
PUBLICITY FOR EXHIBITIONS IN
MUSEUMS OF MODERN AND
CONTEMPORARY ART

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Introduction

My interest towards the modern and contemporary art is quite recent. I have always believed that being Italian influenced this attitude. Art was Caravaggio, Leonardo, Tiziano, Canaletto, masters of the Italian tradition. But I always felt the weight of my lack of knowledge and interest for more recent art, for more difficult art, and for who nowadays is making art.

And then I started to attend exhibitions of contemporary art and becoming more interested, more informed. This new fascination was still developing when I started my academic year at the Erasmus University and it met my interest for Marketing and in particular for promotion.

Art museums carry such an inestimable cultural capital, which often is not managed at the best of its possibilities. Promotion is built to create awareness in different ways and one of its instruments is publicity.

Publicity does not even have an exact translation in Italian. It was a concept that I had not take into consideration attentively before. But I thought it was interesting and challenging and a huge resource for the promotion of a museum.

This thesis is the result of the meeting of two different passions, the arts and marketing.

Chapter I

Museum Marketing and Publicity

The American Association of Museums defines the museum as an institution that is “organized as a public or private non-profit institution, existing on a permanent basis for essentially educational and aesthetic purposes,” that “cares for and owns or uses tangible objects, whether animate or inanimate, and exhibits these on a regular basis,” that “has at least one professional staff member or the full-time equivalent,” and “is open to the general public on a regular basis...at least 120 days per year” (American Association of Museums, 1994, pp.18-19).

Museums preserve and immortalize a multiplicity of values, images and attitudes (McLean,1997): museums permit the visitor to encounter objects of beauty and interest and, at the same time, to learn about said objects through the research addressing the collection and the exhibitions (Kotler, Kotler, 1998).

Historically, museums have evolved from institutions accessible only to elites, to broader-based public institutions. Until the twentieth century, the focus of museums was on preserving the collection for future generations. Nowadays, the purpose of museums is, on one hand, to provide informational and educational resources and programs, and on the other, to provide attractive and haunting museum experiences (Kotler, Kotler, 1998).

The shift towards considering the experience as a product that the museum provides to its visitors, contributes to the treatment of visitors as “customers” capable of judging the quality of the museum and its services (Kotler, Kotler, 1998).

There are different types of museums (Kotler, Kotler, 1998): for instance history museums, science museums, natural history museums, anthropological and ethnographic museums, zoological parks and botanical gardens, children and youth museums, community and ethnic museums, specialty museums, general museums, encyclopaedic museums and art museums. These various types of museums share similar characteristics and differ in others, but in this paper we are going to focus only on art museums and specifically on museum of modern and contemporary art.

Art museums have gone through a slower process of evolution than science and history museums, but they appear to give more emphasis to education (Kotler, Kotler, 1998). Moreover the recent phenomenon of blockbuster exhibitions has increased both the visibility of the art museums and interest in the arts, and has attracted a larger audience.

According to Kotler and Kotler (1998) there are two audiences with whom art museums deal: on one hand, there are patrons, collectors, and donors who contribute to sustain the museum and visitors, and on the other, there are members and the general public. Museums demonstrate a division of labour between the needs of the patrons and those of the visitors. Collecting a large amount of precious and expensive works of art helps in increasing the attention and involvement of

patrons and collectors. According to Kotler and Kotler (1998), the high price of works of art present in museums is considered to be proportional to the level of involvement of patrons and collectors, and consequently increases their social status. Besides museums deal with the general public through promotion (advertising, publicity, special events, and so on) and through educational programmes. As a matter of facts instead, there is another audience to be taken into account: mass media and journalist. Mass media take part in the process of publicity and manage the information that the museum wants to promote. It is clear that the real audience are still the visitors, but since the communication process of publicity does not reach directly the public, the publicity message must be built in order to attract both the potential visitors and the media representatives.

According to McLean (1997), in recent years, the number of art museums has increased and, consequently, attendance per museum has decreased. In order to attract more visitors and additional funding, the museum must generate enough interest among an adequate variety of people who are interested in visiting the museum more than once and are willing to finance the museum and its activities (McLean, 1997). Furthermore, financing bodies want to see statistics that demonstrate that the museum is effective and productive; in other words, they want evidence that the public judges the museum worthy of visiting. Marketing helps the museum to face these problems.

Brief Introduction of Marketing

Marketing is a process that brings together an organization and people, whether it is for profit, to satisfy their needs or wants, or to increase visitors (McLean, 1997). Marketing develops a process of exchange between those who ask for a product or a service, and those who can supply that product or service. Individuals have an assortment of needs and wants they want to fulfil (self-esteem, food and shelter, education, sociability, entertainment, a certain standard of living, creative achievement, and so on), and those can be satisfied by purchasing products or services (Kotler, Kotler, 1998).

Marketing works through a series of tools: these tools are applied in order to simplify the exchange transaction between the organization and its customers and to establish a marketing analysis (McLean, 1997). Marketing addresses four issues: the market, the environment, the marketing information system (MIS), and the marketing mix (Colbert, 2001).

Market: the group of consumers expressing desires and needs for products, services, or ideas. The market can be divided into segments in order to represent the different consumers' tastes and needs.

Environment: the internal and external restrictions that affect the market and the firm. The environment is composed of the internal environment, the market environment, the regulatory environment, the competitive environment, and the macro-environment.

Marketing Information System: consists of three key components, which are internal data, secondary data published by private firms or government agencies, and external data collected by the company itself. The marketing information system can aim, for example, at determining consumer purchasing habits or preferences, or to test public reaction to advertising.

Marketing Mix: consists of the *product* that is offered; the *price* charged in the exchange, both the amount and how it is paid; the *place*/distribution of the product, or when, where, and how the product is delivered to the consumer; and the *promotion*, the nature of the messages communicated to the prospective customers and influencers about the organization and its product, as well as the means by which these messages are transmitted.

Museum Marketing

The extent to which museums have adopted marketing varies quite widely between nations and between museums (McLean, 1997). Marketing has been often accused of ignoring the consumer, of rejecting social relations and, in particular, of negating any notion of individual self-fulfilment, because its aim seems to be simply satisfying the needs of the predominant ideology (McLean, 1997).

In some cases, museums seem still to be production-orientated, believing that marketing is simply promotion or the role of a publicity officer (McLean, 1997). In other cases, marketing is dismissed as being commercial: whereas commercialization becomes its focus only when the goal of the organization is to commercialize. The need for funding should not modify the goals of a museum in order to answer financial market pressures. When it comes to Museum marketing, marketing aims to ensure that the goal of the museum is achieved and therefore is not simply a commercial tool. The museum should not be market-driven, instead it should establish a clear goal to be pursued, which would then become an attitude of mind throughout the organization, gradually transmitted into actions (Lewis, 1991).

The purpose of Museum marketing is to build a relationship between the museum and the public, and to achieve the museum's purpose regarding its public. Marketing is guided by and follows the purposes of the museum and creates the opportunities in which these purposes can be realized (McLean, 1997).

According to Costa and Bamossy (1995) the museum and its management should focus on the authenticity and protection of the object (with respect to the curators, the boards of directors, other museums, and any other academic-, scholarship-, or class-based audience). On the other hand, the museum should pursue a policy of democratization of education, knowledge and access to the

object while still maintaining control over its authenticity (with respect to the lay public on whom the museum must increasingly rely for economic and political support).

Audiences, segmentation, and positioning

According to Kotler and Kotler (1998), to understand the audiences, the managers need to learn why many people never visit, why other people visit occasionally, and why still others visit regularly. Managers must therefore investigate the process through which museum audiences - and potential audiences - make decisions on how to spend their free time. Museums offer unique and distinctive activities and experiences, and managers have to increase the visibility and appeal of their offerings in order to compete with alternative leisure activities and attract larger and broader audiences.

Each museum attempts to identify its most natural audiences and undertakes specific efforts to reach and serve them. There are different approaches to the market that a museum can take (Kotler, Kotler, 1998):

1. Mass marketing: it pays little attention to differences in consumer behaviour or preferences.
2. Segmentation marketing: the museums define groups that they want to attract and then run different programs for the targeted segments. Segmentation marketing can cover several market segments.
3. Niche marketing: it focuses on serving only one or a few groups rather than trying to attract a large number of segments
4. Segment-of-one marketing: it is practiced by museums that seek to know a lot about each member so as to serve that member better.

In case of different segments, usually the strategy adopted is called “concentrated marketing strategy” in which the socio-demographic variables and the benefits – as perceived by the consumers – are taken into account (Colbert, 2001). This strategy follows two steps. Once a museum has identified relevant segments and decides which segments to target, it then has to deal with the matter of positioning.

So, according to Colbert (2001), one of the stages of segmentation is to clarify which are the needs of specific parts of the audience of a museum. After the analysis of its audiences, the museum chooses one or more segments. In case of a market with heterogeneous needs, the choice is usually between addressing different segments with different products or to concentrate only on one segment (Colbert, 2001)

The other stage of segmentation is positioning (Colbert, 2001). Positioning is “the act of designing an organizational image, values, and offerings, so that consumers understand, appreciate, and are drawn to what the organization stands for in relation to its competitors” (Kotler, Kotler; 1998, p.134). Positioning is a strategic concept, for when the market structure is known. (Colbert, 2001). Positioning can be conducted by defining the position of the product in relation with the

competitors – “product differentiation” – or the product is decided on the basis of the needs of the selected segment (Colbert, 2001).

Usually the market is interested in several cultural products that address the same segment, give the same benefits in the same arc of time. In order to win the competition it is necessary to add other benefits (Colbert, 2001).

Strategic Market Planning Process

Marketing the museum usually starts with developing a marketing strategy. The strategic market planning process allows the museum to shape, plan and implement its mission, offerings, and market to be served. It consists of: an environmental analysis, an internal resources analysis, mission and goal formulation, and strategy formulation.

Environmental analysis: its aim is to analyze the environments in which any marketing plan must operate. Museums operate in five different environments (Kotler, Kotler, 1998):

1. Internal environment: the organizational life of a museum and its internal publics (museum board, director, staff, advisory board, volunteers).
2. Market environment: groups and organizations (visitors, members, community residents, stakeholders, activists, media, and so on) with whom the museum works to accomplish its mission.
3. Regulatory environment: groups and organizations (government, regulatory, and accrediting agencies) with an interest in how the museums conforms to laws, rules, and regulations.
4. Competitive environment: groups and organizations that compete with the museum for the attention and loyalty of customers and donors.
5. Macro-environment: forces and conditions (demographic, economic, technological, political, and social).

Internal resources analysis: marketers must assess a museum’s external opportunities and threats in relation to its internal resources. Museums have to review their internal resources and capabilities regarding marketing in each operational area. The museum does not have to correct all of its weaknesses, it rather settles on a strategy of rectifying certain weaknesses that relate to specific opportunities.

Formulating mission, objectives, and goals: any organization can benefit from a SWOT¹ analysis of its strengths and weaknesses in relation to its opportunities and threats. This analysis provides a background and stimulus for management thinking regarding the museum’s basic mission, objectives, and goals.

The mission is the purpose of the organization, what the organization aims to accomplish. A *mission* can be to attain a certain image or niche in the marketplace, a better quality of products and

¹ SWOT Analysis is a strategic planning tool used to evaluate the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats involved in a project or in a business venture or in any other situation of an organization or individual requiring a decision in pursuit of an objective.

services, or a larger market share. Related to mission are the concepts of *vision* and *value*. *Vision* is what the organization wants to be or become, and it reflects the organization's priorities. *Value* consists of the core beliefs and norms of the organization, what it holds to be fair, just, and desirable.

The organization always has a potential set of relevant (quantitative) *objectives*, that follow from the mission and the vision and its task is to make choices among these objectives. Some examples of objectives that a museum might pursue are (Kotler, Kotler, 1998): *surplus maximization* (to accumulate as much cash surplus as possible); *revenue maximization* (it helps to communicate to the donors about the good work the museum is doing); *usage maximization* (granting institutions and other contributors typically look at a museum's visitor level and membership to determine funding support); *capacity targeting* (organizations with fixed service capacities typically set their price and marketing expenditures to produce an audience that can be handled by the existing capacity); *budget maximization* (many organizations act as if they are attempting to maximize the size of their staff, the number of programs offered, and the number of markets reached and therefore search for grant and donations without fully considering their ability to use contributed funds effectively). The objectives chosen by an organization then have to be developed and transformed into the operational and measurable form of *goals*.

The next step to be made by the museum is the *formulation of a marketing strategy*. Its purpose is to assist the organization to achieve its goals in a changing environment. There are two alternatives in strategy formulation (Kotler, Kotler, 1998):

Product portfolio strategy: the museum examines its current offerings, products, and services to determine which ones it should build, maintain, reduce, or finish.

Product and market expansion strategy: the museum then examines new products and new markets that it can expand to.

Marketing Mix

As said before, marketing works through a series of tools: these tools are applied in order to simplify the exchange transaction between the organization and its customers and to establish a marketing analysis (McLean, 1997). Once the marketing information system (MIS) is swallowed, a marketing mix is going to be applied. In the case of more segments more mixes are established.

As mentioned before, the Marketing Mix is constituted by: product, price, place, and promotion. The success of a marketing strategy is based on the balance of these variables since they are "controllable" (Colbert, 2001).

Product

The product is the foundation of every marketing strategy. The museum products are: exhibitions, educational activities, and merchandise. Exhibitions are a complex product because of the notion of aesthetics and the involvement of a subjective, non-quantifiable element related to taste.

According to Colbert (2001) cultural goods tend to be considered specialty goods and are defined by three dimensions: referential, technical and circumstantial. The *referential* dimension describes the possibility of the consumer to compare the product according to different references – other shows by the same artist, other shows in the same museum, etc. The *technical* dimension refers to the material and technical components of the product: the cultural product is very complex and often requires a previous knowledge to be consumed correctly. The *circumstantial* dimension refers to the temporary circumstances in which the product is consumed.

The launching of a new product, for example a new exhibition, represents a risk for any museum. There are three factors that determine the high level of risk experienced by the museum in launching a new product (Colbert,2001):

- the impossibility of pre-testing a newly launched product;
- a planned limited life cycle;
- the inability to stock the product.

Price

Museums offer a range of benefits and values (learning, recreation, sociability, experiences) that can command a price in the marketplace (Kotler, Kotler, 1998). In the past museums were for free, but nowadays, museums that are compelled to raise revenues in the marketplace to supplement or replace subsidies and public-sector support, have to face the problem of revenue-raising objectives. Strategies of pricing should reflect the ideas of segmenting, targeting pricing in relation to competitors and linking prices to specific benefits and incentives. As a result, museums sometimes have to balance revenue-raising and pricing objectives with their educational and public service missions. Museum nowadays put a general price for the museum, offer a range of discounts, and charge high prices for special exhibitions.

Place

The Place variable consists of three distinct elements (Colbert,2001):

Distribution channels include all those who contribute in the process of bringing the product from the manufacturer to the end consumer. The way in which the consumer gain access to the product decides the best distribution channel. In case of an exhibition, the product is interested by a collective consumption – the consumers must gather in the same place at a certain time. Generally speaking, the distribution can be direct – from the producer to the consumer - or indirect – from the producer through one or more intermediaries. Usually museums are their own distribution channel.

Physical distribution consists of all the logistics and movement involved in bringing a product accessible to the consumer, such as shipping, warehousing, inventory management, and so on. This aspect is not often relevant to museums. Merchandise and travelling expositions come to mind here.

Commercial location is the choice of a physical site where the product will be bought or consumed by the customer. The opening hours, location with respect to public transport for instance, and the

presence of clusters can influence the behaviour of consumers. This happens only once in a lifetime. The place instrument for museums, then, is not very relevant.

Promotion

Promotion is the fourth variable of the Marketing Mix. Promotion is of vital importance in building and maintaining audiences and it is the means through which a museum communicates with its target markets. According to Colbert (2001) promotion can be used to create or “modify perceptions, attitudes, knowledge and awareness. As such, promotion can educate the consumer about a product in varying degrees. It can also adjust consumer attitudes by turning indifference into desire or transforming negative perceptions into positive ones” (Colbert, 2001, p.170). Since the lack of awareness is considered one of the key reasons why people do not visit museums, promotion works in order to solve this problem.

The communication programme of the promotion variable is constituted by four steps (McLean, 1997):

1. the identification of the target audience, which happens in the process of segmentation; each audience must be clearly defined.
2. the determination of promotion objectives.
3. the development of the message.
4. the selection of the communications mix.

The main promotional objectives usually are (McLean, 1997):

- to inform, to persuade, and to remind.
- developing and enhancing the image of the museum.
- informing potential users about the museum and its relevant attributes.
- reminding users about the museum on an ongoing basis.
- reminding patrons and donors of the value of the museum.
- developing motivation and commitment amongst employees.

After having set the objectives, a message has to be decided upon. One approach, for instance, is to follow the AIDA formula, which aims to attract Attention, to create Interest, to generate Desire, and to provoke Action (actual purchase). Another example is the hierarchy of effects model (Lavidge and Steiner, 1961) where the receiver of the message moves through a number of sequential stages in relation to the message:

1. Awareness: the potential user becomes aware that he or she has a need that must be satisfied and that there are ways of satisfying it.
2. Knowledge: it is known that the need exists, and interest is developed in learning about it.
3. Liking: the potential user begins to understand what is being offered, and recognises the benefits involved;
4. Preference: the potential user compares alternatives; opinions and preferences are formed.

5. Conviction: the potential user now not only has a preference for a course of action, but also a conviction for demanding it, although he or she has not yet decided to act.
6. Action: the potential user acts on his conviction to bring forward an act of purchase.

So a message has to be developed. This process can be divided into four phases (McLean, 1997):

1. Content: what to say;
2. Structure: how to say it logically;
3. Style: creating a strong presence;
4. Source: who should develop it.

In the next phase of the communication planning the museum needs to decide what proportion of its marketing budget should be allotted to the promotional activities and, consequently, should decide upon the promotional mix.

Promotional Mix

Because of the importance of the promotion instrument for the marketing of museums I will now delve a bit in the promotional mix. The promotional mix is a combination of tools, which an organization uses to communicate with its target audiences. A particular combination has to be chosen, because several tools exist that can be used for the promotion of the museum. They might be mixed in several ways. Several promotional mixes are possible. (McLean, 1997):

Corporate identity: the style and content of a museum's exhibition programming. The culture of the museum and how it is perceived both by outsiders and by those working within it. The corporate identity is often expressed by a museum's logo and the graphic style of printed information.

Personal selling: in museums the only personal contact that users have is usually with attendants or shop and café assistants, so it is important that these employees are chosen carefully and are trained effectively. The importance of recruiting and training, and of giving employees a sense of purpose is a positive aspect of the marketing of the museum product.

Promotional literature: consists of leaflets and posters. The distribution of the promotional literature can be run for display in the museum, or other museums or libraries, or can be run by independent agencies, tourist information centres, hotels, organizations associated with a particular community group, or through direct mail. The design of the printed material is crucial. As publicly distributed literature tends to be passive, it is important to try and elicit a response in order to evaluate the effectiveness of this tool. The effectiveness of the literature should be monitored where possible, through survey research, or merely by verbally asking visitors how they found out about the museum. Effectiveness of distribution should also be monitored. It is worth offering an incentive to a volunteer to make spot checks on the stock of leaflets and positioning of posters in the venues where they were distributed. Museums should also be aware of the developments of technology (e-mail, internet) and be ready to capitalise on them.

