Getting Your Arts Organization Started with Location Based Social Marketing

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INTRODUCTION

Location-based Social Networks (LSNs) have become increasingly popular as of late thanks to the rapid development of social media platforms and their integration with other technologies. Fundamental technologies that support LSNs include Global Positioning System (GPS), which was developed in 1973, and mobile devices, such as smartphones. These have both independently been common to the modern day tech user for quite some time. Foursquare and Loopt were initially the two most popular location based social apps to package both of these technologies together to allow users to take advantage of their GPS-enabled smartphones by "checking in" at a location. This functionality was quickly adapted by other social media giants. Now, on a variety of different social media platforms, users can view where their friends are, or search for nearby places of interest. Almost all social media giants, such as Facebook, Twitter, Yelp, and Instagram, have a location "check-in" feature.

The use of this combined technology has become mainstream among smartphone users only in the past few years. In fact, back in 2010, only 4% of all Internet users used a service such as Foursquare or Gowalla to share their location with their social networks. Today, 90% of people use the location services function on their smartphones and enable their "location share" function on social media platforms. Additionally, according to Pew's survey, "one in ten smartphone owners have used a geo-social ("check in") service." Because nearly 153 million adults are using smartphones (according to the Pew's finding and an eMarketer's survey), this indicates that nearly 4% of US adults are "checking in" on social media.

LSNs provide a plethora of simple and often free marketing features that organizations should take advantage of. Based on a new study from brand marketers, "75% believe location based marketing is an important element to their business strategy in 2016." For instance, for each location on social media, "check-in" functionality provides a digital picture wall that allows others to see what is happening at that space, a way to easily promote both organizations on the whole as well as specific events.

This white paper will give background about LSN technology, its use in arts organizations, why and how arts organizations can take advantage of its benefits, and provide recent case studies of how organizations around the world have successfully used it.

The "Check-In" Feature Social Media

Although there are more ways and tools available now than ever to analyze locational data, locational-based social media marketing has not yet become the industry standard, especially for small businesses and non-profit organizations. According to report from the Global Navigation Satellite System Agency, currently almost 3 billion in-use mobile applications rely on locational information. Additionally, the predicted future market for smartphones will further grow by 6.2% per year with an increase to 14 billion units of wearable GPS-enabled devices until 2023. The Pew Research Report on Social Media Usage 2005-2015 also points out that 65% of adults in the US currently use social media sites. Today, 68% of social media sites embed "check-in" functions that allow users to share a post with exact location they are at. These statistics give a pretty accurate picture of what future trends will be and how important organizations should start locational social marketing now to be ahead of the market. The "check-in" function on social media sites is the easiest and most cost-efficient way for arts organizations to get start of jumping into location based marketing. Upon examination of some key arts organizations' social media pages and the locational "check-in" function on some platforms, we found that many organizations have far more followers than check-ins on the same social media platform, indicating the under-utilization of the check-in feature (see chart below).
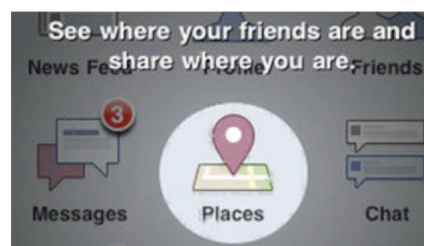
Social media platform	Facebook "Check-in"s	Facebook Followers
Organization		
The Frick Collection	42,354	97,808
Carnegie Museum of Art	24,065	39,396
The Andy Warhol Museum	56,750	108,849
Museum of Modern Art	1,052,925	1,928,202
Brooklyn Museum	160,912	207,511

Figure 1. The Total Number of Check-ins on Social Media Compared to the Number of Followers. For example, The Frick Collection in New York has 97,357 followers on Facebook. The number of people who checked in is only about half of this, which means that there are potential museum visitors who have not been to the museum physically but might love to go some day. Source: Author Research.

