Museums of Iceland – Marketing analysis and online presence strategy

There is an increasing demand to ensure that the marketing activities of the museums of Iceland and FÍSOS are conducted in a strategic and structured manner - to support the overarching goal of increasing online and physical traffic to all FÍSOS member locations. This document reviews available online platforms relevant to FÍSOS and its members and defines an overall structure for marketing analysis including steps to ensure critical online presence for the benefit of all FÍSOS members. The goal of establishing an online presence is a window of opportunity for museums of Iceland to communicate their stories to the world, increase interest about their work and collections - and last but not least, build an engaged audience base. With a structured and impactful social media presence, the museum managements increasingly will be able to manage and revise their communication strategies as well as budgets in a creative manner, thereby making it possible to reach out directly to their respective niche audiences. This supports the goal of continuously attracting and acquiring new customers.

Furthermore, this document puts forth the idea of creating a joint brand for all the members of FÍSOS, as well as an initial proposal on how to implement and execute joint brand activities in the future.

The subsequent analysis and proposal shall be seen merely as a working document and a recommendation and is in no way an agreed or approved framework of activities to take place.

To summarize, this document includes the following:

1) Project description
2) Marketing objectives
3) Challenges
4) The approach – Increased presence and unique selling points
5) Benefits of online presence and why it matters to know your audience
6) Target groups
7) Key platforms
8) Summary
9) Timeline
10) Toolbox for basic online platform presence Google My Business (Google Maps).
1) Project description

The purpose of this project is to identify the appropriate marketing channels for the Museum Association of Iceland (FÍSOS) and its members. Furthermore, it defines the strategy for their online presence and social media in year 2018. This is done through a basic marketing analysis and outline of necessary steps to secure online presence of each member, including websites, social media and other applicable online or printed platforms.

As a starting point of the project, is it proposed that FÍSOS acts as an honest broker that will liaise with its members in order to create a unified message, communicating in a unanimous and consistent voice across platforms as well as in future marketing activities. This furthermore enables an improved utilisation of human and financial resources. It is advised that FÍSOS will provide the needed assistance to its members in the process, so that all members become involved in the dialogue when necessary and can contribute to developing solutions, regardless if they represent big or small museums/organisations. The proposed marketing analysis will also define the overall goals of the project and suggest a timeline of execution.

2) Marketing Objectives

The marketing objectives are both short- and long-term, however the short-term objectives should stay in focus at all times to create and maintain momentum.

Short term objectives:

- Support FÍSOS members (Museums of Iceland) on the market via improving their online accessibility and ultimately drive online and physical traffic to their sites
- Target Domestic and International visitors planning their future travel to and around Iceland to plot museum or local heritage sites visits into their itineraries
- Target Domestic and international visitors already traveling in Iceland to add-on museum or local heritage sites visits to their existing plans

Long term objectives:

- Increase the appeal of Iceland as cultural hub, rich in museums focusing on history, art, handcraft and local heritage
- Increase Iceland’s prosperity and positively impact all regions of Iceland and their cultural efforts

3) Challenges

Strengthening the general online presence and social media presence of all FÍSOS members is a priority and calls for an immediate action. However, this needs to be done with consideration to current trends and inherent challenges to the tourism sector in Iceland today. The most significant challenges for FÍSOS members are currently identified as:
• **Location** - Many members are located in small villages or lesser known areas meaning that promotion and attracting traffic to all members of the association spread out across the country calls for more complex marketing resources (both printed and web-based).

• **Seasonality** - The seasonality of travelling around Iceland impacts the number of visits to certain museums, cultural sites outside of the summer season. This results in limited allocation of staff at various locations or limited financial resources budgeted for promotion. This in return results in reluctance of the employees in managing the social media and online platforms regularly.

• **Misconceptions regarding attractiveness** - General misconception on the low attractiveness of remotely located museums and heritage sites

• **Misconceptions regarding logistics** - General misconception regarding hurdles with getting to a museum or heritage site on your own (e.g. regarding bus transport, excessive walking distances or lack of paved road)

• **Opening hours** - Some locations have limited opening hours. Additionally, the opening hours are not always sufficiently communicated, leading both to confusion and possible disappointment, increasing the risk of negative reviews (e.g. Mondays closed and that information is not available via a simple Google search).

4) **The approach – Increased presence and unique selling points**

Within the framework of this project and to reach the marketing objectives and address the challenges described in the section above, FÍSOS shall be perceived as an enabler and facilitator for its members. FÍSOS, as a network of members spread across the country and functioning at different capacities, can provide the much-needed platform for sharing best practice on online platforms performance and hence offer training to its members within the field. It can, moreover, aid those members with the most limited resources in finding ways of promotion and increased online presence, i.e. via joint-marketing efforts with other members.

However, an increased online presence in itself is not sufficient – it needs to be supported with good and relevant content. Consequently, each FÍSOS member
must understand its audience and identify their unique selling points, which will not only will help differentiate them on the market, but also function as an attraction magnet for their unique target groups as well as the general audience. Unique selling points, if well managed, can bring attention to the organization (museum) itself, initiate dialogue with potential business partners and put the entire town (place) on the map. In particular, the latter is of great significance for FÍSOS members located in more remote areas, struggling to sustain physical traffic all-year-round. This in return can fuel the business further and create a centre of excellence (in a specific discipline), or generate a “must-visit” location for travelling audience.

