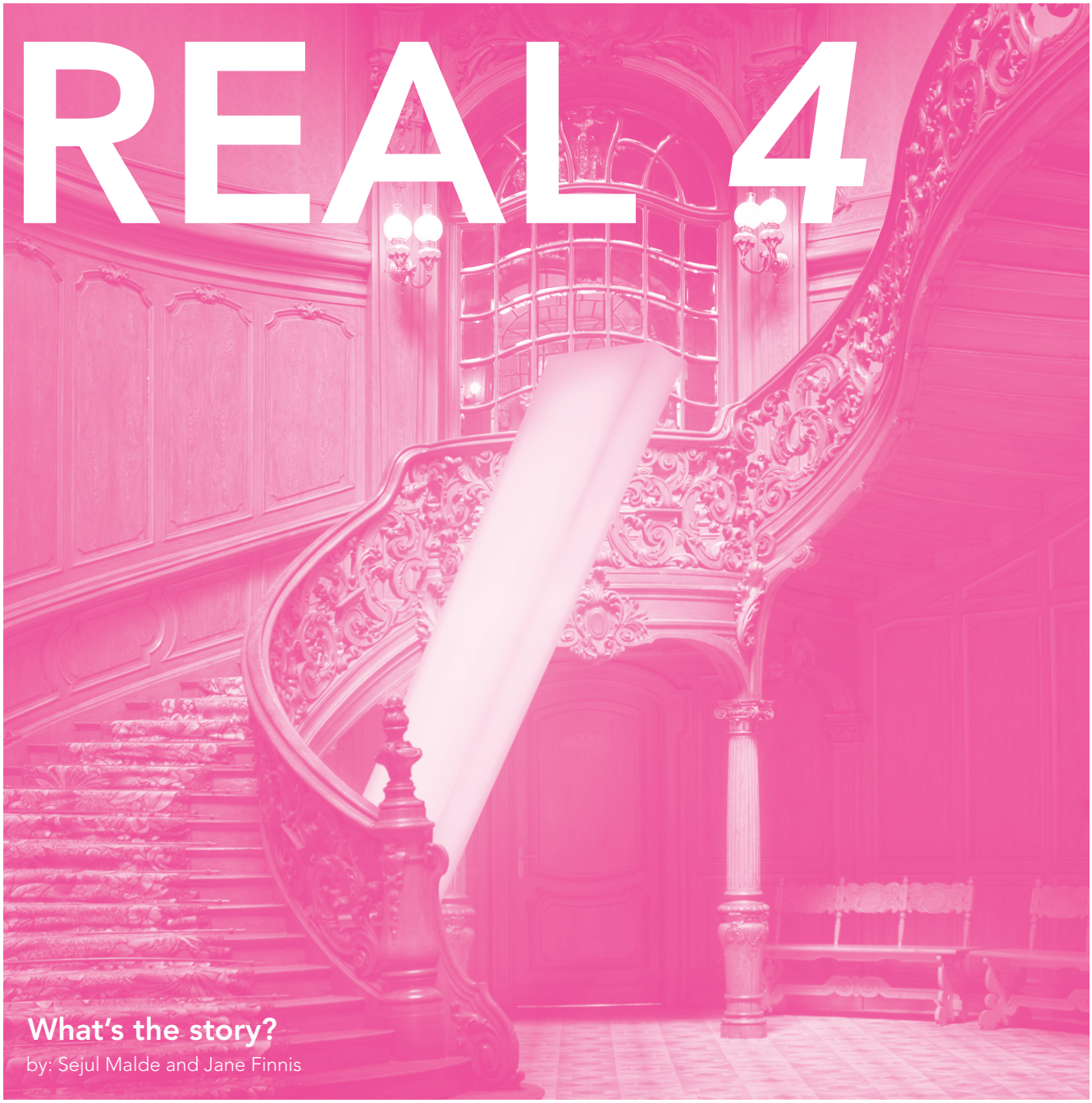
Culture24

Report from the fourth Culture24 Action Research Project

LET'S GET REAL 4



What's the story?

by: Sejul Malde and Jane Finnis

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Reversing into the future

We are living through a time where our definition of what culture is, where it happens and whose story it tells is being turned on its head. Technology and the revolution in online communications have forced society's biggest industries into rapid and wholesale change. Business models for retail, publishing, education, music and travel are in many ways unrecognisable from ten years ago.

Online technologies are turning these industries inside out, forcing brands into conversations with audiences and in many cases creating platforms for commerce based more on user recommendations and less on organisational needs. Digital change has been the driving force of this disruption; it is the sharp end as its very nature challenges organisations to be less hierarchical and more open, agile and outward looking. It is the bellwether of a wider disruption, an indicator of wider trends.

But what about the cultural sector? We are inherently entrepreneurial, resilient, creative and adaptable. It's not as if we are unequipped or lack experience in navigating changing landscapes. So why is it that when it comes to recognising and responding to digital change, we have barely left the starting blocks? In digital terms cultural sector business models are five, 10, even 20 years old and we are excruciatingly slow to change. Even where we acknowledge the need to change we are guilty of defining digital as a technology, a department, a set of neatly defined skills or an output. The reality is vastly different.

Digital is more than just a tool, it is a culture. It drives the way we communicate, the way we pursue our interests, the people we connect with and the way we do business. Digital is changing the way audiences think about and connect with culture, requiring us as cultural organisations to reassess our relevance and public value. It requires changes not only to our capacity, resources and structure, but also to our organisational culture, confidence and mindset. If our only response to this is to build a website, issue a few tweets or hire someone with some technical skills –then that is wholly insufficient. We need to evolve.

Embrace the chaos

If you are a cultural organisation, of any size, dealing with this kind of change is difficult and confusing and can leave many searching for an ordered, tidy approach, but this is an illusion. Change and a shifting landscape are here to stay. Working with chaos is the new normal. We can't go back, we can't stand still, we can only go on and embrace the messiness, the unknown, the potential failures and the lessons to be learned.

The goal is not simply to adopt more technology. In fact, it is not about technology at all. The key is how we see the role of culture in society, how we build meaningful dialogues with audiences, how we build greater value from public investment and how we develop the confidence and the know-how to get beyond the technical and deal with these deeper issues with intuitive ease.

Our environment is not helping

This situation is made worse by the lack of any sophisticated understanding of digital amongst cultural policy makers. Digital is often fetishised as a solution to the sector's problems, promising more innovation, increased revenue, better business models and wider audience reach; borrowing unquestioningly from other sectors when the reality of the cultural sector is far more nuanced.

In the UK cultural policymakers have arrived late to the party. Until recently, Arts Council England's thinking about digital has focussed narrowly on a broadcast-orientated model. This has led to an unhelpful emphasis of digital as production and distribution, that does not reflect the diversity of activity within the cultural sector nor the myriad of online contexts for cultural content. It is only in 2016 that we have begun to see the first real steps from Arts Council to broaden its view of digital by consulting on plans that speak to an ambition for more widespread integration.

Where funders have specifically tried to build digital understanding across the sector, particular challenges have been revealed. In 2015 the Heritage Lottery Fund reviewed the digital elements of their funded projects over the previous three years and identified a range of issues around discoverability, usability, sector skills and the ambition of digital work common to much of the digital output.[1] Similarly the Digital R&D Fund for the Arts which seeks to build new business models and enhance audience reach for organisations with arts projects, has identified in its 2015 Digital Culture Survey[2] that organisations are experiencing a range of operational, behavioural and financial barriers to using digital technologies with many underestimating the complexity of digital projects and lacking the experience necessary to deliver them well.

This paints a picture of a sector which lacks digital confidence, literacies and skills and a reluctance to take risks. Existing models of funding don't directly address the flexibility and specific capacity-building necessary within cultural organisations to change this. Funders, to their credit, are looking to learn and change but more work is needed.

Innovating from the ground up

Faced with these external challenges how do cultural organisations meaningfully embrace digital change? We must find ways to build digital adaptability from the ground up, innovating in ways that are sensitive and flexible to our own circumstances and resource limitations. The common rhetoric of innovation advocates the new and the cutting edge. Culture24's Let's Get Real work is predicated on thinking about innovation more as evolution rather than revolution, enabling you to work more intelligently with what you already have.

1 http://bit.ly/1QmxKhm
2 http://artsdigitalrnd.org.uk/features/digital-culture-2015/

We would like to see the cultural sector borrow thinking from the school of frugal innovation which is all about providing better solutions for more people by using fewer resources and doing things completely differently. It is a practice usually found in the developing world or around climate change issues. Thought-leader and writer Charles Leadbeater[3], in his book of the same name, writes about making constraints work for you and achieving more BECAUSE you have less. It is exactly this lack of resource to afford traditional solutions that leave you with no option but to turn conventional wisdom on its head! Frugal innovation is about rethinking traditional, costly, top-heavy business models in favour of lean, clean and social design principles.

Frugal innovation recommends piggy-backing on existing infrastructures, sharing ownership and packaging products in new ways that people can afford. It is about innovating in the real world, in real time through rapid prototyping, as well as combining teams that do not usually come together to get different insights and ensure strategy is collaborative and interactive.

This thinking totally suits arts and heritage organisations and is an intelligent response to the harsh financial realities faced by many of us. But perhaps more importantly, it is an opportunity to shift our relationship with our audiences and battle our engrained organisational culture. We have what it takes to do this well: a wealth of content, an ability to generate new ideas and a desire to build relationships with audiences. If we use these creatively, we could transform our impact in this new world. We are not in competition with each other and could work more usefully together to create a shared public value for audiences. Frugal innovation and the ideas generated from this kind of approach could help us to join up the dots between the local, social, civic sense of place, bringing us as a sector closer to solutions for the challenges we face and making possible greater community participation and engagement.

This kind of thinking may feel bold, but it has worked beautifully in the developing world and it is time now to apply this to the cultural sector.

Getting real

Let's Get Real has deliberately set out to build a programme that challenges the traditional doctrines and dogmas around digital, supporting cultural organisations to problem-solve and lead change from the ground up.

Let's Get Real advocates maximising the use of existing platforms and tools and collaborating across organisations to build understanding and best practice. The priority is to ensure content is fit for purpose for audience needs and to use experiments to test ideas and act on the evidence. This means working across internal departments (education, marketing, curation, events) and making sure that our audiences are part of how we design services.

Our Let's Get Real Phase 4 project went further in embedding these principles across the work of cultural organisations by using them to join up the way we make things for our audiences and the way we work within our organisations. By better connecting up our external and internal activities in this way, from the ground up, we can learn how the changes needed are not just confined to digital but reach out into all our cultural activities and internal practices, and to all parts of our organisations.

Through the collaborative learning developed within this project, the Phase 4 participants become internal advocates for the change needed inside their organisations and across the wider sector. Let's Get Real supported them to understand this better and from that work they collaboratively agreed the need for a digital change agenda based on the following principles:

- Greater focus on audiences needs, rather than organisational needs
- 'Digital' embedded across organisations, not within silos
- Broader sets of necessary skills and literacies
- Better sharing of knowledge and best practice across the sector
- Funding programmes that better support the true reality of digital work in the sector
- Building an internal culture based on fun, experimentation and learning.

Their task now is to take these principles to heart and be the change they want to see.

How does it feel?

It is not organisations who struggle with digital, it is the people in them and Let's Get Real focusses on supporting the participants as individuals inside their organisations. We ask ourselves: How are we doing? How am I doing? How does this feel?

The answers reveal us to be very human with our decisions often ruled by our emotions. When dealing with digitally based activity there is often a dichotomy between success and failure that creates an unhelpful dynamic of judgment and shame for people. Within Let's Get Real we try and work around this, allowing people to talk openly about failure and celebrate what they have learned (often the hard way!). We see a huge value in the learning that comes from the process, as opposed to the learning from the end result. This can even lead to designing an experiment for failure in order to prove a point internally. Crucially it also recognises the importance of joy as a core value and how vital it is for people to enjoy the process of learning.

The Let's Get Real methodology is learning from others, learning by doing and learning together. The impact comes when the ripple effect of this approach reaches into the different parts of an organisation's practice and is met with open hearts and minds.

3 http://charlesleadbeater.net/

2. Project story

2.1 Aims

In Let's Get Real Phase 4 (hereafter LGR4) we set out to identify practical ways to help arts and heritage organisations respond more meaningfully to the audiences of today. In particular we were keen to explore how these organisations could develop coherent strategies to enable audiences to engage more with their content, whilst working in a more joined-up way organisationally and ensuring they, as individuals, feel empowered to make this happen. In asking 'What's the story?' we are seeking to understand these three areas - the stories for audiences, for organisations and for individuals, in more depth.These are covered in turn in the following sections of this report.

2.2 Participants

25 arts and heritage organisations participated in the collaboratively-funded LGR4 project, each contributing £2,800 to take part. This 'coalition of the willing' was a mix of museums, galleries, libraries, multi-arts centres, performing arts and public arts organisations, online arts and heritage publishers, arts policy and artist support organisations.

LGR4 participants:

national museum wales amgueddfa cymru
ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND
a·n
B3 Creative Network
Bodleian Libraries UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD
Brighton & Hove City Council
bristol museum & art gallery
CHICHESTER FESTIVAL THEATRE
Culture24
Museum of Domestic Design & Architecture
MUSEUM OF SCIENCE & INDUSTRY
NATIONAL GALLERIES SCOTLAND
National Museums Liverpool
National Museums Scotland
ROYAL AIR FORCE museum
RA
ROYAL COLLECTION TRUST
ROYAL MUSEUMS GREENWICH
Royal Pavilion & Museums Brighton & Hove
RSC ROYAL SHAKESPEARE COMPANY
SITUATIONS
UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE MUSEUMS & BOTANIC GARDEN
V&A
WATERSHED
wellcome library
wellcome collection

Let's Get Real 4 - North America

We also ran a parallel project, alongside the main UK LGR4, for four North American organisations. This pilot, in addition to the main research focus, enabled us to explore how international organisations could participate meaningfully in and benefit from our action research projects without needing to travel to the UK.

LGR4 North America participants had access to the same content, experts and discussions as the participants from the main UK project. Collaborative workshops for the LGR4 North America cohort were conducted via Skype, with participants following the same process toward realising individual experiments. Collaboration between UK and North American participants was also encouraged through a 'buddy' scheme across the two parallel projects.

LGR4 North America participants:

The Getty
PORTLAND ART MUSEUM
UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM
VMC virtualmuseum.ca

British Council partnership

The LGR4 project was supported by the **British Council** as part of their commitment to convene and strengthen cultural organisations in the UK and internationally. The British Council provided the venue for the London-based workshops as well as contributing to project discussions as an observer.

2.3 Approach

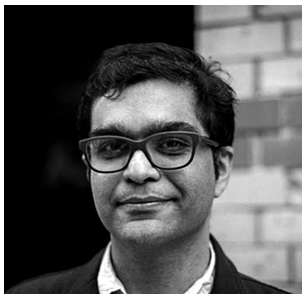
Let's Get Real 4, as with our previous projects, sought to foster learning in three ways: learning from others, learning through doing and learning together.

Learning from others

We worked with a range of talented and experienced individuals and practitioners, sharing their knowledge and expertise from a variety of sectors.

'It is really challenging to hear from, and to respond to, organisations looking at different challenges/approaches in completely different sectors. It really made me think closely about what we are doing and why, and was helpful to have responses and suggestions from outside the box.' – **Royal Collection Trust**

The five experts gave presentations and advice and ran activities at project workshops, as well as mentoring participants through their individual experiments. These experts were:



Abhay Adhikari, Digital Engagement Specialist, Dhyaan

Credit: www.normanposselt.com

Matt Locke, Director, Storythings (former Head of Innovation for BBC New Media and former Head of Multiplatform Commissioning at Channel 4)

Carolyn Royston, Director of Digital, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston (former Head of Digital at Imperial War Museums)

Padma Gillen, Partner, Scroll LLP (former Head of Content Design at Government Digital Service (GDS))

Peter Pavement, Managing and Creative Director, Surface Impression

In addition to this dedicated expert input, the project heard and learnt from other practitioners who were invited to speak at Culture24's 'Let's Get Real Conference 2015: What's the Story?' in Brighton on 23 Sept 2015.

These speakers included:
Andy Budd, Co-Founder and CEO, Clearleft
Seb Chan, Chief Experience Officer, Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI) (former Director of Digital and Emerging Media at Cooper Hewitt Smithsonian Design Museum in New York)
Laura-May Coope, Co-Founder, Social Life (former Social Media Producer, Radio 1 and 1Xtra)
Eric Drass, Artist and Curator
Owen Pringle, Advisor on Digital Transformation, Therein (former Global Director of Digital Communications, Amnesty International)
Wolfgang Wild, Retronaut

Learning by doing

Running individual content experiments provided the opportunity for participants to apply and test theory and strategy in the practical context of their own organisations. The Culture24 team and project experts supported participants to conceive, plan, track and analyse these experiments using agile-based methodologies with a focus on clear objectives, audience involvement, a willingness to create and iterate and a culture of learning from failures. Participants were asked to nominate colleagues from other roles or departments in their organisations to work and consult with on the experiments. In doing so the experiments sought to uncover personal and organisational opportunities and challenges, as well as audience-focussed ones.

'Small-scale experiments are so valuable!' – **The Getty**

Learning together

A key aim of LGR4's approach was to foster open, honest and collaborative learning between participants as a cohort of peers. We encouraged the group to share perspectives, ways of working, opportunities and challenges; as well as to work together to come up with suggestions for ways forward for our wider sector. This was supported via structured and unstructured discussions across the group either online, face-to-face at workshops or over a drink at the pub!

'The idea of a peer group coming together and documenting the issues that affect their field, and trying together to address them, seems to be a really valuable thing.' – **Royal Academy of Arts**

Eric Drass, artist and curator, speaking at the LGR 2015 Conference

Learning together at one of the LGR4 workshops

'The experiments sought to uncover personal and organisational opportunities and challenges, as well as audience-focussed ones'

2.4 Background

The Let's Get Real story has thus far led over 120 project participants from 78 organisations on a journey of open and honest enquiry, seeking to shift the 'digital change' debate from just evaluating metrics of success or better understanding audiences, to also exploring how to be more joined up internally and externally.

LGR1: How to evaluate success online?[4]
June 2010 to September 2011

This first phase of action research brought together 24 cultural organisations to collaboratively look at the state of the sector re metrics and measuring success.

LGR2: A journey towards understanding and measuring digital engagement[5]
July 2012 to June 2013

The second phase of the project involved 22 cultural organisations and focussed on audiences, exploring what digital engagement means.

LGR3: Is your content fit for purpose?[6]
April 2014 to December 2014

This third phase involved 29 participating cultural organisations and explored how to adapt online content to better meet the needs of audiences.

LGR4 and LGR North America: What's the story?
April 2015 to December 2014

The fourth phase, the subject of this report, involved 30 cultural organisations and explored ways of helping arts and heritage organisations to respond more meaningfully to the audiences of today.

LGR Young Audiences
Nov 2015 to June 2016

This new strand of LGR, still ongoing at the time of writing, involves 19 arts and heritage organisations exploring ways to better reach and engage children and young people online.

LGR5: What's the value of online cultural retail?
June 2016 to Jan 2017

This forthcoming project will look at how arts and heritage organisations can better recognise, articulate and generate value from online retail.[7]

4 http://weareculture24.org.uk/projects/action-research/how-to-evaluate-success-online/
5 http://weareculture24.org.uk/projects/action-research/phase-2-digital-engagement/
6 http://weareculture24.org.uk/projects/action-research/phase-3-fit-for-purpose/
7 http://www.weareculture24.org.uk/projects/action-research/phase-5/

3. The story for audiences

3.1 Introduction

Through LGR4 we wanted to understand how arts and heritage organisations could connect more meaningfully with audiences. To do this we explored how online publishing could be shaped by storytelling strategies, tactics and processes, considering audience needs throughout.

3.2 Strategies - framing the story

3.2.1 Why tell stories?

Audiences come first

It's important to consider who our online content is for. We would assume that primarily it's for audiences. Yet for many arts and heritage organisations, their online content offer is more about responding to organisational needs than to audience ones. In many cases arts and heritage organisations' websites are cluttered with legacy content and presented in 'organisation-speak' that is often impenetrable for most audiences. These websites are organisational brochures rather than channels for interacting with and engaging audiences meaningfully. Whilst several revamped art and heritage websites have become more audience-focussed over the last couple of years, this is still a problem for many.[8] Organisations need to adopt storytelling approaches in their online work in order to meet audience needs rather than just their own.

Public value not just marketing value

Most arts and heritage organisations are in receipt of some public money, and have to realise and demonstrate public value. The role of online content publishing within these organisations is mission critical as it relates to the very reason why arts and heritage organisations exist: to connect audiences with art and culture. Yet many arts and heritage organisations don't value their online content publishing work in this way, assigning it to a siloed function of the organisation, focussing more on realising promotional value than public value. An organisation might convince itself that it is demonstrating public engagement through its online activities, but the promotion of brand often trumps the desire for meaningful engagement with audiences. Marketing teams often take over responsibility of online publishing activity, using digital content as a means of promotion rather than as an end in itself.

For example arts and heritage organisations might argue that in recent years their increased use of social media platforms for online content publishing has forced them to take a more audience-focussed approach, as they have had to move closer to where those online audiences are. Yet the early promise of social media channels as public spaces for interaction has changed, as brands of all types increasingly use them to deliver bland marketing strategies. 'Brands scheduled the communications. Brands pushed the same content to everyone, with the vast majority of content irrelevant to a consumer at any given time. Worst of all, brands talked mostly about themselves, and always expected consumers to come over to their place.'[9] Art and heritage organisations are guilty of this too as Jake Orr, Artistic Director of A Younger Theatre, notes in his observation of the use of social media by arts and heritage organisations: 'There is a vast array of organisations that seem to feel that social media equates to marketing…Stop treating your followers as potential ticket-buying people and start seeing them for who they are: passionate lovers of culture.'[10]

We need to value our online content work differently and strategically align it with our core public missions. Our overall approach to this must be joined up, both in how we create content and how this is served to audiences. Focusing on telling stories online rather than just churning out bland promotional fodder provides a way forward.

3.2.2 What's our role in the story?

One of the mistakes many arts and heritage organisations make when publishing online content is to reprise their traditional role as the holders of knowledge, broadcasting it to passive audiences, framed around organisationally-orientated language and themes. Instead, their online content publishing role should centre on mediating genuine two-way conversations with audiences. For many organisations this requires not just a shift in online approach but rather a more fundamental re-evaluation of their public mission and identity.

This challenge is particularly acute for museums and libraries, which have traditionally held a position as experts and keepers of knowledge, statically conferred onto audiences via traditional methods of showcasing. Even if museums, as part of the 'new museology'[11], can be said to have undergone radical change since the 1970s, shifting their attention from collections towards visitors, this change was more about recognising audiences exist rather than challenging the more fundamental question of whether museum collections exist *for* their audiences.

8 For more info please see http://ashmann.uk/digital-2/digital-in-the-arts/ and http://www.theguardian.com/culture-professionals-network/culture-professionals-blog/2013/aug/22/your-arts-website-is-rubbish
9 http://adage.com/article/digitalnext/social-media-failed-deliver-promise/292801/
10 http://www.theguardian.com/culture-professionals-network/culture-professionals-blog/2011/nov/04/arts-twitter-marketing-communication
11 For more information see Vergo, P. (1989) 'The New Museology', Reaktion Books, London

For example the Silk Mill in Derby engages visitors and volunteers to become citizen curators, building their skills to contribute to the collection display and interpretive content in their physical space.[12] However, in the online space, it's hard to identify many genuinely co-creative equivalents. It's more usual to see traditional analogue approaches being replicated online. Most museums adopt digital merely as a tool to broadcast their traditional interpretations of culture to audiences then rendered unable to meaningfully respond, challenge and converse.

Several LGR4 experiments sought to interrogate this established role, and identified ways that museums and libraries reproduce traditional identities online. Some experiments uncovered instances of this in their use of language, for example.

'We learned that we aren't particularly consistent or considered in the language that we use to describe ourselves and what we do to the public. We have a clear mission as an academic library, but strategy around public engagement is newer. The project has raised questions that we're now thinking about and trying to answer.' – **Bodleian Libraries**

Other experiments revealed a lack of collaboration across teams when it came to content production, particularly between curatorial and digital teams.

'There is an ownership around curators and their collections, and a sense that they know best how to communicate their collections. This makes them wary of others attempting to take on this role, particularly in using non-traditional channels/language/methods to discuss items.' – **Royal Collection Trust**

'The digital team are the main force behind all social media content and interaction. Repeated requests for material and curatorial input is often dismissed or given begrudgingly, to the point where initiatives and features have been abandoned.' – **Royal Pavilion and Museums, Brighton & Hove**

Some experiments also revealed how content selection often meets the needs of the organisation rather than audiences, and that adopting a storytelling approach can help.

'In terms of creating content, it has been an excellent opportunity to get the wider curatorial team to begin to think in terms of what they create being for an external, as well as internal, audience. We've been able to begin to draw distinctions between content that is essential for us for management purposes, but perhaps of little interest to the outside world, and the more narrative elements… which are essential for external understanding of and interest in the Collection.' – **Royal Collection Trust**

'We need to step back more and think of new ways to surface our content and present it in engaging ways. It's not enough for us to say "here's some important stuff our curators know about." We need to go beyond that and allow visitors or potential visitors engaging, easy or interesting ways to explore our collections. Too often we are focussed on just pushing stuff out, instead of thinking what do people want, what might people like.'
– **National Museums Liverpool**

3.2.3 Whose story?

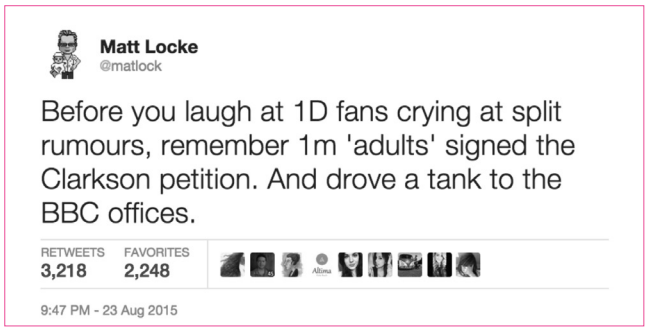
Meaningful online stories need to not only reach and engage audiences, they also need to reflect the audiences in some way, through their lives and their changing culture. From an online perspective this means considering digital not only as a tool that helps us to connect with audiences, but also as a distinct culture within which audiences operate, that could itself shape the content of the story they engage with. Recognising digital as a culture allows us to better understand the relevant audience behaviours, motivations and voices around which to design our online stories, to make them genuinely meaningful for audiences.

We explored digital culture within the project through a discussion on fandoms and fan culture at the Let's Get Real 2015 Conference. Laura-May Coope, former social media producer for Radio 1, and Matt Locke, LGR4 project expert, discussed the attributes of fan culture, upon which many forms of culture such as music, films and games are strongly reliant. Fan culture is distinct, it is social and it is performative. As Laura-May indicated "you don't own your own fandom." Fans' identities are forged by being part of a collective and they seek to continually reaffirm this through social activities. They thirst for a connection that is immediate – a desire to always want to be 'first' and to be 'there'. These immediate, social, networked and identity-focussed attributes of fan culture are inherently digital in nature. Indeed it could be argued that online culture forms such as gaming have largely developed out of fandoms.

'Online content publishing within these organisations is mission critical as it relates to the very reason why arts and heritage organisations exist: to connect audiences with art and culture.'

