

Establishing Online Communities to Promote Best Practices in Collection Care



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The current digital landscape makes it easier than ever for groups to collaborate in a virtual environment and to “push” the content out to networks of colleagues and contacts via the devices that are now at our fingertips. However, as preservation and museum professionals seek to engage colleagues and advance topics such as collection care and digital curation, it is important to understand the available tools and how to effectively implement them. With online resources multiplying, it is appropriate to examine some basic questions: What does it take to create a successful digital community? Which platforms are most effective for sharing information in the cultural heritage community?

Rachael Arenstein will present a brief history of the Integrated Pest Management Working Group. Over the past twelve years the IPM-WG grew from a collaborative project between two museums into a large group with participants representing nearly 60 institutions in the USA, Canada and Europe. Its museumpests.net website and associated online resources are acknowledged as essential tools for the preservation and cultural heritage community. Arenstein will contrast the experience of the IPM-WG with other digital resources by professional societies and institutions, and discuss the essential elements for creating a community and the difference between presenting information and developing communally accepted best practices.

Leon Zak will address the best use of, and expected audience for each system to facilitate choosing the right digital distribution stream. Determining which digital platform a community should choose to engage and communicate with its members is a critical decision. Blogs, wikis, websites and apps - all are possibilities and the correct choice is the one that best fits the community’s needs and goals. He will give a brief walkthrough of how such systems are created and discuss the needed resources for implementation.

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Topics in Museum Conservation

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