VISITORS AND SENSORY MARKETING IN HERITAGE MUSEUMS IN BOGOTÁ

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ABSTRACT

People are constantly looking for new experiences, ideas and space in order to recharge themselves due to their stressful lives. This is why organizations compete for their leisure time. Within these organizations are museums that can take advantage of this opportunity to serve people, giving them memorable experiences through the use of sensory marketing.

The general objective of this research to profile the identity needs of visitors at the National Museum and the Gold Museum in Bogota, Colombia through explorative and descriptive surveys, based on the John H. Falk model. Analysis of the surveys will be carried out to determine which of the five senses affects certain identity needs the most. The end result will provide more information for the two museums mentioned above, allowing for more effective marketing efforts to attract and retain greater numbers of visitors.

Key Words: Museum Marketing, Museum Visitor Identity, Museum Experience, Sensory Marketing

INTRODUCTION

In order to escape from their hectic lives, people seek new experiences, ideas and spaces. In other words: choosing how to spend leisure time has become an important need that museums can fill. The time spent in cultural events competes with other leisure activities and the cultural consumer is looking for "temporary entertainment when choosing a cultural venue" (Colbert, 2009, p. 4). In the Knowledge Age, leisure has become a convenient means of self-enrichment and self-actualization, which make it difficult to understand motivations and personnel interests (Falk, 2009).

Knowing and understanding those motivations and personal interests enables museums to deliver new and memorable experiences. This is due to the fact that museums can invite its public "to explore collections for inspiration, learning and enjoyment" (Kirezli, n.d, p.173). By basing marketing efforts on experience, museums can be much more effective, but unfortunately, most museum marketing is content-oriented, focusing on permanent and traveling exhibitions or special programs such as concerts or guest speakers, ignoring the museum experience.

The museum experience is in part the result of sensory stimuli, so there were some research questions about:
Which senses should be stimulated to achieve greater memory recall?
Does visual sense give satisfaction to *Facilitators* during their visit? –A specific museum visitor category described in Falk´s model

Is the auditory sense the most important factor for *Experience Seekers*? - A specific museum visitor category in the Falk´s model
Does interaction allow for greater recall for *Professionals/hobbyists*? – A specific museum visitor category in the Falk´s model

Based on this scenario, the idea to deliver to museum managers an initial understanding of their current museum visitors from the sensory responses and from the personal interest of the Falk model, the general research objective was to identify marketing visitor segments and their responses to sensory stimuli during their experiences. The specific objectives were to know: the visit museum reasons, the visitors profiles from the meaning of the museum experience, the importance of the different senses in order to enjoy the museum experience and the impact of the sensory elements in visitor satisfaction, the revisit and the recommendation intention, the relevance of the museum café and shop in the overall visitor experience and to establish which details visitors remembered three months after the museum experience.

This paper was designed to provide information about sensory marketing and museum visit or experience in the literature review, later the authors present the methodology used and the findings of the application of the Falk model and sensory element importance in the museum visit to the Gold Museum in Bogota and the National Museum. And finally share the conclusion discussion part.

The Gold Museum contains a magnificent collection of gold, exhibited through historic objects used in religious, social, cultural and daily life of the pre-Hispanic Colombian societies. The most ancient pieces date back to 1,500 B.C., the most famous is the Quimbaya Poporo. The museum contains four galleries displaying works of art and craftsmanship with around 34,000 gold pieces, a restaurant and a shop. It also has a webpage and offers guided tours and audio guides in English, French and Spanish. The museum is open from Tuesday to Saturday between 9am – 6pm and on Sundays and public holidays from 10am – 4pm. It is closed on Sundays.

The National Museum was founded in 1823 and is the oldest museum in the country. It began with a collection of natural history, and then brought together art, archaeological and historical pieces. It moved to its current location in 1948, which was a prison and became a national monument in 1975. It has several collections: history, art, indigenous and Afro-Colombian ethnography, archeology and more than 20,000 pre-Hispanic objects that are symbols of national history and heritage. There is a café and gift shop, as well as a website. There are virtual and guided tours. Admission to the permanent displays and rates vary for temporary exhibits and concerts. Visiting hours are from Tuesday to Saturday from 10am – 6pm and Sundays from 10am – 5pm. It is closed on Mondays.