12 http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-derbyshire-24346142

Whilst arts and heritage organisations might not at first glance consider the activities of One Direction fans to be particularly relevant for them, there is a natural synergy between these organisations and the behaviour of fandoms like the Directioners. Fans don't just have to be young people following boy bands as illustrated by this popular tweet from Matt:

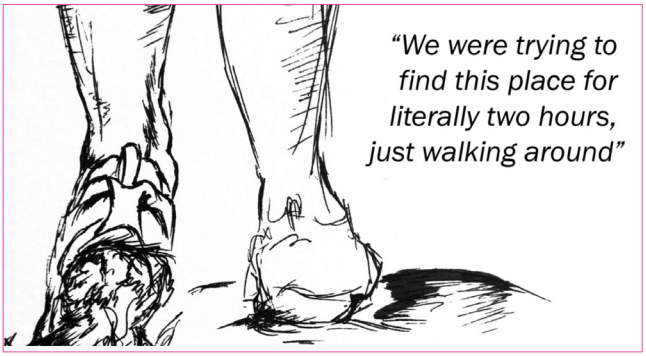


Fans can also be train spotters, history buffs, fashion followers or art lovers – typical niche-interest audiences for many arts and heritage organisations. The challenge for us is make our stories meaningful for audiences by reflecting their interests, perspectives, voices and distinct culture within the stories we aim to engage them with. Laura-May and Matt spoke about how fans are creating their own experiences and generating their own content in response to their passions.[13] Incorporating these into the overall story is important.

Matt Locke, **Laura-May Coope** and **Wolfgang Wild** in conversation at the LGR 2015 Conference

Project experiments run by Watershed and Situations both explored ways of actively engaging the voices of young people and weaving them into stories the organisations were telling. **Situations** sought to encourage and capture these voices by working with a group of young people, called Situations Rising, to generate stories based on their reflections on a recent Situations public art commission called Sanctum.

'Situations wants to extend and deepen our approach of moving away from being the sole producers of digital content and stories about our projects which are often from the position of authority particularly on the Situations website – voices of the curator, producer, artist – the point of view of the specialist and professional and instead platform different and often unheard voices and stories including those of our participants, audiences and communities not yet engaged directly with Situations' work or art in the public realm.' – **Situations**



An online story from Situations Rising about Sanctum

Watershed also worked with a group of young people, called the Future Producers, co-designing their LGR4 experiment around the view of young people towards Watershed's film programme.

'We learnt it is invaluable to co-produce with our target audience. This provided a faster, higher quality insight into their behaviours, interests and motivations. Working this way produced an idea we would probably never have thought of - young people find surprising ways of talking about the programme. They pulled out the recommendable/relatable elements of our programme in a new and surprising way. Films which we would previously have dismissed as not being appropriate for 18-24s were a great success (e.g. Doctor Zhivago) – the Future Producers were able to reinterpret the cinema programme in a very different way.' – **Watershed**

Whilst these experiments proved hugely rewarding for both organisations, they also demonstrated that to engage meaningfully with audiences in this way can be a difficult process. Both learnt that to do so they needed to build strong relationships with their target audiences, involve them at the very outset, give them proper agency by being prepared to let go of control, yet balance this with providing them with the right level of support and training needed to encourage their participation.

'We make assumptions and over-complicate things about the target audience and our offer to them. Being aware of our changing relationship with our co-designers, as it was happening, may have led to less frustration on our behalf. Co-design is harder, riskier, more complicated; yet ultimately quicker and more rewarding.'
– **Watershed**

'Embedding Situations Rising more into the planning and delivery process of Sanctum may have encouraged a greater sense of urgency and understanding of the nature of live reporting….There was an assumption on Situations' behalf that all the young people involved had the attributes and skills needed to produce content quickly and fully understand the nature of live reporting.' – **Situations**

13 See for example http://gameofthronestransmedia.weebly.com/participatory-fan-culture.html or http://terrible1dfanart.tumblr.com/

3.3 Tactics - telling the story

One of the biggest challenges that arts and heritage organisations face in the online space is getting noticed. Previous LGR reports have highlighted the difficulty we can have in connecting with audiences, due to the massive competition for online attention, with so much online content out there via so many channels. We want and need to tell stories online but how do we get heard? There were various reflections from the project about how we can improve the way we tell our online stories to better reach and engage our audiences.

3.3.1 Use images, wisely

The expression 'a picture is worth a thousand words' has never been more true than in the online world. Images are the currency of the Internet and we can make sense of images far more quickly than we can read text or watch a video. 93% of the most engaging posts on Facebook - those that get the most likes, comments and shares - are images.[14] Arts and heritage organisations are image rich; particularly in our digital collections and archive images we hold and those we can capture through our creative work. We could make more of these invaluable assets in the way we engage audiences online, but this does not mean we should throw every image we have at our audiences. We need to be smarter with the images we select and publish, thinking carefully about what will connect with our audiences. Wolfgang Wild of archive image showcasing platform Retronaut[15] spoke at the LGR 2015 conference about the 'S.P.E.E.D model' Retronaut uses to identify archive images that can really connect with audiences. He describes this model as follows:

S = Seeable - rely on the image to tell the story. This is about arts and heritage organisations not telling people that what they have is interesting and showing them instead, through pictures.

P = Positive - the image should give the viewer some form of value, reward or benefit. What might that reward be? The content may be funny, interesting, clever, thoughtful, cool, exciting, helpful, timely, insightful, shocking or fascinating.

E = Easy - the simpler the information an image holds, the easier it is for someone to absorb it. Also, the more confident that person will be that their friends will also 'get' the picture, the more eager they will be to share it.

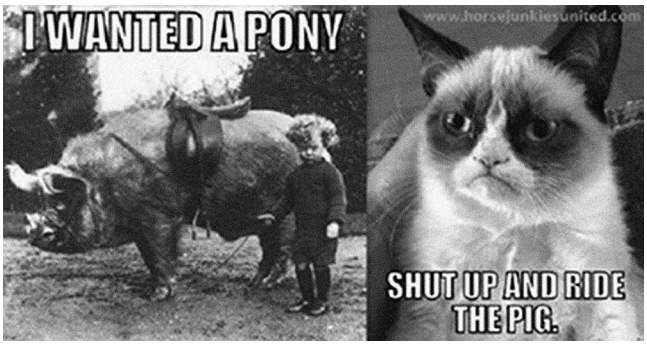
E = Emotive - does this image make me feel anything? Or do I feel nothing at all? Because the more I feel, the more likely I am to share it.

D = Disruptive - Disruption is the most powerful element of the SPEED model. This is the explosion or the punchline. Disruptive images challenge our existing interpretations and assumptions. This not only gives viewers value, it also provides pleasure.

Arts and heritage organisations, particularly museums, libraries and archives, could adopt this model when selecting which online images from their vast collections to showcase for their audiences. Wolfgang worked with Europeana, the European-wide aggregator and platform for collections and archive images, applying the S.P.E.E.D model in order to increase audience engagement with a selection of images held on Europeana. This resulted in Europeana's most shared image of 2013, a photograph from the Bibliothèque nationale de France called Pig Rider.[16]

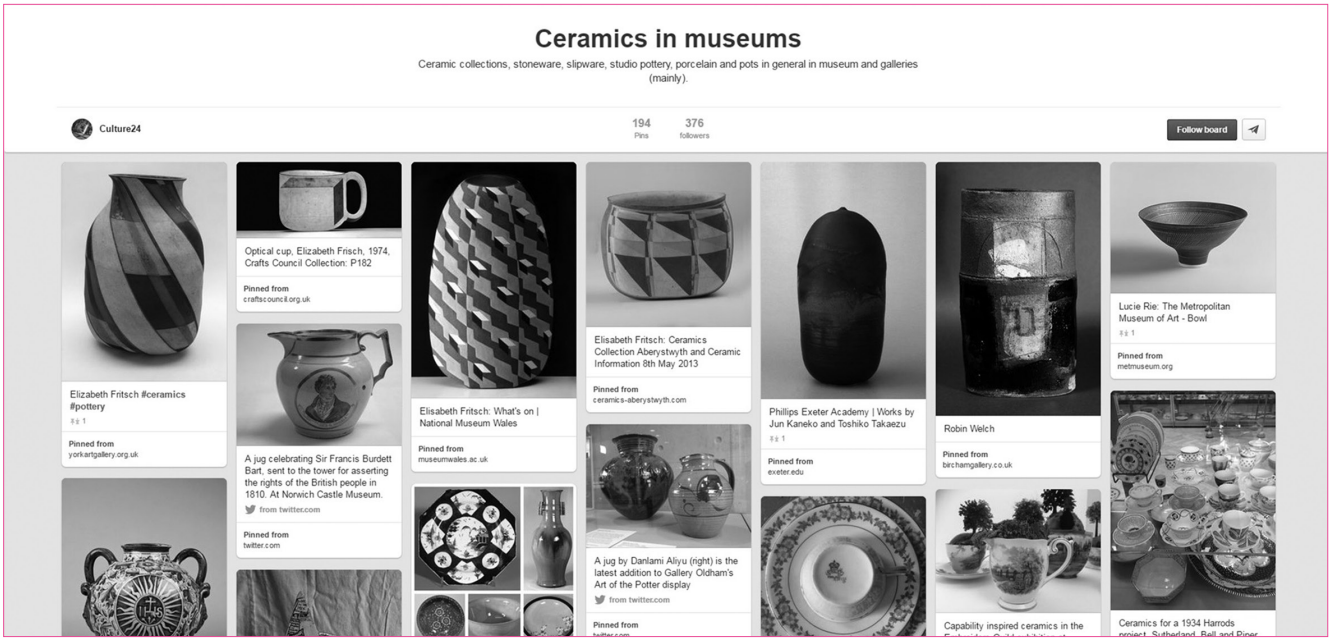
Mr Wingfield's Tame Animals, Agence Rol, 1914, Bibliothèque nationale de France, public domain

The photo was re-published on numerous websites, re-pinned across Pinterest, used on countless blogs, and re-shared across Facebook and Twitter. 'It generated over 250,000 impressions and reached over 100,000 unique users. That's 10-20 times more than an average update before we started using the SPEED model.'[17]



'The challenge for us is to make our stories meaningful for audiences by reflecting their interests, perspectives, voices and distinct culture within the stories we aim to engage them with.'

14 http://www.socialbakers.com/blog/1749-photos-make-up-93-of-the-most-engaging-posts-on-facebook
15 http://www.retronaut.com/
16 See http://exhibitions.europeana.eu/exhibits/show/past-not-as-you-know/vintage-animals/mr-wingfield-and-his-tame-anim
17 http://pro.europeana.eu/blogpost/disrupting-history-one-image-at-time

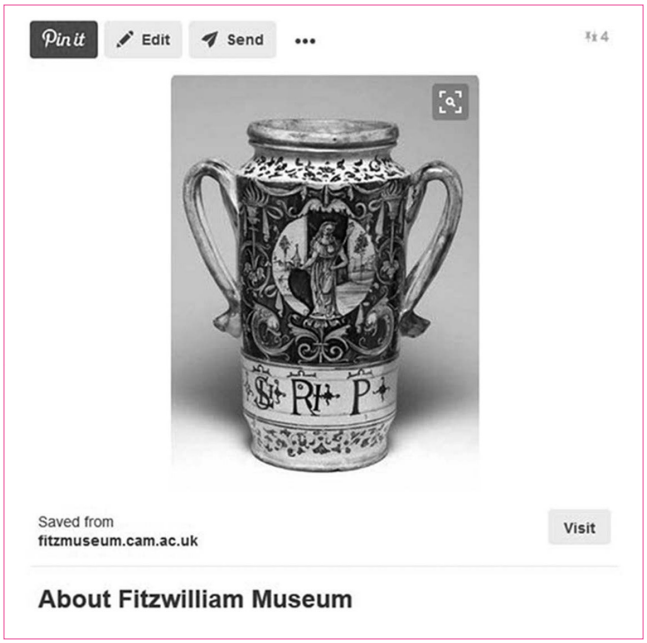


Several LGR4 experiments explored visual narratives. **Culture24's** experiment (Culture24 was participating in the project as online publisher as well as project lead), explored whether we could engage audiences with online museum and gallery ceramic collections, using Pinterest and tapping into the behaviours of the crafters and Etsy fans who already pin images that are often beautiful, sometimes disruptive and nearly always inspirational.

Delving into digitised museum collections we found some material - both contemporary and historical - that fulfilled these criteria, but we also re-pinned existing pins and pinned from other media including Twitter where a thriving network of ceramic fans tweet pictures from museums' ceramics collections.

Bristol Culture experimented with what and where contextual information should be presented alongside their collection images to make them more relevant and useful for audiences.

'It was clear straight away that there were small changes we may be able to make which could make a difference to user experience on our online collections. Across our collections, the field use isn't consistent apart from a few mandatory fields. This experiment helped me to really narrow down some specific content to test out of the hundreds of thousands of object records we have, showing that we may be able to change the order that we display data fields in to make it more user-friendly.' – **Bristol Culture**



Bodleian Libraries experimented with using visual narrative instead of text to present information about the history of Bodleian Libraries on their website. They updated their existing About Us history page, that had consisted of rather dry text running to over 3,000 words, with an interactive image-led timeline that delivered content in digestible chunks and was much more audience-friendly. Undertaking A/B testing on these 2 versions clearly demonstrated the popularity of the visual timeline over the text.

'We are moving from an era of distribution to an era of circulation'

Others explored visual storytelling by using it to encourage content creation by target audiences. **a-n The Artists Information Company** wanted to ensure that artists' practices and voices are better reflected in their content, and that members are involved in the creation of that content. For their experiment they ran a takeover of their Instagram account by the artist Marion Piper.

In doing so they discovered that that their members/artists felt more comfortable using a visual medium as opposed to writing a review and so adopting more visual online storytelling techniques should become more of a priority for them.

3.3.1 Be more open, conversational and playful

As human beings we want stories to inspire us, to move us or to make us laugh. If they can have this kind of effect on us, we want to share them with our friends, families and colleagues. The potential 'shareability' of stories has a huge impact on their reach. At the first LGR4 workshop project expert Matt Locke discussed how we are moving from an era of distribution to an era of circulation, a theory which recognises how so much information these days spreads through sharing between people rather than through formal distribution channels.

Is social media social enough?

Nowadays we look to social media to foster the sharing of stories and therefore to promote circulation. We do this because we think that social media networks and tools support the human desire to share content and stories with our friends and peers. Yet it's not only brands seeking to promote themselves on social media, people are too. Increasing amounts of social media activity centres on the idea of users broadcasting versions of themselves to anyone who will listen, rather than sharing in an honest and more human way.[18]

It's increasingly hard to be yourself on these social media channels when faced with potentially huge audiences and the awareness that everything you create and share is documented, saved and stored digitally. This results in the increasing performativity of multiple public identities on these social media channels and a movement away from the personal.[19] How do arts and heritage organisations engage people with stories on these channels and encourage them to share in an open and honest way if people aren't being themselves on these channels in the first place?

Yet this is not the complete current picture. In more recent times there has been a push back against this broadcast-orientated model of social media. The initial popularity of Snapchat was based more on a desire to reflect the reality of life and the needs of its users as people rather than as own brand broadcasters. For example Snapchat resisted the idea that everything must be saved and stored digitally, and has gone in the opposite direction, latching onto the feeling and behaviour that moments are temporary. This fleeting aspect also allows greater playfulness in the use and sharing of content – audiences in this arena know that their images or short video clips don't need to be highly polished as they will disappear, and the goal is not to capture likes, so they can be more open and playful with what they create and share, arguably more like themselves. As one teenager noted 'Snapchat is where we can really be ourselves while being attached to our social identity. Without the constant social pressure of a follower count or Facebook friends, I am not constantly having these random people shoved in front of me. Instead, Snapchat is a somewhat intimate network of friends who I don't care if they see me at a party having fun.'[20] Similarly the growth of instant messaging apps like What'sApp or Facebook Messenger reflects a growing desire in audiences to have more 'real' conversations with closed networks of friends and family, where there is less need to perform and they can be themselves.[21]

This push back towards a more personally driven social media environment is in turn being resisted, as if a tug-of-war over social media's role in personal identity formation and presentation is being played out. Big brands are increasingly looking to these newer channels to convey their own marketing messages, albeit by having to adapt to the format, and these channels are encouraging this as they look for revenue models. For example through the advent of Snapchat's Discover feature which allows brands to house content within their own dedicated page.[22] In turn these social media channels are adapting their features for users, moving away from the initial unique usage they advocated. In Snapchat's case the lack of social pressure of capturing likes, as well as the fleeting nature of content posted on it, is changing. Snapchat users can now check their Snapchat 'scores' which is determined by how many snaps a user sends and receives as well as how often they post.[23] Also the advent of Snapchat Stories allows users to post to their own stories section (or feed) of their account, which is visible by all friends for 24 hours.[24]

This social media tug-of-war will no doubt continue with newer channels and features in turn encouraging a shift back to more personal, playful usage of social media. As arts and heritage organisations we need to decide which way we want to go. There is a demonstrated desire for audiences to be more themselves on social media and to seek out more meaningful content and conversations that can tap into this. We can respond to this by being more open, conversational and playful in the way we tell our stories online – particularly on social media.

Building new narratives on social media

LGR4 project expert Abhay Adhikari spoke to the project participants about ways to build new narratives on social media and specifically about removing the pressure to be experts. He highlighted how social media is less about accuracy and more about opening ideas and dialogue. This needs to focus less on promotion of individual pieces of organisational content and more on developing a narrative that is focussed on audience. Matt Locke spoke about designing narratives that can engage online behaviours, but to do this you have to either make these very easy for audiences or give them something they really want or care about.

Some of the LGR4 experiments sought to explore these ideas further. Whilst none of them specifically focussed on Snapchat or Instant Messenger apps as platforms, they did explore approaches on more open social media channels. **Museum of Domestic Design & Architecture (MoDA)** identified some of the challenges of using Twitter from an organisational account to develop conversation, even where they had arranged a Twitter takeover.

'As the host of our Twitter takeover put it: "I think your account is more about broadcast rather than interaction" and this is reflected when you try to get people talking, as it were. More people interacted with the re-tweets on individual accounts even, that may not have many followers – just because those accounts like to adopt more conversational approaches. It takes time to build up conversation.' – **MoDA**

18 See for example http://www.huffingtonpost.com/lexi-herrick/11-things-we-fake-in-our-social-media-lives_b_7693182.html
19 For more: see 'Facebook, Anonymity, and the Crisis of the Multiple Self' in Lovink, G. (2011) 'Networks without a cause – a critique of social media', Polity Press, Cambridge UK
20 https://backchannel.com/a-teenagers-view-on-social-media-1df945c09ac6#.w3ty1sgeg
21 http://arstechnica.co.uk/information-technology/2016/02/the-fall-and-rise-and-rise-and-rise-of-chat-networks/
22 https://www.sprinklr.com/the-way/big-brands-advertising-on-snapchat-discover/
23 http://www.buzzfeed.com/benrosen/how-to-snapchat-like-the-teens#.ce2vvnGDA
24 http://webtrends.about.com/od/Snapchat/fl/What-is-a-Snapchat-Story.htm

Brighton & Hove Libraries Services were keen to explore online narratives in order to generate support around libraries in the face of budget cuts. They were keen to resist the natural tendency for the Library to lead on this as an expert and to instead take a more open and conversational approach. They sought to 'move away from a 'billboard' style of communication via social media and create more meaningful dialogue.' Rather than seeking to communicate the adverse impact of cuts on their own Library, they sought instead to generate positive vibes around libraries more generally. This resulted in the creation of a successful 24 hour Twitter campaign entitled #thislibrarycan which invited people to share stories about what their library is doing differently. 'We learnt that being generous of spirit and opening up our idea to all libraries rather than just Brighton & Hove ones was more beneficial.' Part of the reason this small pilot campaign proved so relatively successful, was that it engaged people in what they really cared about and therefore were happy to contribute and share. 'We learnt that people are very generous with their time for a cause that they care about - many people dedicated a sizeable chunk of their day to joining in.'

For their experiment, the **Royal Academy of Arts** (RA) sought to respond to an emerging audience need - 'Feedback from our digital audiences has told us that they want more interactive content, debate and conversation on our channels, so we'll be looking at how we can incorporate live activity alongside scheduled activity to grow our audience and increase its engagement.' They focussed on Twitter and allocated a set time each day to try out three different kinds of real-time interaction with audiences. They joined existing debates through connecting with popular hashtags, shared other people's stories around a particular theme and engaged in direct conversation by responding to every single comment received. Of these approaches they found that connecting with a popular hashtag was the most effective in generating real-time responses from audiences, as it displayed a behaviour that was both easy for their audiences but also that they cared about.

'We started with a very simple idea, asking people to tell us their favourite dog breeds for #NationalDogDay, and said we'd see if we have a relevant picture in the collection for them. The barrier for entry was very low for audiences, all they had to do was tweet one word stating a preference they already held. We were deluged with responses, and were able to share dozens of images in our collection with people who adored their subject, and probably hadn't realised that the RA could have any relevance for them. Seeing it was going well, we then took it further and invited those who had taken part to sketch the dog we'd sent them – which many did, and we collated these in a Pinterest album. Sharing an image relating to a trending topic is something we do regularly, but by changing the angle and inviting response on a topic that mattered to our audience – and taking the time to monitor what came back – we saw a spike in followers, mentions and engagement.' – **Royal Academy of Arts**

The Royal Academy also learnt how much time was needed to invest in genuine online communication with audiences and that a more focussed approach to this was needed: 'The idea that rich, interactive content will help us meet our goals in the longer term, above repeated one-way loudspeaker messaging about our activities, will form a key point in our content strategy, which we will communicate around the RA. We have also been made increasingly aware that successful digital engagement is time-consuming, and requires a way in which staff around the organisation can easily contribute.'

Other LGR4 experiments explored opportunities for playful interaction. Engaging audiences through fun and play creates impact. As **Wellcome Collection and Library** noted in their development of a playful idea to engage audiences with their collection, loosely based on the dating app Tinder: 'If the idea is fun and different, it captures people's imaginations and leads to greater involvement.'

National Museums Liverpool sought to engage audiences in dialogue around how best to engage people in the content and design of their online collections. In particular they wanted to know whether the design for their online collections 'worked'. They found that the most successful way of engaging audiences was when the question was framed playfully around a competition: 'We tried out a 'dress-off' competition asking people to vote for their preferred dress. We showed a dress from our 1930s 'Putting on the Glitz' exhibition, alongside dresses featured in portraits from our collections. This competition proved hugely popular, with 144 engaged users on one post and we received our highest ever Facebook page engagement during the week this competition ran.'

'Much better to have a hunch and test it out, even if it fails'

Chichester Festival Theatre were keen to engage audiences in new and different ways on social media. They wanted to find interesting ways to engage audiences in theatre through sound, and specifically sound design, via social media, aiming to encourage people to create sounds at home and then share them. However, they quickly realised that this desired behaviour was too ambitious without having an existing relationship with audiences around this theme, so scaled their plans back. Instead they sought to pique an initial interest in sound design through designing a playful online quiz. 'We designed an online quiz containing our most interesting sounds from Festival 2015, which we could build mini stories around. The quiz was shared through newsletters and was promoted via Twitter on #LoveTheatre day.' Whilst this received some good initial engagement, its value really lay in starting an ongoing online narrative about sound design between Chichester Festival Theatre and its audiences that it can build on in the future in more ambitious ways.

Playfulness might not always be the right approach; it depends on who your target audience is and what type of conversation they may be seeking. It's often impossible to know this without trying it, so much better to have a hunch and test it out, even if it fails. This helps you to understand the nature of your desired audience conversation better. For their LGR4 experiment **Arts Council England** (ACE) wanted to test how well a piece of advocacy content, in the form of a short film, would work for them outside their usual sphere of influence. They explored several approaches, many via social media, calling on staff, funded organisations and the wider arts and culture sector to share the film with their own followers and friends. They came up with some playful 'Twitter battles' that highlighted the wide range of arts and culture in England, and as a playful piece of content they hoped to engage people beyond their normal audience.

However, this landed badly with audiences. *'The Twitter battles actually got ACE some negative media coverage, which, along with the low engagement these tweets received, proved to us that our Twitter followers are not the wider public with which we hoped to connect with for this campaign. This was a really valuable lesson for us – and helped prove something that we did have a hunch on.'*
– **Arts Council England**

3.3.3 Experiment with editorial formats

We live in a transmedia environment, where the particular medium, device or platform has a diminishing impact on the type of content we engage with. We watch TV programmes on our laptops, listen to radio on our phones, play games on our TVs and read articles on tablets. Rather it's where we are, the type of attention we want to devote and how we might wish to interact that should drive the content and storytelling we are presented with. The way content is structured, styled, scheduled and presented, the choice of editorial format for our stories, governs the way our audiences engage with them, and it's this that must be given primacy over the choice of medium, platform or device. Some project participants experimented with various online editorial formats particularly relating to blogs and video.

Online blog formats

Writing online blogs and articles is nothing new and many arts and heritage organisations publish these. But writing online copy in ways that are meaningful to our desired audiences is challenging and represents an important new skill that arguably all cultural professionals require.

Language and tone are important but the choice of editorial format for the blog or article is as vital in making it relevant to audiences. Over a number of years online news publishers, such as Buzzfeed, have responded to a perceived short attention span from audiences to create shortform, sticky and shareable content for consumption. This has manifested itself in the evolution of 'listicle' formats of online blogs and articles.

In more recent times there has been a resistance to this diet of shortform content and a growing interest in longform editorial content, perhaps aligned to other cultural movements such as 'slow food'. Andy Budd from creative digital agency ClearLeft spoke about this shift at the Let's Get Real 2015 Conference. New publishers like Medium and Matter have shown that people will invest half an hour or more reading well-researched, well-written and beautifully typeset articles, while the Guardian[25] and New York Times[26] have demonstrated that you can keep readers engaged by adding a layer of interactivity to your articles. This interactive longform storytelling approach has been adopted by some arts and heritage organisations, most notably Wellcome Collection's *Digital Stories*.[27] This movement towards longform content has also seen publishers like Huffington Post and Buzzfeed introducing their own longform publishing.[28]

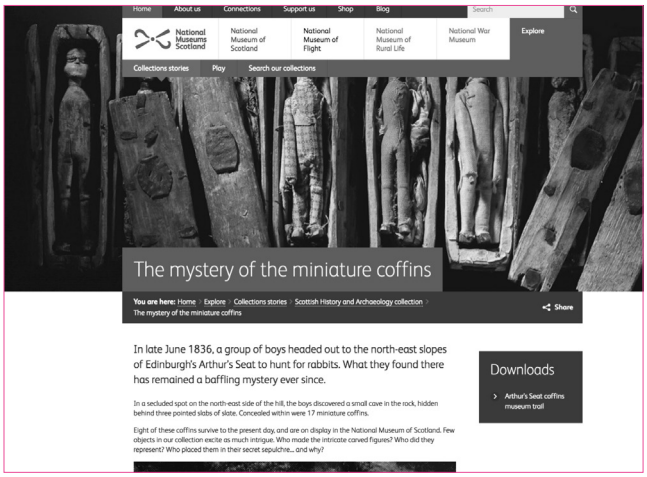
It's not only editorial formats that are adapting to this desire for longer content - Facebook increased the character limit for status updates from 160 to 420 in 2009, and then to over 60,000 in 2011.[29]

Andy Budd speaking at the LGR 2015 Conference

Twitter recently announced it was considering a new 10,000 character limit.[30] Audiences are increasingly using the captions facility of Instagram to articulate their thoughts and perspectives alongside their images, in a longer form image-sharing format.[31] Longform is also seen increasingly in other mediums. For example with the rise of video streaming services like Netflix where audiences can binge on a whole series in a few evenings, we have seen more complex, longer form narrative arcs being developed across episodes in shows such as *The Wire*. Depth, complexity and episodic longform interaction is also being reflected in other formats, as demonstrated by the twelve-part murder investigation podcast *Serial*[32] and Blast Theory's life coach app *Karen*.[33]

So what does this mean for arts and heritage organisations? Should we reflect this shift by focussing our online efforts entirely on longform storytelling? Well perhaps, but only if this meets the audience's needs. The recent trend towards longform storytelling is indicative of a diversification in audience attention patterns that requires a range of editorial formats to meet them. Audiences can interact with online content in a number of ways and contexts. This allows them to demand the content in different formats, depending on what and when they want to read it. Just because a particular person might like to read a longform essay at home, doesn't mean that they might not also be drawn to more shortform orientated content about the same topic when on a quick bus journey. The challenge for arts and heritage organisations is to understand which particular attention patterns are relevant to them and to design editorial formats accordingly.

