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## MUSEUMS & CULTURAL HERITAGE VIA SOCIAL MEDIA: AN INTEGRATED LITERATURE REVIEW

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*Museums are increasingly using social media to include newer active experiences and entertainment. Not only does this digital shift provide a cost-effective, targeted and direct communication with the audience, but it also expands the museum experience beyond the borders of time and place. Although social media has triggered the attention of scholars, no previous study has classified the main ways in which social media affect museums. Drawing on a review of 54 papers this paper both categorizes and presents four major effects. The first effect relates to the opportunities of social media to museum experience and communication. The second effect is the social media enhancement to museums' learning process. The third effect analyses patterns of social media use in museums. The fourth effect involves both the problems and the barriers attendant to social media integration in museums. This study contributes by presenting new theoretical insights, research topics and managerial implications.*

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**Keywords:** *social media, museums, arts marketing, NPOs, cultural tourism, e-marketing*

## INTRODUCTION

Museums are the most representative example of cultural production (Venkatesh & Meamber 2006). Venkatesh and Meamber define cultural production as “the creation, diffusion, and consumption of cultural products” (Venkatesh & Meamber, 2006:11). Museums play a vital role in a country’s sustainable development, branding and net growth (Passebois & Aurier, 2004; Anholt, 2008; Pratt, 2012). For example, UK Museums account for 0.4 per cent of UK GDP (<http://www.museumsassociation.org/>; Museum Association, 2011). At the same time, museums are now competing with various cultural institutions and entertainment facilities (Kim, 2012; Fletcher & Lee, 2012; Hausmann, 2012a). The positive prospects of this market, along with the increasing competition and technological advances have totally changed the nature of museums introducing a new museum profile and experience (McLean, 1995; Kawashima, 1998). This new profile of museums has two main components: the emergence of the cultural marketing and the impact of social media.

First, several studies acknowledge the differences in arts organisations (e.g. museums and galleries) between their procedures and those of the profit-making enterprises. Thus, marketing scholars recognizing the unique characteristics of cultural product and the differences between traditional marketing and arts marketing introduced the definition of “cultural marketing” (Passebois & Aurier, 2004; Botti 2000; Colbert, 2003; Colbert & Courchesne, 2012). Moreover, Rentschler and Osborne (2008) identify that more and more creative industries align themselves to the new wave of the “artertainment/ edutainment” marketing strategy, in which art is

communicated through entertainment. In contrast, Resnick, (2004) disagrees about the involvement of amuse and entertainment (artertainment / edutainment) in the cultural product.

Second, Web 2.0 has created new opportunities and challenges for art organisations. Museums are now called upon adapt to the new digital era and captivate audiences online (Colbert & Courchesne, 2012; Kotler, 2001; Hume & Mills, 2011). More and more museums are increasingly adopting the digitalisation and personalisation coming from Web 2.0 (Russo et al. 2009). This digital transformation is now expanding the relations between museums and visitors. Consequently, visitors seek information anytime and anywhere. Moreover, Lepouras and Vassilakis (2004) argue that Web 2.0 leads museums to the new stream of edutainment (education+entertainment provided by combination of museum and web tools). This new stream boosts visitors' engagement in the offline environment and it provides new educational opportunities (Marty, 2011). Typical examples of edutainment constitute the personal digital collections such as Getty Museums at Tate, Educators Online at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Learning@Whitney at Whitney Museum of American Art, and RFID application at the Science Museum in London.

At the same time, "social media applications are becoming the new communication status quo" (Belenioti et al., 2014:1). Social media offer a dialogic, well targeted and economic communication. Social media instruments have extended the notion of interaction. Social media also provide visitors with new chances of interaction beyond the offline museum via the 3D museums' representation or the artifacts such as social media and Video, e- database and digital museums' collections (Marty, 2008; Jafari et al., 2013; Lepouras & Vassilakis, 2004; Arends et al., 2009; Weilenmann et al., 2013). However, social media emerge crucial challenges for museums managers. First, museums lag to create a dialogic communication via social media. Similarly, Quinton and Fennemore (2013) observe that though NPOs have integrated Web 2.0 tools, they have adopted one

way communication, totally different to the e-marketing orientation. Second, museums find attracting and retaining visitors' loyalty difficult although visitors stand in the center of the museum experience. As a result, effective communication policy is one of the greatest challenges for museums.

To date, scholars have successfully focused how NPOs and museums exploit social media (Quinton & Fennemore, 2013; Nah & Saxton, 2012; Fletcher & Lee, 2012; Hausmann, 2012a; Hausmann, 2012b). In addition, no research categorized the major opportunities, usage patterns and challenges of social media use in museums. After the calls by Berthon et al. (2012), Hausmann (2012b) and Nah and Saxton (2012), this paper presents the main effects of social media on museums. In this article we argued that according to the available studies by 2014 social media have four major effects in museums:

- Benefits of social media in terms of museums communication
  - Social media effects on learning process
  - Insights about the use of social media in creative industries
  - Problems and barriers of social media integration in the museums.

## **THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS**

### ***DEFINING THE CULTURAL TOURISM AND ITS SERVICES: THE CASE OF MUSEUM***

As Museums constitute a unit of the cultural tourism, it is now important to define the terms of cultural tourism and museums. Vassiliadis and Fotiadis (2008) consider cultural tourism as “a special form of tourism that makes a significant economic contribution to profit and non-profit organisations that operate within local communities” (2008:12). Kim (2012) acknowledges Museums as a compound educational and cultural venue. The aim of these organisations is to contribute the conservation and diffusion of cultural heritage.

