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The social network as an instrument for the dissemination of the patrimonial and tourist values of the Louvre Museum

La red social como instrumento para la difusión de los valores patrimoniales y turísticos del Museo del Louvre

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Abstract

The museums, wrapped in the digital space that currently exists, have found in the social network a useful and essential tool for the management of their own content, whether patrimonial, institutional or tourist. Through them, they will make this content available to a wide audience, thus creating a greater relationship between institution and society; In addition to greater loyalty. This study presents the analysis of the publications issued by the Louvre Museum, being considered a cultural institution of great reputation as it is one of the most visited museums in the world. It will focus on the most used social networks, such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. For its elaboration the number of followers in each one of the accounts, the language or languages in which it is published has been studied and the publications have been grouped into content categories. As a result of this study, a better understanding of the management and dissemination of communication by this institution, its strengths and deficiencies; equally, it would be an aid resource to achieve its continuous improvement.

Keywords

Communication; diffusion; heritage; social networks; tourism.

Resumen

Los museos, envueltos en el espacio digital que se da actualmente, han encontrado en la red social una herramienta útil y esencial para la gestión de su propio contenido, ya sea patrimonial, institucional o turístico. A través de ellas, pondrán este contenido a disposición de un amplio público, haciendo que de esta manera se produzca una mayor relación entre institución y sociedad; además de una mayor fidelización. En este estudio se presenta el análisis de las publicaciones emitidas por el Museo del Louvre, siendo considerada una institución cultural de gran reputación al tratarse de uno de los museos más visitado del mundo. Se enfocará en las redes sociales más utilizadas, como son Facebook, Instagram y Twitter. Para su elaboración se ha estudiado el número de seguidores en cada una de las cuentas, el idioma o idiomas en los que se publica y se han agrupado las publicaciones en categorías de contenido. Como resultado de este estudio se logra un mejor conocimiento de la gestión y difusión de la comunicación por parte de esta institución, sus fortalezas y carencias; igualmente, se trataría de un recurso de ayuda para lograr su continua mejora.

Palabras clave

Comunicación; difusión; patrimonio; redes sociales; turismo.

1. Introducción

As cultural entities, museums see communication as a key instrument for acquiring a greater presence in their surroundings, both in the social and cultural spheres. In the management of this communication, new technologies are beginning to be an essential factor which will allow greater progress in the interaction between the public and the institution, making greater development of museums possible.

Through this type of digital communication, it is possible to achieve a greater reach and diffusion of their contents to the society that makes up the target audience of the museums; as well as provoking greater trust. The contents issued thanks to this digital communication, produced by these entities, are increasingly predominant today which makes more frequent use of this type of content to obtain information.

In this context, the role of social networks will be highlighted as a window for the visibility and dissemination to the public not only of the image of the museum as a cultural entity, but also as an institution that generates tourist offerings and as a depository of historical heritage.

1.1. The role of communication in culture

In the cultural field, in order to obtain a greater and better enjoyment and, above all, an adequate knowledge of culture on the part of the public to which it is addressed, it must be made known; making it visible and allowing access to it.

It is for this reason, and in this sense, that museums have become institutions with a clear cultural character whose objective is the management, not only of itself as an institution, but also of its communication in order to be able to carry out a better cultural diffusion and to be able to make available to that audience the cultural heritage it houses.

Thus, and following Forteza (2018), communication will influence the necessary evolution of these cultural institutions to endure in society and have a positive influence on it. In this context, and following Córdón and González (2016), factors such as communication, and in this case digital communication, come into play in this management by museums to help fulfil strategies in terms of dissemination and access by and for the public. Once museums have accepted this digital communication as an essential tool for the dissemination of and access to information, and according to Viñarás, Herranz and Cabezuelo (2015), these entities begin to have greater visibility in the media. As Córdón and González say, "the opening up of museums to society has become a trend that, although slowly, continues in different national and international museums" (Córdón and González, 2016, p. 152).

In relation to this aspect, "this function of diffusion of the museum today is carried out through social communication, and it is precisely here that the union of the museum, communication and the public takes place" (Jiménez-Orellana, 2016, p.179).

