

How to Create Online Exhibits

(a nuts & bolts webinar)

Association of Midwest Museums
and VAMONDE



Presenters



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Why might we want an online exhibit?

Start with this question: “What is it that you want to accomplish?”

1. You recently opened an exhibit and then had to close your doors.
 - a. Want to offer virtual tours of it.
 - b. Want to make the content available before it closes (if you can't extend it)
2. You want to use your collection or expertise to stay relevant right now and/or address at-home needs during this crisis.
 - a. Offer new content or information through online experiences
 - b. Provide access to collection while people can't visit
 - c. Find ways to repurpose or reorganize existing content into thematic offerings
3. You want to use this as a way to pilot topics or test content for future exhibits.

There are likely many other reasons!



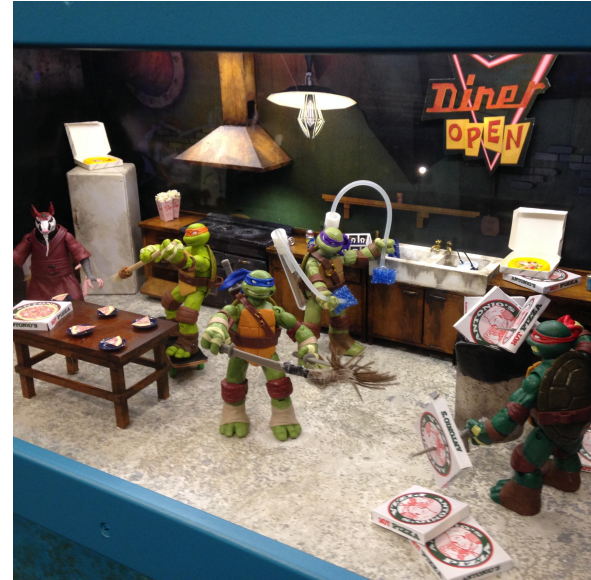
Let's start with a reminder for how
to create great exhibits...



What makes a great in-person experience?

Let's not forget what makes a great exhibit, no matter the format.

1. **Consider your audience.** *Who are you designing this for? Families? Schools? Adults? Children?*
 - a. Awareness of the subject
 - b. Developmental levels and learning needs
 - c. Age appropriateness
 - d. Attention spans
2. **Have a compelling storyline.** *What do you hope people take away from this?*
 - a. Big Idea/main message(s)
 - b. Enduring Question
 - c. Interpretive Messages



What makes a great in-person experience?

(cont.)

3. **Make it visually interesting.** *What's going to keep their attention?*
 - a. Variety of elements
 - b. Cohesive environment/design
 - c. Create multiple “areas/spaces” to go into
4. **Have a clear hierarchy of information.** *What's important and what's not?*
 - a. Be focused
 - b. Organize your messages/ chunk them out
 - c. Bold key points



What makes a great in-person experience?

(cont.)

5. Make sure it is accessible.

- Multiple learning styles and access points
- Audio narration
- Rich descriptions of visual elements
- Test designs in [COBLIS](#) (Color Blindness Simulator)
- Be judicious with fonts and colors

Coblis — Color Blindness Simulator

If you are not suffering from a color vision deficiency it is very hard to imagine how it looks like to be colorblind. The Color **BL**indness Simulator can close this gap for you. Just play around with it and get a feeling of how it is to have a color vision handicap.

As all the calculations are made on your local machine, no images are uploaded to the server. Therefore you can use images as big as you like, there are no restrictions. Be aware, there are some issues for the "Lens feature" on Edge and Internet Explorer. All others should support everything just fine.

So go ahead, choose an image through the upload functionality or just drag and drop your image in the center of our Color **BL**indness Simulator. It is also possible to zoom and move your images around using your mouse – try it out, I hope you like it.



Extra considerations for online experiences

There are a few best practices for web-based experiences to consider.

1. Text length

- a. Total length, suggest staying around 250-350 words (500 max.)
- b. Chunk out your text, 50-60 words per paragraph

2. Video length

- a. In-person is usually around 90 seconds maximum
- b. Use individual, shorter clips (modules)

3. Formatting

- a. Have captions and rich descriptions
- b. Don't use too many fonts and choose fonts that are easy to read

4. Build it in layers, have multiple “spaces” to visit

5. Access varies based on platform used

Attend other online accessibility webinars, like Chicago Cultural Accessibility Consortium



Let's look at typical formats and
elements of online exhibits...



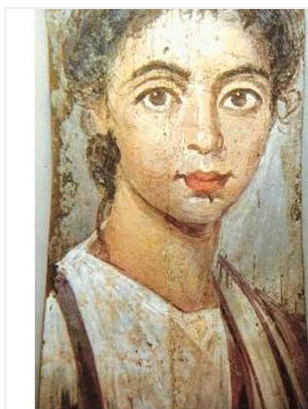
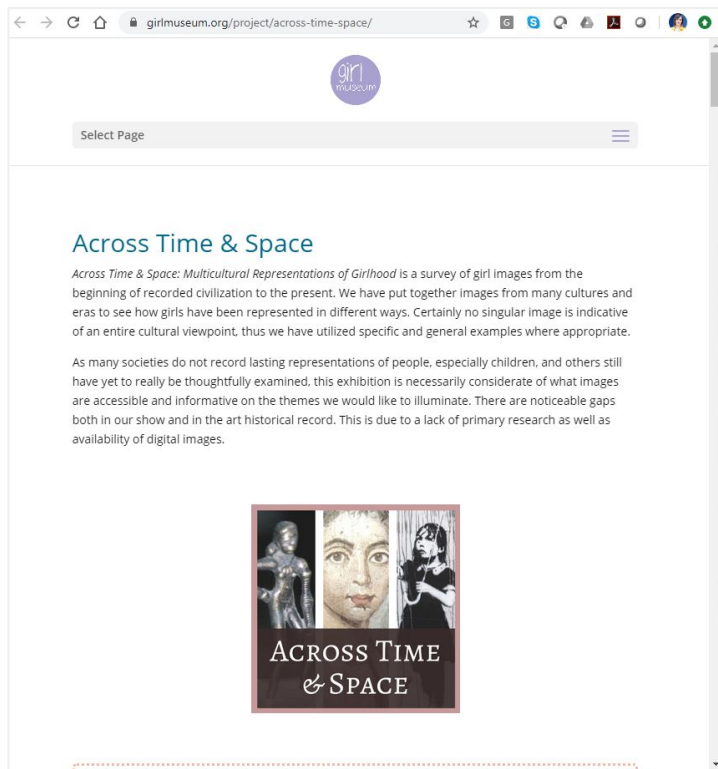
What do online exhibits usually look like?

