Communicating Cultural Heritage to the Young

Encouraging Museum Communications World Wide

REPORT
Conference and seminars arranged by ICOM Brasil and ICOM MPR in Paraty and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil 1 - 8 November 2008
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2 - 8 November 2008 ICOM Brasil and ICOM MPR arranged a conference in Paraty followed by seminars in Rio de Janeiro and in São Paulo 10 November. The events were initiatives to follow up and implement ICOM’s Strategic Plan “Our Global Vision”.

Communicating Cultural Heritage to the Young
The main theme of the conference was devoted to improve museums’ communication activities towards children and young people. Museums have long tradition in attracting school children. At this conference the following additional questions were rised: - How can museums and heritage sites reach out to and encourage individual children and young people? - Which impressions do children and young people have about museums and heritage sites?

Encouraging Museum Communications World Wide
A second enlightened topic was how to improve museums communications. Discussions were made on how to raise the awareness of ICOM and to stimulate efforts related to communications strategies in museums and heritage organisations especially in Brazil and Latin-America, but also the rest of the world.

Meetings in Paraty, Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo
The conference took place in Paraty 2 - 5 November. On 7 November the delegates had the opportunity to meet with the museum community of Rio de Janeiro in Museu Histórico Nacional in Rio de Janeiro. The core components of the first part of the conference were discussed, and new topics were enlightened.

The secretary of ICOM MPR, Mieke Renders gave a summary of the presentations given in Paraty. On 10 November a seminar was held for the museum community in São Paulo.

This publication contains written versions of the presentations given during the conference in Paraty. We take this opportunity to thank all the speakers at the conference. We will also thank all the other delegates, for participating actively in workshops, discussions and other activities, and thereby making the conference to a great success.

ICOM Brasil and ICOM MPR wish to express our warmest gratitude to ICOM, Museu de Zoologia da USP, Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, Secretaria de Estado da Cultura de São Paulo, Museu Histórico Nacional, Departamento de Museus e Centros Culturais, IPHAN and Ministério da Cultura do Brasil for their generous support of the events.

Carlos Roberto F. Brandão
President ICOM Brasil

Paal Mork
Chairman ICOM MPR
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It is my great pleasure to represent Alissandra Cummins, the President of the International Council of Museums, here at the MPR Annual Conference in Brazil. As Executive Council member of ICOM and active ICOM-Brazil and ICOFOM member, I have seen the dedication with which Alissandra Cummins has supported and recognized the dynamism of museums in Brazil, whether inaugurating the new Master’s Programme in Museology and Heritage at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UNIRIO), speaking before audiences of museum people, students and government officials or by sending messages to encourage museum leadership, partnerships, and educational outreach.

For these past years as President, Alissandra Cummins has been supporting young people to have a better chance to participate in ICOM and thereby encouraging these to enter the museum and heritage professions. At the same time, ICOM as a whole, through its Strategic Plan 2008-2010, has underscored the importance of reinvigorating museums for a new generation, by emphasizing, among other things, the use of internet technologies for communications and a reconceptualised approach to activities and meetings where “delivery captures the diversity of ICOM’s members”.

Indeed, Brazil and MPR are two ICOM committees in the forefront “providing leadership in advocating the value of heritage” and setting the example. It is therefore quite fitting that this particular MPR conference is taking place here in Brazil.

In 2006, the President of Brazil approved the National Congress bill to declare the “National Museums Year”. This initiative has showed the Federal Government’s recognition for the work developed by the extensive museum community in the country. ICOM-Brazil plays a very important part in such a community, and has acted over the years together with museums and universities to include the participation of Brazilian professionals in the international museum sphere. An important part of this work relates to communicating and expanding museums and Museology for the young. And we can thank the dynamism of ICOM-Brazil Chair Carlos Roberto F. Brandão, for enhancing, as from 2007, communication to a new generation within ICOM, facilitating the access of young professionals to international ICOM committees.

All recognition for a fine accomplishment should go to the Ministry of Culture for Brazil’s National Museums Policy. This multilingual document is not only a strategic plan, but also a communications policy where words equate to actions. This is surely the way to integrate “culture” and museums as a force for change and institutionally supported development to benefit society and in particular youth, today and tomorrow. We can also thank the support for museums granted by the Ministry’s Museums Department, for having integrated into all plans for “Culture” the proactive role of museums, and also for defending the creation of new courses on Museology in different areas of the country. Many thanks to the Director of the Department, José do Nascimento, and his active staff – for contributing to this very important development of a national capacity building network in Museology, at the university level - that will multiply the number of new museum professionals in the country, adequately prepared to dedicate themselves to heritage. This is really working with the young.

As we all know, we can do much in museums which is targeted for young people, but if we are not “communicating cultural heritage to the young”, we are missing the mark. We can make things fun, without necessarily making the experience an educational one. We can showcase youth, but transmitting the curiosity, interest and passion for world cultures and diverse origins has in today’s multimedia society of virtual connections new benchmarks to recognize to become effective.

How can we know if we are “communicating” to the “young”? Will learning curves tell us? Will improved skills in school mean anything? How will we go about
finding out what our impact is? Perhaps the young
will not fit into the grids pre-established by evaluation
systems and surveys known to date, but the attitudes,
interpretations and actions undertaken by young
people will show us the results. This is one reason why
community involvement is key to encouraging young
people to get involved and participate in museums
on all levels. Organizations such as ICOM’s partner
World Federation of Friends of Museums (WFFM)
have sections for young people where volunteering
with outreach museum programmes for children
and community organizing can amount to valuable
pre-professional experience. In ICOM, the “young
professional” and “student” rates must be kept
affordable as the ICOM Young Professional funds
for the network provides for greater participation in
ICOM’s international meetings.

The 2007 General Conference benefited greatly from
the presence and active participation of so many young
scholarship attendees, enriching the experience for all
and establishing an important precedent for years to
come as ICOM at age 61 (!) renews its membership and
its mission.

One of the reasons why ICOM has always been a
presence and force in Brazil is because Mario Barata,
one of the founding members of ICOM in 1946, was
in Paris on an international scholarship when ICOM
was founded at The Louvre. This is indeed why he was
able to return to Brazil and help create the National
Committee of ICOM, together with a group of
museologists, under the leadership of Regina Monteiro
Real. This revolutionary, innovative and eminently
constructive spirit of international cooperation defines
the meaning of leadership in the world of museums.

2008 has been the year in which ICOM has indeed
embraced its global mission. The ICOM General
Assembly certainly made the right decision in selecting
the Ibero-American theme of the year “Museums
as agents of social change and development” as the
International Museum Day theme. An estimated 15,000
museums participated in the event around the world
with activities as diverse as songfests, marches, special
exhibitions, cultural heritage contests, and even a strike
(employees at the India National Museum). Moreover,
the organization of the International Museum Day
event in partnership with The Tech Museum of
Innovation in San José provided museum people with
the opportunity to celebrate on a 3D virtual platform
called “Second Life”. The possibilities for international
collaborations between museum exhibition designers,
for example, continue to be explored as The Tech
has opened up this new medium to the international
museum people for experimentation to develop and
prototype exhibits for the “real life” museum. In many
ways, this means more participation by young people.
New technologies are among the means with which to
rediscover the past, investigate multiple histories and
cultural diversity, with new tools better apt to provide
multiple perspectives.

As a first global viral communications campaign run by
ICOM, MPR and Brazil can do much to follow up on
this successful foray into “collaborative communication
systems” and see how for 2009 we can do even more
“to facilitate interactive communication across and
within the network”. The theme for 2009 is “Museums
and Tourism”… and there is no reason why we
should not imagine that young people, students, and
young professionals could be among the most active
participants in museum-centered educational cultural
heritage tourism.

In any case, this conference should help develop
a marketing and public relations approach to
communicating to the young within the scope
of ICOM’s objectives in the near term, through
community-based activities which could be articulated
on the national, regional and international levels. For
that reason, we thank Paal Mork and his determined
International Committee for bringing to the fore what
is no doubt the essential challenge of our Organization
as a whole – communicating to the value of heritage to
the young - as this embraces ICOM’s mission to making
museums relevant and contributing to the development
of society today and in the future.

With all best wishes for an excellent and productive
conference over the next days, on behalf of the
President of ICOM and the Executive Council, we
salute your valuable contributions.
A Brief Introduction to Brazil and its Museums

Carlos Roberto F. Brandão, President of ICOM-Brasil

During most of its history as a separate continent, South America has been in isolation. It split from Africa in the Cretaceous period, some 100 million years ago; geological and biological evidence strongly suggest, however, that South America and Australia have been in contact after the splitting from Africa, which may explain why these land masses share very peculiar components of their fauna and flora. South and North Americas only started to exchange biological elements with the upraising of Central America, some 5 million years ago, via the Panama isthmus.

In its way westwards, the plates that together compose modern South America, push up the continental Nazca plate, giving rise to the Andean range, which highest peaks may attain over 6000 m from sea level. The Andes represent a western diagonal of dry and cold climates; at the Eastern end of the continent, a series of plateaus (from northern Argentina to Northeastern Brazil) and the Guiana plate divide South America in three main plain areas, the Orinoco, the Amazonian and the Paraná-Prata basins.

The large South American area now occupied by the Brazilian territory encompasses most of the Amazon Forest at the North, the “cerrados” in the Central area (a savannah-like vegetation) and the Pantanal (flooded every year) in the South west, both shared with Bolivia, Paraguay and Argentina, the “caatingas” (very dry forest which shed leaves in the dry season) in the Northeastern, and the Atlantic (dense evergreen) and Araucaria (endemic pine) Forests covering the Atlantic Range, along the Eastern coast.

When the Portuguese sailors first arrived in the Brazilian coast in 1500, some 5 million aboriginal people lived in this territory, organized in hundreds of ethnical groups, each with its particular language and cosmogony. The contact was dramatic for this population, who suffered a very strong impact and increase in mortality rates, by virtue of several diseases which were unknown here, and to which these populations showed no natural defenses.

The Portuguese first settled along the coast, with Salvador in Bahia and São Vicente in São Paulo states as the first cities in the country. The Portuguese dominated Brazil as a colony from 1500 to 1822, but Brazil suffered also invasions by different groups of, in special, Dutch and French origins. During colonial times, Brazil was not allowed to trade with any other country than Portugal, had no printing rights and no universities. In particular in the XVIII century, the discovery of gold, silver and precious stones in Minas Gerais state resulted in an increase in population and interest on Brazil by the Portuguese. In this period Brazilian baroque developed in many areas, in special the religious architecture, music, and sculpture.

At the beginning of the XIX century, the Portuguese court sailed to Brazil escaping from Napoleon’s threat to invade Portugal. Half of the Portuguese treasure, most silver from the churches, the Royal library, the tribunals and most of the army moved to Brazil, where they stayed from 1808 to 1821, with Rio de Janeiro as its headquarters. Queen Mary, the Mad, died in Rio, and her son, the Prince Regent was crowed in Rio as Dom João VI, King of the United Kingdom of Brazil,
Algarve and Portugal, which enabled Portugal to take part in the Versailles treaty after the Napoleonic Wars.