METHODOLOGY

Exploratory descriptive research with a quantitative method was used to survey visitors at two heritage museums in Bogotá: the Gold Museum and the National Museum. Nonprobability sampling was used to select people; it was a convenience sample among museum visitors. Follow-up interviews or online surveys will be carried out in one-month and three-month intervals after the visit in order to understand long-term memory recall and to determine the impact of the experience.

The information was collected between February 15 – March 22, with 75% of the results coming from de Gold Museum, and 25% from the National Museum. There were 530 surveys completed by giving out a structured 40-question survey composed of personal information, profile characteristics based on Falk's model, habits and experience in the museum and finally over the importance and effect of the senses and their impact on behavioral indicators.

The univariate and bivariate analysis with crosstabs was used in order to test the following hypotheses which include the museum visitor category and the importance of sensory elements on the museum visit:
The museums being studied receive visitors from the five different categories described in Falk's Model.
Only the *Facilitators* went to the museum café.
Only the *Experience Seekers* went to the museum shop.
The sound elements are more important than visual elements for museum visitors.
Videos are the most interesting elements of the museum visit.

There are some limitations associated with this research study. The main limitation consisted of a nonprobability sampling procedure, precluding inferences to the museum visitor population, as it can only describe the behavior of the sample and therefore only show possible trends in the population. Also, 80% of data was collected on weekends and one month into the data collection, the Gold Museum closed its indoor café, so the only alternative for the visitors is the restaurant which is not as visible as the café, meanwhile the National Museum has not offered a restaurant service for six months. Also, during the same period none of the museums under study had a temporary exhibit. Those facts can introduce biased conclusions.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Sensory Marketing

Sensory marketing includes all the human senses in order to work with sensory environments and sensory branding (Miller, R. 2010). In both scenarios sensory marketing becomes important since sensory stimulation reaches visitor perception, attention and recall of objects, situations, or brands (Hulten et al, 2009). If we get an individual's attention and reach his or her emotions, we can deliver a memorable experience affecting present and future buying decisions. These decisions are based on differentiation and user preference, delivering added emotional value through the senses (Khrishna, 2010).

In order to create memorable experiences, it is imperative to work on creating a better museum atmosphere and multisensory communication. This atmosphere related to the museum experience is presented by Kirezli (n.d.) as physical support -characteristics such as design, display, visual, audio and scent related elements, or sensual dimension- "sum of appeals to: vision, smell, sound, touch and taste" (Kirezli, n.d, p.181). Marketers must manage sensory stimuli - such as videos or electronic media - carefully in the context of history museums in order to avoid dissonance since visitors look for authenticity (Wilkening & Chung, 2009, p.25).

In order to understand how each sense influences consumer decisions, it is important to describe how it works and its importance.

Vision is the information processed by this sense involves about "one-fourth of the human brain" and "about 70% of the body's sense receptors are in our eyes" (Pradeep, A.K., 2010, p. 42). Vision then is important to use when trying to capture the customer's attention.
Smell is "mainlined directly into our center of emotion and memory" (Pradeep, 201, p. 45). It never stops functioning. The smell of a scent transports the individual back his or her first experience with the scent. This is called the episodic memory, which stores memories about what and when (Pradeep, 2010, p. 46). In other words, people can recall events and relate then to particular places and times.
Taste often operates in sync with smell in order to identify flavors. Together they can stimulate desire and motivate one to purchase something.
Hearing "allows us to generate deep, nostalgic memories associated with highly emotional moments accompanied by sound" (Pradeep, 2010, p. 51). Sound is important to capture someone's interest. This sense is stored in the brain with emotions and moods.
Touch is physical contact through skin. "Skin is the largest organ in the body" (Pradeep, 2010, p. 52). Humans are sensible to tactile stimuli.

