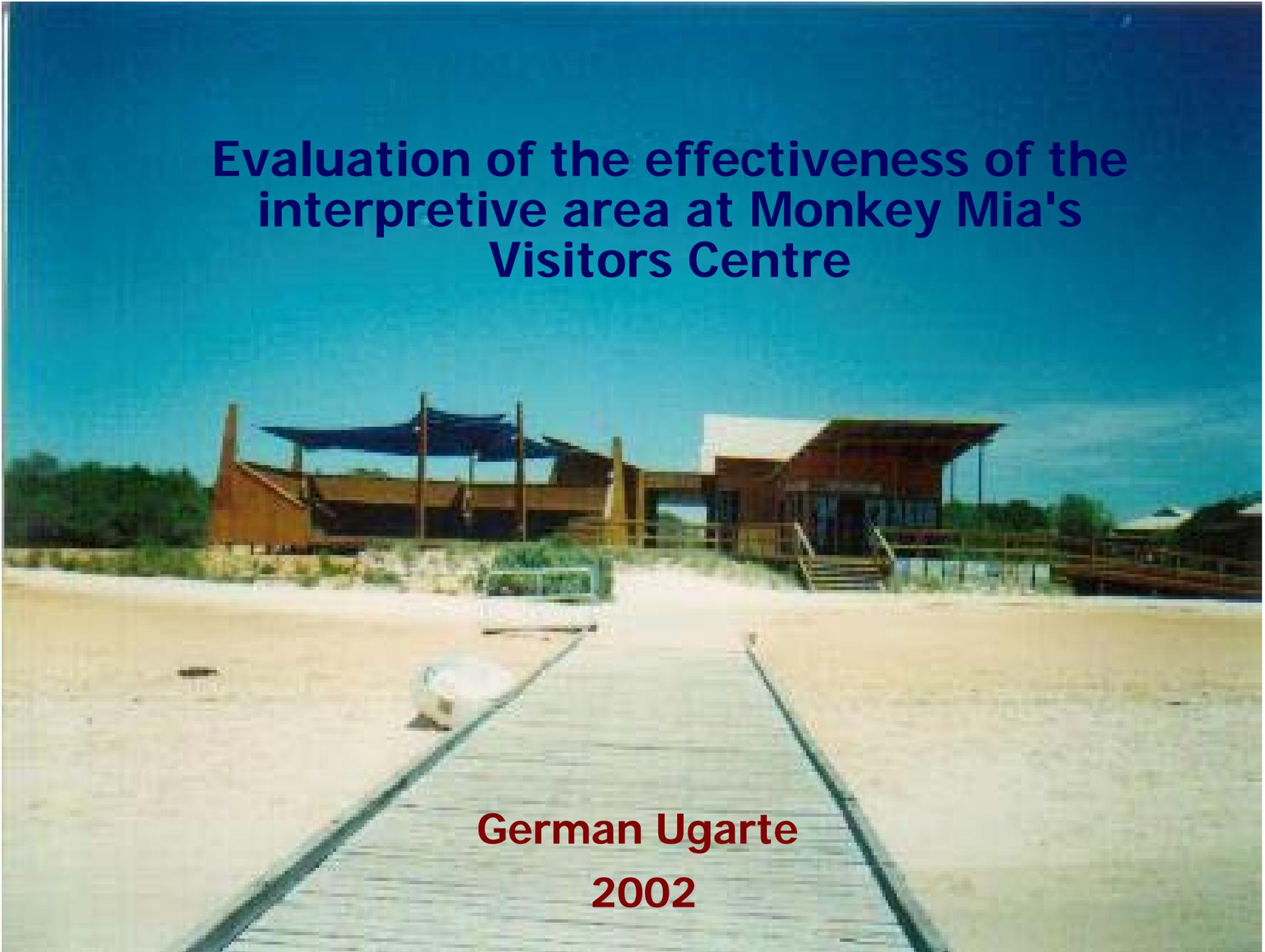


# Evaluation of the effectiveness of the interpretive area at Monkey Mia's Visitors Centre

**German Ugarte**  
**2002**

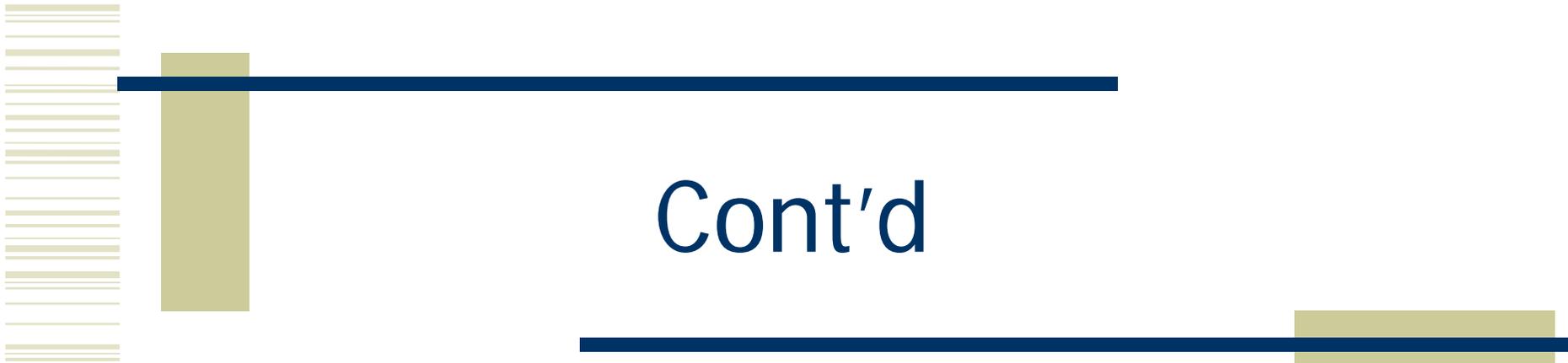




# Objectives



- ❑ To assess the experience of visiting the display and/or display area and its effect on the visitors
- ❑ To evaluate the educational response to the interpretive area and/or displays
- ❑ To evaluate the behavioural response of the visitors to the interpretive area and/or display at Monkey Mia's Visitors Centre.



# Cont'd

- To provide recommendations on improvements which might be implemented in the use of future interpretive facilities in Monkey Mia's Visitors Centre
  
- To produce a body of data and recommendations that will assist CALM in making an informed judgement about the Monkey Mia's Visitors Centre first year of functioning



# Methodology and key concepts...

- ❑ 107 visitors were observed and interviewed at the end of their visit to the interpretive area.
- ❑ 22 were interviewed only.
- ❑ 2 Rangers were interviewed.



# Methods of appraisal



- Formal observation.
- Formal interviews.
- Staff interviews.

# Main evaluation criteria

- ❑ Attraction Power (AP): is the number of people who stop at a display, divided by the number who pass it , expressed as a percentage.
- ❑ Holding Power (HP): is the average time people spend at a display, divided by the actual time required to read or review it, expressed as a percentage.

