



Culturescope.ca Focus Group Evaluation

Focus Group Research Report

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Culturescope.ca
Observatoire culturel canadien
Canadian Cultural Observatory

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary	2
Background	5
Culturescope.ca Objectives	5
Research Objectives.....	6
Methodology.....	6
Summary of Results	8
Reactions to the Website Name and Identifier	8
Reactions to the Website and Interface	8
Reactions to Sub-Pages	13
Appeal of Potential Features and Services	14
Governance Options.....	15
General Feedback on the Initiative.....	16
Appendix A: Recruitment Screener	17
Appendix B: Moderation Guide and Participant Hand-outs	22
Appendix C: CCRN Email Invitation to Members	28
Appendix D: Website Screen Shots	30



Executive Summary

Background: The Canadian Cultural Observatory (CCO), with its web component Culturescope.ca, is an initiative of the Department of Canadian Heritage (PCH) as part of the Canadian Culture Online Strategy. Culturescope.ca provides access to digitized Canadian cultural information, collections, and statistical resources of particular interest to cultural policy professionals on a wide variety of topics. The Canadian Cultural Observatory's mission is to connect Canadian cultural decision-makers and stakeholders to authoritative information on cultural activity throughout Canada and abroad. So far, Culturescope.ca has benefited from two years of feedback received from stakeholders within the cultural community in Canada. The CCO is now seeking for feedback on its visual identity and website from its target audience, which consists of professionals with specialized needs oriented towards involvement in cultural development.

Research Objectives: The research team identified the following key research objectives:

- Evaluating clarity and relevance of home page and sub-page menus;
- Obtaining participant feedback on the visual aspects of the website such as design, colors, graphics, and information layout of the site;
- Obtaining feedback on the site's name and designation;
- Understanding what the users think of the quality and nature of the content that will be offered and finding out if what's being offered satisfies their needs.

Methodology: A total of four 90 minute sessions were conducted at Decima's research facilities in Montreal and Toronto on October 27 and 28, 2003. One session was conducted with French participants and the others were with English participants. The sessions were conducted with cultural policy professionals. All participants needed to be familiar with the Internet. A total of 29 individuals participated in the research.

For all sessions, participants were shown black and white hardcopy versions of the website pages. As well, screen shots of the website were presented in color on an overhead projector in the focus group room. The website was not functional at the time of testing.

Focus Group Results

Reactions to the Website Name and Identifier

- When asked what comes to mind when they hear the term "Culturescope", reactions were very mixed, both in terms of topics and themes and in terms of positive versus negative. While some did consider culture, others were reminded of medical equipment.
- When shown the identifier, participants had very little to say. Generally, it was seen as nondescript, appealing and conservative.



Reactions to the Website and Interface

Participants were presented the home page via overhead projection and provided a paper copy in black and white.

- Participants felt the home page has a very low-key, conservative and safe look and feel.
- Although not asked to focus on actual page content, participants felt a significant portion of the home page was covered in text.
- Participants were generally supportive of the three column format.
- Regarding the colors used, participants did not mind the blue whereas a number were less supportive of the color used on the right hand side.
- Of all the visual elements on the home page, the graphics used were the most criticized. The puzzle was considered irrelevant whereas most had difficulty recognizing the images in the banner. While recognizing the observatory, most felt it was either *cliché* or highly misleading since the website has nothing to do with astronomy. Participants did not consider graphics and animation an essential component of the website, although a minimum is needed to make the site appealing.
- Based exclusively on the information available on the home page (although not asked to expressly look for it), participants were able to recall the site's main purpose or objective.
- Participants referred to the Government of Canada identifier, the reference to the National Library of Canada and Statistics Canada and links to reputable cultural organizations to help them gauge the quality and nature of the information on the website.
- When asked where they would first go on the website, about half of all respondents selected an "orientation" link (e.g. Site Map, About Us, etc.). Participants were also very interested in the links under the Features header (Arts Research Monitor, Training Guide and the Culture Statistics Program) and the Resource Collection.
- The most important item missing on the home page is a link where users can obtain information on the CCO.
- For the most part, participants were pleased with the menu labels on the home page.

Reactions to Sub-Pages

- For the most part, participants were encouraged and pleased with the extent of the issues covered under the Resource Collection. When specifically asked, participants indicated that their level of interest in the site increased when provided with the sub-menus and the brief text that explained the Resource Collection.
- Some suggested that the home page could benefit from a short explanation of the Resource Center and Knowledge Network, especially since they are two of the main sections of the website.
- Participants felt that, given the content under the Resource Collection and the Knowledge Network, the menu labels used for these two sections were appropriate.



- Participants did not fully understand how the Knowledge Network would work. Many were confused by the reference to CCRN members, which seemed to suggest to them that the Network was exclusive to CCRN members.

Appeal of Potential Features and Services

Participants were asked to rate their level of interest in 12 potential features and services for Culturescope.ca.

- Participants were most interested in the Member Directory, the Community Calendar, the newsletters and the Global Search and Sort. Participants were least interested in the Community Library, the feedback feature and unmoderated chat groups.
- Participants were generally pleased with the features and felt that the website team was headed in the right direction in terms of building a useful website.

Governance Options

- Participants were supportive of having the Department of Canadian Heritage develop Culturescope.ca. They felt that it would add credibility to the content and to the initiative overall. A concern raised with respect to PCH being the only supporter is the possible deterioration or even elimination of the site in a situation where the Department encounters budgetary constraints or cuts.



Background

The Canadian Cultural Observatory (CCO), with its web component Culturescope.ca, is an initiative of the Department of Canadian Heritage (PCH) as part of the Canadian Culture Online Strategy. Culturescope.ca provides access to digitized Canadian cultural information, collections, and statistical resources of particular interest to cultural policy professionals on a wide variety of topics. It responds to a growing need for comprehensive, authoritative and readily accessible data, analysis and advice on Canadian arts, heritage and cultural sectors, including broader issues that contribute and frame cultural development.

The Canadian Cultural Observatory's mission is to connect Canadian cultural decision-makers and stakeholders to authoritative information on cultural activity throughout Canada and abroad.

Culturescope.ca will be released to its first community of users in November 2003, followed by a process leading to the creation of a Governance framework, the development of an editorial policy and further talks within an external advisory Board.

