



Article

Directions for the Development of Domestic and International Museum Tourism Services

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Abstract: This article analyzes such important aspects as current trends in the development of domestic and international museum tourism in our country, globalization, and the digital transformation of the economy. It examines the modernization of museum infrastructure, the implementation of innovative technologies and digital services, and effective marketing mechanisms for promoting tourism products. The study substantiates the need to integrate museum tourism into national sustainable development strategies and diversify the tourism market.

Keywords: Museum Tourism, Domestic Tourism, International Tourism, Tourism Services, Cultural Heritage, Digitalization, Innovative Technologies, Tourism Infrastructure, Services Marketing, Sustainable Development

1. Introduction

In today's globalized world economy and increasingly competitive international tourism markets, the development of cultural and educational tourism is particularly important, with museum tourism playing a key role. Museums serve not only as custodians of historical and cultural heritage but also as important institutional actors in shaping a country's tourism appeal, fostering domestic demand for cultural services, and strengthening the country's international image. For Uzbekistan, the development of domestic and international museum tourism is of strategic importance in the context of diversifying the national economy, expanding the export potential of tourism services, and increasing employment. The country's rich historical and cultural heritage, linked to ancient civilizations and the Great Silk Road, provides significant resource potential for the active development of museum infrastructure. Cities such as Samarkand, Bukhara, and Khiva boast unique museum complexes that could become magnets for both domestic and international tourists [1].

In recent years, the country has implemented large-scale institutional and infrastructural reforms in the tourism sector, aimed at modernizing museum operations, introducing digital technologies, developing interactive exhibitions, and improving services. The digitalization of museum spaces, the creation of virtual tours, the use of multimedia platforms, and online promotion are contributing to a broader audience and enhancing the competitiveness of the national tourism product on the international stage. However, certain challenges remain related to the insufficient integration of museum institutions into international tourism routes, the limited use of modern marketing tools, and the need to improve service quality and train qualified personnel. Under these

Citation: Urunbayeva Y. P. Directions for the Development of Domestic and International Museum Tourism Services. Central Asian Journal of Innovations on Tourism Management and Finance 2026, 7(2), 301-309.

Received: 15th Jan 2026

Revised: 11th Feb 2026

Accepted: 24th Feb 2026

Published: 26th Mar 2026



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conditions, there is a growing need for scientific understanding of the development directions of domestic and international museum tourism services, taking into account national characteristics and global trends [2].

Thus, the relevance of this study stems from the need to develop theoretically sound and practically oriented recommendations for improving museum services in Uzbekistan, aimed at strengthening the country's position in the global tourism market and ensuring sustainable socioeconomic development [3].

Review of the literature

Scientific research on museum tourism emphasizes its importance as a key segment of cultural and historical tourism, contributing to the development of the tourism industry and the national economy. Thus, modern studies emphasize the role of museum tourism in attracting tourists and expanding tourism offerings thanks to the country's rich cultural and historical heritage. It has been shown that museums can become significant centers of attraction for both domestic and international tourists by presenting unique exhibits and cultural treasures. Modern literature also examines the development of museum infrastructure through the lens of innovative and digital technologies. In particular, the introduction of multimedia exhibits, interactive programs, and digital services is considered an important factor in enhancing the attractiveness of museum services and expanding visitor audiences. This approach correlates with international research, which emphasizes the importance of interactive museum experiences and the use of virtual reality to improve the educational and educational functions of museums in the tourism sector [4].

Furthermore, academic publications highlight the functional role of museums as key tourism infrastructure assets—not only as repositories of history but also as active participants in tourist routes and cultural policy. An analysis of existing studies shows that museums contribute to strengthening international cultural interaction and enhancing the country's image in the global tourism market. Some studies focus on the specifics of museum tourism within the national context of Uzbekistan, revealing its essence, organizational aspects, and potential development paths. These studies emphasize the need for a scientific understanding of museum services within the framework of national tourism strategies and the practical implementation of innovative approaches to the development of museum tourism in the country [5].