# How we did it?

**A-** Your key to exploring Monkey Mia and beyond (Multimedia).

**B-** Shark Bay World Heritage Area (Panel).

**C-** Living with dolphins (Panel)

**D-** Monkey Mia...a stepping stone into the Shark Bay World Heritage Area (Panel).

**E-** Caring about dolphins (Panel)

**F-** Caring for the dolphins (Panel)

**G-** Looking on (Panel)

**H-** Table

**I-** The Wildlife of Monkey Mia...(Panel)

**J-** Breeding grounds (Panel)

**K-** Carnivorous (Panel)

**L-** Bones (Touch box)

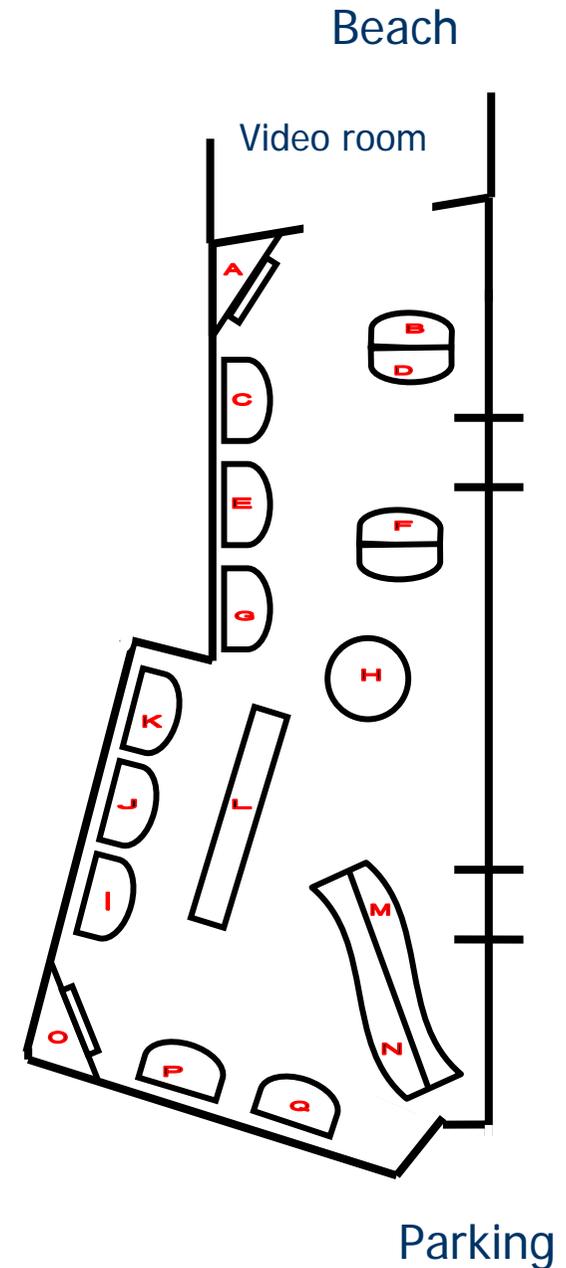
**M-** Dolphin design (Panel)

**N-** Dolphin identity (Panel)

**O-** A touch of Monkey Mia magic...(Multimedia)

**P-** Foraging for food (Panel)

**Q-** Living Together (Panel)





(MM) Multi Media, (HO) Hands-on, (P) Panel  
 Title of the Display

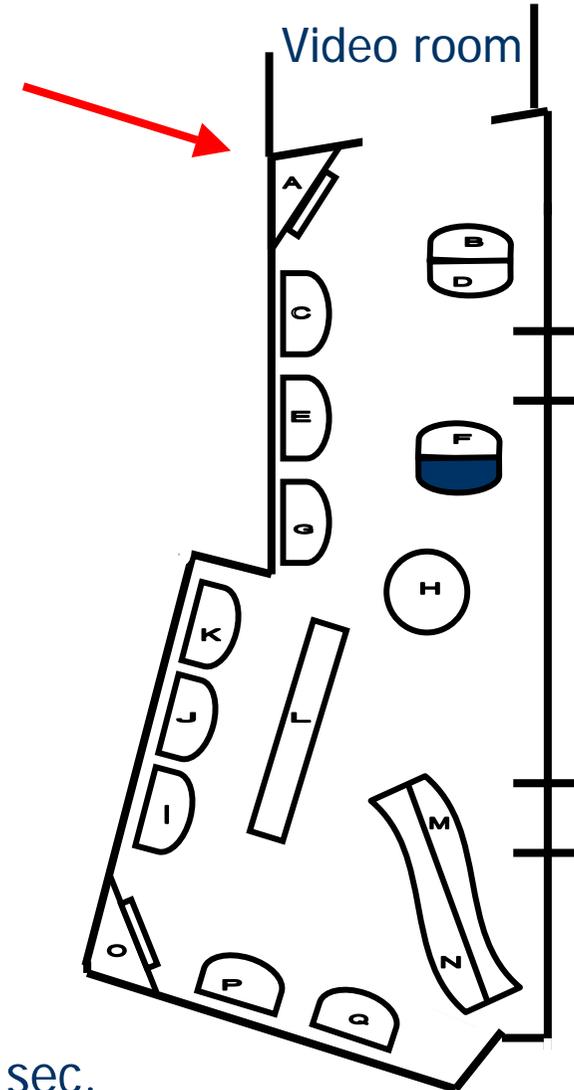
Reading    Touching    Discussing    Looking at photos

