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Communication Strategy of the Museum: Peculiarities of Formation by Means of PR Technologies

Abstract: *Introduction.* The transformation of the museum, the modernization of its activity as an object of the recreation industry in the context of cultural recreation, the transfer of knowledge in a new, interesting and accessible form caused the need to update traditional expositions, intensify exhibition activities and, as a result, change its communication policy. However, today in the theoretical and practical planes of socio-cultural management, the issues of its marketing communications remain unresolved, the main task of which is to help increase attendance, expand the museum audience, or spread information about the museum among those who are unable to directly familiarize themselves with its exposition. *Purpose and methods.* The purpose of the study is to determine the communication strategy of the regional museum on the example of the communal cultural institution “Kremenchuk Local History Museum” and to represent a series of communication events as a component of its PR activity. The purpose of the research is realized by performing the following tasks: determining the ideals, interests and values of the potential museum audience, as well as optimal communication channels; representation of developed PR activities aimed at establishing communication between the museum and visitors and promoting its popularization. *Results.* The article clarifies the results of a sociological survey conducted at the initial stage of the research in order to find out the direction of modeling special PR events for the promotion of the Kremenchuk Local History Museum and identifies a number of PR events aimed at establishing communication between the museum and visitors and promoting its popularization. *Conclusions.* The use of the latest marketing strategy paradigm together with the implementation of digital infrastructure will allow improving the processes of the museum management system, modernizing its main mechanisms, popularizing museum institutions and their services.

Keywords: museum, museum management, museum marketing, communication strategies, PR activities, PR technologies.

1. Introduction

The problem formulation. The present shows the rise of consumer interest in museum institutions and their storage facilities, which necessitates the need for museum management to transform itself to meet consumer requirements, offering its objects in a form that will be best perceived through available resources. Such requirements force specialists in the museum field to form innovative competences of museum activity, including in the aspect of the communication strategy of the museum institution. The concept of museum communication as a leading concept of museology is associated with an interdisciplinary approach to museum activity, the activation and implementation of a differential approach to the museum audience, the search for new forms of work, including through the active use of Internet technologies. The modern museum is a phenomenon of modern socio-cultural reality, which has a double nature: it is both a museum and a tool for forming public opinion, that is, a component of PR.

State study of the problem. Theoretical museology today aims to study and clarify various elements and mechanisms of museum communication. The topic of scientific discussions boils down to questions about the nature of such communication, its forms and means.

The concept of D. Cameron (1968), created in the last century, became the basis for building the communication model of the museum. In classical scientific studies, it is noted that communication in the museum is carried out mainly through exhibition and exposition activities. As D. Cameron (1968) showed, the source of such communication is the museum employee, the exhibitor. At the same time, communication is considered as a process of interpretation and reading of cultural meanings laid down by museum workers. That is, the communication theory of the past, which is based on the heuristic concept of D. Cameron (1968), is mostly introverted, because it does not apply the experience of other spheres of socio-cultural activity and cultural policy, does not strive for active scientific interaction with these fields, although this implies a systematic approach, the application of which is declared, among other things, in museology.

The transformation of the museum, the modernization of its activity as an object of the recreation industry in the context of cultural recreation, the transfer of knowledge in a new, interesting and accessible form caused the need to update traditional expositions, intensify exhibition activities and, as a result, change its communication policy. The strong influx of visitors to museums at the beginning of this century also determined the range of issues related to the search for new forms of communication with them, including the effectiveness of communication, the use of the latest forms of communication, the equality of its subjects, a differentiated approach to the audience,

the ratio of visual and of verbal information in the message, their role in the perception of museum objects, etc.: S. Debenedetti (2003), K. Jagodzińska (2018), D. Folga-Januszewska (2008), R. Oldenburg (2002), I. Parkhomenko (2019), F. Weidacher (2005), D. Vasylenko, L. Butko, V. Maslak and Yu. Domitrak (2020, 2021), A. Ziębińska-Witek (2015).

Thus, the domestic scientific literature on this topic is starting to update the issue of the communication strategy of the museum institution, consideration of the museum communication system through the context of transformation in society. Special attention is paid to the museum's communication system in the broadest sense of the word. Communication is considered as a form of dialogue with the visitor, including through permanent exposure. An attempt is made to analyze the concept of the "third place" in relation to museum institutions. The experience of Polish and European museologists is analyzed and their approaches to the transformation of museums in accordance with the current requirements of modern times are highlighted: P. Verbytska (2016), M. Zubar (2020), R. Mankovska (2000, 2013), F. Weidacher (2005), L. Iliasova (1999), C. Müller-Straten (2008).

