



- ❖ Work has been ongoing by the Directors/Members on the “Future Search Process” or Strategy for the Museum’s future
- ❖ Two Broad Strategies have emerged from this work and engagement based around
 - 1) Staying in the existing Building OR
 - 2) Moving to a Brand New Green Field Site
- ❖ Within the first Strategy Proposal of Staying in the Existing Building are two variations
 - ❖ A) Stay within the existing footprint of the Mariner’s Church OR
 - ❖ B) Seek to Extend the footprint of the Mariner’s Church with a Sympathetic Extension
- ❖ In essence, 3 alternatives are currently on the table
 - ✓ 1A) Stay at Current Location and Within Existing Footprint and develop capability
 - ✓ 1B) Stay at Current Location but Expand Footprint and evolve the museum experience
 - ✓ 2) Seek a Greenfield Site for the Museum with partnering to transform
- ❖ At a high level each proposal needs to be evaluated in detail against a set of criteria, see slide 5 for an example approach but perhaps we also need to broaden the understanding of each option (see next slide for option 1A as promised)



❖ As well as considering the alternatives regarding Museum location and scale, and in order to be able to evaluate them against our broader purpose and objectives, the Institute needs to consider the following questions:

- 1) Our current objectives are stated to be
 - a. to collect, safeguard, hold in trust, research, develop and interpret collections of original objects and original objects on loan, for the public benefit;
 - b. to aid, benefit and assist the maritime interests of Ireland and Irish citizens pursuing maritime occupations;
 - c. to promote the advancement and interests of all Irish specialised knowledge, practice and research in maritime affairs;
 - d. to promote awareness of and raise the profile of Ireland's maritime heritage.

Do they accurately describe our actual objectives today?

Should our objectives be more focussed, in order to clarify our purpose and not to duplicate work of other organisations?

- 1) Are we truly a “national” Museum (or organisation) or really a local Museum?
- 2) If Ireland, as an island nation, deserves a true national custodian of its maritime heritage, recognised as such by the sector and the State – can we fulfil that role?
- 3) Should we be aiming to be an internationally recognised Museum or institute?
- 4) Are we primarily a educational / museum organisation or primarily a research organisation?



National Maritime Museum of Ireland – Future Strategy Outline 1A

OPTION: Remaining within the footprint and developing museum capability

Description	Essentially with this option the Museum stays in the Mariner’s Church but looks to broaden its footprint digitally and perhaps creating space for exhibits by partnering with say Dun Laoghaire Library or moving the archive collection. Focus is on the Museum and making it relevant and raising awareness. Critically it is not about stagnation and aims to create opportunities to broaden within the existing building. With this option control very much rests with the existing governance structures.		
Outline	<p>More Of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing heritage is maintained & strengthened Option to bring more digital to the Museum, e.g. audio guide app, virtual museum in tandem Partnerships on displays are possible Storage off site can be considered Library could be amalgamated with another May bring bigger audience to Museum Seek grants to deal with maintenance or basement improvements 	<p>Less Of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater focus on the museum and exhibits, less on research Whilst less focus, research is still within the remit of the Museum 	<p>Challenges</p>
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This option should not be viewed as stagnation but rather controlled evolution Starting with this option does not rule out any of the other strategic options i.e. it can be tested and move to others if desired Government grants to help with maintenance/renovate basement areas i.e. recent announcement on grants for listed buildings May be most manageable/realistic Control is retained 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current Funding Model is least challenged Probably retains voluntary operational model Doesn't really need a partner Does it address relevance and awareness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding Model is not greatly challenged Will the voluntary approach still work? Can it address awareness? Will the members support it?



National Maritime Museum of Ireland – Future Strategy Outline 1B

OPTION: Extend existing footprint and Further Develop Museum Experience

Description

Essentially with this option the Museum stays at the Mariner's Church but broadens its footprint with a suitable extension. This allows it to further enhance the journey through the Museum, perhaps add a Café. Aim is to enhance the Museum offering both physically and digitally, creating more space for exhibits. Focus is on the Museum and making it relevant and raising awareness. Critically it would require a partner to fund either via government or corporate. With this option control whilst within the existing governance structures, would none the less cede somewhat to the partner.

More Of

- **Includes most of the advantages of option 1A.**
- Existing heritage is also maintained & strengthened
- A variation on this theme, or complimentary initiative, could be the establishment of an umbrella organisation of Irish maritime museums and similar organisations, which could exchange exhibits, collaborate on events, and market themselves collectively.

Less Of

- Would involve ceding some control to partners or other organisations.

Challenges

- Would likely not be possible without expanding beyond current volunteer model.
- However, involvement of other organisations and/or move to employ professional museum staff would open up other opportunities.

Outline

Delivery

- A stated intention to undertake a specific project on or near our current site could be the impetus for seeking greater State or corporate funding.
- It could also be the catalyst for employing a professional CEO and/or curator.
- And it could be used in a further volunteer recruitment drive.

