Promoting Cultural Heritage Through Diverse Digital Marketing Channels

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Abstract: The digital marketing of heritage has many different areas of focus around the globe since its beginning in the 1960's. Among the objectives of this paper is to analyze digital technologies platforms' role in branding cultural heritage as a unique potential with low cost and ability for further spread. These technologies removed many barriers of marketing cultural heritage, which in turn give more opportunities and ideas towards better heritage branding through the various electronic media channels. The following pages of this article examine how historical assets can effectively use social and digital media in this concern and what are the best practices when using social media in promoting these assets along with some tips that sustain their improvement. The various social media platforms are used to communicate wider with the community who most of the time preferred using Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat as four main social media platforms due to their effectiveness in engaging and attracting them, along with their ability in the marketing of numerous events, programs and exhibits. This research is determining what the marketing rules of cultural heritage are in the digital age which in turn should lead the marketers to up-to-date the online marketing strategies in order to fulfill audiences' perspectives like the importance of selecting the targeted segments and creating appropriate virtual communities with common interests.

Keywords: Cultural Heritage, Heritage Sites, Digital Marketing, Social Media

1. Introduction

The concept of the digital marketing is rapidly developed in the field of cultural heritage. The diverse platforms of social media like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat are very important key factors in modernizing many fields like cultural heritage with a trusted data and a wide spread distribution. These data can be obtained and analyzed through diverse ways. Conducting online surveys is among these ways in order to get some needed information [1]. Among the aims of this paper is to shed the light on the history and development of using digital and social media in promoting cultural heritage as an important asset for any nation. It further goes to highlight the main social media platforms and give some tips of using them effectively in branding cultural assets to make use of the benefits and widespread of digital marketing as an important tool in the 21st century.

2. Literature Review

1960's witnessed the start of linking marketing with heritage. Since this link evolved into different areas of study, not to many literature were published in this regard. The end of the 1980's and the beginning of the 1990's witnessed the application of the marketing theories to heritage, excluding the mutual dialogue. The digital marketing was hence dealt from the perspective of cultural heritage and not as a separate domain. This situation changed in the 1990's, when some marketing strategies were identified particularly for the sake of cultural heritage to suit its nature and become for the first time able to deal with such strategies and realize them.

This new trend enabled visitors to experience historical assets in a better way which in turn leads the stakeholders to recognize the importance of digital marketing in addressing the needs of all categories of visitors and link them more to these historical assets. The early 21st century

witnessed more effectiveness of marketing strategies; which appeared in literature. These new strategies combined the terms of branding, digital marketing, and social media as three important aspects in marketing. The last years also witnessed a great and rapid consideration towards marketing cultural assets through the diverse social media channels due to their vital role in the life of the public [2].

The aim of social media platforms is to facilitate collaborations, interactions, and content sharing. Cultural heritage should make use of the widespread abilities of Internet in general and social media in particular as a mean of communication and as a marketing tool to promote its assets directly. In order to gain the best widespread on social media, the marketer should vary in using different media channels in the marketing campaign to meet the user's needs. According to literature, social media users can be satisfied by one or more of the following five sectors. Searching data or information; seeking leisure; looking for social communication; desire to express his/her self; and self management are al desired satisfaction factors when connecting to the Internet.

The most recent research stated that communicating cultural heritage can be happened through social media as one of the effective tools which enable its promotion and transmission through the past and present generations regardless any borders or limitations. The users of social media can help widely in this transmission during their usual engagement by liking or sharing contents of other nations. By that entire, social media is considered a real mean of promoting cultural heritage of any country through its different channels. These channels can include the diverse ways of blogging, all the types of sharing videos or photos, and any social platform. The diversity of social media platforms enabled the responsible organizations for promoting cultural heritage in a way that decreased the distances between the segment category of followers and the cultural organizations. Accordingly, the social platforms are considered capable promoting tools for interpreting the heritage that considered a truly revolutionary approach to cultural heritage marketing [3].

3. Digital Marketing Definition

Digital marketing in general means the process of promoting any product or service using the Internet or any other electronic media. The product here in this research is promoting cultural heritage to be able to get closer to the public. The cost of the digital marketing is very satisfying in comparison to the traditional marketing channels and marketers can calculate the planned promotional campaigns and manage the budget in advance.

For Heritage industry, developing the digital marketing strategy according to users' needs either tourists or community, the value of the historical asset, and the preferred platforms and online behaviors is essential. Not to mention that choosing the right platform is an important key in

delivering any message. These platforms include social media, blogging, Search Engine Optimization, App creation and videos and photos formation [4].

4. Social Media Platforms as a Heritage Marketing Tool

Low coast and the ability of engaging audiences enhance the effectiveness of e-marketing [2]. A good e-marketing campaign needs a careful selection of the appropriate social platform. This section of the research will present guidelines of using four key social media channels to give a hand in choosing the appropriate social channels for marketing [4].

