



r i s t o v e t

Rural Innovative Sustainable Tourism for VET

2019-1-PL01-KA202-065682

Training path

IO2 – A4/A5



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# Module 1: Introduction





# Unit 1.1 – R.I.S.To.VET: Rural Innovative Sustainable Tourism for VET

## Unit introduction

This unit aims to present the project “R.I.S.To.VET: Rural Innovative Sustainable Tourism for VET”. This training path, in fact, has been developed in the framework of this Strategic Partnership. The unit will present the project and its methodology. Furthermore, it will give an overview on the training path and the methodology it was built upon.

### 1.1.1 Presentation of the project

The project “R.I.S.To.VET: Rural Innovative Sustainable Tourism for VET” (2019-1-PL01-KA202-065682) is a *Strategic Partnership for vocational education and training* project funded under the Erasmus+ Programme by the Polish National Agency. It aims to develop, structure and share the professional knowledge about local -based sustainable tourism 4.0. European VET providers and educational institutions have been involved in a professional training and self-training process in order to face the challenges of contemporary tourism.

Contemporary tourism businesses, in fact, in the last decade have been experiencing the challenge of new forms of tourism, but also a lack of an adapted and updated professional education in this field. All over Europe and beyond contemporary tourists want to enjoy authentic local realities together with local inhabitants. On the other hand, the increasing presence of sharing economy websites and apps encouraged several non-professionals to open up to tourism business. Both these phenomena contributed to the development of non-structured practices in the contemporary forms of hospitality and to the increasing obsolescence of traditional business models.

In this framework this strategic partnership of six European VET providers, higher education institutions, NGOs and SMEs aimed to structure these practices in a shareable form of professional knowledge.

This training path has been designed, developed and tested in order to be deliverable both for online and face-to-face education. For this purpose, a specific methodology has been designed in order to extrapolate models from local best practices in the involved countries.

The learning tools has been tested - online and offline - and are available as the first European-based educational toolkit for sustainable local-based tourism 4.0, available for future tourism professionals and tourism professionals who want to update their competences.

### 1.1.2 The project rationale

The project aimed to address the recent changes in tourism business, particularly in rural areas, integrating new experiences and practices in professional education. In the framework of a strategic partnership an experience-based training path grounded in best practices developed in



different local contexts has been developed. This path has also been adapted for online education and will be available through an e-learning platform.

Contemporary tourism is a complex phenomenon that is rapidly evolving in the last decades, all over Europe and beyond. Tourists travelling in Europe have in common the search for local authentic realities, an increasing attention to the environment and innovative forms of hospitality. Differences, obviously, are in the local contexts. Different tourism businesses in different places have been developing (theorising and practicing) several experiences in order to offer new sustainable forms and tools for the knowledge and the promotion of regions and local identities, as well as to promote and capitalise on traditional forms of hospitality.

Tourism businesses inspired by the sharing economy have been creating sharing information systems developed on a local basis and new forms of decentralised or spread hospitality (cf. the phenomenon of home restaurants or the Italian experiences of "Albergo Diffuso", D'Allara 2010). The primary aim is, usually, to abandon the idea of separating tourists from local people and, conversely, to fully engage them not only in a more authentic form of hospitality, but in the local way of life. In rural areas, moreover, these phenomena are connected to the more extensive concept of local development challenging the rural identity, instead of considering it as a weakness (cf. the EU Rural Development Policy and in particular the Priority 6 "Social Inclusion and Economic Development").

The EU Policy for Tourism considers the promotion of competitiveness as a key priority, together with the promotion of "sustainable, responsible and high-quality tourism" (European Commission 2010). Developing innovation in local-based sustainable tourism in order to promote competitiveness and an integrated approach fully responds to the EU recommendations, particularly in economically depressed rural areas or small cities. In addition, the European Commission promotes a [Tourism Business Portal](#) to support tourism SMEs, underlining the importance of this key sector of the European economy.

On the other hand, in many countries, VET educational institutions have not yet included these new tools and experiences in their educational and training paths for tourism professionals. Tourism phenomena are evolving so quickly that formal education has difficulty in renewing itself as rapidly as it would be necessary in order to train young people for the real market. The European Commission, besides, promotes – among the initiatives to support tourism businesses – a Blueprint for Sectoral Cooperation on Skills in tourism (European Commission 2017), highlighting the importance of up-to-date professionals in this field.

Moreover, contemporary tourism tools are developed mostly in practice, by professionals on a trial-and-error basis. Often the most interesting experiences are quite small and distributed all over Europe. Rural areas seem to be a fertile ground for innovation in this sense, together with a few urban contexts.

The gap between the real market (the demand of contemporary "travellers" as well as the offer of innovative small tourism businesses) and the VET education is the main need upon which this strategic partnership have been developed among organisations with deep experience in the field of innovative tourism and strong connections in their territories, in order to identify and analyse the most interesting examples of new forms of tourism in their countries.

The project draws upon the idea that analysing, comparing and sharing local-based experiences and practices among European countries is the first step for developing a common European training path for sustainable local-based tourism 4.0 (cfr. § 1.2.2).

### 1.1.2.1 Methodology

The first stage of the project, thus, has been dedicated to the analysis of the national and local contexts of each partner's country. Data has been gathered about small tourism businesses and about their strategies in responding to the challenges of the contemporary tourism market. Moreover, training paths used by VET providers in the field of tourism in each partner country have been analysed in order to identify training needs.

This comparative analysis of the real economy of local contexts and of VET education systems represents an innovation in the field of tourism studies and a step forward in building the competitiveness of small tourism businesses.

This research has been conducted gathering a variety of quantitative and qualitative data. The main sources of information have been:

- A questionnaire for tourism SMEs owners.
- A set of interviews to tourism SMEs owners.
- An online research about tourism SMEs.

The questionnaire, common to the whole partnership, has been structured in following sections:

- Qualifications (entrepreneur and marketing skills).
- The use of digital tools.
- General and specific business owners' and employees' skills.
- Interest and activities in sustainable tourism.

The Covid-19 pandemic has dramatically burst during the first semester of the project implementation, when the partnership was working on the field research, involving local tourism SMEs.

The pandemic, thus, had a dual impact on this training path. On the one hand, the field research suddenly became an online research: local entrepreneurs have been mostly involved through online interviews and surveys, followed by only a few on-site visits after the first wave. On the other hand, the new topic of the post-pandemic tourism development arose as a specific concern.

In Italy all three sources for gathering data were implemented. Sicily was the main focus area of this research because it is the region where both partner institutions (CEIPES and Co.Net Sicilia APS) are located, and because, thanks to the development of tourism in the last decade, it is a very prolific and interesting field for tourism analysis.

A field research was planned in order to conduct interviews in person. Because of the health emergency due to the pandemic, it was not possible to meet the business owners as expected. Interviews, thus, have been conducted through phone and skype calls. The part of the data was obtained directly from SME's through online questionnaire.

The information gathered through interviews and online research has been structured in a best practices template.

In Belgium data was obtained by combining desk research with a targeted survey.

The background research was conducted by collecting data from international sources online (UNWTO, European Travel Commission, ...) and national/regional sources for Belgium and Flanders, with the report of DMO Visit Flanders offering most of the data. Belgian partner focused on the Flemish region, as this is the region where ViaVia Tourism Academy is active, and the situation/legislation is quite different for the other Belgian regions. The data collection through desk research was complemented by literature review and trend reports for identifying the trends in tourism.



For online survey Belgian partner selected SME's for the database from their own professional networks, personal connections or recommendations, previous partnerships or projects, and from publications such as Travel to Tomorrow by Visit Flanders.

In Poland data were obtained directly from companies via questionnaire. Data was also obtained through telephone interviews. A great number of data were obtained also as a result of searching for information in various types of source materials available online, i.e. on the websites of the Ministry of Development, on the archives of the Ministry of Sport and Tourism, on the websites of the Polish Tourist Organization, Polish Agency for Enterprise Development and several other sources indicated at the end of the report.

Inviting to take part in online survey, Polish partner was mainly looking for entrepreneurs on the Internet. Some were also invited through the Łódź Tourist Organization.

Searching for information about travel companies on the Internet, the booking platforms such as slowhop.com, social media but also the original recommendation were used.

German partner decided to use two different methods to collect data. First of them was an online questionnaire. Due to the difficulties to get feedback from the SMEs, they decided to use additional templates, filled out themselves based on intense internet research, to get the missing information.

In order to find the target group, extensive internet research was conducted, using sites such as www.booking.com or www.maps.google.de.

In addition, they have collected five best practice examples from the Nuremberg region to identify possible strategies for SMEs.

To identify the needs and challenges the Greek partners collected the relevant data by using in-depth interviews to 7 tourism SME owners that followed the questionnaire created for them in order to examine their opinion and perception on the topic and, of course, to take into serious consideration their comments and suggestions.

### 1.1.3 Presentation of the training path

This training path aims to guide trainees and entrepreneurs through the multifaceted world of contemporary tourism, analysing challenges and opportunities offered by the innovation of tourism businesses in the framework of a sustainable, local-based and digital perspective.

The training path and its axis has been structured in specific learning content modules. Theory, strategies, examples, approaches to local contexts have been organised in modules. The aim was to make each axis shareable identifying common points, without losing the perspective on local peculiarities.

After an introduction about the project background (Unit 1.2), thus, the training path presents:

- An overview about sustainable development (module 2)
- Theory and practices of sustainable tourism (module 3).
- The concept of authenticity, explaining what "local-based" means for tourism businesses (module 4).
- Opportunities and tools offered by digital tourism (module 5).
- Soft and practical skills for establishing a tourism SME (module 6).

Modules have been developed focusing on the methodology of experiential learning, offering practical tips for (future) tourism entrepreneurs.



Each module is experience-based and grounded in a comparative analysis of how sustainable and digital tourism are implemented in local business models in Europe and integrated with local peculiarities and traditions of hospitality, mostly in rural areas. In this sense, experiential education is the basis for a place-based and situated learning approach.

The training path has been developed extrapolating the theory from the practices and experiences of existing tourism businesses. Through this analysis we identified the milestones for local-based sustainable tourism. Conversely, the training path will give the trainees/entrepreneurs the capacity to transpose their own ideas in practical business models grounding in these milestones.



## Unit 1.2 – Tourism today and tourism market needs.

### Unit introduction

This unit aims at outlining an overview of tourism history during the last two centuries, addressing in particular the most recent developments.

We will see how travelling, from a practice reserved to wealthy aristocratic people, became available for large social groups, making tourism one of the most important industries in the world.

### 1.2.1 An overview of the recent tourism history

According to the World Tourism Organisation, tourism is the most growing branch of global economy. Its influence thoroughly pervades society, politics and culture.

A complex, interwoven world-wide structure dedicated to satisfying the specific touristic needs of mobile individuals, groups and masses has been developed mostly during the XX Century. The impact of such a structure is analysed in Unit 3.1.

Tourism has been studied at least since the early 1920s. Tourism studies today are a multidisciplinary field without a really integrated framework.

In general, tourism is approached as related to the context of middle-class society from about the middle of the eighteenth century. Older forms of travel are actually studied. Nevertheless travelling as a means to an end is usually separated from travelling as an end in itself as tourism, in a narrow sense, is (education, relaxation, leisure, free time, sociability, entertainment).

#### 1.2.1.1 Pre-modern tourism (17th – mid-18th Century)

The first examples of recreational and educational travel comparable to modern tourism is the “grand tour” often involving youngsters from high European society in 17th and 18th Century for 1-3 years. Since the 19th century, educational journeys spread among the middle class, marking an important step in the development of modern tourism: more and more people started to travel in order to discover and experience culture, art and nature, trying to reproduce writers', philosophers' and artists' grand tours of the past.

The main aspects of this phase are the search for pleasure and education, as well as the restriction to a minority of wealthy young people.

#### 1.2.1.2 Modern Tourism (1850-1950)

During 19th century and until 1950 tourism developed due to a the spread of a (high) middle-class culture of travel, its popularisation and diversification. The phenomenon is related not only to the revolution in transportation, but also to the social changes (demographic changes, urbanisation, labour rights).



The increasing availability of means of transportation (mainly railways and steam navigation) made possible the mobility of tourists, also reducing the cost of travelling: day trips and short-stay became possible for the first time.

Travelling became a popular answer to problems linked to the growing industrialisation and urbanisation.

At the middle of 19th century the first all-inclusive travel offers for organised groups appeared thanks to the British entrepreneur Thomas Cook (1808-1892). Organised travel were offered within the UK in the first period, and then also around Europe. Cook's developed also an offer of one-day countryside excursion specifically addressed to lower middle and working classes, in order to promote healthy diversions out of the polluted cities.

Cook's experience widely influenced the early tourism industry all around Europe.

In the same period, the Alps were opened to tourists, thanks to the easier transportation and under the influence of the Romantic culture. The enthusiasm for mountaineering quickly spread through middle and lower classes, marking a sort of anticipation of "soft tourism".

Bathing and sea-holiday, on the other hand, became gradually populst, mostly for health reason at the beginning.

After 1900 travelling for relaxation and recuperation became increasingly common. That is connected to the introduction of holidays in work contracts and made organised group-travel increasingly common and structured. Holidays for employees, anyway, were an exception before the WWI.

After the crisis of the First World War a new form of healthy and cheap holiday became popular among lower middle and working classes: the summer retreat. The terms dates back the 1830s and define the search for relaxation and healthy air in the countryside as an alternative to travelling and bathing.

### **1.2.1.3 Globalisation of tourism and mass tourism (1950-2000)**

It is commonly recognised that the enormous tourism boom in the post-war period is related to technological progress (mostly in transportation), economic growth and the increase of leisure time as a result of shortening working hours. The offer on an always wider number of new destinations and travelling styles is also a consequence of the growing competition. Holidays, thus, became a common form of recreation.

Organised group travel arose in France, Austria, Germany and Switzerland through social policies, subsidies and holiday villages for low-income employees. Abroad travelling in Europe concerned neighbouring countries in a first phase, and, later on (in particular after 1970), far destinations through Charter flights.

The boom of European tourism began in the 1960s when mass tourism was pushed by tour operators offering always cheaper solutions and introducing new destinations and holiday models, as well as by the spread of car and air mobility. Tourism infrastructures began to shape the landscape of commercial travel destinations sometimes converted into tourist resorts and complexes (such as Alpine or maritime villages in Europe and beyond). The first "club holidays" (such as "Club Méditerranée", "Club Soleil", etc.) have been founded and developed a very successful holiday model. Theme parks, moreover, are becoming increasingly important.

### 1.2.1.4 Recent developments (from 2000)

The development in air transportation (namely low-cost airlines) and the internet sale of tourism services pushed new changes in tourism industry in 2000s.

If, on the one hand, tourism is an increasingly mass phenomenon, due to always more affordable offers, on the other hand there is growing demand for tailor-made solutions. Tourists have a wide range of budgets, tastes and needs. The diffusion of the sharing economy gives, nowadays, travellers the possibility to experience tailor-made solutions at a cheaper cost or even, in some cases, for free (Couchsurfing, free tours, etc.).

The attention for the environment, as well as the desire to experience the authentic local way of life, is part of this new evolution in tourism.

### 1.2.2 Local -based sustainable tourism 4.0

Sustainable local based tourism 4.0 is a new form of tourism based on slow tourism with specific characteristics.

Sustainable tourism refers to the promotion of activities focused on the education, protection and conservation of nature and the environment. These activities are fundamental to create and improve the knowledge of the wealth but at the same time fragility of the context in which we decided to spend our stay. Of course sustainable tourism is focused on the use of local and km0 products and on the promotion of a sort of circular economy in order to avoid any kind of waste in the name of respect for nature and the context. In Module 3 we will show that, actually, there is much more than that in the concept of sustainable approaches. Even focusing only on the environmental dimensions, approaches are multiple and diverse.

Local-based refers to the possibility of improving the local occupancy rate. Creating new businesses involves creating new jobs and also promoting innovation in the tourism sector. Sustainable tourism also promotes seasonally adjusted activities to avoid mass tourism concentrated only at specific times of the year. It also enhances local communities and gender inclusion and equality among employees. Cooperating with local politics and stakeholders is fundamental to offer a quality experience rather than a quantitative one. The tourist will be in contact with the locals. This way the locals will be able to maintain their cultural integrity and integrity, authenticity and show visitors their real lifestyle. In Module 4 we will analyse how to develop tourism businesses drawing on local peculiarities.

4.0 refers to self-efficiency and learning new digitization tools to analyse data and promote activities using social media. In Module 5 we will see how digitalisation is still a challenge, in particular for very small businesses, even if it brings several opportunities of growth. The post-pandemic context, moreover, offers new possibilities also for virtual tourism.





## **Module 2: Sustainable Development**

## Unit 2.1 – Sustainable Development & the SDGs

### Preliminary self-assessment

1. **The concept of sustainable development focuses more on:**
  - a) Economic development
  - b) Social development
  - c) Environmental protection
  - d) All of the above
  
2. **The Sustainable Development Goals aim to:**
  - a) Address a wide range of economic and social development issues
  - b) Set indicators for ranking the sustainability of each country
  - c) Focus on the most important targets for the global economic development
  - d) Focus on the most important targets for environmental protection
  
3. **The spheres or P's of development are:**
  - a) People, planet, profit
  - b) Planet, people, poverty alleviation, protection
  - c) People, prosperity, planet, peace, partnership
  - d) Planet, project, peace, prosperity, protection
  
4. **Sustainable tourism does NOT aim primarily at:**
  - a) The integration of local people in tourist operation or development
  - b) Strong commitment to nature conservation
  - c) Profit for big tour operators
  - d) Social responsibility
  
5. **A sustainable approach to tourism development is of vital importance for:**
  - a) All countries with tourism industry
  - b) Mainly the Mediterranean region, because it is the world's leading tourist destination and among the earth's most endangered ecoregions
  - c) Mainly East Asia and the Pacific as economically less developed, but fast growing tourism destination



## Unit introduction

This unit aims to raise awareness on the concept of sustainable developments through the Agenda 2030 framework. It will provide an introduction focusing on how tourism entrepreneurs can contribute to Sustainable Development Goals.

Learning outcomes and student skills:

- Define the concept of Sustainable Development.
- Define the SDG framework & goal of the Agenda 2030.
- Identify opportunities to apply the SDG framework to their activities/cases.
- Find ways to contribute to sustainable development with their tourism.
- Gain awareness on the contribution of tourism to the SDGs.
- Get insight in the 'why' or purpose of their tourism business.

### 2.1.1 The start of Sustainable Development

The notion of sustainability is nowadays very common, so much that sometimes it seems more like a fashion or marketing trend than an institutionalised major issue. Sometimes we can forget that what is at stake when it comes to sustainability is essentially the human life conditions on earth, today and in the future. Before addressing sustainable tourism, defining what it is and how it can be implemented, let's first of all understand what sustainability is and why it is so important.

We need to go back to the '70s, when dissatisfaction towards the traditional development models began to spread. Until then, development was understood in terms of growth, and especially **economic growth**. According to this approach, a society develops if its economy is growing, if it has a high GDP and a high level of productivity. All these aspects are certainly important for reaching a certain level of development, but it is only one part of the story. Many started in fact to see **the negative effect** of such a model focused on growth: the industrialization process depleted natural resources, caused pollution and many other harmful effects on the environment, undermining human health as well.

Scholars began to support theories of the limits of development, challenging the idea of unlimited development. The unconditional trust in technology was also questioned, as it can lead to ecological disasters. Additionally, the disparities between what was called the global South and North - arguable terms that are nowadays criticised and reviewed - became very evident. Simultaneously, the world became more and more globalized, so the **issue of responsibility** raised many questions, for instance: why are some countries so poor compared to others? What has led to these conditions? Who bears the responsibility of global problems?

The environmental movement, the civil society organisations and NGOs played an important role in the aid for development. At the institutional level, some key international conferences and reports (see Annexes) contributed to define a **new development paradigm**. According to this paradigm three dimensions have to be satisfied and harmonised to reach a complete and balanced development: the **economic**, the **social** and the **environmental** one. It means that, besides the economic aspects, the protection of and respect for the environment, social inclusion and the quality of life are determinants in the development concept too.



These three aspects have to **coexist**:

-Ecosystem integrity (**planet**): the ecosystem must not undergo structural changes, due to human action.

-Efficiency of the economy (**prosperity**): the previous concept of productivity of the economy is replaced by the concept of efficiency.

-Social equity (**people**): both intra-generational, i.e. within communities considered in a certain historical period, and inter-generational, i.e. between different generations.

Several of the international conferences on sustainable development held the first time between the '70s and the '90s continued to take place regularly up until now (see Annex 1).

The term sustainable development was officially introduced and defined for the first time in **1987**, in the World Commission on Environment and Development's (or Brundtland Commission) report "**Our Common Future**". It is defined as "**development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs**"(Brundtland, 1987). The definition entails three important aspects: the first one is the awareness that human activities can have a strong and **long-term impact** on the environment. Therefore, they have to be redesigned in a way that reduces the negative effects, while improving societies. The second is the **concept of needs**; it is recognised that each country, each society, each local context has different needs. The starting point to be considered for the pursuit of well-being varies from society to society. The third one is the concepts of **human development** and **well-being**, that are closely linked to the sustainability paradigm. Human development is the process of enlarging people's choices, it is the capacity of enjoying large, healthy and creative lives (UNDP, 1990). The well-being is not identified with the mere economic prosperity (GDP), but it encompasses the broader perception of quality of life and personal development.

## 2.1.2 Frameworks for Sustainable Development

### 2.1.2.1 The Agenda 2030 - the Sustainable Development Goals

On 25 September 2015, the United Nations General Assembly approved the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** and with it the **Sustainable Development Goals**, a framework comprising **17 goals**, defined by **169 targets** and measured with **231 indicators**. Through this agenda, governments, civil society, and the private sector can guide and measure their contributions to sustainable development towards 2030. This action programme is built on the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The MDGs were the previous programme for the years 2000-2015, focusing on fighting global poverty and human deprivation, especially in developing countries.




The Sustainable Development Goals aim to address a wide range of economic and social development issues, including poverty, hunger, the right to health and education, access to water and energy, employment, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, climate change and environmental protection, urbanisation, production and consumption patterns, social and gender equality, justice and peace.

Figure 1: The Sustainable Development Goals.

Each SDG has specific targets and indicators. According to the indicator framework, SDGs' indicators should be disaggregated, where relevant, by income, sex, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability and geographic location, or other characteristics. Annual refinements of indicators are included in the indicator framework as they occur, in order to grasp differences and be as much inclusive as possible (UN, n.d.).

Here you can find an example of targets and indicators of the SDG 12: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal12>

On <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>, you can read more on the description of each SDG, its targets and its indicators.

The SDGs are not binding, but they act as guidelines, they represent a **universal call to action** for implementing sustainable solutions, ranging from global to local and vice versa. They are common goals, meaning that they apply to all countries and individuals: no one is excluded, nor should anyone be left behind on the path to putting the world on a sustainable path. The goals are **interconnected**, often the key to success on one will involve tackling issues more commonly associated with another.

The programme is unprecedented, because of its global reach, its systematic and collaborative nature (in financing, implementing and monitoring the results, in different countries), its **people-centred, transformative, and integrated perspective** (UN, n.d.).

## 2.1.2.2 Integrating these frameworks: The 5 P's

The UN has elaborated the original notion of the 3 spheres or P's of development (people, planet, profit) to the five Ps: **people**, to eliminate poverty and ensure that all human beings can realise their potential dignity; **prosperity**, understood both as economic well-being and as 'harmony with nature'; **planet**, as an asset to be protected; **peace** and **partnership**, only collaboration between states and businesses can achieve the goals. This global solidarity, focuses in particular on the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable.

The 17 SDGs are all interlinked and cannot just be “cherry picked”. The 5 P’s are part of a model of building blocks that fit into each other: the basis is the well-being of the planet, as a necessary condition for people and prosperity to thrive. People are the next step that builds on this model: the economy must serve society, and not the other way around. Peace and partnership are the **lateral frameworks** that are necessary to reach success on any of the other P’s. Both frameworks, in that sense, are following the logic of planetary boundaries and human basic conditions, in order for economies and societies to thrive.



Figure 2: The integrated SDG model.

## 2.1.3 Tourism and Sustainable Development



Figure 3: The 6 P model

The tourism system as a whole cannot be currently considered fully sustainable. It is the largest industry in the world, accounting for 10.3 percent of global GDP, in 2019 (WTTTC, 2020)<sup>1</sup>, but it often has a harmful impact on the environment and it is not socially inclusive in many aspects. Suffice it to say that tourism related transport emissions represented 22% of all transport emissions in 2016 and will continue doing so in 2030 (21%) (UNWTO, 2019), or that the tourism and travel opportunities for people with disabilities are still limited (see more on it in Unit 3.3).

On the other hand, tourism has a **great potential** to contribute to sustainable development. It has been included as targets in Goals 8, 12 and 14 on inclusive and sustainable economic growth, sustainable consumption and production (SCP) and the sustainable use of oceans and marine resources, respectively; but it can contribute,

<sup>1</sup> However, the fall of the export revenues from tourism, due the Covid-19 pandemic, could reduce global GDP by 1.5% to 2.8% (UNCTAD, 2020. <https://unctad.org/news/coronavirus-will-cost-global-tourism-least-12-trillion>)

directly or indirectly, to all of the SDGs.

To know more about it: <https://www.unwto.org/tourism-in-2030-agenda>

According to Bob Elsen, founder of Joker Tourism (Belgian sustainable tour operator), it is important to add a 6th P as well: **pleasure**. This pleasure should be present in the tourism experience for all parties involved: the tourism entrepreneur, the traveller, and the host community. Tourism in fact provides a pleasant experience, that does not mean that tourists forget about their (socio-cultural and environmental) responsibility in the holiday environment but that they have the chance to become more aware during and through traveling. Pleasure should be an integral part of being sustainable too, as sustainability equals quality as well. Last but not least, pleasure should be central to sustainable entrepreneurship in tourism, as there is no long-term sustainability without passion for the sector.

## 2.1.3.2 Insights for implementing sustainable solutions in your tourism business

### *Finding your why*

As workers of the tourism sector, it is time to ask yourselves which SDGs you can contribute with your enterprise and how.

A good start for reflecting on this large question is the model of The Golden Circle, about innovative enterprises and the communication tools they use, elaborated by Simon Sinek (2009). In his TEDtalk, he explains this model: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u4ZojKF\\_VuA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u4ZojKF_VuA)

Looking at the Golden Circle model, you can distinguish three factors: the 'what', the 'how' and the 'why'. Every organization knows what it does. The 'what' factor can be expressed as the products a company sells or the services it offers. Some organizations know how they do it. The 'how' factors might include their strengths or values that they differentiate themselves from the competition. However, very few organizations know why they do what they do. The 'Why' is at the core of the Golden Circle, because it is the most important message that an organization can communicate; it is what inspires others to action. 'Start With Why' is how you explain your purpose, the reason why

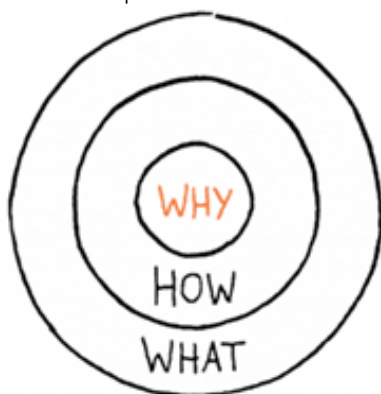


Figure 4: The Golden Circle

the company exists (and we do not mean the turnover), your cause, your belief. The most successful organizations, besides what they do and how they do it, are those able to fully understand and communicate their 'why'.

Starting by articulating your 'why' is a great step. Once you have a clear idea of your 'why', you will be able to redefine your 'what' and 'how' factors, following the purpose of your enterprise, and offer unique travel and tourism experiences.

### *Becoming SDG-Fit*

To define your 'why' it is crucial to relate it to the SDGs. What is the socially relevant contribution you can make to society, the planet, and a fair and healthy economy? Elsen & Bekx (2018)

have elaborated a structural plan to develop and measure the sustainability of your enterprise: the SDG-FIT® plan.

Making your enterprise sustainable is not a one-time event – it's a journey that is always unfolding. The SDG-FIT plan includes four interrelated and additional steps. Each of these steps can be explored in-depth at a later stage in the years to come.

STEP 1 'DEVELOP' clearly states who the actors are in this journey, as well as the level of intensity along the way.

