



Guide for cities

Promoting Cultural Heritage in Digital
Media in the Context of South-South
and Triangular Cooperation



**GUIDE FOR CITIES PROMOTING CULTURAL HERITAGE IN DIGITAL MEDIA
IN THE CONTEXT OF SOUTH-SOUTH AND TRIANGULAR COOPERATION**

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Media in the Context of South-South
and Triangular Cooperation**

A knowledge product of the pilot initiative "South-South Cooperation on Sustainable Tourism Development in Mexican World Heritage Cities" between the UNESCO Office in Mexico and the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC), through its South-South Cities Project.



United Nations
Office for South-South Cooperation

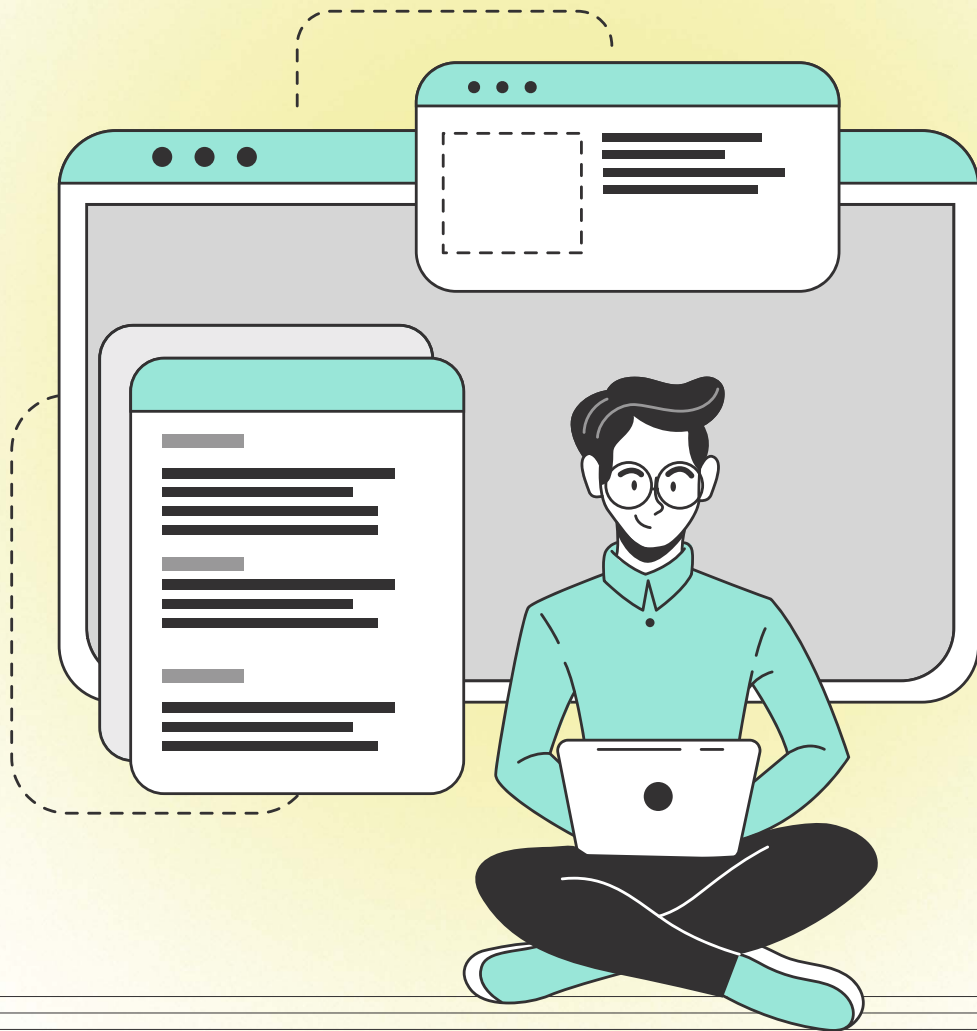


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Presentation



The communication and promotion of heritage in digital channels is a challenge for cultural managers and promoters as it is a field of continuous changes and constant trends and innovations in short time periods. This support guide for the management and planning of digital channels of World Heritage Cities (WHCs) arises due to the commitment to improve the practices and strengthen the skills of the managers in charge of the promotion of cultural tourism in the WHCs. This guide emerges from a series of workshops organized by the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), in the context of the South-South Cities pilot project carried out in 2021 and 2022.

Until a little less than a decade ago, communication services in the so-called social media were a dispensable accessory element for organizations, companies, and government bodies. However, social and economic phenomena, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, have transformed the dynamics of communication. From 2019 to date, the number of users and the average time of use of social media and the webpages have increased exponentially, making the use of these channels essential for the promotion, enhancement, and dissemination of cultural and natural heritage of all the territories, and also concepts and tools as important as the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), which is the criterion for a city (or any place) to enter the UNESCO World Heritage List.

As a response to the needs of contemporary evolution of communication dynamics and with the aim to continuously improve the promotion, dissemination, conservation, and enhancement of the OUVs and the South-South and triangular cooperation in WHCs,

[...] this guide is offered to support all Southern cities interested in strengthening daily practices and communication planning in digital media, and in establishing more international cooperation with other cities of the Global South and beyond.

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WHAT DOES THE GUIDE INCLUDE?

The guide is divided into four sections. The first one addresses ideas on how to start the process from a communication plan; the second identifies some bases and good practices in social networks and in the digital environment; the third focuses on content creation and planning; the fourth and last, to monitor the communication plan and prepare reports. Also, the guide includes tools such as: means of digital communication to emphasize the value of the OUV, examples of good practices, and boxes with suggestions and resources for the use of digital platforms to promote WHC, OUV and South to South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC). To clarify vocabulary related to digital platforms, the words in bold can be consulted in the glossary at the end of the guide, which also includes additional vocabulary related to digital media.

WHO IS THIS GUIDE FOR?

There is a premise that the municipal governments of the WHC should be at the forefront of communication strategies to ensure a sustainable digital transformation throughout the cultural

tourism sector in the medium and long term. Due to this, the guide is mainly intended for government officials responsible for putting together communication plans in the territories and municipalities to which CPMS belong, as well as their main partners, managers, and community representatives who work with key actors to the activation of tourism in the WHC.

HOW WAS THIS GUIDE DEVELOPED?

In the context of UNESCO-UNOSSC cooperation under the South-South Cities Project this guide was elaborated by examining different sources—specialised in territory marketing, strategic communication, and digital communication—, by analyzing and collecting good practices in the field of digital communication and cultural tourism from various regions, and with the advice of specialists in heritage and communication strategies in 2022.

WHERE CAN THIS GUIDE BE USED?

It can be used in any city, and especially in those that have heritage assets inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List (World Heritage Cities) that want to improve their management and promotion planning for cultural tourism and digital media. Although it is addressed to governmental bodies in charge of tourism and culture, the guide can be incorporated into processes where other entities wish to reinforce the promotion of OUV in digital communication strategies. In fact, this guide can be used by any city with a vast and rich heritage of cultural heritage.

TWO ELEMENTS TO CONSIDER

This guide acknowledges the existence of major challenges for an integral development of digital media access in the Global South. When planning on im-

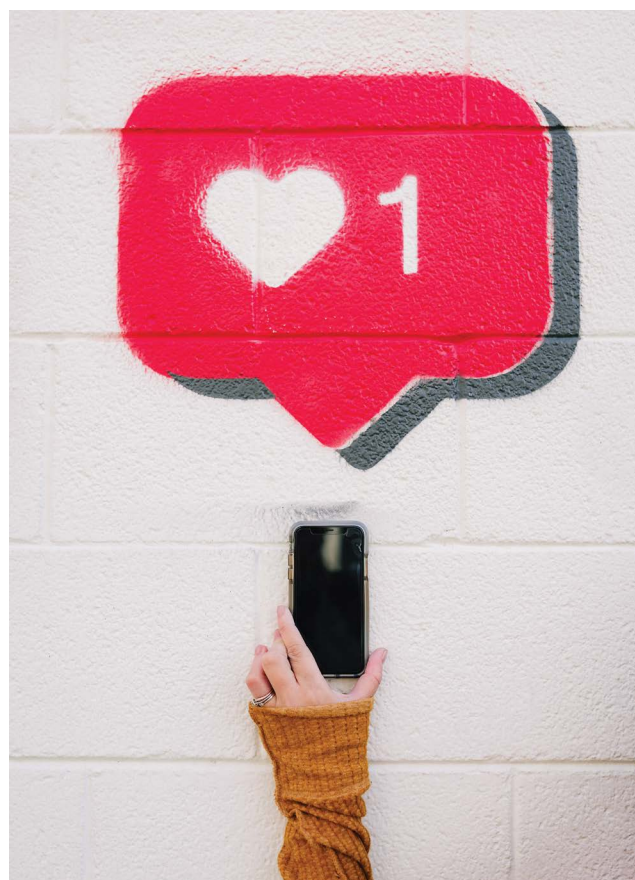
proving and strengthening the digital capacities of the WHCs, there are two factors to consider, as they are closely related to the integral and egalitarian development of the regions and are a challenge to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): the digital divide of the WHCs in the Global South and the social conditions of workers on digital platforms. These challenges need to be considered when planning capacity development and digital transformation, including in the sector of the promotion of heritage in digital media.

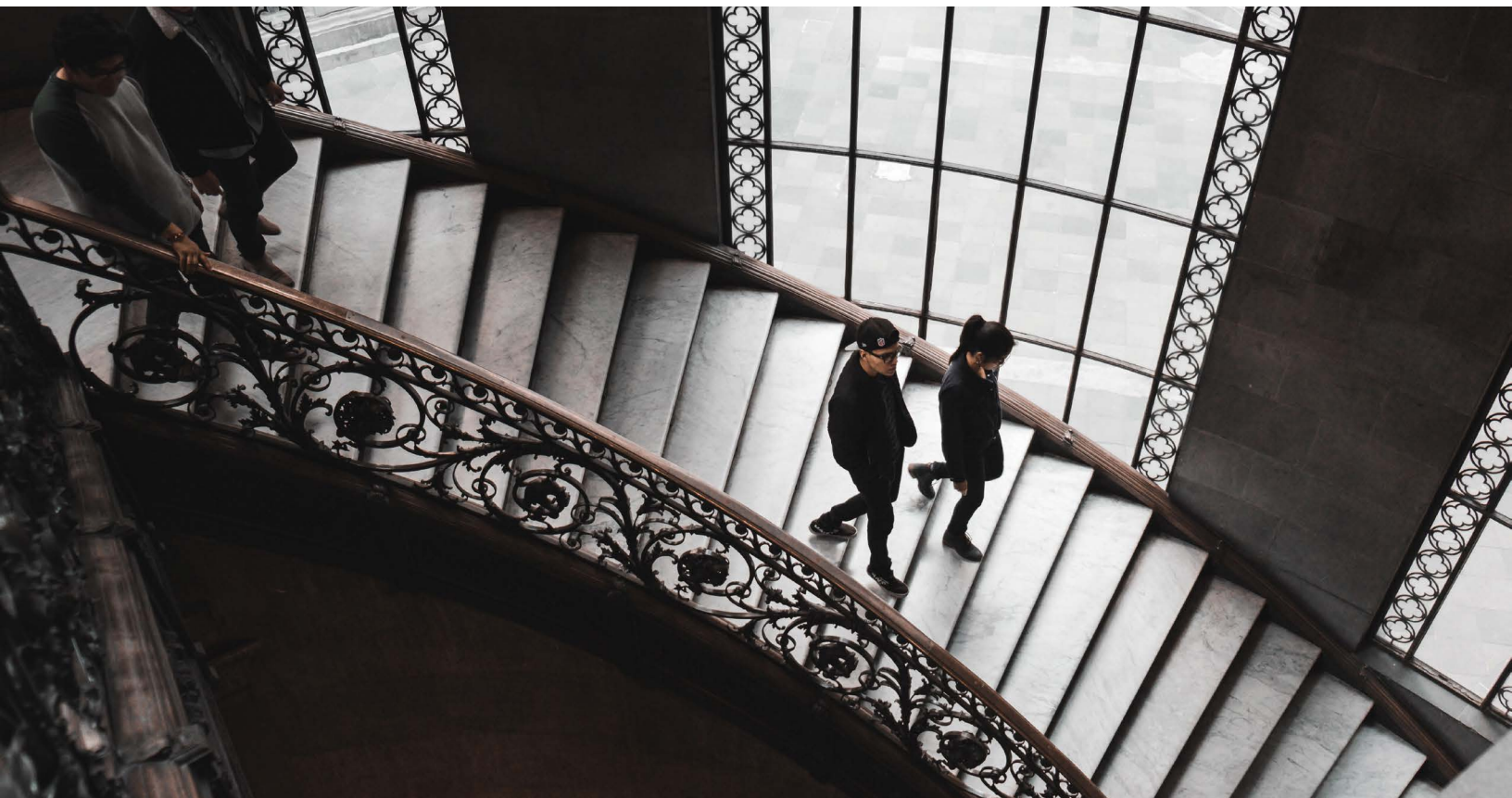
TALKING ABOUT OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE (OUV), SOUTH-SOUTH AN TRIANGULAR COOPERATION (SSTC) AND WORLD HERITAGE CITIES (WHCS)

The present guide has been developed to support public administration agents and actors responsible for the promo-

[...] This guide acknowledges the existence of major challenges for an integral development of digital media access in the Global South.

