



DELIVERABLE



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D4.4 Summary of series of workshops that interrogate the Culture24 approach to aggregation and publishing

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REVISION HISTORY AND STATEMENT OF ORIGINALITY

Revision History

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FINAL	26 June 2013	Sejul Malde/Maria Logothetis	Culture24/SwNHB	Post EF reviewed version (changes made as a result of EF review)
RESUBMITTED Draft V1	June 2014		Culture24	Following Yr 2 Annual Review report – pre EF reviewed
RESUBMITTED Draft V2	June 2014		Culture24	Post EF reviewed
RESUBMITTED FINAL	June 2014		Culture24	

Statement of originality:

This deliverable contains original unpublished work except where clearly indicated otherwise. Acknowledgement of previously published material and of the work of others has been made through appropriate citation, quotation or both.

Introduction

Aims and objectives

The primary aim of these workshops (as described in the DoW) was “*to pilot ways to model the Culture24 approach to its operational, aggregation and publishing work (already testing with BBC and others). This would be led by the Swedish National Heritage Board (SwNHB), in order to determine which elements of this model can be usefully replicated within SwNHB and other countries*”.

Rationale

An overall objective of Europeana Awareness WP4 is to explore how Europeana aggregated content can be delivered to cultural tourists wherever they are accessing information about place. The premise was that cultural venue and events data (referred to within this document as “cultural listings data”), represents a valuable ‘place related’ dataset, that could ,if combined and put alongside Europeana collections content, enhance the overall content offer to cultural tourists

Therefore a key strand of WP4 work relates to assessing venue and events data aggregation models across Europe. This work has already been delivered in D4.2 which explored and mapped any existing national non-commercial venue, events and exhibitions aggregation and sharing services across EU.

This current deliverable (D.4.4) is concerned with examining in more detail the specific model of Culture24 as a cultural listings data provider.

Culture24 was chosen as a focus for this work as we are a cultural listings service, like the ones researched in D4.2, It was felt that Culture24’s approach to aggregating, sharing and publishing cultural listings data provided a useful case study in order to examine in detail what was the model for cultural listings data provision. As such, this deliverable is concerned with the process and considerations relating to the aggregation, sharing and publication of cultural listings data only and looks at the models of Culture24 as a starting point in this process. .

Research questions

This primary aim described above can be examined in more detail by breaking it down to 4 key research questions, that the workshop process needed to explore further.

1. What exactly is the Culture24 approach?
2. How could this be meaningfully be modelled by SwNHB?

3. What is the key learning derived from such modeling?
4. How can the learning be usefully replicated within SwNHB and other countries?

The documentation of the responses to these last 2 research questions within this deliverable specifically aim to address the comments made in the E Awareness Y2 Technical Review Report which states a requirement to highlight “what are the lesson learnt and whether or how the relevant results could be generalized and replicated, or modified and applied to other organisations across Europe or any other kind of wider context” The responses to these areas can be found within the “Key Learning” and “Application of Learning” sections found towards the end of this document.

Definition of approach

As this work is not directly connected to Europeana, the exact detail and methodology behind the workshops were up to both Culture24 and SwNHB to determine. An initial meeting was held in September 2012 between Culture24 and SwNHB to explore how these workshops would be undertaken and in particular to discuss how they could reflect the first 2 research questions, namely:

- What exactly is the Culture24 approach?
- Could this be meaningfully be modelled by SwNHB?

This meeting identified the following key points:

- Whilst Culture24 had an implicit understanding of its approach to aggregating and publishing cultural listings data, this had never been explicitly formalised, documented or presented to other parties before. Without such an explicit articulation, it would be impossible to explore how it could be modelled and replicated. Therefore an important outcome of these workshops was to produce such an explicit articulation of the Culture24 approach.
- SwNHB only currently collect a small set of events listings related to a single festival and hold a dataset of geographical locations that is different in scope and nature to that held by Culture24. This is significant limitation to the piloting process and means that any piloting of the Culture24 approach could only be conceptual and process-driven, rather than practical in nature.
- Whilst the cultural landscape in Sweden is different to that in the UK, the baseline issues around user needs and cultural content provision are similar to an extent, therefore the broader lessons learned during the task should be applicable to other countries and environments too.
- It was also important that the workshops, whilst seeking to achieve the aims of EA WP4, were also specifically beneficial to SwNHB and their participants, otherwise they would be little buy in form participants. The workshop programme devised had to be mindful of this. It is therefore likely that some of the outputs and outcomes produced would only be useful for SwNHB and its own needs and may not be wholly replicable or applicable elsewhere.
- SwNHB consists of several departments with separate functions that do not always collaborate fully and there was a necessity in understanding the overall SwNHB organisational needs as part of this process.

In response to the research question: “what is the Culture24 approach?”, it was agreed that:

In the absence of an express articulation of the Culture24 approach, a key outcome of these workshops was to produce, present and document such an articulation of the approach.

In response to the research question: “Could this be meaningfully be modelled by SwNHB?”, it was agreed that as the workshops could not practically model the Culture24 approach, and that approach had not already been explicitly defined, the workshops would incorporate a series of presentations of Culture24’s methods and thinking (through a range of formats) to relevant SwNHB stakeholders and partners, followed by further facilitated discussion with participants of which parts were useful.

Research questions 3 and 4 could only be explored once the workshops had been conducted and so were considered as part of a post workshop analysis phase. This is documented within the “Key Learning” and “Application of Learning” sections found towards the end of this document..

It was agreed that the first workshop would be held with SwNHB employees only, from a range of departments. It would be used as a scoping exercise that would aim to better understand the broader Culture24 approach through the exposition of a range of case studies and expertise, as well as to unpack SwNHB specific needs. The learning from this could then better inform the approach and content of the second and third workshops.

