TOURiBOOST

REORIENTING TOURISM EDUCATION WITH DIGITAL, SOCIAL AND INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCES TO SUPPORT LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS TACKLE STRATEGIC INNOVATION IN HERITAGE TOURISM
KA2 - COOPERATION FOR INNOVATION AND THE EXCHANGE OF GOOD PRACTICES KA203 - STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

M02: ATTRACTON PLANNING
PART 03: ACCESSIBILITY

CONTENTS

3 ACCESSIBILITY

Accessibility is defined as the communication with the public at all levels. The accessibility of the destination and its attractions is of crucial importance for the local development. It includes the existence of a strategy, the quality of information and hospitality, the presence and quality of secondary or complementary tourist services, internal and external accessibility, attractions and events. Heritage places should be accessible to everyone, including people with mobility or sensory impairments, the elderly, parents with small children and anyone who is temporarily disabled as a result of illness or injury. Improved access can open up wider markets for owners and managers, which could be promoted to increase visitation.

Time lack is a feature of post-modern society; leisure time is thus treated as more precious than ever. Culture is a 'people' industry and customer service is critical: with a high level service, the more likely it is for local businesses and cultural heritage operators to create a memorable impression on the users and visitors of cultural services. The supply side shall deliver outstanding experiences from the first moment that visitors click on a web site or look at a brochure, to when they leave a heritage place, or the business related to the heritage sector. Visitors are willing to pay a price, but they should receive value in return. Pricing policies are fixed prices indicating the right to consume types of heritage. Entry prices should be based on the analysis of the services rendered presupposing visitor participation at all costs, or there can be a scale according

to target groups, or a policy for networking heritage clusters with significant advantages for ticket or package holders. Pricing policies should reflect the balance between price and returned value. Once a visitor enters a heritage place on an entry price he has a 'contract' with the cultural operator. The price paid should reveal the services he is entitled to, the expected quality, behavioural norms- if necessary, the sense of contributing to a good cause (usually restoration, conservation, maintenance and expansion projects) and the ability to express his opinion regarding the fulfilment of the contract.

3.1 Signage Systems

Directional Signage includes roadside signs for motorists, drivers and simple navigation before, during and after a trail, warning signs of both informative and preventative nature, navigation to facilities and recreational opportunities within a heritage area (park, archeological site, museum, etc.). It manages any information that is related to accessibility, (parking and transport possibilities, bus schedules, etc.) amenities, detailed description of the site, maps, route markers and street names, diagrams and photographs, other available tourism packages, activities in proximity or connections to other attractions and ancillary services, such as local tourism bureaus, maps, regional products, etc. Directional Signage also includes any forms of identification and information signs, "Welcome" signs, signage for accredited and non-accredited visitor information services,
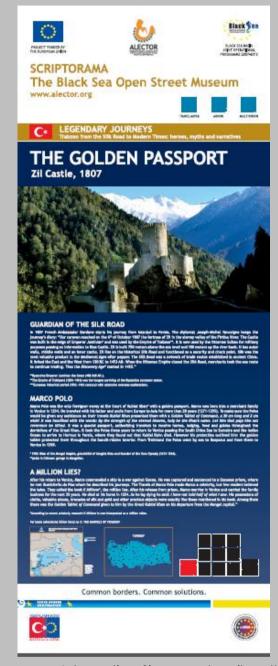
regional tourist drives, themed tourist routes, regulatory signage (parking, no-parking, prohibited, free etc.), roadside advertising, guide and service signs, signage in rural and urban areas etc.

Fig. 14: Black Forest: Monolingual Directional Signage
Source: C.I.P. Transinterpret II Project Record, 2008

3.2 Interpretive Signage

Interpretive Signage strives to attract visitor attention by producing connections to meanings and phenomena.

Interpretive Signage describes the sensitivity and significance of each heritage resource and has to be both educational, accurate and tell the stories of past and present landscapes. Interpretation content needs to assist visitors to develop an awareness and understanding of local cultural heritage, to recognize ecosystem and cultural values, to encourage actions taken in relation to protection of natural heritage and cultural heritage. Interpretive Signage coordinates

communication with the public by presenting the mission and the values of tangible and intangible resources. It is includes a variety of programs and services such as audiovisual programs, historic furnishings, museum exhibit labels, publications, wayside exhibits, graphics design, interpretive, site signage, contextual design, websites.

