

# *Perspectives on the Future of Mobile Interpretation*

*Analysing the findings of the 2009 International Handheld Guide Survey.*

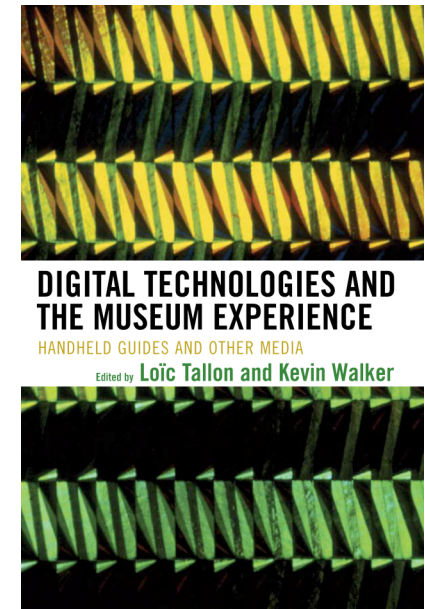
Loïc Tallon, Founder/Director of Pocket-Proof.

[loic@pocket-proof.com](mailto:loic@pocket-proof.com)

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## Qui suis-je:

- Founder of *Pocket-Proof Ltd.*  
a digital consultancy specialised in research & design of mobile interpretation experiences for museums.
- Current project: design of mobile interpretation tool for the Louvre Abu Dhabi  
as member of Reciproque, Insightteam.
- Previous projects: *Watts Gallery, English Heritage, Shakespeare's Globe (UK), Grand Egyptian Museum (Egypt), Massar Discovery Centre (Syria) & Khalsa Heritage Centre, (India).*
- Specializing in mobile interpretation since 2004  
Both in terms of doing independent research & project work.
- Co-editor of *Digital Technologies & the Visitor Experience* (Alta Mira Press, 2008).



*en 15 minutes...*

*about the 2009 handheld guide survey*

- 1.0 MUSEUM USE of mobile interpretation tools
- 2.0 OBJECTIVES for using Handheld Guides
- 3.0 Perceptions of the medium's FUTURE
- 4.0 CHALLENGES in using handheld guides

*A personal perspective on the findings...*

- Survey launched in October 2009.  
by Learning Times & Loic Tallon.
- Objectives were to identify:
  1. how museum's perceive the future of mobile interpretation,
  2. challenges relating to the use of mobile interpretation.
- Also to compare museum's expectations with visitor expectations.  
This is the subject of my 2010 M&W paper.
- Survey was distributed internationally.  
in France this was done in partnership with CLIC France.



*about the survey / data*  
**THE RESPONSE**

- Received over 238 responses from museums and contractors internationally.



39 responses from France (16% of responses)



- What follows is a summary!!*

Full results at <http://www.learningtimes.net/museumhandheldsurvey/>

An important split I use in this presentation:

-  Those from museums that do currently use Handheld Guides.  
(100 responses; 42%)
-  Those from museums that do not currently use Handheld Guides, but would consider doing so within the next five years.  
(73 responses; 31%)

*about the 2009 handheld guide survey*

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*A personal perspective on the findings...*

## *MUSEUM USE of mobile interpretation tools*

- Mobile interpretation is increasingly perceived by museums as a field they should be engaging with.
- Mobile interpretation is no longer the field of the big museums.

### Annual attendance of Institution.

	Less than 5,000	5,001 to 50,000	50,001 to 250,000	250,001 to 500,000	500,000 to 750,000	750,001 to 1 million	More than 1 million
<b>Museum currently using handheld guide</b>	1%	14%	30%	21%	5%	7%	22%
<b>Museum not currently using handheld guide, but intending to in next five years</b>	7%	29%	32%	9%	4%	9%	9%

### Number of paid full time (or full time equivalent) staff at Institution.

	Less than 10	Between 11 and 20	Between 21 and 50	Between 51 and 100	Between 101 and 250	More than 250
<b>Museum currently using handheld guide</b>	5%	8%	21%	20%	21%	24%
<b>Museum not currently using handheld guide, but intending to in next five years</b>	20%	13%	26%	14%	8%	19%