In the broader context of cultural tourism, researchers note that museum tourism is part of historical and cultural tourism, which includes familiarization with the traditions, history, and culture of peoples, thereby enhancing the tourist appeal of regions and promoting economic growth [6].

2. Methodology

This study is based on a comprehensive and interdisciplinary methodological approach that integrates theoretical, analytical, and empirical research methods. The theoretical foundation of the research relies on concepts of sustainable tourism development, cultural tourism theory, and service economy models [7].

Several scientific methods were applied in the research process. The method of analysis and synthesis was used to study scientific literature and identify the main trends in the development of museum tourism. Comparative analysis was applied to evaluate differences between domestic and international practices in museum service organization and to identify best practices that can be adapted to the conditions of Uzbekistan [8].

Statistical and analytical methods were employed to assess the dynamics of tourist flows, museum attendance, and the contribution of museum tourism to the overall tourism sector. In addition, the study utilized an expert evaluation method to identify key factors influencing the effectiveness of museum services and to determine [9].

The research also involved the analysis of official documents, including state programs and policy frameworks related to tourism development in Uzbekistan. This allowed for the identification of institutional and regulatory factors influencing museum tourism.

The combination of these methods ensured a comprehensive assessment of the current state of museum tourism and provided a solid basis for developing scientifically grounded recommendations for improving museum services in both domestic and international tourism contexts [10].

3. Results

To develop museum tourism, it is advisable to develop museum tour routes in two main directions.

The first direction is the development of museum tour routes within the framework of domestic museum tourism. Developing museum tour routes within the framework of domestic museum tourism is quite problematic. Currently, the organization of museum tours is considered a rather sluggish undertaking. It should be noted that, as is well known, museum tours were organized using state funds during the former Soviet Union, and it is well known that these tours were primarily attended by schoolchildren studying school subjects [11].

During the transition to a market economy in the years of Uzbekistan's independence, the organization of school tours funded by the state budget ceased completely. It should also be noted that specialized travel companies and tourism organizations dealing with the organization of museum tours for both domestic and international tourism have not yet been established. The main reason for this is that the museum administration has completely ceased collaborating with government agencies and school administrations in organizing museum tours in accordance with local educational programs [12].

Secondly, museum management has not yet conducted advertising campaigns about the activities of the museums under their jurisdiction, nor has it appeared on television, radio, or in museum-related periodicals. This is quite surprising. After all, no other organization has such a wide range of information about museums. Thirdly, museum workers are more passionate and impressionable than others. Abroad, museum staff elevate certain small details or sources of everyday reality to a sensational level. As a result, mass influxes to museums increase [13].

In our opinion, the organization and development of museum tours in domestic museum tourism should be as follows:

1. Museum tours for schoolchildren.
2. Museum tours for school teachers.
3. Museum tours for specialists in specific scientific fields (history, geography, biology, botany, literature, etc.).
4. Museum tours for scientists and researchers.
5. Museum tours covering subjects studied for the requirements of universities, institutes, and colleges.
6. Leisure and educational museum tours for adults.

To ensure the implementation of Decree No. PF-5326 of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev dated February 3, 2018, "On additional organizational measures to create favorable conditions for the development of the tourism potential of the Republic of Uzbekistan" in the development of domestic tourism in Uzbekistan, as well as to facilitate the rapid development of domestic tourism as one of the most important factors in the sustainable socioeconomic development of regions and familiarizing citizens with the cultural, historical heritage, and natural resources of our country, Resolution No.

PK-3514 dated February 7, 2018, "On measures to ensure the rapid development of domestic tourism," marked the beginning of a promising stage in the development of domestic tourism in our country [14].

This resolution, which will be etched in gold letters into the history of national tourism development in Uzbekistan, will instill in the people of Uzbekistan a sense of understanding, knowledge, and exploration of their homeland, a love of recreation, national pride, and love for their homeland, an attachment to it, and a desire to preserve and protect its nature and natural resources for future generations.

