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# Cultural policy and management: The archaeological museum of the Acropolis

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**Abstract:** *The Archaeological Museum of the Acropolis. Strategy is always an important tool for the development of cultural organizations that want to realize their mission and vision. Implementing a strategic management plan is essential for any organization. "Any organization that adopts the concept of strategic design should select elements from various management models that will then adapt to the specific operating conditions and the place where it operates." There are some basic common steps in all models, since when one tries to develop and design a strategy for managing each organization, one must answer the following fundamental questions: - What is the point we want to go? - initiative purposes, - What is our point now? -reviewing the current situation, -What do we need to do to be where we want to go? -Select a strategy, -What are we going to do? -control. The development of the strategy must be focused on the requirements and needs of the target audience and competition must always be calculated. Mission and objectives can be reviewed whenever necessary. In this paper the concept of strategy is first written out and the planning process for the formation of strategic cultural units is analyzed. The case study examines the Acropolis Museum in Athens, the inauguration of which took place on July 21, 2009. The Acropolis Museum is a Legal Entity of Public Law, belonging to the Ministry of Culture, but it is autonomous in several areas. It is run by a Board of Directors, chaired by Professor of Archeology Dimitris Pantermalis. The new Museum of the Acropolis offers all the services provided by the modern museums of the 21st century. Describe the strategic plan of the organization at work, and on the basis of a SWOT analysis, its degree of viability is being examined for this period of economic crisis. It also analyzes the degree of efficiency of the strategy for future development of the museum and evaluates the strategy on the basis of qualitative and quantitative criteria.*

**Keywords:** Strategy, SWOT Analysis, Organization, Acropolis Museum

**JEL Classification:** I28

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

In the present study, the concept of strategy and the planning process for the formation of strategic cultural units are analyzed. The Acropolis Museum in Athens is then considered as a case study where you describe the strategic plan of the organization and through the SWOT analysis it is considered its degree of viability during this period. Finally, the degree of viability during this period. Finally, the degree of efficiency of the strategy for future development of the

museum is analyzed and the strategy is evaluated on the basis of qualitative and quantitative criteria.

## 2 EXAMINE THE CONCEPT OF STRATEGY AND ANALYZE THE PROCESS OF PLANNING THE STRATEGY OF A CULTURAL UNIT

The strategy as a word comes from the word general, who was the commander of the army in ancient Greece, and then



used as an explanation of the "art of the general" (Hambouri & Ioannidou, 2003: 31). In Modern Greek, the definition of strategy by Professor Babinotis implies that "an organization is involved in the planning of its goal and its strategy" (Hampouris & Ioannidou, 2003: 31). While the concept of strategy has been used as a military term for centuries, cultural things have been used in recent years mainly by Kotler and Middleton (Hampouris & Ioannidou, 2003: 31). Papadakis (1999: 8) says strategy is the common point of activity that the organization and its products / markets define what the nature of the business will be, previously and in the future. For the Boston Consulting Group strategy is a resource-sharing and resource-use plan of the organization that faces competition and stabilizes advantageously the organization through its environment (Bourantas & Papalexandri, 1998: 126). There are, according to Whittington (1993), four schools of strategic theory: classical, evolutionary, procedural and systemic (Hampouris & Ioannidou, 2003: 34). The oldest and wider is the classical school that is rational and designed ex ante in every detail exclusively by the organization's management for the sole purpose of profit (Hampouris & Ioannidou, 2003: 34). With three words, he analyzed, designed and ordered. For the evolutionary faculty, the external environment of the organization, which exerts pressure on the organization's choices and not on its managers, has a primary role (Hampouris & Ioannidou, 2003: 35). In a nutshell, keep costs low and choices high. For the procedural approach, the strategy is shaped by a combination of interactions within the organization it assimilates (Hampouris & Ioannidou, 2003: 35). That is, stay on the ground and go with the current. The system follows logic considering the cultural context and local social forces for strategic planning. In short, play with local rules. In addition to the four strategic thinking schools mentioned above in recent years, a new approach has emerged, based on the resources of the organizations they have in place to achieve their strategic goals (Hampouris & Ioannidou, 2003: 36). Strategy is always an important tool for the development of cultural organizations that want to realize their mission and vision (Christou, 2010; Zunis, 2015). The implementation of a strategic management plan is essential for any organization (Hampouris & Ioannidou, 2003: 41). "Any organization that adopts the concept of strategic design should select elements from various management models which will then adapt to the specific operating conditions and the area in which it operates" (Hampouris & Ioannidou, 2003: 41). There are some basic common steps in all models when one tries to develop and design a strategy for managing each organization to answer the following fundamental questions (Hampouris & Ioannidou, 2003: 41-42): - What is the point we want to go? -initiative purposes, -What is our point now? -revaluation of the current situation, -What do we need to do to be where we want to go-selecting a strategy, -Why are we going? -control, The development of the strategy must be focused on the requirements and needs of the target audience and competition must always be calculated. Mission and objectives can be revised whenever necessary (Wheelen T., Hunger J., 2004).

