

Lauren Trainer, Manager of Visitor Research and Program Evaluation
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Introduction

In the summer of 2010, the Denver Museum of Nature & Science (DMNS) spearheaded an effort to bring together a group of Denver Metro Area cultural institutions as part of an informal network of professionals interested in visitor evaluation (hereafter referred to as “the Network”). The founding purpose of the Network was to utilize the existing resources of DMNS¹ to build evaluation capacity in other institutions, share instruments and data between cultural institutions, and to embark on citywide evaluation projects that would be of benefit to all institutions involved in the group.

The first Network-wide project was a psychographic study using John Falk’s Visitor Identity-Related Motivation Typology to identify and categorize visitors’ motivations for attending a cultural institution on a given day. The Network prototyped Falk’s latest instrument (a card select), collected and analyzed the data, and addressed potential applications of the results to Network institutions.

The Network decided it would also be beneficial to collect visitor demographics across sites using a self-administered survey. In order to ensure maximum comparability across the varied institutions, the Network agreed to conduct a pilot study at eleven institutions over the course of one weekend, providing a snap shot in time of who visits Denver cultural institutions on any given weekend. The participating cultural institutions were: Butterfly Pavilion, Buffalo Bill Museum & Grave, Children’s Museum of Denver, Colorado Railroad Museum, Denver Art Museum, Denver Botanic Gardens, Denver Museum of Nature & Science, Denver Zoo, Littleton Historical Museum, Molly Brown House Museum, and Wildlife Experience².

¹ DMNS has a fully-funded 2-person internal evaluation department (Department of Visitor Research & Program Evaluation) and a team of independently contracted, trained assistants (the DMNS Research Assistant team) who aid with data collection, data entry, transcriptions and other services.

² Research assistants intercepted visitors inside the Hamilton Building at the Denver Art Museum and both inside the museum and outside on the trail up to the grave at the Buffalo Bill Museum & Grave.

The weekend of October 23-24, 2010 was chosen for several reasons: no holidays fall over this weekend; only one institution had a special event happening; and based on the time of year there was a chance that the weather would not be too cold or inclement, which could have negatively affected outdoor venues.

DMNS drafted a one-page survey instrument (see Appendix A), based on their Visitor Baseline Survey³. The Network was encouraged to comment on the survey and suggest changes. The instrument was then finalized. The survey asked about age, sex, ethnic background/heritage, language(s) spoken at home, membership, repeat visitation, education level, zip code, income level, and group composition.

Methodology

Fourteen research assistants collected data as part of this study. They worked from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm on both Saturday, October 23rd and Sunday, October 24th, 2010. There were two exceptions, which should be kept in mind when interpreting the data and reported results:

- 1) Due to a special event the weekend of October 23rd and 24th at the Butterfly Pavilion, data collection occurred the following weekend (October 30th and 31st).
- 2) The research assistant assigned to the Denver Art Museum on Sunday, October 24th was unable to make the shift. Data was collected the following Sunday, October 31st.

Researchers approached visitors and distributed the self-administered surveys just beyond the admission desk/check-in counter/entrance to each institution. Researchers utilized a randomized sample protocol, approaching the third adult⁴ visitor observed and surveyed only one visitor per family/social group.

Researchers asked individuals if they would be willing to take a few minutes to help the museum learn more about its visitors. The top of the survey read: "This questionnaire is voluntary, private, and confidential. It will be used only to learn more about our visitors. We collect this information to help make sure we are an inclusive cultural institution-- welcoming, reflective and responsive to our community and visitors. Additionally, many of our funders and supporters request demographic information. We thank you very much for your help."

³ The DMNS Visitor Baseline Survey is considered a valid and reliable measure, used with consistent results at DMNS since 2008.

⁴ "Adult" visitors" refers to those who appeared to be 18+ years old as determined by the researcher. It is a subjective determination. The survey question related to age also helped to determine if any youth/young people were accidentally surveyed. Surveys completed by visitors who self-identified as under-18 were removed from the data set and analyses, as they were under the age of consent.

