

ZAMS

The Best of The Best in Online Audience Engagement

Sixteen creative, social solutions employed by zoos, aquariums, and museums to create conversation, incite interest, increase reputation, and build online awareness.

Colleen Dilenschneider, IMPACTS Research & Development
August 9, 2011

Categories

1. Next-level engagement
2. Creating excitement for a cool project
3. Community engagement initiative
4. Turn-around of a possible PR crisis
5. Sector-strengthening transparency
6. Public ditching of a social media strategy that didn't work
7. Presentation of a puzzle
8. Unexpected use of a celebrity
9. Showing off pride & personality
10. Simple, online challenge 2.0
11. Industry working together
12. Entirely online museum experience
13. Institutional transparency
14. Digital storytelling
15. Use of online evangelists
16. On-site use of social technology

Best

Next-level engagement

Winner: Museum of Life and Science's
Experimonth: Mood

THE MUSEUM OF LIFE + SCIENCE PRESENTS:
EXPERIMONTH: MOOD

The mood of the community for all of April:

Mood Rating	Count
1	0
2	0
3	100
4	200
5	400
6	800
7	1500
8	2000
9	1000
10	200

MOOD: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Count labels: -5095, -4076, -3057, -2038, -1019

YOU + YOUR MOOD RATINGS : [PRIVATE]

THI

If you are a participant, **sign in** to see realtime data visualizations of your mood.

FRIDAYS SO FAR: | / | / | /

EVERYONE : [PUBLIC]

Today's featured post is...
GENDER AND MOOD
Posted on May 17, 2011 by Beck Tench

We have gender data for 96% of our participants (n=172). Specifically: 86 females, 85 males and 1 transgendered person. Here's a look at their differences in mood and compliance.
[Continue reading →](#)

Posted in [Community](#), [Daily](#) | [Leave a comment](#)

The play-by-play

What it is:

Between March 28th and 31st, 179 people signed up to participate in ExperiMonth: Mood, a month-long commitment to texting in a mood rating of 1 (low) to 10 (high), five times a day through the month of April, 2011.

The Museum used data to draw conclusions regarding age and gender, and noted other interesting findings along the way. They shared these findings with other members of their online audience.

Why it's the best:

- Allowed online audiences to become test subjects, creating buy-in and developing a relationship with the institution
- Audiences became contributors to the scientific process
- Select, volunteer audience allowing for quality of interaction
- Reported findings clearly, making use of information transparent
- New and exciting way to engage in mission-awareness activities off-site

Best

Creating excitement for a cool project

Winner: Museum of Science and Industry's Month at the Museum



Flashlight Tour of Petroleum Planet!

From: msikate | Nov 14, 2010 | 1,137 views

Follow the experiment at <http://monthatthemuseum.org>

The play-by-play

What it is:

MSI conducted a competition to decide who would have the opportunity to spend a full month living in a glass room at the Museum. Over 1,500 applicants posted YouTube videos describing why they should have the opportunity. The winner, Kate, was chosen by judges and the public.

Why it's the best:

- Fun and funny videos built awareness of the initiative
- Month at the Museum is unique and new, garnering attention
- Creative engagement inspired significant earned media
- Throughout Kate's Month at the Museum, she wrote a blog, posted videos, and was available on-site in effort to keep up the level of engagement and excited attained by the competition.
- MATM aims to turn online engagement into visits through the door

Best

Community engagement initiative

Winner: "Those About to Die Salute You" by
Queens Museum of Art (host), Brooklyn Museum, Bronx Museum, El Museo
del Barrio



The play-by-play

What it is:

Artists Duke Riley, Jade Townsend, and Kitty Joe Sainte-Marie staged a semi-mock Roman naval battle/art event called “Those About to Die Salute You.” Riley built several scale model boats and enlisted four museums (each from one of the boroughs of New York) as warriors: The Queens Museum of Art (also the hosts, wearing red), Brooklyn Museum (blue), The Bronx Museum (yellow) and El Museo del Barrio (green). The battle took place in Flushing Meadows, Queens, in a reflecting pool that hadn't been flooded since the 1964 World's Fair.

