DELIVERABLE 3.1.4

Guidelines for the storytelling for VM contents

Work Package	3
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Aim of the document

This paper defines common guidelines for the storytelling of contents in REMEMBER project. They will be, in particular, implemented with topics concerning the "**Adriatic Port Cultural Network" (APCN) and the 8 Virtual Museums (VMs).**

There are many city ports, there are many bordering countries too, but in the Adriatic Sea we have a unique common cultural heritage.

This difference is not set only by the color of the water or the style of our cathedrals: it is stated by our intangible heritage, deep rooted in people lives, souls, behavior.

Adriatic Port Cultural Network is a new entity for both the Economic and Cultural domains. Probably, it's the first city port partnership presenting itself as 'cultural institution' and in a network framework.

"Why" this decision has been taken, why the network must be considered a milestone in the cooperation, are even more important factors of "what" the APCN will make in the short period. **The common meaning of VMs will be framed only if a common narrative will be established**.

It's important to underline that now there are **8 independent city port institutions operating under a common strategy**. They have several stories that converge in a collective narration.

In this regard, the proposed methodology should explain how ports could tell their local common stories in order to create immersive cultural experiences and giving all the target groups an active role in the port storytelling.

REMEMBER will describe **"WHY"** our territories are unique in order to move people to investigate on **"WHAT"** it offers. REMEMBER VM wants to **diversify the flows** and to **widen the range of the tourist's visit**, so it is necessary to show off the reasons with "whys".

Project partners have to **overcome the self-reference: we are not working for a VM "for" users, but "with" users.**

Furthermore, it should be pointed out that the shared target is the creation of a new public and the development of **cultural tourism**.

Therefore the narration must intercept the biographical history of the audience to whom it is addressed, asking questions about people, about the values that guide their choices, their attitude towards other territories and which relations link them to a destination.

Technologies do not arise to enhance art and cultural assets but to play, measure, orient, transmit, reproduce, memorize, seduce, astonish. The technologies must be more and more intrinsically bidirectional.

Setting the scene: the context

Storytelling has always been the practice for transferring knowledge, identity and tradition. With stories, the actions of a few, as well as the mistakes of many, have become a common intangible heritage.

The great poems and the religious texts do not just tell heroic deeds but create a community that behaves taking the heroes as an example. The story itself creates the community. The more powerful it is, the more it creates strong bonds over time.

It is an ancient practice, strictly connected to port and sailing cultures. It has central role in the community building and has accompanied the Adriatic sailors on their long sea journeys. Stories bring order to disorder and give meaning to reality. With stories, the sea did not end in permanence on the ground, rather it became even more present as the scenography on which stand out stories of men, adventures, battles, traffic, gods, different landscapes.

In this framework, the APCN started up in REMEMBER project is a long term challenge that needs a dynamic narration about two coastal environments in continuous transformation.

The project deals with **Virtual Museums**. Some of them will be developed in physical spaces, some other will exist only on line or in temporary traveling exhibitions.

The raise of digital storytelling

If we consider traditional physical Museums, they realized the power of storytelling during the second half of the 20th century. Before, they were considered like temples: self referenced buildings where competent visitors could only admire collections, develop inner thoughts and remain silent.

The museums were designed for trained and educated visitors. The immersive and "exciting" story was not necessary. Today, **museums need to be for everyone**. Many visitors are extraneous to the collection themes; they are there by chance or because it is fashionable.

Sometimes they are even too young or culturally distant to keep the meaning of the exhibitions.

The use of storytelling techniques illustrates, accompanies and excites, fixing the concepts in them, making new topics comparable with their previous experience and knowledge.

Nowadays museums find themselves competing with the wide offer of cultural products coming not only from the cultural sector, but also from the entertainment industry.

That's because the general public is story-addicted. Stories are continuously broadcasted through platform as Netflix or Youtube, tv Channels, Instagram or Facebooks.