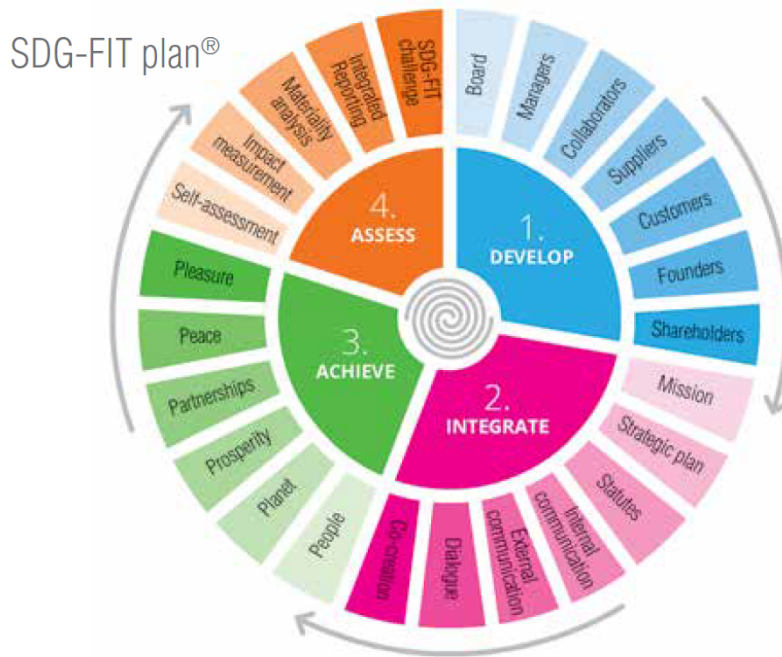


Figure 5: The SDG-FIT Plan.

Management, Senior Managers, Collaborators, Founders, Associates, Suppliers and Customers are the seven specific action areas of the 'Develop' step. In this step you ensure the development of knowledge, understanding, commitment and creation around the project.

STEP 2 'INTEGRATE' defines how and where sustainability is integrated into the inner workings of your organization, as well as the degree of communication and co-creation. Mission, Strategic Plan, Statutes, Internal Communication, External Communication, Dialogue and Co-creation are the seven specific action areas of the 'Integrate' step. In this step, you pave the way for installing this project within your company. By doing this, you make it known to the internal environment, as well as the outer world, where you want to go.

STEP 3 'ACHIEVE' indicates on which P's you want to focus and what the effective results are of this choice.

It is obvious that People, Planet, Prosperity, Partnerships, Peace and Pleasure are the six action areas of the 'Achieve' step. Now, it's time to move on to the results, where you 'walk your talk'. Ideas and projects that were developed and integrated in the two previous steps must, of course, materialise.

STEP 4 'MEASURE' expresses the quality of the work by monitoring. Level Measurement (Self-Assessment), Impact assessment, Materiality Analysis, Annual Report/Integrated Reporting and SDG-FIT Challenge are the five action areas of the 'Measure' step.

At each stage, there is a series of specific areas of action. The process is gradual: you do not have to perform all the tasks of each step or approach them with the same degree of intensity. Each organisation chooses its own direction, rhythm, preferences and priorities to complete the whole picture and to reach its results, be it now or in the future.



## Final self-assessment

1. **The concept of sustainable development focuses more on:**
  - a) economic development
  - b) social development
  - c) environmental protection
  - d) all of the above
  
2. **The Sustainable Development Goals aim to:**
  - a) Address a wide range of economic and social development issues
  - b) Set indicators for ranking the sustainability of each country
  - c) Focus on the most important targets for the global economic development
  - d) Focus on the most important targets for environmental protection
  
3. **The spheres or P's of development are:**
  - a) People, planet, profit
  - b) Planet, people, poverty alleviation, protection
  - c) People, prosperity, planet, peace, partnership
  - d) Planet, project, peace, prosperity, protection
  
4. **A specific sphere or P's related to tourism is:**
  - a) Pragmatism
  - b) Pleasure
  - c) Precision
  - d) Precaution
  
5. **Sustainable tourism does NOT aim primarily at:**
  - a) The integration of local people in tourist operation or development
  - b) Strong commitment to nature conservation
  - c) Profit for big tour operators
  - d) Social responsibility
  
6. **A sustainable approach to tourism development is of vital importance for:**
  - a) All countries with tourism industry
  - b) Mainly the Mediterranean region, because it is the world's leading tourist destination and among the earth's most endangered ecoregions
  - c) Mainly East Asia and the Pacific as economically less developed, but fast growing tourism destination
  
7. **The steps of the SDG-FIT plan are:**
  - a) Preserve, integrate, develop, measure
  - b) Integrate, communicate, develop, measure
  - c) Cooperate, develop, integrate, achieve
  - d) Develop, integrate, achieve, measure

## Unit 2.2 – Regeneration and regenerative tourism

### Preliminary self-assessment

1. **The concept of regeneration refers to:**
  - a) Restoring, renewing, nurturing
  - b) Producing a neutral impact on the planet
  - c) Maximizing growth in an effort to overcome scarcity
  - d) Sustaining the status quo
  
2. **Regenerative tourism dos NOT aims to:**
  - a) Leave a place better than it was before
  - b) Re-value the tourism experience.
  - c) Have a positive impact on destinations and communities
  - d) Avoiding any additional damage to the environment
  
3. **“Step by step thinking” in regenerative tourism means:**
  - a) Taking the time to select the most important stakeholders in the area you operate in.
  - b) Adapting intervention to natural and social changes
  - c) Developing an economic strategy
  - d) Leave a place better than it was before
  
4. **Regenerative tourism is NOT based on:**
  - a) Connections and interdependencies
  - b) A continual adaptation and co-evolution
  - c) Ecosystem awareness
  - d) An anthropocentric system
  
5. **In a regenerative perspective local communities:**
  - a) Focus their local development strategies mostly on sustainable tourism.
  - b) Integrate best practice in sustainable tourism from all over the world
  - c) Develop a tourism strategy as a tool and a resource (out of many) for sustainable development
  - d) Address global environmental problems instead of local needs

## Unit introduction

This unit aims at introducing the concepts of regeneration and regenerative tourism., and how it applies to tourism destinations.

Learning outcomes and student skills:

- Define the concepts of regeneration and regenerative tourism
- Understand the key principles of regenerative tourism
- Apply the principles of regeneration and regenerative tourism to cases
- Analyse the level of regeneration in a destination or tourism business
- Identify opportunities for regenerative tourism as tourism entrepreneurs
- Analyse the supply chain and create improvements towards more regeneration

### 2.2.1 Introduction to the concept of regeneration

'Sustainable tourism' has been the guiding principle for improving the role of tourism in our society over the last years. However, a new trend, the one of 'regenerative tourism', is emerging as the new direction the tourism industry has the potential to evolve towards. In a broader perspective, the 'sustainability' paradigm is evolving into the 'regeneration' paradigm.

The idea of **regeneration** – renewing or restoring something – is not new; mostly commonly it has been used in sectors such as agriculture and architecture. In recent years, it is developing even in other sectors and entering in the mainstream conversation (Haugen, 2020). But what is regeneration exactly? And how is it different from sustainability?

*"Sustainability as we know it is dead. Doing less harm is no longer enough. The future of sustainability lies in regeneration: seeking to restore and replenish what we have lost, to build economies and communities that thrive, and that allow the planet to thrive too"* (Stafford, 2018, p.2).

Following the example of the natural ecosystem (see figure 1), regeneration refers to **a self-sufficient and balanced system**. "Regenerative is living. The key difference about living systems over any other is that they have the ability to regenerate themselves and this ability does not come from any one place and does not require external inputs. The connections between the parts of the system support this ability" (ĀTA Regenerative, 2020). "At its simplest, regeneration is about creating the fertile conditions conducive for life to thrive based on the knowledge that life and living systems, unlike machines, self-organise, and are not static but, through living, are

constantly adapting, changing, evolving" (Pollock, 2019).

If sustainability seeks to sustain, regeneration also **restores, renews and nurtures**. Sustainability focuses on producing a **neutral impact** on the planet, a zero-

#### Attributes of a Successful Living System in Nature

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| • It's <b>ALIVE</b> – vitality; robustness;          | • Efficient - <b>Zero waste</b>  |
| • It's <b>self-organizing</b>                        | • It's <b>evolving</b> – greater order, complexity, beauty - dynamic equilibrium     |
| • Creates <b>conditions for other life to exist</b>  | • <b>Unique</b> , distinctive  |
| • Adaptable, constantly changing ( <b>learning</b> ) | • <b>Balance</b> with all other parts – harmony                                      |
| • <b>Resilient</b>                                   | • It <b>contributes to the well-being of the larger system</b> of which it is a part |
| • <b>Productive</b> – generates <b>ABUNDANCE</b>     |  |



sum game, while regeneration is about **improving the system**. "We can't just sustain the status quo, because it is simply not sustainable the way human civilization is set up currently. Therefore, we need to regenerate first, and then sustain the new regenerated status quo" (Vlahov, n.d.). Regeneration also means to **move from scarcity to abundance**, but not in consumerist terms. It is not about maximizing growth in an effort to overcome scarcity, but on utilizing resources in a way that could continue and create positive life conditions for all future generations.

## 2.2.2 Introduction to regenerative tourism

Starting from the definition of regeneration, "regenerative tourism" is the idea that **tourism leaves a place better than it was before**. It strengthens the potential that is already there; while "sustainability," in comparison, is leaving something as it is so that it exists in a constant state; in other words, not causing any additional damage (Haugen, 2020).

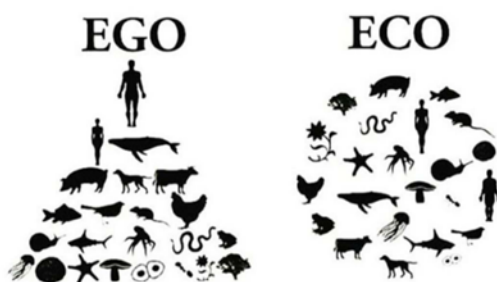
Anna Pollock, the founder of [Conscious Travel](#) and an influential tourism thinker, has been advocating for long for holistic travel and a **paradigm shift of tourism** that positively exploits its transformative nature. She has been an advocate of regenerative tourism for years. The concept gained a renewed attention within the tourism industry in 2019, due to Pollock's work with Visit Flanders and the [Travel To Tomorrow](#) project. Additionally, the regenerative tourism's discourse is developing further, because of the Covid-19 pandemic impact on tourism. Notably, an [article](#) published in the New York Times by Elaine Glusac kick-started the discourse within the tourism sector.

The tourism industry, one of the sectors the most hit by the pandemic, is involved in a reflexivity process. Starting from the idea "#BuildingBackBetter", the sector looks at how it can **"rethink" tourism** and how tourism will look like post-Covid 19. The halt of tourism and the impossibility of travelling during the pandemic, gave tourists and tourism entrepreneurs the opportunity to reflect more consciously on the essence of tourism experience and to **re-value** it. People realize which parts of travelling they really miss and take a step back from the hectic and frequent travelling around they were used to. Tourism is reconsidered as a very special, or 'luxury' opportunity, one that cannot be taken for granted.

Several trends are developing in the tourism industry and mobility. Domestic tourism, for example, can have a revival process, through **re-regionalization**. Re-regionalization in tourism recognizes the need of creating more attractive and meaningful travel offers within our own places and bioregions (Wahl, 2020a) and of strengthening ties within our community, neighbourhoods, city, regions. It also recognises, in economic terms, the benefits of creating jobs and community resilience, while maintaining international collaboration and fair trade (Wahl, 2020b). People rediscover their small-scale surroundings, such as their own neighbourhood. In general, the Covid-19 crisis represents an opportunity for tourism to **redevelop and reimagine itself** in a way that doesn't just avoid damage but actually can have a **positive impact** on destinations and communities.

## 2.2.3 Regenerative tourism for destinations

Regeneration can be the most easily applied to bigger systems, such as destinations, in which many stakeholders are active. The switch from sustaining to regenerating in tourism should be made on the destination level to really realize its full potential. Tourism entrepreneurs have a crucial role to play in this, and should be aware of the key principles of what makes a regenerative tourism destination, so they can contribute to it with their own strategy and approach.



- Tourism as one sustainable development tool out of many
- Finding local solutions for global problems

We will explain each of them here.

### **Long term and step by step thinking**

To develop a regenerative tourist destination, or locally embedded regeneration strategy, is a journey. Regeneration is not episodic and neither static, it involves a **continual adaptation and co-evolution**. Sometimes restoring a place takes a long time.

There is an analogy with gardening: if you plant seeds and nurture them, respecting their environmental conditions and the right time, then you will pick the fruits. You have to create good conditions in your destination, so that tourism can bring the best 'fruits', or, in other words, can have the best positive impact.

It is crucial that you observe how the place is changing, and you are able to **adapt** your interventions and tourism strategies to it. You have to bear in mind that regenerative tourism is a 'long term investment', sometimes it is necessary to wait in order to maximise the positive effects. The benefits for the destination and the community will be higher because you're creating the conditions for a more and more **resilient and self-sufficient system**.

Aiming at the best positive impact and implementing it **step by step** implies to keep finding a balance between several different needs: those of the residents, of the visitors, of the entrepreneurs, of the natural environment,... All stakeholders matter and everyone's needs must be maximally met, without harming the others.

### **Seeing the system/destination as a whole**

"Whole systems thinking is a method of understanding how elements and systems are related, and how they influence one another within a whole" (Ho, 2020, p.13). As **ecosystems**, regenerative tourism is based on the connections and interdependencies. Valuable partnerships, togetherness

### 2.2.3.1 Key principles of regeneration of destinations

Destinations should apply these key principles to initiate the transition to regeneration:

- Long term and step by step thinking
- Seeing the system/destination as a whole
- Tourism strongly embedded in the local context



and collaboration among the stakeholders with diverse experiences are crucial (see also the guidelines below).

Whole system thinking also involves moving from an “ego-system” and anthropocentric system to an **“ecosystem awareness”**(ibid.). The first one is focused entirely on the well-being of one aspect within the system, namely the tourism industry. Profit maximization and attracting as many tourists as possible to a destination are the main strategies here. The second, more regenerative, one emphasizes the well-being of the whole, i.e. the tourism destination and the community in which it is embedded, as well as tourists and all the other actors involved directly or indirectly in the tourism process.

### ***Tourism strongly embedded in the local context***

Tourism should be **in harmony** with the context of the destination: with the community and its habits, culture and history, as well as with the local environment. Each destination is different and unique. It is important to **understand the needs** of the locals and the **intrinsic value** of a specific destination, starting from asking how the destination and the community can benefit from tourism. Looking at the bigger picture of the destination, tourism players will have to ask themselves how and where tourism fits in to **maximize its positive impact**. You need to reflect on how tourism can be part of the context and enhance the value of the community and the place.

### ***Tourism as one sustainable development tool out of many***

Regenerative tourism is not necessarily something that stands alone, and that in itself will deliver a positive net benefit to communities. That thinking needs to be re-evaluated. Instead, consider how communities can best benefit from tourism as a single industry out of many. When taking a systemic and holistic approach, **tourism is no longer a stand-alone sector** and does not represent a goal by itself. Rather, it develops as one industry among many others. In this sense, tourism becomes a (one out of many) tool for sustainable development and a resource of positive transformation that can contribute to a better quality of life for all (Haugen, 2020).

Tourism can act as the **connector** between initiatives and use its strengths- such as global reach, diversity of sectors, financial power, passion of professionals (ibid.) - to support and finance projects in several sectors. The solutions to the local issues should come from the inside the communities and from the initiatives that already exist.

In conclusion, tourism should not be an external factor, detached from the ongoing socio-economic, cultural, political and ecological processes of the destination. Neither should tourism be the only resource of income for a community, as this would create an **unhealthy dependency**. A good interconnection with other sectors and diversifying the source of markets is important also to build resilient systems. A full or very high dependency on tourism can be detrimental for a community and a destination, something that the pandemic crisis has made painfully clear.

### ***Finding local solutions for global problems***

While tourism is a global phenomenon that faces global issues, each tourism initiative and solution should be adapted to the local context and its specificities. The term **“glocal”** could be used here, as it refers to this double mutual relation and intersection between the local and the global dimension. Working on a “glocal” level means finding local solutions to global problems, supporting a global industry through local solutions, and contributing to a global platform with



local stories (Haugen, 2020). It is also the mindset and approach to implement the SDGs (see Unit 2.2 Sustainable Development & the SDGs), and can serve as a baseline for regenerative tourism.

## Final self-assessment

1. **The concept of regeneration refers to:**
  - a) Restoring, renewing, nurturing
  - b) Producing a neutral impact on the planet
  - c) Maximizing growth in an effort to overcome scarcity
  - d) Sustaining the status quo
  
2. **Regenerative tourism does NOT aim to:**
  - a) Leave a place better than it was before
  - b) Re-value the tourism experience.
  - c) Have a positive impact on destinations and communities
  - d) Avoiding any additional damage to the environment
  
3. **"Step by step thinking" in regenerative tourism means:**
  - a) Taking the time to select the most important stakeholders in the area you operate in.
  - b) Adapting intervention to natural and social changes
  - c) Developing an economic strategy
  - d) Leave a place better than it was before
  
4. **Regenerative tourism is NOT based on:**
  - a) Connections and interdependencies
  - b) A continual adaptation and co-evolution
  - c) Ecosystem awareness
  - d) An anthropocentric system
  
5. **In a regenerative perspective local communities:**
  - a) Focus their local development strategies mostly on sustainable tourism.
  - b) Integrate best practice in sustainable tourism from all over the world
  - c) Develop a tourism strategy as a tool and a resource (out of many) for sustainable development
  - d) Address global environmental problems instead of local needs



## 2.3 Annexes

### 2.3.1: The milestones of sustainable development

<p><b>1972_United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm</b></p>	<p>It is the first time that ecological goals and environmental protection are introduced into the development goals in a world conference. The 1972 UN Conference on the Environment is a turning point in the development of international environmental policies, with a multisectoral and transversal approach. One of the major results of the Stockholm conference is the creation of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).</p> <p>Find more about the Stockholm conference and its documentation here: <a href="https://www.un.org/en/conferences/environment/stockholm1972">https://www.un.org/en/conferences/environment/stockholm1972</a></p>
<p><b>1983_ the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED)</b></p> <p><b>1987_ "Our Common Future" report</b></p>	<p>In December 1983, it was decided to set up an organization independent of the UN to focus on environmental and developmental problems and solutions. This new organization, the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), or more informally the <b>Brundtland Commission</b> (named after its president, the Prime Minister of the Norwegian Government), aims to create a united international community with shared sustainability goals. Its purpose is to identify sustainability problems worldwide, raise awareness about them, and suggest the implementation of solutions.</p> <p>The Brundtland Commission published "Our Common Future", the organization's main report. "Our Common Future" is credited with crafting the most prevalent definition of sustainability and, in general, it marks an intense redesign of the concept of development.</p> <p>To see the report: <a href="https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/5987our-common-future.pdf">https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/5987our-common-future.pdf</a></p>
<p><b>1988_The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)</b></p>	<p>The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is the leading international body for the assessment of climate change. It was established by the UNEP and the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO), to provide the world with a clear scientific view on the current state of knowledge in climate change and its potential environmental and socio-economic impacts.</p> <p>Thousands of scientists from all over the world contribute to the work of the IPCC on a voluntary basis. Currently 195 countries are members of the IPCC.</p>
<p><b>1990_The Human Development Report</b></p>	<p>Since 1990, the United Nations has published annually a report on human development. The first Human Development Report (HDR) was launched by the economist Mahbub ul Haq and the Nobel laureate Amartya Sen. The HDR emphasises the importance of the human dimension of development (a dimension previously neglected at the expense of excessive emphasis on economic development). It ranks countries according to their Human Development Index (HDI), which is made up of three main factors: life expectancy, education and per capita income (Gross national income -GNI- per capita).</p> <p>The HDI ranges between 0 and 1, indicating how close each country is to the targets. Currently the HDI represents 189 countries, grouped by quartiles: from a very high to a low HDI respectively from the first to the fifth quartile.</p>

	<p>To consult the HDR: <a href="http://hdr.undp.org/">http://hdr.undp.org/</a></p>
<p><b>1992_The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development</b></p>	<p>The 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), also known as the 'Earth Summit', in Rio de Janeiro, is very important because it brought environmental issues onto the global stage. It ended with the approval of the <a href="#">Rio Declaration</a> and its 27 universal principles, the <a href="#">United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)</a>, the <a href="#">Convention on Biological Diversity</a> and the <a href="#">Declaration on the principles of forest management</a>.</p> <p>One of the major results of the UNCED Conference is <a href="#">Agenda 21</a>, a program of action calling, adopted by more than 178 countries, to build a global partnership for overall sustainable development in the 21st century.</p> <p>The Rio 'Earth Summit' was reaffirmed in <b>2002</b> in the World Summit on Sustainable Development, in Johannesburg (also called <b>Rio +10</b>) and in <b>2012</b> the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, (also called <b>Rio+20</b>) in Rio de Janeiro. In this conference the Member States adopted the outcome document <a href="#">The Future We Want</a>, in which they decided, inter alia, to launch a process to develop a set of SDGs to build upon the MDGs and to establish the UN High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.</p>
<p><b>1995_United Nations Climate Change Conference</b></p> <p><b>1997_The Kyoto Protocol</b></p>	<p>Since 1995 (when the first conference took place in Berlin), UN Climate Change Conferences are yearly-held conferences, in the framework of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). They serve as the formal meeting of the yearly UNFCCC Parties (Conference of the Parties, COP) to assess progress in dealing with climate change and reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.</p> <p>To see all the COP: <a href="https://unfccc.int/process/bodies/supreme-bodies/conference-of-the-parties-cop">https://unfccc.int/process/bodies/supreme-bodies/conference-of-the-parties-cop</a></p> <p>The COP 3, which took place in Kyoto, has led to the Kyoto Protocol, which is an international environmental treaty covering the climate change issue. It foresees a commitment by all participating countries to reduce polluting gases by no less than 5% compared to emissions in 1990 (considered as the base year in the five-year period 2008-2012).</p> <p>Even though it was signed in 1997, it came into force in 2005, after being ratified by Russia. In fact, it is a voluntary agreement, but in order to enter into force, the treaty had to be ratified by at least 55 nations and they had to produce at least 55% of the pollutant emissions. Recognizing that developed countries are principally responsible for the current high levels of GHG emissions in the atmosphere as a result of more than 150 years of industrial activity, the Protocol places a heavier burden on developed nations under the principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities."</p> <p>The United States was not among the adhering countries and alone produced more than 36% of carbon dioxide emissions. This increased the difficulty of implementing the treaty. Currently, there are 192 Parties to the Kyoto Protocol.</p> <p>After the Kyoto Protocol, several agreements on climate changes have been established, in the framework of the COP. For example, the most recent is the <b>Paris Agreement</b>, a legally binding international treaty on climate change. It was adopted by 196 Parties at COP 21 in Paris, on 12 December 2015 and entered into force on 4 November <b>2016</b>.</p>



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Rural Innovative Sustainable Tourism for VET

	<p>Find more here: <a href="https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement/the-paris-agreement">https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement/the-paris-agreement</a></p>
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## 2.3.2 Flourishing destinations as a form of regeneration: a regenerative tourism policy

An example of developing a regenerative tourism policy on a regional destination level is the project of [Travel to Tomorrow](#). It is an innovative tourism strategy for Flanders (Belgium), set up by the governmental organisation Visitlanders, for the period 2019-2024. The policy is based on the idea of a **flourishing destination**.

"The idea of flourishing destinations works a lot more deeply than the idea of sustainable tourism. It's about looking at the destination on a whole and as part of a whole and about allowing it to become more than it is now. Instead of thinking about doing less harm you can start thinking of engaging with the system, to enable it to grow and flourish. That means that it can become more than it is."

(Pollock, as cited in Travel to Tomorrow, 2019a)

In this sense, 'flourishing' is another word for regenerative. The community takes up a central space in a flourishing destination.

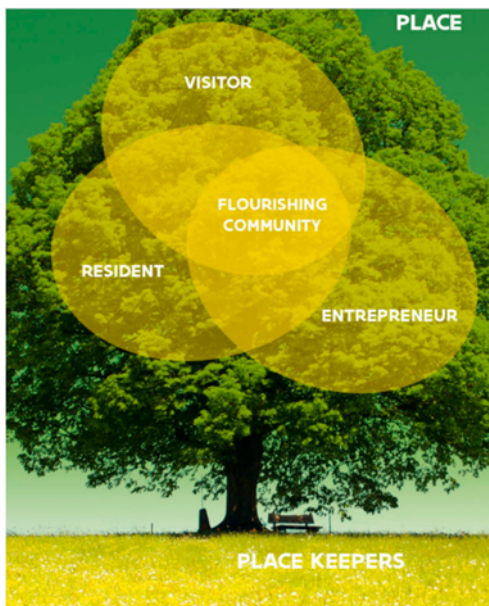


Figure 8: The Lime Tree

"A flourishing community is created where people and organisations feel connected to their place and one another" (Travel to Tomorrow, 2019b). "A flourishing community is very much connected to its specific place; where people work together, where visitors can feel at home and residents can nurture and share their love for the place" (ibid.).

Visit Flanders (Travel to Tomorrow, 2019b) has created a "**checklist**" with more concrete forms a flourishing destination can take for the different stakeholders involved. On the level of your tourism destination, you can check for yourself and other stakeholders how many of these statements apply to your situation, in order to check how advanced the destination is in terms of flourishing or regeneration. Hereafter you can find the checklist taken from <https://www.traveltotomorrow.be/future-vision/the-lime/>

A community thrives when the visitor

- feels genuinely welcome
- can experience the essence of a place
- feels a positive impact of his stay; new energy and inspiration, personal development, commitment to the place and the people that he/she meets
- respects nature, culture and the characteristics of the place
- takes the people and place to his heart, feels involved and wants to return or recommend the place to others



A community thrives when the entrepreneur / service provider

- is vital and profitable and can adapt effectively to change
- has good working conditions and appreciation
- is passionate and innovative/creative in terms of his product or service and monitors its uniqueness
- is an ambassador for the place where he/she works
- strives for high levels of satisfaction by means of genuine hospitality and professionalism
- takes account of the impact of his activities on the community and the place itself

A community thrives when the place

- is appealing, pleasant and safe
- encourages encounters between residents, entrepreneurs and visitors and does not exclude anyone
- showcases its unique character, and retains its identity, nature and culture
- offers space for creativity and experimenting
- draws upon the intellect of the local community
- connects to the rest of the world and makes a positive contribution to a flourishing planet

A community thrives when a resident

- loves living in the place, knows the place well and is proud of it
- is involved in the (tourism) policy of the place so that he/she supports the desired development of their place
- enjoys the positive impact of tourism: retention and strengthening of facilities, heritage, culture, income, jobs, intercultural encounters, ...
- is not inconvenienced by tourism



## 2.3.3 Inspiration and tools to continue your regeneration journey as a tourism entrepreneur

These first introductory concepts paint a picture of what regeneration is about and what regenerative tourism could look like. As an entrepreneur or tourism professional, you cannot make this journey overnight. It requires the profound re-thinking of the system and looking at tourism with a new lens. Continuing from the guidelines above, you can use multiple tools or insights to develop your journey towards regeneration further. Here are a few:

- **Regenesie Group**

Regenesie is a company specialised in the field of regenerative development. The Group was founded by experts in permaculture and ecological design, together with experts in the worlds of business planning and organizational development. At Regenesie they are convinced that human activity can be a source of health and regeneration, rather than destruction and degradation and can be in harmony with natural systems. Regenesie supports this work through client services—providing the foundational thinking and management support needed to engage in regenerative projects and community development initiatives worldwide—as well as through education programs for practitioners of architecture, planning and community development.

<https://regenesiegroupp.com/team>

- **Michelle Holliday**

Michelle Holliday is a consultant, facilitator and researcher, and the author of the book, *The Age of Thrivability: Vital Perspectives and Practices for a Better World*. She centers her work around the concept of **thrivability**: a set of beliefs, intentions and practices based on a view of organizations as living systems. She accompanies pioneering organizations and businesses as they craft a bold manifesto and then design the ways to their thriving journey. As part of the worldwide Art of Hosting community of practice, she regularly hosts public conversations and workshops.

<https://michelleholliday.com/>

<https://www.traveltomorrow.be/inspiration/michelle-holliday/>

TED talk <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RUIStx-nZ3I>

<https://www.slideshare.net/mholliday/humanity-40-draft-presentation>

- **Regenerative Travel**

Regenerative Travel is a shared benefit corporation and booking platform providing marketing and hospitality services to a network of over 50 independently owned eco-luxury boutique hotels dedicated to the highest levels of social and environmental impact located in over 24 countries worldwide. You can look for inspiration from their good practices, both on the entrepreneur's and the tourists' side. Amongst others, it is a platform for connecting conscious travelers to inspiring content, values-aligned hotels or curated itineraries. In other words, the Regenerative Resorts network aims at inspiring transformative experiences for travellers (cf. Unit 3.3 Experience Economy and Transformational Travel).

<https://www.regenerativetravel.com/>



- **REGEN**

REGEN is a collective of hospitality practitioners, researchers, architects, scientists, NGOs, and impact investors, dedicated to make travel a force for good by sharing their knowledge, expertise, insights to transform the travel and hospitality economic model into one that is regenerative for all the stakeholders and the planet. They act as change agents, facilitators, and connectors to support the transformation of the hospitality industry through research and innovation, consulting services, workshops, and conferences.

