

Burke Museum on Twitch:

Bringing Behind the Scenes to Guests at Home



BURKE
MUSEUM

W

Framing

The focus for this project was to create live, long-form virtual programming for the Burke Museum using Twitch. We wanted to test to see if this sort of virtual content could engage people not physically in the museum in new ways, bringing the museum to them. The Covid-19 pandemic illuminated the museum's needs for engaging virtual tools for folks that could not come into the physical space. The Twitch infrastructure provides one such means of exploration.

Purpose and Impact

The target audience for this project was young adults and people who typically do not come to museums often. The top two outcomes from the generic learning outcomes for the target audience were Enjoyment/Inspiration/Creativity and Activity/Behavior and Progression. The first focus relates to creating an event that promotes enjoyment and curiosity, which leads to the second objective which is to promote return engagement through a follow up event.

Deliverables

- There were three deliverables for this project:
- A fully designed, live Twitch channel for the Burke Museum.
- Three facilitated live Twitch streams featuring Burke staff and content
- An evaluation report summarizing data gathered by an administered survey and Twitch stream data

Process

Pre Livestreams (January-March 2023)

This phase consisted on preparing the technology side of the project. First, was setting up the design of the channel itself following Burke branding guidelines. Second, was the gathering of the hardware required for the livestreams. Some required hardware needed purchasing, and some was already owned personal devices. Overall, the hardware cost about \$800 to procure.

Livestreams (March-April 2023)

Three fully mobile, behind-the-scenes livestreams on Twitch were done at the Burke over the period of five weeks. Each livestream had one expert guest. First was Michael Holland, Fossil Preparator. Second was Craig Matsuda, Exhibit Fabricator and Shop Coordinator. Third and last was Melissa Frey, Malacology Collection Manager. Each stream also had an attached survey. These surveys garnered a total of 27 responses.

Post Livestreams (April-May 2023)

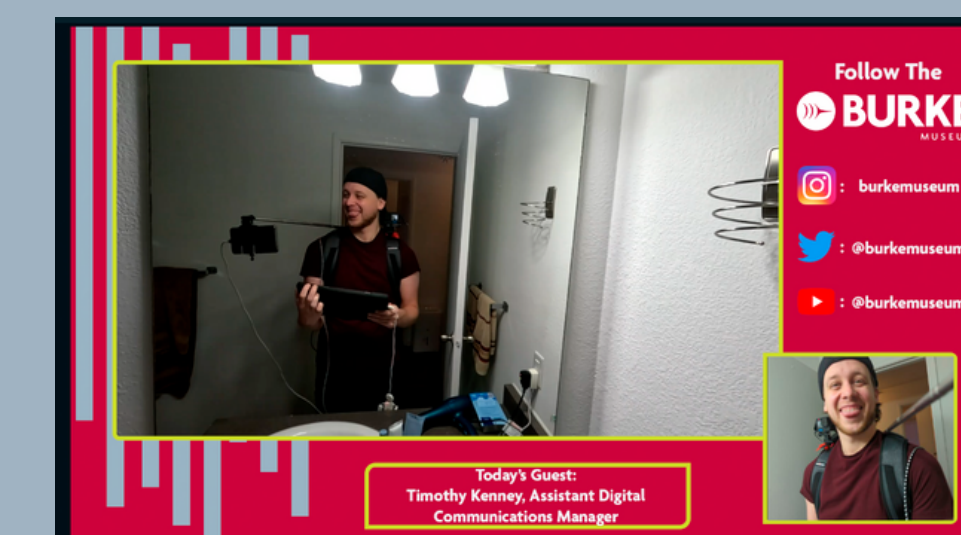
Twitch gives a large amount of data to the streamer that needed to be synthesized. That data was coalesced alongside the survey data into an evaluation report for the Burke Museum. This report has findings from that data along with recommendations based on those findings.

Reflections

Overall, the evaluation report found that the majority of viewers strongly agreed that they would recommend the streams to a friend, and the educational information was engaging. 37% of surveyors lived in Seattle, 22% lived in King County outside Seattle, 7% lived in Washington outside of King County, and 32% lived in states other than Washington. The average age was also balanced across the adult age ranges. 7% were 18 or younger, 19% were 19-24, 26% were 25-30, 22% were 31-40, and 26% were 41 or older.

The sample size was fairly small in number, but the results were positive. The project succeeded as a proof of concept in testing Twitch as a tool, and now there is a baseline of information for further testing.

Next steps for the project would be to start experimenting with the format of the livestreams. Each of the projects streams had similar behind the scenes, expert-led discussion, starting at 4:30 PST and lasting one hour. Future streams should test the length of streams, adjust start times and change the styles of programs in an attempt to find what works best for the Burke.



References

- Wallace, Elizabeth. "How Twitch Can Help Museums Cultivate New Audiences." Jing Culture and Commerce, January 7, 2021. <https://jingculturecommerce.com/how-twitch-can-help-museums-cultivate-new-audiences/>.
- Munzi, Silvana, and Manueala Giovanetti. "Wanted: Virtual or Live! How Lichens Are Becoming Part of Mass Internet Culture." *Symbiosis* 84, no. 3 (July 1, 2021): 285-93. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13199-021-00780-6>.
- Gaylord-Opalewski, Kasey, and Lynda O'Leary. "Full Article: Defining Interactive Virtual Learning in Museum Education: A Shared Perspective." Accessed April 24, 2022. <https://www.tandfonline-com.offcampus.lib.washington.edu/doi/full/10.1080/10598650.2019.1621634>.
- Charr, Manuel. "Monterey Bay Aquarium Live Streaming Animal Crossing." MuseumNext, October 25, 2020. <https://www.museumnext.com/article/monterey-bay-aquarium-live-streaming-animal-crossing/>.

Today's Guest:
Melissa Frey, Malacology Collection Manager