Direct mail: a relatively recent technique, which has been adopted by *arts museums*. Direct mail is an excellent way of promoting directly to specific target groups. The main advantage of using direct mail is that it allows the museum to build continuing relationships with its users. If the museum keeps in touch with its users, making them feel personally involved in the museum, then they are more likely to become loyal users. It can be included as a benefit for joining a Friends scheme – invitations to private viewings, receiving literature about up-and-coming events.

Sales promotion: these are incentives to use the museum. Special promotions can help to attract new users, to encourage repeat visits, and to encourage purchases from the shop or catering facilities. It is associated with the “hard sell” approach, which, particularly if it is seen as too commercial, can be inappropriate for the image of the museum. However, if used carefully and without being too pushy it can be an effective promotional medium. Sales promotion includes: discounts and complimentary purchases, such as cups of coffee in the café, discounts on entrance to exhibitions, free offers and competitions, special events and joint promotions.

Advertising: the most expensive and least cost-effective way to promote a museum. Advertising is any paid form of impersonal communication that is intended to inform and persuade. Museums may advertise to build a good corporate image, to increase usage, to counteract competition, and to inform of new exhibitions, events, and so on. The main advantage of advertising is that complete control is retained over the content of the message, which is not the case in editorial coverage. Key elements in defining advertising objectives are (Govoni and colleagues, 1986):

- a concise definition of the target audience;
- a clear statement of the desired response or responses to be generated among the target audience;
- an expression of goals in quantitative terms;
- a projection of achievements attributable to advertising;
- an expressed understanding of advertising’s role with respect to the rest of the promotion programme;
- an acknowledgement that the goals are demanding yet achievable;
- a statement of time constraints.

Having defined the objectives, an advertising strategy can be developed, which would include (McLean, 1997):

- the purpose;
- the target audience;
- the budget;
- the content;
- the media to be used;
- the frequency of advertisement;
- the measure of effectiveness.

The purpose of advertising will determine the measure of its effectiveness. However, it can be difficult to track effectiveness without some kind of response mechanism, such as a voucher or a coupon. The advertising is best undertaken with the advice of an agency. The message needs to be kept simple, clear and precise since advertisements can only signal a very limited amount of information, which should be first of all dates, times, addresses and telephone numbers. In order to reach the target audience, the museum needs to know which newspapers, magazines, and programmes they read, watch, or listen to. The idea is to use the medium that reaches the largest number of the target number in the most cost-effective way. To achieve impact, it is more effective to use display advertisements, which, are large spaces in specified places, rather than classified advertising, which is usually only single column width.

Advertising has often been considered not suitable for arts because of its commercial nature.

Public relations: “the planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain goodwill between an organization and its publics” (British Institute of Public Relations). Public relations are concerned with building or maintaining image, supporting the other communication activities, handling problems and issues, reinforcing positioning, influencing specific publics, and assisting with the launch of new exhibitions, facilities, and so on.

The design of a public relations programme includes: publications (press releases, annual reports, brochures, posters, articles, employee reports), events (press conferences, seminars, speeches, conferences), stories that create media coverage, and exhibitions at museum conferences. Publicity, or un-paid media coverage, is probably the most popular form of public relations work conducted by museums (McLean, 1997). It is the subject of this thesis. That is the reason to spend the following paragraph on this promotional instrument.

So far we have mentioned six promotional tools, as McLean (1997) has them: corporate image, personal selling, promotional literature, direct mail, public relations and advertising. Kotler (1998) mentions especially advertising, pr, personal selling and sales promotion.

Publicity

When it comes to museums some more tools have to be mentioned, because they are often used by them: word of mouth, publicity and events.

Word of mouth. In the scope of promotion it is necessary to also take into account external sources of communication such as word of mouth for instance. Several writers, including Young (1981) have suggested that word of mouth communication is more important than advertising for services. Positive or negative word of mouth communication will then influence the extent to which others use the museum. Negative experiences tend to have a greater impact than positive experiences. Negative word of mouth communication can significantly reduce the impact of other forms of communication, while positive word of mouth means that less communication is required.

The museum obviously cannot control the communication generated by external sources, but can seek to influence it. And this is the role of publicity.

Publicity is concerned with building or maintaining image, supporting the other communication activities, handling problems and issues, reinforcing positioning, influencing specific publics, and assisting with the launch of new exhibitions, facilities, and so on. Press releases and conferences, speeches and presentations, free air-time on radio or television, and general media coverage are all examples of publicity (Colbert, 2001).

According to Luyten (1994) publicity happens to have more credibility and impact than advertising. People are more receptive to an argument when they perceive this argument to be objective, because they do not feel like they are being persuaded. By presenting information in the form of a critical discourse, the beholder is not as wary of subjective information. In this misperception, the message can have more impact than if it were expressed through advertising.

Some of the tools that are used by the publicity department to carry out its activities are (Luyten, 1994):

News: According to McLean (1997) consumers are five times more likely to be influenced by news and editorial copy than by advertising. Publicity can obtain the attention of people who avoid paid messages because it based on credibility (Horton, 2006). People are more receptive to an argument when they perceive this argument to be objective, because they do not feel like they are being persuaded (Luyten, 1994). By presenting information in the form of a critical discourse, the beholder is not as wary of subjective information. In this misperception, the message can have more impact than if it were expressed through advertising. Nevertheless, publicity complements advertising by reinforcing messages and legitimizing claims, and by telling the story in greater depth.

The museum needs to find or create favourable news coverage about its collections and exhibitions (Luyten, 1994). The more the press is cultivated, the more likely it is to give better coverage to the museum: on one hand, the museum needs the press to promote itself, on the other, the press is always seeking stories that are interesting. The news is also helpful in developing connections in the world of art critics, and in nurturing the public's interest in new artists (Luyten, 1994).

On the other hand, there is no control over the content of publicity, although often journalists transcribe word for word a good press release. Therefore museums can try to influence the external sources (McLean, 1997). The media have the final say in deciding which channel to use to diffuse the news and in which format. On the basis of the channel, the price and the quality of the message change. For example, publicity on television requires a vivid, lively, colourful event and a good speaker; publicity on the radio instead needs a good speaker to come up with interesting anecdotes (McLean, 1997). According to McLean (1997) photo-calls are a way to attract media attention because they give a real sense of involvement. While with a press release journalists can actually change the meaning against the will of the museum, pictures cannot be manipulated so easily. The use of pictures moreover attracts broader media formats like television or magazines.

The key then, to good publicity, is having a good press release and developing relationships with journalists. That is the public relations side of publicity. It is important to have journalists on the museum's side, because, contrary to public opinion, all publicity is not good publicity. The media will be quick to give coverage when things go wrong (McLean, 1997).

Events: Typical events are: openings of a recent collection or of a new exhibition, news about the museum, conferences, speeches, and presentation. The members of the mailing list receive an invitation to come to the exhibition: the press office supports and accompanies the exhibition with a catalogue. In museums of contemporary art, regular exhibitions and their promotion are more important than what they are in established art museums: a contemporary artist has to be brought to people's attention. Big and well-organized events are an indicator of the experience and ability of a museum.

Promotional literature: Moreover one has to come back on the topic promotional literature in this paragraph, because it is intensely used in the art museum world. It mainly consists of: leaflets, posters, catalogues, and books in relation to the museum and all its activities and events. The promotional material should be produced in relation to both the permanent collection and to new exhibitions. It is an expensive tool, but a well-written and illustrated catalogue is considered to be an important way of presenting the museum. In the case of contemporary art museums, the publication of written material acts as a form of legitimization for the artists exposed and, consequently, for the museum.

So when it comes to determine a promotional approach and choosing between the different promotional tools in order to compose the promotional mix for particular arts museums three more promotional tools have to be taken into consideration. Apart from the conventional ones, word of mouth, publicity, and events are serious candidates to be included in the promotional mix of an arts museum.

This thesis is focused exclusively on the aspect of publicity related to the news, therefore the analysis that follows, will not take into account the word of mouth, the events and the promotional literature as part of the publicity process.

The free-publicity process

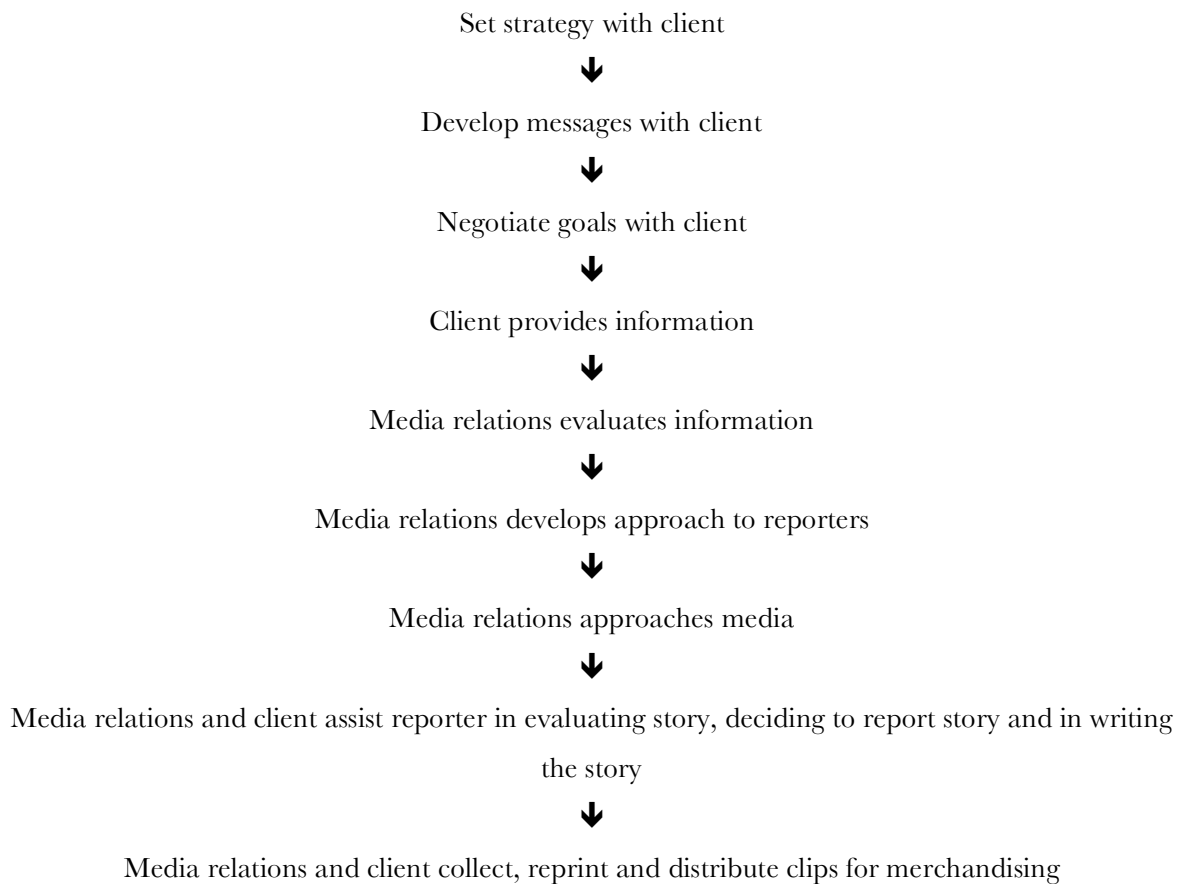
Free publicity is a process that starts with the creation of a press release about an event related to the museum and all its activities. The publicity officer then tries to reach all the media that belong to the desired media list. The product of free-publicity is to obtain wide, positive and favourable editorial and listings coverage from the media².

According to Horton (2006), the general publicity process should be based on the following steps:

Set objective with client



² This thesis is focused mainly on free-publicity, therefore, except when explained explicitly, with the term "publicity" we refer to "free-publicity"



The process should start with an identification by the client of which are his objectives and its target groups. The information is then developed into a strategy with the client in order to set which goals to be achieved, which messages to send to the target audience and which tasks to be performed. According to Horton (2006), publicity programs often fail because the first four steps are not followed correctly.

To put into action publicity program the client should provide to the publicity – or media, press, public relations - officers, the information to develop the publicity campaign. The publicity officers should then choose the journalists to contact in relation to the journalist's experience and knowledge. If the information cannot find interest in the media, the publicity officer should develop with the client a different way to promote the information, which can be done for instance by developing a story that may attract the media, by writing a new release or creating a special event.

When the means to attract the media have been decided, the publicity officers should contact the media and try to make them interested with a story. The publicity officers then should keep a constant contact with the reporters until the story appears on the media.

If the story appears, the publicity officers should measure the results in order to verify if the goals have been achieved.

Now these recommendations are very general and not very relevant ones. When it comes to the publicity of an art museum, the publicity officer acts independently from any consultant and follows

special methods and techniques. These methods and techniques we would like to discover, because they are nowhere described as yet.

Conclusions

In this chapter we have discussed the definition of museums and in particular of museums of modern and contemporary art. We have then introduced the concept of marketing and especially of museum marketing. After a brief introduction about the ways in which the use of marketing is perceived by museums, we described how marketing is practically applied to museums. We discussed the Strategic Planning Market process, in order to give an overview of how a museum can deal with its market and which are some of the objectives that can be achieved. The Marketing mix and its four components have been then introduced, with a particular attention to promotion. Promotion has been discussed especially with regard to advertising and the other promotion instruments, in order to show the main differences between an advertising campaign and other promotion activities. The last part of the chapter has been devoted to publicity: we discussed why it is an important instrument of the public relations.

As the reader can see, publicity in the museum marketing literature is taken to be an element of public relations while advertising is not. Where publicity however seems to perform the same function for museums as advertising does for profit-companies, we certainly have a good reason to analyze more in depth free-publicity.

Chapter 2

Free-Publicity Practice

“The media and businesses in the arts are like the rhinoceros and the tick bird: they need each other. Businesses connected with the arts rely heavily on publicity and critical comment for their success. For this reason, they need to cultivate a usually close relationship with the media. The media, in turn, rely on information as the raw material for their stories and appreciate a high level of professionalism in their sources, since it makes their own efforts easier and their final product better.” (p.71)

As we have mentioned in Chapter 1, marketing literature contains scarce information pertaining to publicity. Very often this tool is merely considered as part of Public Relations, while, especially in the case of museum marketing, it is used extensively and represents a fundamental instrument for the promotion of museums and their exhibitions. The most important characteristic of publicity, which distinguishes it from advertising, is that the public perceives it as a third-party endorsement. If an article related to an exhibition appears in a magazine, the reader assumes that the journalist and the editor thought it worth featuring.

In this chapter we provide an overview of different aspects of publicity, aspects that we investigate through six case studies in the following chapters. We show four different models that can be used to define the interaction of publicity and the public. We then explain the three main features that characterize publicity: the press release, the media list, and coverage. The press release and the media list are the tools used by the publicity department to approach the media. Coverage is the result of publicity, the way in which the media respond to information about the exhibition.

Models of Communication in Publicity practice

The following models of communication have been created by Grunig (1990): through these models it is possible to investigate how the organization relates to its public and if and how the organization is willing to make changes on the basis of feedback from the public.

Grunig (1990) argues that publicity practice has been built on a series of presuppositions that make it less efficient, citing the ambition to reach unrealistic goals and the consequent inability to add value to the organization.

In Grunig (1990) opinion publicity tends to be based on asymmetrical presuppositions, which means that organizations use communication to persuade or manipulate publics for the benefit of the organization and not for the benefit of the public. The alternative approach is based on symmetrical presuppositions where both organizations and public can gain from the relationship: according to Grunig (1990) symmetrical communication programs tend to be more productive and

effective for the organizations.

According to Grunig (1990) publicity can be carried out in different in one of the following ways:

Press Agency model: this model describes a one-way asymmetrical approach to conducting publicity. It is a one-way communication model since the information about the organization is disseminated to its public without research or feedback. Publicity in this situation consists exclusively of press releases, publications, and events. This model is also asymmetrical since its objective is to “change the ideas, attitudes and behaviours of publics, but not those of the organization. Asymmetrical communication attempts to persuade.” (p.21) Through this model, the publicists “usually try to manipulate the media agenda and continually experience conflict with journalists” (p.21).

Public Information Model: usually this model applies to those publicity departments that are managed by journalists. They tend to use accurate information in relation to the organization, but avoid negative information. Through this model, publicity only communicates information selected by the organization and it is therefore a one-way and usually asymmetrical approach.

Two-way asymmetrical model: this model describes publicity that uses research “to identify the messages most likely to produce public support without having to change the behaviour of the organization” (p.21)

Two-way symmetrical model: in this situation the publicity tools include research on publics, reception of feedback, or other forms of dialogue. The objective of this approach is to “adjust the relationship between an organization and its publics”. It is believed by Grunig (1990) that this approach is more effective for the organization.

Press Release³

There is an art to writing a press release. The media person receives a great deal of information to handle every day, therefore the press release must stand out in order to obtain the journalist’s attention.

The standard press release style and format should conform to the international standards of print media journalism: these standards are designed to give all the information that the media person needs in a straightforward, easily accessible manner.

A press release can be, on one hand, a concise piece emphasizing the main facts of the exhibition (who, what, where, when, why, how), usually written for a general audience such as newspaper readers. On the other hand, it may be written for a specific column and specialty interest. In order to reach different mass media, press releases should be able to correspond to both standards.

Publicists do not need excellent writing abilities to create a good press release, rather they need strong editorial skills to maintain high standards and consistent format.

³ This paragraph is mainly based on (Abbott, 1991)

Language and style

In order to create a straightforward press release, the writing style employed should be the same journalistic style as that of the local newspaper. Sentences and paragraphs should be short and the language relatively simple⁴. Another important issue is objectivity: there is a delicate balance between creating an interesting release that will attract the journalist's attention and interest, and remaining objective. Media representatives usually do not appreciate subjective terms; therefore it is suggested to avoid terms like "sensual, beautiful, unique, or outstanding".

Many of the publications the publicity department deals with do not have art critics, and cover the exhibition with short articles. In these cases especially, the press release must be objective and straightforward.

As well, the use of a more specialized terminology can be counter-productive. This is the case when the publicity department submits releases that mimic the style of art critics. The purpose of the press release is not to review the exhibition, but to simplify the job of the media person. Art journalists and art critics must be attracted but not emulated. Art critics who are interested will review the exhibition and synthesize your basic descriptions with their personal observations in their own terminology.

In effect, the more complicated and complex the press release is, the less interested the media will be.

