Crowdsourcing Projects, from Start to Finish

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Emerging Technology Forum – ARLIS/NA 41st Annual Conference Pasadena, CA
Crowdsourcing is using a lot of people to solve a problem
Benefits of crowds
Types of projects

- Tagging
- Debunking
- Personal stories
- Linking
- Stating preferences
- Categorizing
- Creative responses

http://digitalhumanitiesnow.org/2012/06/editors-choice-crowdsourcing-and-cultural-heritage-round-up/
Transcribe Bentham:

http://www.transcribe-bentham.da.ulcc.ac.uk/td/Manuscripts

Users create an online profile, choose a manuscript and transcribe a manuscript into the online database
Transcribe Bentham (cont.)

- Ongoing project
- Maintains a blog for updates
- Maintains a Facebook page
- Has a place for transcribers to work together on pages
Visitors can transcribe a papyri fragment by using a specialized keyboard and without logging in: http://ancientlives.org/transcribe
SETI Quest

- SETI Quest (http://setiquuest.org/join-the-quest) called for volunteer software developers, digital signal processing geeks and data parsing geeks to create and share code to interpret radio data from beyond the stars
SETI Quest

- Participation is done online and the code is stored in the cloud
- Fans can follow the project on Twitter and Facebook
- Donations are solicited on a dedicated SETI Stars site: [http://setistars.org/](http://setistars.org/)
Puzzles of the Past – visitors are encouraged to come to the museum and help identify photographs from the collection: http://www.npvm.org/specialevents.html
[We need to] “find ways to reach more people. This is challenging because we are seeking people to identify old photographs, which we probably cannot publish online due to lack of copyright ownership, and which our target audience – senior citizens with memories of these images – will not be likely to see online. A suggestion to travel to residential care facilities was made, but we do not have the resources for this and, as a donation-funded museum, this project is competing against other needs for very limited resources, including the time to apply for grants and manage the program. Still, I would classify the project a success, since we have gotten many photographs presumptively identified, and we have provided a social outlet for senior citizens to attend at the museum.”
Citizen History: Children of the Lodz Ghetto

- [http://online.ushmm.org/lodzchildren/](http://online.ushmm.org/lodzchildren/)
- Users can research students known to have attended the school
- Users can help translate or identify names of students
- Help verify or invalidate earlier conclusions
Many museums have apps to enhance user experience in museums.

Walking tours and QR codes provide ways to interact as well as give organizers an idea of what is holding the public’s attention.
Victoria and Albert Museum

- By visiting http://collections.vam.ac.uk/crowdsourcing/
- Users can submit the best crop of an image to put in the digital collection
The Participatory Museum at the Wallace Collection co-created an exhibit with a group of children.

Groups of children selected a theme, which objects would be displayed, created press releases and other marketing and put on an opening party.

http://www.wallacecollection.org/collections/exhibition/82
The Brooklyn Museum put out an open call for photographers for works on their theme – then allowed their visitors to evaluate the submissions. The results can be viewed online in a few formats including Top 10, Most Discussed or by artist.
Many hands make light work

- Coordinating volunteers takes time and effort – you may need a dedicated staff person
- Volunteers working at their own pace may take longer
- Volunteers may come and go – without warning
Marketing is key

- Volunteers love to talk about what they’re working on
- Some projects move along more smoothly with more interaction
- Not all of your marketing should be online, know your audience
Ways to fund projects

- Kickstarter: www.kickstarter.com
- Indiegogo: www.indiegogo.com
- Peerbackers: www.peerbackers.com
- Grants
- Public donations
“Find ways to reach more people. This is challenging because we...we do not have the resources for this and, as a donation-funded museum, this project is competing against other needs for very limited resources, including the time to apply for grants and manage the program.”
Difficulties of Crowdsourcing

“Any institution using crowdsourcing for transcription must recognize that it is not a cheap and easy solution to getting material transcribed – the co-ordinators must have a plan for recruiting volunteers, publicizing the work, and for offering ongoing support to volunteers...if volunteer contributions go unacknowledged or the transcribers unsupported, then there is the danger of losing the bond of trust with volunteers.”
References

- North Platte Valley Museum: [http://www.npvm.org/specialevents.html](http://www.npvm.org/specialevents.html)
- Transcribe Bentham: A Participatory Initiative: [http://www.transcribe-bentham.da.ulcc.ac.uk/td/Transcribe_Bentham](http://www.transcribe-bentham.da.ulcc.ac.uk/td/Transcribe_Bentham)
- Victoria & Albert Museum: Beta Crowdsourcing [http://collections.vam.ac.uk/crowdsourcing/](http://collections.vam.ac.uk/crowdsourcing/)
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