There seem to be some pretty standard formats for online exhibits.

- 1. Webpage on an organization's website**
- 2. Dedicated Website**
- 3. Online Collections Database**
- 4. Apps and Other Platforms**



Webpage on an Organization's Website: Girl Museum



Roman Egypt, early 3rd century

From the Roman occupation of Egypt survives a unique collection of portraits that provide unparalleled insight into individuals of that period.
[read more](#)



England, late 16th century

Young girls are quite often shown as servants in the midst of serving their master, but this one is a Cizhou glazed ceramic stoneware, one of many known reclining child pillows.
[read more](#)



England, late 16th century

Three Young Girls is a portrait of sisters who have a story to tell. They are each linked to the other in some way, holding hands or arm in arm, showing their sisterhood.
[read more](#)

England, late 16th century

Sep 15, 2009

Three Young Girls is a portrait of sisters who have a story to tell. They stand in a line facing the viewer all wearing the same elaborate gown that is seemingly the same size even for the diminutive littlest girl.



Follower of William Larkin, Three Young Girls, c.1585-1610, Denver Art Museum, Denver, Colorado, Wiki Commons.

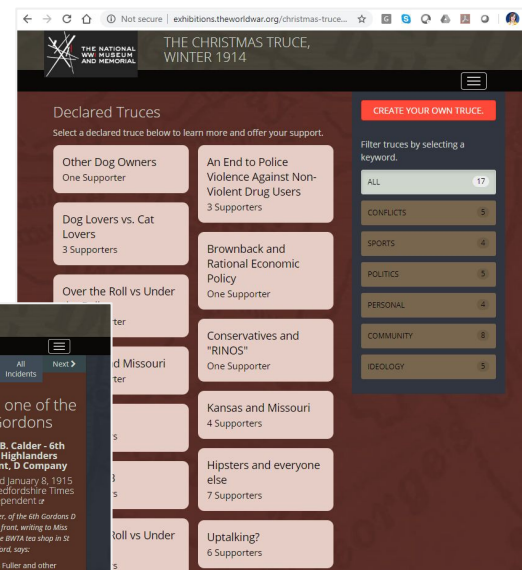
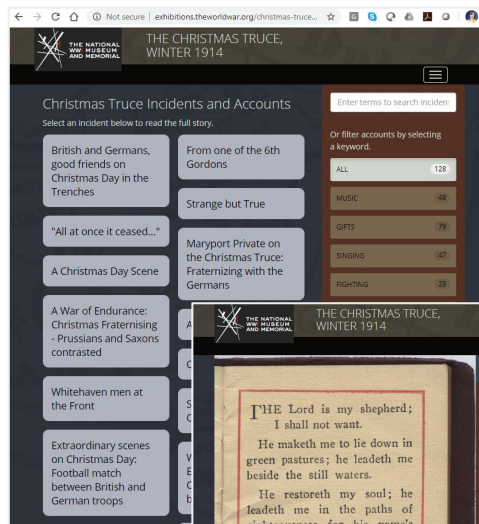
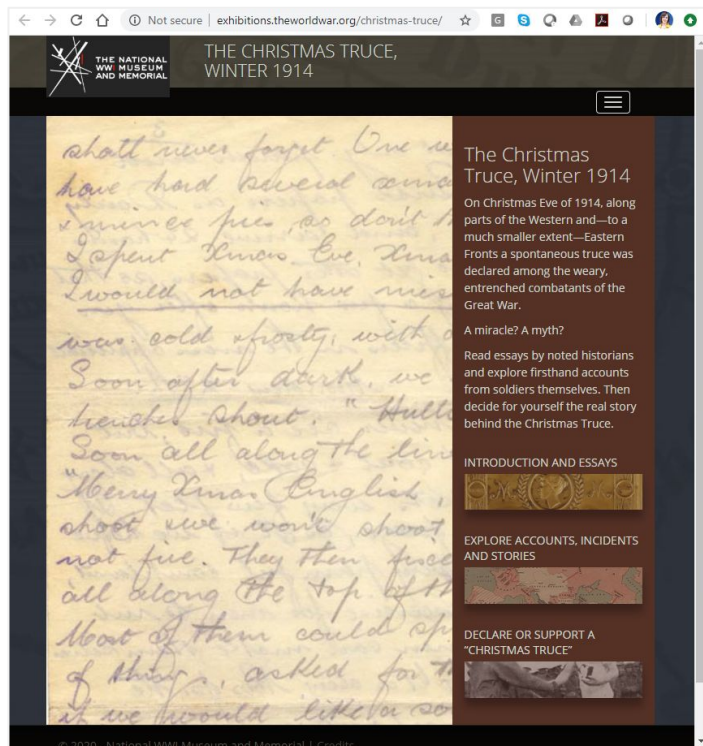
Within their similar hairstyle they each wear a yellow lace hair band, which was only introduced in 1610, so they were at the forefront of fashion as well. Their faces are stylized with rosy cheeks and pale skin, yet individual features, such as their eyes and noses are distinctive.