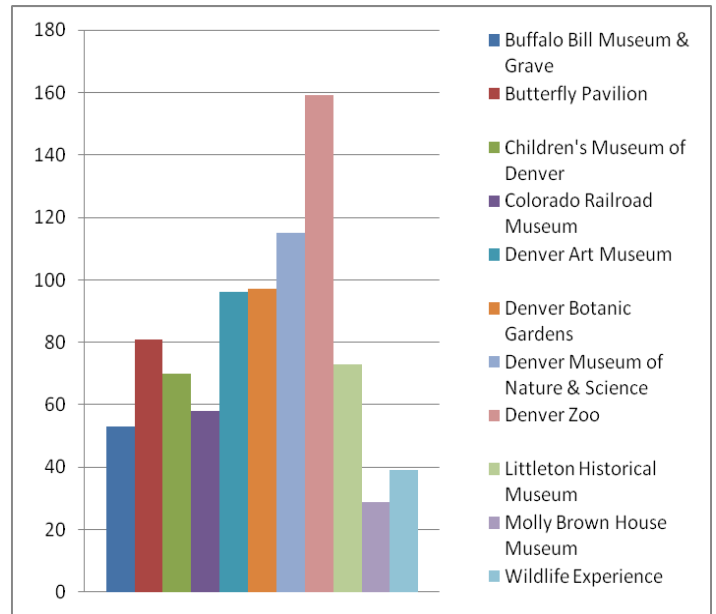
A total of eight hundred and seventy (n=870) surveys were collected from visiting adults during this study⁵.

Table 1 and Figure 1 provide a breakdown of the number of surveys were collected at each institution⁶.

Table 1: Number of Surveys per Institution

Institution	Number of Surveys
Buffalo Bill Museum & Grave	53
Butterfly Pavilion	81
Children's Museum of Denver	70
Colorado Railroad Museum	58
Denver Art Museum	96
Denver Botanic Gardens	97
Denver Museum of Nature & Science	115
Denver Zoo	159
Littleton Historical Museum	73
Molly Brown House Museum	29
Wildlife Experience	39

Figure 1: Number of Surveys per Institution



Researchers also noted how many visitors refused to complete the survey, and the reason (if known, i.e. not a native English speaker, in a hurry, etc.). Five hundred and forty (n=540) refusals were recorded, a 62.1% refusal rate. The most common refusal response was “No, thank you.”

⁵ Not all reported results are out of the full sample size. Since each question is independent and some participants chose to or accidentally skipped questions, each question has a unique sample size.

⁶ The sample sizes vary greatly between institutions, from 29-159. This is important to acknowledge when analyzing the data and interpreting the results. All results are treated as raw frequency counts and associated percentages (not weighted) with the assumption that these are reflective samples.

Results

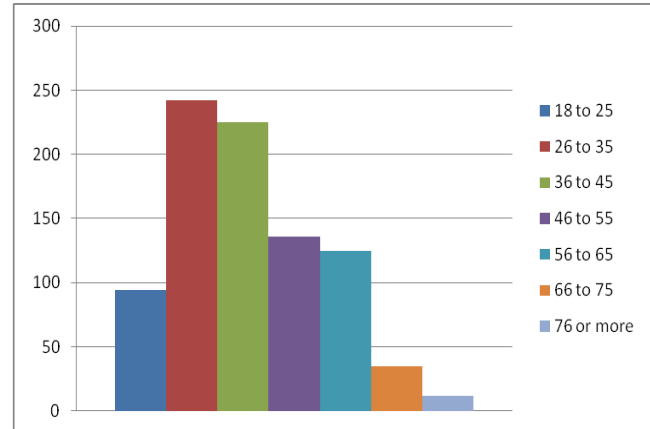
Age

The majority (53.7%, n=467/870) of visitors to the Denver Metro Area institutions were between the ages of 26-45. The next largest segment of visitors (30.1%, n=262/870) were between 46 and 65. Table 2 and Figure 2 provide information about the number of people from each of the age segments represented in the survey.

Table 2: All adult age segments

Age Segment	Percent	N=870
18-25	10.8	94
26-35	27.8	242
36-45	25.9	225
46-55	15.7	137
56-65	14.4	125
66-75	4	35
75 or more	1.4	12

Figure 2: All adult age segments



Sex and Sexual Orientation

More females than males attended the Denver Metro Area cultural institutions that participated in this study: 56.2%, n=489/870 versus 40.7%, n=354/870, respectively.

A very small percentage of respondents self-identified as GLBTIQ⁷ (1.1%, n=10/870).