The table above compares check-in numbers with their actual followers on their same page. For example, The Frick Collection in New York has 97,357 followers on Facebook. The number of people who checked in is only about half of this, which means that there are potential museum visitors who have not been to the museum physically but might love to go some day. Why not find out why they cannot come to the museum and how to motivate them visit the museum based on the behavioral data we collect from their social media platforms?

The "check-in" activity was pioneered by the biggest location-based site Foursquare and Loopt, who they took advantage of GPS-enabled smartphones and invited people to check wherever they were. This activity was further adopted by other social media big brands and has been used for people forming offline networks through online channels. People can allow their friends to see where they are and, at the same time, search for nearby places that they might find interesting. Usually, for each location on social media, there is a virtual "wall of pictures" that allow other people to see what is happening in the space and what people are doing in that space. This is a way of advertising and promoting an organization while easily reaching more audiences.
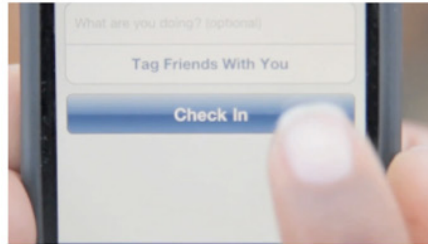

Create your organization's location by either typing the address or pin on the map

Enable the "check-in" feature in Preference
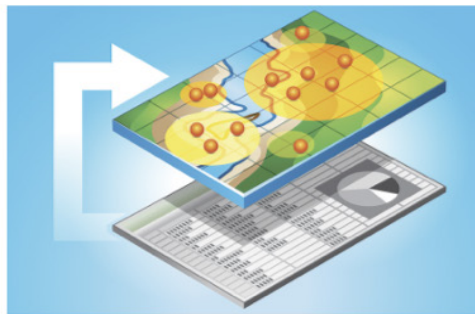
Make it appear on your front page

2 Invite people to "check in"

- ✓ Give people incentives and motivations to check in your location
- ✓ Simply talk to your customers and mention the check-in
- ✓ Include LBS into social media campaigns
- ✓ Your organization itself should also check in for each post

3 Analyze locational data

- ✓ Use tools such as LocalMeasure and Snaptrend to generate insights and reports based on check-in activities (need your account information)
- ✓ If you want to go free, simply tap into your location and manually look through people's posts
- ✓ Try to pay attention to both positive and negative posts and find out why
- ✓ Click into the author's profile to see their demographics

Figure 2. How to utilize "check-in" function in four simple steps: 1. Locate the Check-in on social media 2. Invite people to "check-in" 3. Analyze Locational Data 4. Use the Results. Source: Author. Graph made with Venngage.com. 2016.

3 Biggest Reasons That Non-Profits Should Utilize Locational Data from Social Media

There are a number of ways to use "check-in" on different social media sites. For example, Facebook gives users the advantage of searching nearby locations that their friends have visited, along with letting others know when they check-in to that same place. Foursquare is another platform, one of the pioneers of LBS, as mentioned before. Organizations can provide offers and discounts in exchange for a check-in. Instagram comes with a very simple and useful "geo-tagging" feature that collates content and elevates brand experiences. Organizations that do not use these "check-in" services and other LSN features to their full advantage are missing out on an array of important benefits and might set them behind direct or indirect competitors.

Understand your current audience

From collecting data from current posts and comments associated with the location, arts organizations can better understand current audience and their preferences. On locational social media sites/apps, customer information and their needs in regards to the organization will be constantly updated. Now, customers are more open to sharing their personal information with an organization as they often share their location, demonstrate purchasing inclinations, provide demographic information, along with various other kinds of personal information. Because people share experiences online about one specific location or organization, they might have a better sense of belonging within the location "group."

Collect customer feedback and let them know you care

The "check-in" function can also serve as a tag, and it is just as easy and convenient. Like a hashtag, people can tap into the location and see what people are saying about the organization. This is also a way for an organization's employees to check customer feedback and engage with them to improve current strategies. Most "check-ins" accompany a post, a status, a photo, or a share other posts. In order to get a real time understanding of audience sentiments, arts organizations should engage audiences before, during, and after events and monitor their feedback. Replying to comments promptly is a good way to let them know that you care about their opinions and may encourage them to say more in the future.

