



## Architectural Donor Wall & Electronic Recognition Project Planning Guide

### 100+ Questions To Ensure Your Donor Wall or Recognition Display Is Perfect In Every Way!

Donor Walls, Walls of Champions, Memorial Displays and other commemorative projects require a significant investment of time, energy and money to be done properly. But what does “properly” mean?

At Planned Legacy, our core business is designing and fabricating innovative donor walls, interactive multimedia presentations, powerful digital signage and advanced interactive wayfinding systems for clients across North America. In doing so, we have come to understand that even the most simple display can be an exercise in frustration, poor quality and excessive cost if not planned properly and implemented professionally. For that reason we’ve created the [Architectural Donor Wall & Electronic Donor Recognition Project Planning Guide](#).

The [Architectural Donor Wall & Electronic Recognition Project Planning Guide](#) is a comprehensive series of questions and considerations that you and your team can discuss and decide upon internally, and then review carefully with your display vendor or vendor prospects. We’ve compiled over 100 questions with input from fundraising professionals like you, because frankly, a well designed and easy to update donor wall not only honors your supporters and showcases your achievements, but also reflects the professionalism of you and your organization.

To use the Guide most effectively, review the sections that apply to your project, make careful notes and refer to them as you go forward to ensure that your project meets all of your objectives.

Please feel free to provide any comments or suggestions about this Guide that you think would enhance its usefulness to you and others. And if you would like to see examples of Interactive or Self-Cycling multimedia projects other organizations have created please call us toll free at 1 (866) 882-3580 or e-mail us at [solutions@plannedlegacy.com](mailto:solutions@plannedlegacy.com).

We wish you the very best with your recognition project!

**Questions to Consider when Planning your Recognition Display or Donor Wall**

**Quick Links:** [Goals](#) | [Environment](#) | [Theme](#) | [General Content Considerations](#) | [Content for Donor Walls](#) | [Content for Multimedia](#) | [Budgeting](#) | [Installation](#) | [Due Diligence](#) | [Saying Thank You](#) | [Marketing](#)

**1. Goals:**

1.1 What are the goals and objectives for your recognition program in general?

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1.2 What are the goals and objectives for this particular display?

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1.3 Do you have acknowledgement and recognition policies and procedures for this display?

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1.4 Do you wish to recognize every donor in some way regardless of gift size?

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1.5 Would you like to recognize a major donor?

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1.6 Would you like to recognize a corporate contributor?

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1.7 Would you like to recognize volunteers and/or staff?

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1.8 What donor receives what recognition when and for what gift amounts?

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1.9 Will the display promote any other programs within the facility/organization?

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1.10 Will you use the display as a tool to move donors to a higher level of giving?

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1.11 What types and amounts of gifts will you encourage for this display?

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1.12 Will you be using this display to cultivate more major gifts in the future?

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1.13 Will you be using this display to increase donor interest and retention?

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1.14 Will you be using this display to encourage gifts to a capital campaign?

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1.15 Will you be seeking corporate sponsorship?

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1.16 Will you offer a naming opportunity?

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## 2. Environmental Considerations:

2.1 What are the exact dimensions of the available space for the display?

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2.2 What are the recognition site's traffic flows and areas of congestion?

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2.3 What are the recognition site's light sources?

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2.4 Will visitors be able to comfortably stop, view and interact with the display?

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2.5 Will the recognition site need repainting/touch ups to match the display?

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2.6 Is the environment where the display is to be located noisy or quiet?

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2.7 What types of facility equipment pass by this space and are there buffers required?

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2.8 Are there items that may impact your display such as security cameras, corner round mirrors etc?

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2.9 Do you have sufficient IT support staff available?

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2.10 Will the surrounding environment change in the foreseeable future?

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2.11 What is on the reverse side of the display wall?

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2.12 What is the display wall made of?

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2.13 What is the proximity of electrical, HVAC, cable, or other services?

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2.14 What architectural or environmental regulations should be considered when developing your recognition display?

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2.15 Do you have any concerns with vandalism? Has it been a problem in the past?

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**3. Theme:**

3.1 Is there a specific theme or tag line associated with this project?

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3.2 Will the display be consistent with something that has already been developed?

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3.3 Are there key people/organizations/groups affiliated with or that have played an integral role in establishing your institution?  
Is there a particular volunteer(s) that should be taken into consideration?

