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# The Cultural Heritage of the Historic Center of Quito as a Contribution to the Preservation and Development of Tourism through Inbound Marketing as a Complementary Digital Marketing Strategy

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## Summary

*Ecuador is a privileged country to have various examples of cultural heritage, among them is the city of Quito, which has the best-preserved Historic Center in Latin America and was declared by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site in 1978. In this research, the study of the cultural heritage of the Historic Center of Quito has been chosen as a contribution to the preservation and development of tourism through Inbound Marketing as a strategy that uses digital marketing tools. However, there are several factors that threaten and destroy cultural heritage, such as ignorance, globalization, modernization, informal trade, among others. For this reason, it is necessary to properly manage public policies, educate in defense, and develop both tourism and inbound marketing strategies to contribute to the preservation of this cultural wealth.*

**Keywords:** Cultural heritage; preservation; tourism development; inbound marketing, digital marketing; Historic Center of Quito.

## Introduction

When we talk about cultural heritage, we are referring to the inheritance of tangible and intangible goods that have been granted throughout history, which forge an identity, which allow us to know where we come from and where we are going, thus achieving the development of society (National Institute of Culture, 2015).

Preservation seeks to ensure both tangible and intangible cultural resources and that they last for future generations, and is also closely related to cultural or heritage tourism (Basurto et al., 2015).

On the other hand, when talking about tourism development, not only should economic aspects be covered, since over time they may not guarantee sustainable development, but it should also be sought to have a balanced relationship between the economic, natural and social spheres, which make up the main challenge of sustainability (Gallopín, 2003; Dwyer, 2005, as cited in Sosa, 2022, p. 41).

Inbound marketing is simply based on making companies and/or organizations generate and

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publish useful, relevant and high-value content to consumers by creating connections since this is a more effective way to attract, engage, interact and satisfy as part of their methodology using digital tools such as content marketing, blogs, social networks, websites, among others, and that they approach a brand, service or product through these channels. (Hubspot, 2013).

The Historic Center of Quito, being declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1978, has become a Latin American example of a unique preservationist experience, as it is the largest and best preserved (Sánchez & Woolfson, 2016, p. 29).

Currently, there are several reasons why cultural heritage is not preserved in the Historic Center of Quito, such as globalization and modernization, social conflicts such as violent protests, which do not contribute at all to tourism development, among many others.

Thus, the present research seeks to design strategies that are a contribution to the preservation of this valuable cultural heritage of the Historic Center of Quito and where tourism development is benefited, through the criteria of experts in the field and research.

Finally, this research is integrated firstly by a review of the literature, secondly, by research methodology, followed by the calculation of the population and then shows the instruments for collecting information, results, strategies and finally the conclusions and bibliographic references.

## **1. Literature Review**

### **Historic Center of Quito**

The Historic Center of Quito is located in the south center of the city of Quito, in the province of Pichincha, has an area of 375.2 hectares, with a relative population of 40,000 inhabitants and made up of ten urban parishes (Wikiwand, n.d.). It is considered a place full of cultural and historical values, thanks to its churches, convents, squares, houses, it was declared in 1978 as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO.

Regarding the socioeconomic level of the population, it is middle and lower middle class, and from a cultural point of view, 84% of the residents identify as mestizos, 13% as indigenous and 3% as Afro-Ecuadorians. On the other hand, over the years there has been a representative population decrease due to unemployment and few development opportunities (Torres, 2023, p. 26).

Thus, due to this and several other problems, it presents unfavorable conditions in aspects such as safety, vehicular and pedestrian congestion, informal commerce, environmental pollution, garbage accumulation, among others.

In short, the incorrect use of public space and real estate in the Historic Center of Quito has led to the deterioration of cultural heritage, limiting its tourist development.

### **Molina Tourist System**

Within Molina's (1991) Tourism System, multiple actors are analyzed, such as entrepreneurs, tourists, workers, residents and representatives of institutions. But the starting point is the analysis of each of the subsystems that make it up: superstructure, infrastructure, tourist demand, equipment and facilities, host community and attractions.

The superstructure is made up of both public and private entities, whose function is to provide solutions to the various problems that arise.

Infrastructure is all the goods and services that a certain place has, such as airports, communications, energy, roads, among others.

Tourism demand is the number of people who intend to travel and use tourist facilities and other services outside of their place of residence.

The equipment and facilities are the establishments that provide tourist services and other facilities that make up a tourist destination.

The host community is made up of the local population that has a direct influence on local development, since in this way their quality of life can be improved both directly and indirectly through tourism activity.

Tourist attractions are referred to as the basis of the tourism system since the system develops around them in a territorial manner (Panosso, 2012).

