

Designing digital platforms in cultural events: a conceptual framework

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Abstract

The rapid technological development together with the communicational revolution brought therefore the collaborative process in the cyberspace. A consequence it is common for the users nowadays to face the challenge of dealing with a random and disorganized information on the web. Within this context, conceptual models emerge as an explicit form of better interpreting, understanding and simplifying the ideas concerning a specific situation. So, this study aims at presenting a conceptual model focused on the information/memory management of cultural events as a way to enhance their preservation. As a qualitative-approached study it was based on a documental analysis and on focus group sessions conducted with key stakeholders of a film festival in São Luís do Maranhão, Brazil. Results unveil that in the Brazilian film festivals' scenario, there is still a lack of recorded information, leading to the difficulty in finding and systematizing relevant information. Thus, the conceptual model purposed bridges a gap in literature by contributing with a context-based alternative to the current technological, preservation of information / memory models.

Keywords

Information/memory, management, preservation, conceptual model.

Resumo

Com o avanço da tecnologia e da revolução comunicacional, que conseqüentemente culminou com o processo colaborativo no ciberespaço, é relativamente comum o utilizador ainda se deparar com a desorganização das informações na web e com a forma aleatória em que estão dispostas. Os modelos conceptuais surgem como uma interpretação explícita do entendimento de determinada situação, ou simplesmente de ideias a respeito da situação. Este estudo, fruto de uma pesquisa doutoral, tem como objetivo apresentar a elaboração de um modelo conceptual destinado à gestão e preservação da informação/memória de eventos culturais. A metodologia, de caráter qualitativo, envolve levantamento bibliográfico e realização de sessões de focus group, com intervenientes de um festival de cinema em São Luís, Maranhão, Brasil. Como resultado, expõe-se o contributo que um modelo conceptual dessa natureza pode oferecer à elaboração de outros modelos tecnológicos de preservação da informação/memória, já que ainda é comum se deparar com a desorganização e a falta de informação registrada, especialmente no cenário dos festivais de cinema brasileiros.

Palavras-chave

Modelo conceptual. Gestão da informação/memória. Preservação.

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Introduction

Since the Age of Bronze, a time marked by the invention of writing in Mesopotamia and in other regions of the world, the mankind has passed through various types of information societies (FLORIDI, 2010). However, just recently, human progress started to be associated with the efficient and successful management of the information lifecycle.

According to Floridi (2010, p. 07) the information life-cycle follows some phases, namely: occurrence, transmission, processing and management. Those phases refer to the evolution of recording systems that evolved to communication systems and afterwards to systems of processing and production. Based on that evolution, nowadays the more advanced societies significantly depend on information databases, information-intensive services and information-driven public sectors.

Nowadays, contemporary information depend on a variety of supports and platforms. The actual information is in the Infosphere, understood as this complex informational environment in which people produce and consume information at a surprising speed. In this context, Floridi points out we are currently living on the fourth scientific revolution, as the first was personified by Copernicus (Heliocentric Theory), the second by Darwin (Species Theory), the third by Freud (Psychoanalysis) and the fourth by the Information Era of Alan Turing (Computer Science).

So, this paper aims at presenting a conceptual model focused on the information/memory management of cultural events as a way to enhance their preservation, this qualitative approach study was mainly based on focus groups conducted with key stakeholders of a film festival in São Luís do Maranhão, Brazil. The following sections show the theoretical framework that underpins the study as well as a description of the methodological procedures and results achieved.

Contemporary information: From Mathematical Theory of Information to its semantic character

Claude Shannon's Mathematical Theory of Information, also known as Theory of Communication was the first theory that according to Morin (2003, p. 108) assumed a scientific, precise, new sense, until migrating to the biology, approaching itself in the perspective of the gene, associated with the notion of a code. For Shannon (FLORIDI, 2010, p. 42), information was understood as entropy, according to its concept in thermodynamics, referring to the possibility of being physically quantifiable, such as mass and energy. However, it was only formed by a technical meaning, because the information should contain efficient forms of codification and data transfer.

