

Waikato Museum

Strategic Plan 2016-2021



INTRODUCTION

Museums across the world are changing.

The traditional museum as a place that passively displays collections is in the past. Rapid advancements in new technologies and developments in communications and digital access are influencing conventional understandings and expectations about the role of a museum.

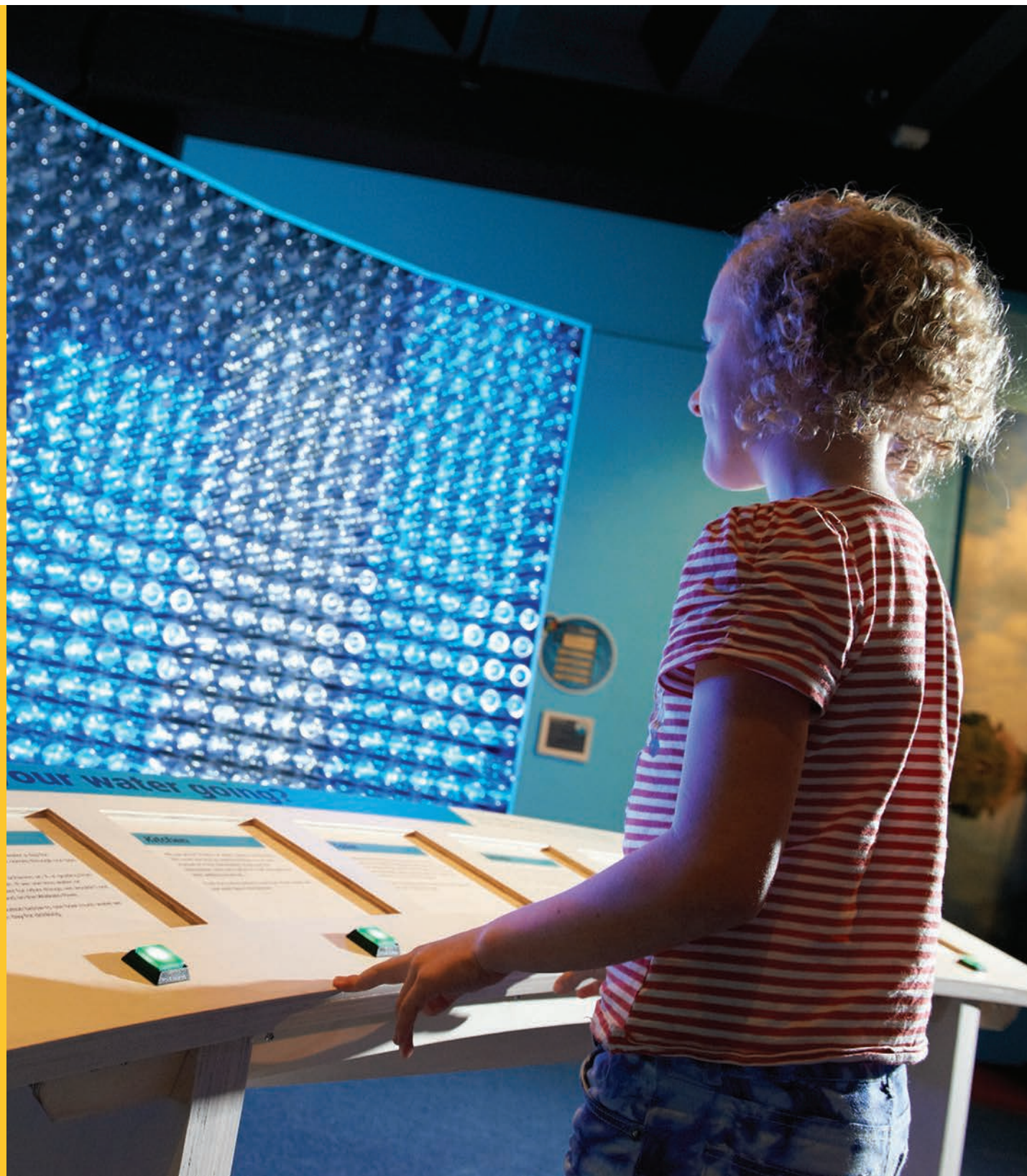
Museum audiences are also changing. Our society is becoming more diverse, more urbanised and generally older. People are more mobile than ever before. The internet and social media has brought the world closer, making it more accessible and more immediate.

