

Europeana Channels

Summary Report Concepttest

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user intelligence

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Background & setup

Background

At the moment Europeana, in cooperation with User Intelligence, is working on a concept for Europeana Channels. In this first phase we focussed on two Channels; the **Europeana Music Channel** and **Europeana Fashion Channel**.

Europeana distinguishes between two primary target groups for Channels: **'Cultural Vultures'** and **'Cultural Snackers'**.

In the first phase research has been conducted with possible future users for the Music - and Fashion Channels, in which we primarily spoke to Cultural Vultures.

After the concept development, based on these insights, Europeana requested a complementary Concepttest to validate the concept with the Cultural Snackers. This test will show to what extent the Channels Concept meets their needs, wishes and expectations.

This document describes the results of the research into Channels Concept among **'Cultural Snackers'**.

Research goals

The goal of this research project is to gain insight into the appreciation and acceptance of the Channel concept in general, and the Music- and Fashion channel specifically, among Cultural Snackers.

The **main research questions** that needs to be answered are:

- *To what extend does the Channels Concept fit with behaviour, needs, wishes and expectations of Cultural Snackers?*
- *How can the Channels Concept be improved on relevancy, usability and experience for this target group?*

In addition Europeana would like to gain insight into the needs, wishes and expectations of the 'Cultural Snackers' regarding Europeana in general and the Channels Concept specifically (sub-research question).

Setup

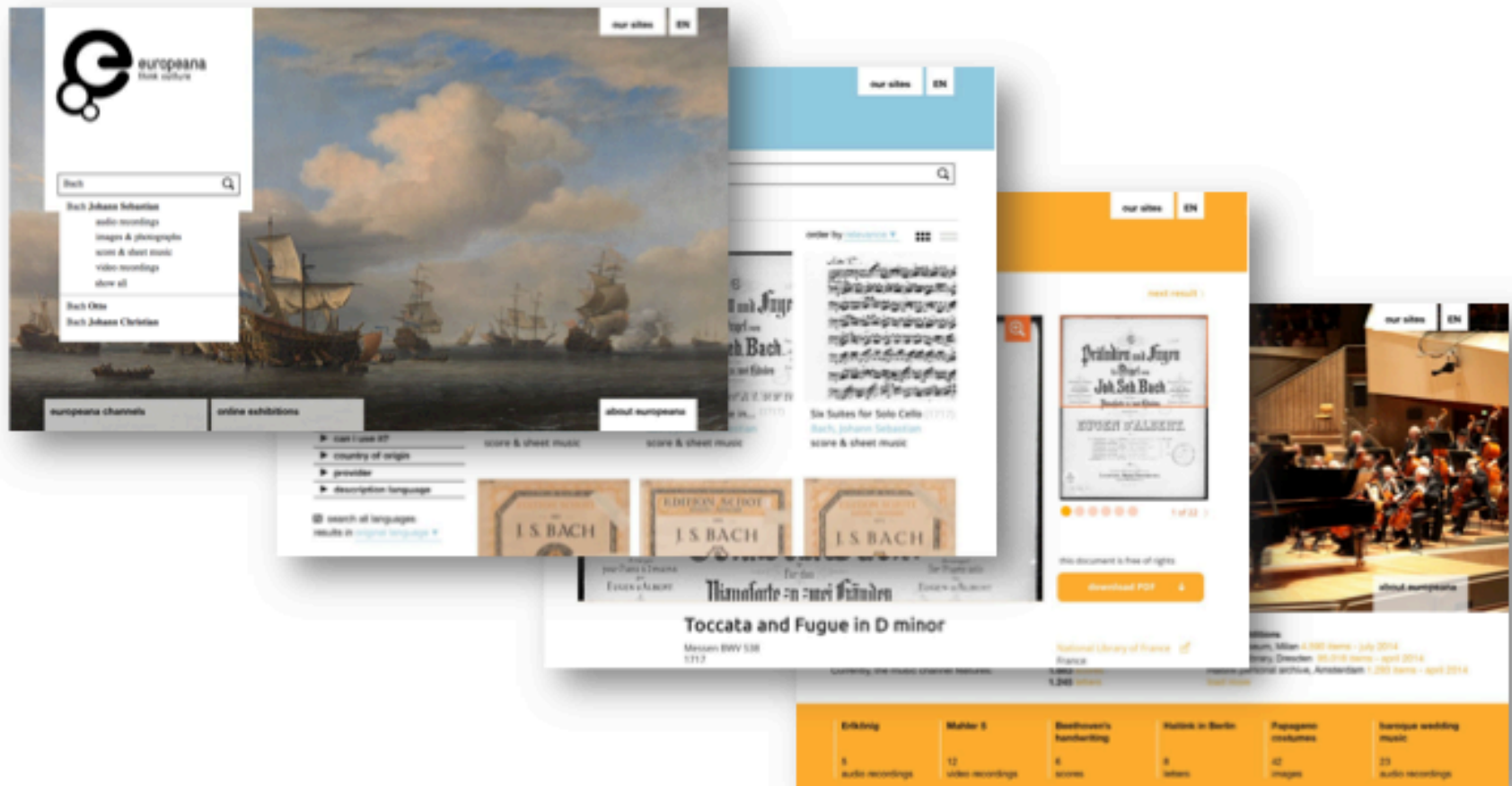
We have answered the research questions by means of **qualitative interviews** with 'Cultural Snackers' in our usability lab in Amsterdam.

