

Digital interpretation: a new era of connecting people with plants at Oman Botanic Garden

G.A. Al Issaey

Oman Botanic Garden, Sultanate of Oman

Corresponding author email: ghudaina.alissai@omanbotanicgarden.om

Keywords: analytics, conservation, education, engagement, interpretation, Oman, technology

In the rapidly evolving digital landscape, Oman Botanic Garden stands at the intersection of botanical education and technological innovation, embracing digital interpretation as a cornerstone of its mission to connect people with the plant kingdom. As we approach the completion of our garden, which remains under construction, we have finalized a comprehensive interpretive strategy that leverages digital technology to foster deeper connections between our visitors and the diverse flora we showcase. This presentation will outline the strategic incorporation of digital interpretation tools—ranging from interactive digital signage and augmented reality (AR) experiences to a bespoke mobile application—designed to enhance educational outreach and visitor engagement within our botanical spaces. These digital platforms not only aim to make botanical knowledge more accessible and engaging for a diverse audience but also serve as a dynamic bridge between traditional botanical education and the expectations of a modern, tech-savvy visitor demographic. We will discuss the challenges and opportunities presented by integrating digital technologies into natural settings, highlighting how our team navigated these to create immersive, informative experiences without detracting from the garden's natural beauty. The focus will be on how digital interpretation aids in conveying the importance of plant conservation, biodiversity, and environmental stewardship in a compelling and interactive manner. Furthermore, the presentation will introduce how the mobile application allows for data analytics on visitor interactions, identifying popular areas and favorite plants. This insight will enable our marketing team to design targeted campaigns and events within specific areas of the garden, enhancing visitor engagement and educational opportunities. Attendees will leave with a comprehensive understanding of how Oman Botanic Garden is pioneering in the field of digital interpretation within botanical gardens, setting new standards for how we engage with and educate about the natural world in the digital age.