So far, Culturescope.ca has benefited from two years of feedback received from stakeholders within the cultural community in Canada. The CCO is now seeking for feedback on its visual identity and website from its target audience, which consist of professionals with specialized needs oriented towards involvement in cultural development.

More precisely, the Observatory considers its clientele to be a diverse, professional community with specialized needs. The core community of practitioners consists of Canadian cultural policy professionals, planners and managers, researchers and post-secondary students, policy analysts and makers. Clients are expected from the public, private and not-for-profit sectors in Canada and the world.

Culturescope.ca Objectives

The purpose of Culturescope is to:

- ...contribute to, and facilitate, the growth of available information online relating to Canadian cultural policy and development.
- ...identify new opportunities to connect cultural policy decision-makers, researchers and other professionals in order to share knowledge and exchange needs and interests.
- ...ensure that the information made available is representative, authoritative, objective, credible, and accessible.



Research Objectives

The purpose of the focus group testing is to evaluate the design and layout of a prototype website called Culturescope.ca, and to assess the broad decisions about how this site has been organised, etc. The evaluation will focus on:

- Evaluating clarity and relevance of home page and sub-page menus;
- Obtaining participant feedback on the visual aspects of the website such as design, colors, graphics, and information layout of the site;
- Obtaining feedback on the site's name and designation;
- Understanding what the users think of the quality and nature of the content that will be offered and finding out if what's being offered satisfies their needs.

Methodology

Participant Selection and Invitation

The sessions were conducted with cultural policy professionals. Emphasis was placed on the academic community - University professors, researchers, and students engaged in research associated with cultural policy development. Equally important were individuals practicing Canadian cultural policy professionals - for example, planners, managers, and researchers, policy analysts and makers. Furthermore, all participants needed to be familiar with the Internet.

With respect to participant recruitment, CCRN members in Montreal and Toronto were initially contacted by their President via email (see Appendix C). Members who expressed an interest were then contacted by Decima recruiters to confirm a time, date and location. These individuals were also asked to provide referrals. The remainder of the participants were then recruited from these referrals and from academics and cultural managers found online. A recruitment screener was developed in conjunction with the Department of Canadian Heritage to ensure that the participants reflected the target groups (see Appendix A).

Number and Location of Focus Groups

A total of four 90-minute sessions were conducted at Decima's research facilities in Montreal (October 27, 2003) and in Toronto (October 28, 2003). Three of the sessions were in English while one in Montreal was in French. All sessions were moderated by Decima Research.



Group Composition

A total of 29 individuals participated in the research. The table below presents the breakdown of participants for each of the sessions.

Location and Number of Participants		Target Market Segment
Montreal, QC	8	• English adults
	8	• French adults
Toronto, QC	7	• English adults
	6	• English adults

Focus Group Visual Material

For all sessions, participants were shown black and white hardcopy versions of the website pages. As well, screen shots of the website were presented in color on an overhead projector in the focus group room. The website was not functional at the time of testing (see Appendix D).

Focus Group Result Interpretation

Qualitative research seeks to develop insight and direction rather than quantitatively projectable measures.

Due to the sample size, the special recruitment methods used, and the study objectives themselves, it is clearly understood that the work under discussion is exploratory in nature. The findings are not, nor were they intended to be, projectable to a larger population.

Specifically, it is inappropriate to suggest or to infer that few (or many) real-world users would behave in one way simply because few (or many) participants behaved in this way during the sessions. This kind of projection is strictly the prerogative of quantitative research.



Summary of Results

Reactions to the Website Name and Identifier

- **Reactions to “Culturescope” were mixed:** When asked what comes to mind when they hear the term “Culturescope”, reactions were very mixed, both in terms of topics and themes and in terms of positive versus negative. While some participants were immediately reminded of something broad and all encompassing, others were reminded of a more specific and narrow focus on culture. In each session, there was at least one participant who was reminded of a medical instrument, which generally was not perceived as a particularly positive image. In Montreal, a few participants were reminded of “MontrealScope” and *ParisScope*.

The identifier below was presented to participants who were then asked to comment on its “look and feel” including use of fonts, color and general appearance.



- **The identifier is considered “safe”:** Participants had very little to say with respect to the identifier. Generally, it was seen as nondescript, appealing and conservative. In some cases, it reminded participants of an institutional organization, such as a bank or a hospital, but otherwise it did not remind participants of a specific company or brand. The only notable criticism was the use of three shades of blue – there was a sense that it should be limited to perhaps two shades.

Reactions to the Website and Interface

Participants were presented the home page via overhead projection and provided a paper copy in black and white. Asked not to focus on text content for the moment, they were invited to comment on the general “look and feel” of the home page, including use of colors and graphics.

- **The home page has a conservative look:** Similar to the comments made regarding the identifier, participants felt the home page has a very low-key, conservative and safe look and feel. Again, participants were reminded of a banking website. Some also suggested the website resembled something a pharmaceutical company might do.
- **The home page is “text heavy”:** Participants quickly commented that the home page appears to have too much text. Although not asked to focus on actual page content, participants felt a significant portion of the home page was covered in text. This left them with two particular impressions. First, they could not immediately bring their eye to focus on a particular part of the home page – in other words, they were not given a clear indication as



to where they should start looking for information, that there is no clear beginning. And second, they felt the website looked intimidating or at a minimum, gave them the impression that they will need to work hard to find what they want on this website. Clearly, the ease of use of the home page had an impact on the user's perception of the ease of use of the website as a whole.

- **The three-column format was generally appealing:** Participants also commented on the fact that the information was organized using three distinct columns. Generally, participants were either not concerned with this format or were supportive of it. It was said that this approach was *en vogue* with current website design trends and that Internet users have become accustomed to this approach.
- **Reactions to the colors were mixed:** While participants were either unmoved by or supportive of the blue frame on the left hand side and across the top of the page, they were somewhat less supportive of the color (referred to as peach, yellow or orange across the various groups) used on the right hand side.
- **The graphics will need to change:** Of all the visual elements on the home page, the graphics used were the most criticized. First, the use of the puzzle in the lower left hand side received considerable criticism. While the English groups did not understand its relevance, the French group quickly noted that the message implied by a puzzle (*casse-tête*) was very negative. They felt the image was symbolic in describing the difficulty the user might have in using the website. Other participants were reminded of geo-politics in terms of bringing the provinces together, or bringing Europe closer to North America (one piece of the puzzle is Europe and the other is North America). Generally, participants did not find the puzzle graphic appropriate.