The word and concept of ‘Museum’ stems from Greeks creating the Museion in ancient Greece. So far, museums have redefined their role to society. Given the broad variety of museums there are many definitions of museums. As Passebois and Aurier (2004) admits, Promian’s museum definition as “a collection; an assemblage of natural and artificial objects, appropriated from their original finality, maintained temporarily or permanently outside the domain of economic activity, subjected to a special protection and presented for viewing in a closed place dedicated to that purpose”. According to the International Council of Museums; ICOM museum is “a non- profit making, permanent institution, in the service of society and of its development, and open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches and communicates, and exhibits for the purpose of study, education and enjoyment, material evidence of people and their environment” (ICOM, 2007). To Mclean (1994) museums are divided into museums funded by central government, museums served for the public benefit, local museum, university museum or even independent private sector museums.

### ***THE EVOLUTION OF MUSEUM INDUSTRY & MUSEUM MARKETING***

Having defined the term of museum and its contribution at economic and social level and before analyzing the social media impact in museum’s performance we briefly review the evolution of museums and the emergence of the new museology era along with the emergence of museum marketing. As noted by Kolb (2013), Byrnes (2001) & Griffin (1988) French Revolution and the enlightenment era provided the impetus for the formulation of public museums. Then, in 1851, social, economic and cultural developments move museums to the spotlight emerging them as , “temples of self-improvement and sources of formal learning” (McLean, 1995a :5), though the learning process was not so enjoyable. The rise of 20 century entailed the decline of museums due to financial constraints. Next, the Second

World Wars museums have been adapted to the bureaucratic reality. Between in 1960-1980 the boom of museums openings becomes an important source of tourist industry for each county( McLean, 1995a). Thus, since 1970 managers slowly adopt marketing strategies to inform its audience about the upcoming events and exhibitions. These marketing strategies has solely informative orientation. (Kolb, 2013). The explosion and redefinition of marketing application in museums began in 1980 firstly in UK when Margaret Thatcher ( McLean, 1995b) decided to cut the financial support to museums and forcing them to develop financial independence (Ames, 1988). Thus, striving for financial sustainability museums apply marketing in its FPOs direction.

A number of scholars argue that museums as service providers have unique characteristics such as intangibility, immateriality, lack of standardization (Hausmann, 2012a; Mclean, 1994; McLean, 1995a, 1995b). Gilmore & Rentschler (2002) also identify that museum service delivery is divided into three parts: Education, accessibility, communication. In the same year, Rentschler & Gilmore, (2002) conclude five dimension of the museum service delivery: museum architecture, programs, accessibility, and communication. They also outline that museums as a service product have both functional and symbolic roles. From the functional perspective, they define the object- based mission of museum to collect, preserve and display object. From the purposive, symbolic perspective they define the mission of museum to serve society through education. Reviewing the museum evolution we understand that until 1980 marketing implementation was focused mainly on the provision of factual and information. (Kolb, 2013). Especially, in the last decades the growing competition within NPOs and FPOs leisure industry, the financial squeeze along with the need for a more customer focus orientation (Cole, 2008; McCall & Gray, 2014), the need for broadening the museum's audience (Kawashima, 1998; (Ruth Rentschler & Gilmore, 2002) and the technological advances have compelled museums to include active experience shifting to the

experiential notions of edutainment, arttainment and Disneyfication (McLean, 1995; Kawashima, 1998; Rentschler & Osborne, 2008). Thus, Bradburne (2001) stresses that marketing implementation is becoming a priority as museums still fail to engage visitors do not present any repetition of visits.

Despite its importance to museums' sustainability the implementation of marketing has been a controversial issue. More specifically, of the many scholars view marketing either as a source of income, as a source to improve audience satisfaction and attachment with museum or a source to boost the ties with stakeholders, to enhance the educational process, to widen the resonance of museum, to augment its social role and to create new partnerships (Bradburne, 2001; Byrnes, 2001; Caldwell, 2002; Kawashima, 1998; McLean, 1993; McLean, 1995; Rentschler & Osborne, 2008; Rentschler & Gilmore, 2002; Ames, 1988; Kotler & Kotler, 2000; Kolb, 2013; King, 2015; Williams, 2011; Griffin, 2008; Cole, 2008; Gainer, Padang, 2001; Kovach, 1989). For instance, many scholars show that the contribution of Disneyfication and arttainment role in improving audience's engagement, interaction and learning process (Rentschler & Osborne, 2008; McLean, 1995b; Cole, 2008; Bradburne, 2001). Moreover, Bradburne, (2001) exemplifies these benefits through the example of partnerships between Nokia and the rebranded museum Mak. Frankfurt (the prior Museum fur Angewandte Kunst, Frankfurt). Furthermore, Kovach (1989) and McLean (1993) ardently support the marketing orientation of museum affirming being something more than increasing profits marketing is about museums' capacity to promote its reputation beyond the general public, to become a vivid and living component of the society.

Yet, only a few doubts the marketing application in museums. For instance, Resnick (2004) questions the commercialization of museums. He also expresses his contradiction for "arttainment"/edutainment because the entertainment's involvement

in the cultural product entail the emergence of low art. In addition, as Bounia (2005) mentions the rise of edutainment have risen many concerns such as the maintenance and preservation of artefacts and the blurring boundaries of museums and thematic parks. Moreover, as noted by Kolb (2013) various scholars believe that this new marketing wave in museums is totally opposite to the intrinsic role of museums as public, open organizations that share knowledge and experience for free. Furthermore, according to Byrnes (2001) Collins express his disregard about the idea museum to be run like business, since this is the synonym of mediocrity.

