

**INVESTIGATING THE USE OF DIGITAL MARKETING COMMUNICATION AT  
THE LIVINGSTONE MUSEUM, ZAMBIA**

**BY**

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Submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree

**MASTER OF ARTS IN COMMUNICATION SCIENCE**

at the

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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26<sup>th</sup> February, 2024

## **ABSTRACT**

In today's digital age, many tourism organisations struggle to reach and engage different target groups and the Livingstone Museum is no exception. This study aimed to investigate the use of digital marketing communication at the Livingstone Museum in Zambia.

A mixed method research design was used to investigate the use of digital marketing communication at the museum, combining qualitative interviews with six museum staff members and quantitative surveys with 300 visitors.

This study investigated the digital marketing communication tools used by the Livingstone Museum to engage tourists, revealing a predominant focus on Facebook, the museum's website, and online tour agencies. However, it was found that these tools were utilised in a limited manner, leading to a lack of visitor awareness and engagement.

Despite recognising the opportunities of digital marketing for enhancing relationships and raising awareness, the museum struggled with challenges such as measuring return on investment, applying an integrated marketing communication approach due to financial constraints, and inconsistent internal communication. The study concluded that the museum's digital marketing efforts needed improvement to effectively reach and engage visitors, necessitating better content, more frequent communication, and a cohesive strategy that prioritised visitor needs.

### **Keywords**

*Digital marketing communication, marketing communication, integrated marketing communication, tourism marketing, tourism organizations, communication staff members, Livingstone Museum, visitor engagement, visitor perception, communication channel.*

**DECLARATION**

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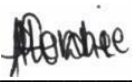
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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Firstly, I would like to thank God by giving me the opportunity and strength to pursue my Master's degree which is something I have wanted since I was a young girl. I would like to express my gratitude to the Department of Communication Science for creating this great learning platform which I am confident will unlock boundless opportunities for me and the many students who undertook this program. My gratitude also goes to my Parents and Siblings for giving me the courage to go on even during times I felt like giving up.

To my supervisors, Dr. Hanekom and Dr. Swart, you spared endless hours to help me improve my work, you urged me on through the most complex academic periods yet and never stopped believing in me. For that I am forever grateful.

Lastly, to the University of South Africa whose vision is “to help the people of Africa achieve their dreams through open distance learning”, I am proud to have been nurtured in your professional institution.

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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

CMO:	Chief Marketing Officer
IMC:	Integrated Marketing Communication
SMM:	Social Media Marketing
UGC:	User-Generated Content

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## **CHAPTER 1 : INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

This study examined the use of Digital Marketing Communications (DMC) at the Livingstone Museum. It aimed to understand the role of digital marketing communication in reaching and engaging museum visitors. Research such as Lister's (2015) study indicates that many museums struggle to attract and reach visitors, but few studies identify the causes of this problem. Specifically, this study looked at a museum's use of digital marketing communications to determine its role in engaging and reaching visitors.

This chapter is an introduction to this study. The research context is addressed by presenting the research problem, the background of the research problem, the research objectives and research questions, as well as the theoretical background of the research. In addition, key terms are defined and research methodology including ethical aspects are discussed.

### **1.2 THE RESEARCH PROBLEM**

The Livingstone Museum, like many other museums, deals with increased visitor expectations and limited information on digital marketing communication (Colon 2016:26). Henry (2017:4) argues that such problems can hinder opportunities such as creating awareness, global reach, and improved communication. Reports by the Zambian Tourism Board (ZTB) have shown that tourist visitation, especially from international tourists, dropped by 33% between 2018 and 2021, mainly due to the pandemic (Busuma 2021). This significant decline highlights the importance of implementing digital marketing strategies, as the digital environment became more prominent when people could not visit physical destinations. This issue is critical because the Livingstone Museum, a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO), relies mainly on visitors to sustain itself.

Visitor statistics for the Livingstone Museum over the last few years further underscore this problem. In 2017, the museum welcomed approximately 50,000 visitors. However, this number dropped to 45,000 in 2018, 40,000 in 2019, and significantly declined to 25,000 in 2020 and 2021 due to the pandemic (Busuma 2021). This declining trend in visitor numbers emphasises the need for effective digital marketing communication to attract and engage potential visitors.

A study on the use of digital marketing communication is important because, at the time of this study, few researchers had explored Digital Marketing Communication (DMC) in the context of museums, including the role digital marketing communication plays in allowing them to reach and engage visitors. Additionally, this study highlights the various opportunities that digital marketing communication may provide the museum in reaching and engaging visitors. The discussion also shows that visitors are the museum's main source of income, making it in the museum's best interest to have efficient DMC tools to reach and engage them effectively.

To further support the identified gap for the study, it is essential to reference previous studies on this topic. Research has shown that museums implementing robust digital marketing strategies have seen significant improvements in visitor engagement and attendance (Smith 2018; Johnson, 2019). These studies underscore the potential benefits of effective digital marketing communication for the Livingstone Museum.

In summary the Livingstone Museum faces a critical challenge of declining visitor numbers, exacerbated by limited digital marketing communication strategies, which hampers its ability to attract, engage, and sustain its primary source of income.

### **1.3 THE CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM**

Due to technological advances in recent years, information and communication tools have become vital in influencing not only global trends but also to create awareness of brands (Leon 2017: 30). Although these technological advances have brought many benefits, they have changed the way organisations, like museums operate. Technological advances such as digital marketing communication have necessitated a re-evaluation of how museums reach and engage visitors (Leon 2017: 58).

Museums globally have been adapting to the digital age and with the growth of digital marketing communication, museums have recognised the importance of embracing digital strategies to increase their reach to visitors (Aldin 2020: 90). Seth (2018: 10) notes that, the importance of digital marketing communication in museums is evident as it is used to ensure that, through a properly strategised digital communication plan, they are able to obtain a competitive edge. Ndinga (2016:245) reports in his study that, museums, in Isoka District, which is in Muchinga province of Zambia, were facing challenges in reaching and engaging with potential customers. Ndinga (2016:

60) adds that, some of these challenges in reaching and engaging tourists has led to the closure of several small culture and crafts centers because the majority of these heritage sites rely solely on visitors to survive.

According to Asegom (2016: 22), most investment in marketing communication of tourism is centered on the capital city of Lusaka, in Zambia. Hence, leaving out other non-government supported tourism organisations to support their own marketing communication strategies, even though, in 1964, Livingstone was declared a tourist capital (Asegom 2016: 22). This highlights the importance of continued engagement of visitors to museums. In addition, the discussion highlights the gap of knowledge that this study addresses in terms of the role that communication tools such as digital marketing communication play in reaching and engaging visitors for museums. The next section discusses the research questions and objectives outlined for this study.

## **1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

Research questions are questions that research intends to answer by the end of the research process (Angus 2018: 35). Therefore, this research intends to answer the following research questions:

- 1 Which digital marketing communication platforms/tools does The Livingstone Museum use to reach and engage tourists?
- 2 What are the opportunities that digital marketing communication can provide the museum?
- 3 What are the visitors' perceptions on the use of digital marketing communication at the Livingstone Museum?
- 4 What are the challenges that the museum is facing with regard to digital marketing communication?
- 5 What is the role of digital marketing communication in reaching and engaging visitors at the Livingstone Museum?
- 6 What recommendations on the use of digital marketing communication at the Livingstone Museum can be made?

## **1.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

This section highlights the research objectives used for this study.

### **1.5.1 Descriptive objectives**

Descriptive research objectives are a type of research objective that seeks to obtain information to systematically describe a phenomenon, situation or population (Weldon 2020: 453). Specifically,

they help answer the what, when, where, and how questions of a research problem, not why. It is important to note that the descriptive research method, unlike experimental research, does not control or manipulate any variables (Tynol 2016: 34).

Thus, descriptive objectives ensure that variables are easily identified, observed and measured. A descriptive research method may involve using a variety of research methods to examine the relevant variables. It primarily uses quantitative data, although qualitative data is sometimes used for descriptive purposes.

### **1.5.2 Exploratory Objectives**

Exploratory objectives are defined as objectives used to “investigate a problem which is not clearly defined” (Palow 2021:867). Exploratory objectives assist the researcher in having a better understanding of the existing problem, but may not provide conclusive results. According to Markis (2020: 78), such research objectives are used when the problem is at a preliminary stage and can change as the study progresses. They at most times use a grounded theory approach or interpretive research because they tend to answer questions like what, why and how. This research used both descriptive and exploratory objectives to better understand the existing problems and provide an accurate description of the phenomenon. These types of research objectives are based on understanding the existing phenomenon and procuring new insight as part of a pilot test to recognise important concepts and identify relevant stakeholders (Palow 2021: 908).

The research objectives for this study are:

- 1 To explore digital marketing communication platforms used by the Livingstone Museum to reach and engage visitors.
- 2 To explore the opportunities that digital marketing communication can offer the museum.
- 3 To understand and describe visitors' perceptions on the use of digital marketing communication at the museum.
- 4 To identify the challenges that the museum may be facing with regard to digital marketing communication.
- 5 To describe the role of digital marketing communication at the Livingstone Museum in engaging and reaching tourists.
- 6 To provide recommendations on the use of digital marketing communication at the Livingstone Museum.

## **1.6 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS**

### **1.6.1 Marketing communication**

Govani (2018:123) states that, marketing communication is, "the process by which an organisation uses specific means of communication to persuade a target market to take a specific action". Carson (2019:45) defines marketing communication as "a means of understanding the expectations of consumers in order to obtain a positive response to an organisation's offerings.

Marketing communication is considered a broad topic based on the combination of different marketing communication tools that usually reinforce each other. However, this study investigated the use of digital marketing communication, which is a part of marketing communication using online/digital media, including the Internet (Vort 2014:34). The study focused on the use of digital marketing communication specifically at the Livingstone Museum to understand how it is used to reach and engage visitors and the various opportunities it can offer them. The above definitions of marketing communication are related to this study because digital marketing communication, which is part of marketing communication, was studied to understand its role in the museum and its communication process.

#### **1.6.2.1 Digital Marketing Communication**

One of the most relevant definitions of digital marketing communication for this study is by Archie (2018:84) who describes digital marketing communication as "an aspect of marketing communication that coherently uses online tools to engage consumers". Avant (2020:70) defines digital marketing communication as "the use of online tools to reach consumers and promote organisational offerings and values". Digital marketing communication also exists as a tactic that organisations are using through various digital tools to understand what works and what doesn't work with their target audiences (Harris 2019:14). Gory (2017:45) outlines digital marketing communication as an approach to create continuous good experiences for consumers that interact with the brand. Examples of digital marketing communication include social media marketing, email marketing and websites, and in the context of museums, virtual museums (Gory 2017: 60).

Reina (2013:23) discusses how organisations around the world use digital marketing communication not only for marketing products and services but also because it encourages customer support systems that allow customers to feel valued. It has become increasingly

advantageous for businesses to use digital marketing communication as part of their marketing strategies to connect with their customers and to create positive dialogue with them. The potential reach of digital marketing communication is indicated in a study by Taye (2017) which showed how organisations with good digital communication strategies not only had more sales by 33% but also enhanced customer relationships.

The concept of digital marketing communication is therefore important to this study because the main focus is on its use at the Livingstone Museum. The focus of the Livingstone Museum is unique because it advances the literature on the application of digital marketing communication in a museum context. In addition, it is clear that the use of digital marketing communication has become increasingly important, which is why this study is important because it addresses the lack of literature on the use of digital marketing communication in the museum environment. This further highlight why businesses like the Livingstone Museum should have the right digital marketing communication strategies in place as it can help them reach and engage visitors, which is a museum concern.

#### **1.6.2.1 Email Marketing Communication**

Laet (2019:90) defines email marketing as "an online tool used to deliver digital messages to consumers". Rental (2015:904) defines email marketing as "a digital communication tool that uses emails to communicate and send promotional messages to various potential customers". The use of email marketing by organisations has greatly evolved due to its ability to allow immediate promotion of products and services, improving relations with visitors through direct access. Email marketing communication is important for this study because it is part of the elements of digital marketing communication that were investigated in relation to the use of digital marketing communication in the Museum.

#### **1.6.2.2 Websites**

Marcus (2020: 2) defines websites as "a collection of websites used to communicate important organisational information". Laet (2019:100) describes websites as "an online tool used to display information about an organisation that appeals to consumers". According to Marcus (2020:45), one of the main reasons why organisations have a website is its ability to increase the credibility of the organisation, because an effective website conveys quality information and promotes an



online presence that can drive traffic to other online platforms. This concept is relevant to the study because the use of websites is part of the digital marketing communication tools discussed in this study.

### **1.6.2.3 Social Media Marketing**

Aritsol (2019:344) defines social media marketing as "the use of online platforms to interact and communicate with potential consumers. Aldin (2020: 5) describes social media marketing as "the interactive use of digital platforms to create and share different forms The types of social tools are Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter and Instagram etc.

A description of social media marketing is relevant to this study as it examines its use in a museum to understand its importance in informing and engaging visitors as part of the museum's digital marketing communications strategies.

### **1.6.3 Museum**

A museum is "a building where historically, artistically and scientifically valuable elements/objects are preserved and presented" (Elson 2021:34). Berlow (2020:901) defines museums as "institutions entrusted with the care of historical and scientific objects". This study focuses specifically on the Livingstone Museum as it sought to understand its use and role of digital marketing communications within the Museum.

## **1.8 THE RESEARCH APPROACH AND PROPOSED RESEARCH METHOD**

This section briefly describes the research method chosen for this study, as a detailed discussion is provided in chapter four.

### **1.8.1 The research design**

This study conformed to both the positivist and interpretivist research paradigms as both qualitative and quantitative methods were used in the study. The positivist paradigm was followed because the paradigm establishes laws and rules to be followed in the collection and analysis of quantitative data, which leaves room for minimal error (Zowen 2019:76). The paradigm also allows the researcher to draw impartial conclusions based on the logic of the scientific method used, which in this case were questionnaires. The interpretivist paradigm was also appropriate for this study because it facilitates the in-depth knowledge provided by qualitative tools about how

and why the research problem exists. The interpretivist paradigm is subjective and affirms that the researcher must be part of the research; gives the researcher the opportunity to form meaningful insights to achieve research goals.

Research method is described as the practices a researcher uses to collect, analyse and interpret data (Wagner et al. 2012:126). This study used a mixed-methods design consisting of qualitative and quantitative methods, which are two broad approaches found in the study. The quantitative approach focuses on numerical and unchanging data and presents the phenomenon using numbers, logic and an objective attitude (Blanche et al 2017:47). A qualitative approach focuses on gathering information through written or spoken language in order to interpret the meaning of that information (Blanche et al 2017:47). Therefore, according to Zeat (2020:34), mixed method research enables the researcher to intensively explore the research problem and allows the researcher to identify and understand the research problem in depth. This statement is consistent with Tagners (2016:160), who argues that a mixed method prioritises understanding processes by forming different categories of data based on different data collection methods.

## **1.8.2 Data collection techniques**

The primary data was collected through semi structured interviews and questionnaires.

### **1.8.2.1 Semi- structured interviews**

Semi structured interviews which can be defined as a technique where “a researcher uses predetermined questions while also further exploring responses from the respondent” (York 2013:85). This technique was used because it allowed the researcher to prepare questions so that no information was left out. It also allowed for the formation of new insight that can be used for the research. The technique was further used because it gave respondents the liberty to describe their opinions and perceptions in their own voice.

During the interview, an interview guide was used which can be described as an instrument used to provide an interview with structure during the process (Mouton 2002:34). The interview guide was piloted beforehand and allowed the researcher to structure all questions in a cohesive and timely manner and also ensured that all important questions were asked so that no data needed for the research was left out. However, according to Hlomes (2014: 23) reliability and validity are usually linked to quantitative studies.

In qualitative studies, the focus is on credibility and transferability. Therefore, credibility in qualitative research refers to the assurance that the outcomes of a study are believable (Hlomes 2014: 40). Credibility in this study was ensured by allowing someone who has no connection to the study to act as a judge and ensure that all protocols were observed when the data was being collected and analysed. Transferability is described as the degree to which the results of a study can be transferred or applied to other similar studies (Hlomes 2014: 45). Transferability in this study was guaranteed by making sure that all participants answer the same questions and that all data collected for this study was analysed so that a highly detailed description of the research situation and methods used is provided. However, in qualitative studies it is not generally possible to exactly replicate a study.

### **1.8.2.2 Questionnaires**

A questionnaire can be defined as “a set of questions used to collect information from respondents” (Couper 2020:34). Questionnaires usually feature open or close ended questions which have a series of predetermined responses. Data collection through questionnaires is one of the most commonly utilised and preferred methods by researchers who adopt a quantitative approach (Couper 2020).

In this study, statements were structured in a way that allowed the researcher to draw conclusions on the visitors’ perceptions of digital marketing communication as well as allow the respondents to provide information regarding their digital marketing communication experiences with the museum. The questionnaire was piloted beforehand to ensure that the quality was acceptable and all questions were formulated in a manner that allowed the respondents to understand what was being asked of them.

According to Huan (2014:56), it is always important to ensure reliability and validity in research as it promotes trustworthiness. Validity is defined by Huan (2014: 66) as “the ability of a research instrument to measure what is intended to measure”. Therefore, this research ensured validity by pre-testing the instrument to ensure the phenomenon was described efficiently. Reliability is described as the ability of research to produce the same results under the same circumstances (Huan 2014: 78). Hence, reliability was ensured by documenting the process followed during the data gathering and the analysis thereof.

### **1.8.3 The Population and Sampling Methods**

This section addresses the target population, accessible population, unit of analysis, sample method and ethical issues.

#### **1.8.4 Target Population**

The target population refers to the total group of individuals to which a researcher intends to generalise the conclusions (Denzin 2000: 34). Therefore, the target group of this study was all Livingstone Museum employees for the interviews and Livingstone Museum visitors for the questionnaires.

#### **1.8.5 Accessible Population**

The accessible population refers to a group of individuals where a sample can be drawn from (Daymon 2011: 56). Therefore, for the semi-structured interviews, the accessible population consisted of the staff members of the marketing and communications department at the Livingstone Museum, and for the questionnaires, the accessible population comprised the museum visitors.

#### **1.8.6 Unit of analysis**

The unit of analysis can be described as the what and who of the accessible population under investigation (Dicicco 2016: 62). Therefore, the unit of analysis for this study consisted of staff from the Livingstone Museum's marketing and communications department as well as the Museum visitors. The thoughts and perceptions of the Livingstone Museum's marketing and communications department on the subject, were addressed through semi-structured interviews and questionnaires were administered to visitors to understand their perceptions on the use of digital marketing communication.

#### **1.8.7 Population parameters**

Population parameters refer to the collection and characteristic of subjects required for a study (Du Plooy 2009:8). The population parameters for this study involved six (6) individuals of the marketing and communications department at the Livingstone Museum and 300 visitors who were present during the data collection period (see section 4.5.1 for a detailed discussion on the population parameters).

### **1.8.8 Sampling Methods**

This study used both non-probability and probability sampling. Non-probability sampling can be defined as “a technique that does not allow respondents an equal chance to be selected” (Weills 2014:20). This technique was chosen to select the museum visitors, because the researcher did not wish to obtain results that can be generalised to the entire population. In addition, the researcher determined that the Museum visitors are the ones with the most recent information on the issue being researched. Convenience sampling, a non-probability sampling technique, was specifically used for this study because the respondents who the questionnaire were administered to were selected based on their availability and willingness to take part in this study.

As mentioned, this study also made use of probability sampling which can be described as an approach in research methodology that ensures each member of a population has a known and non-zero chance of being included in the sample (Weills 2014:29). The probability sampling technique chosen for this study was the census method, which can be described as a survey method in which all members of the population are enumerated (Colgi 2018:45). The census method was used for this research as the researcher deemed it suitable to include all six staff members of the marketing and communication department at the Museum in the interview process. In addition, the census method allowed for a holistic view of the experiences and perspectives on the use of digital marketing communication at the Livingstone Museum by the participants. (see chapter four section 4.5.1 for a detailed discussion on the sampling method).

### **1.8.10 Data Analysis and Interpretation**

For this study, data collected from the interviews were analysed using thematic analysis, identifying patterns and themes from the data collected (Braun & Clarke 2006:6). The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) was used to analyse the data collected from the questionnaires (Braun & Clarke 2006:6). The data analysis approach that guided the qualitative part of this study was thematic analysis which according to (Braun & Clarke 2006:8) is an approach that is used to identify, analyse and give an account of patterns and themes within data. This approach was used because it is flexible and allows the provision of various, detailed and complex information. In addition, it provided unexpected insights that were useful for research.

During the qualitative analysis and interpretation, the researcher first had to familiarise with the data collected by means of thorough reading. After this, data was coded in order to identify any themes. Once themes were identified they were defined and named. The data was then analysed and presented in images and report summaries. For the quantitative part of the study, the researcher engaged an experienced statistician to analyse the data. This was done to ensure that there were no errors in the analysis and the correct results were presented.

### **1.8.9 Ethical Issues**

The researcher also made sure to pay close attention to ethical issues during all stages of the research. The researcher ensured that research guidelines set by the Livingstone Museum were adhered to throughout the entire research process. Aspects such as confidentiality and informed consent were addressed by omitting the names of respondents and calling them respondents a, b or c, while informed consent was ensured by providing each respondent with information about the study that allowed them to decide whether to respond and take part in the study or not.

Permission from the relevant authority at the Livingstone Museum was sought to allow the researcher to conduct interviews with the staff members and administer questionnaires to the museum visitors. The researcher was given ethical clearance from the University of South Africa after the submission of ethical clearance forms during the research process (see the ethical clearance certificate no 240816-052 in the addendum below). In addition, the researcher also made sure that all participants and respondents who took part in the research process did so voluntarily.

## **1.9 SUMMARY**

In summary, Chapter one serves as a foundational chapter that introduces the research idea, setting the stage for an investigation into the use of digital marketing communication at the Livingstone Museum. The chapter effectively outlines the research problem, the background of the problem, the objectives and the theoretical underpinning of the study. The research problem, as outlined in the chapter, highlights the challenges faced by the Livingstone Museum, such as declining international tourist visitation and the need to sustain itself through engaging and reaching visitors effectively. The gap in existing literature is emphasised, underscoring the significance of this study in exploring the role of digital marketing communication in museums' efforts to engage and reach visitors, especially considering that visitors are crucial for the museums' sustainability.

The research objectives and questions are structured to delve into the specifics of digital marketing communication, challenges, opportunities, visitor perceptions, and the overall role it plays at the Livingstone Museum. By formulating these objectives and questions, the chapter provides a clear roadmap for the study's subsequent chapters. The chapter also introduces and defines key concepts such as marketing communication, digital marketing communication, email marketing, websites, social media marketing, and museums, which are essential for understanding the study's context. Additionally, the chapter discusses the research approach, design, and data collection techniques, which include semi-structured interviews and questionnaires. The researcher's attention to ethical considerations ensures the proper conduct of the study. The chapter describes the data analysis and interpretation methods that will be employed, emphasising the use of thematic analysis for qualitative data and statistical analysis using SPSS for quantitative data.

In essence, Chapter One establishes the research context and sets the tone for the subsequent chapters, providing a comprehensive foundation for the investigation into the use of digital marketing communication at the Livingstone Museum. It underscores the importance of this study in addressing the challenges faced by the museum and contributes to the broader understanding of the role of digital marketing communication in engaging and reaching visitors.

The next chapter provides an overview of literature on digital marketing communication.

## **CHAPTER 2 : A DIGITAL MARKETING COMMUNICATION APPROACH FOR MUSEUMS**

### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

As stated in the first chapter, the purpose of this study is to investigate the use of digital marketing communication at the Livingstone Museum in Zambia. In recent years, digital marketing communication has continuously attracted attention and interest among researchers and practitioners around the world. Authors such as Buretti and Moria (2022) called it one of the most desirable communication trends of the 21st century, and it also plays a key role in sustainable competitive advantage marketing and communication. Schult, Kimo and Kangy (2019) supported the strong potential of digital marketing communication as both a concept and a discipline and further argued that despite its relative originality in both expansion and practice, digital marketing communication has had a significant impact on the marketing and communication aspects.

Therefore, the purpose of this chapter was to explore existing literature of digital marketing communication using a literature review. This chapter therefore looks at tourism and how organisations such as the Livingstone Museum contribute to the sustainability of the Zambian economy. A brief discussion on tourism is important because the focus of this study is not only the Livingstone Museum as part of the Zambian tourism industry, but it shows why it is important for the Livingstone Museum to address potential issues, such as increased visitor expectations and their ability to reach and engage visitors.

This literature chapter also covers digital marketing communication in depth, first presenting the background of digital marketing communication and then its origins and how the adoption of this tool has changed the way organisations such as the Livingstone Museum communicate with their visitors. This section then highlights how different scholars in the field define digital marketing communication and their different perspectives on the role and opportunities of digital marketing communication for organisations such as the Livingstone Museum. These discussions help address the research problem by showing how the use of digital marketing communications has helped other organisations reach and engage visitors and understand visitors.

The chapter also discusses various aspects of organisational communication and the ways in which it affects the way organisations such as the Livingstone Museum communicate with visitors.



## **2.2 OVERVIEW OF TOURISM**

Tourism can be explained as going to a destination which is usually different from your country for vacation or business (Shuwa 2017:100). Tourism, according to Sain (2016: 34) is a very important activity to understand because this industry is responsible for economic stability and social progress in many countries like Zambia. An overview of tourism as a whole is important to this study as it showcases how tourism organisations like the Livingstone Museum are important to the country and why it is pivotal for them to have communication strategies that allow them to communicate with potential visitors in order to ensure continued growth.

The most adequate way to explain or describe tourism, according to Ligen (2017:330), is to look at it as not just one activity but a set of activities and processes, for example the travelling to a destination for exploration and local travelling. Rout and Geshen (2018:100) argue that in order to understand tourism, it should be divided into two categories which include demand and supply. The demand part of tourism is described as the consumption of services and products by the tourist throughout their stay in the country of host, while the supply part of tourism is described as the ability of the host country to produce adequate products and services that will satisfy the tourist's needs (Rout & Geshen 2018:100).

Tourism is known for its tremendous potential to bring with it abundant economic value due to the fact that it impacts and influences several other industries in the country indirectly and directly through its ability to generate increased revenue (Bask 2016:500). Scholars like Baits (2019:456) and Sain (2016:120) are of the notion that the benefits of tourism to a country are limitless and are one of a country's most important sources of generating employment and foreign exchange earnings. That is why this study strove to explore how the use of digital marketing communication at the Livingstone Museum can allow the museum to benefit from tourism through consistent engagement with potential visitors.

Tourism can be understood as an activity that creates a basis for the wide scale consumption of a country's natural resources. Tourism, according to Aben (2013:456), gets its importance for its ability to positively affect not only the economy but citizens' interactions and standards of living which will in return improve the country's growth and development. This positive development is seen in countries like Malta and Croatia whose tourism industry contributes 18 percent to their

gross domestic product (GDP). Mai's (2015: 784) argument supports this notion and is of the opinion that the concept of tourism actively creates a foundation for countries to make long term investments that will reap continued benefits for a country.

## **2.3 ZAMBIA'S TOURISM REPERTOIRE**

The Zambian tourism industry is one of the fastest growing industries in Africa, with abundant natural resources such as museums, waterfalls, rivers, lakes and national parks (Japheth 2014: 60). Therefore, it is sensible to briefly attend to museums considering it is the focus of this study and to understand why museums are important to Zambia's tourism industry.

### **2.3.1 Museums**

Zambia has a number of museums that provide tourists with much needed entertainment and adventure, these museums allow tourists to gain some knowledge on the country's history, culture and belief (Aude 2015:100). Museums are pivotal to the country's tourism industry because they place an important role in interpreting the country's heritage through the various collections, researches and preservations stored at the museums (Hambe 2014: 78). This discussion is however important to the study as the main focus was on museums, specifically how the use of digital marketing communication can play a pivotal role in the sustainability of this historical and cultural centre.

According to Japheth (2014: 100) there are ten museums in Zambia with the Livingstone Museum being the oldest and largest museum in the country. The museum is divided into four sections, namely, archaeology, ethnography, history and natural history. The Choma Museum and crafts is another museum in Zambia that is located in the southern part of the country. It is well known for showcasing the cultural heritage of the Tonga tribe who are scattered mainly around the Southern Province.

Tourists usually visit this place due to the many artefacts it has such as beadworks, musical instruments, clay figurines and others. Other museums in the country include the Copperbelt museum, Maramba museum, Moto Moto Museum and others.

## **2.4 TOURISM AS AN ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTOR TO ZAMBIA**

Zambia notably has one of Africa's fastest growing economies with tourism being one of the major contributing factors (Velz 2013:450). Tourism contributes about 4.6 percent to the country's Gross domestic product and is, according to Shuwa (2017: 78), important because of the opportunities it brings due to its role as a commercial activity. The government in 1996 reclassified the sector as an economic sector from a social sector due to the growing potential the sector exhibited contributing to the country's overall economic development Shuwa (2017: 89). Recognising tourism as an economic contributor is therefore essential because it shows how tourism organisations like the Livingstone Museum are important to the country's development and should therefore engage in activities such as the use of digital marketing communication that can help them engage with visitors. The tourism sector in Zambia consists of a number of enterprises such as lodges, hotels, tour operators and transport agencies and various heritage and leisure sites which in return has led to positive economic growth through the aspects discussed below.

### **2.4.1 Foreign Exchange**

The tourism industry in Zambia has contributed immensely to foreign exchange in the country. According to a pilot visitors survey that was carried out by the ministry of tourism in 2018, it highlighted the international visitor's expenditure in the country at about US\$ 200 million, with a potential of doubling these incomes over the next five years (Wolks 2018: 200). The tourism industry in Zambia has by many scholars such as (Imon 2010:45) and (Eron 2016: 78) been identified as one of the key sources of foreign exchange in the country and will continue to help improve the country's position in balance of payments.

### **2.4.2 Increase Income Generation and Employment**

The tourism industry in Zambia contributes especially in Livingstone to jobs and income for the local people, therefore according to (Nsenga 2018:67) there is a need to ensure the survival of the industry which leads to the further increase of jobs as tourism is the main income for towns like Livingstone. That is why this study investigates how the use of digital marketing communication at the Livingstone Museum can help the museum ensure longevity through constant communication and marketing.

The next section discusses organisational communication and provides a brief understanding of how the various elements of organisational communication influence how organisations like the Livingstone Museum communicate with their visitors. Brief discussions on organisational communication are important to this study because it also highlights how organisational communication affects the manner in which they communicate with their visitors.

## **2.5 AN OVERVIEW OF ORGANISATIONAL COMMUNICATION**

This section provides a brief discussion on organisational communication and how different elements of organisational communication are relevant to the Livingstone museum's efforts to reach and engage visitors. It also shows how organisational communication could affect how organisations like the Livingstone Museum reach and engage visitors.

### **2.5.1 Defining Organisational Communication**

Mali (2019:456) describes organisational communication as the various forms in which individuals share information and news in an organisation. Therefore, a discussion on organisational communication is important to the research problem as it will provide an understanding on how organisational communication flow affects how organisations like the Livingstone Museum are portrayed by its visitors.

Ghern and Shaw (2015:56) define organisational communication as “the way in which individuals of an organisation transmit information with their external and internal stakeholders”. Ghern and Shaw (2015:56) also state that communication in an organisation is necessary as the use of communication allows for the initiation of people's ideas and beliefs. Organisational communication is most of the time described as the ‘social glue’ and process that stimulates the minds of individuals in an organisation through verbal and nonverbal messages that ensure the organisation functions effectively. According to Walks (2018:45) the word processes shows that communication is a complex and as the organisation environment changes so does the way in which individuals communicate, it is suggested to be the most functional activity in an organisation and is the basis of all activities in an organisation as the coordination of most organisational activities cannot be achieved without the use of efficient and effective communication (Walks 2018:345).

Organisational communication is an important binding force that allows for the coordination amongst individuals and therefore encourages organised behaviour. In addition to the above definitions, it is emphasised that the behaviour and attitude of individuals in an organisation is mainly understood through communication. Luem (2014:99) notes that there are two important approaches to the role of organisational communication; the first approach is that the role of organisational communication is seen through three categories of management: control of an individual's behaviour, the motivation of individuals and the development of profitable relations.

