museum transitions to everyday operations.⁹⁰

⁸⁹ Newseum staff, interview.

⁹⁰ Walker Art Center staff, interview.

The staffing challenges facing the museum do not end when the museum (re)opens its doors. Leanord Aube's "Tips for Surviving the Transition from Capital to Operating" includes creating a strategy to keep staff beyond the inaugural year. He writes, "Employees who guide major aspects of successful campaigns are prime targets for recruiters. When experienced personnel leave, they take institutional memory with them, and stakeholder relationships suffer setbacks—all at a time when the institution is attempting to find a solid, operating foundation."⁹¹

Volunteers

Docents and volunteers are also important repositories of institutional memory and bridges to the community. At the National Museum of American History, for example some of the docents have been with the museum for nearly 40 years. In order to keep this dedicated team active, the museum should develop a plan for continuation of program during closure. Front-of-the-house volunteers should be drawn upon as resources of knowledge about how the public interacts with the building and the objects and can help in the designing and planning of the new space.

The volunteer force can also serve as friendly guides for visitors coming to a museum that is partially closed or visiting the new building for the first time. At the Indianapolis Museum of Art, volunteers frequently queried about what information they need in order to communicate effectively with visitors about the building project. Volunteers can also be a part of rethinking the institution's approach to visitors, joining front-line and guard staff in refreshing their customer service skills before (re)opening. Museums should remember that volunteers are also members of the community and

⁹¹ Aube, "Smooth Passages."

that their relationship with the institution can be an important link to its audiences, with volunteer's positive experiences traveling quickly through word of mouth.

Measuring and Evaluating

Evaluation is an important part of any museum project, and construction projects are no different. In addition to the feasibility study, which measures the level of community support and other important factors to the decision to move ahead with construction, museums may consider other types of front-end evaluation. The Detroit Institute of Arts, for example, embarked on major evaluation projects at the outset, asking visitors what they wanted from the revitalized building and exhibition program, including what they would want to see and how they would like to see it. Using three diverse sets of visitor panels for the evaluation, the museum tested everything from broad content questions to details like font type and how high signage should be hung.⁹²

In addition to front-end or formative evaluation, the museum should use the period following opening to conduct summative evaluation and reassess institutional goals and objectives. Beyond attendance figures, the museum should develop appropriate measures of success by which to determine the successes and lessons learned of the building project. An plan for ongoing evaluation should be developed and implemented along with the other new processes put into place with the commissioning of the building.

Attendance

⁹² Detroit Institute of Arts staff, interview.

The most obvious means of measuring the success of a completed building project is the number of visitors coming to the exhibitions and events held at the museum. According to researchers Sara Selwood and Maurice Davies, attendance is often viewed as giving evidence of public benefit.⁹³ It is encouraging then that many museums see a large spike in attendance after opening a new, expanded, or renovated building. The de Young Museum opening was incredibly successful with 1 million visitors in its first six months, whereas prior to closure they were down to 450,000 visitors.⁹⁴ In November 2005, more than 30,000 came to the expanded High Museum of Art in Atlanta.⁹⁵ The question on administrators minds, though, is: will it last?

In their 2003 study of science center expansions, Amy Gilligan and Jan Allen found that for 2/3 of the institutions studied, attendance peaked in the opening year and then decreased in year two, though the year two level was still higher than attendance before expansion.⁹⁶ Based on these observations, the authors recommend using year two attendance estimates for budget and staff plans. Museum administrators should also keep in mind their finding that “attendance is unlikely to increase if a science center is already drawing 40 percent of population.”

Anecdotal evidence shows that Gilligan and Allen’s findings do not just apply to science centers, as many other kinds of museums see a spike in attendance that levels off after opening a new, expanded, or renovated building. If the museum has remained partially open throughout most of the construction, it is pretty typical to experience a

⁹³ Selwood, Sara and Maurice Davies. “Capital Costs: Lottery Funding in Britain and the Consequences for Museums.” *Curator*, 48/4, October 2005. 439-465.

⁹⁴ de Young Museum staff, interview.

⁹⁵ Chandler, Mary Voelz. “High points: Atlanta’s expanded art museum paints lessons for Denver’s fall opening.” *Rocky Mountain News*, May 6, 2006.

⁹⁶ Gilligan and Allen, “If We Build It, Will They Come?”

decrease in attendance during this time (e.g., DIA had 30% decrease). The appearance or perception of construction obstacles tends to keep visitors away, as well as negative associations that come with the fact that whole museum is not yet available for viewing.

