Component 1 - Cultural Sector Policy and Governance Reform

Activity 3.2 Develop an innovative concept to the use of the ICT

Innovative concept to the use of the ICT, digitalisation and new technologies to deliver old and new cultural products and services to the regions

TWINNING

Introduction

Activity 3.2 An innovative concept to the use of the ICT, digitalization and new technologies to deliver old and new cultural products and services to the regions and its implementation plan has been developed by individuating a group of tools aimed at supporting the process of implementation of the new culture sector governance model identified by Activity 1.4.

The preparatory phase of the project has evidenced that *heritage of the wealthy past is often not managed effectively for both tangible and intangible aspects and that this hampers the development of a vigorous internal and international tourism*, while such a development is urgently required to allow for diversification of revenue sources in Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijani MCT has already undertaken a number of activities to reform the old registration and inventory systems, moving from a static digital environment to a dynamic one, where the new tools have been or are being developed to allow structured information to be stored and searched; these tools are based on state-of-the-art technologies such as relational databases, web user interfaces.

The new solutions being designed and developed actually enhance the potential to support implementation of policies and practices aimed at promoting and giving value to the cultural heritage of Azerbaijan, both tangible and intangible, encouraging international tourists to choose Azerbaijan as their destination, promoting domestic tourism and giving residents easy access to cultural heritage as part of their everyday life and education.

Given that the new registration and inventory systems being developed and implemented by MCT rely almost exclusively on IT, the potentials of the Internet in terms of widespread reach and pervasive dissemination of information, as well as in terms of rationalizing and coordinating the dedicated human resources, could be successfully exploited to create a web-based portal for tourist promotion and services, through which the quality standards of the overall Azerbaijani tourism offer could be monitored, improved and coordinated, at the same time starting up and fostering an active role of social networks to improve promotion and international visibility. IT therefore appears to be a key enabler in the transformation process that the present project is asked to trigger around cultural heritage of Azerbaijan and its role in the promotion of international and internal tourism as reliable alternative to the prevalent Azerbaijani oil industry.

Goal of the document

By developing the outcomes of the assessment on information systems of Azerbaijan's MCT (which are shortly summarized in the following sections), this document aims at outlining an innovative concept to the use of the ICT, digitalization and new technologies. The aim is to deliver and give value to Azerbaijan cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible, to promote domestic and international tourism and better assist and inform visitors once on site. A practical application of the concept will be a fully-fledged pilot project consisting of a web portal that, drawing from the (purposely optimized) databases of cultural, natural and folklore resources already available or in progress at MCT, and integrating them with detailed information on the tourist services available (opening times, visitors' centers, accommodation, restaurants, travel agencies, tour guides, etc.), can be accessed to obtain the following results:

- promoting Azerbaijan as tourist destination at the international and national level

- offering both residents and tourists an innovative digital tourist info-point, always online and updated

- creating a useful tool for culture clubs and tourist info-points, either staffed or consisting of digital devices (touch screens etc.)

- activating and improving web-based tourism online services, to support the effective purchase, access and visit phases for the visitor, be he a citizen or a tourist

- creating a cultural data / services marketplace that allows access to these data / services to all operators and enables new business models.

Proposed outline of the innovative Azerbaijani Web Culture Portal

Introduction

The following chapter will briefly address the main target audience of the Azerbaijani Web Cultural Portal and the fundamental functions that the portal would have to fulfill. The potential public will be briefly analyzed, the salient characteristics of each Business/Institution to Consumer or Business/Institution to Business public will be outlined. For every functions, some good reference practices will be identified.

Audience analysis

First of all it is necessary to analyze user requirements for cultural and tourism online services and explore how to design culture and tourism websites to attract users and improve the quality of their digital experience. In the travel sector in particular, the change in habits and consumption is causing a growing independence of the tourists and new segments that can be intercepted only thanks to new technologies.

The Azerbaijani Web Culture Portal will address a potential audience made up of the general public, in a B2C logic, of the companies or of the other organizations operating in the territory, in a B2B logic, and of the stakeholders of the cultural sector, identified in the document Integrated Management Planning for each of the cultural sectors.

