

MISSION STATEMENT

THE STÄDEL MUSEUM'S DIGITAL STRATEGY

Frankfurt am Main, January 2017. The digital revolution affects all areas of life. Museums are also subject to society's upheavals, which fundamentally change how we deal with information, education and culture. The Städel Museum has set out to participate actively in shaping this transformation, and to make use of technological developments for all of its core museological tasks. As centers of cultural heritage, museums are taking on ever more responsibility towards society above and beyond the pure communication of art and aesthetics. They are places of learning that convey knowledge and insights while also serving the self-affirmation of their visitors. Our aim is to continue doing justice to the institution's research, education and communication responsibilities in the digital age, and to spark enthusiasm in various target groups for engaging with art and culture. With these pursuits, the Städel is as dedicated as ever to the express wishes of its founder – to make the museum's collection accessible and communicate it to a broad public – and is ensuring its own continued successful existence as well as the ongoing societal relevance of the citizens' museum founded in 1815.

The digital realm offers unlimited scope, and the Städel Museum is taking advantage of this circumstance to expand its sphere of influence and communicate its contents on an entirely new scale. We provide unrestricted access to art-historical knowledge and research results, thus enabling global participation in cultural assets. The aim of our diverse and mutually complementary digital activities is not merely to "reconstruct" a virtual museum in the digital realm. On the contrary, by multiply cross-linking contents of widely varied origins, we are treading entirely new paths in the research, presentation, narration and communication of art. By digital means, we can preserve scholarly findings far beyond the duration of exhibitions and projects and shed light on previously hidden and inaccessible aspects of the museum work and the collection. With the aid of a diversified range of educational offers, we can make complex contents individually accessible. We seek to provide as many different target groups as possible access to art and culture in a manner tailored to their respective expectations and behaviour. We are turning the innovative and comprehensive communication of knowledge into reality – a

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reality that relies more than ever on interactive, participatory and narrative elements. With these activities, the Städel is taking on a pioneer role worldwide in the digital communication of art and culture.

Since the start of its “Digital Expansion”, the Städel Museum has already launched a sizable number of initiatives exploiting all the many innovative digital means of communicating cultural contents. Distinguished as much by their success as by their high quality, they demonstrate how the museum can affirm – and significantly expand – its relevance to society in the twenty-first century.

The projects launched to date include:

- A digital infrastructure in keeping with the latest technology (including a new website and WiFi throughout the museum)
- The Städel’s digital collection
- Art History Online – The Städel Course on Modern Art
- The Städel App (including an audio guide) as a versatile companion on a visit to the museum
- “Imagoras – The Return of the Pictures”, a Städel game for children age 8 and older
- “Time Machine – The Städel Museum in the 19th Century”, a research project
- A large number of digitorials: multimedia preparation for / follow-up on selected special exhibitions
- New forms of online communication, including film series, social media communication and various forms of content production and cooperation

We attach importance to combining quality with innovation. Our new developments and projects consistently build on the museum’s existing analogue and digital expertise. They are based as much on our experience with our own projects as on our knowledge of the current state of research. This encompasses art-theoretical findings as well as art communication methodology, sociopolitical trends, technical innovations and studies on user behavior. We regularly monitor and evaluate the quantitative and qualitative use of all our digital products, activities and communication measures. On the basis of our analyses and statistics, but also our overall digital strategy, we continually optimize and update our offers and develop them further.

The Städel Museum has adapted its internal structure and working mode to the new circumstances. The implementation of digital knowledge in as many areas and departments as possible ensures that our digital and analogue contents are integrated and closely interlinked in a unified approach. The use of technological innovations as an additional tool thus fulfils the Städel Museum mission formulated by its founder more than two-hundred years ago – also for future generations.