Marketing Strategy for Museums.
The Case of the Silversmithing Museum in Northwestern Greece.

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I hereby declare that the work submitted is mine and that where I have made use of another’s work, I have attributed the source(s) according to the Regulations set in the Student’s Handbook.

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Abstract

This dissertation was written as part of the MSc in Strategic Product Design at the International Hellenic University.

The implementation of marketing strategies in the museum has experienced a period of controversy until the advent of the 21st century. Significant changes in societies occurred that made the administration of museums to realize that must incorporate marketing strategies if they want to be evolved as an exemplar of quality service provision and value for money, thus to ensure their sustainable development. The purpose of this dissertation is to discover the importance of applying marketing strategies in nonprofit cultural organizations, such as a museum. The research focuses on the examination of services marketing theory in a specific service context. To better serve the purpose of the study along with the theoretical context based on a literature review, a museum’s case study is constructed with the use of a multi-method qualitative approach for the required data collection. The examined non-cultural profit organization is "the Silversmithing Museum" located in the town of Ioannina of the Epirus region in Northwestern Greece. The tool of marketing mix comprising the 7 Ps – Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Process, and Physical Evidence is used to identify museum’s marketing strategy and best practices, building block for others to develop. In addition, the importance of holding a strong brand name to improve or maintain the museum’s position among other valued cultural institutions in society is revealed.

The dissertation is structured as follows. The first chapter provides a theoretical analysis of the reasons for introducing marketing in cultural organizations such as museums. In the second chapter, the expanded marketing mix in services is examined along with the branding strategy, while in the third, the case study is presented. The last chapter concludes

Keywords: Museum Marketing, Museum Branding, Marketing Strategy, Marketing Mix, The Silversmithing Museum

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Introduction

Museums establish a linkage between nations’ cultural heritage and contemporary life. This implies a unique relationship between museums and their visitors based on each side’s degree of knowledge one about the other, meaning the mutual understanding of the possible aspirations, requirements, constrictions and capacities that arise. In this vein, marketing is gradually being integrated into museums’ planning processes to aid in designing those offerings that meet with contemporary expectations and needs of the potential consumers. Technological and social changes have contributed to the development of a new marketing strategy that allows for two-way communication reforming museums relationship with their audience. Although museums are nonprofit organizations they need to generate sufficient levels of visitor income through a variety of different sources, including the museum shops, publications, cafes and events, to survive and compete with other cultural providers, and leisure –time and educational organizations. To differentiate themselves in the increasingly competitive environment where the vast amount of visitors are time poor and non-expert, the creation of a strong brand identity seems to be of great importance.

The purpose of this dissertation is to discover the importance of applying marketing strategies in nonprofit cultural organizations. The research focuses on the examination of services marketing theory in a specific service context. How marketing can maximize the performance of a nonprofit cultural organization such as a museum? How it can maximize the usage and visitation of museum spaces and enhance the experience? The key is to deliver the ultimate value to the visitors and the implementation of a visitor-centred positioning by the use of the marketing mix. What is the role of branding in forming efficiently museums positioning and widening their audience base? A clear and distinctive brand identity turns to be meaningful and compelling.

To best serve the purpose of the study along with the theoretical context based on a literature review, a museum’s case study is constructed with the use of a multi-method qualitative approach for the required data collection. The examined non-cultural profit organization is “the Silversmithing Museum” located in the town of
Ioannina of the Epirus region in Northwestern Greece. The choice of the museum is made on the basis of its strong association to place’s long tradition in the art of Silversmithing, of being the newest member of the Thematic Museum Network of the Piraeus Bank Group Cultural Foundation (PIOP) and of representing new trends in museology. The tool of marketing mix comprising the 7 Ps – Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Process, and Physical Evidence is used to identify museum’s marketing strategy and best practices, building block for others to develop. In addition, the importance of holding a strong brand name to improve or maintain the museum’s position among other valued cultural institutions in society is revealed.

The dissertation is structured as follows. The first chapter provides a theoretical analysis of the reasons for introducing marketing in cultural organizations such as museums. In the second chapter, the expanded marketing mix in services is examined along with the branding strategy, while in the third, the case study is presented. The last chapter concludes.
Chapter 1. Museums and Marketing

Museums appear in various style and types, having no precise intentions, being full of contradictions, governed by a countless number of people and organizations, and with organisational and staffing structure equally diverse, and as such generate a rather complex phenomenon (Mclean, 2012). Accordingly, although marketing is a term widely used by many is not clearly understood since its concepts are formulated to match the requirements of different situations (Mclean, 2012). It becomes even more complicated as its roots have been found in the private profit sector and not in nonprofit. Thus, for facilitating this study’s core analysis, the main definitions and terms around museum and marketing are presented in section 1.1.

1.1 Main Definitions

*Museum* as an idea has been early developed in human civilization, and first collections and display of objects are found in the Ancient Near East, while the origin of word museum is from the Greek word *mouseion*; a temple of the Muses comprising the concept of the inspirations and learning and safeguard of arts (Kotler et al., 2008, p. 19). In the modern period, the use of the word 'museum' to signify collections has been associated to the strengthening of the sense of public and social interest (Mclean, 2012, p. 11). Museum today is defined according to the latest version of the International Council of Museums (ICOM) definition -following a development course from 1946 up to 2007 - as “a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment” (ICOM, 2018). Museums are so different from each other, they can be devoted to a single object or may be collections driven or activity centered (Kotler et al., 2008, p. 3). Museum’s operation is found in various levels within the nonprofit/public sector (national, state/provincial, and local/municipal) and their service covers various audiences (e.g., museum patrons, the general public, internal audiences, and their political masters) respectively, in their effort to achieve multiple roles (e.g., education, research, exhibition)(Neilson, 2003, p. 17).
Marketing in museums revolves via non-profit marketing and services marketing and is an exchange process among consumers, museums and competitors, aiming to deliver high value at a low cost and at the same time to generate a surplus or break-even in the exchange (Kotler et al., 2008, p. 22). High value is expressed through the museum’s product, incorporating the provision to visitors of service and experience around the collection, the site or the architecture, that is why the term museum service product is also used (Komarac, 2014, p. 204).

Marketing in the museum sector is about building up a relationship between the museum and the public (Mclean, 2012). It is seeking to satisfy consumer needs and wants while meeting the museum’s objectives (Kotler et al., 2008, p. 30). The success of marketing in museums is assessed through satisfying consumer effectively against simply profitably (Rentschler and Reussner, 2002; Smith and Saker, 1992). Museum visitors, members, and donors considered as consumers (Kotler et al., 2008, p. 32), although the term audience is often used instead of consumers or customers since the education staff of museums are the one that communicate directly with the public applying respectively an audience approach (McLean and O’Neil, 2009, p. 217). In museums, the marketing staff works with directors, curators, exhibitions designers, education specialists, and other professionals to create and apply their vision and decisions (Kotler et al., 2008, p. 33). The focus of museum marketing goes beyond the building relationship with the audience, to the communication with the rest museum stakeholders such as funding agencies, local authorities, museum staff, board members, museum professionals, researchers, sponsors and the media (Rentschler and Reussner, 2002, p. 5). The implementation of marketing strategies in the museum has experienced a period of controversy before become accepted and settled with safety in the museum environment. This transition from denial to approval is described in section 1.2.