Museums are changing. To be part of this process proactive museums choose to differentiate and make their offers more appealing and attractive to a wider variety of audiences. This shift in social roles of museums encourage new styles of communication and expression, new goal and mission, all to became places of human transformation.

The most recent evolution allow a wide public (that includes tourist, citizens, businesses) to **create their own stories about themselves, with us, about our relations**. Digital technologies allow everybody to post, take picture, interact, in a continuous stream of experiences, jokes, memes, crowdsourcing.

Now Museums can act as first among equals and create a **bi-directional communication**, providing the visitor the opportunity to actively participate in the story. They became place for Experiences.

Museums can dialogue with the visitor, which can share her/his experiences and a personal point of views. To this end, digital and AR/VR technological enable the use of immersive tools to deliver stories and knowledge through experiences.

In these ways, they can **transform the Visitor into an Ambassador of the VM and the city port**. He/her will keep the relationship with the territories alive and is encouraged to visit the other port- cities involved in the project and all the Adriatic basin. This idea needs to be developed considering visitors also as **creators** of contents, **tester** in giving us rating and feedbacks, **partner** when we recognize how their personal stories interact with our facilities giving more meanings to tangible and intangible heritage.

Rather than simply constituting an additional layer to exhibitions and heritage, the enhancement of contents through interactive exhibits adds value to the overall user experience, especially if combined with personalization to each user's interests.

Interactive storytelling can bridge digital and physical information, augmenting the 'real world' with contents, tips, games, videos. It creates link among our city port contents and offering experiences which corresponds to the user's actions in the physical space.

Storytelling is the bridge associating **tangible and intangible heritage, giving a common meaning to places, collections, facts.** Since centuries, this purpose had been fulfilled by painting, statues and oral story. Recently we got also images, video and audios. Now, digital 2D and 3D reconstructions, immersive photos and videos, interactive technologies, hyperlinks, holograms, support a much more powerful narration.

Some Basic Principles

It is essential to align each partner to some basic principles in order to focus the local narratives around common inspirations and core stories.

Considering the **Seven principle of Museum Storytelling** (M. and. R DeBlasio), we can keep them from 1985 into the new digital approach. Here they are:

1. An effective museum story balance **entertainment and factual soundness**
2. An effective museum story is **compact**
3. An effective museum story is **concrete**, employing highly visual language
4. An effective museum story is **personally appealing**
5. An effective museum story not only describe artifact but tell **why and how** some of them are made
6. An effective museum story **dislodges mistaken stereotypies**
7. An effective museum story invites **cross-cultural comparison**

Today all these principles are boosted by the digital features. Everything could be more customized, bidirectional, visual, entertaining.

Thanks to this approach, storytelling must develop:

a. **Empathy**: to include the life stories of our user/visitor and determines new paths in his imagination. He/She becomes part of the city port story, has the questions, problems, fears, curiosity and dreams that can find and evolution inside our context.

b. **Multiplicity**: Stories are cross and trans-medial, operates on multiple communication channels, in-site and on-line. Web platforms and social media are our impact multipliers.

c. **Building Universes**: Stories create worlds; they fix rules and pacts with the public. The world of City ports is one of the most imaginative ever. Stories also more effective when they build analogies to people's everyday life.

d. **Seriality**: Our stories today will open, close and reopen paths and times. On different media. We will have a palimpsest of stories, coordinated, rich of themes and open to User Generated Contents.

e. **Subjectivity**: Good Storytelling it is increasingly subjective. A strong character generates identification.

f. **Activation**: Do not be shy in developing strong stories with conflicts and problems: they are the most interesting. When stories touch people, they are driven to interact, to empathize, to take action in the direction we want. You can also use direct questions, games, challenges, ... All this generates new audience development, audience engagement. More people identification lead to more visitors turned in ambassadors

Transversally, we must include **gamification** processes in storytelling .

