

Visits to Local Museums in Serbia - The Average Model and Programmed Exception

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Abstract Political changes that stirred the Balkans at the end of the 19th century coincided chronologically with other unrelated processes. One of them is the expansion of new forms of tourism in which museums restructured according to the principles of new museology take important place. The development of new museology, being another separate process, gives a significant role to smaller, local and regional museums. In addition to the role of heritage protection and development of general knowledge they are gaining more and more importance for the preservation of the local community identity. On the other hand, unique specificity of each local community is an attraction that draws modern tourists and permanent museum exhibitions represent places where they can find out themselves about the characteristics of the environment which they are visiting. Acceptance of these new tasks by the museums in the Balkans is much more complex because they firstly had to give up their roles of established local guardians of communist ideology in order to get into the overall reform process. Only then could they embark on making permanent museum exhibitions interesting and understandable to both visitors from the region and tourists, along with the tasks of heritage conservation. Among other classifications, museum exhibits can be complex, thematic and open-air. Analysis of visits made to local museums in Serbia showed that their permanent exhibitions are sparsely attended, with large disparity according to their type. Complex exhibitions are least visited, while thematic ones are much more so, whereas the most visited are the open-air ones. The cause of this relationship, which is observed in other countries as well, is directly related to the degree of attractiveness. However, such a relationship can be changed. A case study of the National Museum of Valjevo which has three permanent exhibitions of various kinds at three locations indicates programming of comprehensive marketing activities, which are an important instrument of change. At the beginning of the process of reorganization a huge disproportion in their visitor figures which corresponded to the above described pattern was noticed. Continuous application of designed marketing efforts led not only to a general increase in visits, but also to a significant reduction in discrepancy of visits various types of exhibitions.

Keywords Museum, Visit, Tourism, Cultural Tourism, Marketing

1. Introduction

During the last decade of the twentieth century it became evident that many changes have taken place globally.

Firstly, cultural aspect of globalization is apparent. Theoretically, opportunity for cultural learning in the 21st century is greater than ever [17]. In addition, profile of contemporary responsible tourist includes a higher than average social consciousness and therefore seek interactive holidays that provide an enriching experience distinct from their day-to-day including opportunities to learn about other cultures and environments, local traditions, politics, religious beliefs [19]. Finally, as a product of globalization final shaping of new museology appeared, which led to museum visits boom [4] [24]. Then the former forms the

museum became anachronous. As noted by Gary Edson "modern museum must be an informative, professional, systematic, friendly and socially active institution" [2]. Therefore, Irina Subotić stated that "understanding of the untouchability of museums, their eternity and unchangeability changed to a great extent" [22]. Noting the changes that have occurred, Ljiljana Gavrilović concludes that "the new museology is trying to break the two-century-long tradition of exclusivity and elitism of museological work and to address all segments of society" [3]. Change of approach to visitors is one of the main features of new museology. Claude Mollard concluded that museums are no longer closed institutions which one visits with the purpose of being seen and that scare away those who feel left out, but that they have become places for the general public [14]. Therefore, museums are becoming very attractive for tourists as well, no matter whether they complement the primary attraction as the main reason for visiting the destination by interpreting it, or they rise up to the level of a primary attraction, such as the Louvre.

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However, unlike the old synonym for museums around the world, The Guggenheim Museum Bilbao has become a kind of paradigm of a new era and a new relationship between museums and tourism. This museum was designed, built and opened at the end of the last century with the primary objective to be the attraction that will divert rivers of tourists who constantly flow towards Spanish beaches, passing by this Basque city, onto its streets and squares [25].

