

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY OF THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY “GRIGORE ANTIPA”

Ruxandra Irina POPESCU

*Administration and Public Management
Department, the Faculty of Management,
Academy of Economic Studies from
Bucharest*

Due to the amplitude of the communication techniques in the public area in Western Countries and the spectacular development of publicity and public relations in this field, we find it interesting to analyze how and if this measure can be applied by Romanian public institutions and to Romanian public products. Thus, we discovered the sustained effort of the National Museum of Natural History “Grigore Antipa” (cultural nonprofit institution which delivers goods as public cultural products towards the entire nation’s population) to promote itself and to communicate its activities to the public by using various techniques, both publicity and public relations, elaborating and creating exhibitions, conferences, festivals with interactive activities for the public, to involve him and transform him from a passive visitor of the museum into a participant at the cultural act.

In 2003, the National Museum of Natural History “Grigore Antipa” from Bucharest began the implementation of an intense program of integrated marketing communication. The notion involves a strategic communication plan which uses more channels, addresses to various types of public and regards results achievement (cognitive, affective and behavior like) – plan borrowed from the commercial area and applied in order to replace itself in the public’s mind, to achieve a larger exposure and to convince the public that, besides the scientific and educational role it plays, Antipa Museum offers also a relaxing way of spending free time. In this matter, I have analyzed the strategic and integrated communication plans of the museum, following each step, starting from research and to the result evaluation.

*Transylvanian Review
of Administrative Sciences,
19 E/2007, pp. 100-115*

1. The Museum – introductive features

Museums are nonprofit permanent organizations, under community service and its development, open for public, which purchase, preserve, investigate, communicate and present for studying purposes, educational and entertainment reasons, materials about people and their environment¹. In this category are included: libraries and archive centers, natural museums, zoo parks, aquariums, natural reservations and science centers.

The Museum Association defines the museum such as “an institution that collects, researches, maintains, exposes and interprets material evidences and associated for public benefit”².

The Members of the Museum Area Training have defined this institution starting from the duties and mission of the museum: „.....to purchase, keep, research and communicate material and informational materials about people and environment, for study and entertainment purposes”³.

A larger perspective over these three definitions draws attention upon the common elements. Museums are institutions – organs or organizations which carry on cultural, social and educational activities – whose main function is to collect and keep in good condition the collected objects or information and to share them with the beneficiary – the public. The distinctive feature between museums and art galleries or show rooms, is the fact that the first ones rely on collections, their management, along with all the responsibilities involved.

The main function of a museum is the academic one, to gather and preserve cultural goods after scientific criteria. Initially, the primary role was the material and cultural research, that later became musts of this function, such as maintenance, pedagogical, instructive and entertainment activity. Also, there are a few common coordinates with other institutions: leadership and activity planning, financial and accountant assurance, training and promotion of the staff. The final purpose of the museum is an educational and cultural one, because it aims to spread on a large scale information and theoretic attitudes, to generate opinions and convictions, to contribute to creating a cultural identity of the people. Maria Ciobanu Bacanu⁴ studied three of the most important functions of the museum:

1. The research role is vital for a museum. Without this task it can not exist. It represents the basis in achieving educational and cultural objectives, because a scientific investment can be attained only by specialists, based in comprehensible, scientific criteria.
2. The preservation function is an important for the museum as the collecting role, because objects –both exhibited and deposited, can be damaged. In time, various factors, such as excessive light, oscillations of temperature, polluted air, can deteriorate the items.
3. The educational role is part of a complex system which influences the cultural pattern of life, the behavior and the way of thinking. This system includes various institutions such as: family, school, cultural institutions, army, church, public bodies, media. The museum informs and forms the public. The educational role consists in transforming the museum into a cultural need and option, result of a process that combines science with art, public relations management and using these for the interest of both parts: the museum and the public.

These are the three essential roles played by museums in order to function and contribute to the development of the society and culture. Besides all these, there have always been individual objectives and functions, of each distinct institution, subordinated to various known or hidden interests and missions or by the needs and expectations of the visitors.

¹ International Council of Museums (1993), apud. Ambrose, T., *Managing New Museums: a Guide to Good Practice*, The Scottish Museum Council, p.14.

² The Museum Association (1993) apud. Ambrose, T., *op. cit.*, p.16.

³ The Museum Training Institute, apud. Ambrose, T., *op.cit.*, p.14.

⁴ Cobianu-Băcanu, M. (1998), *Culture and evaluation*, Ministry of Culture, The Training Center for the staff of Cultural Institutions , Bucharest, p. 44-46, 51.

Today the museum represents not just an efficient tool for enlightenment, but also it adjusts to the new beliefs and their goals are expressed in order to appeal to the main link in its activity: the visitor.

2. National Museum of Natural History “Grigore Antipa” – Institutional Background

The history of this museum begins at 3rd of November 1834 when it is established by Princely Decree Nr.143, by the brother of the ruler Alexandru Ghica, The Great Ban of Mihalache Ghica.

