Kunst-Portale und Social Software - ein Projektbericht

Art portals and social software - a project report

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Zusammenfassung:
Web 2.0 und soziale Netzwerke haben Wahrnehmung und Verbreitung von Kultur deutlich verändert. Der heutige Internetnutzer lädt nicht nur digitale Kunstwerke herunter, sondern erstellt seine eigenen Interpretationen. Dem Konzept der 'Massenmedien' und 'Smart Mobs' verbundene innovative Dienste und Internetanwendungen ermöglichen eine einfache Mediengestaltung, -verbreitung und –bewertung unabhängig von Zeit und Ort. Der Vortrag stellt das laufende Portal-Projekt vor, das die gemeinsame Nutzung digitaler Medien und zugehöriger Informationen durch Internetnutzer und Autoren unterstützt.

Abstract:
Web 2.0 and social networks have dramatically changed the perception and distribution of culture. The current user of internet do not only download the digital artwork creates its own interpretations. Innovative services and web applications related to the concept of 'mass media' and 'smart mobs' offer easy media creation, sharing and validation regardless the territory and time. The paper presents the current project of portal that helps the web users and content creators to share digital media and accompanying information.

1. Social networks challenge the 'mass' art and culture

During one minute users of YouTube upload over 24 hrs. of films. Polish social network NK receives daily one million digital photographs, while the Facebook receives 135849 pictures in one minute. Facebook users choose 'like' 382 861 times in one minute [6].

Such numbers may frighten some people but also make the others very excited. The Web 2.0 has changed the culture paradigms, from the 'read only' consumption (TV, radio, cinema) to more active model. The current user do not limit herself/himself to download the digital artwork, but in response create its own interpretation- a collage/remix of numerous art samples [4]. A good example is the *dojinshi* phenomena, where fans of Japanese *manga* create own stories with well known comic book heroes. Another case is the *machinima*, where fans exploit computer games to create their own feature films or own games *game patching* (Unreal Development Kit). Currently available networked systems need even more sophisticated design approach [8,9]. The Web is full of creative people sharing their works within their 'communities' or with anyone wishing to see the content [7]. The 'mass' culture cannot be sharply put against the 'elite' culture any more [4]. There may be web users that like the music of Britney Spears and the paintings of Vasilly Kadinsky at the same time. The internet and digital media opened 'cultural nichés'. It is financially feasible to deliver the art work if there is only one individual client keen enough to buy it.

The information technologies may help the user to make the reasonable choice. Generally, the main source for identifying art is the artwork itself, with its form and content. Digital media, digital art repositories such as Artspan and Europeana, and new communication channels (Facebook,

Twitter, etc.) present challenge to casual work of art critics. Online access to digital data and new tools can help in recognition and description of the artwork, however its accuracy and quality may vary [3,5]. Artspan offer artists web sites with own web addresses. Each site can be accessed through the service, that can work as a major internet art destination. It is possible to perform search, set up directories and genre portals. The aim is to promote and market artists' work including shopping carts and print-on-demand, blogs and customer service by phone and email [1].

CRM-CIDOC is a good example of the information structure that can be used as a reference, however it requires expertise in the field of art history and IT [2]. It is not very useful for mass culture, where the creative 'output' is huge in quantity and has rather shallow and uncertain history behind. Therefore, the idea was blend the functionalities of social software with the institutional approach. This may give the user freedom of choice and a set of references to make the decision process a bit easier and maybe provoking some further search for explanation. The project portal will reference Europeana but also facilitate Facebook's 'like it' to enable spectators make first 'intuitive' responds to the digital art they experience.

2. Objectives

The main goal of project is to satisfy needs related to 'mass' (digital) culture fruition by the point of view of cultural spectators and digital content creators and art curators. The task is to present complex digital art information in the most comprehensive and legible manner.

The project aims to create the web interface for portal of the art community at the University of Zielona Góra. It will involve students, teachers, and persons associated with the Faculty of Arts, as well as members of the public interested in the broader culture and art, both in the region and around the world. The service will enable to share art work, comments, and evaluation, and perform seeking information from many fields ranging from information related to the department, as well as arts and culture, both regionally and globally.

3. Users

The project is directed to a wide audience aged 18 to 60 years, whose interest is widely understood culture and visual art. It is possible to highlight several types of users, the first and one of the largest groups will be students of the art faculty. The structure of this group will not differ from it native division at Zielona Góra University. Another group is formed by lecturers and teaching staff who will provide materials to students via the Internet service, will provide advice and comment on projects or articles uploaded by the students. The last group of users will be people interested in topics such as visual art and culture, people who can comment and provide feedback for current students' artwork.