### **Inbound Marketing as an E-Channel Strategy**

Inbound marketing, as Inbound Marketing is known, is the evolution of outbound marketing or outbound marketing, where the former, unlike the latter, tries as a strategy to make customers or users look for a product or services through quality and high-value content published by the company. organization or institution, using digital marketing tools generating digital channels to stimulate conversion between those who are interested and visit the websites and those of them generate an action expected by the company, organization or institution, while outbound marketing is about the search for customers by the company promoting its product or service using traditional marketing tools.

## **2. Methodology**

The methodology of this research has a descriptive scope, since it allows us to know the predominant situations, customs and variables, in this case with what is related to the cultural heritage of the Historic Center of Quito, through processes, activities and people.

On the other hand, the research approach is mixed, since the analysis of both quantitative and qualitative information or data will be carried out. In the qualitative aspect, interviews will be conducted with experts in the field of cultural heritage and in the quantitative part, virtual surveys will be applied aimed at national and foreign tourists and residents of the Historic Center of Quito.

## **3. Information Collection Instruments**

Bibliographic tools from previous research related to the topic will be used to contribute to the development and results of the study.

The next instrument is the virtual surveys through Google Forms, aimed first at national and foreign tourists who visited the Historic Center of Quito in 2022 and, secondly, applied to residents of the same.

And finally, virtual and face-to-face interviews are carried out and even telephone interviews are carried out with experts in the field and with regulators of cultural heritage in the tourism sector such as the Ministry of Culture and Heritage, Undersecretary of Cultural Heritage, Camilo Egas Museum, National Institute of Cultural Heritage, Metropolitan Institute of Heritage and Quito Tourism.

#### 4. Population and Sample

According to figures published by Quito Turismo, the arrival of tourists in 2021 was 280,996, this value will be taken for the calculation of the sample (Quito Turismo, 2021). Subsequently, the finite population formula was applied, since Quito Tourism keeps a quantifiable record of the non-resident visitors who arrive annually in the capital of Ecuador.

**Table 1:** Data for the Sample of Tourists.

Parameter	Value
N (Population)	280.996
p (Success)	0,5
q (Failure)	0,5
e (Error Allowed)	0,09
Z (Confidence Level) 95%	1,96
SAMPLE	118

**Note.** The table above indicates the sample number that represents the total number of surveys to apply to tourists, which is 118.

#### Finite Population Formula Applied to Tourists

$$m = \frac{Z^2 * p * q * N}{e^2(N - 1) + Z^2 * p * q}$$

$$m = \frac{1,96^2 * 0,5 * 0,5 * 280.996}{0,09^2(280.996 - 1) + 1,96^2 * 0,5 * 0,5}$$

$$m = \frac{269868,55}{2277,01}$$

$$m = 118,49$$

As a result, a total of 118 surveys have been obtained as a sample to be applied to tourists visiting the Historic Center of Quito.

On the other hand, in order to calculate the sample of residents of the Historic Center of Quito, the decreasing trend of the Secretariat of Territory, Habitat and Housing (2012) has been taken into account in its Territorial Planning Plan 2012-2022, which for the year 2022 is projected to have a population of 26,727 inhabitants (Naranjo et al., 2019, p. 224).

**Table 2:** Data for the Sample of Residents.

Parameter	Value
N (Population)	26.727
p (Success)	0,5
q (Failure)	0,5
e (Error Allowed)	0,09
Z (Confidence Level) 95%	1,96
SAMPLE	118

**Note.** The Table above Indicates the Sample Number that Represents the Total Number of Surveys to Apply to Residents of the Historic Center of Quito, which is 118.

### Finite Population Formula Applied to Residents of the Historic Center of Quito

$$m = \frac{Z^2 * p * q * N}{e^2(N-1) + Z^2 * p * q}$$

$$m = \frac{1,96^2 * 0,5 * 0,5 * 26.727}{0,09^2(26.727 - 1) + 1,96^2 * 0,5 * 0,5}$$

$$m = \frac{25668,61}{217,44}$$

$$m = 118,04$$

As a result, a total of 118 surveys have been obtained as a sample to be applied to residents of the Historic Center of Quito in 2022.

### Criteria for Selecting Experts for Interviews

To carry out the interviews of this research, several experts in the field of Cultural Heritage and Tourism have been selected, according to the criteria of each of the authors.

## 5. Results

### Surveys Applied to Tourists

Regarding the surveys applied to both national and foreign tourists, most consider that the declaration of Cultural Heritage granted by UNESCO to the Historic Center of Quito is quite important for tourism development and that websites and social networks are the main tools to know the cultural richness of this place. On the other hand, with regard to the quality of services within the Historic Center, most of them mention that security, transportation, and hygiene services, among others, are regular. Although only a few responses have been taken for this analysis, in a large percentage and in a general way, tourists see in a positive way every aspect related to the cultural heritage of the Historic Center of Quito.

