Chapter-I

Museum Information Service
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1. Museum Information Service

With the dawn of 21st Century we have entered into the era of Information Technology. Technology enters into our every segment of life. Today’s people are much more conscious about their surrounding and want to know every facts of life more logically and significantly. In this fast moving life people are accustomed to get ready-made information with real evidences and experiences. There are large number of institutions e.g. libraries, cyber cafes, health centres, amusement parks, various coaching / training centres etc. are providing information according to today’s people’s demand, in a lucrative way and doing satisfactory business with demand and accurate supply.

1.1. Museum – as a Storehouse of Information

Museums are the repository and the custodian of large number of specimens, antiquities and other objects related to history, art, religion, culture and science. Each and every object in a museum has its own story that can take us into the glorious flashback and can give us a lesson of history, nature, rich cultural values, scientific and technological achievements of our country etc. Therefore, along with a storehouse of objects, museum is also a storehouse of information for the access, knowledge and entertainment of every people.

Since the last two centuries, silent performances of Indian museums send it in isolation and restrict it as a house of display only; as a result museums could not get popularity among common people. Though few leading museums are serving well, but majority of museums are remain as storehouse of objects only. Till date it is found that only a fraction of information regarding collection is explored and preserved. Now it is the responsibility of every museum to undertake sincere steps for researching more and more information of its collection, preserve it properly for the coming generations and disseminate them through every possible means.
1.1.1. Social Responsibility of museums

Museum is established for serving society by preserving countries heritage and educating people about it. With its valuable information, museum can assist society in education, dissemination of knowledge, eradication of the age-old misconceptions, increasing general awareness, and entertaining people intellectually. The entire information regarding the collection of all Indian museums can provide us an unlimited wisdom regarding our illustrious past, exploring our true history, tradition, arts, culture, religions, values, indigenous science and technology that are the true and rich heritage of India.

1.1.2. Data, Information and Knowledge

Every object in a museum is surrounded by number of queries regarding its entry in the museum's collection. Answers of these queries are the data regarding that object. These data are required to collect at the time of acquisition from the relevant sources, like donor's name, material, locality, size etc. These data are the Raw Data. In maximum cases few data remain unknown at the time of acquisition and therefore, need to collect from the experts and books as well as from other references. These data are known as Acquired Data. All these data are the basis of information related to that object.

The curatorial staff and researchers require undergoing research and processing all the raw and acquired data for generating proper meaning. This valuable meaning or result is the Information regarding particular facts of that object. This information helps to understand the object aesthetically and scientifically. Thus, all such information about an individual object is the asset of every museum. This information helps museums to segregate / classify its collection, arrange display, implement security, take proper preventive measures, prepare labels for assisting visitors to understand the exhibit etc. Information also helps museums to arrange shows, popular lectures, prepare publications and other related activity on that object. It can be said that every activity of a museum is depending upon the information related to an object.
For example, during entry of an art object XYZ in a museum's collection, number of queries are raised. These queries can be divided into two forms—data required for curatorial purpose; for example, size, shape, material composition, condition etc. and data required for serving information to visitors; for example social, cultural, esthetical, historical, and scientific importance etc. of XYZ. Following chart is representing about these queries:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Raw Data</strong></th>
<th><strong>Acquired Data</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Why it is in museum?</td>
<td>Symbolic Representation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who and Where from it is collected?</td>
<td>Tradition and Culture related</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How old it is?</td>
<td>Religious importance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who made it?</td>
<td>Like crafts in museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where such objects are used?</td>
<td>Like crafts on sale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose and process of use</td>
<td>Research on it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shape, size and weight</td>
<td>Aesthetic Importance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present condition</td>
<td>Contact address of Artists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Material composition</td>
<td>Rural Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artistic beauty</td>
<td>Bibliographical Reference</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart: 1.1. Showing Raw and Acquired Data related to an object that need to collect and research for generating information regarding that object.

Information is the need of communication and food of knowledge, and knowledge is the interpretation of information. It is of both perceived characteristics of objects and its interpretation. It is the knowledge that makes thing visible or audible, in written or printed words or in speech. Mission of museum is thus unanimously associated with dissemination of information of country's heritage that gives knowledge to people who come in contact.
1.13. Freedom of Information—Government of India’s Policy in Dissemination of Information

According to the Policy of Dissemination of Information of Government of India, every person has the right of knowing information. Museum is such an institute, which has the duty to inform people whatever they want to know from museum about its objects, heritage and culture of the country. According to India’s Freedom of Information Act, 2000 anyone requesting information must be told if an organization holds the information, and must be given the information in a specific period of time. The general assumption is that information is to be supplied to every interested people, except that information, which may harm the institution or country’s interest. Museum can charge ‘reasonable fee’ for supplying information. Thus museum should maintain good management of records, and supplied information should be easy to understand by the enquirer.

1.1.4. Standpoints of Museum Associations, regarding Information Service

The International Council of Museums (ICOM) has given emphasis on serving people in its Statutes, which is revised during the Triennial period 2001 – 2004. In its Article 2, Para-1, the ICOM defines museum as ‘a non-profit making, permanent institution in the service of society and of its development, and open to public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits, for purposes of study, education and enjoyment, material evidence of people and their environment.’

‘This definition of museum is applied without any limitation arising from the nature of the governing body, the territorial character, the functional structure or the orientation of the collection of the institution concerned.’ All museums present in India officially have to follow the objectives formulated by the ICOM in this definition, as the Museums Association of India is an Independent body.
This definition directs museums that it should serve public friendly activities for the benefit of society. From this point, it can be deducted that without informing society, people cannot be able to know what the museum is doing for their benefit. For that, to fulfil mission and objectives, museums should inform properly to every target people regarding its all activities so that they visit museum and enjoy services at the right time.

In this context the definition of museum formulated by the Museums Association of Great Britain, the wing of the International Council of Museums in United Kingdom, has tremendous importance, because it has directly emphasized on serving information for the purpose of society. The Association in its Code of Ethics for museums (1st edition 2002) defines museum as, “Museums enable people to explore collections for inspiration, learning and enjoyment. They are institute that collect, safeguard and make accessible artifacts and specimens, which they hold in trust for society.”

In its 9th Section the Association explains that—Society can expect museum to, “Research, share and interpret information related to collection, reflecting diverse views”. Emphasis on expectations of society, regarding dissemination of information has been given in this section as follows (only selected points):

9.0 Museums facilitate and carry out research. They share interpret information consistent with their purpose and ensure that it is accurate, up to date and based on the highest standards of scholarship and research. They organize and manage information to make it accessible. Museums interpret information to engage a wide variety of interests and to reflect diverse views. They invite users to question assumption and distinguish evidence from speculation.

9.1 Research and collate information about collection and the subject areas generally, within which the museum has expertise. Enable the museum's researchers and other to keep up to date with development in their field.
9.2 Apply the highest possible standards of objectivity to the research undertaken by the museum, and distinguish clearly between evidence and deduction. Maintain, as far as possible, records and material so that the evidence on which research is based can be re-examined and verified independently.

9.3 Make information publicly accessible. Conduct research with the intention of making it public. Publish research promptly and make it widely available.

9.4 Develop mechanisms that encourage people to research collection, develop their own ideas about them and participate in a variety of ways in shaping the interpretations offered by the museum. Make the museum a forum in which ideas can be discussed and tested.

9.6. Represent ideas, personalities, events, and communicates with sensitivity and respect. Recognize the humanity of all people. Develop procedures that allow people to define, and seek recognition of their own cultural identity.

9.9 Recognize the assumptions on which interpretation is based and those presentational styles may shape perception in unintended ways. Consider carefully the impact of interpretations that excludes any reference to people associated with the items.

9.11. Keep records and presentations as accurate and as up to date as possible. Correct errors in documentation or presentations without delay, when they are brought to right.'

Though these are the selected Code of Ethics of the Museums Association of U. K. for museums there, but it is true for all museums irrespective of any country and thus true for museums in India also. Museum authorities in India should think how they would maintain and serve information resource of museums for the benefit of society, taking inspiration from the above Code of Ethics.
Chapter 1: Museum Information Service

1.2. Present Scenario of Information Dissemination in Indian Museums

Though the modern concept of dissemination of information through a specific management system to target people is new in Indian museums, but necessity of this service was felt long before. Since the establishment, museums are providing information through various ways, according to their capability and financial strength. Major modes of information dissemination in Indian museums are as follows:

1.2.1. Information about Exhibits

Museums mainly provide information regarding its exhibits present in different galleries and in temporary exhibition through following means:

A. Printed Information

Museums have a number of printed materials that provides information regarding collection and exhibitions. Few of them are for all and few are especially serving to those who comes to museum through proper channel and with prior appointment.

B. Information for all visitors

Following sources of information are available for all, some of these are available free of cost while few publications are need to purchase from museum:

i) Labels

In museum variety of labels is used and is generally written in local, national and in English language. Different type of labels provides information differently. Like,

a) Individual label provides basic information about that object like name, measurement, material, location, year etc.

b) Group label provides information about related exhibits in a showcase.

c) Introductory labels provide detail information about objects in a gallery.

d) Pictorial and Caption labels are found at the entrance of galleries and provide information about the content and the name of those galleries respectively.

e) Acknowledgement label commemorate the sponsors, donors, person who inaugurates the gallery etc.

