

Overview

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In this publication ‘contemporary visual art and craft’ is referred to as ‘contemporary art’, and ‘Indigenous art and craft’ as ‘Indigenous art’. Quoted text in italics is directly from survey questionnaires or verbatim responses.

Developing audiences for contemporary art

Although galleries agree strongly on the need for audience development, two-thirds say they don’t know much about the contemporary art audience. This underlines the relevance of this publication and the need to assist galleries in undertaking targeted research.

Galleries are driven by a desire to champion work that does not yet have an audience. However, less than half of galleries agree they’re *‘driven primarily by creating customer satisfaction’*.

Although most galleries do not expect that *‘good contemporary art should speak for itself’*, there is also an assumption by curators that audiences are already familiar with contemporary work. This could dampen motivation to expand the audience net through medium to long-term strategies.

‘We know what to do, we just don’t have the money.’

Galleries identified the two most valuable resources—people and money—as primary obstacles to increasing audiences and improving their public programs. With more money, galleries would appoint a publicist, do more advertising and promotion, invest in new technologies or conduct regular research programs. One wrote: *‘We know what to do, we just don’t have the money.’*

The galleries identified *‘lack of education in the school system’* as a major barrier to audience appreciation of contemporary art. As one said, *‘Conventional marketing has little to do with the promotion of contemporary art exhibitions—we need a higher standard of education, starting from primary school. We now promote our exhibitions by taking them out to school libraries, theatre foyers, community centres ... in fact, any secure space’*.

Some galleries noted that successful school programs increase demand overall. Visitors with a positive attitude towards contemporary art are likely to have acquired it through education. Parental encouragement also plays a role.

Some galleries also attribute low attendances to the lack of compelling, well-resourced exhibitions. Others refer to the inherent conservatism of the local audience, which they said would take considerable education to overcome: over a quarter of the audience surveyed agreed with the statement *‘I don’t think contemporary art requires nearly as much talent as other art’*.

Gallery snapshot

Galleries exhibiting contemporary Australian art or with lower incomes had poorer attendances. Half the galleries with a contemporary Australian focus are in the lowest income bracket, and most attracted less than 2000 people to their top-ranking exhibition. Volunteers are a vital resource, particularly for galleries located outside the inner city or CBD.

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Forty-five percent of galleries have a permanent collection and display of contemporary art (30% in capital cities and 59% in regional areas). Most collect Australian work, with a significant proportion also collecting work of international significance. Many collections have particular relevance to the region, either in artists collected or content. Collection policies more often focus on the work of established artists than do exhibition policies. A higher percentage of regional galleries originate or receive predominantly contemporary Australian work; this is more marked in the area of craft.

Most galleries produced their program on an income of less than \$450,000 in the 2000 / 2001 financial year. Grants from various levels of government, retail or art sales, and sponsorship are important sources of revenue. Most provide free general public access and don’t charge for special exhibitions.

There was some debate among galleries about the need to differentiate craft from visual art, although most thought the term ‘visual art’ comfortably embraces craft.

Who attends contemporary art?

Overall, 54% of people claim to have experienced contemporary art at some time, indicating some familiarity among a high proportion of the community. One third had been to a contemporary art exhibition in the previous two years (31%). A quarter had been in the past (23%), but not in the previous two years, and 46% had never been.

The core audience for contemporary art is biased towards tertiary educated females in their 20s.

The core audience for contemporary art is biased towards tertiary educated females in their 20s. Often they are artists or designers themselves, or socialise in a cultural milieu. They tend to be protective of contemporary art and believe some of its unusual, distinctive and 'special interest' qualities would be lost on a mainstream audience. As one core supporter said, *'Contemporary art should not be advertised on television ... it's not for everybody ... it's not mainstream entertainment.'*

At the other end of the scale are people with little experience or interest in contemporary art. They are more likely to be older white-collar males, lower in educational and socio-economic status, and with little school or parental encouragement in the arts. Of the people who have *never* been to a contemporary art exhibition, a relatively high 20% are in their late teens and twenties. This is when galleries might start thinking about the longevity of the market segments they target. As Peter Steidl and Robert Hughes say in the Australia Council publication, *Marketing strategies for arts organisations*, 'If you capture the interest of a young person, you may benefit from repeat visits for many years to come'.

