

# **Marketing Heritage Conservation Services: Towards an Amalgamation of a Commercial and Social Marketing Strategy**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This paper aims to discover the applicability of elements of commercial and social marketing and in drawing up a concept for a conservation marketing strategy. The author is currently working on the project entitled: *Conservation Marketing as a Tool for Sustainable Preservation of Maltese Cultural Heritage*. Within the framework of this project, a number of interviews with conservators have been carried out by using a survey that focuses on the existing and potential customers of conservation services. This survey shall aim to examine their attitude towards and interest in heritage conservation. The results of this research, supplemented by the analysis of the theory of marketing, will be used for the purpose of this paper: The nature of the conservation market will be analysed, together with its size, agents and the characteristics of the relationships occurring between the providers and recipients of conservation services, keeping in mind the specific market environment. Considerations will be made over the features of commercial and social marketing and the priority they have and the role they play in the overall conservation marketing.

## **Keywords:**

Conservation Marketing, Heritage, Commercial Marketing, Social Marketing

## **Introduction**

Conservation of cultural heritage, defined as the operations that together is intended to maintain the physical and cultural characteristics of an object by forestalling damage or remedying deterioration, so as to ensure that the value of this is not diminished and that it will outlive our limited time span (Viñas & Viñas 1988), is rarely the subject of the economist's interest. This negligence partly results from the insufficient public interest in conservation that currently exists. Another problem is that conservators are, as a rule, not familiar enough with ways of effectively marketing their services and consequently, they might refrain from taking the initiative of reaching out to owners of artefacts and/or sites of historical value and significance. Apart from this, conservators rarely ever seek the assistance and advice of specialists in the fields of finance, management and marketing. At the same time their work is usually perceived by the general public (including potential customers) as a very sophisticated and specialised service, provided mainly to specific entities such as

museums. This could result in the public perceiving that conservation is both unaffordable and not readily available to private, individual parties. These factors reflect negatively on the effectiveness of cultural heritage preservation because still too few measures are undertaken with the aim of establishing and improving communication with potential and existing customers, and, simultaneously, of raising social awareness for conservation.

From the economic point of view, conservation of cultural heritage can be defined as a particular type of professional service performed by highly skilled and knowledgeable conservators on behalf of owners of artefacts and/or sites of historical value and significance. In economic terms, conservators are consequently providers of saleable, intangible and immaterial goods (i.e. services) that can be subject to other people's interest and demand. As such, if they aim to become successful market players, they should obviously be interested in successfully reaching out to potential customers and directing their activities towards their customers' requirements, anticipating their future needs in the process.

As highlighted before, conservation is commonly perceived as a supporting service provided mostly on behalf of museums. It is however to be emphasised that, whereas a number of conservators is employed by museums or any other public institutions dealing with historic and/or artistic works, there is a significant amount of conservation professionals that run a private practice. The range of their customers is very wide, including not only museums, but also private collectors, corporations, museums, universities, and governmental agencies etc. The success of conservators running their own businesses depends highly on their marketing skills, including establishing and developing proper relations with customers and on a continuous orientation on the needs and expectations of the latter.

The consumer-orientation of the supplier of any goods or services is always limited by various factors. To the most crucial constraints there belong existing capabilities and skills, workforce, location, company reputation, as well as its strengths and shortcomings. The existing environment must also be taken into account, that is the competitors, suppliers, distributors, subcontractors, shareholders on the one hand and, in the less immediate "macro" dimension, general economic, technological, social, political and legal factors (Kent 1993, p. 1). The consumer-orientation of conservators is, in addition, considerably restricted by the rules of conservation ethics. For the sake of the preservation of cultural heritage no needs of customers can be met with, that would result in damaging the historic objects in question. That is why successful communication with customers should not only include standard marketing activities but, in addition, should aim to raise awareness and to educate existing and potential customers to influence their attitude, to change their behaviour and to sustain these behaviour changes (Kipp & Callaway 2002, p. 2). This paper aims precisely to

determine the extent, to which a conservation company can merge its commercial goals with an awareness-raising and educating activity.

## **Methodology**

This paper bases on an extensive literature research in the areas of services marketing, health care marketing and marketing of culture which can be considered analogical and exemplary for the novel field of marketing conservation services. This literature research was enriched and supplemented by the empirical observations of the Maltese conservation market. These were carried out mostly in form of interviews with the Maltese providers of conservation services and with their customers. Due to the qualitative nature of the research material available, a hermeneutical analysis approach was adopted. As a results, patterns were discerned and principles that may guide future marketing actions in the area of conservation services were formulated.