As for the graphics used in the banner, participants were equally unimpressed. For the most part, participants could not decipher what the images were in the first place. The only one they could clearly identify was the image of the observatory which most felt was either *cliché* or highly misleading since the website has nothing to do with astronomy. Since users will not know what the Cultural Observatory is when first visiting the site, to show this image will only lead to more confusion.

Although participants did not consider graphics and animation an essential component of the website, they still felt that some graphics were needed. Appropriate images would not only make the website generally appealing to the eye but it would also underline the site's obvious relation to culture and the arts. Participants suggested using more "strategic" images that either relate or speak to the nature of the information contained on the site. Suggestions mostly pertained to the arts (dancer, painter, music, etc.). There was a general consensus that graphics, while appropriate for a more 'general user', were considerably less important for an audience that places a much greater premium on content.



Having commented on the general appearance of the home page, participants were then asked to focus on the content of the home page. They were asked some questions regarding the **purpose of the site** as well as what would be their destinations on the site.

- **Participants understand the site's purpose:** Based exclusively on the information available on the home page (although not asked to expressly look for it), participants were able to recall the site's main purpose or objective. The following are notable quotes from participants who were asked to complete the following sentence - "The objective of this website is to...":
 - "...help cultural researchers network and gain access to cultural policy resources and statistics."
 - "...monitor and track/ highlight the evolving impact of culture in our country and the world."
 - "...act as a gateway to current research developments in culture in Canada."
 - "...provide information and resources to cultural researchers."
 - "...provide resources and information on cultural policies."
 - "...provide access to a network of information resources pertaining to the arts."
 - "...inform multiple culture communities (academic, policy makers, government and practitioners) about cultural policy research and initiatives."
 - "...provide research that appeals to a broad group of individuals by making a website that is easy to use and non-offensive to all types of age groups."
 - "...serve cultural policy researchers in Canada (i.e. academics, administrators, civil servants)."
 - "...serve cultural administrators and academics. It is to offer a free online tool to learn about cultural policy."
 - "...provide resources for cultural policy makers and cultural researchers."
 - « ...offrir une collection de ressources sur le développement culturel et ouvrir un espace de communication à l'intention des chercheurs culturels. »
 - « ...disposer de l'information sur la vie culturelle au Canada et d'ailleurs pour les chercheurs et professionnels en culture. »
 - « ...de rendre accessible les ressources aux différents chercheurs sur la culture canadienne. »
 - « ...de soutenir les travaux des chercheurs canadiens dans le domaine culturel. »

The CCO should consider the above quotes as valuable insight into the type of vocabulary that their targeted audience uses in reference to Culturescope.ca. This can help the CCO team develop marketing and promotional material for the site as well as a possible tag line should one be deemed necessary to help communicate the key purpose of the site.

When asked how they would be able to **judge the quality or nature of the content** on the website based exclusively on what they can see on the home page, participants highlighted the following:

- The Government of Canada identifier increased their confidence in the contents of the website, although some did note that this symbol can be used by any organization that receives a loan or a grant and that this is not necessarily a guarantee that the GoC was involved in screening the site content.
- Other confidence builders included a reference to the National Library of Canada and Statistics Canada and a link to reputable cultural organizations such as the Canadian Council for the Arts and the CCRN.
- Participants felt that the Department of Canadian Heritage should be referenced. In fact, the more departments mentioned the better.



- Some felt the only way they could judge the quality of the site content would be to browse the site and to seek out references and article or report authors.

Participants were also asked to indicate which would be their **first two destinations on the home page**. The major findings from this exercise are:

- First and foremost, participants seem interested in orienting themselves with the site and with the CCO. About half of all respondents selected an “orientation” link as their first destination. Such links include the Site Map, About Us, and the training guide. By combining both first and second destinations, 22 of 29 participants would select an “orientation” link as one of their first two site destinations.
- One participant indicated that he would first go to the Canadian Cultural Observatory link (although there is not such a link) and another would go Home (unaware that he was already on the Home page), both thinking that these links would lead them to a description of the Canadian Cultural Observatory. This underlines the interest among participants in wanting to become more familiar with the CCO and what its website is intended to achieve.
- Participants were very interested in the links under the Features header (Arts Research Monitor, Training Guide and the Culture Statistics Program).
- The Resource Collection was also a very popular destination. Many participants felt that this is where most of the site’s content is located, allowing them to better determine the website’s value.

Home Page Object	1 st Destination Votes	2 nd Destination Votes	Total Votes
Resource Collection	3	6	9
Arts Research Monitor	2	6	8
Training Guide	4	4	8
Culture Statistics Program	2	5	7
About us	4	2	6
Site Map	6	0	6
Reference Desk	3	0	3
Knowledge Network	0	2	2
Creative City Network	1	1	2
The Canadian Council for the Arts	0	1	1
Site Explorer (general)	0	1	1
International Network for Cultural Diversity	0	1	1
Home	1	0	1
CCRN	1	0	1
Canadian Cultural Observatory	1	0	1
Office of Cultural Affairs from the OAS	1	0	1



The home page interface evaluation also provided participants an opportunity to identify **what they felt was missing**. Participants would like to see...

- ...an explanation of or at least a link to the CCO to obtain more information on this organization.
- ...CCO contact information, such as a telephone number or email address.
- ...a date stamp showing when the site was last updated.
- ...an explanation of what the website is intended to achieve. Participants felt that the home page effectively communicated what it could offer but it did not communicate why it was doing it. Participants would like to see some sort of mission or vision on the home page. The use of a tag line could quickly resolve this information gap.
- ...a more detailed left hand navigation menu that would allow them to quickly assess the site's content (participants had not yet been shown the lower level web pages).

