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# The Museum of African American History: Increasing Ticket Sales

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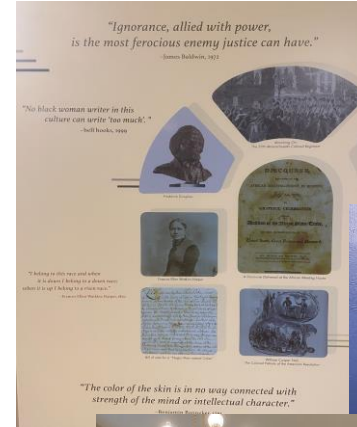
# Background Information

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- Client: The Museum of African American History (The MAAH)
- Purpose of Museum: Educate every generation on a side of history, focusing primarily on the abolitionists movement and colonial periods
  - Often misrepresented, and missing from a standard education system
- Goal of MAAH: Increase ticket sales



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# Situational Analysis

## Strengths

- Consumer's general interest in interactive experiences
- Being the only African American history focused museum in Boston
- Price of the ticket lower than competitors
- 75% are willing to visit the museum

## Weakness

- Customer awareness of museum is low
- Hard to notice the front door of the museum when walking by
- Accessibility of the museum is poor by public transport
- Weak social media engagement

## Opportunities

- Younger demographic easily reachable through social media outlets, as portrayed by Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum
- Awareness and interest in learning parts of Black history is gaining speedy momentum due to the Black Lives Matter movement

## Threats

- Other museums in Boston holding African American Exhibits
  - Covid-19 reducing tourism in Boston area
  - Universities shifted to online instruction, decreases the Boston student population significantly
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# Marketing Goals and Strategy

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# Goals and Strategies

- Overarching goal: Increase ticket sales in the MAAH through effectively targeting the 18-25 year olds in Boston
  - How: Increasing consumer awareness and shaping consumer behaviour
  - Strategies:
    - Usage of a comprehensive segmentation, targeting and positioning plan (VALS system, positioning by core benefit)
    - Capture consumers attention through source factors (classical conditioning to form associations)
    - Social media strategy employing the consistency principle to raise awareness
    - Use of framing and anchoring tactics to convince more purchases
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# Marketing Activities (STICC Recommendations)

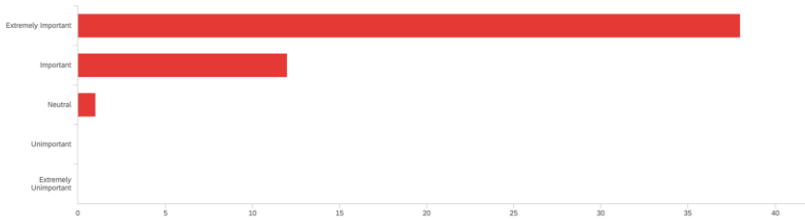
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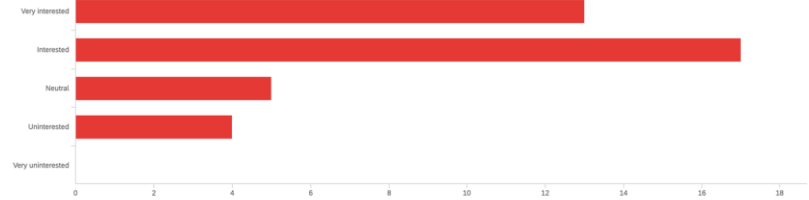
# Primary Audience: Market Segmentation

- Primary Audience:
  - The MAAH should be targeting college students between 18-25
  - Large part of the Boston community that is truly interested by black history, especially in the context of the BLM movement

Q1 - In the light of recent events for the Black Lives Matter Movement, how important do you think it is to understand the ... Page Options ▾