By reading labels visitors can get basic information about a gallery and an object.
ii) Guide Books—General and Sectional

General Guidebook provides brief information about different galleries of a museum along with important objects displayed there, opening and closing time and day, guide service, regular events etc. Sectional Guidebook provides information about objects displayed in that particular gallery. For example, General and Sectional Guidebooks of the Indian Museum, Kolkata. This is generally available to visitors on request.

iii) Booklet

Few museums provide small booklet along with the entry ticket. This booklet provides brief description of the museum and its important exhibits. For example, in the Maharaja Sawai Man Sing II Museum in Jaipur, Rajasthan, a booklet is provided to all visitors along with the entry ticket.

iv) Folders

Many museums provide basic information about the museum like number of galleries, map, main exhibits, scheduled services, address and phone number etc. in brief in a folder. Folders are prepared for number of purposes, like museum folder, gallery folder, exhibition folder etc. Maximum museums prepare folders for these purposes to inform visitors.

v) Picture Post-Cards/Art Album

Picture Post-Cards and Art Albums are popular publications of a museum. These are made on most important exhibits, present in museum's collection. Information is usually written at the back of Picture Post-Card and at the base of Art Album. Purchasing these publications, persons can know about it.

vi) Gallery Plan

Few museums provide gallery plan to visitors to inform them about the location of galleries in museum, so that they can visit desired galleries easily.
For researchers, investigators who come through proper channel and on special permission

They are the specialized and respected visitors and museum assist them as much they can with their all-official files, records and documents. These most precious sources of information are as follows:

i) Accession Register

This register gives brief information about an object like source, location, material composition, detail size, shape and weight, brief history, period, material, artists, makers or cultural groups, provenance, physical condition, price, insurance value and current location in the museum etc. Now photograph of the object is also placed along with above information.

ii) Accession Card

Sometimes it is found difficult to handle Accession Register, in that case same information is stored in the Accession Card. This card is sometime written in both sides and kept in specific section. Respective Keeper can allow authentic person to see it. Few Indian museums practice this kind of data storing. One sample card of the Indian Museum, Kolkata is given below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INDIAN MUSEUM, CALCUTTA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ART SECTION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accession Card</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accession No.</th>
<th>Book No. &amp; Page No.</th>
<th>Size &amp; Weight</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Material</th>
<th>School/Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provenance</td>
<td>Date of Purchase &amp; Price</td>
<td>Condition</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Remarks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DESCRIPTION**

**Figure: 1.1. Accession Card of the Indian Museum, Kolkata**
iii) Catalogue Card

Few museums maintain catalogue card for keeping record of their collection. Visitors on permission can see it. Here one catalogue card of the Manipur State Museums is given below, which is for Anthropological Specimen:

Front Side

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Catalogue Card</strong></th>
<th><strong>MANIPUR STATE MUSEUM, Imphal</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accession No.</td>
<td>General Serial No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name—English:</td>
<td>Local:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classification—Major-group:</td>
<td>Sub-group:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collector:</td>
<td>Date of Collection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Reg. No.:</td>
<td>Field-expedition:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode of collection:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locality:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source of Collection—Name:</td>
<td>Address:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community:</td>
<td>Occupation:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community of producers:</td>
<td>Sex:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production season:</td>
<td>Community of users:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Users—Sex:</td>
<td>Occasion of Use:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Use:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Use:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location:</td>
<td>Case No.:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Drawer No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reverse side</td>
<td>Shelf:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reverse side

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reference of published work if any: Negative No.:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure: 1.2. Catalogue Card of the Manipur State Museum, Imphal*
iv) Catalogue

This is an office record of objects present in a section or gallery of a museum. This is available in the respective section, in the library or sometimes it is available on sale. From catalogue a person can know classified information about the objects present in a particular section of a museum, like name, accession number, shape, size and weight, material/medium, source of entry, brief history of objects, nomenclature with classification, (if it is a natural history object), provenance etc.

v) Index Card

This is a loose post-card shaped card normally of 15 cm x 10 cm in size with a photograph of an object. It is of hard board with perforation for fixing it to a rod of the locked cabinet. It includes detailed information about an object. Very few museums in our country store information in this way.

vi) Scholarly Publications

These publications include Newsletter, Journal, Bulletin, Monograph, Annual Report, booklet on various occasions like Symposium, Seminars etc. Other than these publications museum also published books. Interested persons can go through these publications in the museum library and can take photocopies. The library also gives opportunity to the readers to refer various books and journals.

Box: 1.3

Printed Information available for researchers, investigators who come through proper channel

- Accession Register
- Accession Card
- Catalogue Card
- Catalogue
- Index Card
- Scholarly Publications -
  ✔ Newsletter
  ✔ Journal
  ✔ Bulletin
  ✔ Monograph
  ✔ Annual Report
  ✔ Booklet on Symposium, Seminar etc.
  ✔ Books published by museum
  ✔ Other Bibliographical References

Note: Though all these materials are good source of information, but in many cases it is found that these records are incomplete, not up-to-date and it is also true that a large number of museums in India have non-of the above records.
B. Information through Display Aids

Museum uses number of display aids to provide associated information about objects and also to create liveliness in an exhibition. Here few such display aids are given below that provides aided information about exhibits:

Maps
Maps sometimes placed in a gallery to inform about the site, from where the object is collected and also the region where such object/specimen is found. For example, in the Bharhut Gallery of the Indian Museum, Kolkata the map shows the site from where the huge gate of the Stupa has been collected.

Charts and Graphs
Variety of charts and graphs are used in museums to provide information attractively, lucidly and scientifically to viewers. It is an attractive media of presentation of critical, statistical and scientific information related to an object in easily understandable way.

Photographs
A photograph is worth of thousand words. It is an attractive media that provides authentic information about an object in their natural look. For example, the photograph of a Rhinoceros in the Bengal Natural History Museum, Darjeeling, shows the animal in its natural habitat. It informs detailed information about the habitat of Rhinoceros to all visitors, and everyone understands it easily, irrespective of their age and education.

Mannequin
This is used in museum, especially in Anthropological / ethnological museums or galleries to show actual feature of different tribes, use of ornaments, wearing style, dresses, different habit and habitat etc.
Diagram

Sometimes diagrams are used for showing various parts of an object/specimen, cells, organ etc. This gives aided information that is neither possible to see in real exhibits nor possible to explain briefly through text. For example, a diagram of the Evolution of Man in the Evolution Gallery of the Indian Museum in Kolkata shows the steps of human evolution, which is not possible to explain through any other media.

Diorama

Diorama is used in museums to present habitat of animals, Eco-systems, village scene, historical period, episode etc. by creating miniature environment. It is a very informative and attractive media that provides lots of information together and gives a long lasting imprint in the viewers' memory. For example, Use of a diorama for exhibiting a Royal Bengal Tiger in the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya, Mumbai.

Fabricated objects

Sometimes real objects are so big that it could not be placed or created inside museum. In that case fabricated objects are used to create a miniature environment. For example, house patterns and dresses of all the tribes of Nagaland are shown by fabricating living houses, villages, men and women wearing traditional dresses etc. in the Nagaland State Museum, in Kohima.

Models

Models are used in museums to inform visitors about different parts of a large machine, vehicles, technology, animal figure etc. and also to show the mechanism in miniature form. Sometimes mock-up or working model informs visitors about the mechanism of an entire procedure. For example, in the Birla Industrial Technological Museum, Kolkata, mock-up model of a coal mine demonstrate the entire activity of coal extraction from a mine.

Signage

It provides information through text and image. A good Signage provides correct information at the appropriate time.
C. Information through Interactive and Participatory exhibits

In many science museums in India number of participatory and interactive exhibits are present. For example, exhibits on buoyancy, oscillation, illusion, microscopic view of cells, puzzle etc. These types of exhibits provide scientific information behind the phenomenon. Few museums named such gallery as 'Discovery Room' as in the Nehru Science Centre, Mumbai. In the National Railway Museum, New Delhi, interactive exhibits inform visitors about the mechanism of train's movement and participatory exhibits present in the National Science Centre, New Delhi, inform users about the science behind the mechanism.

D. Face to face Information Dissemination

On prior permission or person who comes through proper channel, the museum authority provides the required information to the person orally. The Director/Curator or Education Officer or the person concern with the specific queries provides the required information.

E. Information through popular lectures

Museums often organize popular lectures in and outside the museum for general visitors, children or rural mass. For example, Taramandal—a popular talk show with exhibits showing the astronomical pictures/positions of sky in the Birla Industrial and Technological Museum, Kolkata. Outside the museum popular lectures are organized for rural people on science, heritage, culture etc. People can get interesting and useful information from this lecture. For example, Birla Planetarium organizes popular lectures in schools and in rural areas regarding any unusual phenomenon in our Solar System.

F. Information through Exhibitions

Exhibition is a regular event of large museums on a particular topic. People can get informed through it on that field. But this opportunity is very much restricted in few large museums only. Sometimes traveling exhibition gives opportunity to visitors of the host museum to get information about that field.
Technology makes dissemination of information more faster, attractive and easy to understand. Following technology have implemented in Indian museums to inform people.

**Computerized Documentation:**

Very few museums of India have completed computerized documentation, a large number of museums are processing it and many museums are thinking on it. Person, who comes through proper channel and has taken prior appointment with the museum authority, can access the computerized documentation of museum objects. For example, the Natural History Museum of the Bombay Natural History Society, Mumbai has computerized documentation of its entire collection and on permission persons can access it.

