City of London Education Board report on Fire of London website April 2017

Site performance from 2 September 2016 until 31 March 2017

Overview:

- Sessions: 344,025
- Users: 220,887
- Page views: 1,036,801
- 64.1% users were new visitors, 35.9% returning
- Average session duration 08:34 minutes, typically users spend less than 15 seconds on websites
- 99% of users surveyed rate the site as good or excellent against a target of 90%

Site performance in Quarter 4, 1 January 2017 – 31 March 2017

- The website had 125,465 sessions – 61% of visitors were new users, 39% returning
- Users: 79,533
- Page views: 403,134
- 99% of users surveyed rate the site as good or excellent against a target of 90%
- An external evaluation of the website was carried out, see details below

A comparison for the same time period with the former Fire of London website

	Jan 2017 new site	Jan 2016 old site	Feb 2017 new site	Feb 2016 old site	March 2017 new site	March 2016 old site
Sessions	52,937	39,518	34,516	26,279	38,012	19,406
Users	34,449	29,656	23,593	20,554	26,097	15,072
Page views	176,526	86,020	113,912	53,408	112,696	39,449

The website had a very strong performance in previous quarters due to the interest generated by the 350th anniversary of the fire. Activity has fallen as the anniversary passed, however, despite this it continues to perform very well in comparison to the former site.

Evaluation summary

An external evaluation of the website was completed in February 2017. The report was compiled by an external researcher using a combination of Google Analytics, a survey placed on the website, phone interviews with teachers and non-teachers who had been using the site, a classroom observation of two sessions in Year 2 classes, and user testing with the public recruited at the museum.

The researcher's conclusions included:

 '…the Fire of London site is clearly a success in all of the most important areas. People really enjoy using it and are pleasantly surprised to have (found) a learning tool of such high quality.'

'The greatest enthusiasm was in relation to the game…It was felt to be in a class of its own, unlike any other learning resource out there…'

'Teachers feel that the site covers everything they need to teach the fire in terms of information. They are also using the site for all the purposes stated in the original project objectives…'

'Parent and teacher users feel that the learning they see in their children is largely down to the visual and interactive nature of the site, it captivates them and makes it a pleasure for them to use. – this resource – provokes a particularly strong response. They really 'connect' with it.'

'Teachers, parents, general users and children were all enthusiastic when asked what they learned from the site, certain that they had learned at least something from it. The question of what they had learnt was put to the children in the classroom during one of the sessions I observed – They proceeded to rattle off all sorts of facts.'

The research found that the site was an overall success, that it is viewed very positively by parents and teachers and that it meets most of its objectives. Key findings included:

- KS1 teachers (our stated priority audience) are the site's main users and many parents are also using the site with their children
- At the time of reporting the site had had 192,000 visitors
- Dwell time was an average of 8.5 minutes – typically users spend less than 15 seconds on websites so this is a very strong figure
- The majority of site visitors were from the UK
- Teachers use the website for lesson preparation, classroom activities and homework
- The game is the most popular activity on the website – with 300,111 page views and a very low bounce rate 2%
- In general the site was found to be very user friendly and a positive experience
- Teachers and parents are confident that children are learning from the site
- Children can answer questions on topics covered the site
- Some usability issues were identified , including lack of a scroll bar
- It was felt that the 'Explore' section of the site was for an older audience and some of the language was difficult for younger children
- All users interviewed were very positive about their experience and it was rated at 9/10 by teachers
- The site is considered a strong enough resource to encourage teachers to choose the Fire of London as a topic to teach

Individual comments

Then following comments are examples of feedback from an online survey that received 199 responses overall.

'I love the information you share with us, as well as finding the site quite easy to use.'

'Content and navigation excellent. Very insightful.'

'Fun, interactive and educational…what more could you want!'

'Great fun for my 6 year old reading the small bundled pieces of text. Easy navigation through site. Great imagery.'

'It was fun and easy to use, I have home-schooled my children in the past and this would have definitely been something I'd have shown them. I liked the way you can click for more detail, so for those that want a quick read there is that option, but for students and just interested persons like me, there is more information there. I didn't look at the Minecraft section but am aware of it and know it will be appreciated by a younger audience.'

'Easy to manoeuvre, beautifully presented in easy to understand text. Very impressed!'

'My son loved this and learnt lots. He was able to navigate it all himself. We would highly recommend it.'

'Perfect for pupils to play.'

'A fountain of knowledge. Brilliant.'