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Acoustiguide eNewsletter

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Dear Friends,

It is every institution's goal to provide their visitors with a rich and engaging experience. We wanted to share with you a few of our clients who have broadened their offerings to reach audiences that are often underserved. In this issue we have highlighted visually descriptive tours for visually impaired visitors and American Sign Language tours for the Deaf community.

We believe one of the keys to developing an effective visually descriptive tour is an on-site walk-through with our editor and a visually impaired visitor. The volunteer for our World of Coca-Cola descriptive tour was Phil Green, a legally blind man who is affiliated with the Atlanta Center for the Visually Impaired. After the walkthrough, Phil shared with us that "Acoustiguide had raised the bar for access to visually impaired visitors of cultural sites". We have seen similar reactions to our Sign Language tours; including our most recent ASL tour launched at the United Nations headquarters in NYC.

We hope you enjoy learning how the museums and cultural sites below are offering additional services to their visitors. Please let us know if you're interesting in developing an assistive tour for your institution.

Visual Description & American Sign Language Tours

- CM Russell Museum, *The Bison: American Icon, Heart of Plains Indian Culture*
- Casa Loma's American Sign Language Tour
- New York Botanical Garden: *Stimulating Your Senses in the Home Gardening Center*
- Acoustiguide's Marketing Support

CM Russell Museum, *The Bison: American Icon, Heart of Plains Indian Culture*



For the launch of the permanent exhibition, *The Bison: American Icon, Heart of Plains Indian Culture*, the CM Russell Museum in Great Falls, MT selected Acoustiguide to develop audio guides for general audience and visually impaired visitors. The visually descriptive tour describes the colorful textiles, intricate beadwork, tools,

descriptive panels, photographs and paintings - providing details of dimension, colors, textures, and materials - to compose a mental image of the object. This description is paired with the general audience tour content to provide context and commentary.

The audio tour program for the CM Russell Museum's Bison exhibition was funded by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Listen to a sample stop [here](#)

Photo courtesy of the C.M. Russell Museum, Great Falls, MT

Casa Loma's American Sign Language Tour



This summer, Casa Loma, the historic site in Toronto, Canada, introduced a new family of Acoustiguide-produced multimedia tours for their visitors. In addition to the general audience tours offered in English, French, Japanese, German, Italian, Spanish, Mandarin, and Korean, the site is providing a visual descriptive tour in English and French along with a handheld tour in American Sign Language (ASL).

All of the content is delivered to the visitor on Acoustiguide's Opus Click players with a full-color screen to display images as well as the ASL video. The high contrast buttons include a raised "5" key to assist in player navigation for low vision visitors, and t-switch and induction loop compatibility make the Opus players ideal to a broad audience.

A recent visitor to Casa Loma shared the following comment: "I had the opportunity to visit Casa Loma for the first time and as a Deaf visitor. I was very impressed with the new ASL tour, which I was told was a brand new initiative for Casa Loma and that I was the first Deaf patron to use this device. I found the device 'user friendly' and was impressed with the quality and clarity of the Deaf person who was signing the information."

New York Botanical Garden: *Stimulating Your Senses* in the Home Gardening Center

In 2008, Acoustiguide created the *Stimulating Your Senses* audio tour for New York Botanical Garden (NYBG), a unique hybrid tour that interprets the Garden's Home Gardening Center (HGC) for all visitors while offering an additional layer of rich visual description at each stop for guests who are visually impaired. Each stop contains two parts - the first is an engaging and informative overview of the HGC, including its distinct gardens, planting areas, and landscape architecture. Visitors are encouraged to experience the HGC from a sensory point of view - feel the texture of the plants, smell their fragrance - and find inspiration to initiate or expand their own home gardens. The second part of the stop offers detailed descriptions of

the HGC during peak bloom, helping visually impaired visitors understand the color and shape of the plants and get a sense for the Home Gardening Center's appearance.

Signage in the HGC displays two numbers: one number for information and another number for visual description. Audio tour signage includes Braille text, and each stop concludes by referencing its counterpart so that visitors can easily access the multiple layers of audio. The innovative structure of this tour brings the expertise of NYBG's horticulturalists to a very broad audience and encourages all visitors to consider experiencing the Garden through many different senses.

To hear the tour in its entirety, please visit New York Botanical Garden's website by clicking [here](#).

Acoustiguide's Marketing Support

Part of Acoustiguide's service includes marketing consultation. Our Graphic Standards Package includes our various logos, icons and images along with tips on how to



develop effective signage for the visually and/or hearing impaired and basic guidelines for making high-visibility graphic choices. Our goal is to help the site alert visitors to the availability of ADA services and provide a positive museum experience to all visitors.

We look forward to speaking with you about Acoustiguide's accessible tours.

- [More About Acoustiguide](#)

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