

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF ARTRON AND CHINAVINE

**A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF ARTRON AND CHINAVINE
HOW DO THESE WEBSITES USE DIGITAL TOOLS TO BUILD
PARTICIPATORY ART EDUCATION
AROUND CHINESE TRADITIONAL ART**

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Abstract

Emerging digital tools are changing the traditional means of education. Traditional Chinese art education is undergoing shift brought by emerging digital tools. This capstone considers the history of digital tools utilization in the scope of traditional Chinese art field and examine the design, best practices and deficiencies through the comparison study of *Artron* and *Chinavine*. The goal is to address the possibilities and potential value brought by digital tools to traditional Chinese art education.

Keywords

Digital tool, *Artron*, *ChinaVine*, Traditional Chinese art, Audience, Participatory culture

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Chapter I

Introduction

1.1. Problem Statement and Significance of Study

1.1.1. Introduction

With the development of the Internet, emerging digital tools are changing the traditional means of education. Traditional Chinese art education is undergoing the shift brought by these emerging digital tools and the digital tools have been introduced into traditional Chinese art field and increasingly play a significant role in exploring arts and cultural resources.

Artron is the most interactive online community in China which gets engaged in the most active art exchange activities in the Chinese market. *Artron* has been an optimal media platform of art education resources and an indispensable important tool for students and audiences from schools and communities to understand traditional Chinese art. *ChinaVine* is an educational website in America which aims to educate English-speaking/reading children, youth, and adults about China's cultural heritage. I am interested in a comparison of these two arts websites since they are representative options that, although conducted by different cultural perspectives, both focus on promoting traditional Chinese art.

These digital tools have not only explored new possibilities to improve art communication and promote the participation for traditional Chinese art education under context of new media,

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but also provide learning opportunities for individuals both in China and abroad. This research considered the history of digital tools utilization in the scope of the traditional Chinese art field. I examined the design, best practices, and deficiencies of *Artron* and *Chinavine* through comparison study according to the criteria drawn from a literature review and documents from my graduate-level courses. Based on the result of the comparison study, I evaluated and synthesized the approaches used to explore education resources by those two model websites and addressed the possibilities and potential value brought by digital tools for traditional Chinese art education.

1.1.2. Purposes statement

The purpose of this research is to explore the best practices of digital tool utilization for traditional Chinese art dissemination and promotion through the art education programs. Arts education, as one of most important approaches to promote the dissemination of traditional Chinese art not only inherits and spreads the historical knowledge of art, but also forges a bridge between the Chinese ancient culture and contemporary society. Moreover, art education not only helps individuals to understand ancient culture and art, but also inspires us to think about ourselves and the world around us. The emerging technology and tools bring new opportunities and challenges to art education. Thus, I did this research to analyze the relationships among digital tools, art education, and audiences. To accomplish this, a review of literature, document analysis, and supporting coursework were conducted to promote the understanding of the history

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and current landscape of the utilization of digital tools in the traditional Chinese art field, and extracted the elements which crucially affect art education resources exploration. The criteria were built on the basis of crucial elements extraction, and then used to engage in comparison of *Artron* and *Chinavine*. More concrete evidences of best practices were drawn from the comparison. Finally, I evaluated these practices and tried to synthesize and analyze the new findings related to the main question.

1.1.3. Significance of this research

My research topic strives to evaluate the best practices through the comparative study of *Artron* and *Chinavine*. Evaluation of the current condition of utilization of digital tools is necessary because, as representative art websites, they provided a good example for the combination of emerging digital technology and traditional Chinese art. By means of retrieval systems and approaches such as China Journal Net, CNKI Database, Google Search and Baidu Search, I have made an effort to comprehensively collect related research achievements for fields such as art communication studies, art marketing, operation of the art industry, arts management, cultural economics of art, new media, e-commerce, internet marketing, media operation and management. However, there are a smaller number of achievements specializing in traditional Chinese art and digital tools. Therefore, I'd like to conduct a study on it and anticipate articulating the interaction which has happened among the digital tools, Chinese traditional art and audiences in the hope of providing reliable information and related data to figure out the best

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practices, challenges, and possibilities.

1.2. Conceptual Framework

1.2.1. Methodological paradigm

The qualitative study that aligns with a social constructivist paradigm will be applied in my research. Creswell stated in his book, “Social constructivists hold assumptions that individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live and work” (Creswell, 2009, p.8). Nowadays, digital tools not only serve to provide convenient and superior conditions for the emergence and dissemination of arts information, but also take part in the whole art dissemination process with its operation concept and value orientation. As a result, the links such as the creative process and arts acceptance have been through an updated change and renovation. Art has shortened its distance with audiences by way of interaction between art and a variety of media, with the diversified art disseminating and developing at a high speed. Under this context, individuals have to get to know the world from a new perspective. In context with my research, this paradigm can show that audiences and the administrator of website need to look for a new understanding of the communication of traditional Chinese art. The approaches of art education have to broaden and the interaction mode between the art and audiences has been changed. Therefore, the audiences who participate in or accept information of art education are eager to learn more about traditional Chinese art.

Moreover, I addressed questions in my research by utilizing research methods including comparative study and various field data-collection techniques, which will be contextualized by

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an extensive literature review.

1.2.2 Role of the researcher

My role in this study is that of an active discoverer. I reviewed literature and documents that align to my research. When I review research, I considered myself to be an active discoverer and sought data and information that help promote my research and understanding of the subject.

This summer, I interned at a website in China. The internship provided me an opportunity to view my research from a practical point of view. The evidences and viewpoints discovered during my internship helped me to reorganize my thought. I also was enrolled in two additional courses for my research

1.3. Research Questions

I made a study on the interaction among the digital tools and traditional Chinese art and audience, and I focused on the following main and sub questions:

How do online culture and art education project employ digital tools to promote Chinese traditional art ?

- *How do the digital tools involved in traditional Chinese art education?*
- *What kinds of participation do the sites encourage through the online education program?*

1.4. Definitions

Digital Tool: A digital tool is based on digital technology and uses the Internet as a medium.

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It is a science technology that goes with the computer, using specific equipment to make the image, text, voice into binary 1 and 0 to computation, process, storage, transmission and restoration. It is also called computer digital controlling technology since it draws support from computer to code, and it also shrinks and decodes the information. In my research, the digital tools that will be looked at include websites, online communities, and applications.

Artron: An art website in China.

ChinaVine: A Chinese art educational project in America.

Traditional Chinese art: Traditional Chinese Art has varied throughout its ancient history, divided into periods by the ruling dynasties of China and changing technology, but still containing a high degree of continuity. Different forms of art have been influenced by great philosophers, teachers, religious figures and even political leaders.

Audience: Audience is a group of people who participate in a show or encounter a work of art, literature, theatre, music, video games, or academics in any medium. In my research, in contrast to immediate audiences, I will focus more on the mediated audiences. They are composed of individuals who consume rhetorical texts in a manner that is different from the time or place in which the speaker presents a text. Audiences who consume texts, information, and knowledge through the Internet are considered mediated audiences (“Audience”, 2013).

Participatory culture: Participatory culture is a neologism in reference of, but opposite to, a “consumer culture” — in other words, a culture in which private persons do not act as

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consumers only, but also as contributors or producers. The term is most often applied to the production or creation of some type of published media. Recent advances in technologies (mostly personal computers and the Internet) have enabled private persons to create and publish such media, usually through the Internet. This new culture, as it relates to the Internet, has been described as Web 2.0. In participatory culture "young people creatively respond to a plethora of electronic signals and cultural commodities in ways that surprise their makers, finding meanings and identities never meant to be there and defying simple nostrums that bewail the manipulation or passivity of 'consumers.'" ("Participatory Culture", 2013).

1.5. Delimitations/Limitations

In my research, I only considered two websites and just focus on their utilization of traditional Chinese art and I only examined the digital tools used to explore the educational resources.

Some viewpoints have been addressed in my research on the basis of the characteristics of traditional Chinese art and Chinese culture which draw from my previous experience and study. Thus, some special problems are a little difficult for people to understand because of the different cultural backgrounds and perspectives.