▼ © Karsten Winegeart, Unsplash





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tion of tourism in the WHCs, as well as for the enhancement of the OUV and the promotion of SSTC. Therefore, it is key to remember what the OUV refers to:

Outstanding Universal Value means cultural and/or natural significance which is so exceptional as to transcend national boundaries and to be of common importance for present and future generations of all humanity. As such, the permanent protection of this heritage is of the highest importance to the international community as a whole. The Committee defines the criteria for the inscription of properties on the World Heritage List (WHC 2008:16).

Regarding World Heritage Cities, this guide refers to protected perimeters or nuclei of protection established by UNESCO. As per 2022, 14 cities in Mexico fulfil one or more criteria to be areas of historical, social, natural or cultural

importance. As well as Mexico, Spain, France, and Germany also have cities recognized for their Outstanding Universal Value. By being inscribed for their Outstanding Universal Value, these territories acquire more responsibility on preserving, conserving and raising awareness through communication. •



WANT TO KNOW MORE?

In the digital repository of the National Institute of Anthropology and History (NIAH) media library, you can access different specialized documents where the role of World Heritage in Mexico and its criteria and classification by location are explained in greater detail, as in *El Patrimonio de México y su valor universal*, available [here](#).

Starting with the communication plan



THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION IN SOCIAL MEDIA TO PROMOTE OUV AND SSTC

Digital platforms, social media in specific, are a meeting point for the multiple audiences and agents involved in cultural tourism of an area and, above all, one classified as a World Heritage City (WHC). For potential visitors and for various actors, such as tour operators, investors, local entrepreneurs, artisans, tourism service providers, and the local community, digital channels are a tool that can help to make visible—in a creative, emotive, and relevant way—the importance for the territory and its residents of representing a UNESCO World Heritage property—from its historical, social, and cultural importance to its importance as a meeting and social cohesion place.

For the managers of the core and buffer zones of an area declared World Heritage Site, digital platforms have multiple lines of interest, mainly in the economic and social sectors. In the economic sector, the use of social networks facilitates the commercial dynamics of local small and medium enterprises, because it allows them to generate collaborative relationships with other enterprises in the same sector and to impuls decision-making for potential consumers of their goods and services, whether they are tourists or residents. For the social sector, the use of social networks makes it possible to visualize key values of the community's identity, promote or maintain a positive image of the territory, and associate different kinds of intangible heritage and cultural expressions, such as gastronomy, rituals, festive events, ancestral knowledge, practices related to nature, knowledge, and techniques linked to traditional crafts.

Moreover, the use of social media improves transparency in the govern-



REMEMBER

These are some of the benefits of social networks in terms of promotion of the OUV:

- » Make visible the specific heritage of the territory.
- » Boost the image of the territory as part of a WHCs group and as a differentiator through OUV.
- » Allow the active attention of different audiences.
- » Facilitate direct communication with users.
- » Create a communication channel with a community that is interested in our contents.
- » Make visible the value of intangible heritage.

ment tourism sector and in the areas dedicated to cultural heritage promotion, and also in the activation of cultural tourism and the promotion of public participation in order to spread the values of the territory associated with the region's heritage. Therefore, good practices in the promotion of the OUV on digital platforms benefit the perception that the different publics have of the city. In short, they offer a window to disseminate the exceptional attractiveness to global audiences.

Designing a communication plan according to the trends of digital platforms and taking into account the authenticity of heritage and the fragility of its expressions are some of the factors that constitute good practices when it concerns the promotion of the OUV and the WHC on digital platforms. Social networks—planned and managed with a strategic point of view—can increase the visibility and awareness of cultural projects, festivities, or activities related

to cultural tourism. In the case of the WHCs, the different dynamics of promotion through social networks prove to be a way to encourage visits through a wider communication that helps decision-making by bringing valuable information.



TWO TOOLS THAT CAN BE USEFUL

Storytelling and storydoing in social networks are two very useful elements when communicating the OUV. Through stories, the public feel identified with familiar and emotional elements. It also attracts their attention. With story doing it is possible to communicate the positive effects of the actions and the importance of cultural heritage protection and conservation programs, to the community and the territory.

OBJECTIVES WHICH INSPIRE THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA TO COMMUNICATE THE OUV

On the way to good social media practices, it is necessary to carry out planning actions before starting to implement promotional campaigns or to publicate daily content. One of the essential prior actions is the drafting of a **strategic plan** for communication. This plan should have a clear, detailed, and measurable determinations that allows the monitoring of the activity and that contains the communication objectives, in accordance with the central objectives of the organization or administration.

Defining general communication objectives is the core of communication planning; in this process, you can make the decision on which attributes of the OUV to communicate. This is why it is vital to review the attributes of the ter-

ritory concerning their heritage and its cultural resources before starting any communication actions.



REMEMBER

The strategic plan is a document that helps the communication team and can also be made available on the institution's website as a transparency practice, so that citizens are aware of the initiatives related to cultural heritage communication. One example is the [Visit Valencia Foundation](#).

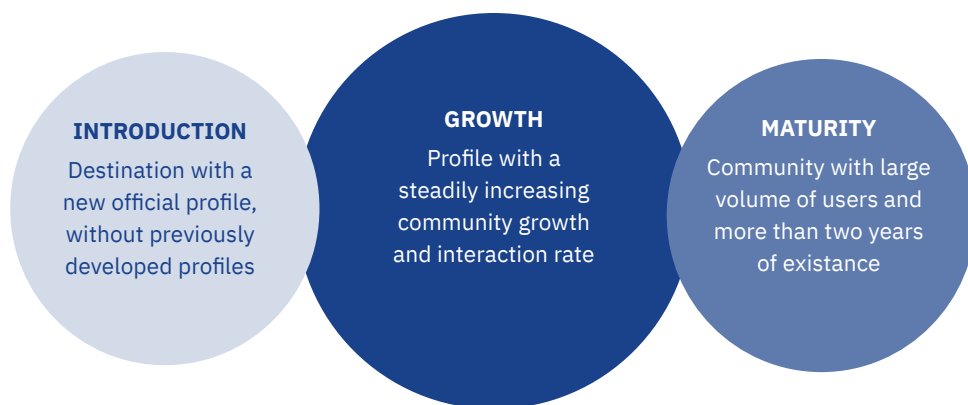
Just as each organization manages its communication differently, there are different ways of drafting a communication plan. However, in all cases it is essential that contains objectives that are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time limited. To know how to reach such goals, the following questions can be useful:

- » What do we want to achieve?
- » In which period of time do we want to achieve it?
- » What is the final goal?
- » With which tools?
- » Why do we want to achieve it for?

The objectives of the social media communication plan should take care of the stages of development of the social media communication profiles of the city. This development stages can be: introduction, growth, and maturity, as described in the **Illustration 1**.

Identifying the stage of development of the social media profiles will help to set more realistic objectives within the possibilities of the institution or administration; besides, knowing the initial status of the profiles will help to evaluate the impact of the communica-

STAGES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN OFFICIAL PROFILE ON SOCIAL MEDIA



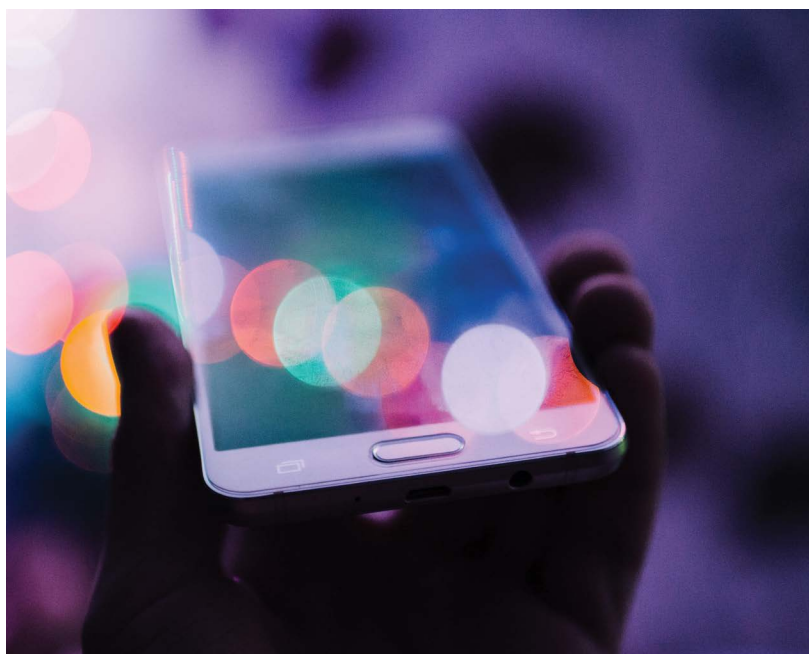
▲ **Illustration 1.** Stages in the development of an official profile on social media. Own, 2022.

tion actions. It is different to set objectives for a profile with a large **community** with long history than to start an official profile from scratch.

In order to define the objectives, here are some important elements that must be taken into account:

- » The OUV is a differentiating value with respect to other similar territories.
- » The central objectives of the areas and ministries of tourism and culture.

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- » The overall message intended to be communicated according to the target audiences.
- » The deadlines and budgets available.

In order to create effective communication content, these factors must be consistent, must of all because different areas (tourism, culture, and heritage protection) must maintain differentiated messages, according to their target audiences, and at the same time consistent regarding the OUV and the cultural resources of the territory.

UNDERSTANDING THE COMMUNICATION OF THE OUV FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF CULTURAL MARKETING

Previous of the generation of content for the digital platforms, we must consider the approach from where we plan to communicate the OUV. Often in the field of heritage and culture, the word “marketing” is avoided due to it being associated with practices where only win-win is considered; however, **cultural marketing** perspective refers to collaboration, development and **co-creation**. From the perspective of cultural marketing, this means that communi-

cation is planned to seek collaborative relationships between cultural organizations (Vargo and Lush, 2006; López, 2011), which can be supported by the attributes of the OUV and the various expressions of cultural heritage of the territory. The goal is to create reciprocal value by using complementary resources related to cultural heritage, cultural resources, and/or creative industries.

Therefore, in the specific case of the promotion and enhancement of the OUV, social networks can pursue communication objectives that are not always related to commercial or traditional marketing objectives. However, they must respond to the specific needs of cultural tourism and cultural marketing. Some of these objectives can be classified as follows:

Notoriety

Target audiences start to recognize your brand and remember it. In other words, the name of the brand territory must be familiar for them.