1.2 The introduction of marketing into the museum sector – a theoretical and historical context

The relationship between marketing and museums concerns mainly the modern history and although it started with tensions from the museums’ side, it evolved to a more consenting one. In particular, fifty years ago, during 1960s changes into the society began
that forced museums to be more open to outside influences and to respond to consumers who showed a different profile than the one used to have in the past (Lehman, 2009, p. 97). It was also the period that Kotler & Levy (1969) broadened the marketing concept to a far larger number of circumstances in which exchange and relationship activities take place such as museums, performing arts groups, churches, social agencies, city governments, social action groups, and celebrities that develop efforts to attract and serve visitors, members, donors, clients, fans, and others. Thus, new domains entered into marketing field among them the marketing in culture including museums and performing arts (Kotler, 2005, p. 114). Since the publication of Kotler and Levy’s, marketers start to focus on non-profit and public sector organizations to highlight the role of marketing as a tool to accomplish their goals (Neilson, 2003, p. 16). The “broaden the concept of marketing” movement especially to non-profit cultural organizations wherein social objectives prevail (education, conservation, custody, etc.) was not warmly welcomed by the museum profession (Kotler, 2005). The adaptation of marketing concept in this type of institutions had to overcome the obstacle of that a market approach is considered until then as an “evil” which can distract them from the traditional mission and values towards artistic excellence and social/community service (Gainer and Padanyi, 2005). This conceptualization of marketing challenged to a great extent the transferring of marketing thought to the cultural context. The resistance against marketing had been more evident to museums, as for too long were known as “elite” organizations addressing to a high-level audience that is capable to appreciate museums’ treasures (Kotler et al., 2008, p. 22). However, museums are organizations which like those of business have also commercial and financial goals in the sense that the offering to visitors of an alternative leisure activity can be considered as a commercial goal, while the rise in visitor numbers and in their own revenue as financials (Camarero and Garrido, 2012, p. 39). In the same vein, the museum sector of UK in the 1980s provides a good example, since Thatcher’s market-led economy had driven competition even among museums, signing a commercial era for them (McLean, 1995, p. 606). Competition influenced negatively the attendance per museum and the governmental funding, pushing museums to look for alternative financial resources; thus, a marketing era dawned in museums (McLean, 1995). The business, social, political and cultural environment in which museums had been operating
was under change and they had to adjust in the new scenery in order to ensure their survival. The 1980s and 1990s broke new ground in museums history as experienced their rapid makeover, after a long time of dormancy in which museums were cold, unfriendly and lacked facilities for the visitors (Mclean, 2012). This was also a booming period for the heritage industry, the service culture sector in the broader sense that museums belong. Under this context museums have gradually shift their strategy to be more visitor-oriented respectively to the shift recorded to the definition of the word museum from functional (object-based) to purposive (people - based)(Komarac, 2014, p. 203), signifying also their evolution from elitist institutions appealing only to a chosen few, to broader-based institutions (Lehman, 2009, p. 87). Museums start to be better informed about their audiences, including even the neglected or prohibited identities that emerged through society’s liberalization such as feminism, decolonization, anti-racism and gay-rights (McLean and O’Neil, 2009, p. 217). The role of the audience in marketing is important since is not regarded only to just people who visit a museum but to its influence on the development of museum concept (Lehman, 2009, p. 88). In this context, museums must incorporate an audience approach giving credit to the diversity and multiculturalism of its audience (McLean and O’Neil, 2009).

The key in acceptance museum marketing had been to persuade the stakeholders about the contribution of marketing strategies to museum viability without sacrifice a museum’s core orientations, missions and values. From a marketing perspective, the success of an organization lies on the delivery of high value to its customers in goods or service exchange and not necessarily on a positive financial result (Lehman, 2009, p. 88). The particularity of museums that demands delicacy in marketing issues is that are non-profit service organizations and as such are subject to the problems associated with the characteristics of services, and the “caprices” of stakeholders (McLean, 1995, p. 611).

Concerning the academic literature, three main periods of marketing in museums and performing arts organizations are recorded reflecting the main thematology of each one, such as the foundation period (1975-1984), the professionalization period (1985-1994) and the entrepreneurial period (1995-present) (Rentschler, 2002). In the first period, the main concern was educating audiences, raising awareness among organization staff of the importance of audiences and the economic impact of the arts on
the community (Rentschler, 2007). Museum’s personnel must be immersed by the notion that their role is to provide constant high-quality service to the visitors (Tobelem, 1997, p. 339). During the second period the importance of applying marketing techniques and establish marketing departments to nonprofit cultural organizations had been acknowledged while in the last, that is characterized also as an entrepreneurial period, collaborative marketing models have been emerged generating multiple revenue sources by repositioning the relationship between the visitor, the museum and the market (Rentschler, 2007). This classification is strongly associated with the changing roles of museums over time.

Tobelem (1997) attributes the introduction of marketing into the museum sector to four factors. The first is the growth of museums, referring to the size and the complexity of the sector. The size in both economic and cultural terms had been significantly enlarged while in parallel complexity and a wide range of diversified activities (temporary exhibitions, research, educational programmes, fundraising, publications, cultural services, and commercial activities) with significant budgets and personnel had emerged. The second is associated with the funding since demands for accountability grew, forcing the state to reduce public subsidies. Especially, public museum experienced a growing pressure to demonstrate that they deliver ‘value for money’ (Caldwell, 2005), and to become more competitive and self-reliant (Goulding, 2000). Museum directors had to search for new financial resources for their survival or expansion and the introduction of new management techniques incorporating marketing seemed like a way out to their financial pressures. The competitive cultural environment in terms “of the proliferation of cultural institutions and the increased range of leisure time activities” (Tobelem, 1997, p. 343) consists of the third factor. Besides, it is a rather myopic approach to focus only on the museum sector’s competition and not in the broader leisure industry. Finally, the fourth factor signals the shift to visitor orientation as is linked to “the need to know the visitors better” (Tobelem, 1997, p. 344). If an organization can understand its market then its response is to offer the ideal good or service, expressing as such the marketing or customer-driven orientation (Lehman, 2009, p. 90).

In the same line, Cole (2008) recognizes the contribution that marketing strategies can make to museum survival by identifying two major forces. The first one covers the
need of ensuring the number of visitors deemed necessary either for museums’ financial viability or in some case even to justify government funding, while the second refers to the need of the cultural organization to be more visitor-oriented (Cole, 2008, p. 177). Attracting and retaining visitors is central activity especially to a competitive marketplace. This means without compromising the needs of their educational mission, to focus on building audiences around the art, to improve the museum-going experience, to incorporate community service and to position themselves towards entertainment. Rentschler (2007, p. 12) argues that “cash-strapped museums cannot afford to be complacent about attracting visitors through the doors to exhibitions. To stay afloat, they need to attract new audiences as well as keep established ones. Marketing is no longer an option: it’s a survival tool rather than a dirty word”.

At the advent of the 21st century, the establishment of creative industries included the museum industry in the category of ‘art and culture”. Museums can no longer waste time in the established arts-based model and have to demonstrate actively their economic and cultural value adopting the creative industries model in which the marketing strategies are essential. The twenty-first-century museum must be developed as an exemplar of quality service provision and value for money (Black, 2005). The contemporary government policies protect museums from market forces aiming at preserving the nonprofit character of museums; however, museums operate in a free market economy in which they face competition with other leisure –time and educational organizations (McLean, 1995; Ravanas, 2009; Rentschler and Reussner, 2002). Therefore, during the last 50 years, significant changes in attitudes of museums and performing arts organizations towards the value of marketing occurred, making them gradually to recognize and use marketing as a management tool (Rentschler, 1998, 2002, 2007).