Structure of the Press Release

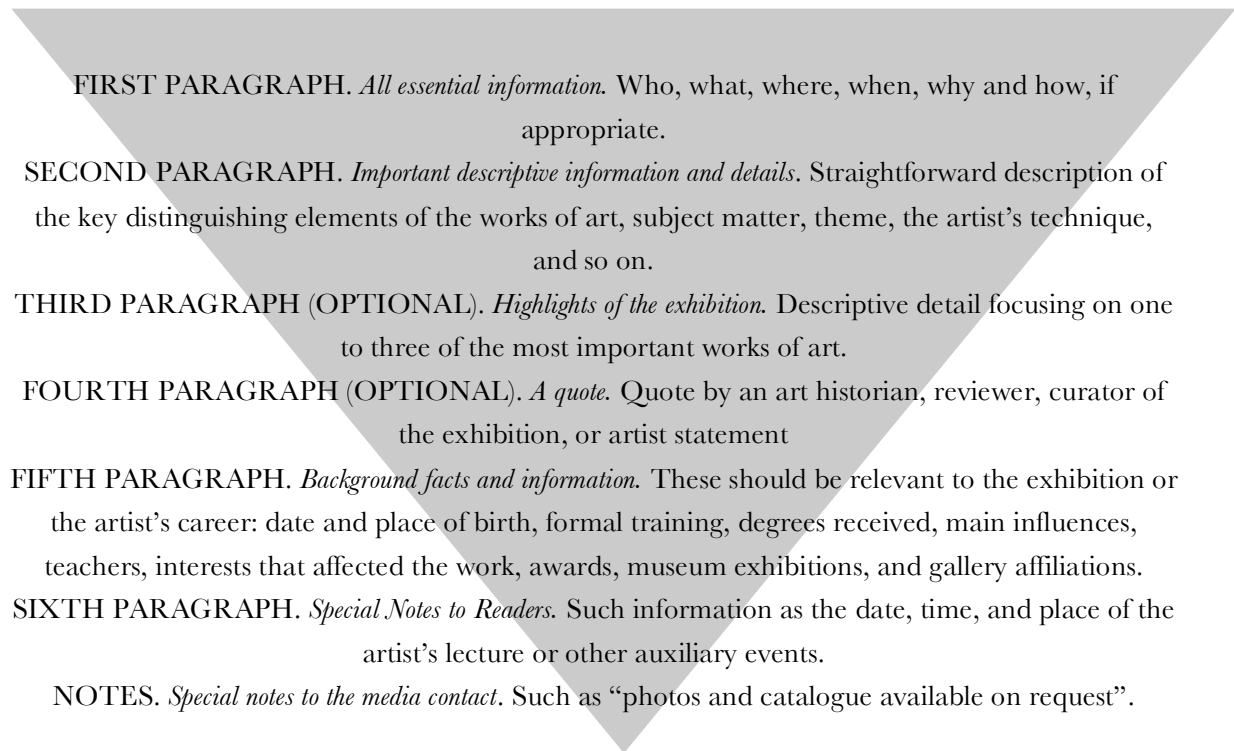
Since the release usually receives only a moment's consideration, the presentation is also crucial. A good press release should contain the following elements:

- Type of communication: highlighting that it is a publicity communication
- Source information: contact information
- The headline: an objective summary of the primary content of the release, as succinct as possible
- The dateline: the city where the press release originates
- The release date: this the date when the information may be used
- Body of release: since most publicity efforts are aimed at the print media, the press release should follow the traditional format of newspaper stories, which are reported in a form known as the "inverted pyramid". The basic assumption of this model is that all the vital details of an exhibition should be located at the beginning of the press release, while other information is provided to the reader in descending order of importance. This model is designed to catch the attention of the reader, and provides a flexible structure that can be adapted to serve different situations and space requirements. In a small newspaper, the entire press release might run as a feature article in the arts and entertainment section, while only the first two paragraphs might

⁴ That there are differences between language and style should be taken into account.

be used in a monthly city magazine. Editors will clip from the bottom up, knowing that the most important information is at the top.

According to Abbott and Webb (1991)⁵ the press release written on the basis of the “Inverted Pyramid Format” model, should be structured as highlighted in the following illustration.



At the bottom of the release, there should be a listing of any special events related to the exhibition that are of interest to the readers.

The press release should be a self-contained document that has all the important information pertaining to the vent in one place. Quite often, journalists receive an invitation, catalogue, poster, or announcement in addition to the press release. Nonetheless, the publicity department should not expect the media contact to look through these extras for essential information.

Media person

There are different types of journalists that should be taken into account during the creation of the press release. As mentioned before, the situation is often such that the journalist writing about the exhibition is not an art expert, therefore the press release should contain all of the information that this type of journalist needs for his or her article and publication.

There are also feature writers who create articles of general interest for their readers. They expand

⁵ Abbott, Webb (1991) p.156

on the news, providing background material or portraits of interesting personalities. While their stories are not critical reviews, their articles are heavily focused on the context rather than on the exhibition itself; therefore, it is necessary to put all the essential information at the top of the press release where it will be seen easily.

Critical reviews, however, are essential to the development of the museum, and the media person who usually writes them is the art critic or the art writer. They share in the journalist's need for trustworthy information, but differ from newspaper feature writers and, indeed, are distinct even from each other.

The art writer usually has an extensive background in art history: he or she usually writes articles for national and local newspapers, and for publications that offer coverage of the arts, but are not art publications. The art writer usually gives a review of the exhibition.

Art critics instead are interpreters of the artworks. Usually, they do not announce the opening of a new exhibition *per se*, but focus on the artist and his or her artworks. An exhibition must be very serious to be worthy of critical review. Critics may apply considerably varied criteria when covering an exhibition. When an art critic visits the exhibition, the order of his final review may be entirely different from that of the press release, depending on the style of the publication and the approach of the reviewer, nevertheless, the release should conform to the inverted pyramid format.

The News Hook

Most feature newspaper stories contain an angle, or "news hook", that draws the reader in. The news hook may tie the exhibition to a current event or highlight an interesting fact that gives the piece a different perspective. The press release provides an opportunity to make the media correspondents draw these connections and offer them a perspective that is newsworthy and of particular interest to their readers.

Quotes

One method of incorporating subjective or positive comments into the press release of the exhibition, while maintaining objectivity, is to include attributable quotes. The quotes can be from past reviewers, the artist, a curator, or the writer of the artist's catalogue.

Context

A clear, straightforward description of the artworks coupled with an elaboration of the artist's political, cultural, and formal context, can assist the journalist in writing the article. The influences on the artist from other artists, from the social and cultural context, and references to his personal and sentimental life can all be of interest to the public. Especially for those readers who are not familiar with the art presented in the exhibition, information about the artist's background and personal life helps them to perceive him/her as a real person with whom they can identify.

The release should give feature editors or critics all the basic information they need. Usually, critics will draw on their considerable experience to interpret the artist's work, but occasionally, an inexperienced critic will have to rely heavily on what appears in the release and may even quote it verbatim. The more informed and thorough the release, the more likely it will obtain the kind of coverage desired.

It is necessary to consider that the media correspondent usually does not make the connections between the different ideas in the press release. It therefore falls to the publicist to carry out the research necessary to write an informed release, while the journalist responds subjectively to the art and decides what to use from the background provided.

Media List

Another component of publicity is the composing of the media list. The list is usually determined by location, the type of exhibition, and the scope of exposure that the museum wants to achieve.

According to Abbott and Webb (1991), the basic media list would be:

- *National and local daily and weekly newspapers, radio and television stations, local bureau offices of national media, and wire services*
- *Monthly newspapers*
- *Art publications*
- *Specialty publications (architecture, design, etc)*
- *Foreign language publications and periodicals*
- *Social press (newsmagazines, female publications, etc)*
- *Free-lance writers*

During the development of the marketing goals it is necessary to identify the target audiences and consequently for each of these audiences, consider what media they follow.

There are different approaches to choosing a media list. On one hand it is possible to follow an order like the one mentioned above. On the other hand, the choice of media list can be based on more detailed assumptions⁷. The study "A Rough guide to media usage: new evidence on advertising effectiveness" (2005) describes how the relationship between public and mass media works, on the assumptions that people use media to fulfil specific needs and that people choose specific media in relation to their needs.

Mass Media and People needs⁸

⁷ The researches that follow are related to advertising, but since publicity is used frequently by museums as a substitute of advertising, and, we believe that the findings can be applied to publicity too.

⁸ This paragraph is based on "A Rough guide to media usage: new evidence on advertising effectiveness" (Dear, 2005). The text summarises the findings of two research studies – one qualitative, the other quantitative - carried out between September 2001 and April 2002 by NFO WorldGroup. Both surveys were

People have strong interests and needs, and these interests vary from person to person. The Henley Centre (Henley-Centre, 1995) has identified nine basic media needs, which can be divided into two main classes: informational needs and cultural needs.

Information needs are:

- Instrumental: information for daily life such as weather, transport, traffic, sales, opening and closing times, etc.
- Analysis: to understand the world, form views, have opinions.
- Enlightenment: keeping up with the world, national and local events; being and becoming informed.
- Self-enhancement: bettering ourselves, self-enhancement, knowledge for its own sake or for later application; acquisition of skills.

Cultural needs are:

- Ritual: media use which frames daily routines, such as getting up, going to work, relaxing after work, accompanying domestic chores.
- Default: absorbing media because it is there or because others within the social context are using it.
- Relaxation: passive absorption of media, unwinding.
- Entertainment: keeping ourselves amused, keeping others amused, having fun.
- Escapism: frees the user mentally from the immediate constraints and/or dullness of daily life, enabling him/her to enter into new experiences vicariously.

The variety of these needs, in both subject matter and Henley-style category, creates a growing demand of which the expanding array of consumer magazines is an indicator. As magazines cater to needs and the needs become more specialized, the increasingly fragmented market follows suit, catering to highly specific interests on an albeit smaller scale. This allows a magazine to establish a more personal link with readers interested in a certain sub sector.

The myriad selection of magazines and the needs they fulfil demonstrates that, as the Henley Centre notes, “the fulfilment of these needs is not just a function of the content delivered in the magazine, it can also be a function of the values and associations of the magazine brand and of the physical qualities of the magazine. For example, a glossy woman’s monthly delivers much more than content on style and fashion. It may also represent any of the following: an association with the magazine brand, a self indulgent treat, time to oneself, escapism, and so on” (Henley-Centre, 1995). The degree to which each of a dozen categories of magazine satisfied the nine media needs already described is presented in a chart developed by the Henley Centre (Henley-Centre, 1995):

	<i>Informational needs</i>			
<i>Content of Magazines</i>	Instrumental	Analysis	Enlightenment	Self-enhancement
Business	xx	xxx	xxx	xx
Motoring	xx	x		x
Current affairs		xx	xxx	xx
Entertainment/Listings	xxx			
Erotic			x	x
Food, Drink	xxx			xx
Hobbies	xx			xxx
Lifestyle, home	x		x	xx
Local Interest	xxx	xx	xxx	
Sport	xx			xxx
Style & fashion	x	x	xx	xxx
Women	xx	x	x	xx

Chart 1: Informational needs (Henley-Center, 1995)

	<i>Cultural needs</i>				
<i>Content of Magazines</i>	Ritual	Default	Relaxation	Entertainment	Escapism
Business	x				
Motoring			x		xx
Current affairs	x			xx	
Entertainment/Listings					
Erotic			x	x	xxx
Food, Drink			x	xx	
Hobbies			xxx	x	x
Lifestyle, home			xxx		xx
Local Interest	x		x		
Sport			xxx	xx	x
Style & fashion			xxx	xx	xx
Women	x		xxx	xx	xx

Chart 2: Cultural needs (Henley-Center, 1995)

It is important to note the failure of any category of magazine to fulfil the “Default” function of Cultural need. Quite simply, it is because the reading of a magazine is an active choice as opposed to the unintentional exposure one might experience with other forms of media.

The chart clearly underlines that different kinds of magazines fulfil different needs and therefore function differently as well. Additionally, it is implied that readers tend to develop a relationship with a given type of magazine.

It is noticeable the absence of Art magazines in the list proposed by the Henley Centre, but since, as we describe in the following chapters, publicity departments of museums aim to obtain coverage from art publications, we believe it is necessary to give more details about this type of press. Art publications are devoted to all the type of arts, to the artists, the institutions that diffuse and promote the arts. These magazines usually present in-depth articles and use often very specialized terminology, which is difficult to be approached by a non-expert public. Having said this for completeness sake, the publications in arts magazines will not be treated in the next chapters. We will suppose here that art publications are considered by their readers a source of information that could fulfil both enlightenment and self-enhancement needs, but, on the other hand these publications are always up-to-date about art events and exhibitions, so they also meet an

instrumental need. Finally we can also suppose that the art publication reader meets also relaxation needs through these magazines.

People in general tend to opt for the medium that they feel best meets their own needs, satisfying their desire for entertainment or information.

Television for example is a relaxation medium. As a highly passive form of entertainment, it allows viewers to relax their minds and be entertained with minimal exertion. The phenomenon of the household television set left on, regardless of whether it is being watched and often simultaneous to internet use or other media consumption, speaks to this passive relaxation role.

Magazines instead are chosen to satisfy and compliment individuals' needs and personalities, and, as noted above, the ever-expanding variety of specialized publications increases the capacity of magazines to do just that. The key limitation, of course, stems from just how specific a reader's needs might be. For instance female publications, such as *Cosmopolitan*, *Elle*, *Vogue* and *Marie Claire*, are seen quite prevalently as brands rather than mere magazines. Readers often strive to achieve a genuine relationship and fit with these publications, immersing themselves in the indulgence, engagement, aspiration, and escape that the magazines have to offer.

Magazines are often chosen for reasons other than the specific needs they meet: often as a distraction to fill time in waiting rooms or on long journeys, as reference material, or even as a sort of personal branding that allows the reader to align themselves with certain desired attributes associated with the magazine.

Newspapers, due to time constraints during the week, and the rise of up-to-the-minute news sources, have shifted away from their traditional news-assimilation role. A prevalent example of this is the large format weekend newspaper, offering in-depth current affairs analysis and special features in lieu of typically short weekly news stories.

Commercial radio, as an essentially complementary medium, tends to accompany other activities such as driving, housework, and internet usage, rather than being consumed as an exclusive activity. This is likely due to the perception of commercial radio as impersonal and generic, frequently presenting content that individuals would be reluctant to actively listen to.

Knowing the types of needs that the public tries to fulfil with specific choices of media, helps in the construction of a media list. An exhibition is a very complex product, bearing a significant cultural value that must be handled with care. The exhibition can be promoted in different ways, but it is probably sound to make a basic distinction between focusing on publications that fulfil self-enhancement/enlightenment needs and on the other hand entertainment needs.

If the promotion of the exhibition is directed more towards publications that fulfil self-enhancement and enlightenment needs, the media to be approached should be more in the vein of business, current affairs, and hobby publications. On the other hand, an exhibition can be promoted with emphasis on those publications that are related to the entertainment, in which case the media to approach might be female, style, and fashion publications.

It should be noted that since certain types of publications are perceived to fulfil the instrumental need, publicity should target these magazines in particular, in order to obtain listings.

Mass Media and People Interests⁹

Choice of media depends quite heavily on the area of interest. For nearly all topics¹⁰, the first or second choice is one of three established media: Magazines, Television, and Newspaper. For a wide range of topics such as beauty and personal appearance, fashion and clothes, celebrity news and gossip, cars and motorbikes, childcare and parenting, health and fitness, and photography, magazines tend to be the first choice, with television ranking as a poor second.

Television tends to be the preferred medium in the categories of sport, travel, gardening, and food, although this standing is shared almost equally by magazines. For information and ideas, aside from those pertaining to cars, newspapers tend to rank highest, with magazines often appearing as a preferred information source among 16 to 24 year-olds. Newspapers also are the preferred medium for arts information, employment opportunities, business and financial news, and items for sale. Since this information is typically delivered in the format of largely factual-based topics, listings, and classified ads, it is significant that this is an area where websites have increased in popularity as a medium.

It should be noted that websites, while the first choice for computer and internet-related information, tend to score relatively poorly as sources of choice in most other areas. The same can be said for commercial radio and newspaper supplements; they do not tend to be first choice as an information source pertaining to a specific topic.

Different media and different consumption¹¹

Media is rarely consumed in a vacuum, thus the context of media exposure must be accounted for. The extent to which media content is received and absorbed can be influenced by numerous factors: a medium might perform a supporting role, such as commercial radio in a loud restaurant kitchen, or two media may be consumed in tandem. The significance of this context, or 'media moment,' is evident in the comparison of television and magazines.

The television moment: as described above, consumers exhibit widespread television exposure; however this exposure is qualified by the passive manner in which the medium is consumed, with viewers tending to pay only casual attention to the television and its programming. This detachment has often been attributed to frustration over lack of control over family viewing choices, and is a harsh contrast to the level of personal engagement found in consumers of magazines.

The *magazine moment* is generally an intensely personal one. The magazine is a more individually

⁹ This paragraph is based on (Dear, 2005)

¹⁰ The topics are: Beauty/personal app.; Fashion, clothes; Celebrity news/gossip; Cars and motorbikes; Baby/childcare, parent; Health and fitness; Photography; Food & Drink; Home Improvement, DIY; Computers, internet; Gardening; TV programmes; Travel and holidays; Science, technology; Sport; Music, cinema, theatre; Items for sale; Personal finance, investment; Business, company news; Jobs, appointments.

¹¹ This paragraph is based on (Dear, 2005)

controllable medium than television, allowing consumers to absorb it at their own pace. This often provides both a relaxing and active experience due to solitude and the self-directed speed and order of consumption. Portability and the physical tangible quality of magazines also contribute to their perceived heightened merit over television.

New Media: A few words about the Internet¹²

The impact of the internet itself being quite evident, it is seen to consist of two streams of media, a communication channel, composed of e-mail and chat functions, and an information channel, consisting of websites. Despite the accepted benefits that this information channel has to offer, the negative aspects of this medium, particularly the relative lack of relationship formed with the consumer, are frequently raised. Surfing the web is often deemed lonely and anti-social, even addictive to the point of infringing on the individual's daily life.

The positive aspect of the internet medium, and the element that links it to magazines and other forms of print media, centres on the increased control it provides to consumers. As with magazines, both the pace and content of consumption are defined, with the exception of pop-up advertisement, by the individual consumer. The extent to which consumers can control their experience through the web goes so far as to influence the perceptions of traditional media as well, leading to newfound appreciation for the editorial processed that magazines undergo.

Magazines and the Internet

The internet resembles print in the level of control exerted upon it by the consumer as opposed to the publisher or broadcaster, providing an opportunity for both media to complement each other through cross-referencing.

An American study released in November 2004 by research agencies Ipsos-Insight and Faulkner Focus¹³ showed a close relationship developing between print and online advertising¹⁴. The editorial function of magazines, presenting a topic and identifying possible sources of further information, can be applied to the largely unfiltered content of the web. The two media can work in harmony, with magazines presenting topics of suggested research and making frequent use of web addresses, and online content referring to and enhancing print material. Publicists can take advantage of the symbiotic relationship between the two channels, making use wherever possible of their website address on printed material.

Digital magazines and the Internet

The success of digital magazines in driving readers to the websites of advertisers is further evidence of the benefits of cross-referencing. While the contents of the digital magazine are identical to that of the printed one, the use of hyperlinks allows the reader to immediately access an advertiser's

¹² This paragraph is based on (NFO-World-Group, 2002)

¹³ (Ipsos-Insight, 2004)

¹⁴ As previously mentioned, since publicity is a substitute for advertising, we believe that these findings can be applied to publicity

website while in the process of reading the magazine, catering to even the slightest interest on the reader's part. Despite a very small proportion of consumer magazines available in 2005, nowadays the number has increased. Moreover it has been noticed that now the content vary between the digital and the printed version of the magazines. The internet offers the possibility to integrate high definition pictures, videos, and music to the content, all elements that do not belong to the press but that are basic elements of a website.

Publicity for exhibitions tends to mainly stem from the press and, according to what has already been mentioned, publications tend to be perceived by the public as more reliable in a wide range of topics including the arts. Nevertheless, by knowing which publication the public chooses in relation to certain types of interests, the publicity department should be able to more easily identify which media to contact.

As mentioned before, internet is increasing in importance and its relationship with the press is becoming very close. Nowadays the publicity for an exhibition can be covered by the magazine or its digital version. Taking into account the Internet's emergence as an important and widespread mass media, contacting digital media directly could be of great advantage for the success of publicity.

Coverage

To obtain coverage means that the information sent through publicity to the mass media has been accepted and transmitted to the public by the mass media. Coverage is the last step of the publicity process.

The content of press coverage can appear in a number of forms (McLean, 1997):

Editorial coverage: reviews and interviews. Editorial coverage is perceived as impartial and can be crucial in promoting a museum. Usually art critics, art writers, and art journalist provide this type of coverage.

Listings coverage: appears often in both regional and local newspapers and in unspecialized magazines.