An important tool of museum communication is social networks and permanent representation of the institution in them. In fact, it is about the same acceptance of the conditions of competition for the attention of the audience, the development of the brand and the offer of one's own services (Ziębińska-Witek, 2015, p. 114). And the format of active communication on the Internet in general and in social networks is easy, accessible and such that it actually levels the barriers and frameworks of formal communication and is the same mechanism that, in our conditions, primarily helps museums to go beyond their walls, start an active dialogue with visitors and at least try to enter the competitive environment, and in many cases simply declare their existence (Zubar, 2020, p. 396).

Despite the generally accepted opinion that modern museums are a component of the economic sphere and, as a result, their activities are determined by the actions of economic mechanisms, today in the theoretical and practical areas of museology, the issues of its marketing communications remain unresolved, the main task of which is to promote the increase in attendance, the expansion of the museum audience or dissemination of information about the museum among those who are unable to directly familiarize themselves with its exposition.

In general, the issue of marketing in the field of culture has been the subject of discussion by scientists and practitioners for many years. For the first time, the problem of applying marketing for cultural organizations was indicated by P. Kotler in 1967. He noted that cultural organizations, namely museums, concert halls, and libraries, produce cultural products and must fight for their consumers and attract the necessary resources (Kotler, 1967). Later, marketing research in the field of culture and art developed: M. Mokwa et al. (1980), J. Melillo (1983), E. Hirshman (1983).

Scientists have come to a general conclusion that traditional marketing must be adapted to the specifics of cultural organizations, where the product often shapes the public, and not the public determines the product's satisfaction of its needs.

A summary definition of marketing in the field of culture can be considered a formulation that defines cultural marketing as the art of reaching those market segments that are interested in a cultural product and choosing for the product such variables as price, place and promotion, which will allow the achievement of goals that correspond to the organization's mission culture (Diggles, 1984; Evrard, 1991; Hirshman, 1983; Kotler et al., 2008; Kotler, 1967; Melillo, 1983; Mokwa et al., 1980).

Therefore, the functions of marketing activities are to establish and maintain relations with state, public, private and corporate organizations in order to optimize financing and attract new sources of income and popularize the museum institution (Debenedetti, 2003; Dierking, 1994; Prentice et al., 1997; Kotler et al., 2008; Tian et al., 1996).

Unresolved issues. Therefore, it is quite natural that the communication model, according to which the museum is a source of communication, has gained significant popularity in modern museum theory. Theoretical studies within this approach are aimed at establishing what role certain components of museum activity play in the communication process and how to popularize museum services with the help of communication.

Because cultural organizations offer products that may not meet the public's demand, they need not just to satisfy people's existing needs, but also to artificially create a demand for the supply in the public.

In this regard, cultural organizations need to constantly develop and educate their audience, prepare them for the perception of modern trends and trends in the field of culture, which requires a long time and additional costs. Maintaining the target audience is also an important task of museum marketing communications. Due to the fact that the cultural organization modifies and changes its product, offering the market new performances, exhibitions, concerts, the target audience of the cultural organization may also change. The task of preserving its target audience, maintaining constant interest in its activities is relevant for cultural organizations.

2. Purpose and methods

The purpose and research tasks. The purpose of the article is to determine the communication strategy of the regional museum on the example of the communal cultural institution “Kremenchuk Local History Museum” and to represent a series of communication events as a component of its PR activity.

The purpose of the research is implemented by performing the following tasks:

- determination of ideals, interests and values of the potential museum audience, as well as optimal communication channels;
- representation of developed PR activities aimed at establishing communication between the museum and visitors and promoting its popularization.

Methodology and methods. To achieve the set goal and solve the tasks, the research was conducted on the basis of the principle of objectivity, which revealed the multifacetedness of the research object and gave the opportunity to get as close as possible to the realities of the museum system.

Information theory was used as a methodology, which acquires special importance in the context of the general communication strategy of the museum institution. Since information theory allows applying an informational approach to the study of information sources.

The research is based on a systemic approach, which requires the use of innovative communication technologies as a way of modernizing the management of the museum institution and represents the museum as an important component of the system of socio-cultural social development.

