



Science on a Sphere Lobby Interview Report

Prepared by Amy Grack Nelson and Beth Janetski

March 2, 2007

Overview

A study was carried out to understand how many visitors see Science on a Sphere (SOS) during their visit to the museum, prior knowledge they have about SOS, and why they choose not to visit SOS. For this study, visitors ages 8 and above were interviewed as they exited the museum. Individuals in school groups were not included in the sample. A continuous random sampling method was used for data collection. Using this method, the interviewer positioned him/herself in the lobby and drew an imaginary line. The first eligible visitor to cross this line was approached for an interview. Data was collected January 8 to February 17, 2007. A total of 189 visitors were interviewed. Visitor demographics can be found on page 4.

Results & Discussion

Visits to SOS

Visitors were initially shown an image of SOS and asked if they saw the exhibit during their visit to the museum. A quarter of visitors (26%) reported visiting SOS. A chi-square test of independence was calculated comparing visits to SOS to the composition of the visitor group (adults and children or adults only). A significant interaction was found ($X^2(1) = 6.98$, $p < 0.01$). Groups of adults and children were more likely to visit SOS (34%) than groups composed of adults only (17%).

Prior Knowledge of SOS

The 50 visitors who saw SOS were asked if they sought out the exhibit or if they just happened to come across it. Most visitors (92%) said they just happened to come across SOS. These 46 visitors were asked if they had seen or heard anything about SOS before seeing it at the museum. Most of these visitors (91%) said they did not have any prior knowledge of the exhibit. The four visitors who had prior knowledge of the Sphere said they had seen it during a previous visit to the museum.

The four visitors who purposefully sought out the Sphere were asked what made them seek the exhibit out. Two of the visitors had seen the exhibit on a prior visit and wanted to show the Sphere to other people in their group. The other two visitors had heard about SOS from someone else, citing SMM's information desk and someone from the organization Fresh Energy.

The 139 visitors who did not stop at SOS during their visit were asked if they had heard or seen anything about the Sphere prior to the interview. Only 17% were familiar with the Sphere. These 24 visitors were asked what they had seen or heard about SOS. Visitors most frequently reported seeing the Sphere during a prior visit (42%) or simply glancing at it during their current visit (42%). There were also a small percentage of visitors (16%) who had heard general information about SOS from other people or in the media.

Reasons for Not Visiting SOS

The 24 visitors who were aware of the Sphere but did not visit it, were asked why they decided not to stop and see SOS. Visitor responses were coded into themes and representative responses are included for each. Some visitors provided more than one reason for not visiting the Sphere. Lack of time was most frequently

mentioned (38%). Visitors also cited kids in the group, their own lack of interest, and crowding in the SOS exhibit area.

Reason for Not Stopping at SOS (n=24)

38% (9) Time

- Lack of time.
- Forgot about it. Time constraints, we only had a little bit of time today.

21% (5) Kids

- They (the kids) didn't want to see it.
- So many kids (with him in the group).

13% (3) Not Interested

- Not really interested.
- Didn't look interesting.

13% (3) Crowded

- Wasn't showing what we wanted to see. Sphere was having problems and there was a class there.
- It was crowded.

13% (3) Other

- Going to the Race show and got distracted by other things.
- Dinosaurs.
- Didn't remember it.

Likelihood of Visiting SOS In the Future

All visitors were asked about their likelihood of visiting SOS during a future trip to the museum. The 139 visitors who did not visit SOS during their museum visit were asked to read a description of the exhibit before stating their likelihood. As illustrated in the table below, the likelihood of visiting SOS in the future was similar for both groups of visitors. More than two-thirds of both groups (72% visited, 68% did not visit) said they were likely to visit SOS in the future.

Likelihood of Visiting SOS in the Future

	Percent of Visitors	
	<u>Visited SOS (n=50)</u>	<u>Did not Visit SOS (n=139)</u>
Likely to visit SOS	72%	68%
Somewhat likely	26%	23%
Somewhat unlikely	2%	5%
Unlikely to visit SOS	0%	4%

Visitor Demographics

Sex (n=189)

Female: 60%

Male: 40%

Primary Language (n=188)

English: 95%

Other: 5%

Ethnicity (n=188)

White: 84%

African American: 6%

Asian: 4%

Other/Mixed: 4%

Hispanic: 1%

South Asian: <1%

Native American: <1%

Age (n=189)

Median age: 36

Minimum age: 9

Maximum age: 80

Age Range (n=189)

8-16: 12%

17-24: 13%

25-34: 24%

35-44: 18%

45-54: 15%

55-64: 9%

65+: 9%

Temporary or Permanent Disability (n=189)

No: 99%

Yes: <1% (Cognitive Disability)

Interest Level in Science (n=189)

Interest level 1-5: 11%

Interest level 6-10: 89%

Knowledge of Science (n=189)

Knowledge level: 1 – 5: 43%

Knowledge level 6 - 10: 57%

Household Income (n=162)

Under \$30,000: 11%

\$30,000 to \$39,999: 9%

\$40,000 to \$49,999: 4%

\$50,000 to \$59,999: 10%

\$60,000 to \$69,999: 7%

\$70,000 to \$79,000: 10%

\$80,000 to \$89,999: 7%

\$90,000 to \$99,999: 4%

\$100,000 to \$149,999: 10%

\$150,000 and higher: 15%

Didn't provide info (refused and no data): 14%

Group Composition (n=189)

Adults and kids: 53%

Alone: 4%

Adults only: 47%

Number of Other Visitors in Group (n=187)

Median: 2

Minimum: 0

Maximum: 8

Ages of Other Visitors in Group (n=408)