Dom João VI left Rio after establishing the first museological institutions in the country, the Royal Botanical Gardens and the Royal Museum (after, the National Museum of Natural History). His son, Pedro, was left here as Prince Regent, but soon after his father got in bad terms with the Portuguese courts. In a trip to São Paulo, in April 1822, the Prince Regent decided to free Brazil from Portugal and founded the Brazilian Empire as Peter I, Emperor of Brazil. However, Dom João died in Portugal some years after and Peter decided to go back to Portugal to secure the crown for his family. He left his son in Brazil, who was to be crowned, Peter II, after a regency period of 10 years. Peter II reigned for almost 60 years, but was sent to exile in Paris by the Republican movement in 1889, where he died shortly after.

These political movements coincide with the birth of different museums along the country, mostly to reinforce that notion of the Brazilian national nature. The main museums founded at that time were the Museu Paraense Emilio Goeldi, in Belém do Pará and the Museu Paulista, in São Paulo, both originally dedicated to the Natural Sciences. At the beginning of the XX century, the first Brazilian art and historical museums arise, giving ground to the Brazilian identity movement. In the years 50 to 70s of the last century, religious, ethnographical and modern art museums were founded in different Brazilian cities, resulting from the recognition of peculiarities in Brazilian art history and in the strong artistic movements that swept throughout the country at that time.

In the last decades, the number of museums increased dramatically in Brazil. The Ministry of Culture registers today over 20,000 museum professionals working for more than 2500 museums in Brazil. However, three thirds of Brazilian counties still do not have museums, which are concentrated in the big cities, mostly along the littoral, reproducing the first stages in the European occupancy of the Brazilian territory. Brazilian museums cover most typologies, with an emphasis in local history and art museums, but there is a strong movement to diversify the nature and scope of museums nationwide, and to attract more than the 30 million projected annual visitors to our museums.
Specific approach for the Young Visitors in Palais de la decouverte

Anne-Marie Delga and Bernard Blache, Palais de la decouverte

Palais de la decouverte, one of the four scientific museums in Paris, is located very close to the Champs Elysées; (the situation in the very center of the city near prestigious art museums is implicating excellence), where fundamental and contemporary sciences are presented on 12 000 square meters through experiments commentated by scientific explainers (60 people, part of a staff of 210).

The topics treated in our museum are Astronomy with the Planetarium, Physics (40% of the surface), Chemistry, Geosciences, Life sciences and Mathematics.

It is resolutely turned towards young public (through children of school age and families). It welcomes between 500 000 and 600 000 visitors a year, 75% are under 18. Some of them are coming in scholar groups (120 000 pupils by year) from Paris area but also a large part of France.

Products:
Specific presentations like workshops are proposed to the young visitors; they will during small sessions truly participate and make some productions (like shampoos, perfumes, their own DNA...).

Temporary exhibitions dedicated to the young and very young are organized (dinosaurs, termites and ants, smells - with special treatment for children between 3 and 6). They are a way to attract “non-visitors” with the help of large PR campaigns.

Some events like special debates, for example with Nobel Prize winners, annual Science Festival, week of the taste are organized.

Some encounters with researchers explaining their activities are organized on a regular basis in the very popular programme “One researcher, one experiment”

Communication Acts
Documents for the visit are specially prepared for the young public, they are proposed for different age groups.

Transversal visits mixing different branches of learning are proposed.

Partnerships with medias dedicated to the young are organized (TV, radios, newspapers)

A strategic targeting towards the young is implemented, especially concerning the choice of the poster images in order to give to a very large number the idea to visit an exhibition or the permanent part of the museum.

Events: organization of games, couponing...like in the recent exhibition “Alfred Nobel, networks of innovation” with the partnership of Samsung (with a travel to Stockholm to win to take part in the ceremony of Nobel prizes).

This specific approach of the young has for result a permanent renewal of the attendance, a greater sensitization of this public towards science and contributes to the emergence of scientific vocations (trying to solve our contemporary problems of recruitment) and a scientific literacy.
Children - The Future Of Museums

Dr. Damon Monzavi, Directing Manager of Gem stones museum of Darya-e-Noor & Kooh-e- Noor, Tehran, Iran

Introduction
The gem stones museum started its service 5 years ago to introduce the arts, sciences and the industry of the gemstones and minerals to Iranian. Iran is a young country, so the most important target groups for our museum are children and the young population. This population is normally not familiar with museums and they think museums are boring places. The question is: How we can excite the interest among the young generation? The visitors who we want to get back to us again - and not only alone but also with their family and their friends. We want to excite the feeling of relationship with the collections for the young generation, and when we do that we can even create relations with families. And this is important, as the family is the most important unit of the Iranian society.

Our aim is to create the Museum as a place where play, joy and learning join together:

Partnerships
The characteristic needs of children are attention and encouragement, especially in public places such as a museum. Children are involved in our museum programs: Children might for example serve as guides; children with a process of third guide, second guide, first guide and then assistant to the staff of the museum. This is not only a service to children but also to the visitors who are captured by these young guides's assistance. The visitor’s attention encourages the children. This act promotes more visitors - especially the families of the children. We also communicate with children in other cities by writing letters to their schools and send them our Virtual museum CD so they can see our museum and take part in our program.

Competitions
The museum organizes competitions between children to excite the feeling of challenge and joy about painting, collecting information and designing. From the paintings we also understand which colours, which sections and which objects that are important for the children. Another competition is how the future museum would be and which objects should this museum contain. By these questions we not only understand which things are important, but also we receive many new ideas from children. The competitions will also make the children carefully watch and think.

We divide the students group in two teams and place them in two different sections of the museum. Then a member of each group assist the guide explaining the objects to the other group and it will be a challenge between the two groups. We arrange this as a competition between the schools.

New Generation of Communication (Digitalizing)
Digitalizing documents can change books, images and documentations to video information for better understanding. Books are transformed to image-shows and movies and presented to children and student using exiting music and short clips. These are introduced to children in the entrance of the museum to make them excited. Internet and email are the fastest growing mediums of communication amongst young people, so we also work in this category. In the museum we also send information to student’s mobiles phone by Bluetooth technology.

Environment And Manner
This is our standard: speak with each group in their language of thinking,
Our manner is presenting documentations by storytelling. Information is provided by posters that tell stories full of interesting and mysterious discoveries by Iranian scientists, victories in battles, deposits of gems and imperial jewellery tales. Through these posters we communicate with children and we can learn them many things with interest. We receive positive audience response by presenting information that they would like to hear from us. For girls we tell romantic stories, fictions, the history of gems, goddesses and angels that are somehow related to stones. For boys we present exciting things such as wars and battles, long journeys, heroes and legends. Student should be invited to the museum at times when the museum is not crowded. The environments should offer a feeling of safeness for the children, so that they feel they are in their classroom and their brains will absorb more than at crowded hours.

In our museum we prevent repetitious processes, using amusing object such as magnifying glass, media stations, etc in exhibitions to attract children’s attention.

The manner in which staff speaks with children is very important. They emphasize informal learning and raising the voice on special words. Primary students have great faith in their teachers, so it’s very important to participate with the teachers in developing our programmes.

**Workshops**

Simple workshop and classes in our museum have been designed for the children in order to learn, experience new things and enjoy their time. We ask them to participate in our events rather than just watching. We let them feel the art and science, something extraordinary through their senses. These activities should be designed according to the abilities of children so that each child can be a shiny star among the adults. Children can work with machines where adults are not allowed – these are designed for educational purposes only for children. Children work longer when they know that adults notice them and they become attractions of the museum. When people take photos of them they feel they have a talent that is respected by others, and this will also encourage them. Nights with families in the museum are offered with presentations of children activities.

**Conclusion**

By paying attention to children’s activities and their ideas, it will be easy to capture the attraction of this generation. Students will respond to messages that reach them clearly and honestly. Children tend to continue behaviour when it is rewarded. It depends how we define children in our museum. Why should they think a museum is a boring place when we let them inform us what they need and then we collect their ideas and develop them! So museums should offer opportunities for children, experiences that in their future life can improve their social skills, self confidence and responsibility. Thus they will learn to communicate with the world, become special thinkers, and acquire social-emotional skills.

*Gem stones museum of Darya-e-Noor & Koob-e-Noor,*
**Museu Paulista: Communication Strategies for the Future**

**Maria-Júlia Estefânia Chelini, Head of the Cultural Diffusion Department, Museu Paulista of the University of São Paulo, Brazil**

I can see that my presentation focus on older youngsters when compared to most presentations delivered to the present ICOM MPR meeting, and there is a reason for that. This is probably because these are the young people we are concerned about now in the Museu Paulista. We assume that it is at this age (between 15 and 24 years old) that the young start coming (or not) to the museums by themselves and in consequence they form an important target group for communication strategies. In order to communicate cultural heritage to this group, we must bring these young people to the museum and this is the main topic of my paper. Let me first briefly introduce you to the Museu Paulista.

The Museu Paulista of the University of São Paulo is a centenary institution whose actions are concentrated in the History area. Its building was originally conceived as a monument to celebrate the Independence of Brazil. Project of the Empire, the construction was interrupted with the incoming Republic that later determined it would receive a museum. The Museu Paulista was created in 1893 and opened to the public in 1895 as the first public Museum of the State of São Paulo. In the 1920’s it assumed a History profile, in 1963 its administration was transferred to the University of São Paulo. In the early 1990’s, after the separation of the collections of anthropology, archaeology and ethnography it redefined its profile and actuation areas. Along its 115 years of existence the Museu Paulista has received almost 27 million visitors. It may seem a low amount in comparison to the number of visitors received by big museums as the Louvre or the Metropolitan, but it allows the Museu Paulista to figure among the most visited museums in Brazil during the last decade. During the last 5 years the average number of visitors stands higher than 300,000 visitors / year.

Researches conducted by the Educative Service show that the main public is divided into two equally important groups: the schoolchildren and the spontaneous public. The latter will be considered in the present work. It is interesting to notice that an important part of this audience consists of the young (15 to 24 years). Between February and December 2005 the Educative Service interviewed 2,289 visitors and classified them according to their age. The result shows that the young (15 to 24 years) represented almost 30% of the interviewed audience.

We don’t know precisely what attracts the spontaneous visitors to the museum, but until now, there has certainly been little communicative action targeting these groups. For the potential foreign visitors, just isolated actions have been developed, such as the elaboration of an English folder. Even strategies considered as basic in institutions worldwide, such as the use of an appropriate language for young audiences in the museum website, started to be discussed only during the recent years as an institutional communication strategy.

During the last years the Museu Paulista started to worry about the image it passes on to the potentials visitors through the media. I am not referring here only to news on TV and magazines but also in circumstances when the museum is used as scenario in documentaries, movies, soap operas and TV advertisements. As an attractive building, the Museu Paulista is frequently requested to be used as scenario and the main concern when analysing these requests is the kind of impact that it could have on the image of the museum. The building and the garden in front of it have not only been scenario for Ferrero’s chocolates and Nestle’s cookies advertisements, for example, but also for romance and action scenes in popular soap operas. It was expected that these appearances would make the museum more familiar to the young.

Based on all these facts, the museum decided to get an overview of the institution’s potentials, allowing it to choose where to concentrate its efforts. The Cultural Diffusion Department of the Museum, with the help of the Educative Service, elaborated a first questionnaire to be applied on young spontaneous public and on young people that came to the museum to attend seminars or courses.