Other feedback provided on the home page included:

- The list of links in the right hand side column could be moved to the left hand side navigation menu and be grouped under "Related Links".
- The descriptions under the listed Features are too long. They could be replaced with short bullets or a short descriptor and achieve the same goal but by taking up less space on the home page.
- Participants hope that the bolded words in the introductory text are actual links.
- The search engine is appropriately located.
- Participants were unclear as to whether or not the links in the right hand column would lead them to the organization's website or if it would lead the user to another layer within Culturescope. There seems to be an expectation that it would lead the user off the main website and onto the partner's website.
- The term "free access" in the Reference Desk section suggested to participants that access to certain parts of the website would be free while others would be fee-based.

Feedback specific to the menu labels included:

- For the most part, participants were receptive to the use of the menu labels on the home page.
- The two areas that instigated the most confusion or misunderstanding were the Knowledge Network and the Reference Desk. Participants could not imagine, despite the brief reference in the introductory text, what the Knowledge Network could represent. Some actually believed that it was an established cultural organization with its own list of members. As for the Reference Desk, most could not understand this feature either or could not believe that an actual reference desk was possible through a website. Some believed that it was a list of references, similar to an extensive bibliography.



Reactions to Sub-Pages

Through overheads and handouts, participants were provided a more detailed explanation of the Resource Collection and the Knowledge Network. The following insights were obtained based on this new information:

- Participants were in a much better position to qualify the magnitude of the information available on this website. In fact, as participants became increasingly familiar with what the website could offer, their interest in the website increased accordingly.
- A few participants were incredulous – they could not believe that the website could be as extensive as the new sub-menus seem to suggest. A few others felt that given the breadth of the information promised on the website, that their highly specialized needs will probably not be met – they felt that the website could not possibly be as deep as it is wide.
- For the most part, participants were encouraged and pleased with the extent of the issues covered under the Resource Collection. When specifically asked, participants indicated that their level of interest in the site increased when provided with the sub-menus and the brief text that explained the Resource Collection.
- Some suggested that the home page could benefit from a short explanation of the Resource Center and Knowledge Network, especially since they are two of the main sections of the website. A few others suggested expanding the left hand navigation menu permanently, or at a minimum allow mouse-overs instead of adding more descriptive text on the home page. Since the space is available, there was a sense that this could be an efficient use of the left hand navigation area, providing the user with quick access to the key layers of the website.
- Participants felt that, given the content under the Resource Collection and the Knowledge Network, the menu labels used for these two sections were appropriate.
- Participants expressed a few concerns with elements under the Resource Collection. More specifically, some could not understand the label Cultural Development and Industries. “Quick Facts” was perceived as a demeaning label since it is often used by websites to communicate shallow and general facts, which are rarely of value to serious researchers. It was suggested that this section should be a direct link from the home page.
- The only comment pertaining to the sub-menu that appears under “Cultural Policy” related to the possible overlap between “Copyright, Intellectual Property and Digital Rights” and “Acts and Legislation” – it was felt that the first should be a sub-section of the second.
- Participants did not fully understand how the Knowledge Network would work. Many were confused by the reference to CCRN members, which seemed to suggest to them that the Network was exclusive to CCRN members.
- The notion of a “Members only” access to certain parts of the website seemed completely acceptable to participants, many acknowledging that this approach is standard on other websites, especially those with discussion group capabilities. Some were even willing to pay a fee to have access to Culturescope.ca.



Appeal of Potential Features and Services

Participants were asked to rate their level of interest in 12 potential features and services for Culturescope.ca. They were also asked to rank order their three most preferred features. The results are presented in the table below with preferences color-coded. Green features were most appealing (features 1 to 5), yellow could be considered second-tier features (features 6 to 9) while grey features (features 10 to 12) were of least interest to participants.

Generally, participants seemed most interested in the features that would help them network (Member directory) and stay updated of new developments in their Community of Practice (Community calendar and the newsletters). Given their background as researchers, it is also no surprise to see that participants were also interested in the Global Search and Sort. Participants were less interested in having to organize the website through the Community Library – there is perhaps an expectation that the user would be responsible for constantly managing and updating their Library. Similar to other website evaluation studies, the feedback feature is rarely of interest although this should not mean the feature should be neglected. Similar to toll-free telephone services, customers will rarely use them however they do expect them to be available. Finally, the unmoderated chat groups were also relatively unappealing – this result is consistent with the results obtained from CCO focus groups conducted in 2002.

Features and Services	Appeal
1. Member directory: This searchable address book of online "business cards" allows members to find experts, based on each member's contact information, photo, bio, area of expertise, and other data they choose to share.	Green
2. Global search/sort: These tools allow members to perform powerful metadata searches to locate and sort documents, members, and discussions posted throughout the site.	Green
3. Community calendar: This tool lists important events, conferences, and milestones for each community area. Calendars from multiple areas of the practice center can be aggregated into a single global calendar.	Green
4. Newsletter subscription: theme-specific coverage - Members can sign up for daily, weekly, or monthly e-mail updates of news, documents, and conversations in their favorite communities.	Green
5. Newsletter subscription: cultural sector-specific coverage - Members can sign up for daily, weekly, or monthly e-mail updates of news, documents, and conversations in their favorite communities.	Green
6. Personalized dashboard: This is a member's control panel that allows them to bookmark links to their favorite topics, subscriptions, documents, and members that are important to them.	Yellow
7. Document collaboration: Allows users to upload and download, rate, and comment on documents. Versions of documents are automatically archived and tracked.	Yellow
8. Cross-referencing: Documents, events, and discussions can be associated with many topics, and are automatically linked to the members who added them.	Yellow
9. Moderated discussion forums: These moderated discussion forums would be created "in context" – directly in the document, topic, or business card members are discussing. Threaded discussions would be mirrored in e-mail to keep busy members in the loop without having to visit the site.	Yellow
10. Community library: This tool allows members to organize documents, books, web sites, photos, and other useful resources. New entries can be highlighted and featured throughout the site.	Grey
11. Feedback / commentary submission forms: These forms would allow all visitors to the site to provide commentary about the site, and to suggest resources or events to the editors.	Grey
12. Unmoderated chat groups: This would enable members to discuss topics, issues, documents, in real-time, and in context.	Grey



Other comments related to the list of potential features and services included:

- Participants were generally pleased with the features and felt that the website team was headed in the right direction in terms of building a useful website. The list helped them understand how the website could be used to facilitate interaction and collaboration between members.
- While participants were interested in the Members Directory, some were uncomfortable with the idea of having their picture posted online. As well, some members were reluctant to be a part of the directory out of fear of being constantly contacted.

