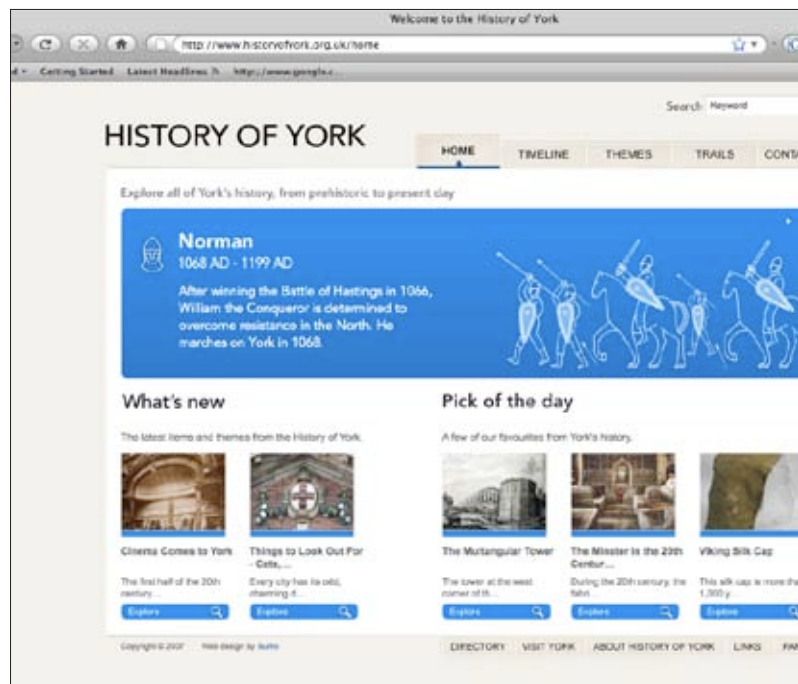


Case Study

History of York



Challenge York has one of the richest histories of any city in Britain - Romans, Vikings, William the Conqueror, bloodshed, conflict, the Black Death, dissolution of the monasteries, civil war, Luftwaffe assault, right up to the 1984 Minster fire. You name it, York has experienced it!

So how do you condense thousands of years of history into just one website? York Museums Trust, in partnership with a group of affinity cultural organisations, asked Sumo to try. The main aim of the website is to bring together cultural venues from across York to promote the city as a complete historic destination, whilst ensuring that the venues are individually represented. Being involved in the project from the very start gave us the opportunity to help the partners in the Northern Writers' Centre to clarify their vision for the venue, and identify how best to communicate this to funders and their wider audiences.

Idea Bearing in mind York's long and complex history, it was especially important to guide and assist site visitors. In signpost terms, we needed to make the complex simple. With this in mind, we created a clean, contemporary identity with an accompanying set of illustrations and animations to represent the 10 historic periods covered.

We worked with the client to define the structure and functionality of the website. Our Content Management System allows all parties involved in the project to add new, interconnected items, trails, articles and locations. The site functionality was designed to lead users on a continuous discovery trail through the content, whether they have a specific interest or are just exploring. The site is built to the internationally-recognised AAA standard, ensuring that the layout, graphics, colours and functionality make it as accessible to as wide a range of users as possible. Additionally, the site was carefully optimised for search engines enabling new users to find it easily.

As the site grows and evolves, it will create a remarkable online encyclopaedia of York history, documented through a miscellany of articles, maps, trails and artefacts.

Response User uptake has steadily increased since the launch, reaching an average of 500 per day after six months. Most of these hits come through Google searches, proving the effectiveness of the Search Engine Optimisation carried out.

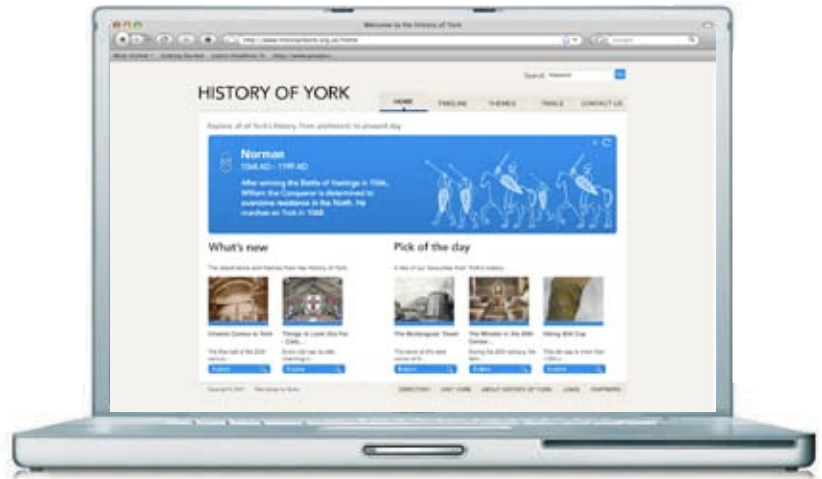
Significantly, this is not a finite project. The website is continually growing and now contains over 200 items linked to nearly 100 themes. It is very much a living resource.

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Sumo is a design company specialising in the arts and cultural sector.
We create great design which turns heads, grabs hearts and inspires audiences to attend the arts more often.