September 7th, the Independence Day of Brazil, has been, year after year, the day the Museu Paulista
receives the highest number of visitors (in 2007, we received 11,700 this day). In 2008, this day was chosen to conduct the public research on young spontaneous visitors. At the exit of the museum the visitors whose age seemed to fit in the group defined as young age (15 to 24 years) were asked to answer the questionnaire. At the end of the day, 120 questionnaires had been answered by young spontaneous visitors that we will call, from now on, “the September 7th group”.

During the second semester of 2008 we also asked the students of four courses organized by the Museu Paulista to answer the same questionnaire. Forty five of them corresponded to the target group we will from now on call “the Course group”.

A preliminary analysis of the answers allows us to identify: 1- who are the young spontaneous visitors that come to the Museum; 2- how they got to know the Museu Paulista; 3- what brought them to the museum this one time or what would make them come back again in the future.

The September 7th group could be divided almost equally in male (53) and female (66). Each gender could also be separated in two groups according to their age: 15-19 years (21 males and 43 females) and 20-24 years (32 males and 23 females). If we consider the respondent’s education, the high school undergraduate, high school graduate and college/university undergraduate constitute nearly 80% of the visitors (each of the three groups contributing equally to the count). Almost 30% of these visitors did not live in São Paulo city. And, of the visitors who lived in São Paulo, 61% came from the eastern and southern areas of the city, the two nearest areas to the Museu Paulista.

If we consider the Course group, most of the respondents (77,8%) were between 20 and 24 years old. Regarding the respondents’ gender, females represented the majority (75,6%). This certainly influenced the result related with their education: 87% were college/university undergraduate. Here, the central area of the city being the exception, all the other areas of the city had an equivalent number of respondents. The young from other cities represented 20% of the total.

These young were asked to chose, between 18 options, the three things they use to do with more frequency in their free time. The Course group chose “read / listen to music” as their favourite leisure activity (71%) followed by “go to the cinema” and “watch TV / VHS / DVD” (39% each). The September 7th group also preferred “read / listen to music” (45%), followed by “watch TV / VHS / DVD” and “access internet” (28% each).

Most of the September 7th group (63 %) answered that they rarely visit museums during their free time and 30,8% of them had never visited the Museu Paulista before. A similar percentage (64,4 %) of the respondents from the Course group affirmed having the habit of visiting museums in their free time, and only 11,1% of them had never visited the Museu Paulista before.

It is interesting to note that most of the September 7th group affirmed they had heard about the Museu Paulista from some friend/relative or from school/college (37,5 and 35,8%, respectively). The majority of the Course group respondents had heard about the Museu Paulista from school/college (60%) but,
although this was also one of the options that could be indicated as the reason for visiting the museum, it was not one of the most chosen reasons. For the Course group, the most frequent answer concerning the reason for visiting the museum was the one related to the collections / the building or the one related to the habit of visiting museums and history museums. A previous visit was also indicated as a good reason by the Course group and the September 7th group. The latter also indicated the collections / the building and the habit of visiting museums and history museums as important reasons, as well as the Museum thematics (São Paulo history and the Brazil independence). But, the September 7th group chose as favourites the reasons related to a friend / relative recommendation, keeping company or bringing someone to visit the Museu Paulista.

It is interesting to notice that, despite the museum’s insertions in the media and the efforts that were made to increase the number and quality of these insertions, this was not one of the most frequently alleged reasons for visiting the museum according to the respondents.

Anniversary concert at Museo Paulista 25 January

The answers also show that accessing the Internet is a common leisure pastimes, but the museum website was not pointed as one of the ways they got to know the museum. Knowing that Brazilian people are considered among those who use internet most frequently (both in number of people and in number of hours per person) and that they are able to use tools that are rarely used in other countries, reinforces the inefficiency of our communication through the website. This will certainly be one of our goals for the coming years.

When asked about the eventual reasons to come back and visit the museum again, the answers of both groups were very similar to the ones given to the previous question.

When asked about whether they would recommend this visit to a friend / relative, nearly 90% of both groups affirmed that they would do so.

The data presented here result from a preliminary analysis, so a lot of research still needs to be done. The present work constitutes, however, a first step towards the creation of objective institutional communication strategies in the forthcoming years.
Children for Museums!

Romina Mancuso, PhD Sociologist, Literature Faculty, Cultural Heritage Department, University of Palermo, Italy

Often times at the return from the holidays we share what we have done, what we have seen, what we’ve eaten and so forth. More and more frequently the friends to whom I ask these questions, answer me by saying: - you know with children ... we chose things and places suitable to them. Otherwise our vacation would be compromised! - Here’s a central point that is fundamental for our thinking today. Children’s and youth’s wishes are strongly influencing the choices of the whole family’s lifestyle. As parents, nannies, grandparents, older brothers, uncles, and any person involved in the kid’s caring are often looking for the best activity and safe place to share time with the little people they love, children should be considered big stakeholders.

People with a high level of education, that are able to thoroughly appreciate works of art, reason with expertise on historical issues, and evaluate political and cultural facts in the end then spend entire days playing with gigantic objects, push on buttons, listen to jingling sounds and fallow entertaining puppets and dolls. And in the end it even seems fun, just for the fact that they shared with their little child exciting moments of personal growth and discovery.

I believe therefore that the theme of this annual meeting of the Committee of ICOM MPR, “Communicating Cultural Heritage to the Young”, is of great interest. The key is to understand how to communicate well with children and young people in relation to the fact, that they can be an effective instrument of communication and persuasion for large and diverse segments of public.

In this paper, with a provocative switch of parts, kids are considered as tools, and not just targets for the museum communications strategies. But of course we don’t want to be a Pied Piper of Hamelin, a man that attracts kids with magic music just to capture and use them for his evil convenience.

Marketing and communication managers are trying all the time to make Museums more attractive to young visitors, thinking how to communicate better with children, what new programs to arrange to attract them, which language to use to make the museum’s collection educational materials more interesting and appealing. Festivals, classes, workshops, concerts, many resources are spent on getting children and youth to enjoy museums. But what can those young people do for the museum’s mission’s development? How can they help museums to promote its image and reputation inside a specific target? Can they contribute to changing Non-museum-goers into museum-goers?

An example of immigrant families, whose children were born in the country of arrival, usually does not attend the museums of the city, because it is considered to vast in difference from their own culture and they are afraid that they won’t find anything interesting for them inside it. However, many positive experiences have shown that a good exhibition that has been addressed to the immigrant’s children, brings the whole familiar group to the museum and this contributes to the integration of knowledge of cultural and ethnic diversity. Obviously this does not happen automatically: it is essential that the children are an active part in the activities. This requires the effort of the organizers, schools, voluntary associations and mainly the responsible for the communication of the museum. They will need to use the right communication in all phases of the project and arrange effective communication plans that will be used to attract the attention of the interested people and persuade them to take an active part in the project. A wrong communication can spoil the whole project.

If it’s true that museums can be considered social actors and an engine of a social changing process, they must consider the emerging needs of the new contemporary society. Needs that are connected with intercultural, intergenerational, interethnic relations management. The new generations can do a lot to help Museums play its role in facing this new challenge and developing its own mission.

Example:

“aMAZE and BEYOND” is an interactive exhibition that takes visitors through a maze, offering them an opportunity to explore the complex issues of stereotype, prejudice and discrimination, in a safe and fun environment that we can find in a museum.
This exhibit was just one part of a complete package of offering programs, provided through The State Museum of Pennsylvania to help educators work on these “tough” issues with their students. In addition, they have been provided with pre and post visit materials, authored by Susan Shapiro, Joan Myhre, and Lisa Pilsitz, museum consultants on “aMAZE and BEYOND.” These experts brought the concept to the museum and have worked closely with museum’s staff and community experts in the development of the exhibit and the pre and post visit materials. The curriculum and the exhibit were based on a curriculum written by Ph.D. Daniel Shapiro that has been field-tested in 18 schools in eastern and central European countries, and in the United States.

If we consider children as communication tools, we need to remember the meaning and the function of the tool itself, so we won’t misuse it, but give it a proper use and not turn it into a weapon of self-destruction. First we need to know their world, and speak their language to be able to talk with them, and understand their needs, to exploit their creative potential and offer them cultural, social, and human opportunities.

For the museum’s marketing and communication people this means that there must be a constant updating of the instruments and languages to communicate with children and youth. It can be very useful sharing the experiences with well known children’s artists, painters, writers, movie directors, and any creative person able to help develop brilliant new communication actions.

There are many examples showing the excellent results come out from collaboration between museum curators, museum communication managers and children’s book authors. Just to mention some I like to remember Quentin Blake, one of the best-known illustrators of our time, that has “lend” is genius and creativity to arrange temporary exhibition and guidebook for The London National Gallery, for The Petit Palais in Paris and several other museums and cultural institutions.

One more example: the project “il libro illustrato è una galleria d’arte” that has involved the cooperation of three illustrators Beatrice Alemagna, Kvja Pacovská, Chris Raschka and three museums the Archaeological Museum of Bologna, the Padiglione Esprit Nouveau in Bologna and the Biblioteca E. De Amicis in Anzola dell’Emilia.

I’m myself a children’s book author too and had already several good experiences of collaboration with museums as the Archaeological Museum of Palermo, the Archaeological Park of Agrigento and others that entrusted me to create books to support their temporary exhibitions or to create activity guide books for the divulgation of the permanent collections of the museum.

I believe that published material must be truly “science proved” and never mind if it’s “just for kid” use! This can’t be taken as an excuse to publish bad quality materials.

To respect the museum’s communication and educational mission means that constant collaboration with curators and experts is needed. This is a fantastic experience. Working closely with archaeologists and science experts, makes you discover many things, but to “translate” their “complicated” archaeological and scientific world of words into children’s language is not easy at all! Beside a “big bag” of tricks required to work in harmony with very strict curators, and be able to “survive” to their harsh judgments, you need a continuous flow of creative ideas and a constant update of new expressive techniques.

Most of the ideas and suggestions come out right away from children themselves and their most frequented places, beginning with the schools.

In order to discover the young visitors’ communicating world, like their spontaneous actions, their offers and needs for an inexpensive museum’s image promotion, this presentation will show some experiences and ideas that can help the dialogue between museum, kids and school.

To start a dialogue it is important to know each other. Any School, like: school of music, dance, sport, art, offers many opportunities to meet and know each other better.

These opportunities, however, are not always easy to notice; they must be searched in the right place and handled in the right way.
At this time Public Relations may play a basic role in discovering, managing and stimulating the dialogue between young visitors, schools and museums. Increasingly modern museums start to have an internal office of public relations that cooperates with the manager of the education department and curators to design educational offerings. Such offers are “calibrated” for different target groups and developed and promoted through effective communication strategies.

In Italy, the museums are limited to guarding and keeping the collections in good conditions but, are devoting scarce resources to communication activities. Therefore, except for major museums (which have adapted to the changing needs of the public) and, for the museums that have been built in recent years have been managed according to modern models, but the figure responsible for public relations is absent.

To interact with the school the museum must know the needs, programs, but also their potential and what has been already done. Crucial, is the constant and open dialogue between one and another.

The exchange of opinions and experiences (not only positive) between all the people involved, like teachers, educators, and expert users of schools and museums, are crucial for the development of activities useful for the growth of profits of the community.

