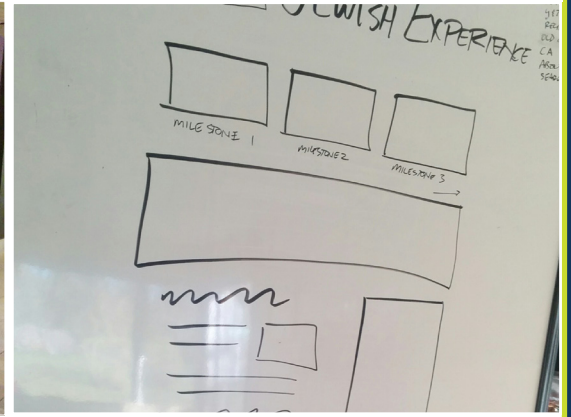


Washington Jewish Museum

The keeper of historical information for Washington State's Jewish community



History

Online Experience

Accessible Archives

User Research

Content Design

Building a curated online experience from the ground up

Overview

In seeking a way to make its digital information widely available to the public, the Washington State Jewish Historical Society decided to build what it called an online museum. The museum would house the organization's hundreds of stories and digital artifacts, as well as index some of its collections for research purposes. North Then West's principal Joel Magalnick worked with WSJHS to create the Washington Jewish Museum, including building the platform upon which the museum would be hosted.

Process

The process began with developing a thorough understanding of what materials would be available for display. This included working with the organization's stakeholders, members of the public who had a use for the information that would be available, and archivists who had access to the physical collection of artifacts housed at the University of Washington, among others.

These conversations gave a real sense of what each party wanted from an online museum and how the content could potentially be organized.

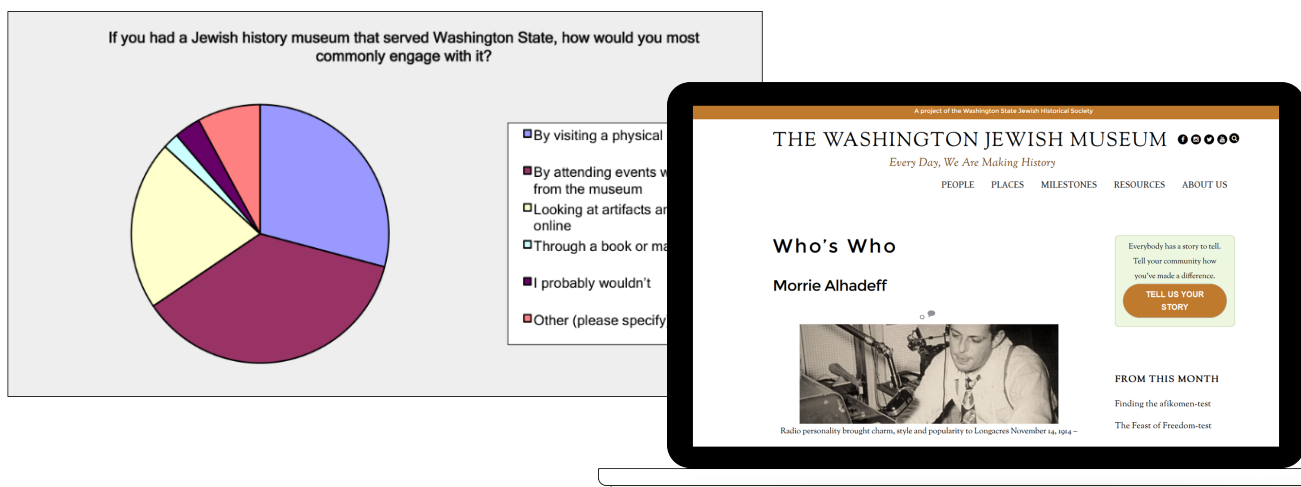
NORTH THEN WEST CASE STUDY

From there, Joel developed methodologies to validate existing assumptions through user research interviews and surveys of the museum's potential audience. One important result was how the oft-used statement from the organization's leadership that "every day we're making history" resonated with the museum's potential users. This insight led to a section of the museum being dedicated to current events and new artifacts being integrated into the collection in addition to special exhibit layouts.

Establishing the bigger picture, however, necessitated the creation of a content design and strategy that would not only allow for the inclusion of content that was currently available, but to be able to adapt to future types of content such as video assets, oral histories, and new modes of storytelling. Starting with the needs of the audience, Joel and the WSJHS stakeholders worked backward to assess how the museum site would be built, how it would engage with its audience (including a secondary site for indexed artifacts), and to leave space for the audience to submit their own content.

Result

The release of the Washington Jewish Museum coincided with a gala event that included dozens of the people and artifacts initially populating the digital museum. The museum provided access to a much larger audience interested in the historical society's offerings than at any previous time—especially because these were artifacts that had previously been available only to the few hundred people who would attend a specific gala event, usually for just an evening or weekend.



*How can North Then West help your company refocus your value proposition to become customer centric? Reach out to us!
Contact joel@norththenwest.com or call 825-436-2035*