

Report from the Culture24
Action Research Project

LET'S
GET
REAL

'How to Evaluate **Online Success?**'

by: Jane Finnis, Sebastian Chan and Rachel Clements

A personal foreword from Jane Finnis

The publication of this report couldn't be more timely, with cuts across all areas of our cultural life and affecting almost every museum, gallery, arts organisation, library, local authority and government department.

During the past ten years millions of pounds have been spent on digital activities in the cultural sector – websites, databases, content management systems, campaigns, digitisation, archiving, editorial, documentation and more.

As a sector, we now have a fabulously rich online set of data at our disposal and a seriously talented set of professionals eager to engage the public (in all its different forms) with that content.

But with less money it is more important than ever that investments are made wisely. This doesn't mean that we won't make mistakes, get things wrong or even fail.

It means that we should invest our time, energy and cash based on an honest evaluation of what works well and commit fully to learning from our mistakes so that we can get better.

My hope is that the publication of this report will kick-start a dramatic shift in the way we plan, invest and collaborate on the development of both the current and next generation of digital cultural activities. The newly enhanced responsibilities of the Arts Council and the availability of Lottery spending offer very practical opportunities to ensure that as a sector we are able to make this change.

The evidence so far is that we are only small players in the online world. Can we change this? I believe so.

It is time to get real.

Jane Finnis
Action Research Project Lead
Chief Executive, Culture24

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Introduction



Developing effective ways to define, measure and evaluate the success of online activities is an issue faced by all parts of the cultural sector. Organisations regularly invest in cultural websites, social media activities and online services without a clear idea of what the services are trying to achieve, or their intended audience.

cultural venues, five agencies and a university. The budget for the project was only £29,000, but it was made possible by the willingness and enthusiasm of the project team and the participants to share data, experience and resources openly in order to improve the effectiveness of their digital output.

be measured. The report looks mainly at the social media platforms of Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. These platforms were chosen because they currently dominate the social space, but it does not mean that other channels are not relevant or should be ignored.

While cultural managers are increasingly interested in showing evidence of online success, funding agencies and government departments currently lack the expertise to offer guidelines or set standards for measurement. For many organisations this results in a confusing mixture of statistics and reporting which is time-consuming to provide and reveals little about online user behaviour, engagement and satisfaction.

The results of this project should be looked at in the spirit in which the project was undertaken – open, questioning and aspirational. They offer an insight into the place where many of the UK’s leading cultural organisations currently are when it comes to understanding and making use of the data that they collect from their online activities.

The real insights lie not in which tools or platforms this report evaluates, but in the shift in thinking that needs to happen at a deep level within every cultural organisation. The lessons can be found through careful analysis of the data against each organisation’s primary objectives.

This report is the outcome of a year-long Action Research Project to address these issues, co-ordinated and led by Culture24 and actively involving 17 different UK

The report focuses on tools such as Google Analytics, Hitwise, Klout and Twitterific. These tools were chosen for their ease of use, and do not represent a black and white definitive picture of how things should

This report provides an insight into the way cultural organisations go about trying to measure the success of their business online and challenges any assumption that simply counting total visitor numbers or ‘likes’ really tells us anything meaningful at all.



“It’s mostly how we’ve applied the experience-to-date with how we work strategically - I feel we’re in a better position to report back, benchmark and compare our data...”
National Museums Scotland

“It has provided concrete evidence that the changes we’re making to the way in which we report our metrics internally and to external stakeholders are in line with the rest of the sector” National Maritime Museum



Key findings

We are overloaded with things that we are now able to measure online. However, none of these are useful without a focus that highlights what ‘success’ and ‘effectiveness’ online mean for the cultural sector. The outcomes of this project have a number of implications for the sector as a whole.

We need to segment our online audiences as we would for any exhibition, performance or workshop, remembering that our digital strategy should not be separate from our overall mission, but rather a tactical strategy, which sets goals, measurements and investment. This tactical strategy should serve to fulfil the overall mission in direct ways for different audiences, be they learners, tourists, artists, seekers or shoppers.

However, despite this, search is still the single most important source of visits to most organisations’ websites.

Be clear ‘what’ you are trying to do online and ‘who’ it is for

It is not enough to see the web as a global machine, reaching out to everyone. Vast quantities of information are now available on everything, necessitating filtering, sorting and curating. As a result, the smart players in the online world are getting more local, more specialised and more niche. Unless each cultural organisation can say exactly what they are trying to do and specifically who their product or service is designed for, how will they know if it has worked or how to measure it?

Focus your online investment

The web has been shifting from an information medium to a communication medium and social media is now dominating the time that users spend online. The way that online visitors find organisations’ websites, and the way that they interact with them, has therefore shifted.

The arrival of mobile platforms has accelerated many online behavioural changes. Mobile is growing many times faster than social media traffic, but the majority of cultural websites are not yet optimised for mobile platforms.

The implications of this for the sector are that if we wish to develop our audiences we need to change the focus of our investment in our online platforms; invest in SEO (Search Engine Optimisation) first, then mobile versions of websites and then social media. This shift is particularly important in the current environment of restricted funding.



Recognise the value, and the limits, of social media.

Social media should be integrated with the wider strategy for the web and the organisation as a whole. If the value of social media is solely reported quantitatively - either through crude measures of reach, or referred traffic to the website - there is a high risk of the investment being seen as ineffectual in the medium term.

Social media needs to be far more tactical, even at the overall brand level. It is worth asking what the value of social media really

is to you? Is it about brand recognition more than anything else? Do you have wider objectives about audience development, learning and two-way communication with audiences, not just marketing?

Remember that at the moment, in general, social media platforms have a negligible effect on traffic to organisational websites. This may be a sign of low engagement with your content or it may be that people are choosing to engage with you in that channel and do not want to visit your website. It is clear that most of the activity within social networks stays 'in' the network and can

often happen in private channels, without you having to be there at all. Tracking this is difficult and is also impossible to control, which can be viewed as a challenge for instructional authority.

Social media engagement isn't about spending money; it's about what you do and say. It's about having the right content in the right channels to engage the right audience in the right way. This can mean big opportunities for institutions with limited resources if they can get this right.



"We have just taken the first major step in unifying our work under the Watershed 'brand' and a more strategic approach to web and social media metrics is essential in assessing progress towards more engaged relationships both on and off line" Watershed

"It will have a much more significant impact as I use the knowledge gained to better define our goals and success measures going forward in the Gallery's new digital strategy. I then fully expect to use the data gathered to report back to both the Exec and Trustees to show our progress. I also expect to work with other teams within the Gallery earlier on in their planning process to ensure that we have identified the success criteria and our methods of measuring these before deployment" National Gallery



Question whether the web is enabling you to reach new audiences

In order to create a more joined-up approach to audiences, we need to connect our online audiences with our offline audiences, and implement audience segmentation models into online analytics tools. This means rethinking the purpose and role of our 'brand' websites and the separation between that and dedicated microsites or online projects such as games for children, projects for teenagers and so on.

One of the closely held assumptions about cultural engagement online has been that it allows us to reach out to new audiences and extend the reach of public programmes beyond those who traditionally engage with the arts. The online Mosaic profiling exercise that was undertaken in partnership with Experian Hitwise challenges these assumptions and raises the question of whether we are actually reaching new audience segments online, or just engaging with a larger number of the same type of people.

Whether this is the case for social media as well requires more investigation, although anecdotally it would seem that there is a high correlation between website visitors and Facebook fans. This should not be surprising given the social capital and identity formation being created and played out on public platforms such as Facebook.

The data suggests that the cultural sector needs to more effectively market its online offerings in order to grow usage beyond traditional audience segments. An opportunity exists here for organisations to more effectively engage UK residents who are not currently using their websites, in much the same way that non-visiting and under-represented communities are targeted by specific campaigns for offline education and public programmes.

Standardise methods of reporting online metrics to external stakeholders

The guidelines outlined by the Central Office of Information (COI) require that museums and arts organisations which receive funding from the UK Government must report data annually on website usage.

The following metrics are reported, with the aim of enabling organisations to define web-based key performance indicators (KPIs): unique browsers, page impressions, visits and visit durations. COI guidelines require the use of an ABCe 2-star accredited¹ analytics tool for this reporting. However, Google Analytics is not a 2-star accredited product, as Google does not release the supporting data. The reporting of unfiltered log file data from web servers is therefore recommended for those organisations that use Google Analytics as their primary analytics software.

There are a number of problems with this method of reporting – in particular, the use of log files which are frequently associated with inflated web usage figures due to the inability to filter out search engine spiders and robots. Discussion within the project group highlighted the fact that, among partner organisations, there was a split among organisations that report data to government using Google Analytics and those that use log file data. Furthermore, the question must be raised as to how useful the reported metrics are for gauging success across organisations, particularly since they do not capture information about the social web and online activity relating to an organisation that occurs outside of that organisation's main website.



¹ See <http://bit.ly/pHyXBU> for details

Part 1: Project background

Between 2003 and 2008 Culture24 carried out a series of comparative surveys of web statistics across a range of UK cultural websites² and assisted in the co-ordination of two international surveys of cultural portals³ around the world.

The results of this work highlighted the lack of clarity within the sector about how best to measure the behaviour of online audiences, what information to collect, and how to analyse and interpret the results. There was also inconsistency in the use of tools, with different organisations counting and reporting different things, and using different systems to record results.

The findings and clear gaps in sector knowledge led Culture24 to consider ideas for further research work. The years of 2008 and 2009 also saw the widespread take-up within the online publishing world of Google Analytics as a free web analytics tool.

An idea began to form for a more in-depth project, and Culture24 posted a message in August 2009, to the UK Museums Computer Group (MCG) e-mail list⁴, inviting MCG

members to come forward if they were interested to "explore methodologies for evaluation of online performance - not just web stats but social media activity, data sharing, content creation etc."

Several organisations responded and were invited to an initial exploratory meeting at the Dana Centre on October 5th 2009. Culture24 also sought out other key organisations working in research and policy to attend.⁵

There was widespread consensus at the meeting on a range of shared problems and an appetite to share information, learning and mistakes.

The key issues raised were as follows:

- No official agreement on which tools or software to use
- Limited knowledge of how best to use those tools that are available (such as Google Analytics)

- Lack of understanding about what can easily be tracked via online activities
- Knowledge gap in awareness of changing online user behaviour
- Confusion about how to evaluate success within social media networks
- Funding agencies and government departments lack the expertise to offer guidelines or set standards
- A confusing mixture of statistics and reporting that reveals little about genuine user satisfaction

Culture24 proposed its idea for a research project that was welcomed on the condition that the work undertaken stayed grounded, practical and real. A small group of national and regional museums and galleries including Tate, British Museum, National Maritime Museum (NMM), Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery (BMAG), Science Museum and Kew committed to the project and were the first early adopters.

The results of this work highlighted the lack of clarity within the sector about how best to measure the behaviour of online audiences...

Initially, interest from both the Museums, Libraries and Archive Council (MLA) and Arts Council of England (ACE) was small, so Culture24 proposed a collaborative funding model where each early adopter would commit a fee of £1,000, with the hope that enough partners would contribute enough money for the project to go ahead.

Further organisations signed up following a short presentation at a Department of Culture Media and Sport meeting in March 2010 hosted by then Culture Secretary Margaret Hodge, to launch their report, Encouraging Digital Access to Culture⁶, authored by Jon Drori. The project seemed

to resonate with the audience and with the themes of the day, and four more venues committed to the project on the spot (Watershed, Royal Shakespeare Company, Roundhouse and National Portrait Gallery). The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) acknowledged the value of the project as a funder and made a financial contribution.

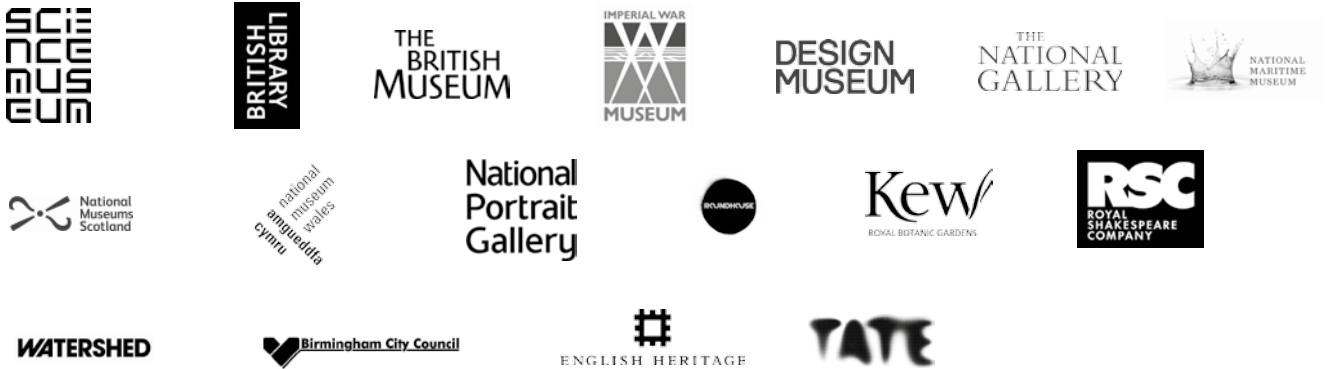
During the following few months, several further organisations approached Culture24 through word of mouth and asked to join the project (British Library, English Heritage⁷, National Gallery, National Museums Scotland, National Museum Wales, Imperial War Museum, Design Museum). It was

at this stage that Culture24 returned (again) to ACE, who agreed to contribute £4,000. Culture24 also approached the DCMS directly, and they agreed to contribute £5,000. The MLA did not contribute any additional funding to this project, as they felt their core support to Culture24 was sufficient.

