Radical Trust
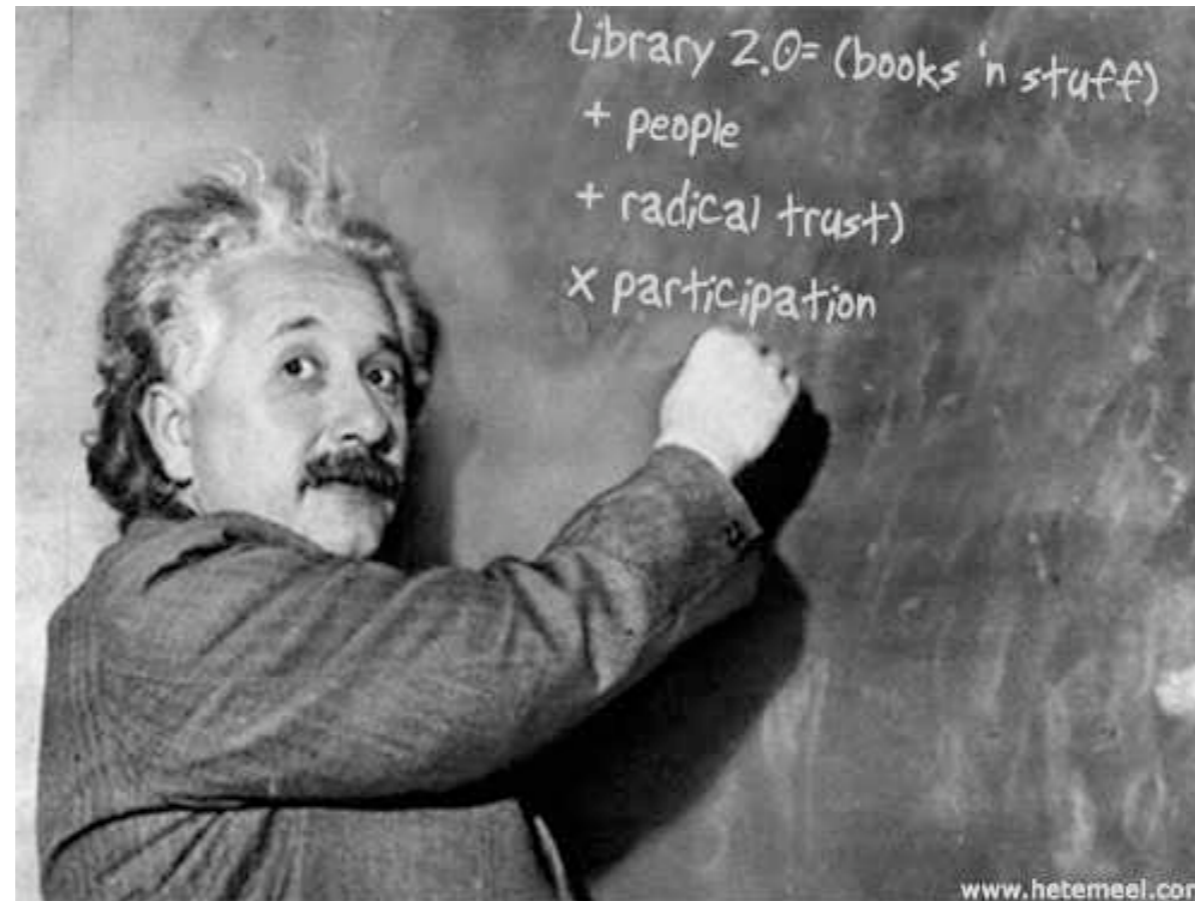

Sebastian Chan
www. powerhousemuseum.com
SebC@phm.gov.au

Jim Spadaccini
www.ideum.com
jims@ideum.com

Today.

The paper and findings. A quick recap of the paper and some the key findings.