While some with no experience of contemporary art indicated a future interest (22%), others were ambivalent (18%) or said they would probably never go in the future (6%).

What appeals?

All except 'committed' visitors claim to prefer more traditional and representational art, so marketing with photographs of the work can help acquaint audiences with the diversity of contemporary art. Some people who are less familiar with contemporary art feel like outsiders. They see its core audience as *'arrogant'* and *'pretentious wankers'* who *'always wear black'*. That is, they are not seen to be 'like me'.

There are clear promotional opportunities in drawing attention to the 'how' of contemporary art.

The phrase 'contemporary art' drew emotive responses from less frequent visitors: *'That pile of cigarette butts, empty coffee cups and rubbish that the cleaner cleared up by mistake'* or *'A stupid big blank wall with one small block of red in the middle'*. One 'infrequent' visitor said, *'Whenever I see the word "installation" mentioned about an exhibition I immediately switch off'*. A positive exhibition experience will change these attitudes, so it is important for galleries to present contemporary art in an accessible framework of information and programs.

Galleries reported that the two highest-attended exhibitions often focused on students or young people (as exhibitors or participants), Indigenous content, or prizes and awards. Many visitors nominated shows featuring paintings, sculpture and works by young artists as the last contemporary art exhibition they had attended. Their high rating of the *'creativity, skill and thought process of the artist'* could be a reflection of their own recreational interest in art: a relatively high number of people (across all visitor groups) claim to practise art as a hobby. There are clear promotional opportunities in drawing attention to the 'how' of contemporary art.

From the audience perspective, the artist's physical presence is a clear winner in positive gallery experiences. Artist-led talks or profiles, stories and photographs of the artist can 'humanise' the art and generate feelings of involvement.

As an audience favourite, student exhibitions can help introduce new visitors to other contemporary work. Although often very contemporary and sometimes challenging, student art is perceived by wider audiences as more approachable; people are not so shy about attending or fearful of feeling out of place.

Indigenous art appears to attract a broader audience (particularly families—*‘it’s something children should be aware of and enjoy’*) than other contemporary art.

Indigenous exhibitions could be introduced as draw cards to widen the audience for contemporary art.

Beyond aesthetics, its primary appeal is the artform’s engagement with Indigenous culture and history. Indigenous exhibitions could be introduced as drawcards (alongside other exhibitions, where appropriate) to widen the audience net for contemporary art.

Galleries observe that event design and content also have an impact. Several mentioned the success of exhibitions with sufficient diversity to appeal to more than one niche audience. They say visitors are often more interested in exhibitions offering interactivity and participation or a range of artists and media. This perhaps explains why galleries with a mixed program are better attended. The celebrity factor or local connections, and themed exhibitions were also mentioned.

Virtually all visitors agree *‘It’s important to support new artists’*, but only 4% of galleries focus on the work of emerging artists.

What’s in a word?

What’s in a word? Contemporary art, contemporary craft?

Language in promotional and explanatory material can have a huge impact on the audience’s engagement with contemporary art.

Accessible language in explanatory and promotional material will help.

The word ‘contemporary’ can trigger negative views. Some less frequent and non-visitors associate this word with the *‘weird, elite, difficult and extreme’* and are further alienated. The research findings suggest putting less emphasis on the word ‘contemporary’ when targeting newer audiences. This isn’t a localised problem. Research carried out by London’s Victoria and Albert Museum in 2000 also found that ‘contemporary’, as a word to describe art, is not fully understood.

The word ‘craft’, even when aligned with ‘contemporary’, can suggest practical or domestic objects made by amateurs, according to many of the people surveyed. Some galleries opt for the generic description—objects, three-dimensional forms—when talking about craft. One gallery specialising in craft writes that *‘by positioning exhibitions in terms of “design”, the gallery has increased and diversified media coverage, which in turn is attracting new audiences’*. On the other hand, another specialist craft gallery argues *‘there is a renewed interest in craft as a response to mass brands and global consumerism,’* and that *‘to call craft practitioners “designers” is to deny the critical role of “making” in their practice’*.

It is important to visually illustrate the work when labelling an exhibition as ‘contemporary’.

One gallery commented that audiences enjoy exhibitions more when they understand the ideas and concepts behind the show—particularly if the work is more obscure. This gallery is using its promotions as an educational tool (providing more information about the context of the work), so visitors are better prepared when they arrive.

