



ViMM Virtual Multi-Modal Museum

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H2020 – COOP8 - CSA - Project Contract Number 727107

OUTPUTS OF THE THEMATIC AREA 5: DEMAND – WORKING GROUP 5.3

TA5-Demand (<https://www.vi-mm.eu/ta5-demand/>) looked at ways in which Digital Heritage in general, and VMs in particular, can support economic and social development by identifying key stakeholders and drivers of demand across sectors (WG 5.1); defining adapted strategies of sustainable development (WG 5.2); and gathering tools and methods for impact assessment (WG 5.3).

WG 5.3 conducted an analysis of the economic and social impact of VMs, their sustainability, and how to measure them. To this end it aimed to 1) Define tools/benchmarks/indicators of: economic growth/activity, improvement in knowledge/education, and citizen engagement; 2) define recommendations to ensure affordability and sustainability of evaluations; 3) define recommendations for social impact regarding: relevance, accessibility, authenticity, participation (in construction of CH) and enrolment (of new audiences).

The outcomes are a list of recommendations, tools, and indicators for the assessment of economic and social impact of virtual multimodal museums.

	Indicators, tools, and planning of impact assessment of ViMMs
Added value of VMs	<p>Digital Technologies are understood as new means of communication, with specific features such as narrativity, interactivity, ubiquity, etc. Their contribution can be established at 4 levels:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) increased dissemination of and accessibility to cultural heritage (e.g. Europeana); 2) providing novel methods of research (e.g. Hunterian Museum) and education (including curiosity, creativity and citizenship); 3) fostering social expression and debate (e.g. CCCB); 4) contributing to the Cultural Heritage institution sustainability. <p>Recommendation: Digital technologies have come to a second phase of development (technological and conceptual), yet cultural heritage professionals still need information about what works with visitors.</p>
Economic indicators to measure the impact of VMs	<p>Institutions use a combination of indicators in different contexts.</p> <p>The most used are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase in local trade; 2. Increase in web visits, downloads, etc.; and 3. Increase in museum ticket sales. <p>Other indicators to be used are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase in museum shop sales; 2. Increase in group bookings (including schools); 3. Increase in local hotel bookings; 4. Increase in local entertainment activities booking; 5. Increase in local job creation; 6. Increase in funding from local/national/international funding bodies. <p>Recommendation: Importance of distinguishing between product evaluation and impact assessment. Importance of building comparative evaluations and ensure the transferability of results, while acknowledging that there is not one-size-fits-all method.</p>

Social indicators to measure the impact of VMs	<p>Institutions use a combination of indicators in different contexts.</p> <p>The most used are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase in audiences' understanding or awareness (e.g. with regard to community, identity, historical facts, a monument, etc.); 2. diversification of visitors' composition (e.g. new social sectors, new communities, etc.); 3. Increase in the demand of activities for general audiences / groups (including schools). <p>Other indicators to be used are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase in visitor satisfaction (from visitor surveys or spontaneous feedback); 2. Increase in the participation in activities for general audiences / groups (including schools); 3. Creation of new associations or groups of interest linked to the museum; 4. Creation of external products or activities linked to the museum (e.g. gifts, tourism activities, educational activities, multimedia products, television/radio broadcasts, etc.); 5. Increase in funding from local/national/international funding bodies. <p>Recommendation: Importance to distinguish between product evaluation and impact assessment. Importance of building comparative evaluations and ensure the transferability of results, while acknowledging that there is not one-size-fits-all method.</p>
Tools to measure the impact of VMs	<p>Institutions use a combination of tools depending on the context and audience to be reached.</p> <p>The most used are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Physical visitor surveys (observation, interviews, questionnaires and driven scenarios); 2. Online visitor feedback (e.g. Trip Advisor, Museum website); 3. Online Surveys (e.g. Survey Monkey and Net Promotor Score); 4. Web statistics (e.g. Google analytics). <p>Recommendation: There is still a great need in the cultural heritage sector for guidance, toolkits, case studies and general frameworks on carrying out evaluation of VMs.</p>
Stage of planning	<p>There are three different situations:</p>

impact assessment	<p>1) Cultural Heritage institutions in general: design phase / operation phase / not planned at all. Funding allocated on demand or not at all;</p> <p>2) Cultural Heritage institutions participating in EU-funded projects: proposal stage; funding allocated and development planned at proposal stage;</p> <p>3) EU-related Cultural Heritage institutions: strategy/theory of change/performance indicators established initially and then broken down in annual business plan goals.</p> <p>Recommendation: Importance of separating design and evaluation, while at the same time, integrating evaluation early-on in the design process.</p>
Stage of conducting impact assessment	<p>Again, three different situations can be reported:</p> <p>1) Cultural Heritage institutions in general: Design phase / Implementation phase / Never conducted; very seldom planned as an iterative process as it is not easy to integrate and carry out regularly in-house;</p> <p>2) Cultural Heritage institutions participating in EU-funded projects: conducted as an iterative process, following Gantt chart specified in proposal;</p> <p>3) EU-related Cultural Heritage institutions: conducted periodically, following bi-annual/annual reviews and/or many-year strategic/ annual business plans.</p>
Staff involved in impact assessment	<p>Again, three different situations can be reported:</p> <p>1) Medium and Small Cultural Heritage institutions: rely on voluntary work or external companies;</p> <p>2) Large Cultural Heritage institutions and Cultural Heritage institutions participating in EU-funded projects: staff/researchers hired by or contributing to the project as collaborating institution.</p> <p>3) EU-related institutions: dedicated in-house teams and taskforces from wider networks instated, but also support from external specialist companies.</p> <p>Recommendation: Design and evaluation should not be undertaken by the same department or team.</p>
Institutional impact of impact assessment	<p>The way the results of assessments are incorporated to the Cultural Heritage institution's activities depends on two elements: 1) when is the assessment conducted, and 2) type of institution. For front-end and formative assessments, corrective actions, even redesign of the (digital heritage) experience, exhibition, etc. are possible. At operational stage, only palliative measures are possible. In many cases, no direct action can be implemented, but the results inform future practice for other/future projects. In the case of large institutions or EU-related institutions, it is possible to develop new services (e.g. transcribathon.eu for Europeana).</p>