



ARTS DAY ON THE HILL JOURNÉE SUR LA COLLINE

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Dialogue on Digital Innovation in the Arts – Minutes

October 24, 2016

Participants:

- 2 facilitators – Frédéric Julien (CAPACOA) and Inga Petri (Strategic Moves)
- 24 participants among Arts Day delegates
- 3 Canadian Heritage observers

Introduction

This dialogue session was jointly held by the Canadian Arts Coalition and the Canadian Arts Presenting Association (CAPACOA), as part of [Arts Day on the Hill](#) and the [Digital Innovation Council for the Performing Arts](#). This participatory session was meant to explore themes related to digital innovation and to inform a roundtable discussion with the Minister of Canadian Heritage as part of Arts Day on the Hill.

Moderation of the dialogue session relied on few “liberating structure” methods to generate big, bold ideas and to elicit conversations that we were not having. Following the first two exercises six topics were selected for deeper exploration in a modified open space structure: contributions to content development, copyright, research and development centres/accelerators, distribution systems, the digital infrastructure and digital archives. The following transcript regroups the big, bold ideas (in quotation marks) and outcomes of the open space. The “other conversations” are also listed as provided.

Main ideas

[A broader outlook at the notion of digital infrastructure](#)

“We need provisions for digital infrastructures where many creative cultures can not only be represented, but mingle and integrate as a living entity. Cultivating art transcends the physical.” 20/25
“We need to encourage more diversity in the representation of our “cultural system”. Because a cultural system that respects its citizens should reflect its citizens.” 19/25

The assumption that there is as table and secure that is accessible to everyone literally in the country – the north, FN, rural and remote

We are looking for equitable support for the development of strategies (physical project for infrastructure can be replicated we digital process – lack of expertise is the arts for technology innovation) specific to the needs of individual organizations, artists and communities. With subsequent investment to maximize internal digital capacity and infrastructure. Ability for organizations to connect and create communities of knowledge and practice.

Also will enable a greater global profile.

Knowledge sharing and a community of practice to establish.

A couple ideas also referred to training and support to artists and arts organizations but weren't discussed as such during the open space:

“Extensive funding for [arts organizations] to reimagine themselves as technical and technological arts hubs (similar to the reimagining happening within the library sector”. 18/25

“Une approche qui inclut des initiatives de formation et d'accompagnement des artistes et travailleurs culturels dans l'environnement numérique.” 16/20

Research and development labs/hubs

“Sufficient resources for artists and arts organizations to explore, learn, share the integration of digital technologies in their work – a way to explore/create and research.” 20.5/25

“A national cultural accelerator with a mandate to support innovation, increase competitiveness and market share.” 16/25

Arts and culture should be part of the federal innovation strategy (across departments).

To create labs with creative industries and arts sector together to drive knowledge, know how, creation of new arts. These labs or hubs will be funded through spectrum auction levy to drive the creation of Canadian content.

We can generate creative ideas.

We can partner with people who know digital and technology; and we can focus on content – our most significant asset is content, via artists, creators.

The labs could also explore distribution and engagement.

We need “a distributed Silicon Valley for Canada – lots of hubs where learning is shared between hubs and into their communities.”

Additional information was provided by participants of this focus group after the dialogue session. This more detailed description is provided in appendix.

Distribution/connection systems

“We can capture and curate practically any art form. We do not have the mechanism to effectively market/sell the content widely. I would develop a distribution system worldwide that could hit everyone with an internet connection and that paid artists/producers/presenters in a sustainable way.” 21/25

“A proper education system that includes links to high quality cultural content for students and the general public.” 21/25

“A digital platform initiative designed to push Canadian cultural content to the world’s educator.”

“It is very difficult to compete with the bigs to create new global platforms. We must leverage these platforms creatively (content) and side step the bigs to create novel innovation using existing and emerging technology.”

“Shared infrastructure for live streaming and/or broadcast.”

Premise is that in the digital age content is not king, connection is king. How do we make those connections, how to we monetize, what are new models we need for paying (not royalties), We have info, where they are watching from, how long they are watching – and how to monetize. Koerner Hall live stream watching time is 75 minutes, but average streaming audience is only 3 to 4 minutes. We are finding the right people and they are watching for a long time.

Marketing of this digital distribution is NOT a precise science, as it is in the physical realm – e.g. direct marketing. Digital is a much more ‘distributed/dispersed post-location audience’ that creates new challenges.

We have pipelines today, but not marketing.

Is there a need for new kinds of platforms?

Creative and Empowered Copyright System

“Implement the Artists’ Resale Right.” 23/25

Assumption /global positions – artists’ incomes cannot be divorced from copyright. In a digital world copyright is being devalued more and more as digital access demands ever lower pricing, lower royalties.

It is a huge issue in terms of sustaining artists industries.

When we develop digital usage, we need to re-envision the power balance of the artist/creator and the distributor.

As we move into more digitization in our work, how do we insure that our work retains its value for the artist. If we cannot secure copyright assurance, how do we

Artists resale right – should be implemented and should extent to the digital image even if the original piece is sold as such and ownership is transferred.

Digital angle: Visual artists cannot continue to create work without levers to generate income. There might also be opportunities to think of copyright and resale right in conjunction with the digital archives discussion (see below).

Business model issue

Contract has to be legal – and an artist needs some protection.

