

# **Boundary County Museum Strategy and Data Dictionary**

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The Boundary County Museum needs a Data Dictionary that defines their Museum Strategy. In other words they need to define the categories they want to use to define the People, Places, Things and Events depicted by the museum. This data dictionary will serve as a meta-model for describing museum artifacts in the museum software. It will hopefully give people a top-down view of the Strategy or logic or meaning of the local naming conventions.

### **Product View**

This Strategy will cover both the product (customer) view of the museum and the process (production) view of the museum. The product view is the view museum customers would see when using the museum strategy to facilitate research. If you were to advertise the museum, that advertising would be the product view of the museum. It would organize the way (or the many ways) customers can use the museum.

### **Process View**

Like the difference between designing and building any product, the production (process) view has a completely different focus and order. The design has a customer focus, and the process view is for the supplier. The purpose of a production strategy is to build the designed product both efficiently and effectively. Therefore, to be meaningful the process strategy requires a product strategy. The process strategy is function of the product strategy. Therefore, design changes after production is begun can be expensive.

### **Definitions for Understanding**

To build this strategy, we will need to understand all the customer views of the museum and then pick the best strategy for organizing museum objects to best serve those customers. We will want input from anyone who wants to input, but in the end we will want one elegant solution that will stand the test of time. The whole strategy process will be the definition or categorization of museum objects and objectives. It will set up a scheme to be used to set up authority lists in the museum software (the product view), and it will be a definition of museum processes and museum facilities supporting those processes. Design is the customer view and Build is the supplier view. The customer view rules, but there is a give and take in the planning process where the supplier's expertise and knowledge of costs may influence what the customer wants. The customer knows what he wants to do with the museum information and how he already understands the county, but the museum experts are experts in the museum process of delivering information. The process will begin with a customer view the planning will bounce back and forth from customer and supplier views with the supplier view always being a function of the customer view. This is how any design-build process works.

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## Relationships Define

The museum objects are defined by their relationships with each other. The museum strategy will formalize those relationships. It will present some general relationship structures, choosing sets of local names for the entities of those structures. For example: authorizing formal sets of local names of locations, organizations, markets, districts, and neighborhoods (probably all by sets of time periods). A museum object could be the product of one county person and the equipment of another. For interesting tools made by the interesting machines in Meeker's Machine Shop, we want to know both how it was made and how it was used. So, like the museum strategy itself we need to document both the customer and supplier views of museum objects. The elegant strategy has to make it easy to document all those relationships.

## Facility View

Product, Process and Facility views are like a three legged stool. They work together, and they are meaningless apart. A museum wants to describe the character of museum objects. That character description includes how and where things are both made and used. This three-fold description format neatly covers all the character views of an object. It is simple, but it is new so it may take some practice to be able to use it. The character of an object is described by this Product, Process, and Facility threefold. The facility view includes location and activity. From location we can derive time, speed and distance, or distribution (volume, space, temperature, pressure, etc.). Processes control activities to produce products. In the activity view, we see all the products that are used to facilitate an activity. Some products are directly consumed in the process view, but some products are indirectly used in facilitating activity. Therefore, when describing a museum object that was both made and used in the County, we would like to describe the location it was made and the location it was used. We would also like to describe how it was made and how it was used or consumed. This threefold of views gives us tools for those character descriptions. We develop character and that character gets consumed in development of character or it is used to facilitate the development of character. To be able to describe objects, one may have to study this paragraph; but the Museum Customer will just see the big picture elegant view of local names, same names used for all three views.

## Next Step

So the next step is to begin laying out some sets of local names. Those would be names of people, places, things and events. They could also be of products, processes, facilities, customers, suppliers, and markets. Facilities and their assets facilitate activities. Types of facilities include kitchens which facilitate food preparation processes using kitchen assets (equipment) which have changed over time. If we have a kitchen asset that we cannot associate with a specific time and place or person, it is not too interesting to researchers. But those researchers cannot find that asset unless we also categorize it generally. The next step is to begin laying out some sets and hierarchies of local names. Then we will use those sets to begin defining the museum production (process and facility) strategy. Then we will use that museum build

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(product) strategy to refine the museum design. After a few of these iterations we will have a list that will define both the rooms in the museum and the way we want to advertise the museum.