

The Process of Valorizing Widespread Cultural Heritage: A Case Study on The Washington Patrignani Maritime Museum of Pesaro (Italy).

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Abstract

The new trends in cultural consumption and the growing need of resources for the economic sustainability of cultural institutions in Italy suggest that museums should include in their mission value creation as a prerequisite for survival and growth.

The aim of the paper is twofold: 1) to propose a conceptual framework for the valorization of cultural heritage of a single organization that draws on strategic marketing planning concepts, along with those of experiential marketing and cultural marketing; 2) to analyze the Washington Patrignani Maritime Museum of Pesaro (Italy), by adopting the conceptual model in order to understand how the museum valorizes its cultural heritage and how it could create further value for the users and for itself. For this purpose we have used the case study method (Yin, 2009).

The proposed model has proven useful for research purposes, and has highlighted the critical aspects of the process of valorizing the museum in question, in particular the absence of the first phase of analysis of the museum and of the context and the last phase of control of the activities carried out. To improve this process and create greater value for visitors and for the museum itself, it should analyze the demand and the competitors, to better define its strategic choices; in this regard, especially, it should identify the most appropriate targets in order to design an offer that meets the desires of the demand. During the implementation of the strategic choices and of the marketing policies the museum should pay more attention to its communication and price policies.

The study highlights the managerial and policy implications and, because the main limitation of the research is the analysis of a single case study, we recommend testing the proposed model on several case studies.

Keywords: *Valorization of Cultural heritage, Cultural consumption, Value creation, Strategic marketing and management, Experiential marketing, Cultural marketing*

Introduction: New Trends in Cultural Consumption and Creation of Value

Given that the value attributed to culture depends heavily on the subjective response of individuals (Bourgeon-Renault, 2000) and that cultural consumers usually have a high level of education (Neal 1998a; Deveux, 1994; Lemmons, 1996; McCarthy *et al.*, 1996) and

exposure to art since childhood (Bourdieu, 1979; DiMaggio, Ostrower, 1990) recent behavioral studies on consumers of art products have highlighted (Collodiet al., 2005; 2008; 2009) that consumers seek not only a cultural enrichment but an engaging and holistic experience that generates pleasure, fun, emotions, sensations and satisfies the desire to be together (Holbrook, Hirschmann, 1982; Schmitt, 1999; Pine, Gilmore, 1999; Ferrari, Veltri, 2008; Addis, 2010; Ferraresi, Schmitt, 2006).

In addition, today's users are more interested in the co-creation of their cultural experience (VomLehn, 2006; Stumpo, 2006; Conway, Leighton, 2009), in the use of technologies for the on-site use of art (Addis, 2010; Pujol-Tosto, 2011) and in "active" cultural participation, that is, in the production and / or exchange of cultural content (painting, playing a musical instrument, exchanging pictures or making videos, etc.), including the use of digital technologies which are more and more user-friendly (e.g. Photoshop) and the Web and social networks, in particular.

Therefore, cultural consumption can be interpreted, as we will explain more fully later (para.3), through Pine and Gilmore's model of experiences, according to which the cultural user can be considered a mere passive recipient of undifferentiated and standardized economic proposals, but can also become an actor deeply involved in the process of cultural production and consumption of intangible value, i.e. of "experiences" (Pine, Gilmore, 1999). According to the Authors, experiences refer to "new" economic proposals (output) of greater added value compared to other services that the consumer enjoys, and which he experiences as personal, memorable, and engaging events on the emotional, physical, intellectual, and even spiritual level.

More generally, cultural organizations should create value for cultural users, either residents or tourists, and create value for themselves. The literature on marketing and management of cultural organizations (AIMAC, 1993; Kotler, Kotler, 1998; Colbert, 2000; Solima, 1998; 2004; Grandinetti, Moretti, 2004; Rispoli, Brunetti, 2009), which refers to the general principles of marketing and management of for-profit enterprises (among others, Kotler, 1967; Cozzi, Ferrero, 2004; Ferrero, 2013), and in particular, of service companies (Grönroos, 1999; Pencarelli, 2013), places the creation of value for the user and for the cultural organization at the center of attention.

According to the marketing literature, value for the cultural consumer, just as for any consumer, is a subjective and multidimensional concept that emerges from an overall assessment of the utility of a consumer product or service, based on the perception of what he/she receives (get) and gives (give) (Zeithaml, 1988) in the medium to long term (Grönroos, 1999; Gummesson, 1996). The benefits (get) can be functional, symbolic, hedonistic, aesthetic, and emotional while the sacrifices (give) can be financial or temporal in terms of time spent collecting information, for the procurement of the physical product /service, etc. In addition, the value created increases when there is cooperation from the customer (Grönroos, 2008; Vargo et al., 2008).