In contrast, Sargeant (2008) based on Liao et al. (2002) appear a compromiser stressing that although marketing is indeed vital for museums' it should be eliminated when it distorts the museums mission. To end this debate we argue that marketing is indeed the backbone of museums' sustainability as through its proper implementation the advantages of marketing overcome the disadvantages. Nevertheless, to achieve a positive outcome museums managers urge to apply marketing principles in a diligence by constantly customizing their marketing strategy to the specific experiential and symbolic attributes and the unique needs of their museums.

Undoubtedly, museums are all about experiences as their evaluation stems from the identity, which is based on the experience of the collection (McLean, 1994). Therefore, museums' "value... is the value of the collection, manifested in its value to the public in terms of their experience. Value is not financially-driven in museums but experience-driven. (McLean, 1993:17) Thus, experiential character of museum is the moderator factor of its performance (Venkatesh & Meamber, 2006). To Venkatesh & Meamber, 2006) these augmented experience and discourses contribute to audience engagement and museums; identity formulation.

McLean,(1995a) defined the new wave of delivering enhanced museum experience aligned to the Disney's model as Disneyfication. This enhancement of museum experience is defined not only within

the illumination of exhibition room but also within the whole atmosphere of museum and its core and supplementary services (ex. quality of museum restaurant and cafe, comprehensively of visiting material, degree of visitors engagement before, during and after the visit, friendliness of staff, quality of shops) (McLean, 1995a). Hence, experience is the factor that eliminates the perceived risks and uncertainty of potential visitors. This experience can definitely enhance and socialize museums via the use of Web 2.0 and social media to all. (Le, 2007, Caldwell, 2002; Goulding, 2000; Griffin, 2008; Hume, 2011; Kawashima, 1998; Kolb, 2013; N. G. Kotler, Kotler, & Kotler, 2008; N. Kotler, 2001; Le, 2007; Mclean, 1994; McLean, 1995a, 1995b; Karnøe Søndergaard\* & Robert, 2012; Soren, 2009).

### ***MUSEUMS IN THE SOCIAL MEDIA ERA***

Kaplan and Heinlein (2010:2) mention “Social Media is a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2. 0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content”. He also classifies social media into 6 types based on their social presence, media richness, self-presentation and self- disclosure: Social Networking Sites (Facebook, LinkedIn), Content Communities (YouTube), Virtual Games, Virtual Worlds (Second Life), Collaborative Projects (Wikipedia) and Blogs.

The pervasiveness of social media within the social and business context along with the new digital face of museums have attracted museums scholars and practitioners’ attention. Especially online marketing tools and social media appear very effective in arts institutions. Colbert and Courchesne (2012) emphasized the positive contribution of social media instruments to cultural industries’ performance. To date, several scholars have investigated the use of social media in Museums.

Examining the research question what are the principal axioms museums tackle with social media implementation, the recent bibliography emerges four important effects so far:

- Benefits of social media within museums
- Social media effects on learning process
- Insights about the use of social media in museums
- Problems and barriers of social media integration in museums.

### ***BENEFITS OF SOCIAL MEDIA***

As for the first effect a number of authors have analyzed the beneficial role of social media use to museums (Table1) (Berthon et al., 2012; Pett, 2012; Waters & Jones, 2011; Whelan, 2011; Chung et al., 2014; Carvalho & Raposo, 2012; Hausmann, 2012b; Hausmann, 2012a; Lehman & Roach, 2011; Mason & McCarthy, 2008; Fletcher & Lee, 2012; Arends et al., 2009; Nah & Saxton, 2012; Waters, 2010; Osterman et al., 2012) .

Kotler et al. (2008), Whelan (2011), Carvalho & Raposo (2012) and Russo et al. (2007) recognized several advantages of social media use. First, not only do social media boost the dialogue, real time communication and engagement with visitors but they also facilitate the interpretation of cultural experience. Second, they enable a participating learning process. In the same vain, Russo et al. (2007) show museum's learning process is becoming more social, modern, young and at the same time entertaining. Third, social media also expand museums' authenticity, and they diminish the boundaries and authority of conventional museums. Moreover, Jafari et al. (2013) as well as Hume and Mills (2011) outline that the online tools expand the sociality and cultural consumption beyond the museum and offline boundaries. Russo et al. (2007) concluded that social media diffuse museum knowledge to a new interdisciplinary and innovative audience. Furthermore, social media enable three models of museum communication: First, one to one communication model is provided by museum programs to visitors. Second, one to many

communication model is enabled between museum and visitor via web page and tools. Third, many- to- many communication model, the backbone of web 2.0, provides the participatory knowledge among all visitors (ex. Wikis) Russo et al. (2007).

Table 1. Summary Table of Selective Key Studies in Social Media& Museums

<b>Authors</b>	<b>Sample</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Findings/ Preposition</b>
Hausmann, 2012b	N/A	To introduce a Conceptual Framework of 17 items about WOM creation via social media in museums	Museums should actively use more than one social media application and encourage conversation WOM among their visitors
Jafari et al. , 2013	Case Study: Kelvingrove Museum and Art Gallery, Glasgow, UK	To explore whether and how museums provide visitors with sociality in the museum offline and online context.	The museum supplies such sociability and contributes to the repository of meanings in social life.
Lehman & Roach , 2011	Case Studies- 6 museums	To analyze the extension of e-marketing in the Australian museums	Museums increasingly use their websites to communicate with their audiences only

			at tactical (marketing) and not strategic level
Lemel, 2010	N/A	To discusses how the synergy of social networking platforms boosts visibility for fine art in the marketplace.	Multitude benefits from social media implementation Synergies of social media with other digital marketing tools are suggested
Nah & Saxton, 2012	N=100	To identify the drivers of adoption, frequency of use and dialogue in Facebook and Twitter on the basis of the proposed conceptual model	Organizational strategies, capacities, governance features are moderator factors of social media adoption and utilization
Srinivasan et al. ,2009	Case Studies: A:shiwi A:wan Museum and Heritage Center of	To provide a model for developing new media technologies in tribal museums	Museums face a difficulty to use new media for a more engaged, local and contemporary reciprocity.