Knowledge

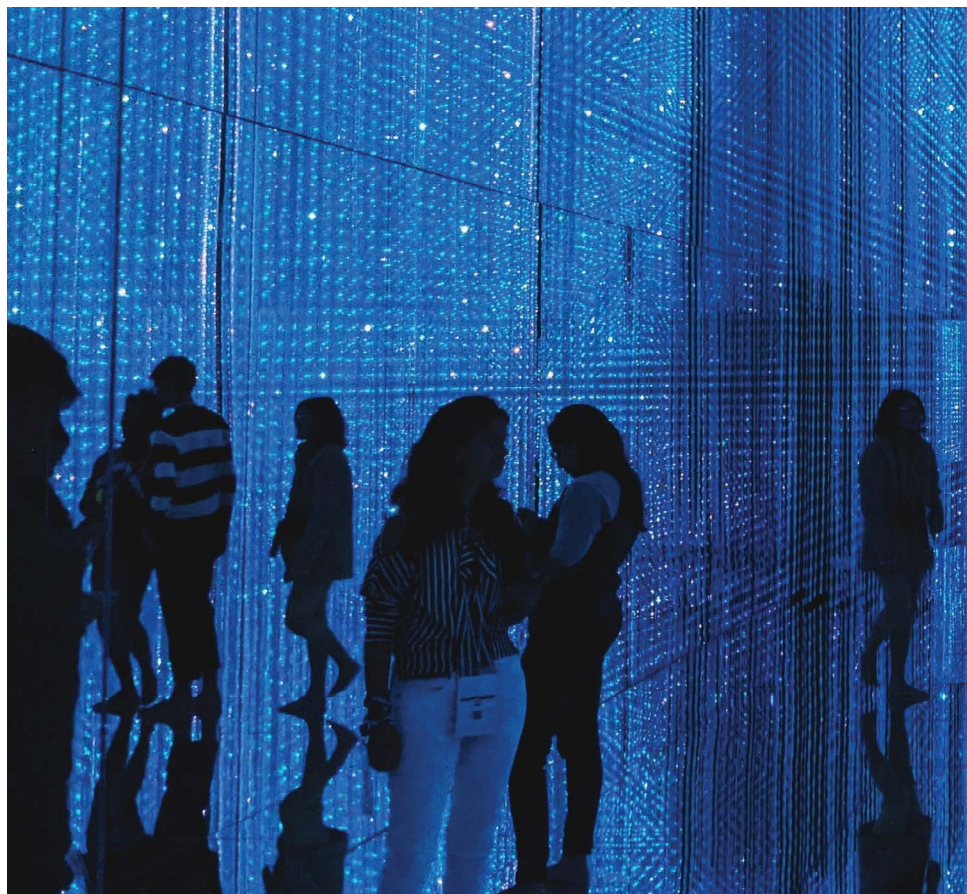
Target audiences know the features of the brand, its products' characteristics and services, and the values that offers compared to other brands. In other words, they get to know the territory in greater depth.

Connection

Empathize and connect emotionally with the **target audiences** to achieve affinity, sympathy, and **engagement** with the territory brand. In other words, it is about creating community and brand experiences, getting people to interact and seek to relate to it, and, therefore, connecting them with the territory brand.

Consideration

To be one of their alternatives—and why not, their **top of mind awareness**

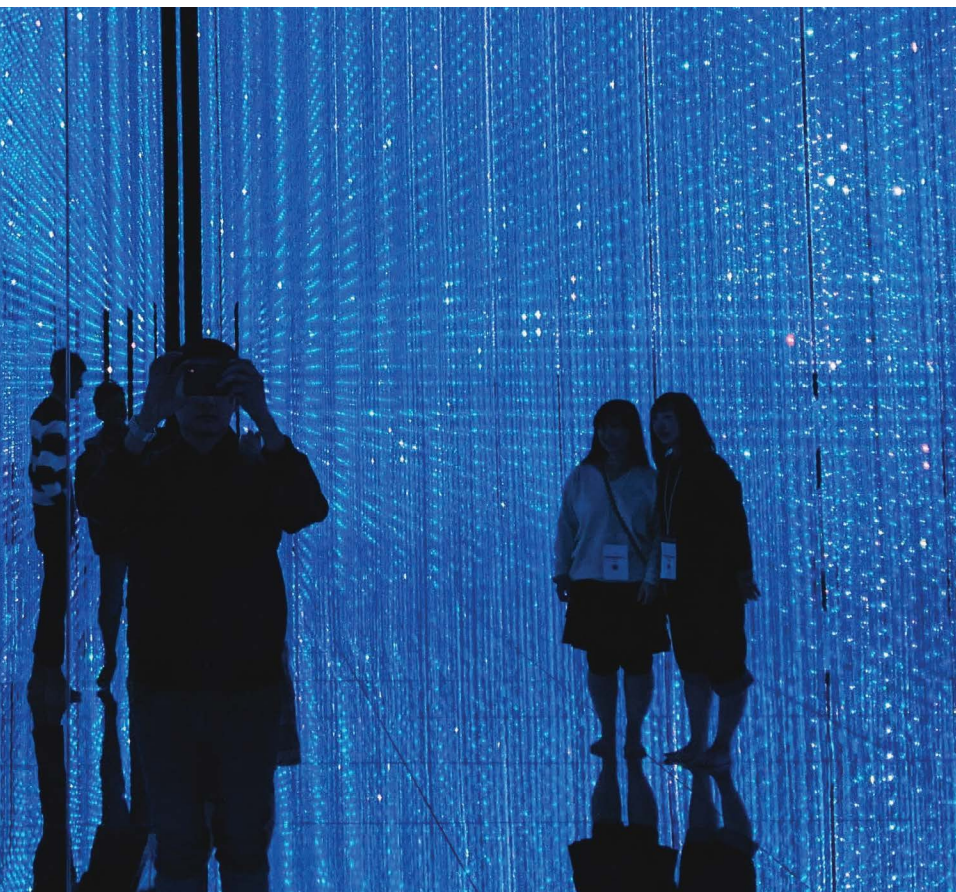


or first brand that comes to mind—when they need or want products and services such as those offered.

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The objectives set out in the strategic communication plan focused on the OUV should have one or more of the following characteristics:

- » Based on the local community.
- » Integration, to share cultural characteristics that are similar to those of others in order to be able to create links between the past and the future through the present.
- » Fostering a sense of identity and responsibility.
- » Encouraging responsible tourism, especially in areas where listed properties are in a state of danger and fragility.
- » Consciousness. Having a sense of care and conservation of one's heritage in the face of respectful tourism.



[...] social networks can pursue communication objectives that are not always related to commercial or traditional marketing objectives. However, they must respond to the specific needs of cultural tourism and cultural marketing.



REMEMBER

Good practices include:

1. Develop a communication plan with specific content for digital and social media.
2. Define objectives that are as specific as possible and in line with the organization's general objectives.
3. Draw up a map of audiences and identify the core audiences to which the content in digital media will be addressed.
4. Define the stage of development in which the official profiles are.

- » Representativeness. Based on the details that make the manifestation of the tangible and intangible heritage of the territory unique and exceptional (UNESCO, 2022).

Increasing the perception of all the cultural heritage of the city, such as gastronomy or crafts, to name a few, and **enhancing the added value** offered by the region's cultural sector, is a **differentiation** of alternatives to increase tourism competitiveness through cultural routes or creative industry activities related to the values of the WHC. To achieve this, the objectives must contemplate the inclusion of relevant **content** for the specific characteristics of audiences in social networks. This is why it is important to design a **map of audiences** according to the objectives of the strategic communication plan for social media. •



SUPPORT SHEET

Before planning your SN communication or renewing your SN strategic plan, you can ask yourself the following questions:

1. Which of the institution's general objectives can be achieved through social media?
2. What specific elements of the OUV makes my city different to others?
3. What core message will be developed to communicate the OUV?
4. Do the current communication objectives include the enhancement of the region's cultural heritage attributes?

Basis for good practices on social media and the digital environment



DIFFERENCES AND CHOOSING SOCIAL MEDIA FOR COMMUNICATING THE OUV AND SSTC

As digital media gain more and more influence on how we interact and thus which (digital) venues we visit, an increasing number of social networks or digital platforms for interacting with audiences are added to the landscape. While many of them maintain similar characteristics in terms of format and interface, there are subtle differences that are important to consider when deciding whether or not to create an official profile.



REMEMBER

Social networks are platforms in constant transformation. Therefore, it is advisable to follow the emergence of new platforms, changes in the layout and functions of the existing ones, and above all to the migration of users to other platforms, according to communication trends.

The differences can range from the formats to the objectives for which the social network was created. Depending on the connection between the OUV and

other cultural heritage of the city (tangible and intangible), we must distinguish three groups of social networks or digital platforms that are important in the areas of tourism, culture, and visitor experience.

General networks

These networks are characterized by their high number of users, their diverse topics of interest, and their popularity as leisure and inspiration platforms for travel destinations and attractive places. One of the main advantages is the large number of visitors that generate content (UGC) and can help to feed the official profile in terms of photography and short videos. At the same time, those users interact with other users. The use of these networks for cultural heritage communication, OUV, and SSTC has a wide potential due to the multiple possibilities of formats. Currently, we can highlight three main platforms that use the power of images as an instrument of inspiration and enrichment of information: Instagram, Tik Tok, and YouTube.

Assessment and travel networks

Also called Online Travel Agency, these platforms provide sales services to users, allowing them to share reviews and evaluations of their experiences. Much

CLASSIFICATION OF DIGITAL PLATFORMS

Examples of digital platforms in the context of tourism and heritage communication

General: Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, Tik Tok, Douyin, Pinterest

Of assessment: TripAdvisor, Airbnb, Booking, Kayak

Specialized: LinkedIn, Google Arts & Culture

of the reputation of destinations and their tourism products rests on these platforms, which is why they are fundamental for the communication of the cultural heritage of a region, since they highlight the sites, buildings and natural areas that are obligatory destinations or points of interest for visitors, classifying them into top preferences based on the evaluation of the users.

Specialized networks

Specialized networks are platforms where the content is aimed at more specific audiences. Here we will highlight two in particular: LinkedIn, for example, is a network of professionals that can help institutional communication and informal **networking** with public and private institutions. It is useful for communicating institutional processes and actions related to the development and conservation of cultural heritage, and also for searching strategic profiles for the organization (or for activities carried out in the cities of the South-South and Triangular Cooperation). On the other hand, Google Arts and Culture is a platform specifically dedicated to the dissemination of culture and arts in all their forms; this network allows institutions—such as museums, collections, and art and culture ministries—to have digital profiles. It is a fundamental showcase for the enrichment of the physical visit as well as for the dissemination and diffusion of photographic archives and other contents.

Before creating an official profile, it is necessary to choose the networks that most share our vision and mission regarding cultural heritage. It is also important to consider the type of content generated, the amount of human resources that will be necessary to manage the new profiles, as well as the time and budget required, since one of the characteristics of all social networks is their high demand of content.



REMEMBER

Having an account on all existing platforms or social media is a decision based on the characteristics and needs of the organization and, above all, on the maintenance capacity and the concentration of users one would like to reach. It is preferable to have only few profiles that fulfill the set communication objectives than to have multiple profiles with little or no updating.

AUDIENCES, SINGULARITIES AND MAPPING

Once the objectives have been established and the platforms with which to work have been chosen, it is essential to differentiate the multiple audiences. As has been said, it is useful to map target audiences to differentiate **communication pieces or creativities**, either in specific campaigns or in permanent content.

Audience mapping is a tool for creating effective communication pieces and campaigns specifically aimed at the organization's stakeholders. The map is based on one or several audience investigations, where profiles of ideal visitors, demographic data, market studies, analysis of tourism observatories, and of existing audiences are taken into account. Audiences are differentiated according to their role in the tourism system. In the case of digital media campaigns, they are, among other, distinguished by their consumption habits of tourism products and digital media, while also considering the data that the **Ads** extensions of the different social networks offer.

Formalizing the map of audiences is useful for having a clear line of arguing in our messages and allows us

to take advantage of the **reticular** nature of digital communication. It also helps us to address each of our audiences with specific language, ideas, and contents, either through negotiated collaborations or spontaneous **labeling** actions.

For example, the map of audiences of a World Heritage City should include the cultural organizations that are linked to the territory and the OUV as well as the tourism sector, as shown in the following image. Mapping must also include, of course, the audiences related to the city's partnerships in its South-South and Triangular Cooperation platform.

When mapping audiences, it is crucial to measure the importance of different factors:

- » Strategic importance for the organization or institution.
- » Influence on the public opinion in the digital sphere.
- » Dissemination of a positive image of the WHC.

- » Interest in the commercial activation of SMEs in the listed areas and buffer zones.
- » Helping to reduce the costs of communication.
- » Better positioned communication amplifiers in the areas of tourism and culture.
- » Possible partners for SSTC.



A TECHNIQUE THAT CAN HELP YOU

Qualifying each of the audiences can be a good way to know which ones to prioritize when planning strategies and campaigns in the short and medium term. **Score each one according to its importance in each strategic factor.** A value of 1 would be the minimum and 5 the highest. Then, calculate a coefficient to determine which audiences to choose and to which the organization should direct its communication efforts.

