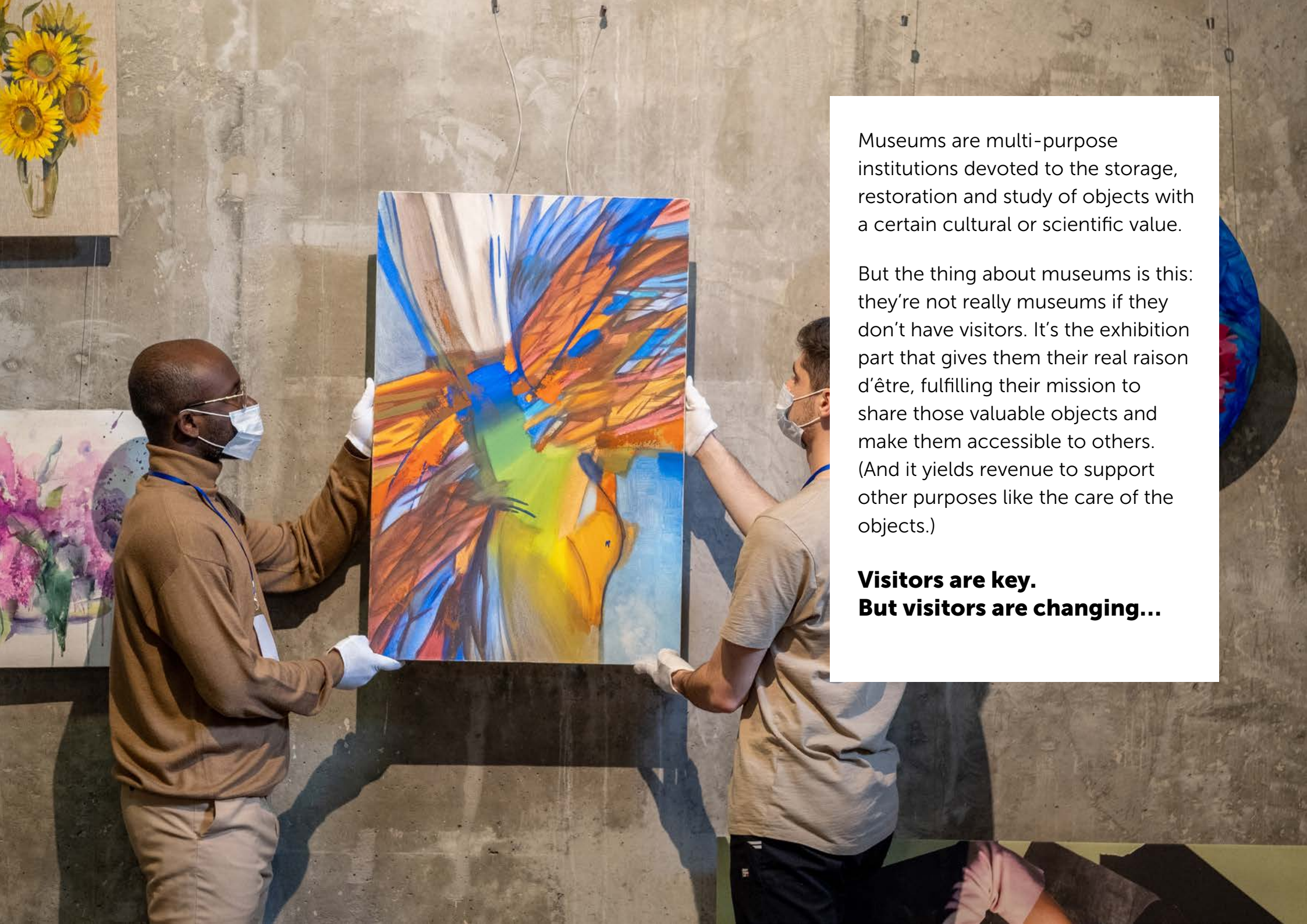


A grand, ornate museum hall with high ceilings and large windows. The walls and floor are illuminated with digital projections. On the wall, there is a large projection of a musical score with a treble clef. On the floor, there are projections of text, including "Salon de la rue de la Harpe" and "Rue de la Harpe". Several people are walking through the hall, looking at the projections. The lighting is warm and focused on the digital content.

The new **museum** experience

When culture and technology come together

BARCO



Museums are multi-purpose institutions devoted to the storage, restoration and study of objects with a certain cultural or scientific value.

But the thing about museums is this: they're not really museums if they don't have visitors. It's the exhibition part that gives them their real *raison d'être*, fulfilling their mission to share those valuable objects and make them accessible to others. (And it yields revenue to support other purposes like the care of the objects.)