	Zuni, New Mexico, USA.		
Waters et al. ,2009	N= 275 nonprofit organization profiles on Facebook ( 34 arts NPOs)	To examine how NPOs use social networking sites to enhance their organization’s mission and programs.	NPOs use social media only for dissemination and not for audience’s involvement

In terms of social media, Arends et al. (2009) investigating 69 art museums conclude three major benefits of social media: Exploration, Announcement- Discussion and Education. The variable of Exploration analyzes how visitors can retrieve information, extend the dialogue and engagement with the museums objects. This factor relates to the browsing of virtual museum via 3D reality and virtual navigation. It can increase findability of e-museums through the use of keywords with the advanced method of Boolean operators. Advanced tagging and display of embedded information related to an Artefact, such as a link to a website, e-shop and social media are the main drivers to boost findability. Finally, in Announcement–Discussion variable, the utilization of alternative social media is a key instrument. For example, the personnel in Art gallery of New South Wales or in Australia Museums use Flickr.

From the marketing perspective, Fletcher & Lee (2012) classify these benefits into four categories: Access, Reach, Speed and Engagement. They also state that social media constitute an efficient, cost effective advertising tool with tremendous reach ability. Whelan

(2011) remarks that social media contribute to branding process thanks to the synergy and web-traffic they create by linking the museum's website to the various social media instruments. Furthermore, several researchers acknowledge that social media can also extend the experience beyond the websites in a more attractive and vivid way (Whelan, 2011; Arends et al., 2009; Weilenmann et al., 2013). Similarly, Fletcher & Lee (2012) enumerate that social media provide a global visibility and access to new audience. Besides, social media accelerate the diffusion of information and foster involvement as well as brand building with audience through the long term conversation.

Regarding Social Networking Sites (henceforth SNS) Chung et al. (2014) report four advantages. First, SNS allow synergies between offline and online context. Second, they provide opportunities for customization and deeper engagement. Third, they boost visitors' social identity. Fourth, they enrich visiting experiences through aesthetic values. As noted by Lemel (2010), SNS provide synergies and boost the visibility of artists' creations. Likewise, according to Haussman (2012b) SNS reduce the asymmetry of information and perceived risk. As a result, visitors also eliminate their behavioral uncertainty. Specifically, this decrease of information asymmetry stems from transmission of chunks. In turn these chunks provide referrals and reviews: chunks "stand as indicators for other information and are particularly relevant for the judgment of services." (2012b:3). One representative example of chunks is information about the price of a ticket, the reputation and branding (and hence the trustworthiness) of an arts institution or even reviews—mainly from experts or high-user, loyal consumers. The Bavarian State Opera creates traffic by urging visitors to generate discussions on tickets or museum quality. At the same time, SNS boost the trustworthiness and commitment to the brand of the Art institution. Specifically, visitors develop emotional ties with the institutions they visit through the direct communication and viral effects of SNS content. However, the available studies have not

examined to what extent social media make its audience to feel nostalgic (variable of nostalgia) after their visit.

In the case of blogs, Haussman (2012b) points out the effectiveness of Micro-blogging instruments such as Twitter. She confirms that the more interesting the content is the more critical mass of user is collected. In other words, more people will be engaged with the brand of the Art Institution. A representative example is the Contemporary Art Museum of Dusseldorf. Lee et al. (2013) finds that community attachment influence visitor's behavior could be considered as a predictor of the relationship between satisfaction and future intentions. Similarly, Arends et al. (2009) stated that blogs, Microblogging in particular, enable faster and easier control of content than websites. Blogs can provide information and direct dialogue, whereas websites cannot. For instance, the blog of MET in New York presents an artefact from their exhibition on fashion twice a week. TePapa in New Zealand explains further the objects through Twitter.

YouTube regards as a very dynamic tool for digital communication. These channels, created either by museums or by visitors, increase visibility and discussion. Indianapolis Museum and ZKM Karlsruhe with ZKMtube resort to tactic successfully. In both museums, every employee has to upload one video per day regarding these museums or affiliative museums (Arends et al., 2009).

Virtual games, according to Arends et al. (2009) Virtual Games boost the Education. Nevertheless, researchers have not treated the implementation of virtual games within museums in much detail. Specifically, no study focused examined the benefits of social media to the boost of augmented museum products such as museum- shop or restaurant. Finally, although the field of virtual games in museums is increasingly attracting scholars' attention no study has investigated the audience's motivation and gratifications of museums virtual games' use. In the following section we discuss the transmission of informal learning process through virtual games.

### ***SOCIAL MEDIA EFFECTS TO LEARNING PROCESS***

Education is also another important benefit of Social Media. As Lehman and Roach (2011) noted these tools are also used for research, education and curation. A recent study by Styliani et al. (2009) remarks that the purpose of these tools is to persuade the virtual visitor to reappear and engage with the online museum context. Thus, the new emerged *modus operandi* of museums named “Edutainment” is realized mainly within virtual and participatory sphere of social media in the Virtual Games (Arends et al. 2009). Pett (2012) recalls Breen’s study of the shifts that social media caused: from the didactic to the participatory learning. With the help of social media any museum can serve educational insights to its audience and expand their learning process. Museums can inspire high educational engagement, as the interactive character of social media enables the continuous sharing and updating of the content. Recent *in vitro* studies have shown that museums can enrich the learning process through social media (Charitonos et al., 2012; Lepouras & Vassilakis, 2004; Russo et al., 2007; Styliani et al., 2009; Russo et al., 2009; Arends et al., 2009). In particular, museums can bolster their educational mission via social media in three ways: Content creation by users, Virtual Games and Google Maps (Arends et al., 2009).

