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THE BLOG AS A COMMUNICATION TOOL

An analysis of Finnish museums' blogs

Master's thesis

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<p>Tiivistelmä – Abstract</p> <p>Blogging has been a steadily increasing trend in social media since its debut in the late 1990's. Social media hosts a wide range of blogs on different subjects and from various domains. A new genre of organization blogs made its appearance in the beginning of the 2000's, namely the museum blog. Museums' presence in social media has grown significantly in the last decades as they became more visitor-oriented and open to new communication possibilities. Blogging is a new way to increase museums' social media presence, communicate and interact with visitors as well as marketing their services.</p> <p>This research analyzes forty-six Finnish museum blogs putting the accent on their structure and features as communication tools. Finnish museums started having their first blogs around 2008 and the number of blogs grew up to forty-six by the year 2014. With the help of content analysis, the study takes a deeper look into Finnish museums' blogosphere and aims to respond to the questions of what, how and why are Finnish museums blogging. The research is comprised of two parts. The first part analyzes Finnish museum blogs and offers an overall picture of the blogs' general characteristics, goals and possible influence in museums and society. In addition, it explains the way museums use blogs and for what purpose as well as possible interaction with museum audiences. The second part consists of questionnaires conducted among museums which own blogs and whose purpose is to complete the blog analysis.</p> <p>In general, museums start blogging in order to document and present their activity to the public. Some museums open blogs for a limited period of time, usually in order to document a project or follow the building process of an exhibition. Most of the blogs though, are permanent and updated on a regular basis. Besides being communication channels, museum blogs offer a personal voice to the institution bringing it closer to the audiences. However, when it comes to interaction with the public, museum blogs remain mostly one-way communication channels as the number of comments stay low although the blogs have a considerable number of readers. A positive aspect of the reader interaction is the polite and constructivist nature of the comments. The research is aimed at cultural organizations which are interested or planning to use social blogs as well as individuals interested in how cultural organizations use blogs.</p>	
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Aika – Month and year 01/2016	Sivumäärä – Number of pages 91+liitteet
<p>Tiivistelmä – Abstract</p> <p>Bloggaaminen on ollut tasaisesti nousussa oleva trendi sosiaalisessa mediassa 1990-luvun lopulta alkaen. Sosiaalisesta mediasta löytyy monenlaisia blogeja eri aiheista ja eri aloilta. Uusi järjestöjen blogilaji ilmestyi 2000-luvun alussa, nimittäin museoblogi. Museoiden läsnäolo sosiaalisessa mediassa on kasvanut merkittävästi viime vuosikymmeninä, ja samalla museot muuttuivat enemmän yleisösuuntautuneiksi ja avoimiksi uusille viestintämahdollisuuksille. Bloggaaminen on uusi tapa lisätä museoiden läsnäoloa sosiaalisessa mediassa, kommunikoida ja olla vuorovaikutuksessa kävijöiden kanssa sekä markkinoida palvelujaan.</p> <p>Tämä tutkimus analysoi neljäkymmentäkuusi suomalaista museologia korostamalla niiden rakennetta ja ominaisuuksia viestintävälineinä. Ensimmäiset museoblogit Suomessa ilmestyivät vuonna 2008 ja niiden määrä kasvoi jatkuvasti. Vuonna 2014 suomalaisia museoblogeja oli jo neljäkymmentäkuusi. Sisällönanalyysin avulla tutkimus katsoo syvemmälle suomalaisessa museoblogosfäärissä ja pyrkii vastaamaan kysymyksiin, mitä, miten ja miksi suomalaiset museot bloggaavat. Tutkimus koostuu kahdesta osasta. Ensimmäisessä osassa analysoidaan suomalaisia museoblogeja ja tarjotaan kokonaiskuva blogien yleisistä ominaisuuksista, tavoitteista ja mahdollisista vaikutuksista museoissa ja yhteiskunnassa. Lisäksi tutkimus selittää, miten museot käyttävät blogeja ja mihin tarkoitukseen, sekä mahdollista vuorovaikutusta museoyleisön kanssa. Toinen osa koostuu kyselystä, joka lähetettiin niille museoille, joilla on blogi. Kyselyn tarkoituksena on täydentää blogien analyysia.</p> <p>Yleensä museot aloittavat bloggaamisen, jotta ne voivat dokumentoida ja esitellä toimintaansa yleisölle. Jotkut museot avaavat väliaikaisia blogeja seuraamaan hanketta tai näyttelyn rakentamisen prosessia. Kuitenkin useimmat blogit ovat pysyviä ja niitä päivitetään säännöllisesti. Viestintäkanavien lisäksi, museoiden blogit tarjoavat henkilökohtaisia ääniä instituutiolle tuomalla sen lähemmäs yleisöä. Kuitenkin, kun on kyse vuorovaikutuksesta yleisön kanssa, museoiden blogit ovat edelleen pääosin yksisuuntaisia viestintäkanavia, koska kommenttien määrä pysyy alhaisena, vaikka blogeilla on huomattava määrä lukijoita. Lukijoiden ja museoiden vuorovaikutuksessa myönteinen puoli on kommenttien kohtelias ja konstrukttiivinen luonne. Tutkimus on tarkoitettu kulttuurinstituutioille, joilla on kiinnostus sosiaalisen mediaan ja jotka suunnittelevat käyttävänsä blogeja sekä ihmisille, joita kiinnostaa, miten kulttuuri-instituutiot käyttävät blogipalveluja.</p>	
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1. Introduction

Nowadays museums operate within three spaces: their physical space, the online world, namely websites and social media, and in the mobile space (Kelly, 2013: 54).¹ During the last two decades there has been a continuously increasing phenomenon in social media, namely blogging. This research will look into the online world of museums and focus more specifically on the practice of blogging within these institutions. The research subjects chosen for this paper are the blogs of Finnish museums. The practice of blogging is part of a bigger picture namely social media, which in its turn belongs to Web 2.0, a web tool known to offer a great possibility for interaction, participation and content creation. The practice of blogging has its roots in the late 1990's, more specifically the term "blog" was used for the first time in 1997², so one would not call it that old. However, when it comes to museums, blogging is a novelty especially if narrowed down to Finnish museums. If museums in general started having their web pages as early as 1990's, blogs, however, even if used in other domains, remained an unexplored area for museums until recent years.

1.1 Purpose and structure of the study

The aim of the present study is to take a deeper look into Finnish museums' blogosphere, analyze the blogs of Finnish museums and present their most common features, their goals and their possible influence within the institutional framework as well as society. The research will present the purpose of museum blogs by trying to respond to the questions of what, how and why are Finnish museums blogging. Is blogging just a fad, is it because museums are doing the same on an international scale, do museums want to keep up pace with the trends in social media, is it another strategy to reach (younger) audiences? Is blogging a part of communication/marketing strategy of the museum? Are museums' blogs of any help to the visitors? What do museums expect to gain from blogging?

The research consists of two parts: a theoretical and a practical one which combined would help to obtain an overall view of the Finnish museums' blogosphere. The theoretical part is based on already existing bibliography related to museum field and social media including books, scholarly

¹ Quoted in Kirsten, Drotner; Kim Christian Schrøder (ed.). *Museum communication and social media: The connected museum*. New York: Routledge, 2013.

² Rettberg, Jill. *Blogging*. Cambridge, UK; Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2008.

articles and online resources. The bibliography though raises some problems as the field of museum blogging has not been thoroughly researched and there are not many published books regarding the subject. However, online resources offer some very good insights in the matter and they could constitute a suitable start for the research. The theoretical part also consists of an analysis of Finnish museums' blogs including content, themes, audience and goals and it will be done having as background the theory based on published sources. The analysis will have as target blog posts and comments. The practical part will consist of a survey aimed at the museum staff who writes and updates the blogs. The aim of the survey is to gain in depth information about the museums' blogging practices which would complete the theoretical analysis and to help answer the research questions.

The research will start by describing the methods used for data collection and analysis, the reasons behind research material selection and address ethical questions related to blog use as well as language issues. The third chapter will deal with museums and social media, more specifically the use of social media in museums, by outlining the role of communication in museums and mentioning the social media role inside museums. Moreover, a brief history of museums will be presented with the main focus on their relation with the public involving the transformation from closed institutions to visitor centered social spaces. Last, there will be presented the use of social media in Finnish museums. The fourth chapter will present the practice of blogging within museums by starting with the blog's definition, introducing blogs as tools of Web 2.0 and defining the museum blog as a new genre of the blogosphere. Then it will mention the role of blogs in museums and offer a summary of museum blogging in an international context. The fifth chapter will analyze Finnish museum blogs by taking into account their appearance, the reasons for blogging, their content as well as comments and feedback. Chapter six will present the results of the questionnaire and the last two parts of this research will consist of a discussion centered on consideration and the future of blogging in museums and a conclusion.

There are two main disciplinary areas in my research, namely, museology and social media. With reference to Peter van Mensch's museology basic parameters, the study deals with the second one: functions, because museums' blogs are part of a cultural institution's communication function, coming secondly after exhibitions, the core of museum communication. According to Eileen Hooper-Greenhill³, one of the museum's tasks is communication which is further extended to marketing and public services and blogging is part of this task. The field of social media is also very

³ Hooper-Greenhill, Eileen. *The educational role of the museum*. London: Routledge, 1994. Print.

broad; there are plenty of definitions of what social media is supposed to be but social media could be defined in a nutshell as “a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, which allows the creation and exchange of user-generated content”.⁴ Social media has several categories: social networks, blogs, microblogging, wikis, social bookmarking, magazines, podcasts, video, photography, art sharing, livecasting, social news and everything that has to do with the ideologies of Web 2.0 namely collaboration, participation and interaction. The form that this research will deal with is blogging.

In the paper *Social media and cultural interactive experiences in museums* Angelina Russo mentions that “The social role of museums has changed dramatically in the last decade, but communication and design rationales are still catching up. Museums no longer fit the early modernist model of the nineteenth century museum, with its authoritative narratives; many now offer interactive and open-ended experiences”.⁵ Although the paper handles mostly social media in general, as does other similar research in the area, it focuses mainly on the idea that the tools of social media are infiltrating slowly into the museum space changing it and offering new possibilities of interaction between similar institutions and the general public. Further on the article mentions that “The field of social media in museums is still very much in its infancy. Few scholarly papers have been written on the subject and while some museums have incorporated social media into their programs, a discussion of their impacts is only just beginning”.⁶

Blogging in the museums’ space has been tackled with even less as most of the academic papers deal with social media in general and very few actually research the blogging phenomenon within museums in particular. On an international level, there are few blogs who write about museums and the use of social media and in Finland even less given the fact that according to a study made by Finnish National Gallery in February 2012 only 14% of Finnish museums had blogs.⁷ From my personal research in the Finnish museums field with the help of the Finnish Museums Association’s museum database, I have gathered only forty-six blogs that are kept and more or less regularly

⁴ Nigel Morgan; Graham Jones; Ant Hodges. *The Complete Guide to Social Media From The Social Media Guys*. <http://www.thesocialmediaguys.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2011/03/CompleteGuidetoSocialMedia.pdf> [5.02.2013]

⁵ Russo, Angelina and Watkins, Jerry and Kelly, Lynda and Chan, Sebastian. *Social media and cultural interactive experiences in museums*. Nordisk Museologi, p. 19-29, 2007.

⁶ Ibid.5

⁷ Finnish National Gallery. *Arvoisa yleisö – verkkosivusto*. Yleisösuhteen kehittämishanke, 2012. http://www.kansallisgalleria.fi/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Valtion_taidemuseo_arvoisayleiso2012.pdf [5.02.2013]

updated by Finnish museums. At a first glance, museums seem to have started keeping blogs around 2008, some of them having regular updates and some writing from time to time. The topics are related to museum work and are written by the museum staff or volunteers within the museum. The aim with this research is to get a deeper understanding of the uses of blogs inside the Finnish museums, namely how and why they use the blogs and what are the future expectations from blogging practice.

1.2 Personal interest

The interest in this kind of research comes from my previous master's thesis which studied the phenomenon of cultural heritage in social media. The study is called *Cultural Heritage in Social Media: Museum of Photography* and "deals with a new form of displaying and preserving cultural heritage in the 21st century by using social media tools".⁸ The work is an analysis of a Romanian cultural heritage blog, Museum of Photography, which contains mainly documentary photography from the end of the 19th century until 1990's. Museum of Photography is not a formal cultural institution but only a blog, created and administrated by a professional photographer, who happens to have a passion for historical photographs and Romanian cultural heritage. The blog allows contributions from other people also and some of the posts, especially the ones related to the history and heritage of Romania, create discussion and bring plenty of comments. The purpose of the research was "to demonstrate that cultural heritage exists outside the boundaries of formal institutions, namely museums, thus showing that the meaning of the word "museum" is expanding and that the public can be successfully involved in online heritage projects. Furthermore, it offers a new insight on the environment where cultural heritage is encountered, how cultural heritage infiltrated in social media, how people respond to this phenomenon and what possible future outcomes this might have".⁹ The idea of my previous study is totally different than the present one; the only thing the two studies have in common is the blogging phenomenon which has not been studied in depth when it comes to cultural heritage field.

1.3 Previous studies

There are several works which can constitute the basis of my research, however, one must bear in mind that there is not yet extensive research done in the area of museums and the practice of

⁸ Rinne, Silvia. *Cultural Heritage in Social Media: Museum of Photography*. Jyväskylä: University of Jyväskylä, 2012.

⁹ Ibid. 8

blogging. However, in the last years research in this area has increased and several online publications as well as printed studies appeared as a result, which discuss museums and social media. Some of the major studies in this area are done by few blogs run by museum professionals and which post regularly about contemporary topics such as museums, interaction, social media, digitalization, and collaboration. Three of them are *MuseumBlogging.com*; *Musematic* and *Museum Next*. There is also a resourceful archive on cultural heritage from United States and Canada *Archives & Museum Information*¹⁰ which holds papers from the *International Conference on Hypermedia and Interactivity in Museums* (ICHIM), a conference dealing with museums and information technology in a broader context, and *Museums and the Web*¹¹ - “an annual conference featuring advanced research and exemplary applications of digital practice for cultural, natural and scientific heritage” which contains few papers about social media and museums. Another significant resource for my study is Nina Simon’s blog *Museum 2.0* which “explores the ways that the philosophies of Web 2.0 can be applied in museums to make them more engaging, community-based, vital elements of society”.¹²

Besides online resources, there are also published works which deal with the subject of museum blogging in a more or less broad context. One of the most significant works in the field is Lynn A. Bethke’s master’s thesis from University of Washington – *Constructing Connections: A Museological Approach to Blogging*. Her thesis is offering a first step in addressing the social media practices within museum from an academic point of view and is exploring whether blogging is an appropriate and beneficial practice for museums.¹³ Bethke also deals with the lack of museological academic research in the field and uses theories from education, communication, and public relations to examine the aspects of blogging as well as examples from museums. The second study is a bachelor’s thesis from Umeå University *Svenska museer och den sociala webben: webb 2.0 som verktyg för dialog* which explores how regional and central museums use the internet for reaching and interacting with the public and how museums can use web 2.0 to communicate with the public.¹⁴ The thesis deals with web 2.0 in general but there is also a section about the uses of blogs in museum communication. The third source is the book *The Participatory Museum* written

¹⁰ Archives & Museum Information <http://www.archimuse.com/index.html> [14.3.2014]

¹¹ Museums and the Web <http://www.museumsandtheweb.com/> [14.3.2014]

¹² Simon, Nina. *What is Museum 2.0?* 1.12.2006 <http://museumtwo.blogspot.fi/2006/12/what-is-museum-20.html> [14.3.2014]

¹³ Bethke, Lynn A. *Constructing Connections: A Museological Approach to Blogging*. Washington: University of Washington, 2007.

¹⁴ Karlsson, Matilda. *Svenska museer och den sociala webben: Webb 2.0 som verktyg för dialog*. Umeå: Umeå Universitet, Institutionen för kultur- och medievetskap, 2008.

by Nina Simon, the Executive Director of the Santa Cruz Museum of Art and History. The book is a practical guide to working with visitors and transforming cultural institutions into more dynamic, participatory and welcoming places. It has two parts: the first one is *Design for Participation* which introduces the principles of participation to cultural institutions and presents three approaches to making exhibitions and the second one, *Participation in Practice*, presents four models for participatory projects and provides recommendations how to develop, evaluate, manage and sustain participation in cultural institutions.

The importance of this research is to offer an insight into the practice of blogging done by Finnish museums and to answer the research questions posed above. One of the main goals is to also outline blogging as a new communication strategy for museums. I hope this research would be of further use to museums or other researchers to understand better the implications of blogging into museums' practices.

2. Methods

The method chapter will describe the type of research used in this paper, the choice of materials, the methods used in gathering and analyzing data and ethical issues. Moreover, I will restate the research questions mentioned in the introduction and the way this kind of research is going to offer a satisfactory answer to them.

The purpose of this study is to conduct a qualitative analysis of Finnish museums' blogs in order to offer a better understanding of the blogging phenomenon inside these cultural institutions. Blogging is a new phenomenon for museums, if we are to think from a historical point of view, but taking into account the emergence of web 2.0, blogging has been around for almost two decades. There is plenty of literature on blogs and blogging but unfortunately most of it deals with other areas where blogging is present. Blogs are very varied and they deal with plenty of themes, however cultural institutions have been paid little attention to when it comes particularly to this subject. One of the reasons is that museums started blogging quite recently and following the activity of Finnish museums in social media, one can notice that there are new blogs opened every year by museum staff. What is this phenomenon all about, why do museums blog, what do they blog and how do they do it are the questions this research will be trying to answer.

The appropriate way to answer these questions is qualitative research because the data gathering and analysis will be done using observational methods thus qualitative analysis offers flexibility “of the various experimental techniques, encompassing a variety of accepted methods and structures”.¹⁵ Qualitative studies are not standardized, the sample size can vary and the study is “more exploratory in nature” and seeking “to understand human behavior and the reasons that govern such behavior”.¹⁶ Qualitative analysis is usually “in the form of text, images, sounds drawn from observations, interviews and documentary evidence”¹⁷ and its purpose is to understand observed phenomena.¹⁸ “Qualitative research begins with an area of interest or a research question and a theory emerges through systematic data collection and analysis”.¹⁹ The main data which will be used in this study is comprised of blog texts including the comments posted on the blogs and questionnaire results which come as the last part of this paper. Because museum blogs are created every year and most of them continue to be updated on a monthly basis, I will choose to deal only with blogs from 2008 to 2014. The research will also be limited to blog posts up to December 2014 as there is more than enough material to be analyzed from this period of time. In the discussion and conclusion part there will also be mentioned new blogs or relevant observations which might appear after 2014. The blogs which are closed and have no significant activity will be mentioned in the study through relevant examples but there will be no further emphasis on them.

The blogs’ structure, content and comments are going to be analyzed using content analysis in order to “synthesize and comprehend the whole blog environment by identifying trends, and [...] yield relevant information of the institution”. Content analysis is a research tool which suits both qualitative as well as quantitative research and it has been used to analyze the structure, purpose, and themes found in high-profile as well as ordinary blogs.²⁰ In qualitative research, content analysis aims to understand subjective content such as attitudes or values.²¹ Krippendorff states that “content analysis is one of the most important research techniques in the social sciences; it seeks to understand data not as a collection of physical events but as symbolic phenomena and to approach their analysis unobtrusively”.²² Content analysis “examines data, printed matter, images, or sound –

¹⁵ Shuttleworth, Martyn. *Qualitative Research Design*, 2008. <http://explorable.com/qualitative-research-design> [24.3.2014]

¹⁶ Ibid.15

¹⁷ Moody, Daniel. *Empirical Research Methods. Research Methods Class*, March 8, 15 & 22, Monash University, 2002. <http://www.itu.dk/~oladjones/semester%203/advanced%20it%20mgt%20and%20software%20engineering/project/materials/what%20is%20empirical%20research1.pdf> [24.3.2014]

¹⁸ Jones, Steve (ed.). *Doing Internet Research*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.; London: SAGE, cop. 1999. Print.

¹⁹ Ibid.18

²⁰ Tremayne, Mark. *Blogging, citizenship, and the future of media*. New York: Routledge, cop. 2007. Print.

²¹ Gerald R., Adams. *Understanding Research Methods*. 2nd ed. New York: Longman, cop. 1991. Print.

²² Quoted in Gerald R., Adams. *Understanding Research Methods*. 2nd ed. New York: Longman, cop. 1991. Print.

texts – in order to understand what they mean to people, what they enable or prevent, and what the information conveyed by them does”, also it “provides new insights, increases a researcher’s understanding of particular phenomena, or informs practical actions”.²³ Since this paper aims to study a phenomenon by looking into its content, content analysis is suitable because “the question can be answered directly from a description of the attributes of content” and “it focuses on the substance of messages”.²⁴ The content analysis will be performed on blog posts namely the texts which are written on a blog and which are to be found in reverse chronological order with the newest post coming first, the information which gives more details about the blog purpose and the blogger(s) writing which is usually found in the blog description or in the blog posts themselves. If the blog does not possess such information then the survey would be a suitable method to find out more about the blog. Comments are also a part of the analysis as they give important feedback from the readers regarding the content of the blog. Other useful factors contributing to analysis are the blog archives, categories and tags which tell about the age of the blog, post frequency and themes as well as visual content, for example photos and videos. Content analysis is the most suitable in this case as it can identify the most noticeable features of museum blogs, museums’ reasons for starting a blog, the blogs’ main themes and what kind of interaction they create with readers by “identifying, coding, categorizing, classifying and labeling the primary patterns in the data [...] which means analyzing the core content of observations to determine what’s significant” (Patton, 2002: 463).

2.1 Data collection

“The main tools of data collection favored by qualitative researchers are interviewing, observation and document analysis”.²⁵ This research will use observation and document analysis for gathering and analyzing data. In addition a questionnaire will be sent to all museums which have blogs in order to find out more data which is not directly visible from the blog content. The blog list used for this study was compiled starting with September 2012 and added to whenever a new blog appeared or was proposed to the list. The museum blog list is not complete as new blogs appear every year while others are deleted or abandoned. However, a blog list had to be compiled as to have enough research material to analyze and reach certain conclusions. In November 2014 there were forty-six

²³ Krippendorf, Klaus. *Content analysis: an introduction to its methodology*. 3rd ed. Los Angeles; London: SAGE, cop. 2013. Print.

²⁴ Holsti, Ole R. *Content analysis for the social sciences and humanities*. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1969. Print.

²⁵ Chris, Mann, Stewart, Fiona. *Internet communication and qualitative research: a handbook for researching online*. London: Sage Publications, 2000. Print.

Finnish museum blogs registered online. Most of them can also be found from the Finnish Museums Association's blog post *Museoiden blogilista: seuraa näitä* (Museums' blog list: follow these)²⁶ however, I chose to leave some out for reasons I will explain in the research material selection part. Before the Finnish Museums Association launched its blog, I also did my own research in order to find the material needed for this paper. The main tools I used in finding museum blogs were Google, for example, searching for certain museum webpages and then looking for the blog links. Most of museums' webpages have their blog links incorporated directly into their webpage which makes it easier for the visitors to navigate towards the blogs. The best tool for searching museums is museot.fi which has a search engine called Search Museums/Museohaku and offers various options (name, location, subject, type, services and accessibility) when doing the search.

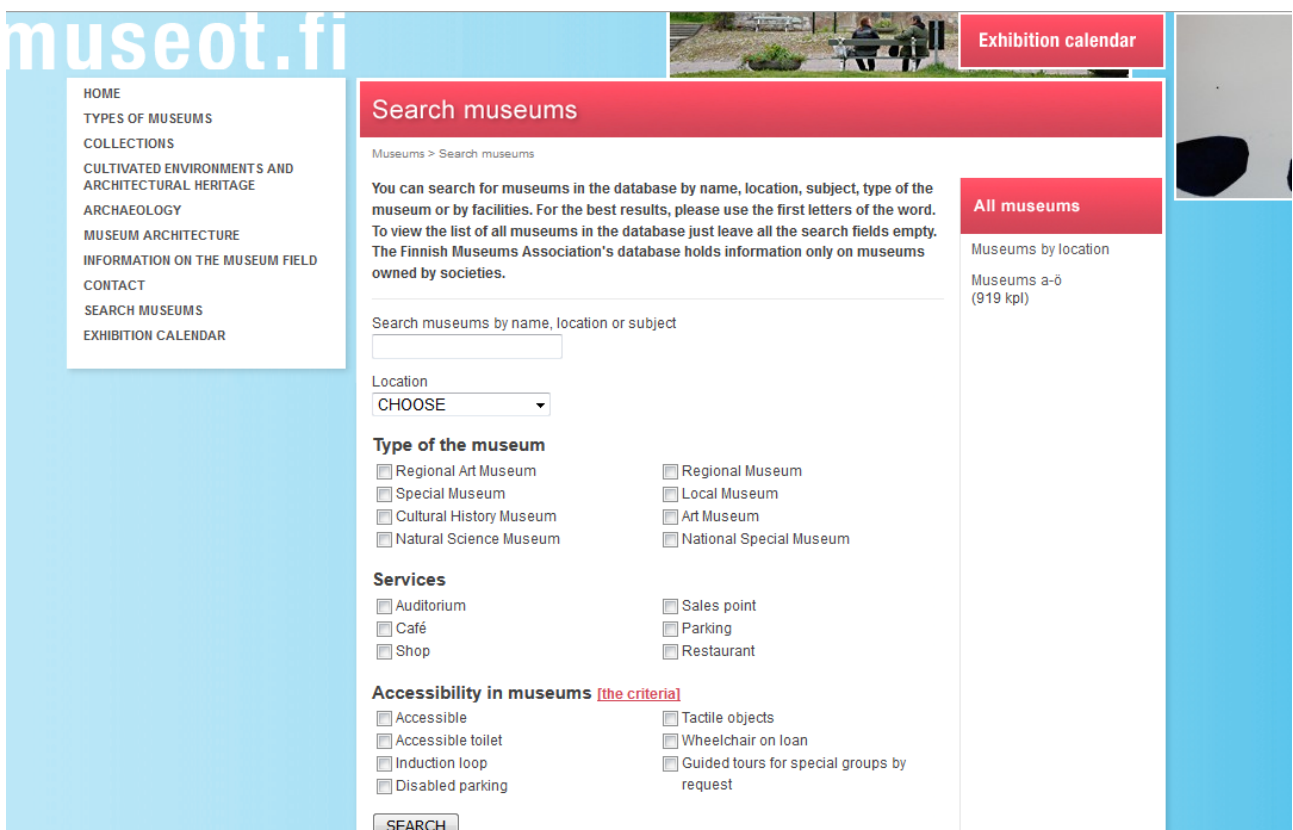


Figure 1

The search part was itself time-consuming since I had to check every museum webpage for blog links and sometimes it was challenging to find the blogs as the links were hard to notice. Another challenge posed by using museot.fi search engine was that not all museums are listed there. The search engine states clearly that “The Finnish Museums Association's database holds information

²⁶ P.S. Blogi Suomen Museoliitto. *Museoiden blogilista: seuraa näitä*. 27.2.2013. <http://museoliitto.blogspot.fi/2013/02/seuraa-naita-museoiden-blogilista.html> [25.3.2014]

only on museums owned by societies”²⁷ which means that museot.fi does not include every single museum in Finland. So, there might be blogs which did not make it to the list due to not being visible.

The second part of data collection consists of a questionnaire which will be sent to forty-one museums via Google Forms. Museums will be given the possibility to answer the questionnaire several times if they own more than one blog. The questionnaire will be sent in Finnish to the main mailing list of the museums or directly to the blog writer(s). The questionnaire is structured and has multiple choice answers, giving respondents the possibility to choose one or more options. The respondents are also given the possibility to add their own answers by using the ‘Other’ box as an alternative. The questionnaire is anonymous, the only field required is mentioning the museum’s blog name.

The questionnaire is meant to complete the research data gathered from the blogs as not all information is visible such as expectations, challenges, future plans, blogger’s age and position inside the museum and number of readers. Some of the questions related to reasons for blogging and blog subjects do not appear on some blogs and in addition, the questionnaire offers museum staff the possibility to add their own observations regarding the institution’s blog.

2.2 Research material selection

As mentioned before I chose not to include certain blogs due to research limitation and due to my decision to focus only on the blogs of certain cultural institutions namely museums. Museums are part of the cultural memory organizations which are public or private institutions whose task is to preserve cultural heritage and documented information for the future generations. Cultural memory organizations take care of society’s memory functions and they include museums, libraries and archives.²⁸ From these three cultural memory organizations, I chose to deal with museums.

