MARKETING SOCIO-CULTURAL BENEFITS OF MUSEUM IN THE SOCIETY: AN EXAMPLE OF NATIONAL MUSEUM, LAGOS

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Abstract

Museums are significant historical institutions established for the collection, preservation and conservation of cultural objects and materials against deterioration, vandalisation and theft. Museums are setup as non-profit making institutions that display objects in their care for people’s enjoyment and educational purposes. The 21st century museums must go beyond total dependency on government funding, if the institution must realize its objectives. The goal of this paper is to publicize initiatives of the Management of National Museum, Lagos towards rendering socio-cultural and educational roles of museum to the people. This paper explores various strategies used by the Lagos museum’s workers to reach out to different age grades in the country through collaborative supports from private and corporate bodies in order to sustain laudable events in the museum. The paper therefore, recommends various forms of marketing strategies used in Lagos museum to other national museums in the country in order to sustain, maintain, as well as realize the socio-cultural and educational benefits of museums to the public.

Keywords: Marketing museum, National Museum Lagos, Social and cultural benefits.

Introduction

Museums in Nigeria are established for the purpose of collecting, preserving, researching and exhibiting the cultural or natural heritage of the country for information and enjoyment of the public (Oyinloye, 2015). The primary responsibility of a museum is to protect and promote heritage, as well as human being, physical structure and financial resources made available for that purpose (ICOM, 2006). Judging the definition of museum given by International Council of Museum (ICOM) at its general assembly meeting held in Copenhagen museum (Denmark), “Museum is a non-profit making permanent institution in the services to society and its development. It is opened to the public for the purposes of study, education, enjoyment, material evidence of man and his environment” (Hudson, 1977). It does not expect to profit for the sustainability of the institution. However, there is a partial effort by most national museums to look for ways of augmenting government subventions.

A careful look at ICOM definition suggests a review of the statements “non-profit making” institution in the service of the people. The term non-profit making institute makes it self-financing and largely dependent on government, as well as public taxes for its survival. This principle has rendered many aspects of the institution stagnant in Nigeria instead of progressing. It has also constituted a lot of challenges hindering the growth of museums in Nigeria. In response to challenges caused by this principle; many museums in developed countries have resorted into market research and marketing strategies to raise funds for their survival as well as progress in their services. Some are incorporating profit yielding alternatives which is essential and effective for museum management. The developed countries who have adopted marketing option as an alternative to raise funds to augment government subventions are museum in United Kingdom, Australian (New South Wales), San Diego History Museum, Queensland Museum, South Australian Museum and many more (Essien, 2009).

Marketing is an aspect of recognizing human economic and social needs in the society. In a simple and straightforward term “Marketing is meeting people’s needs profitably” (Kotler & Keller, 2006). The American marketing association defines marketing as an organization functions and a set of processes for creating, communicating and delivering value to customers as well as managing customer’s relationship in ways that benefit the organization and its stake holders. The concept of marketing emerged in the mid-1950s and it holds that the key to achieving organizational goals consist of the company being more effective than competitors in creating, delivery and communicating superior customer’s value to its chosen target markets (Kotler & Keller, 2006). Marketing in the context of museum institution is to actually publicize the services of museum, so that people can patronize them regularly for their enjoyment.
Marketing strategies in Lagos museum

Generally speaking, museum institution was slow to pickup marketing as an operational method to the sustainability of central management. There was a shift towards marketing museum in the late 1980’s which led to information regarding effectiveness of museum provided through marketing research (Renschler & Gilmore, 2002). There is still some skepticism about the usefulness of marketing in cultural organizations, such as museums as and confusion within the profession of marketing concept (Kolb, 2000; Neilson, 2003). However, approaches to museum marketing are view from non-profit marketing and services marketing to the people. The concept is a reflection on the development of museum from collection and research purposes to public services institution. Marketing in this respect should be seen as another activity that helps to bring visitors’ interests in the marketing aspect to the museum. Marketing of some activities is to help reach larger part of the public, who might not have visited museum. The strategy is to arouse people’s interest to stroll through exhibitions and further participate in other museum’s programmes and events in order to fulfill its social mission to the public.