What is proposed here is that, once critical online presence of most FÍSOS members has been secured, it should be considered to create a unified brand for the museums alongside cultural and art related organizations. And while it is recognized that FÍSOS shall act as an honest broker rather than a brand in itself to be promoted, it would be beneficial to extend its function to some sort of a curator of content received from members, to aim at developing a unanimous voice. This would form an organization that could manage additional activities connected to promoting the Icelandic Museums as a whole, branded as “Museums of Iceland”.

Thus, the project aimed at achieving the marketing goals is divided into two phases:

- **Phase 1**: Secure critical online presence of all FÍSOS members and develop a unanimous communication approach
- **Phase 2**: Build common brand and perform additional activities to promote “Museums of Iceland”.

This document will focus on Phase 1 of the proposed activities, while Phase 2 shall be considered as a future proposal to further strengthen the cultural appeal of Iceland.

Proposed activities within Phase 1 include the following actions:

**A. Secure presence on the basic online platforms (Member websites and external websites):**

- FÍSOS members are provided with guidelines and tools to boost their online visibility via optimizing their existing online profiles and improving their presence on other relevant platforms. This is done to utilize their marketing budgets as efficiently as possible
- FÍSOS members are recommended to cross check various Icelandic online platforms (national and regional) to ensure that available information is accurate
- All FÍSOS members improve their Google Maps presence and claim their Google Business profiles
- Provision of Google My Business Toolbox to ensure critical online presence
B. Secure Social Media presence. FÍSOS members are supported in establishing and/or managing their social media profiles coherent with their target audiences. This is done through the following:

- Introduction to the importance of storytelling for all FÍSOS members
- Provision of guidelines for establishing and maintaining social media platforms
- Recommendation for developing a social media strategy based on a storytelling approach

C. Considerations for working with online platforms and influencers to promote FÍSOS members and creation of content

D. Planning for joint marketing efforts (a few FÍSOS members at a time acting together) in online and printed media

These actions will in return lead to the following results:

- Boost of SEO (search engine optimisation) for all the members
- Enable visitors (both local and foreign) to easily find information about museums, historical sites and activities connected to museums, cultural institutions, art centres, folklore, handcraft and heritage of the local people etc.
- Help directing traffic (physical and online) to all member sites
- Through detailed and on-going communication, clear out misconceptions about museums and sites in more remote areas of a city or region
- Allow for a more unified marketing effort across the FÍSOS network
- Strengthen the cultural and historical appeal of Iceland by raising awareness of the various cultural institutions, heritage houses, museums and art centres all over Iceland.

A prerequisite of carrying out Phase 1 is an active involvement of all FÍSOS members. This means that the members are required to have access to content needed for the online platforms in question and are willing to dedicate resources to ensure the activities of Phase 1.

Activities in Phase 2 are not in scope of this project however it is recommended that they would include:

- Developing a common brand for Museums of Iceland
- Developing a joint communication strategy for the Museums of Iceland
- Curating unanimous messages on what constitutes Icelandic culture, heritage, folklore, music, art and more
- Connect this to activities on platforms managed by Promote Iceland.
Museums of Iceland would be a hub for a curated content from all members of the association, a one-stop-shop for newest exhibitions, research results, art facts, music scene etc. The content could be produced on a rotated curation basis, where the mandate would be passed on from organization to organization for an agreed amount of time. However, in order to maintain a coherent style and the appropriate tone of voice, the management of the social profiles of Museums of Iceland would be managed by an employee of the Museums of Iceland hired for the task.

The Museums of Iceland Full Time Employee (FTE)
The suggested employee would be hired for a full-time basis to manage the Museums of Iceland official platforms, assist members with selecting the right kind of messages and storytelling, and create content for the Museums of Iceland which would include, short guides, interesting facts about the collections, short texts and photographic content (when relevant), engage with the international museum community and communicate with the online audience. The FTE would work in close contact with the FÍSOS board and Promote Iceland.

5) Benefits of online presence and why it matters to know your audience

In a world that is constantly becoming more digitalised, critical online presence is more important than ever to secure traffic to a location and promote relevant activities. In an industry highly depend on tourism, the lack of sufficient online presence (website and social media) can severely limit traffic and the ability to spread the message of FÍSOS member organisations.
Accordingly, by ensuring online presence, the visibility of FÍSOS member organisations will be enhanced and it will become easier for travellers to incorporate the various locations into their travel plans or even reach out to the FÍSOS members for business/professional purposes. Furthermore, it will become easier for locals to identify relevant activities taking place in their area.
Local residents, who are attracted to their local museums and the like, can help build a community and the much-appreciated social media buzz around an event, exhibition or new interesting fact about the museum’s collection. They indirectly function as ambassadors of the place, and considering that more and more tourist look for a “local experience” and valuable local insights on what to see, do or experience, they might be the ones to recommend a visit. Thus, it is often crucial, especially in more remote areas, that the local audience knows about what the museum has to offer.