As for the content creation users are urged to upload photos of their experiences from their visits to museums. For instance, Tate created an interactive website for kids and teens where each young visitor can sign up and upload their photo moments. Similarly, since 2007 the Centre for Art and Media Karlsruhe has been inviting its visitors to FLICK\_KA, where they can have portrait photos in the museum of in their home which could be presented in the exhibition called “YOU\_ser: The Century of the Consumer of the museum” (Arends et al., 2009). Moreover, Charitonos et al. (2012) show that content creation via microblogs such as Twitter boost students’ content participation and facilitate the learning process through the enabled interaction. Likewise, within the content creation of SNS

shifts the informal learning process from education to entertainment (Russo et al., 2009). For example, MOMA with the forum “Talk Back 4” invites youth to discuss artifacts and art. In addition, Brooklyn Museums implementing MySpace encourage youth to share their experience uploading content and making new friends.

Regarding the Virtual Games scholars (Arends et al., 2009; Lepouras & Vassilakis, 2004; Styliani et al., 2009) find that virtual games have a two-fold contribution to museum engagement. They not only attract young visitors, but also they help visitors to acquire a deeper comprehension of the museum. Arends et al. (2009) depict as a prototypical example the game called “Destination”. Launched by the Museum of Modern Art and the P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center in New York City the game asks visitors between 5-8 years old to travel with an alien in these museums. Another example how games facilitate to exhibitions’ comprehension is the online game “Interactive Dollhouse” by National Gallery of Art, in which children can change the colours of paintings and save their new painting as PDF or print it. Moreover, the National Gallery of Canada offers online games where children learn the story of museums via pictures. Brooklyn Museum is another museum that combines educational and marketing tools through the innovative games “Tweet & Grow”. This application attempts to increase social media traffic by providing rewards from e-shop or free passes to users, which nurtures social networks of museums (Pett, 2012).

Furthermore, the exploitation of Google Maps can provide educational services since via GIS certain information and details about the work of artists can be linked to the reality (Arends et al., 2009). In the same vain, Kotler et al. (2008) agree that Podcasts can be useful to students before the museum visit.

Likewise, Museum Kiosks are devices that offer a deeper understanding of objects and collections unavailable to visitors through interaction Kotler et al. (2008). This interaction consists in inviting visitors to play games, which explain didactically the

exhibits, informing them for future activities or sending them photos from their visits. The National Aquarium Denmark, Den Blå Planet in Copenhagen uses successfully museum kiosk.

### ***A SNAPSHOT OF SOCIAL MEDIA USE IN MUSEUMS***

After the analysis of social media's benefits to museums, another important theme in the literature review constitutes the insights of how museums use the social media. A number of researchers investigated the use of social media in various cultural organisations (Berthon et al., 2012; Pett, 2012; Waters & Jones, 2011; Whelan, 2011; Chung et al., 2014; Carvalho & Raposo, 2012; Hausmann, 2012a; Hausmann, 2012b; Lehman & Roach, 2011; Fletcher & Lee, 2012; Arends et al., 2009; Nah & Saxton, 2012; Waters, 2010; Kotler et al., 2008). Kotler et al. (2008) classified the social media practice into Facebook, Flickr, YouTube, Blogs, Virtual Games like Second Life, Podcasts and Museum Kiosk.

In his study, Pett (2012) highlights the vital contribution of social media to museum communication. Precisely, Pett (2012) labels 5 types of online interaction identical to the Rangaswami's 4 pillars of enterprise. Access is consistent with search, Share is similar to Syndication, Experience- Learn- Share is in line with Fulfillment and finally, Create / share is the Conversation. Their study also shows that "those engaged in arts and culture online are also engaged on arts and culture offline" (2012:2). Moreover, they define 5 factors of efficient social media use: Credibility, Consistency and Tolerance to criticism are the three key factors. Then, Integration and Alignment between online and offline communication follow. Also, the way of communication towards audience is vital. Likewise, Hausmann (2012a) concludes three key success factors of social media: the technology adoption, the provision of valuable content with referral potential and the stimulation of audience's involvement. Similarly, Kotler et al. (2008) mention that efficient social media create specialized discussion and boost visitors' loyalty by keeping them up-to-date about current museum activities. According to Weilenmann et

al. (2013), the use of hashtags and direct comments in Instagram encourages audience's engagement.

Berthon et al. (2012) confirms that social media is a depended variable of the technology, culture, and government of a certain country. In their view (2) technology is also affected by the history of a country. Consequently, user patterns are also derived from these aforementioned factors. Third, they also note that within social media local media are unlikely to stay local. On the contrary, (5) global events can be localized through social media. Likewise, Nosen (2009) mentions that social media success stems from money, size and availability. Especially, regarding small museums the success of social media implementation depends on the availability of museums' staff.