Why it's the best:

- A great example of how Twitter can rile up a crowd and build community buy-in. Tweets grew more combative as date drew nearer
- Inspired support for New York museums
- Photostreams were built on Flickr to document the event and boat-building. Media was coordinated with the common tag, “DukeRiley”
- Demonstrated a sense of fun and excitement on behalf of art museums

Best

Turn-around of a possible PR crisis

Winner: The Shedd Aquarium vs. high dolphin calf mortality rates



Rose Lanai L

Im so very sorry about the loss of Tiques calf I know it must be super hard for you all. My thoughts and prayers are with Tique and all of you as well. I guess the angels needed her more than Tique did. I applaud you all for trying to help her thrive.

June 10 at 4:19pm · Like · Comment

 2 people like this.



Shedd Aquarium Thanks Rose!

June 11 at 1:04am · Like



Rose Lanai L :) welcome

June 11 at 12:14pm · Like

Write a comment...

The play-by-play

What it is:

The Shedd Aquarium chose to trust online audiences with news and updates regarding the birth of a dolphin calf, despite high mortality rates. The dolphin calf didn't make it, but the associated audience outpour was far from a PR crisis. The organization received over 103 supportive Facebook comments within one hour of posting the loss on Facebook. Comments were very personal and empathetic, creating strong, personal ties to the Shedd.

Why it's the best:

- They publicized the birth, *sharing successes with their audience*
- They posted updates and content *to create relationships with the dolphins*
- They made online audiences aware of threats *to illustrate that they were addressing them*

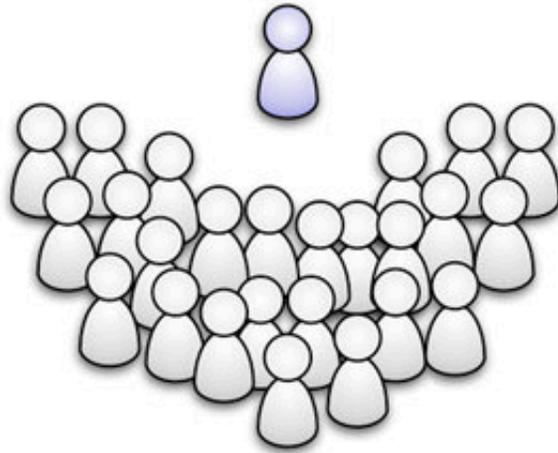
And when the calf died...

- They shared the news on all channels at once, *respecting all audiences*
- They spoke in layman's terms, *opening the gate for empathy*
- They displayed emotion, *demonstrating a human value*
- They allowed themselves to be sad *and did not distract from the loss*
- They responded with thanks, *as a person would respond*
- They followed up *to keep audiences engaged*

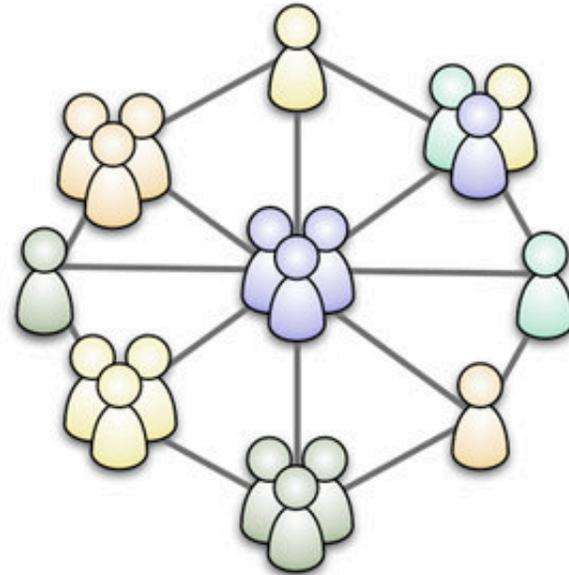
Best

Sector- strengthening transparency

Winner: The Smithsonian's Public Wiki
on their New Media Strategy



Old Learning Model



New Learning Model

The Updated Smithsonian Learning Model

The play-by-play

What it is

The Smithsonian Institution created a public Wiki for their new media strategy. Not only is the Wiki open for viewership, but also for public edits (if registered). SI actively uses this new media strategy and shares the lessons with other institutions through the Wiki. The aim is for the strategy process is to create an effective plan while emphasizing speed and openness.