1.3. Contemporary museum marketing

Since museums are services organizations associated with the characteristics of intangibility, inseparability, heterogeneity and perishability, museum marketing is examined in the service marketing context, although it is differentiated in the extent that the interaction in this sector is more compound (Komarac, 2014; Komarac et al., 2017; McLean, 1994, 1995). The museum service product is delivered in a physical environment
or site, encompassing the land or building block, shape, lighting, means of orientating the audience such as queues, waiting, crowding, and methods of stimulating interest and involvement (Gilmore and Rentschler, 2002; Goulding, 2000). The methods of stimulating interest and engagement can be related to experience. The contemporary marketing concept moves besides the conventional offerings of products and services to those of experiences in an attempt to get away from the high commoditization and to serve effectively the consumers who lose their interest too easily and request excitement in their valuable limited leisure time. Besides, experiences can satisfy also the needs for sociality, social solidarity and pursuit of common consumption interests that can be more important to consumers than the traditional offering themselves (Conway and Leighton, 2012, p. 38). Consumers’ needs should lead the organizations to design their offerings encompassing a sense of feeling, learning, being and participating. A consumer is influenced by his personality, his social context and museum’s physical environment desires to benefit from aesthetic appreciation, escapism, education, and recreation that experiences can generate (Jafari et al., 2013). In this context, contemporary museum marketing abandons - or at least should do so- the passive consumption concept of spaces and establishes a more enjoyable, engaging and transformative one (Taheri et al., 2016, p. 1387). It challenged to make the museum visiting rich, educational, entertaining and layered experience that offers different ways of interacting and intersecting with objects and stories that have been hiding behind them (Scott, 2008). The spread of edutainment, meaning the converge of education and entertainment, is reflecting the new trend and to its support, there are advances of technologies to the world of arts and culture that can be applied. A museum that is stuck to the functions of collection, research and exhibition are not appealing compared to the one that creates holistic and long-lasting personal experiences based on emotional memories, sensation and symbolism. The last can be developed as a rather competitive one in the leisure industry.

Since the contemporary cultural consumer is attracted more by the intensity of the experience and less by the purpose, museums gradually adopt the co-creation of a value approach to strengthen consumer active involvement with them. The cultural visitor is better described as a creative one since with the use of technological advances and innovative techniques, is transforming from consumer to producer of the cultural
products and experiences. This creativeness is a cornerstone for marketing to design such strategies that succeed in building consumer loyalty and to raise the museum's brand awareness. A highly regarded brand guarantees the level of quality and reliability that visitors expect to minimize the risk of their choice. Museums are included in the category of values brand signifying that existence of purpose with a long duration that creates respectively long-lasting relationships with those that share in the market the same values (McNichol, 2005, p. 243).

A successful example of a museum that encompasses contemporary museum marketing is the new Acropolis Museum. Established to a country of tremendous ancient heritage, the new museum of Acropolis in Greece before its opening has been already known due to its strong associations to the history of the Athenian Acropolis, the universal symbol of democracy and to the Elgin Marbles controversy. The Acropolis Museum has evolved its marketing department as the strategic importance of management structure and is supported by modern architectural design, contemporary structure and presentation. This along with the unique collection of antiquity treasures, achieved - even from its first year of operation- to create and deliver a unique, memorable experience to the more than 2,000,000 people that visited it (Tsiotsiou and Mavragani, 2013). The Acropolis Museum succeed in being recognized as one of the best modern museums of the 21st century and emerged as the “flagship” among the other Greek museums.

In our analysis experiential and services marketing and branding, are reflecting the contemporary museum marketing. Marketing the museums is not an easy process but with the application of the efficient tools, effective marketing strategies can be developed creating value both for consumers and organizations. This issue is presented in the following chapter.

Chapter 2. Marketing Strategies in Museums

Museum marketing first identifies consumers’ changing needs and demands and then respond with the creation of achievable, valuable experiences and activities (Kotler et al., 2008, p. 31) aiming at delivering the ultimate value to consumers that in their turn and on the basis of reciprocity principle will “reward” the museum. Although there is no one marketing theory that can be implemented all over the museum sector due to its multi
diversity, tools exist that enhance the development of efficient strategic marketing. In this extent, the expanded marketing mix in the case of services is examined to facilitate analysis of a museum marketing strategy along with the competitive strategy of branding. The effectively positioning of the museum addresses the competition, builds new audiences and secures survival.

2.1. The Expanded Marketing Mix of Museum Marketing

Neil H. Borden in 1953, based on James Culliton idea’s, developed the theory of “marketing mix” that a few years later, in 1960, Jerome McCarthy's elaborated and popularized with the conceptualization of the marketing mix as the four Ps: Product, Price, Place, Promotion (Anderson and Taylor, 1995). Since then, it has become the dominant and substantial element of marketing theory and operational marketing management. The distinctive character of services marketing inspired Booms and Bitner in 1981 to includes next to the 4Ps three more P’s: People, Process and Physical Evidence (Constantinides, 2006, p. 418). Museums as service organizations adopt the marketing strategy of the expanded version of the marketing mix. The description of each element of the expanded version is presented in the table – 1 below.

Table 1: 7Ps in Museums

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<th>7PS</th>
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**PRODUCT**

The key questions for any service provider are to specify what consumers buy from them. Museum product is the total of the images and perceptions of the consumer originated by the intangible and tangible aspects that museums provide. Museum product enters the product categorization of core, actual and augmented, in particular,

- core product is the physical product like the collections that museum displays,
- actual product is the benefits or solutions provided by the product, such as museum cafe, museum design and museum store,
- augmented product (extended product) is referring to features and attributes, such as visual audio support, seminar rooms.

Consumers have expectations of the museum service product and when modifications occur within it, these expectations may be unsatisfied. For example, a museum redesigns the display of the permanent exhibits and remove favourite parts of the collection to leave space to new ones that encompass technology innovations.

The main actions to increase the product value are

- Museums provision of product variety and collections that maintain regular consumers’ interest and attract new ones.
- Assess on a regular basis, the attractiveness of the service product in terms of the product life cycle. E.g. items being on the maturity stage too long may require refreshment changes to keep consumers’ attention.

Since museums do not offer a single service product but a variety of them, the museum’s marketer has to review in width and depth its existing portfolio of offerings and to assess the extent that new services might be added or existing be modified or excluded. This evaluation is in line with the museum’s objective of creating and delivering ultimate value to consumers, which will result in the rise of the museum's value.

**PRICE**

Pricing is the one element that directly influences revenue, as the other all related to expenditure. Thus, the pricing strategy is an integral component of any marketing strategy. In profit organizations, the price is the indicator of the perceived quality while in public appears as a more problematic issue. The cost of providing service is rather difficult to be assessed since the non-homogeneity of services generates differentiated pricing for the provision of apparently similar services. For example, a public museum exhibits collections for free, a small independent museum makes an admission charge while another leisure activity may have a more expensive entry fee. In contrast to the leisure and entertainment industry, museums are not using "value-pricing" as their system relies on the concept of covering at least the fixed costs.
PLACE

Place encompasses factors affecting where and how the offering is available, meaning the kind of facility, location, accessibility, time of an exhibition, and ticket purchasing. The main issue in the museum case is accessibility and is strongly related to location. Location can be binding and result as an obstacle to the improvement of service performance as the museum cannot move to a “better” place. Touring exhibitions and turnaround of the permanent collection can improve the situation when a locational problem exists.

PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Services many times are provided with tangible elements in order to overcome the limitations that services’ intangibility generates to the consumption process. Physical evidence is relevant to the characteristics that are sensed by the consumers. Marketing involves creating an image of the museum offering in the target consumers mind by emphasizing the tangible aspects to enhance consumers’ experience. Physical evidence may include the environment where the service is offered along with any tangible parts that enable the performance or communication of the service. Examples of physical evidence can be even the buildings, equipment, signs and logos. Museums are object-based services but can create an atmosphere by using techniques such as scents, visual and sound effects.

PROMOTION

Promotion refers to the message used to convey the offering to the audience and the channels (or communication means) used to communicate this message. Promotional activities establish communication with the consumers and fund providers in the hope of influencing the recipients’ feelings, beliefs or behaviour. The attraction of sponsorship and the influence of decision-makers, especially in times of limited funding is of great importance for the museum. Promotional methods like the full-scale advertising campaigns are depending on the available museum budget. Promotional objectives can be:

- to build a museum image,
- to inform potential consumers about the museum and its services,
- to keep inform regular consumers about upcoming events,
- to keep inform museums fund providers about the current value of the museum,
- to inspire and motivate museums staff.