The concept of value creation is also expressed in the Italian legislation on cultural heritage, The Code of Cultural Heritage and Landscape (Legislative Decree no. 42/2004), with the term valorization that indicates a set of actions aimed at a better understanding and a best use of the cultural heritage by the users.

Specifically, the cultural benefits (Valdani, Botti, 1999; Botti, 2000) can be cognitive (learning new historic and artistic concepts), psychological and experiential (becoming aware of little-known parts of themselves and experiencing an emotion, a feeling, a memory)

and social (sharing a moment of pleasure with others). Instead, the sacrifices associated with cultural consumption can be financial (the price of the ticket you have to pay to enjoy the cultural products) or related to the time and effort required to gather information on cultural activities, physically procure the product, learn about it (e.g. the use of new technologies in museums), or to the perceived risk associated with wrong purchasing decisions.

The concept of value is therefore articulated within a long term relationship that evolves between the cultural organization and the user. Today, these organizations should try to translate single interactions with the users (e.g. a one-time visit to the museum) into repeated exchanges (for example, in addition to a visit, the user also attends conferences, workshops, etc.).

The institutional value for the cultural organization is expressed, however, by the trust and legitimacy obtained from citizens and public authorities (Scott, 2008) and is connected to the organization's ability to manage the trade-off between the growth in the quality of the cultural offer (cultural purpose), the expansion and acculturation of the public (social purpose), and economic sustainability (economic objective), i.e., the appropriate use of resources by pursuing at least a balanced budget (Chong, 2002). With regard to the social purpose, it should be noted that the cultural organization must, on the one hand, reach a diverse audience that reflects the complex demographic composition of contemporary society (Negri, 2012), including growing segments such as the elderly and foreigners, and on the other, it should ensure that all segments of the public understand the value of their cultural heritage by increasing the cultural capital of each.

Since this study is concerned with cultural heritage, i.e., unique, inimitable and somewhat "sentimental" goods (Trimarchi, 2005), the value creation process for users and cultural institutions also generates cultural, social, and economic development in the local context of reference. The concept of value-in-use strengthens the intangible dimension linked to the historical, cultural, and symbolic meaning that it expresses, thus enhancing its cultural value (Montella, 2009). At the same time, social value is created because cultural heritage allows an experience to be enjoyed and shared by the relevant public (Colbert, 2000; Chong, 2002; Franch, 2010) and it is a potential source of competitive advantage for the territory as it creates the conditions for local development and tourism growth (Rispoli 2001; Rispoli, Brunetti, 2009).

Objectives and Methodology

The objective of the research is to propose a conceptual model for the management of cultural heritage by a cultural organization and to apply that model to a typical Italian museum, which is small, public, and non-profit. The model for the strategic marketing plan of cultural organizations (Bagdadli, 1997; Solima, 1998; Colbert, 2000, among others) along with the contributions of marketing and management literature (Kotler, 1967; Ferrero, 2013, among others) - especially in the context of services (Grönroos, 2009; Pencarelli, 2013) and of experiences (Pine, Gilmore, 1999; Schmitt, 1999) and of cultural marketing literature (Colbert, 2000) constitute the conceptual framework proposed.

The research questions that guided this work are the following:

- 1) How is the process of valorizing cultural heritage characterized?
- 2) How is the conceptual model applied in the W. Patrignani Maritime Museum of Pesaro, a typical, small Italian museum?

The study adopts a qualitative and exploratory-descriptive approach because the phenomenon in question is little known. In addition, the case study

method (Eisenhardt, Graebner, 2007; Yin, 2009) is used to analyze the Washington Patrignani Maritime Museum situated in Pesaro (henceforth referred to as the Museum), through the use of following research techniques:

- semi-structured interviews conducted with the Scientific Director of the Museum which took place on 14th January, 2014, 17th November, 2014, and on 20th March, 2015;
- analysis of the results of a survey conducted in 2013 on the cultural consumers of Pesaro to identify their socio-demographic characteristics, their cultural behaviors, the extent of their knowledge of and frequency of their visits to the Museum, as well as their opinions on the possible enhancement of the Museum;
- analysis of paper-based (brochures and publications) and online (website and Facebook) information available on the Museum;
- participant observations of the writer who has visited the Museum and participated in many initiatives launched by the institution in question.

The mix of tools chosen (unstructured qualitative interviews, analysis of the results of a survey, document analysis, and participant observation) was deemed to be satisfactory as the aim of the research is to understand the peculiarities of the enhancement of the organization. The findings that emerged led the researcher to formulate some managerial and policy implications and point to areas for further research.

The Process of Cultural and Socio - Economic Valorization of Cultural Heritage

In this section we propose a model for cultural and socio-economic valorization of cultural heritage managed by a cultural organization (a museum, a theater, etc.) which is structured in four phases: analysis, strategy, implementation, and control (Fig. 1).

