

## Museums @ 2030

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**Abstract:** The present paper aims to examine the role of Museums at 2030, museums are important assets of broader and wider learning and knowledge institution for the society. In the recent times, museums have developed a strong interest in technology. Museums have started pioneer initiative in interactive technology exhibition techniques for visitor learning. Digital tourism will be enhanced through museum websites, social media platforms and collaborations with portals like Google Art Projects. Its high time for museums to tight their belt and prepare to add minimum technology into their gallery and keep alive the purpose of the Museum. Museum shall house a meaningful combination of the traditional and contemporary formats of storytelling. The narrative style of experiential space design would attract, engage and enroll audiences of all ages and backgrounds.

**Keywords:** Museum, Digitization, Site Museum, Museum Education, Exhibition

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## INTRODUCTION

Our very own former President Late Dr. Abdul Kalam Azad has long ago visualized the dream of modern India in his book 'INDIA 2020'. Today his thought still remains alive in every living individual. The same thought we need to push for our Museums also. Museum here are considered just a repository of old objects and visited by few learned people. It has failed to establish a relation between common people, the farmers, the middle class, elderly people etc. While we have to consider the fact that still more than 65 percent of people resides in villages (*as per data collected by World Bank in 2020*). The reason for this gap is, the Museums have stood at its original stand of its existence, and it has failed to travel with time. If it had managed to relate with common people, their struggle, their development etc., the gap could have been very narrow.

Today in this fast growing life, people are left with very less spare time; they are busy maintaining the targets and load of family life. This will be going to effect the museums too, many of our site Museums, like Kalibangan, Lothal etc. are live examples, even after being prominent sites of the Harappan Civilization, their museum is greeted with very few visitors. Being a student of Archaeology I too visited these sites with great enthusiasm and stayed there for few days, it was a nice experience to relate what I studied in the books, believe me the site will take you to an adventurous journey, the very first example of ploughed field, the wells, the water management system, it was all amazing to study. But what I felt sorry was just two small families visited the Site Museum during my stay.

It's high time now that we understand the role of Museum and re-define its motive and try to relate it with modern time. Many museums like the CSMVS (Mumbai), National Museum (Delhi), Indian Museum (Kolkata), etc. have taken serious initiative to link with modern times. They are using all the modern equipment's of communication, mainly the social media. Looking at the number of people using this medium for communication, this is the right way to get involved with them. These museums have their own Facebook page, they are on twitter also, regularly upgrading their websites, some have come with museums apps too. The CSMVS (Mumbai) have also started '*Museum on Wheels*', the mobile exhibition which travels to different areas of the city and make people interested to visit the museum. And believe me this has worked, the visitor presence has increased rapidly.

Museums can also switch to 'SEP' - search engine optimization, this will allow your museum to appear at top as soon as people search for the option. More temporary exhibition should be done every now and then, this will allow people from different sphere to involve, like recently exhibited '*Tabiyat*' exhibition by CSMVS (Mumbai) in collaboration with the British Museum. With the upcoming and involvement of interior designer, these exhibitions are a massive hit. There are options in Google Earth, where one can put up a 3-D image of site and people from far region can view and get interested in visiting it.

One Museum which I recently visited was the 'KhojGanghijiki' Museum in Jalgaon (Maharashtra), based on the life history of Mahatma Gandhi, it takes you to an amazing tour to study the thoughts and vision of Gandhi ji. It's a kind of museum based totally on digital theme of representation, which makes it popular among children, the visitors are guided through audio-video gadgets, 3-d images, original photographs and audio record of Gandhi ji. There is also a working model of Gandhi ji weaving a charkha, it's so realistic that at first vision it appears real and theres is always a long queue to take a selfie with it. The museum shoee is very nicely created; products like khadi clothes, herbal goods, books etc. are very popular, which is an added source of income. The very good thing about the museum is that the whole environment gives you the feeling of the vision and thoughts of Gandhi ji, every people employed there were wearing Khadi clothes, very polite and helpful, one can say a living place of the thoughts of Gandhi ji.