In the case of museums, the Word-of-Mouth (WoM) communication is considered more influential than advertising.
**PEOPLE**

The museum offers is developing to this of the “experience”. As the provision of experience requires employees’ participation, its quality is determined by the quality of the staff. Distinctions are made between front-door staff and backstage. The front-line employees are the one that contacts directly the consumers and are hired and trained to provide a high value of service to them. They deliver the offering package, from the knowledge and educational value of the collections, to interact with consumers, stimulating participation, offering interpretation and the information needed to contribute to the delivery of the service (education, accessibility and communication). The front-line staff is also useful sources of feedback from consumers. For example, reception staff by encouraging consumers to express and rights their comments and complaints, develop and strengthen consumer interactions, communications and cooperation. However, many museums still maintain little contact with museum staff as attendants and staff in the museum shop and café are the only one encountering the consumers. The people who built the image of the museum are the back office personnel the curators, educationalists and exhibitions specialists. All museum staff must be consumer orientated to succeed in delivering core and augmented service dimensions.

**PROCESS**

The process is the route that the service follows from the provider to the user. Since it reflects the delivery of service, it is vital in simplifying the complicated situation that derives from the service’s heterogeneity. The museum process including many different factors affects the quality of the offering. In particular, process interacts with the element of people as staff, is responsible for the provision of museum service product which effectiveness is supported by the process or systems that are used by the personnel. The aim of the process is to result in the uniformity that will secure the delivery of the same standard of offering to all the consumers.


The elements of the marketing mix combined effectively construct a tool which application can endorse strategies that result in sustainable competitive advantages for the museums. Among the many, branding is acknowledged as a successful strategy for differentiating a museum service product from competing ones, positioning museum to be appealing to leisure consumers and results to the increase of the museum’s value. (Yoo et al., 2000).

2.2 Museum Branding

American Marketing Association defines “a brand as a name, term, design, symbol, or any other feature that identifies one seller’s good or service as distinct from those of other
sellers” (Evans et al., 2012, p. 1458). A brand offers identity that can be comparable to other brands and its effectiveness is related to understanding the associations that exist in consumers cognitive construct. At the 21st century, everything can be branded, from products and services to people, cities and countries, and in turn, brands are evolved as a culture (O’Reilly, 2005). All these can be marked by implementing the core strategies that are used in branding, thus measures of loyalty, awareness, brand associations, perceived quality and other proprietary assets (patents, registered trademarks, etc.) (Caldwell and Coshall, 2002, p. 383). Branding has evolved as an indelible part of the market space and consumption, encoding meanings of social life and of consumers’ psychographic characteristics (Caldwell and Coshall, 2002, p. 383). Despite the prevalence of branding in every aspect of modern life, in culture, delays have been recorded mainly attributed to the risk of museums’ being high commercialized and of related prejudices, in case they succeed in creating an appealing brand. There is a contrast in this initial disregard of branding, since in reality brands related to culture in the sense of being symbolic resources and constructs, therefore consisting an important sector of contemporary culture, whether they appear in commercial or artistic form (O’Reilly, 2005, p. 575). Of course, museums had already names, identities and even logos but the attempt to create hallmarks of all museums products building a recognizable identity had not been in effect. Whilst, due to the factors described in section 1.2, it is now approved by museum stakeholders that the museum marketing departments should proceed in creating desire brand identities and associations.

Many references to branding are found in the marketing literature through the terms of brand equity, brand identity, brand association, brand positioning and organizational branding. The term brand equity confers all the assets that a brand encompass. Brand equity, according to the Marketing Science Institute refers to “the added value of the brand which is rewarded by the market with enhanced profit margins or greater market shares” (Camarero and Garrido, 2012, p. 1532). Organizations can be benefit by their brand equity to introduce new products that either uses their brand name (brand extension strategy) or that their brand name is used in combination with that of another organization (composite brand extension or co-branding strategy) (D’Astous et al., 2007, p. 231). In reference to the cultural organizations and activities, Camarero and
Garrido (2012) propose the term of Cultural Brand Equity (CBE) to define the added value of the cultural brand. It consists of the customer cognitive component of brand awareness, the affective component of perceived quality and brand image, and the conative component of brand loyalty. CBE is treated by the Museums managers as a means of publicity and fundraising (Belenioti and Vassiliadis, 2017).

The term ‘cultural’ brand may coil concepts of reputation, tradition, history, avant-garde, modernity, popularity, innovation, reflecting the main assets that the cultural organization possesses (Camarero and Garrido, 2012). Since marketing distinguishes three types of brands such as corporate, product and values brands, museums fall into the last category (Scott, 2008, 2000). The value of having a brand name generates advantages for the cultural organization such as familiarity, loyal customers who are attracted by the brand’s perceived quality and stimulates partnerships (Belenioti and Vassiliadis, 2017). The way that the values brand to build loyalty is explained by Scott (2008, 2000) as follows: based on the intersection that exists between the values of the brand and those of the audience; on the enduring core purpose that brand entails as it builds a long term bond with parts of the population anchored on the same values, and finally on the perspective for the long duration of the brand based on customers fidelity to its underlying values. This intrinsic value of the brand provides insights with regard to symbolic, emotional and intangible assets of museums and their representation to the society (Scott, 2008, p. 37). For communities, museums retain the link to the past and stand for their current position in society.

The knowledge of what the brand signals in the mind of the audience are crucial to the values brand. Customers’ recognition and feeling of the museum brand, prompt their behaviour. The museum can use the brand as a means of satisfying the basic needs of the consumer, meaning the extent that the brand communicates to audiences the provision of superior utilitarian benefits like the quality of the experience and accessibility of the collection (Evans et al., 2012). The more unique is the brand the more people are encouraged to visit the museum and become regular customers. A unique and efficient image of a museum strengthens its position to the competition. Since museum managers comprehend how visitors assess a museum’s image and the information sources and motivations that influence this image, this will facilitate museum marketing to place the
correct image to each target market and to improve segmentation, through the correct choice of a communication mix. Brand-oriented museums besides of their effort to establish the brand as a distinctive asset that communicates relevance and accessibility, must invest in augmentation activities such as merchandise, exhibitions and commercial stores, that enable the institution to connect with consumers on a more personal level and to communicate a superior brand image (Evans et al., 2012).

Branding operates as a ‘co-ordinating resource’ serving at making an organization’s activities united, and its strategy visible and touchable. For museums, this goes beyond the design of objects and exhibitions on display, to the creation of relations with volunteers, members, donors and corporate partners (Stallabrass, 2014). Implementing a branding strategy is positively related to increase of stakeholders’ engagement as well as to the rise of income, the boost of the museum experience, values and ensuring museum’s survival (Belenioti and Vassiliadis, 2017).
Chapter 3. The Case of the Silversmithing Museum in Northwestern Greece

For the assignment, a case study constructed to identify the best practices in contemporary museum marketing by using the expanded marketing mix and applying the branding strategy. A local thematic technological museum is chosen, best to serve this purpose on the basis of being newly established and making use of the modern museums' technological advances and trends.

3.1 About the Silversmithing museum

The museum is located in the town of Ioannina of Epirus region and is strongly linked to place’s long tradition in the art of Silversmithing. The museum presents the technology of silversmithing during the pre-industrial era and its connection with the social and economic framework of the time focusing mainly on the history of silversmithing in the Epirus region. Museum’s contribution to the contemporary silversmithing sector of the Epirus region is significant since by informing the visitors about the socio-economic factors that determined the establishment and the evolution of the local silversmithing workshops, supports their survival and/or enhances their revival. This art used to have a positive impact on the region's economy to such extent that the city branded as the sacred city of Greek Silversmithing tradition.
The Silversmithing museum is the youngest member of the Thematic Museum Network of the Piraeus Bank Group Cultural Foundation. The foundation of the Museum included in the Operational Programme “Competitiveness and Entrepreneurship” (OPCE II), financed by the 2007-2013 NSRF (European Regional Development Fund co-funding) and the Piraeus Bank (Picture 1 – Appendix II). From the initial silversmithing research programme in 2008, eight years passed until the completion of the project and museum’s opening in September 2016. From then and onwards, it has received around 120,000 visitors, a satisfactory number for a thematic museum located in a provincial town.