Ethnic Background or Heritage

The majority of visitors self-identified as “White, Caucasian or European American” (84.4%, n=734/870). According to U.S. Census data 50.9% of Denver County residents identified themselves as “White person, not Hispanic.” Therefore, it can be inferred that the Metro Area’s cultural institutions see a disproportionately high percentage of White visitors; White visitorship exceeded Denver’s estimated Anglo population by thirty-three percent.

“Latino[s], Hispanic[s], Chicano[s] or Latin American[s]” represented the next largest group of respondents at ten percent (10.1%, n=88/870). However, 34.3% of Denver County residents and 20.2% of Coloradans self-

⁷ Gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer.

identified as “Persons of Hispanic or Latino origin” according to the 2008 U.S. Census estimates. The Metro Area’s Latino visitorship was therefore approximately one-third of what might be expected based on local population statistics.

The percentage of “African, African-American or Black” visitors was also disproportionately low. According to the 2008 U.S. Census, 10% of Denver County residents identify as “Black persons.” However, just over two percent (2.2%, n=19/870) of respondents at the participating cultural institutions self-identified with this ethnic background.

Data for other ethnic backgrounds include one and a half percent (1.5%, n=13/870) “American Indian, Native American or Alaskan Native;” three percent (3.1%, n=27/870) “Asian or Asian American;” and a half percent (.5%, n=4/870) “Native Hawaiian, Filipino or Pacific Islander.” These data are consistent with City and County of Denver ethnicity statistics.

Just under one percent (.7%, n=6/870) of visitors self-identified as “Middle Eastern, Arab or Arab-American.” The City and County of Denver does not record statistics in this category, so no comparison can be made between the findings and the larger Denver population.

The number of visitors self-reporting two or more races (3.2%, n=28/870) exceeded the percentage of Denver Metro Area residents who self-reported (2%) in that category according to 2008 U.S. Census estimates.

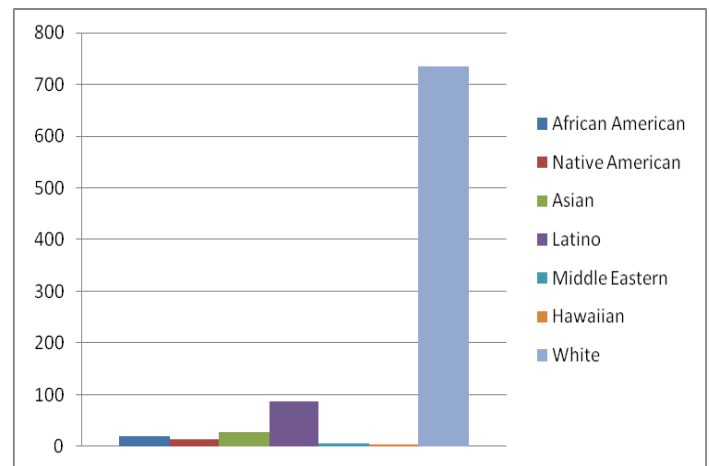
Table 3 and Figure 3 provide information about the number of people from each of the ethnic background/heritage segments represented in the survey⁸.

⁸ Percentages do not equal 100, as participants could select more than one ethnic background/heritage category.

Table 3: All ethnic background/heritage segments

Ethnic background/heritage	Percent	N=870
African, African American or Black	2.2	19
American Indian, Native American or Alaskan Native	1.5	13
Asian or Asian American	3.1	27
Latino, Hispanic, Chicano or Latin American	10.1	88
Middle Eastern, Arab, or Arab-American	.7	6
Native Hawaiian, Filipino or Pacific Islander	.5	4
White, Caucasian or European American	84.5	734

Chart 3: All ethnic background/heritage segments



Language Spoken in the Home

Respondents primarily spoke English only at home (82%, n=713/870). Over 10% households were multilingual (10.8%, n=94/870). Of these, 39.4% (n=37/94) spoke English and Spanish. Monolingual Spanish households represented 2% of respondents (n=17/870)⁹.

The U.S. Census indicates that 27% of the City and County of Denver’s population speak a language other than English at home and the same is true for 15.1% of Coloradans. Denver Metro Area institutions appear to be visited by a higher proportion of English-only visitors in relation to the larger population.

Membership and Repeat Visitation¹⁰

Two-thirds of respondents (64.8%, n=529/817) were not members and never had been members of the institution they were visiting that day. Just under one-third were members (32.8%, n=268/817). A very small percentage (2.4%, n=20/817) of visitors were not members but had a member in their group.

