

**Business Plan for a National «Hellas Liberty» Ship Memorial Museum**  
**Επιχειρηματικό Σχέδιο για το Εθνικό Μουσείο Μνήμης Πλοίου «Ελλάς Λίμπερτυ»**

**Τμήμα Ναυτιλιακών Σπουδών**

**Ξανθή Μόρφη**

**ΑΜ: ΜΝ 06020**

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## 1 Executive Summary

This Strategic Business Plan focuses on the project to convert the liberty ship *SS Arthur M. Huddell* (now known as Liberty Hellas) into a floating museum to be called National Liberty Ship Memorial Museum. This business plan includes the following aspects: mission statement, core principles, strategic goals, start-up costs, business description, brief history of liberty ships, business environment analysis, market analysis, promotional strategy, SWOT analysis, distribution strategy, pricing strategy, staffing strategy, management strategy, and museum operations and activities.

Some of the key issues regarding the conversion of the liberty ship include funding, repairs, restoration and efficient management team. Estimated cost for the repair and restoration of the World War II ship is more than \$5 million, and possible sources of funding include public and private sectors, community investors, and government agencies. The aforementioned amount includes expenses for museum facilities, information technology infrastructure, necessary equipment and materials, among others.

On the other hand, some of the key issues affecting museum industry are the following: the ongoing financial global, global terrorism and competition. Short-term goals and long-term goals have also been identified. Long-term goals include strategic plans for the museum: to be a prominent and remarkable public attraction in Greece and in the Mediterranean region; to be a significant educational and historical destination and resource in the areas of war history and World War II events; and to offer a unique personal and family experiences, nostalgia and information.

The floating museum also has the following missions: to manage and preserve the last liberty ship; to promote the floating museum not only to the Greeks but also to the rest of the world; to administer the museum's personal property and rights; to obtain and manage historical objects and artifacts related to World War II; and to publish history books and journals of World War II liberty ships.

Regarding competition, the museum will target all people regardless of sex, age, economic status or profession. However, students will be the main targets of the museum since there is a plan to offer educational tour and activities as part of the museum's plan to offer unique and satisfactory experience to visitors. In regard to marketing strategy, the following strategies will be adopted: television and radio appearances prior to the official opening of the floating museum; press releases and newspaper accounts on the floating museum; partnership with government agencies and the tourism department, as well as with private entities engaged in travel and tour venture; establishment of online links with tourism and museum websites; launching of an official website where online visitors can be informed of museum activities, exhibition schedules, products, and other relevant information, etc.

A museum website will also be launched to serve as the main source of information about the floating museum. The website will have the following contents: pertinent documents and information about the museum; museum history; membership portal; news updates; exhibitions; and public programs, among others. A SWOT analysis also yields a positive result, since the number of *strengths* and *opportunities* outweigh the number of *weaknesses* and *threats*. For instance, the floating museum has the following strengths: uniqueness and transportability; its capacity to offer unique and satisfactory experience to visitors; pre-existing popularity; its one-of-its-kind feature; accessibility, among others.

Regarding management, what is needed is a clear management structure to successfully manage the museum. The highest governing body of the museum is the Board of National Liberty Ship Memorial Museum, which is authorized to manage and control the museum and all historical and technological collections, natural history and other assets contain therein. Several processes also need to be adopted in order to ensure effective management, such as the following: operational and strategic planning; risk management planning; reporting and monitoring; internal and external audit and reporting; record management, etc.

## 1.1 Ελληνική Περίληψη

Το παρόν Επιχειρηματικό Σχέδιο επικεντρώνεται στο εγχείρημα της μετατροπής του πλοίου liberty με όνομα ‘SS Arthur M. Huddell’ (γνωστού ως Liberty Hellas) σε πλωτό μουσείο, το οποίο θα ονομαστεί Εθνικό Μουσείο Μνήμης Πλοίου Liberty.

Στο επιχειρησιακό πλάνο περιλαμβάνονται τα ακόλουθα στοιχεία: αποστολή, βασικές αρχές, στρατηγικοί στόχοι, κόστος εκκίνησης, περιγραφή της επιχείρησης, σύντομη ιστορία των πλοίων liberty, ανάλυση επιχειρηματικού περιβάλλοντος, ανάλυση αγοράς, στρατηγική προώθησης, ανάλυση SWOT, στρατηγική διανομής, τιμολογιακή στρατηγική, στρατηγική στελέχωσης, στρατηγική διαχείριση, λειτουργία και δραστηριότητες του μουσείου.

Μεταξύ των θεμάτων εν σχέση προς τη μετατροπή του πλοίου liberty, περιλαμβάνονται η χρηματοδότηση, η επισκευή και αποκατάσταση καθώς και η δημιουργία μίας αποτελεσματικής ομάδας διαχείρισης. Το κόστος για την επισκευή και αποκατάσταση του πλοίου του Β΄ Παγκοσμίου Πολέμου υπολογίζεται ότι θα ξεπεράσει τα 5 εκατομμύρια δολάρια, ενώ πιθανές πηγές χρηματοδότησης είναι ο δημόσιος και ο ιδιωτικός τομέας, άλλοι επενδυτές και κυβερνητικοί φορείς. Περιλαμβάνονται δαπάνες για τη διαμόρφωση μουσειακών χώρων, τη μηχανογραφική υποδομή, τον απαραίτητο υλικοτεχνικό εξοπλισμό και λοιπά έξοδα. Βεβαίως υπάρχουν και σημαντικά προβλήματα που επηρεάζουν τον κλάδο των μουσείων, όπως π.χ. η συνεχιζόμενη παγκόσμια οικονομική ύφεση, η παγκόσμια τρομοκρατία και ο ανταγωνισμός.

Στο πλάνο έχουν προσδιοριστεί οι βραχυπρόθεσμοι και μακροπρόθεσμοι στόχοι. Στους μακροπρόθεσμους στόχους περιλαμβάνεται το στρατηγικό σχέδιο το μουσείο για το πλοίο σύμφωνα με το οποίο το πλοίο σκοπεύει: να αποτελέσει χαρακτηριστικό και σημαντικό πόλο έλξης για το κοινό στην Ελλάδα και στην ευρύτερη περιοχή της Μεσογείου, να καταστεί σημαίνων εκπαιδευτικός και ιστορικός προορισμός και πηγή πληροφόρησης σχετικά με την πολεμική ιστορία και τα γεγονότα του Β΄ Παγκοσμίου Πολέμου και να προσφέρει ενημέρωση και μοναδικές προσωπικές και οικογενειακές.

Αποστολή του μουσείου είναι: η διοίκηση, η προστασία και η συντήρηση του τελευταίου εναπομείναντος πλοίου τύπου liberty. Η προώθησή του σε ολόκληρο τον κόσμο, η διαχείριση της ατομικής ιδιοκτησίας και των δικαιωμάτων του μουσείου, η απόκτηση και διαχείριση ιστορικών αντικειμένων και τεχνουργημάτων συναφή προς τον Β΄ Παγκόσμιο Πόλεμο καθώς και η δημοσίευση βιβλίων ιστορίας και περιοδικών εκδόσεων για τα πλοία τύπου liberty στον Β΄ Παγκοσμίο Πόλεμο.

Όσον αφορά στον ανταγωνισμό, το μουσείο θα απευθύνεται σε όλους, ανεξαρτήτως φύλου, ηλικίας, οικονομικής κατάστασης και επαγγέλματος. Κυρίως όμως, το μουσείο θα απευθύνεται σε μαθητές, καθώς προγραμματίζεται η παροχή εκπαιδευτικών ξεναγήσεων και δραστηριοτήτων στο πλαίσιο του ευρύτερου πλάνου του να προσφέρει στους επισκέπτες μία μοναδική εμπειρία.

