

Megan Payne
LIS 258
Museum Observation #2

The 2015-2017 digital strategy outlined by the Science Museum Group is a series of important objectives and principles that are meant to explain how the museums involved are reimagining how to use digital technology both within the museum setting and online. These objectives and principles can actually be applied to any kind of museum (including my partner museum, The Morgan Library and Museum), and are important guidelines for how museums in the twenty-first century can ensure that the digital and physical environments of a museum can coexist and enhance a visitor's overall experience.

First Principle: Audience Centered

The first principle explains how an institution must first look at its audiences' needs and wants before it can make any decisions about what kind of technology should be used in the institution. Any new technology should be tested by a limited number of visitors first, in order to see how they respond to it and if it would be successful or not.¹ The information professional within a museum should also ensure that any new technology would be inclusive and available to use for a wide variety of people in their audience. I think that in order to really know what kind of technology would be the most useful in making my object more interactive, it would be a good idea to survey the museum audience. Have visitors fill out surveys on their way out or online about what kind of technology they would or not want, what would make

¹ Science Museum Group. "Digital Principles: Audience Centered," *Digital Strategy 2015-2017*. <https://group.sciencemuseum.org.uk/policies-and-reports/digital-strategy/>.

technology in the museum more user-friendly, and which parts of the collection they would like to see used with technology more often. That way I would be able to fully understand what visitors would actually want to use.

Second Principle: Sustainable and Scalable

This principle is to remind museum professionals that technology used in their museum must be able to last for the long-term and will be able to be properly maintained.² It can be easy to want to try and implement the newest and “coolest” kinds of technology in order to attract visitors, but if the museum’s budget, space, employees, etc. cannot ensure that it will be able to be maintained or last for a long period of time, it could turn out to be a waste of resources and a disappointment for visitors. I think that The Morgan’s use of audio tours is a good example of implementing technology on a manageable scale. They are relatively easy and cheap to maintain compared to a lot of other technology on the market, but still allow for the visitor to experience the museum setting in a new and interesting way that engages more of the senses than a regular visit would.

Audio Guide

An engaging audio guide highlighting the Morgan's history, architecture, and permanent collection is available free with museum admission. Lasting approximately one hour with over thirty random-access stops, the audio guide features commentary by historian Jean Strouse, the author of an acclaimed biography of Pierpont Morgan; noted architect Samuel White; and several Morgan curators. Geared to both the Morgan regular and the first-time visitor, the audio guide adds an exciting new interpretive dimension to your museum visit. Available at the Information Desk, audio guide units are t-coil compatible and are available in English only.

The Morgan also offers audio tours of select special exhibitions both on site and [online](#).



 [Printer-friendly version](#)

² Science Museum Group. “Digital Principles: Sustainable and Scalable,” *Digital Strategy 2015-2017*. <https://group.sciencemuseum.org.uk/policies-and-reports/digital-strategy/>.

Screenshot of Information About the Audio Guide

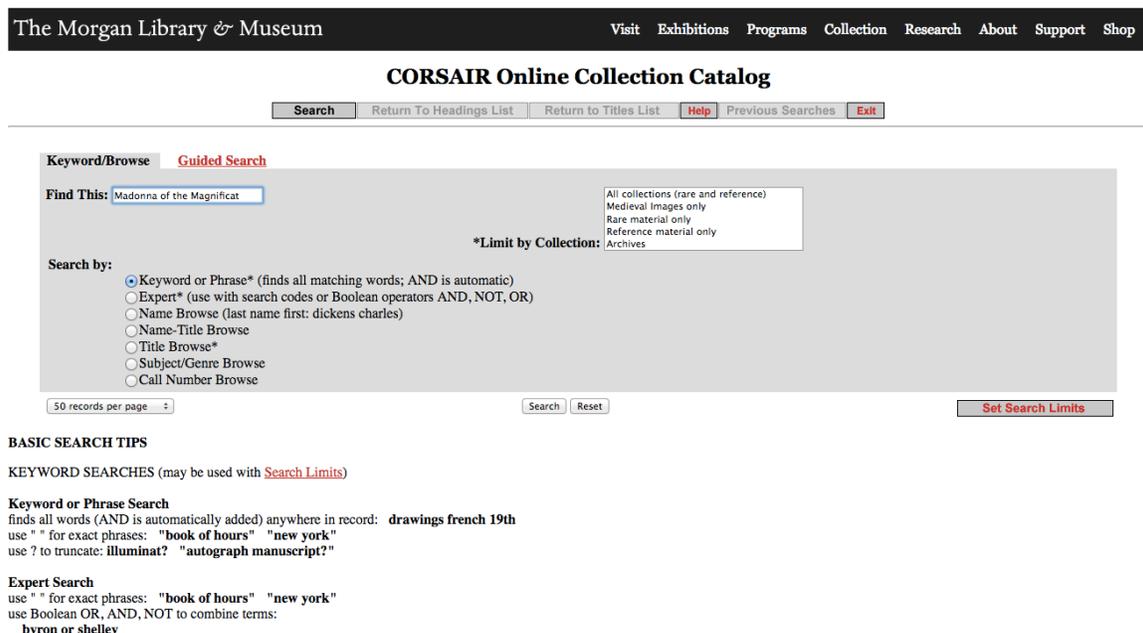
Third Principle: Entrepreneurial and Innovative