They are each linked to the other in some way, holding hands or arm in arm, showing their sisterhood. Their fancy jewelry, including coral hunting horn earrings, tells us that they were likely members of a wealthy land-owning family.

Each girl holds in her hand a unique object: a doll, a bunch of grapes and a pair of pears. Ripe fruit



Webpage on an Organization's Website: National WWI Museum, Kansas City



Dedicated Website: Jane Addams Hull-House Museum

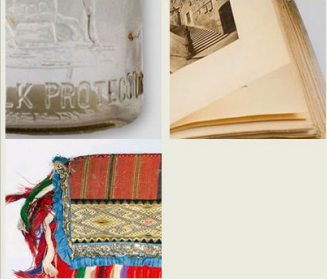
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hullhouse.uic.edu/hull/look/index.html

Look At It This Way

About Romola Milk Bottle Sash Blueprint Giraffe Plate Rocking Chair Record

Look At It This Way



What makes an object an artifact? Why do we save some things and not others? What can we learn from the things we save? It has long been the role of curators and scholars to answer these questions. We wanted to hear from others. Fashion designers, artists, bookmakers, novelists, bicycle repair people, and many more have looked closely at artifacts in our collection and created work in their chosen discipline that helps to illuminate our artifacts.

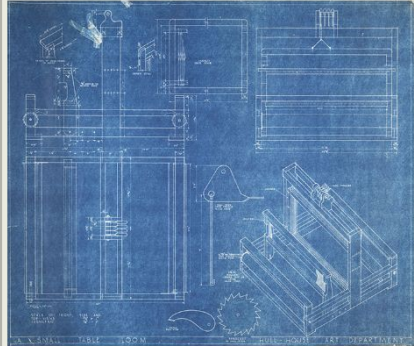
Look At It This Way is a project of the Jane Addams Hull-

Look At It This Way

About Romola Milk Bottle Sash Blueprint Giraffe Plate Rocking Chair Record

Blueprint

Froilan Landeros
Jane Patrick

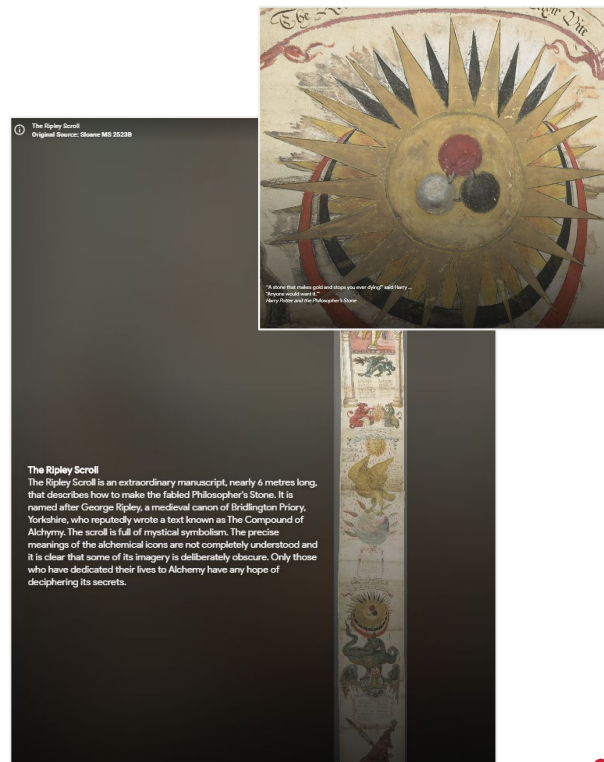
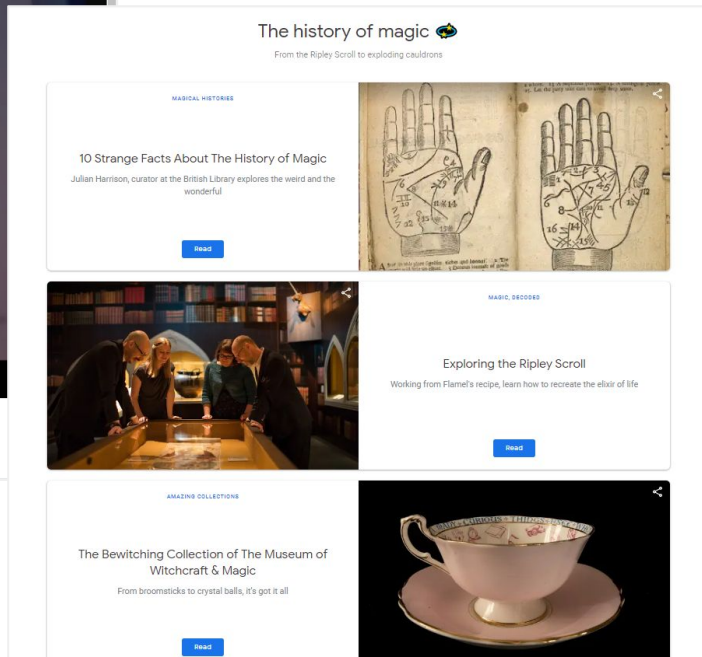
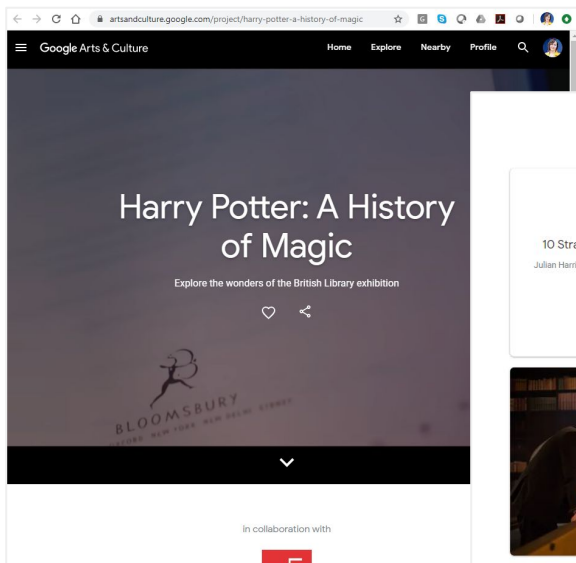