By September 2010 a total of 17⁸ cultural venues from around the UK had volunteered to take part in the project, representing a variety of different types of cultural organisations including museums, galleries, performing arts venues and heritage organisations.



Partner logos



Beyond this project: A relationship with University of Leicester

Professor Ross Parry at the University of Leicester was working on a new Scholarship in Digital Heritage. Part of this programme was a PhD scholarship that would be offered to support candidates aiming to investigate museums' online performance and approaches for measuring the value and impact of online digital culture. Ross approached Culture24 to explore potential collaboration and it was agreed that the student would be given the opportunity to participate in the project and for the findings to form part of their PhD work where appropriate.

The successful PhD candidate is Elena Villaespesa whose research, based on business evaluation models and taking into account the complexity of the Social Web and the particularities of the museum sector, aims to define a balanced evaluation model to measure the performance of museum activities on the Social Web.



Beyond this project: A relationship with NESTA

The subject matter of this project was of interest to Hasan Bakhshi, the Director of Creative Industries, Policy and Research at NESTA. There were clear links with their own programme of work on the Culture of Innovation⁹.

As such, it was agreed that although NESTA would not contribute financially to the project, there was potential beyond this initial phase to further explore the results findings. Members of NESTA staff were invited to attend the face-to-face meetings and had access to monitor project progress via Basecamp.



² See resources on WeAreCulture24 site <http://bit.ly/p0lwBK>
³ See <http://www.culturemondo.org/documents/surveys> for more information.
⁴ JISC archive: <http://bit.ly/p4Zi5X>
⁵ See appendix 1 for list of those who attended.
⁶ Download report: <http://bit.ly/pMe1B7>
⁷ Relates to the English Heritage National Monuments Record website
⁸ See appendix 2 for full list of project partners and URLs
⁹ Download report: <http://bit.ly/ndSSzz>

Part 2:

Project brief – agreed September 2010



The full project brief can be read here: <http://bit.ly/qNIFi3>

Aim of the research: Culture24 wishes to help the sector to improve the way that online cultural activities are evaluated so that we can better understand online user behaviour and hence improve the quality and reach of all of the sector's online services

The project will seek in particular to:

- Explore what common ground there might be between organisations in trying to evaluate online activity
- Benchmark current activity across the sector in such a way that any future changes can be clearly identified and mapped
- Consider what lessons can be learned that might help to shape some advice or recommendations for the wider sector
- Highlight examples of good practice, begin to define what they mean and how they can inform good practice
- Make recommendations for software and configuration standards
- Help to define a better understanding of audience behaviour online
- Create, test and publish simple guidelines for organisations
- Help organisations with the process of clearly defining their target audiences
- Improve understanding of user segmentation

The project will seek to generate practical outcomes that will inform the sector as a whole and help it to improve its working practices

Part 3: Project approach

The project approach emphasised the importance of all project partners collaborating with Culture24 from the outset to share experiences, knowledge and resources across different organisations and to jointly shape the direction of the research.

The format of the project and the nature of the project outcomes have therefore been directly informed by the input and ideas of the project group.

The participant organisations met four times as a group during the duration of the project, and these meetings were key in providing a platform for shared learning and reflection.

They also ensured a genuinely collaborative approach to the project, with each partner able to express their thoughts, feedback or concerns to the group.

The meetings took the format of a one-day facilitated workshop, and each had a specific focus (see appendix 3 for full details).

In between face-to-face meetings, an online project collaboration tool called Basecamp was used as an online tool to communicate with partners, present research findings and coordinate input from the group.

Between July 2010 and September 2011, Basecamp saw activity as follows:

- 53 registered people (37 from partner venues, 11 observers and 8 Culture24 staff)
- 47 shared files
- 51 messages
- 63 comments

Part 4: Project scope and priorities

The project scope and priorities were defined following the first meeting, with further input from project participants during the second group meeting. They highlighted a number of high-level needs within the sector:

- Discuss how the sector should define online success
- Share information about the performance of peer organisations online, to enable benchmarking
- Gain understanding of online cultural audiences and their behaviour
- Combine qualitative and quantitative stats about online users, to build a richer picture of online behaviour

- Set up key segments for online users that could enable cross-organisational benchmarking of factors such as brand loyalty

- Create a standard recommendation of how to record web and social media statistics accurately and effectively, in order to create equivalence in cross-sector data

- Create common dashboards/frameworks for measurement

- Measure quality or value, rather than just "usage" online

- Keep reporting simple

- Compare online success within the cultural sector with that of other industries

- Consider return on investment (ROI) in the context of online success: time and resources dedicated compared to actual achievements

The use of several different types of metrics for online behaviour were discussed:

- Site-based user metrics to improve user experience and identify potential new user types

- Internet service provider (ISP) level metrics to find comparative data and spot macro trends

- Social metrics to identify social content issues and to understand users better.

Following group discussion, two main priorities were agreed as follows:

Priority 1: Online analytics

(Lead: Seb Chan, Head of Digital, Social and Emerging Technologies, Powerhouse Museum)

Focus:

Cultural organisations are increasingly using the same set of quantitative web analytics tools to report figures to their boards and funders. However, organisations face a lack of in-house technical expertise for the use of these tools. This is a problem both for the initial set up and configuration, and for ongoing management and maintenance as the tools themselves, and the business needs of the organisation, change.



(c) JJ Halans 2010

Key tasks:

- Perform a Google Analytics “health check” for all sites to determine the correct set-up and site structure for optimum tracking and analysis
- Send recommended Google Analytics fixes to organisations
- Create a series of sharable user “segments” within Google Analytics that break down visitor and onsite activity
- Collate comparative data by analysing visitor and onsite activity through the various segments, for each partner organisation
- Review evidence for common trends/patterns across all site and segments
- Create a common dashboard, sharing analytics info between organisations.

Key questions:

- What are you trying to do?
- Who are you trying to reach? Be precise
- How will you know you have been successful?
- What methods best measure this success?
- Can you find comparative data?
- What insights are you gaining? (Does success equate with visitor satisfaction?)

Priority 2: Social media

(Lead: Rachel Clements, MA student, Innovation Management, Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design)

Focus:

Cultural organisations need to be more proactive in setting up meaningful measurement frameworks for social media, in order to demonstrate the quality and value of social media interactions with cultural audiences. Benchmarking data is required, in order to compare social media performance across organisations with similar audiences or missions.



Key tasks:

- Mapping and benchmarking social media activities across all partner organisation
- Documenting the resources and time invested in social media by all partner organisations
- Reviewing and analysing the social media strategies and objectives for all partner organisations
- Creating a shared toolkit for social media measurement across the sector

Note: Other future potential areas of research

A third issue was also identified by the project group, concerning those organisations sharing data outside of their own sites to other partner sites or services (e.g. RSS and API). A need for better understanding and methodology for setting success criteria in this area was acknowledged, including:

- Need to define this area of work clearly
- Need for policy on data sharing
- Need for clarity on use of data in other systems
- Common tracking systems
- Strategies to monitor and track usage of automated data sharing systems

Within the group this was felt to be of a lower priority and should not be included within this project. It was felt it could be revisited in a separate project at a later stage.

Part 5: Online analytics: methodology and results

Methodology

Stage One: Online analytics health checks

The web analytics systems used by the participating organisations varied. While most of the organisations used Google Analytics (GA), this was not always being used for official reporting and was being maintained in parallel to log-based systems.

A few of the organisations were still reporting externally to funders using log files software (such as WebTrends) despite their known inconsistencies. This reluctance to switch to a different reporting system may be because in doing so, the organisation needs to negotiate a drop in overall counted traffic of between 40% to 50%.

Of the project partners:

- Two institutions used Urchin¹⁰ on their own servers instead of GA (Watershed and NPG)

- One institution only began using GA just before the third measurement period (British Library)

- One institution was using GA but did not have full access to their account, as the site was outsourced to a third party (BMAG)

- One institution chose not to share GA access (English Heritage, National Monuments Record)

In November 2010, each of the participating organisations (who were able) provided access to their web analytics accounts and a 'health check' was undertaken on each account's installation and basic configuration in Google Analytics.

The aim of this exercise was both to assess the general web analytics competence of each organisation and to ascertain the degree of compatibility between the quantitative data reported by each organisation.

Following the health check, changes were made to bring each account in line with web analytics good practice before data collection began. Overall, all but three institutions were able to have data collected in Google Analytics and compared across all three analysis periods (Oct-Dec 2008, Oct-Dec 2009, Oct-Dec 2010). See appendix 4 for November 2010 dataset.

The focus of this strand of the research was only on the organisations' brand websites and does not include any of the specialist exhibition sites, temporary sites or branch websites. A full list of the URLs, plus a screenshot of these brand sites are shown in appendix 2. It had been hoped that data collection could be done by each individual institution, but given the wide variance in setup and internal skill levels, the collection was done externally and then shared on Basecamp for verification and discussion. Internal traffic was segmented out at the report level as a result of the lack of top level filtering.¹¹

"Our web stats package was not compliant with the research being carried out, so it hasn't shed as much light on our organisation's performance as I would have liked, but the meeting I attended has still been very useful to meet peers and discuss common challenges etc."
National Portrait Gallery

"The limitations caused by the current set up of Google Analytics for the BMAG site was particularly frustrating for me, but at least I can try things out on other BMAG websites where this isn't an issue. It will all be a great help to me in future planning."
Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery

Stage Two: User segments and comparative data collection

A series of simple custom user segments were shared with the group and then used to collect data for the fourth quarters of 2008, 2009, and 2010:

- Internal visits (collected to identify and exclude internal traffic)
- Global visits
- UK visits
- Institutional home city visits¹²
- Organic search visits
- Paid search visits
- All social media referred visits
- Facebook referred visits

- Flickr referred visits
- Wikipedia referred visits

Mobile data was only collected for the fourth quarter of 2010 because of the improved mobile tracking features in Google Analytics released in 2010.

Following this initial data collection, advanced user segments were set up in April 2011 for organisations to capture brand visits (highly focused users who have targeted their online activity towards finding the organisation directly) and collections

visits (users who are directly searching for the organisation's collections) for cross-organisational comparison.

The base-level data generated allowed for cross-institutional comparisons to be made, and the social media-related quantitative data was correlated with the specific social media research undertaken in the project.

Both the Basic and Advanced User Segments have been shared here: <http://bit.ly/p0lwBK>

¹⁰ <http://www.google.com/urchin/>

¹¹ NMM were unable to do this as their internal web traffic is sent via a proxy that has several ranges of IP addresses that are dynamically assigned and change on a really regular basis.

¹² For multi-location institutions this was taken to be their major home city. For NMM and NMS local 'city' represents Welsh and Scottish traffic only.

Issues

There are a number of inconsistencies in Google Analytics, especially when using custom segments and custom reports. The worst of these are variances in visit counts between report types – however, by using the same user segments, the effect of these across institutions is at least consistent.

For counting Twitter, the project used referral traffic from Twitter.com as part of an overall social media filter as well as referrals from popular URL shorteners, even though this is known not to contain traffic coming via Twitter apps (primary way Twitter is used

on mobiles and also for some desktop power users).

Despite this, the overall social media data suggests that even taking this into account the overall patterns and trends are reliable.

FUTURE TREND:

Mobile traffic was, for every institution, growing rapidly and by July 2011 all project partners had reported growth well beyond the Q4 2010 results.

The Roundhouse was reporting that mobile traffic had nearly reached 15% of their total now – double that of the Q4 2010 period.

FUTURE TREND:

FUTURE TREND The automated shortening of all URLs in Twitter to the t.co pattern in August 2011 now will allow for much better reporting for actual Twitter-based traffic. See here for more info: <http://tnw.co/rrljMx>

“The project has given me better understanding of the analytical tools available, introducing new methods of measuring and providing me with clearer ideas on what we should be reporting.

It has also given me confidence to discuss how we can be more consistent in measuring our performance with peers in Wales.”
National Museums Wales

Results: Health check

Underscoring the difficulty of comparative analytics even with the same tools in use, configurations amongst the different organisations varied widely and only one institution had set Google Analytics up in a way consistent with the tool’s own documentation (current as of Dec 2010). In general, the Google Analytics set up for partner organisations reflected both the low level of analytics expertise in the sector and the sporadic updating of their setups.

The majority of participants had not taken the following basic steps when setting up their analytics accounts:

- Successfully segmented their internal traffic
- Set up filters to remove case-sensitivity on URLs
- Integrated regimented campaign tagging in their e-mail and other online marketing activities
- Set up effective methods of tracking views and downloads of non-HTML pages, such as PDFs.

- Understanding the way in which Google Analytics calculates time on site and taking this into account in reporting practices.

Furthermore, very minimal use of Google Analytics data was observed beyond basic reporting. This was highlighted by the fact that few organisations had set up ‘goals’¹³ in Analytics, and very few had integrated web activities such as ecommerce purchases even when they had an online shop component.