Workshop programme

Workshop 1:

Name:

Evaluating opportunities for SwNHB inherent in Culture24's approach and operational model

Date:

Tuesday 11th December 2012

Location:

SwNHB Development team offices, Visby, Sweden

Attendees:

Culture24 (& workshop facilitators)

- Jane Finnis
- Anra Kennedy

SwNHB (Development)

- Maria Logothetis
- Henrik Summanen
- Marcus Smith
- Sophie Jonasson

SwNHB (Communication and PR)

- Agneta Gardinge
- Maria Jansson

SwNHB (Digital Information Services)

- Karin Sterner

Summary of topics covered and discussion:

An overview of the Culture24 operational framework and expertise as well as a summary of the methodologies adopted by Culture24 for supporting the cultural sector (strategic, editorial, technical)

Exploration focusing on more detailed case studies examining key parts of Culture24's aggregation, sharing and publishing working including Culture24's BBC data sharing partnership and the 'Let's Get Real' engagement analytics research.

Subsequent discussion and brainstorming by SwNHB exploring how lessons learnt from the case studies and broader examination of the Culture24 model could be practically applied to their own work.

Key outputs for SwNHB:

Through feedback obtained from project participants various learning points were identified. In particular two key points were highlighted:

1. That SwNHB need to make more effective use of analytics tools to measure audience engagement with their information resources and to benefit from the data drawn from such analysis in different ways.
2. That SwNHB can be more ambitious in encouraging the use of their content by external bodies.

All participants thought that the workshop gave them ideas for future collaborations and working better together, at least as a starting point. The workshop identified that more clearly defined strategic goals were needed regarding how SwNHB enables its information resources to be used more widely. The need for a more effective relationship between the SwNHB Development and the SwNHB Communications team to facilitate such goals was also identified

Next steps:

This workshop was also used as the basis upon which to determine key issues for exploration in the future workshops. It was decided that it would be useful for the second workshop to explore the Culture24 data aggregation and sharing process in respect of a potential tourism focused case study for SwNHB. It was also agreed that the third workshop aim to support SwNHB communication and publication functions, to better promote SwNHB's information resources and collections content.

This ensured that the key processes of data aggregation, sharing and publishing contained within Culture24's approach could be meaningfully explored over these workshops, whilst also meeting some of SwNHB's specific needs

Workshop 2:

Name:

Exploring the operational and strategic considerations of aggregating, sharing and publishing cultural data with the tourism sector

Date:

Thursday 14th March 2013

Location:

SwNHB offices, Stockholm

Attendees:

Culture24 (& workshop facilitators)

- Sejul Malde
- Anra Kennedy

SwNHB (Development)

- Maria Logothetis
- Henrik Summanen
- Lars Lundqvist

SwNHB (Sustainable Development)

- Daniel Nilsson
- Jonas Widhe

SwNHB (Public Visitor Sites)

- Fredrik Käck

Vikings and Their Ancestors Project (ongoing project 2011 – 2013)

- Brita Zetterberg-Blom
Project Manager Destination Uppsala/Visit Uppland
- Bengt Johansson
Project Manager Destination Uppsala/Visit Uppland
- Helena Segergren
Management Support, Infomedica

Evenemang Gotland (Gotland tourism-sector, potential users of SwNHB's data)

- Victor Jansson
Sales/Marketing officer <http://www.evenemanggotland.se/>
- Olle Hoffman
Arendus www.arendus.se (business partner with Victor Jansson)
Cultural Heritage Business Development.

Summary of topics covered and discussion:

A detailed examination was undertaken of both the operational implications and strategic value of Culture24's data aggregation and publishing processes. This was enabled by a presentation of Culture24's 'data process', with facilitated discussion of the possible strategic and operational implications if this was hypothetically applied to potential cultural data partnerships between SwNHB, Vikings Project and the Gotland Tourism Sector.

This sought to reveal both the challenges as well as opportunities in enabling high quality, yet sustainable, aggregated and published cultural data.

The workshop covered the following steps:

1. What is Culture24's operational process?

Participants were taken through the 'story' of a piece of data when put through the Culture 24 process. This story was unpacked by working with participants to identify operational issues/challenges at each step

2. What is the 'Vikings project' hypothetical operational process relating to listings data?

Participants were asked to reflect on the Culture24 operational process as something they could hypothetically do together for the Vikings project. This included defining the requirements that underpin such a process such as the location where venue/events would be aggregated, who the audience is, who would aggregate etc? Participants were then asked to identify the respective main operational issues/ challenges for the project

3. What is the strategic value of such a process?

Participants were asked to look at the Culture24's and the Vikings project's operational processes together, including using audience insight approaches to assess impact of data, in order to articulate the practical benefits and strategic outcomes emanating for this process.

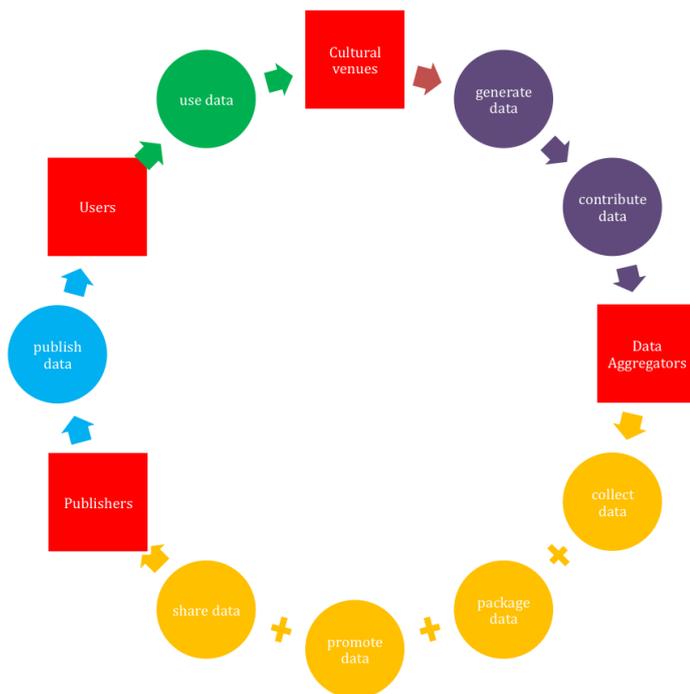
D4.4 Summary of series of workshops that interrogate the Culture24 approach to aggregation and publishing