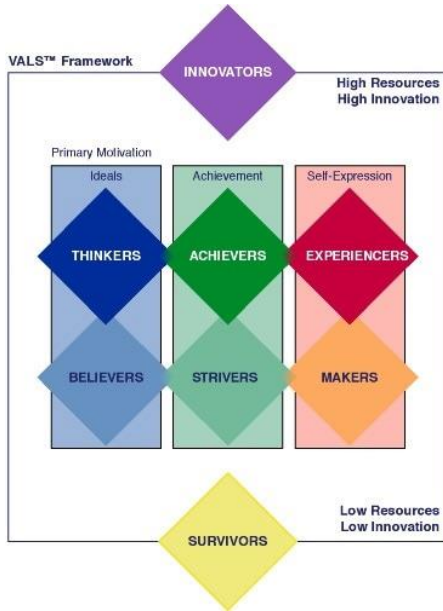
Q6 - How interested are you in visiting the Museum of African American History? (Rank from Very uninterested to Very inter... Page Options ▾





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# Primary Audience: Target Marketing



- Concentrated Target Marketing
    - The MAAH should target 18-25 year old college students in Boston
  - Using the VALS Framework
    - Specifically targeting Innovators and Thinkers
      - Innovators: value independence, taste, and character
      - Thinkers: value knowledge and creativity
    - Both of these groups will find value in the MAAH's offerings, hoping to learn more about Black History through an educational and experiential context
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# Primary Audience: Positioning

- Positioning by Core Benefit:
  - The MAAH provides a great opportunity for students to learn more about Black History and the context surrounding the BLM movement.
  - Not only a museum, but a cultural landmark in the Abiel Smith School and African Meeting House



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# Shaping Thoughts

- 76% of consumers have not visited the museum → weak consumer awareness
- MAAH's location is nestled away from the main street, thus it is not easy for a walker-by to spot the museum
- MAAH is located on the freedom trail - naturally attracts many tourists who will be more likely to walk in to visit for sightseeing purposes
- MAAH can capture the attention of these walkers through vivid imagery on signs that are directing them to the museum placed on the main street of the museum



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# Shaping Thoughts

- Temporal proximity theory → recent events evoke the vividness in a source
  - Sign on the main street: ‘Want to educate yourself on the missing pages of Black history, then head down the street to the Museum of African American History?’ with an arrow pointing to the museum
    - This helps consumers recollect their understanding of the BLM movement, and the importance to educate themselves on the history of the Black community
  - Important to place the sign near traffic → increases the intensity of the sign
  - Sign also deploys the scarcity principle: suggests that the authentic knowledge of black history is scarce
    - Scarcity signals value in people and in turn will attract more customers
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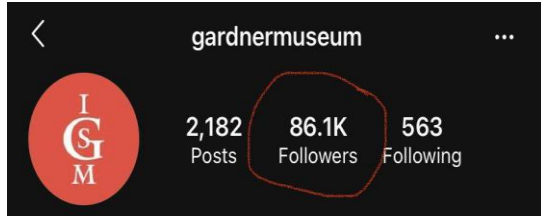
# Shaping Thoughts

- Another way in which MAAH can shape thoughts: change how customers learn about MAAH
- MAAH can collaborate with museums such as the MFA through putting up joint exhibitions showcasing African American history
- Classical conditioning: customers will start forming positive associations between the two museums
  - Consumers are well aware of MFA, and through association, MAAH will also increase its customer awareness → more potential customers, which will eventually lead to increased ticket sale



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# Influencing Attitudes



- Advertise what the MAAH has to offer about colonial history through social media pages
  - Currently: only 1 participant visited museum via social media
    - MAAH followers: 1,531 vs Isabella Stewart followers: 86,000
  - Crucial to gain social media followers in order to attract 18-25 year olds
  - Consistency Principle can be leveraged
    - Followers are more likely to visit the museum as they feel internally motivated to stay knowledgeable about Black history, since they have actively made the commitment to follow the page
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# Influencing Attitudes