The proposed methodology refers to the approaches used in strategic planning for marketing and management of cultural organizations (Bagdadli, 1997; Solima, 1998; Zan, 2003; Colbert, 2000; Kotler, Kotler, 1998; Argano *et al.*, 2006; Rispoli, Brunetti, 2009) and of cities or geographic areas (cultural planning) (Grogan *et al.* 1995; Evans, 2001; Turrini, 2009). It also complements some contributions on marketing and business management (Kotler, 1967; Kotler, Armstrong, 2010; Cozzi, Ferrero, 2004; Ferrero, 2013), especially in the contexts of services (Grönroos, 2009; Pencarelli, 2009; 2013) and experiences (Pine, Gilmore, 1999; Schmitt, 1999) and on cultural marketing (Colbert, 2000).

Fig. 1 - The cultural and socio-economic process of valorization of cultural heritage managed by a cultural organization: a possible conceptual framework



Source: our adaptation from Conti (2014).

In order to make strategic decisions, any cultural organization should first of all consider the demand (actual and potential) in terms of size, trends, and segments and understand "what" cultural users want, "how" they perceive the offer, and what alternatives they consider. In particular, it is important to understand what kind of "experience" (Pine, Gilmore, 1999) they want to have, whether it is physical, cognitive, introspective, fun, exciting (Pekariket al. 1999; Kotler, 1999) or interactive (with or without technology).

In addition, in the context it is necessary to analyze "what" stakeholders (artists, lenders, government and policy makers, the press, the world of art) want, "what" competitor offer (Kotler, Kotler, 1998), and how the macro-environment (demographic trends, technological, economic, political, socio-cultural) might impact the cultural organization. Finally, with respect to the macro-environment it is important to understand which variables can have an impact on the activities of the cultural organization. For example, an increase in demand for culture and a change in favor of the legislation in the cultural sector could have a positive impact on the activities of the cultural organization and, therefore, on its results, while the reduction of the number of cultural users and the entry of a new competitor in the operating context may adversely affect the same.

Instead, with reference to the analysis of the cultural organization, it is important to identify, on the one hand, its achievements, especially in terms of the number of registered visitors and the level of satisfaction expressed by users, and on the other hand, the strengths and the weaknesses of the organization with respect to the demand. For example, if a museum is not equipped with trained guides and visitors ask for compelling and engaging guided tours, this is a weakness of this organization. Otherwise, having an easy-to-use and enjoyable website with an interactive section where visitors can post comments and photos is a strength of a museum, especially if it wants to focus on a younger market. In general, cultural organizations will try to build up their strengths and try to eliminate their weaknesses vis-à-vis the needs and desires of cultural consumers.

The second phase of the strategic process of valorizing cultural heritage consists in defining the mission and the strategic objectives, identifying the segments of interest (targets) to serve, and designing a differentiated value proposition (Ferrero, 2013).

Like for-profit enterprises do, cultural organizations should also define their mission and their objectives of a cultural (increase the quality of the cultural offer), social (increase and "train" the users), and economic (work cost-effectively) nature (Chong, 2002). This necessarily implies some trade-offs which are not easy to solve from either a technical or an economic perspective.

Although cultural organizations are open to all types of audience, it is as important in the cultural arena as it is in the for-profit sectors to choose the target(s) to be served in order to efficiently develop policies for the offer. The appropriate choice of segments/objectives (targets) allows the cultural organization, in fact, to better satisfy its users, to enhance its cultural strengths, to differentiate the offerings, and to avoid the dispersion of resources that are becoming increasingly scarcer.

At this stage it is very important for the cultural organization to design the *differentiated value proposition* in such a way that cultural consumers will prefer its offer to the competitors' alternatives (positioning strategy). It is of primary importance to determine "what" to offer and then, in a marketing logic, the perceived and experienced "benefits" that the target can obtain from the use of the output of the cultural organization. It should be made clear that the cultural offer (the "what") generally consists of three components (Arganoet

- the main or core offer (e.g. a museum visit, a show at the theater, etc.),
- the enriching offer (e.g. conferences, workshops, etc.),
- the collateral offer (e.g. bookshop, bar/café, coat check services, etc.)

The core offer is the *raison d'être* of the organization; the enriching offer joins the main offer and can help to more greatly gratify the users of core products and to attract potential users; the collateral offer is not required for the purpose of mere cultural use but allows the user to enjoy a more complete and satisfactory cultural experience.