Engaging with your audience online is a great way to get to know who your customers are and what they appreciate about your place. Feedback in form of reviews or online analytics provides the needed insights to understand your audience. This in return indicates how to best shape your communication strategy.

Here are a few points on why online presence is so important for any business, museum or local culture centre:
• Your online channels give an opportunity for people to talk about your site, which generates a strong organic presence

• Presence on social media and websites boosts your business in search engines which helps direct traffic to your homepage or physical location

• Indicates that your business/organization is modern, relevant and is following the trends, which strengthens the credibility of your organization

• Social media platforms are widely treated as a source of the most recent information about a place and often serve as a source of inspiration for travel, lifestyle and fields of interest, which ultimately translates into potential customers

• Social media enable your current and potential customer base to communicate with you directly and easily – therefore be inclusive and engaging in your Tone of voice

For all FÍSOS members it is recommended that all communication online (and in printed materials), is done in English to reach wider audience. Communication and marketing in Icelandic is welcomed, but only when deliberately attracting Icelandic audience, and even here including a note that information, exhibition, tours etc. is available in English if necessary.

6) Target Groups

In order to identify which platforms will create the largest and most relevant impact, it is important to know your key audience, including their demographics, travel and online behaviour. Moreover, this enables you to adopt the correct communication approach in terms of content, language, tone of voice and frequency of online posts.

Since many members of FÍSOS have limited resources available for activities related to online presence, it is recommended that each member identifies its primary target groups and only directs its online activities to those few platforms that remain most relevant. Understanding who is the recipient of our communication efforts will furthermore ease the process of content creation and will keep it relevant.

Overall, the audience relevant for FÍSOS members can be divided into 2 groups influencing the outward communication:

1) Local audience
2) Foreign audience
The 2 target groups can further be classified as follows:

**Local audience:**
- Local population in Iceland
  - Town/region locals
  - Locals travelling around the country
- Travel agencies and local guides
- Local and nation level media

**Foreign audience:**
- Travellers (divided into three main profiles – see next page)
- Artists and curators (resident artists)
- Scholars
- School & student institutions
- Field specialists (e.g. Museums abroad, international museum networks, international networks within the specific discipline)
- Foreign media

Foreign audience is by far the largest target group with potentially the biggest impact. This group is therefore of high priority as it ensures a natural flow of new customers while offering an opportunity to build an engaged online audience base, as well as a source of testimonies. This group will furthermore act as ambassadors for the FÍSOS member organisations, when they share their experiences from their visits and tag on relevant social media platforms.

According to Íslandsstofa’s recent research within the foreign travellers (tourists) interested in visiting Iceland, we are looking at a market segment represented by 3 different profiles of active tourists. Attracting these 3 target groups of travellers would be a response to the challenges presented above (Section 3) as they are people who travel all year round, seek out
new and exciting destinations, want to connect to the local culture and are respectful of nature and the environment.

The travellers profiles are described as follows:

- **The Fun-loving Globetrotter:** People between 20 – 50 years old with an urban profile and average income and education. They have an interest in culture, ideas and lifestyle of other people and are savvy internet, mobile and social media users.

- **The Independent Explorer:** People between 35 – 65 years old of rural profile and average income and education who seek authentic experiences and want to travel off the beaten track. This group is into being outdoors, engaging and learning about the local culture and is generally more likely to visit in the winter season. This type of explorer is familiar with social media but doesn’t have a special need to be very active there.

- **The Cultural Comfort Seeker:** 45 years and older. They have both urban and rural profile, average education and above average income. This group is characterised by high interest in culture, ideas and lifestyle of other people and therefore are active on social media platforms. When travelling, they seek comfort rather than challenges.

As recommended, each FÍSOS member should identify their specific target groups and narrow their activities down, to those profiles of museum visitors that remain relevant. It should be noted that for some FÍSOS members both Local and Foreign audience will be valid, including the 3 traveller target groups, and for some members only a fraction of the foreign audience will remain in the picture.

7) **Key Platforms**

For the use of this project, a methodological approach has been taken to review those online platforms, which are of relevance to the FÍSOS members. First step has been to divide them into three groups:

**Group 1: “Housekeeping” platforms:**
- a) Websites: Homepage and other Public or Official Sites
- b) Location based sites
- c) Reviews (user generated content, peer to peer)
- d) Wikipedia

**Group 2: “Storytelling” platforms**
- a) Social media; Facebook, Instagram and more

**Group 3: “Content creation” platforms**
- a) Travel sites, travel agents, topic specific blogs and influencers
- b) Press Trips
- c) Printed marketing materials
These three groups are all part of Phase 1 of the project and scheduled for 2018:

Dividing the platforms into these three groups helps highlighting which require basic updating and maintenance and are valid for all partners and which call for a more strategic and niche oriented approach and should be selected based on member needs. Correspondingly, the platform division allows for upholding clear messages throughout the various channels as well as planning the outward communication appropriately.

Each member will be present in different capacities across these platforms.

Some of the suggested platforms and activities related to them, which are put forth in this document, call out for collaboration with other organisations such as Safnaráð, Íslandsstofa, Ferðamálastofa, Sagatrail or regional marketing offices.

