Digitalization and Smart Tourism

Book 2. Smart Tourism in a museum



A practical guide with methodological guidelines for museum directors and marketing specialists on how to get tangible benefits from Smart tourism, without much cost and knowledge of programming.

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Annotation

In today's world, information spreads at the speed of light and penetrates into all cornersof human activity. Therefore, the role of the Internet for museums will only increase, becausealmost any interaction with any organization of a modern person takes place online. This is especially true for such kind of museum visitors as tourists, because it is impossible to even learn about the museum, being thousands of kilometers away from it, without the Internet.

Naturally, museums have many tasks: preservation of cultural and historical heritage, research work, education of taste and historical memory among the local population, etc. But we will focus on only one task - the transfer of the cultural and historical code to tourists, sincemuseums are the only place where they can get it. Humanity has not yet come up with other organizations for this. At the same time, we will consider only one type of tourism - namely Smart tourism, because it is most consistent with the main tasks of museums.

Today, there is a lot of discussion about Smart tourism. Smart tourism is often understoodas "digitalization", digital transformation, working with big data and other "Technologies of the future", which number in the field of tourism has exceeded more than one thousand, including Internet services, apps and startups of different usefulness and cost. But these concepts are being operated superficially, without any specifics and practical meaning. As a result, we havea "mess" not only in the information space, but also in the minds of travel organizations owners, including museums.

In fact, digital transformation in tourism, which brings practical and tangible benefits, is primarily not about technology, but about establishing online communication between a museum and a potential visitor. Moreover, these days any tourist uses a computer to plan a trip, and a smartphone while traveling. In order to attract their attention, you need to somehowshow tourists useful and accessible information about your museum, both during the trip and during the planning process.

This is why the dissemination of information through digital channels is becoming increasingly important, and perhaps there will be no other channels left in the near future. And together with Smart tourism development museums will have a special role, since Smart tourism is primarily not about rest and walks, but the study of the culture and history of the destination, in other words this is the receipt and processing of information by a tourist in orderto obtain unforgettable and new impressions.

This book is a consolidation of 2 years of experience in conducting courses on the basics of Internet marketing for tourism organizations, and an attempt to bring all the information into some kind of system to help museums understand the advantages of Smart tourism and teachthem to benefit from it, not only financially, but also in terms of education and science.

Theoretical calculations are supported by practical tips and examples that can be easily and painlessly, and often cost-friendly, implemented in any museum.

Competent work on the Internet allows a museum to increase its recognition, raise its influence and strengthen the educational role of museums in the modern world. But as a rule, all museums have a problem of lack of funds for the maintenance of Internet marketers, account managers in social networks, web designers, IT specialists. Therefore, the head of themuseum often has to manage the website and social networks, or control the work of an Internet marketer or SMM. Of course this requires some effort, but with due skill this can become a decisive factor in the success of the museum. The purpose of this book is to help museums look good on the Internet, attract more high-quality client traffic and be smart tourism drivers around the world.

About the author

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The author will be grateful for any feedback, pointing on errors and inaccuracies, which will be corrected in subsequent editions. You can contact the author directly by email: dmitriy.tin@centersmarttourism.com

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Introduction

The Internet is becoming an integral part of our lives. All our purchases and bookings go online one way or another. And the coronavirus pandemic has only accelerated and intensified this trend, as people have appreciated the possibilities of online purchases, orders and bookings.

Going on a trip, people are looking for information about museums on various platforms with tourist reviews, looking for an official website, trying to find independent reviews in socialnetworks, etc. But often, being already located in the destination, tourists are looking for the way to the museum using paper maps or asking local residents, because they cannot find information online, and their smartphones are useless in this situation.

That is why museums need to behave skillfully on the Internet, so that any tourist can easily find the most comprehensive information using a computer or mobile device. This includes the location of the museum, its opening hours, contact details, and even the routes ofbuses which can take tourists to the museum.

On the one hand, search engines are constantly being improved and can already find almost everything. On the other hand, this information must be correctly submitted and postedin order to get to tourists' smartphones with the help of search engines. The best positions in search engines are occupied by the most active and popular travel organizations and businesses. In this book you will find recommendations on how to improve this activity and make it more visible on the Internet.

These recommendations are based on the practice and study of various tourism organizations, not only museums. They are set out in simple enough language, so that anydirector or employee of a museum can easily apply them in practice.