## **Results**

### **Characteristics of conservation services**

Heritage conservation can be defined as the overall of works carried out on a monument. It involves actions that prevent the object from being further damaged or deteriorated, its upkeep, its documentation and – its restoration. Conservation can be considered as one of the most sophisticated types of services. It is very much time-consuming and requires from its provider a thorough, multidisciplinary knowledge and high level of proficiency, as well as certain manual dexterity and psychological approach (such as patience and accuracy). Simultaneously, it distinguishes itself with:

- an extremely big heterogeneity, resulting from the nature of the work to be carried out. The more significant the involvement of the human element in this particular type of service, the more difficult it is to achieve both the repeatability and resemblance of the service processes and their outcomes (Mazur 2002, p. 24);
- an individual approach taken by every single conservator, with various methods tested and eventually applied;
- the overall of features of the heritage item concerned, including its age, state of preservation, size, manufacturing technique as well as grade and type of deterioration.

Conservation, like any other type of services, is not durable; it cannot be performed in advance nor laid in. In addition, in certain cases it can be carried out seasonally only (i.e. works on historic facades of buildings located in Northern Europe, due to climatic reasons, cannot be performed in the winter season). The outcome of conservation aims however to be very long-lasting; one could say that durability and sustainability of the results of a conservation treatment are its most crucial characteristics.

Finally, it should also be emphasised that a conservation service is in most cases a relatively long-lasting project.

### **The agents of a conservation market**

Heritage conservation is, as a rule, carried out by companies or organisations that employ a team of hands-on conservators who can be additionally supported by documentalists, art historians, researchers, technicians and other professionals. Unless it is an internal entity of another institution (such as a museum or archive) that remains solely to its services and thus does not reach to any external customers, a conservation organisation can be considered as a regular market agent. It provides certain services that are in a position to satisfy needs of the owners or curators of the cultural assets concerned and of the public at large.

There are no principles regarding the optimal size of a conservation company. It can consist of one conservator only, or more employees. The larger the conservation team, the bigger are its capabilities. If it consists of conservators specialised in different types of objects (i.e. easel paintings, polychrome sculptures, books and paper, furniture, metal, stone, ceramics, textiles or architecture) or, if there are representatives of any of the aforementioned professions employed, then the offer of their services can be more diversified. If a number of people within the team specialises in the same type of object/s, then they are able to accept large commissions (for instance, conservation of a large-scale painting or conservation of the whole collection of artefacts). Furthermore they are able to work on a larger number of projects simultaneously.

Whereas it is relatively easy to define the providers of conservation services, it becomes more complicated when it comes to identify their actual customers. The group of beneficiaries is very wide. It encompasses not only those who own or look after a work of art or a historic site that requires conservation treatment. It also includes the general public, that is, those who derive satisfaction from conservation services in a wider sense (i.e. art lovers, inhabitants of a town, visitors, passers-by, tourists, citizens of a country, the national heritage which is taken care of). Additionally, due to the intergenerational value of cultural heritage, the beneficiaries of conservation services are also those who either do not reveal any interest in heritage or those who have not yet been born. It is however evident that those who benefit from conservation services without actually paying for them, cannot be considered as immediate market agents (that is, conservation customers). The revealed and non-revealed interests of the aforementioned groups of indirect beneficiaries of conservation services are, to a large extent, represented by curators of cultural collections or historic sites. These may be

considered as actual conservation market agents as they directly participate in the process of market exchange<sup>1</sup>.

Two basic types of customers can be distinguished: individuals or companies who are private owners of cultural property, and institutional clients (museums, archives, churches or any other public body having cultural heritage in its custody). Consequently, these customers can and should be subject to marketing activities undertaken by providers of conservation services.

### **Characteristics of a conservation market**

The market of conservation services consists therefore of mutual relations occurring between agents who supply conservation services and the consumers who are willing to purchase these services in return for payment. The terms mutual relations and payment are of crucial importance with regards to the market definition since, as stated above, the demand side encompasses not only those who are involved in actual transactions but also a number of indirect beneficiaries of conservation services who do not pay for them. In their business practice, conservators must naturally focus on those groups of conservation services recipients who:

- are in possession of cultural assets,
- express the need for the treatment of a historical item and simultaneously,
- reveal the willingness and capabilities to pay for the services requested.