<b>M- Dolphin design...(P)</b>		R    T    D    P	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Start Time</b>	<b>Finish time</b>	<b>Spent time</b>	
HH : MM : SS	HH : MM : SS	Min. ___ sec. ___	
<b>(x) in seconds</b>	<b>Est. Time (y)</b>	<b>H.P. (x/y × 100)</b>	
_____ seconds.	<b>150 seconds.</b>	%	
<b>Observations:</b>			

Estimated Time

Holding Power

# A : Your key to exploring Monkey Mia and beyond (MM)



## ❑ Attraction Power: 27%

o 29 visitors stopped at the display.

## ❑ Holding Power: Not applicable.

o Mean time spent at the display: 3 min 30 sec.

## B :Shark Bay World Heritage Area...(P)

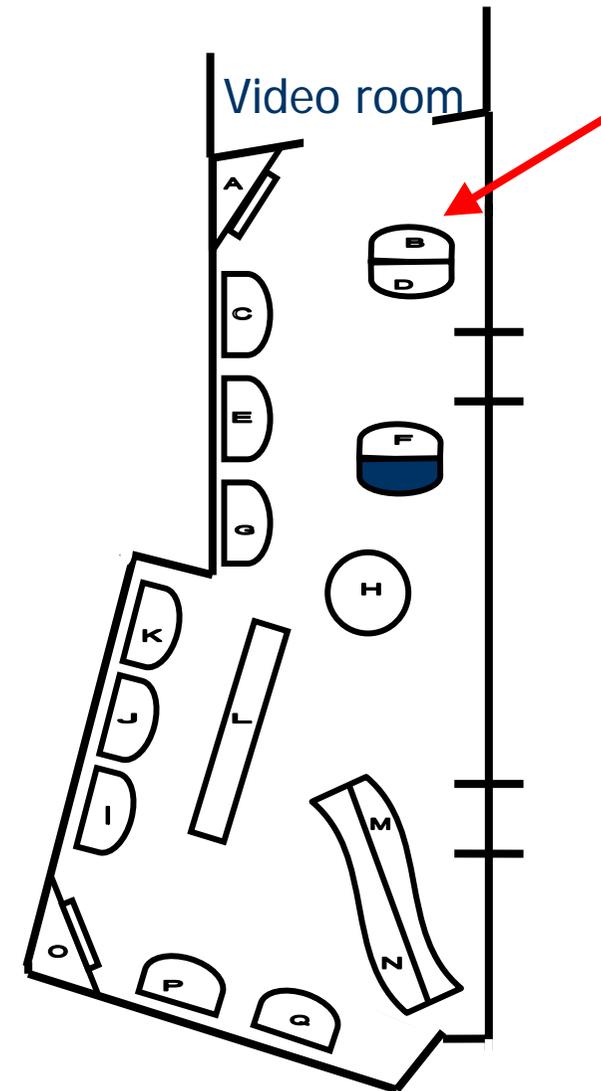


□ **Attraction Power: 22%**

o 24 visitors stopped at the display.

□ **Holding Power: 48%**

o Mean time spent at the display: **50** sec.



