

EU Heritage.

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Video Transcript
SU 2.2.2
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Module:	Module 2: Design an innovative visitor experience
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Sub-Unit:	2.2.2 Audience development: an introduction
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The mission is what I often refer to as blue sky thinking. It is something that you aspire your organization to achieve, something big, something noble, something which to a certain extent appears to be too idealistic. There's nothing wrong with defining an ideal situation. There's nothing wrong with aspiring for the stars. And then followed to the mission statement, we'll also get the vision. And the vision is primarily indicating how the organization aspires to achieve that mission.

The two of these documents do actually support each other. They are interrelated and they define pretty much who we are, what we do, and where we would like to go in the future.

Unfortunately sometimes we have these statements written all over our organization, you'd find them as a statement in any email that we send out, we have them printed in beautiful letters in different parts of our organization... the reality is, to what extent is your organization truly supporting the concept of a vision and the mission?

But what is really important for us is, to what extent is our vision and our mission driven by an audience-centered mentality? So among other things there are a number of elements that one needs to take into consideration before actually developing and a plan for the visitor. And that exercise requires among other things a self-reflective exercise, asking yourself who you are and what is it that you believe in. And based on that, what is it that you would like to achieve. So the vision and the mission play an important part in developing an effective audience development plan. In actual fact they feed on each other. You cannot have an effective audience development plan without having a mission and a vision that truly supports an audience-centered philosophy as stated previously.

The plan, the vision, the mission, are pretty much like a religion the organization needs to agree on. It collectively establishes a common understanding and collectively all stakeholders should be working within the framework which is defined by our vision and our mission. So an immediate word of caution would be that your organization should not be writing down a mission and division simply because that is what the trend is. In different organizations I always say to cultural managers that your vision should not be solely a marketing ploy. Unfortunately it is often used to promote in a very artificial manner what the organization is all about, but then you start to notice that our audiences are not engaging with who we are and what we do, simply because our mission and our vision are saying one thing, and in reality the audience is experiencing something very different.

For an effective audience development plan you also therefore need a mission and a vision that is also aspirational, that it aspires for great things, of course without setting up the organization for failure, but that aspirational mentality would sustain growth within the organization itself, it would sustain growth within its immediate members, it would allow growth within its visitors and it would also allow growth for the organization itself, not just within its own immediate market but actually beyond.

Last but not least the mission and the vision are going to also therefore drive your strategy and each and every strategy needs to be defined by a very clear framework. Often we refer to these as the aims and objectives; again, pretty much like the mission and the vision, the aim is the end that you would like to achieve, the objectives are the processes you will be adopting to actually achieve that particular end, so any strategy that you can think of including the one where you would like to have the audience as the center of your strategy will be clearly defined by a set of aims and a set of objectives.

In each and every case these objectives need to be measurable. We have several institutions which unfortunately spend a lot of time, money and energy in developing strategies which unfortunately are not clearly defined and worst of all they are not even measured. So it is extremely important within our organization that we define a vision and a mission that gives priority to our audiences. That same vision and mission will also be defining our aims and our objectives. Clearly, the two together are also going to develop the framework within which our idea will eventually be turned into an effective, a positive reality for our visitors, who are going to be engaging with our institution.

It is now time to start to unpack slowly but surely the different aspects of an effective audience development plan. Of course there's an amount of basic work, that groundwork, that needs to be completed in order for an audience development plan to be developed.

To start with, as we have already stated in a previous presentation, an audience development plan is an ongoing process. We've also stated that for us to understand how the whole organization can own up an audience development plan, it is extremely important that a strategy is developed. An effective strategy is often dictated through a mission and the vision if i were to put these two words which are very commonly used in cultural organizations i have to say that from experience i have noticed for instance how during workshops some members of a museum for instance found it very difficult to at least write down the main philosophical background of what the museum believes in i invite you all to have an ex to have to generate this particular experience with your team members where you it's very simple exercise you just sit them down and you ask them to maybe use two three four words from the mission statement of your organization and you notice that some of them maybe don't even know actually what the mission that drives your organization is all about

so an adequate audience development plan needs to have a solid foundation in a clearly defined mission and vision statement

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