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3.4 If your institution has a long history, should you celebrate that rich history and elaborate on past accomplishments, or design the display as a springboard into the future? Or both?

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3.5 Is there an environmental, geographic or other highlight for which your region or community is known? If so, should this highlight be integrated into the display's message or visual presentation?

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3.6 Are there heritage materials that should be considered - material from a donor wall to be dismantled or heritage materials from a historical site?

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3.7 What target group are you reaching out to? What will they relate to? What feeling do you hope visitors will experience when looking at the display and/or multimedia presentation?

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3.8 What message do you want to convey with your recognition display and/or multimedia presentation? Is your organization at the leading edge of research or is it more traditional and family oriented? Community oriented? Environmentally friendly? More art than science?

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3.9 Is your donor wall part of a larger overall recognition program that includes special events, dedications, capital campaigns and/or specialized recognition?

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3.10 Is your theme consistent with other newly developed space/areas in your facility?

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3.11 Are there future plans to re-brand your institution you may not yet be aware of?

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**4. General Content Considerations:**

4.1 Does your content echo what the rest of the organization is saying/doing? Is your message consistent?

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4.2 Will you offer a naming opportunity for the display?

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4.3 Is specialized content required? If so who will decide on it and develop it?

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4.4 Will your organization be providing all of the text, images, video, or other materials?

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4.5 Do you have photos for your donor wall design company and/or the architects?

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4.6 Are there any colors, materials, coatings or other finishes that should NOT to be used?

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4.7 Who is part of the development process? Staff, donors, volunteers, Board members?

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4.8 Who will check to make sure the donor wants their name displayed on the wall?

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4.9 Do you have all of your content in an appropriate electronic format?

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4.10 Does your organization have a graphics standards manual?

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4.11 Donor wall companies will require electronic files of all logos, typography, trademarks, photos or other materials used in association with the organization's visual identity. Do you have them?

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## **5. Content Considerations for Donor Walls:**

5.1 Will you have a special section on the display for major donor(s)?

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5.2 Will you have a special section on the display for a corporate contributor?

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5.3 How many giving categories will be represented on the wall?

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5.4 Will donors in higher giving categories be featured more prominently?

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5.5 How many names will be listed in each category?

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5.6 Will the names be organized alphabetically or otherwise?

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5.7 How frequently do you intend to update donor names?

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5.8 How many names in each category do you expect to update?

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5.9 How will donors indicate the way they want their names listed?

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5.10 Who will check and verify the spelling of donor names?

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5.11 How will donor names, spelling and authorization be tracked?

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5.12 Does your category structure encourage increased giving to reach the next level?

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5.13 Will donors be moved from one giving category to another in the future?

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5.14 How quickly will donor names move from one category to another after the gift is made?

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5.15 How can names be added, deleted or moved from one category to another?

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5.16 Will additional giving categories be added in the future?

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5.17 Do your giving categories and names need to be reworked?

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5.18 Will your recognition include your volunteers giving through their time?

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5.18 How do you take Mr. Mrs. Dr. Deceased, Estate of...etc. into consideration?

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5.19 Will your display feature a timeline of events?

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5.20 What type of imagery will best enhance your mission and values?

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5.21 How frequently do you intend to update the display?

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5.22 Are there other areas of the display that need regular updates?

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**6. Content Considerations for Multimedia:**

6.1 Will your multimedia presentation feature audio, video, text and photos?

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6.2 Will your presentation feature donor lists, donor stories and/or profiles?

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6.3 Will your presentation feature historical video, timelines and achievements?

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6.4 Will your presentation feature Board members, special project overviews, giving options and ideas?

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6.5 Will there be a separate multimedia presentation featuring a major donor?

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6.6 Will you offer a naming opportunity for the display?

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6.7 Have you considered a Donor of the Month module?

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6.8 Have you considered a Corporate Giving/Profile module?

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6.9 How will donors indicate the way they want their names listed?

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6.10 Who will check to make sure the donor wants their name displayed on the multimedia presentation?

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6.11 Who will check and verify the spelling of donor names?

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6.12 How often will electronic donor lists be updated?

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6.13 Is specialized content required? If so who will decide on it and develop it?

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6.14 Have you considered other modules or section ideas for the multimedia presentation?

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6.15 Are all modules required for the initial presentation, or will some be added later?

