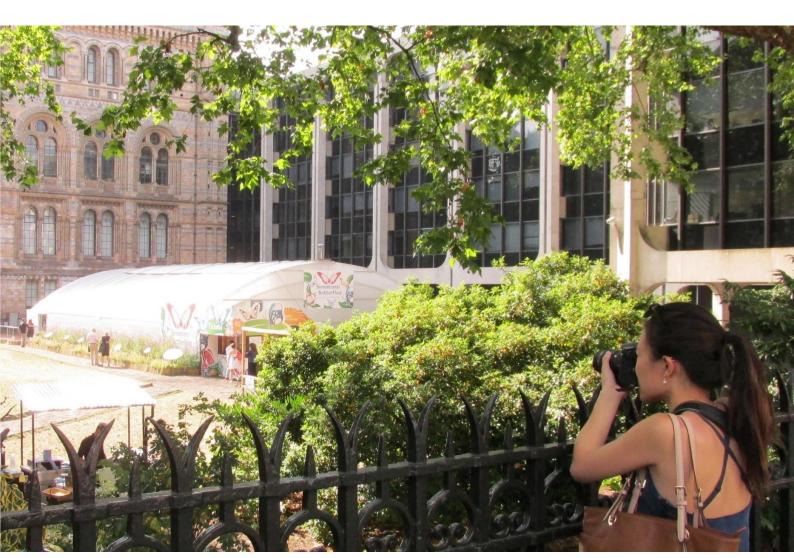# DIGITAL NATIVES

Picture: Visitors in London in front of the Natural History Museum, Image Credit: SE1 Media

MODULE 6 **DIFFERENTIATION IN MOBILE**

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Module 6		**Title:**	Digital Natives
DIGITALIZATION		**Topic:**	This module shows the importance of well-developed mobile marketing and communication strategies to attract young visitors.
		Educational Objective:	Skill development within the scope of digital media use
		Key Words:	Tourism – mobile – consumer – marketing – website
		Duration:	Approx. 30 min. study + 15 min. questions

DIGITAL NATIVES

DIFFERENTIATION IN MOBILE

> **AREA OF GOOD PRACTICE: DIGITALIZATION**

1 INTRODUCTION

A well-crafted digital presence is fundamental for attractions. The mobile digital presence of attractions — how they deliver information and engage mobile consumers — is critical for increasing awareness and revenue.

Younger travellers' behaviour and mobility patterns are changing towards more flexible and spontaneous decision-making, facilitated to a large extent by mobile devices. While previously decisions to visit attractions were taken well in advance, today, the mobile device has the potential to facilitate spontaneous decision-making with regard to on-site exploration and discovery. In such a scenario, most often, tourists would refer to the mobile Web in order to optimise their trip.
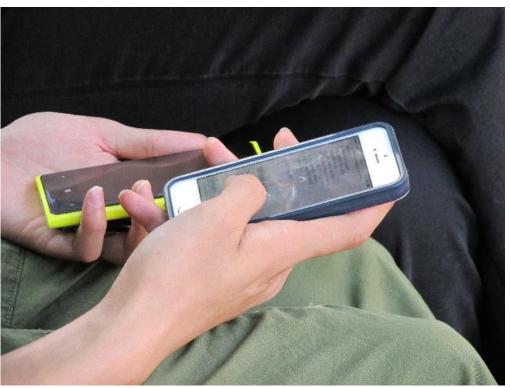
A mobile website that provides the right information at the right time is, therefore, critical in order to increase awareness among visitors, encourage them to visit the attraction and engage with it before, during and after their visit. These processes, as well as finding the right information to make such swift and sudden decisions depends heavily on the user experience that visitors have with the mobile website.

A negative user experience leads to negative brand perception, as well as a missed opportunity to attract digital natives/ the Millennial traveller and engage them with the attraction. It is important to help attractions, as well as destinations and other tourism businesses to question their mobile digital presence and look for ways to improve it.