3.2 Methodology

A multi-method qualitative approach used for the data collection, consisting of interviews with the key staff member and personnel of the museum, content analysis of related websites and social media along with research on secondary sources and a venue observation by personal visits to the museum.

Interviews

The interviewees are two members of the museum, the local coordinator and an employee. The interviews conducted in November 2018 at the Silversmithing museum, constructed on the basis of open-ended questions and considered to be crucial to our survey for the elements of the museum’s marketing mix. Questions concerning the brand strategy could not be posed directly but were identified over data analysis and interpretation.

Content Analysis of websites and social media

Visitors’ comments and postings about the Silversmithing museum were collected from the TripAdvisor website and from the Google search machine. The museum’s Facebook page except its rating provides so limited number of detailed comments that prevent any deeper analysis (Picture 2- Appendix I). The content analysis completed on the beginning of December 2018 including 100 reviews in total referring to the two years of museum operation (Tables 1,2 – Appendix I).

Referring to the material collected from related websites, the examined museum is a member of the Thematic Museum Network of the PIOP and as such the website of the PIOP is mainly used to data collection. Further, this research used websites of partners,
press releases, thematic websites (archaeology & arts), local websites and others that included on their contents news of the Silversmithing museum.

**Personal Observation**
Three personal visits took place, to observe in real time the museum’s operation, and the hosting of events and temporary exhibitions. During these observations, the efficiencies and deficiencies of the museum were recorded.

**3.3 The Marketing Mix**
The Piraeus Bank Group Cultural Foundation (PIOP) is a public benefit non-profit foundation established to preserve, record and highlight Greece’s cultural heritage and, to contribute to the cultural, social, and economic life of Greek regions. The PIOP holds a network of nine thematic technological museums - created in collaboration with the Greek state - for advancing cultural heritage and identity in respect to the regions’ environment; thus contributing to their sustainable development (www.piop.gr).

In this framework, Silversmithing Museum’s *mission* is to preserve the heritage of Epirus' art of Silversmithing and to attribute honour to the individuals that had fought and managed to keep alive this art throughout the centuries, to educate children and all of the society, and to inspire future generations to get involved. Its *vision* is to be a high-quality example of sustainable use of the cultural heritage and a place of reference of the traditional and artisanal history of the region of Epirus. Further, to evolve as a vital social and cultural centrepiece of the town serving the edutainment trend and as a worthwhile visiting thematic technological museum.

The management and marketing department of the PIOP planned and implemented the museum’s marketing mix with respect to the foundation’s and museum’s ultimate goals. This research defined the elements of the marketing mix as follows.

**Product Services**
The Silversmithing museum as a thematic technological museum is oriented towards the silverware technology during the pre-industrial period and as regional museum focus on preserving the silversmithing Epirote heritage. To serve its positioning, the main part of the exhibition refers to the history and technology of silversmithing in Epirus, covering
the post-Byzantine period from the 15th century onwards, without even missing references to earlier times (Archaeology & Arts, 2016). An independent curator, being the external partner of the PIOP, created the concept and implemented it through the specific exhibits. Through various exhibition’s tools (texts, visual material, documentation films, multimedia applications) (Picture 2–Appendix II) the visitor discovers basic traditional techniques of shaping and decorating silverware (forging, casting, filigree work, savati, embossing), learning about each technique’s different stages necessary to the production of the final product. In parallel, special references are made to local craftsmen, but also to commissioners as the influencers in the evolution of the specific art. Further collections of Epirote silver- and gold-smithing works are presented, dating from the 18th through to the 20th century. Finely-crafted objects with ornate details, such as jewellery, arms and martial gear, household silverware and personal objects included in this collection (Picture 3–Appendix II). Artifacts’ both usability and hidden values are revealed to visitors, (through the exhibition tools) as their ownership had associated with prestige, economic prosperity and social recognition of that time. References are also made to contemporary silversmithing by exhibiting samples of the works of craftsmen who are still holding workshops in the Epirus region and are loyal to the long silversmithing tradition (PIOP, 2018).

Further, the museum provides interactive digital games, while in parallel elaborates educational programmes (Picture 4–Appendix II), for students in both primary and secondary school. These programmes aim to gain knowledge on the importance of the art to the economic and social life of the region and to contribute to its revival. Thematic workshops target older people reminding them of the beauty of this art. In addition, museums hosts to its multipurpose hall temporary exhibitions (Picture 5 – Appendix II), events, scientific meeting and act as premises for cultural activities (PIOP, 2018).

Apart from the core and extended product services that the museum offers, visitors can rest to the modern café on the ground floor, enjoying the atmospheric site of Citadel Its Kale and shopping stylish souvenirs and books at the museum’s store (Picture 6 – Appendix II).
Museums TripAdvisor and Google reviews (*Tables 1, 2 – Appendix I*) are dithyrambic about the museum product services except few that are not interest of the specific thematic in the art of silversmithing or consider as small and poor the exhibition. The personal observation confirmed the positive reviews and additionally indicates the provision of convenience in guidance as the curator has set up the exhibition on the basis of answering the following five key questions i) where was constructed and when, ii) out of what material, iii) how, iv) by whom and v) for whom. These questions are displayed distinctively after the main entrance (*Picture 7 – Appendix II*) and along with the small map that the cashier distributes for free to the visitor, enables him to capture instantly the concept of the exhibition and the route that has to follow until the exit of the museum. A digital application is also available in support of the self-guidance. Finally, the abundant outdoor space can host large events during spring and summer in contrast to the small multipurpose hall during the winter time.

**Price**

The museum has the three following charges:

- Standard entrance fee of three euros (€ 3.00)
- Concessionary ticket of one euro and fifty cents (€ 1.50). This is paid by the following categories of visitors after the display of relevant proof:
  1) All students of universities, technical institutes or equivalent educational establishments from countries outside the EU.
  2) Parents having more than 3 children
  3) All employees of Piraeus Bank Group as well as the members of their families who accompany them holding the ‘Winners Card’.
- Free admission to the following categories of visitors:
  1) Young people under the age of 18, with a current identification card or passport
  2) All visitors over the age of 65, upon presentation of their national identity card or passport
  3) Students of night schools and second-chance schools
4) All students of Greek universities, technical institutes or equivalent educational establishments of EU Countries with current identification card or international student identity card (ISIC)
5) Greek citizens serving their military service holding a military identity card.
6) Officials of the Ministry of Culture and Sports, with a current identity card
7) Teachers accompanying children on primary and secondary education school visits
8) Tourist guides and the drivers of tour coaches upon presentation of their professional card
9) Journalists, with a current press card
11) Members Companies and Associations of Friends of Museums and Archaeological Sites in Greece with a certified member card.
12) Visitors being cardholders of free entry.
13) The Culture Card holders.
14) European Youth Card holders.
15) The members of the Centers for Open Elderly Protection with a certified card.
16) Visitors with disabilities and the person accompanying them.
17) Unemployed with a valid unemployment card.
18) Residents of the villages in which the following museums - members of the PIOP are originating from, such as the Silk, the Open Air Water-Power, the Industrial Olive-Oil Production of Lesvos, the Marble Crafts, The Environment Museum of Stymphalia, holding valid identification cards.

In addition, during the following specific dates the admission is free:

- May 18th (International Museum Day)
- June 5th (World Environment Day)
- Last weekend of September (European Heritage Days)

The admission fee according to Museum’s TripAdvisor and Google reviews is considered low making the museum even more appealing to visitors. The personal observation reports also the affordable prices both in the art objects sold in the museum store and in the offerings of the café.
The sum up of those that are entitled to the free entrance is equal to the seventy (70%) per cent of the total number of visitors. Museum's revenues consist of the receipts of the entrance ticket of the rest thirty (30%) per cent of visitors, and of the sales of the museum's store and café. The main part of the museum's operational costs is covered by PIOP's funding. However, the PIOP's administration has already decided for next year an increase of admission fee by one euro (€ 1.00).

