Evaluation in Action

A Sampler of
Tracking & Timing Methodologies
in Museums, Culturals,
and Informal Education Settings

Our illustrious*and voyeuristic* panel!

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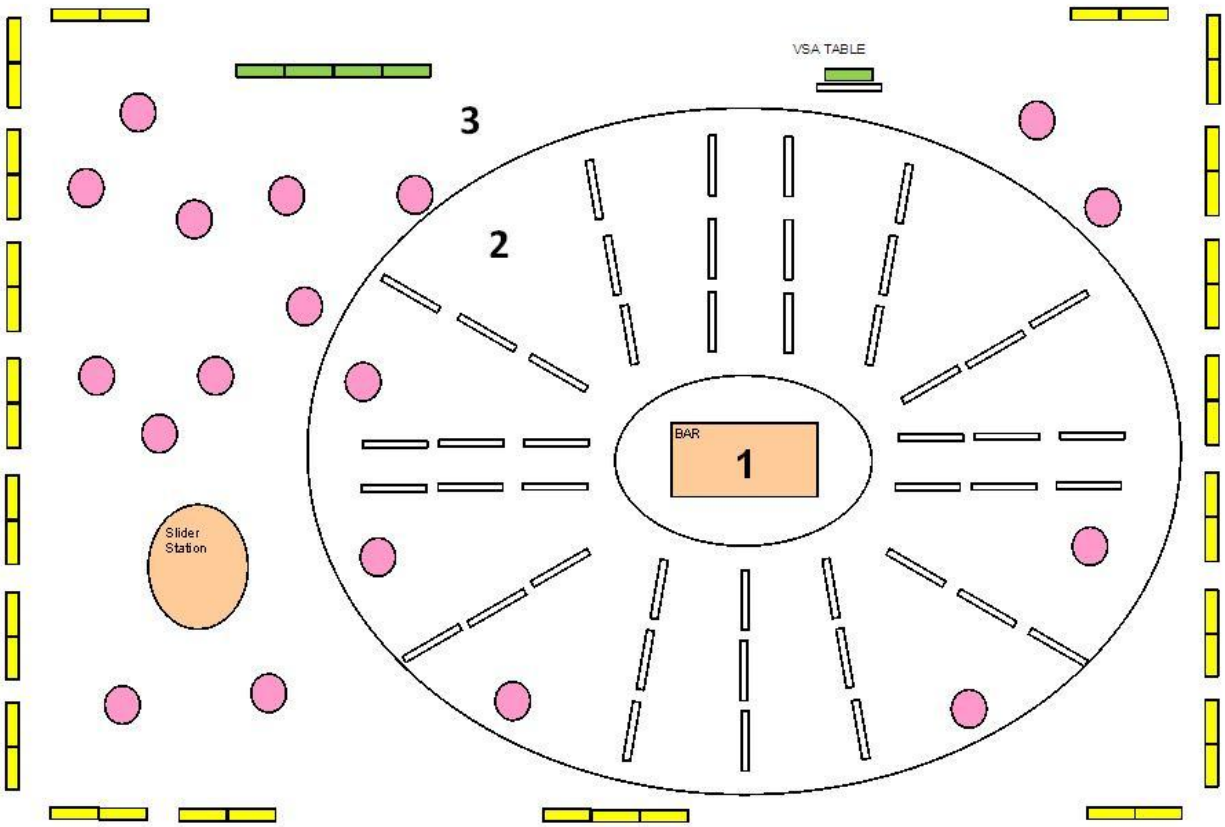
Did you see us yesterday?
We saw <u>YOU</u>!

NO WAY! How'd you do it?

AEA Timing and Tracking Demonstration



TIMING & TRACKING

DATE: _____

RESEARCHER/ ID: _____

	START	STOP
TIME OF DAY		
SITE TIME	00.00	

Area 1=Bar 2=Posters 3=Outside	TIME IN	TIME OUT

KEY - Interactions:

C..... Conversation about poster/ book
M.... General conversation ("mingling")
V..... Viewing poster
B..... Browsing books
W.... Wait at the Bar

But wait! There's more!

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Preliminary Results

- N=17
- Medians:
  - Bar area: 38 seconds
  - Poster area: 213 seconds
  - Peripheral: 110 seconds
- Most frequent behaviors:
  - Bar area: None (waited at bar)
  - Poster area: Stopping (12/17); Viewing (8/17); Mingling (7/17); Conversing about poster (5/17)
  - Peripheral: Mingling (10/17); minimal (2 or less) viewing, browsing books, waiting in line (for food, etc.)

Good thing this was a pilot!
Shirts
Map changes (upside down, scanning, slider station, poster rays/lines)

So what *is* T&T?

- Visitor circulation/patterns
- Physical location
- Recording, in detail, where visitors go and what they do (*mostly in exhibitions)

Fascinating! When did it begin?

- Robinson (1928) & Melton (1935, 1936)
- 1970s/1980s– Loomis, Falk, Dierking, Bitgood, Serrell
- Now– Fairly routine “measure of success”

How does it work?

- Visitor observation (*typically individual, not group)
- From “entrance” ‘til “exit”
- Representative sample (*typically adults)
- Stopwatch and map
- Variables:
  - stopping behaviors
  - other behaviors
  - observable demographics
  - situational variables
- Also important:
  - element(s) and group(s)
  - training/inter-rater reliability
  - technological methods

More on the Variables

Stopping behaviors
Where people went, where they stopped, and how they spent their time
(E.g. time at element, level of engagement, down time)

Other behaviors
What people did, above and beyond the stop
(E.g. path, social interactions, use of objects/interactives)

Observable demographics
(E.g. estimated age, number in party, gender)

Situational variables
May affect visitor behavior
(E.g. crowd level, day of week, special event)

What does it all *mean*?

Traditionally:

Are visitors behaving in the intended and expected manner?

How does it compare to other exhibitions?

And more *progressively*:

Processes, engagement, disengagement, interest, social interactions and role changes

Reasons for exhibit usage and selection

Give THESE some thought!

The 51% rule (SRI and %DV)

-How do you define success using T&T?

Multiple methods

-What can/should you pair T&T with?

Importance and use

-Who is T&T important to and how can they use it?

Ethics

-What about informed consent? Children?

How could YOU use T&T in YOUR work?

What would make it
exciting
challenging
informative
?