Can and Should Small Museums Be Technological Leaders?

American Association of Museums
2008 Annual Meeting
Your Host and Debate Moderator

Holly Witchey, Director, New Media Initiatives at the Cleveland Museum of Art
Yes! I Have Done It.

Heather Marie Wells
Shiloh Museum of Ozark History

www.shilohmuseum.org
Yes! I Have Done It.

- George Laughead
  - Ford County Historical Society, et al

www.vlib.us
www.kansasheritage.org
No! I’m too busy and like to copy other museums’ lead.

- Heather McClennahan
  - Los Alamos Historical Society

www.losalamoshistory.org
A Consultant Who Sees All Sides

- Jim Spadaccini
  - Ideum

www.ideum.com
Advantages to Technology Leadership

- Less red tape (fewer hassles with IT Departments, multiple curators or department heads)
- Small projects that may reach fewer people but have a bigger impact
- Easier for smaller museums to take advantage of free options and software
- Advantages of being a “first mover”
Advantages of Following

- Lack of resources (staff time and money).
- Find out what works and what doesn’t before putting time and effort into a project.
- Ability to get help from those who have already done it.
- There’s no need to reinvent the wheel!
Is Technology a Key Component to Help Us Meet Our Mission?

- Here, we all agree
- Make your website more than an online brochure
- Bring in new audiences with new technologies
Podcasting

- It’s great! Just do it.
  - You don't have to invent any of it
  - Cheap players
  - Cheap software
  - Great way to reach new audiences
- Bonus point for making podcasts
  - Use it on local public radio, etc., in addition to having it on web
  - Use it in museum, providing MP-3 players for visitors
Shiloh Museum Podcast on iTunes

Shiloh Museum of Ozark History

Podcast Description
The Shiloh Museum of Ozark History Podcast offers supplements to our exhibits, grounds, programs, events, and much more!

Customer Reviews
Be the first to write a review 🌟

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Release Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<td>Episode 8 is available for download. (29.2M ... 8</td>
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Drawbacks/Issues with Podcasting

- What are you going to use for your audio?
- Takes time and resources, whether staff or volunteer
- Takes a lot of server space!
- Some of your audience – even your most loyal members – won’t have a clue what you’re talking about
Blogging

- Way to reach audiences that might otherwise never find your museum
- Free publicity
- Free blog space and software all over the web
- Use material from blog in newsletter or other mailings to members. Use newsletter material on blog. Write it once, use it many times
Episode 15 is available for **download**.
(2:40 minutes, 1.40MB, MP3)

The museum staff would like to thank you for your support of the museum’s podcasting efforts as another way that you can enjoy the museum. After more than a year of podcasting, we would really like to know what you think about this new service we are providing.

To let us know your opinions, please send an email with the subject line Podcast Feedback to hmwells@springdaleark.org. Again thank you for supporting the Shiloh Museum and we hope to see you at the museum some time soon.
**Drawbacks/Issues with Blogging**

- Takes time and resources, whether staff or volunteer
- Board member/decision maker fear of loss of control over content
- Some of your audience – even your most loyal members – won’t have a clue what you’re talking about
Social Networking

- Join with international museums of fame on MySpace for free.
- Use volunteer(s) for MySpace work, which is relatively easy.
- Start with quality links to other museum MySpace pages.
- Facebook does not allow organizations -- by the way -- and will remove them.
- Also use linkin.com for your personal resume -- great for finding person's name (not institution) and gets your name found well and fast. Not time intensive, unlike MySpace.
Morse Museum Page on Facebook
Drawbacks/Issues with SN

- Takes time and resources, whether staff or volunteer
- Inappropriate advertising on some sites
- Some of your audience – even your most loyal members – won’t have a clue what you’re talking about
Virtual Tours & Second Life

• How many people will drive six hours to your small museum? With a virtual tour -- no need to invent! With QuickTime it can be done with small budget.
• Allows public access if museum is not open year around.
• Allows for creativity that may not be possible in reality.
Jim’s avatar Mij Foil in SL
Drawbacks/Issues with VR

- Takes time and resources, whether staff or volunteer
- Some of your audience – even your most loyal members – won’t have a clue what you’re talking about
- SecondLife is still a technology issue for many. It takes fast computer, etc. More projects this year from larger museums should teach us more.
Photo and Video Sharing

- Flickr.com for photographs
  - Yahoo.com owns it and indexes flickr pages very fast. It should be used in addition to museums having their photographs up on their own site.
  - Good way to promote new exhibitions, with a few (10 or so) photos.
  - It’s free

- Use YouTube.com for videos
  - Every museum should put up one of their own, for if you don’t, some visitor will anyway!
  - It’s free
A flickr Photo Sharing Site
You Tube (Museum Search)

Halo 3 Commercial: "Museum"
why, when a true hero arrives, the world will honor him...Arms Race Part 3. Amino Museum Travel....halo halo3 master chief chief's face (more)

Cairo Museum
of a visit to Cairo museum back in the days when cameras were allowed inside, albeit for a considerable fee...Cairo museum vacation holiday Egypt Tutankhamun

creationist museum
big waste of money...Jesus god fake religion murder

Muse Muscle Museum
Muse's music video...muse muscle museum matt bellamy

Muse - Muscle Museum (Hullabaloo)
Muse performing Muscle Museum off of album "Hullabaloo"
Concluding Thoughts

- Look at your museum assets and use them with the technology that’s available
- Use your staff and volunteer resources
- Don’t get too caught up in the technology. Keep any project in line with the mission of your museum!
- HAVE FUN! Let the joy of the experience of your museum come across in whatever work you do.