Designing the cultural core means substantially defining the "experience" (Pine, Gilmore, 1999) for cultural consumers who are more and more advanced and active (§ 2) today, compared to the past. They are looking for output with more added value (experiences and transformations, precisely) compared to goods and services. The types of experiences suggested by Pine and Gilmore (1999) can be applicable in the cultural sphere: aesthetic experience (being there), educational experience (learning), entertaining experience (having fun) and escape experience (doing something). While the first and the third type of experiences are passive for the user, the second and the third are active. For example, a museum could decide to offer tours with a very well-prepared guide narrating art in an original way and give the visitor an interesting educational experience or focus on the "active" participation of the visitor (including the use of new technologies) so as to provide an escape experience. The design of such a core offer also involves the definition of "how to" build this output, i.e., what resources and skills to develop internally and to activate externally.

It should, however, be pointed out that a museum may decide to differentiate itself in terms of its enriching offer, by means of cutting-edge educational workshops managed by highly skilled personnel. Alternatively, it may focus on a mix of core and enriching elements in its offer.

In addition, the partners to be involved (other cultural organizations, public administration, businesses such as restaurants, hospitality and other private companies, schools and universities, volunteers, etc.) should be identified in the strategic phase. This should include defining precisely who will "direct" the whole process of valorization, as well as the resources, tasks and time. It should be noted that the strategic choices should be made in a participatory manner, that is, shared among the cultural organization, the residents (especially the cultural users), and the stakeholders involved.

Once "what" to offer has been determined, phase3, *the implementation phase*, regarding "how to" effectively create, communicate and deliver the designed differentiated offer can be enacted. It serves to implement the strategic decisions taken in phase 2 and to actually activate the policies and programs of operational marketing (about the product, price, communication, and distribution).

The offering of experiences (Pine, Gilmore, 1999) requires a greater commitment on the part of cultural organizations with respect to the provision of services as it consists in creating real events involving the users on many levels, personal, emotional, intellectual, and so on (Pine and Gilmore, 1999), and this often requires the development of resources and internal expertise (e.g. front-office staff) and the contribution of external resources and complementary skills (e.g. collaboration with professionals or companies). A very important factor in staging a successful "experience" lies in the adequacy of the activities for the recruitment, training, and incentivizing of the staff who must interact with the cultural users and, if necessary, involve them in the co-creation of the experience. Having a competent staff

is also vital to ensuring the effectiveness of enriching and collateral offers.

During the operative phase, the cultural organization must provide access to the public with appropriate opening hours and provide all the information through effective business communication by means of traditional media (brochures, leaflets, newsletters, etc.) and / or news media like website (FAQ, forums, videos, etc.) and social networks. Even the pricing policy, often underestimated in the cultural sector, needs special attention at this stage because the price is a lever which, if properly used, can help retain users and attract new ones, for example. Finally, during the implementation phase the cultural organization is called upon to effectively manage relationships with the many stakeholders, not an easy task and one that requires time and resources to meet diverse and variegated needs. This stage is, in fact, the longest and most complex of the valorization process because more actors are involved and there may be delays, difficulties, and conflicts. Therefore, it would be necessary at this stage to monitor the intermediate results.

The fourth and final phase, monitoring the results achieved in the strategic phase, involves defining a system of cultural, social, and economic performance indicators (Pencarelli, 2009; Turrini, 2009; Re, 2006). Cultural performance (the quality of the cultural proposals) can be measured, for example, by the level of satisfaction with the core offer expressed by users and art critics; social performance (expansion and acculturation of the public) is measured by the number of new users and the growth of the knowledge acquired by them, for example, while economic performance (cost-effectiveness) is assessed by recording costs and revenues related to expertise and cash flow.

In addition, the socio-economic impact of the activities of a cultural organization on the local territory can be assessed in several areas. For example, there can be an increase in the local wealth and in jobs created through catering, accommodation, transport, trade, etc. on the one hand, and the other, greater social cohesion, a higher perception of quality of life, and so on.

The control phase is important for the value creation process because it allows a better reprogramming of the strategic objectives, of the policies regarding the specific offer, and more generally, of the marketing mix.

The Case of the Washington Patrignani Maritime Museum of Pesaro

Premise

In this section, we discuss how and to what extent the Museum goes through a process of cultural heritage valorization and then, how it could further enhance this cultural heritage by applying the conceptual framework proposed. In particular, we focus on the first two phases of the model: phase 1 (analysis) in which the museum and the external environment are analyzed, and phase 2 (strategy) in which some valorization proposals are made, on the basis of what has emerged from the previous step.

