

The Use of Logos in Presentive Conservation

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Abstract - Recent advances in information technology mean that a museum or research institute can now use a logo to compress collections management information as part of a presentive conservation strategy. Speakers at the recent IIC Congress in Ottawa demonstrated that numerous styles of logo are in use. This article reviews the state of the art in logo design and stresses the need for all institutions that take conservation really (really) seriously to develop their own presentation policies.

Logos

The logo allows large amounts of information to be compressed into a small space (often the bottom left corner of the first slide). It describes accurately the environment to which the collections are subjected.

For example, Logo 1 indicates a literate environment, given to words rather than action, but with a central anomaly showing that at least half the organisation is not all there. Logo 2 demonstrates a trend toward an ecological environment where flora (and the associated fauna) are allowed access to the collections. Logo 3 is politically correct in having an equal number of humans and dragons and immediately suggests Amgueddfa Genedlaethol Cymru.

At the upper end of the technological (and expense) scale the logo is becoming increasingly transparent. Logo 4 leaves nothing to the imagination but does suggest an environment where things are not quite straight. Logo 5, although state-of-the-art in transparency, has not found favour in developed countries.

It is important to keep up with the latest trend and not squirrel away logos that are unfashionable. There is nothing more embarrassing than a dated logo that has become ubiquitous.

Colour Rendering

Presentive schemes using logos have traditionally been rendered in dark blue with data in white or



Logo 1



Logo 2



Logo 3

yellow. More recently the colour rendering has shown a direct correlation with the nature and quality of the accumulated data. The UK National Trust has pioneered a drab environmental green, and GCI has experimented with barely perceptible pastel shades.

Fading

Uneven fading has been noticed on a number of occasions. The prevalent occurrence is bottom-up fading which affects the dark blue backgrounds causing shading from deep indigo to a rather pretty royal blue. Pastel shades have been known to fade diagonally.

Artificial ageing

Repeated exposure of identical data at numerous locations world-wide has shown that some subjects are ageless™.

Software problems

Redundancy is crucial, as it is important to have exactly the same words generated on the screen as will be emitted by the speaker.

Although translations from one language to another used to be a problem, many recent models such as logo 6 translate seamlessly from French to English and back again.

The Welsh logo is very slow as it can only be downloaded at a rate of 1.0 bard.

Policies for Presentive Conservation

It is now proven that traditional methods of data transmission using speech and simple photographic images are unacceptable. All seriously ambitious organisations should develop policies for the presentation of historic data in their care. Such policies would include multiple placement of logos, computer generated lists with high redundancy, and repetitive conferencing techniques.

Recent Research

Experimental work at the Canadian Conservation Institute and at the Museum of Nature in Ottawa suggest that Images and Information for Conservation -Computer Generated (IIC-CG) may yet be superseded. At the Ottawa Congress both groups demonstrated new prototypes of the ACR (Acting Counter-Revolution). Both were high risk, low performance models. Both have eliminated the need for logos, computers or images, but the domestic model demonstrated by Michalski has dispensed entirely with the need for relevant data.



Logo 4



Logo 5



Logo 6