What about giving online access to digital representations of the one hundred most important pieces in the Rijksmuseum collection? That eventually led to why not put *the whole collection* online?

Then, Lizzy says, Europeana came along. Europeana is Europe's digital library, museum, and archive for cultural heritage.[1] As an online portal to museum collections all across Europe, Europeana had become an important online platform. In October 2010 Creative Commons released CC0 and its public-domain mark as tools people could use to identify works as free of known copyright. Europeana was the first major adopter, using CC0 to release metadata about their collection and the public domain mark for millions of digital works in their collection. Lizzy says the Rijksmuseum initially found this change in business practice a bit scary, but at the same time it stimulated even more discussion on whether the Rijksmuseum should follow suit.

They realized that they don't "own" the collection and couldn't realistically monitor and enforce compliance with the restrictive licensing terms they currently had in place. For example, many copies and versions of Vermeer's *Milkmaid* (part of their collection) were already online, many of them of very poor quality. They could spend time and money policing its use, but it would probably be futile and wouldn't make people stop using their images online. They ended up thinking it's an utter waste of time to hunt down people who use the Rijksmuseum collection. And anyway, restricting access meant the people they were frustrating the most were schoolkids.

In 2011 the Rijksmuseum began making their digital photos of works known to be free of copyright available online, using Creative Commons CC0 to place works in the public domain. A medium-resolution image was offered for free, but a high-resolution version cost forty euros. People started paying, but Lizzy says getting the money was frequently a nightmare, especially from overseas customers. The administrative costs often offset revenue, and income above costs was relatively low. In addition, having to pay for an image of a work in the public domain from a collection owned by the Dutch government (i.e., paid for by the public) was contentious and frustrating for some. Lizzy says they had lots of fierce debates about what to do.

In 2013 the Rijksmuseum changed its business model. They Creative Commons licensed their highest-quality images and released them online for free. Digitization still cost money, however; they decided to define discrete digitization projects and find sponsors willing to fund each project. This turned out to be a successful strategy, generating high interest from sponsors and lower administrative effort for the Rijksmuseum. They started out making 150,000 high-quality images of their collection available, with the goal to eventually have the entire collection online.

Releasing these high-quality images for free reduced the number of poor-quality images that were proliferating. The high-quality image of Vermeer's *Milkmaid*, for example, is downloaded two to three thousand times a month. On the Internet, images from a source like the Rijksmuseum are more trusted, and releasing them with a Creative Commons CC0 means they can easily be found in other platforms. For example, Rijksmuseum images are now used in thousands of Wikipedia articles, receiving ten to eleven million views per month. This extends Rijksmuseum's reach far beyond the scope of its website. Sharing these images online creates what Lizzy calls the "Mona Lisa effect," where a work of art becomes so famous that people want to see it in real life by visiting the actual museum.

Every museum tends to be driven by the number of physical visitors. The Rijksmuseum is primarily publicly funded, receiving roughly 70 percent of its operating budget from the government. But like many museums, it must generate the rest of the funding through other means. The admission fee has long been a way