**Abstract of M U. S. EU. M. Project**

# Needs requirements in public museums and project context

On line information channels, especially Internet, and the multimedia allowing an interactive participation to museum visitors are bringing a deep transformation in the cultural heritage domain. As consequence the necessity of an urgent redefinition, revision and updating of the skills of existing professionals is arising, especially for those managing and working within public museums.

There is a widening gap between web based knowledge and training potentialities for cultural consumers and the existing professional skills in public museums.

For example, a museum could offer its clients a high bandwidth connection as a main instrument for a virtual visit in other structures (museums): a guide with a webcam could bring the visitor on a personalised tour (according to users’ preferences) with additional information on the screen, ambient music and alternative itineraries. Another option should rely on a web portal supplying virtual show rooms of different museums and offering, apart from finds’ images, as guides and bibliography, 3D pictures as the reconstruction of the finding in its actual shape or within its historical frame, cd roms, timetables of visits and travel offers in the country where the museum is located, the comparison between findings of the same kind (age, stile, genre) but located in different museums. Moreover the user could buy an online exhibition designed and implemented according to his preferences.

Last but not least a museum, still through Internet, could make available additional documentation to local communities and schools and could be configured as a cultural service either for trans-national than local communities.

As evidenced by the above mentioned examples, the objective of managing the communication opportunities of Internet and new multimedia is closely linked to a pattern, similar in some way to the enterprise in a competitive market, considering museums not only under a conservative perspective (as a container at defence of archaeological, historical and ethnographic finds), but as a space that adds values to relevant findings for their symbolic features within communities (local, national and European), space that promote cultural marketing, by paying attention to customer satisfaction and to the quality of cultural services.

In order to allow existing personnel to supply ‘virtual museums’, in United States private foundations have managed special training programmes. Such training initiatives led to the restructuring of the activities and the organisation of these institutions and to a new vision of the museal skills different from the conservative traditional one*.*

The necessity of high investments in human resources and the innovative demand of continuous professional training are the main outcomes of a context of a deep organisational and professional transformation caused to an increasing use of online communication channels by public museums.

In such a framework, the lack of new training and updating opportunities will bring Europe to loose its challenge (cultural and technological) versus the United States (and, similarly, public institutions versus private ones).

**Main goals**

The first purpose of the project is oriented to supply higher professional skills of managerial, technical and operational personnel of public museums coping with the fast evolution of organisational and technological communication innovations in cultural heritage.

Due to the strong trans-national bias of the project a second goal will rely on the construction of a “Network of public museums-department of Prehistory of European capitals”, aimed to implement a productive environment in terms of ideas, proposals and solutions to increase quality in cultural e-services.

Finally, the project aims to realise the trail version of a virtual European museum.

**Partnership**

* Rome – EURO INNOVANET (promoter)
* Alba Iulia – Alba Iulia University-Centrul de Cercetari Pre- si Protoistorice
* Athens - National Archaeological Museum of Athens
* Berlin - Museum für Vor- und Frühgeschichte
* Bucharest - Muzeul National de istorie a Romaniei
* Budapest – Historical Museum
* Edinburgh – EIL (soacial research institute)
* Rome – Museo Nazionale Pigorini
* Rome – Comital Software house
* Rome – UIL Confederale – Servizio Politiche del Lavoro e Formazione Professionale
* Sofia – National Museum of History
* Vienna - Naturhistorisches Museum- Prähistorische Abteilung

**Methodology**

The project, based on the wide scientific experience of the partner institutions and of the people of the working team, will experiment and use the proper range of techniques, tools and approaches, quantitative as well as qualitative.

Self-training methodologies, distance learning techniques and simulation training scheme will be implemented in the project, in order to manage a continuous training of the personnel within the context of the creation of the first steps of the trail version of a ‘virtual European museum’.

**Target**

The target will include the group of professionals involved into the design and management of a virtual museum for the following functions:

* Scientific management
* Organisational management,
* Design and development of staging,
* marketing,
* cultural communication,
* catalogue - copy - archive,
* documentation,
* teaching and information material,
* guides,
* administration,
* quality assurance of services,
* virtual merchandising.

**Budget**

500,000 Euros

**Duration**

2 years

**Final outcomes**

* Transferable training module
* European Network (constituted and working)
* Shared experimental site that supply the first trial of thematic ‘European virtual museum’.