Publicizing museum hinges on major goal and strategic marketing activities in the National Museum Lagos; the audience development and museum outfit. It is improving patronage at the museum by advertising museum to its target audience of all cadres of academics, particularly primary and secondary school levels. The other strategy is an offshoot of the former which is to broaden the knowledge of the audience on services and information obtainable in the museum that is not applicable to other similar institutions. For example:

- Education and Leisure.
- Museum Kitchen.
- Museum shops for jewelry, indigenous textiles design for outright sales.
- Replica of popular Nigerian artwork as souvenir.

According to V. Okoloagun (personal communication, September 17th, 2012) the major strategy of marketing National Museum Lagos is “Educative Programme” by the information unit of the museum. It has been very instrumental and it plays a major role in reviving as well as reinvigorating the museum. V. Okoloagun (personal communication, September 17th, 2012) says a lot of school pupils are seen in groups on daily basis visiting National Museum Lagos to view exhibition. There is tremendous improvement in students’ visit to the museum because of the principle of using museum specimens as a form visual aid in learning experience in the school. The specimens are used to disseminate information, as well as knowledge in field of history, arts, science, and ancient technology, archaeology and religion studies among school pupils.

This paper observed that, National Museum Lagos uses educational programme on two broad based approaches:

1. Intra-mural programmes: these are programmes carried out within the museum premises to educate and sensitize pupils’ awareness about museum.

2. Extra-mural programmes: these are programmes organised by the museums outside the museum. This can further be classified into children and youth programmes while others are school programmes and adult programmes. The most functioning one from the aforementioned is the children and youth programmes while other two have not gained much recognition and acceptance by the people (O. P. Otuka, personal communication, September 17th, 2012).

Children and youth programmes in the Lagos museum

The programmes under this sub-topic are targeted towards attracting children of ages 6 to 12 years to play, interact and have fun together. The objectives are to bring out the creative ingenuity and artistic skills of an individual child to play. The programme incorporates Art club and long holiday break for its operations. The programme as part of its objectives is set to catch the young and help children develop mentally, as well as actualize their creative dream in life. According to O. P. Otuka (personal communication, September 17th, 2012) the programmes has helped to reposition the image of Lagos museum in Nigeria, especially the national museum Lagos. It has also helped museum to showcase its activities in and outside the museum premises. This in other words has helped to publicized and markets the National Museum Lagos through nooks and cranny of Lagos state. In respect of these achievements, Lagos museum has also planned a giant stride achievement, by opening a website for
children workshop as well as, introduce a vocational programme that will train adult category in the society (V. Okoloagun, personal communication, September 17th, 2012). The workshop is expected to attract fee payment which will serve as funds to augment government’s annual allocations to the museum (V. Okoloagun, personal communication, September 17th, 2012).

The study observed different programmes of education unit in Lagos museum, which has led to tremendous improvement, in the number of visitors to the museum over the years. The larger percentages of visitors are the pupils and students, during excursion which usually is between December and January. This times, number of visitors to the museum is put at least 2,000 people on daily basis. The museum charges entrance fees of N50 per pupil, N100 per adults, while foreigners pay N200. Increase patronage and visitors are attracted because different programmes are organised in the museum in order to generate revenue as to complimentary efforts to government funding of national museums in Nigeria. The education unit of the museum organizes ‘children day’ reception for children of all schools in Lagos State at the museum compound. There is also an entrance fee paid per child for this programme, which is equally targeted to supplement government funding. Some of the activities during this programme, includes essay writing competition, cultural dress competition, as well as cultural dance performance. These aforementioned events are designed to boost the morale of pupils and students. The programme started in National Museum Lagos, and as such have become an event which all children look forward to annually (V. Okoloagun, personal communication, September 17th, 2012).

