

# **Hennepin History Museum Capstone Appendix**

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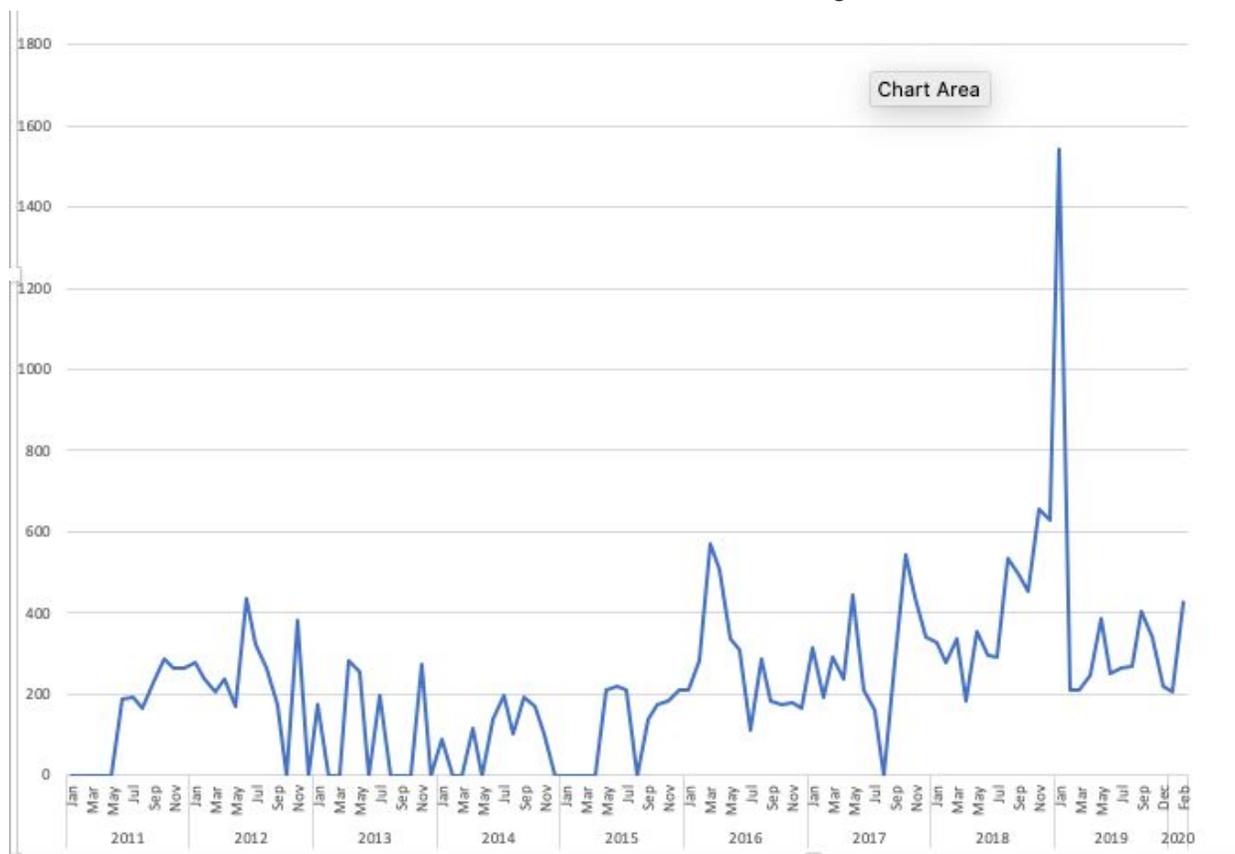
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# Attendance Analysis

One area of my research was taking the museum’s monthly attendance data and reconfiguring it into year-over-year attendance to get a better sense of trends over time.

## Museum Attendance Over Time 2011-2020

Note: Zero attendance months are those where data was missing.



Starting in mid-2016, the organization was on an upward growth streak for attendance, which drastically peaked in 2018-2019 during the run of the exhibit “Owning Up: Racism and Housing in Minneapolis.” According to staff and attendance data, this exhibit really resonated with museum-goers in town and drew in new audiences they hadn’t seen before.