Since the survey. A look at museum blogosphere over the last three months and some thoughts about museum blogs since the paper was written.
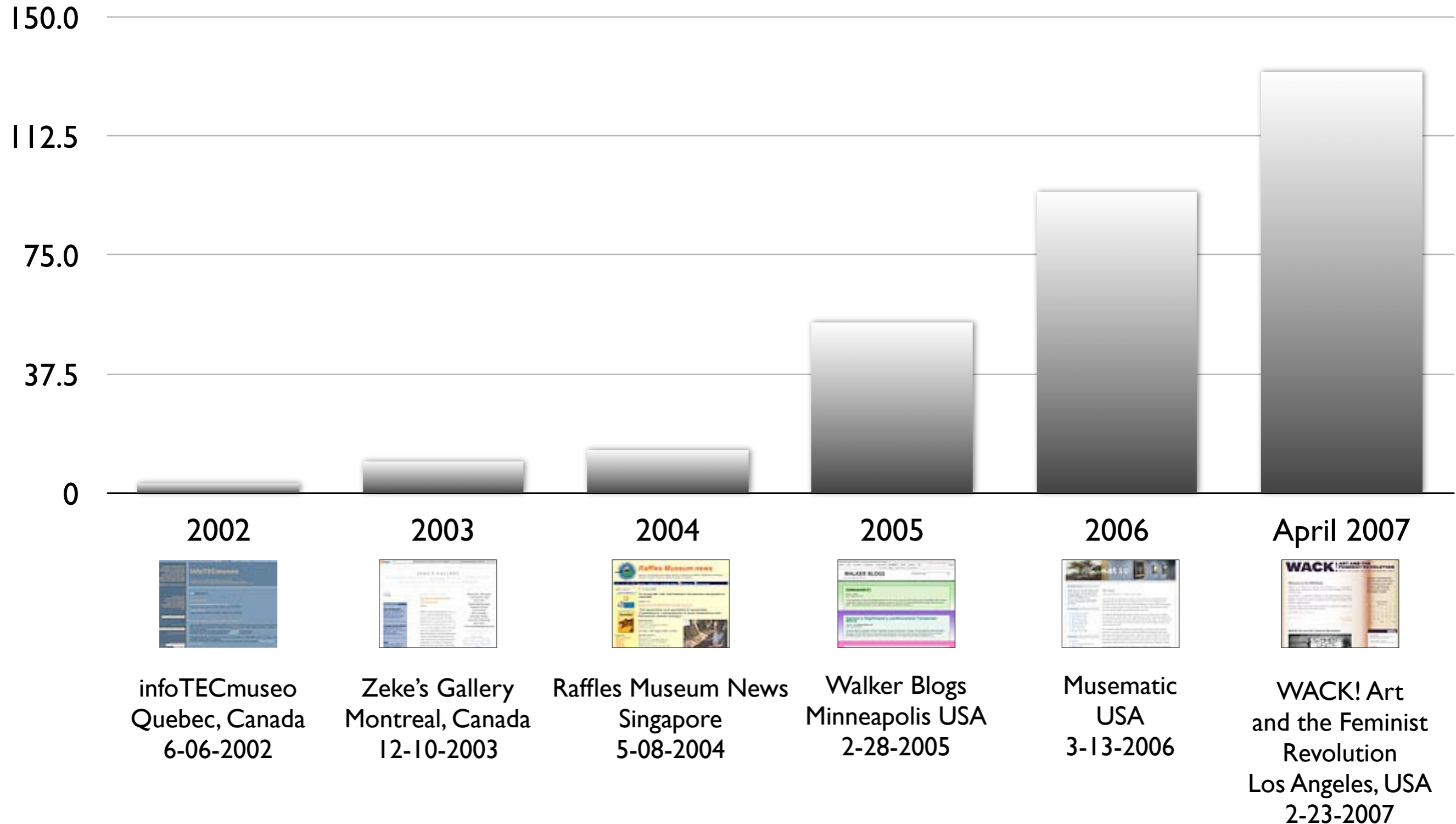
Discussion. What does all this mean and where are museum blogs headed next?
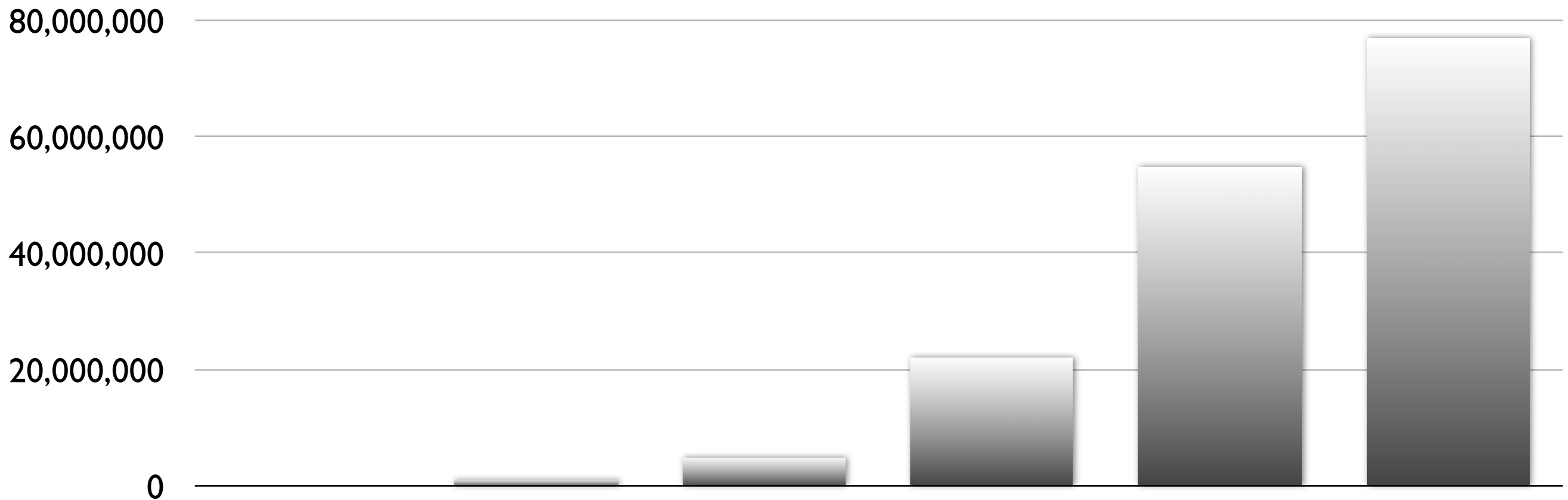
Paper is available at:
http://www.archimuse.com/mw2007/papers/spadaccini/spadaccini.html

