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GIFT
Meaningful Personalization of Hybrid Virtual Museum Experiences Through Gifting and Appropriation

Horizon 2020

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Anthology on Meaningful Personalization

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Project Consortium

Beneficiary no.	Beneficiary name	Short name
1 (Coordinator)	IT University of Copenhagen	ITU
2	Blast Theory	Blast Theory
3	Next Game	NextGame
4	University of Nottingham	UoN
5	Uppsala University	UU
6	Europeana Foundation	EF
7	Culture24	C24

Dissemination Level

PU	Public	X
CO	Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission Services)	
EU-RES	Classified Information: RESTREINT UE (Commission Decision 2005/444/EC)	
EU-CON	Classified Information: CONFIDENTIEL UE (Commission Decision 2005/444/EC)	
EU-SEC	Classified Information: SECRET UE (Commission Decision 2005/444/EC)	

Type

R	Document, report	X
DEM	Demonstrator, pilot, prototype	
DEC	Websites, patent filling, videos, etc.	
O	Other	
ETHICS	Ethics requirement	

D5.3 Anthology on Meaningful Personalization

Introduction

Through the extensive empirics carried out within GIFT, in the specific case studies in WP2 and WP3 as well as in the action research project (part of WP4), the consortium has gathered deep insights into what make digitalisation projects in the museum context succeed, and sometimes fail. 'Why do we fail digitally?' was the title of a recent seminar for museum professionals[1] at the Munch museum in Norway. The title reflects the challenges that museums often encounter in taking advantage of digital technology. The museum sector seems to be divided between the opposing forces of technological optimism, often visible in funding proposals that focus on the latest technology trends (or hypes), and technological fatigue, perhaps fed by past projects which didn't deliver on their promise.

Targeting this issue, the GIFT book offers an original take on digital museum technology by focusing on *hybrid experiences*: designs that use new technologies to augment, expand or alter the physical experience of visiting the museum. We argue that hybrid formats may be used to offer engaging experiences to visitors, to allow the museum to reach out to new audiences, and even challenge the boundary between audience and museum in a collective reimagining of what museums can – and should – be. The book is grounded in practical design projects working with both museum professionals and museum visitors "in the wild", ensuring that both the designs and the discussions in the book are closely connected to the practical concerns of the readers and users.

The book addresses museum professionals, designers, students and others working with digital museum experiences, and provides tools and inspiration that can help create innovative *hybrid museum experiences*. The book complements the GIFT open source experience design framework[2], designed to be usable by museum professionals with few resources aside from the framework – and the book.

The central topic in the book is to investigate how technology can be a tool for creating meaningful and social – rather than just individual – museum experiences. Rather than investigating personalisation through guides, filter and search tools, the GIFT book presents strategies towards creating interpersonal experiences that engage visitors *together*: in groups, with other visitors or in communication with their friends and family at home. We look at how museum experiences can capitalise on and to some extent reinforce strong personal ties through social action such as gifting practices and playful appropriation. Our emphasis lies on creating emotional and personal attachment to the museum and its content. Mere information, however relevant, cannot create this type of attachment. It emerges through personal engagement, active interpretation and intersubjective sense-making.

The book first presents the theoretical foundation for this perspective. Next it goes on to present a set of case studies selected from the empirical experiences in GIFT, serving to concretize these ideas through innovative examples and solutions. The final part of the book is focussed on elaborating on concrete tools and methods, most of them made available at gifting.digital, providing design guidance for designers and developers.

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[1] https://munchmuseet.no/en/news/why-do-we-fail-digitally-developing-solutions-for-transforming-the-cultural-sector

[2] https://gifting.digital/

The GIFT book manuscript has been produced in collaboration by a large number of authors, listed below at their respective chapters. The authors of this report have acted as editors and project managers for this process. The work has progressed through co-writing and co-editing the different chapters as well as the overall structure of the book. This way, the book also serves as a way to create a complex but still coherent perspective on the theoretical and practical outcomes of the GIFT project.

Target audiences

The main target audiences for the GIFT book are museum professionals as well as designers and IT professionals who work in the museum domain. In our extensive work with museum organisations we have worked with professionals in a wide variety of positions within the sector – such as curators, educators, communicators, marketers, project managers and IT staff – which work hard to innovate and change the ways museums work with digital technology. This emerging group of "digital champions" in the museum sector have an urgent need for tools, guidelines and knowledge tailored to the unique needs that arise from using advanced technologies in combination with the specific educational, aesthetic and economic demands that museums must meet. By presenting concrete design tools, methods and processes, as well as the theoretical underpinning of these, the book helps the digital champions implement well-anchored and successful design projects in their museums.
Secondarily, the book will also be useful within university education in the domains of museum curatorship, interaction design, and game design. The book provides an introduction to an important cross disciplinary domain and provides the relevant knowledge for students that embark on digital design projects for the museum context as part of their education.