The Presidential Resolution establishes the following important state programs, areas, and plans for the development of domestic tourism in our country:

- Approval of a plan of practical measures for the implementation of the domestic tourism development program "Traveling across Uzbekistan!"

- Approval of schedules for organizing tours and excursions at the regional level and participating organizations, taking into account the occupancy of tourism infrastructure during the month;

- Ensuring regular informational and educational events to widely engage young people in entrepreneurial activities in the tourism sector;

- Taking into account the seasonality of tourist flows and the full occupancy of regional tourism infrastructure, including the participation of tourism entities, the necessary measures will be taken to effectively implement the plan of practical measures.

Studying this important decision by the President on the development of domestic tourism in our country, we see that programs, instructions, and guidelines have been developed and provided at the state level for the effective research and operation of all tourism companies and organizations in the tourism sector, across all areas of the education system, and for addressing pressing contemporary issues. We understand that we are responsible for maximizing these opportunities and contributing to the implementation of this decision, as we operate in the tourism sector [15].

The most promising direction for the development of domestic tourism in our country is the inclusion of museum tours in the "Traveling in Uzbekistan!" program. As we have already mentioned, museums are a scientific, spiritual, and educational treasure, passing on the wealth inherited from ancestors to future generations, which only grows richer over the years.

Heirloom objects and works of art, created as a product of human creativity, are selected, housed in museums, and become a common treasure. Humanity gradually evolves, passing on the traditions and customs inherited from ancestors to children and grandchildren.

As every country develops, it's natural to turn to history and strive to study and preserve existing customs, traditions, and ancient monuments. In this regard, the role of museums is incomparable. After all, they represent a systematic collection of cultural, educational, and natural monuments of the past, preserved and exhibited in accordance with modern procedures. This is why it's essential to develop museum tours in all museums in Uzbekistan.

To achieve this goal, we need to create a catalog and online database with complete descriptions (address, type, activities, operating procedures, facilities provided, information about exhibits, etc.) of all museums in our country by region, district, and city. Based on this information, museum tour organizers, tourism entrepreneurs, schools, lyceums, colleges, institutes, and universities will be able to quickly organize tours to any museum in our country.

Secondly, our museum directors and staff must reach beyond the museum buildings, reaching out to communities, organizations, and all levels of the education system,

concluding agreements and contracts, and organizing roundtables – essential activities of a modern free market.

Thirdly, rural school administrators must find psychological approaches to organizing free museum tours in any city in our country for schoolchildren who are economically successful farmers, entrepreneurs, and the future generation of the village, at least in one city.

Fourth, including topics such as “Museums as Places of Knowledge”, “Our History of Museums”, “The Animal World of Uzbekistan”, “The Flora of Uzbekistan”, “Famous Children of Uzbekistan”, and “Famous Writers of Uzbekistan” in curricula requiring museum visits in all education systems will also enhance the love, pride, and knowledge of our homeland in our younger generation and contribute to its improvement.

Fifth, why do 5 million people visit the Louvre in France every year? Why do 5 million people visit the Metropolitan Museum in the United States every year? We must also take information such as visitor numbers seriously.

The Use of Museums in International Tourism

The second area is the development of museum tours for foreign tourists. Developing museum tours for foreign tourists poses quite complex and significant requirements. The first of these requirements is that a museum inviting foreign tourists must have an exhibition or exhibits of international significance. We also have many museums of international significance and interest.

As for the second requirement, the experience of world-renowned museums shows that educated, intelligent foreign tourists are, of course, primarily interested in the history of the population of the country they are visiting, its national culture, traditions—that is, ethnography. The results of an analysis of these two requirements show that we can confidently invite foreign tourists to all of our country’s museums. At the same time, we need to develop the latest technologies to utilize our world-class museums in international tourism. In this regard, the use of our museums, which are included in the UNESCO World Heritage List, in tourism is of great importance.