But a theoretical spin or ‘artsppeak’ reinforces feelings of alienation for less frequent visitors and turns the experience into hard work. Shifting the axis of language could be a challenge for galleries: a third say it’s difficult to find people who can talk about contemporary work in an *‘engaging, interesting way’*.

Less frequent visitors need to become more involved with what they are looking at. Accessible language in explanatory and promotional material will help. It is also important to visually illustrate the work when labelling an exhibition as ‘contemporary’. This will balance interpretive descriptions and communicate the *‘colour, beauty and detail, use of new materials, size and scope, and entertainment values’*—qualities the audience says it finds *‘inspirational and uplifting’*.

The visitor experience

Most popular days with visitors are

Saturday and Sunday. There is a need for more advertised weekend openings, particularly in regional areas.

Key decision factors for audiences planning to visit a contemporary art exhibition are *'the actual idea of the work'* and *'word of mouth'*. Knowledge about a gallery and its facilities is important to some when deciding to attend an exhibition (on average, galleries allocate 21% of their marketing budget to promoting the venue).

The artist's presence and reputation are motivating to frequent visitors, whereas less frequent visitors place more emphasis on convenience aspects (venue accessibility, opening times, transport, entry fees) in their decision-making. Accessibility is clearly more of a barrier in regional and rural areas.

Current opening hours are not always suitable for potential visitors. Most popular days with visitors are Saturday and Sunday (equally preferred), Wednesday and Friday. In general, galleries are open fewer hours a day on weekends than during the week, and 35% are closed on Sundays. There is a need for more advertised weekend openings, particularly in regional areas.

One to two hours tends to be the average length of time spent at an exhibition. Regional and rural visitors spend more time, possibly due to rationalising longer travelling distances—often to a venue in another city or town.

Social and family context

The majority attending a contemporary art exhibition went with at least one other person. 'Infrequent' visitors were most likely to attend with others, and 'committed' and older visitors were more likely to have attended on their own.

Social groups and families form a comparatively high percentage of all visitor groups (47%). One third of survey participants *'only go to contemporary art when on holidays or when they have visitors'*. Females are more likely to instigate the visit than males, as well as those with a higher frequency of attendance. Some of the audience complain they *'don't have anyone to go to contemporary art with'*.

Some of the less involved will build viewing contemporary art into other activities and place more emphasis on the whole experience: ease of location and other facilities (café or bookshop). These visitors prefer to attend exhibitions where they can do something else as well (have a meal, walk in the park, look at another attraction) because it spreads the opportunity for enjoyment.

Over a quarter value cafés or restaurants, and a smaller number regard a shop as important. Galleries are more likely to have a shop than a cafe, restaurant or bar (although a third are located in a café or restaurant precinct).

Strategies ... include introduction of children's guides, crèche facilities, interactive exhibitions, and outdoor activities or events and games.

For families in particular the total costs associated with the outing (travel, parking, food and drink, babysitting) are taken into account. This can discourage choice over more easily accessible outings. Families appreciate a crèche or other children's facilities—*'IKEA have a crèche with an inflatable castle for the kids—why can't galleries?'*

Practical issues of transport and parking can also deter families with children and older people with mobility constraints. Around a quarter of galleries do not have toilets in their building—also an important consideration for this group.

Promoting convenience factors (parking, location, public transport accessibility), facilities (cafés, shops) and the venue could be given more emphasis.

People with families become less frequent or non-visitors because they believe contemporary art is unsuitable for children. They don't regard art exhibitions as family entertainment and are concerned their children will be too easily bored unless there are child-related or interactive exhibits. Only 8% of galleries said *'our public programs focus mainly on the teens and pre-teens age groups'*.

Families are, however, more likely to visit Indigenous exhibitions because of an interest in Indigenous culture and the feeling that it is something children should be aware of and enjoy.

Galleries could introduce more 'family friendly' exhibitions at convenient venues and times, and reassure parents when exhibitions are suitable for children. Other strategies could include introduction of children's guides, crèche facilities, interactive exhibitions, and outdoor activities or events and games.

A high proportion of galleries provide disabled access at the front of the building (slightly fewer throughout the building). This may be important because demographically, older visitors are more likely to have gone on their own. More than 80% do not have access programs for the visually or hearing impaired.

