

Managing and Marketing a Modern Art Museum in a Small Town: A Case Study on Odunpazarı Modern Museum

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Abstract : Modern art is relatively new but a popular area in Turkish art society. Modern art museums are mainly located in big cities like Istanbul and Ankara where cultural life is more dynamic. Odunpazarı Modern Museum (OMM) will open its doors on September 2019 and be the only modern art museum located in a small town in Turkey. OMM executives declare the mission of the museum as; art must go beyond the metropolises of the world, give a new lease of life to cities that make a difference with their cultural texture, and reach a greater audience through that expansion. So OMM will not only serve as a museum but a landmark for regenerating the city brand of Eskişehir like the Guggenheim in Bilbao. OMM is located in the Odunpazarı area, the heart of Eskişehir. Named after the historical timber market it once hosted, Odunpazarı is a nominated site for the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage List, and is Eskişehir's first area of settlement. This study focuses on the complex nature of opening a modern art museum in a small town. The management and marketing dynamics of OMM are discussed in the study. Content analysis technique is used on local and national news to display the perception differences before and after the opening of OMM. In depth interviews with the executives of the museum are conducted in order to enlighten the insights of opening a modern art museum in a small town. Early findings of the content analysis point out that, the comments on the national press are mostly positive. On the other hand, different views occur on the local press. The location OMM is constructed and grandness of the museum building are criticized by some of the local newspapers. OMM's potential as a tourist attraction is agreed by most of the media. OMM executives stated the most challenging task as reaching the different target audiences on international, national and local levels. These early findings will be improved and compared shortly before and after the opening of the museum.

Keywords : management, marketing, Odunpazarı modern museum, small town

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