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DOT DASH 3

Interview with founder Larisa Leventon

By Michael Macinnis

An Interview with the creator of DOT DASH 3 a curated online service that showcases art collections and exhibits in a multi-media experience.

What did you do prior to starting your own company? I worked as an investor managing companies that had public offerings. Even though I operate out of New York, the investments were based on Delaware law because they have one of the most well defined business laws.

How you came up with the name, Dot Dash 3? The name was inspired by the Morse code word for the art. But if the word is viewed from another angle it can have a different meaning.



Dot Dash 3 business card that displays the morse code origins of the company name. Photo: Macinnis

What service are you offering that’s unique? Using my platform the artist is able to create a very intimate multi-media experience online. For example, in one of the online exhibits an artist includes pages from his own journal that shows how he came up with the concept. Another artist chose to show a video of a performance that related to the work that was exhibited. Some artists give a very personal audio tour to showcase the art in their studio.

So then you are challenging the traditional white-walled gallery space? We make the experience more personal. For example collectors can showcase their whole collection



(Above and facing page) Larisa Leventon, founder of the internet company, Dot Dash 3, 2013. Photo: Macinnis

on their website so that it’s more accessible to museums, cultural organizations.

What are you trying to make available to the art world that’s missing? It provides a more personal way to view art. For instance if a person isn’t able to visit an artist’s studio, for time or geographical reasons, it provides a realistic way to experience art at the touch of your finger tips. It has some aspects of a magazine or a catalogue but I don’t write an editorial, the artists are able to explain their work. The artists are given as much freedom as they need to create these shows.

What is your business model? There are several ways to look at it. The value is the technology that I provide is unique, it’s patent pending.

I mean where are you getting the revenue to continue to grow and develop your company? Mostly from sales through the site, and licensing the technology to different collectors and cultural institutions. The licensing can take many different forms but basically gives them access to create different exhibitions, and up load their own content. The license fees will be the significant source of revenue over time.

Do you take a commission on art sold through your site? Yes, I do. Artists do have to be invited to participate in the exhibitions curated through a committee. Artists on the platform on DOT DASH 3 are charged a commission.

How do people access the exhibitions on your platform and website? If the exhibitions are done through DOT DASH 3, I’m actively promoting the site as a gallery would online but also through my own relationships both in and outside the art world.

What part of the technology is patented at this point? The algorithm of how this is done, and the different variants of it. Any kind of imaging application, as well as aspects that are data intensive.

How would you break down the licensing process? I make my platform available to museums, cultural institutions, galleries, and

collectors that want to showcase what they have. It’s not a software that is acquired like Microsoft Office where you buy it and it’s yours to store on your computer. It’s via my server, everything that is set up is presented through my server. You’re paying as a collector or institution for access to that server. You’re paying for data storage, bandwidth use. But it appears online like it’s part of your site, even though a lot of the work is done on my end. You don’t actually own the software, you’re paying to use and configure it for your own purposes.

If someone is interested in using your platform, what kind of budget do they need to have in mind? It really depends on the content, what the usage is and the scope of the project or collection. Also the amount of items on display would determine the cost as well. Showing 10 pieces as opposed to 2,000 items would be priced very differently. It really depends on the project. It’s very difficult to describe a general estimate.

Are there competitors out there who offer a similar service? In terms of technology no, this type of multi-media content use doesn’t have anything else like it on the market. But there are other services that show your art virtually, such as uploading a jpeg image on a website, which any site can do. There are other companies that do sell art online, but those are other aspects of presenting digital art altogether.

What would you say an average package and cost estimate would be? I would like to encourage people to take advantage of all the possibilities the platform provides. But in order to get an idea I’d have to have a conversation with the client. There isn’t a package I can just pull off the shelf; it’s really about presenting things in a customizable way.

How long would it take to create and develop a project for your platform? Probably six months minimum, but it depends what you want to do with the platform. Ideally I’m looking for customers who are looking to do something long term. People who will do multiple projects by using different aspects of the technology. That’s what I’m looking for... **M**