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Museum pricing in contemporary museums: A hybrid model

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Abstract

What are the museum pricing strategies in contemporary western museums? A large qualitative study on museum pricing decisions was conducted between 2001 and 2009, based on thirty case studies in Canada, United Kingdom, Italy, Spain, France Australia. Results show that the different strategic motivations of price decisions form a hybrid model. The hybrid model varies according to unequal organisational learning of the strategic role of pricing in the international museum community. A discussion about these results enables us to understand how this hybrid pricing model in contemporary museums denotes their hybrid transitional identity.

Key Words

Museums, Pricing strategies, Organizational learning, Politics, Marketing

Introduction

Pricing has become an essential component of marketing strategy over the last thirty years. At the same time, museums have been subjected to accelerated change, due to a refocusing of government policy; a well-educated community with higher expectations of museums; and a more diverse community which desires a better reflection of contemporary issues in museums. Museums have turned from institutions that collect, preserve and exhibit objects to ones subject to market dynamics. In line with these changes, contemporary museums have reappraised their function and purpose, causing pricing to move from a peripheral issue to one of central importance, which tells a story about the museum and its positioning better than any other marketing strategy. The goals of this paper are to describe and analyse museum pricing strategies in contemporary museums, thereby showing how these pricing strategies mark the museums' identity shift. The research question that flows from these goals has been simply formulated: what are the museum pricing strategies in the contemporary museums?

Extensive qualitative research on museum pricing decisions was conducted between 2001 and 2009, based on thirty case studies in Canada, United Kingdom, Italy, Spain, France and Australia. The results show how the different strategic motivations of price decisions form a hybrid model. The hybrid model varies according to the unequal organisational learning of the strategic role of pricing among the international museum community. A discussion about these results enables us to

understand how this hybrid pricing model in contemporary museum denotes their hybrid transitional identity.

Research framework: understanding the growing role of pricing in museums

The growing role of pricing observed in western contemporary museums could be interpreted as a result of their identity shift over the last thirty years. It is from this organisational behaviour perspective that an international multi-case study comparison of museum pricing strategies was conducted.

A result of their identity shift

Museums now have diverse missions which require them to fulfil a public mandate as well as be accountable to a range of stakeholders, such as governments, boards of trustees, the public and their benefactors. Due to this complex identity, museums mix a traditional functional role with a new purposive role (Weil, 1990). The functional role relates to activities performed in the museum and is object-based: to collect, preserve and display objects. More recently, the purposive role relates to the intent, vision or mission of the museum where the focus is on leadership and visitor services: to serve society and its development by means of study, education and enjoyment (Besterman, 1998). These definitions are illustrated in table 1.

Table 1 - Shift in museum focus : object-based to people-based

Functional	museums acquire, conserve, communicate, and exhibit object-based art for study and education
Purposive	museums are for people to enjoy and to learn from people-based collections which are held in trust for society

As a consequence of these changes, pricing has taken on a wider remit in museums. Pricing can include entrance fees which have multiplied at museums; the admission fees decision, managed as a price and becoming more and more sophisticated. Moreover, entrance prices have become, among other prices, a strategic variable as defined in the pricing literature (Nagle & Holden, 1995), i.e a variable which is considered now to serve museum strategic objectives: development, survival, access, ... (Gombault, 2002). Price variables have been confirmed as privileged fundraising and social tools in the changing museum context (Rentschler & *al.* 2004, 2007).

As museums now use a variety of pricing strategies including even permanent free admission as a "price", the "pragmatic ideology" as defined by Besterman and Bott (1982, 118) seems dominant. Indeed, the apparent contradiction between fulfilling the museum's cultural and social missions and the necessity of ensuring museum development has faded. But in spite of this learning, original access ideology still shapes pricing decisions and practises, as illustrated in the recent European debates about free admission in the UK, Sweden, the Netherlands or France (Selwood, 2007 ; Been, Visscher., & Goudriaan, 2002 ; Gombault, 2006a, 2008).

