

Chapter 15

Digital Communication in Museums and Museological Spaces: Diagnosis of Baixo Alentejo, Portugal

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ABSTRACT

SMM (social media marketing) aims to produce content that users share in their various social media applications in order to increase brand exposure and broaden customer reach. There are numerous marketing techniques to apply in social media in order to involve the customer, some of which have costs and others that do not. Digitization was a real challenge for any museum, requiring cautious and well-planned action to be successful. In this sense, the nature of social networks demands the adoption of a constructivist perspective, that is, a perspective that involves affirmations of knowledge based on individual and collective experiences. Presently, being present in social networks presents itself as a high value advantage, allowing the exposure of the brand, product, or idea at a low cost to a large audience. This chapter aims to systematize some relational marketing best practices that are identified in the museums and museum spaces in “Baixo Alentejo” (Portugal). Specifically, some examples of relational marketing in terms of communication will be identified and analysed.

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INTRODUCTION

Brand attachment studies have a vital importance for marketing and tourism (e.g. museums). There are few empirical studies that explicitly focus on the relation of brand attachment to other concepts, such as brand confidence, brand satisfaction, commitment and brand loyalty (Belaid & Temessek Behi, 2011; Sousa & Magalhães, 2019). For hospitality, such an approach can be very useful when operating within a global environment that sees companies often venture beyond their traditional geographical base into providing services to enhance tourist experience. Therefore, SMM (social media marketing) aims to produce content that users share in their various social media applications in order to increase brand exposure and broaden customer reach. There are numerous marketing techniques to apply in social media in order to involve the customer, some of which have costs and others do not. Digitization was a real challenge for any museum, requiring cautious and well-planned action to be successful. In this sense, the nature of social networks demands the adoption of a constructivist perspective, that is, a perspective that involves affirmations of knowledge based on individual and collective experiences. Presently, being present in social networks presents itself as a high value advantage, allowing to expose the brand, product, or idea, at a low cost, to a high audience. This chapter aims to systematize some relational marketing best practices that are identified in the museums and museum spaces in “Baixo Alentejo” (Portugal). Specifically, some examples of relational marketing in terms of communication will be identified and analysed.

TOURISM SEGMENTATION AND MUSEUMS

The study of consumer behavior has gathered particular interest in recent years in multiple contexts, notably with the development of the digital age (e.g. Pinto da Silva et al., 2019). Tourism is a multifaceted and geographically complex activity that increasingly generates new (and different) market segments with different individual interests. The term niche, in a marketing perspective, refers to two key inter-related ideas: that there is a place in the market for the product, and that there is an audience for that same product. This refers to a specific product capable of keeping up with the needs of a specific market segment (Sousa, Santos & Azevedo, 2020). Therefore, one should not look at the market in a simplistic and homogeneous way, since it represents a group of individuals with specific characteristics and needs.

In this way, niche markets emerge as a response to the growing demand for sophisticated and specialized tourism, such as museums. According to its classical meaning, the concept of heritage refers to the legacy we inherited from the past and that we transmit to future generations (Silva, 2000). Heritage is the “collecting” activity that results from the process of heritage formation. On the other hand, Faria and Almeida (2006, p. 124) consider that “heritage and identity are concepts that go hand in hand and whose diffusion runs in the same global channels”, underlining that the identity of a people is based on its history and heritage milestones, both material and immaterial. For instance, it is widely accepted that destination image is an integral and influential part of the traveler’s decision process and consequently travel behaviours (Vareiro et al., 2020).

In this context, trust has been studied for 30 years in several disciplines and continues to attract the interest of researchers in business-to-business (B2B) marketing (Akrou et al., 2016, p. 269). In relationship marketing, trust has been recognized as an important concept. According to some authors, trust is generally considered a fundamental to develop and maintain a long-term relationship (Sousa & Alves,

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