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**BEYOND THE EXHIBITION: EDUCATIONAL
RESOURCES AND STRATEGIES IN VIRTUAL SCIENCE
MUSEUMS**

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Abstract:

We explore in the present work the potential represented by virtual science museums as a new approach based on key novel information technologies that can be used to extend and complement educational functions of real world museums and interactive science centers. We propose that the main element that distinguishes virtual museums from their real counterparts is the use of purely digital, “virtual” elements, in the form of interactive multimedia resources and experiments that may help the public to better understand scientific concepts and phenomena. These resources, at the same time in which they are used to try to solve some of the problems demanded by a science education reform, also relate to specific problems of scientific museology, for example, the representation of contemporary science, in a realistic and motivational manner. The use of digital objects for learning may be complemented with the establishment of collaborative bonds between the science museum and the formal educational system. Together, this would make possible the accomplishment of collaborative projects between different institutions, as a way to promote the investments and resources dedicated to this extension of science museums and interactive centers’ mission, vis-à-vis the more general society’s needs for the public understanding of science.

Keywords: science centres, education, TIC