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Social Media Technology

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Social Media Technology and the New York Historical Society

In today's social media driven society the most important thing is constant presence. One or more posts across media platforms is important to engage with the younger generation and all types of audiences. The growth in social media uses means that museums and other institutions must keep up with the times in order to remain relevant and constantly engaging with visitors. Usage of social media allows institutions to directly communicate with their viewers through comments and messaging, as well as to reach large numbers of visitors.

My chosen object in the collection of the New York Historical Society touches on lines of art and science history. This means that a social media posting could draw visits from a number of different academic fields as well as the traditional viewer. With institutions such as the NYHS who have a long and positive history their following remains large. On Instagram alone, the NYHS page has 42,800 followers. For this reason, anything that the museum posts on social media is viewed thousands of times with many of their more recent posts receiving 1000-plus likes each. The social media posting I think is most relatable for my object was posted by the NYHS on January 5, 2018 on Instagram.¹

¹ New York Historical Society, Instagram, Accessed March 25, 2018, <https://www.instagram.com/p/BdlKdrMDtVQ/?taken-by=nyhistory>.



This post is great for recognition of the Audubon drawings and provides a simple way to make the posting relevant. It highlights National Bird Day as well as the appearance of the image and a few others in an upcoming exhibit. One important note that the NYHS makes is to point out that they are the “keepers of the world’s largest collection of John James Audubon drawings.”² This specific post meets exactly what the media strategists could hope for. It provided the institution a time to use bring visibility and attention to both the collection of Audubon drawings and to their upcoming exhibition. The New York Historical Society usually only posts one picture a day, so this post would appear to their thousands of followers and would receive 672 individual likes.

I choose this post to discuss because it uses a work similar to mine and provides a starting point rather than a template. When relating this to my chosen object, I feel that a simple one

² New York Historical Society, Instagram, Accessed March 25, 2018, <https://www.instagram.com/p/BdlKdrMDtVQ/?taken-by=nyhistory>.

image post would fall short. I feel that it is important to reach multiple audiences which can be done through a number of different pieces to a post. My posting for my work would include four parts. The first part would be a picture of my object. The second would be a picture of the bird (the Yellow-crowned Night-Heron) as it appears in the wild. The third part would be a video of the animal with a sound in order to recognize its call. The final piece would be the accompanying text, which would include biographical information about the art object, the artist John James Audubon and the species itself. With a post such as this, the NYHS is most likely to reach a wide number of viewers. Within one it provides a number of different options and draws information from across academic disciplines. With a posting such as this is important that it reach the page followers but also should include a number of tags so that even those who do not follow the page will see the posting based on certain search criteria. Tags would appear similar to the ones seen below.³

protection of endangered birds. Join us as we celebrate birds all year! #BirdYourWorld #Audubon #Audubonia 🇺🇸 PS You can also see these snowy owls on view next fall for "Harry Potter: A History of Magic"! #Hedwig #HarryPotterNYHS

nyhistory 🏰 John James Audubon (1785–1851), Snowy Owl (*Bubo scandiacus*); sketches of two beaks and a talon, 1809. Pastel, black chalk, and graphite with scratching out on paper, laid on card. New-York Historical Society, 1863.18.19 #snowyowl #birds #owl #flying #snow #museumsnowballfight #fbf #painting

³ New York Historical Society, Instagram, Accessed March 25, 2018, <https://www.instagram.com/p/BdlKdrMDtVQ/?taken-by=nyhistory>.

This process is important for the NYHS to reach a number of audiences. My posting would include tags related to the fields of drawing and ornithology. These two audiences would be the most important for my object. The best take away from the post for those interested in drawings would be the scientific components and real life references for this style of drawing. The take away for those interested based on the pieces ornithological implications would be the presence of artistic works focused around biological references.

Works Cited

New York Historical Society. Instagram. Accessed April 16, 2018.

<https://www.instagram.com/p/BdIKdrMDtVQ/?taken-by=nyhistory>.

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron. New York Historical Society. Accessed March 21, 2018.

<http://www.nyhistory.org/exhibit/yellow-crowned-night-heron-nyctanassa-violacea-havell-plate-no-336>.