**Computer for Visitors' Interaction**

In many science museums, computers are installed with every important set of exhibits to give detail information regarding that topic, to check the attentiveness of visitors, for quizzing etc. Visitors can operate it by clicking the mouse only. For example, in the Biotechnology gallery of the Birla Industrial and Technological Museum, Kolkata, many computers are fixed with different theme of presentation. Like 'Multimedia Bio Quiz', viewing of the 'component of cells' etc.

**Touch Screen Display**

This is a computer that visitors can access to see the galleries, its exhibits and can get detail information about museum and its various activities by touching the command button visible on the computer screen. This is the modern technique of presentation of information. Many Indian museums have installed it, for example National Museum, New Delhi has placed a touch screen computer in the gallery of the Indus Valley. The Birla Industrial and Technological Museum in Kolkata has also placed few touch screen computers in its Biotechnology Gallery. A good number of museums are trying to provide information by installing this set in near future.
Chapter: 1

Museum Information Service

Website/WebPages

At present about 10% of the total museums in India have already launched their own website and many museums are developing it rapidly. Besides this, many museums have their web pages in big portals. These sites and pages provide information to virtual visitors, irrespective of the city and country.

Multimedia Presentation

A very few Indian museums have developed multimedia presentation on its history, every gallery, main exhibits and activities. Visitors can see it in specific interval of time. For example, in the Raja Dinkar Kelkar Museum, Pune, Maharashtra and Visitors Centre, Chilika, Orissa. This is a very effective media that provides compact information in few minutes.

Information through Audio-Visual Media

Now few leading museums in India are providing information through following audio-visual media to visitors:

Television Set and Video Compact Disk Player

Many big museums have placed Television sets in few galleries. For example, in the Bharhut Gallery of the Indian Museum, Kolkata. Detail information regarding pillars and gate of the great Stupa of Bharhut is recorded in videocassettes and compact disks. This is shown to visitors in this television set in specific interval of time. This is a very attractive and informative media to explain in details about important museum exhibits.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information through</th>
<th>Information Technology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Computerized Documentation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer for Visitors’ Interaction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Touch Screen Display</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website/WebPages</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multimedia Presentation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4 National Museum, New Delhi; Indian Museum, Kolkata; Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya, Mumbai; museums under the National Council of Science Museums etc.
Chapter 1: Museum Information Service

**Overhead Projector for Slide and Film Show**

Few leading museums are showing slides and documentary films regarding its exhibits on the overhead projector in Video Corner, Auditorium and also within few galleries in specific hours. For example, in the Indian Museum, Kolkata, an overhead projector is fixed in the 'Minor Antiquity' gallery for showing slides of antiquities present in the museum's collection.

**Guide-o-phone**

It is a device with pre-recorded cassette of information regarding gallery location, important exhibits, and activities of a museum. It is available in various foreign languages and provided to foreigners so that they can hear and get knowledge about museum and understand exhibits by pressing the respective codes for general instructions and serial number given at the label of that exhibit. This facility is present in the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya in Mumbai.

**Recorded Audio and Visual System**

Many exhibits in science museums are fitted with pre-recorded audio-system. Now visuals are also available in a small video screen fitted with an exhibit. A visitor can hear information or see visuals by pressing a button only. For example, in the Visitors Centre in Chilika, Orissa, by pressing a button, motion and activity of a living Dolphin can be seen in a video screen and in another exhibit sound of Dolphin can be heard by pressing a button.

**Light and Sound programme**

In very few forts, monuments and museums, information is provided through Light and Sound programme. It is a very attractive media for dissemination of information. For example, in the Cellular Jail, Portblair, in the Red Fort, New Delhi and in the Victoria Memorial, Kolkata etc.

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**Box 1.6.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information through Audio-Visual Media</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Television and Video Compact Disk Player</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Overhead Projector for Slide and Film Show</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Guide-o-phone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Recorded Audio and Visual System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Light and Sound programme</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chart: 1.2. Modes of Information Dissemination in Indian Museums
1.2.2. Information about Activities

Other than display of exhibits, museums perform many activities like temporary exhibitions, film shows, cultural programmes, festivals etc. This information is given to visitors and general people within and outside museums by following modes:

A. Museums’ Visitors

Within museum, information regarding various activities is disseminated through following ways:

- **Information Kiosk**
  
  In India Information Kiosk is present in very few museums and till today it is not adequately equipped to answer visitors' queries. Though person sitting in Information Kiosk provides answers of basic queries of visitors, but for serious enquiry he/she sends the visitor to the responsible person. The Kiosk also acts as a Sales Counter. For example, in the National Science Centre, New Delhi.

- **Ticket Counter**
  
  Ticket Counter provides information about various shows and gives ticket for that event. The counter only provides information regarding paid activity of a museum and its venue. For example, in the Birla Industrial and Technological Museum, Kolkata.

- **Reception Counter**
  
  In many museums Reception Counter provides information to the enquirer about the various activities of museum, guide; sales publications and act as a helping desk. For example, in the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya, Mumbai.

- **Regular Announcement**
  
  In few museums every corners and galleries are connected with audio system. Museum announces regular activity time to time through this audio system to remind visitors about the time and venue. For example, the Birla Industrial and Technological Museum in Kolkata runs number of activity every day and inform visitors about this through regular announcement in English, Hindi and Bengali.
Chapter: Museum Information Service

**Signboard/Bulletin Board**

Sometimes schedule information is given in signboards placed in front of the entrance of museum, at the ticket counter or at the information kiosk. It is generally positioned in such a way, so that people can easily look it. For example, schedule information is placed in front of the ticket counter of the Science City, Kolkata.

In few science centres information regarding daily activities like show times and venue are provided on electronic bulletin board placed inside the museum. For example, National Science Centre in New Delhi.

**B. General People**

Museums need to inform general people outside museum buildings to make them prospective visitors. Museums are taking following steps in this purpose:

**Information in Daily Newspapers**

Every leading newspaper has column for Daily City Events. For example, ‘Good Morning Calcutta’ and ‘Time Out’ column in case of the ‘The Telegraph’ newspaper. Now to reach target visitors, big museums are giving classified advertisement in this column. For example, Birla Industrial and Technological Museums, Victoria Memorial Museum, Academy of Fine Arts, Birla Institute of Arts and Culture, and State Archaeological Museum etc. in Kolkata give classified advertisement about temporary exhibitions in the above mentioned columns in the Metro supplement of the ‘The Telegraph’ newspaper.

**Hoarding**

Few Indian museums give advertisement in hoarding, placed in the busy locations of the city, to inform its target visitors about the special activities like summer training courses, cultural programmes etc. For example, the Nehru Children Museum in Kolkata, organizes many activities throughout the year for children and put this information on hoarding in the prime locations of Kolkata.

**Articles**

Articles published in newspapers and journals on a museum (s) give an unpaid publicity to museum (s) and inform readers. Good and informative articles regarding any activity of a museum attract visitors in that museum.
Chapter: 1  

**Museum Information Service**

**Casual Visitors**

This category includes family groups (few of them were with their visiting guests), national and few international tourists, housewives, and few professionals. Altogether hundred and eleven such visitors are interviewed. Analysis of their opinions are assorted in following points:

**Positive stances of Information Service**

1. Multimedia presentation gives positive result in informing visitors. For example, in the Visitors Centre, Chilika, Orissa visitors found satisfied after seeing the brief multimedia presentation—a video guided tour that has provided visitors an overall idea about the museum and its collection in fifteen minutes. In rest of the time they have successfully seen, enjoyed and acquired knowledge about the gallery and exhibits they like. Since, these visitors come to museum for a short period and within that they had to see all exhibits, thus the introductory multimedia show is found most effective in informing visitors in short period about museum and its collection. It has the ability to replace the job of guides in museum.

2. Visitors are found most interested in exploring information about exhibits themselves in Science Centres, Children Museum, Natural History Museum/gallery, Ethnology Museum/gallery, textile gallery etc. because of attractive and informative presentation of objects as well as interactive and participatory exhibits that helps visitor to know the science practically.

3. Visitors like to see and hear different museum shows, cultural programmes, and popular lectures etc. as found in case of the Birla Industrial and Technological Museum, Kolkata and in the Bharat Loke Kala Mandal, Udaipur in Rajasthan, because of effective information and entertainment.

4. Visitors like to purchase a wide range of mementos, replicas, picture post cards, art album etc. that carries important information about our rich heritage.
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Museum Information Service

• Negative stances of Information Service

1. Visitors feel most boring in sculpture, prehistoric, coin etc. galleries as they feel nothing interesting and informative there.

2. Visitors in many museums have found difficulties in getting show times, elevator, toilets, canteen, drinking water points, and parking etc. facilities.

3. Maximum visitors have found visiting only those galleries that they found near, familiar and interesting. Other galleries they found worth for academic purposes and interesting for those who have knowledge about the subject of exhibition because provided media could not draw their interest, specially in painting, archaeology, numismatics, fossil etc. galleries.

4. Reading so many labels creates fatigue to visitors. It is too much time consuming and most of the visitors did not like to read lengthy text. As a result most of them skip the important exhibits and amazing information regarding precious collection of the visiting museum.

• Information Demand

1. Many visitors want to understand the innate meaning of exhibits in most interesting way. Though they have found many galleries boring, but they too interested to know about the mystery of those exhibits, mythology of sculptures, Indian history etc. in fascinating and easily understandable way.

