

Presenting and Promoting Cultural Heritage with Digital Media, Marketing Approaches and Methods. Good Examples.

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Abstract: *Making the cultural and historical heritage of countries available and attractive to a broad public, including in a digital way, is a key to making it survive and be acknowledged and well-maintained in time. Researches and practices show that cultural objects, which are digitalized and promoted, are much more known, visited and attract better investments. Digital tools are more and more used – tools like video presentation, 3D models, interactive photos and video with objects, interactive presentations and games, online tours and life events in social media. Especially, after COVID-19 anti-epidemic measures were imposed, such digital and marketing methods of presentation and promotion became a necessity for museums, cultural institutions, events, festivals and other forms of cultural heritage, in order to continue their existence, work and reach to the public. The paper explores good practices and examples and a variety of media and marketing approaches and methods, which can be used for digital presenting and promotion of cultural heritage, historical objects, places and intangible cultural heritage.*

Keywords: *Digital Marketing; Media; Cultural and Historical Heritage; Presentation; Promotion; Dissemination; Good Practices; Good Examples; Methods; Approaches; Digitalization.*

Представяне и популяризиране на културното наследство с дигитални медии, маркетингови подходи и методи. Добри примери.

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Резюме: *Културно-историческото наследство на страните следва да бъде достъпно и привлекателно за широката публика, включително по дигитален начин – това е ключът към оцеляването му дългосрочно, признаването и поддържането му във времето. Изследвания и практики показват, че културните обекти, които се дигитализират и популяризират чрез онлайн медии, са често по-известни, посещавани, достъпни и привличат по-добри инвестиции от останалите. Все по-често се използват дигитални инструменти и медии, като видео презентация, 3D модели, интерактивни снимки и видео с обекти, интерактивни презентации и игри, онлайн обиколки,*

събития и излъчвания в социални медии. Особено след налагането на протиепидемичните мерки срещу COVID-19, дигиталните и маркетингови методи за представяне и популяризиране на културно историческото наследство станаха необходимост за музеи, културни институции, традиционни събития и фестивали и други форми и носители на културно наследство, за да продължат да съществуват и да достигат до обществеността. Документът изследва добри практики и примери по темата, както и различни медийни и маркетингови подходи и методи, които могат да се използват за дигитално представяне и популяризиране на културно-историческо наследство, обекти, места и нематериално културно наследство.

Keywords: дигитален маркетинг, медии, културно наследство, представяне, популяризиране, добри примери, маркетингови методи и подходи, дигитализация

1. Cultural Heritage and New Digital Media

Cultural heritage is becoming more open and accessible online in the last years, due to physical limitations and anti-epidemic measures, in typical places to show culture like museums and live events. EU commission also aims and finances many projects in the field of making culture – tangible and intangible more easily accessible online and even for people with disabilities. Intangible cultural heritage is also often referred to as alive cultural heritage that comes from the past, lives currently, endures and develops for the future. This involves people - old, new generations and continuity, as well as experience, sharing memories, and living stories. It is also important for cultural heritage to be archived, preserved, widely distributed, and often practiced or presented in order to be sustainable. Continuation of traditions in everyday life is important for important heritage and traditions to not be forgotten. That involves traditions, symbols and their meanings, rituals, rites, home and work common national practices, celebrations, dances, singing, crafts, embroidery, recipes, etc.

Innovative new media and tools used for preserving and promoting cultural heritage are: digital presentations, websites, online platforms and content with open access and collaboration, online libraries and archives, virtual tours and exhibitions, social media presence, 3D exhibitions, 3D restorations, 3D models and 3D exhibitions, multimedia on-site screens in museums, digital ticket reservations and online stores, online live events, online newsletters, multimedia, virtual reality and augmented reality, games, smart and educational phone applications.

According to a survey of NEMO - Network of European Museum Organizations, with more than 1500 professionals in the preserving heritage and museums field, less than 20% of the collections in EU museums are uploaded and accessible online, and at the same time 80% claimed increased visibility as the main objective for digitizing their collections, as well as increased access opportunities and educational use. 75% of respondents pointed out that the biggest obstacles, concerning digitization and online accessibility for heritage collections, are insufficient financial resources, insufficient time, and staff (Todorova-Ekmekci, 2021). Responsible staff for digitalization and promoting cultural heritage should also have

or develop in time relevant digital presenting, marketing and Public Relations skills and experience.