## M : Dolphin design...(P)

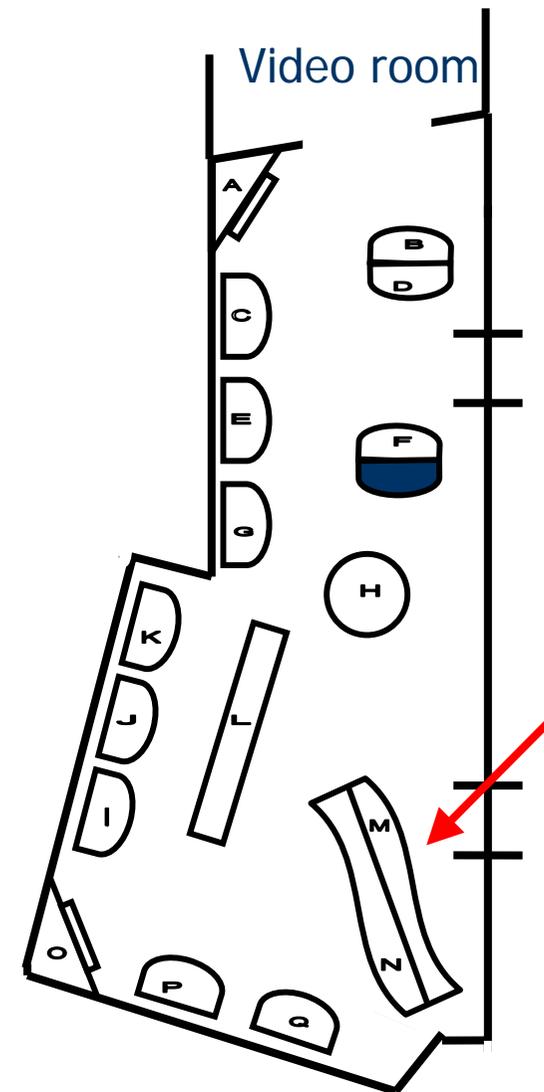


- ❑ **Attraction Power: 64%**

- o 69 visitors stopped at the display

- ❑ **Holding Power: 41%**

- o Mean time spent at the display: 1 min 2 sec.



## L : Bones, Hands-on activities...(HO)

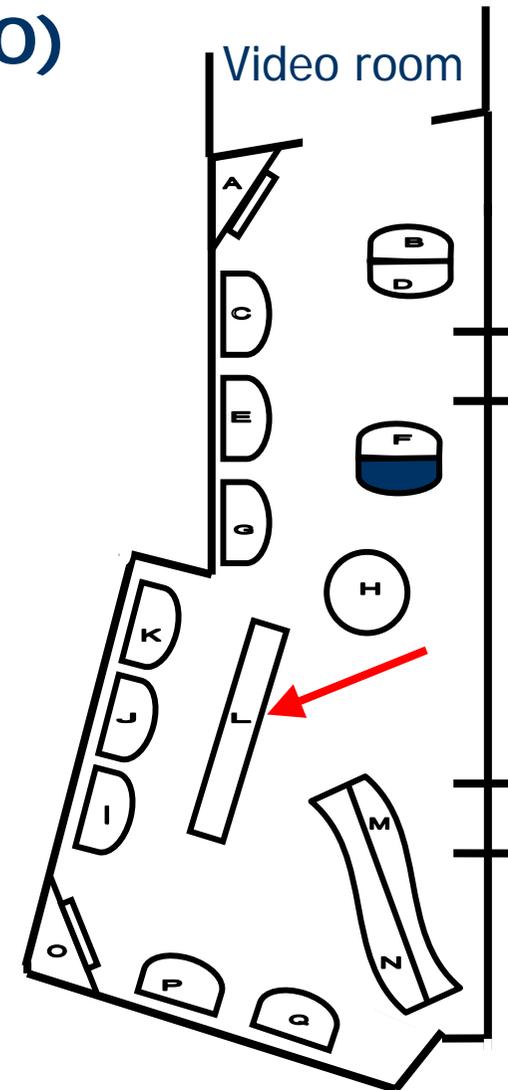


### □ Attraction Power: 50%

- o 54 visitors stopped at the display.

### □ Holding Power: Not applicable.

- o Mean time spent at the display: 34 sec.