Blueprint to make tabletop hand loom, circa 1900
Designer unknown
Jane Addams Hull-House Museum Collection

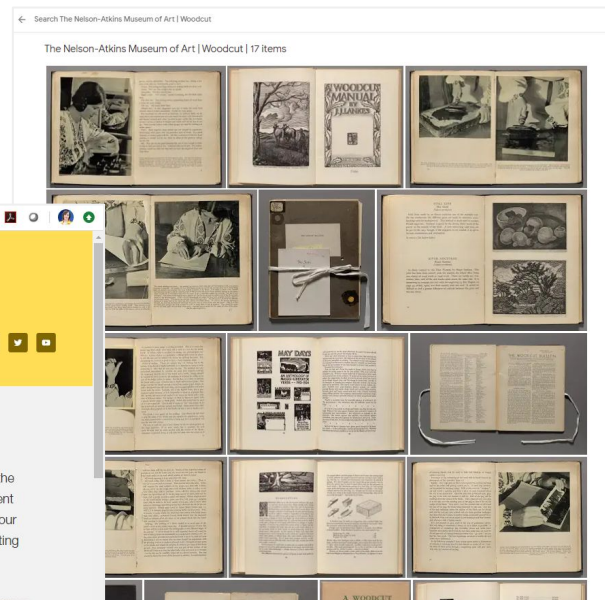
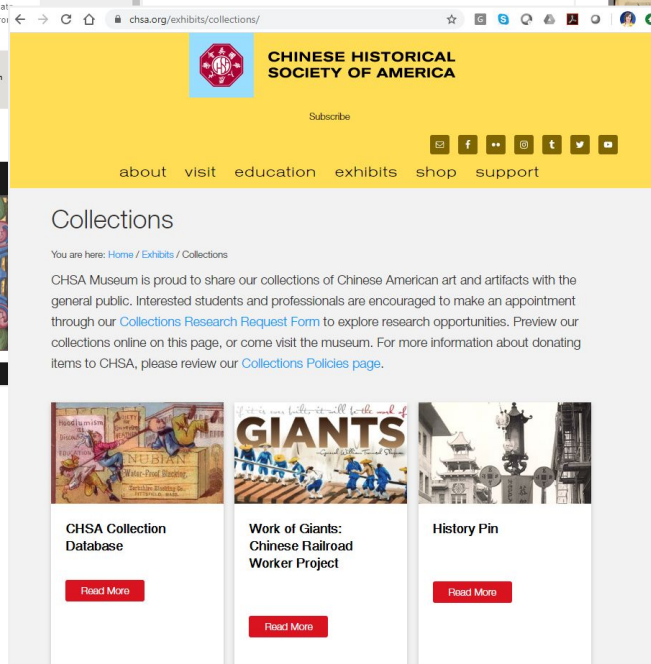
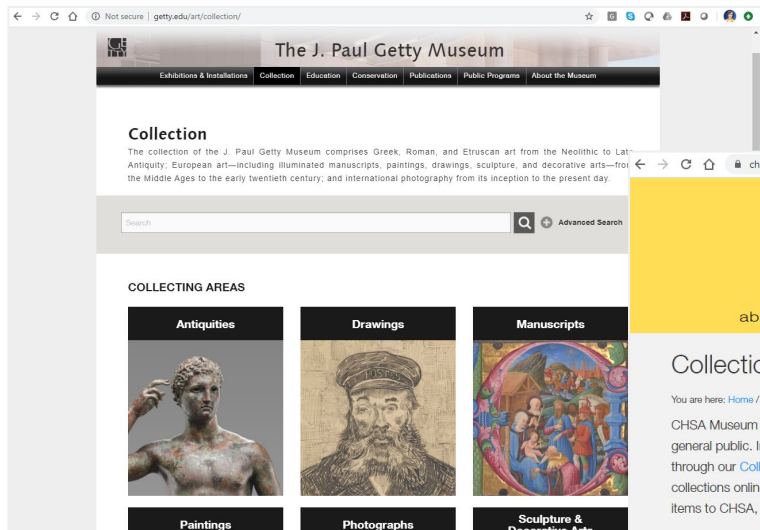
"A man often cannot understand the machine with which he works because there is no soil of out of which such an understanding may grow, and the natural connection of the workshop with culture is entirely lost to him." Jane Addams, First Report of the Labor Museum