First impressions

Most galleries are satisfied with how their public areas and facilities are maintained, but one in five said their building is in need of a general upgrade and facelift, or that their entrance foyer needs improving.

A person's visit is coloured by the people they meet—the receptionist, information and security staff.

The need to improve signage was frequently mentioned. External signage is an important prompt for spur of the moment visitors, and also raises awareness of the gallery's location for later visits. Many galleries do not have their name prominently displayed outside the building; many also said facilities are not well signed for navigating the interior spaces.

Audience perceptions are strongly coloured by the ambience of the space. While current visitors generally like the quiet ambience and contemporary layout, some less frequent visitors mentioned '*hearing my steps echoing*' or the '*unfriendly feeling*' of security guards.

A person's visit is coloured by the people they meet—the receptionist, information staff and security staff. The majority of galleries recognise this, and although half believe security and other frontline staff should be familiar with the art, 40% do not hold regular briefings with frontline staff.

Interpreting the work

Explanatory material

Wall mounted displays, information sheets and catalogues are the most frequently provided interpretive aids.

Galleries with higher incomes or based in the inner city are more likely to provide computer or web-based interpretive aids. Over a third of galleries did not answer questions concerning computer or web-based tools, video, film and audio guides, presumably because they do not use this technology.

'Artspeak' will reinforce feelings of alienation and turn the experience into hard work.

A high proportion (74%) of visitors would like an explanatory flier about the work to take away (yet only 46% of galleries always provide this service), and around a third mentioned they would like an audio guide.

While visitors have a desire to be drawn into the art, care must be taken to ensure published information and gallery guides meet the language and communication level of less frequent visitors. Catalogues were thought to be useful, with nearly half seeing them as 'very' useful. Regional and rural visitors tend to make more use of catalogues, and they prefer longer descriptions of the work. Visitors aged 55+ years were the highest consumers of catalogues.

The 'positive' cluster and 'committed' visitors prefer a brief outline of the work. Many also enjoy picking up a leaflet to take away as further background.

The 'alienated' cluster, 'lapsed' visitors and to some degree 'never' visitors are more likely to want a lot of detail about the work and the artist, and guidance about what to look for. The survey suggested some people may not read a lot of detail, and it may be better to provide information in person or an audio guide.

The 'irrelevant' cluster prefers a short label next to the art they are looking at. Given their lack of interest, they don't want to read a lot of information.

Public programs

Public programs tend to be gallery-based and often include the artist. Exhibition-related workshops, floor talks, lectures and guided tours are the most frequently mentioned public programs. Some galleries provided examples of lively, innovative public programs designed to attract new audiences and interpret the work.

However, there appear to be opportunities for a broader approach encompassing people of all ages and involving programs outside the gallery. One gallery credits its success to an extensive outreach program involving people of all ages, ranging from Art Taster workshops for adults to Playart for pre-schoolers.

Although most galleries claimed ‘*our public program is fairly evenly distributed across all age groups*’, the research shows that programs are more often targeted at schools (from artists-in-residence to briefings for visual art educators). Less than half the galleries conduct external programs with the general public or young people. Regional galleries put more emphasis on programs designed for young people outside the education system.

Galleries with higher attendances, located outside capital cities or with a permanent collection are significantly more active in delivering programs to niche audiences. Conversely, galleries showing contemporary Australian work are less active.

More than two thirds of galleries *do not* have education spaces, lecture or screening rooms, two-thirds don’t have multi-purpose spaces or workshops, and around half don’t have meeting rooms. Only a third saw the lack of these facilities as hampering their efforts to increase audiences.

For over half the galleries, a shortfall of people with specialist expertise is the major obstacle to running more public programs—‘*We would do more public programming if we had people with the right skills*’. And more than a third agreed ‘*it is difficult to find someone to talk about contemporary art in an engaging and interesting way*’.

Galleries are often the first port-of-call for information about the visual arts in their region. Nearly two-thirds provide information services to the general public, artists, collectors, educators, commissioning architects, designers and retailers. They value individual artworks. Many provide a telephone information and referral service, a database collection of images, reference materials or a library. A significant number also provide professional development services to artists.

Marketing contemporary art

Galleries would benefit from including multicultural media in advertising and promotional activity.