Though membership was not predominant, close to two-thirds (63.5%, n=547/863) of all visitors had been to the institution where they were surveyed at least once before.

⁹ This result likely under represents monolingual households, as the survey was offered in English only.

¹⁰ Buffalo Bill Museum & Grave does not offer a membership option at their institution; they were removed from this analysis.

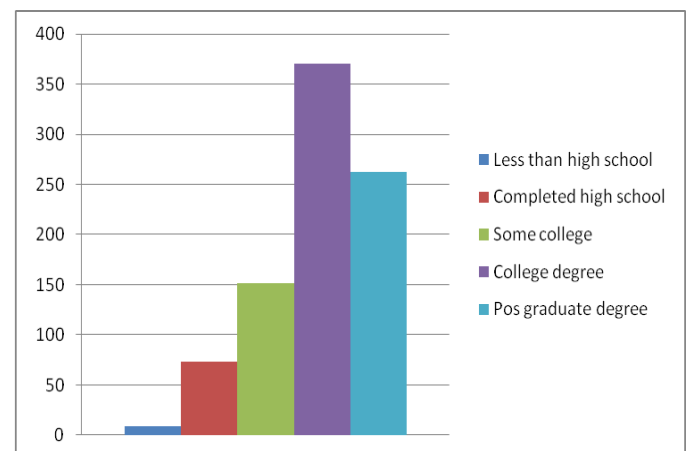
Education

Visitors to the institutions achieved a higher level of education than would be predicted from City and County of Denver census data. Just over forty percent of respondents reported a “college degree” (42.8%, n=371/866). Combining those who identified as holding a “college degree” and those with a “post-graduate degree” increases that number to just under three-quarters of all visitors (73.1%, n=633/866). This is more than double the number of Denver County residents (34.5%) who have a bachelor’s degree or higher. Table 4 and Figure 4 provide information about the number of people from each of the education segments represented in the survey.

Table 4: All education segments

Highest level of education	Percent	N=867
Less than high school	1	9
Completed high school	8.4	73
Completed some college or technical school	17.4	151
College degree	42.8	371
Post-graduate degree	30.3	262

Figure 4: All education segments



Zip Code

Visitors came from throughout the Denver Metro Area, the greater Colorado region, and nationwide. Of the zip codes listed most often by visitors, Denver (n=56), Highlands Ranch (n=29), Littleton (n=26), Broomfield (n=12), Parker (n=10), and Aurora (n=10) were most frequent.