When speaking about a museum of natural history, we can all imagine the objects we'll be seeing in the exhibits galleries. First things that come in mind are stuffed animals, dinosaurs' skeletons, bugs and shelves full of jars containing various species of reptiles. All of these are found also in the Antipa museum, but this museum is filled with a wide variety of collections, exhibits, programs and activities, organized according to the general purpose of the institution. Thus, along the public basic display, Antipa Museum can be proud of its numerous collections, temporary exhibits, interactive programs and communication with the public, as well as a rich activity of scientific research.

The public display is organized on three levels. At the semi-basement visitors can admire dioramas presenting the Romanian fauna, but also the Australian one, minerals and rocks, micro-dioramas with the geological evolution along the eras. Here the specialists have created a natural size cave, with its typical fauna. There are ethnographic and anthropological themes, with unique Romanian elements and rarities, as well as “zanza heads” or “the fardo mummies” and a showroom in honor of the universe and origin of life. The first bio-geographical dioramas in the world, created by Grigore Antipa and unveiled in 1908, represent a pride element for the museum. The exhibition also contains a systematic presentation of the worldwide fauna, composed of impressive collections.

To the scientific collections of the museum, permanently developing, both Romanian and foreign specialists have access. Patrimonial elements, about 2 million pieces, are gathered in over 130 collections, belonging mostly to the animal group, as well as to mineral and rocks sets, fossils, compared anatomy, ethnography and anthropology.

The scientific research is one of the major activities of the museum, which placed the institution amongst the most powerful ones in the zoology area. The museum's specialists annually take field works for the study of the Romanian fauna and for the enrichment of museum's collections and they also take part in international projects and expeditions.

Temporary exhibits are extremely important for portfolio of a museum of natural history. On one hand, it presents to the visitors new theories in science, new discoveries, as well as the results of research. On the other, it owns priceless pieces, from all over the world, which can not be displayed in public except in the case of an exhibit, for a limited period of time.

The first short-term exhibition was organized in 1967 and it was held in honor of Emil Racovita. Since then, their number and amplitude has grown constantly. Until nowadays over 100 displays have been held. Some of them had as central theme fauna from various world regions; others were focused on certain species only. A few shows have had as central point pieces from the oldest collections of the museum, and others have shown new gathered materials in international expeditions. Some expositions have been organized exclusively by the museum; others were the result of collaborations with national or international museums.

The museum aims to a various public throughout its programs, characterized by dynamism and interactivity. The oldest public program of the museum is the cycle of weekly conferences. This was initiated in 1953. The lectures are held by specialists of the museums, as well as by international public figures in the scientific world. Educational programs have begun late in the 70s with competitions named “Who knows, wins!”. These were already unreel in collaboration with schools, most of them in Bucharest.

All these elements from the museum's range are basic ways in which it performs its educational, cultural and social functions, specific throughout its institutional nature.

A few years ago, the managers of the Antipa museum realized that, for the bigger part of the Romanian public, museums represent motionless worlds and the National Museum of Natural History needs *something* to give itself that magical aura of a special, unique world, which waits to be explored by people of all ages, a place "full of life", a world that "speaks".

3. The integrated communication strategy of the National Museum of Natural History "Grigore Antipa"

That certain something needed by the Antipa Museum was a new identity that would show off its multiple personalities: education, culture, entertainment, adaptability, generosity, contemporarily and civism. A job easily said to be done, extremely difficult to realize and yet not impossible.

Outlining and communicating a new identity were activities within an integrated communication strategy:

- the concept of "integrated communication" is a strategic process of coordination of various brand communication programs, subjects, activities which must encourage dialog and focus on the public, means of communication and results;
- the strategy can be thought as "a structure of purposes, policies, programs, actions and resource allotment, which define an organization". A strategy is the extension of an organization's mission, representing a bridge between it and its environment"⁵.

The process of strategic planning, regardless of the area of applicability (publicity, public relations, marketing, and management) follows a certain structure, composed out of various steps, each having a major importance, needful and mutually dependent. Philip Kotler, one of the greatest theoreticians in marketing, proposes a pattern, while analyzing the non profit organizations area, named *Strategic Marketing for Non-Profit Organizations*⁶, executable in basic steps: the analysis, properly strategy and execution.

Dennis Wilcox, public relations theoretician, adds a final step to Kotler's 3 ones: the evaluation stage.

Thus, the analysis of integrated communication strategy of Antipa Museum follows the 4 essential stages projected by Dennis Wilcox, but it also takes in consideration their implications, at the level of non profit institutions, such as described by Philip Kotler in the cited paper.

3.1. Research and Analysis

The first stage in elaborating the strategy consists of analysis and research. It implies the study of internal and external environment of the museum and its purpose is to establish essential elements that should guide the communication strategy. Many times, the proper importance given to this step has been ignored, totally or partially, by organizations and cultural institutions which didn't have a large experience in the field of communication. Causes can vary from the fear to accept reality, and on to a mistaken understanding of the actual activity⁷.

"The research represents a controlled, objective and systematic gathering of information in order to describe and understand"⁸. Dennis Wilcox adds: "research is a form of listening"⁹. In order to

⁵ Brayson, John M. (2002), *Strategic planning for public and nonprofit organizations. Guide for the consolidation and support of organizational achievements*, Revised Edition, Publishing House ARC, Bucharest, p. 144.

⁶ Kotler, P., Andreasen, A. R. (1996), *Strategic Marketing for Non-Profit Organizations*, Fifth Edition, Prentice Hall, Inc., p. 63.

