Virtual Touring Exhibition Position in Sustainable Development Strategy: Applied to Egyptian Dark Stories

(Case Study: Baron Palace)

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Abstract

Tour exhibitions are a window to the world on a large scale. Whether the exhibition is permanent or temporary, your main theme should be to visually convey ideas, reality or concepts, and not just present artefacts in a pleasant arrangement. It's a very difficult task to change exposures several times a year, especially when you have to "reinvent" the concept from scratch. It's linked to museums, scientific centers, universities and galleries around the world in relevant and fundamental projects.

A touring exhibition is a live event intended to share with audiences at their locations. Bring world cultures, adventure stories and wild places to life with interactive tools and amazing photos.

Touring exhibitions risk always being an example of one of the most unsustainable activities of the Egyptian museum due to the grand process, exhibition design principles, design roles and responsibilities, legal and practical documents involved, usually associated with related services, creation, research with critical analysis of the practical implications related to the holding of touring exhibitions. However, can they be a positive force for a museum and a wider area? How can touring exhibitions be part of a sustainable economic and cultural renewal? What effects do tour exhibitions have on the economy as a whole? Can they increase overall sustainability?

To help museums organize tour exhibitions provide new content more efficiently and with a sense of exclusivity (catch it now before it goes!).

Horror movies have no trouble finding an audience. In addition to attracting visitors, hosting a virtual touring exhibition with interactive methods can be a major cost-saver for venues.

Dark stories are interesting to study because it has this "mysterious veil" with a lot of unanswered questions and controversies about it, why do people search about this dark places' stories that cause discomfort in themselves or conversely, places that pulsating the suffering of others?

Keywords:

Touring Exhibition; Dark Stories; Virtual Technology; Tourism sustainability

Introduction

Touring exhibitions are generally associated with strict standers and approved services, including; preservation, insurance, storage, shipping, mounting, installation, etc., then it can be hosted in one or more locations to extend the life of the exhibition and allow the widest possible audience, regional, national or international, to see these artefacts to experience the stories behind them (Walhimer, M., 2011).

These types of exhibitions were held in museums, universities and art galleries need secure facilities and professional staff with the experience to handle the exhibitions. It has several needs for instance; exhibition showcases, props, audiovisual effects, models and changed graphics.

In terms of amusement and enjoyment, the diffusion of the Covid-19 virus delayed a lot of touring plans, but there's a way to urge cultural heritage and historical exhibition where you're. Fast Company, Google Arts and Culture joined up with over 2500 historical centers and museum galleries around the world agreed to bring anybody and everybody virtual tours from the foremost popular museums around the world. Now, you get "visit the museum" from your home and never ought to wear your mask. For example, the British Museum in London, the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam, the Guggenheim in Modern York City, and actually hundreds of more places where you'll pick up information almost craftsmanship, history, and science.

These collaborations can provide new interpretations or more interesting stories and attract new visitors. It has manifested market appeal and leads to an increase in both audiences and sales of goods, generating more income, improving access to collections, and helping to share important works with cultural organizations.

Touring exhibits can make museums more sustainable by providing reusable and recyclable components to tell new stories with fewer resources (Ruiz, A. and Croninin, E., 2019).

For example, when using the dark stories of Egyptian heritage as a new theme for virtual touring exhibitions. These occasions and events remain frozen memories in the form of dark stories that are left behind as forgotten characters/places have eroded over time, whose original purpose is attracting people. Additionally, this perspective is building on stories, collect both physical and digital tools by using visualized context with intellectual dialogue to apply new and develop old work methods and focusing on visitor engagement through the successful experiment. An integrative model is developed that reveals the ways touring exhibitions can contribute to the aspect of tourism marketing, brand image and tourism marketing objectives by using technology, to understand the needs of exhibition visitors.

This type of tourism is known as dark tourism that's defined as a journey to places associated with death, suffering and mysteries. It's like visiting venues where notable tragedies or deaths have occurred in history and continue to affect our lives.

The research focuses specifically on how to carry out this type of exhibition in the tourism sector and help decision-makers understand the competitive landscape to have the ability to compete on a global level and placing Egyptian dark exhibition on the international tourist map to contribute the excellence and, develop the demand for the Egyptian tourism product (Eraqui, 2005).

Central thematic concept of the research

The central theme of this research is the concept of the touring exhibition as a virtual tour. "Its main objective is sustaining hosting Egyptian exhibitions in a way that supports the Egyptian identity and increases its competitiveness; contribute to the marketing of destinations through a new approach".