Falk's Model

In *Identity and the Museum Visitor Experience*, John H. Falk presents two traditional perspectives that make the museum visitor experience. The first being that the contents and exhibits are solely responsible for a visitor's experience, and the second being that the visitor's experience is primarily influenced by his or her demographics, visitor frequency and social arrangement (Falk, 2009, pp. 22-34). This is why there are different meanings that museum visitors capture from the memories of their experiences (Falk, 2009), and different factors that influence the individual to visit a museum on a particular day, and others that drive visitor experience and determine what they learn and remember. Falk presents a nontraditional demographic analysis in order to understand the different kind of visitor experiences from identity needs and interests. He identifies five basic identities, which

relate leisure benefits categories in his model: Explorers, Facilitators, Experience Seekers, Professional/hobbyists, and Rechargers (Falk, 2009). A brief characteristics description of each category:

Rechargers are interested in seeking respite from the everyday stresses and harsh realities. They are focused on having a peaceful or inspiring experience. They see museums as places that afford them an opportunity to avoid the noisiness, clutter and ugliness of the outside world and as an opportunity to relax and encounter a sense of well-being.
Explorers visit museums because they are curious or generally interested in discovering more about the topic or subject matter of the institution. They enjoy learning new things and becoming more informed. The typical explorer visitor perceives that learning is fun. Explorers tend to regularly visit museums since they represent opportunities to learn new things.
Facilitators visit museums in order to satisfy the needs and desires of someone they care about, rather than just themselves, since they enjoy spending time with friends and family. They want to be good parents and place a high value on learning. Visiting the museum may satisfy a social visit agenda since they like to be good companions and want to build relationships with other visitors. Also, they regularly meet for lunch at the museum. The museum visit is an opportunity to exercise their social role as providers of fun, positives experiences for their children.
Experience seekers are motivated primarily in order to "collect" an experience, and their primary goal is to see a destination, building, and something that is iconic, important, or unique. They visit museums primarily to find a good recreational activity, to find amusement. Experience Seekers look for "must-see" destinations within a community and for the whole package: exhibits, food, gifts and a good time.
Professional/Hobbyists expect to fulfill a passion for culture and history and enter with great interest in understanding something specific in greater depth and to complement previous knowledge about a topic, using the museum as a vehicle to facilitate those interests and to network. They visit as a part of a social group and they critically observe how an exhibition is put together, how labels are written, whether certain objects are on display or not. The museum visit is an opportunity to see the work of peers or specialists.

Figure 1 shows synthesis of the process and relation between identity and behavior.

FIGURE 1. PROCESS OF THE MUSEUM VISIT

Resource (Gómez, 2012)

STATE OF ART - MUSEUM VISIT OR EXPERIENCE

Here we have many authors that had studied the museum experiences from different part of the experience process to marketing decisions.

Wilkening & Chung write about understanding public needs (2009), Colbert, Nantel and Bidoleau exposed that the decision processes of experience as a museum visit relies on emotional elements (1994, p.91) and includes museum exhibitions), meanwhile Burton, Louviere & Young about the segmentation and designing experiences to attract and retain the museum visitors (2009) in their article, "Retaining the visitor, enhancing the experience: identifying attributes of choice in repeat museum visitation"

What is behind the museum visit is mentioned in Fauzi Muhammad and Azilah Kasim's article in the *Journal of Global Management* (Muhammad, 2012). When talking about promotion in the museum context, Andrea Hausmann gives a framework for word of mouth advertising (Hausmann, 2012). Margaret Hume also writes about flow of visitors based on experiences (Hume, 2011). Tony Kent writes that the visitor experience becomes enhanced through extensions such as the museum shop (Kent, 2010). Filling the changing needs of museum visitors is shown in the book, "Life Stages of the Museum Visitor: Building Engagement over a Lifetime" (Wilkening, 2009). Finally, museum more information has been gathered by Ugur Yucelt in his journal article on empirical research among visitors (Ugur, 2000).

Finally, it is important to include the sensual dimension in the experiential approach presented by Kirezli in his case "Museum Marketing – Shift from Traditional to Experiential Marketing," because he exposes the theme of the five senses in the context of the museum visit. He describes the experience in Istanbul where in general the museum is solely an exhibition of objects and does not tell stories. He states that this is only appealing to two senses: vision and sound. The other senses of smell, touch and taste are absent. This lack of stimuli does not take advantage of the abilities that each visitor's senses can capture to create a more memorable experience.

In synthesis, museum experience depends on:

Prior interest and prior knowledge in relation to sensory stimulus during the visit.
"The motivational goals visitors enter with are also typically the goals they exit with" (Falk, 2009, p.109),
Perceptions could be more important than situations (Lee, Shafer and Kang in Falk, 2009, p.119);
Only about the 25% of the visit can be recalled; and
One of the primary influencers of the museum visit comes from worth-of-mouth recommendations from family or friends.

