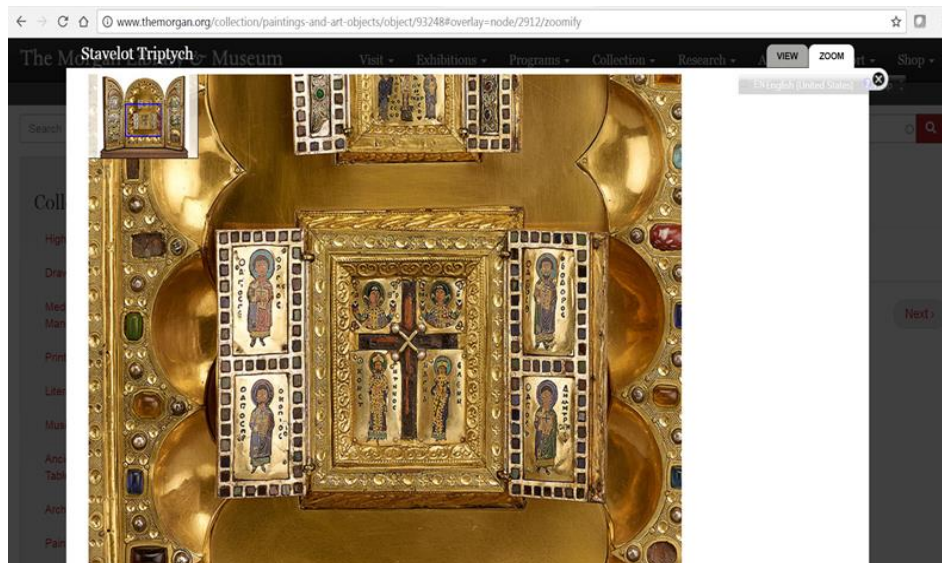


Duffy: Museum-Partnership Observation Assignment Two

To begin, it is crucial to identify what the Science Museum Group's Digital Strategy principles are, and they are the following: Experience, Culture, Collection, Narrative Content, and Infrastructure (Science Museum Group). These five principles are applicable for all types of museums, however, having them implemented can be challenging.

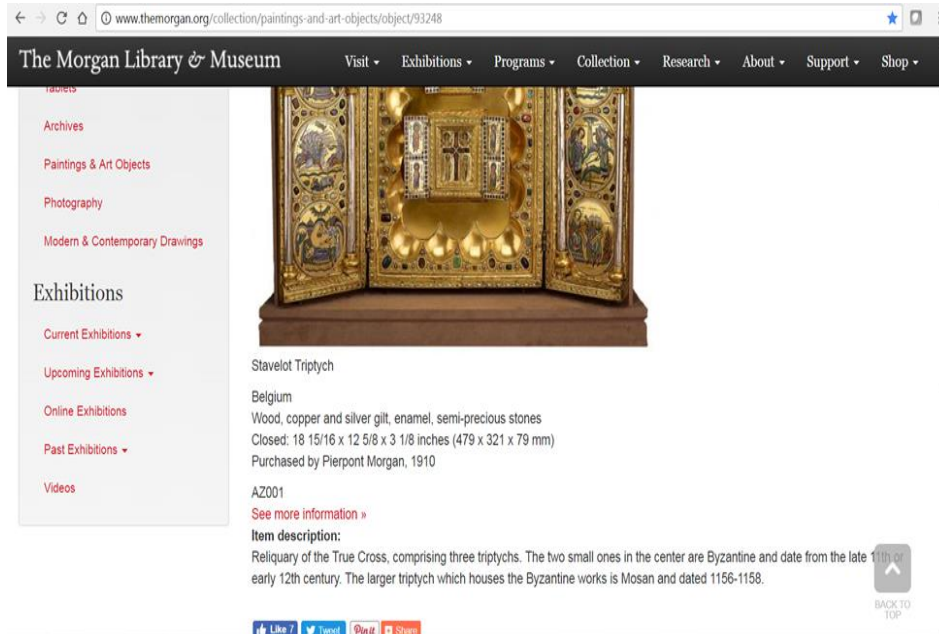
One of the most important principles in my opinion, is the experience of the visitors with the objects of the collections. Information professionals understand that there are many types of visitors that visit exhibitions onsite. Yet I feel in many cases, the online visitors are not always taken into consideration, or visa versa. Essentially, there is a balancing issue between the visitor experiences onsite and online. For example, the Stavelot Triptych on the Morgan Library and Museum website versus what is seen onsite is very different.

