THE HOOSIER HISTORICAL SMART PHONE APP: PUTTING HISTORY AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

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Industry Sector(s): Conventions and Tourism, Community Development
Product Category: Application Software for Mobile Devices

Opportunity Overview

The Hoosier Historical Smartphone App will bring cultural and historical tours of Indiana cities to visitors and residents using compelling photographs, films, oral history, and text.

Markets & Applications

Hoosier Historical will contribute to IUPUI’s transformative leadership in community impact, both in Indianapolis and across the state, strengthening the relationships between scholars, cultural institutions, historic organizations, government entities, community groups, and members of the public. Hoosier Historical will also make a major impact in the field. Public history is an expansive scholarly and professional field that includes any kind of historical work that is done in conversation with and for a public audience. Public historians work in a wide range of venues: museums, archives, as historic preservationists, in the National Parks, as corporate historians, just to name a few.

Competitive Advantage/Value Propositions

Public history is rooted in the work of translational scholarship, challenging its practitioners to make the highest level of historical research accessible and meaningful to the widest possible audience. Traditionally, this translational scholarship has been made available at the venues in which public historians work. The digital age presents public historians with a unique opportunity to transform how history is enacted in public by bringing our work to a much wider public audience. Hoosier Historical provides us with a critical, time-sensitive opportunity to shape interpretation. Although many individual museums and historic sites are already deploying smart phone apps to convey information to their visitors, Hoosier Historical will harness this technology to provide a new way of understanding the past through its development of a durable and replicable state-wide network.

Hoosier Historical will need to find a way to aggregate multiple cities—conceptually, technically, and administratively. We will have to decide how to connect multiple cities in Indiana using tours that will still be viable as local driving or walking tours but that will also point people out to wider connections in the state (e.g., a statewide Native American history tour). We plan to identify a set of compelling humanities themes, possibly
including: “Sacred Spaces”, “Conflict”, “The Memory of Wars”, “Technology and Transportation”, “Immigration and Neighborhoods”, “Race and Place”, and “Consumerism and Family Life” that will link all the tours across the state.

Researcher Biographies

**Rebecca Shrum, PhD**
Rebecca Shrum is Assistant Professor of History at IUPUI and Assistant Director of Public History in IUPUI’s nationally recognized graduate program in public history, which trains students who want to be historians outside of the classroom at places like museums, the National Parks, archives, and historic houses. Before coming to IUPUI, Shrum directed an undergraduate public history program at the University of Wisconsin at Whitewater and is active in the National Council on Public History. Shrum is trained as a historian of early American history and material culture and she is most interested in how our material world shapes individual, collective, and national identities.

**John Dichtl, PhD**
John Dichtl is Adjunct Assistant Professor of History in the School of Liberal Arts at IUPUI and the executive director of the National Council on Public History (NCPH), a professional and scholarly association that inspires public engagement with the past and serves the needs of practitioners in putting history to work in the world. Through its journal, annual conference, digital media venues, and many programs, the NCPH builds community among historians, expands professional skills and tools, fosters critical reflection on historical practice, and publicly advocates for history and historians. From 1999 to 2005, Dichtl was Deputy Director of the Organization of American Historians, where he helped lead the organization during a period of extensive growth. He received his Ph.D. (2000) and M.A. (1993) in early American history from Indiana University. Prior to that, he spent two years writing and editing for the United States Senate Judiciary Committee. Dichtl is the author of the book, *Frontiers of Faith: Transplanting Catholicism to the American West during the Early Republic* (2008).

Development Plans/Needs

1. Develop a series of best practices for creating Hoosier Historical as a state-wide network
2. Create the content for and pilot initial Hoosier Historical smart phone app tours
3. Conduct audience evaluation of the project
4. Develop appropriate partnerships to allow for sustainable development and deployment of the app