Relation to previous publications in the domain

The work is set in a rich tradition of design research concerning mobile, hybrid and immersive museum experiences. However, most of this work has only been published in article format and is spread over a wide range of publication venues. Earlier *books* covering the use of digital technologies in museums have presented basic introductions to technology, as well as in-depth analytical-critical perspectives on the use of technology in museums. Few have provided concrete *design guidance* towards how museums can integrate interactive technologies into their environment in ways that provide for new experiences. While previous books exist dealing with the digitalisation of museums, many of them concentrate on the presence of museums on the Internet. Our book places focus on how digital resources can enrich the museum *visit* and takes a strongly design-oriented perspective. Below, we summarise the most relevant previous books in the field since 2010, in chronological order.

2010 – The Participatory Museum. Nina Simon. Museum 2.0.
This practical guide towards working with communities underlies much of the more recent work in the field, but the book is not specifically focussed with digital or hybrid experiences, and reflects the state of the technology a decade ago. It has been quite influential among practitioners, and represents well the shift in perspective of new museology that underlies also the GIFT project.

2014 – *Code/Words. Technology and Theory in the Museum*. Ed Rodley, Robert Stein & Susie Cairns (Editors). MuseumsETC.
This book, a collection of essays about social and technological innovation in museums from around the world, started out as an online writing project, soliciting contributions publicly and putting a host of experts in dialogue with each other. The result is a fascinating collection of essays by leading museum thinkers and practitioners, discussing the nature of museums in the light of the

dramatic and ongoing impact of digital technologies. The writings are still largely available online at: https://medium.com/code-words-technology-and-theory-in-the-museum.

While this is a very diverse collection, the political perspectives and design goals that are articulated here are largely consonant with those of our book. The GIFT book differs in that we offer practical design strategies and recommendations that serve to address the challenges and opportunities identified in this earlier collection.

2018 – *Museum Experience Design: Crowds, Ecosystems and Novel Technologies*. Arnold Vermeeren, Licia Calvi & Amalia Sabiescu (Editors). Springer International Publishing.
While thematically relevant for our book, this anthology is quite a diverse collection of academic research articles, aimed primarily at an academic audience.

2018 – *Emotion, Affective Practices, and the Past in the Present*. Laurajane Smith, Margaret Wetherell & Gary Campbell (Editors). Routledge.
This book contains a diverse collection of academic work addressing emotions and affect in relation to heritage studies. However, it lacks a design perspective and does not look closely at technology.

2019 – *The Routledge Handbook of Museums, Media and Communication*. Kirsten Drotner, Vince Dziekan, Ross Parry & Kim Christian Schrøder (Editors). Routledge.
This is an edited collection of essays. Based on a media-theoretic perspective on communication, this book provides a framework for understanding how museums re-orient themselves in a contemporary mediatised society. While some chapters discuss design methods for (in particular mobile) visitor experiences, this is not the focus of the book as a whole.

2019 – *Media Innovations and Design in Cultural Institutions*. Dagny Stuedahl & Vitus Vestergaard (Editors). Nordicom.
This is an edited collection of essays. This fairly short book explores participatory design for the museum context. The e-book is freely downloadable here:
https://www.nordicom.gu.se/sv/publikationer/media-innovations-and-design-cultural-institutions

Content and authors

The chapters in the book are written by different members of the GIFT project. It is divided into the following four sections: definitions and challenges, case studies, methods and tools, and a concluding reflection. The first section presents an overview of the main themes of the book, introducing the concept of hybrid museum experiences and relating it to other research in this area (chapter 1–2). The second section presents three case studies of designs that were created as part of the GIFT project, and tried out in six different museums in the UK, Denmark, Norway and Serbia (chapter 3–5). The third section of the book presents tools and methods for working with hybrid museum experiences, aimed at practitioners (chapter 6–10) and is closely tied to the GIFT framework. Finally, in the fourth section, we return to some of the academic debates touched on in the introductory chapters.

At the time of submitting the deliverable, all chapters except one have been drafted and gone through an internal editing process. Further edits are expected as a result of the editing process with a professional publisher, and the book will also be professionally proof-read before publication. The planned delivery date towards publisher has been set to end of January 2020.

The book is expected to be about 80 000 words total, including references and indices. The manuscript is original, and does not include articles that have been published elsewhere. Some of the chapters

are based on GIFT deliverables, but rewritten for the purposes of being accessible towards a general audience.

Chapter overview

1. Introduction – Anders Sundnes Løvlie & Annika Waern (Editors)
   Introduces the concept of hybrid museum experiences, why it is timely, and presents the major theme of the book: how to make museum experiences more personally and socially meaningful through the use of technology.