The audience represented by governments will not take into consideration in this analysis since the current institutional website of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism respond in a clear and reliable manner to the various information and requirements that such an audience may have.

The general audience

The general public is very fragmented and varied, so it is necessary to go into more details about its composition, in order to analyze its needs and expectations. On the basis of the analysis carried out at international level, the three potential publics that we have identified, are transversely crossed by some generational demographic cohorts, among which it is important to highlight: Generation x, Millennials, Generation z. Their importance is not due only to their numerical consistency, but above all because their uses and media consumption have been profoundly modified by the digital ecosystem and therefore that has to be considered in the design a web portal.

Generation X, is the demographic cohort following the post–World War II baby boom and preceding the Millennials (birth years ranging from the early-to-mid 1960s to the early 1980s). Research describes them as active, happy, achieving a work–life balance and with entrepreneurial tendencies.

Millennials are the generational demographic cohort following Generation X (1908-2000). This generation is generally marked by an increased use and familiarity with communications, media, and digital technologies. Millennials are identified as "digital natives" by the Pew Research Center: they use social networking sites, such as Facebook, to create a different sense of belonging, make acquaintances, and to remain connected with friends; they use the internet instead of tv, and they use smartphone to have access to the internet. Digital for them has four main functions: solving daily needs; entertainment; information;

learning. From the point of view of tourism and of the possibility of moving for work, Millennials are the first truly global generation, but with a passion for local culture and traditions.

Generation Z are the youngers, the target of the future, that in the coming years will influence the digital world. For them, digital is information and a source of learning and they are very demanding in terms of content.

Even if the needs and expectations of these audiences are different, it is important not to fragment the offer of information and services by building many different portals, but instead to design a unique and integrated system.

The general audience can be further divided into the following 3 segments:

Citizens

Azerbaijan's inhabitants are interested in this operation, since the culture of their country has an identity value, and it is therefore essential that it is treated in a complete way, also in the digital world. It also represents the "place" in which they can discover information on heritage, art, music, events.

Citizens are a complex public, which has different needs, based for example on age groups and on the purpose of research. There is ample space to think of appropriate solutions to bring children and young people closer to Azerbaijani culture and to promote cultural consumption also through a form of playful learning, conveyed by the digital.

Tourists

They are interested in discovering the country; even if with different travel motivations, a site dedicated to the discovery of the country's culture is a precious tool for choosing the destination, planning the trip and also buying experiences and products. Tourists increasingly use digital during all the time of travel, from the decision of the destination to the purchase of local services.

Foreign workers

A portal dedicated to culture is an instrument to deepen the knowledge of the context of the country in which they work, as well as tool to discover attractions, itineraries, monuments, events. Foreign workers can represent a source of cultural wealth for Azerbaijan, thanks to the exchange of skills and perspectives that they implement. The portal can promote relationships and exchanges.

Needs of the general audience

	Citizens	Tourists	Foreign workers
Discovery		Need to discover Azerbaijan as a possible travel destination	
Cultural information	Find detailed information on all cultural expressions and heritage	Find detailed information on most important cultural expressions and heritage. Find organized information on thematic tours	Find detailed information on most important cultural expressions and heritage. Find organized information on thematic tours
Practical information	Find information on schedules, costs, discounts, events, tours	Find information on schedules, costs, discounts, events, tours in different languages	Find information on schedules, costs, discounts, events, tours in different languages
Learning	In-depth documents for different school orders and for adults		
Planning	Detailed information on events and cultural seasons of theaters, concert halls, ...	Detailed geolocalised information on travel facilities, services and events	Detailed geolocalised information on travel facilities, services and events. Detailed information on cultural seasons of theaters, concert halls, ...
Buy	Buy ticket and subscription	Buy ticket, book rooms, travel services, travel/tourist cards	Buy ticket, book rooms or travel services; buy subscription
Entertainment	Games and recreational experiences to deepen the knowledge of the culture of the country, to visit museums and places of culture	Games and recreational experiences to deepen the knowledge of the culture of the country, to visit museums and places of culture	Games and recreational experiences to deepen the knowledge of the culture of the country, to visit museums and places of culture

Needs of the general audience

B2B (Business to Business) audience

Companies are another important target of the communication of the Azerbaijani Web Culture Portal, as stakeholders as far as tourism and cultural production are concerned. In B2B, the goal of published content is to help the audience on a professional level. That is why webinars, white papers, case studies and blog articles are the most effective content for reaching this type of customer.