Here is a list of 12 useful steps suggested for the development of kids-school-museum dialogue:

- Open the structures of the museum to the events and activities of the school (there is no THEATRE?... you can act at the museum, use the halls of the museum as if they were a classroom).
- Identify and promote opening hours that are more suitable for only student visits, teachers and representatives of schools. (Be sure that this doesn’t bother the regular visitors activity)
- Hosting special events of schools, such as anniversaries, holidays and special exhibitions.
- Create advisory committees, formed by members of the school community, expressing its opinion on the programs, and work as mediators to increase and deepen the dialogue between the museum and schools of the surrounding territory.
- Keep up to date the school office on the activities of the museum.

An example: High school Press Conferences. All high school newspaper advisors, writers, editors, and photographers are invited to attend press conferences for a museum’s temporary exhibitions. All participating schools will receive a press kit and a guided tour through each exhibit. At the end of the year, the Museum will honour the best newspaper article with awards.

- Cooperate with teachers and trainers to identify the needs of the school curriculum, and to develop programs that meet these needs using the collections of the museum. E.g. conferences, study days and updating courses.

An example: the Assessorato Beni Culturali della Regione Siciliana, the Sicilian Cultural Heritage Administrative Council of Sicily, has started a very interesting initiative, named CONOSCI IL TUO MUSEO, curate by Assunta Lupo. It is a competition, where all the Sicilian schools are invited to participate. Teachers and students choose a museum near their area, and then decide to accurately study it, then they produce artistic objects to promote the museums image. After being judged at the competition the best works are awarded at a ceremony, and then exposed. This year, 2008, the initiative is at her 8 year of life, the chosen theme is “ Mediterraneo, luogo di incontri e culture nelle collezioni dei Musei siciliani e nelle biblioteche” and 108 schools are already participating.

- Nominate a spokesman, a sort of ambassador among teachers or representatives of cultural institutions that like volunteers, work with the manager of the educational programs of the museum.

An example: The Field Museum initiated The Field Ambassadors Program in 1999 to increase and deepen communication between the Museum and Chicagoland schools. Field Ambassadors are classroom educators and administrators who volunteer to work with Museum educators. Their goal is to help realize the Museum’s full potential to engage students, stimulate their curiosity, and create habits of life-long learning.
Ambassadors represent the Museum and its offering when they are in their schools by disseminating to their colleagues information about Museum opportunities. Ambassadors also represent their schools’ interest and needs when they are at the Museum by advising The Field Museum on educational programs and materials.

- Prepare speeches, brochures and information materials to spread out and promote the educational proposals, so that the people interested may choose easier. (You can just have a simple leaflet that shows the calendar of the offered activities, and it clearly indicates the objectives, costs, number of participants, age etc).

- The museum figure must be present with its own stand or at least have a sent person at the sector fairs (the book fair for children, toy fair), and even at conferences and debates of education, and training.


- Develop education programs in schools.

An example: many museums make available to schools and centres educational kits and experienced staff, so that they can be trained for the study of particular subjects, often related to the collections of the museum. A service of this kind, however, requires commitment of resources, time and personnel.

- Arrange the publication of a guide for children on the museum, containing scientific information, curiosities and what to-do in the classroom, at home, alone or in company.

An example: “UN MUSEO PER GIOCO” is the guide that I designed and created, in collaboration with Dr. Laura Cappugi, manager of the education department of the Archaeological Regional Museum A. Salinas in Palermo, for 6 to 12 years old visitors. “UN MUSEO PER GIOCO” is an original learning tool that is used directly for children and can be used autonomously and independently on their own or with companions, before or after visiting the museum. The information includes simple and synthetic texts about life in ancient times, offering the reading of prehistoric documents, the Punic civilization, Greek and Roman.

The artefacts related to material life, including curious and apparently unusual items, are set near the ones of today. The dominant feature of the book is the urge to create, invent, experiment and play. Encouraging the autonomous elaboration of the contents and the experimentation of personal creativity does not mean that it’s a affected style of language or of flattening the content, but rather to organize the process of learning through a variety of languages: graphic, pictorial, poetic and narrative. The use of a note book in the end is the diary of a long virtual trip inside the museum and the mnemonic archive of lived experience.

- Cooperate with other museums and training institutes to promote and deepen cross-cutting collection’s aspects.

An example: A well known dancing school in Palermo has dedicated its final course ballet to the Museum. The performance was choreographed with the cooperation of the Brazilian ballet dancer Aurea Liliam Storti. Inspired by Isadora Duncan’s dance concept, she decided to translate into dancing the beauty kept inside Sicilian museums. The same for, Old Greeks statues, and sexy woman painted by Guttuso or Lojacono, butterflies from Sicilian science collections and other museum’s objects become protagonist of a fantastic performance were more than 50 young dancers were on stage for a big night in a real theatre applauded by their family and friends. And from now on they start looking at the museum’s collections with more attention, and wish to visit some of them again. The experiment gave good results but could be improved; a deeper dialogue with museum’s public relations and communication manager could offer more visibility to the museum’s collections.

To conclude, we must remember, however, that the management of programs and activities for the school may be more expensive than other public relations activities, as they require a greater commitment of staff time, consultants and experts labour and a particular use of structures. We should expect and provide services adaptable to public with limited hearing capacity, vision, or difficulty of movement, this requires a lot and specific competence, and a lot of attention from communication experts. Each museum will have to evaluate the results produced by each project in terms of visibility and of a favourable predisposition of interested public so they can find the best mix (in terms
of cost) between quality programs, scientifically reliable, and actions of effective Public Relations. Always remembering that every action, every service that the museum offers or doesn’t offer, does or does not help define the image in the imagination of present visitors and for the ones in the future.

A museum may therefore choose not to put children as one of its public of reference.

An example:
Because there are few ropes and cases that are used to guard fragile objects, The Frick Collection in New York, has decided not to admit to the collection children under ten and those younger than sixteen must be accompanied by an adult. Anyway, through the Education Department, the Frick Collection offers several programs to middle and high school student.

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A World of Stories
Creating a Children’s Activities Center from a Literary Universe

Josephine Østern, Norsk Folkemuseum, Oslo, Norway

This is a project directed especially towards children at Norsk Folkemuseum. It’s also a project still in its planning stages, as always dependant upon the funding. Therefore we still don’t know when - or even whether the project will be realized at all. We are indeed living in interesting times!

But first I need to give you a short introduction to the museum, in order to present the project in its correct setting. Bygdøy is a peninsula with large recreational areas in central Oslo. The woods, beaches and fields are popular destinations for the citizens to go for Sunday walks and other outings. The peninsula also hosts five large museums that are visited by both locals and tourists.

In short, there is a large amount of people visiting the area and with the right product it should be possible to attract more of them to our museum.

Norsk Folkemuseum - See Norway in a day!
The museum shows traditional Norwegian culture and history. The Open-Air Museum features 155 authentic buildings from different national regions, like Gol Stave Church, from the 13th century. We also have large indoor permanent collections and temporary exhibits.

Anually we have approximately 250,000 visitors. About 50% are tourists and 50% locals.

A large amount of them are families with children. We also have numerous children who come with their school or kindergartens.

From the total number of visitors, about 26% are children - about 10% of the total are school children participating in our educational programs. 16% are children not partaking in any educational program. These children are either school children not asking for a guide or children that visit us with their families.

During summer the Open-Air Museum is filled daily with people in costumes and activities. Domestic animals graze the fields. There is folk music and dancing, baking of “lefse” and other activities. It really is a living museum and perfect for children!

This might help explain why about 51% of our visitors come in the short period of June to August, besides being the obvious tourist season.

Unfortunately - during wintertime the situation is very different. The Open-Air Museum is open only as a park. Most of the houses have no electricity and it’s cold. Daylight is also in very short supply during winter.
National Heritage
Simultaneously one of Norway’s most famous authors of children’s books still is not presented in full anywhere in the country. Anne-Cath. Vestly wrote over 50 books of which many are considered classics in Norwegian children’s literature.

This author and her books are an important part of Norwegian history and the development of Norwegian society after World War II. In several of her books she presented controversial topics and thus influenced society. For example did her books from the 1960’s where the mother works and the father stays home to care for their children create quiet a stir in popular opinion.

Her most famous stories are about a family with eight children and the children’s grandmother (Grandma and the eight children). The series is one of the most famous Norwegian book series for children. Vestly also worked as an actress, most famously playing grandma in the TV- and screen versions of Grandma and the eight children.

She also starred in popular kids show for television as well as children’s radio programs. Her characteristic voice is therefore well known to Norwegians of all ages. The illustrations were mostly done by her husband and they represent very familiar images for Norwegians.

Most of her books are about universal subjects such as: childhood, growing up, playing, family life, moving and living conditions. Therefore the presentation of her stories and figures also gives a unique framework for showing general cultural history with more emotions and color than what is normally done in our museum.

Well-known stories and characters can be utilized as guides into the past, reflections upon the present and even speculations on the future. They will also aid communication between the generations as parents, grandparents and children will experience mutual recognition.

That being said, as her books were mostly written during a time when Norway was predominantly a homogenic society; it is important that we substract the general themes in the exhibit in order to communicate well with the new groups now part of the Norwegian population and with the tourists that are not familiar with her books.

Children’s Activites Center
By combining the wish to present the author’s work and the need for a children’s activity center we hope to create an interactive exhibition for and about children. The target group is mainly children and families – but the universality of the themes should make it enjoyable for any one who is or has ever been a child!
Wishing this to be a place where children can use all their senses, experience, play and learn at the same time we are utilizing sounds, smells, activities, films, touchable objects and all manners of tools deemed suitable in the center.

We have made educational programs for different age groups, school groups and for children and adults that visit as individuals during their leisure time. We have also made specially tailored programs for non-Norwegian speaking visitors.

As the building is from the early 1930’s it needs a complete renovation in order to comply with modern regulations and standards. Expectations and requirements of ventilation, emergency exits and accessibility for all groups have all increased substantially today.

Here you see some of the plans of the exterior of the building and for the adjoining playground, where we will build children-scaled models of homes depicted in her stories.

The plans include 3 stories, totaling approximately 900 m2. The outside area also contains a café next to the playground.

**Preproject**
As the project is large and complex and also involves a lot of necessary constructional work, we wanted to be very thorough in the planning process. Projects of this size often have an unfortunate tendency to bring very expensive surprises.

We managed to raise 210,000 Euros from a private foundation for the pre-project.

With this budget we could make thorough investigations and hire professional project managers and artists. We also involved the son of the author who represents the interests of the author and the rest of the family. This ensured both the quality of the work and also gave an assurance that we presented her literary universe in a correct manner.

The pre-project is completed giving us:
- Fully formed plans and drawings
- Models of the center
- A reliable budget for the entire project
- Necessary public permits
- An application for the main project
- Negotiating with copy-right holders (family)
- The family of the author is involved in the project

As we want the center to be interactive, everything has to be made in extra good quality. Children playing do add substantially to the normal “tear and wear” of an exhibition. The total budget for building this center will be 5,614,000 Euros. Our staff can cover some of it through inhouse manpower, but we still need 5,115,000 Euros to fund the center.

We have sent an application to the foundation that funded the pre-project and we are still awaiting their response. Unfortunately the world economy and stock markets suddenly started to decline at the same time. It may seem that the project will have to be postponed until more prosperous times await us once more.