In the process of researching the communication structure of museum institutions, a structural method was used, which made it possible to describe the features of the use of PR technologies, as well as to develop a strategy for their implementation.

During the study, the authors used the method of situational research, which made it possible to analyze the effectiveness of the use of PR tools in the process of adapting museums to modern challenges and to consider specific examples of the use of these tools in real situations.

The use of methods of analysis and synthesis made it possible to determine the degree of development of the topic, as well as to reveal the problems of the communication strategy of the modern museum system.

The practical part of the research is based on the methods of sociological, socio-psychological, pedagogical and managerial analysis, which were used during the survey of respondents. With the help of these methods, it became possible to determine the level of need of potential consumers of museum services in PR activities of museums. Also, the survey method made it possible to determine the real situation regarding the prospects of creating a communication concept of a regional museum institution.

Solving the problem of increasing the effectiveness of management in the socio-cultural sphere requires the involvement of the theory and practice of system analysis, in particular, the systematic formulation of problems and the formulation of tasks, functional and structural analysis of problem areas and synthesis of solutions. The systematic solution of the problem must be

preceded by its systematic formulation, which is the basis of the systematic analysis of the problem. The complete formulation of the problem in the classic systems approach, which includes formulation, construction, evaluation, justification and notation of the problem, was considered by the authors earlier (Martynyshyn & Khlystun, 2018, 2019; Martynyshyn et al., 2020; Martynyshyn et al., 2023; Vasylenko & Butko, 2021).

Information base. The development of museum institutes at the current stage is widely covered in studies that characterize the archival system through the prism of innovative management, the introduction of modern digital technologies into the work of museum institutions, the use of communication technologies both within the organization and during cooperation with potential consumers of museum services. The positive dynamics in the development of the theory of museum management in general and its marketing strategy in particular is due to the increased interest of consumers of socio-cultural services in museum institutions and their activities and the new economic conditions in which museums implement their activities. The scientific work is represented by thorough theoretical studies on the development of an innovative archival system. The theoretical and methodological basis of scientific research is the works of S. Debenedetti (2003), K. Jagodzińska (2018), D. Folga-Januszewska (2008), R. Oldenburg (2002), I. Parkhomenko (2019), F. Weidacher (2005), D. Vasylenko, L. Butko, V. Maslak and Y. Domitrak (2020; Vasylenko & Butko, 2021), A. Ziębińska-Witek (2015).

The main object of research is the museum industry of Ukraine through the prism of the implementation of a modern marketing strategy. Recommendations and a technological toolkit of an effective communication strategy of the regional museum have been developed, which can be useful for museums of various types and subordinations. The survey was conducted in January 2023.

3. Results and discussion

3.1. The results of a survey of the museum's target audience

In the context of modeling special PR events for the promotion of the Kremenchuk Local History Museum, a sociological survey was conducted at the first stage of development to successfully influence the audience, as it is important to clearly understand it. The purpose of the survey was to determine the ideals, interests and values of the audience, as well as to determine the communication channels. Before conducting the survey, we put forward the following hypotheses on the basis of which the questions in the survey were formulated:

- the assumption that low-income consumers visit the museum much less often than others;

- the hypothesis that the modern consumer can be attracted to the museum only with the help of special events;
- the assumption that special events not only work to attract as many visitors as possible, but also convert them into loyal audiences;
- the hypothesis that respondents usually find out about such events with the help of social networks.

A total of 50 respondents took part in the questionnaire, of which 20 were men and 30 were women. The age range of 27 respondents is 19-24 years who took part in the survey, 22 people aged 25 to 30.

Almost 37% of respondents called their income low, 7% defined it as below average, 55% characterized their income as average, and only 1% defined their income as high.

To the question “How often do you visit museums” the majority of respondents (almost 39%) answered “once every six months”, 23% – once a year, 35% – less than once a year, 3% do not visit museums at all (*Figure 1*).