2. Visitors want a media that can give general instructions regarding main attractions of a museum, position of galleries, its content, running activities, shows, show time and venue, selling items, and amenities provided by museums clearly.
Chapter 1

Museum Information Service

• Standpoint of Museums

Admitting all the earlier mentioned facts, museum authorities are ready to take sincere steps in providing information through following ways.

1. Arranging introductory lecture to group of visitors in twenty (20) minute to one-hour interval, depending upon the number of visitors. It is mainly in those museums where implementation of technology in not possible at present due to financial crisis. In other cases many museums are interested in multimedia presentation on entire museum through Projector.

2. Arranging guide service for group of visitors and also deputing guide in every gallery so that visitor can get overall information about exhibits.

3. Providing introductory leaflet and gallery map to visitors along with tickets.

4. Arranging gallery announcement system to inform daily scheduled shows and providing audio-guide service in individual gallery in specific interval of time.

5. Placing catchy and lucid information about galleries in its entrance with pictures, in big font so that every visitor get attracted towards the label, understand the content of exhibition themselves and visit the gallery.

6. Updating museum's reception desk with every information concern with general visitors, and users as well as contact persons responsible for different activities to make it an advanced Information Kiosk in near future.

7. Few museums will try to organize interesting programmes and lectures in future on those galleries that generally not draw attention of common visitors.

Note: A large number of museums agree on the suggestion that they will think for an hourly quiz programme on exhibits of museum, where visitors will participate and museum will provide a memento as a prize to the winner.
Museum Information Service

• Serious Visitors

While surveying in different museums throughout India eighty-one visitors are found visiting museums for specific purposes, including students, teachers, researchers, housewives, national and international tourists, retired persons, and professional etc. Their opinion and standpoints of museums are given below:

• Positive stances of Information Service

1. Few Secondary school students have found museums suitable for practical references in relation to their academic syllabus, school project work, training on various hobbies etc. It is also found that these students are the regular users and beneficiaries of museum's educational service.

2. Researchers have found museum library a useful source of reference.

3. Designers have found museum a good resource for ethnic designs.

3. Parents like to bring their children in museum especially in science museums to extend their area of interest, participate in training programmes and workshops etc. to generate knowledge of science in practical life.

4. Few housewives have found highly benefited from museums' training programmes. For example, training on paintings organized by the Mahant Ghasidas Memorial Museum, Raipur in Chhatisgarh.

• Negative stances of Information Service

1. Information is not updated in more than 90% Indian museums. Many museums have no back-up system, thus many researchers are not getting access to objects that are lost, on loan or in very bad condition.

2. Improper management of information delaying the supply of required information to enquirer. As a result they need to wait for a long period to get any statistical data regarding exhibits and visitors’ figures etc.

Opinion of Serious Visitors

48% 29%
□ Satisfied ■ No Comment □ Not Satisfied
23%

Graph: 1.2. Opinion of Serious Visitors
3. Facility of library, provisions for photocopy, scanning, and computer access are not available in many museums and therefore, getting hardcopy of the information is quite difficult.

4. National museum library is not yet formed in India and therefore, access to similar objects in different museums at a time is not yet possible in India.

5. Museums do not inform properly about the seminars and lectures they organize on different issues, as a result researchers of relevant field could not attain and get current information.

6. Descriptive catalogue or monographs are very rare in Indian museums.

7. Translation of manuscripts, copper plates and inscriptions are not done in majority of museums. As a result visitors could not understand the meaning and researchers also found difficulty in getting information from these valuable sources.

8. Sometimes concern person in a museum could not give instant information against the queries of visitors due to unavailability of resource, time and work pressure or due to absence in that particular date. Therefore, prior permission or appointment is required, but this procedure disheartens many floating visitors in their desire to know at that moment.

9. There are many new things in museums but interpretation of these exhibits, do not attract students. Sometimes the topic found difficult to understand by small school students, but no effort has been taken to inform students most interestingly so that they can understand the most difficult and boring theme with more interest and can enrich themselves with more knowledge.

10. Graphical preservation of designs is not done in more than 90% museums in India. As a result getting information regarding the textile designs, weaving pattern, colour combination is very much difficult and time taking.
Chapter: Museum Information Service

• Information Demand

1. Museum should give emphasis on completing its all the records of collection and keep its back-ups as well as make it accessible for users.

2. Many visitors are found interested in training on crafts making, painting, textile fabrication, music, drama, lectures on indigenous health care etc. and want to get inform about these so that they can take part in correct time.

3. Parents want information about programmes or activities that can assist in the study of their children, increase general knowledge and also want training on various extra-curricular activities.

4. Inside museums, visitors want a service that can guide them in better understanding of objects and inform about museum’s activities with the help of concern persons, detailed printed information, photography, reference library and information board. Prefers special programmes for the assistance in their study, hobby and to know more about own country.

5. Tourists, mainly foreigners want to know the mystery of Indian sculptures, Indian Mythology, Spiritualism, Heritage, Culture and History. Every tourist likes to see programmes on classical and folk music, dance, folklore, martial art as well as indigenous science and technology of the adjoining areas.

• Standpoint of Museums

Majority of museum authorities admit all the above mentioned facts and sincerely want to think upon these matters. They want considerable time to overcome the drawbacks and to provide information according to the arising demands. Many museums are in progress to complete documentation of its entire objects in computer and to make it accessible for users. Few museums are providing various training courses for students, professionals and others as per capacity and demand. Many museums are found serious regarding public friendly services and informing about it to target visitors.
Case Study: 1. Visitors Survey

Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya (Former Prince of Wales Museum of Western India), Fort, Mumbai

Date of Survey: 9th July 2002*  Total number of visitors surveyed=21

Category of Visitors:
Tourist = 8 (National = 5, International = 3); Service Holder = 5  Artist = 3
Art object seller = 1: Researcher = 2: Housewife = 1: Student =1.

The Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya is one of the best museums in India, housed in the magnificent heritage building of the Indo-Saracenic Style, located in the prime 'Crescent Site' on the way to the Gateway of India—the most important and busiest tourist point in Mumbai. Since 1922, the museum has become most attractive place for all national and international tourists of Mumbai and secured a permanent position in tourist maps of Mumbai as well as of India and also in all websites of travel and tourism in India.

Visitors: In average 950 visitors come per day in the museum (as per 2000-2001), including huge number of national and international tourists, delegates, artists, designers, researchers, local people and students.

Besides a place for holiday entertainment and a popular tourist spot the museum is worth of educational purposes. Many students and researchers come here to see rich collection and use the museum library. Majority of visitors found satisfied after seeing the museum's collection, but considerable number of visitors is found interested in more interpretation of exhibits. They want a brief presentation to acquire an overall idea and knowledge about the huge collection of the museum that are exhibited in number of galleries.

* Survey proof is given in the 'Research Proof' section of the Appendix II, page number 313.
Information Dissemination:

Within the museum: Museum provides information through its Information Kiosk, Ticket Counter, and Reception Desk. Guide-o-phone in different foreign languages is available for foreigners. Guide service is provided to school groups and interested group of visitors. Education Officer is always at service to help any enquirer. An interactive Computer Centre is present for students and teachers of art, history and culture that offers facility of CD Library and Internet on membership. A library with huge collection of books and journal are also present for members. Other than visitors, the museum provides in-service courses for museum professional working in different museums as well as arranges seminars and workshops. Museum’s Sales Counter is full of mementos, art objects, miniature paintings and popular publications for sell.

Outside the museum: Museum only provides information about the temporary and traveling exhibitions for general people outside the museum through advertisement and media coverage in local newspapers and banners. Invitation Cards are sent to different target institutions and selective guests for inviting them in temporary or travelling exhibitions.

Suggestions: Besides all, the museum till requires to inform local schools and people through direct correspondence and advertisement regarding its valuable exhibits, various activities and especially about travelling exhibitions, so that they can visit generously in time, since their absence is very much felt in the museum.
1.3.2. Result of the Survey on Public outside museums

Survey is conducted on public in seventeen cities of the nine States and one Union Territory of India between 2001-2004. All together two hundred and forty-six people of different walks of life are randomly interviewed and opinion regarding information provided by museums in those cities are taken. These opinions are analyzed and summarized below:

• Positive stances of Information Service
  1. Considerable sector of our society consider museum as a house of information regarding our glorious past, history, arts and science; an institution for informal education and learning; and a place for enjoyment and holiday entertainment.

  2. A good number of national and international tourists visit big, popular and important museums of our country. These museums are enrolled in tourist maps and thus every travelling agency brings their tourists in these museums.

  3. Large number of school visits nearby famous museums with great enthusiasm to see and know about wonder. Good number of researchers visits museums for their research works. Many artists, designers, representative of few corporate houses have found museums an effective place for information regarding our ethnic heritage.

• Negative stances of Information Service
  1. Public opinion reveals that a very little percentage of people get valuable information from museums, few get entertainment and maximum of them cannot remember what they have seen few weeks ago.

  2. Maximum designers are regularly facing difficulties in getting information regarding art objects, textiles and ornaments etc. present in museums. Though they sometimes get information from big museums but small museums remain out of their reach and as a result art objects there remain unexplored.
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Museum Information Service

3. Museums do not inform what they are going to provide in the vacation for children / students, housewives, professionals or any interested people properly.

4. Museum authority hardly contact with tourism departments and leading travelling agencies of the city to inform them about the major exhibits of museum, its importance and attractiveness to common people etc. They also do not inform about the timing of special shows so that travelling agents can fix timing of tourists' visit in the museum accordingly.