In the long term we are still optimistic as the project is good and solidly prepared. We still hope for the completion of the Children’s Activities Center at Norsk Folkemuseum in the future!
Museums and Communications - The Need to Improve Strategies

Paal Mork, Chairman, ICOM MPR

This presentation will give you an introduction to communications and integrated marketing communications. Museums face demanding communications challenges in today’s information society, and I will explain you why. In the second part of my presentation, I will describe some tools to reach through with the messages communicated by the museum.

Introduction to communications

What is communication?

Communication basically means the transfer of a message from a sender to a receiver, followed up by a reaction from the sender. The process can be disturbed by noise interfering the message or if the sender uses codes that the receiver does not understand. Communications is a two-way process between sender and receiver where messages are carried both ways.

In marketing terminology communications is commonly used to describe the integrated process of promoting goods or services to a consumer, and also to receive feedback. I will try to give you an introduction to this use of the term.

Communications in the Information Society

When I grew up in a small town on the west coast of Norway, we had only one TV-channel. Even on the radio, there was only one programme. It was convenient, since there were no discussions about what programme to watch, and when we talked about TV in the lunchbreakes, everyone had seen the same programme. This one and only channel was a public service broadcaster where no advertising was allowed. For museums, heritage sites and also companies who wanted to communicate a message, the channels of communications were fairly limited.

Today, I do not know how many TV channels you have, we’ve got too many. And most of them are commercial. In addition we have got several new communications channels, like the Internet, more sophisticated direct mail and new telephone systems. The consumer receives loads of information wherever he turns his head.

Actually it sounds like an ideal situation for communicators. Channels for communications have increased in number and become far more accessible. Everyone can make a site on the Internet. To produce printed information material is much easier than only a few years ago. And not at least, the choice of commercial TV and radio channels has risen considerably.

But the truth is, the competition for creating awareness for a communicated message has never been harder. I mentioned earlier that communication can be interfered by noise, and this is what it really means.

The wide choice of communication channels has resulted in an information overflow in society. As a consequence, the corporate industry has developed sophisticated communications strategies to communicate their messages. Communications is treated as an integrated process that includes all channels for transferring a message from a sender to a receiver. This is called integrated marketing communications.

In planning a marketing communications campaign, the marketing manager takes on the consumer’s point of view. He researches which channels of communications the targeted consumer is exposed to and prefers. A consistent message is delivered through a wide but specified choice of communications channels. The aim is to reach through to the chosen consumer. And when the campaign is carried out, the consumer should read an article in the morning newspaper about the issue, see a board showing the issue on the back of the bus he takes every day and even receive a personal invitation to an event focussing on the issue.

Communications processes also appear to become more personalised. Messages are less mass-communicated and more tailor made to suit the preferences of each consumer. Not at least new interactive opportunities have improved such options.

According to integrated marketing communications, advertising, Public Relations, direct mail, Internet, event marketing and other channels for communications are combined to transfer a consistent and common message. This process offers far more impact on the receiver than if a message is received only through one
channel. Probably it is the only way to reach through in today’s overflow of information.

**Communications in Museums**

Museums who promote themselves in this environment will certainly fight a hard battle. Professional communications agencies run integrated marketing communications campaigns for corporate businesses through advertising media coverage and other channels.

I have worked in museum communications for nearly 20 years. And I have seen a turning towards a situation where more emphasis is needed to communicate a message. In my early days, I could just send a newsletter and an image to a newspaper, and have a good chance to get it published. Today also the newspapers fight a harder battle to gain readers, and they are very confident to find their own way of angling. Stories that do not fit the chosen angle will not be published. And there are loads of professional communicators out there who specialises in giving a story the best angle.

**The Importance of Communication**

Even though to reach through with our communications has turned harder, it is probably more important than ever to focus on this issue. I see at least two crucial reasons to strengthen our communications strategies:

Today’s society is becoming more leisure oriented. The spare time is higher valued, and people want to be activated while they are free from work. They go on more comprehensive holidays and spend more leisure time in organised activities. Basically, this sounds positive for museums and heritage sites. You could presume that since people have more leisure time available for activities, they would also be more eager to experience the cultural heritage. The problem is just that the competition in the leisure time marked has become much more intense. People spend more time watching TV, surfing on the Internet, shopping and other commercially based activities. In this market there are strong competitors, desiring the same few hours that people have available for leisure activities. And you can be sure these competitors have studied all about integrated marketing communications. If museums and heritage sites do not take into consideration that they are part of this competition, they will inevitably loose attention. You can argue that museums have such unique collections, that they will draw attention anyway. But in today’s society of information overflow, a sophisticated communication strategy to make the museums and its collections known is also vital.

The second reason is more related to the society itself. In many countries governmental funding is becoming more project orientated. Many museums and heritage sites move from a situation of full governmental funding, to a situation where they have to create more own income or apply for the needed funding on a project basis. In Austria for example the museums are reorganised to companies that receive project funding for investments and daily tasks must partly be covered by the museum’s incomes. In such a situation visibility is crucial. For museums and heritage sites that can prove their position through highly developed communications, it will be easier to promote their needs.

**Conclusion**

Effective communications strategies are becoming more and more important in today’s society. It is treated as an integrated process where all promotional channels are combined. The groups of receivers must be clearly defined, and the means of communications are chosen based on the receiver’s point of view. This process is called integrated marketing communications, and I believe it is important for museums and heritage sites to take this situation into consideration.

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*Early morning, Paraty*
Communicating Values through Cultural Heritage

Nina Zdravič Polič, ICOM MPR Vice-Chairman

Introduction
This paper examines the ‘future realities’(1) for museums. It reflects on the significance of cultural heritage for developing our sensitivity and forms for an open society without discrimination, without majorities and minorities with differentiated rights and responsibilities; for improving people’s knowledge about other cultures... in the case of this debate it is looked at from the perspective of communications practice in museums and it explores the integrated marketing communication paradigm as a way, a new possibility for a more complex promotion of the respect for common universal heritage, cultural diversity, respect of every individual based on shared values and universal responsibility.

In the world of today - in the whirlwind of uncountable dramatic changes (felt and seen) on the earth and in the contemporary information society as a result of overall globalisation, expansion of new technologies, environmental and climate changes, mobility flows (implying the movement of people, ideas, images, mixing of cultures and many others (2)), and last but not least, the most recent financial global crisis - the museums are endeavouring to respond to this universal phenomenon, to develop the ability to anticipate these changes, and to relate to the society by bringing forth the role of cultural and natural heritage in forging a stable world where cultures and cultural groups coexist side by side, where the ‘plurality of cultures cooperates in a dialogue’(3).

This paper will focus first on intercultural dialogue as an indispensable element of communication on the international level and one of Europe’s present and future priorities. Cultural heritage is undoubtedly one of the key areas of intercultural dialogue.

The European Parliament and the Council of the European Union declared the year 2008 the European Year of Intercultural dialogue. In the past few months, a rich programme of events - international conferences, seminars, exhibitions – have been unfolding in EU countries on the theme of intercultural dialogue in different areas, from art and culture, media, education and science, to sustainable economic development.

ICOM Slovenia and museums of Slovenia joined in this initiative and prepared their own events, as will be illustrated by several examples, including a case studies of the Slovene Ethnographic museum as a museum of ‘people for people’.

Intercultural Dialogue for Europe of Cultures
In 2008, intercultural dialogue has thus been high on the agenda of our institutions and strongly present in the daily life in Europe with a strong focus on questions such as:

How do we, European citizens and museum communities in Europe of different nationalities and backgrounds, „manage, and respond to, cultural diversity in the context of globalisation, migration processes, expressions of national identities”? (4)

How to bring intercultural dialogue into all spheres of life at the international level, beyond Europe?

How can museums strengthen their participation by creating and broadening their ‘space’ for intercultural dialogue, through new teaching and learning methods and approaches in museum communication by highlighting different aspects of cultural heritage through which countries and people maintain their identity? Cultural heritage as a driving force of cultural identity is a medium that has the potential to communicate with so many people in so many places.

Intercultural dialogue is understood as an open exchange of views between individuals, groups with different ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds and heritage on the basis of mutual understanding and respect. It operates at all levels – within societies, between societies in Europe and between Europe and the world at large.

Europe has changed a great deal in the past few decades: the enlargement of the European Union, migration flows and greater mobility within its borders that have significantly increased the population diversity.

The development of intercultural competences and the promotion of intercultural dialogue are essential for fostering cultural diversity as part of the European Union’s commitment to solidarity, social justice and cohesion.
To quote Jan Figel, the European Commissioner: “Europe struggles to go beyond multicultural society, where cultures and cultural groups coexist side by side. The countries of the EU should become intercultural societies where plurality of cultures cooperates in a dialogue.” (5) The objectives of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue (2008) are the following: (6)

- the contribution of different cultures and expressions of cultural diversity to heritage

- the promotion of intercultural dialogue as a process in which EU citizens can improve their ability to deal with a more open, but also more complex, cultural environment where different cultural identities and beliefs coexist

- intercultural dialogue as an opportunity to contribute to, and benefit from, a diverse and dynamic society, not only in Europe but also in the world

- the European citizens’ awareness of the importance of an active European citizenship based on common values, openness to the world and respect for cultural diversity and different ways of life.

Heritage, arts, and culture are the key areas of intercultural dialogue among many others – education, migration, multilingualism, minorities, sustainable economic development, religion. Young people are its main target group, and the civil society actors – local NGOs and national professional organisations and trans-national NGOs as well as private foundations – its main driving force and promoter.

**Intercultural strategies for museums**

Heritage institutions, in particular museums across Europe and the world, have gradually developed a range of approaches to the fostering of cultural diversity, cultural self-awareness in migrant communities. Moreover, museums are increasingly exploring the development of special exhibitions and events drawing on collections that might hold a particular significance for the immigrant community. Some deem it urgent to re-think the fundamental functions of museums – from collection and conservation to exhibition and communication strategies – from an intercultural perspective at a national, European and global levels (e.g. Museum of World Culture in Goteborg, Musée de l’Immigration in Paris, Slovene Ethnographic Museum, Musée des Civilisations, Quebec).

**Facing Changes**

The issues regarding the future of museums and the heritage sector worldwide have also been studied in depth and discussed by different academicians and museologists. To quote from Gary Edson’s relevant thesis “The Local, Regional and National Identity Challenge”: (7) “There are few challenges that face the heritage sector today as critical or as immediate as identity. ... The ultimate question for the museum of the future may be one of identity because the mission of museum as institutions grows out of tradition and is shaped by public need. ... Questions about visitorship, funding, collections, social and cultural affiliations, conservation, education are but a few of the most obvious issues to be considered. In reality the questions are much more fundamental. ... Identity concerns asking the questions:

What must the heritage sector do to have a meaningful role in contemporary society and successfully compete with an expanding array of leisure time activities? What should be the guiding principles for museums as they address decreased funding and increased social
and political expectations? Who will lead the next generation and heritage facilities? ...The concern about identity is further exacerbated by the twin challenges of adaptability and sustainability. Museums and heritage organisations must cope with increased competition, more diversity constituents, and higher expectations ...and substantially different ways of conducting business. ...

The needs of the contemporary museum community have changed dramatically in the past decades and will continue to change."