Advertorial coverage: editorial or listings space linked to paid-for advertising.

In addition to content, coverage is also defined by the time and place, whether provided by a journalist or the editorial staff, the segments of public reached, and so on. This is best illustrated by some examples:

- *National and local daily and weekly newspapers, radio and television stations, local bureau offices of national media, and wire services:* targeted in order to obtain a wide geographical coverage.
- *Monthly newspapers:* targeted to obtain a wide time coverage
- *Art publications:* targeted to provide coverage to people involved and interested in the arts

through reviews by critics and experts.

- *Specialty publications (architecture, design, etc)*: targeted to provide coverage to certain segments of the public who are usually also interested in and/or connected to the arts.
- *Foreign language publications and periodicals*: especially in the case of exhibitions featuring foreign artists, these are targeted to obtain coverage in the countries where the artist is from, or is connected to, etc.
- *Social press (newsmagazines, female publications, etc)*: targeted to provide coverage to a specific but sizeable segment of the public.
- *Free-lance writers*: contacting free-lances can often lead to coverage on the internet.

Different media persons can cover the news about the exhibition. As mentioned previously, there are journalists who are not art experts and that quite often are identified as “editorial staff”. There are feature writers who use the exhibition as a means to create articles of general interest for their readers. The art writer usually is an expert in art history but who does not write in art publications. Art critics write instead for art magazines and specialized publications.

Conclusions

In this chapter we have discussed the main characteristics of publicity for exhibitions. We firstly analyzed different communication approaches which the publicity department can engage. We analyzed how, according to the literature, a press release should be constructed in relation to: language and style; the “inverted pyramid format” as a framework to present the information related to the exhibition; the types of media correspondent that should be considered while writing the press release; and the information that can be used to attract the attention of the mass media and of the public.

We have proceeded to discuss the construction of a media list on the basis of the needs and interest of the public. It has been observed that people choose their media in order to fulfil some needs: by knowing which needs the public perceives each publication to meet, the publicity department can construct its media list accordingly. On the basis of the needs the promotion for the exhibition seeks to fulfil, the publicity department can choose a series of media that aim to satisfy the same kind of need. Moreover, we discussed how people choose a typology of media (magazines, or television, or internet) on the basis of their interests and their relationship with them, and the consequent necessity of accounting for these differences in choosing which type of media to approach most actively.

Finally, we have discussed first the different types of coverage that can be obtained, on the basis of editorial type, time, space, type of journalist, and type of publics reached.

On the basis of this material we will now develop a research approach in order to find out if the recommendations in this chapter are being followed by the arts museums. Our research approach will be made explicit in the next chapter.

In the following chapters, we will then present the results of six case studies that have been conducted in order to investigate how publicity works in practice and whether the literature we have presented is taken into account in the publicity process.

Chapter 3

The research

In this chapter we introduce the aims and objectives of our research and the methods of data collection and data analysis we will use.

Ethical Issues

In order to respect the privacy of the press officers of the museums, I omitted their names and the name of the museums. I identify the museums only by the country in which they are located, and if the artists of the exhibition we analyzed were national or foreigner.

The museums are identified as Italian Museum 1, Italian Museum 2, Italian Museum 3, British Museum 1, British Museum 2, and British Museum 3. The persons interviewed are identified as publicity officer of the Italian Museum 1, publicity officer of the Italian Museum 2, publicity officer of the Italian Museum 3, publicity officer of the British Museum 1, publicity officer of the British Museum 2, and publicity officer of the British Museum 3.

Aims and Objectives

The aim of our research was to investigate the workings of the publicity process for exhibitions of modern and contemporary art. The main assumption of our research is that every article written about an exhibition is based on or presents information that derives from the press release. Therefore we focused on the construction of the press release and the media list for exhibitions, and on the coverage obtained in the press and on the Internet.

We investigated recent exhibitions of figurative arts in three art museums in Italy and three in the United Kingdom. We then compared the results between countries in order to identify common elements and differences.

The main questions for the research are:

1. How does publicity work for an exhibition of modern or contemporary art?

On the basis of the Grunig (1990) models of publicity we discussed on Chapter 2, the following main question is:

2. Does the publicity for the museum follow a press agency, a public information, a two-way asymmetrical or a two-way symmetrical model?

The sub-questions are:

1. How is the press release written?
 - 1.1. Which language is used? Are there subjective terms?
 - 1.2. What is the structure of the press release? Does it follow the “Inverted Pyramid Format”?
 - 1.3. Is there a “news hook”? OR Are there any “news hooks”?
 - 1.4. Is there any information related to the background (artistic, historical, political, personal)?
2. How is the media list decided upon?
3. How is coverage obtained?
 - 3.1. What kinds of media have provided coverage?
 - 3.2. What is the geographical and the chronological coverage?
4. Is Internet coverage considered?
5. What are the differences between theory and practice?
6. What are the differences and similarities between the use of publicity in Italian and British Museums?

Methods

Our research is based on a combined research method (Seale, 2004) that integrates both qualitative and quantitative methods. According to Seale (2004) qualitative research “implies an inductive process in which theory is derived from (or ‘grounded’ in) empirical data” (p.295) and, on the other hand, “quantitative research, rather than a linear process of hypothesis testing, is often very much more exploratory than is generally appreciated” (p.295). The qualitative methodology has been chosen because of the scarcity of literature and investigations in the field of publicity, and a qualitative approach gives us the opportunity to create connections and interrelate data. On the other hand, some aspects of coverage have been analyzed with a quantitative method. In the quantitative research the process of measurement is central and, since some aspects of coverage are empirically measurable, it has been decided to support the qualitative methods with quantitative. We decided to take into account only the publicity material found in the press and on the Internet. Moreover, radio and television news are only usually not collected by the publicity department of the museums.

Data Collection

I investigated exhibitions of modern and contemporary figurative arts in three museums in Italy and three in the United Kingdom that took place in the last two years.

Italy:

- Italian Museum 1
Exhibition of a Modern Artist

- Italian Museum 2
Exhibition of Foreigner Modern Artists
- Italian Museum 3
Exhibition of Foreigner Modern Artists

United Kingdom:

- British Museum 1
Exhibition of a Foreigner Contemporary Artist
- British Museum 2
Exhibition of Contemporary Artists
- British Museum 3
Exhibition of a Foreigner Modern Artist

I chose this sample on the basis of:

Language reasons: to work with Italian and English texts

Number of exhibitions: all the museums displayed, in the last year, between two and six exhibitions.

Italian museums: the three museums are located in an area where the cultural offering is wide, and these museums are direct competitors in the scope of modern and contemporary art, therefore a considerable effort is made in order to promote their collections and exhibitions.

British museums: the museums share the same characteristics with the Italian museums: they represent the varied and active British artistic life, but unlike bigger museums are less congested and more similar to the Italian context. These museums are competitors in their field.

The museums initially contacted were ten, but only with six it has been possible to arrange the collaboration. The museums have been contacted through the e-mail: the e-mail addresses have been found in the websites of the museums usually in the page devoted to the press office. With some museums it was sufficient the e-mail contact, with others phone calls were necessary.

The data collection took place in two stages. We firstly obtained from the press offices of each museum the press release and collection of press clippings for the exhibition. Secondly we contacted the publicity officer of the exhibition by phone for an interview.

Data Analysis

1. Stage

The data analyzed are:

press releases of the exhibitions: 6 press releases
clippings:

Italian Museum 1: 78 reviews - 178 listings

Italian Museum 2: 67 reviews – 88 listings

Italian Museum 3: 54 reviews - 90 listings

British Museum 1: 9 reviews – 18 listings

British Museum 2: 24 reviews – 22 listings

British Museum 3: 12 reviews – 58 listings

answers from the non-standardized interviews.

The press releases have been analyzed through a qualitative content analysis. According to Holsti (1969), counting and analyzing textual data can be done in various ways: a common starting point is to define categories of analysis and to code the data using these categories. Categories might be pre-set by the researcher in advance of reading the data or may be based on an initial reading of the texts. Coding usually emerges from a combination of the two processes. This stage requires intensive work to ensure that coding categories will capture the content of texts clearly (reducing ambiguity and overlap) and exhaustively (including all relevant content).

The categories used for the content analysis were adapted from the “Inverted pyramid format” model defined by Abbott and Webb (1991):

- *All the essential information (who, what, where, why and how¹⁷):*
- *Important descriptive Information and details (straightforward description of the key distinguishing elements of the works of art, subject, theme, the artist's technique)*
- *Highlights of the Exhibition (details of the artworks)*
- *A Quote*
- *Background Facts and Information relevant to the exhibition*
 - Background Information about the exhibition: i.e. the exhibition was part of a series of events, or is directly related to a previous exhibition of the same museum*
 - Artistic context*
 - Historical and political context of the artist/s*
 - Facts about the personal life of the artist/s*
- *Special Notes to the Readers (events, lectures, conferences)*
- *Special Notes to the Media Person (photos, catalogues)*

The press clippings were then investigated quantitatively through a media coverage analysis adapted from the model adopted by Nelli and Bensi (2003). Media coverage analysis is a methodology that collects and classifies every kind of message transmitted through the mass media, and transforms qualitative information into quantitative evaluations (Nelli, Bensi, 2003).

¹⁷ By *how* we have included: the way in which the exhibition has been built (sections), the institutions and organizations that act as patrons, donors, sponsors, collaborators, and persons who have participate in the realization (curators, committee)

Media coverage analysis is based on the theories of the persuasive role of mass media, central to which is the ability of transmitted messages, through their content, tone, or simply through frequent repetition, to influence the behaviour of the public. Media coverage analysis has developed through three different phases: initially it took the form of media monitoring, which, through press clipping and the collection of radio and television messages, provided statistics on media coverage. In the second phase, research was extended to the content analysis of media coverage, introducing media content analysis. In its last phase, media coverage analysis has been integrated within the grouping of indicators used to quantify media reputation and help in developing corporate reputation.

In this research we are not interested in the study of the museum's corporate reputation, but media coverage analysis – also known as “publicity tracking research” in the United States (Nelli, Bensi, 2003) - represents a good approach for our investigation because it is considered one of the methodologies to evaluate the efficiency of public relations more commonly used.

Initially, the press clippings were analyzed through media monitoring – quantitative approach - on the basis of:

- Distinction between reviews and listings
- Duration of coverage
- Geographical coverage
- Presence of images or pictures

The press clippings were then examined through media content analysis. The items extracted from the press releases were counted in the press clippings. The data obtained through the content analysis was compiled into a database and the percentage of appearances of each item in the press clippings was calculated.

2. *Stage*

Finally, non-standardized interviews with the publicity officers of the museums were conducted. Five of the interviews were conducted by telephone and one in person. In non-standardized interviews the “interviewer works to a set of topics that must be covered, though the exact order in which questions are asked and the wording of questions can vary. Such interviews allow for flexibility, greater depth and more sensitivity to contextual variations in meaning than is generally the case in classical survey research using standardized interview or questionnaire” (Scale, 2004, p.165)

The questions can be grouped under the following general themes:

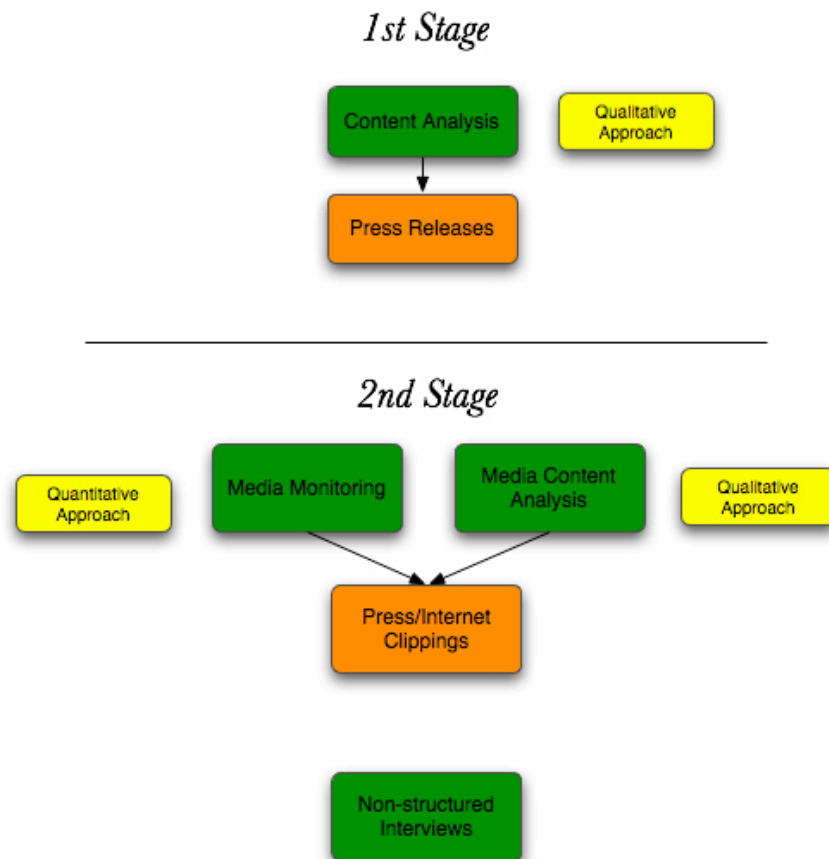
- How was the media list chosen?
- On which basis did the publicity officer decide to insert the information on the press release?
- Findings of the content analysis and the media coverage analysis of the press clippings.

The answers of the interviews have been transcribed either verbatim or by summarizing some passages. These data were then arranged under the research question they addressed.

Examples have been chosen to illustrate the main points.

Conclusions

In this chapter we described the research conducted. In the following diagram we summarize the approach described.



Chapter 4

The results – Press Release and Press Clippings

In this chapter we are going to discuss the results of our research in relation to the first stage of our research, the press releases and the press clippings. It appears that some of the results are as expected, while others contradict the theories presented in Chapter 2. We discuss our results on the basis of the research questions we posed in Chapter 3, leaving the discussion of our main research questions for Chapter 6.

The Press release

According to the theories expressed in Chapter 2, a press release for an exhibition should be a straightforward description, easily manageable for the media person. In other words, according to Abbott and Webb (1991), the focus of the press release is directed towards the media person and does not take other elements into consideration. The observations made in this paragraph are the product of the interviews.

According to the publicity officer of the Italian Museum 1, collaboration with curators is indispensable. The creation of a press release must take into account the curator because he or she is the creative and passionate side of the exhibition, something the reader should be aware of. At the same time, the publicity officer states that his/her job is to filter the information coming from the curator in a way that can attract both those who know of the artist on exhibition, and those who do not. Specifically, for this exhibition the publicity officer of the Italian Museum 1 has tried to bear witness to the work of the curator and to highlight the emotional side of the research involved. It has also been observed that when the Italian Museum 1 publicity officer was describing how to build a press release, the readers she was referring to were not the media, but the public. In other words, her focus is not on the journalists but on the potential visitors to the exhibition.

With regard to the creation of a press release, another case that does not conform with the theory of Abbott and Webb (1991), is the one for the exhibition at the British Museum 2. The publicity officer of the British Museum 2, made use of six press releases before the opening of the exhibition, one of which was released the day before the opening, and one press release for its closure.

It has been observed that the other museums write different press releases in order to convey different information in relation to events happening contemporarily with the exhibition. For the British Museum 2, seven press releases were written, and aside from the sixth one, which conveyed all the information of the previous ones, each one integrated new information in relation to the exhibition. The reason for this choice, the publicity officer of the British Museum 2 said, was to create the maximum amount of media and public awareness. The publicity officer of the British

Museum 2 was interested in developing a profile for the exhibition in both the media and public domains: his aim was to create a degree of anticipation and also to ensure that people were aware that the exhibition was coming. So, differently from the other practitioners, the publicity officer of the British Museum 2 was also discussing the press release in terms of creating a campaign with it and not simply about the press release as the originator of publicity as such, because it is going to be used by the journalists for their listings and reviews.

According to the publicity officer of the Italian Museum 3, the most important thing to take into consideration while writing a press release is to give correct information. By being coherent and avoiding giving wrong or misleading information, the collaboration with media improves, and the journalists, instead of focusing on mistakes in the press release, might deepen the details given in the press release.

Generally spoken the publicity officers of these arts museums direct themselves to the possible visitors and not to the journalists, when they write a press release.

Language: subjective terms

According to Abbott and Webb, the press release should avoid subjective terms. Nevertheless, we have observed through the content analysis that some of the press releases make use of such terms to describe the artists exposed at the exhibitions.

With regard to the Italian Museum 3 exhibition the main artist was defined as a *great artist*.

In the press release of the exhibition of the British Museum 3, the artist was described as an *outstanding artist*.

With regard to the exhibition at the British Museum 2, the artist was described as a *leading artist*.

According to the publicity officers, these terms should not be considered subjective because these artists have already achieved international recognition, which is hard to contradict. Nevertheless, this terminology is intended to reach the public, not the journalists, and it should be noted that none of the subjective terms obtained coverage.

In the case of the exhibition of the Italian Museum 1, subjective terms were used to describe the exhibition rather than the artist. The terms used were *highly awaited exhibition*, *exceptionality of the event*. According the publicity officer, as mentioned before, the exhibition embodied the complex and passionate effort of the curator in the research of the artworks, and therefore these expressions were chosen to reflect the emotive side of the exhibition. It should be noted that this item did not receive coverage either.

Neither the British Museums 1 nor the Italian Museum 2 press releases present subjective terms.

The main result of this part of our analysis is the fact that differently from what suggested by Abbott and Webb (1991) theory, the publicity officers make use of subjective terms, but they do not receive any coverage from the media.

Which is the structure of the press release? Does it follow the “Inverted Pyramid Format”?

According to Abbott and Webb (1991), the press release should follow the “Inverted Pyramid Format”:

- *All the essential information (who, what, where, why and how¹⁸):*
- *Important descriptive Information and details (straightforward description of the key distinguishing elements of the works of art, subject, theme, the artist's technique)*
- *Highlights of the Exhibition (details on the artworks)*
- *A Quote*
- *Background Facts and Information relevant to the exhibition*
 - Background Information about the exhibition: i.e. the exhibition was part of a series of events, or is directly related to a previous exhibition of the same museum*
 - Artistic context*
 - Historical and political context of the artist/s*
 - Facts about the personal life of the artist/s*
- *Special Notes to the Readers (events, lectures, conferences)*
- *Special Notes to the Media Person (photos, catalogues)*

We have classified all the information of the press releases on the basis of the categories of the “Inverted Pyramid Format” model. For each exhibition, we found the order in which items of a specific category appear in the press release and the coverage obtained by each item (with the exclusion of the notes to the reader and to the media person, and the quotes) among all the clippings examined. This paragraph is based on the results of the content analysis on the press releases and the media coverage analysis. We did not make distinction between reviews and listings here, because our aim is to understand in general which kind of information from the press release has more potential to appear in the media.

The following chart represents the way in which the categories of the “Inverted Pyramid format” appear in the press releases of the three Italian museums and the percentage of exposure of the items.

