

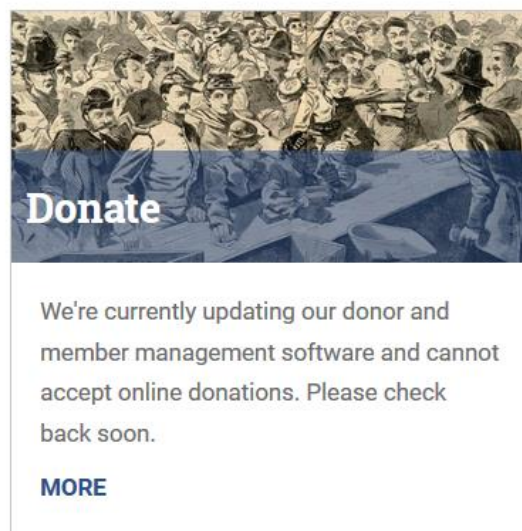
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LIS 258

Museum-Partner Observation Three

Privacy and data security is an area that the National Museum of Civil War Medicine (NMCWM) is severely lacking in. Part of the issue here may be that the NMCWM is very small and does not offer app-based or interactive services that would require patrons to share personal information. The only online tools that currently require patrons to share information include an option to donate to the NMCWM online and an option to join the NMCWM's mailing list.

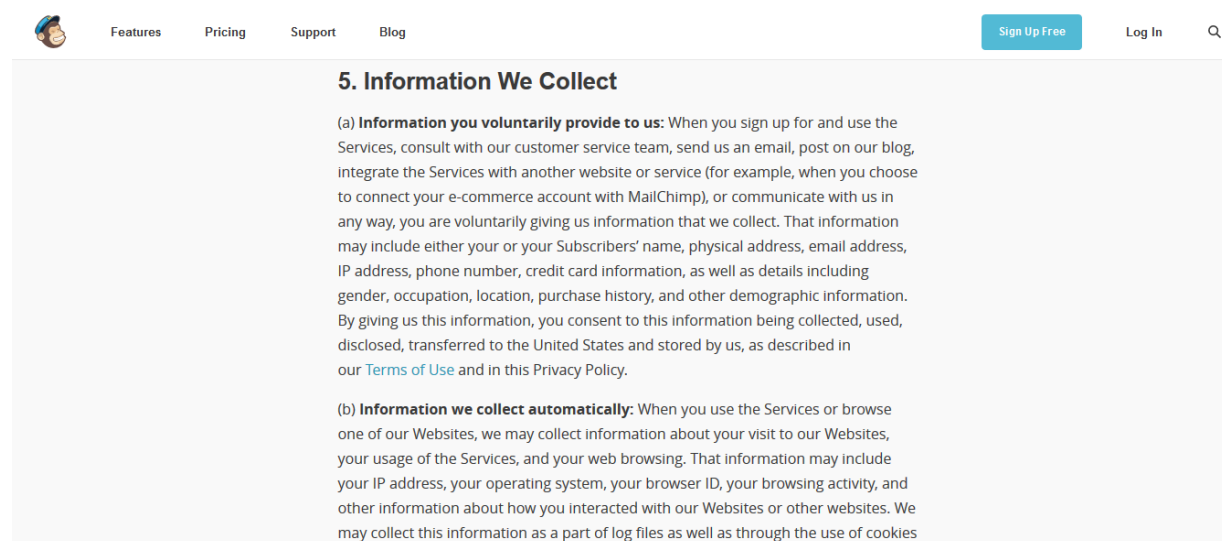
Currently, the online donation tool, found under the "Support" tab on the top of the global navigation bar, is temporarily out of service. Though very little information is provided, I would – optimistically – assume that this software update may include tighter security for transactions. Yet, there is no way to know this for sure.



The only other potential personal data entry point on the website is the email list.

Freeman, Adams Becker, Cummins, McKelroy, Giesinger, Yuhnke note that “[m]useums and

cultural organizations often work with third-party companies and vendors to provide necessary services, giving them control of data security” (2016). This is an important point, as it comes into play when looking at the service used for the NMCWM email list. The NMCWM uses a service called Mail Chimp. There is no privacy notice given directly on the NMCWM site when registering for the email list. Therefore, I went to the Mail Chimp official website to look at their Terms of Service and Privacy Policy. Unfortunately, the Privacy Policy leaves a lot to be desired.



The screenshot shows the MailChimp website's privacy policy section titled "5. Information We Collect". The page has a navigation bar with links for Features, Pricing, Support, and Blog, and buttons for Sign Up Free and Log In. The main content area contains two paragraphs of text:

(a) **Information you voluntarily provide to us:** When you sign up for and use the Services, consult with our customer service team, send us an email, post on our blog, integrate the Services with another website or service (for example, when you choose to connect your e-commerce account with MailChimp), or communicate with us in any way, you are voluntarily giving us information that we collect. That information may include either your or your Subscribers' name, physical address, email address, IP address, phone number, credit card information, as well as details including gender, occupation, location, purchase history, and other demographic information. By giving us this information, you consent to this information being collected, used, disclosed, transferred to the United States and stored by us, as described in our [Terms of Use](#) and in this Privacy Policy.

(b) **Information we collect automatically:** When you use the Services or browse one of our Websites, we may collect information about your visit to our Websites, your usage of the Services, and your web browsing. That information may include your IP address, your operating system, your browser ID, your browsing activity, and other information about how you interacted with our Websites or other websites. We may collect this information as a part of log files as well as through the use of cookies

Mail Chimp has a very lengthy section on the information they collect from users. Among this information are names, email addresses, IP addresses, browser IDs, browsing activity, use of social media networks, location, and demographic information. Essentially, by signing up for the NMCWM's mailing list patrons are inadvertently, and unknowingly, handing over a lot of personal information to a third-party. I find this information extremely distressing as it highlights the NMCWM's struggle to adapt to new forms of privacy in an ever-evolving technological world. Freeman, Adams Becker, Cummins, McKelroy, Giesinger, Yuhnke assert

that “museums have an increasing responsibility to communicate and initiate public dialog on the issues that surround privacy” (2016). This means, to me, that it is the duty of the museum to disclose all privacy policies in an accessible manner to patrons. Hopefully, the NMCWM will be able to meet this expectation in the future.

References

Freeman, A., Adams Becker, S., Cummins, M., McKelroy, E., Giesinger, C., Yuhnke, B. (2016).

NMC Horizon Report: 2016 Museum Edition. Austin, Texas: The New Media Consortium.