

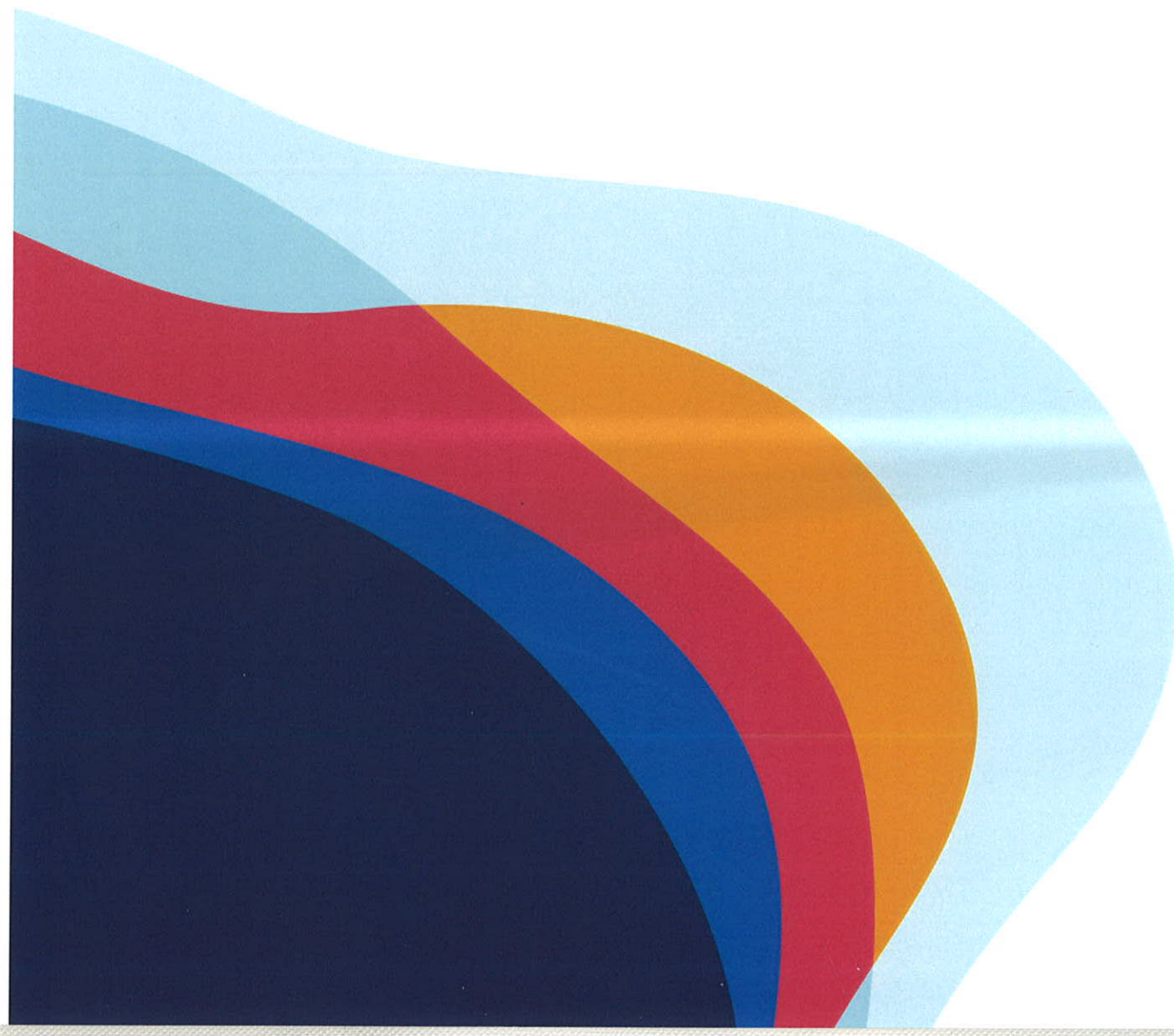
Museum of London

“How the Museum of London
got the wow factor”

Design Business Association
Design Effectiveness Awards 2011

9.0. Museums, Galleries, Events and Visitor Attractions

Museum of London
Coley Porter Bell
July 2011
FOR PUBLICATION





Executive Summary

With its cutting edge research and over 2 million objects, the Museum of London has all the ingredients to be a world class museum. However, it was failing to capture the public's imagination. When Coley Porter Bell was approached in 2007, visitor figures were falling¹, at a time when museum visits in the UK were increasing².

