



Museum Management Training at the Fine Arts Zanabazar Museum

UNESCO-Zanabazar Museum National Training Workshop – Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, 8- 23 October 2007

BACKGROUND READING MATERIALS

Training in Marketing

Who?

In most countries marketing is still a relatively new area of museum activity. Consequently, across the world relatively few museums or related institutions and organisations have so far appointed specialist staff in this field or related areas of museum management (such as public and press relations, membership development or fundraising).

Under most traditional museum governance and funding systems, most if not all of the activities of the museum were financed by national or local government out of taxation, with little or no requirement that they engage with its actual or potential audience or seek wider financial and other support, such as external grants, sponsorship and partnerships with other organisations, whether commercial, not-for-profit foundations or international aid and development grants and loans, as well as practical support by volunteer staff. With such changes becoming widespread in many countries and museum systems, it is important that all managerial and administrative staff with policy and financial responsibilities should be aware of recent developments and current trends in relation to the marketing of museums.

However, some museums and related bodies using *Running a Museum* in training and staff development may already have specialist marketing staff. If so, their professional training and experience will almost certainly have been in general marketing, most probably orientated towards the business sector, since there are only a tiny handful of specialist programmes in e.g. museum or wider cultural management who offer specialist education in museum marketing.

More usually, whatever marketing activities are undertaken by the museum will be the responsibility of non-specialist staff whose own training, and probably their main day to day duties will be in other areas, such as general management and administration or perhaps visitor and educational services. The chapter should be of special relevance to those taking on a marketing role within the museum without formal qualifications, or perhaps even experience, in the subject.

What?

With moves towards a more market-orientated approach to museums and related institutions and services becoming widespread in many countries and museum systems, it is important that all training and staff development programmes should aim to familiarise staff in all departments and of all levels with these governance and management trends and with the principles and practice of marketing, as well as providing a basis for more advanced training, policy discussions and forward planning by more senior staff. The Marketing chapter will also be of special value to such

experienced marketing specialists who have moved into the museum from a perhaps very different area of work or type of organisation area, since it specifically examines current views and experience in the marketing of museums and related facilities and services.

How?

While it is important to have information and staff discussion sessions in any training programme about the nature of marketing and related fields and their impact on the museum sector, this is a field in which there is almost unlimited scope for practicing a wide range of marketing and related techniques, many of which could serve not just as a training exercise but would be of lasting benefit to the museum and its future development.

For example, in even a very short workshop of perhaps just one day, time could be found for the participants to spend some time on a small market research study, for example interviewing museum visitors, preparing an evaluation of an exhibit, or writing publicity material about the museum or a future special exhibition or event for an advertisement or press release. Those taking part in a longer training programme, perhaps one or two days a month over a period of several months, could make a real contribution towards the development of long-term strategies, such as developing the museum “brand” or a longer-term public relations and membership or “Friends of the Museum” campaign.

Marketing is also one of the fields in which the museum will find a lot of expertise in the local business community, in university and other management schools, and perhaps in other parts of the public or voluntary service. Experience in many parts of the world shows that many such organizations and professionals working in the field of marketing, including market research, advertising or public relations, are very interested in museums and their work, and would be happy to help by making available their expertise.

It is very desirable that both the museum’s own marketing section and those responsible for its training and staff development programmes build up good relations with local specialists. They can often bring practical case studies of their own experience into more formal training sessions and workshops. Also, as museum marketing is still in an early stage of development in most parts of the world, it is very desirable that training programmes include opportunities to make study visits to look at the way in which marketing and promotion are approached in a range of other organisations seeking to relate to the general public, for example a major tourist hotel, leisure park or heritage site such as a national park, as well as in other museums in the country or region.

(extracted from *Running a Museum: The Trainer’s Manual*, p.33-34, UNESCO 2006)