Marketing indigenous Nigerian foods

Museum kitchen is another marketing strategy of publicizing National museum Lagos. It is a place of relaxation that prepares indigenous dishes and drinks to satisfy hunger as well as quench tasty visitors. The Lagos museum’s kitchen is reputed for standard and hygienic food of any class of visitors who wish to enjoy the exact taste of indigenous dishes from any part of the country. The museum kitchen prepares various food timetables as stated below for interested visitor that patronizes its services. For example, major tribes' and peoples indigenous foods are prepared daily on different days of the week in order to accommodate varieties:

- Monday: Efik day – Edika-ikon soup and akpu
- Tuesday: Edo day – Banga soup and gari
- Wednesday: Igbo day – Okasi soup and akpu
- Thursday: Yoruba day – Efo-riro soup and iyan (pounded yam)
- Friday: Hausa day – Mia tause soup and tuwo shinkafa

The strategy of presentation and marketing Nigeria’s indigenous dishes in the Lagos museum kitchen is worthy of emulation by other national museums in the country because it has been quite rewarding (V. Okoloagun, personal communication, September 17th, 2012). A lot of people come into Lagos museum’s kitchen on daily basis to wine and dine traditional Nigerian dishes.

Strategies of marketing Arts and crafts in Lagos museum

One prominent marketing strategy in the Lagos museum is by the sales of indigenous arts and crafts as souvenir to museum’s visitors. Observation at the museum’s reception reveals a conspicuous display of tie and dye clothing, as well as batik pattern textiles for sale. Some of the textiles are already sown to fit both male and female visitors; while others are packed in 4 and 5 yards that could be made into choice styles. This type of textiles are commonly referred to as ‘adire’ popular among the Egba cultural people of Yoruba in Ogun State, and graduates of Fine art schools in Nigeria. Other methods of marketing art in Lagos museum is through production of replicas of Nigeria’s popular cultural objects such as FESTAC mask (Festival of Black Arts and Culture), Benin and Ife bronzes are reproduced for visitors who wish to buy them as souvenir (Oyinloye & Ijisakin, 2012). It is worthy to mention here that Lagos museum has in reserve an art gallery that caters for contemporary artists’ exhibitions who wish to display their artworks for public views. Other outfit of marketing in the Lagos museum is the jewelry shop, where quality jewelries are made and sold to members of the public within museum’s compound. Note that, it is not the museum employees that run the aforementioned businesses. Museum authority takes certain percentage from the proceeds after sales from individuals that run the business. It is pertinent to note that, National Museum Lagos is making effort to preserve and display objects as well as protect visitors and general public interest in changing exhibitions of diverse themes.
Corporate organizations and Lagos museum

The idea of marketing museum to corporate organization is drawn against the backdrop of nonprofit making institution. In this regard, collaboration between museum and corporate organization is what Austin (2000) describes as an important strategy in the twenty-first century museum. Austin (2000) maintains it is as an avenue for museum to sell its vision out to a larger audience. A careful look at the above statement shows that collaboration with corporate bodies enables museum to gain more revenue to achieve successful museum management, and publicity in the contemporary times.

In the recent past, finding have shown that, the most common type of relationship with other bodies are participatory of individual, philanthropists and organizations giving financial support to the museum. The philanthropists, has given donations to museum, though small and not regular support, but these has often served good purposes whenever it comes (Essien, 2009). Corporate giving represents one of the most important resources in the museum sector, which helps it to forge ahead. In the 1980s, corporate giving increasingly took the form of strategic philanthropic collaboration in the museum. In 1990s, corporate attitude is shifted from philanthropic giving to strategic investment (Essien, 2009). The scope of corporate giving is now wider, including marketing, as well as skill acquisition and advertising strategy. The dependency of both sectors’ collaboration could also provide the resources which organizations rely on in order to survive. The assistance offered may be in form of financial resources, expertise skills, processes or marketing ideas. It is therefore, good to encourage museum services, workers and museum bodies, to corporate with each other, in order to achieve its goal and objectives. The administrative sector of National Museum in Lagos is aware that integrating resources from within and without are necessary for collaborative arrangements in order to enhance good services delivery. Museum can benefits support in direct participation, not only of money, but also of goods, voluntary services and ventures. Thus collaboration may be seen as way to shed the pressure on museums and also have impact on the Management.