The logo was seen as 'business like', a 'no frills establishment' and created uncertainty over what the museum was for and what to expect³.

With funding for the redevelopment of the lower galleries recently approved, a new positioning and identity was needed - to act as a strategic blueprint for the new galleries, to raise the Museum's profile, attract new visitors and guide everything the Museum was doing.

We needed to inject a sense of dynamism into the brand and connect the past with London's global role today.

We defined the brand idea as: "Fundamentally London – alive with contrast, ideas and discovery".

The new positioning and 'Thumbprint' identity Coley Porter Bell developed, defined the essence of the new Galleries of Modern London which opened in 2010.

Since the relaunch, the number of visits to the Museum in 2010/11 rose 79% on the previous year (2009/10)⁴. However, as the gallery space had not been fully operational for the past three years, data is compared with 2006/7, over which visits rose 31%⁵.

Moreover, the museum succeeded in increasing visits amongst desired target audiences⁶:

- Visits by Londoners up 73%
- Visits by families with children up 132%
- Visits by lower income households up 46%
- Visits by minority ethnic communities up 14%

London's own media hailed the re-launch a triumph, with an 8 page spread in Time Out entitled "How the Museum of London got the wow factor"⁷.

(Word count 300)

"Coley Porter Bell has put us on a journey. The new brand perfectly captures the vitality of London and the people whose stories we tell. The identity marks us out as a vibrant and must-see destination. It strikes the right note for the award winning galleries of the Museum of London and has helped propel the Museum into its next orbit".

Antony Robbins, Head of Communications, Museum of London



Outline of project brief

In 2007, the Museum of London briefed Coley Porter Bell to develop a new and exciting brand identity that could inspire a passion for London – its history, archaeology and diversity. To do justice to the museum's work, making it not just relevant to today's audiences - but a 'must go' destination.

In particular the new positioning and identity needed to:

- i) Reposition the gallery in order to increase total annual visits and penetration with key target audiences – Londoners, families with children, people from lower socio-economic groups and minority ethnic communities.
- ii) Define the idea for the Capital City project - a project that would see the opening of the new Galleries of Modern London in the museum's lower floor.
- iii) Unite the three individual sites (Museum of London, Museum in Docklands and Museum of London Archaeology Service), yet allow them to express their points of difference.
- iv) Give employees something to believe in and provide a platform for a long term campaign and future development.

Before:

MUSEUM OF LONDON

**MUSEUM
IN DOCKLANDS**

MUSEUM OF LONDON

Archaeology Service

Description

The Museum of London is one of the world's largest urban history museums and consists of three sites:

- Museum of London
- Museum in Docklands
- Museum of London Archaeology Service

With its cutting edge research and over 2 million objects it has all the ingredients to be a world class museum but was being let down by its identity and lack of clear positioning.

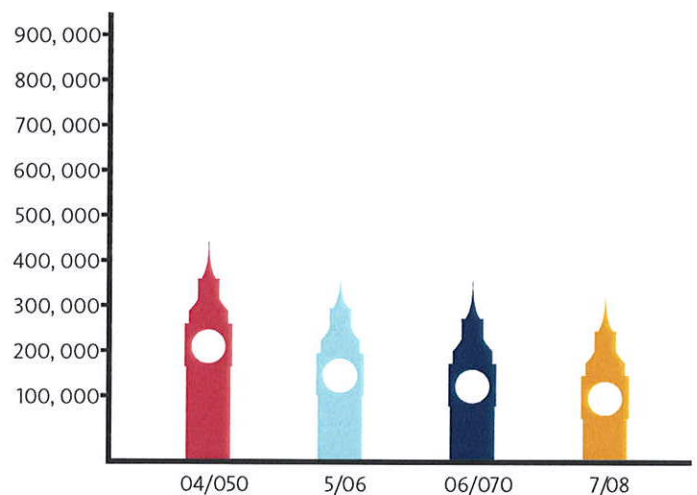
Research revealed its corporate identity was bland and uninspiring and failed to capture the public's imagination. In particular, the logo was seen as "business like"... "no frills establishment"... "it says, this is a very serious place"⁸ ... "neat little box but doesn't say anything"⁹. It created uncertainty over what the museum was for and what to expect. The website was also seen as confusing, inflexible, difficult to navigate and old fashioned¹⁰.