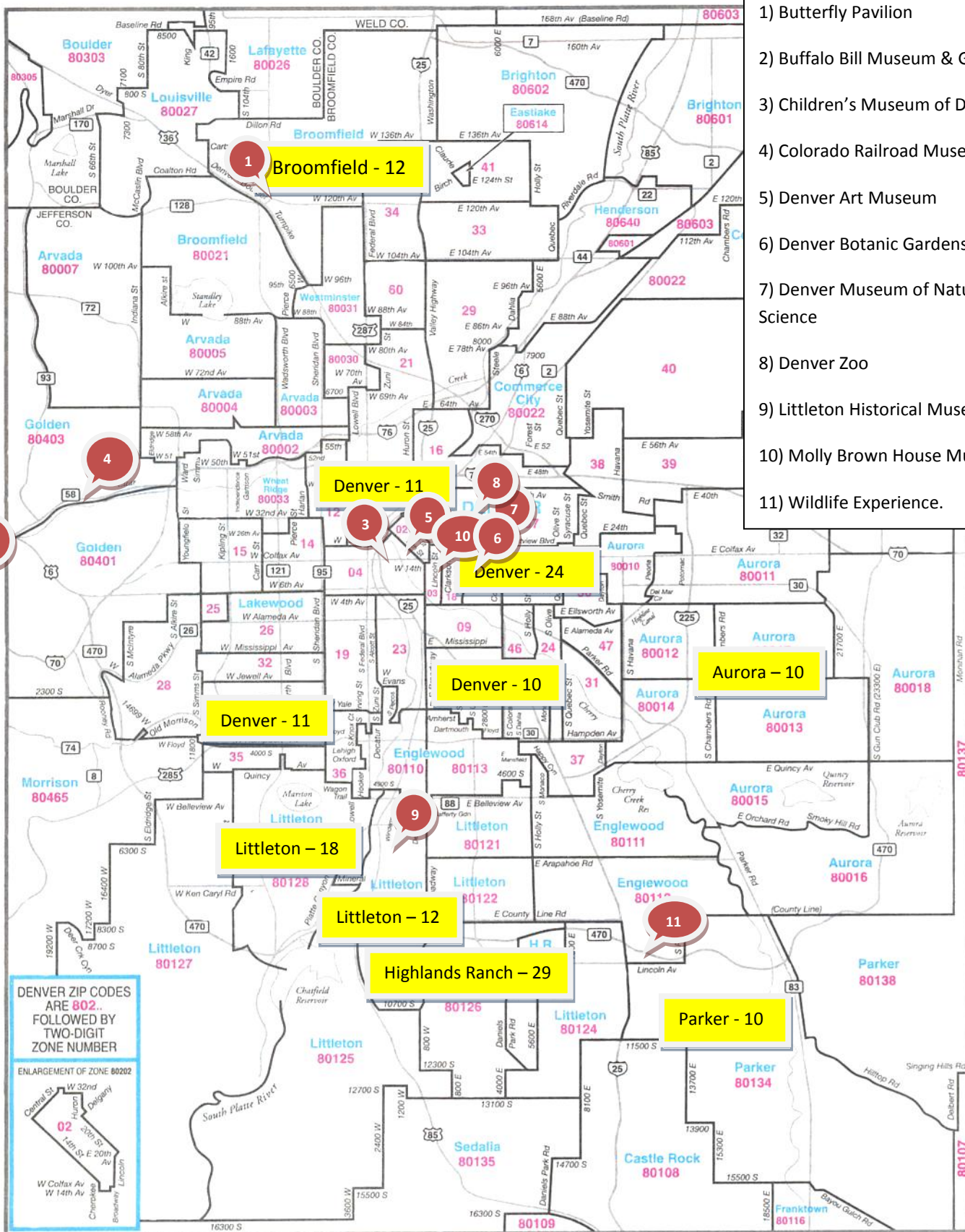
One hundred and twenty-seven visitors listed out-of-state zip codes: this is 17.4% of all respondents.

Table 5 represents the zip codes most listed by visitors. Map 1, below, shows the location of those most-listed zip codes, as well as the locations of institutions where surveys were administered.

Table 5: Zip Codes with Greatest Number of Visitors

Zip Code	Number	Location
80123	18	Littleton
80129	17	Highlands Ranch
80220	13	Denver
80020	12	Broomfield
80120	12	Littleton
80130	12	Highlands Ranch
80206	11	Denver
80211	11	Denver
80227	11	Denver
80013	10	Aurora
80134	10	Parker
80210	10	Denver

Map 1: Denver metro area zip codes with the greatest number of visitors.¹¹



- 1) Butterfly Pavilion
- 2) Buffalo Bill Museum & Grave
- 3) Children’s Museum of Denver
- 4) Colorado Railroad Museum
- 5) Denver Art Museum
- 6) Denver Botanic Gardens
- 7) Denver Museum of Nature & Science
- 8) Denver Zoo
- 9) Littleton Historical Museum
- 10) Molly Brown House Museum
- 11) Wildlife Experience.

¹¹ Buffalo Bill Museum & Grave is located off the map; however, the location of the pin is correct in relation to the map.

Joint Household Income

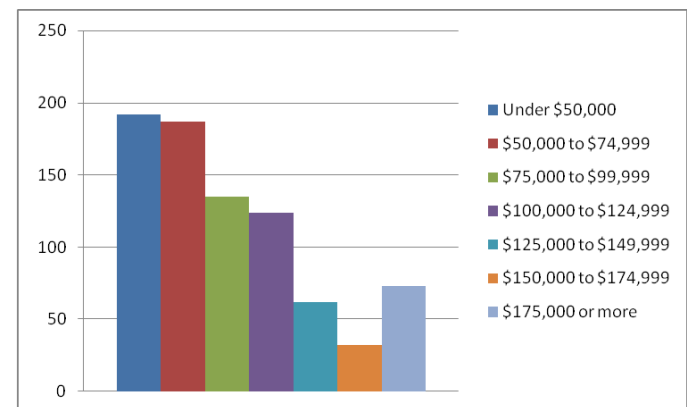
The “under \$50,000” and the “\$50,000 to \$74,999” both represented approximately one quarter of the sample each: 23.8% (n=192/806) and 23.3% (n=188/806) respectively. The U.S. median household income is \$50,233 and Denver’s medial income is \$46,305; the median of our sample falls in the “\$75,000 to \$99,999” category and the mode is in the “under \$50,000” category. Seven percent (7.4%, n=64/870) did not answer this question.