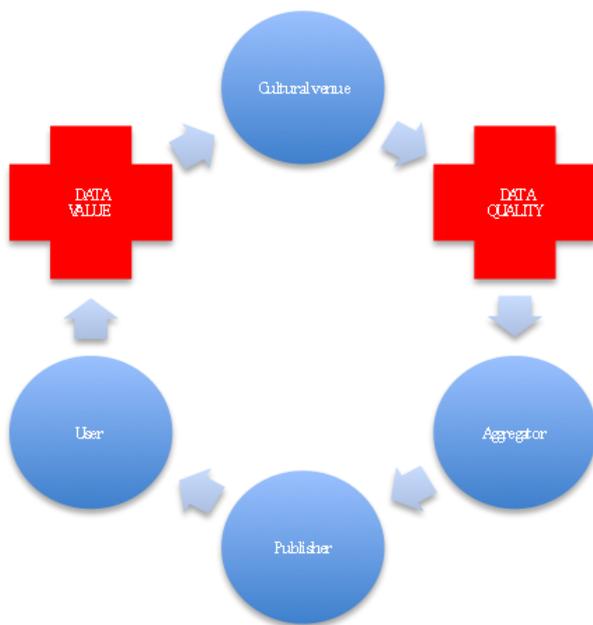


Outputs

- The Culture24 approach to aggregation, sharing and publication of cultural listings data was documented and presented for the first time. The full detail of this is contained within the Appendix of this deliverable.
- This approach was represented through the following ‘operational and strategic value circles’ that were developed and explored further within the workshop. These show not only the key steps but how there is a virtuous circle of value creation that can be created if all the relevant steps are implemented



Operational steps in the Culture24 approach



The virtuous circle of value creation through data

- Key points discussed related to:
 - Data quality: creating and maintaining cultural listings data quality represents a key challenge in ensuring a successful and sustainable data aggregation and publishing service
 - Data aggregations models:

- To ensure high quality cultural listings data is aggregated and published, a user/community generated data aggregation model should be considered.
- However significant investment in terms of resource is necessary to maintain a strong network, therefore adopting a mixed model of cultural data listings aggregation could be considered with different editorial interventions
- Data sharing processes: this is also resource intensive, in particular:
 - Getting the word out
 - Making the case for data to potential partners
 - Meeting their strategic and logistical requirements
- Data value
 - To articulate the value of cultural listings data, a direct link must be established between its aggregation, sharing and publication and its ultimate use/engagement by the public.
- The benefits and strategic value of this approach discussed included:
 - Gathering data in one place to use in other ways
 - Structured sharable flexible tagged usable up to date data set
 - Promoted to use good images
 - Produce a standardised events/venue data model that is reusable
 - Achieve a critical mass of coverage
 - Creating a community/network of peers
 - Incurring no direct costs
 - Directly meeting the needs of users
 - Promote reach of data
 - Generate audience insight into engagement with data.
- Feedback from project participants regarding their key learning from the examination of the process focused on the following areas:
 - ***The importance of generating or collecting cultural data that responds to user needs***

E.g.:

“I learned that it’s important to learn from the public what information they need/want. The most obvious information (opening hours, entrance fee etc.) is of course important, but to the public other things can be critical for their decision to make a visit or not (pets allowed, stroller friendly etc.). These things above are directly applicable to the Viking project in Uppsala”.

“What would be interesting to take one step forward together is the discussion of how we can make the cultural heritage more interesting for target groups that we don’t reach today. I think we need both new concepts as well as more knowledge about our

customers/costumers (and non-users). I think that a close relation between commercial actors and for example SwNHB could be developed further”.

- ***The importance of maintaining high quality cultural data, as well as the operational challenges***

E.g.:

“The method they (C24) used regarding input of data was one of the interesting parts in the workshop. I realised that one of the main ‘problems’ is to keep the data up to date. Since the people responsible for doing that often have a lot of other things to do one of the main keys is to convince the institutions/sites of the advantage of doing the job continuously. They might not see the effect after a month, and not even a year. But if you create something that is useful for the public, easy to use, and always up to date the results will come over time”

- ***The value of developing data partnerships, as well as the challenges in establishing them***

E.g.:

“I developed better knowledge on what a co-operation between SwNHB and a commercial operator can look like, regarding responsibilities, division of roles etc. I have learned (and seen with my own eyes) that there is a real interest for commercial use of shared cultural heritage related data”.

- ***The challenges of being unable to practically test the Culture24 approach as well as the applicability of the Culture24 approach to the specifics of the SwNHB, that we perceived limitations of this process, were also highlighted:***

E.g.:

“C24 did an interesting exposition of their working methods that was really valuable. But since I have just started to discuss a project it is very difficult to transform their methods into something that is of immediate use to my project”.

“All information was useful, but as usual the information needs to be filtered to fit into Swedish conditions. C24 and SwNHB are not the same type of organisation, work in different ways and with different relationships to users and co-operation partners, but many of the goals are the same and this information is important for everyone in this field to take part of”.

Workshop 3:

Name:

Exploring strategic, content-focussed digital campaigning by cultural organisations to drive audience engagement

Date:

Friday 15th March 2013

Location:

SwNHB offices, Stockholm

Attendees:

Freelancer (& workshop facilitator)

- *Abhay Adhikari*

Culture24

- Sejul Malde
- Anra Kennedy

SwNHB (Development)

- Maria Logothetis
- Henrik Summanen
- Marcus Smith

SwNHB (Sustainable Development)

- Ulf Lindberg
- Jonas Widhe

SwNHB (Communication and PR)

- Maria Jansson

Summary of topics covered and discussion:

The workshop emphasised that it is not enough to simply publish/aggregate cultural data online. It also needs to be disseminated, packaged and seeded into conversations and those interactions tracked, nurtured and learnt from.