The identity and naming also failed to unite or differentiate any of the sites successfully.

"It's less clear to me why a museum should be 'in' a place rather than 'of' a place...is the British Museum 'The Museum in Bloomsbury?'"¹¹.

At a time when other museums in the UK were seeing increasing visitor numbers¹², the Museum of London was experiencing a year on year decline in the number of visits¹³.

Visits to Museum of London



When the Museum of London applied to the Heritage Lottery Fund for funding for the New Galleries the submission outlined the core aim as "to change the presentation of London's story to make it more relevant and engaging to present and future audiences".

A new positioning and identity was therefore crucial to realise this ambition.

Overview of the market

London is a very competitive market, home to many world leading arts and heritage attractions. With people already squeezed on leisure time, the museum needed to increase its relevance to today's Londoners.

Being a fast-paced, vibrant city, there was clear recognition that London was changing faster than the museum was responding. The Museum needed to modernise and reflect a greater sense of London's contemporary identity.

Moreover, any positioning, identity and offering would need to work harder than most to engage the public – given the challenges that the Museum of London faced with its location and architecture, which even the media acknowledged!

“The challenges the galleries faced were many... compounded by unfriendly Barbican architecture, which sites the main entrance one story up and hidden behind a brick roundabout”.

Peter Watts, The Independent on Sunday.

Project launch date: including the opening of the new Galleries of Modern London - May 2010

Design budget: £ 96,000



Outline of the design solution

i) Redefining the target audience

The museum had been for white middle class, traditional museum goers and culturally confident families. It needed to be for everyone, from the general public to experts, from Londoners to tourists, kids and families. Today, all Londoners should feel 'this is part of my story'.

Prior to Visual Planning™ we spoke to museum staff, school groups, tourists, people working in London authorities and the diverse people who live in London today. We wanted to understand how they currently felt about the museum and importantly to help clarify what its future focus should be.

We heard opinions ranging from 'a jewellery box of discovery', to 'people's history', to 'london for londoners', 'london as a world city', to 'archeology'¹⁴. There was a real need to get them to unite behind one thought.

ii) The Visual Planning™ Workshop

Our Workshop's focus became - not simply to define what the brand should look like visually - but to develop a brand idea the Museum staff could unite behind and guide future gallery development and exhibitions.

Throughout the workshop we heard about human stories related to the city, its ever changing nature and the world class status of the museum. As captured in qualitative learnings: "...It's not an art gallery, it's about people, the everyday history of the city and the people who live here..."¹⁵

People also expressed a desire for more energy, creativity and dynamism. There was a desire to connect the capital city of the past with London's global role and cosmopolitan character of today and its people as catalysts of change. In effect, capturing a sense of the past, present and future.

These findings were encapsulated in the thought:

'Fundamentally London – alive with contrast, ideas and discovery'.

With the new brand personality: 'impressive', 'enthalling' and 'provocative'.

A defining thought that has become the blueprint for all communications and the design and content for the Galleries of Modern London.

- Roman London
- Medieval London
- London today
- Inner London 2020
- Inner London 2020
- Outer London 2020



tiii) The Design

The bold new identity resembles a 'Thumbprint' signifying the people that have left their 'mark' on London throughout history. Designed to represent the ever changing city, the coloured layers map out the shape of London's past, present and future. It's also an organic mark, reflecting the ceaseless ebb and flow of London life.

The typography pays homage to London's iconic street and Underground signage.

The curved contours are warm and welcoming, whilst the vibrant, contemporary palette is alive with creative energy.

