

# Importance of Semiotics and How Well It Works in Virtual Museum's Space: A Study of a Few Signs for Social Impact in the Current Digital Age

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## Abstract:

In the current digital era, a study of graphic signage has a huge impact on how users connect with brands, how information is communicated, and how messages are interpreted. Visual communication is fundamentally the use of visual components to communicate ideas. Images, colours, shapes, typography, and symbols are the primary components of an impactful graphic sign that combine to produce a unified visual message. Significantly the Icons, symbols and index appeals directly to the viewer's senses, providing a quicker comprehension of the message than written communication, which relies on words to communicate information.

In this current digital phase, language barriers can be overcome and messages can be understood by a variety of audiences with the use of good Icons and symbols. The ability to draw in viewers and convey a clear message through images is more crucial than ever in an information-rich society.

The museum's most crucial communication tool is its public exhibits and displays. Regardless of the theme, method, or kind, a skilled designer will aim to improve communication by producing eye-catching displays that highlight the intended strengths in relation to the exhibition's goals, frequently by utilizing knowledge of semiotics and information graphics.

The widespread idea of a physical museum began to shift into the digital realm during the fastest-growing period of the technological revolution. Therefore, by creating some icons for a virtual vintage museum, the study attempts to explore the particular significance of semiotics.

**Keywords:** Digital era, Icons, visual message, vintage museum

## Introduction

The main source and importance of national identity represented by the nation's museums. It comprises the understanding of historical relics, artifacts, and antiquities from various eras. As museums of national importance, it is their duty to preserve and promote the authenticity of historical components that characterize a country's level of richness. The expanding appreciation of culture, cultural tourism, exceptional international exhibitions, and extensive marketing campaigns have all played a significant role in the museum revolution and the worldwide reputation of museums as places for leisure and education. Therefore, museums have developed into a social phenomenon with education and entertainment as their main goals. As a result, a range of museums that focus on all aspects of knowledge and human experience

have evolved. Among the many museums that have grown around the world are those that focus on archaeology, history, culture, natural science, art, architecture, seafaring, and other scientific disciplines. There are several different museums in India, both nationally and in various regions. In India, there are over 10,000 museums, with the Ministry of Culture regulating the operations of over 383 of them.

That museum has changed over time, just as other social institutions. Their ideas and purposes have changed over time. One way to describe the shift from a repository to an educational organization is as follows. The emphasis has moved from isolated things to ones that integrate visitors' experiences with an object's social natural connections.

The presence of visitors in museum exhibits is one of its distinctive characteristics. Since the beginning, the museum's most significant tools of communication have been its public exhibits and displays. An experienced designer will strive to improve communication by producing not only eye-catching displays but also by creating relevant signage that acts as a visual guide to inform viewers, regardless of the subject and approach.

But in the current digital era, virtual resources about any information system, including museums, are easily accessible to individuals all over the world. Compared to written communication, which uses words to convey information, the viewer can understand the message more quickly because of various graphic signs, which appeal immediately to their senses. In this techno driven period, museums use graphic signage to guide visitors around exhibits in a way that communicates the curator's intended meaning or lesson.

The durability of any tangible, solid item has a limit. Similarly, even after restoration, the majority of the museum's antiquities and artifacts have a specific lifespan. Over time, the authenticity of an artifact or an ancient object will eventually disappear. As a result, rather than concentrating on several restorations, the majority of museums worldwide are primarily focused on preserving the knowledge as a digital sign. The essential requirements for the study of signs for the museum system in the Indian context can be found here.

Signs, which are ideographic graphic symbols that are simple to learn, incredibly ubiquitous, and efficient at communicating information, are a common and efficient method of doing so. Its meaning is created, recognized, and interpreted by associations and memories formed by brain activity. Graphical communication aims to develop cross-language communication systems that completely avoid using words and rely only on visual signs.

In order to provide information about a particular context, the study aims to determine whether graphic signs can improve the user experience. The study area discusses the remarkable initiatives of National Digital Repository for Museums in order to digitalizing museums in india and the evolution of the spiritual sign "OM" over time, and it presents the entire information as a modern product "Calendar," which was released by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India. Additionally, the study attempts to investigate the unique significance of semiotics by creating a few icons for a virtual platform of a vintage museum.