The use of goals has often been challenging for the cultural sector, since their use has traditionally been associated with ecommerce and revenue generation. However, it’s possible to use goals for a cultural website if we make the assumption that the completion of a goal carries a certain value, without necessarily needing to quantify that value directly in terms of revenue.

One of the early outcomes of the health check and data collection exercise was setting up a session for project partners with a representative from Google.

During this session the group discussed the design and use of goals in Google Analytics for more advanced behavioural reporting.

The health check resulted in a series of very basic recommendations for Google Analytics setup in the form of a checklist which each of the organisations went on to implement.

Segmenting internal visits to websites from each organisation’s own staff or domain was particularly relevant to those institutions with large number of staff, such as the British Museum, who generated 1% of visits to their own site from internal visits in 2010. The British Library generated 7% of visits internally due to internal access to their own site via their public reading room¹⁴. By segmenting this traffic they can look at different behaviour patterns or content preferences for the different on-site members of the public or staff.

FUTURE TRENDS:

Since the project completion several organisations have now set up GA goals. These include Tate and Roundhouse.

Tate
GOAL 1: Ecommerce goals - Membership (new, gift, renew); Membership donations; Exhibition and events tickets; Shop sales; Donations; Magazine subscriptions; Become a patron; Online courses.

GOAL 2: Non ecommerce goals - Email subscription; Downloads (e.g. education packs); RSS subscriptions.

GOAL 3: Content and social features; New user account; User comments > x number of pages visited in specific sections (eg. Collection).

Roundhouse
GOAL 1: Ticket sales - A URL destination goal that tracks visitors through the purchase path until they reach the payment success page.

GOAL 2: Monitoring users who browse our site viewing 5 or more pages in one visit.

GOAL 3: Sign ups to mailing list.

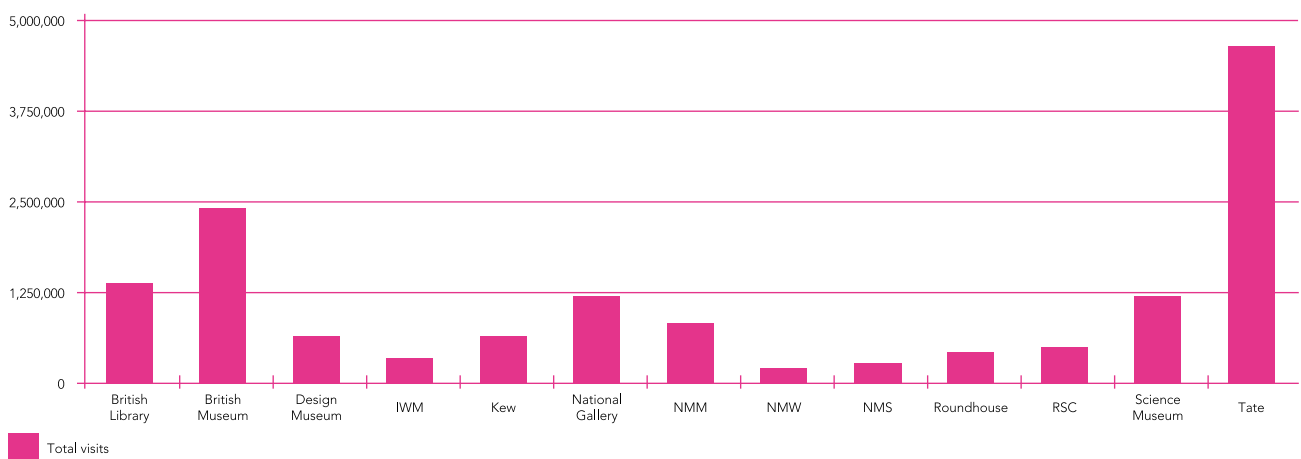
Data capture: results from the 2008-2010 quantitative data.

For the fourth quarter of 2010, the number of overall web visits ranged from 200,000 to 4,600,000 for partner organisations. Unsurprisingly, the biggest national brands

such as Tate and British Museum were at the higher end of this scale, while the smaller national or subject-specific organisations such as National Museum Wales and National Museums Scotland were at the lower end (see fig. 1).

Figures shown do not include those partners who were not using GA or were not able to provide access to their accounts.

Fig. 1 Overall web visits for the fourth quarter of 2010



Web visitors were segmented by their location and split down into international visitors, national visitors and visitors from the organisation's local city (see fig. 2).

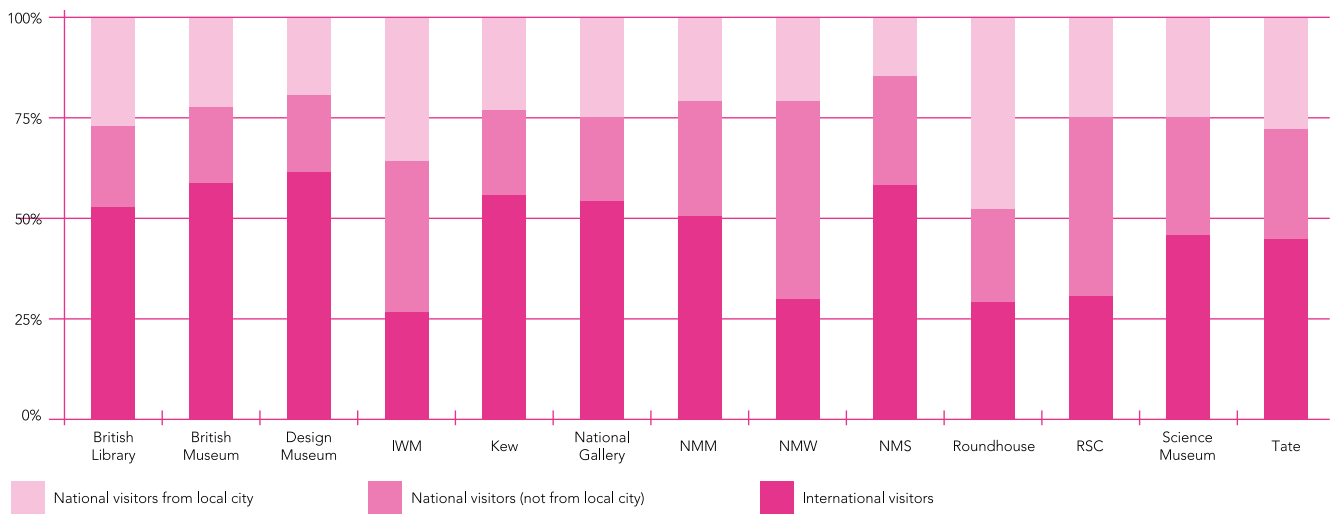
This analysis showed that the Design Museum and British Museum had the highest percentage of international traffic during the fourth quarter of 2010, at 61%

and 55% respectively, while the Roundhouse and the Imperial War Museum had the highest percentage of local city traffic (the local city being London in both cases), at 48% and 36% percent respectively.

¹³ See <http://bit.ly/qdmtto> for all about analytics talk

¹⁴ Both figures are taken from GA statistics for the 4th Quarter of 2010

Fig. 2 Visitors for the fourth quarter of 2010, segmented by location

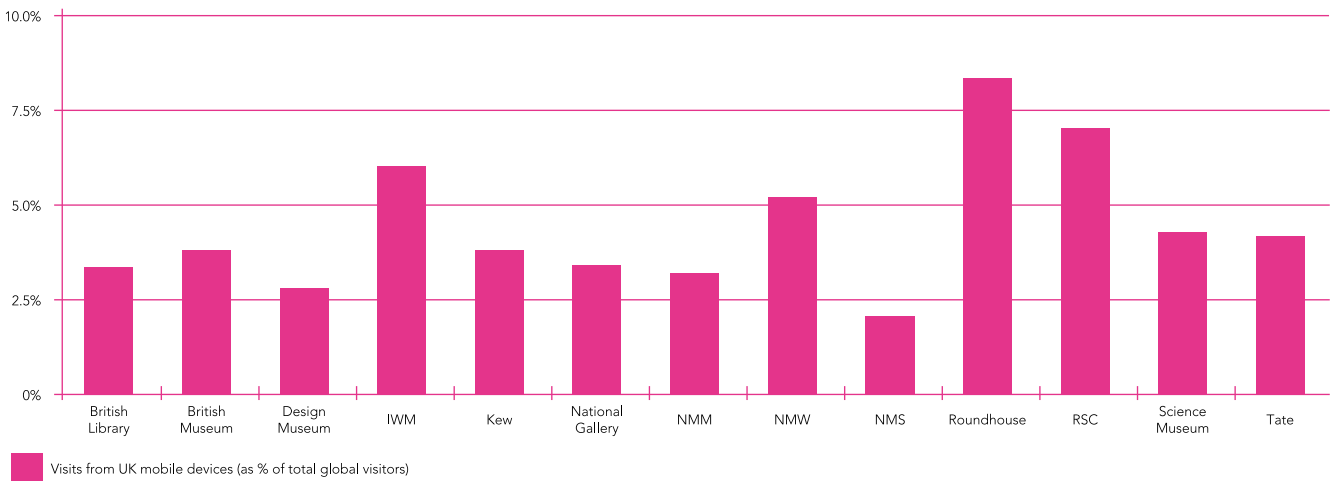


Segmentation was also carried out to determine the percentage of visits in the fourth quarter of 2010 which came from mobile devices (see fig. 3 below).

The Roundhouse and Royal Shakespeare Company (both performing arts companies) saw the highest percentages of UK mobile

traffic at 8% and 7% respectively. iOS was the dominant mobile platform in use, averaging 80% of total mobile traffic.

Fig. 3 Visits from UK mobile devices (as a percentage of total global visitors)

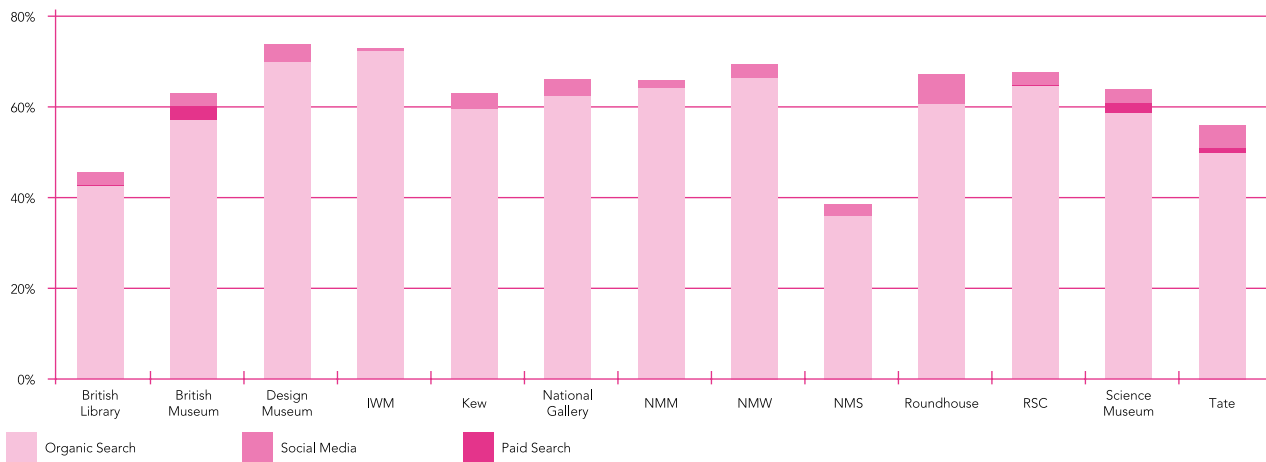


Web traffic was also analysed to determine the relative influence of different sources of web referrals (i.e. the websites from which a web user was directed to an organisation's website). The results (see fig. 4 below) showed that organic search remained the dominant referring traffic source for

all organisations, averaging 58% of all referrals across all organisations. Paid search, by contrast, was found to drive very low visitor numbers, with an average of only 0.6% across all organisations.

The social media segment as a whole also averaged very low referral rates, with an average of only 3% across all organisations. This segment aggregated traffic from URL shorteners as well as the main platforms (Facebook, Twitter and Flickr) and included Wikipedia.

Fig. 4 Visitors from different sources of web referrals (as a percentage of all visits) for the fourth quarter of 2010



Analysis

The participating institutions had quite different web traffic. Some were far more local in users than others and the segmentation revealed a level of detail otherwise obscured by global numbers.

Despite considerable effort and resources being spent on social media projects, institutional websites saw quite low volumes of referral traffic from these sources. Unsurprisingly, organic search traffic was the primary way visitors found their way to these sites – a timely reminder of the importance of continual investment, or at least annual SEO health checks.

Additional segmentation at the individual institution level was added late in the project to capture the different behaviour of web visitors landing on sites with an assumed pre-awareness of the institution’s brand, and this was compared against long tail traffic.

While data for these comparisons is not being published, there is a strong case for the use of such segmentation in assisting institutional planning.

Mobile traffic to each website is growing rapidly across the board with a strong leaning towards iOS devices. In fact, mobile traffic is growing considerably faster than social media traffic sources combined, yet few organisations had dedicated mobile versions of their websites. As expected, sites with a greater event-focus - those in the performing arts - drew the highest proportions of mobile traffic.

Most importantly, the time spent looking through this data revealed far more insights in a short time than any top level reporting. These insights have value to internal web teams as much as institutional marketers and content creators.

The detail in the data should allow for much higher institutional intelligence to inform forward planning.