## O : touch of Monkey Mia magic...(MM)

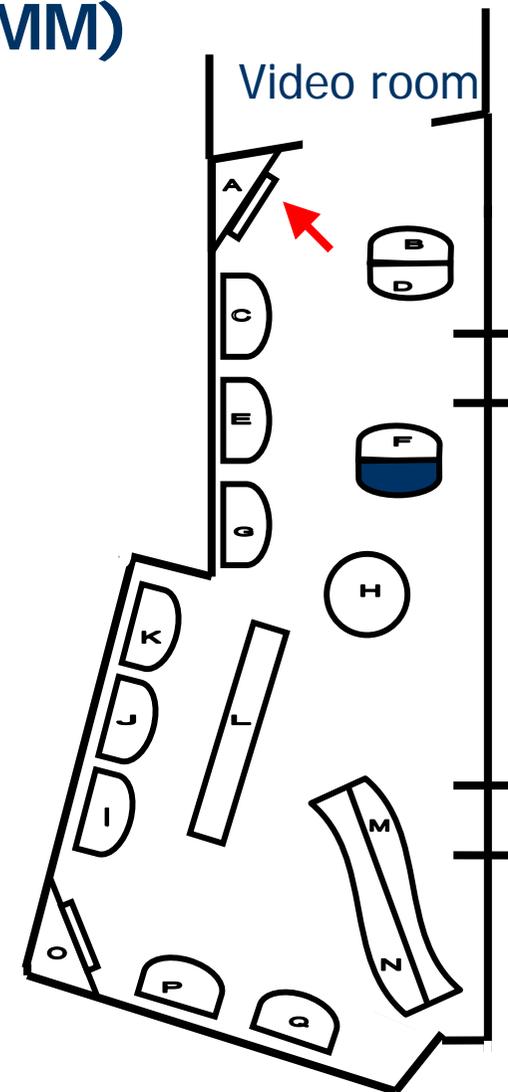


### □ Attraction Power: 34%

o 36 visitors stopped at the display.

### □ Holding Power: Not applicable.

o Mean time spent at the display: 3 min 10 sec.

