

Grantee Name
Fractured Atlas
Project Title
To support and further develop Artful.ly (Fractured Atlas's free ticketing and donor management software)
Project Progress and Successes
<p>We are deeply grateful to the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation for its ongoing commitment to Fractured Atlas, and we are honored that Artful.ly, our business management software for the arts, is a part of the Fund for National Projects initiative. Now at the mid-point of the grant term, we are pleased to report on the significant progress we have made and to share insight on the challenges we have encountered.</p> <p>Built on the concept of strengthening artists' entrepreneurial skills and providing them with powerful business tools, Fractured Atlas has become essential to the cultural ecosystem of this country. One of these business tools, Artful.ly, has evolved from the research-and-development pipeline of projects to be a core program serving an ever increasing segment of the national cultural sector as well as the Fractured Atlas membership. The past year saw significant strides forward in the development of the software, culminating in a public launch in fall 2013, when Artful.ly officially moved out of its beta stage. While we continue to enhance the software to provide a wider range of functionality, Artful.ly now offers an effective and highly accessible way for artists and arts organizations to manage donations, ticketing, and communications with their patrons and supporters.</p> <p>Artful.ly's constituents can easily access and use features that represent complex and sophisticated functionality. Arts organizations can embed the software on their own websites to sell tickets and take donations. Artful.ly users that are fiscally sponsored can automatically access their Fractured Atlas fiscal sponsorship information. Producers can create a customizable discount code that can be applied to the ticket price, and they can customize ticket capacity, and set specific capacities for individual ticket types (student, senior citizen, VIP, etc.). A daily sales email report gives a summary of sales, donations, exchanges, and refunds. Customer records can be designated as individual people or as institutions such as businesses, foundations, non-profits, government agencies, etc. Artful.ly recently had a significant redesign of the user interface, allowing patron records to include social media handles, patron photos, glance representations of giving, total tickets sales, and lifetime value, along with new patron interactions such as logging volunteer activity and distinguishing between ticket purchases and event attendance.</p> <p>Fractured Atlas firmly believes in the power of community design and continues its extensive outreach to the arts community to ensure that the product will meet their needs. Over the past year, we have been working closely with the Atlantic Theater Company to identify the requirements of midsized presenting organizations. Through this partnership, we were able to isolate specific requirements and strategize a work plan for more advanced feature development, and to build several critical features. Memberships, which will allow producers to create, price, and customize subscriptions for their organizations, emerged as one of the larger feature sets required. Another involved Relationships, a way to define and track relationships between people such as employer/employee, parent/child, solicitor/prospect, etc., and connecting people into Households, which allows grouping spouses into households for mailing and solicitation while still allowing producers to view household members as individuals. These features will be released in early 2014.</p> <p>In addition, over the past year Fractured Atlas has built functionality for printable tickets</p>

and an iOS application for scanning tickets, both of which are set for public release in early 2014. All of these features are designed to give arts organizations maximum flexibility and nimbleness, delivering powerful technological tools at a minimum cost.

We were delighted that the public launch of Artful.ly that took place in October 2013 generated significant interest and excitement. Not only was there extensive press coverage (see below for links to some of the published articles), we also experienced a notable growth in the number of users. Last summer we had approximately 1,500 users. As of the end of February 2014, there are 3,398 individual user accounts, connected to 2,152 organizational accounts.

Challenges / Obstacles / Failures Encountered in the Project

Although Fractured Atlas is an arts service organization, Artful.ly represents an ambitious software development project and is subject to the issues experienced by any technology firm -- whether it is for- or not-for-profit. Feature development takes time, and it is not always possible to predict how long it will take. The timeline that we sketched out in our proposal has by necessity been revisited. In particular, our work with Atlantic Theater Company will continue through June of 2014, which has pushed back the intended work on integrating the software with the fiscal sponsorship program. We should note, however, that the feature development to date has been immensely useful to our fiscal sponsees, who represent a significant percentage of our users.

Some of the factors that have contributed to the obstacles we have encountered include the difficulty in hiring and building a team of developers, the challenge of building new features in parallel with maintaining and refining existing features, and the huge challenge to the organization of balancing the management of this project simultaneously with several other big new software development projects, as well as maintaining existing platforms. The work with Atlantic Theater Company was slowed somewhat by their staff turnover, but also by underestimating the tremendous complexity of their requirements and the time necessary to build those features.

Fractured Atlas has grown as an organization phenomenally fast, more than doubling its budget size from \$9 million to over \$20 million in just three years. As our programs and services expand and evolve to meet an ever growing demand, we face the challenge of ensuring smooth integration and cohesion for all our efforts. In the coming months, we will address this issue and develop a strategy for better internal management as well as a more logical, comfortable, and welcoming customer experience for our artist constituents.

What was learned from these that might be of benefit to others?

The staff of Fractured Atlas is reminded daily that it is incredibly difficult to fly the plane while still building it. Perhaps the most valuable learning we can share with the field is to take great care in promising deliverables that are manageable given the time and resources available. Most particularly, as a nonprofit organization working in technology, we find ourselves competing for developers who are attracted to our entrepreneurial spirit and mission to serve the arts but a drawn to software firms that can offer higher salaries and stock options. We have learned that it can take programmers more than four months to become familiar with a code base, and we must take care to budget adequately for software maintenance and refining iterations. Of course, these challenges are not unique to Fractured Atlas, and we are steadily becoming smarter about meeting and even planning ahead for them.

Links to relevant website(s) and/or project publications, reports, etc.

<http://www.fracturedatlas.org/>
<https://www.artful.ly/about>

Press Coverage:

The Wall Street Journal: Know Your Audience

Oct 21, 2013

<http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702304402104579147840608822008>

Crain's New York Business: Nonprofit offers creative assistance

Dec 16, 2013

<http://www.craigslist.com/article/20131215/ARTS/312159996>

Backstage: Fractured Atlas Helps Theater Artists Get Organized With Artful.ly

Oct 30, 2013

<http://www.backstage.com/news/fractured-atlas-helps-theater-artists-get-organized-artfully/>

Fast Company: Why An Arts Non-Profit Is Developing Web Dashboards

Oct 21, 2013

<http://www.fastcolabs.com/3020230/why-an-arts-non-profit-is-developing-web-dashboards>

Xconomy: Artful.ly Business Management Platform for the Arts Gets Wide Release

Oct 21, 2013

<http://www.xconomy.com/new-york/2013/10/21/artful-ly-business-management-platform-arts-gets-wide-release/>

Digital Music News: Artful.ly Gives Small Arts Organizations a Tech Boost

Oct 21, 2013

<http://www.digitalmusicnews.com/permalink/2013/10/21/artfully>

The Chronicle of Philanthropy: Nonprofit's Sales Software Helps Arts Groups Track Audience

Oct 22, 2013

<http://philanthropy.com/blogs/philanthropytoday/nonprofits-sales-software-helps-arts-groups-track-audience/76735>

Newsday: Game-Changing Software Platform Empowers Smaller Arts Orgs with Same Box Office, Fundraising, and Marketing Power of Major Cultural Institutions

Oct 21, 2013

<http://www.newsday.com/business/press-releases/game-changing-software-platform-empowers-smaller-arts-orgs-with-same-box-office-fundraising-and-marketing-power-of-major-cultural-institutions-1.6293577>

If someone wishes to speak with your organization further about your project, would there be a willing contact? Y/N

If yes, please provide contact name and information for preferred method of contact (email, phone, etc).

Yes, please e-mail:

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