
VI. RELATED PROJECTS & RESOURCES

A. Museums & Historical Places

“Animal Guides” - a cuddly approach

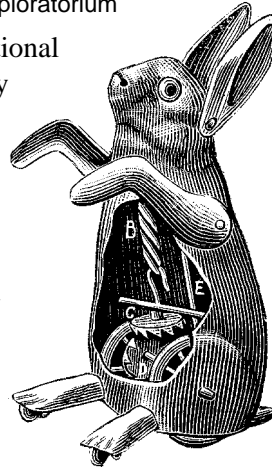
- Natalie Rusk, Project Director, Electronic Guidebook Project, Exploratorium

In an article from England I read about a project by the National Museum in Stockholm that involved handheld devices, they use stuffed animals as guides. I can remember a snake saying something like, “Oh, that rock looks nice and warm.” The idea is that you are looking at artwork from an animal’s point of view. They tried different animals and decided on an owl. There was also a bat that looked sort of worried but tough. It was interesting how the children were comforted by holding an animal when looking at a scary painting.

The article was in GEM News: <http://www.gem.org.uk/gemnews.html>

The researchers are from the Interactive Institute:

http://www.interactiveinstitute.se/emotional_eng/projekt/museums.htm



mak.frankfurt (Museum of Applied Art in Frankfurt)

- Andrea Bandelli, Museum Consultant

They have Apple ibooks on a wireless network that you can use to access deeper content about the objects on display. For example, if there is a Japanese book on display, you can use the I-book to see all of the pages in the Japanese book. So the digital format allows you to see more than you would otherwise. The problem is that the I-book is heavy to carry and people aren’t expecting a laptop in an art museum. When it was made available, only a few people asked for it.

They also have another project with Nokia using mobile phones that includes games for children in which they answer questions or find objects. This is a technology experiment; the idea of having a game is not a priority of the museum. It works, but it’s not clear who will pay – there is a problem with costs. People pay for their own phones and the locals all have mobile phones but for tourists it involves paying a high price.

For more information see their Web site at <http://www.mak.frankfurt.de> or e-mail the museum at info@mak.frankfurt.de

ARIF - A Resourceful and Intelligent Friend at Petrosains Museum in Malaysia

- Rob Semper, Executive Associate Director, Exploratorium

ARIF, A Resourceful Intelligent Friend, is a touch screen sensitive wireless communications device which provides visitors to Petrosains with an interactive text, image and audio guide to the museum. Petrosains is a science discovery

Building a List of Related Projects

We would like to start developing a list of other projects we should know about that are doing related work. • Rob Semper, Executive Associate Director, Exploratorium

Straps for handheld devices

This company can do a custom job – you send the specs and they send you a prototype. They can also do a sleeve for the device. rhodiana.com

Smithsonian Air and Space Museum

I heard the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum was doing something along these lines. Has anyone seen it? • Rob Semper, Executive Associate Director, Exploratorium

centre located in the Petronas Towers in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia involving 7000 m² of exhibition with a mainstream story-line based on S & T of oil and gas. ARIF is a modified hand held computer (Apple Newton) that receives radio frequencies similar to modern car radios. One receiver scans all the while, the other locks the strongest signal and this informs the computer to load files related to the area from which this strongest signal is detected. This provides a sense of intelligent to ARIF as it recognizes the location of the visitor automatically.

Tajuddin Majid, Head Exhibit Maintenance, Petrosains
 Geoff Snowdon , Associate Executive Director Petrosains, SDN BHD Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
 info-petrosains@ptronas.com.my

Experimentarium, Denmark

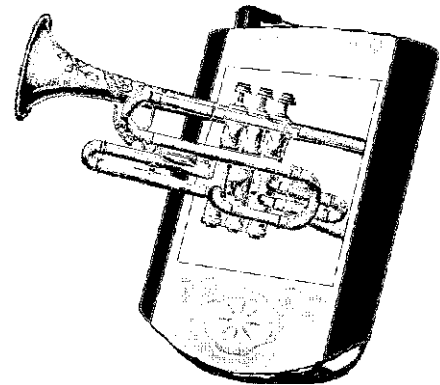
- Andrea Bandelli, Museum Consultant

The Experimentarium has introduced a new SMS service with the goal of giving each individual visitor an experience that is adapted to his or her personal interests, to be a kind of personal servant to the visitor, suggesting various activities and reminding the visitor of displays and activities experienced during previous visits. The long-term perspective is to offer intelligent exhibitions where visitors can recall and reuse previous experience.