On the Finnish Museums Association blog list there is the link of The National Archives Service/Arkistolaistos – *Näkökulmia arkistosta* (Perspectives from the archive).²⁹ Another cultural memory organization with its own blog is the Finnish Literature Society/Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura. On the blog *Vähäisiä lisiä* the experts in the field are writing and discussing

²⁷ Museot.fi Search museums. <http://www.museot.fi/searchmuseums/> [25.3.2014]

²⁸ University of Tampere. *Tietoaainestojen säilyttäminen. Muistiorganisaatiot.* http://www.sis.uta.fi/iti/kurssit/tahap/m5/m5_muistifunktiot.html [25.3.2014]

²⁹ Näkökulmia arkistosta. <http://nakokulmiaarkistosta.blogspot.fi/> [25.3.2014]

about culture, research and cultural heritage.³⁰ Libraries in Finland also started their own blogs joining the trend of other memory organizations. Two major works about library blogging have already been published namely Michael P. Sauers *Blogging and RSS: a librarian's guide* and Karen A. Coombs and Jason Griffey *Library blogging* which is a proof that library blogging is a growing phenomenon and attention is paid to by researchers. I also chose to leave out the blogs which deal with cultural heritage in general such as the Finnish Museums Association blog which is writing about contemporary issues of cultural heritage. There is also The Doll and Teddy Bear Museum's blog *Nukkenallemuseo*³¹ which is written in Finnish but it is situated in Lézan, Southern France so it does not belong to Finnish museums. *Painolastina*, the blog kept by the amanuensis from Rauma Maritime Museum is also not on the list as the blog emphasizes on personal experiences and reflections upon life as a sailor.

All of these blogs will be left out due to limiting of the research and choosing a homogenous sample for content analysis. The cases chosen for this study obey the limits of content analysis sampling as they are “both representative and significant, while still small enough to be analyzed in depth”.³² I did not limit my research to museum type as the museum type is not relevant to my research questions and besides, the number of Finnish museums which have blogs is very small and the research would not give the expected results.

2.3 Data analysis

The data analysis will be carried out mainly on the blog texts or blog posts. The main things I am interested in when analyzing museum blogs are: layout, reasons for blogging, content and comments. These four characteristics are enough to explain the phenomenon of blogging inside museums. The content (text and possible pictures or videos; the **About** section of the blog) responds to the question of what and why are museums blogging, the layout including archives, categories, tags, the blog service they are using and other incorporated features, for example **like us on Facebook**, explain how museums are blogging. In this way it can be noticed the dynamics of the blogs, when were created, the frequency of posts, the number of posts denoting how active the blogs are. The comments give an idea about the feedback museums' blogs receive and their popularity among readers, what opinions do readers have, possible criticism, additional information

³⁰ Vähäisiä lisiä. <http://www.finlit.fi/blogi/> [25.3.2014]

³¹ Nukkenallemuseo. <http://museopaivakirja.blogspot.fi/> [6.5.2015]

³² Seale, Clive (ed.). *Researching society and culture*. London: SAGE Publications, 2000. Print.

or contribution to the blog posts. Also they offer an idea where do blogs stand as communication tools inside museums.

The information will be selected straight from the blogs with proper quotations and screenshots if necessary. The idea is not to read every blog post but scan them and observe their most important features like the themes they write about. Some of the museums present themselves and their goals in the **About** section, in the introductory post or on the blog banner situated above the page usually accompanied by a photo. However, some blogs do not offer such information and it has to be extracted from the content.

One must be careful with the content of blogs as one of its major disadvantages is instability and an ephemeral content.³³ The content can be modified and deleted without any notice. Initially I had forty-eight museum blogs on my list but unfortunately Åland Maritime Museum does not have a blog anymore, the link leading to a page with the mention article not found. Another blog that cannot be accessed is *Museo-opas tarinoi*³⁴ (Museum guide tells stories) from Sieve Museum which upon accessing the link, the message “This blog is open to invited readers only” is displayed.

2.4 Ethical and language issues

The ethical issues implied in this study take into consideration the kind of material that is going to be researched. One of the first things to consider when doing internet research is that no harm is done to anybody and the content and authorship of the material is given credits to. This paper does not deal with a complex research ethics because the studied subjects are not individuals therefore no informed consent is needed. In the book *Doing Ethical Research*, the author states “that some Internet material arguably falls into the category of online publication. Blogs with no limited access are written as public texts for people to read and encourage interaction. Analyzing the public face of many companies, organizations, pressure groups, appreciation societies seems to be relatively ethically straightforward”.³⁵ The research material is text-based comprised of blogs which belong to an institution. The blogs are public, not password protected, can be accessed by anybody at any time and their content is not personal so they do not contain any sensitive information. Upon using material from the blogs like quotations or photos, the source will be mentioned. If there is a need to

³³ Myers, Greg. *Discourse of blogs and wikis*. London; New York: Continuum, c2010. Print.

³⁴ Museo-opas tarinoi. <http://sievinmuseo.blogspot.fi/> [6.5.2015]

³⁵ Farrimond, Hannah. *Doing ethical research*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.

quote comments, I will not use the commenter's name or nickname. Some blogs do specify clearly that photos are not allowed to be used without permission.

I choose English as the primary language for this study because of two reasons. First and foremost there is not that much research done in the field of museums and blogging especially connecting the blogging phenomenon with the museum institution and an international language would not only make the study more accessible but it will give other researchers interested in this subject the opportunity to inspire themselves and pursue further research in the field if needed. Secondly, my knowledge of academic Finnish is limited and I would like the writing to have a good quality. When confronted with situations of quoting text directly from the blogs, suitable translation will be provided. The names of the blogs will be kept in Finnish and an alternative English name will be used for the institutions referred to in the study.

3. Museums and social media

In this chapter I intend to offer an overall theory regarding the use of social media in museums. I will start by outlining the role of communication in museums and continue with a general picture of the use of social media in museums with the accent on the benefits of social media tools within the museum institution. Further on, I intend to outline a brief history of museums with the accent on their transformation from closed institution to social spaces that include Web 2.0 in daily activities. Then I will mention the use of social media in Finnish museums. This chapter is important for the rest of the paper because it shows how museums developed to introduce social media into their practices as a tool of communication, marketing and education, and also presents the Finnish museums' situation when it comes to social media.

3.1 Museum communication

"Museums are highly visible institutions in contemporary societies and their ongoing existence and claims for resources are often justified on the grounds of 'relevance'. To what, and to whom, are they relevant? The common answer is 'the public'. Within the museum context the term *public* is often used to invoke a generalized body of people: an audience, a represented community or certain non-visitor interest groups. It is employed to lay claim to and convey the museum's status as an

open, democratic institution for and of ‘the people’”.³⁶ Museum communication has developed with the idea that museums are public and they are made for an audience. One of their main goals is to educate and inform the audience along with documentation and preservation of cultural heritage.

The concept of the public has changed in time and new meanings were attributed to it as the goals of the museum itself changed. In the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries museum’s mission was to educate and civilize people along with standing as a symbol for a nation’s military, cultural or economic achievements. However, this previous idea of being public shifted with the birth of contemporary museum which “struggles to negotiate between the remnants of an earlier rhetoric of ‘public’ and new practices and types of spaces designed to attract new audiences, engage new communities and respond to the locality or nation within which they are situated”.³⁷ This new idea of public museum fits into the new museology theory whose idea was the development of accessibility in museums by emphasizing on the visitors and their experiences.³⁸ “This ongoing quest to attract and be relevant to the public is not new. It has been a concern for museums since their invention as a public institution in the late eighteenth century” (Anderson, 2004).³⁹

Museums, as other cultural institutions, were affected by the changes of the late twentieth century as their “physical structures, types of exhibits, collection policies and management of many museums have changed over the past three decades to accommodate the developments of both the consumerist and the cultural-pluralists aspects of museums (Benhamou and Moureau, 2006; Karp et. al., 2006; McIntyre, 2006; Message, 2006).⁴⁰ Nowadays museums, besides their exhibitions, contain shops, cafes, cinemas and restaurants. In addition to that, museums started to go online, opening web pages, sharing their collections, creating virtual or three dimensional replicas of their physical exhibitions. Moreover, museums have also entered social media which is “increasingly transforming cultural communication frameworks and is representative of the shift in museum ideology over recent years”.⁴¹ In the history of museums, there have never been as many public, real-time conversations surrounding the best methods and techniques with which to engage audiences. This increased interest has been in part enabled by the heightened importance now placed on audiences, as well as the rise of the internet providing tools for collaboration.⁴² One of

³⁶ Barrett, Jennifer (ed.). *Museums and the public sphere*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011.

³⁷ Ibid. 36

³⁸ Ibid. 36

³⁹ Ibid. 36

⁴⁰ Quoted in Barrett, Jennifer

⁴¹ Downes, Caroline. *Analyzing characteristics of social media in cultural communication: An investigation of social media use at Museum Victoria*. School of Media and Communication, RMIT University, November 2011.

⁴² Ibid. 41

these tools is social media with communication as one of its most important features. Also communication in social media happens in real-time (Mitussis et al., 2006, 576) and it is mainly informal and user-generated (Constantinides & Fountain, 2008; von Campenhausen & Lübben, 2002).

Over the past thirty years museum communication has progressed from the 19th century information transmission models used in the early modernist museums, to social constructivist models which acknowledge the experiences that audiences bring with them when visiting the museum (Watkins and Mortimore, 1999; Falk & Dierking, 2000; Hein, 1998).⁴³ Museum communication can also be defined through the 1960's communication theories of Bart, Levi-Strauss, Saussure and Foucault: communication is the interpretation of meaning through symbols and signs (Barthes, 1972; Levi-Strauss, 1967; Saussure, 1960) or as a meaning-making process heavily influenced by culture (Berger - Luckman, 1966; Foucault, 1969). Lustig and Koester (1993) summarized these (post)modern definitions into a contemporary definition of communication as a “symbolic, interpretive, transactional, contextual process in which people create shared meanings”. Communication is a process through which information is shared between two or more persons and it can be one-way, two-way or circular which implies exchange of information and interaction and its aim is information transfer. Besides information transfer, Lustig and Koester (1993) also mention information creation and sharing as a part of the communication process. The main goal of the communication process is the understanding of messages and their meanings as well as feedback receiving in order to show how the messages were understood.⁴⁴

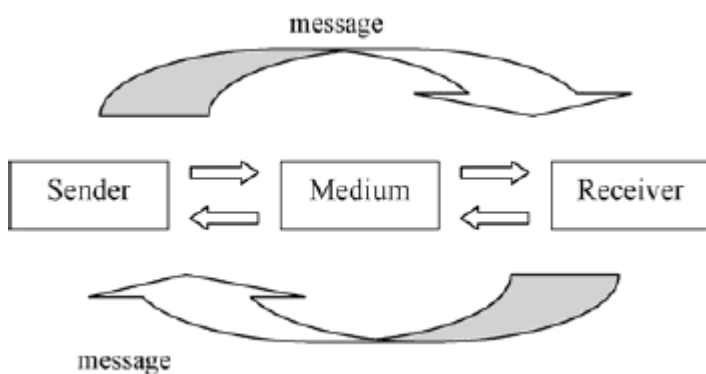


Figure 2 Communication model

When it comes to social media, the communication model within museums is re-designed “from a transmission model defined from an institutional perspective on to a user perspective” and allows

⁴³ Quoted in: Russo, Angelina and Watkins, Jerry and Kelly, Lynda and Chan, Sebastian. *Social media and cultural interactive experiences in museums*. Nordisk Museologi, p. 19-29, 2007.

⁴⁴ Quoted in: Reisinger, Yvette. *International tourism*. (2nd ed.) New York: Routledge, 2012.

museums to find answers to their communication structure and purpose in order to reformulate their perspectives and goals. Social media focuses more on interactive communication processes in museums than unilateral communication processes meaning that the information consists of external sources not only internal ones such as the institution and its collection. With regard to visitors, the communication process sees them as cocreators and not just information receivers (Kirsten and Schrøder, 2013: 3, 4). As noticed from Figure 2, the message in the communication model goes both ways in an institution that uses social media.

Angelina Russo (2007) offers a comprehensive model of communication for museums which includes one-to-one communication (user to user), one-to-many communication (museum to user e.g. museum web pages and blogs) and many-to-many communication model (knowledge to knowledge e.g. wikis). One-to-one and one-to-many communication models have represented the authoritative voice of the museum and they have left room for little to no interaction. According to Thomas S. (1998) museum authority has its roots in the physical collections and this authority is seen in museum's displays and interpretation. The information that museum is offering is authentic and reliable which is of great importance in the era of social media when objects are not the primary focus anymore but the public. "The notion of authenticity – as provided by the museum – organizes collections of narratives into recognizable and authoritative histories, mediating the relationship between visitors and objects. Social media can extend this authenticity by enabling the museum to maintain a cultural dialogue with its audiences in real time".⁴⁵ However, although many-to-many is recognized as part of museum communication model, museums "remain slow to recognize their users as active cultural participants in many-to-many cultural exchanges and therefore social media have yet to make a significant impact on museum communication models, which remain fundamentally one-way (Russo & Watkins 2006, Russo et al 2006).

3.2 The use of social media in museums

Museums have always used technology be it exhibition cases, videos, dioramas or an interactive (Museum Informatics, 2000: 194). Recently museums began to shift from being archival institutions frequented by the upper and educated classes, to institutions that allow public engagement and encourage public discussion and participation. This has been made possible by

⁴⁵ Russo, Angelina and Watkins, Jerry and Kelly, Lynda and Chan, Sebastian. *Social media and cultural interactive experiences in museums*. Nordisk Museologi, p. 19-29, 2007 .

allowing social media tools into museums which in their turn offer visitors the possibility to respond to museums' content and collections.⁴⁶ Museums have been using social media mainly for events listings or posting reminder notices, to reach larger or new audiences and to post online promotions or announcements, extending the audience/institution relationship beyond “the captions, the information panels, the accompanying catalogue, the press handout” (Vergo, 1989: 3).⁴⁷ This usually sums up museums' social media use for communication and marketing purposes. One of the articles from *Museums and the Web* site starts by explaining the role of social media in people's lives and how museums are embedding social media into their practices for marketing and communication benefits: “Social media is transforming the way people interact with each other, make decisions in their daily lives, and receive information (Qualman, 2009). Therefore, museums are trying different approaches to utilising these media for improving their marketing and communication practices (Kelly, 2013)”.⁴⁸ Besides marketing and communication, museums are using social media for educational purposes, that is engaging teachers, museum educators and the public into museum activities and encouraging them to make use of museum resources and share museum experiences. One way in which social media can be used in learning is by allowing the public to be active members in the museum community and to make contributions through involvement and participation (Russo, 2007).⁴⁹ This implies that the public can be active in the social media channels provided by the museums, interacting with the museum and other visitors in order to consume but also contribute with and exchange information. “For museum education social media can be used to ensure learning opportunities for online visitors and as an integral part of an educational project (on-line or blended). Social media offers a flexible, user-friendly and open use of all kind of museum related content. But in fact, social media for museum education is still rarely utilized”.⁵⁰ Blogging is also a way to encourage constructivist learning in museums outside their walls as blogs offer “the opportunity for conversation, both through blogosphere stories and through commenting structures which mimic conversational structures” (Bethke, 2007: 17).

⁴⁶ Downes, Caroline. *Analyzing characteristics of social media in cultural communication: An investigation of social media use at Museum Victoria*. School of Media and Communication, RMIT University, November 2011.

⁴⁷ Quoted in Russo, 2012.

⁴⁸ N. Dudareva. *Museums in social media*. In *Museums and the Web 2013*, N. Proctor & R. Cherry (eds). Silver Spring, MD: Museums and the Web. Published June 1, 2014. <http://mwf2014.museumsandtheweb.com/paper/museums-in-social-media/> [accessed 16.3.2015]

⁴⁹ Russo, Angelina and Watkins, Jerry and Kelly, Lynda and Chan, Sebastian. *Social media and cultural interactive experiences in museums*. *Nordisk Museologi*, p. 19-29, 2007.

⁵⁰ *Museums and the Web. Unconference session: Social media in museum education*. http://www.museumsandtheweb.com/blog/biancabocatus/unconference_session_social_media_in_mus.html#comment-4548 [accessed 5.5.2015]

“Major museums worldwide are starting to use social media such as blogs, podcasts and content shares to engage users via participatory communication. This marks a shift in how museums publicly communicate their role as custodians of cultural content and so presents debate around an institution’s attitude towards cultural authority” (Russo et. al., 2008). Many museums and other cultural institutions decided that they needed web sites in the early 1990’s so people could find more information about them. Later in the 2000’s, with the advent of web 2.0 which gave rise to social media tools, museums started embedding different social media into their practices in order to share their content and communicate with the public.⁵¹ A simple definition of Web 2.0 would be “a second generation of the World Wide Web that is focused on the ability for people to collaborate and share information online. Web 2.0 basically refers to the transition from static HTML Web pages to a more dynamic Web that is more organized and is based on serving Web applications to users”.⁵² Web 2.0 main characteristics are: participatory, dynamic and user-centered (Hinton & Hjorth, 2013: 20). “Social media can be defined broadly as those services that facilitate online communication, networking, and/or collaboration” (Russo et. al., 2008). Social media “has grown out of Web 2.0 and the creation of the user-generated Web. [...] Social media is a Web 2.0 innovation [...] because it encourages user-generated content, [and] it extends the focus to the users by allowing them to curate other content to share among their networks”.⁵³ “According to Kaplan and Haenlein there are six different types of social media: collaborative projects, blogs and microblogs, content communities, social networking sites, virtual game worlds, and virtual communities. Technologies include: blogs, picture-sharing, vlogs, wall-postings, email, instant messaging, music-sharing, crowdsourcing, and voice over IP, to name a few. Many of these social media services can be integrated via social network aggregation platforms”.⁵⁴ A more simple approach to social media is offered by Harto Pönkä which divides social media tools into two categories: the ones used for reaching and sharing and the ones used for content production.

⁵¹ Simon, Nina. *A simple argument for why museums and cultural institutions should care about social media*. Museum 2.0. 13.4.2009. <http://museumtwo.blogspot.fi/2009/04/simple-argument-for-why-museums-and.html> [accessed 5.5.2015]

⁵² Beal, Vangie. *Web 2.0*. Webopedia. http://www.webopedia.com/TERM/W/Web_2_point_0.html [5.5.2015]

⁵³ Beattie, Andrew. *What is the difference between social media and Web 2.0?* 29.11.2011. <http://www.techopedia.com/2/27884/internet/social-media/what-is-the-difference-between-social-media-and-web-20> [5.5.2015]

⁵⁴ Nigel Morgan; Graham Jones; Ant Hodges. *The Complete Guide to Social Media From The Social Media Guys*. <http://www.thesocialmediaguys.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2011/03/CompleteGuidetoSocialMedia.pdf> [5.5.2015]

Reaching and sharing tools include Facebook, Twitter and Google+ and content production tools are comprised of blog services, Flickr and YouTube, for example.⁵⁵

A 2011 New York Times report about the use of social media and websites in local museums stated that: “A decade ago, museum Web sites were little more than online advertisements, displaying an institution’s hours, directions, admission prices and exhibitions. ... But evolving technology has created new opportunities, and [social media managers] are becoming critical players in helping museums exploit them” (Vogel, 2011). Vogel also said that most of what goes on the walls of museums is still carefully organized by scholars. Museums are still using conventional methods of communication and social media is a new way to approach audiences using new channels “turning passive audiences into active ones through the opening up of communication channels between museums and audiences. This is because museums have realized that engagement results in a higher visitor attachment to the museum and usually affects visitors’ memory and experience of the institution positively” (Downes, 2011: 14). Also social media helps to “build and sustain communities of interest around an institution. Inclusion, community, access and representation have been buzzwords in the museums sector for some time, and there is hope that social media will fit that brief also” (Kidd, 2010). “The goal for all this technology remains getting people through their doors.”⁵⁶

Nowadays museums all over the world use social media tools “as a means to communicate and promote their activities, and also to interact and engage with their visitors (Russo, Watkins, Kelly, & Chan, 2008; Kidd, 2011; Fletcher & Lee, 2012). A large number of museums now have a profile on social media sites to post news, promote their exhibitions, or disseminate their content; and also to organize participatory projects or to create initiatives aimed at interacting with the visitors and starting conversations and debates.”⁵⁷ Through social media museums create for themselves a face as part of their branding activity and therefore making people feel more familiar and involved with the institution (Kidd, 2010) and also “have the opportunity to use tools provided by social media to interact more directly with a range of audiences on their own terms in a more equal, two-way

⁵⁵ Pönkä, Harto. *Sosiaalinen media ulkoisen viestinnän ja maineenhallinnan apuna*. SlideShare. 14.3.2012.
<http://www.slideshare.net/hponka/aikopa-some-140312> [17.3.2015]

⁵⁶ Bomboy, Scott, and Rebecca Sherman. *Success Strategies for Engaging Audiences with Museum Website Blogs*. MW2014: Museums and the Web 2014. Published February 24, 2014.
<http://mw2014.museumsandtheweb.com/paper/success-strategies-for-engaging-audiences-with-museum-website-blogs/> [accessed 16.3.2015]

⁵⁷ E. Villaespesa. *Diving into the Museum’s Social Media Stream. Analysis of the Visitor Experience in 140 Characters*. In *Museums and the Web 2013*, N. Proctor & R. Cherry (eds). Silver Spring, MD: Museums and the Web. Published January 31, 2013.
<http://mw2013.museumsandtheweb.com/paper/diving-into-the-museums-social-media-stream/> [accessed 16.3.2015]

relationship. Social media offers greater scope for collaboration, enabling museums to respond to changing demographics and psychographic characteristics of the public. Significantly, the tools of social media also provide new ways to learn about audiences through interacting with them directly [...]”.⁵⁸

However, there are also problems regarding introducing social media in museums as this can be seen as a threat to museum’s authority because “Web 2.0 puts users and not the organization at the centre of the equation. [...] Many years ago now, Stephen Weil stated that museums need to transform themselves from ‘... being *about* something to being *for* somebody’. Social media provides the perfect vehicle to take this further, with museums enabling learners, users, visitors to become participants wherever they are and however they choose. However, this depends how willing museums are to implement organizational change and conduct meaningful two-way interaction and dialogue with their audiences.”⁵⁹ Instead of worrying about losing control of their content or that visitors will prefer the virtual space rather than the physical institution, museums “should focus their social media efforts on their visitors interacting and engaging with their collections” [...] Through effective social media use, museums can achieve a focused enhancement of the museum experience, providing opportunities for visitors to connect and respond to the museum collections in non-traditional ways (Downes, 2011: 19, 20). Another challenge of implementing social media into museum space is taking into account the various types of audiences and their needs (Downes, 2011: 17). Also museums should treat social media as part of their overall communication strategy and not implement it separately as it leads to a misalignment of frameworks that is goals and results can differ due to differences in the strategies (Downes, 2011: 28). Also social media needs carefully planning and implementation because “no one single approach to social media is suitable for every museum”.⁶⁰ That is because museums have a broad range of audiences with different backgrounds, needs and preferences.

A study done by Natalia Dudareva on the audiences of museums on Facebook found out that they are not homogenous but driven by different motivations to follow museums and interact with them online. In the article *Museums in social media*, Dudareva outlines four groups of motivations for cultural consumption in social media: intrinsic benefits of arts and culture, manifestation and development of personal identity, education and intellectual development, socialization and

⁵⁸ Kelly, L. *The Impact of Social Media on Museum Practice*. Paper presented at the National Palace Museum, Taipei, 20 October 2009.

⁵⁹ Ibid. 58

⁶⁰ Downes, Caroline. *Analyzing characteristics of social media in cultural communication: An investigation of social media use at Museum Victoria*. School of Media and Communication, RMIT University, November 2011.

interaction. Added to those, she mentions five types of relationships found between museums and their users namely the enthusiast, the connected, the contributor, the interested and the informational. The enthusiast is an active museum visitor and has a high interaction with museums online, the connected and the contributor visit museums regularly but they do not involve with museums online as actively as the enthusiast does. The interested uses museums' social media as a source of information but is not actively involved with them. The informational uses social media occasionally for information but it is not an active museum visitor and has the lowest involvement with museums' social media.⁶¹ Although the main aim of the study concerned museum marketing and was restricted only to three Danish museums and their Facebook use, the study's typology about motivation for cultural consumption in social media types of relationships found between museums and their users can be extended to other museums' use of various social media tools. The study proves that "social media provides an opportunity to remain connected with museum audiences outside the actual visits" and "offers vast opportunities for direct communication with target audiences, maintaining long-term presence in their consideration, and even involving them at the core of the museum experiences".⁶²

Social media has integrated itself strongly into museum field as nowadays there is plenty of research on this subject, social media strategies for museums are discussed and implemented on sites such as *Museums and the Web*, the international conference about culture and heritage online, and several publications are dealing with social media use in cultural institutions. The importance of social media use in cultural institutions is also stressed by Nina Simon on her blog *Museum 2.0* where she mentions that social media changes the way people interact with the Web which "is changing into a socially contextualized information environment, and as that change happens, it becomes more important that people can 'find you' via their personal social networks".⁶³ As more people use social media services for interaction, information dissemination and content creation, museums have also adapted to the public's needs and requests and have integrated social media tools into their communication and marketing strategies. They have embraced social media, "seeing it as a way to reach out to the community and involve them in order to both improve access and

⁶¹ N. Dudareva. *Museums in social media*. In *Museums and the Web 2013*, N. Proctor & R. Cherry (eds). Silver Spring, MD: Museums and the Web. Published June 1, 2014.

<http://mwf2014.museumsandtheweb.com/paper/museums-in-social-media/> [accessed 16.3.2015]

⁶² Ibid. 61

⁶³ Simon, Nina. *A simple argument for why museums and cultural institutions should care about social media*. *Museum 2.0*. 13.4.2009. <http://museumtwo.blogspot.fi/2009/04/simple-argument-for-why-museums-and.html> [accessed 5.5.2015]

improve understanding. This represents a shift towards a user-focused conceptualization [...] that can be compared to the kind of shift that O'Reilly characterizes as occurring in the internet move from Web 1.0 to Web 2.0⁶⁴ (Hinton & Hjorth, 2013: 84). Social media is not a novelty anymore in museum field but a contemporary reality which holds “tremendous promise for museums in advancing visitor involvement and in forging engagement for potential visitors and society at large” (Drotner and Schrøder, 2013:2). It should be acknowledged and be used for museums’ advancement as representatives of cultural heritage and society’s values in a modern world.

3.3 From closed institutions to Web 2.0

In this part I am shortly going to outline the history of museums so as to offer a better understanding of the museum institution and its stages within our society. The main goal is to present how the museum developed from a closed institution with no access to the public, to the open, interactive and educational place we have nowadays. It is also crucial to understand how the concept of museum developed in order to have an overall picture of the role and functions of the present cultural institution. For the start I would like to provide the ICOM definition of museum which was adopted during the 21st General Conference in Vienna, Austria, in 2007:

A museum is a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment.⁶⁵

The ICOM definition of museum embeds the role and functions of the museum in contemporary society namely an institution which serves a multitude of purposes and is open to a large audience. The definition however has changed since 1964 in accordance with the developments within the museum community as well as society in general. However, taking into account the fact that museums are a large and ever-growing presence in social media, the definition reflects very well museums’ functions within online world that of being in the service of society and communication; communication being one of the most important factors when it comes to museum blogs.

Museums’ journey from being closed institutions until their development into open spaces in the service of society starts more than two thousand years ago with the private collection of a

⁶⁴ For a better understanding of the differences between Web 1.0 and Web 2.0 see Tim O’Reilly, What is Web 2.0.

<http://www.oreilly.com/pub/a/web2/archive/what-is-web-20.html>

⁶⁵ ICOM. *Definition of Museum*. <http://icom.museum/the-vision/museum-definition/> [accessed 10.3.2015]

Babylonian princess, Ennigaldi, the daughter of King Nabonidus, the last king of the Neo-Babylonian Empire. Her collection consisted of artifacts from different places and periods carefully organized and labeled.⁶⁶ Collections of objects have been found in Paleolithic burials so it is difficult to say though when the first museum was founded because collecting was a part of humans' basic activities. Collecting is also one of the basic functions of a museum as without collections museums would not have what to offer to the public. The information that museums disseminate is based upon their collections. Throughout the ages collecting was the core activity that later shaped museums. The starting point for collecting was the belief in magic and usually the collected artifacts were thought to have supernatural powers. Other reasons for collecting were veneration of the past and its personalities, collections gathered and dedicated to the gods and later on dedicated to church as well as exotic artifacts and curiosities. The collections usually had religious, magical, economic, aesthetic, or historical values and collecting was usually practiced by wealthy groups or individuals. First attempts to open collections to the public were done in ancient Greece and Rome where temples' and treasuries' collections were opened to the public upon the payment of a small fee. During the medieval time, collections were mainly found in princely houses and churches and represented an economic factor, being used in wars and other expenses as well as trade.

Still the concept of museum as it is known nowadays was inexistent in antiquity despite the fact that the word museum has its origins in the Greek term *mouseion* which meant "the abode of the Muses" (Dixon, 1919: 3; quoted in Barrett, 2011) and represented a philosophical institution or a place of contemplation. The Roman equivalent of the word museum designated a place for philosophical discussion. "Some of the earliest museums were in cities such as Alexandria, Athens and Rome. They were associated with knowledge creation and dissemination (similar to the role of modern universities), or were devoted to displaying captured treasures" (Barrett, 2011:46). Such institution existed in Greece, more specific in the great Museum in Alexandria, founded by Ptolemy I Soter early in the 3rd century BC. The museum in Alexandria was a research center which included large libraries, research laboratories, lecture rooms and classrooms, its own collection of artifacts and sculptures as well as a botanical garden and a zoo and it was meant for the study of literature, history and astronomy.