Important trends in digital marketing and new media usage for promotion purposes are explained in (Krasteva et al., 2016) and (Bogdanova et al., 2019). Those authors as well as many others in scientific and marketing related literature note explicitly how important new digital media tools and platforms and digital marketing, as well as word-of-mouth recommendations and dissemination in social networks, are important for promoting cultural heritage in present and future times.

This paper offers several important key points to consider and have in mind for presenting and promoting cultural heritage:

- All-usage, all-media, multimedia digital platforms (e-news, online TV and video, online blogger and vlogger journalists, influencers, travelers, life events. etc.;
- Digital environment and COVID-19 changed consumer behavior, tourism and business models for presenting culture;
- Users are online and mobile - sharing at all times experiences and recommendations and reviews online and offline;
- Cultural heritage should be easily found by online search engines, well-described and categorized with metadata, headlines, etc. (Sotirova-Valkova, 2020);
- Collective knowledge and creation are used to promote culture.
- Content matters, as well as personalized content – people prefer to find, watch and share only content that is relevant to them, interesting and easy-to-perceive, while skipping other content. Form, performance, accessibility, interactivity of content matters (Bogdanova et al., 2021);
- Usage of digital games, presentations, videos, interactive tools and platforms, virtual reality and 3d models, smart educational games - for presenting, understanding and promoting national and folklore heritage. In museums, sites, tourist agencies, festivals, etc.
- Social networks have an important role for promotion;
- On-line communication and call-to-action results in real actions - online shopping, event, museum or fair visits, and tourism-related services;

As cultural heritage is related to crafts, works, local national traditions and sights, it is also important for the development of tourism and business. Especially digital marketing has proven with many good example cases, to be very useful for cultural heritage promotion.

Digital Environment and media usage influences Tourism and promotion of National Heritage. According to Fiz Travel Statistics¹: 75% of the people involved in the research, search destinations online before booking and 60% of searches are via mobile devices; 80% of consumers read 6 to 12 reviews on average before making a

¹ Fiz Travel Statistics – <http://www.fiz.com/travel-statistics/> (accessed 04.03.2021)

booking (Tnooz); 75% of new generations upload a photo, status or share a video to social media every day while on holiday.

2. Marketing plan and approaches for promoting cultural heritage. Good Examples.

The author of the paper offers an **8-step plan to promote and disseminate cultural heritage with a marketing approach**:

1. Choosing a campaign idea - something useful, practical, curious, educational for people, something new, updated or involving the participation of celebrities, politicians, foreigners, remarkable human stories;
2. Finding funding and assembling a suitable team;
3. Preparation for implementation and distribution of tasks;
4. Finding partners - companies, media, institutions, etc.;
5. Defining key media and dissemination channels and preparing suitable materials for publishing;
6. Releasing press releases or generating and publishing information in the news, before and after the campaign/ event, including traditional and electronic media and personal invitations;
7. Analysis and evaluation;
8. Development and sustainability over time.

The following paper offers systemized marketing approaches and types of good practices for cultural heritage presentation and promotion:

- Events, fairs, festivals and other cultural gatherings promoting culture, traditions & folklore (like Shepherds Gathering, Elena Crafts Festival, Surva, Veliko Tarnovo Folklore Festival, etc.);
- Digital and virtual tours, exhibitions, events (free or paid);
- Celebrating holidays, birthdays, anniversaries, related to cultural heritage;
- Making content that can have value for the news and media;
- Movies, books, blogs, vlogging online (blogging but with video content);
- Games, including smart education games, interactive display multimedia games and virtual reality games;

Relevant research by several authors from the Institute of Mathematics and Informatics at the Bulgarian Academy of Science presents some aspects and innovative approaches in presenting cultural heritage via serious educational games (Noev et al., 2019).

- Interactive digital displays and maps, recreations and demonstrations on the spot, 3D modeling virtual and augmented reality.