The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art experienced a worst case scenario—attendance actually dropped after opening a new addition in January 2006. The director attributes the drop to the fact that the museum “hasn’t done much local marketing yet.”⁹⁷ The Milwaukee Art Museum did not meet attendance expectations after opening its expansion in 2001⁹⁸; the museum’s goal in the first year, however, was ambitious at double the annual attendance of previous years.⁹⁹ Though the museum’s attendance increased 37% after the opening of its new wing in 2001, as of 2005 attendance is down nearly 16% below what it was in 2000, before the addition opened to the public.¹⁰⁰

While San Francisco’s Asian Art Museum exceeded its visitor goals in its first year after moving, attendance has been diminishing in recent years. The staff estimate that several reasons account for this decrease—the excitement of newness is over, the static nature of the chosen exhibition schedule, and the existence of other competing culture choices in the Bay Area, including the new de Young Museum.¹⁰¹

The Walker Art Center’s expansion is often cited as a success, despite the fact that its attendance remained level when comparing the full year before it closed with the

⁹⁷ Huisking, Charlie. “Ringling Museum sees drop in guests.” *Herald Tribune*, April 30, 2006.

⁹⁸ Stamler, Bernard. “Not Every Opening is a Hit.” *The New York Times*, March 30, 2005.

⁹⁹ Herzog, Karen. “Art Museum draws 10,000 during festival; Crowd sets record despite competition from Summerfest, sunshine.” *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, July 10, 2001.

¹⁰⁰ Chandler, “High points.”

¹⁰¹ Asian Art Museum, interview.

full year after it opened its addition. Part of the reason for this is that the museum improved its counting techniques—resulting in lowered, but more accurate figures.¹⁰² The IMA had a similar experience when it converted from a free museum with poor counting techniques to a ticketed museum with state-of-the-art measuring methods.¹⁰³

Other Measures of Success

Using other indicators of success beyond attendance figures can give a more complete picture. Membership figures are used to suggest more intensive relationship with the museum than a single visit. For example, while the Milwaukee Art Museum didn't meet attendance expectations it did double its membership within a year¹⁰⁴; member numbers have remained 58% higher than before opening the new addition.¹⁰⁵ Members at the de Young Museum increased 19%, up from 42,000 in 2003 to 50,000 in 2004. After its opening in October 2005, the museum's membership continued to increase by another 40%, now topping 70,000.¹⁰⁶ The Museum of Fine Arts Houston's member base grew 57% after its major expansion in 2000 and the Museum of Modern Art shot up from 35,000 members to over 100,000 after its 2004 unveiling.¹⁰⁷ Membership numbers, like attendance figures, however are not necessarily indicators of long-term success; Houston's membership has returned to nearly the level it was at before its expansion.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰² Abbe, Mary. "Bigger Walker draws same numbers; At the addition's 1-year mark, most signs point to success, despite flat attendance." *Start Tribune*, April 12, 2006.

¹⁰³ Indianapolis Museum of Art staff, interview.

¹⁰⁴ Sabulis, "High's growth."

¹⁰⁵ Chandler, "High points."

¹⁰⁶ Chandler, "High points."

¹⁰⁷ Sabulis, "High's growth."

¹⁰⁸ Sabulis, "High's growth."

Maxwell Anderson, researcher in arts and cultural policy at Princeton University, argues that attendance and membership indicators “provide at best highly problematic metrics, and at worst deceptive ones.”¹⁰⁹ Anderson makes the case for developing generally accepted metrics that are “mission-focused, long-term, and verifiable” including such measures as: quality of experience; fulfillment of educational mandate; institutional reputation; quality of exhibitions; and facilities’ contribution to core mission. Among 100 potential measures Anderson suggests for art museums are finding that visitors have “an improved understanding of why some artworks are more valuable than others” and a desire to return in the near future, or evaluating the percentage of the building that is dedicated to permanent collections. This type of evaluation, Anderson argues, is a better representation of the true contributions of museums as well as a more accurate way to measure long-term success; both aspects make his method more suited to the needs of museum administrators and potential funders than attendance and membership numbers alone.

San Francisco’s Asian Art Museum takes a step in Anderson’s suggested direction by using anecdotal evidence of pleasing experiences, quarterly satisfaction surveys, and positive reviews in the media as measures of success. An independent study of visitors to the Asian Art Museum in San Francisco during its first year of opening found that nearly 70% were very pleased by the experience. 75% were first-timers.¹¹⁰ The Walker Art Center considers critical response in its assessment of the institution’s achievement. One year after its reopening the Walker reported “an

¹⁰⁹ Anderson, Maxwell L. “Defining Success in Art Museums.” *Art Museum Network News*, October 2004.