Companies and non-governmental organizations can be divided into 3 categories:

Companies that operate in the cultural sector

They have both the interest to be represented correctly, as strong elements of the cultural system, and the need to find ad hoc services for their business. In this case the goal of the portal must be to develop partnership with them, to strengthen cultural production in Azerbaijan.

Companies in the tourism sector

Their main interest is to find information and tools that facilitate their work. They have to find useful services and strong contents to help them in promoting Azerbaijan as a tourist destination, for its natural and cultural resources.

NGO

Their work in the country must be properly represented; their websites can act as a pivot for the Azerbaijani Web Culture Portal. The needs of NGO won't be further analyzed, because these are very similar to cultural companies' ones.

Needs of B2B sector

	Companies - Culture	Companies - Tourism
Discovery		Foreign tours operators need to discover Azerbaijan as a possible travel destination
Cultural information	Digital register of cultural companies: detailed online mapping of all the companies in the sector	Digital register of tourism companies: detailed online mapping of all the companies in the sector
Practical information	Shared platform in which insert events	Shared platform in which insert tours
Learning	tutorials to deepen the knowledge of the sector	tutorials to deepen the knowledge of the sector
Planning	Detailed geolocalised information on MCT events	Detailed geolocalised information on MCT events

Functions of the innovative Azerbaijani Web Culture Portal

The main functions of the Azerbaijani Web Culture Portal are identified as follows:

1. informative function
2. promotion function
3. education function
4. entertainment function
5. service-based function
6. E-commerce function

1) Informative function

Informative function aims to provide relevant and current information to a wide audience base. It is necessary to rationalize the information provided online and to create simple and obvious routes to that information for all the target audiences. The information function has three main sub-functions:

- **providing information on culture**: rich information at different levels on the entire cultural production of the country and on tangible and intangible heritage. The main purpose is to convey specific, clear and comprehensive information to a specific user/audience so that the reader learns something new or better understands a topic. This information could be targeted on a particular section of the public, to offer direct access to selected information of specific interest to this audience (e.g. citizens, tourists, the scientific community, and the media). A very important way through which information is conveyed is that of images: creating a campaign for images, both on the site, and through social media is essential for two main reasons:

    1) images are one of the elements that search engines classify and therefore allow the users to find the sites they want

    2) the images have a strong emotional value and may arouse curiosity, desire to know, inspire travel.

- **providing practical information**: precise and updated information on museums, theaters, concert halls, (addresses, opening hours, prices), events (duration, price, venues), and contacts. Possibility to search for this information by type and geolocalisation of information. The purpose is to enable visitors to be independent for everything concerning the practical organization of visits, tours, participation in events. Practical information should be easy to find: users should be able to find the information they are looking for without having to be familiar with the internal organizational complexities of the website and of the MCT.

- **news**: regularly updated information concerning the cultural sectors. The purpose is to promote cultural participation of locals and of tourists. Information should be given well in advance to allow tourism promotion agencies to use them, tourists to plan their trip, citizens to plan their cultural programs. We also have to remember that the website is a virtuous circle between users who visit the site and the needs of search engines. The latter are responsible for rewarding all the sites that have a structure ordered in content and that are made to give users certain answers to their needs. In practice, the visibility of a website is the product of the interaction between what Google and other search engines expect from the site and what

users do. Precisely for this reason offering news is an opportunity, as it is shown that the more a site is updated, the more is preferred by users, who often come back. Among the types of news that may be interesting for the various categories of users we find:

1) launch of new products/itineraries/events

2) participation in fairs or other events

3) announcements of communication initiatives (e.g. new press campaign)

4) news related to the sector in which it operates (eg. entry into force of new legislation).

A best practice is CulturaItalia, a heritage to explore (http://www.culturaitalia.it) by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities and Tourism (MiBACT). CulturaItalia offers guided access to the world of Italian culture. Thanks to innovative IT solutions, it collects and organizes millions of information on the resources that make up the rich cultural universe of the country, making it available to users of the Web. Users can discover resources of all kinds that make up the articulated cultural heritage of the country (museums, photographs, libraries, archives, galleries, exhibitions, monuments, films, records, etc.), to satisfy scientific research or simple curiosity.