<i>Italian Museum 1</i>		<i>Italian Museum 2</i>		<i>Italian Museum 3</i>	
essential information (who, what, when, where)	100%	essential information (who, where, when)	100%	essential information (who, what, where, when)	100%
important descriptive information	14%	essential information (how – patrons/supporters)	12%	essential information (how – committee)	6%
essential information (how – patrons)	6%	important descriptive information	30%	essential information (how – curators)	14%

¹⁸ By *how* we have included: the way in which the exhibition has been built (sections), the institutions and organizations that act as patrons, donors, sponsors, collaborators, and persons who have participate in the realization (curators, committee)

important descriptive information	7%	essential information (how – committee ¹⁹)	13%	background fact (personal context)	27%
background facts and information (artistic context)	20%	essential information (how - curators)	17%	essential information (how – partner)	20%
important descriptive information	2%	background facts and information (artistic context)	27%	background information (personal context)	14%
essential information (how – section of the exhibition)	2%	background facts and information (personal context)	28%	essential information (why)	25%
background facts and information (artistic context)	24%	quote		important descriptive information	45%
important descriptive information	1%	background facts and information (artistic context)	16%	background information (personal context)	21%
essential information (how – curator)	17%	notes for the reader and the media representative		important descriptive information	20%
highlights of the exhibition	23%			essential information (why)	25%
essential information (how - sponsors)	0%			essential information (how – sections of the exhibition)	14%
notes for the readers and the media person.				background information (exhibition)	10%
				notes for the media person	

With regard to the Italian museums we have obtained the following results. The press release of the Museum 1 contains all the sections suggested by the model (a quote is considered optional) but the order is not followed. It is also notable that it is the only Italian press release in which there is a description of the artworks (*highlights of the exhibition*).

The press release of the Italian Museum 2 exhibition contains all the sections suggested by the model, with the exception of the section dedicated to the *highlights of the exhibition*, which however is optional information. The order of the sections in the press release is the most close to the “Inverted Pyramid format”, apart from the location of important descriptive information between essential information.

The press release of the Italian Museum 3 exhibition contains all the “necessary” sections suggested by the model, but does not follow the “Inverted Pyramid format” order. Moreover background information is located quite at the beginning of the press release, before the important descriptive information.

The following chart represents the way in which the categories of the “Inverted Pyramid format” appear in the press releases of the three British museums and the percentage of exposure of the items.

¹⁹ Committee (“comitato scientifico” or “direzione scientifica” in Italian) is the head of the museum management.

<i>British Museum 1</i>		<i>British Museum 2</i>		<i>British Museum 3</i>	
essential information (who, what, where, when)	100%	essential information (who, what, where, when)	100%	essential information (who, what, where, when)	100%
essential information (how – curators)	26%	important descriptive information	50%	quote	
essential information (how – partners)	0%	background information (exhibition context)	35%	background facts (personal context)	19%
quote		important descriptive information	38%	important descriptive information	34%
highlights of the exhibition	16%	background information (personal context)	37%	essential information (how – partner)	3%
notes		essential information (how – partners and supporter)	9%	important descriptive information	31%
background information (exhibition context)	4%	quotes		background facts (artistic context)	8%
notes to the media person.		background information (exhibition context)	2%	highlights of the exhibition	10%
		Background fact (exhibition context)	30%	background facts (artistic context)	0%
		Important descriptive information	11%	essential information (how – curators)	3%
		notes for the readers and the media persons.		essential information (how – exhibition sections)	1%
				Notes	

The British museums behave a bit different from the Italians, so it seems. The press release of the British Museum 1 exhibition does not follow the “Inverted Pyramid format”. It is notable that the category *Important descriptive information* is missing.

For the exhibition at the British Museum 2 seven press releases have been realized. For every press release it is indicated how many articles have been written until the following press release.

1. Press Release: Coverage obtained: 2 articles
2. Press Release: Coverage obtained: 0 articles
3. Press Release: Coverage obtained: 4 articles
4. Press Release: Coverage obtained: 4 articles
5. Press Release: Coverage obtained: 2 articles
6. Press Release: Coverage obtained: 34 articles
7. Press Release: Coverage obtained: 0 articles

Since only few articles have been written between the first and the fifth press release, and the content of the first five press releases is present also in the sixth one, the analysis has been made on the 6th press release.

This press release of the British Museum 2 exhibition contains the essential sections, but it does not follow the order suggested by “Inverted Pyramid format”.

The press release of the British Museum 3 exhibition, finally, does not follow the “Inverted Pyramid format” but contains all the necessary sections. This is probably the most peculiar press release since the order of the categories is completely mixed.

We can conclude that the “Inverted Pyramid format” is not followed and, by observing the percentage of exposure, we can also observed that the position of the item in the press release does not determine the opportunities to be covered.

News hooks

According to Abbott and Webb (1991), the “news hook” is a piece of information that the journalist can use to attract readers or to create a link between the exhibition and another event.

This paragraph will address the news hooks in the press releases, describing the objectives of the publicity officer and the media coverage they have obtained. This paragraph is the product of results from the content analysis of the press releases, data on coverage of certain items, and the interviews with the publicity officers.

The news hooks for the exhibition of the Italian Museum 1 were five. The first related to the fact that artworks exhibited were brought together and presented for the first time. The information obtained 29% coverage in the reviews and the 6% in the listings.

The second news hook related to the fact the exhibition was going to be transferred in a foreigner museum after its closing. The information obtained coverage of 17% in the reviews and 2% in the listings. According to the publicity officer, the coverage should have been wider, but, in her opinion, journalists are not sensitive to exhibitions that are made in Italy and then brought abroad, as much as they are to foreign exhibitions coming to Italy.

The third news hook refers to the fact that the curator spent a a certain time in recollecting all the artworks exposed. This information obtained coverage in only 21% of reviews. According to the publicity officer, this information could have obtained a wider coverage, and a reason why it did not, might be that the curator was responsible for another recent exhibition of the same artist and therefore might have been already overexposed to the media.

The fourth news hook refers to the fact that the artist chose particular names for its artworks. The information obtained 18% coverage in the reviews and 1% in the listings. the publicity officer decided to insert this information on the press release in order to provide a different perspective about the artist’s way of naming the artworks.

The fifth news hook refers to the fact that the author had a show in another museum in the surroundings of the Italian Museum 1. This information obtained 68% coverage in the reviews and 5% in the listings. According to the publicity officer, the information on the press release had the function of a background fact more than a news hook, nevertheless, the opening in concomitance of a new exhibition in the same museum where the author already exposed, might have influenced the coverage obtained.

With regard to the exhibition of the Italian Museum 2 no specific news hooks were found.

In the press release for the exhibition of the Italian Museum 3, two news hooks were found.

The first news hook refers to the fact that some of the artworks shown were exposed in Italy for the first time. This information obtained coverage of 41% in the reviews and 19% in the listings. According to publicity officer, this information is very important because it acts to attract those people who are passionate for the artists exposed and have already seen previous exhibitions in Italy: with the Italian Museum 3 exhibition, potential visitors have the opportunity to see new artworks.

The second news hook refers to the area in which the museum is located. The publicity officer said that this information was included to attract local publications in particular, and to confirm the strong tie between the town in which the museum is located and its region. 25% of the articles that covered the news hook came from local newspapers from the museum's region, but 46% of the publications that gave coverage were local.

With regard to the exhibition at the British Museum 1, the news hooks were two.

The first news hook is referred to the fact that the exhibition is based on a previous one exposed in another country, but it presents new works. This information obtained 55% coverage in the reviews and 11% in the listings. According to the publicity officer of the British Museum 1, this information was very important because it helped to distinguish this exhibition from the previous one, and it was used to give a reason to potential visitors to attend the exhibition.

The second news hook refers to the fact that the artists that participated to the exhibition based their work in the city where the museum is located. This information obtained 33% coverage in the reviews and 5 % in the listings. The publicity officer of the British Museum 1 intention was to highlight the fact that these artists decided to live and work in the museum's city and, consequently, to create a cultural community.

As to the exhibition at the British Museum 2, the news hooks were four.

The first news hook refers to the fact that that was the first exhibition of the artist in the city of the museum. The coverage obtained was 37% in the reviews and 29% in the listings. According to the publicity officer of the British Museum 2, this information signifies the importance of the exhibition. From the museum's point of view and city's point of view it was important to show that a contemporary artist could be attracted there for a specific show. It should also be noted that 26% of the coverage obtained is in articles from local newspapers.

The second news hook refers to the fact that the exhibition featured new artworks. This information obtained 27% coverage in the reviews and 15% in the listings. According to the publicity officer of the British Museum 2, the fact that the artist was able to bring new work to the exhibition shows that she placed a certain value on the show and that made it more important. Quite often, exhibitions with major artists present works that have already be seen in other galleries

and, in the publicity officer of the British Museum 2 opinion, the presence of new artworks should be highlighted in order to attract more visitors.

The third news hook refers to the fact that the exhibition was included in a series of exhibitions about social issues. This information obtained 35% coverage in the reviews and 15% in the listings. According to the publicity officer of the British Museum 2, this information was necessary to attract attention to the fact that there was a series of exhibitions addressing these social issues and their exhibition was the major show.

The fourth news hook refers to the fact that the exhibition opened an arts festival in the same city. According to the publicity officer of the British Museum 2, the information provided a link to the arts festival that takes place in the same city, and to some extent there was the possibility that visitors who attended exhibition might also go to the festival and vice versa.

This information obtained 20% coverage in the reviews and 31% in the listings.

With regard to the exhibition of the British Museum 3 the news hooks was one.

The first news hook refers to the fact that it was the first retrospective of the artist in that country. This information appeared in 33% of the reviews and in 10% of the listings. According to the publicity officer of the British Museum 3, journalists probably were not familiar with the artist and this is why the information did not obtain wide coverage.

We noticed, that the “usual” news hook for arts museums refers to the fact that the artworks presented are new, or never seen before in the country. For instance the first news hook of the exhibition British Museum 1 obtained the 55% coverage in the reviews, overcoming the average of 30%²⁰.

These news hooks are mainly addressed to the public that already knows the artist and do not target those who do not know the artists presented, but could possibly be “hooked” through connection with contemporary news or events, even not directly related to the arts. The only exception is the fifth news hook of the Italian Museum 1, which obtained the 68% coverage in the reviews. As mentioned before, this is mainly due to the fact that the museum where the artist exhibited previously in the same area, was showing a new exhibition in concomitance with the one at the Italian Museum 1 and therefore it demonstrates that a news hook on an external event may obtain a broad exposure.

²⁰ See Chapter 6

Background Information on the Artist/s and on the Exhibition

In this paragraph we are going to analyze some examples of background information about the artist and the exhibition that is present in the press release, and we have defined the percentage of coverage for these items.

This paragraph is the product of data from the interviews with the publicity officers and the media coverage analysis. We have defined the average percentage of coverage of items belonging to the following categories:

Background Information about the exhibition

Artistic context

Historical and political context of the artist/s

Facts about the personal life of the artist/s

The aim is to identify the background information that the publicity officer communicated in the press release, determining for which reason it was included, and how the media reflected this information.

According to Abbott and Webb (1991), placing the artist into a political, cultural, and formal context, can help the journalist in writing the article, and also, by making reference to the personal and even sentimental life of the artist, one can easily catch the attention of the public and especially of potential visitors unfamiliar with the art on exhibition. In other words, the press release should not be too detailed, but at the same time should provide the journalist with the necessary prompt to write an article.

According to the publicity officer of the Italian Museum 1, background information is necessary to explain the work of the curators. As mentioned before, in the publicity officer's opinion, the main goal of the press release is to filter all information about the work of the curators and museum to create the exhibition, in order to provide the reader with a clear overview of what has been done and to catch his or her attention. For this exhibition in particular, according to the publicity officer, it is indispensable to describe the context, because it explains the process of creating the exhibition: in general, contextual information helps the reader to make reference to everyday life and stimulates ideas for new research.

The information providing artistic context obtained on the average 40% coverage in the reviews and 3% in the listings.

According to the publicity officer of the Italian Museum 2, in the press release it is important to give background information because it introduces the reader who does not know the artist to the artworks. Additionally, background information is helpful for the journalist who is not an art expert, to use in writing the article.

In relation to the personal background of the artists, the information obtained on the average 52% coverage in the reviews and 10% in the listings.

With regard to artistic background the information obtained on the average 37% coverage in the reviews and 12% in the listings.

With regard to the exhibition of the Italian Museum 3, background information and facts are necessary to provide a wider overview, to inform those readers who are unfamiliar with the subject, and to give a prompt for an in-depth article. According to the publicity officer, the art press usually expands upon the topic. In the press release it is necessary to focus on specific topics. The figure of one of the artists exhibited, for instance, was not analyzed in-depth in the press release because the number of his paintings at the show was small. Nevertheless, through the media coverage analysis, the information about the same artist reached 81% coverage in the reviews and 36% in the listings. It is very uncommon to obtain such a wide coverage when the item is only named in the press release. Since the name of the artist was present also on the title, we might suppose that this worked as a catalyst.

In relation to the artistic context, the information on the average obtained 48% coverage in the reviews and 11% in the listings. With regard to personal context the information obtained 28% coverage in the reviews and the 11% in the listings.

According to the publicity officer of the British Museum 1, contextual information is very important in the case of young and contemporary artists who are not well known yet, and are still working on developing their reputation in the art world. Any connection to more established artists or artistic movements could create an incentive for potential visitors to come to the exhibition.

Moreover, the publicity officer of the British Museum 1 is of the opinion that even the exhibition can be contextualized in order to attract more visitors. By referring to a previous exhibition made by the museum, the aim was to contextualize this exhibition with a previous one.

The items providing artistic context for the artists obtained 77% coverage in the reviews and 50% in the listings.

In relation to the background information about the exhibition, the information received 11% coverage in the reviews and 0% in the listings.

According to the publicity officer of the British Museum 2 it is important but not essential to give contextual information about the artist. In the particular situation of British Museum 2 exhibition, the work and style of the artist was very individual, according to the publicity officer, therefore it was important to describe which previous experiences may have influenced the artist way of making art. By informing the reader that about the previous experiences of the artist, the visitor was prepared for certain expectations of what he or she would see at a British Museum 2 exhibition.

The publicity officer of the British Museum 2 is of the opinion that it is important to provide some context about the exhibition. The British Museum 2 exhibition opened an arts festival and by contextualizing the exhibition the publicity officer of the British Museum 2 aimed to attract visitors interested in the Festival and vice versa.

Also, the British Museum 2 exhibition was created in the context of a series of exhibitions about social issues.

Another item that is considered background information related to the exhibition is to the mention of the presence of another artwork of the artist in a different location within the same city. The presence of this piece was very important because it had the ability to attract potential visitors to the exhibition, and instead of using a poster made by the museum, the artwork worked as a catalyst.

The information relating to the personal background of the artist of the exhibition in the British Museum 2 obtained 62% coverage in the reviews and 9% in the listings.

The items pertaining to the context of the exhibition appear in the 66% of the reviews and 51% of the listings.

According to the publicity officer from the British Museum 3, providing contextual information is very important especially for artists that are not very well known. For example, the artists of the British Museum 3 exhibition is not a famous artist in the United Kingdom, therefore it was necessary to give some background information to help the journalist in writing their articles. Moreover, to refer to other aspects of the artist's life, gives a different perspective of the artist that can catch the attention of the readers. The information obtained 42% coverage in the reviews and 9% in the listings.

In relation to the artistic context, the items founded received 54% coverage in the reviews and 22% in the listings.

Differently from the news hooks, the background information related to the personal facts of the artists seems instead to be addressed to the potential visitors.

The background information about the artistic context is addressed on one hand to those who are interested in the arts but do not know the artist or the arts shown. Artistic background information is also addressed to the journalist in order to, according to what supposed by Abbott and Webb (1991), give them the enough elements to contextualize the artists.

Conclusions

In this chapter we have discussed the results of the first stage of our research: the analysis of the press releases, the choices of the publicity officers during its creation, and we also discussed some of the results of these choices in the coverage.

In the following chapter we discuss the second stage of our research, which is related to the media list and a more in-depth analysis of the coverage.

Chapter 5

The results- Media List and Coverage

In this chapter we discuss the results of the second stage of our research. In the previous chapter we discussed the results related to the press release and the press clippings. We here discuss the results of the analysis of the media list and of the coverage.

The media/press list

The following paragraph is based on the interviews conducted with the publicity officers. The opinions described are of the interviewed publicity officers.

For the Italian Museum 1, the publicity officer chooses the media list on the basis of membership statistics, surveys and questionnaires, and educational programmes. The media list is also based on an Italian database and an international database divided by country. Taking into account that 60% of the visitors are international, it is very important to obtain wide coverage in foreign publications. With regard to the type of publication it is important to reach as many as possible, especially art publications, local and national newspapers, internet resources, and weekly and monthly specialized or general publications. In order to reach a wider variety of publics, female publications are often contacted.

Nevertheless, according to the publicity officer, every exhibition attracts different kinds of publications: scientific exhibitions especially draw the attention of specialized magazines.

For the Italian Museum 2, the media list is chosen on the basis of a developed database. Generally, most importance is given to national newspapers, local newspapers and publications, and art publication. The museum is located in a very touristic city and there are many publications written in different languages to inform tourists about events within the city. It is very important to obtain coverage in this type of magazine. The publicity department also makes use of data coming from surveys that are distributed among visitors, through which they can determine what kind of visitors the museums are attracting and, in particular, from which source they became aware of the museum.

According to the publicity officer of the Italian Museum 3, there is no “ideal” media list, rather it changes for every exhibition in relation to the kind of art exposed and to the type of interlocutor. For instance, the case of modern art is more complex because it is necessary to reach a more varied public. As a basic distinction, it is more important to contact the national media than the local ones. Nevertheless, because of the strong bond between the city where the museum is located and its region, support from the local media is especially important.

For the British Museum 1, the choice of which publishers and publications to contact is based on characteristics of the exhibition: for instance, the nature of the art exposed, the artists, and the partnerships involved. In the case of the exhibition of the British Museum 1, since the exhibition featured works by local and locally based artists, many of the publications contacted were local. Moreover, the exhibition was undertaken by two national institutions, therefore national newspapers were also contacted. It was also important to be reach art publications.

For the British Museum 2, its publicity officer is of the opinion that mainstream publications and arts publications have equal weight. In the interest of generating the maximum amount of visitors to the exhibition, mainstream media are approached, namely newspapers or Sunday newspapers, and the arts sections of those papers. Equal focus should also be given to specialist publics so that the quality of the exhibition is recognized by the artistic community, and those people who are specifically interested in going to see exhibitions are aware of it.

According to the publicity officer of the British Museum 3, the first publications to be contacted are the national newspapers and the art publications: moreover all the critics and key writers are approached and international publications were also contacted.

We conclude here, that the publicity officers in general look for coverage from national newspapers and art publications. Newspapers make possible to obtain a wide exposure on different publics, while coverage on art publications assures to reach the public who is already interested in the arts. Practitioners recognise also the importance of coverage from local newspapers: the exposure on this type of press connects the museum with the local community, tying the bond between them.

Media Needs

The following paragraph is the product of the interviews and data from the media coverage analysis. According to what was mentioned in Chapter 2, the research *Magazines Into 2000* (Henley Centre, 1995) has identified nine basic media needs, which can be divided into two main classes: informational needs and cultural needs.

Information needs are:

- Instrumental
- Analysis
- Enlightenment
- Self-enhancement

Cultural needs are:

- Ritual
- Default
- Relaxation
- Entertainment
- Escapism

The degree to which each of a dozen categories of magazine satisfy the nine media needs is presented in the chart presented on Chapter 2.

It has been asked to the publicity officers of the museums which kind of publication, on the basis of the needs they fulfil, they think is more desirable to obtain coverage from.