This approach affirms that good organisational communication strategies are pivotal for an organisation like the Livingstone Museum because it influences the way visitors relate with the organisation. This is one of the motivations for this study as it explores digital marketing communication at the Livingstone Museum to understand the visitors' perceptions on the use of digital marketing communication at the museum. The second approach argues that the role of organisational communication is highly focused on problem solving, conflict management and bargaining. According to Nras (2011:568) the second approach looks at organisational communication as a way for organisations to manage conflict and solve problems efficiently.

## **2.6 ORGANISATIONAL COMMUNICATION PROCESSES**

This section provides a brief discussion on organisational communication processes which include internal communication and external communication. The discussions are important to the study because they highlight how the two aspects of organisational communication affect each other and the need for them to be consistent.

### **2.6.1 Internal Communication**

Internal communication according to Luston (2011:678) is an important initiative that has to be implemented properly in order for the overall organisation to run properly and ensure success. Cabre (2018:34) therefore defines internal communication as the processes that an organisation uses to efficiently transmit information within an organisation. The discussion of internal communication is key because it is believed that internal communication is the beginning of all organisational communication (Kalia 2011:950), so it adds a much-needed perspective on how different elements of internal communication can affect how organisations operate. Like the Livingstone Museum, they engage with external audiences.

Lanes (2017: 40) asserts that although internal communication is focused on members of an organisation it aims to guide and motivate employees which leads to them being able to communicate efficiently with visitors because they are aware of the goals and objectives of an organisation. A study by Heavenly (2017:45) revealed that the concept of internal communication has drastically changed throughout the years and has attained a broader meaning by looking at employees as important assets to the organisation, Hence, there has been a need for many organisations to change the way they communicate with their various employees.

Myths (2014:769) adds that the adaptability of an organisation in the market place is based on efficient internal communication. Studies such as Mozack (2011: 677) and Samson (2013:668) discovered that internal communication usually operates three roles which include education, communicator and change agent, which are roles that allow organisations to adapt to visitors' different expectations and ensure success. Therefore, aligning the goals of individual staff members to the organisation's goals is identified as a pivotal task that is achieved through efficient internal communication.

Therefore, efficient internal communication for an organisation like the Livingstone Museum is pivotal because members of the organisation are the ones who represent them on a daily basis. It is important for the Livingstone Museum members of staff to constantly be aware of what is happening in the organisation in order for them to be able to provide visitors with coherent and consistent messages.

### **2.6.2 External communication**

External communication, according to Kiriago (2019:567), can be defined as the processes that organisations use to transmit and acquire information from its visitors and other relevant publics, while Radids and Feult (2020:344) describe external communication as the way in which an organisation interacts with its visitors to create a mutually benefiting relationship. A discussion on external communication is imperative to this study because it shows how the use of external communication activities can ensure organisations like the Livingstone museum's longevity.

External communication is an activity that is very pivotal to the successful running of an organisation as it is mainly used for efficiently communicating a message to create and maintain a good image and identity (Deiny 2016:78). According to Bandi (2019:78) current and potential

visitors usually have perceptions towards an organisation and this is usually based on the organisation's external communication activities such as various integrated marketing communication tools which include public relations, advertising, direct promotion and digital marketing communication.

External communication, according to Holly and Matts (2018:789), prioritises the external individuals such as visitors and therefore, it is very important for organisations to identify this activity as an essential element to their success. According to Que (2018: 45) effectiveness of external communication is essentially measured based on the extent to which specific goals are met such as, positive attitude, awareness creation and enhanced relationships from visitors, hence according to Sanve (2015:455) it is important for organisations to ensure that all external communication activities are in line with the organisation's needs for success. Edwards (2017:678) points out that the need for external communication becomes pivotal to an organisation's success due to how it focuses and attempts to nurture the external relations of an organisation's service while maintaining a reputation.

Authors such as Carnen and Nouts (2019:678) argue that many organisations that have successful external communication activities usually have efficient communication strategies that make use of communication tools such as digital marketing communication. Carnen and Nouts (2019:678) also state that organisations with good and successful well integrated external communications activities usually exhibit traits of visionary companies such as being innovators, consistent improvement in market share and overall profitability, which is the main goal for most organisations.

## **2.7 MANAGEMENT OF EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION**

As previously mentioned, the use of external communication is of particular importance to the present study as it allows organisations to communicate with museum visitors. According to Anka and Zeind (2014:34), the management of external communication is a task that many organisations have adopted to interact with visitors and develop profitable relationships. Dupol (2016:456) describes the management of external communication as the way in which an organisation ensures that they understand their visitors through efficient communication strategies.

Therefore, a discussion on the management of external communication is important to this study as it will show why the management of external communication is important for organisations like the Livingstone Museum and the prospects it can provide them.

According to Gezai (2010:780) the concept ‘external communication’ was initially used in organisational theory in the late 1960s and was designed to highlight how organisations gain increased market share. However, due to the change in the business environment external communication also became more about communicating with potential visitors and understanding their expectations, which saw a rise in activities such as integrated marketing communication (Krammel 2020:456). According to Mual (2017:567) the management of external audiences has become essential and many organisations are investing in the various tools to ensure that the organisation communicates efficiently. This is the reason why this study also explores the specific tools that the Livingstone Museum are using as part of their external communication processes to reach and engage visitors.

The long-term strategic management of external communication is therefore significantly connected to longevity and survival of an organisation, that is why this study explores digital marketing communication tools used by the museum to manage their visitors. Hence, the next section will briefly explore marketing communication.

## **2.8 OVERVIEW OF MARKETING COMMUNICATION**

An overview on some definitions of marketing communication and a brief look into integrated marketing communication is essential to this study as it will show the origins of digital marketing communications which is the main focus of this study. It also shows why the combination of these tools should be used in an integrated manner. Marketing communication and integrated marketing communication are subjects that have been conceptualised and developed since the early 1990s (Monroe 2014: 34). One of the earliest and most quoted definitions of marketing communication is by the American Association of Advertising Agencies (AAAA) (1990) who termed marketing communication as “ A concept of communication that recognises the added value of a comprehensive plan that combines and evaluates the roles of a variety of marketing communication tools for example advertising, direct marketing, sales marketing, sales promotion, public relations and digital marketing communication” (Eric & Mose 2011:566).



Subsequent to the definition of marketing communication by the American Association of Advertising several new definitions on the aspect developed. The newer definitions of marketing communication put forward description of the aspect that eluded that it should be focused on the prospects of the organisation and so Layman (2011: 66) defined marketing communication as “strategically prioritising communication in order to engage consumers and encourage purposeful relationships. This definition of marketing communication puts forward that marketing communication is not just tactical but a strategic purpose that builds purposeful relationships.

Marketing communication is a concept that has been seen to be persistently attracting the attention of various scholars and academics. It has been viewed by various authors such as Cosmas and Lott (2002:78) as one of the most essential activities organisations should prioritise as it plays a major role in sustainable competitive advantage which is the main goal for many if not all organisations. According to Fisher, Balgow and Shiltz (2014:976) marketing communication can be defined as a process where various marketing communication tools are employed to convey messages to specific visitors. This process of marketing communication using communication tools to convey a message is supported by Rerman (2013:57) who argues that for the message conveyed to have an impact, an organisation must understand its objectives in order to achieve an optimum synergy effect.

As seen in the above description of marketing communication it is regarded as an idea that prioritises the intention of adding value to a communication plan through the use of tools that when aligned to an organisation’s communication objectives, convey a unified coherent message of what the organisation is about and what they offer (Daniel 2015: 456).

### **2.8.1 Marketing Communication**

The need to add value to the marketing communications plan does not consist of just using several marketing communication tools but combining them to effectively influence each other Jacya (2017: 60). The integrating effect of several marketing communication tools surpasses their individual effect which is known as synergy (Toya & Maria 2011:788). Hence, this combination of marketing communication tools for a synergy effect is known as integrated marketing communication. The aspect of integrated marketing communication focuses on the managing of traditional marketing communication in an integrated manner.

However, there are still various scholars and experts who disagree on a definite description and definition of integrated marketing communication as well as the whole scope of the aspect (Requel 2010: 455). Several descriptions of the aspect have been given, such as it being seamless communication, relationship marketing and added value marketing communication. Therefore, for the purpose of this study, the definition of Layman (2011: 66) is most suitable as it recognises integrated marketing communication as a combination of tools that organisations like the Livingstone Museum can use to efficiently reach and engage their visitors in a consistent manner.

An overview on some of the earlier definitions to the more modern definitions of marketing communication and a brief look into integrated marketing communication is essential to this study as it shows the origins of digital marketing communications which is the main focus of this study. Marketing communication and integrated marketing communication are subjects that have been conceptualised and developed since the early 1990s (Monroe 2014: 34). The next section examines marketing communication in the context of tourism. It adds value to this study as museums form part of the tourism sector.

## **2.9 TOURISM MARKETING COMMUNICATION**

This section provides a brief discussion on tourism marketing communication and the role it plays in organisations in the sector. This discussion is important to this study because it indicates the essence of marketing communication tools to organisations specifically in the tourism sector wherein the Livingstone Museum is situated.

### **2.9.1 Defining Tourism Marketing Communication**

The term tourism marketing communication first became popular in the 1960s, when it was defined as a “systematic process that employs integrated communication strategies with the aim of engaging and reaching visitors to understand their expectations which in return leads to the realisation of a certain profit” (Audrian 2014:78). However, Kalun (2018: 788) defines tourism marketing communication as an “organised and well-coordinated effort that is used by tourism organisations to increase awareness of their service or product”. That is why, for the purpose of this study, tourism marketing communication is explored as it highlights how efficient marketing communication strategies allow organisations such as the Livingstone Museum to reach and engage visitors.

According to Chanés (2013:56) tourism marketing communication can be described as a process where tourism organisations primarily forestall the expectations of visitors with the intention of ensuring that visitors are satisfied in order to achieve organisational and economic goals. Furthermore, when an organisation identifies these needs and wants of a consumer; it makes it easier for the organisation to satisfy them in a profitable and efficient manner.

### **2.9.2 Features of Tourism Marketing Communication**

Tourism has positioned itself as a self-sufficient sector, which has resulted in a wide range of products and services that are constantly competing to gain the utmost share in the sector (Hawrin 2015: 98). Tourism is, according to Cefton (2017:766), by far one of the fastest growing and competitive sectors in the world hence, many countries are looking to find new ways to attract visitors and more tourism organisations are developing high skill strategies to understand visitors' expectations. Therefore, for the purpose of this study, tourism marketing communication is explored to show the opportunities marketing communication tools such as digital marketing communication can provide.

Based on the views of Raun (2019:54) and Timot (2017:56) tourism is an industry where visitors have a wide range of choices from which to choose from, it can be expected that this sector should consider more dynamic marketing communication strategies. Raun (2019:100) argues that due to the natural sense of curiosity and wanting to seek adventure of human beings the need to seek new experiences will always grow. Therefore, marketing communication in the tourism industry is deemed necessary as part of the processes in order to communicate with visitors and create awareness about their organisation.

Tourism is seen as a complex sector due to the multiple activities that together produce what is known as a 'tourist product' and also because of the many sub industries that are created under the sector and are in themselves complex (Herba 2016: 348). Other scholars in this field like Ragu (2018:78) agree with (Herba 2016: 245) as they argue that these complexities in the tourism industry are the reason why tourism organisations should employ efficient communication strategies that allow them to reach and engage their visitors in order for them to understand their expectations.

According to Hathaway (2019:306) the main focus of marketing communication in tourism is the need to identify consumer groups to address their needs and wants appropriately. Marketing communication in the tourism sector should include much more than the development of products and services but also the need to acquire information and communicate with potential visitors to determine their expectations, which is an aspect the Livingstone Museum should be ensuring at all times. The main reason for this is for tourism organisations to be able to tailor their product and services to the right visitor for their satisfaction (Veriy 2019: 34).

The nature of marketing services and products are viewed by scholars like Fishu (2012:67) and Shinu (2020:45) as very intangible and perishable due to limiting factors that can enable tourism organisations to create and distinguish themselves from other organisations and develop a competitive edge. This means in order to have effective communication in the tourism sector organisations need to employ effective and efficient communication strategies. Fishu (2012:456) is of the notion that for tourism organisations to be successful there is a constant need to consistently communicate with potential clients because it allows them to increase awareness about their organisation. The close linkage that exists between tourism and communication is due to the change in consumer expectation (Fishu 2012:456). The main role of marketing communication in tourism according to Quix (2018: 56) should be to conduct market research through various communication initiatives, design and develop the tourism product and services, in conjunction with consumer requirements.

The next section highlights on integrated marketing communication and its importance to this study.

## **2.10 INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATION**

Integrated Marketing Communications is a strategic approach that unifies and coordinates various marketing communication tools and elements to deliver a consistent, seamless, and synergistic brand message to target audiences (Smith 2021). At its core, integrated marketing communication aims to create a unified brand experience by integrating different promotional tools and channels, aligning messaging, and maximising the impact of communication efforts. It encompasses a spectrum of elements and tools, harmonising traditional advertising, public relations, sales promotion, direct marketing, digital marketing communication, and personal selling into a cohesive strategy (Kitchen & Schultz 2020).

The key to successful IMC is the seamless integration and synergy among these diverse tools. This integration involves strategic planning and coordination to ensure that each element complements and reinforces the others, conveying a unified brand message. According to Smith (2021: 212), communication and marketing tools such as digital marketing communication tools should harmonise with offline initiatives to provide a consistent brand experience across online and offline channels (Belch & Belch, 2018). IMC thrives on consistency, clarity, and continuity in messaging. Through integration, it ensures that each communication element works cohesively to support the overall marketing objectives and resonate with the target audience. This approach aims for a synergistic effect where the combined impact of integrated communications surpasses the sum of its individual parts, amplifying brand visibility and recognition (Schultz & Kitchen 2020).

## **2.11 DIGITAL MARKETING COMMUNICATION**

Since its origin digital marketing communication has become a pivotal tool that organisations like museums are using to interact with both their local and international visitors. The inception of the internet has provided both large and small companies with opportunities with a new and beneficial way of marketing communication (Koew 2022:23). Being a part of this digital community has enabled many organisations to go beyond traditional mass communication and create a communication process that, according to Rerman (2013:200), has the potential to offer organisations limitless opportunities. However, a more detailed discussion on the topic is provided because it is the main focus of the study and highlights the role digital marketing communication plays in organisations like the Livingstone Museum.

### **2.11.1 Integrated Digital Marketing Communication**

Integrated digital marketing communication represents a strategic approach that merges various digital marketing tools and channels to craft cohesive, consistent, and impactful brand messages across online platforms and interactions (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick 2019:34). At its core, integrated digital marketing communication aims to synchronise and align diverse digital marketing elements, such as social media marketing, content marketing, search engine optimization (SEO), email marketing, paid advertising, and website optimisation, to create a unified brand experience for visitors (Smith & Zook 2011). It involves the seamless integration of these digital tools to ensure a harmonised and synchronised brand message across multiple online touchpoints.

Successful integrated marketing communication relies on the strategic integration and synergy among these diverse digital marketing tools. The integration involves aligning messaging, design elements, and strategies across various digital channels to provide a consistent and unified brand experience (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019: 46). For instance, a company's content marketing efforts should complement its social media strategy, reinforcing the same brand values and messages across different digital platforms (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick 2019: 50). Moreover, the SEO strategy should align with content marketing efforts to ensure that the content ranks well on search engines, driving organic traffic to the website (Ryan, 2016). Integrated digital marketing communication emphasises coherence, consistency, and continuity in digital messaging and interactions. Through integration, it ensures that each digital marketing element works harmoniously to support the overall marketing objectives and resonates with the target audience across the digital landscape. This approach aims for a synergistic effect, where the combined impact of integrated digital communications amplifies brand visibility, engagement, and conversions, fostering a strong digital presence and connection with the audience (Smith & Chaffey 2005).

### **2.11.2 Definitions of Digital Marketing Communication**

Since its inception digital marketing communication has assumed a much deeper meaning than it did in the early 1990s (Sudge 2014:50). Therefore, for a better understanding of digital marketing communication, it is vital to look at the various definitions proposed by academics who are experts in the field. Hence, a discussion on the definitions of digital marketing communication shows how different authorities in the field understand digital marketing communication and how it could play an important role in organisations like the Livingstone Museum.

There are many definitions of digital marketing communication, but one of the most relevant definitions is by Semron (2016:756) who describes digital marketing communication as an aspect of marketing communication that acknowledges the value of interacting with consumers in a strategic and collaborative manner. According to Jen and Melon (2013:238) the highlighting aspect of the above definition is its emphasis on the use of a comprehensive and synergic digital marketing communication plan that makes use of different digital marketing communication channels to achieve maximum effort, that is why the first objective of this study explores which digital marketing tools the Livingstone Museum is using to reach and engage visitors.

Donovan (2002: 230) and his fellow academics at Trent University in the UK suggested digital marketing communication as a comprehensive organisational process used to plan, develop and coordinate a successful integrated organisational communications strategy that helps maintain positive relationships with visitors and all the other important external and internal audiences. The goal according to Donovan (2002: 230) is for organisations to use their online presence to communicate messages in an integrated manner (Berst 2018:90).

Based on the above definition it is argued, for the purpose of this study, that the definition can have three themes. The first theme assumes that digital marketing communication is a strategic communication process and not just the mere use of any digital marketing communication channel. The second theme assumes that there are a number of important stakeholders who are a pivotal part to this strategic process and the third theme points out that the internal members of an organisation perform a fundamental role in the success of this process (Donovan 2002:245). These themes are supported by Fiute (2018:455) who states that digital marketing communication is a strategic process and therefore tools used must always be in line with an organisation's overall goal. The above themes are in line with solving the research problem by creating an understanding of certain elements of digital marketing communication that can be used to guide organisations like the Livingstone Museum in the use of digital marketing communication.

According to Berst (2018:90) digital marketing communication emphasises the importance of the relationship between an organisation and its visitors in driving value of the organisation. The author defines digital marketing communication as a process that uses an online presence to manage customer relationships and enhance an organisation's value.

One of the emphases which this definition represents is that the processes used by digital marketing communication should be used by organisations to nurture and maintain its relationships with customers.

Table 2.1 on the next page shows some of the opinions and views in regard to the definition of digital marketing communication that have been proposed by various authors and scholars who are experts in the field of digital marketing communication.

**Table 2.1: Defining digital marketing communication**

<b>Author</b>	<b>Definition and description of digital marketing communication</b>
<b>Noah and Guid (2012)</b>	A consistent and well-coordinated process used to ensure a positive behavioural response towards a business.
<b>Hagah (2013)</b>	The use of digital media in order to communicate well coordinated and consistent messages to an external audience.
<b>Barn (2015)</b>	The understanding of customer's behaviours while nurturing relationships and customer loyalty using an online presence as part of the process.
<b>Herden (2016)</b>	The use of online channels in order to create profitable relationships that increase the consumer and stakeholder base.
<b>Jade (2017)</b>	The use of online channels in order to gather information and persuade consumers towards a business's good and services
<b>Moore (2017)</b>	A business process that uses online media to manage a business's external audiences.
<b>Creward and Phillips (2018)</b>	An activity that focuses on the use of well integrated online channels to communicate with potential consumers.



As seen from the table on the previous page, the description of digital marketing communication given by Moore (2017:23) utilises the term business processes, which was originally used by Kade and Bundi (2001). Moore (2017:54) was of the opinion that the term business process expresses the underlying characteristics of digital marketing communication, since digital marketing communication does not only focus on the use of digital media for marketing and communication but also acts as a functional part in an organisation. Moore (2017: 67) further mentions that digital marketing communication has significantly progressed from being seen as just a communication course to taking the position of a management process.

In their research conducted on digital marketing communication in various well-known museums in the central and southern part of Croatia, Deric and Gaura (2015: 456) highlight that several definitions and descriptions of digital marketing communication had been revised by Moore (2017: 78) and then later re-examined by Menn et al in (2019). During the revision of these descriptions of digital marketing communication, Moore (2017: 104) expressed several particular themes that developed in the definitions. The various themes include the organisation and business processes of marketing communication using an online presence, the use of online channels and tools to regulate and coordinate consistent messages for maximum communication and the enhancing of profitable relationships with potential customers and stakeholders.

After comparing the above definitions of digital marketing communication, it is obvious that there is no definite definition of digital marketing communication. Existing definitions show that various academics and experts in the field of digital marketing communication have taken different approaches in the meaning of digital marketing communication. As seen by others it is a business process that organisations must use in order to manage and nurture both external and internal relationships, while others look at it as a business concept of marketing communication that encourages the use of multiple digital marketing communication to ensure maximum results. Therefore, the above discussion is important for this study as it highlights the various views on digital marketing communication which is the main focus of this study and the role it can play in assisting the Livingstone Museum in reaching and engaging visitors.

Therefore, based on the definitions by various authors, the researcher proposes the following definition of digital marketing communication for the purpose of this study:

*Digital marketing communication is a well- coordinated process that uses platforms such as social media, websites, email marketing and virtual museums to assist organisations like the Livingstone Museum in reaching and engaging visitors in order to understand their expectations.*

### **2.11.3 Background of Digital Marketing Communication**

Digital marketing communication is a term that can be dated back to the 1990s when it was first used (Leroy 2015:788). Digital marketing communication has gone through various stages before reaching an ultimate meaning and purpose. The notion of digital marketing communication began with the development of web1.0 which only allowed its users to find out essential information that they needed, but it did not allow them to share it (Demond 2017:78). However, through many technological advances, there has been an emergence that has not only allowed organisations to find out essential information but also allowed them to share and interact with consumers (Cimon 2016: 45). A discussion on the background of digital marketing communication is pivotal to this study as it provides an understanding as to where this type of marketing communication tool originated from and why it has become popular in recent times.

According to Tiwari (2018: 234), Kestenbaum and Shaw are regarded as the main pioneers of digital marketing communication. Together they created various database models that were used by many big organisations such as Barclays. The digital marketing communication database solutions had many features such as contact strategy optimization, marketing resource management, sales channel automation and marketing campaign management. These digital databases forever improved the way buyer and seller/provider related to each other.

During a close investigation on the findings of previous studies conducted on digital marketing communication, such as one by Runken, Koyd, Selly and Evrest (2001: 244) showed that the need for digital marketing communication had come as a result of various factors such as the fact that consumers not only had more options but also became more knowledgeable and demanding, hence allowing them to make better and informed decisions on the products and services they chose to use, wanting to engage more with organisations, the increase in prices of using traditional advertising and the increase of competitors worldwide.

According to Bexton and Kalif (2010:200) prior to the 1990s, when digital marketing communication was basically nonexistent with the majority of businesses and academics in the field of marketing focusing on traditional marketing because it was assumed that marketing was a one side activity and was mainly used to just market goods and services to as many people as possible (Brey 2011: 478) Therefore, there was less focus on engaging and interaction with consumers in majority of organisations marketing strategies. The basic idea and notion of some digital marketing communication platforms such as social media according to (Brey 2011:345) were not autonomous or linked to businesses, hence there was no or less use of it by organisations in their marketing communication strategies. However, several academics in this field did note that the majority of new and old businesses and writers were interested in new dynamic ways in which to not only interact with consumers but also find a way to efficiently understand their needs (Archie 2019:65).

According to Whispers (2020: 134), digital marketing communication by many organisations is being considered as one of the main competitive edges associated with marketing. In terms of marketing communication, digital marketing communication according to Tiwari (2019:190) has been recognised as one of the most important technological advances in regards to communication. The approaches used by digital marketing communication have gained undeniable appreciation and importance in regards to marketing with the increasing trend of organisations being more consumer perception focused in order to ensure the maintenance of consumer loyalty along with establishing a good brand image.

## **2.12 GROWTH OF DIGITAL MARKETING COMMUNICATION IN MUSEUMS**

The use of digital marketing communication in many museums has increased rapidly in importance due to the opportunities it has provided many museums (Archie 2019:80). Grens (2016: 348) argues that this growth can be due to the fact that visitors are probably the most important asset of museums and therefore they must always find ways to maintain good relations with them. Grens (2016: 566) also suggests that there are several factors that can be linked to the growth of digital marketing communication in museums. That is why the following discussions highlight various reasons as to why many museums like the Livingstone Museum could benefit from using digital marketing communication as part of their communication strategies. This section also gives insight on why the research problem may exist.

### **2.12.1 The increase in modern museum visitors**

The increase in the modern visitor wanting value for their money in both the services and products offered by museums became adamant (Zexsi 2019: 23). Therefore, museums had to make sure that they did not only know who was interested in their services but what and why visitors were interested in their various products and services. Hence, becoming increasingly important for museums to use digital marketing communication to keep consistent communication with them to understand what visitors expected from them which is a problem the Livingstone Museum may be facing (Keal 2016:89).

It became more evident that visitors had become more vocal about their experiences and therefore wanted to provide museums with feedback (Crensh 2020:34). This change in museum visitor attitude according to Wolks (2018: 200) saw an increase in the use of digital marketing communication because it created platforms where museums and visitors could communicate efficiently. This change in visitors' attitudes also meant that museums needed to systematically attain information about their visitors and use it in their planning and decision-making processes (Meiu 2018: 56).

### **2.12.2 The Evolution of Technology**

Museums like many other organisations have realised that the manner in which organisations are relating with their visitors has indeed changed and is constantly changing based on visitors' various wants and needs (Grey 2016: 600). This argument is supported by (Aldin 2020: 23) who believes that the shift in technology has created an environment that has enabled interactive and consistent communication between museums and its visitors. The fast pace of internet-based communication tools which are changing the way organisations like the Livingstone Museum reach and engage with visitors, has been viewed by many scholars as the main reason for the growing importance of digital marketing communication (Allan 2015: 789). The above discussion contributes to the study by highlighting the changing dynamics in the way museums interact with their visitors. The recognition of this shift is essential for the museum to adapt its communication strategies to meet the various expectations of visitors.

### **2.12.3 Ability to Enhance Relationships**

Jeyu (2016: 567) argues that the ability for museums to efficiently communicate with their visitors and nurture profitable relationships is one of the main reasons for the increased use of digital marketing communication in these cultural institutions.

### **2.12.4 The Empowering Effect**

The growth of digital marketing communication in museums according to Kaseri (2019:90) can be linked to its empowering effect especially since digital marketing communication allows businesses to extend their market reach and operational efficiency. Digital marketing communication created some sort of democratised environment which has restructured marketing communication and has allowed organisations like museums to efficiently and effectively promote their goods and services at a larger scale (Tanah 2013:567). In a study conducted in several museums in Malaysia by Kint and Draw (2014:789), it was highlighted that many of the museums used digital marketing communication because of the many opportunities to engage in various national and international marketing campaigns that are usually expensive due to the massive number of resources usually required.

### **2.12.5 Geographic Barriers**

Digital marketing communication has created an environment that eliminates most limitations from the practice of communication. Bennedy, Mos and Guns (2015:900) argue that the increasing cost of traditional media, mainly allowed huge multinational corporations to have global reach, but in the advent of various cost-effective digital technologies many organisations like museums have been given the chance to reach potential customers. The discussion by Bennedy, Mos and Guns (2015:900), is significant to this study on digital marketing communication at the Livingstone Museum because it acknowledges how digital technologies have provided opportunities for organisations like museums to eliminate limitations in creating awareness of their offerings and enhancing relationships.

### **2.12.6 Personalisation**

Personalisation as described by Ntenga (2017:890) as the tailoring of an organisation's products and services based on visitor's expectations or purchase history. Personalisation is another aspect that has led to the growth of digital marketing communication in museums. Hunk (2013:789) is of

the notion that because digital marketing communication allows museums to understand their visitors and tailor products to specific needs is connected to why there has been a surge in the use of digital marketing communication. A study conducted in Greece by Miguel and Foster (2016:450) supports Hunk (2013:789) and highlighted how various small museums and cultural heritage sites used digital marketing communication to be able personalise their products and gain a competitive edge.

Personalisation has allowed museums to efficiently build sustainable relationships with potential visitors. Gregory (2017:890) attributes this to the fact that personalisation in marketing communication is concerned with building relationships by understanding each individual potential visitor's expectation to enhance customer loyalty. Therefore, this study explores what opportunities the Livingstone Museum can benefit from the use of digital marketing communication such as the ability to personalise visitors' individual expectations based on their different expectations.

Based on a study by Derrick (2011:78) who eludes that many museums in Croatia have benefited from digital marketing communication through personalisation, the study gives an example of how several museums in Croatia would target certain offerings to specific visitors' every time they visited their website. This, according to Derrick (2011:78), was done based on the comprehensive information they gathered through constant communication. The study also suggested that many museums found it difficult to personalise their products using traditional media such as newspapers. Therefore, many museums opted to adopt digital marketing communication as part of their marketing communication strategies, leading partially to growth in the use of digital marketing communication in these organisations.

### **2.13 TRENDS IN MUSEUM DIGITAL MARKETING COMMUNICATION**

Due to the change in the technological environment, cultural and heritage institutions like museums have indeed resorted to new communication strategies to reach and engage visitors (Zirean 2014:45). That is why this study highlights whether the museums communication strategy has evolved with the latest communication trends by exploring whether the Livingstone Museum has adopted digital marketing communication as part of their communication strategy to reach and engage visitors as well as understand their expectations.

The integration of digital marketing communication into these organisations' marketing communication strategies has been viewed by scholars such as Nechita (2014:234) as one of the growing trends in museums. The introduction of internet-based communication tools has enabled museums according to Nechita (2014: 354) to not only reshape their traditional offerings but also enhance visitor's experiences and attract potential customers to the museums.

According to Worns (2016: 21) although the use of digital marketing communication is continuously being utilised by museums and is in fact presumed to be widely adopted by many museums in the years to come, it is however still a challenge for some museums to be receptive to this new technology, therefore, part of the objectives of this study was to understand what challenges the Livingstone Museum may be facing in the use of digital marketing communication. A study conducted by Habid and Kozak (2015:249) revealed that many museums in Pakistan did not use digital marketing communication as part of their marketing strategies and even when the benefits provided by digital marketing communication were clear. The study showed that many museums in Pakistan were still not receptive because they did not have sufficient information on how to use the tool.

The next discussions highlight the various trends in digital marketing communication that organisations such as the Livingstone Museum have adopted as part of their digital marketing communication strategy.

### **2.13.1 Virtual Museums**

The rise in the use of digital marketing communication has also seen the creation of what is known as virtual museums (Streak 2017: 13). These according to Denford (2017: 678) are created by using virtual networks to exhibit and showcase a museum's collection to attract and engage visitors. The use of these virtual museums came as a result of museums wanting to give their visitors a preamble of what they can expect to see when they visit the museums (Denford 2017: 780) Virtual museums have also allowed museums the ability to enhance the individual identity of the museum which in return separates them from other museums (Denford 2017: 900).

The use of virtual museums has increased because they allow museums to create online worlds that provide visitors with an interactive experience (Soul 2012:899). Visitor experience in museums according to Pasht (2019:345) has evolved due to the fact that visitors are now taking an

active role in creating their own experiences. Therefore, these platforms are helping museums understand what customers expect from them (Soul 2012:899). Virtual museums are playing a pivotal role in encouraging visitors to visit by allowing them to immerse themselves in the historical exhibition and also provide understanding of the historical exhibits available at the museum (Pasht 2019:400). Virtual museums as a digital marketing communication application are explored in this study to understand the opportunities it could provide the museum.

### **2.13.2 Email Marketing**

Email marketing according to Rental (2015:904) is a platform of digital marketing that uses emails to communicate and send promotional messages to various potential customers. Email marketing has been considered as one of the most efficient and effective ways to communicate with customers and is therefore used by many tourism organisations like museums (Rental 2015:906). Research papers such as by Carens (2014:890) highlighted how many museums in the central part of Tunisia are using email marketing as one of their main tools of digital marketing communication. In this regard authors such as Keppers and Lahns (2012:566) points out the main benefit of email marketing is its ability to provide high response rates from clients at a low cost, and their belief is that this is one of the main reasons that museums have gravitated towards this digital marketing communication platform.

However, despite the many advantages this platform provides, authors such as Glide (2014:78) and Dalfin (2015: 23) are of the notion that the tool still has many deficiencies and are backed by a study conducted by Glide (2014:67). The study found that many museums do not utilise this tool because they found that many of their visitors did not like receiving unwanted messages from them. Email marketing communication is explored to understand if this platform is being used to help the museum efficiently reach and engage visitors as well as understand visitor's expectations.

