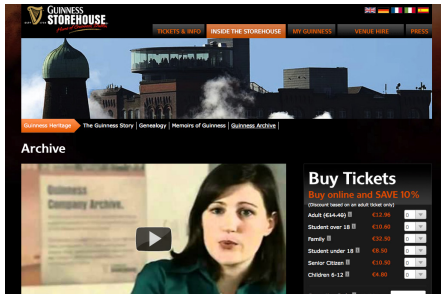


Unlocking the Value of Collections

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Using the example of the Guinness Archive, Pam Millist outlines the value of a digitised collection in creating access to records and for building revenue opportunities for custodians.

At the VALA (Victorian Association for Library Automation) *eM-powering eFutures*, conference held in Melbourne in February, one paper that sparked wide interest among delegates was the keynote presentation by Eibhlin Roche from the Guinness Archive on unlocking the potential of an iconic global brand. In her presentation, Ms Roche discussed how the collections and assets of the Guinness Archive, Library and Museum are now invaluable assets adding value to the organisation. The presentation underlined the importance of centralised Information Management, whether for archival or current materials, and is an inspiration to Information Workers in Australia in Libraries, Galleries and Museums.

The Guinness Archive exists primarily to promote the Guinness brand and consists of 7.5 thousand linear metres of paper records, several thousand items of advertising, 20,000 employee records, thousands of artifacts as well as multimedia materials. The archive commenced with preserving the foundation lease from 1759 (which was signed for a 9,000 year lease) and all surviving records from that date. It is the only corporate archive open to the public in Ireland. *"These records provide an invaluable social record and they are unique in Ireland as an awful lot of our social records were destroyed in 1922 during the Irish Civil War,"* said Roche. *"This elevates the Guinness Records to national importance because the brewery was the largest employer in Dublin for well over 100 years and the records that we have are so rich and detailed."*

With such a large resource and a team of only two archivists, the work of preserving and unlocking the value of the collection is enormous. Using their knowledge of the collection and focusing on the sections that contribute the most

value, the team have worked on a range of digitisation projects. In collaboration with the Guinness global marketing team, they have been proactive in creating and organising digital content that has contributed significantly to promoting the Guinness brand while preserving the intellectual property and boosting revenue. These projects include:

- Genealogy digitisation project, where records of past employees are now searchable online
- Audio histories online and audio guides provided to visitors to Guinness storehouse
- Factsheets on the website
- Indexing and digitisation of their most used and highly visible advertising material collection in various media—posters, press ads, cinema advertising and digital advertising.
- Use of QR codes throughout the Guinness Storehouse tour to add value to the experience by providing links to more information
- Use of social media to broaden the engagement with the Guinness brand

Guinness is deriving enormous commercial and marketing value from the digitisation and controlled availability of its assets and its unique Irish records. The key lessons learned outlined by Roche are to: have a clearly defined mission statement for your information or knowledge service with a unique selling point that ties it to your organisation; be strategic in prioritising projects; apply key metrics for success; and seek collaboration.

While Guinness has developed a number of vehicles to deliver its digitised assets to the world through various channels, Inmagic Presto provides a single platform that enables global reach and management of a range of resource types. Inmagic Presto software is

supplied by Maxus Australia and used worldwide by organisations such as:

- NASA to manage more than 5 million photos, 10,000 videos and up to 7,000 motion picture films
 - Victoria Law for access to easy to understand information about the law and legal services in Victoria in various community languages, and
 - Rail Knowledge Bank, an initiative of the CRC for Rail Innovation to create an online resource for the rail industry.
- The Presto platform functionality includes levels of access controlled by its sophisticated role-based permissions. Engagement and collaboration with various groups of users is also available with the inbuilt social media tools such as blogging, social commenting and social tagging with access managed using the role-based permissions.

The work of Eibhlin Roche and Guinness Archives is an excellent demonstration of encompassing traditional and new technologies for collection management. Through a strategic perspective on management of digital assets and working to focus on adding value to an organisation, what might have been seen as a dusty museum and records collection, is now a valuable and key asset to Guinness and its parent organisation.

Pam Millist, Client Support Consultant with Maxus Australia. Maxus is an advertiser with INSITE.

Web links:

- Guinness Archive: *unlocking the potential of an iconic global brand:* www.vala.org.au/vala2012-proceedings/vala2012-plenary-5-roche
- Guinness Storehouse: www.guinness-storehouse.com/en/Index.aspx
- Inmagic Presto: www.maxus.net.au/products/presto
- Victoria Law: www.victorialaw.org.au
- Rail Knowledge Bank: <http://railknowledgebank.com>