However, since that exhibit closed in early 2019, attendance has leveled out and lost some of its previous growth momentum. With a sustained closure during 2020 due to COVID-19, I expect 2020 will be a very hard year on overall attendance.

**Event Attendance**

In addition to looking at general attendance, I also examined event attendance to see what drew in high numbers of visitors. I used my best judgment here to pull out events that had high attendance numbers or seemed well-attended for their expected capacity (e.g. a guided tour). I also looked at whether the event was a partnership and had good Facebook event traffic prior to the event.

I found that partnership events regularly perform well for Hennepin History Museum. Visitors also seem to respond well to history topics that offered strong connections to today or recent history, like the “Owning Up” exhibit, 35W tour, and the history of Eat Street and Block E.

Visitors also seemed drawn to events with a quirkier, unique take on history like a bike tour of alleyway art, historic bus tours with the Minnesota Transportation Museum, a Pet Festival, and Bee Night Out.

Event	Attendance	Year	Tie to Exhibit?	Partnership?	FB Event That Performed Well?	FB interest/going #
Suffrage Saturday VFW 101	62	2020	Yes			
Terrace Theater exhibit opening	92	2020	Yes	Terrace Theater Legacy Project	Yes	78 went/1.1K interested
Suffrage Saturday (Susan B. Anthony's birthday)	127	2020	Yes		Yes	13 went/94 interested
Stories for the Season	30	2019			Yes	6 went/90 interested
Joyful Riders field trip	56	2019		Joyful Riders	yes	25 went/299 interested
35W tour	34	2019		partnership with MNDOT and HSPH master's program at U	Yes	14 went/105 interested
Being Somali panel	29	2019	Yes		Yes	49 went/304 interested

Smithsonian Museum Day	160	2019		Smithsonian		
Art in Alleyways bike tour	15	2019		Mpls Alley Initiative for Neighborhood stimulation	Yes	14 went/179 interested
Doors Open	243 people (over 2 days)	2019		larger Doors Open event		
Washburn-Fair Oaks Tour	20	2019			Yes	multiple - Aug. 2019 - 7 went, 194 interested
City Hall tour	18	2019			Yes	6 went/138 interested
Fireside Chat Curt Brown on book	40	2018				
tours with MN Transportation Museum	88	2018		MN Transportation Museum	Yes	
MN Transportation Museum tour Foshay	42	2018	Yes	MN Transportation Museum	Yes	
Close Associates exhibit opening	73	2018	Yes			
fireside chat on Harry Hayward book	32	2018				
3rd Friday Project Runway panel	43	2018	yes			
3rd Friday Picnic Operetta	108	2018		Picnic Operetta		
Owning Up opening reception	126	2018	Yes			
Washburn Fair oaks walking tour	34	2018				

History in Focus reception	73	2018				
Heart of the Beast Puppet Theatre	30	2017		HOBT puppet theatre		
Glen Lake opening & book event with Mary Krugerud	160	2017	Yes	Hopkins Historical Society partnership	52 went/620 interested	
Fireside Chat: Block E Mpls Times Square -author talk with William Burleson	69	2017			28 went/357 interested	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/events/524796721220634/">https://www.facebook.com/events/524796721220634/</a>
3rd Friday: Thoreau's 200th Birthday	36	2017			6 went/74 interested	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/events/778146469007546/">https://www.facebook.com/events/778146469007546/</a>
Eat Street exhibit opening	105	2017	Yes	Whittier Alliance & Spotlight Oral Hlstory	24/160 interested	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/events/1208112486002266/">https://www.facebook.com/events/1208112486002266/</a>
Glen Lake documentary	40	2017	Yes		15/98 interested	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/events/120890971907706/">https://www.facebook.com/events/120890971907706/</a>
Downtown Mpls with Iric Nathanson	55	2017		book event		<a href="https://www.facebook.com/events/1628818800467388/">https://www.facebook.com/events/1628818800467388/</a>
Fireside chat: historic Dinkytown	31	2016		historian Cara Letofsky	10/150 interested	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/events/684664908347513/">https://www.facebook.com/events/684664908347513/</a>
30 Years of Quatrefoil Library	31	2016		Quatrefoil		
Pet Festival	61	2016				<a href="https://www.facebook.com/events/636027519881984/">https://www.facebook.com/events/636027519881984/</a>

