

Megan Payne

LIS 258

Interactive Technology

For this interactive technology assignment, I decided to choose Project Tango, implemented in 2016 at Museu Nacional d'art de Catalunya, which is the official museum of Catalan art located in Barcelona, Catalonia, Spain.



Photo Credit: Simon Hill/Digital Trends

Links

<http://blog.guidigo.com/blog/guidigo-presents-the-first-project-tango-app-capable-of-3d-indoor-geolocation/> -Explanation of the project/app

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TBqlrii6Fgw>- YouTube video that gives a demonstration of the app and visitor feedback

<https://www.digitaltrends.com/mobile/lenovo-project-tango-impressions/> -Article about a visitor's first impressions

<https://www.engadget.com/2016/02/23/exploring-barcelonas-greatest-museum-with-project-tango/> -Article about a visitor's first impressions

Features

In this particular implementation of the project, the app is uploaded onto a tablet, and acts as a tour guide for the visitor. There are multiple sensors in the tablet that record everything in front of and around the user, then upload it into the app to create a three dimensional recreation of your surroundings in real time. The app then lays out a path of blue dots on the floor on your screen that can lead you to around the museum, marking out at certain focal points that the museum may want the visitor to spend time at. There is also a two dimensional, more traditional map of the museum available on the app as well. At the mapped out points, if the user holds up the tablet to the front of the painting/artwork, they can tap on little circles located on the screen that can give the user more information about the subjects in the artwork, the artist, or anything else that the museum staff want the visitor to know. I think that the designers of this app chose this feature in order to first and foremost make navigating around a museum environment smooth and efficient for the visitor. Sometimes a visitor may be unsure of where they are supposed to begin their tour, or may get confused trying to navigate around the museum environment, so this kind of technology would erase that apprehension and confusion. Also,

interactive technology like this will be able to highlight aspects of the collection that they want to create more buzz for, or just simply keep pieces of the collection that visitors specifically seek out fresh and exciting. It also allows the museum to give the visitor more information without overwhelming them with too much wall text or too much information in a pamphlet/brochure.

Why Would This Work For My Object?

I think that ultimately this kind of interactive technology would work for my object because it allows for the museum visitor to interact with *Madonna of the Magnificat* in a way that I do not think visitors are doing so now. The painting is not placed at eye-level in the museum (it is hung above a doorway), so this placement does not allow for any wall text or labels, and therefore there is very little interaction taking place. The user can hold the tablet up to the painting, and the designers on staff at the museum can make little circles on each of the subjects in the museum, and when the user taps on these circles, they can get a little biography or summary about who the person is and why they are relevant to the other biblical subjects in the painting. There are many people out there who may visit the museum and may not have an extensive background in who biblical figures are or biblical stories, so this may be especially useful for them. The designers could also include information about the role that Christianity played in Italian art and culture. For example, the subjects in the painting who are holding the book for the Madonna are thought to be members of the Medici family, a very important Italian family during this period of time.¹

¹ Patty Gayle. "Visual Analysis of Botticelli's 'Madonna of the Magnificat,'" *Owlcation*. <https://owlcation.com/humanities/Visual-Analysis-of-Botticellis-Madonna-of-the-Magnificat>.

There could be information that explains why they would have been included in the painting alongside holy figures. I think that the app would also be very useful for the museum as a whole, as it makes for easier navigation around the premises and can highlight other aspects of the collection as well.

Audiences

I believe that the two kinds of audiences Project Tango would most likely influence and engage the most are teens and adults. In the twenty first century, teens have grown up with all kinds of technology and interactive technology and have been engaging with it more than any other group, so they would seem like the audience that would want to reach for this kind of interactive technology first. I think that Project Tango could be inclusive for all age groups if the museum designers wanted it to be, but I think that it is geared towards older age groups because of the navigational aspect (an adult or teen would most likely be leading a child throughout the museum setting). I also think that teens and adults would be interested in using this interactive technology because it would give them a great deal of concrete information in a way that does not seem overwhelming, as you can pick and choose how many points you tap on to receive this information. Visitors want to be guided into making their own discoveries, and they want to be able to create their own personal paths around the institution in order to make observations², and I think that Project Tango allows the visitor to do just this. It has also been noted in the 2016 NMC Horizon Report that museum visitors want to be

² Serrell, Beverly. (2015). "Who is the audience (and what do they want)?" In *Exhibit labels: An interpretive approach*, (64). Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press.

able to receive more information in a quicker fashion in order to make these observations.³ Project Tango allows the user to gather the information they want to acquire for their own personal experience, and it makes this information available at the tap of a finger.

³ NMC Horizon Report 2016 Museum Edition: "Personalization" (14).