With regards to this, all activities must be consulted with and approved by Safnaráð, Íslandsstofa, Ferðamálastofa, Sagatrail or regional marketing offices, whenever these are in question of certain activities.

**Group 1 “Housekeeping” Platforms**

By “housekeeping” platforms we understand platforms which contain basic and essential information about the business or organisation (museum, cultural centre, municipal website managing the historical site etc.). They serve as the primary source of all up-to-date factual data about your organisation, including its business offer, location, opening hours, events and social media links. These platforms are also of critical importance in order to achieve a verified presence in Google searches (and Google Maps) and to be trustworthy to your potential customers.

The Housekeeping platforms, in various capacity, are obligatory for all FÍSOS members and each member shall take ownership of ensuring that correct information about their site is available on all platforms.
The Housekeeping platforms include:

A. Websites: Homepage and other Public or Official Sites
   - Member homepage (desktop and mobile version)
   - Public or Official sites such as:
     - Inspired by Iceland website
     - Visit Iceland (Iceland.is)
     - Visit Region Sites (e.g. Visit West Iceland)
     - Other relevant pages such as Sagatrail.is

Member homepage
The homepage of each member is the primary source of information about the organisation and therefore should be as inviting as possible, intuitive and all information on it should be correct.

Here are a few things to keep in mind when updating your homepage:

- Any business targeting a foreign audience should have a webpage available in English and include both background information about the place as well as contact information
- All content needs to be up to date
- Current and high quality pictures must be used to showcase the highlights of visiting the place
- If the homepage hosting allows for embedding Google map location, it is a good way to maximize search rankings
- Social media profiles should be connected via icon widgets. Make sure that these are connected correctly, and only connect those you plan on using and will have content on and restrain from connecting social media you don’t use.

Public or Official sites
Being present on Public or Official sites about Iceland is a great way to boost your SEO and tap into a new audience already looking for places to visit during their trip. Visitors to these online platforms can often be perceived as the “low-hanging-fruit”, already indicating openness and interest to finding inspiring locations. It is therefore a great opportunity to attract them to your website and social media channels. Do not miss this opportunity and make use of these platforms.
Here are a few things to keep in mind with public or official site presence:

- Once you have updated all your information on the homepage, cross-check that your organisation is included on the official site and other public/regional sites and verify that the data there is accurate (e.g. Inspired by Iceland, Visit West Iceland)
- Make sure that all links work correctly to optimize the search results and get all the traffic to your website
- Invest in captivating images to include on these sites
- Prepare a calendar of events well in advance to make sure that all potential visitors are able to find necessary information about your local events
- Keeping an eye for other relevant platforms such as Sagatrail Iceland (sagatrail.is) is recommended as this is a way to streamline efforts in improving online presence and since many FÍSOS members are part of both associations, it is beneficial to find ways of working together to advance efficiency and extend the reach.

B. Location based sites: Google Maps\(^1\) and Google My Business

According to the Search Engine Watch\(^2\), 70% of online searches are conducted via Google and 1 out of every 5 of those searches is for business or a place. Considering that, every business be it museum, local centre, hotel or historical site should be present on Google Maps and should have all accurate contact information pinned correctly.

There is high probability that some FÍSOS members are present on Google Maps, but have been pinned by visitors, meaning that they have not claimed their business and verified the accuracy of the information about their business.

In order to fully benefit from online presence, each member is urged to take the steps to improve their Google Maps and Google My Business profiles.

Things to keep in mind

- Presence on Google Maps makes your location easy to find findable and ensures that potential visitors don’t commute to the wrong places (particularly important for lesser known areas)
- Presence on Google Maps helps visitors plan their trips and incorporate the specific location into their travel plans (including pinning locations for offline usage)

\(^1\) Apple Maps are still in the making therefore are not included in this project
• Your location should be available both on the desktop and mobile version (app) of Google Maps
• Claiming your business on Google via Google My Business moves the ownership of your online search profile to you
• Google My Business is a tool to build an online profile with a complete set of information, pictures and reviews (detailed toolbox for claiming your business is available in Section 9 of this document)
• User reviews available thanks to claiming your business and having a My Google Business account provide another level of trustworthiness to your online presence
• Google is ranking businesses with many reviews higher in the search results
• Share your Google Maps listing on your social media channels to encourage additional reviews

C. Reviews (user generated content, peer to peer)

User generated content or peer to peer marketing essentially means that former customers (or visitors) are advocating a product, experience (service) or location to their peers (friends, family or followers). They can do so by leaving reviews, passing on recommendations, writing blog posts or even publishing videos.

This is a powerful way of marketing a business or a location (in the case of FÍSOS members both matter) simply because it is likely to be one of the most authentic genuine ways of promoting your organisation. Reviews that the online audience can relate to are often the decisive factor for people looking into new products, locations, experiences (e.g. museum visits).

TripAdvisor often ranks as the most trusted resource for travel planning – ahead of other sources such as printed guidebooks. It should therefore not come as a surprise that the Google search results are heavily impacted by the quality and quantity of reviews on credible third-party sites such as TripAdvisor.