These world-wide shifts and trends mean that staying relevant is becoming more challenging for museums. Visitors want to be entertained. There is an increasing expectation that museums will provide digital, interactive and participatory learning experiences as well as more diverse services, collections and exhibitions.

This strategic plan is the Waikato Museum's response to these trends and the challenge to remain relevant to the Hamilton and Waikato community.



TE WHARE TAONGA O WAIKATO



WAIKATO MUSEUM: AT A GLANCE

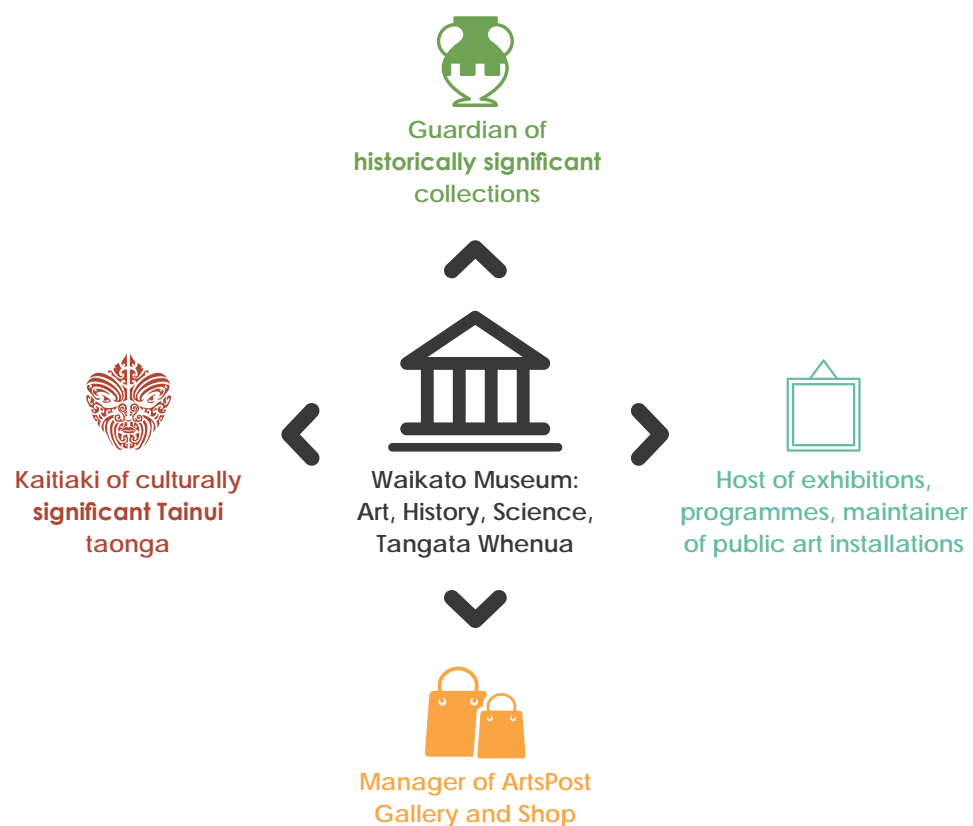
Services

Waikato Museum provides services to Hamilton and the Waikato region. It cares for, preserves and shares local stories and stories about objects and taonga of the Waikato and Tainui waka.

The Museum holds and exhibits art collections and it implements and maintains a changing programme of educational and interactive programmes and exhibitions. It preserves and

maintains collections in the four areas of Art, History, Science and Tangata Whenua. In addition, the Museum maintains public art installations and manages the ArtsPost galleries and shops.