MAP OF AUDIENCES IN THE CONTEXT OF COMMUNICATING THE OUV AND SSTC

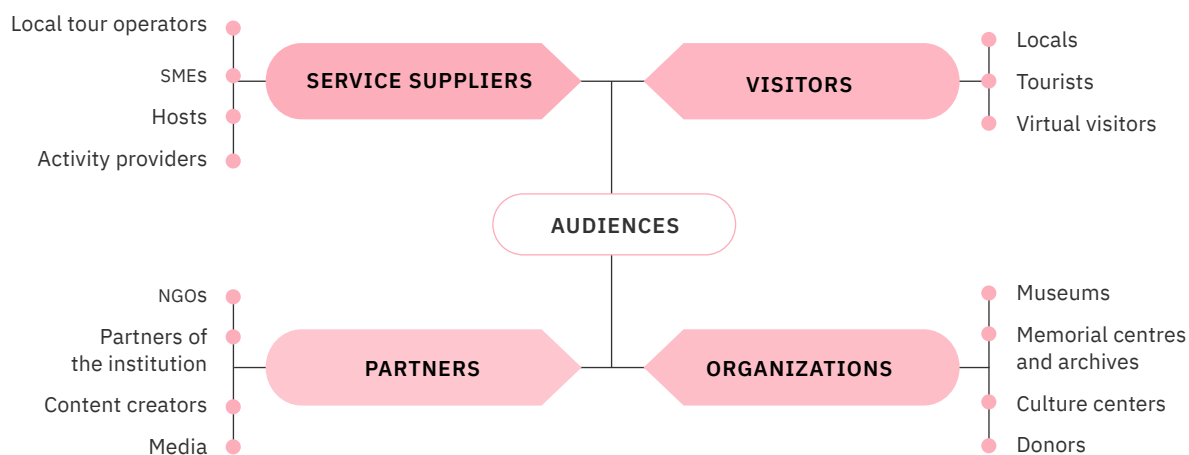


Illustration 3. Map of possible general audiences for communicating the OUV and SSTC through digital media.

For communicating the specific aspects of heritage, OUV and SSTC, the audience map can help to identify those niches that are sensitive to specific issues of culture, heritage, conservation, history, and international cooperation agenda and also people who may be interested in amplifying our content or generating collaborative actions that have an impact on their followers.

ELEMENTS TO AVOID IN THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA FOR WHC HERITAGE COMMUNICATION

The main motivation to invest time and effort in digital media is closely related to initial expectations. Some of these expectations are wrongly based on generalized ideas that overestimate the final results and underestimate the quantity and quality of efforts required to achieve the expected goals.

When planning communication in digital media, experience shows that not everything on these platforms immediately becomes a **trending topic** or a **viral content** with a positive response. However, communicating the OUV, heritage and SSTC entails a responsibility in which frivolity and simplicity must be avoided, while adopting a friendly (and approaching) tone towards the public instead. Therefore, devising appropriate communication to disseminate the OUV and the diversity of cultural resources is a challenge.

When communicating the distinctive features of heritage, it is necessary to bear in mind its fragility, its importance for the cultural diversity of the territory, and the risk of being perceived only as folklore. In this aspect, dedicating some time to do previous research and putting into action the advice of a cultural professional is very useful. Calling one or more professionals specialized in cultural aspects when there is a doubt regarding the form of discourse and representation in campaigns or

digital content is of utmost importance to guarantee a correct communication of cultural heritage. This is also highly relevant when it comes to aspects related to the South-South and Triangular Cooperation.



REMEMBER

Analyzing in advance the organizational and territorial limitations to communicate the OUV and the diversity of the cultural expressions of the territory is an opportunity to encourage creativity in communication.

At the same time, there are some practices that should be avoided to make digital content management processes more effective:

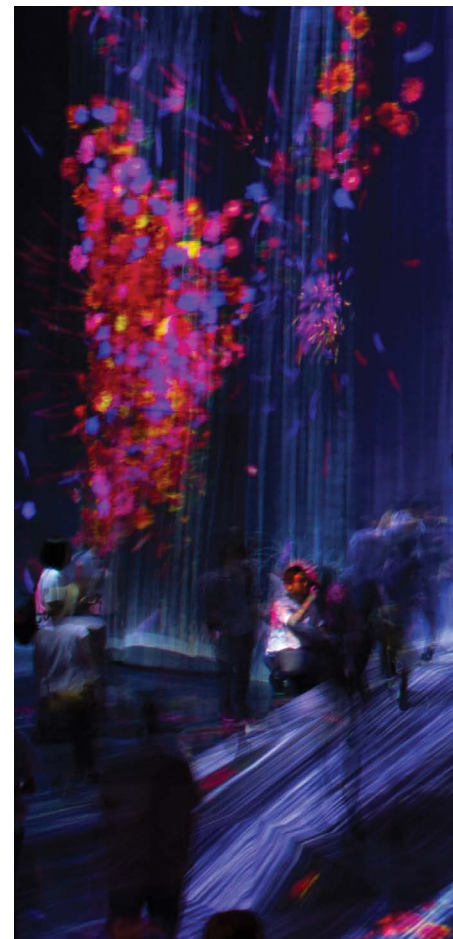
Digital communication as the only communication resource

Digital communication should be complemented with further support and practices as far as possible. Including analog media or the on-site experience of visitors is a very important alternative to communicate the OUV of the city and its territory. Some examples of on-site communication might be interactive devices during tours or art installations to encourage visitors to take photos.

Excessive repetition of content

We are exposed to numerous stimuli in digital media on a daily basis. Due to the above, and in order to create relevant content, one of the challenges is to capture attention through in-depth knowledge on the subjects related to the cultural heritage of the territory, its creative sector, its festivities and its current cultural activities. It is important to

[...] in order to create relevant content, one of the challenges is to capture attention through in-depth knowledge on the subjects related to the cultural heritage of the territory [...]



use creativity to avoid repetitive posts that can distract the users' attention.

Sporadic reactivity

Digital media have the characteristic of immediacy and interactivity, which demands a prompt response to user interactions whether they consist of doubts or comments; these interactions need to be reacted to as soon as possible and in a long-lasting manner.

Insufficient investment

Digital media are indeed cheaper in terms of daily investment. Nevertheless, to achieve the desired results, it is important to have a decent budget for human and technical resources and according to the capacities of the organization and their objectives; either for the generation of **organic content** or for paid campaigns.

▼ © Luke Paris, Unsplash



AN EXAMPLE THAT CAN HELP YOU

To enrich the visits of tourists and to encourage the rediscovery of a facility listed as World Heritage, the team of Casa Batlló in Barcelona, Spain, has developed multiple projects where different elements were implemented, such as an immersive experience in an augmented reality room and artists installations in the enclosure. Find out more [here](#).

Quality, rather than quantity

Although it is necessary to be constantly present in the official profiles, generosity in the number of publications should never be above their quality.



Likewise, in community growth, the **quality of followers will always be rewarded over quantity.**



A TIP THAT CAN BE USEFUL

There are ways to (rapidly and) artificially increase the number of followers in a short time by buying phantom followers or bots. Such practices are sanctioned at the user's level and conditions of the social network companies, such as Meta, apply. They also affect the effectiveness of your content in various ways and are considered unethical practices that can affect the institution or organization profile's image. Therefore, this is not a recommendable exercise. For more details on this issue, please refer to the risks section of this guide.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS FOR COMMUNICATING THE OUV IN SOCIAL MEDIA FOR SSTC

The digital identity of an organization or an individual on social networks is defined by their behavior and content, and through how they express themselves in that communicate actions, information, or statements. Therefore, the shared content articulates the contents of its mission, vision, and values; and translates the essence of the identity of a city and its territory into behaviors relating to other people (interpersonal relationships) and to the digital and analog environment.

Identity in social networks is not only composed of the name of the user, the screen name, or the username used to open an account on any of the available platforms (Twitter, YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, LinkedIn,

and so on). Identity is everything that identifies a profile and, therefore, includes any permanent traits that make the profile what it is (individualization) and what distinguishes it from others (differentiation) in social networks. Thus, basic elements to make the digital identity of the profile coherent are essential.

Some basic elements to shape a digital identity in accordance with the communication of the OUV, the cultural heritage and the South-South and Triangular Cooperation of a city and its territory are:

- » Consistent user name and user image in all official profiles. This must be in line with the organization or institution they represent. In the case of areas such as of tourism, using the key term or "visit" within the name can facilitate the search.
- » Ownership. It is achieved through the account verification processes on the various platforms and the web domain or by indicating in the **bio** that the profile is the official account of the responsible institution.
- » Identifying the relevance and quality of the content. This is carried out through the different content nodes. It is important that they are related to the history and heritage of the territory. Relevance must also be interpreted through the establishment of a content curator.
- » An inclusive and neutral approach in the messages and language used in the publications, providing information of value and without transmitting personal opinions.
- » Pluralistic, accessible and familiar tone in response to users and in daily publications. We must try to invite for conversation and participation; in addition, it is necessary to use accessible typography and to complete the descriptive fields of the images and

videos so that they are also available for people with visual disabilities.



A TECHNIQUE THAT CAN HELP YOU

To ensure responsible and limited use of private data, creating an email address that is only used for your social media profiles is recommended. This will reduce the chances of the account being hacked as well as making it more flexible for the team's collaborating users.

As a complement to the above recommendations, good practice can be guided by the following questions:

- » What does the organization intend to do through social media profiles at the level of culture and tourism?
- » What image of the city's heritage do we want to picture to the audiences on social media to achieve the intended purpose?
- » What do we want the audiences to see of the city when they visit our official social media profiles?

RISKS AND UNDESIRED USES OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Social networks are a place for constant exchange of information; they are a territory of their own in which individuals, groups, companies, and institutions carry out activities under a digital identity. The enormous possibilities offered by social media and their massive use entail a series of risks of various kinds. In the case of the accounts in charge of promoting a territory with a view to disseminating its cultural heritage, its OUV and the alliances, agreements, or partnerships with the South-South and Triangular Cooperation, we can distinguish

some aspects to consider before and during the communication planning.

Risks

Frivolization of sensitive information about groups and religious or ritual festivities: it is advisable to be careful with visual pieces and texts that promote religious or ritual festivities, since their use has a high potential to attract travelers. It is necessary to take into account that travelers require information about the importance of the festivity or ritual beyond its attractiveness, especially about the social function it fulfills in the community. First of all, the respect that travelers must have towards these manifestations must be considered as well as having full awareness of the fragility of these cultural expressions and the alterations that they may suffer from the presence of people that are unfamiliar with their practice. These cultural manifestations should never be promoted without the prior permission of the communities that practice them.

Negative viralization of content

Followers on digital platforms interact constantly, share our content or give their opinion about it. Mistakes we make in messaging or misinterpretations of content tend to get shared quickly and can impact the reputation of the city and our organization. In this case, a key question that we must ask ourselves is whether we are clear about how to react to a situation of this type within a maximum of 24 hours.

Excessive promotion of sensitive points within protected areas

This risk specifically refers to points called photo spots linked to mass tourism. Here are some measures that can be adopted: identifying and proposing various points from where to see the landscape and take photographs, taking advantage of those points to show



the cultural and tourist activities in the area and to carry out awareness campaigns on the importance and effects of responsible tourism.

Identity theft

This refers to the hacking of official accounts and profiles in digital media. This situation represents a potential risk. It is essential to have a specific protocol for handling this situation, as well as to carry out preventive measures, such as the protection of passwords and specific emails for accessing the official profiles with an adequate chain of custody limited to the managers of the accounts in social networks.

Unwanted uses

Reputational damage

Derived from content generated on assessment platforms (such as TripAdvisor) as well as content generated by users with a negative experience with heritage-related services or their overall experience in the city and its territory. Such contents can damage the relation with audiences, institutions, or



A TIP THAT CAN BE USEFUL

Collaboration strategies with content creators for the promotion of the territory and cultural and natural protected areas should be carefully and rigorously analyzed, as the reputation of these creators will be associated in the long term with the territory and the institutions that promote such collaborations, given that materials on the internet remain in the digital memory, perhaps forever.

▲ © Jezael Melgoza, Unsplash

groups of interest that in the medium- and long-term add a negative impression to the digital reputation.

Harmful or misleading advertising

The nature of digital channels and the large volume of information they handle make it impossible to be in absolute control of the products, services and tourist experiences in the territory that are offered in digital media. How-



ever, a good practice is to be attentive to the offers of the area on travel experience platforms, with the aim of promoting those that add value the OUV (and that can open possibilities for the South-South and Triangular Cooperation) and to monitor and prevent the dissemination of those that are harmful or misleading.

Actions that contradict ethical practices

In the case of social networks, the most recurrent practice is the abrupt growth of followers by acquiring them through platforms dedicated to audience growth. This practice, in addition to being against the uses and conditions of the platforms, harms the organic growth of the account and affects its reputation.