While in Europe and the world the process of connecting the new museology and new tourism was taking place, splitting and the creation of new states occurred in the Balkans, with the abandonment of the system of "socialism as a world process" and entering the thorny labyrinth of transition. Therefore, the acceptance of the idea and implementation of the new practice of museology and its connection to tourism was made the more difficult. It was hampered by the practice of the previous system in which museums represented one of the powerful tools of the ruling ideology. It was hindered by the uncertainty of the transition. It was held back by the age structure of professionals and the problem of institutionalized learning about new theory and practice. In such relationships, while the old practice of ideological abuse of the museum was being abandoned knowingly and voluntarily, a problem in change the old professional principle "his highness the subject" to a new one "his highness the visitor" occurred [11]. Therefore, speaking about the state of museums in Serbia, Vesna Djukić rightfully observed: "While museums in Europe and America, are visited by numerous visitors, here it is the opposite – they are widely ignored by the audience (...) Why is this the case everywhere in the world, and not with our country? The reason for this could be different awareness of the importance of cultural institutions (...) Museums around the world exist to meet the needs of the audience, and here to preserve and conserve museum items" [1].

Vesna Djukić wrote these words a decade and a half after the beginning of the turbulent transition in the Balkans. Almost the entire decade passed since then. Therefore, it is time to look more specifically at the general modernizing changes of approach, especially from the aspect of the museum to the public, particularly tourists. The focus of this paper is directed towards local and regional museums in Serbia. After a general introduction to museums and its permanent exhibitions, an overview of the state of museum exhibitions and their visits to regional museums in Serbia is presented. Then, a case study that suggests a possible way of changing the practical application of modern museums with incorporated elements of marketing and management is given.

2. Museum Visits

2.1. General Considerations about Museum Visit

A professor at City University London, Vicky Woollard, reasonably believes that the increase in the number of

visitors is a raw but unambiguous indicator of success of any museum. If steady, growth clearly shows visitor satisfaction [27]. Bearing this in mind, managers of many museums in the world feel the hidden discomfort when confronted with newspapers headlines such as *The Louvre visitor numbers rise to 8.8 million* [23]. Other museums such as the British Museum can boast millions of visits which at the beginning of the 21st century records the visit of 5.6 million, or London's National Gallery 4.9, the Vatican Museum 3, Versailles and the Musée d'Orsay (Paris) 2.4 and 2.5 respectively, London's Tate gallery 2.2, Madrid's Prada 1.7, Hermitage museum in Petersburg 1.7, Vienna Museum of art History 1.6 and Florence Uffizi Gallery 1.5 million visitors [4]. However, all these examples are of the most famous museums, located in the largest cities of the world. Their visitor figures are certainly not a benchmark for average museums which are in their size, popularity, organization, attractiveness of offer and location entirely differently positioned. An illustrative example can be a museum in French city of Belfort, which has about 60,000 residents. Close to German and Swiss borders, the old city with the cathedral originating from the 18th century, preserved, reconstructed Vauban type fortress and famous Bartholdi lion sculpture are the attractions that contribute towards the development of Belfort as a cultural tourism destination. In Belfort there is a local museum of history and art Musée et Lion. From an internal document on its functioning *Musée et Lion: suivi nombre de visiteurs* received from Bojana Jokić Ilić, the curator of the Military Museum in Belgrade who was a volunteer in Belfort during the 2007, it can be seen that the fort was visited by 111,499 visitors during that year, whereas the plateau with the lion sculpture had 71,885 visitors. However, visit to the permanent exhibition was much lower. Historical exhibition of the museum had 14,043 and the art exhibition had 4,381 visitors [11]. A similar, diverse, but much smaller than the number of visits to the most famous mega-museum is visitation rate to the museums of British Lancashire area [26] which indicates different relations, though not less important that small, local and regional museums have.

2.2. Regional / Local Museums

Regardless of any differences that are observed to the meaning of "local" and "regional", The International Council of Museums (ICOM) makes no distinction between "Local Museums" and "Regional Museums". Moreover, ICOM body "ICOM International Committee for Regional Museums (ICR)" bore the name "Committee for Local Museums" during the first decades of its existence [6]. Statute of ICR defines regional museums as follows: „Regional Museums are defined in a broad sense, applying to countries of different cultural background, as museums that collect, research and display objects and other relevant contents from a region, in most cases smaller than the territory of a state (district, landscape, town or village). As a rule they work in the fields of natural, social, ethnic and cultural history of a given region in general or in special

collections and exhibitions” [20]. Thus, viewed in a broader sense, regional museum is every museum that is not national, but with the possibility that the concept of a regional museum is more closely determined according to the usual practice of the state.