Project manager - Mads Hammerich
www.experimentarium.dk/uk/pressecenter/pressemeddelelser/sonofon.html

Experience Music Project, Seattle

- There is the Experience Music Project in Seattle, but three out of five people I know turn the device back in after twenty or thirty minutes. • Daniel Molitor, Consultant
- It's a CD ROM player with headphones and a handheld device. You point to any object in the gallery with infrared and get music and audio. The amount of information is incredible. Whenever you see instruments or records on display, you can listen to their sound with excellent quality. The problem is that it is very isolating, and you have to carry three things: the headphone, the handheld device, and the CD ROM player. It also distracts you from the objects themselves as you read the text on the screen or listen to the audio. It has potential but I'm skeptical. You get the devices free when you buy a ticket. • Andrea Bandelli, Museum Consultant
- They're planning to roll out another feature where you can use bookmarks. • Deborah Lawrence, Manager Interactive Technology Audience Services, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art



<http://www.emplive.com>

Doges' Palace in Venice

- At the Doges' Palace in Venice they are using Casio Cassiopeias. They have a couple of hundred in multiple languages. When I was there they had run out of the English ones, so they are being used. They rent them out to visitors. • Allison Woodruff, Member of Research Staff, Xerox PARC
- It's not wireless, it's map-based navigation. There is a visual interface based on a birds'-eye-view map. When you go into a room, it has information about all of the various objects in the room; they dump all of the information about an object at you and you pretty much have to listen to all of it. It's more like an audio tour with visual orientation. • Paul Aoki, Member of Research Staff, Xerox PARC

Lancaster Guide Project, England

- This is an historic town center where they are doing a very rough automatic location-detection. It tells you about the castle you're in, the history of the castle and so forth. It does a lot of dynamic generation of the content based on your route. • Margaret Fleck, Senior Researcher, Hewlett-Packard Research Laboratories
- It's also based on time of day, when things are open, and it's wireless. • Eamonn O'Brien Strain, Research Scientist, Hewlett-Packard Research Laboratories

<http://www.guide.lancs.ac.uk/overview.html>

B. Education Projects

MindSurf - a new division of Sylvan Learning

- Daniel Molitor, Consultant

The people at Sylvan Learning in Baltimore have a relatively new division called MindSurf. There is an education program they're rolling out and offering to high schools. They're now using a Handspring device with their own custom software, mostly media related to lesson plans, and are also using off the shelf software like daytimers and so forth. They check out the devices to the kids and if the kids lose them they pay a nominal fee (for a \$500 device they pay \$40 if they lose it). If the kids' parents or the school sign up for the premium version they will wire the school and have additional features available.

<http://www.mindsurf.com/>

C. Audio Experiences

Lonely Planet Digital City Guides

- Katherina Audley, Content Developer, Electronic Guidebook Project, Exploratorium
Lonely Planet just finished building digital city guides for handheld computers. You can download the multi-format guides onto a variety of formats. Research on how people use them out in the world is something we can learn from.
- Q: That's an odd combination – guidebooks to places with no electricity.
- A: They're out on the internet which is all over the world by now.

<http://www.citysync.com/about/about.htm>

Antenna Theater

- I'm thinking of Antenna Theater – not the audio guides they do for museums, but their own art, environments that you move through. • Melissa Alexander, Project Director, Origins, Exploratorium
- They're basically art installations. They set up an intriguing relationship between devices and people. • Rob Semper, Executive Associate Director, Exploratorium

<http://www.antenna-theater.org/>

Business & Industry

Industry Web Sites

- Michael Schiess, Project Manager, Physical Science Interpretation, Museum of Science, Boston

You could go to the Web sites of Palm and Handspring and look at their grant awardees for interesting ideas for next steps.

<http://handspring.com>

Downloading Into Your Palm Pilot

- There's a project here at the BART station where they beam things into your Palm Pilot. • Rob Semper, Executive Associate Director, Exploratorium
- It's Wideray - they download a reader and custom guide. • Michael Petrich, Co-Project Director, Playful Invention and Exploration Network, Exploratorium
- In many conferences they have a docking station for Palms and they fill your Palm up with stuff. • Marcos Frid, Research Engineer, Hewlett-Packard Research Laboratories

One company that does this: Friendlyway.com

Business & Industry

H.P. Executive Briefing Center in Cupertino

- Marcos Frid, Research Engineer, Hewlett-Packard Research Laboratories

This is a briefing center where executives from HP's customer companies come to hear about our products and how we can help their businesses.

The new, redesigned center has technology similar to the Electronic Guidebook project at the Exploratorium. There are infrared beacons posted at certain locations, and visitors walk around the building with an HP Jornada which can pick up the beacons which the visitor desires to collect.

There are also "stations" where the visitor can offload the beacons collected, and the corresponding URLs are incorporated into each visitor's personal web page at the briefing center. This page remains active for 90 days after their visit so that they can explore the links which they picked up from the beacons at their convenience.

Soundtrack Productions, Inc.

- Deborah Lawrence, Manager Interactive Technology Audience Services, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art

This is a small company that does audio guides for museums in Mexico that just rolled out an iPAQ version. Their handheld is called "Navip@ss."

Soundtrack Productions, Inc.

www.soundtrack.org

3600 Cerrillos Road, Suite 1108, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87507

(505) 820-6744

Sound in Urban Spaces

- Susan Schwartzenberg, Senior Artist, Exploratorium

This isn't really a handheld project but it's interesting. It's an artist team that does public projects in urban spaces that tell you about the history of the space. You go into a phone booth and dial an 800 number and you hear an oral history from someone who lived there years ago, and so forth. It's the idea of being in an environment and using an instrument to find out additional information.

- They also did something on the anniversary of Nagasaki. • Melissa Alexander, Project Director, Origins, Exploratorium

Janet Silk and Ian Pollock

<http://www.gardenofeternaltime.com>