25 http://www.theguardian.com/world/interactive/2013/may/26/firestorm-bushfire-dunalley-holmes-family
26 http://www.nytimes.com/projects/2012/snow-fall/
27 http://digitalstories.wellcomecollection.org/
28 http://www.buzzfeed.com/tag/longform and http://highline.huffingtonpost.com/
29 http://www.zdnet.com/article/facebook-increases-status-update-character-limit-to-63206/
30 http://www.bbc.co.uk/newsbeat/article/35240281/twitter-closer-to-allowing-longer-tweets-of-up-to-10000-characters)
31 http://nymag.com/following/2015/11/why-instagram-captions-are-the-new-blogging.html
32 https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/why-complex-storytelling-thriving-our-digital-age-nicholas-thompson
33 http://www.blasttheory.co.uk/projects/karen/



For their LGR4 experiment, **National Museums Scotland** (NMS) were interested in experimenting with longform stories, as they wanted to create deeper audience engagement with their online collections based on interests, rather than pushing content linked to wider initiatives like exhibitions and events. The choice of format therefore linked directly with the type of audience attention they were after. The museum created a longform online story related to the Arthur's Seat coffins[34] - eight miniature coffins complete with carved wooden corpses, discovered hidden on Arthur's Seat in Edinburgh in 1836 and never fully explained since.

'We wanted to encourage our audience to read a longform story on a topic we know, from our web and social media stats, that they're interested in. We wanted to understand if it's worth our while investing energy in creating content that isn't driven by our exhibition, event, and capital project programme. We're constantly experimenting with content forms across our social media channels but are more cautious in our approach on the NMS website. We wanted to shake this up a bit, creating a more journalistic, multimedia story, to see if this would appeal to online audiences.' – **National Museums Scotland**

The museum had to present the content in such a way that it not only sparked interest but could also be built upon. This required investing time and effort to build a deeper understanding of what audiences are looking for relating to a subject: 'Longform stories are time-consuming to create but, backed with a strong social media campaign and released at the right time, can be a success for the organisation. We learnt that planning and research are vital: is there an interest in the subject? How can we build on that interest, to challenge audiences' perceptions or perhaps give them more than they expect?'

Other participant organisations sought to resist longer form blogging formats. **National Galleries Scotland** (NGS) had reviewed their online content and concluded that the majority of their blog content was too wordy and dry. There is often a danger that organisations can view blogs as places to post only long academic essays. NGS wanted to help build this internal understanding that blogs can adopt more succinct and lighter content.

'Staff in the organisation generally don't see the value in the creation of digital content and it's often a challenge encouraging staff to do so while working to deadlines which would maximise the potential audience i.e. publishing while topical. It was also challenging to get people to move towards creating 'lighter' content. We worked closely to cut content back so it could be more image and/or story driven. While it was challenging a number of our colleagues did learn to create content which was less 'heavy' and less academic.' – **National Galleries Scotland**

Other organisations experimented with shortform blog formats as a more audience-friendly way into their collections. **Bristol Culture** found that the creation of a simple 'listicle'-style blog post that showcased 14 symbols of death from their collection[35] (connected to the 'Death: the human experience' exhibition on at Bristol Museum & Art Gallery) was a much more successful way to drive audiences to these online collections than relying on their collections search or social media promotion.

'We don't need to reinvent the wheel in terms of content – we just need to format it in a way that audiences are used to seeing (and will notice in the huge amount of content that gets thrown at them on a daily basis!).' – **Bristol Culture**

Online video formats

The popularity of online video is huge and is growing each year. Audience viewing habits are moving away from TV and toward online video. A recent study by Cisco Systems shows online video will account for 80% of all Internet traffic by 2019.[36] For audiences, online video is easy to consume and interpret, so is a very effective storytelling medium. The sheer scale, popularity and effectiveness of online video means that arts and heritage organisations have to consider using it as a way to engage audiences. But online video doesn't just come in one style, the choice of editorial format is key. A quick glance at YouTube uncovers a host of editorial formats, style and themes including vlogs, interviews, tutorials, challenges and more. Arts and heritage organisations need to find the right format that can work for their audiences and for the story they want to tell and that makes sense for their organisation.

For their LGR4 experiment the **Royal Shakespeare Company** (RSC) explored making 'how-to' videos around hair and make-up in theatre. This format made sense to them as they not only wanted to tell a different story about the RSC to a different kind of audience, but they also had the relevant skills to complement the how-to format.

'We're not just actors on a stage, we have a lot to offer a wide range of audiences - all kinds of people, such as hairdressers and make-up artists, work here. We have a lot of skills around hair and make-up in our theatre, could we use this to make a simple how-to video and distribute it to different channels than we would usually use? How-to videos are big news on the web, so this seemed like a good way of getting content out to a different kind of audience.' – **Royal Shakespeare Company**

34 www.nms.ac.uk/arthursseatcoffins
35 http://www.bristolmuseums.org.uk/blog/symbols-of-death
36 http://www.cisco.com/c/en/us/solutions/collateral/service-provider/ip-ngn-ip-next-generation-network/white_paper_c11-481360.html

Another online video format that is becoming more commonplace is live streaming. Until now we have tended to see video through a narrow lens - something that's created, recorded, produced. This is changing with a greater desire for live video and the streaming experience. This has been enhanced by social media companies like Facebook, Twitter and Snapchat finding ways to integrate video into their content offerings and link it in to people's increasing desires for community and in-the-moment, shared experiences.

For their LGR4 experiments both **University of Cambridge Museums** and the **Getty** explored live streaming using Periscope.[37] They wanted to understand what particular formats, within the overall live streaming style, would work within a museum setting. Both found that they had to resist a traditional museum approach to broadcast, as this didn't complement the inherent interactive playfulness of the live streaming format. University of Cambridge Museums tried a number of styles including a traditional museum approach of simply filming a curated talk. For the Getty, the relative newness of live streaming gave them the freedom to try out less established approaches.

'We learnt that some broadcast formats work better than others. Short over long, questioning over presenting. For example filming a curated talk lacked any potential for interactivity, plus it was quite long.' – **University of Cambridge Museums**

'We did not want to use the traditional museum-video model of having a cameraperson tape an expert standing in front of an object. To replicate this model yet again in Periscope seemed a bit absurd, not to mention a missed opportunity. With Periscope, the expert and the eyes, the host and the videographer, can now become one and the same. We wanted to really explore what that means. We therefore created broadcasts in which an educator acts as tour guide, moderator and virtual eyes, guiding viewers through interesting details of specific artworks and responding to all questions and comments in a rapid-fire manner.' – **The Getty**

Both organisations faced logistical challenges in using live streaming tools within the particular physical constraint of the museum. University of Cambridge Museums had 'issues planning and using it in a museum' whereas the Getty faced 'logistical challenges such as spotty Wi-Fi and copyrighted artwork'. However, being aware of these particular constraints meant that they could find ways for managing them such as the Getty only focussing on broadcasts about single public domain works.

Both organisations quickly understood the fun elements of using Periscope for live streaming and the benefits this brought. For the Getty this was in setting the right playful tone for its audiences to engage with somewhat serious content: 'We wanted to create a space for irreverent questions that people may feel too ashamed or 'dumb' to ask in a museum -- questions like, 'Why do babies look so weird in old paintings?' and 'Why is everyone naked in the art?'. We titled our show 'Literally Anything at the Getty' and picked one object to discuss each week for five minutes. The moderator's fun and informal interaction with the audience sets the tone for the broadcast, which is intended to break down emotional, intellectual, and geographic barriers to appreciating old art.'

For University of Cambridge Museums, the playfulness of this format helped build interest and buy-in from colleagues: 'We realised how easy and fun it was to use Periscope. Staff picked it up quickly and enjoyed the spontaneity of live streaming, and the idea of presenting the museum's activities at, potentially, any given moment.'

Traditional arts and heritage organisations might assume that they would have difficulty in adapting to the new distinctive styles created by live streaming through Periscope. But for both University of Cambridge Museums and the Getty, this difference gave them the freedom to suspend their typical approaches and become more experimental with formats and styles.

'They had to resist a traditional museum approach to broadcast, as this didn't complement the inherent interactive playfulness of the live streaming format.'

37 Periscope is a video streaming platform from Twitter. For more information see http://www.telegraph.co.uk/technology/2015/12/010/what-is-twitters-new-periscope-app/

3.4 Process - designing the story

From a project perspective we wanted participants to consider audiences not only in their online storytelling strategies and tactics but also in the processes that they used in planning these stories. The project therefore adopted human-centred design principles to help participants design their digital storytelling experiments according to audience and user needs. Human-centred design is the discipline of generating solutions to problems and opportunities through the act of making 'something new', driven by the needs, desires, and context of the users for whom it is being made. It's interesting to see a few innovative arts and heritage organisations exploring ways to use human-centred design principles in their work.[38]

In most cases the primary users for LGR4 participants' experiments were their target audiences. However for some there were also internal stakeholders and colleagues to consider. As a project we were less concerned with participants creating brand new products or new services, but rather with finding new approaches to repurposing existing assets and channels to tell more impactful stories. We helped participants consider their users in the design of their online storytelling experiments in the following ways:

3.4.1 Generating ideas

Participants were encouraged to brainstorm ideas for their experiments that could not only meet organisational challenges, but also meet the needs of audiences. Project expert **Matt Locke** highlighted that if designing meaningfully for audiences, we have to design for new attention patterns, new behaviours and for circulation not distribution. Matt then worked with participants to brainstorm ideas for their experiments based on this. He used 'ABC cards' which were cards, designed by Storythings, each with a particular audience Attention, Behaviour or Circulation scenario written on the back.

For example:

ATTENTION:

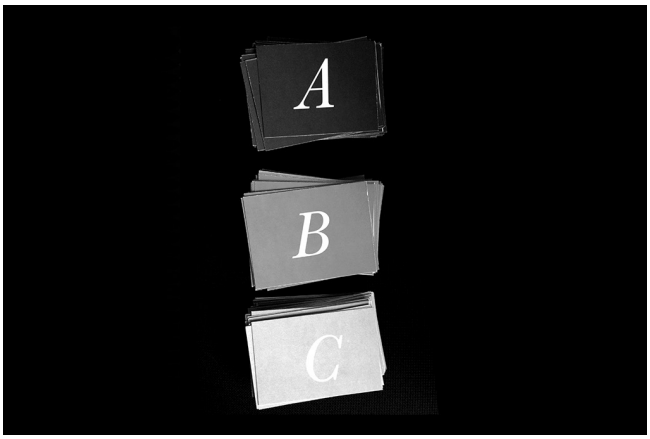
- Something that invites users to come back at least once a week over a set period of time.
- Something that has a specific timetable of activity to follow.

BEHAVIOUR:

- Something that asks you to spot details or themes in an artist/author's work.
- Something that is so spectacular you want to take photos of it.

CIRCULATION:

- Something that creates an event that ends up being covered in the press.
- Something that produces a final product you can show to your family and friends.



Participants were provided with one of each card and asked to come up with an idea that linked to a particular audience-focussed organisational problem or hunch they wanted to understand further but which also met each of the Attention, Behaviour or Circulation scenarios on their cards. They ran a few iterations in order to brainstorm ideas. This activity wasn't aimed at coming up with the perfect idea, but rather to get us in the habit of brainstorming ideas with the audience or user in mind.

Participants generally found this activity difficult but rewarding. Some commented how it was hard to work within the constraints provided but that this allowed them to be more creative and be led more by audience needs than the organisational ones. Many also found it hard to come up with ideas without evaluating them straight away, which tended to block the creative process. Other found it challenging to resist resorting to their organisational perspective and to keep continuing to think from an audience perspective.

Once participants had brainstormed several ideas they were asked to pick one and explore it further. They did this by completing a story brief card that asked them to validate this story idea from various perspectives for example:

Why does this story need to happen? What is the business challenge? Why does this brief exist?

Who is this story for? What do we know about the target audience? What do they value? What do they think about us as a brand?

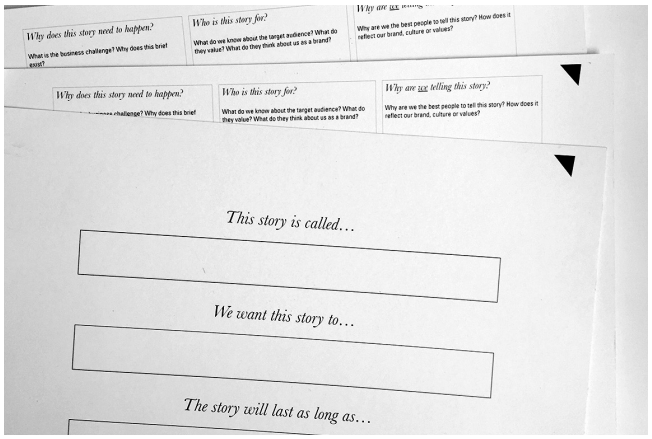
Why are we telling this story? Why are we the best people to tell this story? How does it reflect our brand, culture or values?

How will we tell this story? What will we do to tell the story? How will we create conversation and participation?

Where will we tell this story? What platforms or contexts will we use? What media will we need to create?

What will this story do? What do we want people to do as a result of this story? What behaviours do we want to encourage or change? How will people feel after the story? How will we know this?

38 For one that is please see Derby Museums Human Centred Design Handbook, downloadable http://www.derbymuseums.org/wp-content/uploads/Derby-Museums-HCD-Handbook.pdf and http://designthinkingformuseums.net/



This story brief card allowed participants to make sense of their ideas from an organisational and audience perspective. It also gave them a way of articulating their ideas to colleagues and when making decisions on their ideas.

3.4.2 Defining the story

Once participants had developed potential ideas for their experiments, they were challenged to come up with research questions to help refine them further. A focussed research question not only ensured that a practical and realisable experiment could be delivered within the timelines and constraints of the project, but also that it could respond to the most relevant audience need. This meant challenging participants to interrogate their initial question from an audience perspective.

For example **Watershed** were keen to run an experiment that sought to engage audiences aged 18 to 24 years old with cinema. This audience group is a strategic priority for Watershed and they were about to introduce a discounted cinema ticket for them. Their initial idea focussed on ways of getting these target audiences, via their Future Producers Group, to respond to the ticket offer. However, they realised that this question's focus was more about the organisation and its offer than about young people's interest in cinema. They therefore refocussed their question: 'we refined the initial, very wide proposal that was made to the Future Producers of interrogating our 18-24 £4.50 ticket offer and producing an event around it; to focussing on how we could get attenders to recommend to non-attenders to attend.' This shifted focus to the views of the audience.

Watershed's 'Recommendation Machine' in action

'We were less concerned with participants creating brand new products or new services, but rather with finding new approaches to repurposing existing assets and channels to tell more impactful stories'

The **Royal Air Force Museum** on the other hand refocussed their question by reprioritising the target audience. They wanted to capture and share their volunteers' experiences to support the recruitment and engagement of new volunteers - 'we originally wanted to target reaching a youth audience but as the project developed we realised we needed to focus on establishing how to do digital engagement in general, with a view to focussing on specific audiences in the future.' They recognised the need to build internal digital communications capacity around volunteering first, before they were in a position to target specific groups.

LGR4 encouraged participants to find ways to understand audience needs in order to better define their experiments. Conducting audience research allowed participants to challenge their organisational assumptions as **Bodleian Libraries** discovered when conducting online and offline user research on what audiences knew about the Library - 'we learned more than we thought we might about what our visitors know about us. We expected to see lots of Harry Potter references and 'old books' type statements, but in fact a huge number of the people coming into our spaces didn't even know we were a library - they had just wandered in. The things people did know or wanted to know were quirky or experience based - how to get in, amazement at seeing historic moments, and seeing things behind the scenes.'

Audience research also allowed participants to better focus their research questions. The **US Holocaust Memorial Museum** ran visitor surveys to generate audience insight which made them realise that their research question was misdirected.

'The initial research question was: what would it take to foster stronger multigenerational conversations among visitors in small, family groups before, during, and after their visit to the Holocaust Museum? It turned out we had the wrong question! The real discovery came in looking over the surveys: our visitors couldn't even get to the point of having conversations about the exhibitions because they were so confused about how to get into the building, find the cafe, and interact with our security guards. Therefore the question changed to: what do visitors need to know in order to have a successful and comfortable visit to the Museum, and how can we best provide it to them? We learnt that it is really important to be sure you're asking the right question, and to be open to changing the question when it becomes clear that it's not working.'
– **US Holocaust Memorial Museum**

For **Virtual Museum of Canada** understanding these needs became the primary focus of their experiments so that they could refocus their overall research question for future exploration, beyond the project. They used online surveys to better understand the motivation and online behaviour of their website audiences - 'The main challenge was in the area of research design, articulating a clear (and manageable) goal for the experiment and identifying and executing the steps to achieve it. While we knew, generally, from the experiment's outset that we wanted to learn about our website visitors so we could better target our content to them, the experiment was a process of stripping away extraneous elements and refining our focus.'

The project was also keen to promote user needs research to help participants not only in shaping their experiments, but also in building their abilities to doing this work in the future. At one of the LGR4 workshops, **Seb Chan** noted that good user research didn't need to take ages or be a huge undertaking but rather was about being focused, asking better questions and thinking critically about the answers. This focussed approach was documented in Erica Hall's book 'Just Enough Research'[39] which he strongly recommended to participants.

In their experiment the **National Museum Wales** wanted to help build these user research abilities across other departments by encouraging colleagues to better understand and respond to web analytics data.

3.4.3 Prototyping and testing the story

Many arts and heritage organisations struggle with prototype testing and iterative evaluation. This is often due to an unrealistic desire for perfection before releasing something. 'Culturally, we haven't/don't really like to try something out to see if it works, and tend to aim for perfection before release. Increasingly, this means that we are very slow to respond to changes, and very reluctant to aim for a Minimum Viable Product, wanting perfection.' – **Royal Collection Trust.**

39 https://abookapart.com/products/just-enough-research

We therefore encouraged participants to build prototyping and testing into their story experiments where possible. There were some useful insights to draw upon:

Prototypes should be simple and quick

For their experiment **Wellcome Collection and Wellcome Library** wanted to find fun, simple and unexpected ways to pique audiences' curiosity in what they could see in the Reading Room at Wellcome Collection to allow people to explore their collections in a way they haven't before. They decided to prototype an approach based on dating apps. Instead of spending lots of time and money creating something that they assumed, but couldn't be sure, would work, they created a quick paper prototype that could be tested with audiences and iterated: 'Based on user feedback, we iterated and re-tested the paper prototype before feeding all of that knowledge into a digital prototype. This allowed us to test our idea on people in person and remotely, and was closer to how we envisaged the final product.'

Through being able to test the prototype they also learnt a lot about how to conduct user testing. 'Starting simple and knowing what you want to find out were critical and made the process much easier and more focussed. People will say anything, even if it's not exactly relevant to what you're testing for, but it's usually still useful. We quickly learned not to take things personally.'

Prototypes can be empowering and can build momentum

For some participants who had encountered barriers within their experiments, creating a prototype allowed them to regain control and to move forwards. For Elissa at the **US Holocaust Memorial Museum** 'My project mentor (Padma) assured me that I could make something happen - I just had to get it down as a prototype. So, on a Friday afternoon in January, I returned to my notes from two months previous, opened up WordPress, and built a website[40] in about three hours. I tested this prototype with 20 visitors of various ages, backgrounds, and comfort with the English language over the course of two days, and learned a lot!'

Prototyping is not just about products

The value of prototyping is not only in testing product prototypes, it's also about building learning into the prototyping process itself. For their experiment **Portland Art Museum** (PAM) were interested in exploring how they could give the substantial number of stories captured through their Object Stories project[41] a second life. Launched in March 2010, Object Stories invited visitors to record their own narratives about personal objects. For their experiment they worked collaboratively with developers/technologists and a number of Object Stories storytellers in a discovery and prototyping process. Museum staff facilitated a one day Innovation Lab that brought these distinct perspectives together.

Whilst the Innovation Lab ended with ideas for prototype products, these were suggestions that had been tried and tested before and there was a reluctance to pursue them again. However, rather than view the outputs as a failure, the participants from PAM sought to understand and surface the visitor/participant behaviours represented by each of the team's prototype ideas. These behaviours included creating responses to existing stories, creating connections or links between stories, user tagging or rating of stories, sharing stories and creating new stories. Through this process, PAM learnt that the prototyping process required them to listen to the teams of community members and their ideas, rather than taking a strong role in shaping these conversations.

Prototyping editorial approaches rather than products – testing ways of presenting content to audiences can also be very effective. For example, trying out new editorial formats, language or design on existing web pages or social media. This can be tracked by simple A/B testing and metrics from web analytics or other user orientated research. A number of participants including those from Bodleian Libraries, National Museums Scotland and Bristol Culture, as have each been discussed earlier, undertook this form of content prototyping and testing. This allowed all of them to quickly learn whether their online content was presented in a way that was useful to audiences. 'We learned that we aren't particularly consistent or considered in the language that we use to describe ourselves and what we do to the public' – **Bodleian Libraries.**

'The value of prototyping is not only in testing product prototypes, it's also about building learning into the prototyping process itself.'

40 https://ushmmtest.wordpress.com/
41 http://objectstories.org/

4. The organisation's story

4.1 Introduction

By running storytelling experiments, LGR4 participants were able to explore more than just audience engagement strategies. The act of doing through experimentation allowed participants to shine a light on particular organisational opportunities and challenges they faced. Through this work, we can begin to map out an organisational story that relates to understanding and adapting to digital change. As has been noted in the previous chapter, from an audience perspective, storytelling through online content is not an ancillary function of an art and heritage organisation, but rather it goes to the heart of understanding its connection with audiences and its public value. Similarly, the way an organisation considers and manages its internal approach to publishing online content goes to the heart of its ability to adapt to digital change. This is something that the Government Digital Service recognised by making transformation in its online content publishing services, including the governance and processes relating to them, a fundamental driver in its overall digital transformation strategy.[42]

Focussing on online content experiments allows arts and heritage organisations to not only understand their ability to tell stories with online content to audiences but to also better understand their own internal stories relating to organisational capacity and therefore ability to adapt to change. As Louise from the **Royal Academy of Arts** pointed out when reflecting on her interpretation of the word 'story' through the project: 'At the first workshop, I interpreted this as a literal piece of editorial narrative – i.e. what individual story should we tell, as an example for how we should generate editorial content generally. However, realising that my focus on only editorial content was too narrow an interpretation and that the term 'story' was I think being used in a broader way, I came to understand this as a more open idea about how we as an organisation make decisions.'

4.2 Digital change strategies

So how should an arts and heritage organisation approach digital change strategically and how do insights from LGR4 help to inform and shape this?

One important point to note from the outset is that adapting to digital change is not a simple linear path to a clearly defined goal. Even if such a goal appears obvious e.g. making all online outputs mobile-responsive, in response to the massive shift in use of mobile devices - achieving this goal doesn't mean we have suddenly digitally transformed. The sheer pace of change alone means that audience behaviours will have already moved on by the time we think we have met them. Also we need to question whether meeting one audience-focussed goal supports our entire organisational capacity to responsively adapt to broader digital challenges, such as finding the right resource and skills. In fact the impact of digital is so holistic that the very way organisations think about managing change itself needs to change. Janet Harding, the Director of the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, articulates this eloquently in a recent essay in relation to museums. She points out how museums 'absorbed the ideas of change management popularized in the 1990s' but that these ideas 'are now seriously mis-matched with the world in which we find ourselves. In particular change that is focused on achieving a specific endpoint is out of step with the digital-dominated trend towards perpetual beta. I think that we won't create museums that are appropriate for the digital age without changing our organisational cultures and how we work.' This is a message that all organisations, not only arts and heritage organisations and certainly not only museums, need to heed.

There were a number of insights from the LGR4 project that can help arts and heritage organisations begin to strategically move toward this vision of digital transformation.

'Change that is focused on achieving a specific endpoint is out of step with the digital-dominated trend towards perpetual beta.'

42 https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2012/oct/17/gov-uk-website-internet

4.2.1 Change within and across organisations

Seb Chan, the Chief Experience Officer at the Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI) in Melbourne, spoke at the Let's Get Real 2015 Conference about his experiences of digital transformation in his previous role as the Director of Digital and Emerging Media at Cooper Hewitt Smithsonian Design Museum in New York. One of the biggest pieces of learning Seb shared about digital transformation was the need to internalise risk within the museum so it had more 'organisational muscle' to manage change in the future. The Cooper Hewitt invested in a highly competent internal technical team which meant it was able to deliver and sustain a considerably more transformational and holistic set of systems, built in conjunction with many external collaborators, than if it had entirely outsourced the project. The museum's ability to internalise risk in this way meant that not only could it make big changes in the way its audience experienced and interacted with it, via digital technology, it was also better placed to manage change in the future. As Seb noted 'this is about culture change which is a responsibility the organisation cannot outsource.'

Digital Transformation Advisor **Owen Pringle** (below) spoke about 'The Painful Truth about Digital Business Transformation' at the LGR2015 conference. He observed that for today's organisations leading the way in technological change, their notion of digital was not as a category but as a catalyst. This approach recognises that whilst technologies provide newer or faster ways of doing things we do already, they don't create new things to do in their own right. This can be seen for example in the development of the washing machine or the in arrival of technologically innovative firms such as Uber. Whilst most arts and heritage organisations don't necessarily aim for technological innovation in this way, it is still important to resist viewing digital as a category or as a 'thing' as this not only underplays the transformative impact of digital on all of their work, but also creates restrictive silos around their approach towards it. Several LGR4 participants identified their biggest organisational challenge as the siloing of digital within the structure and mindset of the organisation, so that it became just the responsibility of a particular person or department and manifested itself as disparate projects, rather than as a core and connected function of the whole organisation.

Royal Museums Greenwich identified this challenge: 'we face siloed ways of working with digital split across multiple departments. No organisational consensus on what the digital objectives are and therefore random projects commissioned all over the place with varying quality and little thought given to the long term maintenance of platform integration.'

National Museums Liverpool identified a lack of joined up thinking when it comes to digital: 'our current organisational structure does not support digital transformation. The lack of strategy and clear objectives about what we should and could be doing digitally means that those of us with a digital focus are working in different directions to different priorities.'