Museum Blogs (Cummulative Approx. Totals)

2002	**2003**	**2004**	**2005**	**2006**	**April 2007**
infoTECmuseo Quebec, Canada 6-06-2002	Zeke's Gallery Montreal, Canada 12-10-2003	Raffles Museum News Singapore 5-08-2004	Walker Blogs Minneapolis USA 2-28-2005	Musematic USA 3-13-2006	WACK! Art and the Feminist Revolution Los Angeles, USA 2-23-2007

Y-axis values: 150.0, 112.5, 75.0, 37.5, 0

Source: museumblogs.org

Blogosphere (Cummulative Approx. Totals)

2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	April 2007
infoTECmuseo Quebec, Canada 6-06-2002	Zeke's Gallery Montreal, Canada 12-10-2003	Raffles Museum News Singapore 5-08-2004	Walker Blogs Minneapolis USA 2-28-2005	Musematic USA 3-13-2006	WACK! Art and the Feminist Revolution Los Angeles, USA 2-23-2007

Source: Technorati

The Paper and findings.
The Online Survey

(Yes. We are starting with *Stage Two* from the paper.)

The Paper and findings.
The Online Survey

The URL of the survey was emailed to the administrator addresses of each blog listed on MuseumBlogs.org and announcements were posted on the *Ideum blog* and *Fresh + New* at the Powerhouse Museum (December 19, 2006). A reminder email was sent a few days prior to the closure of the survey to these same addresses as well as to the *MCN-L* (Museum Computer Network) discussion list (January 4, 2007).