Methodology: an international multi-case study comparison

In order for the aim of the study to be achieved, three stages were undertaken. First, the authors separately conducted a meta-analysis of the literature in English and French in pricing in museums and pricing in the general marketing literature (Rentschler, 2004). Specifically, known museology journals were targeted for review, as were general management and marketing journals. The sourced

articles were then discussed and analysed using a systematic approach of content analysis, familiar to both researchers. Conclusions were drawn about the literature and a typology designed around it.

Second, one of the authors conducted two qualitative studies on museum pricing: one about pricing decisions in Canada, Italy, Spain and the UK (Gombault, 2002); another one about the role of free admission in the pricing strategies of UK museums (Gombault, 2008). Two methods were used: case studies (interviews, observation, documents) and secondary data analysis. From this research a museum pricing strategy typology and a continuum of country learning in these pricing strategies were developed which synthesise the results.

Third, the researchers then are conducting other case studies in the UK, France and Australia to confirm their typology.

In total, the paper presents results based from about 30 case studies (see appendix 1) and an extended secondary data analysis. The sample of the case studies includes mainly well-known national or regional museums, in order to reflect the mainstream trends of pricing in each country. However, some smaller museums have been investigated when they present an innovative aspect.

Results: a hybrid model of pricing for contemporary museums stem from their unequal organisational learning of the strategic role of pricing

From the case studies undertaken, it was observed that museums implement multiple pricing decisions on their core offer (entrance) and their peripheral offer (amenities and facilities) to serve their financial strategy as well as their marketing strategy. But these price decisions, often partitioned off in a differentiated organisational process, more or less integrated, generally do not fit in a planned and formalized pricing strategy.

This emergent pricing strategy is driven by three kinds of strategic drivers:

- The original ideological approach to price setting (free entry and low prices as a means of access) still shapes the thinking of many museum professionals. Even if pragmatists tend to rule, museum and cultural policy makers remain attached to free admission and low prices as a museum ideal. Even pragmatists most often see admission fees as a «necessary evil». This strategic motivation could be easily explained by the attachment to the traditional museum identity in relation to its original ideology of access.
- At the other end of the scale are the economic models whose application is yet to be proved as of value to museums. Pricing strategies implement mainly financial strategies of museums. Pricing decisions are based on costs and the search for self-financing. This led to a focus on audience development rather than on segmenting the market.
- More recently, pricing strategies implement marketing strategies, to reach their various audience goals: democratisation, access, social inclusion, attendance, flows regulations ... Price decisions position and target the offer.

These three pricing decision drivers are combined into different ways in contemporary museums in order to form various pricing strategies. If the contemporary museums no longer consider the price as a minor variable, its strategic role is unequally understood. The pricing strategy is all the more integrated because the organizational learning of the strategic role is high. Results of this research show that this learning depends on two main factors:

- the endogenous level of the pricing decision;
- the development of the peripheral offer.

Two main factors explain this diversity.

The last case studies produced in 2008 and 2009 confirm these results previously formulated in 2002.

First learning factor: the endogenous level of the pricing decision

Already recognized in North America, the strategic role of pricing is being affirmed in Europe in the large public cultural institutions and in smaller museums, managed by a network at a local level (in the Italian cities or in Catalonia, for example). In the large-sized public institutions, this evolution appears to be the direct consequence of having obtained their autonomy of administration, acquired

fairly easily. This is the case of the large national museums of the United Kingdom which have been autonomous for many years. The Louvre museum and other large French museums, and also Pompeii in Italy have gained this same autonomy but more recently. In the public museums, managed through a network by local organizations, the alignment with the market by fixing prices stems from a perspective of economic development and cultural diffusion, for which local organizations have well understood the fundamental role played by cultural institutions, i.e, the museums: a part of the competition in attracting tourists which exists in cities and regions. Moreover, regardless of the country, in private museums the admission fee is inevitably used—even if a certain mimetism within public museums can be observed—as an endogenous variable. It is not by accident that in the United Kingdom, three fourths of the independent museums charge admission whereas two thirds of the local public museums practice free entry¹.

