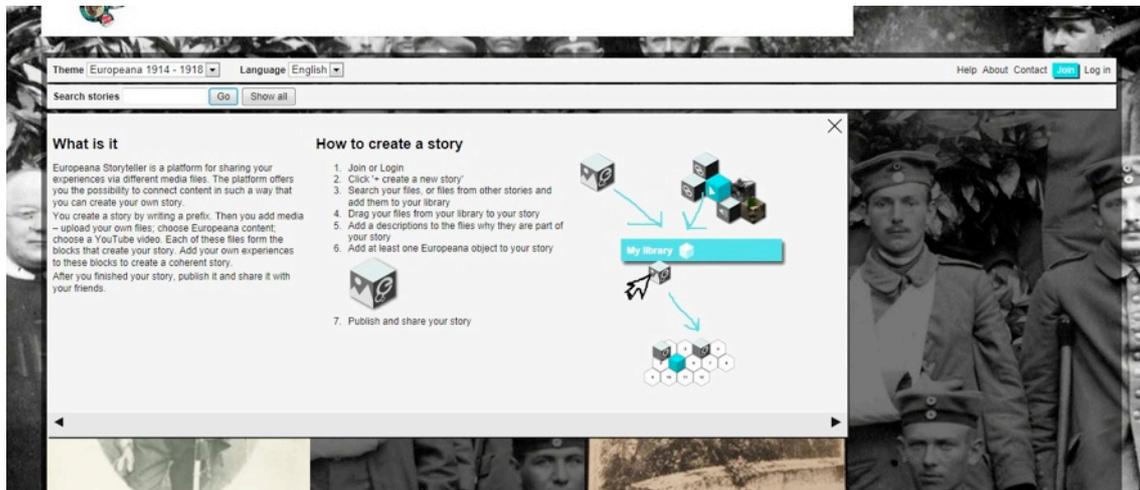# Usability report

What was the product tested?	Digital Storytelling Platform
What was the area of focus?	Overall IA and impression.
What were the methods used to test?	Test URL - http://panic.image.ntua.gr:9001/awareness/html/index.html#/en/Europeana+1914+-+1918
Who were the test participants?	Jon - Director of an eye tracking company Morgan - Web developer Jaime - Illustrator and Graphic designer
What were the scenarios tested?	No scenarios were set