4. The Portal

The project of portal is aimed at the art community. Its general functions have been divided into two parts.

The first one is the scientific/art information and another one is devoted to social networking. These two elements, even though of different characters, have been integrated with each other. Their boundaries functions overlap, forming a consistent service that offer far more interesting and intuitive functions.

The digital content part provides the information compiled by users-artists, administrators, departments or authorities. The information is provided in the form of articles, along with digital photos or other materials presented in digital form with the additional possibility to make them available through community channels for comments.

Options associated with the second part assume that users have access to their own individual art works in the form of graphic files, audio and video through social networking sites such as YouTube and Vimeo. The reason is that such digital media can be commented by other registered

users. The assessment is done by a system of 'fivestars', where as a one star rating means a job poorly in public opinion and five in a very positive reception.

Artists can discuss and exchange opinions on the current work, and thereby improve their skills, for example, on the basis of valuable advice and opinion of experienced artists from around the world.

With the integration of modules that provide social networking of the Facebook it is possible to expanded significantly the functionality of portal. For example, by clicking on the "I like it" , the art work will be made available to the user's table, reaching a wide audience within a user's friends. This could create a network of links with new potential customers, making the portal as well as artwork more popular. This gives the artist the possibility of display both for the global and local users.

One of the basic elements of the portal will also have access to a multimedia encyclopaedia of art and culture of Europeana. The information will be presented on the site with search capabilities, and recommending additional related articles and information through the use of semantic web and artificial intelligence components. By combining the service information elements, and the scientific community in the form of encyclopaedia and materials provided by lecturers, the portal will meet the high expectations raised by the students.
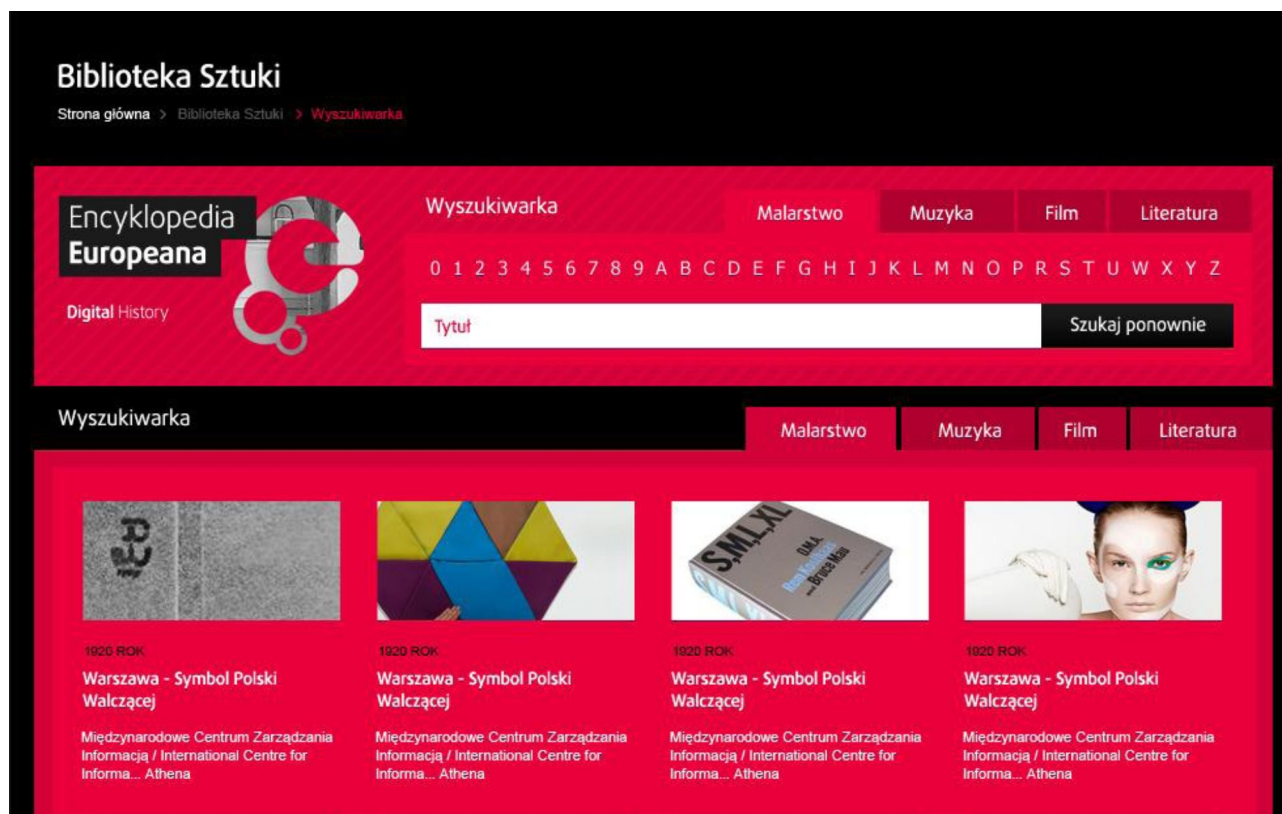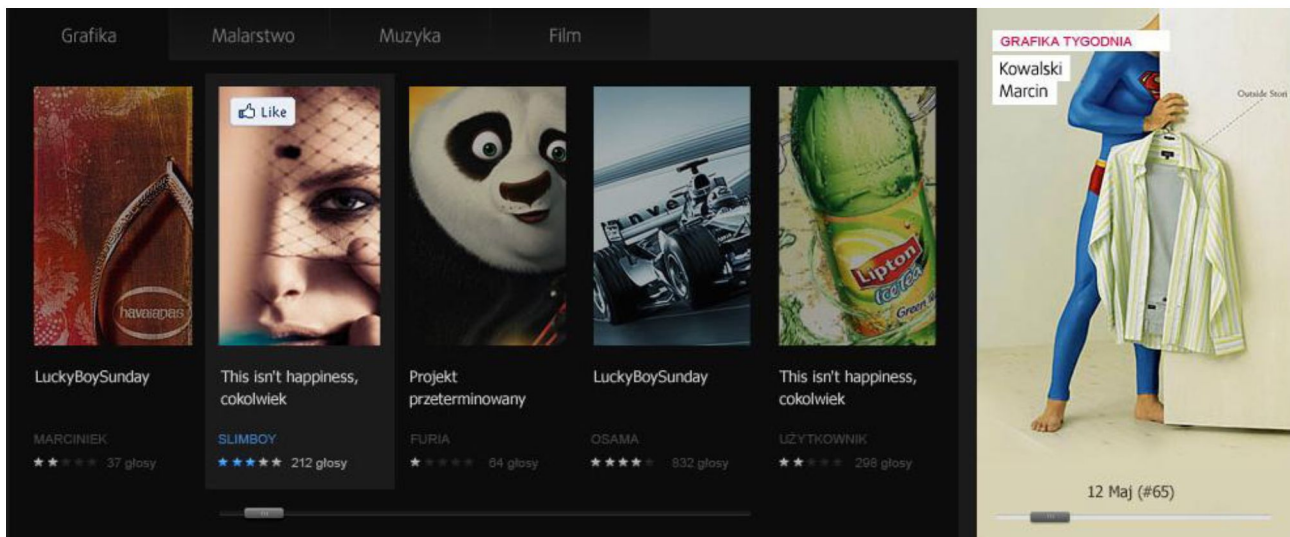