The identity unites the brand by representing the passage of time, but also allows each site to be distinct. The impression of water is used for the Docklands site and earthy tones for archaeology.

We also developed the identity beyond the logo to create a clear visual architecture and a consistent tone of voice.

The Galleries of Modern London that opened in May 2010 have been designed to bring to life the brand personality and brand values.

Every detail was considered, even recommending that the Museum in Docklands was renamed the Museum of London Docklands, linking the group together.

(Word count 499)

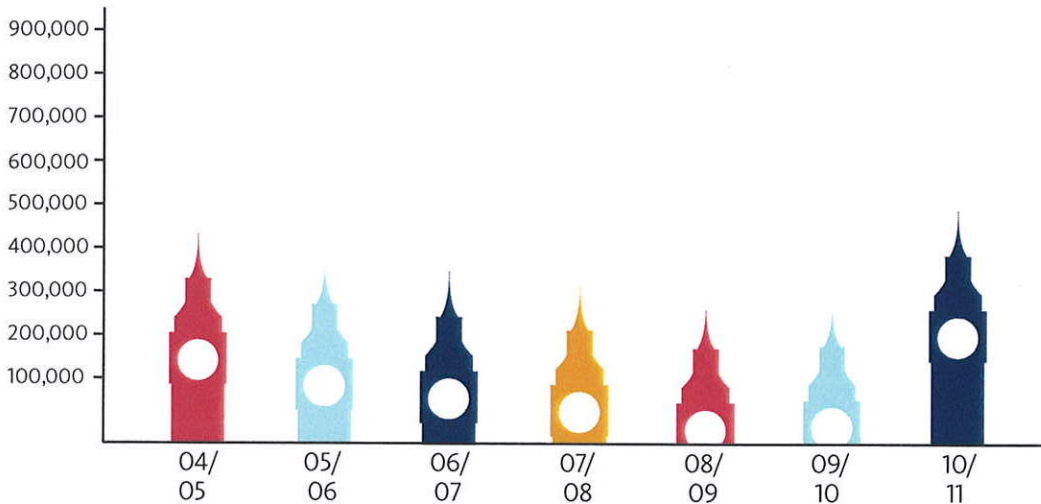


The Results

A 'must go' destination...

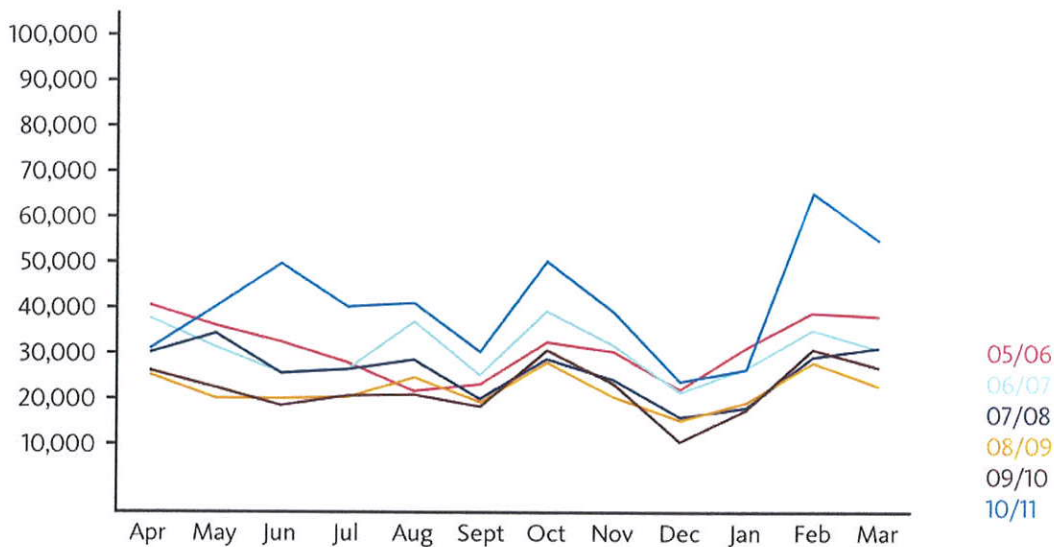
- Increase in number of visitors and visits¹⁶

Visitor figures have seen a massive increase since the brand and gallery relaunch in May 2010, with the number of visits up 79% on the previous year (2009).