⁷ Research is still compared to documentation work in dusty, old archives.

⁸ Broom, G., Dozier, D. (2000) *Using Research in Public Relations*, apud. Wilcox, D.L., Ault, Ph.H., Agee, W.K., Cameron, G.T. – *Public Relations. Strategies and Tactics*, Addison-Wesley Educational Publishers, p. 120.

create a strategic plan which sets comprehensible objectives, missions and methods to accomplish these, an institution must know its current position, the target public, and the characteristics of the external environment. To get in one place you must know the starting point, but most importantly what you can take with you, what are the resources you need and which is the most efficient – not necessarily the shortest road to take.

To create the plan for integrated communication, the Antipa Museum has lead a campaign of research just upon the aspects of its activity considered as vital: consumer public (visitors, general public, and media) as well as a research study upon the evolution and categories of visitors.

A. Internal Environment

This is the environment over which the institution can act directly, built and influenced just by the members of the institution. The most important feature is the human one, the one that stands at the basis of the organization's activity. Besides the staff, essential elements of the internal environment are also the mission, the objectives and purposes which influence the existence, way of thinking and acting of the institution.

Mission, objectives and purpose

In 1923, Grigore Antipa established “the main purpose” and the “special purpose” of the museum, thus:

“The National Museum of Natural History from Bucharest is the central museum of the country for all the natural science branches and has as main purpose: gathering, research, study, sorting, preservation and exposure of all collections necessary for studies and scientific research, for needs of educational institutions and for the popularity of this science. Besides general scientific studies this museum also has a specific purpose: to organize and facilitate systematic study of Romanian nature and its problems, as well as to gather needed materials for this research activity”¹⁰.

The mission of an organization represents the essence of its efficiency and activity – what it wishes, tries and manages to accomplish: “any organization begins with a mission [...] institutions can be defined as a human collectivity structured to accomplish a certain mission throughout rational means”¹¹.

According to this definition we realize that the purpose that Antipa spoke of is, actually, the stated mission of the institution on Kiseleff Street Nr.1.

The purpose, not in the sense used by Grigore Antipa, is more specific. Purposes are operational and measurable activities and their achievement requires setting up periods of time and specific responsibilities.

Organizational culture

Organizational culture determines best what an institution can create, because its main point of view is the human feature, essence of all activities. The principle that should guide any institution is that one stating that before being wage earners, we are all people. People built their way of life around certain individual values, earned throughout their life, whether from personal experience or from other's experiences, from their teachings or habitudes, from imitation, will to be like the others, and wanted or not these values reflect upon their professional activities, upon their social behavior, in the way they react to stress, pressure or lack of supervision. Thus, the characteristics of one's employee personality contribute to creating an environment, a work mood, and in time they adjust and generate dependency or change depending on the degree of acceptance of the members regarding change.

⁹ Wilcox, D.L., Ault, Ph.H., Agee, W.K., Cameron, G.T. (2000), *Public Relations. Strategies and Tactics*, Addison – Wesley Educational Publishers, p.120.

¹⁰ Antipa, G. (1923), *Organization of Romanian museums*, Publishing House National Culture, Bucharest, p.26.

¹¹ Kotler, Ph. (1997) “*Marketing Management*”, Publishing House Teora, Bucharest, p 67.

On the delineation of the organizational culture contribute, along with the personal values of each employee, a series of individual characteristics: professional background, individual objectives, and management policy, formal and informal communication.

Individual values are filled up professionally by those of the institution. The importance, coherence and degree of adhesion of the members to these values determine how much the people will get involved in accomplishing the institution's mission.

Antipa museum has always promoted passion, professionalism, involvement in research activities and for evolution. These values have been built and sent throughout the *image of the organizational hero*, the one that set the basis of this museum, the promoted it within the worldwide museums, the one who through professionalism and passion managed to build up a brand in the first half of the 20th century. The personality and involvement of Grigore Antipa¹² motivated and inspired his successors and contemporaries and until this day he represents an element of pride for those dedicating their professional lives to the museum.

B. External Environment

If the internal environment helps an institution setting up its goals and purposes in order to accomplish its mission, the external environment is the one that influences how much of these goals are achievable. The museum is a cultural institution whose main feature is its public character, both the classic category of visitors, as well as other types of public, persons and organizations, which come in contact with the activities of the museum: sponsors, partners, scientists, collaborators. Along with the public, the competitive surroundings have a big influence over the strategic decisions of the institutions, public, private or nonprofit.

A third element which is part of the external environment is the so called "macro environment" – the economic, political, social, cultural, technological context from a country, of the region where a certain institution develops its activity. For the Antipa Museum, each of these elements has had a major importance in sketching the new identity and wording the communication strategy.

Antipa's public

Input public: represented by the Romanian state, the major financier of the museum, as well as the private sector, which gets involved more and more financially, into the cultural activities.

Internal public: represented by the employees and volunteers

Intermediary public: is given by various partners and collaborators who help the museum to send its message to the consumers.

Consumer public: represented by children, teenagers and as well as middle aged people and older persons, interested in natural history, mainly from the capital, but also out in the country. A consumer public, very important for Antipa is represented by the media, which plays a vital part in influencing the public opinion.