**Visitors are key.
But visitors are changing...**



New generations ask for new approaches. Museums that thrive in the 21st century understand the needs of the younger generations, speak their language and sync with their interests.

Millennials and their younger counterparts are more tech-savvy than any other generation, so leveraging technology can be an extremely useful way to engage with these digital natives and to make museum visits more appealing.

If museums wish to keep up with the times and maintain their visitor rates, they'll have to embrace the opportunity of the digital transformation.

A transition empowered by technology.



Technology can act as a useful conversation starter and marketing tool encouraging people to experience the depths of what a museum has to offer.

Manuel Charr
MuseumNext

The full experience

The number one thing to realize about the 'museum visits 2.0', is that they're full experiences. It's a visitor journey that starts even before they enter your venue for the very first time...

Pre-visit

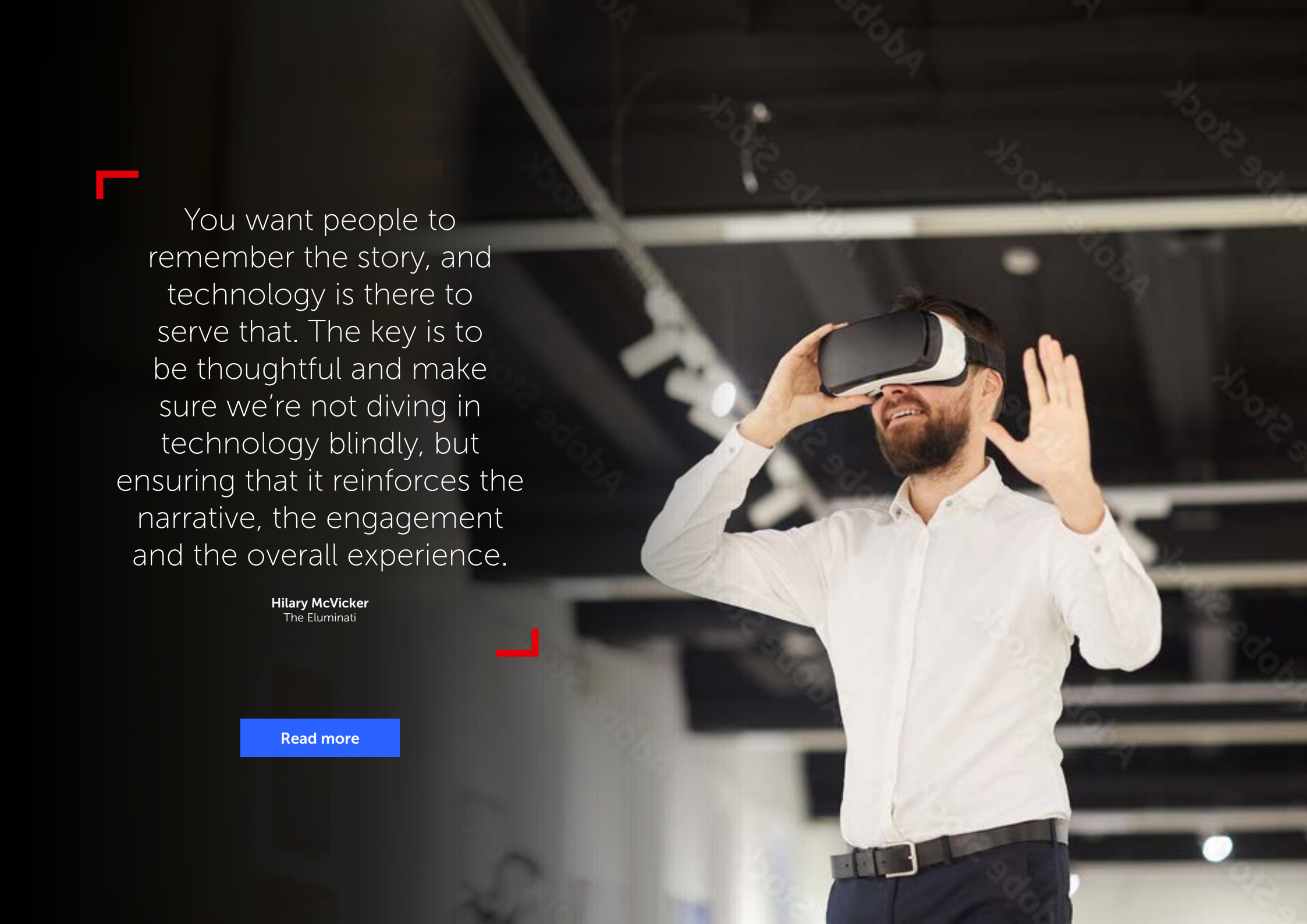
- Trigger interest and **raise awareness** through marketing & communication.
- Start the smooth experience at the **planning** stage.