The silo problem was also mentioned by **National Museum Wales**: 'another challenge was ownership of the project, it was difficult to get across that this wasn't a digital project that digital media were doing, rather something that we all needed to work on together. Mindsets are still very much that Digital Media do all the 'digital stuff'.'

A more holistic, cross-cutting approach to digital is required right across the organisation. Owen spoke about how organisations need to focus on 'horizontal digital alignment', not vertical. He had worked previously with the Barbican to help them understand that a 'vertical only' alignment of digital would hinder its ability to assist in the organisation's wholesale transformation. They had to review their digital objectives in order to ask less 'vertically aligned' questions such as 'how can we optimise our digital marketing strategy?' or 'how can we use digital better?' and rather pose questions such as 'how will our customers' expectations continue to change?' or 'how can we become a better organisation in an increasingly digital world?' that could apply across the organisation. This more 'horizontally aligned' way of thinking was further embedded by prioritising cross-cutting projects aiming to deliver across the organisation's strategic goals and functions and to challenge organisational silos.

4.2.2 Move forward, then move again

Several LGR4 participants felt that their organisations had begun to understand the organisational importance of digital and were being more responsive to digital change. Yet even for these organisations, there were challenges in staying flexible and focussed. **Situations,** for example, recognised the strategic importance of digital but acknowledged the importance of maintaining flexibility: 'We are faced with the challenge of maintaining a digital strategy that not only keeps up-to-date with current online audiences' expectations, but that reflects our organisation's approach to producing, in terms of offering the new or the unexpected. Our projects are bespoke to each location and hence, our digital strategy needs to be bespoke and flex accordingly.'

Some participants felt they had the support and freedom of their organisations to experiment digitally. For example the participants from **Wellcome Collection and Wellcome Library** note that: 'We're very lucky that there's buy-in for digital transformation at a high level. Our challenge is to use that freedom to come up with innovative ideas.' Similarly **Portland Art Museum** reflected on how they could operate in a 'bubble', free to get on with projects with fewer of the internal challenges faced by other organisations. Whilst having this support and freedom is to be valued, care needs to be taken that bubbles don't become their own digital silos. These bubbles need to burst on occasion, in order to share learning across the organisation. This is a challenge that **Bodleian Libraries** notes: 'we're very lucky to have an organisation that believes digital is important and is willing to invest in it. However, we're a long way from educating the organisation as a whole about digital workflows and ensuring that digital is embedded in projects rather than just an add-on.'

Whilst many participating organisations bemoaned a lack of resource as a big organisational challenge in the path towards change, simply having more people is not a magic bullet. With more resource can come less freedom to try things out and respond to digital change. As the project participants from **Arts Council England** noted: 'larger organisations have more people. That's a given and is often seen as an advantage. It is for us in a way that we do tend to find some space in workloads and timescales for us to try new approaches for our work. But with that size also comes more layers of involvement - sideways, as well as up and down the chain of command - which can often hinder work or add more questions to an idea than anything else.'

4.2.3 Varied and flexible approaches

Given that the challenges presented by digital change are so diverse, the strategic approaches to managing them also need to be varied and flexible. Change is hard and as arts and heritage organisations we need to become more open to different approaches and more adept at combining and adapting them where necessary. LGR4 highlighted three models (of the many that exist), each of which take different approaches towards becoming a more digitally responsive organisation.

1. The Response Matrix

During the final workshop with LGR4 participants we explored the 'Response Matrix' that was developed by Teo Greenstreet as a way for organisations to consider their future sustainability in terms of environmental change.[43] This matrix takes a three-pronged approach to responding to change that focusses on reacting, redesigning and reframing. With the LGR4 participants we explored how this might be considered in terms of digital change. We explored and interpreted the matrix as follows:

- **REACTING:** responses prompted by the effects of the digital change challenge - quick fix holding actions
- **REDESIGNING:** Responses prompted by the underlying causes of the digital challenge - processes and systems
- **REFRAMING:** Responses prompted by underlying causes - shifting values and world views

In our discussions participants had different feelings about which of these three responses they as individuals were comfortable with and which elements of the matrix they and their organisations were operating within. There was agreement across the group that all three responses should be valued within a digitally responsive organisation and there needed to be internal capacity to effect any of them, depending on the nature of the challenge in hand.

2. Fast and slow

In his Let's Get Real 2015 Conference talk Seb Chan spoke about the value of working in an agile way and focusing on ongoing deployment and prototyping. He talked about how such an approach helps build velocity and how this is an organisational enabler. Many arts and heritage organisations have begun to recognise the value of agile working and we sought to promote this approach within the project when participants worked on their experiments.

However Seb also pointed out that whilst speed and tempo were important considerations in an organisation's response to change, not everything needed to be fast. An effective organisation needs to be able to move at two speeds: 'some things should happen fast and some things should happen slow and that is ok - not everything has to be fast.' We should take time when needed to think about quality and also to reflect on the process. This is important for many arts and heritage organisations that are keen to maintain quality in their output, but still try things out. We were also keen to build this reflection time into the project, asking participants to reflect on the impact of their experiments and their overall experience during the project, at later stages in the process.

3. Top-down and bottom-up

In a Q&A discussion between Owen Pringle and Seb Chan at the Let's Get Real 2015 Conference, both stated the importance of strong leadership to support digital change, but noted that this could not be the only approach nor happen in a vacuum. It had to be complemented by other smaller-scale actions happening amongst employees and teams from within the organisation's ranks. Both approaches rely on and support each other, but it's important for organisations that their people know that in the absence of strong top-down leadership they still have a way to move forwards. This pragmatic approach is explored more in section 4.3 below.

43 For more information see http://www.nutgreen.co.uk/

Owen Pringle and **Seb Chan** in conversation at the LGR 2015 Conference

4.3 Digital change tactics

If organisations need to consider a holistic internal cultural shift in order to become more strategically responsive to digital change, how can this work in practice? The LGR4 project focussed on this in workshop and mentoring sessions with Carolyn Royston, Director of Digital, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum and Padma Gillen, Partner, Scroll LLP.

Both experts have significant experience of digital transformational work and brought the benefits of their experience to support participants in understanding practical ways to manage and navigate digital change. Whilst both spoke about the importance of strong leadership that is invested in change, they also discussed that for meaningful change to happen across the organisation every person in the organisation, not only leadership, has to become a change agent and feel empowered to lead from wherever they are.

Exploring practical ways for each individual to effect change from their sphere of influence represents a way for change leadership to work across an organisation. LGR4 participants explored these practical approaches in the context of their own organisations and through their experiments, drawing useful insights.

Rachel from the **Royal Air Force Museum:** 'Padma's and Caroline's talks on organisational change enabled me to put into perspective what is in my remit to change and influence. It helped to clarify the situation that I was in.'

4.3.1 Treat change as your own practical project

Padma and Carolyn spoke about managing change individually as a practical project and taking a pragmatic approach to moving it forwards. This is about building clarity by working through the specifics of what *you* can realistically do to effect change and also to build momentum by setting out on a path towards change even if it is via small steps. For example making lists of areas where you are being blocked, prioritising the importance of each and then coming up with practical actions you can take immediately to advance the most critical ones is very empowering. Just as important is identifying areas that you simply cannot change. For these you can consider other ways around them or if this is not possible, simply stop worrying about them and focus your energies and efforts on what you can change.

Danny from the **Royal Shakespeare Company:** 'I learnt that some things can't be overcome, so it's better to plan a way around them. Rather than continually being disappointed that I'm not finding time to do it, arrange to do it once the obstacle is out of the way.'

Lynn from **National Museums Liverpool**: 'I learnt that you need to tackle some battles and not others. I knew this before, but I think it helped clarify what to fight battles over.'

4.3.2 Building meaningful internal communications is key

The majority of practical approaches towards building change from the individual perspective that we explored focussed on ways of improving internal communications. As Elissa from the **US Holocaust Memorial Museum** identifies: 'The biggest thing we need to do is talk to each other - not just the worker bees who make things happen, but supervisors to supervisors and C-level staff to one another - in order to smooth the pathway for working together.' Where there is a siloed mentality between different internal departments, it is important to take a frequent and open approach about communications, so everyone feels informed and respected.

Andrew from the **Royal Collection Trust** notes: 'this has really brought home the importance of communication - both larger meetings with representatives, but also talking to individuals and ensuring that all necessary stakeholders feel part of the project. Letting people know how ideas were developing, what we were planning, what had happened. Communicating failure is equally as important - letting people know what hasn't worked, and how we are going to change. The larger problems all had some founding in a lack of communication.'

Also Annelisa from the **Getty**: 'My favourite tactic is to share everything as openly and transparently as possible, placing notes and updates in a self-service system (Basecamp, Slack, or Google Docs) where anyone can follow along. Typically the worst thing you can do at our organization is to not communicate out.' She set up clear communication channels with regular status updates as well as providing opportunities for colleagues with any objections to her Periscope experiment to find out more - 'I invited everyone who had concerns about the LGR experiment to come observe any Periscope broadcast, any time.'

'If you show staff an example of something that really worked well – a workflow that was quicker, more effective and made for happier users, then job done.'

Being open with communications is about more than opening up the lines of communication, it is about communicating open and honest methods of communication. Carolyn spoke about the importance of building empathy with colleagues and trying to understand their perspectives. She also highlighted the importance of asking open questions, not using jargon and being an active listener. Much of this centres on communicating with colleagues as humans first and foremost, rather than just as fellow cultural professionals. This also enables you to cut through some of the 'organisational clutter' that becomes a barrier to understanding someone's particular perspectives and ideas about a situation. For example Lizzy from the **V&A** found that having informal conversations with curators was a much more effective way of tapping into their knowledge: 'The most useful thing I did was downloading a free dictaphone app onto my iPad and interviewing curators about their objects. It's so much easier to uncover interesting stories when you're having a relaxed chat with someone on a topic that they are passionate about. Very busy people are far more likely to help you out when you're just asking for half an hour of their time for a conversation.'

Whilst opening up communication in the ways described is key, it is also important to use these communications to meaningfully move forward with decisions. This can sometimes be challenging if the communications process generates several different viewpoints and suggestions. A useful communication tactic explored by project participants was to guide decision-making by using evidence. This is particularly useful when presented with differing opinions of what to do next. For example Trish from **Royal Museums Greenwich** learnt how to steer decision-making: 'I found when asking for contributions without any parameters there would often be so many diverse views it would be impossible to arrive at an action plan. I initially tried asking our subject experts what would be the best stories to tell but was getting lots of random suggestions and no commitment. So we used web analytics and then audience votes to define a shortlist of stories which we then shared with the experts - they had to agree the best six stories chosen from this list and agree who would tell them.'

Similarly Lynn from **National Museums Liverpool** says: 'I learnt that people respond to evidence, showing metrics or a video of someone talking about your website is really powerful.'

Graham from **National Museum Wales**: 'The most practical way possible is evidence-led analysis. Pure hard evidence. If you show staff an example of something that really worked well – a workflow that was quicker, more effective and made for happier users, then job done.'

Where providing evidence is not possible it's important to consider whether people's objections to a course of action have merit. In some cases it's only if you go ahead and try that will you know. Padma highlighted that in some circumstances it was 'better to ask for forgiveness than permission', meaning that it is often easier to just go ahead and do something and demonstrate practically that it hasn't caused problems some might have envisaged in a hypothetical situation.

Conversely if you believe that a proposed course of action is the wrong one it's important to know when to say no. Some participants learnt to get better at this. For example Louise from **Royal Academy** - 'I tried, and have been trying generally, to say no in ways that are firm and clear, and led by my expertise in editorial. Acting as an expert offering advice rather than an overloaded content-producing service, I'm hoping to develop more respect for what our department does and create a different dialogue for collaborative working with colleagues across the organisation. I have been trying this with varying success! At times, my advice has been gratefully received, and at others it's been vehemently refused and we've ended up doing the content in question. However, being aware of this shift I'm attempting is allowing me to practise it, and I'm hoping it will improve over the long-term.'

Even if you are unsuccessful at blocking an action and it does prove to be the wrong one, this provides invaluable evidence to help you advocate in the future. After all it's not just about demonstrating what works well, evidence can also be used to demonstrate what doesn't work.

4.3.3 Build internal support and foster collaborative working

Collaborative working across internal teams doesn't just happen; sometimes you have to make it happen, proactively. For the LGR4 project we asked all participants to nominate colleagues from different teams to advise and work collaboratively on their experiments. We also asked participants to hold regular meetings throughout their experiment with this internal group to facilitate collaborative dialogue.

For example Trish from **Royal Museums Greenwich**: 'To attempt to implement our experiment we set up a cross-museum working group involving stakeholders with expert knowledge in all our subjects including Library archivists, curators, astronomers, interpreters and conservators.' Also for Chris from **National Galleries Scotland**: 'We developed and established a group with cross-department representation who became known as the department's digital content liaisons. We met with the group three times over the period of the experiment and asked them to come up with ideas for content. This proved effective for some, and challenging for others but there was benefit even for this latter group by trying to do this and therefore being able to reflect on why this was unsuccessful.'

Some organisations sought to create collaborative working conditions by actually changing their physical location within the office. For example Rachel, Volunteer Manager from the **Royal Air Force Museum,** changed the location of her desk to be in closer physical proximity to other teams. This move was to support her aim to better connect up her work on volunteering with other departments in the museum.

Many participants learnt the importance of gathering support for change and finding willing change agents in their colleagues. For Andrew at the **Royal Collection Trust**: 'it became apparent that there were paths of least resistance - individuals who were keen/ interested and open, and able to act as advocates with their own teams. It's really important to cultivate these sympathetic people when we are trying to implement something new.'

Other organisations identified using colleagues as invaluable sources for untapped passion and creativity. Dan and Andrea from **Arts Council England**: 'We don't take advantage of our internal staff as much as we could/should. We have over 400 colleagues, and we can use them as online advocates more than we do!' Annelisa from the **Getty**: 'Museums and other non-profits attract people who are passionate, creative, and willing to accept less pay than in the private sector. Yet such organizations may not give these people the creative space to use that passion and to experiment and have the freedom to fail. Showing that we can do such a thing and succeed is important for future experiments.'

Some participants ran events and sessions to gather support and buy-in. For example Lynn from **National Museums Liverpool:** 'I presented to my department and gave them an update on what we'd learned and they were really interested in what had gone well and not so well. It provoked them into thinking more about how they use social media and how we as an organisation talk about our collections.' For other organisations it was important to find less formal ways to interact and share ideas. Annelisa from the **Getty** - 'I'm working with a colleague now on a half-day 'digital share' where people who work on digital stuff can get to know each other, share info and ideas, and then have drinks together.'

Finding ways to have fun and celebrate success was also important. For Vicky from **Brighton & Hove Libraries Services** it was important to build fun and informal ways to help staff develop digital skills and confidence: 'perhaps consider doing this through sharing successes and maybe an after work computer club in the pub?' Elaine from **National Museums Scotland** wanted to find fun ways to share data and evidence 'I'm arranging a Christmas social media celebration, to share stats from the year in a fun and informative way.'

4.4 Digital change as resource

The focus on individuals within organisations exploring their own roles as change agents led the LGR4 group to discuss and re-imagine what a specific digital role might look like for a digitally-responsive arts and heritage organisation. In particular how such a role might be considered not just in delivering digital outputs in a narrow sense, but also how to effect digital change as a change agent.

In time it is hoped that aspects of this re-imagined role could be embedded into everyone's roles, as articulated by Sam from the **Museum of Domestic Design & Architecture** 'I think organisationally we have mainly learned that where we don't have digital staff, we definitely need digital to be embedded more fully in existing roles in order for us to progress and improve.'

However until that time comes it is for the people who currently occupy digitally-focussed roles within organisations to lead as change agents to enable this to happen. So what could such a re-imagined digital role look like?

4.4.1 Demonstrate diverse skills

A diverse range of skills beyond technical and functional ones, such as project management, audience research, data analytics and copy writing are all needed for digitally focussed roles. Softer skills are also vital, such as the importance of communication skills to foster the collaborative culture necessary to respond to digital change. Several LGR4 participants reflected on these softer attributes during their experiments.

Graham's role at **National Museum Wales** during his experiment was to become a mentor and influencer, seeking to empower colleagues to take control and ownership of website content. 'I became better at making people realise that they themselves are able to directly influence our online audience and that it was them that was in control of their audience.' Similarly Krystyna at **Royal Pavilion and Museums, Brighton & Hove** was keen to empower colleagues to create content, in this case Tumblr blogging, but realised that this required more input on her part than simply training them on how to use Tumblr or leaving them to get on with it - 'Giving someone the freedom to work in their own time and with their own creativity may be what they would like, but they still need guidance and encouragement before they can really do it themselves. I realised they could not just be trained and left to it at first. They needed motivation, inspiration and encouragement.' Also Andrew from the **Royal Collection Trust** reflected on his role as an influencer - 'It really focused a lot of my energy on acting as an influencer, rather than a participant in other work streams - convincing, cajoling and soothing as the need arose.'

4.4.2 Everyone can be creative

At one of the project workshops there was an interesting discussion amongst participants about the perception of their role in comparison to those who were deemed 'The Creatives'. There was a feeling that these creatives were perceived to be 'the gods in the industry', whilst there was often a lack of internal respect for the typical 'digitally-related' roles that many project participants held. Many also noted that some of this lack of respect came about because of how the participants themselves thought about these roles and it was up to people in these positions to articulate the creative aspects of their own roles.

For example Lizzy from the V&A recollects a conversation with Seb Chan at an LGR4 workshop where she was describing needing to work with a curator to shape online content. 'When I recounted my meeting with the curator to Seb Chan, his reaction was "Why didn't you write the content yourself?". This question completely changed the direction of my research project, as it made me realise that what I really needed to experiment with was in fact different methods of content creation. This forced me to question whether I should create more content myself and not just be a content commissioner or recipient. A journalist would never say "I can't write about that subject, I'm not an expert", but we tend to. I realised that my lack of confidence in my ability to write engagingly on a topic I have not studied was holding me back.' – **Victoria & Albert Museum**

4.4.3 Adapt or die

Along with the increasing diversity and importance of softer skills in this re-imagined digital role, it also needs to be flexible, to adapt to particular circumstances. As David and Claire from **Watershed** noted when reflecting on their relationship with the Future Producers groups in their experiment: 'Your role will change. The relationship between the Future Producers and us changed throughout the process – from mentors, to managing, to coaching, and back again.'

4.5 Digital change as organisational rhythm

We encouraged project participants to run experiments not only to learn more about engaging audiences in online storytelling or as a way to shine a light on particular organisational opportunities or challenges, it was also a way for participants to undertake a process that we believe can effect change from within an organisation by effecting changes in the rhythms of working practices.

Project expert Matt Locke spoke to the group about how organisational rhythms operate at a deeper level than even organisational strategy and culture. He explained how rhythm is not often something defined by your organisation but is defined by the sector or industry in which you work. 'For example if you work at a newspaper, your rhythm is the daily edition. If you're an advertiser, it's a campaign. If you work in an art gallery or museum, is the calendar of exhibitions. If you're a publisher, it's the big marketing moments before summer and Christmas. For advocacy groups, it's the cycle of policy decisions and elections.' [44]

The challenge for many organisations is that these existing rhythms are incompatible with the pace of digital change and only by changing the rhythms can organisations become best placed to respond to this change. For example the BBC didn't fully understand how to react to digital until iPlayer came along. iPlayer didn't necessarily respond to or effect a massive change on the watching habits of viewers when it first came out. However for the BBC internally, iPlayer was a massive step change as it challenged the entrenched rhythms of BBC TV programme production that had always focussed on scheduled release. It meant that when sector-disrupting influences came along, such as Netflix releasing all their shows at once and massively changing TV viewing habits, the BBC were better placed to respond than they would have been, due to these changes in their rhythms caused by iPlayer. Rhythm change is hard but happens over time by making fast and small changes to working practices and processes.

We encouraged participants to reflect on their experiments as a process. For many this formed a different way of working that had the potential to change their existing organisational rhythms, and they were keen to embed these processes within their organisations. For some it challenged their approach to failure allowing them to give something a go without having to plan and worry too much

'We definitely will consider running small scale experiments in the future. We actually are now approaching more of our small projects as experiments, which I find puts less pressure on our team and allows us to try new things without being afraid of failing. It signals to other departments that things may be works in progress and helps us manage expectations.'– Liz from **Bodleian Libraries**

'I think working in self-contained experiments has been the most useful thing for me to take from the project - the fact that it is alright to do things iteratively, in small stages, and not 'know' that something is going to be a success at the beginning of a large project.' – Andrew from **Royal Collection Trust.**

'I learned the value of experimentation. It's much easier to do things within an organisation when it's couched as an experiment. It's really powerful to say "Let's just try it, it's okay if it doesn't work out as long as we learn from it".' – Lynn from **National Museums Liverpool**

For others the benefits were also about being able to build momentum by making small and quick steps without needing too much extra resource or capacity.

'I learnt that a lot can be achieved without additional funds and within a short time frame.' – Vicky from **Brighton & Hove Libraries Services.**

'I learnt that experimentation and trying things out doesn't have to be hugely risky or expensive, and that we can take baby steps.' – Meg from **Chichester Festival Theatre.**

Others found that working in an agile manner by putting the audience first at all times and working iteratively was an invaluable aspect of the experiments as a process.

'This was the first time I'd really had much engagement with the idea of agile working. Coming from a collections background (and collections role) where projects often have a funding-restricted life-span it has been great to be introduced to/immersed in a different way of working.' – Sam from the **Museum of Domestic Design & Architecture (MoDA)**

44 https://www.hatchforgood.org/explore/120/rhythm-the-most-important-thing-about-your-organization-that-you-don-t-understand

5. Our story

5.1 Introduction

The LGR4 project aimed to support participants in learning both about audiences and how to engage them better through online storytelling and about organisational challenges and how to effect change. This learning process was also about the participants themselves, as human beings confronted by challenges and how we find ways to make sense of these and move forward. Understanding these individual stories is key to unlocking the story for audiences and for the organisation. Only through understanding yourself and how you feel can you effectively connect with your organisation and your audiences.

5.2 How did we feel?

We asked participants to locate themselves, as people not organisational representatives, within the project. They reflected on what they had learnt as individuals and how they felt through the project. There were three sets of opposing feelings that arose most often. These point towards developing organisational cultures that are more honest, fun and collaborative; and therefore more sensitive to the feeling of the people within them

5.2.1 Fearful vs confident

During the later workshop we spoke a lot about fear. Many participants articulated the fear they had felt at the outset of the project, particularly around risk-taking and the possibility of failure.

'I learned that I am not comfortable with risk-taking and that I should listen to other people when they say everything is going to be okay.'

'I do need not to panic and worry so much.'

Project expert Padma Gillen explained how a fear based culture within organisations can cause inertia, leading to difficulties in dealing with change. He spoke about trying to "give the gift of fearlessness" and that it is possible to be fearless without being reckless. To become fearless was not to shut it out, but rather acknowledge and use it positively - "Fear and excitement often feel similar, so just flip them." Through encouraging a spirit of experimental practice, the project sought to help participants flip this fear in order to become more confident, excited and empowered in their work and their positions within organisations.

'LGR provides a buffered space where the fear-based culture around us didn't matter, and I think we can decide to create that space for other projects, perhaps seeing it not as lacking fear but as embracing it as part of the process.'

'It's made me feel bolder about my skills and my place in the organisation.'

'I felt empowered to try and effect change within my organisation and also that I have got ideas and knowledge that can benefit the organisation.'

'I feel more empowered to state the case for change, and I feel stronger in my persuasiveness as to why we won't do certain things the old way anymore.'

The focus on fear and the need to build confidence amongst participants speaks of the challenging relationship that many arts and heritage organisations have with failure. There is often an unhelpful dichotomy between success and failure, creating an unhelpful 'fear of failure' culture for many individuals and organisations. Whilst there has more recently been a desire to positively embrace failure in the arts and culture sector, especially in its role of nurturing innovation through organisational R&D processes[45], there is a danger that if viewed only through this lens, failure is considered simply a business development tool rather than something that is inherently confronting, messy and personal. Within the Let's Get Real programme we try and support participants to talk openly about failure and celebrate it as a rich learning experience.

'There is often an unhelpful dichotomy between success and failure, creating an unhelpful 'fear of failure' culture for many individuals and organisations.'

45 http://artsdigitalrnd.org.uk/features/the-f-word/

5.2.2 Demoralised vs joyful

A number of participants talked about the organisational bureaucracy and politics they faced trying to get their experiment off the ground, which left them feeling demoralised.

'It felt demoralising and tiring to have to spend so much of my time reassuring people and apologising for protocol slights.'

'I faced a really trying environment in which to try to corral a team of people who weren't necessarily assigned to this project.'

Reflecting back on the participants' journey through their experiments, at the final workshop, many participants spoke about the importance of bringing an element of fun, freedom and joyfulness into their work through their experiments. This joyfulness could cut through the feelings of organisationally-induced demoralisation, particularly through energising and inspiring colleagues.

'Experiments that are fun for your team to do are more engaging. Controlled, formulaic works less well. Licence to fail, aim for fun.'

'If you can find the fun in something, people are much more willing to help then you might think.'

'The experimental, joyful approach we took to this project has really opened me up to the spirit of experimentation.'

5.2.3 Alone vs supported

Many participants discussed how they felt alone and unsupported within their organisations when attempting to run their experiments, largely due to the inability of colleagues to devote their time.

'I think generally I felt a bit on my own with the experiment.'

'It's REALLY hard to go it alone when you're bumping into larger institutional roadblocks. I need a partner: to bounce ideas around, to learn each other's skills, to challenge each other to think bigger.'

However for those who felt alone within their organisations, there was great value in belonging and participating within the wider project group. Many discussed the support the group has given them to reflect on their challenges, share ideas and foster collaborative peer learning.

'It's encouraged me to feel that I'm not alone in the challenges we're facing.'

'I found the most useful part of being part of something bigger. A collective of people who all agree on the fundamental problem. If we all make a small ripple then together it will be a wave.'

Brighton, home of Let's Get Real

6. The experiments

6.1 Introduction

Participants' individual content experiments, conducted during the LGR4 project, are detailed here, specifically the questions they sought to answer, what they did, what they learnt, and how this informs what they will do next...

Some experiments worked more successfully than others and some could not be fully realised due to encountering a variety of obstacles but all experiments, irrespective of this perceived success, provide invaluable insights both for participants and for the wider arts and heritage sector.