It is free to enter the Museum, with charges for entry into the Science galleries and special exhibitions.

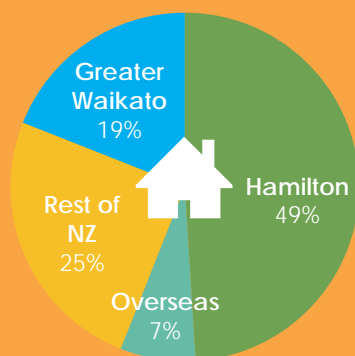


48%



of non-users reported they did not know where the museum was located

Where do our customers live?



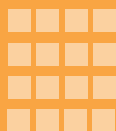
34



FTE paid staff assisted by a varying number of volunteers, including those from the Friends of the Museum

16 galleries totalling 2,660m²

7.2%



increase in gallery space since 2013

Facts and Stats

The Museum's visitor numbers and financial performance have remained static over the past five years. Performance in these two key areas is often dependent on exhibitions. For example during the *Body In Action* exhibition in 2015 the Museum had 40,895 visitors, increasing the annual visitor numbers by 32% compared to the same period the previous year. Domestic visitor numbers and revenue are comparable with similar sized museums but the Waikato Museum has low tourist visitor numbers.

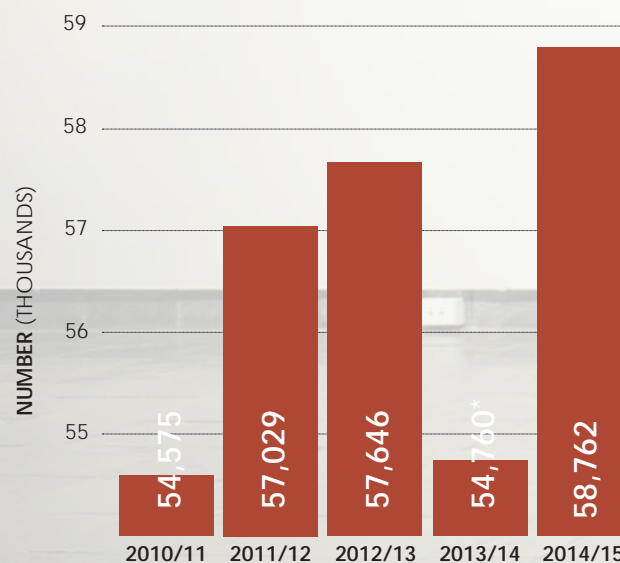
Major events hosted by Waikato Museum:

- National Contemporary Art Award - annually
- NZ Fieldays No.8 Wire Award – annual award
- Waiclay National Ceramics Award - biennial award hosted by Waikato Museum

Major collections held at the museum:

- Trust Waikato Collection
- Hetet/Te Kanawa Collection
- Barry Hopkins Art Trust Collection
- Waikato Historical Society Collection
- Waikato Bequests Trust Collection

Unique website visits



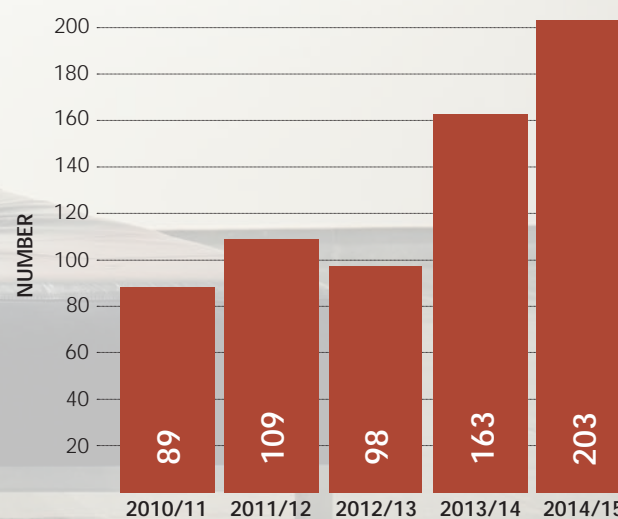
* New website launched in Dec 2013 affected visitor numbers for 2013/14 year.