### **2.13.3 Websites**

Another trend that is growing in the use of digital marketing communication by museums is the use of websites (Muslin 2018: 100). According to Quad (2020: 33) nowadays it is very uncommon for organisations to not have a website, which is why it is no surprise that this is a growing trend in museums' digital marketing communication strategies. The increase in the use of websites by museums is connected to the fact that many museums utilise them as a way to communicate new



happenings or exhibitions or to present a preview of what visitors expect when they get to the museum (Muslin 2018: 225). Websites are also highly adopted by museums because they have functions that allow the museum to reach and engage visitors as well as for instant feedback through the feedback mechanisms that websites usually have (Simone and Dwen 2018:89). This tool was investigated to find out the role it plays in allowing the Livingstone Museum to reach and engage visitors

#### **2.13.4 Social media marketing and communication**

The use of social media is another trend that is being used increasingly by museums; it has been widely adopted by these organisations due to its ability to provide quick and easy engagement between the museum and its visitors (Burres 2016: 103). Social media is different from many other online tools as it allows museums to interact with visitors in real time because of the high traffic these platforms usually have (Burres 2016: 117).

Social media platforms like Guggenheim, MoMa and Tate are examples of channels being used by many small museums in the UK (Lumbe 2019: 690). A study conducted by Muslin (2018: 70) showed that the museum of rural life in Berkshire, UK saw a 47% increase in real visitors to the museum due to their constant engagement and interaction with visitors through these platforms.

According to Burres (2016: 677) social media marketing communication is an aspect of digital marketing communication that has changed the way organisations interact with visitors on a daily basis, therefore the increase in the use of various social platforms by museums is eminent. Social media marketing communication provides tourism organisations like the museums unprecedented opportunities to interact and communicate with customers in a profitable manner (Tigor 2017:9). A study conducted by Porsha (2011:899) highlighted that many museums and cultural centres in Australia utilised this tool of digital marketing communication because not only are there many social media platforms to choose from but it does not cost a lot to set up.

The study by Porsha (2011: 566) also highlighted that there are three types of social media marketing communication that exists namely owned/organic, paid social media, earned social media. Owned/organic social media is according to Nathans (2019:67) the free tools that a social media network provides its users to build a social platform and communicate. It consists of media that the organisation owns and is dependent on the organisations to manage it, however, because

owned social media is managed solely by the organisation, reach and engagement is limited without the boost of paid promotion (Nathans 2019:67). Dobacco and Franz (2011:899) describe paid social media as when an organisation pays to use various social media platforms to display adverts or sponsored messages on their behalf. Paid social media according to a study by Bryan and Odd (2016:566) is a trend that is being used by many museums as it allows them to communicate their offerings and even direct traffic to their other social media platforms. Earned social media according to Laet (2019:70) is when others spread awareness, news or feedback about an organisation like paid social media, it is beneficial because due to external forces an organisation can expand reach and increase credibility.

Social media marketing communication was investigated in this study to understand the value and role it plays in allowing the Livingstone Museum to reach and engage visitors.

Table 2.2 below describes various digital marketing communication platforms along with their purposes. In the rapidly evolving landscape of communication, organisations, including museums, employ various strategies to reach and engage visitors. Therefore, investing in these tools is integral to effectively convey information, engage with potential visitors, and showcase the organisation’s offerings.

**Table 2.2: Digital marketing communication platforms in the context of museums**

Digital marketing communication tools	Descriptions
<b>Virtual museums</b>	These are a collection of museums and artefacts that are displayed on the internet through videos, photos and documents (Streak 2017: 190). They are used to show what the museum offers and communicate information about the museum (Streak 2017: 233).

<b>Email- marketing communication</b>	This is a tool used to send digital messages to organisations visitors (Laet 2019:90). Examples include Gmail, Yahoo, Mailchimp and Hubspot (Laet 2019:90).
<b>Website</b>	This is a tool typically dedicated to an organisation with information about who they are and what they offer (Quad 2020: 100).
<b>Social media marketing and communication</b>	These are platforms that organisations can use to connect with potential visitors (Tigor 2017:9). It allows organisations like museums to interact with visitors on a personal level (Tigor 2017:9). Examples include Facebook, Instagram, Guggenheim and MoMa (Artsol: 2019:344).

As seen in the above discussion many digital marketing communication platforms exist that can be used by organisations like the Livingstone Museum to effectively reach and engage visitors.

## 2.14 SUMMARY

The chapter provided an overview of tourism, defining it as an activity crucial for economic stability and social progress, especially in countries like Zambia. Tourism's multifaceted nature is explored, breaking it down into demand and supply components, highlighting its potential to generate economic value and contribute significantly to a country's GDP. This literature chapter also discussed organisational communication and how the various aspects of organisational communication influence each other. The chapter also discussed digital marketing communication in depth by highlighting how scholars such as Kade and Bundi (2001:89) argue that digital marketing communication is a platform that should be used as part of organisations' well coordinated integrated marketing communication strategy.

In addition, the section addressed the research problem and identified reasons as to why this problem exists. The chapter further addressed the research objectives by showing the role and opportunities digital marketing communication can provide the Livingstone Museum. It also discussed the platforms that many museums like the Livingstone Museum are using to engage and reach visitors and also highlighted the challenges other museums are facing in the use of digital marketing communication and why these challenges exist. Therefore, the next literature chapter discusses the theoretical framework which provides a theoretical foundation and important perspective for the study as they highlight the theory that supports the reason for the existence of the research problem.

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## **CHAPTER 3 : A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE USE OF DIGITAL MARKETING COMMUNICATION**

### **3. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter discusses three theories that have been selected for this study as they contribute to understanding the research problem. The theories provide the theoretical foundation on which the study was founded and guide the development of the data collection instruments. The chapter first discusses the Diffusion of Innovations Theory highlighting the processes of innovation adoption. The diffusion of innovations theory assists in addressing the fourth research objective which was to identify specific challenges the Livingstone Museum may be facing in regards to the use of digital marketing communication as it highlights the different factors that may cause these challenges. This theory also guides the research instrument as it provides a basis for exploring whether challenges in the adoption of digital marketing communication do exist. This is done by assisting the researcher in understanding the processes identified by Rogers (2002) that the museum may go through in the adoption of digital marketing communication.

The Media Richness Theory is also discussed as it addresses the fifth research objective which is to understand the role of digital marketing communication at the Livingstone Museum as it showcases how using the right medium of communication can play a vital role in conveying what is identified as rich information. The Media Richness Theory guides the research instrument by putting in perspective what role digital marketing communication can play for the museum and the various opportunities it can offer them. The AIDA model of marketing communication was also adopted as it addresses the second objective which is to identify what opportunities digital marketing communication can provide the museum. It is realised that the AIDA model is a hierarchy of effects model and usually applied in the marketing communication context. It is, however, applicable to this study as it highlights how the use of efficient communication tools such as digital marketing communication can allow organisations like the Livingstone Museum to push its visitors into the consumer purchase phases, which in this case, are reflected in consumer visits.

The next section discusses the diffusion of innovations theory and how it relates to the study.

### **3.2 DIFFUSION OF INNOVATIONS THEORY**

The procedure of adopting recent innovations is a topic that has been discussed for many years; which has in return led to the development of various adoption models with the most popular one being the diffusion of innovations by Rogers (2003: 34). The Diffusion of Innovations Theory by Evert Rodgers (1962) is a communications theory that attempts to explain how and why new ideas or technologies become popular throughout society (Keyan 2018:667). This theory relates to the study because it provides an understanding of how and why some organisations have decided to adopt or not adopt the use of innovations such as digital marketing communication. It also gives guidance on why the Livingstone Museum may be facing challenges in the use of digital marketing communication. Rogers (2003:58) describes diffusion as the procedure in which an innovation is communicated through specific channels over a period of time amongst individuals of a social system.

This theory can be linked to similar studies such as one by Katz and Hamilton (2017: 45) whose study explored the delayed use of virtual museums in several museums in New Zealand. Their study highlighted through the use of the diffusion of innovation theory why the museums faced challenges in adopting the innovation. The theory has also been used similarly in other studies, for instance Kross and Fred (2017:340) who investigated the use of websites by small hotels and lodges in Dingle, Ireland. This study revealed that many of the business owners were in fact resistant to adopting the innovation. Many disciplines have in fact used this model as a framework, such as Jooley (2011:45) and Stuart (2014:987) mention several of these disciplines which include political science, public health, communication, history, economics and education and also described how Rogers's (2003) theory is mainly used as a theoretical framework in technology industry in order to understand diffusion and adoption of various innovations.

Rodger's (2003) theory on diffusion of innovation is believed by most scholars and experts to be the most appropriate theory used for investigating the adoption of various technologies in the field of both internal and external communication (Cedlin 2011: 344). A study by Dankenchip (2011:677) used Roger's theory of diffusion and innovations to help investigate employees' adoption of various communication technologies for instructions at the Northern Carolina community college. Rogers (2003:45) argues that most research on diffusion involves some sort of innovation and often uses the terms technology and innovation. According to Rodgers (2003:

48) “a technology is a blueprint for instrumental action in order to promote the reduction of uncertainty in cause-effect relationships which are involved in achieving a desired outcome”. In addition, the decision to adopt any innovation is the choice to completely use an innovation as the best course of action for an organisation or individual while rejection is the decision to completely eliminate the innovation from any plan or strategy (Rogers 2003:50).

Researchers and practitioners from various fields such as communication, education and health care have shown undying interest in the diffusion of innovations theory and how it can help organisations communicate effectively with both internal and external audiences (Lonst & Savannah 2011:567). Many of these fields have shown interest in improving organisational communication, yet there is evidence that many organisations may still be struggling with this process (Greg 2012:34; Murlin 2018:788).

Rogers (2003:67) who is believed to be the pioneer of this theory identifies four key components of diffusion of innovations, attributes of innovation and a five-stage mechanism. Therefore, the next section discusses the four key components of the theory.

### **3.2.1 The Four Key Components of Diffusion of Innovations**

The discussion below addresses the research objective on exploring the digital marketing communication platforms that the Livingstone Museum may use, as this section discusses key components that could guide the Livingstone museums’ decision in the use of digital marketing communication.

#### **3.2.1.1 Innovation**

Rogers (2003:80) provided the following definition of innovation “an innovation is an idea, practice or project that is seen as recent by an individual or other component of adoption”. An innovation sometimes may have been invented some time back but if a person or organisation perceives it as relevant it will still be viewed as an innovation. The newness and relevance feature of an innovation is related to the four steps of the innovation decision process known as knowledge, persuasion, decision and implementation that is discussed in section 3.4. Moreover, Rogers (2003:90) mentions that there is still a lack of diffusion research in communication technologies, because communication technologies usually consist of more than one distinguishable component that can usually be perceived as being closely related.

However, when it comes to innovation, according to Nidea (2019:432) uncertainty is a common obstacle to the adoption of innovation process because the consequences and no knowledge about the innovation can possibly create uncertainty about the innovation. Consequences, according to Rogers (2003:100), can be described as the changes that exist in a person or social environment due to the adoption or rejection of the innovation. Therefore, to reduce the possibility of uncertainty of adoption, it is very crucial for the individuals wanting to adopt the innovation to be well informed about its advantages and disadvantages to make the consequences known (Rogers 2003:101).

### **3.2.1.2 Communication channels**

The second component of the diffusion innovation process is the communication channels. Rogers (2003: 110) describes communication channels as systems that individuals use to create and share information with each other to have a mutual understanding. Rogers (2003: 112) argued that communication has to occur through what he described as sources and channels. Therefore, Rogers (2003:120) states that sources can be identified as an individual or organisation, where a message comes from while channels can be viewed as the way a message goes from the source to the relevant stakeholder. Rogers (2003:140) also mentions that diffusion is a specific type of communication which usually includes the following elements: an innovation, two or more individuals, units of adoption and a communication channel. Although digital marketing communication may not be a new innovation this theory still applies to the research context because digital marketing communication is a communication system that the museum may be facing challenges in adoption and the theory is hence being used to understand if this is actually the situation and why specific challenges may exist.

According to Stuart (2014:98) these communication channels can also be grouped as localite channels and cosmopolite channels that are used to communicate between an individual and organisation with its relevant stakeholders of a social system. The distinction between localite and cosmopolite channels in communication, as described by Stuart (2014:107), refers to the scope or reach of these channels in connecting individuals and organisations with their stakeholders in a social system. These terms are often used in the context of innovation processes and organisational communication.



Localite channels are communication channels that operate within a specific locality or limited geographic area and are characterised by their focus on local communities, groups, or regions, such as local newspapers, community radio stations, or neighborhood (Martin 2012:549). These mediums typically cater to a specific geographic audience and address issues.

Cosmopolite channels, on the other hand, have a broader reach and operate on a more global or widespread scale. They transcend geographical boundaries and are not confined to a specific locality such as national or international newspapers, television networks, and online platforms, which are considered cosmopolite channels (Martin 2012:550). These mediums have a wide audience and can disseminate information to diverse and widespread populations.

While organisational communication can be local or cosmopolite, almost all mass media channels are viewed cosmopolite because mass media channels are more significant at the knowledge stage while localite and other communication channels such as internal organisational communication channels are mostly important at the persuasion stage of the innovation process (Luwenki 2015: 43).

### **3.2.1.3 Time**

Rogers (2003:160) identifies time as the third element in the innovative decision process, however the time component is usually ignored in most behavioural and communication science studies. Martin (2012:453) states that it is important to always include the time dimensions in the diffusion process because it shows the strength of the innovation. The diffusion of innovation process, adopter categorization and rate of adoptions are components that usually have time dimensions (Martin 2012:743).

### **3.2.1.4 Social system**

The social system is identified as the last and final component of the diffusion process. Crads (2013:75) describes the social system as a group of interrelated units that are unified in trying to find problem solving techniques to achieve a common goal. Due to the fact that diffusion of innovation occurs in a social system, it is therefore influenced by the social structure of the particular system. Moreover, for Rogers (2003:180) social structure is the systematic arrangement of units and therefore the nature of the structure in the social system affects its member's innovativeness which is identified as an important role for a social system.

### **3.2.3 Attributes of Innovations and Rate of Adoption**

As seen above, Rogers (2003:200) described the innovation process as linked to uncertainty and therefore proposes several attributes of innovation that could assist in reducing these uncertainties about the innovation. The attributes that Rodgers (2003: 189) in his theory discussed include five characteristics of innovation, namely, relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability and observability (Sawete 2014: 322). These five characteristics are discussed in the sections below. These discussions assist in understanding the significant attributes of digital marketing communication that might influence its use at the museum and why specific digital marketing communication platforms may be used.

Rogers (2003:260) eluded that although there may be many diffusion studies, there is still a lack of research papers on what could be leading to this uncertainty that occurs in individuals or organisations in the innovation adoption process and the rate of adoption. According to Tungs and Fred (2013:75) Rogers described the rate of adoption as the relative time at which an innovation is adopted by individuals of a social system and mentioned relative advantage as the strongest predictor of the rate of adoption of an innovation.

The next section discusses the five characteristics attributed to the rate of adoption in detail.

#### **3.3.3.1 Relative Advantage**

Relative advantage, according to Rogers (2003:300) can be described as the extent to which an innovation is perceived as being better than the idea it supersedes. The consolidation of multiple functions into one tool and better service of an innovation are aspects of relative advantage. According to Halis (2016:98) relative advantage is important because potential users need to understand how adopting an innovation can improve their current situation. This, in the context of this study, highlights how digital marketing communication specifically can improve the museum's current communication situation and allow them to reach visitors efficiently. Rogers (2003:330) notes that in order to increase the rate of adoption and make relative advantage more effective, it is important for the innovators to use the correct methods to ensure that individuals of a social system are comfortable and satisfied. Therefore, this section shows the value of exploring digital marketing communication and how its use can be of advantage to them.

### **3.3.3.2 Compatibility**

In some research studies relative advantage and compatibility were seen as similar, although Rogers (2003:350) noted that they are conceptually different, compatibility is defined as “the extent to which an innovation is seen as consistent with the existing values and needs of the potential adopters in a social system”. The lack of compatibility in an innovation with an individual or organisation’s needs and wants can negatively affect how the innovation is adopted (Croghan 2015:78). That is why exploring what specific digital marketing platforms the museum uses are important as this objective will provide a basis of understanding the compatibility of specific digital marketing communication tools to the Livingstone museums communication processes with the museum visitors. Croghan (2015:78) mentioned that an innovation should at most times be compatible with an individual or organisation’s needs, wants and values because this will help reduce the possibility of uncertainty in the adoption of the innovation. In addition, innovations that do not put forth an organisation’s needs and value are more likely not to be adopted, therefore innovations meet success when they can be seamlessly be adopted by its users (Sassan 2018: 56)

### **3.3.3.4 Complexity**

Rogers (2003:400) viewed complexity as the extent to which an innovation is seen as relatively difficult to utilise or understand by individuals of a social system. Xanah (2014:67) mentions that contradictory to the other attributes of the adoption process, complexity is usually negatively linked with the rate of adoption process; hence increased complexity of an innovation is a significant obstacle in the adoption process. Complexity is an important factor to this study as it highlights the need to explore what challenges in the use of digital marketing communication exist at the Livingstone Museum and why they exist.

### **3.3.3.5 Trialability**

According to Rogers (2003:440) trialability can be viewed as the extent to which an innovation is experimented with on a limited basis and is something that is positively linked to the rate of adoption. Ryan (2013:90) is of the notion that the more an innovation is tried the quicker its adoption in the social system. As seen in the implementation process of the innovation decision process, reinvention can occur during the trial of the innovation process and the innovation may be modified by a potential adopter. According to Rogers (2003:450) increased reinvention can also create faster adoption of the innovation into the social system. This section is important to the

study as it shows the need for organisations like the museum to ensure that the digital marketing communication platforms being used are compatible with their communication processes and adhere to the wants and needs of the visitors.

### **3.3.3.6 Observability**

The final attribute of innovations is observability which Rogers (2003:500) described as the extent to which the results of an innovation are obvious to other members of a social system. It is eluded that role modelling is one of the key influential elements in the adoption and diffusion of an innovation. According to Rogers (2003: 653) not every individual in a social system adopts an innovation first, therefore the innovation group that comes after the early adopters rely on seeing members of this group using the innovation in a beneficial manner. Hence observability in the context of this study highlights a factor that was explored in understanding influence in the museum's decision to adopt or not adopt digital marketing communication.

In summary, Rogers (2003:788) states that innovations that offer more relative advantage, compatibility, simplicity, trialability and observability will most likely be adopted faster in the social system by individuals and organisations. Applying Rogers' principles contributes to understanding the research problem and assists in evaluating how well digital marketing communication aligns with the museum's goals; whether it offers advantages over traditional methods; how easy it is to implement; the feasibility of trial runs; and the observability of positive outcomes. This analysis can guide the museum in making informed decisions about the adoption and optimisation of digital marketing strategies.

The next section discusses the five stages of the adoption process and its importance to this study.

### **3.3.4 The Five Stages of Innovation Adoption**

The discussion below is pivotal to the study as it brings to light the processes that organisations like the Livingstone Museum may go through in adopting the use of digital marketing communication. This section aligns with the research objective on the challenges that the Livingstone Museum may be facing when it comes to the adoption of digital marketing communication.

#### **3.3.4.1 The Knowledge Stage**

This is where the innovation decision process begins and in this stage a business/individual learns about the new innovation. According to Seerman (2016:90) this stage usually comes with questions like what, how and why. These questions represent three types of knowledge namely awareness knowledge, how to know and principles knowledge (Seerman 2016:450). Awareness knowledge can be seen as the knowledge of the innovation's existence which can motivate the individual/organisation to seek more knowledge about the innovation and eventually adopt it. The how-to knowledge contains information on how the innovation must be used correctly, Rogers (2003:6) saw this type of knowledge to be important as he believed that it was important for an individual or organisation to have a basic knowledge of the innovation before adopting. The principal knowledge looks at the functioning principles that define how and why an innovation works and whether it is viable or in line with an organisation's objective (Rogers 2003: 8).

#### **3.3.4.2 The Persuasion Stage**

During this stage the business/individual can either have a positive or negative perception of the innovation, however according to Lerk (2013:300) the formation of a positive or negative attitude towards the innovation does not lead directly or indirectly to the adoption of the innovation. Rodgers (2003:67) states that the knowledge stage is more knowing centred while the persuasion stage is more feeling cantered therefore during this stage there are usually more emotions involved in the process of adoption. The individual/organisation may also ask for referrals on the innovation. Therefore, this stage forms an important aspect of this study as it provides a perspective to exploring the value of digital marketing communication to the museum by deriving an understanding on the perceptions the museum may have on the adoption of digital marketing communication.

#### **3.3.4.3 The Decision Stage**

At this stage of the innovation decision process, the party involved may choose to adopt or not adopt the innovation. Although adoption means complete acceptance of the innovation and rejection means complete refusal of the innovation, however according to Rogers (2003: 67) at this stage of the process the innovation may pass through trial, since the majority of individuals usually want to try out the innovation for themselves. According to Webby (2019:56) some cases the order of stages which is knowledge, persuasion and decision can sometimes be switched to

knowledge decision and persuasion, especially in countries whose cultures may have a great influence; this influence has the ability to change the adoption of the innovation from a personal decision to a collective decision.

#### **3.3.4.4 Implementation Stage**

During this stage of the process, the innovation is put to practice, however according to Doil (2019:234) the newness of an innovation can sometimes bring uncertainty in the diffusion process and this uncertainty of the outcomes can still be a problem at this stage. According to Rogers (2003:100) reinvention, which can be described as the extent to which an innovation can be modified, can also take place at this stage of the adoption process. According to Deign (2018: 45) the more reinvention takes place the easier it gets for the individual to fully adopt the innovation because they will have managed to create a sustainable way to use the innovation according to their wants and needs.

#### **3.3.4.5 Confirmation Stage**

During the confirmation stage, which is the final stage of the adoption process, according to Rodgers (2003:110) is the stage where the individual can look for support for their decision, although a decision might have already been made, it is very common for it to be reversed by conflicting messages and attitudes about the innovation. During the confirmation stage the innovation is usually fully accepted or is discontinued due to it not meeting the individuals/organisation needs (Herston 2018: 34)

In summary, the discussions on the diffusion of innovations theory have highlighted the adoption processes of technological innovation such as digital marketing communication. In addition, the theory provided a perspective as to why specific challenges may occur in the museum's use of digital marketing communication and the role it can play in allowing the museum to reach and engage visitors.

#### **3.3.5 Relevance of The Diffusion of Innovations Theory**

The diffusion of innovation theory is of specific relevance to this study, because it is a theory that is based on understanding what may influence the museum's decisions on adopting digital marketing communication. Hence making use of the diffusion of innovations theory is of importance because it provides contextual factors of the adoption processes. These contextual

factors assist in understanding how characteristics of digital marketing, communication platforms, the social system, time, and external influences interact to influence the adoption process. This understanding can guide the development of targeted strategies to facilitate the successful integration of digital marketing communication at the museum. The diffusion of innovations theory also provides a foundation on which the analysis of the challenges the museum is facing in the use of digital marketing communication, is based. It further attributes reasons for the existence of challenges, as, according to Ortiz (2020: 344), the sequence of phases provided by the theory allows for the understanding of behaviours and attitudes that may exist in an individual/organisation when decisions are being made.

The diffusion of innovations theory is important to this study because it is vital for both theoretical and practical perspectives in terms of the use of digital marketing communication in Zambian museums. The Zambian tourism industry, according to Aldrir (2018:433), is an industry where process advancements are being continuously developed in both practice and research fields, yet sometimes these innovations take long to spread into wide use. A study by Jovani (2015) showed evidence that there is a lack of diffusion in Zambian tourism when it comes to various current advancements such as digital marketing communication. Hence, this theory could assist the study in understanding why such gaps may exist specifically at the Livingstone Museum.

### **3.3.6 Criticisms on The Diffusion of Innovation Theory**

Although the Diffusion of innovation theory provides a vital perspective as to how and why the diffusion of specific innovations may be delayed throughout various industries, authors such as Genmt (2019) and Filis (2020) argue that there is a need for the theory to be modified to enhance its usefulness and validity to the present context because the basis of the current theory does not adequately observe the behaviours of individuals and organisations when they make decisions in regards to the adoption of specific innovations (Zorth 2012:45).

The diffusion of innovation has seen criticism in regards to its inability to sometimes be unable to provide precise conceptual and operational understandings of adoption, differentiate acquisition of an innovation at individual level and organisational level and theoretically specify effects of mandates on diffusion and adoption (Ester 2018:56).

According to Nate (2019:743) in the original theory, adoption of an innovation and understanding the innovation were measured in the same context, when in reality it is unrealistic to portray both occurrences as being the same because sometimes organisations may adopt an innovation without the experience of using it and at later stage train its staff on how to use it. According to Dant (2016:98) the theory does not capture situations of partial adoption as well as instances where the innovation is used in another form other than the one intended by developers and advertisers of the innovation. Therefore, according to Morris and Zhaxk (2014:45) modifying the diffusion of innovation theory to prioritise other forms of adoption can represent an important extension of the theory.

Most classical literature on the diffusion of innovation theory has focused on the diffusion of an innovation throughout a social system even though most empirical studies have concentrated on the adoption of an innovation in an organisation, leaving the distinction between individual and organisation undefined (Guandi 2018: 23). According to Sneak (2017:23) and Layt (2019: 45) although many organisational based studies have in fact used the theory as part of their studies, there remains a huge research gap in its application to organisational innovation adoption. Therefore, creating a justified need for the diffusion of innovation theory to formally and more precisely focus on the adoption and use of technologies in an organisation in more detail.

The next discussion looks at the media richness theory and how it assists this research in understanding the role of digital marketing communication at the museum.

### **3.4 MEDIA RICHNESS THEORY**

The media richness theory is a communication theory that was introduced by Daft and Lengel in the mid-1980s as an extension of the information processing theory (Daft & Lengel 1986: 233). The media richness theory, at times referred to as the information richness theory, is a framework that is used to understand the ability of a communication medium to reproduce the information sent using it in a rich manner (Daft & Lengel 1986: 290). The media richness theory evaluates the richness of specific communication mediums such as phone calls, video conferencing and email, thus based on a study conducted by Corts, Lart and Fentel (2016) the media richness theories that richer and personal information must at most times be transmitted using rich media while less rich information can generally use leaner and less rich media.



“Media richness can be described as the relative ability to convey information in a manner that changes understanding within a time interval” (Daft & Lengel 1986:342). Classical literature on the theory highlights that all media vary in their ability to enable users to communicate and enhance understanding (Daft & Lengel 1986:365). This theory, therefore, explores why and how individuals or groups use a specific tool to communicate (Sherman 2018:455). The media richness theory states that different communication tools have different capacities in conveying different types of information and should therefore be closely studied (Daft & Lengel 2002:455). Therefore, the use of digital marketing communication at the museum was explored to understand whether it can convey rich information to visitors, through attempting to understand the role digital marketing communication may have at the museum. As a result, the media richness theory is used as part of this study’s theoretical framework as it assists in addressing the research objective on understanding the role digital marketing communication plays at the Livingstone Museum. It also adds a much-needed perspective by showing the importance of how the use of digital marketing communication might assist the Livingstone Museum in reaching and engaging visitors.

Daft and Lengel (1986:590) in their theory provide a set of objectives and characteristics that are used to understand a specific tool’s ability to transmit rich information, with rich information having more abilities and reducing the amount of equivocality in a message. According to Daft and Lengel (1986:596) a rich communication tool is one that allows prompt feedback, therefore increasing the richness of the information conveyed between the two parties. The media richness theory focuses on the communication mediums used by an organisation- in particular; the ‘task medium’ fit which according to Daft and Lengel (1986:619) makes sure that the chosen channel is capable of transmitting rich information. It is suggested by many academics that the chosen media channel should be able to build rapport, provide control of the situation at hand and provide opportunities for interaction (Sether 2019:899). The media richness theory therefore points out that different channels are to be used based on the three characteristics which include knowledge of the channel, access to the media channel and its ability to transmit rich information (Daft & Lengel 1986:629). The richness of the information is guided by one rule which insists that the channel used for the task is suitable, the information will therefore be rich (Thou 2017: 45). The media richness theory argues that low richness in information should be avoided as it contributes to the uncertainty in the information disseminated (Daft & Lengel 1986: 718).

However, according to Qaig (2020:566) barriers to using the right media do exist such as lack of time and knowledge. Media choice can also be affected by elements beyond the richness of the channel such as no feedback from one party and other environmental issues such as viruses that affect electronic media. This theory therefore complements the diffusion of innovation theory and also provides reasons as to why the research problem may exist.

Although Asel (2018:349) states that there are no best or worst methods of communicating, Feller (2019:234) argues that the choice of media should always be guided by the task at hand. While Vargie and Yoursh (2016:786) view the task at hand as important in ensuring that there is coherence in the media chosen and the identified task at hand. Tasks with more levels of uncertainty are assumed to make the use of rich channels, while tasks that are presumed to have low levels of uncertainty can use relatively lean channels (Feller 2019:504). In addition, Ghellag (2014:788) states that individuals at most times prefer media channels that offer rich information.

According to Thusa (2017:104) it is important for organisations to have knowledge on whatever specific tool they choose. The media richness theory argues that this knowledge is what individuals use to establish whether the chosen media channel will actually communicate the amount of information intended. According to Thusa (2017:189) the media richness theory points out that effective communication should be able to overcome all organisational challenges including handling emergencies, disseminating important information and showing a realistic view of what the organisation offers.

### **3.4.1 Benefits of the Media Richness Theory**

The media richness theory for many years has occupied an appreciated stance in the communication industry as it has assisted many organisations in choosing the right mode of communication based on the equivocality of the message (Marvel 2013:123). The media richness theory prioritises the selection of a media channel based on how communicative they are, thus allowing organisations to pay close attention to how they communicate with their audience (Redd, Benist & Lorrie 2020: 567). Daft and Lengel (1986) predicted that organisations are most concerned with task efficiency, therefore ensuring that the communication goal is achieved at most times while ensuring relationship growth and maintenance.

The media richness theory highlights how various organisations are different in the goals they are trying to achieve, because with different organisational cultures and environments, the way an organisation may perceive a particular communication tool is different for how another would (Nandre &Veji 2020:456). That is why the media richness theory advocates for the complete understanding of a communication platform before utilisation. Academics such as Suh (2020) and Derosa (2019) have advocated for the theory because many organisations have had to work outside office boundaries, meaning they have had to rethink the manner in which information is distributed. This shift in the business environment has seen many organisations and academics through the assistance of the media richness theory come up with new suitable ways to communicate.

Therefore, as seen by the discussion above, the media richness theory can provide much needed perspective because it prioritises task efficiency by ensuring the role of a communication tool is understood, which is something this study attempts to explore.

### **3.4.2 Relevance of the Media Richness Theory to Digital Marketing Communication**

The media richness theory is of specific relevance to digital marketing communication, because it is a tool that is based on the notion of efficiently engaging consumers in a timely manner (Ronle 2018:654). The theory emphasises that an organisation's communication medium must at most times allow them to reach their target audience to understand their needs (Zruig 2016:34). The theory believes that the right media channels allow organisations to efficiently communicate with consumers, because they disseminate what is known as rich information.

Since the media richness theory emphasises effectiveness of organisational communication, through the use of the right communication channel, it can according to Christen (2019:106) be linked to digital marketing communication because it has been identified as an important tool to organisational success as it allows them to communicate with their various stakeholders. Digital marketing communication studies that support this theory include those of Salex (2017:370) and Alfi (2019:8), who noted that the media richness theory recognises interaction and prompt feedback that digital marketing communication offers as important in the nurturing and maintaining of relationships.

Subsequently the media richness theory is believed to be a driving force behind effective communication, because according to Janernsh (2020:3) it focuses on the following elements of the communication process: the nature of the task at hand; the type of message; the communication tools or channels used; and the receiver of the information. The media richness theory is important to this study because it provides guidance in exploring the digital marketing communication channels that are being used by the Livingstone Museum as it highlights communication processes that should be considered before a specific communication tool is used.

### **3.4.3 Evolution and Criticism of the Media Richness Theory**

The media richness theory is a theory that was used mainly for internal communication but due to the identification of external communication being part of the overall success of an organisation it is now being used in many external communication studies (Saeye 2020:90). The media richness theory received a lot of criticism as it mainly recommended face to face as the richest form of communication, because according to Mhou (2015:566), face to face communication was perceived to have the most capacity of allowing the understanding of ambiguous information.