During visit

- **Immerse visitors** in your story immediately. It's these details that will make your museum experience stand out!

Post-visit

- Create a memorable experience visitors find **worth sharing** afterwards.
- Follow up on your visitors with a **continued story**.



You want people to remember the story, and technology is there to serve that. The key is to be thoughtful and make sure we're not diving in technology blindly, but ensuring that it reinforces the narrative, the engagement and the overall experience.

Hilary McVicker
The Euminati

[Read more](#)

Trigger interest

Social media

In a sense museums are just like any other business. Including the importance of marketing and communication in the creation of brand awareness and development of new audiences. And in our digital era, social media plays a huge part in this stage.

With over four billion people using social media, it's a cheap and effective tool with an immense reach. That's why, in the last years, a growing number of museums have created accounts on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat or TikTok. By posting pictures, behind-the-scenes videos or even memes, they trigger the interest of younger visitors.





The Museum of English Rural Units 

@TheMERL

look at this absolute unit.



In April 2018, the Museum of Rural Life in Berkshire, UK shared a picture of a really big sheep with the line 'Look at this absolute unit'. The post went viral, it was liked by over 112,000 people and shared by over 25,000.

And more importantly, this also translated into a 47% increase in real world visitors to the Museum of Rural Life in 2018.

Did you know?

In 2021, a group of Viennese museums launched an account on OnlyFans, the social platform (in)famous for its uncensored 18+ content. The city of Vienna and its museums announced the OnlyFans campaign after their other social media accounts were banned for depicting nude artworks.