Abandonment of official

WHAT I AM AND WHAT I SEEM TO BE

In the digital ecosystem, the areas of tourism and culture are separated by different profiles that focus on communicating two perspectives of the same topic: the value of tangible or intangible cultural heritage in a territory. An alternative that constitutes a good practice is to articulate the knowledge of both through specific contents and campaigns by means of their official DMO. This way, it is possible to make the aspect of the territory's identity more visible, based on what the city really is in terms of the territory's cultural heritage, its history and its exceptional attributes. One example is the DMO website of Tarragona, a World Heritage City in Spain, you can visit it [here](#).

profiles on social networks

The abandonment of official channels partially or totally originates a practice that affects the communication of the organization at the level of presence, image and reputation. In addition, it violates the commitment to serious and responsible management that is acquired as an organization or institution that promotes the city and its territory. It is a good practice to keep official channels constantly updated and, in cases of administration changes, to take into account the transition time to provide continuity in the shortest possible period. •

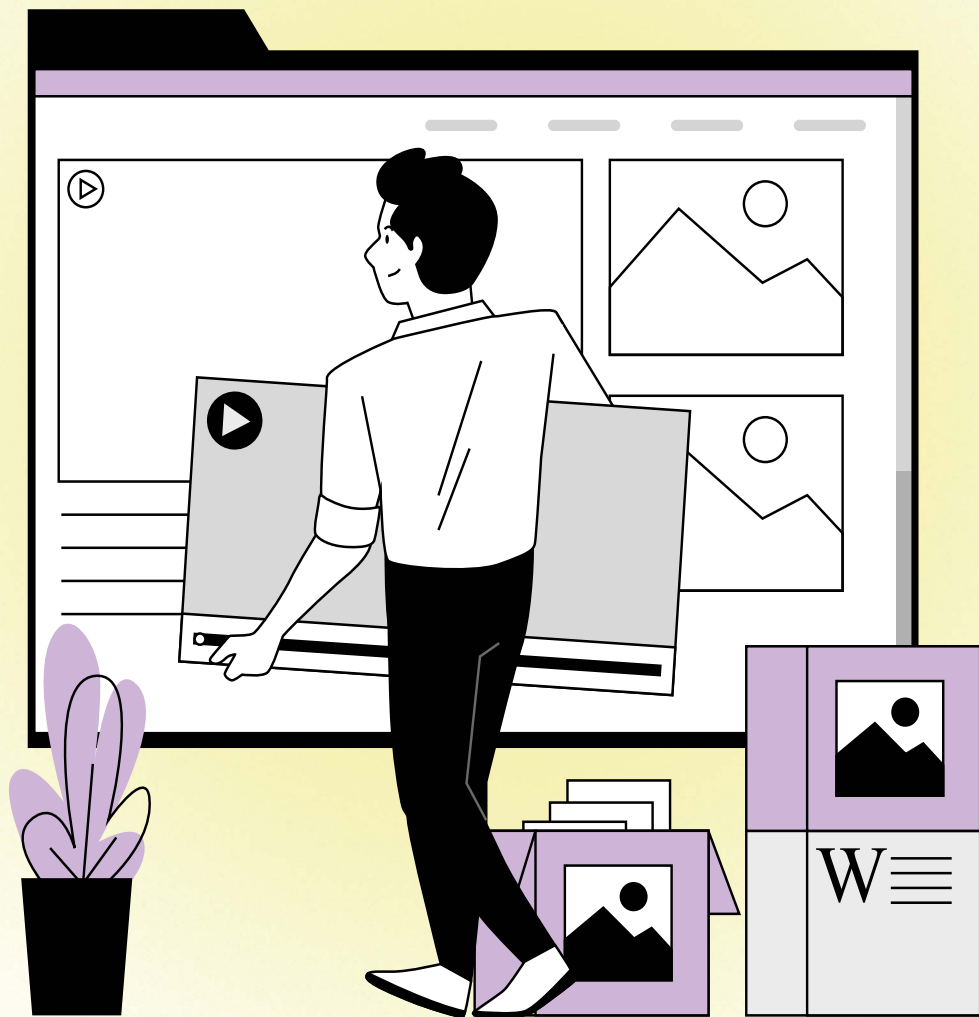


SUPPORT SHEET

Some useful questions you can ask yourself for the selection of social networks and to avoid unwanted uses:

1. What are the advantages that this social network or platform offers me compared to others?
2. Are we able to generate enough content for the social networks we already have or is it necessary to shorten or extend the official profiles?
3. What type of audience does this social network make it easier for me to reach?
4. Are we paying enough attention to all the audiences in the organization's audience map?
5. Are there any ideas or practices to avoid and how could we improve them?
6. Are we prepared with a protocol for possible controversial public events?

Content creation and planning



QUALITY AND RELEVANCE OF CONTENT TO EMPHASIZE THE OUV

One of the most important characteristics of digital communication is its reticularity. This means that communication is not limited to a central focus but to multiple nodes (users) connected with the same capacity of broadcasting messages, which generates an extreme abundance in terms of variety and number of contents. This translates into a challenge to keep users' attention on their own content.

Content refers to all the communication elements or messages that are published through digital channels: videos, photographs, **gifs**, memes, blog posts, **landing pages**, interactive content (surveys, questions, and so on), etc. In other words, it is the backbone of the transmission of messages on social networks.



REMEMBER

When we speak about quality content to promote the cultural heritage of a territory, we are referring both to the quality of the formats of photography, videos, audio as well as to the ideas, themes, data, and valuable information to communicate the importance of cultural heritage in terms of tourism as an integrated whole. The quality of the content has to be designed for potential visitors and for virtual visitors only, who will get to know the region's cultural heritage through digital platforms.

The main challenges of content in the communication dynamics that promote tourism—especially cultural tourism—in the contemporary **digital sphere** are the retention of users' attention, the generation of engagement

of followers with the profile, visibility, and, in the long-term, the **loyalty** of potential visitors and residents based on the OUV that the territory possesses.



ONE EXAMPLE THAT CAN HELP YOU

UNESCO has a profile on Google Arts and Culture entitled Memory of the World where multiple digital exhibitions are available to the public. This initiative is a way to reach out to those who cannot physically visit venues or exhibitions as well as to enrich physical visits and to inspire virtual visitors.

Content is considered relevant when it responds to different aspects, for example because it resolves doubts, supports the decision process of a trip, provides original information and knowledge, and connects directly with the user's experiences and feelings. When relevant content is generated for the users they become loyal to the profile. Sharing with our audiences what we know and what we do best is a good practice.



REMEMBER

When you include content generated by users in your profile, try to mention them to give credit for the material you are using and also mention or tag institutions, companies, or organizations that you use images, videos, texts, and information from.

As a consequence of the great abundance of content, the quality of the publications becomes a determining factor to capture the attention of users. On the

other hand, given the fact that those contents are part of an official profile, they constitute part of the official image of the territory. A tool that constitutes a good practice to guarantee the quality and relevance of the contents in social media is the design of an editorial plan. When we speak about content quality, we refer to ensuring materials that have the highest possible quality at a technical and aesthetic level: photographs, texts, videos, participation dynamics, among others. Some elements to take into account for the quality of the contents are:

Image quality

Verify that the image in the publication has the best resolution, composition, and the right size for the social network or web interface, making sure to show a different angle or view of the cultural element that you are presenting.

Video quality

Make sure the resolution is optimal for uploading according to the social network and verify that the audio is clear. In the case of short videos, include the insertion of text as it has been proven that videos without audio perform better.

Information quality

Verify through official sources that the data is correct and that it provides an element of learning or resolution of any doubts regarding the city's OUV. If possible, assign those tasks to a qualified content curator.

EDITORIAL PLAN AND CONTENT CALENDAR FOR THE OUV AND SSTC

An editorial plan is a content planning tool that is accompanied by a schedule in which different collaborators related to the area of social communication have a meeting point to approve the publications as well as to brainstorm

regarding the publications. Some of the elements that this plan may contain are shown in **illustration 4**.



A TECHNIQUE THAT CAN HELP YOU

With the constant use of mobile phones to consult social networks, the most suitable video and photo formats are portrait formats as they fit the characteristics of the apps' interfaces and the way we use smartphones. Make sure that the formats of the landing pages to which the network leads are in a responsive design (that adapt to the dimensions of all devices) and that in the promoted content the format is in **native advertising**.

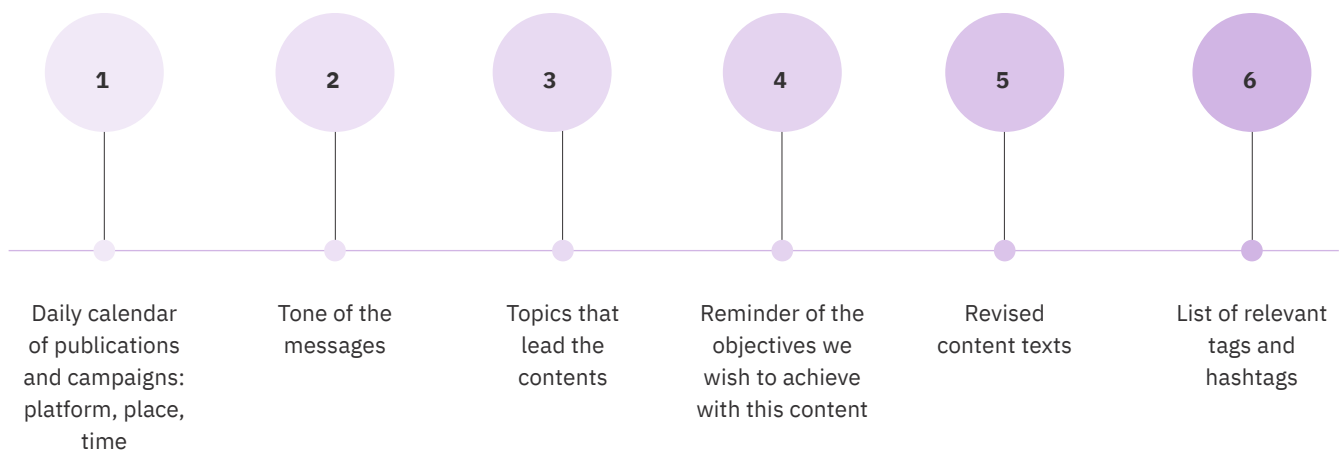


SOMETHING THAT CAN HELP YOU

In the case of heritage and culture, collaborators such as curators, archaeologists, restorers or collaborators in the area of culture can be perfect ambassadors of the territory's OUV, particularly those from other cities that could be interested in SSTC. Check if any of them has a professional profile where they talk about topics related to their job and invite them to collaborate with content from their profile. Another alternative is to label organizations in publications related to institutions, such as museums, in the perimeter and buffer zone. You may also use the [South-South Galaxy](#) and the [Cities Clusters platform](#) for knowledge sharing, connecting with experts, and for partnership brokering.

A tool that constitutes a good practice to guarantee the quality and relevance of the contents in social media is the design of an editorial plan.

ELEMENTS OF AN EDITORIAL PLAN FOR CONTENTS



▲ **Illustration 4.** Some suggested elements to include in the editorial plan. Own elaboration, 2022.

Making an editorial plan to be able to organize ideas, themes, and formats of the contents of the social networks allows several things:

- » Make publications more efficient for each of the platforms.
- » Optimize time and human resources invested in the maintenance of social networks.
- » Have a clear and concrete overview of the themes and messages through which we intend to achieve the communication objectives.
- » Create content that generates interaction with users
- » Generate publications that contain valuable information regarding the differential features of the territory.

In order to promote contents that make visible and value elements of the territory's cultural heritage, it is essential that the following aspects are being considered in the editorial plan:

Location

A way of making the territories visible is referring to the exact location of the city through geo-tagging and explaining

how far it is from nearby cities. It is important to do so textually, visually, and, above all, by adding the location in the tags on the platforms which allow it.

Specific facilities that make up the OUV

Making infographics, short videos, web articles, blog entries, or collaborations with museums in the area is an alternative to emphasize the specific elements that are part of the declaration as World Heritage City. It is also a way to promote possible alliances with other cities and territories for the South-South and Triangular Cooperation.

The role of the cultural heritage of the territory within the historical and cultural transcendence of the region or the country

Making short videos with interviews of specialists of the academic or cultural institutions of the region that explain in a specific way the relevance of the cultural heritage for the history and cultural landscape of the country is an opportunity to enrich the contents related to the OUV.



AN EXAMPLE THAT CAN BE USEFUL

In the editorial plan, it is useful to include international dates related to the various expressions of cultural heritage and listed areas. Examples of dates that could be considered to communicate the significance of the OUV and SSTC could be:

- » 16 November, International World Heritage Day.
- » 15 April, World Art Day.
- » 18 April, International Day for Monuments and Sites.
- » 5 June, World Environment Day.
- » 12 September, UN International Day for the South-South Cooperation.

The obligation of protection and awareness of the fragility of cultural heritage

One aspect of the communication of a territory is the permanent awareness-raising through specific permanent campaigns for a responsible visit, whether for tourists or residents.