### Resident Surveys

Since the surveys have been applied to the residents of the Historic Center of Quito, most of them consider that the tourist activity in the Historic Center of Quito is beneficial both for tourism development, to generate sources of employment, obtain economic resources and be internationally recognized, in addition to the fact that social networks are a very important instrument for the promotion of their cultural heritage. In other words, a large percentage of residents have a positive perception of this place, despite the fact that only a few responses have been taken for this analysis.

### Interviews with Experts

Once the interviews with each of the experts in the field were applied, it was concluded that the Historic Center of Quito, being the most outstanding and representative of all Latin America, must be preserved, despite all the limitations that occur, it is important to continue working for the tourist development of this place. That is why even the Municipality of Quito has invested nearly \$600 million in the last 30 years for the conservation of this site and its declaration.

## 6. Strategies

Once the information collection instruments (surveys and interviews) carried out with experts in

the field, national and foreign tourists have been applied, strategies are proposed for each of the elements of Sergio Molina's tourism system and inbound marketing, which contribute to the preservation of the cultural heritage and incentive of tourism in the Historic Center of Quito.

Regarding the superstructure, it is decided to develop a security plan, since residents and tourists are victims of crime in the Historic Center of Quito, therefore, it is expected that the numbers of robberies and violence will decrease.

For the infrastructure, the implementation of sanitary batteries is considered necessary, since those that the Historic Center of Quito has are scarce and many of them are not enabled, generating annoyance in people.

Regarding the demand, and to encourage the participation of tourists and residents, it is proposed to hold talks related to the care and preservation of the cultural heritage of the Historic Center of Quito, and in this way generate a sense of belonging. All this in coordination with the Municipality of Quito and the IMP.

With regard to infrastructure and equipment, it is proposed to extend the hours of service in person at the Tourist Information Point "El Quinde – Shop and Visitor Center" located in the Plaza Grande to solve the user's doubts in time and thus also contribute to local entrepreneurship.

For the host community, it is planned to carry out a virtual training aimed at tourism and non-tourism companies and residents of the Historic Center of Quito, to provide information on the importance of cultural heritage granted by UNESCO.

And, within the part of tourist attractions, it is proposed to improve the "Ecuador Film Residency" program so that through the publication of High-Quality audiovisual material, several influencers, both national and foreign, raise awareness among citizens about the care and preservation of the nomination of Cultural Heritage of the Historic Center of Quito. and that contributes to tourism development.

For the implementation of the inbound marketing strategy, content marketing will be used as an attraction strategy to reach the target audience, through the creation of a blog in which articles are shown with quality content that generates value with information regarding history, culture, nomination of Cultural Heritage, seeking as its main objective the conversion between those who visit the blog and those who tell their experiences when visiting the attractions of the Historic Center of Quito through comments on the same blog.

In order for the blog to be visible among the first places in search engines, it is necessary to invest in SEO (Search Engine Optimization) campaigns, and SEM is a strategy paid for clicks or impressions that a user makes when visiting the website, that is, to carry out management in an organic and paid way through keywords organized by an agency or foundation in coordination with the Municipality of Quito and the IMP.

The use of high-traffic social networks such as Facebook, Instagram and Tik Tok, would be the ones that are mainly used through links to the content blog and within this there is the availability of a Landing Page in which an email address is mainly requested to send complementary information and tourist packages and promotions that are available as a conversion strategy seeking that the customer or tourist generates an action.

In addition to the previous strategy, once a database is obtained through the Landing Page with the emails of each user interested in additional information or in visiting the Historic Center of Quito, the use of email marketing or emailing will allow segmenting and directly sending all

types of relevant content that promote tourism and perception of the patrimonialization of the Historic Center of Quito.

## 7. Conclusions

For some years the Historic Center of the City of Quito was abandoned, which caused the deterioration of its heritage buildings, and thus, also contributed to the insecurity of the place.

By being declared a World Heritage Site in 1978 by UNESCO, the Historic Center of Quito has been reborn and acquired great recognition not only nationally, but also internationally, thus generating a sense of belonging on the part of the population that drives them to continue with its care and preservation.

The complement of inbound marketing strategies with the use of digital tools will allow a greater reach at a national and international level, sharing high-value content on the heritage of the Historic Center of Quito and encouraging tourism by stimulating the offer to users and/or customers.

Through the strategies proposed in this research, it is sought to promote tourism development and preservation of the cultural heritage of the Historic Center of Quito and provide continuity for future generations.

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