



100 buildings - 100 stories Places, people and digital storytelling



Digital tools spark community engagement



Participatory governance of cultural heritage



HERMOUPOLIS



11,407



Challenge

The historic city of Hermoupolis is rich in architectural heritage, much of which is endangered or decaying. The key idea behind 100 buildings/100 stories is that to preserve their value, buildings need people. Beyond the technical conservation of a building, the local community can keep heritage alive by recognising and sharing its qualitative value: the stories it tells. The challenge of 100 stories/100 buildings was to make citizens aware of the vulnerability of their built heritage and encourage them to engage in its preservation



Solution

The solution was to turn the conservation management plan into an active, creative and participatory process, instead of a sterile procedure implemented by experts and public authorities only.

100 building/100 stories allows residents to narrate, share and re-create the stories of the city and its buildings. Through digital storytelling, the initiative bridges the tangible and intangible heritage of the city and sparks community engagement.



How ?

- 1 The city integrated the participatory digital tool 100 stories/100 buildings into its local digital heritage system, HERMeS (HERitage Management e-System). HERMeS facilitates the management and preservation of Hermoupolis' built heritage, and the added tool allows citizens to submit their own stories and memories relating to a particular building.
- 2 Through the online portal, users are asked to (a) share a story, (b) propose a building that is worth mentioning in the list, or (c) both. Users can also upload photos, audio and videos. The stories are registered and hosted on an online page. Then a QR sign is placed in front of the associated building. Via their mobile phones, visitors can scan the sign and discover the story of the building through the eyes of the community.
- 3 A new outreach strategy makes citizens aware of their contribution to the collective memory of the city, together with public events and participatory workshops to learn about, evaluate and improve the initiative.
- 4 The initiative is ongoing and being evaluated. It won't be limited to 100 buildings and the digital tool will be improved through the lessons learned. New proposals to extend the tool are being discussed with the municipality.

CULTURAL HERITAGE IN ACTION

Sharing solutions
in European
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Budget/Financing

9,950 €

The total budget was used for human resources (design, installation) and services (publication, translation, printing). The idea was made possible and 90% funded by the European Heritage Days Stories call of the European Union and the Council of Europe. HERMES NGO finances 10% of the project (hosting, updates and new activities) through donations.

Management

- HERMeS designed and implements the initiative, with the support and input of the Syros Institute.
- From 2010 to 2015, the HERMES system was funded and updated by the Municipality of Hermoupolis and Region of Cyclades.
- The Municipality of Hermoupolis actively supports the project. Discussions to develop new projects in partnership with the municipality are ongoing. The Municipality and the South Aegean region supported the organisation of a cultural event to promote the initiative.
- Cultural organisations like the Institute Kyveli, Plagma and Anima Syros contributed by creating stories, disseminating the initiative and developing related projects.
- The Department of Product and Systems Design Engineering of the University of Aegean contributed through research and development of educational digital tools.
- Public schools organised educational activities to inform students how they could participate. Citizens contributed by creating and submitting their own stories.



Transferability

- Everyone can write, tell or draw a story about their city and heritage! For those citizens that are less keen on technology, alternatives should be provided.
- HERMeS uses open-source software that can be transferred to other locations. It is already being applied in cities in Greece, Albania and North Macedonia.
- With little budget, digital preservation and management systems for built heritage can be opened to community involvement.
- Cooperation with local authorities is key! It is important to develop a common understanding of what heritage and heritage protection means.
- Be sure your project is sufficiently flexible to be scaled up/down depending on the resources available.
- This initiative can inspire other community-oriented heritage services that encourage digitally creating and sharing stories about buildings.



Impact

- Boosts citizens' curiosity to know the stories behind the buildings of Hermoupolis.
- Allows the community to acknowledge their heritage and raises awareness of its fragility.
- Develops a feeling of collective heritage ownership and raises the sense of belonging to a place.
- Enables the community to shape their own opinion for the conservation management plan in the future.
- Promotes collaboration among individuals, public schools, the university and cultural organisations.
- Became an umbrella for other local heritage activities by different stakeholders.



Contact

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Links

- [100 buildings / 100 stories video](#)
- [HERitage Management e System \(HER.M.eS\) video](#)
- [Heritage Management e-Society NGO website](#)
- [Hermoupolis Digital Heritage Management website](#)

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