Chapter II

Literature Review

2.1 Importance of digital tool involvement

Human society has stepped into an information civilization age with the development of information access and digital technology as important driving forces. Emerging digital tools also change traditional means of education. “Within the context of education, the internet and technology has changed the means by which a teacher presents material for acquisition to students. Digital information can be accessed at any given moment which means it is up-to-date, relevant, and authentic and when scrutinized can be adapted to students at every level meeting the needs of the student” (Shannon, 2006, p. 11). Traditional Chinese art education is undergoing the shift brought by these emerging digital tools. Gu Zhaogui (2005) suggested that it is necessary to expand the traditional circulation channels and positively adopt new circulation channel such as E-commerce and network, and besides, there is a need to participate in the worlds cultural, artistic and economic activates more widely and positively (p. 86). In order to expand the communication, the digital tools have been getting to be introduced into traditional Chinese art field and increasingly play a significant role in exploring education resources.

Digital tools have shown strong integration capacity, which is one of its biggest features.

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Zhan Yanxiang (2011) considered internet as the art of reconstruction and integration (p.7). Nowadays, with the innovation of information technology and development of the Internet, art education has not only occurred in the classroom and other culture venues. The approach of art education has been widely broadened and it has not been restricted by space, time and national boundary. Zhang Minghong (2010) pointed out Internet is the important element in Chinese artwork market with the advantages of timeliness, accuracy , high efficiency and convenience; it breaks the limitations of traditional channels such space-time, national boundary, region, number of people, scale, and quantity; besides developing a complementary and diversified trade platform with gallery and auction house, it also plays several characters such as gallery, auction house and information release platform, and provides 24-hour service for audiences. It has not only offered a brand-new platform for the transaction and display of artwork, but also covered a wide range without capital pressure, which can better demonstrate the openness and justice principle (p. 15).

In addition, undoubtedly, the digital tools have presented a new development opportunity for the art industry, including art education. The Report of Internet (2013) shows that by December 31, 2011, network users had reached 310 million in China, newly increasing by 62 million in half a year. Broadband network users had arrived at 300 million, with mobile network users of 70 million. Now, in respect of the number of network users, China only ranks second behind the United States, which has 5 million more network users compared to China. Nowadays, the internet has already evolved into an indispensable part in people's lives. The binding of

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traditional Chinese art and the internet comes naturally. The approaches of art education have been expanded with the involvement of digital tools in China and have changed the arts learning context a lot, especially in the traditional Chinese art field. In the past two decades, the teaching of traditional Chinese art has focused more on individual study or coursework in art departments. However, emerging digital tools, like a website, fundamentally widen the channels for individuals to learn traditional Chinese art and make arts learning not limited to a traditional environment.

2.2 History of digital tool involved in traditional Chinese art field

The famous proposition of communication sciences, “The medium is the message”, was proposed by Marshall McLuhan, a Canadian scholar of communication sciences. According to him, “we are thoroughly changed by any communication media in all aspects, including our personal lives, politics, economy, aesthetics, mentality, morality, ethics, art and society. And the change is so deep that everything about us is contacting with it, influenced by it and change for it. The medium is the message” (as cited in Li Bing, 1993, p.161). Currently, ecological environment of contemporary communications is consisted of newspaper, TV programs, network and other mass media. In the wake of the in-depth market economy spreading the field of culture and art as well as the concept of artistic consumption, the traditional pattern of China’s artistic communication has been broken, along with the trend of diversification and internationalization brought by mass media. “Innes pointed out that communication media acts as an effective way

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for people to exercise their social rights and political rights. The emergence of new media is capable of breaking the original monopoly right” (as cited in Dai Jinguang & Jin Guanjun, 2000, p.322). The constant intervention of mass media has led to the popularization of traditional art study.

There is hardly literature with precise record about when digital tools became involved in the traditional Chinese art field. However, based on the development of Chinese media industry and various degrees of audiences’ participation, the period can be summarized as three stages at large.

In 1960s, gradual popularity of television in Chinese households and the promotion of the ideological trend of Chinese calligraphy had resulted in the earlier awareness of the role played by TV media by the calligraphy in the traditional art field in China; consequently, the tele-lecture of calligraphy had come into the view of Chinese audiences. “In 1964, the tele-lecture of calligraphy jointly held by Zheng Yongxian, Guo Fenghui, Pu Xuezhai, Kang Bopan and Liu Boqin was the first precedent of tele-lecture of calligraphy in China” (Zheng Liqun, 2004, p.102). The tele-lecture aimed at imparting the content of calligraphy and the skills of traditional Chinese calligraphy by virtue of demonstration; and the lecture content was designed according to the contents of works. For instance, in the lecture of traditional Chinese calligraphy, the teachers may break down the steps of learning; and instruct audiences the skills and techniques of Chinese calligraphy. All the teachers participating in the tele-course were famous artists then. And the earliest tele-lecture was set up by CCTV. During this period, the traditional art education

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still featured one-way communication, namely from teacher to audience. Audiences were unable to choose education content and progress in the class; however, the TV media had freed people from the sterile and time-consuming empathic learning of traditional art, which was replaced by the relaxed and recreational audio-visual way of education. “The statically silent lines of writing and painting were changed into dynamically vocal words by TV for communication. The tele-lecture with image, music, subtitle and interpretation had brought about a brand-new experience for audiences” (Zheng Liquan, 2004, p.102). And the tele-lectures during this period function as the results of the earliest intervention of media into traditional art.

During the period between the late 1990s and the early 2000s, the emergence and development of internet had brought about new opportunities for China’s traditional art education. Tele-lectures were edited and produced into videos or optical disks to promote to audiences. “In the late 1980s, along with the popularity of televisions, diversified forms of calligraphy tele-lectures were broadcasted by various provincial and municipal TV stations, evoking national repercussions. Teaching Materials for Calligraphy Tele-lecture was published in the meantime to accompany the tele-lecture, with the market of calligraphy education mobilized by the tele-lecture” (Zheng Liquan, 2004, p.102). During this period, Chinese art audiences were able to choose the learning contents by themselves from the internet and shops, and set up learning schedules based on their own demands. However, the learning style featured relatively independence, with the learning process limited to interaction between learner and computers or among several learners (discussion among acquaintances).

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The rapid development of internet has further broadened audiences' access to the art resources. Starting from 1994, China's internet enjoys its rapid development by maintaining an annual growth rate of user number as 300%, leading to the emergence of large quantities of art websites. According to the statistics on calligraphy websites conducted by Zheng, the networked art has begun to take shape. "1120 calligraphy websites can be directly searched by Google engine; and 3400 calligraphy websites can be directly searched by *Baidu* engine" (Zheng Liquan, p.103). Besides, there are special zones for calligraphy set up in various web portals, including *Sina*, *Netease* and *Sohu*. Many calligraphy publications have owned online editions, such as *China Art Weekly*. The online calligraphy resources are so abundant that they almost cover all aspects of calligraphy, including creation, research, comment, collection and marketing. The major contents include calligraphy history, appreciation of calligraphy works, introduction of calligraphers and calligraphy organizations, personal calligraphy portfolios, theoretical works, news release, calligraphy forums, introduction of calligraphy publications, introduction of museums, galleries, collection and marketing, etc. Compared to mass media, such as publications and TV, internet features faster communication speed, wider scope and lower technical difficulty. By virtue of internet, calligraphy works can be formed into digitalized resources once uploaded in the internet, with easier repetitive manufacturing, production and communication with extremely cheap cost. Zheng Liquan (2004) pointed out that "learners can be faster to appreciate the most cutting-edge calligraphy works. In front of internet, everyone is equal without any difference of location and time. Internet, as the new media, has reduced the 'intermediary' link in

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calligraphy communication, leading to the substantially reduced economic cost. On the other hand, the globalization of internet has strengthened the ‘cross-cultural communication’ of calligraphy. Temporal and spatial distance can no longer exert any influence on the sharing of global artistic resources” (p.102). Compared to the former two stages, the current stage of art learning feature is more flexible. Audiences can both choose their own learning contents and resources freely and interact with other audiences remotely; the online and offline exchange and interaction have been further expanded. Besides, the introduction of more digitalized tools, such as SNS, video editing software and personal website, has authorized audiences with the dual identities: the ones both enjoying and creating learning resources.

