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DESIGN AND MULTIMEDIA FOR MUSEUM OUTREACH

С. Шобінгер. Дизайн і мультимедіа для музейної просвітницької діяльності. Ця стаття описує участь автора в проєкті *on.tour* Берлінського єврейського музею. Показано необхідність перспективної виховної роботи музеїв, під якою маються на увазі інформаційно-пропагандистські програми для досягнення широкого кола різних людей незалежно від їх соціального і культурного шару.

Ключові слова: мультимедійні технології, музей, освіта.

С. Шобінгер. Дизайн и мультимедиа для музейной просветительской деятельности. Эта статья описывает участие автора в проекте *on.tour* Берлинского еврейского музея. Показана необходимость перспективной воспитательной работы музеев, под которой подразумевается информационно-пропагандистские программы для достижения широкого круга разных людей независимо от их социального и культурного слоя.

Ключевые слова: мультимедийные технологии, музей, образование.

S. Schöbinger. Design and multimedia for museum outreach. This article refers to the authors participation in the project *on.tour* of Jüdische Museum Berlin. It shows the necessity of forward-looking educational work of museums, which means often but not exclusively museums outreach programs to reach a vast range of different people independently of their social and cultural background.

Keywords: multimedia-technology, museum, education.

Cultural Education and Outreach

„A museum is a non-profit making, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, and open to the public which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits, for purpose of study, education and enjoyment, material evidence of people and their environment” [1] — by its *Code of Ethics for Museums* the International Council of Museums lays out the standards of modern cultural education and museums work. In this code, the council outlines its responsibility for all sections of society: “The museum has an important duty to attract new and wider audiences within all levels of the community” [1] and therefore, the idea of education must be highly flexible and adaptable to their target groups. The museum should manage reaching both experts and people that are new to specific field of research, at the same time. However, studies, such as the Shell Jugendstudie indicate that in Germany educational performance is connected to the social background, like nowhere else in the world [2]. The German Museum Association notices that people less inclined to education undertake little or no effort to visit a museum. Only 2...5 % of the visitors can be determined as being less inclined to education. Though the educational mandate of a museum includes notably a sociopolitical component and inherits the mandate of inclusion, participation, and integration across all ethnic origins and social background.

The museum as a vivid institute that is exposed to societal change, preserves not only the cultural memory of society, but also has its modeling influence, absorbs and preserves cultural goods on the one hand and on the other hand stimulates a discussion about the own history and the environment.

The radius of action cannot any longer be limited to the real estate of the museum. In a society, where we are confronted with numerous education and entertainments programs and the adolescent target group attempts an open discourse in all kinds of social networks and blogs, needs a museum to seek the discourse beyond its own walls - not only virtually, but also actually.

Under the term outreach experts summarize the work of a museum work that occurs beyond the walls of the museum. Today for museums outreach is much more a tool to take on their social responsibility and fulfill their educational goals. However outreach is always positioned «somewhere in between marketing and learning [3].

It seems today that there is no clear definition of the term outreach. Outreach programs vary from suitcase- sized desktop solutions, to room-filling installation, roadshows or trains. Virtual museums are named outreach as well as cases for loan to both pupils and teachers with sculptural exhibits and educational materials.

The methods vary from theater and story-telling to art workshops, guided peer to peer teaching and handicraft training (practical sessions to explore ones skills). Therefore every educational work a museum is executing away from its immobile institution is part of its outreach program.

One cannot deny that outreach work is in some kind meant to let people visit these museums sometimes after they were involved in its outreach program. The UCL sees outreach as a „correction of marketing failure in museums“ as a widening of connecting points with a group of people that might still see museums as a place where people with white gloves touch ex-pensive artifacts, more exclusionary and not as a part of their world.

To reach that part of society, which does not feel attracted by museums and its educational programs very likely is probably the biggest achievement of outreach today.

In the end one should not forget that the museum itself evolves as an integral part of our society which is also characterized by its increasing numbers of immigrants. Therefore, it is inevitable to maintain a permanent dialog between cultures.

Technology and Multimedia

One cannot deny that original museum exhibits are surrounded by a particular aura, whether it is a replica or an illustration, a photo or a film. The inventory of a museum and its exhibitions cannot be taken on tour easily. Uncertainties of transport, light, moisture, heat and very importantly reduced safety standards do reject most specimens to travel. What first sounds like a disadvantage can be turned into an advantage: What matters are the stories, the biographies behind the objects. They are the ones people tend to reflect. Even very simple everyday objects can hold the key to a fascinating story about what has happened to it in the past.

With this in mind, one can note that particularly Outreach-Programs lead to a shift of the classic tasks of a museum to the mediation of the content for the visitor. Multimedia technology can demonstrate new and unusual ways of mediation of museum content.

Small segments, animation, reduction and enlargement can demonstrate the originals in a smart and clever way and most importantly bring added value. The list of techniques is long and stretches out to different kinds of technical devices, such as apple iPads, sensor technolo - gies as i.e. RFID, localization via NFC or large-scale geocaching activities. Webpages, blogs and social networks are integrated to the same degree. Later in this paper examples will be shown.