For many, there was an enormous value in simply being able to benchmark their output against other organisations and begin to understand what is big or what is small.

Once the Google Analytics configuration of different organisations has been set up correctly, comparative figures could in the future be automatically collected, updated and displayed using the Google Analytics API and a presentation/aggregator such as that used by the Museumstats.org project, originally developed by the Walker Art Center (details in Appendix 7). However, to be most useful and effective such a setup must ensure the use of geographic segmentation.



“[The project] has given me an opportunity to re-focus on our use of Google Analytics and to gain greater knowledge in how best to exploit this package...”

I expect the knowledge gained to directly impact on our planning and decision making going forward.” The National Gallery



“It has provided me with a better understanding of the data required to measure how well my organisation is performing online. It also provided me with helpful tools and knowledge to articulate how well or otherwise my organisation is performing to colleagues.”
Roundhouse

“I feel we’re in a better position to report back, benchmark and compare our data. Actual tangible impact is difficult to measure but it’s certainly made others more aware that this is an important nut to crack.”
National Museums Scotland



Part 6: Social media - methodology

Between October and December 2010, data on social media usage, strategy and investment was collected from each partner organisation, in order to build a holistic picture of each organisation's approach to social media.

The data collection process was split into two distinct stages:

Stage 1: Collect qualitative and quantitative data on social media usage and engagement.

The aim was to take a snapshot of the performance of all partners on each main social media platform at a specific point in

time, reviewing all partner organisations on the same day to ensure a fair comparison.

The decision was made to focus on the major social media channels only, and therefore data was collected from Twitter, Facebook and YouTube. These platforms were chosen based on an initial review that indicated that these are the most common platforms currently in use.

Blogs and Flickr were omitted from the initial study since their function and setup varies significantly between institutions, adding an extra layer of complexity to any comparison.

All partner organisations provided access to their main branded Twitter and Facebook accounts for a period of two months to facilitate data collection¹⁵. YouTube data was gathered via observation of each organisation's account, without access to the partner's YouTube accounts themselves.

The full list of quantitative data collected is shown in fig. 5 below. For each channel, qualitative information was also gathered on the tone of content (positive or negative) and the general 'feel' of the site.



Fig. 5: Quantitative data collected in stage 1 of social media research for further review and discussion.

General Information	List of social media channels that each organisation uses Strategy for linking to social media from the main website Size of the organisation (based on number of physical visits)
Twitter	Number of followers Number of mentions Number and type of tweets Klout stats Tweetlevel stats
Facebook	Number of fans Growth rate in fans Fan demographics Amount of organisational content Amount of user-generated content Amount of content
YouTube	Number of viewers and subscribers Amount of user-generated content



Stage 2: Collect data from each of the partner organisations on their social media strategies and the resources they invest in social media.

Each of the partner organisations was asked to respond by email to a set of questions about its social media strategy, and also to provide copies of relevant documentation. Additionally, an online

survey was administered via SurveyMonkey to collect information about the resources each organisation invested in social media. The themes explored by the questionnaires are summarised below:

Strategy	Percentage of organisations that have a social media strategy Scope of strategies Success measures in relation to strategy Impact and effect of strategy
Investment	Staff investment in maintaining, updating and creating content Staff investment in monitoring and reviewing performance Direct costs of social media Software tools used Understanding of 'value' in relation to social media

Results were made available via email and Basecamp to each partner for checking and feedback.

The full dataset was then shared with all partner organisations on Basecamp, for further review and discussion.

Issues

One of the main issues faced was the limitation of the time period covered by each dataset, which covered only one week of social media conversations. Ideally the collection of data would have been repeated at regular intervals, but the time and resource constraints of collecting this data manually meant that this was not an option. Some channels were also only created recently and are still in development.

The group also experienced problems associated with the use of different tools for social media stats. For example, automated tools such as Klout and Tweetlevel are

associated with problems such as slow rates of data refresh on these platforms. However, it was felt that the inclusion of this data in cross-organisational benchmarking would result in a richer case study.

Sentiment analysis of user comments (tracking positive, negative and neutral comments from users) was performed manually. This method was chosen because there are acknowledged issues with many of the automated tools available, which find it difficult to put a word or phrase into context or to pick up the subtleties of human expression and speech. However, through performing a manual version

of this analysis, it was found that even with a human eye, pursuing this type of analysis on cultural websites seeking to encourage lively, rich debate on abstract topics can prove particularly challenging. For example, some comments recorded during the research as negative in tone were made in reference to a controversial piece of artwork that was being discussed on one organisation's social media channels. While the comments themselves were negative, the debate as a whole was lively, engaged, and reflected positively on the organisation. However these factors weren't reflected by the results of sentiment analysis.

Results

The results from the social media strand of this project provided important benchmarking data that partner organisations were able to use to assess the success of their social media strategies in relation to their peers. It also provided an important catalyst for group discussion about social media strategies; much of the group learning came from this discussion of the results.

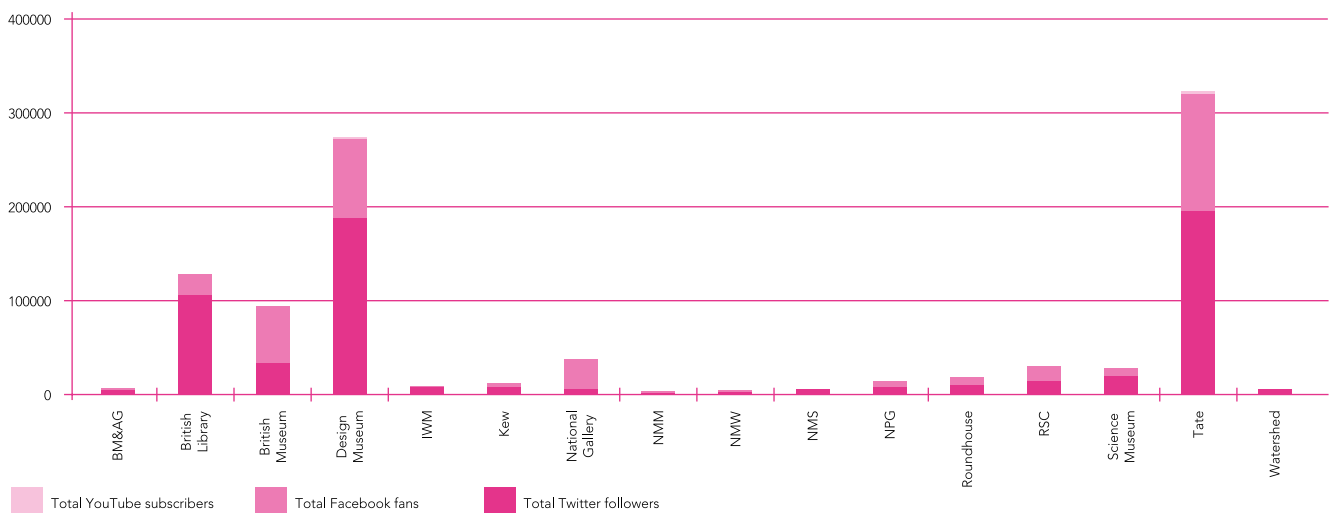
The full results of this data collection exercise are shown in appendix 5 to this report.

The data collected was used to create scores for popularity and engagement for each organisation. Popularity is a basic measure of the total number of online users for each organisation, and was charted across all of the social media channels combined (i.e. Facebook popularity plus

Twitter popularity plus YouTube popularity) in order to account for differences in organisations' preferences for the use of different channels.

Unsurprisingly, a correlation was seen between social media popularity and the average visitor numbers that each organisation received each year, with the largest national organisations receiving the highest scores, bar a few exceptions such as the Design Museum (see fig. 6 below).

Fig. 6: Popularity of organisations on social media channels



Measures of 'engagement' were therefore an important complement to popularity scores. Engagement attempts to quantify the quality and value of user interaction and is an essential consideration when measuring the success of an organisation's social media strategy. The results showed that some of the smaller organisations, such as Kew and the Imperial War Museum,

were developing a higher proportion of meaningful relationships relative to their total fan base than the large organisations that dominated the popularity figures. Thus popularity in social media was found to have little relationship to engagement, as the following results illustrate.

Analysis of Twitter engagement was performed using Tweetlevel scores¹⁶ for engagement (see fig. 7 below). The highest partner score was 62 (out of 100) and the lowest was 5, but in general this analysis showed similar levels of engagement for everyone, with the exception of the Design Museum who scored low on engagement despite their high score for popularity.

¹⁵ Several organisations operated additional channels for exhibition or educational projects. These were not looked at during this project.

¹⁶ Tweetlevel is a free online tool that measures Twitter engagement: <http://tweetlevel.edelman.com/Home.aspx>

Fig 7: Tweetlevel engagement scores for Twitter



For Facebook, there is no standard measure of engagement available, and therefore an experimental approach was taken which used the data available for user-generated content (UGC) during the week in which measurements were taken.

User-generated content was taken to include all wall posts, comments, likes, photos, videos, discussions and reviews that were added by users, rather than the organisation.

The formula used is shown in fig. 8 below.



Fig. 8: Calculation for Facebook engagement

$$\left(\begin{array}{l} \text{wall posts in past week} \\ + \\ \text{comments in past week} \\ + \\ \text{wall 'likes' in past week} \end{array} \right) \times 52 + \begin{array}{l} \text{total media added} \\ + \\ \text{total discussions} \\ + \\ \text{total reviews} \end{array} = \text{engagement (un-weighted)}$$



A weighting system was then introduced to control the total number of Facebook fans and thus adjust for popularity¹⁷.

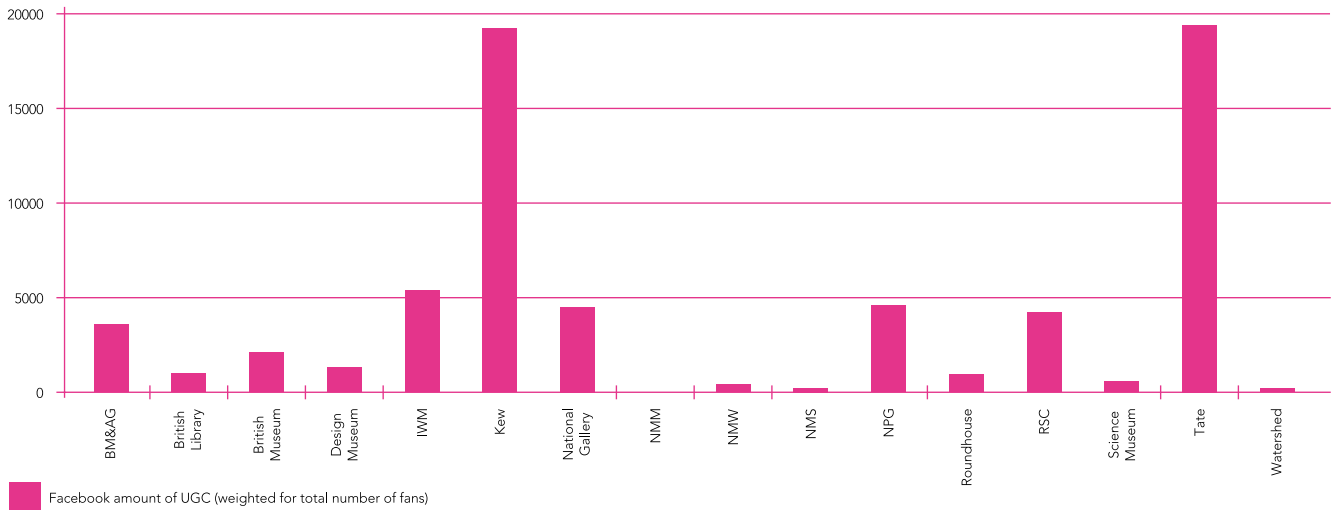
The results are shown in fig. 9. Currently this is extrapolated based on only a week's worth of user data, but it would be possible to automate the collection of figures for user-generated content through the

Facebook API or similar, which would allow for data to be collected on an ongoing basis and give a more accurate score.



¹⁷ Weighting system based on total number of Facebook fans: <5K = 1; 5K - 10K = 1.5; 10k - 20k = 2; 20K - 30K = 3; 30K - 40K = 4; >40K = 5

Fig. 9: Facebook amount of UGC (weighted for the total number of fans)



A further factor discussed by the group was the value of the social media conversations that were happening in spaces other than on the organisation’s own social media spaces. In other words, people talk about you in their own private channels whether you have a social media presence or not. This is not something that any organisation can prevent or control.

While the benchmarking of these conversations was not part of the data-gathering exercise, the group acknowledged the importance of tracking the number of conversations taking place on platforms other than the organisation’s own, and discussed the use of bit.ly tags a potential way of measuring the virality of content across the web more broadly. Tagging content and posts with a bit.ly

URL allows organisations to check on the number of times that URL was shared across different social media spaces, including private spaces. This is done by using the 'Info Page+' feature on any shortened link, which allows you to see real-time stats on any sharing. See <http://bitly.com/> for more information.

Qualitative data

The benchmarking exercise aimed to help organisations move beyond measuring numbers and to begin to experiment with ways of measuring quality/value of engagement and meaning: not just usage but also interaction, recognising the importance of qualitative measures as well as quantitative.