In our sample, it is the Canadian museums which best illustrate the concept of price as an endogenous variable and these museums are the most innovative in terms of price-actions—as in other domains². Entry to the four national museums and their branches has been free since their foundation in 1988. Because of financial difficulties, this charging policy changed with the introduction of voluntary or obligatory admission fees. For example, in Quebec, the province which subsidizes museums the most—60% of museums, exhibition centres, interpretation centres and eco-museums and 71.7% of museums, alone, charged admission in 1998³ and fixed their prices autonomously. The policy of paid admission thus becomes part of a logic of economic rationality, assumed without question. In general, Canadian museums, whatever their statutes, integrate admission prices as a variable of their strategy and furthermore, they all have marketing departments or facsimiles of such. They are the best representatives of the evolution of charging admission as this practice is gaining a strategic dimension, observed on an international scale.

Even in the United Kingdom, the policy of Chris Smith, Secretary of State for Culture, Media & Sport, in the Blair government, who constrained charging national museums to revert to free admission, did not stop museums organizational learning about the implementation of pricing strategies. After having battled this exogenous constraint, these charging museums (among which the *National Maritime Museum*, the *Natural History Museum*, the *Science Museum*, the *Victoria & Albert Museum*,...) finally accepted free admission as an opportunity to substantially increase public financing, all the while continuing to actively develop pricing of their peripheral offer. So behind what could appear as a unique political logic, free admission policy for national and some regional museums in the UK also appears as a pricing strategy: free admission as a marketing strategy⁴. This pricing strategy was initially invented by the National Gallery and the British Museum, the two superstar national UK museums which had defended the original ideology of museum access. The UK national museums' return to free admission illustrates perfectly the hybrid model of pricing in contemporary museums: mixing political ideology (beliefs in the "iconic value"⁵ of free admission), economic rationality (more public financing and more charging of peripheral activities for more free admission) and marketing pragmatism (the search for more access by other actions than free admission, recognized as ineffective in itself)⁶. To a certain extent, since deciding in 2008 to impose free admission on national French museums for young people of less than 25 years old but not for all visitors, French cultural policy started to integrate this hybrid model of pricing.

¹ Figures extracted from Runyard and French (1999, p. 46).

² In an international survey, Maggi (1998) already showed that Canadian museums are more innovative from all points of view, and especially concerning their management.

³ Figures extracted from "Portraits statistiques des institutions muséales du Québec 1998. Résultats d'enquête" *Rapport du Ministère de la Culture et des Communications de Québec*, p.14.

⁴ For a presentation of this strategy, see the second section of the results below.

⁵ Interview with Ben Cowell, Head for Museums Sponsorship Unit, Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

⁶ These results are developed in the research report produced for the French Ministry of Culture and Communication (Gombault, 2008).

Strategic role of pricing has developed without ambiguity over an extended period of time in the United States, over ten years in Canada, in the United Kingdom and in several large museums in certain European countries, as well as in Australia. For example, the *National Gallery of Victoria* (NGV) conceptualises pricing as a key strategic issue, relevant politically as well as for community development purposes. As the premier art museum in the state, the NGV argues that free admission to the core offer is crucial and more in hard times. They postulate that the primary experience is about the art (and that that experience should be free) and the secondary experience is about other things such as food, shopping and such like. They structure their offers accordingly, charging for blockbuster exhibitions that bring in hordes of people in the quite winter months or for major events on site, but lowering charges for disadvantaged groups or charities. Pricing is self-determined, although any move to return to charging for the core offer would be a joint museum and political decision.

However, in France, Spain, or Italy pricing advances in this area have been more timid. Price determination in public European museums usually remains an exogenous variable and historically comes from a political rather than market-oriented logic. Contrary to private museums, the majority of national, regional, or municipal museums cannot make an autonomous decision on this matter; their prices remain globally a political decision. For example, in Italy, approximately three thousand Italian museums are rarely independent institutions or corporations, but rather a complex and articulated ensemble which depend partly on the public authorities (the central administration of the State, local governments, provinces, municipalities), the Catholic Church, and private citizens. Admission prices of national museums are fixed by the Department of Cultural Heritage. Admission prices for museums which belong to local institutions, are fixed by the latter. The different admission prices of public museums are thus fixed in a political manner; since 1993, however, the State and local organizations have partially disengaged themselves from direct management of prices for ticket sales and the peripheral offer, resulting in the evolution of the museum system towards a relative hybridization of the model, which we call “public-private”.