Table 6 and Figure 6 provide information about the number of people from each of the income segments represented in the survey.

Table 6: All income segments

Income range	Percent	N=806
Under \$50,000	23.8	192
\$50,000 to \$74,999	23.3	188
\$75,000 to \$99,999	16.7	135
\$100,000 to \$124,999	15.4	124
\$125,000 to \$149,999	7.7	62
\$150,000 to \$174,999	4	32
\$175,000 or more	9.1	73

Figure 6: All income segments



Group Composition

Over three-quarters (78.8%, n=681/864) of all visitors came with a family member. Additionally 14% (13.7%, n=118/864) came with a friend. Only a small percentage of respondents (3.2%, n=28/864) indicated that they were visiting the institution alone or with a “school/community group” (1.7%, n=15/864). It appears that visiting a cultural institution is primarily a social activity for those who participated in the study.

Over one-third of visitors were accompanied by a child under the age of ten (36.1%, n=740/2052). This may indicate that at least one-third of visitors to Denver Metro Area cultural institutions are parents or caregivers of young children. The next largest segment in the “age of other” category was 26-45 (28.4%, n=583/2052). This was also the largest age segment of those who responded to this survey, indicative of visitors being accompanied by someone in their peer-age group.

Institution-Specific Findings within the City Wide Demographic Study

Age

- Highest percentage 18 and 25 year olds: Butterfly Pavilion (17.3%, n=14/81).
- The Molly Brown House Museum had no visitors between the ages of 18 and 25.
- Highest percentage of 26-35 year olds: Children's Museum of Denver (44.3%, n=31/70).
- Highest percentage of 36-45 year olds: Wildlife Experience (43.6%, n=17/39).
- Highest percentage of 46-55 year olds: Molly Brown House Museum (34.5%, n=10/29).
- Highest percentage of 56-75 year olds: Denver Botanic Gardens (39.1%, n=38/97)
- Highest percentage of 76 or over year olds: Littleton Historical Museum (4.1%, n=3/73)
- The Children's Museum of Denver did not have any visitors over the age of 65.
- The Colorado Railroad Museum and the Wildlife Experience did not have any visitors 76 or above.

Sex and Sexual Orientation

- Highest percentage of males: Denver Museum of Nature & Science (52.3%, n=58/111).
- Highest percentage of females: Butterfly Pavilion (72.5%, n=58/80).
- Most even distribution males and females: Denver Zoo (51.9%, n=74/154 and 48.1%, n=80/154 respectively).
- Highest percentage identifying as GLBTIQ: Denver Museum of Nature & Science (2.6%, n=3/115).

Ethnic Background/Heritage

- Highest percentage of visitors self-identifying as "African, African American or Black:"
 - Butterfly Pavilion (4.9%, n=4/81)
- Highest percentage of visitors self-identifying as "American Indian, Native American or Alaskan Native:"
 - Denver Botanic Gardens (3.1%, n=3/97)
- Highest percentage of visitors self-identifying as "Asian or Asian American:"
 - Wildlife Experience (5.1%, n=2/39)
- Highest percentage of visitors self-identifying as "Latino, Hispanic, Chicano or Latin American:"
 - Children's Museum of Denver (27.1%, n=19/70)
- Highest percentage of visitors self-identifying as "Middle Eastern, Arab, or Arab-American:"
 - Children's Museum of Denver (1.4%, n=1/70) and the Littleton Historical Museum (1.4%, n=1/73)
- Highest percentage of visitors self-identifying as "Native Hawaiian, Filipino or Pacific Islander:"
 - Wildlife Experience (2.6%, n=1/39)
- Highest percentage of visitors self-identifying as "White, Caucasian or European American:"
 - Denver Botanic Gardens (91.8%, n=89/97)

Language Spoken at Home

- Highest percentage English: Denver Art Museum (92.7%, n=92/96).
- Highest percentage multilingual: Children's Museum of Denver (18%, n=12/67).
- Highest percentage of monolingual (non-English): Children's Museum of Denver (Spanish; 10.4%, n=7/67).