Geographically, a conservation market can be of different scale. One can speak of a local, regional, national or global conservation market. For logistical reasons, one would think that providers of conservation services would primarily focus on objects located within the same community and, at the same time, that the owners or curators would try to collaborate with those conservators who can be easily reached. The above situation cannot however be considered as a rule pertaining to the conservation market. As in the field of health care, the reputation of the conservator plays an important role when it comes to choosing a service provider. The better the name a conservator or a conservation company carries, the more likely their services will be desired. It is common practice to invite the most acknowledged conservators from other cities or even foreign countries to participate in the conservation treatment of the most valuable works of art. The nature of historical items has also to be taken into consideration. Whereas conservation companies usually have equipped studios, in which artefacts can receive proper treatment, in some instances artefacts/buildings cannot be taken to studios and conservation work would have to be carried out on site. This may also happen when the artefact is very fragile and/or when its technical condition or functional status is very poor. Furthermore, there are

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<sup>1</sup> Some non-owners can indirectly participate in covering the costs of conservation, for example by means of buying entrance tickets to museums or historic sites.

certain types of artefacts that cannot be moved due to their structure or size (edifices, frescoes etc.). Thus, the activity of conservators frequently reaches far beyond their closest environment.

Another important issue is that nowadays, conservators usually focus on public assets, that is, on historic sites and artefacts being owned and managed by national, communal, ecclesiastical bodies or by some non-governmental institution. This happens for several reasons. In Europe, since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the trend has been towards the development of museums. The aim was to gather the most valuable works of arts and eventually to make them available for the general public. As a result of the large extent of damage caused during World War II, a great deal of artefacts were damaged and the several items that had belonged to private collections were gathered and stored in museums so as to ensure their best possible care. In addition, in the Central Eastern European countries private collectors were forcefully expropriated and their assets became public property. At the same time, ecclesiastical cultural heritage, which is considered to be one of the richest and most precious, except for situations resulting from *force majeure* or any abusive circumstance such as theft, was never kept in private hands. Thus one can say that nowadays, the most important but also best known works of arts remain in non-private hands. For this reason, conservators obviously find the public assets to be their most desired area of interest and their most prestigious commission. Having, for instance, the portrait of La Gioconda or Michelangelo's 'Pieta' in one's portfolio, would be an honour and a very prominent career milestone for any conservator. As a result, private assets and, in particular, items owned by private collectors, have less chance of receiving conservation treatment.

The latter happens also because of the following reason: The main responsibility of public curators of cultural heritage assets is to preserve artefacts in a good technical condition so as to safeguard them for future generations. That is why it is required that they seek a conservator for help. The responsibility of private owners does not reach that far, they are not obliged to look after anything but their own wealth<sup>2</sup>. This part of the conservation market however deserves greater attention and the private heritage assets ought to be properly taken care of. Concurrently, it may happen that some artefacts remaining in private hands are of such great historic, artistic and monetary value that even the owner may, in certain cases, not be aware of it. Professional advice by a conservator may help to reveal the significance of the object. Finally, it is highly probable that an artefact in private hands may become part of the national heritage in the future. Unlike public curators who have to comply with certain rules to manage their budget, private owners are fully free as to how to decide how to allocate their funds. Their willingness to spend money on conservation might however not be that high because of their insufficient awareness and because of the fact that they are not appropriately approached, or given adequate incentives by providers of

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<sup>2</sup> An important exception to this rule is architectural heritage. If according to national legislation, a building is listed as a monument, its owner is officially obliged to upkeep it in a good technical condition. In case of negligence, a fine may be imposed on the person concerned.

conservation services. In other words: so far only small efforts have been made to attract private customers.

As stated above, conservation services can in certain cases be performed only seasonally. In addition, conservators may often face long-lasting breaks between particular commissions. These breaks may severely affect their financial liquidity. A well-thought marketing strategy should help a conservation company to ensure a steady flow of commissions, being adjusted to its capacities and to keep up an economic sustainability.

### **Commercial marketing versus social marketing**

As underlined above, conservation marketing has a multiple impact potential. Its results are beneficial not only for the direct market agents concerned that is for suppliers and customers of conservation services. On the contrary, by raising public awareness they can have a significant influence on increasing sustainability of cultural heritage preservation on a local, regional, national or even international level. This positive effect will depend on the scale, intensity and the type of marketing to be applied, bearing in mind in particular to the commercial and social marketing approach.