- Would require additional funding, but only gradual commitment to each phase of the expansion.

- May encounter logistical / planning difficulties given the nature of our current building.



National Maritime Museum of Ireland – Future Strategy Outline 2

OPTION: Move to Greenfield Site to enlarge Museum capability

Description

With this option the Museum moves away from the Mariner’s Church and a new museum & experience is delivered. As it is a greenfield site there is an element of “bluesky” as to what the new Museum experience is. This is probably the highest risk & cost and in this option control is very much ceded away from the current governance structures.



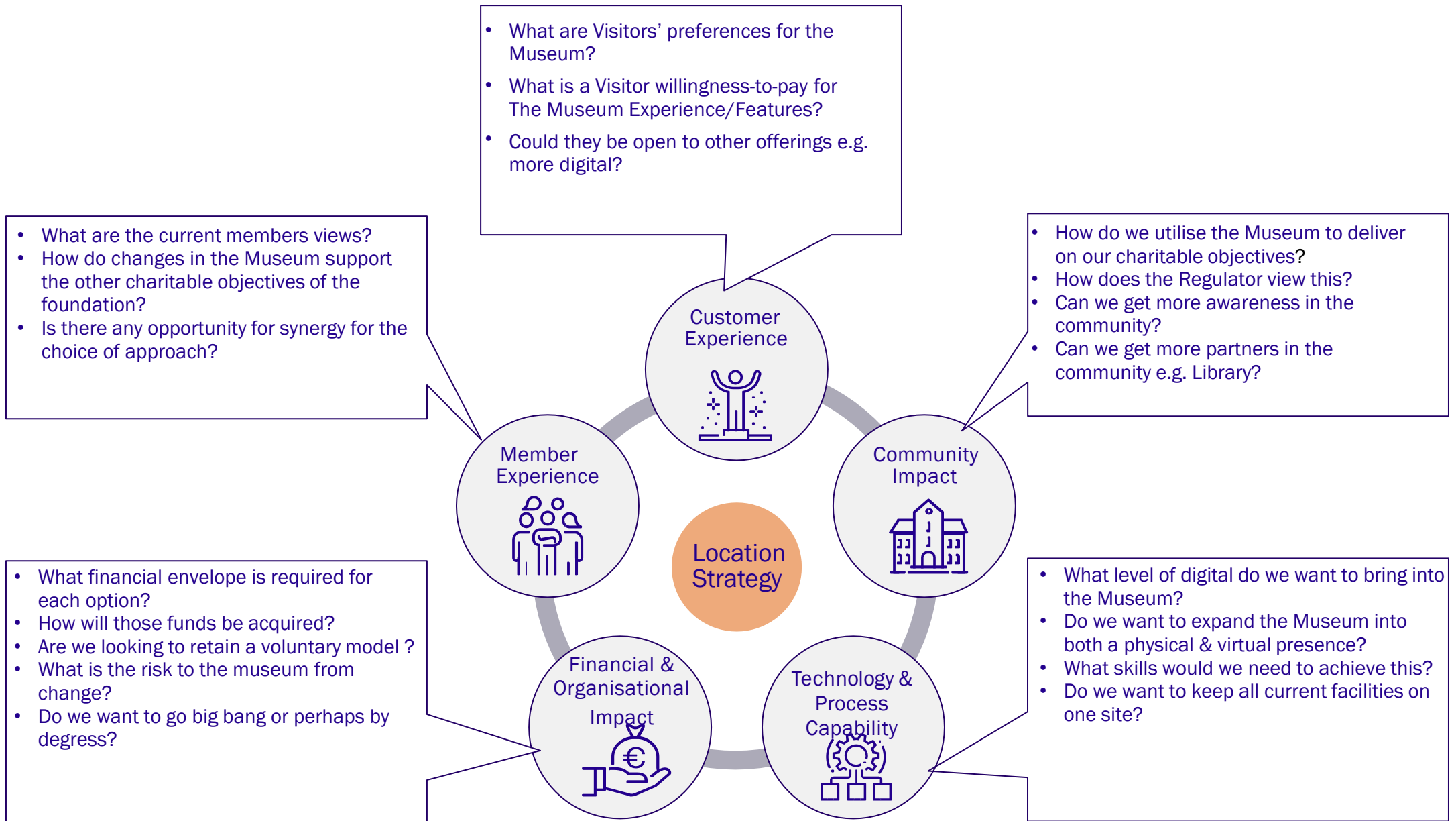
More Of

Less Of

Challenges

Outline

Delivery



Enhancing the Museum Visitor Experience Through Digitisation (Draft)

Summary

Many museums have enhanced their visitor experience through the use of technology/digital approaches. The use of QR codes, app downloads and widespread adoption of digital capable mobile phones has made it easier to provide for example an audio guide without the necessity of investing in specialist audio equipment and handsets.