Also, the Mathematical Theory of Information was mainly concerned with the transmission of messages and especially with noise abolition. There was no focus on the message semantics, on the interaction between concrete subjects within a social field and on specific conditions of space and time (GUEDES; ARAÚJO JÚNIOR, 2014). Afterward, the information assumed its semantic role, without leaving behind its physical phenomenon character.

This semantic concept was extended by the philosopher Luciano Floridi, who proposed a conceptual map with several theories about information. The concepts presented by Floridi refer to different types and levels of information resulting from the interpretation of codes, signals and interaction with other subjects. Floridi (2010) addresses some types of information that emerge from the design of analog and digital data (binary) to their configuration at other levels. They are: environmental information and semantic information (well-formed and meaningful data); instructional information (information containing an instruction of action on a fact) and factual information (the one that only represents the fact); mathematical information (for the quantification of information and probabilities); physical information (information as a physical phenomenon); biological information (information for the study of living organisms); and economic information (economic value of information) (FLORIDI, 2010, p. 28).

On the other hand, this study aligns with the concept purposed by Silva and Ribeiro (2011), once the authors explain the nature of information associating it with the definition of culture and cognition, as follows:

Information is a structured set of mental and emotional coded representations (signs and symbols) modelled by / through social interactions, which can be recorded on any material (paper, film, magnetic stripe, compact disc, etc.) and therefore, asynchronously and multi-directed (SILVA; RIBEIRO, 2011, p. 28).

Within this concept, Silva (2006) points out six properties for supporting information, they are the: a) structuring by action (human and social); b) dynamic integration; c) pregnancy; d) quantification; e) reproductivity; and f) transmissibility. However, there is no consensus in the academic world yet, about the concepts of information, that is why they are supposed to be revised and remodelled since the very nature of the informational phenomenon itself holds many nuances. This difficulty is also intensified by the increase in the production and accumulation of information, which has never been so vast as nowadays, and by the strategic role, the information assumed into the digital property issue.

Accordingly, those challenges bring to light other questions such as: how the emerging technologies of Web 2.0 can turn into models or supports to allow and promote the intensification of codification, appropriation, storage, memorisation, transferability, reuse and reproduction of information?

Although there are many aspects surrounding the phenomenon of information in the contemporary world, this study will focus on the storage and memorisation of information, based on the notion of collaboration as suggested by several models referred in literature. Moreover, the model presented in this paper aligns with what is claimed by Lazzarin, Azevedo Netto and Sousa (2015) as it tries to understand how the contextual territory of the informational construct can guide the theoretical aspects of the memory, both as a recorded information in the virtual environment and

as a resource for (re) construction of a social memory. According to the aforementioned authors, “there is a struggle between the duality of information and alienation of the human brain, that brings, as a result, a difficulty of preserving the memory of all the ideas, facts and events that are of most interest to the individual” (LAZZARIN; AZEVEDO NETTO; SOUSA, 2015, p. 23).

In order to achieve that purpose, it is necessary to place Human Being as core of the discussion, exploring some features that constitute and collaborate to the understanding of the role information and memory play in contemporaneity. Within this context, the present study follows a methodology that involves key contributors of a film festival in São Luís do Maranhão, Brazil, placing them as fundamental interlocutors to design a conceptual model on information/memory management.

The conceptual model: definition and elaboration

Considering the relevance of understanding the paradigmatic evolution over the years to better interpret the epistemological issues that involve information and, specifically, information sciences, Capurro (2003) emphasises the importance of investigating the paradigms of the area. First of all, it is fundamental to define the paradigm concept, which according to Kuhn (1991) are world models, representations and interpretations, universally recognised, since they provide modelling solutions for problems to a scientific community.

Capurro (2003, p. 3) mentions three main paradigms for information science: the physical (similar to the traditional paradigms of user studies), the cognitive (similar to the alternative approach of user studies) and the social. According to the author, “information science was born in the mid-twentieth century when the physical paradigm was questioned by an idealistic and individualistic cognitive approach, afterward replaced by a pragmatic and social paradigm.