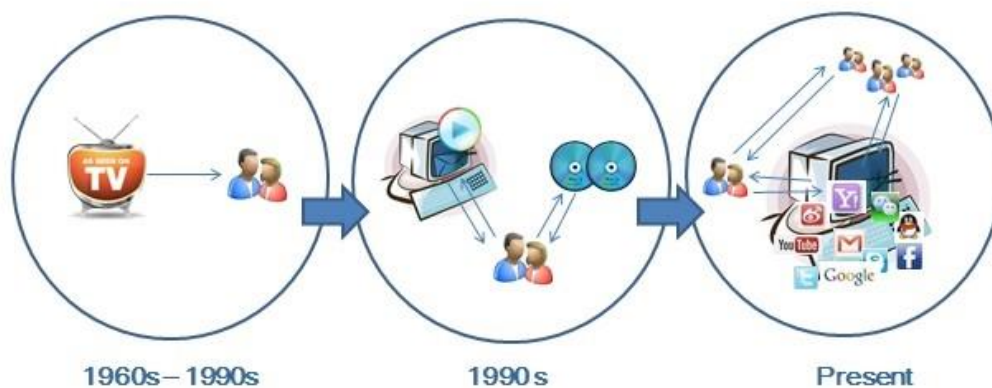


Figure 2.1. The Change of the Learning Environment

2.3 Participatory culture conducts participatory learning

For the purpose of arts communication, this digital tool has instilled new vitality and

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presented a new approach. It shows the advantage of spatial freedom, never restricted to the traditional venues of education, such as an art gallery, studio, or arts center.

Since 2003, Web2.0 has led us from one-way diffusion to multi-way interaction. The audiences are no longer passive information receivers, and they are not even just traditional media consumers, but have become more active information sharers and transmitters. Herry Jenkins defined this new media form as “participatory culture”. Zhou Rongting & Guan Jihua (2010) explained that “participatory culture refers to a free, equal, open, inclusive and sharing new media and cultural pattern created by all audiences as the platform through certain identity, with the main forms of active creation of media text, transmission of media content and intensification of network communication” (p. 16). More and more people have participated into the network environment to obtain and create the learning resources, under impact of this trend, study of the traditional Chinese arts has also changed, and the educational process of arts has transformed from the original one-way study to current multi-way and participatory study. This has also allowed for the globalization of education. Modern education regards “high participation” into social public activities as one of its purposes. “If it were possible to define generally the mission of education, it could be said that its fundamental purpose is to ensure that all students benefit from learning in ways that allow them to participate fully in public, community, creative and economic life” (as cited in Jenkins, 2009, p. 9). The new participatory learning model has fundamentally optimized the personal learning environment.

Jenkins and Bertozzi (2007) described a participatory culture that is inherent to the

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interactive qualities of the Internet where people take an active role in shaping their reality. There is a close relationship between participatory culture and immersion in digital media and social networking through electronic forums. Jenkins and Bertozzi (2007) defined participatory culture “as one where there are relatively low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement, where there is strong support for creating and sharing what one creates with others, and where there is some kind of informal mentorship whereby what is known by the most experienced is passed along to novices” (p. 174). Furthermore, Jenkins (2009) defines participatory culture as follows:

“For the moment, let’s define participatory culture as one:

1. With relatively low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement
2. With strong support for creating and sharing one’s creations with others
3. With some type of informal mentorship whereby what is known by the most experienced is passed along to novices
4. Where members believe that contributions matter
5. Where members feel some degree of social connection with one another (at the they care what other people think about what they have created) ” (p. 5)

According to Jenkins' definition of participatory culture these can be found: firstly, in the new media environment artistic expression gradually becomes a broader and a more civilian concept. Audiences who have the appeals for artistic expression can create and share it by means of proper digital tools. They can also obtain any learning resources they want based on their own interests.

Secondly, the emergence of Internet promotes the social connection in real world. In the beginning this kind of relationship is relatively loose and unstable and mostly lack bilateral

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interaction with the real world. Audiences interact with online contents via digital tools and this interaction makes the relationship increasingly diversified, that is, the relationship can be close contacts between friends, stable commercial intercourse and temporary conversational relationship. Also the intensity of relationship is remarkably enhanced and long-term and stable online communication with the real world increases simultaneously. It is thus clear that participatory culture improves social communication and constructs a more open and flexible interactive learning mode.

Thirdly, participatory culture lays emphasis on relationship building and personal identification. In the online learning behaviors of the early stage, audiences spontaneously organize together and form virtual communities because of common interests, emotions, cognition and other demands, and community members can participate in community activities and share community resources as formal or informal members. Participatory culture further reinforces this tendency, on the one hand, it enables the relationship between community members to go beyond the virtual level; on the other hand, the amount of participators and the common space constructed further expands the participation.

Finally, participatory culture holds personalized creation in esteem. Creating medium texts full of personality is the basic premise for audiences' participation as well as the characteristic of participatory culture. "Personalized text creation can be comprehended from three aspects: audience-generated contents, audience-added contents and audiences' medium behaviors" (Zhou Rongting & Guan Jihua, 2010, p.16) . "Audience-generated contents" means that the audiences

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make their own experiences and thinking into digitized texts and images by digital tools and share them with others. "Audience-added contents" refers to the way that audiences integrate or recreate contents they have seen before sharing with other audiences. "Audiences' medium behaviors" refer to the ways that audiences browse online contents and provide feedback on the contents to generate the relationship between contents.

Besides the definition of participatory culture, Jenkins (2009) summarized participatory culture from four aspects "Affiliations, expressions, collaborative and circulations" (p. 9)

-Affiliations

Memberships, formal and informal, in online communities centered around various forms of media, such as Friendster, Facebook, MySpace, message boards, metagaming, or game clans.

-Expressions

Producing new creative forms, such as digital sampling, skinning and modding, fan videos, fan fiction, zines, or mash-ups.

-Collaborative

Problem solving, Working together in teams, formal and informal, to complete tasks and develop new knowledge, such as through Wikipedia, alternative reality gaming, or spoiling.

-Circulations

Shaping the flow of media, such as podcasting or blogging.

2.4 Criteria for website review

Learning online optimizes a participatory learning environment. The online art educational

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program, like *Chinavine* and *Artron*, widely use the digital tools to promote the learning environment for audiences. They create and share the resources with audiences and the audiences interact with resources by using the digital tools. The property and forms of online art education programs have made it inevitably become one part of participatory culture. Thus, in my research, I use the features and forms of participatory culture to inspect two online art education websites, *Chinavine* and *Artron*, in order to find out the best practices used to promote the Chinese culture learning environment. The criteria consist of following aspects draws from the definition of participatory culture:

- Accessibility

Inspect if they have relatively low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement.

- Creating and sharing resources

Inspect if how they create resources and how strongly support for creating and sharing one's creations with others.

- Navigation

If they have clear navigation makes audiences fully participate in website.

- Social connection

Inspect if the participation promote the establishment of social relations and there members feel some degree of social connection with one another.

Besides, the forms of those two websites will be combed from following perspectives provided by Jerkins (see 2.3) .

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- Affiliations
- Expressions
- Collaborative
- Circulations

Chapter III

Comparison Study of *ChinaVine* and *Artron*

3.1 Overview of the *Chinavine* Model

Begun in May 2007, “the primarily web-based project, *ChinaVine*, was developed, in part, to respond to this growing interest in China and to communicate a nuanced and complex conception of China’s cultural heritage for English speaking, reading and writing audiences” (Congdon & Blandy, 2010, p.2). *ChinaVine.org* is a partnership project that includes faculty and students at the University of Central Florida, the University of Oregon, Shandong University of Art and Design in Jinan, China, and, most recently, Beijing Normal University and the Beijing Folk Literature and Art Association. *ChinaVine.org* includes animation, video, photographs, and written text. An interdisciplinary team of faculty and students at each of the original three universities has been working on various parts of the website since Spring 2007. The teams associated with *ChinaVine.org* share all documentary material and communicate through list serves and individual email accounts.