Competition

In enunciating Antipa Museum's competition all competitive elements must be taken in consideration, whether they are direct or indirect with the activities, services or the image of the institution. Thus, we can talk about:

- **Direct competition** represented by all cultural institutions of the capital and country: *museums, art clubs, cinema theaters, theaters, libraries* etc. All these compose the Romanian cultural landscape,

¹² Grigore Antipa was an excellent manager, as well as a great scientist: zoologist, museum specialist, economist, sociologist. His studies and researches were published in many papers, some of them guides for their field of activity. He is the first Romanian marine biologist, the first to have studied the fauna in the Black Sea, internal rivers, of the Danube and of the Delta. He also set the basis of ecology in Romania.

along which more and more private companies appeared in organizing cultural events, shows and concerts. Many clubs and particular art schools emerged (dance, painting, sculpture, photography, music, theater). Amazing successes are the places for young people – clubs¹³, that combine music and drinks with competitions and painting exhibitions, multimedia and new media¹⁴. Very hip are also, the artistic festivals, which address to the large audience interested in culture as well as to more restrained audience. Foreign cultural institutes are very involved in the Bucharest's cultural activities and generally, the Romanian culture, promoting cultural exchange and diversity. Their attractiveness is translated throughout the element of “new” they bring in the Romanian society, in which an important percentage of its members have never been abroad, as well as thorough the technological and financial resources available and which help them implement impressive programs;

- **Indirect competition:** Internet and Television are two inventions which have revolutionized societies worldwide. Throughout them people keep in touch 24/7, even in the less accessible parts of the Globe. What can be more fascinating for a 12-13 years old child than to communicate through a computer's screen and a video camera with a friend from Papa New Guinea? And yet, the answer can be a visit to the Antipa Museum. Hundreds of clubs, bars, fast-food restaurants, malls, all these can not be ignored from the list of favorites of the targeted public of a museum.

The Macro Environment

In order to develop a strategic communications plan whose effects to be felt on a long term, an institution must understand the way the outer components function and the directions these are heading. The forces that take part in this macro environment are demographical, economical, technological, political and socio-cultural.

From a demographical point of view, the number of the permanent residents in the capital raised impressively since the 1989 revolution, but especially in the last years when the economical imbalance provoked by the very long transition period led to an emphasis of the poverty level in the rural areas and a dense concentration of population in cities in search for a job, business opportunities or simply for luck. Therewith, in the last few years, Bucharest had the highest place concerning the number of people “passing through”.

This aspect will certainly have important effects on the economic environment and will be proper for foreign investments and development in order to level the economics of the countries in the European Union.

From a technological point of view, Romania is in an evolution phase. In many areas, we can talk about inchoate status, like multimedia or combining new technologies with art, a trend that in European countries came to organizing annual festivals on this topic. In other branches, we are equal to the great European economic powers, or even better, considering “the massive brain export”.

In the political and legislative domain, regarding the funds given by the state to cultural institutions, there isn't going to be a major investment but the activity of these institutions is encouraged through numerous acts of recognition of the importance these institutions have in development of national and world culture.

The socio-cultural characteristic is the most important in the communication strategy development, and The Antipa Museum treated it as is. The modification of values and the way of living, the

¹³ One special place is the terrace above the National Theater in Bucharest, where in the summertime movies are projected or concerts are held.

¹⁴ Term defining the new technologies – digital photography, computer programs and techniques – used as support and artistic expression.

passing to a very alert life rhythm, mobility, the need to have fun and socializing contributed to the modification of the public's expectations regarding the services they are offered. In fact, the needs have diversified and the museums are dealing with a very drastic and various public.

This aspect, and the impressive growth of competition, stood at the base of the strategic communication plan development, integrated in the „Grigore Antipa” Natural History Museum.

3.2. Strategic Planning

The planning process is compared by Dennis Wilcox with the attempt to arrange the pieces of a puzzle. The results supplied by the research and analysis team represent the parts of the game that need to be assembled in order to create a coherent and single picture. These elements must be used efficiently so as to reach the objectives set by the organization. Philip Kotler divides this step in two sub stages: establishing the goals and the purposes to achieve and elaborating the actual strategy. This sub phase needs setting a clear targeted audience, competitive position and establishing the elements of mix-marketing (the 4 Ps: product, price, promotion and placement)

The integrated communication strategy program of the Antipa Museum was built in the next steps:

A. Establishing the Objectives

A.1. Actual status

Acting within an unstable external environment, economically, socially and culturally, the museum finds itself facing all the changes occurred in these areas in the last decades, especially concerning the way of life and values of the visitors.

Even since the beginning the educational role of the museum targeted first of all the young audience: students in full process of educational and cultural forming. Amongst them, children and population of all ages, interested in natural history, were part of the visitors of the museum. During the last years, the public represented by children had reached almost 80% of the total number of visitors but the annual number of sightseers had also decreased considerably. The main causes of this change were linked to: *the lack of activity* for the public because of the services offered by the museum; increase of the *indirect competition*; *change in the lifestyle and needs* of the people regarding entertainment and relaxation activities; *the image of the institution*, seen as a classical cultural and educational center. Under these circumstances the museum risked to become one of niche, taking in consideration the perception of “kid’s museum” of the public.