Research problematic

The research offers a new perspective on the problematic of hosting Egyptian touring exhibitions and reveals the solutions that facilitate their hosting. The international museums have increasingly turned to virtual shows to attract visitors to their objects during Covid-19. For that, the research presents a new experience for virtual touring exhibitions by using dark Egyptian heritage sites stories. It's a great solution for the obstacles that touring exhibitions faced when using real objects.

According to the UNESCO World Heritage Center, "the entry of a site on the World Heritage List often goes hand in hand with an increase in the number of visitors" (Mariani, M.M. and Guizzardi, A., 2020).

Although some Egyptian heritage sites are inscribed on the World Heritage List, these sites are not well promoted. This lack of planned marketing techniques not only led to a lower market position for Egyptian heritage sites but also its overall image.

As a result, traffic becomes a huge challenge, as the site could suffer a sharp drop in revenue that it needs to maintain to be sustainable.

In 2010, the site was visited by approximately 331,050 international visitors, while the rate of visits fell to 53,573 in 2013 (Amer, M., 2015)

Research significance

The research study has an appropriate significance with the problem of low demand during the off-peak seasons. Through the literature review, transmedia storytelling is defined by Henry Jenkins as a process of systematically spreading the integral elements of fiction across multiple broadcast channels with the aim of creating a unified and coordinated entertainment experience. Ideally, each medium makes its own unique contribution to the unfolding of the story. Jenkins threw his ideas down the transmedia path in 2003, but the thinking goes back to Walt Disney and his ambition to create a multiplatform narrative universe. The experience that (i) and (ii) would create together would be presented on multiple platforms accessible before and after the direct physical experience of visiting the exhibition.

In this way, the concept of exposure to inertia would be accessible for a longer period of time and accessible to a new audience, possibly mainly internet users, but with a potential interest to visit.

This touring exhibition vision has an appropriate significance as it promotes the site's culture significance augmenting the visitation rate especially during off-peak times, and managing international demand, and at the same time, avoiding adverse impacts on the site. In addition, the research suggests some recommendations which are in relation to create financial resources generating income to cover the site expenses.

Aims and objectives

This research is considered one of the first investigations about the touring exhibition position in sustainable development strategy-vision 2030. Therefore, this study will provide new approach for generating touring exhibition with another prospect. It will be "virtual tour" that will provide inspiring imagination, learning in a dynamic, engaging, entertaining manner for children and adults alike and sustainability. The idea helps museums' exhibitions to be an effective and catchy for the community by adding value to the heritage and social memory. The exhibitions should be based on the acknowledgement of tangible, intangible heritage and the needs of the community in order to be sustainable (ICOM, 2011). Moreover, the importance effects of creating and delivery of memorable experience for audiences and increasing awareness.

Transmedia experience

The need to reach potential audiences and audiences across a wider range of platforms also requires a diverse mix of watch time, including access levels for complementary albeit standalone digital and virtual experience, outside the physical visit, and online ticketing systems that provide access across all platforms, would make the experience much more accessible to potential audiences.

High narrative content

Rather than focusing on the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, which is typically the case with the blockbuster exhibition, interpretive outlines would require high-quality narrative content that creatively supports slow experiences. This would also include an increase in digital content.

Pay-per-use and access in tiers

Transmedia thinking would lead potential users to access the experience across time and physical space as often as needed, even beyond the physical visit. Presenting the experience in stages can also help with monetization.

Is a model worth testing?

This is indeed a preliminary idea to be tested in response to the dire economic conditions that the industry may face, perhaps now is the right time for the new models to have meaning and purpose.

https://www.museumnext.com/article/prototyping-new-travelling-exhibition-models/

Egyptian touring exhibition from different perspective (Sustainability in touring exhibitions)

In general, touring exhibitions have a lower carbon footprint compared to one-time temporary exhibitions, as visiting multiple locations effectively recycles them over a longer lifespan. However, what can make touring exhibitions less sustainable is the use of non-recyclable materials and environmentally harmful transport. To address this, touring exhibits should be designed and manufactured with materials that are recyclable and reusable. This may include whether the materials can be reused at Group locations. If it is not in the whole group, can the materials be delivered to the host location? Such was the case with the recent national Soyuz Capsule tour, which saw structures repurposed for other exhibits. Furthermore, the materials can also be reused by handing them over to third parties (Hamdy, A., and Nageib, Sh, 2021).

