CultureCase

Using social media to attract music tourists

This research was conducted by **Angela Besana** and **Annamaria Esposito** at **IULM University, Italy**

Summary

This paper describes how 'marketing and fundraising impact the economic performances of American symphony orchestras and opera houses'. Specifically, it looked at the way that the organisations make use of social media (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and blogs) to attract the business of 'music tourists'. These people 'can be attracted by single events, festivals, and special events with stars, whether instrumentalists or singers. Music tourism is about performances and festivals with backgrounds and traditions of music genres and myths, memories of famous concerts, bands, divas and interpreters'. These tourists are especially important 'for destinations that receive the greatest national and international flows, and represent distinct American musical identities and memories'. The researchers found that for about half the organisations in the study, 'marketing, social media strategies, as well as cooperation and networking between different actors of the tourist industry are crucial to support the musical tourism offer system'.

The study was based on a sample of 158 of the 200 top orchestras and opera houses in the United States

88 organisations in the sample were identified as 'fundraisers who connect to different and multiple donors, sponsors and national and international friends' with savvy use of social media actively 'supporting these multiple relationships'.

The paper has some observations on the particular strengths of each social media channel

‘Facebook is useful for deepening the fan experience, promoting referrals and testimonials and prompting feedback. Twitter allows orchestras and opera houses to put themselves in context and to send timely or urgent messages. YouTube is a showcase for the orchestra and opera’s “products” and helps to attract new audiences. LinkedIn is a tool for staff communication and for finding volunteers, as well as for posting to interest groups. Blogging is a tool to personalise the organisation’s voice, provide background and maintain contact during non-performance times’.

Keywords

opera **social media** **tourism** **USA** **Classical Music**

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