Ως προς τη στρατηγική marketing, θα υιοθετηθούν οι εξής στρατηγικές: παρουσιάσεις στην τηλεόραση και στο ραδιόφωνο πριν από τα επίσημα εγκαίνια του πλωτού μουσείου, δελτία τύπου και σχετικά άρθρα στις εφημερίδες, συνεργασία με Δημόσιες Υπηρεσίες και το Υπουργείο Τουρισμού καθώς και με ιδιωτικές επιχειρήσεις που ασχολούνται με την οργάνωση ταξιδίων και εκδρομών, δημιουργία ηλεκτρονικών συνδέσεων (online links) με ιστοσελίδες τουρισμού και μουσείων, ανάρτηση επίσημου ιστοχώρου στον οποίο θα μπορούν οι ηλεκτρονικοί επισκέπτες να ενημερώνονται για τις δραστηριότητες του μουσείου, τις ώρες λειτουργίας της έκθεσης, τα προϊόντα και άλλες σχετικές πληροφορίες, κτλ. Ο ηλεκτρονικός ιστοχώρος του μουσείου θα αποτελεί την βασική πηγή πληροφόρησης με τα ακόλουθα περιεχόμενα: κείμενα και πληροφορίες σχετικές με το μουσείο, ιστορική αναδρομή, portal μελών, ανακοινώσεις, εκθέσεις, προγράμματα για το κοινό και άλλα.

Η ανάλυση SWOT καταλήγει σε θετικό αποτέλεσμα καθώς ο αριθμός των *δυνατών σημείων* και των *ευκαιριών* ξεπερνά τον αριθμό των *αδύνατων σημείων* και των *απειλών*. Το πλωτό μουσείο έχει μεταξύ άλλων, τα εξής δυνατά σημεία: μοναδικότητα και δυνατότητα μετακίνησης, ικανότητα να προσφέρει μοναδική και ικανοποιητική εμπειρία στους επισκέπτες, προϋπάρχουσα δημοτικότητα, χαρακτήρα μοναδικό στο είδος του και εύκολη πρόσβαση..

Ως προς τη διοίκηση, για την επιτυχή διαχείριση του, είναι απαραίτητη μια ξεκάθαρη διοικητική δομή. Ο ανώτερος φορέας διοίκησης του μουσείου είναι το Διοικητικό Συμβούλιο του Εθνικού Μουσείου Μνήμης Πλοίου Liberty, το οποίο θα έχει την αρμοδιότητα να διαχειρίζεται και να ελέγχει το μουσείο και όλες τις ιστορικές και τεχνολογικές συλλογές, τα αντικείμενα φυσικής ιστορίας και άλλα περιουσιακά στοιχεία τα οποία περιέχονται εντός αυτού. Κρίνεται απαραίτητο να υιοθετηθούν διαδικασίες προκειμένου να εξασφαλισθεί αποτελεσματική διοίκηση, όπως: Επιχειρησιακός και στρατηγικός σχεδιασμός, σχεδιασμός διαχείρισης κινδύνου, σύνταξη και υποβολή εκθέσεων, παρακολούθηση, εσωτερικός και εξωτερικός οικονομικός έλεγχος, οργάνωση και διαχείριση αρχείων.



Picture of Hellas liberty arriving in Piraeus

## 1.2 Prologue

This Business Plan for a National Hellas Liberty Ship Memorial Museum, is being proposed to be a floating museum to preserve a vital piece of history and create a lasting reminder of the strong ties between Greece and the United States. The liberty ship, called The *Arthur M. Huddell* is the last of the Liberty Ships vessels which played a vital role in the efforts of the United States to aid European allies during World War II and during the Cold War years. For years, the *Huddell* had been anchored off Fort Eustis in Newport News Virginia and managed by the United States Maritime Administration. In 2008, the *Arthur M. Huddell* liberty ship was transferred to Piraeus, Greece to become a floating museum after a memorandum of understanding signed between the United States and Greece.

The Business Plan looks into the marketing, financial and administrative viability of managing the floating museum. This Coursework provides convincing evidences, backed by reliable statistical and demographic data and solid research that showed that putting up the National Hellas Liberty Ship Memorial Museum would be highly desirable and profitable. The governments of Greece and the United States will both profit from this business venture as it will promote global tourism and appreciation for the role of liberty ships during the World War II.

Future generations will benefit from the uniqueness, accessibility, and transportability of the floating museum because it will not only be a permanent attraction of Greece but the museum can be transported anywhere in the world. As the symbol of freedom, the *Hellas liberty ship*, the last of its kind, will be preserved and will continue to advocate the global piece.

Knowing the impact that the National Hellas Liberty Ship Memorial Museum will have on preserving the history and heritage of World War II to Greece and to the rest of the world, it is therefore highly recommended that this business plan be approved and implemented at the earliest convenience.

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## 2 The Liberty Ships

The term “Liberty Ships” refers to EC2 type ships that were designed and constructed by the United States Maritime Commission for use during the World War II<sup>1</sup>. The World War II had various nations invest huge amount of resources in efforts to improve their attack and defense military strategies<sup>2</sup>. The liberty ships though built by the US were British in conception. The ships were quick and cheap to build. Between 1941 and 1945, about 2,751 liberty ships were built. This makes the liberty ships the largest number of ships that were built using a single design. The US showed immense effort when it came to the building of the liberty ships. These ships carried about 12 to 25 Naval Armed Guard and a crew of about 41. During the World War II, about 200 liberty ships have been estimated to have been destroyed by explosions, torpedoes, mines, and Kamikazes (weaponry used by the Axis).

Since the liberty ships were constructed for use during the World War II, they had a stein-mounted 4-in (102mm) deck gun. The gun was used to fight against the surfaced submarines. In addition, the liberty ships had several types of anti-aircraft guns. Each Liberty ship had the following characteristics; Length: 441 feet, 6 inches, Beam: 56 feet 10 3/4 inches, Dead Weight: Tonnage 7,000 tons: Cargo carried: 9,140 tons. Draught: 27 feet, 9 1/4 inches, Crew: 41 and Speed: 11 to 11.5 knots.

One of the liberty ships referred to as *SS Patrick Henry* that was launched on September 27, 1941, while another one referred to as *Robert E. Peary* was built for about four days. Due to its role during the war, a liberty ship was designed to carry about 440 tanks, 230 million rounds of ammunition, and 2,840 jeeps. The names given to the ships were adopted in honor of prominent Americans such as *SS Patrick Henry* and those who signed the Declaration of Independence. Apart from naming these ships in honor of prominent Americans, groups that were able to raise about \$2 million in war bonds were given an opportunity to suggest a name for the ships. For instance, one liberty ship was named after the founder of 4-H movement. Examples of liberty ship that survived the war are the *SS Jeremiah O’ Brien* and *SS John Brown* and *SS Arthur M. Huddell*, now known as *Hellas Liberty*.

## 2.1 History

Liberty ships were produced in mass in order to assist the allies' armed forces to fight the Axis forces during the World War II. The liberty ships were built as a result of the passing of the American Merchant Marine Act in 1936. This Act was passed in order to subsidize the construction of commercial vessels which were supposed to be used as naval auxiliaries by the United States Navy during the World War II. By 1940, about 200 ships were being constructed each year. These ships were powered by steam turbines and they comprised of three types of merchant vessels and a tanker. However, limited industrial capacity (turbine construction) was one setback in the construction and building of these ships. In 1940, American shipyards built simple and fairly large ships for the British government which had requested for the ships in order to boost the merchant fleet and to replace those ships that were lost during the war.



Picture of a Liberty Ship

The ships were referred to as Ocean Class ships and they had 2,500 horse power. The first Ocean Class ship was referred to as *Ocean Vanguard*. This ship was launched in 1941 (16<sup>th</sup> August). It was this design that was modified by the United States Maritime Commission with the aim of conforming to the American construction practices. Furthermore, the commission wanted to make ships that were quick and cheaper to construct<sup>3</sup>. The US version was referred to as EC2-S-C1 (where EC stands for Emergency Cargo, 2 for a ship measuring about 140 m long, S for Steam engine, and 'C1' for the C1 design). This new design of ships had welding replace riveting and was adopted as the Merchant Marine Act design<sup>4</sup>.

By 1941, the Defense Aid Supplemental Appropriations Act had the number of lend-lease ships increase to 200. By April the same year, the number again increased to 306, with about 117 of the ships being liberty ships. As compared to ships that were built much earlier, the liberty ships were constructed by welding together sections instead of riveting. The welding together sections of the ships reduced the labor costs. Since welded ships had not earlier been built, a new work force had to be trained on how to do the welding. As the World War II began, more women enlisted in the armed forces. These women got employed in shipyards to replace men who went to the war. The first fleet of liberty ships was launched on 27<sup>th</sup> September 1941. One of the ships was referred to as *SS Patrick Henry*, and it was launched by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. It is the Presidents' Roosevelt statement that the new class of ships would give liberty to Europe during the launch that led to the adoption of the name "Liberty Ships"<sup>5</sup>.

