

Case Study: Economic Impact

Harry Potter's Economic Magic

Powerhouse Museum, NSW

Nov. 2012

Powerhouse exhibition smashes NSW attendance records and makes substantial contribution to NSW economy



The Powerhouse Museum's *Harry Potter™: The Exhibition* has been awarded the NSW Premier's Award for Public Service in the 'Building the Economy' category. Staged by the Powerhouse Museum from November 2011 to April 2012, *Harry Potter™: The Exhibition* delivered an impressive \$46.9 million in economic impact for NSW.

Congratulating the Powerhouse Museum, NSW Minister for Tourism, Major Events and the Arts, George Souris, said: "The Harry Potter exhibition is a great triumph for the Museum. Its success builds on NSW's exemplary reputation for hosting world-class exhibitions that benefit our tourism industry and the broader economy.

"The people of NSW not only enjoyed the unique opportunity to experience the rich creativity of this global phenomenon, they are also reaping the economic benefits of hosting this exclusive international exhibition," Mr Souris said.

The results of an economic impact study, undertaken by Destination NSW, show that the revenue generated from *Harry Potter™: The Exhibition* is the highest for an exhibition staged in NSW, and one of the highest for a cultural event staged in NSW. The exhibition was also the most popular in NSW history, smashing previous box office records by attracting 382,739 visitors: the highest attendance for a paid exhibition in NSW.

Almost half of visitors to the exhibition (48.3%) travelled from outside Sydney. 30% of visitors were from interstate or overseas with a further 18.5% travelling from regional NSW. The study found that *Harry Potter™: The Exhibition* specifically attracted 79,093 visitors to Sydney from outside NSW, including 6,454 overseas visitors and 72,639 interstate visitors. These Harry Potter tourists spent 260,000 additional bed nights in NSW and generated \$46.9 million in economic impact for the NSW economy.

Powerhouse Museum Director, Dr Dawn Casey, said: "The Powerhouse Museum is delighted to receive this Award. It is a testament to the importance of this state's investment in its museums and galleries to engage diverse audiences in educational and cultural enriching exhibitions and programs. It also demonstrates that museums can provide strong economic returns to NSW.

"Harry Potter is the largest exhibition the Museum has staged. With daily visitation averaging 2,695 visitors, the scale of the exhibition and its enormous popularity has been an exciting challenge for Museum operations, sales and marketing.

“It took the Powerhouse to new levels with its strategic and media partners that were pivotal to achieving its national audience reach, in particular the support of Destination NSW, Nine Entertainment Co, News Ltd, Qantas, Qantas Holidays and Accor Hotels.”

The exhibition boosted the Museum’s annual visitation to its highest on record (728,034 visitors), more than 44 per cent higher than average annual visitation over the last decade.

Whilst claiming the mantle for the most popular exhibition in NSW, Harry Potter is now ranked fourth in Australia for visits to a paid exhibition.

“The experience that the Powerhouse has gained from staging Harry Potter has put the Museum in a strong position for attracting international exhibitions to Sydney in the future,” said Dr Casey.

Harry Potter™: The Exhibition showcased hundreds of original artefacts from the entire Harry Potter film series. In partnership with Warner Bros. Consumer Products, Global Experience Specialists, Inc. (GES) created the 1,400 square-metre exhibition, allowing visitors to experience dramatic displays inspired by the Harry Potter film series and see up close the amazing craftsmanship behind the authentic costumes, props and creatures.

Image: The Sorting Hat in Harry Potter: The Exhibition at the Powerhouse Museum. Photo: Powerhouse Museum