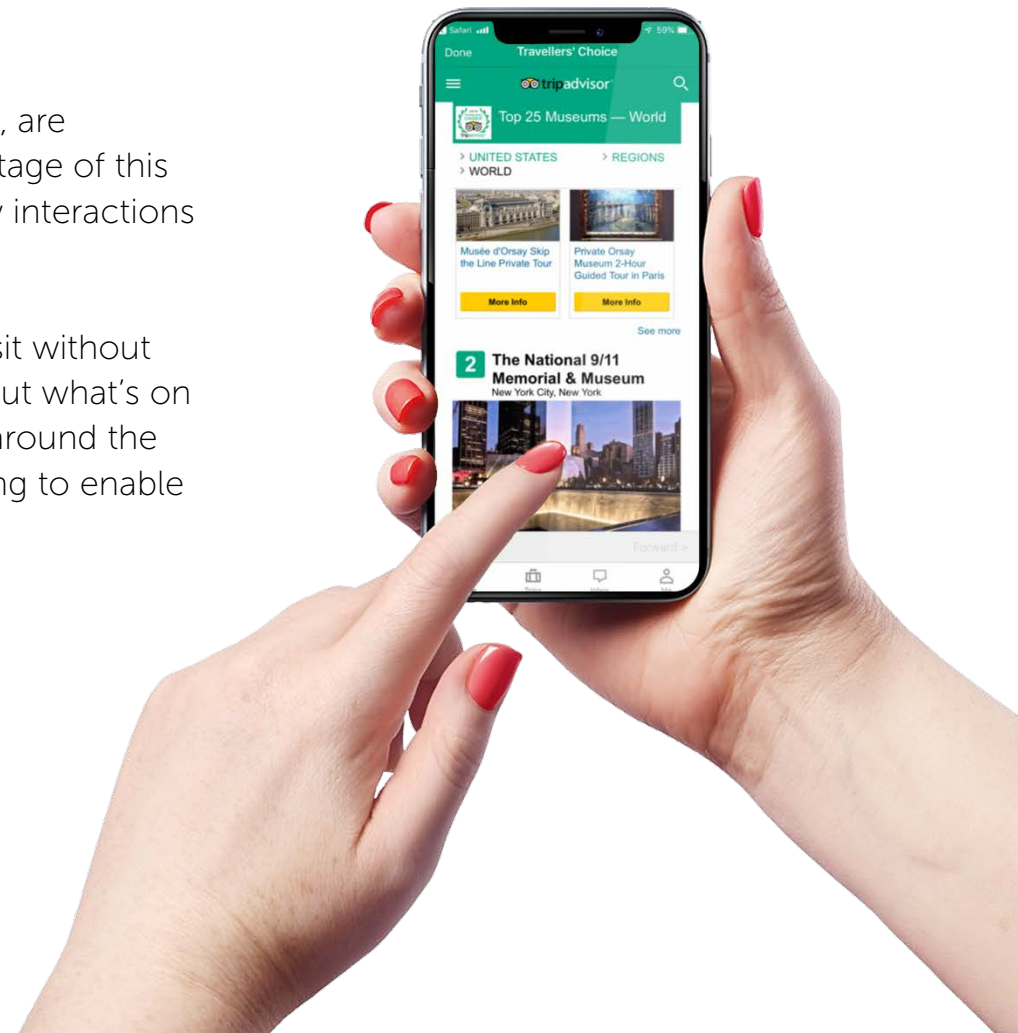


A smooth planning

Mobile apps

Among the new technologies that have emerged in the last 10 years, are mobile applications, or apps. Museums worldwide have taken advantage of this technology to improve communication with visitors and enable new interactions throughout the visitor journey.

In the pre-visit stage this means helping them plan and book their visit without having to leave their homes. Apps can feature more information about what's on display to help visitors organize their day and plan an optimal route around the museum including all their personal must-see exhibits. Just everything to enable a smooth visitor experience from the start.





There are a lot of opportunities in hybrid solutions; also for museums, exhibiting in the physical museum space and extending the journey on other locations and online. It's not the only way forward, but that's the beauty of today: there are so many ways forward.

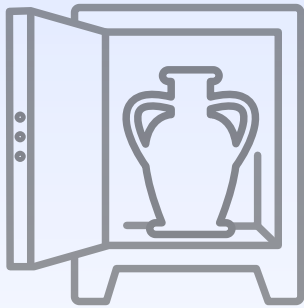
Arnold van de Water,
Factorr



[Read more](#)



Immerse visitors in stories



Virtual museums
unlock archived artefacts



An extra level of
interactivity through
mobile applications



The use of new media
to create digital art



A new immersive
experience using
technology

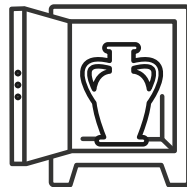
Unlock artifacts

Online museums

An increasing number of museums has started the digitization of their collections. Reasons for doing this include (international) accessibility and increased visibility.

But isn't it a risky thing to do, if what you want is more physical visitors in your museum? No. Not if you remember that the two are different experiences.

The online experience is very different to walking into the museum and seeing real-life artifacts. It's still a special thing to be in proximity of things and interact with something that is not online. That's not changing.



Also, people come to museums because they want an entertaining day out. It's the much-talked about transition in museums from education to entertainment. You don't have to give up on the education part entirely, but you do need to realize that the museum visit is a social experience.

The web is not at all good at replicating those intimate social experiences... But it could be a trigger for people to come see the real thing!



If you want to extend the visitor journey with an online experience, is just duplicating the physical structure of your museums really the best way to access that content? It probably isn't. One of the ways we try to use digital is to give an approximation of the curatorial experience. You can give every person a digital experience, but the question is how can you get close to that personalized experience?

Dave Patten,
The Science Museum London

[Read more](#)



Extra interactivity

Mobile applications

We already touched upon the introduction of websites and apps in the communication plan of museums to tease prospect visitors. But the potential of these tools reach much further.

Think, for instance, of virtual reality, augmented reality and/or iBeacon-enabled mobile applications. The use of apps can add an extra interactive layer during the museum visit. They add content about objects in the exhibition and humanize the stories of the collection. It shifts the way people look at objects, engaging them with the background story.



Digital art

Another technology trend in the cultural field is the fusion of technology and art. Digital art. Simply put, digital art is a term used to describe either an artistic work that uses digital technology as part of the creative process, or a work that's presented using digital technology. In both cases, it challenges the way we think about art and creativity. Bringing spectacular results and new experiences to museums which appeal to the younger generations.



Digital technology
as a means of
creation

Digital technology
as a means of
presentation

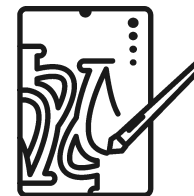


Space Dreams © Refik Anadol

The creation of digital art

What if you no longer need paint brushes to create a painting or chisels to sculpt figures? New technologies are changing the way art is created and shared, and open the gateways for new artistic concepts from artists that think beyond the conventional boundaries of the art world.

For a long time, digital art was not considered as 'real art'. Something new is always a bit more complex to grasp. And doubts are understandable. But if modern museums really wish to represent the art of their time, then digital art is a trend they can't ignore any longer.





Life of a neuron by Artehouse © Artehouse

AI in museums is still in its nascent stages but has received growing interest across the sector - from its use to improve services and workflows to creative experiments by artists.