Governance Options

- **PCH is a logical and appealing governance option:** Participants are supportive of having the Department of Canadian Heritage develop Culturescope.ca. They feel that it would add credibility to the content and to the initiative overall. There was some reluctance in Montreal where a few participants expressed concerns over the potential for the content to cater to political motivations. They also expressed concerns over the Department's ability to efficiently cater to the French Canadian community – they feel that translations are often flawed and that they are not “in touch” with what the community really needs.
- Another concern raised with respect to PCH being the only supporter is the possible deterioration or even elimination of the site in a situation where the Department encounters budgetary constraints or cuts. Participants recalled various well-intentioned initiatives that “fizzled,” including CultureNet. Participants would feel more reassured knowing that the initiative was supported by a combination of federal Departments, including for instance Statistics Canada and Industry Canada.
- Participants were hesitant to indicate that their organizations would collaborate with the Observatory on the evolution of the website. While most would visit and use the site, participants are likely taking a “wait and see” stance with respect to collaboration. Participants would probably feel more comfortable answering this question if they had more information on the CCO and some sense of the level of effort that the collaboration would involve.



General Feedback on the Initiative

A variety of themes are worth highlighting, although they were not necessarily part of the moderation guide. Notably:

- **Regional Differences:** There was a distinct difference in reactions to the website between Ontario and Quebec participants. Participants in Ontario were much more receptive to the concept presented while those in Quebec seemed more difficult to impress or to convince that this website would be of any use to them. This difference may be attributable to a variety of factors including the fact that CCRN members were more common in Toronto than in Montreal. In fact, most Quebec participants did not even know what the CCRN was. Another contributing factor may be because Quebec cultural experts are accustomed to limiting their networking and research to the province of Quebec, therefore obviating the need for a national collaboration and networking tool.
- **Show me the value:** Many participants, while not necessarily set in their ways, have established an efficient network of contacts and a repertoire of research sources they know and trust. These participants indicated they would need to be shown the additional value they could obtain by using Culturescope.ca instead of their current process.
- **Defining the Right Target Audience:** While the introductory text on the home page indicated that the site was intended for “Cultural policy researchers in Canada, as well as other professionals engaged in Canadian cultural development”, a number of participants felt the website was too exclusionary. In most cases, these participants were cultural managers who did not consider themselves researchers or policy developers. They considered themselves cultural experts “in the trenches.” However, they did indicate that, if it is the CCO’s intention to include them as a target audience for the site, that more relevant links and themes on the home page would improve their likelihood of using the site.
- Other audience related feedback pertained to artists and to the general public. Again, despite the statement on the home page, many participants felt that this site should not be limited to experts. They felt that the general public and grade school and high school students should have access to this type of information as well. Understandably, this audience cannot be served through Culturescope.ca, especially since this is a large part of Culture.ca’s mandate. A recommendation might be to make sure there is a link to Culture.ca from the Culturescope.ca home page.



Appendix A: Recruitment Screener



CCO Website Evaluation 2003 Screener for CCRN Members

Questionnaire: _____

Montreal: Monday October 27 th - French 12:00 am 1 6:00 pm 2 Toronto: Tuesday October 28 th - English 12:00 am 1 6:00 pm 2	Study#: XXXX CSRC Reg#: XXXX Call: 1-800-554-9996 recruit 10 for 6-8 to show
Respondent's name: _____ Respondent's phone #: _____ (home) Respondent's phone #: _____ (work) Respondent's fax #: _____ sent? _____ or Respondent's e-mail : _____ sent? Sample source (circle): client focus dbase random referral	Interviewer: _____ Date : _____ Validated: _____ Central Files: _____ On List: _____ On Quotas: _____

Hello, my name is _____. I'm calling from Decima Research on behalf of the Canadian Cultural Observatory, an initiative run by the Department of Canadian Heritage. You were recently contacted by email by Donna Cardinal (the CCRN President) whereby she was extending you an invitation to attend a focus group in **Montreal/ Toronto**. We have been informed that you've expressed an interest in attending one of the sessions. This call is simply to provide you with some more information on the session and to give you a specific time and location for the session.

EXPLAIN GROUPS. About 8 cultural experts such as yourself will be taking part. You will be asked for your suggestions regarding the development of a collaborative web-based information service on the evolving state of culture in Canada. Participants will receive an \$85 incentive for their time and will also be served a light meal. The session is expected to last about one and a half hours. Are you still able to attend on **[DAY, MONTH DATE at TIME]**?

Participation is voluntary and all your answers will be kept confidential and will be used for research purposes only. We are simply interested in hearing your opinions, no attempt will be made to sell you anything. The format is a "round table" discussion lead by a research professional.

Yes	1	CONTINUE
No	2	THANK & DISCONTINUE



I would just like to ask you a few background questions...

1) What is the name of your organization, institution or agency?

2) What is your role within the organization?

- Cultural planner 1
- Policy maker 2
- Manager 3
- Researcher 4
- Advocate 5
- Practitioner 6
- Other (_____) 7

3) Would you say you use the Internet frequently in the context of your work and research, that you use it often, occasionally, rarely or never?

- Frequently 1
- Often 2
- Occasionally 3
- Rarely 4 **THANK & TERMINATE**
- Never 5 **THANK & TERMINATE**

Montreal: Monday October 27 th - French	
12:00 am	1
6:00 pm	2
Toronto: Tuesday October 28 th - English	
12:00 am	1
6:00 pm	2

As I mentioned earlier, the session will take place on, **Day, Month, Date @ Time for 1.5 hours**. Would you be willing to attend?

- Yes 1
- No 2 **THANK & DISCONTINUE**



Do you have a pen handy so that I can give you the address where the group will be held. It will be held at:

INSERT FACILITY IN TORONTO OR MONTREAL

We ask that you arrive fifteen minutes early to be sure you find parking, locate the facility and have time to check-in with the hosts. The hosts may be checking respondent's identification prior to the group, so please be sure to bring some personal identification with you (i.e. driver's license). Also, if you require glasses for reading, please bring them with you.