2) Promotion function

The aim of the function is to increase awareness of the country as a tourist destination. Visitors have to rely on descriptions provided by destinations because tourism products are purchased in advance prior to their use and away from the point of consumption. Given the wide use of new technologies in the search for tourist destinations, it is necessary to have a digital strategy of tourism promotion. This strategy must be able to differentiate the "Azerbaijan" product from the others on the market and is crucial to visitors' satisfaction and destination's competitiveness to give timely and accurate information, relevant to visitors' needs.

Tourist could arrive in Azerbaijan both as individual travelers and through a tour operator in an organized manner. So it is necessary to build different promotion strategy for B2C (most from European countries) and B2B markets (Far East, US and often Persian Gulf countries).

For any promotion strategy it is necessary to know who you're marketing to. The first step it to identify Azerbaijani "buyer personas". Buyer personas represent ideal customer(s) and can be created by researching, surveying, and interviewing potential audience. It's important to note that this information should be based upon real data wherever possible, as making assumptions about the audience can cause the marketing strategy to take the wrong direction. The information that should be gathered are:

1) demographic information (location, age, income if possible, job title)

2) psychographic information (needs, challenges, interests, priorities)

3) business interests in the country.

The website is at the heart of digital marketing, since content and timing could be easily controlled and promotion goals monitored. In tourism and culture promotion field a promotion strategy often used is to

involve bloggers in narrating the country of to involve tourists in providing images and description of the country, via users' generated contents.

A best practice is Terre di Siena, Official Touristic Website - Siena Department (www.terresiena.it). It promotes on the digital Siena Department and its territories for tourists B2B and B2C. Each territory is told and represented through its main characteristics. Some specific targets are also highlighted, among which green tourists, biking tourists, on foot tourists, horse riding, SPA & wellness, families, company meetings, films shooting.

3) Education function

Web sites can have a marked educational function. Some interesting examples are the various online courses platforms as Coursera, Open courseware of MIT, Khan Academy. The Azerbaijani Web Culture Portal could also incorporate an educational function, providing in-depth material suitable for different levels of reading and competences. The Culture Portal may propose documents, video or audio for children and young people, university students, specialists, art or archeology lovers. This function fulfills the learning needs that different categories of people show. Furthermore, the materials produced are elements of territory's promotion, especially for English-speaking countries or those seeking information in English, which may find it more difficult to currently find high-quality content on Azerbaijan in their own language, apart from some sites of private operators..

A best practice is Museo della Scienza, insights section (http://www.museoscienza.org/approfondimenti/). A series of in-depth documents in audio, video, text, photographic or multimedia format made available to users by subject. A space in which to learn by choosing one's own path, one's own curiosities or stimulated by a visit to the Museum.

4) Entertainment function

One of the needs highlighted in the previous analysis is to explore playful, entertaining contents. This type of content is hardly made available by cultural institutions. There is however a current in cultural promotion - playful learning - that is becoming important, which conceives the game as a tool to bring people closer to cultural content.

A best practice is "Father and Son - The Game", by Naples Archeological Museum, the first museum in the world to produce and distribute a video game, free and for all ages. In "Father and Son" the player takes on the role of Michael, a young man who goes to Naples after receiving a letter from his father. In particular, Michael will travel to the National Archaeological Museum of Naples to learn more about his parent's life and the teachings he has left him. Exploring the streets of Naples and the halls of the National Archaeological Museum, the player encounters stories that cross the ages: he will be catapulted in 79 AD in Pompeii in the twenty-four hours that preceded the devastating eruption of Vesuvius, and then he will return in 2018 at the ruins of Pompeii, as a tourist who takes a picture. The game requires to actively visit the city and the Museum, in order to be completed, and thus becomes a playful guide to the city and to understand how it has evolved over time.

5) Service-Based function

The Azerbaijani Web Culture Portal will have to provide a series of services for visitors (tourists and citizens) and for cultural and tourist businesses.