The resistance of public authorities to entrusting pricing decisions to museum direction can be explained in various ways. Price, and notably the entry fee, fundamentally affects the mission of the museum. If it is too high, it is suspected as harming this mission and distorting museum identity by making a tourist attraction of a cultural enterprise which is pursuing its own goals. Price is controlled for ideological reasons to ensure that institutions do not increase prices without reflection and do not thereby risk creating a lucrative instrument. Even private museums often reproduce this purely political, logical argument to fix their prices. For example, the *Museo Poldi Pezzoli* in Milan refused to make price a variable of management and have an on-going check so as to maintain the price as low as possible and to conform to the mission and identity of the museum. More broadly speaking, the liberty of an organization to fix its prices is one of the key elements of its managerial autonomy. The State is reluctant to hand over this managerial autonomy. Retaining the right to make pricing decisions is therefore an essential element of State control for museums. An additional element is the fact that “price” is a subject which is still taboo in the museum sector and the actors in museum organizations sometimes seem to make a point of being uninterested in this matter, refusing to combine art and culture with material or pecuniary questions and sometimes fearful of being suspected of altering the mission and identity of the museum.

It is possible to propose that representations of price at the heart of European museums are generally negative. Naturally, it is seen as in contradiction to the idea of a museum, which is fundamentally grounded in free admission. It is at best a “necessary evil” to offset insufficient public resources. Above all, most of the actors have not understood the stakes. However, after having vilified the product and publicity variables of the marketing-mix, the actors now understand perfectly their interest, but promotion and, even more so, pricing, still escapes them. It is then possible that, even if the assurance of public financing does not push them towards this organizational learning—the most innovative museums in this matter have known or anticipated important financial difficulties—they might consider thinking about this question not only in relation to an economic or financial plan, but

also with regard to their mission and their identity. Finally the growing use of pricing as a management tool is not without sharp criticism from the partisans of free admission, and from others: those for whom this evolution would be incompatible with the identity and mission of the museum which should allow free access to everyone. However, on the contrary, museums which have pricing strategies seem to have discovered that having an entry fee and the establishment of prices for other services could be reconciled with the idea of accessibility for everyone (persons with limited financial means, regular visitors, etc) due to reductions, exonerations, subscription cards and other special price formulas. Many studies (for a synthesis, see Gombault, Petr & *al.*, 2006b)⁷ confirm that generalized free admission no longer appears as a pertinent method for attracting new publics to museums. Equal access to culture and notably to museums, is not so much dependent on pricing as on other variables in the marketing mix. But in spite of the repeated results of studies in this area, the angelism of free entry lasts. Resistance to the development of the strategic role of pricing is proof of the still profoundly ideological nature of the question of admission price in the museums, as though it were an obvious insignia of emergence, then affirmation of a management culture which clashes with museum identity as it is perceived from within and by the exterior world (Gombault, 2003). This original ideological position explains in part the unequal organizational learning of the strategic role of pricing in museums.

The diverse degrees of learning therefore seem to vary according to one factor: whether or not there is liberty to set prices. In the sample studied, this factor is determined by several elements; juridical statute, management method, size, but also the macro-culture of the museum, meaning its surrounding political, economic and culture environment—and the cultural policy which ensues. This is illustrated in Table 2.

**Table 2 – Endogenous price fixing:
First factor in organizational learning of the strategic role of pricing**

	Little learning Exogenous price decision	Much learning Endogenous price decision
Legal status	Public	Public & Private
Management method	No autonomy Regulated Bureaucratic	Autonomous or independent management Entrepreneurial
Size	All sizes	Average to large for public museums All sizes for private museums, but learning more extensive in large museums
Macro-Culture /Cultural policy	Interventionist	Liberal

When considering the ensemble of these parameters in the different cases studied, the different degrees of learning can be clearly identified in each country. The degrees of learning are illustrated in Table 3 on a continuum from little learning about pricing at one end and a great deal of learning about pricing at the other end.