Some of the top review platforms include:
• TripAdvisor
• Google Reviews (highlights the importance of having a Google My Business profile)
• Foursquare
• Facebook (even though it is a social media channel, it often is a great place to leave reviews)

Of these peer to peer platforms, TripAdvisor continues to serve as one of the most important channels for building brand reputation and driving bookings.

D. Wikipedia (relevant to some members)

Most organisations will benefit from having a Wikipedia profile. Benefits include:
• Contributing to knowledge building about the Icelandic culture, history and heritage
• Improving reputation – a Wikipedia page gives additional credibility
• Have impact on what is written about the place and spread the right message
• Better SEO results and enhanced visibility – the more places online about your organisation or artist you exhibit, the better hit results.

Creating a profile on Wikipedia is recommended to those FÍSOS members who represent an organisation or a person that is notable, meaning “if it has been the subject of significant coverage in secondary sources” and there is citable information to verify your organisation (museum, artist, literature etc.). Wikipedia has great results in online searches, however it is very strict on its content policies, which means that the content is produced and edited by the community and not people working for the organisations being described. All articles/pages on Wikipedia need to be objective, free of any opinion and have multiple references to secondary sources to be verifiable.

A list of Museums in Iceland is already available on Wikipedia and some of FÍSOS members are present there. It is recommended that all members undertake measures to be present on Wikipedia.

**Group 2: “Storytelling” Platforms**

As far as the Housekeeping platforms are a priority in reaching the project objectives (basic sources of information), the Storytelling platforms build on the Housekeeping platforms and strengthen the appeal of each member. Thus, the Storytelling platforms shall be developed only after completion of Housekeeping platforms and both must be maintained continuously.

The Storytelling content is defined as content, that tells a specific story consistent with the values and brand of each member. It invites the audience to step into the world of the story your place tells. It shifts the communication from a one-way (mass) communication to a more personalised, two-way approach, building stronger links with the audience.

Storytelling is interactive. Therefore, some of the best ways to tell a story are through social media platforms, or platforms that encourage feedback and dialogue. This is the perfect way to let the world know about your unique selling points and convince any online viewers that your content is worthwhile and by extension, a visit to your place is a bucket list point.
E. Social media

Social media is a great way to gain new audience and engage with people in an increasingly connected world. Small businesses and local organisations tend to be reluctant to “jump into” the social media world – often because it seems overwhelming and resource demanding. However social media presence has become inevitable if you want the world to know about your business and be on the map of potential visitors. It’s the way most people find inspiration and fuel for their wanderlust.

It is suggested that you think disruptively and creatively about the messages you would like to spread on your social media channels. Basic information and facts are a must, but the opportunities for storytelling are endless. Inviting your staff, visitors and friends to help with ideas on what to post is a way to start.

There are many social media platforms and the choice of “best platform” keeps on changing. However, what doesn’t change is the fact that, choice of platforms depends on your relevant audience (as suggested in Sections 6 and 7) and every social media channel requires a specific posting activity and form of posts. Below is a visual overview of how much “fuel” each social media platform requires (only those platforms that are relevant to FÍSOS have been included) and a further description of each of them can be found in the following section.
Understanding your audience and their online behaviour will help you choose your platform and adjust your communications. It is important that each post includes a fun and engaging story but keeping them short and sweet, yet informative is key. Focus on the experience you want to share with your audience rather than describe technicalities.

As the graph above shows, the required posting frequency varies – and is something you need to be aware of when choosing your platform, as maintaining the recommended posting frequency becomes important to maintaining growth and post engagement.

Social media platforms

Facebook

Facebook is one of the most important online platforms since it has the largest blend of demographics. In addition, Facebook is increasingly becoming connected to Instagram, allowing streamlining of marketing efforts. Facebook has a wide reach and is often used as an essential information sharing tool, i.e. for important news releases and notifications on changes at the organisation.

Some companies, who have very basic website needs, even decide to use their Facebook page as their main website – covering information such as contact details and opening hours. In terms of online usage and behaviour, travellers who are searching for a specific place/location traditionally search for website, location on map and Facebook page – finding relevant information such as site description, physical location and pictures. Additionally, Facebook is to a greater extent becoming a direct communication tool, enabling visitors/customers to contact the organisation through the messaging function. This enables a more dynamic as well as more personal communication flow between site and visitor.

Things to keep in mind

As a social media platform, the activities connected to Facebook should be divided into two categories; 1) Basic Activities and 2) Growth and Promotional Activities

Recommended Basic Activities:

- Creation of Facebook Page (if not already existing)
- Update basic contact information, opening hours and description
- Ensure that information is available English
- Ensure that the page includes quality pictures. When posting, always try to choose striking images to capture attention
- Ask museum visitors to follow you on Facebook and leave a review
- Interact with your viewers on a regular basis to keep them interested and ask questions to encourage feedback
- Continuously manage user access
• Post in a casual yet professional voice by keeping the messages engaging, positive and inspirational
• Post frequently; 1-2 times per day is desirable if possible (it can be a mix of your own content and reposted content).
• Share and re-post interesting content from reputable news outlets to strengthen the storytelling aspect
• Don’t forget to interact with other users! Not only is it a source of inspiration for your work but also brings traffic back to your profile and fosters a community
• Schedule your posts on Facebook. This is particularly useful if you have limited staff resources. Facebook offers this option and this was you can plan your posts ahead of time and ensure continuous flow. Consider taking a “post preparation day” where you schedule several posts for the week, thereby ensuring that the profile stays “alive”.