The recommended actions, as a rule, do not involve significant financial costs and knowledge. But, of course, the introduction of everything new will require the directors and employees of perseverance, diligence and a desire to constantly improve the work of theirmuseum.

In addition, the recommendations cover possible changes in the digital world that may occur in the future. If there is an understanding of how the Internet works in tourism, what kindof content should be posted there - any changes in search engine algorithms will not harm themuseum's activities or worsen its position.

For those who are just starting their journey in the digital world, we recommend our new tutorial on the basics of digital travel marketing. More: https://centersmarttourism.world/for-tourism-organisations/materials/guideline-for-museum-en/





1.1. What is Smart Tourism?

There are many definitions of this phenomenon: the use of information and communication technologies, Big Data and Internet of Things for the development of thetourism industry, etc. But there is still no precise definition.

For example, Wikipedia says: "Smart tourism is an important component of a smart city ...". Stop! Here is the first inaccuracy. Smart cities deal mainly with locals, and Smart tourism deals with visitors. Usually Smart cities are more about roads, traffic lights, utilities, while Smart tourism is about something completely different: hospitality, discovering something new,traveling to an unfamiliar place. Even at the stage of travel planning, no matter how smart the city is and no matter how it saves and optimizes resources, the question is: how does it interact with tourists thousands of kilometers away? In no way!

Two years of experience in teaching the basics of Smart tourism to representatives of tourism organizations has shown that they simply do not understand what tourists want from them and what Smart tourism is all about. In fact, the answer lies on the surface. Smart tourism is the transfer of information from tourism organizations to tourists using the Internet. And that's it!

In particular, for museums this is the transfer of useful information to tourists about the profile of the museum, schedule of work, free days, and then receiving feedback from touristsin the form of questions, requests, reviews or ticket bookings. In addition, as we have alreadysaid, most tourists find museums and plan their visit online. They just don't have any other way.

What's more, according to Expedia's research, when planning a trip tourists visit between 120 and 160 different websites and, of course, they visit the websites of the museums in the place where they are going, so it is important that they can find all the information they need.



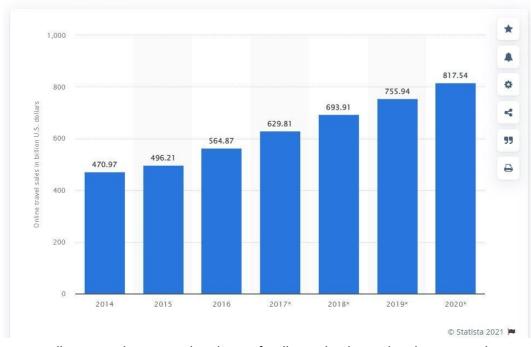
ONLINE BOOKERS INCREASINGLY ENGAGE WITH TRAVEL CONTENT IN THE WEEKS LEADING UP TO **PURCHASE** Number of visits to travel sites Average Travel Site Visits per Week made by bookers 45 days (Number of travel sites visited per week by the average segment member, Dec'15-Feb'16 aggregate) 35.0 before booking: 30.0 25.0 **T** 20.0 15.0 10.0 5.0 ■ UK -US ■CA

Source: https://info.advertising.expedia.com/2016-travelers-path-to-purchase

According to Yandex experts, about 30% of the travel market is already online, and it is expected that within 10 years this share will constantly grow to 50%. https://blog.travelpayouts.com/tpas2021-travel-future/

Digital travel sales worldwide from 2014 to 2020

(in billion U.S. dollars)



Also, according to statista.com, the share of online sales in tourism is constantly growing: Source: https://www.statista.com/statistics/499694/forecast-of-online-travel-sales-worldwide/

Now we can draw conclusions:

- Smart tourism is a connection between a tourist and a tourism organization via the Internet.
- The purpose of museums in Smart tourism is to attract customers and provide them with

information in order to provide better service.

• The goal of Smart tourists is to make their trip conscious, comfortable, without queues and, of course, optimal in price.

1.2. The main thing is Content!

Based on the definition of Smart tourism, in order to understand the main way to achieve their goals, museums need to look at themselves through the eyes of a tourist. And, best of all, through the lens of the Internet. No wonder the Internet is called a "Window to the world". Basically, it needs to be done for 4 cases:

When a tourist is away and planning a trip.