According to Gary Edson(8), museums should therefore free themselves from standardized thinking and anticipate challenges in order to follow the lead of intensified changes in society, advocating instead norms of acceptable practice (leadership), services and important skills such creativity, innovation, visualisation, communication to be developed and used to transform museums. Comprehending communication in the sense of dialogue, museums have the institutional and individual skills for conveying information and for building openness and respect.

**Marketing Communications**

**Experience and Motivation**

In the context of museums, communication is a crucial element of any marketing programme or concept that uses marketing communications methods, tools and models and the help of qualified staff in order to achieve the mission and vision of the museum and meet public expectations and social imperatives through positive impressions and real value-added.

The existing museums across the world that are more than ever aware of their role in fostering a climate of understanding intensifying the process of communicating heritage values by means of marketing communications strategies. The latter have adjusted to the changing role of museums in the post-modern society to the point of practically erasing the borderline between the cultural and business sphere. Thus, a new role of the community-based museum has emerged, more oriented towards the visitor’s experience and the information the public gets from the museum.

**Experience: Kotler’s Model**

This experience is highlighted in the works of Neil Kotler and Philip Kotler (9), who consider it an important aspect of marketing in the way it influences and engages the visitor. There are multiple experiences of the museum-going that can identify the museum product. They include learning, creative, social, recreational, intellectual, emotional and other experiences... they are reached through diverse museum programmes, activities and services (various exhibitions, workshops, lectures, special events...). In the museum-going experience, Neil Kotler and Philip Kotler identify three strategies that serve the marketing function of a museum, i.e.: „improving the museum-going, community service and market repositioning toward entertainment.” (10)

The museum-going experience as a derivation of the visitor’s motivation, is illustrated by an example taken from the recent survey by The British Museum, London, presented by Xerexes Mazda,(11) a museum expert for visitors studies, in his lecture at the Summer School of Museology Celje in Slovenia in June 2008.

This survey deals with visitor motivations on the basis of three objectives - to attract, to engage and to impact from four points of view:

- the spiritual: visitors are looking for creative stimulation, for quiet contemplation
- the intellectual: visitors may have a professional, academic or personal interest in the subject, or they may wish to arouse their children’s interest in the improvement of knowledge
- the emotional: visitors want to experience what the past was like, or they may have a personal connection to the subject
- the social: visitors see the museum as an enjoyable place for spending time with friends and the family.

The result of this visitors studies for The British Museum has shown that 43% visitors come for social reasons, 37% for intellectual reasons, 16% for emotional reasons, and 4% for spiritual reasons.

However, the result changes when the visitor’s motivation to visit a special exhibition is assessed, as in the case of an exhibition on Michelangelo where the intellectual motivation of the visitors reached 60% and their social motivation only 19%.

**Marketing Communications**

In addition to the above mentioned, and to a series of existing theoretical communication concepts (intercultural dialogue, experience, education), the marketing communication process needs to be also investigated from a new angle, i.e. in relation to the Integrated Marketing Communication concept that has been applied during the last two decades and that promises new successful results.

For David Pickton,(12) marketing communications is „the face of the organisation that its audience learn to know and respect. It occurs formally and informally, internally and externally, at all contact points, wherever and whenever people interact with the organisation. Marketing communications is one of the most exciting areas within marketing.... In the past, marketing communications was known under some other commonly used names such as promotion or advertising. ... Over recent years “marketing communications” has become the favoured term among academics and some practitioners. For marketing to be successful many people have to be involved in the communication process both within the organisation and outside it. Marketing communications is part
of marketing as advertising is part of marketing communications”, writes Pickton.

Marketing, (as is known from Philip Kotler’s studies on marketing(13)), was traditionally used in reference to one of the four elements of the marketing mix – the ‘4Ps’, i.e. Product, Price, Place and Promotion. The term ‘promotion’ has since been replaced by the term ‘marketing communication’.

Marketing communication in this context means the process of effectively communicating the product of all 3 elements of the marketing mix to target audiences. The marketing communication plan sets objectives, analyses unplanned messages and uses marketing activities (or tools) to communicate the message.

There are in fact two types of messages: planned and unplanned. Planned messages are conveyed through advertising, direct mail or marketing personal contacts, public relations, promotion, packaging, specialities?, sponsorship, licensing, visitor service. The unplanned message sources include all the elements associated with the organisation’s / museum’s image and / or brand – the skills and courtesy of the staff, the quality of the museum visitor’s services and of other facilities.

Both types of communication are crucial. Ideally they function together and deliver a unified message.

**Integrated Marketing Communications**

Therefore, one of the most important communication trends that have occurred in the past two decades is the shift to integrated marketing.

Integrated marketing communication coordinates and communicates each part of the marketing mix. It creates synergy by coordinating all marketing activities or tools to send a consistent planned message that promotes an institution’s goals. In other words, it is the marketing communication element (earlier the term promotion was used) that ties together the other elements or components (product, price, place) of the marketing mix. „By coordinating all marketing activities (i.e. marketing mix with other communication components – advertising, promotion, public relations direct marketing, and so on) the combined message has more impact than an independent one. It creates more loyalty and long term relationships. It helps with internationalization and it eliminates message conflict. As a result, the consistency of message works as a natural process so that people are more likely to remember and to respond to it.

By adopting this basic arrangement it is possible to develop a new concept to represent the marketing mix, states Pickton. This concept is called “The Wheel of Integrated Marketing Communications”.(14)

The Wheel illustrates that there is a wide range of marketing communications activities and that many of these activities overlap. For example: there are elements that may be categorised as both Public Relations and Advertising (e.g. corporate advertising), both advertising and sales promotion (e.g. direct mail), as both sales promotion and personal selling (e.g. exhibitions), as both personal selling and Public Relations (e.g. lobbying). The Wheel does identify major areas of marketing communications.

**Conclusion**

All these models and open questions relating to museums and their future realities are a long story and a long-term necessity, if in the future museums are to strengthen their role in society, to contribute to a climate of understanding and to safeguard the cultural heritage assets of the mankind.

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Communicating Cultural Heritage - Balancing the Academics with the Tabloid

Ellen Semb, Museum of Cultural History, University of Oslo, Norway

More than 20 years ago, when I had set out to interview archaeologists in connection with an archaeological excavation of mediaeval Oslo, I discovered how difficult it was to get researchers to communicate - at least to me as a journalist. I had just finished journalist school, a master’s degree in Norwegian literature at university, and I was testing out the journalist profession.

I was freelancing for the Oslo daily Arbeiderbladet, writing for their Saturday supplement. I wanted to report on how people lived 700 to 800 years ago in ancient Oslo, what they ate and drank and their daily life in general. I visited the excavations, interviewed archaeologists and contacted the Historical Museum to talk to more. This materialized into three two-page articles published over three week-ends. And it proved good copy – not, however, due to the archaeologists. In fact, when I tried to get answers to my questions on how people lived in those days, what they ate and how they dressed, only one of the researchers gave me answers that enabled me to make my reporting alive and colourful. The others would hardly talk and uttered something like “yes”, “perhaps this way or the other”, “we dare not say”, and “no, this you cannot write”.

I discovered that it was very hard to get professionals to communicate. Even though I sent my manuscripts for them to be able to correct their own statements, not much came of it despite the fact that the excavations had hardly been mentioned in the press and the news before. I had assumed that the need for attention and recognition would have been rather extensive for the archaeologists working in pre-historic Oslo.

Museum of Cultural History, University of Oslo

Eight years have passed since I started the job as responsible for press and marketing at the Museum of Cultural History in Oslo. I looked forward to be able to follow research and exhibition activities at close range and communicate both results and ongoing research to the public.

I believe that I was surprised, when I discovered that it was not that easy to get to communicate with the researchers at the museum. I felt that many of them were neither very good at keeping me informed, nor good at appreciating the value of communicating with the general public and deliver news to the media. It must be said, however, that some of the archaeologists doing fieldwork on large excavations often are very good at communicating. They often experience that the public, school classes and local media appear on the scene and want to know about the excavation and the results. Through this extended contact with the public they obtain practice in talking with people without specialist knowledge.

During one of my first years in this job, I was responsible for a press conference in connection with a large inter-disciplinary project involving anthropologists, linguists and historians. The project went on for several years and dealt with language, indigenous people’s conceptions of place, migration and history. The female research director had difficulties formulating what the project was actually all about and why they worked with it. I guess this was not a big deal within the research community but it proved hard to specify to people who did not know the field. Probably she had not assessed the work and the results in relation to its relevance to the general public. We had several meetings before we reached a conclusion as to what actually was the purpose of the project and how this could be communicated. Afterwards she was happy that the two of us together – through frequent questions between us – were able to reach a way to communicate research that made people aware of what was going on.

Getting more visitors to the museums depends on several factors. Of course, most important is what is exhibited, lectured about and how it is presented. The Museum of Cultural History in fact consists of Excavation of pre-historic Oslo, Norway
two museums, one of which – Historical Museum – is situated in the centre of Oslo, near the main street, and without entrance fee. Few tourists visit, but many locals do, and school children are being taught here. This museum has about 70,000 visitors a year. The other museum – the Viking ship Museum – with its three big 1100 years old Viking ships is situated about 3 kilometres outside the city centre. Most visitors to this museum consist of tourists, and at the same time, with about 400,000 visitors a year, it is one of the most visited museums in Norway.

The Historical Museum has most of the activities ranging from permanent and temporary exhibitions, lectures, displays to programmes for children. Oddly enough, despite the fact that the museum has been in the same place for almost a 100 years, it is still unknown to many in Oslo. The museum is a part of the University of Oslo, and has a permanent staff of more than 100 people. Research is carried out in many fields, and we have almost 60 arrangements a year. It may be so that people are not that interested in history, archaeology and anthropology, but it may also be the case that the public imagines a museum to be a dusty place with uninteresting items displayed in the exhibition cases, and where things seldom happen that have anything to do with ones own life.

Money for marketing – China
I have a fixed amount of money for marketing the museum. When all agreements have been kept, few resources are left for advertising outside the regular newspapers in order to attract possible new groups of public.

I do, however, have more faith in newspaper articles and coverage than advertising. I’d like to illustrate this with an example: Three years ago we had an exhibition on China running from May to September – that is in the middle of summer. The exhibition displayed original clay sculptures from the household of emperor Jing Di, who ruled from 156 to 141 B.C., being the fourth emperor of the Han-dynasty. The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs was involved on various levels and funded the marketing budget. Thus I was given the opportunity to test out alternative marketing arenas. The back of the Oslo airport busses, adshells on the subway platforms, posters on the sides of trams, promotion films in all cinemas for a while and several more advertisements than normal in the dailies and magazines. All in all, we were given the opportunity to spend a small fortune on advertising.

The exhibition lasted for three months. We had 12,000 visitors. The fact that so few came may of course be due to summer, and consequently that there were more tourists than natives in Oslo at the time. It may also be due to the fact that the exhibition was not as big and interesting as similar exhibitions in for instance in London and New York. It may, however, also be because the considerably smaller city of Stavanger had had the exhibition for three months before it was shown in Oslo. On this occasion the press, TV-news, and other kinds of media had covered the event. Probably the Archaeological museum of Stavanger had never had so many visitors before.