Visitor services may have varying degrees of complexity, but the most important are those that meet the needs of visitors during the planning phase of their journey and those during the journey itself.

In the planning phase, in addition to a good organization of information, it is important to offer all the services that help in building the itinerary (both as tourists and hikers), to identify which sites to visit, to highlight the proposals on the basis of target of belonging (families, mountain lovers, cultural tourists), to find hotels and restaurants. During the journey, in addition to the services provided for the planning, it is useful to provide a series of services and tools designed for the mobile, such as the app already developed by the MCT. These tools must be properly promoted both in commercial establishments such as hotels and restaurants, and on the Azerbaijani Web Culture Portal.

Providing services to cultural and tourism enterprises has as objectives:

- to create a partnership and network with the companies themselves

- to promote the dissemination of the MCT addresses in terms of cultural and tourist promotion

- to gather up-to-date information to propose to citizens and tourists with ease

An up-to-date and comprehensive database of cultural resources, cultural services and events, as well as a rich high-quality media repository, are strategic assets to enforce an effective and sustainable promotion of Azerbaijan's cultural heritage: the database provides the material to be promoted, while the media library provides the quality finish that yields appeal and raises emotions. This is of the utmost importance in the current global tourism market: choosing a destination involves emotions and feelings, as traveling is inherently emotional, and emotions guide decision-making on a destination. Over the past decade Internet and the social media have totally taken over travel marketing and promotion, and significant actions in tourism are performed online, from choosing a destination to making purchasing decisions to reviewing a service. A positive emotional experience will promote social media word-of-mouth and influence positively the destination reputation. An effort to promote Azerbaijan as a tourist destination on the global market will therefore have to focus mostly, if not exclusively, on the internet and on social media. And high-quality, appealing, emotion-raising multimedia information (especially photos and videos) is an indispensable asset for tourism promotion.

From the technical point of view this kind of services requires open systems with a high degree of interoperability.

A best practice (for B2C services) is Trentino Grande Guerra, (http://www.trentinograndeguerra.it/), the official website of the Provincia Autonoma di Trento for the Centenary of the First World War, edited by the Italian War History Museum of Rovereto. From the site you can download an app that allows you to: 1) discover the points of interest and places of the Great War to visit near you, if you are in Trentino; 2) choose between excursions in nature and city walks to discover a still tangible twentieth century; 3) know the events and activities you can participate in; 4) find the best places to stay and where to eat.

A best practice (for B2B services) is CulturaItalia, a heritage to explore (http://www.culturaitalia.it) by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities and Tourism (MiBACT). Information on cultural resources is not produced by the Portal, but is provided directly by the subjects who own and manage the resources. All the actors of the cultural system - public administrations and private companies - can transfer exclusively the "metadata" to the CultureItalia database.

6) E-Commerce function

Tourists and hikers need to purchase a range of products and services that facilitate the visit or that are necessary during the trip. Among these museum tickets, museum cards, hotels, guided tours. The Azerbaijani Web Culture Portal can:

• be a hub, where to find links to specific sites that sell services

• directly sell some of the services.

It is important to remember that the travel and tourism sector turns out to be the most advanced industry in the e-commerce sector at a global level with 25% of the turnover on the network, with more than 45% of online shoppers per year buying tourist products or services (Netcomm UE sources).

People online buy mainly: tickets for planes, trains and ships of long distance routes for personal or business reasons; hotel and holiday reservations. Then there is a growing number of people who buy through offline channels (travel agencies) but only inform themselves on the internet (info-commerce) and are therefore strongly influenced by what they see online in their purchase path. The scenario of online commerce of tourism products turns out to be particularly articulate, and the path of purchase of the related products meets different touch points, both online and offline, which have a different weight in determining the final outcome. Moreover, even when the acquisition decision matures almost exclusively online, the order can be produced in a traditional way and vice versa.

It follows that the travel and tourism sector is the most multichannel of e-commerce: there are numerous purchases that are booked online and sold in the traditional way on delivery but also those booked in the traditional way and sold online. Multi-channel presence becomes fundamental, just as the offer of online services and products is strategic.