### **(Background Study)-**

#### **The National Digital Repository's important role in digitizing museums in India-**

Regardless of the physical and geographic locations of museums, the National Digital Repository for Museums of India offers universal and integrated access to virtual theme-based collections and artifacts. Through a wide variety of digital collections featuring sculptures, paintings, manuscripts, weaponry, coins, and many other types of artifacts, the portal presents India's rich legacy. Students, educators, researchers,

and even visitors can access an extensive amount of information from virtual museums at any time and from any location. Ten national museums are available online through a single gateway, maybe for the first time in history. The Indian Government's Ministry of Culture is providing funding for this project. The national digital repository incorporates the digital collections made with JATAN: Virtual Museum Builder, making them accessible to the public via the national portal.

Through the technical expertise of the Center for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) in Pune and the Art Institute of Chicago, the Ministry of Culture developed standardized software called "Jatan" to be implemented in its museums as part of an ambitious project to digitize the collections of the museums under its control. The project's dual goals are to make effective use of technology in museum management and to make the collections of these museums more accessible to the public by making them available for online viewing over the internet.

A virtual museum helps in digital preservation and providing online access to heritage information resources for education, research and tourism. It can make the museum antiquities accessible online for the benefit of tourists, teachers, students and researchers. Museum antiquities can provide information about history of the civilization, lifestyle, culture, traditions, ancient knowledge of science and technology and overall human evolution.

### **Digital Preservation of Museums-**

In addition to offering online access to heritage information resources for study, teaching, and tourism, a virtual museum aids in digital preservation. It can help tourists, educators, students, and scholars by making museum treasures available online. The history of the civilization, way of life, culture, customs, ancient scientific and technological knowledge, and the general progress of humanity can all be learned from museum antiquities.

The expansion and modernization of the nation's museums is one of the Ministry of Culture's key responsibilities. Because they provide concrete examples of how a nation's culture and legacy have evolved throughout time, museums serve as a storehouse for that nation's culture. Thus, enhancing the nation's museums is a significant endeavor within the purview of the Ministry of Culture. The Ministry of Culture is in charge of several of India's most significant museums, including the National Museum in New Delhi, the Indian Museum and Victoria Memorial Hall in Kolkata, the Salar Jung Museum in Hyderabad, the Allahabad Museum, the Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalay (IGRMS) in Bhopal, and the three National Galleries of Modern Art in New Delhi, Mumbai, and Bengaluru, respectively. In addition to these, the Archaeological Survey of India operates site museums at 44 locations near significant Archaeological sites around the nation.

### **Implementation-**

As explained below, ten chosen Museums of the Ministry/Archaeological Survey of India have adopted the Jatan software in the first phase of the digitization project:

National Museum, New Delhi

Indian Museum, Kolkata

Victoria Memorial Hall, Kolkata

National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi

National Gallery of Modern Art, Mumbai

National Gallery of Modern Art, Bengaluru

Allahabad Museum  
 Salar Jung Museum, Hyderabad  
 Nagarjunakonda Museum  
 Goa Museum

By doing this background study we can understand that ministry of culture’s National Digital repository portal has a vision to provide quality service with better user experience in terms of accessibility. In the web portal- “Museums of India” The first phase of digitalization project mostly focusses on photographic documentation and partly making 3D models for the digital repository. For the further scope of developing the virtual museums in the country the study of sign might become very crucial to make a wider social impact in this changing digital era.