It is important to understand what exactly a tourist will find and see while planning a trip. To do this, let's just try to find your museum on the Internet. For greater objectivity, it is better to use the Incognito mode, which is available in any search engine, so the system does not take into account previous queries. And now let's search the museum by its name and carefully look at what the search engine will give out. Check the relevance of the information - phone numbers, addresses, how to get there, links to the website and social networks, as well as photos. Read the reviews of tourists, look at whether all the reviews have answers and, if not, draw conclusions. In addition, it is useful to read reviewsin different search engines and in different languages.

• When a tourist is already in your city or somewhere nearby.

In this case, it is worth taking a smartphone that is not linked to your account, for example, from your children:) and take a walk around the city. Check if your museum is displayed on the map, it is easy to find and make a route. How do other museums and tourism organizations show themselves on the Internet and what information they give?

When a tourist is already at the museum.

Imagine yourself as a tourist. Try using your smartphone to search for the object's description in different languages, audioguide, other useful information etc. Check the Internet connection at the museum, try to make a live broadcast. Imagine what informationa tourist can search with a smartphone inside the museum. If you haven't found it, then you found a hint - what information needs to be added to the website and other services, which will be discussed later

When a tourist has already left the museum.

Many tourists like to share their impressions of the last trip in various social networks and on websites that accumulate reviews. Such kind of content is considered very valuable in the tourism industry and has its own name - UGC (User Generated Content). The fact is that these days people trust direct advertising less and less, but they trust what other tourists write about a tourism organization. You should forget about laziness and constantly search for what they say about your museum on the Internet. Moreover, you should encourage tourists to post information about your museum. The simplest way is to provide high-speed WiFI to visitors so that they can immediately post their posts or live streams directly at the museum. Obviously, if you find a negative review, it makes sense to respond, comment and somehow try to rectify the situation. Remember that reviews areread not only by the owners, but also by other potential tourists. And if the museum does not respond to questions, comments or reviews - how attentive is it to tourists' requests and does it work at all? There are also some automated services that allow you to track your online reputation. There are paid ones and free ones. The most famous free serviceis Google Alerts - https://www.google.com/alerts.

The main thing to care about when working with any content on the Internet is the museum's online presence in the most complete way, so that any tourist can get any information. Information about the museum, called tourist content, should include not only therules of behavior for tourists, but also the address, phone number, location on the map, photos, videos, etc. In a word, it should include all the necessary materials to serve one purpose - satisfy requests of tourists.

In general, the content should cover the full range of questions that tourists ask or mayask, including, for example, free visit days, or public transport stops near the museum, or working hours of bar-room. If there are questions with no answers, of course, you should answer this question, and then create the content and post it, at least, on the website.

Frequently asked question on our courses is: "What should I write about on my website and social networks?" Study reviews and questions for the museum on different platforms - there are ready-made themes for your blogs, websites and social networks.

It should be said that the content must be 100% copyrighted and useful for tourists. Today, all search and Internet systems are getting smarter and easily detect non-copyrightand useless content, which can put an end to the online promotion of the museum.

Let's summarize:

- The main thing is content.
- The main thing for the museum is to create high-quality, reliable content and post it on the Internet; and the task of search engines and other Internet services is to show this content to tourists.
- The main thing for a tourist is to get all the necessary information about the musuem, withoutlong and boring search.

1.3. Content placement

There are many different websites and services on the Internet. How not to get lost among them? Of course, you need to post information where it can be found and where it is easy to use. The principle "Be where your customers are" works well, but technical development makes its own adjustments to this postulate, which can be rephrased as follows: "Be where your customers can easily find you."

Official website of the museum.

Perhaps this is the most important place. This is your home on the Internet: the main page of the website is also called the home page for a reason:). It should contain the maximum amount of high-quality, unique, interesting, copyright information for tourists!

Search engine directories.

It all depends on the country. For Russian-speaking countries, these are, of course, Google and Yandex. For those who prefer Chinese, these are Baidu and Wechat. Both Russian-language search engines have special directories: Google My Business and Yandex Business Directory. These services are tied to both Internet search and map search, so the directory is the second most important resource. With the help of these resources, potential tourists will be able to find your hotel. If everything is done correctly, even without paid advertising, potential customers will find you in search. This is called organic traffic.

In addition, search engines have special services for museums, such as Google Arts&Culture https://about.artsandculture.google.com/

Yandex https://yandex.ru/promo/maps/museum-night/index/

Naturally, you should not neglect the opportunity to tell about your museum on the Internet. This not only helps tourists find you, but also improves the position of the museum website in organic search.

Popular local web-mapping services.