Given the organizational complexity of ecommerce in terms of logistics, legal framework, safety of payments, in most cases cultural institutions rely on third parties to perform this function. This is the case, for example, of theaters, which sell passes and tickets on international circuits selling these products, or museums that rely on specialized companies for ticket sales or visits bookings.

The choice of whether to sell directly or rely on third parties is based on a careful analysis of the resources and skills within the MCT. The two best practices presented below illustrate two different ways of doing e-commerce, the first by relying on a third party, the second through this model in an autonomous way. Whatever the final choice, it is essential that the portal is effective in doing info-commerce, being able to provide users with all necessary and effective information in order to make the final purchase, even if on a third site compared to the portal itself.

A best practice is the Genoa Aquarium (https://www.acquariodigenova.it/). On the site you can buy tickets and book the visiting time. In addition, a series of thematic visits are proposed with a double objective: to

attract the public interested in deepening the contents of the Aquarium, to convince visitors to return several times, each time making a different experience.

Another best practice is Internet Culturale (http://www.internetculturale.it/). Internet Culturale portal collects the Catalogs and digital collections of Italian libraries, edited and directed by the Central Institute for the Unique Catalog of Italian libraries, and is the Italian portal for accessing to heritage of Italian libraries. The primary objective of Internet Culturale is to promote the knowledge of the heritage of Italian libraries by offering cultural insights into book collections through digital and multimedia resources dedicated to literary, scientific and musical culture; it is proposed as a reference point for those who are interested in the world of books; as a thematic aggregator of digital content, it aspires to welcome the results of these activities carried out by the entire library community. From 2017 for the first time a central public administration offers an e-commerce service within the Italian Cultural Institutions for exclusive high-definition images of manuscripts, scores, historical photos, through the Internet Culturale portal. Users, with their own credit card can buy previously unpublished digital content on the Internet.

Proposed outlines of Web Culture Portals for MTC Regional Culture and Tourism Departments

Functional and effective design of a system requires focusing attention to users' needs. In this document the term users stands for citizens and tourists willing to enjoy cultural heritage of Azerbaijani regions. This does not mean that citizens and tourists are the sole actors involved in the processes described: many other actors are indeed involved in the process and many of them will need to access and use some components of the architecture described below, i.e. stakeholders such as the management of sites and museums, event organizers, tourism professionals, etc. Within the document, actors acting for the stakeholders involved will be referred to as operators.

Consequently, although operators are the actual users of some of the systems (i.e., museum staff in charge of the data entry for their museum), the use cases were analyzed from the perspective of the final users – i.e. tourists and citizens.

For each of the public and functions we have identified one or more actions to be carried out online, summarized in the table below.

	Informative function	Promotion function	Education function	Entertainment function	Service function	ecommerce function
Citizen, Tourist, Foreign workers	detailed information on key attractors; calendar; news;	Storytelling of the territory; thematic itineraries	Audio, video, text content on tangible and intangible heritage	game to discover the country	address book and map of hotels and restaurants; app	tickets /cards selling point
Companies	relevant news	content and places that are going to be promoted	How to use specific services		Digital register of cultural/tourism companies	link to their selling systems

Some use cases that have been identified to this end are briefly described hereafter.

Getting interested

In order to get interested in visiting a destination and/or enjoying the country's cultural heritage, a user has to make a decision, which can be triggered by one or many motivations. Taking time off from work for recreation and leisure, namely having a holiday and, more often than not, travelling, has been considered by human beings as a very right for the past century now; and travelling means selecting a destination, i.e. a place to spend one's holidays.

Tourism has become a global phenomenon[1] in the 20th century, and it is constantly growing. International tourism arrivals worldwide in 2016 were 1.235 million, and they grew by 6% in January-April of 2017 compared to the same period in the previous year, with business confidence reaching its highest levels in a decade, due to sustained growth in most major destinations. In this global situation, one of the hardest tasks of a tourist destination is to convince the would-be tourist to choose exactly that destination for his or her holidays and, consequently, take the first step and make the necessary steps as purchasing flights and booking accommodation.

Azerbaijan is a country rich in heritage both cultural and natural, and at the same time it is a young independent State that has only recently tackled the enterprise of attracting international tourists. Cultural tourism is one of the most important, probably the most important way to preserve and enhance cultural diversity and authenticity of the cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible: well-oriented tourism policies can sustain cultural pluralism, contribute to the maintenance of heritage, help contrast cultural prejudices and contribute to local development.