The experiments covered a broad range of objectives, strategies, themes, platforms, content types and target audiences, as broken down below:

Experiment Grouping	Experiment Focus	Experiment Case Studies
Experiments using particular online strategies	Editorially shaping online collections	See: **National Museums Scotland** **Bristol Culture** **Victoria and Albert Museum** **Museum of Domestic Design & Architecture** **Royal Collection Trust** **The Getty** **Portland Art Museum**
	Engaging audiences via social media	See: **Royal Academy of Arts** **Brighton & Hove Libraries Services** **a-n The Artist's Information Company** **Arts Council England** **Chichester Festival Theatre**
	Prototyping	See: **Wellcome Collection and Wellcome Library** **Watershed** **US Holocaust Memorial Museum** **Royal Air Force Museum**
	Playful engagement	See: **Wellcome Collection and Wellcome Library** **Chichester Festival Theatre** **Watershed** **National Museums Liverpool**
	Social media takeovers	See: **a-n The Artist's Information Company** **Museum of Domestic Design & Architecture**
Experiments using particular editorial formats	Longform content	See: **National Museums Scotland**
	Podcasts	See: **Royal Museums Greenwich**
	Visual timelines	See: **Bodleian Libraries**

Experiment Grouping	Experiment Focus	Experiment Case Studies
	Video	See: **Royal Shakespeare Company** **The Getty** **University of Cambridge Museums**
	Blogs	See: **Bristol Culture** **National Galleries Scotland**
Experiments conducting audience research	Co-creation and co-design with young people	See: **Watershed** **Situations**
	Various forms of user consultation and research	See: **Bodleian Libraries** **US Holocaust Memorial Museum** **Portland Art Museum** **National Museums Liverpool** **Wellcome Collection and Wellcome Library** **Virtual Museum of Canada**
	Online surveys	See: **Virtual Museum of Canada**
	Using Google Analytics	See: **National Museums Scotland** **National Museum Wales** **Bristol Culture**
Experiments using particular platforms	Periscope	See: **The Getty** **University of Cambridge Museums**
	Instagram	See: **a-n The Artist's Information Company**
	Pinterest	See: **Culture24.org.uk**
	Twitter	See: **Royal Academy of Arts** **Arts Council England** **Museum of Domestic Design & Architecture** **Chichester Festival Theatre** **Brighton & Hove Libraries Services**
	Tumblr	See: **Royal Pavilion and Museums**
Experiments specifically focussed on internal organisational change	Supporting, creating and shaping internal content production processes	See: **National Museum Wales** **National Galleries Scotland** **Royal Air Force Museum** **Royal Pavilion and Museums** **Royal Collection Trust**
	Training and mentoring colleagues	See: **National Museum Wales** **National Galleries Scotland** **Royal Pavilion and Museums** **Royal Collection Trust**

6.2 Experiment summaries

6.2.1 Amgueddfa Cymru - National Museum Wales

Name	**Graham Davies**
Organisation	**Amgueddfa Cymru - National Museum Wales**
What was the research question behind your experiment?	My research question was around how to define measurable success for our new website. More specifically, how best to aid the Marketing Department to create measurable goals and objectives to measure the success of our new visiting webpages. The experiment will attempt to empower and enable the Marketing Department to take control and ownership of website content by helping them develop a series of measurable goals and objectives for the visiting section of the website. With training and awareness of Google Analytics they would be in a (new) position of tracking their own goals against their objectives and experiment with text and copy to effect change themselves - work that has historically been undertaken by the Digital Media Department.
Why was this important to your organisation?	This was important because we have undergone a large website redesign project, which has led to the realisation that the success factors and goals need to be owned by those departments that create the content, rather than owned by Digital departments. Content creators will therefore understand and have a responsibility for the success of their online content if they own their own goals.
What did you do to implement this?	First of all the Digital Programmes Manager and the Head of Digital Media discussed this with the Head of Marketing before agreeing to set up some principles to make sure the project stayed on track. This happened to coincide with a Digital Marketing course that the Head of Marketing was undertaking at the same time, so both things worked hand-in-hand.
What happened?	From discussions with the Head of Marketing, we arranged for all the marketing and communications officers to attend a workshop where we outlined our work and the project and tried to tease out what online success looked like to them, along with some of the goals that they felt were important to them. We presented them with a few examples of data dashboards that they could track, and ultimately influence directly according to the content they publish (explaining that a part of the project would involve each site helping Digital Media to come up with what they wanted measured, Digital Media would actually create the dashboards for them). It became apparent during this workshop that individual sites required different goals to one another and therefore an overarching set of goals wasn't that easy to come up with without first exploring each site's requirements in more detail. This next step is to take the project on a roadshow to all our sites to focus on each site individually, before agreeing on a higher level set of goals.
What were the personal challenges you faced when carrying out this experiment?	The personal challenges were mostly around disseminating research in a non-technical way and explaining the concepts behind Google Analytics to an audience that was not used to the terminology. Another challenge was ownership of the project, it was difficult to get across that this wasn't a digital project that Digital Media were doing, rather something that we all needed to work on together. Mindsets are still very much that Digital Media do all the 'digital stuff'.

What did YOU learn?	I learned how to adapt my use of terminology according to the audience. I also became better at asking the right questions for understanding the level of commitment and/or engagement from other members of staff. I became better at making people realise that they themselves are able to directly influence our online audience and that they are in control of their audience.
What did YOUR ORGANISATION learn?	Our organisation is still learning, but the Head of Marketing and the Marketing and Communications Officers have all now attended Google Analytics training. This has raised the awareness among staff about the amount of data we have available to draw on about our online audience and how they interact with our content and websites. The organisation is still learning the benefits of disseminated digital ownership and that it's the content creators themselves that can direct online engagement, rather than assuming the Digital Department can wave some magic wand to make it happen on their behalf.
What next?	There is still a lot of work to do. We need to take this project to all our sites and to focus on the goals the Marketing Officers need to make their content better. Up until now the thinking tends to be - write it once, publish the same thing on many platforms – on and offline. We will be creating individual content dashboards for each of our sites, this will be done in conjunction with the content creators, with them leading on the questions as otherwise it remains 'something that the Digital Department does'. We want to get Marketing Officers to own these dashboards and to run their content experiments themselves (and to track the effects on their dashboards). Therefore attempting to instil this LRG project in the thinking of our staff right from when it is written, and helping to empower our staff to do content experiments for themselves.

6.2.2 Arts Council England

Name	**Andrea Lingley & Dan Smith**
Organisation	**Arts Council England**
What was the research question behind your experiment?	We produced a piece of advocacy content - a sixty second film - that was a lot more public-facing than our usual work, so we wanted to test how well this content would work for us outside our usual sphere of influence, calling on staff, funded organisations and the wider arts and culture sector to share the film with their own followers and friends.
Why was this important to your organisation?	The Arts Council develops and invests in arts and culture - and we also champion it. To do this, one of our key priorities is to continue to make the case for arts and culture and its public investment across our audiences. We want to make as big an impact as possible with our work, and so testing this approach was important to us.
What did you do to implement this?	We established a few different tests to help us do this: • Internal comms: teasing staff with this content and asking them to share it and providing them with helpful hints and tips on how to do so. • E-comms: emailing our funded orgs with additional content and resources, and a direct ask of them to share this content with their followers (and with different links to the film per five geographical areas we cover – for our own information and tracking). • Use of supporting artwork and content across our channels: we came up with some Twitter battles. Highlighting the wide range of arts and culture in England (in terms of both type and point in time), and as a playful piece of content we hoped to land beyond our normal audience. We also developed GIFs with clips from the film, and 15 second edits for Instagram.
What happened?	The film was watched in full over 20,000 times, and our social channels – along with the #culturematters hashtag – saw an increase of engagement by 50%, on average
What were the personal challenges you faced when carrying out this experiment?	Finding time to think about this project/attend meetings – but feeling the benefits when we did. Also coming from a complex organisation, we didn't have a specific event, show or product to focus the experiment on and we found it difficult to come up with the initial idea. It was hard for us not to think of the big picture and come up with a larger campaign, but it really helped us to drill down and think about a specific piece of content to test with a specific audience - which we can then take learnings from and apply to other pieces of work (as detailed later).
What did YOU learn?	We don't take advantage of our internal staff as much as we could/should. We have over 400 colleagues, and we can use them as online advocates more than we do! Some of this work landed badly. For example the Twitter battles actually got ACE some negative media coverage. Which, along with the low engagement these tweets received, proved to us that our Twitter followers are not the wider public with which we hoped to connect with for this campaign. This was a really valuable lesson for us – and helped prove something that we did have a hunch on. However we did learn that including popular, mainstream artists in the video and finding a link to timely news worked – the Benedict Cumberbatch run at the Barbican worked well for us. The Huffington Post used the film in an article about him.

What did YOU learn? (continued)	Other tactics we deployed worked better for us: tracking links per geographic area gave us insight into the effectiveness of Area comms channels and general rates of uptake across areas; the joined-up approach we forced ourselves to take with this work helped us present a clear, multi-channel campaign to our audiences – something we can often struggle with, given the competing narratives and comms projects we have to work on at any one time. We also learnt more about who our social media channel followers are and which are the best channels to use when sharing public facing content. Our Twitter feed is mainly followed by the sector – so organisations we fund, artists and those that are generally in tune with what we do. Sharing the 'battles' did not work with this audience. Whereas the battles may have worked better with our Facebook followers where we could have targeted audiences by their interests.
What did YOUR ORGANISATION learn?	The outputs of the digital and marketing team were highlighted to all our staff, with the internal comms work we executed. Along with sharing the video content, we gave every staff member a proactive 'how to be an advocate online' document (and printed copies delivered to all – a big thing for a digital first org!), along with a more formal social media policy – so all staff felt empowered and informed to engage online, whilst recognising they work in the public sector. As a wider advocacy and communications family, thanks to the preparation and the assets we developed, we felt like a more joined-up function of organisation.
What next?	We've managed to come up with a list of ingredients that DO and DON'T work when promoting this sort of public-facing advocacy content. We'll be repeating what worked and enhancing it (for example, posting related discussion topics on our intranet's discussion board, to sit alongside new content and get staff engaged in our work), and making sure we avoid things that we now know don't sit well with our audiences. BUT - we'll explore new ways to engage with them instead. So for example, the next Twitter experiment we did was commissioning a 50-part Twitter novel to celebrate us hitting 100,000 followers. This is not something we normally do, it could have fallen flat and generated some iffy coverage like the battles, but it went down really well. We're keen to continue trying things like this, and LGR has helped to get us thinking outside the box in this way.

6.2.3 a-n The Artists Information Company

Name	**Stephen Palmer**
Organisation	**a-n The Artists Information Company**
What was the research question behind your experiment?	How to ensure that artists' practices and voices are better reflected in a-n's content, and that members are involved in creation of that content.
Why was this important to your organisation?	• We want our content to inform artists, but in a way that enables artists to create and inform the content. • We want to deepen engagement with our members, to stay relevant to artists so that they continue to be members.
What did you do to implement this?	We worked through several ideas – initially thinking about an idea to encourage artists to share images, videos, and ideas about what happens in their studios, and then thinking about whether we could get members and other artists involved in the creation of an 'Artist-led A-Z'. As part of this thinking I set up an a-n Instagram account www.instagram.com/anartistsinfo/ thinking that as a 'visual' platform it would be a better place to encourage a-n members to get involved in these projects than Twitter or Facebook – that it might be good place to create visual content (whilst our membership is made up of people who work in visual media, much of our content is text-based). In my first meeting with my project mentor Abhay, he suggested we could run a member 'takeover' of our Instagram account, pitched as a chance for an artist to gain exposure through our channel (although at that point we only had 130 followers) – but also to 'help us to develop our Instagram channel'. Abhay also gave advice on how to run the takeover. I thought it would be good to coincide this with a specific event so it had a clear angle/purpose. Coincidentally Sluice http://www.sluice.info/ an organisation that runs a biennial artist/curator led art fair in London got in touch and asked if a-n would be interested to be media partner of its 2015 edition. We were and thought this would be a good chance to run the 'takeover'.
What happened?	We posted the opportunity on Instagram https://www.instagram.com/p/8AMJ7qFhws/ and also as an opportunity on our own jobs and opps site, plus promoted it through our email digest. We received 9 responses and selected Marion Piper @marion_piper as she was using Instagram in an interesting way and had a similar number of followers to a-n (now around 200). I put together terms and conditions for the takeover – I tried to keep these fairly loose but as we decided the best approach was to hand over our login details for Instagram we needed to have some contractual conditions to back us up. I had a brief Skype meeting with Marion to ensure everything was clear and to see what support she needed. During the week leading up to the takeover we published a news story to publicise it and other a-n activity at Sluice_2015 https://www.a-n.co.uk/news/sluice_2015-talks-takeovers-and-a-new-publication We asked that Marion could attend the art fair for one day and post at least 15 images. She was keen and able to be there more, so she attended the preview and 2 subsequent days. On the morning after the preview we published a follow up story with highlights from Marion's first day https://www.a-n.co.uk/news/sluice_2015-art-fair-a-palpable-atmosphere-of-experimentation Over the three days of the fair Marion posted over 50 images https://www.instagram.com/explore/tags/ansluiceartisttakeover/ • No of likes: 611 • No of comments: 15 • Around 50 new followers - 281 before takeover • 334 at end of takeover.

What happened? (contunued)	The images looked great and gave a real sense of the event. Marion's comments: I really enjoyed the Instagram takeover! I felt I was able to engage more with the groups there and perhaps ask more probing questions because I mentioned the a-n takeover, which always received a warm response. I had in mind that I was there not for myself but on behalf of other a-n members and wanted to show the set-up, people, activity and work on show for those unable to attend.
What were the personal challenges you faced when carrying out this experiment?	Ensuring the terms and conditions covered a-n with regards to what is suitable to post on a general interest social media account without interfering too much with the takeover artist's ability to post. Concern about allowing a non-staff member to use a-n's social media – should we give them the password or should we find another approach? Making sure the offer was an enticing one – did we have enough Instagram followers – what fee should we pay to the takeover artist for this sort of opportunity? Ensuring that in the lead up to and during the takeover we gave enough coverage through other channels (a-n.co.uk, Twitter, Facebook).
What did YOU learn?	That content can take different forms – that content can exist in a social media platform. That we can use social media in a different way – twitter has always been good for directing users to content but this was about using social media to produce content. That members/artists probably do feel more comfortable using a visual medium as opposed to writing a review. That some events are much better covered in this way – a review of an art fair after it has happened is not particularly interesting whereas producing content as a thing is happening is much more lively!
What did YOUR ORGANISATION learn?	That content can take different forms – that content can exist in a social media platform. That we can use social media in a different way – twitter has always been good for directing users to content but this was about using social media to produce content. As a team, I think using Instagram has helped us to think differently about content, and particularly about how content can develop across several platforms to produce something greater than if it were on a standalone platform.
What next?	• More takeovers – maybe getting back to the original idea of focusing on artist's studios. • More focus on member's projects working across Instagram and the a-n site. • Think about how to use Instagram in a less formal way to promote member's projects.

6.2.4 Bodleian Libraries

Name	Liz McCarthy
Organisation	**Bodleian Libraries**
What was the research question behind your experiment?	How can we best deliver content about our history and who we are to our visitors, web & in person? Sub-question: what do our visitors know about us/our history before they arrive, what do they learn, what do they want to learn and how? Sub question: what stories can we tell to engage people with our mission and our history?
Why was this important to your organisation?	We had previously done very little to provide casual visitors with easily digestible information about our history and who we are (outside of booking a formal tour or buying a full-length book). As we review our content strategy and focus more on public engagement, it was important to make sure that we were accessible and clear about who we are, where we come from and what it is about our history that makes us special.
What did you do to implement this?	We initially ran user research both in person and online to ask visitors what they know and what they want to know. We also updated our current About Us history page, which ran to 3,000 words. We a) reduced the length and b) created an interactive timeline that delivered content in easy-to-read chunks. We ran A/B testing on the old history section version and the new one. We worked with our Venue Services team to overhaul the Tours and Venue Hire sections of our website, which are some of the 'top visited' content for members of the public. These sections are often the first experience visitors have with us, and they weren't fit for purpose. The reworked version not only provides a more explicit path to tour tickets and hire info, but also provides clearer information about our historical spaces.
What happened?	An incredible level of support and collaboration from other teams! Our Venue Services team was enthusiastic about a redesign of their pages, and also about providing information about visitors that they have gathered after years of face-to-face interaction. Other teams were able to contribute information and stories for the timeline, and as we move forward we've had enthusiastic feedback on future plans.
What were the personal challenges you faced when carrying out this experiment?	Time. With all the best will in the world, we all have too much to do and too little time in which to do it. Colleagues were enthusiastic about helping, but I tried to be realistic about what they could actually fit in. It is always challenging in a large organisation to move big things quickly, so I focused on getting smaller elements done one bit at a time. Too much choice! We have so much going on in our team, and in retrospect many of the things we've done over the past nine months could have been a great Let's Get Real project.
What did YOU learn?	In addition to developing a better understanding of our public visitors, learning to use a few new technical tools and better analytical and testing skills, I felt what I really gained from the project was a better understanding of how to approach digital project management and the value of building a team that feels it can be creative and experimental.

What did YOUR ORGANISATION learn?	Technical and testing skills - we had issues with the timeline tool we wanted to use, which we were able to address but it took time and expertise from our developer. Once we had that sorted, we encountered issues with our CMS and A/B testing. We were able to fix these, but - again - it took time. However, now we're set up to do more regular testing, and have experience of running tests. We learned more than we thought we might about what our visitors know about us. We expected to see lots of Harry Potter references and 'old books' type statements, but in fact a huge number of the people coming into our spaces didn't even know we were a library - they had just wandered in. The things people did know or wanted to know were quirky or experience based - how to get in, amazement at seeing historic moments, seeing things 'behind the scenes'. We also did quite a lot of thinking about our 'commercial' public options (tours, venue hire, etc.) and how we present these to our visitors. We're not at the stage yet where we can judge whether the improvements we made are having a financial impact, but user feedback is much better. We learned that we aren't particularly consistent or considered in the language that we use to describe ourselves and what we do to the public. We have a clear mission as an academic library, but strategy around public engagement is newer. The project has raised questions that we're now thinking about and trying to answer.
What next?	We're still working on this experiment, but it has a number of different (and big!) project aspects of its own: • Run a social campaign based on the timeline stories • Investigate audio guide or replacement options for visitor services • Explore content delivery onsite (mobile? kiosks? something else?)

6.2.5 Brighton & Hove Libraries Services

Name	**Vicky Tremain**
Organisation	**Brighton & Hove Libraries Services**
What was the research question behind your experiment?	Can we engage our customers in advocating for us (and all libraries) online? Can they help us spread the word about libraries that are doing things differently/challenging perceptions?
Why was this important to your organisation?	• To move away from a 'billboard' style of communication via social media and create more meaningful dialogue. • To generate positive vibes around libraries in the face of budget cuts that all local councils are facing. • To learn more about where our customers are online and what else we can offer them digitally.
What did you do to implement this?	My experiment was the creation of a 24 hour Twitter campaign entitled #thislibrarycan. We invited people to share stories about what their library is doing differently.
What happened?	We got influencers from the cultural sector on board via a concept note we shared in the run up. We had 1,231 tweets (376 original tweets), and increased our followers by 50 in 24 hours (our average before the campaign was around 10 new followers a week!) We had very positive feedback from participants and interest from Libraries Taskforce in scaling up the campaign together in 2016.
What were the personal challenges you faced when carrying out this experiment?	I needed to let go of the fact that people would take the campaign in different directions! Not everyone shared my vision for the hashtag but that was ok :)
What did YOU learn?	That a lot can be achieved without additional funds and within a short time frame. I also learnt that people are very generous with their time for a cause that they care about - many people dedicated sizeable chunks of their day to joining in.
What did YOUR ORGANISATION learn?	We should invest more time into our digital platforms and create measureable realistic goals around what we want from online engagement. We could be further implementing digital engagement into all of our work.
What next?	I'm creating a report on my experiences of the project, to include a list of suggestions for the future of our social media accounts, blog and website, and the ways that our digital agenda can feature in all job descriptions.

6.2.6 Bristol Culture (Bristol Museums, Galleries & Archives)

Name	Fay Curtis
Organisation	**Bristol Culture (Bristol Museums, Galleries & Archives)**
What was the research question behind your experiment?	I wanted to see how people engaged with our online collection search via social media, and whether this differed from how people engaged with our blog. I also wanted to see how people engaged with content from an exhibition which opened at Bristol Museum & Art Gallery on 24 October 2015 called death: the human experience. This is a tricky subject and I wanted to introduce some of the themes in the exhibition to people before it opened, and gauge their reaction so that we could adjust content accordingly once it opened.
Why was this important to your organisation?	Two main reasons - firstly, the death exhibition is our flagship exhibition this year, and being on the subject it is, we wanted to measure audience reaction prior to opening to better prepare our comms strategy. Secondly, we're looking a lot at storytelling/narratives online at the moment and how we should be approaching this (and if there is a need for it). I wanted to use Let's Get Real 4 to inform Phase 3 or 4 of our website development, which we're looking to base around digital stories and our online collections.
What did you do to implement this?	I worked with one of the lead curators, Amber, who set up a 'Symbols of death' narrative on our online collection search: http://museums.bristol.gov.uk/narratives.php?irn=12883 This worked well with what I had in mind after looking at the ABC cards: short pieces of content to share daily at different times of the day, alternating between objects/narratives when posting to see if there was a difference in engagement. There were just over 20 symbols, so I chose 14 of these to highlight on the blog and posted one a day on social media in the two weeks in the run-up to the opening of the exhibition. I wanted to see how people (referrals from social media) navigated through our object/narrative pages on the online collection search – if they went on to further pages, if the hierarchy of information made a difference etc. I set up some tracking on Google Analytics – I originally wanted to try Event Tracking but for a couple of reasons it wasn't quite feasible to do this in time for the experiment on our online collections search. So, I set up campaign links, content grouping and segments on GA. Alongside this I created a simple 'listicle'-style blog post: http://www.bristolmuseums.org.uk/blog/symbols-of-death/ to compare how people engaged with this style of content. Lastly, and on a slightly separate note, I pulled together some data (mainly from Twitter) around people responding to our death content/talking about the death exhibition to run it through a sentiment analysis tool – Alchemy.
What happened?	Just before I started the experiment, we created a Facebook event for the exhibition, which gained huge traction very quickly. It became pretty clear to us that the exhibition theme wasn't a put-off! The event had more people attending it than actually like our Facebook page for Bristol Museum & Art Gallery (!) so I decided to post the content in the event instead of on the page. I posted the symbols on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram each day, alternating between linking to the 'object record' and the 'object narrative' on our online collection search, at different times of day.
What were the personal challenges you faced when carrying out this experiment?	The usual – time and trying to juggle multiple projects at once. We were going live with website Phase 2 just before the opening of the exhibition, and I would've liked to spend some more time focussing on LGR4 in more depth.

What did YOU learn?	It was clear straight away (and from discussions with Peter) that there were small changes we may be able to make which could make a difference to user experience on our online collections. Across our collections, the field use isn't consistent apart from a few mandatory fields, e.g. object number, which causes issues for user experience design. This experiment helped me to really narrow down some specific content to test out of the hundreds of thousands of object records we have, showing that we may be able to change the order that the data fields display in to make it more user-friendly. People didn't navigate much to/from object records and object narratives – maybe this is ok and we don't want to try to change this behaviour, but there could be ways for us to make it easier to navigate and test again to see if there is a need for this. So a change we made as a result of this is pulling through text from narratives onto object pages, instead of relying on people clicking on links to read narratives. Overall, though, the blog post was a bigger driver to the symbols of death on the online collection search than the posts on social media, even though most visits to our blog come from social media anyway (meaning that people are going from social media > blog > online collections search). It seems that this format of content works better with social media audiences. It may be better to pull groups of collection items together on the blog as opposed to in a narrative on the online collection search, and I have done this since for the National Gallery's #AngelTrail which proved really popular again. I think this shows that we can learn from what other (probably non-cultural) orgs, with lots of resource, are doing. We don't need to reinvent the wheel in terms of content – it seems obvious, but we just need to format it in a way that audiences are used to seeing (and will notice in the huge amount of content that gets thrown at them on a daily basis!). I didn't have much time to do a huge amount around sentiment analysis/Alchemy but putting the data through it initially showed a really positive response (even with terms normally seen as negative e.g. 'death') – this showed me we were on the right track and to carry on doing what we were doing once the exhibition opened.
What did YOUR ORGANISATION learn?	That people 'love' death and that we maybe shouldn't have been so worried about the audience response. We've now made some changes to how the data for objects in the online collections search is displayed as a result of findings from LGR4. We prioritised the order of fields displayed to be more user-friendly, for example replacing the object number with the object name as the title – on page titles, search results and thumbnail navigation. It's made us think about how we design and test methods for publishing content in order to successfully analyse it, for example having meaningful URLs for our online collections.
What next?	We've already worked on small improvements to the online collections search – order of lists/fields etc. We'll be working on Phase 4 of our website, part of which is around stories/narratives online and integrating online collections. From my content experiment, I think we need to break this down into two sections: 1. Stories/narrative content as the primary focus with object records integrated but secondary 2. Object records as the primary focus with stories/narratives integrated but secondary We'll be testing what user needs are for both kinds of content – which we're sure will bring up lots of lovely challenges around what digital assets we have, how we use these and how (or whether) the content we have in our physical spaces needs to change for digital platforms. I also want to work more on the Alchemy sentiment analysis API to see if we can use this for analysing social media engagement in a simple and consistent way.

6.2.7 Chichester Festival Theatre

Name	**Meg Dobson**
Organisation	**Chichester Festival Theatre**
What was the research question behind your experiment?	Can we get our audiences to engage with us in new and different ways on social media?
Why was this important to your organisation?	We don't have very high engagement currently with audiences via our social media and feel that while we continue to put content out, we don't get much back in the way of more meaningful engagement and it seems to feel quite one way. It was important to us to have a go at something different.
What did you do to implement this?	The team had several discussions about possible experiments and ways with which we could try and get this different interaction (this was prior to my starting the job). The initial idea was around sound design with the aim of getting people to create sounds at home and share them with the theatre, with the potential to be used in a show. Originally the idea was that this would be for our summer production of Running Wild but this didn't work with the project's time line.
What happened?	The initial phase of the experiment, decided on with my project mentor, was around trying to engage with other artists on SoundCloud with the idea of building up a bank of interesting sounds with which to share and inspire audience members before encouraging them to develop/find/create their own sounds. This didn't work brilliantly; with no context and no sense of what the point of it would be for our audiences, I wasn't really getting anywhere and I decided not to take it any further. I then met with our sound associate, who also felt the SoundCloud experiment wasn't going to work without any context; he got very excited about the idea of encouraging people to create and share sounds but was talking about creating a microsite and discussion board and the whole thing suddenly felt like it was blowing up into something that was only relevant for a very specialist audience rather than the more general engagement that we were aiming for. I decided I needed to scale things back and that the idea of getting people to create sounds and share them with us was altogether too ambitious without an already established platform with which to do this, and that we were expecting too much from our audiences. So, following an interview with our sound associate which I shared on our blog/news section of our site, I designed an online quiz using an app called https://polldaddy.com/ to which you could upload audio files which I gathered with the help of our Head of Sound by going through all the audio files which we used in Festival 2015 and selecting the most interesting ones/the ones which we could build mini stories around. The quiz was shared through our newsletters and ended up being carried out by 182 people. On #LoveTheatre day we shared the quiz on Twitter with a competition to win tickets to our Christmas show if they tweeted their score to which 21 people entered.

What were the personal challenges you faced when carrying out this experiment?	There were several things I found challenging with this experiment. Firstly, I started this job part way through the project and found it quite difficult picking up where someone else had left off and essentially trying to carry out someone else's ideas. I also found it quite difficult engaging people within my organisation (possibly because I was new), though I think this was partly down to feeling like they would find it an annoyance as everyone's so busy, especially in the middle of the Festival season. Our Sound Associate, whilst absolutely lovely, and very enthusiastic on the two occasions I did meet up with him, is an incredibly busy man and it wasn't always easy getting hold of him.
What did YOU learn?	Well, I know this anyway, but I do need to not panic and worry so much. Also, if you can find the fun in something, people are much more willing to help then you might think.
What did YOUR ORGANISATION learn?	That experimentation and trying things out doesn't have to be hugely risky or expensive, and that we can take baby steps.
What next?	We've already carried out another poll using the same app, so, on a very small scale, that type of engagement is something that we are continuing. I also think it's highlighted that digital innovation and experimentation is an area that we do need to put more time, thought and effort into.