Sustainable Development Egypt's Vision 2030 SDS

In 2014, the government announced the "Egypt vision 2030" from the SDS (Sustainable Development Strategy) approach which was hosted by the Ministry of Planning connived representative committees in all sectors with the participation of experts from all fields aiming to develop public policy and strategy drawing Egyptian vision until 2030.

The governmental objective is to position Egypt among 30 counties in the world depending on economic development, justice, social involvement, knowledge, creativity, participation and a balanced ecosystem in order to improve citizens' QUL

(Saleh, A.S. and Zaky, M., 2021). While government objectives aim to achieve social justice in the framework of sustainable development's dimensions through strategies that provide economic benefits, equal opportunities, reduce geographical gaps, achieve freedom and political empowerment, and embedding cultural values at the term of social justice. Thus, the social dimension of strategic vision included several pillars to achieve social justice like health, education, and culture (Shams, 2014).

In order to establish a system of cultural values based on acceptance and diversity, providing accessible knowledge, supporting creativity and increase capacity building. Besides respecting Egyptian cultural heritage in terms of Egyptian soft power at regional and international levels.

The governmental strategic plan for culture development

The strategy aims to achieve three main targets during the next years through a group of programs that aims to develop and reconstruct the cultural system besides reviewing laws and legislation in relation to heritage protection.

- The first target is to develop arts and cultural industries.
- The second is to increase the efficiency of existing cultural institutions in terms of civil activities.
- The third concern is to promote, sustain, maintain and protect cultural heritage and enhance local and international tourism.

The Egyptian government adopted several projects to support implementing the cultural objectives such as:

- Promote cultural heritage and sites within media, events, and festivals.
- Support the cultural industry and create a stable environment that grants its growth which is supposed to achieve by increasing the governmental expenditures on culture, increase international cultural exchange, support international participation in exhibitions and festivals and promote cultural industries.
- The programs element is a database that protects intellectual property; provide accessible digitalized all forms of cultural heritage, cultural services map and documented heritage sites map.
- Expand and develop cultural services infrastructure and increase its effectiveness in form of medium-cost programs to be achieved by 2026.
- Reviving, marketing, promoting traditional crafts.
- Protect and preserve heritage program that planned to end by 2030 in form of a high-cost program. The program elements are provided insurance and security system for archaeological sites, increase the process of production of archaeological books, implement caring techniques to archaeological monuments regarding groundwater, increase registering monuments with UNESCO against potential crisis, identify mosques and churches that prior to financing it maintain (Ministry of Planning).

Impact of virtual touring exhibitions in strategic plan of sustainability

Sustainability in touring shows is about the themes and stories you focus on, where you tell them, and how you tell them. Visitors, and places too, often search for more social stories linked to ecology and environmental concerns. "What's new?" The touring shows also have a real impact on the community, generating events and a rich accompanying program, sometimes in connection with themes of pop culture, often their instrument of attraction for some visitors for the first time they enter a cultural place. And isn't the ultimate goal of cultural sites and visitor attractions ultimately just the spread of culture, in whatever form? (Hume, M. and Mills, M., 2011).

Creating touring exhibition by interactive methods

Many museums advertise virtual tours and shows. Historic centers around the world also share most of their Zen art on social media to help people adjust to staying at home (Romano, A., 2020). It has become a very important tool to reach visitors such as the Internet and virtual reality, 3D technology, mobile tours and websites used by many marketing museums and some cultural heritage sites around the world, and they take advantage of dark events which can be published as a virtual show.

Different type of technologies used in virtual tours:

- ## Virtual reality (VR)

Virtual reality is known as augmented reality and is defined as a 3D dimensional interactive environment designed by computer programs that humans can explore and interact with and become part of that virtual world. It surrounds the user and places them in a fake world to make that world appear realistic. Interaction with this reality is the result of communication between the expanded environment and the senses and reactions of the user, this innovation depends on the mixture of creative mind and reality through the creation of false environments that reality and the possibilities of interaction to be able to offer.

This technology is used in various fields such as medicine, engineering, design, and the arts. It is valuable in all areas, especially in entertainment and museum display (Adachi, R et al., 2020).

A virtual tour of Ramses VI tomb

During 2020, the ministry took important steps to keep up with modern global trends and achieve digital transformation in the tourism and antiquities sector. In its efforts to focus more on technology in advertising, the ministry launched virtual tours of museums and archaeological sites on social media platforms for the first time from April to June, when travel around the world ceased, under the title "Egypt from home from experience " due to the Corona crisis.