*about the 2009 handheld guide survey*

1.0 MUSEUM USE of mobile interpretation tools

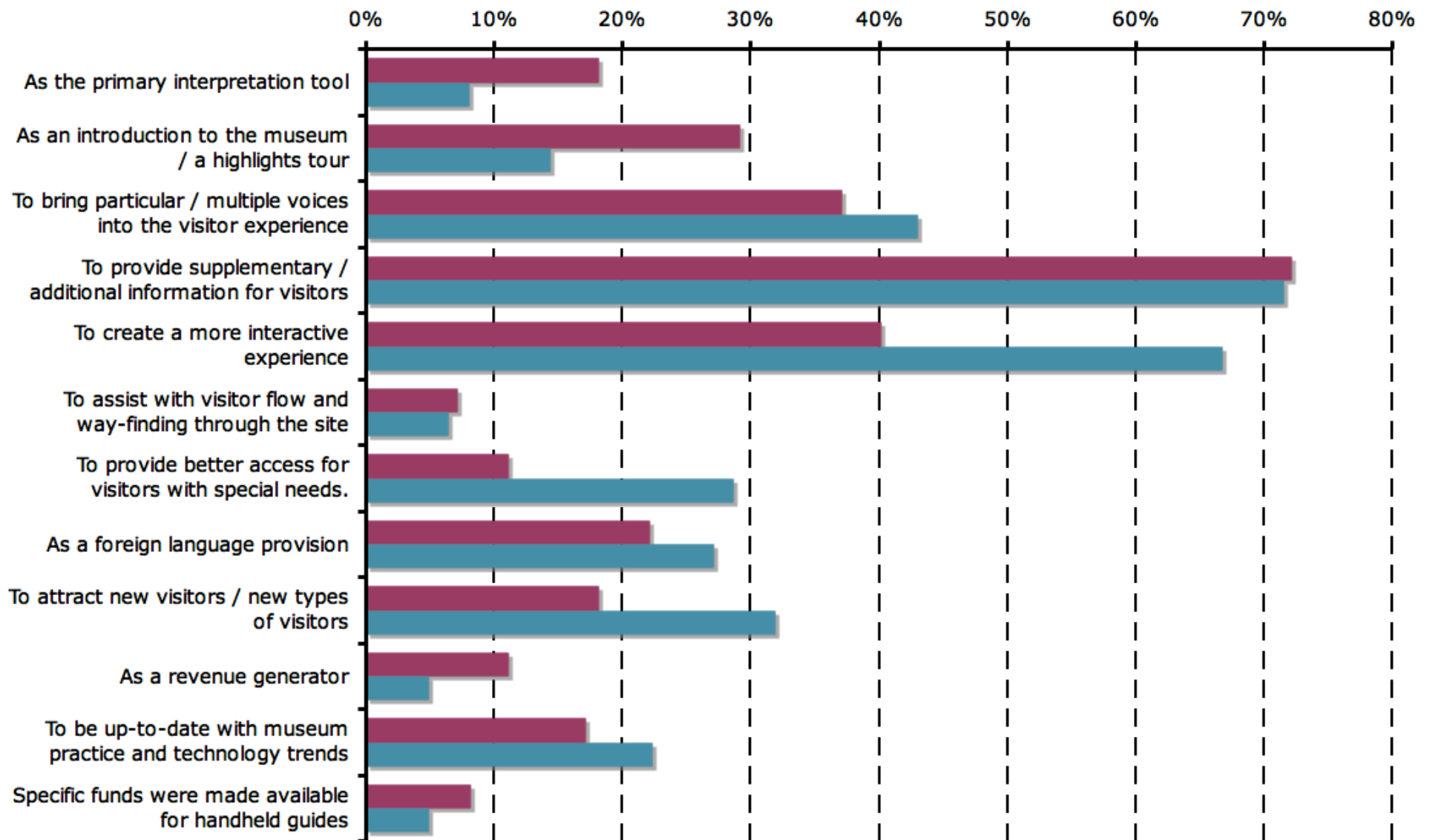
2.0 OBJECTIVES for using Handheld Guides

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*A personal perspective on the findings...*

## Museum's OBJECTIVES for handheld guides:



## *Museums' OBJECTIVES in using handheld guides*

Most popular:

- To provide supplementary Information (72%).
- This was followed by the creating of a more interactive experience (50%)
- Bringing multiple voices into the visitor experience (39%).