<https://regenhospitality.com/>

- **Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency**

Tourism Declares is a global community that supports tourism businesses, organisations and individuals in declaring a climate emergency and taking action to align their plans with the need to cut global emissions in half over the next decade. They try to encourage the travel industry (organizations, entrepreneurs, influencers, bloggers, writers, consultants, etc.) to take responsibility, for example by offering environmentally responsible travel experiences that benefit the local community. When you sign the statement, you engage to: 1) develop a climate action plan within twelve months, 2) make your intention and progress public, 3) actively contribute to the reduction of total CO2 emissions by 55%, 4) work together and support other professionals who want to contribute to the climate, 5) you advocate for change and enter into a dialogue with family, friends and business partners. The climate plan is personal and therefore different for everyone.

<https://www.tourismdeclares.com/>

## 2.4 Figure references

- Figure 1: <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/blog/2016/07/17goals17days-progress-made-on-sustainable-development-goals/>.
- Figure 2: Route 2030, 2020.
- Figure 3: Elsen & Bekx, 2018.
- Figure 4: <https://www.smartinsights.com/digital-marketing-strategy/online-value-proposition/start-with-why-creating-a-value-proposition-with-the-golden-circle-model/>
- Figure 5: Elsen & Bekx, 2018.
- Figure 6: Pollock, 2019.
- Figure 7: Lehmann, 2010 as cited in Lehmann, 2019).
- Figure 8: Travel to Tomorrow, 2019b





## **Module 3: Sustainable Tourism**

## Unit 3.1 Sustainable Environment

### Preliminary self-assessment

1. **An environmental impact is NOT:**
  - a) Any change to components of the environment, whether positive or negative, resulting from human activities or natural events
  - b) A phenomenon impossible to assess and measure
  - c) The effect that people's actions have on the environment
  - d) An environmental imbalance
  
2. **High environmental impact of uncontrolled conventional mass-tourism is NOT caused by:**
  - a) Long-distance transportation
  - b) Increasing interest in visiting natural areas
  - c) Deforestation and intensified use of land
  - d) Increasing number of visitors
  
3. **This is NOT a principle of low impact tourism:**
  - a) Designing low-impact facilities
  - b) Contributing in developing ecological and social conscience
  - c) Minimising waste production
  - d) Increasing the number of visitors in less-developed countries
  
4. **In a regenerative tourism perspective, choosing quality over quantity means:**
  - a) Offering more expensive services in order to minimise the number of visitors
  - b) The ability of offering meaningful tourism and travel experience both to tourists and to destinations
  - c) Focusing on cultural experiences rather than on activities in natural areas
  - d) Developing small luxury facilities.
  
5. **Local communities will benefit from your tourism business if:**
  - a) Your business contributes to the development of a large network of business with investors from all over the world
  - b) Your business attracts a high number of visitors
  - c) Your business cooperates with local stakeholders in meeting local needs
  - d) Your business imports best practices from other countries

## Unit introduction

This unit aims to introduce the concepts of environmental footprint and life cycle assessment, as well as to raise awareness about the potential environmental impact, both negative and positive. For this reason, concepts of eco-tourism and regenerative tourism will be also focused on.

Learning outcomes and student skills:

- Define the environmental impact.
- Detect the main elements that compose an environmental impact.
- Identify high impact factors, in particular in tourism activities.
- Define low-impact activities and businesses.
- Detect the main impacts of tourism activities and businesses.
- Identify ecological solutions for different businesses.
- Identify low- impact activities in a given area or region.
- Choose the most suitable solutions for his/her business (in energy-saving and waste management).
- Define the concept of slow food and slow food network.
- Identify opportunities for regenerative tourism as tourism entrepreneurs.
- Analyse the supply chain and create improvements towards more regeneration.

### 3.1.1 Life Cycle Assessment and Environmental Footprint

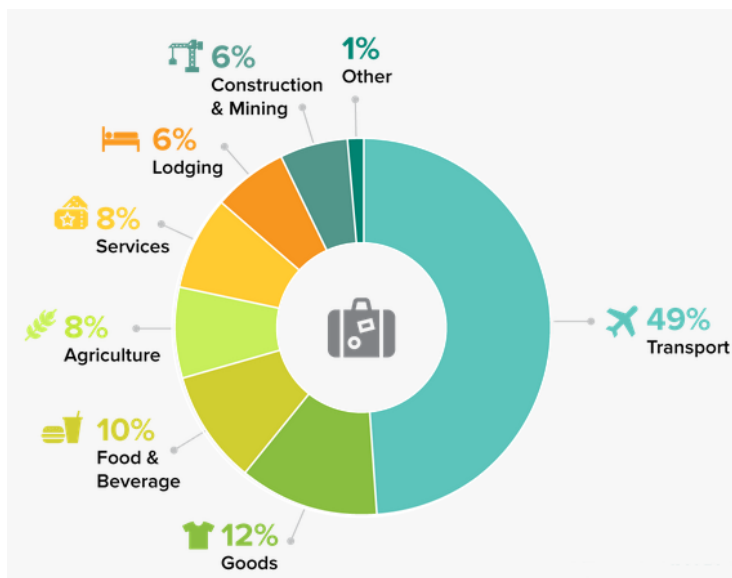


Figure 1: Carbon footprint of tourism.

An environmental impact is defined as any change to components of the environment, whether positive or negative, resulting from activities, products, or services, as well as from natural events. In the framework of this training path, we are going to focus on human environmental impact, in other words the effect that people's actions have on the environment, creating environmental imbalance.

For example, when volatile organic compounds are released into the atmosphere, the effect is pollution, in this case being negative. The primary negative impact in an energy dependent society is the

result of energy production and use. Nevertheless, many other activities, such as waste disposal and increased demand for resources cause harm to the environment. The impacts of these activities on the environment have become clear and include: climate change, acid rain,



photochemical smog and other forms of pollution, ocean acidification, displacement and/or extinction of wildlife, resource depletion and more.

In the last decades, several tools have been developed to assess and measure negative environmental impacts, in particular analysing supply chains and end-of-life waste management.

Life Cycle Assessment aims at evaluating any environmental impact related to all the stages of the life cycle of a product, process, or service.

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) defined a standard (ISO 14044:2006/Amd 2:2020) specifying requirements and providing guidelines for life cycle assessment in 2006 (International Organization for Standardization [ISO], 2006). The European Commission (through the Joint Research Centre and the DG-ENV) developed the Reference Life Cycle Data System (ILCD) with the aim to provide guidance and standards for an even greater consistency and quality assurance in applying LCA, yet in line with international standards (European Commission - Joint Research Centre - Institute for Environment and Sustainability 2010).

Product Environmental Footprint (PEF) and Organisation Environmental Footprint (OEF) are the EU recommended method to estimate environmental impact of goods, services and organisations (Commission Recommendations 2013/179/EU). Through the analysis of detailed information on the flows of material, energy, waste and emissions, PEF and OEF set the framework for modelling the environmental impact throughout the life cycle, "cradle to grave". The Environmental Footprint method identifies the effects of human activities on human health, biodiversity and natural resource provision, grouped in 16 impact categories: Climate change; Ozone depletion; Human toxicity, non-cancer; Human toxicity, cancer; Particulate matter; Ionising radiation; Photochemical ozone formation; Acidification; Eutrophication, terrestrial; Eutrophication, freshwater; Eutrophication, marine; Land use; Ecotoxicity freshwater; Water use; Resource use, fossils; and Resource use, minerals and metals.

These impact categories are evaluated through indicators expressed in terms of Biodiversity or Human Health footprint (European Commission - Joint Research Centre - Institute for Environment and Sustainability 2010).

### 3.1.2 Low impact and eco-tourism

Several NGOs and international networks have defined eco-tourism as "responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment, sustains the well-being of the local people, and creates knowledge and understanding through interpretation and education of all involved (visitors, staff and the visited)", applying the multidimensional concept of sustainable development to the field of tourism (Global Ecotourism Network 2016; The international ecotourism society 2015).

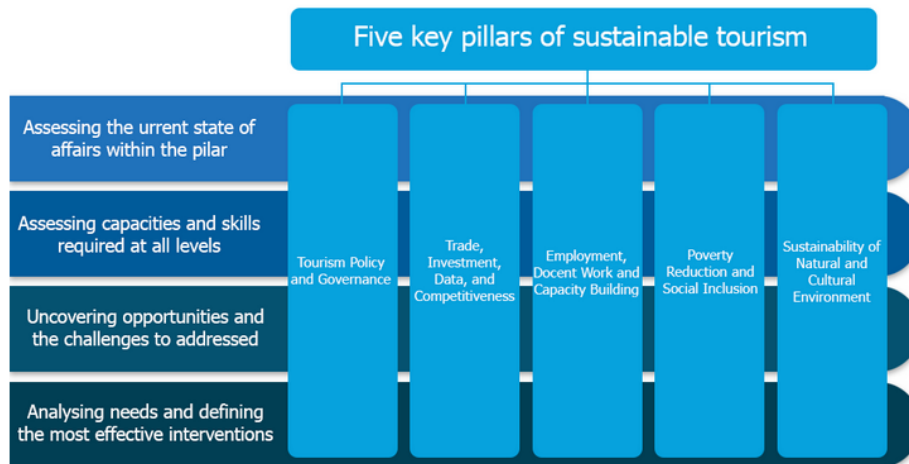


Figure 2: Key pillars of sustainable tourism.

In this training path we are going to analyse eco-tourism in the environmental (unit 3.1) cultural (unit 3.2), social (unit 3.3) and economic (unit 3.4) perspectives.

### 3.1.2.1 Tourism environmental impact

With a constantly increasing number of visitors, on a global scale, negative impact of tourism is relevant when this level becomes greater than the environment's possibility to cope with this use within an acceptable limit of change. In the last decades, the uncontrolled conventional tourism development caused dangers to several natural resources, putting very high pressure on tourism destinations around the world. Moreover, areas where natural resources are already scarce experienced a critical growth of consumptions.

Traditional mass-tourism, in fact, requires invasive activities such as long-distance transportation, facilities and infrastructure development, deforestation and intensified or unsustainable use of land, marina development, trampling, anchoring and other marine activities. These activities affect the environment causing depletion of natural resources (such as energy, water, food), land degradation, air pollution and noise, solid waste and littering, sewage, aesthetic pollution, alteration of ecosystems.

### 3.1.2.2 Low impact tourism: standards and tools

In the last two decades, low impact tourism initiatives have been arising around the world, leading also to the development of strategies for a positive impact of tourism activities on the environment and local communities.

Private stakeholders in early 2000s developed proposals for international standards in sustainable and eco-tourism. The Mohonk Agreement (an informal scheme for an international eco-tourism certification), for instance, is still a reference in the development of many eco-tourism and sustainable tourism schemes (Mohonk Agreement 2000). Today, both the World Tourism Organisation and the European Union are involved in promoting a sustainable approach to tourism. In 2016 the European Commission published a system of indicators encouraging tourist destinations to adopt a sustainable approach through a management tool, a monitoring system as well as an information tool (European Commission 2016).

### 3.1.2.2 Low impact tourism: principles and criteria

Research and practices in eco-tourism show that low impact tourism needs to be small scale, especially in fragile areas, in order to minimize the potential damage to the environment.

Professionals separate a generic sustainable approach to tourism (that could be applied at any scale), from eco-tourism (which aims at having a positive impact). Focusing on environmental aspects, low impact tourism, as a consequence, should:

- Produce direct financial and/or active benefits for conservation of natural areas and biodiversity.
- Design, construct and operate low-impact facilities.
- Minimize physical, social and behavioural impacts on fauna and flora.
- Minimize waste production.
- Contribute in developing ecological and social conscience.
- Be non-consumptive (for instance in terms of logging, mining, recreational hunting or fishing).

Units 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4 will focus on principles of eco-tourism connected with social, cultural and economic sustainability.

## 3.1.3 Regenerative tourism for tourism entrepreneurs

The regeneration concept can also be applied in tourism enterprises. It is a way of thinking, a way of doing business that is dedicated to contributing to sustainable development. Here are a few insights into concrete measures you can take, sources you can consult and approaches you can try, in order to start and then continue your regenerative journey as a tourism entrepreneur.

### 3.1.3.1 Guidelines to start your regenerative journey

#### ***Start from sustainability and go beyond***

As we have seen, regeneration builds further on sustainability. **Sustainability standards** represent the basis if you want to develop your regenerative tourism process. Using these standards, you can aim to measure tourism beyond its financial benefits, and also look at the greater positive impact it can have on all the 5 P's of sustainable development.

It is important for companies to have good sustainability practices, such as correct waste management and using recycled materials, as well as have sustainability certification, and more. With regeneration, you can add to that and achieve the next level. Sustainability actions can be turned into regenerative, if they integrate **restoration, renewal and resilience** into the strategies (Vlahov, n.d.)

Complying with sustainability parameters and criteria is a good -and necessary- starting point. In this regard you can find some criteria and guidelines for sustainable tourism practices:

- **Minimum Criteria by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC)**

The GSTC Criteria serve as the global baseline standards for sustainability in travel and tourism. The Criteria are used for education and awareness-raising, policy-making for businesses and government agencies and other organization types, measurement and evaluation, and as a basis for certification. They are arranged in four pillars: Sustainable management; Socioeconomic impacts; Cultural impacts; Environmental impacts. The Criteria are designed to be adapted to local conditions and supplemented by additional criteria for the specific location and activity. They are split in two sets of Criteria: GSTC Criteria for [Industry](#) (businesses), and GSTC Criteria for [Destinations](#).  
<https://www.gstcouncil.org/gstc-criteria/>

- **Green Destinations**

Green Destinations Foundation is a non-profit organisation for sustainable destination development and recognition based in the Netherlands. Together with their global Partnership of representatives, expert organisations and academic institutions, they support more than 200 destinations in 60 countries to deliver responsible tourism based upon globally recognized principles and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).  
<https://greendestinations.org/>

- **The Center for Responsible Travel (CREST)**

CREST is a global nonprofit organization based in Washington, DC dedicated to provide, through rigorous research and an academic approach, evidence-based analysis and guidance to address the tourism industry's most pressing issues to increase the positive global impact of responsible tourism.  
<https://www.responsibletravel.org/>

- **Sustainable Travel International**

Sustainable Travel International is a non-profit organization aimed at taking on tourism's most pressing and transformative impacts, and working towards a future where travel is beneficial for people and places around the world. They provide businesses and destinations with the guidance and support they need, by focusing on four priorities: to safeguard nature; to combat climate change; to empower communities and to tackle waste and pollution.  
<https://sustainabletravel.org/>

### ***Choose quality over quantity***

Up until now, one of the primary indicators of success of tourism was the growth in the number of visitors. But what matters in regenerative tourism, rather than the quantity of visitors, is the **quality** of the visits: the ability of offering meaningful tourism and travel experience, quality of services, to tourists and to the destination. What should be measured is not merely the numbers, but the extent to which local destinations and their residents thrive.

To choose quality over quantity means for example to respect the **carrying capacity** of the destination. The carrying capacity is assessed by including the infrastructure (for example the waste, water and energy management and land use), but also the social and environmental limits: how are residents and ecosystems impacted by the amount of visitors (Future of Tourism, n.d.) ? Sometimes less visitors means they will greatly enjoy the place and it will enhance their tourism experience. The destination and the local community as well will benefit more.



For tourism entrepreneurs, prioritizing quality over quantity can look like this:

- To adopt and support responsible consumption and production (SDG12) in your supply chain, reflected in fair working conditions and prices.
- To define the success of your tourism enterprise, not only on the basis of profitability (linear economy oriented to growth) but also to think in terms of circular economy and the Doughnut economy (See Unit 2.2. Sustainable Development & the SDGs)
- To offer 'personalized' and quality experiences to your guests, and establish with them a human contact, so that they can feel welcome and have meaningful travel experiences (see the unit on Transformative Tourism)
- To make tourists aware about their responsibility, to make them feel part of something bigger, i.e. the wellbeing of the destination in which they can play an active role.

### ***Know what your added value to the community is***

It is important to question the role of tourism in a certain place and community. How do you shape local tourism, so that it can fit the context? Tourism entrepreneurs have to bear in mind that not every destination will necessarily benefit from tourism. Or rather, that (mass) tourism that is not managed well, tourism that comes without considering the characteristics, the history and the needs of the destination, can be very harmful to the local development. As a tourism entrepreneur, you need to keep **questioning the value of tourism for your local environment** and look for the best way tourism can contribute to the local community and destination wellbeing. To get the right insight, it's important to use an internal and bottom up approach (rather than an external and top down one). For example if you are not from the location yourself, you should involve and collaborate with local people.

Therefore, start by asking yourself: what is the value you can add that the community can benefit from? How can your community best benefit from your tourism activity? Which role can you play within the destination? Which are your strengths that you can contribute with?

This is the baseline to develop tourism activities, strategies and initiatives that **meet the community's needs**. You need to have a clear idea about all the people involved in your tourism activity and projects, from your employees to the indirect stakeholders. In other words, you need to understand and define who your community is, and which its characteristics are. Because there is no such thing as "THE" community: it is heterogeneous and exists of different groups, with different needs. Thinking about your value to your community is also necessary to make sure that between tourists and locals, and all the other actors involved in the tourism experience, there is a harmonious and mutually beneficial exchange.

While defining your WHY (see The Golden circle, Unit 2.2), you should also center your reflection on your community, to consider who the beneficiaries of your entrepreneurial activity are. Your purpose and broader objectives, such as your contribution to the SDGs, have to be communicated, starting from your staff members who can be your sustainability ambassadors. It is important to let your stakeholders know why you are doing initiatives that are 'not directly business oriented' or purely commercial, or why sometimes you do not take the easiest way in order to fulfil broader purposes. When you present the benefits of making these conscious choices towards sustainability, it will be easier to create **more engagement and support** among your stakeholders.





### **Connect & collaborate with various partners**

As already mentioned, tourism connects different sectors and a wide variety of stakeholders. Tourism therefore has to be developed in a **collaborative way**, with equal participation by government, the private sector, and civil society organizations that represent diversity in communities (Future of Tourism, n.d.).

The involvement in the decision making process, planning and management should be extended among the different actors of the destination, so that the positive impact of tourism can be best ensured and increased. Moreover, you have to take into account and engage not only individuals and entities within the tourism industry, but also outside of it. Especially in times of crisis, such as the one caused by Covid-19 pandemic, it is useful to look for valuable partnerships with organizations in several sectors, other enterprises and for support from institutions and government.

A special attention has to be addressed to **minority groups**, making sure that they are represented, and their voice is heard in tourism processes.

## **3.1.3.2 Operating responsibly throughout the supply chain**

Customers are increasingly asking for more sustainable travel options. Even though tourists have an individual responsibility in choosing their travel options, the tourism industry has the biggest responsibility in the regenerative tourism change. "Hotels and travel agents have an absolute duty to look beyond profit and think about where the customer's money will go. We are all responsible for an ethical supply chain". (Kinsman, as cited in Ho, 2020, p.33).

In case you are starting out as a tourism entrepreneur, it is important to **choose partners** that share your vision, to create a regenerative supply chain from the start. If your enterprise is already established, and you want to initiate a transition process towards regeneration in your enterprise and destination, you need to deeply **understand your supply chain**. Really get acquainted with the needs and roles of each actor, in order to implement the right changes. "Once you begin to understand all of the different stakeholders who are involved, you can begin to understand how you can work together more consciously, mindfully, and collaboratively" (Reed, as cited in Ho, 2020, p.32.) This way, you can enhance both the destination and local community on the one hand, and the travel experience for the guests on the other hand.

From suppliers to consumers, throughout the supply chain, there are a few things to take into consideration. They are, among others:

### **Collect data and measure your impact**

As we have understood, regeneration is a 'journey', an always evolving process. Therefore, it is important to **keep track of the impact** your activity has. Referring to regenerative tourism initiatives and businesses, the impact and success has to be measured not only in financial terms, but through the different aspects of sustainability: the financial, social, and environmental wealth created for all their stakeholders.

[Greenview Portal](#), for example, is an online sustainability management system designed specifically for the hospitality sector. Greenview supports hospitality organizations with their



corporate responsibility and sustainability platforms to measure, share and improve their sustainability performances. It is used by over 30,000 hotels worldwide. Through this kind of platform, any participating business can get a sense of where it is placed and how it can improve.

### ***Be transparent***

Provide information and communicate about which are the true costs you have that determine the final price of the tourism products and services. Communicate where the money goes, if possible even including all the sections, e.g. labour, raw materials, distribution, commissions, administration, marketing... To prevent 'leakage' as much as possible, it is useful to share where the money stays on a destination level, e.g. in the local community, in the state, abroad,...

Transparency has many benefits. It improves awareness among tourists of the economic power they have. Vendors and providers enforce their accountability; they also might be more willing to support and contribute to the local economy (Ho, 2020). "Travellers are empowered to make informed spending choices that align with their own values, while a more sustainable and resilient local economy blossoms" (ibid, p.28).

### ***Inspire transformation through meaningful travel experience***

The aim of regenerative tourism is also to produce a **spillover effect**. It means for example that tourists take the regenerative perspective home with them and start to apply it in their daily environments. Therefore, you should ask yourselves, how you can create the circumstances for regeneration through your guest experience? How you can create the space for engagement, interaction, and understanding for travellers to learn and activate a transformative shift through their experience (Ho, 2020)?

Practically speaking tourists can also be engaged in some of your sustainable initiatives and challenges, for example in gardening and local agriculture, or in innovative solutions for waste management.

"You must create the conditions for the guests to have these shifts in perception. It's critical for the entire ecosystem, including the hotels, travel agents, tour operators, and the destination, to be aware of each other's interdependence. We can't save the Earth, but we can save the Earth place by place. This is why regenerative tourism is so important: it helps our places come alive, and that's the beginning of a healing process." (Pollock, as cited in Ho, 2020, p.34).

## 3.1.4 The example of slow food

Food tourism and destinations continues to attract increasing numbers of visitors (Stone et al. 2018), as shown also in the RISToVET research report (RISToVET IO1 report). Nevertheless, it is important to highlight that "mass tourism is dependent on a globalized system of large-scale industrial agriculture" (Fusté-Fomé and Jamal 2020, p. 228) which significantly contributes to climate change and land degradation.

The slow food movement, initiated in 1986 in Italy by Carlo Petrini, currently present all over the world, was born to promote "good, clean and fair food" (Our philosophy 2021) and today, in the



wave of the “slow movement” is a very important trend in the framework of eco-tourism. Slow food tourism, in fact, promotes the use of locally grown ingredients, traditional agricultural practices and recipes, taking time to prepare food.

The focus on the “local” origin of food and on the *terroir*, “a term that encapsulates the idea that a particular interplay of geography, history and human factors imbues foods with a particular taste that cannot be recreated elsewhere” (Musgrave 2009, p. 158) entails a particular ecological attention.

Cultural and social aspects of slow food tourism will be addressed in unit 3.3.

### **3.1.4.1 Slow food activities and low impact tourism in practice**

Slow food activities or businesses contribute both to mitigate the tourism footprint and to preserve the environment.

First of all, as already mentioned, scale is a major challenge for any form of low impact tourism. Two main aspects concerns:

- The environmental footprint of transportation. That is a challenge for any kind of sustainable tourism. Even if tourism businesses cannot influence transportation networks, low impact tourism activities should promote low-distance travels.
- The promotion of circular economy. Low impact tourism activities should aspire to be as much carbon neutral and zero-waste as possible.

In terms of low impact, slow food activities directly respond to the following criteria:

- Lower carbon footprint of food ingredient.
- Promotion of ecological agriculture.
- Small scale activities without construction of new facilities.
- Promotion of zero-waste strategies (reuse of organic waste for agriculture).

In terms of positive impact on the environment, slow food activities promotes:

- Biodiversity, growing genetically diverse crops and maintaining community seed banks.
- Traditional ecological agricultural practices, mitigating the pressure on the soil.
- Zero-waste farming.

## Final self-assessment

1. **An environmental impact is NOT:**
  - a) Any change to components of the environment, whether positive or negative, resulting from human activities or natural events
  - b) A phenomenon impossible to assess and measure
  - c) The effect that people's actions have on the environment
  - d) An environmental imbalance
  
2. **Life Cycle Assessment aims at:**
  - a) Assessing the economic value of a product, process or service, evaluating each stage of its life cycle
  - b) Assessing the sustainability of a product, process or service
  - c) Assessing any environmental impact of a product, process or service, evaluating each stage of its life cycle
  - d) Assessing any negative environmental impact of a product, process or service, evaluating each stage of its life cycle
  
3. **The European Commission recommends a method to estimate environmental impact of goods, services and organisations called:**
  - a) Product Environmental Evaluation and Organisation Environmental Evaluation
  - b) Product and Organisation Assessment
  - c) Product Environmental Footprint and Organisation Environmental Footprint
  - d) Product Sustainability Assessment and Organisation Sustainability Assessment
  
4. **High environmental impact of uncontrolled conventional mass-tourism is NOT caused by:**
  - a) Long-distance transportation
  - b) Increasing interest in visiting natural areas
  - c) Deforestation and intensified use of land
  - d) Increasing number of visitors
  
5. **This is NOT a principle of low impact tourism:**
  - a) Designing low-impact facilities
  - b) Contributing in developing ecological and social conscience
  - c) Minimising waste production
  - d) Increasing the number of visitors in less-developed countries
  
6. **In a regenerative tourism perspective, choosing quality over quantity means:**
  - a) Offering more expensive services in order to minimise the number of visitors
  - b) The ability of offering meaningful tourism and travel experience both to tourists and to destinations
  - c) Focusing on cultural experiences rather than on activities in natural areas
  - d) Developing small luxury facilities.
  
7. **Local communities will benefit from your tourism business if:**
  - a) Your business contributes to the development of a large network of business with investors from all over the world
  - b) Your business attracts a high number of visitors
  - c) Your business cooperates with local stakeholders in meeting local needs
  - d) Your business imports best practices from other countries



**8. Slow food activities meet the regenerative tourism perspective because:**

- a) They focus on culinary experiences
- b) They don't require long-distance travel
- c) Food tourism is the most sustainable form of tourism
- d) They focus on local peculiarities with a particular attention to the supply chain

## Unit 3.2 Sustainable Culture

### Preliminary self-assessment

1. **Authentic tourism and experiential tourism are related to:**
  - a) The search for exciting experience in the natural environment
  - b) The design of tourism facilities
  - c) The dynamic interaction of the visitor with people, places and landscapes during the travel
  - d) The training of tour-guides.
  
2. **Authentic destinations are designed basing on:**
  - a) Tangible and intangible characteristics of places
  - b) Food and wine traditions
  - c) A consolidated tourism business network
  - d) A consolidated cultural tourism tradition
  
3. **Authentic tourism and experiential tourism have NOT in common:**
  - a) The contact with local people and local communities
  - b) The search for exciting experience in the natural environment
  - c) Tailor-made tourism offers
  - d) The interest for an in-depth experience of the local way of life
  
4. **Experiential tourism does NOT offer:**
  - a) An in-depth knowledge of the visited area
  - b) The possibility of a personal growth
  - c) Standard high-rate services
  - d) The discover of local traditions
  
5. **Authentic tourism and experiential tourism are also related to:**
  - a) Mass tourism
  - b) Immersive tourism
  - c) Long-distance travelling
  - d) Hit and run offers



## Unit introduction

This unit aims to raise awareness on the impact of tourism on local cultures. In the framework of sustainable tourism, authentic tourism and experiential tourism are focused on as approaches that preserve local cultures and communities, yet developing innovative and interesting solutions for travellers.

Learning outcomes and student skills:

- Define the concept of authentic and experiential tourism.
- Identify authentic and experiential solutions for different businesses.
- Identify authentic and experiential activities in a given area or region.
- Choose the most suitable solutions for his/her business.
- Identify opportunities for authentic and experiential tourism as tourism entrepreneurs

### 3.2.1 Authentic Tourism

Trends in the tourism market increasingly demonstrate the emergence of increasingly complex needs in terms of variety and quality of the travel experience. Tourists are increasingly interested in wanting to touch the authenticity of the place they visit, but above all it is their interest to want to know the true identity and the true face of the places they choose to visit, so tourists decide not to visit but to discover and experience the chosen tourist destination at 360°. Surely an important part, in the discovery of the authenticity of a place, is covered by the locals, i.e. those who live in that place and who know its history, myths, legends, traditions and customs and continue to preserve and pass on in time.

The search for local culture has become a fundamental component for the tourist when deciding on the next tourist destination. Surely there is a greater openness on the part of the tourist to want to go into the territory to discover all the glimpses, the traditions, the most "hidden" places or better still less touristy and not very commercialized. In Italy, for example, the opportunity to discover the villages is becoming increasingly popular, certainly less known from a tourist point of view but which better reflect the *modus vivendi* of the locals, they represent the Italian spirit, tradition, culture, folklore and so on.

So as in the Italian case, this example can also be reused for other contexts, the discovery of the territory passes through the landscapes, culture and traditions of the place, the legends connected to it but also food and wine.

#### 3.2.1.1 Let's find a definition of authentic tourism

In this first part, we will focus on finding a definition of authentic tourism bearing in mind that the subject is very vast and is still the subject of studies by tourism scholars. We could therefore say that it is an evolving definition that is enriched with something more every day.

