

Museum Visitor Engagement

Resonant interactive experience through a mobile guide

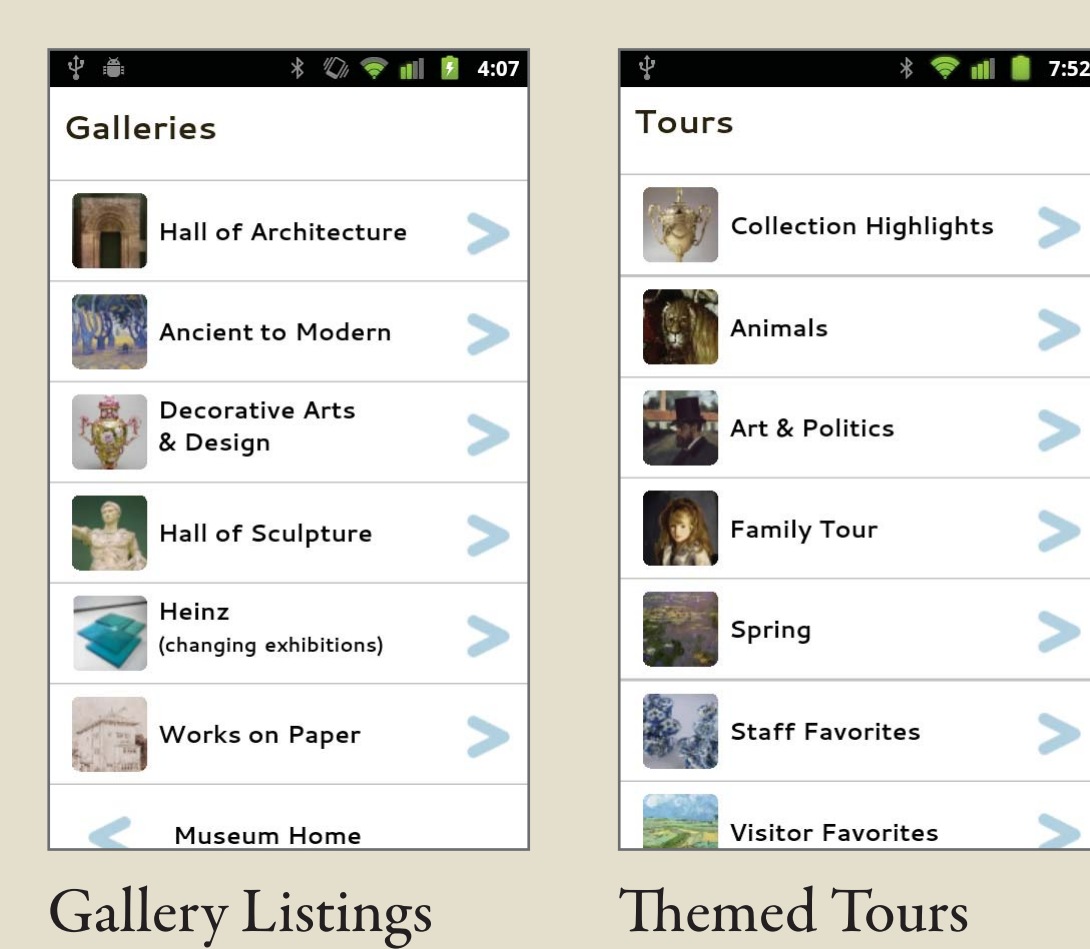
Art museums are vast resources; however, much of their information is inaccessible to visitors. This mobile guide system provides supportive information and activities that resonate with visitors—that make the collection personal and relatable to their experiences, resulting in greater engagement and learning.

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Guide System

Planning

After arriving at the museum and accessing the guide, visitors can browse galleries, tours, and the day's events to plan their visit.

