



## Oregon's Heritage Vitality Report: Initial Findings



- Centennial: many new heritage organizations
- Sesquicentennial: many heritage organizations struggling
- Initiated by Oregon Heritage Commission
- Unique national initiative



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### What is Heritage?



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### Heritage is widespread and diverse

State Historic Preservation Office, Oregon Historical Society, Main Street, Certified Local Government Program, Special Assessment Projects, Trails, Landmarks, Archaeological Sites, Historic Homes, Museums, Cultural Centers, Historical Societies, Historic Cemeteries, Archives, Public Records, National Register Sites, Heritage Trees, Roadside Signs, Community Traditions, Traditional Crafts, Classroom Education, Living History Actors, Historians, Theaters, Farms, Ranches, Businesses, Libraries, Books, Magazines.



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### Heritage by the numbers

- More than 200** museums
- More than 350** registered charities in Oregon use the word history, museum, heritage, archive, archaeology or historic in their name.
- More than 1,900** individual Oregon listings on the National Register of Historic Places,
- More than 105** national historic districts
- 6** national historic trails
- 50** covered bridges



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### Heritage by the numbers

- More than 300** locations contain historic public records that belong to counties
- More than 30,000** archaeological sites.
- More than 1,100** designated Century Farms and Ranches
- 748** designated historic cemeteries.
- 63** Main Street programs



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### Heritage by the numbers

556 commercial building operators and home owners with projects involved buildings with assessed values totaling **\$323 million**.

Once home to **more than 30** indigenous languages, now only a handful remain.

**29 percent** of domestic pleasure travelers say heritage sites and attractions affect their choices



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### Demand for heritage services is increasing

- ◆ Increase in online queries and requests
- ◆ Increase in the use of their archives
- ◆ Increases in number of visitors
- ◆ Increase in the conservation, repair, and restoration of historic buildings



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### Assessment Methods

- ◆ National Literature
- ◆ Online and Paper Surveys
- ◆ Interviews
- ◆ State & County Data
- ◆ State by state comparisons



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### Top Issues in the Next Ten Years



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### I. Creating Stable and Sustainable Funding



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Declining or unstable government funding





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### Increased competition for public and private funds

- ◆ Against other sectors of community
- ◆ Among heritage organizations



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### Dealing with funding issues

- ◆ Reduced or eliminated staff hours
- ◆ Reduced hours open to the public
- ◆ Reduced building maintenance
- ◆ Reduced marketing and outreach
- ◆ Not pursuing collaborations



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### Dealing with funding issues

- ◆ Refocusing their mission
- ◆ Creating new strategic plans
- ◆ Seeking new collaborations
- ◆ Merging



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### II. Strategic Collaboration



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### Current

“Increasing community involvement and partners” and keeping “heritage organizations viable and relevant” were among the top five issues.



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### Current “Collaborations”

Joint planning and marketing	51%
Website links	50%
Joint programming	42%
Photo scanning	23%



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### Continuum of Relationships

- Cooperation -- links
- Coordination – marketing, programming, scanning
- Collaboration (co-creation) – programming, scanning
- Alliance
- Integration



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### Most common relationships involve

Local governments	54%
State or federal agencies	47%
Newspapers	44%
Other museums	42%
Cultural specific groups/ associations	40%
Businesses	38%



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### III. Developing New Leadership



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### Issues affecting new leadership

- ◆ Population demographics are changing
- ◆ Shifting generational and cultural expectations for heritage organizations
- ◆ Half of Oregon's population has moved to the state from elsewhere.
- ◆ Increasingly diverse ethnic mix



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### IV. Changing Role of Technology



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### Technology issues

- ◆ Affect organizational infrastructures, outreach strategies, and public expectations
- ◆ Redefine traditional roles, types of resources, and relationships with audience/community.



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### The Virtual Heritage Experience

- In 2006, 43% of museum visits nationally were remote
- Enabling and wiring expectations differently, particularly among younger audiences
- Digital—and usually free



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### Virtual Experience Today

23% of historical society/museum websites surveyed in Oregon did not have a website



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### Virtual Experience Today

- 68% had more than 10 pages on the site
- 29% provided some form of access to collections information
- 24% had e-commerce features
- 18% provided opportunities to donate online
- 18% had interactive resources



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### Virtual Experience Tomorrow

41% of surveyed heritage organizations plan to launch a new website or online resource in the near future



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### V. Calculating Economic Value

- ◆ No measures exist of the impact of heritage organizations and heritage activity upon the local and state economies
- ◆ The economic value of heritage and preservation in Oregon is not insignificant
- ◆ This role is not adequately articulated and acknowledged



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### National economic value

The nonprofit arts and culture industry generates over \$166 billion in economic activity annually, supports over 5.7 million full-time jobs, and returns over \$12 billion in federal income taxes annually.