According to Essien (2009) museum collaboration with non-museum sectors take various forms of intervention, this includes loan of objects and temporary exhibitions. Another important organization from which museum can benefit through collaboration is in the mass media publicity, when museum organizes a special exhibition to educate the public. This is a very good strategy of National Museum in Nigeria, if an organization calls for special exhibition in its premises. Museum benefits from press review, wide publicity of its objects as well as services. Nevertheless, museum communicates to public by promoting their activities in partnerships with non-museum sectors for sponsorship. Museum benefits a lot by partnering with media houses, when this happens, it is an indication that museum is bound to secure more publicity for special exhibitions in both print and electronic media.

In museum exhibitions, the press produces report and supplementary stories on the collections, which also involves lecture and other events. It could be said that, the role of the press in cross-sector collaboration is not only to communicate with the public, but to also support special exhibition mounted by the museum sector. Where museum have the support of the press, more visitors are attracted as the profile of the event heightens. According to O. P. Otuka (personal communication, September 17th, 2012) National Museum in Lagos has realized the importance of effective communication to the public through efforts of the press in successful exhibitions. Presently, National Museum Lagos uses the press media for sponsoring and publicizing museum programmes such as, children’s day; cultural day; end of the year carnival; periodic exhibitions; seminars as well as symposiums.

In the same vein, museum’s collaboration with organizational sectors can be extended to strengthen the existence of its services. According to V. Okoloagun (personal communication, September 17th, 2012) National Museum Lagos has benefited immensely from the services of MTN, Globacom networks, and others bodies in this direction. She mentioned that, other contributors and supporter of children’s day and cultural day are Unilever Plc., Viju Milk, Golden Burger, and so on which has led to additional promotions of other museum’s programmes and as such have put Lagos museum on a recognizable pedestals among Nigerian museums. The motivation behind collaboration of museum and other sectors is to create a strong alliance for better public services and communication. Museum’s collaboration with other sectors is also targeted towards strengthens partnership agreement. It also enables flow of traffic between people and organizations in the museum. It also increases visitors and revenue to the museum. It has helped to fulfils educational and research objectives more effectively. It has caused expansion in the scope of collections and exhibitions. It has also helped to improved public relation services, as well as expertise rate, and skill acquisition of the workers. It has also improved level
of grant, revenue and donations. Finally, it hoped to improve number, as well as sophistication of equipment and facilities in the Lagos museum (O. P. Otuka, personal communication, September 17th, 2012).

**Strategy of tourism in marketing Lagos museum**

Tourism is an industry that engages the visitor by making difference and diversity intelligibly through narrative experiences. The link between museum and tourism can be achievable through museography, which is the product of culture reserved in the nation's museums. The key to great museography is engaging, convincing and telling stories about real people, as well as real events in the museum. Frank (1987) defines tourism as the practice of travelling for pleasure, tours, and services for the tourists. A tourist is hereby referred to as a person who is travelling for pleasure or enjoyment (Olokesusi, 1987). Tourism involves satisfying of one's curiosity about other people's land and culture (Frank, 1987). Tourism could also be seen as the preservation for the purpose of exhibition of resources that are both natural and cultural for the purpose of education and entertainment providing material for research on the aspects of man's heritage as well as development. Olokesusi (1987) again, describes tourism as the movement of people within or outside a state or nation for leisure, cultural, sports, education, religions, and conference or health reasons. Going by the aforementioned statement, one sure thing that is tourism is a way to discover new things. Most things to learn from and enjoy in the museum are product of archaeologists and traditional art traditions which the tourist always crave for.

It should be noted that no museum exists without the archaeologists, traditional art and craft makers and the likes. In this regard archaeological findings have contributed immensely to the museum's collections after they have been carefully studied and interpreted. Museum collections attract visitors from all walks of life if they are effectively managed. Visitors patronize the museum when there are materials or objects that say something about people's history, economic and socio-cultural attainment of their locality (Okpoko, 2006). Museum attracts visitors who might be tourist from within or outside the country who spends money in the museum shops, museum kitchens or restaurants, hotels, and outside markets in the locality (Aremu, 2008). Museum collections also serve as a medium through which various indigenous ethnic art works in this country, are displayed to inform people about their origin. By this, museum is not only helping to promote domestic tourism but also marketing these collections. Museum are now begin to transformed from a reservoir of folklore and heritage to a more active, vibrant and self-sustaining non-profit making institution (Schwartz, 1982). Services and souvenir of Nigerian arts are source of attraction in the museum to the tourist, which are fetching museums reasonable income to compliment government subvention.