Also, Capurro (2003) adds that the information science reinterprets Shannon and Weaver’s model, joining the vision of two other emblematic paradigms: the cognitive and the social. Some authors such as Ingwersen (1992) point out that information science, at the beginning of the 1990s, englobed transferring information studies “based on cognitive systems, desired information, effectiveness and information transfer, relations between information and producers and also between information and users” (INAZAWA; BAPTISTA, 2012, p. 173).

Mainly due to the paradigm’s evolution, there was an expansion of studies on information, promoting then, the development of theoretical models that aimed to facilitate the understanding of how users search and use the information. Under a cognitive approach, authors such as Dervin (1983), Taylor (1986) and Wilson (1981) introduced models that supported the understanding of users’ informational behaviour.

According to Wilson (1990, p. 11), “a model can be expressed by mathematical formulas, symbols or words, although it is characterised by the description of entities, processes or attributes, as well as the relations between them.” It may still be prescriptive or illustrative, but it should also

be useful. Wilson emphasises the importance of conceptual models in the study of organisational systems. For the author, those models are used to facilitate the understanding of a particular study area, to illustrate a concept, to identify the structure and logic of a situation and as a prerequisite for designing a system or prototype.

However, just recently, the development of conceptual models in the Information and Communication Sciences (ICS) has become a more common practice, especially because of its close relationship with theorisation and prototyping. The present study, for instance, identified three main models of Information Science (IS) with a trans and interdisciplinary¹ scope, they are Tom Wilson's, Dervin's and Krikelas' model (SILVA, 2010).

Table 1: Description of IS models

Trans and interdisciplinary IS Models	
Tom Wilson's model	It focuses on the characterization of an individual behaviour when searching for information, who acts as a consequence of his perceived need for information. Information is not considered as a primary need but a secondary necessity, motivated mainly by other needs rather than the basics.
Dervin's model (Sense-Making theory)	Centres in the idea of discontinuity, conceiving information as a meaning created at a given time (time-space) by one or more human beings. A need for information situation, in this case, will be the one in which the inner sense disappears, and the person must create a new meaning. Information is interpreted as something created by the user, that is, it does not exist unless it has been interpreted and assimilated as a response to a vital situation.
Krikelas' model	In the search process one finds, in first place, the diffusion or dissemination and the collection of information. Individuals are simultaneously senders or receivers of the information. Information needs always emerge as a consequence of some event occurring in the individual's environment. The results of collecting information are stored in memory, or on some physical sources, such as personal files.

Source: Silva (2010).

The eLit.pt model is another example that contributed to the elaboration of the conceptual model here presented. It was chosen mainly because of its structure showing the relevance of contextual references that must be observed when designing a model. The (eLit.pt) model emerged as an output of the research project entitled Information literacy in the European Higher Education Area: the study of information competencies in Portugal, which had as main propose to look at information literacy, considering "the boom and variety of literacies present in current literature (AZEVEDO; SARDINHA, 2009, p. 1-34 apud SILVA, 2010, p. 43). For that example, the context analysed was the school, involving students from several secondary schools, universities and polytechnic institutes in Portugal.

Thus, considering the technological challenges that confront the information management, it is crucial to realise the articulation between information and communication technologies (ICT). Similarly, with other models, the one described by this study underpins on the Ludwig von

¹ According to Silva (2006), it is "a social science that investigates the problems, themes and cases related to the perceived and knowable communicational phenomenon through the confirmation or not of the properties inherent to the genesis of the flow, information organization and behavior, organization, storage, retrieval, interpretation, transmission, transformation and use of information" (SILVA, 2006, p. 141).

Bertalanffy's General Systems Theory, adapting it to the information-communicational phenomenon (SILVA, 2010).

