

THE PROSPECTS OF USING SOCIAL NETWORKS AS A MARKETING TOOL IN THE MUSEUMS OF UZBEKISTAN: IN THE EXAMPLE OF THE INSTAGRAM PLATFORM

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Abstract: Museums are a bridge between history and modernity, a place where masterpieces of art and culture gather, and a means of increasing the tourist potential of a country. The Hermitage, the British Museum and National Gallery, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the Vatican Museums, etc. they actively offer their services to the public and are gaining prominence among art historians. In this process, they use a number of tools and services, among which the use of social networks for marketing purposes occupies a large place. For this reason, this article studied the level of such activity in museums in Uzbekistan, the current situation on the example of Instagram, and gave solutions and suggestions for existing problems.

Keywords: social media, Instagram, museum, marketing.

Introduction: Museum is a bridge connecting history and the present, a place that gathers masterpieces of art and culture, and is also a means of increasing the country's tourism potential. Museum visitors are not limited to local residents, but foreign tourists can also be found among them. For example, in 2022 alone, 7.8 million tourists visited the Louvre, even if the complications of the coronavirus pandemic were not completely eliminated. There is no doubt that there are French citizens or permanent residents among them, as well as a significant share of foreign tourists. At this point, the reasons for this museum's worldwide popularity include its long history, location in one of the most developed countries and the most famous city in the world, many original and valuable works of art among its exhibits, and other reasons. But the reasons are not limited to this, but other museums, such as the Hermitage in St. Petersburg, the British Museum in London and the National Gallery, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the Vatican Museums, etc. actively offering their services to the public and gaining fame among art fans. In this process, they use a number of tools and services, among which the use of social networks for marketing purposes occupies a large place.

Marketing¹ refers to activities a company undertakes to promote the buying or selling of a product or service. Marketing includes advertising, selling, and delivering products to consumers or other businesses. Some marketing is done by affiliates on behalf of a company. Marketing refers to all activities a company does to promote and sell products or services to consumers.

Literature review. Social networks are defined by Kaplan and Hanlen as Internet-based platforms and applications that are built on the technical and ideological foundations of Web 2.0 and allow their users to create and share content.² These platforms include Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Telegram, WhatsApp, Tiktok, and LinkedIn, which have already found their users around the world.

¹ Marketing in Business: Strategies and Types Explained. Article by Alexandra Twin. May 9, 2013. www.investopedia.com

² Social media for cultural communication: A critical investigation of museums' Instagram practices. Journal of Tourism, Heritage & Services Marketing, 2020. Dimitridos Amanatides and others. School of Economics & Business Department of Organisation Management, Marketing and Tourism

As Konstantinides et al. points out³, as social networks become more popular, organizations and corporations are rapidly moving their marketing strategies to these networks. It is for this reason that international and local museums are using various new tools and methods along with continuous information about their activities in this type of social networks, and this process has been studied by several researchers around the world. In particular, the article "Top Museums on Instagram: A Network Analysis" published by Vasiliki Vrana et al. in the International Journal of Computational Methods in Heritage Science in 2019 talked about the use of Instagram by several museums in the world, including 51 owners of Instagram accounts were included in the study, 26% of the most visited museums in the world do not have Instagram accounts, while some accounts are actively maintained, some are only partially used to share information and attract users' attention. An article published by Amanatidis and other authors in 2020 explored the importance of social networks in cultural communication, using the experience of museums on the Instagram platform as an example. The article published by Gökçe Özdemir and Duygu Jelabi mainly analyzed the social network framework of Art and Culture Museums. According to the authors, the technological development in communication is contributing to the impressions of museum visitors before, during and after the visit. This is because social media has given museums the opportunity to renew their connections internationally with information about new research, special evenings or gatherings, new exhibitions, excavation processes and sponsorship services. In their research, they studied the 10 most popular museums with Facebook accounts and classified them based on specially developed criteria. Thus, in this work by Kotler, museum managers today must maintain the integrity of their museum as a distinctive collection, conservation, research, exhibition, and educational institution, while at the same time making their museum more popular and competitive. it is said that they are struggling with issues.

Methodology. Several scientific methods were used by the author during the research. In particular, the methods of observation, analysis, and synthesis were used in the process of gathering information about the topic and determining the causes and roots of current problems, while the methods of content analysis and comparison were widely used to find solutions to these problems.