“Over the last several decades the field of art education has become more socially conscience and many art educators now focus on ways in which art can help us understand others and ourselves” (Congdon and Brandy, 2010, p.9). With the goal of being more sensitive to

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cultural differences amongst us, “ChinaVine’s intention is to humanize the ways in which we all think about each other. This effort should help facilitate a more positive result within our increasingly global world” (Congdon and Brandy, 2010, p.9). Thus, “one of ChinaVine’s major goals is to encourage openness as opposed to a narrowing when encountering ‘the Other’ ” (Congdon and Brandy, 2010, p.10).

The mission of *ChinaVine* is to

“engage English-speaking/ reading/writing students in an online learning environment that asks them to explore their individual and cultural identities as they discover information about the diverse and complex lives of the Chinese. *VineOnline*’s mission is to pique interest in participating with *ChinaVine* by posting stories on a number of topics, many of which will later be developed for the website. Possibilities for participating with *ChinaVine* include developing or responding to content for *chinavine.org*; posting images and sounds supporting the project to Flickr, Vimeo, Soundcloud, and/or Todou; responding to *ChinaVine* content on these platforms as well as Instagram: following and commenting on *ChinaVine* on Twitter, Weibo, and Facebook; and commenting on posts appearing on *ChinaVine*’s blogs.” (Congdon & Brandy, 2010, p.6).



Figure. 3.1. Homepage of *ChinaVine*
Scree shot from *ChinaVine* website: chinavine.org

3.2 Overview of the Artron Model

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Artron online arts platform belong to *Artron Group*. *Artron Group* established in 1993 is headquartered in Shenzhen. With three operating sites including Beijing, Shanghai, and Shenzhen, *Artron Group* spreads its products over Mainland China, HK, Macao, USA, Japan, Europe and other overseas market with well-developed printing industry. This group develops from the plate-making professional service company into the modern corporate group that integrates photographic design, plate-making, printing and services. In 2000, *Artron* art website was set up. After revision in 2007, it has created 29 channels for such as information, exhibition, and video, which comprehensively introduce Chinese art. With the mission of “serving arts to the people”, *Artron* provides the artwork information, e-commerce, advertisement services and search services to satisfy the diverse requirements from the artists, art institutions, students majoring in arts and the art enthusiasts.

Besides, as a comprehensive platform to share art resources, *Artron* is not only used the digital tools to comprehensively collect and present the art information, but also equipped with a special section of art education which provides opportunity for audiences to study online, especially for students majoring in Art. In addition, *Artron* accelerates the establishment of learning and communication in real life through online engagement.

Furthermore, *Artron*, as an interactive online community, gets engaged in an optimal digital platform for art information, as well as an indispensable tool for art education. Nowadays, with professional members of over 1 million, this platform achieves an average daily page view of 8 million. On the whole, internet users can apply online platforms into their daily lives and benefit

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from it.



Figure. 3.2. Homepage of Artron
Screen shot from Artron website: www. artron. Com

3. 3 Comparison study

3. 3. 1 Accessibility

When we discuss the problem of “accessibility”, it is necessary to understand the audiences and what artistic expression they have. *Artron* as an open-ended art learning environment, it mainly serves Chinese-speaking audiences who are come from China or other countries. The major audiences are composed of students, scholars, artists, art lovers, people and organizations in art-related industries. The audiences of *ChinaVine* are from English-speaking countries who are interested in Chinese culture.

Accessibility of *Artron*

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When working on reducing the barrier of the website, the most obvious feature of *Artron* is it is designed to meet various demands of audiences. According to the “culture consumer model” proposed by Kolb (2005), the audiences can be divided into five types: petty producer, enthusiast, cultist, fan and culture consumer (cited in Charles, 2012, p. 345). From bottom to top, the level of consumer engagement with culture increases. From top to bottom the portion of consumers increases. On the website of *Artron*, the content is orderly partitioned to satisfy the audiences’ different interests and learning requirements.

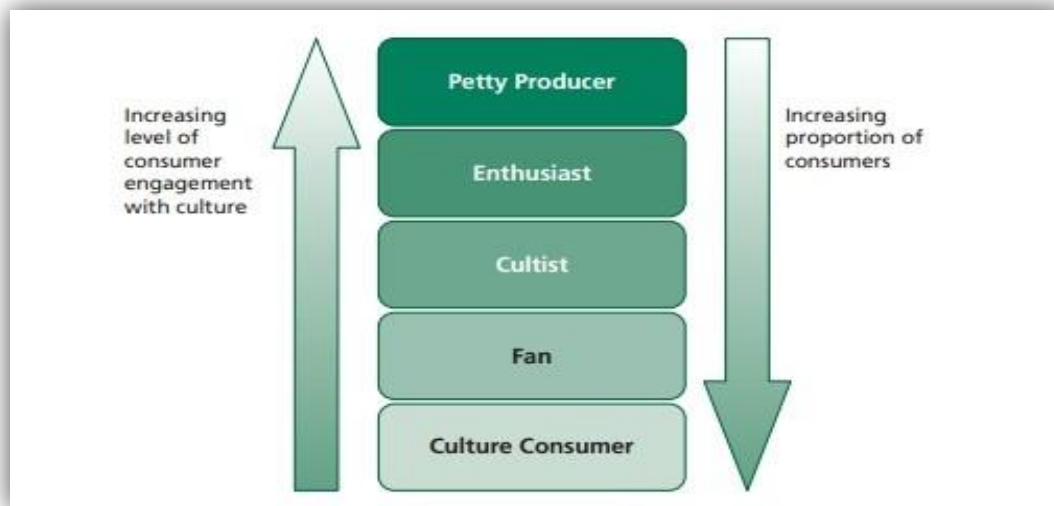


Figure. 3.3 Cultural consumers Source: Adapted from Kolb 2005

(as cited in Charles, 2012, p. 345)

For culture consumer, Kolb (2005) defined the culture consumer is that “the majority of the population – the mass audience for cultural events and festivals – can be classified as cultural consumers. They do not have specialist cultural event interests, but consume culture as part of day-to-day life. For these consumers, factors such as convenience and cost are key elements in

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their decision-making processes, as are the effects of reference” (as cited in Charles, 2012, p.347)

Artron has provides a large amount information for free browsing, including the art news, introduction of common art knowledge and the information of art exhibitions, and this kind of information generally consists of pictures and text. As long as the audience possesses the basic Internet browsing technique and Chinese reading ability, they can freely browse this kind of knowledge and information. It is easy for audiences to find the entrance and engage in the resources.

For fan and cultist, Kolb (2005) defined the fan as “fan is similar to a cultist, but will devote less time and money to pursuing their interest. This allows fans to have multiple allegiances and to be more open to developing new cultural interests. They are attracted by the familiarity of the form or content of the event, or the connection between the event and another which they have attended in the past” (as cited in Charles, 2012, p.346). *Artron* has provided multiple entrances and accesses for fan-level audiences to satisfy their spontaneous and diverse learning purposes. For example, for the resources of Chinese ink painting, the website has conducted classification from various perspectives, such as

- Classification of artists

The audiences can choose the artists they are interested in to obtain the art resources;

- Classification of regions

The selecting the regions they are interested in, they can understand the different regional characteristics of Chinese ink painting;

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- Classification of themes

By selecting the themes they are interested in, such as landscape, flowers and birds and figure painting, they can directly access their target category.

These clear and diverse classifications can significantly reduce the barrier for the audience to obtain the resources.

For enthusiast, Kolb(2005) gave the definition to it as “they are very knowledgeable about their chosen field and it is a significant element in their social and friendship networks” (as cited by Charles, 2012. P.346). *Artron* has provided a forum section for these audiences, and the audiences can register an account and participate into the discussion of various topics in the forum. The registration and use method is similar to that of other popular social media, and the audiences only need to grasp the basic Internet application technique to participate into the topic discussion and share their understanding, in this way to satisfy their need for deep exploration of knowledge.

“Petty producers have developed such a strong level of engagement with the culture that they have started to create it at an amateur level. They are looking for cultural experiences that allow them to participate in production or that offer opportunities for their advancement or development within their preferred cultural field” (as cited in Charles, 2012, p.345). For petty producer, *Artron* has also opened a blog section, blog is similar to personal homepage, and you can build your personal homepage by registering an account. This account is not only the audience’s virtual identity at *Artron*, but can also be used to share all resources on the website,

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such as the online and offline information communication between the audiences and the information consultation of art activities. On this personal homepage, the audiences can freely upload videos, pictures and texts through digital tools, and they can also build their own Study Circle by following, sharing and replying the content posted by other people. The registration account has been bound to the biggest social communication tool in China—QQ, and any audiences can quickly register their own *Artron* account through their existing QQ account.

