

Elise

Medieval History Librarian



I really need a way to get information about our collections to the public. Faculty want to have online access to our manuscripts collections, and I want it to be able to show our collections to colleagues in the field.

Biographical Info

Age: 39 Years Old

Education: MLS

Technology: Comfortable with online technologies for creating content. She uses Twitter, runs a blog and uses LibGuides to manage her content.

Goals

- Be able to set up a site for her digital projects, ideally with little or no intervention from the IT groups
- Upload her own collections of items and annotate them, with information like locations or dates
- Keyword search for content
- Provide supplementary info - such as other links, contact info or accompanying essays
- Provide high resolution images with features like zooming to enhance the experience of the site

Values

- Easy to use and attractive sites
- Ability to customize the experience to suit the subjects of the collection
- Technology that fosters collaboration and the ability to share knowledge

Frustrations

- Not being able to provide an easy way for others to access her collections
- Sites that are so hard to use it's difficult to teach others how to use
- Needing to store her content in a multitude of locations

Margaret

Postgraduate student of the Department of Archaeology



I'm trying to get an idea of what collections are available online. The geographic location of items are important for deciding where to travel - I definitely prefer working with items hands-on.

Biographical Info

Age: 25 Years Old

Technology: Comfortable using the laptop for her research and writing activities.

Story

Margaret is performing research about the use of currency throughout ancient civilizations as part of a funded PhD project at the University of Sheffield. She has a limited travel budget and wants to perform as much research online as possible.

Goals

- Use the internet to locate ancient coins and currency for analysis
- Locate and meet colleagues in the field
- Find out where items are located in planning a research trip to the US

Values

- High quality photos that she can use for analysis and comparisons
- Useful metadata - reliable and credible sources of dating and locations
- Serendipitously finding new, interesting material and perspectives

Frustrations

- Suspecting she's missing content by not using the right keywords for searching
- Having to do a lot of extra work to find exact locations of items
- Not being able to determine credibility of the site upon first visit

Craig

Special Collections Curator



To be perfectly honest, I'd rather just focus on physical exhibits and get visitors into the exhibit hall. But this is a priority from administration so I'll definitely comply!

Biographical Info

Age: 63 Years Old

Education: PhD

Technology: Has not taken up learning new technologies as much as younger librarians. He is comfortable using email and office productivity tools.

Goals

- Create sites to highlight physical exhibits he curates, preferably with the low amounts of effort
- Be able to provide more depth to his exhibits - for example, a way to flip through pages of rare books, which normally can only be opened up to a single page in a display case
- Have the same flow, or storyline, to the online exhibits as in his physical exhibits
- Able to set up a new site without learning new technologies

Values

- Minimizing the amount of duplicative effort he puts into creating exhibits
- Preserving the thought and effort put into curating an exhibit
- Being able to share his exhibits with colleagues who can't travel

Frustrations

- Not having the ability to choose how his content displays
- Sites that are boring or look dated
- Sites without a clear delineation

Candace

8th Grade History Teacher



I'm always looking online for more content to use in my lesson plans. Kids love to see historical pictures surrounding events we talk about in class. And it helps them retain the information better.

Biographical Info

Age: 31 Years Old

Education: M.S.

Technology: Comfortable on the laptop and her iPhone. Uses primarily for Facebook, Twitter and posting to her blog, often while watching TV in the evening.

Goals

- Locate content about class topics using google searches
- Find and download images and other content to incorporate into her lesson plans
- Make sure it's OK copyright-wise for her to include this content in handouts and her blog for her students
- Find a knowledgeable person to ask for more in-depth questions

Values

- High-res photos that work well on a projector
- Easy to download content
- Credible, high quality explanatory essays she can send students to for homework

Frustrations

- Getting "lost" on the site
- Not able to find contact information
- Sites that block downloading content
- Sites that you can't sit and browse through

Terrence

Head Curator of Collections, Harvard University



“*In my free time I love sitting outside with my laptop just looking at what other institutions are doing with their collections. In fact, this is a perfect Saturday afternoon for me!*”

Biographical Info

Age: 42 Years Old

Education: PhD

Technology: Loves his iPhone and Macbook Air, appreciates technology but is admittedly a novice.

Goals

- Get a good overview of holdings in collections in various institutions
- Find out who the curator is (in case it's someone he knows from conferences or list serves)
- In searching for specific objects, he wants to be able to use google rather than having to check each institutions page
- Ideally also learn something about the collection -- how the curator acquired the items or perhaps some tidbit of history

Values

- Serendipitously finding new information - new people with similar interests to network with, new blogs to bookmark and come back to
- Sites that are easy to navigate and have plenty of information about each item

Frustrations

- Exhibits sites with little or no information about the content
- Not able to find out who the curator is
- Sites with ugly design or don't showcase the collection properly