In *commercial marketing*, the aim is principally of a financial nature, as it serves to increase the income of the providers of the service concerned and, at the same time, to raise the benefit and the level of satisfaction of the customer. Accordingly, efforts are made to first

- identify groups of individuals that are most likely to become potential customers of a given company;
- identify their needs and expectations;
- see how the above needs and expectations can be satisfied in accordance with the company's commercial goals;
- undertake certain actions that will help to convincingly attract clientele and eventually increase the company's financial benefit.

The successful existence of a company shall depend on an effective communication and fruitful co-operation with the demand. Consequently, it can and, in its own interest should undertake appropriate marketing activities in order to achieve its own goals, meet the needs of customers and position itself well in the competitive environment. Consequently, a set of incentives are designed that should draw the potential and prospective customer's attention and encourage them to use the company's services, if possible more than once. These incentives can be of various types, depending on the company's capabilities and the specifics of the market concerned, the type of products or services provided and the knowledge of the customers' preferences and needs.

In contrast, the main aim of *social marketing* is to:

- achieve social benefit by means of commercial marketing instruments,
- introduce an evolution of social awareness with regards to a particular field,
- influence related values, public opinion and people's behaviour and eventually,
- motivate people to a voluntary engagement in achieving, building or sustaining a social good (Kotler 1982, p. 490-514).

The reasons for such an engagement can be of an individualistic nature, wherever identification with such values concerned occurs. They can also have a social or altruistic background (regional or local identity, responsibility towards future generations etc.). The social marketing approach is relatively well developed in such fields as health care (smoking or obesity prevention, organ donation) or environmental protection. By applying instruments borrowed from commerce, the parties dealing with social marketing try to influence and positively modify social behaviour in order to increase the benefit of the target audience rather than that of the marketer. Like its commercial equivalent, social marketing focuses on the consumer – on learning what his needs and wants are and on communicating with him accordingly in order to meet these expectations (Weinreich 2006). It is however important to stress that, whereas commercial marketing usually focuses on selected market segments, that is one particular groups of customers who for different reasons such as lifestyle, consumption preferences, age or level education, are more likely to positively respond to the market offer than any others, social marketing implies awareness-raising campaigns and is therefore addressed to an undifferentiated audience at large, including those who show no or little interest in the field concerned. As such, social marketing is obviously less, if at all, profitable than its commercial counterpart and it involves an inevitable wastage of resources, since all the costly actions taken are not focused on a carefully selected target group. On the contrary, they need to be widely dispersed and the expected rate of response is comparatively lower in this case. For this reason, social marketing is rarely undertaken by an individual company; it is rather subject to either collective activity of the whole sector, of lobbying groups, or of national or supranational institutions with significant support provided by mass media.

### **Merging the commercial and social approach in marketing heritage conservation**

It is evident that conservation services fulfil both functions. Specifically, they are capable of satisfying individual needs expressed by owners or caretakers of cultural assets and, at the same time, they aim to achieve a social benefit, which is preserving the common cultural heritage. However, when it comes to the question, which of the above aims should have priority in the activity of companies providing conservation services, no straightforward answer can be given. Ideally, in view of the importance of cultural heritage preservation for the community concerned

and for the general public, and bearing in mind the nature of conservation services<sup>3</sup>, focus should primarily be put on the social benefit of these services. This would obviously require involving a significant financial contribution of the state or third parties. Such circumstances are very difficult to achieve by a private, small-scale company. Nonetheless, it is possible for a conservation company to amalgamate elements of both types of marketing in order to be able to improve and accomplish more effectively their commercial goals and simultaneously, help to raise social awareness with regards to cultural heritage preservation.

As stated above, heritage conservation encompasses not only the physical restoration of cultural objects but also a number of other activities such as actions that prevent the object from further deterioration, its documentation, storage and display. That is why, in view of the principles of conservation ethics, the actual treatment of a monument should be considered by a conservator as the ultimate solution that should be preceded, if possible, by other means of professional assistance, i.e. preventive conservation actions, preservation guidelines, expertise on storage conditions, advice on the artistic and historic value of the object (to find out if it is worth investing money in its restoration). Thus it is possible for a conservation company to offer a wider range of services, many of which are less intrusive and less expensive than the actual conservation intervention. For many conservators, it is obvious to offer these services. It is however also important to make it evident for the customers that they might receive a very diversified and less expensive assistance when using conservation services. The first marketing step taken by a conservation company should therefore be to provide clear and comprehensive information regarding the choice of the service offered.