Members

- Highest percentage of members: Denver Zoo (47.8%, n=76/159).
- Highest percentage of lapsed members: Wildlife Experience (20.5%, n=8/39).
- Highest percentage of non-members: Molly Brown House Museum (89.7%, n=26/29).
- Highest percentage of people visiting with a member: Wildlife Experience (5.1%, n=2/39).

Repeat Visitors

- Highest percentage of repeat visitors: Denver Museum of Nature & Science (86.1%, n=99/115)
- Highest percentage of first-time visitors: Molly Brown House Museum (89.7%, n=26/29)

Education

- The Butterfly Pavilion, Denver Art Museum, Denver Botanic Gardens, Molly Brown House Museum, Littleton Historical Museum, and the Wildlife Experience had no visitors with less than a high school education.
- Highest percentage of visitors who completed high school: Children's Museum of Denver (15.9%, n=11/69).
- Highest percentage of visitors who completed some college: Butterfly Pavilion (27.2%, n=22/81).
- Highest percentage of visitors with a college degree: Wildlife Experience (63.2%, n=24/28).
- Highest percentage of visitors with a post-graduate degree: Denver Botanic Gardens (54.6%, n=53/97).

Joint Annual Income

- Highest percentage under \$50,000: Butterfly Pavilion (38%, n=30/79).
- Highest percentage between \$50,000 and \$74,999: Children's Museum of Denver (30.3%, n=20/66).
- Highest percentage between \$75,000 and \$99,999: Children's Museum of Denver (27.3%, n=18/66).
- Highest percentage over \$175,000: Denver Botanic Gardens (17.1%, n=14/82).

Key Findings in the City Wide Demographic Study

- The majority of respondents were female and between the ages of 26-45.
- One-third visited a cultural institution with at least one other person who was under the age of ten.
- Over three-quarters of visitors came with a family member and an additional fourteen percent visited with a friend.
- Respondents were primarily “White, Caucasian or European American” and spoke English at home.
- One-third were members of the institution they visited on the day they were surveyed, and two-thirds had been to that institution on at least one prior occasion.
- The majority of visitors had high levels of education; a college degree or above.
- Just under half of visitors indicated an income of under \$75,000.
- Many visitors reported zip codes in Denver, Littleton, Parker, Broomfield, and Aurora.

Appendix A: Visitor Information Sheet

(Please note: the original formatting of this survey was on one-side of one sheet)

Visitor Information Sheet

This questionnaire is voluntary, private, and confidential. It will be used only to learn more about our visitors. We collect this information to help make sure we are an inclusive cultural institution-- welcoming, reflective and responsive to our community and visitors. Additionally, many of our funders and supporters request demographic information. We thank you very much for your help.

Your age:

- Under 18 36 to 45..... 66 to 75
- 18 to 25..... 46 to 55..... 76 or more
- 26 to 35..... 56 to 65.....

Your gender: Male Female

Please check if you self-identify as GLBTIQ.....

What is your ethnic background or heritage? (Check as many as apply.)

- African, African American or Black..... Latino, Hispanic, Chicano or Latin American.....
- American Indian, Native American or Alaskan
Native..... Middle Eastern, Arab, or Arab-American.....
- Asian or Asian American..... Native Hawaiian, Filipino or Pacific Islander.....
- White, Caucasian or European American.....

If other, please specify: _____

What language(s) do you/your family speak at home? _____

Are you a member here? (Please choose ONE.)

- a member.....
- not a member and have never been.....
- not a member but I used to be.....
- not a member but someone in my group is.....

Have you been here before? (Please choose ONE.)

Yes, I have been here before..... If yes, when was the last time you were here? _____

No, this is my first visit here..... (**Let us know the month/year, if you remember!)

What is the highest level of education you have completed? (Please choose ONE.)

Less than high school..... Completed some college or technical education..... Post-graduate degree.....

Completed high school..... College degree.....

What is your home zip code? _____

What is the joint annual income of your family? (Include you and those you live with; choose ONE.)

Under \$50,000..... \$125,000 to \$149,999.....

\$50,000 to \$74,999..... \$150,000 to \$174,999.....

\$75,000 to \$99,999..... \$175,000 or more.....

\$100,000 to \$124,999.....

Who did you come with today? (Please choose ONE.)

I came here alone..... I am here with family..... Other.....

I am with a school/community group..... I am here with friends.....

If other, please specify: _____

Please list the ages of all the other people who are with you here today:

Thanks again for your time! Please return this to the person who gave it to you.