According to Jiménez-Orellana (2016), in this way, a type of communication based on unidirectionality by the institution begins to be set aside in order to establish, more and more frequently, and as the authors Domínguez, Álvarez and Martí (2012) say, a two-way communication with a participatory profile between the

public and the museum.

Thus, through this type of communication, the public ceases to be a simple receiver and spectator of information and becomes a participant; a generator and distributor of the contents made available by the museums and, in general, the cultural institutions.

However, and following del Río (2011), this involvement on the part of the public in the museum's discourse sometimes provokes a certain amount of mistrust on the part of the institution itself.

Even so, cultural institutions, and therefore museums, increasingly use social communication. In this type of communication, social networks take on a leading role as a vehicle for giving visibility to the institution's own contents. Following Mas (2019), through this type of communication, the aim is to extend the experiences lived in the museum's own environment to continue the experience outside it.

Therefore, the aim is to create an experience that can be perceived not only physically, but also sensorially, so that the public can enjoy it anywhere and at any time. Following Naranjo, "with the creation of their web pages, citizens no longer have to go to a museum to see a work" (2016, p. 348).

1.2. Social networks as tools for cultural dissemination

In this digital environment in which institutions and society are now integrated, museums have increasingly seen the positive values generated by this interaction between themselves and their followers through social networks.

Through them, there is a contribution and a feedback of both information and contents produced by the institution itself. Similarly, this audience can in turn share content with the museums, providing added value that the museums must consider in future management and which will serve as improvements for the institution itself (Cordón and González, 2016).

In line with this idea, and as Sofía Rodríguez Bernis, President of the International Council of Museums of Spain, says, "the museum, since it opens its doors to the public, does so to create an atmosphere of dialogue, conversation and communication. And social networks are the most propitious environment to generate that atmosphere" (2013, p. 3).

Following Izquierdo, Alvarez and Nuño (2017), social networks have acquired notable prominence and greater penetration in society, generating new ways of transmitting information. As a result, these networks have become the greatest exponent of Web 2.0.

As previously mentioned, with the irruption of social networks in the social, cultural and even institutional environment, the way in which knowledge and information are shared, accessed and communicated has been transformed with the appearance and use of this type of interaction derived from the integration of new technologies in the field of communication (Ibáñez, 2018).

Following Losada-Díaz and Capriotti (2015), the potential of digital communication where the leading role of social networks can be framed, is increasingly recognized by cultural institutions, and museums, coming to change the way of communicating.

New technologies have been increasingly positioned, but above all the Internet, as the undisputed means of communication with respect to other more primitive media, since it is capable of mobilising large masses of people, unlike those that have not evolved with technology.

It is not surprising, therefore, that in the cultural sphere where culture has to be visible, museums decide to approach the web and, above all, social networks, to increase their presence as a cultural entity and to disseminate the values it contains.

Following Cordón y González (2016, p. 153), the use of Communication and Information Technology by museums in their online communication management makes it possible to promote them and achieve a greater attraction for tourism, which can be summarised as a greater approach to the audience they wish to address and, therefore, to give visibility and strengthen the image of the museum itself. In this sense, Losada-Díaz and Capriotti say, "this brings a clear added value from a different concept of these institutions that are no longer just a physical space, but also a virtual one" (2015, p. 892).

It should not be forgotten that this public is the one that sustains the durability of cultural institutions and therefore the conservation of the heritage they house, because without it they would have no reason to exist. And it is that, following Domínguez and Gutiérrez, "it is essential in this era to integrate users in all those processes of creation, participation and dissemination where the management team considers it relevant" (2018, p.58). Therefore, social networks will become virtual meeting places where all kinds of relationships between public and museum are established.

2. Research objectives

The general objective of this research is to understand and study the management carried out by the Louvre Museum in the field of its communication as a cultural institution. To this end, it will be based on the analysis of the digital communication issued by this cultural space through its official accounts on the social networks Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

2.1. Specific objectives

This study aims to achieve the following specific objectives, which will enable the general objective mentioned above to be attained.