Awards:

- 2012 - Museum's Aotearoa Project Achievement Award: Exhibition Excellence - Social History
- 2012 - Judges' Award for Sustainability
- 2012 - ArtsPost Galleries & Shop: 2012 Top Shop Retail Excellence Awards: Giftware and Homeware category



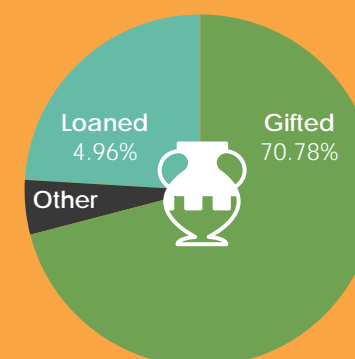
Number of public programme events



The Museum consistently scores high in **customer satisfaction** rating surveys carried out by the Council. In 14/15 that rating was

84
(Exceptional)

Museum collections



28,035

items in the Waikato Museum's collections, which was recently valued at

\$25,242,226



Budget and Revenue 5 YEAR TREND

	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
Education	\$25,896	\$24,402	\$25,906	\$53,889	\$38,770
Exscite Centre	#	#	\$45,860	\$64,571	\$54,922
Public Programmes	\$20,657	\$8,902	\$8,597	\$19,225	\$25,627
Venue Hire	\$11,039	\$7,616	\$13,191	\$9,529	\$8,213
Koha	\$6,669	\$7,448	\$5,313	\$8,571	\$8,006
Museum Merchandise	\$52,528	\$25,650	\$20,722	\$37,815	\$18,874
ArtsPost Gallery Hire	\$10,394	\$8,319	\$6,197	\$10,403	\$8,976
ArtsPost Commission Received	\$91,223	\$93,758	\$84,515	\$80,319	\$81,697
Sponsorship/Grant	\$415,086	\$97,172	\$62,648	\$27,547	\$525,973
Other*	\$245,642	\$149,364	\$98,233	\$135,108	\$154,777
Total Revenue	\$879,134	\$422,631	\$371,182	\$446,977	\$925,835
Operating Budget	\$4,953,015	\$4,590,516	\$4,147,384	\$4,257,320	\$4,585,352

* Includes non excsite admission fees, recoveries, sundries receipts etc

Exscite admission not reported seperately

How do we compare?

It is difficult to make comparisons with other museums due to the enormous variety in how these are run, what services they include, who runs them and how they are funded. However, after analysing results from a number of cities in New Zealand the following conclusions can be made:

- The revenue Waikato Museum receives each year is comparable to other museums of similar sizes. Expenditure is a little higher than these museums, however this may be due to differences in how budgets are reported in different areas.
- The number of domestic visitors to Waikato Museum appears comparable to visitor numbers at other similar sized museums that offer a similar service. However, these museums are located in smaller cities. Domestic visitor numbers could be improved.
- Tourists make up a very small percentage of our visitors. Compared to museums that cater primarily for tourists, Waikato Museum underperforms in this area. Efforts to increase visitor numbers should focus on providing a service for this market.

