



## Testing the level of interactivity of institutional websites: From museums 1.0 to museums 2.0



Paul Capriotti<sup>a,\*</sup>, Carmen Carretón<sup>b</sup>, Antonio Castillo<sup>c</sup>

<sup>a</sup> *Universitat Rovira i Virgili, Department of Communication Studies, Av. Catalunya, 35. 3rd Floor, Room 323, 43002 Tarragona, Spain*

<sup>b</sup> *Universidad de Alicante, Department of Communication and Social Psychology, Carretera San Vicente del Raspeig s/n 03690, San Vicente del Raspeig, Alicante, Spain*

<sup>c</sup> *Universidad de Málaga, School of Communication Sciences, Campus de Teatinos, 29071 Málaga, Spain*

### ARTICLE INFO

#### Article history:

Received 21 July 2015

Accepted 10 October 2015

Available online 26 October 2015

#### Keywords:

Museums

Web 2.0

Interactivity

Dialogic communication

Public relations

### ABSTRACT

The Internet has changed the way in which organizations communicate with their publics, and museums are not an exception. The consolidation of Web 2.0 has not only given museums access to a powerful new tool for disseminating information, but has involved significant changes in the relationship between institutions and their publics, facilitating and enhancing the interaction between them. The overall objective of this paper is to analyze the degree of interactivity implemented in the websites of major international art museums, in order to assess if museums are evolving towards more dialogic systems with relation to their publics. The results indicate that museums still have a low level of interactivity on their websites, both in the tools used to present information and the resources available for interaction with virtual visitors. But it has also observed that museums are progressively implementing interactive and dialogic sources, suggesting a clear trend towards new ways of managing these platforms in order to establish more participatory and collaborative communication systems with virtual users.

© 2015 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

### 1. Introduction

The Internet has gradually but radically changed the way in which organizations communicate with their publics. It has opened a wide range of tools for communication and public relations (Zerfass, Tench, Verčič, Verhoeven, & Moreno, 2014), first as a mass medium (accessible 365 days a year, 24 h a day—internet 1.0-), but fundamentally as a tool that facilitates interaction and relationship building between organizations and their publics through interactive and collaborative resources and platforms (internet 2.0) (Kent & Taylor, 1998; Guillory & Sundar, 2014).

The websites of the organizations have also undergone a constant evolution for two decades, from being basically informative/monologic instruments in the beginning to now serving as conversational/dialogic tools (Heinze & Hu, 2006; Capriotti & Pardo Kuklinski, 2012). Thus, websites with a “one-to-many” approach tend to disappear and be replaced by “many-to-many” platforms that favor the open interaction. Dialogic communication is now-

days an essential expectation in the online communication strategy of any organization. It has generated a key challenge for corporate communications and public relations, because as Cobo and Pardo Kuklinski, (2007) the websites are not mere windows onto multimedia content but rather they should be an open platform built for user participation that allows for symmetrical and multidirectional communication between organizations and publics.

In this change of the communication model, museums are no exception. For almost 20 years these institutions have been using the communicative possibilities offered by websites to make their collections, activities and knowledge accessible to a wider public (Crenn & Vidal, 2007; Simon, 2010). The role of the internet in museums is of increasing importance, and will be even more important in the future as more changes occur in the social web and mobile communications (Crenn & Vidal, 2007; Tallon & Walker, 2008; Simon, 2010).

The overall objective of this paper is to analyze the degree of interactivity implemented in the websites (in this case, institutional websites of major international art museums), assessing whether these digital platforms are evolving towards more interactive/dialogic models (2.0 websites) or if they are maintaining a structure and operation which is informative/unidirectional (1.0 websites).

\* Corresponding author.

E-mail addresses: [paul.capriotti@urv.cat](mailto:paul.capriotti@urv.cat) (P. Capriotti), [mc.carreton@ua.es](mailto:mc.carreton@ua.es) (C. Carretón), [acastilloe@uma.es](mailto:acastilloe@uma.es) (A. Castillo).

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1. Interactivity and dialogic communication

The emergence and consolidation of Web 2.0 during the first decade of the century has involved significant changes in the relationship between an organization and its publics, facilitating a more symmetrical interaction and negotiation in terms of power and mutual influence, beginning the move towards a full dialogic or interactive form of communication (Kent & Taylor, 1998; Ingenhoff & Koelling, 2009; Capriotti, 2011; Guillory & Sundar, 2014).

Kent and Taylor (1998, 2002) indicate that the dialogic communication is the framework for the building of relationships between an organization and its publics through the Internet. Dialogic communication can be defined as “an ongoing interaction between organizations and their publics using Internet tools, which enables information, comments, opinions, assessment and experiences to be exchanged on a continuous basis” (Capriotti & Pardo Kuklinski, 2012; p.620). Thus, interactivity is the cornerstone on which dialogic communication is built (Guillory & Sundar, 2014), and it is used by organizations to establish an appropriate engagement with their publics (McAllister-Spooner, 2009; Taylor & Kent, 2014).