Press coverage
It became quite evident to me that press coverage in newspapers, magazines and TV constitutes the single most important way of marketing an exhibition. Advertisements may be used for reminding people that the exhibition is still there and when and what is happening. The main interest among the public, however, is created via press coverage. Press coverage with a good angle, many pictures and good placing constitutes the best form of marketing of a museum’s activities. Given extensive coverage in the media provides the institution with a role as an actor contributing to setting an agenda. The museum is perceived as an interesting social actor in relation to the public and, not least, in relation to politicians and other decision makers. And if the readers do not come to us immediately after coverage, we may perhaps achieve a kind of “top of the mind status” within various communities. Next time, this particular museum may be the one they visit. Also one article in the press normally breeds more.

All of us who work in relation to the press know how important it is to cultivate ones press contacts. To know who is interested in what you communicate, who might want to come and who knows that in this particular museum there are good prospects of making a good story or interview, and perhaps even get the news out first. This is important to many for their willingness to report on the activity. We also have to know who in the academic staff are good at giving statements, who has a good radio voice, and who is able to formulate a good exaggerated statement.
I myself have three or four contacts that I cultivate carefully. These contacts know that they can be the first to get the material, and that they will be able to come before other journalists and thus get the best story. It is all a matter of certain kind of bargaining as to when and how the material must and may be published. I also suggest exciting angles to what is to be written, and I suggest exciting stories.

We, who are employed within the research institutions, let alone the museums, for maintaining relations with the press and media are often the ones that communicate research, development and exhibition activities carried out at the various institutions. Often it is also we who know how a case may be presented to the media, who we are going to contact, and what we ought to communicate. However, we have to develop a relationship to the professionals in order to make them willing to communicate to the public in a way that makes them intelligible to others. It all boils down to the fact that the media and the researchers are completely dependent on each other. The media may need a researcher to legitimize a case, and the researchers are dependent on the media to give legitimacy to their activities.

It is expected that we turn research and other activities into an exciting and fantastic world. We need to get attention and to construct a cosmos out of chaos. We are supposed to get history or nature to tell people a story, but this does not mean that the public or journalists are not supposed to ask questions. It is equally important that we try to get people to use their own heads and make them open to the fact that science does not constitute a given truth.

**The Media in Norway**

The media situation in Norway is perhaps a bit special compared to many other countries. Next to Japan, Norway is the country in the world with most newspapers per capita. However, compared to the number, few of them are actually national newspapers. Very many people only read local and possibly regional newspapers. In addition we have one public TV-station with three channels and also commercial Norwegian and foreign channels.

In spite of the great proportion of Norwegians who read newspapers regularly, very few newspapers may be described as so called “high brow”. This implies that also so called intellectuals read tabloids. You don’t experience class distinctions between newspaper readers the way you do in many other countries like, for instance, Great Britain. However, it must also be mentioned that the tabloids do review books, films, art and music and once in while bring a refreshing discussion on culture.

In most of the newspapers research results are seldom covered, apart from those purely medical and then often with a focus on miraculous therapies. On the other hand coverage of for instance football, sports and cinema is extensive, and this despite the fact that more people visit museums than premier league football matches in a year. This ought to be brought to the attention of newspaper editors.

**The researchers, the science and the society**

Within research and academic communities one may encounter great scepticism towards communication of research and research journalism. Often the sceptics will refer to increased commercialization and its consequences: vulgarization of arguments, fragmentation of knowledge, polarization of opinions and emphasis on spectacular events.

The Norwegian media researcher Harald Harmoen says: - Communication of research to society constitutes a receipt for the research funding provided, and it is also a means for legitimizing that research has been completed or is in progress. Research must be rooted in society and this contract must be maintained through communication to the general public.

Communication of research serves three functions:

- Legitimizing research and the researcher
- Render research visible in order to, among other things, recruit new researchers
- Public information (not in the traditional sense, but as communication)

Helge Rønning, professor of media studies at the University in Oslo, writes that the tasks of the university and the researchers are divided into three: research, teaching and communication. Communication includes participation in the public debate. The university (and other research communities) are not offered any incentives to participate in the debate. “This weakens the university as an institution within the general public and threatens qualified communication between the scientific field and the general public.”

**Linear model**

In many situations researchers perceive communication of research as a linear model. According to this model it is the researchers who possess all knowledge and, if need be, it is the public that is to be fed with information because it lacks knowledge and insight. The model situates scientific or technical information, i.e. researchers, and the public on opposite ends of an axis. The researchers produce science which is “pure and genuine”, before a populariser disseminates simplified accounts to the public. The journalist or the “disseminator” is regarded as a communication link functioning as a filter for the research. The goal is to minimize media-noise, or interference, in order to transfer information with maximum fidelity to the receiver.

**Attitudes towards popularization**

Sociologists of science have had a showdown with this model. Also researchers learn about other fields of research, than their own, through popular accounts...
A good upstanding research debate consists of a kind of belonging that excludes everyone else. It is a matter of technical terms and jargon which prevent inspection and discussion and mark a fraternity. It is a matter of communicating the positive results and the successful methods of a project. Instead we should make an effort to interview several within the same academic one for practicing scientific work and creating scientific knowledge.

Within many research communities there is a view on science that either it is genuine, or it is popularized. Such a view may serve the researchers because it draws a sharp line between genuine and popularized knowledge where science is idealized as being superior. Knowledge is turned into a domain solely reserved for researchers. Politicians and the general public are only supposed to be able to acquire simplified representations of science. Thus the knowledge based authority of the researchers is sheltered from external criticism.

Rather researchers ought to regard popularization as an integral part of the production of scientific knowledge. The public offers scientists a different arena from the academic one for practicing scientific work and creating scientific knowledge.

The researcher

Professor Rønning labels the style of the tabloids as exaggerated statements. Very many researchers are prone to speak in derogatory terms about this style, but in so doing they are themselves expressing an exaggerated statement on incompatibility. The press and the researcher have conflicting starting points: a scientific account is logical with a premise and a conclusion, whereas our way of accounting for a phenomenon is to create a totality. Often researchers cannot write and are unable to cover things journalistically.

When one has worked on the same subject for several years, it may be difficult to discern what may prove exciting and make the public want to read about it. In addition, what may appear as old material to the researcher may represent something totally new to the public.

With both a failing ability to communicate and a language inaccessible to most people, they often hinder journalists in asking critical questions. Researchers use a private language that makes them belong to their own fraternity. It is a matter of technical terms and jargon which prevent inspection and discussion and mark a kind of belonging that excludes everyone else.

However, many researchers ought to be confronted with common sense and not only the voices of research. A good upstanding research debate consists of a dialogue between society and research. We have to see to that communication with society obtains higher prestige within the research community – to focus on research.

Surveys on reading habits carried out in Sweden show that research items in dailies are popular. The Swedish research journalist Peter Sylvan interprets the surveys as reflecting that the readers want articles that query science and put it into a wider context.

The research communities possess a lot of “good copy”. The special character of science provides it with a potential for satisfying the media’s demands to a news item. It lies inherent in science to find results that have not been known before.

We need knowledge about research journalism

We, who work with press and PR, have got a lot to learn from research journalists and research journalism when it comes to press releases, press items, material on the museum’s website and written material in connection with an exhibition. This is also the case if we are lucky enough to be allowed to write articles for the press, and when we are in contact with journalists. Even though we are situated in a communication situation, and always in a journalist position, we need more knowledge about how to go about it, what criteria to use as a basis for good journalistic craftsmanship in communicating knowledge and science, how to write, what angles to use, and how possibly to comment on the research process as such.

Not least it may be important to realize that perhaps there are many others than yourself, who struggle with communicating what the professionals at the museum are working with. Also it may be difficult to communicate, to get an angle on the information so that the general public too may benefit, and that you may be subjected to harassment. The latter happened to a colleague of mine at the university, when he interviewed a physicist for the university research magazine. The physicist was only able to speak in formulas, and when he was asked to try and speak in more general terms, the journalist, who is himself a natural scientist, was told to go home and learn formulas.

Demands to communicate research

The Norwegian media researcher Harald Harmoen writes that we must popularize the research material in order to make it intelligible to a larger audience. By disseminating scientific knowledge we participate in laying the foundation for enabling more people to take part in the public debate and thus become involved in political decision making. A functioning democracy is dependent on a general public with access to knowledge. The danger is, however, that we, who represent an organisation of knowledge, run the risk of only communicating the positive results and the successful methods of a project. Instead we should make an effort to interview several within the same academic...
field and to describe the methods used in plain words.
In that way at least the public and the press gets a
chance to appraise the contents.

Both we and the journalists ought to possess prior
knowledge and have time to get acquainted with the
research project to be covered. On the other hand one
ought not to belong to the same research community
as the researchers. In that case one runs the risk of
identifying too closely with the academic milieu,
the academic terminology and the source’s way of
thinking. Both in order to be able to ask questions
relevant to the general public and to keep a critical
distance in appraising methods and problem, a distance
between the source and the writer is required. It is a
precondition, however, that we are well informed and
both able to listen and ask relevant questions to the
researcher. We also ought to be able to communicate
that more results and more truths may exist within the
same academic field.

The language and academic jargon of the researchers,
however, contribute to hindering journalists in asking
critical questions towards the research, because the
researchers are worried about the legitimacy of their
work. The language is characterized by research
jargon and academic terms, formalities and (at least in
Norwegian) many nouns. In an attempt to “translate”
the language into more common expressions, to write
an active language that uses verbs and to translate
academic terms, one must accept that the descriptions
become more approximate in order to make them
intelligible to the public. If one uses verbs instead
of nouns, reduces comprehensive introductions and
instead becomes concrete at the very outset, use shorter
sentences, use illustrations that show what is being
talked about in the text and finally put everything into
known contexts, it actually is possible to write about
research in an intelligible and exciting way.

Researchers ought to be confronted with “common
sense” and not only with voices of research itself,
Harald Hardmoen says to me in an interview.
Within the research communities one is by and large
only subjected to appraisal by colleagues. A good
upstanding debate about research must be based
on a public discourse. Researchers often delineate
boundaries in order to maintain their own research
and down rate so called stupid questions asked in an
intelligent way. Researchers are also concerned with
delineating a boundary against the vulgarization that
popular scientific and journalistic accounts may entail.
They exchange horror stories about this, and I have
experienced that myself.

At present the museum is working with a larger
evacuation in Western Turkey in cooperation with the
Turkish State and the University of Izmir. Last autumn I
had obtained an appointment with Aftenposten’s week-
end supplement (Norway’s largest daily) about covering
the excavation. I went there and made a six-page article
with photos about life during classical antiquity. My
angle was on “The good life during classical antiquity”,
that is the life of luxury of which the rich and wealthy
had plenty. When the article was printed, nothing had
been changed apart from the title. Now it was called
“Here they had fun”. In practice this entailed that the
angle of the article had been changed into making it
appear as if everybody - including slaves, craftsmen and
others with low or no income - drank wine, went to
the theatre and retired to their landed estates for the
week-end. Thus it became very difficult to explain this
to the academic community, where I almost got hanged
because I had not emphasized that it was only a valid
description of some.