Least popular:

- Revenue generation (9%).
- Assist visitor-flow (7%).

## *Museums' OBJECTIVES in using handheld guides COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS*

Differences in responses of Museums that currently did/did not use handheld guides:

Museums that currently **do not** use handheld guides identify more closely with:

- To create more interactive experience, (40% vs. 67%)
- To attract new visitors / types of visitors, (18% vs. 32%)

Museums that **do** currently use handheld guides identify more closely with:

- To provide a highlights tour. (29% vs. 14%)

*about the 2009 handheld guide survey*

1.0 MUSEUM USE of mobile interpretation tools

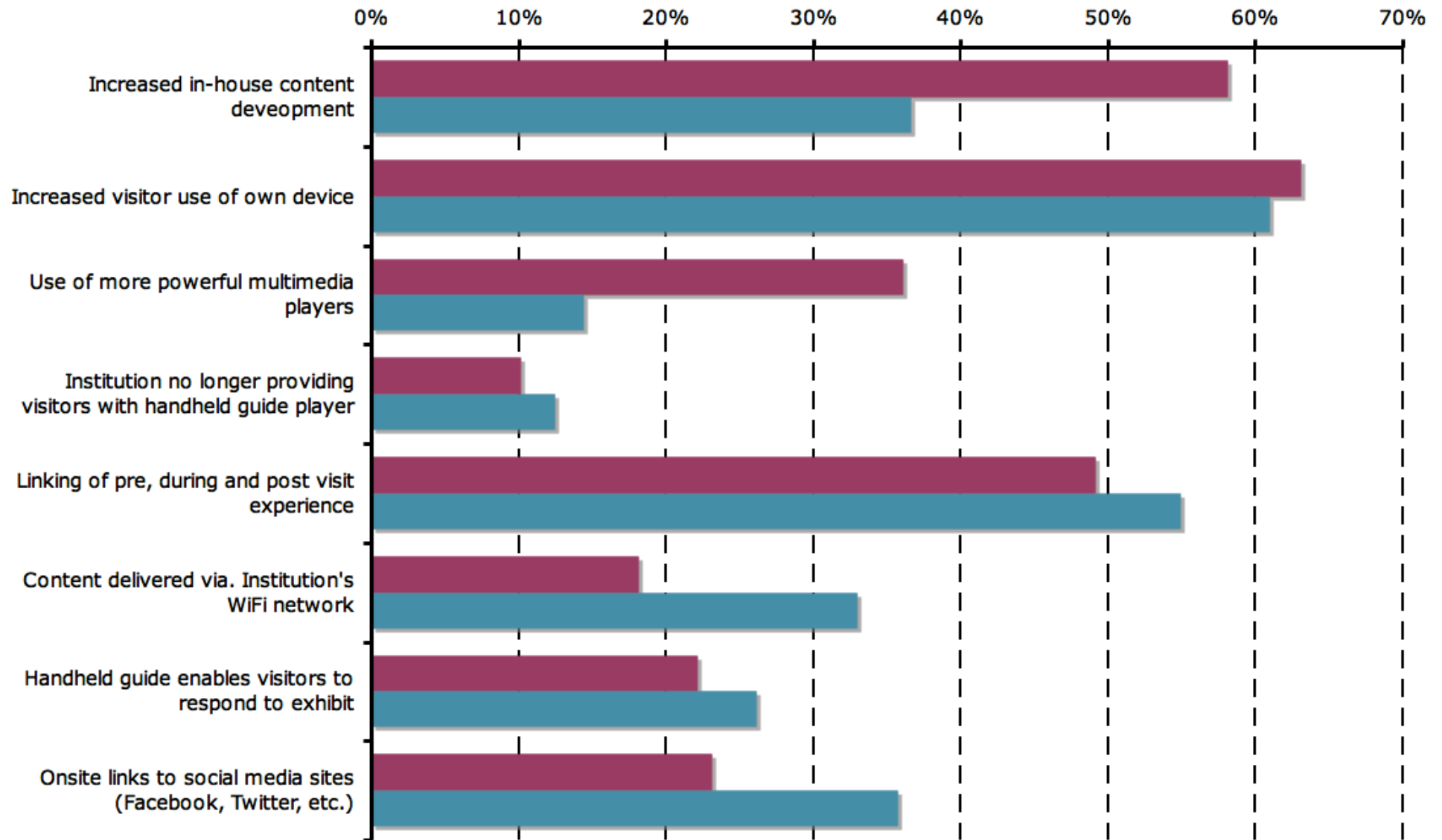
2.0 OBJECTIVES for using Handheld Guides

