Planning Social Media for Museums

Museums and the Web 11 April 2007 San Francisco

Jerry Watkins

Senior Research Associate, Queensland University of Technology

Jerry Watkins has a 20-year track record in communication strategy, design and production. He has provided creative consultancy to some of the world's leading companies.

Jerry is currently working with UNESCO and UNDP on digital content creation programs for community media organisations in Indonesia, Nepal and India.

His research examines participatory design and interactive systems.

Agenda

- Examining social media in museums
- Establishing current state of play
  - Share implementation experiences
- Strategy for planning and sustaining social media

Recording

- Audio
- Photographic

Questions

- What are you trying to achieve?

- Who will be involved?

- How will you implement and sustain your program?

- What are the incentives for participation
via social media?

What are social media?

- "Online technologies and practices used to share opinions, insights, perspectives"
- Software-supported social networking
- Many-to-many communication supported by web technology
- 5 mins

What's different about them?

- Participation
  - Responding
  - Sharing
  - Creating
- Communication
  - One-to-many
  - Many-to-many
  - Hybrid (Amazon)

Why use social media?

- Establish dialogue with / between users
- Build relationships with / between audiences
- Bring together communities of interest
- Enhance external / internal knowledge sharing

Incentives for participation

- Knowledge sharing

- Voice

- Education

- Acknowledgement

Where used?

- Project support
- Exhibition support
- Discrete / ongoing projects
- Marketing, promotion

Separating media > tools

- Self-publication, feedback   blogs
- Personalisation   tagging, social bm
- Content sharing   wikis
- Online audio   podcasts
- Online video   vlogs

Workshop background

- Introductions
  - Organisation
  - Experience
  - Issues
  - Reason for attendance
- 10 mins

Sebastian Chan

Manager, Web Services Unit, Powerhouse Museum

Sebastian Chan has a background in social policy, journalism and media criticism as well as information technology, and has been building and producing websites and interactive media since the mid-1990s.

His other interests include electronic music and digital art, and he has produced and managed large scale national and international events and festivals in these fields. Sebastian runs the popular blog *Fresh+New - digital media in museums*

Feedback, response

- Museum visitors are using already social media to discuss the organisation
    - Are you aware of this?
    - Does your audience want to talk to you?
    - Do you engage or are you eavesdropping?
    - Is your organisation ready to listen?

Feedback, response: examples

- Live example from audience
- Current conversations about Powerhouse Museum
  - Technorati
  - Alpha with extras
  - Parents and visitors blogging about an exhibition/activity
- Artmobs

Feedback, response: activity

- Outline how your organisation listens to its audience
- Are there areas of your organisation that do not respond to feedback?

10 mins

Content sharing

- Does your organisation encourage audiences to tell their own stories?

  - Does it offer platforms for storytelling and conversation?

- Does it scale?

  - Can you cope with success technologically and organisationally?

Content sharing: examples

- Expected - Every Object Tells A Story
- Unexpected - V&A Arts & Crafts tile game
- Unpredictable - Powerhouse Museum tagging

Content sharing: activity

- Where in your organisation is the audience encouraged to
  - communicate [freely] with organisation?
  - communicate [freely] with each other?
- Do 'unexpected outcomes' occur in real world?
- Give examples from, or design an activity for the online environment
- 10 mins

Internally deployed social media

- Break down information and knowledge silos internally
- Enhance communication between staff
- Renegotiate relationship between institution and audiences
- Redirect organisational objectives

Internally deployed social media

- PHM Preservation & Conservation Department's [communal bookmarks](#) for internal use
- Now being considered for external use

Angelina Russo PhD

Senior Research Fellow, Queensland University of Technology

Dr Angelina Russo is Chief Investigator of the *New Literacy, New Audiences* project www.cci.edu.au/nla. This draws together six major Australian cultural institutions to examine how digital content creation can create a new audience of active cultural participants.

Angelina's PhD examined the impact of new media technologies on museum communication. In 2005 she was awarded the prestigious Smithsonian Fellowship and worked with the Cooper Hewitt National Design Museum (NY) to explore creative new media technologies within education programs.

What's different about them?

- Participation
  - Responding
  - Sharing
  - Creating

Responding

Challenge: engage audience in conversations

Target: design institution promoting cultural networks

Implementation: provide online forums

Outcome: program support

Sharing

Challenge: engage communities of interest

Target: picture archive extending into community

Implementation: collect informal/ anecdotal information

Outcome: knowledge exchange

Creating

Challenge: engaging communities of practice

Target: art institution targeting new audiences

Implementation: capture innovative creative activity

Outcome: exhibition support

Implementation

STRATEGY	TARGET	TOOLS	SUSTAINABILITY
	K>12	FORUMS	PROJECT SUPPORT
		TAGGING	
RESPONDING	Peers/Colleagues	**BLOGGING**	EXHIBITION SUPPORT
	Seniors	**WIKIS**	
		FOLKSONOMIIES	MARKETING/ PROMOTION
SHARING	Indigenous	PODCASTING	
		CONTENT SHARING	KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE
	Comms of Interest	-**YouTube**, Flickr -MySpace, Delicious	
CREATING	Comms of Practice	CONTENT CREATION TOOLS	COMMUNITY CAPTURE, DISPLAY, INTERACTION

Sustainability

- Is strategy fit for purpose?
- Who is involved? (team, programs)
- Can you demonstrate value?
  - sharing
  - responding
  - creating
- Management buy-in?

Implementation: activity

- Prepare a 3 min outline of a planned social media project in your institution
- Outline strategy, target, tools and audience
- How does your project add value to the museum?
- How will the project be sustained?

- 15 mins

Implementation presentations

- 30 mins

Wider issues

- Social media enable
  - information sharing
  - response to issues
  - creation of new knowledge/ content
- Cultural authority of museum is derived from
  - primacy of object collections
  - patrimony of museum

Incentives for participation

- Knowledge sharing

- Voice

- Education

- Acknowledgement

Voice   vs.   Authority

Shift for cultural institution from traditional role as gatekeeper of information and objects, towards facilitation of creative cultural participation

Participation with 'non-experts' erodes 'authority' of institution and 'authenticity' of information

Voice vs. Authority: activity

- What issues will be raised by
  - Management
  - Peers
  - Audiences
  - Colleagues

- 15 mins

Agenda

- Examining social media in museums
- Establishing current state of play
    - Share implementation experiences
- Strategy for planning and sustaining social media

Links

- New Literacy, New Audiences
  - www.cci.edu.au/nla
  - nlablog.wordpress.com
- Fresh + New
  - www.powerhousemuseum.com/dmsblog