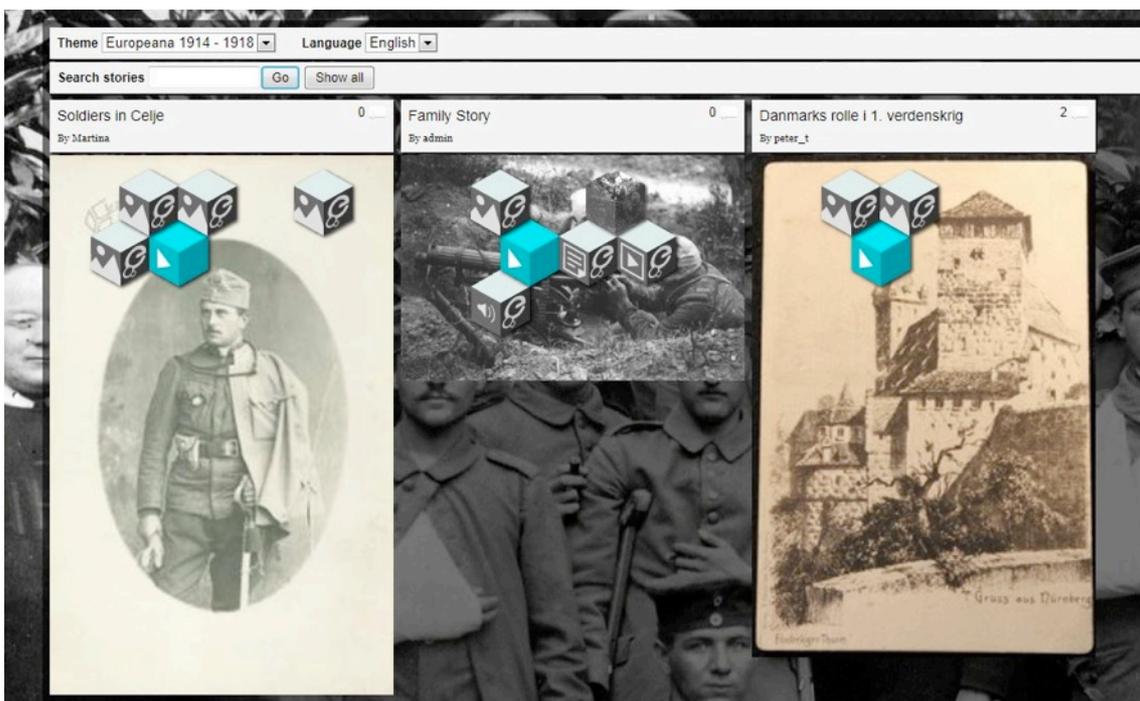Report by - Dean Birkett

Date - 16 April 2013

Jon (38, Director of an eye tracking company)

Firstly the image below is opened right away. The scroll arrows at the bottom do nothing. The cube icons and build thing is illogical and confusing to me, and I am pretty au fait with all sorts of interfaces… for the people who are likely to utilise this site it is polar opposite from what I would design.

As a tutorial style opening it adds no value, even if it did it disappears without any real guidance and when you try to open it later the help is the same screen, generic and has no value or assistance value, nor is it contextual.
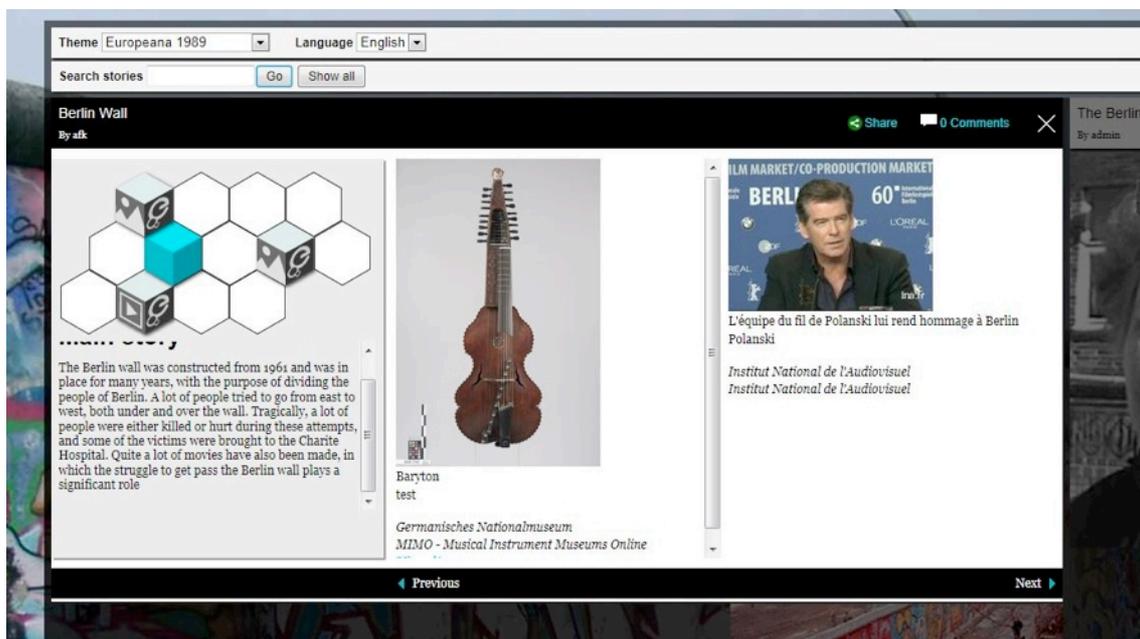
There are no obvious starting points and the image below shows how these cubes just don't work… the title is stated (poorly) and the number to the side
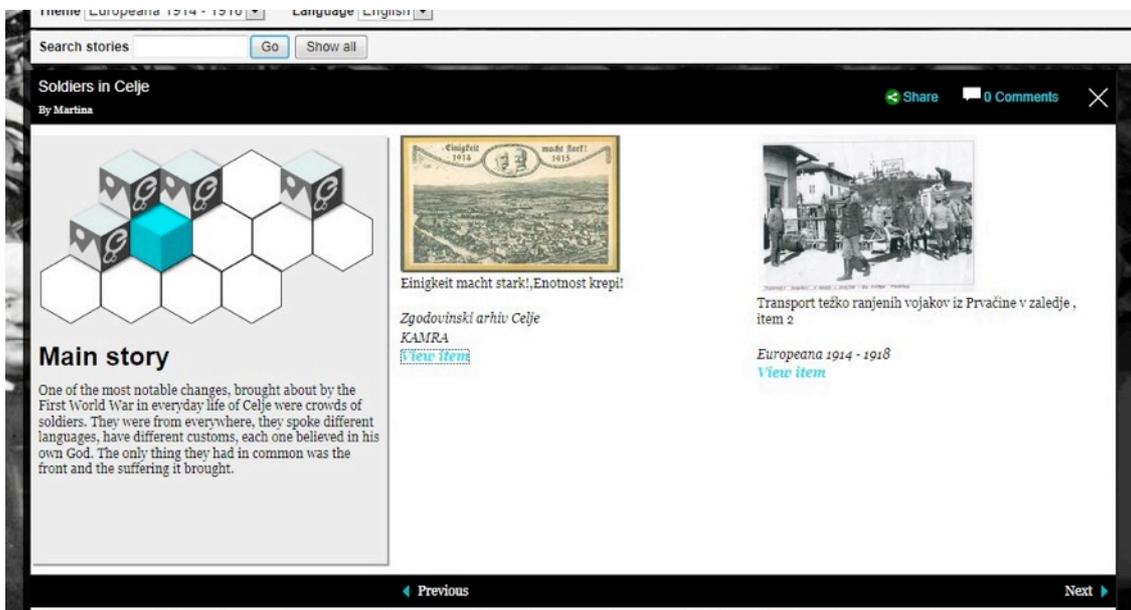