As we are only inviting a small number of people, your participation is very important to us. If for some reason you are unable to attend, please call so that we may get someone to replace you. You can reach us at **1-800-363-4229** at our office. Please ask for **Virginie Roux**. Someone will call you the day before to remind you about the discussion.

May I please get your name:

ON FRONT PAGE



Finally – we are having some difficulty finding cultural experts such as yourself in the **Montreal/ Toronto area** so we were wondering if you would be able to recommend a few colleagues who might be interested in attending one of our sessions. We are seeking to invite participants from the academic community - University professors, researchers, and students engaged in research associated with cultural policy development. We are also looking for practicing Canadian cultural policy professionals - for example, planners, managers, and researchers, policy analysts and makers. Is there anyone you know who we might be able to contact and invite to one of our sessions?

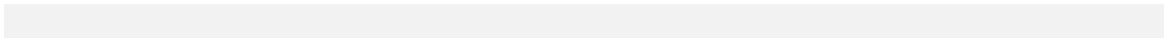
OBTAIN AS MUCH INFO AS POSSIBLE ON POTENTIAL RECRUITS:

Name	Telephone #	Organization/ position

Thank you very much for your help!



Appendix B: Moderation Guide and Participant Hand-outs





OUTLINE	
1. Introduction	5 minutes
2. Participants presentation	5 minutes
3. Presentation of the interface	50 minutes
4. Features and Services	15 minutes
5. Governance Options	10 minutes
6. Conclusion	5 minutes
Total	90 minutes

1. INTRODUCTION (5)

Welcome. You are about to participate in what has become an ongoing consultation with professionals in the cultural domain, a process that has already been underway for approximately two years. Today we will be focusing on a website that is currently being developed.

Before we begin, allow me to introduce myself. My name is Rick and I have been hired to lead you in the discussion today. To do that, I'll ask a number of different questions and have you discuss your opinions with each other. I am interested in hearing from everyone in the group. It is important to remember that there are no right or wrong answers. It is your opinion that counts.

In reporting the results, I may take some notes. However, I will be audio and video recording this session so that I don't miss any details. These tapes will only be used to help me recall enough details to enable me to report people's opinions accurately. Nothing you say or do will be identified to you as an individual and you will never be contacted in connection with this particular session.

One final note, this room is equipped with a one-way mirror. A few of my clients are back there to hear firsthand your ideas and thoughts.

Again, there are no right or wrong answers. Thank you for joining me today. Are there any questions before we begin?



2. PARTICIPANT PRESENTATION

(5)

- What I would like to do now is get to know each one of you a little. I would ask that we go around the table and give every one the chance to introduce themselves. Could you please tell us your name and a little something about yourself and what you do.
- Since the conversation will revolve mostly around the Internet, could you also describe the types of Canadian cultural information you seek out on the Internet?

3. PRESENTATION OF THE INTERFACE

(50)

Identifier

- What does the name “Culturescope” evoke? What does it make you think of?
- What are the references that come to mind when you see this image – SHOW IDENTIFIER – does it remind you of a particular country, organization, industry or field?
- What do you think of the:
 - Font?
 - Color?
 - Anything else?

Design Interface (first impression)

SHOW DESIGN INTERFACE ON OVERHEAD SCREEN AND PROVIDE HANDOUTS – ONLY PROVIDE HOME PAGE

- Based on what you can see on the home page/ various web pages, what, using one sentence, do you think is the intent of this site? Who is it intended for?
- Without concerning yourselves too much with the actual content, how would you describe the general feel of this website? Is it appealing? What makes you say that?
- What are your impressions of the quality or nature of content that will be offered on this site? Is there anything on this site, is there a sign, that would allow you to quickly judge the quality of the content? What allows you to determine the quality of the information?
- What do you think of the colours?
- What do you think of the images?
- Based on what you see, how would you rate your personal level of interest in going deeper into this website? I would like you to use the piece of paper in front of you to identify where you would click first on the home page?¹ Identify the first three links you would select?

QUICKLY GO AROUND THE TABLE TO GET EVERYONE’S FIRST DESTINATION THEN DISCUSS SELECTIONS

- Why would you go there first?
- Are you going there first out of interest or rather out of curiosity because you don’t know what you would find there?
- What would you expect to find via that link? What would you like to find?

¹ If participants have a copy of the home page, they would be asked to circle and number their top three destinations. Otherwise, they would write down on a piece of paper the links they would visit first.



- This leads us to discuss the actual labels and menu items. Are the graphic elements and labels clear?
- Do you like the way the page is organized?
- What do you think of the menu items? For example:
 - Do the choice of topics and sub-topics make sense to you?
 - Are they too general or too detailed/ specific?
 - Assuming that the website is targeted to someone like you, are the menu items relevant or appropriate?
 - Any missing items / themes / topics?
 - Do any topics overlap? Which ones?
 - Are any labels ambiguous, in other words, they provide no insight as to what you would expect to find by clicking on the link?

PROVIDE AN OVERVIEW OF ALL THE WEBSITE THEMES AND SECTIONS

- Now that you are familiar with what each section offers, do you have any additional feedback on the topics and menu items used?
- Would you say that the descriptions I just provided you met your expectations? Which descriptions did not match what you expected to find under a certain menu item?
- Are you now more interested in certain parts of the website given the descriptions provided? Less interested?
- What about your interest in the website as a whole? Have the descriptions increased the appeal or usefulness of the website to you?
- Considering all the different aspects of the website we've discussed, is there anything that you would change? What would be the most important change you would recommend?

4. CULTURESCOPE SERVICES AND FEATURES (15)

- Would you expect that access to the specialized services of the Observatory would be offered free of charge?

HAND OUT PAGE OF POSSIBLE SERVICES AND FEATURES

- Using the page I just handed out, please rate each feature using a 5-point scale where 1 is not at all interesting and 5 is extremely interesting.
- Using the second column, rank the three features you would be most likely to visit or explore.
- Please use the space at the bottom of the page to list any features you think would be interesting but are not on this sheet.