Various mediums of communication such as electronic media were regarded as less rich because they lacked the personal touch that face-to-face communication provided (Harker 2018:239). However, according to Bishi (2017:899) electronic media became unavoidable because it allowed organisations to build relationships and provided access to vital information long after it had been received. Recent developments in the media richness theory highlight that digital marketing communication tools are highly recognised channels that should be in-cooperated in the communication strategies of organisations to enhance effective communication (Harker 2018:260). According to Eowan (2018:67) the change in the media richness theory was due to the change of dynamics in communication and organisational priorities.

The AIDA model is discussed next and aims to highlight how the Livingstone Museum can access opportunities from the use of digital marketing communication.

### **3.5 THE AIDA MODEL**

The AIDA model represents a particular hierarchy that a consumer usually progresses through, when exposed to a communication message that promotes the purchasing of a specific product or service. These processes, according to Strong (1925: 23), include awareness, interest, desire and

action. According to Strong (1925) the first two stages of the processes are identified as cognitive stages because this is where a consumer's attention is attained and interest in the product or service begins. The next stage according to Strong (1925) is an effective stage because this is where a consumer identifies properties of how the product or service may benefit their livelihood; the last phase is the action phase where a decision is made based on how strong the organisation's communication message is. According to Rake (2013:43) the AIDA model is also used as a purchasing funnel for consumers as it can support them in making a final decision about a product or service. However, the initial development of the model by Strong (1925) went through a variety of phases before coming up with his final model that is used today by many researchers and academics. Strong's (1925) theory phases began as follows:

In the initial stages Strong (1925) determined that a consumer would go through the phases in the purchase of a product. In the next phase of his theory establishment, Strong (1925) then decided to add the action and satisfaction stages to his model because he believed that it is at these stages that a consumer's final decision is made and consumer needs and wants are made a priority. However, his final version of the model does not include the satisfaction stage. Hence, in the last phase of theoretical establishment (Strong 1925) determined that the acceptable stages of the theory would include awareness, interest, decision and action. The AIDA model is built on the assumption that a potential consumer should pass through a sequence of cognitive and affective stages which then leads to a behavioural response. The next section discusses the stages of the AIDA model in detail and also highlights its relevance to this study.

### **3.5.1 Stages of the AIDA Model**

This section discusses the stages of the AIDA model as it will highlight how and why organisations like the Livingstone Museum can use digital marketing communication and be able to access the opportunities that come with it. The AIDA model was used to highlight how the museum can use communication mediums like digital marketing communication to ensure that visitors go through all phases identified by the AIDA model successfully.

#### **3.5.1 Awareness**

Awareness, according to Strong (1925:45), is the first stage in the AIDA model and should be the first step in the marketing communication process. This is an important stage of the process because this is where visitors can be made aware of the existence of the museum's products or

services. Strong (1925:56) noted that it is vital for organisations to find means of seeking identity and visibility for the products and services they will offer. That is why this stage of the process can provide organisations an opportunity to create awareness through the use of communication tools such as digital marketing communication, as awareness can lead them towards the tentative trial of the marketed product and service (Lerty 2020:345). This stage if done successfully gets the visitors attention and can lead them into having interest in their products and services, which is the next stage of the process.

### **3.5.2 Interest**

Organisations are always striving to make consumers have interest in their products and services. Interest in a product or service according to Rowely (2017:67) may appear when consumers are constantly engaged and made aware of how the product and service will benefit them. This stage of the AIDA process according to Strong (1925:60) is when the consumer develops an interest in the product or learning about it and how it can potentially benefit their life (Hirvu 2020). Therefore, for the context of this study the AIDA model highlights how aspects of the museum's communication process such as the use of digital marketing communication can be used to ensure that the visitors develop an interest in the organisation. According to Strong (1925: 78) once this stage is accomplished consumers will then have the desire to purchase the product or service, which is the next stage of the process.

### **3.5.3 Desire**

Desire, according to Noth (2018:233) is the aspiration to acquire a particular product or service and is the third stage of the AIDA model. This stage, according to Strong (1925:85), is when an individual cultivates a favourable disposition towards the organisation's products or services. This stage highlights how the museum can use digital marketing communication platforms to increase desire in a visitor because they have been made aware of the products and services and have developed an interest. These marketing communication platforms provide consumers with relevant information in a way that explains the benefits of the product or service (Noth 2018:383). Desire in consumers is important according to Nash (2019:23) because it builds to the state of motivation, where feeling compel to take action.

### **3.5.4 Action**

Action is the final stage of the AIDA model and, according to Strong (1925:100), action is the state where a consumer's feelings and emotions are in full effect and they are encouraged to purchase the product or service. This stage is where organisations focus on ensuring that all processes lead to maintaining market share by the consumer actually purchasing the product or service (Strong 1925: 166). The AIDA model has showcased how the Livingstone Museum through the use of digital marketing can create awareness, which may lead to potential visitors developing interest and a desire to take action and visit the museum.

### **3.5.5 Relevance of the AIDA Model**

According to Nuon (2017:187) it is important for organisations to always strive to create a good market response towards their goods and services. This market response, according to Nuon (2017:408), can be attained through the use of different marketing communication techniques such as digital marketing communication. Therefore, the AIDA model was specifically chosen for this study because it is sometimes referred to as a communication strategy theory due to how it allows organisations to know why efficient communication is vital for consumer progression (Mayce 2018:605). The theory according to Mayce (2018:788) eludes that use of tools such as digital marketing communication are vital because they allow organisations to prioritise a customer. However, even though the AIDA model is an advertising theory it still adds value to this research as it can be used by not necessary viewing the stages of the model as consumer purchase phases but as opportunities that can be attained through the use of proper marketing communication platforms in order to release a strong communication message.

The AIDA model, which is part of many hierarchies of effects models, is suitable for this study because the model specifically has been used in a similar way in many successful studies such as by Hault (2012) and Yasmine (2019) where it was found that the AIDA model specifically also exemplifies the need for sending a strong communication message for consumers to have a positive attitude towards an organisation during the purchasing process (Lank 2016:788). The AIDA model comprehends the internal consumer processes of product purchasing, or in the context of this study, visitor motivation to visit the museum, that organisations can benefit from through the creation of a strong communication message which can be done using tools like digital marketing communication.

The next section considers some of the various criticisms that the AIDA model has had throughout its existence and in recent times.

### **3.5.6 Criticisms of the AIDA Model**

The AIDA model, although being one of the most used theories, has in fact been faced with some criticisms, with the main one according to Kred (2018:67) being the absence of the consumer's feelings and attitude after the purchase, such as satisfaction, consumption, repeat product patronage and other after purchase behaviours such as referral and reviews. This criticism is relevant to the current study as it shows the importance of recognising post-purchase behaviours which allows for a more comprehensive and effective approach in reaching and engaging with visitors throughout their entire journey, from awareness to becoming loyal visitors. According to Danut (2011:899) the reliance of a fixed nature is another inconsistency in the theory because it may no longer be suitable for modern sales processes which have changed in recent times.

For example, the emotion that is most times addressed in advertising and identified by advertising psychology as significant is not highlighted in the theory. Merowa et al (2019:78) argue that the AIDA model does not take into consideration the different facets at which a sale can take place, because not all products and services have the same sales strategies.

Another criticism the AIDA model is facing according to Runts and Sehe (2020:45) is that the stages of consumer purchase behaviour provided by the model is relatively fixed, which is not the case for most sales processes. For example, the stage of attraction and interest can be completed as one phase. The model also did not take into consideration that numerous media can be used in the progression of a consumers' journey until they become interested in making a purchase, therefore a step-by-step sequence will find it difficult to take these paths into consideration.

However, even though the AIDA model has faced many criticisms throughout the years it has still managed to institute itself as one of the most used hierarchy of effects models, which is evidently applicable to the current study as it highlights how the museum can use digital marketing communication to ensure that visitors go through all identified phases identified by the AIDA model.



### 3.6 THEORETICAL CRITERIA

Table 3.3 highlights the critical insight derived from the theories discussed in this chapter and the subsequent proposed theoretical criteria. It also indicates the alignment of the theoretical criteria to the research questions. These theoretical criteria form the theoretical foundation of the study and informed the development of the data collection instruments.

**Table 3.1 Theoretical criteria for the use of digital marketing communication at the Livingstone Museum**

Research question	Theoretical criteria	Brief description
RQ1: What digital marketing tools do the museum use to reach and engage visitors?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited use of digital marketing communication tools such as social media, email marketing, websites and virtual museums</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>According to Halis (2016:98) relative advantage is important because potential users need to understand how adopting an</li> </ul>

		<p>innovation can improve their current situation. This, in the context of this study, highlights how digital marketing communication specifically can improve the museum's current communication situation and allow</p>
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		<p>them to reach visitors efficiently.</p>
<p>RQ2: What are the opportunities that digital marketing communication can provide the museum?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>• Enhanced relationships</li> <li>• Create awareness</li> </ul>	<p>Jeyu (2016: 567) argues that the opportunity for museums to consistently communicate with their visitors and ensure enhanced relationships is one of the main reasons for the increased use of digital marketing communication in these cultural institutions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awareness is the first phase in the AIDA model and explains the first phase that consumers proceed through when becoming aware of a product or service that they need or want. Pertaining to the current study, awareness is important in that it is a crucial first step for visitors to the</li> </ul>
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		<p>museum as motivated by the use of digital marketing.</p>
<p>RQ3: What are visitors' perceptions on the use of digital marketing communication by the Livingstone museum?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awareness of the museums use of digital marketing</li> <li>• communication tools and museum offerings</li> <li>• Interactive and consistent communication with the Livingstone museum</li> </ul>	<p>It is suggested by Markine (2019: 34) that digital marketing communication has been utilised by many organisations to effectively keep consumers aware of new happenings in</p>

	<p>Attractive use of digital marketing communication</p>	<p>order to ensure constant interest in the organisations offerings.</p> <p>Due to the consumer expectations constantly changing, it important to consistently interact and communicate with them in order to understand their expectations (Saun 2020:89)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Interaction due to digital platforms:</li> <li>● The evolution of technology has created platforms that allow organisations to communicate offerings in a creative</li> </ul>
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		manner in order to attract visitors (Felium 2018: 56)
RQ4: What are the challenges that the Livingstone museum is	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Challenges in applying an integrated digital marketing approach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The evolution of technology and the modern visitor has changed the way</li> </ul>

facing with regard to digital marketing communication?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Challenges in measuring effectiveness of digital marketing communication</li> </ul>	organisations communicate leading to many facing challenges (Herston 2018).
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Diffusion of Innovations Theory elucidates the intricate adoption process of digital marketing communication, shedding light on the challenges faced by the Livingstone Museum (Lerk 2013). These challenges revolve around knowledge acquisition, emotional perceptions, decision dynamics, implementation uncertainties, and final confirmation, influencing the museum's ability to effectively leverage digital strategies for visitor outreach and engagement (Webby 2019).</li></ul>
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<p>RQ 5: What is the role of digital marketing communication at the Livingstone museum?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Consistent communication with museum visitors</li> <li>● Understand visitors' expectations</li> </ul> <p>Interactive communication</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Daft and Lengel (1986:619) point out that the chosen channel of communication should be capable of transmitting rich information, according to the media richness theory. It is</li> </ul>
		<p>suggested that the chosen media channel should be able to allow the consistent transmission of information in order to build rapport and provide control of the situation at hand (Sether 2019:899).</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Due to changes in the business environment, external communication has become more about communicating with potential visitors to understand their expectations (Krammel 2020:456).</li> </ul>
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**3.7 SUMMARY**

In conclusion the chapter discussed three pivotal theories in relation to the study. The study was shaped by the Diffusion of Innovation Theory, which provided a framework for understanding how digital marketing communication tools could be introduced and adopted by the museum. Rogers' (1962) Diffusion of Innovation Theory identified key factors influencing the adoption of innovations, such as relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability (Rogers 2003).

By evaluating these attributes, the study assessed the opportunities of digital marketing innovations and identified potential barriers to adoption. Segmenting the visitors into different adopter categories—innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards—enabled



targeted marketing strategies tailored to each group's readiness and receptiveness (Rogers 2003; Sahin 2006). This segmentation helped in designing more effective communication and engagement strategies for different segments of the museum.

Media Richness Theory, developed by Daft and Lengel (1986), guided by highlighting the importance of the museum selecting digital marketing communication channels based on their ability to convey information effectively. This theory posited that communication media varied in richness, with richer media being more effective in resolving ambiguity and facilitating understanding (Daft & Lengel 1986). By evaluating digital marketing tools against criteria such as feedback capability, multiple cues, language variety, and personal focus, the study ensured to understand, through the first research question on what digital marketing tools the museum uses to reach and engage visitors, whether the chosen media aligned with the complexity of the messages being communicated (Daft & Lengel 1986; Dennis & Kinney 2018). According to Dennis and Kinney (2018:56) this alignment enhances the effectiveness of digital marketing efforts by ensuring that complex and nuanced messages are conveyed through appropriately rich media, thereby improving audience engagement and comprehension.

The AIDA model structured the digital marketing communication campaigns by defining clear stages that guided the visitors from awareness to action (Strong 1925; Kotler & Keller 2016). This model outlined four stages—Attention, Interest, Desire, and Action—that described the consumer journey from initial awareness to taking a desired action (Kotler & Keller 2016). By applying the AIDA model, the study ensured that digital marketing efforts were targeted and effective at each stage of the consumer journey. Strategies to capture attention might have included eye-catching visuals and compelling headlines, while content to sustain interest could have involved informative blog posts and interactive experiences. Persuasive messaging that highlighted unique exhibits and visitor testimonials created desire, and clear calls-to-action. (Kotler & Keller 2016; Fill 2009).

## **CHAPTER 4 : RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

This study explores the use of digital marketing communication at the Livingstone Museum to understand how it can assist the museum to reach and engage visitors and understand their expectations. Hence the previous chapters presented a review of relevant literature on digital marketing communication and discussed theories that underscored the research. From the literature review it is clear that digital marketing communication is a tool that may be able to assist the museum in reaching and engaging visitors. The previous theoretical chapter is linked to the methodology of this study as it provides guidance by noting important aspects of the study to ensure that value-adding research instruments are used to collect specific information to address specific research objectives.

This chapter discusses the research approach that was selected for this study and elaborates on the research design including the approach and paradigms that the study adopted. The study chose to adopt both the qualitative approach and quantitative approach to holistically understand the use of digital marketing communication at the Livingstone Museum from both staff members and visitors. The subsequent sections of the chapter discuss the population, sampling, ethics, data collection, data analysis, and issues of reliability and validity.

### **4.2 RESEARCH PARADIGMS**

Research paradigms, according to Pangliy (2019:566) are common beliefs and agreements that are usually shared between researchers about how a research problem can be understood and addressed. A research paradigm is characterised by the way researchers may respond to ontological, epistemological and methodological questions (Pangliy 2019:657). Hence this section will elaborate on the two paradigms chosen for this study which include the positivist and interpretivist paradigms.

#### **4.2.1 Positivist**

The positivist paradigm is described as a branch of philosophy that became prominent during the late eighteenth century due to Auguste Comte's works (Skeet 2018: 75). The positivist paradigm, according to Lemy (2019: 32), is of the position that reality may exist separate from individuals because it is not affected by our opinions and feelings but is governed by absolute laws. In

positivism, the same is applicable to the social realm because reality is usually free from context, therefore various positivists researchers in diverse times and places may have similar conclusions about a subject matter (Ardin 2018:78).

#### **4.2.1.1 The Epistemological, Ontological and Methodological Assumptions of Positivism**

The epistemological assumption of positivists is at most times objective because these researchers usually have an objective mentality as they observe phenomena that exist independent from them so that they don't affect the outcome (Rids 2016:23). Positivist researchers utilise various elements to define a phenomenon in its real nature, as they exist, in order to avoid any personal interventions whatsoever.

According to Crass (2018:45), the ontological assumption of the positivist paradigm, is that a single reality exists which needs to be understood by a researcher and in this single reality there is a set of standardised values that a society is governed by and must be adhered to by all individuals. As a result of the ontological assumptions underpinning this paradigm being a single reality the term objectivism is generally used to define the ontological stance of the positivist paradigm (Rids 2016:67). Therefore, positivism argues that researchers should consider concepts as object and real so that they can be deemed verifiable (Corn 2017:616).

Positivist methodological assumptions, at most times make use of quantitative data to address research objectives and formulate theory (Crass 2018: 68). This data can be collected through the use of experiments, quasi experiments, standardised surveys, exploratory and analytical methods which at most times require an objective method of measurement and analysis (Corn 2017:896). The numeric data presented usually makes use of descriptive or inferential statistical analysis. According to Vrate and Struik (2016: 344) research that uses the positivist approach is considered appropriate if it encompasses both internal and external validity, reliability and objectivity (Guba & Lincoln 2017: 66)

The positivist paradigm is applicable to this study as it adopted the quantitative approach as part of the research methodology. Hence the positivist paradigm is suitable for this study as it sets laws and rules to be followed when collecting and analysing quantitative data that leave room for minimum error (Zowen 2019:76).

The paradigm also permits the researcher to draw unbiased conclusions based on the logic drawn from the scientific method used, which in this case was questionnaires used to address the fifth research objective (Zowen 2019:80).

### **4.3.2 Interpretivist**

Interpretivism, according to Ziman (2018: 233), is the response to the over dominant nature of the positivist paradigm because interpretivism discards the fact that a social world can exist independent from our senses. Instead, interpretivist researchers believe in various socially constructed worlds that depend on other social realities for meanings, hence making it more complicated to interpret in terms of fixed realities (Ziman 2018: 300). Reality is based on interpretivism and is not discovered but created (Timothy 2019:30).

#### **4.3.2.1 The Epistemological, Ontological and Methodological Assumptions of Interpretivism**

The epistemological assumptions in interpretivism are subjective because they are of the stance that an external world is not easily reached by the researcher without it being manipulated by their preconceived ideas and notions (Lukela 2016: 30). This is in line with Zlow (2016:456) who states that individual's opinions are important due to the fact that social elements interact with each other in a system to find meaning of the different phenomena that exist. Trix (2014: 411) asserts that interpretivist researchers are usually encompassed in the social world that is being investigated hence they are rarely disconnected from the environment they are attempting to understand. The aim of research that relies on the interpretivist paradigm is usually not to attain universal context of knowledge, it however, attempts to explore individual interpretations of a social system.

The interpretive ontology assumption claims that individuals are not always able to know and understand reality because it is always based on individual opinions and interactions (Timothy 2019: 47). In interpretivism reality is based on individual interaction and actions and therefore is something that cannot be generalised. According to Lukela (2016:23) interpretive ontology is of the stance where one believes in various socially constructed realities and assumes that these realities are handled differently by different individuals. Therefore, interpretive ontological assumptions at most times are never permanent or have an even standard where the outcome is not known (Timothy 2019: 34).

Blaike (2010:133) argues that interpretive methodological assumptions are concerned with data collection methods such as observations, focus groups and interviews with attitudes based on the researcher's knowledge and experiences, but the social system is understood through the eyes of the individuals taking part in the research rather than the researcher. According to Cohen and Ratte (2017: 27) the main aim of the interpretive approach is to explore the social system in context of the participants hence interpretivist researchers collect data using mainly qualitative methods. The data is collected over a long period of time and analysed by the researcher identifying patterns in the data to understand the phenomena (Cohen & Ratte 2017: 30).

The interpretivist paradigm is suitable for this study because, as mentioned above, this study will also be making use of the qualitative method which will allow the researcher to understand the research problem in more depth in order to classify the problems or opportunities discovered. Hence the interpretivist paradigm was suitable for this study because it facilitates how and why a research problem exists through the use of in-depth information that qualitative tools provide. The researcher is thus allowed to develop meaningful insights through the use of semi-structured interviews in order to address the research objectives.

#### **4.4 RESEARCH APPROACH**

There are two research approaches that are generally used in research; these include the qualitative and quantitative approaches. For this study a mixed method approach was chosen because the integration of different research methods can enhance understanding of the research problem. A mixed approach according to Risc (2016:23) is an approach that involves collecting, analysing and combining qualitative and quantitative research techniques. Bert (2017:54) "describes a mixed method approach as the type of research where elements of qualitative and quantitative approaches are combined for the purpose of deeply understanding the phenomena being investigated".

A mixed method approach was used because it gave the researcher adequate means to ensure that the participants and respondents express themselves so that findings are grounded in both participants' and respondents' experiences (Bert 2017:89). In addition, the mixed method approach allowed the researcher to collect a substantial amount of data as it adds to the quality of the research findings of the study. The mixed method approach, according to Zeat (2020:34), allows the researcher the opportunity to intensively investigate the research problem and extensively allow

the researcher to identify and understand the research problem in depth. This statement is in line with Tagners (2016:160) who asserts that a mixed method approach prioritises having an understanding of the processes, by forming different categories of information based on various information collection methods. Therefore, the next section discusses the triangulation approach as the mixed method approach selected for this research.

#### **4.4.1 Triangulation**

The most common and well-known reason for using a mixed method approach is to achieve triangulation. Burton and Bartlett (2009:38) maintain that triangulation is mainly used to increase the validity of the research findings. Triangulation, according to Risc (2016:23), is an approach that involves collecting, analysing and combining qualitative and quantitative research techniques. The purpose of this design is to obtain different but complementary data on the same topic to best understand the research problem (Planko 2020:97). The intent of using this is to bring together the differing strengths and non-overlapping weaknesses of quantitative methods with those of qualitative methods.

This design and its underlying purpose of converging different methods have been discussed extensively in literature because it offers a variety of datasets to explain different aspects of a phenomenon of interest (Jick 2022: 245). This study aimed to achieve methodological triangulation by using multiple methods. The aim of methodological triangulation according to Jick (2022: 245) is to decrease the deficiencies and biases that come from any single method. Hence this design was used for this research because the researcher wants to provide a balanced understanding of the research problem and also to validate the findings. The researcher also believed using this approach would ensure the use of the right method of data collection based on the different characteristics of the units of analysis.

Three types of mixed method approach for achieving triangulation exist. The sequential explanatory approach is characterised by two distinct phases: an initial phase of quantitative data collection and analysis followed by a second qualitative data collection and analysis phase (Hale 2019:24). The general aim of this approach is to further explain the phenomenon under study qualitatively or to explore the findings of the quantitative study in more depth (Tashakkor 2019: 34).

The sequential exploratory approach is similarly characterised by two distinct phases: an initial qualitative phase followed by a second phase of quantitative data collection and analysis (Cole 2019: 90). The general aim of this approach is to further explore the phenomenon under study quantitatively or to perform quantitative studies to generalise qualitative findings to different samples (Tashakkor 2019: 58).

The concurrent triangulation approach is described by Morris (2020:23) as the simultaneous use of the qualitative and quantitative methods to more accurately describe the phenomenon and relationships among variables of interest. In concurrent triangulation design, both qualitative and quantitative data are collected alongside each other in a single phase (Hale 2019:40). The general aim of this approach is to better understand or obtain a more developed understanding of the phenomenon under study and validate the overall results (Tashakkor 2019: 70). Concurrent triangulation can be used to ensure that all research questions are addressed adequately or to seek information about different levels of the research problem (Creswell 2019:87). The general idea is that the need to address different types of questions within the research project may arise and require different methods (Creswell 2019: 89).

The concurrent triangulation approach was used for this study as it allows the researcher adequate means to ensure that the participants express themselves so that findings are grounded in participant and respondents' experiences (Bert 2017:89).

In addition, the use of a mixed method approach to gather the needed data was based on the fact that it allowed the researcher to collect a substantial amount of data through two research methods that could contribute to the quality of the research findings of the study.

The next sections discuss the qualitative and quantitative approaches to highlight the different perspectives and why they were selected for this study.

#### **4.4.2 Qualitative Research**

According to Allino (2016:222), in qualitative research data is generally collected using written or spoken symbols, and after being collected is analysed by discovering and grouping themes that are generated from this data. The qualitative approach, according to Zeat (2020:34), allows the researcher the opportunity to intensively investigate the research problem for the researcher to

identify and understand the patterns and themes that exist in the information collected. This statement is in line with Tagner (2016:160) who asserts that qualitative research as a research approach prioritises having an understanding of the processes that form different categories by using various information collection methods and acquires this information through structured and in-depth data analysis.

Chello and Kotar (2018:56) argue that, when attaining knowledge, there are a variety of means by which individuals can attain this and also that there are various ways of knowing. The scholars also state that individuals have various means of understanding the situation at hand due to the probability that individuals experience the same situation but can have different understandings. According to Dabbey (2017:200), researchers who adopt the qualitative method are sometimes viewed as being biased because they generally have an idea of what the research findings will be. Therefore, qualitative researchers usually have a predetermined perception about the phenomenon being investigated. Researchers according to Manny (2019:452) at times refer to the qualitative approach as imprecise and subjective.

Qualitative research according to Beau (2020:54) utilises what is referred to as soft data, this type of information is presented using spoken words, impressions, sentences, photographs and symbols. Hence qualitative research at most times does not entail the use of numerical data. The main advantage of qualitative research is the provision of in-depth information and intensity in the description and presentation of information (Xyt and Johns 2020:212). Another strength of qualitative research consists of the fact that it prioritises the understanding of behaviours and attitudes that participants may ascribe to (Elstone 2017:95). According to Tony (2018:149), qualitative research is important in research in that it permits for elements to be compared to understand how they differ and/or are related.

Based on the above discussions, the qualitative approach was chosen as part of this study's methodology because it allows the researcher to collect in depth information from museum staff members in a manner that will provide specific insights on why the research problem exists. The qualitative approach is beneficial to this study because the semi-structured interviews conducted provided opportunities for creativity that lead to vital in depth information.



#### **4.4.3 Quantitative research**

According to De Baus (2020:10), quantitative research is a process where a phenomenon is measured in an objective manner and emphasises mathematical and statistical analysis. The quantitative method strategically focuses on quantifying the collection and analysis of data formed from a deductive approach where the emphasis is on the testing of theory shaped by positivist philosophies (Reed 2018:76). The quantitative approach is designed to provide reliable information and is associated with social science methods that promote objective empirical investigation of observable phenomena to test and understand the problem at hand (Burns 2017:97). This according to Dessel (2015:50) is done through a variety of quantifying methods reflecting on its vast use as a research method on different academic disciplines. That is why according to Lian & Hook (2020:27) qualitative researchers usually collect data that is usually analysed and presented numerically through graphs, charts, tables and maps etc.

One of the most vital objectives of the quantitative research method is to help “describe, predict quantities and degrees and relationship between the phenomena that are being researched” (Fate 2018:120). Hence, one of the major advantages of quantitative research is that it can be administered to a large group of participants, which in return makes the generalisation of the research possible (Keyton 2016:53). The quantitative research method usually requires carefully thought through design which makes it easy for another researcher to replicate both the test and the results (Elnor 2019:76). According to Fate (2012:153) quantitative research allows researchers to collect data in real time scenarios so that statistical analysis can occur almost immediately.

Based on the above discussions the quantitative method was adopted for this as it allows the researcher to collect a sufficient amount of data from the museum's visitors quickly using close ended questions in the questionnaire. This method is also applicable to this study because it usually uses randomised samples which exclude biasness and allow for the true research findings to be presented. The quantitative method was used in the form of a questionnaire with the museum visitors because of its anonymous nature as they were not required to indicate anything that will identify them. Hence, respondents were more likely to participate in the study and gave their honest opinions on the Livingstone museum’s use of digital marketing communication whilst remaining anonymous.

#### **4.5 TIME FRAME**

The time frame for this study is cross sectional and quantitative questionnaires and qualitative interviews were used to allow the researcher to address the main aim of the study and to provide a detailed description of the use of digital marketing communication at the Livingstone Museum. A cross sectional time frame is described as a method of collecting information from a sample in a prescribed time frame (Deton 2017: 254). Hence this study adopted a cross sectional time frame because it was conducted over a few months, which is enough time for the researcher to reach conclusions about the research problem.

#### **4.6 POPULATION**

Zambia, a landlocked country in Southern Africa, has a diverse and dynamic population. According to the latest census data, Zambia's population is estimated to be over 18 million people (Central Statistical Office 2022). The population is characterised by a youthful demographic, with a significant proportion of individuals under the age of 25. This youthful population presents both opportunities and challenges for the country, particularly in areas such as education, employment, and healthcare (World Bank 2021). The population is distributed across urban and rural areas, with urbanisation trends leading to growing populations in cities like Lusaka, Ndola, and Kitwe (UN-Habitat 2022). A population comprises of a complete set of individuals with specific set of characteristics from which a sample is drawn from in order to conduct research (Vester & Kruger 2012:30). The population can also be described as the society from which a researcher can draw their sample for their study from and it hence includes the properties that form the unit of analysis (Grandal 2016:193). It is also referred to as the complete set of units from which the researcher intends to generalise their findings. Moreover, it is known as the element of analysis in the population that a study has access to (Vester & Kruger 2012:50).

When selecting the population, it is important to classify elements or objects that can provide the data needed by the researcher (Malotra 2014:415). Therefore, the target group of this study was all employees and all visitors to the Livingstone Museum in the month of April. Livingstone Museum staff and visitors were selected as the target group as the research was specifically conducted at this very Museum.

#### **4.6.1 Sample population parameters**

Population parameter, according to Vester and Kruger (2012:78), can be described as the value that describes the characteristics of an entire population. Specific population parameters are set to describe the characteristics of the respondents and participants who could provide the information that is needed to answer the research questions of this study. According to Maxwell (2019:80) to identify population parameters for a study, a researcher must have clearly stipulated inclusion and exclusion criteria. Therefore, the next section discusses the population parameters set for the marketing and communications staff members and museum visitors.

##### **4.6.1.1 Marketing and Communications Staff Members**

This section highlights the inclusion and exclusion criteria for the Marketing and Communications Department and the museum visitors.

Staff members in the Marketing and Communications Department

###### **4.6.1.1.1 Inclusion Criteria**

1. Participants who were a staff member of the marketing and communications department.
2. Participants who were formally employed by the museum.
3. Participants available during stipulated data collection periods.
4. Participants 18 years and older.

###### **4.6.1.1.2 Exclusion Criteria**

1. Individuals who were not available during data collection periods.
2. Individuals who chose not to participate.
3. Individuals who did not meet the inclusion criteria.

##### **4.6.1.2 Museum Visitors**

This section highlights the inclusion and exclusion criteria of the museum visitors.

###### **4.6.1.2.1 Inclusion Criteria**

1. Respondents who were 18 years and older.
2. Respondents who visited the museum during the data collection periods.
3. Respondents that were conversant with the English language.

#### **4.6.1.2.2 Exclusion Criteria**

1. Individuals younger than 18 years.
2. Individuals who chose not to participate
3. Individuals who do not meet the inclusion criteria.

#### **4.6.2 Accessible Population**

The accessible population can be referred to as the subset of the target population that the researcher may have reasonable access to (Malotra 2014:625). The accessible population for this study consisted of the six communication and marketing staff members of the Livingstone Museum. Because they are a small number, the researcher included all of them in the study. It also included 300 museum visitors because that was the average number of visitors the museum received per week in the month of April.

#### **4.6.3 The Unit(s) of Analysis**

The units of analysis are described as the individuals of the accessible population which a researcher intends to include in a study (Stelman 2011:748). According to Sutton (2012:47:91), the unit of analysis is the “elements of a social world” and is described as the matters or entities to which research findings are applicable. Thus, the unit of analysis for this study are the individuals in the Communication and Marketing Department at the Livingstone Museum and the museum visitors.

The goal of this study was to explore the use of digital marketing communication at the Livingstone Museum. Hence, to fully understand the phenomenon being investigated, it was important for part of the population to be sampled. The next section therefore discusses the sampling technique used for this study.

### **4.7 SAMPLING**

Sampling can be described as the selection of elements drawn from the entire population to be investigated (Stelman 2011:838). It entails the researcher selecting which people, settings, occasions, behaviours and social occurrences to explore/investigate (Baxter 2018:129). Baxter (2018:163) states that there are two types of sampling that are used in research, which include non-probability and probability sampling.

In this regard, this study made use of convenience sampling which is a non-probability sampling technique, and the census method which is a probability sampling technique. These sampling techniques are discussed in more detail in the next sections.

#### **4.7.1 Probability Sampling**

The probability sampling technique is a fundamental approach in research methodology that ensures each member of a population has a known and non-zero chance of being included in the sample (Grandal 2016:199). This method aims to provide a representative subset of the larger population, allowing researchers to make valid statistical inferences about the entire group based on the characteristics observed in the sample (Colgi 2018:50). Probability sampling enhances the generalisability of research findings and allows researchers to quantify the margin of error associated with their results, providing a solid foundation for drawing reliable conclusions about the population based on the characteristics of the sampled individuals (McJohns 2014:479).

