CultureCase

Strategic management will make museums more effective in achieving their goals

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Summary

This paper took a critical look at how strategic management might be applied to the running of museums. By applying this technique from outside the non-profit world, museums can create greater value for their visitors whilst expanding their visitor numbers. In this approach, audience research and evaluation take on increased importance in the successful running of the organisation.

Strategic management is more common in private sector businesses

The main components of strategic management are: goal-development (specifically defining and refining the goals of the organisation over the time period in question); strategic analysis (examining the strengths and weaknesses of the organisation as well as opportunities and threats); strategic orientation (preparing and equipping the organisation to be goal-focused); strategic planning (developing plans that set out the implementation of the strategy - informed by previous stages); implementation of the plans developed in the previous stage; and finally strategic control (continual review, supervision and modification of strategy during its implementation).

Museums can adapt this approach for their own ends

A visitor-oriented museum would do this as follows: an external visitor focus (the goals will relate to broadening the visitor base and providing them with a fulfilling experience); an internal visitor focus (concentrating on understanding the visitor experience in order to make it enjoyable and worth recommending to others); strategic orientation comes in the form of visitor orientation (by getting the museum to concentrate specifically on that first encounter with the building or exhibition). All of this is informed by organisational analysis through audience research and evaluation, providing the museum with insights about attitudes and behaviours of museum visitors and non-visitors. It also acts to inform organsational control as it suggests what is working to fulfil the goals of the museum, and what needs to be abandoned or modified.

Keywords

evaluation **research** **planning** **strategy** **management**

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