5. GOVERNANCE OPTIONS (10)

- Would you be more likely to use this type of information service knowing it was developed by the federal department responsible for arts, culture and heritage, or less likely? Why or why not?
- If not, what governance alternatives would you suggest? Could you see yourself or your organization collaborating with the Observatory on the evolution of this Website? Why not? If so, in what ways? Why is it important that organizations like yours collaborate?
- Which organizations would you want to see contribute?

6. CONCLUSION (5)

- **How important is it that a site like this have a graphic presentation, using images, graphics, animated components, etc.?**
- Does anyone have any additional comments you would like to pass on to the website development team?
- Are there any questions or issues that should be passed on to the website development people?

Thank you for your participation!



Possible Features/Services

Column A: Please rate **your level of interest** in each feature/ service in the first column using a 10-point scale where 1 is “Not at all interesting” and 10 is “Very interesting”.

Column B: Please indicate the top three features/ services you would be most likely to visit or explore where the most attractive is assigned a value of 1, the second most attractive a value of 2 and finally the third most attractive a value of 3.

Features and Services	Column A: Your Level of Interest	Column B
Newsletter subscription: cultural sector-specific coverage - Members can sign up for daily, weekly, or monthly e-mail updates of news, documents, and conversations in their favorite communities.		
Newsletter subscription: theme-specific coverage - Members can sign up for daily, weekly, or monthly e-mail updates of news, documents, and conversations in their favorite communities.		
Document collaboration. Allows users to upload and download, rate, and comment on documents. Versions of documents are automatically archived and tracked.		
Member directory. This searchable address book of online "business cards" allows members to find experts, based on each member's contact information, photo, bio, area of expertise, and other data they choose to share.		
Personalized dashboard. This is a member's control panel that allows them to bookmark links to their favorite topics, subscriptions, documents, and members that are important to them.		
Community calendar. This tool lists important events, conferences, and milestones for each community area. Calendars from multiple areas of the practice center can be aggregated into a single global calendar.		
Community library. This tool allows members to organize documents, books, web sites, photos, and other useful resources. New entries can be highlighted and featured throughout the site.		
Global search/sort. These tools allow members to perform powerful metadata searches to locate and sort documents, members, and discussions posted throughout the site.		
Moderated discussion forums: These moderated discussion forums would be created “in context” – directly in the document, topic, or business card members are discussing. Threaded discussions would be mirrored in e-mail to keep busy members in the loop without having to visit the site.		
Cross-referencing. Documents, events, and discussions can be associated with many topics, and are automatically linked to the members who added them.		
Unmoderated chat groups: This would enable members to discuss topics, issues, documents, in real-time, and in context.		
Feedback / commentary submission forms: These forms would allow all visitors to the site to provide commentary about the site, and to suggest resources or events to the editors.		

OTHER SUGGESTIONS:



Appendix C: CCRN Email Invitation to Members



Donna Cardinal wrote:

You are receiving this invitation as someone involved with the Canadian Cultural Research Network.

The Canadian Cultural Observatory (CCO) is preparing for the launch of their on-line information service called Culturescope at the CCRN's 5th anniversary colloquium in Ottawa on November 13. In advance of the launch, the Observatory is looking to convene focus groups in Montreal and in Toronto at the end of this month to pilot the user interface they have designed for Culturescope. You are invited to take part in any of these focus groups, as follows:

- Montreal, October 27 (Monday) - either of two sessions, one at lunch time and one in the evening (Downtown location TBC)
- Toronto, October 28 (Tuesday) - either of two sessions, one at lunch time and one in the evening (Downtown location TBC)

Incentive is in two forms: a lunch, and an honorarium of \$85.

Participants must be aged between 29 and 65 years of age and use the Internet regularly. Ten persons per session can be accommodated. Please feel free to extend this invitation to other colleagues and University professors or senior managers from the Cultural sectors actively engaged in cultural policy.

To avail yourself of this opportunity, please contact Sophie Chagnon from the CCO via e-mail to Sophie_Chagnon@PCH.GC.CA before noon October 21st. 2003. Please indicate time and location.

Thank you for considering this opportunity.


Donna Cardinal, President
Canadian Cultural Research Network



Appendix D: Website Screen Shots







[Home](#) | [Feedback](#) | [Français](#) | [Site map](#)

ALL of the words

[home](#)

Site Explorer

- ▶ [Resource Collection](#)
- ▶ [Knowledge Network](#)
- ▶ [About Us](#)
- ▶ [Help](#)
- ▶ [Important Notices](#)

Home

Welcome to Culturescope.ca, an on-line service designed to meet the needs of cultural policy researchers in Canada, as well as other professionals engaged in Canadian cultural development. Culturescope.ca provides free on-line access to a regularly updated **resource collection**, a **knowledge network** for sharing ideas, and access to a network of reference librarians through its **reference desk**. Culturescope.ca is brought to you by the Canadian Cultural Observatory.

Features

[Training Guide - User Instructional Video](#)
This QuickTime animated video is a live presentation on how to use Culturescope. If you're new to Culturescope, this animated video is intended to help you get quickly off the ground by focusing on the most important features, the ones that you will use over and... [\[more\]](#)

[Culture Statistics Program](#)
Recognizing the need for optimal use of Statistics Canada's culture data holdings in a clear and accessible way through improved data dissemination, the Canadian Cultural Observatory has invested considerable resources to timely disseminate, via... [\[more\]](#)

[Arts Research Monitor](#)
Get a monthly update with the Arts Research Monitor. The Monitor provides a timely summary of innovative approaches to important arts issues, such as economic impact, advocacy, arts education, arts funding, human resources, attendance, and social and... [\[more\]](#)

[Suggest a resource or event](#)

Reference Desk

Free access to [Culturescope.ca's bilingual professional reference service](#) in partnership with National Library of Canada.