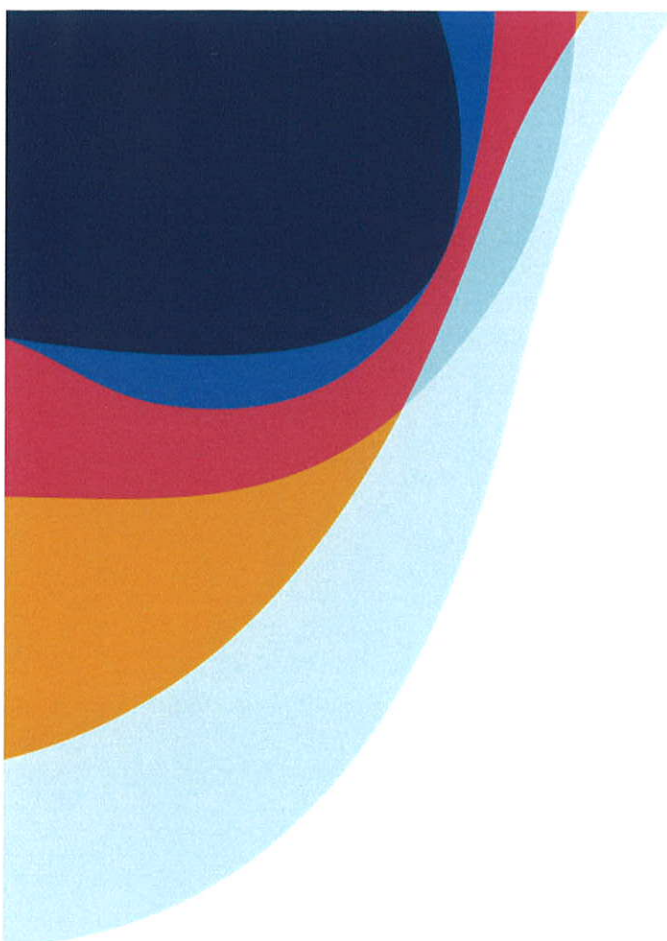


Moreover, comparing 2010/11 with 2006/7 (the last time the gallery was fully open) we get a clear picture of the effect of the rebrand with number of visitors up - 75,266 or 22% - and the number of visits up 116,106 - or 31%. Indeed, the success of the relaunch surpassed expectations with the number of visits exceeding the Quarter 1 2010 (April - June) forecast by 27% and exceeding forecast for each of the subsequent quarters 2 and 3.

Of note is that the increase in number of visits has been sustained 10 months post the new gallery opening and is ongoing.



- Increase in first time visits to their highest level since research began in 2005¹⁷.
- Increase in visit frequency from 1.08 times per visitor in 2006/7 to 1.16 times per visitor in 2010/11¹⁸.



- Customer satisfaction has also been extremely positive¹⁹.

Looking at the Morris Hargreaves McIntyre’s hierarchy of motivations, where customers become increasingly engaged with the museum as they move up from social through to spiritual motivations, we can see that most visitors had an experience that exceeded their expectations. Those expecting a social visit (25%) considered their visit to have reached an intellectual or even higher level of engagement by the time they left. A higher proportion of visits resulted in emotional (13% to 61%) and spiritual (4% to 8%) outcomes than expected.

It would appear that the relaunched Museum was working to ‘enthral’ people as defined by the new brand personality.

It is no surprise then that, 62% of visitors said they were ‘very likely to return’, up from 45% in 2006/7²⁰. Moreover, the likelihood of visitors recommending the museum to a friend has risen to its highest recorded, up from 74% in 2005 to 84% in July-September 2010²¹.