Regarding activities and visits to regional museums, Greg McManus, the President of ICOM International Committee on Museum Management (INTERCOM), believes that there is a significant difference between the museums space, facilities and programs designed for locals and tourists. For the local population, the primary significance of a temporary thematic exhibition and other public programs of short duration is the fact that they make it possible for the interest in the museum not to be lost and the local population is encouraged to repeat visits.

On the other hand, for tourists who will probably visit the museum only once in their life, it is essential that the permanent exhibition presents the stories about the environment in which the museum is situated thus reinforcing the destination values. Tourists’ motivation for visiting museums relates to the need for better understanding of nature, geography, history, and life at the destination [13]. So, one of the goals of museums is to meet these needs through its permanent exhibitions. Also, through the imperative to select attractive themes, exhibits and manner of presentation, as well as to apply marketing principles, their goal is to be not only passive interpreter of other tourist attractions in the region, but also to become one of the attractions for which the destination is visited.

2.3. Three Types of Museum Exhibitions

Permanent museum exhibitions can be classified in numerous ways, mainly in accordance with various aspects of the classification of museum institutions to which they belong. However, one of the classifications applies specifically to exhibitions. According to it, permanent exhibition can be complex (encyclopedic) and thematic. Complex exhibitions through the use of the most diverse exhibition materials present several "themed stories" from various periods, with topics arranged mostly applying chronological principle. Thematic exhibitions present, more or less chronologically limited historic themes (process, person, event,...), and in practice they appear in two forms, as a museum indoor exhibits and open air ones. It is this key division that is essential for further consideration of visitor statistics of museums in Serbia.

3. Visitor Statistics for Museums in Serbia

3.1. Museums in Serbia

At the beginning of the second decade of the twenty-first century in Serbia there are 150 independent museum institutions, disregarding dependent departments and museum collections and galleries without funds. Out of this

number, seven museums are national, 2 are provincial and 40 fall into the category of municipal, but with expanded jurisdiction to several surrounding municipalities, while the remaining ones are either specialized, or municipal but with no extra territorial jurisdiction [11]. It was those 40 museum that were the focus of the research *Management of regional museums in Serbia*, which also covers issues of permanent museum exhibitions and their visitor statistics for the period 2006 -2008. Basically, the research indicates that more than a quarter of examined museums, 11 of them, does not have an active complex permanent exhibition, 7 of which do, while 4 do not have a thematic exhibition. The remaining 29 museums have central, permanent complex exhibitions. Most of them, 16 museums, in addition to the complex also have one or more thematic exhibitions in the extended museum departments - dependencies. Out of that number, 8 museums have open-air dependencies. It is either a village folk museum, museum displays at archaeological sites or historically famous places [11].

3.2. Visitor Statistics for the Period 2006 - 2008

Regarding visits to permanent exhibitions, information was gathered from 27 museums, 16 of which had active both central complex exhibition and one or more thematic museum dependencies. Only 9 of them had central exhibitions, whereas in 2 museums only dependencies were active. Analysis of the information obtained showed that, depending on the museum, visits to the complex exhibition ranged from 100 to over 14,000 visitors, and that visits to the complex display of a virtual museum, which represents average statistical model, was 5,500 visitors a year. On the other hand, visits to thematic exhibitions to the museum dependencies ranged from 1,300 to 39,000, and the average visit to statistical model of this kind was 13,000, i.e. more than double the visits to complex exhibitions (ratio 1: 2.36). Although in the final analysis of the study the difference between thematic indoor exhibitions and open-air ones was not made, in specific samples it can be observed that the exhibitions in the open air are much more visited than indoor exhibitions, and that visits to them ranged from 15,000 to 39,000 a year. The data suggest that the central complex museum exhibitions in Serbia are less visited than the thematic ones, and that thematic exhibitions in the open air are more visited than the thematic indoors exhibitions [11]. This study confirmed the results of the previous one, conducted in the period 2004-2006 on a much smaller sample using random sample method [12]. On the other hand, according to an average of 5,500 visitors of average statistical model of complex exhibition, one-half visits are made by visitors from the region and the other half by the visitors from outside the region - tourists. As for the specific museums, the number of tourists rises with an increase in visits over the average rate, while the number of domestic visitors grows at a lower rate or stagnates. Simultaneously, with thematic museum exhibitions, which are more visited than the complex ones, tourists comprise