On average, it took about 42 days to build a single ship. The building of *Robert E. Peary* took about 4 days making it the liberty ship that was built within the shortest time frame during that time. By 1943, about three new liberty ships were built each day. The first American ship to sink a German-made surface combatant was a liberty ship referred to as *SS Stephen Hopkins*. This ship sank a *German Stier* during a ship-to-ship gun battle which took place in 1942<sup>6</sup>. Another liberty ship, *SS Richard Montgomery* was destroyed during the war, leaving behind a wreck of the ship with about 1,500 tons of explosives aboard. A well known instance is the port Chicago disaster whereby about 320 sailors and civilians were killed as one of the liberty ships (*SS E.A Bryan*) was being loaded with 2,000 tons of TNT in July 1944.

The ship detonated to cause the death of the sailors and the civilians<sup>7</sup>. The *SS Albert M. Boe* was the last Liberty ship to be built and it was launched on 26 September 1945. The ship was named in honor of the United States Army Freighter chief engineer. Boe was being recognized for his courageous act, where he had after a 1945 explosion remained below decks so as to shut down the engine. This even won him a Merchant Marine Distinguished Service Medal.

## 2.2 Construction

An American Industrialist, Henry J. Kaiser is acknowledged for his role in the construction of liberty ships. It was him who speeded up liberty ships production by introducing welding rather than the riveting that was initially done in constructing the ships. Kaiser applied revolutionary prefabrication techniques in building the liberty ships. After being built in America, liberty ships were sent to other nations such as Great Britain and the Soviet Union<sup>8</sup>. An estimated 250 liberty ships that were built were sent to Soviet Union and Britain under the Lend-Lease program. The US during World War II required to defend itself and to fight the Axis Forces. This made it necessary for the US to build a high number of liberty ships to use and also to send to other nations that were involved in the war. For example, the Pearl Harbor attack motivated the US Maritime Commission to embark on more production of the ships<sup>9</sup>.



*Picture of Robert E. Peary Liberty Ship*

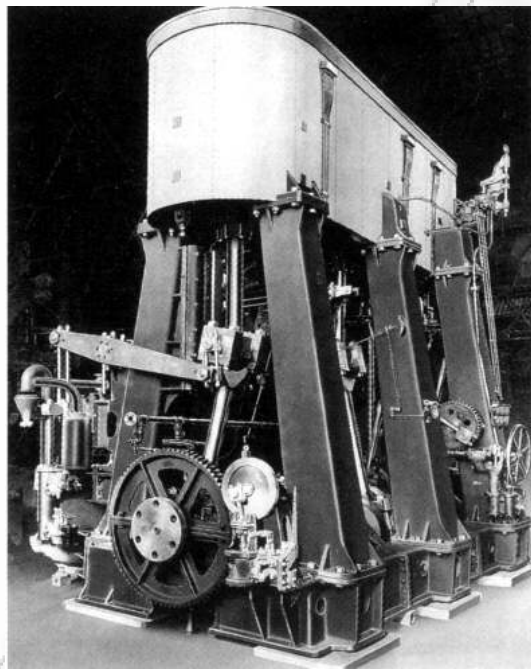
The liberty ships were considered to be “steamers with a simple design”. The coal-fired steam engine was reliable despite being obsolete. The construction of liberty ships for Britain was encouraged by Britain’s large supply of coal<sup>10</sup>. In addition, liberty ships had oil-fired boilers. The replacement of riveting with welding during the construction of liberty ships was effective in minimizing the labor costs. The mass production of liberty ships had the demands of the construction program satisfied. The US Maritime Commission sought to meet these demands by having new ship yards established on both the Gulf of Mexico and both coasts. The ship yards that were operated by Henry Kaiser were found on the West Coast. Apart from his role in the construction of liberty ships, Kaiser had been involved in the building of the Hoover Dam and the Bay Bridge. The methods of prefabricating and

producing in mass the liberty ships was done in four operating yards (three in North West, Richmond, and California). The ships were constructed to last for about five years. However, those that survived the war continued to ply the sea until 1970s. The ship building techniques that were applied in the construction of liberty ships were adopted to become standard practice in the ship building industry. Some examples of ship yards where the liberty ships were constructed include; Alabama Drydock and ship building (Alabama), California ship building Corp (Los Angeles), J.A Jones (Brunswick, Georgia), North Carolina ship building Company (Wilmington, North Carolina), and the Oregon ship building Corporation (Portland, Oregon), Richmonds shipyards (Richmond, California)<sup>11</sup>.

The then US President Franklin Roosevelt made great contribution in the construction of the ships. Before the construction of the liberty ships began, the Navy shipbuilding Program in the United States utilized most of the ship building resources that were available. The program was authorized to expand and this called for the establishment of new ship building yards and the re-equipping of old yards. This is because; the merchant ship building had started to be overcrowded by the priorities of the navy in Britain. Efforts to counter this threat had Great Britain turn to the United States for new cargo vessels. The sinking of Allies ships by the German submarines increased the speed of production of the liberty ships<sup>12</sup>. The Allies required ships to replace the ships they were losing to the Axis (German) submarines<sup>13</sup>. The ships were also meant to increase the flow of supply of commodities to England.

The reality of the World War II made it necessary for ships to be quickly, simply, and cheaply built. The decision on where to establish ship yards where the liberty ships would be constructed was based on several factors. For instance, the size of the area where the ship yards would be established. In addition, the availability of labor and management, as well as adequate transportation was considered. It was the availability of new labor supplies that motivated the US Maritime Commission to establish the Kaiser/Todd ship yard sites in Maine and Richmond (California). The ship yards were selected so that the 60 British Freighters would be constructed there. By early 1941, about nine ship yards in America and a total of 65 yards were approved. The approval was meant to have about 260 liberty ships built under the first Emergency Program. About eleven ship yards were dedicated to emergency-type vessels building.

Liberty ships were built in about eighteen shipyards that were located along the Gulf, Atlantic, and Pacific coasts. In the ship yards that were distributed all over America, an estimated 1.5 million workers learned how to weld prefabricated components. Riveting would also be done then. Each work day in the ship yards was split up into three-8 hour shifts. The Oregon ship building corporation (Portland, Oregon) and Bethlehem-Fairfield ship yard (Baltimore, Maryland) were the first ship yards to be established by the US Maritime Commission. The contract to construct the first liberty ships was given on March 14, 1941<sup>14</sup>.



*Picture of Engine of a 1940's Liberty Ship*

During the liberty ship building program, many technological advances in the ship building industry were experienced<sup>15</sup>. The traditional ship building industry was done from the keel up, with the vessel being completely constructed on the ways. However, Kaiser's ship building plan was different. The plan was based on modular hull construction. This type of construction involved the production of more than 30,000 components per ship, which was done in factories across the country. The entire bulkheads at the ship yards were preassembled in various areas of the yards, and then moved in assembly-line fashion for it to be attached to the bow and stern sections. A smooth hull in the liberty ships was made possible by the replacement of labor intensive riveting with the welding of hull plates. Advancement in welding techniques continued until the first all-welded ship was produced. The perfection of prefabrication was experienced, whereby complete double-bottom sections, deckhouses, bow units, and stern-frame assemblies were used to speed up the production. There was need for

standardization if the ship building emergency program was to succeed. This was very advantageous for the construction of the vessel, since the construction specifications and drawings could then be rapidly reproduced for use in the other shipyards. Through the nationwide standardization, liberty ships production under the Emergency shipbuilding Programs became very successful<sup>16</sup>.

### 2.2.1 The Construction Process at the Ship Yards

In the shipyards, there was a linear “conveyor belt” plan where steel plates and shapes entered the yards’ on the inland side. The plates would then go through a large prefabrication this is where a ship’s major sections were constructed. Rails or movable cranes were then used to transport the ships’ sections, and lifted onto the hull by large cranes for the final assembly. The bulk of building a liberty ship constituted the welding. It is estimated that about 600,000 feet of welded joints were made for a single ship, whereby about a third of direct labor in construction was related to welding<sup>17</sup>.