⁷The arguments of these studies are presented below in point 2.

Table 3 – The degrees of learning of the strategic role of pricing by country

Spain	France	Italy	Australia	United Kingdom	Canada	United States
Little learning						Much learning
Fixation mostly exogenous						Fixation mostly endogenous

The case of Spanish museums at the beginning of year 2000 (Caramés, 2001), well illustrates the relationship between the level of price setting and strategic learning that was carried out. Admission prices of Spanish public museums are determined by their administrative supervisors—central, regional or municipal. All revenues for these museums, including those called "autonomous" like the *Prado*, go into the coffers of the administrators who supervise them. The museums' decision-making power about pricing is non-existent or weak. Therefore, there is no autonomy of management. This configuration has repercussions for the nature of price-actions. Pricing policy in these museums, concerning the level of prices as well as reductions, is very slow to evolve. Admission fees remain relatively low. The reductions granted are part of a classic approach to price discrimination in museums. The only movement to be observed is charging admission fees for cases which previously benefited from free admission, since the heads of institutions think that the customer will put more value on a paid offer, even when inexpensive. Price increases and the development of price-actions which characterize a growing number of museums do not yet much concern Spanish public museums, contrary to the situation in theatres, auditoriums and festivals which are more affected by private law management methods.⁸ Only the Catalan museums, incidentally like other cultural institutions of the region, seem innovative and appear to be involved in the strategic evolution of the role of pricing. Firstly, prices of public museums are increasing more than in the rest of the country and are progressively coming closer to those of private museums. Secondly, Catalan museums benefit from greater management autonomy which becomes evident in pricing decisions. For example, several museums in Barcelona present a perfect public-private management hybridization and fix their prices in an endogenous manner. At the *Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona* which includes a mixed consortium composed of the municipality of Barcelona and the *Generalitat* as one part and by the private foundation of the museum, representing the other part, prices are fixed by patronage (board of directors) of the foundation. Thirdly, Catalan museums were the first to propose price-actions still unedited in Spain: combined entry passes offering access to several museums; promotions in relation to the purchase of another service such as transport; telesales allowing visitors to buy their tickets from a distance and in advance.

Second factor of organizational learning: development of the peripheral offer

This study shows that the strategic use of price is positively linked to the connection between pricing decisions of the core offer and those of the peripheral offer. This connection can be clearly identified since the peripheral offer, always including entry charges, is well-developed. The connection can also be observed if the peripheral offer is initiated and developed in the museums which have free admission. By crossing the level of peripheral offer (developed/limited) and admission policy of the core offer (charges/free), four configurations of organizational learning of the strategic role of pricing can be noted. These four configurations are illustrated in Table 4.

⁸ Theatres, auditoriums and public festivals must submit to the application of private law, concerning pricing and the provision of services.

Table 4 – Pricing adjustments between core and peripheral offers in museums: four configurations of organizational learning showing the strategic role of pricing