A.2. Mission, objectives and purposes

Elaborating these was preceded by a restatement of the institution's mission. This states especially the educational role assumed by the museum in the society and adds two new elements: entertainment and civic spirit:

“This means the study of biodiversity throughout research based on collections and the transfer of scientific knowledge towards the public, aiming to educate while spending in a relaxing manner free time, spreading awareness about national and worldwide inheritance, as well as to sensitize people with the actual problems of the environment, species and habitats”¹⁵.

Starting from this point the mission of the integrated strategy program was stated this way: *“Transforming the old, rusty image of the museum into a contemporary, dynamic, civic and open to dialog with the public”.*

The main objectives throughout this can be achieved aimed at the following aspects:
- developing the museum's image as a place of education and culture but also for entertainment;

¹⁵ www.antipa.ro

- increasing the public display;
- developing a direct and “warm” dialog with the visitors, which as “exhibitions consumer” has a passive role, of spectator and not of active participant in this type of cultural events;
- drawing towards the museum new types of visitors;
- increasing the competitive capacity;
- dynamic way of presentation of the museum, of visiting it by creating new spaces of activity;
- achieving an ecological education of the public and involving them in the environmental protection;
- informing the public about the problems regarding the museum’s patrimony and on the importance of the museums as scientific research institutions;
- implementing programs of impact which will transform into traditional events, held annually or periodically.

The goals established after the establishment of these objectives were meant to ease the implementation and the achievement of results:

- creation of a strong visual identity;
- using an „*above the line*” advertising campaign;
- developing the PR activities;
- developing of programs and events based on interactivity;
- advertising in an intense way all the programs, events and activities what take place in the museum;
- increasing the number of visitors on an annual base.

B. Elaborating the Strategy

B.1. The Targeted Public

One of the main aspects of the integrated communication programs is the target-public. From this point of view, the integrated communication strategy for the Antipa Museum was concentrated on several types of public:

- the consumer public: present or potential visitors of the museum, general public and mass-media. The last two categories are very important for achieving the strategic mission – transforming the museum’s image.
- the input public, potential sponsors: companies, public and private agencies.
- the intermediary public, that helps disseminate the museum’s message to the public..

B.2. The Strategic Positioning

„The positioning is the first reason chosen as a solution to the communication problems, in a society that communicated in an excessive manner”¹⁶ and is referring to the perception that the public has on a product, service or person, at the place that it holds in the mind of the consumer.

For the Antipa Museum, the position it holds in the mind of the audience is influenced by the mission that the integrated strategic communication plan has to achieve. Essential factors such as the transformation of the institutional image, the attractiveness, the awareness, the maintaining of the museum’s educational function and the desire to satisfy all the consumer’s needs have led to the strategic positioning bellow:

The Antipa Museum is an institution with a fascinating contemporary personality that offers education, culture and entertainment.

¹⁶ Rise, A., Trout, J. (2004) *Position, the struggle for a place in your mind, how to be seen and heard on a over congested market*, BRANDBUILDERS Collection Marketing & Advertising Books, Courier Marketing, Bucharest, p.5

B.3. Tactics

This is given by the activities and the ways in which the goals previously mentioned will be met. For implementing its communication strategy the Antipa Museum used the following methods:

- contacting an advertising agency for the creation and the implementation of an advertising campaign ;
- creating an attractive logo;
- building a data base with people working in the media, or having managerial functions in private companies;
- making of an attractive complete series of presentation materials;
- giving interviews in the mass-media and attending TV and radio shows;
- implementing programs addressed to all ages;
- promoting intensively all the activities, programs and events organized by the museum or to which the museum is participating;
- organizing live animals expositions;
- implementing special prices on special occasions such as: The child's day; UNIFEST – the student's week.

3.3. Communication

A. The Institutional Identity

The first step in achieving the objective of growing the museum's visibility and notoriety consisted in the building of a strong visual identity: a *logo*.

The Leo Burnett & Target advertising agency was in charge with the new institutional design.



The logo they designed is communicating in an attractive and intelligent manner both the mission and the values of the museum. Its shape sends the viewer to the physical concept of a building, of an institution, of a space where the museum opens its gates to the public. The *G and A initials*, with lead to the great Grigore Antipa, are positioned in a dynamic and funny way, so that they resemble a mammoth – a symbol of the museum's main domain, the nature and its history. Right under it is placed the name of the institution: The National Museum for Natural History Grigore Antipa.

The colors of the logo change with its use, several themes being developed:

- white background, black text, together with the contact information placed on the right side: used as superscription in all the official documents issued by the museum: demands, press releases, promotional materials;
- black background, white text or just white text if the background on which the logo will be placed is dark colored;
- yellow background, black text – special uses (on glass).

B. The Advertising Campaign: "The Antipa Museum. Hard to forget!"

The "Grigore Antipa" Museum is the first Romanian museum to benefit from a professional advertising campaign, made by Leo Burnett & Target, one of the most prestigious advertising agencies in the world. In Romania, Leo Burnett & Target received the „best advertising agency of the year” price two years in a row in 2004 and 2005.