After the main structures of the ship were completed, the ship or vessel would be launched. The vessel was moved to the nearby outfitting docks. Within twenty four hours, a keel would be laid on the vacant way to allow the vessels’ final joinery, painting, and electrical work to be completed. In addition, rigging and adding of lifeboats in the vessel would then be done. The ship would be delivered to a US Maritime Commission representative the same day the final outfitting was done. The delivery of the ship was done with its crew aboard, after which it was sent to join the other convoys that crossed the Pacific or the Atlantic.

During the construction of the liberty ships, the labor productivity is estimated to have reached an average annual rate of 40 percent. The increase in speed of production led to an increase in the number of ships constructed because the duration of production of a single ship was reduced<sup>18</sup>. Some shipyards during the early stages of building liberty ships lacked adequate equipment and machinery. This demanded that the construction apply different labor-intensive production techniques.

By 1946, (February), about 362 ships which made up about thirteen per cent of the liberty ship fleet had developed at least one major fracture. For the ships in “class I” (about one third), the structures that developed fractures that threatened the ships’ structural integrity. Some of the well known case of fractures was in the *SS John P. Gaines*, where ten people lost their lives after its tragic accident in the sea<sup>19</sup>. The ship *Schenectady* broke when it was tied near the outfitting dock, about 24 hours after it was launched.

### 2.2.2 Some of the Structural Defects in Liberty Ships

There were several structural problems or defects that arose from the manner in which the liberty ships were constructed<sup>20</sup>. During the first years of the World War II, ship losses were high. These losses were attributed to various factors. It is estimated that about 39 per cent of the overall total number of the ships that were constructed sunk in 1942. However; the rate of sinking had drastically reduced to 4 per cent by the final year of the war. The early liberty ships experienced structural defects such as deck and hull cracks, which were attributed to the use of inexperienced workers in the ship yards. Furthermore, the workers used new welding techniques to join up together the different sections of the ships.

Due to the need to have a large number of liberty ships produced for use during the World War II, the workers were required to build the ships in haste. This is considered as one of the factors that contributed to the structural defects of the liberty ships. An example of a liberty ship that sank was the *SS John P. Gaines* in 1943. Although breaking down or sinking of the ships was attributed to inexperienced workers and haste during construction, research findings have suggested that it was the poor quality of the steel grade that was used for construction that led to the structural defects<sup>21</sup>. The steel is said to have suffered from embrittlement. Due to the change in temperatures in North Atlantic, it became easy for the hull to fracture. This was made worse by the welding, because the cracks were able to run for large distances.

Overloading of ships also contributed to their structural defects, while the severe storms at the sea exposed the ships to conditions that made it easy for them to develop structural problems. Due to these problems, efforts to address the crack problems were made. Various reinforcements were made to the liberty ships. For example, the successor design of



the liberty ships was the victory ship which was designed less stiff to deal with fatigue, and was also much stronger than the EC2-S-C1.



Picture of Launching a Liberty Ship, from the New York Public Library collection

### **2.3 The Last Liberty Ship ‘SS Arthur M. Huddell’**

More than 2,000 Liberty Ships were constructed in US shipyards beginning in 1942 to support the war effort. They were the first ships to be built using production line methods that resulted in a four day construction process for each ship. Although the Liberties were designed as cargo ships that could be built quickly and cheaply to meet immediate wartime needs, they proved to be very resilient and long-lasting. About two-thirds of all cargo shipped from the U.S. during World War II was shipped on Liberty Ships and more than 200 were sunk by enemy action. After the war ended, many Liberty Ships were purchased by Greece to build up a merchant fleet which had been decimated by World War II and to deliver food, medicine and supplies in the crucial Cold War years. The Greeks bought or were given many Liberty ships after World War II to build up their merchant marine fleet, which was decimated by the fighting. U.S. troops often were carried to Europe during World War II in Liberty ships. There, they fought alongside Greek forces against the Italians and Nazis, who occupied Greece.

The liberty ship *SS Arthur M. Huddell* was launched on December 7, 1943 and within a year was converted to lay gas pipeline across the English channel to supply fuel to the Allied forces after the D-Day landings. The *Huddell* subsequently worked as a cable layer in commercial service after the war. It has been called a “ghost ship” and a “maritime Lazarus”. The *Arthur M. Huddell* is the last of the Liberty Ships, vessels which played a vital role in the efforts of the United States to aid European allies during World War II and during the Cold War years. For years, the *Huddell* had been anchored off Fort Eustis in Newport News Virginia and managed by the United States Maritime Administration.

In June of 2005, Greek origin State Senator of Rhodes Island (USA), Leonidas Raptakis joined Virginia State Senator Nick Rerras, Connecticut State Representative Dimitrios Giannaros, adviser to the Greek Minister of Mercantile Marine Manolis Alifierakis, Hellenic Maritime Attaché Commander Andreas Lelakis (New York) and Superintendent Engineer of Sea crest Shipping Matheos Ferenduros in inspecting the *Huddell*. The *Huddell* had been identified as the last remaining Liberty Ship in private hands and the inspection and was a very likely candidate to be restored as a floating museum.

In 2008, the *Arthur M. Huddell liberty ship* was transferred to Piraeus, Greece to become a floating museum after a memorandum of understanding signed between the United States and Greece<sup>22</sup>. The donation of *SS Arthur M. Huddell* was endorsed by Senator Raptakis of Rhode Island as a plan to create a floating museum in order “to preserve a vital piece of history and create a lasting reminder of the strong ties between Greece and the United States”<sup>23</sup>.



Picture of the *SS Arthur M. Huddell liberty ship*, just arrived in Greece

### 3 Business Description

In spite of the existing modern technologies, historical museums still maintain their strong appeal to people, particularly those who are interested in history and archeology. Some of the great events in history were preserved in still photos and audio-visual materials, but there are significant relics and remnants of the past that must be preserved in their original forms, textures and shapes. One of these significant historical artifacts is the *Arthur M. Huddell*, one of the liberty ships used by the United States in World War II. According to the United States Maritime Administration (2008), *Arthur M. Huddell* is the last liberty ship under its flotilla.

In June 2008, the United States through its Maritime Administrator Sean Connaughton finalized the transfer of *Arthur M. Huddell* after signing a memorandum of understanding with Merchant Marine Minister George Voulgarakis<sup>24</sup>. The memorandum of understanding was signed in the presence of US Ambassador to Greece Daniel Speckard. Based on the contents of said memorandum, the liberty ship will be transformed into a floating museum.

The legality of this undertaking is generally governed by the memorandum of understanding between the government of the United States and the government of the Hellenic Republic of Greece. The return of the last of the liberty ships that helped saved the world from the claws of the Axis Power led by the Nazi Germany is more than a matter of history to the people in Greece. To many, the return of “The Old Loved One” as they call it, brings back glory to Greece as the great nation of seafarers<sup>25</sup>. Greece, a developed nation that is rich in history, has more than a hundred of museums. Most of the country’s museums are situated in different locations, such as Athens, Greek Islands, Thessaloniki, Crete Island, Rhodes Island and Corfu Island. Among the Greek museum categories, the category that has the most number of museums is history and archeology. The National Liberty Ship Memorial Museum belongs to this particular category. However, unlike all of the existing museums in Greece today, the National Liberty Ship Memorial Museum is a floating museum and it can be transported to different locations of the country— even abroad.

There is no doubt that this museum venture will be profitable because of its uniqueness, transportability, historical significance and its capacity to attract visitors. The uniqueness of the National Liberty Ship Memorial Museum will set it apart from hundreds of

museums that now operate in Greece. Since it can be transported to different places of the country and even to nearby countries within the region, this floating museum may be exposed to more people. Its transportability and accessibility are just two of its strengths and advantages over existing museums in Greece today.

Since it is a semi-private, semi-public property, the funding will be sourced from different sources, such as the public and private sectors. Initial expenses may go to the improvement and necessary renovation on the liberty ship, and important facilities for the convenience and accommodation of tourists, including important amenities and equipment that are related to museum venture.