**Recommended Growth and Promotional Activities (Boosting):**

• Be clear about why you want to boost your Page or Post. Ask yourself; what is your overall goal? This will help you define what parameters to choose when specifying and targeting your boost.
• Be critical of what and why you boost. It can be very easy to spend valuable (and limited!) resources on boosts and not achieve significant results. Only boost content that is relevant to whatever you want to achieve. Narrow down your boost audience to begin with.
• Set aside a budget for boosting relevant post. Consider boosting content that is performing well organically with your audience. By boosting “high-performing content” you will maximize the impact of your boost.
• Don’t forget to boost high quality content that you have invested significant funds into – make sure the content gets the reach it deserves!
• Boost your Facebook Page (not only singular posts) – but remember that post boost often is better at attracting interest from new users
• Events – boost events that you want to attract new audience to
• Don’t get stuck on one way of boosting – keep experimenting to see what creates the best results

**Post frequency:** Daily, 1 to 2 posts with high quality images and storytelling content. Posts include own photography and re-posting other users content (connected to the content strategy of the profile). Stick to posting only once per day if you don’t have enough great content to post more often.

**Instagram (posts and stories)**

Instagram is one of the social media platforms with the highest organic engagement (receiving more likes and comments on each post). Therefore, it is important for most
organisations to be present on it. However, the level of activeness will be linked to the availability of human resources at each museum. Instagram is a visual platform and is particularly well-suited for members with highly photogenic exhibitions, buildings and locations.

The required activity on Instagram includes posting pictures with captions (short text), video content and Instagram Stories, which are short unformal videos and photos.

Managing a successful Instagram account (also known as “feed”) means placing high emphasis on visual aesthetics and include both your own content as well as content from other photographers/Instagammers (re-posting). People normally don’t follow you only based on your individual post, but more based on the overall look of your feed and the story your profile offers. Posts to Instagram Stories on the other hand shall be less formal, more frequent and don’t need to be perfect. Stories are used to promote recent posts, ongoing activities and events, everyday life situations and more.

The idea behind starting an Instagram account is to build a community of dedicated followers who are interested in the culture and heritage of Iceland, Museums present here, local perspectives and the Icelandic way of living. Instagram users look for content that will inspire them in everyday life and inspire their travel plans, therefore creating a good content strategy with a storytelling angle is key.

Things to keep in mind
Here are a few points that need to be considered when defining your presence on Instagram:

- Create a catching “Bio” (description of your profile)
- Plan on posting content that is not only facts or information about your museum or collection, but weave in storytelling aspects, i.e. how the objects from the collection have been used by real people, what role have they played for the people and Icelandic culture, etc.
- Post photos and stories from the area, landscape, architecture, local food (whenever relevant). Storytelling content is promoted more extensively by the Instagram algorithm nowadays and will help keep people interested in your profile and activities
- Keep it real - people want to follow stories that feel real and maintain a personal touch
- Use a visual planning tool to curate the look of your feed. The overall look of the feed is often more important than the individual photos, thus it is important to be mindful of the consistency in the look throughout each post (i.e. UNUM app)
- Post new things that people haven’t seen or heard of before to catch their attention
• Use posting platforms that will enable you to create one post to be shared on 2 or 3 different social media at once. Use a simple posting tool for that such as the built-in posting option on Instagram (your post from Instagram will go directly to Facebook, Twitter and other platforms at the same time), or Buffer, which will also allow you to schedule your posts when needed.

• Posting engaging content will help create interaction on the Instagram profile (people commenting and liking the post), thereby helping ensure that your post gets picked up by the Instagram algorithm. Many likes + comments = new followers.

Furthermore, consider following an “engagement strategy” which means taking a number of steps to help increase the incoming activity of your profile. Instagram promotes active and real profiles. The algorithm detects spammy accounts. It is however very important to be active in order to build a solid follower base. Therefore it is recommended to:

• Interact with followers

• Comment and like on the content of other profiles → take a targeted approach and try to attract people you want as your followers (i.e. large profiles liking your photos will help the performance of the post more than if liked by small accounts).

• Follow other profiles (not too aggressively) and interact with the people you follow. This tends to be overlooked but helps build the community.

Post frequency: Daily, 1 to 2 posts with high quality images and storytelling content. Posts include own photography and re-posting other users content (connected to the content strategy of the profile). It is possible to share posts to other platforms while posting on Instagram. Resources are better spent on interaction with other users rather than posting too often.

Twitter

Twitter is a great tool for sharing knowledge, news and interesting facts. It is therefore a highly suitable platform for most of FÍSOS members due to the nature of their business. It is a platform where users express their opinions and engage in discussions. Predominantly Twitter is used for microblogging and dialogue with the audience, which means that sharing visual content is not as important as it is on Instagram or Facebook. The downside is however, that it requires a high intensity posting and engagement to maintain relevant.