Is advertising and promotional activity reaching the right audience? A high two-thirds of people surveyed claim they ‘*never know what contemporary art exhibitions are on*’. However, they agreed ‘*it’s important to keep up with the latest directions in art*’, indicating their interest in finding out what’s happening.

People from non-English speaking backgrounds (particularly Europeans) have a higher interest in supporting new artists but very low awareness of what is on. Galleries would therefore benefit from including the multicultural media in advertising and promotional activity.

Around two-thirds of galleries do not rely primarily on word of mouth to sell their exhibitions, indicating the importance of marketing.

The research indicates that marketing is primarily used as a short-term promotional tool to attract audiences to single exhibitions. While this is an important function, few resources appear to be earmarked for actioning medium or long-term strategies for developing new audiences.

Half the galleries do not regularly involve marketing staff in program and event planning.

Galleries spend on average around a tenth of their annual budget on marketing. The percentage rises for smaller galleries and drops for higher income galleries. Around half this allocation is spent on promoting the annual exhibition program and six per cent is spent on promoting education programs.

However, a quarter do not budget for positioning and profiling the gallery, half do not budget for promoting education programs, and two-thirds do not budget for medium to long-term audience development programs. Of the third that do invest in audience development strategies, only 2.5% of the marketing budget is allocated.

Almost two-thirds of galleries do not have a full-time marketing person, and 19% have no full-time staff in any capacity. Even galleries with incomes exceeding \$450,000 average just a 0.9 full-time marketing person (compared to 22.1 full time staff overall).

Half the galleries do not regularly involve marketing staff in program and event planning.

Despite the shortage of internal marketing specialists a high 61% don't have a board member with marketing expertise, and 67% rarely, if ever, contract external specialists.

Gallery managers may like to review and refine their marketing know-how with two particularly useful Australia Council publications. *Marketing strategies for arts organisations* (Peter Steidl and Robert Hughes) is an easy to follow, step-by-step guide to developing effective marketing strategies. You'll find accessible information on growth strategies, audience development, reviewing your competition and defining target markets. It also provides a practical toolbox of techniques to support future strategy development.

Fuel4arts.com, a free online audience development and arts marketing tool has just released a new resource for arts marketers—*SAUCE: Hot tips for effective arts promotion*. It covers campaign planning, design and production of promotional materials, media relations, advertising, sales promotion and direct marketing.

The Australia Council has produced a number of other arts marketing and audience development publications (available in print and online), including *The world is your audience* that looks at targeting multicultural audiences and media. See <www.ozco.gov.au/resources/publications> for links to each of the Australia Council's marketing publications. See also *How to market Indigenous arts* at <www.ozco.gov.au/atsia/howto/market.html>; although aimed at artists, it has useful information on publicity and Indigenous media links.

Strategic planning

Three quarters of the galleries claim to have a strategic plan. Of these, 84% address the issue of developing audiences.

Only 15% consider their strategic plan has been very successful, indicating that galleries either don't believe it's a useful tool, or need to maintain the plan as a living document.

Capital city and higher income galleries, and galleries with higher attendances are more likely to have a strategic plan. Those with less contemporary content are much less likely to have a strategic plan.

Market research

While half the galleries say they are primarily driven by customer satisfaction, little work is undertaken to obtain visitor feedback. Few galleries conduct independent audience evaluations and only 27% conduct frequent visitor research. Nearly half occasionally conduct research of the wider marketplace.

The processes of visitor feedback and audience profiling can be improved. Only half the galleries profile visitors on site by postcode or other data, and less than half seek visitor feedback on exit.

Targeting niche audiences

Nearly half the galleries are not targeting specific demographic groups. Of those who did specify a target audience, 53% give youth and education as a priority.

Galleries are not identifying specific targets—either as the core audience for annual programs or targets for long-term audience and business development.

The tourist market is also important to a small number of galleries. Two galleries said their priority is reaching audiences outside the normal 'arts audience' demographic (lower incomes, less educated or living in the outer suburbs); eight galleries are targeting culturally diverse audiences. A number of Indigenous galleries target collectors in both Australia and overseas to support their artists and the growth of their business.

It is logical that targeting activity is driven by the content of each exhibition and this may be why more galleries did not specify targets.

It is nonetheless concerning that more galleries are not identifying specific targets—either as the core audience for annual programs or targets for long-term audience and business development.

