How Art Historians Use Social Media
(... and How They Don't)

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What we’ll cover

1. The state of social media at the Getty Research Institute
2. What we knew about our audience
3. Our methodology
4. The results of our research!
5. How we’ll use our findings
The Getty Research Institute
Our audience (according to Facebook)

- 23,000 followers
- 59% outside the USA
- 60% are women
- 25–35 largest age group

(Statistics accurate as of Jan 2018)
Do Art History and Visual Culture Scholars Use Social Media?
What we knew from other studies

- STEM-field academics are more likely to use social
- Twitter is the favorite social platform (except when it isn’t)
- Social networking is happening
- Overwhelmed by information

London School of Economics, 2011
UX Model: Exploratory Research
Part 1: The Survey

- 998 respondents
- 19 multi-part questions with rankings
- Covered social media use, demographic-type characteristics, and scratched the surface on feelings
Social Platforms Used by Scholars:

1. YouTube 85.21% (484)
2. Facebook 82.76% (480)
3. Academia 60.04% (338)
4. LinkedIn 52.35% (290)
5. Instagram 53.32% (269)
6. Twitter 44.76% (252)
7. Pinterest 39.27% (214)
8. Snapchat 11.3% (61)

What are scholars doing on social media...

1. Learning about updates in their field (451)
2. Networking with colleagues and peers (425)
3. Finding a research resource (380)
4. Sharing material (360)

...and what they are not.

1. Publishing their work (171)
2.Posing a research question (230)
3. Discovering a new research topic (282)

Where Scholars are Most Active: Facebook

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liking posts</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>403</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharing</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clicking links</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comment</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>340</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How scholars view social media

Content scholars most like to see...

- Newly digitized material
- Research
- Calls for applications

How useful is social media?

- Very Useful (49) 23%
- Useful (106) 41%
- Neutral (68) 19%
- Not useful (30) 6%
- Less useful (45) 11%

Preferred sources for updates:

- Journals + Publications (147)
- Facebook (87)
- Email (86)
- Twitter (60)
- Social Media (platform not specified, 36)
What the survey didn’t answer . . .

• Why are scholars using these platforms?

• How does it fit into their professional lives?

• How do they feel about using social platforms?
Survey = What and the Who
Interview = How and the Why
Part 2: The Interview

• Understand real-world contexts
• Identify patterns of behavior
• Discover underlying feelings, fears, and biases
1. Access
   • Access the latest news, updates, and their network via social platforms

2. Time
   • Priorities take a back burner to daily digital distractions

3. Advancement
   • Anything outside of peer review is a “waste of time”
4. Trust
   • Access the latest news, updates, and their network via social platforms

5. Professional Reputation
   • Want to be seen as serious and competent
What’s next for us

• Building a solid social media strategy
• Considering other social platforms
• Informing our overall digital strategy
• Applying results to our website redesign
Questions?

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Opening and closing slide design: presentationgo.com