To strengthen the quality of content related to cultural heritage and OUV, communicate the value of WHC and form an integrated set of cultural heritage to be communicated, either with specific campaigns or with permanent content. The local cultural resources of the protected zone, both in the core zone and in the buffer zone, must be used.

Some of these cultural resources to enrich the contents may be the activities that take place in other heritages, their capacity for access and interconnection as well as the tourist equipment and complementary services they have. These elements can be enjoyed and used by tourists to make the decision to visit the territory.

At this point, a brief review of what we mean by cultural resources that can nurture the thematic content around the communication of the OUV and the tourist resources inventoried in each WHC shall be given:

Manifestations of the indigenous peoples and urban groups

Cultural expressions related to the cultural heritage of the original groups of peoples that lived and still live in the territory and that preserve all or part of their social, economic, cultural, and political institutions. This includes their identity defined by numerous uses and customs, which inhabit a specific territory within a city.

Oral traditions and narratives

Cultural elements related to stories and narratives such as legends, tales, short-stories, and traditions that have been passed from generation to generation to manifest an archetypal idea or image and that are part of the cultural heritage of the population as well as a tool for their conservation and development.

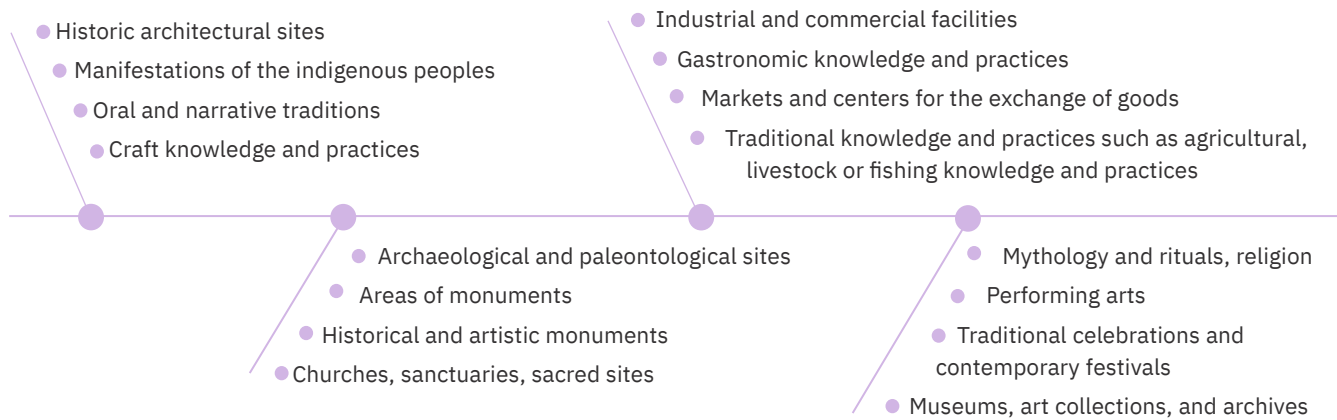
Craft knowledge and practices

The techniques and procedures with distinctive characteristics that are entailed in the production of goods in which the manual contribution of the creator is the most important component of the final product. Those can be utilitarian, symbolic, religious, or decorative.

Gastronomic knowledge and practices

Cultural value inherent and added by humans to food, including its cultivation, packaging, preparation, presentation, periods or occasions in which it is eaten or drunk, and also the sites, artefacts, and recipes. It also responds to

CULTURAL RESOURCES OF THE TERRITORY AS SUBJECTS FOR TRANSMITTING THE OUV



▲ **Illustration 5.** Key themes for the design of contents for the enhancement and communication of the OUV and the cultural heritage of a territory. Own elaboration, 2022.

unspoken expectations that are part of a common memory and produce specific feelings or emotions just by its mention, evocation, or consumption.

Markets and centers for the exchange of goods

Spaces of social coexistence in which communities engage in the sale and exchange of goods and services, almost always in a traditional way.

Traditional knowledge and practices related to agriculture, forestry, hunting, livestock and fishing

Systems of sustainable use of land, water, and biodiversity for the production of food and beverages, which have evolved from the needs, aspirations, and environment of a community or population, almost always rural.

Mythology and rituality, religiosity

Community practices and collective protocols that relate to indigenous or religious cosmogonies and may in-

volve visitors at different levels, from observation or pilgrimage to active participation.

Performing arts

Forms of symbolic creation, practice, and expression, such as theatre, dance, music, and film.

Traditional celebrations and contemporary festivals

Traditional manifestations that take place in a specific site and time to commemorate, honor, celebrate, or give thanks for a special situation or personage on a regular, though not permanent, basis.



A TOOL THAT CAN HELP YOU

The Google Arts platform has a [Cultural Heritage](#) section with enriched content with which you can add content to your profile.

Archaeological and paleontological sites

Sites where traces, evidence of the existence of ancient human societies, or/ and fossilized remains have been preserved.

Areas of monuments

Delimited areas in which the original layout of the cities is recognized and have monuments with historical value, built before 1900. They generally consist of municipal palaces, kiosks, parks, churches, cathedrals, and other related monuments from the 16th to the 19th century.



REMEMBER

Cultural heritage should not be considered as scenery, but as a reference to establish new criteria for assessing diversity. In this sense, it is recognized both for its aesthetic value, its historical or stylistic representativeness and its degree of innovation in terms of the materials or techniques used as well as for its social use, its anecdotal importance or its relationship with the daily life of the local population.

Historical and artistic monuments

Representative samples of isolated architectural works, as well as urban or rural sites that bear witness to a particular civilization or historical event. It refers not only to great creations but also to modest constructions that have acquired cultural significance over time.

Historic architectural sites

Ensembles of historic buildings and monuments from the 16th to the 19th

century that are not designated as an area of monuments but instead are representative of the localities and sites where they are located.

Churches, sanctuaries, and sacred sites

Buildings or sacred places linked to religious practices and culture with an architectural, artistic or cultural value that are or were used for religious and spiritual worship.

Industrial and commercial facilities

Spaces in which productivity systems that have been incorporated into the cultural heritage of the country and which are considered emblematic of a geographical environment, locality, or region—such as factories, estates, farms, mines, and distilleries—were created.

Contemporary architecture

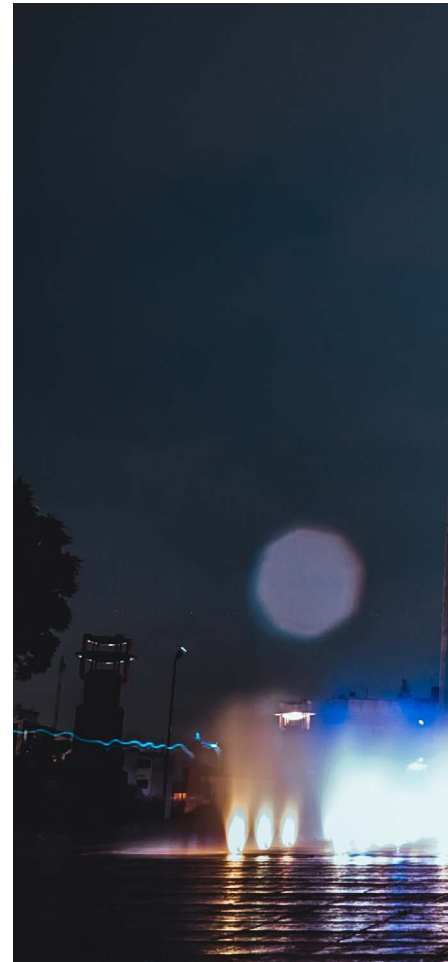
Urban and current culture connected to modernization and technological, cultural, and economic progress. Moreover, it represents the architectural and artistic richness.

Museums, artistic and historical collections and archives

Institutions in charge of protecting, disseminating, and researching material artifacts that express or bear witness to human creation or the evolution of nature with archaeological, historical, artistic, scientific, and/or technical value. They can be moved but usually are kept in specific facilities such as museums, churches, estates, or other buildings to preserve and exhibit them.

Natural sites with cultural value

Places that hold natural heritage made up of physical or biological formations.





▲ © Luis Domínguez, Unsplash

They are acknowledged for their aesthetic, scientific, sacred, or conservation value of emblematic species of flora and fauna.

The editorial plan requires a calendar to mark the most important dates for the city as well as the organizations' and international days. These days can be added as content to the social media account because they have relevant links to tourism and the region's cultural heritage throughout the year. The calendar also gives us the possibility to calculate the amount of contents and collaborations to be worked on and to establish guidelines for the coming years. With regard to the South-South and Triangular Cooperation, days can be added that are particularly important for the cities with which cooperation activities are carried out.



A TECHNIQUE THAT CAN HELP YOU

There are various digital tools to schedule contents, some of which can be found in the interfaces of the social networks themselves. They contain automatic scheduling on the days and times chosen, scheduled posts, and a tool to optimize time and resources for organizing content.

THE IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL ELEMENTS ON SOCIAL NETWORKS

Due to the large amount of stimuli and messages on digital platforms, they require specific attention to the quality of the visual elements. Therefore, it is important to ensure that these elements and messages of all contents are coherent with the brand of the city, configuring a visual line that makes the messages identifiable. At this point, it is worth recognizing that the focus is not only on communicating the OUV but also on how the OUV is communicated.

Some of the aspects to pay attention to among the visual elements of the social network profiles, both in the web pages where it is possible to customize the header or **cover** of the **feed** and in those where ephemeral content (stories) is created, are:

Color palette

This refers to selecting a group of colors that dominate the contents. In addition to being used in the brand design of the territory, they can be inspired by the chromatics of the cultural resources such as buildings, natural landscapes, monuments or artistic expressions of the listed area. This palette can also serve as a guide to harmoniously arrange different contents in the feed.



Typography

Selecting a group of letters that have a specific character, are easy to read and attractive can be used as a differentiating element of the contents, such as in infographics, banners, headlines, and so on. Attention must be given to ensure that they are coherent with the rest of the elements of the visual line. Also, they should be easy to read in different sizes, colors, and formats.

Style of icons

Icons are simple graphic appeals that depict the most emblematic elements of what they represent in different degrees of abstraction. The graphic style of icons, just like the one in typography, can belong to the same group or family, as shown in the example below; even though the four icons represent a tree, they do not belong to the same family. To represent specific cultural heritage elements, for example, architectural elements, they can be a useful distinguishing element.

Quality and style of the formats

Try to ensure that the different possible formats for the contents maintain a standard of quality and style. Videos, photographs, infographics, or even memes that are your original content shall keep coherence among them by repre-

senting the same visual lines, filters, or concepts. Keep in mind the devices on which they will be consulted, favoring the vertical format.

Tone in messages

The texts of your networks' content should always have a smooth, easy to understand tone and should call to action. The following are some tones that can be used:

- » Colloquial
- » Advising
- » Informative
- » Corporative
- » Objective
- » Informal
- » Pedagogical
- » Formal



AN IDEA THAT CAN HELP YOU

To ensure that the concept and the visual creativity of all accounts on social media and other digital platforms maintain coherence, it is useful to prepare a visual identity manual for social media, specifying formats, pixel sizes, color palettes, and other design details that must be respected in the daily management of content.

A resource that can help is the identity manual of the city or the territory brand.

▲ **Illustration 6.** Examples of a color palette, typography and different icons.

In such the visual criteria that gives coherence to your message are established and will help you preserve the visual personality of the territory. If this resource is not available, it is essential to plan an identity manual for communication in the digital environment.

CAMPAIGNS

Scheduling and planning digital social media campaigns is a step that should be included in the general content calendar. Campaigns can be permanent or periodic and include various communication activities on social networks, such as webinars, participation dynamics, raffles, digital tours, activities, or creative pieces to be downloaded by the users.

In the case of cultural heritage and the OUV, campaigns which are aimed at local populations to raise awareness of the conservation, protection, and territorial importance of the core area and its buffer zone are indispensable in the digital media strategy. Campaigns, as well as content, can be either organic or paid content.

Regardless of the type of campaign, the preparation of a brief including the following data is necessary to clarify the lines of communication that the campaign will follow:

Objectives

Just like the strategic communication plan, communication campaigns can follow the SMART model of objectives. In turn, in the case of social media campaigns, some specific objectives can be: to generate traffic to the website, increase the number of followers, generate conversations, and so on.

Segmentation of the target audience

The campaigns can be directed to one or several of the identified audiences of our map of audiences. The import-

ant thing is to characterize them according to the data available, in order to design an appropriate message and to classify them based on the data offered by the administration panels of the social networks.

Time period

It is vital to define a relevant period where the most impact can be made. In content campaigns it is important to plan the times of the day when greater visibility in each type of network can be achieved.

