



Roundtable on Digital Technologies Table ronde sur les technologies numériques

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National Arts Service Organizations Meeting

Rencontres des organismes nationaux de services aux arts

8 décembre 2017

About the Digital Innovation Council



*This project was funded by the
Department of Canadian Heritage*

- *The Value of Presenting* (2011-2013)
- Ongoing exploration at the CAPACOA Conference
- Set up listserv for community of 50 arts leaders 2016.
- *Digitizing the Performing Arts report* (2017) focused on performing arts presentation.
- “What’s your digital project?” web conferences
- Digital Arts Services Symposium
- Currently trying to rally stakeholders around a collective impact project.





Based on:

- Literature review
- Dialogues with 70 participants active in performing arts and technology
- Participation in two digital conferences

Explored:

Current and future digital landscape

Lessons from other cultural sectors (Music, Books, News)

How digital innovations create new value

New Business Models for Presenters

Audiences, Markets, Revenues in Digital Economy

The digital economy

Successful business models in the digital world:

- Tied to distribution
- Rely on scale



Les modèles d'affaires qui ont du succès dans l'univers numérique :

- sont axés sur la distribution;
- nécessitent une grande envergure.

Achieving scale

- Organizational growth (organic)
- Mergers & Acquisitions
- Collaborations, collaborative networks



FJ

Scale? Stratford Festival HD

- 2-3 productions each season “to create a Canadian collection of the entire Shakespeare canon”
- \$19.95 at Cineplex
- VOD on iTunes, Amazon, Google Play, CBC Watch
- Single organization; exceedingly difficult to achieve digital scale



A screenshot of the Stratford Festival website. The top navigation bar includes links for "Home", "About Us", "Programs", "Tickets", "Store", "FAQ", "Contact Us", and "Support Us". A prominent banner features the Stratford Festival logo and the text "PLAYING AT A THEATRE NEAR YOU!". Below this, a section titled "PRESENTS THE BEST OF SHAKESPEARE ON CINEMA SCREENS IN SPECTACULAR HD" lists three plays: "KING LEAR" (February 19, March 7 and 22), "KING JOHN" (April 9 and 12), and "ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA" (May 21 and June 7). Each play listing includes a "BUY TICKETS" button with "CANADA" and "INTERNATIONAL" options. A "WATCH THE TRAILER" button is also visible.

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Announced in September 2014

It costs \$600,000 per film. This can only be feasible with the help of donors and sponsors, and with a brand such as Stratford Festival.

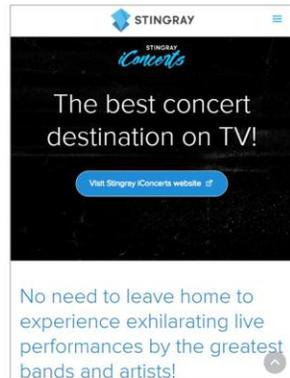
Distribution in cinema theatres through Cineplex since 2015 and in U.S. theatres.

VOD distribution of the entire collection is exclusively through foreign based distribution platforms: iTunes, Amazon, Google Play. Some films are also broadcast by CBC and made available on CBC watch.

Good initiative to expand the fan base, but the returns on cinema tickets and streaming are “modest” according to executive director Anita Gaffney.

Scale: different strategies

Mergers & Acquisitions



Collaborations, collaborative networks



Stingray Digital Group is fuelled by mergers & acquisitions.

Stingray has become a multiplatform content provider for customers and businesses. It boasts 400 million subscribers and 11,000 commercial clients: pay TV operators, commercial establishments, OTT providers, mobile operators, and so on.

Does the BBC have enough scale?