Qualitative feedback from individuals has been very enthusiastic²²:

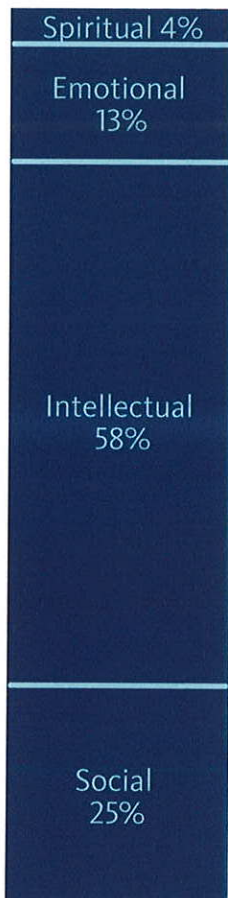
“Have just visited the new Sacker Gallery with my family. I just want to congratulate you. This is the best Museum display we have been to this year. Well chosen items, great and imaginative use of space and light, and superb interactive exhibits. Our two boys were reluctant to go into the Museum, but even more reluctant to leave. Thank you”.

Indeed, the Museum has been recognised as the true home for the story of London and has renewed London based journalists sense of pride in their city.

“...a new marvel of British heritage...”
Londoner’s Diary, Evening Standard

“This is an experience Londoner’s can really own”.
The Metro, Arwa Haider

Main motivation



Main outcome





Attracted key target audiences

The Museum achieved its objectives of increasing visits amongst its key target audiences²³:

i) Increase in visits from Londoners

The Museum is now being seen as a museum for Londoners, with the number of visits from Londoners increasing from 109,306 in 2006/7 to 189,298 in 2010/11, an increase of 73% on 2006/7 and an increase of 11% as a proportion of all visits in 2010/11. In addition, 70% of Londoners said they were 'very likely to return' in 2010/11 versus 61% in 2006/7.

ii) Increase in visits from children in family groups

There has also been a huge increase in the number of visits from children in family groups, from 30,121 in 2006/7 to 70,000 in 2010/11 - an increase of 132%! This also corresponds to a 7% increase as a proportion of all visit types in 2010/11.

iii) Increase in people from lower income households

More people from NS-SEC groups 5-8 visited the museum in 2010/11 - 55,056 compared with 37,692 in 2006/7. This is a 46% increase and also corresponds to an increase of 2% for all visits in 2010/11.

iv) Increase in people of minority ethnic communities

With museums often the preserve of the white middle classes, it is very positive to see an increase in people from minority ethnic communities visiting, up by 14%, from 41,461 in 2006/7 to 47,325 in 2010/11.



Increase in sales

The increase in footfall has driven increased sales in the Museum's shop. Indeed much of the shop's merchandise is branded with the Museum's identity.

Sales in the MOL shop grew a phenomenal 66% post the new galleries opening, with spend per visitor (the museums main sales KPI) increasing by 38% - compared to the same period in 2006 when the gallery space was last fully open²⁴.

	July-Sept 2006	July-Sept 2010	% change (2006 vs 2010)
Shop sales	£123,842	£206,145	+ 66%
No of visitors	90,727	109,449	+ 21%
Spend per visit	£1.36	£1.88	+ 38%

On the back of the new identity the museum has also launched a new range of greetings cards, which were the UK's best selling licensed range for the first quarter of 2011.

Sustaining donations and aiding partnerships

According to the brand's director of development the brand positioning and identity has helped sustain donations in a period of financial instability...

"The new brand - and not just the brand logo - has been of great importance in the last half of the Capital City Campaign which took place during the growth of the credit crunch, the collapse of Lehman Brothers, and the growing recession. Our brand image portrayed optimism, growth, pizzazz, style, engagement and many other qualities that have helped us and the Museum be successful".

Martin Kaufman
Director of Development

New teaching partnerships are also under discussion with London Universities.



The new positioning defined and supported the successful launch of the Galleries of Modern London

The new positioning drove the content of The Galleries of Modern London, which take up the lower galleries of the Museum of London. Traditional exhibits have been blended with digital technology, to add richness and extra layers of interpretation.

Two new exhibits in particular, work hard to deliver the personality of 'enthraling' and 'provocative' as defined by Coley Porter Bell's new positioning.

The Pleasure Gardens includes a set of extraordinary contemporary hats created by Phillip Treacy, inspired by the 18th century costumer, they are shown with.