According to Hammond (2003), originally the General Systems Theory emerged from a more comprehensive and holistic theoretical framework development in Biology. However, its association with the systems technological development often biases a bad interpretation, particularly in what concern its understanding of social systems. In this sense, Hammond adds:

Most importantly, Bertalanffy saw the system view as an alternative to the reductionist methodology and mechanistic values of the industrial revolution. In contrast, he saw the system perspective, with its emphasis on relationship, as the basis of a new scientific paradigm that offered both science and humankind something better (HAMMOND, 2003, p. 105).

Accordingly, since the beginning of the doctoral project, the authors have identified the need for elaborating a conceptual model, considering in particular, the context-based issues related to a film festival. Therefore, the objective was to explore in-depth that scenario in order to draw a possible diagnosis and intervention plan that could benefit cultural events as a whole. Hence, through the definition of functional requirements, listed by participants it was possible to identify their needs and requirements and to analyse design solutions to finally, prototype a collaborative platform for the film festival. This process was conducted and led by the researchers and developed by a technical team.

From the analysis of potential needs and requirements to the validation of the prototype, the research followed steps shown in Figure 1:

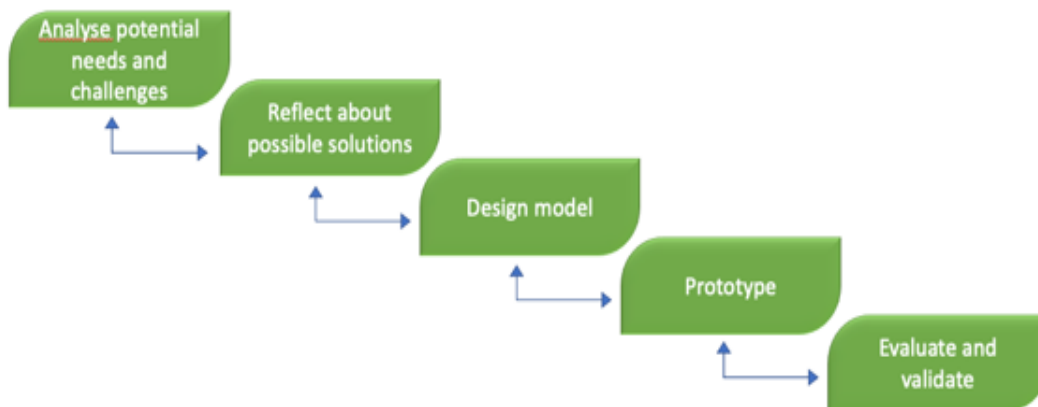


Figure 1: Research actions step-by-step. Fonte: own elaboration.

Considering the operative concepts of the e.Lit.pt Model, São Luís do Maranhão, Brazil is outlined as the environment of the study, which has a cultural, social, economic and political reality that does not prioritise the preservation of collections and the record of cultural memory. The audio-visual production films and festivals inserted in this environment value little the systema-

tisation of information and preservation of the festival memory, making difficult to search and access their content.

There are two other operative concepts appropriate for structuring a conceptual model: the context and the situation. The first, according to Silva (2010), is the unit aggregating material elements (a building, a room, an office), technological (furniture, office material, computers with or without internet connection) and symbolic (functions performed by people or social actors). The second corresponds to “the circumstantial and temporary state with a duration more or less reduced and continuous, which gives historicity to the action of communicational - information” (SILVA, 2010, p. 47).

Concerning the film festival studied for this paper, it is inserted in the headquarters of the Department of Cultural Affairs of the Federal University of Maranhão (UFMA/DAC), which is responsible for organising and conducting the festival. Its building is located in the historical center of São Luís, in Humberto de Campos street, 174. Also, according to what the interlocutor F referred to during the second focus group session, the internet in the building is limited and slow. And the staff working for the film festival team is of just 8 experts, among journalists, administrators, projectionists, and audio-visual technicians.

The operative concepts, inserted in Information Sciences, or more broadly in Information and Communication Sciences, intervene in the elaboration of aggregate models when considering problems and situations that involve the organisation of information and memory recording. Consequently, the conceptual model here presented focuses on how this information and/or memory can be produced, managed and represented, considering the environment, context and concrete situation, of cultural events related to audio-visual and film production.

