



Digital Strategies for Heritage (DISH) 2013 *2 & 3 December 2013, De Doelen Rotterdam*

Chefs' Table session

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Table Host: Paul Manwaring & Jonathan Carter

Title: Using Open Source Software to Publish Cultural Heritage Apps – The pain and pleasure of making interactive experiences

Introduction

From Winning Apps4NL with Vistory to recently publishing the Europeana Open Culture App, Paul and Jonathan have endured many difficult challenges- let them share their knowledge and experiences with you.

Over the past few years Glimworm has emerged as a leader in the Open Data and Open Cultural Data initiatives and have created several award winning and renowned apps including Vistory, Rijksmuseum Muse and Europeana Open Culture.

Along the way they have also created important open source publishing platforms such as Muse Open Source and Push2Press. They will share their story with you and their knowledge not just about their successes but also their failures and lessons learned. They will also show some of their Apps and the software that makes them possible in an interactive forum that will allow you to get hands on and experience yourself the possibilities interactive platforms create with social curation, crowd sourcing, sharing, comments, data enrichment and much, much more.

Discussion

Open Data open research platforms

Apps 4NL contest won with their app VISTORY: <http://www.vistory.nl/>

Using cultural heritage content in apps: is it successful? - only in certain ways...

we assume that, with a lot of media writing about VISTORY it would get downloaded a lot... but actually, that's not the way it works. The audience is

very select for this kind of apps.

when people upload a picture it gets geotagged; but also already existing content is geo-tagged and users at the spot can find it.

Vistory was successful for the makers: they used to spend a lot more on marketing budget for their own company, but with winning the Apps 4 NL award they instantly got a lot more audience for their products.

Learned lessons from Vistory: by now 60.000 downloads.
but is there money to earn from downloads?

It doesn't matter how many downloads you have, it matters how the app is used.

users use the app in a different way than it was planned
making really cool user experiences wasn't really scalable

Another app: Rijksmuseum Muse - advantage was that the Rijksmuseum was reopening and that the publicity could also be used for the app.
100.000 downloads should have been achieved... however until now, there are only like 1000 downloads.

The Rijksmuseum has made a great job in digitizing, their app is the first to pop up in the app store - so the Glowworm app, which was only using Rijksmuseum data in their app, they couldn't compete. They couldn't actually use the Rijksmuseum's name in the app. Plus: the official Rijksmuseum app is for free. RijksmuseumMuse costed something.

But, out of this project Jill Cousins, director of Europeana, approached the company with the question if they can make an app for Europeana content.

Europeana came to them with a specific problem: how do you create a real good user experience for so much (meta)data?

Europeana content is purely database driven, about the api. It's not interactive. It only displays metadata and thumbnail pictures. Links to sites like Wikipedia etc at its best.

The value of open data: using the network
the resilience of decentralization (of data)

How to make the right choices when it comes to what to invest in (which or who's open data to work with)? - It depends on who you want to reach with what message. Find out what they use and what they don't use and then do the same (for them).

Europeana content is not editable - the original data is at the institution that owns the data. You can connect with the object (through google search, wikipedia, ...), favourite, comment or share it on facebook or twitter. So it takes you deeper (outside of Europeana into the web).

comments also say things like: "there's a great movie about Vermeer (>> link to the movie)"
it shows what is important to the users.

the likelihood of somebodies sharing is greater the more interest there is. The app has created a lot of likes and shares. you can also create or rather curate your own museum with the app. it extends the experience with other platforms in a meaningful way.

the owners of digital content can really create new audiences
the mission of a heritage institution has to be extended for digital content.
remember: physical content mission was preserve, present, etc. but now it goes beyond that.

but yes, you have to give up "ownership" of your data. let users really "do" something with the content. take it away.

in analogue culture you have a top-down approach. in a digital culture it is the bottom up situation. your users will inform you and it will influence your decision making.

inappropriate content or comments by users are not usual. so, that's a myth!
(well, most of the time)

What do we need?

- public privat partnerships that create apps that engage and inspire
- create realistic and sustainable business models
- commit to active and effective promotion
- publish often - publish fast
- collaborate on creating open source platforms that enable the above

share best practices-Apps4EU are a good example
learn to take risks (have a little faith)

What do we want?

engage the public.

take IMDB.com - created by users. but maybe that's more useful to many people than for instance museum content would be. but something like wikipedia works as well, so you should be closer to that as well (Europeana should)

but: it's not about the quantity of audience engaging, it's about the quality.
smaller audiences = more outcome for the institutions.

if we change from centralized distribution: the potential in the future is to partner up with other platforms, like wikipedia. it will contribute to a better or improved user experience

"we can create a new global value chain" - there's a lot of possibilities there, think about google glass!

apps talked about:

Muse : the mobile personal museum

<http://www.glimworm.com/portfolio-item/muse-open-source/>

Europeana app:

<http://blog.europeana.eu/2013/06/europeana-releases-first-free-ipad-app/>

questions?

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