Let's assume that the Ismayilli department is going to be the focus of a campaign on the social media to promote cultural itineraries in the area, with special attention to cultural tourism. The operators of the social media team working on the campaign will need high-quality structured multimedia information (texts, pictures, videos, audio, etc.) regarding the cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible, of the department, to post on the social platforms (typically Facebook and Instagram). Some reliable information on the accessibility of the heritage (opening times, cost of tickets, availability of guides) will be also useful, to be inserted in the posts or, most probably, to be linked from the posts to the relevant entries in the database or page of the Web Culture Portal.

The information system can provide all the needed material to carry out the campaign:

- high-quality multimedia items to post, to raise emotion and attract attention to the item (museum, site, single work of art, typical piece of craft, video of craft activity, etc.)

- text descriptions the social media team can draw inspiration from when writing for the social media

- detailed information on accessibility

In case the multimedia information is lacking from the system, and a shooting (photo, video) campaign is commissioned, the relevant material will be acquired in the database to be used in future occasions.

In the case of the Ismayilli region, a series of digital materials can be built on the basis of the main itineraries identified in the Integrated Management Planning document

Theme	Itinerary	Target	Material
The Silk Road	On the tracks of Albanian shepherds-warriors	green/cultural tourists	picture, videos of the spots, opening times, …
	The Golden Age: cities and craftsmanship along the Silk Road	cultural tourists	picture, videos of the spots, opening times, …

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[1] http://media.unwto.org/press-release/2017-07-14/strong-tourism-results-first-part-2017

Theme	Itinerary	Target	Material
	The Mountain Fortress	cultural tourists, mountains lovers	picture, videos of the spots, itineraries stops, walking distances, rest areas, scenic spots, …
Wine production	The Wine Route	wine lovers	guided tours, guided tastings, itineraries in the vineyards, possibility to buy wine, timetables, ...
Health	The Thermal Route	SPA lovers, health tourism	hours, treatments, benefits,…
Nature	Into the wild	Green tourist, hikers, craft lovers	picture, videos of the spots, itineraries stops, walking distances, rest areas, scenic spots, …

Planning a journey/visit

If planning a holiday in the global tourism market usually means buying air tickets and booking accommodation through online travel agencies (OTA), defining the program of a holiday implies gathering information about where to go and what to do during one's stay. The information needed will at first be rather general, and it will have to gradually become more and more detailed (and local) as the planning goes further.

In order to grasp a better knowledge of the country, its region, its cultural heritage and its sights, users need functionalities supporting exploration according to different criteria, including at least exploration by geographic area/location and exploration by topic according to what they want to see and do during their stay (i.e. cultural itineraries in sites and museums, natural experiences, historical routes, traditional crafts, shopping, local products, practicing sport etc.). Each and every user is typically interested in more than one topic (i.e. visiting archaeological sites and witnessing local crafts, or hiking along historical routes and tasting local products), but one topic will generally prevail, generating product-oriented segmentation such as cultural tourism, adventure tourism, wine tourism, etc.

In the geographic approach users select a (geographic) region or an area around a given location, whereas in the topic-based approach they select one or more topics of interest from a predefined set (archaeology, nature, crafts). Users may then apply additional filters to further focus the exploration (e.g. relevance/rating, suited for children) to identify places and sights that match their personal preferences. Users can be offered the possibility to drill down further, and explore a single item: read the description, view any related image and/or video, acquire any detailed information useful to decide whether to include the item in the journey/visit.

Once users have identified the main goal(s) and destination of their visit, they will need further information to draft a program or, better, a schedule of which places to visit and in what order: they will need travel times between different sights, identification of possible accommodation at stop-overs, availability of services, and they will have to make sure if a site or museum is open, if guided tours are available and how they work, how to visit a crafts laboratory, where to buy traditional objects.

It is worth mentioning that, in performing the exploration, the user might resort to more traditional query forms/filtering widgets as well as to map navigation, usually intermingling the two.

To support the user in explorations as outlined above, the application requires that the underlying information systems adequately index and deliver information. This drives precise technical requirements and constraints in the development and integration of the different components.