- Information Demand

A. Parents

Today's parents are very much concerned about their children and always in search of opportunities that can provide their children more knowledge and assist in their study. They demand following information from museums:

1. Want information about those services that can guide children in understanding exhibits, assist in education and about library membership.

2. Want information from guide to know the innate mystery of exhibits, popular lectures, story telling programmes, interactive and participatory exhibits, games etc. for children.

3. They want information about the opportunities for their children in learning art and craft making, knowing about traditional medicines, science and technology through training etc.

4. Want to get inform at right moment about summer courses, project works, cultural activity, and heritage study / tour, nature camps, training etc. organized in museums for their children.
Chapter: Museum Information Service

B. Business groups/Professionals

These busy people like to utilize their valuable free time effectively and also like to know the valuable resources present in museums for business purpose. They are willing to know following information from museums:

1. Information about different activities and cultural programmes concern with Indian heritage during holidays.

2. Information regarding franchise, selling / purchase of antiquities, art objects, replicas, popular publications, mementos, traditional gift items etc.

3. They are interested in lucid and interesting talk show about the mythology of the sculpture, important episode of history, epic stories and want to know about the exquisite artistic work with high technological use.

C. Travelling Agents

They are always in search of those places that are attractive, entertaining, knowledge worthy to tourists and that can prove tour most effective as tourists spend huge money and energy in search of knowing unknown, long away from home. Thus, they want following information from museums to make the visit of their tourists party most memorable:

1. Want information about the location, content, condition for photography, 'dos and do not', timing of interesting activities and attractive programmes in the museum etc. so that they can bring tourists in the museum accordingly.

2. Want a brief presentation that can give visitors an overall idea about the visiting museum, its important exhibits and activities in few minutes.

3. They want printed information like folders, leaflets, picture post-cards and CDs, as well as mementos in reasonable price so that tourists can purchase it for retaining the memory of their visit and also to preserve information about the visiting museum.
D. Retired Persons / Artists

These persons visit museums when they like to know something in details or for specific purposes. Consulting with them it is found that they like to know following information from museums:

1. Want information about scientific, cultural and religious aspects of exhibit(s) of museums in details. They also like to study in the museum's library.

2. Many retired persons have huge knowledge about our history, mythology, science and technology and want to offer volunteer service to museums by deliberating lectures, providing training, showing variety of performing art etc. and thus want to know museum's point of view in this regard.

3. Museums are the source of ethnic design of art objects, ornaments, textile, traditional motifs and source of dying arts etc. Artists want soft and hard copy of information about these objects.

- Standpoint of Museums

It is a big concern for every museum that a good percentage of people in our society do not feel interest in museum visit. Museum authorities admit their drawbacks in this regard.

Museums, which have attractive exhibits, provide number of services to visitors and users have already taken innovative strategies to attract target people informing them through newspapers, hoarding, media coverage, television, leaflets, direct mails etc. For example, the Birla Industrial and Technological Museum in Kolkata. Museums, those not yet utilizing these media are planning for similar initiatives in near future, overcoming its financial problems. Beside these two categories of museum, many museums are present in India that are not yet providing any service to visitors other than display of exhibits. These museums are too thinking for providing information about its valuable exhibits through any suitable media as per their financial strength and capability.
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1.3.3. Result of the Survey on Teachers

Survey has been conducted on teachers in few schools, colleges and universities in six cities of the five States of India between 2001-2004. All together eighty-two teachers are randomly interviewed and opinion regarding information provided by museums in those cities are taken. These opinions are analyzed thoroughly and briefed below:

- **Positive stances of Information Service**

1. For teachers museum is worth of knowledgeable entertainment and academic purposes. It is a very useful institution for recapitulating our past with living memories. Many galleries of museums can be used as extended practical classes especially in case of ancient Indian history, natural history, ecology, science and technology.

2. Many history teachers are participating in the orientation courses organized by few Indian museums and getting interest to bring their students in museum and teach them history within the museum galleries with original objects. For example, the Archaeological Museum of Deccan College in Pune, Maharastra runs an orientation course every year for history teachers.

3. Schools are sending regularly their students for museum visit and teachers are guiding their students in museums to understand history and science with practical evidences.

- **Negative stances of Information Service**

1. Stereotype information dissemination in museums could not properly incite visitors to get knowledge about our history, art, culture and science.

2. Except few museums under the National Council of Science Museums and some leading museums in big cities, museums hardly contact schools for inviting students, informing about study-kits, popular lectures, different show times, cultural programmes, workshops, summer training, nature camps, etc.
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- Information Demand

1. Teachers want that museum's guides should take proper care of students and demonstrate all the interactive and participatory exhibits practically.

2. Many school teachers want that museums should exhibit its few objects in such a way that collate the academic curriculum of students and local history so that students can get the opportunity of seeing real objects that they are studying in their books and also know about their surrounding.

3. Schools want that museums should intimate about its 'Loan or Study-kits' and every activities at the right time, so that they can take loan or purchase the kit and can send their students for learning, participating and enjoying various activities and events organized by different museums.

4. Teachers want a special cell in museums that will provide information to students about objects, subjects, project work, model making etc.

5. Schools located far away from museums want that museum should develop a mini-museum in schools, deliver popular lectures and send mobile exhibition bus so that students can get the opportunity to see the national heritage.

- Standpoint of Museums

Indian museums are now sincerely looking after serving schools. Earlier they wanted to open mini-museums in rural areas and big schools, but this effort do not fulfil till now. Many leading Indian museums and museums under the National Council of Science Museums often send their mobile exhibition bus to rural areas and communicate schools through direct mails. The attempt will be frequent in future. Museums are also trying to develop more teachers' orientation courses in near future and that will be informed to every nearby school and college for the generous participation of teachers.

Graph: 1.6. Opinion of Teachers

- Satisfied
- No Comment
- Not Satisfied

Opinion of Teachers

- 46%
- 37%
- 17%
1.3.4 Results of the Survey on Students

Survey is conducted on school students in four cities of the four States in India between 2001-2004. All together one hundred and forty students are randomly interviewed and opinion regarding information provided by museums to students are taken. These opinions are analyzed and summarized below:

- **Positive stances of Information Service**
  1. Large number of students every year visit big museums of India and majority of visitors in Indian museums is students coming as school groups.
  2. For students, museum is a place for entertainment, education and a house of learning.
  3. Good number of students are using museums for project work, participating in training courses, summer camps, nature camps, hobby club activities, and competitions during vacations and referring books in libraries etc.

- **Negative stances of Information Service**
  1. Visit to museums is very much limited to big museums, especially in science centres and popular museums only. Other than this, schools rarely send their students for visiting nearby small museums.
  2. Though many exhibits in a museum have linked with school syllabus, but its representation and deliberation of related information are not commensurate with the academic standard and perception level of students.
  3. Sometimes information dissemination regarding uncommon exhibits and theme of exhibition does not attract students to explore new area of knowledge.
  4. Few museums arrange summer courses, cultural activities, heritage study, training on craft / model making, music and dance, drawings etc. but this information is not properly disseminate among different schools, especially vernacular and less reputed schools of the city and suburbs.
**Information Demand**

1. Maximum students want to get inform whatever museum is arranging, at right moment either through direct contact with schools or through media.

2. They want to see and get informed about actual objects, its history and science that they are studying in their academic syllabus along with associated information that encourage them to increase their knowledge.

3. Guide lecturers provide information to school groups orally but students want more printed information so that they can retain it and can take help out of it in their education.

4. Students in rural areas do not get any information from museums regarding their education or any other activities, camps, participatory programmes etc. thus they want that nearby big museums should arrange various activities during vacations and inform them so that they can participate in it.

**Standpoint of Museums**

Now, museums are trying to provide every related information regarding activities, training, cultural programmes and competitions arranged for students through every possible means. Few leading museums in Mumbai are recently disseminating information to different schools through direct mail, sending posters, inviting membership for library facility etc.

Admitting all the negative stances of Information Service in view of students and on the basis of their information demands, museums are thinking for more advanced services and effective modes of information dissemination in near future to draw attention of more and more students towards museums.
Box: 1.10.

General Demands from museums

A. Maximum poles on....

- Systematic Information Service that can be able to provide every information related to museum exhibits, its theme, activities, services, facilities, offers, competitions, training, workshop, seminars etc. deal with visitors and common people.
- Information service that is able to reach every visitors and local people at right time and able to attract as well as convince them about the affectivity of the exhibition and different services.
- Brief presentation on entire museum in a short period of time.
- Printed information that can guide visitors in understanding all about museums and to preserve information about the visiting museum.
- A library having good collection of books and journals as well as books and other publications related to the objects exhibiting in the museum.
- Telephone Service that can give quick information about important exhibits, activities and other usability / facility of museum etc.
- Museum on Internet, having information about the activities, opportunities in the museum and about objects.

B. Museums should be ....

- A place where people can get information about our past, history of objects, tradition, art and culture and can aware about our indigenous science and technology.
- A place where people can get knowledge about the chronology of evolution of life, culture, tradition, art, as well as science and technology from most ancient period to recent as well as its trend in coming era like a Time-Machine.
- A place that is useful to students, researchers, professionals, children, housewives and businessmen in their respective field of interest.
The museum is the one-man collection of Dr. D.G. Kelkar, established in 1975, dedicated to the memory of his only late son Raja. It is a collection of artifacts that mirrors everyday life. The museum opens in all weekdays for all.