- Behavioral consistency being leveraged in past: Four Seasons Hotel in Hong Kong
    - Photography competition: participants upload photos of landmarks within HK to Instagram (Hashtag #OurHK)
  - The MAAH: promote participants to take a photo of an item in the museum that they found fascinating, with the hashtag #LearningAtMAAH
    - Winners: receive a free item from the museum gift shop or two tickets
    - Rewarding your audience for investing time in your brand → more likely to remain consistent with you as they went through great efforts to attain the prize
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# Influencing Attitudes

- Participants who have previously visited the museum answered that they would definitely recommend the museum to their friends
    - Important to constantly remind consumers of the museum through social media
  - Emphasize on branding a visit to the museum as a memorable experience that can be gifted
    - People adapt quicker to material than experiential purchases (Hallinan)
    - Value of material items depreciate with repetition/comparison - gifts that encourage experiences are much more appreciated in the long run
    - MAAH begins promoting gifting a ticket around October/November: increase in ticket sales around Christmas time
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# Impacting Choices

- People are risk averse when choosing among gains, and risk seeking when choosing among losses
    - **Avoid framing the museum experience as a gain** (makes it less likely that they would purchase the tickets)
      - “You could have immersed yourself in African American history in ways you haven’t before.”
    - **Utilize messaging which frames missing out on the museum experience as a loss** (will make consumers see it as a loss if they do not purchase tickets, which would make them more to take a chance and purchase MAAH tickets)
      - “Don’t miss out on educating yourself on the important missing pages of African American history, here at the MAAH.”
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# Impacting Choices

- Consumers usually tend to have an externally-derived reference point, potentially from comparing ticket prices of other museums
    - 70% of the respondents either think the price of the ticket is \$15 or \$20, which is considerably higher than the actual MAAH ticket price of \$10.
      - Invite social media followers/consumers to guess how much they think a MAAH museum ticket costs (through an Instagram post, Facebook/banner ad, etc.)
      - By surprising respondents with the fact that a MAAH ticket is offered at a lower price compared to what was initially perceived; consumers are more likely to purchase as they anchor on the initial price they thought the price would be
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# Impacting Choices

- Multi-unit pricing presents another effective application of the anchoring tactic that could be employed to increase ticket sales
    - Advertisement which informs potential visitors that they could purchase a “2 tickets for \$15” or “4 tickets for \$30” deal
      - Potential visitors would lean on buying the number of tickets suggested by the anchor quantity in the advertisement
    - Offer family ticket gift bundles, perfect for special occasions
      - Consumers will anchor on the recommended quantity as they feel like they are gaining a deal out of the promotion, and the museum increases its quantity of tickets sold without significantly compromising ticket values
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# Implementation and Evaluation

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# Price and Budget

- Three main costs associated with implementing our plan:
    - Signage design and creation: average \$450 per sign in the United States
    - Content creation for social media: \$1000-\$5000 per month when contracting with an agency
      - Could also be done in-house or with interns, bringing down overall costs
    - Social media advertising campaigns
      - Facebook: Costs about \$0.97 per click, and \$7.19 per 1000 impressions
      - Instagram: Costs about \$0.20 to \$2.00 per click, and \$6.70 per 1000 impressions
  - More budget should be allocated toward Instagram than Facebook, as the target market is more active on that social media
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# Suggested Timeline for Implementation