As part of this initiative, new online advertising slogans were also introduced; namely #ExperienceEgyptFromHome, "Experience Egypt soon" Same great feelings. An initiative that was very successful and praised by the local and international media (Hoffman, S.K., 2020).

A virtual tour of Ramses VI tomb
(Timothy, D.J., 2020)

Hologram technology

A hologram is a three-dimensional image obtained with a laser and stored on the flat surface of a photographic plate. It is the final product of the display (Jianshe, M., 2012).

Holographic technology is used in electronic holographic tourism to show the most famous tourist attractions through tourism virtual. However, there are many ideas on how this technology can be used in various fields, including the museum exhibition area, to stimulate tourism and attract many tourists through all its elements, especially the dazzling and artistic decorative arts (Pollalis, C et al., 2017).

Using 3D hologram video

3D allows users to stereoscopically view the program using a variety of devices and tools connected to the computer (such as gloves with headphones, glasses and hats) so that they can touch and feel, see and hear the sound they can hear. 3D plays an important role in virtual reality technology, provides a virtual model and allows users to integrate as if they were immersed in a real environment.

For example, The Science Museum Group (SMG)

The Science Museum Group (SMG) has recognized climate change as one of the most important challenges facing today's society and has made it a central component of corporate strategy. In addition to increasing sustainability in the group's museums, sustainability is a fundamental characteristic in the design and management of touring exhibitions. SMG touring exhibitions are a relatively new field of activity for museums, which emerged from the Tour Collider in 2013, have reached more than 2 million visitors and have a tour to more than 40 countries. This hasn't only resulted in STEM education and increased public participation but has also allowed the group to reach new audiences and find new partners to collaborate with.

Another manner that SMG has made their touring exhibitions greater sustainable through digitising the unique exhibition and reworking it to be a virtual bundle, which could then be employed through an excursion accomplice.

Known as a Blueprint Pack Exhibition, in an unmarried hyperlink those applications include all of the content material and virtual property to supply a modern, instructional and dynamic exhibition on a cutting-edge topic. The excursion accomplice can determine which substances to use, whether or not to show their items from their series and to conform the content material to suit their space. The idea has been very a hit and has created a sustainable manner to develop participation and growth partnerships. Additionally, this idea permits the exhibition to attain smaller and formerly inaccessible venues, and for the identical show in a couple of locations simultaneously.

For the Science Museum Group, there will always be further scope for developing new concepts, better use of materials and more intelligent designs that can increase sustainability (Kuo, T.C. and Smith, S., 2018).

Touring exhibit under a different context

A touring exhibition is similar to another exhibition in many respects, but it should attract a large number of visitors in a short period. Egyptian dark stories exhibition design as a unique idea and experience for Egyptian touring exhibitions, it is an idea to achieve harmony between social, cultural and economic, and it is the most ideal approach to achieve strategy comprehensive for Egyptian tourism marketing and economic sustainability. The exhibits are commended for an extensive educational, marketing, and operational aid program to alleviate the needs of the hosts.

Dark tour

It is not a new phenomenon form but for many years, now Dark tourism has been a part of our fascination, however, we seek it for very different reasons, and it has become essential to implement Egyptian dark virtual tour.

The Dark tour Worldwide

Many countries depend on using drama in marketing tourism. Therefore, we need different and unique ways to attract visitors and adopt a new kind of tourism "Dark tourist" to not focus only on traditional markets, however on another several tourism products to satisfy and new tourism markets and sectors. There are different dark stories exhibition that's scattered worldwide in museums, historic ruins, cemeteries and war scenarios and areas where catastrophic accidents. Dark stories should reflect the historical image by different tools which can bring life to past events. Dark tourism sector tends to attract many people to spread the concept of Dark tourism as visitors feedback describes some sites as particularly fun (Volait and Minnaert, 2003).

The dark tour is a change from routine through the virtual show that provides the ideal opportunity to change the routine, which includes a search for a novel experience and the quest for adventure and excitement (Crompton, 1979), travellers are motivated by such socio-psychological motives as:

Escape: Tourism provides opportunities to escape life's problems; this expressed a need for novel experiences and meeting new people.

Thrill: It defines an experience in which excitement is the essential element; people may try new things, even at some risk for tourists (Walchester, K., 2018).

Adventure: This is defined as an exciting experience gained through the strange and unusual happenings.

Novelty: It is defined in a variety of ways, including curiosity, adventure, new and different. Indeed, a new destination should then possess large amounts of novelty, uncertainty, and complexity to have high adventure potential, hence high arousal.

Boredom Alleviation: New context is an optimal way of relieving boredom; tourism is one of the most common means of alleviating or escaping boredom.

