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Digital Marketing for the Benefit of Cultural and Historical Heritage

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ДИГИТАЛЕН МАРКЕТИНГ В ПОЛЗА НА КУЛТУРНО- ИСТОРИЧЕСКОТО НАСЛЕДСТВО

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DIGITAL MARKETING FOR THE BENEFIT OF CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL HERITAGE

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Abstract: *The demo of the research shows how new digital media can not only be used for preserving the cultural and historical heritage of a country, but also be quite successful in promoting it and reaching the right audience in the right way.*

It shows the current digital marketing tendencies and how they change the media, as well as the customers traveling process, understanding, researching and using the cultural and historical heritage.

Gathered data, observations and research shows examples of presenting cultural or historical heritage objects and places through digital tools and devices.

Keywords: *Cultural and historical heritage, preservation and promotion, digital marketing, new online media*

Резюме: *Демонстрацията на изследването показва как новите цифрови медии могат не само да се използват за запазване на културно-историческото наследство на една страна, но също така да бъдат доста успешни в насърчаване и достигане на подходящата аудитория по правилния начин.*

Показва текущите дигитални маркетинг тенденции и как те променят медиите, процесите на пътуване, на разбиране, на изследване и използване на културно-историческото наследство.

Събраните данни, наблюдения и проучвания показват примери за представяне на културни или исторически обекти и места, чрез цифрови инструменти и приспособления.

Ключови думи: *Културно-историческо наследство, опазване и представяне, дигитален маркетинг, нова онлайн медия*

1. Introduction

The more digital people become the more access they have to faraway places, things and information materials. They want to be well informed and in the most digitally easy to understand and perceive way via multimedia tools and devices. This includes – portable digital devices – phones, laptops, tablets; applications and multimedia; digital internet connected, information posts in key places; digital marketing tools – social networks, blogs, vlogs, podcasts, catalogue sites, search engines and SEO, games and so on.

In 2016 г. over 66% of Bulgarian population is online, over 70% of the users search products online before buying and at least 60% of them have shopped online.

Researches show that 87% of them use social media and 70% of them trust social media for product purchase and are influenced from social media for brand trust.

In many countries investments in digital media are reaching the levels of traditional media.

There are several important tendencies in digital marketing and media usage, which deserve to be noted:

1. Internet – is a new all-media digital platform (for transformed new usage of papers, TV and so on)

Internet will become a multimedia portal for all types of media content, where users will be able to choose their own personalized content at demand.

2. Users are becoming more mobile – online and offline and they are all the time connected to Internet

Mobile devices will have increasing importance for customers' lives online and offline. Over 90% of customers in Bulgaria have mobile phones and 20% of them have smartphones with Internet access, 5.4, are using tablet (Mobile Review Research and DigiTribe Report, 2012). More recent researches show different percentages from 30% to 50 % of mobile phone usage with Internet.

Worldwide experience in more developed mobile markets shows that people in Bulgarians, like many other nations, will soon start to get more information about the things they need on the move, instantly with searching in Internet.

It is no surprise that tourist agencies and services are also going online and the tourist agency offices now have less clients on the spot.

3. Social networks and digital word-of-mouth recommendations and comments have been increasing their importance - 80% of online users spend most of their time in social networks and chats

Bulgarians as well as all Europeans spend most of their time online in social networks according to various researches, and Bulgarians are using them about 20% more than the average for other countries. 85% of Bulgarian online users are often (on daily basis) visiting social networks and mostly Facebook -73.8% (DigiTribe Report), followed by Google+ - 32.8%, Twitter - 10,7% and Foursquare - 1,4%. 81.1% of Facebook users in Bulgaria think that it's important for a modern brand to be in Facebook and 67% are stating that a brand fan page there helps building trust for the brand. Tourist objects and institutions should also be worried and follow what people are saying for them in the social networks.

Some of the municipalities in the country have started to use the social networks for building image, but still not to its full potential.

Social networks can help in many initiatives concerning cultural and historical heritage. Not to mention that citizens have already started on their own to digitalize the cultural things and the memories from old times. However social networks always carry certain risks like spreading not true or not objective information and opinions.

4. Bloggers – the new media of citizens

In the last 5 years blogging has been very popular. Many citizens or journalists have made special blogs for traveling and discovering cultural or historical information. And because of the personalized point of view and comments directing people what is most important, or what type of emotions it provoked – these blogs have started to be even more important to people for understanding one place or one culture than any official recorded sources.

5. Content and personalization are becoming more important more important

Different platforms and applications in recent years have enabled people to choose the content they receive according to their own needs. Google, You Tube, Amazon and many

other sites are now remembering people's preferences in searching and perceiving content. They are showing different results depending on the history of the user.

People don't want also too much details and information about things they are not interested in. Their attention span, time and patience has reduced, because of having too dynamical life, overloaded with information. That is why the standard means of promotion of cultural and historical heritage like brochures, books and tour guides are not that effective any more. Much more useful for cultural and historical heritage promotion and preservation in future will be personalized applications, bulletins or sites with good content writing, good search options, multimedia information and SEO optimization.

6. On-line communication results in real actions - QR codes, discounts, geolocation

A QR code on an object or a site can give to people much more information than they can read just on the spot. Also it gives them the opportunity to return to this information when it is convenient for them.