Let's start with an excursus based on the change in the perception of tourism. At the beginning of the 90s, the new marketing policies closely linked to the tourism sector had led in many cases to a standardization of the offer, the so-called tourist packages offered families and groups of tourists trips to standard, hit and run locations.



This type of tourism was not aimed at really understanding and knowing the destination chosen as a tourist destination, certainly this condition is even more accentuated by the effects generated by the globalization of national and international tourist markets. This, in turn, has significantly reduced the availability of tourist experiences that can be considered as unique and authentic and consequently, the possibility of tourists to live experiences of this type.

Today we are witnessing a radical change in this now obsolete perspective of tourism: the tourism sector today tends to be based on the idea that the tourist is on average more educated, sophisticated and attentive to the environment, sustainability and quality of life and for this reason the tourist is less inclined to appreciate experiences and products developed for mass tourism.

On the contrary, greater awareness has led the modern tourist to try to resist the effects of globalization through an increased interest in local traditions, cultures and respect for them and the environment. Today more than ever, the traditions, customs, culture and authenticity that a destination expresses often represent the main attractions sought by tourists, especially those who travel with the aim of living unique and authentic experiences in contact with the local culture of the places they visit.

The more the economy of experiences grows and affirms itself, the more important the attribute of authenticity becomes: consumers decide whether to buy or not, also based on the perception of how real and authentic the good or service to buy is.

For this reason, today more than ever, consumers are looking for destinations that offer a sense of reality, rather than destinations designed like theme parks built for the use and consumption of tourists.

Our era can be defined as "the era of the search for authenticity" (Taylor 2001).

Tourism is a sociological phenomenon in all respects, as well as an economic one, it develops and changes together with society. Paying more attention to different factors and to the characteristics of the territory certainly involves the development of new opportunities, by doing so, new points of attraction will be created that are interesting especially for those who are looking for the authenticity of places, relations with the locals, looking for the daily life of the place, its rhythm and its customs.

It is no longer a question of a quick visit, a hit and run tourism but a full experience of life, everyday life and tradition preserved by the community itself.

This is the point from which we must start to build an innovative tourist offer, at the base there is the desire to show the authenticity of one's territory, the promotion of this strength is preparatory to the ability to make travellers discover it.

The authenticity of the place therefore represents a real opportunity for economic growth but also an efficient way to combat the abandonment of territories and combat the depopulation of certain areas. In the case study that will be proposed at the end of this paragraph, we will discover together the opportunities and the consequent growth that has been recorded by putting into practice everything that has been mentioned so far.

It is difficult to be able to give a specific and unambiguous definition of authentic tourism, nevertheless it is possible to define the boundaries and its main characteristics. products, unspoiled landscapes, traditions and customs.

The present study intends to contribute precisely to bridging this knowledge gap, trying to investigate what are the attributes that tourists associate with a destination perceived as authentic and what are the benefits they perceive to obtain in the presence of these attributes and, finally, how these are benefits are transformed into means to achieve personal values.





People want more and more true activities: authentic experiences that lead to discover a territory and its people beyond stereotypes. From this point of view, each region offers a myriad of microcosms to explore. The key word is biodiversity: from an environmental point of view, but also from a cultural one. By enhancing, in addition to top destinations, small businesses that offer a more intimate and more rarefied dimension from the point of view of tourist presences.

So what tools do we have to understand if the experience lived by the tourist is truly authentic?

To try to answer this question, we can resort to the concept of front back regions by Goffman (1959) that suggests the idea of considering the tourist experience as the result of a dynamic interaction that the visitor has with objects and subjects. (residents and other visitors) with whom he relates during the holiday.

This interaction would take place in the first instance with the physical and social spaces of the destination, in which tourists move during their vacation (in the language of Goffman the so-called front region), to then develop by penetrating in a dynamic and progressive way the life of the local community.

With reference to this last aspect, the tourist interacts first with the life of the local community as organized and reproduced for the purposes of tourist usability, and then with the real one that is part of the daily life of the premises (the latter is what Goffman calls back region).

How to offer a tourist an authentic destination?

The characteristics attributed most to authentic destinations are related to both the sphere of intangible and material ones.

Among the intangible ones we include all those characteristics linked to the locals and to everything that is not concretely usable, therefore it is not about objects, places, but traditions, uses and customs, for example: genuine inhabitants, hospitable people, real people.

The creation of a typical product, a typical dance or song, of the specific ways of saying or doing the place, also attributable to the habits of the locals that the tourist makes his own during the trip.

The concept of authentic destination is closely linked to these characteristics:

- non-replicable landscapes
- to the genuineness and kindness of the residents
- to culture and traditions
- a sense of community
- with a fascinating atmosphere
- the fact that the destination remains unchanged over time, especially in terms of the consistency of the destination with its history.

Among those material characteristics we include:

- style accommodation facilities
- non-globalized destination
- stores and original products
- monuments and infrastructures
- unique events and shows
- local food

All these characteristics sharpen the perception of its authenticity by tourists. Linked to this set of attributes is the possibility of obtaining mainly experiential benefits, such as the importance of



being able to live an experience in the local style that cannot be repeated elsewhere, of being able to interface with other people and learn new things. These benefits allow, in turn, to realize values essentially attributable to inner and personal growth and the achievement of happiness.

### **3.2.1.2 Authenticity and sustainability**

More and more often nowadays tourists prefer the so-called authentic tourism, the purpose of these trips in most cases is the search and discovery of places to visit that still maintain their authenticity intact, beyond the fact that this authenticity is referring to the natural and geographical dimension, think of an uncontaminated beach or a natural reserve or an authenticity strictly connected to the modus vivendi of the locals, or think of the small villages for example present in the Italian Alps where the inhabitants still live very closely contact with nature, dealing most of the time with breeding and agriculture and are far from city life.

Obviously, this search by the traveller for the authenticity of the place goes hand in hand with the continuous search for sustainability, authenticity and sustainability in fact are not two distant concepts, on the contrary they are connected as the adjective can be linked to the concept of authenticity intact, healthy, original, therefore still in a natural state. This means that in order to maintain this natural state of the place the traveller must adopt a sustainable behaviour.

Consider, for example, a natural park that is still intact and not contaminated by man, the tourist will have to adopt a definitely more sustainable attitude and therefore show respect for the place.

## 3.2.2 Experiential Tourism – Key concepts and definitions

Experiential tourism is a new and innovative form of tourism that has taken hold in Europe in recent years. This new form of tourism provides that the holiday is not only imitated in search of the perfect accommodation facility but also implies the possibility of accompanying one's trip to real emotions. Those who deal with experiential tourism are called the OTE, operators of experiential tourism, a new professional figure still in the phase of regulation in the various European countries who is able to plan and design experiences studied ad hoc in such a way as to give value added to the trip, therefore this will not be an anonymous and standardized experience but rather planned and organized from all points of view that can be addressed to an individual or a group.

We could say that experiential tourism has always existed, but in recent years the perception of this activity has certainly changed. Certainly influenced the increasing desire on the part of tourists to experience the destination of their holiday in a more truthful and authentic way, therefore in a closer way to immerse themselves in the part of those who live in that place.

There is more and more talk of experiential tourism that can be contrasted with mass tourism. What matters is not the destination, whether it is known or not, but to have an intimate experience and be the protagonist of your holiday.

Furthermore, it can be associated with Slow Tourism. A substantial difference between these two phenomena is that Slow Tourism, compared to Experiential Tourism, is more closely linked to the



protection of the environment, culture and traditions, therefore closer to Sustainable and Responsible Tourism.

Being able to enrich one's services by offering experiential tourism certainly represents an excellent opportunity for growth, what is important is that the offer cannot be reproduced by other competitors, indeed these experiences must have their uniqueness as their own characteristic, therefore it is far from what commercial services can be, it is not a simple walk in nature or an easily repeatable excursion. You need to exploit your potential and let the tourist experience a sensory experience that includes all 5 senses and creates connections on a physical, emotional, spiritual, social and intellectual level.

What lies at the base of experiential tourism and which determines its success is the operator's passion, or rather, the operator who offers the experience to the traveller must be able to involve, to create pathos, to create relationship and sharing. Only in this way will the tourist be able to fully immerse himself in the activity and identify himself in the premises.

What is certainly essential for proposing an experiential tourism model is knowledge of the territory, it will be the task of the tour operator to be able to build the offer

The first phase is the design, which involves two subordinate phases, the first is the construction of the offer, thought out in detail, the second phase is marketing.

Preparatory activity for marketing is the search for the target: who is my offer addressed to, my experience? It is necessary to look not only at the age group but also at the purchasing power of the tourist and the time available.

A strength of experiential tourism is that often this experience can be linked to an alternative activity. If I am a host who offers accommodation near the beach, I can offer an activity that does not directly involve the sea or the beach, but rather something else, for example a food and wine or nature trail in the hills, in the mountains and so on. In doing so I differentiate my services, in the event that there should be an unfavorable day for the tourist to be able to use the beach, the host could propose his alternative offer. This step is critical for service differentiation. What is important is that a service is provided that generates empathy with tourists, this will be an added value that will make the difference especially with the competitors.

What underlies experiential tourism is not only the experience itself, but what it leaves to the tourist, in terms of feelings for example: feeling at home, relaxation, the feeling of being lost in time, the possibility of learning new things and to make good purchases. This result seems to suggest that the main existential components, at least in this study, are mainly connected to perceptual elements concerning the communities, the landscape and the history of the destination. In turn, this experiential component is fundamental for the achievement of values such as happiness or self-realization.

The consequences that most relate to personal growth concern the possibility of experiencing local style and learning new things while developing pleasant memories related to the experience. Finally, it is interesting to note how, albeit indirectly, attributes such as: culture and traditions, unique landscapes, local / traditional food and the perception of a destination not corrupted by time and which resists the effects of globalization.

What to offer the visitor?

Let's start from the beginning, the term experiential tourism already contains its own definition. Diving is the main activity, the cornerstone of this new form of tourism still in an evolutionary phase, therefore its definition is in the making. In this case, attention is paid to the travel experience, to all those cultural, gastronomic and outdoor activities that we can carry out during your itinerary.



However, the definition of experiential tourism has something more to add. This more that immersive tourism offers the traveller is the ability to create a relationship with the locals, with the culture and its traditions.

Point by point below we will analyse all those characteristics and types that can help professionals to create their own experiential tourism path to offer to the visitor trying to remain generic, what is certain is that in these cases the imagination, innovation and creativity are fundamental and not negligible aspects that OTE must possess to build its offer.

Let's start with the most modern and technological aspect. Today all travellers have a smartphone or a tablet that they use as a tool to travel, to search for information on the spot, to use maps, to book, to review but above all to immortalize typical moments or landscapes through their cameras.

Often these images are then published by the travellers themselves on the main social media. It is now common practice to share our most beautiful and happy moments.

Starting from this assumption, OTE can fully exploit this possibility through the Storytelling tool. But let's see what it is.

According to American anthropologist and writer Mary Catherine Bateson "Our species thinks in metaphors and learns through stories". We have always been linked to stories because they know how to involve us, open our minds and give emotions.

Telling is what allows us to promote and sell any service, even more so in tourism, where places and tourist facilities are infinite containers of stories that only ask to be told.

Storytelling is a technique borrowed from classic fiction to become an effective communication tool in tourism marketing: its purpose is to express ideas and concepts by suggesting and persuading the public by involving them on an emotional level.

Unlike institutional communication (objective, cold, impartial), storytelling speaks in the first person, transmits emotions, surprises and involves, managing to capture the attention of users, then telling stories to surprise and excite. Tourist communication is no longer based on what is objectively considered the most interesting destination, but on what people think is the best (if they are the ones who tell the destination, so much the better).

In this way the role of narration becomes that of stimulating the dream, igniting the imagination, creating identification, anticipating - or prolonging - the pleasure of the journey itself.

So we can deduce that at the base of experiential tourism there is the idea that the visitor must be personally involved.

Examples of experiential tourism that are among the most in vogue and the most sought after by tourists will be discussed below. Obviously this must in no way limit the imagination of OTE which, on the contrary, can draw inspiration to develop new ideas and new projects.

## Final self-assessment

1. **Authentic tourism and experiential tourism are related to:**
  - a) The search for exciting experience in the natural environment
  - b) The design of tourism facilities
  - c) The dynamic interaction of the visitor with people, places and landscapes during the travel
  - d) The training of tour-guides.
  
2. **Authentic destinations are designed basing on:**
  - a) Tangible and intangible characteristics of places
  - e) Food and wine traditions
  - f) A consolidated tourism business network
  - g) A consolidated cultural tourism tradition
  
3. **Authentic tourism and experiential tourism have NOT in common:**
  - a) The contact with local people and local communities
  - b) The search for exciting experience in the natural environment
  - c) Tailor-made tourism offers
  - d) The interest for an in-depth experience of the local way of life
  
4. **Experiential tourism does NOT offer:**
  - a) An in-depth knowledge of the visited area
  - b) The possibility of a personal growth
  - c) Standard high-rate services
  - d) The discover of local traditions
  
5. **Authentic tourism and experiential tourism are also related to:**
  - a) Mass tourism
  - b) Immersive tourism
  - c) Long-distance travelling
  - d) Hit and run offers

## Unit 3.3 Sustainable Society

### Preliminary self-assessment

1. **Inclusive tourism does NOT address:**
  - a) The mobility of local labour market
  - b) Inequalities on the basis of gender, age, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion, economic or other status
  - c) Opportunities to travel, as well as to work in the tourism sector
  - d) Tourism as an elitist and exclusive phenomenon
  
2. **Community-based tourism is based on:**
  - a) High knowledge and social involvement rates
  - b) Cultural activities led by local people
  - c) A wide international network
  - d) A strong life cycle assessment process
  
3. **This is NOT one of the examples of the positive social impacts of sustainable tourism:**
  - a) Employment creation
  - b) Degradation of culture
  - c) Income distribution
  - d) Poverty alleviation
  
4. **Socio-cultural benefits of sustainable tourism do NOT include**
  - a) Strengthening of communities
  - b) Strengthening of local culture and traditions
  - c) Better understanding between peoples and cultures
  - d) Higher mobility of the local labor market
  
5. **An inclusive tourism business does NOT:**
  - a) Involve experts or organisations to face complex cases of conflict situations
  - b) Adopt international regulations about violence and sexual harassment
  - c) Promote training activities for its staff as well as for local stakeholders
  - d) Discourage the use of inclusive language



## Unit introduction

This unit aims to raise awareness on the impact of tourism on local communities. We are going to outline how a tourism business can contribute to the development of an inclusive and sustainable society.

Learning outcomes and student skills:

- Define the role of tourism in a sustainable society.
- Identify the key elements of a socially sustainable activity or business.
- Define slow, rural and CBT tourism.
- Identify slow, rural and CBT tourism activities and their key elements.
- Analyse slow transportation networks.
- Analyse the rural tourism business models and their approaches.
- Outline different CBT approaches.
- Identify challenges and opportunities of socially sustainable approaches.
- Outline slow, rural and CBT tourism scenarios (e.g. post-crisis tourism).
- Assess the attractiveness of a given location in terms of slow, rural and CBT tourism.

### 3.3.1 A sustainable society through tourism

Tourism activities have a huge impact not only on the natural environment, but also on local communities.

"Mass tourism is dependent on a globalized system [...] which, contrary to the claims of the green revolution, has historically entrenched underdevelopment, dependence, poverty and loss of food security" (Wise 2019, p.67).

Low impact tourism, eco-tourism and slow tourism, thus, apply a set of criteria and principles, not only in order to minimize the negative impact, but also turning the process in positive outcomes for local societies.

Tourism experience, in fact, needs to be positive for both visitors and hosts.

Socially sustainable tourism should:

- Generate financial benefit for local people.
- Help raising awareness about social and environmental issues through interpretative experiences.
- Recognize rights of local people, contributing to their empowerment.
- Promoting the multidimensional ethics of sustainable development.

If the methodology of Social Impact Assessment is sometimes applied in tourism (McCombes 2015), in particular for new large-scale projects, there are no widely accepted international standards (such as FairTrade standards for agricultural products), nor official tools, adapted for a small business aiming at developing a socially sustainable activity. It has to be noticed, nevertheless, that social and cultural impact is included in the European Tourism Indicator System (European Commission 2016).

According to different local contexts, social sustainability, thus, is pursued through slightly different approaches. Nevertheless, a common element is, again, as for the environmental perspective, that the scale is considered a major challenge. Moreover, a socially sustainable



tourism should promote an active exchange between visitors and hosts that search both for more conscious way of living, "caring for the ecological systems and spaces that sustain the planet's inhabitants (human and non-human)" (Fusté-Forné, Jamal 2020, p. 229).

### 3.3.1.1 The need for inclusive tourism

**Many inequalities still exist in tourism**, on the basis of gender, age, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status. This in terms of opportunities to travel, as well as opportunities to work in the tourism sector.

One of the criticisms of tourism is that it is an **elitist and exclusive** phenomenon. The possibility and pleasure of travelling and leisure activities are reserved to the privileged middle and upper classes, that creates profit particularly for large companies in the tourism sector. This means development opportunities as tourism entrepreneurs are not always open yet to poor and marginalized groups (Scheyvens & Biddulph, 2018). Small and medium enterprises are experiencing difficulties, especially nowadays with the Covid-19 crisis. As a large economic industry, tourism potentially provides many work opportunities. However, several social categories are excluded, which means they cannot access or fully benefit from those job opportunities. In order to enhance the positive social impact and increase business opportunities and revenues, **tourism has to become more inclusive**.

## 3.3.2 Socially sustainable tourism schemes: slow, community-based and rural tourism

The three approaches we are going to analyse, moving from different yet complementary perspectives, focus on involving tourism practices and visitors in the social sustainable development of an area, valorising and preserving local peculiarities.

### 3.3.2.1 Slow tourism

As already mentioned about slow food tourism (cf. §3.1.3), in the framework of the "slow movement" (Honoré 2004), the claim for quality and time invested also tourism activities. Slow travellers, thus, research fewer and more meaningful experiences, conversely to the "voracity" of traditional mass tourism. This approach perfectly matches the criteria of social sustainability, promoting (Dickinson and Lumsdon 2010):

- Slow transportation, in terms of valorising slow transportation networks (cycling, walking, trekking and others), "unhurried" travel (not bound by strict sightseeing itineraries) and proximity travels, maximizing the time available for the trip.
- Slow places, choosing locations that give tourists the possibility to immerse themselves in local life that includes shopping from local markets and producers, as well as acquiring knowledge and skills. In this sense, small villages and family accommodations are often preferred to cities and hotels.
- Slow food, as already discussed in §3.1.3.



Slow tourism practices, thus, promotes worldwide several alternative spaces and economies, such as small shareholdings, community and microenterprises, etc.

Moreover, as Fusté-Forné and Jamal (2020) states "Diversity, difference and pluralistic ways of valorizing bioregional foods and sharing slow hospitality with visitors in these small agricultural spaces should help to facilitate economic sustainability and food security amidst daunting global environmental challenges, including population growth and the climate crisis." (p. 231).

### 3.3.2.2 Community-based tourism

The approach of community-based tourism focuses on the empowerment of local people that have full ownership and management of the tourism experience, ensuring that the economic benefits remains local and that visitors can enjoy authentic experiences both in terms of cultural and natural heritage.

It is a form of tourism with very high knowledge and social involvement rates, enabling tourists to discover local wildlife, as well as traditional cultures.

As it is mostly developed in rural, poor and/or economically marginalised areas, community-based tourism should apply a strictly participatory approach, in order to really involve local people. The community should contribute in creating and marketing community-tourism products, being aware of their commercial values.

In other words, community-based tourism should protect cultural identity and natural environment, fostering economic and social regeneration.

## 3.3.2 Socially sustainable tourism schemes: Inclusive and accessible tourism



Figure 3: Elements of inclusive tourism

Inclusive tourism focuses on **widening access of marginalized people, both as producers and consumers of tourism, and as decision-makers**. This implies overcoming physical, socio-cultural and economic barriers preventing their access. Inclusive tourism can be defined as "transformative tourism in which marginalized groups are engaged in ethical production or consumption of tourism and the sharing of its benefits". **Ethical production and consumption** is a key component of the definition of inclusive tourism and refers to the responsibility towards other people and the environment. **'Transformative'**, could imply "addressing inequality, overcoming the separation of different

groups living in different places, challenging stereotypes or generalized histories, and opening people up to understanding the situation of minorities" (Scheyvens & Biddulph, 2018, p.592).

The need for inclusive tourism is especially relevant nowadays, because the tourism industry has been hit hard by the Covid-19 pandemic, and underrepresented communities have been amongst the hardest hit.

### 3.3.2.1 Equality vs. Equity

While addressing social inclusion issues, it is important to **understand the concepts of equality and equity**. Those terms are sometimes used in a very similar way, however they have different implications. Equality means to give everyone the same support and the exact same resources. It refers to **equal opportunity** and the same levels of support for all segments of society. Equity means that everyone gets the support they need: the resources are distributed **based on the specific needs** of the different social groups and individuals.

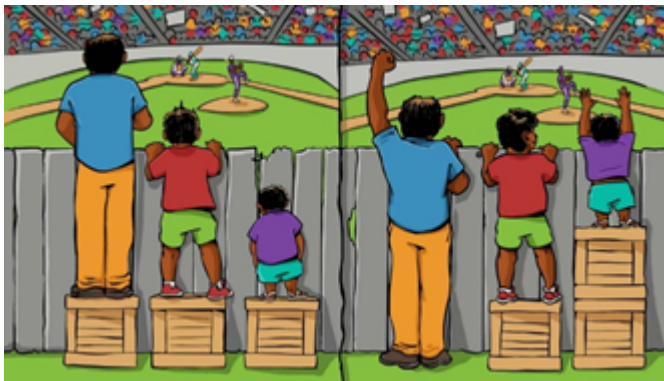


Figure 4

As shown in Figure 2, on the left side of the illustration, for example, three identical boxes are given to three people of different heights: it is an equal distribution of resources. However, it fails to consider that the tallest person does not need a box to see over the fence, while the shortest person needs an extra box.

Recognizing the difference between equality and equity is important in several spheres of life: public health, politics, education, racial justice. An example of equality is a company's hiring process, where all applicants are given fair consideration and it is the best qualified applicant to be hired (without considering, for example, the gender or the ethnicity of the applicant, neither the composition of the staff). Examples of equity are affirmative action policies (like "quotas" for certain marginalized sections of society) and decisions by companies to consciously look for a female director for their board that is composed of all men (Diffen, n.d.).

Equality and equity have **different implications**. Equality treats without difference and can be considered the final goal, but the risk is to not take into account the differences and inequalities that characterize our society. Equity starts from the assumption that not every person has the same opportunities, it recognizes that some segments of society are discriminated against or disadvantaged because of their attributes (e.g. disability, ethnicity, gender, age...). Therefore, it aims at levelling those inequalities, in order to achieve greater fairness of outcomes. The risk of equity is to misinterpret the needs of the social groups and individuals considered and to end up in imposing strict interventions, policies and measures in an authoritarian way. It can also be seen as a form of exclusion or discrimination towards the social groups who are not considered. Sometimes equity is criticised because it does not recognise meritocracy.



Both equality and equity aim at **promoting fairness and justice**. What is important is that you bear in mind both approaches, depending on the situation, and you are able to consider the different implications they might have.

### 3.3.2.2 Intersectionality

Inclusion in tourism can be reached only by the **collaboration of different stakeholders** and by adopting an **intersectional approach**.

**Intersectionality** is an approach that focuses upon mutually constitutive forms of social oppression, discrimination and privilege rather than on single axes of difference (Hopkins, 2019). In that way, different aspects of people's identities can contribute to being discriminated on more than one level.

The term was conceptualized by [Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw](#). You can watch her TED talk here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=akOe5-UsQ2o>

The multiple factors of advantage and disadvantage, within a social context and established power relations, are for example gender, ethnicity, class, religion, disability, physical appearance. Intersectionality recognizes that, when an individual belongs to different marginalized categories, there is an **additional effect of marginalization and discrimination**. For example, for a black, or/and disabled woman, it might be harder to access work and to find work with decent conditions. In this case, you need to consider the combinations of the three factors, to understand and overcome the inequalities the person might suffer from.

### 3.3.2.3 Inclusive tourism for tourism workers: practical guidelines & insights for creating an inclusive enterprise policy

The aim of this chapter is to gain a better understanding of the issues that some demographic and social groups face when working or wanting to work in the tourism sector. Of course, these forms of inequalities and discrimination are not only present in tourism, but they represent systemic and structural socio-cultural problems. In this sense, tourism can contribute to more equal and just societies, challenging dominant power relations, advocating for human rights and representation.

Next to addressing these specific issues concerning accessibility, to make your business more welcoming for EWD, there are many things you as an entrepreneur can do to create an inclusive tourism business where everyone feels welcome. The first step is to become aware of exclusion issues people are facing when working or wanting to work in the tourism industry. Below are some next steps you can take to do your part in creating a more inclusive tourism climate, by starting with your own enterprise and to create an inclusive enterprise policy.

- A working environment where everyone can feel comfortable and welcomed, enhances the company's performance. Workers' satisfaction, in fact, contributes to a positive and stimulating working environment, with positive mutual relationships between employees

and employers, as well as between employees and their co-workers. So first of all, it is important to make all employees feel recognized and valuable. An important practice is to appreciate employee's performance through formal and informal performance appraisals and to provide constructive feedback. This goes especially for employees from marginalized groups.

- Training is another highly important tool to understand, appreciate and valorise the diversity of the workplace. Training is also necessary to avoid sexist, racist and other discriminatory attitudes. To deal with possible misunderstanding or opposition in the work team, companies should explain the reasons for diversity and what benefits it brings to management and employees.

For example, training marginalized people to become guides is a successful initiative to make their voices heard, while strengthening ties within the local community and neighbourhood and providing innovative tourism experiences. Inspiring examples of such initiatives are Invisible Cities, a social enterprise challenging the stigma of homeless people and their conditions of 'invisibility' and SASANE Sisterhood Trekking & Travel, supporting women who are victims of human trafficking and domestic violence. You can read about these initiatives here:

<https://invisible-cities.org/>  
<https://sanesisterhoodtrek.com/>  
<https://sasane.org.np/about/>

Training for managers and the staff is also important to know how to deal with clients, in case of racist, sexist, discriminatory behaviours or conflicts.

- Another important aspect is to provide customized support, solutions and services to respond to the different needs of employees, which can vary depending on culture, ethnicity, gender, age, creeds.
- To create an inclusive working environment also means to create a safe environment for everyone. It is important that entrepreneurs pay attention in detecting any kind of stereotypes that might be offensive and forms of discrimination and violence, even when they are verbal or so-called micro-aggressions, in order to tackle and overcome them.
- A big part of creating a safe environment is not just about actions, but also about the words that are used. Showing sensitivity to possible exclusion or violence through language is an important first step. Here you can find some insights to deal with and prevent these issues in the workplace:
  - Avoid Racial language and behaviour  
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/editorialguidelines/guidance/racist-language>
  - Avoid sexist language and behaviour  
<https://www.coe.int/en/web/human-rights-channel/stop-sexism>  
<https://www.coe.int/en/web/gender-matters/recommendation-on-preventing-and-combating-sexism>
  - Adopt gender-neutral and inclusive language  
<https://www.un.org/en/gender-inclusive-language/>  
[https://www.europarl.europa.eu/cmsdata/151780/GNL\\_Guidelines\\_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/cmsdata/151780/GNL_Guidelines_EN.pdf)  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2016/01/31/fashion/pronoun-confusion-sexual-fluidity.html>

Remember: Non-binary people may use different pronouns. If you're not sure what pronouns someone uses, ask! That does however not mean to go further and ask any question about their gender and give them unwanted attention. You can also add your pronoun for example in the email to support LGBTQIA+ community and to create a comfortable environment. Even in the documentation, forms, booking system etc. you can leave several options or give the possibility to enter the preferred pronoun.

- Dare to rethink some aspects of your business that you might take for granted. Are the spaces and facilities of your business designed for everyone? Are they inclusive and

welcoming everyone? There are obvious adjustments that can be made, such as facilities to accommodate PWD, but some changes can be made also in terms of gender equality. One of the most discussed issues is about redesigning bathrooms.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/av/uk-55164675>

<https://www.uua.org/lgbtq/welcoming/ways/bathrooms>

- Adopt international regulations about violence and sexual harassment. Businesses should at least comply with international standards and regulations, and where possible, to even be proactive about it. This means that enterprises should have their own and internal regulations and protocols and make sure that employees are aware about it. Entrepreneurs have the responsibility to prevent any risky situations at work for their employees.