⁶⁶ Wilkins, Alasdair. *The story behind the world's oldest museum, built by a Babylonian princess 2,500 years ago*. io9. 25.05.2011 <http://io9.com/5805358/the-story-behind-the-worlds-oldest-museum-built-by-a-babylonian-princess-2500-years-ago> [accessed 10.03.2015]

Although the collections of ancient Greece and later Roman Empire were very rich in works of art and valuable artifacts, it was not until the Renaissance when the first great collections began to form. The Renaissance was also the starting point for the development of modern public museums. Significant material was collected by wealthy people, usually merchant and banking families but also royalties or scientists. “The fifteenth-century Medici Palace in Florence is often considered the precursor, with its select invitations to visit, its acquisition and collection practices, displays and philanthropy. The Medici’s use of its collections and its granting of access to them shifted from the private realm and signaled the way in which museums would become signifiers of knowledge and power in new ways for centuries onwards” (Alexander, 1979). The earlier collections of the Renaissance went under different names such as museums, studioli, cabinets des curieux, Wunderkammern, Kunstkammern and fulfilled a variety of functions (the storing and dissemination of knowledge, the display of princely and aristocratic power, the advancement of reputations and careers) and had mostly shared two principles: that of private ownership and of restricted access (Bennett, 1995:73). These institutions were “collections of valued objects that formed a part of the cultural accessories of power in contexts in which it was the organization and transmission of power within and between the ruling strata rather than display of power before the populace that was the point at issue” (Bennett, 1995: 27). The new view upon world order developed during this time and changed the way of collecting and the nature of collections. The collections started to have a scientific and systematic profile and not be viewed only as curiosities. Museums also started having different profiles such as history, art, sciences or natural sciences. “Art collections of royalty and wealthy buyers were the forerunners of art galleries, royal menageries became the predecessors of modern zoological gardens and museums emerged from the private cabinet of curiosities to become the public collection of history, anthropology, geography and technology” (Barrett, 2011: 46). Although museums started opening their doors to the public during the 16th and 17th century, the people who were allowed to visit them belonged to upper and middle classes. Museums were opened only certain days and visitors were allowed in only small groups. Certain collections were even more restricted only to individuals of high rank in society and only on special occasions.

The modern museum started developing during the 18th century when collections were transferred from private to public ownership and were opened to the public in a greater number than before. Also the number of museums started to increase, the most important in Europe being The British Museum and Louvre, which are considered by some the first public museums (Barrett, 2011), followed by several museums in Rome and other parts of Europe. Soon after that, the museum trend spread all over the world and a significant number of museums started making their appearance. But

“museums in the eighteenth century were not usually owned by the state on behalf of the people as a corollary to citizenship, governance or democracy. Visitors were subjects not citizens and power was represented ‘before’ them rather than ‘for’ them” (Prior, 2002: 35; quoted in Barrett, 2011). It was not until the 19th century when museums started growing at a fast pace and they were “a vital part of the industrialization and colonial processes” (Barrett, 2011: 47). This growth resulted “from the confluence of technological progress and ideas about civilized societies” and from the fact that “collections had a purpose and value other than as private collections for the personal interest of their owner” (Barrett, 2011:48, 49) so the outcome was a significant number of museums opening their collections to a large public. That also meant paying more attention to artifact care and conservation and organizing the collections in such a way that they would be systematically organized and informative so that they would be more accessible to a public with different cultural and educational backgrounds. “The modern museum, from which our contemporary museums have emerged, was an important part of changing social values and practices in the 19th century. Not only did the numbers of cultural institutions increase, but access to museums and other cultural institutions was more widespread and the displays were more likely to reflect the world of the new merchant classes and the everyday experience of the city, rather than the world of royalty” (Barrett, 2011:46). In Finland the development of museums was slightly behind the rest of Europe and although collections existed since 17th century, the museum as institution came into being in the 19th century. “The public character of the museum was moving from a private collection of objects acquired mainly for their exotic worth to a publicly accessible institution housing an array of material arranged for the educational benefit of different classes in society” (Barrett, 2011: 53).

Another significant shift of museums took place in the 20th century when the focus on the object diminished and was transferred to the public. The museum institution shifted from being about something to being for somebody. Weil describes this shift from the care and study of collections to the delivery of a public service which demands new skills and attitude within museums (Weil, 2002). The museum started offering different services to the public such as educational workshops, museum shops, museum restaurants, virtual exhibitions and online services such as websites and social media services thus “engaging with visitors as customers and consumers” (Barrett, 2001:56). An important feature of the contemporary museum is its openness, the museum is “not limited by its own walls, and through the use of technology can establish new relationships and communications outside the physical structure” (Barrett, 2011: 110). Two new functions were attributed to the museum: the educational and entertainment function and as compared to its predecessors, the 20th century museum aimed to illustrate ideas rather than display objects (Barrett,

2011). Museums have “attempted to rethink and restructure the organization of the institution to engage different audiences in ways that are contact zones, while simultaneously reorganizing the plurality of meanings and values inherent in the contact. This involves moving from a visual culture of display to a wider concept of communication” (Barrett, 2011: 110). This shift in museums’ functions resulted from the increasing of the leisure industry, which constituted a competition for museums in terms of attracting visitors, and from the shifting of cultural policies and reduced funding (Burton and Scott, 2003).

Communication between museums and visitors has been challenged considerably since the 1990’s once with the arrival of the World Wide Web which offered museums a multitude of possibilities to develop their activity as well as strengthen their relations with the public. Besides the physical exhibitions, one way that museums engage in communication with their public is online technology. “Museums have always employed technology, whether that technology was an exhibition case, a diorama, a video or an interactive. The new technologies that are flooding into the museum environment such as mixed and augmented-reality museum experiences, museum blogs, and podcasting art installations are just the latest wave” (Marty, 2007). The Web offered museums “the possibility to create online applications that could be viewed by an international audience” [...] or provide “applications in the gallery and for publishing in electronic forms” (Marty, 2007: 146). At the beginning museums “published on the Internet only textual records of their databases, a significant step for improving access to their holdings, particularly for researchers and specialists. Since the 1990’s, an increasing number of museums are providing Web access to collections information in multimedia form, thus creating a rich source that can be used for educational purposes” (Marty, 2007: 146). Later on museums started having their own web pages which acted as a source of information for the public offering details on the exhibitions, events, opening hours, prices and facilities. In an addition to web pages, museums opened virtual exhibitions thus enhancing public’s accessibility to the institution. The newest trend in museums, though that has been around since the early 2000’s, is Web 2.0 which facilitates two-way communication between the institution and the public. In an interview offered to The Guardian, Sir Nicholas Serota and Neil MacGregor affirmed that “the relationship between institutions and their audiences would be transformed by the internet” and “museums would become more like multimedia organizations”.⁶⁷ This statement outlined the fact that in the last decades, museums shifted emphasis from object based collections to an informative and educational role which has as focus the public.

⁶⁷ Higgins, Charlotte. *Museums' future lies on the internet, say Serota and MacGregor*. The Guardian. 8.7.2009. <http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2009/jul/08/museums-future-lies-online> [accessed 13.3.2015]

Observing the history of museums one can say that it took a long way to reach the open, visitor oriented institutions that they are today. The communication function of the museum has developed as a result of the institution's transformation towards the public and the shifting from an object-based towards a user-oriented space. The contemporary museum as a concept does not lie only in the physical institution but it is expanded beyond that. "In the twenty-first century, museums exist within new political and cultural contexts. The museums are arguably more accessible, both intellectually and physically, to the public and to their communities of interest, than in previous centuries" (Barrett, 2011: 115).

3.4 Finnish museums in social media

This part will present a short overview of social media in Finnish museums in order to give an idea how Finnish museums are using social media and where do blogs stand as social media tools in Finnish museums. As a start, an overall picture of the use of internet and social media services by Finns will be offered so as to have an idea about what percent of people are active internet and social media users. According to a study done by Central Statistical Office of Finland in 2014, 86 % of the population between the age of 16 to 89 used internet. 64 % of the respondents used internet several times a day, the biggest group being between the ages of 25 and 34 with 90 % users. From the oldest age group 75 to 89 year olds, only 28 % used internet. 51 % of the respondents between 16 and 89 years old used social networking services. Social networking offers users the possibility to interact and communicate with each other on a daily basis. The age group who used social networking services the most is between 16 and 24 years old with 93 % followed by 25 to 34 years old with 82 %. The lowest use was registered for 75 to 89 years old group only 3 % of them used social networking services. 32 % used networking services several times a day and 46 % daily or almost daily. Most frequent use of social networking services could be noticed in young people and young adults and decreased in respondents over 35 years old.⁶⁸

Social media is also widely used by the Finnish public with Facebook being the most popular social media service. Around 2.4 million Finns use Facebook, the greatest use being among 15-24 year olds who make up around 90 % of the users. Facebook use decreases with age, 25-34 year olds make 82 % of the users while above 65 year olds, only 21 % use Facebook. Other popular social media services are YouTube with 2.0 million users and WhatsApp with 1.6 million users. These are

⁶⁸ Tilastokeskus. *Suomen virallinen tilasto*. Väestön tieto- ja viestintätekniikan käyttö 2014. http://www.stat.fi/til/sutivi/2014/sutivi_2014_2014-11-06_fi.pdf [accessed 3.5.2015]

followed by Wikipedia, Instagram, Google+, Twitter and LinkedIn.⁶⁹ Central Statistical Office of Finland mentions Twitter (20 %) as the second after Facebook (95 %), LinkedIn (17 %) and Instagram (13 %). Social networks offer the option of content sharing that means forwarding media content for the purpose of interaction and communication between users. Content sharing and following in social media is more frequent for 16 to 34 year olds. All in all 57 % between 16 and 89 year olds have followed social media content and slightly over 30 % have shared content. Most of the shared content is comprised of online news, YouTube videos and music.⁷⁰

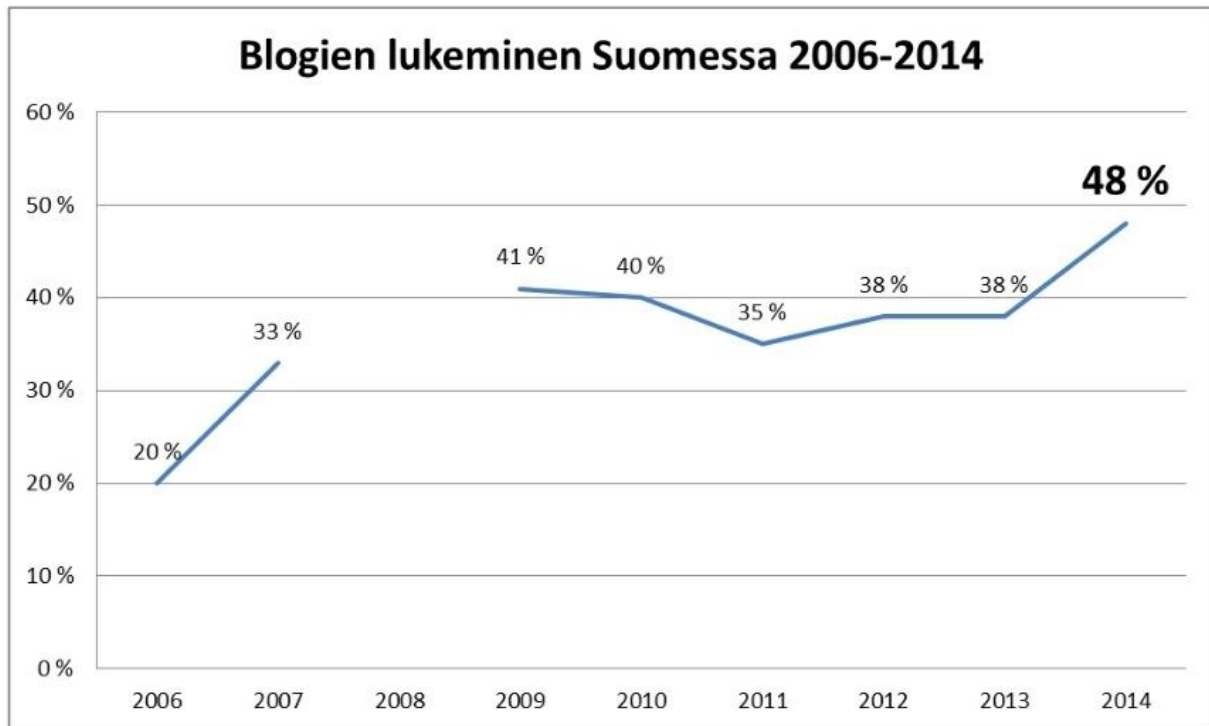
When it comes to blogs, only 6 % of 16 to 74 year olds have blogs which is two times more than four years ago. The percent that leaves comments on blogs is slightly higher, around 15 % from the same age group. Still commenting on blogs is not as popular as writing in other spaces on the internet, uploading own content or writing on forums. The biggest group who wrote blog comments during 2014 is comprised of 16 to 34 year olds and the activity was slightly over 20 %. 34 to 54 year old group followed with around 15 % and the rest 55 to 74 comprised approximately a 5 % of blog commenters.⁷¹ The situation changes dramatically, when it comes to reading blogs. The number of people who read blogs has increased a lot during the last years. A study done in 2014 by Central Statistical Office of Finland states that 69 % of people between the ages of 25 and 34 read blogs with a slight decrease in 16 – 24 group of whom 66 % read blogs, followed by 58 % of people between 35 and 44. Blog reading decreases with age, the smallest group of blog readers being between 75 and 89 with only 7 %.⁷²

⁶⁹ Pönkä, Harto. *Sosiaalinen median katsaus 02/2015*. SlideShare 26.2.2015.
<https://somekirja.wordpress.com/2015/02/26/sosiaalisen-median-katsaus-022015/> [accessed 4.5.2015]

⁷⁰ Ibid. 68

⁷¹ Ibid. 68

⁷² Ibid. 69



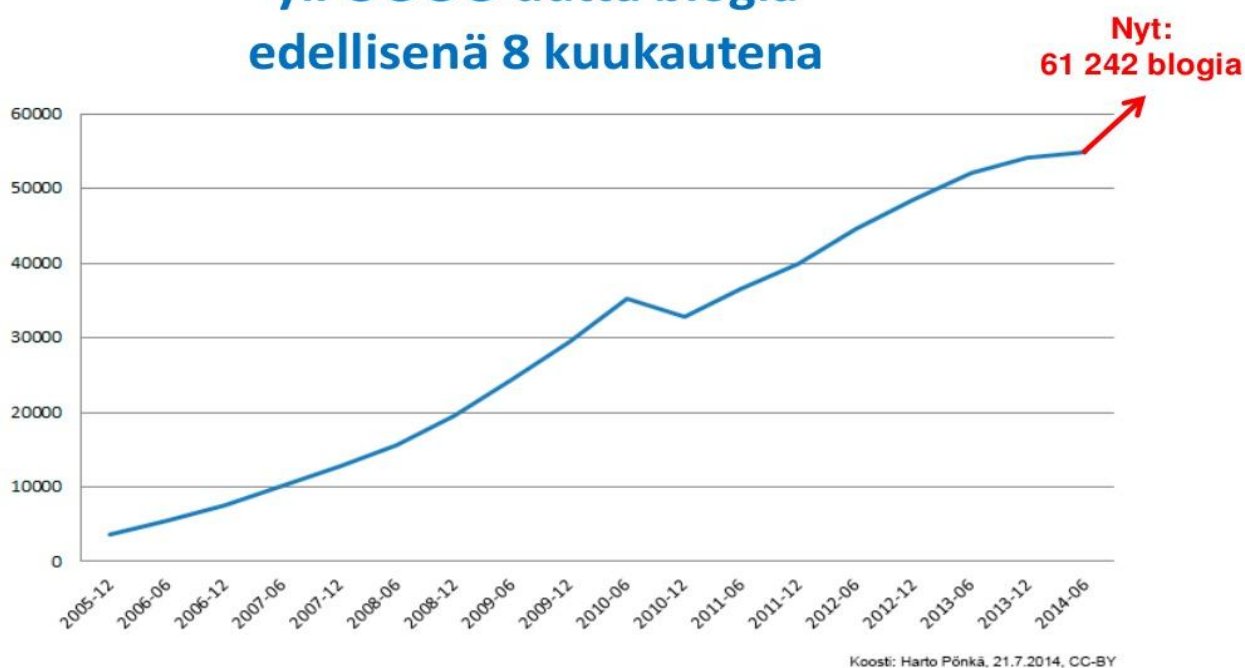
Tietolähde: Tilastokeskus, Väestön tieto- ja viestintäteknikan käyttö, 16-74-vuotiaat, <http://www.stat.fi/til/sutivi/index.html>

Figure 3 Blogs' reading in Finland 2006-2014

The increase in blog numbers has also been high in the last years. Blogilista.fi service had over 60 000 blogs in June 2014 and the number is currently increasing. The most popular blogs in Finland are about youngsters' lifestyle.⁷³

⁷³ Ibid. 69

Blogilista.fi-palveluun lisättiin yli 6000 uutta blogia edellisenä 8 kuukautena



Lähde: Harto Pönkä, Sosiaalisen median käsikirja, 2014, sekä <http://www.blogilista.fi/>, 26.2.2015

Figure 4 Blog numbers in Finland 2005 - 2014

As it can be noticed from the above results usually teenagers and young adults make the biggest percent of social networking and social media users followed by the middle age groups. Social networks and social media are least used in the older group ages but according to Central Statistical Office of Finland there has been an increase in social media services use by the elderly during the last years. This can offer an idea of who are the potential followers of museums in social media especially when it comes to museum blogs.

The use of social media in Finnish museums has been studied briefly by the Finnish Museums Association in 2012. A questionnaire regarding the use of social media tools in museums was sent to museum members of the association. The goal was to find museums where social media was used in a new way. The questionnaire was sent to 227 museums and the answer percent was 38 % which means that 86 museums responded out of which 21 specialized museums, 33 cultural history museums, 2 natural history museums, 17 art museums and 13 mixed museums. Among them there were small local museums as well as museums with few staff members. The questionnaire was aimed at the museum staff and how they make use of social media. The public was not taken into

consideration when conducting the research. The results were summed up based on nine questions and the results were classified according to yes/no answers.

	Yes	No
Does the museum have a blog?	14 %	86 %
Does the museum's webpage offer the possibility to discuss or comment content?	22 %	78 %
Does the museum's webpage offer the possibility of content creation (e.g. add information about collections)?	13 %	87 %
Can the museum be followed on Twitter?	8 %	92 %
Is the museum on Facebook?	79 %	21 %
Does the museum's webpage have "Follow us on Facebook" option?	42 %	58 %
Did the museum upload videos on YouTube or on other video-sharing websites?	18 %	82 %
Did the museum upload photos on Flickr or on other image hosting website?	19 %	81 %
Does the museum offer mobile services (e.g. guiding or game)?	9 %	91 %

Figure 5 The use of social media in museums. Finnish Museums Association's questionnaire "The use of social media in museums", 16.2.2012.

Based on this questionnaire it can be noticed that the presence of Finnish museums in social media is rather low besides Facebook which is a popular tool for museums. Also museums have on their webpages the option to follow them on Facebook. The least popular social media services in museums are Twitter and mobile services. Unfortunately, blogs are rating very low on museums' social media preferences, only 14 % of museums having blogs. Discussion, interaction and content creation possibilities are also not yet very used by museums. The questionnaire revealed that museums used other services than the ones already mentioned such as Wikipedia, Pinterest, Issuu and Google Maps. In addition, some of the museums mentioned that they will increase their social media presence in the near future so the results of the questionnaire might have been different if the study had been done few months later. Already the number of the blogs had increased in 2014 compared to 2012.

The results also revealed why museums are reluctant to use social media. In some cases the person who is responsible with communication and marketing, is not familiar enough with social media and its required technology. Some stated that they have not found the right person who would be responsible for social media use in their institution. Also social media can be demanding and time consuming as it requires constant activity and frequent updates so some museums would rather not use social media than have a lousy online presence. Another reasons especially in small regional museums was the age of employees and the fact that social media is not part of their everyday life. One important reason for avoiding social media presence was copyright. In some museums the copyrights of collections are not very clear and museums proceed with safety regarding this issue by avoiding making their collections' data public.⁷⁴

Nevertheless museums were open to new possibilities when it comes to social media by introducing new tools in their activities or improving their present social media use. In her research about customer relationships in social media in the context of Finnish art museums, Heidi Kronström concluded that museums have a positive attitude about social media but “their actions do not (yet) correspond to their visions and reasons for creating an online presence. It seems as they agree on the importance of social media as a new arena for communication with the customers, but they do not have the resources, or perhaps willingness, to really work for the two-way communication that could lead to long-term interactive relationships with their customers, making their social media actions less than ideal” (Kronström, 2011: 99).

4. Museums and the practice of blogging

The section of this work is going to take a closer look at the definition and the nature of blogs and the phenomenon of museum blogging in general. I will start by providing a definition and a brief historical background of the blog and placing the blog in the large scene of web 2.0 and social media. Then I will provide a description of the museum blog as a separate genre in the blogosphere using blog classification and Nina Simon's flowquiz for museum blogging and explain what the role of the blog in museums is. Finally, a short review of museum blogging at an international level will be provided as to have an idea what is the situation of blogging in a broader context. This chapter should act as a theoretical basis for the blog analysis which will follow in chapter five.

⁷⁴ Kansallisgalleria. *Arvoisa yleisö – verkkosivusto*. Yleisösuhteen kehittämishanke, 2012.
http://www.kansallisgalleria.fi/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Valtion_taidemuseo_arvoisayleiso2012.pdf

4.1 What is a blog?

“Social media can take many different forms, including Internet forums, weblogs, social blogs, microblogging, wikis, podcasts, pictures, video, rating and social bookmarking”.⁷⁵ Blogs are part of social media which is “a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, which allows the creation and exchange of user-generated content”.⁷⁶ According to Kaplan and Haenlein there are six different types of social media: collaborative projects, blogs and microblogs, content communities, social networking sites, virtual game worlds, and virtual communities.⁷⁷

When it comes to the history of blogs there is no clear date which can attest exactly when blogs came into existence⁷⁸ although historical accounts of blogging claim that software developer Dave Winer created the first blog in 1996 (Gurak et al., 2004: 1).⁷⁹ The blogs’ predecessors are the websites and according to Blood (2004) blogs have emerged from online forums, web journals and e-mail lists, some researchers even stating that blogs have a combination of both online and offline elements (Cohen, 2006: 12). Blogs developed from the websites in the late 1990’s and started gaining popularity at the beginning of the 21st century with the launching of hosted blog tools. The first mention of the term “weblog” was done in 1997 by Jorn Barger while referring to his online journal *Robot Wisdom* and it is a shortening of the words Web and log.⁸⁰ In the book *Blogging*, Jill Rettberg explains the etymology of the word log and its relationship to nowadays blogs: “the word log is taken from nautical navigation, and originally referred to a chronological record of events during a sea journey: tracking speed, weather, course and so on. The name originally comes from the practice of measuring speed by throwing a log attached to a rope overboard and counting how many knots in the rope passed through a sailor’s hands in thirty seconds. Readings from the log would be then entered into the logbook. Today, other information is also entered into the logbook. Weblogs have retained the chronological organization of the ship’s logbook, although their content is less ordered and less systematic than the conventional logbook. The implicit transfer of the navigation metaphor to the Web is fitting, as people in the nineties tended to talk about navigating the Web”. An interesting analogy between the history of blogs and history of museums is made by

⁷⁵ Social Media Guys. *The Complete Guide to Social Media*.

<http://rucreativebloggingfa13.files.wordpress.com/2013/09/completeguidetosocialmedia.pdf> [7.4.2014]

⁷⁶ Ibid. 75

⁷⁷ Kaplan, Andreas M.; Michael Haenlein. *Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of Social Media*. 2010. Business Horizons 53 (1): 59–68. <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0007681309001232> 7.4.2014

⁷⁸ Coombs, Karen A. *Library blogging*. Columbus (Ohio): Linworth, cop. 2008.

⁷⁹ Quoted in Hookway, 2008.

⁸⁰ Rettberg, Jill Walker. *Blogging*. UK: Polity Press, 2008. Print.

Julien Dibbell (2002) who states that weblogs are similar to cabinets of curiosities in the way they gather and present information. Rettberg also states that there are plenty definitions of blogs, one being given by her for *Routledge Encyclopedia of Narrative Theory* “a weblog is a frequently updated Web site consisting of dated entries arranged in reverse chronological order so the most recent post appears first” (Walker, 2005). Alfredo M. Ronchi has a similar type of definition referring to the blog as a website “where entries are made in journal style and displayed in a reverse chronological order”⁸¹ hence the many references to the blogs as online diaries.

The predecessor of the blog is the website and but unlike websites, blogs are more interactive due to RSS feeds, trackbacks, permalinks, blogroll and the comment section which offer bloggers the possibility to link to other blogs, to receive or to leave comments and interact with their readers. These particular features allow blogs to be part of web 2.0 whose main characteristic is “an increased level of interaction between users and the Web and among users themselves.” (M. Ronchi, 2009: 193). Blogs are used as a two way communication channel as they offer the chance of information sharing, collaboration, interaction and participation. The article *What is web 2.0*, includes a chart which illustrates one of the difference between web 1.0 and web 2.0 as being the transition from personal websites to blogging and stating that “one of the most highly touted features of the Web 2.0 era is the rise of blogging”⁸².

In 2014 Technorati, a blog search engine and directory, was tracking around 112.8 million blogs.⁸³ A certain number of blogs cannot be determined with precision though because there might be inactive or abandoned blogs. The blogs vary a lot by type and theme ranging from personal to professional blogs. According to Technorati’s State of blogosphere 2011, there is an increase in the frequency of blogging and it distinguishes four types of bloggers: the hobbyists which are blogging for fun and constitute the great majority of blogosphere; the professionals which earn some income from their blogs; the corporate bloggers who blog on behalf of the company or organization they work for and finally the entrepreneurs who blog for the company or organization they own.⁸⁴

⁸¹ Ronchi ,Alfredo M. *Eculture : cultural content in the digital age*. Berlin : Springer, cop. 2009. Print.

⁸² O’Reilly, Tim. *What is Web 2.0. Design Patterns and Business Models for the Next Generation of Software*. 30.9.2005. <http://oreilly.com/web2/archive/what-is-web-20.html> [7.4.2014]

⁸³ Technorati. *About Us*. <http://web.archive.org/web/20080504092447/http://www.technorati.com/about/> [8.4.2014]

⁸⁴ Technorati. *State of the Blogosphere 2011: Introduction and Methodology*. 4.11.2011. <http://technorati.com/social-media/article/state-of-the-blogosphere-2011-introduction/> [8.4.2014]

4.2 Blogs as part of Web 2.0⁸⁵

There is complicated to offer a full definition of what is Web 2.0 including features and characteristics as this is not the main aim of this chapter but instead it would be relevant to provide a description of one of the features of Web 2.0 for a better understanding of the concept and of the aim of this paper. In an article *What is Web 2.0* published on O'Reilly Media there is a sub-chapter called *Blogging and the Wisdom of Crowds*. The part discussing blogging is relevant for what the concept means for Web 2.0 and it describes its main features in comparison with Web 1.0 and websites. I will make a short summary of the article including relevant quotations as I consider it a good example for illustrating participation in the virtual space and supporting my analysis.

One of the main differences proposed by O'Reilly in the chart illustrating the differences between Web 1.0 and Web 2.0 is the passage from personal websites to blogging⁸⁶ and later in the article stating that "One of the most highly touted features of the Web 2.0 era is the rise of blogging [...]. At its most basic, a blog is just a personal home page in diary format. But as Rich Skrenta notes, the chronological organization of a blog 'seems like a trivial difference, but it drives an entirely different delivery, advertising and value chain'".⁸⁷ The main difference between a webpage and a blog is interactivity and participation meaning that a blog will allow the readers to comment and even start chatting in the comment section, in this way leading to discussions, a feature web pages lack. As it will be noticed in my example I intend to choose for illustrating reader interactivity, the blog has some extra interactivity features a webpage does not have. Moreover, there are a couple of main differences which I would like to point out. First of all, the blogs have a special technology which "allows someone to link not just to a page, but to subscribe to it, with notification every time that page changes"⁸⁸, namely RSS⁸⁹. Secondly, another noticeable difference between web pages and weblogs are the permalinks (permanent links) "a URL that links to a specific news story or Web posting. Permalinks are most commonly used for blogs, which are frequently changed and updated. They give a specific Web address to each posting, allowing blog entries to be bookmarked

⁸⁵ Rinne, Silvia. *Cultural heritage in social media: Museum of Photography*. University of Jyväskylä, 2012.