Twitter will be the most useful tool for those members that have the resources to be engaging with users, meaning being active on daily basis. Twitter’s biggest value lies in the ease of “retweeting” content which enables any tweet to go viral nearly instantly.

Things to keep in mind

• Being engaged on Twitter means keeping an eye for what content is trending and try to repost content from users with big following with a hope that they will notice your profile and will follow back
- It is a platform mostly used on mobile, therefore short and captivating text is the way to go.

- The approach to successfully build community and profile on Twitter is to share content about your organisation and repost from other Twitter users or share attention grabbing articles, links, videos etc. from the web.

- A good rule of thumb is to remember that most retweets happen within an hour from posting, therefore you want to keep your daily frequency high if there is some special content that you want to get out there.

Post frequency: It is recommended to post daily 3-5 times including own content and retweeting others content.

**Pinterest**

Pinterest is a fairly easy platform to manage and is often overlooked. The big benefit of Pinterest is that it allows users to discover things that inspire them, ranging from products, to travel and lifestyle, while often exposing them to things they didn’t know they were looking for.

Being successful on Pinterest does implicate having a lot of content, therefore only use this channel if you have time to create many boards, wide range of images to share or represent a niche interest field that might attract online users for other purposes than a visit to your museum or site, e.g. goods (broderie, era specific outfits, handcraft) or services (tours etc.). High quality images are more likely to go viral on this site due to its visual nature, particularly important these days after Pinterest introduced the visual search tool. Thus, it is extremely important to build a substantial photo collection and pins relevant to your field.

Even though Pinterest might require a very frequent posting, the big benefit of having a profile on this platform is that it functions as a portfolio for your business and once your images are out there if anyone pins them, they will always lead back to you. As an example, if your image is pinned by a highly-followed member, it has the potential to be viewed by millions, regardless if you are active on your profile on daily basis or not. To make the case even stronger for Pinterest, research shows that 70% of online buyers look for ideas on Pinterest and 67% go on Pinterest to keep up with the latest trends³.

**Things to keep in mind**

- Continuously build a portfolio featuring your own content, images of your collections, location and products
- Create thematic boards to categorize your images and pins
- Interact with others and pin their content whenever relevant to you

³ [http://blog.viraltag.com/2015/03/28/pinterest-important-businesses/#sthash.Tg08OhC3.dpbs](http://blog.viraltag.com/2015/03/28/pinterest-important-businesses/#sthash.Tg08OhC3.dpbs)
• Pinterest creates & facilitates buying intent, therefore it should be particularly used by those FÍSOS members who offer products (goods and services) without the necessity of a physical visit

**Post frequency:** It is recommended to post daily, however, if your human resources are limited, it is still a great strategy to accumulate content on Pinterest and let it serve as your portfolio without necessarily posting every day.

**Snapchat**

Even though Snapchat remains a popular platform among Icelandic users, the downside of it is that it demands very frequent activity and is primarily suitable for a short lived sharing of content. With very limited workforce resources it is not recommended to use Snapchat.

**Feedly, Imgur, Reddit and Bored Panda**

If you want to find trending content, inspiration for what type of news to promote, have a funny picture you would like the world to see, then these social media/online network media platforms provide great access to an abundance of stories and content.

Platforms such as Feedly, Reddit, Imgur and Bored Panda have an extremely wide reach potential - if posts gain traction and even end up going viral. They are great for creative experimentation in terms of online presence but do require more dedicated resources to understand and work with them.

A way to penetrate these channels could be to work with social media influencers who are present on these media.

**Group 3: Content creation platforms**

Content creation platforms are online and printed platforms that create an opportunity to produce an article, blog post, itinerary and the like. Working with these enables you to tap into their networks of relevant audience, highly receptive to the museums value proposition due to the selective nature of the professionals they will work with.

A great advantage of these platforms and activities connected to them is that they can be planned out, in cooperation with other FÍSOS members. This approach calls for a unified message from the members and can be a very efficient way to utilize marketing budgets.

Content creation platforms include 3 groups of activities applicable to FÍSOS:

1. **Travel sites, travel agents, topic specific blogs and influencers**
   Connecting with travel sites, travel agents and local bloggers is a smart way to reach a wider audience by default interested in the content these channels present. In
particular, travel itineraries prepared and presented by bloggers (and similar) on their sites can be a great way to have your location presented to a wide audience. Topic specific (discipline) bloggers or influencers are relevant for those FÍSOS members, who focus on attracting a specific target group, other than local and foreign tourists. One of the main values added by working with bloggers and influencers is the provision of written and photographic content available for future use by the FÍSOS members.

Recommended travel sites, travel agents and travel or topic specific blogs include:

a. Local blogging platforms such as I Heart Reykjavik, From Ice to Spice or Icelandic Knitter
b. Travel agents, i.e. Grayline, Reykjavik Excursions, GJ travel, Pink Iceland, Iceland Travel, Arctic Adventures, local travel agents/guides specializing in the specific area and others

c. What’s-on (event site for the Reykjavik area)

2. Press trips

Reaching international media with general travel and topic specific profiles can be an efficient manner or targeted potential visitors, without a significant financial burden if done in cooperation with other organisations. It is suggested here that future press trips and influencer visits should be organised in cooperation with regional marketing offices, Ferðamálastofa, Íslandsstofa or even Sagatrail when relevant.

