



PRESS RELEASE

Bremen, 10.1.2020

Weserburg Successfully Tests New Price Model

More visits, no reduction in revenues and completely positive feedback: this is how the Weserburg Museum for Modern Art assesses its special pricing offer 'Pay As You Stay'. During the four weeks before Christmas 2019, visitors to the museum were not charged the fixed daily price but paid a flexible admission fee: 1 euro per 10 minutes. The Weserburg was thereby the first museum in the German-language space to test the feasibility of a pricing model in which the admission fee is oriented to the duration of the visitor's stay.

In the four weeks of Advent (26.11 – 22.12.2019), the Weserburg Museum for Modern Art charged on all the 24 days it was open, not the customary daily admission fee (9 euros regular, 5 euros reduced), but a flexible price of 1 euro per 10 minutes (0.50 euro reduced). Payment was made at the end of the visit. At the same time, the daily admission fee was the highest price that visitors had to pay, even if they remained longer than 90 minutes. The offer applied to the purchasers of individual tickets. Visitors to guided tours, special programs or the children's museum were excluded from the offer along with groups. Whoever had been granted free admission up to then retained this status.

The result: in comparison to the 24 days when the museum was open during Advent 2018, the number of visits increased by 42%. If the visitors' profile for the years 2014 to 2018 is included as a figure of reference, then visits rose by an impressive 72%. In comparison to the previous year, ticket proceeds stayed the same. When compared to the average for the five-year period from 2014 to 2018, the volume of ticket sales for 2019 was almost 30 percent higher thanks to 'Pay As You Stay'. 'We had expected a slight downturn in revenues,' says the Weserburg's business manager Dr. Tom Schößler. 'The fact that we were able to attract an increased number of visitors without any financial loss shows that there might very well be alternatives other than a fixed daily fee and free admission.'

Whereas a preliminary survey in October/November 2019 revealed that during normal operations visitors remained in the exhibitions at the Weserburg for an average of 83 minutes, they stayed for an average of 67 minutes during the Pay As You Stay promotion. The fact that the duration of a normal visit declined by little more than a quarter hour shows that visitors nonetheless take the time they need to experience art. The accompanying questionnaires offer confirmation from the visitors: almost no one reported feeling compelled to hurry because of the price model. Nor were there complications with



regard to explanation or payment at the exit. Instead, visitors said that they felt the prices were fair and that, if the model were to be applied permanently, they would even come to the museum more often.

'We realised that the "ceiling" of 9 euros would lead to lower average proceeds per visit because everyone who stayed for a shorter time would have an advantage while those remaining longer would experience no disadvantage,' commented Dr. Schöbler with regard to the findings. With an average of 5.55 euros per visit, the average admission fee per visit did indeed sink by around 30 percent in comparison with the figure from 2018 (8.12 euros). The clear increase in visits, however, compensated for this, so that revenues remained the same.

The director of the Weserburg, Janneke de Vries, adds: 'We were hopeful that the model would find acceptance; but I was surprised that the results – both at the pay desk and regarding the evaluations – turned out to be so positive.'

Because of the success, the Weserburg will subject the model to a second test in March 2020. 'We want to make sure that it works outside the Advent season and in another exhibition constellation,' says Janneke de Vries. 'Then we can perhaps gain an impression as to whether this model is more suitable for promotional weeks or in fact offers a long-term alternative to a fixed admission price.'