Therefore, the researcher deemed it sensible to use the census method which is a probability sampling technique for the qualitative part. All six staff members of the marketing and communication department at the Livingstone Museum who were present at the time of data collection were included in the study. The next section discusses the census method in detail.

##### **4.7.1.1 Census Method**

The census method is a research approach where data is collected from every member of the population under study (Leston 2018:509). Unlike sampling methods, which involve selecting a subset of the population to represent the whole, a census attempts to gather information from each individual or unit within the entire population. According to Rasit (2017:80) one of the primary advantages or one of the primary benefit of the census method is its ability to provide a comprehensive and accurate representation of the entire population, leaving no room for sampling errors or biases. This approach is often employed when the population size is manageable, and the cost and logistical challenges associated with collecting data from every unit are justifiable (Rasit 2017:80)

According to Nethel (2013:18) the census method is particularly advantageous when the population size is relatively small, as it allows for in-depth exploration of individual cases. However, it is important to note that the census method might not be the most practical or cost

effective approach. Felium (2015:56) notes that while ensuring completeness, the census method could be resource-intensive, and researchers should weigh the benefits against the associated logistical challenges.

Therefore, in this context, the decision to use the census method for sampling the six staff members of the Marketing and Communication Department at the museum implies a commitment to obtaining a detailed and nuanced understanding of each participant's role and experiences within the staff population, contributing to the richness and depth of the research findings.

#### **4.7.2 Non-Probability Sampling**

Non-probability sampling can be described as when there is no guarantee that the individuals of the population stand a chance of being selected (Grandal 2016:193). Non-probability sampling techniques consist of “voluntary sampling, convenience sampling, quota sampling, dimensional sampling, judgmental/purposive sampling, and snowball sampling” (Grandal 2016:195). McJohns (2014:477) argue that the sampling technique chosen for a study should be selected by a variety of very essential characteristics such as the level of knowledge of intended participants in, the studies objectives, financial resources available for the study, the time dimension or limits of the study and the research problem at hand.

Therefore, the visitors who completed the questionnaires were selected through non-probability sampling, namely convenience sampling because they were available at the time the data was collected and willing to take part in the study (Baxter et al 2018:186). However, the researcher deemed it sensible to use the census method for the qualitative part. Therefore, all six staff members of the marketing and communication department at the Livingstone Museum who were present at the time of data collection were included in the study.

##### **4.7.2.1 Convenience Sampling**

Convenience sampling which is also referred to as haphazard sampling or accidental sampling is described as a non-probability sampling technique where elements of a target population meet a simple stipulated criterion, such as being easily accessible, geographic proximity, being available at the time the study was in progress, or the willingness to be included in the study (Hashan 2014:90). This sampling technique is also described as investigating elements of the population that a researcher has easy access to.

Convenience samples are at most times referred to as ‘accidental samples’ because samples are selected based on happening to be situated, spatially or administratively, near to where a researcher is conducting their research (Rasit 2017:76). In addition, convenience sampling usually does not require the generation of a simple random sample because the criteria is based on whether the participant is willing to take part in the study. According to Shons (2019:346) most convenience samples are collected based on the population at hand because the information is usually readily available for the researcher to collect. Researchers who utilise convenience sampling do not at most times have to travel great distances to gather information, but simply collect from whatever environment is nearby or accessible (Graw 2019:53).

Leston (2018:342) asserts that one of the most vital aspects of convenience sampling is it being cost effective as it permits research funds to be distributed to other aspects of a project in circumstances where funds may be minimal. However, Zady (2016:43) does argue that the findings from convenience sampling techniques cannot be generalised to the population because of the potential bias of the sampling technique. Convenience sampling was used in this study specifically when collecting the quantitative data, because only 300 visitors who were willing to take part in the study were included. The 300 visitors were asked to take part in the study over a prescribed period of time agreed upon by the museum supervisors. Convenience sampling was also used in this study because due to Covid-19, the museum did not operate at its usual normal hence not as many individuals were available for the researcher to select from, hence only those who were available at the time of data collecting were included.

#### **4.8 DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES**

Qualitative and quantitative approaches make use of different data collection methods, which comprise of interviews, observation, focus groups and questionnaires. The approach for collecting data for a study is at utmost times based on the nature of the phenomenon being investigated (Terry 2019:60). Since the issue being investigated in this study is the use of digital marketing communication at the Livingstone Museum, interviews and questionnaires were used as data collection techniques. Further for the purpose of motivating the choice of data collection, observations and focus groups are subsequently briefly explained.

Observations and focus groups were regarded to be unsuitable for this study because the researcher was not interested in understanding specific behaviours or attitudes. In addition, checking validity in observations with sufficient precision can be difficult. The researcher wanted participants to be able to express themselves freely as focus groups don't always allow for freedom of expression.

The next sections discuss and provide motivations as to why interviews and questionnaires were selected as the data collection techniques for this study.

#### **4.8.1 Semi- Structured Interviews**

According to Dessel (2015:67) an interview is a dialogue between two or more people where one party asks questions and the other gives required responses. Based on common phrasing the term interview is described as a dialogue where one person is the interviewer and the other one is the interviewee (Ishan 2015:45). The main purpose of an interview is usually to transfer information from interviewee to interviewer (Ishan 2015:50). Nethel (2013:23) describes in person interviews as a method of collecting data which entails direct communication between the respondent and interviewer in line with the questions.

According to Felium (2015), in person interviews yield the highest response because they permit the interviewer to make clarity on an ambiguous answer. Interviews at most times entail language symbols between two or more individuals, however in some cases an interview can take place with parties involved taking turns typing questions and answers on a digital platform (Tiller 2016: 80). Tiller (2016:47) also noted that recent communication advancements for example the internet has allowed interviews to happen where individuals are not in the same place geographically such as with visual video conferencing software and telephone interviews that allow conversations to happen without individuals being in the same place. These new technologies have in fact made it easier for researchers to collect valuable information without having to physically move.

The development of the interview guide for investigating the marketing communication and digital marketing communication strategies of the Livingstone Museum was informed by extensive literature review in chapters 2 and 3. Research on integrated marketing communication highlights the necessity of utilising a diverse range of tools to effectively reach and engage audiences (Keller 2016; Kotler and Armstrong 2020). This informed questions about the tools used by the museum to communicate with visitors and promote their services. Additionally, digital marketing literature



underscores the importance of social media, email marketing, and websites in fostering continuous interaction and engagement with audiences (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick 2019; Kaplan and Haenlein 2010). This guided the inclusion of questions on the frequency and role of digital marketing in the museum's communication strategy.

Furthermore, the literature review emphasised the opportunities and challenges presented by digital marketing. Studies indicate that digital tools can enhance customer relationships and drive engagement, while also presenting challenges such as digital literacy gaps and resource constraints (Holliman and Rowley 2014; Tuten and Solomon 2017). These insights shaped the questions on how digital marketing assists the museum in informing visitors and maintaining positive relationships, as well as the specific challenges faced. Additionally, best practices in digital marketing strategy development, which advocate for continuous assessment and adaptation to changing trends (Strauss and Frost 2016; Batra and Keller 2016), informed questions about potential improvements in the museum's use of digital marketing.

For this particular study, the researcher aimed to conduct 6 face-to-face semi-structured interviews which, according to Darey (2015: 87), is a type of interview where all the interviewees are asked the same questions that are open ended in an attempt to observe trends. The researcher conducted interviews with all the six members of staff of the Communication and Marketing Department because they were a small number and the researcher believed interviewing all the members of the department would give a well-rounded analysis on the use of digital marketing communication at the Livingstone Museum. See appendix C for the detailed interview guide

The interview was semi-structured because it made the process easier because all interview participants answered the same questions. This type of interview was also used for this research because it allowed participants to elaborate on their opinions while still keeping participants on topic. According to Jeol (2018: 456), semi-structured interviews are important because they encourage two-way communication, therefore, allowing for a free flow of well-structured information. This type of interview was used for the reason that they have a unique advantage of allowing the researcher to establish a mutual understanding with potential participants and therefore gain their trust and cooperation. Interviews were kept short and straight to the point and all participants were required to wear masks for protection against COVID-19.

#### **4.8.1.1 Semi-Structured Interview Guide and Format**

As mentioned above the main purpose of an interview according to Vitchie and Kewis (2013:58) is that it can assist the researcher or interviewer to obtain and understand a participant's perspective regarding a subject matter. Terror and Durhein (2019:100) assert that, during an interview, participants must be made aware of the purpose of the study and must at all times understand what they are committing themselves to. To this end Bloomy and Trabtee (2016:215) state that “a set of predesigned structured, semi-structured or unstructured questions’ is usually adopted during interviews being conducted. Therefore, according to Terror and Durhein (2019:159) this set of predesigned questions is what researchers refer to as an interview guide.

Gref (2017:396) is of the view that the word ‘interview guide’ can be described as a set of predetermined questions prepared by a researcher in order to guide them as they conduct the interview with the individuals taking part in the study. Aldrain and Feyvine (2011:677) argue that the main purpose of an interview guide is its ability to add structure and coherence to the interview process. In addition, it was of utmost importance to put together an interview guide before an interview takes place as this allowed the researcher to both comprehend what they wanted to accomplish at the end of the interview and also re-evaluate any mishaps that may have happened during the process (Gref 2017:456).

In addition, an interview guide makes sure that the interview is conducted in a cohesive manner that allows the interviewer to easily navigate through various aspects of the interview with ease (Liam 2019:746). The interview guide also acted as a time management tool thereby ensuring the interview does not go off topic and is kept as short as possible due to COVID-19 protocols.

#### **4.8.1.3 Pre- Testing of the Interview Guide**

The interview guide for this research was pre-tested in order to address any possible inconsistencies with the research instrument. The researcher first allowed credible academics who have experience in marketing communication to scrutinise the research instrument in order for them to provide any recommendations and then moved on to the pre-test. The pretesting process went as follows:

#### **4.8.1.3.1 Selection of participants**

Participants for the pre-testing phase were selected from a pool of similar individuals from a similar organisation to the target population of the actual study. This ensured that the feedback received was relevant to the context of the research.

#### **4.8.1.3.2 Informed Consent**

Participants were informed about the purpose of the pre-test, the voluntary nature of their participation, and that their feedback would be used to improve the interview guide. For more detailed information, please refer to the informed consent letter included as Annexure B.

#### **4.8.1.3.3 Mock Interview Process**

With questions based on the research objectives, the researcher began the interview process by asking the pre-set questions, and taking notes on any difficulties participants faced, any confusion regarding the questions, or any other issues that arose.

#### **4.8.1.3.4 Feedback Session**

After the mock interviews, a feedback session was conducted. This session included clarity of the questions that may have been difficult, the relevance of the content, and the overall flow of the questions in the interview schedule. Based on the feedback received, the researcher made minor technical revisions to the interview guide. However, it should be noted that the data collected during this process was not included in the final dataset or report.

### **4.8.2 Analysis of the Data Gathered During the Semi-Structured Interviews**

According to Stan (2018:476) qualitative data analysis can be described as the process of applying logical techniques to interpret data collected. Types of qualitative data techniques usually used in research include thematic analysis, discourse analysis, and ground theory. Thematic analysis can be described as a technique that involves screening through a data set and identifying patterns and meaning across the data (Rust 2019: 35). Draun and Blare (2016:98) refer to thematic analysis, a method of data analysis that can be utilised to identify and observe why a subject matter exists in order to give account of patterns and themes that may exist within the information.

It simply guides a researcher in organising and describing data in an in-depth manner. Thematic analysis can also be described as a descriptive approach that provides various data analysis skills to a researcher in order for them to conduct various forms of qualitative analysis. Based on the above description this study employed thematic analysis to analyse the data that were collected during the interviews. Thematic analysis was employed in this study because it allowed the researcher to recognise and be aware of precise elements or variables that may influence the reasons as to why the subject matter exists. Hence, a participant’s interpretations were significantly interpreted using thematic analysis to highlight the most relevant clarifications for a participant’s conduct, actions and views and the features that are in order with the characteristics involved in the process of thematic analysis (Brahim 2014:211).

**4.8.2.1 The Process followed for the thematic analysis**

According to Curtis (2019:56) it is vital that qualitative researchers familiarise themselves with thematic analysis as both an independent and a dependable qualitative method to data analysis because thematic analysis is a valuable research approach that provides a much needed detailed and compound account of the data. To this end, the six phases identified by Vais, Moradi & Bondis (2019:14) are discussed in Table 4.1.

**Table 4.1: Phases of the Thematic Analysis of this Study**

Phase 1: researcher must familiarise themselves with data	According to Vais et al (2019: 30) during the first phase of thematic analysis, the researcher collects sufficient data. If information was captured through an interactive mean, then they usually have some preceding understanding of the data and, may
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	<p>have probably developed several analytical ideas on the data. Nevertheless, regardless of the circumstances, it is vital that a researcher immerses themselves in the data collected by continuously re-reading it and, at the same time, pay close attention to various meanings and patterns in the data set. According to Lurts (2017:90) it is beneficial for the researcher to read through all the information at minimum twice before beginning to code because this will allow them to form ideas and possible patterns.</p>
<p>Phase 2: The generation of initial codes</p>	<p>In the second phase of thematic analysis initial codes are formulated from the information. According to Vais et al (2019:67) it is vital that the codes generated from the data set identify features that the researcher feels are significant. Codes according to Rapal (2015:345) are described as the most prominent aspect of the raw data that can be analysed in a meaningful manner regarding the subject matter. The coding procedure is an important part of the analysing process because the data is arranged into a meaningful section. It is very important to note that data which is coded is not the same as themes which are usually more extensive; therefore, the interpretative part of the analysis usually occurs in the third phase where patterns are developed.</p>
<p>Phase 3: The search for themes</p>	<p>During this phase the whole data set must have been coded and collated. Therefore, this phase of the thematic analysis process entails categorising several codes of the data into possible themes and arranging the important patterns and ideas in the information that has been identified. It is at this phase that codes are analysed, as the analyst uses tables of visual objects, and mind-maps. The researcher in this phase may identify each code name and start identifying means to arrange the codes into themes.</p>

Phase 4: Reviewing themes	The fourth phase is when a set of possible themes are generated. According to Vais, Moradi and Bondis (2019:274) this process entails refining these themes because it should be noted that some
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	of the themes identified by the researcher may not be considered as a theme, because there may not be adequate information to support them or the data is too miscellaneous. The researcher can review themes at this level by reading the complete collected extracts of particular themes and, secondly, by going through the entire data set to understand whether a theme works in relation to the content in order to code any information located in the themes that may be missed in the other coding phases (Draken 2018:56). Hence it is also recommended to continuously review and improve the coding until the required thematic map is attained.
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Phase 5: Defining and naming themes	The fifth stage begins when the candidate is content with the thematic map of the data. The researcher may at this stage refine and define themes in order to show the essence of what a particular theme means and determine which section of the information captures themes that are to be highlighted. The researcher will then develop complete analysis of all themes and should show how they relate to the research objectives and questions.
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<p>Phase 6: Producing the report</p>	<p>During the final stage of the thematic analysis process completed themes are identified and the concluded analysis report is developed. According to Claw (2017:750) the final report must narrate the complete process of the data analysis in a way that is convincing to the reader about the value and validity of the analysis. The final report must include data extracts and a cohesive account of what the content entails within and across all themes. Vais, Moradi &amp; Bondis (2019:456) assert that the information can be analysed by the researcher by searching for recurring themes as they screen the reports repeatedly. The qualitative data analysis and interpretation for the purpose of this study, requires the identification of themes or patterns in the information collected (Zembuck 2020:31).</p>
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**4.8.3 Criteria to Determine the Quality of the Semi-Structured Interviews**

In qualitative research, the focus is on transferability, credibility, dependability and confirmability of the appropriate measures used to ensure quality interpretation of data, and confidence that findings are replicable and believable (Haun 2014:100)

**4.8.3.1 Credibility**

Credibility is the first facet that must be established in research because according to Rongs (2018:89) it is viewed as the most important portion of research in ensuring trustworthiness'. This is done because credibility essentially requires the researcher to clearly link the study's findings with reality in order to ensure that a study's findings are in fact believable (Murse 2020: 30).

Credibility in this study was ensured by allowing credible academics who have experience in marketing communication to scrutinise the research instrument in order for them to provide input.

This allowed the researcher to make sure that the research instrument is without bias.

#### **4.8.3.2 Transferability**

Transferability can be described as the ability of a qualitative study's findings being able to be generalised or transferred to other settings (West 2019:233). Therefore, transferability in this study was ensured by doing a thorough description of the research process that was followed as this allowed anyone of the researchers who may be interested in conducting the research to understand the research steps that was followed to investigate the research problem. An attempt to achieve transferability included a thorough description of the research process that was followed as this allowed an in-depth understanding of the steps that were followed to investigate the research problem.

#### **4.8.3.3 Dependability**

Dependability in qualitative research is the understanding that a study can be trusted over time (Major 2015:175). In order to attain dependability, the researcher is required to check whether the data analysis process is in line with the prescribed protocols for a design (Kolit & Deck 2013:23). Dependability in research was considered important in that when the study is dependable, it ensures data stability over a period and under different situations. This means that if the research is conducted again in the same context with similar methods and participants, similar results will be produced (Henton 2014:34).

Therefore, in order to attain this, the researcher allowed credible academics to scrutinise the data analysis processes and results of the study to ensure the findings are accurate.

#### **4.8.3.4 Confirmability**

Kergley (2014:292) asserts that confirmability is the establishment that the collection of data and interpretation of findings of research are not merely just fabricated by the researcher but are clearly derived from the data collected. Various authors state that confirmability of qualitative research is achieved by means of an audit trail, reflexive journal and triangulation (Dowe 2016:34). An audit trail is useful for qualitative studies, because it shows visible evidence that the researcher did not simply pre-empt the outcome of the study.

Therefore, confirmability in this study was achieved by keeping records of the evidence of the data collected (such as the recordings) and the evidence of that analysis process that was followed.



#### **4.8.4 Self-Administered Questionnaire**

According to Kalton (2015:45) a questionnaire is a data collection method where a series of questions and other prompts are created in order to collect specific information from respondents. Thus, even though questionnaires are at most times created for statistical analysis this is not always the case. However, they do have an advantage over some other instruments in that the administration of questionnaires is cheap because the researcher does not require as much effort from the respondents as verbal or telephone interviews and they often have standardised answers that make it simple to compile (Dowe 2016:69).

Kalton (2015:12) argues that a questionnaire usually consists of a set of questions that a respondent must address in a set format. Arnolds (2013:88) explains that the format of the questionnaire may vary according to what goal a researcher has planned. Uma (2011:34) asserts that a researcher must use a close ended question in a questionnaire rather than open ended questions because it tends to yield the best results. An open-ended question requires the participant to construct their own answer, while a closed-ended question requires a participant to select an answer from a provided number of options (Kalton 2015: 54). The response option for a closed-ended question questionnaire according to Kalton (2015: 59) consists of four types of response scales such as multiple choice, dichotomous, rating and Likert scale.

The Likert scale is where the respondents of a study specify their agreement or disagreement of a question based on a five- point scale.

The development of self-administered questionnaires for assessing the Livingstone Museum's use of marketing and digital marketing communication strategies was guided by sentiments and insights from chapter 2 and 3. According to Malhotra (2014), the foundation of a reliable questionnaire lies in its ability to capture accurate data by ensuring clarity and relevance of questions. This sentiment influenced the design of questions to be straightforward and focused, thereby minimising the risk of misinterpretation by respondents.

The literature emphasises the importance of understanding the target audience's preferences and behaviours, which is crucial in marketing communication (Kotler and Keller 2020). This guided the inclusion of specific questions aimed at gauging how visitors perceive the museum's use of different digital platforms, as seen in sections addressing awareness, interaction, and content

preference. Such targeted questioning is essential for collecting data that reflects the true sentiments and behaviours of the respondents, ensuring that the museum can tailor its strategies effectively.

Recent studies by Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2019) highlight the growing significance of digital marketing in engaging audiences and promoting services. This insight informed the segmentation of the questionnaire into distinct sections that separately address the museum's communication efforts on platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. By doing so, the questionnaire captures detailed data on the effectiveness of each platform, allowing for a granular analysis of digital marketing strategies.

Furthermore, the literature underscores the value of interaction and engagement in digital marketing (Ryan 2016). This guided the formulation of questions on how frequently the museum engages with visitors via digital platforms and how these interactions influence visitor perceptions and behaviours. For example, the section on the role of digital marketing communication explores the frequency and quality of interactions, reflecting the need for consistent and meaningful engagement as highlighted in the literature.

Informed by the works of Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2019), the questionnaire also incorporates Likert scales to capture the intensity of respondents' opinions on various aspects of the museum's digital communication. This method is effective in providing nuanced data that can be quantitatively analysed to reveal patterns and trends in visitor perceptions and behaviours.

#### **4.8.4.1 Questionnaire response format and types of questions**

Several questionnaire response formats exist which include dichotomous, multiple choice, picture choice and Likert scale (Dawn 2018:665). This study made use of a six-point Likert scale in order to understand a respondent's level of agreement and disagreement towards an identified statement (Dawn 2018:765). This Likert scale was used for this study because this format gives a number of distinctions in which respondents can express their experiences and opinions.

Close-ended questions, according to Dawn (2018: 780), can be described as questions where respondents are able to answer a question based on a limited number of responses given. Therefore, closed-ended questions were used as they make it easier and quicker for the respondents to answer.

In addition, the answers given by respondents make it easier when it comes to comparing answers and evaluating any trends in the respondents' answers (Kergley 2014:300). Furthermore, the researcher followed a specific procedure when administering the questionnaires which included the researcher handing the questionnaire to 300 museum visitors. The questionnaires were administered in person at the museum in the month of April. The researcher introduced herself to the respondents and asked them if they had a few minutes to answer the questionnaire and explain to them what the study is about. It was firstly mentioned to them that participation in this research was voluntary and they can withdraw at any point of the procedure. The researcher made it clear to respondents that there is a participant sheet that contains details about the research and also an informed consent that should be signed. The researcher made it clear that the informed consent form is to be signed as proof that they were by no means being forced to take part in the questionnaire and that they are free to withdraw from the process at any time.

Respondents were also told that the information they provide would by no means have any effect on their livelihood or be shared without their consent. The researcher assured them that no information would be traced back to them because there is no need for them to provide any identity on the questionnaire. The researcher had a box at the entrance of the museum where respondents were required to put their questionnaires after they were done. This was explained to them when the questionnaire was being handed to them and was done to reduce the interaction between researcher and respondent. See appendix C for the questionnaire.

#### **4.8.4.2 Pre-Testing of the Self- Administered Questionnaire**

The questionnaire for this research was pre-tested in order to ensure that respondents did not have any difficulties answering the questions and also to ensure that the quality of the research instrument is acceptable and the questions are clear. The pre-testing process made use of respondents who did not take part in the actual survey. During the pre-testing process of the questionnaire, the researcher paid close attention to how respondents answered the questions because each respondent had interpreted the questions differently. According to Arnolds (2013: 50), when selecting respondents for the pretesting process, it is important to ensure that individuals selected are similar to the actual respondents.

#### **4.8.4.2.1 Selection of Respondents**

Respondents for the pre-testing phase were selected from a pool of similar individuals to the target population of the actual study. This ensured that the feedback received was relevant to the context of the research.

#### **4.8.4.2.2 Informed Consent**

Respondents were informed about the purpose of the pre-test, the voluntary nature of their participation, and that their feedback would be used to improve the questionnaire. For more detailed information, please refer to the informed consent letter included as Annexure C.

#### **4.8.4.2.3 Mock Self- Administered Questionnaire Process**

With questions based on the research objectives, the researcher handed out the questionnaire to respondents. Whilst the respondents answered the questions, the researcher observed the respondents during the process, took notes of any difficulties respondents faced, any confusion regarding the questions, or any other issues that arose.

#### **4.8.4.2.4 Feedback Session**

The researcher then conducted a feedback session. This session included clarity of the questions that may have been difficult and the relevance of the content. Based on the feedback received, the researcher made minor technical revisions to the questionnaire. However, it should be noted that the data collected during this process was not included in the final report

### **4.8.5 Data Analysis of the Data Gathered in the Questionnaires**

This section discusses how data gathered from the questionnaires was analysed.

#### **4.8.5.1 Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS)**

The quantitative data for this research was analysed by using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). According to Seloms (2015:76) it is one of the most used statistical packages that can transcribe data and conduct complex manipulations using simple instructions. Ruben (2017:32) identifies SPSS as a software that can analyse and edit all sorts of information from various sources such as: quantitative research, a consumer database or even Google analytics. SPSS was created for not only interactive batch use but for non-interactive batch use also (Ruben 2017: 58).

However, in order to ensure that no mistakes were made during the quantitative analysis phase, the researcher made use of a statistician during the coding process. The information from the quantitative questionnaires was transformed into a numerical system that the analysis program understood. For example, when making use of a Likert type scale for a questionnaire, strongly agree used the code number '5' while strongly disagree used the code number '1'. Hence, words were replaced with numbers and numerical codes were then entered into the system by the statistician. The last step to prepare data for analysis entailed the cleaning phase, because, during the coding and entering phase, the statistician may have made some mistakes in the data which may cause the results of the research not to be valid. Once the statistician was satisfied, SPSS analysed it and the results were presented in the form of tables and graphs.

#### **4.8.6 Criteria to Determine the Quality of the Questionnaires**

This section discusses how reliability and validity for the research questionnaires were ensured.

##### **4.8.6.1 Reliability**

Reliability can be described as how reliable the information that has been collected using a research instrument is. Therefore, reliability according to Baldwin (2010: 34) refers to the ability of a research's finding being repeatable, if the research is conducted again using the same instrument.

According to Phelan and Wren (2014: 56) reliability in research can be tested in various ways such as test- retest reliability, parallel form's reliability, inter- rater reliability and internal consistency reliability. Therefore, to measure the internal consistency of a test, Santos (2020:18) suggests that Cronbach alpha may be used to describe the reliability of factors taken from multi-point formatted scales or questionnaires. Field (2019:675) highlights that using the Cronbach alpha method to measure scale reliability will be vital in showing the number of measurement errors.

Using closed-ended questions in the questionnaire would also work to ensure reliability as it creates a level of similarity from the sample, which adds to reliability. To further check on reliability and minimise measurement errors, a pilot run of the questionnaire instrument was conducted as suggested by Kimberlin and Winterstein (2018:2277) to ensure consistency before the questionnaire is administered to the respondents.

#### **4.8.6.2 Validity**

Validity can be described as how accurate a research instrument measures what it was intended to measure (Haun 2014:75). Validity according to Baldwin (2010:21) refers to a study being credible or believable. Orean (2015:34) says validity can be described as the degree at which a study can measure what it is supposed to measure and so the validity of a research tool is considered valid when it is able to effectively measure what it claims to be able to measure Orean (2015:34). Validity in research is essential in ensuring that a researcher uses methods that are ethically acceptable, and also methods that truly measure the phenomena the way it was intended to (Orean 2015:84).

To test the validity of the questionnaire, the researcher sought guidance and assistance from relevant experts in the digital marketing communication field. These specialists were asked to go through the questionnaire and ensure it has no misleading questions and whether it captures what the study is investigating. Validity was also ensured by piloting the study; this was done to see if similar results would be found on the actual data collection periods and highlight whether the results are valid.

Other aspects through which validity was ensured included internal validity. Internal validity is defined as “the extent to which the observed results represent the truth in the population that is under investigation” (Field 2019: 490). It is suggested that the internal validity, a study can be threatened by factors, such as errors in measurement or an inefficient selection process of respondents (Tavakol & Dennick 2019:30). Therefore, internal validity in this study was ensured by making use of randomly selected respondents who visited the museum and were willing to take part in the study. Internal validity was also ensured by making sure that all respondents answered the questions as this helped to eliminate any bias.

#### **4.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION**

According to Resnick (2015:56) ethics in research involves the ability to apply fundamental ethical principles to various research aspects. It is the rules that distinguish what is not right and what is wrong during the research process. Adhering to ethical norms in research is vital, since research encompasses a huge amount of interaction with various individuals in different disciplines and institutions, hence ethics ensure that respect, fairness and trust are always promoted (Resnick 2015:

70). The researcher first obtained ethical clearance from the University of South Africa (UNISA) before any data was collected and abided by the Unisa research ethics policy (see the ethical clearance certificate no 240816-052 in the addendum below). Ethical issues in this research were guided by the Unisa research ethics rules including:

#### **4.9.1 Survey and Interview ethical Considerations**

This section highlights how the researcher ensured ethical considerations were adhered to.

##### **4.9.1.1 Voluntary Participation**

According to Marvel (2019:654), it is important to ensure that during the data collection process no respondent or participant is coerced, forced or manipulated to take part in a study. Therefore, to ensure voluntary participation in this research, respondents and participants identified in this study were furnished with details about the research through the participant information sheet. The information sheet contained reasons for the study and the respondents' and participants' involvement in the study respectively.

This document allowed respondents and participants to decide whether or not they agree to take part in the study. Marvel (2019:700) emphasises that no individual should be coerced or manipulated in any form to partake in a study and should be at liberty to withdraw from the study at any point of the process.

##### **4.9.1.2 Confidentiality, Anonymity and Participants' Privacy**

Christon (2020:76) asserts that it is imperative that no information collected during that research process is to be shared without participant authorisation. Therefore, Anonymity and confidentiality of the respondents and participants in this study were guaranteed by assuring them that their names, addresses, and personal information would not form part of the research publication. Resnick (2015:802) argues that it must always be explained to them that the information gathered is purely for research purposes and should not be used in any way beyond the intended purpose, which violates their privacy or would have any effect on their livelihood.

#### **4.9.1.3 Informed Consent**

According to Rawl (2018:14), in addition to providing individuals with adequate and relevant information on the research topic, a researcher must always ensure informed consent before the data collection process begins.

The researcher in this study ensured informed consent by providing an informed consent form that all respondents and participants were required to sign. This form is a proof of the respondents and participant's personal right to consent in participating in the study. The informed consent document was in accordance with the UNISA research ethics principles of informed consent.

#### **4.9.1.4 Participant and Respondent Data Storage**

According to Marvel (2019:878), it is important for the researcher to adequately handle and store data collected during the research process. Therefore, the data collected for this research was stored in a hard drive for not more than three years.

### **4.10 SUMMARY**

This chapter showcased the research methodology that was employed in the study. It included a detailed discussion on the philosophical approaches adopted by the researcher to inform the design, as well as methods of collecting and analysing data. In the context of this study, it was important to get insight from different participants to enhance understanding and improve the outcomes of the research. From the detailed discussions in this chapter, it is clear that the research approach is an essential factor in research. Hence as explained, this study adopted a mixed methods design for the study, which included quantitative and qualitative methodologies.



## **CHAPTER 5 : AN INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS ON THE USE OF DIGITAL MARKETING COMMUNICATION AT THE LIVINGSTONE MUSEUM**

### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

The previous chapter discussed the research methodology used in this study. This chapter presents and interprets the data collected through the semi-structured interviews and questionnaires. The chapter begins with the presentation and interpretation of the qualitative data which were obtained by conducting semi-structured interviews with six officials from the Marketing and Communication Department at the Livingstone Museum.

The chapter subsequently presents and interprets the quantitative data, which was collected by administering questionnaires to 300 respondents, yielding a 100% response rate. After the qualitative and quantitative data are presented and interpreted, the findings from both data sets are summarised.

### **5.2 QUALITATIVE FINDINGS**

The interviews were conducted with six staff members of the communication and marketing Department. Six interviews lasting approximately 35-45 minutes with each participant were conducted over five consecutive days according to the participants' schedule after permission was given. The interview guide, which consisted of 17 questions, was developed in line with the research questions. This ensured that participants were asked similar questions. Data were transcribed and analysed thematically. The qualitative instrument used in this study ensured the collection of rich and in-depth information from the participants, which added to the understanding of the phenomenon after analysing the interview data. After transcribing and analysing the qualitative data, a detailed thematic map was created that addressed Research Questions one, two, four and five.

The next section discusses the demographic information of the interview participants.