Through the above information, we can see that *Artron* has two significant characteristics in reducing the barrier and expanding the accessibility. First of all, the website design has considered the diversity of audiences, and through the design of multiple approaches and entrances, it can satisfy different engagement requirements from the audiences, in this way to promote accessibility. Secondly, on the website, the digital tool setting is connected to the audiences' existing operation experience, and for the audiences, it is easier for them to blend into the application environment they are familiar with.

Accessibility of *ChinaVine*

Using image information to promote accessibility is one of the greatest features of *ChinaVine*. “As educators, we know that English-speaking societies are increasingly being saturated with visual images”(Congdon & Blandy, 2010, p.3). Freedman (2000) notes that because of this fact, art educators are in an excellent position to teach about the complexities of learning that takes place through visual images (p.319). Knowing that our knowledge increasingly comes from visual rather than text-based information, *ChinaVine.org* is heavily dependent on visual images. A mass of images and videos are applied on the website to visually

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present the cultural content and constantly make the content easier for audiences to perceive and accept. The three major parts, *Art*, *Artist*, *Participate* on the *ChinaVine* all use massive amounts of images and videos to present and interpret cultural content.

Second, “ChinaVine.org’s programming is validated through W3C, the World Wide Consortium, permitting the site to be standardized across web browsers” (Congdon and Blandy, 2010, p.4). It greatly reduces the barrier caused by technical problem and makes audience freely browse the websites by using any web browsers.

Furthermore, the website designed to consider demands from different groups. Congdon & Blandy (2010) stated that “best practices for interactive websites were considered for a site that is meant for children, youth, and adults with an overall goal of eliminating the need for any guessing on the part of users” (p.5). Thus, when the website was designed, they considered (2010):

“It is important to all of those associated with ChinaVine.org is that the website be accessible to as many visitors as possible. As a consequence accessibility to users with disabilities was assumed from the very beginning. Programming and presentation was combined in a website that is 'Section 508 valid,' meaning that ChinaVine.org is consistent with requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act and priority level 1 and most of priority level 2 of Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG). Plans exist for moving the site to priority level 3, the highest level of accessibility associated with WCAG. This will require the development of text equivalents for image map links, assess / change foreground /background colors for text so that it offers sufficient contrast for people with color deficits, and the development of keyboard shortcuts for important links ” (p.5).

3.3. 2 Creating and sharing resources

Artron

As the “collector” of Chinese art resources, *Artron* is the most important professional portal

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and most active online interaction community of Chinese artworks in the world, which is the preferred media platform to obtain art information, and it is an indispensable important tool for arts learners. Through different sections of art resources and the application of many digital tools such as electronic map, video and blogging, *Artron* fully presents the art and cultural resources to the audiences. In the following, representative sections will be quoted and selected to introduce *Artron's* achievements in creating and sharing resources:

In *Artron*, the *Auction and Collection section* is an important reference tool for audiences who interested in art collection, through which, the audiences can first time quickly and accurately learn related auction market information of Chinese artworks around the world, and in this way, they can grasp the latest market trend of Chinese artworks in the domestic and foreign auction companies in real time. On the *Artron* site, the organization notes that it is the “only official release platform for more than 400 auction companies around the world, 12 million pieces of auction news, and gradual expansion with more than 800 auctions and the information of more than 250,000 items for auction every year” (artron.net).

Artron Gallery section is the most authoritative service and information platform in the Chinese gallery industry, the audience can use the online search tool to enter the gallery database and obtain the specific background introduction of more than 3000 galleries in China and the information of artists and art exhibitions. *Artron Gallery Yellow Page* is the first gallery database with the most complete information and the guiding network search tool with the most practical functions, and the comprehensive promotion services are provided to more than 3000 galleries in

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China and their represented artists with the unprecedented form of yellow page, which builds a bridge of communication between the collectors and the gallery, so that the consultation and collection channel of artworks will become smoother. Advanced association search can make the audience accurately obtain the latest information of exhibitions; the map search function is convenient for search of gallery location, which can help the audience to plan the field trip.

By following the Chinese artists' art life and achievements, *Artron Artist section* provides the audiences with the standard electronic profiles, online artwork collections, the latest and most complete online exhibition of artworks, rich publication information and authoritative work certification information, through which, you can realize the closest online contact with the artists and learn about their colorful art life. It has included the accurate and authoritative information of more than 40,000 ancient and modern Chinese artists; the official websites of more than 4,600 modern Chinese artists are settled here.

Artron Video section is the gathering center of the most high-quality art video programs, which provides a webcasting platform of the latest and most complete art videos to the massive art audiences. In the meantime, our professional audiovisual program shooting and production team can provide production and promotion services of professional short films to various art institutions, and efforts have been made to build the biggest video database in the art industry of China.

Artron Exhibition section focuses on the field of modern arts from the professional perspective. 500 domestic and foreign art institutions and museums, more than 3000 galleries

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have used the digital tools to create graphic and text information to present the art for audiences.

Artron Lecture section is a professional program of art education and popularization. It is dedicated to building a bridge between the Chinese art elites and the public through various forms such as salon and lecture, in this way to present the new trend of art development and the new situation in the art market. Its content involves the investment and collection of different categories and prices, college academic discussions, artists, museums, galleries, exhibition and various other public lectures. Each issue will provide the most popular, leading-edge and valuable fresh topics in the art field to the art enthusiasts and employees.

In addition, *Artron* interaction platform has further expanded the online resources and interaction with the audiences and the relation between various resources can be continuously strengthened due to the audiences' participation. *Artron* has also provided the audiences with a network art community with multiple forms, and "at present, the number of registered members has reached one million" (artron.net). Through various platforms such as blog and forum, a virtual life space has been created where you can freely release information, share works and photo album, communicate and meet friends with the same interests, so that *Artron* can truly become a public art home. The interaction community mainly includes the art forum and blogging.

The blogging has gathered the high-quality resources in the Chinese art field, the audiences can rapidly publish their works, articles, pictures and news, and they can also have convenient and fast communication with the critics, artists, art market experts, famous bloggers and art

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enthusiasts. According to the record on the website, “the daily blog number can reach more than 1000, and the number of registered famous artists in the community is more than 600” (artron.net).

The forum has gathered the most mainstream and famous artwork collection and investment all around the world, the convenient, stable and friendly interaction platform can provide the audiences with life-related and diverse information interactive services, and the themes cover various fields such as arts, collection. According to the data provided by website, “every minute, more than 10,000 people visit the forum channel, and the daily posts are more than 20,000” (artron.net).

ChinaVine

Compared to *Artron* which has a big capacity and makes all efforts to integrate existing art resources, *ChinaVine* focuses more on deep exploration of specific traditional Chinese arts. One of its characteristics on resource creation and sharing is “in the development of the website, scholars associated with *ChinaVine* sought new and cooperative ways of using educational research methods that explore new technological advancements” (Congdon & Blandy, 2010, p.6). Originally consisting only of the website chinavine.org, *ChinaVine* now takes full advantage of the Internet to support create and share the information by including numerous social networking sites in the US and PRC including Facebook, Twitter, Soundcloud, Vimeo, Flickr, Instagram, weibo, and Tudou.

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Additionally, fieldwork is one of important part to support creation and sharing. Beginning in 2007, fieldwork in China, including a 2011 summer field school in Beijing, became integral and significant to the development of content for ChinaVine. Fieldwork teams consist of scholars from the US and the PRC along with graduate and undergraduate students. “To date, fieldwork has occurred in Beijing (including Jianguo and Song Zhuang), Shanghai, Jinan, rural Guizhou province, rural Shandong province, and most recently in several Bai villages in Yunnan province near the city of Dali ” (Congdon & Blandy, 2010, p.7). In addition, a trip to Inner Mongolia has been done in summer 2013. “Fieldwork has concentrated on artists, art forms, and festivals using interview strategies that incorporate video, audio, and photographic documentation. Text, video, photographic, and audio materials collected in the field are developed and interpreted for the website and supporting social media ” (Congdon & Blandy, 2010, p.7).