Gamification is the application of game-design elements and game principles in non-game contexts. It can also be defined as a set of activities and processes to solve problems by using or applying the characteristics of game elements.

With it Museums face the problem of decreasing number of visitors. One way to solve this problem is to attract new target groups such as young people. Therefore, some museums

started to develop online museums where they digitally present their exhibition artifacts to a larger audience. One way to reach this goal are virtual environments. Gamification is one approach that could solve both problems.

Gamification is one approach to increase the entertainment and thus the motivation factor of users. One central goal of gamification is the **improvement of users' engagement**. Thus, gamified applications try to motivate the user by game design elements.

The term game needs to be specified: In everyday language, the terms play and game are used interchangeably; in fact, their meaning differs. A play is a more free form with improvisational aspects, whereas a game **"is structured by rules and competitive strife towards a goal"**. Therefore, games have a desired outcome. In our VM it could be the composition of a puzzle image, a treasure hunting that leads in different virtual locations, …

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The point of view

Tell stories from different point of views. We should be not afraid to reveal the controversial side of things or discuss gray areas in history. VMs present facts and events throughout the last hundred years that sometimes might be uncomfortable to discuss, but are fascinating to learn about. Sharing stories about conflicts, revenges, pacifications reveals the humanity of the museum and puts it in an responsible context.

Don't forget: **visitors are the main characters** of most the effective stories. *In example, in our context, they could takes the role of an ancient shipbuilder, a fisherman or a broker in a virtual reality environment. He could pilot a boat inside a port or simulate the number of container that could be loaded on a ship*

Sometimes VMs could also decide to implement **virtual storytellers**. They could be human-like avatars or 'humanized' tools or object. They play the role of the Sage, they introduce the visitors to a narrative universe, giving him information, tips, tricks. In this way, visitors will be emphatic with the virtual narrator that is speaking to them is real and that he/she is in the same room with them.

All Publishers

For all these reasons, REMEMBER Project **Partners should consider themselves as Publishers**. VMs are narrative universes that include the project application, plus all the city port branding tools like social media, web sites, opinion on Tripadvisor or other rating platforms.

VM narratives does not operate to 'convince' or 'sell' but to **involve**, **engage and educate,** include people's lives and create a different conception of a special place, the Adriatic Sea and their cities. In this way VM visitors will be transformed in "cultural citizens of the Adriatic Sea" wherever they are actually resident.

The REMEMBER project Partners should strive not only to inform but also to **stimulate curiosity** by activating lateral thinking and connections and to activate the people's desire to know more,

to visit more, to ask for more emotions and experiences. It should create a conception of the place linked to identity values, and activate the urge to interact, **to be there**.

City Ports in the framework of the Adriatic Macro Region must be shown as a powerful common richness. **In the past as in the present, they express the relationship between land and sea as a key factor in the creation of wellness, culture and the development of communities.**

The REMEMBER VM common platform supports all the process of virtualization of dynamic relations concerning this shared heritage. The common platform is a live, dynamic and relational common base set up for evolving processes.

The common narrative

In this framework, the **scope of data collection is the preservation of tangible and intangible cultural heritage** (Deliverable 3.1.1) of the involved ports by the realization of a cloud-based tool implemented by the 8 ports sites.

The particular **heritage** - related to the Adriatic City Ports – could be articulated in 3 thematic areas:

1. Heritage as a specific **element of the Identity** of each local community

2. Heritage as a **resource to be protected and valorised** in order to generate new social and economic opportunities (such as new jobs, cultural values, etc.)

3. **Tangible heritage to be preserved from** potential deterioration caused by the time, pollution, mass tourism, etc.

The introductory and common section should help to describe how the relationship with the sea and with the maritime system influences on the cultural, social and economic development of the eight ports involved in the project and their relative territories.

This narrative should be developed through plots set today as in the past: the involved ports share a common background and a sense of belonging resulting from the intense commercial and social relations between the two Adriatic shores. Today, this maritime cultural heritage is facing several challenges that are endangering its integrity and its very existence.

