

Children's Creativity Museum

A new name and identity for a pioneering institution



The Children's Creativity Museum is an interactive art and technology museum for kids. One might expect as much with the pairing of "creativity" and "museum," but it wasn't always obvious. There was a time when people didn't know what to expect when they went inside; many didn't even know what the place actually was. And that was the problem for the organization formerly known as Zeum. In San Francisco, a city that plays host to beloved interactive learning institutions like the Exploratorium and the Bay Area Discovery Museum, Zeum was having a difficult time getting people through its doors.



Even when it overcame its admissions hurdle, Zeum had another issue. Inside, it looked like just another children's museum: blocks and clay and buttons to press, but no real character. Zeum's progressive mission—teaching the three C's of twenty-first-century skills: creativity, collaboration, and communication—was faithfully executed, but the experience didn't feel unique. Zeum had been trying for years to broaden its audience to include children five years of age and under but had no real differentiating factors to motivate parents to bring their younger children to visit. Realizing this, Zeum leadership sought our help to create a new name and identity.



An informal audit of similar institutions showed that many of their names were either descriptive or slightly suggestive of what to expect inside: Bay Area Discovery Museum, Hands On Children's Museum, Adventure Science Center. Although the name Zeum sounded fun, it didn't provide parents with any clues about what they and their children would experience. With that understanding, our verbal branding team identified two primary goals the new name needed to accomplish: It had to be descriptive enough to indicate who it was for, but also suggestive enough to encompass the broad range of imaginative activities participants could take part in. After vetting over 200 names with Zeum leadership, it was agreed that the name "Children's Creativity Museum" accomplished both goals.



“Since our relaunch in October, we have seen double-digit growth in weekly attendance, new memberships, and website traffic. We attribute these impressive statistics to the phenomenal success of our new name and offerings.”

— Michael Nobleza, Interim Executive Director, Children's Creativity Museum



We also created a playful, fun identity to help the museum increase engagement with its activities. The identity changes were also appealing to the five and under set. A group of colorful, charming, and playful characters, the Creativity Critters each have their own story and are mapped to specific sets of activities. The Creativity Critters are not only instantly accessible to the museum's new target audience, they actively help foster its mission: encouraging kids to imagine, create, and share—ultimately reinforcing a new way to nurture core twenty-first-century skills.



The Children's Creativity Museum held a grand opening event in October 2011, and with more than 5,000 visitors in attendance, it was an exceptional success. And that success has led to some very tangible results: The Children's Creativity Museum has seen a 36 percent rise in weekday attendance, a 43 percent increase in website traffic from one year ago, and a 49 percent increase in the average number of new members who join each month.



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