Notable Exhibits

Hatching the Past: Dinosaur Eggs and Babies

(4 September 2010 - 27 February 2011)

27,139 visitors

Off the Wall: World of WearableArt™ Up Close

(2013) Target: 7,000 visitors

9,388 visitors

Ngaa Pou Whenua

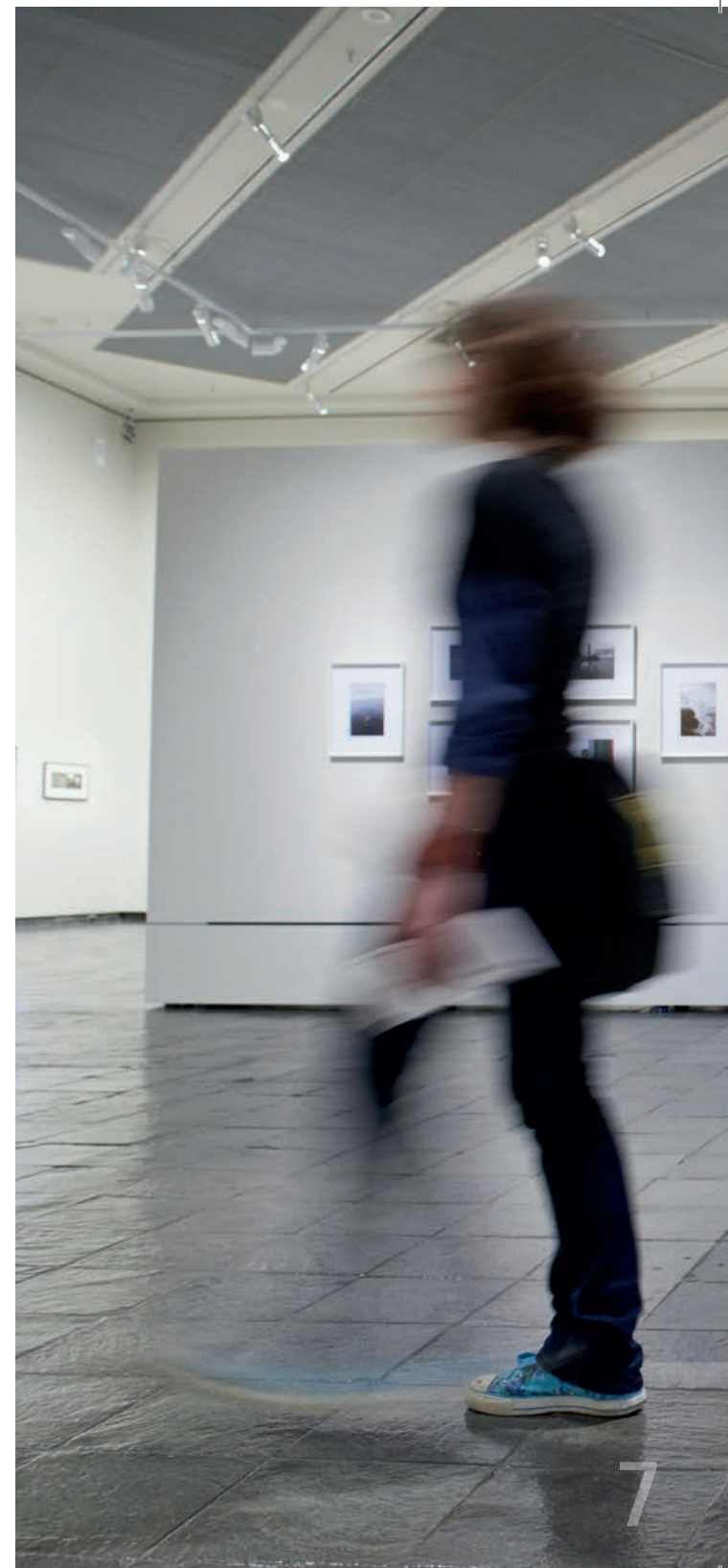
(November 2010 – May 2014)

more than 300,000 visitors

For Us They Fell

(24 April 2015 to 11 November 2018) since April 24th,
16% improvement on visitor numbers for the same period last year

77,663 visitors



EMERGING TRENDS

Museums are changing because society is changing.

Advances in technology and easy access to information have profoundly changed the way people all around the world live, work, learn, and relax. Social media is highly influential; notions of what is current and topical shift constantly and quickly.