Why it's the best:

- They did it for smart reasons:
 - **To eat their own dog food**- To actually use the products that they make and “believe in”
 - **“Brain Trust”**- There’s more talent and expertise within the community than inside an institution
 - **External is the new internal**
 - **Feedback and testing**- The public Wiki does not allow the institution to wait until the last minute for feedback on the strategy

Best

Public ditching of a social media strategy that didn't work

Winner: The Brooklyn Museum's switch to Meetup.com

Brooklyn Museum 1stfans

Home Members Sponsors Photos Pages Discussions More ▾ Join us!



Brooklyn, NY
Founded Oct 26, 2010

1stfans	194
Group reviews	12
Upcoming Meetups	1
Past Meetups	8
Our calendar	

Follow us     

1stfans meet artists and museum staff at exclusive meetups during *Target First Saturday* . Also, they get to skip the movie and coat check lines, so come mingle with us during our events!

1stfans is \$20 membership level at the Brooklyn Museum. Join the meetup group to get announcements about upcoming events, then become a member either [online](#) or at the door for \$20 year.

“ Alright, I'm biased because I run the group, but it's a great place to meet new people. I've really loved getting to know our members - everyone is like a friend. ...
—Shelley 

“ Great art, cool exhibit, I liked everyone! Great people.
—Azdren 

Join this Meetup Group  Sign up using Facebook
You can join groups on Meetup using your Facebook account. Not on Facebook? [Join Meetup here.](#)

By clicking the "Sign up using Facebook" button above, you agree to Meetup's [Terms of Service](#)

Welcome! **What's new**

The play-by-play

What it is:

The Brooklyn Museum's popular 1st Fans initiative publically dropped associated Twitter and Facebook accounts and left their Flickr group behind to focus on using Meetup.com. They shared their reasoning on their blog. Simply put, these popular, go-to tools were not meeting their needs, so they adjusted.

- They wanted to use social media to facilitate on-site engagement
- People were not responding to their online engagement efforts
- The platforms did not allow for communication among audience members
- Administrative overhead was high due to 1st fans set-up

Why it's the best:

- The Brooklyn Museum took the time to experiment with multiple forms of social media (ex: Twitter Art Feed)
- They assessed how each platform was helping them to meet their goals
- They shared their findings and were transparent with audiences
- They didn't give up on social media. They found a platform that worked.
- They unapologetically ditched popular tools, which weren't working

Best

Presentation of a puzzle

Winner: National Constitution Center's
"Address America"

ADDRESS AMERICA

presented by SMITH &

NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER



Six Words to Inspire a Nation

The Address America Contest has ended, however submissions will be received through January 20.

The winners of the contest are:

"Divided by fear, united in hope." **(GRAND PRIZE WINNER)**

Submitted by Donna Formica-Wilsey of Philadelphia, PA

"Shared dream. Shared destiny. Shared duty."

Submitted by Charlene Ann McGrady of West Chester, Pennsylvania

"Together we can change tomorrow, today."

Submitted by Casey Oehler

"America's story is still being written."

Submitted by Renée Hope Guillory of Phoenix, AZ

About the Project

The [National Constitution Center](#) and [SMITH Magazine](#) ask you to help President-elect Obama inspire America.

In six words, give him guidance.

Offer ideas for his inaugural address.

Six memorable words for January 20th.

In six words, a President can say a lot: "To bind up the nation's wounds" (Abraham Lincoln, 1865) "Pay any price, bear any burden" (John F. Kennedy, 1961)

So give your speech writing a try.

The play-by-play

What it is:

Upon Barack Obama's election in 2008, the National Constitution Center challenged its online audience to provide guidance to the president elect by choosing six words or less that they'd like to hear in his inaugural address.

Thousands of entries were submitted and six winners were chosen by a panel of distinguished judges, including several recognized writers and journalists, including Jim McGrath, speech writer for the then-current president George Bush.