3.0 Perceptions of the medium's FUTURE

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*A personal perspective on the findings...*

# Perceptions of the Mediums *FUTURE*.



## *Perceptions of the medium's FUTURE*

Three top responses:

- Increased visitor use of own device. (62%)
- Linking of pre, during and post visit experience. (51%)
- Increased in-house content development. (49%)

Least popular response:

- Institution no longer providing visitors with handheld guide player. (11%)

## *Perceptions of the medium's FUTURE COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS*

Significant differences in responses of Museums that currently did/did not use handheld guides:

Museums that currently **do** use handheld guides identify more closely with:

- Increased in-house content development. (58% vs. 36%)
- Use of more powerful multimedia players. (36% vs. 14%)

Museums that **do not** currently use handheld guides identify more closely with:

- Content delivered via. Institution's WiFi network. (18% vs. 33%)
- Onsite links to social media sites (Facebook, Twitter, etc.). (23% vs. 36%)



*about the 2009 handheld guide survey*

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2.0 OBJECTIVES for using Handheld Guides

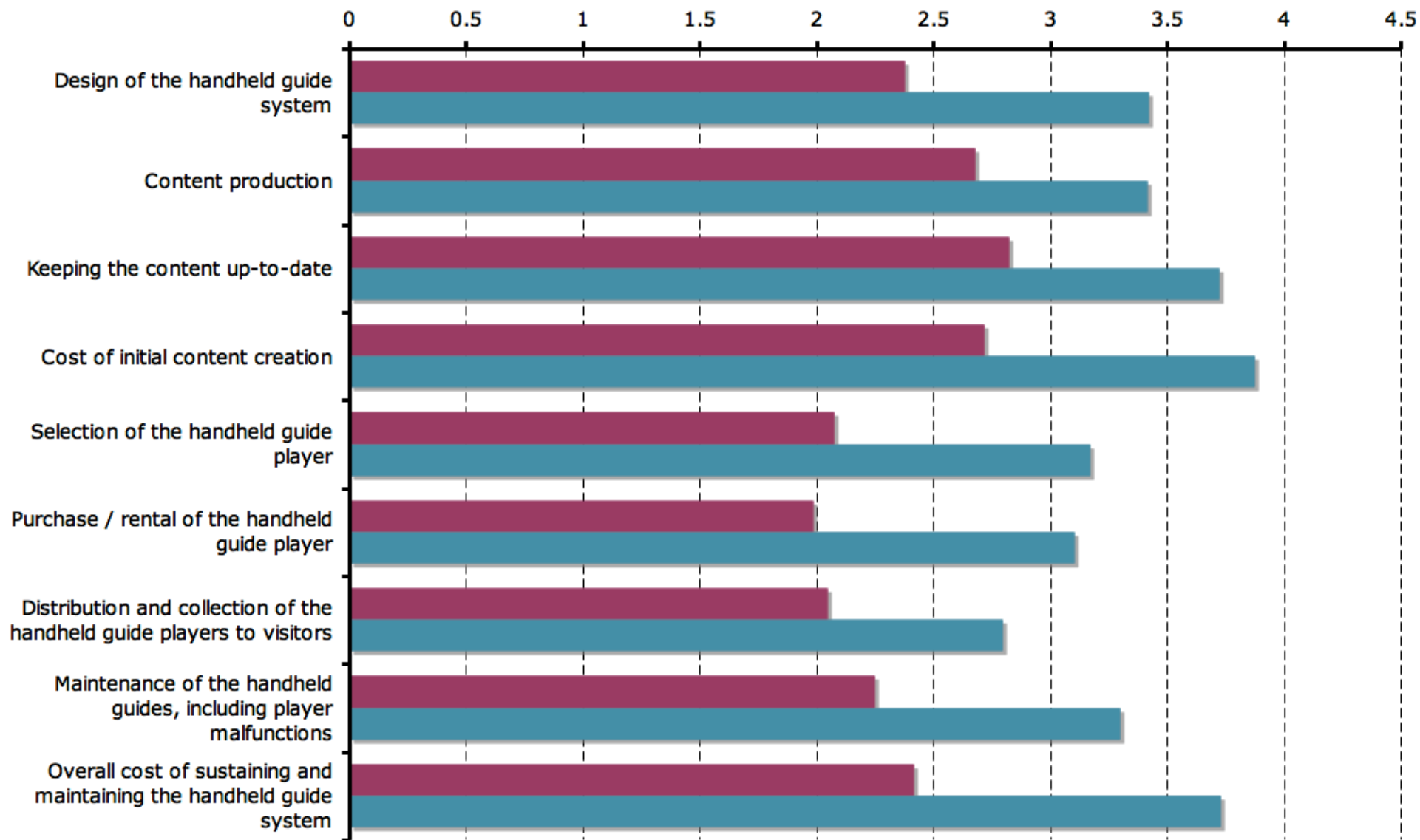
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*A personal perspective on the findings...*