Expand your audience reach

It is probably the easiest and least costly way to advertise the organization and generate great ROI on social media. For example, when a customer checks in on FourSquare or Facebook, the business's name is displayed for that customer's friends and followers to see. By knowing the most influential user at the location, organizations can also target this group of people and invite them to advocate in exchange for discount tickets. Installing the organization's website button on social media can further allow visitors to easily share your original content with their networks, drive them from social media to the website, and ultimately allow them to get closer to the organization. Moreover, the use of location information online allows you to look at close-by organizations and target competitor's customers with just simply clicking into their location tag and finding out what people say about them.

- Reach people who are in "immediate proximity" from the organization so these people can visit RIGHT NOW.

- Allow other people to see the organization's name and visit the organization's page.

- Appear on other people's nearby feeds and encourage them to walk-in when enough people check-in at your location.

- See the organization from consumers' perspectives and use insights from this data to better satisfy them.

Figure 3. Four major benefits to using the "check-in" feature. Source: Author.

Tools and Key Measurements

Tools

There are many useful location-based tools available, each providing a variety of benefits. Although some are not free, they provide an easy and user-friendly interface for organizations to work with. Most also provide free trials and demos before payment is required (see Figure 4 for detail per tool).

USEFUL TOOLS FOR LOCATION-BASED MARKETING
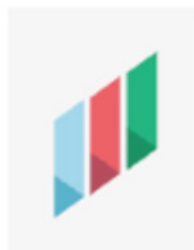
Local Measure

Allows you to discover public social content, such as pictures and videos, that was published at your organization

Urban Airship

Provides the ability to target audience research by better understanding audience profiles

Facebook

Allows you to measure the effectiveness of your ads and posts by calculating users posts on Facebook

Snaptrend

Helps you identify and understand relevant social media conversations at a specific location

WeLink

Monitors social activities for your location and helps develop engagement and advertising strategies

Geofeedia

Provides information on other locations your audience tends to go to by analyzing their public social data

Figure 4. There are many useful location-based tools available, each providing a variety of benefits. Although some are not free, they provide an easy and user-friendly interface for organizations to work with. Source: Author. Graph made with Venngage.com. 2016. See Bibliography for website links.

Measurements

Arts organizations should leverage and prioritize certain measurements in order to develop an informative report or dashboard, allowing for better strategic planning in the future. See Figure 5 for a list of suggested mea-

Tones or emotional sentiments:	Frequency of posts:	Hashtag:	Followers:
Posts, comments, and photos usually reflect people's emotion regarding the content. Find out why people give positive or negative feedback to the organization.	*This feature can help identify "influential users" and "loyal customers" as they frequently say something about the organization. Reach to the most influential ones and encourage them to post more.*	*Easily find out what the most popular hashtag is in order to reach a broader audience.*	*Don't forget to check out people's profiles and see how "influential" they are. You might be surprised to see one of your customers has thousands of followers*
Who they follow:	**Behavior patterns:**	**Locations nearby:**	**Sample posts:**
This is a way to identify possible competitors and to see some cool things they do to draw more customers. Learn from this!	*These measurements contain several elements such as cross-visiting sites, the most active timeslot from posting, the popularity of one post, and how frequently they post after visiting a show*	*Get to know the organization's direct and indirect competitors nearby. Direct competitors are those organizations who do similar things to you; indirect competitors are non-arts organizations such as nightclubs, restaurants, and football stadiums.*	*Record sample posts as examples to show other people in your organization that it is important to make a change and adopt feedback. Keep and promote what people like and fix what people complain about.*

Figure 5. Arts organizations should prioritize certain measurements in order to develop an informative report or dashboard, allowing for better strategic planning in the future. Source: Author.