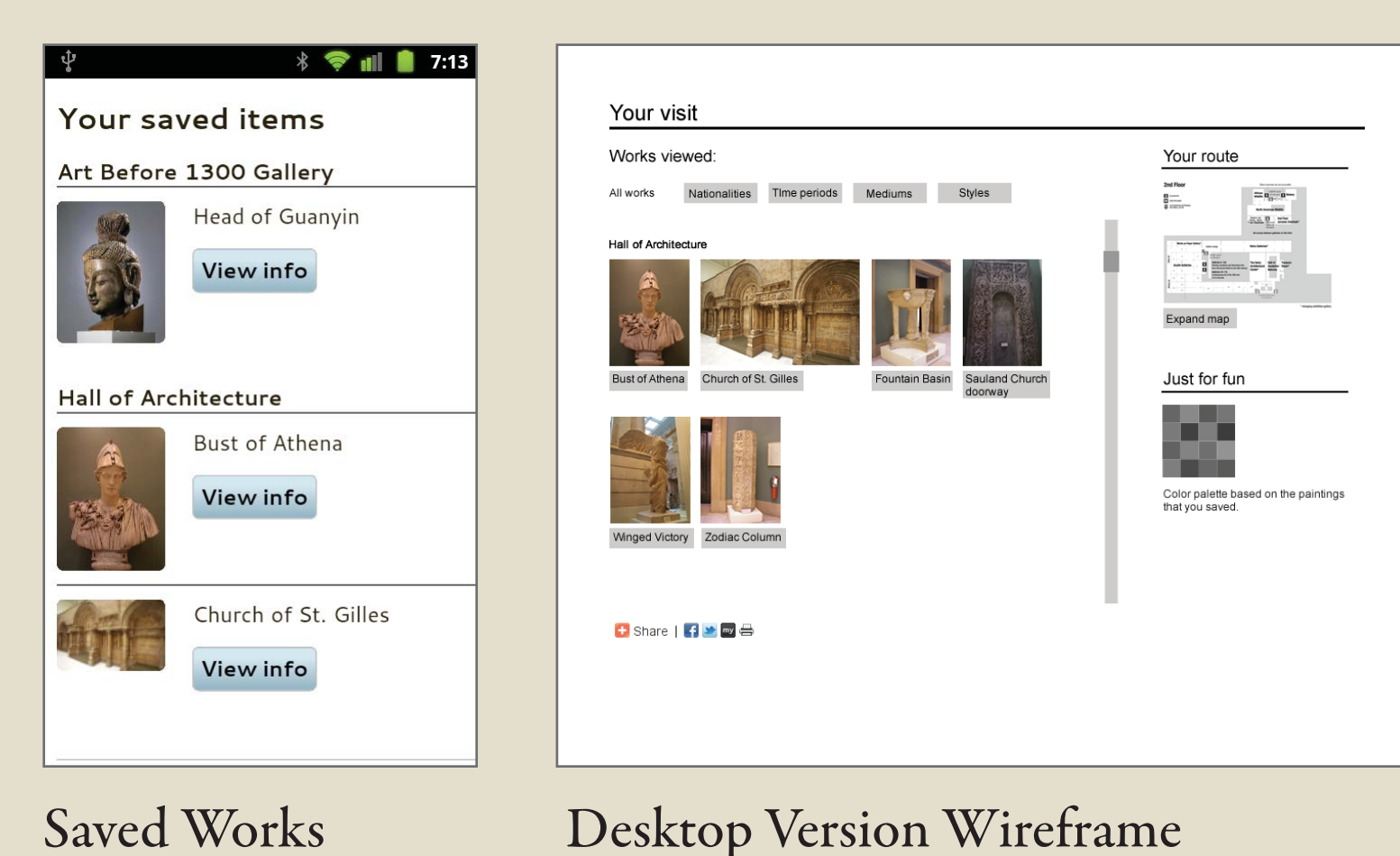


Exploring

Visitors learn about works by selecting a tour, browsing through the guide, or by directly scanning QR codes on object labels. When most phones support NFC, tapping NFC tags can replace scanning QR codes.

Reviewing

Visitors can access a list of their saved works to learn more after their visit.



Testing a Working Prototype

University undergraduate and graduate students tested the guide in the Hall of Architecture at the Carnegie Museum of Art. Museum education and curatorial staff also provided feedback.