The third principle is all about how museum must take their technology to the next level in order to engage audiences more. It is important that museum constantly try to find new ways to use the technology that is already part of their institution, to keep things fresh and exciting for their audience. Information professionals must also be constantly trying new things and collaborating with other professionals/museums/technology companies/etc. in order to keep up with the ever-changing desires of the audience.³ I think that part of the reason why my object feels inaccessible at times is because of the limited use of technology used within the walls of The Morgan, and I believe that can be changed with the introduction of a something relatively simple, like a basic app. Visitors are already allowed to use their cell phones in The Morgan, so providing them with an app that they could use during their visit could be a way to help them engage more with object. The app could provide contextual and/or detailed information about objects on display like *Madonna of the Magnificat* (for example, information about the artist, the time period, the materials), and links and information about programs, tours, and events. An app like this can constantly be updated and changed as time goes on, providing a platform for experimentation by information professionals.

Fourth Principle: Open, Reusable, and Sharable

³ Science Museum Group. "Digital Principles: Entrepreneurial and Innovative," *Digital Strategy 2015-2017*. <https://group.sciencemuseum.org.uk/policies-and-reports/digital-strategy/>.

The fourth principle is about how technology used by a museum should be open and available for a large audience to use and interact with. The authors of these principles state that museum should “Use permissive content licenses...Promote content reuse through partnerships...Share collection data and other data sets where they will aid external researchers.”⁴ Essentially, it is important as an information professional to ensure that the technology in The Morgan is able to be used more than once, and can continuously educate and help people. I think that The Morgan does an exemplary job of making a great deal of data about objects in their collection available to the public through the use of CORSAIR, an online digital catalogue. The entries are very detailed and easy to access through The Morgan’s main website.



Screenshot of CORSAIR’s Main Search Page

⁴ Science Musuem Group. “Digital Principles: Open, Reusable, and Sharable,” *Digital Strategy 2015-2017*. <https://group.sciencemuseum.org.uk/policies-and-reports/digital-strategy/>.

Questions about this item?: Please include all the starred fields in this record in your enquiry or request

- *Location: Objects (OBJECTS)
- *Call Number: [West Room](#)
- Status: On view in West Room
- *Bookmark for This Record: <http://corsair.themorgan.org/cgi-bin/Pwebrecon.cgi?BBID=141404>
- *Record ID: 141404
- *Accession Number: AZ014
- *Author/Artist: [Botticelli, Sandro, 1444 or 1445-1510, After](#).
- *Biographical Data: After Sandro Botticelli Italian, 1444-45-1510
- *Title: [Madonna of the Magnificat \[painting\]](#).
- *Published/Created: Florence, Italy, ca. 1490

Description: 1 painting.

Links:



[Recto](#)

Screenshot of Catalogue Entry of My Object, Madonna of the Magnificat



Medium/Support: Oil on panel.

Dimensions: panel: 37 3/8 inches (950 mm) diameter

Credit: Purchased by Pierpont Morgan, 1911.

Genres: [Paintings --Italy --Florence --15th century](#),
[Oil paintings --Italy --Florence --15th century](#),
[Panel paintings --Italy --Florence --15th century](#),
[Tondi --Italy --Florence --15th century](#).

Notes: This is one of more than a dozen versions made by contemporaries of Botticelli after an original that the artist painted ca. 1481. The many versions attest to the immediate success of Botticelli's composition and its appeal to contemporary Florentine collectors. The title derives from the opening words of the Virgin's song of exaltation, Magnificat anima mea dominum (My soul doth glorify the Lord), which she is writing in the book before her.

A contemporary copy, one of seven replicas, after Botticelli's tondo (ca. 1481) now in the Uffizi, Florence.

The painting derives its name from the opening words of the Virgin's song of exaltation, "Magnificat anima mea dominus ..." (My soul doth glorify the Lord), Gospel of Luke, Chapter 1, which she is writing in the book before her.