On the website, the Stavelot Triptych has the zoom-in feature, which is great because the viewer can see minute details that they may not be able to see in-person. With a piece of art such as this one, that feature is fantastic to have. On a computer, this feature works very well, but when I tried this on my phone, it was very troublesome.



Yet when the visitor looks at the bottom of the page, there is very little information about the object itself. For people like myself, who has a background in this type of art, even I find this to be very lacking so I can only imagine what it would be like for someone who does

not have that knowledge. I saw the, See More Information, option and thought, 'Great, there will be more'. The result of this was a lot of information, yet it was in a very confusing and overwhelming format. To be honest, I was intimidated by it.



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Stavelot Triptych

Belgium

Wood, copper and silver gilt, enamel, semi-precious stones

Closed: 18 15/16 x 12 5/8 x 3 1/8 inches (479 x 321 x 79 mm)

Purchased by Pierpont Morgan, 1910

AZ001

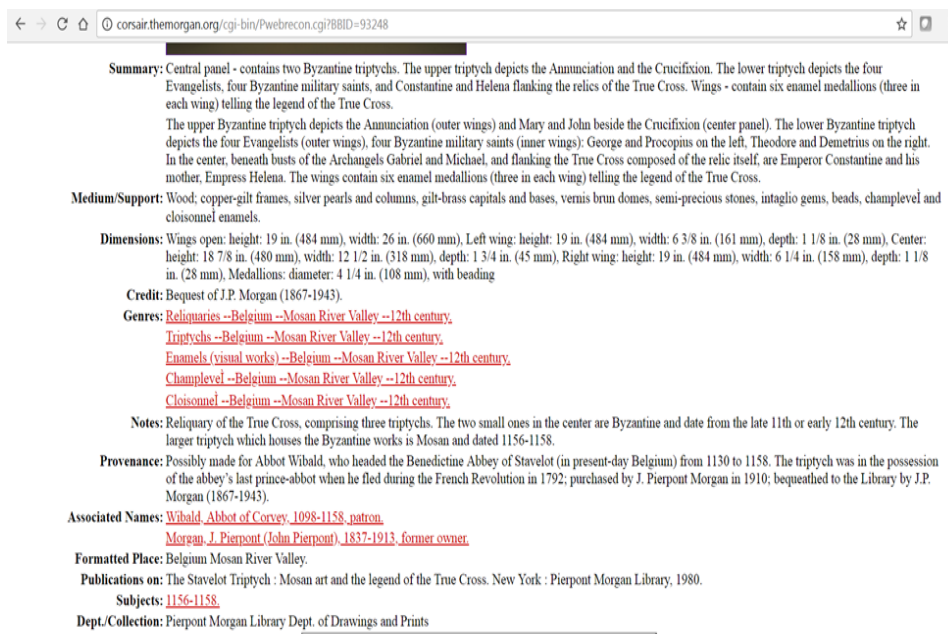
[See more information »](#)

Item description:

Reliquary of the True Cross, comprising three triptychs. The two small ones in the center are Byzantine and date from the late 11th or early 12th century. The larger triptych which houses the Byzantine works is Mosan and dated 1156-1158.

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corsair.themorgan.org/cgi-bin/Pwebrecon.cgi?BBID=93248

Summary: Central panel - contains two Byzantine triptychs. The upper triptych depicts the Annunciation and the Crucifixion. The lower triptych depicts the four Evangelists, four Byzantine military saints, and Constantine and Helena flanking the relics of the True Cross. Wings - contain six enamel medallions (three in each wing) telling the legend of the True Cross.

The upper Byzantine triptych depicts the Annunciation (outer wings) and Mary and John beside the Crucifixion (center panel). The lower Byzantine triptych depicts the four Evangelists (outer wings), four Byzantine military saints (inner wings) George and Procopius on the left, Theodore and Demetrius on the right. In the center, beneath busts of the Archangels Gabriel and Michael, and flanking the True Cross composed of the relic itself, are Emperor Constantine and his mother, Empress Helena. The wings contain six enamel medallions (three in each wing) telling the legend of the True Cross.

Medium/Support: Wood; copper-gilt frames, silver pearls and columns, gilt-brass capitals and bases, vernis brun domes, semi-precious stones, intaglio gems, beads, champlevé and cloisonné enamels.