the majority visits, especially domestic tourists from Serbia, and very few from abroad [11]. This fact leads to a further analysis focused on the issues of attractiveness of museum displays of various types of exhibitions.

3.3. The Causes of the Differences in the Popularity of Different Types of Museum Exhibitions

Since the second half of the last century, when most of the local museums in Serbia were established, complex central exhibitions were designed by stereotype thematic plans. Emphasized unique specificities of the region where the museum is located were not mapped, but the overall general historical development, from prehistoric times to the mid-twentieth century, with a focus on World War II partisan liberation movement and communist ideology used to be presented. Vinča figurines, swords and yataghans, elements of folk costumes, German warrants after Tito (Josip Broz Tito), but necessarily without the other part of the warrant, with a reward for Draža Mihailović (Dragoljub Draža Mihailović) and weapons, personal items and pictures of communist heroes were commonplace almost all exhibitions. This emphasizes the fact that uniformity of themes was further strengthened by a kind of visual uniformity. Since many museums in Serbia did not have enough skilled staff, a very important role in their institutional development, as well as in the formation of the permanent exhibitions, belonged to external services of central national museums in Belgrade, which used the same technology and design solutions for the preparation of different exhibitions. Thus, as in the iconostasis, "canonical places" of certain items of a general nature were well-known. With these concepts specific local historical processes, as well as exhibits of unique features were incorporated into a recognizable narrative pattern, so they did not come up to their full potential. So, after visiting a few of these complex exhibitions, without getting to know the specific features of unique environment visited, but with a known general historical trends, tourists experienced *déjà vu* effect. While tourists who visited these exhibitions became fewer and fewer, they continued to be visited by students who come from schools in the region within organized tours, where museums served as a sort of 3D update of history books.

Exceptions to this rule are the museum visits to which are higher than the established average visits to complex exhibitions, where the majority of visitors are tourists. Those are the museums that have made the extra step and changed conventional approaches to start presenting specificities of the region, with the use of modern design and technology. Thus, in marketing parlance, they offered a new attractive product, but did not limit themselves only to that. They also used marketing through implementation of a wide range of promotional activities in order to convince potential visitors that their product is different from others they are used to and that it should be visited [11].

It is this unique specificity that began to be presented by new museum exhibits that became the main reason why the

thematic exhibitions in museum dependencies had previously been more visited than the old complex exhibitions, which still prevail in Serbia.

The content and location of each thematic exhibition are inherently unique. Slaughter of the dukes is a historic event that took place in Valjevo, composer Mokranjac and national hero Hajduk Veljko come from Negotin, Battle of Tekeriš took place near Loznica, the house of the writer Bora Stanković exists only in Vranje. It is in the presentation of the uniqueness and specificity offered by thematic exhibition, compared to the effect of *déjà vu* which is offered by the most complex exhibitions, that the reasons of higher visit figures to thematic rather than to complex exhibitions lie. Tourists had already seen similar central complex exhibitions elsewhere, even in their own cities. On the basis of the experience they gained bias that all of them are more or less the same, which affects the lower visit figures.

On the other hand, they are aware of the fact that the unique content of thematic exhibitions cannot be seen elsewhere and therefore opt to visit only them.