**A study on a product representing the Evolution of the Sign “OM” published by the Ministry of Culture-**

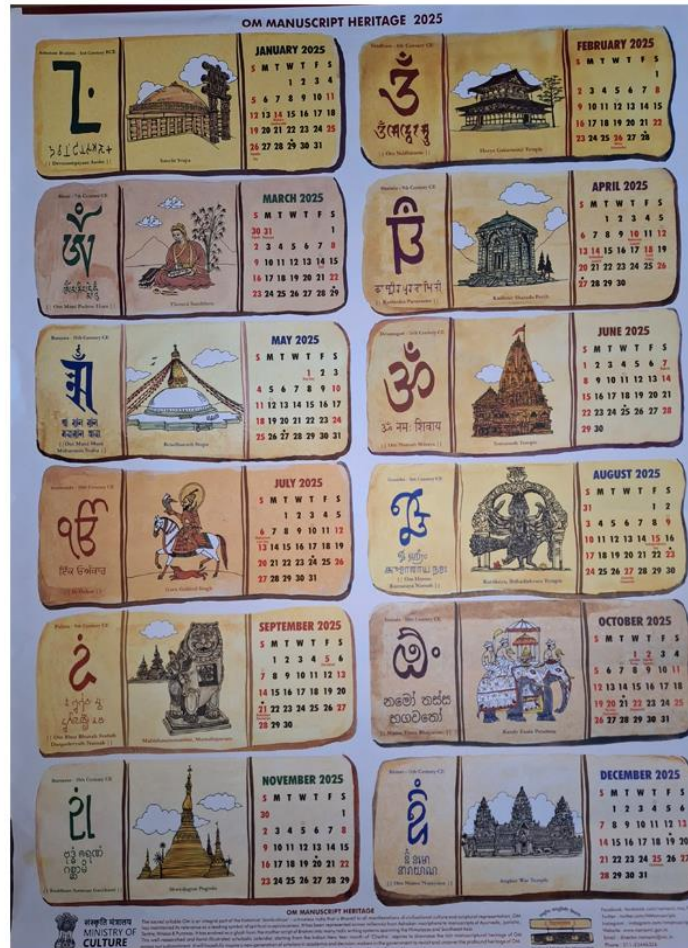
An essential component of the historical "Jambudvipa"—the eternal India that is Bharat—is the sacred phrase OM. OM has remained a prominent emblem of spiritual auspiciousness in all forms of Scriptural depiction and civilizational culture. From Ashokan Inscriptions to Ayurvedic, Jyotisha Tantra, Itihasa, and Puranic writings, it has been depicted for millennia. From the Bramhi mother script, it has developed into a sign that is used in other iconic writing systems throughout Southeast Asia and the Himalayas. The calendar highlights the rich manuscriptural tradition of OM throughout our Subcontinent by showcasing several representations.



**(Image 1.1- Various symbols of OM in different time frames-Image retrieve from the Sanskrit researcher and retired Teacher- Mr Arun Sarma in Assam )**

The study's most intriguing finding was that the signs' varied color schemes represent various time periods in various locations. The audience of the modern era is completely unfamiliar with the OM sign variation. In order to help the viewers, relate to each version of the OM in a particular time period, the designer

created a pictorial composition. An excellent illustration of a thoroughly researched study of signs is this illustrated scholastic calendar of the Evolution of OM, which was produced by Dr. Anirban Dash and Harsha Tsering Nagaraju. This product can be used in Indian museums as a kind of online repository for national heritage.



(Image-1.2- Image of the Product calendar representing the various sign of OM, retrieved from the Sanskrit Researcher and retired Teacher- Mr Arun Sarma in Assam)

**To find out the extent of the enormous social impact, certain attempts were made to create signs for a virtual vintage museum-**

In addition to studying the three main components of signs—the signified, the signifier, and the interpretent—seminotics also examines the foundations of visual interpretation. As a result, the students' main concern when making vintage signs is the social impact of visual interpretation, which they achieve by simplifying simple forms with a particular color scheme that corresponds with the object's surroundings. In comparison to certain regions of the world, the virtual platform of the vintage museum concept has not taken off in India. As a result, this project could have a significant effect on the future development of India's national museum culture both domestically and abroad.

**Design of a Vintage Car Sign 01-**

Pranay Pandey, a student at JECRC University's School of Design, has created a set of vintage car signs

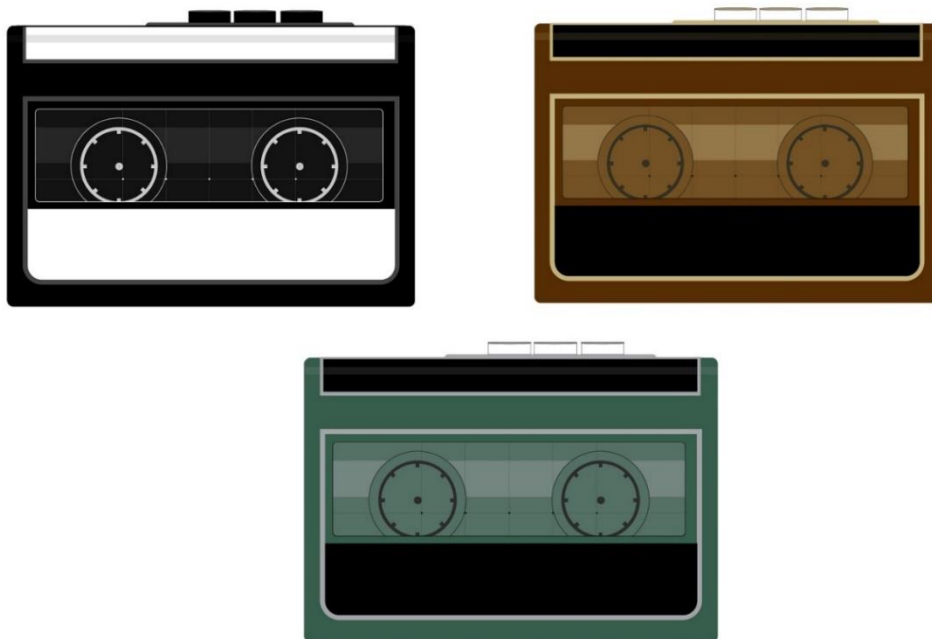
using a simple color scheme in an effort to fulfil the fundamental objective of visual representation.