⁸⁶ O'Reilly, Tim. *What is Web 2.0. Design Patterns and Business Models for the Next Generation of Software*. 9 September 2005. <http://oreilly.com/web2/archive/what-is-web-20.html> [accessed 18.10.2014]

⁸⁷ Ibid. 86

⁸⁸ Ibid. 86

⁸⁹ Pilgrim, Mike. O'Reilly Xml.com. *What is RSS*. 18 Dec. 2002. <http://www.xml.com/pub/a/2002/12/18/dive-into-xml.html> [accessed 10.5.2015]

by visitors or linked to from other websites”.⁹⁰ Referring to interactivity, Tom Coates mentions in the article *On Permalinks and Paradigms* that with the help of permalinks, blogs are not only publishing platforms but conversational spaces and permalinks are an “attempt to build bridges between weblogs”⁹¹ Moreover, besides permalinks and RSS, the blogs have trackbacks which help users not only to “subscribe to each others' sites, and easily link to individual comments on a page, but also [...] see when anyone else links to their pages, and can respond, either with reciprocal links, or by adding comments”.⁹²

To sum up, the three main features which make the difference between a webpage and a blog, namely RSS, permalink and trackbacks are tools which specifically allow interaction for the users making the blogs one of the Web 2.0 tools just because visitors can connect between them in a way Web 1.0 did not allow, they can create their content and share it easily with others and overall they are given much more freedom regarding publishing, opinion and communication.

4.3 A new genre – the museum blog

Nowadays the web hosts a very large variety of blogs from personal blogs to corporate or organizational blogs. The formats and type of blogs are even more various depending on bloggers' preferences and goals. Public is offered the possibility to browse and find a blog which suits their own interest and preferences. Information can be easily found on blogs which deal with specific subjects although blogs can cover a variety of issues and not focus on a single topic. According to media type, blogs are mainly textual but some do also embed other types of media into their structure like text, photos, video and music. There are also only blogs comprised of videos called vlogs, photoblogs, that is blogs containing photos, linklogs, blogs containing only links or podcasts which include audio files. Other types are the collaborative blogs or group blogs who are written by several bloggers. Classifying blogs according to genre is a difficult task because there are so many topics one can write about. Some examples of blog genres would be: food, news, music, art blogs, family, fashion, lifestyle and the list can go on because the web surely has blogs on every subject.

⁹⁰ TechTerms.com. *Permalink*. 2012. <http://www.techterms.com/definition/permalink> [accessed 10.5.2015]

⁹¹ Coates, Tom. *On Permalinks and Paradigms*. 11 June 2003.

http://www.plasticbag.org/archives/2003/06/on_permalinks_and_paradigms/ [accessed 10.5.2015]

⁹² Ibid. 91

There are also blog types according to the device they are written and updated from, for example moblogs which are updated from a mobile device.⁹³

As the blogs became more diverse and easily accessible due to the advent of web publishing tools, museums started to embark on the blogging journey and offer new possibilities of communication and engagement to their public. A new blog genre, the museum blog, was born in late 2004, early 2005 and it started growing annually although museum blogging still remains only a tiny percent of the entire blogosphere (Bethke, 2007: 9). Museum blogs belong to the group of corporate and organizational blogs which are used to “enhance the communication and culture in a corporation or externally for marketing, branding or public relations”.⁹⁴ Also a museum blog just like a corporate blog “can be used to establish dialogue between the company and its target market and to create new, more enduring relationships with a customer base” (Singh et al., 2008)⁹⁵ and this is also an inexpensive and easier way to communicate with a large number of people than other type of media. Museum blogs can be written by a single person or several museum employees can contribute with their own posts to the blog. This also depends on the museum’s media strategy for example if they have a certain employee who takes care of the museum’s social media image or if all employees are active social media users. Both ways could be efficient but if the museum does not have a particular employee taking care of the blog then it would be more efficient if all the employees contributed. In such way the blog is being kept active and a larger picture of the museum activity is offered, depending on the employees tasks. According to media type, museum blogs are mainly textual but lots of them employ other type of media such as photos, videos and links thus making them hybrid blogs.

Although social media in museums is a subject which has been touched by several researchers, museums’ blogs are not yet studied in depth at an academic level although such research would be needed in order to explore the museum blogging phenomenon thoroughly and to determine the role of blogs within the museum. How do museums use blogs, for what purposes and are they suitable social media tools taking into consideration museum practices including communication, public relations, marketing and education. A significant research paper on this subject was published by University of Washington and using a museological perspective, is exploring if blogging is an appropriate and beneficial practice for museums by combining theories from the fields of education,

⁹³ Wikipedia. *Blog*. 9.5.2015 <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blog> [accessed 10.5.2015]

⁹⁴ *Ibid.* 93

⁹⁵ Quoted in Pedersen, Sarah, 2010.

communication, and public relations and by examining aspects of blogging in light of these theories, using examples from museums (Bethke, 2007: 2).

A comprising list on museum blogs' type is presented by Nina Simon on her blog Museum 2.0. Simon created a flowquiz to help museums decide which type of blog would be suitable for their purposes. There are four blog approaches presented based on the options in the quiz: institutional info blog, aggregate content blog and here is included community content blog, specialized content blog and personal voice blog. There is also a fifth option which is no blog at all because the museum might not be ready or consider that it does not need one. The institutional info blog mainly distributes news about museum, the aggregate content blog shares news related to the content of the museum and as a branch of the aggregate content blog is the community content blog which tries to open their museum content to the public and get the public involved in blog writing. The specialized content blog is linked to an exhibition or a specific area of the museum and presents news about that particular subject. The last one, the personal voice blog, is similar to personal blogs and museum staff posts their personal comments about the museum.⁹⁶ In general, Finnish museums blogs are a mix of all four: the institutional info, aggregate content, specialized content and personal voice blog where the staff shares news, content and personal views. The aggregate content's branch, namely the community content blog, is not available in Finnish museums, the public cannot publish content on museum blogs with the exception of comments and some museums do not even have a comment section on their blogs. However, some museum blogs do allow guests post usually from collaborators or artists.

The blogging phenomenon inside museums is a consequence of museums extending their activities beyond the walls with the help of the Internet. The museum was not tied only to its building and the relationship with the public became more malleable through social media which offered museums the possibility of extending their relationship with visitors and displaying cultural knowledge beyond their walls (Russo, 2012). The museum blog unites the private and the public space, which in the past existed separately (Hooper-Greenhill, 1992 : 200), by making museum behind the scenes work and activities available to the public as well as complementing the experience of the visitor (Nina Simon, 2007). Other benefits that museum blogs have according to Jim Richardson, is bringing more web page traffic and increase museum visitor numbers about 10 %.⁹⁷

⁹⁶ Simon, Nina. *Institutional Blogs: Different Voices, Different Value*. Museum 2.0, 7.3.2007.
<http://museumtwo.blogspot.fi/2007/03/institutional-blogs-different-voices.html> [accessed 10.5.2015]

⁹⁷ Richardson, Jim. *Why Museums should blog*. Museum Next. 29.12.2009.
<http://www.museumnext.org/2010/blog/why-museums-should-blog> (the link is not available anymore).



Figure 6 Museum blogging flowquiz

4.4. The role of blogs within the museum

The presence of museums in social media has increased during the last few years. Museums make use of different social media tools mainly to connect and communicate with the public and to make themselves more visible in a continuously increasing technological world. Communication is one of the basic functions of a museum⁹⁸ and social media is an appropriate tool for serving a museum's communication needs. "The increasing use of social media in museums is representative of a larger

⁹⁸ Greenhill, Eilean Hooper. *Communication in theory and practice*. In *The Educational Role of the Museum*, ed. Eilean Hooper-Greenhill. New York: Routledge, 1999. Print.

shift in museum ideology as popular communication tools are used more and more for cultural communication between institutions and audiences”.⁹⁹ The increasing trend of social media in museums is also representing a change from the conservative and closed museum institution to a more open and public oriented space where technology is involved for creating a more interactive environment. Nina Simon states that museums should be involved more in social media because there is a shift in how people interact online. This shift is caused by the increase in social media use which offers interaction and responsiveness.¹⁰⁰ The museums’ traditional ways of approaching audiences should be supplemented by social media as “audiences are increasingly going online, it is tremendously important that an effort is made to engage these audiences”¹⁰¹.

In chapter three I mentioned how museums make use of social media services to promote their institution and to interact with the public. Blogs are also part of this category and they are used basically for the same purposes namely communication, public relations, marketing and occasionally education. The main goal for using blogs is the same as with social media – giving a voice to their institution and making that voice to be heard in order to attract and engage with visitors. But what do blogs have more special to offer to museums than other social media tools?

The blog is a significant social media tool whose popularity has grown lately inside the museum institution. There are many museums which have their own blogs although there is no certain number and no in depth studies done about museum blogging besides articles, blogs posts and few academic research papers. The term of museum blogging or museoblogging is used by Jill Walker Rettberg when referring to the blogs’ purpose “not just more marketing and publicity but something more personal, something that’s not going to be on the official website”¹⁰² basically stressing on the main purpose of museum blogs: communication. The models of communication found in museum institutions are broadcast communication from museum professional to the audiences and networked communication which involves conversations with audiences and interactivity.¹⁰³ Blogs represent both types of broadcast and networked communication which give the institution “a voice

⁹⁹ Downes, Caroline. *Analysing characteristics of social media in cultural communication. An investigation of social media use at Museum Victoria.* <http://labsome.rmit.edu.au/files/Analysing%20characteristics%20of%20social%20media%20in%20cultural%20communication%20-%20Caroline%20Downes.pdf> [8.4.2014]

¹⁰⁰ Simon, Nina. *A Simple Argument for Why Museums and Cultural Institutions Should care about Social Media.* Museum 2.0, 13.4.2009. <http://museumtwo.blogspot.fi/2009/04/simple-argument-for-why-museums-and.html> [10.4.2014]

¹⁰¹ Ibid. 100

¹⁰² Rettberg, Jill Walker. *From Places to Connections. New Media, Games and Democracy Seminar in Bergen*, October 16-17, 2006. <http://www.slideshare.net/jilltxt/from-places-to-connections> [10.4.2014]

¹⁰³ Bethke, Lynn A. *Constructing Connections: A Museological Approach to Blogging.* Washington: University of Washington, 2007.

in a way the building and its exhibits alone never could. Blog readers relate to a human voice more than they do to the often impersonal voice of the press release and exhibit text”.¹⁰⁴ The type of communication model blogs represent depends a lot on their format and success at interacting and creating conversation with visitors. Some blogs do not allow comments or even if they allow, the public is not active commenting. In this case the blog represents the broadcasted communication model. In the case that the blog is successful in establishing a two-way communication where the public responds and engages in discussions with museum staff then we deal with the networked communication type.

The uses of blogs in museums can be varied depending on the goals of the institution. A good summary has been provided in the previous section where four blog types were presented. According to Nina Simon, museum blogs can offer news about the museum, share content of the museums and museum staff’s thoughts and opinions. Blogs can enhance a museum’s image by engaging with the public. The museum can go beyond its own formal website and get closer to the public by opening some of their activity that goes beyond closed doors and make the institution friendlier to the visitors by offering a more personalized profile. Unlike websites, museum blogs “do not use an institutional tone of voice but are conversational and personal and may consist of many contributors’ voices. The institution’s Web site is normally accessed for informational purposes, such as factual information about the museum, opening times, access details, etc. Blogs, on the other hand, often provide access to community, which may include museum staff, but also museum visitors and other interested parties. The character of blogs is not necessarily fixed and may evolve depending on the often changing contributors”.¹⁰⁵ Also blogs may be more trusted than conventional marketing-oriented websites due to the enthusiastic voice of the bloggers and discussion encouragement. Blogs can also act as a complement to the museum’s website by providing more in-depth information about certain topics, the opportunity to get to know the staff and engage with them, offer new information on a regular basis and attract younger audiences because blogs “create an environment of person to person communication by seeking opinions, ideas and feedback and by encouraging the visitors to participate, contribute and share experiences”.¹⁰⁶

Jim Spadaccini mentions on Ideum that museum blogging is becoming mainstream and “it’s no longer about starting a blog, but rather using blogging tools to achieve various tasks. We’ve seen

¹⁰⁴ Ibid. 103

¹⁰⁵ UKOLN. *Uses of blogs*. <http://www.ukoln.ac.uk/cultural-heritage/documents/briefing-4/html/> [accessed 11.5.2015]

¹⁰⁶ Ibid. 105

blogs that: support exhibits, help organize docents, share the museum Director's vision, conduct direct marketing, re-publish articles from museum publications, help with professional development, explore specific topics or issues, as well as blogs that are used as simple content management systems inside existing sites".¹⁰⁷ On Ballrommet, a blog about Norwegian cultural institutions, there is a brief presentation of why museums blog. The main reasons are to create dialogue with the public, to document important events at museum, for informing the public about museum activities, to convey professional content, to make museums more personal by allowing visitors to take a look behind stage, to take part in public debates and to discuss professional issues.¹⁰⁸ Bethke's research on museum blogs revealed that museums had various goals with blogs. Some planned to "engage in dialogue with their visitors or to give a behind the scenes look at a new museum or to provide information not otherwise available" as others had more elaborated plans such as specific age group target, strengthening the relations with other cultural and educational institutions, increase public awareness of museum's activities and establish the museum brand as well as developing individual voices of the staff and creating new levels of access for public by expanding museum's collections and activities beyond the institution's walls. Blogs also aim to create a closer relationship with the visitors because "when museums choose to speak with a conversational voice, whether singular or plural, visitors will relate to the institution more effectively" (Bethke, 2007: 50).

4.5 Museum blogging in an international context

As an addition to this chapter, I would also like to present briefly the situation of museum blogging in an international context. Obviously one cannot have a clear image of museum blogging globally as blog tracking has its challenges and research on museum blogs is usually restricted to certain areas. Blog search engines do a very good job in tracking blogs but some problems do arise with these methods of blog tracking as not all blogs are active. A comprehensive site whose goal was to compile a directory of museum and museum-related blogs as well as raising awareness and increasing the authority of sites focusing on museum-related issues is Museum Blogs.¹⁰⁹ Unfortunately Museum Blogs was shut down but two papers including a museum blog survey appeared as a result of this site.

¹⁰⁷ Spadaccini Jim. *152 Museum Blogs, 20.000 Posts*. Ideum, 1 May 2007. <http://ideum.com/blog/2007/05/152-museum-blogs-20000-posts/> [accessed 11.5.2015]

¹⁰⁸ Huseby, Hege Børrud. *Hvorfor blogger museer?* Ballrommet. 28 June 2012. <http://ballrommet.wordpress.com/2012/06/28/hvorfor-blogger-museer/> [accessed 11.5.2015]

¹⁰⁹ Museum Blogs. <http://museumblogs.org/> (closed)

The surveys were completed in 2006 respectively 2007 so according to the present day they are outdated as the blogosphere is constantly changing, new blogs are added, others are deleted or they become inactive. Nevertheless I will present the results shortly to have an idea about the situation of museum blogs back then. Bethke (2007) mentioned in her research about museum blogging that the first museum blogs appeared in late 2004 and early 2005 and increased in number during the following years 2006 respectively 2007. A survey was done in 2006 by Ideum on museum blogs and community-based sites in order to map the activity of these two media tools within museums. There were found only 26 sites and the conclusion, based on Technorati's search results which claimed 29.6 million blogs in March 2006, was that museum blogs are one in a million. The results included blogs and community-based sites from art, science, history and children's museums as well as museum related. The findings revealed that museums "used their blogs to report on the latest exhibitions, to share photos and videos of museums and installations, to explore current events in science, and even to organize docents."¹¹⁰

A more in-depth analysis of museum blogs was done by Sebastian Chan and Jim Spadaccini in the paper *Radical trust: The state of the museum blogosphere*.¹¹¹ It is stated that in 2006 Museum Blogs started with around 30 museum blogs. The number grew by the end of January 2007 at 111 blogs and the number was predicted to grow up to 200-300 blogs by the end of the year. In contrast with the affirmation of Bethke about the first museum blogs, Chan and Spadaccini track the first blogs around 2002 with *infoTECMuseo* launching in June, *Museum People* in August, and *Modern Art Notes* in September. The blogs that were used in the survey belonged to museums from North America, Europe and Oceania and most of them had as main language English. The survey was comprised of two parts: the first part analyzed the activity of each blog for one day including number of posts, comments, external links, advertising, post length and date along with blogging software and the second part included a survey sent to the bloggers. The second part of the survey dealt with questions about the purpose and target audience of the blog, authorship, how often the blog is updated and if the posts are reviewed prior to publishing. Evaluation, hosting services, challenges and future considerations were also some of the aspects that were taken into consideration in the survey. The results showed that usually the most active blogs tend to be the best ranked, the blogs are split into audience oriented and professional development oriented and they usually come from various museum departments such as exhibitions, collections, education,

¹¹⁰ Spadaccini, Jim. *Museums 2.0: A survey on museum blogs and community-based sites*. Ideum, 6.3.2006. <http://ideum.com/wp-content/uploads/2006/03/museumblogs3-6-06.pdf> [accessed 12.5.2015]

¹¹¹ Chan, Sebastian and Jim Spadaccini. *Radical Trust: The State of the Museum Blogosphere*. Toronto: Archives & Museum Informatics, published March 1, 2007. <http://www.museumsandtheweb.com/mw2007/papers/spadaccini/spadaccini.html> [accessed 12.5.2015]

marketing or IT. The target audience was mostly museum professionals and the general public and as for the bloggers there was a wide range of people within the institution who wrote the posts from museum educators to scientists, a reason why museum blogs were so diverse. Most of the blogs' content was published directly and not reviewed with some exceptions and the average time invested in blogs maintenance was less than five hours per month. Also bloggers kept track of the blog's visitors measuring success mostly in visits, comments and number of links. The blogs' most popular platforms were Wordpress and Blogger and most of them enabled the readers to follow them through RSS feed. Some of the concerns regarding blogging were sustainability which was directly linked to funding followed by institutional support, spam and hateful speech or inappropriate comments. In general, the bloggers had future plans for continuing and developing the blogs.

The study concluded that museum blogging is “maturing and becoming an accepted communication platform” stressing the fact that while the blogs have excellent potential for marketing, developing and keeping audience requires more varied content. It was also revealed that museum bloggers comment on each other's posts and link their content to other museum blogs. Spadaccini affirmed that if the growth of museums blogs continues and follows a similar trend as the museum website growth, it will be difficult to keep track of the museum blogosphere's activity in the near future.¹¹² In addition to the study mentioned above, Spadaccini also concludes that “it's no longer about starting a blog, but rather using blogging tools to achieve various tasks. We've seen blogs that: support exhibits, help organize docents, share the museum Director's vision, conduct direct marketing, republish articles from museum publications, help with professional development, explore specific topics or issues, as well as blogs that are used as simple content management systems inside existing sites”.¹¹³

¹¹² Spadaccini, Jim. *152 Museum blogs, 20.000 posts*. Ideum, 1.5.2007. <http://ideum.com/2007/05/152-museum-blogs-20000-posts/> [accessed 12.5.2015]

¹¹³ Spadaccini, Jim. *Museum blogging is mainstream*. Ideum, 18.10.2007. <http://ideum.com/2007/10/museum-blogging-is-mainstream/> [accessed 12.5.2015]

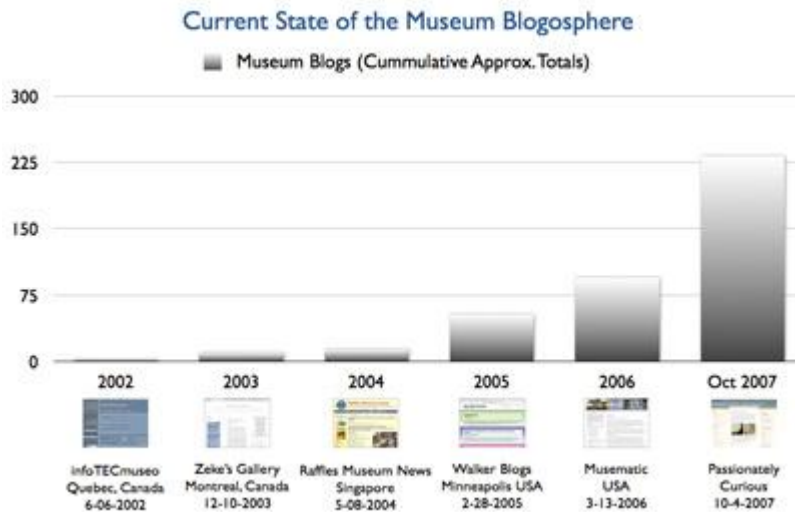


Figure 7 State of Museum Blogosphere 2007, Ideum

5. Museum blogs in Finland

This chapter will create an overall picture of the Finnish museum blogosphere by analyzing Finnish museums' blogs and taking into consideration their layout, reasons for blogging, content and reader interaction. Their layout consists of the blogging service and the appearance or outer look of the blog as well as different options and media embedded in the blog; the reasons for blogging and the content will touch the question of why and what museums are blogging by taking a closer look at the texts and other media posted on the blog and the reader interaction will offer an idea about the popularity of the blogs and how people are expressing their opinions in relation to the blog content.

Finnish National Gallery's study *Museums and social media applications* is mentioning two types of social media platforms used by museums: sharing and distribution platforms and content providing platforms. The sharing and distribution platforms include more social networks like web pages, Twitter, Facebook, Google+ while content providing include blogs, Youtube, Flickr. The blog is a good way to open the museum activities to a wider audience and approach different kind of subjects like what is happening behind the scenes, exhibitions' feedback, social and political issues from the museums' perspective, museum tasks, interviews, museum exhibits or artists. A museum blog could also document and reflect upon museum activity or record museum staff's thoughts. The second study from Finnish National Gallery, *The use of social media in museums*, mentioned in chapter three, states that only 14% of museums had a blog from a total of 86

respondents. Although the study showed that the use of social media applications has increased, not all museums use them for various reasons. Some of the reasons museums do not have blogs are the difficulty in finding suitable subjects and time for updating the blog regularly. Some museums have used blogs to post about their upcoming exhibitions and seasonal employees have been writing on the blog or permanent staff members appointed with this task. The blogs are usually updated one to three times a month.

In 2014 there were forty-six museum administered blogs in Finland with some museums owning several blogs. The list should have had two more blogs, that of Åland Maritime Museum and Sievi Museum. Unfortunately upon opening the link <http://www.sjofartsmuseum.ax/sve/bloggen> I got the message that the article was not found (Error 404) and Sievi Museum's blog states that "This blog is open to invited readers only". During the study there have been some changes in several other blogs. Urajärvi Cultural park blog changed its appearance and it looks more like a website now. Media Museum Rupriikki joined Museum Centre Vapriikki in 2015 and their blog has been deleted. In the future, the Media Museum will use Vapriikki's blog for updates. Espoo Museum of Modern Art has a continuation of its old blog Näkökulmia, which is called The Change and which is having updates about the museum's new exhibition. Helsinki Museum of Natural History's blog LUOMUS has also been renewed and divided into LUOMUS blog and Green roofs. Unfortunately the links leading to the old updates are not working and the new blog version does not allow commenting anymore. Kiasma's unofficial blog stopped updating in December 2014 and announced¹¹⁴ that the updates will take place on the Kiasma's official blog.

I grouped the blogs according to four museum types: cultural history museum, art museum, natural science museum and specialized museum. Upon dividing the blogs into categories, I also noticed a fifth category of blogs belonging to several museums. The most prominent group is that of cultural history museums which includes eighteen blogs, Vantaa City Museum owning three blogs. The second biggest group is that of specialized museums which has thirteen blogs. After that comes the category of mixed museums usually meaning a museum centre which includes cultural history, art, specialized and natural science museums or museums with different profiles sharing the same blog. In this group there were ten blogs. The last and smallest category belongs to art and natural science museums with three, respectively two blogs.

¹¹⁴ Saattaa sisältää nykytaidetta. *Uusi vuosi, uudet kujeet*. 30.12.2014. <http://www.lily.fi/blogit/saattaa-sisaltaa-nykytaidetta/uusi-vuosi-uudet-kujeet>

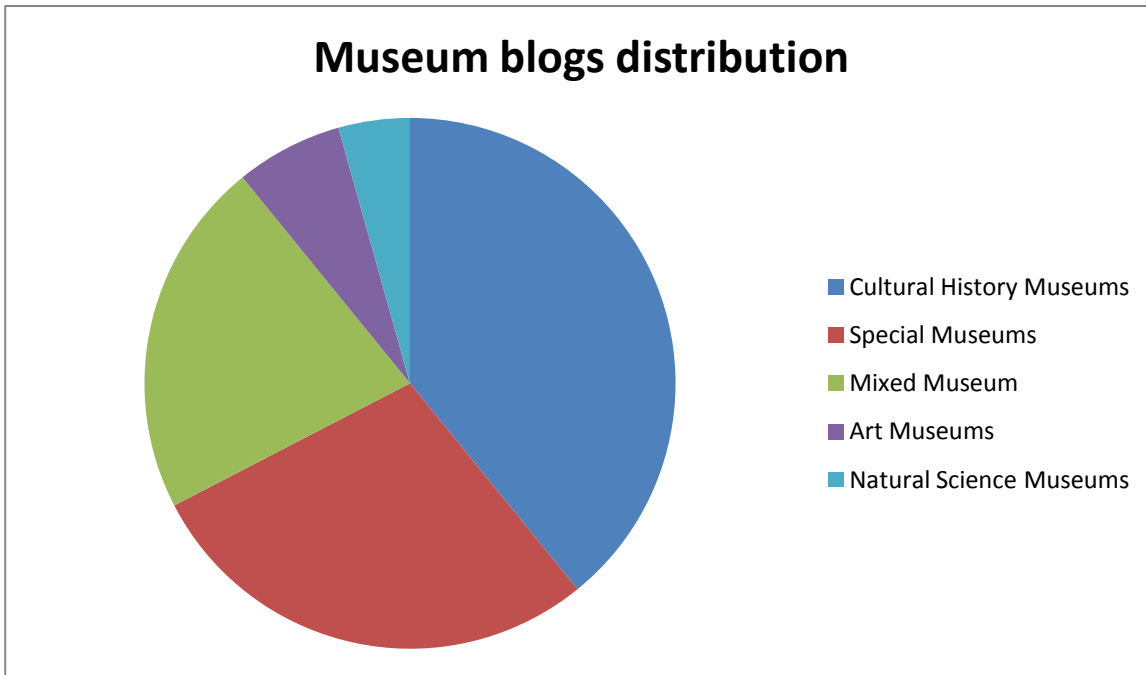


Figure 8 Museum blogs distribution

It was previously mentioned that the blog is a new phenomenon of web 2.0, being around for almost two decades. However, museums in Finland started using blogs quite recently. The first museum blog registered is that of Finnish Museum of Natural History which started its blog in 2008. In the year 2009 there were no new museum blogs registered. Their number started growing in 2010 when nine new blogs were created and the number stayed the same in 2011. 2012 saw an increase in museum blogs, the number of new blogs reaching ten. In 2013 there were thirteen more blogs created and in 2014 only four more museum blogs were opened. The data was gathered with the help of the Archive section which is usually embedded in the blog tools.



Figure 9 Finnish museum blogs

The activity of museum blogs varies a lot depending on their writers and purpose. Majority of the blogs are opened to document the museum activities in their whole but some are opened only on a temporary basis when documenting a project or the process of exhibition. The latter ones usually cease their activity after the project has ended or the exhibition has opened. There are also blogs which cease their activity due to other reasons: bloggers do not have time to update them anymore, the museum changes the type of social media they are using (Fiskars Museum) or the museum opens/joins another blog as in the cases mentioned above. In addition to those, Artillery Museum of Finland and Werstas Museum have new blogs *Museotonttujen blogi* and *Arjen historia*. Their former blogs were *Mörssäri*, respectively, *Aukion laidalla*. Out of forty-six museum blogs sixteen museums were not active anymore, seven of them having the last update in 2014.

5.1 Blogs' layout

The blog layout means its appearance, what kind of media blogs use as content and the options they offers to present the content and interact with the readers such as RSS feeds, comment section, archives, categories, tags and other additional elements embedded in a blog's structure which make the blogs more visible, user-friendly and interactive. Museum blogs are no different from other kind of blogs when it comes to layout. The main type of media used by museum blogs is text followed

by photos and videos. The typical Finnish museum blog combines successfully texts and photos to present its content to the readers.

The blog's layout is heavily influenced by the hosting service. "A blog host is the company that provides the space on their servers and equipment to store your blog".¹¹⁵ When it comes to hosting service there are two types of blogs: the ones managed by the user directly from the server and the ones hosted by a third party which are nowadays the most popular and easy to use. More than a half of Finnish museum blogs (27 blogs) use as their host Google Blogger, which is Google's free tool for creating blogs.¹¹⁶ Other museum blogs are hosted by other services (4 blogs) or they are embedded in the museum's web page (15 blogs). Other blogging services used by museum blogs are Blogi.fi (Arjen Historia), Lily (Kiasma's unofficial blog), Ratata (Fiskars Museum) and Wordpress (Museum of Technology).