Design Criteria

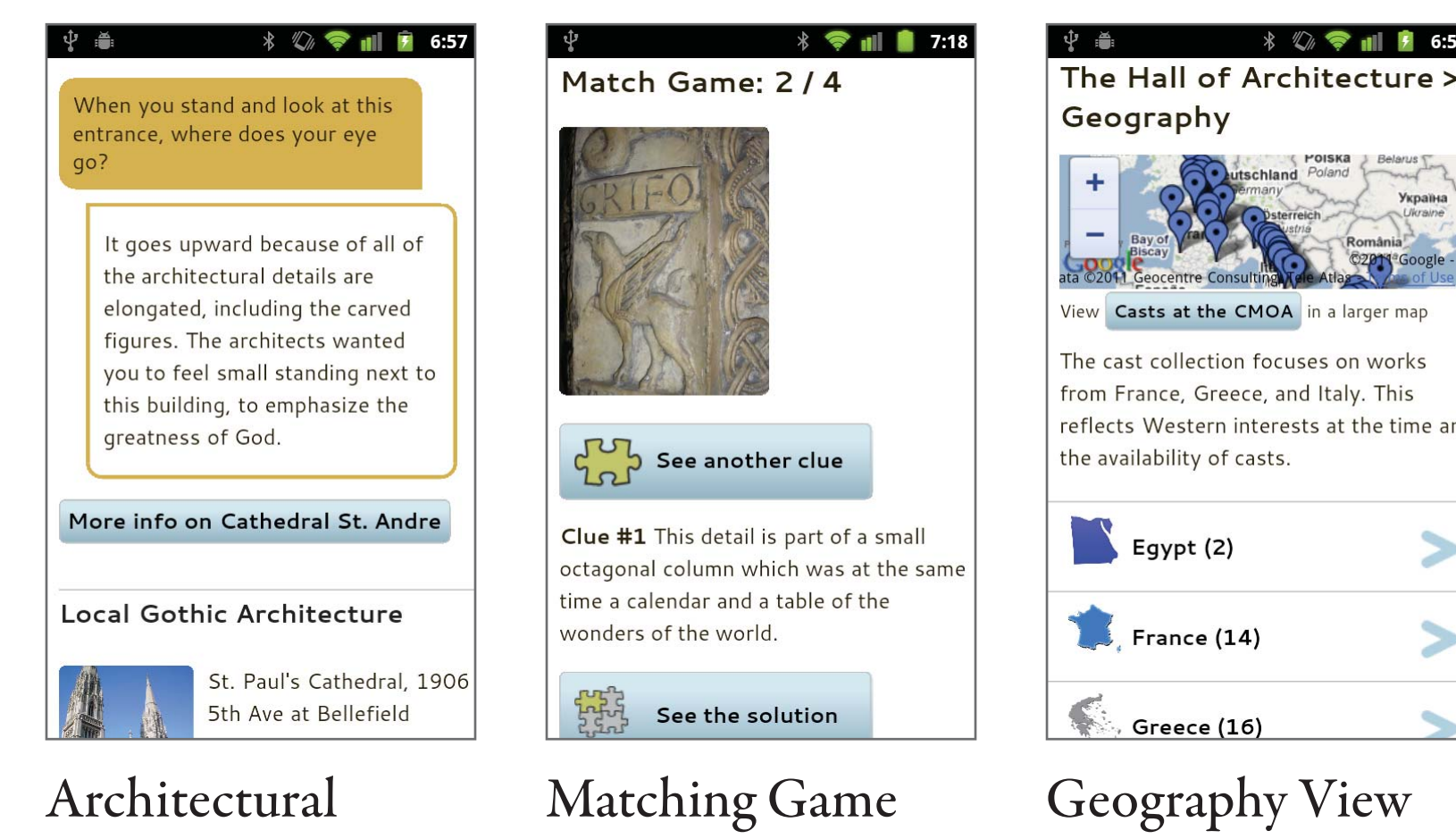
A successful guide will support different goals and experience preferences (direct access, supported access, and guided access). It will also support and spark **conversations**, enable a shared experience with present and non-present friends, be intuitive, **encourage exploration**, and provide **multiple pathways** to engagement. It must accomplish these goals while bringing attention to the exhibitions, rather than becoming a distraction or disconnected activity.

