

Digital Catalogues Study

Museum Staff Interview Protocol

This protocol was developed by Rockman et al in collaboration with the Art Institute of Chicago, the J. Paul Getty Museum, the National Gallery of Art, and the Philadelphia Museum of Art for a cross-institutional study of digital catalogues. For further information and additional instruments, visit <https://digpublishing.github.io/catalogues-study>

Introduction

Thank you for taking time to talk with me today. My goal in talking with various staff at the Getty/PMA/AIC/NGA is to learn more about your digital catalogues and the platforms that host them, to get an inside understanding of the design, content, and target audiences of these publications. You probably already know some of the pros and cons of the technology you're using or have some insights to offer on who is using these resources, and your perspective will help us design surveys and focus groups that get at some of the things we don't know yet about these catalogues. To facilitate our conversation, I have your website in front of me so we can use the catalogues to illustrate our discussion, whenever that might be helpful.

If it's alright with everyone, I will use an audio recorder while we talk so that I can go back and take notes later on anything I miss. The recording is just for my use and won't be shared with anyone else. I will, however, be sharing a summary of my findings from these interviews with the project team. [Check for consent and questions. Turn on audio recorder if group agrees.]

Introductions/Catalogue Overview

First, can we go around the table and have everyone introduce themselves and say a little something about their involvement in producing the catalogues?

- What do you see as the overall purpose of producing these catalogues?
- What do you hope your institution will gain by creating these?
- What do you hope users will get out of using these?

Catalogue Audience

Have the catalogues been marketed in any way to particular groups?

What kinds of data do you have on the existing users? (e.g., analytics data, email communications, etc)

Are there additional audiences you would like to see using these catalogues, or different ways in which you hope people will use them?

Catalogue Design/Content

How did you arrive at the design for the catalogues? (Can you talk to me about the logic behind the layout, etc?)

How was content for the catalogues produced?

How do you think these publications compare to traditional scholarly texts? (in what ways are they better/worse?)

How do you envision users navigating the content?

- When you think about a user opening the catalogue for the first time, what would picture as the ideal user experience? (e.g., flow/navigation through catalogue, length of time use, return use, saving images or downloading content, etc.)
- Compared to that ideal, how do you think users are actually using the catalogues? (e.g., Do you think they are encountering hurdles in their use, or do you suspect they are using them in unintended ways?)

Platforms

[Verify platforms used]

What do you like about the platform you are using?

What are the drawbacks?

- Are there features you wish it had that are missing?
- How would these features change the user experience?

How are your catalogues similar/different from those produced by the Getty/AIC/PMA/NGA?

If you've seen online collection catalogues from other museums, how are yours similar/different?

- In terms of design?
- In terms of content?
- As a result of the different platforms?

Questions for this Study

What do you see as some of the strengths of these publications?

What do you see as some of the weaknesses?

Given the opportunity, what kinds of questions would you like to ask users that could help you understand how they are currently using the catalogues?

What questions would you like to ask users that could inform your work on future digital publications?

Wrap Up

Overall, how would you like to see these resources expanded or improved?

Is there anything else important that our research team should know to help guide our study?

Thank you for your time!