6.2.8 Culture24.org.uk

Name	**Richard Moss**
Organisation	**Culture24.org.uk**
What was the research question behind your experiment?	Can we connect audiences to online museum and gallery ceramic collections using Pinterest?
Why was this important to your organisation?	Because we are looking at different ways of using social media in our adult publishing offer and have just spent the last two years or so investigating audience and communities of interest. We're about bringing collections, places etc together, offering context. I thought an informal, browseable, visual guide to ceramic collections would be an interesting way of doing that. And to really try and understand Pinterest.
What did you do to implement this?	• Started a Pinterest board for ceramics • Cleaned up the Culture24 Pinterest offer • Pinned lots of pots from collections online • Added Foursquare locations, links back and copyright • Promoted it through social media channels • Put a call out to get involved through newsletters
What happened?	• Not a lot - on Pinterest • We doubled the following but it's still only at about 140 followers • Loads of museums and collections got in touch and said yes please • A few people re-pinned • I got dragged towards traditional publishing ie publishing ceramics-related content on Culture24.org.uk
What were the personal challenges you faced when carrying out this experiment?	• Time - lack of • Guilt - at using Pinterest for so many hours • Colleague negativity - "what are you doing that for?" etc which made me keep it under the radar a little bit when it could have done with buy-in, so I felt a bit dispirited at times • That said, our sector comms embraced it. Our Twitter and Facebook link-up could have been better, I didn't push for that enough

What did YOU learn?	• Pinterest is a slow burn • Pinterest is labour intensive • Pinterest is dominated by shops and sellers • There aren't many good collections online to pin from to make it work really well • That it may yet take off • That tags on Pinterest don't really work • That you need great pictures • That we are guilty of 'silo' culture here
What did YOUR ORGANISATION learn?	That disruptive or emotive pictures work best on Pinterest. In the case of pots this would be artistic and contemporary rather than the historic, which is what dominates digitised collections. That if someone is engaged in an experiment you need to provide the right environment for feedback and support.
What next?	It has been fascinating. Few museums are making Pinterest work effectively. We are not making the most of it but it is something I would like to farm out to a volunteer or intern so that it could be given some time and attention. It's not an obvious outlet to complement publishing. However I feel this is just beginning to get somewhere. The re-pins are moving up slowly so it will be interesting to see if we can progress it as a place for inspiration - in the tradition of decor inspiration that seems to be Pinterest's forte.

6.2.9 The Getty

Name	Annelisa Stephan
Organisation	The Getty
What was the research question behind your experiment?	We had two questions, one more research-based and one more culture/mindset based. Research question: what does a Periscope-native art encounter look like? Culture question: how can we generate a creative rhythm that will allow us to do something new we're excited about?
Why was this important to your organisation?	When new digital tools come along, many organizations feel pressure to adopt them immediately in order to stay current. But new tools often embody paradigm shifts that require innovation, not just more of the same in a new place. New digital tools invite us to respond with entirely new models of content presentation and interaction, if we have a moment to slow down, zoom out, and strategize. Showing that we can create something new if we give ourselves breathing room and collaborative space was important in this project. Considering new models is particularly important for Periscope, the promise of which is to "discover the world through someone else's eyes." We didn't want to use the traditional museum-video model of having a cameraperson tape an expert standing in front of an object. To replicate this model yet again in Periscope seemed to be a missed opportunity. With Periscope, the expert and the eyes, the host and the videographer, can now become one and the same. We wanted to really explore what that means. We therefore created broadcasts in which an educator acts as tour guide, moderator, and virtual eyes, guiding viewers through interesting details of specific artworks and responding to all questions and comments in a rapid-fire manner. To address the cultural question (doing something we really care about), this is critical for an organization. Museums and other non-profits attract people who are passionate, creative, and willing to accept less pay than in the private sector. Yet such organizations may not give these people the creative space to use that passion and to experiment and to have the freedom to fail. Showing that we can do such a thing and succeed is important for future experiments.
What did you do to implement this?	Working in a small team, we did a series of tests with various Periscope approaches that faced logistical challenges such as spotty Wi-Fi and copyrighted artwork. We decided to embrace our limitations and create broadcasts about single public-domain works in which an educator acts as tour guide, moderator, and virtual eyes, guiding viewers through interesting details of specific artworks and responding to all questions and comments in a rapid-fire manner. Based on our group insight, we wanted to create a space for irreverent questions that people may feel too ashamed or "dumb" to ask in a museum -- questions like, "Why do babies look so weird in old paintings?" or "Why is everyone naked in the art?" We titled our show "Literally Anything at the Getty" and picked one object to discuss each week for 5 minutes. To address the rhythm/culture issue, we picked a rhythm -- every Tuesday at noon for five minutes -- that was sustainable and memorable for the audience. A Twitter poll 24 hours ahead decides between one of two objects. The moderator's fun and informal interaction with the audience sets the tone for the broadcast, which is intended to break down emotional, intellectual and geographic barriers to appreciating old art.

What happened?	We were pleasantly surprised by the level of interest, an interaction we achieved from our very first broadcast. Based on looking at other Periscope broadcasts, we decided to stick to 5 minutes, then asked Twitter followers (and staff who tuned in) whether the pace felt too rushed. Almost all thought 5 minutes was a good amount of time, but that it was important to state the 5-minute limit clearly up front and at the halfway mark. The compressed time scale gives the broadcast a rapid-fire energy that we also liked. We've tried a few variations, including inviting a curator to co-host, buying new equipment (we tried various microphones and ended up with an iPhone Lavalier mic), experimenting with text vs. emojis, and trying artwork of various sizes.
What were the personal challenges you faced when carrying out this experiment?	A person on my team left the Getty mid-way through the experiment and I had little time to work on this project. As the LGR participant it was incumbent on me to get things jump-started, but the people who had expressed interest in the project were also busy and therefore understandably not comfortable with the open-ended commitment - there were a lot of questions about required meetings and homework in between.
What did YOU learn?	• I learned that I have an amazing small team who like each other, are smart and talented, and have great ideas. • I learned that I need to more assertively manage meetings and interactions in ways that help projects move forward productively. • I learned that I am not comfortable with risk-taking and that I should listen to other people when they say everything is going to be okay.
What did YOUR ORGANISATION learn?	• That we can experiment with new things and not die. • That digital media and education are converging. • I also shared notes and learnings from LGR with a wide Getty group, which I know many members of the organization found valuable; and I held a hands-on training session for Periscope open to all staff, which shared the knowledge we had gained during the project.
What next?	We're continuing our weekly Periscope sessions. We even had a fan from London, who we met via the show, join as a guest host when he was in Los Angeles. Now that we've gained more mastery of Periscope as a tool I hope we can expand our use of the platform and apply what we've learned so far to new experiments.

6.2.10 Museum of Domestic Design & Architecture (MoDA)

Name	**Sam Smith**
Organisation	**Museum of Domestic Design & Architecture (MoDA), Middlesex University**
What was the research question behind your experiment?	We wanted to discover whether/how we could co-create meaningful and engaging content with our audiences to tell stories about our collections on our (soon to be) new website.
Why was this important to your organisation?	The Museum of Domestic Design & Architecture (MoDA) changed the way it works in 2011 to being: Online, On Tour and By Request. Because of the slightly unusual way we now operate (with no physical exhibition or gallery space), we feel that our online presence is particularly important. As we currently lack the gallery space where informal interactions around the collections might ordinarily take place, we wanted to experiment with a project to engage our audiences online. Looking to co-create content around online collections seemed a meaningful way of involving our audiences in the process as well as the outputs of the project. In this sense we wanted to move away from producing purely didactic, distributed content (through, for example, Blogger) to producing content that embraces contribution, engagement and participation. We also wanted to maximise the opportunity afforded to us by rebuilding the MoDA website (and a move to a more flexible CMS) by co-creating content through our social media channels in the interim, which we could later re-appropriate to tell stories about our collections in a variety of ways on the new site.
What did you do to implement this?	We decided to concentrate on a particular collection (the Charles Hasler Archive) in the run up to the launch of a book about that collection. In the first iteration of the experiment we invited the book's author to take over our Twitter account for the day and we also spent a week tweeting an a-z of the collection. Before tweeting the a-z we identified members of our online audiences who we felt might be interested in the items we were posting, in the hope that they would be most likely to engage in conversations about them. We tweeted 'at' those people throughout the week and used a hashtag (#Hasler) to help us track the campaign and for future use in a Storify post in lieu of the new website being ready on time (we are aiming to launch February/March 2016). In the second iteration of our experiment we looked at using new social media and social media channels (i.e. Periscope and Vimeo) to interview people who were already engaged with the collections (as a specialist interest). The aim was to create some (hopefully) more considered and rich media content to associate with collections records on the new website and to use these to further tell stories about the collection. At this stage we also re-published the a-z of the Hasler collection on Facebook, to look at whether that created a more meaningful level of engagement than publishing it on Twitter did. In terms of analytics and evaluation, we took our top media tweets over the course of the previous year to look at as a benchmark, and used Culture24's Social Media metrics toolkit from the 'How to Evaluate Success Online' strand of the Let's Get Real Project to give them meaning for our organisation. We also began to look at setting KPIs for social media engagements within a draft Balanced Value Impact Model (BVIM) that we produced as part of a scholarship to take part in a pilot of JISC's 'Spotlight on the Digital' training programme, as a means of strategising and demonstrating impact in our digital outputs more widely

What happened?	The first iteration of our experiment was a qualified success – whilst our engagement rate compared favourably with our benchmarking, we did not see the kinds of interaction we would have liked. We received far more likes and retweets than comments, and conversations engendered by both the Twitter takeover and the a-z of the collections were few and far between. As the host of our Twitter takeover put it: "I think your account is more about broadcast rather than interaction and this is reflected when you try to get people talking, as it were. More people interacted with the re-tweets on my own account even though I haven't that many followers – just because I chat quite a lot on that account. It takes time to build up conversation." An unintended (though welcome) consequence of the first iteration was that, over the week-ten days that we ran the a-z and hosted the Twitter takeover, we gained an extra c.10% of Twitter followers. Whilst we were starting from a fairly low base, this was still a significant jump. The second iteration of our experiment unfortunately fell a bit flat, and we decided to postpone it until we could run it more effectively. We set up a Vimeo channel and recorded five interviews with specialists talking about different aspects of the collection (a university professor, copyright holder and protégé of an artist featured in the collection for example), but internal IT /software issues precluded us from editing the videos in time, and as all of our Periscope interviewees postponed until early 2016, we decided to wait until that point before proceeding – particularly as that would lead us nicely into the launch of the new website. Because of the lack of conversation sparked by the a-z of the collection and the takeover day, we also decided to postpone the Storify post until we could add the rich media interviews, as it was otherwise a fairly verbatim replay of the first iteration of our experiment.
What were the personal challenges you faced when carrying out this experiment?	Probably the biggest personal challenge in planning and carrying out the experiment was being in post for a relatively short time period. I started in late January, and getting to grips with where the museum was digitally and trying to plan a range of digital projects and a website rebuild that all complemented each other, were audience-focussed and achievable within a fairly tight timescale, was initially a challenge. In terms of the experiment itself, the biggest challenges were mainly IT and in lead-in times for Periscope interviews. After agreeing to be interviewed, all of our contributors requested delays in order to more fully prepare.
What did YOU learn?	Taking part in the project was the first time I'd really had much engagement with the idea of agile working. Coming from a collections background (and collections role) where projects often have a funding-restricted life-span it has been great to be introduced to/immersed in a different way of working.
What did YOUR ORGANISATION learn?	Because of the length of time it has taken us to plan and deliver aspects of our experiment, I think organisationally we have mainly learned that where we don't have digital staff, we definitely need a digital strategy (or for digital to be embedded more fully in existing roles and strategy) in order for us to progress and improve our digital outputs. At certain points of our planning and delivery of the experiment it felt like a very long run for a short jump, (especially when after weeks of planning we appeared just to be doing an a-z of the collection on Twitter!) but conversely it also felt like a process that was important/necessary to go through and one that would lead to the development of strategy to help us meet our organisational needs digitally more easily going forward.

What next?	The next stage will be to conduct the Periscope interviews and edit the interviews we've already conducted so that we can publish them on Vimeo and tweet links to them. We'll then compare the stats for tweets with video to stats for tweets with collections images (the a-z) and embed the content produced through the experiment into our new website, linking it to object records via tags/ categories/metadata etc to produce richer media content. In the longer term, the plan is then to use those collections records (with embedded social media interviews, comments etc) within a WordPress multi-site install (the new website) to tell more longform stories about the collections. We have been basing this approach on the Wellcome Collection's 'The Collectors' with the ambition of co-curating online exhibitions with our audience that visitors can further interact with and comment on. If this is successful, we'll then reiterate the whole process with different collections and themes, evaluating and refining as we do so, and creating complementary social media and content policies and plans. We also have a placement student from UCL starting with us in April who is writing a dissertation on video blogging in museums and who will pick up on the work we are doing with Periscope and Vimeo to further progress and refine the content we create through these channels for the website.

6.2.11 National Galleries of Scotland

Name	Christopher Ganley
Organisation	National Galleries of Scotland
What was the research question behind your experiment?	How do we engage staff in the creation of appropriate content for our blog? The question encouraged people to think about storytelling, the audience and what's unique about the organisation.
Why was this important to your organisation?	The period of the research coincided with the development of a formal Digital Content Framework for the organisation. The blog and the experiment were used to help inform types of content created, to increase content created for digital platforms and to increase staff engagement in the blog (as well as other digital content). This is important to the organisation because it wants to elevate the status of digital internally, encouraging all members of staff to think about the audience and digital content.
What did you do to implement this?	The blog was launched in August 2014, replacing the existing 'news' section on nationalgalleries.org while creating a forum which was intended to be more discursive and flexible. We recently conducted a content audit and review and this concluded that the majority of content created for the blog was too wordy and often too dry. We encouraged everyone in the comms department (digital, press and marketing) to create content for the blog (to fully understand what we were asking colleagues across the organisation), which would in turn help inform the guidelines and key messages for the blog.
What happened?	We developed and established a group with cross-department representation who became known as the department digital content liaisons. We met with the group three times over the period of the experiment and asked them to come up with ideas for content (which incorporated ideas around storytelling) as well as introduce them to analytics and different approaches to generating content. These meetings helped inform the key messages for the blog and encouraged department contacts to become champions for content creation. We also established the project management tool Trello so we could schedule and view content plans, which could be viewed by departments across the organisation.
What were the personal challenges you faced when carrying out this experiment?	Staff in the organisation generally don't see the value in the creation of digital content and it's often a challenge encouraging staff to do so while working to deadlines which would maximise the potential audience i.e. publishing while topical. It was also challenging to get people to move towards creating 'lighter' content. We worked closely to cut content back so it could be more image and/or story driven. The experiment itself was significant in scale involving people from across departments and a lot of new content was created. Overseeing the project during our busiest period and bringing it to a close was a significant challenge.

What did YOU learn?	Most of the useful insights I gained from the project were from the workshops and discussions with my project mentor. The Culture24 project team and network were an invaluable source of support and knowledge. The keys things I learned were around strategies for developing organisational change and methods for making a strong case to senior management to rationalise particular decisions and develop objectives. The storytelling activity was particularly useful for me in terms of thinking about audiences and types of content. In practical terms I learnt how to use the project management tool Trello which has become embedded in the department and used by colleagues throughout the organisation. I also learnt how important our working group was and how imperative sharing our findings (analytics, user-feedback, and other evidence) was to them.
What did YOUR ORGANISATION learn?	The blog guidelines were migrated into overarching social media guidelines and key aims and objects, sitting alongside the blog template. This has helped us open up digital channels and focus on creating content relating to key messages. The organisation (or at least some of the key individuals we have been working with) has learnt about the importance of scheduling and creating content with an audience in mind. While it was challenging, a number of our colleagues did learn how to create content which was less 'heavy' and less academic. The key thing which colleagues took away from the project was how interlinked our different channels are and how they all relate back to the primary channel: nationalgalleries.org.
What next?	Our next step is to share the social media guidelines across the organisation and embed the key messages across all of our content, further developing these streams of content. For example, towards the end of the project we set up an online survey about our video content and we can use this information to inform future video content used on our social channels. The majority of those who completed the survey indicated they wanted to see more content about artistic and creative processes which will become the next strand of our output.

6.2.12 National Museums Liverpool

Name	Lynn Hagan
Organisation	**National Museums Liverpool**
What was the research question behind your experiment?	We had a few questions around content and design of our online collections and how best to engage with people. Specifically, we wanted to know: • Does our design for online collections work? • What do people think of our content and design? • How can we get feedback from people, what is the best way to engage with people about this?
Why was this important to your organisation?	This is important to our organisation because we are currently investing time and effort into making more of our collections available online and we want to know if people will respond to our collections and how best to present them. We are always exploring different ways of using social media, in particular, to engage with those who may be interested in our collections.
What did you do to implement this?	We published some 'star objects' from the new development of galleries at our Lady Lever Art Gallery. We asked people for feedback on our content and design through: • face-to-face interviews • an online survey linked from our online collections, a blog about the design and content and sent out via an e-newsletter to existing supporters of the Lady Lever Art Gallery • a single-question online poll on object pages • posts on Facebook and Twitter
What happened?	In terms of finding out whether our design and content worked and asking people for feedback, we had very low responses across all the different ways of asking for feedback. We definitely got the richest feedback from face-to-face interviews. Disappointed, but not dissuaded, we tried out some new and more interesting ways of engaging with people on social media and also of getting feedback. We ran some user testing on https://www.usertesting.com and included a question asking people to explore our collections. We learned from this that the design worked well and people liked the presentation of online collections, even on a mobile phone. We tried out new ways of engaging with people. We tried out a 'dress-off' competition asking people to vote for their preferred dress. We showed a dress from our 1930s 'Putting on the Glitz' exhibition, alongside dresses featured in portraits from our collections. This competition proved hugely popular, with 144 engaged users on one post and we received our highest ever Facebook page engagement during the week this competition ran. We also created a quirky animated gif/video about our Wedgwood collection, showing intriguing details of the people and creatures featured on the bowls, tablets, teapots and plates. This was not so popular and didn't receive much engagement.
What were the personal challenges you faced when carrying out this experiment?	I struggled to advocate for the project internally. I felt like I didn't have enough persuasive skills to bring people along with me. It was very difficult to find the time to focus specifically on the project. I deliberately picked something I thought I would get support from colleagues on. I found it hard to persuade and influence others to try things out, even in the context of being experimental. People liked the idea but just didn't have much time to dedicate to this.

What did YOU learn?	I learned that we need to step back more and think of new ways to surface our content and present it in engaging ways. It's not enough for us to say 'here's some important stuff our curators know about'. We need to go beyond that and allow visitors or potential visitors engaging, easy or interesting ways to explore our collections. Too often we are focussed on just pushing stuff out, instead of thinking about what people want and what people might like. I learned the value of experimentation. It's much easier to do things within an organisation when it's couched as an experiment. It's really powerful to say "Let's just try it, it's okay if it doesn't work out as long as we learn from it." I learned that I should have tried to involve people earlier with the project and got them on-board more from the start, rather than trying to do everything myself.
What did YOUR ORGANISATION learn?	We learned that just 'pushing stuff out' doesn't always work and that there are more ways to present stuff to engage with people. We also learned it takes more effort to do that and it's hard to spend time and effort doing that.
What next?	We have realised that we need to spend more time thinking about how we write content about our objects and artworks online. We have started looking at how best to write object labels with a view to establishing guidelines for future collections. We are also looking at how we can work smarter with curators to bring different collection areas together to tell new and interesting stories. We are continuing to try out different ways of talking about our art and objects on social media.

6.2.13 National Museums Scotland

Name	Elaine Macintyre
Organisation	National Museums Scotland
What was the research question behind your experiment?	Can we encourage our audience to read a longform story on a topic we know they're interested in? Can we persuade curators to work with us and is it worth our while investing energy in creating content that isn't driven by our exhibition, event, and capital project programme?
Why was this important to your organisation?	We're constantly experimenting with content forms across our social media channels but are more cautious in our approach on the NMS website. I wanted to shake this up a bit, creating a more journalistic, multi-media story, to see if this would appeal to online audiences. This is important as we're investing a lot of time and energy in creating content around ten new galleries due to open at the National Museum of Scotland in summer 2016, and this experiment gave me the time and space to try different approaches in a less pressured, high profile environment.
What did you do to implement this?	I created a longform story (http://www.nms.ac.uk/arthursseatcoffins) which included three films, made in-house and featuring the Keeper of Scottish History and Archaeology and an external expert, the Creative Director at Cadies and Witchery Tours in Edinburgh. Besides highlighting the coffins, it drew on other areas of the collection from the period, including Scottish charms and objects associated with Deacon Brodie. The story was accompanied by two blog posts and launched with an (unpaid) social media campaign across Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. The story was released at Hallowe'en, to maximise its spooky credentials.
What happened?	ENGAGEMENT ON NMS WEBSITE – GOALS AND RESULTS • The first goal was for an increase in the number of views of the previous Arthur's Seat coffin page (which received around 1.4K page views per month). The aim was to double this figure during October-November 2015. This was achieved. From 26 October – 18 November 2015 the Mystery of the Miniature Coffins page was viewed 13,665 times, making it the 11th most popular page on the site. During the Hallowe'en week (26/10/15-2/11/2015) it was the 5th most viewed page (the first time an object story has made the top 5). • The second goal was for evidence that some readers have engaged more deeply with the website content: longer dwell time on the page (currently 24 seconds). This was also achieved as dwell time rose to 40 seconds – still not long enough to read the whole page, but an increase of 166%. • The third goal was for evidence that some readers have engaged more deeply with the website content by clicking on links to other areas of the website. This was unclear as the bounce rate of the page was just 4%, which compares very favourably with the average bounce rate for that period (12%) and suggests that people directed to the page through social media links moved on to view further content. However, the exit rate was 47%, suggesting that people who were already on the site and had navigated to the page then left the site. ENGAGEMENT ON SOCIAL MEDIA • The main goal here was evidence of engagement on Twitter and Facebook. For Twitter we were aiming for a 5% engagement rate. (Engagement is the total number of times a user clicks anywhere on a tweet and includes retweets, replies, follows, likes, links, cards, hashtags, embedded media, username, profile photo, or tweet expansion.) For Facebook we wanted a 10K reach with 1K engaged users on Facebook for the main post. • We broadly achieved this goal. Whilst we narrowly missed a 5% engagement rate on Twitter, the overall response was very good (4.5%). The three Facebook posts about the coffins were the most popular posts that period (26/10/2015-18/11/2015). All smashed the target.

What were the personal challenges you faced when carrying out this experiment?	The biggest challenge was definitely finding time to edit the films. I'd anticipated problems involving curators and external experts but in fact it was my time that posed the biggest problem. I hadn't realised how long it would take to edit the films in-house.
What did YOU learn?	The project was experimental in three areas and provided useful results in each. In-house film-making: • No matter what time of day, the Museum is noisy. Invest in a proper microphone or find a quieter location • When filming, shoot more 'ambient' footage for cutaways, eg the curator looking at the objects, walking down the corridor, etc • Think carefully about how to open and close the film and make sure the speaker pauses between sections • It takes a long time to edit films • A film doesn't need to be perfectly polished for people to watch and share it, it's the content that counts. Participation: • The curators were happy to collaborate on a project that wasn't specifically tied to an exhibition or other current work, but it's important to make the most of the time they have to give you • External partners were also keen to work on the project, and very co-operative. I made several new, useful contacts through the project. Timeliness: • The right content can do well on social media without paid promotion • Timing is everything. Releasing the story at Hallowe'en, when people are hungry for 'spooky' content, was key to its success.
What did YOUR ORGANISATION learn?	• Longform stories are time-consuming to create but, backed with a strong social media campaign and released at the right time, can be a success for the organisation. • Planning and research are vital: is there an interest in the subject? How can we build on that interest, to challenge audience's perceptions or perhaps give them more than they expect? • New projects like this must be carefully evaluated against robust targets, to ensure the effort continues to be worthwhile.
What next?	I'll be using this experiment as a basis for future content planning and also to fuel future discussions about in-house filmmaking (in that I've proved it's worth the effort if the content is right, but we need more resources and skills for it to be successful on an ongoing basis, and not a drain on people's time).

6.2.14 Portland Art Museum

Name	**Mike Murawski and Kristin Bayans**
Organisation	**Portland Art Museum**
What was the research question behind your experiment?	What does storytelling look like in a museum, and how might we give the Portland Art Museum's Object Stories project (story content and visitor experience) a second life?
Why was this important to your organisation?	Let's Get Real was an opportunity for the Portland Art Museum to take a closer look at the Museum's Object Stories platform (http://objectstories.org/) which has been undergoing a series of transitions in the project's technology, gallery space and programming. Launched in March 2010, Object Stories began as a way to invite visitors to record their own narratives about personal objects. By capturing, honoring, and sharing participants' stories, the project aimed to demystify the Museum, making it more accessible, welcoming, and meaningful to a greater diversity of communities – while continuing to highlight the inherent relationship between people and things. Over 1,000 people from throughout Portland - most of whom had never before set foot in the Museum - have participated as storytellers in this project, with more than 2,000 stories now recorded and in the project's archive. In recent years the initiative has shifted its role, as Object Stories exhibitions and content focus more on local, place-based connections related to special exhibitions and community partnerships, with stories and storytellers selected and curated by the Museum's Education department.
What did you do to implement this?	We decided to explore answers to our research question by working with developers/technologists and a number of Object Stories storytellers from the Portland community. Museum staff facilitated a one day Innovation Lab that brought these distinct perspectives together through a collaborative discovery and prototyping process.
What happened?	At the beginning of the Innovation Lab day, participants completed a warm-up improv exercise, reviewed the Object Stories project and selected stories, and were re-introduced to the research question. Museum staff divided the participants into two teams, creating an even mix of developers/ technologists and storytellers. Each team engaged in two rounds of focused brainstorming, and then presented their ideas and paper prototypes to the larger group for more in-depth discussion. The Innovation Lab was smaller than expected, with 8 participants, excluding the Museum staff. The Innovation Lab mechanics were more fluid than anticipated, and output goals shifted at the end of the day.
What were the personal challenges you faced when carrying out this experiment?	Through this process, it was vital that we played the role of listening to the teams of community members and their ideas, rather than taking a strong role in shaping these conversations. This was certainly a challenge, as museums often lack the capacities to listen to and respond to the ideas of their visitors and communities. The Innovation Lab ultimately ended with more "finished product" ideas rather than a set of easily testable behaviors related to storytelling. As a result, we are now combing through Innovation Lab project notes and prototypes to surface the visitor/participant behaviors under each of the team's final prototypes. These behaviors included things such as creating responses to existing stories, creating connections or links between stories, user tagging or rating of stories, sharing stories, creating new stories, and developing more comfortable spaces for dialogue and listening within the Museum. We plan to identify and test a handful of these behaviors with visitors, using both digital and analog means to explore how best to get visitors involved with Object Stories in new ways.

