

Advantages and disadvantages of virtual museums: deeper insights into young visitors' experiences

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Cite as:

Komarac Tanja, Ozretic-Dosen Durdana (2022), Advantages and disadvantages of virtual museums: deeper insights into young visitors' experiences. *Proceedings of the European Marketing Academy*, 51st, (106332)

Paper from the 51st Annual EMAC Conference, Budapest, May 24-27, 2022



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Abstract

The paper explores young visitors' experiences of Web-based virtual museums (VMs) and aims to reveal new insights for academics and museum professionals for creating experiential value and authentic Web-based VMs experiences. Different VMs exist (for decades now), but the research on visitors and their experiences is scarce. Qualitative research methodology (research diaries) was applied; 107 young visitors participated in the study. The results point to the main positive elements of the museum virtual tours: 1) visitors' orientation and moving, 2) technology used in VMs, and 3) virtual exhibition and artifacts as crucial factors for satisfaction with VMs. Time flexibility and lack of cost represent additional advantages. The absence of people in VMs and lack of services such as museum e-shop and entertainment represent the main disadvantages or harmful elements.

Keywords: *virtual museums; young visitors; qualitative research*

Track: Tourism Marketing