Open During Construction: How to Minimize Impact on Visitors and Staff

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Construction in the Galleries
Construction All Around Us
Construction All Around Us
Sam Houston Regional Library and Research Center
Construction on the Grounds
BEFORE

Museum Renovation

AFTER
Before Construction
Factors to Consider When Deciding to Be “Open”

- Safety of People & Safety of Collections
- Project Schedule
- Cost of Closure vs Cost of Staying Open
- Ability to Provide Access to Building and Spaces
- Ability to Provide Services
Tips for Planning to Be Open During Construction

- Get Specific
- Signage is Your Best Friend
- Disclaimers are Good
- Prepare Your Staff and Docents
- Be Prepared to Protect People and Property
Items to Include in RFP and/or Construction Contract

- Project Timeline and Notice of Changes
- Company and Personnel Requirements
- Access Requirements
- Preparation and Maintenance of the Space
- Safety and Security of the Space
What to Include in Initial Outreach

- Announcement That Open During Construction & Hours
- What You’re Doing and Why
- But What About Me
- What to Expect
  - What Is and Isn’t Available
  - Any Other Issues and How Handling
- Anticipated Timeline
- Where to Find Updates
- Miscellaneous Information: Images, Fundraising Pitch
Possible Outlets for Outreach

- Press Release
- Print media (e.g. newspaper), radio, television
- Website and/or Construction Webpage
- Social Media
- E-newsletter and/or Email Blast
- Mailer (e.g. postcard, flyer, newsletter)
- Voicemail Message
- Ad Placements
- Interpretive Content/Behind the Scenes Campaigns
- Targeted outreach to specific demographics
During Construction
Making the Most of Being Open During Construction

- Maximize Other Assets
- Develop Innovative Solutions for Limited Services
- Teachable Moments
- Springboard for Renewed Interest
Minimizing Impact to Visitors and Staff During Construction

- Planning and Preparation
- Communication
- Celebrate Milestones
- Taking Charge
After Construction
Look Back on What Happened

- Make note of issues/progress/etc in a consistent place throughout the process
- Ask *lots of people* how the process went
- Create a wrap report
- Celebrate your success, learn from your mistakes, and accept the things you cannot change
Tips for an Opening Event

- Wait to Set the Date
- Press Previews and Soft Openings
- Special Activities
- Expect a Crowd
- Honor Your Stakeholders & Encourage New Ones
Contact Info and Questions

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