The qualitative findings on the general 'style' of each organisation’s social media presence therefore provided an important means of checking the interpretation of the quantitative data. However, the use of qualitative data in a benchmarking study presented issues for researchers, including the labour-intensity of data collection and the complexities of processing and interpreting the data.

The research also experimented with the use of Klout account types to capture qualitative information on organisations’ Twitter accounts (see fig. 10 below). While this type of analysis may be helpful for encouraging organisations to think about the personality of their social media site, the group found this information of limited value for cross-sector benchmarking.

Fig. 10: Percentage of Twitter accounts reviewed with different Klout account types

Klout account type	% of Twitter accounts
Activist	5.5%
Celebrity	5.5%
Dabbler	5.5%
Pundit	5.5%
Feeder	11.0%
Curator	17.0%
Specialist	22.0%
Thought leader	28.0%

Investment in social media

The results from the questionnaire showed that investment levels for social media (both staff time/number of staff, and direct costs outside of staff time) are highly variable between organisations. For slightly more than half of the partner organisations this was between one and four hours per week. At the top end, 12% of organisations were committing more than 13 hours per week (see appendix 5 for more details).

Analysis was undertaken to determine whether those organisations that were investing more in social media were having more success with their social media channels. The results showed a strong correlation between social media popularity and investment. To some

extent this correlation reflects the size of the organisation and its international profile. For example, those ranked top for both investment and popularity included many of the large national organisations, whilst the bottom ranked were mostly regional organisations. However, the Royal Shakespeare Company and Design Museum were both in the top five for popularity and also showed a high investment, so clearly this has had some impact on these organisations.

By contrast, little correlation was seen between social media engagement and investment. This came as a surprise to the research group, who were expecting to see a much stronger link between the hours

invested in social media and those channels with the most highly engaged fans.

It was felt that these results might reflect the fact that those who have got their strategies right in terms of targeting their social media content and understanding their audience potentially did not need to put quite so many man-hours into the actual updating of content. Examples of this type of pattern include Kew and the Imperial War Museum, both of which cater to a specialist and niche group of fans, and who understand how to cultivate these fans through the use of unique content with specialist appeal, subject-specific posts and a relaxed, yet authoritative style.



“It has highlighted the need for a detailed social media and online audience engagement strategy.” Roundhouse

“It has increased my awareness of the value of measuring social media; it has given me some good ideas about how to ‘sell’ performance to stakeholders.” Imperial War Museum



Social media strategies

The questionnaire results showed that only 65% of partner organisations had a social media strategy in place. When the organisation’s individual strategies were reviewed, it was found that many of these provided day-to-day management guidelines for social media but lacked any type of high-level direction, analysis of target audience, or measured objectives.

Analysis was undertaken to determine whether the presence of a social media strategy within an organisation had an impact upon the success of that organisation’s social media output, in terms of popularity and engagement. However, the results showed a very low level of correlation. These results highlighted that simply having a strategy in place is not enough; the strategy itself needs

to be targeted and effective. In practice this means ensuring that the strategy is not written in isolation from the organisation’s main business objectives.

For some organisations without strategies, there was almost a reluctance to push the internal process forward, as there was fear that an ‘official’ strategy might curtail freedoms that were passing unnoticed.

This issue was discussed with the group and examples of best practice were reviewed. Some key questions that a social media strategy should address were suggested:

- What are you trying to do?
- Who are you trying to reach?

- How does this relate to the broader audience strategy?
- How will you know you have been successful?
- What methods best measure this success?
- Can you find comparative data?
- What insights are you gaining?

As part of the project existing social media strategies were shared across the group. A further useful online database of more than 170 social media policy documents from across all sectors was identified at: <http://socialmediagovernance.com/policies.php>



“This project has crystallised for me many of the issues I sensed the Design Museum had with its metrics and social media. I am hugely more confident about how I can move the museum forward constructively in these areas.

I have gained a mixture of theoretical, and importantly practical, tools to develop the museum’s digital activity and strategy.” Design Museum



Measuring success in social media

In discussing the results of the social media benchmarking exercise, the group noted that many of the tools available for measuring social media are still developing, and that measurement can be highly time and resource intensive. Furthermore, the evidence from the Google Analytics strand of research highlighted low referral rates for social media. If social media is not working as a tool to drive visitors to organisations' websites, then other criteria and success factors for social media need to be considered.

As part of the social media strand of the project, Jenni Lloyd from social media consultancy Nixon McInnes worked with the project group on developing a set of recommendations for measuring success in social media effectively.

The main points that Jenni highlighted were as follows:

- Set objectives for social media that relate to broader objectives within your organisation
- Align each high level objective with a set of tangible outcomes that you hope to see happen as a result of social media engagement

- Select metrics for social media which relate to these outcomes
- Before you start a campaign or any new activity, ensure that you have taken a benchmark of the current position, in order to assess the impact of changes.

On the basis of these recommendations, Elena Villaespesa and Rachel Clements worked together on developing a toolkit for social media measurement, suitable for use by organisations in the sector. The toolkit was based upon marketing frameworks used by large corporations and adapted for use in the cultural sector. It is available to download here: <http://bit.ly/p0lwBK>

This resulting resource provides a set of social media goals that an organisation may wish to track. These cover both aspirational goals for social media such as building online community, increasing audience engagement and changing brand perception, and also management goals such as return of investment. Against each goal the toolkit suggests different metrics that can be used by cultural organisations to effectively track progress, and includes a schedule for how frequently they should be measured.

Notes are included on how each metric can be tracked most efficiently using free tools available online.

The research group as a whole acknowledged that there is no magic tool that reports on all social media metrics, so a combination of tools is needed, including some manual data collection or a human eye to verify results (specially with qualitative analysis).

The aim in developing the toolkit was for organisations to use a 'pic 'n' mix' process to select a suite of goals and measures suitable for tracking either the overall impact of social media activity, or the impact of specific campaigns within the organisation. This approach was developed in acknowledgement of the fact that the measurement needs for different organisations and for different campaigns will vary, whilst the suite of available tools is changing fast. Organisations can therefore use the toolkit as a basis to build and define their own measurement frameworks to meet their needs and to suit the resources available at the time.



"The things social media does well are hard to articulate, perhaps because they are difficult to measure? More qualitative research in this area is needed to complement what the project has done so far. I'm not convinced with the current attempts to measure social media 'success' or even to define what success is." BMAG



Part 7: ISP level metrics: data from Hitwise

Following the results of the web analytics research, Culture24 worked with Experian Hitwise to analyse web traffic for the sector at a macro level and identify trends. Experian Hitwise is a global company that provides competitive intelligence and

insights on how Internet users interact with websites, measuring internet behaviour by 25 million users worldwide across 165+ industries¹⁸.

For the purpose of this project, raw data was provide by Hitwise and analysis was carried out by Culture24, highlighting a number of points.



Attention share

The overall proportion of traffic being generated to cultural web sites is very small. In June 2011, the combined traffic to all partner organisations represented less than 0.02% of total UK web traffic, or 1.76 million visitors.

This was of equivalent size to Bizrate.co.uk (comparative shopping engine), parkers.co.uk (car sales) or community.babycentre.co.uk (information for expectant parents).

Furthermore, the percentage share of web traffic to a wider cross-section of 40 cultural websites¹⁹ (including project partners) still only represents less than 0.04% of total UK web traffic or 5.71 million visitors – an equivalent size to littlewoods.com (online shop), inbox.com (web based email service) or forum.digitalspy.co.uk (forum for the entertainment site of the same name).



¹⁸ See www.hitwise.com for more information

¹⁹ See list in appendix 5

These 40 cultural websites were selected by Culture24 in order to form a wider group that shared a similar purpose and function as the 17 project partners. They include many of the leading arts, museums, galleries and performing arts organisations in the UK.

A list of the total visits to the top 1,000 websites by UK households in June 2011

contained only two cultural websites - the National Trust (#790) and the National Archives (#879) - and none of the partner organisations ranked in this list.

This data came as something of a reality check to the group and highlighted the relatively low influence of the cultural sector within the online space.

It also led the group to question whether using increased unique visitor numbers as a measure of success is useful, given that the percentage web share of these visits is actually decreasing. In other words, while almost all project partners experienced growth in their web traffic during the three years analysed, other websites are growing much faster.



Mosaic demographical groups

Analysis of demographic data from Hitwise enabled Mosaic²⁰ profiling to be undertaken for UK domestic web traffic to cultural sector sites. This analysis revealed a dominance of web users from the Mosaic types O and F ('Liberal Opinions' and 'Suburban Mindsets' respectively). Mosaic consumer classifications are produced by Experian based on a sophisticated mixture of trend analysis and market research to produce 155 Mosaic person types aggregated into 67 household types and 15 groups. This creates a three-tier classification that can be used at the individual, household or postcode level. These Mosaic profiles could be applied to the users within the UK domestic segment of the Google Analytics segmentation that was created for partners' websites, in order to gain insight into these users needs and behaviour.

Users with the demographic profile Liberal Opinions range between 14% and 29% of visitors to partner organisation's websites, in particular those from the demographic

group O61 ('Convivial Homeowners') which represented approximately 21.4% of traffic to partners' websites overall.

These are, 'well paid professional couples, often with children, choosing to live in diverse urban areas rather than the suburbs' (Experian Group, Mosaic UK Interactive Guide 2009).

These individuals are well educated and often in creative jobs. They make up only 1.68% of the population and therefore are highly over-represented on partners' websites. Users with the demographic profile Suburban Mindsets range between 10% and 12% of users to partner organisation's websites. These are 'maturing families on mid-range incomes living a moderate lifestyle in suburban semis' (Experian Group, Mosaic UK Interactive Guide 2009). This insight into online user segments led the group to question whether the cultural sector is in fact attracting new audiences online, as has traditionally been

assumed, or is simply engaging with the same audiences that they interact with offline.

The best way to test this hypothesis would be to compare the Mosaic profile of each organisation's online visitors with that of their offline visitors, using information collected in visitor surveys. To do this would incur costs as Hitwise is a commercial service. Individual reporting on specific issues starts at around £5,000 with a full annual licence for a specific organisation in the region of £25,000.

Further detailed breakdown by Culture24 of the demographic groups and types is available here: <http://bit.ly/p0lwBK>

Culture24 is exploring the possibility of providing this as an agency service via a single account looking at multiple cultural sites and sharing and reporting trends to the wider sector as a whole.



Upstream analysis

Analysis of upstream websites visited by users prior to a visit to a cultural website underscored the dominance of search engines as a referral tool, with these generating about 50% of visits across all partners' websites.

In the Hitwise data, social media was found to be a poor referrer to cultural websites, backing up the results of the social media segmentation for web analytics benchmarking.

From an evaluation of the top 10,000 websites in the UK to which social media sites refer traffic, the only partner organisations to appear in this list were Tate, English Heritage²¹, Kew and the British Library. There were no arts or heritage sites placed in the top 2,000 ranked sites.

This raises questions about where we should be targeting our investment online to increase web traffic to our sites, and also about the value of social media for organisations. If the value of social media does not lie in web referrals, then the point where the value does lie needs to be more clearly articulated.



²⁰ Mosaic UK - unique consumer classification based on in-depth demographic data <http://bit.ly/nlKlau>

²¹ Refers to their main site not the EH NMR.

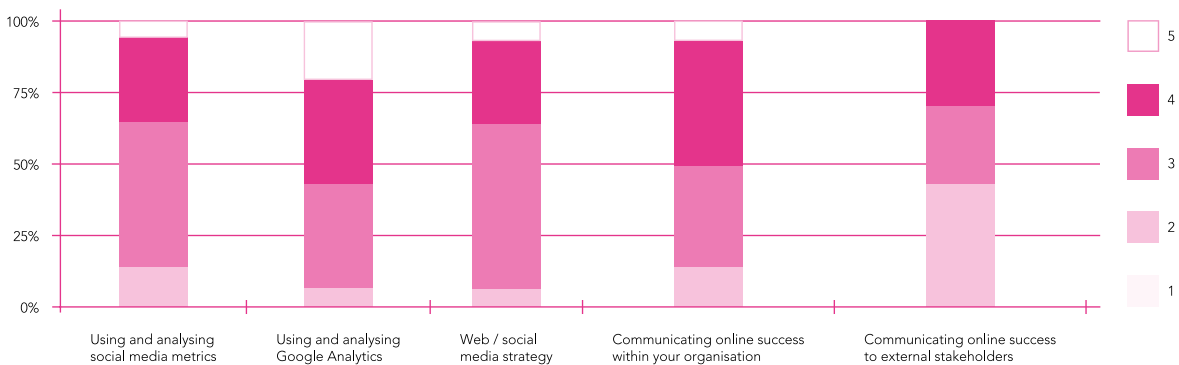
Part 8: Partner feedback

Feedback from partner organisations was collected between July and September 2011 via Survey Monkey, to evaluate the success of the project to date and to determine whether it had delivered on its original objectives.

Responses from partner organisations were extremely positive, with all participants surveyed indicating that they would be keen to carry on the existing project and that they would be very likely to participate in this project, or one like it, again using the same collaborative funding model.

Partners were asked to rate their organisation's improvement in several key areas, as a result of the project, and the results were encouraging, with the majority of organisations scoring 3 or above in each area (see fig. 11 below).

Fig. 11 Responses received in July 2011 from partner organisations to the following question: "Please rate your organisation's improvement in the following areas, as a result of this project."²²



Over 90% of participants showed improvement in all areas with the most improvement in 'using and analysing GA', followed by 'communicating online success within the organisation'.