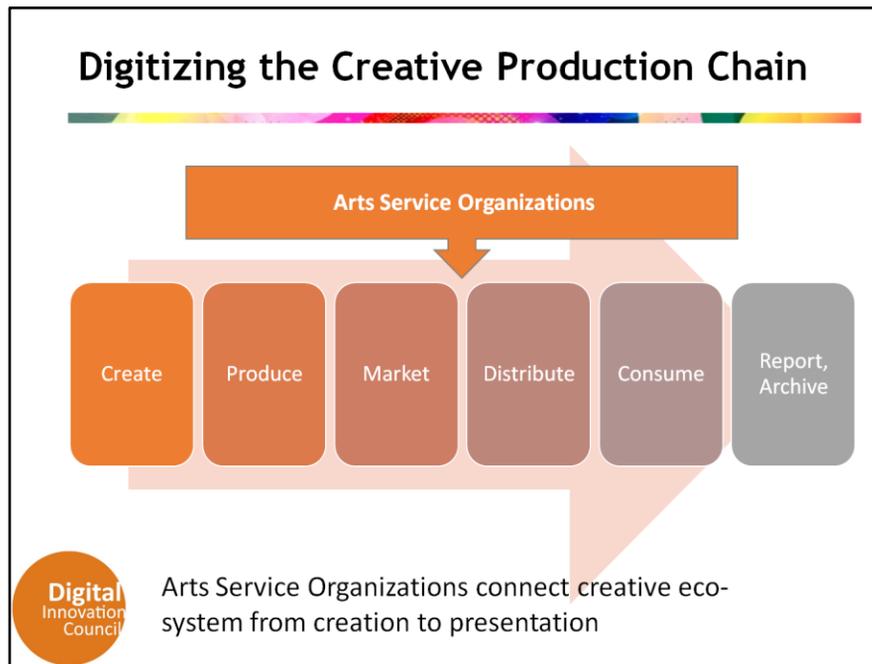
Radio Player is a not-for-profit system spearheaded by BBC in partnership with commercial radios. It now has iterations in other countries.

Radio Player Canada brings together 400 private, public, campus and community radio stations into a single platform that feeds radio in cars, smart speakers and mobile apps. Combining their efforts, they created an opportunity to stand out and gain audiences that no individual radio station could achieve by itself.

Lack of scale has consequences



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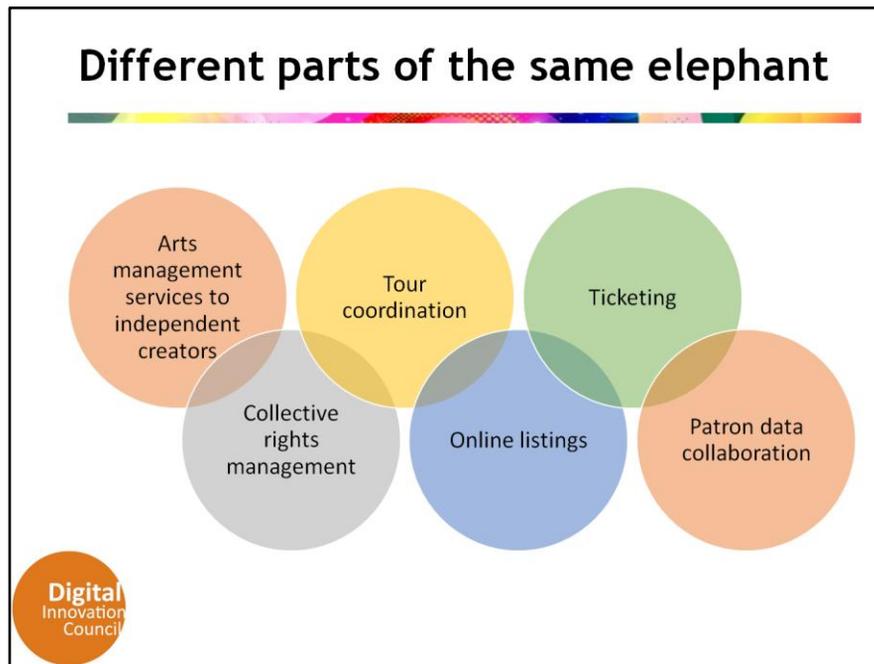


In the performing arts, ASOs connect different parts of the creation-distribution chain: co-commissioning, showcases, block-booking. They however have not yet taken fully advantage of technology to create efficiencies. As they do, their current business model (which relies heavily on the showcase conference) will be challenged.