Dedicated Website: Google A&C and British Library



Online Collections Database



Apps and Other Platforms



British Museum Guide

London Travel & Tours
Vusiem Tour Guides Ltd

★★★★★ 5.0, 2 Ratings

Free - Offers In-App Purchases

Screenshots

iPhone iPad



Explore the museum with this handy and useful guide



Great guide to the collection with images and audio



Navigate galleries with an interactive map

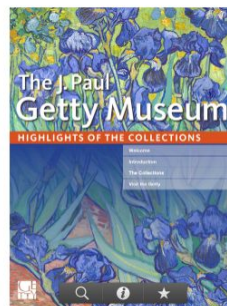


Select from hundreds of objects to create your tour



Getty Publications

New App: The J. Paul Getty Museum Highlights of the Collections



Zoom in on 150 Highlights of the Getty Museum's Collections with our Mobile App

From treasures of the ancient world and medieval manuscripts to Renaissance drawings, French furniture, Impressionist paintings, iconic American photographs, and much more, this app gives you access to 150 of the most beloved objects in the Getty's collection. Each object is presented with an image and a brief analysis, and some also include audio commentary and multiple views. This multiplatform app brings the Getty's most extraordinary artworks and the expertise of its curators to your fingertips.

Features

- Works by Bernini, Leonardo da Vinci, Gauguin, Hockney, Lange, Man Ray, Michelangelo, Raphael, Rembrandt, Renoir, Stieglitz, Titian, Turner, Warhol, and many others
- Nearly 200 images
- Audio commentary on selected works
- Videos that take you behind the scenes at the Getty Center and Getty Villa and explore the life of J. Paul Getty