**Place: Physical Evidence**

The Silversmithing Museum is located at the castle of Ioannina, in the western bastion of the north-eastern of citadel Its Kale. A historical site with Byzantine origins and bearing signs of the Ottoman rule evolved through the time as one of the main tourist city attractions. The PIOP evaluating the historical importance of the site, its associations to Epirus heritage, proceeded to the restoration of an inner area of the Byzantine building which occupies the bastion’s two levels, as well as the adjacent building of the old cookhouses. A rare photo was the guide to the restoration of the two emblematic chimneys on cookhouses’ roof (Anesti, 2016). The exhibition areas avail themselves of the bastion’s two levels. At the first level, the main part of the exhibition is being developed, while at the second the collection of Epirote silversmith artifacts. The entrance to the first level is impressive as the door opens and the hearing of the sound of a hammer guided by craftsman’s hand carving a silver plate conveys the visitor in the rite of a silversmithing workshop (*Picture 8 – Appendix II*). Sounds and visual effects enhance the museum’s concept and create a sacred heritage place.

Besides the exhibition area, the museum features area of educational programs, multipurpose hall for hosting of temporary exhibitions and events, shop and cafeteria, amenities, and support facilities and is surrounded by landscaped gardens. Reviews are enthusiastic of the beauty and atmosphere of the place and astonished by the architectural workings.

Regarding museum’s accessibility, there are problems since, in the whole area of the castle, the car entrance is forbidden (this is the reason for no provision of parking services) and the nearest castle gate to the museum is closed. These raise access difficulties to the vulnerable groups of visitors considering that a long walking around the castle is required to get one to the citadel of Its Kale. In addition, reviews have revealed
that the indirect access through the two most distant gates of the castle, combined with the lack of adequate signage turns to be confusing for the visitor and guide him only to the other museum of the site, the Byzantine. There are efforts from the PIOP side for restoration works in the south Gate of the Castle which will resolve the problem, hopefully in the following year.

**Distribution**

The tickets for the museum are distributed only via the Museum Ticket Desk. There is no specific limit to the number of tickets available during the opening hours of the museum. Although the provision of e-ticketing service would improve visitor convenience there are no complaints about the lack of this service.

**Promotion**

Museum’s opening ceremony in September 2016 indicated that the Silversmithing museum will dominate in region’s social life. Representatives of the most important Greek Institutions have attended the ceremony. Among them the President of Greek Democracy as well as his predecessor, Former Prime Minister, Ministers, the Religious leader of the Greek Orthodox Church, political leaders, MPs and other regional stakeholders. The ceremony was broadcasted live on local TV channels while detailed reportage broadcasted on National TV channels.

The Silversmithing museum being a member of the thematic network of PIOP is promoted through tools and activities that the Foundation has elaborated. Strategic advantages, such as its location, situated to the known citadel of Its Kale, the remarkable restoration of the bastion, the modern setting up of collection that educates and engages visitors to the art, the value of regional artifacts, the use of interactive tools and technological advances, all these are advertised to national media, websites and social media. The Foundation organizes and coordinates all the promotional actions and implement an inter-promotion strategy among the network museums. In this line, the Museums Network Meeting is established and is hosted by another member of the network museum every time. The second one took place in October 2018 in the Silversmithing museum.
In particular, this research records the following promotional strategy

- **Exhibitions:** According to the Museum's local coordinator, Ms Drimtzia Agni, especially two temporary exhibitions, "When Art Becomes Sacred. Jewish heirlooms Ioannina" co-organised with the Jewish Museum of Greece and the "The Countless Aspects of Beauty", co-organised with the National Archaeological Museum, considered very successful and attracted a large number of visitors. Museum’s target is to continue to host remarkable exhibitions as a result of exceptional partnerships.

- **Cultural and academic events:** Indicative are reported “AGM of H2020 Connecting Nature project 2018” meeting, the academic meeting "Growing children with self-esteem", Christmas workshops for young and adults, “School of Rock” educational activity for children, “the hunt of the lost treasure” for school children in the citadel of Its Kale, art photography exhibitions, theatrical plays, documentaries and movies special screening, books readings. Specific reference is made to the hosting of
  - the Plug into cultural Heritage Project (PLUGGY) between 17th and 27th of July 2018. During these days, visitors of all ages experienced and evaluated PLUGGY’s augmented functionality and features. They digitally explored a collection of silver gilt artifacts and the PLUGGY team measured the application’s usability and effectiveness. School students became excited by the AR app and the event turned to be one of the most popular of summer 2018 (PIOP, 2018).
  - The latest event with an international character as the Grammy-winning producer, musicologist and record collector Christopher C. King presented his latest book “Lament from Epirus: An Odyssey into Europe’s Oldest Surviving Folk Music”.

These cultural, academic, artisanal, entertaining and co-creative activities in respect to Epirus heritage, diversity, and multiculturalism increase museums visibility to the public build an audience around the art and attract new audiences.

- **Publications:** The PIOP publishes guides, books, CD-Roms, postcards, posters, related to the museum’s thematic. These are commissioned to specialized
external researchers who collaborate closely with the staff of the Foundation that supervises the production of these activities.

- **Cultural objects:** A variety of cultural products inspired by the Silversmithing museum can be found in the PIOP museum shop located at the centre of Athens, next to Syntagma square. There, consumers can be captured by the art of the products, be informed about the Silversmithing museum and be intrigued to visit it.

- **Electronic media:** Silversmithing museum’s presence in the electronic media is through the PIOP website (www.piop.gr) and Social Media (youtube, facebook, Flickr). The bimonthly programme of museum activities is published on the PIOP website in which useful links exist for special professional networks, cultural tourism networks, educational institutions & associations. The visitor experience metrics questionnaire and the subscription to the foundation’s newsletter are also found there. is Despite website’s friendly design and the provision of the download of the museum’s press, it cannot enable the extraction of targeting information for the exhibitions, activities and events as the related posts address the whole network. The website is available only in two languages while several parts of the website are only in Greek. Although reviews on other museums of the network exist, no one is posted for the examined museum. The PIOP facebook page has 4,992 followers and provides a link to the TripAdvisor reviews while there is also an unofficial Facebook page created by museum’s friends having up to now 2,002 visits. Press releases are very limited and not updated. The e-shop is found on the PIOP website for promoting selected museums’ products (www.piopmuseumshop.gr).

- **Advertising campaign:** As part of the PIOP promotion to a wider audience in 2017 renew the cooperation with OTE TV for the broadcasting of documentaries for the museums’ network and those of the Historical Archives that it holds. In addition, informative videos of the network are posted on the website of the Piraeus Bank. These videos are also displayed on screens at the Bank’s branches through the intranet, at the Attica mall in Athens and can be found in the channel of YouTube.
Posters depicting exhibits and banners with the logo of the museums’ network decorated regional events in public spaces.

- The national press has promoted the Silversmithing museum especially its opening as well as its websites devoted extended articles on the museum. The local press always reports the museum’s upcoming events.

Referring to reviews on Tripadvisor for the museum’s promotion the only relative comments are visitors’ recognition of the Piraeus Bank brand name that ensures the high level of museum’s quality (Tables 1, 2 – Appendix I).

People – Processes

The museum is staffed by four front-of-house employees and a local coordinator. The four belong to the personnel of the PIOP while the local coordinator to this of the Piraeus Bank. The four employees are alternate in different positions from ticket desk and call center to museum store, café and protection staff. The local coordinator is responsible for the whole museum and its workings, she works with the staff to ensure the museum’s smoothly operation and assists wherever needed in any department. Further, she makes contacts with local authorities and submits proposals for future events and workshops to the PIOP's administration.