Our societies are becoming more diverse in terms of culture, religion and lifestyle. People today are mobile, technology-savvy and accustomed to a high degree of immediacy in their interactions with the world around them. They seek novelty; they want to be entertained as well as educated.

In the face of these changes, museums are challenged to do things differently to deliver outcomes that reflect the role of a modern museum.

Traditionally, museums have been primarily associated with the preservation of history for future generations, in static displays and collections. However museums are now becoming places for experiences and events connected with the present day as well as the distant past.

The 'mix' museums offer has broadened to include contemporary art and science, as well as local stories. And increasingly museums are privileging temporary exhibitions over permanent exhibitions, thematic approaches

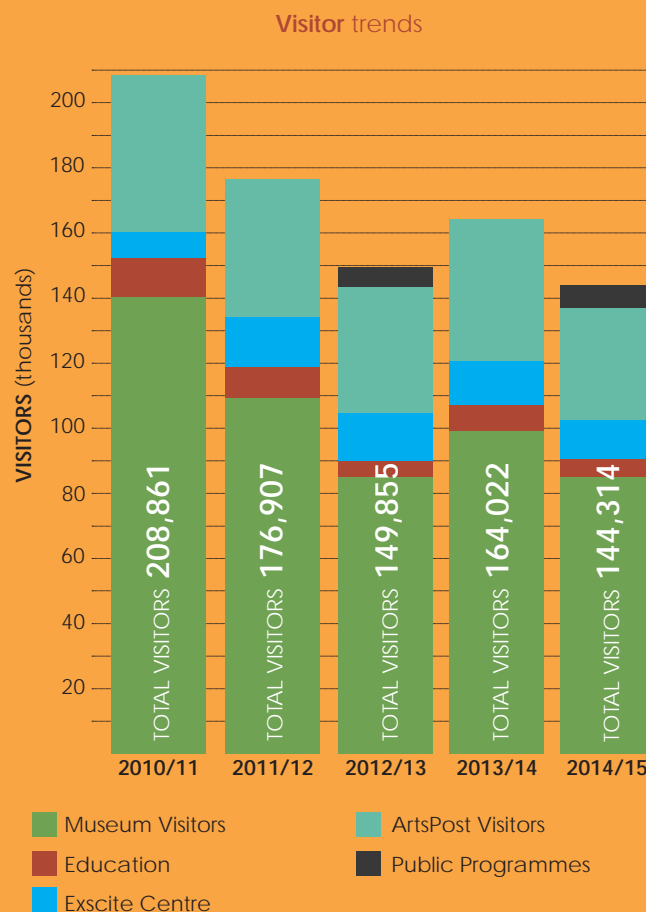
over chronological ones, and multi-dimensional, interactive presentations over fixed and passive presentations.

To stay relevant, museums are recognising that they need to be inclusive and provide visitor experiences that are digital rich, interactive and participatory.

Modern museums are embracing modern business models to support their functions of stewardship and learning. This includes researching and understanding their audiences to better meet their needs; advocating, promoting and marketing museum services; and generating alternative revenue streams through merchandising and complementary services.