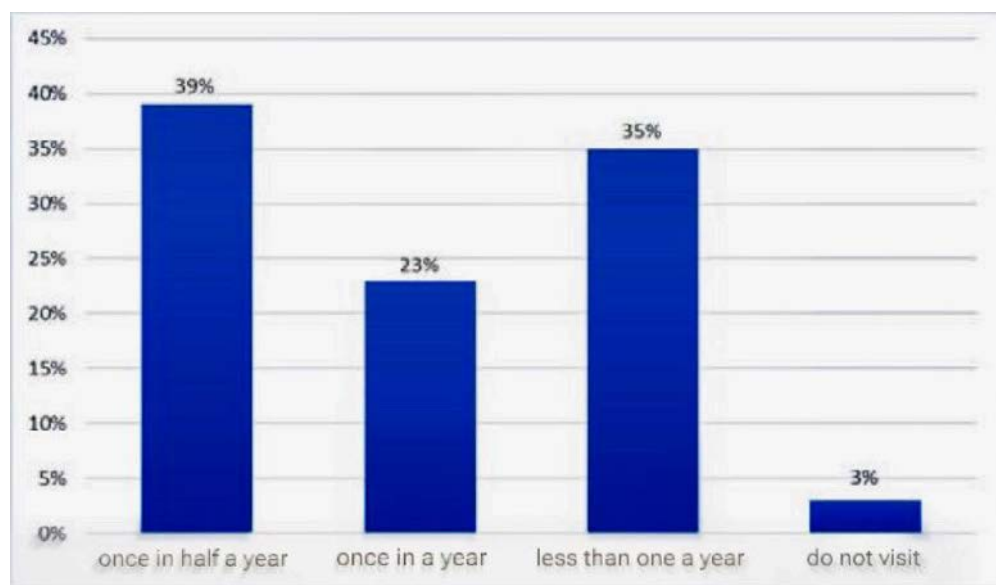


Figure 1. Frequency of visits to the museum by respondents

Source: own development

Separately, the questionnaire contained a question about “What format of special events are you most interested in?”. This question is most helpful in formulating expectations from the museum industry and evaluating the factors influencing the final choice. Respondents are most interested in the format of lectures, a little less interested in festivals, much less in master classes. Movie screenings and concerts are the least interesting to them.

The assumption that “low-income respondents visit museums much less than others” was fully confirmed. The higher the respondent's income, the more often he goes to museums (the most popular option “once every 2-3 months” is absent at a low level of income and reaches 33% among people with a below average income, this indicator reaches 42% among people with an average income). Respondents with a higher level of income prefer to attend lectures, discussions and master classes, respondents who defined their income as low choose festivals, concerts and film screenings (i.e. events borrowed from the world of commercial culture).

The hypothesis that respondents usually find out about such events with the help of social networks was fully confirmed. 75% of respondents reported that social networks are the main source of information. Recommendations from friends and online media are a little less popular. Television gains 0%. The assumption that consumers can be attracted to the museum only with the help of special events has been partially confirmed. 44.4% of respondents answered this question positively. The hypothesis that special events not only work to attract as many visitors as possible, but also turn them into loyal audiences has also been confirmed.

3.2. PR activities aimed at establishing communication between the museum and visitors

Therefore, based on the analysis of the sociological survey, a number of PR measures were determined, which will be aimed at establishing communication between the museum and visitors and will contribute to its popularization.

Tasks of the PR strategy of the project:

- 1) involvement of a potentially interested audience in the activities of the museum;
- 2) increasing the loyalty of consumers and partners;
- 3) work with the public sector;
- 4) expansion and strengthening of international relations.

The museum needs technologies that, in addition to informing the public, visually show the organization's image, emphasize communication, and establish a dialogue. Special measures have become a key tool for achieving goals. Next, we will consider what measures the museum can use for its promotion.

We will consider three measures that differ in their orientation to different target groups, and therefore measures that have different goals. In addition, we have selected events that differ in format and forms of work with target groups. Determining the concept and scenario of the events, the Kremenchuk Museum of Local History starts from its basic positions, from its mission,

related to the museum's unique offer. Ideally, the event is clearly identified with the museum (*Table 1*).

Table 1. Special events at the Kremenchuk Museum of Local Lore as part of a PR campaign to popularize its activities

Name of event	Format	Target audience
“Kremenchuk Past”	International forum	Future and young specialists, specialists in history, culture, ethnography, ethnology, music, folk crafts, urban planners, artists, co-organizers, potential partners, professional and public mass media, city and regional authorities
“RE: incarnation”	Workshop	Students, schoolchildren, preschoolers, art school pupils, teachers of educational institutions, ordinary citizens
“Mysterious Kremenchuk”	Series of lectures	Residents of Kremenchuk (local historians, urbanists, historians, ethnographers, writers, artists, ordinary citizens), students, schoolchildren, preschoolers

Source: own development

The International Forum “Kremenchuk Past” – during the forum, the issue of the connection between the culture of Kremenchuk and other world cultural areas, the possibility and impossibility of their integration from the point of view of geopolitics, art history, anthropology and philosophy, and migration processes can be discussed.