The advertising campaign had a local dissemination and was initiated at the beginning of 2003, with two „prints”, in order to test the efficiency and the attractiveness of the message... It continued in 2004, with the making of two TV *spots*, two radio *spots* and two other *prints* in an exercise of innovative media.

The main steps in the making of this campaign were:

1. Defining the Problem

- during the last years, the number of the Museum's visitors was on a continuous decrease..
- the main causes of this trend are:
 - the lack of attractiveness for the target-group;
 - Bucharest is a city with many temptations that can corrode the Museum's appeal (TV, bars, internet, malls, shows).
- the result of all these aspects is that the Antipa Museum has fallen into a dangerously narrow niche – the museum became an educational site for the children è 80% of all visitors being children.

2. The Campaign's Mission

- changing the image of the Antipa Museum from a traditional educational institution into an interesting opportunity for spending free time;
- replacing the old „dusted” image of the Museum with that of an interesting contemporary figure.

3. The Campaign's Objectives

- the doubling of the number of adults visitors compared with the same period of 2003;
- increasing by up to 30% the percentage of the adult visitors in the total number of visitors, compared with the same period of 2003.

4. Target audience

- Social – demographic profile: people living in Bucharest (including students), 18-35 years old; high level of education
- Psychological - graphic profile: they appear to have a rather large interest in studying new things. They watch shows that include natural history area fields such as National Geographic, Animal Planet, and Discovery Channel.

5. Creating a communication strategy

Persuading teenagers and young people from Bucharest to visit the museum Antipa as a way to spend free time with an unforgettable time promised.

6. The company's project

You will be so impressed with the Antipa museum, that you will start to manifest the “Antipa effect”

Slogan: Antipa Museum. Hard to forget!

7. Executions¹⁷

- ***Prints:*** The Dolls, The Dog, The Jars, The Bones : are meant to describe the imaginative part of the company, the effect that a visit to the museum might have on people of different categories: children placing the dolls in a order that describe their evolution ; the young man who is styling the dog's hair to look like the head of a dinosaur, the woman who is placing cucumbers in jars just like reptiles are being placed in jars in museums, young adults going to restaurants and placing bones on their plates to look as an animal's skeleton.

- TV spots:

The terrace: romantic atmosphere, a dinner in nature with adequate music, characters elegantly dressed, lights. The young man invites he's partner to have a seat and pours wine in the glasses, and wants to light the candles but not in a usual way but through that of friction with two stones.

¹⁷ See Annex 1.

Graffiti: a young man is making a drawing on a wall using a spray can. All of a sudden he hears the sound of that which appears to be a police car (graffiti drawing is illegal) and the young man tries to escape the danger of being arrested: the image goes then towards the young man's drawing: drawing like the prehistoric people.

Logo: Antipa Museum: Hard to forget!

- **Radio spots**: we hear songs that are specific for children and children's games, but the important elements are replaced with scientific terms that have impressed children. These terms are repeated and used in different aspects of the conversation between them.

The Pachyderm (elephant): "A pachyderm is swinging on a spider's web, and cause it doesn't break, another pachyderm arrives..."

Antipa Museum. Hard to forget!

The Snail: "Monopod Gastropod, take your horns out, cause I'm talking you to drink some water..."

Antipa Museum. Hard to forget!

- **The innovative method**. The main idea was to put prehistoric tools in the hands of the models in the windows of shops. They were also given a brand, that of the Antipa Museum of course.

8. Media Strategy

Due to a very limited budget, the museum's strategy regarding media is to establish good relations with the media moguls.

The "Hard to forget" campaign was implemented during apr-sep.2004 (the two prints: The bones and The jars) and has used more media doors to achieve its goals. Scattered through this are TV stations, radio and local newspapers, posters so on and so forth.

- TV: the two commercials were viewed on National Geographic and TVR Cultural (500 times) reaching a target audience of 11% of the local public (over 60.000 persons); also these commercials could be viewed in Carrefour magazines as there were set plasma TVs above each cash register.
- Radio: the two commercials were on the air on Radio 21 and Radio Star (over 220 times)
- Press: posters were also published in some of the most appreciated magazines concerning how to spend your free time such as B24 Fun or Sapte Seri.
- Outdoor: during autumn, the campaign was communicated by city lights that were placed in every buss station.

3.4. Evaluation

This final state consists of evaluating the results according to the objectives. The communication strategy of the museum is not applicable for a short time but rather for a short period of time. A permanent version is wanted, especially if the results rise to the expectations. Thus, a general evaluation of the integrated communication program was not made, but the evaluation strategy consisted in the analysis of the impact upon the public, of the effects and of the efficiency of each activity.

Public impact

- During the campaign, the number of adult visitors rose with 368%. The percentage of individual adults has grown from 19% to 44% (while the promo was on-air)

- Proposals of collaboration were received from many institutions for organizing public events, exhibitions, mutual promotions or creating TV shows to promote the museum. Amongst these were: TVRM, K Lumea, TVR, Antena 1, Romfilatelia (stamps series or scientific collections), Publishing Houses Egmont, Humanitas – National Geographic Junior (public programs for parents and children), University of Bucharest, Libelula Theater (children’s programs) My Dog Magazine (program for children and pets), Plastic Artists Union (exhibits and programs for children), radio stations Radio Romania Tineret and Delta RFI.

