

The Aspects of Openness in the Museology

Malgorzata Telesinska*

Department of Architecture, Wroclaw University of Science and Technology, Poland

Abstract

The Museum is a space defined by the boundaries of functionality. It is the society who changes the demarcation line, which sets the scope of the museum's activities as the result. The space changes and transforms with close correlation to its functional program. The man, moving deeper into the virtual world, gradually distances himself from the outside world. The museums are becoming more open to their visitors, trying to meet the expectations of the most demanding audience. They use new technologies, they use the multimedia.

In this article, the author describes the challenges and possibilities the museums face in the light of their recent developments. Emphasis will be placed on the openness of the following aspects: information, data and resources. The article covers the current trends and encourages discussions about the future of the museums in the context of the contemporary social changes.

Keywords: Open museum; New museology; Social museology; Open museum

Introduction

Museums, galleries, archives and libraries (GLAM) have existed for millennia. However, with the open trend of 'traffic', the museums are attempting to share their data and open sources, making themselves more available. But what is the Openness? What does the word "openness" mean? The fact that "the openness" has a great social value is emphasized by many theoreticians [1]. But how can it be defined for the museums? How does it affect their activities? Can openness influence and change the social space? In order to comprehend this, one should focus on how the concept of the openness changes the world of the museums into the space of the 21st century.

In the twentieth century, European museums began the trend of sharing the collective cultural heritage and cultural data through an open data system, accessible via web portals. They went even further - they began to process the data, so that they could participate in social life, by involving themselves in open-source projects. In addition, priorities of the museums' undertakings have shifted, projects began to move beyond the walls of the buildings - all in order for the educators to reach the largest audience possible. The growing scope of those activities has reached academic cooperation, schools, scouting and other fields. In fact, actions have been undertaken to broaden the audience even further. As a result, the museums' program has undergone tremendous transformations - an institution oriented exclusively toward the fully aware recipients, it started coming back as a form of support for transformation and gaining experience. The process of changing the direction has already begun, tempting the audience to redefine the culture and think outside of the box. The museums have begun to experiment with new, interactive, narrative multimedia, simultaneously applying modern cultural analytics. The 21st century has become an era of interdisciplinary research engaging academia, businesses, governmental and cultural organizations who seek solutions based on the contemporary knowledge. The fields that undergo the research are: application, online society and national heritage. GLAMs have become open to innovations in the field of digital infrastructure by redefining the original meaning of Openness.

Open Museums

"The spectrum of openness is very broad" but scattered "most works fall between the two extremes. Thus characterizing a work as

open or closed is rarely a binary decision; it is generally a question of 'how open'" [1]. While keeping the museology in mind, we must not forget about the other areas of knowledge and social life, which are related to the concept of the Openness. So what is the Openness? Open information, open data, open innovation, open source software, open participation, open discussion, open standards. All these areas, although not mutually dependent, share this one particular feature - Openness. This connection allows to align many fields of knowledge with each other, Openness being their main shared part (Figure 1 and Table 1).

GLAM units are trying to immerse as many people as possible in their key activities. By entwining their visitors in the transmitted content, the units aim to inspire both the expression of personal opinions and creative process. The interest in scientific and technological activity is changing, as is the need for participation. These changes have become the foundation for creative development of knowledge and content. Traditional management of cultural heritage can be compared to basic

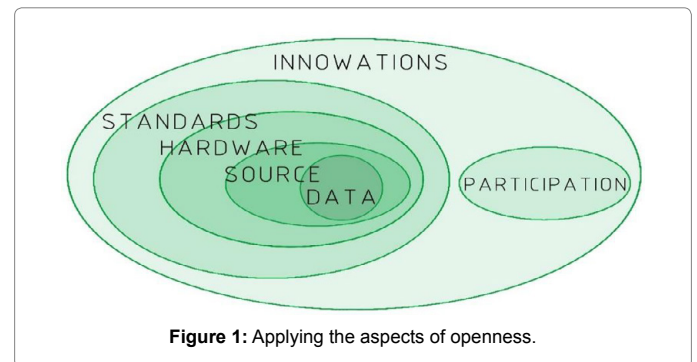


Figure 1: Applying the aspects of openness.

*Corresponding author: Malgorzata Telesinska, Department of Architecture, Wroclaw University of Science and Technology, Poland, Tel: +48-71 217 643; E-mail: malgorzata.budlewska@pwr.edu.pl

Received August 07, 2019; Accepted August 22, 2019; Published August 28, 2019

Citation: Telesinska M (2019) The Aspects of Openness in the Museology. Arts Social Sci J 10: 452.