The staff can be easily identified by the elegant grey suits which wear with pinned badges indicating their name. The suit colour has been chosen in accordance with the PIOP’s policy that the staff’s outfit should reflect the thematic of each museum. Thus, grey is associated with silver.

Reviews are positive, referring mainly to how welcoming, smiling and polite is the personnel and only a few to the incidents of a staff member to close anxiously the doors before the end of the announced opening hours. Also, they commented on the absence of guard in the official gate (Tables 1, 2 – Appendix I).

The number of employees is justified by the size, nature and the PIOP’s policy. The Museum without being large has the space required for the exhibition needs and being supported by technological advances has become visitor friendly. A separate guide is not required due to its setting up of exhibition already described in product services. The taking of photos and videos is allowed, limiting the need for the permanent presence of
a guard in the exhibition. Finally, all the museums in the PIOP network are staffed in a similar way.

3.4 Branding

Since the PIOP is benefited from the long history and dominant presence of Piraeus Bank in Greece, a briefing of bank's brand name precedes the analysis of brand name of the PIOP and as such of its network member, the Silversmithing museum.

Piraeus Bank established in 1916 and evolved as the biggest banking group in Greece. Today provides a wide range of financial products and services to approximately 5.2 million customers. Its target group is corporates, private individuals and small and medium-sized enterprises and ranks first in business financing, with a market share of 35% and a balance of approximately €35 billion. Piraeus bank maintains a customer relationship with 85% of small and medium-sized enterprises in Greece. It serves the market through the extensive network of 753 branches (620 of them in Greece and 133 abroad) and the innovative winbank digital banking platform. Piraeus Banking group following the international trends in business innovation and supported by technological advances established e-branches in which transactions are made with speed, convenience and security (Piraeus Bank Group, 2018a). The high qualified personnel of more than 14,000 employees support the bank's positioning as a prominent regional financial institution in Southeastern Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean. Besides its banking leadership, it had distinguished many times in significant fields regarding mainly business excellence, information technology and innovation. Recently, the Piraeus bank awarded as the Performance Brand of the Year. At the same contest also won four “Peak” Performance Marketing Gold awards for the most efficient and innovative advertising campaigns (Marketing Week, 2018). At 2018 Ermis Awards, a contest that rewards the excellence in strategy and the creation and efficiency of communication, Piraeus Bank conquered 14 awards while it was the first enterprise that awarded with the title of Creative Bravery (Piraeus Bank Group, 2018b). All these constitute banks evolutionary route during the 102 years of its operation, its prospects of multi-dimensional expansion and the dynamics of its brand name that is related to the leadership, to credibility and security, quality and innovation. Piraeus Bank has built a strong brand name that is used
as a communications device for promoting the same consistent message about its corporate identity to all concerned parties—consumers, suppliers, workers, shareholders and partners. Further, by having a large base of customers, and by developing advertising campaigns courting media attention, it has ensured its brand awareness to every other activity and operation that it has developed or plans to develop.

The Piraeus Banking Group following an extroverted strategy and in the line of the corporate responsibility rules developed social and cultural sensitivity that expressed through the establishment of a voluntary non-profit cultural foundation in 2001, the PIOP. The PIOP is now a public benefit non-profit foundation that is subsidized for its operation by Piraeus Bank. It plans and implements projects and programs related to culture and the environment following Sustainable Development practices. The PIOP instantly developed to an acknowledged cultural institution, being an accredited advisory body of UNESCO on intangible cultural heritage matters. This is associated to the PIOP’s contribution to the inclusion of the know-how of masticha cultivation in Chios and Tinian marble craftsmanship, to the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity of UNESCO (PIOP, 2018). The PIOP has been certified by «TUV AUSTRIA HELLAS» for the museum network and has developed and implements an Environmental Management System (EMS), for the reduction of the environmental impacts associated with its activities that is applied to all of the Foundation’s building and activities. In 2012, the PIOP was awarded the Europa Nostra Award, in the category «Dedicated Service». Referring to the Silversmithing museum, being a member of the PIOP network had ensured its brand awareness and brand image before its opening. This is evident also in the reviews that make reference to Bank’s brand name (Tables 1, 2 –Appendix I). Even those that did not know its relation to the Piraeus Bank by visiting the museum they realize it, just from the PIOPs logo display associated to the relative of Piraeus Banking Group (Picture 9- Appendix II). This motivates people to visit the museum to reduce the perceived risk involved in using up time for a museum visit. However, for others, the Piraeus bank brand extension to the culture generates negative feelings like distrust and the threat of being manipulated. These are originating from what a financial institution represents to them, meaning the perpetual hunt of profit to the detriment of the ordinary
people. This is certainly a disincentive and erodes the non-profit character of the PIOP museums' network.

In the beginning, the brand name of the bank acted as a safety net in museums consumers but soon the PIOP proved its value and its network of museums has become popular of the high value that delivers to the visitors and the new insight in the museology that successfully provides. The Silversmithing museum has won recognition from the local stakeholders that are positive in developing a partnership for the promotion of cultural identity aiming also in stimulation of the local economy. In this framework, Silversmithing museum strongly associated to the innovative way used to present its thematic to the public, stimulating the co-creation of experience and to the elaborated communication of culture through periodic exhibitions, lectures, conferences and a variety of other events, managed to forge a unique and efficient image. This acted as a catalyst in increasing the rate of visit and consumers loyalty. Museum brand's perceived quality is reflecting the number of people visited the museum during its two years of operation, reaching approximately the 120,000, while the nine Museums welcomed 314,844 visitors in total (270,771 Greeks and 44,073 from abroad) recording an increase by 43.2% in 2017 compared to the previous year.

4. Concluding Remarks

The implementation of marketing strategies in the museum has experienced a period of controversy until the advent of the 21st century. Significant changes in societies occurred that made the administrations of museums to realize that must incorporate marketing strategies if they want to be evolved as an exemplar of quality service provision and value for money, thus to ensure their sustainable development. Museum marketing identifies consumers’ needs and demands, their change in behaviours, expectations, and appetites and responds through offerings that are designed to deliver the ultimate value to visitors. Hopefully, in their turn and on the basis of the reciprocity principle will "reward" the museum. In this context, contemporary museum marketing has abandoned the passive consumption concept of spaces and has established a more creative one, transforming the museum visit to a rich, educational, entertaining and layered
experience. The new concept aligned with the edutainment trend and supported by technological advances provides alternative ways of interacting and intersecting with objects and stories that have been hiding behind them. The museum that succeeds in providing a holistic and long-lasting personal experience it can establish a strong position in the competitive cultural environment.

Although there is no one marketing theory that can be implemented all over the museum sector due to its multi diversity, the expanded marketing mix in the case of services was examined in the museum marketing strategy analysis along with the competitive strategy of branding. In accordance with this, the case study of the “Silversmithing Museum” was constructed. This thematic technological museum retains a unique character to the point where it may be said that no other museum resembles it in the entire region of Northwestern Greece. Although the thematic approach allied to location and that of local identity it definitely could not stand by itself. The marketing mix planned for Silversmithing museum reveals that the administration of the PIOP has obviously made notable strides in trying to provide the optimum experience for the visitors. The visitors’ perceptions, aspirations and experience of museums are enhanced through a combination of, the manner in which the collections are exhibited, the provision of service, the impact of the building, the staff, and the means chosen to communicate the benefits of the museum experience (Northern Ireland Museums Council, 2009).