Services that are more sophisticated, specialised and that are meant to meet unique needs of particular customers, require an in-depth analysis of each and every case (Mitreaga 2005, pp. 17-18). Undoubtedly, conservation services belong to this category, due to the set of characteristics that make every intervention distinctive (the unique structure and manufacturing technique of every single item, its size, state of preservation, as well as the dimension and character of damage and the method of treatment). It therefore seems worth considering for companies acting on the conservation market to include elements of relationship marketing in their selling strategy. It should also be emphasised that a conservation service is in most cases a relatively long-lasting project. As such, it implies frequent interactions between the conservator and the owner of the heritage object. Consequently, provision of conservation services often has a relational rather than a transactional character. Every conservation project requires an individual cost-benefit calculation. For this reason, it would be rather difficult and irrational for a conservation company to introduce, for instance, a standard set of price promotions that would be available for every client and applicable to each project. Rather than that, an individualised approach is

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<sup>3</sup> In particular, their manufacturing and extremely time-consuming character, distinctiveness of each and every conservation project together with the resulting difficulty in setting a price that would correspond with the efforts involved.

advised. The range and type of marketing incentives should preferably be adjusted to the nature and complexity of the works to be carried out, they should also be related to the customer's loyalty; with the latter being rewarded and additionally stimulated. Establishing good relationships with customers can be very positive both, commercially and socially. First of all, a satisfied customer is the best disseminator of the company's reputation. Alongside this, an in-depth contact with a customer, including frequent interactions and discussions on the subject of interest, automatically widens his or her level of awareness. It is to be expected that customers that are aware of things will subconsciously promote good practices in their environment.

A very common problem with many conservation companies is how to be successful in coping with deadlines. Deadlines are usually included in the contract and not sticking to them might in some cases discourage customers from further collaboration. In their marketing efforts, conservators should therefore always take into account the possibility of having to deal with very urgent commissions (i.e. resulting from damage of buildings or artefacts caused by an accident or force majeure). Besides, due to the type of conservation treatment that creates a number of limitations on the speed of the progress of the project, including any unforeseen additional works that might prove necessary in the course of the conservation treatment, a conservator must bear in mind the risk of the possible extension of a project's duration. For these reasons, it is necessary to keep in constant touch with the customers in order to inform them of any unexpected complications.

When considering the relatively low profit of conservation services, it is very unlikely that a conservation company will be in a position to allow a financial risk and subsequently to undertake a large-scale marketing campaign addressed to the general public. On the contrary, in order to remain sustainable in its professional activity, a conservator must focus its marketing efforts upon a group of customers that will most likely and most positively respond to the actions taken. For this reason, conservation marketing will mostly have a commercial rather than social character, although in some cases the implementation of the social marketing approach could be possible. It is for instance advisable that a conservation company finds way of promoting and presenting the results of its work (i.e. public lectures or presentations, writing articles on newspapers, organising open educational courses for the potential customers etc.). What is more effective would be to carry out a commercial marketing campaign in a small community. Even though it directly addresses selected groups of recipients/customers, it may have a constructive impact on the whole society, as the satisfied customers are the best propagators of the quality of the services received. Thus, by word of mouth, they can best promote and help develop the new, positive tendencies and behaviours among the public at large.

Social marketing aims to positively influence the behaviour of the general public with regards to a particular field of interest. Conservators running a private practice may undoubtedly have a

significant contribution in this respect. By establishing a good and fruitful relationship with their customers and by making sure that the results of their work are made known to the general public, they can achieve a significant social benefit. Furthermore, raising public awareness in the field of cultural heritage preservation will certainly result in an increased public interest in using conservation services which shall have positive commercial consequences for conservators. Needless to say, the range and extent of marketing activities must naturally be adjusted to the size and capabilities of the conservation company concerned. It is however to be expected that any good patterns of behaviour developed within a community, can be successfully disseminated and implemented by external providers and customers of heritage conservation services.

## **Discussion**

Whereas there is never enough awareness-raising, it is evident that those who have little knowledge of the issue in question but may potentially be interested in conservation, should be addressed with utmost intensity. A social marketing campaign should therefore primarily motivate the owners of historical objects to look more carefully to the appropriate care of their belongings. Since social marketing – by definition – does not include any targeting methods, it can be expected that its effects will leave an imprint on those who are, on the one hand, presently not interested in conservation services (since they do not own historical objects) – to make them acquainted with how to proceed in case their situation changes and, on the other hand, on those who are familiar with conservation practices but perhaps need to be reminded about their benefits and the hazard pertaining to any negligence or attempt to economise on conservation intervention.