To promote the museum business, the following will be carefully considered: marketing strategy, promotional strategy, distribution strategy, and pricing strategy. In terms of promotional strategy, online technology will be used by developing an official museum website and online portal for the benefit of visitors from all over the world. A well-thought-out pricing strategy will also be applied in order to manage the risks of competition and to attract a larger market.

One of the primary advantages of this floating museum is its accessibility to the intended market. A distribution strategy will be applied in order to better promote the museum and to attract more visitors. Several strategies will be introduced and implemented in order to attract more visitors and to maintain the consumers' loyalty to the museum.

Apart from the museum itself, there are various products and commercial items that can be sold within the floating museums, such as the following:

- Commemorative items ship-like figurines, posters, stickers and postcards.
- History books, journals, magazines and publications related to the museum.
- Related products like coffee mugs, ball pens, and other accessories with the museum logo.
- Shirts, sweatshirts, jackets, umbrellas, among other wearable items with the museum logo printed on them.

The amount required for the conversion of the World War II antiquated battle ship into a floating museum is \$5 million. Such a conversion will include renovation and other necessary repair or refurbishment to restore this old liberty ship. On the other hand, there are various reasons why the liberty ship should be converted into a floating museum in Greece. These are the following:

- It will be a good addition to the historical ship of the Hellenic Republic.
- It would allow young and old to preserve and experience Greek historical merchant history.
- Preserve and collect war artifacts of Greece's contributions during the World War II and beyond.
- It will be used for education program for young people.
- It will open partnership with the Hellenic Maritime Museum and present museum quality exhibits.

### **3.1 Business Environment Analysis**

Internet technology has an enormous impact on the business side of museums, as well as on the promotion of cultural and tourist products. In the past, museums and tourist destinations in Greece relied on traditional media like newspapers, magazines, radio, and televisions to promote their business, but the advent of new communication technologies like the Internet reshaped the marketing and promotional strategies of museums and cultural products. Websites, social network sites, and vide-sharing system are now being used to promote and advertise museums and to attract potential visitors at home and abroad. Since the advent of Internet technology, tourist agencies and museums have invested in ecommerce as part of their strategy to attract visitors and to control competition.

There is no doubt that Greece is a nation of beautiful cultural heritage and tourist attractions. Greece is one of the most visited countries in the world. Because of its many tourist destinations like museums, ancient buildings and cultural heritage, the country attracts

over 16 million tourists each year<sup>26</sup>. Among its popular cities, the most visited is Athens, which attracted more than six million tourists in 2005.

Tourism contributes 15 percent to the country's gross domestic product. This is not surprising since Greece is home to hundreds of tourist attractions, which include museums, beaches and thermal springs, among others. When it comes to history, Greece is one of the popular words that usually come to mind. There are already more than one hundred museums in operation in Greece, but just recently, a new museum opened and caught the attention of media organizations worldwide. The New Acropolis Museum recently opened in June 20 and is said to boost museum industry in Greece<sup>27</sup>. Certainly the New Acropolis Museum will be one of the main competitors of the National Liberty Ship Memorial Museum because of its large collection of artifacts and expansive location.

Archeological Museums in Greece are located in the country's most important cities—Athens, Thessaloniki, Pieria, Herakleion, Santorini, Delphi, and Olympia. These historically significant museums house hidden treasures and priceless ancient artifacts. On the other hand, Byzantine Museums contain ancient manuscripts of Greek writers and philosophers, gold and silver vessels, sacerdotal vestments, marbles and icon collections.

Several museums compete with each other in places like Sparta, and Delphi. Definitely, all kinds of arts, whether contemporary or ancient, designs, history and archeology, including special interests are housed in the more than one hundred museums of Greece. In order to gain market share, museums need to adopt effective marketing and promotional strategies. Aside from countering the risks of competition, museums are also saddled with key environmental issues like the enduring global economic crisis, global terrorism, and the ever-changing preferences of consumers.

### 3.2 Mission Statement

The goal of the National Liberty Ship Memorial Museum is to preserve and promote the heritage of World War II liberty ships for the benefit of both present and future generations. The floating museum also serves as a concrete sign of the long-lasting friendship and alliance between the United States and the Hellenic Republic of Greece.

To fulfill this overall mission, the museum shall:

- Manage and preserve the last liberty ship *SS Arthur M. Huddell* (now known as *Liberty Hellas*).
- Promote the floating museum not only to the Greeks but also to the rest of the world.
- Administer the museum's personal property and rights.
- Obtain and manage historical objects and artifacts related to World War II.
- Publish history books and journals of World War II liberty ships.

### 3.3 Core Principles

Since important decisions and programs must be made and established in an ever-changing environment, it is imperative for the National Liberty Ship Memorial Museum to be comprehensible and understandable about the museum's values and core principles that guide it. Thus, the following are the core principles to be adopted by the museum:

- Historic assets and properties are held in trust.
- The last of liberty ship must be promoted as a symbol of freedom and of international comity.
- Interpret and preserve meaningful historic objects.
- Being open and accessible to the public.
- Dedication and commitment to constant learning and teaching.
- Emphasis on the importance of research.
- Being a significant part of the community.

- Being a museum with a cause.
- Being a museum of community leadership.
- Offers an affordable, informational, educational and pleasant visitor experience.

### 3.4 Strategic Goals

The strategic goals for the museum are divided into two periods— long-term goals and short-term goals.

#### 3.4.1 Long-term Goals (5 years to 20 years)

- To be a prominent and remarkable public attraction in Greece and in the region.
- To be a significant educational and historical destination and resource in the areas of war history and World War II events.
- To offer a unique personal and family experiences, nostalgia and information.
- To improve accessibility to the actual site, programs, facilities, collections, etc.
- To be clearly visible and respected in the national community.
- To establish a long-lasting brand name.
- To be leader in museum community.
- To steadily increase and improve ridership and membership.
- To make changes in the community by engaging in community outreach programs, educational and school activities, public forums, and charitable programs.
- To establish a high standing and respectable identity in the museum community.
- To be financially sound and stable.

#### Short-term Goals (1 year to 5 years)

- To source sufficient funding from both public and private sector.
- To renovate and restore *SS Arthur M. Huddell* now renamed *Liberty Hellas*.
- To transform *Liberty Hellas* into a stable and functional floating museum.
- To establish the museum as a respectable brand and member in the museum community.



- To gain popularity and market.
- To complete all the necessary museum facilities, equipment, and materials.
- To establish a reliable and unique information technology infrastructure like website, online portal and virtual museum.
- To acquire and maintain competent museum staff and management.
- To formulate and implement a sound and effective marketing, promotional, pricing and distribution strategies.
- To be financially stable.

### **3.5 Organizational Assessment**

Despite being new to the market, there is a need to assess the role and function of the museum in the community and in the lives of the people. There are five principal themes in regard to this matter and these are the following:

- Dedication and sense of pride to the organizations and its community programs, activities and plans.
- Commitment to make the museum a profitable venture without causing undue financial burden on the community.
- Conformity that volunteer and staffing structures are too slim.
- Commitment to stronger community outreach and interactions.
- Commitment to increase the organizational capacity to improve and maintain good quality of museum facilities and collections.

### 3.6 Start-Up Costs

There is one main concern in regard to the status of the *SS Arthur M. Huddell*, and this is funding for its refurbishment and renovation. There is a need to renovate the ship itself and to repair its engine since much of its parts are missing. The conversion of the antiquated battle ship into a floating museum requires the amount of \$5 million. In November of 2007, the amount of \$1.5 million was raised for the conversion of the *Huddell*. Apart from costs for renovations and repair, sufficient funding is also needed for museum facilities, equipment and materials, including important amenities and conveniences like website, communication facilities, among others.

Possible sources of funding for the floating museum are as follows:

- Private funding for museum.
- Hellenic government funding.
- Partnership with government ministries, such as Cultural, Tourism, Defense and Mercantile agencies.
- Partnership with Hellenic Maritime Museum.
- Partnership with local community

### 3.7 Market Analysis

Museums maintain their lasting appeal to people despite the many available new media technologies that hook on young people. However, Internet technology has enormous impact on museum business due to its capacity to offer digital or virtual museum experience. Virtual or digital visits may affect actual visits, thus affecting other ventures or interrelated activities within the actual site. Today's search with Google search engine for the key words 'virtual museum' showed more than 75 million hits. In 2002, Google search engine brought up only 141,000 hits for the same key words<sup>28</sup>. This means that virtual or digital museums grew exponentially over the years, there is no actual study conducted on the impact of digital museums on actual museums.

