

Design of a technological tool as a marketing innovation strategy to promote handcrafted textiles from Santa Maria Zacatepec

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Craft products from traditional towns are beginning to be replaced with imported goods, a situation that promotes a loss of identity. Santa María Zacatepec in the Mixteca Alta of the state of Oaxaca is a town located in the Republic of Mexico, with a population (2020) of 17,100 habitants (47.6% men and 52.4% women) where 30 families (120 habitants) are dedicated today to the elaboration of hand-embroidered blanket huipiles. The objective of this study is the design a digital platform as a marketing innovation strategy to promote artisanal textiles. The information is collected through qualitative research, through a series of personal interviews. The result is the design of a digital page that promotes and sells artisan products online.

Keywords: Handmade textiles, digital platform, innovation in marketing, Santa María Zacatepec

I. INTRODUCTION

The artisan workshops constitute an important challenge because they are considered subsistence companies (Hernández-Ascanio et al., 2016). In the area of the Central Valleys of Oaxaca, artisan workshops are one of the greatest assets of the entity, even though their continuity is in danger of disappearing since the new generations are not interested in continuing with the artisan tradition (Medase & Barasa, 2019). Over the years, the work of artisans has developed amid many difficulties that slow down their competitiveness, because they have fewer material resources, which means that these businesses have to carry out innovations in their productive practices (Cuevas-Vargas et al., 2020). Measuring economic performance in subsistence businesses is complicated since they rarely have accounting records (Yrigoyen, 2011) they do not have control over their sales (Hernández Girón et al., 2007) and they operate with deficiencies in the administrative process (Coca Carasila, 2006) which makes it difficult to specify the productivity of the artisanal sector.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Cultura y Desarrollo, 6: Dinámica de La Artesanía Latinoamericana Como Factor de Desarrollo Económico, Social y Cultural - UNESCO Biblioteca Digital, n.d.) recognizes that the artisanal sector plays a decisive role in local economic development and the fight against poverty, basically because artisanal productions are carried out by populations with similar characteristics, even in the so-called first world countries, some still native; therefore, the craft activity is developed in the five continents. On the other hand, the opening of Latin American economies in macroeconomic contexts brings to the fore the need to technologically modernize micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (Mi-PyMEs) in different sectors and face the challenges of international competitiveness.

The artisanal sector is immersed within the classification of Mi-PyMEs, whose economic relevance resides in the fact that they constitute 99.8% of the companies in Mexico. Organizations of this type are found throughout the country and the world, constituting an important factor in the economic system, both for its contribution to employment and for its contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). In Mexico, these companies generate 52% of GDP and contribute 72% of formal jobs (Hernández Ramírez et al., 2011).

Innovation has an important role in the performance of artisan workshops, Hernández Girón et al., (2007) analyze the internal and external factors of innovation used by artisans in Mexico, where knowledge in workshop management is more relevant than administrative knowledge as an explanatory factor for innovation in this type of business. Innovation allows improvements and modifications to products, processes, procedures, and the ways of marketing the products (Guerrero-Sánchez, 2021) as well as administrative innovation in artisan businesses through the forms of organization, distribution of work and products; as well as new marketing methods such as the use of digital platforms (Correa García & González Acolt, 2017) that have eliminated geolocation and information

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exchange barriers in the trade of goods and services and also in relationships (García-Mogollón, 2020). The innovations show that these have a determining role in the development of artisan businesses (Medase & Barasa, 2019) and has led to the integration of synthetic fibers, diversification, notable improvements and higher quality in artisan products, the inclusion of instruments of modern work methods that increase production (Correa García & González Acolt, 2017).

A digital platform is a technology-enabled business model that creates value by facilitating exchanges between two or more interdependent groups (Major et al., 2020). In the case of transactional type platforms, they connect users with producers and facilitate the sharing of information to strengthen collaboration or innovation in products and services. On the other hand, non-transactional platforms like Facebook, Instagram, etc., connect people and sponsors to your target audience.