The research had the following set-up:

- 6 interviews of about 1 hour each;
- All participants were (non-professionally) interested in both music and fashion;
- Interviews were held on 8th of October 2014.

Testing materials

During the Usability Test the participants went through medium-fidelity wireframes of the Channel Concept.





Summary of conclusions

Summary of conclusions (1/2)

1. Appreciation for Channels is **largely positive**. The Channel concept fits well with the Cultural Snackers';
 - Passive searching attitude;
 - Wish for visual and aesthetically pleasant presentation;
 - Wish contextual information.
2. The Channels Concept is seen as an **improvement** in regard to the current Europeana portal.
3. The Channels Concept seems **to fit better** with the behavior, needs, wishes and expectations of the Cultural Snacker than those of the Cultural Vulture.



See page 12-13 for explanation on why the concept fits well with needs, wishes and expectations of Cultural Snackers.



See page 14-15 for explanation on why the concept is seen as an improvement.



See page 16-17 for explanation on why the concept is seen as an improvement.

Summary of conclusions (2/2)

4. The Channel Concept leaves **room for improvement** to fit the needs, wishes and expectations of the Cultural Snacker even more.



See recommendations in chapter 4 on page 21-23.

5. However, optimizing the Channels Concept alone doesn't seem to be enough to reach the Cultural Snackers. **Issues in the current portal** are a challenge for the success of Channels;

- Lack of familiarity with Europeana;
- Limited quality of (part of) the content and meta data;
- Incompleteness of the database.



See page 18-19 for explanation.



Conclusions

1. The Channel Concept fits Cultural Snackers well (1/2)

The Channels Concept has a good match with the following characteristics of the Cultural Snacker;

- **Attitude towards cultural heritage:** Cultural Snackers tend to have a broad interest in cultural heritage, across various themes, topics and disciplines. Due to their broad interest they tend to be satisfied with more general (superficial) information on a topic.
 - Channels offer ways and inspiration to explore various topics.
- **Passive attitude:** Cultural Snackers tend to have a passive attitude towards;
 - Achieving a search goal and
 - In absorbing information: preferring aesthetic pleasant experiences.
 - Channels offer a way to explore the portal without having to type in a search. In addition, the more visual presentation of the information is appreciated.

1. The Channel Concept fits Cultural Snackers well (2/2)

- **Expectations of content:** Cultural Snackers want to learn contextual information on a topic and would prefer calls to action based on a topic (e.g. visit this exhibition).
 - The Channel Concept offers more contextual information than the current portal.
- **Searching behaviour:**
 - Google is a search reference;
 - Explorative searching behaviour;
 - Wish to be inspired during search: sensitive for visual triggers and related topics.
 - Channels stimulate explorative searching behaviour with browse entry points.