To enable this, the workshop focused on creating a campaign message to develop a community that stretches from the hyper local to global. It explored strategies to engage

target audiences that exist online and offline and techniques to create context and conversations on different social media websites.

This workshop also illustrated a key component of Culture24's approach to knowledge sharing which is firmly based on partnership working, by engaging a specialist expert in this area (Abhay Adhikari).

Outputs:

Feedback from project participants regarding key learning relating to publishing in the following areas:

- **Planning your publishing approach is key, including aim and key messages, especially when using social media publishing channels**

E.g.:

*“Ask open-ended questions in order to start a dialogue, follow up on the answers (don't ignore them), and carefully think through your desired outcomes before embarking on a digital campaign as *part* of a broader communications strategy”*

“I learnt the importance of strategic planning, knowledge of target groups, surprises or "a twist" rather than obvious messages works well.”



- **The need to work with communities of relevant users to help spread your cultural data**

E.g.:

“There are two groups of people you need to consider when trying to communicate a message over social media: your target audience, through whom you hope to achieve your desired outcome; and 'influencers', who may not necessarily be within your target audience, but are the people you need to engage with in order to get noticed”.

- **The importance of tailoring and curating cultural data for the appropriate channels and to make it interesting for the user**

"The importance of focusing and tailoring the message to the medium. That in order to elicit a response and start a conversation, you must communicate in an engaging and genuine way."



The image shows a screenshot of two tweets from Twitter. The first tweet is from Marcus Smith (@carwash) and the second is from Anra Kennedy (@AnraKennedy). Both tweets discuss digital campaigning and the importance of engaging and genuine communication.

Marcus Smith
@carwash
"What is digital campaigning?" Connecting with a community in an engaging & genuine way. Communicating your message with dialogue. #digi_se
2:27 PM - 15 Mar 2013

Anra Kennedy
@AnraKennedy
'Use yr specialist curator's eye to curate content in social media, no need to create everything.' Again, museums have head start. #digi_se
2:00 PM - 15 Mar 2013

- **The importance of maintaining an authentic voice when publishing (museums and cultural heritage organisations have a huge advantage when it comes to establishing authenticity)**



- **The importance of looking deeper when measuring the success of your cultural data publishing**

"Raw numbers (of likes, retweets, hits - whatever!) are not enough to measure success: how many of those people actually engaged with your message? How many took things further, started a conversation, took action outside of the social media bubble?"

For the perspective of Abhay Adhikari as an external expert please see the following link <http://storify.com/gopaldass/digital-campaigning-with-the-swedish-national-heri>

Overall feedback on 3 workshops and process from SwNHB

“SwNHB considers it valuable to cooperate with organizations from other countries as it highlights diverse ways of organizing the work process, different from the ways we are used to. Culture24 has made evident the importance of a cohesive force in order to make information connected and synergetic on a digital level, as in comparison to the analogue/mass medial structure where information is split into ‘silos’ and stored within separate institutions.

Culture24 demonstrated possible ways of synchronizing the various tasks and areas of responsibilities regarding the data sharing process, and pointed out that you also need to invest lots of time and effort into building sustainable partnerships and networks and that you will need to consider the long term costs in maintaining and managing the systems online as over time, as well as the networks, personnel resources etc.

From a technical point of view Culture24 demonstrated how to make use of tools to manage analytics and statistics that we felt were useful to us. SwNHB is indeed active online with social media and the web in general, but we are yet to make effective use of analytics tools (such as Google analytics) and how to benefit from that data in different ways, measuring effects of marketing efforts and so forth.

Since the use of digital platforms and media is relatively new, providing data that easily can demonstrate benefits from being online as well as investing in digital tools, networks and systems and digital infrastructure in general, is crucial when it comes to making decisions on an executive level.

The aim of working with digital information sometimes clashes in many aspects regarding ‘traditional’ work and organizational processes within the cultural heritage sector. Through Culture24’s ‘Data sharing process method’ Culture24 highlighted and pointed out where there are possible areas of miscommunication, as well as how to ameliorate these problems. Furthermore this concerns SwNHB’s external partnerships as well. In a digital world new and different ways of working and communicating will form. During the workshops we focused on building sustainable partnerships as well as working together digitally in a general way, which to us was very valuable input.

The third workshop with the theme ‘digital campaigning’ was fruitful since there was lots of concrete and hands-on input for us to make direct use of. It also became quite clear that even if we do use social media, we also realized that we do not fully comprehend the mechanisms of social media and how to make the best use of it.

On a general level we (SwHNB) would say that Culture24 has contributed to a more comprehensive understanding of the working progresses and communicative aspects in a digital environment. This is important as we are facing structural changes for our systems as well as our communication methods”

Key learning

The primary aim of these workshops (as described in the DoW) was “to pilot ways to model the Culture24 approach to its operational, aggregation and publishing work” and for such piloting to be meaningful, the key learning derived from the whole piloting process needed to be identified.

It was agreed with SwNHB, through an analytical phase post workshops, that the key learning emanating from the workshops, through the facilitated discussion of the Culture24 approach, would be worked into a checklist of key considerations or fundamentals (ignoring those issues specific to Culture24) that any wider group of cultural organisations who are engaged with data collection, aggregation and sharing could consider.