<i>Content of Magazines</i>	<i>Informational needs</i>			
	Instrumental	Analysis	Enlightenment	Self-enhancement
Business	xx	xxx	xxx	xx
Motoring	xx	x		x
Current affairs		xx	xxx	xx
Entertainment/Listings	xxx			
Erotic			x	x
Food, Drink	xxx			xx
Hobbies	xx			xxx
Lifestyle, home	x		x	xx
Local Interest	xxx	xx	xxx	
Sport	xx			xxx
Style & fashion	x	x	xx	xxx
Women	xx	x	x	xx

Chart 3: Informational needs (Henley-Center, 1995)

<i>Content of Magazines</i>	<i>Cultural needs</i>				
	Ritual	Default	Relaxation	Entertainment	Escapism
Business	x				
Motoring			x		xx
Current affairs	x			xx	
Entertainment/Listings					
Erotic			x	x	xxx
Food, Drink			x	xx	
Hobbies			xxx	x	x
Lifestyle, home			xxx		xx
Local Interest	x		x		
Sport			xxx	xx	x
Style & fashion			xxx	xx	xx
Women	x		xxx	xx	xx

Chart 4: Cultural needs (Henley-Center, 1995)

It is necessary to notice that in the charts art and culture publications are absent, therefore we focused only on the types of publication described in the chart. It is also notable that all the publicity officers agree on the importance of obtaining coverage from publications that fulfil instrumental needs.

According to the publicity officer of the Italian Museum 1, to obtain coverage from publications that fulfil self-enhancement and enlightenment needs is preferable.

According to the publicity officer of the Italian Museum 2, the publications to be taken into account mostly are those that fulfil self-enhancement needs.

the publicity officer of the Italian Museum 3 is of the opinion that is very important to obtain coverage from all kind of publications in spite of the type of need they fulfil.

According to the publicity officer of the British Museum 1, the more suitable are publications that fulfil enlightenment and self-enhancement needs.

In the publicity officer of the British Museum 2 opinion, it is necessary to take into account the type of exhibition, but in general self-enhancement and enlightenment publications should be preferred.

The publicity officer of the British Museum 3 is of the opinion that the publications more important are those that fulfil enlightenment and self-enhancement needs.

We may observe that the publicity officers believe that is more important to obtain coverage from publications that fulfil instrumental needs and, apart from the general answer from the publicity officer of the Italian Museum 3, no one refers to publications that meet cultural needs.

The Coverage

The following paragraph is based on data obtained through media content analysis.

In the following paragraph we give an overview of how many articles per type of publication each exhibition obtained coverage from.

We also describe which kind of needs fulfil those publications that gave coverage.

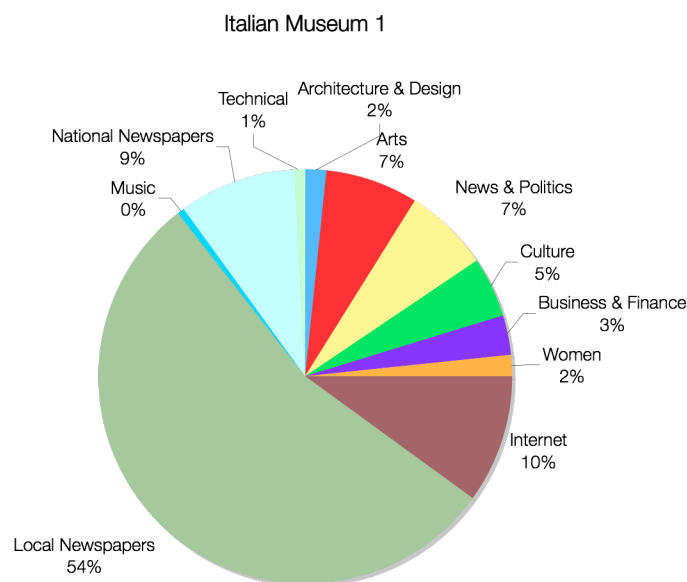
According to the charts presented on Chapter 2 and on the “Media needs” paragraph, every type of publication fulfil certain types of needs and they can fulfil them at three different levels, which corresponds to one, two or three “X” in the charts.

As illustrated in the following example chart, we have defined how many articles have been written for each type of publication. Then, according to the media needs chart, we insert the number of articles in correspondence to the needs fulfilled by the publication. Besides, in order to show that the publication could fulfil the need at level one, level two or three, we have multiplied the number of articles by 1 in case of level one, by 2 in case of level two and by 3 in case of level three.

<i>Type of Publication</i>	<i>Number of articles</i>	<i>Instrumental</i>	<i>Analysis</i>	<i>Enlightenment</i>	<i>Self-enhancement</i>
Lifestyle/home	4	4		4	8
Current affairs	41		82	123	82
Business	8	16	24	24	16
Women	4	8	4	4	8
Local Interest	140	420	280	420	
Hobbies	3	6			9
		<i>Total</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Total</i>
		454	390	575	123

The total of the articles so calculated has been translated into a pie graph to determine which kind of needs the articles per publications have fulfilled and in which percentage.

The following chart illustrates the coverage obtained by the Italian Museum 1 exhibition according to the type of publication.

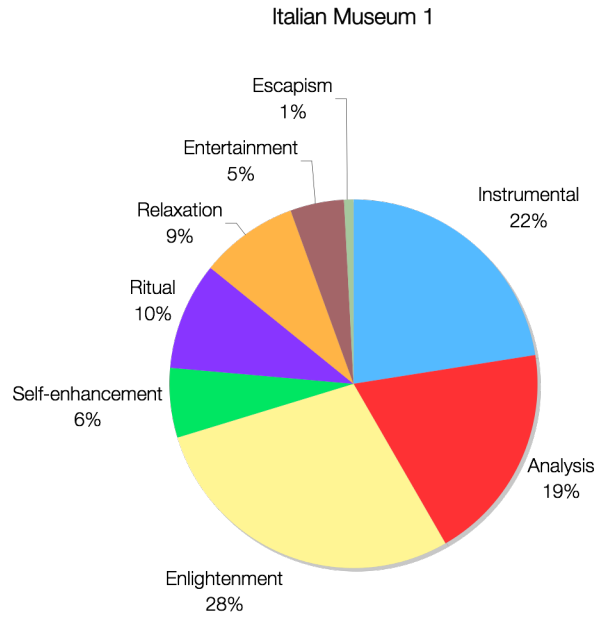


Graphic 1: Italian Museum 1: Percentage of articles per type of publication

The following chart illustrates the coverage obtained by the Italian Museum 2 exhibition according to the type of publication.

More of half of the coverage has been obtained by local newspapers. The 7% of the publications were about art. The other half is quite equally distributed among different publications. It is to be noticed that the coverage obtained from national newspapers is not very wide.

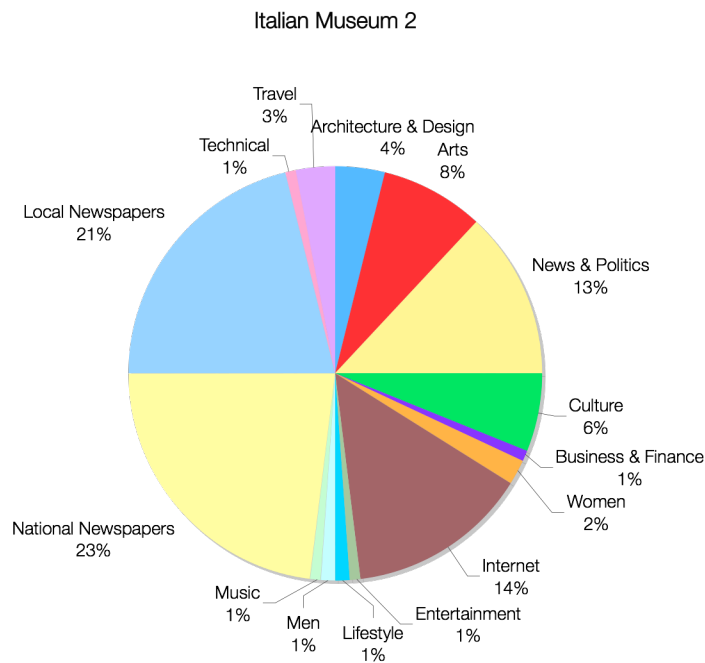
In the following graph there is a description of the coverage on the basis on which type of need the publications fulfil.



Graphic 2: Italian Museum 1: Percentage of articles per type of need satisfied

According to what expected by the publicity officer, the publications that gave more coverage are those that fulfil enlightenment needs. Nevertheless it is notable that the relaxation need is met in a wider percentage than the self-enhancement need and that, on the other hand, cultural needs have a less percentage than informational needs.

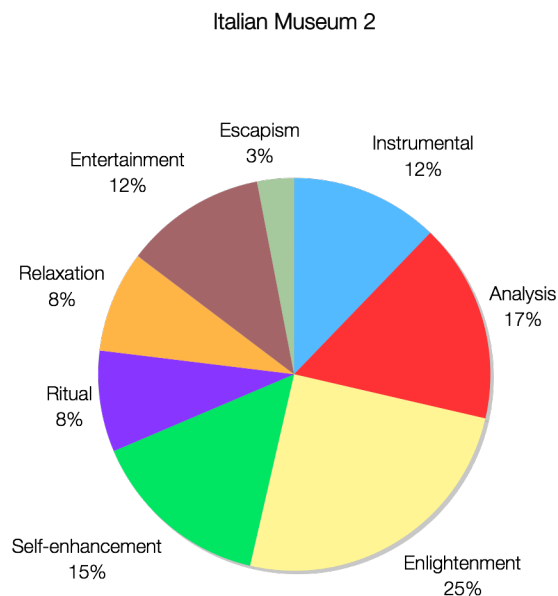
The following graphic represents the coverage obtained by the Italian Museum 2 exhibition with regard to the type of publication.



Graphic 3: Italian Museum 2: Percentage of articles per type of publication

The widest coverage had been given by national and local newspapers. The art publications constitute 8% of the coverage.

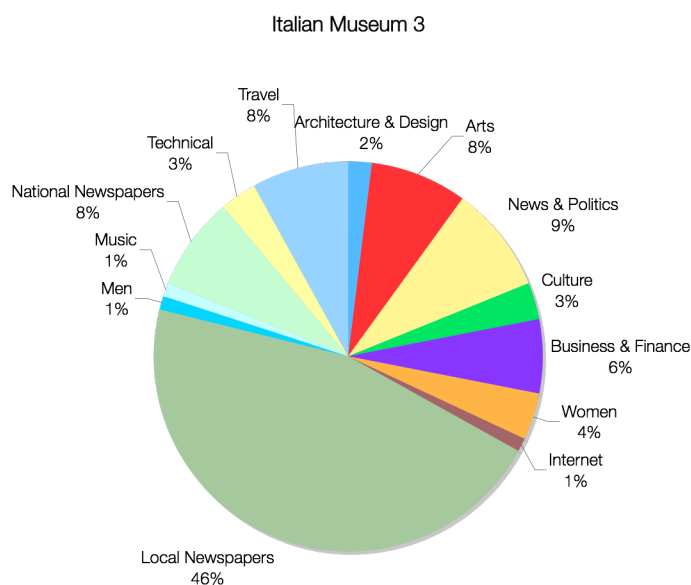
The following graphic represent the publications that gave coverage to the Italian Museum 2 exhibition on the basis of the type of need they fulfil.



Graphic 4: Italian Museum 2: Percentage of articles per type of need satisfied

Publications that meet enlightenment needs gave the widest coverage. It is notable that the publications fulfil in a broader percentage informational needs than cultural needs.

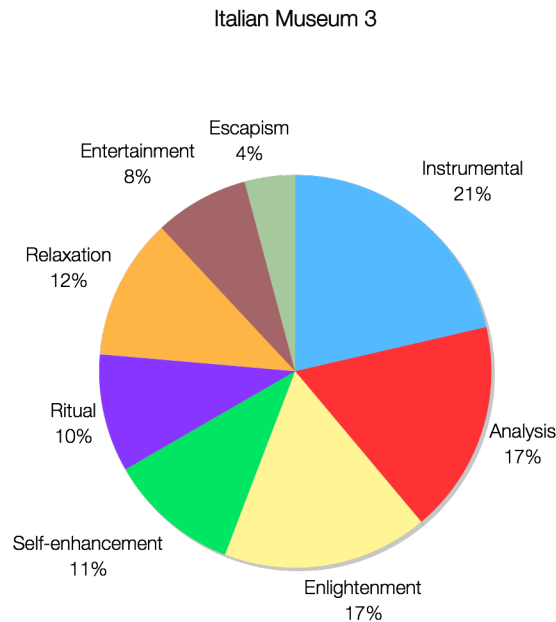
The following graphic represents the coverage obtained by the Italian Museum 3 exhibition with regard to the type of publication.



Graphic 5: Italian Museum 3: Percentage of articles per type of publication

Local newspapers gave the widest coverage and this reconfirms the strong bond between the museum and its town and region. National newspapers and Art publications are each equivalent to the 8% of the coverage.

The following graphic represent the publications that gave coverage to the Italian Museum 3 exhibition on the basis of the type of need they fulfil.

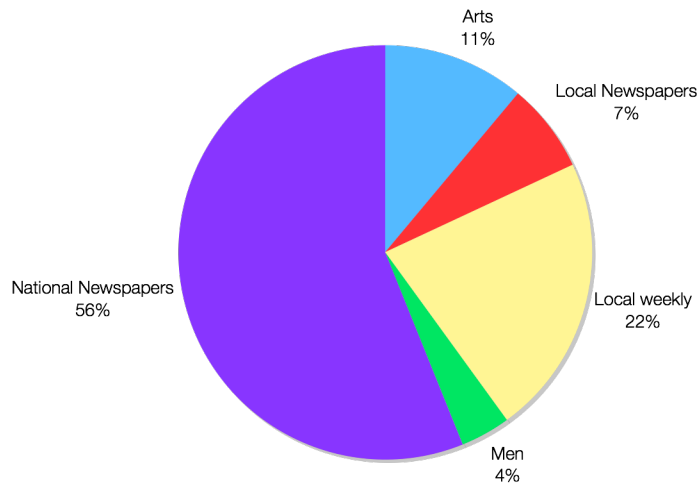


Graphic 6: Italian Museum 3: Percentage of articles per type of need satisfied

According to the publicity officer of the Italian Museum 3, it is important to obtain the widest coverage in spite of the type of needs. We can notice however that informational needs reached are satisfied by a broader percentage of publications than cultural needs.

The following graphic represents the coverage obtained by the British Museum 1 exhibition with regard to the type of publication.

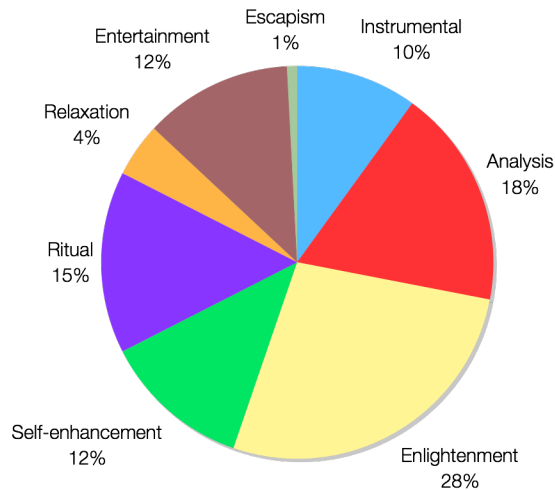
British Museum 1



Graphic 7: British Museum 1: Percentage of articles per type of publication

National newspapers gave the widest coverage, followed by local publications. Art magazines are equivalent to the 11% of the coverage. The following graphic represent the publications that gave coverage to the British Museum 1 exhibition on the basis of the type of need they fulfil.

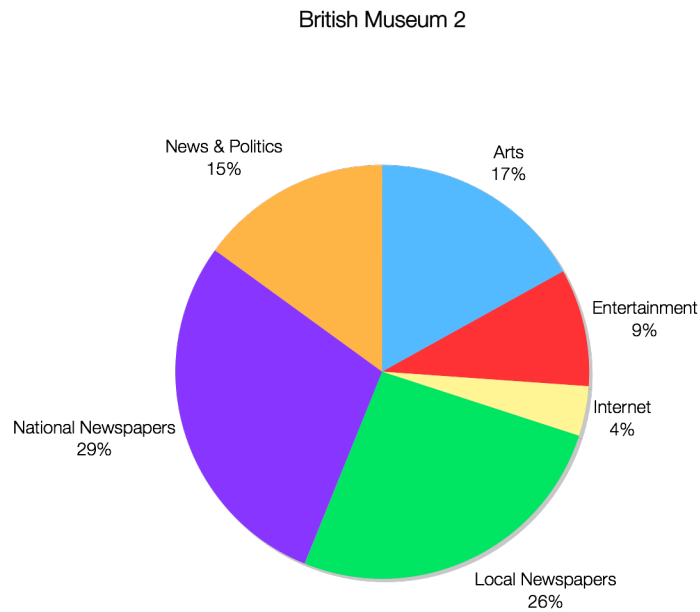
British Museum 1



Graphic 8: The British Museum 1: Percentage of articles per type of need satisfied

Most publications that cover the exhibition of the British Museum 1 meet enlightenment needs. It is noticeable that self-enhancement needs and entertainments needs are met in the same percentage. We might also notice that informational needs are covered by the widest percentage than the cultural needs.

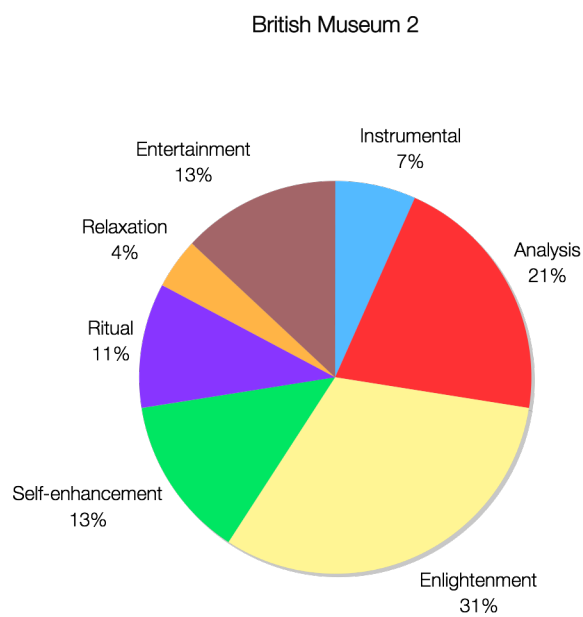
The following graphic represents the coverage obtained by the British Museum 2 exhibition with regard to the type of publication.



Graphic 9: British Museum 2: Percentage of articles per type of publication

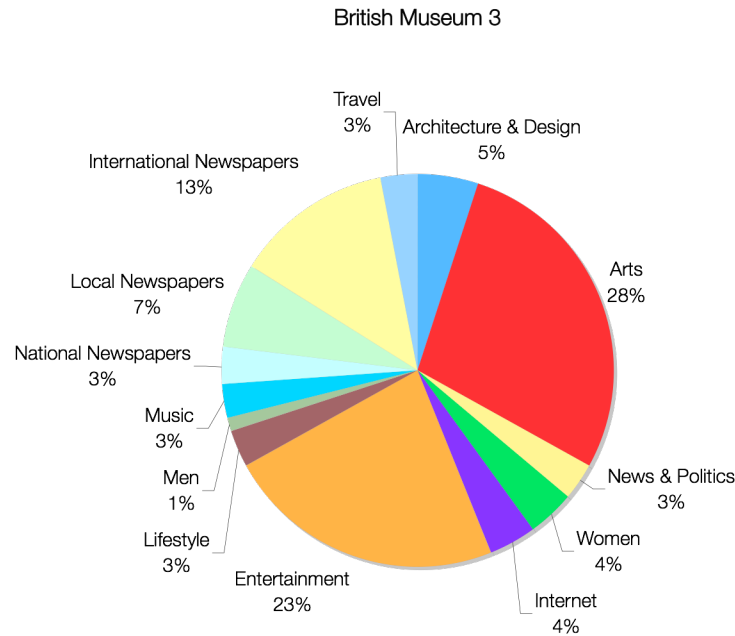
National and Local Newspapers gave the widest coverage. Arts publications amount to the 17% of the coverage.