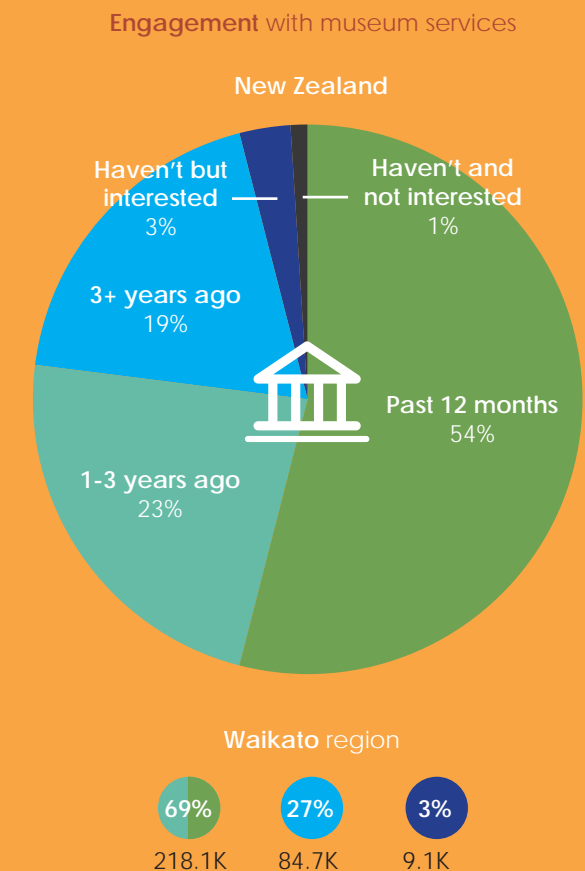
More and more, museums are working within highly developed local and global networks. They are partnering with their communities and tangata whenua, particularly in the telling of local stories; with philanthropists and funders to help finance high profile collections and exhibitions; and with peer institutions around the world to access and share new content and material.

In New Zealand, Wellington's Te Papa Tongarewa is an example of a 'new' museum, successfully incorporating community participation, interactivity and elements of popular culture into its practice.



* In November 2012 new procedures were put in place to collect a more accurate door count for the museum. A lower figure from then onwards was expected.

- More integration of technology
- Broader, contemporary mix of programmes
- More diverse audiences and expectations
- Greater role for communities and local stories
- More interactive and participatory museum experiences



OUR STRENGTHS



Location

Waikato Museum is located on the banks of the Waikato River at the south end of the central city in Hamilton. Museums can play a key role in creating a strong and positive identity for a city. They can also be significant attractors of visitors, including tourists. Accordingly, the Museum plays a role in Hamilton's two key plans, the Hamilton River Plan and the Central City Transformation Plan. These plans have key actions for transforming the central city and increasing engagement and connection with the river. Telling the story of the river and highlighting its importance to our region is a key role for the Museum. The ability to link with future tourist attractions on or next to the river is therefore a significant advantage.



Diversity of Collections, Programmes and Exhibitions

The museum has a diverse collection which spans across four areas - art, tangata whenua, science and history - with a particular focus on the people, history, culture and art of the Waikato. Programmes and exhibitions all benefit from the blend of these collections and the variety that this brings. This range and diversity is a key strength and while it means the Museum caters for a wide and diverse audience, global trends support this direction. The diverse offering at the Museum enables local stories and documents about our cultural heritage to be told.



Connection with Tangata Whenua

The museum is kaitiaki to a significant collection of Tainui taonga, including Te Winika which was gifted by Dame Te Aatairangikaahu in 1973. This preserves these important toanga and also enables these collections to be shared and Maori stories and culture, which is a vital part of understanding the Waikato identity, to be told.



Staff

Museum staff are known within the community for their expertise, knowledge and their genuine desire to provide exceptional customer service.

OUR CHALLENGES



Brand and identity confusion

The name “Museum” does not adequately describe the diversity of offering and the role the Museum plays in Hamilton and the Waikato’s arts and cultural infrastructure. Developing a stronger identity and brand presence is something that the Museum needs to focus on. There is also a need to create a sense of identity for the museum that the public can relate to, and that provides a profile or theme for the diverse blend of collections, programmes and exhibitions that the museum offers.



More local content

Telling stories of the Waikato and bringing stories to the Waikato is a vital part of the Museum’s role. Not only does it market our local identity, but it assists our communities to explore their place within a modern, global context.



New funding models

Museums worldwide are facing the challenge of identifying and implementing new models for revenue generation. Sustainable revenue streams are needed to deliver the diverse, dynamic, and awe-inspiring experiences visitors expect. This involves partnering with funders, sponsors and private philanthropists as well as merchandising, event hosting, and art and cultural tourism.