(Image-2.1 Images of the variation of sign for Vintage Car designed by Mr. Pranay Pande)y

#### Design of Vintage Audio Cassettes Sign- 02-

Mr. Vidansh Verma, a student at JECRC University School of Design, created the second series of the sign with a primary focus on using subtle color with simple form. As digital technology grows, audio cassettes are gradually going extinct. As a result, this effort might build a link between modern phase of digital developments and the origin of electronics innovation.

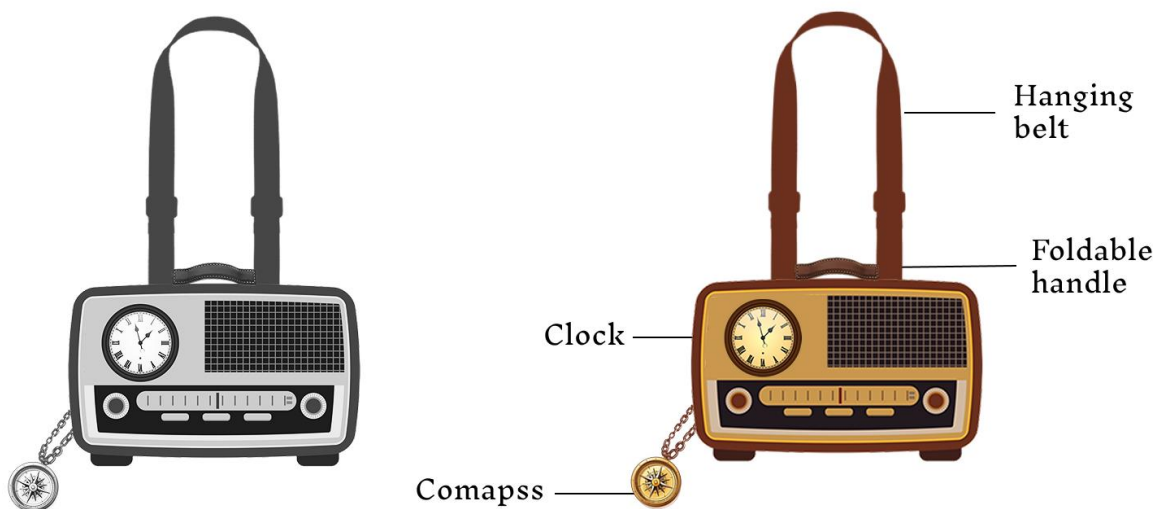


(Image-2.2 images of the Vintage Audio Cassettes Sign designed Mr. Vidansh Verma)

### Design of a Vintage Travel Friendly Radio Sign-03-

Ms. Kriti Arora has attempted to combine a number of antique motifs into a single composition during the design research of the Travel Friendly Radio's Sign. The visual components of the travel-friendly radio sign, which included a clock, a folding handle, a hanging belt, and a compass, created a symbolic depiction of a vintage multipurpose gadget. In order to give viewers a conceptual narrative throughout the platform for the virtual vintage museums in India, this unique representation has the potential to have a significant social influence in this changing digital era.

## TRAVEL FRIENDLY RADIO



(Image-2.3 image of the Vintage Travel friendly Redio Sign designed by Ms. Kriti Arora)

### Result and Conclusion-

The study led to the realization that semiotics is now crucial for both creating a place of futuristic social influence in the field of information graphics and for creating an effective visual communication. A well-researched genre of sign system can alter the conventional approach of capturing information in any field in modern culture, and the digital age demands time-effective conversation. The students' primary attention during the sign-design process is on using the context specific colors and pertinent shapes of the vintage items to create a global visual effect.

In order to establish a universal language-based communication system that entirely reduce the uses of words and relies only on visual sign in the museum's virtual realm, the study accomplished its main goals by carrying out an initial survey on this area of study of design.

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5. The primary resource of variation of OM is collected through field survey.