4.1. Facebook as a Heritage Marketing Platform

Facebook is among the powerful social media platforms that can be strongly used to establish a strong relationship with cultural audience. The actual start of Facebook came at Harvard in order to encourage classmates to know each other [5]. Later, Facebook become the most used social media platform, which has about 1.45 billion daily active users around the globe. The most common age of using it is 25-34 with about one million shared links every 20 minutes. The research suggested that posting on Facebook once a day between 1 – 4 pm is enough and sharing a post every other day.

Facebook content is needed to be engaging, informative and competing with other feeds. The content should have some visual heritage materials like funny videos and other contents relevant to your site. Sharing a direct YouTube link of a video on the Facebook page of your historical asset is not the correct choice as Facebook selects its priorities from its private platform and not from the others like YouTube. So, it is important to share and upload the video itself to the Facebook page and not the link to it. Moreover, Hashtags on Facebook platform is not the appropriate choice when posting, so avoiding them and tagging relevant pages on Facebook pages will be more effective. Furthermore, do not forget that the content you post is building your brand's personality [4].

4.2. Twitter as a Heritage Marketing Platform

Twitter is a social platform that used for publishing micro contents. It can be used as a recent marketing tool which started only since 2008 [6]. Statistics refers that the platform of Twitter has around 336 users per month who are actively use it with about 6,000 tweets every second. It also refer that tweeting on this platform has very limited characters per post which cannot exceed 140. Institutions that develop a heritage brand personality are the most successful on Twitter. In order to keep the success it is vital to avoid weak messages in your posts.

Tweets which emphasize that the user is a human being and not a robot are essential along with offering the essential data about the historical asset. Try to create your own

Hashtags or use the existing ones in order to simply find the trending topics. Developing an 'editorial calendar' with your events, exhibitions or new excavations is important to decide in advance what content to tweet. Tweeting 3-5 tweets per day is the most recommended.

4.3. Instagram as a Heritage Marketing Platform

Among the other social platforms is Instagram that creates a space for sharing photos and videos with maximum of 60 seconds where audience is strongly relate to visual contents as it gives authentic and experiential information [4]. Instagram as a free mobile application is more recent social media platform than twitter [7]. It has around 700 users. Adding your heritage sites locations, Hashtags, and captions are important. Captions should tell engaging or meaningful historical stories. Sharing one or two daily posts on Instagram is the most preferable.

4.4. Snapchat as a Heritage Marketing Platform

Videos and pictures on Snapchat remove automatically after being viewed. As a social media platform, it is used by females between twelve and twenty four years. Snapchat has more than 190 active users per day, besides a daily ten billion views of videos.

Stories on Snapchat and Instagram are very similar visual platforms that you can use to deliver a visual image about your heritage site to encourage audience for the actual visit [4] through publishing the daily activities or stories in public as a very attractive way for users [8]. Not to mention that among the very powerful roles of Snapchat among the social platforms that it helps in transferring the world of mouth very quickly between users and non- users, so it will be great benefit for cultural heritage e-marketing to use this feature positively [9].

5. Marketing Rules for Heritage in the Digital Age

The recent digital area has some regulations and rules which organize the work of e-marketing. These rules are going to be discussed in this part of the article focusing on marketing heritage. Despite the fact that these rules have been recently formulated, they proved their effectiveness in the field of marketing heritage as a new discipline. Despite the fact of the applicability of these rules due to the technological advances, their success depends on audience acceptability because not every consumer will like to be in a one-on-one relationship with a heritage site. This one-on-one relationship might results in mess due to the desire of every heritage site to develop a one-to-one relationship with its own audience [10]. Marketers should also take care that online pop-up advertisements is not preferable at all for all users, as long as windows opened by force; obligatory downloads; and the flashing of some items, hence the marketing plan of any heritage asset should avoid them as users do not like them [11].

5.1. Create Virtual Communities and Select Target Segments

In order to create a strategy for attracting the needed segments and generate a loyal virtual community, audience, suppliers and stakeholders should be engaged in this process. Among the unique aspects of e-marketing is its capability to gather a common virtual audience who are sharing the same interest of following heritage. Amazon.com is a good example in this concern as it offers divers chat rooms that gather people with the similar interests with each other to create interactive communities.

In order to reach the best results of heritage digital marketing, heritage marketers should think about the segmentation of audience rather than marketing for all of them. Unfortunately, many marketers saw these individuals as micro segment that's why they used the same way of marketing to broader customer segments.

Using filtering techniques let the space for gathering all the audience from the same segmentation to deliver them same recommendations that they might like and compare their needs and requirements with other audience from the same profiles. Effective strategies that give audience options without overwhelming them and offering them continuous dialogue are needed.