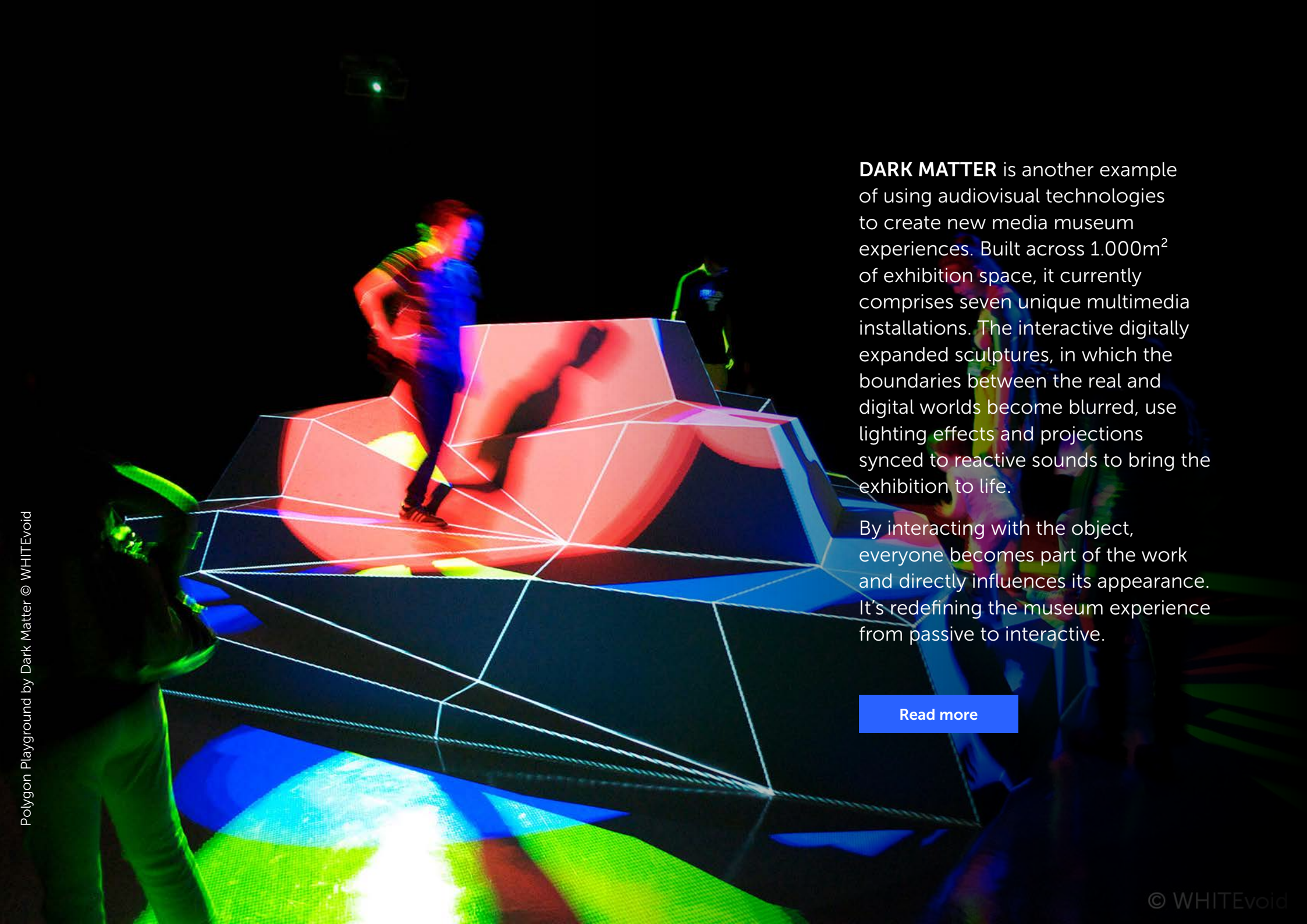
Multimedia artist Refik Anadol was one of the firsts to explore the potential of synergies between art and machine learning.

[Read more](#)

As an artist and a researcher, I'm really inspired about how we can make the invisible more visible. Translating data to reinterpret and narrate a world that we cannot see or touch.

Refik Anadol



A person is standing on a large, colorful, polygonal digital sculpture in a dark museum space. The sculpture is composed of various geometric shapes in shades of red, orange, yellow, and blue. The person is wearing a dark shirt and pants, and their body is partially obscured by the glowing digital elements. The background is dark, with some faint lights and other people visible in the distance. The overall atmosphere is futuristic and interactive.