The common part aims at enhancing and exploring the cultural values and the social and economic relations that linked the Adriatic Italian and Croatian ports and their surrounding territories, starting from the role of „**cultural hubs**" traditionally played by the ports.

We must increase knowledge and awareness on the relations that forged the cultural identity of the involved territories, through activities aimed at safeguarding, systemizing and valorising the common cultural heritage.

Above all, We must highlight and strengthen the **mutual understanding** between ports, cities and surrounding territories contributing to generate of added value to the social, cultural and economic aspects.

The cloud-based platform will allow the accessibility to the common cultural contents also from remote locations and by virtual tourists, contributing to enhance the visibility of the cultural destinations.

The common historical introduction will use a strongly visual narrative, considered the best way to communicate the common identity to the ordinary visitors. Each VM should be linked to the common platform and with other's virtual museums realized in the project, so to improve accessibility to digitalized contents of other involved ports.

REMEMBER project partners are aware that the nature and the value of the tangible and intangible items they choose to present must be understandable as evidence of the Adriatic Maritime culture related to the single city-port.

VM must highlight the role of the ports as gateways for social and economic development in the past centuries, but also their current importance, their dynamism and their ongoing adjustments to the changing global economy.

The port-maritime intangible cultural heritage needs to be continuously **recreated** by the community as to recover and valorise the relation between ports and cities, **by linking the present with the past**.

This parallel valorisation aims at demonstrating that the past is the origin of today's port-cities identity and richness in terms of culture, works, productions, investments and that the port system is still operating as an engine for the local community.

Each partner should try to make these sorts of comparison in its own storytelling.

Aspects to Focus

To set the proper storytelling strategy we should focus the:

a. APCN and city ports institutional goals to reach through VMs, *to be collected from PPs*

b. *characteristics of the different target audiences, to be fixed with PPs*

c. the point of view of the stories to be broadcasted,

d. the core stories and the following palimpsest,

e. the purpose of the common content section of VM, and related contents

f. the structure of the local content sections of VM, and related contents.

Branding Adriatic Port Cultural Network is a first goal of the project. Brand identity set differenced and convey attention from new visitors, investors, media, influencer and make citizen and stakeholders feel proudly at home.

The branding process includes:

a. create a logo,

b. a payoff, as a memorable phrase that will sum up the tone and premise of APCN

c. common typography, colors, …

d. defining core messages, a palimpsest to complement and reinforce the existing reputation of a brand.

e. choice of broadcasting channel (web portal, apps, social media, events,…) in relations to the target audiences

Payoff: It must be a simple sentence. To give many meanings.

*In example : **Adriatic Ports Cultural Network: Mirrored Horizons**.*

It evokes: love and conflicts, a common project, continuous relations, common interests, connected lands and a single sea, eating together, watching each other to grow together, and so on…

Core stories

City ports have many stories to tell. Each story is like a not where is preserved the knowledge in a wide network of relations. By their nature, they regard the whole human being and they are virtually endless.

In order to give reference points to our VM and audiences, **we must fix a narrative framework that expresses the essence of city ports in Adriatic Sea**.

These 'essence' is the result of a mix of **core stories**. They represent the main narrative paths that could be considered common to cities, habitants and visitors. They are related to the project partners and can be updated regularly by institutions and people.

Considering **city ports as places of human experiences**, we can represent most of the aspects with a story taxonomy where actions and experiences ae the ways to represent concepts about our tangible and intangible heritage:

1. **TRADITIONS & CULTURE – Intangible heritage,**

    1.1 competences, job profiles,

    1.2 Visual art

    1.3 Crafting, tools,

    1.4 literature, proverbs, languages,

    1.5 religions, gods, sea mythology, fairy tales

    1.6 sustainable behaviors / greening

    1.7 food and recipes.