<https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/violence-harassment/resources/lang--en/index.htm>

<https://resources.workable.com/sexual-harassment-policy#>

- In the most complex cases of conflict situations, such as intercultural conflicts, involving experts such as cultural mediators might be necessary. In fact, it is crucial to consider the socio-cultural and political context, next to the personality level of the people involved.
- Create alliances or partnerships with social service and vocational agencies, organizations and institutions involved in raising awareness and support inclusiveness in tourism and the rights of marginalized people. Equality in Tourism is an example of a non-profit organisation working to promote gender equality in destinations around the world: <https://www.equalityintourism.org/>. Several platforms can provide you the tools for implementing an inclusive workplace, an example, focusing on LGBTIQ+ people, is <https://workplacepride.org/>.
- Additionally, especially workers of marginalised social groups, should have unions and other forms of representation. Third-sector organisations can implement lobbying activities, advocating for new policies and rights. An example is represented by Las Kellys association:

<https://theurbanactivist.com/idea/meet-las-kellys-their-cause-redefines-tourism-in-barcelona/>

### **3.3.2.4 Benefits of an inclusive approach in your tourism enterprise**

The perceived cost is one of the greatest concerns of employers who consider the implementation of measures and initiatives for an inclusive tourism policy in their business. These costs are for example related to additional training and to changes in facilities for accommodating EWD. Costs for the company might in fact increase at first. However, after this adaptation time - for which governmental financial incentives can be considered - the employment of marginalised and discriminated groups, would positively impact the service quality and efficiency in the long run, reducing operational costs and increasing the financial gains of enterprises. These transition costs represent an investment for a better future, for improving the conditions of future generations.

In fact, a well-managed strategy supporting diversity and the creation of a positive workplace has many organizational benefits. Among these: lower absenteeism and turnover, that highly characterizes the tourism industry, leading to reduced cost and increased productivity; increased creativity, innovation, problem-solving abilities and unique ideas contributing to the system flexibility.



Additionally, taking the example of EWD, having access to the perspectives and skills of EWD can make it easier to empathize with the needs of consumers and to provide the services that PWD consumers are seeking. This may result in attracting more consumers to the company's products and services.

Socially aware customers may very well appreciate and prefer firms that support marginalised people and have a social purpose. Travellers with disabilities, women, LGBTQIA+ community represent a large spending power and might be more attracted by hotels that value employee diversity and individuality. Therefore, it is a business opportunity for destinations and companies to embrace all visitors and enhance their revenues. Social sustainability is increasingly gaining importance in the labour market. Ensuring the diversity of the workplace is a way to contribute to the sustainability of the enterprise. It also contributes to the competitiveness of organizations, establishing a positive company image and improving marketing initiatives. But of course, here it is important to make sure you actually walk the talk and not just use empty words.

Lastly, it is important to bear in mind that promoting and supporting underrepresented social groups should not mean to exclude other social groups. This means that supporting women, LGBTQIA+, ethnic or PWD entrepreneurship and employment in tourism should not be aimed at denying work opportunities in tourism to -hetero, cisgender- men, other ethnic groups or to people without disability. Such an approach would be at odds with the concept of equality.

## Final self-assessment

1. **Social sustainability of tourism:**
  - a) Is measured through a standard tool of Social Impact Assessment
  - b) Is pursued through mass tourism
  - c) Is pursued through different approaches
  - d) Is independent from environmental sustainability
  
2. **Inclusive tourism does NOT address:**
  - a) The mobility of local labour market
  - b) Inequalities on the basis of gender, age, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion, economic or other status
  - c) Opportunities to travel, as well as to work in the tourism sector
  - d) Tourism as an elitist and exclusive phenomenon
  
3. **Community-based tourism is based on:**
  - a) High knowledge and social involvement rates
  - b) Cultural activities led by local people
  - c) A wide international network
  - d) A strong life cycle assessment process
  
4. **This is NOT one of the examples of the positive social impacts of sustainable tourism:**
  - a) Employment creation
  - b) Degradation of culture
  - c) Income distribution
  - d) Poverty alleviation
  
5. **Socio-cultural benefits of sustainable tourism do NOT include**
  - a) Strengthening of communities
  - b) Strengthening of local culture and traditions
  - c) Better understanding between peoples and cultures
  - d) Higher mobility of the local labor market
  
6. **An inclusive tourism business does NOT:**
  - a) Involve experts or organisations to face complex cases of conflict situations
  - b) Adopt international regulations about violence and sexual harassment
  - c) Promote training activities for its staff as well as for local stakeholders
  - d) Discourage the use of inclusive language
  
7. **Impacts of an inclusive tourism policy in tourism businesses do NOT include:**
  - a) Increased service quality and efficiency
  - b) Lower absenteeism and turnover due to a positive workplace
  - c) The attraction of socially aware customers
  - d) A long-term increasing of costs

## Unit 3.4 Sustainable Economy

### Preliminary self-assessment

1. **Social entrepreneurship:**
  - a) Involves creating new charitable and civic organizations that are financially self-sufficient.
  - b) Involves bringing new products or services to market.
  - c) Involves a person or group who owns their own for-profit business.
  - d) Involves revitalizing government agencies.
  
2. **The acronym CSR stands for:**
  - a) Corporate Search and Rescue
  - b) Corporate Social Responsibility
  - c) Corporate Sensitive Reliability
  - d) Corporate Social Reality
  
3. **The '3-R approach' of circular economy refers to:**
  - a) Reproduce-recollect-recycle
  - b) Reduce-reuse-recycle
  - c) Reuse-revive-regain
  - d) Rescue-regain-recycle
  
4. **Which of the following is NOT an approach of the circular economy concept:**
  - a) Focusing on the use of raw materials
  - b) Focusing on waste generation
  - c) Focusing on system changes
  - d) Focusing on resource use
  
5. **Which of the following is NOT a challenge for a social entrepreneurship:**
  - a) Lack of funding support
  - b) Ability to scale-up
  - c) Employers are especially volunteers
  - d) Lack of proper business strategy
  
6. **Which is the 'duality' that a social entrepreneurship has to deal with:**
  - a) Address social problems and at the same time have managerial procedures
  - b) Manage volunteers and employees at the same time, and make them cooperate successfully
  - c) Address social problems and at the same time have profits to ensure the viability of the entrepreneurship





## Unit introduction

This unit aims to provide an introduction to the concept of Sustainable Economy by investigating three aspects: sustainable tourism, social entrepreneurship (corporate social responsibility -CSR) and circular economy. The unit has been kept as lean as possible while providing enough information to allow an effective understanding of the general concept for all the target groups that will use it.

Learning outcomes and student skills

- Define the role of tourism in a sustainable economy
- Identify the key elements of an economically sustainable tourism activity or business.
- **Define Social Entrepreneurship and CSR**
- **Develop a social business plan**
- **Detect the social entrepreneurship models in tourism**
- **Identify challenges and opportunities in social entrepreneurship**
- **Demonstrate the dimensions of a sustainable enterprise**
- **Complete a business plan**
- **Integrate a business strategy**
- **Create value with CSR and social entrepreneurship**
- **Define Circular Economy**
- **Outline the theoretical framework of Circular Economy**
- **Identify the approaches of circular economy**
- **Identify the key elements of circular economy**
- **Integrate circular business models**

### Unit Motivation

The last years, the public discourse on man-induced climate change, that threatens human health and ecosystems on a global scale, is continuously evolving. In this context, sustainability, in general, and the need for sustainable economies, in particular, are in the focus of policy makers and scientists. The years to come it is expected that the transition to a sustainable economy, will play a vital role to guide policymakers to boost the world economy. This transition requires the involvement of each economic sector. As tourism industry is rapidly growing worldwide<sup>1</sup>, the negative impacts caused as a result of tourism will also grow. Thus, it is rather interesting to explore how those negative impacts should be carefully managed and mitigated through sustainable tourism practices, along with concepts of circular economy. So, the motivation of this unit is to broaden the theoretical and practical background of the students in the aforementioned fields of sustainable economy.

### 3.4.1 The role of Tourism in a Sustainable Economy

Tourism sector is a driver of growth in many countries. Many policy makers see tourism as the main instrument for national and regional development, as it boosts new activities. However, we already analysed its negative aspects in units 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3. According to the last available

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<sup>1</sup> World Tourism Organisation-UNWTO, Available in: <https://www.unwto.org/international-tourism-growth-continues-to-outpace-the-economy>



estimations, the 8% of the global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions is related to tourism activities and especially transportation and accommodation (Lenzen, 2018).

Unplanned and controlled tourism can deteriorate local environment so much that its growth may be compromised. So, if we treat environment as a 'tourism product' we could easily conclude that by protecting the environment it is also been protected the tourism sector. So, transitioning to sustainable tourism, will protect environment and will have a dual positive economic impact; further growth of tourism sector will be ensured; and national economic development will be strengthened (Creaco & Querini, 2003).

### 3.4.2 The economics of sustainable tourism

One of the fastest growing sectors not just in tourism, but in the whole economy, sustainable tourism stimulates economic growth and job creation. There is a growing body of evidence that switching from conventional tourism to sustainable can lead to broad economic, social and environmental benefits for the host countries and their communities. Tourism's potential for creating employment, supporting livelihoods and enabling sustainable development is huge, given that it is one of the main sources of foreign exchange income—the principal source for one-third of developing countries and one-half of the world's Least Developed Countries (LDCs) according to the UN Conference on Trade and Development. As sustainable tourism takes off, the need for jobs to protect wildlife, biodiversity, and fragile ecosystems for people to visit becomes clear—as does the need for experts who can act as "tour guides" of a sustainable tourist destination. Tourism in a sustainable economy refers to tourism activities that can be maintained, or sustained, indefinitely in their social, economic, cultural, and environmental contexts: "sustainable tourism" (Pan et al, 2018; Harilal & Tichaawa, 2020).

Sustainable tourism is directly and positively linked to the SDGs, poverty reduction, rural development, preservation of culture and society, gender equity, environmental protection, climate change mitigation and shows a beneficial impact on climate change mitigation. A just transition of the economy to sustainable practices with a view to green jobs is needed including the education and awareness of employers, employees, host communities and tourists, with the local government to be put in the fore front. Green jobs can be created through the development and promotion of sustainable tourism. Green labels and certification programs support these products and services, but they are still underdeveloped in many tourism destinations. The understanding of and commitment for green jobs supporting an adequate transition for workers and employers towards a low carbon, climate change decelerating, environmentally friendly and socially respectful development should be a crucial part of sustainable tourism policies in any tourism-oriented country. Green jobs therefore need to be integrated in all tourism related policies on employment and business as well as climate change mitigation with a view to their sustainability (Rasoolimanesh et al., 2020).

The sustainability of hotels is a very current topic as well. As hotel guests have been becoming more and more environmentally conscious (see figure below), the number of sustainable hotels is also rising. Just to mention some examples, they usually only use environmentally-friendly products (cleaning products, etc.), buy regional food, and use solar panels to generate electricity.

## Share of travelers that believe sustainable travel is important worldwide in 2021

Global travelers who believe in the importance of green travel 2021

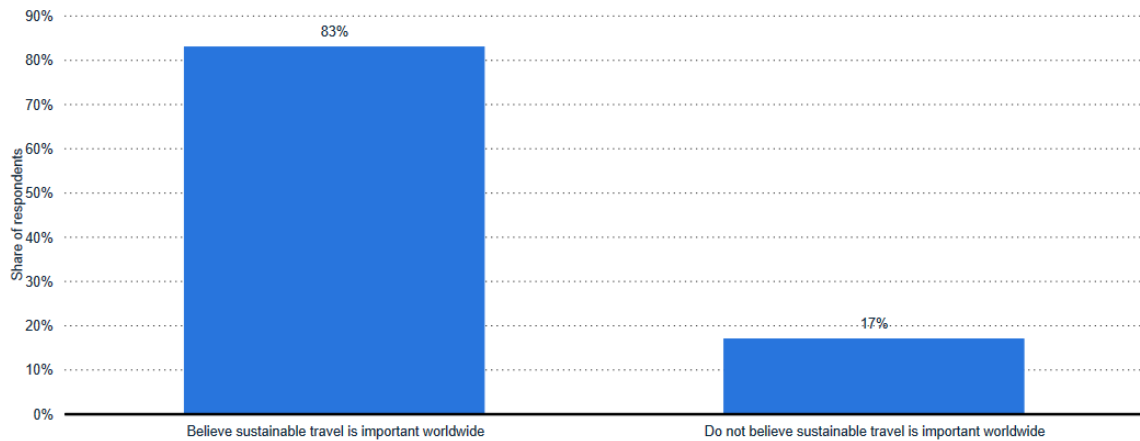


Figure 5: Share of travellers that believe travel is important worldwide in 2021.

Summing up, the main positive economic impacts of sustainable tourism relate to foreign exchange earnings, contributions to government revenues, generation of employment and business opportunities<sup>2</sup>.

### 3.4.2.1 Key principles of an economically sustainable tourism activity or business

In 1992, a crucial year for sustainability, the UK-based NGO (non-governmental organization) 'Tourism Concern' in association with the NGO Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF) published 10 principles for sustainable tourism:

1. *Using resources sustainably.* The conservation of natural, social and cultural resources is crucial for the long-term.
2. *Reducing overconsumption and waste.* By reducing waste, the costs of restoring environmental damage disappears and at the same time quality of tourism rises.
3. *Maintaining diversity.* Maintaining natural biodiversity makes local communities resilient.
4. *Integrating tourism into planning.* The environmental impact assessment that it is included in a strategic planning framework increases the long-term viability of tourism.
5. *Supporting local economies.* Tourism businesses that support a wide range of local economic activities and takes into consideration the environmental damage, will not face problems of social acceptance.
6. *Involving local economies.* By local communities' involvement apart from the economic benefits the quality of tourism experience is improving.
7. *Consulting stakeholders and the public.* Tourism industry, local communities, organizations and institutions should work all together in order to avoid conflicts of interest.
8. *Training staff.* Integrating sustainable tourism into work practices through staff training improves the final tourism product.

<sup>2</sup> Report about Sustainable tourism worldwide, available at: <https://www.statista.com/study/21705/green-tourism-statista-dossier/>

9. *Marketing tourism responsibly.* Promotion of destination areas should also provide tourists with the essential information about the natural, social and cultural environments in order to increase respect and enhance their satisfaction.
10. *Undertaking research.* Research and monitoring of the sector, with data collection and analysis is essential to improve outcomes and practices.

(Niedziółka, 2014)

An interesting video on Sustainable Tourism is provided by The Travel Foundation<sup>3</sup>:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JFbbKbdqoJg>

### 3.4.3 Social Entrepreneurship and Corporate Social Responsibility

The last decades the term social entrepreneurship has gained great visibility and popularity. However, it is a term that is not explicitly defined until now. According to the relevant literature, the definitions of social entrepreneurship focus on four key factors: the features of the individual social entrepreneurs, their area of operation, the processes and the resources used by the social entrepreneurs, and, of course, the mission (Dacin, 2011). In the following table we choose to present one of the most know definition of 'social entrepreneur' by Dees (1998) and two representative definitions of 'social entrepreneurship' from the literature. However, what should be stressed out and is commonly accepted, about social entrepreneurs, is that the operating model is composed of activities, systems, structures, internal and external value partners that interrelate to create the proposed social value. The operating model and the resource strategy, of the social entrepreneurs, are designed based on social value architecture and influenced by characteristics of the operating environment such as culture, markets, political environment, characteristics of the entrepreneur amongst others.

**Table 1 Definitions of 'social entrepreneur' & 'social entrepreneurship'**

Source	Definition
Dees (1998)	<p>Social entrepreneurs play the role of change agents in the social sector by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopting a mission to create and sustain social value</li> <li>• Recognizing and relentlessly pursuing new opportunities to serve that mission;</li> <li>• Engaging in a process of continuous innovation, adaptation, and learning;</li> <li>• Acting boldly without being limited by resources currently in hand;</li> <li>• Exhibiting a heightened sense of accountability to the constituencies served for the outcomes created.</li> </ul>
Zahra et al. (2009)	<p>social entrepreneurship encompasses activities and processes undertaken to discover, define, and exploit opportunities in order to enhance social wealth by creating new ventures or managing existing organizations in an innovative manner</p>

<sup>3</sup> The Travel Foundation is a charity that works in partnership with businesses and governments so that tourism brings greater benefits for people and the environment. Web page: <https://www.thetravelfoundation.org.uk/>

Ashoka (2012)	Social entrepreneurship encompasses the activities and processes undertaken to discover, define, and exploit opportunities in order to enhance social wealth by creating new ventures or managing existing organizations in an innovative manner.
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According to UNIDO (United Nations Industrial Development Organization)<sup>4</sup>, Corporate Social Responsibility "is a management concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and interactions with their stakeholders. CSR is generally understood as being the way through which a company achieves a balance of economic, environmental and social imperatives, while at the same time addressing the expectations of shareholders and stakeholders." According to many authors, social entrepreneurship is synonymous to Corporate Social Responsibility, as CSR projects are implemented by social entrepreneurs. There are some objections on this issue however, the majority of the researchers believe that those two concepts are interrelated (Buendía-Martínez & Carrasco Monteagudo, 2020). The key concepts of CSR are environmental management, eco-efficiency, responsible resourcing, stakeholder engagement, labor standards and working conditions, employee and community relations, social equity, gender balance, human rights, good governance, and anticorruption processes. In Figure 4, all the key issues are presented.

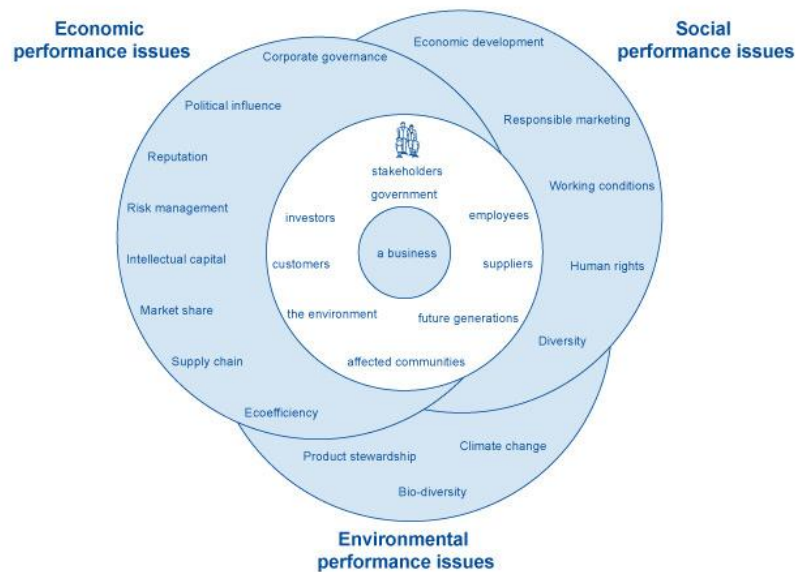


Figure 6: Corporate Social Responsibility key issues.

Source: UNIDO<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> UNIDO is the specialized agency of United Nations that promotes industrial development for poverty reduction, inclusive globalization and environmental sustainability.

<sup>5</sup> UNIDO (United Nations Industrial Development Organization). Available in: <https://www.unido.org/our-focus/advancing-economic-competitiveness/competitive-trade-capacities-and-corporate-responsibility/corporate-social-responsibility-market-integration/what-csr>

### 3.4.3.1 Social Business Plan

A social business plan is a document that describes a social business in detail. It may refer to an existing social business, or a social business idea that has not yet been put into practice. A social business plan can be used as an internal management guide for the owners or managers of the social business. However, it can also be used externally, to tell other people about the social business and how it operates. In this respect it is an important tool if the social entrepreneur wants to convince other people to get involved in the social business, particularly business partners or potential lenders and investors. They social business plans have some differences with the business plans of the conventional businesses as a significant proportion of any profit made by the business is used in line with its social purpose. Social enterprises are driven by social objectives rather than maximizing profit for private gain, so the social value proposition is the justification for the organization's existence and influences all other dimensions of the business model. (ILO, 2011)

In Annex the reader can find a useful social business plan template as designed in an EU project<sup>6</sup>.

### 3.4.3.2 Social entrepreneurship business models in tourism

Tourism is promoted as a vehicle for development by different governments and development agencies as we already analysed. In line with the general concept of social entrepreneurship, the fundamental goal of a tourism social entrepreneurship is to eradicate societal problems through economic and social value creating activities. By focusing on increasing social wealth, social entrepreneurship highlights the potential of tourism to drive social change and to be a sustainable development paradigm. The critical themes that depict the significance of social entrepreneurship in tourism include economic and social value creation, social innovation and sustainability within destinations. These themes are captured in Sheldon et al.'s (2017) definition of Tourism Social Entrepreneurship (TSE): "*a process that uses tourism to create innovative solutions to immediate social, environmental and economic problems in destinations by mobilizing the ideas, capacities, resources and social agreements, from within or outside the destination, required for its sustainable social transformation.*" (Sheldon et al., 2017, p. 7) The conceptual framework of TSE for sustainable community development is presented in Figure 5<sup>7</sup>,

<sup>6</sup> Sector, F. (2007). A business planning guide to developing a social enterprise. *Dalam www.forthsector.org.uk.*

<sup>7</sup> The seven interrelated community capitals (Flora et al., 2004) are shown in overlapping ellipses at center of the TSE framework and explained below based on the way they are employed within the structure.

- *Natural capital* pertains to the geography, natural environment and resources of a place, including its landforms, plants and wildlife, which in many cases compose the core tourist attractions at a destination.
- *Built capital* refers to made physical structures such as buildings, roads and other facilities that support the mobilization of TSE.
- *Financial capital* includes the monetary resources required to develop a community's infrastructure and capacity to fund TSE projects.
- *Political capital* entails the power dynamics and relations between institutions within a community, including tourism social entrepreneurs' ability to influence local decisions.

while in Figure 6 it is provided a business model planning for TSE, and finally, in Figure 7 are presented the TSE business model dimensions.

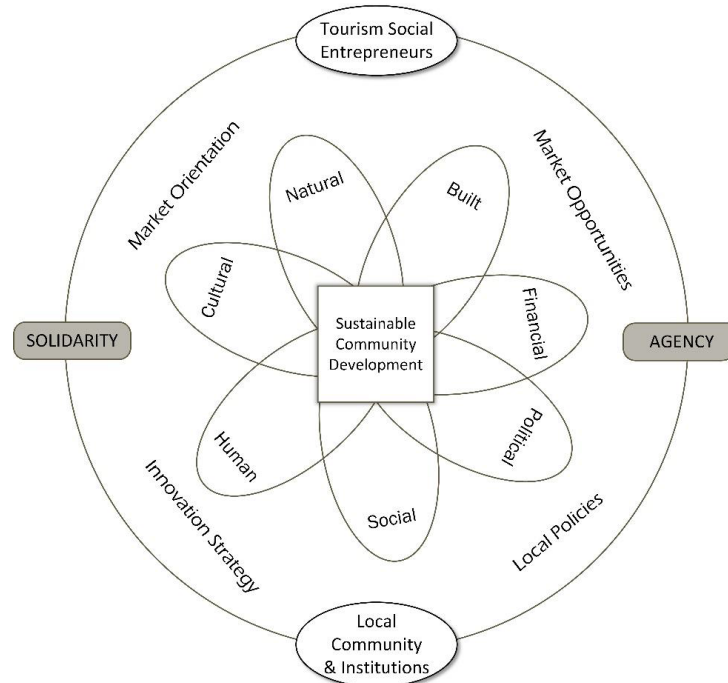


Figure 7: Conceptual framework of TSE for sustainable community development.

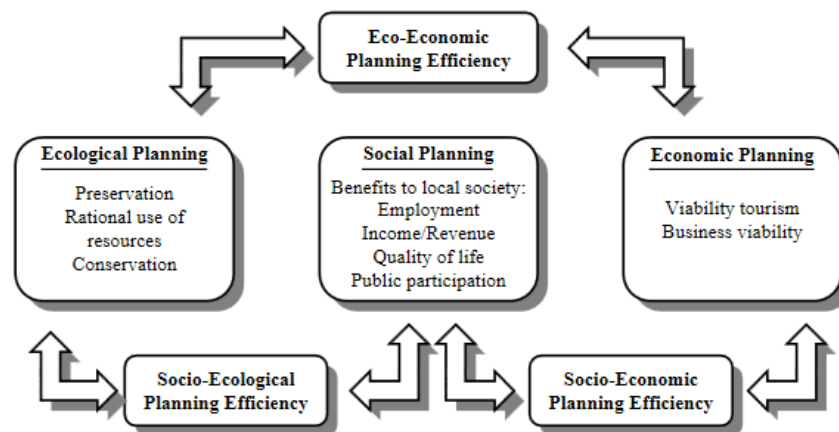


Figure 8: Business model planning for TSE.

- *Social capital* is based on social structures and networks within a community as well as tourism social entrepreneurs' networking abilities. Moreover, social capital can develop in two forms: 'bonding' or the intact ties that make a coherent community; and 'bridging' or the weak ties that establish and preserve ties between different groups and institutions.
- *Cultural capital* encompasses the totality of a community's way of life including their customs and traditions that impact their worldview and actions.
- *Human capital* encapsulates the community's talents, education and skills that will enable them to utilise and improve their assets, outsource resources that are not present in their locality, and perform specific roles in TSE.

(Aquino et al., 2018)

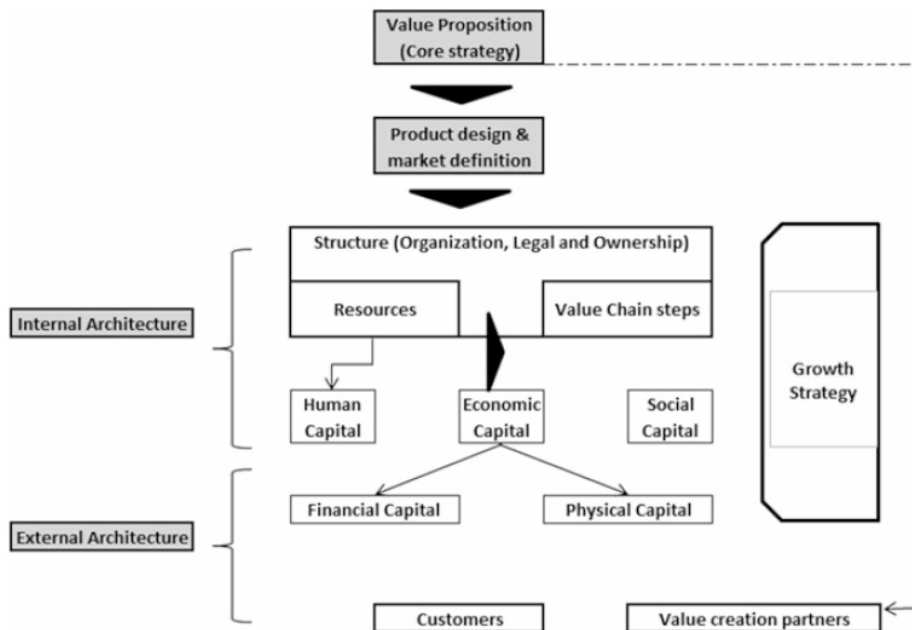


Figure 9: Business models dimensions

### 3.4.3.3 Challenges and opportunities in social entrepreneurship

Some of the most obvious and important challenges that social enterprises are facing are the following:

**Lack of Funding support.** Funding and initial capital is by far the most important element for any kind of business. When talking about social enterprises research have shown that the majority has great difficulties or even fail to secure start-up capital. This happens because of the misconception that socially driven organizations are not so profitable and there is risk involved whether to money being lend will be given back or not.

**Ability to scale-up.** The majority of the social enterprises lacks the ability to scale-up the enterprise to the next level especially because of the lack of support and structured policies.

**Duality of mission.** Social entrepreneurs have the vision to create value by addressing social problems. This vision, however, is not deviant from the economic objective as the social enterprise can also aim to earn profit through the business model. The management of this duality can create problems.

**Lack of proper business strategy.** Social enterprises lack of proper business strategy leading to on-competitive products, most of the time because the focus is on the social needs and not to the actual product or service provided (Hynes, 2009).



### 3.4.3.4 The dimensions of a sustainable enterprise

In the literature, the notion of sustainable entrepreneurship is conceptualized to have four business dimensions namely; economic, social and environmental (Figure 8). Combining those dimensions of the sustainable business, with the four dimensions of social entrepreneurship i.e., social mission, social innovation, social networking, and financial returns we get Figure 10.

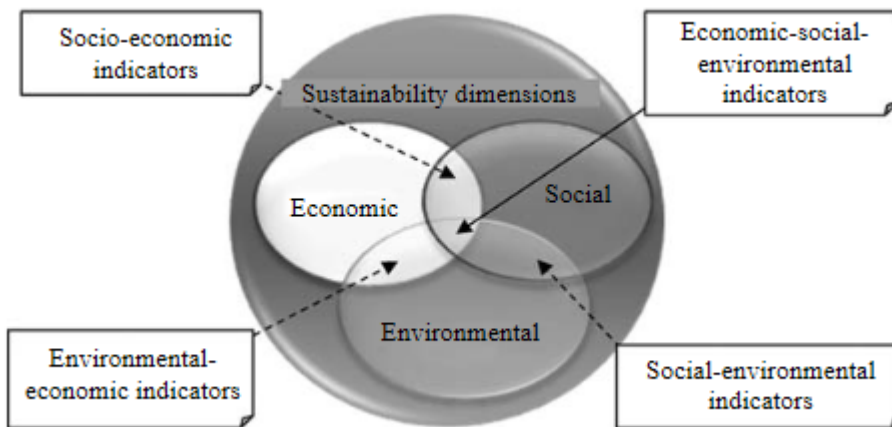


Figure 10: Inter-relationship among the sustainability dimensions of the business.