Fig.1. An access to the Europeana
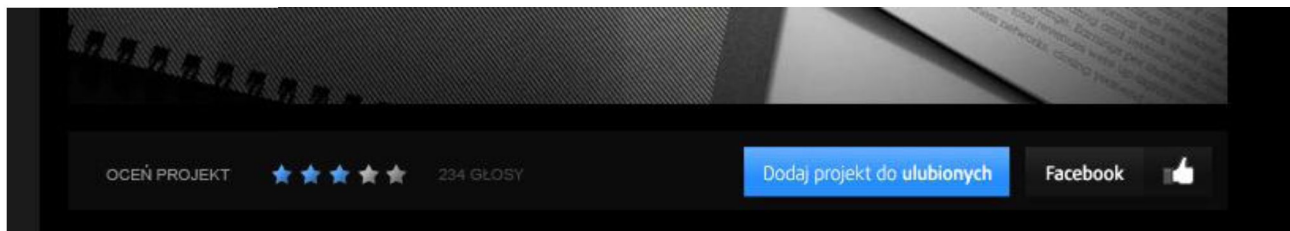
Fig.2. Sample art collection

Fig.3. Voting capability

5. Conclusions

The social media presents several challenges in the field of digital culture and art. Digital media are no longer 'owned' by individuals but are can serve special social functions. Some of the artworks have been 'cited' or re-designed so many times that their original form is someway forgotten. It is the current trend of mixing the concept of 'mass media' and 'smart mobs'.

The social networking adds an emotional factor of the first response and anonymous voting. It is possible to greatly enrich the access and understanding of digital media representations, provided that some attention is put to credibility of the information. Hence the idea of putting together the professional information sources such as Europeana with the popular 'mass' culture such as Facebook. This can help to understand the art in broader context of the network, allowing user to interactively compare recognizable images of the current artworks with those virtually recalled from the past.

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