¹¹⁰ Baker, Kenneth. “After a successful first year, Asian Art Museum wants you to return—again and again.” *The San Francisco Chronicle*, March 22, 2004.

unprecedented 1,300 citations or reviews in publications” internationally in its first year after reopening.¹¹¹ The public programs department of the Newseum created its own strategic plan for reopening that includes five steps to assess success beyond the number of people served, including measuring the degree to which activities add to the educational enrichment of schools.¹¹² While closed, the department has largely relied on assessing its work via recognition of the Newseum name and its work despite the lack of an operating facility. Margaret May of LORD Cultural Resources Planning & Management also suggests dimensions such as buy-in from trustees to volunteers and the degree to which qualitative objectives are met (changes in perceptions and behaviors) as indicators of accomplishment.¹¹³

Additional data that can be analyzed for determining institutional health and performance includes exhibition-specific attendance, earned revenue, visitor zip codes, budgets, and demographic data.

Ongoing Research and Evaluation

This step of defining appropriate measures of success within a museum is the first towards implementing an ongoing evaluation plan. Leonard Aube, writing for ASTC, recommends creating an ongoing budget for market and visitor research. He argues that evaluation that “quantifies and proves the impacts, challenges, and strengths of your institution is invaluable in developing a compelling case for operating support.”¹¹⁴

¹¹¹ Abbe. “Bigger Walker.”

¹¹² Newseum staff, interview.

¹¹³ Adapted from May, “Developing Audiences

¹¹⁴ Aube, “Smooth Passages.”

According to Gail Dexter Lord, of LORD Cultural Resources Planning and Management, four types of evaluation can help improve your institution's performance if incorporated into an ongoing evaluation program. These types of evaluation include comparing the museum's performance: to other museums and cultural institutions (comparables and best practices); to professional standards; relative to visitor expectations and experience (visitor research); to community expectations. The first type of evaluation requires a significant amount of legwork in retrieving equivalent data from other institutions. Throughout my research I was unable to find any single source of information on even the most basic of numbers (e.g., attendance by year) for multiple types of cultural institutions. This is an issue that would benefit from further investigation into the viability of creating a repository for museums, science centers, zoos and aquaria, and other cultural institutions to compile and share their data in ways that can be easily compared across the field.

The benefits of a sustained evaluation plan, according to Lord, are that the assessments will "bring you closer to your visitors and community supporters, and eventually, increase the enthusiasm of staff and visitors who will be able to better understand the impacts of their work."¹¹⁵

Conclusions and Recommendations

Of 806 museums surveyed in the American Association of Museum's (AAM) 2003 *Financial Information*, 28% are renovating facilities (or planning to), 12% expanding, and 13% constructing entirely new buildings.¹¹⁶ My research into over thirty museums that experienced some type of closure during a construction project suggests that, as

¹¹⁵ Lord, Gail Dexter. "Performance Evaluation for Museums." *Currently*, January/February 1999.

¹¹⁶ Morris, "Expansionism."

the building boom continues into the 21st century, many museums will also need to deal with partial or complete closure of their facilities. My goal for compiling this case study data in to one single source is to provide a resource for museums facing the decision to close in the future and to facilitate the process of museums connecting with one another to learn from past experiences.

In sum, I offer up the following “Top 10” recommendations as a quick summary of the critical issues a closing museum will need to address.

1. **Decision-making:** Involve a broad base of constituents in your decision to close, carefully considering the financial implications, public service ramifications, effects on support base, and inconvenience to staff caused by such a closure.
2. **Ongoing Evaluation:** Know your audience and meet their needs. Plan to evaluate before, during, and after the facility closure with measures of success that speak to the mission, rely upon verifiable data, and reveal the long-term health of the museum.
3. **Planning:** Use the feasibility study and strategic plan to benchmark performance, guide changes to the intellectual program, and inform the marketing communications plan and any necessary rebranding efforts.
4. **Research and Development:** Closing provides a unique opportunity to step back, evaluate, and plan for the future. Apply this time to thinking about processes, big ideas, and new or revised goals.
5. **Learn from Others:** Use this resource to find other museums who have gone through similar projects and contact them. Your museum colleagues are happy to speak frankly and reflectively about what they’ve learned.
6. **Communicate:** Share, publicize, and connect effectively with constituents throughout the construction project using the cost-effective, creative, as well as traditional channels.
7. **Continue Programs:** To the extent possible, continue to serve your public through alternate facilities, partnerships, and electronic outreach. Use the opportunity to prototype new program formats and target new audiences.
8. **Staff:** Care for your employees through a proactive approach to motivation and morale problems. Maximize any available down-time by giving staff the opportunity to research new ideas or to rest. Don’t over do it.
9. **Celebrate (Re)opening:** Reengage audiences, donors, the board, and the staff. Give your thanks and use the opportunity to create new relationships within the community.
10. **Share Your Experiences:** Use the knowledge you’ve gained from your building project to help other museums following in your footsteps. Compile the results from your ongoing evaluations and publish them for colleagues along with your suggested best practices and lessons learned.