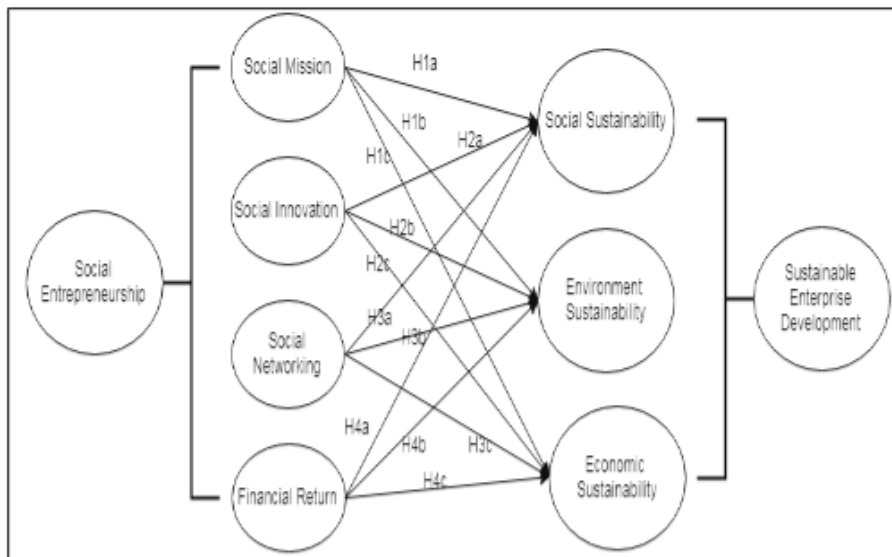


Figure 11: Social Entrepreneurship & Sustainable Enterprise development.

### 3.4.3.5 Create value with CSR and social entrepreneurship

Several authors have claimed that CSR is possible under a specific set of circumstances that will create economic value for firms. Economic value is created when consumers are willing to pay more for products and/or services provided by companies than the cost of their inputs. Value creation in the CSR realm has been defined as "identifiable, measurable economic benefits that the firm expects to receive". (Burke/Logsdon 1996, p. 497). Five strategic dimensions of CSR affect the ability of enterprise to create value: centrality, appropriability, proactivity, visibility, and voluntarism. These five strategic CSR dimensions help to explain how resources and capabilities may create value for the firm. Another avenue of value creation is through cost reductions available to the firm by focusing CSR projects on activities within the expertise of the firm. Projects within the business domain of the firm are subject to greater oversight and monitoring from the firm, thus reducing costs compared to initiatives in areas little understood by the firm. Therefore, highly central programs are likely to create greater value over time than projects that are marginal to the business mission. (Husted & Allen, 2009)

### 3.4.3.6 Business strategy and CSR

In Figure 10, it is graphically presented the relationship between business strategy and value creation by CSR.

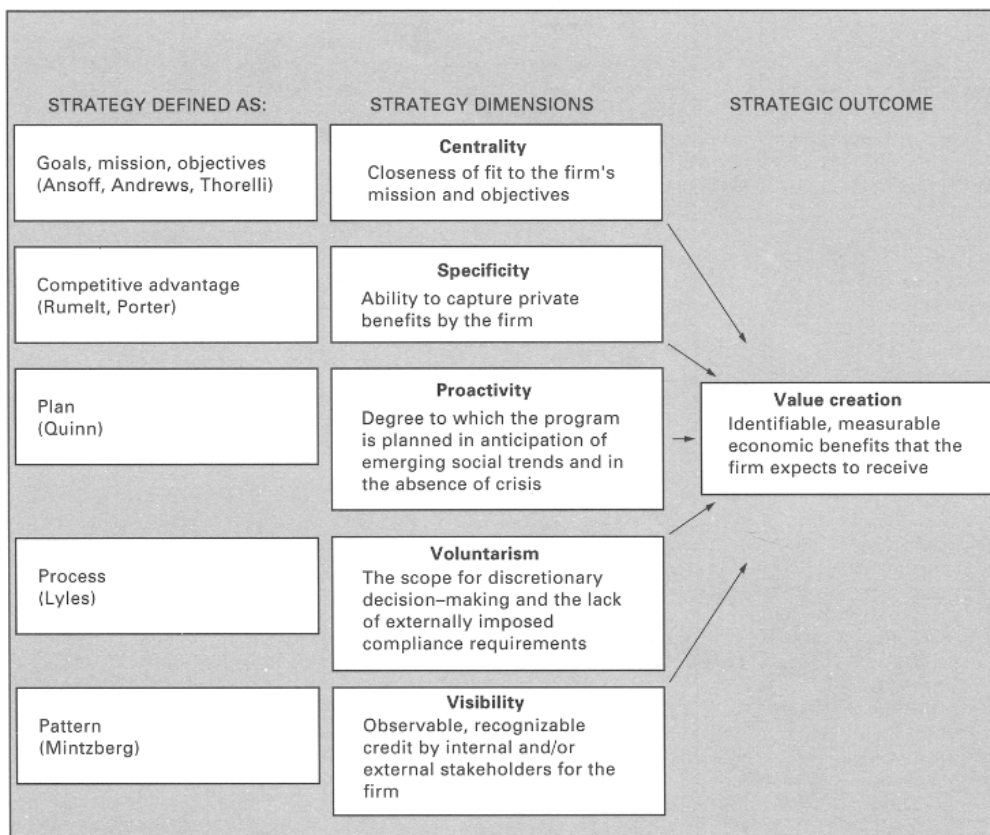


Figure 12: Business strategy and CSR.

### 3.4.4 Circular Economy

One of the key drivers of a sustainable economy is the concept of building a circular economy which focuses on reducing waste and at the same time, ensure that materials (and energy) are used as efficiently as possible. Being more circular involves getting the most from products by using them as complete as possible; by sharing items with others to re-use when it is possible; and, of course, by increasing levels of recycling to, at least, a level up to which the value of the materials used is recovered (Korhonen et al., 2018). (see Figure 13)

As it is stated by the relevant report of EU<sup>8</sup>, circular economy preserves the value added in products for as long as possible and virtually eliminates waste. It retains the resources within the economy when a product has reached the end of its life, so that they remain in productive use and create further value. It may involve:

1. Increasing the time products deliver their service before coming to the end of their useful life (durability);
2. Reducing the use of materials that are hazardous or difficult to recycle (substitution);
3. Creating markets for recycled materials (standards, public procurement);
4. Designing products that are easier to repair, upgrade, remanufacture or recycle (eco-design);
5. Incentivizing waste reduction and high-quality separation by consumers;
6. Incentivizing separation and collection systems that minimize the costs of recycling and reuse;
7. Facilitating industrial clusters that exchange by-products to prevent them from becoming wastes (industrial symbiosis);
8. Encouraging wider consumer choice through renting or leasing instead of owning products (new business models)

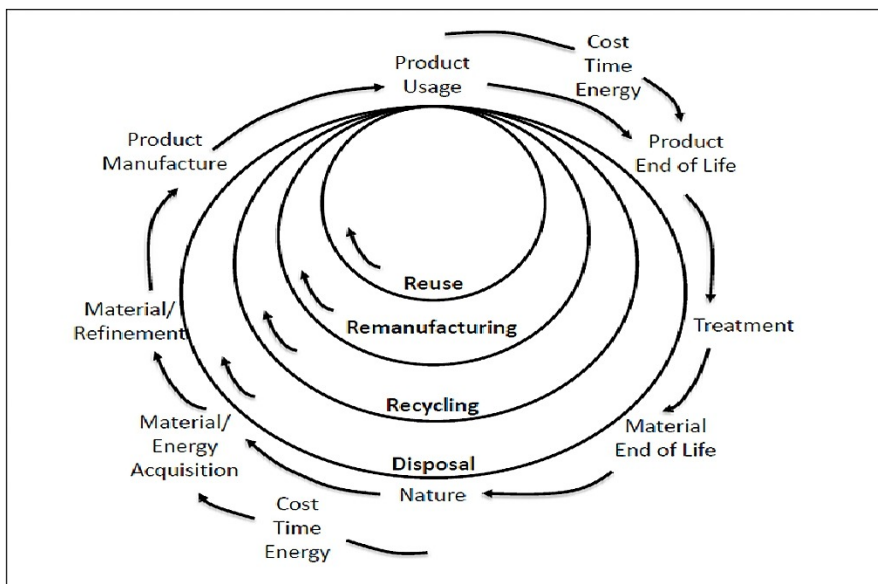


Figure 13: Concept of Circular Economy.

<sup>8</sup> Available in: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/circular-economy/overview>

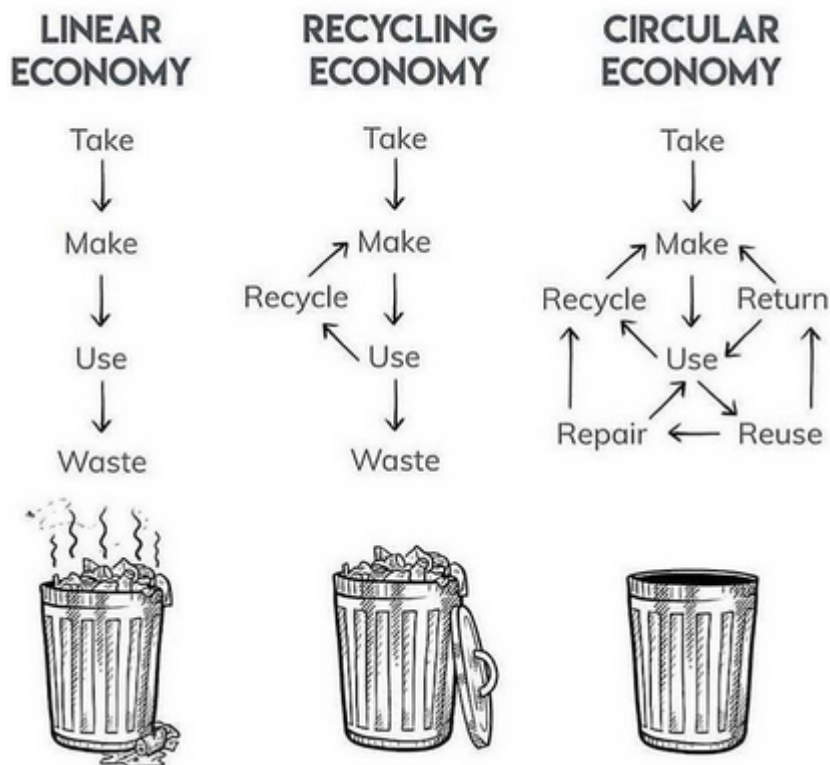


Figure 14: Circular Economy Comparison.

### 3.4.4.1 Approaches of circular economy

There are many approaches relative to the circular economy concept; some approach the concept by focusing on the use of the raw materials, other focus on system change and other on resource use. Those that focus on system change often emphasize three elements:

- Closed cycles, material cycles are closed following the example of an ecosystem. Producers take back their products after use and repair them for a new useful life. In this system, it is therefore not only important that materials are recycled properly, but also that products, components and raw materials remain of high quality in these cycles
- Renewable energy. Just like raw materials and products, energy also lasts as long as possible in a circular economy.
- Systems thinking. Every economic agent (company, person, organism) is connected to each other.

However, the most known and used approach is the "3-R approach". The "3-R approach" refers to the equal focus on the following dimensions:

- Reduce (minimise as possible the use of raw materials)
- Reuse (maximise as possible the use of products and components)
- Recycle (what cannot be reused recycle it)

(Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2015)

### 3.4.4.2 Key elements of circular economy

The elements of a circular economy - renewable energy, natural capital, new revenue models, product design, supply chain collaboration, high-value reuse and recycling - in relation to each other are presented in Figure 12.

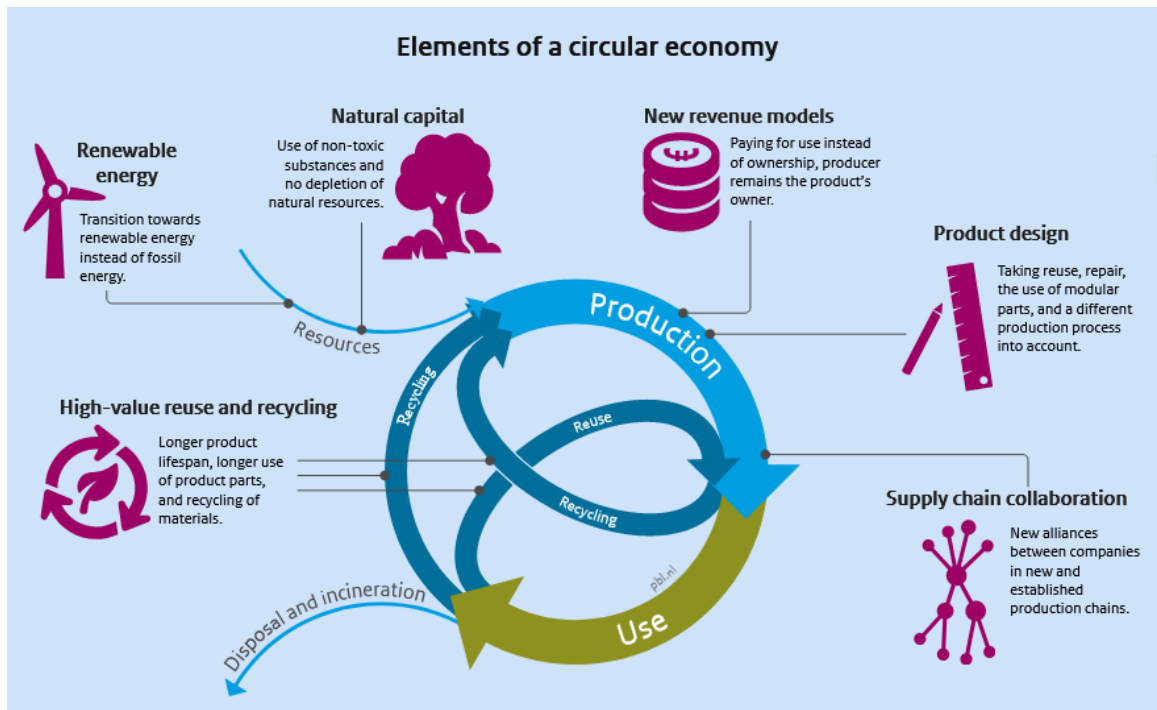


Figure 15: Elements of Circular Economy.

Source: PBL Netherlands environmental assessment agency, 2019  
<https://themasites.pbl.nl/o/circular-economy/><sup>9</sup>

An interesting video about circular economy is provided by EEA<sup>10</sup>:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_9mHi93n2AI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_9mHi93n2AI) & another by Ellen MacArthur Foundation<sup>11</sup>:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zCRKvDyyHml>.

### 3.4.4.3 Integrate circular business models

To implement and upscale circular business models, the following elements are required:

1. Circular goals, such as reuse, repair and recycle, need to be agreed on by policymakers. In the EU, this has already been done.
2. New business models need to be developed through innovation by companies. This is called business model innovation.

<sup>9</sup> Available in: <https://themasites.pbl.nl/o/circular-economy/>

<sup>10</sup> European Environmental Agency, web site: <https://www.eea.europa.eu/el>

<sup>11</sup> The Ellen MacArthur Foundation is a UK charity working on business, learning, insights & analysis, and communications to accelerate the transition towards the circular economy. Web page: [www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org](http://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org)

3. Technical and/or social innovation in companies and society need to go hand in hand with business model innovation.

In Appendix II, it is provided an analytical framework for business models in the circular economy which is built on the following key elements:

- circular strategies, such as lengthening the useful life of products, reuse, repair, remanufacturing, or recycling, are defined as the circular goals that need to be achieved through innovation and enabling action;
- business models are defined as a combination of value creation, value proposition and value capture strategies;
- business model innovation is framed as a means of implementing those circular goals;
- business model innovation is placed in the context of two other important dimensions: technical and social innovation
- the acknowledgement of appropriate policy, behavioral and educational action as important enablers for circular business model innovation

The provided framework can be applied to the different life cycle phases of many different products and it can give many useful general insights (Gillabel et al., 2021). In Figure 14 we see a circular business models as it proposed by Einarsson & Sorin (2020) in a report for EU about circular economy.

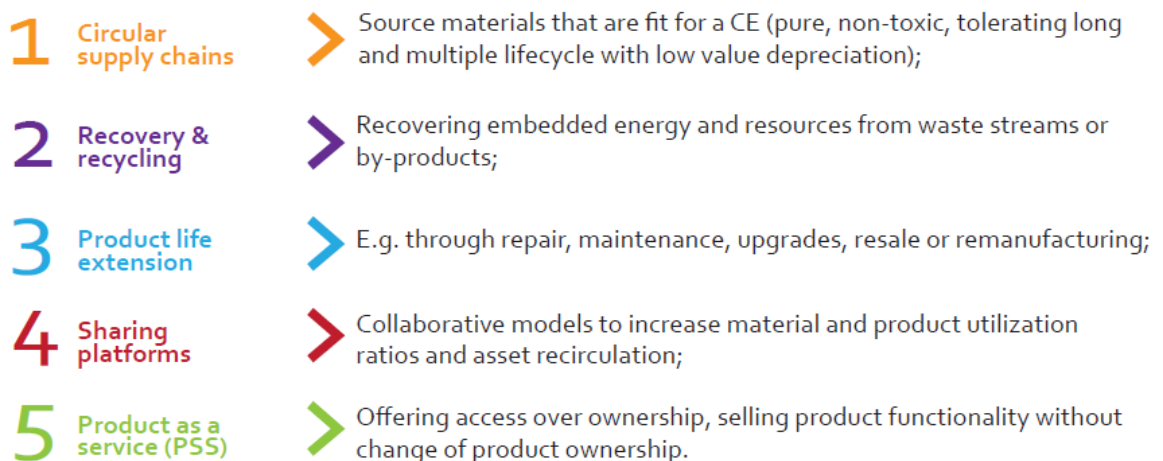


Figure 16: Circular business model

### 3.4.4.4 Circular Economy and Tourism Sector

In current discourse, the Circular Economy framework is predominantly associated with product manufacturing or resource intensive industries and value chains, and less so with service industries such as tourism. However, a Circular Economy refers to the economy as a whole, so, service dominated industries, like the tourism sector and its environment, are important consumers and/or users of materials, energy and other resources such as land (destinations), buildings (construction materials), furniture, vehicles, fossil fuels, food, textiles, a range of consumables, etc. The tourism industry is interlinked with a host of other key industries from agriculture to the built environment and transport industries. Thus, tourism industry economic agents have an important role within the circular transition (Einarsson & Sorin, 2020).

Circular tourism argues in favour of a model in which each tourism agent (tourist, Destination Management Organizations (DMOs), suppliers (hotels, restaurants, etc.), and resident population) adopts an eco-friendly approach (Rodríguez et al., 2020).

Rodríguez et al. In 2020 published a thorough literature review around circular tourism and conclude to the following:

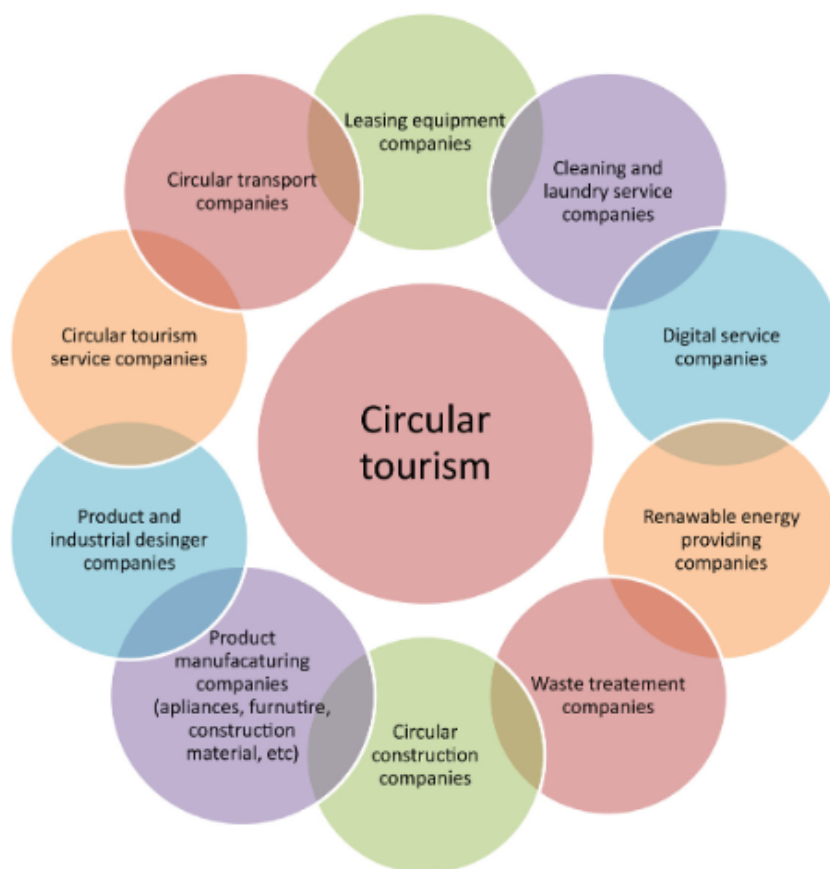
- Tourism has significant environmental impacts and uses a wide range of natural resources, and hence, it is crucial to use the resources taking into account CE principles in order to minimize the negative impact on the environment
- The implementation of CE actions in agriculture is vital to achieving sustainability in the sector. Agrotourism is an effective way of developing circular practices in rural tourism.
- Using renewable resources instead of conventional energy is an important aspect for the application of tourism circular economy.
- The promotion of CE principles in the rehabilitation and conservation of heritage initiatives is crucial for the sustainable continuity of cultural tourism.
- The application of CE principles can provide hotel companies with the necessary framework for business development and can help to create a more sustainable experience for all stakeholders by reducing the negative implications on social and environmental sustainability
- Regarding waste generation, tourism plays an important role, not only because of the large number of tourists worldwide but also because of the higher volume of waste per capita of tourists compared to the resident population.

In Figure 15, we can see an illustration about how circular tourism sector operates.



Figure 17: The circular tourism sector.

As we understand, circular tourism requires a great number of different companies and suppliers in order to be achieved by a tourism enterprise. In Figure 16 it is presented an attempt to gather all the companies that are necessary in order to achieve the circularity of providing tourist services.



**Figure 18: Example of companies necessary to achieve the circularity of providing tourism services.**

In addition, in Annex IV, it is provided a full table about the relationship between climate change and tourism sector, in order to have the full conceptual framework.

Summing up we have to highlight the benefits of circular tourism. As circular economy promotes a new and more holistic model of production, by transforming “products” into “systems” with a better ‘production cost-environmental damage-product price’ ratio, consequently CE will generate benefits for the environment, profitability for companies and lower prices for the consumer. Here is where the concept of circular economy arises as an economic model that is tied to sustainability, whose objective is for the value of products, materials and resources to remain in the economy for as long as possible, reducing waste generation to a minimum. Thus, by developing circular tourism will lead to sustainable use of resources, improving the efficiency of the tourism industry and achieving the sustainable development of the sector. The sustainable management of resources is the key element of every policy regarding tourism sector; it also requires the involvement of all component parts of the economy, and for them to be interconnected. Companies, consumers and governments need to work together towards a common goal: implementing a just, social, collaborative and sustainable economy. And of course, circular tourism, through all those mechanisms, ensures a long-term economic development of each region.





It is provided an interesting webinar on Circular Economy in tourism by One Planet network<sup>12</sup>: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BuhEbVNKErE>

### 3.4.5. The Doughnut Economics

The Doughnut Economics model has been defined by the economist Kate Raworth. It can be described as a “breakthrough alternative to growth economics” (Monbiot, 2017).

You can watch Kate Raworth’s TED talk here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rhcrbcg8HBw> and visit her website here: <https://www.kateraworth.com/>

The Doughnut scheme (see figure 2) represents the **social and planetary boundaries** of sustainability. The inner ring of the doughnut sets out the minimum needed to lead a good life (income, food, a certain level of housing, access to clean water and air, education, health care, social equity...), defined on the basis of the SDGs. Anyone not attaining such minimum standards is placed in the doughnut’s hole. The outer ring represents the ecological ceiling drawn up by earth-system scientists. It is the boundary that humankind must not cross, to avoid damaging the climate, the oceans, biodiversity, freshwater...in other words, the Earth system. The “real doughnut”, between the two rings, is where everyone’s needs and that of the planet are being met. It is the place of humanity living well, that has and uses the resources without waste and excessive damage to the environment. Here humanity can **thrive**.

The Doughnut is an important approach to frame the challenges of our era and it acts as a compass for human progress. Moreover, it can be applied on scale anywhere. According to Raworth, the data available nowadays, would make it possible to understand who and where is ‘in the hole’. For example, how many poor people there are in a city and who live in areas where schools, houses or green spaces are substandard and which. So that, the measures to get those people into the Doughnut, without going over to the other side can be defined. It also helps to understand that the problems are **interconnected**. We have to take care of jobs and health, the economy and the environment at the same time and in the same way.

The model applies easily to the **local sustainable development of a place**. Amsterdam is the first city in the world to officially adopt Doughnut Economics. In 2020, before the Covid-19 pandemic, the city of Amsterdam invited Kate Raworth to teach at the Applied Sciences University and to set up a network involving associations, organisations and companies, together with the local administration. The Amsterdam Donut Coalition has therefore been created, in order to collect data, study situations and draw up proposals. They produced a ‘**city portrait**’ showing where basic needs are not being met and a Roadmap 2020-2025, that has been approved by the City Council in April 2020. Amsterdam’s deputy mayor, Marieke van Doorninck, recognises that the Doughnut can help to overcome the effects of the crisis and to rethink the future.

Find more here: <https://www.greeneuropeanjournal.eu/the-doughnut-model-for-a-fairer-greener-amsterdam/>

Several cities all around the world are following Amsterdam’s example in downscaling the Doughnut at their scale: among these, Copenhagen, the Brussels region, the city of Dunedin in New Zealand, Nanaimo, British Columbia, Philadelphia and Portland.

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<sup>12</sup> The One Planet network has formed to implement the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production, which supports the global shift to SCP and the achievement of SDG 12. Web page: <https://www.oneplanetnetwork.org/>



Figure 19: The Doughnut of social and planetary boundaries.



Figure 20: The Doughnut of social and planetary boundaries with SDGs.

### 3.4.6 Experience Economy

As an entrepreneur, you need to understand what your customers are looking for. It is very important to see your offer through the customers' eyes, to maximally be able to meet their needs. These needs and expectations change and evolve over time. The modern economic model was first centred on offering **products**: commodities (e.g. vegetables, animals, minerals) – the **agrarian economy**-, and with the Industrial Revolution, goods, referring to the **industrial economy**. Then, around the '60s, a new 'level' of the economy, focused on delivering **services**, developed, leading to a **service-based economy**. The most recent economic design thinking, starting around 2000, is shifting towards offering **experiences**.

These changes in consumers' needs have been studied by Joseph Pine. You can watch his TED talk here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2RD00ZCyJCK>

The term '**experience economy**' was elaborated by the authors Pine & Gilmore (1999), who stated that the market was evolving to an economy where consumers are desiring experiences, more than products or even services. The concept is particularly relevant in the tourism sector, since tourists look for experiences while travelling. Within the experience economy, the tourism enterprises that are able to offer experiences clearly provide an added value.

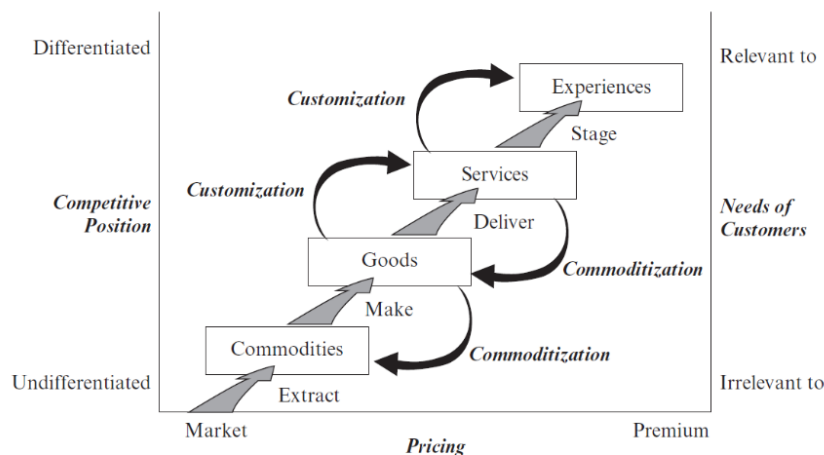


Figure 21: The progression of Economic Value.

can be seen as the 'first generation' experience economy. The author Boswijk (2012) amongst others, has added an extra dimension to the concept; the importance of **meaning of the experience**, leading to the '**Experience Economy 2.0.**'

In the 'Experience Economy 2.0.', experiences are not merely about entertainment or education (cf. the four realms of experiences, see below), but they also provide meaning and at times even 'transformation'. These meaningful experiences involve as many dimensions as possible and influence the customer on a deeper and personal level. They serve as trigger moments in someone's life, which can lead to permanent changes or have a lasting impact.