Mass Media

The “assault” of the media in 2004 made possible for the first time, the bonding between various redactors and reporters whom, accustomed to a large number of special events offered their personal data for contact, and so besides the press releases to the institutions, they were informed constantly regarding the public events held by the museum.

Also, the database of the museum, created in 2003, includes today over 400 people from the media and private sector – actual and potential collaborators and partners.

The intense promotion of the museum throughout this program has made people familiar with the success of the institution in realizing public activities.

Awards

- At the 2003 edition of the Publicity Festival Ad’ Or, the print “The jars” won the award for the best press ad, in the Entertainment section.
- At the 2004 edition of the same Festival, Ad’ Or, 368 works created by publicity agencies attended. The awards won by the commercials for Antipa Museum were:
 - Campaign of the year: “Hard to forget”
 - Best ad press :”The Dog”
 - Best TV spot in the Entertainment section: The Terrace
 - Best print in the Entertainment section: The dog and The Dolls
 - Silver Effie 2005 in the “*Media & Entertainment*”

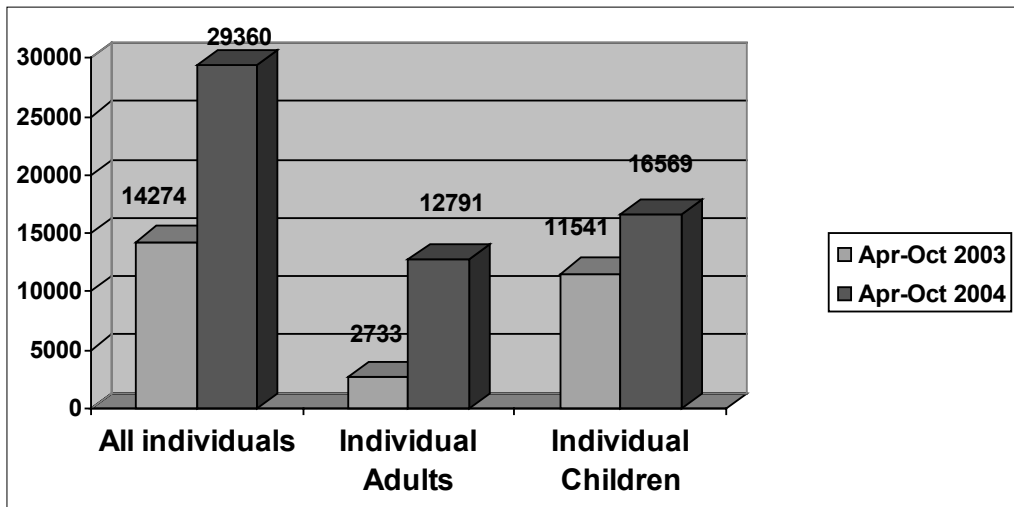
Conclusions

The National Museum of Natural History “Grigore Antipa” is the first and only museum in the country that has realized the importance of using all communication means in order to accomplish its mission: to educate and supply public cultural products.

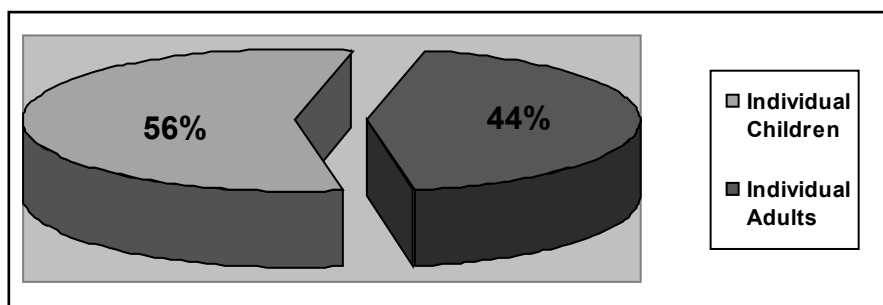
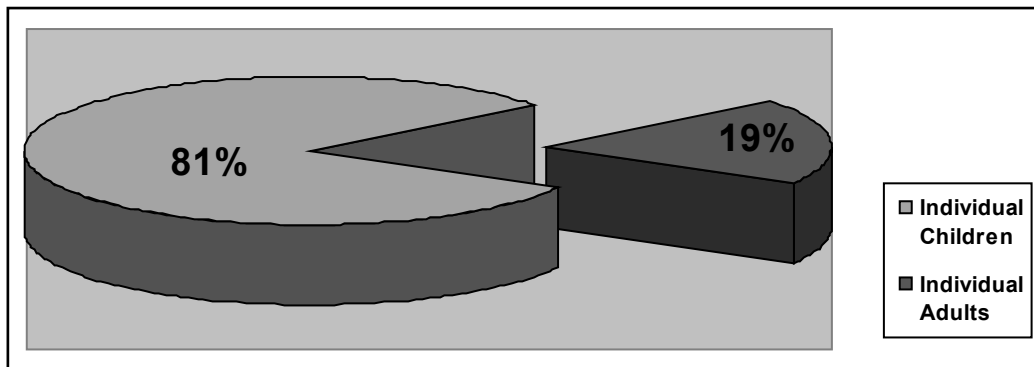
Although initially the budget of the museum didn’t allow the development of a publicity campaign, managers of the institution reached for the services of a publicity agency, which was more than interested to build up a campaign. In the same time, the set of cultural products changed, becoming more interactive, divers and postmodern, being born out of will, transformed in mission, to offer to the public science, education and culture in an interactive and relaxing manner. Thus the visit to a museum was transformed in a real life experience. Public relations have had a great support in the achievement of the museum’s goals. Coordinating all of these means of communication with the purpose to send out a single mission to a complex category of public, was controlled within an integrated communications strategy, and begun in the spring of 2003, along with the launching of the advertising campaign “Hard to forget”.

