

Case Study

Europeana

Profile

Website's name / Domain	http://www.europeana.eu
Country of origin	Netherlands
Geographical scope	European
Language/s / tackling of language issues	The website is available in English but also provides summaries in many other European languages.

Website owner

Contact	Europeana.eu c/o the Koninklijke Bibliotheek National Library of the Netherlands Jonathan Purday PO Box 90407 2509 LK The Hague info@ europeana.eu
Type of organisation	Non-profit organisation
Description of the owner organisation	The Commission has been working for a number of years on projects to boost the digital economy. These prepared the ground for an online service that would bring together Europe's cultural heritage. The idea for Europeana came from a letter to the Presidency of the Council of Ministers and to the Commission on 28 April 2005. Six Heads of State and Government suggested the creation of a virtual European library, aiming to make Europe's cultural and scientific resources accessible for all. This was the starting point for Europeana.

Importance of the website within the organisation structure

The website is a communication and network basis for European libraries and facilitates the civil public to access European heritage via internet.

Description of the website’s mission and objectives including the main activities of the website and which domains and disciplines are addressed, as well as how the accomplishment of the mission is facilitated

The idea behind Europeana is to create an online service to connect European cultural heritage organisations. The aim is to create a well accessible online resource that unites European heritage and represents its cultural and lingual diversity. The main goals of the portal are to provide access to European heritage through a cross-domain portal and to make the portal a sustainable research resource as well as to bring together existing digital content and enhancing further digitisation of cultural and scientific heritage.

Already more than 50 organisations contribute to the prototype version of Europeana.eu and more than 6 million links to digital items are available. Furthermore, the prototype website demonstrates how online communities concerning different topics can be implemented on the operational website. The communities will provide a discussion board and the possibility to directly contact other community members. Another facility is the Thought Lab, where new ideas and technologies to realise the operational Europeana website are demonstrated.

Website facilities

Kind of facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online Community • Forum • Data base • Photo / video library • Feedback form • Newsletter 	
Member / non-member facilities	Some member facilities	
Importance within the website content	The communication facilities allow for European debate about culture and cultural heritage and foster the creation of online communities as well as communication via Facebook. The main focus is still on the development and implementation of the online library including text, pictures, video and audio files.	
Frequency of usage	Number of visitors (monthly):	Average 450,000
	Frequency and number of uploads of contributors:	Re-launch release in summer 2010 by which time the current 5 million items will be doubled to 10 million. So content ingestion is happening rapidly at present. Frequent enlargement of the database after the launch. More than 1,000 content providers, whose content comes in through some 60 aggregators.
	Frequency of website updating by the website owner:	Weekly

Does the website show any results for working communication and debate on a European / cross-border level?	Significant interest among content providers - Europe's museums, libraries, archives and audiovisual collections. Frequent references in the media, in part because of a perceived, though erroneous, rivalry with Google books. High levels of usage in the early weeks in response to significant press attention. Now settled into a pattern of regular usage that shows a great deal of loyalty - many repeat visits, and a fair amount of educational use at all levels.
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Evaluation of the website

Mission and objectives, accomplishment of mission	Attitude towards the European idea, incorporation of the European idea	The website supports the exchange and communication about cultural heritage through the creation of online communities and facilitates access for everyone to libraries across Europe.
	Cultural values	Apart from intercultural dialogue and research co-operations in the field of cultural heritage as well as digitisation of cultural heritage, the website aims at allowing for accessibility to European heritage for organisations and the broader public. Another important value is the presentation of Europe's cultural and lingual diversity.
Presentation, navigation, structure	The website's presentation is appealing and simple. The navigation of the website is well structured and all information can be easily found.	
Trustfulness	Europeana is co-founded by the European Union	
Main strength	Main strengths are the online communities as well as the provision of accessibility to a wealth of European culture.	
Main drawback	Main drawback is that the website is only available as a prototype at the moment.	
Usage of communication facilities	The platform seems to be used very regularly as well as the communication facilities like the communities and Facebook.	

Vision and recommendation of website owners

Recommendations for the European Commission	Harmonisation of copyright and finding a way to deal with orphan works as well as helping to make sure that more countries digitise cultural heritage content. Europeana needs a sustained long-term funding to enable it to plan a
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Vision of further development of the website

longer term development strategy.

Two projects, Europeana v1.0 and EuropeanaConnect are currently developing new functions and applications, including APIs, semantic enhancement of metadata, multilingual search, mobile applications, geographic location tools and other elements. Very large amounts of new content will be ingested from a range of projects in the Europeana group.