Database management

Eight-six per cent of galleries claim to have a mailing list that the general public can join. Although 84% direct mail, only 55% have lists of recent visitors. This

Capturing and maintaining contact databases is being poorly done by galleries, if at all.

implies galleries may be using old lists, over-calculating their use of direct mail, or under-estimating the extent to which their lists contain recent visitors. Further, although 59% direct mail to prospects, only 52% have in-house lists of prospects gathered through promotional activities. Some galleries could also be using external lists.

Only half the galleries surveyed segment their list by the person's interest in contemporary art. This is perhaps not surprising, given that 72% of galleries designate 75+% of their program to mostly contemporary Australian art. Galleries that also present non-contemporary work are less likely to segment their list by contemporary art interest.

Galleries are poorly managing the basic strategy of capturing and maintaining contact databases. Chart 2.28 on page 28 indicates the composition of direct mail and email databases, and the highlights show where galleries can improve their reach.

Targeting audiences via direct mail

An increased focus on building relationships with visitors will help galleries secure support from their community. Direct mail programs could help develop a loyal audience, generate repeat business, improve attendance at lectures, forums and symposia, enrolments in a membership program, and encourage donations or bequests.

Targeting audiences via the Internet and email

Most current and 'one off' visitors are *regular* Internet users, and although most galleries (85%) have a website, only 19% generate an email newsletter or provide a virtual gallery for viewing works of art. Under half use their websites to provide educational and background information.

Galleries are also not utilising the Internet's 'interactive' capabilities through development of online communities or e-networking.

Many of the visitors surveyed use the Internet for email and research, and around half the current and 'one off' visitors use it for *'finding out what's on'*. Email promotion has grown so dramatically for one gallery that this is their primary promotional tool, especially for live events, most of which they said sell out after the email promotion.

Internet strategies are less likely to be successful in regional areas; findings suggest newspaper articles and reviews are more persuasive.

Of galleries with a website, 82% did not estimate the number of 'hits' received. While recognising this is a crude measure of web usage (length of time on site and number of pages accessed provide more valuable insight) it is concerning there is not more evaluation of website effectiveness.

The Internet is a key tool for keeping visitors informed about contemporary art events. As current visitors are heavy users of the Internet, email strategies and online showcases are influential.

Galleries can access SAUCE via fuel4arts.com for a step-by-step guide to developing online newsletters and promotions.

Using the audience's preferred media channels

The sector may find a correlation between improved publicity strategies and renewed interest from the mainstream media.

Nearly half the galleries believe the media are not interested in providing quality coverage of contemporary art, underlining the relevance of the Australia Council's current media initiatives as part of its approach to promoting the value of the arts.

Galleries that have ever had access to a professional publicist, whether by contract or as part of a festival, report an immediate increase in media coverage and audience interest. Most galleries, however, appear to regard a publicist as a luxury. The sector as a whole can increase its media relations activity, and may find a correlation between improved publicity strategies and renewed interest from the mainstream media.

Targeting audiences via media advertising

Nearly all galleries frequently or occasionally advertise in the print media, two-thirds through television or radio promotions, and nearly half use outdoor media advertising to reach their audiences. Galleries with higher attendances advertised more frequently in electronic and outdoor media.

Current visitors cited ‘newspaper advertising’ as the second most frequent source of information (26%) after ‘word of mouth’ (37%), followed by ‘signage’ (19%) and ‘direct mail’ (17%).

Galleries frequently mention increased coverage in mainstream media (7.30 Report, CNN, Foxtel, arts supplements in mass-circulation dailies) as reaching new audiences. Other successful advertising outlets include arthouse cinemas and street newspapers.

Targeting audiences via media editorials

Favourable reviews in the press tend to prompt attendance and stimulate word of mouth among less frequent visitors. A high proportion of ‘current’ visitors read the arts pages in major city newspapers (*The Sydney Morning Herald*, *The Age* and *The Australian*), and view arts programs on television. Fewer current visitors listen to radio arts programs or read art magazines.

Targeting audiences via cross-promotions

Galleries with higher attendance and income are more likely to be involved in cross-promotions. Generally, they confine their cross-promotions to other arts organisations or tourism agencies. Very few frequently cross-promote with non-arts organisations. Some galleries mentioned cross-promotions with the media (particularly local radio stations), sponsors, local bookstores, and hook-ups with other galleries. Others refer to the benefits of being a festival stakeholder.