Exploration Patterns

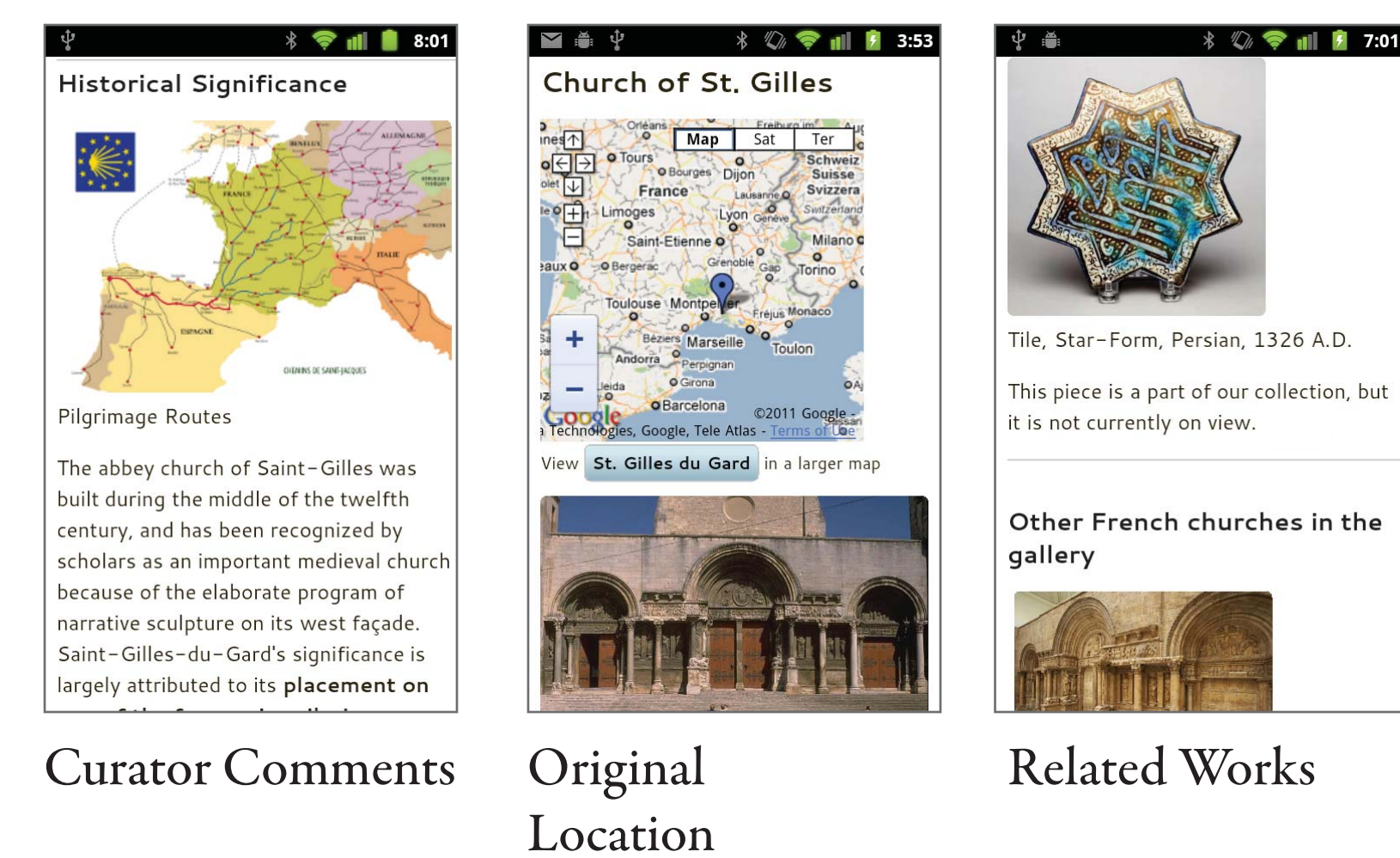


Visitors can choose their level of guidance by directly accessing works, seeing recommended works or by taking a self-guided tour.