The DIY section on the website not only makes fun for audiences, but also provides a new model for audience visually understand Chinese culture. In the DIY section, Chinese culture, like Chinese painting, Chinese story and games are made as an DIY products by digital tools。Audiences can make artworks or play game through operate the mouse. This way of information sharing and creation are more interesting than traditional ways. It also presents *ChinaVine* is dedicating to innovate tools to interpret Chinese culture.

3. 3. 3 Navigation

Navigation of *ChinaVine*

This section is discussed from historical perspectives which mainly drew from the article

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wrote by Congdon and Blandy in 2010 since the website has changed dramatically. The navigation for *ChinaVine* could be discussed from two aspects, internal and external. Internal is for people who currently or future manage the *ChinaVine*. External means navigation on the website for the audiences.

From internal perspective, Congdon & Blandy (2010) indicated that “the site is programmed in such a way that current and future site managers can easily access and add to the site” (Congdon & Blandy, 2010, p.4). For this purpose, the characteristics of the navigation could be summarized as following aspects. First of all, the files, template, style sheet are orderly arranged. “Files are placed into categories and subcategories with naming conventions for files and directories that are easily identifiable.” Page templates were created so that content can be added or refreshed regularly and easily. “PHP: Hypertext Preprocessor was used to code the templates and to support the interactivity of the site. Using PHP permits for a dynamic administration of the site by people not knowing how to do advance programming.” (Congdon and Blandy, p.4). Style sheets associated with the color and format of the presentation are used in such a way so that updates will not compromise the overall code for the website.

From external perspective, *ChinaVine* put forward their idea that “best practices for interactive websites were considered for a site that is meant for children, youth, and adults with an overall goal of eliminating the need for any guessing on the part of users” (Congdon & Blandy, 2010, p.4). Design elements reinforce ease of use and navigation. Primary and secondary navigation cues are consistent throughout the site. Title and other hierarchical elements are also

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consistent throughout. Hotlinks are obvious. Adobe Flash, standard to most computers, is used to stream the videos. Video controls are available to give visitors more power over the viewing experience. Below is a flowchart of *ChinaVine* to prove above features of navigation for audiences. It is clear to find that *ChinaVine* use vertical navigation to organize the information:

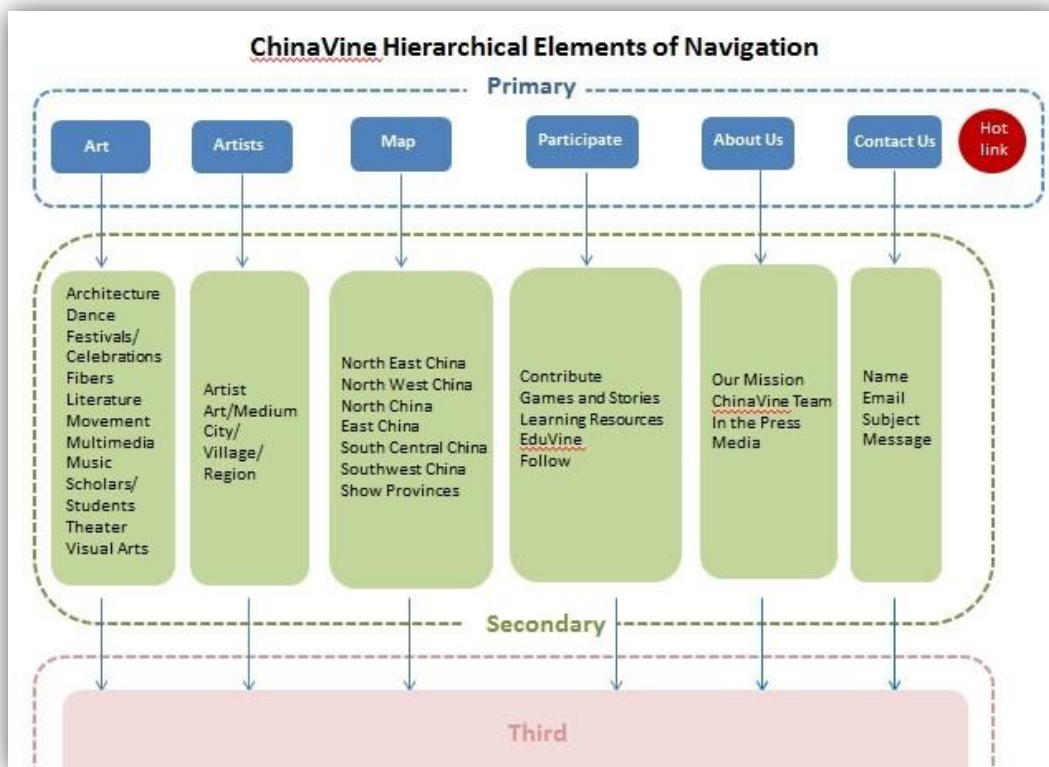


Figure 3. 4. ChinaVine Hierarchical Element of Navigation

Characteristics of *Artron*'s navigation are to combine the vertical navigation and parallel navigation together. Compared with *ChinaVine*, *Artron* contains more information. Thus, in order to clearly organize and present the information for audiences, *Artron* provides two groups of navigation for audiences. These two groups are set on the basis of different theme and content

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which greatly optimize the organization of website and make audience fully participate in the online learning environment.

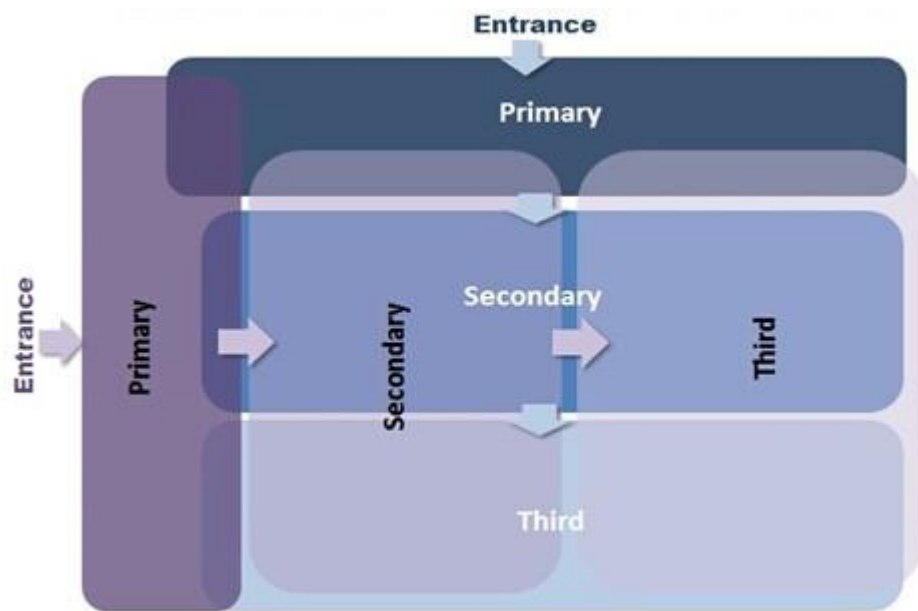


Figure 3. 5 Artron Hierarchical Elements of Navigation

From the view of vertical navigation, art resources have different classification of functions according to art industries. Primary navigation includes 18 cues, *Artist*, *Gallery*, *Collection*, *Video*, *Exhibition*, *Art Search*, *Forum* and *Blogging* and so on. In fact, when audiences click on navigation cues, they will enter the sub-websites. From the view of vertical navigation, *Artron* is also platform with a collection of multiple sub websites (Figure.3.6). This setting helps the audience classify the information, so that audiences have more clear goals and objectives when they browse the website. At the same time, from the point of view of art learning, it is helpful to the audience to establish knowledge frame, so that the audience can understand Chinese art and culture from various aspects.



Figure3.6. The sub-websites on the Artron

From the view of lateral navigation, art resources according to art forms have different classification, such as calligraphy, craft and porcelain etc. the settings of lateral navigation meet the audience with the demands of deep learning in professional knowledge and information. Audience can acquire content with a click on the keywords of their interests. Vertical navigation lets the audience understand the full range of the art circle; and lateral navigation which integrate resources according to a sort of art form, provide the depth of experience to the audience and cater to senior users' demand.