Studies have been made on the differences between
scientific and popular scientific ways of writing. Greg
Myers’s study shows that when research is popularized,
research matters are described in a completely different
way from scientific texts. Scientific texts describe the
case in a way that he calls “The narrative of science”,
whereas the popular scientific texts are written in a way
that he labels “the narrative of nature”. Scientific texts
are organized around the processes of research itself,
whereas popular scientific texts are focusing more on
the object that is being researched than on the research
process as such. The illustrations in a research article
may be about what we know, whereas in a popular
scientific article they are often about what we see.
The visual elements in a popular scientific article are
often organized in a way that makes us encounter the
“known” subjects before we are introduced to the more
abstract ones. As a rule they are organized so that the
known depictions are placed to the left and the more
abstract illustrations to the right.

**Ways of writing a story**

When I plan contact with “my” journalists, I try to put
myself in the situation of the public. Many are like me,
interested and keep themselves informed, but are not
professionals. The readers want a coherent story which
forms a whole that makes sense. They like to read about
what is similar to their own lives in order to be able to
identify with story or the culture, and at the same time
they like to read about what is most dissimilar in order
to test out their own values in relation to the exotic.
But why is it so difficult to make the researchers express
themselves in such a way that the reader may recognize
him- or herself through the material?

According to Helge Rønning, one must also relate to
the complexity of the material and be knowledgeable
about what one is writing. In Norwegian media it is
normal practice to let the interviewee or the person
written about read the article before it is published.
Then it is possible to discuss what has been written.
This does not mean, however, that one should
necessarily give in to the viewpoints of a researcher.
We are the ones who try to satisfy the curiosity of
the public and try to describe the questions in a way
that we see fit. Actually the interviewee only gets the
opportunity to correct direct quotes.

At the news desk, news that may be published with a
striking title will be more popular than a neutral one.
If research items are going to prevail it may depend
on whether they can be given a marketable title that
also appeals to the news editor. News from medical
research about deadly bacteria and miraculous therapies
may compete with news about murder, violence and
catastrophes.

What is to count as important research news will
depend on who is assessing. Probably the researcher
and the journalist will have different starting points.
The researcher should not forget that the journalist
represents the public interest and interprets it, when
she assesses news with regard to what is interesting.
She is not supposed to leave that priority solely to the
research community. On the other hand it also demands
that a journalist writing about research possesses a
certain amount of knowledge about research methods
and interpretations of research results. However, the
news does not have to lie embedded in the research
project as such, but just as well may be created by the
angle chosen. Also it may be made more relevant in a
bigger context and in an extended perspective.

Coffee break.
*From left: Lena Millinger, Josephine Østern, Ellen
Semb, Carlos Roberto F. Brandão, Minna
Karhunsaaari, Mieke Renders, Maria-Riitta
Saloniemi, Christine Skeete, Romina Mancuso.*
The Hero
Studies of research journalism, and hence also our own accounts of this material, reveal typical narrative patterns. Often we represent the academic material as an epic story. That is, we use narrative techniques that may be compared to a detective story, where obtaining results becomes a race with time. The scapegoat is lack of resources, and the hero is the researcher who fights against the negligence of society and absent funding. But the hero ends up with an elucidating result and discovers the important tracks that may lead to the salvation of our globe, our body or our future, let alone to tell us about what really happened in the past. Often the activities of researchers are described as a “hunt” or a “struggle”.

Such an image of the researcher or the research team paints an idealized picture of the hero or the heroes working outside society driven by idealism without having an eye to politics or ethical values. The newspapers are spiced with “New research shows...”, “The experts think that...”, “Researchers have found out...”, “discoveries”, “finds” and “breakthrough”. Such accounts are about praise for the lonely researcher or researchers struggling against the inherent abominations of nature, history or society. In this way the hero is also depicted as the hero who is beyond criticism. Criticism is silenced and this also goes for the public discourse on the value and use of research and the use of resources. Research appears objective and truthful, whereas the public has been put in a distanced, respectful and subordinate position. Often photos that accompany such an article consist of beautiful depictions of sky, the researcher in his study poring over skeletons, dressed in a white coat, microscope and deeply engaged. The distance to normal people is maintained through a representation both in pictures, text and narrative technique, and it becomes like a fairy tale that explains how the world is put together. This is a myth about reality that we are only able to admire at a distance.

Nevertheless it is possible to achieve more critical and inclusive science communication and journalism about research. The starting point is that people today possess rather extensive knowledge, and those interested in research also read themselves both on the net, in newspapers and in magazines. Researchers may contribute themselves by referring to the hypotheses suggested to begin with, what questions he asked himself before the actual process, what he wanted to know and how he arrived there. This will uncover the uncertainties and choices made during the process. The researcher may also help us and him by referring to other researchers within the same academic field and tell us about possible points of disagreement.

The Representation
The most important task is to tell a story which is exciting to read and creates coherence. To construct a story means to fulfil the specific character of the museum. As Helge Remning said in the interview: The human being is a narrating animal.

That means that we construct a narrative the way it’s done in novel writing with an opening, we present the differences, describe the conflict, follow the trail of events, the overcoming and the end. However, because we are actually dealing in non-fiction that must be suitable for a newspaper, the most important features of the story ought to be put in the introduction, and as a rule the action is based on the results.

We must demonstrate that past and present hang together, and that cultures hang together. Next we ought to write about what is exotic, different and mystical, and also, if possible, about relations to cosmos, origins, the relationship between men and women, the gods and death.

By all means use concrete examples, and find a story that may be told in a concrete way. In this way it is also possible to generalize the material. Researchers, however, are often careful with generalizations, and therefore a vitalization may pose a challenge to us whose job it is to communicate. We have to be careful to present any single case provided by research as exactly that. If we generalize, we have to stand for this generalization ourselves. It must be emphasized that it is our own representation and not the researcher’s.

One may start by thinking how this story is to be told. What pegs may be used to hang it on, and how is it possible to create interest and recognition. Be detailed in some areas, and imagine yourself situated in a way of life where a certain phenomenon occurs. As a starting point take something that is generally known and describe phenomena with colours, light and smell. Interview those who have been involved and get them to describe concretely the use and the context. If possible go to the place where the phenomenon is found, describe the place and how you experience it. Also write about the origins of the project, what methods were chosen and why. And don’t forget that the article must have a headline with an exaggerated statement and an introduction which condenses the most exciting conclusions of the remaining text. Use direct quotes from those interviewed and your own questions. Describe certain details of the surrounding environment, but avoid hero and worship.

Think for yourself what gets you absorbed into a newspaper article with a news that you are not really interested in – what attracted you anyway? Usually it is the introduction that functions as a teaser. The rest of the construction of the story constitutes the actual dramaturgy. A feature writer thinks in line with Aristotle’s idea about the public speech which is supposed to consist of ethos, logos and pathos. Ethos is standard and credibility, logos is knowledge and pathos is engagement (the appeal to the senses and feelings). AND it is perhaps here that we use too much pathos on the research and the researcher, instead of writing about both results and methods. This is a delicate balance where it is necessary to be careful not to remove research and the researcher from society.
Among other things, Richard Scanlan is researcher at The Poynter Institute for Media Studies in the USA. He is of the opinion that the solution for someone who wants to describe a situation is to make use of the following six points:

- Describe persons instead of quoting sources
- Communicate experience rather than viewpoints
- Be aware of the process and not only the result
- Describe instead of just summing up
- Offer experience and not only information
- Exploit the ten senses of the reader: firstly the five normally recognized namely vision, smell, hearing, taste and sound, and secondly our sense of time, of place, of people, of drama and of meaning.

**History is exciting**

History creates a story and it is represented chronologically. And people are very interested in history. One of the most popular channels on TV is History Channel. The most popular serials on TV consist of a mixture of fact and fiction, and as a rule from periods in history with great conflicts. Just think about the serial “Rome”. It has been made on the basis of a lot of historical and other kinds of research.

We have to make sure to put everything into context and use chronology instead of themes. When we write we ought to ask how this research may or may not have something to do with what is happening today. Here we have a potential for improvement.

There exists a discrepancy between research and the media world which is not easy to overcome. Often, however, researchers speak about things not belonging to their own academic field, and in such cases they also lack expert knowledge. In Norwegian TV we have a type of person that a linguistically creative journalist student some years ago labelled – what in English would be something like – a “national opinionator” (the original Norwegian “rikssynser” sounded just as impossible to our ears until relatively recently). “National opinionators” are researchers within a certain academic field who are adept at performing, have a good voice and possess extensive general knowledge. However, when they answer questions about foreign politics, economy and violence - when their own field is a different one – they make themselves omniscient with a right to talk in the media about most subjects.

**Cult of the dead - Dead Classic**

In the museum’s last temporary exhibition, “Dead Classic” about death and the after life in classic antiquity, we have employed various techniques in order to communicate with different groups among the public. The exhibition itself is fantastic with burial chambers, mummy cases, grave goods, sculptures and pictures of murals. We have had very many visitors, and we have taught 190 school classes since it opened. The public has been overwhelmingly enthusiastic.

In this exhibition, we have presented research in different ways. For the children we present the tale about death and the journey across the river Styx with an animated film. By the way, presentations for children are rarely criticized by researchers. We are permitted to narrate history on a level we imagine the children are able to understand. The film has all the characteristics of literature: a protagonist that narrate, a sinister river that has to be crossed, a monster that waits on the other side, and trials that the hero has to overcome. At last, he finally reaches his goal and gets to rest safely in the land of the dead. The main character is the dog Filo whose owner gave him a decent burial more than two thousand years ago. The film is shown on five screens with sound through earphones, and thus the children present were also activated.

Also we have made our own newspaper. For the two last exhibition the museum has not produced catalogues, and instead we have made a newspaper. We have printed 15,000 copies and hand them out for free. The paper is of 24 pages and functions very well. The public takes it home, and children take it to school and use it during classes.

The newspaper is formatted as a tabloid and on newprint. The starting point was the fact that we knew about a lot of exciting projects and stories that would not appear in the exhibition. We wanted to produce a sort of tabloid and thought: blood, murder, sinister stuff, heroes, villains and heroic deeds. Together with the academically responsible for the exhibition and the designer of the Historical Museum (who, by the way, made the movie) we started. We invited researchers on classical antiquity to write, and PhD- and master-students have found material on various oddities and witchcraft.

I have been responsible for, and worked with, the editing, I have re-written all the articles into newspaper format, and I have replaced all academic words and expressions, made the sentences as simple as possible, and finally dramatized the material. I did not receive any protests. For example the paper features “Classical ways to die” which mentions 20 examples of how it was possible to die in classical antiquity. For instance: Ovid died from grief, Cleopatra died from a snake-bite, Caligula was killed by his own bodyguards etc. There are items on the first cities of antiquity, the fratricide in Rome (Romulus and Remus), the calendar year, the “wear- and dispose-gladiators”, about the horrible fate of the soldiers, about Augustus, about memorials for the dead, about money and about the art of making love. In the last case Ovid writes that men should not shave their legs, and before they seduce a woman it suits them to dress a little negligent, but they must smell nice and be clean. For women he suggests certain hair-dos and perfumes. We write about the poor vestal virgins who were buried alive if they did not remain virgins, about murder by poison and witchcraft, about the fabulous
life of a collector, about films on classical antiquity and about recent research.

The newspaper functions well as advertisement for the museum and has inspired several newspaper articles. We will continue with exhibition newspapers, and thus make research accessible in an entertaining and exciting way for everyone who is interested. Then we will be able to get a public debate about what is going on within the institutions.

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