Dimensions: Wings open: height: 19 in. (484 mm), width: 26 in. (660 mm), Left wing: height: 19 in. (484 mm), width: 6 3/8 in. (161 mm), depth: 1 1/8 in. (28 mm), Center: height: 18 7/8 in. (480 mm), width: 12 1/2 in. (318 mm), depth: 1 3/4 in. (45 mm), Right wing: height: 19 in. (484 mm), width: 6 1/4 in. (158 mm), depth: 1 1/8 in. (28 mm), Medallions: diameter: 4 1/4 in. (108 mm), with beading

Credit: Bequest of J.P. Morgan (1867-1943).

Genres: [Reliquaries --Belgium--Mosan River Valley--12th century](#), [Triptychs--Belgium--Mosan River Valley--12th century](#), [Enamels \(visual works\)--Belgium--Mosan River Valley--12th century](#), [Champlevé--Belgium--Mosan River Valley--12th century](#), [Cloisonné--Belgium--Mosan River Valley--12th century](#)

Notes: Reliquary of the True Cross, comprising three triptychs. The two small ones in the center are Byzantine and date from the late 11th or early 12th century. The larger triptych which houses the Byzantine works is Mosan and dated 1156-1158.

Provenance: Possibly made for Abbot Wibald, who headed the Benedictine Abbey of Stavelot (in present-day Belgium) from 1130 to 1158. The triptych was in the possession of the abbey's last prince-abbot when he fled during the French Revolution in 1792; purchased by J. Pierpont Morgan in 1910; bequeathed to the Library by J.P. Morgan (1867-1943).

Associated Names: [Wibald, Abbot of Corvey, 1098-1158, patron](#), [Morgan, J. Pierpont \(John Pierpont\), 1837-1913, former owner](#).

Formatted Place: Belgium Mosan River Valley.

Publications on: The Stavelot Triptych : Mosan art and the legend of the True Cross. New York : Pierpont Morgan Library, 1980.

Subjects: [1156-1158](#).

Dept./Collection: Pierpont Morgan Library Dept. of Drawings and Prints

In the museum, the object was displayed very well, with the panels wide open so the visitor could see them clearly, but what shocked me was the label and the audio option. Its

label and audio gave the visitor a balanced lesson on the object so they would know and understand what they are looking at without feeling confused or overwhelmed. The label and audio onsite has more information for the visitor to learn from than what the visitor would find on their website. Because of these vast differences, the visitors will have different experiences while looking at the objects in an exhibit. With the continuous use of technology nowadays, digital media can fill the gaps and change the visitors' experiences of exhibitions both onsite and online (Economou, 2008, p. 137).



Stavelot Triptych
Abbey of Stavelot, southeast of Liège (Belgium),
setting and medallions ca. 1156-58, with Byzantine triptychs
from Constantinople, ca. 1100
Champlevé enamel on gilded copper, silver, *vernis brun*, and
precious stones, with plaques and medallions in cloisonné
enamel on gold

A masterpiece of medieval craftsmanship, the Stavelot Triptych
was created during the Romanesque golden age of ecclesiastic
metalwork, when the dominant centers of production were in
the region between the Rhine and Maas rivers (described as
Mosan). Originally the astonishing richness of the triptych was
probably even more pronounced, with portions of the central
panel covered in gold and studded with gems; the modern
gilded brass background is intended to evoke a similar effect.

The triptych comprises a Mosan setting, enshrining on the
central panel two miniature Byzantine triptychs, of which
the larger one contains a visible relic of the True Cross.

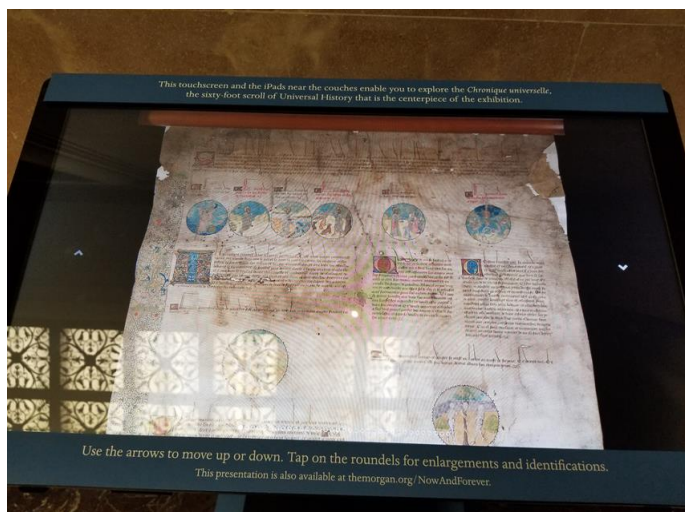
Appropriately, the wings are inset with six of the finest Mosan
champlevé enamel roundels that narrate the Legend of the
True Cross: at left, three scenes depict Constantine's vision,
battle, and conversion; at the right, three scenes show Helena's
search for and identification of the True Cross. The two small
triptychs were probably obtained by Abbot Wibald of St.
Remaclus in Stavelot while on a diplomatic mission to
Constantinople in 1155-56. He may have commissioned the
sumptuous setting for the relics following his return.