Why it's the best:

- It's fun, and conceptually fits the organization's mission by connecting people with history. "The President is elected by the people, and therefore, his words are our words, and this unique contest allows 'We the People' to engage directly in one of the most historic inaugurations in a generation
- Played on timely micro-blogging, character-limitation trend
- Submissions were read and judged by industry experts, allowing access and increasing reputation of the National Constitution Center

Best

Unexpected use of a celebrity

Winner: The Hijack of LACMA's
Twitter account by Rainn Wilson



LACMA LACMA

Did you know that LACMA actually stands for "Lame Artists Create Most Art"? #rainn

6 Aug



LACMA LACMA

Hi I'm actor @rainnwilson and @LACMA belongs to me. Suck it, art snobs. Pffffttt (fart noise) #rainn

6 Aug



LACMA LACMA

Hi I'm @LACMA. Justin Bieber JUSTIN BIEBER I <3 JUSTIN BIEBER!!! LOL. Xxx Ooo OMG! He's soooooo cuuute!!!! #Rainn

6 Aug

The play-by-play

What it is:

Rainn Wilson of “The Office” conducted a two-day hostile takeover of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art’s Twitter account. He humorously explained the uselessness of LACMA with overwhelming absurdity as part of “Cell Phone Stories,” a summer-long project in which guest artists used mobile-phone technology and social media to create "episodes" designed to re-imagine the museum experience.

Why it's the best:

- Wilson’s episode, “I Hate LACMA” aids to counter notions that art museums take themselves too seriously. LACMA not only came up with the episode, but embraced this lighthearted anti-LACMA messaging.
- The ‘takeover’ appears extreme and required trust in an online audience, which is why it garnered attention and increased brand awareness
- Provided incentive to follow LACMA on Twitter (fun, open personality)
- Appealed to “some people who might not normally be aware of LACMA”

Best

Showing off pride & personality

Winner: Museums Betting Artwork on the Super Bowl (originally by Indianapolis Museum of Art and the New Orleans Museum of Art)

The screenshot shows the ESPN Page 2 website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with "myESPN" and various sports categories like NFL, MLB, NBA, NHL, NCAA FB, NCAA BB, NASCAR, SOCCER, and MORE SPORTS. There are also links for WATCH, FANTASY & GAMES, PAGE 2 & COMMENTARY, and RADIO & MORE. A search bar is located on the right side of the top bar.

The main content area features an article titled "Even art museums make Super Bowl bets!" by Amanda Angel, dated 3:35 PM ET. The article includes a large image of Claude Lorrain's painting "Ideal View of Tivoli". Below the image, the caption reads: "Claude Lorrain/New Orleans Museum of Art. Claude Lorrain's 'Ideal View of Tivoli' could be headed to Indianapolis after Super Bowl Sunday."

On the right side of the page, there is a promotional banner for the Capital One Cup, which says "Did your school WIN THE CAPITAL ONE CUP? FIND OUT NOW". Below this, there are two columns of featured authors: Scoop Jackson (Michael Rapaport talks about sports, A Tribe Called Quest. (07/22/11)) and Kurt Snibbe (Legendary caddie Steve Williams is Page 2's Fictional Statue of the Week. (07/22/11)).

The play-by-play

What it is:

In 2010, Directors at the Indianapolis Museum of Art (Max Anderson) and the New Orleans Museum of Art (John Bullard) made public bets on who would win the Super Bowl (Colts vs. Saints). After a series of playful trash-talking, the directors bet famous works of art from their collections. New Orleans won, and IMA fulfilled their end of the bargain.

The wager: If the Colts win the Super Bowl, the New Orleans Museum of Art will lend Claude Lorrain's, *Ideal View of Tivoli*, 1644 to the Indianapolis Museum of Art for three months. If the Saints win, on the other hand, the Indianapolis Museum of Art will lend out Turner's *The Fifth Plague of Egypt*, 1800.

Why it's the best:

- The bet mixes unexpected popular cultures/interests
- Art museums have a sense of fun, risk and adventure
- Museums display pride in their community and stand behind their cities
- It started a trend. In 2011, The Milwaukee Art Museum and the Carnegie Museum of Art agreed to a Super Bowl bet, wagering a Renoir (Carnegie) and a Caillebotte (Milwaukee).