Copyright: © 2019 Telesinska M. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.

Open data and open information	Opening the data is a key move in the transformations of the librarian, museal and archival sectors [7]. Information sharing is also important in the academic field, including: colleges, cultural life units and museum units. This has made numerous open-ended research initiatives possible [8].
Open source	Open source has given rise to many technological corporations, it is common amongst many research laboratories. Museums prefer the free software to developing the systems themselves [9,10].
Open hardware	The spread of the "do-it-yourself" principle in the field of electronics comes from the 1980s and it is derived from affordable personal computers. In the early twentieth century, low-cost hardware projects became widely used [11]. These include Raspberry Pi and Arduino hardware platforms [12].
Open standards	"A key benefit of open standards is that they foster interoperability, allowing disparate devices, applications, and networks to communicate." [1]. They "help to maximize access, provide application- and device-independence, provide long-term access to resources and services, and support interoperability" [13].
Open participation	The participant becomes the subject; it allows bilateral interaction with projects, builds the meaning of institutions and revives the museum activities. The open policy of the museums includes various new forms of participation, particularly the involvement of academics, government, industrial sectors and other cultural institutions. Thanks to open participation, the image of an institution depends significantly on the involvement of its participants. This is a trend that is somewhat similar to the civil budget or social consultations.
Open innovation	"Open Innovation is the use of purposive inflows and outflows of knowledge to accelerate internal innovation, and expand the markets for external use of innovation, respectively" [14]. Open innovations in the museum context include the concepts of social innovation, open innovation and social [15]. The collaboration with other institutions broadens the cognitive spectrum and simultaneously introduces new points of view. Thus more solutions can be found to a particular problem. "that internal ideas can also be taken to market through external channels, outside the current businesses of the firm, to generate additional value...Open Innovation suggests that valuable ideas can come from inside or outside the company and can go to market from inside or outside the company as well." [1].

Table 1: Openness data information.

consumption of goods. Nowadays the spectator needs to be involved, he wants not only to see the exhibition. He yearns to touch it, to understand it, to feel compassion and to co-create (Figure 2).

Social Changes

Museal experience expanded beyond the walls of a building. The aforementioned concept refers not only to physical presence. One cannot exclude the aspect of the time spent in the context of the institution. Part of this process is to open up own employees; to encourage them to share their knowledge and interact with the visitors. The visitors undergo a constant anthropological mutation. Along with it, their way of being changes together with the channels of cultural information transfer. The museum is therefore both "used" and "viewed". It should not be considered a place of reflection and contemplation.

The problem is complicated and three basic aspects can be distinguished in it:

1. Museal reality grows harder to classify - it is already almost an impossible task. The common depiction of museum visitors becomes meaningless. The bigger and the more undefined the group of recipients is, the harder it is to examine (Visitors were cleverly compared to various creatures, for example to grasshoppers or fish. This method of categorization made it possible to develop a categorization of behaviors, which had a large impact on further research on museum recipients [2].

2. Technological development contributed to the reorganization of private and social life. People adjusting themselves to new standards (spontaneously or by force) have become multi-taskers. Along with the constantly growing spectrum of skills developed by the consecutive generations, the museums attempt to evolve along with them.

3. The tools developed by the institutions are an internal problem. Technologies become outdated. It is connected with the gradual shift (aging) of individual user behaviors. The man, as a being capable of multitasking, is a subject to the evolution of tools. The museums constantly aim to keep up the pace of this violent evolution, while remaining one step behind.

The problem of attitude towards the new recipient is fairly common. It is based on the change of interpersonal connections and interactions between the man, the space and the work of art. As Garlandini says: „Today, to consider museums solely as conservation institutions is a mistake. What characterizes any contemporary museums is the strong