Interactivity is one of the distinguishing features of Internet (Castells, 2001; Kioussis, 2002; Leiner & Quiring, 2008) and in the field of communication and public relations has been the subject of various studies, since it is the basis on which the study of dialogic communication between an organization and its publics is built. Research on websites (Jo & Kim, 2003; Jo & Jung, 2005; Capriotti & Moreno, 2007; Park & Reber, 2008; McAllister-Spooner, 2009; Kim, Park, & Wertz, 2010; Guillory & Sundar, 2014) has focused mainly on the analysis of the level of interactivity driven and implemented by organizations. Studies have been developed to evaluate the tools and resources available on websites to promote and facilitate interaction (Heinze & Hu, 2006). Thus, it has been identified two main approaches to websites based upon the varying use of the tools or means of interaction: those websites that focus mainly on the dissemination of information and those more oriented to organization-public dialogue (Capriotti & Moreno, 2007). In the first, the level of interactivity is low and the tools used are primarily unidirectional, with the main objective of disseminating information from the organization to its publics in order to influence them. In the second approach, the level of interactivity is high, and the resources available on the website are used to facilitate two-way communication, encouraging dialogue and interaction to establish a stable and continuous relationship.

Those investigations have been made from the evaluation of two key aspects in websites: firstly, analysis of the tools used for the presentation of information (to assess the interaction between visitors and the information on the website and how people receive or get information and interact with it). And, secondly, the use of resources and tools available on the websites to facilitate the interaction of virtual users with the organization (to analyze the virtual interaction between the organization and virtual visitors, and how they communicate and interact with the organization through the website). The results obtained in most of the studies conducted (Jo & Jung, 2005; Heinze & Hu, 2006; Capriotti & Moreno, 2007; Park & Reber, 2008; Ingenhoff and Koeling, 2009; McAllister-Spooner, 2009; Kim et al., 2010; Guillory & Sundar, 2014) indicate that organizations are still at an early stage of migration from a model of informative and unidirectional websites towards a model of dialogic websites. In most cases they are not currently developing the full potential offered by the social web, although a trend has been observed towards greater interactivity.

### 2.2. Dialogic communication, interactivity and museums

Communication and Public Relations are now playing a key role in the development of postmodern museum (Hooper-Greenhill, 2000; Gürel & Kavak, 2010; Capriotti, 2013) and in recent years the Internet has gained a leading role in these institutions as a communication tool with their publics (Marty, 2007; Simon, 2010; Capriotti & Pardo Kuklinski, 2012).

For a long time, web 1.0 resources (predominantly unidirectional) allowed museums to provide information using an “up-down” strategy (Capriotti & Kuklinski Pardo, 2012). The Internet has expanded the capacity of these institutions to disseminate information in a massive, controlled, quick and easy manner (Marty, 2007; Capriotti, 2011). However, through web 2.0 tools (which are more collaborative, multidirectional and dialogical) museums are offered new options and possibilities for communication, and changing the way museums engage with their publics through involvement and active participation using instruments that allow the exchange of information, debate, discussion and collaboration (Crenn & Vidal, 2007; López et al., 2010; Kidd, 2011).

Several studies (Marty, 2007; Crenn & Vidal, 2007; Tallon & Walker, 2008; Capriotti, 2010; Allen-Greil & Mac Arthur, 2010; Capriotti & Pardo Kuklinski, 2012; Padilla-Meléndez & Del Águila-Obra, 2013) indicate that websites are being used increasingly to generate a more collaborative and interactive relationship between museums and their various publics, analyzing the two previously mentioned aspects of dialogic communication: tools for the presentation of information (Capriotti & Pardo Kuklinski, 2012; Padilla-Meléndez & Del Águila-Obra, 2013), and the use of resources for interaction with the publics on websites (López et al., 2010; Capriotti & González Herrero, 2013). Thus, studies are evaluating whether museum websites are immersed in a process of transition from static spaces of dissemination of information (1.0 websites) into platforms for interaction and dialogue between museums and the public (2.0 websites).

However, most of the research conducted has an unrepresentative number of museums and are implemented at a national level or comparing a few countries at best. And, finally, these studies also tend to focus only on one particular aspect of the analysis. There are few international studies with a large sample of institutions to examine both aspects in an integrated way.

## 3. Purpose of the research

Thus, this work evaluates the level of interactivity implemented in the institutional websites of the 100 most visited art museums in the world (including museums in 24 countries in three main geographical regions: Europe, America and the Asia/Pacific region). To do so, it will analyze two key aspects in order to ascertain the interactivity of websites: tools used for the presentation of information and the use of resources for interaction with publics, in order to establish whether these digital platforms are evolving towards a more interactive/dialogic model (2.0 websites) or continue with an informative/unidirectional approach (1.0 websites).

## 4. Methodology

The corpus of the study was the main international art museums. To define the sample, the number of annual visits to museums was identified, and it was decided to analyze the most visited art museums in the world. The sample was selected from the annual ranking of visits made by the prestigious magazine “The Art Newspaper” (<http://www.theartnewspaper.com/>), which prepares an annual

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/1025548>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/1025548>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)