Fig. 15: Zil Castle, Eastern Black Sea Turkey
Source: MIS ETC 2617 ALECTOR Project Record
Courtesy: D. Papathanasiou-Zuhrt, 2016

Zil castle, situated 15 km in the South of Camlihemsin province, was built in the XIII century by the Grand Commenoi and used by the Trabzon Empire. The Ottoman Empire used this castle in the XVI century for security after the conquest of the region. The Castle lies on the west hillside of the Firtina valley, is at an altitude of 750 meters from the sea and 100 meters up the river ban. It consists of, middle and inner ramparts. The four-storey tower has arched windows and loopholes. Right in the middle of the historical silk road the castle functioned both as a security and check point with 30 soldiers in the Ottoman times. This figure is estimated from the historic records that indicate the supplies for wheat and which was stored for the needs of the soldiers in the castle. It in also understood that Zil Castle was in cooperation with Kale-i Bala (Bala Castle) and Ciha Kale (Ciha Castle).

Through the MIS ETC 2717 Project [ALECTOR](#),

GUARDIAN OF THE SILK ROAD

In 1807 French Ambassador Gardane starts his journey from Istanbul to Persia. The diplomat Joseph-Michel Tancoigne keeps the journey's diary: "Our caravan reached on the 6th of October 1807 the fortress of Zil in the stormy valley of the Firtina River. The Castle was built in the reign of Emperor Justinian* and was used by the Empire of Trabzon**. It is now used by the Ottoman Sultan for military purposes passing on information to Rize Castle. Zil is built 750 meters above the sea level and 100 meters up the river bank. It has outer walls, middle walls and an inner castle. Zil lies on the historical *Silk Road* and functioned as a security and check point. Silk was the most valuable product in the Mediaeval Ages after pepper. The *Silk Road* was a network of trade routes established in ancient China. It linked the East and the West from 130 BC to 1453 AD. When the Ottoman Empire closed the *Silk Road*, merchants took the sea route to continue trading. Thus the *Discovery Age** started in 1453."

**Byzantine Emperor Justinian the Great (482-565 AD.).
**The Empire of Trebizond (1204-1461) was the longest surviving of the Byzantine successor states.
***European historical period (15th -18th century) with extensive overseas explorations.

MARCO POLO

Marco Polo was the only foreigner envoy at the Court of Kublai Khan* with a golden passport. Marco was born into a merchant family in Venice in 1254. He traveled with his father and uncle from Europe to Asia for more than 20 years (1271-1295). To make sure the Polos would be given any assistance on their travels *Kublai Khan* presented them with a *Golden Tablet of Command*, a 30 cm long and 2 cm wide! It was inscribed with the words: *By the strength of the eternal Heaven, holy be the Khan's name. Let him that pays him not reverence be killed.* It was a special passport, authorizing travelers to receive horses, lodging, food and guides throughout the dominions of the Great Khan. It took the Polos three years to return to Venice passing the South China Sea to Sumatra and the Indian Ocean to arrive to Hormuz in Persia, where they found out that Kublai Kahn died. However his protection outlived him: the golden tablet protected them throughout the bandit-ridden interior. From Trebizond the Polos went by sea to Bosporus and from there to Venice in 1295.

* Fifth Khan of the Mongol Empire, grandchild of Genghis Khan and founder of the Yuan Dynasty (1215-1294).
***paiza* in Chinese: *gerege* in Mongolian.

A MILLION LIES?

After his return to Venice, Marco commanded a ship in a war against Genoa. He was captured and sentenced to a Genoese prison, where he met *Rustichello da Pisa* whom he described his journeys. *The Travels of Marco Polo* made Marco a celebrity, but few readers believed the tales. They called the book *Il Milione*, the million lies. After his release from prison, Marco marries in Venice and carried the family business for the next 25 years. He died at his home in 1324. As he lay dying he said: *I have not told half of what I saw.* His possessions of cloths, valuable pieces, brocades of silk and gold and other precious objects were exactly like those mentioned in his book. Among them there was the *Golden Tablet of Command* given to him by the *Great Kublai Khan* on his departure from the Mongol capital."

https://touriboostproject.org

For more adventures follow Story no 3. THE MARVELS OF TRABZON

SCRIPTORAMA MUSEUMS

the Eastern Black Sea Development Agency has facilitated interpretive signage at 10 selected locations, among which is Zil Castle. The cultural communication concept, has been followed by the COS/TOUR/699493 DIVERTIMENTO Project, is to provoke the attention, reveal the untold stories and inspire further motivations with visitors through a place driven heritage narrative. The figure below presents the structure of the narrative that is composed by three interrelated subsections to form a cohesive narrative, while it is capitalizing on the general audience knowledge of Marco Polo, as the prototype of commerce vs war. An asterisk section is provided to facilitate the acquisition of unknown facts, words and personage. The overall process time required for cognitive processing of the presented information for an healthy adult with sufficient knowl English as a foreign language is about ¾ of a minute to a minute.