2. Hybrid Museum Experiences – Lina Eklund, Jocelyn Spence, Paulina Rajkowska, Annika Waern Anders Sundnes Løvlie & Steve Benford
   The concept of "Hybrid museum experiences" is discussed in depth and related to previous research in this area.

3. Museum as Mixtape: Gifting Museum Experiences – Jocelyn Spence & Steve Benford
   This chapter presents the experience of designing, deploying, and playing an artistically designed web app that invites museum visitors to turn their visit into a "gift" – a hybrid experience that can be digitally "wrapped" and sent to someone they love; as if they were making a mixtape, only with objects from a museum. We discuss how a fundamental social activity such as gifting can form a basis for creating new layers of meaning for museum experiences.

4. Never Let Me Go: Social and Introspective Play – Karin Ryding
   The chapter presents an example of a playful mobile experience, "Never let me go", in which social play is used to infuse new layers of meaning into an arts museum visit. We discuss how museum visits are rarely solitary experiences and how highly visitors priorities social interaction, while museums tend to put great emphasis on the objects they have on display. Play can bridge between these two perspectives to create transformative experiences.

5. "Your Stories": The Lifecycle of a Museum Experience – Paulina Rajkowska, Annika Waern & Qilun Chen
   This chapter deals with another challenge for hybrid museum experiences: How can the museum ensure that a hybrid experience continues to work well once in place, throughout the time that the system is in place? Through a study of an augmented reality installation in the National Museum of Serbia, Belgrade, the chapter discusses the many practical and organisational challenges involved in creating and maintaining a hybrid experience over time.

6. Sensitising Designers to Theory – Annika Waern & Paulina Rajkowska
   This chapter is the first of the practical methods and tools chapter, and addresses a known problem in design research: How can relevant insights from academic theory help to inform practical design processes? The chapter details two possible ways in which this can be done: through the explicit incorporation of theorists into the design team, and through sensitising exercises such as role-played scenarios. The chapter shares insights into how these methods work, and present concrete suggestions for how to implement them in practice.

7. Ideation Tools for Experience Design – Anne Rørbæk Olesen & Christian Hviid Mortensen
   This chapter shares insights from the practical experiments conducted as part of the action research project in GIFT. It presents a range of tools such as ideation cards and goals and stakeholder analysis, together with useful strategies of using them in projects.

8.   Prototyping Tools – Steve Benford, Boriana Koleva & Emily Thorn
      Prototyping tools presents a number of technical tools developed as part of the GIFT project
      in order to support rapid prototyping of hybrid museum experiences. Rapid prototyping is
      needed to quickly reach the point where an idea can be tested and critically examined. The
      tools discussed in this chapter do not require high levels of technical skills to be implemented
      and used e.g. in a brainstorming or early evaluation workshop. One example is Artcodes: a
      technical tool that allows for a versatile way of connecting digital content to physical objects,
      through drawing and scanning visual signatures (artcodes). (This chapter is not yet drafted,
      and will be based on D6.4.)

9.   Evaluating Hybrid Experiences – Jocelyn Spence & Jon Back
      This chapter gives an overview of methods and tools for evaluating hybrid experiences in a
      museum context, and in general, what is gained by doing studies of visitor experiences. We
      discuss reasonable strategies for evaluations, depending on the goal of the evaluation and
      cover both quick-and-dirty methods as well as in-depth studies.

10.   Action Research as a Method for Reflective Practice in Museums – Christian Hviid
      Mortensen, Anne Rørbæk Olesen & Sejul Malde
      In the final chapter of this section, we discuss how museums can use action research as a
      method for "reflective practice", which is a central concept in design research. We argue that
      developing a culture of internal reflective practice is vital for dealing with and getting the
      most out of the digital opportunities and challenges that museums are facing. Action research
      may be one productive way of fostering such a culture.

11.   Redefining the Museum through Hybrid Museum Experiences – Annika Waern &
      Anders Sundnes Løvlie
      The final chapter of the book reconnects to the first chapters to discuss how the introduction
      of hybrid experiences can challenge our expectations on what a museum is and how a museum
      visit is done, and sometimes redefine both.

Conclusions

The book has been conditionally accepted for publication with Amsterdam University Press. Judging
from the interest shown by museum contacts as well as initial contacts with the publisher, the book
is timely, as more and more museums are looking into using both mobile and immersive technology.
The connection to the GIFT framework and its conceptual and technical toolset, also increases the
value of the book as a practical guide for design and development.

A full draft of the book manuscript will be emailed separately to the reviewers. The manuscript cannot
be included with this report since the report will be public, while the book will require that the
copyright is partially or fully transferred to the publisher. The book will be made available either
under a Gold (full open access) or Green (by which authors retain the right to publish individual
chapters) access schema.