Free

iPhone

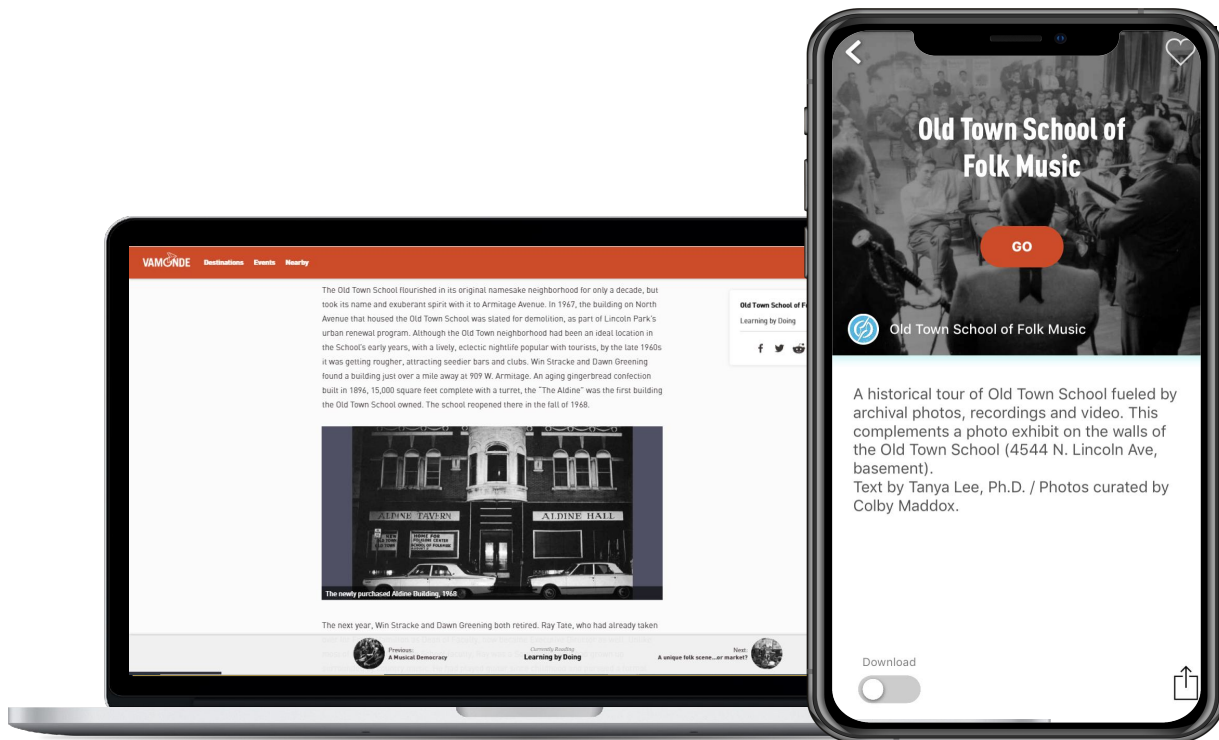
iPad

Android

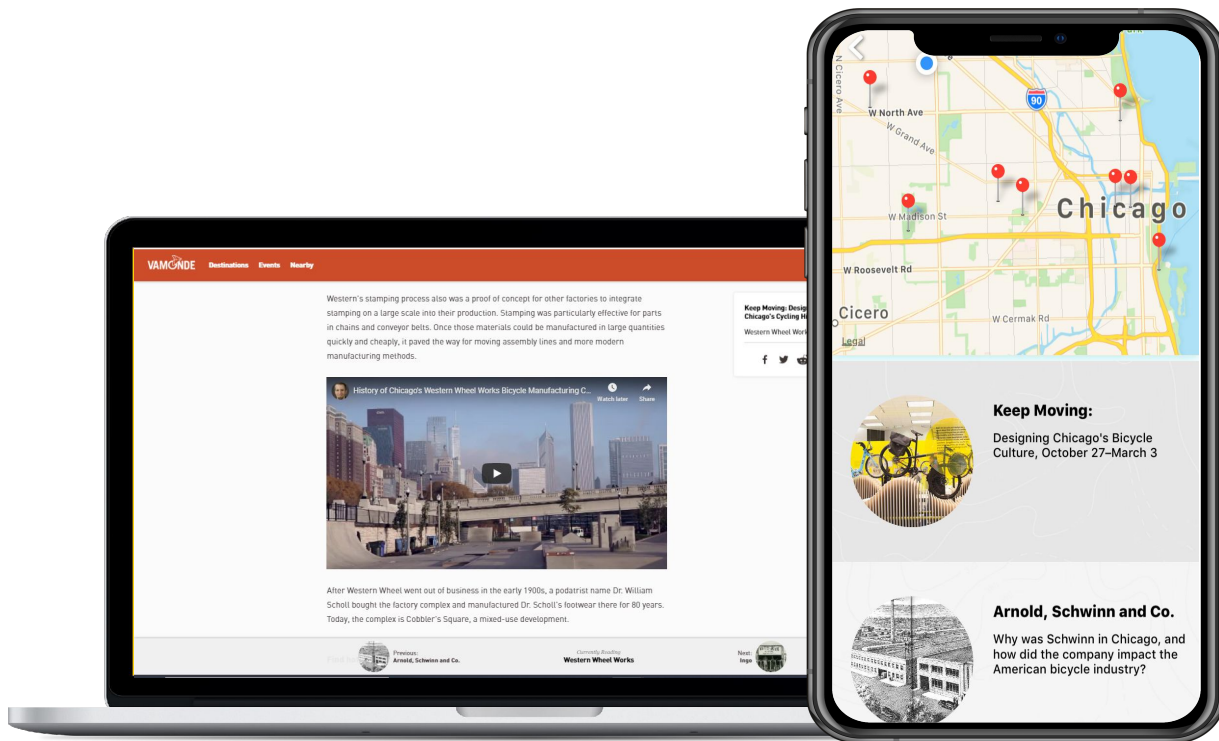
Nook



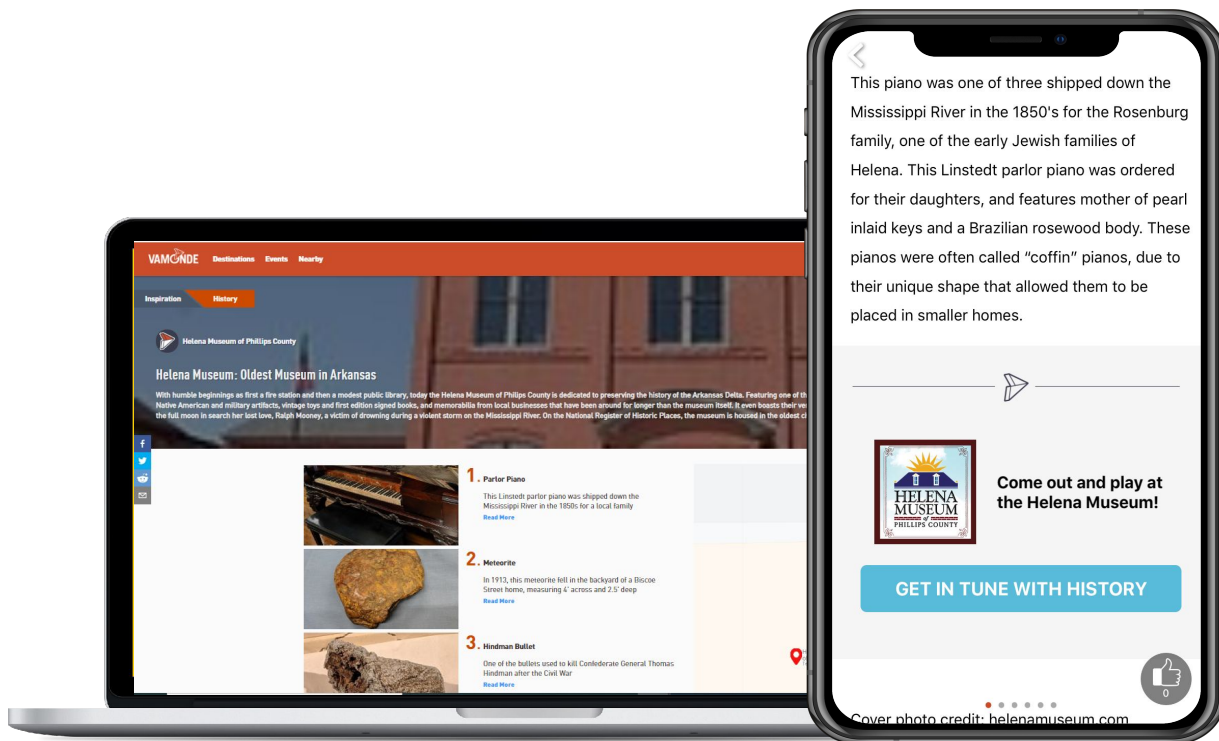
Apps and Other Platforms



Apps and Other Platforms Cont.



Apps and Other Platforms Cont.



Common elements of online exhibits

What do online exhibits primarily consist of?

1. Organizing **theme or topic**
2. **Written content**
3. **Images** or image galleries (new or repurposed)
 - a. Photos of people, places and things
 - b. Works of art or details from works
 - c. Objects
4. Embedded **videos** (new or repurposed) - expert explaining a concept, staff member giving a tour, image slideshow, etc

Some examples included at-home or in-school activity suggestions or digital games



Let's look at creative ideas for
reaching beyond status quo...



How might we upgrade the typical formats?

What else might we do to create interest or hold a visitor's attention?

Things to see:

1. Invite them to **click to dive deeper**, rather than place all content on a single page
2. Make it **accessible** - include captions or links to transcriptions, audio and visual elements, describe images
3. Feature **multiple points of view** or tell stories for varying learning levels/audiences
4. Use Prezi or whiteboard explainer videos to **animate content** vs. having paragraphs of text (embed as video, of course)
5. Reuse great **freely licensed or publicly available content** and cite the source
6. Try using **infographics** to convey facts



How might we upgrade the typical formats?