### 5.3 DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF PARTICIPANTS

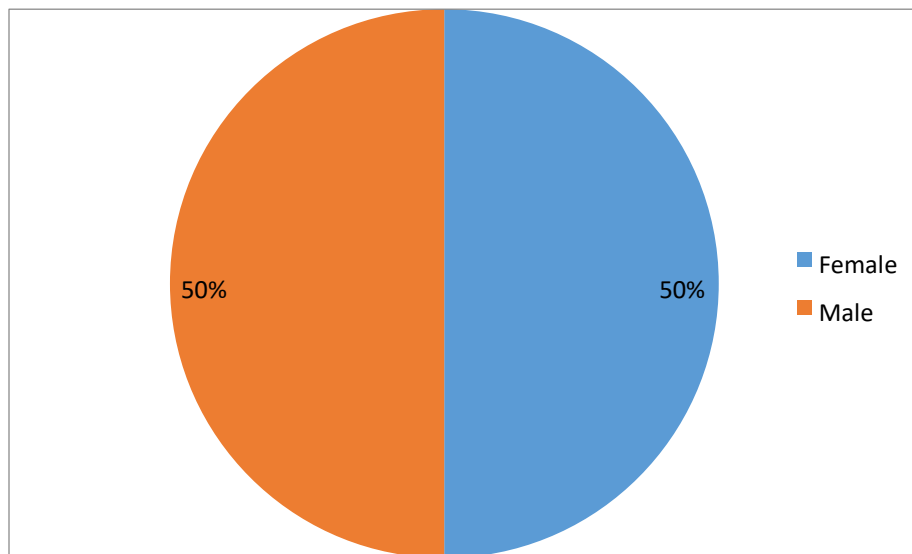
This section discusses the demographic information of the interview participants. Part A of the interview guide focused on certain demographic variables of the participants, such as gender, age group, current position and years of working at the museum.

According to Koller (2019:442) demographic information of participants, which includes variables such as age, gender, occupation, income, ethnicity, and religion, is important as they contribute to understanding why specific phenomena exist and may easily be measured. The next section depicts the demographic variable of gender in the form of a pie chart.

#### 5.3.1 Gender

Figure 5.1 below highlights the number of the participants which include male and female participants in percentages.

**Figure 5.1: Gender distribution of participants**



The figure above shows that there is an equal percentage of male and female participants who took part in the interview process. The data collected shows that 3 were male and 3 were female participants. This equal distribution of male and female employees has emerged from similar studies carried out on museums, namely, that by Verić and Faura (2022) who conducted a study on museums in central and southern Greece which revealed the equal distribution of employees in some departments. In addition, Morson (2021) study also revealed an equal distribution of male

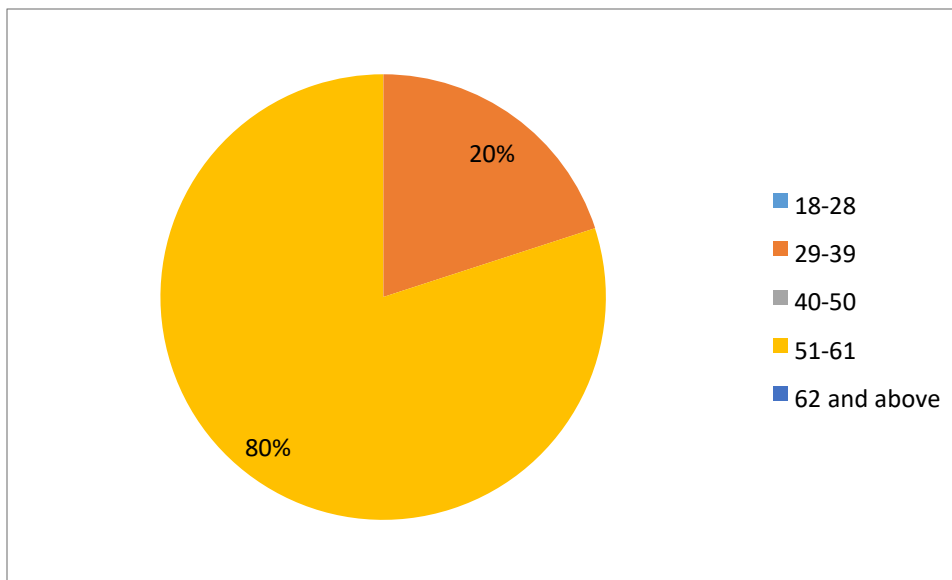
and female employees in communication departments of museums in South Italy. These studies both highlighted how the equal distribution of employees has contributed to museums offering quality service due to diverse perspectives.

Although the equal distribution of male and female participants was unintentional and was not part of the sampling procedure, participants emphasised that the equal distribution of departmental staff enabled them to communicate with an increasingly diverse audience.

### 5.3.2 Age

Figure 5.2 below illustrates the ages of the participants in percentages, using different colours to depict the various age groups.

**Figure 5.2: Age distribution of respondents**

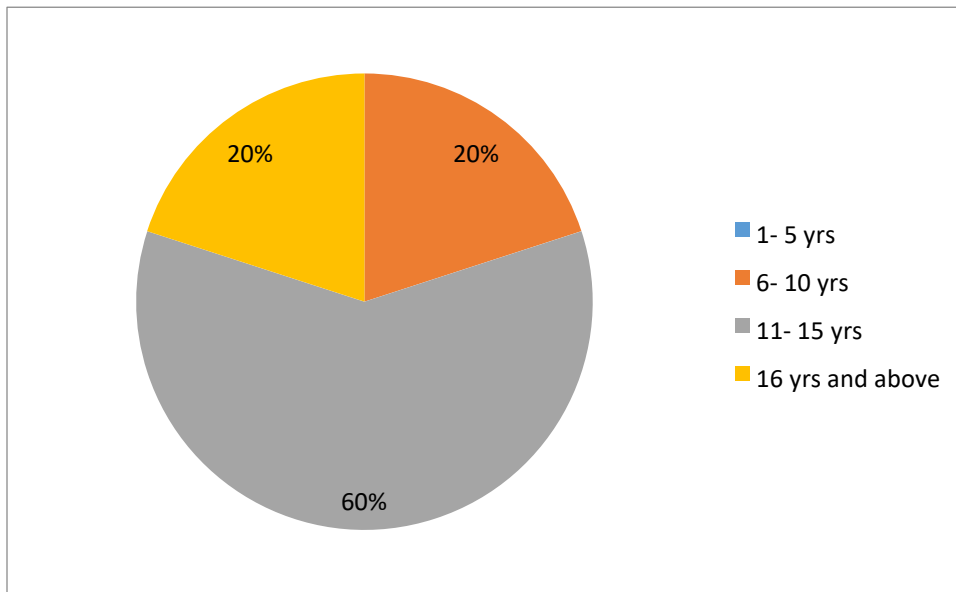


The figure above shows that 80% of participants who happen to be members of staff in the Marketing and Communications Department were between 51- 61 years old, while 20% were between 29-39 years old. There were no participants in the other age groups. This indicates that the majority of participants are older, with a significant gap in between.

### 5.3.3 Number of Years Worked at the Museum

Apart from understanding the gender and age distribution of participants, the researcher also considered it significant to understand the number of years each participant had worked at the museum. Figure 5.3 below illustrates the number of years the participants have worked at the museum.

**Figure 5.3: The distribution of participant based on number of years they worked at the museum**



The figure above shows that 60% of the participants worked in the museum for 11-15 years, 20% worked at the museum for 6-10 years and 20% for more than 16 years. None have been working in the department for less than 5 years.

It is evident that the staff members in the Marketing and Communications Department at the Livingstone Museum have vast experience. These findings are similar to those of Amir's (2020) study conducted at the National Museum and Art Gallery in Botswana that showed that many individuals had worked there for a long period of time and had great knowledge of the facility. In addition, the vast experience of some of the participants at the Livingstone Museum, specifically the Marketing and Communications Department contributed to the value of responses in regards to how the Museum reaches and engages visitors through digital marketing communication.

## 5.4 THE THEMATIC MAP FOR SECTIONS B AND C OF THE INTERVIEW GUIDE

The thematic map presented below highlights the insights derived from the analysis of data collected in sections B and C of the interview guide. Through a rigorous thematic analysis, this map showcases the interconnected themes that emerged from the collected data. These themes serve as the foundation upon which the findings of the qualitative part of this study were constructed, offering a comprehensive understanding of the patterns, nuances, and significant aspects inherent in the data.

**Figure 5.4: Thematic map on the use of digital marketing communication at the Livingstone Museum**



Section B in the interview guide investigated marketing communication and digital marketing communication, followed by Section C and its focus on the role of digital marketing communication, opportunities provided through the use of digital marketing communication and the challenges being experienced in the use of digital marketing communication.

The following sections highlight the themes that emerged from the data and are supported by verbatim quotes.

### 5.4.1 Exploring Digital Marketing Tools Used by the Museum

This section highlights the first objective which sought to understand the digital marketing communication tools that are used by the Livingstone Museum to reach and engage visitors. In addition, the section answers the first research question:

*Which digital marketing communication platforms/tools does the Livingstone Museum use to reach and engage tourists?*

Therefore, through interviews conducted with the museum’s marketing and communication staff, one theme was derived under this section as illustrated in Table 5.1.

**Table 5.1: Theme 1 (limited use of digital marketing communication)**

<b>Limited use of digital marketing communication</b>	
<b>Codes</b>	IMC approach not emphasised  Digital marketing communication mix  No presence of communication plan

As highlighted previously in section 2.10.2 of the literature review chapter, digital marketing communication tools refer to the promotion of an organisation’s products or services through the use of online channels (Donovan 2020: 230). The digital marketing communication mix tools which usually include social media, websites, email marketing and in the case of virtual museums (Duncan & Moriarty 2018:198) are used to inform and persuade visitors to procure an organisation’s product and service offerings. However, although this study focused specifically on digital marketing communication, the researcher did in fact include questions on general marketing communication to understand how digital marketing communication contributed to the Museum’s overall communication strategy.

It was clear from the responses received during the in-depth interviews that the Livingstone Museum still has much to do in respect to how it communicates with visitors to promote its services and products. The study highlighted that there was limited use of communication and marketing tools at the Livingstone Museum as the museum relies heavily on its website and Facebook page as well as, on recommendations or referrals from previous visitors and its affiliations with various online and local tour agencies to communicate its offerings.

It is clear that the members of staff in charge of communication and marketing at the museum were not exploring other digital marketing communication avenues such as email marketing, virtual museums as well as other social media platforms. In addition, the traditional marketing communication mix, which includes advertising, personal selling, public relations and sales promotion was not being utilised. Moreover, it was evident that the Museum did not use the combination of all or some of the relevant marketing communication mix elements to create a well synergetic communication strategy. The study also found that the museum was outsourcing its marketing communication activities to organisations that ran these activities on its behalf.

All the participants had similar views, in that most of them agreed that there was limited use of marketing and communication tools in the museums marketing communication strategy with one participant stating that *“We only use Facebook and our website to communicate with visitors and I personally do not think those tools are sufficient”*. Two other participants said that they knew that the museum does not make use of other marketing communication tools like advertising, newspaper, television, radio and media relations to communicate with visitors” and that *“Most people know about the Museum from referrals or recommendations from people who have visited the museum before”* and that *“you can get information about us from local tour agencies”*.

Another participant mentioned that *“sometimes information may not be on our website or Facebook page but it can also be gotten [sic] from the online tour agencies we partner with. Participants 2, 4, 5 mentioned that “we use online tour agents which is where we do the bulk of our digital marketing communication” and that “we collaborate with online tour operators and travel agencies intensely. In fact, it is one of our main channels of communication with our visitors, especially the international ones.”*

Most of the participants were of the view that they knew the Museums website was not as functional as expected and more work needed to be done with the tool. This finding is in line with the opinion of Guide and Nroos (2019:110) that an organisation’s means of communication is at most times from the sender perspective, that is, it adopts an inside–out approach. As mentioned in the literature review, museums engage the use of digital marketing communication tools such as social media and email to communicate their market offerings

(Feung & Danford 2013:11). Therefore, as highlighted in the study, the Livingstone Museum does in fact make use of digital marketing communication tools but to a limited extent. However, it should be noted that, although the museum uses online tour agencies to help them communicate and market their services, the information is usually posted on the tour agencies digital marketing communication platforms and not on the museum's digital platforms.

Moreover, the outsourcing of most of its digital marketing communication activities is confirmed by participant 1 who said that *"we outsource a lot of our digital marketing communication activities to a Durban based company"* despite the Museum being based in Livingstone, Zambia.

In regards to the use of social media, the study established that it is one of the digital communication mix elements that the Livingstone Museum uses and seems to prioritise. A comment made by participant 1 that most of the digital marketing communication was done using social media specifically, Facebook was similar to the comments of participants three and four.

The participants stated that *"we usually post on Facebook when we have something going on such as special rates or other special promotions"* and that *"Facebook is the only digital marketing communication platform that I am able to use"*. According to Laston (2017:56) it is not possible to over emphasise the importance of social media as part of the digital communication mix to museums. However, museums should always plan to ensure several channels are being used in a coherent manner.

One participant mentioned that *"we sometimes have an agent that is contracted to handle the marketing communication and most of the communication is done on social media and is online based"* and added that the museum does not use any other social media platforms apart from Facebook.

The above participant responses are an indication of why Morany (2017: 23) is of the view that it is important museums must use an array of digital communication tools with visitors to attain their trust and ensure customer loyalty. This view is consistent with the suggestion of Fest and Jitaba (2018:209) that, if museums want their visitors to be well informed of their offerings, they should create what they described as a synergetic digital marketing communication plan.



According to Geung and Stanford (2020:895) a poll was conducted recently by Tour Travel on museums and how they carry out their digital marketing communication activities. It was found that social media was the tool being used to efficiently communicate with the vast majority of visitors. Accordingly, there is an increasing number of museums that have taken to social media in their Digital marketing communication activities and that use it as marketing or information tools. It was found that Facebook, Instagram and Twitter were used by 65% of museums, thus making them the favourite social media channels.

A brand's involvement with its social media pages may have an impact on how the social media channels are perceived, thereby influencing attitudes toward the museum's brand. (Jagger & Kanford 2018:31).

In terms of the website, it is obvious that their opinions of the museum's website are different. Two participants said "*the website is updated regularly and visitors can actually be communicated to using this platform*" while most of the participants were of the view that they know the museums website was not as functional as expected, since visitors are rarely informed on current or updated information from the website and more work needed to be done on this tool.

The majority of participants mentioned that "*the website is a new digital tool that we have started using as we are not yet comfortable with it*". This finding resonates with the diffusion of innovation theory discussed in chapter 3, section 3.1, as the theory by Everett Rogers (2023) highlights how innovations spread within a social system. According to this theory, individuals fall into different categories based on their want to adopt new technologies, ranging from early adopters to laggards. The view expressed regarding the website aligns with the stages of adoption outlined in this theory, where individuals might be in the early stages of adopting or adjusting to this innovation.

Although the museum's members of staff indicated that they believe their digital marketing communication method is geared towards the right direction, the tools currently used are not sufficient to communicate with museum visitors. According to Haggie and Emeralds (2014:47) digital marketing communication tools should be used to showcase the various activities designed by an organisation and to highlight the importance or advantages of its product to its target audience, thereby persuading them to purchase/make use of the product. To this end, digital marketing communication tools, such as social media, email marketing, websites, and in regards

to museums, virtual museums, should be used by the organisation to communicate with visitors and gain the full advantages that the digital marketing communication mix provides.

However, it is the museum staff members’ responsibility to properly strategise which components of digital marketing communication mix will be used. The Museum may need to select various components of the digital marketing communication mix in that the selection is based on the specific communication objectives the museum has outlined for itself.

According to Fennil (2019:34), a lot of planning and consideration is required to create the appropriate digital marketing communication strategy and organisations must ensure that the tools chosen are sufficiently flexible so that it will suit any subsequent alteration that may take place in the market.

**5.4.2 Opportunities Provided Through the Use of Digital Marketing Communication**

The second objective sought to understand the opportunities that the use of digital marketing communication has provided the museum in reaching and engaging visitors, and in addition, answered the second research question. Two themes emerged from the in- depth interviews and are presented and discussed below.

**Table 5.2: Theme 2: (The Use of Digital Marketing Communication Leads to Enhanced Relationships)**

<b>The use of digital marketing communication leads to enhanced relationships</b>	
<b>Codes</b>	Mutual beneficial relationships  Enhanced relationships valued  Visitor feedback and enhanced relationships

To ensure effective communication, museums must engage their visitors and other specific audiences. As part of its digital marketing communication processes, the museum staff members said that the institution does in fact benefit from opportunities provided by digital marketing communication that help them safeguard their reputation by seeking to build and enhance mutually

beneficial relationships with its visitors. Enhanced relationships for the museum are an important aspect for growth which they believe can be achieved by initiating a rapport with its visitors. A participant said *“These visitors are the reason the institution still exists so it is important for us to manage a good relationship with them”*.

According to Notts (2020:34) understanding your target audience and specific stakeholder allows museums to know what and how to communicate. Therefore, the Livingstone Museum is of the understanding that internal stakeholders (members of staff) have to interact and engage the external stakeholders (visitors, investors and other stakeholders) as they all contribute to the success of the museum.

This view is in line with Xaver (2021:23) who asserts that enhancing relationships is a two-sided coin; one side is developing the relationship while the other side is finding means to maintain this relationship. Ensuring dialogic communication with visitors creates a platform for the Museum to reach and engage its visitors effectively. The following comments from some of the participant’s highlight how important enhancing relationships and managing them is:

*“We seek to have a relationship with our visitors because it is important for us to continue knowing them” and “We know that we need to enhance our relationship with visitors and find ways to maintain them”*. The need for the museum to reach and engage their visitors has a direct implication on how the museum will be perceived. This is in line with Sandles (2019:24) who believes that consumer perception directly feeds into an organisation’s reputation. In addition, the author asserts that, creating avenues for organisations to understand the perceptions visitors have of them suggests that they are being listened to or heard and their input is valued.

According to a study conducted by Greens (2016:34) on American museums, it was revealed that enhancing relationships was at the core. This foresight has helped the museums in their quest to build an effective working visitor-museum based relationship which in the end has led to mutually beneficial relationships for the institutions.

For the Livingstone Museum, enhanced relationships are something that they would like to improve on, and they understand that this opportunity can only be accessed if they improve on their efforts to reach and engage visitors. As stated in the comments provided by some of the

participants “*We would like to improve on our digital feedback mechanisms as this will help us interact better with our visitors*”. Another participant added that “*My main concern is the manner in which we provide feedback because, I know that this has affected our ability to enhance our relationship with the visitors*”. To this end, this theme has highlighted how the museum’s use of digital marketing communication has affected the opportunity for them to enhance their relationship with the visitors.

The above themes also indirectly address the first research question and highlights the need for the museum to use more digital marketing communication tools to cater to diverse visitor segments.

**Table 5.3: Theme 3 (Visitors’ Awareness as An Opportunity of Digital Marketing Communication)**

<b>Visitors’ awareness as an opportunity of digital marketing communication</b>	
<b>Codes</b>	<p>Visitor experience</p> <p>Global reach</p> <p>Brand recognition</p>

This theme highlights how digital marketing communication is focused on providing the museum the opportunity to create awareness of the institution’s services and products. Therefore, in terms of creating awareness, most of the interview participants commented that “*when we post on Facebook or our website, we believe it gives us the opportunity to create awareness of an idea we have*”. The museum is aware that digital marketing communication has the power to create what

Dunken (2018:34) terms as brand visibility. A participant added that “*I understand that digital marketing communication has the potential for global reach which is why I think it is important to our communication strategy*”.

According to Briskol (2020:789), the more an organisation informs and makes its consumers aware of its offerings and the more this information is directly related to brand recognition. Briskol (2020:789) adds that the stronger the brand recognition, the more the organisation has the chance of being chosen. This view is in line with one participant who elaborated that “*I want people to be*

*more aware of the Museum and the services we offer, as I think this will contribute to more people visiting us”. Participants also asserted that “digital marketing communication can allow or make [sic] visitors aware of our offering which can make us edge out competition”.*

It is evident from the data collected that participants are aware of the opportunities that digital marketing communication can provide them and have in fact provided them though to a limited extent. The museum staff members also added that *“we believe with better investment into their digital marketing activities we would be able to make visitors aware of their organisational efforts and better the experience of their visitors”.*

This statement is also consistent with the objective of the second research question, because according to Karson (2018: 45), digital marketing acts as a bridge between the museum and its audience, creating awareness and facilitating communication, which ultimately increases visitor engagement.

### **5.4.3 Challenges faced through the use of digital marketing communication**

This research study also sought to understand the challenges that the Livingstone Museum was facing with regards to the use of digital marketing communication in reaching and engaging visitors. In addition, it aimed to answer the fourth research question. Therefore, the next section discusses the two themes that were derived through in-depth interviews conducted.

**Table 5.4: Theme 4 (Challenge in measuring return on investment of digital marketing communication tools)**

<b>Challenge in measuring return on investment of digital marketing communication tools</b>	
<b>Codes</b>	<p>No presence of standard measurement</p> <p>Need for measurement acknowledged</p> <p>Measurement tools not consistent</p>

This theme consists of a discussion on some of the challenges the Museum has in measuring or evaluating marketing communication in a digital marketing communication context. The qualitative data collected in this study highlighted the difficulty of measuring results of a marketing communication approach in digital marketing communication campaigns.

Several participants acknowledged the importance of measuring return on investment in relation to digital marketing communication campaigns. As one participant put it *“we need to make sure that everything that we do has [sic] some sort of return, so that it gets [sic] more mileage with the limited budget we already have”*. Bensturg and Skant (2019: 312) describe return of investment as a measure to determine the value or benefits of an activity against its prescribed costs.

Measuring return of investment as seen in the interview findings is a challenge for the Livingstone Museum in the use of digital marketing communication. It was noticed that current measurement systems are either elementary or not applied consistently. As expressed by a participant *“currently, return on investment is being measured manually through reports that are compared and sometimes these reports have discrepancies that may only be noticed at a later stage”*. Nevertheless, the data demonstrates that the Livingstone Museum has in fact tried to find measurement tools that work for its digital marketing communication campaigns.

A participant said that *“There is continuous effort to ensure that whatever we invest in our digital marketing communication strategy showcases some returns”*. Many participants are of the opinion that finding means of measuring return of investment is likely, as one mentioned that *“is a challenge for us but we know finding a way is possible.”*

It is valuable to note that the data from interviews which indicates challenges in measuring return on investment also showcases the importance of measuring it on digital marketing communication campaigns. It is apparent from the findings that whatever activity goes into the digital marketing communications campaigns needs to be accounted for to know whether it is efficient or not. These findings are in line with the argument that many organisations are in a position where they are finding it difficult to measure or evaluate their digital campaigns (Karson 2018: 441). Karson (2018) further explains that what makes measurement more problematic is that, there is no globally standardised measurement instrument that facilitates digital marketing communication evaluation, as was also reflected in the study’s findings.

**Table 5.5: Theme 5 (Challenges in applying an integrated marketing communication approach to digital marketing communication)**

<b>Challenges in applying an integrated marketing communication approach to digital marketing communication</b>	
<b>Codes</b>	Expensive digital marketing communication mix elements  Limited financial resources  Creative spending required
	Partnerships with online tour agencies

From Table 5.5, it can be seen that some of the challenges faced by the Livingstone Museum in applying an integrated marketing communication approach to its digital marketing communication strategy are particularly unique to the nature of the museum as a non-governmental supported institution. Interview data illustrated that, using various digital marketing communication mix elements in a coordinated manner to convey a consistent marketing message to stretch limited budgets of institutions such as the museum.

The Livingstone Museum as a non-government supported institution has limited financial resources and as a result is constrained in using some of the available digital marketing communication amenities. Participants pointed out *“Although we use digital marketing communication tools such as Facebook, we are limited in its use because we can only use the free amenities provided by the app”* and *“we do not have big budgets, so we are always being told you can’t do this because you must know the biggest thing, we have against us is finances”* and *“we are a non-government supported, that’s the biggest factor”*.

Hurau (2018: 169) concurs and explains that the lack of an appropriate budget is one of the significant organisational barriers to digital marketing communication implementation. Given this position of limited financial resources, the Livingstone Museum cannot fully take advantage of the many digital marketing communication mix elements as they may want to.

As such, the ability to fully embrace the integrated marketing communication approach in digital marketing campaigns has been affected. As one participant puts it *“right in terms of creating that synergy in order to effectively reach and engage, I would say, yeah it is a financial challenge”*. It is apparent from such sentiments that one of the hurdles to fully integrate digital marketing communication is the availability of financial resources.

In addition to limited resources, data collected highlighted that the concept of brand consistency poses a challenge to the success of the museum’s integrated digital marketing communication approach. It is worth noting that all participants agreed on the importance of branding and how it affects the manner in which the organisation is viewed. According to Woody (2018:682) digital marketers should start considering how brand consistency may or can assist their digital marketing efforts.

The challenge of brand consistency is evident in the data collected which points to the fact that not all the museum's communication members of staff understand either the concept of branding or what the Livingstone Museum as a brand stands for. As the museum’s brand contact members, it is expected of staff to comprehend every aspect of what makes the Livingstone Museum a brand.

This is important as the concept extends to how the brand is portrayed on various digital marketing communication platforms and in their messages. Sentiments such as *“I am not really sure if we can consider ourselves a brand”* and *“we do not have a clue, we just post whatever needs to be posted, we do not have any guide”* demonstrate that branding is a concept which is still absent in some areas of the organisation. However, it is a concept strongly linked to the integrated marketing communication approach and some of the members of staff still don’t know the importance of how it allows the museum to be portrayed.



This finding is in line with the assertion that branding in digital marketing communication can sometimes be problematic for organisations such as museums due to certain ethical concerns that may arise in modern museum practice (Hian & Orges 2020:307). However, some participants did express that they wish mechanisms were in place to ensure that everyone in the institution understands and consistently projects the same brand voice. The interviews also revealed that the participants are willing to participate in training that educates members of staff in the organisation on how the Livingstone Museum communication activities should be carried out to ensure brand consistency.

#### 5.4.4 The Role of Digital Marketing Communication

This section discusses digital marketing communication and the role it plays in allowing the Livingstone Museum reach and engage visitors. Hence, the section answered the objective which is to explore the role of digital marketing communication at the Livingstone Museum in engaging and reaching visitors and as well as the fifth research question. Through interviews conducted, two themes were derived, as highlighted in Table 5.6 and Table 5.7 respectively.

**Table 5.6: Theme 6 (A Lack of Consistent Communication in The Digital Marketing Communication Strategy**

<b>A lack of consistent communication in the digital marketing communication strategy</b>	
<b>Codes</b>	<p>No indication of a central communication structure</p> <p>No emphasis on feedback</p> <p>Activities for reaching and engaging visitors not coordinated</p> <p>No indication of planned visitor interaction to engage visitors</p>

This theme highlights that consistent communication in digital marketing communication tools used by the museum is not at the core of their digital marketing communication campaigns. It emerged from findings that the way the museum ensured message consistency across all its digital

marketing communication channels were met with dissimilar views expressed by the participants. It is evident from the comments from some of the participants that more work needed to be done in this regard. The staff members in charge of marketing and communication were clearly not very involved in the development of the museum's digital communication strategy as it appeared that the management made the decision on when messages were to be posted on the various digital platforms. In other words, there was a lack of internal communication between staff members and the management which in return leads to inconsistency in messages posted.

A participant indicated that, *“we only post on our social media page and website when we are told to.”* Another participant commented that *“we have had an incident whereby [sic], I posted something I deemed important but was told to take it down”* and that *“there is no uniformity on our Facebook and website; we have to get the right information on time so that we can speak in one voice”*.

A study conducted by Stanf and Alye (2019) on consistent communication in digital marketing and museum performance showcased that, in institutions such as museums, messages on digital platforms should be effectively communicated in a unifying manner. The authors adopted the term “digital message consistency” which they described as the deliberate effort that uses a uniform communication-like approach to motivate, inform and persuade visitors in one brand voice.

Thus, digital message consistency may be used for making the target audience more trustworthy thus, ultimately, improving organisational performance. It is imperative that every member of the organisation is aware of and acknowledges the relationship between what they do and the impact it may have on service delivery. To this end, it is evident from responses that digital message consistency is not used by the Museum to create certainty and aligned communications that will be viewed by visitors and can ultimately improve museums reputation.

In regards to the Livingstone Museum and its digital messages, there is a need for them to be consistent with the messages delivered on their digital platforms. A participant elaborated on an incident that occurred where similar questions were asked on their Facebook and website but were answered differently. The participant's response does not resonate with Bucks (2017:78) view which explains that, if a visitor shares a complaint or asks a question, organisations response at all times must match the information that another visitor may have previously received. Bucks

(2017:78) adds that, if the context of the situation changes, an organisation should still be able to adapt their message while still portraying the same idea. In addition, it is important that institutions are consistent with the type of message they send out to their consumers hence, the need for all communication levels to be integrated.

In respect of the participants' views on the level of consistency in the museum's messages, it was evident from the responses received that it was not a priority as all forms of digital marketing communication messages sent by the museum were not planned in accordance with a stipulated idea. It was evident that the staff members did not have the same knowledge on specific areas of how the museum functioned and the services it provided. In other words, the museum was not operating like "one body" where all the staff members had identical organisation communication ideas and objectives. A member of participants explained that message consistency is also difficult because as mentioned "*we use online tour agencies who sometimes may post messages on our behalf.*" Another participant elaborated that "*I [sic] will sometimes see messages posted by one of the online tour agencies that I would have had no knowledge about*".

The participants' comments are inconsistent with the recommendations of Chow and Barack (2018:34) who assert that it is important for an institution to extend the scope of its communication to include all those who deal with the institution. The authors add that this type of communication will lead an organisation to be consistent in how their organisation's messages are delivered. This will have an important role in creating a lasting relationship between the Livingstone Museum and its visitors. This view is also in line with the opinion of Gauve and Roos (2019:3) that an organisation's method of communication is based on an inside-out view.

This view is of the notion that a well-planned message is formed by an organisation who initiates the communication and a consistent message is conveyed. It is important that an organisation should be able to meet customer expectations through consistent communication. An institution can make their brand look reliable by conveying consistent messages to its customers and prospective customers. Therefore, based on evidence from the in-depth interview, it can be seen that consistency in communication is not at the core of the museum's digital marketing communication plan.

**Table 5.7: Theme 7 (The prioritisation of visitor needs and wants in the digital marketing communication strategy)**

<b>The prioritisation of visitor needs and wants in the digital marketing communication strategy</b>	
<b>Codes</b>	<p>No presence of visitor database</p> <p>Visitor data not used in planning</p> <p>Limited emphasis on visitor satisfaction Limited visitor feedback systems available visitor retention methods not emphasised</p>

This theme shows that the digital marketing communication strategy used by the museum is currently not visitor-oriented. This theme emerged from the findings that the Livingstone

Museum’s digital marketing communication strategy does not emphasise the importance of catering to visitors' wants and needs in every step of the process. It was insinuated from participant’s responses that, planning and implementation of digital marketing communication activities, has not been centred on trying to understand visitor’s expectations. The visitors in the case for the Livingstone Museum should be viewed as the most important component of the whole process in their digital marketing activities.

Data from the interviews highlight that interaction with visitors on digital marketing communication platforms is limited. As there is no constant communication to encourage visitors to visit the museum or inform them on the different services offered. In this regard, one participant highlighted that *“I rarely interact with visitors on our Facebook or websites pages”*, and another participant said *“Actually, our main reason for using Facebook is to post only when something is happening at the museum”*. It is evident that the museum does not interact with their three target visitor segments which include active visitors, previous visitors and potential visitors (Karson 2018:25). Data collected showcased interactive means of digital communication is not used by the museum to understand their visitor’s expectations and needs.

The study shows that the Livingstone Museum staff members in charge of communication rarely continuously carry out interactive initiatives and find ways to rightly target visitors with the correct communication messages. According to Blod (2017:160), interactions on digital marketing communication platforms are based on an understanding of consumer experiences, values and needs and for this reason, consumer interaction becomes important. Participants also highlighted that, if given the chance, they would like to interact more with visitors as the results from these initiatives can be used as valuable information used to plan well balanced digital marketing communication strategies.

According to a study conducted by Mals (2018), it was revealed that many museums in Italy had a visitor database which they believed were important in satisfying visitor's needs. The study shows that information was collected from the museum's interactive initiatives and was stored to plan other targeted marketing communication activities.

Interview data however, showed that the Livingstone Museum had no visitor feedback systems on the website. As one participant stated "*we have got [sic] no feedback system on the website, however, it is something we are working on*". Feedback from visitors is something that the museum needs to prioritise because feedback could be used to enhance positive relationships and to ensure appropriate communication methods are used.