In their analysis of 12 art museums, Chung et al. (2014) assert three strategies of SNS use in museums: awareness, comprehension and engagement. First, awareness aims to increase the visibility, retain current audience and attract new audience highlighting the diversity of museum. For instance, posts about museum news create awareness. This strategy has a short term outcome. Chung et al. (2014) believe that employees should adapt post accordingly to attributes of each social media platform. Second, comprehension attempts to boost users' understanding about the museums, mission, and activities that in turn boost visitor attachment. Therefore, employees should use a combination of social media channels illustrating any activity of museums staff: from curators, collections managers to videographers. In this way, they will boost the collective identity or visitors' attachment to museums. Thus, visitors are likely to make a donation. The third strategy increases the interaction of visitors with the museum. This parameter attempts to urge people talking about museums. Again, a combination of post mix is suggested in order that organisations are more popular.

Regarding the ideal way of social media use, Chung et al. (2014) as well as Kotler et al. (2008) highlight that each of this tool has

different characteristics and functions. Twitter is ideal for offers and event- reminders (Chung et al. 2014). On the other hand, FB is used for conversation and relationships' development (Chung et al., 2014; Kotler et al., 2008). As noted by Kotler et al. (2008), Facebook is widely used by the renowned museums such as Johns Hopkins University Museums (Baltimore, Maryland), U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum (Washington, D.C.) and the Brooklyn Museum (New York). Furthermore, Flickr as photo-sharing content community is ideal to inform audience about events and exhibitions. Notable museums such as Brooklyn Museum, Mart Museum (Italy) and the Museum of Spanish Colonial Art New Mexico, use Flickr (Kotler et al., 2008). YouTube belongs to the social media dream- team as it increases web- traffic, visibility, tagging and connectivity. Now, many museums have their own YouTube channel providing their visitor with a multitude of topics (Indianapolis Museum of Art), contests (The Brooklyn Museum) or customized videos (New York City 's Museum of Modern Art, MoMA).

In terms of Blogs, Kotler et al (2008) listed the two types of Blogs: the Photoblogs, created by photographs and the Videoblogs, created by users to communicate stories. They praise Blogs for their interactivity with young people. Podcasts are also ideal for kids and teens as well because they allow museums to approach visitors with specialities (hearing- impaired). Podcasts can offer added information. However, no attempt was made to investigate social media as a mean of impaired visitors' engagement with the museums.

Museums Kiosks provide additional information about the objects and collections (Kolter et al., 2008). In Catalania of Italy, 62 museums use them. Kiosks reduce the cost of producing multimedia kiosks. They also give access to content of other museums in the same network and encourage tourists to visit more museums in the same area. In kiosks, visitors have customization services: they can select what they want to see and they can be informed about offers, new services or exhibits.

To date several studies have explored the usage patterns of social media in museum organisations. Fletcher & Lee (2012) investigated how 315 museums use social media. They point that managers do not develop dialogic communication although they believe in these medias' effectiveness. Next, these authors acknowledge that few museums apply social media tools for brand engagement, brand recognition or crowd-fundraising. Precisely, they observe that museums managers use social media to post reminders (60%), online promotions, announcements (45%), or to expand their brand awareness and reach new visitors (42%). Nevertheless, a minority (11%) uses them to create a bidirectional communication. Thus, Fletcher & Lee (2012) also identify two moderator factors of boosting participation: content quality and successful selection of social media instruments. In this study, Facebook is illustrated as the king of social media. According to Lehman & Roach (2011), Victoria and Albert Museum in London has the best social media use within Facebook, Twitter and Flickr. After, Australian Museum follows because it encourages audience to communicate by commenting, tagging and sharing their favourite parts of their visits. Tate Museums in UK also via Tate Online encourages collaboration with audience and integrate marketing approach at a strategic level.

Hausmann (2012a) concludes that museums managers should focus on the platforms with high visibility (Facebook, Youtube) and update their profiles several times per day. Content is a critical success factor: the more appealing the content is, the more buzz and dialogue will be emerged between museums and visitors. Consistent to Hausmann (2012a), Colbert and Courchesne (2012) motivate cultural industries to seize the advantages of online Marketing and Social Media. They also acknowledge the co-creative media and media convergence as a culture mediator. They agree that arts institutions should employ marketing strategies and tactics based on co-creation and involvement of clients. Thus, a two-way communication will appear and through the community attachment a

loyalty may be created. Similarly, Lehman and Roach (2011) highlighted that the success of the modern museums depends on its website's Technological Acceptance Model. Therefore, they recommend all museum managers to be aligned to the new digital era at a tactical and strategic level.

Furthermore, Pett (2012) showed that the staff of British Museum use social media to give access to digital content and boost conversation and engagement with the audience. Given this study, the online exhibition "Haj", where museum encourages visitors to share their experience via video, text, pictures over social media, constitutes a representative example of social media use. Moreover, Pett (2012) remarked that British Museum implements social media at their full potential. In terms of UGC managers have launched successfully the project "A History of the World- AHOW". AHOW attempts to disseminate world history through the collection of British Museums and was awarded by the Art Fund in 2011. Similarly, British Museum (henceforth BM) was labeled as innovator player with the project in Wikipedia named "Wikipedian- in residence". This social media application was designed to boost the visitor interaction with the BM collection and encourage the collaboration between curator and Wikipedia users. Regarding the most popular social media, the research showed that BM has a very active presence on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Blogs. Still, Pett (2012) identifies some weakness in the social media use of BM.