The term 'Virtual museum' has no exact meaning in the World Wide Web. It may refer to any kind of collection of material like libraries, books or even actual museums<sup>29</sup>. One of the companies that made their first foray into virtual museum was Apple Computer's 'Virtual Museum'<sup>30</sup>. This application allows the user to search virtually a 3-D simulation of several museum spaces. In the past, several CD-ROM products attempted to offer a three-dimensional simulation of the physical features of a particular museum as a substitute for actual museum visit. However, such CD-ROMS were useful only as supplements rather than replacements for the actual museum.

Whether a virtual museum has a financial impact on the actual museum is an issue that has not yet been the subject of any research. But what is certain is the fact that a digital version may have both positive and negative impacts on the business side of the museum. Actual or physical visitors may have the chance or probability to join actual museum activities, purchase museum products and share their actual experiences with their friends and families. Virtual users are only limited to what is given to them online. This means that a digital version is mainly useful for promotional purposes.

### 3.7.1 Key Issues Affecting the Market

Apart from the issue of online or digital museum, there are a number of key issues affecting the market, such as the following:

- The ongoing economic crisis.
- Market preference.
- Global terrorism.

The financial crisis also affected art museums in the United Kingdom and the United States<sup>31</sup>. Similar to any other business, museums need to meet their operating costs every year in order to survive. For example, in the United States, museum visitors were only required to give donations in lieu of entrance fee. But this payment system negatively affected the operations of most museums in the United States. For the National Liberty Ship Memorial Museum, payment will be in terms of entrance fee in order to prevent possible financial losses or closure. Another key issue is the consumers' preference. However, this can be overcome

by means of strategic pricing, strategic distribution, as well as effective marketing. Since Greece is a country known for ship-building<sup>32</sup>, this floating museum will have a greater chance to attract more visitors compared to traditional museums scattered all over the country.

Like any other country, Greece is not new to terrorism. The country has been affected by a wave of terrorist activities originating in the Middle East<sup>33</sup>. Terrorism has affected not only the security of the Greeks, but also the country's economy and tourism business. A recent study shows that Greece's tourism shares relies on the following factors:

- Past and current attacks in Turkey.
- Past and current attacks in Israel.
- Past and current attacks in Greece; and past tourist shares in Greece<sup>34</sup>.

The same study also reveals that Greece lost nine percent of its market share in tourism due to transnational terrorist attacks.

In regard to the floating museum, there are various issues of concern that must be thoroughly addressed and these are the following:

- The United States Congress passed a legislation with respect to the Liberty Project in 2006.
- The SS Arthur M. Huddell and other remaining liberty ships require some repair.
- Environmental Protection Agency Regulations.
- Funding for testing of PCB's completed and secured analysis.
- Funding to refurbish and to tow vessel.
- Permanent location for the museum.
- Funding for a floating museum.

### 3.8 Competition and Buying Patterns

Greece is a country with more than a hundred of museums. These museums are divided into different categories, such as the following: history and archeology, art and design, science and nature, ethnographic and folklore, food, fashion and music, and special interests. Today there are about 37 museums under the category of history and archeology, while there are 24 under the classification of special interests. A National Liberty Ship Memorial Museum belongs to the category of history and archeology. The table below shows the museum's potential competitors in the market.

| <b>Name of Museum</b>             | <b>Location</b> |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Archeological Museum of Agrinion  | Agrinio         |
| Archeological Museum of Chania    | Chania          |
| Archeological Museum of Corfu     | Corfu           |
| Archeological Museum of Corinth   | Corinth         |
| Archeological Museum of Delphi    | Delphi          |
| Archeological Museum of Epidaurus | Epidaurus       |
| Archeological Museum of Nauplion  | Nauplion        |
| Archeological Museum of Paros     | Paros           |
| Archeological Museum of Pella     | Pella           |
| Archeological Museum of Rethymno  | Rethymno        |
| Archeological Museum of Rhodes    | Rhodes          |
| Archeological Museum of Samos     | Vathy           |
| Balkan Wars Museum of Yefira      | Thessaloniki    |

However, among the more than one hundred museums in Greece, two are only considered as war museums— the War Museum of Athens and the Balkan Wars Museum of Yefira. Most of these museums are situated in Athens, Greek Islands, Thessaloniki, Crete Island, Rhodes Islands, and Corfu Island.

The floating National Liberty Ship Memorial Museum will have a good advantage over its direct competitors because of its uniqueness, accessibility and transportability. It will

be the first of its kind in Greece to offer unique museum experience. Museums like the New Acropolis Museum charge 1 euro for entrance fee, except those exempted from fee by government legislation. On the other hand, Byzantine Museum charges its visitors 2 euro per visit, while Benaki Museum charges 3 euro.

This new museum will target all people regardless of sex, age, economic status or profession. However, students will be the main targets of the museum since there is a plan to offer educational tour and activities as part of the museum's plan to offer unique and satisfactory experience to visitors.

### **3.9 Marketing Strategy**

There are several ways to market and promote the floating museum. Before it was renamed *Liberty Hellas*, *SS Arthur M. Huddell* had a much publicized transfer from the United States to Piraeus in Greece. Because of this dramatic transfer of the last liberty ship to the Hellenic Republic of Greece, too many Greeks would like to see *Liberty Hellas*.

To market and promote the floating museum, the following marketing strategies will be adopted and implemented:

- Television and radio appearances prior to the official opening of the floating museum. This is to boost the popularity and exposure of the museum to the public.
- Press releases and newspaper accounts on the floating museum.
- Partnership with government agencies and the tourism department, as well as with private entities engaged in travel and tour venture.
- Establish online links with tourism and museum websites.
- Launch an official website where online visitors can be informed of museum activities, exhibition schedules, products, and other relevant information.
- Develop a virtual or digital museum to introduce online users to the floating museum. The purpose of the virtual museum is to entice online users to visit the actual museum.
- Develop promotional videos that can be posted on video-sharing websites, blogs, and social network sites.

- Secure membership with a social network site like Facebook, Friendster, Twitter, MySpace, etc. to further update fans or members with museum activities, products and calendar events.
- Always aspire to provide lasting and unique experience for visitors in order to maintain their patronage and loyalty. The best promotional tool is word-of-mouth marketing.

The museum website will serve as the main source of information about the National Liberty Ship Memorial Museum. There is a need to develop a highly interactive website in order to better attract museum visitors in Greece and in other countries. The website will have the following contents:

- Pertinent documents and information about the museum (corporate governance, annual report, strategic plan, etc.)
- Museum history.
- Membership portal.
- News updates.
- Exhibitions.
- Public programs.
- Related products and items for sale.
- E-ticketing .
- Educational links.
- Virtual tour.
- Contact details.

### **3.10 SWOT Analysis**

Every existing museum in Greece has its own strengths and weaknesses. A floating museum may have several advantages over traditional museums in Athens or in other parts of the country, but like any other tourist destination it also has a number of weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The following are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the floating National Liberty Ship Memorial Museum:

### 3.10.1 Strengths:

- Uniqueness and transportability that makes it accessible to different parts of the country and of the region as well.
- Accessibility.
- The capacity to offer unique and satisfactory experience to visitors.
- The much publicized donation and transfer of *SS Arthur M. Huddell* is a great advantage to the new floating museum.
- Its one-of-its-kind feature may be able to attract more visitors and counter the risks and threats of competition.
- The possibility of international exposition by entering other countries.
- There is no need to acquire land and construct a building there is already a preexisting structure, which is the ship itself.
- The right to establish visitors' centers, tourist departments, souvenir stores, etc.
- Any privilege from the government, guarantee, protection or subsidy that will secure the continuity of the museum.
- Less expenses.
- Its capacity to attract people from all walks of life.
- In-house management expertise, exhibitions and recording and archives.
- Since Greece is considered a country of old museums, it has the possibility to be run by top experts in the field.
- The museum is endorsed by the United States' Maritime Administration and is supported by the government of Greece.
- It has links with numerous websites due to popularity of liberty ship *SS Arthur M. Huddell*.
- The museum may offer related products and commercial items as part of its income-generating activities.



