



"Museum exposition in the age of digital communication"

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Abstract

Culture is not one of life's luxuries, it is life itself . . . Culture is the soil that provides a society's nourishment and the basis on which it defines its value system, traditions, and behavior. It contains the morals and ethics of the community, governs society's conception of its own future and selects the means of getting there.¹

During the last decades humanity has experienced a true revolution in the ways and means of communication unknown before. Nowadays Internet and other information and communication technologies are evolving and penetrating all realms of our life even more intensely. These advances generate new skills, ways of thinking and behavioural attitudes among individuals, especially among the young generations, which are leading to constantly deeper, beneficial or disruptive, changes in society. Education and more in general the cultural sector has been impacted by such a revolution but may even benefit from this. However, research on these socio-cultural phenomena and their possible impact on societies in the future are lagging behind this rapid technological development.

Today, more than twenty-five years after interactive virtual and enhanced reality were first exploited, and more than twenty years after the "explosion" of the Internet, a wide range of technologies are on the shelf, major bottlenecks disappeared, a number of applications and services are available, so what is missing? What are the opportunities and the threats?

We are now in a position to consider whether such investments are effectively useful and really do increase and promote knowledge of the arts, sciences and history, and whether they satisfy users' requirements. Do ICT tools really help content holders and/or end-users? Do we use digital communication in the best way? How to make appealing art collections to the "Google" generation?

The present paper will summarize the most relevant «events» that influenced "culture" and museums in the recent past trying to identify the proper use and role of such tools and technologies.

¹ The Power of Culture: The Cultural Dimension in Development (Copenhagen: Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2000), chapter 3. Available online at: <http://www.um.dk/danida/tpoc/index.asp>.