Results. In Uzbekistan, state organizations and institutions mainly share information through Telegram, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube networks. That is why, in this article, we will give a deeper emphasis on the Instagram platform and its use as a marketing tool among the social networks listed above. The Instagram social network is rapidly developing and has found its place among the elderly and young population. The fact that this platform mainly specializes in image and video sharing, the ability of the author and subscribers or other users to leave comments about each media under it, makes it possible to establish barrier-free communication between the two parties. This network is a reason to show objects and resources of museums and attract new visitors. As of January 1, 2022, there are 127 museums in Uzbekistan, and not all of them have the ability to use social networks, especially Instagram accounts. Museums with such a page, their pages and the number of subscribers can be found below.

No.	Museum	Username	Amount of followers
1.	State Nature Museum of Uzbekistan	@tabiat_muzeyida	1018
2.	Museum of Olympic and Paralympic Fame	@olympicmuseum	861
3.	State Art Museum	@davlat_sanat_muzeyi	554
4.	Andijan regional history and culture museum	@andijonmuzeylari	518
5.	Museum of applied art	@museumofappliedart	517
6.	Museum of modern art of Uzbekistan	@camuz_uz	121
7.	Shakhrisabz state museum-reserve	@shakhrisabz_museum	74

³ Top Museums on Instagram: A Network Analysis. Vasiliki Vrana and others. Article in International Journal of Computational Methods in Heritage Science · July 2019

8.	Termiz state museum-reserve	@termizdavlatmuzeyi	90
9.	Fergana State Museum	@museumfergana	87
10.	Kokan State Museum Reserve	@kokandmuseumreserve	30

As you can see from the table above, the museum with the largest number of subscribers is the Natural Museum of Uzbekistan, but even these numbers show that there are still serious problems in reaching a large audience. Museum pages with less than a hundred subscribers show that there is a task of attracting new subscribers, radically updating the method and direction of content management. The main problem at the center of this article is that we should pay attention not only to improving the activities of museums, carrying out restoration and reconstruction works, but also to be able to show the results of these actions to the public, to make them interested in visiting the museum. In this regard, the administration or managers of the museum will have to take a number of actions. The types and directions of these reform works can be divided into several categories:

1. Organizational measures:

- a) Hiring the service of a dedicated Social Media Manager (SMM) or marketing manager for the museum or collaborating with such experienced specialists, developing a special marketing strategy, studying the experience of local and international museums that have been successful in this direction.
- b) Including the implementation of various meetings, exhibitions of scientific and popular publications, artistic evenings and similar events in the activities of the museum.
- c) Preparation of museum decoration, interior in a way that attracts visitors to post on social networks. For example, organizing a special photo zone, placing the relevant attributes of a museum, an ongoing exhibition, meetings.

2. Actions to be taken on the network platform:

- a) Providing continuous information to the audience about exhibits and materials in the possession of the museum, rare manuscripts, sources. "Artifacts/Collections Details - a category that includes online displays of museum exhibits to engage visitors at pre- and post-visit stages."⁴
- b) Maintaining the content not only for informational purposes, but also for advertising and marketing purposes. An example of this is to provide information about meetings held not in the form of reports, but by inviting visitors in advance, which are not only official events, but also artistic meetings and other gatherings, as mentioned in part 1. should include.
- c) Widely promoting the museum's remarkable feature, exhibit, historical event, person, place and event will also increase the interest of visitors..
- d) Widely used hashtag(#), trending audio, video, photo formats, not avoiding news, posting constant and current stories, using attention-grabbing words and sentences.
- e) Identifying the target audience and promoting the profile within the network, which can include celebrities, artists, bloggers or Instagram's own advertising service.
- f) Content language. If necessary, providing information in three languages or in one national (Uzbek) language and international (Russian or English) helps to attract more users..

In conclusion, it can be said that as new age technologies, the Internet age have brought many changes to our lives, service companies are on the way to adapt their marketing strategies to this virtual world.

⁴ A social Media Framework of Cultural Museums. Article by Gokche Ozdemir and Duygu Jelabi. December 2017. Advances in Hospitality and Tourism Research (ATHR) AN International Journal of Akdeniz University Tourism Faculty. ISSN: 2147-9100 (Print), 2148-7316 (Online)

Such institutions include museums that serve as one of the foci of urban culture, and they are also trying to adapt to the virtual world. Despite the fact that several museums in Uzbekistan have their own pages on social networks, especially on Instagram, there are still problems with marketing and these pages. Solving these issues requires making changes in the activities of museums in organizational directions, working in cooperation with specialists in various fields, as well as testing new opportunities in the field of SMM, learning experiences and putting them into practice. Correct implementation of these processes guarantees a positive result in the long run.

Literature:

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