What did YOU learn?	We were thrilled to learn that the Object Stories platform is still relevant for the Portland community. Our Innovation Lab participants were extremely excited to be thinking about the role of storytelling in the Museum, and current Object Stories exhibitions and partnerships keep gaining more internal and external support. We also learned that there is lower interest in sharing Object Stories content outside of Portland. It has become a successful localized project, with growing meaning for our community. Finally, through this process, we learned that participants are interested in a more immersive Object Stories gallery experience, and storytelling experience overall.
What did YOUR ORGANISATION learn?	The Museum certainly plays a role in elevating community stories and content, and we're interested in exploring this further and finding ways to integrate story-based content into our collections, galleries, and exhibitions in ways that do not relegate community stories to a single space or education function. Innovation Lab participants indicated a desire to continue sharing their voice with the Museum, which was important for us to hear from voices outside the institution. Visitors continue to indicate a desire to see themselves and their voices within the Museum, placing trust and value in this institution. There is a belief among the participants that "museums" elevate content.
What next?	The Museum's Education Department will more than likely host Innovation Lab style projects to inform and enhance future interpretation projects and programs, including Object Stories. We are interested in exploring visitor and user behaviors as a way to extend the experience of Object Stories within and beyond the Museum, as well as other forms of interpretation and community partnerships. We're also very interested in exploring visitor motivations for listening to and creating content for this and other projects.

6.2.15 Royal Academy of Arts

Name	Louise Cohen
Organisation	**Royal Academy of Arts**
What was the research question behind your experiment?	How can we increase our social media engagement with real-time activity? Feedback from our digital audiences has told us that they want more interactive content, debate and conversation on our channels, so we'll be looking at how we can incorporate live activity alongside scheduled activity to grow our audience and increase its engagement. The hypothesis is that by readdressing this balance of our content and engaging more with our users directly in relevant ways that matter to them, we will create a larger, more engaged community.
Why was this important to your organisation?	Reaching new audiences is key to the future of the Royal Academy, and of course social media and digital content is a vital tool in this. How we use these channels to engage most deeply with these groups on social media – to both bring them into the galleries and to encourage them to embrace the values we champion – is one of our ongoing challenges, and will form a part of the content strategy which we're currently working on.
What did you do to implement this?	We began by looking at Twitter over the course of a single week, putting aside 30 minutes each day to try out a different kind of real-time interaction – social sharing, social networking, capital building and joining a popular hashtag. We then iterated on our findings as below.
What happened?	We found that putting some effort into joining a relevant hashtag was by the far the most successful method for us. We started with a very simple idea; asking people to tell us their favourite dog breeds for #NationalDogDay, and said we'd see if we have a relevant picture in the collection for them. We were deluged with responses, and were able to share dozens of images in our collection with people who adored their subject, and probably hadn't realised that the RA could have any relevance for them. Seeing it was going well, we then took it further and invited those who had taken part to sketch the dog we'd sent them – which many did, and we collated these in a Pinterest album. Sharing an image relating to a trending topic is something we do regularly, but by changing the angle and inviting response on a topic that mattered to our audience – and taking the time to monitor what came back – we saw a spike in followers, mentions and engagement. Finding social sharing – tweeting a series of articles from many different publications about a single topic – not as successful as expected, we developed this into a week-long experiment to see if a sense of expectation would increase engagement. To involve the wider RA network of staff, we tried a rota, with a different staff member tweeting their reading recommendations every day. We found this still didn't yield a great increase in engagement and required quite a lot of time and effort to co-ordinate, so we concluded that this wasn't a content strand worth pursuing for us. Replying individually to every comment was also not very effective for us, and we concluded that with the volume of incoming comments we have, unless they are questions or particularly interesting/topical comments, it's likely not worth our time to respond to all of them.
What were the personal challenges you faced when carrying out this experiment?	The main challenge I faced was fitting the regular 30 minutes of live activity into my working day, and having enough time to analyse the results and iterate on them.

What did YOU learn?	Through the hashtag experiment, I learnt that to really engage people with our organisation it's no good shouting about all the things we want to tell them; we have to find the overlap with their interests, even if they aren't always those central to our own mission. I also became aware how important it is to invite interaction in a way that's manageable and fits the fleeting, dipping-in-and-out way in which people use the platform. With the dog hashtag, the barrier for entry was extremely low – all they had to do was tweet one word stating a preference they already held, but the exchange that developed out of it was in many cases significant. I also became aware that a genuinely two-way communication requires significant full-time attention, which we previously haven't given it. Incorporating this sort of live conversation – whether joining a popular hashtag, or running Q&As or other formats – seems to be the biggest improvement we can immediately make to our social channels, so we'll look to develop this as a regular presence as part of our content strategy
What did YOUR ORGANISATION learn?	The idea that rich, interactive content will help us meet our goals in the longer term, above repeated one-way loudspeaker messaging about our activities, will form a key point in our content strategy, which we will communicate around the RA. We have also been made increasingly aware that successful digital engagement is time-consuming, and requires a way in which staff around the organisation can easily contribute.
What next?	As above, we are currently developing a content strategy and will be incorporating these learning points into its framework, making them a regular feature of our content. It's likely we will take decisions to do less content overall and do it better, creating richer, more time-consuming and genuinely interactive content.

6.2.16 Royal Air Force Museum

Name	Rachel Ball
Organisation	Royal Air Force Museum
What was the research question behind your experiment?	How to capture and share our volunteer's experiences to support the recruitment and engagement of new volunteers. Originally we wanted to target reaching a youth audience but as the project developed we realised we needed to focus on establishing how to do digital engagement in general, with a view to focusing on specific audiences in the future.
Why was this important to your organisation?	We want to reach new audiences and welcome new volunteers. The most successful recruitment method is word of mouth, and I wanted to explore ways we can utilise this recruitment tool beyond individual networks. It would also help to recognise the impact volunteering has on the organisation and the visitor experience.
What did you do to implement this?	First step was for me to understand how a department works and how they engage with a new volunteer. To do this we staged a one-off half day volunteering trial. I would be there to observe and the volunteer would capture their time and experience within the department. I also videoed a volunteer who was leaving. I asked questions I would normally ask in an exit interview. I wanted to see if I could create soundbites which would encourage people to join us as volunteers. The aim would be to share these on our website.
What happened?	The volunteer undertook a number of activities which gave me a great understanding of how the department operates. Through the half day trial the volunteer made notes and took photographs to document the experience. I asked the volunteer to provide this documentation in a method they are comfortable with - this was a Word document. I turned this and other articles written about volunteers into posts on a word press site. I will be developing this site further and will be looking into integrating this with our main website.
What were the personal challenges you faced when carrying out this experiment?	Finding a volunteer and department who were willing to take part and matching the schedule, building cooperation and a buy-in. It was a challenge to find a volunteer who felt confident enough to give this a try; we don't have many volunteers who feel they are social media savvy, or in the habit of sharing what they do.
What did YOU learn?	I am not very confident in using different social media and other online applications, so this has been a big learning curve to knowing what the possibilities are. For this experiment I put together a WordPress site, something I had never used before. Taking part in Let's Get Real 4 has really influenced my approach to collaborative working and strengthened my understanding of how to tell stories.
What did YOUR ORGANISATION learn?	This is hard to quantify at the moment. It has certainly helped the conversation about the need to capture volunteers' experience, and that the benefit of doing this is much wider than the recruitment need.
What next?	The next step is to establish different ways/methods to help volunteers capture their experiences, as we need to build more content.

6.2.17 Royal Collection Trust

Name	Andrew Davis
Organisation	**Royal Collection Trust**
What was the research question behind your experiment?	What is the best way to engage the public in the items within the Royal Collection?
Why was this important to your organisation?	There had been a feeling (based on our Google Analytics reports) that there had not been a tremendous engagement with the Collection amongst the general public (we have vastly more traffic to the Visit section of the site than to the Collection area), and want to find ways to boost engagement with the Collection itself. This has tied in with physical visitors to our sites, where people are more interested in seeing the Castle/Palace than the artefacts themselves - as a charity we are responsible for promoting the Collection and access to it. Existing work was already underway to make technical changes to the site and how we store and publish information about the Collection, as well as looking at how the public responded to these changes.
What did you do to implement this?	There were two strands to our experiment - the internal process of beginning to change the way that we think about the creation of content (even the notion that what we are actually doing is creating content), and what that content itself actually should be, and who we should be aiming at with it. The first strand involved (and continues to involve) discussions across the organisation about both who is responsible for telling our stories, and who we think we are telling them to/for. This work has been about slowly bringing people around to the notion that digital/online audiences are not monolithic, so the previous approach of having a single online voice won't best appeal to those audiences. Our Collection Online meetings, involving representatives from all curatorial sections, met to discuss how we can adapt content already produced for different audiences (exhibitions, catalogues, scholarly articles) to re-use or expand the principles for online use. The second strand involved creating test content, and trialling on prospective users.
What happened?	We still have no agreement on exactly what our stories should be - are we seeking to present the Collection in an ordered/thematic way, focusing entirely on the art itself, or are we trying to use the objects in the Collection as jumping off points to also allow us to tell the stories of the people who created them and the world they were created in/for? This is a debate that is much broader than the digital - it relates to everything from our exhibition and publishing programmes, to our events and learning activities. In this sense it has been timely for the digital to be a driving part of the discussion, and not bolted on to a decision made elsewhere. In terms of creating content, it has been an excellent opportunity to get the wider curatorial team, who edit our Collections Management System from which nearly all online content about the Collection is drawn, to begin to think in terms of what they create being for an external, as well as internal, audience. We've been able to begin to draw distinctions between content (usually raw data) that is essential for us for management purposes, but perhaps of little interest to the outside world, and the more narrative elements, which perhaps have little interest internally, but which are essential for external understanding of and interest in the Collection. These debates will be ongoing!

What were the personal challenges you faced when carrying out this experiment?	Selling the concept of an experiment - the very idea that we might be doing something that we couldn't guarantee would work. It really focussed a lot of my energy on acting as an influencer, rather than a participant in other work streams - convincing, cajoling and soothing as the need arose.
What did YOU learn?	Mostly about the need for communication - emphasised by Carolyn in our discussions - constantly keeping people in the loop about what we were doing, and how ideas were developing. The biggest problems were when different sections felt that they were being ignored/others were receiving special treatment. At the same time, it also became apparent that there were paths of least resistance - individuals who were keen/interested and open, and able to act as advocates with their own teams. It's really important to cultivate these sympathetic people when we are trying to implement something new.
What did YOUR ORGANISATION learn?	Harder to say! It's certainly something that we are continuing to work on, and I think that the concept of experimenting to find what might work is an important one for us to look to take forward in the future. We are definitely more open to the results of external feedback, and allowing this to influence our planning. Hopefully we are also learning the importance of the curatorial voice in making our collections relevant -no matter how great the artwork, we can't purely rely on that to attract audiences in a really competitive digital realm.
What next?	We will be launching a series of online Collection Trails, of differing length/style/tone, and will be monitoring the response to these. This will then influence our commissioning process moving forward, and where we seek to place each piece of content (does something work best on the website, social media or newsletter etc. Hopefully it will see us continue to develop as a content producing body (and perhaps seeing ourselves as such)

6.2.18 Royal Museums Greenwich

Name	Trish Thomas
Organisation	Royal Museums Greenwich
What was the research question behind your experiment?	It has changed to: does audio work as a platform for telling our stories and can we use an audio podcast series to encourage audiences to engage with our content repeatedly?
Why was this important to your organisation?	RMG has a lot of stories of broad topical content which draw in international audiences. We want to use this content as a hook to raise awareness of RMG. We also want to deliver a content series which is not siloed by venue - some of the stories we tell touch all four of our museums. Additionally audio is more cost effective for us to produce and we may be able to do this in-house once we establish a format.
What did you do to implement this?	Set up a cross-museum working group involving stakeholders with expert knowledge in all our subjects including Library archivists, curators, astronomers, interpreters and conservators. Based on our analytics discovered the top 100 most popular stories told on our website and blog and via our online collection. Put these stories to an audience vote online and based on the results of this identified the 6 most popular stories across different themes. Commissioned a production company to work with our subject experts to produce the series in Jan/Feb 2016 which will then be distributed via our website, Soundcloud and iTunes.
What happened?	We had a much loftier experiment in mind to start with. It was about establishing a cross-museum content strategy. This was too complex to address in the time frame so we narrowed the objective to working together to produce a content series driven by audience interest and subject-focussed rather than venue-focussed stories.
What were the personal challenges you faced when carrying out this experiment?	I was delivering a new website for RMG in parallel to this project. It just became physically impossible to do both and so the website was prioritised. In addition I had hoped to recruit a new content post to the team in the time frame but this was also put on hold so there was no other capacity within my team to support the project. Also I have just accepted a new role so will be leaving RMG at the end of March 2016 and won't be able to see the experiment through to the end - which is disappointing. I will ensure the work is handed over so that the project completes and the insights can be built upon.
What did YOU learn?	Not to be too ambitious! Also I would say I let the Culture24 programme objectives and timeline dictate the idea and this was actually making it more difficult to achieve something useful for RMG. To make this work, I had no choice but to do the best project for RMG in the best timeline for RMG which unfortunately doesn't fit with the timeline for LGR4.
What did YOUR ORGANISATION learn?	I think we are starting to work better cross-museum to deliver content. There are some people who will always be happy to contribute and always do. There are others who promise a lot but don't deliver(!) and then there are some who can't see the point. I hope we can inspire the second and third groups by showing them what can be achieved working with the first group.
What next?	We're continuing to work towards a content strategy. We will produce and text our six-part audio podcast series from Mar-Sept in 2016. If this goes down well with our audience, we will make the business case to do a 25-part series to follow this.

6.2.19 Royal Pavilion and Museums, Brighton & Hove

Name	Krystyna Pickering
Organisation	**Royal Pavilion and Museums, Brighton & Hove**
What was the research question behind your experiment?	The aim of the digital team was to see if we could encourage our curatorial team to be more active in our online presence and engage audiences with their work behind the scenes. We wanted to provide greater awareness of our programme of work while engaging with 'virtual visitors' through our collections and buildings. We decided to focus on the Booth Museum and posed the question, would the curators and volunteers at the Booth be more willing to participate in social media if we allowed them the freedom of their own Tumblr account to do with as they liked?
Why was this important to your organisation?	This was a highly interesting and significant experiment. The digital team are the main force behind all social media content and interaction. Repeated requests for material and curatorial input is often dismissed or given begrudgingly, to the point where initiatives and features have been abandoned. At the same time the team is asked, by both curatorial and organisation staff, why we are not partaking in certain social media events or platforms. Knowing the increasing importance of a useful, prominent online presence, it is essential that we find a way of achieving this to benefit and not burden.
What did you do to implement this?	We already have a main Tumblr account for the Royal Pavilion and Museums, Brighton & Hove. We decided we would create a new Tumblr blog within this specifically for the Booth Museum. We trained the curator and keeper of natural sciences in using it and left them to it.
What happened?	The Booth team is used to producing detailed blog posts for our WordPress site, which prove very popular. To begin with, they approached Tumblr much like a blog post with lengthy detailed comments and descriptions, which seemed to be lost on most of the Tumblr audience. It also became clear they had not fully got to grips with using hashtags. They had a few regular followers and the odd like. After the initial collection induction posts, the enthusiasm seemed to wear off. It was decided another training session was needed. I spent a morning with guys at the Booth, smoothing out quirks and exploring Tumblr with them, to show them what could be done. We searched posts and hashtags for inspiration and tried to relate popular trends to the Booth's collections. Afterwards they had a list of relevant hashtags, ideas for showcasing the collections and themes to work to. Once they were given more guidance, direction and encouragement, the team at the Booth were more than happy to carry on.
What were the personal challenges you faced when carrying out this experiment?	The main challenge was getting the Booth team to be enthusiastic and self-motivated, to commit to an additional aspect of their work when they had no previous experience with that form of social media. Trying to do this without looking like I was monitoring their work, when we had pitched it on the idea of it being entirely their own media to play with, was a difficult balance.
What did YOU learn?	I learnt that it may take longer than first thought for a team to adopt something new to them and have the confidence to run with it straight away. Giving someone the freedom to work in their own time and with their own creativity may be what they would like, but they still need guidance and encouragement before they can really do it themselves. And often they won't ask if it's not going to plan. A brief check-in once in a while was usually the best approach.

What did YOUR ORGANISATION learn?	The digital team realised that with the right training, guidance and encouragement we could get the curators involved in our online presence. Although it initially took time and a lot of assistance before they felt comfortable to post regularly and be involved in online interaction, it has certainly paid off. It seems that when they have control over something, and can see the success of it, it stays more relevant to their workload. And they don't forget it, unlike the request for an image of the month that they don't know where to find online.
What next?	From the success of the Booth Tumblr, which has overtaken our main account, we've established that the best way to work with social media is to give the curators the freedom to post what they would like rather than us requesting specific material. Since the awareness of the Booth's Tumblr has increased across the organisation, we have had requests to create three other department Tumblr blogs. Knowing now that this appears to be a more beneficial way to work, we can use this strategy with other curators and departments. We have identified the need for top-up training for those with current Tumblr blogs, which we will do soon. Then we will move on to encouraging other curators to join in.

6.2.20 Royal Shakespeare Company

Name	Danny Evans
Organisation	**Royal Shakespeare Company**
What was the research question behind your experiment?	Can we create a piece of content that will appeal to a new kind of audience? We'd like to use our content to reach out to audiences who don't normally encounter the RSC. We have a lot of skills around hair and make-up in our theatre, could we use this to make a simple how-to video and distribute it to different channels than those we would usually use? How-to videos are big news on the web, so this seemed like a good way of getting content out to a different kind of audience. Could 'accidental' encounters with our brand lead to longer term engagement?
Why was this important to your organisation?	Primarily three reasons: 1. We want to broaden our range of audiences and show people who might not think the RSC is for them, that it really could be. 2. We want to communicate that you don't just have to be an actor to work here – there are any number of skills that are necessary to make our work on stage happen, including costume-making, lighting, sound, carpentry and hair and make-up. 3. An opportunity to test a new content format, which if successful could be rolled out further.
What did you do to implement this?	I conducted some web research on how-to videos, exploring popular formats and looking at what works and what doesn't. We also explored potential channels, with the idea that we needed to get this content out to audiences who probably wouldn't be watching our usual RSC social media channels. I discussed the ideas with the Head of Wigs and Make-Up and several other people in the organisation, to get them to buy-in to the project. Feedback was positive and we agreed to go ahead.
What happened?	When we investigated the practicalities of making this content, we found that not all our shows would be suitable for filming it – to film a video about an interesting hairstyle we'd need a show where we use the actor's own hair to create a hairstyle. We've therefore scheduled the project to be filmed later in the year.
What were the personal challenges you faced when carrying out this experiment?	The later stages of LGR coincided with the redevelopment of our website, in which I was heavily involved. This meant that I had no capacity to work on the project from August to the end of November. Also, due to resource issues we have less ready access to expert filming and editing for this kind of project. This meant taking a different approach to the project, and trying to do something more low-key that could be filmed and edited by ourselves. Once I was available to take the project further (from the beginning of December) I tried to get a date before Christmas, but the Wigs department was busy and shows were unsuitable, so we agreed to wait until 2016.
What did YOU learn?	When planning around major projects, it's better to wait until project completion than try to fit something in, as this can become frustrating. When creating this type of project with other departments, there will always be unforeseen logistics (such as 'the wrong type of show').
What did YOUR ORGANISATION learn?	We're starting to think outside our usual social channels and with this in mind now have a very successful Tumblr blog where we cherry pick content, which seems to be going out to a different kind of audience, possibly not dissimilar to the one this project is aiming to reach.
What next?	Once we have created this content, later in the year, if feedback is positive we plan to develop a larger scale How-To project.

6.2.21 Situations

Name	Sarah James
Organisation	**Situations**
What was the research question behind your experiment?	How can we increase dialogue online with our audience and solicit, share and curate stories inspired by our work from audiences, participants and artists during a live project? We also wanted to engage new audiences online with our work particularly young people aged between 16 and 24.
Why was this important to your organisation?	Situations wanted to extend and deepen our approach of moving away from being the sole producers of digital content and stories about our projects, which are often from the position of authority particularly on the Situations website – voices of the curator, producer, artist – the point of view of the specialist and professional and instead to platform different and often unheard voices and stories including those of our participants, audiences and communities not yet engaged directly with Situations' work or art in the public realm. Situations also wanted to increase the number of young people visiting a particular public art project called Sanctum which was the basis of our pilot.
What did you do to implement this?	Situations Rising are a group of young people aged between 16 and 25 from Bristol and surrounding area who, through Situations and Bristol based agency Rising, came together for Sanctum as our digital live reporting and storytelling team. This core group of three young women already had a strong online presence, followers and links to a peer network of similar-aged young people; and Situations saw this as an opportunity to make contact digitally with a wider reach of young people than we currently engage with. They were supplemented later on in the project with 15 other young people who became our Digital Storytellers.
What happened?	Utilising Sanctum (Theaster Gates' first UK public art project – http://www.sanctumbristol.com) as a potentially rich platform for storytelling, Situations Rising began to document, reflect, tell the story and converse with an online audience for Sanctum. The core group firstly used their own digital platforms and followers to begin to start up a conversation about Sanctum pre the fabrication of the structure in early autumn 2015. The group also helped disseminate the open call-out to artists and build the initial excitement of Sanctum arriving in late October. The core group were then supplemented with 15 active bloggers, artists, illustrators and filmmakers who during the run of Sanctum took on the challenge of live reporting every day. These were our Digital Storytellers and had unlimited access to Sanctum and backstage. A total of 15 accounts were used in the build-up and during Sanctum to share Situations Rising content. Seven Situations Rising accounts were especially created: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WordPress, Soundcloud and YouTube. Eight of the digital storytellers posted and shared from their own accounts, on their own Tumblr blogs, from their Vine channels and on other platforms.

What happened?	The Situations Rising 'Amplifier' accounts became a central place of aggregation, and a platform for these different voices to come together. Twitter was by far the most active account with the largest following (157 followers, 526 tweets), then with Instagram (119 followers, 87 posts) and Facebook (138 likes, 75 posts) following closely behind. Presences also made on Wordpress, Soundcloud, Tumblr and Vine, however did not attract significant views or followings. Live reporting across digital channels broke down into 33% re-posts, 28% text posts, 19% image posts, 14% short video posts and 4% polls. These platforms, whilst sharing some overlap with Situations' own social media followings, drew a distinctly separate audience with a much younger demographic. Around 44% of their following were not previously Situations followers and 67% of followers were under the age of 25. Interactions with online influencers such as Rife Magazine, a young people's publication, heavily impacted on their reach. Alongside their live reporting the Digital Storytellers produced a number of creative responses: six films, eight written reflections, seven sets of illustrations and one original composition. Through a new online partnership with Canvas, the Arts Council-supported platform for audio-visual material, Situations Rising were invited to submit short films from Sanctum. Through Canvas, Digital Storytellers were supported to capture and edit six films, two of which are on the Canvas platform. To date the total of Canvas' reach across the whole channel is 164,848 views and 1388 subscribers. In total we can see Situations Rising had a core reach of over 68,000 people over the course of Sanctum, with Twitter providing the highest reach for Situations Rising at 54,460 and Facebook coming in second with a reach of 14,036. Out of their 526 Tweets, the group engaged 16 people in separate conversations about Sanctum.
What were the personal challenges you faced when carrying out this experiment?	My area of expertise is audience engagement and work with young people – not digital or social media. Having a Digital Reporter in place within Situations from August 2015 was essential to the success of the project as I would have personally struggled to critique and review the online plans and digital content production with Situations Rising because of my lack of knowledge.
What did YOU learn?	I learn a lot about online engagement through social media and digital platforms; how audiences share content and what makes a good story. Content and conversations from Situations Rising that was most popular were those stories about individual performers with special access to that individual, also when Situations Rising had more of an independent voice and voiced their own opinions and thoughts rather than just stating facts or purely sharing what was going on more generally.
What did YOUR ORGANISATION learn?	• During the live project we needed to ensure the reporters had a clear brief with set parameters and deadlines and that we encouraged them to follow a timeline closely - this was especially important in live reporting. • The recruitment of the Digital Storytellers resulted in a set of creatives rather than writers/ reporters that we needed and so responses to Sanctum were creative responses which although interesting didn't garner the interest or increase footfall by non-attending audiences.
What next?	Situations would like to retain the relationship with Situations Rising and plan how we could incorporate an improved model into some of our new commissions and public art projects in 2016 and beyond.

6.2.22 University of Cambridge Museums

Name	**Richard White and Sarah-Jane Harknett**
Organisation	**University of Cambridge Museums**
What was the research question behind your experiment?	How can the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (MAA), whose collections span nearly two million years of human history, on all six inhabited continents, find an immediate way to connect international audiences with its international collections/activities?
Why was this important to your organisation?	The MAA has a collection that spans all six inhabited continents, meaning objects held within the museum are of interest to world-wide audiences. Although there is information available on collections databases, the MAA website and social media platforms, the opportunity to talk about those collections in a live environment, with interaction by viewers, provides the MAA with a deeper connection and level of engagement with international audiences.
What did you do to implement this?	We introduced MAA to Periscope, a free live streaming tool created by Twitter. We created an account, trained staff on how to use it and, with no promotion, started by filming a curator's talk on their current exhibition, The Power of Paper. We then worked on a plan to 'scope' four times over MAA's Days of the Dead activities. Richard wrote a document about the marketing aims and Sarah-Jane worked out a schedule and questions to address. We promoted these films via Facebook and Twitter and provided information about how to use Periscope, as well as when we would be filming, on the MAA Day of the Dead webpage. The films covered: • Set-up. The blank space being transformed. Why are we doing this? What is the Mexican Society? • Who is the altar in honour of? (in Spanish) • A look at the objects on permanent display • The complete altar, an explanation of what it all means
What happened?	The first scope - with little promotion - attracted over 100 live viewers, but had a low retention rate, mainly due to the broadcast being quite long. The following Day of The Dead scopes had more planning behind them, more engaging forms of filming/content and a better marketing strategy. Although the four broadcasts attracted fewer live viewers, the retention rate was much improved and the MAA's Periscope account started to attract more followers. We realised it would be best to scope outside of normal opening hours to avoid filming members of the public or children. We planned out the scopes and did one at the end of each day as the Day of the Dead altar grew.
What were the personal challenges you faced when carrying out this experiment?	Most of the personal challenges were practical issues: making sure there was a strong Wi-Fi signal; ensuring those presenting were comfortable and knew what was about to happen; getting over the nervousness of everything involved when live broadcasting; Sarah-Jane's dodgy camera work! The Day of the Dead activities are a busy time for the museum, so this Periscope project was another 'thing' we were asking staff to make time for, but even so, it didn't prove to be too disruptive and fit in well with the schedule.

What did YOU learn?	We realised how easy and fun it was to use Periscope. MAA staff picked it up quickly and enjoyed the spontaneity of live streaming, and the idea of presenting the museum's activities at, potentially, any given moment. We learnt that some broadcast formats work better than others. Short over long, questioning over presenting.
What did YOUR ORGANISATION learn?	That the University of Cambridge Museums (UCM) has the potential to live stream a wide number of its museums' events and exhibitions on a regular basis, further promoting the University's museums and Botanic Garden to international audiences. Using Periscope has helped the UCM to realise how responsive it can be to broadcasting live moments in museums. The MAA has developed an appetite to continue 'scoping' and aims to implement the platform into future exhibitions/events and general planning. Other points: • Certain formats of scoping work better than others. Filming the curated talk lacked any potential for interactivity, plus it was quite long • Difficult to film during normal opening hours/pre-booked tour • Difficult to avoid members of the public being filmed • Have another member of staff on a connected device to answer any questions (if the person filming is unable to answer) • Have good Wi-Fi • Retention rate is low - choose your scopes wisely • The audience truly is international • Potential to expand life of content on YouTube and other platforms • Planning is essential to make it go well, but too much can make it stilted and less interesting.
What next?	MAA will be using Periscope again. We are presenting the project to other University Museums and are investigating whether it is better to scope from one central account or each museum individually.