The hosting service plays an important role in the blog's layout because it defines the structure and features which are included on the blog. The blogs hosted by Blogger service have certain structure and features which are limited by the hosting service and it is very likely that one can find similar blog layout. For example, all the blogs hosted by Blogger have a blog archive, where one can browse posts by month and year, a profile which offers information about the blog, links to other sites such as the museum's website, RSS feeds, categories and tags, where one can browse by the subject of interest, other links that connect the blog to different social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Youtube, Instagram, Vimeo), Google+ followers and some blogs even mention their authors.

Other blogging services though offer similar options while webpage embedded blogs can be personalized according to the author's needs. The blogs hosted by other services or embedded into the museum's website have similar features as Blogger, for example, archives, categories, links connecting to other social media platforms, RSS feeds and comment section but since they are part of a website, there is usually additional information about the museum besides the blog. Some of these blogs though do not have a separate archive or category section which makes browsing a bit more difficult if one looks for a certain post. Vapriikki's blog has a section showing the newest posts but no archives to make browsing by month or year possible. Other blogs without archives are Hotel and Restaurant Museum's blog, Espoo Museum of Modern Art, Kiasma, Raahe Museum,

¹¹⁵ Gunelius, Susan. *What is a Blog Host?* About.com. <http://weblogs.about.com/od/bloggingfaqs/f/FAQBlogHost.htm> [24.4.2014]

¹¹⁶ Karch, Marziah. *What is Google Blogger?* About.com. <http://google.about.com/od/googleblogging/fr/bloggerreview.htm> [24.4.2014]

Serlachius, Media Museum Rupriikki, Museum of Cultures and Fiskars Museum. Archives are not a must for blogs but they make browsing much easier. About thirty-five out of forty-six museum blogs have archives.

Other features that Finnish museum blogs have are categories and tags also called labels depending on the blogging platform. Categories and tags are similar to keywords helping to organize the content of the blogs into themes. They make the blog easier to browse by subject especially if the reader looks for particular topics of interest. Out of forty-six blogs, only four use categories and twenty-one use tags. Museum blogs have also interactive features such as liking or sharing a blog post and other links, usually to the museum's official web pages, museum's social media accounts or different projects related to the institution or its activities. The option of liking or sharing a blog post on other social media platforms is available on thirty-three museum blogs while twenty-four museum blogs contain links to other web spaces. These can offer more visibility to the blog and to the museum by offering visitors the possibility to spread the word by sharing blog posts and get more information on museum activities from other online sources. Some museums also track their activity regarding the entries and comments by displaying recent posts/comments as well as most read/commented entries. Thirteen blogs have a section for recent posts/comments while only one museum blog, Kiasma's unofficial blog, has a section for the most popular blog entries.

Museum blogs have also embedded RSS feeds or news aggregators¹¹⁷ which offer readers the possibility to follow the blogs as well as comment sections where visitors can interact with museum staff and other readers by commenting on the posts and expressing their opinions with regard to the blog content. Twenty Finnish museum blogs use RSS feeds or news aggregators and thirty-six blogs have comment sections although Kiasma and Finnish Craft Museum close their comment section after a while leaving the possibility to comment only on the newest posts.

An interesting feature which almost lacks in museum blogs is the blogroll, "a list of other blogs that a blogger might recommend by providing links to them".¹¹⁸ Most of the links that museum blogs include in their blogroll are usually the museum website, the museum's other social media applications or the city the museum belongs to. Some of the museum blogs which include other

¹¹⁷ "Really Simple Syndication": a format for syndicating many types of content, including blog entries, torrent files, video clips on news-like sites; specifically frequently updated content on a Web site, and is also known as a type of "feed" or "aggregator". An RSS feed can contain a summary of content or the full text, and makes it easier for people to keep up to date with sites they like in an automated manner (much like e-mail). The content of the feed can be read by using software called an RSS or Feed reader. Feed readers display hyperlinks, and include other metadata (information about information) that helps you decide whether they want to read more, follow a link, or move on.

¹¹⁸Wikipedia. *Glossary of blogging*. Last updated. 25.4.2014. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glossary_of_blogging [24.4.2014]

museum blogs in their blogroll are Kiasma, Lappeenranta Museums and Kouvola Museum. The unofficial blog of Kiasma has included the link to the museum's official blog, Kouvola Museum has a link to Finnish Museums Association's blog and the museums from Lappeenranta added to their blogroll three project blogs. A blogroll would help museum link between them and form a more compact museum blogosphere. Finnish Museums Association's blog is the only one that has a blogroll with Finnish as well as foreign museum blogs.

It is important though to know that museum blogs are not all the same when it comes to layout. Some do have certain features while others lack them as blogs are not identical no matter the hosting service. The idea of the blog is similar but the layout is different and varies from blog to blog.

5.2 Reasons for blogging

This section will provide an answer to the questions of why and what Finnish museums blog. It will take a closer look at the reasons why museums blog and the content of blogs including major themes found in the blog texts and other forms of media such as photos and videos. Also suitable examples will be provided to illustrate the reasons for blogging and content themes. One of the main reasons that people blog in general is communication and museums are no exception to that. Museums want to establish a two way relation with their visitors and to share their events and knowledge. Blogs are “an inexpensive way in which an organization can encourage employees to share knowledge”¹¹⁹, communicate with the public, advertise their services and receive feedback. According to MacDonald (1992) “all museums are, at the most fundamental level, concerned with information: its generation, its perpetuation, its organization, and its dissemination”.

Museum blogs are written by the museum staff meaning permanent employees, researchers, trainees, volunteers or various temporary employees who can be working on projects. Sometimes posts can be also made by guest writers. Most of the blogs mention its writers on the right side of the page or at the end of every post. Sometimes there are also photos of the staff in the blog posts or in a special section dedicated to the bloggers.

¹¹⁹ Ojala (2005). Quoted in Pedersen Sarah. *Why Blog? Motivations for blogging*. United Kingdom: Chandos Publishing, 2010.

The main type of blog used by museums is the text blog. However, almost all the museum blogs use some form of media mostly photos and some do also use videos uploaded through Youtube or Vimeo. The only blog without any kind of media, just plain text is *Taide jää mieleen* (Aboa Vetus & Ars Nova project).¹²⁰ One of the blogs with plenty of photos and videos is *Perinnekylä* (Virtain Perinnekylä museum area) which documents its activities by taking videos of them.¹²¹

Another aspect related to the content is the language used on the blog. The main language the blogs are written in is Finnish as they are aimed at the Finnish public. However, there are some exceptions which post in Swedish and English as well, besides Finnish. The posts are not exclusively in another language but they are bilingual. This is the case of Fiskars Museum which has bilingual posts in Finnish and Swedish. K.H. Renlund Museum has also occasional bilingual blog posts. Its first introductory post is written by a summer employee, Sonja, who also presents herself in English.¹²² Forssa Museum uses Finnish and English in most of its posts, usually making a concise summary in English about the main idea of the post. The museum has also a brief presentation of itself and the blog in English: “Stories of daily life in Forssa Museum, Southern Finland. In Vorssammuseo 3.0-project we planned and build a new Forssa history exhibition ‘City of Colourful Cloth’. Blogposts 2011-2013 are about the Vorssammuseo 3.0-project”.¹²³ Other museums use English and Swedish in very few of their posts. Kiasma¹²⁴ and Craft Museum of Finland¹²⁵ have each few posts written exclusively in English but besides that, they use Finnish as main language. Helsinki City Museum uses Swedish language in a post from May 2014: *Blogg: Historia man minns*. Elävä Museo has also a post in English written by a student from Saint Petersburg *Christmas at Volkoff Museum* (20.12.2013). English is also used by Finnish Museum of Photography in *#snapshot from Hamburg with Love* (6.12.2013).

The tasks of the contemporary museum work are information, production, coordination and teaching. The activity of museums has extended beyond museum walls towards the whole society.¹²⁶ This is reflected in the content of the blogs which is informative, interactive and didactic. Usually museums state their reasons for blogging and what to expect from their blogs in their first post, some of them have a separate introductory section placed on the right side of the blog or in the

¹²⁰ *Taide jää mieleen* <http://taidejaamieleen.blogspot.fi/>

¹²¹ *Perinnekylä* <http://perinnekyla.blogspot.fi/>

¹²² K.H. Renlundin Museo <http://khrenlunds.blogspot.fi/2010/06/tervetuloa-valkommen-welcome.html>

¹²³ Vorssammuseo 3.0 <http://vorssammuseo.blogspot.fi/>

¹²⁴ Siitari, Pirkko. *Openess and museums*. Kiasma blogi. 28.9.2013. <http://blog.kiasma.fi/blog/?p=1054> [27.4.2014]

¹²⁵ Laura. *Searching for answers*. Suomen Käsityön Museon Blogi 24.09.2013 <http://www3.jkl.fi/blogit/craft/?p=508> [27.4.2014]

¹²⁶ af Hallström, Jaana. *Museoammatilaisen käsikirja*. Helsinki: Museoalan ammattiliitto ry, 2007.

blog banner which shortly explains the blog's content. There are also a few blogs which do not mention anything about their content but this is made clear from the actual blog posts.

The main reasons for blogging, as stated on many museum blogs, are presenting and documenting museums' activity. Upon a closer analysis of the blog banners and introductory posts, museums open blogs in order to write about their projects and new exhibitions including the planning and building process. In addition to this, employees present their thoughts related to museum activities and professional challenges as well as raise questions relevant to museum field, work and ethics. Museum activities and events are also very frequent subjects of blogs. For example, museum activities might include working with collections, archives, conservation, exhibition planning, which are employees' routine and usually not seen by the public. Events include exhibition openings, workshops, celebrations, guided tours or any other event organized by the museum. Museum blogs share educational information related to their collections which can be specific to the museum profile (history, art, natural sciences, sports, photography etc.) as well as stories related to various subjects depending on the museum's profile and mundane happenings. Fiskars Museum states in the introductory post that there is not a predefined plan for the blog and the content remains open.¹²⁷ Mäntyharju museum hopes that the blog will open the complexity of museum work to the readers and make them more interested in the local culture.¹²⁸ Kuopio Museum of Natural Sciences states that through social media "the flow of information to visitors is cheap and fast and [...] it's easy to publish informal information about what is happening behind closed doors"¹²⁹ and museums from Lappeenranta wish that their blog would work as "an information channel and share museum practices and the lessons learned from them".¹³⁰

One typical example explaining the blogging reasons is Varkaus' Museums blog which has an introductory post called "Why Blog?". The museum staff mentions that the idea of opening a blog was in their mind for some time and the blog is a way to present to the public the museum activity which is not shown in the actual exhibitions. They express the wish to create a more open museum culture by presenting their collections to all who are interested in them. Museum employees hope

¹²⁷ Fiskars Museum. *Dammig på vinden*. 19.1.2010. http://museum.ratata.fi/blogg/article-48868-121007-dammig-pa-vinden?offset_48868=285 [18.11.2015]

¹²⁸ Mäntyharjun museo. *Museo-blogi avattu!* 18.9.2012. <http://mantyharjunmuseo.blogspot.fi/2012/09/museo-blogi-avattu.html?view=classic> [18.11.2015]

¹²⁹ Kuopion luonnontieteellisen museon blogi. *Twitter, Facebook, RSS, Flickr, YouTube*. 29.10.2010. <http://kulumus.blogspot.fi/2010/10/twitter-facebook-rss-flickr-youtube.html> [19.11.2015]

¹³⁰ Elävä Museo. *Imatralla tutustuttiin arkkitehtuuriin pyöräillen*. 7.5.2012. <http://elavamuseo.blogspot.fi/2012/05/imatralla-tutustuttiin-arkkitehtuuriin.html> [19.11.2015]

that the blog will offer a different view of museum work and even work as a discussion channel. They encourage people to leave comments, ask and criticize by using the comment section.

This is a good question. The thought of opening a blog has been in the staff's mind for a while. We think that the blog is a suitable way to present the museum's activity: what visitors can't see and what is going on behind the exhibition's walls.

We want to create an open museum culture. One way is to share museum's daily routine and open collections for all who are interested. We believe that knowledge brings more appreciation. Through this blog we hope that museum work is not seen just as hanging paintings or working in dusty collection storages. Readers can expect information about exhibition work, collections, museum teaching and other things related to museum work. Staff might also discuss museological matters.

The responsibility of the blog will be taken by the signer but the other seven members of our team will also bring their contribution. We hope that the blog could work as a communication channel. Comments, questions, wishes and critique are welcome in the comment section!¹³¹

Nautelankoski Museum blog is offering an insight into the everyday work and challenges of a small local museum including artifacts, people, texts, exhibitions, guided tours and events as well as more mundane activities such as cleaning, baking and coffee making.

Nautelankoski Museum's blog offers a behind-the-scenes insight in the life and challenges of a small local museum – the world of museum work, artifacts, people, texts, exhibitions, guided tours as well as cleaning, baking and coffee-making. The blog is updated whenever we get the chance. Welcome to see the work of Liedo local museum!¹³²

Other museums such as Kankaanpää Town Museum and Kouvola Museum are writing about local history, stories, their collections, projects and reflect upon museum's future.

Kankaanpää Town Museum's blog, where the future of the museum is reflected upon and where we talk about museum's projects as well as the history of Kankaanpää.¹³³

¹³¹ Varkauden museot. *Miksi blogi?* 21.10.2013 <http://varkaudenmuseot.blogspot.fi/2013/10/miksi-blogi.html> [28.4.2014]

¹³² Pikkumuseon haasteet <http://nautelankoski.blogspot.fi/>

¹³³ Tulevaisuuden museo <http://tulevaisuudenmuseo.blogspot.fi/>

*Kouvola museum treasures – Museum artifacts from Poikilo museums' collections and stories about Kouvola.*¹³⁴

Other museums open their blogs in order to document their exhibition process or a project but then they decide to continue with the blog. However, some museums abandon their blog after their exhibition or project has ended.

Helsinki Museum of Natural History opened its blog in 2008 few months before inaugurating their new exhibition. This is also the first museum blog opened in Finland and it is still active nowadays even if the exhibition was successfully opened the same year as the blog.

*Together with my work colleague, we have thought about opening a blog for the Museum of Natural Sciences for a while. There are about two months until the opening of exhibitions and now it's time to accomplish our old dream. I am the Museum of Natural Science's spokesperson and i thought to start the story from the beginning.*¹³⁵

Forssa Museum also opened their blog to follow their project Vorssammuseo 3.0 whose result would be the exhibition *City of Colorful Cloth*. The exhibition process is documented during 2011 – 2013 but the blog continues with stories of daily life from Forssa Museum.¹³⁶ Museum of Cultures from Helsinki has its own blog, Muutoblogi, hosted by National Board of Antiquities. The blog tells about the exhibition's dismantling, the work of museum technicians and conservators and the new exhibition on world's religions scheduled for autumn 2014.¹³⁷

*Welcome behind the scenes at the Museum of Cultures! Here you can follow our busy year: dismantling of exhibitions and spaces at Tennispalatsi, the work of museum technicians and conservators as well as new exhibition's, World's religions, planning and building at The National Museum.*¹³⁸

Museum Centre Vapriikki started its blog in 2011 with the intention of following the making of the exhibition *Luokaamme Uusi Maailma! Agitaatioposliinia Pietarin Eremitaasista 27.5-*

¹³⁴ Kouvolan museoaarteita <http://museoaarteita.blogspot.fi/>

¹³⁵ Monimuotoisuutta tutkimassa. Hiisivuori, Laura. *Pikakelaus: Miten tähän on tultu?* [27.03.2008] <http://blogs.helsinki.fi/luonnontieteellinenmuseo/2008/03/27/pikakelaus-miten-tahan-on-tultu/> [28.4.2014]

¹³⁶ Vorssamuseo 3.0 <http://vorssammuseo.blogspot.fi/>

¹³⁷ http://www.nba.fi/en/museums/museum_of_cultures

¹³⁸ Muutoblogi 2013 http://www.nba.fi/fi/museot/kulttuurien_museo/muutoblogi[28.4.2014]

30.10.2011.¹³⁹ The exhibition got its own separate blog¹⁴⁰ and Vapriikki's blog continued with other updates. Turku Castle received funding for renewing their main exhibition and the blog Turun linna uudistuu!¹⁴¹ was opened in 2013 to follow the process which was completed during the summer. The blog, however, is still active. But not all museum blogs continue, so after the exhibition or projects come to an end, the blog stops being updated. This is the case of Siilinjärvi Museums, Aboa Vetus and Ars Nova – Museum of History and Contemporary Art, Vantaa City Museum and National Police Museum. Siilinjärvi Museums opened their blog in order to follow Paikallismuseohanke PAMU project¹⁴², Aboa Vetus and Ars Nova had a collaboration project with social and health services of Turku and The Finnish Work Environment Fund in order to follow how the museum supports a good work life.

*Taide jää mieleen is history and contemporary art museum Aboa Vetus & Ars Nova, social and health services of Turku and The Finnish Work Environment Fund's project where we follow how the museum supports a good working life. Taide jää mieleen –blog follows the project's progress and goal achievements during 2012.*¹⁴³

Vantaa City Museum has two projects: Rock'n Vantaa and Tikkurila Railway Station. Rock'n Vantaa is a two year project documenting the band and rock culture starting with the 1960's and which will be finalized with an exhibition scheduled for opening in 2014. The blog consists of interviews and photos with rock bands which will be later used in the upcoming exhibition.

*Rock'n Vantaa is a two year project which maps youth bands and rock culture from Vantaa starting with the 1960's. Vantaa City Museum's amanuenses Anna Kangas and Mari Immonen collect material extensively from interviews to objects. The collected material and research results will be presented in 2014. The blog followers will have the opportunity to explore data collection and the progress of the research process.*¹⁴⁴

Tikkurila Railway Station's blog was opened on the 120 years anniversary in 2012 and it documented the railway station's environment through photos taken from the roof of Hotel Sokos.

¹³⁹ Saloniemi, Marjo-Riitta. *Metropoli oven takana*. Museokeskus Vapriikki. 8.5.2011.

<http://vapriikki.net/blog/metropoli-oven-takana/> [28.4.2014]

¹⁴⁰ Luokaamme uusi maailma! <http://arkisto.vapriikki.fi/luokaammeuusimaailma/blog/index.html>

¹⁴¹ Turun linna uudistuu! *Turun linnaa uudistetaan!* 18.01.2013 <http://turunlinna.blogspot.fi/2013/01/turun-linnaa-uudistetaan.html> [28.4.2014]

¹⁴² Siilinjärven museoiden paikallismuseohanke. *Mistä PAMU-hankkeessa on kyse?* 23.08.2013. <http://siilinjärvenmuseot.blogspot.fi/2013/08/mista-pamu-hankkeessa-on-kyse.html> [28.4.2014]

¹⁴³ Taide jää mieleen <http://taidejaamieleen.blogspot.fi/>

¹⁴⁴ Rock'n Vantaa <http://rockn vantaa.blogspot.fi/>

The documentation process was also part of Next Tikkurila project and of World Design Capital Helsinki 2012 program. The blog posts the same photo taken in the same location during every month for a whole year.

*Tikkurila old station turns 150 years old in 2012. The blog will follow the station's environment through photos taken from Hotel Sokos Vantaa's roof. At the end of the year we will see how the station looked and how its environment changed. Photographing is part of Vantaa City Museum's Next Tikkurila project. It is also part of the World Design Capital Helsinki 2012 program.*¹⁴⁵

The National Police Museum opened the exhibition *Poliisi fiktiossa* in the spring of 2013 and the whole process was documented on the blog *Faktaa fiktioista*. The exhibition theme is the image that fiction literature, movies and television productions create about police and their work. Once the exhibition was finished, the blog came to an end.

*Police Museum's Faktaa fiktioista blog tells about the building of the new exhibition which opens in spring 2013. [...] With the help of the blog, it is possible to glance into museum professionals' routine and see beforehand some parts of the new exhibition. Poliisi fiktiossa exhibition tells how national fiction literature, movies and television productions have shaped citizens' perceptions about police and their work.*¹⁴⁶

*We have built the exhibition and the blog ends here.*¹⁴⁷

Besides the blogs mentioned above and which have almost the same pattern of presenting museum work from the perspective of museum staff, there are also other blogs which have a more original content and another way of approaching culture related subjects. One of the blogs is Korsman House which belongs to Satakunta Museum and where visitors can time travel in a typical family's house from Pori in the year 1951. The blog is kept and updated by Kaarina Korsman, a housewife who tells about her family's daily life in 1951.

¹⁴⁵ Tikkurilan asema <http://tikkurilanasema.blogspot.fi/>

¹⁴⁶ Faktaa fiktioista -blogi.

<http://www.poliisi.fi/poliisi/poliisimuseo/home.nsf/pages/1725A2D80C35E211C2257B03003D5C83>

¹⁴⁷ Poliisimuseon blogi: faktaa fikstioista. *Huh heijaa...* *Poliisi fiktiossa on valmis* 11.04.2013
http://www.poliisi.fi/poliisi/blog_museo.nsf [28.4.2014]

*In the house of the Korsmans Mrs. Kaarina Korsman runs a family of four's routine in 1951. The diary tells about the life of a housewife living in Pori during the time when coffee was rationed and darning was a useful skill.*¹⁴⁸

Museum Militaria – The Artillery, Engineer and Signals Museum of Finland opened its blog in 2013 and although the blogger is the museum secretary Sirkka, the posts are originally written from the perspective of four museum elves which guide the reader behind the museum's scenes. The elves are a customary appearance in the blog photos and blog texts are written as a sort of dialogue between the four of them.

*On this blog you can follow the adventures of Museum Militaria's elves: Vilho, his fiancée Linnea, Jaakko and Seppo. Under their guidance you will get to know the exhibitions of Museum Militaria.*¹⁴⁹

5.3. Blog content

The previous examples illustrate the main reasons museums choose to open their blogs and present their activity to the public. The following part will take a closer look at the blogs' entries and detail further on their various content. The content of the blogs is comprised of the subjects discussed and the ideas presented in the posts. The content differs from blog to blog as the themes vary between museums. For example, on an art museum blog, one expects to find subjects related to art, a history museum talks about its local history and culture and a natural history museum has posts about nature and the environment. In general each museum talks about their activity and exhibitions and presents behind the scenes facts which the visitors are not likely to see in the exhibitions.

One of the main themes on museum blogs is planning and building exhibitions. Almost every museum blog has posts about their exhibitions. Being one of museums' basic functions, the exhibition is the main way of communicating with the public and it reflects the visible results of museum work. Through blogs, museums make sure that the work going on when planning and setting up an exhibition is also presented to their potential visitors. Writing about the exhibition process can make people interested in visiting the exhibition. Some examples of museums blogging about their main exhibitions' design process would be The Museum of Cultures building World's religions exhibition and later on moving from Tennis Palace to Finnish National Museum (Muuttoblogi), Turku castle renewing its main exhibition (Turun linna uudistuu – which later on

¹⁴⁸ Korsmanin talossa <http://korsmanintalossa.blogspot.fi/>

¹⁴⁹ Museotonttujen blogi <http://museomilitaria.blogspot.fi/>

became its permanent blog Turun linna blogi), Forssa Museum's main exhibition *City of Colorful Cloth* and the opening of Gösta Art Museum in Mänttä. Helsinki City Museum is also moving and the blog follows what is happening before the opening of exhibitions. Besides main exhibitions, museums report a lot about their temporary exhibitions, too. Museum Centre Vapriikki reports diligently about its temporary exhibitions and in 2013 has a full report consisting of several blog entries on the building of the Terracotta Army exhibition from bringing the terracotta warriors from China until their return. One of their temporary exhibitions featuring porcelain from Russia got its own blog.¹⁵⁰ Kiasma is also writing about exhibiting some of its significant works of Finnish artists in Moscow along with a short analysis of some of the works (*Kiasman kokoelmat esillä Moskovassa*, 13.2.2014). Museum blogs which use tags or categories classify all their new exhibitions under "näyttelyt – exhibitions" so it is easier for readers to check directly their exhibition news. Compared to sites or other forms of social media, blogs offer museums the possibility to detail more on the exhibition work and at the same time upload photos and videos of the process (e.g. Kuopio Natural History Museum).

A great deal of museum blogs, write about their various projects and some museums open their blogs only for the purpose of following a certain project. As mentioned previously, exhibitions constitute museums' main projects but besides that museums also write about educational or development projects and about renovations usually within museum premises. Fiskars Museum reports on their museum's main building renovation during autumn 2013 and spring 2014. Vantaa Museum's blog Rock'n Vantaa documents the whole process of gathering material for a new exhibition on rock culture from Vantaa and Espoo Museum of Modern Art opens a second part of their blog – The Change to document the renewal of their exhibition. Other blogs have different projects, which involve education and development, and report on activities and results of their projects. These blogs often contain reflections and analysis of the projects. Aboa Vetus and Ars Nova blog follows and reports on the collaboration between the museum, social and health services of Turku and The Finnish Work Environment Fund in order to follow how the museum helps improving work life. Some of the subjects discussed are how culture helps the well-being and life quality of employees and how a stressful work day can be overcome by a visit at the museum. Museum of Technology's Pienten paja follows a project based on workshops with school children which will later result in an exhibition. A similar project went on in Siilinjärvi Museums, namely involving school children in museum activities and workshops in order to make them acquainted

¹⁵⁰ Vapriikki. *Luokaamme uusi maailma*. <http://arkisto.vapriikki.fi/luokaammeuusimaailma/blog/index.html> [20.11.2015]

with local culture. The blog has a very strong museum pedagogical approach. The museums from Upper Savonia received funding between 2014 and 2015 in order to develop their collections and activity; the results can be found on Ylä-Savon paikkallismuseot blog. Werstas museum's first blog, Aukion laidalla, was opened due to Avara museo project whose aim was to develop museums' learning environment for adults. The blog tackles questions like what would be an open, inviting and fascinating museum for visitors and what can one learn from museums. The Hotel and Restaurant Museum opened their blog *Niin kasaria!* to gather and present information about 1980's food culture in Finland whose results will be exhibited to the public in 2014.

Museum events are a significant part of museum routine including exhibition openings, workshops, guided tours, various celebrations, informative events and institutions report them frequently on their blogs. Exhibition openings are an important part of museum work and they are mentioned occasionally on some museum blogs. Turku castle offers plenty of details about the opening of their renewed exhibition including the visit of the president.¹⁵¹ Forssa Museum shares the excitement of opening their new exhibition in a post about the event from November 2013.¹⁵² During summers museums organize different kinds of activities for their visitors including celebrations. Perinne kylä writes about various summer events; Forssa also reports on what is happening in the Kehräämö historical area where museum has its premises. In addition, museums organize plenty of workshops with different themes and for different age groups. Finnish Craft Museum announces its workshops through the blog¹⁵³, museums from Varkaus and Siilinjärvi organize different workshops with children where they can create pottery and different tools that were used in the past by local people as well as gathering and presenting information about local history by researching and writing short essays. Pukstaavi encourages school children to present their favorite books and Elävä Museo invites them to attend art and media workshops. Museums also organize lectures on a wide range of subjects. For example, Vapriikki has plenty of lectures on Terracotta warriors, Etruscans and other extinct populations of Italy, the pharaohs' cultural heritage in Egypt during Hellenistic and Roman time, ancient Greece and Chinese culture. The lectures' summary is presented on Vapriikki's blog. Museums from South Karelia organized a seminar about museum environment whose summary can be found in Elävä Museo blog archives in November 2012. Museums occasionally report on their blogs about guided tours, mostly when tours take place but sometimes presenting also a short

¹⁵¹ Turunlinna blogi. *Presidentti Sauli Niinistö julisti Turun linnan historia –näyttelyn avatuksi*. 6.7.2013. <http://turunlinna.blogspot.fi/2013/07/presidentti-sauli-niinisto-julisti.html> [22.11.2015]

¹⁵² Vorssammuseo 3.0. *Avajaistunnelmissa*. 26.11.2013. <http://vorssammuseo.blogspot.fi/2013/11/avajaistunnelmissa.html> [22.11.2013]

¹⁵³ Suomen käsityön museon blogi. *Valmista Rautalankaelukka Avoimessa PAJASSA!* 4.7.2011. <http://www3.jkl.fi/blogit/craft/?p=76> [22.11.2015]

summary about the tour. Fiskars Museum organizes time travel themed tours where children can also participate. Kuopio Natural History Museum has trips in nature where participants can learn about nature and their environment as well as lectures and workshops on the respective themes. One event which was very popular among locals, gathering around 1200 participants, was mushroom weeks where people could learn more about mushrooms and taste mushroom dishes.¹⁵⁴ Espoo Museum of Modern Art's guide is writing some of her thoughts on experiences from guided tours.¹⁵⁵ Plenty blog entries about guided tours and workshops can be read on Turku Castle's blog under "opastetut kierrokset – guided tours" and työpaja – workshop" tags.

