INTERACTIVE TECHNOLOGY

at the

MACARTHUR MEMORIAL MUSEUM

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Link to Exhibit:

http://va-norfolkmacarthurmemorial.civicplus.com/27/Museum

http://info-matic.org/interactive-technology-at-macarthur-memorial-museum/

Another visit to the museum was made to take digital images of the kiosk. It is unfortunate for the purposes of this assignment that this is the closest interactive attribute that the museum offers that could possibly be an addition to the museum display for General MacArthur's War Department identification badge.

The first link is to the MacArthur Memorial Museum's webpage (2019). Both the exhibit (kiosk) and the museum object (identification badge) are not shown on the website. The second link is to the info-matic blog.

Interactive Features of the Exhibit

This is a kiosk where the user can use the touch screen to activate the black and white photographs that are viewed as a slide show that is tied to the life of General MacArthur. The designers may have chosen this feature to save on energy. The display only runs if there is someone to press the start button rather than be on a perpetual loop. This kiosk may be designed this way due to the lack of 21st technology when it was originally designed. After speaking to the museum's archivist for a previous assignment, it is apparent that the lack of funding could be a primary reason why current digital technology is not a priority (personal communication, February 2019).

Why this Exhibit Serves as a Good Example of Interactivity

The MacArthur Memorial Museum is a specialty museum, targeting a specific audience with its narrow focus. "Visitors are often in the company of others who may not share their enthusiasm or level of knowledge about the topic of the museum" (Serrell 2015, p. 58). Exhibits need to be engaging to a broad audience and adapt to world changes. They must be relevant, or they will not survive economic conditions (p. 59).

The focus of the museum is General MacArthur's life and military career that took him around the world (Macarthur Memorial 2019). For the casual museum visitor that may not necessarily want to study the world wars, this exhibit could serve as a good example of interactivity for the War Department Staff identification badge to showcase its artistic detail and to highlight its history. This badge is larger and more ornate than most military accoutrements of today and was proposed by General MacArthur about two years before the US Army approved it (Emerson, n.d.). To show it enlarged to enhance the detail and to label each part and what it represents allows a deeper appreciation and more information for the badge as an individual object and give it more prominence as part of the overall museum collection.

Potential Audiences for My Exhibit

Audiences that would be most interested in this exhibit would be adults and military enthusiasts. It is an interesting military uniform accoutrement with its detail, colors, and history. Each design detail carries historical significance and a similar identification badge is still used today in the United States Army (Emerson, n.d.).

Conclusion

The MacArthur Memorial Museum is not technology driven. It relies on objects, photographs and videos pertaining to the historical significance of General Douglas MacArthur.

If it could add even this small interactive exhibit that could enlarge an object like the

identification badge and explain it in more detail, visitors could gain a different perspective of

such a huge personality and the times in which he lived.

References

Emerson, W. K. (n.d.). US Army Staff Identification Badges, 1920-Present. Retrieved from

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Serrell, B. (2015). Exhibit Labels: An interpretive approach. *Who is the audience (and what do*

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