2. **SOCIO-ECONOMIC RELATIONS – Intangible heritage**

    2.1 inland /City port relations,

    2.2 import/export of goods, traffics

    2.3 routes, maps

    2.4 immigration/emigration of people,

    2.6 Sailing activities, cruises,

    2.7 Tourism

    2.8 Sailing techniques, winds, on board tools and technologies,

    2.9 Fishing,

3. **PHYSICAL HERITAGE (ARTCRAFT, BUILDINGS, ETC) – tangible heritage.**

    3.1 Port authorities headquarter and premises

    3.2 architecture,

3.3 lighthouses,

3.4 dams,

3.5 ship design, shipbuilding, ship maintenance,

3.7 relicts;

3.8 sustainable power and environmental solutions,

3.9 other monuments

The three main categories allow each partner to vertically decline their contents, with the aim of valorising and strengthening **the link between the cities and their communities**, paying specific attention to creation of visitor's **experiences** and **curiosity.**

Than each partner can vertically organize its contents, to build a palimpsest, to easily interact with users. They allow also horizontal connection between different VMs.

The Virtual Visit

Dealing with VM we should consider the phenomenon of people behaving and feeling as if they "are there" in the virtual reconstructed world created by digital displays. It is a powerful sensation, which is unique, still new and unexpected for many visitors.

As specified in the deliverable 3.1.1, each REMEMBER Virtual Museum should have:

- **an introductory and common section.** According with the technical specification of the local VM, the common platform will contain edited contents that transmit to the visitor the whole common cultural background of the APCN. After the overview of what the city ports will realize and the technologies they will use, this common part will be available in different format and media.

- **a local section,** conceived as a net of clouds developed by each partner. The 8 Virtual Museums – Local sections should contribute to improve the accessibility to the 8 cultural heritage ports sites (Ancona, Ravenna, Trieste, Venice, Rijeka, Dubrovnik, Zadar, Split). Moreover, each of the 8 VM could be linked to contents of other VMs to create logical link and more rich interpretations with of other involved ports. Each partner should upload its own contents.

The introductory/common section

The introductory/common section should help to describe the positive influence that the relationship with the sea has had in the past on the cultural, social and economic development of the eight ports involved in the project;

The common introduction should provide a **«fil rouge»** - based on the Adriatic "strong" identity - connecting the different storytelling made by the eight city-ports involved.

Starting from the common platform, the eight virtual museums should foster the access of the eight cultural heritage ports sites (Ancona, Ravenna, Trieste, Venice, Rijeka, Dubrovnik, Zadar, Split).

The content structure the REMEMBER Common section, hosted by a shared platform provided by an website.

The basic common contents will be:

a. **Mirrored Horizons**: section to describe the uniqueness of the Adriatic tangible and intangible cultural heritage; why it is important in history and present time; why it must be know; how it fulfil people's curiosity and needs

b. **Presentation of REMEMBER project and the APCN**: reasons, goals, future strategies: this sections will welcome the visitors, linking the network goals to the Adriatic heritage, inspiring people to deep in the navigation. It could be more static or dynamic according to the PPs desire;

c. A short **introduction to the 8 city ports**: some appealing descriptions of the beautiful city ports from a visitors point of view;

d. **Selected contents about the 3 different main categories**, from all the partners: it will be perfect to collect 3 contents for each topic (total 9 for each partner that will become 72 in total)

e. **Introductions and links to the 8 VMs**: a short and appealing description of the local VMs that invites people to go into the local interfaces.

f. Presentation of **some routes including city ports**: a description of 2-3 touristic routes that represent the 'spirit' of the city ports, even using links at the previous described contents. They can involve some or all the ports. They must connect place in al logical framework;

Contents will be **georeferenced** in order to allow a better understanding of the contenxt and to facilitate the approach.

Each partner will actively contribute to this part following a common structure and methodology that will be explained at the following paragraph.

