User-generated and Observed Data at the Hall of Human Life

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What is the *Hall of Human Life*?

The *Hall of Human Life* (*HHL*) is a 9,700 square foot exhibition about human biology and human health at the Museum of Science, Boston. This exhibit centers around one central theme: "Humans are changing in a changing environment."

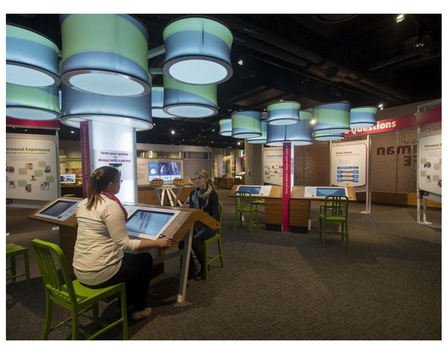
One unique aspect to the exhibit are the use of wristbands and Link Stations. By scanning a wristband at these exhibits, visitors are able to use their own bodies and behaviors to understand biological mechanisms, see and analyze their own data in relation to other visitors, and create research hypotheses related to the activity.

User-generated data

Although not used for this study. past evaluations have used user-generated data for:

- Measuring stay time at individual exhibits
- Comparing visitor demographics over different time periods
- Determining drop-off points at a single component

In 2014, user-generated data was analyzed from an exhibit titled "Form your Opinion" to see seasonal differences in visitor drop-off within the exhibit. Each section represents an individual screen, with the percentages indicating how many visitors saw that particular piece.



Summative Evaluation Methods and Goals

A summative evaluation was conducted and collected visitor data via:

- Surveys
- Interviews
- Timing and tracking observations

This evaluation addressed four questions:

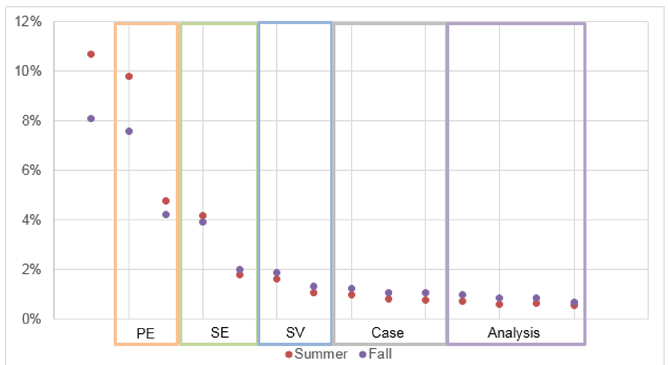
Who is using *HHL*?

How is *HHL* perceived?

How is *HHL* being used?

What do visitors learn?

Figure 7. Screen Occurrence Data from All "Form Your Opinion" Trees, (summer dates: May 7-June 8, 2014, fall dates: October 17-November 18, 2014).



Challenges

- Data output can be messy and difficult to clean
- Time and budget constraints
- Difficult to interpret
- Demographics are based on visitor self-report and may be inaccurate
- Lack of context for data

Summative Results

As a result of this evaluation, we found out:

- HHL's demographics are similar, but not identical to the rest of the Museum.
- It is perceived as suitable for all ages, unique, and up-to-date, particularly for its content and technology.
- Visitors use *HHL* similarly to other large science museum exhibitions
- Link Stations helped promote educational goals and messages related to active participation in scientific processes.

Future use

These data have the potential to be used as a on-going, low-resource data collection method for exhibit remediation. Evaluators and exhibit designers can learn more nuanced information about use and visitor demographics at individual components.

References

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