FINDINGS

Sample Profile

Demographic, behavioral and psychographic profiles are included:
Behavioral. Of those questions, 58.4% have visited other museums in Colombia and only 24.2% in other countries. As for their frequencies of visit, 59.4% rarely visit or only on special occasions, while 35.7% visit museums one or two times a year. In addition, 55% visited the museum during the afternoon and 53% were visiting a museum for the first time. The majority of those surveyed visited the museum with family (48%), while the rest (35%) went with friends.
Socio-demographic. The difference between men and women visitors wasn't great with 47.8% being women and 51.5% men. Colombians were the predominant nationality at 83.6%, and largest age groups represented were less than 20 years old (31.5%) and between 21 and 30 years old (31.5%). Students made up 39% and employed made up 32% of those surveyed. Coinciding with this figure, 59.8% were single. As far as the education levels are concerned, 30.4% had only graduated from high school, 21.1% are currently university students and 22.8% graduated from university.
Psychographic. As for what visitors were interested in seeing, 62% came specifically to visit the museum and 81% planned on covering it entirely.

Museum Visit and Experience

Reasons for visiting museums
Of the museum goers surveyed: 23.8% want to discover new things, 24.6% want to satisfy their interest in culture and history, 17.2% simply want to become better informed and 14.5% want to participate in a recreational activity and 9% want to experience something new.

Experience
For 38.6% of those surveyed, the visit was an intellectual experience, and for all 36% the visit invoked all senses, while only 13% of visitors surveys had a social experience or 11.6% an emotional one.
The significance of the museum visit is tied to learning, either as an opportunity for the user or as a result of entertaining way to carry it out.
For 44.5% of visitors, they felt a sense of cultural identity and 28.2% reported a feeling of pride from their experience.
The relevance of the museum café and shop in the overall visitor experience was low seeing that only 18% visited the café or restaurant and only 35% stopped by the gift shop.

Visitor Profiles

From the meaning of the museum experience to identify visitor profiles, all the profiles were present in table one below. It should be stressed that adults with children refused to answer the survey since their children were tired. Also, since visitor turnout is low (especially at the National Museum) during weekdays, this could be a possible explanation for the low presence in Rechargers.

TABLE 1. VISITOR PROFILES

Falk Visitor Profile	%
Explorer	41
Professional/hobbyist	20
Experience seeker	15.5
Facilitator	13.2
Recharger	4.3

Visiting the Café. Of the 13.2% of Facilitators who visited the museum, 19% stopped at the café (the equivalent of 4.1% of the total visitors). Of those who also visited the café, the other profiles represented a total of 14.1%. The hypothesis is rejected since other profiles entered the café, not just Facilitators.

Visiting the Gift Shop. 34.7% of the visitors entered the gift shop, of these visitors, 18.1% were Experience Seekers. This implies that a greater frequency from the other visitor profiles visited the gift shop.

Importance of senses

To understand the importance of the different senses in order to enjoy the museum experience, the following elements available prior to and during the visit were measured: website, audio guides and components and videos. In this respect, the following information was found:
Only 17% visited the website before visiting the museum, in spite of the fact that 95% of visitors provided their e-mail addresses for further contact.

The majority (78%) affirmed that what they remembered was due to what they saw.
86.5% did not use guides and 72% did not use audio guides or audiovisuals during their visit.

Among the pleasant elements within the visit, the sensory stimuli are tested in Table 2, which highlights the predominance that visual and auditory elements play in making the visit pleasant. It can also be emphasized that the café and gift shop has a low rate of visits, which impacted the results in the table:

TABLE 2. RATING OF ELEMENTS

Sense	Sensory element	%
Visual	Lighting	9.0
Visual, Auditory, Touch	Interactive	8.7
Auditory	Music	8.6
Auditory	Sound	8.6
Olfactive	Smell	8.3
Visual, Auditory	Videos	8.1
Visual	Signs	7.0
Touch	Touch	6.9
Taste, Olfactive, Touch, Visual	Café	2.3
Visual, Auditory, Olfactive, Touch	Shop	3.3

The sound elements such as audio recordings only received a qualification of 6.4 out of 10, while the visual elements such as paintings, exhibitions, signage and documents obtained ratings between 8.1 and 9.0 out of 10.