- The showcase conference and the block booking process, even in their analog format, are ways to create efficiencies.
- I want to Showcase is a nice example of digitizing a particular step in the creation chain, and then of scaling it across North America.
- Online ticketing is yet another example of digitization. However, it is very much modeled on physical box office booth.
- If arts service organizations don't reinvent their business model and digitize their services, they could be disrupted by other analog and digital service providers.

Digital pressures on Arts Service Organizations

The business model question is important for presenters and it is also a crucial one for arts service organizations. I had a phone discussion with the new digital person at La danse sur les routes and revenue generation will be big question (and a big obstacle) for ASOs, whose business model is predicated on the organization of a conference. The different digital opportunities that exist for arts service organizations will nearly all imply some disruption of the current revenue generation models. And with Canada Council forcing ASOs to generate more revenues, ASOs will be particularly reluctant to anything that might impact their current revenue generating activities. We're entering an era in which ASOs will be



Different digital initiatives have been or are being pursued to assist creators, producers, distributors/presenters and consumers across the production the creative production chain. They are however seldom connected to one another, which implies manual data re-entry, poorer data, and lost opportunities to create value.

How do we recognize that they are parts of the same elephant?

And how do we connect them?



Where do we begin?



Stop building platforms!

▪ Build interoperability, first.

▪ Requirements:

- Data and metadata standards (formats, single ID's, descriptive metadata)
- Open and linked data - no more closed databases

▪ Structured data has value

▪ Oh, by the way, open and linked data is discoverable...



Interoperability, a definition: The ability of a system or application to work (connect, exchange information, make use of information) with other systems or application, at the current time and in the future.

Interoperability ≠ connecting two systems through an API (Application Programming Interface).

The best example of interoperability is the world wide web: it's an agreed upon transfer protocol (http) and markup language (html) to exchange documents over any system and any device.

Open linked data and other aspects of the semantic web also provide for **built-in interoperability**.

- same formats are used
- single IDs makes data usable in any language
- metadata describing the data follow an agreed-upon specifications (i.e. the Resource Description Framework)
- the connections between data points are mapped on an agreed-upon ontology
- Data is uploaded on the web using good old html so that every one can access it (data points are assigned a URI – Uniform Resource Identifier)

Once data and metadata are structured and connected, they have more value. This

Structured data: before and after



Chat Bot before/after adding structured data

Video by Culture creates. Duration: 2:49.

