

## *Lower cost meets better engagement using mobile wallet*

Members are one of the most important assets for museums. Acquiring, retaining, and engaging with members are critical for museums to receive sustainable support from patrons and achieve the mission of educating the broader public. Membership service at most museums has traditionally been a highly manual and tedious process. It's costly and time-consuming, yet non-engaging. To address these pain points, we discovered a low-cost, effective, and sustainable solution: **leveraging the mobile wallet.**

The mobile wallet piqued our interest because of its increasing popularity among consumers, its simplicity, and its effective interactions with users. It could also be a first step for museums to catch up with the digital trend without taking on much risk.

### **AN INCREASING TREND OF MOBILE WALLET**

Since 2012, mobile wallets such as Apple Wallet or Google Wallet have been gaining popularity among consumers. There's huge potential to unlock the power of the mobile wallet beyond payments. According to [Forrester Research's 2015 Report](#), the ability to save loyalty cards to smartphones has become the most desired consumer feature within mobile wallet, which positions mobile wallet to become a powerful marketing platform. Early adopters such as Starbucks, American Airlines, and Sephora launched digital loyalty members and saw significant return on investment. [For example](#), Sephora customers who use digital membership card spend **2x more** annually and **twice as frequently** as average Sephora customers.

**Museums can also tap into the opportunity that lies within the mobile wallet by replacing traditional cards with something less costly, more automated, and more engaging.**

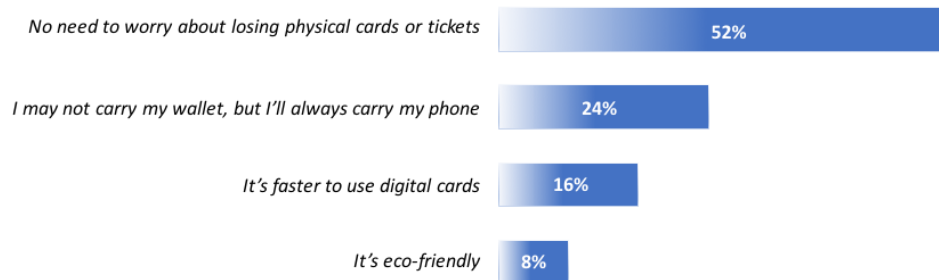
## BYE, BYE, PLASTIC CARDS!

The typical membership onboarding process is time-consuming and expensive. After a visitor signs up, the process of syncing membership information across databases, sending print requests, assembling the welcome packages, and shipping via snail mail can take up to weeks and involve a large amount of production and labor cost.



Keeping track of more and more physical cards is also a burden for members. In addition to taking up space, losing and having to replace the card is frustrating. At the heart of the mobile wallet lies the concept of **convenience**. Recently, we conducted a survey to better understand the incentives behind using mobile wallets. According to the result, the most popular reason for using the mobile wallet was to avoid losing the physical cards or tickets. Survey participants who are museum members have showed interests in getting rid of the plastic cards: 60% said they'd definitely use digital membership card from their mobile wallet if available; an additional 27% expressed interest in giving it a try.

### Top reasons for using mobile wallet



Save money and time by streamlining the onboarding process with digital membership cards. Instead of printing and shipping membership cards by snail mail, which can take several days or weeks, digital membership can be delivered **instantly and automatically** via email or SMS. By opening avenues for marketing channels, the cards can increase engagement by sending push notifications about membership benefits such as promotions, discounts, or renewal reminders. Therefore, additional synergy can be achieved across marketing channels. We estimate that digital membership cards can save up to \$7 per annual membership by eliminating the cost of card fulfillment and reducing direct mail marketing.

## ENGAGE WITH MEMBERS MORE EFFECTIVELY

When to engage with members and how to engage them have direct impact on membership growth and retention. Timeliness and relevance are key. Whether it's a renewal notice, special promotional discount, or membership benefit reminder, delivering the most relevant information at the right time, through the right channel is critical to capture attention.

Mobile wallet opens up a more effective membership engagement channel, as [open rates](#) for mobile push notifications range from 30% to 60%, and interaction rates run



as high as 40%. In comparison, the average open rate for email is 20%, and the average click-through rate is only 5.4%.

The significant difference is mainly a result of timeliness and relevance. In fact, smartphone wallets can even push location-based alerts to users. Museums can not only ping users with membership information, reciprocal benefits,

and special promotions through push notifications, but can also choose when and where to ping them. This means your members can get notifications to your special exhibits when they are close by.

Moreover, museums can even consider taking a step further and leveraging digital membership cards to create incremental benefits for members, such as digital gift tickets. Digital gift tickets allow museum members to share complimentary tickets with friends and family more easily compared to physical tickets they receive in the mail that often end up unused, a missed opportunity.

Combined with traditional outreach channels, mobile wallet offers a low cost, streamlined, and effective way to better engage with members and bring in more value to museums. According to [American Museum Membership](#), donors connected to an organization through multiple communication channels are at least 20% more valuable than those connected through only one channel. And as members enjoy more benefits from their membership, they are more likely to renew and bring new potential members to the institution.

## GOING DIGITAL ≠ EXPENSIVE INVESTMENTS

Going digital doesn't have to be a daunting initiative. Digital membership cards via



mobile wallet are extremely lightweight to implement and easy for users to opt in.

The development lifecycle for a new digital project can be time consuming, especially when you want to do it right.

Unlike mobile apps, the mobile wallet is native to most smartphones, so no additional downloads are needed. Digital membership card can achieve a lot

of basic app features with only a fraction of the cost, low development effort, and very little time committed. It saves you money, boosts up member engagements, and your members want it!

**For museums contemplating digital transformation, why not taking this quick-win leap to get started!**

Learn more at <http://membership.cuseum.com>

## FURTHER READINGS

- [2016 Market Trend and Membership](#)
- [Membership Marketing in the Digital Age: A Handbook for Museums and Libraries](#)
- [Vibes Mobile Wallet Survey](#)