
Education, dissemination and new technological approaches for a museum opened behind closed doors: the University Museum of Paleontology and Prehistory "P. Leonardi"

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Résumé

The Museum of Paleontology and Prehistory "P. Leonardi" was founded in the mid-60s by Professor Piero Leonardi, who aimed to create an exhibition dedicated to university teaching. Over the years, the continuous and growing demand led to a reconfiguration of the Museum for an open enjoyment to a wider and more diversified public. Unfortunately, in 2012 the Museum was damaged by the earthquake that struck the Emilia Romagna region; since then, the Museum cannot be visited while awaiting for the renovation work. Accessibility, involvement and identification are the elements necessary for the museum experience to be fully lived. Traditionally, access problems have been mainly associated with architectural barriers, while only recently the general attention was more carefully focused on immaterial types of barriers, such as sensorial and cognitive or cultural and technological ones. Thus, communication in the museum context is of primary attention, as far as it places the visitor at the core of the communicative process instead of the Museum exhibition, facilitating the visitor during a process of personal experiential growth. But what happens when the Museum is no longer available? Is it possible to get out of the physical limits of the Museum itself and to make the heritage available again? In order to respond to different fruition needs an integrated enhancement project has been developed, involving the digitization of the collections by new technologies; this attempt to create a virtual and dynamic environment

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has the dual purpose of allowing consultation to researchers and students and to set up virtual paths for non-academic users. Furthermore, the demand for educational workshops for schools of all levels was granted thanks to a Student Association comprised of several students enrolled in the Master's Degree, and which aim is to disseminate and communicate the contents of the Museum in the light of the latest scientific discoveries. Finally, the staging of temporary exhibitions allowed the heritage to be brought out of the Museum and to be available to the general public with the possibility of creating new thematic routes, which in future will implement the original path of the Museum itself.

Mots-Clés: Education, scientific dissemination, university museum, new technology