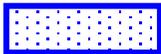


# Distribution of visitors ...

## VISITORS



10 - 20



21 - 30



31 - 40



41 - 50



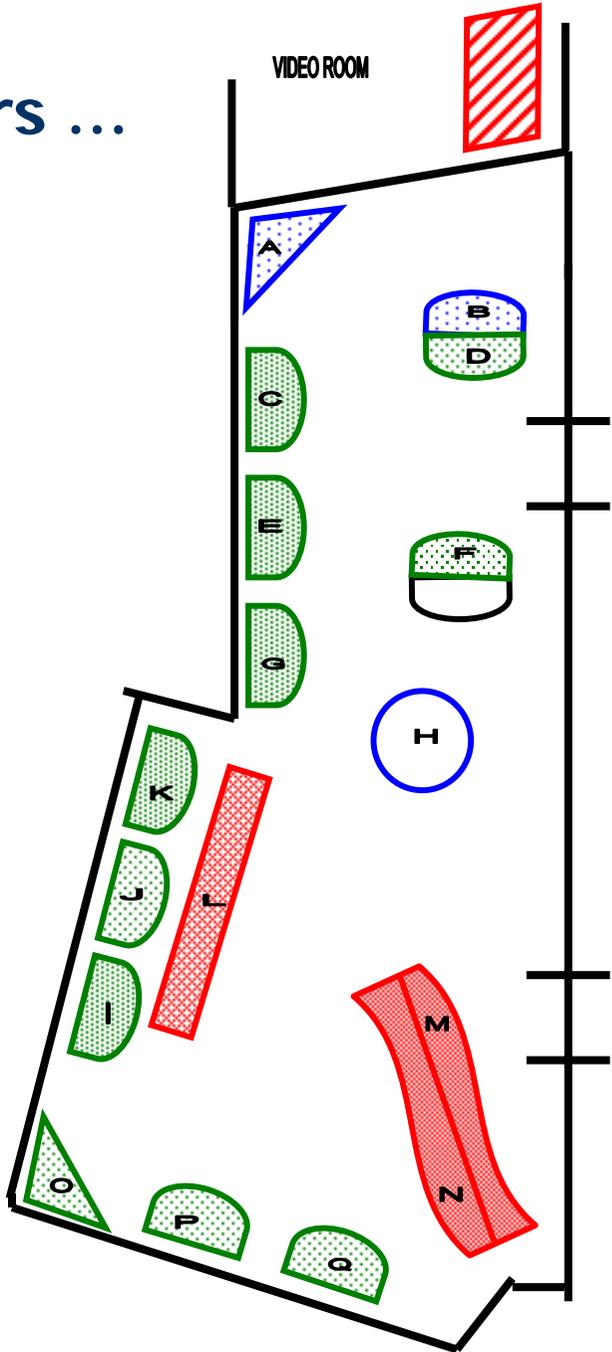
51 - 60



61 - 70



OVER 100



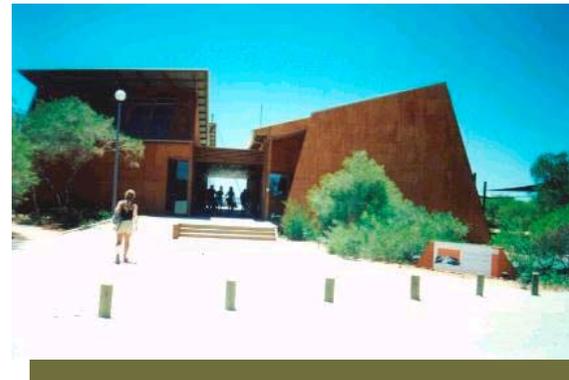
# Interview guide for display area

- Nationality.
- Existence of the I.A.
- Main reason they came to the I.A.
- What did they like the best & the least.
- How they would improve the I.A.
- Purpose of the I.A.
- Consequence of the I.A. experience.
- What did they learn?

# Results

## In which country does the visitors usually reside?

- 26% Australia
- 25% England
- 14% Germany
- 5% Switzerland
- 3% France
- 3% United States



## Did they know that there was an interpretive area?

- 64% of the visitors knew that there was an interpretive area.
- 29% of the visitors did not know that there was an interpretive area.
- 7% no response.



## Did the centre meet the needs of the visitors?

- ☐ 83% agreed that the centre meet their needs
- ☐ 17% found that the centre did not meet their needs.

“The computer was not working...”

“I was expecting more information about the area...”

“Has to be more interactive...”.



## What is the main reason for visiting the interpretive area?

43% were looking for information principally about the dolphins and the Shark Bay area.

“We didn’t hear what the Ranger said on the beach...”

“More information in depth about the Marina Parks, dolphins and Peron National Park...”

25% wanted to visit the display area

15,5% of the visitors were passing by when they saw the interpretive area.

8,5% Others (see the bones, wait for the video, wait for the cruise, heat, etc)

## What did they like the best about?

### *The way the displays were presented...*

□ 31% of the interviewed visitors found good/nice the way the displays were presented.

“Informative without being boring, not too technical...”

“Nice, open and easy...”

□ 28% of the interviewed visitors found easy/clear the way the displays are presented.

“Open, easy to read and see...”

“Very clear, provide good summary of information...”

□ 16% of the interviewed visitors referred to specific displays.

“I like the real things, bones...”

“I like to see the skeleton and inside the dolphin...”.

□ 12% referred to photographs, colours, diagrams, art decoration, etc.



## *About the displays topics...*

❑ 64% found that the displays' topics are good and/or informative.

“They cover what people don't understand... “

“Lots of answers to questions I wanted to know...”

“They are specific, I liked information about fins and families...”

“Good mixture between text and images...”.

❑ 8% found the displays were easy to understand and/or easy to read.

❑ 2% others. (one of the visitors answered; needs more information and other said too long).

## What did they like the least about the interpretive area?

❑ 46% answered “nothing” referring that there was nothing they dislike.