E-Bulletins

- ▶ [The Canada Council for the Arts](#)
- ▶ [The Creative City Network](#)
- ▶ [The Canadian Cultural Research Network](#)
- ▶ [International Network for Cultural Diversity](#)

International Focus

- ▶ [CIRCLE \(Cultural Information and Research Centres Liaison in Europe\)](#)
- ▶ [The Center for Arts and Culture](#)
- ▶ [Observatories of Cultural Policies in Africa](#)
- ▶ [Office of Cultural Affairs from the OAS](#)

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[Important Notices](#)



[Home](#) | [Feedback](#) | [Français](#) | [Site map](#)

ALL of the words

[Home](#) > [Resource Collection](#)

Site Explorer

- ▶ [Home](#)
- ▼ [Resource Collection](#)
 - ▶ [Quick Facts](#)
 - ▶ [Cultural Policy](#)
 - ▶ [Cultural Management](#)
 - ▶ [Cultural Development and Industries](#)
 - ▶ [Cultural Participation](#)
 - ▶ [Creativity and the Arts](#)
 - ▶ [History and Heritage](#)
- ▶ [Knowledge Network](#)
- ▶ [About Us](#)
- ▶ [Help](#)
- ▶ [Important Notices](#)

Resource Collection [Suggest a resource or event](#)

Welcome to the Resource Collection. This repository consists of knowledge resources provided by the Canadian Cultural Observatory, as well as other contributing partners in the cultural development community.

Some examples of information you'll find include:

- Previously unavailable cultural data, provided in partnership by the Cultural Statistics Program of Statistics Canada.
- Never before available on-line access to a selection of research papers, provided by the Strategic Research and Analysis Directorate within the Department of Canadian Heritage.
- The Arts Research Monitor, provided in collaboration with the Canada Council for the Arts.
- Daily cultural updates from cultural observatories and think tanks around the world.
- Approx. 600 cultural research related Web sites from Canada and abroad.

Features

[Feature1 title \(internal Object\)](#)
Short description of feature 1 will go here upsum ikium de trasum que dustum ikerate soubimoja... [\[more\]](#)

[Feature2 title \(internal Object\)](#)
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[Feature3 title \(internal Object\)](#)
Short description of feature 3 will go here upsum ikium de trasum que dustum ikerate soubimoja... [\[more\]](#)

Reference Deck

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E-Bulletins

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- ▶ [The Creative City Network](#)
- ▶ [The Canadian Cultural Research Network](#)
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International Focus


- ▶ [CIRCLE \(Cultural Information and Research Centres Liaison in Europe\)](#)
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[Important Notices](#)





Canadian Cultural Observatory



Home Feedback Français Site map

ALL of the words

[home](#) > [Resource Collection](#) > [Cultural Policy](#)

Site Explorer

- ▶ Home
- ▶ Resource Collection
- ▶ Quick Facts
- ▶ **Cultural Policy**
 - ▶ Copyright, Intellectual Property and Digital Rights
 - ▶ Public Funding
 - ▶ Public Interest in Culture
 - ▶ Policies (General)
 - ▶ Acts and Legislations
 - ▶ Directory of Cultural Observatories and Organizations
- ▶ Cultural Management
- ▶ Cultural Development and Industries
- ▶ Cultural Participation
- ▶ Creativity and the Arts
- ▶ History and Heritage
- ▶ Knowledge Network
- ▶ About Us
- ▶ Help
- ▶ Important Notices

Cultural Policy

[Suggest a resource or event](#)

Cultural Policy describes a broad range of values and principles that guide social entities in cultural affairs and public spending in order to develop cultural life. The topics examined in this section include copyright, intellectual property, digital rights, public funding, and public interest in culture and government policy. This section also features a compilation of links to cultural observatories and organizations of particular interest to the research and policy communities.

Features

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Reference Desk

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E-Bulletins

- ▶ [The Canada Council for the Arts](#)
- ▶ [The Creative City Network](#)
- ▶ [The Canadian Cultural Research Network](#)
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International Focus

- ▶ [CIRCLE \(Cultural Information and Research Centres Liaison in Europe\)](#)
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Date Modified: 2003-08-20 4:30 pm
[Important Notices](#)







[Home](#) | [Feedback](#) | [Français](#) | [Site map](#)

ALL of the words

[home](#) > [Resource Collection](#) > [Cultural Policy](#) > [Copyright, Intellectual Property and Digital Rights](#)

Site Explorer

- ▶ Home
- ▶ Resource Collection
- ▶ Quick Facts
- ▶ Cultural Policy
 - ▶ **Copyright, Intellectual Property and Digital Rights**
 - ▶ Public Funding
 - ▶ Public Interest in Culture
 - ▶ Policies (General)
 - ▶ Acts and Legislations
 - ▶ Directory of Cultural Observatories and Organizations
- ▶ Cultural Management
- ▶ Cultural Development and Industries
- ▶ Cultural Participation
- ▶ Creativity and the Arts
- ▶ History and Heritage
- ▶ Knowledge Network
- ▶ About Us
- ▶ Help
- ▶ Important Notices

Copyright, Intellectual Property and Digital Rights

Consult references related to laws and international agreements that protect the work, intellectual capital and publishing rights of artists and producers, both on-line and off-line.

Books

Book 1 title (internal Object)
Short description of book 1 will go here upsum ikium de trasum que dustum ikerate soubimoja... [\[more\]](#)

Book 2 title (internal Object)
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Web sites

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Date Modified: 2003-08-20 4:30 pm
[Important Notices](#)





Culturescope.ca

Canadian Cultural Observatory

[Home](#) | [Feedback](#) | [Français](#) | [Site map](#)

ALL of the words

home > Knowledge Network

Site Explorer

- ▶ Home
- ▶ Resource Collection
- ▶ Knowledge Network
 - ▶ Canadian Cultural Research Network
- ▶ About Us
- ▶ Help
- ▶ Important Notices

Knowledge Network

Welcome to the Knowledge Network, an on-line community workspace in which cultural practitioners associated with cultural organizations can share information and knowledge amongst themselves.

The Canadian Cultural Research Network, whose members will be using the site to exchange ideas and research, and to stay connected with each other.

The Observatory welcomes the participation of your organization. [Contact the Observatory](#) to learn more about how the Knowledge Network may serve the needs of your community on-line.

Some benefits may include:

- Cost-effective exchange of creative ideas and innovations within the community.
- Easy for members of a community to publish new information.
- Improved visibility for experts within the community.

Reference Desk

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Feature2 title (internal Object)
Short description of feature 2 will go here upsum ikium de trasum que dustum ikerate soubimoja... [\[more\]](#)

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Short description of feature 3 will go here upsum ikium de trasum que dustum ikerate soubimoja... [\[more\]](#)

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