A History of Many Glacier Hotel	51	2016			17/57 interested	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/events/1668412303383618/">https://www.facebook.com/events/1668412303383618/</a>
Opening: High Wheels exhibit	185	2016		Cycling Museum of MN	58/217 interested	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/events/1686145504992798/">https://www.facebook.com/events/1686145504992798/</a>
Easter Egg Hunt	110	2016				
Bee Night Out	86	2016				

### **Comparison to Other Local Historical Organizations' Annual Attendance**

I also gathered data on attendance at other Minnesota historical societies and local history organizations (as available). While there isn't necessarily a standard way to record visitors that all these organizations are using, this data does give a qualitative look at how Hennepin History Museum's visitation is performing in comparison.

Given its location in a very populous metro area, Hennepin Historical Museum has a lot of opportunities to grow attendance. Currently, it's performing on par with many organizations in much smaller communities. In comparison, other county museums in larger Minnesota cities, like St. Cloud and Duluth, have much higher attendance.

While Stearns History Museum and St. Louis County Historical Society's higher annual budgets and expanded facilities may be attendance factors, they could be a model for what Hennepin History Museum could aspire to for its own audiences. However, Hennepin History Museum has the added challenge of Mill City Museum and the Minnesota History Center as large competitors in the Twin Cities.

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Annual Attendance #s</b>	<b>Year Data is From</b>
Anoka County Historical Society (Anoka)	12,335* *also affiliated with county library system	2019
Blue Earth County Historical Society (Mankato)	6,198	2019

Historic Chippewa City (Montevideo)	3,076	2019
Dakota County Historical Society's Lawson Memorial Museum (South St. Paul)	5,000	2019
End O Line Park and Museum (Currie)	3,928	2019
McLeod County Historical Society (Hutchinson)	1,000+	2019
Mayowood, operated by History Center of Olmsted County (Rochester)	4,421	2018
Minnesota Historical Society	1,034,058 (statewide)	2019
Murray County Historical Society (Slayton)	4,500	2019
Nicollet County Historical Society (St. Peter)	10,488 (total across several sites)	2019
Pine County Historical Society (Askov)	2,500	2019
Pipestone County Museum	5,000	2019
Gibbs Farm, Ramsey County Historical Society (Falcon Heights)	18,000 students	2019
Roseau County Historical Society (Roseau)	7,408	2018
Stearns History Museum	15,302	2019
St. Louis County Historical Society (Duluth)	345,943	2018
Waseca County Historical Society	5,060	2019

# Interview Research Insights

One part of my research was interviews with Hennepin History Museum staffers. I conducted interviews with four staff members via Zoom. Questions and key insights gleaned from interviews are listed below.

## **Q: What do you enjoy most about working at the museum?**

**Insights:** Staff see the organization's small size as an asset. They are able to be more local and personal with visitors and connect with people about their own history and community in a way larger institutions can't.

## **Q: What kind of topics/programs/etc. do you find visitors engage most with? Least?**

**Insights:** A large number of visitors are very interested in history that is relevant to their lives, either something from their past/family history (nostalgia) or history that tells us something about Hennepin County or Minneapolis today (example: the "Owning Up" exhibit on the history of redlining in Minneapolis).

There is also some good interest in topics with broad appeal, like their current women's suffrage exhibit. Visitors show the least interest when a history topic is very narrow, specialized or esoteric.

## **Q: How would you describe your high-engagement, repeat visitors?**

**Insights:** They are on board for whatever history topic the museum staff throws at them, whether it's programming or an exhibit. They'll bring friends to the museum. They are small in number but very brand loyal and tend to be white and older visitors.

## **Q: What kind of visitors do you hope to see in the museum in the future?**

**Insights:** Overall, staff would like to grow their core audience and increase brand loyal visitors. Staff have a desire to see more diverse, younger audiences. They would also like to reach more people in the suburbs of Hennepin County and other areas outside of Minneapolis.

## **Q: How do you want visitors to feel when they visit?**

**Insights:** Staff want visitors to feel like they've learned something new, particularly about their community. They want visitors to feel connected to the museum and its local focus. They want visitors to feel like a small museum is an asset and somewhere they would like to visit, in part, because of that small size.