# The challenges in the development/operation of handheld guide system

(1 = Not a Challenge, 5 = Very Challenging)



## ***CHALLENGES in the use / operation of Handheld Guide System***

Three top responses:

- Keeping the content up-to-date. (3.2 : 51%)\*
- Cost of initial content creation. (3.2 : 48%)
- Content production. (3.0 : 38%)

Least popular responses:

- Distribution and collection of the handheld guide players to visitors. (2.3 : 21%)
- Purchase / rental of the handheld guide player. (2.4 : 24%)
- Selection of the handheld guide player. (2.5 : 24%)

\* (Average score : number of responses who scored the challenge as a 4 or 5).

## *CHALLENGES in the use / operation of Handheld Guide System*

Differences in responses of Museums that currently did/did not use handheld guides:

Museums that currently **do not** use handheld guides identify more closely with:

- Overall cost of sustaining and maintaining the handheld guide system. (2.4 : 26% vs. 3.7 : 56%)
- Cost of initial content creation. (2.7 : 34% vs. 3.9 : 69%)
- Purchase / rental of the handheld guide player. (2.0 : 15% vs. 3.1 : 38%)

*about the 2009 handheld guide survey*

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*A personal perspective on the findings...*

## *A personal reading of the results...*

Survey throws forward lots of questions:

- What do museums mean by an interactive experience?
- What are reasonable objectives for mobile interpretation tools?
- How do we define an ambitious mobile interpretation project vs. insufficiently ambitious?
- How can we improve sharing of financial data on the delivery and implementation of mobile interpretation tools?

A question I find most striking relates to the relationship between the Content and the Technology.

## *A personal reading of the results...*

**Content**, and **interaction with that content** come out as the areas of greatest interest, esp of established museums.

- Provided top three responses for OBJECTIVES
- Is top two key FUTURE objective of museums with Handheld guides.
- Provided the three responses to CHALLENGES

This is as opposed to the focus being the technology.

## *A personal reading of the results...*

important change is for museums is:

1. have greater control over content that comes from more available platforms.

The important milestone mobile interpretation projects of the next few years will be those that enable more varied and exciting types of content, engaging interfaces, and means of interacting with the Content. We won't remember the technology...



***Merci.***

*Full survey report:*

<http://www.learningtimes.net/museumhandheldsurvey/>

*Email:*

[loic@pocket-proof.com](mailto:loic@pocket-proof.com)

*Et merci a CLIC & Cite National de l'histoire de l'immigration.*