Arts and LSNs Case Studies

1. The Smithsonian Museums

Since 2011, the Smithsonian Museums started to host fun competitions seasonally using locational "check-in" services on social media platforms and the game app "SCVNGR" for all nine museums in the city. SCVNGR is a social location-based gaming platform for mobile devices and includes features for both customers and organizations themselves. While using the "check-in" service solely for advertising and marketing purposes, the Smithsonian also sees this as a way to advance interactive education

programs. Educational institutions and organizations can build challenges at different locations on the map free of cost and invite others to play. Customers can earn points and prizes from the organization by going to that location and participating in the challenge. The Smithsonian integrates SCVNGR with their own social media pages by inviting people to complete the challenge by "checking in" on Facebook or Instagram. Once they post a picture and show it to the front desk, they receive an exclusive prize (free or discount admission, free drink at the café, coupon at the museum store). Thus, although museum goers can participate actively, play the

game, and earn points, they can also enjoy benefits by simply "checking in." These features are sure to lead to memorable experiences for visitors.

Figure 6. Since 2011, the Smithsonian Museums started to host fun competitions seasonally using locational "check-in" services on social media platforms and the game app "SCVNGR" for all nine museums in the city. Source: Smithsonian Museums.

2. Zarraffa's Coffee

Zarraffa's Coffee, founded in 1996 and based in Australia, is a leading coffee brand whose mission is "to deliver the essence of coffee from its origin in Kenya and Ethiopia with great customer services and cultural values". Their business has evolved from one single store on the Gold Coast to hundreds of chain stores in many locations worldwide. One of their extraordinary marketing strategies is based on social media marketing. They utilize social media features to a

great extent and make it part of their core marketing strategy. In 2015, they started to run a promotional campaign using Facebook "check-ins", aimed at advertising their brand and engaging with customers. They offered a complimentary upgrade (called "upsize") of any drink if the customer showed them that they "checked in" on Facebook. They encouraged people to use any internet-enabled device to "check-in" in their posts, photos, or directly on Zarraffa's Facebook page. This promotion was simple and generated a large ROI., as the drink upgrade was not costly for Zarraffa. Once their customers "check in," even just for the drink upgrade, their friends on social media immediately could see the "check-in." Getting people to check-inon social media gave Zarraffa more exposure, allowing to draw more customers and increase their brand awareness from the "free advertisement" by their own customers.

Figure 7. In 2015, Zarraffa's Coffee started to run a promotional campaign using Facebook "check-ins", aimed at advertising their brand and engaging with customers. Source: Zarraffa.com.

3. Fox Theater at Georgia

The Fox Theatre in Atlanta, Georgia encourages all audiences to "check in" using Foursquare by having an active "check-in" special. They offer a variety of deals, including a 20% discount to upcoming shows and a chance to meet the director and dancers face-to-face at backstage after the show. While enjoying a series of musicals and ballets with the discount ticket, audiences have the chance to meet their favorite artists and producers with just simply a "click" on their social media pages. Additionally, the Fox Theater created their own event called "Check-in for Encore," which offers a special encore during the show if there are enough people "checking-in" to the venue. Another benefit is that once a certain amount of people have "checked-in" on Foursquare, the organization has the chance to appear in "Best of Nightlife Places" for all users in the area to see on Foursquare. The Fox Theater has learned how to take advantage of people's excitement when winning prizes by offering rewards for checking-in, and thereby creating positive benefits for their organization. In a recent interview, Russell Suave, Social Media Manager at The Fox Theatre said, "We are very fortunate to have our patrons and customers as promoters to support our social efforts and allow us to cross-market upcoming shows."

CONCLUSION

Using locational-based social marketing is a solution that turns mobile audiences into social audiences, enables organizations to reach people based on previous real-world location history, and helps increase their website click-through rate. Not only does this solution allow organizations to find new audiences around a specific area, but it also dramatically boosts an organization's promotion ability because of the huge amount of geographical-based social media users. Finally, since most locational social media apps and tools are free or low-cost, it is a simple way for non-profit organizations to reduce general campaign costs.

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