Below is the detailed list of these key considerations that serve as such a checklist:

Cultural listings data quality and attributes

- Creating and maintaining cultural listings data quality represents a key challenge in ensuring a successful and sustainable data aggregation and publishing service.
- Cultural listings data quality can extend to a variety of considerations, but there are certain core data requirements:
 - Up to date opening hours/event timings and entrance rates
 - Accurate geo-locations
 - Name and a basic description of the venue or event
 - Venue or event website url
 - Breadth of coverage of relevant domain
- For any cultural listings dataset to be useful, it needs to have a high standard of breadth, depth and accuracy
- However 100% coverage is not essential. What is important is enough cultural listings data to create an aggregation service or publication strong enough to meet audience expectations.
- It is essential to have as close to complete coverage of high profile and well-known listings datasets as possible (for example in the UK the Culture24 dataset includes venues and event listings from all the major museums and galleries such as British Museum, Tate etc). These are the datasets that reassure users they are looking at a reliable source of information. Added to those a publication or service will ideally also include a rich layer of less well known information, enough to provide choice and interest.
- Other supplementary requirements, whilst not essential, can make a real difference in ensuring that the data is usable or ‘sticky’.

- These requirements should be given due consideration to help add audience appeal and build services. Examples of such requirements include:
 - A relevant/interesting/appealing image, cleared for use, at the required size and resolution
 - Subject tags to facilitate discovery, personalisation and sharing
 - Target audience information
 - Detailed, audience-appropriate, descriptive copy
 - Direct route to booking service (if relevant)
 - 'Special offer' or discount information
 - Additional venue information (if relevant), such as:
 - Venue facilities (e.g. disabled access, parking, cafes, gardens)
 - Venue services (e.g. education or identification services, wedding or conference hire)
 - Exhibitions (e.g. permanent and temporary)
 - Collections (e.g. overviews of collections, key exhibits, key artists)
 - Resources (e.g. loan boxes, bookable learning sessions, books, podcasts, websites, leaflets, games, and teachers' packs)
 - Associated events/venues
 - Associated other content – video/audio/text

Cultural listings data aggregation models

- To ensure high quality cultural listings data is aggregated and published, a user/community generated data aggregation model should be considered.
- Such a model requires an effective collection mechanism that incorporates both a functional technical system as well as a streamlined process of data capture.
- A further vital requirement for such a user/community generated data aggregation model is to build and maintain a strong network of contributing cultural venues and communicate to them the value of maintaining high quality cultural listings data.
- There are also other forms of manual and/or service driven intervention that are necessary to help promote the quality of cultural data aggregated from user/communities directly. These include:
 - Ongoing user management
 - Ongoing user engagement
 - Editorial intervention
 - Campaign led interventions
 - Commissioned aggregation services
- However a user/community generated cultural listings data sourcing model does not alone generate the breadth, depth or accuracy required of a data set. To do so a 'mixed model' of data aggregation should be considered, which supplements user/community generated data aggregation with 'in house' editorial research and upload.

- Significant investment in terms of resource is necessary to maintain a strong network, engage in other forms of necessary intervention (as highlighted above) and adopt a mixed model of cultural data listings aggregation. Therefore effective data aggregation models must not just consider technical set up costs but also ongoing resource costs to ensure a continued high quality of cultural data aggregation.

Cultural listings data sharing considerations

- Making aggregated cultural listings data technically available is only the first step in the data sharing process. The most resource-intensive parts of the data sharing process are:
 - Getting the word out
 - Making the case for data to potential partners
 - Meeting their strategic and logistical requirements.
- The establishment and servicing of cultural listings data partnerships include the following stages and considerations:
 - **Strategic** - advocating the value of cultural data and partnership to senior management and agreeing license terms, including usage metrics and branding and fees where appropriate
 - **Editorial** requirements - analysing and agreeing the purpose, type and scope of fields required and supporting decisions around presentation; analyse whether quality and quantity of cultural data within database meets requirements
 - **Technical** – liaising with technical teams to establish cultural data sharing format, decide frequency of updates, set up and test processes
 - **Branding** and promotion - agree credit lines, display of logo, links back and any promotional messages or activity agreed within license.
 - **Financial** –exploring how financial value can be derived, not necessarily through charging for cultural data but also to consider shared open data business models

Cultural listings data publication

- Simple online publication of aggregated cultural data not enough. It needs to be disseminated, packaged and seeded into conversations and into relevant user communities whenever and wherever they are, and those interactions tracked, nurtured and learnt from.
- Such cultural listings data dissemination approaches should be governed by the following best practice guidelines:
 - Always plan your publishing approach, including thinking through your overall aim and key messages

- Always work with communities of relevant users to help spread your cultural data
- Tailor and curate cultural data for appropriate channels and make it interesting for the user
- Always maintain an 'authentic voice' when publishing.

Cultural listings data value

- To articulate the value of cultural listings data, a direct link must be established between its aggregation, sharing and publication and its ultimate use/engagement by the public. To do work must be undertaken to measure, track and analyse relevant public usage and engagement with aggregated and published cultural data.
- Any subsequent data generated from such an analysis could be used to build an evidence-based case to cultural venues about the ultimate use value of ensuring high quality data creation and management.
- If a cultural listings data service can identify the value of cultural data through the public's ultimate usage of it, and communicate this effectively to an established network of cultural venues, it can better ensure that the data that is created and maintained is of a higher quality, which in turn enhances its overall value and impact.
- Raw numbers are not enough to measure success, instead look to qualitative analysis to identify how many people actually 'engaged' with your message? How many took things further, started a conversation, took subsequent action

Application of learning

Another key aim of this deliverable as detailed in the description of work was *“to determine which elements of this model can be usefully replicated within SwNHB and other countries”*. These workshops were designed to explore the process of generating effective cultural listings data services and in particular exploring how Culture24’s model could be applied elsewhere. This approach very much links into Europeana’s role of helping institutions promote their content and data better, and looking with them for scalable models.

