

## Designing a Digital Museum Catalog App for Tailored Exhibition Experiences

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Together with the cultural institution *Haus der Bayerischen Geschichte* (HdBG), we are currently developing digital concepts and ideas for the upcoming *Museum of Bavarian History*<sup>1</sup>, which will open in 2018 in Regensburg. Within this project context, we designed a *Digital Exhibition Catalog App* (DECA) that we would like to present at the *Interdisciplinary Conference on Digital Cultural Heritage* (DCH) 2017.

According to Mihatsch [1], an exhibition catalog has two main functions: First, it can be used as a guiding tool during the actual visit of an exhibition („*catalogue-en-acte*“), as it provides useful hints about the organization and content of the exhibition. Second, it can be used as a mnemonic device after the visit of the exhibition („*catalogue-document*“), as it summarizes and archives all the objects shown in an exhibition. Taking a look at the existing, printed catalogs of past exhibitions of the HdBG, we found that they seem to be focused on the second function, but are rather cumbersome to use as a guiding tool during the actual visit of an exhibition because of their extent and size. Moreover, traditional catalogs are created by an editorial team and are thus generic, pre-compiled lists of exhibition objects. These objects possibly do not reflect the individual exhibition experience of the museum visitors who may take quite different routes through an exhibition and, in the majority of cases, will not actually visit all the objects listed in the catalog. Finally, printed catalogs are obviously restricted to contain only text and images, but no multi-modal content such as audio or video.

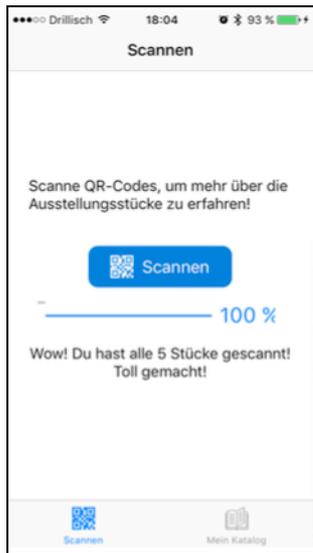
To address these issues of existing catalogs, we designed a prototype for the “Landesausstellung Bier in Bayern”<sup>2</sup> that can be used to create a tailored catalog of the visitors personal exhibition experience via a smartphone app. We implemented an iOS app (cf. Fig. 1) that allows visitors to collect objects during their visit by means of QR codes and that motivates them to discover (and collect) further objects in the exhibition. The objects that can be collected and cataloged via the app are managed via an easy-to-use, web-based content management system (cf. Fig. 2). We are currently also experimenting with further gamification elements that increase the motivation of visitors to engage in the exploration and collection of digital artifacts in the museum.

As next steps, we are planning to conduct information behavior and user experience studies in a realistic exhibition environment, to investigate how users respond to such digital museum catalogs and how they like the aspect of a tailored catalog in particular.

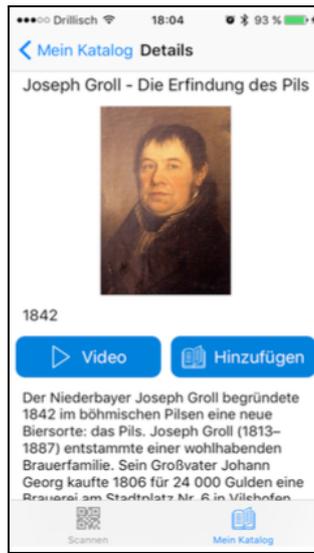
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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.museum.bayern/>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.landesausstellung-bier.de/>



Scan object via QR code.

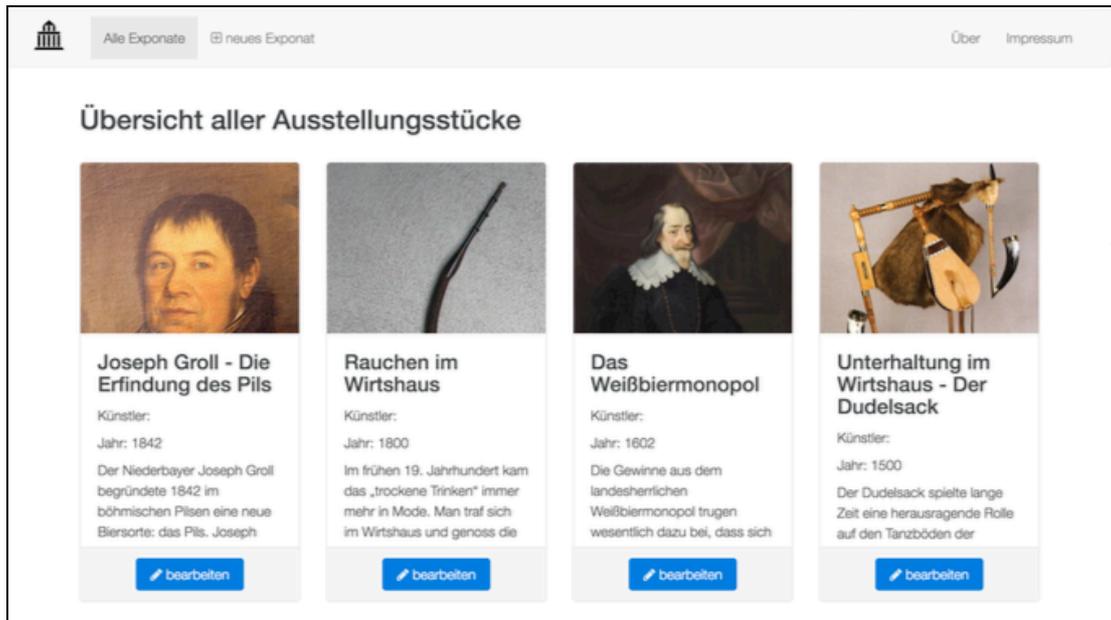


Display information and add object to personal collection.



View personal collection.

**Fig. 1.** Digital Exhibition Catalog App (iOS application).



**Fig. 2.** Content management system (web-based) for managing objects that can be collected via the Digital Exhibition Catalog App. QR codes for each object are created automatically.

## References

- [01] Mihatsch, K. (2015). Der Ausstellungskatalog 2.0. Bielefeld: transcript.