The Current State of Valorization of the Museum

The Maritime Museum of Pesaro is dedicated to Washington Patrignani, a native son and teacher who not only had a passion for the sea and the maritime life of the city, but who also curated the first collection of objects related to the sea and the Pesaro seaboard. The Museum was set up in 2007, as part of a municipal project, in Villa Molaroni, an Art Nouveau-style building owned by the Municipal Administration. The Renco S.p.a. company, which specializes in the construction of tourist resorts all over the world, restored the building,

cooperated in the creation of the Museum, and now finances Villa Molaroni. The Museum was conceived and now is led by the Scientific Director, Maria Lucia De Nicolò. She is a Professor of History of the Mediterranean in the Modern Era and of Renaissance History at the University of Bologna; she has continued to follow the path begun by the founder but with a new interpretation. Thanks to extensive archival research (XV-XVIII centuries) into the historical causes and investigation into the processes, the reports, and the contamination that had occurred over time, it was possible to reconstruct the original formation of the navy of Pesaro and recover the essence of this maritime city.

The exhibition begins from and includes the staircase, the entrance hall, the central corridor (Maritime and traditional aspects of cultural anthropology; The ancient port, the rebuilding of the Piceneship of Novilara (7th c. BC); The maritime trade and ships of the fifteenth century, Pictorial views of the Pesaro Harbor between the 17th and 18th centuries; Symbols and figureheads on traditional boats) and six rooms: Room 1: Shipwrecks and wrecks. The Arduz (1817); Room 2: The traditional boats of the Pesaro seaboard (16th-19th c.); Room 3: The Arts of the port (master sail makers and rope-makers); Room 4: Fishing techniques (15th - 20th c.); Room 5: Aspects of everyday life (housing, food, clothing, religion, etc.); Room 6: Master carpenters and construction sites. Source: www.museumarineriapesaro.it

Today, the strategic choices made by the Museum (phase 2, strategy), as suggested by the conceptual model (Figure 1), do not derive from the analysis of the context (phase 1, analysis), in particular from the analysis of the demand, but they enhance its main strengths which we will discuss below. In this regard, therefore, the *mission* of the Museum is to make known the culture of the sea, the peculiarities of the people whose lives are connected to the port, and the whole set of customs and traditions that have survived through the narration of the evidence collected. Thus, it increases the meaning and significance of the objects and the latest information that has been gathered. To this end, the Museum engages in activities geared towards research, conservation, and the dissemination of knowledge on the maritime life of Pesaro. It is committed to pursuing the strategic objectives that should guide any cultural organization (Chong, 2000), i.e., 1) improve the quality of the cultural offer; 2) expand and acculturate the public, and 3) efficiently manage the financial resources available.

The museum is open to all segments of the public (target-groups) but is popular with the over-45s with a medium-high level of education, although in recent years it has paid special attention to the segment of children through the provision of educational initiatives.

It offers an exciting and highly interactive guided tour *core* offering in which visitors encouraged to ask questions because, as was mentioned above, the understanding of the Museum requires the narration of the history of the objects contained therein. A specially designed path way with audio and video components is offered to primary schoolchildren. The guided tour is set up as a real "experience", in Pine and Gilmore's (1999) sense, that is "staged" by the Scientific Director and her three co-workers who, with specific skills and passion tell anecdotes and point out details that are usually not part of the repertoire of ordinary guides. In the viewpoint of the management and the author of this paper, this allows visitors to experience the four dimensions of the experience suggested by Pine and Gilmore (1999): the aesthetic experience (being there), the educational experience (learning), the entertainment experience (having fun) and the evasion experience (doing something, in the sense of asking questions); according to another classification of experiences, it is a primarily physical, cognitive, fun, social and interactive experience.

Three years ago the Museum launched a project entitled "Eco-museum of the

Pesaro Seaboard” which offers guided tours outside the museum in neighboring locations that share a maritime tradition. This project is part of ADRIAMUSE, a wider project aimed at creating a widespread outdoor museum by developing a network of relationships with other cultural realities whose common denominator is the Adriatic Sea. In addition, as part of the eco-museum project, two "enriching" types of activities, also classifiable in the category of "experience" (Pine, Gilmore, 1999), were launched successfully, receiving a good response from the public:

- The "Fish Fridays. A fish a month" events to promote seasonal fish through a conference with an expert and subsequent on-board fish-tasting;
- "Stories, fables, legends of the sea", a series of events that include the reading of fairytales and an educational workshop for children with a snack offered by a local bakery.

Other "enriching" activities sponsored by the Museum include periodic painting exhibits pertaining to the guiding themes of the museum exhibition rooms, workshops for schools, and presentations of thematic publications, also known as the *Rerum Marimarum* Notebooks.

The creation of these "experiences" (Phase 3, implementation) is based principally on the strong skills and relational capacity of the museum staff. To this end, the Museum does not use new technologies on-site and collaborates with only a few external partners, primarily with teachers or artists who donate their time and expertise for free or for a modest fee. Today the Museum is open four days a week and entry is free. Timely information is provided to visitors by e-mail, through the website, or Facebook; communication is also done through commercial brochures. In the strategic phase performance indicators to be measured in a subsequent phase (phase 4, control) have not been established. In fact, to this day, data on visitor flows is not collected, satisfaction surveys have never been carried out, nor has the competition or the context been analyzed.