Best

Simple, online challenge 2.0

Winner: Smithsonian's *Are You Smarter than a Curator*

ARE YOU SMARTER THAN

A CURATOR?



Smithsonian Institution

smarterthanacurator.org

The play-by-play

What it is:

The Smithsonian has created a short quiz that tests the taker's knowledge of the institution and its collections. The quiz is simple, but engaging. After the first question, quiz-takers are asked for their mailing address so that they may receive an "Are You Smarter than a Curator" sticker. It is quick, challenging, and fun.

Why it's the best:

- It strengthens awareness of the role of curators in all museums
- It makes curating appear fun and accessible
- It is a short quiz with a simple message
- The sticker awards engagement
- SI captures email addresses of potential visitors

Best

Example of the industry
working together
Winner: Ask a Curator Day

Follow
[#askacurator](#)
on Twitter



The play-by-play

What it is:

On September 1, 2010, 340 museums took part in Ask A Curator Day on Twitter. The online community had the opportunity to ask curators anything they wanted to know. Questions ranged in variety from “frequently asked” to creative and unanticipated. To ask a question, individuals would @reply the appropriate museum. Interactions used the #askacurator hashtag. The event was created and publicized by Jim Richardson, Managing Director of Sumo Design Company.

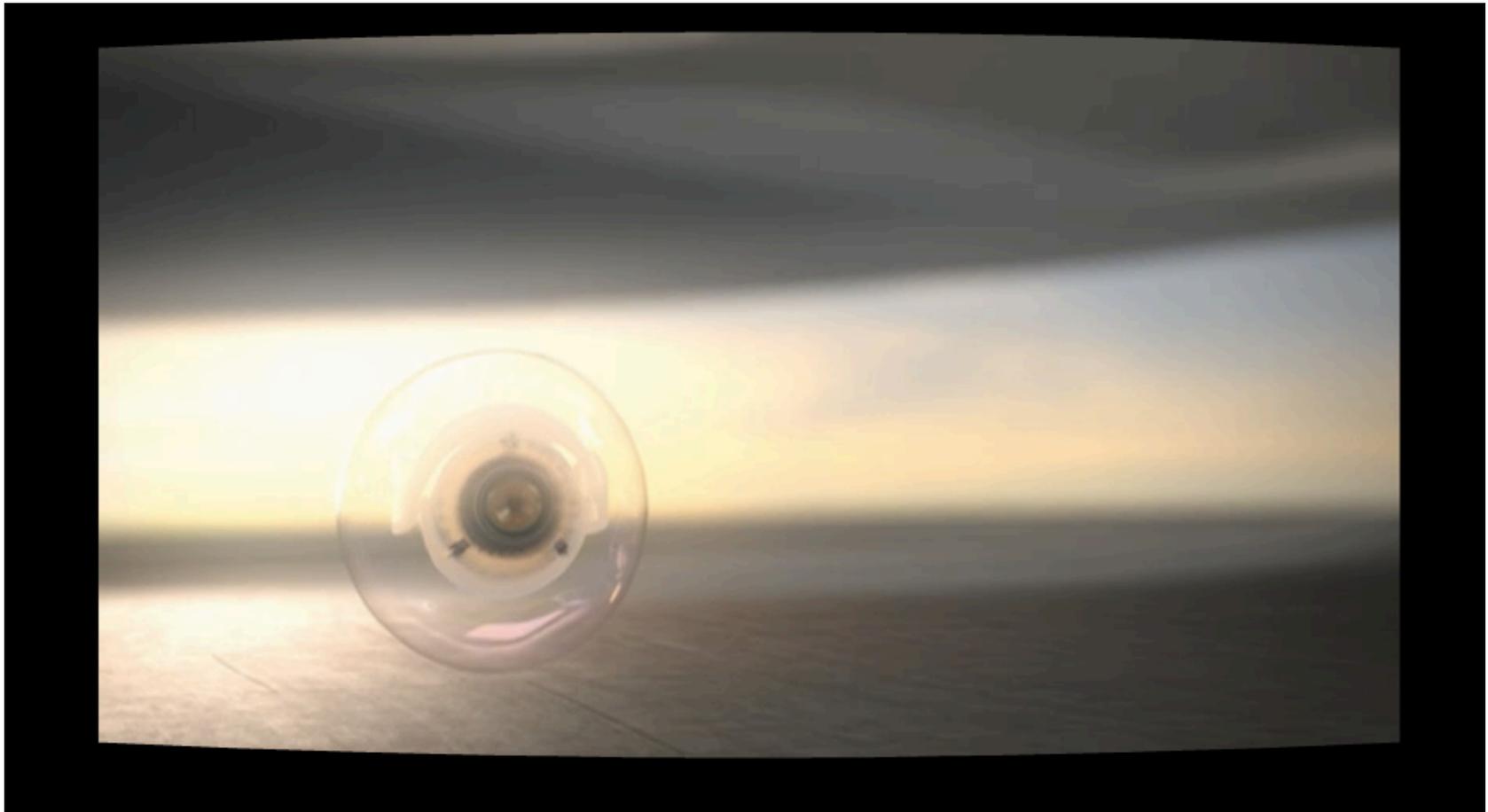
Why it's the best:

- #askacurator trended worldwide on September 1st, 2010
- Over 300 museums participated
- The event received significant earned media coverage
- It was low-resource for museums to participate
- It highlighted the role and value of curators internationally
- It drew positive attention toward museums and inspired personal interactions with individual institutions

Best

Entirely online museum experience

Winner: Adobe Museum of Digital Media



The play-by-play

What it is:

The Adobe Museum of Digital Media (AMDM) is an entirely virtual museum that displays and explores groundbreaking digital work, as well as commentary on how digital media influences culture and society.

Like a physical museum, AMDM has ever-changing exhibits and was created with the help of Italian architect, Filippo Innocenti. Space and physicality plays a key role, despite the fact that it is an entirely online experience.

Why it's the best:

- It is the ideal medium for viewing and sharing digital media
- Experimental, unique, first of it's kind
- Operates within context of a traditional museum, but in an online space
- Presents opportunities for physical museums to learn from audience reactions and museum initiatives

Best

Institutional transparency

Winner: The Indianapolis Museum of Art's Website Dashboard



The play-by-play

What it is:

The Indianapolis Museum of Art first started displaying their organizational dashboard on their website in 2007, when talk of online transparency and radical trust were less celebrated than they are now. The dashboard displays statistics by year and by department. The dashboard displays everything from the number of total volunteer hours, to the number of artworks on loan, to membership revenue.

Why it's the best:

- This initiative is still frequently sighted as one of the first examples of online transparency in the nonprofit realm
- It's honest and demonstrates trust. The dashboard displays both attractive
- and potentially less-attractive statistics
- Numbers from previous years are posted for comparison purposes
- Builds trust in the museum. They are not hiding anything.

Best

Digital storytelling

Winner: Culture Shock!



Digital stories by people in the North East
Inspired by museums and galleries

Stories

Inspiration

Themes

Search

About

Stories

Page [1](#) [2](#) [3](#) ... [62](#) [63](#)



The Day My Life Changed



My Advice For Young Mums



Childhood Memories



Little Miss Sticky Backed Plastic



Blimey!



Golding Family History



Search

Keyword search

Search

Lucky Dip



My favourite holiday
Stacey Young

[View this Story](#)



The Cow Kicked Nelly
Nicola Mantallos Lovett

[View this Story](#)



Blue Tac and a Lesson In Life
Mel Robson

The Play-by-play

What it is:

Culture Shock! is a project wherein individuals from the North East of England share digital stories inspired by museum and gallery exhibitions. The aim is to illustrate how museums contribute to cultural identity and the stories featured range from ordinary to extraordinary. Storytellers engaged in IT, creative writing, and communication workshops prior to developing content. *Culture Shock!* contains both ordinary and extraordinary stories from a region, and remains one of the largest digital storytelling projects in the world.

Why it's the best:

- Stories are not overly-edited; they maintain the author's voice
- Stories are personal and, though created by people in the North East of England, they are accessible and relatable to nearly everyone
- The site credits the specific museums and objects that inspired featured stories

Best

Use of online evangelists

Winner: California Academy of Science's NightLife Insiders

CALIFORNIA ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

NightLife

Email | Print | Share

NightLife is a weekly event where visitors ages 21 and older can enjoy music, science, entertainment and cocktails, while experiencing the Academy's world-class exhibits and having fun with friends. Each weekly installment features something new and different.