The online survey collected information from 51 blogs submitted by 53 individuals (two blogs had two authors participate), **more than half of the known museum blogs at the time the survey was conducted.** Accordingly, the group represents a wide range of institutions, individuals, and blogs from across the globe, representing many "first world" countries of North America, Europe, and Oceania.

The Paper and findings.
The Online Survey

Most of the blogs that participated use English as their primary language although five of the blogs are in other languages. This is fairly representative of the number of foreign language blogs that currently appear on the Museum Blogs site. As of late January 2007, **13 of the 111 blogs in the directory were in a language other than English.**

More than half of the participating blogs are directly affiliated with a museum, university or an institution. For those who responded to the question of what "Department" they were affiliated with, a wide range of responses were collected. **Museum blogs can be found in exhibit and exhibitions departments, collections, education, marketing, or IT or specialized Web departments.** The diversity represented here is in keeping with McAfee's (2006) assertion that social software will initially emerge from various places within large organizations, rather than from the "top down."

The Paper and findings.
The Online Survey
Purpose and Target Audience

Who is your target audience(s)? (select all that apply)	
Museum Professionals	29 of 53
General Public	28 of 53
Special Interest Groups	17 of 53
Students and Teachers/Educational	9 of 53
Internal Museum Personnel	9 of 53

Target audiences of museum blogs

Key points

• A wide range of purposes and audiences

• The experimental nature of some of blogs means that the purpose and audience may be evolving

The Paper and findings.
The Online Survey
Operational Details

How would you describe yourself? (select all that apply)	
Museum Educator	14 of 53
Interested Individual	13 of 53
Museum Curator	11 of 53
Student	11 of 53
Museum Consultant	8 of 53
Marketing Professional	3 of 53
Scientist	3 of 53

Museum Bloggers describe themselves

How many staff hours are needed each month to maintain the blog? (53 responses)	
0 – 3 hours	41.5 percent
3 – 5 hours	22.6 percent
5 – 10 hours	13.2 percent
More than 10 hours	22.6 percent

Staff hours for museum blogs

The Paper and findings.
The Online Survey
Operational Details

Key Findings

• 4/5th's of museum blogs publish directly (41 of 53)

• About 60% post fewer than 5 times a month. (31 of 53)

• Most museum blogs are "unfunded," only 6 of 53 respondents reported any form of direct funding.

The Paper and findings.
Operational Details: Post-paper

Zeke's Gallery
#4 museum blog - Technorati rank 43,472 (193 links from 90 blogs)

Zeke's Modus Operandi

```
I read someplace that Boing Boing requires their editors to have 6 new posts up
before 9 AM. I said to myself 'hey, Boing Boing gets a lot of traffic, that might
be a good idea.' I realized that since I mostly write about Contemporary Canadian
Art, that 6 might be stretching it, and 9 was way early. So I scaled down, and
said three before 10 AM.

I use Google Alerts in French & English based around keywords of Art, Artist,
Culture, Gallery, Museum, Montreal, Quebec and Canada for the most part. Sometimes
I add in more specific terms like a person's name or a specific institution.

These alerts get emailed after midnight, so when I show up the next morning, I
have a fairly (but not completely) comprehensive set of art news from a gazillion
and a half sources.

I click through on those that look interesting, and then taking another page from
the Boing Boing style guide, I pile on the opinion rather thickly (I assume that
this is why I don't have that many comments, not everyone wants it to be known
that they read my blog).

On a good day (like yesterday) total time spent blogging is about 90 minutes. Add
in 15 minutes to compile stats, and it doesn't take up 10% of the time people
think it does - what takes a lot of time are the reviews which are not pithy (or
smarmy) one liners.
```

The Paper and findings.
The Online Survey
Visitation and Evaluation

Key Findings

• The vast majority of museum bloggers measure visitation (43 of 53)

• The number of visitors is seen as a key to measuring success (33 of 53).