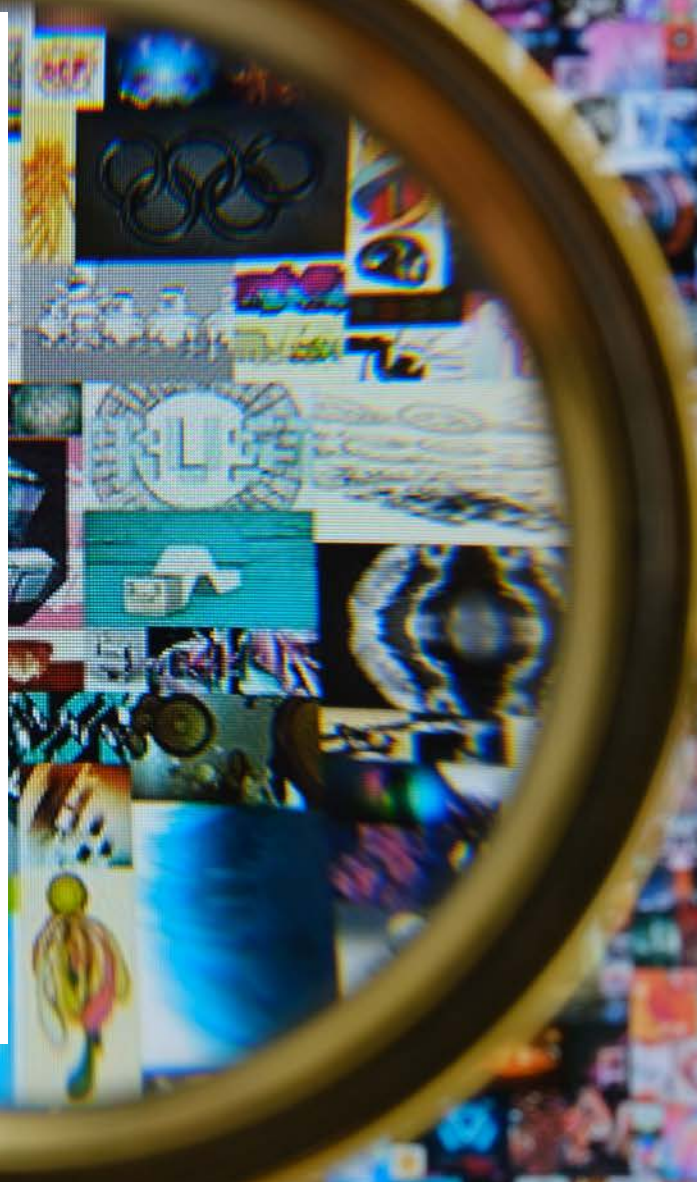
DARK MATTER is another example of using audiovisual technologies to create new media museum experiences. Built across 1.000m² of exhibition space, it currently comprises seven unique multimedia installations. The interactive digitally expanded sculptures, in which the boundaries between the real and digital worlds become blurred, use lighting effects and projections synced to reactive sounds to bring the exhibition to life.

By interacting with the object, everyone becomes part of the work and directly influences its appearance. It's redefining the museum experience from passive to interactive.

[Read more](#)

Did you know?

Early 2021, the renowned auction house Christie's auctioned off its first digital-only artwork by an artist named Beeple, for nearly 70 million dollars. Many agree that this unique sale introduced the next chapter in art history with a new appreciation for digital arts and led to the rise in popularity of NFTs (non-fungible tokens) to sell and collect digital art.



Digital technology as a means of presentation

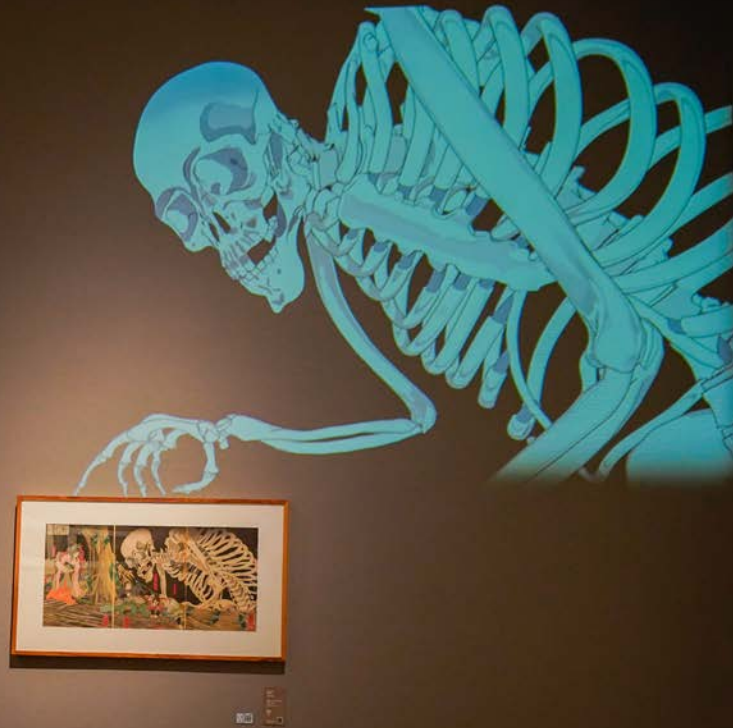
The second definition of digital arts focuses on the use of digital technologies as a way of presenting/visualizing art. The most straightforward example being displays and (interactive) videowalls. But it also includes the use of digital projectors, holography, VR technology, etc.