1 / 8 NightLife. Every Thursday evening at the California Academy of Science

Join us at NightLife every Thursday in August for our Summer Concert Series. We'll have great live music in our East Gardens. Check the Upcoming Installments to the right for more information.

This Week | VIP Tours and Rentals | Resident DJs | Community | **NightLife Insiders**

Rachel Gill, Scene Insider

Obsessed with other people's lives, Rachel travels all over this great land interviewing people and reviewing the places they go. She bestows her comedic reviews about life in general on her Facebook, [YouTube](#), [Twitter](#), [Flickr](#), and [her blog](#). Rachel's current passion is interviewing YOU at NightLife every Thursday night. The social scene at Nightlife is a party mix of people who bring the sexy to sci-fi. Don't be shy meeting her at Nightlife, she is very comfortable saying hello and signing unsolicited autographs for the most unkempt, odorous, and poorly groomed individuals. Catch her on Thursday nights,

Upcoming Installments

August Summer Concert Series

8-12 - "ParkLife" - A celebration of Golden Gate Park with [Outside Lands](#), [Daves](#), DJ Omar, and the great attractions in the Park

8-19 - "NightLife on the Rocks" - Rock Make Street Festival pre-party with by [Magic Bullets](#) and [Still Flyin'](#), and a mixology contest

8-26 - "NightLive" - Official Treasure Island Music Festival pre-party with [Wallpaper](#), the [Downer Party](#), and [LoveTech](#)

[Other Events >](#)

Blue Angel

Blue Angel Vodka

Blue Angel Vodka is proud to be the exclusive vodka sponsor of NightLife. Look for their premium vodka and featured weekly specialty drinks at all NightLife bars.

NightLife Tickets

Thursdays, from 6:00 pm - 10:00 pm.

Tickets are \$12 (\$10 for Academy members). Last entry is 9:00 pm.

21+ with Valid ID.

The Play-by-play

What it is:

California Academy of Sciences recruited six NightLife Insiders to serve as online evangelists for their weekly NightLife Program. Potential Insiders were encouraged to apply for the opportunity and selected based on originality, humor, quality of written essay, grammar and spelling, and activity in social media. Insiders were featured on the website and received free passes, special shows, and VIP tours in exchange for tweeting, blogging, posting videos, and sharing organic content online over a three-month period.