Median age: 22

Minimum age: Less than 1

Maximum age: 82

SMM Members (n=189)

No: 62%

Yes: 36%

Number of Visits to SMM in Last 2 Years (n=189)

None: 24%

1-2 times: 27%

3-5 times: 35%

More than 5 times: 14%

Education (n=189)

Less than High School: 14%

High School: 6%

Some College/Tech Ed: 18%

College Degree: 40%

Post-Grad: 22%

SOS Lobby Interview

Excuse me, my name is _____ and I work here at the museum. We are talking to visitors today to get feedback about Science on a Sphere. Would you be willing to take a few minutes to share your opinions? (*Interview visitors 8 and above only. Secure adult permission and verify age if necessary before you do the interview.*)

1. Did you visit Science on a Sphere during today's visit? Here is an image of the Sphere to help you remember which exhibit it is. (Show photograph of Sphere)

- 1 Yes → Skip to page 2
2 No

DID NOT VISIT SOS TODAY

2. Had you seen or heard anything about Science on a Sphere before this interview?

- 1 Yes
2 No --> Skip to 3

2b. (*If Yes to 2*) What did you see or hear about Science on a Sphere?

(*Probe if necessary to make sure they are answering the question. If they heard something about SOS, ask who they heard it from.*)

2c. (*If Yes to 2*) What was the main reason you decided not to visit Science on a Sphere today?

3. Here is a description of Science on a Sphere. Please take a minute to read this. (*After visitor has read sheet*) After reading the description, what is the likelihood that you would visit Science on a Sphere during a future visit to the museum? Would you say you are...

- 1 Likely to visit SOS
2 Somewhat likely to visit SOS
3 Somewhat unlikely to visit SOS
4 Unlikely to visit SOS

- SKIP TO VISITOR INFO SHEET--

VISITED SOS TODAY

4. During today's visit, did you purposefully seek out the Science on a Sphere exhibit or did you just happen to come across it?

- 1 Seek it out → Go to 4a
- 2 Come across it → Skip to 4b

4a. (If *Seek it out*) What had you seen or heard either at the museum or before your visit that made you want to seek out Science on a Sphere today?

4b. (If *came across it*) Had you heard or seen anything about Science on a Sphere before you came across it in the museum?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

4c. (If Yes to 4b) What had you seen or heard about Science on a Sphere?

(Probe if necessary to make sure they are answering the question. If they heard something about SOS, ask who they heard it from.)

6. What is the likelihood that you would visit Science on a Sphere again during a future visit to the museum? Would you say you are...

- 1 Likely to visit SOS
- 2 Somewhat likely to visit SOS
- 3 Somewhat unlikely to visit SOS
- 4 Unlikely to visit SOS

- GO TO VISITOR INFO SHEET--

Visitor Information Sheet

This last part of the survey is designed to help us serve our audience.

1. How would you rate your interest in science on a scale of 1 to 10 if 1 is "I have absolutely no interest in science" and 10 is "I am extremely interested in science"? (CIRCLE ONLY ONE NUMBER)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

2. How would you rate your knowledge of science on a scale of 1 to 10 if 1 is "I know absolutely nothing about science" and 10 is "I am a research scientist"? (CIRCLE ONLY ONE NUMBER)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

3. What is your age? _____

4. Are you... Male Female

5. Do you have a temporary or permanent disability? Yes No

6. *If yes*, how would you describe the disability? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mobility | <input type="checkbox"/> Learning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Visual | <input type="checkbox"/> Cognitive |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Auditory | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

7. What is the primary language spoken at your home? _____

8. What is your ethnicity (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

- African-American
- White
- Hispanic
- South Asian
- Asian
- Native American
- Other: _____

9. Who did you come with to the museum today? (CHECK ONLY ONE ANSWER)

- I am here alone
- I am with a school or tour group
- I am here in a social group, such as a family, that includes adults AND children
- I am here in a social group that includes adults ONLY

10. Please list the ages of all the other people you are with today at the museum (not including yourself).

11. Are you or your family a member of this museum? Yes No Unsure

12. Before today, how many times have you visited this museum during the last 2 years?

- None
- 1-2 times
- 3-5 times
- 6 or more times

13. What is your zip code? _____

14. What is the highest level of education you have completed? (CHECK ONLY ONE ANSWER)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than High School | <input type="checkbox"/> College Degree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Completed High School | <input type="checkbox"/> Post-Graduate Degree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Some College or Technical Education | |

15. What was your total annual household income last year? (CHECK ONLY ONE ANSWER)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Under \$10,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$70,000 to 79,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$10,000 to \$19,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$80,000 to 89,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$20,000 to \$29,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$90,000 to 99,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$30,000 to 39,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100,000 to 149,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$40,000 to 49,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$150,000 or more |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$50,000 to 59,999 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$60,000 to 69,000 | |

Science on a Sphere

This is the closest you can get to looking at Earth from space without suiting up and blasting off! When you visit Science on a Sphere on the museum's 3rd floor you will:

- Admire the unique and beautiful features of Earth as you compare our home planet to some of its close neighbors in the solar system.
- Gain a deeper appreciation of Earth's most plentiful and precious resource—water—and how it shapes the world on which we live.
- Observe the interaction between clouds, continents and oceans as you watch weather move around the globe in near real-time images.

Science on a Sphere is an amazing projection technology that makes complex scientific data and concepts visible and understandable and offers the most accurate representation available of the whole Earth.

Science on a Sphere is the creation of the Global Systems Division, Earth System Research Laboratory of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

Science on a Sphere