	CHARGING CORE OFFER AND INCLUDING TARGETED AND/OR OCCASIONAL FREE ADMISSION	FREE CORE OFFER (OR VOLUNTARY GIFT)
CHARGING DEVELOPED PERIPHERAL OFFER	<p>Configuration 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → High self-financing → Average to high integration of the pricing decisions of core offer and those of peripheral offer → Organizational learning of strategic role of high pricing <p>Large museums, public or private (Ex : <i>Musée du Louvre, Musei Vaticani, Guggenheim museums, Royal Ontario Museum, Musée Canadien des Civilisations...</i>) Average-sized and small dynamic private museums (Ex : <i>Pointe-à-Callière, Château Ramezay, Heide Museum of Modern Art</i>).</p>	<p>Configuration 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Average to high self-financing → Average to high integration of the pricing decisions of core offer and those of peripheral offer → Organizational learning of strategic role of pricing from average to high <p>Large museums: English, American, Australian, national (Ex: British National Museums such as <i>National Gallery, British Museum, Tate Gallery...</i> In Australia, <i>National Gallery of Victoria, Queensland Art Gallery...</i>) Large private museums (<i>J. Paul Getty Museum</i>).</p>
CHARGING LITTLE DEVELOPED PERIPHERAL OFFER	<p>Configuration 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Weak to average Self-financing → Weak to average integration of the pricing decisions of core offer and those of peripheral offer → Weak to average organizational learning of strategic role of pricing <p>Small and average-sized museums, public or private (Ex : <i>Museo Poldi Pezzoli, Museo Civico Archeologico de Bologna, Bata Shoe Museum, Fundació Antoni Tàpies</i></p>	<p>Configuration 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Weak Self-financing → Weak integration of the pricing decisions of core offer and those of peripheral offer from zero to weak → Weak organizational learning of strategic role of pricing except if free admission is chosen in an endogenous manner (Ex : <i>Museum of British Road Transport</i>) <p>Small and average-sized public museums, or private if totally financed by public or private funds.</p>

Configurations 1 and 2 show that if there are admission fees associated with charging for the developed peripheral offer, it leads to a high level organizational learning of the strategic role of pricing. The absence of admission fees does not necessarily hinder large museums. Therefore, even though the level of admission charges is not a condition for the implementation of a development strategy in large museums but simply modifies its modalities, it also does not limit their organizational learning of the strategic role of pricing. It is the level of development of charging for the peripheral offer which appears to be the most important factor in the learning process, regardless of the size of the museum. It is through the management of numerous peripheral activities including price, usually fixed according to the criteria of the market, that museums best control this variable. Thus, in configuration 3, even if museums require paid entry, the learning process of the strategic role of pricing remains limited, as long as their peripheral offer remains limited, as well. In configuration 2 the integration of decisions between core price offer and those of the peripheral offer will be higher when public financing is weak or diminishes. In this case, the pricing level of peripheral activities then acquires more weight in the financing of free admission.

Finally, the sample only contains one example of configuration 4, because the price management stakes in museums which set few prices, are obviously weak. These are museums which are usually entirely subsidised, whose prices are set in an exogenous manner. Their organizational learning

concerning pricing strategy is weak and their management, in general, is hardly innovative (Bagdali 1998). The *Museum of British Road Transport* is a counter-example in which free admission to all cultural activities was chosen in a strategic manner. This kind of ideal model, in which museum management is extremely dynamic with the implementation of a triennial marketing plan, is only possible through a close and solid partnership with public and/or private financiers.

It therefore appears that since the future of the museum relies on development of commercial activities, the debate about free admission/ admission fees is associated with a non-problem. The most dynamic museums have the choice, depending on a certain number of cultural and political factors, between two main operating tracks to implement their development strategy: either no entry charge and the active construction of a commercial enterprise around the museum, as is the case for museums which are heavily subsidized like the *National Gallery* of London, or admission fees which are more or less contained within a moderate price range. These museums also benefit from the construction of a commercial enterprise, no less active, nearby.

Configuration 1 and 2, on one side, and 3, on the other, can be distinguished by the level of organizational learning of the strategic role of pricing, either high or rather low. This difference has consequences for the mode of learning and on the process of pricing. In configurations 1 and 2, learning is quite rapid, in close relation with the elaboration of the general strategy. This process of pricing which is planned, iterative and integrated, includes at least three steps: analysis, definition of pricing strategy, and implementation. In the most innovative museums in this area, for example, the *Musée Canadien des Civilisations*, the *Royal Ontario Museum*, *Natural History Museum* in London, or *Heide Museum of Modern Art*, in Melbourne, Australia, more formalized processes have been observed, such as: definition of a general strategy for the museum, definition of marketing objectives, detailed study of clients and competitors, choice of optimal structures and price levels, fixation of prices and associated conditions, implementation of a monitoring system and review over time. This results in formation of a pricing strategy which is, relatively speaking, optimal. In configuration 3, the organizational learning process is slower, incremental and empiric and corresponds to a “trial and error” approach. The process of pricing is not formalized and is used infrequently. Pricing strategy is emergent: identifiable *a posteriori*, it is neither conscious nor planned. Moreover, it is interesting to note that in the two types of configurations, regardless of learning level in the strategic role of pricing, organization mimicry and sometimes a process close to *benchmarking*, play a major role in this learning process. The size of the museum does not change anything in this circulation of *savoir-faire*—only that approach is, once again, more formalized—and small museums appear to be particularly reactive in importing and adapting the most judicious pricing-actions of their competitors.