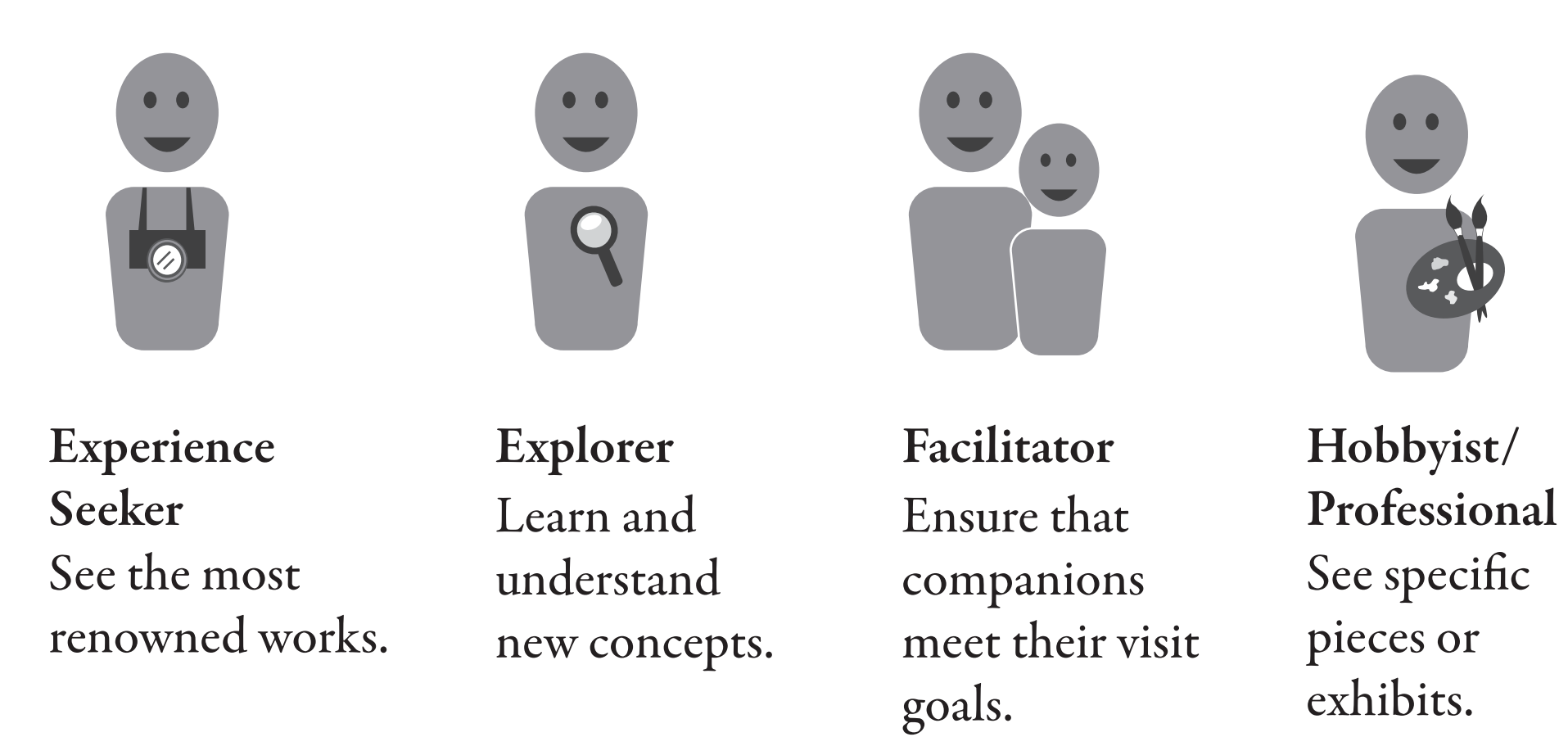
Gallery Information



Object Information



Visitor Types



Source: John Falk, *Identity and the Museum Visitor Experience*

What: An overview of the exhibition with general context, deeper discussions of important concepts in the exhibition, fun ways to view the works with friends, and alternate organizations of the works.

Why: These features allow visitors to get both a broad overview and access to more specialized content, encouraging their curiosity and exploration. Games and alternate organizations of the collections add structure and guidance to support novices.

Who: Primarily Experience Seekers, Explorers, and Facilitators.

What: Provides a range of content about a specific work, such as related works in or outside of the museum, original location of the artwork, historical significance and Q&A about style or process. Both breadth and depth are provided through both original content and links to outside content on the Internet.

Why: Showing related works and context helps visitors to make connections within the exhibition, the museum, and their immediate and broader communities.

Who: All visitor types to different degrees.

Future Work

Other types of content or features could be tested, such as inclusion of **visitor stories** related to the exhibition and **follow-up interactions** on the museum website or through social media channels. **Integrating the guide** with other interpretive aids could also be explored. In order to include substantive content from visitors, perhaps a physical space could be provided outside of the gallery where visitors are encouraged to share their stories.

Feedback and Results

Participants were happy with the guide and felt that it answered their questions. They felt comfortable **exploring** and navigated the content with few errors. Participants said that they would use the guide alone or with friends and that the guide was **not isolating** like traditional audio guides. The game provided direction and allowed for **social interaction** and competition. Museum staff were enthusiastic about the contextual information and the potential for the guide to direct focus and thoughtful attention to the works.