One reached REMEMBER outcome is the birth of APCN and the setting up of its future goals. **This fact pushes up the need to be represented as a whole, far beyond the initial communication targets of the project**.

PPs desire a bigger and more representative common part than it was planned in the project.

This common part could be more or less dynamic, updated and rich of contents according by the future investment in time, people and budget.

The eight local sections

The eight VM section should make understandable the nature and the value of those categories which form the cultural, social and economic heritage of the eight ports.

Virtual experiences and digital contents provided by the local VM should show the role of the city ports as gateways for social and economic development in centuries, underlining their current importance, their dynamism and their ongoing adjustments to the changing world.

The tangible elements of the maritime history (eventually) presented by the local VM have to be easily recognized by the visitors as a sign of the Adriatic Maritime culture related to the single city-port.

Common Part Editing Format

In order to have a **common content framework**, here are some basic format rules for the Common part contributions.

All the general part will follow ordinary web writing techniques paying attention to the user engagement.

The contents provided **by each partner** will be made consistent by a **light editing process** but is important that they already follow guidelines.

a) City port presentation:

- 4 high quality photos

- a 2000 (max) characters text in local language and English

- a short (max 3 minutes) video *(if available)*

b) VM presentation:

- 2 high quality photos

- a 2000 (max) characters text in local language and English

– links to web sites, App download and any other available and related content,

- a short (max 3 minutes) video *(if available)*

c) Specific local contents:

- 3 (audio/video/photo/ 3D/ …) contents per each of the 3 main topics (Tradition&Culture, Socio-economical Relations, Physical Heritage). These contents get a better meaning if they related with other port cities. Each content must be described by an abstract of 1000 character (max), and according all the platform rules

Editing Style

Text editing and content development should be done by experts such as researchers, copywriters and translators.

In the elaboration of the texts it is necessary to consider: **different needs** related to the different target audiences; **level of detail** necessary to communicate the desired contents according to the aims pursued; **different ways of fruition** of the texts.

Here are some **general guidelines** to follow so that educational and informative texts are easy to read and to understand:

a. **elaborate short texts** and **divide them into paragraphs** (4-5 lines each);
b. give **information in a logical order**, distinguishing between the basic and derived information;
c. **express one main concept per sentence**;
d. **use a simple, non-specialist language**, defining the technical terms when it is necessary to use them;
e. avoid the overload of information and **point out concepts**;
f. **avoid the academic, formal and impersonal style** of writing, preferring a conversational style;
g. preferably **use the active form of verbs** and express the subject at the beginning of the sentence;
h. **avoid subordinate sentences**, syntactically complex constructions, unnecessary adverbs;
i. use underlining and **highlight key words** with bold.

Regarding the architecture of information, it is important to remember that contents could have **different levels of detail** and **different codes of expression,** depending on the audience and the aims pursued.

For didactic and educational purposes, it is useful to present the contents in a hierarchical form, in which the fundamental notions can be communicated through a first level that is more comprehensible and immediate, while further additional information and collateral issues can be included in subsequent levels of discussion.

If the target audience is the foreign tourist, **translations** of texts should always be provided. Italian/English and Croatian/English are the language pairs included in the project. Other language translation can be provided by the VM if required.

For the vistors **with sensory disabilities**, methods of **autonomous use** of the contents should be preferred.

For **blind people and visually impaired**, knowledge of things involves intact perception channels: touch and hearing. Therefore, a selection of **written texts** must be transposed into **Braille** (if part of a physical set up) and/or proposed in an extended **audio version**.

It is also important not to forget aspects that may facilitate readability:

- **use sans-serif fonts** (arial, elvetica bold, sans serif or verdana);
- **use a double or triple line spacing** and adequate spacing;
- **place the text on a single column**;
- **align the text only on the left** (no justification);
- **allow the characters to be zoomed in**;
- **the background must be uniform and contrasting** (dark text on a light background, or vice versa).

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