In their responses, partners stressed not only the value of the personal and organisational learning as a result of the project, but also the importance of opportunities to network with, and learn from, peer organisations.

A few organisations found it difficult to attend all the face-to-face meetings. For one, this was due to lack of internal funds to cover travel and accommodation due to funding cuts. For others this was due to pressures on time constraints. Both of these issues would need to be considered in any future research work.

All respondents agreed that the project had delivered on its objectives with 86% rating this as more than 4 out of 5.

On personal impact ...

"Access to a great peer network and the chance to share and learn from people who 'get it'. It's also been incredibly beneficial for me to get to know the sector, take some comfort that I'm not alone with some of the problems we face, and help push issues that I think are enormously important about digital in general"

"It has provided me with a better understand of the known unknowns regarding use of Social Media"

"Great opportunity to form/strengthen relationships with people in similar roles across the sector"

"Excellent networking and peer support - I was new to the museum sector at the beginning of the project and it's helped hugely in providing a friendly and supportive group of people to talk to, even outside the project"

"Evaluating my own work within the context of other organisations' work"

"Better understanding of Google Analytics and social media metrics; better cooperation with colleagues in the sector"

"Valuable engagement with colleagues in peer institutions"

On working together ...

"The group meetings and the opportunity to network and chat with colleagues face to face was really valuable and an important aspect of the project. It's been an interesting balance of strategic thinking and practical application - and all relevant and applicable within my organisational context. Well worth participating in"

"The challenges related to lack of resources/staff time means that it is a difficult time to introduce new ways of doing things and looking at things. But I think that there will be an impact in the future, especially around the smarter use of Google Analytics e.g. setting goals"

"I am always excited when museums and galleries work together to move an area forward of which this is a great example. As a sector we can sometimes really achieve great things by pooling our knowledge, resources and expertise. It's always difficult to organise the sector to work together and I salute Culture24 for facilitating the project"

²² On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = No improvement and 5 = Large improvement

Case studies from different partners: "How has the project impacted on your organisation?"



The British Museum

"During the run of the project, a social media strategy was devised by the British Museum that set specific aims and objectives as well as targets around social media activity. These aims and objectives were in line with the Museum's overall strategy to 2012. The tools used to measure social media were also enhanced during the run of the project and the Museum is planning on using the social media toolkit that was devised during this project to measure future campaigns and to evaluate how viable these tools are.

Associated with the Museum's involvement in the project, content planning and creation around exhibitions and the Collection has become much more aligned across web, marketing and the Museum's general online presence. A co-ordinated digital communications approach has also been implemented to ensure that the Museum is communicating in a timely and aligned manner.

This project has been useful in reviewing how museums across the UK are measuring their online activity and what best practice methods can be achieved. It also provided a very helpful network for discussion with people in similar roles in different museums."

*Matthew Cock,
Head of Web*

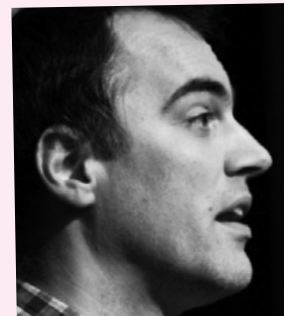


Tate

"One of the objectives for our online strategy was to improve reporting, so in the past few months we have worked with many different departments to create more accurate and customised monthly online metrics reports. We have also begun reporting metrics of our social media activity, which are analysed and discussed in a monthly meeting. This has increased the understanding of the value of social media within the organisation and has helped us to plan our social media content more strategically, by setting objectives for different kinds of posts and evaluating against these objectives.

The project has helped us in this process by improving our analytics settings and creating more segmented reports based on visitors' location, content visited or traffic source among others. Moreover, the project allowed us to analyse online trends and increase our knowledge of the demographics and online behaviour of our website and social media audiences. As a result, we are able to measure Tate's online performance more accurately, which in turn informs decisions around our online activities."

*John Stack,
Head of Tate
Online*



(c) MuseumNext



National Maritime Museum

"The National Maritime Museum produces a quarterly report to its Trustees on cross-museum activity, providing an overview of what's been happening in every department in the past three months. The Digital Media team produce the online activity report, including details on web visitors, popular online content and social media follower numbers. For a long time, this was a basic overview of top line figures.

In 2010 the Museum assigned their Digital Marketing Officer the task of refreshing the reporting framework, to deliver something more insightful that could inform the way in which the online platforms and online content are developed. The subsequent report now looks at online user behaviour and aligns the traffic to nmm.ac.uk with the audience segments used by the Communications team, such as local families, museum and gallery goers etc. It also looks at how visitor behaviour is changing, particularly in the way that users are accessing the website (social media links, mobile devices etc). Much of this report has been supported by the museum's involvement with the Culture24 project, in particular the Google Analytics segmentation that has been developed, peer support and networking with other museums, and the in depth discussions about getting meaning out of web metrics."

Emma McLean,
Digital Marketing
Officer



Roundhouse

"As a direct result of the project, Roundhouse now produces a fortnightly report measuring all online activity. This report measures general web activity, ticket sales, engagement via social media and change over time in engagement via social media. The report also measures the number of referrals from social media to the Roundhouse website. Using these measurements, the organisation attempts to judge which activities undertaken by Roundhouse via social media and through the website increase engagement within the online community. The organisation also tracks online activity for a number of peer organisations, to provide a rough comparison of online success measured against key peers.

Roundhouse has also recently generated a one-off report reviewing visitors to the main website and visitor usage when using the site. This report broke down audiences into different categories (ticket buyers, general browsers, users seeking information on creative courses and users seeking visitor information) and measured the activities of those users (number of pages visited, time on site, most popular pages and bounce rate).

The production of these reports was influenced directly by the knowledge Roundhouse gained through participation in this project. The reports themselves have informed the following business decisions:

Roundhouse had always considered the need to develop a mobile compatible web platform important, but considering predicted usage of the site via mobile devices by the end of year, the need for a mobile site for the purposes of selling tickets has become a priority for the web team.

Roundhouse had always understood that users' main purpose while accessing the Roundhouse website was to purchase tickets, but the web team was unaware of how successful the organisation was in encouraging young users aged 11-25 to access the creative courses offered online. The new reports have directly impacted on the organisation's decision to change how these courses are made available.

Developing an understanding for how successful we are in our use of social media was a driving factor in participating in the project. And although I feel we are now far better placed to measure immediate success regarding our use of social media (i.e. how many we reach, how popular we are relative to our peers, number of referrals to our main site), I still feel we have some way to go before we can directly correlate business success with success of our usage of social media.

I constantly pose the question internally, "What would happen if we decided to no longer use social media? Would it make any difference to our business?" Although we can say with certainty that having a presence on common social media platforms is important and useful, it is impossible to quantify and evaluate the direct return for the organisation.

However, posing this question is in itself useful to stimulate conversation internally regarding continuing investment in social media, and that is a direct consequence of our involvement in this project."

Conor Roche,
Head of Broadcast
and New Media



Part 9: Project outcomes

The project has had a number of wide ranging outcomes:

- The formation of a lively and engaged peer network with a shared sense of purpose. This network has provided an important resource for the group as a source of community, knowledge and support. It has also provided a space to compare and contrast data.
- The majority of partner organisations have now switched to Google Analytics for web reporting and have set up their accounts in accordance with Google Analytics current best practice. This provides consistency in the configuration of these accounts for reporting and has formed the basis for a set of recommendations for reporting within the sector.
- A social media metrics toolkit and a review of third party social media tools has been researched and shared and is in the process of being applied by partner organisations.
- The group as a whole gained an understanding of both the strengths and the limits of social media. The importance of creating social media strategies that include a clear understanding of the target audience needs and behaviours, and that relate to wider audience strategy within the organisation, was one of the key learning points.
- An understanding of the relationship between the data available from analysis and tracking of web statistics and social media channels and its potential to help meet and fulfil specific key performance indicators (KPIs) e.g. number of local visitors or local visitor expectations.
- Changes to the way that organisations report their online success/failures internally, as a direct result of this project. In particular to segment and separate different user behaviours, intentions and engagement, define targeted reports with different staff members and relate digital KPIs to broader organisational KPIs.

This report recommends: 10 key things to do

1. Adopt Google Analytics for basic reporting to government along with central government use of an ISP level alternative (such as Hitwise) for balance. Widespread adoption will allow for in-depth sector analysis and benchmarking.
2. Adopt this report's guidelines on best practice for configuring Google Analytics software to ensure consistent reporting. This should cover basic health checks, user segments and goal definition.
3. Revise the 'whole' suite of metrics you care about and also the tools you use to measure them. Google Analytics and Hitwise are not the solution; they must be used as part of a multi-tool solution that will require good problem definition before we start.
4. Engage with and consider ways to enhance Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) through investment of money and/or time. This is still the main source of most of your traffic.
5. Consider where, when and how you use social media to be most effective. Investment can buy you popularity but it can't buy you engagement.
6. Define your online audience targets specifically and map them to your overall business objectives and targets. Online access for everyone is simply not good enough.
7. Don't think about digital activities as something separate from the physical. Build links between your overall mission and business strategy and all your activities. Define your overall strategy before you deploy any specific tactics – digital or otherwise.
8. Build links between your web team, your marketing dept, those who create your content and your executive. Work together to define shared goals that can be used for reporting.
9. Get ready for mobile. Ensure your website is mobile friendly and you can respond to the growing trend of mobile access. Consider what your users want to on the move?
10. Remember to look at the patterns, not just the numbers. Small can be beautiful. Success is not defined by scale but by fulfilling your objectives or your audience's needs.

Part 10: Some nice extra bits

There have been two significant developments in the last few months of the project:

Culture24 Conference: Let's Get Real

Watershed, Bristol on September 20 and 21 2011.

www.WeAreCulture24.org.uk/letsgetreal

The conference will mark the publication of this report and present the key findings. The programme will look more deeply into the issues from the action research using honesty, plain-speaking and troubleshooting. Delegates will leave with a better understanding of not just what success online might look like, but what it can mean for their organisation.

Conference highlights:

- Keynote from Tom Uglow, Creative Lead at the Google Creative Lab.

- Publication of the final report from Culture24 Action Research Project: How to Evaluate Online Success?

- Session with Matt Locke (Storythings.com), plus lessons on 'failing forwards' from some of the Action Research partners

- Practical workshop strands looking at both strategy and tactics

- Crit Room: submit your site's problems for some friendly group therapy and constructive analysis

- Informal 'Talk Tables' to meet with key industry players for problem solving and troubleshooting

- Evening social event sponsored by Google with local food, ales and wine, and an exhibition of digital interactive work from Watershed's Pervasive Media Studio, including Stand and Stare's interactive Theatre Jukebox



A new Culture24 partnership with Google

Culture24 have partnered with Google to coordinate and deliver a series of 5 workshops for the culture sector, around the UK. The workshops are being designed to offer practical advice, tips and demonstrations of the tools and technology that enable organisations to get more out

of the web. This will include topics such as Google Analytics and how to tap into the power of data, thinking about site design and so on. Thanks to financial support from Google the workshops will be virtually free to all participants.



Appendix 1: Attendance at Dana Centre London on October 5th 2009

Lead: Jane Finnis, Culture24

Group One: those working in museums on online strategy, delivery and development side

Mia Ridge, Daniel Evans, Kate Leyland: Science Museum

Linda Spurdle: Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery

John Stack: Tate

Matthew Cock: British Museum

James Morley: Kew

Fiona Romeo: NMM

Group Two: those working on the research side and interested in this area

Ross Parry: Department of Museum Studies University of Leicester

Marieke Guy: UKOLN

Hasan Bakhshi: NESTA

Group Three: those from within key agencies with a remit to better understand and advise the sector in this area:

Dan Ellitts: Public Engagement and Audience Development, Arts Council

Katie Pekacar: Policy Adviser, MLA

Jahangir Mohammed: Performance and Monitoring Manager (Renaissance)

Joanne South & Tricia Jenkins: Arts and Business



Appendix 2: Full list of project partners and URLs

Organisation	Lead Contact	Website
Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery	Linda Spurdle	www.bmag.org.uk
British Library	Adrian Arthur	www.bl.uk
British Museum	Matthew Cock	www.britishmuseum.org
Design Museum	Josephine Chander	www.designmuseum.org
English Heritage - National Monuments Record	Vikki Fenner	www.english-heritage.org.uk
Imperial War Museum	Wendy Orr	www.iwm.org.uk
National Gallery	Charlotte Sexton	www.nationalgallery.org.uk
National Maritime Museum	Fiona Romeo / Emma McLean	www.nmm.ac.uk
National Museums Scotland	Hugh Wallace	www.nms.ac.uk
Amgueddfa Cymru - National Museum Wales	Dafydd James	www.museumwales.ac.uk
National Portrait Gallery	Leigh Amor	www.npg.org.uk
Roundhouse	Conor Roche	www.roundhouse.org.uk
Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew	James Morley	www.kew.org
Royal Shakespeare Company	John Benfield	www.rsc.org.uk
Science Museum	Mia Ridge / Daniel Evans	www.sciencemuseum.org.uk
Tate	John Stack / Tijana Tasich	www.tate.org.uk
Watershed	Louise Gardner	www.watershed.co.uk