Membership schemes

Forty-five galleries run membership programs, such as a ‘Friends’ scheme, and a low 14% hold private viewings with sponsors or members. Galleries showing contemporary Australian art and capital city galleries are less likely to have a membership scheme.

In written statements galleries refer to the physical limitations of their building (lack of air conditioning, tucked away where no one can find it) or to the inherent conservatism of the local audience, which they say would take considerable education to overcome.

Audience targets for galleries

Chart 1.1: The marketing matrix

Attitude	Attendance				
	positive	lifestyle	alienated	irrelevant	rejectors
‘committed’	4				
‘infrequent’	3				
‘one-off’		2			
‘lapsed’			1		
‘never’					

People who have little or no experience of contemporary art but are still prepared to listen to messages aimed at the profile of the ‘alienated’ cluster (19%):

- Use of visual marketing rather than strong association with the word ‘contemporary’ is directed at this cluster’s stated preference for realistic art and may introduce them to a compatible segment of contemporary art.
- Neutralising their negative perceptions of contemporary art using carefully written advertising, promotional and information copy.
- Careful selection of which exhibitions to target at this group based on their expressed preferences. ‘Weird’ and very challenging work may not be appropriate. Highly diversified exhibitions on the other hand are ideal.
- Providing lots of information about the work at the exhibition, and developing an exhibition catalogue with the target group in mind.

- Marketing through the more commercial channels of mainstream media, perhaps with an emphasis on the more populist aspects of the exhibition (e.g. artists, sporting connections, competitions, etc.).
- Website promotion, where the gallery's web address (www.galleryname.com.au) is prominently featured in all printed and marketing material. This can also be achieved through focused advertising of the website, and will draw visits to the site which can help educate the inexperienced.

People who have had some experience of contemporary art and who will listen to a message tailored to the profile of the 'lifestyle' cluster (23-33%):

- Visual marketing, but with less stress than for the inexperienced group above.
- A family emphasis in the marketing message and content selection—exhibitions 'suitable' for children and extended family to visit together.
- Emphasis on convenience and facilities, selling the message that visiting contemporary art compares favourably with their other leisure activities.
- Marketing through mainstream media and editorial, possibly with a greater emphasis on local publications aimed at the home / family market.
- Use of promotional accessories that 'catch the eye'.
- Careful website design to maximise involvement and interactivity. Webcams in galleries and copious illustrations of actual work may be appropriate.

People who have significant experience of contemporary art and who will listen to a message tailored to the profile of the 'positive' cluster (19-29%):

- Visual marketing for those in the 'lapsed' visitor end of this cluster.
- Leaflets to take away and public programs involving them with the work, such as artist talks, workshops and so on.
- Emphasis on new directions and innovation in the marketing spin.
- Family and socially oriented facilities and activities so the prime motivators may be justified in indulging their interest in contemporary art.
- Marketing through broadsheet advertising, and professional media relations activity with the print and broadcast media.
- Prime targets for 'friends of' and 'bring a friend' initiatives.
- Program and visual information on the website allowing forward planning in a complex and demanding social and leisure schedule.

People who are very enthusiastic about contemporary art. Their message reflects their roles as cognoscenti and guardians of contemporary art (9%):

- Market innovation, the conceptual and 'leading edge' aspects of exhibitions.
- The more challenging the better.
- Opening events and public programs 'by invitation' to 'committed' visitors.
- Higher involvement in 'friends of' or 'ambassador' membership programs, supported by newsletters, website material and so on.
- Conventional advertising is not so important for this group, as they will actively seek to be on direct mail lists maintained by the gallery.
- Perhaps a 'closed' area of the website, along with interaction in the form of discussion groups and message boards. Support for online booking if relevant, and online viewing of current and prior exhibitions.

The research indicates that in general terms, contemporary art needs to broaden its audience profile to include:

- more males (often influenced by female partners and friends)—perhaps through 'bring a friend / partner' incentives
- younger 'techno' focused people who are a primary target for new media art, reached via targeted press and the Internet
- people in their 30s and the 55+ age group, and families
- people without tertiary education, by breaking down 'elitist' perceptions and perceived difficulties in understanding the work.