**Hindrances to marketing strategy in Lagos museum**

The concept of marketing museum’s services is good and reasonable in the twenty-first century museum as practiced in Lagos museum. However, as important as marketing museum is, there are challenges hindering the smooth operations of these strategies. They include inadequate funding of museum to meet marketing needs that could bring museum closer to the people. The fact that, museums are non-profit oriented public institution, it has made it difficult for the institution to carry out most strategies of marketing museum to the people. The major resource to make museum thrives is from federal government purse and it is not regular. Museums have to wait for the insufficient yearly allocation in order to run their activities. This was observed as major reason, why museum organisation has to look inward for viable means of generating revenue through numerous activities that will bring income for the survival, as well as makes the institution lively.

According to O. P. Otuka (personal communication, September 17th, 2012) the National Museum Lagos has been added on internet, for easy accessibility but little has been done to upgrade the museum's activities in order to promote its image. Publicising museum on the internet offers the opportunity to increase accessibility, share information on collections with millions of cultural tourists and researchers throughout the world. Many museums in the advanced countries offer searchable database of their collections, by providing detailed information on each objects and materials. Such information includes: the maker, origin of creation, medium of execution, or style, dimensions, preservation and conservation history, exhibition and socio-cultural functions to the place of origin. There are also online exhibitions whereby the use of audio, tapes, video and animation are used to recreate electronics museum. Some have online stores where, visitors can purchase items like posters, prints, books, toys, clothing, jewelries, and other customised museum items. The site may offer educational materials, for students and researchers or lesson plans for teachers. It is hoped that
National Museum Lagos will rev up to this standard by making use of all aforementioned devices that will further propagate museum functions in the twenty-first century. Finally, most museums sites on internet have guide for visitors on the hours of operation weekly, directions, floor plans, current and upcoming exhibition and workshops. Other internet sites feature calendar of events in the year, new list of objects, and jobs in the museum. Where this is happening, information in the museum becomes cheaper as well as easily accessible, thereby making people become museum friendly.

**Summary discussion**

This study has examined National Museum Lagos as a viable marketing venture in the twenty-first century. It has discovered the potential that brings museum closer to the people in the society. It analyzed marketing strategies and the avenues of promoting museum’s values, with a view to gain more patronage vis-a-vis visitors, as well as generates income for the museum. The study opines that, if the museum institution is given freehand to publicise its activities appropriately, many organization would collaborate with the museum and makes it function effectively. The study identified a need for museum to be market-oriented in order to survive in the era of inadequate funding of National Museums in the country. Having identified this, the study observed a need to collaborate with private individuals and corporate organisations if, National Museum Lagos must move to the recommended category of the twenty-first century museums reorganized by the International Council of Museum (ICOM, 2006). The study used qualitative method of research to analysed useful information obtained through key informant interview and personal observation. Descriptive analytical method was used to enumerate values in the structures and contents in National museum, Lagos.

**Conclusion**

The stated aim and objectives of study were achieved from information and data collected from primary sources, as well as from purposefully selected key informants interviewing. The study therefore, established marketing museum as a desirable tool for income generation and museum’s effectiveness in the twenty-first century. It was observed that marketing museums through variety of programmes which comprised children and adult classes will definitely increase visitors from all walks of life into the Lagos museum. On the other hands, collaboration with individuals and corporate organisations will also strengthen museum funding thereby, giving it an edge in the procurement of equipment and facilities needed in the museum. It was also discovered that, involvement of multi-national organisation will further help to sponsor museums programmes and events. It will, as well bring about publicity of museum’s services and exhibitions, in various news media to the public.

Finally, the study analysed various strategies of marketing museums currently adopted in the National Museum Lagos. It therefore, recommends marketing museum strategies embarked upon in Lagos museum as a necessity to all other National Museums in the country, if they must increase number of visitors to their museums which will in-turn increase their financial support from the public.

**References**


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