## COLLEGE STUDENT MARKETING STRATEGY



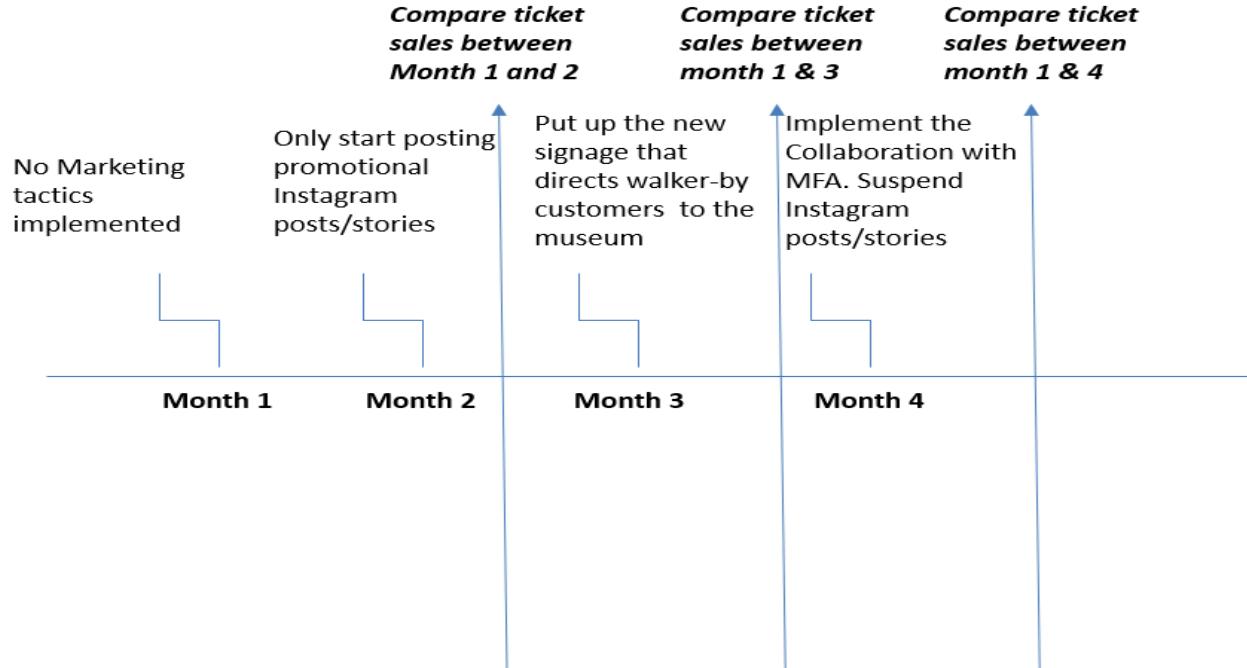
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# Outcome Assessment

- Posting social media content that is targeted towards the thinkers/innovators and refer to engagement level reports generated by Instagram
    - Analyzing social media metrics such as followers, no.of comments, no.of
    - Website statistics, specifically in regards to engagement/traffic generated from the advertisement campaigns placed on these platforms.
  - The MAAH can hand out surveys to visitors to assess how they heard about/what made them visit the museum.
  - Initial investment of money, time and effort by the staff and management of MAAH
    - However MROI offsets the potential costs.
  - Overall, marketing plan enables MAAH to gain streamlined branding → allows positive customer perception and awareness, eventually increasing ticket sales.
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# Assessing Success





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# Benchmark Utilization

Primary benchmarks which can be used to measure the success of their marketing activities include:

- Past performance comparisons
  - Target goals
    - Target goals should increase as months progress, and performance should be analyzed in comparison to these goals in order to determine levels of growth.
  - Comparison to other local museums' successes with increasing engagement amongst a younger demographic of visitors
    - The Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum found success with creating promotional material that maintained the museum's identity while still specifically appealing to a younger demographic
    - This allowed for further engagement with younger consumers without any sacrifice of their core target market
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# Potential Limitations & Solutions

- Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, people are naturally less likely to visit despite the marketing efforts.
  - The MAAH's COVID safety measures will help increase consumer confidence to visit amidst the pandemic.
  - Further, since we are targeting college students; grouping their visit times will make contact tracing easier.
  - Deploying new signage on public property may have legal or local regulations which may make it harder to implement.
  - They can get legal consultation (additional fees apply) to make sure they are adhering to the laws and regulations concerning deploying signs.
  - Since students are a fluctuating population, decreasing marketing efforts during holiday seasons will save marketing costs for when they are not present.
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**Thank You!**

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