

# Mediated environments



Comparisons between the modern and past mediated environments reveal a difference in perspective, design, the contexts and the audience. This has been attributed to a number of factors that include changes socio cultural values and perceptions together with advances in technology and innovation of better practices in operation and management of the mediated environments. Most of the changes are aimed at ensuring the provided service meets the expectation of the audience. The museums are one of the mediated environments that have seen undergone tremendous changes from the 19th to the current 21st century.

The museums began as private collections made of rare, curious and antique objects or artifacts. These belonged to wealthy and high ranking individuals, families and institutions. The public museums were significantly founded around the world in the 18th century, although others had been established in earlier centuries as far back as the 13th century (Anderson, 2004). From having personal audience, the idea grew to public viewing of the objects of historical, artistic, scientific or cultural importance. This grew to differentiation of this mediated environment into many varieties in the 19th century, based on the main genre of the collected artifacts.

The contemporary situation has led to different museums covering the subjects on archeology, zoology, arts, craft, history, ethnology, cultural history, anthropology, military history and natural history among other subjects. Under the subject classes, the museums may further specialize the categories of objects under agriculture, technology, modern art or children's museum among other sections that may be deemed appropriate by the museum (Henning, 2006). Categories have been added, especially towards

the 21st century, to further provide the audience with clearer perspective on given areas of knowledge, to which the objects and artifacts have relevance. According to Anderson (2004), " museum leaders have influenced the transformation" of this mediated environment and its role in the society.

The museums are now " no longer sacred or untouchable", but are now rather " open to public scrutiny" with an interactive relation with its audience (Casey, 2011). Attention to the role they have as a medium of relaying information to the public has made the professionals focus on effectively achieving the objective though redesigning their environments ensuring the audience has memorable experiences from the visit (Gleiniger, 2010). The contemporary interior designing of the museums are aimed at ensuring the audience gets the ambience of what the displayed artifacts portray.

Historical objects of a specific era are designated together in an arrangement that would give the viewer a perspective of the historical events and a " general feel of the historical era" (Henning, 2006).

The use of mediated space is appropriately applied in relaying similar and related information at the same time. The various categories of audience, from children, pupils, scholars to professionals in given areas of study, have their perceived needs catered for by creation of specified sections within the museum. Visualization achieves the purpose of easily translating the " easy to understand artifacts" into the historical context (Gleiniger, 2010). The addition of audible music in some section related to the displayed artifacts creates simulated experiences within this environment. The " museum mise-en-scene", creates specific perspective and " associated understanding" of its artifacts and objects (Casey, 2011).

The use of technology has further expanded the mediated environment capabilities to perform its purpose. The TV screens create an amiable environment, rather than archaic, in addition to providing extra information. The museum of modern art in New York has installed " touch screen kiosks" with soft ware suited for a variety of audience (fluidproject. org, 2011). The use of modern technology embodies the museum arts within the contemporary socio cultural environment, and subsequently transforming this " mediated environment to experience based from object based approach" (Casey, 2011).