



Conjuring audiences for fun and profit.
Research to inspire content creation and new markets.





Conjuring audiences?

Illusion and imagination

Making uses and interpretation known

Creating content to bring new audiences into being

Viewing the play

Building the engagement



HistoryWired: A few of our favorite things - Microsoft Internet Explorer

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Back Forward Stop Home Search Favorites Media Refresh Print Mail News RSS Feeds

Address <http://www.historywired.si.edu/> Go Links


Google Search Web 9 blocked AutoFill Options

History WIRED A FEW OF OUR FAVORITE THINGS

ABOUT THE PROGRAM HELP COMMENTS SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

Time Frame 1635 - 1953
 1400 AD 1600 1700 1783: George Washington's Uniform

General Accomplishment Art Commerce Events Home Leisure Medicine Military People Politics Science Tech



George Washington's Uniform

1780s

Armed forces
Clothing/accessories
Eastern US
Presidents
Revolutionary War
Uniform

Search

Print Communications Home

George Washington's Uniform
The gentleman soldier
Click for more options.

Clothing Arts Entertainment

Business Transportation Military

Photography

Science Medicine Computers Sports



www.historywired.si.edu

Questions

Does 'American Bytes' work well?

Does the writing in a popular style communicate to audiences?

Do people like and use the voting?

How do people use the interface ?



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Methods

Selection of 11 'natural' visitor groups at the NMHA (31 individuals).

Introduction of the website on a laptop

Observation

Interview



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Results

Change name from 'American Bytes': rude, 'America bites the dust'

Writing accessible, encouraged rapid uses, good for people who liked just reading

Half were interested in voting

Audience uses:

- 'Reading' left to right across the map
- Quickly exploring the surface geography and the information
- Careful inspection to answer particular interests
- Experimenting with the navigation functions
- Seeking the visual experience of objects



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Design decisions

- Changed the name to *History Wired*
- Confirmed importance of the writing, affirmed the decision to write for a generalist audience
- Voting stayed. Not so important in deciding the ‘shape’ of the site
- Predicted success, broader audiences for NMAH, especially younger audiences at play.
- Identified additional uses, especially ‘cruising’



Search for images:

in these results
[Advanced Search](#)
[Browse](#) | [Help](#)

Search results

Your search for **flannel flowers** in title, creator, subject, date or place found 29 images.
 Displaying: 1-9

<< View first page | < View previous page | [View next page](#) > | [View last page](#) >>



PICTURE TRAILS ►

VIEW FAVOURITES ►



Birthday card for Judy: **Flannel flowers**
 National Gallery of Australia
[More Information](#)
[Add to favourites](#)



Christmas Bells & **Flannel Flowers**
 State Library of NSW
[More Information](#)
[Add to favourites](#)



Exocarpus cupressiformis (Native cherry), Breyenia oblongifolia, Actinotus minor (Small **flannel** flower...
 National Library of Australia
[More Information](#)
[Add to favourites](#)





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Questions

1. Preliminary evaluation –

● What are the likely issues for users, in the content and the design?

2. Evaluation and usability testing –

● What changes are needed to improve usability for different kinds of users?



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Methods

1. Sociocultural analysis
‘Quester testing’
2. Statistical analysis of website use
Usability testing in users’ context
Online satisfaction survey



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Results

1. Sociocultural analysis

- Logo may need explanation (for overseas visitors)
- Some images constructed Australian identity in disturbing ways
- Discrepancies in expectations of the content and what it provides
- Strange mix of images for some searches
- Develop trails further



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Results

2. Usability testing

- Improve the information about images for those with a specialist interest
- Explain copyright and purchase - make it consistent and clear to a school audience
- Improve search



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Design decisions

- Change the images on the home page representing Australia
- Develop further trails in response to requests
- Upgrade and redesign search
- Provide consistent instructions for copyright, purchase of images

Thinking multimedia audiences

A reflection of ourselves	Multiple others, some unknown
Individuals	Activities
Targets	Audience-content relationships
Receptive	Productive
Categorised by demographic	Known by interests and choices



Research magic

Work with dynamic concepts of audiences, based on content and use. Tolerate, enjoy, explore the uncertainty

Gain language, thinking, interests of audiences and reasons for choices

Seek descriptive as well as numeric information and use it systematically

Use knowledge and experience of 'counter hands' within the organisation to define/describe audience interests



Thank you