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### 3 SWOT ANALYSIS

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The process of evaluating the present state of an organization is compiled in the bibliography titled "SWOT analysis", an abbreviation of the initial letters, English words, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, respectively translated into advantages, weaknesses, opportunities and dangers (Hambouri & Ioannidou, 2003: 50). SWOT analysis is a simple and useful tool since it reflects a kind of strategic balance that shows the strategic position of the organization (Hampouris & Ioannidou, 2003: 52).

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### 4 CRITERIA FOR SELECTION - EVALUATION OF THE STRATEGY

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A very prime point is also the control of the efficiency and effectiveness of the chosen strategy. It is a continuous development, which, with reliable and practical criteria, explores the results, in order for the organization to be viable and improving, the satisfaction of the large public and its productive resources to evolve (Hampouri-Ioannidou, 2003: 59). Control can still help with modifications to the implementation of its strategy for profit.

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### 5 CASE STUDY: THE NEW ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF THE ACROPOLIS

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The monuments of the acropolis have borne all the damage from ancient times to the Middle Ages. In the 17th century foreign travelers reported it and their wear began a few years later when the Ottomans for a fortification dismantled the temple of Nike (Aspridis-Kordias-Kymeris-Kyriakos, 2014). In 1687 a Venetian bomb destroyed much of the monuments while the final hit came in the 18th century when the English Lord Elgin took sculptures from the Parthenon. The Greek state decided in 1863 to build a museum and was founded in 1865. This museum, with as many extensions as it did later, could not cope with the presentation of the exhibits but also with the needs of the visitors. In 1976, the prime minister, Mr. Konstantinos Karamanlis, delimited the space for the construction of a new museum, while the contribution of the Minister of Culture of the period 1981-1989 to Melina Merkouri was enormous. In 2000, the last international competition was awarded to Bernard Tschumi and Michalis Fotiadis (Aspridis-Strohliak-Kymeris-Kyriakos, 2014). The project "Creation of a New Acropolis Museum" was co-financed by the Greek State and the Ministry of Culture and by the European Union and the European Regional Development Fund.

The inauguration of the new Acropolis Museum took place on 21 July 2009. Its total space is 25,000 m<sup>2</sup>. and the exhibition area is 14,000 square meters, ten times larger than the old museum. The Acropolis Museum is a Legal Entity of Public Law, which is the Ministry of Culture, but it is autonomous in many areas. It is run by a Board of Directors, chaired by Professor of Archeology Dimitris Pantermalis (VIMA). The new Acropolis Museum offers all the services provided by modern 21st century museums.

Figure 1  
The new Acropolis Museum



## 6 THE STRATEGIC PLAN OF THE ACROPOLIS MUSEUM FOR THE PERIOD 2014-2020.

The eighth year of operation of the Acropolis Museum (2017) had the same stable qualities as in previous years, as well as the addition of new digital applications to the exhibition venues and the establishment of pioneering programs of periodicals (Dimitrios Pantermalis). There has been a great and successful response by the Museum's staff to its visitors, which averaged 4,000 visitors per day, facilitating entry, movement and stay in the Museum's rooms of such massive traffic (Pantermalis). The Honorable Distinction of the Museum in 2017 by the users of the TripAdvisor guidebook, shows the bold extrovert policy of the Acropolis Museum (Pantermalis). There was a telephone interview of Mrs. Danaï Zaousis from the Communication & Promotion Department to record the strategy. The Acropolis Museum, through its Strategic Plan for the period 2014-2020, is reviewing its mission as a museum by setting goals for the next period as part of its bid for the whole country, and with my goals being aligned with the practices other similar art museums as well as setting strategic goals that can stand financially. The strategic plan of the Museum for the period 2017-2018 is in line with the framework of the six-year program (NSRF 2014-2020) in order to be in harmony with the state-community co-financing program (tornosnews.gr). Its structure has the following form.