• About half cited "quality and relevance of comments" (27 of 53) and "number of links" as benchmarks to measure success.

•A fewer number of museum bloggers listed the "geographic spread of blog visitors" (15 of 53) and the "number of media mentions" (10 of 53).

The Paper and findings.
The Online Survey
Technology

Key Findings

- Those who have installed software prefer WordPress (22 of 53), with Moveable Type (3 of 53) and Drupal (2 of 53) marginally represented.

- For hosted services a similar pattern emerges, with Blogger (17 of 53) dominating.

- The majority of museum blogs support some type of syndication, only about one-fifth do not (11 of 53).

- As far as syndication format is concerned, RSS was the most popular (37 of 53), with Atom not far behind (21 of 53).
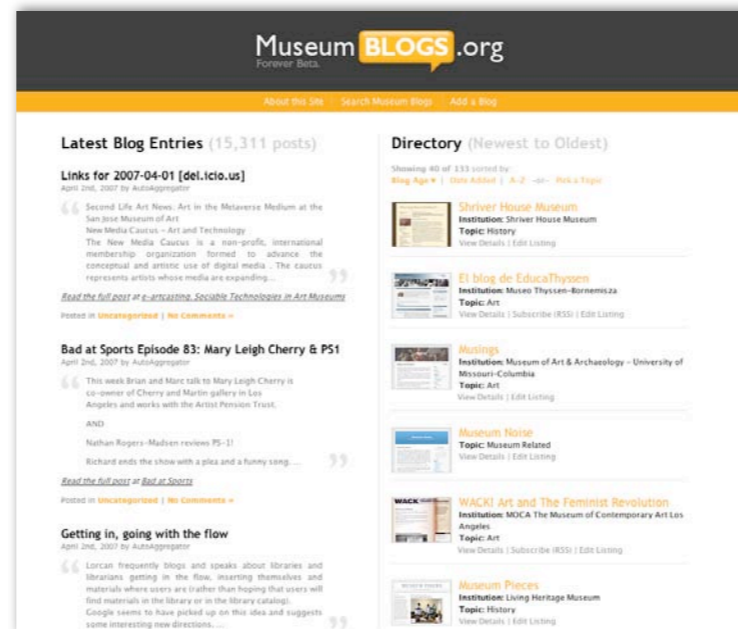
The Paper and findings.
The Online Survey
Technology

Key Findings

• A majority of museum bloggers use Technorati (29 of 53).

• Feedburner (16 of 53) and Google Blog Search (19 of 53) were also fairly well represented, although about one-fifth of the respondents (9 of 53) reported using no outside blogging software tools or services.

The Paper and findings.
Analyzing MuseumBlogs.org

The Paper and findings.
Analyzing MuseumBlogs.org

Rank	Blog	Technorati rank	Technorati links
1	Modern Art Notes	11,515	784 from 261 blogs
2	Eye Level	31,554	262 from 104 blogs
3	Botany Photo of the Day	33,683	586 from 98 blogs
4	Zeke's Gallery	42,395	304 from 78 blogs
5	Yesterday.SG	52,644	1624 from 63 blogs
6	Hanging Together	71,599	316 from 47 blogs
7	Musematic	87,097	189 from 39 blogs
8	Fresh & New	97,958	100 from 35 blogs
9	Andy Warhol Blog	111,771	42 from 31 blogs
10	Past Thinking	120,367	196 from 29 blogs
11	Science Buzz	125,161	768 from 28 blogs
12	Ideum: Ideas + Media	130,265	159 from 27 blogs
13	Antarctic Conservation Blog	135,801	189 from 26 blogs
14	Oz: the blog of Glenda Sims	155,443	92 from 23 blogs
15	MuseumBlogging.com	163,248	82 from 22 blogs

Top 15 blogs ranked by Technorati ranking. Data retrieved 12/21/06.
Museum Blogs Directory had a rank of 67,857 (149 links from 50 blogs).

The Paper and findings.
Top 15 Technorati ranking, 3 months later.