These can be navigation services popular among tourists, for example, 2GIS.

Forums and travel reviews.

The best-known here is Tripadvisor. It should be noted that more than half of the travelersvisit this platform before the trip. There is one rule: if your museum is placed there, you should answer all reviews. For today, the basic registration on Tripadvisor is free. Moreover, there are cases when information about the museum is placed by tourists, not by the museum. In other words, when searching on Tripadvisor, some museum directors are surprised and outraged that information about their museum is not entirely reliable. It is quite easy to fix it is enough to declare your rights to this museum and then respond to the reviews of tourists. To add a museum on Tripadvisor, just follow the link https://www.tripadvisor.com/Owners

Online tickets.

The most famous is Getyourguide.com https://www.getyourguide.ru/?partner_id=6TYGTG8. Registration is free, however a commission is charged on each booking. Therefore, each museum decides for itself - tobe placed there or not.

Social networks.

The most popular are Facebook and Instagram. In the Russian-speaking environment, these are VK and OK. In all social networks, the basic placement of businesses is free, but if you want to receive additional traffic, you will have to pay for promotion. Each museum decides for itself whether it needs paid promotion. However, basic page placement is essential as users will be able to find you on various social media platforms. Obviously, having a business page or group obliges the owner to keep it up to date and quickly respond to questions and comments.

• Local Tourist Information Center.

These organizations are supported by the government and designed to help tourists. Different countries have different conditions for cooperation with them. For example, somevisit centers place advertisements for museums on their websites, and some even place links to bookings. In any case, tourists often visit information centers or their websites, so placing there is advisable, but take into account local specifics.

• Websites of local partners and other travel organizations.

This topic is not very developed in the world yet, and that is why it has great potential for those who will start doing this. For example, if a tourist plans to book a hotel, firstly he or she visits its website, and if there will be a link to a museum nearby, there is a possibility that a tourist will go to the museum's website with a subsequent visit. There is an opportunity for mutual partnership. Hotels and museums could exchange links on their websites, so hotel guests will visit the museum, and museum visitors will stay in this hotel. Museums can cooperate not only with hotels, but also with other organizations serving tourists. For example, with taxi companies, cafes, restaurants, etc.

• Local and international travel magazines, portals and associations.

Often serious tourists prefer to receive information about the museum through reviews notonly of tourists, but also of professionals. Therefore, participation in professional associations increases the credibility of the museum. In addition, contacts with other tourism organizations also increase the likelihood of new visitors.

Other.

It all depends on the imagination of the museum and local characteristics. For example, itcan be tourist exhibitions, fairs, some kind of festivals, where the museum can place information or advertisements.

Providing high-quality information about a museum on the Internet contributes not only to the growth of tourist traffic, but also to the growth of EAT ranking indicators in the same searchengines. EAT means Expertise, Authority, Trust. By increasing this indicator, your museum willbe displayed more often and higher in Google and Yandex searches.

As a result, museum information should be posted wherever potential customers canclick. Content must be high quality and relevant.

If there are reviews of tourists about your museum in the places of content placement, they need to be answered as quickly and adequately as possible! Because the reviews are read by other potential customers as well. Despite the fact that now there is quite a lot of talk about fake reviews, people read them nevertheless. By giving answers to all reviews, you can, firstly, convey to tourists the information that your museum is valid and takes the opinion of tourists seriously, and secondly, this can be a way to put into your answer some kind of useful, promotional information.

1.4. Modern terms in simple words

The definition of the basic concepts associated with Smart tourism, for those who are stillnot familiar with them:

- Smart tourist is a tourist who mainly uses digital channels for receiving information, booking and shopping. According to various sources, the number of such tourists has already exceeded 50% of the total, so you should not neglect this segment of visitors!
- Smart tourism is the ability of tourism organizations to meet the needs of Smart tourists.
 Unfortunately, for a number of reasons, museology lags behind the development of Smart tourism in comparison with other industries.
- Digital transformation of tourism is the use of digital technologies by both tourists and tourism organizations, including the development of Smart tourism. Business transformation from offline to online. What happens if you don't move? It's okay, of course,but you will lose more and more customers who have not found you online. They will go toanother museum or even to another country, more adapted to Smart tourism.
- **Digital data** is any number related to a business, for example, revenue for a certain period, number of visits, number of website visitors per day, etc.
- Big data is data collected over a long period of time or when the amount of data is verylarge (also called a dataset). Some sources indicate that Big data is data that cannot be processed in Excel... Maybe so:)