Picture: Participant testing websites in mobile field test, Image Credit: SE1 Media

The Digital Tourism Think Tank (SE1 Media) in collaboration with WYSE Travel Confederation carried out a mobile field study, aimed to understand better whether and how mobile content changes the perception of young travellers towards a destination.

Each field test was carried out in London with one participant and two moderators, taking around 30 minutes per person. Digital Natives, aged between 14 and 35, were asked about their current perceptions of two locations on a 7 point scale followed by randomly showing the participants the mobile optimised website of either the Victoria and Albert Museum or Queen Elisabeth Olympic Park and the full website of the other attraction. Participants were asked to access information on the full and mobile optimised websites about each point of interest and make a decision on whether they would like to visit the point of interest. After this test, they were asked again about their perception with regards to the websites and point of interest on a 7-point scale.

3 GOOD PRACTICE

Digital Natives involved in the field study were aged between 14 and 35. The participants were from following countries: Australia, China, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Singapore, Spain, Switzerland, UK, USA and Russia. 90% of participants used smartphones every day, 10% of participants had no smartphone.

For participants involved in the field study, hearing name of the attraction already leads to them having a certain image of the attraction or assuming what they can see and experience within the attraction. Keywords that are part of the attraction name trigger recognition among participants that are unfamiliar with the attraction and its name.

When dividing the participants of the study into groups, they were asked to access either mobile optimised or full websites of the attractions and look for points of interest within the attractions that could help them form a decision on whether to visit or not. The perception towards the website and the point of interest were recorded with a 7-point scale.

3.1 Results for Victoria and Albert Museum websites

The mobile website is ranked higher than the full website in all dimensions. The overall ranks show that the participants perceived the mobile website as easy to use, clear and pleasant. On the contrary, the full website is considered as dull, uninteresting and unattractive. Participants found the mobile website easier to use than the full website.

Nevertheless, users also criticised the mobile website. They pointed out that the website did not provide a clear overview of the museum. Some participants even thought that the museum

Picture: User experience testing of websites on mobile, Image Credit: SE1 Media

was a shopping centre. This might be due to the fact that the mobile website uses the same design codes as fashion and e-commerce websites. Additionally, one of the first elements promoted on the mobile website is the museum shop. Practical information, such as location, prices and opening times, are not immediately available and not visible on the home page. Travellers, who need information quickly without spending too much time on the internet, while on-site, perceive this as an

inconvenience. From the results, it is clear that they want to know immediately where the attraction is.

The mobile website's ratings for creativity (4.9) and attractiveness (4.7) are lower than expected. It is perceived as tidy and well organised. However, as the exhibitions are promoted on the home page, participants thought that the topic of the museum was restricted to that of its current exhibitions (fashion, wedding dresses).

Surprisingly too, the full website was considered as quite clear (3.9) to understand and easy to use (4.1). The full website's navigation is similar to that of a desktop website, that's why participants have the know-how to navigate across the pages.

3.2 Results for Olympic Park websites

The participant ratings for the mobile and full websites for the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park show that the difference between the two websites was more dramatic than those of the Victoria and Albert Museum. The full website was perceived as less creative, not particularly interesting and attractive. Likewise, the full website was more difficult to use and unclear.

Unlike the full website, the overall ratings for the official mobile website of the Olympic Park were high for all dimensions. The website was rated as creative, interesting and attractive and was perceived easy to use and clear.

The mobile website of the Olympic Park scored higher than the official website of the Victoria and Albert Museum.

3.3 Design improves reputation

After looking at the mobile website, participants have a better perception of the museum than before. Their excitement towards their possible visit grew (from 4.4 to 4.9). They expected to enjoy their visit at the museum more than before viewing the website (from 4.9 to 5.2). The tidiness of the website and the choice of fashion photos give participants the feeling for a modern museum. Nevertheless, after looking at the website, some participants were less excited to visit the museum. Due to the topics of the exhibitions promoted, some male participants thought that the museum was mainly about fashion and lost interest, as they considered the attraction more relevant for women.