Appendix A: Interviews Conducted

Asian Art Museum of San Francisco

Deborah Clearwaters, Manager, Public Programs Department
Ami Tseng, Marketing Manager, Marketing Communications Department

Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco

Deborah G. Frieden, Project Director, New de Young Museum Project

The Detroit Institute of Arts

Pete VanDyke, Communications Coordinator
Jim Boyle, Director of Marketing

Indianapolis Museum of Art

Jessica Disanto, Communications and Marketing Manager

Minneapolis Institute of Arts

Susan Jacobsen, Director of Public Programs
Kaylen Whitmore, Associate Director of External Affairs
Amanda Birnstengel, Director of Visitor Services
Jim Ockluy, Director of Interactive Media
Brian Kraft, Registration
Robert D. Jacobsen, Curator of Asian and Ancient Art

Newseum

Rich Foster, Director of Programming

Walker Art Center

Christi Atkinson, Director, Education and Community Programs
Blythe Staley, Marketing Specialist, Marketing and Public Relations

Appendix B: Case Studies

The building projects at the following 38 museums, science centers, and other cultural institutions were considered within the context of this paper. All have undergone (or will undergo) some form of construction project, though those marked with an asterisk (*) did not (or will not) experience a facility closure.

Akron Art Museum	Legion of Honor
American Museum of Natural History*	Liberty Science Center
Amon Carter Museum in Fort Worth	Louvre
Anacostia Museum and Center for African American History and Culture	Milwaukee Art Museum
Asian Art Museum of San Francisco	Minneapolis Institute of Arts*
B&O Railroad Museum	Montreal Museum of Fine Arts
Beauvoir, Jefferson Davis' home	Morgan Library and Museum
Capital Children's Museum/National Children's Museum	Museum of Fine Arts Houston
Cleveland Museum of Art	Museum of Modern Art
Currier Museum of Art	Nantucket Historical Association
de Young Museum	National Aquarium in Baltimore*
Detroit Institute of the Arts	National Gallery of Art*
Denver Art Museum	National Museum of American History
Fort Worth Museum of Science and History	National Museum of the American Indian*
Getty Villa	National Portrait Gallery
High Museum of Art*	Newseum
Indianapolis Museum of Art	Orangerie
James Madison's Montpelier*	Peabody Essex Museum
John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art	Rijksmuseum*
La Porte County Historical Society	San Diego Natural History Museum
	Seattle Art Museum
	Smithsonian American Art Museum
	Walker Art Center

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- ⁱ Photo of MoMA QNS from <http://www.bridgeandtunnelclub.com/bigmap/queens/sunnyside/momaqns/index.htm> ;
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- ⁱⁱ Screenshot of IMA homepage (<http://www.ima-art.org/>) from January 25, 2002.
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- ⁱⁱⁱ Screenshot of IMA homepage (<http://www.ima-art.org/>) taken on May 9, 2006.
- ^{iv} Milwaukee Art Museum logo and photo of Brise Soleil from the Milwaukee Museum of Art Web site <http://www.mam.org/thebuilding/index.htm>
- ^v “CMA@” image from <http://www.clevelandart.org/educef/cma%5Fat/html/> ; Walker Without Walls photo taken from <http://design.walkerart.org/detail.wac?id=2104&title=Projects&style=images>
- ^{vi} Photo of Walker Art Center “Introduce Yourself” billboard from <http://media.walkerart.org/3566480.jpg>
- ^{vii} San Francisco Chronicle photo of the Asian Art Museum opening by Elizabeth Mangelsdorf
- ^{viii} Visitor’s photo posted on image sharing site Flickr at: http://static.flickr.com/32/53084141_789eaf981f.jpg