We need to 'be the change what we want to change', the museum should switch over to vision 2030 and before that it needs to adopt all the modern themes to showcase their old repository. It should be able to communicate with every section of our society. Museum should be able to help people to find their place in this very world; it is the place where one can relate its past and the future. National museums and other established museums should come forward to promote and support smaller museum, this will help them to sustain long term. Through Museum exchange programs, and the museums from all over the country can tie up with each other and exhibit each other's popular theme. This will not just popularize the story of the object but will also generate economy. The basic purpose of the museum is education. N.R. Narayana in his book '*A better India a better world*' emphasis that '*by enabling a renewed, re-energized education sector, we have the potential to transform our country into a true knowledge power, and realize a future of prosperity and growth*'. The museum staff should be well equipped to do the scientific study of the subject and its relevance to local and every sphere of the community to effectively implement the means of communication; they should be well trained with modern digital modes of communication. So keeping in mind the focus of our motive and with moving according with time the Museums need to tie up their shoes to move forward.

Museums need to employ engaging and immersive communication revealing spaces, and interactive technology. It should house a meaningful combination of the traditional and contemporary formats of storytelling. The narrative style of experiential space design would attract, engage and enroll audiences of all ages and backgrounds. The use of Layered content will provide scope for both short and long visits, with the use of the available state of art digital technology one can popularize the museum. In today's world where young generation are more technological advance and would like to engage themselves into more developed technology, the establishment of I-max theatre for the visitors, especially for the children will be one of the major activity in the museum, where one will experience real life activity. All modern facilities like mobile apps, beacons, sensors, scanners, multi-lingual audio facilities to impart information on various galleries will be an added benefit to the museum. Directional gallery sound for specific displays, immersive multisensory experience are also very useful means of attracting visitor's attentions.

The tourist awareness, prior knowledge and perception of quality and value are factors that affect motivation to visit a destination and selection to travel experience, in today's world this can only be achieved through the process of systematic use of information, communication and multimedia technologies. Digital tourism will be enhanced through museum websites, social media platforms and collaborations with portals like Google Art Projects. Destination management model can be created based on generating a digital culture and building digital skills. Use of QR codes, Wearable's, voice technology, space fully connected with Wi-Fi are also recommended. Online campaign management should be in place to look in traveler's journey along with integrated destination management programs.

But now the main question arises-is this possible? There are several small museums which survives on small contributions of some society, trust etc. as it is very evident that museum can't just sustain on contribution from visitor's entry fee. And it is also clear that these advance technology comes at very high price. So how small museums which just saw a very bad phase of Covid, where it was forced to shut down for more than a year. Forget about taking into new technologies these small independent museums failed to even take care of their artefacts. In such context where they can't even bear the load of conserving their artefacts, how they can add these digital technologies in their belt. But here it is not the end, there are options and ways to deal with this situation. Very few museums are aware that there are various schemes under Ministry of Culture (Government of India) and State Governments departments where they grant good amount of money for development of Museums. Some years back the Money Museum in Nashik (Maharashtra) got a handsome amount to re-develop its existing small museum. The Museum underwent huge renovation, improving its display panels, adding new sections and more facilities for visitors. Now the museum is at good face and more footfall have been recorded. Many such Museums have benefitted by these Schemes. The Small museums should come up with good proposal and approach the Ministries to get these grants.

In this new world where everything is uncertain and we have just seen the impact of COVID-19, where hundreds of Museums failed to reach up to the Visitors, while few managed to get the technologies work for them and reached the people at the fingertips. We should be aware and more prepared for such situations in near time, and thus the very purpose of Museum to impart knowledge about our rich heritage should not be hampered even another wave of COVID-19 and alike situations arises. Its high time for museums to tight their belt and prepare to add minimum technology into their gallery and keep alive the purpose of the Museum.



## FIGURES



Figure 1: Museum on wheels (CSMVS, Mumbai)



Figure 2: Archaeological museum Kalibangan (Rajasthan)





Figure 3: The section showing Gandhiji's growing years (image courtesy, Gandhi research Foundation)



Figure 4: Quit India Movement (image courtesy, Gandhi Research Foundation)



Figure 5: Old display panel, Money Museum (Courtesy- INHCRF Museum, Nashik)





Figure 6: Old display panel (Courtesy- INHCRF Museum, Nashik)



Figure 7: Re-developed museum entrance (Courtesy- INHCRF Museum, Nashik)





Figure 8: New added galley section (Courtesy- INHCRF Museum, Nashik)



Figure 9: New added galley section (Courtesy- INHCRF Museum, Nashik)





Figure 10: New added galley section (Courtesy- INHCRF Museum, Nashik)

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