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6.16 Which content modules will you want to manage yourself? (Note: Content that will not change frequently, such as Board member names and photos, or historical information, can be hard-coded into the display, saving you unnecessary programming costs.)

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6.17 Will your organization be providing all of the text, images, video, or other materials?

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6.18 Do you have all of your content in an appropriate electronic format?

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6.19 Will your multimedia component be self-standing or integrated into the display?

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6.20 Would you like your multimedia presentation to be self cycling or interactive?

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6.21 What degree of interactivity do you want visitors to experience when they navigate the presentation?

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6.22 What size screen suits your space and what is the life span of the equipment?

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6.23 Will you be using a plasma display, LCD screen, kiosk, or all three?

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6.24 Will your electronic component be integrated now or in the future?

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6.25 Do you require a portable kiosk for outreach marketing at events, galas etc.?

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6.26 Would you benefit from having a second kiosk in another location to complement your display?

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6.27 Are there other displays or walls in your organization that this display should complement?

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6.28 Do you wish to track interactive usage?

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6.29 Do you require brochure holders built into the design?

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6.30 Have you considered offering other printed materials such as volunteer applications, maps, coupons, flyers etc.?

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6.31 Have you considered accepting electronic donations at your display?

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6.32 Do you require a printer with your display?

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## 7. Budgetary Considerations:

7.1 Do you need to create a term position for this project or pay staff overtime?

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7.2 What is considered an appropriate budget amount? For example: 2 - 4% of total funds raised?

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7.3 Is there an old donor wall that must be dismantled? What is the cost associated with this and how do you notify your donors of this?  
How do you dispose of old donor wall plaques, names, etc?

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7.4 Can you use the dismantling of an older wall to encourage your donors to move to the next giving level before the new display is installed?

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7.5 Are there costs associated with support companies? Can your donor recognition company handle the "entire" job from start to finish?

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7.6 Have you established a budget for initial design, fabrication and installation?

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7.7 How often will you need to update the display - weekly, monthly, yearly?

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7.8 What areas of the display will need to be changed on a regular basis?

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7.9 What areas of the display will only need to be changed occasionally?

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7.10 What will it cost every time you update the display?

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7.11 Have you established a budget for annual maintenance and updates?

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7.12 What costs will be associated with the unveiling of display?

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7.13 What are the costs of any special events coordinated with the unveiling?

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7.14 What are the costs associated with marketing the display?

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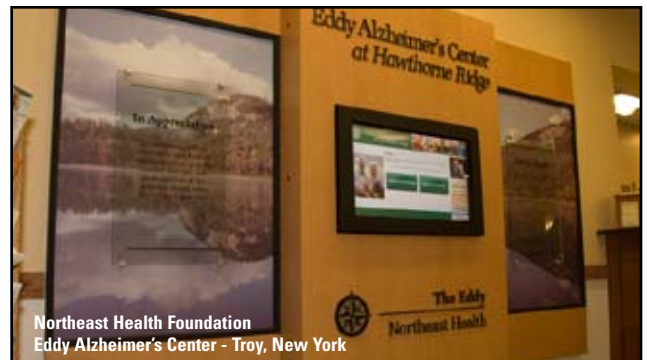
**8. Installation Considerations:**

8.1 Are there public/staff safety considerations to be aware of?

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8.2 Are there security or after-hours issues?

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8.3 Is the space unique, for example, high ceilings? Will special equipment rentals be required for installation?

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8.4 If required, how will you dispose of old donor plaques? How will you notify your donors of this?

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8.5 Have you established a budget and timeline for installation?

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8.6 Will there be other activities taking place in the area during the installation?

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8.7 Will you be installing the display or will your donor recognition company be doing it?

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8.8 What pre-installation preparations are required?

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**9. Due Diligence (Including Questions for Multimedia Vendors):**

9.1 Have you checked at least three of your donor wall vendor's references?

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9.2 Do they have experience working with non-profit organizations?

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9.3 Can your donor wall vendor show you past installations and examples?

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9.4 Does the recognition company selected comply with "disabled persons" standards?

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9.5 Do they have experience working with the various types of lighting required for different displays and locations?

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9.6 Has your donor wall vendor built the type of display you are looking for in the past?

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9.7 Do they have in-house writers and multimedia designers to assist with content creation?

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9.8 Can the vendor guide you through a content development process which might include text, graphics, video, photographs, audio, archived information, storyboarding and multimedia layout?