**Subject Content:** The collection includes paintings mainly from western India, artifacts used by women, ornaments, Kitchen utensils, weapons, textiles from western India, deities of daily worship, magnificent collection of lamps, tambools (quid of pan), writing implements, musical instruments, ivory objects, carved doors and a recreated ‘Palace of Mastani’ etc. All of these are depicting artistic works, amazing craftsmanship, and folk-culture of the Western India mainly of Maharashtra and Gujarat.

**Information Dissemination:**
1. There is a provision for guiding visitors.
2. The museum has started fully computerized documentation of its collection that can be accessed by interested visitors on permission.
3. The museum has developed a multimedia presentation on its collection that can be viewed by group of visitors at regular interval of time.
4. Website provides an overall view of the museum and necessary information.
5. Publication on each type of object, guidebook, introductory brochure, picture post cards and greetings cards are available in the sales counter.
6. The museum’s library is rich in useful books that can be referred by visitors.

*Survey proof is given in the 'Research Proof' section of the Appendix II, page number 313*
Chapter: Museum Information Service

Museum's Strength: The museum is highly popular in the city as well as in India and abroad because of its public image that is earned by effective public relations and dissemination of information. The museum has a very good collection of art objects that attracts every person to visit repeatedly. Adjustable museum hours facilitate many visitors to visit the museum. The name of the museum is mentioned in every public place, tourists' guidebooks/maps and websites that make museum familiar with every tourist and local people.

Museums' Visitors:
In average 250 visitors come to the museum everyday including large number of national and international tourists, scholars, professional in the field of Art and design, students and local families. Museum's staff assists visitors to know more about the rich art treasure displayed in the different galleries of the museum.

Forward Planning
1. The Museum is planning for appointing a Public Relations Officer to maintain communication with common people, visitors and target institutions as well as popularize the museum.
2. The museum is also planning for holding special exhibitions from time to time in order to display and popularize objects from store.
3. The museum also has plans to give information of objects of its collection, through popular publications, advertisements in public places, communicating with travelling agencies and tourism department to draw attention of national and international tourists.
4. The museum has planned to raise entrance fee, sell replicas of art objects and give attractive service for which it can ask for Government grants.

Suggestions:
Museum needs to undertake marketing strategy to utilize its rich information regarding arts and crafts for generating fund and popularize museums among students and common people. The museum should send travelling exhibitions to disseminate information about rich artistic work of India beyond its boundary.
1.4. Museum Information Service

Information Service of an institution has manifold activities. It provides information regarding the products/exhibits/shows/services of that institution to general people/users/customers/buyers, so that they can purchase products, enjoy exhibits/shows and use the service in time. In case of the service sector institutions like Museums, Libraries, Science Parks, Zoos etc., it has the responsibility to inform visitors with the every facts of that institution concern with them, so that they can enjoy all the exhibits and services as well as get knowledge. The service also assists the institution itself by providing all the necessary information from its data bank whenever required to perform every activity smoothly and swiftly.

1.4.1. Definition

Museum Information Service can be defined as the service that informs and reminds local as well as target people and institutions about the lively existence of the museum, its important exhibits, and activities arranged for them for attracting, convincing and inviting them in the museum; provides necessary information to visitors and users so that they can enthusiastically see and understand all exhibits, enjoy shows, get knowledge and entertainment and also benefited from different activities of the museum in their purposes as well as assists management by providing all the necessary information to perform every activity properly so that the museum can survive successfully in the competition along with like organisations.

The service includes all advertisements, media coverage, direct mails, telecommunication, open-dialogues, popular lectures, travelling exhibitions, mobile museum service, facsimilies, e-mails, web pages, website and all the publicity materials given by the museum for informing people and institutions outside. Inside the museum it includes all the visual aids, labels, audio-visual presentations, electronic information operators, lectures, guide service, announcement facility, publications, records in both hard and soft copies, direct dialogue, training facility, workshops, temporary exhibitions and library facility, all that can assist visitors in better understanding both the material and non material evidences present in the museum. Selling replicas and art objects museum can also disseminate many information to all those who will come in contact with it.

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6 Museum always at service with useful activities for target people and institutions.
7 Libraries, Zoological Gardens, Botanical Gardens, Amusement Parks, Popular Monuments etc.
8 Computers, participatory/interactive exhibits, guide-o-phone, light and sound shows etc.
1.4.2. Mission of Information Service

The mission of the Information Service is primarily to inform all target people, institutions, virtual and actual visitors about every fact of museums concern with their interest.

Today, every museum needs an information service to speak about itself. The service can enable museums to convince people that it is serving for their betterment and can expose museum as a living institution. Informed people will visit more and more to museums and will enjoy user-friendly services. This hike in visitors' flow is urgently required today to solve the age-old visitors' crisis in Indian museums that has already closed few Indian museums for visitors along with financial and allied crisis and compel those museums to remain as store house of valuable objects only. Other than this, many museums are suffering from visitors' crisis. For example, the Archaeology Museum in Pune. This museum is famous for its valuable collection and once it was very popular but presently a very poor number of people visit this museum. The list of this type of museums is quite long. The mission of the Museum Information Service is thus can be categorised as follows:

- Maintaining communication within and outside museum with every concern people
- Generating museum's awareness among target people and institutions
- Assisting visitors in finding, understanding and getting knowledge about exhibits
- Make the museum user friendly
- Increase number of visitors, revenue and image earning
- Help museum to stay in competition with other similar organisations
- Update information regarding collection and visitors
- Develop an Information Bank for the purpose of museum itself and users
- Getting feedback of museum's exhibition and various services
- To improve the quality of service by rectifying drawbacks

Sports Museum at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, New Delhi, Maritime Museum, Kolkata, Maratha Museum, Pune etc.
1.5. Dissemination of Information

Museums need to maintain two way communications with people in and outside the museum in order to inform all the facts of museum that are concern with general people and visitors and also to understand their response to convey management. It requires proper understanding of the nature of information, and its demand for disseminating information in and outside of a museum. In this purpose information can be classified as follows:

1.5.1. Classification of Information

To perceive the nature of Information related to objects present in a museum, classification of information can be done as follows:

A. By Source:
Using source as characteristics, information can be grouped as:

Signals/ signboard: Messages in form of signs, symbols like arrows, words and number, pictorial labels etc.

Text Matter: Advertisement copy, labels, popular publications, documents, books and journals that gives descriptive information about objects etc.

Visual aids: Photographs, drawings, diorama, fabricated, objects etc. that serves related information about exhibits to visitors.

Audio: It is the pre-recorded sound system fixed with exhibits or gallery that tells about the exhibit (s) in the gallery by operating given electronic device. It also includes regular announcement system.

Video: This is the videocassette on the exhibits, on the theme of gallery, associated history, film on natural history etc. that can be shown in gallery television set, or in the large screen of museum's auditorium. It also includes slide projection within the gallery or in auditorium.
Chapter: Museum Information Service

B. By Channel:
Using channel as a carrier of information, classification can be done as follows:

**Literature:** Direct distribution of folders, guide books, gallery maps etc. from the museum's Reception Counter or Information Kiosks or Ticket Counter.

**Section wise:** Information that is available from the museum's library, office, respective sections etc.

**Distribution Agencies:** They may be Receptionists, Guides, Education Officer, or Public Relation Staff who will provide information to visitors or users. Contract may be given to Advertising or Public Relations Agency for communicating with common people and target institutions.

C. By Media:
Using Physical Media information can be classified as follows:

**Oral Media:** It includes person to person or one to one and one to many communication like guide service, discussion with prior appointment, seminar, lecture etc. that disseminates information.

**Recorded:** It includes all the pre-recorded information made ready for serving visitors, common people and target institutions. These are:

**Paper-print:** All the printed information material like guide book, leaflets, posters, banners, folders etc.

**Audio and Visuals:** Pre-recorded audio and videocassettes as well as slides.

**Electronic:** It is the machine that provides information through its mechanism like mock-up models, interactive exhibits, audio-visuals appliances etc.

**Computerized:** Information stored in computer hard disk that can be accessed by visitors and users.
Chapter: Museum Information Service

D. By Recipient:

Using recipient as a characteristic for grouping information, classification can be done on the basis of the followings:

Individual: When information needs to deliver to individual person by providing answer of his/her question or giving the printed information.

Group: When information need to deliver to a group of visitors, delegates, students etc. like guide service, conducting classes in the activity room, delivering lecture etc.

Organizations/Institutions: Museum has few specific institutions with that they need to communicate regularly. These institutions are schools, cultural organisations, travel and tourism departments, advertising agencies etc.

E. By Information Needs:

Information need varies person to person, institution to institutions. Using information needs as a characteristic information can be classified as:

Know-why Information: This type of information includes basic and background information, readily accessible through labels, guides, given information materials, announcements, presentations, and different shows. This are targeted to common visitor.

Know-how Information: This type of information includes more technical facts that need to provide through activity, interactive exhibits, guide demonstration, audio-visual presentation etc. This is targeted to students, researchers and serious kind of visitors.

Show-how Information: This type information needs to deliver through popular programmes like film shows, organising different programmes etc. this are targeted to mixed visitors including common as well as serious visitors.
1.5.2. Properties of Information

Information can be examined from the point of view of its inherent properties. This property can be classified as follows for the selection of various modes of information dissemination:

**General Information**

Every information in the museum is not for all people. Information is specific to specific persons as per their nature of requirement. Museums need to collect and deliver information to general visitors so that they can easily find the position of galleries, knows about exhibit through labels and edu-entertainment activities.

