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The Ashmolean Museum

Founded 350 years ago, [The Ashmolean Museum](#) is the University of Oxford's museum of art and archaeology, boasting world famous collections that range from Egyptian mummies to ancient Greek jewellery.

Unfortunately, their [Digital Asset Management](#) processes needed bringing into the 21st Century.

In 2021 the Ashmolean set about changing this, and brought in Christopher Monaghan as Museum Systems Implementation Manager. Chris was tasked with leading a project to introduce a new Collections Management System and DAM that, they hoped, would revolutionise the museum's collections management—but the two systems would need to work together.

"Our old system was creaking at the edges"

At the beginning of the project the museum had a CMS in place, but they took the decision to replace it with [MuseumPlus](#).

"Our old CMS was creaking at the edges, and we were looking for a solution that provided better performance and sustainability" explains Chris.

However, in terms of a DAM, they were starting from scratch.

"When I arrived at the Ashmolean we didn't have a proper DAM system in place" says Chris.

"We were relying on a series of interconnected, and very complicated, directory folders which were mapped to users' hard drives."

"We had an image drive which was just a series of hierarchical Windows folders, which of course provided no way to track metadata. We just had a filename, and it was very time consuming to find and add assets."

During the DAM selection process, ResourceSpace stood out to Chris and the team because of how it could integrate with MuseumPlus—as well as the Ashmolean's other systems.

"The integration with MuseumPlus was a key requirement for us" says Chris.

"Without it, our collections management process would be inefficient and, frankly, chaotic."

Read more: why ResourceSpace is perfect for [arts and heritage](#)

"This integration means we have a single source of truth for each type of data. "

Because ResourceSpace and MuseumPlus work together, the Ashmolean's process for adding new objects and digital assets is simplified.

For example, a curator will add an object into a collection in MuseumPlus with all the relevant data. The museum's Photo Studio is then tasked with taking pictures of the object and uploading them to ResourceSpace. Without an integration, both elements of this workflow would have to be carried out twice, but because both systems can talk to each other, the CMS updates the DAM with information about the object, and vice versa.

"This integration means we have a single source of truth for each type of data" says Chris.

> I've had lots of positive feedback from the DAM users, particularly around sharing content with non-DAM users

"This is crucial to retaining clear identification of photos and objects, and maintaining consistency."

"This simply wasn't possible before—and we're still working through some of these issues that were the result of having no systems."

The ResourceSpace- MuseumPlus integration is critical to the Ashmolean Museum's collections management processes, but the DAM system has offered Chris and the team multiple benefits beyond that, from file sharing and in-platform image editing, through to basic things such as being able to search for assets via metadata.

"I've had lots of positive feedback from the DAM users, particularly around sharing content with non-DAM users" recalls Chris.

"Previously we'd have to use WeTransfer or something similar, but with ResourceSpace we can simply create temporary off-site sharing links."

"ResourceSpace also just saves us so much time in making processes more efficient, whether that's making edits to assets in the DAM rather than downloading them to an image editor, or being able to search metadata fields and create collections."

Chris is also effusive about the amount of time ResourceSpace is saving him personally.

"As a system admin I really appreciate the importing and exporting functions."

"I can export hundreds of thousands rows of data in the blink of an eye, and it runs perfectly each time. Just recently I exported 600,000 objects in 15 minutes—it's really fast!"

Chris' role with the museum began with overseeing the implementation of ResourceSpace and the MuseumPlus integration, but he's now responsible for running those systems, and he's delighted with his experience so far.

"We're very satisfied. The ResourceSpace team are always quick to respond, are solutions-orientated and provide really thoughtful answers."

"I've found them to be really excellent to work with."

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ResourceSpace being an open source platform was another big plus for the Ashmolean during the DAM selection process, something the museum has used to their advantage.

"We love that ResourceSpace is open source for a number of reasons" says Chris.

"First of all, open source software typically has really detailed documentation, which is definitely true of ResourceSpace, but also because we're able to develop new plugins to support our processes even further."

"I also really appreciate the speed and flexibility of the platform's development."

"The ResourceSpace team are very transparent with their roadmap and they're open to listening to customer feedback and implementing changes off the back of it."

Interested in finding out more about the MuseumPlus integration, or how ResourceSpace can transform your collections management process?

Book your free demo below and we'll give you a 30-minute tour of the platform and demonstrate all of the features and benefits Chris and the Ashmolean team have found to be so invaluable.

Get started