Discussions and conclusion

This paper provides a perspective within which pricing strategies in the contemporary museum are analyzed: their hybrid pricing model, mixing original access ideology, economic rationality and marketing pragmatism, is a clear marker of museum hybrid identity in transition between what they have historically been and what they are becoming (Gombault, 2003). Various motivations for pricing decisions exemplify how they take into account their various missions, from the traditional focus on custodial conservation to the contemporary focus on educating and entertaining the public, both needing more financial as well as more marketing strategies. More precisely, there are four discussion points arising from this international study.

First, pricing strategies adopted in museums are markers of their “marketization” or market orientation. Museums are becoming more business like, with consideration being given to self-financing, consumer behaviour and market studies that underpin actions in pricing.

Second, entrance price has become less important while “other prices” grow such as those of augmented products and services in shops, restaurants, car parks and such like. These augmented

products and services are not always recognized as a part of the price package. It demonstrates the incomplete learning of the strategic role of pricing.

Third, free admission is run by the most dynamic museums as a pricing strategy, within a portfolio logic. The hybrid model of pricing, incorporating politics and marketing motivations without any contradiction, is thereby perfectly illustrated.

Fourth, the growing role of pricing in museums marks how they consider themselves as creative industries, generating sustainable development for their territories (Travers, 2006). As part of this mix, they are familiar with marketing a city or region, acting as a draw card for people to attend blockbuster exhibitions, or draw people to a city or region in the dull winter months when they are looking for something to do⁹.

This paper is based on longitudinal research which is ongoing. More empirical data will be provided in the coming months as well as deeper analysis, especially about organizational learning processes of pricing. In the aim of enriching the model, the research agenda entails both broadening and deepening the sample with an extended range of locations and museum types in other parts of the Western World

⁹ A forthcoming paper will more develop this aspect of the data.

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Appendix 1: sample of the case studies directly investigated from 2001
(data about other museums come from documentary research).

United Kingdom

- *National Gallery*, London
- *British Museum*, London
- *Natural History Museum*, London
- *Science Museum*, London
- *Museum of British Road Transport*, Coventry
- *Victoria & Albert Museum*

Canada

- *Royal Ontario Museum*, Toronto
- *Musée Canadien des Civilisations*, Hull
- *Pointe-à-Callière, Musée d'archéologie et d'histoire de Montréal*
- *Musée de la Civilisation*, Québec
- *Bata Shoe Museum*, Toronto
- *Château Ramezay*, Montréal

Australia

- *National Gallery of Victoria*, Melbourne
- *Heide Museum of Modern Art*, Melbourne
- *Queensland Art Gallery*, Brisbane

Italy

- *Musei Vaticani*, Rome
- *Galleria degli Uffizi*, Florence
- *Soprintendenza archeologica di Pompei*, gérant les sites de *Pompei*, d'*Oplonti*, de *Stabia*, d'*Herculaneum*, et le *Museo archeologico di Boscoreale*.
- *Museo Archeologico Nazionale*, Naples
- *Museo e Galleria Borghese*, Rome
- *Museo civico archeologico*, Bologne
- *Museo Poldi Pezzoli*, Milan
- *Museo Bagatti Valsecchi*, Milan

Spain

- *Museu Nacional del Prado*, Madrid
- *Museo Nacional centro Reina Sofia*, Madrid
- *Guggenheim Bilbao Museoa*, Bilbao

France

- *Musée du Louvre*, Paris