- Analytics is working with data and building solutions based on it. The antipode of intuitive
 decisions and "box ticking" approach. Analytics can be divided into financial, marketing, web
 analytics, etc.
- Content is a broad concept related not only to information about working hours and ticket
 prices. It includes high-quality photos, videos, visitor stories, a museum blog, and even themenu
 in a museum cafe.
- Cloud is a way of storing and processing data, content and files not on your personal
 computer or company computer, but on remote servers that can be located thousands of
 kilometers away from your enterprise. In other words, it is online data storage.
- Robotization is the replacement of a person with a kind of machine for performing individual operations. For example, there are robots in telephony or advertising. The most common example is an autoresponder that replies when people cannot answer. Or a search engine spider that constantly visits websites and draws conclusions about the usefulness or uselessness of a particular website. A common example of a robot is a household coffee machine it saves a person from the need to grind and brew coffee. In museums, the izi.TRAVEL service is essentially a robot guide in your smartphone, that willguide you along the museum and tell everything along the way instead of a live guide. As for humanoid robots, such kinds of robots are mainly used for marketing purposes, but there is little practical use for them in the museum business.
- Automation is the transfer of part of the functions performed by a person to a machine. These
 functions are usually well-defined. For example, you can automate the process of opening a
 door in a museum by installing an automatic door, or automate accounting by installing a
 special program on your computer. The most vital example is an automatic fireextinguishing
 system that detects fire or smoke and turns on alerts, or, in some cases, even extinguishing
 devices without human intervention.
- Artificial intelligence is a rather vague concept. It is believed that these are methods
 capable of imitating human actions. Basically, this is the delegation of some tasks to the
 machine for recognizing objects like faces or actions, and the development of automatic
 solutions based on this recognition. As applied to tourism, the most striking example is a
 translator in our smartphones, when the machine performs speech recognition and automatic
 translation.
- Machine learning is the process of a machine accumulating the knowledge and skills
 necessary to accomplish a task assigned to it. In fact, this is the process of correcting errors.
 Many have noticed that smartphone translators are getting better. Based on a hugenumber of
 translations, the machine learns to cut off the wrong options and return the correct ones instead.
 Similarly, machines play various games: they lose a lot first, but thenanalyze which mistakes led
 to the loss and do not repeat such mistakes again.
- Deep learning is a type of machine learning associated with disparate data, that is, when datasets cannot be systematized in any way.
- Neural networks are computational algorithms or programs that mimic the human brain. As
 you know, the brain is built on neurons, and the connections between them are constantly
 changing, while the exchange of information between neurons occurs as layers. In each layer,

different neurons are connected horizontally. The links between layers are vertical. Electronic neural networks work in much the same way. For example, most online translators are built on neural networks.

- Leadership is an important part of digital transformation. Someone in the company mustlead
 and control the process. Moreover, the leader should convince everyone of the importance of
 digital transformation of employees. It is ideal to encourage related businesses, such as tours,
 taxis, restaurants, travel agencies, etc. to cooperate in digital transformation. Without doing
 this, only little changes will happen... In general, digital transformation is primarily a
 transformation or at least an understanding of the digital thinking of tourists.
- Real time is when the museum always knows how many visitors it has, how many will arrive
 etc. This term corresponds to operational management and may be well automated by
 establishing communications and various technologies, which are a great many for every taste
 and wallet.
- Creativity in this case there are no ready-made algorithms and miracle pills. As in any
 business, you need imagination, which is a sign and driving force of creativity. Of course, it is
 inconceivable without leadership, because it is not enough to come up with something, you
 also need to bring it to life.

1.5. How to keep up with new technologies?

Another frequently asked question: we are going to study various tricks of the digital world, but everything is changing very quickly, new technologies and services are coming allthe time; how to navigate this diversity and not get lost?

The answer is simple: you should focus on the tourist or the client. The better your content, the more welcoming your online hospitality - the more attention and popularity you willhave and, ultimately, you will have more visitors. Technologies will help you to cope with this task, and every year they do it better and better. Therefore, feel free to plunge into the digital world, remembering your main mission as a museum.

Technologies come and go, but culture, history and hospitality remains!

You have read the introductory part of our manual.

To purchase the full version, please send us a request at free form to email: info@centersmarttourism.com or Whatsapp: +493052015140

Sincerely,

Center Smart Tourism GmbH