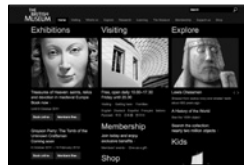
Screenshots and URLs



www.bmag.org.uk



www.bl.uk



www.britishmuseum.org



www.designmuseum.org



www.english-heritage.org.uk



www.iwm.org.uk



www.nationalgallery.org.uk



www.nhm.ac.uk



www.nms.ac.uk



www.museumwales.ac.uk



www.npg.org.uk



www.roundhouse.org.uk



www.kew.org



www.rsc.org.uk



www.sciencemuseum.org.uk



www.tate.org.uk



www.watershed.co.uk

Appendix 3: Project meeting dates and agendas

Meeting 1	July 2010 Culture 24	Map the issues and considerations in the use of Google Analytics, Social Media and Data sharing. Scope the focus of the research across each of the subjects and define the agreed priorities for the research. Speakers: Seb Chan (Powerhouse Museum), Anra Kennedy (Culture24), Jenni Lloyd (Nixon McInnes)
Meeting 2	September 2010 Imperial War Museum	Review final project brief, methodology and timetable. Define user segmentation with GA. Define social media priorities for benchmarking Speaker: Seb Chan (Powerhouse Museum)
Meeting 3	January 2011 British Museum	Review social media benchmarking and highlight issues requiring further attention. Review health checks for all sites and the application of shared segments in GA across all partners. Discuss project, analysis, publication and knowledge sharing moving forward Speakers: Rachel Clements (Researcher), Jenni Lloyd (Nixon McInnes).
Meeting 4	July 2011 Culture 24	Review Google Analytics work and Hitwise data. Discussion on advanced segmentation, goals and event tracking. Review social media analysis outside of institution channels. Group feedback on project. Discuss need/shape of future work Speakers: Clancy Childs (Google), Seb Chan (Powerhouse Museum), Rachel Clements (Researcher)

Appendix 4: Google Analytics benchmarking dataset (November 2010)

A. Visitors

	Visitor growth % growth from previous year		% national visitors			% visitors from local city		
	2010	2009	2010	2009	2008	2010	2009	2008
British Library	n/a	n/a	47.91%	n/a	n/a	27.21%	n/a	n/a
British Museum	10.57%	35.27%	41.78%	44.82%	42.45%	22.24%	26.29%	20.56%
Design Museum	9.26%	7.17%	38.87%	39.25%	39.17%	19.20%	19.64%	15.99%
Imperial War Museum	9.38%	-10.76%	73.54%		73.77%	35.68%	35.22%	30.61%
Kew	-35.06%	-32.15%	44.77%	34.94%	66.15%	23.36%	19.79%	30.91%
National Gallery	11.78%	0.12%	45.83%	44.92%	43.18%	24.07%	25.69%	19.34%
National Museum Wales	0.44%	15.69%	70.94%	63.96%	64.06%	21.12%	16.93%	15.18%
National Maritime Museum	-1.54%	-9.14%	48.85%	48.74%	47.78%	20.14%	21.87%	17.40%
National Museums Scotland	67.04%	9.45%	41.82%	59.21%	62.91%	14.34%	18.64%	20.38%
Roundhouse	12.06%	24.82%	71.82%	75.83%	75.91%	48.04%	54.94%	45.66%
Royal Shakespeare Company	16.93%	7.40%	69.72%	64.21%	73.86%	24.87%	24.92%	27.03%
Science Museum	5.67%	20.67%	55.06%	55.74%	53.09%	24.85%	27.49%	20.89%
Tate	19.99%	33.54%	55.77%	53.91%	42.17%	27.83%	29.23%	18.65%

B. Referrals

	% referrals from organic search		% referrals from social media		% referrals from Facebook			% referrals from Wikipedia		
	2010	2010	2009	2008	2010	2009	2008	2010	2009	2008
British Library	42.05%	2.86%	n/a	n/a	0.59%	n/a	n/a	1.40%	n/a	n/a
British Museum	56.51%	2.57%	2.06%	1.79%	0.64%	0.28%	0.05%	1.41%	1.48%	1.41%
Design Museum	69.54%	3.86%	2.89%	4.33%	1.31%	0.57%	0.22%	1.53%	1.67%	1.90%
Imperial War Museum	72.11%	1.11%	1.27%	1.12%	0.07%	0.04%	0.01%	0.74%	0.83%	0.74%
Kew	59.45%	3.60%	2.04%	1.01%	0.83%	0.22%	0.02%	2.17%	1.32%	0.90%
National Gallery	62.08%	4.05%	4.02%	3.76%	1.06%	0.35%	0.08%	1.30%	1.67%	1.64%
National Maritime Museum	64.03%	1.96%	2.14%	1.90%	0.27%	0.12%	0.02%	1.43%	1.69%	1.36%
National Museum Wales	65.97%	2.92%	1.96%	1.60%	1.38%	0.32%	0.07%	1.07%	1.01%	1.36%
National Museums Scotland	35.37%	2.69%	0.88%	0.70%	0.97%	0.15%	0.03%	0.60%	0.56%	0.61%
Roundhouse	60.08%	6.71%	2.60%	1.63%	5.45%	1.88%	1.06%	0.19%	0.28%	0.20%
Royal Shakespeare Company	64.22%	2.68%	2.95%	1.22%	1.56%	1.59%	0.40%	0.57%	0.57%	0.57%
Science Museum	58.55%	3.28%	2.42%	5.22%	0.66%	0.49%	0.12%	0.55%	0.69%	0.71%
Tate	49.39%	4.77%	3.33%	4.20%	1.95%	0.58%	0.20%	1.61%	2.09%	2.65%

C. Mobile

	Mobile visitors 2010, segmented by platform (as a percentage of total mobile visitors)					Mobile visitors 2010, by location (as a total of location-based traffic)		
	% iPhone/iPod	% iPad	Total % iOS	% android	% other	% global	% national	% local
British Library	57.10%	19.34%	76.44%	11.98%	11.58%	2.99%	3.38%	2.64%
British Museum	59.06%	21.58%	80.64%	10.05%	9.31%	3.84%	3.77%	4.26%
Design Museum	63.63%	22.29%	85.92%	7.70%	6.38%	3.41%	2.82%	3.35%
Imperial War Museum	60.99%	18.09%	79.08%	9.91%	11.02%	5.55%	6.36%	4.63%
Kew	60.96%	19.96%	80.92%	10.86%	8.22%	3.26%	3.79%	3.66%
National Gallery	57.18%	24.33%	81.51%	9.43%	9.06%	3.32%	3.44%	3.29%
National Maritime Museum	58.30%	16.81%	75.11%	14.86%	10.03%	3.58%	3.20%	3.12%
National Museum Wales	62.42%	11.92%	74.34%	14.01%	11.65%	3.98%	5.16%	0.83%
National Museums Scotland	60.09%	22.85%	82.93%	12.85%	4.22%	2.86%	2.15%	1.23%
Roundhouse	68.75%	12.68%	81.42%	8.56%	10.02%	6.12%	8.38%	4.86%
Royal Shakespeare Company	63.26%	20.61%	83.87%	8.65%	7.48%	4.90%	7.04%	2.90%
Science Museum	61.28%	15.83%	77.12%	12.05%	10.83%	4.05%	4.23%	3.82%
Tate	64.47%	19.03%	83.50%	8.37%	8.14%	4.00%	4.20%	3.87%

Appendix 5: Social media benchmarking dataset (November 2010)

A. Overview of social media usage

Q1. What social media platforms does each organisation participate in?

Facebook	100%	YouTube	71%	Blogs	59%
Twitter	100%	Flickr	94%	Foursquare	82%

Q2. How many official accounts does each organisation maintain on the following platforms?

	Average Number of Accounts	Range
Facebook	2.5	From 1 to 7
Twitter	2.5	From 1 to 8
YouTube	1.0	From 0 to 1
Flickr	2.0	From 0 to 7

Q3. Does the organisational website actively encourage content sharing and takeaway? (i.e. Like, Digg buttons etc.)

Yes	59%	No	41%
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Q4. Does the organisation actively link to their social media platforms from their website?

Yes	94%	No	6%
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B. Facebook

Q1. Fans

	Total fans	New fans in past month	New fans as a % of total fans	% of fans from UK
BMAG	1478	140	9%	62%
British Library	23272	2160	9%	29%
British Museum	60743	5894	10%	21%
Design Museum	86169	4688	5%	9%
Imperial War Museum	3337	252	8%	43%
Kew	3851	355	9%	42%
National Gallery	34095	3398	10%	26%
National Maritime Museum	88	88	100%	75%
National Museum Wales	1362	111	8%	87%
National Museums Scotland	149	40	27%	78%
National Portrait Gallery	7624	749	10%	46%
Roundhouse	9752	538	6%	77%
Royal Shakespeare Company	15805	668	4%	60%
Science Museum	9827	437	4%	47%
Tate	128058	6636	5%	26%
Watershed	1092	57	5%	86%

Q2. Demographics

	Average
Male	37%
Female	59%
13-17	4%
18-24	17%
25-34	32%
35-44	24%
45-54	12%
55+	7%

Q3. Organisational content added to page

	Wall posts in past week	Comments in past week	Total media (photos + videos)
BMAG	21	1	12
British Library	2	6	157
British Museum	2	2	163
Design Museum	2	0	428
Imperial War Museum	6	0	31
Kew	12	3	278
National Gallery	6	0	55
National Maritime Museum	2	0	6
National Museum Wales	6	0	3
National Museums Scotland	4	0	36
National Portrait Gallery	7	3	118
Roundhouse	8	2	148
Royal Shakespeare Company	12	7	760
Science Museum	2	0	138
Tate	8	0	207
Watershed	3	0	58

Q4. User-generated content added to page

	Wall posts in past week	Comments in past week	Wall "likes" in past week	Total media (photos + video)	Total discussions	Total reviews	Monthly active users
BMAG	1	6	61	11	0	2	259
British Library	5	9	51	38	11	2	14150
British Museum	17	13	177	0	6	0	31329
Design Museum	7	3	111	560	0	0	50235
Imperial War Museum	4	3	93	121	0	1	420
Kew	0	64	298	364	0	0	1398
National Gallery	4	18	323	127	15	3	19149
National Maritime Museum	0	0	0	0	0	0	114
National Museum Wales	1	0	7	33	0	0	169
National Museums Scotland	1	0	4	8	1	0	103
National Portrait Gallery	1	7	124	135	0	0	1986
Roundhouse	4	4	20	19	0	0	1951
Royal Shakespeare Company	16	39	111	66	0	1	7849
Science Museum	2	0	13	88	8	0	553
Tate	40	362	1436	1316	166	8	75052
Watershed	0	0	3	9	0	0	184

Q5. Qualitative information

	Average		Range	Account style	
% of positive user generated comments	66%		from 0% to 96%	Broadcast	78%
% neutral user generated comments	23%		from 0% to 60%	Conversational	22%
% negative user generated comments	6%		from 0% to 24%		

C. Twitter

Q1. Account usage

	Total Tweets	Tweets over past 2 days	Retweets (by org.) over past 2 days	Listed	Following
BMAG	4801	23	14	194	1187
British Library	678	4	2	2636	65
British Museum	757	2	1	2875	276
Design Museum	388	1	0	3873	75
Imperial War Museum	1420	7	1	588	3179
Kew	2144	20	3	435	4226
National Gallery	300	4	0	306	314
National Maritime Museum	164	4	0	14	83
National Museum Wales	274	3	0	46	52
National Museums Scotland	879	14	3	100	350
National Portrait Gallery	461	12	1	486	586
Roundhouse	1398	7	2	444	711
Royal Shakespeare Company	1199	4	0	684	199
Science Museum	1212	1	0	1598	3476
Tate	1205	7	2	6140	726
Watershed	3583	13	0	209	3413

Q2. Followers

	Total Followers	@Mentions in the past 2 days	Klout True reach	Klout Amplification	Klout Network
BMAG	1757	10	182	34	66
British Library	102851	38	28000	0	0
British Museum	30508	65	8000	0	0
Design Museum	186665	16	2000	0	0
Imperial War Museum	5732	18	1000	17	59
Kew	4802	42	2000	0	0
National Gallery	2932	14	138	3	1
National Maritime Museum	158	1	25	7	33
National Museum Wales	482	2	183	15	48
National Museums Scotland	1251	9	199	8	41
National Portrait Gallery	4489	27	504	12	48
Roundhouse	7022	18	3000	7	33
Royal Shakespeare Company	11339	38	279	13	52
Science Museum	17566	14	3000	0	0
Tate	191935	128	27000	23	60
Watershed	3222	29	1000	6	1

Q3. Tweetlevel

	Influence	Popularity	Engagement	Trust
BMAG	40	48	44.2	30.4
British Library	61.6	73.7	39.3	52.5
British Museum	61.5	67.6	45.1	52.9
Design Museum	55.6	77.5	5.1	48.2
Imperial War Museum	59.9	56.1	51.3	47.6
Kew	60.2	54.6	46	47.1
National Gallery	43	51.5	40.4	32.5
National Maritime Museum	27.3	30.8	28.9	16
National Museum Wales	30.1	38.7	24.2	17.2
National Museums Scotland	50	45	45.6	31.5
National Portrait Gallery	50.3	54.5	48.8	33.8
Roundhouse	55.4	56.6	46.3	35.9
Royal Shakespeare Company	56.1	59.9	44.3	43.2
Science Museum	57.7	63.7	49.7	45.1
Tate	74.4	78.4	61.5	67.1
Watershed	55.8	51.3	54.2	34.5