On.tour — The Jewish Museum Berlin Tours Schools

With its outreach program *on.tour* the Jewish Museum Berlin visits numerous schools all over Germany. The concept combines a highly mobile exhibition with digital media and interactive tools and practical workshops. This EU co-financed project was developed by the Hochschule für Technik und Wirtschaft Berlin / University of Applied Sciences and the Jewish Museum Berlin. In a most different team of museum educators, Jewish studies scholars, computer scientists, multimedia designers and exhibition designers a program was developed which introduces pupils to German-Jewish history, while delivering knowledge about religion, immigration and the question for the own identity.

Experienced museum educators accompany the pupils through the exhibition and enter in an active dialog with them, while offering a variety of references to their own life.

The innovative mobile exhibition system form-id serves this purpose with a modular and highly adaptable platform for a hands-on explorative knowledge transfer. The simple and playful construction principle paired with the aesthetics of packaging and stapling is in the focus of the design concept. Thus, mobility is essential and more than a requirement. The actual unpacking of the objects is a part of the practical mediation and is done by the visitors them-selves. The system consist of only two major elements (L-Module and Cubic-Modul) which can stacked together in endless variations to create exhibition space.

Furthermore innovative graphics lead through the exhibition and interact with multimedia

applications and informative media stations.

The exhibition usually is setup every day in another venue (fig. 1). This can happen indoor or outdoor and installing and de-installing usually takes only one hour. Due to its consequent mobility even every interactive device in the exhibition is powered by batteries. The whole exhibition is stored and transported in a cargo-van (fig. 2).

Some modules are equipped with innovative technology, which allows the visitor in a playful and intuitive manner an interactive study of the Jewish traditions and lifestyles.



Fig. 1. Installed exhibition on a schoolyard

Many exhibits are marked with interactive object label, which can be read by a special scanner station. Simply placing an exhibit (marked with an RFID transponder, 125 Hz) on the active surface and the corresponding content is detected. An Arduino microcontroller manages the readout of the ID and transmits the information via Bluetooth to an iPad which shows additional content according to the detected object. Thereby real objects are enriched to a variety of additional information.



Fig. 2. Interactive diaries (a), interactive cinema sequences (b) and *on.tour*: ready for the next venue (c)

Central elements of the knowledge transfer are interactive diaries of young people who have been specially designed and implemented on iPads. By using small games, cinematic sequences from interviews and interactive features, the students explore the personal stories of six different Jewish youth their own age.

The intuitive operation via touch screen as well as puzzles and quizzes allow easy, playful approach. Technically the six iPad applications are based on the open source software Cocos2D.

Glasgow Open Museum

Different but not less outstanding, the Glasgow Open Museum is an example for outreach of cultural institutions nowadays. The idea behind the museum is taking the ordinary exhibition beyond the museum walls and out into the community. This can be several kinds of collections as well as participatory art workshops, which will be exemplified later on. The Open Museum takes its exhibitions to communities, different venues and groups of all kinds. It is a free service, open to

everyone, underlined by the British idea that art and art as a part of education should be free of charge, as they are an indispensable part of societal life.

The museum offers for instance a broad collection of handling kits, which look alike tool boxes of scientists, inventors and explorers. The design is at the same time overwhelmingly accurate in every detail as well as it is heartwarmingly infantile. All these exhibitions are on loan. Another possibility of cooperation with the museum is the contribution of an idea or a field of interest. The interested recipient may decide what the display is about and what it goes into as well as what it wants to say. The museum offers competent support for the realization of new exhibitions.

Recent works include an “Alternative Guide to Glasgow”, an art project, which aims to in-form visitors to and inhabitants of Glasgow about new perspectives to the Scottish town. The work, done by long-term prisoners in Scotland. This project resulted in a tourist style-map with a twist, which are actually accessible in tourist offices, museums, libraries and community houses. There are a great deal of other project, worth mentioning, however due to the limited scope of this paper, our view should now turn to a German project named Weimarpedia.

Weimarpedia

This project, financed by the German ministry for education and research [4], serves a smart and novel toolkit to school classes. Weimar, well known for the period of Classicism, stands in the focus of the project. Pupils may explore the different aspects that characterize this era, such as poetry, music and architecture from a very creative point of view. It also includes a participatory aspect, since the pupils release their findings on the weimarpedia website. In short the project offers pupils to elaborate on particular topics by using archives on netbooks which are made available as well as doing research in the city. Children learn to be explorers and historians and have the chance to participate discourses by developing audio plays, short cartoons and collages.

Conclusion

This article refers to the authors engagement in the project *on.tour* Das Jüdische Museum Berlin macht Schule. It shows the necessity of forward-looking educational work of museums, which means often but not exclusively museums outreach programs to reach a vast range of different people independently of their social and cultural background. As a museum mirrors only the society the technical progress is at any time immanent in knowledge-transfer and the learning process and offers a great possibility to enlarge the capacity of any educational program.

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