**Scientific, Technical, historic, artistic Information**

Other than general visitors many serious visitors come to museum to know something in detail. For example, researchers, professionals, museum personal, students and other interested persons. They need detailed scientific, technical, historical, artistic and other professional information. Thus, museums need to collect and store this information to deliver in time.

**Economical Information**

In addition to above properties of information that generally serves for the interest of museum and on the demand of visitors, museums need to think for important information about museum itself that can improve the economic condition of the museum. Such information is given in the Advertisement Copy to perform following functions:

1. Allure common people
2. Generating awareness
3. Attracting visitors
4. Inform people about every activity
5. Increase participants in various programmes
6. Increase customers of museum's product and services
7. Earn revenue
1.5.3. Information Service within a museum

Information can be given to visitors through following modes:

Information Desk / Kiosk or Reception Counter

It should be the first visitors' introduction point in any museum. Staff of this desk should disseminate information as per demand of the enquirer. Area of work can be divided among the staff for disseminating information to visitors for the following purposes:

1. Providing publications—for examples, folders, guidebooks, gallery plan, activity books for children, and questionnaires etc.
2. Spot answering—to the enquirer about basic queries.
3. Providing guide-o-phone—to foreigners or any interested visitors.
4. Keeping records—of the enquiry for assessing information demands.
5. Convince about different packages—to visitors about the utility of different services and membership facility
6. Regular announcement—about schedule programmes to remind visitors about the time and venue of the programme.
7. Filing up forms—of different facilities by interested visitors.
8. Taking appointments—of people with museum authority or personnel who want to know in detail or need specific information.
9. Help visitors to reach his destination—should help visitors to contact or discuss with respective museum personnel, who have prior appointment or want some information for serious purposes and also help to use library.
10. Display of Publication—In front of the Information Kiosk / Reception Counter popular publications like guidebooks, different folders, booklets on associated information, albums, should be displayed so that visitors can handle it, see and acquire information about collection, its different aspects and activities. It will help them to choose their desired publication for purchase.
The probable information that museum should provide to its visitors through the Reception Counter / Information Desk is shown in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information Service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>for Museum Visitors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information Sectors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Information by signboard, information board and manually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Opening &amp; Closing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Holidays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Show Hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Admission Charge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Discounts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Transports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Events &amp; Activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Range of Facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Visitors Amenities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Through Publications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Guidebook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Leaflets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Picture Post-cards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Albums</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Monographs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Bulletin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. News Letter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Take-home Sheet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Journals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Catalogue, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service for Visitors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Guide Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Service for Disabled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Programmes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Training Facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Film Shows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Exhibition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Loan Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Cyber Cefe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Memberships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Library, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information related to Identification and purchase of Objects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Conservation officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Concern Persons of each gallery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Education Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Person who can give visitors' answer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Conservation Incharge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Exhibition Incharge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Curator / Keeper</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart: 1.3. Showing different areas of museum activities that are required to inform visitors.

Sales Counter

Museum sells replicas, art objects, picture post-cards, art albums, mementos and popular publications. All these objects are linked with our history, art and culture and carry valuable information. Therefore, whoever purchase and sees these objects can get information about it. Thus, through exhibition and selling of objects museum's sales counter can disseminate information.

Signs, Directions, Maps and Bulletin Board

Museums need to place specific signs and direction boards in the strategic locations to inform visitors about the route of visit, exhibits present in the gallery, area for getting basic amenities etc. Bulletin Board can provide information to visitors regarding the time and venue of special activities or shows.
Chapter 1  
Museum Information Service

Gallery Audio System
It can be arranged for delivering pre-recorded guide lecture to group of visitors present in the gallery in specific interval of time.

Exhibits and Exhibition Aids
While exhibiting an object many accessories are used that carries and disseminate information about that object. These are labels; visual aids like photographs, charts, diorama, fabricated objects, mannequin, model etc.; audio-visual presentations like gallery video and slide show, pre-recorded sound system etc.; use of computers in giving detailed information and quizzing on exhibits; interactive and participatory exhibits; theme display etc.

Library Service
Museum library provides huge information through books, journals, annual reports, catalogues, monographs, seminar reports etc. to the readers and members. It is very much required in museum's library that apart from the computerized cataloguing of books, and journal, bibliographic reference of the exhibits in the museum should also be catalogued. So that readers or users can get quick and easy access to the books and journals that they want to refer to know in detail about any exhibits present in the museum's collection.

Open Conversation
Information can be provided to the person who has prior appointment with the responsible person in a museum. Sometimes appointment can be arranged for the enquirer with the respective museum personnel on the basis of urgency and importance. Desired documents and record books can be shown to the persons if required.

Gallery Guide
It is an effective media that can provide information to visitors about the exhibits and can answer their questions. Guide can demonstrate the participatory and interactive exhibits properly, can explain the science behind it and its practical use in daily life etc. and can make the presentation more attractive, informative and easy to understand.
Chapter: Museum Information Service

© Multimedia Presentation, Special Shows and Cultural Programmes

These are the modern and very effective modes for disseminating information about the entire museum, exhibits, related history etc. lucidly and attractively within a very short period of time. These are very informative and entertaining media that are capable in drawing interest of every category of visitors irrespective of their age group and educational background.

© Access to reserve collection

Generally, only one third of total collection of the museum displayed in different galleries and rest of the collection remains in store. In this reserve collection many precious and important objects remain. Many researchers, artists and designers need to study few such objects. Museum's authority may give permission to interested people to study in the museum's storage area who have come through proper channel. For this facility museum needs a complete databank either in hard or in soft copy about the location of each object in store so that visitors can reach at the point quickly.

© Computerized Information Room

In this room all computers should be connected through Local Area Network and Internet. Access to information should be given to Read Only Memory so that users can utilize following facilities without hampering any data system:

1. Access to every object present in the museum's collection
2. Access to objects in reserve collection
3. Access to delicate and precious objects—Fragile, brittle and very rare objects, gold coins, gems and jewelry, etc.
4. Access to Epigraphs—Translation of manuscripts, copper plates, inscriptions etc. present in the museum's collection.
5. CD-ROM on exhibits, historical site, wild life, scientific phenomenon, solar system etc.
6. Access to Internet for surfing different museums and other sites.
1.5.4. Information Service outside museums

Information regarding all about a museum that needs to deliver visitors and target institutions can be disseminated in two ways:

**I. Publicity Department or Public Relations Department and**
**II. Internet**

**I. Publicity Department or Public Relations Department**

Museum's publicity department or the public relations department is responsible for communicating with target people and institutions and can inform through following modes:

**Media Relations**

The department should keep in touch with the print and electronic media and maintain good relations with them to keep them in confidence so that whatever releases the museum is provided to them, they should publish, broadcast and telecast through their respective media. The department should invite reporters and journalists in museum whenever anything new is going to happen. The staff should keep a constant look on the newspaper and electronic media releases, so that they can correct information in case of any wrong interpretation.

**Advertisement**

The department has the responsibility to advertise museum, its important exhibits, activities and different programmes to generate attraction in common people. In this purpose the department can go for giving information in form on classified as well as institutional advertisement in daily newspapers, in hoarding, giving posters and banners in strategic locations etc. Museum can advertise itself by giving information in the daily city event programmes in different television channel and radio, especially in FM channels.
Communications with the target institution like schools, colleges, tourism departments, traveling agencies, social organisations etc. is urgently require informing and reminding them about every activities of the museum related to them. The department should inform them in advance through direct mails, e-mails, direct dialogue, over telephones etc. so that they can get time to arrange visit to museum and enjoy different activities. Museum can inform target institution in following means:

❖ **Schools**
  - Through letters and personal contact to invite students and teachers
  - Informing about loan service for providing information inside schools
  - Teachers’ training in museum, so that they can teach their students in museum.

❖ **Social organizations - Institutes for handicapped, Orphans etc.**
  - Through letters and personal contact to inform and invite children’ and students’.
  - Popular lectures, documentary shows, training in their institutes.
  - Arranging conveyance and special guided tour in museum

❖ **Travelling Agencies, Tourism Department and Hotels**
  - Regular contact with travels agencies, Department of Tourism, hotels of all levels and different guesthouses.
  - Informing them about the discount, prime hours and special programmes.
  - Commission based on purchase

❖ **Tourist spots**
  - Giving hoarding to inform about the prime attractions and special event of museum.
  - Selling museum articles in the sales counter of tourists’ spots.
Chapter: 1 Museum Information Service

Publication of Information Materials and its Distribution

The department is responsible for writing and printing information materials like folders, booklets, posters, leaflets, institution specific information materials, competition forms etc. It is the responsibility of this department to distribute information materials to target people and institution at right time.

Sending Travelling Exhibition, Mobile Museum Bus, Arranging Popular Lectures in Schools and Rural Areas

The department has the responsibility of outreach activities to inform about the country’s heritage to distances people through mobile museum bus, travelling exhibition to rural museums and schools as well as arranging popular lectures and shows there.

Community Relations

Now, every corporate house is dedicatedly looking after community relations to reach close to community. As a public service institution a museum can inform about its active presence in its host community by offering social services through its unique ways. For example, beautification of gardens, road dividers, railway stations, airports, public sector organisations, reputed hotels with replicas of sculptures, artistic monumental fragments and paintings of different Indian schools. This will not only help to provide information about the museums to common people about Indian heritage but also help to earn revenue.