### The Structure of the Strategic Plan

We will present the structure of the strategic plan of the Acropolis Museum Cultural Organization that was done through its own targeting methodology based on its own needs and choices for the 2014-2020 period and is as follows: 1. The mission and the fundamental principles of the Museum (missionandvalues). 2. Text of the introduction by the director of the museum, Mr. Pantermalis (director's foreword). 3. The plan in brief, a summary of the key points of the Strategic Plan. 4. Set-scene presentation with the sub-sections: 4.1) Analysis of the strategic environment. 4.2)

Analysis of museum performance (efficiency / visibility indicators - operating cost per visitor). 5. Presentation of strategic objectives of the museum: - For the 2014-2020 period, the museum had five (5) key strategic goals. - Each goal is defined by specific priorities, ie specific axes for the implementation of the target, each of which has the name of the executives responsible for implementation. -The targeting method we mentioned is summarized in the following relation (Zounis, 2015):Goal-Priorities-Strategies

### The main strategic goals of the museum according to the Strategic Plan

According to the strategic plan, the main strategic goals of the 2014-2020 Museum are the following: 1. The significance-priority of the permanent collection for the Museum. Symposium with the new Ministry of the Interior's strategy to claim the return of the Parthenon sculptures at the British Museum (Zaoussi, 2018). 2. Strengthen the Museum's educational program and periodic exhibitions with the aim of quantitatively and qualitatively increasing traffic. 3. Maintaining high quality standards at all levels of its operation and service delivery. Strengthening management systems and organizational capacity. 4. Financial stability and then economic empowerment of the museum. 5. Creating a multi-dimensional website for the Acropolis Museum that will include (tornosnews.gr): - Information about the Museum and the organization of a visit to it, - Presentation through the Collector Management System of the collection of the 10,000 objects of the Museum. - "Virtual" Online Museum where the visitor will schedule his visit according to his interests, creating a "personal collection" of favorite exhibits through applications (Zaoussi, 2018). - Children's Club Website, where children will be able to tour the Museum and learn about ancient culture by learning to play (Zaoussi, 2018). We note that the main strategic objectives of the museum for the period 2014-2020 correspond to a wide range of issues that are: a) cultural-educational-social role of the museum along with marketing issues (increase of traffic), b) improvement of the administrative / capacity, c) elevation in financial income, and d) functional-ergonomic issues.

## 7 SWOT ANALYSIS, ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF THE ACROPOLIS MUSEUM

The main goal of the Acropolis museum is to preserve as much as possible the treasures that the museum has in its possession (Zaoussi, 2018). The museum was designed with two objectives. Being able to offer the best possible conditions to present the projects he has in his possession and to be friendly to his guests (Sgoura, Ch., 2016). Its strengths and weaknesses are those that concern its interior and the opportunities and threats are the wider socio-economic-political environment that can affect it. In Opportunities we can mention globalization and almost free, which increases the impact of the Museum. The rise of the average educational level still increases access to art. Also, the development of technology is another opportunity as well as the new ways of networking the youth (eg blogs, facebook, instagam, twitter, etc.). In Threats we can say that globalization eliminates borders but increases competition at