Good examples of that are the interactive culinary map in Gaziantep's kitchen museum² in Turkey and the interactive digital multimedia installations project MOSTI, at the Museum of Science and Technology in Saudi Arabia, well described with other relevant examples in (Todorova-Ekmekci, 2021);

- Awards, competitions, contests;
- Experience with the cultural object, involving celebrities, influencers or many people as customized interaction (like making a photo with the cultural object);
- “Open-doors” experience or recreation event, that enables interaction with a cultural object, symbol, place or customs;
- Education and schools, educational lessons and tours online;
- Charity events and bazaars with media coverage and partners;
- Cocktails with patrons of culture and art;
- Promoting Culture with Social Entrepreneurship.

Social entrepreneurship and e-commerce are important marketing approaches for promoting and sustainable use of traditional symbols and forms:

The figures below (Figure 1. and Figure 2.) show some examples of social entrepreneurship products with embroidery and a book promoting traditional Bulgarian rituals and celebrations.



Figure 1. Shirt for a man with “Protection” embroidery symbols, Vezba.Bg³.

Figure 2. Book “I speak to you daughter”⁴, Anelia Ovcharska-Milusheva, book with Bulgarian rituals and celebrations.

² interactive culinary map in Gaziantep's kitchen museum, Turkey – <https://www.kulturportali.gov.tr/turkiye/gaziantep/gezilecekyer/emine-gogus-mutfak-muzesi> (accessed 04.03.2021)

³ Shirt for a man with “Protection” embroidery symbols, Vezba.Bg, <https://vezba.bg/collections/mazhki-rizi-s-shevitsa/products/mazhka-riza-s-shevitsa-zashtita>, 2021 (accessed 04.03.2021)

⁴ Book “I speak to you daughter”, Anelia Ovcharska-Milusheva, book with Bulgarian rituals and celebrations – <https://cutt.ly/DUQ2ic9> (accessed 04.03.2021)

Promoting culture brings benefits for tourism and when this is possible online, then it can reach more people from different countries. Such is the example of Vezba.bg site which promotes widely Bulgarian embroidery and its meaning and value to a wide audience online, not only in Bulgaria.

The Virtual Heritage and Museums Center of Tutrakan offers 9 virtual tours, as well as many 3D models and other multimedia content and archive with cultural and historical value. Both museums – the one in Tutrakan and the Plovdiv Regional Ethnographic museum have digital displays on the spot in the museum and multimedia presentations of their cultural heritage online (Todorova-Ekmekci et al., 2021). The BELL project, mentioned in the same paper, also presents a good practice for multimedia presentation, as well as generating news and media coverage via exhibitions with photos of bells in different Bulgarian cities. A useful example for improving the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage is analyzed and described in detail in (Georgieva, 2020), by using the capabilities of new technologies to promote Thracian Cultural Heritage. It includes involving interactive forms, virtual walks, use of virtual and mixed reality solutions and other innovations.

3. Involving education and NGOs in campaigns and initiatives promoting cultural heritage

In the last year, visiting museums, which was before optional, became mandatory in the school programs, defined by the Ministry of Education and Science. Several parties and institutions were involved in initiating this change in school programs, including Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.

However, how such visits happen in a period of homeschooling, due to anti-epidemic measures, depends not only on children's online learning skills, but also on the efforts of museums and other parties concerned with presenting and promoting culture.

Often Non-Governmental Organizations and tourism-related businesses are involved in projects that present and promote better and in a bigger scale local cultural heritage. For example, EAFF NGO Association⁵ (<https://eaff.eu/en>) has an online TV and many recorded folklore dances with traditional costumes and music (Bogdanova et al., 2019), which can be used in cooperation with museums for presenting folklore to children and involving them via online festival competitions. EAFF multimedia site and related YouTube channel are good examples of promoting Bulgarian and international folklore and offering Festival Practices in a Virtual Environment (Nikolov, 2021).

Another example opportunity of online platforms and digital marketing and media tools that can be used for promoting cultural heritage is “Narodoznanie”

⁵ EAFF NGO Association – <https://eaff.eu/en> (accessed 04.03.2021)

(meaning “Nation learning” in English language) multimedia educational lessons at Ucha.se⁶ educational online platform.

Conclusion

All presented research and good examples lead to the conclusion that more new digital media tools and methods can and should be used for promoting cultural heritage, places and events. The presence of cultural heritage in digital media in an open and accessible way is important for its modern presentation, promotion and sustainability. The same applies for integrating marketing approaches and methods for promoting culture. They are often more effective and reach wider audiences online.

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