The following graphic represent the publications that gave coverage to the British Museum 2 exhibition on the basis of the type of need they fulfil.



Graphic 10: British Museum 2: Percentage of articles per type of need satisfied

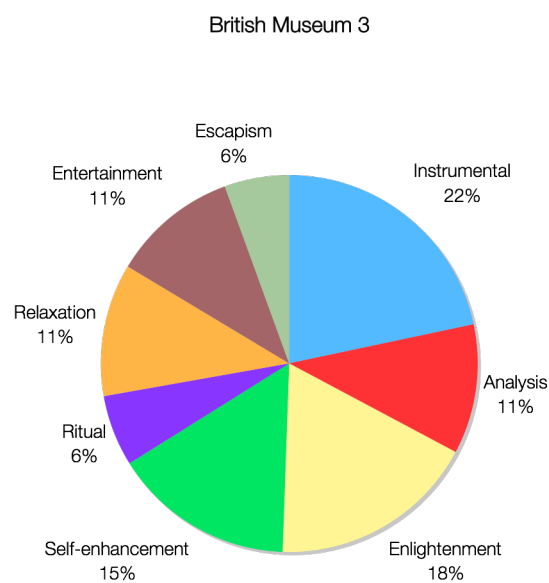
The exhibition obtained coverage mainly from enlightenment and instrumental needs publication. We can observe that escaping needs publications are missing. The following graphic represents the coverage obtained by the British Museum 3 exhibition with regard to the type of publication.



Graphic 11: British Museum 3: Percentage of articles per type of publication

The Art publications are equivalent to the 28% of the coverage and, differing from all the other exhibitions, constitute the widest coverage.

The following graphic represent the publications that gave coverage to the British Museum 3 exhibition on the basis of the type of need they fulfil.



Graphic 12: British Museum 3: Percentage of articles per type of need satisfied

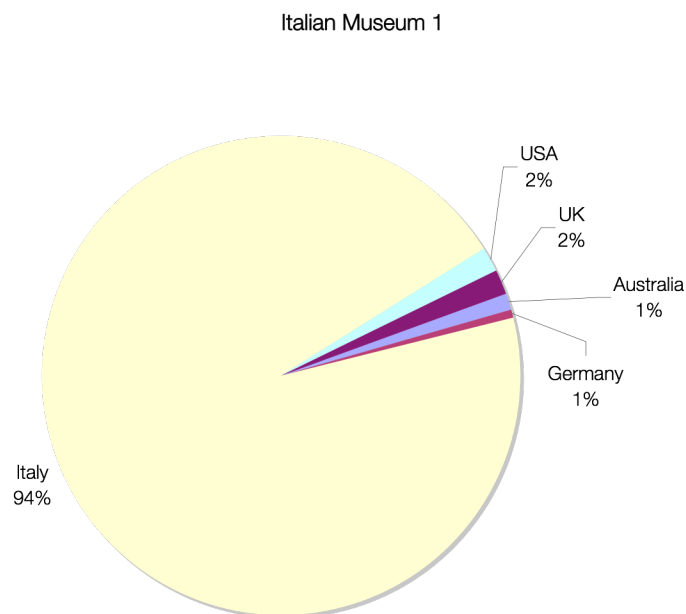
It is noticeable that a wide range of publications, on the basis of the needs they meet, is reached by the British Museum 3.

It is notable the similarity among all the exhibitions with regards to the needs they fulfil. Enlightenment needs obtain always the highest percentage, followed by the others informational needs, as expected by the publicity officers. Nevertheless also cultural needs are satisfied.

What is the geographical coverage?

In this paragraph we provide some information about the geographical and chronological coverage. The data are the result of the media coverage analysis and interviews.

For the exhibition of the Italian Museum 1 the geographical coverage is:



Graphic 13: Geographical coverage for Italian Museum 1 exhibition

The exhibition was covered by different international publications, a really important fact considering that the exhibition was moving to a foreigner museum. According to the publicity officer of the Italian Museum 1, however, the data about international coverage are not complete because of financial reasons.

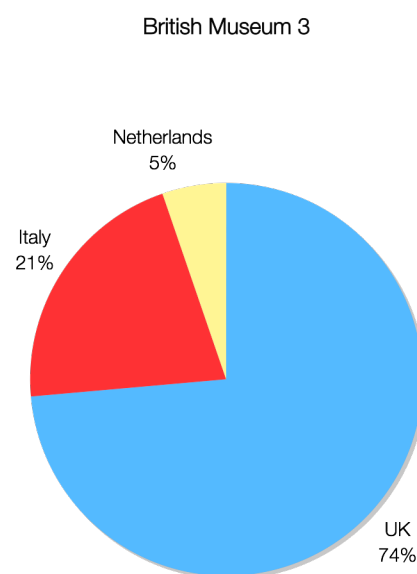
According to the publicity officer of the exhibition of the Italian Museum 2, because of financial reasons, press clippings from international publications are not collected.

According to the publicity officer of the Italian Museum 3, the exhibition also obtained coverage abroad, but for financial reasons they do not collect press clippings from international publications.

The exhibition of the British Museum 1 obtained coverage only in the United Kingdom. According to the publicity officer of the British Museum 1, the lack of international coverage was due mainly to the nature of the exhibition, which was exclusively related to local artists.

The exhibition the British Museum 2 obtained coverage only in the United Kingdom. The publicity officer of the British Museum 2 recognised that the exhibition could have obtained international exposure.

The exhibition the British Museum 3 obtained the geographical coverage as described in the following graph:



Graphic 14: Geographical coverage for the British Museum 3 exhibition

According to the publicity officer of the British Museum 3, all press texts circulated not only to foreigner media but also to the correspondents of foreigner press. Nevertheless, for financial reasons they only use a press cuttings agency to read in the so it is difficult to provide exact details of coverage abroad.

The absence of data with regard to the international coverage did not permit us to verify the exposure on international publications. In relation to the chronological coverage we give more insights on Chapter 6.

Is Internet coverage considered?

As previously mentioned in Chapter 2, internet, despite the accepted benefits that it has to offer, is often accused of negative aspects, in particular the relative lack of relationship with the consumer.

Nevertheless, that the editorial function of magazines can also be applied to websites and that the two media can work together, has also been investigated²¹.

Internet offers publicity the possibility of obtaining coverage from digital magazines on one hand, and from digital versions of printed publications on the other.

From media coverage analysis it has been observed that only the Italian Museum 1 and the Italian Museum 2 take coverage obtained on the web into serious consideration.

The publicity officer of the Italian Museum 1 believes in the importance of the web, and especially of the digital versions of printed magazines. The publicity officer of the Italian Museum 2 also recognises the impact of websites in the practice of publicity, but noted that the editorial work of persons writing for the Internet is less careful and often is simply a copy of the press release.

So with regard to the use of internet for press release by internet we might conclude, that the museums tend not to give much credit to the Internet and websites, and therefore they exclude those clippings from their collection.

Conclusions

In this chapter we have explained the results of our research on the basis of the theories exposed in Chapter 2 and, moreover we tried to give an overview of those results that we could not refer to the theories but that, from the discussion with the publicity officers, have a certain importance in the practice of publicity.

In the next and last Chapter we will introduce some aspects of practice that are not taken into consideration in the theory. Finally we answer to our main research questions.

²¹ (Ipsos-Insight, 2004)

Chapter 6

Conclusions

On the basis of our research, it might be said that publicity for modern and contemporary art museums is a complex process where many factors play an important role and its practice is not easy to be encapsulated into the existing theory. Nonetheless on the basis of the results obtained through our research, we aim to give a description of this process and, hopefully, a direction for the development of new investigations in this field. We try then to answer our main research questions.

What are the differences between theory and practice?

In this paragraph we make some observations based on the results of our research that define the relationship between theory and practice. Before we do this, we like to draw the attention to the fact that two practices have shown up, that are surprising in the sense that they are not mentioned in theory, as exposed in Chapter 2.

The importance of pictures in the articles

The pictures of artworks from the exhibitions that appear in the articles are thought to have a different impact than mere words, and their effect likely necessitates a separate investigation. Nevertheless, we discussed with the publicity officers how they evaluate the use of pictures in the press.

The publicity officer of the Italian Museum 1 believes that pictures can “conquer” the reader, and since it is the publicity office that provides the images to the media, a lot of attention is paid to the choice of pictures. According to the publicity officer, photographic portraits of the artists are very useful because they provide a human perspective of the artistic genius.

According to the publicity officer of the Italian Museum 2, pictures are so important that when a listings is supported by a picture representative of the exhibition, it should be considered a review.

According to the publicity officer of the Italian Museum 3, pictures are useful in catching the attention of the reader, but they are more important for the press than for the publicity of the museum.

The publicity officer of the British Museum 1 is of the opinion that the presence of pictures has a huge importance. Especially for contemporary art, which receives less visibility and is not considered as established as classical art, pictures have a great appeal. Photographs are intriguing and visually attractive. Moreover, the pictures occupy a larger space on paper and increase the impact of the coverage on the public.

The publicity officer of the British Museum 2 believes that pictures are key. Without images to support the article, it can be quite difficult to give context to the exhibition. A feature about an exhibition with no pictures lacks something, therefore it would be foolish not to include them.

According to the publicity officer of the British Museum 3 'a picture is worth a thousand words' and this is still true today. An image certainly has greater impact than words alone and stimulates people to read the article and even act on it.

Curators, committees, partners, sponsors

Curators create the exhibition and have a fundamental role in a museum. The committee (“direzione scientifica” or “comitato scientifico” in Italian) manages the museum. Partners are organizations or institutions, which collaborate with the museum in reaching a certain goal, for instance, the creation of an exhibition. The partnership implies the sharing of risks and benefits. Sponsors, donors, patrons, and supporters are institutions, public or private organizations, firms, privates, and foundations that finance the museum and its activities.

As mentioned before, in the literature related to publicity for museums, and in particular pertaining to press releases, there is no mention of these groups, but in the press releases analyzed they appear and, to a certain extent, obtain a discrete coverage.

For the Italian Museum 1 exhibition, the publicity officer focused particularly on the work of the curator, especially because of the complex work that went into creating the exhibition. The curator obtained coverage of 62% in the reviews and 5% in the listings. In the Italian Museum 1 press release the sponsors of the exhibition are named, but as recognised by the publicity officer, the information did not obtain coverage. The publicity officer remarked that journalists never mention the sponsors because it is perceived as a form of advertising: the publicity officer is of the opinion that sponsors do not look for visibility or direct branding by financing museums.

According to the publicity officer of the Italian Museum 2, naming the curators and the committees is a form of recognition of them and their work. Curators have been named in 39% of the reviews and 18% of the listings, while the museum committee obtained 30% coverage in the reviews and 5% in the listings.

The exhibition was the product of a the partnership with several foundations (40% reviews, 5% listings); the patronage of a foreigner institution (27% only reviews); a co-production (21% only reviews); and the support of a foreigner organization (24% only reviews). According to the publicity officer of the Italian Museum 2, if the supporters were business organizations, they probably would have not obtained coverage.

According to the publicity officer of the Italian Museum 3 it is very important to name the curators and committees because it is a way to recognize the work done by the employees of the museum. Coverage means good publicity for the museum and also for the individuals who are part of the museum. Curators are named in 28% of the reviews and in 7% of the listings. The museum committee obtained 11% coverage in the reviews and 3% in the listings.

The exhibition Italian Museum 3 is a product of the collaboration with a foreigner museum. The publicity officer of the Italian Museum 3 is of the opinion that it is important to publicize the collaboration, because by giving publicity to the partner the collaboration improves and may lead to other projects. The coverage of the partnership was 54% in the reviews and 43% in the listings.

Information about the sponsors of the exhibition was not given in the press release: nonetheless, the publicity officer of the Italian Museum 3 argues that it is almost impossible to obtain coverage of sponsors from the media.

According to the publicity officer of the British Museum 1 it is not very important to name the curators, while the focus should be given to the artist. In the publicity officer of the British Museum 1 opinion, a wider coverage was obtained by the curators because of their curatorial choices (67% reviews and 6% listings).

The exhibition of the British Museum 2 was realized in collaboration with two no-profit organizations (18% reviews and 4% listings).

For the exhibition of the British Museum 3 the curators are named in the press release, but the coverage obtained is 17% in the reviews only. According to the publicity officer of the British Museum 3, only known and respected curators obtain coverage, but curators essentially tend to only be named in the academic press or in specialized publications.

The exhibition was also the product of a collaboration between the British Museum 3 and a foreigner museum. This information obtained coverage of 17% only in the reviews. The publicity officer of the British Museum 3 believes that this is due to the fact that the other museum is not very well known by the media.

It is notable that the information related to co-workers, partners, supporters is perceived quite important by the museums to be shown in the press release and consequently to obtain coverage on.

If a theory about publicity of arts museums is going to be developed those two findings of our research should be incorporated.

On the light of all the results obtained, we may now answer our main research questions.

Does publicity for museums follow a press agency, public information, two-way asymmetrical, or two-way symmetrical model?

With regard to the publicity models, we believe that the museums in general follow a public information model. All the publicity officers convey correct and clear information in their communication, but these museums do not use any source of feedback from their public in the publicity process.

Nevertheless we have observed that the Italian Museum 1 and the Italian Museum 2 make use of questionnaires and surveys in order to better understand their visitors and to adjust their behaviour in relation to the visitors. It seems reasonable to conclude that both museums take feedback into account for publicity and promotion activities, but the way in which surveys and questionnaires can actually affect the organization and its behaviour is difficult to determine.

How does publicity work for an exhibition of modern or contemporary art?

As mentioned previously, publicity in our research concept is mainly based on three elements: press release, media list and coverage obtained. We give an overview of each of these elements on the light of the results of our research.

Press Release: subjective terms

In relation to the language used in the press releases, we analyzed the presence of subjective terms and, contradicting Abbott and Webb (1991), all the press releases but the Italian Museum 2, make use of subjective terms. The interesting side is that none of these terms obtained coverage on the media. We can then suppose that, according to Abbott and Webb (1991), the journalists stick to the objectivity and use their own judgement in evaluating an exhibition.

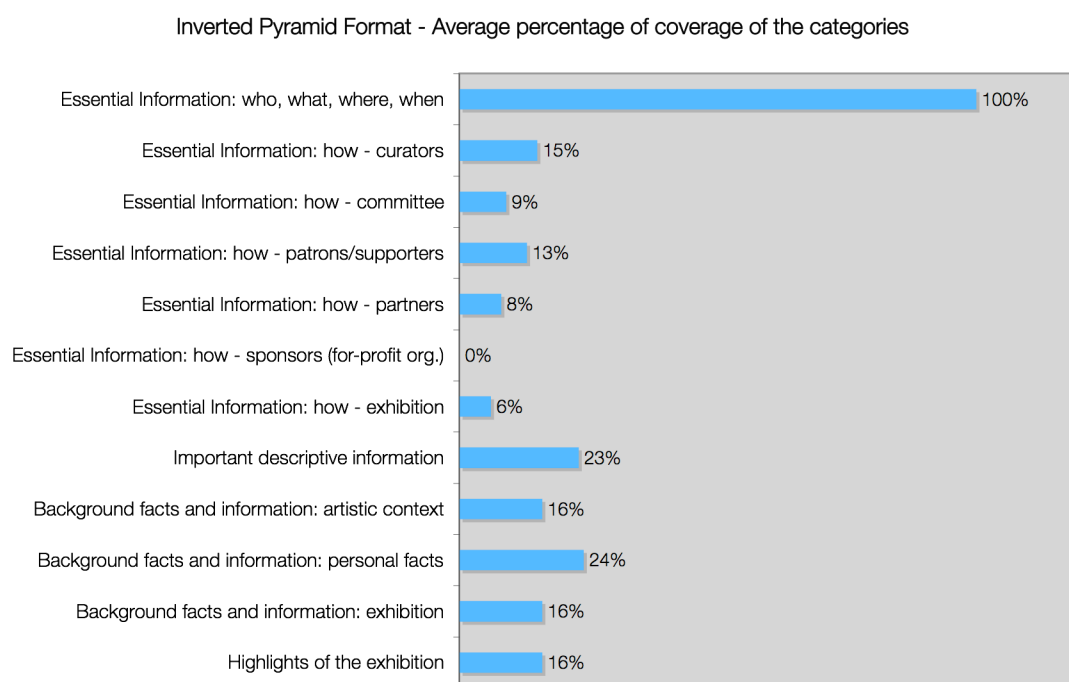
Inverted Pyramid Format

In relation to the structure of the press release, we noticed that the “Inverted Pyramid Format” is followed with regard to the content, but the order of the various sections is different. We noticed that if the information is located differently from what is suggested by the model, the coverage obtained does not change. We suppose therefore that it is the content of the information and not its position which determines whether the journalist would use it or not for the article.

In general we have observed that the essential information *who, what, where and when* obtains, gets a 100% coverage. The essential information *how* instead differs whether it refers to curators,

committee, supporter, donors or sponsors and the coverage changes in relation to the countries and to the museums concerned. On average information about curators obtains 15%, committee 9%, patrons/supporters 13%, partners 8%, sponsors (for-profit organizations) 0%. In relation to *how* the exhibition is built the average coverage percentage is 6%. *Important descriptive information* obtains an average 23% of exposure. *Background facts and information* vary: background information related to the artistic context obtains 16% coverage, while personal facts obtain on the average 24%. Contextual facts about the historical and political background do not appear in any of the press releases. Background facts related to the exhibition on average obtains 16% coverage. *The highlights of the exhibitions* obtain on average 16% exposure.

In the following graph we summarize the results obtained.

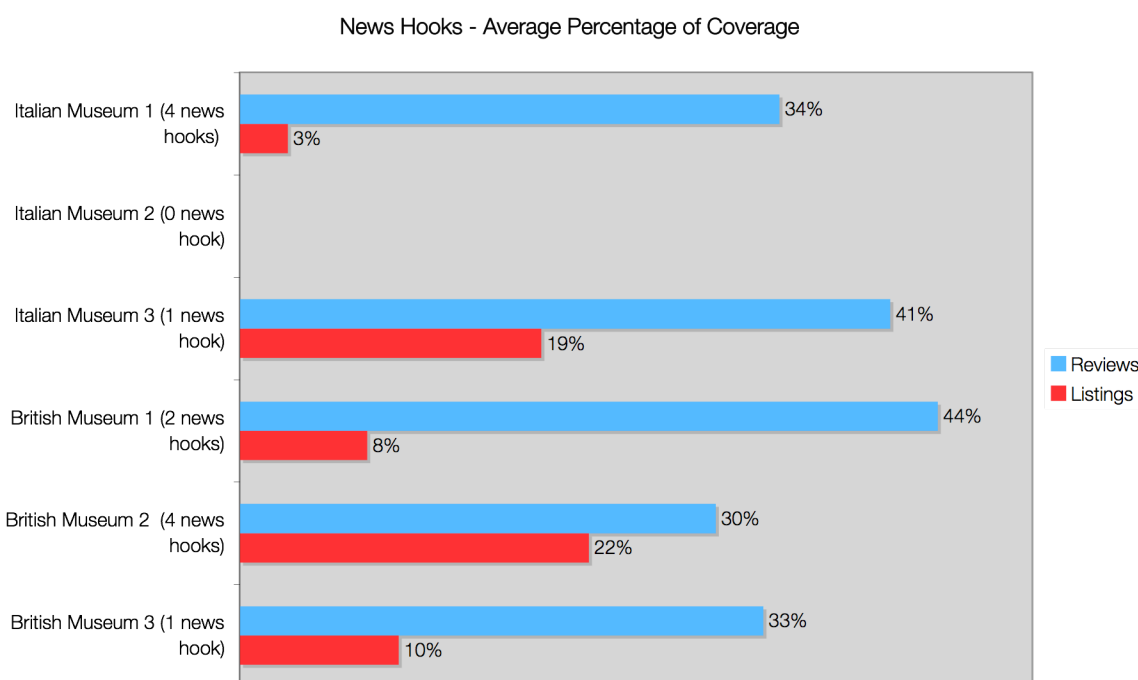


Graphic 15: All the museums - Average percentage of coverage of the categories of the Inverted Pyramid Format

We conclude that those types of information that have more possibilities of being taken over by the media for the public from the press release are *important descriptive information* and *background facts* about the personal life of the artist.