Although as a museum is a natural storyteller, the Silversmithing museum in the era of the digital revolution grabs the opportunity to craft and distribute new stories in new ways, educating and entertaining its audience. Its focus on cutting edge technologies for the creation of interactive exhibits increases audience engagement. Visitors of the museums warmly welcomed the interactive way of exposing the artifacts, a surprising change to predictable ‘sameness’ of the so many other leisure pursuits, as this expressed through their dithyrambic reviews. The regular hosting of temporary exhibitions and events are working as a means to provide greater access to objects and collections and in making the museum appealing to the repeat visitor. The museum store and café complete the museum offerings, which are becoming even more attractive due to the low pricing policy that the museum follows. In addition, the significant investment in the capital
infrastructure not only raised the standard of museum’s buildings in which the collections are housed, the better protection of site heritage, but it has strengthened capacity to meet visitors’ service expectations. Further, since the PIOP covers the museum’s operational costs and is responsible for finding resources from other governing bodies, this is reassuring for the ongoing replenishment of the buildings and the reinvigoration of their displays. Nevertheless, it looks as if further work is required to address the outstanding barriers to visitors wishing to access the museum. The centralised promotional system most of the times works effectively, but improvements can be made in facilitating the extraction of information for the museum’s activities. The same applies to the staffing in terms that is follows the central PIOP policy. Consistent data about visitors is not available so as to outline in detail the profile of the visitor and this, in fact, proved to be a limitation to this study.

The Silversmithing museum is the case of the museum that is under the umbrella of a very strong brand name of another sector. Although it is associated with the Piraeus Bank, a financial institution, this brand identity can increase purchase possibility when the consumer has a good image of this certain brand. The Piraeus bank and the PIOP brand awareness proved to be very important to the museumgoers decision-making process to visit the museum. Besides it boosted familiarity and loyalty, it encouraged partnerships. Further, brand awareness can positively affect besides the brand image the perceived quality, since the recognition of brand awareness affects the consumer’s emotional perception.

Potentially offering visitors a unique experience the “Silversmithing Museum” constitutes the benchmark for all the other museums in Northwestern Greece. Over the two years of operation managed to attract a considerable number of visitors, to be established as an important member of the museums' network of the PIOP and to be a visible, and valuable, part of the wider cultural and heritage sector in the region.
References


ICOM. (2018), “ICOM Definition of a Museum”, available at:


**Appendices**
Appendix I

Picture 1—Tripadvisor Rating for Silversmithing Museum, Ioannina, Epirus.

Source: www.tripadvisor.com.gr/Attraction_Review-g189453-d11785814-Reviews-or200-Silversmithing_Museum-Ioannina_Ioannina_Region_Epirus.html

Note: the covering time period is from 1/11/2016 up to 2/12/2018. From the 207 reviewers, 184 of them evaluated the museum as excellent, 20 as very good and only 3 as moderate.

Picture 2—Facebook Rating for Silversmithing Museum, Ioannina, Epirus.

Source: https://www.facebook.com/pages/%CE%9C%CE%BF%CF%85%CF%83%CE%B5%CE%AF%CE%BF-%CE%91%CF%81%CE%B3%CF%85%CF%81%CE%BF%CF%84%CE%B5%CF%87%CE%BD%CE%AF%CE%B1%CF%82-%CE%99%CF%89%CE%AC%CE%BD%CE%BD%CE%B9%CE%BD%CE%B1-Silversmithing-Museum-Ioannina-Greece/1767584110169027

Table 1 – Evaluated elements of marketing mix as recorded in TripAdvisor reviews for Silversmithing Museum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product Services</th>
<th>Place: Physical evidence</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Promotion</th>
<th>People: Processes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

-35-
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most of the reviewers evaluated the museum as excellent, innovative, unique</th>
<th>Excellent restoration, fantastic surroundings. Sound of craftsmanship’s hammer while working, conveys the visitor to a silversmithing workshop</th>
<th>Low price</th>
<th>The brand name of Piraeus Bank is dominant</th>
<th>Very polite staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interactive, informative, Creative, educational</td>
<td>Fantastic place located among others worth visiting museums and attractions. Sustaining that sense of local identity as defined by geography, interest and experience</td>
<td>Value for money</td>
<td>Smiling and helpful</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern, thematic museum, multimedia applications, linear and complete, satisfying every kind of audience, stylish handicrafts, from jewelry to weapons, kitchen utensils, and religious items. Decent bookstore, nice café.</td>
<td>The choice of the place itself is very impressive. The museum is built in a reused space full of stone walls and arcs. Elegant and adequate panels. Displays explaining step by step the various techniques, visualizing the craftsmanship workshop, signs in English, nice amenities.</td>
<td>Absolute a bargain at only 3 euros per person and free for over 65s</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collection consisted of fine models of local jewelry, Authentic and fascinating exhibits</td>
<td>The building is in the sort of &quot;inner&quot; area of the medieval Castle, and is housed in Beautifully restored and refurbished buildings which form part of the Castle walls. The interior is modern and floors and stairs &quot;float&quot; on steel supports in the space provided by the restored stonework.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lighting is sharp and clear.

Few of them 5 out of 60, consider that the exhibition is not interesting, small in size, children get bored, too thematic addresses only to those interest in the specific art.

Guard anxious to close the doors before the end of the official opening hours. The absent of a guard in the officially gate generates accessibility problems.

Source: www.tripadvisor.com.gr/Attraction_Review-g189453-d11785814-Reviews-or200-Silversmithing_Museum-Ioannina_Ioannina_Region_Epirus.html

Note: the sample consisted of sixty (60) TripAdvisor reviewers for the period 1/11/2016-2/12/2018. The reviewers are thirty two (32) men and twenty eight (28) women. The majority of them are Greek while eighteen (18) foreigners. In particular, twelve (12) are coming from the following countries Italy, UK, Israel, US (three per country). Six (6) are coming from the Netherlands, Germany, Sweden, Russia, Australia and France (one per country).
Table 2 – Evaluated elements of marketing mix as recorded in Google reviews for Silversmithing Museum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product Services</th>
<th>Place: Physical Evidence</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Promotion</th>
<th>People: Processes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Most of the reviewers evaluated the museum as worth visiting, remarkable, excellent, unique</td>
<td>Beautiful location, excellent architectural working restoring the medieval building, found in historical attraction.</td>
<td>Low price</td>
<td>The brand name of Piraeus Bank ensures quality</td>
<td>Very helpful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational, excellent meeting point of culture and tradition, unique experience</td>
<td>Space linked to the thematic, nice interior</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precious artifacts, unique exhibits, fine visual representation of silversmithing technology, nice museum store and café, equal to other Europeans museums</td>
<td>Suitable for Disabled Persons (DPI)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Few of them 4 out of 40, consider that the exhibition is poor</td>
<td>Signage not facilitates visits, easily to get confused with the others site’s museums</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Closed earlier than the announced opening hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: [www.google.gr/search?newwindow=1&sa=X&q=ελληνικά%20μουσεία&ved](www.google.gr/search?newwindow=1&sa=X&q=ελληνικά%20μουσεία&ved)

Note: The sample consisted of forty (40) Google reviewers for the period 1/12/2016-2/12/2018. Among them twenty five (25) are men and fifteen (15) are women, and all are Greek citizens.
Appendix II

Picture 1 – Funding for the museum’s construction

Source: Author’s personal photo album

Picture 2 – Exhibition’s tools

Source: Author’s personal photo album
Picture 3 – Collection of Epirote silver and gold – smithing works

Source: Author’s personal photo album
**Picture 4 – Area of educational programs & interactive and digital games**

Source: Author’s personal photo album

**Picture 5 – Museum’s multipurpose hall and temporary exhibitions (1st level)**

Source: Author’s personal photo album
Picture 6 Museum’s store & café

Source: Author’s personal photo album
**Picture 7 – The five key questions**

Hóu;
Where was it constructed?

Hóws;
How?

Apó ti;
Out of what material?

Apó pòion;
By whom?

Gia pòion;
For whom?

Source: Author’s personal photo album

**Picture 8 – The sound of the carftsman hammer (visual material)**

Source: Author’s personal photo album
Picture 9 – The logos of Piraeus Bank and Piraeus Bank Group Cultural Foundation