Pett (2012) assesses that Brooklyn Museum launches the most efficient social media strategy within all social media tools. Brooklyn museum is ranked globally as the first museum in SNS by leveraging engagement through subscription to exclusives events. Brooklyn Museums is also the only museum that combines educational and marketing orientation by developing innovative games such Tweet & Grow. This application leverages the social media traffic by providing rewards from e-shop or free passes to users that nurture social networks of museums. With regards to Location Based Marketing techniques, Pett (2012) concludes that Brooklyn Museum constitutes

a unique example for other museums to follow with the platform “We Are What We Do”, sponsored by Google. Moreover, they find that synergies between museums could boost the traffic. For instance, Metropolitan Museum of Art (MET) and Brooklyn Museum achieved this goal within Foursquare. Additionally, Chung et al. (2014) implementing a qualitative survey in 12 museums draw that museums primarily use SNS, then Twitter, Blogs and YouTube. Consistent with Pett (2012), they conclude that still little is done in Foursquare, Flickr, Vimeo, Pinterest, and Instagram.

The measurement of communication efforts constitutes a very important line in the museums marketing communications. According to Hume and Mills (2011), Web inserted new methods of measurement through key performance indicators (KPIS) such as visitation and tracking systems of visitors. Accountability and numbers of visits are the new KPIs. Regarding the social media context, indicators as numbers of fans, likes and comments constitute the most popular method to evaluate social media effectiveness. Still, even though they are not so accurate, Facebook Stats, Google Analytics, and Google Alerts are depicted as the most popular measurement tools (Fletcher & Lee, 2012; Nosen, 2009). Similarly, Pett (2012) suggests that measuring the social media effectiveness can be implemented through the relevant KPIs. For instance, the variable of affiliation can be measured on the basis of fans, followers, contacts or subscribers. On the other hand, the variable of engagement analyzes a multitude of criteria like volume of comments, posts, reposts and retweets, embeds, views, traffic to site, or mentions. Finally, the social medias’ impact is evaluated via specialized software based on social indices that analyze networks and effort to ‘determine user’s spheres of influence, their audience numbers and their trust levels.’ (2008: 15).

Such approaches, however, did not investigate to what extent these metrics help managers. Moreover the available studies doesn’t take how frequently are these methods used by managers. Although

extensive research has been carried out on social media metrics no previous study examines to what extent do managers interpret into ‘true engagement’ rather than numbers of followers.

### ***PROBLEMS AND BARRIERS OF SOCIAL MEDIA IMPLEMENTATION IN MUSEUMS***

According to the literature review, numerous researchers emphasize the lack of social media integration at a strategic and tactical level (Fletcher & Lee, 2012; Berthon et al., 2012; Hausmann, 2012a; Waters, 2010; Waters et al., 2009; Lehman & Roach, 2011). As Srinivasan et al. (2009) asserted, museums do not understand their new responsibility for a more “engaged, local and contemporary reciprocity” (2009:18) and ignore the opportunities of ICT. Similarly, Nair, (2011) and Mangold and Faulds (2009) suggest that organisations should comprehend that social media is an unstructured, conversational dialogue.

Moreover, the big challenge for NPOs and museums is that these organisations do not exploit social media to their full potential. Managers lag how to integrate them in the daily, tactical operation. For example, Waters et al. (2009) investigating 275 museums via content analysis reported that these museums use the minimum of Facebook potential. Similarly, Lehman & Roach (2011) and Styliani et al. (2009) asserted that marketing in museums is limited only in the “brochureware” boundaries (Hanson and Kalyanam, 2006; Strauss, El-Ansary, and Frost, 2006) in which websites are used only as content providers. In addition, successful and modern museums will integrate new technologies in their communication and marketing daily activities. Engagement and Dialogue are the new streams, while the laggards will be excluded from their industry (Lehman & Roach, 2011).

Ethical practice of social media is a principal issue that museums should consider in the social media era. Numerous scholars regard the threats of authenticity, authorization over digital collection, digital content and transparency as the major obstacles of social media

implementation. Some identical ethical issues relate to privacy concerns, exposure of young visitors, web bullying developed by trolls users (Pett, 2012; Arends et al., 2009; Wong, 2011). Wong (2011) cited that in Holocaust Museum Twitter use creates crucial questions about the transparency. Arends et al. (2009) and Pett (2012) further considered a serious challenge the lack of expertise for crisis communication and wrong decisions of strategic digital communication management. Other identical ethical issues relate to the maintenance of museum archives and the low involvement of audience. Last, the detrimental selection of software entails bad interaction experience between museums and audience.

Such expositions are unsatisfactory because they provide categorical views. Herein lies the dilemma? Are managers really able to understand and corroborate with the participating culture of digital society that social media exemplify in the context of museums? Museums being a social and perpetually evolving institution should correspond to this challenge, it is as called by few scholars. Moreover, another reason for supporting the dialogue and transparency via social media is that from a business perspective, museums simply as organisation or brands should also in line with the emerging communication status quo. (Belenioti et al., 2015). Thus, to generate a broader and repetitive audience, museums need to be explicit and talkative by providing interesting fresh content of sectors' services. Finally, the argument of maintenance is valid both for digital and print communication. Ending this debate we concluded that the rational and aligned to museum values social media use defiantly boosts the vast benefits of this stream and eliminates these doubts. In other words, given its efficacy and amplitude benefits social media should be treated rather a boosting performance tool than a deteriorate factor of museums sustainability.

As for the barriers and challenges, Whelan (2011) recognizes the lack of IT knowledge, funding or personnel availability. He also

identified that social media generate serious questions about the authority and authenticity of online museum content.

Regarding the impediments of social media use in cultural industries, Berthon et al. (2012) and Hausmann (2012a) identify several barriers: visitors and managers' attitude, way of use (dialogical or monological), bureaucracy of organisations, lack of IT literacy and skills, and finally, lack of consistency about the integration of social media or misalignment between vision-organisational culture and images. For example, while they eagerly support the social media use they exclude their internal stakeholders, prohibiting their employees to use them during the work.