In their "**progression of economic value**", Pine & Gilmore show the experience as a next step in the evolution of the market. Experience is, in short, a **new source of value creation**, while services and goods are means to create and offer the experience.

In the years since, reality has indeed proven the validity of this theory. These first theories and models of the experience economy

While traditional businesses were more transaction-based, following the 'Experience Economy 2.0.', it is important to be a responsible entrepreneur and serve a certain (meaningful) purpose. "Offering an experience is part of the first generation Experience Economy. An experience is exciting, activates the senses and has a high fun factor but won't influence you very deeply. A meaningful experience, to experience something, does". (Boswijk et al., 2012).

Moreover, the desire for **authentic experiences** has become a mainstream in tourism and is in line with the experience economy. This economy represents an economy in which consumers seek authentic experiences (Pine & Gilmore, 1998). "Authentic experiences are always personal, and are experienced by engagement on an emotional, physical, mental and/or intellectual level" (Cornelisse, 2018, p.93).

### 3.4.6.1 The characteristics of experiences

Key elements of the experience are that they are personal, about sensations (things that are experienced with the senses), they exist only in the mind of the customer (there is always a subjective interpretation), and they are (or must be) memorable. Every experience will be different for every person, since it will be defined by every person's state of mind.

We can **characterize** 'experiences' in short:

1. An experience = a new source of value creation
2. The customer/tourist needs to perceive experiential value
3. Interactions with people and places (co-creation) are part of the experience
4. Experiences make differentiation and competitive advantage for SMEs possible
5. Experiential value can be added to all types of products

#### **The four realms of experiences**

According to Pine & Gilmore (1998), we can look at experiences across two dimensions, each with two opposite sides of a spectrum:

- First dimension: **Customer participation** Active vs. passive participation
- Second dimension: **Connection** Absorption "*The experience enters the customer*" vs. Immersion "*The customer enters the experience*"

Experiences can be categorized in each of the four 'realms' which are formed when combining these two dimensions:

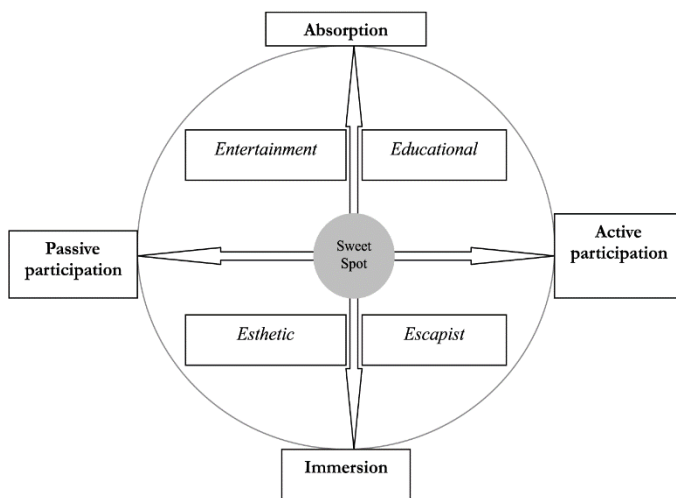
1. **Entertainment**: high absorption – passive participation. E.g. dance shows, concert, TV  
Relaxed, fun (not "deep"; more superficial)

2. **Educational** experiences: high absorption – active participation. E.g. a classic city tour about history

Learning is happening all the time in all kinds of situations

3. **Aesthetic** experiences: high immersion – passive participation. E.g. museums, architecture, cinema

Aesthetics are subjective and sensory, and often involve the arts



4. **Escapist** experiences: high immersion – active participation. E.g. climbing, playing music

Escapism is a conscious or unconscious flight from reality.

The '**sweet spot**' occurs where all the realms meet, an experience that has an aspect of all the realms will certainly be a memorable experience. The more experience realms are put in one experience, the more intense it will be. This insight can help when planning and designing experiences.

Figure 22

### 3.4.6.2 Meaningful experiences

Which experiences change our life, and we will thus never forget, signal what we value most in our lives. As an SME in Tourism, you can create this value, this meaning, through experiences. Businesses that contribute to the quality of the lives of people will be the most successful in the future. Value-driven organisations with purpose are most likely to be future proof.

Experiences are not 'static' or general, they are **dynamic and highly personal**. Nevertheless, meaningful experiences share common **characteristics**, according to Boswijk et al. (2012):

- Increased concentration and focus
- All one's senses are involved
- An altered awareness of time
- Emotional involvement
- The process is unique for the individual and has an intrinsic value, is irreversible
- It involves contact with the "raw stuff", the real thing
- It involves a process of doing and undergoing
- There is an element of playfulness
- There is a balance between the challenge and one's own capacities

### 3.4.6.3 Experience Design

Pine & Gilmore (1999) talk about 'staging' experiences. Memorable moments don't 'just' happen, they must be carefully **planned, executed, improved and designed**. This process is called experience design.

**Experience design** is "the practice of designing products, processes, services, events and environments with a focus placed on the quality of the user experience and culturally relevant solutions, with less emphasis placed on increasing and improving functionality of the design."

To offer a memorable and meaningful experience, we must **step in the shoes of the customer** and look at our offer through their eyes. It will undoubtedly improve what we are selling and make it more tailor-made to their preferences and expectations.

Using experience design results in a **competitive advantage**: satisfied customers who are getting what they need or want from an offer, will be loyal customers, choosing one brand or company above the other. Offering quality is not enough, that is merely the basic expectation of the customer. The **key differentiator** is to offer a good service and create a memorable experience, then customers will choose you over another tourism SME. When an experience is well-orchestrated, customers don't remember the service, they just remember this memorable moment and how it made them feel.

#### ***Classic experience design principles***

Pine & Gilmore (1999) state 5 experience design principles for designing a memorable experience:

##### **1. Theme the experience**

Build your experience around a specific theme, make every part of the experience fit in a unified story line, which is clear, captivating and compelling to the customers.

##### **2. Harmonize impressions with positive cues**

Have an eye for detail: even the smallest cues can affirm the greatness and uniqueness of the experience, they contribute to fulfilling the theme. The combination of all the small cues make up the impression of a memorable experience in the minds of the customers.

##### **3. Eliminate negative cues**

There is no room for inconsistent cues which don't fit in the general story of the experience. Eliminate anything that could contradict or distract from the theme. Also, don't "overservice" your customers; leave them some personal space while experiencing.

##### **4. Mix in memorabilia**

Especially on holiday or in any tourism experience, customers love to get some souvenirs or memorabilia which remind them of the experience they've had. If your experience was worth it, people will want to pay for something to take home, to commemorate this experience. For you, this can also mean an additional source of income.

##### **5. Engage all five senses**

Tourism experiences should be multisensory and experiential: people want to see, feel, hear, smell and taste things. The more senses are being addressed, the more compelling the experience will feel, and the more memorable it will be.



Boswijk (2012) adds one more experience design principle to this, where he puts the attention on the emotional way of experiencing above the rational way:

### **6. Naturalness**

The whole experience should make a natural and authentic impression. All the elements should fit together and feel right together, you should feel welcomed and comfortable in the setting of the experience.

And last but not least, apart from these principles: keep evaluating, keep experimenting, keep improving, keep evolving with your experiences. It is a process that is not perfected overnight.

## Final self-assessment

### 1. Social entrepreneurship:

- Involves creating new charitable and civic organizations that are financially self-sufficient.
- Involves bringing new products or services to market.
- Involves a person or group who owns their own for-profit business.
- Involves revitalizing government agencies.

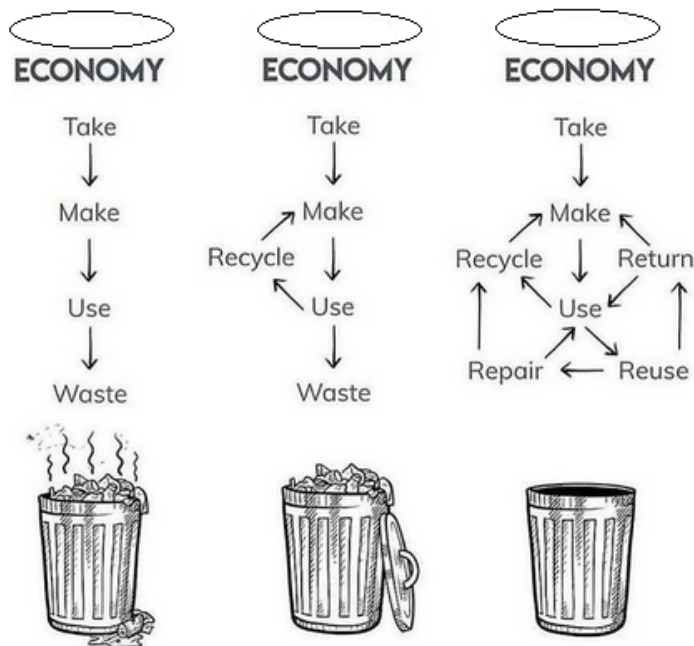
### 2. All definitions of CSR recognize that:

- Companies have a responsibility for their impact on society and environment
- The natural environment should be the main focus of CSR activities
- Business ethics is a complex issue
- Companies must pay equal attention to business ethics and sustainability

### 3. The acronym CSR stands for:

- Corporate Search and Rescue
- Corporate Social Responsibility
- Corporate Sensitive Reliability
- Corporate Social Reality

### 4. Fill the gaps.



### 5. The '3-R approach' of circular economy refers to:

- Reproduce-recollect-recycle



- b) Reduce-reuse-recycle
  - c) Reuse-revive-regain
  - d) Rescue-regain-recycle
- 6. Which of the following is NOT an approach of the circular economy concept:**
- a) Focusing on the use of raw materials
  - b) Focusing on waste generation
  - c) Focusing on system changes
  - d) Focusing on resource use
- 7. According to the approach of the circular economy that focus on system change, the emphasis is put on the following three elements:**
- a) Closed systems, natural energy, system thinking
  - b) Closed cycles, environment, system thinking
  - c) Closed cycles, renewable energy, system thinking
  - d) Closed systems, renewable materials, multilevel system analysis
- 8. Which of the following is NOT a key element for the framework for business models in the circular economy:**
- a) Circular strategies
  - b) Business model innovation as a combination of value creation
  - c) business model innovation in the context of physical innovation
  - d) the acknowledgement of appropriate policy, behavioral and educational action as important enablers for circular business model innovation
- 9. Which of the following is NOT a challenge for a social entrepreneurship:**
- a) Lack of funding support
  - b) Ability to scale-up
  - c) Employers are especially volunteers
  - d) Lack of proper business strategy
- 10. Which is the 'duality' that a social entrepreneurship has to deal with:**
- a) Address social problems and at the same time have managerial procedures
  - b) Manage volunteers and employees at the same time, and make them cooperate successfully
  - c) Address social problems and at the same time have profits to ensure the viability of the entrepreneurship

## 3.5 Annexes

### 3.5.1 Inequality issues in tourism employment

#### 3.5.1.1 Gender-based inequalities

Tourism is a sector with a high number of female employees: while 39% of people employed in the broader economy are women, in tourism women represent 54% of the people employed (UNWTO, 2019). However, there are several gender-based inequalities, such as:

- Women are usually employed in **low paid and low-level jobs**. Even though they represent an important part of the workforce, women in hospitality hold less than 40% of managerial positions, less than 20% of general management roles and less than 8% of board positions (UNWTO, 2019).
- Women often face the 'glass ceiling' and the 'sticky floor' in the workplace. The '**glass ceiling**' refers to the difficulty to reach high level positions, because of social barriers and prejudices. The '**sticky floor**' refers to the limited possibilities that women have for their professional improvement or climbing the professional ladder.
- Women's mean hourly rate is significantly lower than men (UNWTO, 2019). This is called the '**gender pay-gap**'. For example, in their case study on the Hotel Best Tenerife Calvet et al. (2021) found out that, at the end of 2017, the housekeepers (92% women) received a productivity bonus of 139€, while the housekeepers (85% men) received 640,67€, despite both positions being in the same professional agreement and having the same base salary. Moreover, often this wage discrimination occurs even when women have a higher education level than their male counterparts.

However, it is necessary to mention that the gender pay-gap is smaller in tourism than it is in the broader economy at the global level. Tourism employment is comparatively lower paid for both men and women than mean wages across the broader economy (UNWTO, 2019).

- Women are more likely to have **precarious working conditions**, such as temporary, part-time, in some contexts, even informal jobs. Additionally, sometimes the jobs are physically hard, with strenuous rhythm. This way, women are exposed to stress and different types of occupational risks, like the carpal tunnel syndrome and exposure to cleaning chemicals in the case of housekeepers (Calvet et al., 2021).

These forms of discrimination towards women (in terms of wage, type of employment, working conditions and opportunities), find their roots in **socio-cultural patriarchal systems**. In patriarchal societies, the work that is usually attributed to women tends to be devalued and not recognized. Even though, compared to the last century, there have been significant changes in the situation, most of the time women are still the ones who take care of the children and domestic life. Therefore, some of the feminised jobs, even in the tourism industry, tend to be considered as an 'extension' of the unpaid domestic work. The boundaries between the two are blurred, resulting in a high and not recognized workload for women.

The feminisation of work sometimes entails that women have to respond to specific **physical standards**. This is often the reflection of gender stereotypes, and contributes to their perpetuation, for example in terms of sexualisation of the feminine image. Additionally, the



physical standards are forms of discrimination towards women not responding to the (preferred) stereotypes. In the tourism sector, groups that suffer most from these impositions are for example hostess in the events and flight attendants, as in the case of the workers of the Aeroflot company, who have sued the company:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/sep/04/aeroflot-gender-discrimination-case-reaches-court-in-moscow>

Another crucial gender issue is **sexual harassment**. In some tourism environments the risk of being exposed to sexual harassment is high. This is due to, amongst others, the many and frequent social contacts at work, involving direct contact with clients and a persistent belief that 'the client is always right'. Additionally, the work's rhythm, often involving night working hours, can increase this risk. Also, hotel rooms can become risky situations for housekeepers. Working with the doors of the rooms open and having an alarm to immediately notify any possible aggression are some measures to protect them.

- In general, sexual harassment within the tourism industry is **rarely reported**, for several reasons. The workers might not identify these behaviours as harassment; they might be discouraged to report it because of the lack of follow-up of the complaints by the supervisors; they could think that reacting and denouncing them can be disadvantageous for them and their job security (that is often already precarious). For example, sometimes waitresses are forced to supplement low wages with tips, and they feel pressured to tolerate lewd comments and inappropriate behaviour as part of their job, at the risk of not receiving the same tips (Calvet et al., 2021).

It is necessary to keep in mind that gender discrimination and inequalities **does not only concern** -hetero, cisgender- **women**, but any **LGBTQIA+**<sup>13</sup> **person** is especially exposed to experience this kind of discrimination and inequalities, in different forms.

For example, a focus group study with 18 trans workers in the restaurant sector in the United States, showed that they are three times more likely to suffer harassment and receive twice as many sexual comments than other workers (Calvet et al., 2021). "Trans workers can suffer specific harassment due to their gender identity and other discriminations such as the obligation to wear a uniform and use a toilet that does not correspond to their gender" (ibid. p.21).

### 3.5.1.2 Ethnicity-based inequalities

As in any other work environment, in the tourism industry, ethnicity-based<sup>14</sup> and even racist forms of discrimination might occur.

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<sup>13</sup> For the explanation of the acronym, you can read:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/21/style/lgbtq-gender-language.html> and

<https://abbreviations.yourdictionary.com/what-does-lgbtqia-stand-for-full-acronym-explained.html>

Some are expressed in similar ways to the gender-based inequalities: wage discrimination and low-level jobs, precarious working conditions, flexible contracts, to which are added long and irregular working hours and exploitation practices. Especially **new immigrants and newcomers** in a country, sometimes tend to be in a disadvantaged condition, because of the lack of familiarity with the new environment, limited personal networks and sometimes not recognised qualifications.

In the tourism industry too, sometimes it happens that the **country of origin is perceived as a criterion**, and even as an important one, for determining skills, capability and the tasks that can be accomplished. It can even have an implication on the **hierarchy** in which way work is organized. An example from the cruise industry, where a study found that workers from the United States and Western Europe hold managerial positions; workers of the same nationalities and, in fewer cases, Eastern Europe, are in positions such as receptionists, guest relations, casinos, entertainers and room service managers. Jobs in restaurants and cabin work, instead, are developed by men from Latin America, Southeast Asia and, to a lesser extent, women from Southeast Asia (Calvet et al., 2021).

Another example is represented by the food and beverage sector, where - even though employment conditions are generally precarious for all workers - white people mainly occupy the most visible jobs, especially in restaurants' reception; while women and people discriminated by their ethnicity work more behind the scenes, such as in the kitchen, preparing food and washing dishes. In turn, **these hierarchies produce differences** in wages, social benefits, training and progress opportunities, and inequalities in working conditions. For example, most immigrant workers rarely have access to a promotion, so they are trapped in the same job category without many opportunities for job mobility (ibid.).

Tourism, by its very nature, is made of **human encounters** and **intercultural exchange**. It creates a multicultural environment, bringing various different cultures, languages and lifestyles together. That is exactly its strength. Tourism entrepreneurs can contribute to this social and global process, **enriching the workplace diversity**: either by belonging to an ethnic minority themselves, by being immigrants or having foreign origins, or by working together with people of different cultures and origins.

Despite the discriminations, especially in the tourism sector, immigrants and people with different origins and culture can **represent an important added value**. They can help in interacting with foreigners, understanding different cultural, social and economic perspectives. Multiculturalism and diversity of the workplace represent an advantage also in terms of **bringing more and different perspectives and ideas** to the working team, which often results in finding successful decisions and solutions. This implies that each worker actively participates or has a specific role in the decision-making process. The recognition and contribution of a **diversified and multicultural team** can help in offering meaningful tourism experiences.

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<sup>14</sup> Ethnicity is considered as a whole of social relationships, processes and identities that are construct-ed by a common cultural background. Those shared attributes include for example the language, traditions, history, religion, nation, social behaviours. A group identifies itself and distinguishes itself from other groups on the basis of this set of features (ethnic identity).

Interacting and working with people of different backgrounds and cultures is not always easy. To reap the benefits of workplace diversity, employees and managers must **understand the challenges** and know how to effectively deal with and overcome them. Some of the challenges, for example, consist of **communication barriers and miscommunication**, that might generate customer complaints and create conflicts. In the work team there might be **acceptance issues** too. It might occur that some employees and managers can be reluctant to the changes made in the enterprises in order to foster diversity. Additionally, the other workers or managers can adopt **a wrong approach to solve diversity and acceptance issues**, for example through a paternalistic or bossy attitude. Even showing - both in the company and from clients- an exaggerated interest towards workers of other ethnicity, in terms of exoticism<sup>15</sup> or even racial fetishism<sup>16</sup> (in a broad sense), is a behaviour that should be prevented.

### 3.5.1.3 Disability -based inequalities

**People with disabilities (PWD)** represent a substantial portion of the global population. According to the World Health Organization, over one billion people or **15% of the global population** have a documented disability (WHO, n.d.). This might include, for instance, orthopaedic disabilities, visual disabilities, hearing disabilities, speech and language disabilities, mental disabilities and chronic illnesses. Despite legislation and policy initiatives, **unemployment rates are generally much higher among people with disabilities** than for the general population. For example, 2011 statistics from the U.S. Department of Labour showed an unemployment rate of persons with disabilities of 15%, compared with 8.9% in the non-disabled population (Kalargyrou & Volis, 2014), even though they have similar professional qualifications. PWD are more likely to end up in **lower-skilled occupations**. The exclusion from the labour market of PWD, often leads to exclusion from social life as well (Bengisu & Balta, 2011).

Usually when it comes to tourism and PWD, the focus is from tourists' viewpoint - namely referring to 'accessible tourism' (see section 4). However, the place of **employees with disabilities (EWD)** in the tourism industry could also use more attention. Additionally, as already mentioned, inclusive tourism has to be considered with an **intersectional approach**. Barriers and negative attitudes towards PWD are usually even higher if the PWD is also a woman or a person from an ethnic minority. A research conducted in Turkey by Burcu (2007, as cited in Bengisu & Balta, 2011) shows that among employed PWD, the percentage of employed women (12%) is disproportionately lower than that of employed men (88%). PWD from ethnic minorities are more likely to be unemployed (Bengisu & Balta, 2011).

If you are willing to make your enterprise more inclusive and accessible to workers with disabilities, hereafter you can find some **principles and practical guidelines** to bear in mind, following the work of Bengisu & Balta (2011):

<sup>15</sup> For some explanations of the concept: <https://www.encyclopedia.com/social-sciences/applied-and-social-sciences-magazines/exoticism>

<sup>16</sup> For some explanations of the concept: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/janicegassam/2021/02/07/what-is-fetishization-and-how-does-it-contribute-to-racism/?sh=72f095006e39>

- Hiring of employees should be **based on merit, suitability and capability** of the candidate, regardless of the presence or degree of disability. EWD should have the possibility to fulfil any task in the hospitality industry as long as their professional knowledge and skills fit those tasks. Job analysis should be applied to determine the physical, cognitive and other requirements of the position (e.g. tasks which critically require vision and frequent reading of documents are not suitable for employees with visual disabilities).
- The job or task appointed to EWD **should not deteriorate** the disability.
- The **working environment should be adapted** to EWD. This means rearranging physical conditions (such as staircases, restrooms, entrances and exits of buildings and work environments...) to eliminate architectural barriers, or to set up the assisting devices, so that EWD can work effectively. However, it is not just about the physical conditions and infrastructure. Creating an inclusive working environment involves human relationships, attitudes and creating an accepting atmosphere as well.
- On one hand, it is essential to provide employees with disabilities with the necessary **orientation and training**. On the other hand, training programs to other employees are needed to **raise awareness**, to inform all staff about disabilities, and to assure a positive attitude toward EWD. For example, an attitude which can disturb PWD is being constantly pitied or idealised by other people, being treated with contempt and being rejected from the society.

In this regard, watching Stella Young's TED talk is recommended:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8K9Gg164Bsw>

- Job plans for EWD should be carefully prepared and implemented, for example with **customized occupational safety activities** and the implementation of **legal requirements** regarding EWD. Special conditions might apply for EWD, who can for instance be provided with flexible work schedules, short-term objectives, and job-specific accommodations.

## 3.5.2 Accessible and social tourism for tourists

As mentioned above, a truly inclusive tourism system means creating a context in which everyone is welcome to enjoy the benefits of tourism. Both for people to work in the tourism sector, to gain an income and contribute to the labour market, as for tourists who can enjoy tourism experiences. This section focuses on the latter group, to ensure **everyone has the opportunity to be a tourist** and to feel safe, welcome and recognized by the tourism industry.

### 3.5.2.1 Understanding social tourism

Social tourism focuses on widening access of marginalized groups to tourism experiences and services. Historically, social tourism has been concerned with enabling economically disadvantaged people to participate in tourism. The way how this has been approached has evolved throughout the decades, ever since when the term was first coined around 1950.

Some of the **definitions of social tourism** are:

"the relationships and phenomena in the field of tourism resulting from participation in travel by economically weak or otherwise disadvantaged elements in society" and "a particular type of tourism characterised by the participation of people with a low income, providing them with special services, recognised as such" (Hunzicker, 1951, 1957).

"the connections and phenomena related to the participation of people in the countries of destinations as well as of holidaymakers, of disadvantaged layers of society or those unable to participate in tourism, holidays and their advantages for whatever reason" (ISTO, 2011). Discover more about ISTO here: <https://isto.international/>

In its broader vision, key aspects and characteristics of social tourism are:

- It is a **non-profit** tourism or a form of tourism that has a broader goal, **beyond profit**, producing social benefits and a positive social impact.
- It promotes the **economic, social and physical accessibility** (see next paragraph) of the tourism practice to as many people as possible. Accessibility also involves accessible information. In this sense it is important to inform, for example, about the services and facilities available for PWD or to promote your company as 'LGBT friendly', if it is the case.
- Social tourism is based on the conviction that everyone has the **right** to enjoy tourism experiences (the notion of 'tourism for all'). 'Everyone deserves a holiday' and therefore this social service has to be guaranteed.
- Tourism is considered as an opportunity for **socialization** (tourism is made of encounters, exchange and sharing of experiences among people from different cultures, regions...) and for **personal development**.

### 3.5.2.2 Understanding accessible tourism

Another concept that is important when talking about the social and economic sustainability of tourism, is the concept of **accessible tourism**. When the inclusiveness of tourism is discussed in regard to the offer for tourists, it is often in terms of its **accessibility** for tourists who have disabilities. "The concept has been variously defined in order to pay more or less attention to issues of physical ability, cognitive ability and issues relating to age" (Scheyvens & Biddulph, 2018, p.595). For example, older and less mobile people have certain access needs, which can become a



huge obstacle when traveling or touring. Thus, accessible tourism is about making tourist destinations, products and services accessible to all people, with or without physical and any other disabilities -including cognitive, intellectual, psychological disabilities and temporary disabilities - and regardless the age. This requires **removing barriers** which might prevent this from occurring. According to the UNWTO "accessibility for all to tourism facilities, products, and services should be a central part of any responsible and sustainable tourism policy" (UNWTO, n.d.).

These barriers include, amongst others:

- Untrained professional staff capable of informing and advising about accessibility issues
- Not adapted tourism infrastructure and services (not accessible hotel rooms, restaurants, shops, toilets and public places...)
- Inaccessible streets and transport services
- Unavailable information on accessible facilities, services, equipment rentals and tourist attractions. (UN, n.d.).

While there are many resources on the issues of accessibility on the basis of physical disabilities or age, not that much attention is given yet to people with mental health issues, chronic illnesses, etc. Measures and solutions for these groups might be less obvious, but they should still be taken into account as well.

### 3.5.2.3 Promoting participation of all tourists

As already mentioned, the tourism experiences are not -yet- open to and enjoyable by everybody, in an equal way. We can take the example of the LGBTQIA+ community.

*The case of the LGBT community*

According to a research conducted in 2016 by the tour operator Virgin Holidays, one in three LGBT travellers (32%) feels they are treated differently due to their sexuality when on holiday and an overwhelming 80% said that the travel industry does not do enough to inform the LGBT community about local laws prior to departure. The travelling opportunities for LBTQIA+ people result to be limited, since two thirds (63%) of the respondents refuse to visit somewhere with an unwelcoming attitude towards the LGBT community and almost a quarter (23%) of LGBT travellers change the way they act and try to camouflage their sexuality when on holiday (UNWTO-IGLTA, 2017). LGBTQIA+ suffer more from security, risk and safety issues and sometimes, for example regarding the gay couple, they do not feel free to express their affection in public while travelling. Additionally, "transgender and gender non-confirming tourists often have feelings of fear and anxiety related to sharing and avoiding sharing their gender identity when going through tourist processes related to identification documents, security thresholds, and check-in procedures" (Olson & Reddy-Best, 2019, p.250). Here you can read about an example of issue for transgender people at airport's scanners: <https://www.propublica.org/article/tsa-transgender-travelers-scanners-invasive-searches-often-wait-on-the-other-side>

An inclusive tourism offer means that it is promoted that everyone can participate in tourism experiences. According to the Flemish Holiday Participation Centre, three aspects are crucial for participation and need to be balanced with each other: connection, capacity and challenge. You can ask yourself these questions and check if you have taken all these three aspects sufficiently into account.



- Make sure people feel a **connection** to your offer. Can they recognize themselves in it? Do they feel like it is something for them? Can they connect with your vision, your services and your products? On this level, there can be barriers for people who are willing to buy an experience, but they don't feel welcome or they don't connect with your offer.
- Going on a holiday or having a tourism experience needs a certain set of skills. Make sure people who need support in taking actions towards their experience, can feel supported. Ask yourself if the people you want to reach have the **capacity** to plan and interact with you and your offer. Is the information people need available and understandable?
- You also need to find the sweet spot on the level of **challenge**. People participate if the challenge is in balance. When it is too big, people do not see themselves starting on a trip; too difficult, too tricky. When the challenge is too small, it loses all its attractiveness and it is not worth the effort.

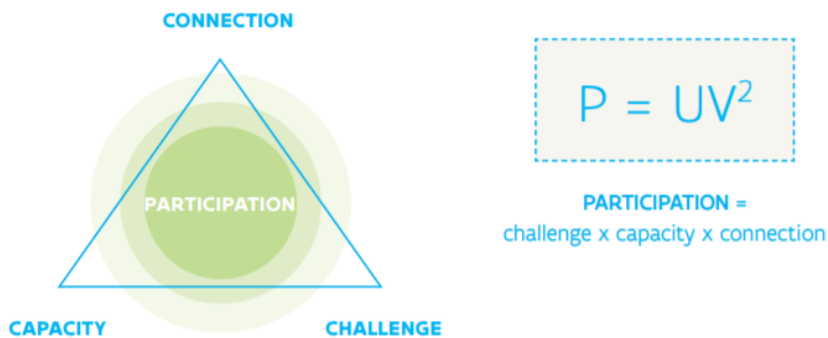


Figure 23: The three elements for participation.