3.3.4 Social connection

Artron

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Artron, serving as an art website, not only offers the audience a lot of art information, but also helps the audience to establish connections between each other. Such connection involves both online communication and mutual communication in real life. It can be roughly divided into three types:

People to people

On the site, online connection is established among people through the forums and blogs, these contacts directly move towards the real world because of more learning and communication needs among people. Some people, due to common hobbies and interests, form into associations and groups to become mutual learning partners.

People to organization

Artron not only enhances the exposure opportunity of artists, but also contributes to academic exchanges and cooperative relation with the arts organizations and individuals. Furthermore, it also greatly promotes cooperation between artists and art institutions. For example, the galleries released solicit contributions invitation by *Artron* platform, which attracted artists to participate in the exhibition, and online exhibition hall and gallery exhibition synchronously proceed. It not only broadens cooperative paths, but also greatly enhances the participation degree of audience. Even after the exhibition, the audience can still review works of art through the online exhibition hall, which lets the audience have opportunities to learn again. In addition, galleries, art institutions, museums and other art organizations can release post information through this platform, which also expand the employment path of graduates and art

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workers.

Organization to organization

Through the Artron platform, art organizations can find their own cooperative partners and contribute to academic cooperation in the first time through the information database. Network platform provides more choice opportunities for art organizations, and proper cooperation network are further expanded. In the past, cooperative relations may only occur in the same city, now may be the cross regional, and even cross-border cooperation. In cooperation, cultural exchanges will also therewith continue to gradually expand, and transmission route of Chinese traditional culture will be more abundant and fast.

ChinaVine

ChinaVine highly value the collaborative relationship. According to the organization of *ChinaVine* stated by Congdon and Blandy (2010), “ *ChinaVine* is a partnership project that includes universities and organizations in the US and the PRC. We are the principle co-investigators of *ChinaVine* ” (p.5). The partnership project that includes faculty and students at the University of Central Florida (UCF), the University of Oregon (UO), Shandong University of Art and Design in Jinan, China (SUAD), Beijing Normal University (BNU) and the Beijing Folk Literature and Art Association (BFLAA). On one hand, *ChinaVine* involves in Chinese and American scholars through the fieldwork. American scholars came through some areas of China to conduct investigation. They compiled electronic text and image information by digital tools and sent to the network for the audiences to learn and discuss. “The presentation layer also

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needed to be consistent and congruent with both the cultural material being presented and the visual conventions and rhetoric of our Chinese partners at SUAD and in Beijing. Since the programming and design of the site was accomplished by personnel at UCF and UO, feedback from SUAD was continuously invited” (Congdon & Blandy, 2010, p.4). Through such cooperation mode, *ChinaVine* has not only become a simple sharing culture and information website, but also become a connector of scholars’ cooperation and cultural communication between China and America.

In addition, another goal of *ChinaVine* is to “facilitate a communicative relationship between the people who are being represented and the participants with the website” (Congdon & Blandy, 2010, p.8). Recently, *ChinaVine*, as a learning tool, not only helps audiences know about Chinese culture, but also close work with Chinese culture study institutes. The audiences deeply develop their interests to Chinese culture through taking the Chinese study class, Chinese cultural presentation held by Chinese study institute, like Confucius Institute and schedule trip to China through taking exchange program, like Fulbright, Chinese flagship. It should be said, *ChinaVine* has been getting to develop cross-culture dialogue with China and other country.

3.3.5 Forms of participatory culture in *ChinaVine* and *Artron*

After comparison study between *ChinaVine* and *Artron*, I made a chart to summarize what forms of participation they have had from affiliations, expressions, collaborative and circulations in order to make a clear picture for those two websites.

Forms of Participatory Culture in *ChinaVine* and *Artron*

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	Affiliations	Expressions	Collaborative	Circulations
ChinaVine	weibo.sina.com.cn Tudou.com t.sina.comTwitter Facebook.com Vimeo.com Flickr.com Soundcloud.com Instagram	DIY section Story Video Map Zine Interactive Blogs	SUAD UO UCF BNU BFLAA MUC Artists	Bloging Podcasting
Artron	QQ Paybal Weico Weibo	Video Map Interactive blog Forum	Gallery Museum Art Institute	Blogging Forum

Chapter IV

Research Analysis/Synthesis

After doing comparison study in Chapter 3, it could be found that *ChinaVine* and *Artron* play different roles in the process of spreading Chinese culture. *Artron* establishes art database and cultural map, etc. by digital tools and collects all current Chinese art resource to present to promote learning environment for audiences, so it acts as a collector of Chinese culture. *ChinaVine*, looks like a discoverer of Chinese culture who dedicate to explore the Chinese art through fieldwork and promote the Chinese art learning environment by curriculum design and developing participatory learning.

After the comparative study in Chapter 3, similarities and differences of these two websites could be found out. First, they have same organization paradigm. The organization paradigm means how they organize the website. Second, they both link to various media and focus on the utilization of various media to promote participation of audiences. Third, cross-culture study is highly valued. Furthermore, they both claim the originality of the education resources. However, the standards and goals of art curriculums are addressed by *ChinaVine* while *Artron* focus more on general learning. Besides, *Artron* tried its best to fully present the art resources to audiences through providing the online lecture and *ChinaVine* focus more on establishing the interactive

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learning platform for audiences.

4.1 Similarities

4.1.1. Same organization paradigm

The two websites share the same organization paradigm. Although *Artron* involves plenty of art information, its organization framework of education resources consists of three parts from perspective of audiences' learning behavior, including information browsing, online classroom, discussion and feedback.

Information browsing includes all contents on the website, like news, story, image, and video. Information browsing is a form of one-way communication. Meanwhile, it is the main part on the *Artron* website.

Online classrooms are installed on the video section and consist of two forms. The first one is online courses that are similar to the original TV lectures but with more vivid content. *Artron* collects the excellent courses from famous arts institutes in China, such as China Art Research Institute, Central Academy of Fine Arts, Peking University, Nanjing University of Art, China Academy of Fine Arts, and Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts. The online courses are designed to provide audiences with the systematic learning. The second form is thematic video, some of which aim to record the art life of artists, some to introduce the artwork or to record and evaluate an event.

Discussion and feedback can be mainly seen in forum and blogging sections, where the audiences can take full participation and have the highest initiative. Audiences can review and

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study the online art resources by themselves, and then make different comments combined with their own life experiences or recreate and share the information based on the existing resource.

The learning resource organization of *ChinaVine* is extremely similar to that of *Artron* and also consists of three parts. First of all, the parts of *Art* and *Artist* on the website mainly focus on introducing and sharing art information. The *Participate* section emphasizes on the interaction and participation of audiences. For example, the systematic curriculum of *EduVine* is the same as the online classroom of *Artron* and provides systematic learning opportunities to the audiences. *Contribute* under the section of *Participate* is the place where audiences can post their comments of the website. The comments are also available after each class of curriculum.

4. 1. 2. Link to various media

From the comparison study in Chapter III, it can be seen that *Artron* is a relatively independent learning platform, since *Artron* website is powerful in strength and rich in resources, It manages a relatively larger interactive platform by itself, namely the blogging and forum section. In addition, *Artron* also binds the social media such as Weibo, Wechat to expand the participation. Besides the *comment section* on the website, *ChinaVine* also binds social networking platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Weibo, etc. Due to the collaborative relationship, the participation of *ChinaVine* and *Artron* is expanding.

4. 1.3 Develop cross-culture study

Although their target audiences are different, they both lay emphasis on the cross-culture

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study and in-depth research and analysis of culture. *Artron* not only introduces the developing progress of Chinese art in domestic, but also shares lots of related information of the developing progress of Chinese art in foreign art market ,such as the art exhibition in Japan, America and Europe. In addition, *Artron* has been establishing an English website, hoping to have more exchange opportunities with foreign art field. Although the English website is not as mature as Chinese website in content, it fully reflects the trend that *Artron* dedicated to create an international cultural exchange platform.