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### State value considerations

- ◆ Total Oregon SHPO grants for 2004-2009 equaled \$8,446,456 invested in those communities or projects
- ◆ Cultural and/or heritage tourism represents 40% of all leisure travelers
- ◆ Direct earnings in tourism in the arts, entertainment, and recreation (which includes visits to museums) is \$294.9 million dollars annually



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### Developing the Economy and Heritage

- 25% jointly market with other heritage organizations
- 17% developed cultural tourism programs with their local tourism commission
- 32% coordinate efforts of economic & cultural tourism development with the city and other heritage organizations



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### Opportunities Presented by Increases in Demand

- ◆ Increase in online queries and requests
- ◆ Increase in number of visitors
- ◆ Copies or scanned documents
- ◆ Memberships



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### VI. Calculating Educational Value

Nationally, and in Oregon, few quantitative and qualitative measures are in place to determine the value of history education.

- No Child Left Behind
- Short term value
- Long term value



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### Potential educational value of heritage: How do we calculate them?

- ◆ More engaged citizens
- ◆ Citizens with knowledge and skills that make better decisions for Oregon
- ◆ Greater understanding of the impacts of change on their community.
- ◆ Better understanding of sustainability issues in state.



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### Supporting K-12 schools by

- ◆ underwriting transportation costs
- ◆ charging reduced or below-cost admission fees
- ◆ securing grants to offset other financial barriers
- ◆ helping with Teaching American History grant projects without full financial compensation



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### Education and Heritage Today

- ◆ Because of the weak economy, the public's perception of the value of the liberal arts education, which includes history, has diminished.
- ◆ Oregon history is typically taught as a separate subject only in the fourth or fifth grades, unless a creative and passionate teacher incorporates it into other subjects.
- ◆ Only 25% of responding heritage organizations actively partner with schools and school districts
- ◆ 80% of Certified Local Governments and 69% of historic preservationists are planning public education initiatives in the next three years.



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### VII. Inadequate training systems

- ◆ Many heritage organizations say their staff and volunteers do not have adequate training, including collections management and preservation.
- ◆ Training is often one of the first things cut from a budget.
- ◆ As an aging volunteer corps leaves, replacements need to be found and trained.
- ◆ Because of geography, many people can not travel to trainings where they are taking place.



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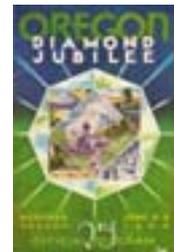
### Training topics:

- ◆ Digital technologies to expand awareness, support and effectiveness
- ◆ Refining regulatory tools so they are effective and publicly supported
- ◆ Developing adequate preservation environments and materials



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### VIII. Marketing, Public Relations, and Advocacy Efforts



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### Marketing today

- ◆ Oregon heritage organizations and businesses use more traditional and independent outreach techniques, such as press releases, printed newsletters and mailings, hosting meetings and placing ads.
- ◆ Non-heritage businesses and organizations use more dynamic methods, including social media, interactive websites, RSS feeds, etc.



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### Surveyed Oregon museum websites:

- ◆ Only 11% use a form of social media
- ◆ Only 18% feature interactive resources
- ◆ Only 18% provided opportunities to donate online
- ◆ Only 18% had online member services



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### Marketing today

- ◆ Approximately half of Oregon's heritage organizations report participating in joint planning and marketing efforts with local organizations, businesses, government agencies.
- ◆ 36% of responding heritage organizations report making “reductions in community outreach/marketing.”



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### Role of State Government?



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### Statewide Assistance

- ◆ Educating the public about the economic, social and cultural benefits of heritage.
- ◆ Providing technical training and advice
- ◆ Providing information about additional grant opportunities



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### The eight challenges:

1. Stable and sustainable funding
2. Strategic collaboration
3. Developing new leadership
4. Changing role of technology



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### The eight challenges:

5. Calculating the economic value of heritage
6. Calculating the educational value of heritage
7. Inadequate training systems
8. Bringing 21st century sophistication to marketing, public relations and advocacy efforts



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### Where will solutions be found?

organizations	communities	collaborations
regions	statewide	national
businesses	nonprofits	
government	public	





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“One of the huge challenges that a lot of heritage type organizations are facing: [getting ] people realizing that it is a bread and butter operation and that it's not just something that's great when times are wonderful.”

- Diana Banning, City of Portland Archives



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“You can't shy away from the big fixes. When you see the opportunities you have to take them.”

- George Vogt, Oregon Historical Society



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**Questions &  
Comments**