which I assume is comments, adds no value in its current form. The icons are not either clear, nor useful – and there is no clear user journey identified, no

preview of the story or contents and the images are poorly used. I am assuming with more stories this would be more of a W8 tile style screen? I would suggest that just having the title, image below, maybe the creator and then an icon for say video, audio, image, text (one for each) that just highlights if there is content (greyed out if not). Bottom line is this interface is confusing, doesn't tempt me to investigate and gives a very poor reward for any calls to action. Once again there also isn't a simple journey for a novice to follow and no contextual help.

Thirdly (image below) With all the images and items in the stores, the problem is the text is so weak and limited, there is no context, no story, no link to any reference. Where the headlines are in English often the other text is not, and there is no translate option or language choice that appears to affect the content, as opposed to the menu's and frames.

In terms of the UE – apart from the poor iconography, disjointed and weak UI and very poor guidance and reward through the site, when you actually open an element the presentation is weak and boring, the cubes make a totally confusing menu selection and when you do determine the navigation the reward is poor, the images and layout are so basic, and don't give really any value to the user – after a couple of clicks I would navigate away.

I appreciate that a lot of the text is user defined but the presentation is so poor that even the nice images lose their power which would overcome this problem. Due to the confusing iconography and lack of standard / simple controls mean that users I think would be confused, unimpressed and unlikely to return.

Morgan (36, Web developer)

Really confusing stuff, not easy to follow or even understand what is going on on that page. I had no idea what the blocks were until I clicked on them, after that they were easy to drag around and click on.

It is obviously something to do with World War One and how you can create your own family history of it, the whole thing just confuses me as to what I am supposed to do when there. I know it is to do with contributing to something but I just don't understand how what I do will be used etc once it's been done.

After writing all that I found the help link, when you click this it explains what you should do - hard work though unless you are inquisitive and don't give up.
The sharing button doesn't work.

Jaime (30, Illustrator and Graphic Designer)

The home page clearly describes what the site is about and how to get involved, but the navigation window is not so obvious. Took ages to load once I clicked out of the intro menu and selected a theme. Had to refresh it twice to get anywhere.

I think it would be useful to have a drop down menu where all contributed story titles were perusable. It was pretty obnoxious having to select from one theme each time (and wait the aforementioned eternity for the stories to load).

The search is rubbish so it took me a while to find anything, but when I did it was fairly straightforward. However, I find these mystery molecule blocks of storytelling not very cohesive. There doesn't seem to be a narrative that strongly relates each bit of content, therefore I lost interest very quickly.