❑ 10% were looking for other and more information

“Not friendly, I want to know more about animals not the interaction...”

“Not enough about from birds, plants from here...”

“Too much about the dolphin...”

❑ 6,2% showed annoyance to the computer’s malfunction

❑ 5% did not appreciate the lack of labelling on the bones.

# How would the visitors improve the interpretive area?

34% of the visitors would either change or add elements to the presentation.

More interactive displays (16 visitors)

Sounds of dolphins and the ocean (5 visitors)

Aquarium (5 visitors)

Bones to be labelled (5 visitors)

More 3D models (3 visitors)

23% of the visitors would add more information.

## What did they think is the purpose of the Visitor Centre?

87% to educate and/or inform

Of these 36% said that it was to educate/inform about dolphins.

“Make people understand dolphins, how to communicate with them and not harm them...”

“Inform people about dolphins, and what CALM is doing to protect them...”

Another 8% said that it was to educate/inform about Monkey Mia and Shark Bay.

## What will they do as a consequence of the Visitors Centre experience?

- take care of the environment 41%
- take a cruise 15%
- take a guided walk 8%
- purchase a souvenir 7%
- others. 28%



## What did they learn?

❑ 76% acknowledged that they learned something from their experience in the interpretive area.

❑ 36% of these claimed to have learned something about dolphin behaviour.

“Yes, that they can be aggressive, I thought they were always friendly...”

“Yes, echolocation and social structure.

❑ 15,5% Claimed not having learned anything.

❑ 28% claimed to have learned something about dolphin's anatomy.

❑ 11% claimed to have learned something about dolphin identification.

❑ 12% claimed to have learned something about the history of Monkey Mia and of Holey Fin.

❑ 5% claimed to have learned something about other animals.

# Recommendations

- ❑ The physical set up is adequate attractive. However there could be improvement on floor maintenance (sand) and rubbish collection frequency.
- ❑ More inviting/clear signage showing the whereabouts of the centre and opening/closing times could be implemented in the vicinity or even at the corridor which leads to the centre entrance.
- ❑ The centre profile could be enhanced and number of visitors increased by giving it a name, for instance something like “Holey Fin Interpretive Area” and market the place that way.

- ❑ Not enough visibility for interpretive area in the brochures distributed at the entrance of the reserve.
- ❑ Presence of a knowledgeable person to provide guidance to visitors would enhance the patronage i.e. a ranger at the centre after or between dolphin feeding times.
- ❑ Access to video room not clear to public.
- ❑ People are shown openly playing with dolphins in the water in one of the videos in show.
- ❑ Computer A has too many links available. Most of them are not accessible or are slow to connect, making it of little use. I suggest reassessing and if necessary re define its links.

❑ Working hours could be re worked to cater for late afternoon returning or leaving cruises tourists. There were instances by where people wanted to come into the centre after 4:00 PM.

❑ Hands on area, display (L) has many unidentified bones and other materials. Snake jars displays don't look too attractive or clean, they are surely a disincentive at this stage.

❑ I believe display (B), which has a reasonably high holding power does not get a high number of visitors. It may be in need of relocation to a different part of the centre.

❑ Same for display (O), the computer. The size and location of display (M/N) may be interfering with the visibility of it.

- ❑ Highlight the importance of the drawings on the floor. For example, by naming the different elements presented.
- ❑ Include more activities for younger children. For example, by introducing interactive games as part of the already existing multimedia.
- ❑ Create a more evocative atmosphere in the interpretive area using sounds of the sea, for example “Dolphin Dreams” composed by John Grout.
- ❑ Improve comfort level in exhibit area by installing air-conditioning or more efficient cooling fans. If this impractical or too costly, interpret the situation for visitors (this could indeed be an excellent opportunity for some general environmental education, explaining the environmental cost of air-conditioning, electricity etc.)

Once you have opened a centre, you have created a business which will need continual marketing, management, re-thinking, and renewal if it is to remain an interesting, attractive place... (Scottish interpretation Network, 2001)

Thanks...



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