Creativity / creative rationale

Being clear about how to transmit the message—if necessary in different formats or activities—within social networks and differentiating between stories, short videos, and photographs can support the creativity of the publications. It is important to consider texts and captions in short videos.

Budget

In the case of paid content campaigns, it is important to be transparent about the cost per click, printouts, actions, and other types of costs charged by the digital platforms.

Calendar of actions

Specifies the moments and the platforms where the content will be published in the general content calendar. In addition to facilitating the work, this will allow the contents to be monitored and well identified.

Report on results

A brief and concise report of the results obtained in social networks should be made, taking into account the graphics provided by the platform management tools. This will help us to know the effectiveness of the campaign and its cost.

COLLABORATIONS IN SOCIAL MEDIA

When we talk about collaborations in social networks, we refer to those actions or strategies that are carried out in the field of communication through which the interaction with other profiles is negotiated to increase the impact and relevance of the messages.

One type of collaboration can be with the so-called content creators or Influencers. However, it is possible to establish collaborations with institutional profiles or public bodies, or with associations or organizations in the fields of culture and tourism, such as art and science museums, local museums, civil associations promoting culture or responsible tourism, or others that are compatible with the values of the territory and the dissemination of the OUV. All of the above can be done also within the framework of the South-South and Triangular Cooperation.

Before starting any collaboration of this type, it is necessary to consider some elements:

- » It is important to take into account that the collaborations must be formal and detailed agreements on a written document in which the characteristics of the collaboration are specified. In some cases, the compromises of the collaboration must be established in a formal legal agreement, since the collaborations can be considered as paid content that must be formalized.
- » Conduct a pre-search with prospective content creators and arrange at least one first meeting through an official email account. Those prospects need to share the tone, values, and themes you want to communicate.
- » There are different ways to reach a collaboration agreement. In the specific case of content creators, it may be necessary to contact them through

agencies. Therefore, it is useful to have a brief in which you can describe the objectives of the collaboration.



ONE EXAMPLE THAT CAN HELP YOU

As part of the strategy to promote sustainable tourism in natural areas, the Iceland government launched the Iceland Academy campaign. This campaign consisted of a series of videos where the visitors completed a training course about responsible visits. Through simple language, valuable information was given regarding important aspects of the natural heritage of the territory that visitors should know; all this in a dynamic and original way. [You can see the materials here.](#)

- » It is always helpful to prepare a collaboration brief that specifies the exclusivity time (if required), type, and potential use of the content, budget, agreement, measurements, or reports of the impact in addition to the traditional and basic elements.
- » In the specific case of collaborations to communicate the OUV or the different expressions of cultural heritage (or the South-South and Triangular Cooperation), it is important to ensure that the values that are intended to be promoted through the collaborations are in line with the values of protection and conservation of the cultural heritage.

The advantages offered by the collaborations are the following:

- » They make the message visible among audiences potentially interested in our topics. In the case of re-



sponsible tourism and cultural tourism, many creators related to culture, arts and travel can get the message across potential visitors.

▲ © Fabian Jones, Unsplash



REMEMBER

Collaborations with content creators dealing with the divulgation of a cultural asset must be properly planned and analyzed, as undue or inappropriate messages can devalue cultural heritage and create a communication crisis.

- » Generate conversations in a specific community so that they feel more engaged with the subjects we want to promote and communicate.
- » Communication should take on a friendlier, more personal, and informal tone. In the case of content creators focused on topics such as history and cultural heritage, it can also give a certain level of credibility.

Something you can do for a successful collaboration is to plan ahead the actions to be negotiated with the content creators, thinking about the particularities of their profiles and audiences. •

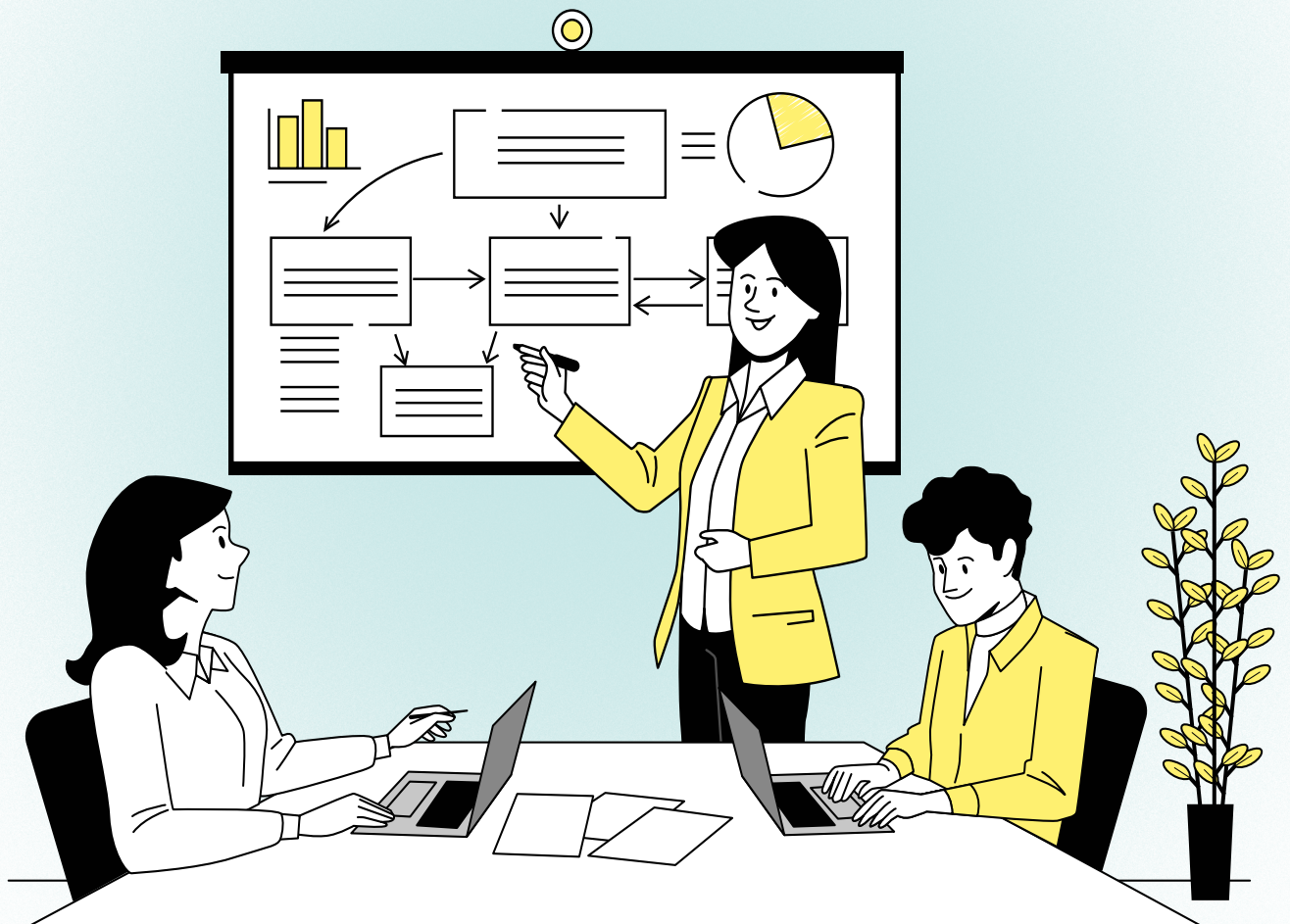


SUPPORT SHEET

Some useful questions at the stage of content generation and day-to-day communication:

1. Does the content answers questions regarding the OUV?
2. Is the quality of the photos, videos and graphics as desired?
How can we improve it?
3. How can I emphasize the OUV through my social media content?
4. Are the aspects of the OUV well represented in the content (text and image)?
5. Are the graphic elements (typography and color palette) of the profiles inspired by any of the cultural heritages of the territory?
6. Do the icons and other graphic elements of the profiles differ from other territories or are they easy to associate with the territory brands?
7. What benefits can collaborative social media campaigns bring to the territory?

Follow-up of the communication plan and reports



MONITORING OF THE SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT PLAN AND THE PERFORMANCE REPORT

Regularly monitoring the effectiveness of social media activity is a good practice for several reasons. On one hand, monitoring through periodic reports allows adjusting the content strategy. In the case of budget, it allows you to know how you are investing and how this investment is returning. The data analysis of the reports allows having a set of elements for decision-making to improve the visitor's experience.

The follow-up of a communication plan must identify the most relevant indicators or those that respond to the communication objectives of the strategy plan. On the other hand, they can be presented as periodic reports commented on and evaluated by those responsible for the communication area. The reports—which can be weekly, monthly, semi-annual, or annual—must respect the function for which they were elaborated and emphasize the value of the data offered by the social media account management panels. While the frequency of reporting is a factor that depends on specific management needs, it is important to include three key reports: at the end of a social media campaign, at the end of a partnership, and at the end of the implementation period of a strategic communication plan. Those three reports will give insight into key management results, not forgetting to carry out periodic monitoring reports to be able to cross-check with the above-mentioned key reports.

Some of the data that can be part of the performance reports are shown in **illustration 7**. However, to ensure frequent communication of the OUV and the cultural heritage of the territory (as well as the South-South and Triangular Cooperation), it is also possible to add the data to those publications



A TOOL THAT CAN HELP YOU

A simple structure of a performance report can be: relevant KPIs, development and conclusions. Remember that many automation tools offer the download of some graphs that can be useful for reporting and can make reporting for short periods more practical, an example of these is Hootsuite, which presents reports in a single panel.

which focus on themes related to the OUV or the SSTC.

SOCIAL MEDIA KPIs

The term **KPI** refers to Key Performance Indicator. In social media, it refers to the monitoring of specific data that allows verifying the progress of the communication strategy that is being carried out. KPIs help in different areas of digital communication, which means that there are indicators for specific areas such as e-commerce, web analytics, or social networks. In the latter case, some of the most important indicators are:

Engagement

Any action performed on a social media content where interaction is encouraged. It is also called interaction rate.

Reach

This data refers to users who have seen your publication.

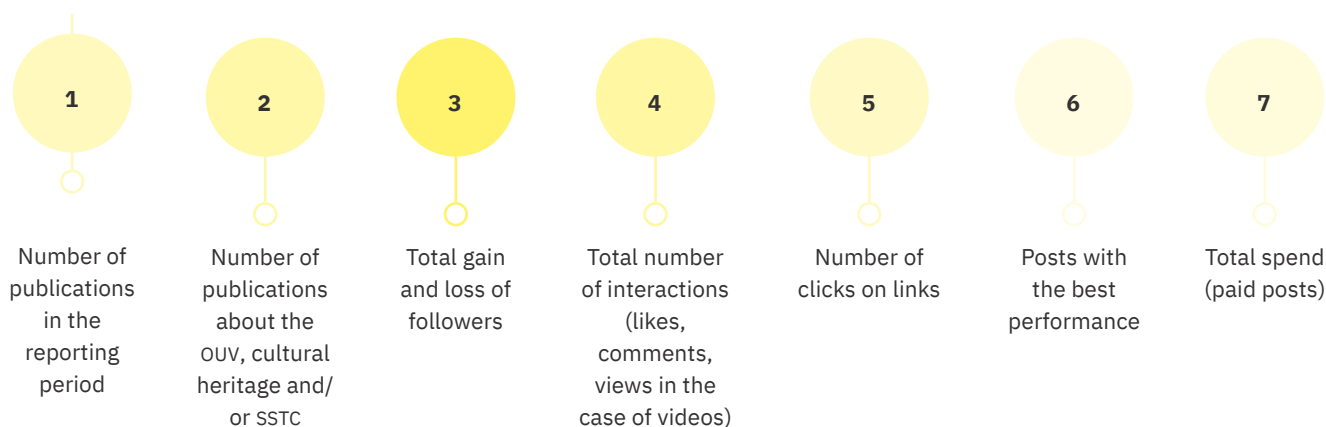
ROI (Return on Investment)

Measures the return or profitability of an investment.

CPI (Cost per Interaction)

Costs when advertising a publication.

ELEMENTS TO CONSIDER IN SOCIAL MEDIA REPORTING



▲ **Illustration 7.** Elements of a periodic report on social networks including communication of the OUV and SSTC. Own elaboration, 2022.

The following indicators are obtained from different data operations. Some, such as reach, are included in the administration panel of social networks. Others, such as engagement, can be calculated. Two possible ways to calculate are:

- » **Engagement** = Total interactions per post / reach per post * 100
- » **Average engagement** = Total interaction / total number of posts



REMEMBER

When managing collaborations with content creators, it is important to consider some of their KPIs to ensure the success of the collaboration. Some of them can be engagement, growth rate and authenticity of the followers.