It is not easy to suggest particular actions or specific marketing tools that ought to be applied to ensure the effectiveness of a social marketing campaign with regards to conservation, as it obviously depend on the financial and human resources available, on the heritage preservation – related legislation adopted in the particular country, on the spatial range of such a undertaking etc. Among recommendable social marketing actions in the conservation field the following means can be mentioned:

- television spots or billboards promoting good practices,
- a cycle of articles dedicated to this issue,
- juxtaposing good and bad examples of conservation-restoration treatment,
- organising open days within the institutions dealing with conservation,
- free assessment of the condition of artefacts,
- organising care of collection courses and any other activities that sensitise the general public and make them aware of their responsibilities towards the cultural heritage in view of its universal, timeless character and its value.

When it comes to applying elements of the commercial marketing, they ought to be introduced whenever there is a real possibility to turn the prospective customers into the actual ones. From this moment on, the providers of conservation services may implement marketing tools that would have been completely cost-ineffective if applied to the general public, i.e. where in most cases, it is rather unlikely to obtain any positive feedback. Therefore, the marketing strategy must be now targeted at those who are at all likely to use conservation services. Such factors as lifestyle, consumption preferences, age or educational level ought to be taken into account while trying to identify people who are most likely to positively respond to the offer made. Hence, a marketing strategy should be designed (by means of both, language used and incentives offered) so that owners of historical objects feel personally addressed and express desire to go ahead and use conservation services.

## **Conclusions**

The interdependence upon the supply and the demand side of any market transaction is a very complex issue. It is evident, that both parties influence and highly depend on each other. It is usually the demand for a particular good or service that encourages the supply side to continuously develop and enhance its offer in order to better meet the needs of the existing consumers and to further attract new ones. In case of very specialised services, it should however be presumed that a consumer first has to be made aware of his or her needs as well as of the ways of satisfying them by the provider of these services, not only from the marketing point of view but also with regards to the (not yet discovered) needs that are to be satisfied. It seems therefore necessary that a provider of conservation services recognises its task to apply a marketing approach in its daily professional activities. There is a need, on the one hand, to better understand the revealed and non-revealed preferences or expectancies of the owners of heritage objects and, on the other hand, to be able to shape the services offered accordingly, obviously with regards to actual needs, capabilities and development potential of the conservators. A thorough knowledge of the specific mechanisms pertaining to the conservation market and selecting the most effective marketing methods can therefore be of crucial importance for the providers of these services.

The public character of social marketing allows everyone to get acquainted with the issue concerned. At the same time, one has to be aware that there will always be certain groups of society that will not be properly approached by means of a social marketing activity. Unless provided with special funds, a private conservation company cannot and should not take on the full responsibility for the education of the general public. Nevertheless, in view of the company's commercial goals, it can contribute to promoting good practices in society at a relatively low cost. By undertaking activities of a composed, promotional-didactic character (such as writing articles or making public

presentations of the accomplished conservation works), a conservation company would be in a position to attract and educate representatives of those social groups who would most likely use its services. It would be therefore recommended for a conservation company to, if necessary, redefine its mission and to more consciously and focus on both, commercial and social goals. Wherever possible, conservators should therefore reach out to prospective and existing customers with essential knowledge in order to, convince their clientele about the benefits of using professional conservation services.

In sum it has to be emphasised that a marketing strategy, in particular its commercial component, implemented by a conservation company cannot be too forceful. Conservation projects, due to their nature and accuracy must be carried out slowly and in many cases cannot be completed in haste<sup>4</sup>. Therefore, conservators are not in a position to finish working on too many projects within a short period of time. It is important that they identify artefacts that require a prompt intervention of first aid treatment, to prioritise their commissions and thus to ensure the sustainable existence of their companies. Adopting a well-thought marketing strategy should make it possible for conservators, on the one hand to reach their commercial goals and, on the other hand, to protect the cultural heritage, including that remaining in private hands, in a better, sustainable and more effective way.

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<sup>4</sup> Obviously, the duration of the conservation depends of many factors, such as size of the object, its type, manufacturing technique and the state of preservation together with the extent of the damage.

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