

Social Media Technology in the Yorktown Museum

Kyle Nolan
LIS:258 Museum Informatics
Dr. Christine Angel
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Chosen Social Media:

[Yorktown Historical Society Facebook page](https://www.facebook.com/YorktownHistoryNY)

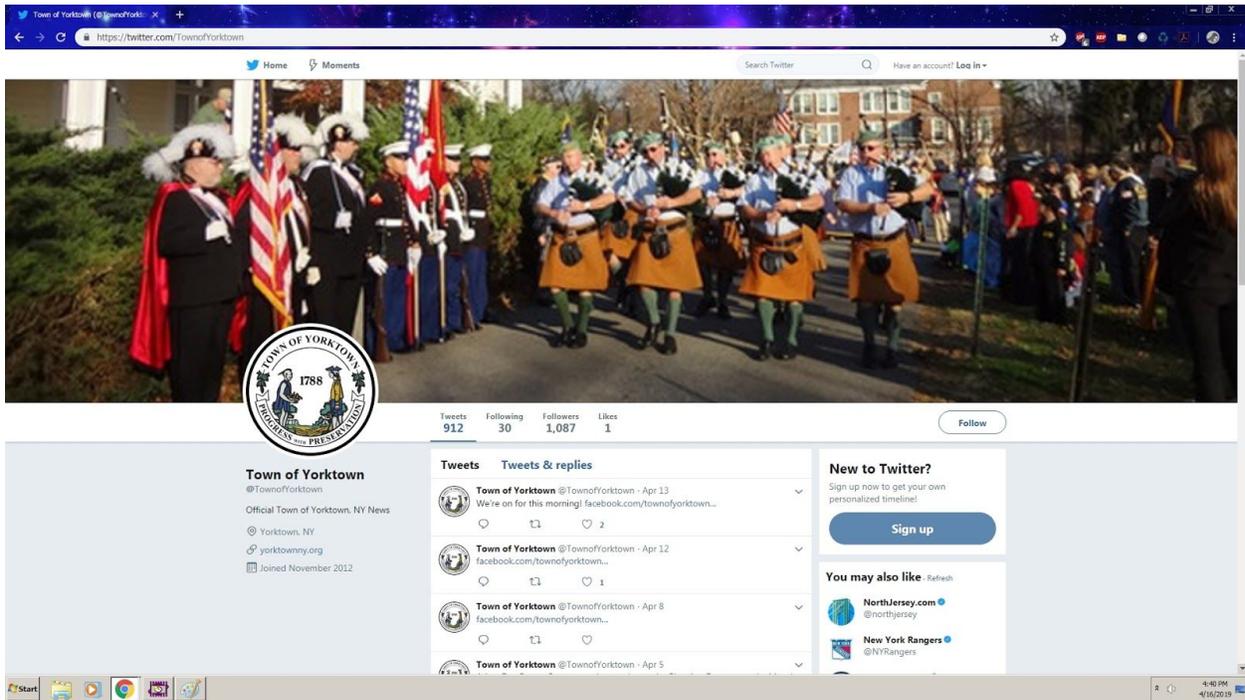


Screenshot of the Yorktown Historical Society's Facebook page

Discuss the social media features of this implementation, and speculate on why the designers might have chosen these features:

I decided to go with a local group associated with the Yorktown Museum, so that I could get a better look at the local audience that would be associated and interested in the museum. The above image of the Yorktown Historical Society's facebook page is only a glimpse at the information this organization provides. As they provide snippets and snapshots of local history, the Yorktown Historical Society page also provides a calendar of events, visiting information, the organization's information, and ways for the community to interact with them. As Facebook is widely considered a connective social media site, for small towns and their organizations it

would make sense that they reach out to the community in this way. There isn't a great need for them to span a wider net, unlike larger museums such as the Met and the AMNH that receive visitors from all over the world regularly.



Screenshot of the Town of Yorktown's Twitter page

Additionally, there is the Town of Yorktown's Twitter page, in which locals are able to get quick and short announcements of what activities are happening. While a twitter page would limit what other information the museum could provide (no calendar of events or contact pages), it is still more of presence than the museum currently has. A facebook page or a twitter page would add a nice touch for the Yorktown Museum to reach out to its local community and get word out about what they're doing inside and outside of the walls of the museum building.

Explain why you believe this exhibit might serve as a good example of interactivity for your type of collection (or object):

Using social platforms such as Facebook allows a certain interactivity with the local community that the Yorktown Museum just doesn't have right now. It would allow them to connect their objects and exhibits to places and people, and let current residents make their own connections as well. If people are able to share their experiences with the Yorktown Museum, then it can greatly influence how the museum engages their visitors. According to the New Media Consortium's 2016 Museum Horizon Report, "Museums that have historically discouraged photography have been capitalizing on the participation cultivated by social media to captivate their audiences" as a response to the updates in technology available (NMC, 2016, p. 18). In an age where connectivity drives the livelihood of organizations, it is important for small museums to create "policies that foster digital interaction inside museum walls", and have an online presence beyond their regular website (NMC, 2016, p. 18).

In regards to an interactive exhibit involving the barn loom located in the Sylvia Thorne Room, having visitors share their experiences, or creating a challenge that gets them to weave or interact more with the room as a whole, would be an engaging opportunity for the museum to look into. They could ask people to post pictures of themselves weaving on a small DIY loom, a factoid they learned while at the museum, or connect the barn loom to another object or place in the local area. Many museums encourage their visitors to connect their collections to outside experiences, and this is a lesson the Yorktown Museum could take when looking into interactivity and social media in the future.

Identify at least two potential audiences for your interactive exhibit, and explain how they would benefit from your ideas:

Two potential audiences for the use of social media and interactivity in the Yorktown Museum would be local historians and educators/students. Local historians could benefit greatly from getting frequent updates from the museum, as well as the ability to post their own findings to share with the museum. As for educators/students, having an engaging activity, especially for younger grades, would allow educators to facilitate learning through the Yorktown Museum and share those experiences with the community.

Resources

NMC Horizon. (2016). Participatory Experiences Short-Term Trend: Driving Ed Tech adoption in museums for the next one to two years. NMC Horizon Report: 2016 Museum Edition. Austin, Texas: The New Media Consortium. p. 18-19.