A vendor’s table is strewn with secondhand objects including a pair of radios. When a visitor lifts an object, it becomes activated and an array of information about the item appears below it. A story about the object told by a previous owner begins to play from the radios’ speakers. Visitors can listen to each story individually or trigger more than one simultaneously, pushing the objects into dialog with each other. Each item is tagged with a QR code as well so that this content can remain attached if it is purchased and removed from the table.

Diversity of content is one of the flea market’s defining characteristics: the feeling that one can find anything and everything there. The relationship between perceived value and price also plays an important role and is frequently the topic of conversation or debate. Whether the objects’ precise provenances are known or not, the eras, places and people that they evoke are also part of the content one experiences at the flea market.

The flea market is a place of discovery, containing elements of a traditional commercial space and a museum without the formality or permanence of either. Individual markets and the booths within each have their own character: some highly curated and some seemingly random. Objects at the market can exist anywhere on the trash/treasure continuum depending on who’s evaluating them. Beyond this, they are in a state of contextual limbo, each severed from its previous setting but not yet assigned to a new one.