As the specificities and uniqueness of the content carry a higher level of attractiveness, additional attractiveness (attractiveness plus) is represented through open space and the natural environment. This is the reason why the archaeological site Felix Romulijana, historical complexes in Brankovina and Tršić, Risovača cave or skansen Sirogojno as musealised open spaces, receive more visits than not only central complex exhibitions but the exhibitions indoors thematic exhibitions as well.

The general rules that are so prominent in Serbia are encountered in museums throughout the Balkans and Europe [11]. However, there are exceptions, the ones that prove the rule. The museum the work of which is presented in the following case study, is just one such example. At the same time, it is also one of the few in Serbia which is comprised of three different types of exhibitions. At the time the above-mentioned research was performed (2006 - 2008), visit figures to its exhibitions, even though they were well above the observed average, were characterized by a classic pattern: the central complex exhibition was less visited than thematic indoors exhibition, and it was visited significantly more than thematic exhibition in the open air.

In the period 2010 - 2012 the situation changed immensely. Cause of changes is the application of modern marketing approach, which represents a kind of exceptions projection. It is about the National Museum of Valjevo (*Narodni muzej Valjevo*), and the case study is presented on the basis on the authors' personal insight into its activities and their results, as well as on the official annual reports and internal documents of the museum [7] [8] [9] [21] [16].

4. Visitor Statistics for National Museum of Valjevo

4.1. About the Museum

National Museum of Valjevo (www.museum.org.rs) is located in the city of Valjevo, which according to the 2002 census has the population of 61,035 and it is the center of the municipality of 96,761 inhabitants [15]. The museum was founded in 1951 at the time when most of the now existing regional museums were founded in Serbia. During the first half of its existence the museum went through various stages of development and came into the 21st century in a devastated state. Then the process of its thorough revitalization began. At the beginning of this process the museum in the city center had a thematic exhibition in Muselim's residence (*Muselimov konak*) dedicated to the Slaughter of dukes and Serbian revolution in the early 19th century. The exhibition was opened in 1995 and it had 4,000 to 4,500 visitors annually. The museum also organized the historical memorial complex in the village of Brankovina, with museum exhibitions in the open air (www.brankovina.rs). It started operating in 1984 and it had yearly visits of 21,000 to 25,000. On the other hand, at the very beginning of the 21st century the museum did not have a complex central exhibition. Previous complex exhibition, which was opened in 1979 was uninstalled in 1996 due to damage to the central building of the museum. Revitalization process which was started then included a reconstruction of the buildings and preparation of new exhibitions, as well as internal staff reorganization and the development and application of the modern approach to culture management and marketing. In 2004 a significant innovation of the thematic exhibition in Muselim's residence was completed and the central complex exhibition was completed in 2007.

4.2. Visitor Statistics for the Period 2006 - 2009

Period 2006-2008 represents the time covered by the above research of museums visits in Serbia. According to the study, the newly opened central permanent exhibition in Valjevo: *The third dimension of the past - a view from the future*, in which the focus rests upon unique specificities of Valjevo, with the application of modern design and modern technical facilities, was visited by approximately 13,023 visitors annually. Thematic exhibition Muselim's residence, updated in accordance with modern principles was visited by 17,804 and exhibition in the Historical memorial complex in Brankovina by about 28,000 visitors. Two-thirds of visits made to the exhibitions were made by visitors who do not come from Valjevo [11].

The reported results suggest that the reorganization of the museum, along with the implementation of new approaches in creating attractive museum products, active marketing and promotion directed towards the local population through the media and to all the citizens of Serbia, as well as direct promotion aimed at all travel agencies in Serbia gave visible results. The number of visitors of all exhibitions was increased to a number that is significantly higher than the number of visitors from the previous period and higher than the average visits made to museums in

Serbia. Even the number of visitors to the central complex exhibition significantly exceeded the national average for the visitors of thematic exhibitions. On the other hand, the already noticed discrepancy in the popularity of different types of settings (the most visited open-air thematic exhibitions, less visited indoors theme exhibitions and the least visited complex exhibitions) has remained present.