From the demand perspective, the main strengths are the originality of the Museum and the attractiveness of the guided tours, whereas the main weaknesses are the scarce human and financial resources available to enhance the product and the communication policy as well as the lack of a price policy.

Improvements to be Made for the Valorization of the Museum

The conceptual scheme proposed in paragraph three suggests how to further improve the valorization of the museum in question, valorization that currently can be considered quite acceptable. An analysis of the context, a step that is currently neglected, and the reformulation of the strategy, in light of the preceding step will now follow.

As part of the context analysis (phase 1) an analysis of the demand provides valuable information to improve the design and implementation of the offer and marketing mix policies. From the quantitative point of view, there is a growing demand for cultural tourism in Italy and in the Marche Region as well as a good response to quality cultural initiatives. A survey of cultural consumers who are residents in Pesaro (Conti, 2014) carried out in 2013

Revealed significant qualitative aspects of the question; in particular, the respondents: 1) live an especially physical, cognitive, social, and fun experience; 2) want to have a more social and interactive experience; 3) spend little money on culture, less than 20 Euros per month for 50% of the sample; 4) appreciate new technologies for use on-site and for the communication of cultural initiatives; 5) believe that the Museum should involve interested citizens, students, and people in need of social rehabilitation such as the unemployed or the sick, as

museum volunteers; 6) suggest "de-seasonalizing" the city's cultural offer which is currently concentrated in the summer months, proposing new cultural offerings (e.g. pop, rock, or jazz concerts and initiatives for young people to stimulate creativity), and make cultural consumption generally more attractive.

In addition, the survey revealed a reasonable level of knowledge about (67%) and use (27%) of the Maritime Museum (Table 1) especially by respondents over 45 (80%). Table 1 also highlights the preferred valorization activities for different segments of users of different age groups. The main activities appreciated by children and adolescents (age 3-18) are the Educational Workshops, Sea Day, and the Treasure Hunt. These are new forms of use of the museum that combine the playful and the scientific. Users aged 19-45 favor concerts, films, and guided tours, confirming the Italian preferences for concerts, cinema, and the museum visit in the classic sense, considered more suitable for adults. Finally, for those over 45 the choices are, in order of preference, conferences (particularly on art, economics, and philosophy), guided tours, and exhibitions (especially painting, contemporary art, and photography).

Table 1 – Knowledge, Use, and Proposals for Valorization of the Maritime Museum of Pesaro

Knowledge and use		Proposals for valorization			
<i>Do you know the Museum?</i>		<i>Visitors aged 3-18</i>		<i>Visitors over 45</i>	
Yes	63%	Worskhops	73%	Conferences	67%
No	37%	Sea Day	67%	Guided tours	67%
Total	100%	Treasure Hunt	57%	Exhibitions	60%
<i>Have you visited it?</i>		Guided tours	47%	Concerts	49%
Yes	27%	Readings	31%	Readings	48%
No	73%	Concerts	29%	Films	45%
Total	100%	Exhibitions	29%		
		<i>Visitors aged 19-45</i>			
		Concerts	72%		
		Films	67%		
		Guided tours	60%		
		Conferences	55%		
		Exhibitions	55%		
		Readings	43%		

Source: Conti (2014).

In addition, the findings of the survey show that respondents would like to see three special proposals sponsored by the Museum: 1) meetings among artists, designers, and entrepreneurs to develop ideas and new cultural and creative enterprises; 2) informational meetings on the "Eco-museum of the Pesaro Seaboard"; 3) seminars on restoration, including the reproduction of a small restorer's work shop in the museum, to teach people about restoration and the restorer, a professional who is all too often considered a mere craftsman.

With regard to competition, in Pesaro this is the only museum of its kind. Therefore, there are no direct competitors, but there are several indirect competitors (Kotler, Kotler, 1998) represented by other museums, theaters, cinemas, and cultural event planners. The

challenge of the Museum, as we will explain later, will be to create a unique value proposition involving cultural organizations and other stakeholders, such as universities, businesses, etc., to attract both residents and tourists.

To continue with our SWOT analysis, at this time, the macro-environment seems to offer more opportunities than threats as concerns the enhancement of the city's cultural organizations because the Marche Region is committed to the realization and development of cultural districts and the revival of tourism. The main threat that the Museum will try to reduce is the lack of networking that currently takes place between organizations and companies, both public and private; this represents a country-wide structural limitation.

