

Multi-media

Multi-media refers to content that uses a combination of different media forms, such as audio and still images. Multi-media can be a very engaging and effective form of interpretation. Commissioning multi-media can be very expensive and professionals will need to be involved, money will also need to be spent on maintenance.

Strengths

- Involves and focuses the user.
- Video footage and animated material can be more expressive.
- Database multi-media can allow access to a whole museum archive.
- 3D representation can bring sites and objects to life.

Weaknesses

- Development and hardware costs can be high.
- Multi-media can lead to visitor flow problems with people being concentrated in certain places.
- The content and hardware requires on-going maintenance.

Audience

- Day and staying visitors.
- Special interest.
- Young people.
- Educational visitors.
- Learning for those with special needs.

Costings

- Please see page 10 of the HLF Interpretation Guidelines [Click here](#).

The best type of multi-media are immersive but this can be costly. The three most accessible forms are listed below:

Video: is the cheapest form of multi-media and it can be made in-house. It can be a way of getting the word out but of also interpreting your waterway.

- Anderton Boat Lift (Canal & River Trust).
- Ham House Video (National Trust).
- Consider the type of audio tour device you will use: Handsets, downloadable files. You will also need to consider the format that the files will be recorded in.

Podcasts

- Sense of place (Edinburgh World Heritage Site).
- Wrest Park (English Heritage).
- Liskeard's Mining Heritage.
- RSPB 'Natures Voice'.

Interactives (games)

This can be useful for reaching out to schools and new audiences, but can also be costly.

- **Hook a duck.**





Dudley Canals Trust

If you visit Dudley Tunnel in the Black Country you have the option of taking a marvellous boat trip through the tunnels to discover a hidden underground world and can even have a go at legging a boat yourself!

These trips have been very successful currently attracting around 80,000 visitors every year. The trips were set up to increase public awareness of the tunnel and to raise money to fight the proposal by the British Transport Commission (forerunner of British Waterways) to close the tunnel in the early 1960s. Over the years Dudley Canal Trust have developed their interpretational

offer and have found that visitors do expect interpretation and a certain level of entertainment. The latest round of interpretation updates in 2013 included the installation of a new video that made use of computer graphics to explain the geology and history of the area. Also, a simple sound and light show in another cavern was installed telling the story of how Dudley mines were formed.



‘We believe that the interpretation work has had a major positive impact on visitor numbers and visitor satisfaction’.

Derek Gittings
(Operations Director of Dudley
Trust (trips) Ltd.)

Derek advises that when embarking on an interpretation project it is useful to research the history and pick on some topics of interest that are specific to the canal such as the ‘business case’ for building the canal, the engineering problems encountered and solved, water supply, cargoes carried, links with local industry or farming and families that worked the boats. Boat family history can be particularly attractive to visitors as it involves people, who with a bit of research can be named, their way of life described and any descendants traced. This research is ideal for involving local communities. Dudley Tunnels have been voted the best attraction in Dudley by Trip advisor and advertise using press, publications and increasingly the internet.

<http://www.dudleycanaltrust.org.uk/>



Foxton Canal Museum

The remains of the Foxton Inclined Plane Lift on the Leicestershire Line of the Grand Union Canal is a Scheduled Ancient Monument. The physical remains of the lift are still visible and it is the long term ambition of Foxton Inclined Plane Trust that one day the lift will be returned to working order.

To bring the boat lift to life now, Foxton Inclined Plane Trust are developing a series of multi-media displays in Foxton Canal Museum. One display will be made up of a large screen showing the lift working. The animation will only begin though, once the boiler under the screen is filled with coal, then the boat will set off. Fun and educational additions

like this will make the museum really enjoyable for visitors. There will also be a curved screen which will show an animated history of the locks and local waterways. For visitor use outside the museum, an App is being developed which will show the boat lift working and information about the locks whilst people are looking out onto the ruins.

Visitors will be able to see the boats using the old Inclined Plane, through the App. The displays are primarily aimed at families, with a balance of fun interactive elements and more in-depth information for adults. The multi-media displays in and outside the museum are being produced to raise awareness about the boat lift, to engage with visitors and to help protect the historical remains, so that in future years a full working restoration may be possible. Working effectively with a number of organisations, has been key to getting this project off the ground and in securing funding. The project is funded by the Arts Council, and numerous groups have been involved including two Local councils, Leicester Shire Promotions, and Canal & River Trust. The museum will be opened with a new name - The Boilerhouse - in 2015.



‘The interpretation will help protect the lift’.

Michael G Beech
(Museum Keeper and
Company Secretary)

info@fipt.org.uk



Caerleon Baths

The multi-media display at Caerleon Baths creates the effect of the baths full of water. This was created using live footage taken from a swimming pool, two digital projectors, LED lighting and audio recordings.

The effect is impressive bringing the baths to life through showing the baths as they would have appeared during the Roman period. Projected words often swirl around on the water or sometimes people appear swimming along to help to tell the stories of the baths.

Visitors can explore the baths via a walkway above. The great thing about this multi-media display is that as well as giving visitors at taste of what it would have been like here during the heyday, it has not had an impact on the physical remains and everything that has been put in place is reversible.

‘The multi-media display has not only increased our number of new visitors but has also led to people visiting us again’.

David Penberthy
(Head of Interpretation
and Learning at CADW)

To accompany the multi-media display are audio posts, clips of black and white movies, interpretation boards and touch screen games. Visitors have been impressed with the display with the staff receiving good comments. The baths are attracting new visitors and the work done has re-invented the baths enticing visitors back.

<http://cadw.wales.gov.uk/daysout/Caerleon-roman-fortress-baths/?lang=en>