The value of and need for visitor feedback is demonstrated by some of the participants' responses "*I wish we had a visitor feedback system on our website as it would help us measure our [sic] digital communication results*". Another participant added that "*we rarely get feedback on messages posted on Facebook and even when we do, we still need clearance from management to respond which sometimes takes long*". According to Grath (2020: 154), the unique nature of digital marketing communication for museums lies in the fact that being visitor-oriented is motivated by the need to have continuous understanding of who your visitors are. In that sense, visitor retention is strongly promoted. Participants highlighted that the museum should prioritise visitor retention and satisfaction. One participant stated that "*we aim to do more with our digital marketing communication tools in future so that we better understand our visitors*" and another said, "*I really hope we can improve on our use of digital marketing communication so that we can persuade visitors to visit the museum more*".

These comments from participants show the need for the museum to value retaining visitors through understanding their expectations and the use of interactive communication as an integral part of their digital marketing communication strategy. The visitors are at the centre of the existence of the museum and therefore, it is fair to expect that all digital marketing communication activities are prioritised. However, it is clear that the museum currently does not have in place digital interactive mechanisms to prioritise visitors. The researcher is of the opinion that; this should be a key goal. These findings are in line with the argument that digital marketing communication is consumer-centric in that all activities are focused on discovering wants, needs and expectations of customer and design communication strategies accordingly (Umar 2021:23). In addition, visitors' perceptions highlighted on section 5.5.2 of this chapter showcase the need for a consumer-centric approach around which communication strategies should be developed.

The above findings underscore the need for The Livingstone Museum to streamline its digital marketing communication strategy. This involves fostering internal cohesion for consistent messaging and prioritising visitor engagement to better understand and meet their expectations. Addressing these aspects will significantly enhance the museum's reputation, relationship with visitors, and overall effectiveness in digital communication. In addition, the findings underscore the museum's awareness of digital marketing communication's potential for awareness creation but also highlight challenges in measuring Return on Investment (ROI) and implementing an integrated communication approach due to financial constraints and brand consistency issues. Addressing these challenges could significantly enhance the museum's digital marketing effectiveness.

## **5.5 QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS**

In person questionnaires were administered to 300 visitors, with all 300 responding yielding a response rate of 100%. The quantitative phase of this study took six weeks to complete with each respondent taking about 15-20 minutes to complete the individual questionnaire. The questionnaire required respondents to indicate their level of agreement with statements on a five-point Likert scale where 1 = strongly agree, 2= agree 3= neutral 4 = disagree and 5= strongly disagree. However, for presentation and interpretation purposes, strongly agree and agree as well as disagree and strongly disagree were compressed into two categories consisting of agree and disagree, respectively. Aggregating the responses was done to simplify the data presentation and make it

easier to comprehend at a glance. In addition, this reduced the complexity of interpretation by condensing the five-point scale into broader categories and facilitating a clearer understanding of overall findings. The quantitative section responds to the fifth research question namely: *what are the visitor's perceptions on the use of digital marketing communication at the Livingstone Museum?* The next section discusses the demographic characteristics of the respondents.

### 5.5.1 Demographic Characteristics of Visitors

This section presents the socio- demographic information collected for the quantitative section of this study.

#### 5.8: Age

Variable	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)
<b>Age</b>		
18 - 28 years	6	2%
29 - 39 years	20	6.7%
40 - 50 years	91	30.3%
51 - 60 years	142	47.3%
61 years and above	41	13.7%

The findings indicate that 2% of the visitors fall into the age group 18 to 28, 6.7% into the age group of 29-39. In addition, 47.3% were aged 51 to 60 years, 30.3% were aged 40 to 50 years and 13.7% were aged 61 years and above. The findings suggest that particular segments, specifically those aged between 40 and 60 years, visit the museum the most and potentially engage more with the museum's communication efforts as in the case of this study. This according to Shnos (2019: 34) is also common in museums in Greece as this author's study showed that many museums there focus their communication efforts to older age groups. A similar study by Canes (2016) showed that museums in Egypt also had a challenge in attracting visitors between the ages of 18- 35, however, they overcame this challenge by adapting their services through the feedback they got from their digital platforms.

**Table 5.8: Gender**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Frequency (n)</b>	<b>Percent (%)</b>
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	197	65.7%
Males	103	34.3%

Table 5.9 above shows that the majority of the respondents were female at (65. 7%) and (34. 3%) were male. The findings show that it seems that the communication efforts of the museum mainly appeal to female visitors. This finding supports the view of Xayn (2018:339) that it is crucial for museums to understand their visitors to know what type of content appeals to all segments.

**Table 5.9: Type of Visitors**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Frequency (n)</b>	<b>Percent (%)</b>
<b>Type of visitors</b> Local	231	77%
International	69	23%

Table 5.10 indicates that the majority of respondents were local visitors (77%) and international visitors were the minority (23%). This finding suggests that international visitors are mostly not reached or the museum is not prioritising means to reach and engage international visitors with their communication activities. These findings are in line with Fraiser (2018) who asserts that organisations need to adapt all communication activities that best accommodate their different audiences.

### **5.5.2 Visitors' Perceptions of the Livingstone Museum's Use of Digital Marketing**

#### **Communication**

This section presents results of visitors' perception about their museum's use of digital marketing communication.



**Table 5.10: Awareness of the Museum’s Products and Services**

<b>Visitor’s awareness of the museum’s products and services</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>
Facebook	92.7%	6.3%	1.0%
Twitter	99.7%	0.3%	0.0%
WhatsApp	99.7%	0.3%	0.0%
Instagram	99.7%	0.3%	0.0%
Email	100%	0.0%	0.0%
Website	88.0%	8.3%	3.7%
Virtual museum	100%	0.0%	0.0%

The findings indicate that the museum mainly does not use existing digital marketing platforms to create awareness of its products and services. It is clear that email (100%) and virtual museums (100%) are not used to create awareness of their products and services. This is followed by Twitter, WhatsApp and Instagram (99.7%), Facebook (92.7%) and the Website (88%).

The findings highlight the need for the museum’s digital marketing communication activities to ensure that visitors are made aware of various products and services through these platforms. Junes (2015: 45) argues that the importance of organisations creating awareness of products and services as it leads to brand preference. Therefore, the findings show that the museum is utilising digital marketing communication in a limited manner to create awareness of products and services.

**Table 5.11: Conversations with the museum about their products and services**

<b>Conversations with the museum about their products and services</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>
Facebook	92.7%	6.7%	0.7%
Twitter	99.7%	0.3%	0.0%
WhatsApp	99.7%	0.3%	0.0%
Instagram	99.7%	0.3%	0.0%
Email	100%	0.0%	0.0%
Website	88.0%	8.3%	3.7%
Virtual museum	100%	0.0%	0.0%

Table 5.11 shows the responses to the statement “I am able to have conversations with the museum about their products and services on the following platforms. (The term “conversations” refers to interactions between the respondent and the museum)”.

The majority of the respondents disagreed that they had conversations with the museum about their products and services through digital marketing communication platforms such as Facebook (92.7%), Twitter (99.7%), WhatsApp (99.7%), Instagram (99.7%), Email (100%), Website (88.0%), and Virtual Museum (100%). These findings are not in line with Rochane (2019:430) who argues that it is crucial for organisations to identify digital channels that are most likely to create a base for positive interaction between consumer and organisation. Therefore, the findings show the need for the museum to identify digital marketing communication platforms that could allow them to interact with visitors and to intentionally engage in conversations.

**Table 5.12: Content Displayed By the Museum On their Platforms is Informative**

	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>
Facebook	92.3%	7.0%	0.7%
Twitter	99.7%	0.3%	0.0%
WhatsApp	99.7%	0.3%	0.0%
Instagram	99.7%	0.3%	0.0%
Email	100%	0.0%	0.0%
Website	88.0%	8.3%	3.7%
Virtual museum	100%	0.0%	0.0%

Table 5.12 illustrate that the majority of the respondents disagreed that the content displayed through Facebook (92.3%), Twitter (99.7%), (Whatsapp 99.7%), Instagram (99.7%), Email (100%), Website (88.0%), and Virtual Museum (100%) by the museum were informative. These findings show that the museum needs to re-evaluate their means of informing visitors or develop more initiatives to inform visitors about their offerings. The findings show that the Livingstone Museum’s visitors may not be finding the content displayed by the museum informative because it is not the type of content they prefer to engage with. Dunken (2018:64) emphasises the importance of creating content that is relevant and valuable to the target audience. If the content shared on platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or through email fails to address visitors' interests or needs, it might not be perceived as informative.

**Table 5.13: Preferred type of content**

<b>Preferred type of content</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>
Videos	0.0%	28.3%	71.7%
Pictures	0.7%	34.3%	65%
written messages	0.0%	32%	68%
Written messages including videos and pictures	0.0%	34%	66%

Table 5.13 indicates the responses to the statement “I prefer the following types of content”. As highlighted, the type of content preferred was (71.7%) videos, (65%) pictures, (68.0%) written messages and (66.0%) preferred written messages including pictures and videos. These findings highlight the need for the Museum to use specific types of communication to ensure the messages relayed are informative and create awareness of the organisation. Therefore, it is evident that in the case of the Livingstone Museum, the visitors prefer to be informed using videos which aligns with the view of Elem (2017:87) who explains that museum visitors are usually a visual type of audience and prefer messages that come in the form of videos and pictures. In addition, the neutral responses indicate that aspects of preferred content need to be investigated more in-depth by the museum and possibly addressed.

### 5.5.3 The Role of Digital Marketing Communication at the Livingstone Museum

This section presents the findings on the role digital marketing communication has played in terms of consistent communication, meaningful interactions and meeting expectations.

#### 5.5.3.1 Consistent Communication

Table 5.14 shows the responses to the statement “*The similar messages posted by the Museum about their products and services across the following platforms allow me to know about the Museum’s products and services*”.

**Table 5.14: Consistent Communication**

Consistent communication	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
Facebook	91.0%	8.3%	0.7%
Twitter	100%	0.0%	0.0%
WhatsApp	100%	0.0%	0.0%
Instagram	99.7%	0.0%	0.3%
Email	100%	0.0%	0.0%
Website	93.7%	6.3%	0.0%
Virtual Museum	100%	0.0%	0.0%

According to the results shown in Table 5.14 most of the participants were of the view that the messages posted by the Museum through digital marketing communication platforms such as Facebook (91.0%), Twitter (100%), WhatsApp (100%), Instagram (99.7%), Email (100%), Website (93.7%), and Virtual Museum (100 %) are not consistent. This shows that the Livingstone is not consistent in the messages that they post on their digital platforms. This finding confirms the findings highlighted in section 5.4.2.1 which indicates the need for the Livingstone Museum to be consistent in how their brand is represented on all digital platforms as this promotes one organisational voice. A study by Kumar and Lim (2018) emphasises that maintaining consistency in brand messaging across various digital platforms is crucial as inconsistency in messaging can confuse visitors and dilute the brand identity.

### 5.5.3.2 Meaningful Interactions

Table 5.15 presents the responses to the statement “*I believe my conversations with the Museum on the following platforms have made my interactions with them meaningful.*” Meaningful refers to whether one feels the museum listens and values their perception of them”.

**Table 5.15: Meaningful Interactions**

Meaningful interactions	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
Facebook	91.0%	8.3%	0.7%
Twitter	100%	0.0%	0.0%
WhatsApp	100%	0.0%	0.0%
Instagram	99.7%	0.0%	0.3%
Email	100%	0.0%	0.0%
Website	93.7%	6.3%	0.0%
. Virtual Museum	100%	0.0%	0.0%

The respondents agreed that they did not have meaningful interactions with the Museum about their offerings, in terms of the Museum valuing the visitor’s perception of them through digital marketing communication platform such as Facebook (91%), Twitter (100%), WhatsApp (100%), Instagram (99.7%), Email (100%), Website (93.7), and Virtual Museum (100%). This shows that there is a need for the Livingstone Museum to ensure that their digital communication activities with visitors create an environment where visitors can give valuable feedback. This feedback can be used by the Museum to make adjustments in their offerings to best suit visitor’s expectations, whilst maintaining a positive perception of their organisation.

Hence, Boba (2016:67) asserts the importance of ensuring consumers feel valued always. The author further notes that, consumers at most times, want to feel like they are part of the decision making process. This argument is in line with Braxton (2019:34) who argues that the success of an organisation lies in stakeholder inclusivity.

### 5.5.3.3 Meeting Expectations

Table 5.16 presents the responses to the statement *“The manner in which the Museum interacts with me on the following platforms allows them to meet my expectations in terms of them being informative, interactive, innovative and simple to understand”*.

**Table 5.16: Meeting expectations**

<b>Meeting expectations</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>
Facebook	91.7%	7.7%	0.7%
Twitter	100%	0.0%	0.0%
WhatsApp	100%	0.0%	0.0%
Instagram	100%	0.0%	0.0%
Email	100%	0.0%	0.0%
Website	93.7%	6.3%	0.0%
Virtual Museum	100%	0.0%	0.0%

Table 5:16 indicates that majority of the respondents disagreed that interactions with the Museum through Facebook (91.7%), twitter (100%), WhatsApp (100%), Instagram (100%), Email (100%), Website (93.7%), and Virtual Museum (100%) meet their expectations in terms of the interactions being informative, interactive, innovative and simple to understand.

This result highlights the sentiments of Wes (2019:54) who explains the importance of organisations in ensuring that their means of communication is not just beneficial to them but to consumers also. Hence the Livingstone Museum needs to invest more time to better understand their consumer base, so that they can engage their visitors in a manner that makes them feel valued.

#### 5.5.4 Opportunities That Digital Marketing Communication Can Provide the Museum

This section presents the results of whether the use of the following digital marketing communication platforms in the Museum contributed to visiting the Museum, understanding specific needs and desires, and generating relevant information:

##### 5.5.4.1 Frequent Communication

Table 5.17 indicates the responses to the statement “*frequent communication from the museum on the following platforms has contributed to me often visiting the museum*”.

**Table 5.17: Frequent communication**

<b>Frequent communication</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>
Facebook	91.3 %	7.7%	1.0%
Twitter	100%	0.0%	0.0%
WhatsApp	100%	0.0%	0.0%
Instagram	100%	0.0%	0.0%
Email	100%	0.0%	0.0%
Website	93.3%	6.7%	0.0%
Virtual museum	100%	0.0%	0.0%

Based on the results obtained, respondents agreed that their visits to the museum were not due to the frequent communication from the Museum through digital communication platforms such as Facebook (91.3%), Twitter (100%), WhatsApp (100%), Instagram (100%), Email (100%), Website (93.3%), and Virtual Museum (100%). This highlights the need for the Museum to re-strategise the digital marketing communication plan in a manner that allows them to efficiently reach and engage visitors. This can also be linked to why the Museum has a low number of international visitors, as according to Hance (2020:23), digital marketing communication provides a space where geographical barriers are broken and engagement can be attained.

#### 5.5.4.2 Understanding visitors' needs

Table 5.18 on the next page shows the responses by respondents to the statement “*The products and services marketed to me by the museum on the following platforms are specific to my wants and needs*”.

**Table 5.18: Understanding visitors' needs**

<b>Understanding visitor's needs</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>
Facebook	91.3%	8.7%	0.0%
Twitter	100%	0.0%	0.0%
WhatsApp	100%	0.0%	0.0%
Instagram	100%	0.0%	0.0%
Email	100%	0.0%	0.0%
Website	97.7%	2.3%	0.0%
Virtual museum	100%	0.0%	0.0%

The respondents disagreed that the products and services marketed to them through digital communication platforms such Facebook (91.3%), Twitter (100%), WhatsApp (100%), Instagram (100%), Email (97.7%), Website (97.7%), and Virtual Museum (100%) were specific to their wants and needs. This indicates the need for the Museum to involve more activities in their strategy that allow them to interact with visitors to better understand their individual needs. It also highlights the need for the Museum to continuously interact with their visitors as it creates an environment for engagement which will allow them to better understand their visitor's needs. In addition, the findings highlight the significance of engagement according to Semron (2016:47) for understanding consumer needs. They advocate for continuous engagement as it helps organisations gain deeper insights into the evolving preferences of their audience.

#### 5.5.4.1 Adequate information

Table 5.19 shows the responses to the statement “*The conversations I have with the museum on the following platforms provide adequate information about their products and services.*” The term conversations, refers to interactions between the respondent and the museum.



**Table 5.19: Adequate information**

<b>Adequate information</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>
Facebook	92.7%	6.7%	0.7%
Twitter	99.7%	0.3%	0.0%
WhatsApp	99.7%	0.3%	0.0%
Instagram	99.7%	0.3%	0.0%
Email	100%	0.0%	0.0%
Website	88.0%	8.3%	3.7%
Virtual museum	100%	0.0%	0.0%

Respondents agreed that the conversations they had with the Museum on digital marketing communication such as Facebook (92.7%), Twitter (99.7%), WhatsApp (99.7%), Instagram (99.7%), Email (100%), Website (88%), and Virtual Museum (100%) did not provide adequate information about their offerings. Hence, there is a need for the Museum to either articulate the information in their messages better or use a means of communication that visitors prefer and better understand. This is in line with Maslow (2017:34) who argues that it is the responsibility of an organisation to ensure that their messages provide adequate information to consumers based on their individual wants and needs.

The overall findings on visitors' perceptions regarding the Livingstone Museum's digital marketing communication strategies revealed crucial insights. The findings show that there is a significant gap between the Museum's use of digital platforms for creating awareness and engaging visitors. Platforms like email, virtual museums, Twitter, WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, and the website are underutilised in informing visitors about the Museum's offerings, pointing to the need for the museum to leverage these platforms effectively to raise awareness and engage visitors. In addition, showcased in the findings, is a disconnect in terms of meaningful interaction and content preferences as visitors largely felt they didn't have meaningful conversations or interactions with

the museum through digital channels, indicating a missed opportunity for valuable feedback and engagement. Consistency in messages also emerged as a significant issue across various digital platforms. The Museum's messaging lacks consistency, potentially confusing visitors and diluting the Museum's brand identity. Moreover, the digital communication didn't meet visitors' expectations regarding informativeness, interactivity, innovation, and simplicity across multiple platforms. This suggests a need for the museum to better understand its audience's preferences and engage them in ways that make them feel valued and understood.

In summary, there's a significant opportunity to improve communication by increasing platform utilisation, aligning content with visitor preferences, ensuring consistency in messaging, fostering meaningful interactions, and tailoring information to individual visitor needs. These adjustments can potentially enhance visitor engagement, foster a stronger brand identity, and create a more impactful digital presence for the museum.

## **5.5 CONSOLIDATION AND SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

This chapter has presented and interpreted the data collected from interviews and questionnaires in relation to the use of digital marketing communication at the Livingstone Museum. The in-depth interviews were conducted with members of the Marketing and Communication Department at the Museum and questionnaires were answered by visitors. The responses of participants and respondents regarding individual perceptions of the use of digital marketing communication in the museum were then compared and synthesised.

The main notion in the findings on what digital marketing communication tools the museum uses to reach and engage its visitors, highlight that the museum needed to do more in terms of communicating with its visitors. It was evident from the results that the museum was not making full use of the digital marketing communication in general to promote its market offerings. It is evident that the museum mainly uses its websites and social media platforms, specifically Facebook, to communicate with its visitors. Therefore, from both qualitative and quantitative results, it is evident that the museum does make use of digital marketing communication but in a limited manner as they prioritise Facebook and their website.

As showcased by literature, various digital marketing communication tools exist such as email marketing, social media marketing platforms such as Instagram, X and WhatsApp and in the context of a museum virtual museums. However, based on empirical findings, these are not used to their full extent. In addition, the Museum outsources some of its digital marketing communication activities to online tour agencies that handle these activities on their behalf. It is also evident from the data that a service business, such as the Museum should have a strong online presence as digital media have become a strong source of engaging and reaching visitors.

The main perception of the visitors on the role of digital marketing communication was that the Museum needed to do more in how they communicated with its visitors. It is evident from visitors and staff members that message consistency is not prioritised in ensuring that one voice is highlighted across all communication networks. The results showed that external message consistency is something that begins from inside the organisation; therefore, it is important for the entire museum to have the same idea on how the museum should be perceived by their visitors.

It is also evident that the museum needs to focus more on understanding its visitor's needs and wants. Results highlighted that the museum needs to be more interactive with its visitors as this will present visitors the chance to let the museum know the type of services they prefer and also allow the museum to understand its visitors.

The results from the interviews and the questionnaires revealed that the communication staff are aware of the opportunities of using digital marketing communication such as awareness, personalisation and creating enhanced relationships. However, based on results from the visitors, the museum is not taking full advantage of these opportunities. This can be seen from how frequently the museum engages visitors on their digital platforms and how the visitors view their interaction in relation to the museum accessing these opportunities. However, the museum is aware that more needs to be done in order for these opportunities to be realised.

In summary, it is evident that the museum is experiencing challenges in the use of digital marketing communication. As highlighted by findings, there is a substantial challenge in measuring the return on investment of digital marketing communication tools. This arises due to the absence of standardised measurement practices, inconsistent application of measurement tools, and the difficulty in quantifying the effectiveness of digital campaigns. This challenge is exacerbated by

the absence of a globally accepted measurement instrument for evaluating digital marketing communication, as observed in similar organisations. The importance of measuring return of investment is stressed to ensure optimal utilisation of their limited budget, a concern echoed by many participants.

The findings show that the museum is facing obstacles in implementing an integrated marketing communication approach in its digital strategy. Financial limitations hinder their ability to fully utilise various digital marketing elements and platforms. Despite recognising the significance of brand consistency in shaping audience perception, there's a lack of comprehensive understanding and alignment among staff members regarding the museum's brand identity and this disconnect is also affecting how the Museum is portrayed across digital channels.

The overall study highlights the need for the museum to go back to the drawing board and reevaluate their complete marketing communication strategy as this will trickle down to how they will better employ digital marketing communication and measure outcomes.

## **5.6 SUMMARY**

In conclusion, this chapter presented the results of the qualitative and quantitative data collected for this study. The main findings that were obtained from the study highlights the need to do more in regards to the manner that the Museum communicates with visitors as well as make adjustments in their use of digital marketing communication and ensure it plays a better role in engaging and reaching its visitors.

Based on the findings, major improvements need to be made by the museum both in internal communication and external communication for them to better communicate with their visitors. The concurrent triangulation approach that was used allowed the study to confirm both quantitative and qualitative findings and ensure an accurate presentation of results. The next chapter concludes the study and makes recommendations based on the results found in this study.

## **CHAPTER 6 : CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

The aim of this study was to explore the use of digital marketing communication at the Livingstone Museum and understand how they reach and engage visitors. This chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations emanating from the study. The first sections discuss the conclusions based on the findings of each research question and how the study answered the research questions. The final section discusses recommendations that the Museum could take into consideration in the use of digital marketing communication. The chapter also considers the limitations and strengths of this study as well as the relevance of the findings to museums that use digital marketing communication. In addition, this chapter offers recommendations for future research.

### **6.2 CONCLUSIONS RELATING TO THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND RESEARCH FINDINGS**

#### **6.2.1 Research Question 1: which digital marketing communication tools do the Livingstone Museum use to reach and engage tourists?**

As previously indicated, in chapter one, this study is contextualised within the realm of marketing communication to provide a framework for ascertaining how digital marketing communication contributes to the overall communication strategy. Based on the research findings as highlighted in Theme 1 of Chapter 5, it can be concluded that, when it comes to overall marketing communication, the museum focuses more on tools of the digital marketing communication mix, specifically Facebook, a website, and online tour agencies. As already highlighted by Donovan (2020: 230), digital marketing communication refers to promoting an organisation's products or services through the use of online channels. These online channels which include Facebook, websites, Twitter, WhatsApp and Virtual Museums are what scholars refer to as the digital marketing communication mix in the context of museums.

Based on research findings, it can be concluded that the Livingstone museums does currently make use of digital marketing communication tools. However, tools from the digital marketing communication mix are utilised in a limited manner. The overall communication strategy focused primarily on its website and Facebook, or its association with online tour agencies to reach and engage visitors. The findings also indicated that the Livingstone museum needed to establish a

more prominent presence on their digital marketing communication platforms and not only engage visitors when the museum had something special happening. This is in line with the quantitative findings which showed that the visitors were not made aware of the museum's products and services through their various digital platforms nor had conversations with the visitors pertaining to their products and services. These findings indicate the limited nature of the museum's use of digital marketing communication, preventing them from reaching their full potential in terms of reaching and engaging visitors.

The study further concludes that the limited use of the museum's digital marketing communication tools has resulted in the visitors not finding the content displayed informative, as highlighted in Table 5.13L "*Content displayed by the museum on their platforms is informative*". The museum needs to re-evaluate their means of informing visitors or develop more initiatives that inform visitors about their offerings. The museum needs to focus more on monitoring feedback and frequent engagement to stay informed of the content visitors prefer and provide content accordingly. Engagement refers to the interaction between consumer and organisation to form and maintain mutually profitable relationships (Hallubik 2019:166).

The research also concludes that the digital marketing communication platform used most frequently by the museum included Facebook, followed by word-of-mouth recommendations and its association with online tour agencies, and then their website which is the least used digital marketing tool. Although these tools are effective in reaching visitors, there would be an improvement if the museum included more marketing communication and digital marketing communication mix tools in their strategy. Therefore, Strong (2018:197) advises that, in terms of reaching and engaging visitors in the museum industry in general, it is vital that they use sufficient communication tools that are well-planned to ensure that messages reach the targeted audience at the right time if they are to achieve the desired result.

### **6.2.2 Research Question 2: what are the opportunities that digital marketing communication can offer the museum?**

Based on findings highlighted in Theme 4: "*the use of digital marketing communication leads to enhanced relationships*", the Livingstone Museum communication staff members are aware of the opportunities that come with the use of digital marketing communication, as they understand

digital marketing communication can provide them opportunities for enhancing their relationship with visitors. However, it is still not highlighted in the manner that they communicate with their visitors. This conclusion is supported by the fact that the museum visitors indicated that frequent communication has not enhanced their relationship with the museum or lead to them visiting the museum.

Research shows that the museum's awareness potential is not being fully exploited, as visitors report that they cannot find enough information on the museum's digital marketing communication platforms. This finding suggested that the museum should re-evaluate the way information is presented or better understand the wants and needs of the visitors, which visitors emphasised that the museum does not communicate with them.

It can also be concluded that most organisations, such as the Livingstone Museum, can take advantage of the opportunities of digital marketing communication, such as strengthening human relations and raising awareness, because it reaches countless people (Bennedy, Mos & Guns 2015:456).). The number of people in the digital space is growing more than ever, as more and more people use digital communication platforms to search for information or interact with different organisations. It is therefore imperative that the Livingstone Museum effectively improves its online presence by creating activities that allow it to improve visitor relations and raise awareness of how to create a feedback mechanism on its website to better engage visitors.

The view of Bennedy, Mos and Guns (2015:456) is consistent with that of Tong (2013:897-898) to the effect that, in the museum industry, the use of digital space as a marketing and communication platform has shown phenomenal growth and has advanced significantly in the past decade. A few years ago, approximately one-fourth of museums made use of digital marketing communication as part of their communication compared to today where the majority of museums have at least one digital marketing and communication platform to engage and reach visitors (Tong 2013:980). Hence, such sentiments show why it is advisable that the museum frequently engages its visitors and provides adequate information about their products and services as highlighted by the Museum visitors (see tables Table 5.18: “*frequent communication*” and Table 5.10: “*adequate information*”)

It can be concluded that the museum does not exploit the unique potential of digital marketing communication, however, it should be noted that all the participants indicated that they were interested in learning more about the various opportunities that digital marketing communication can provide them in reaching and engaging visitors.

### **6.2.3 Research Question 3: what challenges is the museum facing in the use of digital marketing communication?**

Based on the overall research findings, the Livingstone Museum is facing some challenges in the use of digital marketing communication as part of their communication strategy. As highlighted in the previous discussions, the museum is facing various challenges in adopting digital marketing communication. Hence, as highlighted in Theme 6: “*challenge in measuring return on investment of digital marketing communication tools*”, it can be concluded that the museum is challenged with the inability to measure results or the effectiveness of their digital marketing communication activities.

The Livingstone Museum does acknowledge the value of measuring their investment in digital marketing communication. This supports suggestions in literature where it is stated that organisations like museums should find means to quantify their performance (Marian 2016: 64). Although very important, the museum has no standard measuring tool even though the findings point to attempts to measure the effectiveness of marketing and communication activities through reports. The research findings thus support the argument that the impact which an organisation’s activities have on their consumers is sometimes intangible and, hence, difficult to measure or quantify (Manro 2015: 90).

It can further be concluded that the Livingstone Museum has not yet reached the desired level to consistently measure the effectiveness of communication channels and subsequently the return of investment on digital marketing communication as a whole. Findings confirm arguments in the literature that, even in commercial marketing and communication, measuring the effectiveness of digital marketing communication is still quite problematic (Patri 2022: 3067). The overall research also concludes that, based on Theme 7: “*challenges in applying an integrated marketing communication approach to digital marketing communication*”, the Livingstone



Museum has challenges in applying an integrated approach to digital marketing communication and these challenges are related to limited financial resources allocated for these communication activities. Furthermore, the results reveal that the Museum as a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) does not have access to financial resources to follow an integrated marketing communication approach. Literature points to a similar conclusion that Non-Government Organisations like the Livingstone Museum usually have restricted financial resources (Manro 2015: 45).

Thus, it can be concluded that the Livingstone Museum is currently not in a financial position to use many of the marketing communication mix elements, as an integrated marketing communication approach might require adequate financial support. To this effect, digital marketing communication at the museum has to be implemented using only the available financial resources, thereby limiting the full benefits of an integrated approach.

The research also concludes that the concept of branding within the organisation is still a challenge and this in turn affects the museum's use of digital marketing communication. This supports the literature where it is stated that many organisations like museums, have been slow to adopt the concept of branding (Edwin 2019:438). Branding is central to applying an integrated approach in that the brand image of the Livingstone Museum has to be consistently portrayed by all its brand points. According to Woody (2018:43) and Hurau (2018: 109), branding assists organisations to understand who they are, which in turn assists them in understanding how the museum should be portrayed to their target audience. However, the members of staff are willing to undergo training to better understand the museum's brand and know how to portray it in a consistent manner.

#### **6.2.4 Research Question: 4 what is the role of digital marketing communication in reaching and engaging visitors at the Livingstone Museum?**

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that digital marketing communication does not play a major role in reaching and engaging visitors at the Livingstone Museum. The findings show that the museum's marketing and communication staff needs to do more in setting out specific goals they want to achieve with the digital marketing communication tools, as this will assist in each individual tool to play a significant role in their overall strategy.

It can further be concluded that the Livingstone Museum is not succeeding with overall communication which has led to many inefficiencies in the manner in which they communicate with visitors.

Gauve and Roos (2019:45) advises organisations to have solid communication skills from top to bottom as it ensures consistency in the manner that they engage visitors. Therefore, in order to ensure message consistency across all its communication channels, there is a need for the museum to engage the marketing and communication staff in the management of the Livingstone Museum. The findings also highlight that integrating marketing and communication efforts are needed as this can help the Livingstone Museum to present unified and compelling messages to its visitors. This consistency not only enhances visitor engagement but also strengthens the museum's brand presence in the digital space. Based on the findings highlighted in theme 2: "*a lack of consistent communication in the digital marketing communication strategy*", there appears to be an absence of coherent and consistent internal communication within the museum. This result in a lack of commitment on the part of the communication staff and a lack of understanding of what role each individual member of staff has in the communication department.

The lack of message consistency is noted in the visitors' feedback and their perception of whether the messages posted by the Museum on various digital marketing communication platforms are consistent (see section table 5.15: "*consistent communication*"). The visitors' perceptions confirmed how the museum was struggling with engaging the visitors in a manner that promotes the organisation in one voice, as is evident in theme 2, which addressed the lack of consistent communication in the digital marketing communication strategy.