Firstly, we want to see the presence of the Louvre Museum in the social networks chosen for the analysis carried out in this research. On this occasion, we want to see if this institution is on the social networks of Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

Secondly, we want to know the period in which there is the greatest influx of tourism and visits to the Louvre Museum, as it will depend on this to a greater or lesser extent on the dissemination of content by this entity. Thirdly, the aim is to select appropriate categories of content to encompass the publications issued by the Louvre Museum according to the main theme of the content of the publication.

Fourthly, the aim is to record the language(s) in which the content is issued by the Louvre Museum, since this information will help us to conclude whether the management of its communication is aimed at an international or national audience.

Fifthly, the number of followers on each of the social networks analysed is sought, as this data will determine the degree of involvement of the Louvre Museum institution in broadcasting content to its public.

Sixthly, we want to know the number of publications issued on each of the social networks, both individually and globally. From this, it can be seen whether the Louvre Museum is managing its communication properly in the sense of making itself known as a cultural entity, but also making its heritage and tourist values known.

3. Methodology

3.1. Sample

This study aims to analyze the management of the informal social networks of the Louvre Museum located in the city of Paris, France. The reasons why this cultural entity has been chosen for study are the following. Firstly, and as shown in the news published by La Vanguardia (2019), the Louvre Museum is the first museum that has managed to exceed ten million visits in one year. Specifically, it has registered a total of 10.2 million visits in 2018.

This means an increase of 25% in the number of visitors compared to 2017. As a result, the Louvre Museum has become a model for other institutions, as the appropriate management of this identity has made this significant increase possible in a matter of one year.

Secondly, and as the news published by ED Digital Economy (2019) says, the museum is immersed in the preparation of a mega exhibition whose key figure, and around which this event will revolve, will be that of Leonardo da Vinci for the 500 years since his death.

This event is intended to become one of the museum's major tourist attractions, whose focus will be not only the elements linked to the painter, and the main theme of the exhibition, but also his heritage collection in general. This type of event is expected to attract a greater flow of tourism, in addition to publicizing its heritage treasures.

And thirdly, and according to the news published by El Comercio (2019), the museum has the objective of creating a new digital strategy applied to this cultural institution, which aims not only to enrich the experience lived in the building itself, but also to enhance the emotions experienced before and after the visit through new technologies such as the Internet.

As for the period chosen for the elaboration of this research, the time has been limited from June 1, 2019 to August 31, 2019. The analysis of the official social networks has been focused on these dates because according to the Official Website of the Office of Tourism and Congress of Paris (2019), is established as a high

season, and therefore as the time of greatest influx of visitors, from April 1 to October 31. However, this period has been reduced to the months of June, July and August so that it does not become too crowded.

3.2. Content analysis

Content analysis and observation will be key to the development of this research, as they are two techniques through which the results, and therefore the objectives defined earlier, will be achieved.

According to Berelson, content analysis is a "research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of the communications, in order to interpret them" (Berelson, 1952: 18, cited in Espín, 2002). The analysis of content "is characterized by giving meaning to the information, analyzing and interpreting it" (Espín, 2002, p. 96)

With regard to the observation technique, and according to Ruiz (2012), observation as a study method becomes a scientific technique when it serves to study an objective in an investigation, is planned systematically, is related to more general theories and is checked by criteria of validity and reliability.

To achieve a more effective study, the following stages have been followed in the research.

Firstly, by identifying the official website of the Louvre Museum, access has been gained to the official social networks of the museum through the space provided for this purpose, i.e. through the action buttons that redirect directly to the accounts of the social networks.

Secondly, each of the official social networks of the Louvre Museum has been registered. In this case, those of Facebook, Instagram and Twitter have been selected for analysis.

Thirdly, the number of followers registered on the counters of each of the social networks analysed has been counted and recorded. In the case of the official Facebook website, a distinction was made between the number of "Followers" and the number of "Likes". Likewise, the language used to broadcast the content to the public has been recorded, and the total number of publications that will subsequently be analysed has also been noted.

