

## PODCAST IN MUSEUMS

Podcast technologies are becoming one of the last revolutions in world-wide media industry. They are freely distributable audio files, easily downloaded from Internet. You can then listen at them at anytime, anywhere in audio portable players such as, mp3 or IPODs.

In Western countries, where technology has had a strong impact, most of young people, mostly the youngest, carries these audio devices in their pockets, the podcast world will open a new array of possibilities in many fields, particularly in museums.

In the field of museology, 'in general terms', podcast can be understood as audio-guides, but its scope is beyond a simple explanation of the exhibition, covering almost every field in the museum.

The use of podcast in museums offers numerous advantages, such as easy edition, contents updating or flexibility of use.

Also, the possibility of using podcast as audio-guides substitutes or complements is another low-cost advantage, since institutions will have just to produce its own material rather than buying and maintaining audio devices.

Podcast in museums can be used to describe an art gallery or develop the expositive speech, but also to interview specialists, artists or museum staff; conferences diffusion; audio-descriptions for visual impaired people; podcast for children; to reflect visitors feedback or comments, or to explain temporal exhibitions, recent archeology discoveries or new works that have been added to the permanent exhibition, etc.

Podcast can usually be downloaded from the museum web site. The possibility of subscription by means of content aggregators makes it easy for museum infovisitors<sup>1</sup> to know new released podcast without needing to visit the web.

Another option is that the museum itself, can supply computers, within its premises, to allow users to in situ download podcast to their mp3 before starting the visit.

**The National London Gallery** (<http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/podcast/default.htm>) or the **MOMA** ([http://www.moma.org/visit\\_moma/audio.html](http://www.moma.org/visit_moma/audio.html)) are two good examples of

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<sup>1</sup> Visitors who accede to the museum through their Web.

podcast in use, where visitors have the possibility to download these audio files. At moment, most of museum podcast are in English.

French Podcasts are very rare, being limited just to Canada with initiatives like The **Quebec Civilization Museum** (<http://www.mcq.org/fr/baladodiffusion.html>).

**The Centro de Arte Jose Guerrero** in Granada (<http://blog.centroguerrero.org/category/podcast/>), **The Scientist Museum** in La Coruña (<http://www.casaciencias.org/podcast/audioquias.html>) and the project of podcasting RWN son[i]a of **MACBA** (<http://rwm.macba.es/>) are the three examples of podcasts in Spanish, all of them are of very high quality. Also, in the **Art and Design Contemporary Museum** (MADC) of Costa Rica (<http://podcast.madc.ac.cr/>) Spanish podcast can be found.

We hope that more museums follow shortly these pioneers initiatives and they include podcast among their options, since it's a simple and easy way, visitors can improve their experience in the museum.

More informacion: <http://mediamusea.com>



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