ChinaVine make cross-cultural study as one important goal. “Through its participatory structure, *ChinaVine* provides a network that connects individuals to those whom they may think of as the ‘Other’” (Congdon and Blandy, p.17). The cross-cultural study of *ChinaVine* comes from both internal and external aspects. Since scholars and students from different countries contribute to *ChinaVine*, there will be some collision inevitably when they make learning resources together. The contents of learning resources may undergo countless revise and discussion from drafts to release,” the interpretive approach used by *ChinaVine* and the specific elements of the interpretative approach require multiple drafts that include text, photographs, and video reviewed by both Chinese and American scholars prior to posting ” (Congdon and Blandy, p.19). This complicated process is a kind of cross-cultural study.

The external cross-cultural study occurs in the *ChinaVine* webpage. The audience can understand the Chinese culture and re-examine the national culture and the culture of other countries in the world.. ”Accessed by people in over 100 countries *ChinaVine* engages a wide

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and diverse audience. Through participation on *VineOnline* and *EduVine* visitors to the sites are asked to understand themselves as they understand “the Other” (Congdon and Blandy, p.17). “The website, while focusing on China, is really an innovative way to engage the English-speaking/reading /writing world in dialogues about our global community” (Congdon and Blandy, p.16). Besides, when audiences study Chinese culture, they are also provided opportunities to learning their own culutre. “ *EduVine* will not only teach participants about tradition and change in Chinese folk culture, but it will allow them to reflect on how similar ideas are represented in their own culture” (Congdon and Blandy, 2010. p.16).

4.1.4 Strongly support originality

Both *ChinaVine* and *Artron* have independent research teams who pay more and more attention to the originality of online contents. *ChinaVine* is cooperatively managed by scholars and student from universities and its information is collected through fieldwork, interview, etc., edited by digital tools and then published on the internet. For example, the design of *EduVine* is an embodiment of the originality. The images and texts of this course are evolved by the primary data collected by the team. *Artron*, on one hand, is committed to integration of resources, but on other hand, is starting to create unique art resources by digital tools, such as making yellow pages for galleries, drawing cultural map, and producing videos independently. Its emphasis on original contents can thus be obviously reflected.

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4.2 Differences

4.2.1. Education Standards are addressed

Although the two websites have similarities in many aspects, there are different practices between them. The online courses of *Artron* are mainly presented by recorded video which contains all the knowledge information, while the courses of *ChinVine* are in more diversified forms, including text, image, video, links to resources and comment. Taking the Unit 2 on *ChinaVine* website as an example, this unit mainly introduces the Calligraphy and Brush Painting. First of all, in the beginning of this course, the involved standards of this course are listed, including National Standards (Figure 4.1), including National Standards for Visual Arts, Common Core English. From the involved standards, it can be seen the target viewers of *EduVine* are fit for youth and adults above K-12. Besides, the given standards clear the difficulty of learning contents and point out teaching objectives accurately, so that audiences can learn the courses with the clear purposes. Then, the related resources are also listed in each course to support the learning of audiences (Figure. 4. 2) .

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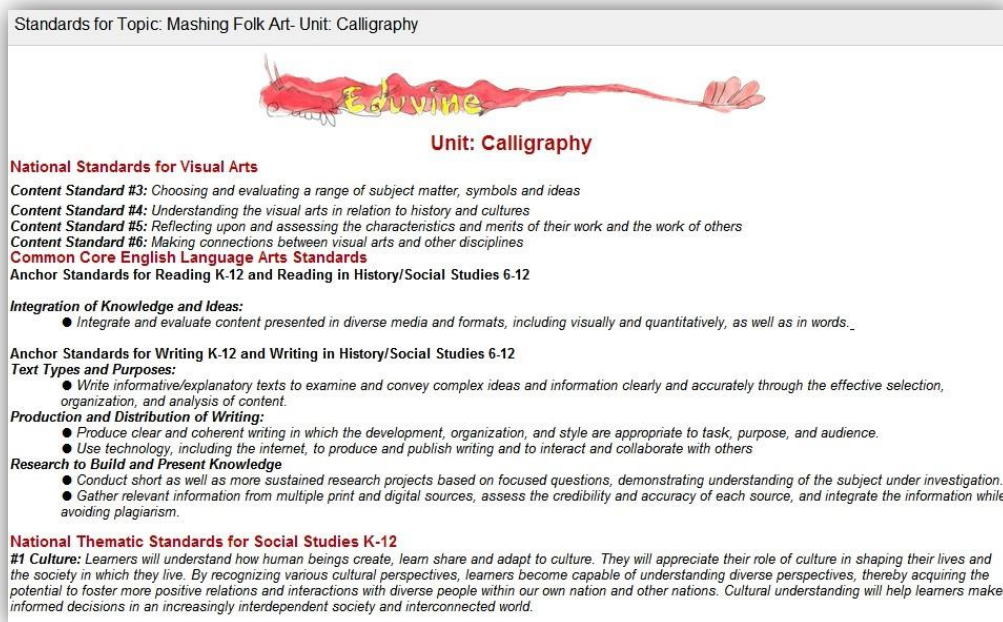


Figure. 4. 1 National Standards Addressed
Screen shot from *ChinaVine. org*



Figure. 4.2. Read/ View Resources
Screen shot from *ChinaVine. Org*

4.2.1. Innovative learning is emphasized

According to the previous chapters, we can see that the art education under the context of participatory culture pays more attention to the involvement of audiences. Project New Media Literacies (2012) discussed how to best facilitate learning in the participatory environment. I am impressed by two characteristics: 1. Heightened motivation and new forms of engagement

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through meaningful play and experimentation. 2. Opportunities for creating and solving problems using a variety of media, tools, and practices. *ChinaVine* considered the above two points in the process of curriculum design. The DIY in the *Game and Story* section is a highly entertaining learning style which easy to stimulate the learning enthusiasm of audiences. Creating works online can bring the sense of achievement to the audiences. Compared with *Artron*, *ChinaVine* is more likely to emphasize the fun from the study.

4.3 Challenging, implication and best practices

As a person who has indulged in Chinese culture for a long time and work with staff in *ChinaVine* for two years, I found the biggest challenging for them is how to fully and deeply present Chinese culture, especially traditional Chinese culture. This challenging also figured out by Congdon and Blandy (2010), “the artistic practices we experienced when visiting the Chinese artists were far more powerful than anything we can reproduce on the Web. Furthermore, the artistic practices as experienced by the Chinese in-group are far more powerful and meaningful than anything we experienced in a short visit” (p. 8). However, after working in the *ChinaVine* project, I can see a new model of Chinese cultural communication as well as the research and presenting of Chinese culture under the western ideology. Combined with the experience of art communication and art administration, *ChinaVine* model makes me realize the needs of the audiences who from English-speaks countries, and also makes me rethink how we can better interpret Chinese culture under the contexts of globalization and multi-culture.

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It is no doubt that *Artron* is currently the largest and most promising art website in China. However, owing to commercial business model, we can see many commercial marks on the website; for example, the homepage is full of advertisements which decline the user experience, rich in contents but slightly confused. Besides, it is worth exploring how to further integrate and deeply explore the art learning resources to benefit more audiences of different backgrounds. However, I also can see the revolutionary change of Chinese traditional art communication mode through reviewing *Artron*. The new opportunities brought by emergence of the network and digital tools have been getting to broaden the access to the Chinese traditional art has been forge a new platform because of the

At present, it is too early to judge which model is more suitable for the development of Chinese culture, because they grow in different cultural backgrounds, serve different audiences and have different purposes. However, we can see several best practices are ongoing after the comparison study of *Artron* and *ChinaVine*.

- To develop a communication between the traditional Chinese art and the audiences who participants in the online art learning environment.
- Try to deal with the shifting brought by the new media and contributing to building a model integrating with culture, education and advanced technology.
- Practice innovate the content of traditional Chinese art education and heighten motivation and new forms of engagement through employing emerging digital tools

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- Attempt to promote accessibility and broaden the accesses to traditional Chinese art, not only youths, adults, but also older and disabilities.
- Constantly support creation and sharing through optimize audiences' experience
- Make all efforts to ensure that more and more audiences benefit from online art learning and promote social connection for them to participate fully in public, community, creative and economic life

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