7. Online shopping is rapidly increasing

Shops in front of touristic objects, museums and municipal information offices should adjust to the current online tendencies. There could be a special discount for example if a person researches in advance and receives online some discount cards.

Also for tourist agencies and municipalities it is much more convenient to receive historical, touristic or cultural information online, removing the necessity of going somewhere and losing time and money to find the necessary information.

8. Digital environment is changing consumer behavior and business models

Many businesses and institutions need to change their way of working in order to be still competitive and useful for people. For example a library now is supposed to have a digital archive of the books it has, which enables people to find easily what they need. Customers demand faster, better and more convenient services.

9. Digital environment is changing the way people search, perceive, evaluate, collect and spread information.

Virtual and real world are now very connected. Virtual tools have enabled people to save time, make a better choice and be more informed. This comes also with being more demanding, critical and self-confident. Users now have the power to make a big influence with their opinion and spread easily the word about good or bad things they have experienced, reaching much greater audience and results than before.

Digital environment is transforming traditional media and people's behavior everywhere, including Bulgaria, where about half of Internet users think that Internet is helping them to maintain relations with people and to research and choose better and know more about things they are interested in, affecting their choices. They expect communication with brands and institutions online, as well as social attitude and understanding of their needs.

2. Examples of using digital media around the world for promoting and showing cultural and historical heritage

In many countries museums have been using digital tools since years- digital presentations, 3D exhibitions and modeling, multimedia screen posts, digital ticket reservations, email bulletins and so on.

Bulgaria also started to use digital means to present and preserve cultural heritage, but still there is more to be done. A good example of such projects for digitalization are BELL project – "Research and Identification of Valuable Bells of the Historic and Culture Heritage of Bulgaria and Development of Audio and Video Archive with Advanced Technologies", <http://www.math.bas.bg/bells/>.

Another project worth to be noted is the 3D models exhibition of Regional Historical Museum of Veliko Tarnovo during the last several years.

Implementing new digital media and Digital Marketing is becoming crucial factor not only in business and education, but also in tourism. That is why for every historical place or object and for every cultural knowledge and traditions there should be a digital recording. Younger generations choose where to go by researching the place online before that or by reading opinions of others online. So “if you are not online, they will not understand about you or the things you have” – same is applicable for historical places and cities.

One of the top criteria for choosing New European Capitals of digitalization of what the cities have to show. Many of the chosen cities on the new European cultural map have digital maps, which point the culturally significant places, people and information, including different multimedia tools and social media connections.

Social media and friends’ news feeds, comments, rates and likes have become an important criteria for people’s choices what to read, visit or use. Bad or good impressions and experiences of people are now not just a personal, but a public matter to discuss and share online. People have a more important voice, which reaches faster and further to many people. And news of bad customer service reaches more than twice as many years as praise for a good service experience.

Digital is removing barriers like: not knowing language (automatic translations), not knowing destinations (Google Maps), not knowing information (Wikipedia and Google search), distance (Seeing and researching before going), etc. Virtual tools are helping us to do amazing things with less effort and greater success.

Now every new generation is overloaded with information and in time the ability to search, analyze and implement will be more important than remembering and knowing something by heart, which has range and time limits.

Not it is not enough to just to have a beautiful historical building or monument in the city to be notices. It is important how it is maintained, showed, renovated, how it is recorded and promoted. There is many examples of not very significant sights, which become popular because of good digital presentation and marketing and many examples of very important cultural or historical heritage which very few people know about or visit, because it is not well used – for example in Turkey, Sivas city there is a very old mosk (djamia) from Seldjukian time, with many architectural mysteries and achievements recorded in UNESCO cultural heritage, but few people know about it and visit it, because it is hard to find information about it. At the same time one new mosk and park in the region have a very beautiful and well informing multimedia site and regular tourist visits. Many people have seen online or in TV the flying balloons over the mountains of Cappadocia valley, but few of them really know and understand the historical importance and cultural treasures of the region.

Via QR codes, electronic devices and bulletins people can take and see much more information about one place which they visited, than what they can perceive in the time of visit. For example Mevlana museum in Gaziantep gives the visitors a disk with songs, poems and explanations of dervish culture, mission and traditions – some of them with 3D visualization. It also includes an archive recording of the meanings of symbols knitted on the very old carpets exhibited in the museum, which represent the old culture, believes and traditions.

The local Zeuma museum exhibits preserved, old mosaics from the region with showing digital recreations of them to tourists on big interactive screens, including an opportunity for the visitor to “play” with the mosaics - by making and uncovering an old puzzle (fig. 1).



Figure 1. Zeuma museum

In Poland, Krakow Oskar Schindler's Factory has been turned to an important historical sight for visitors of the city and includes many interactive presentations of history including – digital recordings and sounds from the war times, digital info posts and a special room for watching documentaries (fig. 2).



Figure 2. Krakow Oskar Schindler's Factory

The city also has a very old Wieliczka salt mine included in UNESCO lists, but many of the tourists remember and know it not because of the figures and facts told by the tourists guides inside, but because of the numerous photos circulating in Internet and Facebook, with people photographed in funny poses by the automatic camera device front of salty sculptures, which signals you and asks you to send a free photo of your experience inside the mine (fig. 3).



Figure 3. Wieliczka salt mine

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