Fletcher & Lee (2012) indicate that the most significant problem is the one way communication that currently dominates social media environment. Moreover, social media use implies serious issues such as transparency, liability and credibility of a museum or privacy protection of visitors' data. They also assert that managers should invest to their employees in terms of time and knowledge so as to make them familiar with social media use efficiently.

Finally, few authors (Russo et al., 2007; Styliani et al., 2009) have considered the interdisciplinary collaboration as a new issue for discussion. Thus, cross – disciplinary cooperation from archaeologists and educationists to communication consultants and designers will provide the optimal results.

## **DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS**

Given the available literature on social media use in museums we identified four important effects: the benefits of social media to museum communication, the enhancement of educational role of museums via social media, patterns by which museums use social media and the problems and the barriers attendant to social media integration in museums. The study revealed that beyond social media effectiveness museums managers lag into dialogical communication. This result may be explained by the limited understanding of

managers how to create dialogue within social media. Moreover, the review concluded that museums do not use social media at their full potential. A possible explanation for this might be the infant character of social media or the lack of personnel's expertise and knowledge about the efficient use of social media.

Finally, in this paper we didn't attempt to paint the implementation of social media in museums as a rosy picture. Contrary to the majority of scholars, some critics question the ethical orientation of social media towards the privacy of audience or they doubts the huge transparency of museums in the sake artifact's maintenance (Pett, 2012; Arends et al., 2009; Wong, 2011). Ending this debate we concluded that the rational and aligned to museum values social media use boosts the benefits and eliminates the doubts. Thus, in accordance to the majority of scholars, who are social media enthusiasts, we view social media as a boosting performance tool than a deteriorate factor of museums sustainability as soon as the museum uses in a proper way social media.

The contribution of this study is twofold: First, this paper extends the current knowledge providing a summary of studies about social media in museums. Second, the findings of the current literature review may help museum practitioners and scholars to understand better the nature of these digital tools and deploy successfully e-communication tactics.

Regarding the managerial implications, one of the issues that emerges from these findings is the lack of dialogical communication. In turn museum professionals are encouraged to use the full potential of social media sharing a dialogic, engaging, informative, entertaining content. Given the potential of social media, managers are urged to think 'out of the box' and apply tactics from the FPOs social media marketing. Thus,, they should incorporate these digital instruments at strategic and tactical level not only for marketing but also for educational and entertaining purposes always in consistency

with the *raison d' être* (Mangold & Faulds, 2009) of each organizational mission of museums.

As for the tactical level in particular managers definitely can potentiate the 7ps of Marketing Mix via social media. First, managers can boost the variables of Price and Place within social media by engaging and inviting audience to contests. Museum managers can offer rewards such as free daily entrance, free meals in museum restaurants, and free coupons from the museum shop, events, or even by inviting them to the forefront of their campaigns. Second, regarding the variable of Product, social media can further augment the educational mission through the "edutainment". As virtual games appear prominent managers are urged to retain the interests of their young audience by launching educational virtual museum games. Additionally, museums officers can ameliorate their services by posting content (testimonials) about the museum experiences and activities from the internal (employees) and external (visitors) stakeholders perspective. In this way, a museum achieves a dialogical communication and improves its services from the audience feedback and testimonials in social media.

Third, regarding the People variable, given that social marketing increases the velocity of communication and relationship marketing boosts the mutual engagement (Moretti & Tuan, 2014) managers could benefit from this combination to bolster the audience engagement. As explained earlier, testimonials are a very efficient strategy not only for product's improvement but also for audience involvement. Therefore, museums practitioners can also enhance the positive E-WOM, which in turn will not only extend further museum's audience base but will it also extend fundraising and enhancement of membership programs. As regard the variables of People and Process, to achieve a participatory culture in the participative culture of museums managers should seek synergies with linking partners from museum and business sector in the social media totality.

Finally, in terms of Process variable, managers can achieve a better understanding of the social media use and users by monitoring frequently their audience patterns through users' behavior researches. Within Social Media context, monitoring the Facebook page and the Twitter account of museums allows to evaluate the number of likes, shares, retweets and followers. Then, observing the Youtube webpage, in which the video of museums are presenting, would permit to see the number of its views. The spread of the hashtags through Facebook and Twitter can be measured by means of the website <http://keyhole.co/> and social media analytics (Fan & Gordon, 2014; Sabate et al., 2014).

## **LIMITATIONS & FURTHER RESEARCH**

Nevertheless this study provides fruitful theoretical and managerial implications, our research has several limitations. All the following limitation is an important issue for future research. First, a limitation of this study is the finite available bibliography mainly focused on big museum brands with plenty of resources. Moreover, there is no study relating to the use of social media use in Greek museums. Although Greece has a marvelous cultural heritage, a prominent museum sector given their contribution to local economy (Deffner et al., 2009; Vassiliadis & Fotiadis, 2008) due to the lack of effective marketing strategy Greek museums find attracting and retaining visitors' loyalty difficult. Therefore, more research on boosting museum branding via social media needs to be undertaken. Second, another important limitation is that so far studies paid solely attention to the social media usage from a corporate aspect. Consequently, further study with more focus on social media behavior of museum visitors is important. Third, our study examines the most important aspects of social media use within museums and does not investigate the development of storytelling or learning programs through social media. Future research should explore the

interrelationship of social media and storytelling or informal learning process from a marketing perspective. Fourth, very little is known about the measurement of social media efficiency and the actual measures of social media marketing effort in museums. To investigate rigorously the causal impact of each social media instrument to formation of audience patterns researchers could design experiments, more cross-cultural studies relating to the social media usage in museums and how the social media usage affects the brand perception of museum could provide fruitful insights.

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