In 2009, due to the global economic crisis, reduced number of visitors from outside the city was observed in almost all the museums in Serbia. This also happened to the exhibitions of Museum of Valjevo. Number of visits to Brankovina dropped to 22,000, to thematic exhibition in Muselim's residence to 13,579, and to the central exhibition went down to 12,121 visitors.

4.3. Visitor Statistics for the Period 2010 - 2012

In the year in which there was a decline in visits additional management measures were conducted which gave a result in the period to come, despite the continuing economic crisis. Over the next three years, from 2010 to 2012, average annual visits to the complex exhibition were 24,263, to the thematic exhibition in the Residence 21,399, and to the exhibition in Brankovina 29,473. As indicated by the above information, new visitor figures exceeded not only the visits made in 2009, but also from the previous, record period.

Table 1. Comparative review of visits to The National Museum of Valjevo and the virtual model of the average

	A	B	C	D	E
I	-	5.500	13.023	12.121	24.263
II	4.250	13.000	17.804	13.579	21.399
III	23.000		28.000	22.000	29.473

A - The average annual visits to The National Museum Valjevo for the period 2000 - 2002

B - The average annual visits to exhibitions of average model museum in Serbia, without differentiating visits to thematic exhibitions by type

C - The average annual visits to The National Museum Valjevo for the period 2006 - 2008

D - Annual visit to The National Museum Valjevo in 2009

E - Annual average visit to exhibitions of the National Museum of Valjevo for the period 2010 - 2012

I - Visits to complex exhibitions

II - Visits to the thematic indoors exhibition

III - Visits to the thematic open-air exhibition

It should also be noted that the designed marketing activities resulted in rejection of above stated general pattern in which the complex exhibitions are less frequently visited than the thematic ones. In the new period, the number of visitors to the central, complex exhibition of the National Museum Valjevo was higher than the number of visitors to Muselim's residence as a nearby connected thematic indoor exhibitions (ratio 1: 1.13), nearly more than four times higher than previously observed visits to the complex exhibition of average model museum in Serbia (the ratio of 1: 4.41) and almost twice the average visits to thematic exhibitions of the average model as a whole, without making differentiation of those indoor and open-air (ratio 1: 1.87). On the other hand, visits to the complex exhibition significantly increased to reach visits to the

thematic open-air exhibitions (ratio 1: 0.82). At the same time, visits to the Residence as a thematic indoors exhibition considerably exceeded the average visits to thematic exhibitions to the average model as a whole, without being distinguished by space (ratio 1: 1.65).

5. Change Programing

Increase of visits to all exhibitions, despite the continuing economic crisis and changing ratio in the popularity of different types of exhibitions, outside the identified standards framework, is the result of the implementation of interconnected activities within the four of the five elements of 5P marketing mix - Product, Promotion, Price, People and Place [5].

5.1. Product

With 2004 innovations in Muslim's residence and opening of a new complex exhibition in 2007, these products of Museum of Valjevo have become much more modern than before, which did not apply to the exhibition in Brankovina, opened in 1984 and only later innovated to a certain extent. Therefore, during 2011 in the central segment of the complex in Brankovina a new permanent exhibition was opened, while both before and after that innovations were made to the rest of the exhibition. In this way, the entire museum product was innovated and modernized, with its unique focus on specific features, making it the additionally attractive.

5.2. Promotion

In order to generate familiarity with the "products" of the National Museum of Valjevo and present its attractiveness and specificity, a variety of promotional activities were taken on:

- Media relations activities were further strengthened and expanded.
- Promotional activities towards travel agencies from Serbia were increased, mostly by e-mail, as well as by constant presence at tourism fairs and similar events.
- New directions of email communication directly to potential customers who had previously communicated through travel agencies were introduced. These are schools and excursion associations from Serbia and tourism organizations from neighboring countries in the Balkans with similar language, mainly from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Slovenia.