Videos received a rating of 7.7 in terms of importance for visitors. A possible reason for this lower score is that many visitors pass them up, only paying attention to the more traditional exhibits.

After reviewing the data resulting from processing of the importance of the different elements that affected Experience Seekers' satisfaction, it was found that although the sound recordings have a high importance of 78.8%, elements such as architecture, museum staff and historical facts (ranging between 90% and 91.3%) outweigh them. These last three items are strongly related given that they include nonverbal communication.

Sensory Elements in Visitor Satisfaction

For 86% of museumgoers, a satisfaction level of 8.7 out of 10 was reported. This was due principally to the fact that 26% thought it was time well spent with family and since they focused on learning something specific, so they learned new things. They also viewed all of the areas of the museum –exhibitions, café and gift shop – as single entity relating to the overall experience.

Regarding aspects or elements relevant to the satisfaction in the experience of the visit was found in order: architecture, museum staff, object exhibition, historical facts, paintings, signage, maps, important figures, documents, sound recordings, videos, interactivity, and the café. The visual senses were so dominant that those involving the other senses were the last on the list of importance.
This trend repeats itself with Facilitators who rated their level of 8.8 out of 10 with their visit and reported visual elements such as objects, paintings, maps and signage as most important (between 79.4% and 89.7%).

Other Indicators

Other metrics arise as an effect of sensory marketing such as revisit intention, recommendation, perception of the amount of time spent, staff friendliness and finally recall. The following was found:
High revisit intention: 93%
High recommendation intent: 93.4%
The amount of time spent was in accordance with what was planned
Staff friendliness was rated highly at 9 out of 10
43.9% of visitors remember a specific, followed by a specific exhibition at 29.8%

About the Hypotheses

The museums being studied receive visitors from the five different categories described in Falk's Model. This hypothesis is tried and accepted.

There is not only one specific profile that visits the café or restaurant, nor the shop museum; every profile did, albeit in low proportions. So the respective hypothesis is rejected.

Museumgoers rated sound elements with a medium level of importance since visual elements were rated as more important resulting in a hypothesis is rejected. Accordingly, the auditory sense is not the most important sense for Experience Seekers. Although it ranks high between 10.1% and 10.4%, it is not the most important as other senses which rank between 9.7% and 11.4%.

Videos did not appear to be an important element of the museum visit which means that the hypothesis is rejected.
The visual sense gives satisfaction to Facilitators during their visit, given that for them the most important elements were the exhibitions of objects, paintings, maps and labels.

CONCLUSION

As presented in a description about the Topkapi Museum in Istanbul, both the National and Gold Museum in Bogota are trying to appeal mainly to the visual sense and this neglects the possibility of creating a memorable experience using stimulation through other senses.

The usage rate for the museum websites is low, which raises the question whether visitors really want to have a significant experience, or if more stimulation through diverse communication channels is lacking from the museums under study. There was also a low user rate of elements, devices or equipment during the same visit, such as audio guides, recordings for specific exhibits and audiovisuals or videos.

Knowledge about the inner needs of visitor leisure time allow for better museum management so it can determine the museum's role, nontraditional market segmentation and the ability to design different sensory stimulus to create a better experience.

The appropriate use of sensory stimulus results in high level of satisfaction, making the revisit intention and recommendation intention more likely. There are no different levels of satisfaction, nor different intention levels of revisit and recommendation related to the different identity needs. The perception of time spent being the same as planned in the museum is a positive factor since the visitor was not overburdened nor did they feel that the museums lacked content.

The levels of memory regarding the visit are not considered great, between 30% and 44%. It is possible that there is a lack of appropriate sensory stimuli, which could provide greater impact on immediate memory. However, as far as memory is concerned with this paper, more research must be carried out one month and three months after the museum visit to bring better results.

It is necessary to conduct experimental research to measure whether the sensory stimulus increases satisfaction levels, revisit and recommendation intention. Further research is needed in order to gain deeper knowledge, to carry out measurements by observation of how much time visitors spend in an exhibition, reading labels and signs and how they interact with the technology available at the exhibits.

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