Self-Guided Digital Resources for Families
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Digital resources: An opportunity for museums

- Disseminate information to many visitors with ease
- Encourage visitors to interact socially
- Allow for more dynamic learning experiences
The Search for the Four Givens

Pros:
- Families enjoyed using iPads
- Supported family learning

Cons:
- Barrier to looking at objects
- Story was too complex
- Difficult for hosts to distribute
Project Goal

Our goal was to assess whether self-guided digital resources for families are a practical and effective means to complement the experience at the Museum of London.
Project Objectives

1. Examine self-guided digital resources in other museums across London
2. Develop a prototype of a self-guided digital resource for the Victorian Walk
3. Test the prototype in the Victorian Walk and assess its effectiveness and practicality
Project timeline

May

- Examine Other Museums’ Resources
- Develop Resource
- Test Resource

June

- Refine Resource
- Develop Recommendations
- Project Wrap-up
Visiting museums and interviewing stakeholders

- Our resource should include
  - On-loading process
  - Help button
  - Choices for visitors

- Our resource should avoid
  - Handling personal information
  - Relying on a stable internet connection
Family learning

- Joint attention
- Recognising context and culture
- Collaboration through conversation
Human Computer Context Interaction (HCCI) Framework

Outlines the interactions that an ideal resource should promote amongst visitors.
Welcome to London

You and your family have just moved to Victorian London! Take a walk through the streets and see what the city has to offer!

This is a self-guided experience. You do not have to follow the order of the numbers on the shops. Not every shop has an activity.
Welcome

Travel to a room and tap on the corresponding number!
Pawnbrokers, referred to as "uncle," were the poor person's bank. Clothing and jewellery were handed over in exchange for a loan.

If the loan was not repaid within a year, "uncle" could sell the goods. By 1900 there were 700 pawnbrokers in London.
Pawnbroker

Choose an Activity

Imagine
Search
Quiz
Pick an object and make up a story about it. Who did it belong to? Why did they sell it?
Can you spot the following items?
Three pocket watches
Silver cutlery
Drinking glasses
How much money do you think the pawnbroking industry made annually?

- £10 Thousand
- £8 Million
- £15 Trillion
How much money do you think the pawnbroking industry made annually?
How much money do you think the pawnbroking industry made annually?

Try Again  £8 Million  Try Again
8 million pounds; which today would be equivalent to well over 900 million pounds. With that much business, the pawnbrokers played an important role in the working class economy.
Pawnbroker

Choose an Activity

Imagine  Search  Quiz
Pawnbroker

Need help?
Select an activity at the bottom of the screen!

Act: Live life as a Victorian through your actions!

Search: Find Victorian artefacts in the shops!

Imagine: Use your imagination to live back in Victorian London!

Quiz: Test your knowledge of the Victorian era!

Press back when you are finished

Got it!
Testing our application

Our methods of data collection

- Observations
- Survey responses
Testing our application

Limitations

- 63 families used our application
- Observed 20 families
- Surveyed 45 families
- Different version of the survey on different days
Families prefer digital resources

"Times are moving on digitally and [the museum] should keep up with the market."

"Children are obsessed with technology and it might help them get more engaged."

"[Digital resources] are fun, help you understand more, and encouraged our child to read."
Joint attention

- Was the whole family engaged?
  - *Six out of seven* families said yes

- Were all family members included and invested?
  - *All ten families* agreed or strongly agreed
"The imagine [activity] caused lots of interesting conversation."

"Our favourite activity was discussing what went on in the shops."
Recognising context and culture

“We did not know [the pawnbrokers] existed.”

“We were excited to hear that the first public toilets were at the Great Exhibition in 1851.”
Interviews with museum hosts

- Keeping £100 security deposits is unsafe and impractical

- **Five out of six** hosts would prefer an automated system for distribution

- Front desk is a preferred location of distribution for hosts but may be inconvenient for visitors
Recommendations

Implement more digital resources for families in its galleries

Further explore digital activities to promote family learning

Consider implementing resources for visitors’ personal devices
Implement more digital resources for families in its galleries

- Families have positive attitudes towards digital resources
- The Four Givens report supports these positive attitudes
Further explore digital activities to promote family learning

- Due to the small sample size, the museum should look into further testing our activities
- Other activities also promote family learning
Consider implementing resources for visitors’ personal devices

- The rent-out model is currently impractical for the museum
- The bring your own device (BYOD) model eliminates the need for a rent-out process
- Potential difficulty getting visitors to download the resource on mobile device
Implement more digital resources for families in its galleries

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Acknowledgements

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References

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Thank you!
Why Victorian Walk?

- One entrance and exit
  - Easy to distribute and collect iPads for testing
- No existing exhibit descriptions
  - Visitor attention
  - Avoid information overload