The initial meeting between SwNHB and Culture24 outlined the inability to practically model the Culture24 approach within the SwNHB, but instead adopt a methodology that explored Culture24’s approach from a conceptual and **process-driven** perspective. The initial meeting also identified that, despite the differences in the cultural landscape in Sweden to that in the UK, the baseline issues around user needs and cultural content provision are similar to an extent. As such the **broader** lessons learned during the task could be applicable to other countries and environments too.

This means that the learning from these workshops can be meaningfully reapplied by Europeana when advocating for the broader best practice concepts and process relating to cultural listings data aggregation, sharing and publication (as modelled by the Culture24 approach) These concepts are inherent in the ‘checklist of key considerations’ derived from the workshops and highlighted in the last section.

Going forward, it is recommended that the promotion of this learning back to cultural institutions could take place via a series of workshops (perhaps via the Europeana Network). These workshops could be used to:

- Promote the strategic value of cultural listings as a digital asset for tourism, representing a vital information resource for tourists who are planning their activities and visits
- Explain the challenges and opportunities in producing fit for purpose cultural listings by discussing and unpacking the ‘checklist of key considerations’.

Key elements of the methodology and learning of the SwNHB/Culture24 workshops described here could be more widely applied in this way.

Appendix:

Culture24 approach to venue and event listings data aggregation & sharing

Culture24 sits between the worlds of museums and commercial publishers. We work very closely with museums and other cultural venues and have a deep understanding of their collections and digital offers. Indeed, Culture24 was originally conceived of as the 'first national virtual museum' (and named 24 Hour Museum) when set up in 1999. Our technical infrastructure is rooted in a cultural collections management system, as are the tagging vocabularies we apply to the data. Being born of this museological, digital cultural heritage community and seeking to represent it in an authoritative, authentic way sets us apart from our competitors in the world of commercial listings aggregators and providers. It comes with a unique set of challenges as well as certain advantages.

The venue and listings information in Culture24's data set is aggregated in two main ways – direct input by venues themselves and editorial collation by Culture24 staff. This document outlines the key steps in those processes then goes on to summarise the considerations involved in the process of data sharing - packaging and offering data for publication by external partners.

These processes and issues are summarised for the purposes of interrogating Culture24's methodologies and the extent to which they might be transferable or replicable in other settings and by other organisations.

In addition to aggregating data from the network we also write editorial content about the arts and heritage sector, consisting of news, features, interviews, trails, event round-ups and photo stories. This content is created, stored, published and shared within the same technical system as set out below. This document is about the venue and listings data only, not the creation and sharing of editorial content.

For clarity, this document uses the following terms in the following ways:

'Data' = factual information about venues and their public offer (text, images, urls)

'Content' = articles written by the editorial team (text and images)

Data aggregation

Culture24's 'network' of arts and heritage venues and organisations is currently 5,100 strong. We exist to support this network to reach audiences online and rely upon them to supply us with the information we require in order to do that job well. This data aggregation work requires intensive resource across a range of processes and is impacted by several factors.

1.1 Human effort

Staff within our network of venues and organisations are given log-ins to Culture24's password-protected web interface - DDE (Direct Data Entry) - where they can enter

information and upload images. A single user might be responsible for uploading information on a single venue or on multiple venues. The system allows a user to take control of an entire set of local authority venues for instance, and there is no limit to the number of individual users who may be given access to each venue record.

This user/community-generated data sourcing model has many advantages but does not alone generate the breadth, depth or accuracy required of a data set such as ours. Over the last three years or so we have moved towards more of a mixed model. The Culture24 content team researches and uploads some listings information in-house, in line with editorial priorities, user expectation and the requirements of sharing partners. In-house upload happens in two ways:

- simply using DDE in much the same way as venues would, logging in to create individual records one by one
- uploading batches of multiple events listings via a spreadsheet-processing system.

Within this mixed model there are several types of intervention and several touch points with the network. DDE users require varying levels and types of support from the Culture24 team and our in-house data sourcing takes various forms. These break down as follows:

- **Ongoing DDE user management** – creating user profiles, issuing passwords, setting up new venue records, assigning permission levels, issuing initial instructions, issuing password reminders, providing ongoing help, dealing with staff turnover in venues.
- **Ongoing DDE user engagement** – ensuring users remember to keep their records updated as far as possible and incentivising them to contribute to the data set by reminding them of the value and benefits of doing so and through rallying calls around particular campaigns, time periods, locations or partner priorities. Methods include email and email newsletters, Twitter, Facebook, blogs posts and phone calls.
- **Editorial intervention** – when a writer at Culture24 writes an article about a venue, exhibition or event, they check the venue's record to ensure it is up to date and use this touch point to make contact if not. The content team also keeps an eye on the breadth and depth of coverage. Where there are glaring omissions the team will source and upload that information themselves, again using that as an opportunity to make contact with the venue and remind them of the DDE service.
- **Campaign-led intervention** – the Museums at Night campaign is a good example of this. Culture24 coordinates this national festival of late-night opening in museums and galleries across the UK one weekend each May. We make entry of information about Museums at Night events into DDE a requirement of inclusion in the festival and accompanying PR campaign.
- **Commissioned aggregation services** – Culture24 offers a tailored service to sharing partners, researching suitable venues and events around specific themes or regions. For example the BBC has commissioned us to source and register non-profit

cultural venues as BBC 'partners', to ensure they are signed up to BBC terms and conditions, to support them in uploading information on events relating to BBC broadcast output, to tag and moderate all uploaded records, to ensure suitable images are provided and finally to feed those records through to the BBC's Things to Do website via a bespoke XML data feed.

These different touch points and types of support and intervention with our network are all inter-related and inter-reliant, combining to service Culture24's data aggregation activity.