### 3.10.2 Weaknesses:

- Possible renovations and repairs on the old ship.
- The need to transform the entire ship into a museum.
- The ongoing terrorist attacks in the Middle East and in Israel.
- The ongoing financial crisis.
- The volatility of the market in the region.
- The need to adopt a more effective pricing strategy to fight existing competitors in the market.
- The need to counter the risks of competition.
- Lack of funding to support operations.
- Too many existing museums in Greece.
- The need to fix papers and legal matters for inter-city or interstate travels.

### 3.10.3 Opportunities:

- Since this floating museum is unique, it has the opportunity to promote itself as the one-of-its-kind museum in Greece and in the whole region.
- The opportunity to travel and enter new markets, thus expanding the exposure of the museum.
- The opportunity to take advantage of its preexisting popularity.
- There is opportunity to offer related products and commemorative items for sale.
- Arrange international exhibitions.
- Offer museum merchandise and products through its official website.
- Partnership with government agencies and tourism departments, as well as private entities engaged in travel and tourism business.
- Liberalization of geographic markets.
- Government help and subsidies.
- New programs and sponsorships may boost the image of the museum.
- Consumer loyalty and patronage.

#### 3.10.4 Threats:

- Risks of international terrorism.
- Threats of economic and financial market collapse affecting the economy of Greece.
- Piracy on high seas.
- Natural calamities like tsunami, earthquake, hurricane, super typhoons, etc.
- Changing consumer tastes and preferences.
- Lack of funds for renovation and possible malfunction.
- Insufficient funds to pay personnel and services.
- Government regulations lowering the amount of ticket fees.
- Taxes, duties and other payments for inter-state expositions.
- Technological advances.
- Continuous changes in the global economy.

#### **3.11 Promotional Strategy**

In order to promote the museum, the museum Board will make use of the existing promotional tools and marketing mix. Marketing and promotions will be under the duties and responsibilities of the marketing director to be appointed by the Museum Board. The Marketing Director will have the following duties and responsibilities:

- Prepare, plan and implement the marketing and promotional strategies of the museum.
- Submit the finalized marketing and promotional plan to the Museum Director and the board of trustees.
- Responsible for the overall promotional activities and marketing campaigns of the museum.
- Coordinate with the Museum Direction and operations department.
- Responsible for promotion and publicity for museum travels around the country and for foreign exhibitions.
- Hire, train and monitor marketing staff.

- Responsible for the development, update and maintenance of the official museum website, virtual museum and other social network sites connected with the museum website.
- Submit an annual marketing plan.
- Conduct market research, recommend pricing strategy and update the museum's marketing strategy.

To regularly promote the floating museum, the Marketing Director must have connections with the mainstream media or must be able to submit regular contributions or press releases to newspapers and magazines. Most Greek newspapers allot special sections like Arts and Culture, etc. The Marketing Department in coordination with the Museum Director may regularly submit short articles or press releases promoting the museum's activities or future exhibitions for free or at a minimal advertising rate.

The following will be part of the museum's promotional strategies:

- Establish linkages with schools and universities. Update schools and universities with museum activities and exhibitions.
- Establish connections or affiliations with local governments.
- Establish agreements and mutual ventures with private entities and corporations.
- Offer free admission to selected individuals like children, people with disabilities, senior citizens, among others.
- Sponsor awards and, in partnership with the national government, honor the world war II veterans in Greece.
- Offer lectures on the historical significance of liberty ship to schools, colleges and communities.
- Form and establish World War II veteran associations and offer free admissions to said war veterans living in Greece.
- Regularly update the museum website, attract online users to explore the virtual museums, and encourage them to buy museum products and accessories online.
- Establish a charitable foundation where visitors and online users may donate goods, money, clothing, books, etc. for selected charitable causes and activities.

In regard to the last strategy, the museum may establish a charitable foundation to be called 'Liberty Care.' This strategy aims to encourage museum visitors to donate money, goods, clothes, books and other kinds of donations that will be distributed to selected charitable causes. Donations may go to World War II veterans, the less fortunate and victims of natural calamities, terrorism and other catastrophic events. Liberty Care is a unique promotional program that aims to bring people closer to the museum and to instill in the people's minds that the Liberty floating museum cares.

### **3.12 Pricing Strategy**

Most museums in Greece charge entrance fee ranging from 1 euro to 6 euro. The National Art Gallery & Alexandros Soutzos Museum is charging 3 euro to 6 euro per visit, while the Cycladic & Ancient Greek Art charges its visitors 2.50 euro to 5 euro. Since the National Liberty Ship Memorial Museum is a new market player, tickets will cost 1 euro for students and 2 euro for general tickets. Moreover, free admission may be given to selected groups like children, people with disability and World War II veterans.

The price tag is already reasonable and affordable compared to existing market players. This pricing strategy aims to manage competition and to better position the brand in the market. The price tag is also in response to the ongoing global financial crisis that affected the Greek economy, particularly the shipbuilding industry<sup>35</sup>.

### **3.13 Distribution Strategy**

The core product of the business is the museum itself, and the purpose is to encourage and attract more people to visit the museum during scheduled exhibitions. Related products will be the following:

- Commemorative products and items liberty ship figurines, posters, table calendars, stickers, postcards, etc.
- CDs containing significant World War II documentaries, liberty ship histories, virtual museum, etc.

- Books, journals, magazines, publications and reading materials related to the museum.
- Other products like coffee mugs, ball pens, pen holders, and other accessories with the museum logo.
- Shirts, sweatshirts, jackets, umbrellas, and other wearable items with the museum logo printed on them.

There are a number of ways for visitors to purchase their own tickets. Visitors may obtain their tickets through the following channels:

- By purchasing an e-ticket on the official museum website. E-tickets obtained online must be presented at museum entrance.
- Mobile ticketing may also be used to purchase tickets. Payments may be sent through credit load and the visitors only need to present the confirmation message at the museum entrance. This is to make the museum more accessible to consumers, particularly mobile phone users.
- Tickets may be purchased at the designated ticket booths and business partners.
- Tickets may be purchased at the actual site.

On the other hand, the operation hours of the floating museum will be as follows:

- Open: Tuesday to Sunday from 8:40 to 15:00.
- Close: Monday.
- Holidays: 6 January, Shrove Monday; Holy Saturday, Easter Monday; Holy Spirit Day.

For international exhibitions, schedule for foreign travels are to be announced one month before the actual date in order to better promote the museum. The also museum needs to retain the services of lawyers who will be the ones to process legal and travel papers for inter-state exhibitions and to arranged and secure legal matters related to museum activities, travels, permits, among others.

### 3.14 Staffing Strategy

The success of the museum lies on the quality of people who represent it. The following talents will be recruited to work for the museum:

*Officer:* Volunteer coordinator  
Operations staff  
Trustees

*Highlights:* A philosophy of volunteerism will be adopted.  
A booklet of volunteer opportunities will be made available.  
Volunteer opportunities will be announced via the museum website.  
Volunteers will undergo examination and interview and will be assigned to their well-matched areas of assignment.  
Volunteers will undergo rigorous training.  
Promotion of volunteers will be from unskilled to skilled tasks.  
Additional volunteers will be recruited and trained from time to time.  
Positive contributions and satisfactory performance of volunteers will be recognized and rewarded.  
Privileges and remunerations will be offered to volunteers.  
Reciprocity will be provided for volunteers.

*Officer:* Executive Director and Trustees

*Success milestones:* Paid volunteer coordinator is entitled to funding.  
Incumbent's duties and responsibilities will be delineated in a formal job description.  
Paid volunteer coordinator is entitled to suitable pay and benefits package.

*Officer:* Executive Director and Trustees

*Success milestones:* Authority to hire a marketing director and funding will be provided accordingly.  
Expectations will suit the formal job description.  
Provision of benefits package and appropriate pay.

