

The NZMuseums website
NZMuseums – the website for/of museums of New Zealand
www.nzmuseums.co.nz



NZMuseums

The NZMuseums website is an exciting website which features collections and stories of the museums of New Zealand, as well as being available as an online collection management system for museums.

Online collection management system (CMS)

Museums with no electronic Collection Management System (CMS) can use NZMuseums as an online CMS, storing their information on the web. For those already using a CMS, you will be able to easily export information from your system onto NZMuseums. You don't have to have any collection management system in place already, or if you do, you don't have to be using Vernon– you can export information from any system (including Mosaic, PastPerfect and similar collection management systems).

Which museums can put their collections and information on NZMuseums?

Any museum in New Zealand, large or small, is welcome to put information on NZMuseums. Smaller museums with few resources will receive assistance to ready themselves to go online through training and the opportunity to tap into financial support.

Financial support

The NZMuseums Website One Year License Fee Grant is for small mainly voluntary run museums that can commit to putting 200–2000 items on NZMuseums and would like financial support to increase their online collection storage.

Who is the end-user of this site - the target market?

This site is aimed at: the general web-surfer, the person with an interest in local history, the academic researcher, the person planning their visit to a region and wanting to create a stimulating cultural itinerary, the New Zealander interested in finding out more about their nation.

What will the website offer museums and the end-user?

Museums are being offered the opportunity to include their collections (whole or part) on NZMuseums, this might be by using the site as a collection management tool, or by uploading from your present collection management system. By being part of NZMuseums you will be provided instantly with a contemporary promotional tool, used by national and global audiences. End users will get easy access to information about museums, their collections and stories, the opportunity to provide comment, and a real insight into the cultural heritage of

New Zealand. NZMuseums also allows easy contribution to other sites such as Matapihi – www.matapihi.org.nz and DigitalNZ – www.digitalnz.org

What is the aim of this website?

The aim of the website is to promote interest in New Zealand museums from anywhere, and to help and encourage museums to make the information they provide to the world a lot more interesting and appealing. We also intend that the end user will be able to connect with museums, ask questions, blog, tag items, add information and be truly interactive - in the way that people expect to be on the web these days.

The key messages that will be conveyed through this website to users are that:

- this is the content from your community – from the local museums throughout the country. It is of value to you, the user
- content is very interesting – you will want to keep discovering more and more
- it is bright and appealing and has been produced to be available to all
- the website is simple to use (there are accessible instructions if needed)
- it will always be a useful resource
- new content is constantly being added
- the end-user can do things to make him/herself feel part of the site (i.e. share comments, tag, blog)

How is the change occurring?

NSTP works with Vernon Systems Limited (VSL) on the website, and McGovern Online produced the logo and designed the site. VSL have created eHive, a global online collections website, in which NZMuseums will sit.

How will the connection with eHive work?

eHive is the main storage facility, and NZMuseums sits within eHive. Museums sign-up with NSTP, and once collection information is put in, it will immediately transfer to NZMuseums - unless the museum chooses not to place items on NZMuseums (in which case it is a very simple opt-out process). Museums in New Zealand will still be promoted under the brand NZMuseums – a very valuable marketing tool for museums in this country. Although it sits within eHive, NZMuseums will very clearly have its own identity and can be accessed in a variety of ways – through eHive, through its own url, through other websites and through search engines. A member of the public accessing NZMuseums will not know that it is a 'subset' of the larger eHive umbrella.

So where do you come in?

We are calling for museums to prepare collection information to place on NZMuseums. You don't have to put all your collections on the website, but a reasonable selection of items to begin with will assist in making NZMuseums an exciting and meaningful website for any end-user to visit, be they a researcher with a specific task or a web surfer with a passing interest. We want to get New Zealand's collections on line to show the feast of material we have throughout our country, and to entice more visitors to the smaller museums throughout the nation, not just the hot tourist spots. This site will encourage people to be interested in and to get to your museum, whether they are local or visiting from elsewhere, or visiting virtually.

We are asking all museums to:

- prepare material to go on the site
- make decisions on the collection items you'll include, that best show your story

Working regionally and collaboratively

We are also encouraging museums to work regionally. As an example, there may be several museums in one region that would like to put items on the site. As a group under the guidance of a regional coordinator, those museums will come up with lists of items they will put on the site, about which they will contribute stories and images. They will all discuss their approach to providing the information, and share helpful hints on how to photograph items. New Zealand Museums will also work well for groups of museums wishing to bring information together in the form of virtual exhibitions. A museum may wish to join up with other similar museums, i.e.: a group of tractor museums, to form a small community of museums on a similar theme. Other initiatives, such as the Distributed National Collection, might choose to have a presence in NZ Museums (and/or in eHive) in this way.

How can National Services Te Paerangi assist you in this process?

It's a simple process to prepare to digitise your collections, and one that requires some straight forward planning.

National Services Te Paerangi will be able to provide you with the basic guidance for successful preparation of your data and images (photography and scanning) to go online.

Is there going to be any training on how to use the new website?

Yes, and the whole process will be very user-friendly.

How much will this cost?

- Up to 200 items will be free of charge.
- A licence fee of US\$99 (US\$250 at the moment) per year allows for storage of up to 2000 images and text.

Benefits for your museum

- A straightforward and cost-effective way to have an internet presence
- An easy and affordable entry into digital collection management
- Greater promotion of your museum and visibility of your collections
- Consistency across the sector in terms of standards and best practice
- Increased opportunities for collaboration
- Allows easy contribution to other sites such as Matapihi and DigitalNZ

Benefits for the Public

- One website providing easy access to many museum collections
- One website address, one menu, one type of search result
- Reduced travel, telephone and research time for researchers
- Easily accessed from different computer platforms

Are you coming online with us?

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact:

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