



Sleeping With the Enemy: Turning Market Cannibalisation into Market Growth

SPEAKER: Rose Hiscock, Manager Marketing and Communications, Museum Victoria (Melbourne, Australia)

As Head of marketing and communications for Museum Victoria, Rose Hiscock is responsible for the profile and visitor numbers for five museum venues. She has worked in the museum sector for many years and is experienced in commissioning market research, brand development, and call-to-action campaigns.

<http://www.museum.vic.gov.au>

CHAIR: Carlie Janszen, Marketing and Communications Manager, Rotterdam Marketing (The Netherlands)

Before becoming Marketing Communications Manager for Rotterdam Marketing, Carlie Janszen worked for the International Film Festival Rotterdam and the International Architecture Biennale Rotterdam in similar roles. Rotterdam Marketing is responsible for the marketing of Rotterdam, using a thematic approach e.g. architecture, festivals, arts and culture, nightlife, shopping.

<http://www.rotterdam.info/>



CASE STUDY NOTES:

Rose Hiscock opened her case study with the question – can competitors be partners? You need trust to build a successful partnership but how can you trust your competitors? She went on to describe how five organisations in Australia did just that.

The organisations concerned are the Melbourne Museum, Scienceworks Museum, Immigration Museum, Melbourne Planetarium, and the Royal Exhibition Building. They have been brought together under one umbrella organisation, the State Museum for Victoria, described by J. P. Green, CEO, Museum Victoria, as: 'A single museum organisation capable of realising its full potential.'

The Australian market

Australia has a population of about 20 million people, of which tourists make up about 5 million. Although the same size as Europe, the population is concentrated on the edges of the continent, including in the state of Victoria. Distances mean that Australians do not often travel overseas to see exhibitions, so exhibitions must come to them. However, not many Australians choose to spend their leisure time at museums and indigenous collections are more popular with tourists than with Australians.

Working in a network

Each of the individual museums, now under the Museum Victoria umbrella, had been facing difficult times, falling visitor numbers, rising budgets, etc. There were obvious financial advantages in operating as a network. However there was also a fear of competition. Some museum staff felt that a visitor to another museum was one less visitor to their own museum. They had to be convinced that this was not the case - research conducted by Museum Victoria shows that cultural activity actually generates more cultural activity, so one museum visit leads to other 'extra' visits somewhere else (or repeat visits to the same museum).

Building a clear identity and understanding your audiences

The first steps for each of the organisations under the Museum Victoria umbrella, was to:

- Establish a clear identity, distinct from the other organisations in the network. This included work on brand, logos, etc.
- Understand the different audiences, where they live, why they come, etc. It became apparent that each of the organisations appealed to a slightly different audience. Interestingly, there were some surprises: sometimes a museum appealed to a quite unexpected type of audience.

This work was very worthwhile because it helped the museums to identify potential partners, with complementary identities and audiences. The research also identified families as an important audience for all the museums. This has led Museum Victoria to look for partnerships with other 'family friendly' cultural activities, for example, the zoo. The aim is to reach wider, younger audiences.