Q4. Qualitative review

	Average	Range	Klout account type	
% positive user mentions	62%	from 38% to 81%	Activist	5.5%
% neutral user mentions	34%	from 0% to 62%	Celebrity	5.5%
% negative user mentions	3%	from 0% to 24%	Curator	17.0%
			Dabbler	5.5%
			Feeder	11.0%
			Pundit	5.5%
			Specialist	22.0%
			Thought leader	28.0%
Account style				
Broadcast	39%			
Conversational	61%			

D. YouTube

Q1. Viewers and viewer engagement

	Total number channel views	Total videos on channel	Total upload views	Total subscribers	Ave. views for top 5 most viewed	Total comments	Friend	Subscriptions	Favourites
	12432	58	128949	414	10018	12	16	16	7
BMAG	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
British Library	10251	32	40671	99	6539	1	0	0	8
British Museum	2742	42	9491	79	1185	0	0	0	0
Design Museum	752	9	9032	21	1704	0	2	0	0
Imperial War Museum	7517	66	63013	116	4798	3	0	4	2
Kew	8765	60	122670	174	11456	8	66	81	20
National Gallery	10716	15	56064	287	8836	8	55	22	14
National Maritime Museum	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
National Museum Wales	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
National Museums Scotland	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
National Portrait Gallery	927	30	10266	11	1698	0	0	0	0
Roundhouse	9414	45	107696	142	11461	4	14	3	8
Royal Shakespeare Company	7528	45	49657	218	4669	0	8	0	0
Science Museum	12187	53	310806	314	36545	0	42	21	10
Tate	76200	195	738313	3469	29153	122	0	0	19
Watershed	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Q2. Qualitative information

	Average	Range
% positive comments	83%	from 50% to 100%
% neutral comments	7%	from 0% to 33%
% negative comments	10%	from 0% to 50%

(NB. Figs include only those organisations who have comments on YouTube)

E. Investment in social media

Q1. Please indicate the number of staff who are regularly involved in maintaining, updating and creating content

	% of total responses				
	1 to 4 members of staff	5 to 8 members of staff	9 to 12 members of staff	13+ members of staff	Don't use this channel
Facebook	76%	24%	0%	0%	0%
Twitter	65%	29%	6%	0%	0%
YouTube	75%	0%	6%	0%	19%
Flickr	94%	0%	0%	0%	6%
Blogs	56%	6%	6%	19%	13%
Other (please list below)	75%	0%	0%	0%	25%

NB. Vimeo, Wikipedia, Audioboo, Podcasts and Foursquare were mentioned as other channels for consideration in the total social media investment

Q2. Please indicate, on average, how many hours per week are spent in your organisation on maintaining, updating and creating content for the following social media channels:

	% of total responses				
	1 to 4 hours per week	5 to 8 hours per week	9 to 12 hours per week	13+ hours per week	Don't use this channel
Facebook	47%	41%	0%	12%	0%
Twitter	53%	41%	0%	6%	0%
YouTube	56%	0%	6%	19%	19%
Flickr	81%	0%	0%	6%	13%
Blogs	44%	31%	0%	6%	19%
Other (please list below)	50%	17%	0%	0%	33%

Q3. Do you actively monitor and review the performance of your social media channels?

Details of the type of monitoring and review processes that are used	N' of organisations using this
Measure growth in number of fans / followers	11
Report on progress to senior management	9
Track number of responses and comments	6
Report regularly on progress to other departments	5
Compare against other museums and galleries	4
Measure qualitative data	3
Report on success of specific campaigns	3
Automated data collection	1
Use the user discussion on social media channels as a gauge of what audiences are interested in	1
Monitor conversations about the organisation	1

Q4. Do you use any specialist applications (e.g. Tweetdeck) to maintain and / or review your social media channels?

	% of responses
Yes	76%
No	23%

Name of application	N' of organisations using this
Tweetdeck	10
Addictomatic	2
bit.ly stats	2
Google Analytics	2
HootSuite	2
Wordpress stats	2
Akismet	1
Echofon	1
Google alerts	1
Netvibes listening dashboard	1
Seismic Desktop	1
Socialmention.com	1
The Archivist	1
Topsy	1
Tweetbeeps	1
Tweetie	1
Tweetreach	1
Tweetscan	1
Tweetstats	1
Twinbox	1
Twitpic	1
Twitter for iPhone	1
Twitter search	1
Twittercounter	1
Twitterfall	1
Twitvid	1
Twuffer	1

Q5. How much, on average, is spent on the direct costs of social media each year within your organisation? (Software, training, consultancy etc. - excluding staff costs).

Range	Average
from £0.00 to £10,000.00	£1687.50

Q6. In what ways do you think that your social media investment returns value for the organisation?

Comment	No. of organisations that mentioned this
Engage and interact with audience	10
Extend audience / outreach	7
Build community and relationships	5
Increase brand awareness and raising profile	5
Opportunity to monitor feedback, discussions and opinions from audiences	5
Disseminate information and knowledge	4
Drive traffic to the website	3
Informal and more personal way to connect Playfulness and fun	3
Promote collections and exhibitions	3
Provide a platform for "special" content that doesn't fit other platforms (e.g. behind-the-scenes)	3
Socially-targeted advertising	3
Advocacy	2
Empower staff to communicate directly with audiences	2
Drive ticket sales	2
Change the perception of the organisation: be seen as 'open and modern'	1
Decrease reliance on print media	1
Drive traffic to surveys and evaluations	1
Increase transparency	1
Increase speed of communications	1

F. Social media strategy

Q1. Does the organisation have a social media strategy in place?

Yes	59%	No	41%
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Q2. For those organisations which answered YES:
a. How long has this strategy been in place?

Less than 6 months	20%
6 months - 1 year	30%
1 year - 18 months	50%
More than 18 months	0%

b. Which social media platforms does the strategy cover?

	Number of responses
Facebook	9
Twitter	8
Flickr	6
YouTube	5
Blogs	2
Website	2
Vimeo	1
It purposefully doesn't cover specific platforms	1
Online forums and communities	1

c. Which departments does the strategy cover?

	Number of responses
Marketing	5
All	4
Digital Media	3
Press	3
Web / online	2
Learning	1
Onsite interpretation	1
Senior management	1

d. Have you set success measures in association with the strategy?



e. Has the strategy been effective?

	% of responses
Yes	60%
No	0%
Work in progress / too early to tell	40%

f. Has the presence of a social media strategy affected the ability of your organisation to innovate with social media?

Yes	30%	Unsure	40%
No	10%	Didn't say	20%

g. Are you planning any changes to the strategy in the future? If so, please provide details.

NB: there is a lot of change and development taking place across those organisations that have strategies in place - many are in the process of refining their strategies to reflect the changing social media landscape.



Q3. For those organisations which answered NO:

a. In the absence of a developed strategy, does the organisation have any other management tools in place to govern social media output (e.g. targets, goals etc)?

Comments

- Social media usage guidelines
- Stats are reviewed in regular reports (monthly or quarterly)
- Report statistics to senior management
- Circulate reports across different departments
- Broad outline contained in the organisation's New Media Strategy

b. Are there specific issues or difficulties associated with developing a social media strategy in your organisation that you would like to discuss with the group?

Comments

- Finding the best home for this in the organisation
- It's time consuming. How do you find the time to put this together when other projects are more pressing?
- What are the key issues to address?
- How to create a concise, meaningful strategy to fit multiple sites?
- Ownership of the strategy: who should lead when the multiple departments are affected?
- What's the main purpose and value of a specific social media strategy?

c. What has been the main impact of the absence of a social media strategy in your organisation?

Comments

- Uneven development across the organisation in the use of different channels
- Lack of understanding of the role of social media at senior management level
- No defined targets/goals for social media output
- No procedures or guideline for a social media usage
- Ad hoc and inconsistent content
- Difficult to quantify social media success
- Lack of coordination between departments
- Lack of realization of the full potential of social media
- Lack of appreciation of the role of social media in the organization
- Don't measure impact in a consistent way

d. Has the absence of a strategy had an impact on the ability of your organisation to innovate with social media?

	% of responses
Yes	0%
No	71%
Unsure	14%
Didn't say	14%

Comments

- Lack of strategy has allowed the team to move more quickly than the organisation and to be more innovative
- Lack of strategy = lack of constraint
- No targets or preconceived outcomes
- No guideline can mean reinventing the wheel with each new project

Appendix 6: Selection of leading cultural venues used for comparative analysis

The organisations on this list were chosen by Culture24 to create a wider group of websites that were similar in purpose and function to the 17 project partners.

National Museums Liverpool
www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk

Museum of London
www.museumoflondon.org.uk

Tyne & Wear Museums
www.twmuseums.org.uk

MOSI
www.mosi.org.uk

Manchester Museums
www.museum.manchester.ac.uk

Royal National Theatre
www.nationaltheatre.org.uk

Royal Opera House
www.royalopera.org

Southbank Centre
www.southbankcentre.co.uk

English National Opera (ENO)
www.eno.org

Sadler's Wells
www.sadlerswells.com

The Sage Gateshead
www.thesagegateshead.org

Everyman Playhouse
www.everymanplayhouse.com

Curve
www.curveonline.co.uk

The National Archives
www.nationalarchives.gov.uk

The Victoria & Albert
Museum
www.vam.ac.uk

The Natural History Museum
www.nhm.ac.uk

Saatchi Gallery
www.saatchi-gallery.co.uk

Cornerhouse
www.cornerhouse.org

FACT
www.fact.co.uk

Whitechapel Gallery
www.whitechapelgallery.org

Institute of Contemporary Arts
www.ica.org.uk

Ikon Gallery
www.ikon-gallery.co.uk

Baltic
www.balticmill.com

Arnolfini
www.arnolfini.org.uk

Appendix 7: Related projects

Project details	URL	Contact
Online resource for different museums to share and aggregate their museum web stats using Google Analytics.	http://museumstats.org/	Nate Solas nate.solas@walkerart.org
Automated online collection of high level social media stats for museums worldwide	http://litot.es/museums-in-social-media	Sean Redmond @rdmond
A spreadsheet of 1,500+ museums on Twitter	http://bit.ly/museumtweets2011	Jim Richardson @SumoJim jim@sumodesign.co.uk
PhD research into new ways of thinking on the significance of visitor context on online experiences. Rather than focusing on web analytics this research focuses on when, where and how people engage with museums online.	http://oonaghmurphy.com/current-research/	Oonagh Murphy @OonaghTweets murphyoonagh@hotmail.com
Survey that tries to quantify the benefits (or not) of the culture sector using resources on social media	www.mardixon.com surveymonkey.com/s/R9Z6PGS	Mar Dixon @MarDixon marlinedixon@gmail.com
Qualitative research project carried out between July and August 2011, evaluating the differing attitudes to the risks and opportunities of social media use in the cultural heritage sector as well as the resources and support required for best practice.	http://theculturalheritagesector.wordpress.com	Nicole Beale nicolebeale@gmail.com

Appendix 8: Further reading

Used for reference in the writing of this report:

- Museums & Web 2011 paper on the early stages of this project <http://bit.ly/jumv2l>
- NESTA's report 'Culture of innovation: An economic analysis of innovation in arts and cultural organizations' <http://bit.ly/ndSSzz>
- DCMS, Sponsored museums: performance indicators 2009-10. <http://bit.ly/oeyeu9> [accessed 29 March 2011].
- Experian (2009) Mosaic UK 2009 interactive guide, version 1.5. <http://bit.ly/r0lqVl> [accessed 25 March 2011].
- Morris Hargreaves McIntyre (2005), Never mind the width feel the quality. Manchester: Morris Hargreaves McIntyre <http://bit.ly/n3NOZZ>
- Arts Council England Digital audiences: engagement with arts and culture online. London: MTM London (2010) <http://bit.ly/iku1qC>
- Online database of over 170 social media policy documents from across all sectors <http://socialmediagovernance.com/policies.php>
- Twitter strategy. Neil William's government department template - more here: <http://bit.ly/hi2NwO>
- Seb Chan's Blog: fresh + new(er): discussion of issues around digital media and museums www.powerhousemuseum.com/dmsblog/



Of wider relevance and interest:

- 10 Essential Things To Do, page 42 of DCMS commissioned Encouraging Digital Access to Culture report by Jon Drori <http://bit.ly/pMe1B7>
- For a fresh, human take on the evolution of social media guidelines Meg Pickard's description of how things have moved along at The Guardian is a great read: <http://bit.ly/quAxpN>
- BBC on Visualising the internet: <http://bbc.in/rfByaF>
- Ofcom report on Adult and Children media literacy: <http://bit.ly/n8ggbR>
- The museum of the future: some posts about analytics <http://themuseumofthefuture.com/tag/statistics/>
- Getty Museum Twitter Evaluation, 2009 <http://bit.ly/rISdnV>
- Blog: Technology in the arts: The Art of Social Media Analytics by Amelia Northrup <http://bit.ly/rgW2RR>
- Museum Next: Research: Social Media Audiences and the Museum <http://bit.ly/pjPa0g>
- Nina Simon's book 'The participatory museum'. Chapter 10 on 'evaluating participatory projects' <http://www.participatorymuseum.org/chapter10/>

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