international level. The financial crisis fails the resources of the Museum as there is a decline in the purchasing power of consumers (Pappas, 2017). At the strong points we can mention the name of the Museum and the prestige it inspires. Also the Museum's vision. Still, we have to mention that the visitor can see permanent, seasonal or periodical exhibitions supported by valuable services such as guided tours or personal guided tours (Aspridis-Kordias-Kymeris-Kyriakos, 2014). There is interactive visitor involvement using touch screen displays, with visual 3D but also with virtual reality, with projections or even with documentaries. The visitor offers a sense of exhilarating exposition which is complemented by the provision of hospitality services such as restaurants, cafes and childcare facilities (Zaoussi, 2018). The museum is designed to support the access of all its visitors to culture, with special ramps and special lifts, Braille, and other audiovisual media (Aspridis-Strohliakimeris-Kyriakou, 2014). It is environmentally friendly and connected to the most modern technological applications, attracting so many new people. The Acropolis Museum is No. 1 among the 327 activities in Athens and 94% of its ratings in the tripadvisor travel guide are excellent (76%) and very good (16%) (tripadvisor). The strategic position of the museum is completed by its topographical position adjacent to the Acropolis monument and the theater of Herodes Atticus, three sights that are co-operating with each other (Aspridis-Strohliakimeris-Kyriakou, 2014). The second museum in Athens, the Archaeological Museum, has one-third of the Tripadvisor's visit to the Acropolis Museum. The design of his exhibits must be oriented towards fulfilling his goals, namely attracting new visitors, reducing his operating expenses, increasing his income and increasing the satisfaction of his clients. In the Acropolis Museum the design was the one who helped to fulfill his goals. Through modern management systems it can reduce its operating costs. It is environmentally friendly, has been built with recyclable materials of high energy efficiency and is capable of operating under any weather conditions (Aspridis-Strohliakimeris-Kyriakos, 2014). It is safe with the introduction of modern security systems and can be used by companies as well as by ordinary visitors. The Acropolis Museum still with innovative exhibitions and collaborations such as those with the Shanghai Museum and the New York Museum has, during this time of crisis, to make sure that choice in quality is not dependent on the crisis (Zausis, 2018). Weaknesses should include the non-autonomous administration, the limited number of employees and the lack of sufficient financial resources. The era of crisis requires partnerships / partnerships that can be saved. The collaboration and sponsorships of major Greek companies such as ETEM, who was the great sponsor of the exhibition "Tourism Landscapes by Reconstructing Greece", is an example. The Museum's plan envisages tightening public relations with local and national institutions, educational institutions or other organizations with a similar strategic targeting (Zaoussi, 2018). The museum's property is its people. The training, training and development of the capabilities of the existing staff are essential for the development of the museum (Aspridis-Strohliakimeris-Kyriakos, 2014).

### **Performance review of the strategy-evaluation**

In such a modern museum that is the head of the country's museums, it is difficult to find any disadvantage in its strategic course. The Acropolis Museum faithfully follows the theory of implementing a strategic plan, recording the goals and ways of applying them. Magnificent but also systematic, it is worthwhile to fill its inspiration and increase its traffic to more than 1.5 million visitors a year now. The policy of continual control of its capabilities through its annual summary with reference to profitability ratios, as well as a detailed understanding of its financial situation, is a powerful asset for achieving its goals. The detailed description of each individual sign, accompanied by excellent graphic editing of the brief account, makes it attractive. However, looking at the elements of periodic annual reports, the signs of the economic crisis are visible. While the five years of its operation had a 10-12% increase in traffic each year (Kontraŭ-Rassia, 2014), in recent years the number of annual visitors has stuck to about one and a half million visitors. Here, it should be noted that while the museum is public and not private, it does not receive a state subsidy and operates exclusively from its own revenues and a budget of 6.5-7 million euros coming from tickets, souvenir sales and coffee- restaurant without any profits (Kontraŭ-Rassia, 2014). The Museum's management by the Organization for the Construction of a New Acropolis Museum must go to the new Museum. Managerial and staff positions must be proclaimed to operate under the new regime (Kontraŭ-Rassia, 2014). His expansive intention to create a digital museum that is being prepared will give impetus and bring additional economic benefits. At the end of 2017, the Region of Attica finally secured resources for the creation of the Digital Acropolis Museum, with a total budget of 1.74 million euros (tornosnews.gr). Here we have to add that this is a requirement of the museum since the beginning of its operation.

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## **8 CONCLUSIONS**

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The strategy is an important development tool through which cultural organizations can realize their goals and visions. A strategic plan depicts the entire strategy of the cultural organization that is the mirror of the organization to the outside. The strategy and its applications (strategic planning and strategic plan) are not vague and abstract concepts, but something specific that is shaped according to the actual needs and functions of a cultural organization. The organization that has a clear mission, owns what its potential and weaknesses, opportunities and risks, with the right choice of strategy and performance control, can ensure its sustainability. Investigating the case of the Acropolis Museum we come to a conclusion with a positive sign, since its strategic planning at all stages of its development works in a coordinating way in order to benefit its mission and goals. By reporting and evaluating the advantages and drawbacks of this design through the study of his strategic plan, financial figures and performance indicators, we come to the main result that we conclude, having regard to the current economic situation, the strategy of an organization should not be above the possibilities that can be funded, but

the mission and goals of the organization with the current economic data be carried out.

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