**Q: What do you think the museum’s biggest strengths and weaknesses are?**

**Insights:** There are strengths and weaknesses of being small. They have less staff and resources but are more able to take risks and try new things because they are a small organization. They have a strong collection, though staff noted it leans whiter than they would like.

One of their biggest weaknesses is the lack of accessibility of their physical building. Currently, there is no way anyone in a wheelchair or with limited mobility can enter the building, and upgrading the building would be very costly.

**Q: How would you describe Hennepin County itself?**

**Insights:** The county has a high population and is very diverse, but its county identity is rather amorphous beyond that.

**Q: Who do you see as your biggest competitors?**

**Insights:** Staff noted other organizations in the Whittier neighborhood as competitors, especially Minneapolis Institute of Art and American Swedish Institute. The Minnesota Historical Society (MNHS) is also a competitor in the history museum realm; the public also gets confused and often thinks Hennepin History Museum is part of MNHS.

**Q: What does the museum look like in 5-10 years in your ideal future?**

**Insights:** Staff envision themselves in a building with more accessibility, or on the way to achieving that. They see more partnerships and more people engaged with the organization. They want to be seen as innovative in the field and an organization that is partnering with the community. “A resource for the community by the community” was one staff’s vision of the future.

# Target Audience Full Insights

While my PowerPoint presentation includes graphics exploring these two audiences, here is my full research data that I was able to glean through Simmons, Mintel and secondary sources.

## **Lifelong History Learners**

- largely white and non-Hispanic, 55+
- high income, frequent leisure traveler, educated, reside near urban areas
- broad consumers of culture (sometimes trending a bit more classic/traditional)
- "Attending arts and cultural events form an integral part of their social and family lives."
- tend to be frequent attenders and potential donors
- tend to be involved in local community
- most similar to the average museumgoer today

## **Desires**

- to be active, social/connected (often active retirees), quest for intellectual stimulation learning

**Barrier:** "There are so many great arts and culture options to choose from in town."

Other activities older museum goers are interested in:

- visiting aquariums/zoos
- theater
- dance performances
- music concerts
- educational courses
- photography
- playing musical instruments
- tailgating
- scrapbooking
- painting/drawing/sculpting
- antiquing
- going to bars/nightclubs/dancing
- going to beach/lake
- cooking for fun
- needlework/quilting
- reading

## **How to Reach**

- They are super-connected, they're learning about leisure activities almost totally online: web, social media, Yelp/TripAdvisor

- 94% of those 55+ are social media users
- Social media sites they visit daily: Facebook
- Websites visited in last 7 days: New York Times, BBC, HuffPost, People.com, Consumer Reports, IMDB, Yelp, Kayak, Wikipedia, Zappos, Orbitz, Ticketmaster, Groupon, Travelocity, CNN, Expedia, Hotels.com - clearly news consumers and travelers

### **Similar Archetypes/Personas**

- Audience Agency's [Commuterland Culturebuff](#)
- Colleen Dilenschneider's [Active/Historic Visitors](#)

### **Young Metroculturals**

- more diverse in age, race, ethnicity
- millennial and Gen Z
- college grad, high-earner, home owner,
- loyal online shopper, leisure travel, resides near urban area, pet owner, active/healthy lifestyle, news reader (but online)
- more active in general than current museum visitors - travel, dining out 3x a week or more
- wide variety of interests -packed leisure time
- more likely than average to volunteer

### **Relationship with the Arts**

- 78% of millennials believe the arts are relevant to their personal interests
- 70% of millennials who recently attended a performing or visual arts event expressed they'd like to do so more often
- likely to attend multiple arts/culture venues
- highly engaged in creative participation - 50%+ consider themselves to be "arty"
- often visits a lot of museums but not necessarily a member of any

### **Desires**

- experience driven - 78% of millennials said they would rather spend money on experiences vs. buying something desirable
- to be well-informed and in-the-know
- interested and have concerns about their community - and want to feel more connected to it
- want to know neighbors and feel more connected

### **Other Popular Activities**

- birdwatching
- board games
- card games
- cooking for fun

- dining out
- educational courses
- gardening
- needlework/quilting
- photography
- painting/drawing/sculpting
- playing musical instrument
- visiting zoo/aquarium
- live theater
- dance performances
- hiking/backpacking
- reading books
- reading comics
- scrapbooking

### **Barriers**

-“My time is precious, and I don’t want to miss out on something else.”