Some more ideas...

Things to do:

1. Add **interactives**, such as games or online versions of digital elements in other exhibits
2. Provide **DIY activities**
3. **Virtual tours** of a place or space featured in the story
4. Try interactive or scrolling **timelines**
5. Add **zoom or spin effects** for images of artifacts



What ideas have you had?

Share ideas in the chat box.



Resources for DIY online games

Some resources exist for creating free online games to add to websites, often used by teachers. Give them a try!

1. **WISC-ONLINE** [GameBuilder](#) - matching, crosswords, jeopardy, sports-related games, etc.
2. [Quizlet](#) - make flash card style games
3. **Interact** [quiz tool](#)
 - a. [Colonial Williamsburg](#) uses these quiz games in their online exhibits
4. **Educaplay** [free gamification tool](#) - riddles, memory games, word scrambles, matching columns, etc.



Resources for other content

You may be interested in unique ways to deliver content in your online exhibit. Here are a few ideas:

1. **Fiverr** - [hire an artist or animator](#) to create an animated or whiteboard sketch explainer video for you (among other things) - quickly!
2. **Slideshow Presentations** - turn your PowerPoint into a [video presentation](#) or try [Prezi](#) instead
3. **Videos** - look for videos marked as [Creative Commons on YouTube](#) videos, check out [Creative Commons](#) and [Vimeo Creative Commons](#). You can also repost other videos and cite them, but be careful of the source and contents.



Here's an example exhibit...



Online Exhibit about Pet Careers

This online exhibit will be about how pets - and other domestic animals- are trained to help or entertain us.

We want to deliver the following messages:

- 1. Pets are sometimes trained to help and entertain us**
 - a. Guide Dogs are specially trained to help blind or visually impaired people
 - b. Some animals help to comfort us when we are sick or sad
 - c. Dogs, horses, and other animals serve in law enforcement or military
 - d. Pets and domestic animals are sometimes trained to perform in movies, shows, etc.
- 2. Different animals are well-suited for different types of jobs**
- 3. Our community has many great stories about service animals**



Online Exhibit about Pet Careers

We could feature:

1. **Local stories** about service animals and pets
 - a. could record some interviews using Zoom or other program to get current stories
 - b. mainly stories about guide dogs, military and law enforcement in newspapers or on TV, and pets that have appeared commercials or movies
 - c. Might be able to get other local stories from community partners like veterinarians, the local police and fire departments, senior centers and hospitals
 - d. We also have members and volunteers who use service pets
2. Photos and videos in **our archive** that show service animals and pet careers dating back to 1920
3. Background **research** on the topic
4. A **game** we create using a free online tool



Online Exhibit about Pet Careers

EXHIBIT MAIN PAGE

My Museum: Pet Careers Online Exhibit



1. Introduction to Pet Careers



2. Guide Dogs



3. Therapy Animals



4. Law Enforcement or
Military Animals



5. Pets in Entertainment



EXHIBIT AREA 1

Introduction to Pet Careers

Pets are sometimes trained to help and entertain us.

They play important roles in our communities.



Play a matching quiz game

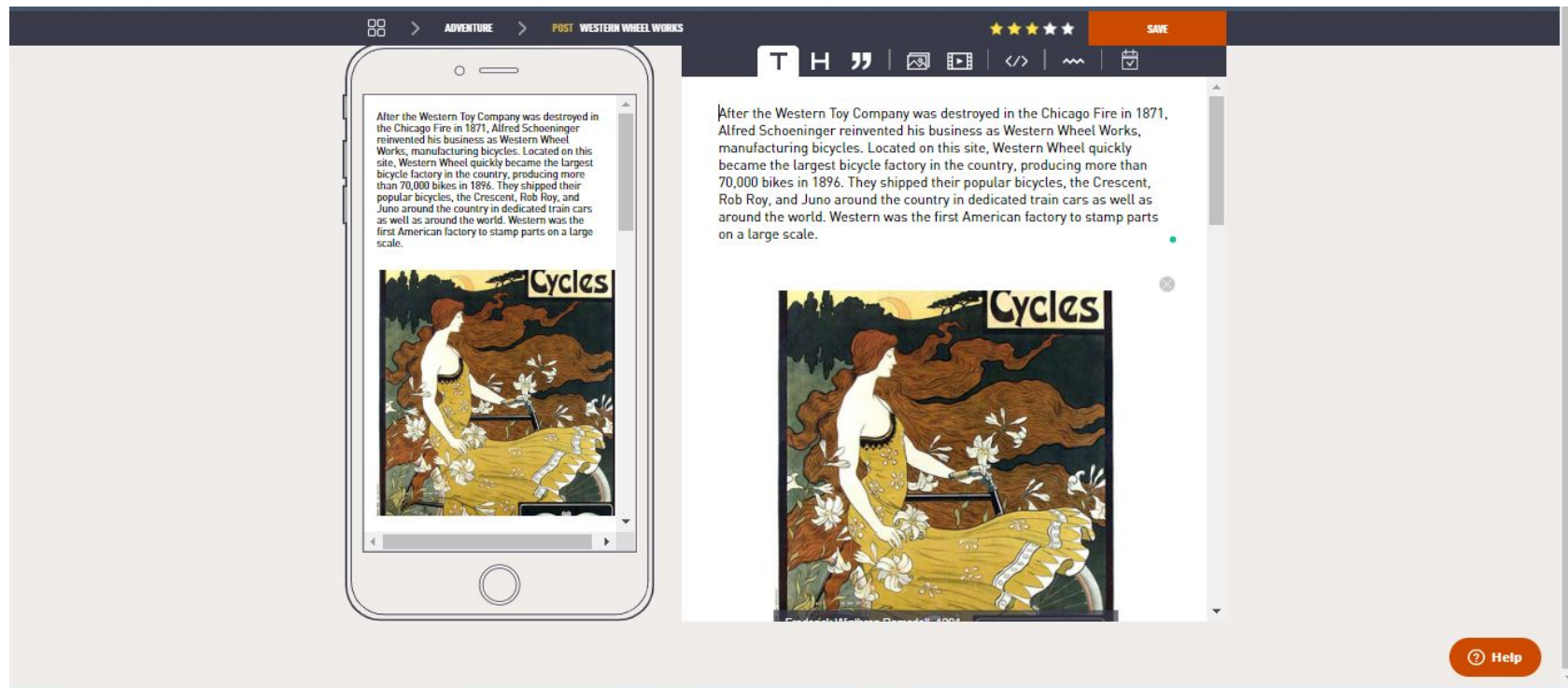
Match the dog and its natural abilities to the need or service they are most suited for.