1.3   Accessibility to historic structures

Access to heritage places from the remote past is often difficult because earlier design and construction techniques do not usually consider the needs of visitors, but the needs of defence or other uses of populations and inhabitants.

Fig. 16 Soumela Monastery, Trabzon, Turkey
Fig. 17: Zil Kale, Trabzon, Turkey
Visitors climbing the external staircase
Source: MIS ETC 2617 ALECTOR Project Record
Courtesy: D. Papathanasiou-Zuhrt, 2016

Technological improvements in assistance equipment and improvements in building design help to correct earlier inequities. Access to the historic landscape means unassisted barrier-free movement from arrival to destination. Accessibility to heritage assets should include a continuous route which allows the individual to experience a range of environments found at a given places. Whenever possible, all areas of a heritage place or building should be accessible. Access must be provided from the main access point, onto, into and through the site, historic building or historic landscape. There should be at least one accessible route using appropriate grades or ramps from a site access point, such as a designated parking space for all including visitors with disabilities, to an accessible entrance. There should be at least one accessible public entrance into a site and appropriate door width, threshold and configuration. If one public entrance is not achievable, then an alternative building entrance for the disabled should be identified (by signs) and it should remain unlocked during hours of operation.

Fig. 18-19: Varna Archaeological Museum.
Formely a school, the Museum provides for excellent movement of visitor flows both in the interior and exterior spaces.
Source: MIS ETC 2617 ALECTOR Project Record
Courtesy: D. Papathanasiou-Zuhrt, 2015

It is expected that, once inside a historic building, the public visitor or employee will have barrier-free access to all services provided to the general public. This includes bathrooms, offices, restaurant dining, etc. Corridors and interior doorways must be wide enough for a wheel chair, modest floor level changes must be ramped, and thresholds must be shallow. At a minimum, all services on the accessible entrance floor must be available to all visitors including the disabled. The extent to which a historic interior can be modified without loss of its historic character will depend on the size, scale, and detailing of the features along the accessible route.

Historic places are composed of character-defining features, so that careful consideration must be given to avoiding alterations to those features that contribute to Site's significance. In some instances, complete accessibility may be possible by resurfacing an entrance path. In other instances, new trails, ramps or parking may be necessary to accommodate the public. Alterations and interventions should not

change to the historic character of significant places. Alterations to non-character-defining features are acceptable in order to provide the highest level of access within the building with the lowest level of impact. Less significant interior spaces can be considered in order to provide necessary amenities on the floor of principal access. Toilet facilities should be provided for the general public and one accessible unisex unit (sized for wheelchair use and with a privacy latch) must be provided. All public spaces on at least the level of the accessible entrance should be made accessible.

Fig.20-23: Zil Castle: Physical Accessibility Entrance to the Zil Castle
Source: MIS ETC 2617 ALECTOR Project Record

Courtesy: D. Papathanasiou-Zuhrt, 2016

1.4   Real-time Accessibility

ICT advances have enabled private persons to create and publish information in the Internet using Web 4.0 tools Witnessing the enormous popularity of apps on smart phones one can easily understand the significance of real time accessibility and connectivity." The term has since come to mean a variety of things, but here we define it as someone who makes little distinction between his or her home and work lives. In all cases connected visitors are looking for personalized, useful information, information which enables to experience both the known and the novel in a solid, seamless and high quality way, with ease of access to services and goods and gives the possibility to create and share this information.

By producing a series of different materials to document personal experiences connected visitors create the enabling environment for viral information dissemination and viral direct marketing of local businesses: By watching personal documentations recipients are inclined to purchase the product or the service in question, both as laymen or professionals. Connected visitors think globally, they celebrate diversity and have good communications skills, regarding travelling as opportunity for self-actualization, self-gratification, self-enrichment and enhancement of self-image. Connected visitors are explicitly seeking for authenticity. Their ambitions for emancipation and self-identity expression, is a well acknowledged fact: they use social media tools to broadcast their experiences and emotions to family and friends in real time. Connected visitors are buyers and sellers at the same time, marketing virally items and places, products and service in real time, in the case their experiences have been met (sweet spots).