Curiosity: Travel is a manifestation of curiosity; as people grow bored with their environment, the motivation to see something new and different increases (Rounds, J., 2004).

The Story: Baron Palace, the Hindu Palace

The Dark tourism site: Baron Palace, the Hindu Palace-Heliopolis, Cairo, Egypt

Dark tourism typologies: Dark Fun Factories

Tourism Nature: Entertainment; with Intention, Cultural Context and Events

Product: Haunted houses using the dark stories about Baron Palace

This is the most spectacular palace in Heliopolis city, Cairo. For a long time, the palace was uninhabited. There are a lot of fairy tales that people weave around this terrifying Baron Empain Palace such as, the magic room or the pink room. The Baron Edward Empain's sister was killed in the palace. The neighbors surrounding the palace hear screaming voices coming from it and see fire flames coming out from the palace, and when someone approaches the palace, the fire goes out automatically (Mongy, Y., 2020).

Figure (1): The Baron Palace

Source: (Salam, N.F.A., 2020)

Figure (2): Edouard Louis Joseph, Baron Empain.

Source: (Volait, M., 2019)

Suggested Promotion Plan: Horror Palace dedicated to infusing adventure in visitors through entertainment, Haunted Houses using the dark stories about Baron Palace through VR, AR.
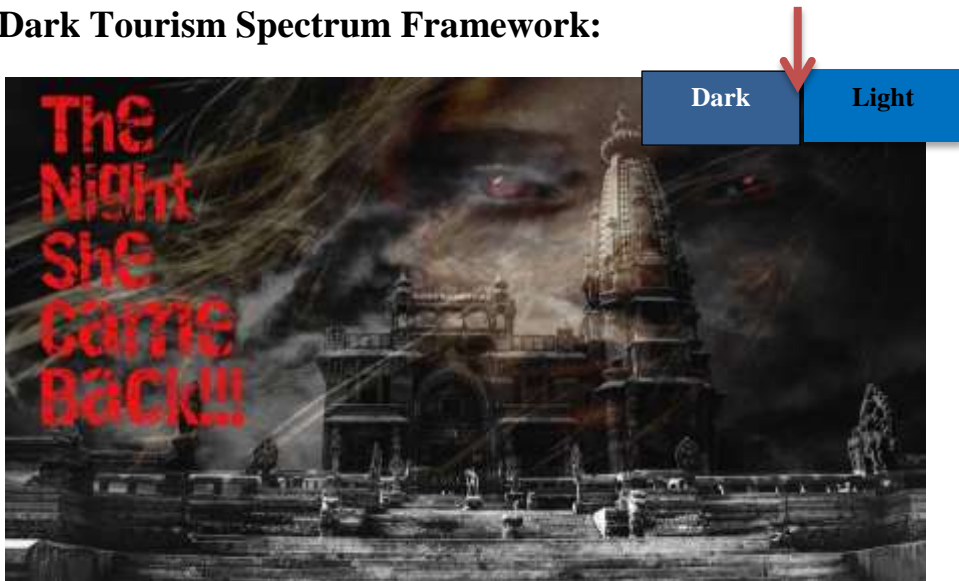
Dark Tourism Spectrum Framework:

Figure (3): Expecting Promo for Baron Dark Tour
Source: By the Author

Conclusion

The virtual touring exhibition model shall be sustainable in the PostCOVID-19 situation. The industry, which is primarily blockbuster-oriented was concerned almost exclusively with bringing profitable material culture to the world for the public to experience. Is there more to see?

At face, value the blockbuster show has been a source of income for museums worldwide and the ground base for the industry to prosper, hint at a game of wait and see, where exhibition halls are putting off their shows amid a surprising sense of collegiality and collaboration. Costs and expenses are, by the by, on the table. It might be the case that prototyping modern models are the way forward might address the need for an industry that requires much more elasticity. Business enhancement is a critical necessity today, but there is also space and potential for new, more focused, educational and enhancing learning experiences. Also, use imaginative stories as a dark heritage.

This was highlighted in a survey by Imagine Exhibitions in 2019, which they shared with all members of the TEN6 (Traveling Exhibitions Network) members at the American Alliance of Museums (AAM).

Touring exhibitions also have a real impact on the community. In addition to boosting a region's economic development, they help to be part of a base for investment and wider economic opportunities.

Finally, by leading innovation and developing new concepts, touring exhibitions can increase the sustainability of museums by providing reusable and recyclable components to tell new stories with fewer resources.

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