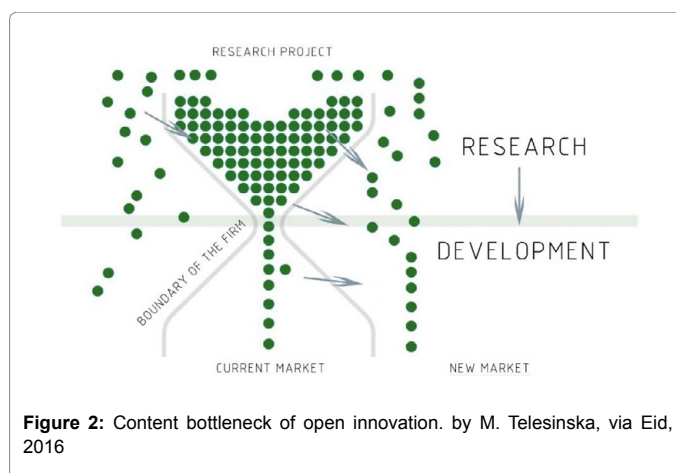


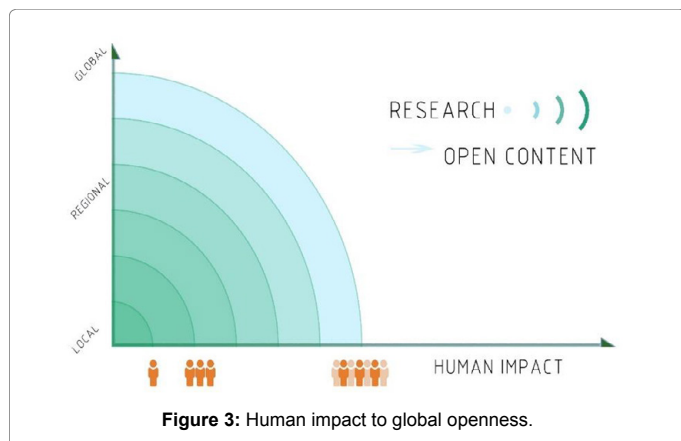
Figure 2: Content bottleneck of open innovation. by M. Telesinska, via Eid, 2016

link with (...) communities. Social and community activities are a fertile breeding ground for meetings museums (Figure 3) [3].

Technological Changes

"...challenge for contemporary architecture theory and design is to try to understand the appearance of these tools in a more sophisticated way than as simply a new set of shapes [4]. The digital world began to seep into the contemporary reality creating a new, fourth dimension. Sharing the data and resources defines one of the standards in educational and cultural activities [5]. Museums are constantly looking for new channels of communication, often reaching out for the technology [6-16].

It is a fact worth noting, that the mere possession of museal objects does not contribute by much into the educational process. Only the related activities and artifacts determine the true value of those objects. Various practices can be mentioned and they contribute to the rank of an object and they grant it the proper impact. These actions may change over time, transforming exhibits from physical objects into a series of concepts and characters. These in turn resonate, arouse associations that can be adopted in further school and museal education. These activities become more individualized, despite of the limited project frameworks that are difficult to specify.



Conclusions

The activities focus mainly on the techniques of the communication rather than on the content transmitted. This happens for the sake of the viewer’s perception. However, will this not lead to the change in the perception of the exhibits themselves? If the artifacts stopped playing the primary role in the museum, would they not become obsolete? The direction, in which the modern museology steers, is particularly interesting; it is very different from the achievements of the last two centuries. What might happen is a strong emphasis on the communication, augmentation of the role it plays for the visitor, and opening of a typically self-contained institution to the influence of the present day. These changes will be accelerating continuously in the current century. One day perhaps, the evolving museums will no longer need the physical walls that nowadays define them as the institutions wholly contained within the borders pre-defined by their architecture. It is highly possible that they will shift entirely into the

virtual reality, where they would be able to fulfill their mission. To transfer the experience, teach and educate. The following can be stated: the museums will cease to exist in their form so well known to us and it will happen within the next twenty years.

References

1. Maxwell E (2006) Open Standards Open Source and Open Innovation: Harnessing the Benefits of Openness In: Innovations, pp: 119-76.
2. Levasseur (1991) Levasseur M Ethnographie de l'exposition Paris.
3. Garlandini A (2017) ICOM Milan 2016: The New Responsibilities of Museums towards Landscapes. 69: 173.
4. Lynn G (1999) Animated form New York 1999, pp: 16-17.
5. Raport (2017) Raport: NMC Horizon Report: Museum Edition.
6. Parry (2007) Recoding the museum: Digital heritage and the technologies of change London.
7. Voss J (2012) Radically Open Cultural Heritage Data on the Web.
8. Owens B (2016) Montreal institute going 'open' to accelerate science, 351: 329.
9. Wilde, Mann (2010) Open Source Collaboration: New Models for Technology Development in the Museum Community.
10. David A, Oberoi S (2016) Museums & Free/Open Source Tools: Cost-effective Best Practices.
11. Dennis AK (2013) Raspberry Pi Home Automation with Arduino.
12. Langer M, Alderman J (2016) Open hardware belongs in your museum.
13. Kelly B, Ellis M, Gardler R (2008) What Does Openness Mean To The Museum Community?
14. Chesborough HW, Wim V, West J (2006) Open Innovation: Researching a New Paradigm Oxford.
15. Eid H (2017) The Museum Innovation Model: A museum perspective on innovation.
16. Parry (2007) Recoding the museum: Digital heritage and the technologies of change London.