Let's assume a user has got to know about some places on a social network, following a travel blogger. The Web Culture Portal will clearly show the possibility to navigate by selecting a region on the map. The map has to be specifically designed to support this kind of navigation featuring a simple design and clearly showing regions and outstanding (i.e. most known) sights such as– i.e cities, monuments, reserves.

A selection of most relevant items is shown for each applicable category; users are allowed to expand the lists ("see more" link/button) and scan them for items that meet their preferences. Although users are allowed to refine search by browsing further and/or applying a set of filters, it is of paramount importance to immediately capture their attention.

The user can get detailed information for any item; details may vary depending on the category each item belongs to. While users are browsing/expanding the list and/or applying filters, the map is updated to reflect their actions and choices. Along with exploration of sights in the area, users also have access to information concerning resources and services that, though not being the main driver for their visit, are necessary to implement it; these include accommodation, food, transportation.

On site information search/request

Once users have reached their selected holiday destination, they will typically need further information, completing what they gathered before traveling, so that they can enjoy their stay at the best. This situation is of the utmost importance for the tourist experience and the ensuing reputation of the destination as, once they are on site, visitors consider the destination (i.e. the, generally public, organization managing the main cultural attractions and the information network system and, on a broader scale, the whole destination with all its public and private stakeholders) totally responsible for the quality of their experience.

A wrong piece of information will generally spoil an otherwise positive travel experience, especially if it triggers a disappointing event: the typical example is wanting: *to visit a site or museum > searching for information about its opening times > trusting the retrieved information > planning a visit accordingly > getting to the museum or site > eventually finding out that it is closed*. This is true whether the incorrect information is retrieved online, or is provided by an operator at an information desk, or dispensed via a device, such as mobile apps or digital signage on premise (at a museum, at the station, in the hotel lobby).

This means that guaranteeing validated information regarding the accessibility of cultural resources (first of all exact location and how to get there, opening times, price of entrance ticket) is absolutely relevant for the tourist experience on site and for the possible consequences on the destination reputation, that will influence the development of a vigorous internal and international tourism.

Furthermore, when users are on site and look for more information to enrich their experience, whether it is at an info point or on line, it is possible to interact proactively with them, suggesting additional experiences, such as a visit to an attraction, or an event, or an excursion, which users might have missed if they had not

been mentioned to them. Proactivity is always a useful tool, as it ensures that the user feels cared for in a individually customized way; if offered via devices, relying on simple profiling techniques, it can retrieve data which can be useful to guide subsequent editorial decisions on the portal structure and content.

Let's assume a user is staying in Ismayilli and that finds out the Lahij historical-cultural reserve, with its coherent, unique urban fabric made up of 19th century residential houses. He decides to visit it and needs to know how to get there. Users will have the possibility of asking the operators of an info-point, possibly at the Ismayilli district cultural centre, a culture club that has been proposed for non privatisation; or they might decide to browse a dedicated app while in Ismayilli, or check out on a leaflet published by the same culture club. The operators at the Ismayilli district cultural centre, after providing information on how to get to Laji and when to go to enjoy it at most, will also have the option of proactively proposing a visit to the local culture club (Laji settlement handicraft club, also proposed for non privatisation), mentioning the fact that Lahij village is renowned for its production of arms and copper items decorated with carved ornaments.

Providing an expansion of the app, already developed and tested for Baku, on the territory of the entire country would be of great use to supply services while tourists are on place. It is recommended to pay great attention to the georeferencing of the places, in order to respond effectively to the needs of the visitors.

Conclusion

As reminded in the introduction, Azerbaijani MCT has already started moving from a static digital environment to a dynamic one, designing and building knowledge and content management infrastructures that allow now to design a more dynamic website, able to connect to different databases and to provide services of great use to citizens, tourists, scholars, companies.

The next necessary step will be a recognition of the resources and skills needed to complete this process, taking into account the technological specifications of the system currently in use.

It will be necessary to clearly outline the priorities in terms of:

- public to which service is intended

- contents to be developed

- services to be implemented and managed

in order to build a road map of the digital transformation of the MCT to meet tourists' need and to improve promotion and international visibility.