As the model aims at diagnosing and guiding more practical intervention, it is structured within three broad areas that additionally must be context-based, they are: production, organisation, and representation of information and memory, as Figure 2 illustrates:

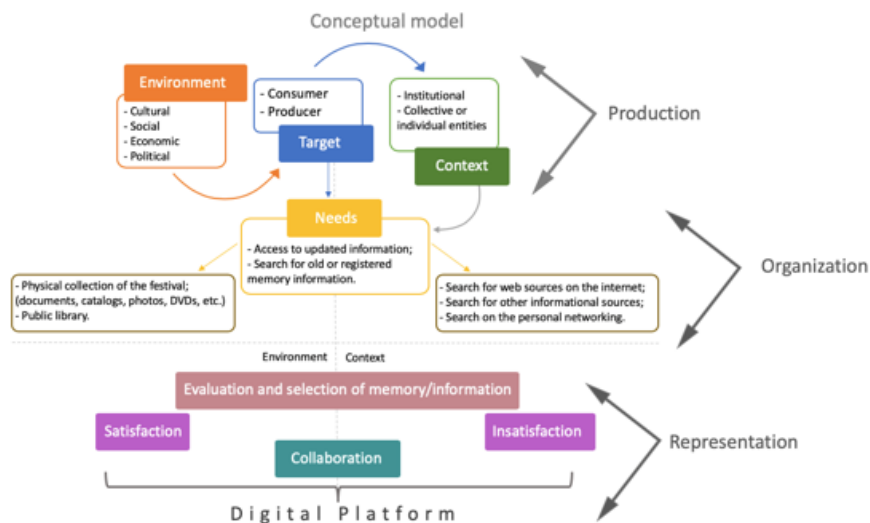


Figure 2: Conceptual model for the information organization and register of cultural events memory.

Source: own elaboration

<http://www.revista.teccog.net>

The target, whether as consumer or producer, is conditioned to the environment in which they are inserted, so they are driven by their needs and requirements. Such needs, in turn, are related to the changing context. The target moves and is driven by info-communicationally, since they “access and search for the information they need, to then show, evaluate and critically choose the information found for immediate and contextual use (s)” (SILVA, 2010, p. 52).

In the conceptual model, it is the target that demands the need for information and rescue of memory, as they use to act info-communicationally. On the other hand, there is no way to abnegate the relevance of physical collections, such as libraries, although the influence of the Internet, through search tools, as for instance Google (MONTEIRO et al., 2006), it is the first option that come up to the audience’s mind when they think about accessing information/memory.

The access to information/memory also raises two other actions: the evaluation and the selection of existing content. This result can range from user satisfaction to dissatisfaction whether or not this content matches the initial search. At this point a digital platform emerges as a viable, environmentally collaborative, and facilitator of the production, organisation and representation of information and memory, both for the users and for the entities responsible for managing them.

More than an explanation of the conceptual model above, the focus is to highlight how and what is the purpose to elaborate a model in the area of Information and Communication Sciences. The conceptual model facilitates the mapping of operations system when allows the creation of a product that is not arbitrary, inconsistent and complex.

Another relevant aspect of the conceptual model is that it brings to light the actual need for getting a practical understanding of the procedures adopted in the creation and implementation of a collaborative digital platform for cultural events. In accordance with Pinto (2009, p.35), who focuses on implementing strategic systems and management platforms in the area of safety and health at work (SST), our model purposes a dynamic process, in which the stages can be flexible, whereas the activities occur simultaneously and/or following different phases.

The author also suggests this process can be divided into ten steps: the initial situation assessment, the management awareness, the definition of SST policies, the definition of the project team, the formation of the project team, definition of the implementation project, planning, implementation and operation, verification and corrective actions, and certification.

In this study, the search for strategic procedures, named as guidelines, is essential for communicating components and activities that mainly optimize the time and the cost of a project. The verification of the guidelines listed above derives from the practical experience with this research, when using various methodological procedures and context-based application.