Throughout the Mexican Republic, there is artisan activity, with Oaxaca being the main producer, followed by Guerrero, Veracruz, Chiapas, Jalisco, Mexico, Michoacán, and Puebla. The state of Oaxaca is the most representative, its artisan production includes black clay, ceramics, chilleria, carved wood, gold and jewelry, saddlery, and textiles, to name the most important. The alebrijes, famous in Mexico and the world, show his creativity and ingenuity, made from the copal tree, native to Oaxaca and from which incense is extracted for the altars of the dead. However, it is difficult for small communities to appear on this list, as in the case of the municipality of Santa María Zacatepec; this municipality is located in the District of Putla, in the Mixteca Alta, having its history as descendants of the faculties whose existence is recorded in a pictographic document that dates back to the government of 11 Tigre. This group has preserved part of its territory, distinctive clothing, and some cultural traits that mark differences concerning the rest of the Mixtecs until today.

Within its culture, the Municipality has fascinating gastronomy, which is distinguished by using elements of the region, such as the milpa: local varieties of corn, chili (costeño), and rod beans, there are also various types of pumpkin, holy grass, epazote, candó, iguana tail, tindoyo, samaritan, veliján leaves, huchicata, and avocado; little ear (mushroom), Creole green banana, as well as endemic animal species: frog legs (lecue), bilolos pots, chilolos, river worms, crabs, river shrimp, ants, chicatanas and wasp nests.

This population has been characterized by maintaining its culture and ethnic roots, through various festivities, traditions, and artistic manifestations. One of the most distinctive characteristics of the tacuates of Santa María Zacatepec, in the Sierra Sur of Oaxaca, is the masculine dress that some men from

the community still keep. The main element of the costume consists of cotton woven on a backstrap loom, with a remarkably long central canvas that is folded in half and cut to form a V-neck. On the shoulders, there are frayed and embroidered stripes that connect the canvas. central with sleeves made up of other hand-woven canvases. Typically at least one frayed stripe is repeated below the neckline, with brocaded and embroidered designs around it so that it almost resembles a collar. The ends of the cotton are tied to the sash, above the calzón (chatu), to create a kind of bag in front and the set of these elements distinguish the suit from the other neighboring Mixtec, Amuzgo, and Triqui peoples, notably the coordinated combination of pre-Hispanic techniques (brocade) and European techniques (embroidery and fraying).

In Zacatepec the tacuates continue producing their own cotton (white and coyuchi) in a limited way and some people even still spin with malacate (chiti kata), local clothing is increasingly made from shirts and huipiles of commercial blanket embroidered with thread industrial. There are few people who weave on the backstrap loom and even fewer who work with brocade. Curiously, many of the women have adopted the iconography of the men, embroidering rows of zoomorphic figures that cover the front of their huipiles (xikun) in one block.

In order to promote artisan textiles from the community of Santa María Zacatepec, a digital platform was designed as a marketing innovation strategy.

HYPOTHESIS

The design of a digital platform has an impact on economic development by favoring the commercialization of artisan Textiles from Santa María Zacatepec.

II.METHODOLOGY

The information is collected through qualitative research, through a series of directed personal interviews with the mayor, coordinator of the Santa María Zacatepec Textile Project, Councilor for Culture and Tourism, Councilor for Ecology, Councilor for Sports (administration 2023-2025), and the members registered craftsmen.

III.RESULTS

Analysis of the environment of Santa María Zacatepec:

The total population of the municipality in 2020 was 17,100 people, which represented 0.4% of the population in the state.

- In the same year, there were 3,423 households in the municipality (0.4% of the total households in the state), of

which 988 were headed by female heads of household (0.4% of the state's total).