3.4 A dull website damages the image of the attraction

On the contrary, participants who have looked at the full website have worse perception of the museum than before, from 5.0 to 4.3. Their excitement towards a possible visit dropped from 4.8 to 4.2. Participants lost interest in the attraction (from 5.6 to 4.5). Nevertheless, the overall ratings of their expected experience are still above average. The full website scored well because it provides a menu with clear and explicit sections to find concrete information.

4 EFFECTIVENESS AND SUCCESS FACTORS

- Design of a website impacts on the reputation of an attraction

- A good mobile website can change attitude and motivation in seconds

- Design influences perception

- A full website could have its benefits

- Unclear messages damage motivation to visit

- Elements that influence perception are being clarified

- High importance on pictures

- Practical information is crucial for visitors

- Immediacy of information is important for young travellers

- Images and photos have a threefold function (allow recognition, provide indicative visual language, increase motivation)

5   RESULTS AND IMPACT

Attractions need to speak experiences: Digital natives do not have time and will only look at a website for a very short time. When they first open the mobile website, it has to be immediately clear what they can do, see and experience within the attraction, including authentic images that communicate actual experiences is key.

Visual layout has to be spot on: All elements within a website should communicate a positive tone and enforce the image of the attraction. In this context, apart from images, button colours, tabs, links, and fonts should be considered carefully.

Be practical and match tourist's needs: When on site, young travellers seek concrete answers to critical questions that form part of their decision-making. It is important to deliver answers to their needs.

Location & Directions: On-site needs differ among travellers, but when it comes to large environments and limited amount of time, it all boils down to one: location. When deciding whether to spontaneously visit an attraction, its location plays a key role in making a decision. This, as well as directions how to reach, should be easy to find on the website.

Push notifications: Young travellers are active, and often in a hurry. Especially in dense built up environments, they might miss out and not notice an attraction in their vicinity. This is why push notifications are critical in order to attract and engage visitors.

Exceed expectations: When looking up information, tourists have already drawn certain conclusions based on previous knowledge, or the name of the attraction. A brand has only a limited amount of time to match those expectations or change them for the better.

6 ADDITIONAL LEARNING MATERIALS

6.1 Links to websites

http://queenelizabetholympicpark.co.uk

http://www.vam.ac.uk

http://thinkdigital.travel/all-insights/differentiation-in-mobile/

7   QUESTIONS

This is the professional self-learning section to reflect on the topic, improve your skills and sharpen your creativity. Please use it as a starting point for the development of your own ideas and thoughts. Please select at least one of the questions below and note your answer in max. 1000 characters. You can also use the additional online material or consult other online sources to refine your arguments. Please sent your answers to the following contact: info@eumillennials-tour.eu

1.   What do you think about the methodology and the results that emerged from the field study? Are the findings really practical? Why or why not?

2.   What other conclusions for the design of mobile web content of cultural institutions can you find?

3.   If you would be in the role of the museum's curator, which further digital media offers would you design for your institution to capture the attention of the digital natives?

Please sent your answer(s) to the following contact: info@eumillennials-tour.eu

Please add the number of this module and the number of the question to your answer (e.g.: module 1, question 1.).

We will not give grades. Individual feedback will only be given by the online assessment contact.

8   ONLINE ASSESSMENT

For those that are interested in deepening their knowledge about the module, a personalized online assessment is offered. For all questions on the topic and further information about this module, please contact your expert for your online assessment:

X23 Srl

Marika Mazzi Boém

Project Manager

E-Mail: marika.mazzi.boem@x-23.org

Phone: +39 06 94356265

Skype: marika.sviluppo

9   GENERAL CONTACT INFORMATION

Digital Tourism Think Tank & SE1 Media

Ramona Wagner

Programmes Director

E-Mail: Ramona.wagner@se1media.com

Phone: +44 20 71931003 ext. 3

http://se1media.com

10 RESPONSIBLE ACCORDING TO THE PRESS LAW

V. i. S. d. P.:

Ramona Wagner

SE1 Media Ltd.

International House

Dover Place

TN231HU

Ashford

United Kingdom

Phone: +44 20 71931003 ext. 3