2. The Channels Concept is an improvement (1/2)

- The Channels Concept is perceived as an improvement when compared the the current portal. The table below summarizes the points on which the Channels Concept is perceived an improvement:

	Points of critique on the current portal:	The Channels Concept is favorably received for:
Look & Feel:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dull and dusty;• Museum like (serious and academic);• Not matching with the rich and creative content.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vivid;• Inspiring;• Appealing;• Colorful.
Calls to Action	Are missing in order to maintain the Snackers' interest and attention	Are noticed and appreciated in 'related items' and visual representation of e.g. the exhibitions.
Search	Executing a specific search activity does not yield the expected result: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Missing content (known items cannot be found);• A too specific entry leads to no result, where a too general entry leads to many specific options.	The Channels support and encourage the Snackers' in their wish to browse.

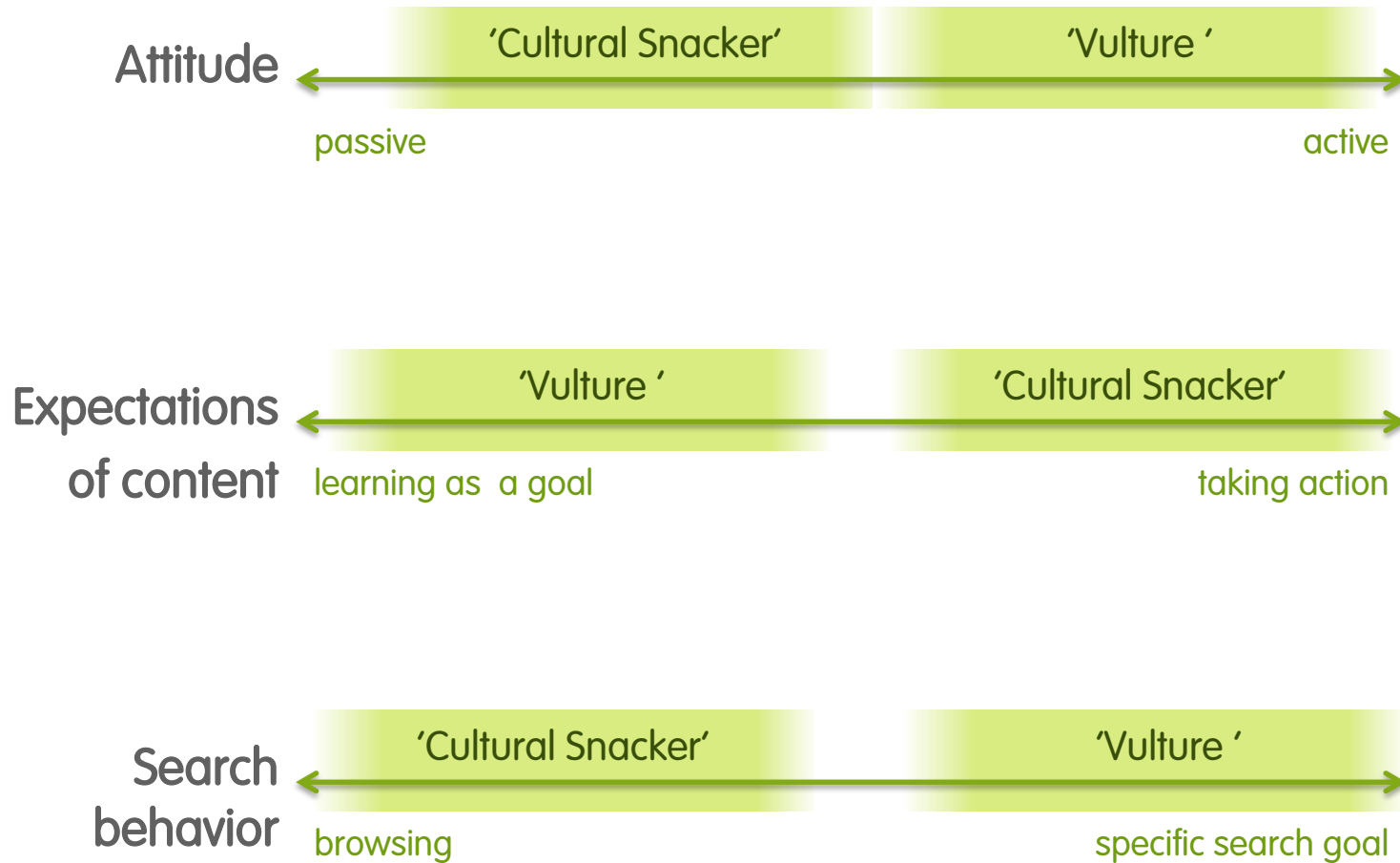
2. The Channels Concept is an improvement (2/2)