-choosing an alternative activity and wanting an event that’s relevant to their lives are top barriers

-time > money

### **How to Reach**

-81% more likely to have donated to public radio in the last 12 months

-5.5-8.2x more likely to not subscribe to print media

-social media is a high news source

-86% of millennials learn about arts events from some online resource -48% social media, 28% online ads, blogs 25%

-Millennials are highly engaged with arts events online, both before and after the show. Prior to attending an event, 40% of millennials post on social media about their upcoming plans. After the event ends, 45% of millennials post information online, and 27% write reviews on the web. And their activity doesn’t stop there: 35% of millennials also follow people associated with the event on social media.

-Visual consumers

-High daily use of Facebook, YouTube and Instagram

-Websites visited in last 7 days - TripAdvisor, HuffPost, New York Times, Washington Post, Orbitz, Yelp, Travelocity, Wall Street Journal

### **Similar Archetypes/Personas**

-Audience Agency’s [Metroculturals](#)

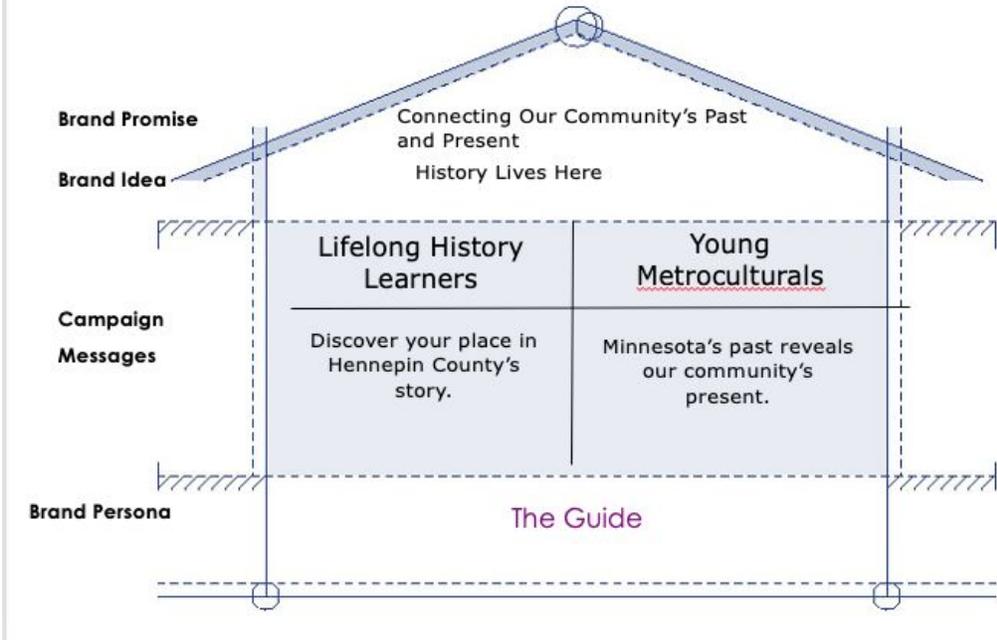
-Colleen Dilenschneider’s [Inactive Visitors](#)

-Curalate’s [the Nostalgic](#)

# Insights Genesis and Messaging Architecture



## Hennepin History Messaging Architecture



## Additional Creative Sample for Campaign Recommendation #2

Signage example: The Broadway Building in Northeast Minneapolis. It is the former Land O Nod mattress factory and now home to Spyhouse Coffee, 612 Brewing and other businesses.

**LAND O NOD  
MATTRESS FACTORY**



**SLEEP TIGHT,  
MINNESOTA.**

**THIS 1921 BUILDING ONCE SENT  
CUSTOMERS OFF TO DREAMLAND  
ON LAND O NOD MATTRESSES,  
INCLUDING THE COMPANY'S  
PATENTED WATERBED.**

**#HISTORYLIVESHERE**

**HENNEPIN  
HISTORY MUSEUM**

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