Fig. 24: Sile Light House, Turkey
Connected Consumer in Action
Source: MIS ETC 2717 ALECTOR Project Record
Courtesy : D. Papathanasiou-Zuhrt, 2016

Fig. 25: Giresun, Turkey
City Map with Quick Response Codes for Tourists (QRC)
Source: MIS ETC 2717 ALECTOR Project Record
Courtesy : D. Papathanasiou-Zuhrt, 2015

1.5   Cognitive - Emotional Accessibility

Heritage entities are cultural markers replete with symbolic elements. Without the ability to access the intangible networks of knowledge and value transmission, visitors cannot recognise and appreciate monuments and objects of art as such.

- **Human cognitive architecture and heritage presentation**

Heritage protection and conservation are meaningless without interpretation to bridge the gap between monument-meaning and monument-fabric. Trying to facilitate access to cultural values embedded in the tangible fabric, cultural communication shall relate related to the phenomena from a visitor-centric point of view by linking causal mechanisms of human cognitive architecture and instructional design in order to facilitate higher cognitive results in non-formative settings. Irrespectively of the media's nature, information flows structured in this way aim to reduce the time the visitor's needs to prepare for their visit, and to provide them with information comfort during their stay time.

- **Cognitive Accessibility**

Cognitive accessibility is ensured by activating human perception through provocation, by relating to prior acquired experiences, and by providing for novelty and variety, surprise and exploration. Capturing the attention means to create bridges between the inherent values of phenomena selected for presentation, and the audiences. Far beyond the dissemination of factual information, cognitive accessibility aims to create meanings, so that visitors can put a phenomenon into personal perspective and identify with it in a way that is more profound and enduring way.

- **Meanings**

Meanings create the asset significance. Meanings are contextual in nature, including a linguistic, spatial and a social context. To understand the meanings of heritage entities is to understand those meanings within the given context. Communicated through the use of language, meanings are embedded in language and culture. Being culturally and socially constructed they are shared by all who access them, but not by those who are unable to decode them. One of the most significant contexts of meanings is the spatial context, the sense of the place. Meanings extracted from a visit to a place, heritage or natural site, collection etc. constitute the high added value experience a visitor takes away in memory. In this vein, meaning *is* the experience- the only experience any visitor has with a place, an item, an event.

- **Heritage offers**

In order for a heritage asset to be mentally, emotionally and spiritually accessible, it has to be transformed into an easy to follow structure, into a joyful experience. Cultural heritage operators should therefore develop heritage strategies able to defend local heritage against a globalizing world and invest in interpretive planning projects to attract and retain visitors' interest by offering experiences in a recreational learning environment.

Heritage visitors, might that be recreationists or heritage site visitors, festival goers or flea market buyers want to be engaged and discover what is unique about a place or an item, and they are offered a high added value, only via good interoperation of the object and the place. Interpretive products and

services at local level add value and visitor are willing to pay a premium price for the right experience: It is the interpretation of a heritage place that will define local identity and hence difference in the market. In order to survive, local heritage assets have to satisfy the needs and expectations of experience-seeking cultural visitors.

Opportunities for cultural communication exist as soon as an asset is signified. Cultural communication is a meaning making multidisciplinary process especially designed to introduce an audience to the spirit of the asset in an entertaining way conveying a message that has personal relevance and meaning to the audience. It is a strategic communication that seeks to create bonds between the audience and the resources, the visitors and the places they visit. It requires research, planning, higher professional skills and consideration of best use of possible media forms and the principal messages to be conveyed to target

Welcome to the *Joe Petrosino Museum*, a narrative musem made of history, memory, and human values that we wish to preserve and pass on to future generations.

audiences. Interpretive products and services must present to visitors *the meaning* behind any type of resources, which creates value and significance.

Fig. 26 and 27: The JOE PETROSINO Antimafia Museum
Couresy: Aldo Di Russo
Meaning are contextual in nature.
Explore a best practice example in Padula, Italy:
http://www.aldodirusso.it/Minisito/index.html

In this effort, we are concerned with the fighting against the Mafia. To serve this cause we have set up a museum that is generating emotions, which lead to empathy, knowledge, and side taking in favor of legality.

The *Joe Petrosino Museum* is not a dusty place with silent objects, it's digital,- just like the Mafia that no longer has the image of a shepherd who wants to steal a sheep, it's digital as well. So digital must be the fight against the Mafia.

TOURiBOOST
Reorienting tourism education with digital, social and intercultural competences
to support local stakeholders tackle strategic innovation in heritage tourism
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