One element that can be useful to track the communication of OUV, cultural heritage and the South-South and Triangular Cooperation is to include a

specific periodic KPIs' report of the contents that include those subjects, in order to have a record of how to communicate and of how successful specific content related to OUV is.

DIGITAL REPUTATION AND ITS MONITORING ON TRAVEL PLATFORMS

Another important part of the follow-up of communication plans in digital media is the monitoring of the visitor experience through Online Travel Agencies (OTA) platforms, such as TripAdvisor, Google Travel, etcetera. These platforms consist of a large part of user-generated content, which is of great value for the OUV and the cultural heritage of the territory in terms of tourism development. Its importance lies in being one of the information sources that contributes to the digital reputation of the places to visit within the core area and the buffer zones. Therefore, it also impacts the reputation of the OUV and the various expressions of cultural heritage. At the same time, the high amount of visitor evaluations and comments can offer clues for the improvement and optimization of the physical visit.



A TOOL THAT CAN HELP YOU:

Having a draft with possible responses to user comments will facilitate the task and ensure a proper tone and treatment. At the same time, the following tips can be helpful:

- » Read opinions and offer solutions
- » Always respond and respond promptly
- » Acknowledge positive feedback
- » Learn from negative feedback
- » Encourage the visitor to leave feedback

For those platforms, the central task of communication management is to monitor the Online Reputation (ORM). This refers to periodic monitoring of what is being said about the experiences, activities, tours, and various tourism products, to be informed about the visitors' experiences and to implement actions for improvement.

Travel platforms are important for connecting with services and goods offered in association with the OUV, such as hotels, restaurants, and various tourism products.

Some measures that constitute good practice are the following:

- » Verifying that the facilities in the protected area have the correct data registered in the right category with a profile administered by the responsible institution, and no duplicate profiles.
- » Ensure that negative comments are professionally responded to by the official profile.
- » Raise awareness among service providers about the importance of invit-

ing visitors to leave feedback of their experience on the platforms.

- » Conduct capacity-building for tourism service providers to have a proper digital presence in media, such as on Google Business, and also invite users to leave comments on their business.

BASIC ELEMENTS FOR CRISIS COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT

In the current communication landscape on social networks, situations that crisis management may arise. Contingency plans and other management tools previously designed for the appropriate treatment and actions must be in place. It must be clear that communication crises are unexpected, while correct reactions can be planned.

The primary task of the communications team in crises is to respond as soon as possible with messages from the official voice and to always remain open to recognizing errors and rectifying them, depending on the individual case.

Some examples of situations that can cause a communication crisis in social networks, cultural heritage and the South-South and Triangular Cooperation are:

- » Campaigns that contain controversial, or else incorrectly documented and communicated matters in the creative pieces of communication.
- » Collaborations with content creators whose covering of the message is inappropriate and may be associated with disrespectful actions or cultural appropriation.
- » Errors in advertising or in the content on official platforms.
- » Complaints of visitors about museums or guided tours.
- » Controversy regarding actions or the lack of actions by the authorities in charge of the conservation of the protected area.



REMEMBER

Some of the communication crises related to social networks and protected cultural heritage are not directly linked to communication itself, for example, those related to complaints concerning the conservation or bad experiences of visitors in the protected perimeter. In those cases, communication is a complementary tool to the actions taken by the corresponding authorities, which is why it is important to have a list of contacts to inform the respective area so that they can react. In this case, the right communication must be accompanied by the right actions.

Some of the prior measures for handling these crisis situations are the following:

- » Establishing a crisis committee within the communication department, including a director, an assigned spokesperson, and specialized advisors (legal, security, quality, environment, to name a few). This committee must be instructed in the immediate measures for crisis situations and for handling them.
- » Designing a crisis communication management manual with hypothetical situations and a crisis level semaphore specific to the territory and listed assets, bearing in mind the possible treats of the core area and its buffer zone.
- » Designing social network guidelines for collaborators so that they are aware of the organization's position. Trying to include protocols in the handbook considering all possible areas (human resources, environ-



ment, legal, finance) and responsible parties.

- » Having a file with prepared templates of communiqués, letters and other materials.
- » Having a register with the names and direct contacts of key authorities

▲ © Julio López, Unsplash

and clusters to provide key information if needed.



A TIP THAT MAY BE USEFUL

Social media is often used as a platform for visitors and residents to voice their dissatisfaction with the protected site. Assess whether the comment can be responded to promptly, while always expressing your thankfulness for the user's feedback, without reacting automatically. This can be an opportunity to improve the image. The following tips should be considered:

- » Develop responses based on honesty, openness and professionalism.
- » Analyse whether it is a real disagreement or a trolling action.
- » Do not delete negative or controversial comments.
- » Quote or cite only credible and verified sources.
- » Follow up on the situation to assess possible repercussions in the short, medium, and/or long term, depending on the situation.

Some immediate actions for the case of social media are:

- » Gather enough information regarding the nonconformity or event that caused the situation in the shortest possible time.
- » In the event that the situation is a disagreement, identify the relationship that the person has with the institution and, depending on the case, evaluate whether it is possible to resolve the disagreement directly (DM) or by addressing the corresponding institution.

- » In the case of a complaint that requires dialogue, trying to find solutions in a private chat to address the particularities in a personalized way is advisable.
- » If the complaint is not within the competence of the tourism or culture agents, avoid responding negatively and clearly explain the institution's mandate.
- » In case a publication or comment has a negative viral effect, call the crisis committee to take appropriate action. Response time is crucial. Try to always provide an adequate, supported, and reviewed response within 24 hours after the situation's occurring. •



SUPPORT SHEET

Here are some the useful questions to ask at the follow-up stage of the communication plan:

1. How often do I need to make reports according to the needs of my communication department?
2. What are relevant indicators (KPIs) based on the objectives of the communication plan?
3. How do contents related to the OUV, cultural heritage and the South-South and Triangular Cooperation perform?
4. Are we satisfied with the indicators of the last social media report? What measures can we take to improve them?
5. How do visitors evaluate the experience of the protected areas and the tours of the OTAs?
6. What are the main strengths and weaknesses that are coming to light through the comments and how can we improve?



ABBREVIATIONS

CPI Cost per Interaction

DM Direct Message

DMO Destination Marketing Organization

ICT Information and Communication Technology

KPI Key Performance Indicator

MWHC Mexican World Heritage Cities

NIAH National Institute of Anthropology and History

ORM Online Reputation Management

OTA Online Travel Agency

OUV Outstanding Universal Value

ROI Return on Investment

SM Social Media

SME Small and Mid-sized Enterprises

SSTC South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC)

UGC User Generated Content

UNWTO World Tourism Organization

WHC World Heritage Cities

GLOSSARY

Ambassador

In marketing, a person who represents a brand of any kind and whose messages promote such in order to achieve greater recognition in specific areas of command.

Bio (Instagram)

Derived from biography, it is used to indicate profile information. Within the given space, it is possible to add name, age, country or links.

Bot

Program that operates automatically without human intervention. It can be reflected in artificially created accounts.

Brief

A concise and direct document describing central details to cover the basic content of the advertising campaign.

Buffer and core zone

Areas that compose a World Heritage site, whose use and development are legally and customarily restricted to reinforce its protection.

Clusters

Groups of specialized companies, often SMES and related supporting actors, that cooperate closely in a given location.

Co-create

Communication actions, campaigns, and/or content generation in collaboration with people, institutions, or organizations can favor the visibility of the messages in social media.

Community

Total users who follow a social media account or profile.

Content

Any piece of communication (video, meme, photo, infographic) that is integrated into the digital communication channels, whose purpose is to capture the attention of the users, generate interaction and provide valuable information.

Content curator

A professional who is dedicated to creating a customized selection of the best content and resources on specific topics. He/she searches groups and shares the most relevant information.

Cover Page

Picture on top of a profile on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube that spans the entire width and can be customized.

Creativities

Different materials or communication pieces featured in a campaign.

Cultural marketing

Process that takes place in cultural organizations, societies, and governments through collaborative relationships. It aims to create reciprocal value through the use of complementary (cultural) resources, creative industries, and/or technologies.

Digital Identity

Digital version of oneself that identifies a person or brand through the different traces left in their digital interaction.

Digital platforms

Virtual system that allows the operation of various applications in a single environment that can be accessed via the internet.

Direct message

A service provided on various social networks for sending private messages between two users, commonly called DM.

Engagement

Indicator in social networks that shows the percentage of interactions that a user has with a brand on different channels.

Feed

In social networks, it is the space where the entire digital traffic of content that the user follows.

Geotagging

Action of adding location information to a post on social networks.

Gif

Graphic Interchange Format; motion with several frames of a duration of 3-5 seconds.

Hacking

The activity of using a computer to access information stored on another computer system without permission, or to spread a computer virus.

Hashtag

A word or phrase preceded by the symbol # that is used in social media posts for a keyword or topic of interest to make it easier to find.

Influencer

A user who has a certain credibility in a usually large digital community of followers. His/her main activity on social networks is to generate content on specific topics of interest in their community.

Landing pages

Web page to which a user is directed by clicking on a hyperlink.

Loyalty

In marketing, strategies to offer a good service in accordance with the customer's/user's satisfaction criteria with the aim of keeping them loyal to a brand.

Meme

A piece of communication that expresses a satirical perspective on a specific and/or current situation through a drawing or character and contextualizes it with written language, while giving a glimpse of a current social event.

Mentions

Call to attention by adding a user's name preceded by the @ sign.

Native advertising

The practice of including promoted content on a platform, while respecting the platform, format, and style of the editorial content.

Networking

Building up a network of professional contacts through different channels, for example, LinkedIn.

Niche

Small group of users who have very specific needs or a unique combination of specific needs.

Online Reputation Management

Activities within communication management that focus on assessing, monitoring, and promoting improvements in the image and user perception of a brand.

Organic content

Free content published on digital profiles.

Paid content

A form of advertising focused on boosting organic content or on designing unique ads.

Photo spots

Specific locations that a large number of users of social network visit to take pictures and share them on their social media profiles.

Pixel (Facebook)

A tracking tool that uses a code that is inserted into a web page (totally invisible to the user), which is used to track content of other users.

Responsive

Digital design technique to ensure that the content of a web page can automatically adjust to the layout of different devices, such as tablets, computers, or mobile phone.

Reticular

Characteristic of the internet that describes the networked or rhizomatic architecture which allows connectivity between multiple nodes of information.

Screen name

Also referred to as user name, it is the name on the screen that identifies a brand or person on social networks.

Social networks

Digital platforms that allow interaction through a profile with personal data in the internet, facilitating the creation of communities based on common criteria and thus allowing communication between users.

Spam

Constantly unwanted content or emails without relevant information.

Sponsored post

A form of social media advertising that consists of paid content that is published in a highly relevant medium.

Stories (Instagram)

Short audiovisual content that can be personalized with tags, stickers, etc. and shared for a limited time of 24 hours. In other networks such as YouTube, they are called shorts.

Strategic plan

A document that functions as a road-map of an organization where communication objectives and how they can be achieved in the medium term are determined.

Tag

Binding keywords that are added to a post to identify similar content or related topics. It works differently depending on the social network.

Top of mind

Brands that occupy the first stands in the mind of a consumer.

Trending topic

Topics that are trending and appear frequently.

Trolling / Troll

A user who is characterized by destructive criticism and unsubstantiated negative comments on other users' posts.

User Generated Content

Content that non-brand users share on their personal profiles.

Viral

Content that, due to its relevance and creativity, is massively shared in a short period of time.

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In the context of the pilot project between the UNESCO Office in Mexico and the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC), this document was proposed to strengthen capacities to address the contemporary requirements of the dynamics of communication, with the objective of improving the promotion, dissemination, protection, and relevance of the Outstanding Universal Value in World Heritage Cities, as well as the South-South and Triangular Cooperation.

Digitalization has generated new challenges for cultural agents and promoters due to the constant evolution and trends that change in the short term, therefore the commitment to generate support for the management and planning of digital channels that seek to promote cultural tourism in World Heritage Cities, through innovative mechanisms that adapt to the digital reality.

This guide aims to address the process of developing a communication plan, provide elements to identify good practices in social networks, create and plan quality content, and finally, provide the tools to generate a plan for monitoring such content.

We recognize the great challenges involved in digital access and development in the Global South media, hence the importance of providing support projects that can be used for any city that has heritage sites inscribed on the World Heritage List by UNESCO, where its Outstanding Universal Value is a source of attraction for a more sustainable Cultural and Creative Tourism.