Linking the Landscape:
Digital Outreach to Small Towns and Rural Communities

Smithsonian Affiliations National Conference
June 11, 2013
Museum on Main Street (MoMS) is an exhibition based humanities project that targets small towns across America. It is national in scope, but at the heart, celebrates local cultural heritage.
MoMS exhibitions are catalysts for community and civic involvement, public-private partnerships, and community based public programs.
MoMS across America

47 states and over 1000 communities have participated in the MoMS project
State Humanities Councils provide...

- Support for humanities programs and educational activities in host communities
- Networking and training opportunities
Small Town Museums provide...

Exhibitions and public programs centered on local culture and heritage

Community-wide support and volunteerism
MoMS… Illuminates and celebrates local heritage and traditions
MoMS... Inspires community pride and involvement
MoMS...Enhances partnerships between schools and museums
MoMS... the centerpiece of Digital Outreach

Sharing memories and celebrating local heritage is central to the MoMS experience.

MoMS national network is perfect for digital outreach centered on local history.
MoMS Digital Outreach…Grand Aspirations

- Use MoMS online presence to celebrate, explore, and deepen an understanding of our shared American experience as it relates to Main Street America;

- Use innovative technologies to collect local stories and artifacts that augment MoMS exhibitions and to highlight local history and culture;

- Connect young people to their own local history and to local cultural organizations;

- Bridge the gaps between generations and across diverse local communities through sharing of local stories, histories, traditions and cultures.
Collection point for text-based stories and images from the general public

Online exhibitions allow local hosts to share stories and collections
Mobile Application

Mobile app allows venues and students to collect stories from anyone, anywhere

More than 450 stories on SfMS App so far.
Youth Access Initiative

Students in under-resourced, rural communities learn interviewing skills, technology skills and conduct oral history interviews.

Students create history projects, documentary videos, local and online exhibitions.

“It opened up some really valid lines of communication that would not have started before ... and it became a bonding experience through the community of our school that we have these really rich histories and we haven’t shared them.”

– Participating Teacher, North Carolina
“I’d like to think that this is one of the life–altering programs, helping students with career choices, college choices, life choices.”

– SfMS Instructor
MoMS exhibition, *New Harmonies*, inspired online public history projects in 12 Georgia communities:

- “Darien’s Chitlin’ Circuit”
- “Southern-Fried Woodstock: Byron Pop Festival”
- “A West Georgia Tradition: African American Shape Note Singing”
- “James Brown: A Music Box from Toccoa”
Local Content... Cell Phone Tours

MoMS exhibition, *The Way We Worked*, includes a cell phone tour that features in depth information from our curator and local content that complements the exhibition:

- 43 local stories from communities in MI, MN, KS, and LA
- 13 states have developed state based stories related to TWWW
MoMS... Builds Community through Social Media

MoMS shares news on Facebook about local events (1200 posts resulted from a general post about *Hometown Teams*).

Tweets from the *Journey Stories* installation workshop in Aspen, CO last Friday were re-tweeted by Senator Udall’s office