1.2 Data model

The types of venues and organisations within Culture24's network are:

- Artist studio or collective
- Sacred space
- Campaign or initiative
- Association or society
- Garden, parklands or rural site
- Ship or maritime heritage site
- Transport heritage site
- Industrial heritage site
- Architecture centre
- Environmental or ecological centre
- Science centre
- Agricultural site
- Archaeological site
- Prehistoric site
- Castle or defences
- Historic house or home
- Heritage site
- Gallery
- Archive
- Library
- Museum

The information we gather from these venues covers:

- **Venue facilities** – eg disabled access, parking, cafes, gardens
- **Venue services** – eg education or identification services, wedding or conference hire
- **Exhibitions** – permanent and temporary
- **Events** – Workshops, storytelling sessions, guided tours, late openings, seasonal events, lectures, performances, living history/re-enactments

- **Collections** – overviews of their collections, key exhibits, key artists
- **Resources** – eg loan boxes, bookable learning sessions, books, podcasts, websites, leaflets, games, and teachers’ packs.

Tagging:

All information gathered can be assigned a geo-location and any number of ‘tags’. These tags cover three main subject areas with structured vocabularies around – art, science & nature and history & heritage – plus festival and programme tags (such as Heritage Open Days, Big Draw), locations, target audiences and national curriculum categories.

1.3 Technical system

At the heart of Culture24’s content management system (CMS), is the database which stores, sorts and serves up all of the information and content we gather and create. The content development system (CDS) element of this infrastructure is an online interface used by a range of content creators and inputters to upload text and images into the database. The system has a hierarchical permissions system that allows different users varying degrees of access to records within the database.

These users and their access levels break down as follows:

Editors	Full permissions to create, delete, update & publish all records, manage vocabularies & manage all user accounts within system
Journalists	Permission to create and update all records
Venue group managers	Permission to create, update & delete records as well as manage venue users within their groups
Venue users	Permission to create, update and delete all records relating to specified venues within system
Venue events/resources only users	Permission to create, update & delete only event and resource records relating to their specified venue (ie not venue or collections records)

Culture24’s CMS is built in Index+, a powerful software toolkit for creating systems to manage structured and unstructured text, data, still and moving images, sound and video. It features fast searching, very high storage capacity, a robust, network orientated, server-client architecture and a range of application development tools. Index+ is designed for UNIX, MS-Windows, NT and mixed environments and created and managed by System Simulation.

1.4 Data quality

We do not usually moderate the information coming in from our cultural sector network; all listings are published without checks of any kind by our content team. We endeavour to keep an eye on the data set though and frequently make minor corrections – ie to typos - where necessary, without making contact with the venue. If in our opinion a record requires significant alteration we make contact with the record ‘owner’ (the person who created it) and support them in making the changes. We trust our venue network not to abuse the system by entering information that might be in any way unsuitable for publication and thus far, over more than ten years, have had no problems at all. The only current exception to this general moderation policy is the BBC work described above. The intervention required by the BBC makes a positive contribution to the quality of the overall data set.

1.5 Legal considerations

It is essential that Culture24 adheres to the laws around copyright, IPR and data protection across our entire service. We do this in various ways.

We are careful to ensure that we safeguard the contact details of individual DDE users and thus comply fully with data protection legislation.

We have three separate sets of terms and conditions that relate to our data set, one for the venues and organisations supplying the information, one for users of the Culture24.org.uk website where we publish the data and the other for partners taking syndicated data feeds. The former and latter documents are available as appendices to this document.

The terms and conditions for DDE users basically ensure users understand they are taking responsibility for the accuracy, quality, IPR status and content matter of all information and images entered into the Culture24 system. Also that the venue they are representing is aware of and has agreed to this and that they understand Culture24 will be sharing this information with third parties.

The terms and conditions for partners taking syndicated data feeds are more complicated. There is a basic set of conditions common to all partners, ensuring they understand the venues (through their DDE users) are responsible for the accuracy and quality of all information provided; that information and images supplied must be displayed in the context provided and that information cannot be shared with third parties without Culture24’s agreement. Beyond those terms though, experience has taught us that there are always additional terms required that relate specifically to each individual data consuming partner. These depend upon the nature of the data being taken, the nature of the partnership with Culture24, the technical method of sharing that data, the context of the publication/service/widget where the information will be displayed and finally upon the status or type of organisation taking the data. Licenses are therefore shaped around each partnership individually. This is a resource-intensive but necessary process.

1.6 Financial considerations

Historically, Culture24 has offered this aggregation service at no charge to non-profit cultural venues. In 2013 we began to offer a subscription service for commercial venues, whereby we sell access to our Direct Data entry system for an annual fee. This fee includes the

network support, inclusion in data feeds, access to participate in the Museums at Night festival and its accompanying PR and promotion plus a monthly network newsletter.

This subscription service was launched only as a pilot, with very little promotion, to test the water. Calls were made to commercial art galleries that had already expressed an interest in the service, and a handful of subscriptions were sold. Fees are charged on a sliding scale according to the number of paid staff a gallery has. There are three tiers of access and prices vary between approximately £80 and £160.

We are too soon in the process to determine yet whether or not this is a model we wish to continue. Currently we are unable to resource the calls and communication required to sell these subscriptions, the pilot will be picked up at a later date.

Data sharing

As Culture24 exists to support arts and heritage venues to reach audiences online it is important that the venue and listings data we collect is distributed as widely as possible in order to reach as many audiences as possible. Theoretically, technology has made the sharing or syndication of venue and listings data simple. In practice, it's a process that requires a considerable level of resource and has thrown up issues we weren't expecting when we first began to offer data to third parties.

2.1 Data access and formats

Culture24 currently offers venue and listings data to third party publishers and partners (data 'consumers') in four standard formats and at three levels of access, open, redacted and full. The formats we offer are RSS, OAI-PMH, SOAP and Excel. We also work with individual publishers to create bespoke formats if required, as with the BBC for example.