Fourthly, the content categories were identified and classified for study.

Fifthly, each of the publications registered on the three official social networks of the Louvre Museum is classified and grouped into the previously selected content categories.

Sixthly, and finally, the data obtained in the research is written up and the conclusions derived from the study are written down.

3.3. Content categories

For the preparation of this study, content categorization was used to classify publications obtained from the three social networks of the Louvre Museum.

When classifying the elements of this research into content categories for later analysis, and according to Andréu (2002), it is necessary to find what these elements have in common. According to Espín, "categorisation aims to provide a simplified representation of the raw data by condensation" (2002, p. 102).

These categories of content can be defined as labels that encompass a group of elements under a generic title, depending on the characteristics that they have in common. These characteristics can be semantic, syntactic, lexical, etc. (Espín, 2002). This author considers besides that these should be homogeneous, exhaustive, exclusive, objective and concrete.

Each of the content categories identified and selected to group the publications registered on the official Facebook page, the official Instagram profile and the official Twitter account of the Louvre Museum is explained below. Based on these, the publications issued will be catalogued:

- "Entity": For this category, all those publications that issue information related to the institution itself will be considered, such as its history, contact information, opening hours, news about the museum, publications related to the building itself, among others.
- "Others": In this category of content will be registered all the publications that do not have as subject the institution, the patrimonial collection, the archive and the leisure. Therefore, all additional information that may have an impact on the museum will be registered here, such as information on the city, tourism in general, on other topics of interest, competitions, among others.

- "Heritage collection": This category will include publications that talk about the heritage collection that the museum houses, as well as general information about it, descriptions, images, among others. Also included are multimedia publications that focus on the visualization of the collection, either in general or with specific elements.
- "Archive": This category records those publications whose main theme is the documentary production, either of any kind, made by the museum itself. It will register publications of magazines, books, among others.
- "Leisure": This category groups together all those publications whose main theme is the communication of activities of all kinds, and which are carried out in the cultural institution itself and can serve as a tourist attraction. Thus, group activities, workshops, seminars, exhibitions, concerts, congresses, among others, will be registered.

4. Results

Following this study, it was found that the Louvre Museum is present on the web and has its own official social networks on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

About the language of content and following Losada-Díaz and Capiotti (2015), most international museums use their official language to broadcast content.

In this respect, and as has been seen, both on its official Facebook page, its Instagram profile and its official Twitter account, the Louvre Museum publishes mainly in its official language, French. Similarly, but to a lesser extent, publications are recorded in other languages, such as English, Spanish, Russian and Chinese, among others.

Table 1. Languages of dissemination in the social network accounts

	Official Facebook page	Official Instagram profile	Official Twitter account
Louvre Museum	French Other languages	French Other languages	French Other languages

Source: Social networks from Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

As for the number of followers registered on the official social network counters of the Louvre Museum, it should be noted that in the case of the official Facebook page, a distinction must be made between "Like" and "Followers". This differentiation is given by the fact that both concepts can tend to be considered as synonyms; however, it can be said that those people who give "Like" to the Facebook page can be included, in turn, in the number of "Followers". As a result, it has been decided to differentiate one concept from the other.

In relation to this idea, the official Facebook page has 2,504,235 "Likes" and 2,476,024 "Followers" at the time the data for this analysis was collected. The official Instagram profile had 3,518,805 followers, while the official Twitter account had 1,475,695 followers at the time the data was collected.

Table 2. Number of followers in social network accounts

	Official Facebook page	Official Instagram profile	Official Twitter account
Louvre Museum	Me gusta: 2.504.235	3.518.805	1.475.695
	Seguidores: 2.476.024		

Source: Social networks from Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

About the number of publications issued during the period taken for analysis on each of the profiles of the museum's official social networks, i.e. Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, a total of 65 publications were detected and posted on the official Facebook page. On the official Instagram profile, a total of 78 publications were transmitted, while 521 publications were posted on the official Twitter account.