News hooks

In relation to the *news hooks* we made the following summarizing graph:



Graphic 16: All the museums - Average percentage of coverage of the news hooks

The British Museum 3 news hook obtained 34% coverage on the reviews and 3% on the listings. The British Museum 2 used four news hooks that, on the average, were covered by 30% or reviews and 22% of listings. The British Museum 1 presented two news hooks that, on the average, appear to the 44% of the reviews and 8% of the listings. The Italian Museum 3 used one news hook, obtaining 41% of the exposure on the reviews and 19% in the listings. Italian Museum 2 did not use any news hook. The Italian Museum 1 presented four news hooks, obtaining, on the average 34% of the reviews and 3% of the listings.

We can observe that the *news hooks* on the average are mentioned at least in the 30% of the reviews and on the 3% of listings.

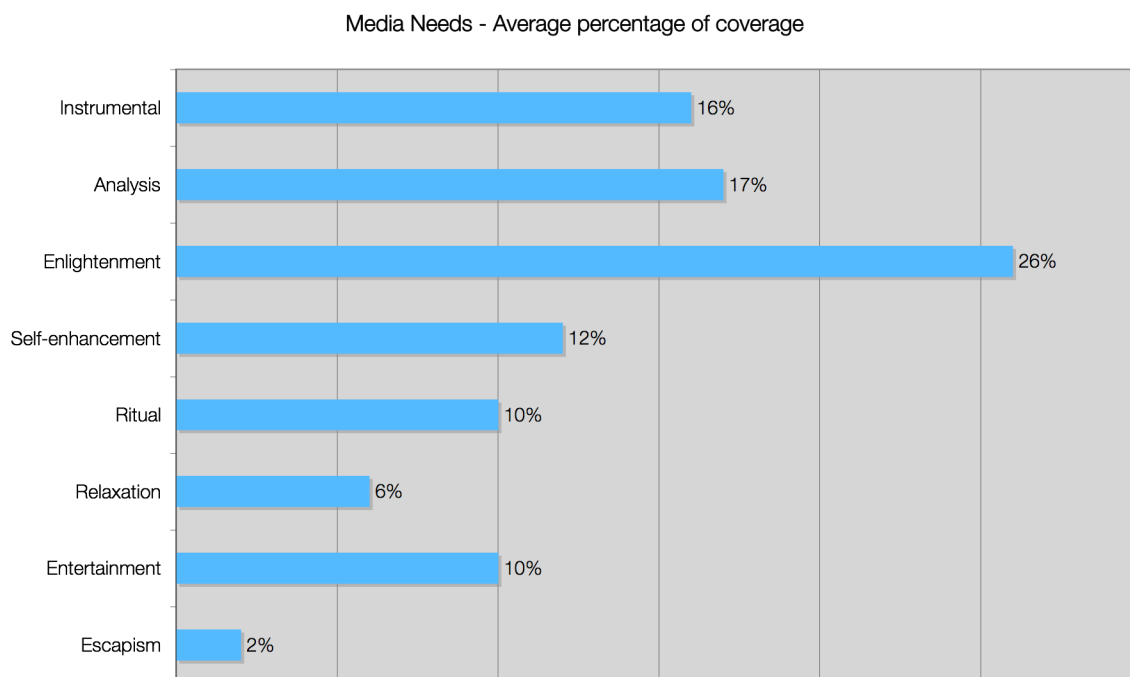
Media List and Coverage

In relation to the choice of the media list according to all of the publicity officers the most important publications to be contacted are national and local newspapers and art publications.

On the basis of our results about the coverage obtained we can conclude that on the average among all the museums examined, local newspapers are responsible for 29% of the coverage, national newspapers for 21% and art publications for the 12%. According to the Henley Centre study (2005) the main source for art information are the newspapers and we can conclude that our results confirm this fact.

Media List: Informational needs versus Cultural Needs

In relation to the publications on the basis which kind of need they fulfil, we can conclude that these publications fulfil all the media needs. In particular, informational needs receive a broader coverage than the cultural ones, as illustrated in the following graph:



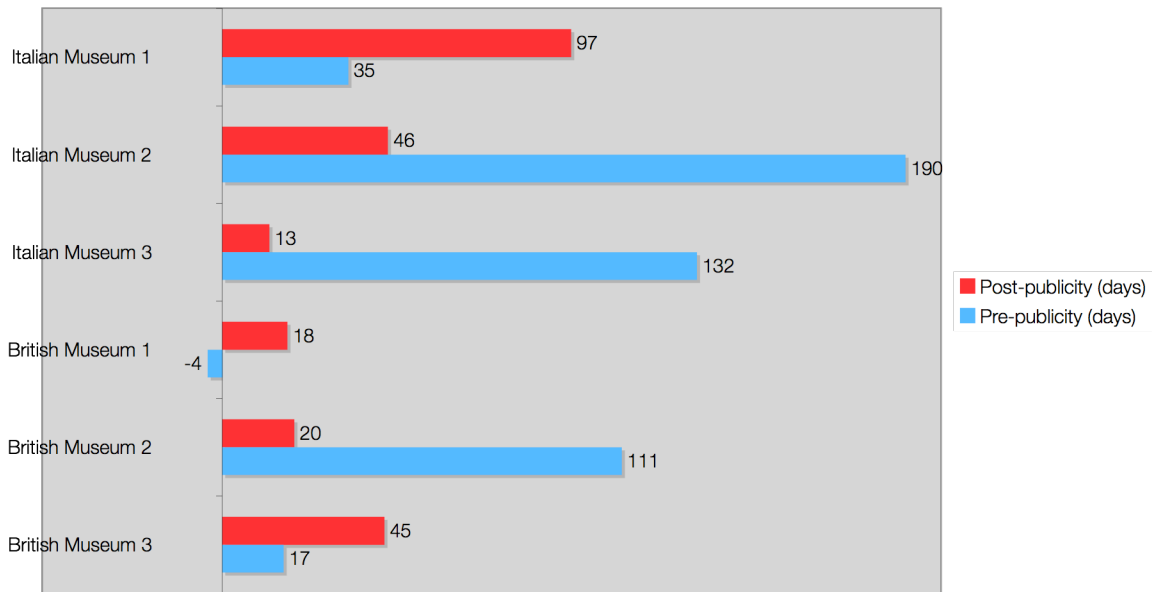
Graphic 17: All the museums - Average percentage of coverage of publications identified by the media needs they satisfy

Enlightenment needs obtain the broader coverage on the average, followed by analysis needs and instrumental needs. Among the cultural needs, the entertainment one receives the widest coverage. In spite of what expected from the publicity officers, there is a broad variety of needs that the coverage of the news about a new exhibition can fulfil. We may conclude that an exhibition does not need necessary to be associated with publications that fulfil enlightenment or self-enhancement needs. Exposure can also fulfil cultural needs and it is very interesting to see here that the entertainment one is the widest among them.

Geographical and Chronological Coverage

In relation to the geographical coverage we noticed that only two of the museums collect – partially – press clippings from international publications. This is according to them due to the costs of the activity, therefore it was not possible to evaluate correctly the geographic coverage. The chronological coverage, we can observe from the following graph:

Chronological Coverage - Days of exposure before the opening and after the closure of the exhibition



Graphic 18: All the Museums - Average percentage of chronological coverage

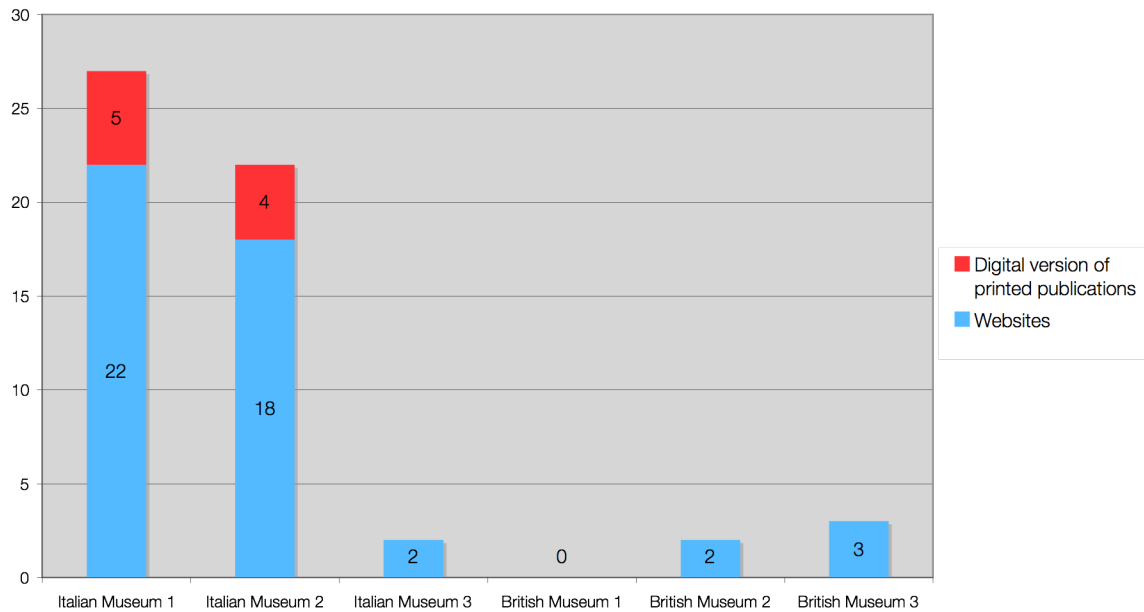
All the museums obtain some “pre-publicity”, or coverage that anticipates the opening of the exhibition, but the the British Museum 1 for which instead the first article is written four days after the opening of the exhibition. It is notable the wide pre-publicity obtained by the Italian Museum 2, which amounts to 190 days of exposure before the opening. We also notice that all the museums receive “post-publicity” and in particular, the Italian Museum 1 receives coverage for 97 days after the closure of the exhibition.

Internet Coverage

In relation to the internet coverage we can conclude that museums tend not to consider internet like the other media and, in general the number of articles from the internet taken into account is very low. It was not possible then to make a in-depth evaluation on the internet clippings.

The following graph shows the number of websites that were taken into consideration by the publicity officers in their press clippings.

Clipping of the Coverage obtained on the Internet



Graphic 19: All the museums - Internet clippings from digital versions of printed magazines and from websites

We devote one paragraph more to those elements that are not discussed in the theories, but that from the interviews with the publicity officers came out as important.

Pictures

Pictures are considered very important by all the museums with the only exception of the Italian Museum 3 officer who believes that pictures are more important for the media than for the exhibition. Nonetheless, in general, great importance is given to the pictures because they represent objectively some of the elements of the exhibition and give to the reader a more direct perception of the show.

Curators, committee, partners, donors and sponsors

In relation the curators, committee, partners, donors and sponsors, we noticed that a bigger focus in the realization of the press release and also in the coverage obtained, is given to the curators and committee in the Italian Museums and that it is perceived as a way of recognising the work done by the members of the institution. The partnerships are promoted by the museums of both countries and the coverage received is discrete. The promotion of the partnership is perceived as important for the museums as a way to develop and improve the relationship. Information about the donors is highlighted and receives a discrete coverage. The for-profit organizations that act as sponsors are named only in the Italian Museum 1 press release, but however, according to the publicity officers, they do not receive coverage. We supposed that journalist perceive as a form to advertisement to nominate business organization that support museums.

The Publicity Model

On the basis of the results obtained through our research, we define how publicity for exhibitions differs from the Horton (2006) publicity model:

Publicity officer: The publicity officer probably is an employee of the museum who usually maintains a constant relationship with the mass media. In case of smaller museums, the public relations practice can be left to an external agency. In general there are neither objectives nor strategies developed. The interaction that usually takes place is between the publicity officer, the committee, and the curator.

Goals: Usually the museum does not have a specific goal for the promotion of an exhibition besides obtaining good reviews and numerous visitors. The widest and positive exposure on the media is, generally speaking, the main goal of the publicity officers.

Information: The publicity officer can usually receive the information related to the exhibition from: artist, curator, committee, partners, and art critics. The information are then selected and arranged in order to obtain the widest positive coverage on the media.

Relation with the media: usually the publicity officers have a solid relationship with the media, therefore are aware of which kind of story they can obtain from a certain source. They tend to give the priority to the same types of publications. Nevertheless they usually keep track of who are the journalist and publications, which give coverage to the exhibitions.

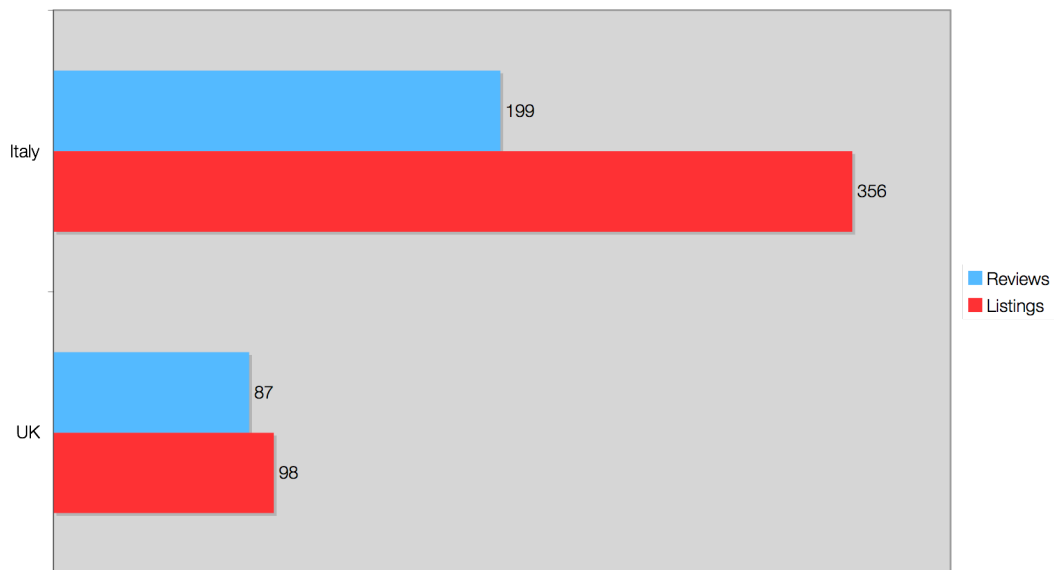
Results: after a publicity campaign, besides the collection of the press clippings, there are seldom deep researches on which are the effective results, like, for instance, a media coverage analysis.

For museums it is often considered too expensive to make an actual research on the results of a publicity campaign besides investigating who are the journalists and publications, which will more likely writing of the exhibition. There is a lack of investigation about which information is attracting more easily the media, which language should be used, if the specific position of an element in the press release can influence the coverage obtained. In other words, there are rarely researches performed on the process of publicity that investigate the work of the officers themselves in the light of the coverage obtained.

What are the differences and similarities between the use of publicity in Italian and British Museums?

In this regard a general observation can be made. As we might observe from the following graph:

Reviews and Listings: Coverage obtained per Country



Graphic 20: Museums per countries - Coverage per number of reviews and of listings

Italian museums receive more coverage than the British ones and the difference between the reviews and the listings is wider in the Italian context.

Nevertheless it is not simple to make a clear distinction regarding the way publicity is done for exhibitions in Italy and in the United Kingdom. All the museums share the same problems in their relationship with the media, for instance the incapability to obtain coverage for their for-profit sponsors, and they have similar strategies to reach them.

Final Remarks

The aim of this research was to understand how publicity works for exhibitions of modern and contemporary art. Some of the results were expected, some others did not confirm the theories in Chapter 2 and others were not mentioned in the theories.

We might wonder whether the practitioners should follow more closely the theories we presented, whether the theories we presented are not applicable, and whether there is a need for a new theoretical framework.

Our first observation is that publicity officers for museum do not seem to be aware of the possibilities offered by publicity theory. The intent of the communication is still felt not very developed: publicity officers still tend to be focused simply on arising awareness and attracting a large amount of visitors. Many visitors are necessary for the success of an exhibition, but is a large amount of visitors always a symptom for a good publicity campaign? The answer is unknown.

We also observed that the efforts to address new publics are not so numerous. Some museums reach certain publications in order to reach different and more diverse public, but what is the same intent present for example in the press release? Are different publics taken into account while

writing a press release? We observed for instance that background information related to the personal life of the artists tends to obtain coverage in 26% of the publications and, according to Webb and Abbott (1991), it is a good stimulus for the readers who approach the artist for the first time. Therefore, why not emphasizing the human and personal aspect of the artists more?

We noticed further that the attention of the publicity officers is mainly focussed on those possible visitors who already are familiar with the arts, the artist or the museum. It is absolutely important to maintain and improve the relationship with the loyal public, but then, since publicity can be so powerful and inexpensive, why not to risk and use this channel in an innovative way more focused on the new potential visitors? Background information about the artistic context might be used to suggest to the journalist an in-depth article and can give more insight to the publics familiar with the arts but not specifically with the artist exposed. A description of the artworks exposed is another way to catch the attention of the public acquainted with the arts.

Publicity officers believe also that news about the exhibition is strictly connected with publications that fulfil informational needs and in particular enlightenment and self-enhancement ones. We have found that this is true, but we also discovered that also cultural needs are satisfied through the coverage obtained by an exhibition. We do believe that practitioners should focus on the fact that news about exhibitions can fulfil an entertainment need and, therefore, should consider in its media list also those publications that satisfy these types of needs.

Another question to be asked is why is the internet still not considered as a serious medium by the arts museums for publicity? Internet represents a forceful instrument to catch the attention of potential visitors because it reaches a large amount of individuals, because it offers the possibility of using multimedia instruments and because it is intuitive. Museums should firstly take more seriously into consideration the coverage obtained on the Internet, and secondly take into consideration its potentials to reach new publics.

We can also wonder why publicity officers tend to use in the press release certain elements that do not obtain any coverage. Subjective terms and sponsors are two examples of topics that never reach the coverage, therefore we might wonder why they appear in the press releases.

We already mentioned that only two out of six publicity officers declared to make use of questionnaires and surveys for their media list, but, we might wonder, why there is not more time spent on researches? The obvious answer is because of financial reasons, but we might also suggest that probably many museums do not believe in the utility of these research methods and that only the public that can be reached is the one already interested in the arts and there is no luck in trying to reach publics less or not familiar with the arts. But, is that true?

We believe that the studies on publicity for exhibitions of modern and contemporary art are inadequate and there is certainly a need for new investigations. The theoretical framework we have tried to apply on the practice of publicity did not cover all of its aspects, but on the other hand, publicity officers do not seem to follow any specific principle based on actual researches anyhow.

We hope with this research to have brought up new questions and to have created a new interest in the subject. Because of the lack of studies on this topic, we think it would be important to do more in-depth investigations and, in the future, to develop a forceful and relevant theory, so that practitioners will become interested on the theory.

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