6.2.23 US Holocaust Memorial Museum

Name	Elissa Frankle
Organisation	US Holocaust Memorial Museum
What was the research question behind your experiment?	The initial research question was: what would it take to foster stronger multigenerational conversations among visitors in small/family groups before, during, and after their visit to the Holocaust Museum? Over the course of the project, this question changed to: what do visitors need to know in order to have a successful and comfortable visit to the Museum, and how can we best provide it to them?
Why was this important to your organisation?	These questions were both important to the Holocaust Museum for a number of reasons: Over the course of the past year, the Museum has been trying to adopt a more visitor-centric way of operating programs and creating content by listening to visitors at every stage of project development, rather than starting with staff needs and desires. Answering these questions would be vital to understanding visitor needs for engaging with each other in the physical exhibition space, a question on which we had largely not been focusing for several years The Holocaust Museum was intentionally built without many signposts or markers directing visitors where to go in and around the Museum building in order to access the Permanent Exhibition, the Museum's main exhibition space. Furthermore, information about ticketing (only six months out of the year, sometimes available online and sometimes available day-of in person) adds another layer of confusion and another barrier to comfortable access to the Museum. Over the last twenty years, our visitorship has changed from a specialist/deep-engagement model to a broader general-public visitor model, and many visitors come to the Holocaust Museum as just one stop among many other museums on the Mall. As such, they bring with them expectations that other museums encourage: the exhibitions will be well-labeled and easy to find, there will either be free admission or expensive (but unlimited) tickets, etc. Answering the questions about visitor needs in physical space would help us in more realms than just the digital: it would enable us to accept our place among other institutions and the role that we play for many visitors as another stop on the way through Washington, DC, and better serve them in this context. We've done a lot of work in the past on looking at families in the context of bringing younger children to the Museum building, who may not be ready to encounter the Permanent Exhibition's rather graphic history of the Holocaust. What we had not worked on as deeply was enabling parents to talk to children, children to talk to parents, grandparents to talk to grandchildren, guardians to talk to their charges, etc. In the initial experiment, we surmised that this was a visitor need in order for people of all ages to come into the Museum prepared to engage with their group, and be able to leave with confidence in their ability to talk about what they had seen. This experiment would provide insights into engagement among visitors, the ability to digest information, and comfort in encountering difficult subject matter.

What did you do to implement this?	Beginning with the original question I assembled a team (my dream team!) of staff from Digital Learning and New Media (my division), Marketing (where a lot of the web-based and digital storytelling work currently lives), Visitor Services, and Educational Initiatives (where a lot of visitor-research work lives). As people brought colleagues into the process and my boss suggested more collaborators, we wound up with more than a dozen people involved in the project on some level. We met early on to frame the research question and create an interview protocol for talking to visitors before, during, and after their visit to the Museum. These questions involved: • what they knew about the Museum • why they had chosen to visit • with whom they were visiting • whether they had done any research on the Museum ahead of their visit • how much they knew about the Holocaust ahead of time, and how they had learned it • what they thought other visitors should know before their visit • whether they thought they would talk to each other about their experience at the Museum after their visit • what, if anything, would be difficult to discuss after their visit We spoke to 35 visitor groups (almost all multi-generational or family groups) outside the Museum building and on the second floor of the Permanent Exhibition. We then followed up with those who had given us their email addresses with a post-visit survey, which did not have a particularly high uptake rate.
What happened?	It turned out we had the wrong question! We had started out with the intention to fabricate a three-part mobile web experience for visitors to use throughout their encounter with the Museum, which we then brought down to solely a pre-visit guide due to lack of time. But the real discovery came in looking over the surveys: our visitors couldn't even get to the point of discussing the exhibition because they were so confused about how to get into the building, find the cafe, and interact with our security guards. At the same time, I was working on redesigning our ticket language for the 2016 high season to make it more user-friendly and helpful for a first-time visitor, who might be reading their ticket while waiting in line to enter the Museum. Building on this work, I slimmed down my team to two visitor services colleagues, a coder with time on his hands, an audience research expert, and a digital storyteller/videographer. We reframed the question in terms of visitor comfort and decided to make a "user guide" to the Museum. This guide would answer frequently asked questions we received from visitors, be lightweight and easy to access in our no-Wi-Fi space, and be a resource throughout their visit. It would be accessible from home or while standing outside the building on their way in. We worked on making pretty buttons, writing language, and even redrawing maps of the Museum. We also reviewed our pre-existing content on the web and in physical form that contained orientation information. But the best-laid plans... I had another set of projects I was running take on a life of their own in late November, the videographer and coder got pulled onto higher-priority projects, there were some staff shakeups in Visitor Services, and I sprained my knee in mid-December, all of which made for a trying environment in which to try to corral a team of people who weren't necessarily assigned to this project.

What happened?	In the end, with less than a month to go before the final workshop, I spoke to my project mentor Padma, who assured me that I could make something happen - I just had to get it down as a prototype. So, on a Friday afternoon in January, I returned to my notes from two months previous, opened up Wordpress, and built a website (https://ushmmtest.wordpress.com/) in about three hours. I tested this prototype with 20 visitors of various ages, backgrounds, and comfort with the English language over the course of two days, and learned a lot! • Visitors want a map. The layout of the building and our lack of signage are still the biggest barriers to confidence in the Museum space. • My three-paragraph rendering of our complex ticketing policy was infinitely more comprehensible to visitors than the page-long description on our current website. • Visitors were as curious about ticketing as about where to go in physical space, so these were the two areas on which I focused the most in my overnight iterations of the prototype. • Visitors were curious about Holocaust history and wanted to feel smart when they walked in the door. • Visitors were curious as to how we would promote this web experience if it were a real experience; more research is needed to determine what motivates a visitor to visit a site like this in the first place, since only one of the visitor groups with whom I spoke during the prototyping had visited our website at all before coming to the building.
What were the personal challenges you faced when carrying out this experiment?	I moved into my current job in December of 2014. When we were deciding to work with Culture24 and take part in Let's Get Real, my job was still taking shape; by the time the workshop was taking off in earnest, my work had solidified and I was running six separate projects. This was a structural imbalance that I couldn't correct in time, and led to a lot of self-discovery about prioritization, saying no, and the importance of mental health days. I struggled with institutional structures: whose time I could borrow, how this project was prioritized, the lack of a partner or dedicated staff to assist with the project, how protective the Exhibitions team felt of the Permanent Exhibition and of the architect's original wish to keep the building confusing, a continued lack of belief in the centrality of visitor needs to the motivation behind our work. In so doing, I uncovered a number of truths about the organization that I could reveal to my colleagues and begin to address; unfortunately, this meant perpetually bumping into walls that nobody had acknowledged were there before.
What did YOU learn?	So much! And so much that I'm already applying to other projects I'm running. To make a project successful, particularly one that needs staff from across the Museum, you need institutional buy-in at higher levels and a dedicated team, or at least a few people with supervisory buy-in who have been given the green light to help you out. My original vision for the pilot-building process had been to cross-train staff on each other's work and build empathy not just for visitors, but also for staff across the institution (so Visitor Services staff would learn about digital storytelling, coders would talk to visitors, and so forth). But this meant that our roles were not well-defined throughout the project. In the future, I want to make sure that I have well-defined and codified roles. These can change and shift throughout the project, but they help us to understand who is responsible for doing what, who to ask about other parts of the work, and how we relate to the larger context of the project. It helps everyone to feel they have agency over their work. I'm currently restructuring another project team to have better-defined roles. It's REALLY hard to go it alone when you're bumping into larger institutional roadblocks. I need a partner: to bounce ideas around, to learn each other's skills, to challenge each other to think bigger. It's really important to be sure you're asking the right question, and to be open to changing the question when it becomes clear that it's not working. Listening to visitors is incredibly gratifying. Talking to four visitors over the course of 15 minutes can tell you more than 3 days of internal meetings ever could about how to create a product that fits their needs.

What did YOUR ORGANISATION learn?	The experiment revealed a few truths that had been discussed quietly but never acknowledged fully: We've been putting staff needs and beliefs ahead of visitor needs, and assuming we are our visitors (we're not). We're still working with assumptions made about our visitors before we became a major tourist attraction. The building says a lot but does not speak for itself, and it's hard to get to underlying meaning and symbolism if you can't even find a water fountain. It's also even harder to learn about the Holocaust if you can't find the elevator to the Permanent Exhibition! We also uncovered a new truth about working in a digital framework in a physical space: the timelines of digital and traditional exhibition teams are vastly different. Digital time moves faster with these strong, motivated, creative teams than I thought was possible - so fast, in fact, that it often makes our slower-moving exhibitions staff uncomfortable. The biggest thing we need to do is talk to each other - not just the worker bees who make things happen, but supervisors to supervisors and C-level staff to one another - in order to smooth the pathway for working together. It's going to be uncomfortable, but it can be better if we at least speak the same language and can agree on expectations for working styles, team-building, and timelines.
What next?	As already mentioned, I'm taking a lot of my team-building discoveries into the rest of my work at the Museum. In addition, this project was really well-timed: we will soon kick off the process of rebuilding the Plan a Visit section of our website, for which I'll be acting as content lead. I've shared my prototype and my findings with the team, and the language I developed and tested with visitors will serve as a jumping-off point for our initial research and creation of the new site. Thinking about visitor comfort and confidence throughout this process has led us to a lot more comfort and confidence in talking to and thinking about visitors. Finally, the experiment showed that it *is* possible to do rapid testing, learning, and rebuilding cycles at the Museum without a lot of money or time. Each time we do something we didn't know we could do before, we pave the way for someone else at the Museum to know they can do it too, and in that way we change the culture of the institution.

6.2.24 Victoria and Albert Museum

Name	Lizzy Bullock
Organisation	Victoria and Albert Museum
What was the research question behind your experiment?	How can I implement the findings of the V&A's Let's Get Real 3 experiment (a sample content audit) to better tell the stories contained in the V&A's Japan collection?
Why was this important to your organisation?	The Museum's Toshiba Gallery of Japanese Art was closed for refurbishment. Our Japan content therefore needed to be up to date and engaging in time for the reopening of the gallery in November 2015.
What did you do to implement this?	I wanted to keep the initial phase of my project small, so decided to focus on improving just one page. I began by identifying an area of our collections that was both under-served online and for which our LGR3 research had suggested there was a public demand. The best fit was our page on Samurai (at the time entitled Japanese Arms and Armour). The page had been made a long time ago from various pieces of disparate content that had been produced for other purposes, rather than telling a clear story. There were also important parts of the Samurai story missing, including what the term 'Samurai' actually means.
What happened?	I arranged a meeting with the relevant curator and before meeting with him I drew out on A3 paper a structure for the page, including what our research had suggested were the key topics to include. I also included a mood board of suggested images from our collections to guide him in the kind of content I needed him to produce. This worked really well as a starting point for a conversation in which we teased out what were the most important points in the story of the Samurai. I was pleased with how receptive he was to this technique, as I don't often get the chance to actively steer the creation of this kind of content. The changes that have been made to the content since this meeting have increased dwell time on the page by almost a minute. However, at our next LGR workshop, when I recounted my meeting with the curator to Seb Chan, his reaction was "Why didn't you write the content yourself?". This question completely changed the direction of my research project, as it made me realise that what I really needed to experiment with was in fact different methods of content creation. This forced me to question whether I should create more content myself and not just be a content commissioner or recipient. For the second phase of my experiment I focussed on creating short, engaging stories about objects in the newly refurbished gallery. My manager challenged me to interview a curator about one object and write up its story. I actually ended up interviewing five curators and writing stories for 12 objects.

What were the personal challenges you faced when carrying out this experiment?	I realised halfway through the project that I was looking at the creation of digital content the wrong way round. A journalist would never say "I can't write about that subject, I'm not an expert", but we tend to. I realised that my lack of confidence in my ability to write engagingly on a topic I have not studied was holding me back.
What did YOU learn?	I learned that being an expert in what makes a good digital story is as important as being an expert in the story itself. I learned that I can approach the creation of some online stories in the way that a journalist would. I also learned that we tend to assume a lot about how curators perceive Digital Media, but in fact they can be very receptive when you approach them. Finally, I learned that it is far easier to tease out the most interesting and intriguing stories about an object if you sit down with a curator and have a chat with them about it.
What did YOUR ORGANISATION learn?	I think wider organisational learnings will come later, but my colleagues on the Digital Media team were very interested in how my experiment developed and my findings.
What next?	We are currently undertaking a large website rethink project, including a new content strategy. Object stories are increasingly important, and the approaches I have developed both in commissioning content and in writing it ourselves are being fed into the new strategy.

6.2.25 Virtual Museum of Canada

Name	Megan Richardson
Organisation	Virtual Museum of Canada (an investment program and website managed by the Canadian Museum of History)
What was the research question behind your experiment?	The research question behind our experiment evolved from a visit motivation entrance survey on the Virtual Museum of Canada (VMC) website. When the survey launched in the summer, "casual browser" was the motivation most often selected. (Once the school year began, "teacher" became a second key motivation.) Our question, therefore, was: What can we learn about casual browsers (and teachers) on the VMC website? Why are they on the site? What do they do there?
Why was this important to your organisation?	This was important to our organisation because the VMC website presents hundreds of virtual exhibits and teacher resources to interest and engage Canadians and other online visitors, but we did not know enough about who visits the website, why and what they do there. We believed that if we knew more about who was visiting the website, we would be able to target content to them more effectively, and bring greater value to their visit.
What did you do to implement this?	We identified the top two motivations from the entrance survey: "casual browsers" and, later, "teachers" and added the following (paraphrased) questions to learn more: • From where are you accessing the site? • When accessing the site, are you alone or with someone? • As a "casual browser", are you looking for something specific or are you really just browsing? • As a "teacher", which grades do you teach? Then we launched an exit survey with the same question as the entrance survey about motivation for visiting the site, and the following additional (paraphrased) questions: • How well did the VMC meet your needs today? • (If not "fully", then) How could we have better met your needs? • Will you visit this site again? At the time of the final LGR4 workshop on February 9, 2016 we were still refining our path analysis to try to identify characteristics and behaviours of "casual browsers" and "teachers" that we could map onto the larger set of Google Analytics data gathered over the previous 12-18 months.
What happened?	While our Head of Web Development was able to identify fairly typical paths for both "casual browsers" and "teachers," when he mapped them onto the overall website data set, the findings were unexpected. We had expected that because our survey results indicated a majority audience of casual browsers and teachers, we would see this reflected in the larger data set. This was not the case. For example, only 204,000 of 2.3 million visits (8.7%) fit the "casual browser" behaviour, and 10,000 (less than 1%) fit the "teacher" behaviour. These numbers seemed too low. At the time of writing, we are looking into ways of refining the data set and the paths to get clearer results. For example, stripping out the bounce and 404 traffic to make the data cleaner, and loosening the paths to draw out some useful themes.

What were the personal challenges you faced when carrying out this experiment?	The main challenge for me was in the area of research design - articulating a clear (and manageable) goal for the experiment, and identifying and executing the steps to achieve it. While we knew, generally, from the experiment's outset that we wanted to learn about our website visitors so we could better target our content to them, the experiment was a process of stripping away extraneous elements and refining our focus. The Culture24 & co. team of experts were particularly helpful here, suggesting practical ways forward. A secondary challenge for me was the sense of incompleteness and inconclusiveness with which the LGR4 project ended. When it wrapped, we were still looking at the data to ascertain if it would be possible to draw meaningful conclusions from it. Diving right in with a more "agile" approach of tweaking the website might have given us more immediate results, and a clearer sense of direction, than trying to analyse what may end up being inconclusive data, but we had to start somewhere, and unpacking the elusive "casual browser" (and then the "teacher") seemed like a good place.
What did YOU learn?	I learned … some lessons about action research work, including the importance of focus and scale when articulating the initial research question, of flexibility and creativity when things shift due to new findings and ideas, and of curiosity and commitment when the way forward isn't obvious, or the results aren't what you expected. …a new way of working in a new environment. When I assembled the cross-functional team for our LGR4 project, I had been in my role with the Canadian Museum of History for 2 months. …new evaluation tools and techniques, including Qualaroo website surveys and Google Analytics path analysis.
What did YOUR ORGANISATION learn?	The Virtual Museum of Canada started to learn …about the motivations and behaviours of some of its main website audiences, and how these audiences shift at different times of year. …that though a significant number of website visitors self-identify as "casual browers," they seem to fit more of a UK "local historian" or "history enthusiast" profile. We also confirmed that in its current state the VMC website has issues related to things like findability and functionality that prevent visitors from fully appreciating our content.
What next?	We will continue to work with our project mentor Peter Pavement to make sense of the broader GA data set in relation to the "casual browser" and "teacher" path analyses, and to see if we can draw meaningful conclusions to inform decisions regarding the visitor experience of the website and how we engage visitors using social media. The LGR4 action research experiment will inform the bigger think we are currently doing about who the VMC serves and if our delivery model is still viable.

6.2.26 Watershed

Name	**David Redfern and Claire Stewart**
Organisation	**Watershed**
What was the research question behind your experiment?	Focussing on audiences aged 18–24, how do we get attenders to tell non-attenders to attend?
Why was this important to your organisation?	In early 2015 audiences aged 18–24 were identified as a strategic priority for Watershed, with the first outcome of this in April being the introduction of a £4.50 cinema ticket at any time of the day or week. We wanted to work with the target audience directly in the form of the Future Producers group to add some fresh research and insight and develop our offer to audiences aged 18-24. Crucially we would take an open approach that focussed on the audience from the outset. Previously Future Producers had been constrained to a particular outcome, programme strand or event structure. Although we had initially developed some ideas as to what a final product or outcome would be, those were left behind, and we started again collaboratively with the Future Producers in thinking about how to get 18-24s to become Watershed customers, and influence their friends and peers to do the same. This approach freed us collaboratively to explore new ideas, take a risk and try something new.
What did you do to implement this?	We refined the initial, very wide proposal that was made to the Future Producers of interrogating our 18-24 £4.50 ticket offer and producing an event around it; to focussing on how we could get attenders to recommend to non-attenders to attend. Working with the Future Producers as mentors over 4 weekly sessions, we concentrated our thinking into wanting to understand what the triggers and drivers are around recommendation and sharing. This could be around anything: a film, a play, a place to eat, a thing to read, anything that was recommended to a peer. We then gave the Future Producers their own challenge – to come see something at Watershed and then try to recommend that film to a non-attending friend. From this the Future Producers discovered that most people weren't aware of the £4.50 ticket offer (unsurprising as it was only a month old at the time!) and that the price alone was powerful enough to drive attendance; and was one of the key drivers for recommendation.
What happened?	Following this 4 week period of re-framing and research, the Future Producers were asked to come back with a pitch as to what they were going to produce for the target audience. One of the group came up with the idea of a recommendation system for films, based on an assertion that the target age group like to be recommended things. The group worked up this idea into The Recommendation Machine as presented in their first visualisation of it. The Recommendation Machine is a physical kiosk with an iPad in it - the iPad is programmed with an online Buzzfeed-style quiz (crucially, written by the Future Producers) to recommend films that they had picked from our programme to potential 18–24 audiences. It used audience-focussed, playful, lifestyle choices and often surprising questions to recommend a film at the end. The original idea was that this machine could be placed anywhere in the city, and through answering a few quick questions you are recommended a film at Watershed and can buy your ticket there and then.

What happened?	Great ideas, but we asked them to produce a minimum viable product, to create a prototype to test their core assertion, before going ahead and building a 'proper' kiosk. They also decided that they wanted to produce a launch event, a quiz night with a difference. Over a three week period the Future Producers designed and built the kiosk, picked films they wanted to recommend, wrote the questions and worked alongside Watershed's web developer to create the quiz software. And so the machine was launched at an event – a Quiz Night for 18-24 year olds where using it was part of a series of interactive events (including a round where non-attenders were awarded extra points) in a self-described 'quiz with a difference'. Everyone who completed the quiz received a free ticket to see the film that was recommended to them, and we evaluated it on the night with a short survey.
What were the personal challenges you faced when carrying out this experiment?	Working collaboratively means you have to let go of some control and rely on other people - and this was difficult at times. Dealing with the changing relationship with the Future Producers during the process. The relationship between the Future Producers and us changed throughout the process – from mentors, to managing, to coaching, and back again.
What did YOU learn?	Start with your target audience. We had a focus that matched a strategic goal and it was far more beneficial than leading with a programme decision and working backwards. Co-produce with your target audience. This provided a faster, higher-quality insight into their behaviours, interests and motivations. Working this way produced an idea we would probably never have thought of. Young people find surprising ways of talking about the programme. They pulled out the recommendable/relatable elements of our programme in a new and surprising way. Films which we would previously have dismissed as not being appropriate for 18-24s were a great success (e.g. Doctor Zhivago) – the Future Producers were able to reinterpret the cinema programme in a very different way, relatively easily. Make the cultural programme personal. It produces interesting results, and it has cultural and personal relevance. Focus on a minimum viable product – our decision to create a prototype first rather than a polished product made a hunch testable and achievable in a short timeframe. Your role will change. The relationship between the Future Producers and us changed throughout the process – from mentors, to managing, to coaching, and back again. Does the exact working nature of this role need to be examined a bit more closely going forward? Use staff from across the organisation. Using staff from the Communications and Publishing teams as mentors for the Future Producers provided a different perspective and approach. Let go of some control – it's only an experiment. The Future Producers tended to self-organise – communication between them and us could have been improved but everything that needed to happen, did. Open briefs generate surprising results. Having briefs that aren't attached to specific funding criteria enables more flexibility in how projects are implemented and delivered. Survey results - out of 20 users surveyed on the Quiz night about their experience of using the Recommendation Machine, we found out: • 90% rated it quite good or very good • 70% may or would definitely recommend this way of choosing a film to a friend • 80% found the quiz useful and would use it again • 95% would recommend a visit to Watershed The physical quiz success suggests there is an appetite for events like this. It attracted a new audience, and the crowd bought premium beers.

What did YOUR ORGANISATION learn?	We make assumptions and over-complicate things about the target audience and our offer to them. Co-design is harder, riskier, more complicated; yet ultimately quicker and more rewarding.
What next?	Given the appetite with which the target audience responded to The Recommendation Machine, we believe there is an opportunity to iterate further in exploring its potential to inform how Watershed connects with audiences in the 18-24 age group. Further exploration would be low cost – both financially and resource wise – and be a meaningful reason to communicate further with the target age group. There are three separate elements to consider: the online quiz, the physical machine, and the quiz event. **The Machine** There are still unanswered questions around the impact of the physicality of the machine e.g. does a physical presence create or enhance the experience and make it an attractive and engaging proposition? Does it work as a stand-alone device? We suggest keeping the prototype kiosk for a second stage of testing, and focus on making it a little more stable and secure, so that it can be located in the venue for a period of two weeks. We also need to build in methods for evaluation and measurement so that we can assess its impact. We could look at a second prototype build and opportunities around featuring it in different locations/events at a later stage. **Online Quiz and Website** We should also test whether the software of the Recommendation Machine would work in an online context only. Currently the quiz is available at http://dev04.watershed.co.uk/fpquiz/ and apart from a few fairly minor changes this could form the basis of this next stage of testing. Through online communications activity – including online advertising, content creation, email campaigns to U24 list – this would give us the opportunity to examine and test the impact of hosting the quiz online. This should create a higher volume of users and therefore lead to a better understanding of its impact and potential. In order to support this we need to consider building in social sharing elements and ways of capturing email addresses so we can track/measure purchases and communications impact. Through commissioning a young person to write the quiz each month we can also interrogate the process for pulling out recommendable elements of the programme. **The Event** Explore whether the Film Quiz event could be a regular programme event: how do you make it sustainable, who would it be led by internally, and who would host it (our Future Producer host was very unique and provocative, and this was definitely a strength)

6.2.27 Wellcome Collection and Wellcome Library

Name	**Chloe Roberts and Russell Dornan**
Organisation	**Wellcome Collection and Wellcome Library**
What was the research question behind your experiment?	We wanted to give people a flavour of what's in the Reading Room. Our experiment looked to answer three questions: • Do people want to look at lots of things? • Do people want to look at things in depth? • Would people want to visit the object?
Why was this important to your organisation?	We were looking for a way for the Library and Collection to work together to digitally showcase our collections in a new and interesting way. Since the Reading Room was set up as a physical space to do just that, we wanted our project to focus on this hybrid space. As an organisation, Wellcome encourages experimentation and an approach that piques people's curiosity. We don't need to focus on income generation or footfall which gives us a bit more creative freedom. With that in mind, we chose an approach based on dating apps, with a view to allowing people to explore our collections in a way they haven't before. We wanted it to be fun, simple and unexpected.
What did you do to implement this?	We met with our in-house user experience experts who advised us on how to approach our prototype, urging us to start simple and scale back some of our initial ideas. We created our paper prototype and tested it on staff and visitors. This involved writing a set of stories based on a variety of objects we chose in the Reading Room accompanied by photographs. Based on user feedback, we iterated and re-tested the paper prototype before feeding all of that knowledge into a digital prototype. This allowed us to test our idea on people in person and remotely, and was closer to how we envisaged the final product.
What happened?	The response to the prototype was very positive. We received really useful feedback, both positive and negative, which allowed us to refine our stories. The constructive nature of the comments flagged aspects of the prototype that we hadn't fully considered and could then incorporate into the next iteration. It was interesting that some points were widely agreed upon among those tested, whereas others were divisive; all were valuable
What were the personal challenges you faced when carrying out this experiment?	Our initial apprehension at accosting the public to test our prototype, although this did get easier. Once we developed our digital prototype that could be tested remotely, we hoped more people could test it with the added advantage that we wouldn't be standing over their shoulder (passively) influencing their behaviour. However, the uptake wasn't as great as we'd hoped.
What did YOU learn?	We learned how to conduct user testing. Starting simple, and knowing what you want to find out, was critical and made the process much easier and more focussed. People will say anything, even if it's not exactly relevant to what you're testing for, but it's usually still useful. We quickly learned not to take things personally. Although everyone is different, there were some common themes. When it came to the stories we wrote, we found that people generally like a narrative they can follow, especially ones about people. We learned that images are vital, but need to be of high quality and varied.
What did YOUR ORGANISATION learn?	If the idea is fun and different, it captures people's imaginations and leads to greater involvement. When the Collection and Library work together and learn from each other, each benefits from being exposed to a different viewpoint, ethos and range of expertise.
What next?	We're still collecting quantitative and qualitative data and hope to present our results to internal stakeholders to see how feasible it would be to make our idea a reality.

Who are Culture24?

www.WeAreCulture24.org.uk

Culture24 is an independent charity that brings arts and heritage organisations together to do amazing things they couldn't do on their own. We are a small and dynamic team of writers, thinkers, producers and publishers who love arts and culture, understand digital and believe that cultural organisations have a vital place in a better world.

We are best known for publishing great websites about culture (Culture24.org.uk, Show.Me.Uk, VanGoYourself.com); producing the successful Museums at Night festival of after-hours openings and leading Let's Get Real, the collaborative action research project involving cultural organisations across the UK, Europe and North America.

Culture24 provides platforms, networks and safe, collaborative spaces within which cultural organisations can work together to reach and engage audiences, benchmark, experiment and learn. We broker partnerships and strategic opportunities that it would be near impossible to access as individual organisations.

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Credits

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