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IMAGES AND VIDEO:

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**Grand Rapids Public Museum Unveils ab1.bot
as Part of Digital Literacy Initiative**

New PublicOS Overview Video and DigitalMe Summer Programming Launch to
Inspire a New Generation of Digital Creators

GRAND RAPIDS, MI - The Grand Rapids Public Museum (GRPM) introduces ab1.bot (Artifact Builder 1), the first in a new suite of interactive digital experiences powered by PublicOS, the GRPM's innovative digital learning platform, designed to advance educational technology and promote digital literacy through exploration, creation, and storytelling.

Artifact Builder 1 allows users to author and modify their own digital artifacts in a web browser, creating interactive virtual exhibits with text, imagery, 3D, links to sources, and more. With ab1.bot, the launch of PublicOS, and engaging new programming, GRPM is redefining the future of digital learning in museums.

"The Museum, at its core, is a learning institution dedicated to accessibility and knowledge to all," said Dale Robertson, president and CEO. "This accessible platform will promote new levels of both digital and human connection *safely and responsibly*."

Designed with young innovators in mind, the platform also allows for safe exploration of artificial intelligence (AI) features like language models and image generation. The platform that powers ab1.bot, PublicOS, is the first platform of its kind in the nation to be awarded Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) certification by FTC-approved safe harbor PRIVO.

[Learn more by watching this video.](#)

The GRPM has offered several pilot experiences with this technology to young learners through summer camps for the last 3 years. Campers accessed the platform, created their digital projects, and designed small digital exhibits using the GRPM's online collections. These projects are like the next generation of shoebox dioramas, allowing viewers to jump inside with an Extended Reality (XR) headset. These projects showcased what they were learning in camp, turning concepts into interactive, real-world experiences. ab1.bot allows these young innovators to be more than technology consumers; it's here to develop leaders in digital production by making authoring accessible to all.

While these pilot programs have focused on digital exhibit creation, the outcomes that are possible with ab1.bot and PublicOS are truly endless.

“In our 2025 Digital Me camp, we trained a docent bot on Museum artifacts, placed them on a 3D globe,” said Josh Freeney, Senior Vice President of Digital Strategies. “Users could ask questions of the docent bot in real time to learn more about the artifacts via primary sources in the Museum’s digital collections. Our conversations together explored future possibilities with robotics and how this tech can be used safely and efficiently. These campers are really engaging with the past, present, and future through ab1.bot.”

[Join a Livestream](#) to Learn About ab1.bot and the GRPM Digital Collection

The GRPM invites the community to join us digitally or in person to learn more about this engaging technology. Josh Freeney, the GRPM’s Senior Vice President of Digital Strategy, will lead three livestreamed demonstrations with ab1.bot online and for a special in-person stream on the Museum’s 3rd floor by the Michigan Map on Saturday for Steam Day. See this technology in action and discover how it can be used to create documentary maps to tell local stories.

Join us on the following dates:

- Thursday, August 7, at 11 a.m. (online)
- Friday, August 8, at 11 a.m. (online)
- Saturday, August 9, at 11 a.m. (online + in person at the Museum)

Saturday’s demonstration falls on the Museum’s Summer STEAM Day, part of the Summer Saturday Programming. In addition to the ab1.bot demo, families can explore science, technology, engineering, arts, and math through pop-up exhibits and hands-on activities. Meet That One Team robotics club and try out solar telescopes with Planetarium staff.

To join us remotely for the livestream, visit grpm.org/digital

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About PRIVO:

PRIVO is a leading authority in children’s online privacy, minors’ digital identity, and consent management. PRIVO’s signature Kids Privacy Assured program aids companies in navigating the online privacy landscape from COPPA, GDPR to the Children Codes. Additionally, PRIVO’s specialized suite of cloud-based solutions including age verification, youth registration, and parental consent, enable companies to seamlessly engage with - or block access to - minors. PRIVO has been an FTC-approved COPPA Safe Harbor since 2004, trusted by leading and well-known family brands.

<https://www.privo.com/>

About The Grand Rapids Public Museum

A public institution with over 250,000 artifacts, The Grand Rapids Museum has been in town since 1854. It tells the history of Kent County. The Museum offers three floors of exhibits, a planetarium, and educational programs. A 10-year tax from Kent County taxpayers in 2016 helped fund part of the museum. It also protects The Mounds, a National Historic Landmark. The museum holds accreditation from the American Alliance of Museums. It is at 272 Pearl Street, NW, in downtown Grand Rapids, MI. For more information, including hours, admission, and events, [visit grpm.org](https://grpm.org). Be curious!