One of the major reasons for opening a museum blog was presenting an institution's work that takes place behind closed doors, away from public's sight. This includes building exhibitions, which was mentioned earlier, working with collections, conservation work, field work, meetings and occasionally interviews with artists present in museum exhibitions. Exhibition planning and building is a great part of museum work that visitors do not get to see. Museums, though, write about it on their blogs, for example, Kuopio Natural History Museum announce when the exhibition about bats arrived from Helsinki to Kuopio and how the work of unpacking the exhibition truck went.¹⁵⁶ The museum has also several updates about conservation work, mainly taxidermy. Conservation work constitutes the subject for Turku Castle, too, although the conservators involved work in different specializations such as art, textile, paper and taxidermy. An art conservator from Kiasma mentions the challenges of managing a modern work of art.¹⁵⁷ Other museums mention their collections related-work like digitizing photographs, working in archives or in storage facilities. The museums from Varkaus present their digitization project and collections of photographs¹⁵⁸ and Nautelankoski Museum documents its work thoroughly on their blog Pikkumuseon haasteet (Challenges of a small museum). The updates include work with museum collections, collections policy and cataloguing, archive work¹⁵⁹ museum collaboration with other institutions and collection loans¹⁶⁰, storage spaces and artifact protection in storage rooms.¹⁶¹ To

¹⁵⁴ Kuopion luonnontieteellisen museon blogi. *Sienet kiinnostavat - Kuopion Sieniviikkojen tapahtumissa yli 1200 osallistujaa*. 15.9.2014 <http://kulumus.blogspot.fi/2014/09/sienet-kiinnostavat-kuopion.html> [22.11.2015]

¹⁵⁵ Näkökulmia. *VESIPUTOUSSATEENKAARI: Otteita oppaan elämästä EMMAn taideluonnossa*. 30.5.2013. <http://www.emma.museum/node/1092> [23.11.2015]

¹⁵⁶ Kuopion luonnontieteellisen museon blogi. *Lepakot tulevat!!* 5.2.2014 <http://kulumus.blogspot.fi/2014/02/lepakot-tulevat.html> [22.11.2015]

¹⁵⁷ Kiasma. *Konservaattori kertoo*. 30.5.2014 <http://blog.kiasma.fi/blog/?p=1785> [23.11.2015]

¹⁵⁸ Varkauden museot. *Piipun juurella - Teollisuuskaupunkien museotieto avoimeksi*. 8.10.2015 <http://www.varkaudenmuseot.blogspot.fi/2014/10/piipun-juurella-teollisuuskaupunkien.html> [22.11.2015]

¹⁵⁹ Pikkumuseon haasteet. *Vko 30: Lauri Nautelan arkiston järjestämistä*. 31.7.2010 <http://nautelankoski.blogspot.fi/2010/07/nautelankosken-museon-mesenaatti-lauri.html> [23.11.2015]

¹⁶⁰ Pikkumuseon haasteet. *VKO 46: Esinelainausta*. 19.11.2010 <http://nautelankoski.blogspot.fi/2010/11/vko-45-esinelainausta.html> [23.11.2015]

get more closer to their visitors, museums from Upper Savonia¹⁶² and K.H. Renlund¹⁶³ Museum write about museum employees and their work duties and Kiasma and Museum Centre Vapriikki organize “ask a curator” session where the public can present questions to a museum professional.

Besides presenting what is going on behind the exhibition walls, museum blogs are also very informative and reliable sources about various subjects related to museum profile such as history, art, natural sciences, sports, photography and so on. History museums have plenty of informative blog entries about the museum, its collections and local history. Raahe Museum’s blog is not particularly active but the updates deal mostly with local history. Mäntyharju Museum also writes about its history as an industrial city in a post from 19.3.2013 which explains how a small town became industrialized with the help of water power, wood and railway.¹⁶⁴ The blog offers more details about the local industry in other several posts. Kouvola museum presents different artifacts from museum collections, which otherwise are not on display for everybody to see, along with stories related to the objects and local history. For example, in an entry from 9.7.2013, the curator tells about the fire which destroyed Voikka eighty years ago and adds along photos with artifacts related to the accident.¹⁶⁵ Museums from Varkaus also write shortly the history of a former hotel, nowadays used as a museum building.¹⁶⁶ Finnish Craft Museum writes about some of their collection items now and then. Other museum blogs such as Museum of Basketball write about subjects related to the institution’s profile, for example, Roope Suonio, basketball player and a guest blogger makes a post about the everyday life of a professional basketball player in Finland. The aim of the post is to document the life of a sportsman for future generations.¹⁶⁷ Museum of Photography presents a comprehensive post about the history of the slide from its birth up to the present day.¹⁶⁸ Educational posts can also be found on natural science museum blogs. Kuopio Natural History Museum has a good deal of posts about the environment, flora and fauna which

¹⁶¹ Pikkumuseon haasteet. *Vko 9: Esineiden suojausta säilytystiloissa*. 4.3.2011

<http://nautelankoski.blogspot.fi/2011/03/vko-9-esineiden-suojausta.html> [23.11.2015]

¹⁶² Ylä-Savon paikallismuseot. *Meijän museoposti - yhteistyötä yläsavolaisittain*. 31.7.2014

<http://ylasavonpaikallismuseot.blogspot.fi/2014/07/meijan-museoposti-yhteistyota.html> [23.11.2015]

¹⁶³ K.H. Renlundin museo. *”Mitä jäbä duunaa?”* 8.5.2014 <http://khrenlunds.blogspot.fi/2014/05/mita-jaba-duunaa-petri-aspvik-1.html> [23.11.2015]

¹⁶⁴ Mäntyharjun museo. *Olipa meille koski, tulipa meille rata ja hyvää puuta*. 19.3.2013

<http://mantyharjunmuseo.blogspot.fi/2013/03/olipa-meilla-koski-tulipa-meille-rata.html?view=classic> [24.12.2015]

¹⁶⁵ Kouvolan museoaarteita. *Voikkaan tulipalosta 80 vuotta*. 9.7.2013

http://museoaarteita.blogspot.fi/2013/07/voikkaan-tulipalosta-80-vuotta_9.html [24.11.2015]

¹⁶⁶ Varkauden museot. *Tehtaan hotellin ovet aukeavat*. 20.5.2014

<http://www.varkaudenmuseot.blogspot.fi/2014/05/tehtaan-hotellin-ovet-aukeavat.html> [24.11.2015]

¹⁶⁷ Koripallomuseo. *Vieraskynä: Urheilijan arki (Roope Suonio)*. 18.12.2014

<http://koripallomuseo.blogspot.fi/2014/12/vieraskyna-urheilijan-arki-roope-suonio.html> [24.11.2015]

¹⁶⁸ Terävyysalue. *Mad men, karuselli ja diakuvan pieni historia*. Suomen valokuvataiteen museon blogi. 19.1.2014

<http://valokuvataiteenmuseo.blogspot.fi/2014/01/mad-men-karuselli-ja-diakuvan-pieni.html> [24.11.2015]

offer useful facts to readers and can serve as biology lessons. Some of the posts include beekeeping, animals, birds, fish or different plants. The museum also offers advice on how to help injured birds by giving them Cola.¹⁶⁹ Other museums like Fiskars share recipes for sour bread (8.8.2013), Kaarina Korsman writes some of her food (18.7.2014) and soap (11.7.2014) recipes on her blog Korsmanin talossa. The posts are not necessarily educational but also informative. Kiasma often publishes information about exhibitions or cultural events in other institutions (21.5.2012; 8.7.2013) or presents museum events' schedule. Vapriikki has several posts telling the history behind yearly traditional celebrations such as Easter, Valentine's Day, May Day, Halloween, Midsummer or Finnish traditional Little Christmas (Pikkujoulu) and it also writes about a series of events where cultural heritage professionals visit different parts of Tampere and grade the environment. Fiskars Museum has similar posts about the historical environment of the upper Ironworks area, describing the environment including built heritage and the history of the place.¹⁷⁰ Blog posts which are informative contribute to museums' strategy of developing informal learning as the information offered is reliable, within reach and readers can select it to suit their interests.

Research work is also a subject that museum blogs often write about. Researchers from museums in Southwest Finland write about their work on Southwest Finland cultural heritage blog. The blog touches a wide range of cultural heritage subjects mostly related to local history, archaeology and built environment and it resembles an information database for museums in the respective region. Arjen historia blog (Werstas museum, Labour Archives, The People's Archives, Museum of Technology, Museum of Gold) has similar thematic as Southwest Finland cultural heritage blog, writing mostly stories about museum and archive work, historical collections and life in the past. The aim of the blog is to present the history of ordinary people as well as pearls of museums' collections.¹⁷¹ Vantaa City Museum writes occasionally about archeological field work¹⁷² as well as research, one of their posts dealing with ceramic research.¹⁷³ Museum blogs which share this kind of educational information make learning possible beyond museum walls and increase their chances of attracting visitors to their institution through sharing stories from their collections and archives and also make people interested in local culture by promoting a place's history.

¹⁶⁹ Kuopion luonnontieteellinen museo. *Colaä noccaan!* 31.10.2011 <http://kulumus.blogspot.fi/2011/10/colaa-noccaan.html> [24.11.2015]

¹⁷⁰ Fiskars Museum. *The upper Ironworks area.* <http://www.fiskarsmuseum.fi/en/upper-ironworks-area> [28.11.2015]

¹⁷¹ Arjen historia. *Blogin esittely.* <http://blogi.arjenhistoria.fi/blogin-esittely/> [23.11.2015]

¹⁷² Muistaakseni. *Monipuolista työtä kaivausten ympärillä.* 14.6.2013 <http://muistaakseni.blogspot.fi/2013/06/monipuolista-tyota-kaivausten-ymparilla.html> [23.11.2015]

¹⁷³ Muistaakseni. *Vantaan keramiikkatutkimuksia esiteltiin kansainvälisesti.* 10.9.2012 <http://muistaakseni.blogspot.fi/2012/09/vantaan-keramiikkatutkimuksia.html> [23.11.2015]

Some of the content from the blogs is more personal dealing with staff spending free time together or visiting other cultural destinations. Helsinki Natural History Museum has several entries from November 2014 which describe the staff's trip to Australia, Museums of Lappeenranta organize a trip to local museums¹⁷⁴ or Forssa museum staff visit Wales.¹⁷⁵ The employees from Fiskars Museum also spend time together horse riding and grilling.¹⁷⁶ Sometimes a member of the staff can make an entry about their free time outside the museum like in the case of Kuopio Natural History Museum where a member of the museum staff tells about her walks in the nature (27.2.2014) or her studies (16.2.2011). According to Nina Simon, personal voice blogs "are the stickiest type for established institutions"¹⁷⁷, the readers not only get to know the activity of the institution but also the staff and thus blogs help to create a more personal relationship with the public.

Museum employees write sometimes about mundane things that are happening in the museum. Espoo Museum of Modern Art writes about experiences with different customers (8.8.2011), museums from Joensuu present one of their new products, small green frogs (19.12.2012). Fiskars Museum writes about some unfortunate events when thieves have broken into the museum, caused minor damages and stole some of the staff props (18.4.2012) or museum's Christmas tree was stolen and lights were broken (18.12.2010). They also have few unusual events such as finding museum's lost stand board in the nearby river (4.7.2012) or some kids discovering several objects in a lake, one of the objects, a bottle, is estimated to be from the end of nineteenth century (27.7.2011). Nautelankoski Museum organized a thematic day for radio amateurs and the blog post has also been translated to Morse (15.8.2012).

One of the uses of museum blogs is interaction with the public through various activities such as contests, asking questions, help from readers or publishing old photos in order to arouse curiosity and start a discussion. Vapriikki organized a photo competition (13.9.2012) and together with Kiasma they also have "Ask a curator" session in which people can ask a curator about their work or museum collections. Museums from Joensuu post photos of some artifacts from their collections and ask the readers to guess the object and its use (31.1.2014). Mäntyharju Museum has an unusual contest, asking the readers to guess the height of a spruce from the museum surroundings

¹⁷⁴ Elävä museo. *Retki paikallismuseoihin*. 6.8.2012 <http://elavamuseo.blogspot.fi/2012/08/retki-paikallismuseoihin.html> [25.11.2015]

¹⁷⁵ Vorssammuseo 3.0. *Tapaus Chepstow: älykkäitä projekteja museossa*. 15.5.2013 <http://vorssammuseo.blogspot.fi/2013/05/tapaus-chepstow-alykkaita-projekteja.html> [25.11.2015]

¹⁷⁶ Fiskars Museum. *Museets personal utomhus - Museon henkilökunta ulkoilmassa*. 3.9.2012 http://museum.ratata.fi/blogg/article-48868-120826-museets-personal-utomhus-museon-henkilokunta-ulkoilmassa?offset_48868=105 [25.11.2015]

¹⁷⁷ Simon, Nina. *Floor staff hit the blogosphere: Exploratorium Explainers*. Museum 2.0. 29.5.2007. <http://museumtwo.blogspot.fi/2007/05/floor-staff-hit-blogosphere.html> [12.12.2015]

(29.6.2013). Museums make use of their photo collections in order to create educational and at the same time entertaining posts. Varkaus Museums has a series of then and now town photos (29.11.2013; 31.1.2014) and Kankaanpää Museum has a yearly Christmas calendar where it posts a total of twenty-four entries from first to twenty-fourth of December presenting photos and artifacts from museum collections. After posting the Christmas calendar series for the first time, museum staff reported that it reached 1626 readers, being one of the most popular post series (3.1.2011). Through blogs, museums can ask for help regarding information about collections. Hotel and Restaurant Museum often asks readers to provide memories on food related subjects or even objects and photos which could help with the new exhibition. K.H. Renlund Museum asks readers to contribute with their memories from school for an anniversary exhibition (17.1.2014) and Lappeenranta Museums organize events where staff presents photos with no or little information from their archives and people have the chance to contribute with their knowledge in case they know more details about the photographs (5.4.2012). The next section of this chapter will elaborate more on museum blogs' interaction with the readers through comments and feedback.

5.4 Comments and feedback

An important part of the blogs is the comment section where readers can express their opinion, write their thoughts and offer feedback. This is a feature of blogs which makes them part of Web 2.0 as they allow interaction with the public. Blogs are a new communication channel for museums and their goal is to communicate with the public and receive feedback as this “makes communication a two-way process”.¹⁷⁸ At first glance museum blogs do not receive lots of comments at all and this might happen due to various reasons which involve blog visibility, content, length of texts, frequency of posts and comment section. If the blog is not easily visible from the museum webpage, people might not notice it at all. In addition to that, compared to blog reading, commenting on blogs is not a very popular activity among Finnish social media users as shown in a study done by Central Statistical Office of Finland. As seen from the analysis above, blog content deals mostly with every day museum activities, the bloggers avoid writing conflicting opinions that would start heated discussions and they also do not disclose confidential information. The length of the posts also plays a significant role in the readers' interaction with the blogs because if the posts are too long they might run the risk of becoming boring and uninteresting thus the reader

¹⁷⁸ Šola, Tomislav. *Essays on museums and their theory: towards the cybernetic museum*. Helsinki: Finnish Museums Association, 1997.

abandoning the lecture. The frequency of posts refers to how often the blog is updated. In the case of museums most of the blogs are active, meaning publishing posts once or even several times a month. Some blogs, as mentioned above were opened to follow an exhibition process or a project and then closed or abandoned. Other blogs were not updated at all after a while. There are also blogs which do not allow comments or they close the comment section after a while.

One of the most active museum blogs are Kiasma's two blogs, Kiasma ja Saattaa sisältää nykytaidetta (last updated in 2014), Espoo Museum of Modern Art – Näkökulmia (old blog), Fiskars Museum, Vantaa Museum, Korsman House, Kuopio and Finnish Museum of Natural History, Finnish Museum of Photography and Mäntyharju Museum. These blogs post constantly and often which is also reflected in the number of comments they receive. Kiasma's blog Saattaa sisältää nykytaidetta and Fiskars Museum are the only blogs with slightly over a hundred comments. They are followed by Kankaanpää Museum and Kuopio Natural History Museum with around sixty comments. Other blogs also post constantly but not that often as the aforementioned ones. Vantaa Museum, Southwest Finland cultural heritage blog, Kiasma and Finnish Museum of Photography have between thirty and forty comments, the rest of the blogs varying a lot from one comment up to thirty. However, readers leave comments and feedback from time to time. The blogs which did not receive any comments are Aboa Vetus & Ars Nova *Taide jää mieleen* which was updated only in 2012 as part of a project and the blog of Tikkurila train station, also updated only in 2012. Few blogs still did not have comments up to 2014 but the situation changed for the following year. Ten blogs out of forty-six have no comment section at all such as Forestry Museum of Lapland, National Police Museum, Raahe Museum and Korsman House which makes them more like news boards or diaries. Serlachius Museum blog does not allow comments but people can like their posts on Facebook. The Craft Museum of Finland and Kiasma have their comment section closed to most of their blog entries, usually the comment section being opened briefly for the newest posts. During the study, some of the blogs got a new format which did not support commenting anymore. These blogs are Vapriikki, Finnish Museum of Natural History, the new blog of Espoo Museum of Modern Art and Urajärvi Cultural Park.

The types of comments posted on museum blogs are decent and polite and readers usually stick with the posts' subjects. Readers are offering feedback on the exhibitions, projects or blogs; they encourage and admire museum's activities and workshops, share their memories, offer more information on the subject, share their random thoughts, ask questions and sometimes even correct mistakes and bring criticism. There were quite few negative comments though, some even deleted and spam.

Vapriikki receives positive comments about the blog content describing it as funny and a good way to inform people of what is happening behind the scenes as well as exhibition feedback:

Nice to read the story behind the scenes. When it comes to exhibitions, it is annoying that the authors don't get any coverage although the work is like writing a book. Writers are celebrated. Fortunately, the blog gives the chance to know how the exhibition is built and who builds it.

*This blog is the most enjoyable museum publication i've read for a while. I promise to buy the exhibition catalogue if there are same kind of stories! Good luck with building the exhibition!*¹⁷⁹

*Nice exhibition – really gorgeous. The opening was also a success. The band was very professional: especially the trumpeter's solo was brilliant. Leningrad Dixieland Band grand old man had a banjo instead of mandolin! The eighty year old grandpa played banjo so nicely and sang at the same time with so much feeling.*¹⁸⁰

Museo Militaria received feedback about the original idea of presenting museum work from the point of view of four elves: “Excellent idea to get the dwarfs to present the museum and your work!”¹⁸¹ Most of the feedback museums receive is really short: “Very nice that such a day was organized. The participants seemed to really enjoy it! :)”¹⁸²; “Wonderful exhibition of Turku Castle...”¹⁸³; “Great job, your exhibition’s quality (and also atmosphere...) improves all the time!”¹⁸⁴

Some visitors express their wish to visit the museum after reading the blog: “Nicely written! I must visit the exhibition”.¹⁸⁵ Museums also receive feedback on their blogs: “Very interesting and welcomed blog into museum world! I would like that a museum dealing with the visual area, use a lot of photos on its blog, only text updates are a bit numbing. Just grab the camera and take photos

¹⁷⁹ Vapriikki. *Supremattistinen Matto* 13.05.2011 <http://vapriikki.net/blog/supremattistinen-matto/#comments> [29.4.2014]

¹⁸⁰ Vapriikki. *Se on siinä*. 27.5.2011 <http://vapriikki.net/blog/se-on-siina/#comments> [29.4.2014]

¹⁸¹ Museotonttujen blogi. *Kaitsun verstaalla*. 12.11.2013 <http://museomilitaria.blogspot.fi/2013/11/kaitsun-verstaalla.html> [29.4.2014]

¹⁸² Kuopion luonnontieteelliseen museon blogi. *Geologian päivä Puijolla yhdisti geologian ja biologian*. 18.9.2012. <http://kulumus.blogspot.fi/2012/09/geologian-paiva-puijolla-yhdisti.html> [14.12.2015]

¹⁸³ Turun linnan blogi. *Tyttökuningas – Made in Turku*. 19.9.2014. <http://turunlinna.blogspot.fi/2014/09/tyttokuningas-made-in-turku.html#comment-form> [14.12.2015]

¹⁸⁴ Turun linnan blogi. *Jalkajousi miehen puku*. 11.4.2014. <http://turunlinna.blogspot.fi/2014/04/jalkajousimiehen-puku.html#comment-form> [14.12.2015]

¹⁸⁵ Elävä Museo. *Taidemuseon kokoelmia tutkimassa*. 20.8.2014. <http://elavamuseo.blogspot.fi/2014/08/taidemuseon-kokoelmia-tutkimassa-etela.html> [14.12.2015]

of museum work that it's not seen to the public, spaces and staff behind closed doors :)”¹⁸⁶; “The blog brings the customer closer to the museum. And it is a contemporary documentation tool”.¹⁸⁷ One person gets inspired to start their own blog after reading Forssa Museum's blog: “I really like this post. It inspired me to start my own blog”.¹⁸⁸

The feedback is not always positive but nevertheless it is expressed in a polite and constructive manner which is useful for the museum services' improvement. For example, Kiasma received feedback about the customer service which is passive; the staff is bored, rude and indifferent.

*I was visiting Kiasma as a researcher the same weekend. Kiasma's customer service staff has been for long the same and they know a lot. However, the reality is that, when being in the same work for a long time it occurs some kind of “blindness” and passivity. This can be seen when clients are not met with a smile, eye contact is not made, body language is not open and positive etc. I noticed bored facial expressions, very rude and mean customer service, indifference and discrimination between staff. I would hope that the organization paid more attention to activating the customer service staff.*¹⁸⁹

Hotel and Restaurant Museum posts questions at most of their entries regarding a certain theme from the 80's and some people answer bringing forward their memories. One reader remembers the events in his/her life during the 80's such as the beginning of work life, money, freedom, dancing and the big love: *True – there is something moving about it. Life started then, studies were over, work life began, money, freedom, dance – sigh. And the big love – it was then. I don't miss it but I smile whenever I think about it.*¹⁹⁰ People also share their memories about food in a post about home and school food. One person remembers how bad the food at school was:

[...] During one of the first school days liver casserole was served which was so bad that i couldn't even eat it. Other kids were already playing outside when the teacher forced me to eat, i almost threw up. [...] I have horrible memories with other foods. We called potatoes

¹⁸⁶ Terävyysalue. *Tervetuloa!* 1.3.2010. <http://valokuvataiteenmuseo.blogspot.fi/2010/03/tervetuloa.html> [14.12.2015]

¹⁸⁷ Kuopion luonnontieteelliseen museon blogi. *Blogi täytti vuoden.* 16.2.2011. <http://kulumus.blogspot.fi/2011/02/blogi-taytti-vuoden.html> [14.12.2015]

¹⁸⁸ Vorssammuseo 3.0. *Korvikeleivän kannassa kiinni!* 26.6.2014. <http://vorssammuseo.blogspot.fi/2014/06/korvikeleivan-kannassa-kiinni.html> [14.12.2015]

¹⁸⁹ Saattaa sisältää nykytaidetta. *Asiakaspalvelun näkökulma.* 19.4.2011. <http://www.lily.fi/blogit/saattaa-sisaltaa-nykytaidetta/asiakaspalvelun-nakokulma> [29.4.2014]

¹⁹⁰ Kadonneen kasarini metsästys. *Tarpeeksi lähellä ja riittävän kaukana.* 12.2.2014 <http://www.kadonnutkasari.fi/2014/02/12/tarpeeksi-lahella-ja-riittavan-kaukana/#comments> [29.4.2014]

*kinder-surprise potato because under the rubbery peel one could find black or brown surprises. Most of the time I managed only with dried bread and grated carrots.*¹⁹¹

Kankaanpää Museum has yearly Christmas calendar posts with photos from the museum archive and at the same time invites people to share their memories or recognize the places and people in the photos:

*I went down from Myllymäki track onto the ice of a man-made lake the year 80 + with a sledge...And a certain pit. As far as I remember, there was a hill in Kirnu before new settlements, as well as in Tehtaankatu park. Often went to Jämi, too. And of course, when talking about skiing, I remember the hill tracks from school years, among others, the water tower and other places, broke a toe only once ;)*¹⁹²

*In the upper photo, in the foreground are the following persons (from left to right): Erkki Toivonen, Tapio Leivo, Juhani Nevaranta, Artillery Brigade's current commander Pertti Lahtinen (in front), Arto Kiviharju and Harri Eteläkoski (front middle). Oikealla tunnistettavissa Leena-Maija Haavisto (in front), Eila Kangasniemi (second row) and Leena Toivonen (back). From the angels on the stage, i recognize Maj-Lis Rantala (right), Pirjo-Riitta Leppänen (second from right) and Anita Huhtamäki (fourth from right). I think the photo was taken during a Christmas celebration in 1970 or -71 and the pupils in the photos were in the second or third grade back then. This way fifty year old Esa Vanonen remembers his own school colleagues and classmates.*¹⁹³

The same museum receives several comments on a post about Midsummer celebrations, readers writing some of their memories related to the Midsummer celebrations in Niinisalo.¹⁹⁴ From my own observations, usually cultural history museums as well as other museums, which deal with stories or events about the past, receive comments in which readers express their memories.

Readers also ask museum's advice on different situations and in their turn offer advice to museums. Finnish Museum of Natural History is complaining in a post from 2009 that there is an increase in

¹⁹¹ Kadonneen kasarın metsästys. *Koutiruan veroista kouluruokaa*. 19.9.2013

<http://www.kadonnutkasari.fi/2013/09/19/> [14.12.2015]

¹⁹² Tulevaisuuden museo. *Joulukalenteri, 4. luukku*. 2.11.2014.

<http://tulevaisuudenmuseo.blogspot.fi/2010/12/joulukalenteri-4-luukku.html> [29.4.2014]

¹⁹³ Tulevaisuuden museo. *Joulukalenteri 2011, 22. luukku*.

<http://tulevaisuudenmuseo.blogspot.fi/2011/12/joulukalenteri-2011-22-luukku.html> [29.4.2014]

¹⁹⁴ Tulevaisuuden museo. *Niinisalon juhannusjuhlat*. 20.6.2013.

<http://tulevaisuudenmuseo.blogspot.fi/2013/06/niinisalon-juhannusjuhlat.html> [14.12.2015]

the number of rabbits in Kaisaniemi as well as in the city which cause damage to the environment. Some readers come with advice on how the problem can be solved by building fences that can keep rabbits away:

1. Well, why not surround all the area with a net against rabbits? The botanic garden of Turku University did this and it was also proposed by Juha Valste in Finnish Nature (Suomen Luonto) magazine from 9/2008.

2. Answering to the park rabbit: rabbits as well as brown hares are urbanized that they are able to leap into the garden through open gates during the day. Even a denser and intact fence wouldn't keep the rabbits out. The rabbits can also dig their way under the fences, so a fence should be buried at least half a meter under the ground in order to be an effective barrier.

3. I will continue about this subject. This summer students are in a serious shortage of seasonal jobs. If you took a couple of guys to do the job, they'll surely manage to bury the fences half a meter under the ground before the autumn cold starts. I don't think that the rabbits will force their way in through the gate from the Unioninkatu side. The gates from Kaisaniemi beach side should be kept closed more often. Is that too much?¹⁹⁵

Forssa Museum gets suggestions about possible events from a reader:

Great work – thank you on my and Forssa history's behalf! One alternative for the program could be live role playing, separate or as part of the event. The role playing done for Kehräämö Night worked very well and they were rewarding for both role players and other participants. Cotton angel guides from different times were tried few times and people liked them.¹⁹⁶

Readers also ask advice from the museum, for example, upon finding a bird ring from a dead bird's carcass.

Question: *Hei, nice page! However, i'm looking for an address where i can send a ring. In Kivenlahti, on the south end of Merivalkama, around the school's lower corner, there*

¹⁹⁵ Monimuotoisuutta tutkimassa. *Kaniongelmia Kaisaniemessä ja kaupungilla*. 3.2.2009 <http://blogs.helsinki.fi/luonnontieteellinenmuseum/2009/02/03/kaniongelmia-kaisaniemessa-ja-kaupungilla/> [29.4.2014]

¹⁹⁶ Vorssammuseo 3.0. *Lähellä sydäntä!* 2.10.2014. <http://vorssammuseo.blogspot.fi/2014/10/lahella-sydanta.html> [14.12.2015]

is a carcass of a small white bird. My girlfriend noticed that the bird had a ring. I took the leg with the ring and i'm thinking of bringing it to you but I didn't find the address. Where should I send it? Who is interested?