It is recommended to plan 2 press trips in 2018, covering 2 different regions of Iceland.

At the time of creation of this document, the above-mentioned suggested activities have not been discussed with neither of the potential partners.

3. Printed marketing materials

Even in today’s digital world, printed materials (if used correct) remain a valid source of reaching your target audience. A cost-efficient way of utilizing printed marketing materials is to unite resources with other FÍSOS members. In addition, printed media is a great opportunity for working with influencers who can provide content for both social media as well as printed materials. Below are a few suggestions to printed marketing material platforms that can still remain relevant for FÍSOS members:

- Leaflets, flyers and Maps
- Icelandair Stopover Magazine, Wowair Magazine
- Lonely Planet and similar

Traditional printed guidebooks such as Lonely Planet are still a powerful mean of promotion, particularly to the brand recognition of the guide but also due to longevity of the guides,
which are often passed on from traveller to traveller. The main point however to remember is that the unique selling points about each location should be highlighted.

8) Summary
The general recommended attitude for all FÍSOS members is to take means to understand what their audience is looking for when visiting both online and in person. “Put yourself in the shoes of a travellers” seems to be a good approach in order to gather insights on what platforms are used as the first resource when planning a trip to another city or country. Observing how each member does their research when planning a visit to a new museum or location is a great starting point. This should enable each member to realize the importance and resourcefulness of online platforms and help narrow down their niche audience.

Within the framework of this project is it recommended that FÍSOS acting as an honest broker, will empower all members to take charge of their online presence including Google My Business, own website, other official websites and social media. Correspondingly, the communication strategy done by each member should be well planned and in line with the activities of other FÍSOS members to guarantee a unified approach. Emphasizing the unique value proposition of each of the members should be the main selling point, particularly when speaking of members in more remote areas.

9) Timeline

The project timeline is a suggestion of activities proposed for year 2018, however it is subject to changes based on feedback from FÍSOS board meeting, which will take place in late January 2018.

The following timeline includes both Phase 1 and suggested Phase 2 of the project. However, Phase 2 will be revised only after approval of proposal connected to creation of joint brand - Museums of Iceland.
10) Toolbox - How to claim your business on Google via Google my Business

In case your business/site already is present on Google Maps, however you have not set up the profile yourself, it is now time for you to Claim your business. This means getting the management rights to the profile and change all the information to be as accurate as possible. This is important for both Google Maps and Google search in general.

When you create your Google listing you will be asked to add a primary industry category, or “keyword” to describe your business and use up to five additional categories. Your main business category should be the main classification for your business such as “museum, whilst the remaining five categories should act as additional descriptors and be in form of incorporate SEO keywords that will help the potential audience find you.

As Google is focusing its algorithms more and more on personalized search results you need to include 3 types of words when describing your museum or organization:

- Industry keywords (museum, photography museum, design centre)
- Keyword modifiers (Icelandic design, history museum, botanical museum)
- Local Keywords (east Iceland museum, best museums in Iceland, local art Westfjords)

Make sure there are no duplicates of your business on Google maps, someone might have set up a profile for your business in the past and if you keep multiple profiles this will harm your search results.

Here are the steps to follow:

1. Sign into your Google account. It would be best to use a company Google account or your private one, that can be accessed for work purposes. As you will in fact be creating a Google Business account, it will be possible for you to add your work email (other than Gmail) and your colleagues’ email addresses to the account to become owners or managers of it.
2. Once you are logged in, go to Google Maps by pressing the small cubes in the top right corner and then select Maps. In the search bar type in the name of your business, and choose from the list which one is yours. Below you can see contact details and a link to Claim your business, which you should click on.

3. Verify that you are the right person to manage this business and that the contact information is correct. If you continue, your Business account will be set up and you will be asked to finalise the verification process.

4. Next step is to verify your business by phone call or by Mail (Google will select the option). Make sure phone number/address given is correct and you will immediately receive a phone call to confirm your profile on Google or get a post card sent, which will take 2 weeks. You will be given a code that you should write down.
5. Now you will be asked to confirm that you are authorised to manage the business. Once you’ve verified, you may see a banner asking you to review your information and make any final changes. Click **Done editing** when you’re certain that everything is up to date.

![Confirm your business](image)

Note: You won’t be able to update the business’s name until the verification process is complete.

6. Edit all your information, add opening hours, address, website and any other relevant information.

![Edit your information](image)

7. If you want to get access to your business management site again, go to [https://www.google.com/business/](https://www.google.com/business/) and manage your location.
8. On the top of the page you get the overview of options for managing your business account. In the left top corner press on the three lines to get to Settings and Users of the account. Here you can add/remove users, change user roles to owners and managers etc.

9. Add photos to your profile and make sure that all contact information is consistent with your website and other online platforms like TripAdvisor or Facebook.

10. Don’t forget to maintain your profile continuously!