Business model innovation is critical – how do we compensate artists properly? Whether it is artists resale rights, including copyright; different artists currently have different ways to

93 countries have artists resale rights included and Canada does not. Has major impact on Canadian artists to not be able to ensure their rights.

Distribution has to be open to artist making digital content.

Digital Archives

Finding it difficult to access materials or materials that are becoming degraded digitally, or in accessible digitally

Historical bias determines what we preserve, what is accessible and what we consider historically relevance

As we create in the digital realm there is a false assumption that it will be archived.

Statement: there is a need for support to access and maintain retain our past work to artists and community while ensuring that our current work is also accessible for the future

Very significant overlap with copyright group. Often archives that do exist they are not online because of serious copyright concerns.

Media arts sector there is a real concern in keeping archives over time.

If we want to support digital creation we should also be able to access our historical creation.

New contributions to content development

Note: The open forum on contributions to content development eventually merged with the research and development forum. The following notes were nonetheless collected separately during the wrap up.

Among the different options on the table, a levy on spectrum auction is the best way to introduce a new form of contribution to content development.

Not a tax, but a way to partner - should be at the heart of consideration for digital Canadian content.

Netflix has no tax, but Shomi did.

All online commerce has to be subject to income and sales taxes in Canada. Global jurisdiction is something we need to look at. At a world-wide level we need a protocol to regulate online content – revenue has to be allocated back to where the purchase happens (in Canada) not where the company is located (US, Portugal).

Cross-ministerial – innovation, global affairs, trade policy, immigration, intellectual property, sports.

Other conversations we are not having / questions we are not raising?

- Not everything has to be digital to be valuable
- Adapt to (replication) devaluing of copyright and royalty regimes for creator
- How to enable artists to generate more revenue by getting their work out. Opportunity to raise the profile of artists.
- Our history and archives in the arts – how do we also get easier access to the things that have happened before
- When people talk about digital there is an assumption that it is easily accessible to everyone but it is not in fact the case
- Access and equity – disproportionately affect indigenous artists, rural artists and senior artists.
- How do we continue to work with government that ensures access to content and artists are fairly compensated?
- Business models need to be developed alongside content and platform consideration. Tech innovation has to become applied to how people make a living / are compensated.
- Beyond the artists, we need to think from the point of view of the market and the citizen.
- Canadians and their needs are paramount in any consideration.
- Is there a need for more digital content?
- Is it very difficult to compete with large global platforms. Why replicate, why not use them for our purposes?
- Need to look at emergent technologies
- Think of the Internet of things, not just the digital broadcast model.
- Distinguish between content, platform, and ISPs.
- Having copyright is one thing, having it enforceable is another, especially in digital realm.
- Courageous conversation is about serious responsible regulation of the internet, and taxation. Contributions to content development.
- In the digital world 'content is king' – we are content, there is a lot of innovation that is happening, we are responsible for innovating the content.
- Inga's question – who has made money on content so far? Anyone? All the big money is in platform ownership instead of content – biggest challenge ever.
- Digital export of Canadian content – we need to consider mechanisms for distribution.

- Scarcity of budget for dissemination and marketing – does it matter if we have content or a platform but we can't reach critical mass with it and get adoption.
- Do we need to be Canada-wide or do we go global w digital?
- We need a strategy for export

Appendix: Additional information provided by Christina Loewen and Robin Sokoloski regarding the idea of research and development hubs

1. The arts exist for public good. We are mostly NFPs and charities serving a triple bottom line: social good, artistic excellence and financial accountability. Creators and citizens are not in opposition, creators are accountable to citizens.

So what might a system look like? An accelerator platform, R & D Lab of labs, Incubator.

Why an Accelerator?

- Addresses equity and resource distribution – anyone from any class, age group or culture can apply to an accelerator program they just need a good idea.
- An accelerator is user or citizen focussed – you can't move forward in the process until you have validated your idea with your potential market.
- Increases success and impact - fail fast, fail often, fail cheap
- Provide a framework for testing – experimentation, small user focused questioning
- Promotes shared learning – peer learning and mentoring experience
- Invites cross-sectoral partnerships - borrowed from silicon valley tech start ups, outside experts, different perspectives.
- Reduces waste (on failure) – fail cheap.

This system can/should incorporate 3 pillars:

1. Content creation for the digital realm – in the arts, we get stuck on re-interpreting the art into a digital version. What about direct to digital art?
2. Distribution/dissemination – simulcasts, HD broadcasts, platforms (the Opera Platform in EU)
3. Engagement/Accessibility – interactivity, Moment factory, Coldplay, second screen, gamification, geocaching.,

Funded by Spectrum Auction which is a model for Arts/business partnership (funded by rogers, bell etc)

Arts AND CULTURE as part of the Innovation Agenda

We need to innovate, to respond to our changing marketplace, changing demographics

Just as businesses, culture is an economic driver, and like other sectors must innovate to be competitive, to increase market share.

The mandate letter for the Min of Innovation, Science and technology recognizes the value of accelerator programs and have charged the Minister Bain with increasing support to accelerators because they are a recognized means to making business more prosperous, more competitive in the global economy. In the arts this also translates into improving social well-being of Canadians, increasing relevance to a growing diverse Canada.

3-4 Pillars

New innovative content for new innovative technologies/channels

Dissemination

Engagement

Partnership

Cross-sectoral, cross-ministerial partnership

Funding mechanism – The Spectrum Auction