Event Organisation

Now successful events earn fastest popularity to any organisation. For that many organisations together are organising events with celebrities throughout the year. Though museums are not yet come in this field but can step with its uniqueness. Museums together can organize cultural programmes and competitions on ethnic cultural items like folk dance and music, art and craft exhibition, etc.
Museum Information Service

Over Telephone/Mobile

Museum should keep a special telephone number to serve information on phone for general people regarding their enquiry about the museum. In this service the telephone operator should attain telephones for giving basic information to the enquirer. The person should connect the line to the respective department in case the enquirer wants to know something from that department.

Museum can also provide very special information regarding its temporary and traveling exhibitions, special shows, celebration of festival etc. in short message service (SMS) scheme of cellular companies to all its subscribers.

Following chart shows how information can be delivered to target people and institutions:

Chart: 1.4. Shows how museum information service work outside museums
II. Internet

The Internet is a global collection of people computers, which are linked together by cables and telephone lines making communication possible among them in a common language. Technically, it can be defined as a global collection of interconnected networks that enables computer users to share information, programmes, and messages. Internet basically tries to connect many LANs\(^{10}\) and WANs\(^{11}\). Internet is accessible through the World Wide Web sites, which is a collection of text and graphic files made available to the public on a computer connected to Internet.

Internet gives many opportunities to museums to do something for their virtual visitors\(^{12}\). Museums are now expected to provide 24-hour-a-day access to every sorts of information, exhibitions, presented in attractive packages. Considering the facts early attempt was taken by Jim Angus, Manager of Information Technology and Web Development at the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County and Jonathan Bowen of the University of Oxford. On their guidelines in many countries virtual museum library pages are developed like in Germany, Canada, Russia, Britain, Korea, Kenya, Australia etc. to maintain a country wise museum directory. In India too, lists of museum are launched in many big portals.\(^{13}\)

Besides this many Virtual museums are also developed which do not have any existence in reality. For example, www.lhham.com.sg— an online museum of Lin Hsin Hsin, www.24hourmuseum.org.uk—24 hours online museum of UK and www.museum.rbi.org.in — Monetary museum of the Reserve Bank of India etc. More than ten-percent museums of India today have their own websites like National Museum, New Delhi; Indian Museum, Kolkata etc. and expected an exponential rise in this number within coming five years.

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10 Local Area Network
11 Wide Area Network
12 Visitors of www.
Necessity of the museum's web site today

Museums of course maintain contacts with public and other museums long before the advent of the digital communication through traditional means; such as conference, seminars, publications, exhibitions, popular lectures etc. Now Internet is an excellent addition as a new modes of communication, because it is very much accessible, attractive, informative, entertaining, and also saves time. It gives opportunity to reach large number of people throughout the World.

Many museums worry that the access to museum via Internet may reduce the desire to visit real museum, in fact the situation is found opposite. The future of information provision is increasingly digital and online and real challenge is to provide a site that can meet the increasing high expectation of the Internet public. Museum can use its website in following ways for disseminating information:

- Can provide basic information and advertise museum
- Can publish research information and can exhibits photographs of important objects
- Can load temporary exhibition (both real and virtual) with multimedia presentation
- Can provide information about training, vacancies, loan, technical assistance etc.
- Can communicate with people/users and use the website with ISDN (Integrated Services Digital Network) for multimedia conferencing
- Can provide monthly news, seminar reports, and other schedules
- Can exhibit important objects of reserve collection as well as too fragile, sensitive and precious objects, which are not possible to display or show in the museum.
- Can offer consultancy service regarding conservation, preservation and display of the objects, exhibition, administration, training programme etc.
- Can invite donations, earn money from paid information scheme
1.6. Effectiveness of Museum Information Service in the survivability of Indian museums today

A. Generating awareness among local people and target institutions
Responsibility of the service is to inform local people and target institutions like schools, colleges, universities, social organisations, society for handicaps, orphans etc. about the museum, its important collection and different public friendly activities in which people can participate for acquiring knowledge and entertainment.

B. Generating conviction regarding museum visit
Attractive information is capable of convincing people about its uniqueness and benefit. It can able to generate conviction among them regarding museum visit and participation in its activities / programmes.

C. Increasing number of visitors
Generating conviction among general people about museum visit, the service can definitely increase number of visitors and also increase the revenue earning of museum.

D. Assisting visitors by supplying information according to their demand
The service can assist visitors in providing information about the position of galleries and its important exhibits, different activities and facilities etc. The service can assist visitors in getting their desired information from specific persons and sources. For examples, The service can assist students, researchers, artists, sellers and others in getting required information from the respective persons in the museum, referring displayed objects and its related documents vividly as well as books and journals in the library.
Chapter 1: Museum Information Service

E. Inform the feedback of museum's activity to the management

The service can inform internal management about the response of visitors regarding museum's exhibition and different activities so that they can assess the success of undertaken service, tailor it according to the arising demand and develop new services.

F. Earning good image and revenue

If the Information service can do all the above-mentioned jobs then it will definitely earn revenue and good image of museum in society. This is very much essential for Indian museums today for removing the age-old negative image and misconception of people as well as to overcome financial crisis.

G. Help in successful survivability

Earning good image, creating general awareness about museum among general people, increasing number of visitors and revenue etc. the service can give museums a strength that will help museums to survive successfully with its competitors, like amusement parks, recreation centres and public libraries, Zoo etc. in the rat race for attracting visitors and earning revenue.

Assessment of Undertaken Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decision Making</th>
<th>Improve Quality of Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overcome Drawbacks</td>
<td>Deliver New Service</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Internal Management

Museum Information Service

Informing People

Museum Visitors  Local People
People in Other Cities  Virtual Visitors
Other Museums

Chart 1.5: Different role of Museum Information Service
Future of Museums with and without Information Service

Museums with Information Service
- Communication with general people, visitors and target institutions through Information Service.
- Well-informed people will visit more and more to the museum and avail museum's services, enjoy programmes and participate in various activities.
- Museum can tailor exhibition and services according to rising demand and thus quality of service can be improved.
- Museum can earn revenue and positive image in society and can stay in competition with similar organisations by attracting visitors.

Museums without Information Service
- No communication
- Without any information people will not be able to know what the museum is serving for their interest and museum will not get adequate visitors.
- Without knowing visitors' response, museum can not be improved positively. Quality of service will remain unchanged.
- Museum can not earn revenue and can not stay in competition with the organisations for poor number of visitors. Museum can not retain its age-old image.

Chart: 1.6. Showing a museum with and without an Information Service
Dr. Bhaw Daji Lad Museum (Former Victoria & Albert Museum) 91 A, Babasaheb Ambedkar Road, Byculla, Mumbai-

Date of Study: 09.07.2002  Source of Information: Mr. J. Desai, Curator

Type of Museum: General Museum run by the Municipal Corporation of Mumbai

The museum is housed in a magnificent heritage building of Indo-Saracenic Style in the Rani Park (former Victoria Garden) of Mumbai.

Objects Content: Paintings of old Mumbai, cultural life of Maratha, pottery, ancient tiles, textiles mainly Watson textiles, metals objects, arms and armoury, glass negatives, arts and crafts, Indian coins, geological specimens etc. One visitors count machine is there, which is still working satisfactorily since 1862.

Service Provided: Guide service is available for school groups and willing people on prior permission. The museum provides necessary information and assistance to artists, newspaper houses, researchers, students of textiles, designing, ceramics, history etc. It also conducts competition on essay writing, sit & draw, allocutions etc. during the time of Ganapati festival of Mumbai.

Museum’s Visitors: Large number of people comes to this museum, but majority of them come here for specific purposes. Local people come here as a side spot during their visit in the Zoo, since the museum is situated in the Zoo complex. It is found that number of visitor increases during the competitions and exhibitions.

Museum’s Strength: Museum has rare collection of tiles, textile designs, monument’s plans and ceramics which are very much useful for people concerned in this field and they come for this purpose. Museum is located inside the Zoo complex, which is a popular tourist spot. For that it gets good number of visitors. Financially the museum is in a good position as it is fully sponsored by the Municipal Corporation of Mumbai.
Chapter: 1  

Museum Information Service

Problems: Museum lacks experienced staffs. Number of staff members is very few. The museum has to spend maximum part of its fund on the maintenance of the building, since it is housed is an ancient heritage building of about 150 years old. Therefore, other developmental programmes and services for visitors are suffering greatly. Museum’s has no marketing policy till now; therefore, popularity of the museum among local people is poor. Museum has communication problem with visitors. As Mumbai is a cosmopolitan city, therefore, variety of visitors comes here from different parts of the country as well as the world. But there is no interpreter, and maximum number of staffs only knows Marathi.

Forward Planning:
1. Museum decided to take a project for 2-5 years appointing few experts, who can work in conservation and computerized documentation of all the objects.
2. Trying to give banners, posters etc. during its various activities in the busiest and strategic locations of Mumbai and suburbs to attract people.

Suggestions:
1. Museum should appoint experts in the field of Museology, so that proper attention can be given on museum functioning like documentation, display, publications, visitor-oriented services, temporary exhibitions etc.
2. Museum needs persons who can communicate in Hindi, English and in common foreign languages.
3. The museum should advertise itself to inform about its various activities to local people, so that they can visit and participate in correct time.
4. Museum should provide few services for visitor that can assist them in understanding exhibits, getting interest ad entertainment.
5. Proper signboard, indications, labels, and plan are required to guide visitors.