The results of the study indicate that the development of museum tourism in Uzbekistan is characterized by a gradual transition from a traditional model to a modern, service-oriented model. This transformation is reflected in the introduction of digital technologies, interactive exhibition formats, and improved visitor services.

The analysis shows that domestic museum tourism remains insufficiently developed. One of the main problems is the lack of systematic organization of museum tours, especially for educational institutions. Unlike the Soviet period, when museum visits were supported by state funding, current practices show limited cooperation between museums, schools, and tourism organizations.

At the same time, significant progress has been observed in the development of international museum tourism. Museums of international importance, such as the State Museum of the History of the Timurid Dynasty and the I.V. Savitsky Museum, attract foreign tourists and contribute to the international recognition of Uzbekistan’s cultural heritage.

The study also revealed that digitalization plays a key role in increasing the attractiveness of museum services. The introduction of virtual tours, multimedia exhibitions, and online promotion tools significantly expands the audience and improves service accessibility.

Furthermore, the comparative analysis of museum service models demonstrated that modern museums are increasingly integrated into tourism infrastructure, actively using digital marketing and providing multilingual services. However, challenges remain in terms of marketing effectiveness, investment attraction, and staff training.

Overall, the findings confirm that museum tourism has significant potential for further development and can become an important driver of economic growth and cultural exchange.

The identification, protection, and preservation of cultural and natural heritage recognized as having universal value throughout the world is one of UNESCO's main areas of activity. This focus is reflected in the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, adopted by UNESCO in 1972. Member States of the Convention may recommend the nomination of historical heritage sites located within their national territories for inscription on the World Heritage List.

The Republic of Uzbekistan joined this international convention in 1993. Under this convention, the following cultural heritage sites of Uzbekistan were inscribed on the World Heritage List:

- Ichan-Kala (1990);
- Historic Center of Bukhara (1993);
- Historic Center of Shakhrisabz (2000);
- Samarkand – Crossroads of Cultures (2001).

These cultural heritage sites inscribed on the World Heritage List are visited by tourists from all over the world. The development of museum tourism for foreign tourists, in particular visits to the State Museum of the History of the Timurid Dynasty in Tashkent, will also enhance the international reputation of our museums. This museum is visited by heads of state, who are the first to visit their homeland.

The Afrosiyob Museum in Samarkand, the I.V. Savitsky State Historical Museum, is one of the most visited museums in the world. As is well known, the Louvre Museum of the Francs is the most visited museum in the world. The French and Americans call the State Historical Museum named after I.V. Savitsky “The Louvre in the Desert”.

The development of domestic and international museum tourism in Uzbekistan has acquired strategic importance in recent years, diversifying tourism services and enhancing the competitiveness of the national tourism product. As noted in studies, modernizing museum infrastructure and introducing innovative service forms contribute to increased tourist flow and improved service quality. Of particular importance is the transition from the traditional museum model to a modern service-oriented model, which involves the digitalization of exhibitions, the development of interactive formats, and the active use of marketing promotion tools. Scientific literature emphasizes that the competitiveness of museum tourism directly depends on the level of technological equipment and integration into international tourist routes.

Table 1. Comparative characteristics of the state of museum services in Uzbekistan

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Traditional model (previously)</i>	<i>Current model (currently)</i>
Exhibition format	Static exhibits, text descriptions	Interactive panels, multimedia technologies
Promotion	Limited advertising, offline channels	Online promotion, social media, digital marketing
Tourist services	Basic excursions	Multilingual guides, audio guides, virtual tours

Infrastructure	Minimal tourism integration	Inclusion in national and international routes
Participation in international projects	Limited cooperation	Expanding international cultural exchange

An analysis of the presented data suggests a qualitative transformation of museum services in Uzbekistan. The current stage is characterized by active digitalization, improved service quality, and the increased integration of museums into the country's tourism system.

As a result of modernization, the attractiveness of cultural sites for foreign tourists is increasing, contributing to the growth of the export potential of tourism services and strengthening the country's international image. At the same time, there remains a need to further refine marketing strategies, increase investment activity, and train qualified museum management personnel.