	Points of critique on the current portal:	The Channels Concept is favorably received for:
Presentation of search results	The search results are not presented in an orderly way (relevance). (see previous report).	The search results are presented in an orderly way, due to the balance between visuals, text and 'white' space.
Filters	Filters are perceived as not always relevant and hard to interpret.	Filters are largely perceived as relevant.
Metadata on the item page	Is often perceived as incomplete, irrelevant; incomprehensive; not up-to-date.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presents the contextual information which the user is expecting.• Is understood better.

3. Channels fit the Snackers better than the Vultures

- Snackers tend to **explore/browse** more than Vultures, who are more likely to perform a specific search. Channels **facilitate and stimulate** browsing.
- Snackers are more **broadly interested** in cultural heritage 'topics' / themes. Channels fits well with this because it inspires to **explore** various themes.
 - Vultures tend to have a more deep interested in one theme, often a professionally driven interested, of which they would prefer to receive in-depth information. Channels tend to be too broad / general to provide this in-depth information.
- On the following page the characteristics of the Cultural Snacker are compared with those of the Vultures.

Characteristics of 'Snackers' in comparison to 'Vultures'



5. The current portal as a challenge for Channels (1/2)

Optimizing the Channels Concept alone, does not seem to be enough to reach and bind the Cultural Snackers. **Issues in the current portal** are a challenge for the success of Channels:

- The **familiarity and whereabouts** of Europeana;
 - None of the Cultural Snackers, we spoke to, were familiar with Europeana.
 - Once the Snackers were introduced to Europeana (organization) and the Channels Concept, their interest as well as their enthusiasm increased. Post introduction the Snackers were encouraged to visit Europeana in a future situation.

5. The current portal as a challenge for Channels (2/2)

- The **quality of the content** and **metadata**;
 - Snackers are looking for meaningful metadata that provides them with inspirational and contextual information about an item. This includes valuing descriptive information (imported from Wikipedia is accepted) on an item more than e.g. a copyright. On top of that, missing metadata means a discouragement for continuing search activities.
- The **completeness** of the Europeana **database** content in relation to the World Wide Web;
 - The Snackers' point of reference for a search/browse-portal for cultural heritage is Google. For Snackers it is important that the results presented to them via the Channels Concept is as good as (and even has an added value) the results they would find using a more general portal.



Recommendations

Recommendations (1/3)

As Channels seem to fit well with the needs, wishes and expectations of the Cultural Snackers, further development of the Channel Concept seems a valuable way to pursue.

- However, to get the most out of the Channel Concept familiarity of the Europeana portal and quality of the content are important points of attention.

Furthermore, the channel concept leaves room for improvement to fit the needs, wishes and expectations of the Cultural Snacker even more.

- As Channels are valuable browse entry points for Snackers, the **availability of the Channels** can be made **more explicit** on the homepage.

Recommendations (2/3)

- The **relationship** between a search **result** and a **Channel** can be made more clear. Snackers value a clear structure and presentation in their search results, in order to help them comprehend their search entry as a whole. Although the color of the banner changes when entering a specific Channel, this relationship can be made more explicit.
- Visually the Channels Concept can learn from the lay-out of the Fashion Portal. Snackers were very positive about the Fashions portal's:
 - Balance between 'white space' and content (composition of page);
 - Amount of text in comparison to the image;
 - Large image on an item page: inviting to read the accompanying text;
 - The contrast between 'calm' background and 'inviting' content.