We now move on to strategy, the second phase of the conceptual model proposed. In order to improve the process of valorization, the museum should maintain the mission and strategic objectives but set more specific secondary objectives for the two target-groups of actual visitors (over 45) and potential visitors (under 45). In particular, the museum should continue to offer the over-45 visitors a satisfactory offer core (guided tours) and an "enriching" offer to increase loyalty; it should offer attractive proposals to potential users, e.g. adolescents (13-18) and adults (19-45), taking into account the type of cultural product they prefer.

More specifically, the over-45-year-old visitors should be offered the most appreciated activities that emerged from the survey on cultural users of Pesaro (Conti, 2014), but the sea should be kept as a unifying *fil rouge*. Thus, conferences on art, economics, and philosophy should be related to maritime themes. Guided tours should be developed even outside the museum to implement the "Eco-museum of the Pesaro Seaboard" project and to that end, other museums connected to maritime life should be involved, for example, the Museum of Natural Dyes, formerly used to color the sails of boats, and the Rope Museum, another typical material used by sailors. In addition, restaurant owners should participate by offering a fish menu at locations that are in convenient stopping points on itineraries outside the museum, and transport companies could manage the movement of visitors from one museum to another. To this end, the Museum should play a role in "directing" activities between public and private organizations and look for resources in collaboration with local governments. Finally, the exhibitions on painting, contemporary art, and photography, should be organized in a manner that is consistent with the maritime themes. In this regard, the Museum could host young artists, giving them spaces in which to express their creativity (Conti, 2014).

With regard to the potential visitors, for those aged 3-18 it should be noted that the three major initiatives suggested by the survey on cultural users in Pesaro - educational workshops, Sea Day and the Treasure Hunt - highlight the need to combine a playful component and a scientific one. The Museum is already strong in scientific competence, but should improve its edutainment techniques. The Sea Day could be organized with the help of a marine biologist who could bring children to visit the harbor and the boats in the morning, and in the afternoon, help them to reflect on what has been observed; for example, a sample of sea water could be analyzed, a fisherman could be invited to tell stories about his life on the sea, and so on. Some freedom should be given to young people involved in these activities, to schools (in keeping with the curriculum), and to families.

For those aged 19-45, it is essential to develop "hybrid" cultural proposals that blend the museum visit with the enjoyment of their preferred cultural offerings, such as concerts and films. Mini-concerts (pop, rock, jazz, etc.) could be offered at the Museum and

local film club, and both could include a museum visit or tour and the focus would be on maritime themes. For example, readings about the sea could be accompanied by piano music and a film night in each room of the Museum and in different genres, ranging from classics like *Titanic*, *Pirates of the Caribbean* to docudrama like *Closed Sea* on the plight of migrants. In essence, the Museum should to adopt an unconventional approach to gradually bring in more young people who are not habitual museum-goers.

It was also suggested, in the survey cited above (§ 4.2), that the Museum should first of all, become a venue for encounters between artists, creative thinkers, and entrepreneurs to generate ideas for creative and cultural start-ups which might then develop into real incubators of entrepreneurship established in other buildings of historical and artistic importance to be valorized. Secondly, the Museum could also organize meetings to inform citizens, businesses, and organizations interested in the "Eco-museum of the Pesaro Seaboard" project, in order to expand the tour route beyond the walls of the museum and involve not only cultural but also other organizations to develop the local economy and tourism (restaurants, transport, etc.). Finally, the third proposal concerns the restoration of works of art in an effort to revive the Italian restoration sector, appreciated worldwide but currently in crisis. This could be achieved through seminars and meetings on the subject in which the encounter between supply and demand for restoration is fostered, involving the University and the local trade associations. One idea might be to hold a mini-workshop to demonstrate, in real time, the restoration of some museum objects by art restoration students of the University of Urbino in order to show people this art.

All of the museum programs should be offered year-round, which would help to seasonally adjust the city's cultural offering currently concentrated in the summer. In addition, volunteers should be involved, from those most welcome such as interested citizens, students, the unemployed or the sick, so that users can appreciate the "social role" of the Museum. This would also bring down costs and increase cultural participation.

It should be emphasized that the "experience" so far offered by the museum, or rather co-created with visitors, should be improved and planned more specifically. Currently, visitors spontaneously pose questions during the guided tours, but the interaction between visitors and guides as well as among visitors themselves should be stimulated and specifically defined.

In the third phase of the model, implementation, according to the proposals for valorization suggested in Phase 2, the Museum will be expected to handle a larger number of initiatives, in a more planned way, with better attention to detail. In addition, it will have to deal with a larger number of public and private stakeholders (government, other cultural organizations, businesses, schools and universities, associations, residents, etc.), better meet their expectations, and more effectively and efficiently manage scarce resources. In order to create more value for cultural heritage, as part of the remaining marketing mix policies, the communication policy and the price policy should be improved. Concerning its communication policy, the Museum should clearly define the message (the copy strategy, and first of all the promise and the justification) and choose the tools (the communication mix) which are the most appropriate for the main target visitors.

