THE EUROPEANA SPACE MOOC: CREATIVE WITH DIGITAL HERITAGE

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Abstract

The Europeana Space MOOC aims to teach people how to creatively reuse cultural heritage content on open repositories such as Europeana. The MOOC is offered on the edX platform (KULeuvenX). It targets simultaneously 3 different audiences: the general interested public, having in mind in particular students and teachers, professionals from the Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museum sector (GLAM) and app developers.

The MOOC is in many ways breaking with tradition, in a sense “flipping the MOOC”. First of all it is not based on university lectures, but on the contrary is accepted as part of the university course curriculum. Second, it is based on research in a large best practice network where not only universities but also software companies, creative industries, libraries, archives and museums participate. Third, it involves practical activities in which the students are actually stimulated to use the tools that have been developed in the Best Practice Network. In this way, the MOOC makes a shortcut link between academia and the stakeholder field.

The MOOC contains 8 Modules: an introduction to the general concept, a Module on Photography, on Open and Hybrid Publishing, on TV, on Dance and Museums, and finally two modules giving context, the IP for the Cultural Entrepreneur module and the Creative Marketing Module.

The Modules have been developed in an EC Funded CIP Best Practice Network, where for each different domain, e.g. photography or dance, a complete cycle was realized, from concepts to demonstrators over hackathons to business model workshops and monetization, whit the aim to make new startup companies with innovative apps reusing cultural heritage contents. This has actually lead to the launch of several new companies.

The innovative approach and success of the hackathons lead us to believe we should share the insights gained with education, and for this the MOOC was developed and launched in October 2016. About 100 participants followed this MOOC, which was self-paced. Credits could be obtained if a sufficient number of modules was completed. The MOOC got a good response and an exit survey showed that students highly appreciated the innovative format and quality of the contents, but above all the experience to learn in a well balanced mix of students, some being amateurs, others professionals. The fact that newly developed tools to remix cultural content were used in the assignments was greeted with enthusiasm.

In this paper we will present the key concepts behind this MOOCs, the learning results achieved and also the lessons learned on how this flipped MOOC concept is best deployed. We will highlight the challenges of offering materials to 3 distinct audiences concurrently and how to stimulate exchange between very different learner groups. We will also elaborate on the value of the hackathon formula which was the basis of the best practice network.

Keywords: MOOC, creative industries, Europeana, OER.