Recommendations (3/3)

- Present the entry points in a more visual way. Snackers valued the exhibitions (spherical photo's) far more interesting and comprehensible than the browse entry points expressed in figures (see image below).

Erkönig	Mahler 5	Beethoven's handwriting	Haitink in Berlin	Papageno costumes	baroque wedding music
5 audio recordings	12 video recordings	6 scores	8 letters	42 images	23 audio recordings

music exhibitions



Russian conductors in the EU



famous concert halls



Herreweghe takes on BWV 232



opera posters from the 1960's



explore the world of musical instruments

5 

Main findings
per page

Classification of findings



High priority

A serious problem that hinders the usage of the site severely



Medium priority

An important problem that hinders the usage of the site.



Low priority

A small problem that hinders the usage of the site sometimes.



Positive finding

A positive finding about a well functioning part of the website.



Additional findings / observations

o.a. Found bugs in test material, limitations in the review.

Homepage



✓ **Large visual appreciated.**
Clear visual relation to cultural heritage due to single large image as background.

✓ **Search box is easily found.**
The search box is clearly visible.

M **Channels are noticed on homepage, but don't attract immediate attention.**
The large visual and exhibitions attract more attention due to their visual presentation.

↳ Channels could be shown more explicitly due to their relevance for Cultural Snackers.

- Present Channels in visual way, e.g. like the spherical presentation of the exhibitions.

Search result page

L

Link remains unnoticed.

Color of the bar, linking to the Channel, seems to be too discrete.

✓

Filters and their workings are largely understood.

M

Difference between 'object' and 'form' is not clear.

This might be solved when the object filter could be opened.

✓

Visual presentation of the results is valued as visually pleasant and structured.

Item page

The screenshot shows the Europeana Music interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'previous result' and 'return to search results' links. The main content area displays the manuscript cover for 'Präludien und Fugen für Orgel von Joh. Seb. Bach.' with a 'download PDF' button. Below the image, the title 'Tocatta and Fugue in D minor' and 'Missa BWV 58' are shown. A description follows, mentioning the piece's history and its nickname 'Dorian'. The composer section identifies Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) and provides a brief biography. A 'related items' section shows five thumbnails for other musical works. At the bottom, a 'music channel' section highlights that the document is part of a channel offering various audio, image, and video recordings, with a link to view online exhibitions.

✓ Visual presentation is valued greatly.

✓ Composition of the page is valued as pleasant and structured.

It helps the user in quickly finding the information they are looking for.

✓ Contextual information appreciated.

The contextual information show in the descriptive text is valued as a large improvement on the current item page.

✓ Related items stimulate browsing

The related items match the search/browsing behavior of the Snackers, by being a motivation and link to explore more on the website.

L The Channel bar is understood, but not always noticed.

Channel landing page

our sites EN

europeana music

search the music channel collections

europeana music collections

about europeana

the music channel
brings together all music related cultural heritage from the europeana collections. Currently, the music channel features:

30,245 audio recordings
11,392 images & photographs
5,904 video recordings
1,883 scores
1,245 letters

recent additions
Scala museum, Milan 4,590 items - july 2014
Dresden library, Dresden 95,018 items - april 2014
Haitink personal archive, Amsterdam 1,290 items - april 2014
[load more](#)

Erkänig 5 audio recordings	Mahler 5 12 video recordings	Beethoven's handwriting 6 scores	Haitink in Berlin 8 letters	Papageno costumes 42 images	baroque wedding music 28 audio recordings
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music exhibitions

Russian conductors in the EU

famous concert halls

Herweghe takes on BWV 232

opera posters from the 1960's

explore the world of musical instruments

[load more exhibitions](#)



The look and feel of the page is appreciated.

Without being cluttered, the page presents many different items which attract attention.



Browse entry points are ignored.

Comparing the 'browse entry points' with the exhibitions: users tend to ignore the browse entry points. The exhibitions are presented visually more attractive, therefore users pay no effort in understanding, let alone start exploring, the entry points.

Consider to make the browse entry points equally visual as the exhibitions.

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