To the younger ones, the Museum could communicate the *edutainment* experience as one that is playful yet scientifically rigorous and justified by the presence of competent staff. This message should be addressed both to schools through meetings, emails, and phone calls and to families through the Internet and brochures. To the 30-45 age group, the

communication should emphasize the "hybrid" nature of the Museum's proposals (museum visit combined with films or concerts); the proposals should be publicized by qualified personnel using a more massive approach through the Internet and social networks. Finally, for the more adult and senior targets, communication should highlight the importance of the fun and social as well as cultural benefits of going to the Museum, above all through the use of traditional media (brochures, posters, local press).

It would be interesting to create an integrated communication project co-sponsored by the Museum and the Eco-museum of the Pesaro Seaboard project, by means of a contest that would be open to primary school students of the Province of Pesaro- Urbino and University of Urbino students enrolled in such courses as Information, Media, and Advertising, Marketing, and/or Conservation and Restoration of Cultural Heritage. In this way, students of all ages would become familiar with the Museum and the Eco-museum .

In terms of price policy and in consideration of the proposed improvements, we believe that the Museum could continue to offer free guided tours, but should introduce tickets at a low price for other "enriching" initiatives (e.g. exhibitions, eco-museum, etc.) and "hybrid" products (film club, mini-concerts, etc.) because the fact that something has a price is a signal that it has value.

Also, in the strategic stage, the Museum should define a performance indicator system to be used in phase 4, control. We suggest, first of all, counting the actual number of visitors to the Museum and collecting socio-demographic information on them (gender, age, profession, etc.); then, qualitative data could be obtained through customer satisfaction questionnaires. This would improve the reprogramming of the marketing mix policies and the creation of value for visitors and for the Museum.

Conclusions

Although cultural products are inherently experiential (Holbrook, Hirschmann, 1982), the process of valorizing cultural heritage proposed by us indicates that in order to satisfy an evolved visitor who wants to co-create his/her own cultural experience, the experiential offer must be planned and implemented carefully (Pine, Gilmore, 1999; Schmidt, 1999), highlighting the strengths of the organization and the opportunities of the environment in compliance with the mission and strategic objectives.

The proposed model has proven useful for research purposes, and has highlighted the critical aspects of the process of valorizing the museum in question, in particular the absence of the first phase of analysis of the museum and of the context and the last phase of control of the activities carried out. To improve this process and create greater value for visitors and for the museum itself, it should analyze the demand and the competitors, to better define its strategic choices; in this regard, especially, it should identify the most appropriate targets in order to design an offer that meets the desires of the demand. During the implementation of the strategic choices and of the marketing policies the museum should pay more attention to its communication and price policies.

The "value-setting" of cultural heritage requires, on the one hand, a renewed capacity for management, organization, and recognition of the results by cultural organizations and a tighter cooperation of the latter with stakeholders, and, on the other, the development of a more widespread interest in cultural heritage and of higher usage rates and active cultural participation. This requires across-the-board commitment and responsibility, starting from the policy makers, in collaboration with industry experts who should define

new rules and strategies to enhance the value of cultural heritage within an accountability perspective, establish a more favorable tax treatment for private investment in culture by businesses and individuals, increased public funding, more incentives for the cultural production system, and do more to foster artistic education in primary schools. The local government is called upon to “direct”, with competence and responsibility, the process of enhancing the cultural heritage of a city or territory. At the same time, the education system, intellectuals and the media should help to sensitize people to the issues of cultural economics and private enterprises should give more support to culture through funding and by providing specialized expertise (design, marketing, etc.).

The central role attributed in this study to the cultural consumer in the process of valorizing cultural heritage should not be read as an indication that organizations should simply implement the proposals put forth by the demand. On the contrary, such suggestions should be generally adapted to the specificities of each organization and translated into action in the manner and time that is most effective in the given context. In this regard, experiential marketing and relationship marketing have a large potential for application in the cultural sphere.

It may be validly argued that consumer participation in the decision-making and cultural creation of viewing experiences, the responsibility of each community, and the adoption of the rules of accountability to account for resources used and results achieved will represent the key elements in valorizing our heritage in the near future, according to a model of management of the common good and of more sustainable, equitable, and effective development.

The case study method was used for this research. While it is a limitation, since only one case is investigated, the advantage is that it allows the adoption of a qualitative exploratory-descriptive approach to analyze the many variables that compose the proposed conceptual framework, applied to a sector which is still little studied in the marketing and management literature. Later on, this model can be tested and perfected through the analysis of multiple case studies.

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