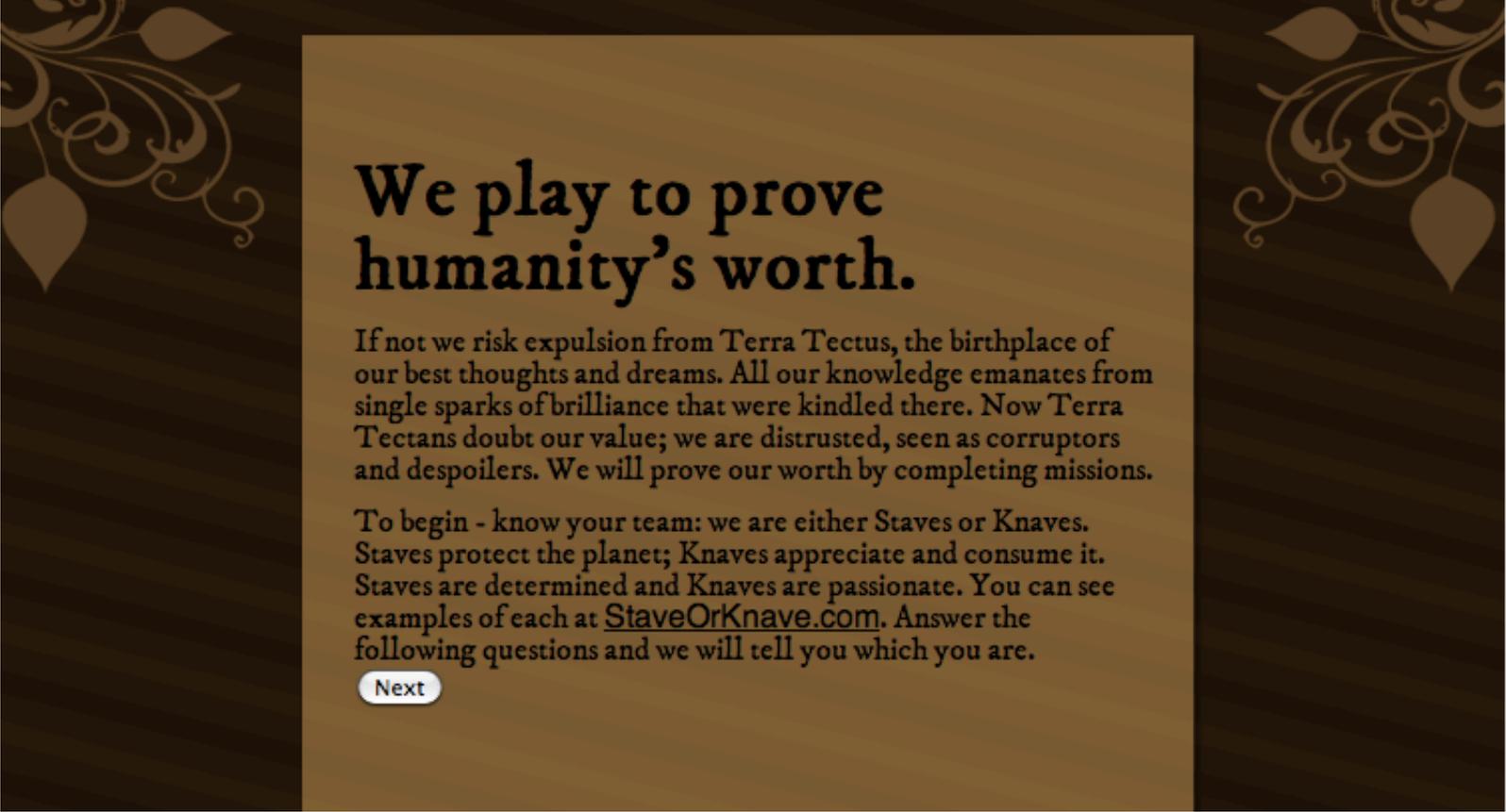
Why it's the best:

- Targeted 'Creators' and 'Critics' for high efficiency and impact
- The institution was transparent in the initiative and "payment"
- Utilized initiative with a "connected" younger generation
- Created organic, promotional content

Best

On-site use of social technology

Winner: Smithsonian American Art
Museum's Pheon



We play to prove humanity's worth.

If not we risk expulsion from Terra Tectus, the birthplace of our best thoughts and dreams. All our knowledge emanates from single sparks of brilliance that were kindled there. Now Terra Tectans doubt our value; we are distrusted, seen as corruptors and despoilers. We will prove our worth by completing missions.

To begin - know your team: we are either Staves or Knaves. Staves protect the planet; Knaves appreciate and consume it. Staves are determined and Knaves are passionate. You can see examples of each at StaveOrKnave.com. Answer the following questions and we will tell you which you are.

Next

The play-by-play

What it is

Pheon is a new mission-based, alternate reality game at the Smithsonian American Art Museum. A variation on the classic game Capture the Flag, *Pheon* is a competition to obtain the game's virtual talisman, the pheon, to restore balance to a virtual world called Terra Tectus. Players complete various missions focused on the museum's art collections, exhibitions, and programs to earn points and propel the game. *Pheon* can be played on-site or online and revolves around the completion of tasks, the making of objects, discovery, and documentation.

Why it's the best:

- Pheon can be played on-site or online
- It requires creativity, observation, and the thrill of imagining you are a different person in an alternate reality
- Tasks are based on collections, but can be done anywhere
- Offers a new, social and technology-based experience in an informal learning environment

Have ideas, examples, or resources to share?
Please contact me!



cdilenschneider@impactsresearch.com



Know Your Own Bone
www.colleendilen.com



@cdilly
www.twitter.com/cdilly



www.linkedin.com/in/colleendilenschneider



www.facebook.com/cdilly