Provenance: Casa Alessandri, via degli Albizzi, Florence, 1864; purchased by J. Pierpont Morgan from Elia Volpi, November 1911.

Associated Names: [Volpi, Elia, 1858-1938, former owner](#).

[Morgan, J. Pierpont \(John Pierpont\), 1837-1913, former owner](#).

Formatted Place: Italy Florence.

Subjects: [Mary, Blessed Virgin, Saint --Art, 1490](#).

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

Record Options	
Select Download Format:	Full Record <input type="button" value="v"/> Format for Print/Save
Enter your email address:	<input type="text"/> <input type="button" value="Email"/>

Screenshot of Catalogue Entry of My Object, Madonna of the Magnificat

Fifth Principle: Embedded Across the Organization

The final principle explains how all employees of a museum should be consistently updated on what kinds of technology is being used in the museum and how it

contributes to the overall mission of the institution.⁵ This principle is important because it ensures that everyone in an institution is working together towards a common goal and everyone will become knowledgeable about different types of museum technology. I think that since The Morgan does not have a department or employment position strictly allotted for dealing with technology within the museum, that would be the first step in making my object, and the rest of the collection, more interactive. That way, there is a person (or multiple people) available to guide the rest of the staff on how to make decisions about what kind of technology should be used, as well as how to actually use the technology itself. However, I think that the creation of online exhibitions by The Morgan is a way that they are meeting the needs of this principle right now. Online exhibitions, like regular exhibitions, need collaboration between multiple departments in order to be successful. The Morgan has several online exhibitions available on its main website, underneath the “Exhibitions” tab. Each online exhibition has several different thumbnails a visitor can click on that will take them to different aspects of the exhibition, and includes scanned pictures of objects accompanied by summaries and labels, just like an in-person exhibition would.

⁵ Science Museum Group. “Embedded Across the Organization,” *Digital Strategy 2015-2017*. <https://group.sciencemuseum.org.uk/policies-and-reports/digital-strategy/>

I'm Nobody! Who are you? The Life and Poetry of Emily Dickinson

- Go to audio stop -

Next

The sun kept stooping – stooping – low –

Two – were immortal – twice –

Distance – is not the Realm of Fox

The Wind begun to knead the Grass –

The Day undressed – Herself –

I suppose the time will come

Light is sufficient to itself –

I heard a Fly buzz – when I died –

Bless God, he went as soldiers

My friend attacks my friend!

I'm Nobody! Who are you?

A little madness in the Spring

Of our deepest delights

Emily Dickinson wrote nearly 1,800 poems. Many of these exist in multiple drafts, but some are unique copies. Only ten poems were published during her lifetime, all anonymously and likely without her consent, but she was not completely averse to sharing her work and she sent hundreds of drafts to a wide range of friends and correspondents.

Dickinson is widely recognized as one of the most important poets of the nineteenth century and her work is acknowledged as a precursor to modernism. She profoundly influenced later generations of poets, writers, musicians, and visual artists.

Listen to a selection of the poems, as read by contemporary poet Lee Ann Brown, [here](#).

This online exhibition was created in conjunction with the exhibition *I'm Nobody! Who are you? The Life and Poetry of Emily Dickinson*, on view from January 20 through May 28, 2017.

I'm Nobody! Who are you? The Life and Poetry of Emily Dickinson is made possible with generous support from the Ricciardi Family Exhibition Fund, the Lohf Fund for Poetry, the Caroline Macomber Fund, and Rudy and Sally Ruggles, and assistance from the Acriel Foundation and the Gladys Kriebel Delmas Foundation.



Daguerreotype, ca. 1847. The Emily Dickinson Collection, Amherst College

www.themorgan.org/exhibitions/online/emily-dickinson/8

First Thumbnail of "I'm Nobody! Who are you? The Life and Poetry of Emily Dickinson" online exhibition

After reviewing the principles, I think that overall I would best be able to make my object more interactive by starting at a very basic level, and then as time goes on, be able to expand and experiment with different variations of technology. The Morgan Library and Museum does not implement a large amount of technology within the institution itself, so I would have to use Principles One and Two to get a feel for what kind of technology the audience would want to see and what kind of technology the museum would be able to sustain, all the while making sure it still aligns with The Morgan's mission and vision. I think that The Morgan already does a great job with making its online resources interactive, as mentioned in Principles Four and Five, but I think I could further enhance my objects interactivity by perhaps constructing an online exhibition around it. Finally, I could make my object more interactive by highlighting it on the app I suggested under Principle Four.