Table 3. Number of publications in the accounts of the official social networks

	Official Facebook page	Official Instagram profile	Official Twitter account
Louvre Museum	65	78	521

Source: Social networks from Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

In terms of publications, a total of 664 posts were made globally over this three-month period on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, the three official social networks of the Louvre Museum.

With regard to the main theme of these 664 publications, a total of 146 belong to the content category of "Entity", 49 of them are in the content category of "Other", 259 are about the "Heritage Collection", 207 publications correspond to the category of "Leisure", while only 3 correspond to the category of "Archive".

To shed more light on this issue, and thus give a more detailed view on the type of publications issued on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, we have proceeded to break down the publications issued as follows.

On the one hand, we proceeded to break down the publications issued on Facebook. A total of 65 publications have been recorded on this page. Of this total, 16 publications are from the content category of "Entity", 1 publication belongs to the category of "Others", 20 publications have been registered in the content category of "Heritage Collection" and 28 publications are about "Leisure".

On the other hand, it is noted that there is no publication corresponding to the content category of "Archive". Secondly, a breakdown of the publications published in the official Instagram profile is made. A total of 78 publications have been issued in this profile. From the total of them, 23 publications correspond to the content category of "Entity", 15 of these publications are about the category of "Others", 38 of them have been registered in the content category of "Heritage Collection" and 2 publications are about the category of "Leisure".

As with your Facebook profile, there are no publications in this social network in the "Archive" content category. Thirdly, a breakdown is made of the publications issued on the official Twitter account. A total of 521 publications have been published on the official Twitter account. Of this total number of publications, 107 of them correspond to the content category of "Entity", 33 publications belong to the content category of "Others", 201 publications have been registered in the category of "Heritage Collection" and 177 publications have as their main subject the content category of "Leisure".

Unlike the other two official social networks of the Louvre Museum, 3 publications issued have been registered here under the "Archive" content category.

Table 4. Number of publications in the official social network accounts

	Institution	Others	Heritage collection	Leisure	Archive	Total
Official Facebook page	16	1	20	28	-	65
Official Instagram profile	23	15	38	2	-	78
Official Twitter account	107	33	201	177	3	521
TOTAL	146	49	259	207	3	664

Source: Social networks from Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

5. Discussion and conclusions

Through the results obtained after the elaboration of this study, it can be concluded that digital communication, and on this occasion the official social networks of the Louvre Museum, are key tools in the correct management of communication by this cultural institution. The importance of this communication management is evident in the greater or lesser dissemination of the museum's heritage and tourist values.

An analysis of the three official social networks of the Louvre Museum shows that the most widely used social network by the institution is Twitter, followed by Instagram and finally Facebook. Regarding this data, it is worth noting that Twitter has become the most used social network, even though it is the museum's account with the lowest number of followers compared to Facebook and Instagram.

Regarding the language used to broadcast content on the three official social networks, the Louvre Museum uses mainly its official language, French. However, this is not the only language detected; there are also publications in other languages such as English, Spanish, Chinese and Italian, among others.

From the data observed in this section, it can be concluded that the management of publications by the Louvre Museum is aimed at attracting tourism that is more international than national in nature. Therefore, the use of several languages is frequent and not only the official one.

About the categories of content issued, there is a greater number of publications whose main theme is the "Heritage Collection" of the museum itself. Next, there is the category of "Leisure", focused on the tourist offer prepared by this cultural institution and carried out in it. Thirdly, you will find more publications in relation to the category of content "Entity". On the other hand, it can be observed that there are hardly any publications related to the content category of "Archive", that is, any type of documentation elaborated and published by the museum itself.

As regards the analysis of the number of publications in each of the above content categories, it can be seen that the Louvre Museum's management of digital communication of its publications is essentially aimed at focusing attention on its heritage collection and making it known to a wider and more international audience. At the same time, this communication management is aimed at showing the tourist offer that is made in the institution, causing a greater influx of tourism.

In relation to this idea, there is a close link between the heritage collection and the attraction of a growing public. The audience not only seeks to learn about the heritage housed in the museum, but also to enjoy the range of activities on offer, which normally focus on the collection itself.

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