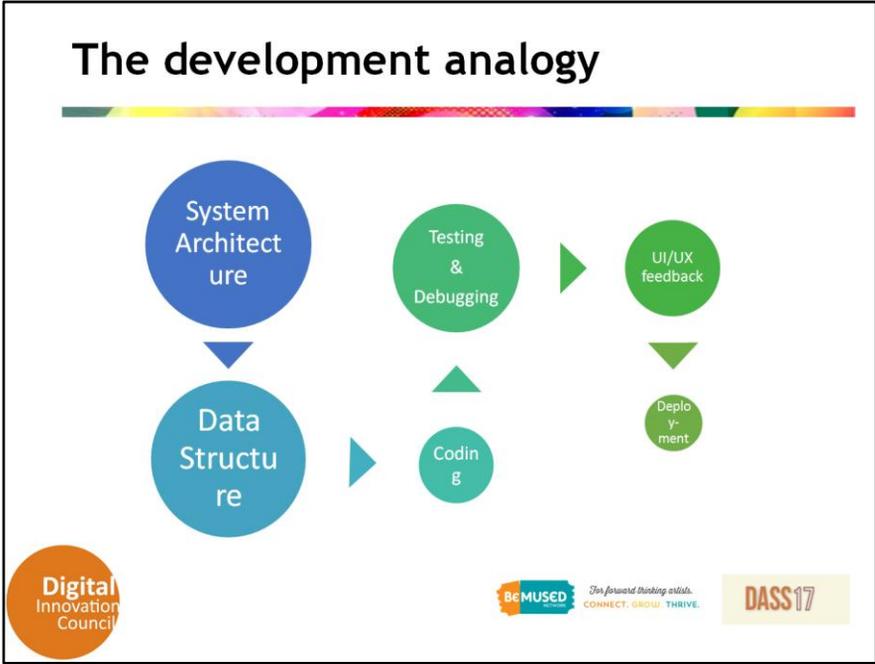
<https://youtu.be/WalOgD41kDE>



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This video exemplifies how content can become more easily discoverable when it is structured with semantic web markups. This is one of many potential benefits arising from structuring, opening, and linking data on the web.

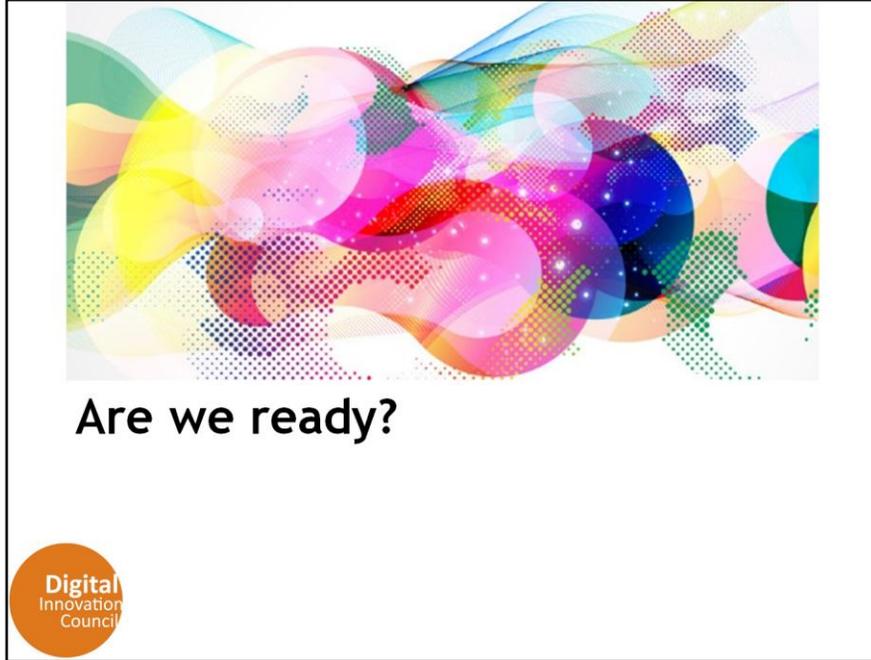
Other areas that could benefit from open and linked data include: collective rights management, connecting supply and demand, providing more value-adding contents to users, as well as research.



This is a slide from a presentation by Amine El, at the Digital Arts Services Symposium, held in Toronto, November 30, December 1, 2017.

In the software development process, *system architecture* and *data structure* are the two most important phases: way more than the actual coding.

If the development process is a good analogy for 4-year Digital Strategy Fund, then we should currently focus on architecture and data structure.



At one point during the Digital Arts Services Symposium, someone said: "We were not ready for the Digital Strategy Fund". I understood this statement in a particular way: the readiness we were missing was a readiness for collaboration, for opening up to one another in drastically different ways, for new ethics of partnership.

Failure is not an option!

- A brand new collaboration mindset is required
- Are you ready to let go of your current modus operandi?
- Are you ready to let go of your current job?
 - This change in paradigm has to be the most significant outcome of the Digital Strategy Fund.



The Digital Strategy Fund is a once in a century opportunity. Failure is not an option!

Letting go of the current modus operandi could also mean letting go of the not-for-profit mindset.

Re-imagining the role and function of ASOs may involve radical evolution, merger, closure.

Critical questions and ideas



- What governance structures are required to develop and maintain our system architecture and data structure?
- How do we recognize different parts of the elephant that need to be connected?
- Is an interoperability agency/consultancy needed?
- What do digital arts services look like?



To be continued... / À suivre...

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