The eight guidelines for the creation and implementation of collaborative digital platform for cultural events, underpins in what is purposed by Pinto (2009) following eight guidelines:



Figure 4: Guidelines for the creation and implementation of a collaborative digital platform for cultural events.
Source: own elaboration (2018)

After detailing the conceptual model and the guidelines, the next section refers to the methodological procedures used in this study. The following section describes the literature review process and the data collection phases, that supported the elaboration of the conceptual model.

Methodology

The methodology of the study follows a qualitative approach carried out in three distinctive phases: 1) literature review; 2) identification and definition of functional and generic requirements; and 3) elaboration of the conceptual model, as follows:

a) Phase 1

The first phase included a literature review of the central topics of this study, namely the paradigms, conceptual models, Information Sciences, Memory management, and preservation. The topics about web 2.0, collaboration, information society and collective intelligence were also explored as transversal issues, in order to bridge the gap between literature and the empirical contact with the agents approached for the research. Those agents, who are to the participants of a film festival in São Luís do Maranhão, Brazil, englobe event organisers, producers, filmmakers, critics, representatives of civil society and teachers of academic institutions who are lectures in courses related to audio-visual production.

b) Phase 2

The second phase refers to the identification and definition of functional and generic requirements to a collaborative digital platform, elements which were prioritised for the elaboration of the conceptual model. This phase was accomplished through a focus group session (FG) with six target agents in the audio-visual scene of São Luís, Maranhão, Brazil (cinema producers, profes-

nal and amateur filmmakers, film critics). The objective was to interact with those agents to identify the characteristics and guidelines the model and platform should include.

c) Phase 3

The third phase corresponded to the elaboration of the conceptual model. The model was based on the theoretical frameworks selected from literature and the phase 2 (the functional and generic requirements), which were defined through the focus group session and the meetings between the researcher and the web developers. The web developers were responsible for designing the collaborative digital platform for the aforementioned film festival in São Luís do Maranhão, Brazil.

Conclusions

The technological advances over recent years and the emergence of new roles for social actors, as users of the cyberspace, have promoted new perspectives and approaches in the field of information and memory. The change on the user's position, from passive to active actors, has led them to a new role as content producers. This is happening especially because of the easy access to digital resources, free display and distribution channels, and intuitive software.

Moreover, the power attributed to the Web 2.0 generation has contributed to significant changes on products, contents, and models of organisation and registration. Also, nowadays there are various formats and supports, which are diverse in their way of use and consumption. So, considering the collaborative or crowdsourcing context of, it can be mentioned that are not the technical or academic competencies that highlights, but the skills, experiences, innovative ideas and quality of work carried out by the actors, whether professionals or amateurs.

The conceptual model here presented has a trans and interdisciplinary scope in Information Sciences and contributes to the current literature by adapting and going further on elements explored by previous models, namely: Tom Wilson's Model, Dervin's Model (Sense-Making Theory), Krikelas' Model and the eLit.pt model.

Additionally, the model underpins in three broad areas involving the information/memory management and preservation of cultural events: production, organisation and representation of information/memory. It is considering those as broad areas that the model establishes three operative concepts: the environment, the context, and the situation. Assessing the target's needs and requirements is also a crucial part in the process of designing a tailored-product.

In this sense, an important aspect corresponds to the list of functional and generic requirements for the collaborative digital platform prototype, as it served as the basis for the model elaboration. Although it is based on only one reality, this model also brings contributions by inspiring other technological models on information preservation/memory of cultural events, which are still underexplored in the area of Information Science.

Moreover, as one of the results presented along the paper consisted in relating some structu-

ral concepts to the management and preservation of information/memory of cultural events, another key contribution of the study involves the creation of a framework that can be used in further studies of this nature. Furthermore, the methodology applied is an example of a contribution to the literature by going deeper on the steps suggested by other studies.

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É, portanto, um campo de profunda investigação científica, de ação e métodos transdisciplinares, para avançar na compreensão de como as informações são absorvidas, transmitidas e processadas pelo sistema sensorial e pelo conjunto mente/cérebro do ser humano

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