In this way, the new museum products have become widely known, and therefore desirable and more visited.

5.3. Price

These promotional activities have been used to present the attractiveness of all exhibitions of Museum of Valjevo, but additional emphasis is placed on the central, complex exhibition as the least visited element. However, it is

noticed that it is not enough to annul the discrepancy in the number of visits to different types of exhibitions in favor of the least visited. Therefore, additional measures have been taken related to pricing policy. In fact, an opportunity of special tours and package tickets with discounts existed before. Now, in accordance to the degree of inflation ticket prices for a tour of one exhibition were increased, while the price for the cheaper package tickets for all three exhibitions was not increased, and the price including the visit to both the complex exhibition and Muslim's residence was reduced.

In this way a large number of visitors - tourists from previously more visited thematic exhibitions were redirected to the central complex exhibition, which still had its own visitors, mainly from the region, for which it represents a multi-useful 3D school textbook.

5.4. People

Increased promotion and pricing policies have contributed towards general increase in visits as well as towards diverting guests from well-visited to less visited exhibitions and increased effort directed towards the audience. Permanent continuation and development of promotional activities resulted in the internal reorganization of the museum from up-to-then unique professional museum service in which the focus was placed on working with museum collections. Because of the separation of interested individuals from the general professional services and with corresponding affinity, knowledge and experience, a separate independent service for museum communication and working with the public was formed.

Application of internal marketing [10] aimed at staff and focusing on specific characteristics of the museum and the destination to which it belongs, visitors' satisfaction is directly influenced. Thus, the work with the audience as well as additional marketing activities gain increased quality. Particular importance is placed on interpretation, i.e. the process in which the tourists are explained the significance of the place or object they visit with the aim of increasing visitor experience through the "entertainment education" (edutainment) and understanding of the cultural and historical heritage [18].

6. Conclusions

Nowadays, museum, among other things, represent a generator of tourism development, and thus has the potential to be developed. However, when one takes into account that the total number of visitors to regional museums in Serbia is small, it can be concluded that, with a few exceptions, museums in Serbia generally do not represent a tourist attraction, as they do not possess the necessary attributes: to be known to the public, to attract tourists, to be praised by them, to be a part of tourism supply, to make a profit, so they are untapped potential of cultural tourism. However, this situation may be changed.

Awareness of the new roles of museums, the application of modern museology practice, as well as application of appropriate marketing and management methods are all required for introducing change.

During the preparation of the central, complex, permanent exhibitions it is necessary, avoiding patterns that contribute to the experience of déjà vu, to display unique specificity of the area. Innovative, creative approach to presentation entails attractive interpretation of designed museum narrative directed according to the interest, understanding and pleasure of visitors, with the aim of encouraging emotions and creation of experience as the primary product of museum. Friendly targeted, receptive narrative conception must be accompanied by an attractive design and use of modern technology. In this way, a museum exhibition is set up as an integrated, packaged and attractive product mix.

Implementation of exhibitions and other museum programs, no matter how attractive they may be, is not the museum's sole activity. The modern way of life that includes competition from other products with which potential museum visitors could replace their leisure time choice, requires a continuous struggle for relevance and attention attraction. The rich and diverse museum promotion offer is a task that should not be left to others. Actual existence of stereotypes about museums as uninteresting temples of elite culture is always to be kept in mind. The existence of programs contrary to this stereotype is not enough to attract new audiences to museums. Therefore, it is necessary to have ongoing implementation of public action strategy, especially of public positioning strategies and strategy of recognition or public visibility development. It is necessary not only to negate the existing stereotypes, but also to position the museum as a major city as well as the national brand by targeted marketing and PR activities.

Finally, great importance is placed upon the development of the audience service whose staff need to be trained to transform informative interpretation into animation so the experience becomes memorable, and who, based on their experience, propose constant innovation of existing products, as well as permanently implement promotional activities.

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