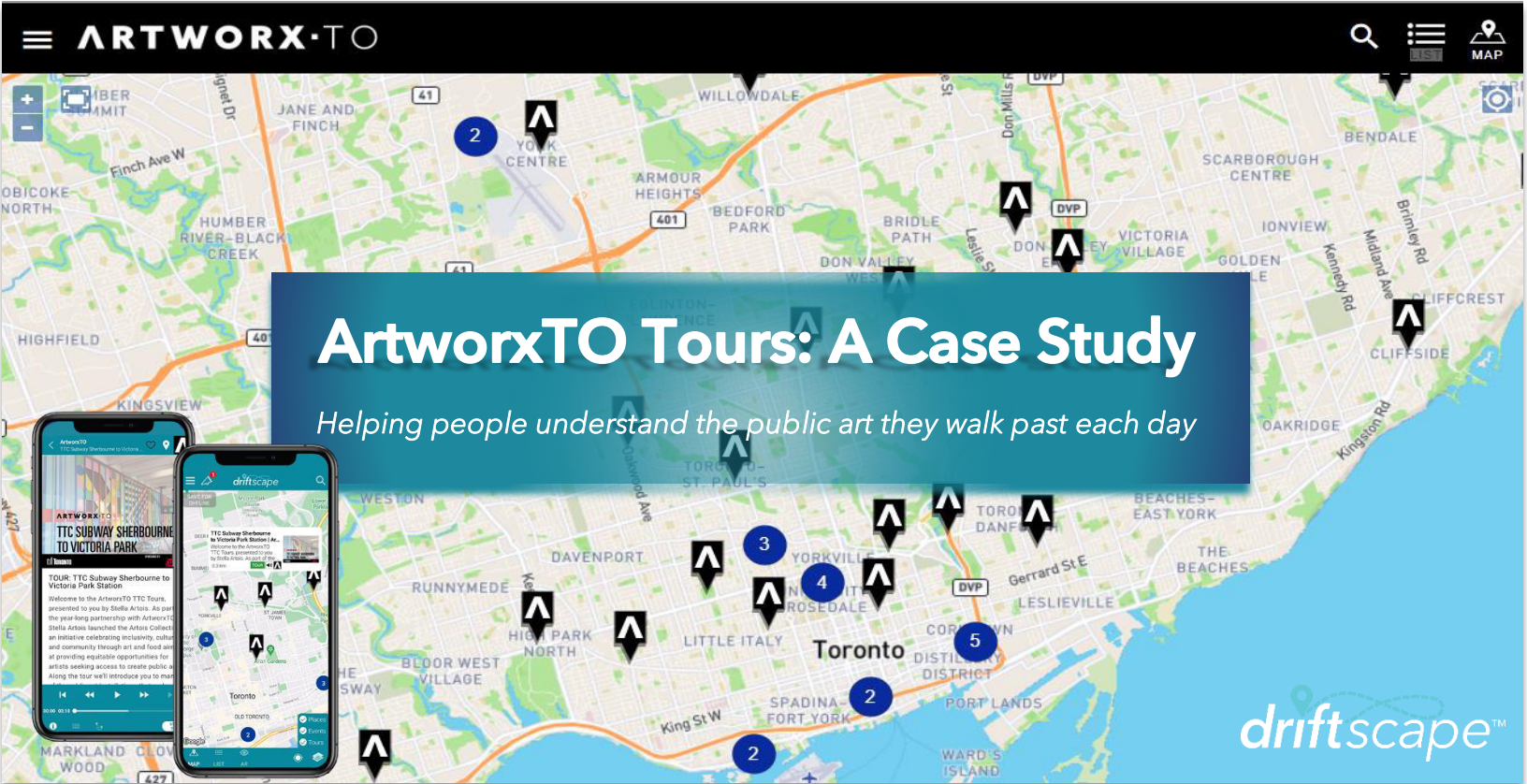




In this Driftscape Case Study, we show how the [Driftscape app](#) was used to engage the public in a conversation about more than 500 public art pieces across the city.

What is ArtworxTO?

ArtworxTO is a year-long celebration of Toronto's extensive public art collection and the city's creative community. Conceived by the city's Economic Development & Culture department, the program runs from 2021 to 2022. The program supports artists, art projects and creates opportunities for the public to engage with art daily.

The Challenge

The challenge was to create opportunities for the public to learn more about the public art they see daily, while respecting social distancing requirements due to Covid-19 which precluded large-scale public gatherings.

By creating awareness of public artworks such as sculptures and murals, and the programs that support them, the city creates a richer experience for residents and visitors. More awareness leads to more understanding and greater acceptance of new art public projects.

But how to deliver this information in a way that people can readily access and enjoy?

The Solution

Driftscape's shared platform was the perfect solution and an excellent supplement to in-person programming. Drawing on the city's collection of more than 2,000 public art pieces, the Driftscape team, working in collaboration with city staff and more than 30 community arts groups, designed more than 50 walking tours across town. The ArtworxTO Tours introduce the public to over 500 works of art in every municipal district.

Each ArtworxTO Tour features a dozen or more works selected by city staff or arts groups, narratives developed in collaboration with the artists and community partners, images and sometimes video content, and audio narration for an immersive experience. Many tour stops were narrated by the artists themselves, providing a direct connection to the work's creator. Community groups and artists were excited by the ability to include their own content, in their own words. Several tours were designed, narrated and produced by Driftscape's content team to ensure complete coverage of the City.

ArtworxTO Quests

Public engagement, through Driftscape, included Quests, in which users solve clues to find the next piece on a tour, using augmented reality to find sculptures and murals. Quests can be attractive for younger audiences, and other users looking for a more interesting way to discover public art.

User Experience

Artworks featured include large-scale sculptures by well known artists, wall murals and small, illustrated signal boxes under the city's StreetART program. Users select from a menu of tours depending on their interests and location.

Many tours were designed to start at transit accessible points, or to be completed by bicycle. Users pause at each stop while they hear audio narration describing the piece, they can view a video of the work's creation, or hear an interview with the artist, incorporating third party content.

The Driftscape platform provides a rich experience at each piece of art, much more content than is normally available on a plaque attached to the artwork.

The Driftscape platform is both iOS and Android compatible and its auto-play feature makes advancing to the next stop a breeze! The feature allows the tour to run in the background as users move through a neighbourhood, directing them accordingly. When users approach the next artwork, the Driftscape app automatically plays the next audio track to tell them about it, with accompanying images and occasional artist video

Client Benefits

Driftscape's ArtworxTO Tours offer excellent opportunities for third party sponsorship, easy updating as new works are added or new content developed. The Tours offer new ways for the public to engage with the art they see daily but may know little about. This enhances public acceptance of new artworks. And, at a time when the public is looking for new opportunities to get out and about, the ArtworxTO Tours offer an excellent chance to stretch legs and learn a little at the same time!

"Nobody's ever done a year of Public Art before, especially in the city of Toronto. And it's the largest cultural initiative that the city has ever done in its history. Driftscape turned out to be an amazing partnership for this. Driftscape app was a perfect package or mechanism, if you will, in order to gain access to those public artworks on the city streets so people can experience them on their phone and hear narrations and so forth."

Says Joe Sellors, City of Toronto - ArtworxTO Project Lead.

Driftscape's ArtworxTO Tours were featured at TEDx McGill and at the ArtworxTO Symposium in November 2021. For communities looking for new ways to engage locals and visitors alike in local history, arts and culture, walking tours using the Driftscape app are an excellent solution.