- The average size of households in the municipality was 4.4 members, while in the state the average size was 4 members.
- The average level of schooling of the population aged 15 or over in the municipality was 5.3 in 2010, compared to the average level of schooling of 6.9 in the entity.
- In 2020, 11,900 individuals (87.2% of the total population) were in poverty, of which 5,069 (37.1%) had moderate poverty and 6,832 (50.1%) were in extreme poverty .
- In 2020, the condition of educational backwardness affected 45.7% of the population, which means that 6,234 individuals presented this social deprivation.
- In the same year, the percentage of people without access to health services was 51%, equivalent to 6,961 people.
- The lack of access to social security affected 91.5% of the population, that is, 12,488 people were under this condition.
- The percentage of individuals who reported living in homes with poor quality materials and insufficient space was 40.3% (5,502 people).
- The percentage of people who reported living in homes without the availability of basic services was 74.8%, which means that housing conditions are not adequate for 10,207 people.
- The incidence of lack of access to food was 31%, that is, a population of 4,235 people.

Is observed in the indicators presented the complex social situation of the inhabitants of said municipality, which justifies the importance of the implementation of the digital platform for the commercialization of the textiles of this population, in this way it can help to improve the economic conditions and social at least of the artisans and their families, of course, a second stage of this project is the attraction of tourists to this destination, who can visit the different textile workshops, traditional cooks, Atotonilco hot springs among other attractions and tourist activities.

A variety of visits were made to each of the artisans in their homes, with the aim of collecting the material as shown in the following figure.





Figure 1. Interviews with artisans in their workshops

Therefore, a database of photographs of the huipiles was generated, for advertising material, whose proudly wear these garments are members of the same artisan families, as shown in the Figure 2 and 3.



Figure 2. Blanket huipil from Santa María Zacatepec
The photograph was taken by the researcher



Figure 3. Blanket huipil from Santa María Zacatepec
The photograph was taken by the researcher

On the other hand, to provide identity to the digital platform to commercialize the textiles of Santa María Zacatepec (Figures 2 and 3) and with them generate a greater reach of market segments and develop a brand positioning, a tourism branding (brand development for tourism purposes) that is presented below (Figure 4).



Figure 4. Tourist branding of Santa María Zacatepec
The photograph was taken by the researcher

Whose meaning is based on the belief that a very large eagle with 2 heads, took and ate the inhabitants, fearing to be victims, a group of people emigrated to Ixtayutla and others to Santa María Zacatepec, explain the elders in an interview.

Due to the above, the two-headed eagle is an element that is very common to find in the embroidery of textiles, so it was considered to include this element in the branding, another element considered only the three rings that symbolize the three hot springs. of Atotonilco, Santa María Zacatepec, it is known of the importance of having an image or logo for the positioning of products and services and course of tourist destinations, in this case, said the logo will represent a brand of all textiles made by artisans from Santa Maria Zacatepec.

On the other hand, the online store has the elements of customs and traditions, traditional cuisine, ecotourism, and, of course, the online store for the sale of textiles (Figure 5).



Figure 5. Digital platform



IV.PERSPECTIVES

The craft activity in Mexico needs to be supported, not only from the governmental sphere, but also from the academic sphere, with proposals of a social, economic, technological and administrative nature to ensure that it is not seen as a means of survival for marginalized groups, but rather encourages them to have a life with less social and economic gloom, and thereby reduce the extreme poverty in which many rural communities find themselves that with their handicraft products make some homes of families with greater economic power shine.

However, there is still a lot to be do, especially in terms of innovation. Statistical data does not allow for clear and defined information, since the artisanal activity is not broken down in the population censuses or in the National Institute of Statistic and Geography (INEGI) economic censuses, which is why it is difficult to know its reality in detail, even though throughout the country there is a craft activity, especially in rural areas. As part of the comprehensive project, to promote the development of the community, there is a Tourism Development Plan, that involves other aspects promoted by the municipal authorities of Zacatepec (2023-2025 administration). Digital marketing has allowed small companies to compete with the largest on equal terms, playing an increasingly important role in the overall marketing strategy, so another important point is that the platforms can display information in various languages.

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