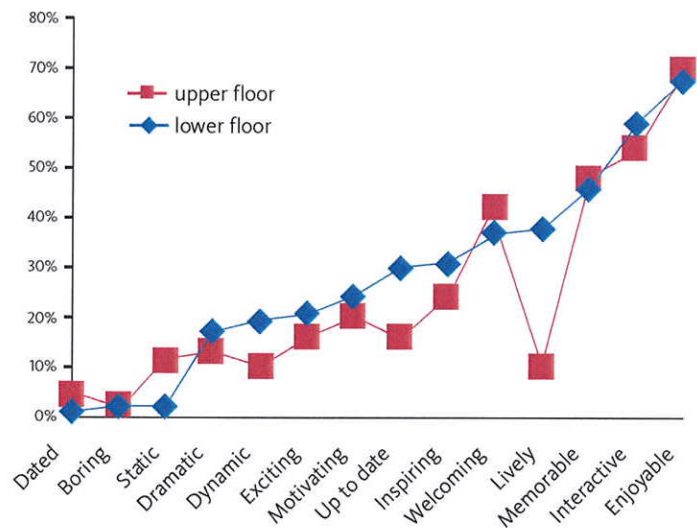
The River of Ideas encourages thought and debate...

"As you complete your journey... there on a 'river of ideas' ...visitors are invited to vote on the concerns of contemporary and future London ... with a bit of work that's one giant living poll on attitudes to modern London's problems. It's potentially a means by which the curators can make this museum alive to change as well as capturing the story of our past".
Kurt Barling, BBC London.

And it's not just journalists who have noted the brand idea of being 'alive' with contrast, ideas and discovery. In quantitative research, visitors scored the new galleries on the lower floor significantly higher than the upper floor for being 'lively'²⁵.

It is also very positive to see that both the upper and lower floors are scoring highly for being 'welcoming' in line with the new brand behaviour as detailed below²⁶.

Which of these words would you use to describe the galleries?



The paid for exhibitions that have run since the brand relaunch have also proved extremely successful. The London Street Photography Exhibition that has been running since February 2011 has generated 85,338 visitors compared with 33,848 visits for the Satirical London Exhibition that ran in 2006 (comparing the period of the first 116 days). An increase of 252%²⁷.



New brand behaviour

The new brand identity has also manifested itself with new brand behaviour, including a change in approach to front of house welcome and the addition of 'visitor hosts'. Instead of traditional security attendants supervising the galleries, visitor hosts act as guides and information assistants, providing regular tours through the galleries and presenting short talks on items of interest. This helps deliver the brand personality and tone of voice of being enthralling, inspiring, lively and engaging.

Generating the 'wow' factor from the media buzz

The launch of the new identity and galleries has generated a real media buzz, achieving around £1 million of free media coverage for launch of the galleries, with the launch featured in GQ magazine, The Times, The Guardian, The Metro amongst others and on BBC's Radio 4's Today Programme.

Time Out produced an 8 page supplement entitled "How the Museum of London got the wow factor" in its May 27th – June 2nd 2010 edition. This has helped take the Museum to a new, young audience and the relationship with the title remains strong.

Marketing campaign

The new marketing campaign builds on the new positioning, and has broadened perceptions of the Museum and its collections. The 'You are Here' campaign linked past and present through images displayed on posters over 1000 sites across the city, including some of the capital's iconic locations: the National Gallery, St Paul's Cathedral and London Zoo. They prompt the onlooker to reflect on how the unflagging energy of Londoners has shaped the capital over the past 350 years.

