

**A comparative study of the British National Museum
Website and the Colombo
National Museum Website**

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Abstract

A museum is a non-profit and permanent institution that collects tangible and intangible heritage related to past, present and future under one roof. The purpose of the museum is to collect, preserve, interpret and display items of cultural, artistic or scientific significance for the education of the public. There are various types of museums such as National, Provincial, University, Cultural, Scientific, Memorial and Eco-museums. Any type of a museum should collect, conserve and display the heritage of the country. A website can be used as a display tool. The main objective of this study was to identify the existing information on museum websites. This study aims to examine the way to present information through the websites and to evaluate museum websites by using a website evaluation tool.

This is a qualitative research. Evaluation tools were used as the quantitative method. Desk research and Website evaluation tool were used to gather data for the study. This is a comparative study between the British National Museum (BNM) and the Colombo National

Museum (CNM). Google Page Speed and Hubspot Marketing Grader were used as evaluation tools of the websites.

Primary data revealed that there are various types of information available on the BNM than CNM. General information, contacts and visiting, online services, programmes, research helps, online booking facilities, video, audio and picture galleries are some of the information which included on BNM. The bad thing is that there is no separate website for CNM. The information related to CNM is available under Department of National Museum. Besides, CNM collected 60% marks from the page speeds and 19% marks from Marketing Grader. As such BNM collected a higher score than CNM. Page Speed tool displayed 70% and Marketing Grader displayed 89% scores for BNM. It revealed that CNM website should be developed furthermore.

There are some major improvements suggested by the study. A separate website for CNM should be developed and it should include more information. Following WCAG and proprietary accessibility guidelines, establishing formal web accessibility laws and guidelines, upgrading online services for museum websites are most valuable suggestions for the CNM Website.

Keywords: *Museums, National Museums, Museum Websites, Websites Evaluation, British National Museum, Colombo National Museum*