It goes from adding small layers to the existing works or the complete transformation from traditional artworks to digital artworks. The iconic pieces are first digitized and then brought back to life using one of the above-mentioned visualization technologies.

Such digital exhibits are gaining popularity in museums and art institutions. The trend increases the world-wide accessibility of those iconic works, and it's a way of keeping up with this digital age and delivering new experiences to a more tech-savvy audience.



From layers... to full-blown digital artworks



The skeleton of Utagawa Kuniyoshi's masterpiece "Soma's Negori" coming to life outside the painting's frame.



© Infinity des Lumières

Infinity des Lumières, Dubai



CULTURESPACES was one of the forerunners to pick up on the trend of artainment - technology-enabled art experiences that allow you to do more than just watch the paintings; you can walk through the landscapes, breathe the atmosphere and really interact with the works.

The group opened its Paris digital art center in 2018. In less than a year more than 1.2 million visitors flocked to the museum, and the immersive factory-turned-art space even starred in the Netflix hit show *Emily in Paris*!

Its popularity has allowed Culturespaces to expand to South-Korea, Dubai and soon also New York with new immersive art experiences. And there are more similar digital exhibition projects popping up around the world.

[Read more](#)

What works for museums, also works for cities to attract tourists!

Explore new digital destinations by using your city landmarks such as monuments, bridges, chimney stacks, dams, buildings and arenas as storytelling mediums...

For more about the growth of urban projection mappings and how it can help increase your reach, check our [guide](#).



The façade of the iconic Castel dell'Ovo in Naples is animated with a series of projected artistic works created by digital artist [Franz Cerami](#) as a wonderful homage to the values and traditions of Naples.

Large-scale multimedia architectural projection mapping staged in [Changfeng Square](#) illuminated several landmark buildings such as the Shanxi Grand Theatre, the Taiyuan Science and Technology Museum and the Taiyuan Art Museum.

A continued story

Digital communication

The museum experience starts before your visitors enter your venue AND it should also continue after they leave again!

Give access to exclusive information about their favorite artifacts of the collection. Send them personalized suggestions about upcoming exhibitions. Or help them explore other must-sees.

Videos, podcasts, e-mails, social media... Today's digital communications tools are there for you to use. Allowing you to continue the engagement, maintain a positive sentiment and even build a community of recurring visitors.



Did you know?

Over the last fifteen years, an increasing number of museums has experimented with podcasts as a medium to engage with their audiences. Some award-winning examples include:

- ***Raw Material: The Beholder's Share*** by the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art
- ***Van Gogh Belicht: de brieven*** by the Van Gogh Museum Amsterdam
- ***A History of the World in 100 Objects*** by the British Museum and BBC Radio 4