Periodic evaluation of the results has demonstrated its efficiency:

- During the campaign, the number of grownups rose with 368%.



The percentage of individual adults has grown from 19% to 44% (while the promo was on-air).



- Proposals of collaboration were received from many institutions for organizing public events, exhibitions, mutual promotions or creating TV shows to promote the museum.
- A series of materials of the museum's presentation have been created; a complete and attractive display.
- The intense promotion of the museum throughout this program has made people familiar with the success of the institution in realizing public activities.
- The position of the institution as an alternative option of spending spare time (education, culture, relaxation and entertainment) began its stabilization.
- The public relations activity of the museum has been initiated. Until the moment of the actual realization of the need of the public relations plan, the institution did not possess

technological resources which to use in this purpose. Computers endowment, essential for a good coordination of the communication activities of the museum, was one of its weakest points. The improvement of this, throughout technical material acquisitions and personal involvement of a part of the staff towards developing a public relations program, led to setting some basic directions. The accent was put on creating a continuous dialogue with all types of outside public, which the museum has or might have contact with, in order to establish a trustworthy relationship with them, to enhance transparency and notoriety of the museum and of the cultural products it offers.

The public relations strategy was built on two levels:

- on the one side, promotion of the personality and new image of the museum-as institution;
- on the other side, communicating every product, event, developed program, through the use of various public relations techniques, along with publicity stunts.

Thus, the program of creating a complete data base (name, first name, function, company, personal data), in which people from all types of public-potential or existent, have been included: collaborators, partners, financiers, media, visiting public¹⁸.

Also, an indispensable activity of good communication of each public institution was unrolled – creating a Webpage. This contains varied information about developed research activities, publications of the institution and contact data (address, phone number, fax number, e-mail). This would be an easy way throughout which people can come in contact with the representatives of the public relations and cultural marketing departments.

In order to sustain the launch of the communication campaign and to announce the change of the museum's position, the representatives of the Administrative Board but also the Executive one, have given a series of interviews in radio and TV¹⁹ shows, and also to newspapers.

In addition, the activities of the museum have been publicized to media and input audience throughout press releases and presentation materials sent on-line through data supply for the media.

To create and also maintain a stable relationship of collaboration and respect with its audiences, the Antipa Museum settled as purpose the elaboration of official requests and answers, written on personalized papers – formed of the new logo of the institution but also the official “thank you” addressing to all its partners, on all occasions.

In November 2004, the Antipa Museum celebrated 170 years from its foundation, event dominated by the public relations section. The occasion was used to develop a dialogue between the Anipa Museum and the other national museums, government representatives, local authorities, the media public and representatives of Romanian cultural institution.

References:

- Antipa, G. (1923), *Organization of Romanian museums*, Publishing House National Culture, Bucharest
- Brayson, John M. (2002), *Strategic planning for public and nonprofit organizations. Guide for the consolidation and support of organizational achievements* Revised Edition, Publishing House ARC, Bucharest
- Broom, G., Dozier, D. (2000) *Using Research in Public Relations*, apud. Wilcox, D.L., Ault, Ph.H., Agee, W.K., Cameron, G.T. – *Public Relations. Strategies and Tactics*, Addison-Wesley Educational Publishers
- Cobianu-Băcanu, M. (1998), *Culture and evaluation*, Ministry of Culture, The Training Center for the staff of Cultural Institutions, Bucharest

¹⁸ Today it contains over 400 names – potential or actual collaborator and partners.

¹⁹ For example, in 2004, in Andi Moisescu's TV show – *Publicity Break (Pro TV)*, after naming the “Hard to forget!” campaign of the Museum, at the Ad' Or Festival of Publicity, the campaign of the year.

Hein, Hilde (2000) *The Museum in Transition, A Philosophical Perspective*, Washington, Smithsonian Books

Kotler, P., Andreasen, A. R. (1996), *Strategic Marketing for Non-Profit Organizations*, Fifth Edition, Prentice Hall, Inc.

Kotler, Ph. (1997), *Marketing Management*, Publishing House Teora, Bucharest

Rise, A., Trout, J. (2004) *Position, the struggle for a place in your mind, how to be seen and heard on a over congested market*, BRANDBUILDERS Collection Marketing & Advertising Books, Courier Marketing, Bucharest

Wilcox, D.L., Ault, Ph.H., Agee, W.K., Cameron, G.T. (2000), *Public Relations. Strategies and Tactics*, Addison – Wesley Educational Publishers

The Museum Association (1993) apud. Ambrose, T., *Managing New Museums: a Guide to good Practice*, The Scottish Museum Council

Annex 1 - Advertising Campaign *Hard to forget!* - Leo Burnett & Target