'StreetMuseum' iphone app

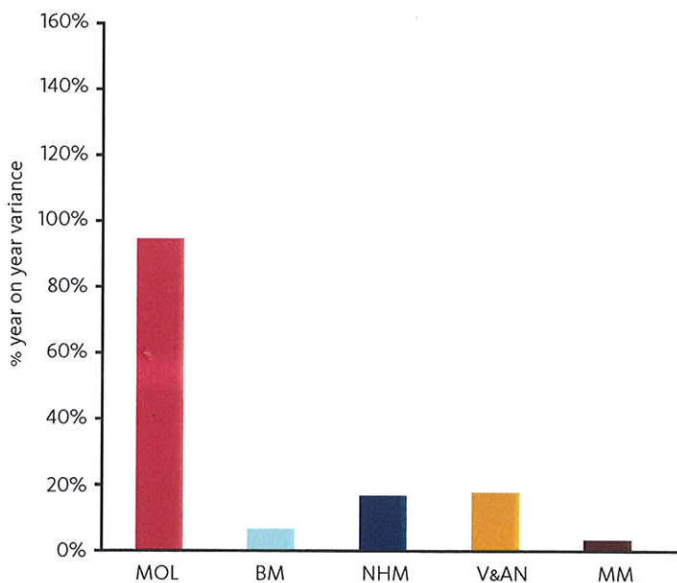
The 'You are Here' theme was carried through in an iphone app, which the new identity perfectly lent itself too with its overlapping layers of past, present and future. The app takes 200 images from the Museum's collection and geo-tags them to their actual locations, allowing users to see a place both in its past and present guise. The app's success took everyone by surprise. It has been downloaded by over 150,000 people worldwide²⁸ and connects the brand to a younger urban audience, who might not otherwise encounter the Museum.

Other influencing factors

The 'You are Here' campaign, iPhone app and development of the new galleries were all done off the new brand positioning. They build on the idea of overlapping layers of past, present and future and the people of London as catalysts of change.

The increase is not simply due to an increase in visitor attendance at all museums as Museum of London experienced a much higher growth in visitor figures compared to other key London cultural institutions²⁹.

Visitor benchmarking July - September 2010



The increase in visits/visitors was not due to an increase in additional gallery space as the new Galleries of Modern London were opened in the same lower ground floor space as had been previously available.



1. Museum of London 2005 - 2008
2. Mintel: Historic and Cultural Visitor Attractions – UK November 2010
Euromonitor: 'Tourist Attractions – United Kingdom' July 2010
3. E-Survey, Morris Hargreaves McIntyre May 2007
4. Museum of London 2009/10 vs 2010/11
5. Museum of London 2006/7 vs 2010/11
6. Museum of London Visitor Research Findings 2006/7 and 2010/11 Morris Hargreaves McIntyre
7. Time Out May 27th – June 2nd 2010 edition
8. E-Survey, Morris Hargreaves McIntyre May 2007
9. Stakeholder interviews, Coley Porter Bell 2007
10. Stakeholder interviews, Coley Porter Bell 2007
11. E-Survey, Morris Hargreaves McIntyre May 2007
12. Mintel: Historic and Cultural Visitor Attractions – UK November 2010
Euromonitor: 'Tourist Attractions – United Kingdom' July 2010
13. Museum of London 2004/5 – 2008/9
14. Stakeholder interviews, Coley Porter Bell 2007
E-Survey, Morris Hargreaves McIntyre May 2007
15. Stakeholder interviews, Coley Porter Bell 2007
16. Museum of London Visitor Research Findings 2004/5, 2005/6, 2006/7, 2008/9, 2009/10, 2010/11 Morris Hargreaves McIntyre
17. Museum of London Visitor Research Findings 2004/5 vs 2010/11 Morris Hargreaves McIntyre
18. Museum of London Visitor Research Findings 2006/7 vs 2010/11 Morris Hargreaves McIntyre
19. Museum of London Visitor Research Findings 2010/11 Morris Hargreaves McIntyre
20. Museum of London Visitor Research Findings 2006/7 vs 2010/11 Morris Hargreaves McIntyre
21. Museum of London Visitor Research Findings 2004/5 vs 2010 Morris Hargreaves McIntyre
22. Galleries of Modern London Evaluation Findings, Creative Research 2010
23. Museum of London Visitor Research Findings 2006/7 vs 2010/11 Morris Hargreaves McIntyre
24. Museum of London July – Sept 2006 vs July – Sept 2010
25. Galleries of Modern London Evaluation Findings, Creative Research 2010
26. Galleries of Modern London Evaluation Findings, Creative Research 2010
27. Museum of London
28. Museum of London
29. Museum of London