The standard access methods can be summarised as follows:

2.1.1 Our **open** access venue and listings data consists of the name and or title fields, dates, times and addresses, plus a link to the rest of the record (description fields, tags, target audiences, related records etc) on culture24.org.uk. Taking and re-publishing this data requires no registration and can be done without making contact with Culture24. We do encourage data consumers to get in touch however. This open access is available via RSS, OAI-PMH, SOAP and Excel, through the latter does require contact as staff have to download and provide the data manually.

2.1.2 Our **redacted** data feed allows potential data consumers to see the data structure and access the first few letters of every field - to experiment with the data within their own environment and decide whether it fits their requirements. Again, theoretically they could do this without making contact with Culture24. Redacted access is available via OAI-PMH and SOAP.

2.1.3 **Full** access to our data - all fields except Culture24's administrative and workflow fields - requires the data consumer to make contact with us and ask for a key. This key - a numerical pass code that unlocks access to the SOAP and OAI-PMH data feeds, is individual to each data consumer and issued only upon the agreement of a license. The full data set is available via OAI-PMH, SOAP and Excel.

Access to the representative images accompanying venue and event records, at full size, is only currently available via OAI-PMH and SOAP. Thumbnail images are available via our standard RSS feeds and full size images could be made available upon request in a bespoke RSS feed.

2.2 Human effort

Making data technically available is only the first step in the data sharing process.

Experience has taught us that the most resource-intensive parts of the process are getting the word out, making the case for our data to potential partners and meeting their strategic and logistical requirements. The establishment and servicing of our data partnerships include the following stages and considerations.

2.2.1 From the point of first contact, whether a potential consumer has approached us or we them, the negotiations required for each new partnership include:

- **Strategic** - advocating the value of the data and partnership to senior management and agreeing license terms, including usage metrics and branding and fees where appropriate
- **Editorial** requirements - analysing and agreeing the purpose, type and scope of fields required and supporting decisions around presentation; analyse whether quality and quantity of data within database meets requirements
- **Technical** – liaising with technical teams to establish sharing format, decide frequency of updates, set up and test processes
- **Branding** and promotion - agree credit lines, display of logo, links back and any promotional messages or activity agreed within license.

2.3 Tracking and measuring

Ideally, Culture24 would be tracking the journey of all data leaving our database for other publishing environments, measuring audience reach and user engagement then analysing the impact of the entire process. The reality is that our technical systems are not set up to do any tracking of APIs yet. Plus, where any of our data consuming partners have the means to measure usage of our data within their digital environments they are usually not willing to share metrics back with us due to commercial sensitivities and/or lack of resource.

The benefits of being able to track and measure usage of this venue and listings data would be huge. If communicated back to both the Culture24 content team who support the venue network and aggregate data and the venues running events and generating the data, this information would influence internal resourcing decisions as well as editorial priorities.

Cultural venues and their funders need to be able to track and measure digital activity within and beyond their own databases and websites. The thriving data science industry has much to teach the cultural sector. Evidence-driven decision-making will have a vital role to play within the cultural and creative digital sectors once the lag between the sectors has been bridged. Culture24 is working with several partners on various aspects of these issues, both through data sharing initiatives and action research projects in order to try to understand the value inherent in the data we're dealing with and its journeys.

2.4 Branding and credits

Culture24 does publish an audience-facing website – culture24.org.uk – and runs the Museums at Night campaign, both of which require public profile and brand recognition. However, when it comes to our data-sharing partners we have come to recognise that this need for brand recognition often has to be put aside. When it comes to data sharing the partner publisher brand is top in the hierarchy, followed by that of the cultural venues (either individually or collectively) and finally Culture24's own brand.

The key consideration for us when negotiating a license and branding is that the venues contributing data understand where it has come from and why and also that our funders do. We require as far as possible that discreet 'powered by or 'provided by' Culture24 branding is displayed on pages displaying data provided via our system, with links back to our website. We also, where appropriate, work with the data consuming partners to promote the partnership and message out to the venue network. This drives participation by venues, incentivising them to enter more data into the system.

2.5 Financial considerations

When we first offered the Culture24 venue and listings data set for publication by third parties, in 2010, we planned a charging model, hoping to replicate the rates the commercial listings services charge. This has not happened for a variety of reasons and we are now, whilst not discounting charging were the right partnership to come along, mainly working on a free to access model. Reasons for this include:

- An assumption on publishers' parts that a publically funded data set should be freely available, particularly since the government's Open Data Initiative gathered strength
- The misunderstanding that the data is available via Google anyway, so 'why should we pay?'
- Publishers claiming poverty and more willing to enter a partnership on an 'in kind' basis – data in exchange for market profile for example
- The reality that because we publish this data ourselves, on culture24.org.uk, it is technically available for anyone to 'scrape' anyway, simply bypassing all partnership routes and licensing requirements.

Again, we are only at the beginning of this data sharing journey but believe at the moment that not charging is the only way forward within our current model. The benefits we gain through sharing the data and seeing what happens to it add value to our organisation and offer in ways other than that initial financial transaction.

2.6 Future opportunities

The areas of data sharing we are currently exploring, operationally and theoretically, include the publishing and sharing of linkable open data – facilitating semantic connections with other data sets, be they cultural, touristic, academic or commercial.

Identifying and understanding value at all points of the cultural data and cultural tourism ecosystem, in order to drive evidence based decisions, will be key as our data aggregation and sharing services, technologies and partnerships develop.

Culture24 is working in partnership on a range of projects to further that understanding, both for our organisation and for our venue network. These projects include:

- **Let's Get Real** – multi-partner action research into digital engagement, led by Culture24
- **Europeana Awareness** – piloting services to package cultural venue and events listings with collections material for cultural tourists, interrogating models and outcomes as we go
- **Europeana Creative** – again piloting and advising upon services to drive usage of cultural collections content but with the emphasis upon creative industries
- **Connecting Collections** – a national education project aiming to support children and teachers in finding and using digital cultural collections content in their learning and teaching.