



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

Chefs' Table session

Table Number: 9

Table Session: 2

Table Host: Merete Sanderhoff & Lizzy Jongma

Title: Use open licensing to the MAX

Introduction

Open licenses change the perception of museum collections and what they can do for us.

Open licensing enables museums to bring their collections to the people and turn them into active tools in the hands of users. But licensing can be a jungle. Along with my sous-chef Lizzy Jongma from Rijksmuseum, we will discuss which licenses GLAMs need to choose (for instance within the Creative Commons framework) to ensure that their collections can go where the users are and foster new forms of engagement (Wikipedia, social media, remix culture etc.) The outset for discussion is our personal experiences with licensing collections: How did we serve our audiences on digital platforms like Wikipedia, Europeana, Google Art, Facebook etc. And how does this serve our own organizations?

Discussion

"Use open licensing to the MAX" by Merete Sanderhoff (Statens Museum for Kunsts) and Lizzy Jongma (Rijksmuseum).

Idea behind the chefs duet: Merete represents a small museum, Lizzy represent a huge museum.

Lizzy: we decided to be in the bigger world. we wanted to be on Wikipedia, Europeana and Flickr - wherever the audience is. We immediately run into to licencing question.

Releasing both metadata and images helps us more than selling images.

Especially publishing photographs from archives that people never get to see

in the museum.

Merete: I was an art historian but then I became a lawyer too.

We had 50 000 high resolution photographs of our collections but they were locked in special machines that people could access outside of the museum.

(...)

We had an opportunity to join Google Art Project but we didn't have good quality material for that. We had highlights from our collection on our website. Google Art Project takes over the rights on the images when you sign a contract with them so we decided to give them only 160 images. We wanted to share the rights with the public.

In the beginning we used the most restrictive licence CC BY NC ND, now we use CC BY even though we know it's not ok to put rights on public domain images (which is often the case).

Question to the participants: Are you familiar with Creative Commons licences?

Two steps:

1. Decide what you do with the collections
2. Who owns the rights?

Participant: We want to build a digital database and we want to find out what licences to use. These are photographs and documents, sometimes we know the copyright holder, sometimes not.

Lizzy: Orphan works is a difficult issue. We decided that everything created before 1940 is in public domain.

Lizzy: In the Rijksmuseum we now have 200 000 in the public domain and we are missing another 100 000. In the beginning we took things we didn't have rights to off the website and then we started getting calls from living artists asking if their work lost value.

Participant2: I wonder what is the best argument to use against the protectionist plan and to encourage to open up more?

Merete: Regarding money-making - we looked into research and found out that it's not a big business. We showed it to our board and said - yes, we do make a little money but we also have to pay someone to prepare it to sell.

Research referenced by Merete can be found here:
<http://openglam.org/documentation/>

Regarding the watermarks and restrictive licenses - Wikimedia Commons doesn't take low resolution images with watermarks and material licenses as Non-Commercial.

Wikipedia is a great example - if you provide good quality material you might get featured + it gets referenced.

Lizzy: High resolution has high impact, low resolution has low impact.

Rijksmuseum did a survey on Europeana and found out that their material got more clicked because it included visuals.

Low-res is an image of 72 dpi. Rijksmuseum used 1000 x 1000 and it's perceived as good enough for digital media.

Merete: If you have great images you get people's attention on social media.

Lizzy: Retarget everything in your museum for a person that loves art but doesn't know the authors and titles.

Merete: I'm an art historian but I'm also and culture snacker.

Merete: One good thing about open licencing is that it makes your collection flexible.