Rank	Blog	Technorati rank	Technorati links
1	Modern Art Notes	11,515	784 from 261 blogs
2	Eye Level	31,554	262 from 104 blogs
3	Botany Photo of the Day	33,683	586 from 98 blogs
4	Zeke's Gallery	42,395	304 from 78 blogs
5	Yesterday.SG	52,644	1624 from 63 blogs
6	Hanging Together	71,599	316 from 47 blogs
7	Musematic	87,097	189 from 39 blogs
8	Fresh & New	97,958	100 from 35 blogs
9	Andy Warhol Blog	111,771	42 from 31 blogs
10	Past Thinking	120,367	196 from 29 blogs
11	Science Buzz	125,161	768 from 28 blogs
12	Ideum: Ideas + Media	130,265	159 from 27 blogs
13	Antarctic Conservation Blog	135,801	189 from 26 blogs
14	Oz: the blog of Glenda Sims	155,443	92 from 23 blogs
15	MuseumBlogging.com	163,248	82 from 22 blogs

Rank	Blog	Technorati rank	Technorati links
1	Modern Art Notes	11,039	715 from 309 blogs
2	Walker Art (Combined)	19,460	542 from 191 blogs
3	Botany Photo of the Day	32,627	393 from 119 blogs
4	Yesterday.SG	44,416	639 from 91 blogs
5	Zeke's Gallery	45,996	182 from 88 blogs
6	Eye Level	51,888	142 from 78 blogs
7	Musematic	73,045	158 from 57 blogs
8	Hangingtogether.org	82,530	146 from 51 blogs
8	Fresh & New	82,530	122 from 51 blogs
10	Science Buzz	97,593	475 from 44 blogs
11	Ideum: Ideas + Media	111,111	138 from 39 blogs
12	Oz: the blog of Glenda Sims	128,807	109 from 34 blogs
13	Museum Blogging	165,360	44 from 27 blogs
14	I Blogged Andy Warhol	165,360	34 from 27 blogs
15	Antarctic Conservation Blog	196,271	110 from 23 blogs

Top 15 blogs according to Technorati. Data retrieved 12/21/06 (left) the same
15 on 4/6/07 (right). (*Data for the Walker Art not available on 12/21)*

*Museum Blogs Directory had a rank of 67,857 (149 links from 50 blogs) in December 2006
and 80,794 (136 links from 52 blogs) in April 2007.*

The Paper and findings.
Analyzing MuseumBlogs.org

Rank	Blog	Comments
1	Botany Photo of the Day	128
2	Museum People	83
3	Science Buzz	62
4	Bad At Sports	39
5	Fresh & New	27
6	Zeke's Gallery	16
6	Inherent Vice	16
8	Observations	14
9	Hanging Together	12
9	Museum 2.0	12
11	Ideum Blog	11
11	Oz: the blog of Glenda Sims	11
12	Musematic	9
13	Yesterday.SG	8
13	The Attic	8

Top 15 blogs ranked by the number of user comments in previous 30 days. Data retrieved 12/21/06.

The Paper and findings.
Top 15 user comments, 3 months later

Rank	Blog	Comments
1	Botany Photo of the Day	128
2	Museum People	83
3	Science Buzz	62
4	Bad At Sports	39
5	Fresh & New	27
6	Zeke's Gallery	16
6	Inherent Vice	16
8	Observations	14
9	Hanging Together	12
9	Museum 2.0	12
11	Ideum Blog	11
11	Oz: the blog of Glenda Sims	11
12	Musematic	9
13	Yesterday.SG	8
13	The Attic	8

Rank	Blog	Comments
1	Botany Photo of the Day	192
2	Science Buzz	152
3	Bad At Sports	141
4	The Attic	74
5	Observations	67
6	Museum 2.0	35
7	Fresh & New	28
8	Ideum Blog	19
9	Oz: the blog of Glenda Sims	17
9	Musematic	17
11	Zeke's Gallery	16
12	Museum People	10
13	Hanging Together	12
14	Yesterday.SG	7
15	Inherent Vice	4