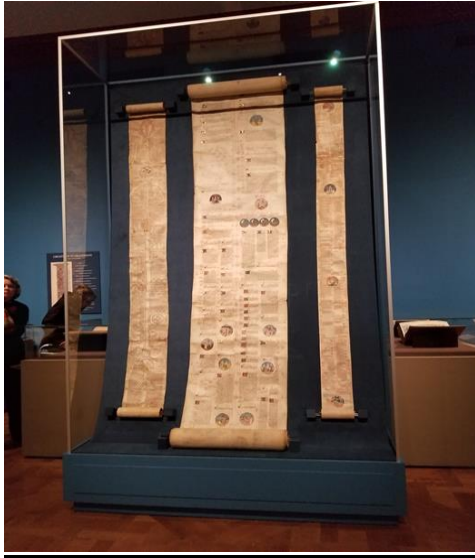
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PURCHASED BY PIERPONT MORGAN, 1910

To solve this problem, it is a multi-step solution. Firstly, replace the bottom of the Stavelot Triptych's page with the museum label, or audio clip. The museum may have done this purposefully to get people to visit the museum onsite by not having these accessible on their website, which is understandable, but a double-edged sword. The lack of information of the object on their website could discourage people from wanting to visit in-person because typically, there is more information about objects on their websites versus onsite. Second, I would suggest they fix the glitches on their website because looking this up on my phone had some issues like lagging, loading slowly, not always a clear picture, etc. I wouldn't suggest that they have a touch screen tablet in front of the object. They did have that for another object in another exhibit, but that had problems of its own.

Below is the touch screen option for the Universal History scroll, which is great since the scroll itself is sixty feet long. This piece of technology is not even in the same room as the object, and there is only one of this with two ipads in the hall before the exhibits. If I was to choose where to place this, I would have put it by the object itself so it would be convenient for visitors. Economou (2008, p.138) mention that the placement of the station and the interface design of the station is very important for visitors. This station is well done in the way you can pick a roundel and it will tell you more about it. On the other hand, there was no information I could find on this object specifically onsite or online. There was no label for it onsite, and on their website, it was only this feature.





At first, the best solution that I could think of to solving these problems that I have seen with this other object in the collection is to have an app like the Frick Collection. The museum would not have to worry about the costs of getting the devices, replacing them, finding a place to display the devices by the objects themselves. Doing that in itself is a very big financial burden that the museum may not be able to start or sustain. Something that Helal, Maxson, and Ancelet (2013) make the great point that a big problem for museums and technology is that they may not have the technology itself onsite to create an app, and that the staff doesn't have the technological skills to be able to do it. They also mention that creating the technology versus making it user-friendly can be challenging as well. Reading this, as an information professional, was a reality check that creating technology like an app, never mind making it user-friendly, is not easy task. This does not mean that they cannot improve the technology that they already have. As I have stated above, they should improve their website itself (get rid of the glitches so it is phone friendly) as well as have the information labels onsite be consistent with what they have posted online. Online visitors may not be able to see or interact this object or collection in-person, so to have the website be lacking of information, or the opportunity to interact is not fair for them.

As Information professionals, we need to remind ourselves the mentality of a visitor that is viewing our objects or collections both onsite and online. To keep asking ourselves, 'If I was a visitor, what would I like to know about this object? How would I like to interact with it?'

What would help me?' Plus, there is always a solution to problems, and with the amount of technology that is available, museums need to see what options are out there, and try them out. With technology, sometimes you will not know how well it works until you test it, and being technologically proactive is the only way to successfully use digital media to make an object, exhibit, or collection interactive with visitors.

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