### 3.15 Management Strategy

A clear and simple management structure is needed in order to successfully manage a museum. The presence of effective corporate governance is to control and govern an organization so to achieve its main objectives and to hold people accountable for their functions and duties. The National Liberty Ship Memorial Museum will operate under the law of Greece. The highest governing body of the museum is the Board of National Liberty Ship Memorial Museum, which is authorized to manage and control the museum and all historical and technological collections, natural history and other property and assets contain therein. The board and the Senior Management Team will be authorized to ensure the museum's stakeholders that the management is complying with its responsibilities with accountability and due diligence.

To ensure the effective governance of National Liberty Ship Memorial Museum, the following management processes must be observed:

- Operational and strategic planning.
- Risk management planning.
- Reporting and monitoring progress versus the operational plan.
- Internal and external audit and reporting.
- Record management.
- Compliance with procedures, policies and rules and regulations.
- Review and performance planning.
- Engagement of external and internal auditors.

To secure the interdependence and efficient integration of various museum departments and offices, the following plans must also be observed and implemented:

- *Strategic plan:* This will provide the direction for museum activities according to management goals.

- *Operational plan:* It will define operational processes and procedures to sustain the strategic course for museum activities within the context of the short-term and long-term goals set by the management.
- *Information and communication technology services strategic plan:* it will provide strategic management direction within the context of information and allied technology systems of the National Liberty Ship Memorial Museum.
- *Asset strategic plan:* It will analyze and identify crucial concerns that may impact museum requirements for facilities and assets.

A Strategic and operational Plan is to be adopted to abide by government and legislative requirements and to support the museum management through the following plans:

- Management plan
- Strategic audit plan
- Privacy plan
- Risk management plan
- Human resources strategic plan
- Occupational and safety plan
- Collection development plans
- Public program plans
- Exhibition plans
- Research plans

#### 3.15.1 Committees and Management Groups

The following committees also need to be created in order to assist the Board in the management and control of the National Liberty Ship Memorial Museum:

- Senior management team.
- Budget review committee.
- Business delivery team.
- Professional development committee.
- Information steering committee.



- Agency consultative committee.
- Intellectual property advisory committee.

### 3.15.2 Internal Reporting

Internal reports are to be prepared by the senior management to be submitted to the museum board. These reports are the following:

- Monthly performance reports versus budget reports.
- Monthly program reports.
- Mid-year report on budget review.
- Mid-year report on strategic and operational plan performance.
- Annual report on the strategic and operational plans performance.

On the other hand, the following documents and information will be made available on the museum official website:

- Annual reports.
- Strategic plan.
- The management or corporate structure of the museum.
- Names and email addresses of museum officers.
- Code of conduct for members of the Board.
- Employees' code of conduct.
- Privacy Plan.

### 3.15.3 Risk Management

Risk management system plays an important role in managing potential risks that may affect not only the museum operations, but also the ship itself. The following must be developed in order to alleviate the risks to the ship itself, people, to the collection and costs:

- A risk management policy.
- A risk register to be updated and monitored on a regular basis.
- A risk register monitoring committee to assess possible risks.
- A disaster preparedness plan, as well as a business continuity plan and disaster recovery plan.
- A general security plan.

### **3.16 Financial Strategy**

Financial strategy is required to monitor the sales and expenditures of the museum and to assess its viability and operations. The following strategies will be adopted for museum's first year of operations:

- Develop an effective financial strategy.
- Develop and implement new forecasting and budgetary systems.
- Regularly assess the financial status of the museum.

### **3.17 Information Technology Strategy**

Since information technology infrastructure plays an important role in the promotion and marketing of the museum, there is a need to adopt an effective information technology strategic plan, which will be implemented during the museum's first year of operations. These information technology strategies are as follows:

- Adopt an information communication technology recovery plan.
- Acquisition of sufficient computers and networks.
- Implement backup and recovery infrastructure.
- Adopt an information security policy.
- Improve the wide area network for reliability.
- Adopt a information disaster management plan.
- Invest in information technology security against illegal computer activities like computer hacking, phishing, etc.

#### 4 Museum Operations and Activities

The National Liberty Ship Memorial Museum will conduct various operations, exhibitions and activities in order to attract visitors and to make it accessible to various communities not only in Greece but also in other countries. The museum will conduct the following activities and programs:

- *Community engagement:* it will include lectures, travels and other programs offered to various communities on a regular basis.
- *Displays and exhibitions:* the floating museum will travel to various places in Greece and even in foreign countries.
- *School and university engagement:* this is to bring the floating museum closer to elementary, high school and college students. Discounts or even free admission may be given to students.
- *Education programs:* the museum may sponsor lecturers and book authors to conduct lectures, research and other education activities.
- *Costumer service:* trained museum staffs are committed to provide unique museum experience to visitors. Such services will include ticket sales, phone bookings, medical services for exceptional cases, interpreting museum exhibits, tour guiding, among others.

- *Use of facilities:* the floating museum will also offer additional facilities like photo booth, bookstore, souvenir store, eatery, viewing or audio-visual room, lecture room, first aid clinic, etc.

## 5 Conclusion

The Strategic Business Plan proposes to put up the National Hellas Liberty Ship Memorial Museum, which will be a floating museum that has for its mission to preserve and promote the heritage of World War II liberty ships for the benefit of both present and future generations. The floating museum also serves as a concrete sign of the long-lasting friendship and alliance between the government of the United States and the Hellenic Republic of Greece. To fulfill this overall mission, the museum shall:

- Manage and preserve the last liberty ship *SS Arthur M. Huddell* (now known as *Liberty Hellas*).
- Promote the floating museum not only to the Greeks but also to the rest of the world.
- Administer the museum's personal property and rights.
- Obtain and manage historical objects and artifacts related to World War II.
- Publish history books and journals of World War II liberty ships.

The Business Plan includes the following key aspects: mission statement, core principles, strategic goals, start-up costs, business description, brief history of liberty ships, business environment analysis, market analysis, promotional strategy, promotional strategy, SWOT analysis, distribution strategy, pricing strategy, staffing strategy, management strategy, and museum operations and activities. The Business Plan presents the details of all of the factors that will ensure the viability of the project and its financial sustainability over the long term<sup>36</sup>.

Some of the key issues regarding the conversion of the liberty ship include funding, repairs and restoration, and efficient management team. Estimated cost for the repair and restoration of the World War II ship is more than \$5 million, and possible sources of funding include public and private sectors, community investors, and government agencies. However, the aforementioned amount includes expenses for museum facilities, information technology

infrastructure, necessary equipment and materials, among others. On the other hand, some of the key issues affecting museum industry are the following: the ongoing financial global, global terrorism, and competition pose as threat to the venture. Short-term goals and long-term goals have also been identified. Long-term goals include strategic plans for the museum: to be a prominent and remarkable public attraction in Greece and in the region; to be a significant educational and historical destination and resource in the areas of war history and World War II events; and to offer a unique personal and family experiences, nostalgia and information.

For its marketing strategy, the business venture will focus on the students as its primary customers and will make use of a web site to promote the museum. The web site will have greater reach, i.e., international exposure, because the museum will have an online presence.

For the SWOT analysis conducted, it yields a positive result, since the number of *strengths* and *opportunities* outweigh the number of *weaknesses* and *threats*. For instance, the floating museum has the following strengths: uniqueness and transportability; its capacity to offer unique and satisfactory experience to visitors; pre-existing popularity; its one-of-its-kind feature; accessibility, among others. It can be concluded that from the standpoint of marketability, financial viability and sustainability

In order to successfully manage the museum, it must have the right staffing requirements with qualified museum personnel. By creating the highest governing body, which will be called the Board of National Liberty Ship Memorial Museum, the project will be assured of effective management and control of all the assets of the museum, and the Board will have the authority to make strategic decisions for the best interests of the museum.

The giant leap from being an old liberty ship to a modern, well-equipped floating ship memorial museum will be the greatest challenge that this project will face. However, based on the market analysis, SWOT analysis, the analysis of competition and comparative advantage, the financial analysis as well as analysis of the museum management aspects, all the results point to the viability, feasibility, and sustainability of this business venture, and it can be concluded that it would be to the great advantage of the Greek government its people to support this plan to establish the first-of-its kind National Hellas Liberty Ship Memorial Museum in Piraeus, Greece and to provide the financial support needed to make it a reality.

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