Museum's answer:

This information can be found on Finnish Museum of Natural History's webpage under Bird ringing section. The information you searched for can be a bit difficult to find but this link will help you find information on how you can send the ring's details by post or even through an online form! Of course, the ring can be also returned to the Museum of Natural History's (Pohjoinen Rautatiekatu 13, Helsinki) customer service desk which will send it forward. A found ring is a valuable discovery; it would be nice if you could return it!¹⁹⁷

Museum of Photography is asked for advice on how to store old photographs which are waiting for digitization. The museum replies, offering a useful link on storing old photographs and contact information of two specialists.¹⁹⁸ On a post about a game from 1885, which contains Finland's map and sixty seven areas, a reader mentions that it is a treasure and asks what places are mentioned in the game. A museum employee adds photos with the areas present in the game.¹⁹⁹ Kouvola Museum blog has a post about a certain building where a reader asks about the location of the respective building. The museum staff mentions the approximate location as the building does not exist nowadays anymore.²⁰⁰ Museums from Varkaus receive a comment asking about an abandoned motel and museum staff promises to look into the matter and find information from their archive.²⁰¹

Readers also correct information in the blog posts, for example, a reader corrects the location and the former use of a building mentioned in one of the blog entries of Urajärvi Cultural Park:

Palokunnantalo was not on the same place as Makkaratalo but just across the street, on the other side of Keskuskatu. Later, the building housed IKL's restaurant Musta

¹⁹⁷ Monimuotoisuutta tutkimassa. *Luomulaisen matkassa: Lepakkometsän pimeydessä*. 16.8.2013. <http://blogs.helsinki.fi/luonnontieteellinenmuseo/2013/08/16/luomulaisen-matkassa-lepakkometsan-pimeydessä/> [29.4.2014]

¹⁹⁸ Terävyysalue – Suomen valokuvataiteen museon blogi. *Museon ytimessä*. 19.4.2010. <http://valokuvataiteenmuseo.blogspot.fi/2010/04/museon-ytimessa.html> [14.12.2015]

¹⁹⁹ Kouvolan museoarteita. *Mitä John Bull teki Suomessa?* 13.9.2013. <http://museoarteita.blogspot.fi/2013/09/mita-john-bull-teki-suomessa.html> [14.12.2015]

²⁰⁰ Tulevaisuuden museo. *Pohjanlinna*. 7.7.2011. <http://tulevaisuudenmuseo.blogspot.fi/2011/07/pohjanlinna.html> [14.12.2015]

²⁰¹ Varkauden museot. *Ivar Ekström – kuvaaja metsäkansan mailla*. 23.10.2013. <http://www.varkaudenmuseot.blogspot.fi/2013/10/ivar-ekstrom-kuvaaja-metsakansan-mailla.html> [14.12.2015]

*Karhu and after the wars, Kalevala Women's Kesikartano, until it was demolished accompanied by protests.*²⁰²

Other readers add more information by commenting on the blog entries. On a post about kettlebell's history from Kouvola museum, a reader comments by adding more information about the subject.²⁰³

There are very few negative comments on the blogs and they are usually related to the use of money, namely that money should be spent on other institutions such as schools, not museums and that art museums are not a real workplace:

*It would be really good if EMMA was closed and the spared money would be used in a reasonable way (for example, Espoo elementary schools).*²⁰⁴

*Well then it's time to get a real job. 200 000 € is too much.*²⁰⁵

There are many readers though who reply to the above comment. Here is one example:

*Kiasma is one of the most interesting destinations in Helsinki, i go there almost everytime i come from Kotka to Helsinki. It is a shame if "it's time to get a real job" opinions underestimate the meaning of art museums. It would be time to get acquainted with artists' work. Full stop.*²⁰⁶

On other blogs some of the comments have been removed by the museum staff. This is the case of Nautelankoski Museum²⁰⁷ and Vantaa Museum²⁰⁸. Unfortunately it is not known if the comments were inappropriate or just spam as sometimes spam filters do not work properly and unnecessary spam messages get published in the comment section.

²⁰² Urajärven kulttuuripuisto. *Viuluniekkoja ja muita viikareita*. 19.9.2012. http://urajarvenkulttuuripuisto.fi/von_heidemanit/1706#comments [29.4.2014]

²⁰³ Kouvolan museoaarteita. *Kahvakuulan historiaa*. 10.5.2013. <http://museoaarteita.blogspot.fi/2013/05/kahvakuulan-historiaa.html> [14.12.2015]

²⁰⁴ Näkökulmia. *Den glider in*. 16.5.2011. <http://www.emma.museum/blogit/nana-salin/2011-05-16/den-glider> [29.4.2014]

²⁰⁵ Kiasma. *Perustehtävämme on vaarassa!* 14.8.2012 <http://blog.kiasma.fi/blog/?p=315#comments> [29.4.2014]

²⁰⁶ Ibid. 205.

²⁰⁷ Pikkumuseon haasteet. *Luonnonkukkia ennen juhannusta*. 24.6.2010. <http://nautelankoski.blogspot.fi/2010/06/vko-25-luonnonkukkia-juhannusta-ennen.html#comment-form> ”Blogin hallinnoija on poistanut tämän kommentin.” [29.4.2014]

²⁰⁸ Muistaakseni. *Pääsiäinen*. 17.3.2010. <http://muistaakseni.blogspot.fi/2010/03/paasiainen.html> ”Blogin hallinnoija on poistanut tämän kommentin.” [24.4.2014]

Museums are seldom commenting on each other blogs. Nautelankoski Museum received feedback from Fiskars Museum mentioning that their blog is nice and Fiskars staff will surely follow it.²⁰⁹ An employee of Kankaanpää Museum congratulated Forssa Museum upon renewing the exhibition and mentioned how nice it is that others can follow the exhibition's progress.²¹⁰ The Finnish Labour Museum Werstas former blog, Aukion laidalla, received positive feedback from an employee of Kuopio Natural History Museum on a less conventional event called dark cafeteria organized in collaboration with the association of visually impaired in order to offer an idea to visitors how it is to be blind.²¹¹ These comments do indicate that museums follow each others' blogs to a certain degree although the blogs are not linked to each other, for example through blog rolls.

The most noticeable feature of the blogs' comment section was the scarcity of comments. With very few exceptions, museum blogs do not receive many comments and their communication model remains roughly one-to-many as "feedback is what makes communication a two-way process" (Šola, 1997:125). Kiasma²¹² and Helsinki City Museum²¹³ are among the few museum blogs which managed to gather around fourteen comments for a blog post and this is still a small number if we are to compare with more popular blogs. However, according to Jenkins (et.al 2006:7)²¹⁴ "a participatory culture is one in which not every member must contribute, but all must believe that they are free to contribute". Participation is not necessarily measured in the number of comments but in the number of readers. Reading is also a form of participation and besides, the readers could share the blog links in their own social media circles, talk about the blog or they could visit the museum. In this sense, participation is not always visible because blogs, as other social media, are flexible when it comes to participation. "Blog users may be as actively engaged as they wish. They may simply read what a blogger has posted, they may click on links, they may send the blogger their analyses and opinions along with links to additional information and they may engage in dialogue with the blogger and other blog readers. The amount of participation varies from session to

²⁰⁹ Pikkumuseon haasteet. *Vko 35: Varsinais-Suomen museopäivä*. 3.9.2010.

<http://nautelankoski.blogspot.fi/2010/09/vko-35-varsinais-suomen-museopaiva.html> [14.12.2015]

²¹⁰ Vorssamuseo 3.0. *Vorssasta kuuluu kummia*. 25.1.2012. <http://vorssamuseo.blogspot.fi/2012/01/vorssasta-kuuluu-kummia.html> [14.12.2015]

²¹¹ Aukion laidalla. *Pimeä kahvila valaisi mieliä*. 29.4.2012. <http://aukionlaidalla.blogspot.fi/2012/04/pimea-kahvila-valaisi-mielia.html> [14.12.2015]

²¹² Kiasma. *Perustehtävämme on vaarassa!* 14.8.2012 <http://blog.kiasma.fi/blog/?p=315#comments> [18.12.2015]

²¹³ Helsingin kaupungin museo. *Pillimehua vai samppanjaa?* 1.4.2014. <http://www.uusikaupunginmuseo.fi/blogi-pillimehua-vai-samppanjaa/> [18.12.2015]

²¹⁴ Quoted in Giaccardi, Elisa (ed.). *Heritage and social media: understanding heritage in a participatory culture*. London; New York, NY: Routledge, 2012.

session and blog to blog, [and] is determined by the user [as] blogs are one- and two-way methods of communication where users choose their level of participation (Tremayne, 2007:129).

According to the “90-9-1” participation principle, defined by Jakob Nielsen (2006) “in most online communities 90% of users are lurkers who never contribute, 9% of users contribute a little, and 1% of users account for almost all the action”²¹⁵ so museum blogs do have an audience as the next chapter will show, but the audience is not necessarily seen in the comment section. Nina Simon explains that “the vast majority of people who read your blog aren't reading it because they want or plan to comment on it. They are reading it to read it--to learn, absorb, and gain awareness of new things”. She goes on to explain that the success of a blog is not measured by the number of comments and museums should evaluate the blog purpose first before worrying about comments.²¹⁶ In conclusion, measuring the success of a blog is not a simple task but a museum could take into consideration visitor statistics for a start.

A good way of researching blog audiences is through questionnaires. Forssa Museum asked its readers about their interests, background, thoughts and wishes regarding the blog content. The questionnaire revealed that the blog is not read only locally but also internationally. Readers' background and reasons for following the blog were very diverse. Most people wanted to learn something new or they were just interested in a certain subject and the average reader was either into handicrafts, history or a cultural consumer. Most of the readers expressed their wish to read more about stories related to artifacts and museum work.²¹⁷

The aim of this chapter was to analyze blogs' layout, reasons for blogging, content and reader interaction. It was noticed that Finnish museum blogs are not a homogeneous group but they have various characteristics. The blogs' appearance differs depending on the blogging service museums use although more than a half of museum blogs use Google Blogger and the main blog type remains the text blog. The most noticeable difference from other type of blogs was the lack of blogrolls thus museum blogs not being able to link between them. Museums' reasons for blogging and content revolve around their daily activities and the wish to document these activities and present them to the public. The comment and feedback analysis showed that museum blogs still remain a one-way communication channel mostly due to the fact that readers are not commenting in significant numbers and some museums do not allow commenting at all on their blogs. Most of the comments

²¹⁵ Quoted in Simon, Nina. *The Participatory Museum*. Santa Cruz, CA.: Museum 2.0, 2010.

²¹⁶ Simon, Nina. *Why doesn't anyone comment on your blog*. Museum 2.0. 2.12.2008.

<http://museumtwo.blogspot.fi/2008/12/why-doesnt-anyone-comment-on-your-blog.html> [18.12.2015]

²¹⁷ Vorssammuseo 3.0. “*Museoblogi on hieno idea!*” – *Blogikyselyn saldoa*. 23.10.2015.

<http://vorssammuseo.blogspot.fi/2015/10/museoblogi-on-hieno-idea-blogikyselyn.html> [18.12.2015]

museum blogs receive is feedback from blog readers. A positive aspect noticed with regard to comments was that museums do not receive bad intended comments which could be a result of the non-controversial subjects they post.

6. Questionnaire results

In this section the results obtained from the questionnaire will be reported and the findings will be commented on taking into account the blog analysis from the previous chapter. In addition to the blog analysis, a questionnaire was sent to Finnish museums in order to complete the research and to clarify some of the aspects that were not directly noticeable from the blogs such as expectations, challenges, future plans, bloggers' age and position inside the museum or number of readers. The questionnaire also offered the chance to museum staff to express their opinion regarding aspects of museum blogs and blogging. There were also questions which dealt with reasons for blogging and blog subjects. Some of these can be checked from the blogs' description but there are blogs which do not state them clearly so additional questions were necessary.

The questionnaire was compiled using Google Forms and contained 14 questions with multiple choice answers. The respondents could choose one or more answers and they could also add their own as the questionnaire offered the possibility to tick the Other box and write own answer. The questions were strictly related to blogging and their aim was to find out the dynamics between the blog and museum staff as well as aspects related to blog readers. The questionnaire was anonymous; the only field required was filling in the museum's blog name. The questionnaire can be found as an attachment to this paper in both Finnish and English although only the Finnish version was sent to museums. In addition, a summary of the responses will also be attached to this paper.

The questionnaire was distributed to forty-one museums through Google Drive by inserting a standard mail to all respondents. In the mail it was mentioned that there is the possibility to answer the questionnaire several times if the museum possessed more than one blog so forty-six responses were expected. This was the case of three museums which have two (Aboa Vetus and Ars Nova; The Artillery Museum) or even three blogs (Vantaa Museum). The mail addresses of the respondents were collected from the museums' websites. Usually the questionnaire was sent to the main mailing list of the museum so all the staff could receive it. If a general mailing list was not found then the questionnaire targeted certain persons of the museum staff, usually the bloggers, if

their name was available on the blog. In case this alternative was not possible, the questionnaire was sent to several members of the staff. The responses were collected between March and May 2015 during which time the questionnaire was sent several times. A total of thirty-one responses from forty-six blogs were obtained which is above half.

With regard to problems and limitations of the questionnaire there were some aspects related to the type of the questions, distribution and respondents. First, the questions were multiple-choice, closed format questions, which means, a variety of answers to choose from was offered to the respondents. This limited the various points of view which could have been expressed if the questions were done in an interview style. Nevertheless an option to add own answers was given at the end of most questions. The multiple-choice type of questionnaire was chosen also due to practical reasons. If the questions had been open, meaning that the respondents could have written their own answers, the answering percent might have been very low. Another aspect was related to the distribution of the questionnaire. As in most cases, it was distributed to several members of the staff and that led to multiple answers on behalf of the same blog. Nevertheless the answers were mostly the same and a combination of all was taken into consideration. The software used to analyze the results took only one answer into consideration but noticeable differences in the answers were also added afterwards. The last issue was related to respondents namely some of the blogs were written by former museum staff and they could not be reached anymore. Other staff members answered on their behalf but unfortunately some of the questions remained unanswered because the present staff members had no access to the blog's user account and they could not give information on reader statistics or blogging challenges. There were no technical problems encountered during the study whatsoever.

The first question was "Why did the museum start its own blog?". The main reasons were because the blog was considered to be a communication channel between the museum and the public (71.4 %), the blog offers more information about the museum (65.7 %), it provides visibility in social media (60 %) and it develops museum's possibilities of communication and marketing (54,3 %). Some museums (37.1 %) answered that the blog was opened to post updates on projects and upcoming or new exhibitions. Other reasons were the blog being museum's diary, museum blogging being trendy and fun as well as being a learning environment. Few museums mention other reasons for blogging such as Vantaa Museum blog *Rock'n Vantaa* which is a two year project documenting rock music and young bands from Vantaa starting with the 1960's. The blog presents and analyses interviews and makes available photos and other documentation to the public. The Craft Museum of Finland adds that interaction between museum and the public does not happen although the option of interaction it is chosen in the questionnaire. Aboa Vetus and Ars Nova adds

that summer staff started the blog *Museon kuvioita* not only for information dissemination and interaction but as a study diary and a project. The blog was active between May and September 2011.

The second question aimed at finding out where the museum staff gets the ideas for the blog posts from. The majority answered that the exhibitions and projects (82.9 %) museum's daily activities (82.9 %), staff's ideas (74.3 %), collections and archives (62.9 %) are the main subjects they write about. Media and the public's proposals accounted for only a small part of inspiration sources (28.6 %, respectively 11.4 %). *Rock'n Vantaa* added that some of their ideas consist of interviews' gathered material. Museums from Siilinjärvi blogged about the results of the workshops aimed at school-aged children as part of the local museums' project. Aboa Vetus and Ars Nova also mentioned one of their projects as a source of inspiration for the blog *Taide jää mieleen*, Forssa Museum stated that yearly festivities make good subjects for their blog *Vorssammuseo 3.0*. The Craft Museum of Finland also added subjects related to museum field and *Korsmanin talossa* mentioned newspapers from 1951, museum's interview material and other literature from 1940's and 1950's.

At the question "what were the blog benefits for the museum" most of museums answered that the blog developed communication and interaction between museum and public (65.6 %) and it made the museum more visible in the media (53,1 %). Few considered that the museum acted as a learning environment and just one respondent (The Artillery Museum of Finland) mentioned more visitors due to the blog. *Rock'n Vantaa* mentioned that the posts are going to be used in museum's upcoming exhibition. Museum of Technology's blog *Pienten paja* stated that the blog draws the attention of possible sponsors and the museum field in general. Museum of Basketball said that it does not see any benefit for now and Museum of Cultures did not research the matter. The same goes for other few museums which skipped this question.

"What are museum's expectations regarding the blog" question was answered by an overwhelming majority with the blog offering more information about museum and its activity (94.3 %) followed by making the museum more visible in social media (62.9 %). The blog was also expected to bring more visitors to the museum (22.9 %) and act as a learning environment (20 %). Kiasma expected the blog to encourage discussion and Forssa Museum mentioned that the blog could offer transparency and a more personal approach to museum activity. Museums of Siilinjärvi hoped that their blog can be an inspiration for other museums when planning similar projects.

Two of the questions were related to the bloggers, namely who writes the blog and what age are they. The majority of museum bloggers are part of museum staff (82.4 %), a part of them are working on projects (38.2 %) and the rest being seasonal employees, students and interns. It is interesting that none of the museums have people from the general public as their contributors. The age of the bloggers varies between 30 to 40 (70.6 %), 40 to 50 (58.8 %), 50 to 60 (41.2 %), 15 to 30 (32.4 %) and over 60 years old (8.8 %). According to the results there are no museum bloggers under 15 years old among the respondents.

The majority number of blog visitors are between 100 and 500 (54.3 %) per month. Just 25.7 % account for over 500 visits and below 100 are around 14.3 %. Museum of Basketball stated that no new posts, means zero visitors. The Craft Museum of Finland mentioned over 4000 visitors but wondered if that is true. Given the fact that the museum blog is embedded in the website it might be that the visitor numbers include the website visitors as well. Few museums had no information about visitors' numbers. Another question referred to the dynamics of readers during the last year if the readers' numbers grew, diminished or stayed the same. 41.2 % mentioned that the readers' number stayed the same, 38.2 % said that it grew and 5.9 % noticed a decrease in their readers while 11.8 % did not have information about this aspect. Kankaanpää town museum mentioned that Christmas calendar brought the blog more visitors than usual. The museums were also asked if they get new readers on their blogs daily. Most of them (41.2 %) replied that they get new readers now and then but not daily, 41.2 % could not say while only 5.9 % said that they get new readers on a daily basis. When asked how long readers stay on the blog, most of museums could not give an answer as they had no data about it. 18.2 % visited the blog less five minutes and 9,1 % between five and ten minutes. Regarding the comments, the museums were asked if their blogs received bad comments or criticism. Most of the respondents (88.2 %) said they did not received criticism or hateful comments. Only 11.7 % of the respondents said that they received such comments.

One of the questions referred to future plans for the blog. The majority intend to continue maintaining and developing the blog (61.8 %). 8.8 % said that they closed or intend to close the blog and 5.9 % do not know. Other museums (Museum of Technology and Helsinki City Museum) answered that the blog will continue to be updated until the end of the project or exhibition opening. The Finnish Labour Museum Werstas blog *Aukion laidalla* mentioned that the blog is not updated anymore because the museum has a new blog, namely *Arjen historia*, where other museums write, too. Espoo Museum of Modern Art had a blog about their collections, *Näkökulmia*, which was supposed to be seasonal but nowadays the blog continues addressing new subjects as *The Change*. Museum of Cultures' blog takes a break as preparations for new exhibition start. Aboa Vetus and

Ars Nova mentioned that their blogs are closed but still accessible online. When asked what the challenges of blogging are, most of museums (84.4 %) said that maintaining and updating the blog is time consuming. 18.8 % said that it is difficult to come up with new ideas for the posts. The Sports Museum said that activating bloggers to write is time-consuming, Hotel and Restaurant Museum also added spam as one of the challenges, K.H. Renlund Museum is also on Facebook and Instagram and considers blogging more laborious because of the writing amount. Museum of Technology's blog has only one blogger and sometimes it is challenging to find new subjects to write about. Aboa Vetus and Ars Nova did not know how to answer this question because the persons who were keeping the blogs are not working for them anymore. The person, who responded, mentions that they do not think that the bloggers encountered any of the challenges enumerated in the questionnaire. Two of the museums skipped the question.

The last question was if the museum considered the blog to be a successful communication tool. The majority (88.2 %) said that it is. The museums from Joensuu said that their bloggers have not been that active anymore and posted quite rarely which resulted in fewer or no new readers. Vapriikki mentioned that new posts are seldom published and therefore the blog is not successful. Museum of Cultures believes that the blog had its own group of loyal followers. Kuopio Museum of Natural History thinks that the blog could do better; it has very few readers. The Craft Museum of Finland wonders if there are over 4000 readers why nobody is commenting. Upon a closer look, The Craft Museums' blog has the comment section closed for the majority of their posts. Comments are open only for newer posts.

The questionnaire's results offered a thorough picture of museums' blogging practices in Finland and it answered in a suitable manner the research questions posed in the introductory and methodology chapter related to the museum blogging phenomenon and how it works in Finnish museums. As observed from the analysis, the main purpose of museum blogs is promoting the institution by offering information about it and its activities, creating communication possibilities with the public and making the museum more visible in social media. It is interesting though that the blogs have not made significant contribution to increasing visitor numbers or perhaps museums do not have specific information about visits based on blog views. Also, among museums' expectation from blogs, bringing more visitors, does not figure as a priority. Museums expect that blogs will offer more information about the institution and its activities as well as promote the museum in social media.

Besides this, museum blogs do not have problems with criticism or trolling as a vast majority admitted that they did not receive either of them. The only problems encountered were blogging as a time consuming activity and difficulty coming up with new subjects. Bigger museums have certain employees whose job includes taking care of museum's social media presence but in small museums this task can be taken care of by the whole staff. If the staff is very busy or the museum is understaffed, allocating time for blogging could be a problem. One must remember that museums also use other social media channels which need time, too.

According to the questionnaire's results, the readers' situation is fairly good meaning that most of the blogs have between one and five hundred readers whose numbers remained the same throughout a whole year. Also the blogs gain new readers from time to time. All in all, museums' blogging experience seems a positive one as most of institutions plan on continuing their blogs and in their opinion, the blog is a successful communication channel as it developed interaction between the institution and the public.

The questionnaire was aimed at museum staff and the answers provided an explanation to museum blogging phenomenon from the employees' perspective. Readers' perspective was not taken into consideration at all in this study although it would be interesting to know the public's opinion on museum blogs. After the completion of the questionnaire, further questions came up while analyzing the answers. Some of them were related to privacy policy of the blog, for example are the subjects to be posted planned and discussed in advance between museum employees or does the post require editing before posting. Also it would have been helpful to know more details about the blogging software that some of the museums use with the exception of free blog hosting services such as Blogger and Wordpress and if the blog supports some type of syndication in order to allow the readers to follow them more easily. That would have given an idea if museums use financial resources for keeping their blogs. More information could be asked about how bloggers measure the blog's success, if they have any concerns related to their blog (sustainability, institutional support, spam, hate speech or inappropriate comments)²¹⁸, if the posts are written in their work or free time and how much time is allocated monthly for maintaining the blog. In the paper *Radical Trust: The State of the Museum Blogosphere*, the museums were also asked about their target audience. In this paper, the target audience of the blogs is assumed to be the general public.

²¹⁸ Spadaccini, J. and C. Sebastian, 2007.

7. Observations

In the discussion section of this paper I would like to present some of the observations gathered throughout the research such as additional information regarding the blog statistics, some of the challenges encountered while writing the paper, future considerations regarding museum blogging as well as some observations related to improving museum blogs.

The number of blogs taken into consideration for this paper was limited to December 2014. However, in 2015 there were four more museum blogs making their appearance. The first one, Old Kuopio Museum's blog *Onni asuu arjessa*²¹⁹, which is a journal of a mother living on the museum premises in the 1950's, and which resembles Pori Museum's *Korsmanin talossa* blog. The second belongs to Sarka – The Finnish Museum of Agriculture²²⁰ and it follows the journey of making a new exhibition and third blog, documents Suomi syö ja juo project (Finland eats and drinks)²²¹ which deals with the food culture in Finland and which is a collaboration between several Finnish museums. The last blog, *Töissä merellä*, was created by Forum Marinum in December 2015 to present museum work and planning of the main exhibition during 2016. The trend of museum blogging has been slowing down compared to previous years but still continues nevertheless.

One of the biggest challenges in researching blogs is that their content is ephemeral meaning that posts and even entire blogs can be deleted, disabled temporarily or available only for certain readers. That was the case of Åland Maritime Museum which does not have a blog anymore and *Museo-opas tarinat*²²² (Museum guide tells stories) from Sieve Museum which is available only to invited readers according to the message displayed upon accessing the link. Media Museum Rupriikki's blog was also deleted while the research was in progress and its blog moved to Museum Centre Vapriikki. Unfortunately, the old blog entries are not available anymore. A similar situation is to be found on Finnish Museum of Natural History, which renewed its blog and the link containing old entries leads to a blank page. Museum Centre Vapriikki and Urajärvi Cultural Park renewed their blogs without including a comment section, previous comments being also deleted. The problem with researching blogs is that one cannot be sure if the blog links are still available in the future.

²¹⁹ Kuopion korttelimuseo. Onni asuu arjessa. <https://onniasuuarjessa.wordpress.com/>

²²⁰ Suomen maatalousmuseo Sarka. Orastaa. <https://orastaa.wordpress.com/>

²²¹ Suomi syö ja juo. *Ruokavuosi juhlien!* <http://www.suomisyojajuo.fi/ruokavuosi-juhlien-blogi>

²²² Museo-opas tarinat. <http://sievinmuseo.blogspot.fi/> [6.5.2015]

Another challenge encountered in this research was analyzing blog content due to its diversity and increased amount of information which was not structured. A similar research dealing with blog content analysis summarized the challenges researchers usually have to encounter when they analyze blogs: “Content analysis of blogs pose a set of challenges as [...] information contained in blogs were highly unstructured, of varying lengths and written in different levels of vocabulary, and can contain other formats beyond text like images, sound and multimedia. There is also apparently no software tools that are currently in existence specifically designed for blog content analysis” (Schubert, 2009: 2).

The future of museums blogs is in close connection with the future of blogging. Although blogging has been around since the end of 1990’s, it does not show signs of disappearing very soon. Museum blogs are slowly on the rise at least for the moment and blogging in general is a popular tool of social media. In her research, Lynn Bethke addressed the issue regarding the future of museum blogging by asking museums if blogging will have a future within their institution. The majority of responses was positive and thought that blogging is “a valuable tool with potential for the entire museum community” (Bethke, 2007: 73) even if not all museums might engage in blogging. “Museums and blogs have a future together, although the path is not yet clear. The potential and versatility of blogging is an excellent option for museums [...] to become a more relevant presence online. A blog can act as a supplement to an exhibit, an informational byline, or an announcement board. All options have both benefits and costs, and it will be up to each institution to determine if blogging is an appropriate course of action for it” (Bethke, 2007: 74). According to other researchers, blogs might change in the future but the concepts of communication and interaction as basic blog features will still be a part of the social media phenomenon which emerged at the end of twentieth century (Burstein, 2005).

In order to develop their blogs museums could, for a start, make them more visible by adding them to their websites. Some blogs are not featured at all by museums’ websites especially if the blog belongs to more than one museum hence the difficulty to track museum blogs mentioned in the methods chapter. According to Bethke (2007) “museum blogs also have the potential to extend the museum visit beyond the time the visitor spends within the museum building”. Visitors could also return to the museum’s webpage and read the blog after a museum visit (Bethke, 2007: 21) or take a look beforehand. Museums could promote their blogs through other social media channels they use, for example Facebook usually has more followers than a blog and museums could gain more readers by sharing their blog posts on Facebook. Adding a blogroll could also help museums connect between them and promote themselves thus creating a museum blogosphere. In this way,

by reaching one museum blog, readers could visit other museum blogs, too. Another aspect that museums can take into consideration is other bloggers who can promote the museum blog by mentioning it or sharing a certain blog post. This action could increase museum blog traffic significantly and raise awareness of the museum, especially if the blogger is a well-known one.

Another important aspect is the blog content, namely the length, media used and post frequency. The texts on museum blogs vary quite a lot in length from well documented lengthy posts to posts containing few sentences. However, bloggers usually recommend short posts and avoiding excessive scrolling as reading on the Web is very different than reading print and people nowadays are overwhelmed with so much information and their attention span usually does not last beyond reading the headline and skimming through the text (Paterson ed., 2008: 51-52). The blog posts can be made more entertaining to read by adding photos or even videos depicting the museum daily activities, readers might not read everything but they will surely notice the photos. The post frequency depends on how much time and resources a museum wishes to invest in developing the blog. Ideally, all museum employees should write on the blog as it would offer a broad perspective on museum work. Also the post frequency should range from one to several posts a week. Anja Alasilta (2009) recommends writing everyday if one wants plenty of readers, writing once a week, preferably on the same weekday, will keep the blog into readers' mind and if one is writing less frequently than that, writing about the most interesting subjects would be a viable option. In addition, a good blog has a comment section and the blogger responds to the comments, reads and interacts with other bloggers from similar fields.