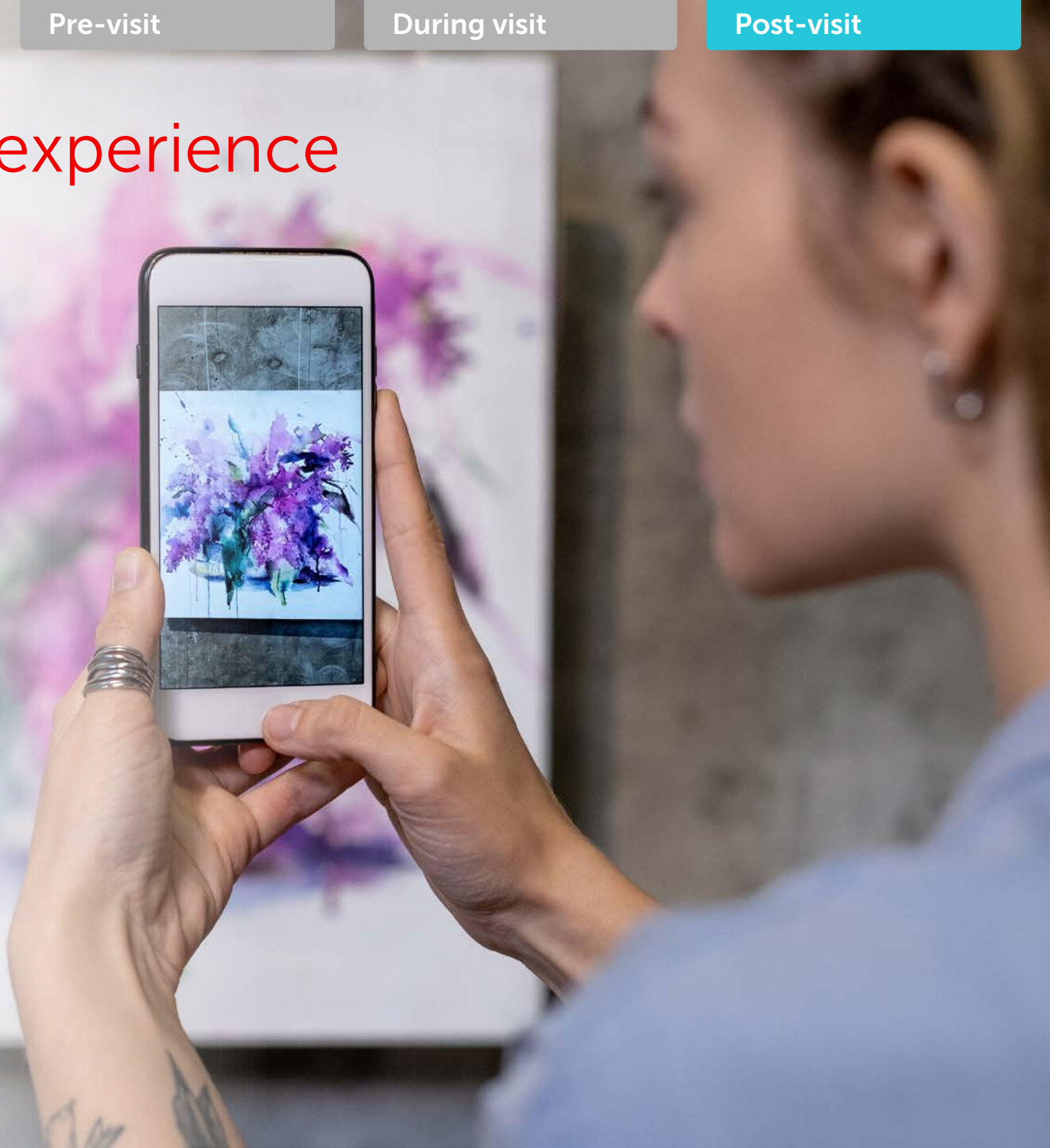
A memorable experience worth sharing

Photography

Here's a tricky question to end our e-book about technologies:

Should you allow phones in your museum?

The answer depends on who you're asking, but let's make this clear: when people look at their phones, it doesn't necessarily mean they're not interested in the collection. On the contrary, they might as well be looking up additional info or sending a picture to their friends telling what an amazing experience they're having...



With people from all over the world active on Facebook and/or Twitter sharing their opinions; cell phones and social media are a way of reaching out to new audiences. It's like word-of-mouth advertising, but with one simple click you can potentially reach more than hundreds of other social media users.

**Social promotion
to reach potential
audiences**

**Visitors share
their experience
online with friends,
family...**

**Visitors enjoy the
experience and take
pictures**

Summary

Pre-visit

- Don't underestimate the importance of brand awareness. Technology can play a huge role in this stage especially when it comes to attracting younger generations.
- Useful tools: *social media, museum apps, virtual museums*

During visit

- Stand out with something new, fun, interactive, entertaining... Technology can serve your story in many ways. Choose minimal visual layers or go for a complete immersive digital experience.
- Useful tools: *visualization technologies, VR, AR...*

Post-visit

- Keep the momentum going. You can use technology to continue your story online and create a community. In the end, this fanbase can even potentially bring in new visitors.
- Useful tools: *podcasts, newsletters, digital communication, social media*

Conclusion

The future of museums is infused with technological innovation. So it's time to embrace the change, be inspired by the creativity of others, take your time to explore the possibilities that are out there in the big wide world, and ultimately get your story told in a unique and engaging way.

If you only ever looked at museums, you'll only get what museums already do. I don't just want a museum voice in the room, that's not taking us to an interesting place, that takes us to somewhere I already know and understand.

Dave Patten

Want to know what Barco's technology can do for your museum project?
Let's sit together to discuss your needs.





ENABLING BRIGHT OUTCOMES

BARCO