5.2. Online Audience Leadership

In reality a physical heritage site cannot be re-designed by its audience despite the fact that it can be online manipulated through the diverse social platforms. With a few mouse clicks, the entire site can be reconfigured and modified based on audience desires. So, it is important for heritage marketers to know how to select the suitable information and how to create appropriate environment for audience in which they can choose freely according to their needs. This will in turn lead to making use of the great power of the existence of social audience on these platforms and their building power. To achieve effective positioning marketer has to focus on 'affect' and emotional ties between audience, brand (heritage site) and the association offering the services [10].

5.3. Branding in a Global Portfolio

Despite the fact that most of the brands have their own history and a number of them have a valuable heritage, only a few of them were able to highlight their heritage as a valuable asset. It is not necessary to be a heritage brand to be successful; because being successful does not mean that an association necessarily is a heritage brand. However, when heritage is part of an association's brand identity, it can indeed be valuable [12]. Branding has become more important while digital technology might undermine the power of brands if they permit the online audience to control and use information. The international framework of digitalization created not too much space for the personal relations and more freedom to choose among the diverse alternatives. Online audience can then trust and deal with

the reliable online brands that create more intangible behaviours. Hence a rapid development can be occurred to these brands with the progress of the new technology with the condition that all brands have to put into consideration their value and meaning either on the Internet or reality. Moreover, heritage associations have to seek for the global market in branding themselves due to the growing importance of globalization. This importance has to encourage brands to focus more on distribution themselves on international levels and between all the nations rather than focusing on segments of the Arabic, European or Asian markets [10].

5.4. Influence Audiences as Co-producers

Marketing literatures were increasingly using the term 'audience engagement' since 2005. One of the most comprehensive definitions for audience engagement in the literature is "the perception of engaging emotions, behaviors, or knowledge of audience to a certain degree in order to participate relational exchanging". Audience engagement happened when they interact or participate with any activities, rather than purchase, of an organization or historical asset [13].

Instead of developing new site, event or exhibition in traditional process, cultural associations need to allow audience to design their own services or products like the touristic gifts. This new emphasis means that cultural associations have to offer diverse alternatives to audience with regard of not overwhelming them and ensuring the effectiveness of the intended plan at the same level. This plan should respond to the real requirements of audience while using the digital connections. A successful example of enabling audiences as co-producers is garden.com which gives an opportunity for a consumer to design his/ her own garden on his private PC and can select from over 16,000 landscaping options before deciding.

5.5. Use Online Creative Pricing

The pricing power has changed from institutions to audience due to digital technology. Priceline.com is considered one of the obvious examples in this regard as it gives its consumers the opportunity to select their suitable price limits during the diverse online activities like booking airplane or hotel tickets, or the online renting of cars and hence a negotiation step happen where the company can decide for itself. This experiment could be applied to heritage sites by letting visitors decide for the price of family or school programs for example.

5.6. Create Anytime-Anyplace Distribution

Viral marketing is an effective and creative way for marketing or promoting any product or service. One of the leader platforms in free marketing and distributing a certain service or product was Hotmail which was sold for 400 million dollars to the company of Microsoft. The same technique of free promoting can be used in distributing heritage sites and achieving wider sharing with no cost.

5.7. Redesign Advertising as an Interactive Marketing Tool

Digital advertizing as one of the marketing ways appeared due to the existence of the mass media. Digital technology presented different type of audience communication which transferred the marketing process from being only a transmission process to become an interactive one. The advancement in technology, besides the decreasing of its price, and the availability of Internet even on the TV devices helped a lot in reinforcement of this move. Hence appear the importance of designing any website, as the creative and engaging websites allow the users to spend more time using them and enjoy their historical content.

5.8. Use Marketing for Creating Knowledge

Tacit knowledge is a vital consumers' data that marketing could gain benefits from it in the digital age. This fundamental knowledge includes interests' areas and activities of users. It can also provide information about the diverse patterns in which a user is shopping including the preferable way of paying. Furthermore, the varied discussion on chat rooms can provide very important data that can be used in understanding users' mentality. All the previous ways of obtaining information about users should be used well by heritage websites towards further better development. This emerged knowledge can help in responding faster to the needs and changes of the market and cope with the user's needs by thinking about the presented service and innovating more creative product or service [14].

5.9. Use Adaptive Testing in Marketing

Trials and errors are a powerful philosophy that allows learning while doing and hence optimizing a suitable eventual marketing strategy and the advances in technology would make it easier to master these experiments. This adaptive testing makes it harder for the competitors to figure out what your strategy [10].

6. Conclusions

Currently, social media is a key factor in our personal and cultural lives and we cannot separate it from our online world. Social media extended its presence into the heritage sectors as an important approach of marketing the cultural heritage. A growing number of people now speak of social media especially the young audience which helped in the branding and growth of many cultural industries. It is now crucial to understand that; social media become own exceptional marketing potentials as an ever-growing low coast online marketing tool. Heritage institutions have to rethink their traditional outreach strategies and cope with the social media wave to embark on a new era of cultural heritage marketing.

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