Community interaction

Museums around the world are expected to interact more with their communities. The communities and organisations within Hamilton and beyond would like the Museum to collaborate more, utilise local expertise more within their programmes and exhibitions and share their staff expertise. This could include outreach programmes to see more programmes, activities and exhibitions outside the walls of the Museum, including a view to the greater Waikato region.



Physical connection to the street

The Museum is located well back from the street, limiting visibility of the building and there is no street presence. There is a need to address accessibility issues, improve signage and link better to Victoria Street. There is no access to the river from the building or profile to passersby on the river paths.



More visibility of Tainui history and taonga

Taking existing strengths to the next level of excellence can be a challenge. The Museum’s role as kaitiaki of Tainui taonga and strong relationship with Tangata Whenua provides considerable opportunities to raise the profile of our rich and fascinating local heritage and stories in innovative and culturally appropriate ways.

WHAT IT MEANS FOR OUR MUSEUM

1. We need to keep offering the mix of exhibitions and experiences we currently do.
2. We need our brand and profile to be much more visible.
3. We need to keep up with technology and customer experience innovations.

Our visitor satisfaction rating is exceptional. Experts and stakeholders tell us that Waikato Museum demonstrates many of the characteristics and innovative practices 'new' museums around the world exhibit.

The overall message is that the Waikato Museum's offering is high quality, contemporary and engaging. We are doing the right things in the right ways. We will continue to improve by working to our strengths and increasing our involvement with communities, stakeholders and local iwi. However the identity of the Museum - what it is and what it does - needs to be clarified and then promoted strongly. This identity must be anchored in local stories, our eclectic mix of art, science, history, and tangata whenua, and our connection to the Waikato River.



KPIs

- Customer satisfaction rating is 85% or higher
- Revenue increases each year
- Visitor numbers increase each year
- Museum brand recognition within the region improves each year

PLAN OF ACTION

PURPOSE

To develop a distinctly Waikato identity and be relevant to our communities

OUTCOMES (what we hope to have achieved in five years time)

- The Museum brand and offering is known locally and regionally
- More local, domestic and international visitors experience the Museum
- More people know the history of the Waikato and local stories
- More revenue generated
- Consistently rated as “exceptional” for customer service

ACTIONS

RE-BRAND

PROFILE AND IDENTITY

- Develop branding that reflects the new museum name and a distinctly Waikato identity
- Implement the brand change across all areas of Museum activity and signage
- Develop and implement a communications and marketing plan to raise the profile of the Museum to residents and encourage repeat visits
- Develop a plan with Hamilton & Waikato Tourism to raise the profile of the Museum as a tourist destination and improve the tourist experience

RE-DESIGN

CONNECTIONS AND VISIBILITY

- Re-design the Victoria Street museum entrance and landscaping for better visibility, connection and access to Victoria Street
- Improve the connection to ArtsPost and future development behind the ArtsPost
- Open the Museum to the riverbank paths and connect to the developments planned for Ferrybank in the River Plan

ENHANCE

PROGRAMMES AND VISITOR EXPERIENCE

- Continue to improve exhibitions and programmes with modern, participatory technology
- Produce an exhibitions plan with a focus on themes promoting Waikato identity
- Establish an advisory group with Tainui to develop and guide a plan to increase the profile and visibility of local Māori cultural history and taonga
- Form an expert inter-disciplinary group to provide advice on the presentation of collections and exhibitions
- Extend the educational focus to include a learning centre specifically catering to the educational and curriculum needs of children

IMPROVE

REVENUE STREAMS AND SUSTAINABILITY

- Expand the merchandising and develop new merchandising approaches and products, especially for the tourist market
- Investigate opportunities to increase small event-hosting, pitching the Museum as a small premier venue with a riverbank location
- Develop a funding plan and strengthen partnerships with existing and potential funders and sponsors

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PHOTO CREDITS

All photos: Waikato Museum except:

Pages 10 and 13: Hamilton City Libraries, image numbers HCL_09196 and HCL_4655.