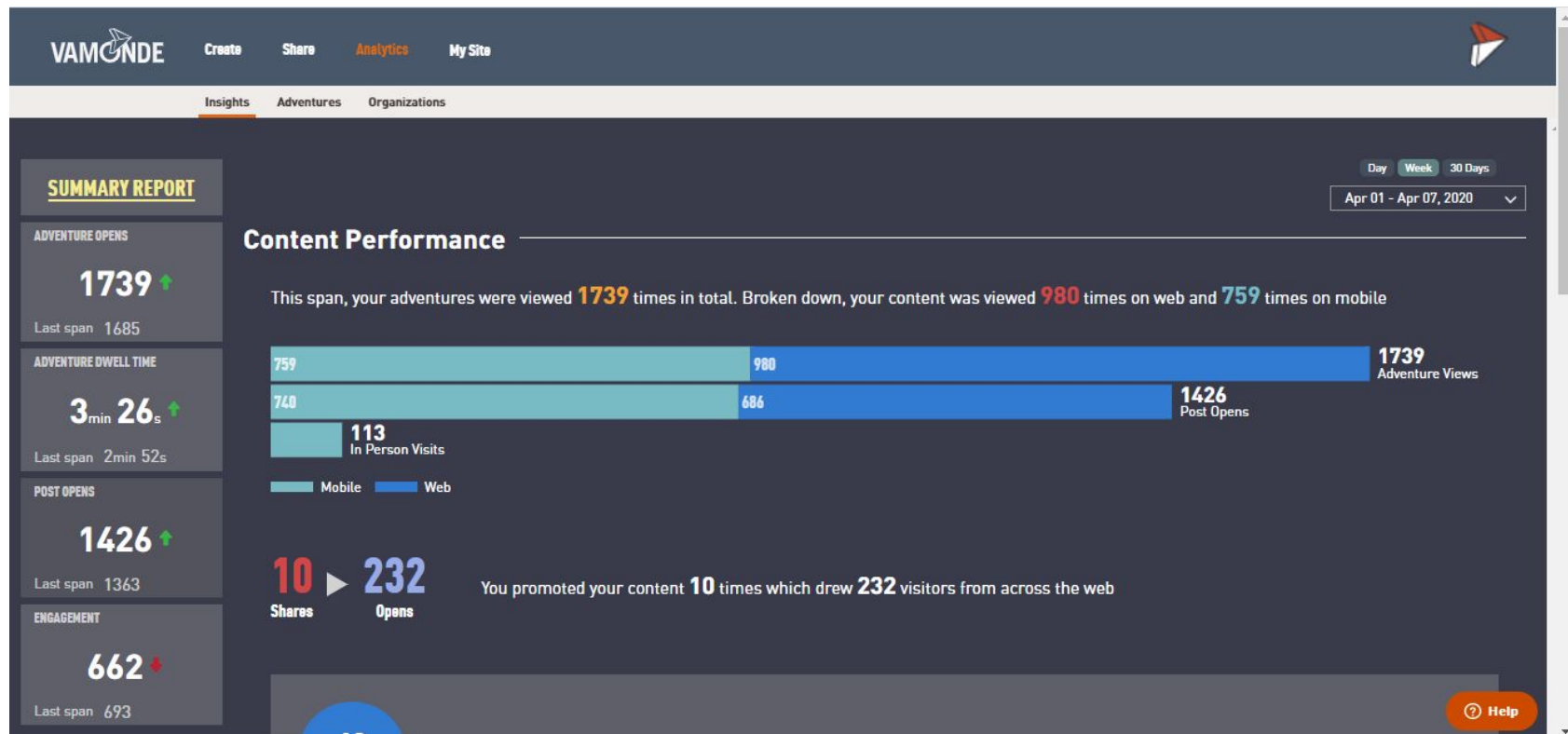
Let's look at how you might use
VAMONDE to build an online exhibit...



VAMONDE Digital Tools



VAMONDE Digital Tools



Questions?



Resources:

1. Association of Midwest Museums webinar recordings and demos about [how to collaborate from home](#)
2. Google Cultural Institute Platform [FAQ](#) and list of [online exhibits](#)
3. [Practical Tips for Creating Online Exhibitions](#), presented as part of Museum Practice Seminar during Museums Association Conference, 2011.
4. [VAMONDE Examples](#) and [Digital Tools](#)
5. Video Captioning Options: [Add your own captions in YouTube](#), try software like [Rev](#) to add subtitles or transcribe videos, or hire services like [CaptionLabs](#) or [3Play Media](#)