The research also made conclusions based on theme 3: "*the prioritisation of visitor needs and wants in the digital marketing communication strategy*", that the museum does not prioritise visitors' needs and wants in the manner they communicate. This is supported by the museum visitors' perceptions which showed that the museum does not create meaningful interactions with them. The visitors clearly highlighted that the museum did not create an environment that allowed them to express their perception of the museum's services and products. This was also indicated by one of the communication members of staff who noted that the website provides no opportunity that allows visitors to interact with the museum. These findings further portray that the museum's

current communication strategy does not include activities that support visitor engagement. Furthermore, the results showed that the museum does not meet the visitors' expectations in terms of interactions being informative, innovative and simple to understand. This finding is confirmed by the result that showed that, the visitors do not find the information displayed by the museum informative (see Table 5.12: "Content displayed by the museum on their platforms is informative"). These findings therefore, indicate poor communication strategy on behalf of the museum.

Hence, it is established that the use of digital marketing communication in the Livingstone Museum's communication strategy is currently not playing the role it is expected to play in terms of engaging and reaching visitors.

#### **6.2.5 Research Question: 5 what recommendations on the use of digital marketing communication at the Livingstone Museum can be made**

Based on the findings presented in Chapter 5 and the conclusions highlighted in the preceding sections, this particular section offers conclusions on recommendations in regard to the use of digital marketing communication at the Livingstone Museum. The recommendations are illustrated by Figure 6.1 on the next page, followed by a detailed explanation in accordance with the research questions.

#### **Figure 6.1: Recommendations on the Use of Digital Marketing Communication at the Livingstone Museum**

### 6.2.5.1 Recommendation on Digital Marketing Communication Elements Used by The Museum

Digital marketing communication elements used by the museum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>An integrated approach needs to be emphasised</li><li>Employ more elements from the digital marketing communication mix</li><li>Develop a well -structured communication plan</li></ul>
Opportunities of digital marketing communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Enhanced relationships with visitors</li><li>Digital marketing communication should include means to create awareness</li></ul>
Visitor perception on the museum's use of digital communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Enhancing awareness</li><li>Tailoring content to visitors' preferences</li><li>Consistency and Value Perception</li><li>Meeting Visitor Expectations</li></ul>
Challenges in the use of digital marketing communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Invest in consistent standardised measuring tools</li><li>Consider applying a digital marketing communication approach to digital marketing communication</li></ul>
The role of digital marketing communication at the museum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Create a central communication structure</li><li>Prioritise visitor feedback</li><li>Plan visitor interaction to engage visitors</li></ul>

As previously mentioned, the Livingstone Museum's current communication strategy heavily relies on a few digital marketing communication elements, predominantly the website and Facebook page, alongside recommendations from prior visitors and affiliations with online and local tour agencies. However, it is evident from participant responses that this approach falls short in effectively engaging and reaching potential visitors. To bolster reach and engagement with

visitors, it is imperative for the museum to diversify the digital marketing communication mix in an integrated manner. While social media, especially Facebook, is being utilised, other platforms should be incorporated to create a comprehensive strategy. Expanding beyond social media to incorporate email marketing, diverse online platforms, and potentially explore emerging channels like Instagram and Twitter, could significantly broaden the museum's reach and engagement.

Additionally, the museum's website, although recognised as a valuable tool, requires substantial improvements to deliver timely and comprehensive information. Regular updates and a more visitor-centric approach are essential. Given the outsourcing of digital marketing activities, it is crucial to ensure that the museum's messages and promotions are not solely confined to the platforms of third-party agencies. As noted by Cyrus (2018: 78), establishing an internal digital marketing team or collaborating closely with external partners to harmonise messaging across all platforms, is vital for consistency and for creating a coherent brand image.

The Livingstone Museum's current communication strategy predominantly relies on a limited set of digital marketing tools, including its website and Facebook page, along with recommendations from visitors and affiliations with tour agencies. However, this approach has proven insufficient for effectively engaging potential visitors. To enhance reach and engagement, it is crucial for the museum to diversify its digital marketing efforts. Expanding beyond social media to include email marketing, diverse online platforms, and emerging channels like Instagram and Twitter could significantly broaden its audience and improve visitor interaction.

Moreover, the museum staff should undergo strategic planning to identify and prioritise specific components of the digital marketing communication mix that align with the museum's communication objectives. Hence, it is suggested that the museum develop a well-structured communication strategy based on the current needs of the organisation. A digital marketing communication strategy can be seen as a document or blueprint that outlines an organisation's communication and marketing objectives or efforts for a particular period (Quinton 2018:45).

Therefore, it is imperative that the Livingstone Museum comes up with a digital marketing communication strategy that is flexible and visitor-satisfaction focused. Embracing a flexible approach in selecting tools and constantly assessing their performance against set goals will ensure adaptability in a dynamic market landscape. Leveraging a well-rounded mix of communication tools, as recommended in literature and supported by the study's findings, will empower the museum to not just reach but also engage visitors, fostering a deeper connection with the museum's offerings and experiences.

#### **6.2.5.2 Recommendation on the Opportunities of Digital Marketing Communication at the Museum**

The Livingstone Museum's recognition of the opportunities that digital marketing communication can provide them underscores the necessity of enhancing relationships with its visitors. Relationships are foundational to the museum's success, and it is imperative to fortify efforts in engaging and interacting with visitors and stakeholders. According to Dunken (2018:50), leveraging digital marketing communication channels offers an avenue to initiate and maintain these crucial connections. As highlighted by participants, there is a collective understanding that building relationships requires a continual dialogue and proactive engagement with visitors. Therefore, implementing robust feedback mechanisms and responsive communication channels is paramount. Expanding beyond the current digital tools, such as improving feedback processes on the website or social media platforms, can facilitate meaningful interactions, demonstrating to visitors that their feedback is valued and acted upon.

Based on insights from experts like Notts (2020:34) and Xaver (2021:23), understanding the specific needs and preferences of the museums' diverse audience segments is important. This understanding should inform tailored communication strategies that resonate with these distinct groups. Incorporating personalised messaging or targeted campaigns through email marketing or social media interactions can significantly enhance the sense of connection and relevance. Moreover, the Museum should aim to create an environment of active listening, wherein visitor input and opinions are acknowledged.

Communication, in fostering brand visibility and amplifying global reach, signifies a crucial understanding of its impact on creating awareness. It is therefore recommended that the museum expands beyond the current utilisation of Facebook and the website as this will present an opportunity to maximise exposure across diverse digital channels. Investing in a comprehensive digital marketing strategy that encompasses multiple platforms, such as Instagram, Twitter, email marketing, and potentially emerging channels, can significantly amplify the museum's presence and outreach.

Drawing from insights by Dunken (2018:50), prioritising digital marketing efforts can directly correlate with increased brand recognition and subsequently influence visitor decisions. By consistently sharing engaging and informative content across various digital platforms, the museum can increase its visibility and differentiate itself from competitors.

### **6.2.5.3 Recommendation on Visitors' Perceptions on The Use of Digital Marketing Communication**

#### **6.2.5.3.1 Enhancing Awareness**

The findings underscore a crucial need for the Livingstone Museum to diversify its digital platforms to increase awareness of its products and services. Exploring underutilised platforms like email and the website can significantly expand their reach. Moreover, fostering meaningful conversations on these platforms is essential as prioritising engaging with visitors across multiple channels, enables a two-way communication and valuing visitor feedback. Aligning with Rochane's (2022) insights, that selecting appropriate platforms for positive interactions will be critical in building relationships and enhancing brand preference.

#### **6.2.5.3.2 Tailoring Content to Visitors' Preferences**

Understanding visitor preferences is important in content creation. As indicated, videos, pictures, and written messages are favoured content types. Hence, it is recommended that capitalising on visual content like videos and pictures, in line with Shinu's (2020: 34) observation, can effectively inform and engage visitors. Aligning content strategies with visitor preferences, and ensuring informative, engaging, and varied content across platforms, will be instrumental in capturing visitor interest and fostering a deeper connection with the museum's offerings.

#### **6.2.5.3.3 Consistency and Value Perception**

Consistency in messaging across platforms is crucial and impacts the museum's brand representation. Establishing a unified voice and aligning messaging across digital channels can increase brand recognition and coherence. Hence, addressing discrepancies in messaging as revealed in the findings is essential to maintain a cohesive brand image.

#### **6.2.5.3.4 Meeting Visitor Expectations**

The museum should strive to meet visitor expectations through its digital communication efforts. Understanding visitor needs and tailoring offerings accordingly will enhance the relevance and effectiveness of digital interactions. Providing informative, interactive, and easy-to-understand content, as highlighted by Wes (2019:54), can bridge the gap between visitor expectations and the museum's digital communication initiatives.

#### **6.2.5.3.5 Leveraging Opportunities**

Re-evaluating the museum's current digital strategy to seize opportunities for improved communication is imperative. Geographical barriers can be overcome through strategic digital initiatives, potentially attracting more diverse visitors. Therefore, the Museum should consider revamping its approach to encourage frequent visits by creating engaging and tailored content that resonates with individual visitor preferences and needs. Moreover, initiating effective conversations and providing adequate information aligned with visitor needs can foster meaningful interactions and ultimately contribute to a more enriched visitor experience.

In essence, the Livingstone Museum's digital marketing communication strategy should be aligned towards visitor-centric approaches. Embracing visitor preferences, fostering consistent, engaging, and informative content, and prioritising meaningful interactions across diverse digital platforms will be significant in augmenting visitor engagement and enhancing the museum's impact.

#### **6.2.5.4 Recommendation on the Challenges in the Use of Digital Marketing Communication**

As highlighted, the museum is facing difficulties regarding measuring the effectiveness of digital marketing communication at the Livingstone Museum. Hence, in order to overcome this, it is recommended that the museum establish clear and specific objectives tied to measurable goals (Karson 2018: 36). Defining precise targets aligned with the museum's mission and marketing strategies allows for more accurate assessment of return of investment. Whether it is increased



website traffic, engagement metrics on social media, or specific conversion goals, setting measurable objectives provides a clearer path for evaluating success.

Additionally, regular audits and reviews of measurement practices are essential (Karson 2018:39). Conducting periodic assessments of measurement methodologies ensures consistency and accuracy in evaluating digital marketing campaigns. This approach helps in identifying discrepancies early on and allows for necessary adjustments to measurement techniques, improving reliability and precision.

In addition, the study also highlighted that the museum encounters specific challenges when integrating marketing communication into its digital strategy, primarily due to limited financial resources and a lack of comprehensive understanding of brand consistency among staff members. To address these issues, it is crucial to consider innovative solutions. One such approach is to capitalise on content repurposing and recycling. Creating evergreen content that can be repurposed across various digital channels helps maximise the impact of limited resources (Hurau 2018: 45). By transforming blog posts, videos, or educational content into different formats suitable for diverse platforms, the museum can maintain a consistent presence without significant additional costs.

Moreover, leveraging user-generated content (UGC) could significantly benefit the museum's digital marketing efforts. Encouraging visitors to share their experiences through photos, reviews, or stories about the museum on social media platforms can amplify its online reach (Woody 2018). UGC not only fosters community engagement but also serves as authentic testimonials, enhancing the museum's credibility and visibility across digital channels.

#### **6.2.5.5 Recommendation on the Role of Digital Marketing Communication at the Livingstone Museum**

The Livingstone Museum faces challenges in maintaining consistent communication across its digital marketing channel and this impacts its brand image and visitor experience. To address these issues, several recommendations can be proposed. Firstly, establishing a centralised communication strategy involving all stakeholders within the museum is crucial (Chow & Barack 2018: 90). Encouraging open communication channels between management, marketing teams, and staff responsible for digital platforms ensures everyone is aligned with the museum's

messaging objectives. Regular meetings or briefings can help in fostering a shared understanding of communication goals and guidelines.

Secondly, developing comprehensive brand guidelines that encompass digital communication protocols is essential (Stanf & Alye 2019:34). Creating a unified document outlining messaging tone, content standards, and response protocols across all digital channels ensures consistency. This guideline serves as a reference for all staff involved in digital communication, maintaining a coherent brand voice.

Additionally, the museum should consider providing training and guidelines for external partners or Online Tour Agencies representing the museum (Chow & Barack, 2018). Offering clear instructions and materials to external parties engaging on behalf of the museum may ensure they convey messages consistent with the museum's brand voice and guidelines.

As noted in section 5.4.2.2 “The prioritisation of visitor needs and wants in the digital marketing communication strategy”, the museum’s current communication strategy does not prioritise understanding their visitors’ needs and wants. The researcher, therefore, recommends that the museum’s Marketing and Communication Department should collectively consider all potential digital marketing communication ideas that promote visitor engagement. This may allow the museum to stay focused, because, with so many digital marketing communication tools, it is easy to get distracted. The researcher also recommends a plan of action or strategy to establish tasks and timelines to be met during a stipulated time as the researcher understands that digital marketing communication can be overwhelming, hence, it is important that the plan of action clearly lays out specific times for engagement with visitors.

#### **6.2.5.6.1 Conduct Digital Marketing Communication Trainings**

The researcher recommends that the Livingstone Museum provide training on the use of digital marketing communication. According to Files (2020:45), training and development programs can provide organisations like the museum benefits including enhanced employee performance, boosts employee productivity and improved organisational culture. Therefore, such training could allow the museum to highlight how they wish their staff members to portray the organisation as it will ensure coherent and consistent communication both internally and externally. The researcher also recommends training where the museum brings in a third party who can help them determine ways

to better measure the results of their digital marketing communication activities. Digital marketing communication training, according to Cyrus (2018: 355), are teachings that enhance knowledge on different aspects of digital marketing communication. Digital marketing communication training is something the museum can benefit from because it will allow them to develop their knowledge on aspects they are not so conversant with, such as measuring results (Cyrus 2018: 360).

### **6.3 LIMITATIONS AND STRENGTHS OF THE STUDY**

This section highlights the limitations and strengths of this study.

#### **6.3.1 Limitations of the Study**

Some of the limitations of this study relate to using a qualitative approach for one part of the study. Therefore, not all the findings of this study can be generalised to the entire population. The study was conducted at only the Livingstone Museum. As such, findings of this study can only be generalised to the Livingstone Museum and not to other Zambian museums and their use of digital marketing communication.

Nonetheless, the use of a qualitative method on museum staff members was applicable to this study because it provided a systematic and in-depth investigation into the phenomenon of digital marketing communication in its context, which was its use at the Livingstone Museum. In addition, participants of the face-to-face semi-structured interviews were not sampled as the sample size was small. The research thus focused on all the six marketing and communication staff members and none of the other staff members were included in the study. Therefore, the views expressed during the face-to-face semi-structured interviews may not represent all of the Livingstone Museum employees.

Another limitation of the study relates to the fact that the research only focused on the use of digital marketing communication at the museum. Though the perspective of integrated marketing communication was included in the study, priority was given to digital marketing communication and the role it played in allowing the Museum to reach and engage visitors.

This study also focused on the views of 300 visitors who visited the museum during the data collection period, hence, the study only reflects the perception of the 300 Livingstone Museum

visitors and not all museum visitors. In addition, this study may not have adequately captured the perceptions of the museum visitors as the study made use of a Likert style responses which may have limited the visitors' responses. Moreover, it did not allow for further exploration of these opinions. Due to time constraints the study only collected data from a limited number of respondents which limited the amount of perception highlighted.

### **6.3.2 Strengths of the Study**

The above section discussed the limitations of this study. However, there are also strengths to this study. The study addresses a gap in literature as not many studies have been conducted on the use of digital marketing communication in the context of museums, especially those in Zambia. The gap in literature is also addressed by providing an in-depth literature review that highlights digital marketing communication as a priority for organisations like the Livingstone Museum. In addition, the study highlights the role of digital marketing communication in allowing the museum to reach and engage visitors.

Despite the study focusing on digital marketing communication, sentiments of integrated marketing communication were included. The research also showcases the current situation of the museum's internal and external communication as well as highlights how the museum's internal communication affects how it interacts with its visitors. In addition, not many studies have highlighted the use of an integrated marketing communication approach to museums, including the use of digital marketing communication to museums in Zambia and its role in reaching and engaging visitors. The study provides a detailed description of the situation in terms of the visitor's perception of how the museum is currently meeting their expectations.

The strength of this study also relates to how the research methodology was clearly outlined and the fieldwork rigorously conducted. Every aspect of the methodological design of this study is thoroughly explained. The mixed method research design is highlighted for its ability to provide an in-depth perspective of the phenomena under investigation through the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods to collect and analyse data. The sampling method and the unit of analysis is also explained, and the data collection method processes and analysis are explained in detail.

In addition, the strength of the study pertains to how the quality of both the research processes and the study findings were ensured. To ensure high quality of the research processes, the researcher

used measures for both the quantitative and qualitative parts which included establishing a clear chain of evidence by way of a study protocol, pretesting of interview and questionnaire questions and having a database for all collected data. A noteworthy strength is the use of triangulation to investigate the topic through different research methods. The quality of the findings is also ensured by clearly explaining the data analysis for both the qualitative and quantitative process. The researcher also made use of a statistician during the quantitative analysis process to ensure due process is followed and ensure critical guidance in producing trustworthy research findings.

The following section discusses the relevance of the findings for museums in the use of digital marketing communication.

#### **6.4 RELEVANCE OF THE FINDINGS FOR MUSEUMS THAT FOLLOW A DIGITAL MARKETING COMMUNICATION APPROACH**

It is important to highlight the relevance of the findings, especially in the context of museums that use digital marketing communication. Literature has indicated that not many studies have focused on integrated marketing communication and digital marketing communication within museums (Kerry & Patty 2022: 1004). Therefore, this study provides the necessary foundation which museums can use when understanding the factors that come with using digital marketing communication to reach and engage visitors. The study's findings are also relevant in that it outlines all the aspects that organisations like the Livingstone Museum can avoid when making use of digital marketing communication. Lastly, this research provides a comprehensive foundation that other researchers can use for similar studies.

It can hence be concluded that the study contributes to knowledge about and an understanding of digital marketing communication in the context of museums.

## **6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

The following are recommendations for possible future research projects on the topic:

- Although the Livingstone Museum was used for this study, future studies can engage in comparative studies which explore the use of digital marketing communication in various museums. It is important that future studies aim to compare the use of digital marketing communication among different museums to better evaluate its level of adoption and role.
- Furthermore, future studies could go beyond the use of digital marketing communication and can include aspects such as the measurement criteria for the effectiveness of digital marketing communication tools or overall marketing communication. In addition, future studies could also consider the overall benefits of adopting an integrated marketing communication approach. This may allow organisations to understand how they can benefit their overall functioning.
- In addition, future research could explore other aspects of marketing communication in the context of museums or other Zambian tourism organisations about which there is little information in the literature. Research could focus mainly on aspects such as public relations, advertising, direct marketing and other means of marketing communication.
- Additionally, studies could perhaps focus on development of a conceptual framework for digital marketing communication processes/strategies for museums.

## **6.6 SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH**

The conclusions drawn from the findings and the recommendations made are based on the analysis of data collected from the Livingstone Museum's communication staff members and visitors. Therefore, following a thorough analysis, the researcher notes that the museum's use of digital marketing communication has not reached its full potential and more needs to be done in terms of how the museum reaches and engages its visitors. The research also notes that the manner in which the museum is currently communicating with its visitors does not meet their expectations. This was highlighted in the questionnaire responses from the survey with respondents reflecting a negative perception towards the museums' use of digital marketing communication and the interview participants' describing the museum's current communication strategy as not being visitor-oriented.

The researcher also noted how organisational culture largely influenced how the museum communicated with visitors and recommended the development of clear organisational policies and guidelines that can support communication officers as they engage visitors. The data collected was on the use of digital marketing communication at the Livingstone Museum in relation to reaching and engaging visitors. Therefore, for each of the objectives, conclusions are drawn, and recommendations are made in relation to the objectives of the study.

This study contributes valuable new knowledge to the field of digital marketing communication within the museum sector, particularly focusing on the Livingstone Museum. By highlighting the museum's limited use of digital marketing tools like Facebook, its website, and online tour agencies, the research identifies significant challenges such as measuring return on investment and financial constraints. Additionally, it underscores the need for better branding and consistent communication to improve visitor engagement and awareness. These insights are crucial given the museum's reliance on visitors for sustainability and the significant decline in visitor numbers due to the pandemic, as reported by the *Zambian Tourism Board*.

The findings emphasise the importance of prioritising visitor engagement by enhancing the museum's online presence and creating more informative and engaging content. Setting specific goals for digital marketing tools is essential to ensure they play a significant role in the overall communication strategy. This research underscores the potential benefits of effective digital marketing communication for attracting and engaging visitors, addressing the concerns of increased visitor expectations and limited information. By implementing the recommended strategies, the Livingstone Museum can better meet visitor needs, improve visitor statistics, and ensure its sustainability in the competitive tourism sector.

As noted, the research made use of a mixed method approach, specifically the concurrent triangulation approach, not only produces in-depth information but also contributes to the production of a rigorous and credible source of data.

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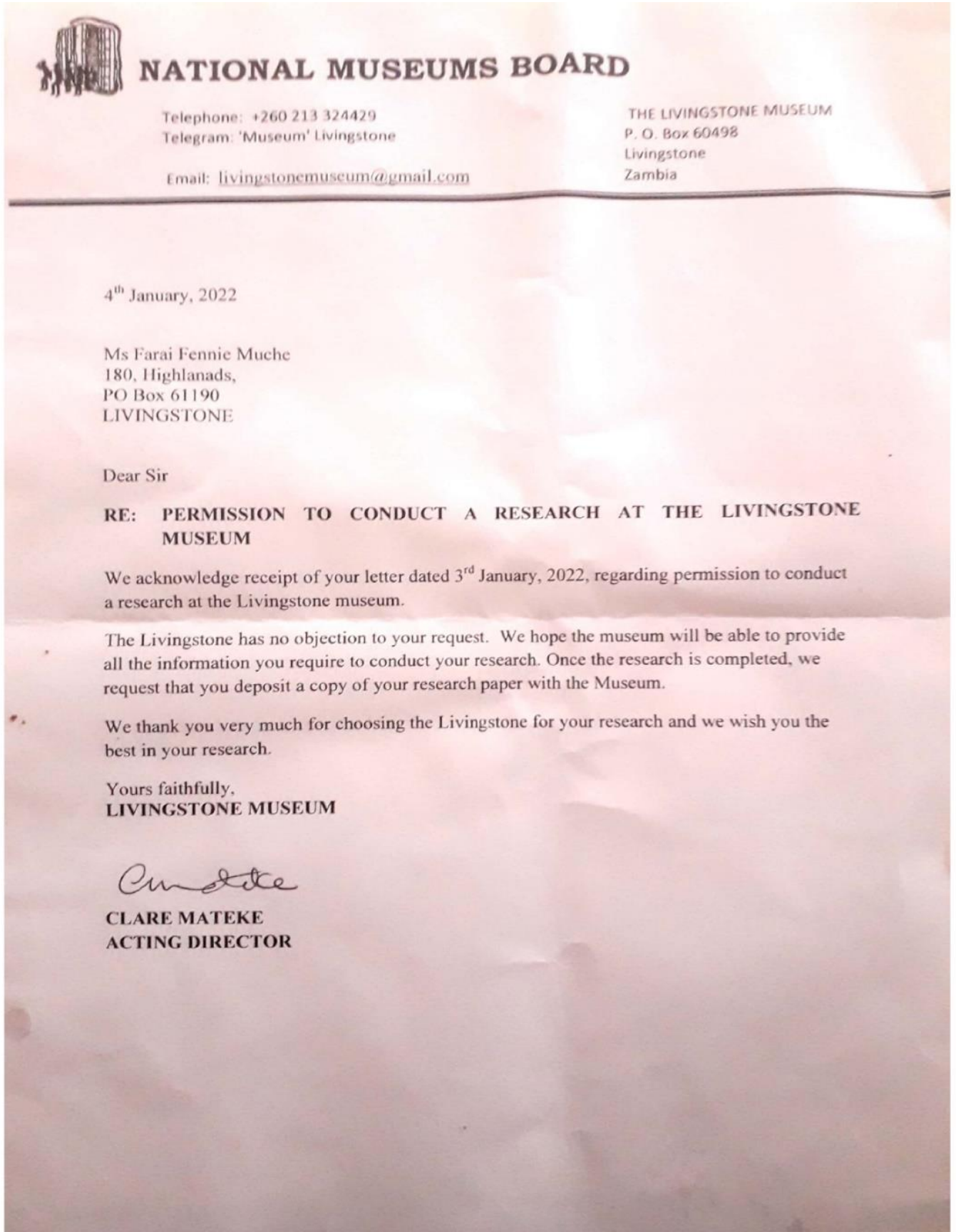
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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Livingstone Museum Permission Letter



## Appendix B: Interview Guide

### INTERVIEW GUIDE BY FARAI FENNIE MUCHE

**STUDENT NUMBER: 65994922**

#### INTRODUCTION

Good day, my name is Farai Fennie Muche. I am a student at the University of South Africa where I am conducting a study on the use of digital marketing communication at the Livingstone Museum in fulfilment of my Master's degree. The main objective of this interview is to gain an understanding of how the museum can make/ makes use of digital marketing communication to reach and engage visitors and understand their expectations. The findings of this study may be used to assist the Livingstone Museum in improving their digital marketing communication efforts to reach and engage visitors. During the interview no participant will be required to give their name if they are not comfortable doing so. Thank you very much for participating in this study.

#### INFORMED CONSENT

I ..... who is 18 years and above, willingly agree to participate in this study titled **“An investigation on the use of digital marketing communication at the Livingstone Museum”**. I declare that i am aware of the intended use of the information gathered from this interview and that my participation is voluntary as i have not been coerced in any way to take part in this study. I give permission for the interview to be recorded and can withdraw from the study at anytime.

.....

Participants signature

.....

Researchers Signature



## **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

### **SECTION A**

Demographic information

1. What is your age group
  - 18- 28
  - 29- 39
  - 40- 50
  - 51- 60
  - 61 and above
2. What is your current position at the museum?
3. How long have you worked for the Livingstone Museum
  - 1- 5 years
  - 6- 10 years
  - 11- 15 years
  - 16 years and above

### **SECTION B**

Marketing communication and digital marketing communication

1. Which tools does the Livingstone Museum use as part of their communication strategy to communicate with visitors?
2. Which tools does the museum use as part of their communication strategy to market and promote their products and services?
3. Which of the tools mentioned previously does the museum use as part of their digital marketing communication strategy?

### **SECTION C**

**The role of digital marketing communication**

1. How often does the museum communicate and interact with visitors via digital marketing communication platforms?
2. What role does digital marketing play in allowing the museum to communicate and interact with visitors?
3. How often does the museum promote products and services using digital marketing communication platforms?
4. What role does digital marketing communication play in allowing the museum to promote their products and services?
5. In your opinion can digital marketing communication be used to reach other goals, if so please elaborate, if not is there a specific reason?

**Opportunities provided through the use of digital marketing communication**

1. How has digital marketing communication assisted the museum in informing visitors about different products and services?
2. How has digital marketing communication assisted the museum in ensuring they have a positive relationship with visitors?
3. In your opinion how can the museum improve their use of digital marketing communication? Please elaborate

**Challenges of digital marketing communication**

1. What are the specific challenges faced by the Livingstone Museum in the use of digital marketing communication?
2. How have these challenges affected the way the museum engages its visitors?
3. How have these challenges affected the museum’s ability to reach visitors?

ANY OTHER COMMENTS

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

THANK YOU

## Appendix C: Visitor Questionnaire

### SECTION A Demographic information

Please mark the appropriate box with an X

1. Gender

Female  Male

2. Age

Age 18- 28  29- 39  40-50  51- 60  61 and above

3. What type of Visitor are you

International

Local

### SECTION B

#### Visitor's perception of the Livingstone museums use of digital marketing communication

This section seeks your perception on how you feel about the museums use of the following digital marketing communication platforms allow the museum to make you aware of products and services, have conversations with you and whether the information they display is informative.

**Guide: Kindly respond to all the statements by marking the options that best describes your view with an X. Only select one option per platform**

1. I am made aware of the museums products and services through the following platforms.

Only select one option per platform

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Facebook					
Twitter					
WhatsApp					

Instagram					
Email					
Website					
Virtual museum					

2. I am able to have conversations with the museum about their products and services on the following platforms. (The term “conversations” refer to interactions between the respondent and the museum) Only select one option per platform

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Facebook					
Twitter					
WhatsApp					
Instagram					
Email					
Website					
Virtual museum					

3. I visit these platforms because i find the content displayed by the museum informative. Only select one option per platform

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Facebook					
Twitter					
WhatsApp					
Instagram					
Email					
Website					
Virtual museum					

4. I prefer the following types of content. Only select one option per platform

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Videos					
Pictures					
Written messages					
Written messages that include videos and pictures					

**The role of digital marketing communication at the Livingstone museum**

This section is about what your opinion is on whether you feel that your interactions with the museum on mentioned digital platforms have played a role in the museum better understanding you as visitor and knowing the different products and services they offer

**Guide: Kindly respond to all the statements by marking the options that best describes your view with an X. Only select one option per platform**

1. The messages posted by the museum about their products and services across the following platforms are consistent and allow me to know about the museums products and services.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Facebook					
Instagram					
Twitter					
WhatsApp					
Email					
Website					
Virtual museum					

2. I believe my conversations with the museum on the following platforms have made my interactions with them meaningful (“meaningful” refers to whether you feel the museum listens to you and values your perception of them). Only select one option per platform

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Facebook					
Twitter					

WhatsApp					
Instagram					
Email					
Website					
Virtual museum					

3. The manner in which the museum interacts with me on the following platforms allows them to meet my expectations in terms of them being (informative, interactive, innovative and simple to understand). Only select one option per platform

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Facebook					
Twitter					
WhatsApp					
Instagram					
Email					
Website					
Virtual museum					

**Opportunities that digital marketing communication can provide the museum**

This section is about your opinion on whether you feel the museums use of the following digital marketing communication platforms has assisted them in increasing your want to visit them, understanding your specific needs and wants and providing relevant information.

**Guide: Kindly respond to all the statements by marking the options that best describes your view with an X. Only select one option per platform**

1. Consistent communication from the museum on the following platforms has contributed to me often visiting the museum. Only select one option per platform

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Facebook					
Twitter					
WhatsApp					
Instagram					
Email					
Website					
Virtual museum					

2. The products and services marketed to me by the museum on the following platforms are specific to my wants and needs. Only select one option per platform

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Facebook					



Twitter					
WhatsApp					
Instagram					
Email					
Website					
Virtual museum					

3. The conversations i have with the museum on the following platforms provide adequate information about their products and services. (The term “conversations” refer to interactions between the respondent and the museum). Only select one option per platform

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Facebook					
Twitter					
WhatsApp					
Instagram					
Email					
Website					
Virtual museum					

ANY OTHER COMMENTS

.....  
.....

**THANK YOU**

## Appendix D: Ethical clearance certificate the complete ethics clearance form is not showing



### COLLEGE OF HUMAN SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

07 June 2022

Dear Ms Farai Fennie Muche

**Decision:**  
Ethics Approval from 07 June 2022  
to 07 June 2025

NHREC Registration # :  
Rec-240816-052  
CREC Reference # :  
65994922\_CREC\_CHS\_2022

**Researcher(s):** Name: Ms FF Muche  
Contact details: [65994922@mylife.unisa.ac.za](mailto:65994922@mylife.unisa.ac.za)  
**Supervisor(s):** Name: Dr. J Hanekom  
Contact details: [hanekj@unisa.ac.za](mailto:hanekj@unisa.ac.za)  
Name: Dr. C Swart  
Contact details: [CSwart@unisa.ac.za](mailto:CSwart@unisa.ac.za)

**Title: An exploratory study on the use of digital marketing communication at the Livingstone museum, Zambia.**

**Degree Purpose: MPhil Communication Science**

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the Unisa College of Human Science Ethics Committee. Ethics approval is granted for three years.

The **low risk application** was reviewed by College of Human Sciences Research Ethics Committee, in compliance with the Unisa Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment.

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:

1. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.
2. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study should be communicated in writing to the College Ethics Review Committee.
3. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.




4. Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the Committee in writing, accompanied by a progress report.
5. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, if applicable: Protection of Personal Information Act, no 4 of 2013; Children's act no 38 of 2005 and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003.
6. Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data require additional ethics clearance.
7. No fieldwork activities may continue after the expiry date (**07 June 2025**). Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.

*Note:*

*The reference number **65994922\_CREC\_CHS\_2022** should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.*

Yours sincerely,

Signature: 

Prof. KB Khan  
CHS Research Ethics Committee Chairperson  
Email: khankb@unisa.ac.za  
Tel: (012) 429 8210

Signature: PP 

Prof. K. Masemola  
Executive Dean: CHS  
E-mail: masemk@unisa.ac.za  
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