

Western Museums Association Program
Committee: Session Proposals (Round 1)

Western Museums Association

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Contents

0.1	Open Doors: Making All Feel Welcome at a Niche Museum. . .	2
0.2	Maximizing Social Media for Professional Development	6

Regular session/panel
(roundtable, single speaker,
etc.)

0.1 Open Doors: Making All Feel Welcome at a Niche Museum.

ID: WMA2020.SP34

Assigned to: Doug Jenzen

Track:

Some museums naturally serve a very focused demographic in their region. Join representatives from 3 “niche” museums to learn about how they strive to stay true to their mission and core audience while making sure that all in their region feel a sense of welcome and belonging. This session will identify challenges and strategies to creating a welcoming environment and sense of belonging when your museum has a tight mission that serves a specific audience.

Session Information

Format: Regular session/panel (roundtable, single speaker, etc.)

Uniqueness: This session tackles the difficult question of how niche museums welcome others into a largely mono-cultural community without compromising topical interests or diluting authenticity.

Objectives: - Empower other museums to embrace an “all are welcome” mentality. - Identify challenges unique to “niche” museums that serve a very specific audience by default. - Share strategies for creating welcome and belonging outside of a core-cultural audience.

Engagement: Engagement during the session will take the form of a slideshow presentation followed by a Q&A. We will need a microphone (preferably cordless) for the audience if the session is recorded and/or amplified. We will also need a projector and screen for audio/visual presentations.

Relationship to Theme: - Refining mission statements and values - Embracing diversity, equity, inclusivity, and accessibility - I also think this session fits with the theme of FORWARD in that it may provide insights into how we can build bridges in an era where people across the globe are becoming more and more polarized and insular.

Additional Comments: I have reached out to several people to be panelists. Currently, Gravity Goldberg (Director of Public Programs and Visitor Experience, The Contemporary Jewish Museum) has confirmed her interest and availability to be a panelist. Phillip Thompson (Executive Director, Idaho Black History Museum) has expressed interest. I have a few other irons in the fire as well. I am trying to find 3 panelists that will cover a few different perspectives on this topic as well as being representative of different types of museums at various scales. One area I am lacking

panelists is around the issue of creating welcome beyond a group of core enthusiasts. (For our museum that might mean making "non-car-people" feel a sense of welcome and belonging at our motorsports museum.) I am open to suggestions and ideas for additional panelists that have had successes at their museum that they can share.

Audience

Audiences: Curators/Scientists/Historians Events Planning Marketing & Communications (Including Social Media)

Professional Level: Emerging Professional General Audience Mid-Career Senior Level

Scalability: My target audience are other museums that serve a very specific demographic in their region. However, I believe that the lessons learned at our session will still be applicable and beneficial to museums with a broader scope.

Participants

Matthew Suplee

Submitter, Moderator, Presenter
Exhibit Developer
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I will mostly be moderating but I was planning on briefly presenting some of the challenges that our motorsports museum faces: bringing Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Inclusion to a largely mono-cultural audience; creating appeal beyond just the motorsports community, and bridging diverse (and sometimes conflicting) socio-political viewpoints. I was going to use those challenges to set the stage for the panelists to present success stories from their museums on those fronts.

Gravity Goldberg

Presenter
Director of Public Programs and Visitor Experience
The Contemporary Jewish Museum, San Francisco, CA
ggoldberg@thecjm.org

Successes in making non-Jewish persons feel welcome and included at CJM.
(*confirmed*)

Phillip Thompson

Presenter
Executive Director
Idaho Black History Museum, Boise, ID
phillip.thompson@p-johnson.net

298-340-4448

I need to talk to him more but I am under the impression that he has worked to share the experience of being a black Idahoan in a region where the vast majority of people are not persons of color. I am curious how he has made inroads and what techniques he uses to reach people. *(not confirmed)*

**Half-day workshop (9:00
a.m. – 1:00 p.m.)**

0.2 Maximizing Social Media for Professional Development

ID: WMA2020.WK2

Assigned to: Jason Jones

Track: Technology

Social platforms such as Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, and Reddit present evolving opportunities for museum professionals to share resources, ask questions, recognize trends, and amplify experiences for the benefit of the sector. This session will include strategies for finding peers to follow, hashtags to use, and groups that serve as gathering spaces for different areas of museum work. Participants will enhance their understanding of how to use social networking during and after the WMA Meeting.

Session Information

Format: Half-day workshop (9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.)

Fee: No

Uniqueness: I do not think this type of workshop has taken place at previous WMA meetings. It will help participants maintain connections after the meeting ends.

Objectives: Participants will leave the workshop with an enhanced understanding of how to: 1) Use social media platforms to find and solicit information related to their area(a) of museum work; 2) Find, create, and/or join online groups related to their area(s) of work; 3) Publish information to larger circles of online audiences. Participants will leave with an enhanced understanding of how to use social networking during the 2020 WMA Annual Meeting and after leaving Portland.

Engagement: Participants will be encouraged to log into their individual social media accounts at the start of the workshop in order to follow along as I show them how to find and solicit information on various platforms. They will be encouraged to ask questions, join groups, and publish posts during (or soon after) the session, depending on their comfort level.

Relationship to Theme: Our sector's forward momentum depends on greater collaboration and communication. We are more efficient when we are constantly learning from one another, sharing resources, and amplifying our experiences for the benefit of the sector. Aspects of our work can be very similar but many of us work in small departments with modest budgets for training and research; social media is an inexpensive way of connecting people with questions to people with possible solutions.

Additional Comments: Happy to merge with another session and/or bring in additional speakers, depending on where this fits into the conference program.

Audience

Audiences: Marketing & Communications (Including Social Media) Technology

Professional Level: General Audience

Scalability: This topic is relevant for museum professionals at all types and sizes of organizations.

Participants

Maren Dougherty

Submitter, Moderator, Presenter
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If this fits into the program as a shorter workshop (e.g., lunchtime workshop), I could be the main presenter. If expanded, I could introduce the topics and ask social media savvy peers to offer case studies of how they have used specific social media platforms.

Maren Dougherty

Presenter
EVP, Communications and Visitor Experience
Autry Museum of the American West, Los Angeles, CA

(confirmed)

**Full-day workshop (9:00
a.m. – 4:00 p.m.)**