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9.9 Does the vendor utilize environmentally friendly products and practices?

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9.10 Are they a one-stop shop? Can they design and fabricate the display?

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9.11 Can they design and integrate the multimedia presentation?

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9.12 Is designing and manufacturing donor walls and recognition displays with multimedia presentations their core business?

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9.13 Will they be doing the design and programming of the multimedia presentation themselves or will they be subcontracting to a second vendor? Are they knowledgeable with regards to the different types of multimedia display hardware options?

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9.14 Can they provide specific project examples and references for projects they have developed that incorporate interactive and/or self cycling multimedia?

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9.15 Do they have experience setting up, monitoring and supporting remote networks?

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9.16 If there is an electronic component to the display, how secure is the data?

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9.17 What is their system's security protocol? How is the system locked down?

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9.18 If an electronic component is included, can it be easily updated by section?

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**9.19** What is their database structure? Is it scalable and able to handle an unlimited number of records and search queries? What is their record back-up and restoration capability?

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**9.20** What ongoing monitoring system does the vendor have in place to continually check on the system's performance and address any issues that may present themselves?

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**9.21** Do they provide an image of the most recent version of the multimedia presentation and database, and how quickly can it be replicated?

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**9.22** Do they have experience working with donor management software?

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**9.23** On interactive multimedia presentations can the client measure visitor usage, areas visited, times of visits, etc? What reporting procedure does the system employ?

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**9.24** How is content management handled? Can it be done remotely from the client's computer? Does it require a technical visit to the system's PC? Does it require information to be forwarded to the vendor's facility where it must be burned to a CD or DVD and then sent back to the client, who must then upload it manually to the system?

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**9.25** Are they capable of integrating all or part of the multimedia presentation with the client's Web site?

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**9.26** Can they answer the technical questions posed by your IT professionals, architects and engineers?

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**10. Saying Thank You:**

10.1 How will you say thank you to donors at various levels of giving?

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10.2 Are you being consistent throughout your office, facility, sister facility with levels of giving and recognition?

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10.3 Do you have "take home" items for major contributors? For example, miniatures of the display?

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10.4 Is your space/room/facility recognition consistent with the new display?

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10.5 Who will be in charge of all donor information required to appropriately say thank you?

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10.6 If thank you letters are being sent, who will draft the letters?

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10.7 Who will sign the letters? Who will mail the thank you letters?

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10.8 Who will coordinate follow up with donors and how?

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10.9 Will major donors and donors in higher giving categories receive personal phone calls and/or additional recognition? Who will make the calls?

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10.10 Who will record the contact information and correspondence?

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10.11 Have you considered additional ideas that would help your organization distinguish itself from others with regards to recognition and acknowledgement?

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10.12 Who will relay display updates to donors?

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**11. Marketing:**

11.1 How will you announce your new display to donors, staff, volunteers and the public?

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11.2 How will people know that your new display is interactive and updated regularly?

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11.3 Can you include the display in any of your current/annual special events?

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11.4 Do you have regularly scheduled internal/facility tours where the display might be included? For example, staff orientations, visitor tours, prospect tours, etc.

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11.5 Are there any special events that might enhance the unveiling of your new display?

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11.6 If part of a larger recognition program or capital campaign, have you chosen the most strategic date for the unveiling of your display?

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11.7 Have you prepared a press release to announce your new display?

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11.8 Do you have a newsletter in which you could profile the display?

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11.9 Have you prepared a media list you can announce the new display to?

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11.10 Have you considered online press release submission?

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11.11 Have you considered e-mail and Web site announcements?

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11.12 Have you considered announcing your campaign and display to influential blog site owners?

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11.13 Have you considered an in-house promotional plan to create awareness?

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11.14 Have you considered a community-based promotional plan to create awareness?

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11.15 Do you have a public relations person who can keep donors informed about publicity concerning the display?

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11.16 Are you taking advantage of all promotional opportunities associated with your new display?

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Thank you for taking the time to download the second edition of the Planned Legacy Architectural Donor Wall & Electronic Recognition Project Planning Guide. We hope this Guide has been helpful, but if you have any questions or suggestions, please e-mail us and let us know at [solutions@plannedlegacy.com](mailto:solutions@plannedlegacy.com).

We wish you the very best with your recognition project!