Top 15 blogs ranked by the number of user comments in previous 30 days.
Data retrieved 12/21/06 (left) the same 15 on 4/6/07 (right)
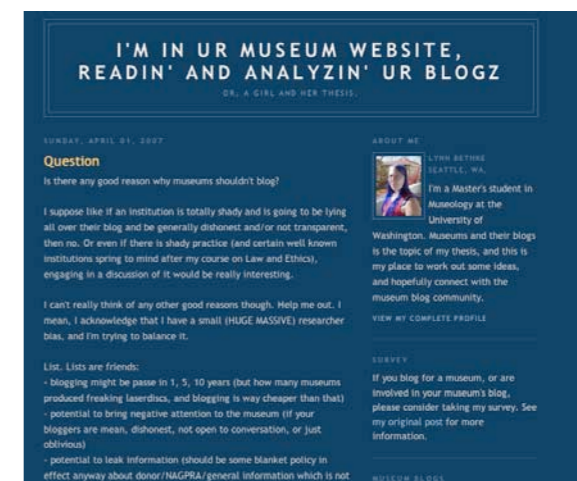
Since the Survey.
Recent Developments

• More museum blogs are appearing, there have been 39 additions to Museumblogs since January 1.

• Commenting on museum blogs seem to be on the rise.

• Active blogs seem to keep stable rankings and show slight improvement.

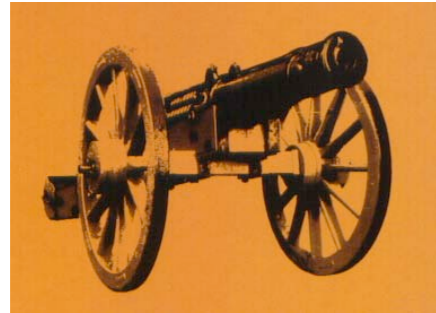• Some "new models" for museum blogs have appeared...

http://blog.awm.gov.au/focus/   http://www.thewalters.org/blog/   http://museumblogthesis.blogspot.com/
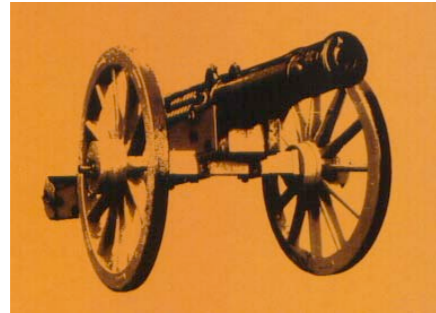
Recommendations.
For those about to blog....
and who are already blogging...

• In exploring the technical approach the survey found the vast majority who used software used WordPress, those who used a hosted service used Blogger.

• If you use WordPress, use "date and name based" option in permalinks it will improve Google Rankings dramatically. While Technorati rankings can help show how "popular" exhibits, the site itself drives very little traffic. Less than one percent of visitors to MuseumBlogs came from Technorati itself.

• Ping! Please see: http://codex.wordpress.org/Update_Services

• The frequency of posting has a lot to do with success, develop a sustainable model. Team blogging may help. Try to increase the frequency of posts.

• Where possible, encourage commenting and interactions. Hate speech is rare. Install and/or use spam software.

Recommendations.
For those about to blog....
and who are already blogging...

• Posting frequently and connecting with existing audiences can help with early success. Wack! Art and the Feminist Revolution is been operational for six weeks. It has 64 posts and 114 comments. Its' Technorati ranking is 61,597 (95 links from 67 blogs)

• Technorati ranking can take time. Launched in February, KQED's Quest blog has 62 posts and 111 comments, yet its' Technorati ranking is only 390,281 (13 links from 12 blogs)

• Link to other museum blogs. If every blog in the Museumblogs directory linked to each other, all of our blogs would be in the top 20,000 in Technorati. Our Google rankings would improve dramatically as well.

Discussion.

Questions and Comments are welcomed.

A PDF of this presentation will be posted on Ideum blog and Fresh + New.