In recent years, it has become known that foreigners everywhere refer to the I.V. Savitsky State Historical Museum in Karakalpakstan as the "Louvre in the Desert". The renowned Metropolitan Museum of Art in the United States was one of the first to recognize this museum as the most interesting museum in the world, rich in historical exhibits related to the development of humanity. We must effectively utilize this international advertising. Most importantly, we must create museum tours that meet international standards, museum infrastructure that meets international standards, and museum services that meet international standards. First and foremost, we must develop museum advertising that meets international standards and regularly showcase this advertising in international tourism markets.

Secondly, our hotels where foreign tourists stay must always have videos with detailed information about our museums, brochures, and promotional materials available to every foreign tourist free of charge. Third, museum management should enter into reciprocal agreements with hotels where foreign tourists stay. Due to climate conditions, and sometimes due to technical problems and other reasons, tourists are unable to travel along their routes. In international tourism, this situation is called "forced downtime". It is during this time that hotel management can organize museum tours for tourists.

4. Discussion

The findings of this study highlight the strategic importance of museum tourism as a component of cultural and educational tourism. The transition from traditional museum models to modern service-oriented systems reflects global trends in the tourism industry, where visitor experience and digital engagement play a central role.

The underdevelopment of domestic museum tourism indicates the need for stronger institutional coordination between museums, educational institutions, and tourism organizations. Integrating museum visits into educational programs and promoting cultural awareness among local populations can significantly increase domestic tourist flows.

The role of digitalization is particularly important in enhancing the competitiveness of museum tourism. The use of interactive technologies, virtual reality, and online platforms not only improves visitor experience but also enables museums to reach international audiences. This aligns with global best practices in museum management and tourism marketing.

The study also emphasizes the importance of effective marketing strategies. Museums must adopt modern digital marketing tools, including social media promotion, targeted advertising, and online booking systems, in order to attract both domestic and international tourists.

In addition, the integration of museums into international tourism routes and participation in global cultural projects can significantly enhance their visibility and attractiveness. The experience of world-renowned museums demonstrates that strong branding and international cooperation are key factors in achieving high visitor numbers.

Thus, the development of museum tourism in Uzbekistan requires a комплексный подход that combines infrastructure modernization, digital transformation, marketing development, and institutional cooperation.

5. Conclusion

The study revealed that the development of domestic and international museum tourism services in Uzbekistan is an important area for the structural modernization of the tourism industry and economic diversification. Museums are gradually transforming from traditional cultural and educational institutions into active participants in the tourism market, creating a competitive tourism product. It was established that the key factors driving the growth of museum tourism include the digitalization of museum spaces, the introduction of interactive technologies, the development of service infrastructure, and integration into national and international tourist routes. The positive dynamics of modernizing museum services contribute to the increased tourist appeal of historical centers such as Samarkand, Bukhara, and Khiva, strengthening the country's position in the global tourism market.

At the same time, problems related to insufficient marketing activity by individual museum institutions, the limited use of digital analytical tools, and the need to further improve the quality of service for international tourists were identified.

While researching the topic, we identified the following problems and expressed our scientific proposals to them, which include:

- develop a comprehensive museum tourism development strategy with a clear distinction between domestic and international promotion, including the creation of a unified digital platform for museum services.
- expanding the digitalization of museum activities through the implementation of virtual tours, mobile applications, online booking systems, and multilingual audio guides.
- fostering international cooperation through participation in global cultural projects, temporary exhibitions, and exchange programs will increase the visibility of national museums internationally.
- improving marketing policies through the use of digital marketing tools, targeted advertising, and promotion through social media and online tourism platforms.

Implementation of the proposed measures will enhance the competitiveness of museum tourism in Uzbekistan, strengthen its contribution to the development of the domestic tourism market, and increase the influx of foreign tourists, ensuring a sustainable socioeconomic impact.

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