8. Conclusion

This paper's aim was to study Finnish museums' blogs as communication tools by analyzing their content and answer the questions of what, why and how do Finnish museums blog. The goal was to take a better look into the content of museum blogs, highlight their most important features and possible influence as communication channels. In order to accomplish this study, I chose forty-six museum blogs which were analyzed using content analysis and the results were presented in the fifth section of the paper. In addition to blog content analysis, a multiple choice questionnaire was sent to the research subjects in order to complete the data by further inquiring about bloggers' expectations, challenges, future plans and reader statistics. I chose this subject because the blogging

phenomenon inside cultural institutions and especially museums has not yet been studied in depth and with the rise of social media applications inside museums, blogging deserves more attention as it can be a useful tool to help museums improve their communication services with the public.

The analysis part of this paper used forty-six museum blogs from Finland to outline their most important features, the reasons they are blogging, their content and the comments they receive from the readers. The findings regarding the layout were not exceptional meaning that museum blogs have the same layout as other blogs including posts in chronological order, archives, categories, tags, comment sections, feeds and other links embedded in the blog structure which usually connect the blog to other social media applications such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, Youtube. The blogs' layout depends a lot on the hosting service. Around half of the museum blogs use Google Blogger as their hosting service while the rest use other services or they embed the blogs into the museums' web pages.

Museum blogs are mainly text blogs written by the staff and the main language used is Finnish, sometimes Swedish and English being used, in this way the blogs limiting their audience mostly to Finnish speakers. The content of the blogs reflect the subjects discussed by museum staff and they usually differ in every museum depending on the institution's profile. The main reasons museums start blogging is to offer people an idea about the museum's activity which is not seen by the public and establish a communication channel outside the institution. Museums have varied activities which happen behind closed doors and the blog is an excellent channel to present people what they do not have the chance to see in exhibitions. Also museums open their collections to everyone and contribute to an open museum culture. By presenting what is not usually seen in the exhibitions, blogs can make museums more interesting, spark curiosity and attract more visitors. A good number of museum blogs were created to document the process of an upcoming exhibition. Following the process of creating an exhibition can be very interesting for many people who would then come to the museum to see the final result. Besides exhibitions, museums also write about their everyday activities and reflections upon different subjects. They also offer additional information on artifacts, historical events and people, artists, nature and the environment thus acting as a valuable source of information and learning.

An important part of the blogs is the comment section because this is a way for museum to establish a dialogue with their readers or visitors. Most of museum blogs have a comment section where people can leave their opinions; however, some museums limit their comment sections while others do not allow comments at all. In general, people do not comment much on museum blogs and the

average post might have one to three comments although the museum staff encourages people to discussions. The usual comments are feedback regarding the exhibition, blog, various events or workshops, sharing thoughts and memories and asking questions although there are also comments expressing criticism and more blunt opinions as in the case of budget cuts discussed on Kiasma's blog. The blog administrators have the option to delete offensive comments and there were two cases of deleted comments although the reason was not mentioned. Although the number of comments might not be significant, museum blogs do have hundreds of readers and museum staff considers them a successful communication channel, according to the questionnaire. In addition, more than a half of museums responded that they would like to continue and even develop their blogs.

Museum blogs are an increasing presence in social media and this is seen by the increase in the number of museum blogs which started with one in 2008 and continued up to forty-six in 2014. However, taking into consideration all museums in Finland, the present number of museums, which blog is very small. The main reason that museums keep blogs is to share their information and communicate with the public but as seen from the small number of comments, the blogs remain mainly a source of information and less of a communication channel due to low responsiveness. Some blogs do not even allow comments making them a part of the traditional few-to-many broadcasting communication model rather than networked communication which offers interactivity.²²³ Nevertheless, blogs remain a useful tool for museums offering more visibility to the institution and the chance to get closer to the audiences. The fact that museum blogs do not receive plenty of comments does not mean that they do not have plenty of readers as Nielsen's study showed that most of users in online communities are lurkers and only a small percent do actually contribute to content creation.²²⁴ Also participation does not always mean commenting but reading is also a form of getting involved and in this way readers "may feel that they have developed a personal relationship with the blogger and, by extension, the museum" (Bethke, 2007: 28). Blogging was probed to be beneficial for museum practice (Bethke, 2007: 74) and even if the future of museum blogs is uncertain as the online space is in a constant change, for the time being museums can take advantage of social media benefits and use blogs as an additional channel for reaching and interacting with audiences.

²²³ Bethke, Lynn A. *Constructing Connections: A Museological Approach to Blogging*. Washington: University of Washington, 2007.

²²⁴ Nielsen, Jakob. *Participation Inequality: Encouraging More Users to Contribute*. Nielsen Norman Group. 9.10.2006. <http://www.nngroup.com/articles/participation-inequality/> [1.5.2014]

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Appendix 1. Finnish museums blog list

1. Museum of Photography **Terävyysalue** <http://valokuvataiteenmuseo.blogspot.fi/>
2. Urajärvi Cultural Park <http://urajarvenkulttuuripuisto.fi/>
3. Turku Museum Centre **Turun linna uudistuu!** <http://turunlinna.blogspot.fi/>
4. Museum of Sport **Tuuletuksia** <http://urheilumuseo.blogspot.fi/>
5. Mäntyharju Museum <http://mantyharjunmuseo.blogspot.fi/>
6. Museum of Cultures **Muuttoblogi** http://www.nba.fi/fi/museot/kulttuurien_museo/muuttoblogi
7. Kouvola Museum **Kouvolan museoaarteita** <http://www.museoaarteita.blogspot.fi/>
8. Satakunta Museum **Korsmanin talossa** <http://korsmanintalossa.blogspot.fi/>
9. Police Museum **Faktaa fiktiosta** http://www.poliisi.fi/poliisi/blog_museo.nsf
10. Finnish Labor Museum Werstas **Aukion laidalla** <http://aukionlaidalla.blogspot.fi/>
11. Espoo Museum of Modern Art **Näkökulmia** <http://www.emma.museum/blogit>
The Change <http://www.emma.museum/thechangeblog>
12. Kiasma <http://blog.kiasma.fi/blog/>
13. Kiasma unofficial blog **Saattaa sisältää nykytaidetta** <http://www.lily.fi/blogit/saattaa-sisaltaa-nykytaidetta>
14. Finnish Museum of Natural History <http://www.luomus.fi/fi/tulekaymaan/ajankohtaista/blogit/luomuksen-blogi>
15. The Artillery Museum **Mörssäri** <http://tykistomuseo.blogspot.fi/>
16. Joensuu Museums **Vitriinien välistä** <http://joensuunmuseot.blogspot.fi/>
17. The Craft Museum of Finland <http://www3.jkl.fi/blogit/craft/>
18. Kankaanpää Museum **Tulevaisuuden museo** <http://tulevaisuudenmuseo.blogspot.fi/>
19. Provincial Museum of Central Ostrobothnia **K.H.Renlund Museum** <http://khrenlunds.blogspot.fi/>
20. Kuopio Natural History Museum <http://kulumus.blogspot.fi/2012/08/haisua-loyhkaa-tuoksua-sienet-tutuiksi.html>
21. Nautelankoski Museum **Pikkumuseon haasteet** <http://www.nautelankoski.blogspot.fi/>
22. Raahen Museum **Museumiblogi** <http://www.raahenmuseo.fi/blogi>
23. Fiskars Museum **Livet på Fiskars museum** <http://museum.ratata.fi/>

24. Forestry Museum of Lapland <http://www.lapinmetsamuseo.fi/blogi/>
25. Museum of the Finnish Book Pukstaavi [http://www.pukstaavi.fi/fi/blogi/tuo-mainio-museoiden-
yo.html](http://www.pukstaavi.fi/fi/blogi/tuo-mainio-museoiden-
yo.html)
26. Museums of South Karelia **Elävä Museo** <http://elavamuseo.blogspot.fi/>
27. Media Museum Rupriikki <http://rupriikki.tampere.fi/category/blogi/>
28. Vapriikki Museum Centre <http://www.tampere.fi/vapriikki.html>
- Vantaa City Museum
29. **Muistaakseni** <http://muistaakseni.blogspot.fi/>
30. **Rock'n'Vantaa** <http://rocknvantaa.blogspot.fi/>
31. **Tikkurilan asema** <http://tikkurilanasema.blogspot.fi/>
32. Forssa museum **Vorssammuseo** <http://vorssammuseo.blogspot.fi/>
33. Siilinjärvi Museums <http://siilinjärvenmuseot.blogspot.fi/>
34. Serlachius museums **Museoväen Kynästä** <http://www.serlachius.fi/fi/blogi/>
35. Varkaus museums <http://varkaudenmuseot.blogspot.fi/2013/10/miksi-blogi.html>
36. The Finnish Artillery Museum **Museotonttujen blogi** <http://museomilitaria.blogspot.fi/>
37. Virtain Perinne kylä <http://perinnekyla.blogspot.fi/>
38. Aboa Vetus and Ars Nova Museum **Museon kuvioita** <http://museonkuvioita.blogspot.fi/>
39. Aboa Vetus & Ars Nova, Social and Health Services of Turku and The Finnish Work Environment Fund **Taide jää mieleen** <http://taidejaamieleen.blogspot.fi/>
40. Hotel and Restaurant Museum **Kadonneen kasarın metsästys**
<http://www.kadonnutkasari.fi/niin-kasaria/>
41. Museums of Upper Savonia **Ylä-Savon paikallismuseoiden kehittämishankkeen blogi**
<http://ylasavonpaikallismuseot.blogspot.fi/>
42. Museum of Technology **Pienten paja** <http://pientenpaja.wordpress.com/>
43. Finnish Labor Museum Werstas, Labor Archives, The People's Archives, Museum of Technology and Gold Museum **Arjen historia** <http://blogi.arjenhistoria.fi/>
44. Helsinki City Museum <http://www.uusikaupunginmuseo.fi/2014/01/>
45. Turku Museum Centre/Southwest Finland cultural heritage blog <http://kulperi.blogspot.fi/>
46. Museum of Basketball <http://koripallomuseo.blogspot.fi/>

Appendix 2. Questionnaire email and questionnaire

Hei,

Nimeni on Silvia Rinne ja olen museologian pääaineopiskelija Jyväskylän yliopistossa.

Olen tällä hetkellä tekemässä gradua suomalaisten museoiden blogeista. Gradussa aion tutkia museoiden blogeja Suomessa ja selvittää muun muassa blogien hyödyn museoille, miksi ja miten museot ylläpitävät blogeja ja miten blogit vaikuttavat museoiden arkeen ja vuorovaikutukseen yleisön kanssa.

Tutkimuksen avuksi olen luonut kyselyn, jonka avulla yritän selvittää museoiden bloggaamiseen syyt sekä näkökulmat blogeista.

Haluaisin lähestyä teitä sähköpostikyselyllä mistä löytyy monivalintakysymyksiä sekä vapaakenttä jos haluatte lisätä vastauksia sekä ajatuksia. Jos teillä on blogeja enemmän kuin yksi, voitte vastata kyselyyn useamman kerran, jokaisen blogin kohdalla erikseen.

Toivon, että saamani vastaukset ja materiaali ovat teillekin hyödyllisiä. Kiitos etukäteen vastauksestanne!

Ystävällisin terveisin,

Silvia Rinne

Taiteiden ja kulttuurin tutkimuksen laitos

Jyväskylän yliopisto

Suomalaisten museoiden blogit 2015 - kysely

Blogin nimi:

1. Miksi museo on aloittanut oma blogin?

- Blogi antaa lisää infoa museosta.
- Blogi on vuorovaikutuskanava museon ja yleisön välillä.
- Uutta näyttelyä/projektia varten
- Blogi on museon päiväkirja.
- Blogi kehittää museon kommunikaatio- ja markkinointimahdollisuuksia.
- Blogi antaa lisää näkyvyyttä sosiaalisessa mediassa.
- Blogi on museon oppimisympäristö.
- Blogin luominen on trendikästä ja hauskaa.
- Other:

2. Mistä museohenkilökunta saa aiheideoita blogiin?

- Museon arkitoiminnasta
- Yleisön ehdotuksista
- Näyttelyistä/projekteista
- Museon kokoelmista/arkistosta
- Museon työntekijöiden ajatuksista
- Mediasta
- Other:

3. Mikä on ollut blogin hyöty museolle?

- Blogi on tuonut lisää kävijöitä museolle.
- Blogi on kehittänyt kommunikaatiota/vuorovaikutusta museon ja yleisön välillä.
- Blogi on tuonut museolle lisää medianäkyvyyttä.
- Blogi toimii oppimisympäristönä.
- Other:

4. Mitä museo odottaa blogilta?

- Tuo lisää kävijöitä.
- Antaa museolle enemmän näkyvyyttä sosiaalisessa mediassa.
- Antaa yleisölle lisää infoa museosta sekä museon toiminnasta.
- Toimii oppimisympäristönä yleisölle.
- Other:

5. Kuka ylläpitää blogia?

- museon henkilökunta
- kesätyöntekijät
- vapaaehtoiset työntekijät
- projektityöntekijät
- yleisö
- Other:

6. Minkä ikäisiä ovat blogin kirjoittajat?

- alle 15v.
- 15-30v.
- 30-40v.
- 40-50v.
- 50-60v.
- 60+v.

7. Blogin kävijämäärä (lukijat) kuukaudessa

- alle 100
- 100-500
- yli 500
- Other:

8. Onko blogi saanut huonoja kommentteja / kritiikkiä?

- Kyllä, hyväksyn ne.
- Kyllä, hyväksyn ja vastaan niihin.
- Kyllä, jään niitä huomaamatta.
- Kyllä, poistan ne.
- Ei

9. Mikä on blogin tulevaisuussuunnitelma?

- Haluan ylläpitää ja kehittää museon blogi.
- Lopetin / aion lopettaa blogia.
- En tiedä.
- Other:

10. Mitä haasteita bloggaamisessa on?

- Blogin ylläpitäminen ja päivittäminen on aika vievä.
- On vaikea keksiä uusia aiheita.
- Blogipalvelu on maksullinen.
- Suojattomuus – kuka tahansa voi lukea ja kommentoida.
- Teknisiä ongelmia
- Blogipalvelua on vaikea käyttää.
- Other:

11. Onko blogin lukijamäärä kasvanut/laskenut/pysynyt samana viimeisenä vuonna?

- Lukijamäärä on kasvanut.
- Lukijamäärä on pysynyt samana.
- Lukijamäärä on laskenut.
- En osaa sanoa.
- Other:

12. Saako blogi uusia lukijoita päivittäin?

- o Kyllä
- o Ei päivittäin mutta silloin tällöin
- o Ei
- o En osaa sanoa

13. Kuinka kauan lukijat pysyvät blogissa?

- o Alle 5 minuuttia
- o 5-10 minuuttia
- o 10-30 minuuttia
- o Yli 30 minuuttia
- o En osaa sanoa

14. Onko museon blogi onnistunut kommunikointityökalu sinun mielestäsi?

- o Kyllä
- o Ei
- o Other:

Finnish museums' blogs 2015 – questionnaire

Name of the blog:

1. Why did the museum start its own blog?

The blog offers more information about the museum.

The blog is an interaction channel between the museum and audiences.

For the new exhibition/project

The blog is museum's diary.

The blog develops communication and marketing possibilities between the museum and the public.

The blog offers more visibility in social media.

The blog is museum's learning environment.

Having a blog is trendy and fun

Other:

2. Where does the museum staff get ideas for the blog posts?

Museum's daily activity

Proposals from the audience

Exhibitions/Projects

Museum's collections/archives

Museum employees' musings

Media

Other:

3. How did the museum benefit from the blog?

The blog brought more visitors to the museum.

The blog has developed communication and interaction between the museum and the public.

The blog has made the museum more visible in social media.

The blog functions as a learning environment.

Other:

4. What does the museum expect from the blog?

To bring more visitors

To offer the museum more visibility in social media

To offer the public more information about the museum and museum's activity

To function as a learning environment for the public
Other:

5. Who maintains the blog?

Museum's staff
Summer staff
Volunteers
Project staff
The public
Other:

6. What age are the blog writers?

Under 15
15-30
30-40
40-50
50-60
Over 60

7. Blogs' readers during a month

Under 100
100-500
Over 500
Other:

8. Did the blog receive hateful comments/criticism?

Yes, I allow these comments.
Yes, I allow these comments and answer to them.
Yes, I ignore these comments.
Yes, I delete these comments.
No

9. What are the future plans for the blog?

I intend to maintain and update the blog.
I do not update/intend to stop updating the blog.
I do not know.
Other:

10. What are the challenges of blogging?

Maintaining and updating the blog is time consuming.
It is difficult to come up with new subjects for posts.
Blogging service is not free of charge.
Vulnerability – anyone can read and comment.
Technical problems
Blogging service is difficult to use.
Other:

11. Did the blog's amount of readers increase/decrease/stayed the same for the past year?

The amount of readers increased.
The amount of readers stayed the same.

The amount of readers decreased.

I do not know.

Other:

12. Does the blog get new readers on a daily basis?

Yes

Not on a daily basis but from time to time

No

I do not know

13. How long do the readers stay on the blog?

Under 5 minutes

5-10 minutes

10-30 minutes

Over 30 minutes

I do not know

14. Is the blog a successful communication tool in your opinion?

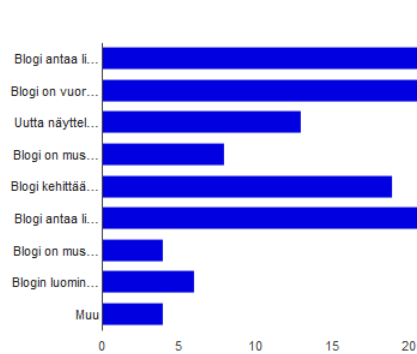
Yes

No

Other:

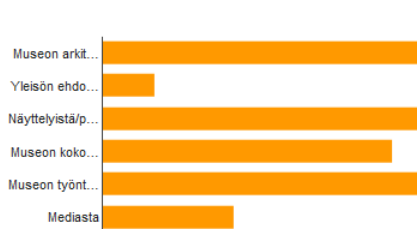
Appendix 3. Questionnaire results

1. Miksi museo on aloittanut oma blogin?



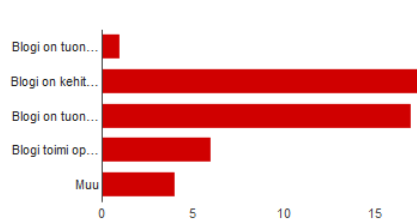
Blogi antaa lisää infoa museosta.	23	65.7 %
Blogi on vuorovaikutuskanava museon ja yleisön välillä.	25	71.4 %
Uutta näyttelyä/projektia varten	13	37.1 %
Blogi on museon päiväkirja.	8	22.9 %
Blogi kehittää museon kommunikaatio- ja markkinointimahdollisuuksia.	19	54.3 %
Blogi antaa lisää näkyvyyttä sosiaalisessa mediassa.	21	60 %
Blogi on museon oppimisympäristö.	4	11.4 %
Blogin luominen on trendikästä ja hauskaa.	6	17.1 %
Muu	4	11.4 %

2. Mistä museohenkilökunta saa aiheideoita blogiin?



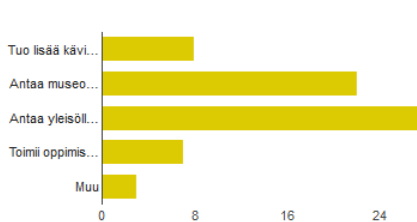
Museon arkitoiminnasta	29	82.9 %
Yleisön ehdotuksista	4	11.4 %
Näyttelyistä/projekteista	29	82.9 %
Museon kokoelmista/arkistosta	22	62.9 %
Museon työntekijöiden ajatuksista	26	74.3 %
Mediasta	10	28.6 %
Muu	6	17.1 %

3. Mikä on ollut blogin hyöty museolle?



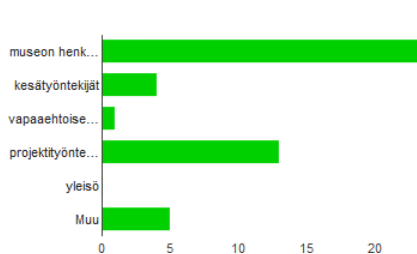
Blogi on tuonut lisää kävijöitä museolle.	1	3.1 %
Blogi on kehittänyt kommunikaatiota/vuorovaikutusta museon ja yleisön välillä.	21	65.6 %
Blogi on tuonut museolle lisää medianäkyvyyttä.	17	53.1 %
Blogi toimi oppimisympäristönä.	6	18.8 %
Muu	4	12.5 %

4. Mitä museo odottaa blogilta?



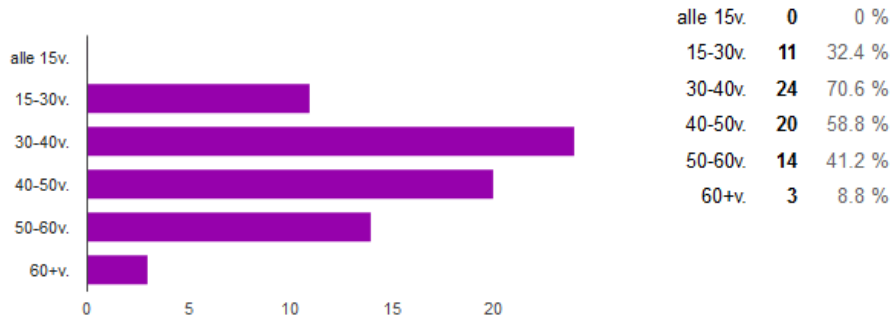
Tuo lisää kävijöitä.	8	22.9 %
Antaa museolle enemmän näkyvyyttä sosiaalisessa mediassa.	22	62.9 %
Antaa yleisölle lisää infoa museosta sekä museon toiminnasta.	33	94.3 %
Toimii oppimisympäristönä yleisölle.	7	20 %
Muu	3	8.6 %

5. Kuka ylläpitää blogia?

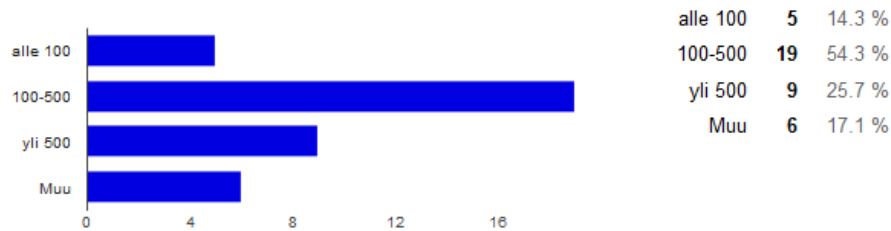


museon henkilökunta	28	82.4 %
kesätyöntekijät	4	11.8 %
vapaaehtoiset työntekijät	1	2.9 %
projektityöntekijät	13	38.2 %
yleisö	0	0 %
Muu	5	14.7 %

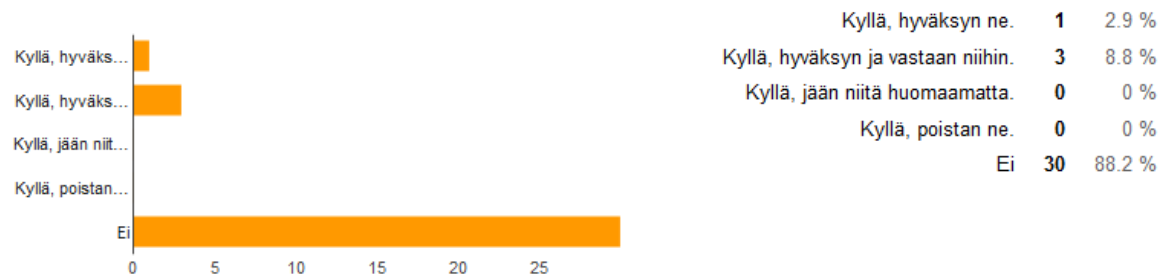
6. Minkä ikäisiä ovat blogin kirjoittajat?



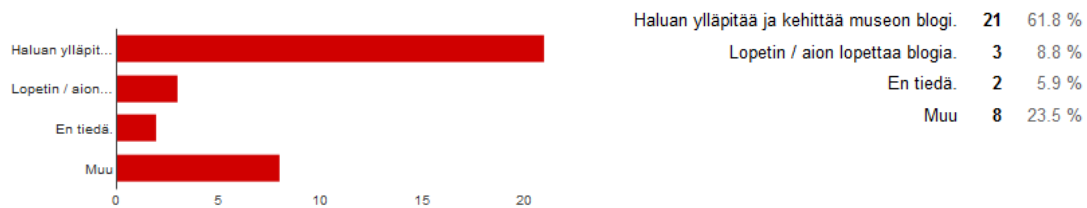
7. Blogin kävijämäärä (lukijat) kuukaudessa



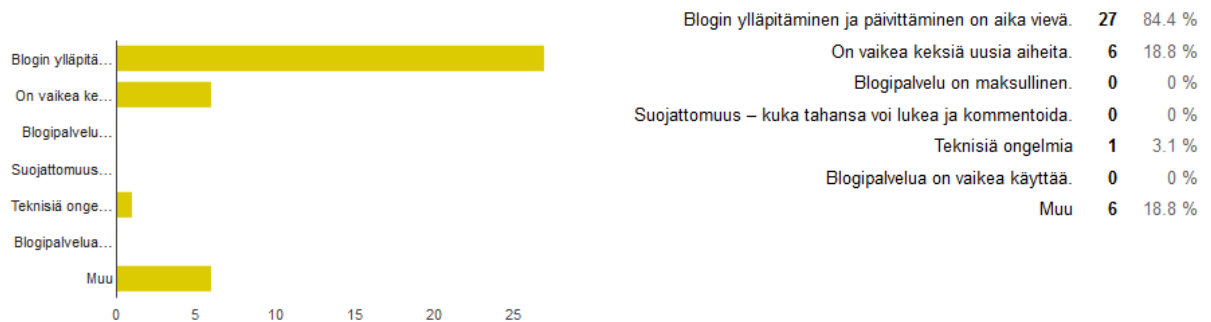
8. Onko blogi saanut huonoja kommentteja / kritiikkiä?



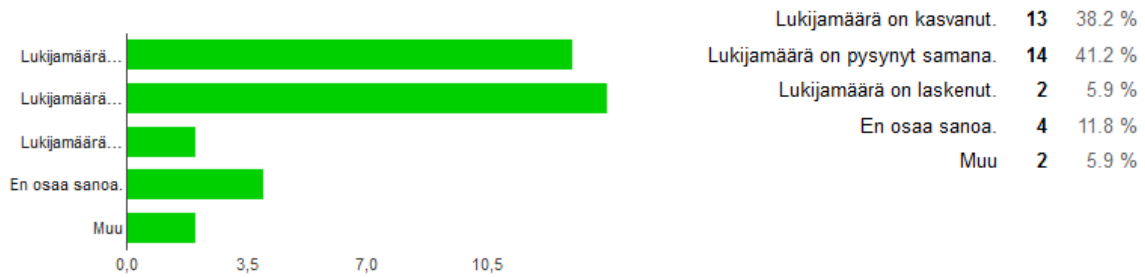
9. Mikä on blogin tulevaisuussuunnitelma?



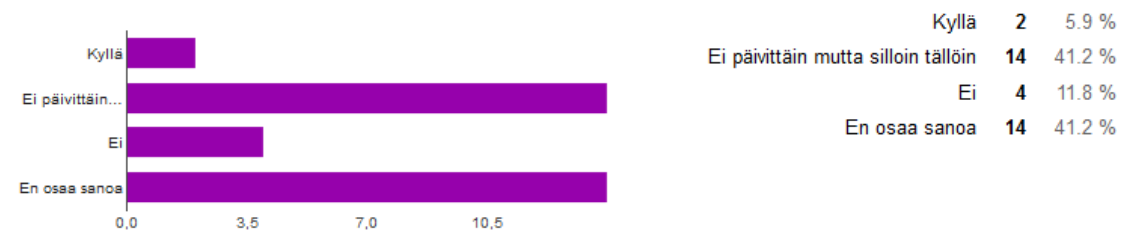
10. Mitä haasteita bloggaamisessa on?



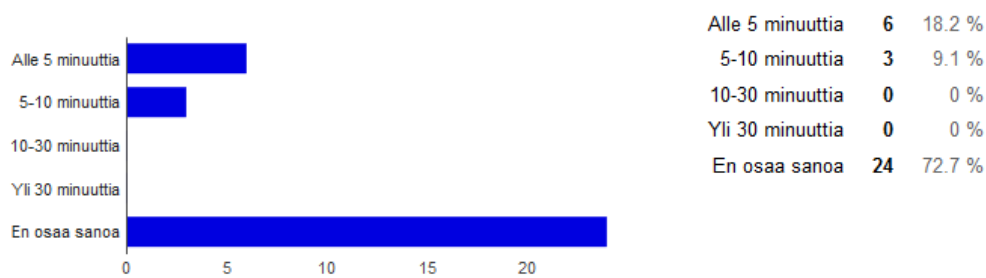
11. Onko blogin lukijamäärä kasvanut/laskenut/pysynyt samana viimeisenä vuonna?



12. Saako blogi uusia lukijoita päivittäin?



13. Kuinka kauan lukijat pysyvät blogissa?



14. Onko museon blogi onnistunut kommunikointityökalu sinun mielestäsi?