At its recent meeting, the Board proposed to explore 3 main areas to enhance the visitor experience and provide direction to the Museum Committee; namely;

- 15 to 20 Minute Introductory Video Presentation for the Visitor at the start of their visit
- In respect of the Museum's star exhibits a set of digital screens per exhibit to give the visitor an enriched and more detailed information e.g. Bailey Light exhibit could include history of lighthouses in Ireland and more information on the Bailey.
- Self-guiding experience where by the museum journey is mapped out via a numerical route with accompany commentary on the exhibits. In essence, the visitor downloads or can receive the commentary on their phone.

Outline of Each Proposal

1. Introductory Video & Location Within Museum

The core of the proposal is to have a 15 to 20 minute video to give the visitor an overview of the history of the museum, its purpose, the key exhibits and perhaps some additional footage on Irish Maritime matters e.g. Lighthouses of Ireland.

Key elements to be determined are

- a) Where would this take place e.g. former café space, the current area in the library which already has a big screen or a new section, can any of the unused areas of the museum be suitably refreshed to work. Probably has to be a natural flow from the museum entrance.
- b) Composition & format of the 15 to 20 minute video. Has to be professionally edited/compiled. Draft suggested content (to be refined) is:
 - i. Introduction (short)
 - ii. History of the Mariner's church
 - iii. Key Exhibits & their history (introductory flavour), location in the museum, especially anything rare or unusual perhaps some digitals extracts from the library
 - iv. General Museum Overview – location of exhibits/areas (diagram that gets highlighted with the conversation)
 - v. Key elements from Irish Maritime history (lighthouses of Ireland, Irish Shipping, RNLI etc.)

- vi. Forthcoming exhibits
- vii. Health & Safety/Museum etiquette expected from the visitor
- viii. Items for the younger visitors
- c) Could we get an introduction from our Patron
- d) Who should be the narrator or narrators
- e) Some of the footage we may be able to get from interested parties e.g. RNLI may have a history we can use or we may already have it in our possession.
- f) Would we add this to the virtual tour of the Museum as an introduction

Overall, the video should whet the visitors' appetite for the museum, point out some must see and perhaps give them a reason to come back again.

2. Highlight the Museum's Star Exhibits

The Museum has a number of really core or unique exhibits e.g. the Bailey Light Optic, Halpin Exhibiton, the Kerlogue.

We should select a small number and seek to engage the visitor more in these by having self-service screens (perhaps two per exhibit) suitable housed around the exhibit that would give the visitor more information on the exhibit, its background, relation to wider matters, should they desire a deeper dive.

Again similar to the Introductory video, content could be determined and as these are standalone self-service screens more rather than less can be included. Indeed, we may well have more content than the screens can accommodate which could be rotated in and out to keep the content from going stale.

Overall this would let the interested or casual visitor delve more into the exhibit and have a more fulfilling experience, determined by their own curiosity or area of interest.

It is also possible that interested parties may have material which they would make available to us e.g. RNLI, Commissioners of Irish Lights etc.

First ask is of the Museum committee to devise a list of possible content for the key exhibits and then we go about seeing what is the most suitable display mechanism and how we build that content. This ask can probably be split into three parts 1) technological i.e. the self-service touch screen, 2) The housing or presentation of the touch scree to the visitor and 3) The exhibits & the content to be included on the screens.

We can allocate appropriate owners to the tasks

3. Self-Guiding Experience

A self-guiding approach has been used by many museums worldwide in tandem with actual human guides. To be clear the proposal is not one or the other. Indeed, audio guides have become the norm at many museums worldwide, complimenting the personal or group guide.

However, this has often meant that the museum has had to invest not just in the intellectual property (content) that would be the basis of the audio guide but also in the audio equipment and handsets by which this is delivered. This brought about considerable set-up cost but also ongoing cost and maintenance obligations in respect of handset upkeep, replacement, sanitisation etc.

However, given the large acceptance of digitally capable smart phones either Android or iPhone, it is considered there exists a very suitable alternative whereby the visitor could scan a QR code and download or perhaps only access an audio guide on the museum's server whilst they visit the museum.

The guide would be married to a predefined museum tour with a route and exhibits identified by numbers which the visitor would follow. Note, if the visitor decides to go solo, they could still get the info by pressing the relevant number on their phone.

To deliver the above. We need to make some initial assessments

- a) Technological feasibility & options e.g. Simple App that links to Museum server or download to phone etc.
- b) Are we exposing the Museum IT infrastructure to any risks and if yes, how do we mitigate same
- c) Devise a planned route through the Museum Exhibits
- d) Include all exhibits or a selected few
- e) Devise the script for the guide and do we want to include an option for extra info on the exhibit
- f) Who will be the narrator or narrators

Considering the above there are perhaps two broad elements to be researched 1) the technical feasibility & 2) The actual material & museum visitor route or itinerary.

Whilst all of the above will add to the visitor's experience whilst attending the museum. It is also likely that we will be able to leverage some of the material to enhance the museum's presence online and on social media to generate greater awareness and attract more visitors.