The event should be held in mid-May in the format of three parallel platforms. The forum offers such events as discussions, presentations and exhibitions.

The forum broadcasts the image of the museum as an expert. Cooperation with the Youth Parliament of Kremenchuk, educational institutions of the city opens the way to communication with its audience, that is, young people who are interested in culture, art and history (potential visitors). Thus, the event works on the following PR tasks of the museum: attracting an audience potentially interested in the history and culture of their region, increasing the loyalty of consumers of museum products and partners. Therefore, the goals of the event are to increase loyalty and attract a new audience to the activities of the museum.

“RE: incarnation”. Joint workshop of KP “Miskoforlennia”, Department of Youth and Sports, Department of Culture and Tourism of the Kremenchuk City Council and the Kremenchuk Local History Museum. The project is aimed at using waste materials to create new useful objects.

“RE: incarnation” is a creative workshop that will give a second life to used advertising banners. The format of such an event: three times during the summer season – June, July, August, pavilions covered with banner fabric can be placed on the territory, which would act as canvases for visitors. Workshop participants would gain complete creative freedom. Everyone, having signed their fragment of the canvas, could order a bag or clutch with their own work. This series of workshops is an excellent example of a long-term program of dialogic interaction with visitors within thematic projects.

Such an event (workshop) is an external, informal micro-event. Completed tasks:

- involvement of participants;
- coverage in specialized and public mass media;
- involvement of opinion leaders as workshop moderators;
- involvement of students and young professionals in the activities of the museum;
- building a dialogue between organizers, participants and moderators.

“*Mysterious Kremenchuk*” – a series of lectures, which can be co-organized by the Department of Humanities, Culture and Art of KrNU. The main topic of the course of lectures will be various curiosities from the history and culture of Kremenchuk and Kremenchuk region. This event solves the task of “increasing the loyalty of consumers and partners” and “attracting a potentially interested audience to the activities of the museum”. The main target group: the Kremenchuk community, local historians, urbanists, historians, ethnologists, writers, artists, ordinary citizens), students, schoolchildren, preschoolers.

Place: the premises of the museum, this site has an image resource, equipped with everything necessary and designed for a large number of visitors.

Promotion: announcements to be published on the Internet platforms of the museum and the department of humanities, culture and art of KrNU and the university, it is possible to involve other online platforms.

The main competitive advantages of the museum as a leisure institution are its unique educational programs that cannot be obtained in other educational institutions.

4. Conclusions

As a result of the research, the following was found out:

1. Today, there is a rise in consumer interest in museum institutions and their storage facilities, which necessitates the need for museum management to transform itself in accordance with consumer requirements, offering its objects in a form that will be best perceived through available resources.

2. The strong influx of visitors to museums at the beginning of this century also determined a range of issues related to the search for new forms of communication with them, including the effectiveness of communication, the use of the latest forms of communication, the equality of its subjects, a differentiated approach to the audience, the ratio visual and verbal information in the message, their role in the perception of museum objects, etc.

3. In the theoretical and practical spheres of socio-cultural management, the issues of museum marketing communications remain unsolved, the main task of which is to promote the increase in attendance, the expansion of the museum audience, or the dissemination of information about the museum among those who are unable to directly familiarize themselves with its exposition.

4. The results of PR activities of the museum should be strengthening of trust in the museum and creation and promotion of its positive image, development of the museum on an innovative basis.

The scientific novelty is due to the definition of the components of the PR activity of a modern museum institution as a component of its external communication strategy.

The significance of the study is determined by the relevance of practical research that will allow modern regional museums to form an effective system of PR communications.

Prospects for further research. The obtained results allow us to draw a conclusion about the need for further research on museum communication and a closer integration of museology with various traditions of communication research and with advanced achievements of foreign and domestic scientific thought. The study of museum communication in a broad economic and cultural context opens up the possibility of correlating the main directions of museum activity with each other as components of communication processes carried out both by specific museum and general traditional means.

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