### 3.5.3 Resources for improving accessibility and inclusivity to all types of tourists

There are many marginalized groups of (potential) tourists you might want to create improved access for. Chances are high you cannot tackle all of this in one time, but you will need to take an incremental and step-by-step approach. Here are some resources and initiatives that can inspire you to take action and that can guide you on your way towards building an inclusive and welcoming character for your business.

- The European Network for Accessible Tourism (ENAT)

ENAT is a non-profit association of tourism enterprises, organisations and individuals from the private, public and NGO sectors aimed at evaluating good practices, as well as providing and endorsing services and products for accessible tourism in Europe. Their website can offer you insights and resources, or you could join their Facebook group: <https://www.accessibletourism.org/>  
[https://www.facebook.com/groups/accessibletourism/?ref=pages\\_profile\\_groups\\_tab&source\\_id=259850660739090](https://www.facebook.com/groups/accessibletourism/?ref=pages_profile_groups_tab&source_id=259850660739090)

- Holiday Participation Centre in Flanders

The Holiday Participation Centre is an initiative of [VISITFLANDERS](#). Its aim is to make holidays and tourism in Flanders accessible for all, including people on a low income. It is an organisation that connects tourism entrepreneurs, tourists and social organisations to make holidays for everyone possible. Their inspiring model and more information can be found in these videos: <https://whyholidaysmatter.wordpress.com/2015/12/02/the-impact-of-our-network/>

- Impact Travel Alliance (ITA)

ITA is a global community and non-profit aimed at sensitizing and providing travellers with the knowledge they need to have a positive impact on local communities and environment. For instance, they provide insights into the importance of including underrepresented groups and communities in travel, and the additional steps that can be taken to advocate for access and equality. You can also join their Facebook group:

<https://www.impacttravelalliance.org/>

<https://www.impacttravelalliance.org/how-to-support-people-with-disabilities/>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/impacttravelalliance>

- Scandic Hotels Accessibility resources

Scandic is the largest Nordic hotel operator with many hotels across Scandinavia. They are a pioneer in accessibility for hotels and give the topic ample attention. Their online accessibility training can be a useful resource for your business as well:

<https://www.scandichotels.com/explore-scandic/special-needs/accessibility-training>

Scandic has developed an accessibility standard that can inspire you as a tourism business, especially when it is an accommodation:

[https://www.scandichotels.com/globalassets/always-at-scandic/special-needs/accessibility\\_standard\\_neweng\\_.pdf](https://www.scandichotels.com/globalassets/always-at-scandic/special-needs/accessibility_standard_neweng_.pdf)



- Equaldex

Although LGBT tourism has gone from a niche business to a major player in the overall tourism business in the last decade, there are still plenty of places around the globe where being an LGBTQIA+ person is not safe, nor is it comfortable – for tourists and/or locals.

Equaldex is a collaborative LGBT knowledge base, it is a crowd-sourced website informing about LGBT rights and news around the world:

<https://www.equaldex.com/>

- International Gay and Lesbian Travel Association (IGLTA)

IGLTA is a network of LGBTQ+ welcoming tourism businesses. They provide free travel resources and information and promote equality and safety within LGBTQ+ tourism worldwide:

<https://www.iglta.org/>

- The Black Travel Movement (BTM)

BTM is a collective of Black travellers in the United States, aimed at empowering and at giving visibility to Black travellers, by sharing authentic counter-narratives and representation of Black experiences, within a predominantly White-washed touristic landscape. Many of these travellers made the transition and began companies that now make up the BTM.

<https://www.travelandleisure.com/travel-tips/travel-trends/black-travel-movement>

- Travel Noire

Travel Noire is a media company, aimed at created a space for Black people to see themselves in the travel industry:

<https://travelnoire.com/>

<https://www.instagram.com/travelnoire/>

- Black Travel Alliance

Black Travel Alliance is a professional non-profit organization aimed at supporting Black content creators around the world and increasing their representation in the travel industry via various avenues, such as employment, conferences, and media:

<https://blacktravelalliance.org/>

Another suggestion is to look for **travel blogs**, **Instagram** profiles and pages, **Facebook groups** etc...that cover topics on disability, LGBTQIA+ and any other specific social groups you are interested to attract and to understand. These resources might give you a perspective on their issues, needs and priorities. This way, you can adapt your offer to these groups.



## 3.5.4 Business planning template

Executive summary

The business	
Name	
Address	
Key contact	Name
	Telephone
	email
Legal status	
What does your business do?	
Date business was/will be set up	
Social aims (include mission statement)	
Background information	
The organisation (if applicable)	
Name	
Address (if different from above)	
Key contact (if different from above)	Name
	Telephone
	email
Chief executive or manager (if different from above)	
Legal status	

<b>Management structure/relationship between organisation and venture</b>		
<b>Directors</b>	Attach CVs or brief details a appendix	
<b>Social purpose</b> (include mission statement if different from above)		
<b>Background information</b>	This should be a short summary of the organisation. This should focus on range of activities and current funding and finance. Attach relevant information such as audited accounts, M&As, structure, etc as an appendix.	
<b>Key staff</b>		
<b>Name, age and qualifications</b>	<b>Job title</b>	<b>Date joined</b>
Please also attach CV details of Key Staff as an appendix – this should include past experience and current job responsibilities.		
<b>Number of employees (in new business):</b>		
<b>Details of staffing of business (include details of succession planning)</b>		

**Details of any key staff to be recruited**  
(Attach job descriptions of new key posts as an appendix)

**Training requirements of staff**

**External relations**

Attach as appendix details of following (if applicable):

Bank

Lawyer

Accountants

Monitoring officers (LA departments etc)

Provide details of trade associations or networks that you are members of:  
(Detail the organisation/association and what involvement you have)

**Product or service**

Your products or services, including prices (if available)

#### The market

Customers – who will buy your goods/services?

Why will customers buy from you?

Market Research – detail the market research carried out, what trends were identified etc?



Competitors – detail major competitors, their strengths/weaknesses and pricing strategies:

Market testing (if applicable) – detail any results from this:

Similar examples (if applicable) – details of similar types of social enterprises and what can be learned from them

### Social purpose

Give brief details of the social purpose you will meet through running your social enterprise.

Who will benefit?

Why is there a need for this social enterprise?

How will running the social enterprise meet the need?

What is the type of social enterprise that will be run? (if applicable – for example social firm, development trust, etc)

Briefly detail your strategy to meet the critical success factors?

#### Business environment

**External environment** – Briefly detail key issues in external environment for your business (include information from any PEST Analysis):

#### Industry analysis

Briefly detail key issues for your industry (include information from any SWOT Analysis):

#### Critical success factors

Briefly detail the main critical success factors for your industry:

#### Business development strategy

Briefly detail your strategy to meet the critical success factors?

#### Turnover and sustainability

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
What sales turnover is expected?	£	£	£
What non-commercial income do you have?	£	£	£
What profit do you expect to achieve?	£	£	£

How long will it take you to achieve sustainability?

Give reasons why you will achieve your expected turnover?

Give reasons why you will obtain non-commercial income?

Give reasons why you will achieve sustainability?

Scenario Planning (best / worst case scenarios and what you will do to achieve sustainability)

### **Marketing and sales**

What is your 'marketing strategy'? (include any e-commerce strategy)

What is your pricing strategy?

What is your promotion and advertising strategy? (Please attach any relevant material)

What is your customer care and customer feedback strategy/policy?

Details of the people involved in marketing:

What is your budget for marketing?

**Premises**

Insurance – please give details

Location:

Buy	Rent	Lease
<b>Buy</b>	<b>Rent/Lease</b>	
Owner of property	Rent/Lease (per year)	
Valuation of property	Rent/Lease agreement	

<b>Mortgage details (if applicable)</b> Amount of mortgage	How often do you pay?
Offer/conditions	Rent/Lease term:
Equity	Will you be able to renew the rent agreement/lease? Yes No
Length of mortgage (if applicable)	When is the next rent/lease review?
Additional information: Other loans/borrowings secured against property	How often are reviews?
Other occupants renting etc:	Who is responsible for repairs? – inside the building           – outside the building
Rates per year:£	
<b>Suppliers</b>	
Who are your major suppliers?	

Are there alternatives?

What are the advantages of buying from the suppliers shown above?

### Production operation

Include relevant details on production/operation including business review, quality standards, supervision, production methods etc:

### Equipment and vehicles

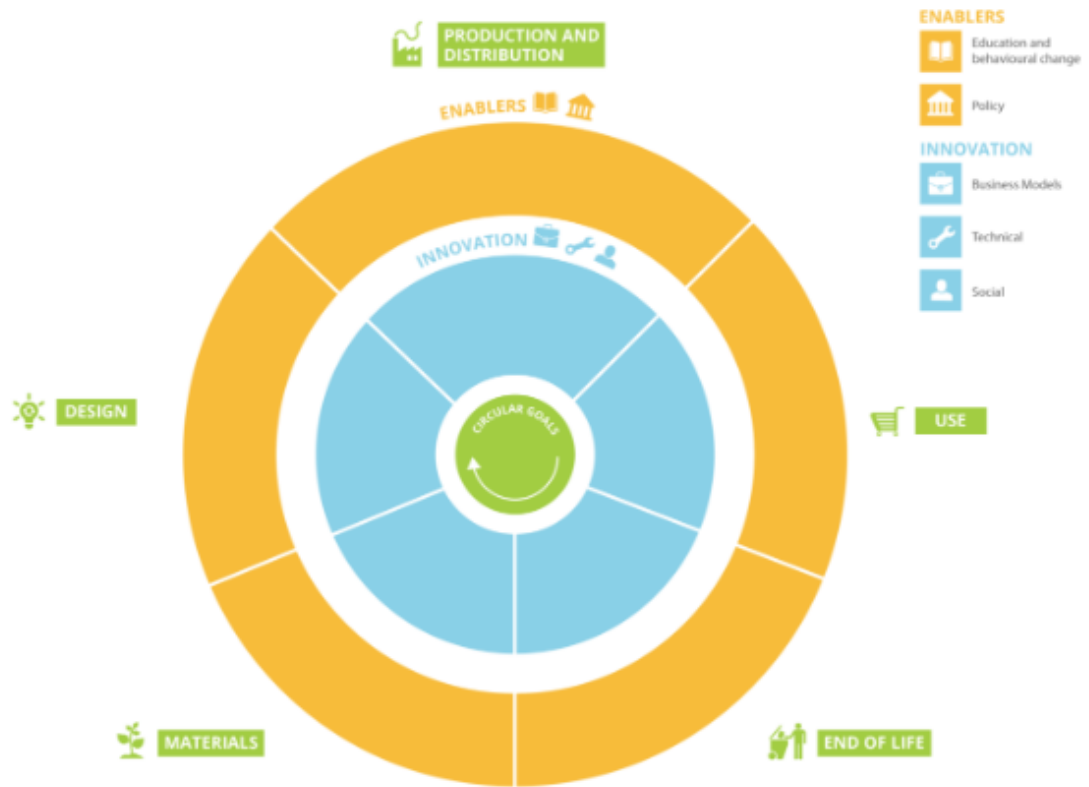
Equipment/vehicles – current Description	Age	Condition	Spare capacity	Value/Cost

<b>Equipment/vehicles – required</b>				
Description	Date of purchase	Condition (new/used)	Spare capacity	Value/Cost
Please detail finance arrangements of any equipment/vehicles required.				
Depreciation policy – please give details:				
<b>Action plan (for new ventures)</b>				
Please give brief details of key milestones and activity required to set up social enterprise including information on who will carry out activities and associated costs.				
<b>Finance</b>				
<b>Profit &amp; loss:</b> Please provide projected profit and loss figures for first three years as an appendix				



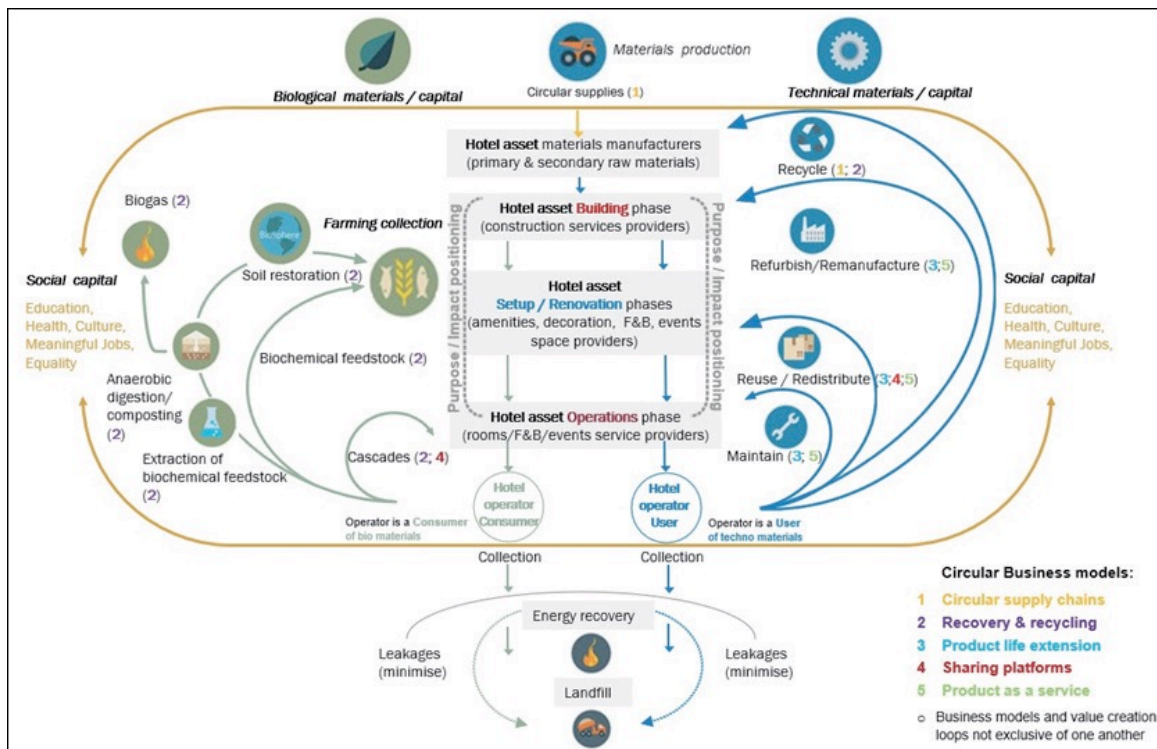
<p><b>Brief details of budget assumptions:</b></p>
<p><b>Realistic cashflow forecast:</b> Please provide realistic cashflow forecast for first three years as an appendix.</p>
<p><b>Brief details of cashflow forecast:</b></p>
<p><b>Balance sheet</b> If required please provide as an appendix.</p>
<p><b>Amount of development finance required – what you need it for and for how long</b> (give details of each item if necessary):</p>
<p><b>Please provide details of any security provided:</b></p>
<p><b>Please provide any details of finance of funding secured – what you have it for and for how long:</b></p>
<p><b>Details of any previous borrowing (if applicable):</b></p>
<p><b>Details of any large scale funding (that may affect this social enterprise):</b></p>
<p><b>Scenario Planning if funding/finance not secured from preferred suppliers:</b></p>

# 3.5.5



Source: Gillabel et al., 2021

### 3.5.6 A conceptual CE framework for a circular hotel operator



Source: Einarsson & Sorin, 2020

### 3.5.7 Relationships between climate change and tourism sector

Impact	Implications for tourism
Warmer temperatures	Altered seasonality, heat stress for tourists, cooling costs, changes in plant-wildlife-insect populations and distribution, infectious disease ranges
Decreasing snow cover and shrinking glaciers	Lack of snow in winter sport destinations, increased snow-making costs, shorter winter sports seasons, aesthetics of landscape reduced
Increasing frequency and intensity of extreme storms	Risk for tourism facilities, increased insurance costs/loss of insurability, business interruption costs
Reduced precipitation and increased evaporation in some regions	Water shortages, competition over water between tourism and other sectors, desertification, increased wildfires threatening infrastructure and affecting demand
Increased frequency of heavy precipitation in some regions	Flooding damage to historic architectural and cultural assets, damage to tourism infrastructure, altered seasonality
Sea level rise	Coastal erosion, loss of beach area, higher costs to protect and maintain waterfronts
Sea surface temperatures rise	Increased coral bleaching and marine resource and aesthetics degradation in dive and snorkel destinations
Changes in terrestrial and marine biodiversity	Loss of natural attractions and species from destinations, higher risk of diseases in tropical-subtropical countries
More frequent and larger forest fires	Loss of natural attractions; increase of flooding risk; damage to tourism infrastructure
Soil changes (e.g., moisture levels, erosion and acidity)	Loss of archaeological assets and other natural resources, with impacts on destination attractions

Source: Scott et al., 2008

## 3.5.8 Creating meaningful experiences: key elements

According to Boswijk (2012), here are five key elements that need to be taken into account when creating meaningful experiences. They should all be present in the experience.

### 1. Custom-made

Make the experience **personally relevant**. Tourists do not like to feel one out of many. Get to know your customers in advance (e.g. through service design tools) and know what it is they want and expect. Look for experiences that relate to the tourist's way of life and values. Use their world and environment to start from.

Even go beyond tailor-made; co-create experiences with your customers. Let go of the traditional and think out of the box, make it unique and exclusive. And do keep in mind that exclusive does not need to mean expensive!

### 2. Authentic

Dare to offer something different. Tourists are generally in search of authenticity. Show and offer them things others won't. Don't only go to the highlights, also dare to go 'off the beaten track'. Go from the 'front stage' to the back stage, from 'staged authenticity' to real authenticity. **Real authenticity** is not (only) about how things were in the past, but the actual daily life of a destination. Avoid showing exclusively situations that confirm cultural stereotypes customers might have. When you can't help but being in a staged authenticity situation, be honest about it to the customers. Make sure everyone, especially the locals, is comfortable in their role. A real and authentic experience can have great value and meaning for a tourist.

When your business is not about tour guiding, you can also offer authentic experiences. A hotel or restaurant can be authentic, fitting in the *couleur locale*, offering a real local experience. Being authentic is in this context also about being consistent, harmonizing the experience (cf. experience design principles).

### 3. Intercultural encounters

Bring people together. Tourists are often driven by curiosity and are generally interested in the **local culture** and local life. It's about real interactions and intercultural encounters; when these encounters are staged and thus not authentic, they will not have the same effect as real and genuine interpersonal and inter-cultural experiences. Merely 'watching' the locals is not enough, real encounters are about doing activities together and learning from each other. Let customers share in the local life in an interactive and meaningful way.

### 4. Learning experiences

Use all the senses, do not limit to only listening and watching. Let customers feel, smell, taste,... Use triggers for real sensational experiences. Make the experiences active and interactive. Let customers do things together, so they can exchange experiences. A nice way to learn is through '**edutainment**', activities where education and entertainment meet.

### 5. Challenge

Challenge your customers, but in a feasible and pleasant way. Memorable moments are often moments with great impact, which can be created by (slightly) **stepping out of the comfort zone** of the tourist. Overcoming a personal challenge can lead to transformation and meaning for the tourist. Find what triggers them and take the experience one step further.

### 3.5.9. Transformational travel

"Travelers today are increasingly drawn to travel as a form of self-actualization and personal transformation and growth" (Gustafson, 2018, p.3). A survey conducted by Skift in 2017 confirmed the importance of this trend: 54 percent of respondents ranked the importance of transformative travel as 7 out of 10 or higher and 52 percent said they place increasing value on this type of travel (ibid.). According to [research carried out by the Adventure Travel Trade Association \(ATTA\)](#) in 2017, travellers also said they wanted a sense of "accomplishment and achievement" and a feeling of "gratitude and mindfulness." In other words, modern-day travellers are looking for transformation.

This shift toward transformative experience reflects a broader movement within the global economy. "In thinking about the future of the experience economy –more experiences should yield transformations. While experiences are less transient than services, the individual partaking in the experience often wants something more lasting than a memory, something beyond what any good, service or experience alone can offer" (Sundbo & Sørensen, 2013, p.39). The most innovative companies are '**experientializing**' - giving an added value through experiences- their goods, surrounding their services with engaging events, creating new and wondrous experiences, and eliciting transformations (ibid.).

"Considering that travel is already a prime source of life-altering experiences, the tourism industry is well-positioned to engage with this new reality" (Gustafson, 2018, p.9). The Skift survey found that 32 percent of consumers have had an experience while traveling that has transformed them in a positive way, while another 24 percent of consumers have not had such an experience, but they would like to.

With the Pine & Gilmore model of the "progression of economic value" continuously being rethought, we can add 'transformations' as a next step beyond experiences. When the experiences 2.0. are meaningful and memorable enough, they will be able to transform the traveller, making a lasting impact on their life and identity.

#### 3.5.9.1 Characteristics of transformational travel experiences

'Transformational travel' (or the synonym 'Transformative travel') is the next evolution of 'Experiential travel'. It has similar elements to 'Experiential Travel': both refer to travel experiences that go beyond consumption of a product or service (Cohen, as cited in Gustafson, 2018). However, 'Transformational travel' takes it a step further.

The concept of 'Transformational Travel' was popularized by the [The Transformational Travel Council \(TTC\)](#). It is an adventure-travel company aimed at providing both travellers and travel providers with tools for personal and professional growth, or, in other words, to transform their lives, through travel.

The TTC defines Transformational as: "*any travel experience that empowers people to make meaningful, lasting changes in their life. Ultimately, it's a new philosophy on travel that connects travellers to their truest self and to others, cultivating a sense of purpose and belonging*" (Hauptert, as cited in TTC).



The characteristics of transformational travel are the following:

- a factor of **self-development and consciousness**:

"transformative travel takes place when experiential travel goes a step further and expands the mind, shifts perspective, pushes boundaries of one's comfort zones, and creates cultural understanding" (Gustafson, 2018, p.9).

- an experience that involves travellers totally, with a deep connection with the **sense of place of the destination**. This also fits in the concept of regeneration and flourishing destinations (cf. chapter 2.3. on Regenerative Tourism)
- a **post-travel action** that makes the difference between experiential travel and transformational travel. Through the 'shake-up experiences' (Gustafson, 2018) of travelling, the travellers come back home as different people from when they left. They gained new perspectives and learned something new, and "returning home to implement this knowledge, ultimately changing their lives and the lives of others around them".

Positive travel experiences transform travellers, so that they gain awareness, and they can engage with the world in a better and positive way, with a **spillover effect**. Travellers transform themselves and can then transform the world, for the better.

### 3.5.9.2 Guidelines for creating transformational travel experiences

First, remember that experiences are **personal**. Therefore, the transformational factors may change and are different for everyone, for each tourist. Some identify the life-changing or 'shake up' travel experiences with spontaneous, unexpected adventure; some others with food, arts, culture, or intercultural encounters; some with wild, remote places and contact with nature; some others in urban and mundane environments and space of socialization. Some have transformational experiences through contact with cultures extremely different from their own and some others with environments that are closer to their home environment.

Therefore, transformational travel is mostly about a mindset to travel and about intention. According to TTC (n.d.) this approach involves to:

- **(Re)connect** : from superficial to deep and meaningful encounters and experiences

Transformational travel is about intention, awareness and reflective moments. "We call this traveling from the inside-out, artfully balancing the exploration of your inner and outer world". It is made of a continuous encounter with the other and inner dialogue.

- **Engage**: from passive to active ways of living the travel experience and engaging with the world

The traveller is able to take responsibility for his/her role in the journey, bring a growth mindset, and be proactive in creating his/her experience.

- See travel as a **Process** rather than a *Product*

Transformational travel is not a noun, but a verb. It's an action. "Transformational travel is more than just a feeling or a moment. It is more than that flush of happiness and wonder that comes from a special experience and connection".

"With transformations, the economic offering of a business is the change in the individual person, changed as a result of what the offering business does. With transformations, the **customer is the product!** The individual buyer of the transformation essentially says, "Change me." The company's economic offering is neither the materials it uses nor the physical things it makes. It's neither the processes it executes nor the encounters it orchestrates. When a company guides transformations, the offering is the individual" (Sundbo & Sørensen, 2013, p.40).

Hereafter you find some guidelines for providing transformational travel, however remember that any guideline can **create the conditions** that assist the transformation but can never guarantee it, as it is such a personal phenomenon.

- **Understand the customer:** get to know what are their needs, their dreams, and their tolerance for risk, surprise and discomfort (Pollock, 2017)
- Focus on the **outcomes, the effects** of the experience

"You need to see travellers as a responsible and active part of not just the experience, but the outcomes and effects of that experience" (TCC, n.d.). This means you will co-create the experience with the traveller.

- Look for innovation, breaking boundaries and the "**wow factor**" (Gustafson, 2018)
- Support and guide the customer towards overcoming challenges and **reaching a breakthrough** (Pollock, 2017)
- Resist the over-curation of travel experiences, the tendency to create full schedules, by allowing more breathing room for discovery. There should be room for **unplanned exploration** (TCC, n.d.).

### 3.5.9.3 The 'Hero's Journey' of the traveller

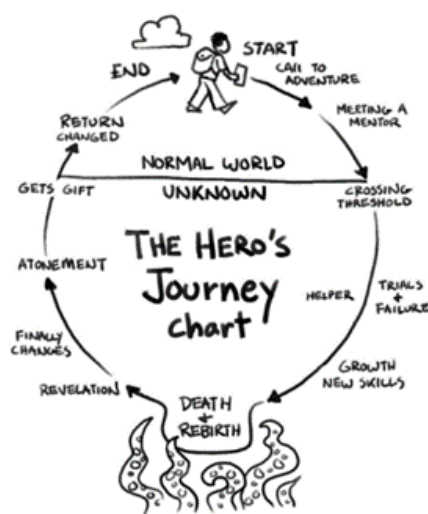


Figure 24: The Hero's or Heroine's Journey

When you implement the guidelines mentioned above, you create the conditions for tourists to undertake the so-called 'Hero's Journey'.

<https://www.transformational.travel/research>

The journey of the hero is a classic model of storytelling, that has its roots in mythology. In the Transformational Travel Trend, the 'Hero's Journey' was developed from Joseph Campbell's monomyth (1949)<sup>17</sup> and adapted to the current context of travel.

It is a cyclical journey, consisting of three phases: The Departure, The Initiation and The Return.

<sup>17</sup> Campbell, J. (1949) *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.





- **The Departure:** the hero or traveller leaves his/her ordinary life, exits the comfortable and familiar world and goes on an adventure, in an unknown world.
- **The Initiation:** the hero, traversing the threshold of an unknown world, faces trials and challenges - either alone or with the assistance of helpers. The true character of the hero is tested and emerges.
- **The Return:** the hero again traverses the threshold between the worlds, returning to the ordinary world with what he gained, and that he will use for the benefit of his community. The hero himself is transformed by the adventure and gains wisdom, awareness and recognition.

This model is closely related to the process of transformation, and especially transformation through travel. By stepping out of the comfort zone, being in a new environment, transformation can take place. That is why the classic Hero's Journey model can be useful to keep in mind when creating transformational experiences.

But not only the classic model can be useful, the Hero's Journey also refers to an acronym reflecting an attitude while travelling, what TTC calls 'Travel like a Hero' (n.d).

- **H** - Traveling with HEART: with empathy, humility, courage
- **E** - Seeking ENGAGEMENT, with the people, places, cultures, in a full immersion experience.
- **R** - Having the RESOLVE to work through the challenges that every journey provides
- **O** - Leaving your heart, mind and soul OPEN to the unknown that each journey involves.

The transformation manifests itself in several forms, for each traveller, as in the [spectrum of transformation](#), made by TTC.

You can read more about the Hero's Journey here:

<https://www.transformational.travel/research> and

<https://medium.com/nyc-design/how-to-use-the-heros-journey-as-a-design-thinking-tool-c4901be5ce>

## 3.6 Case studies

### 3.6.1 Environmentally friendly and engaged: Castelli Hotel Zakynthos (Greece)

#### 3.6.1.1 Overview

Vision and mission:

- "A green hotel combining holidays and relaxation with the betterment of all. A sparkle of sustainability".
- "Authentic Philoxenia respecting the environment, the local community, our guests and our team".

Situated at Agios Sostis, a serene location in the beautiful Laganas bay of Zakynthos, Castelli Hotel combines perfectly the life of a cosmopolitan resort with holiday relaxation, depending on your mood, every hour of the day. Located within walking distance from the 9km sandy beach of Laganas, one of Mediterranean longest; Laganas is an idyllic destination for all holiday makers, Zakynthos enjoys incomparable natural beauty, its nesting loggerhead turtles *Caretta Caretta* (the protected sea turtles), an excellent choice of restaurants with local and international cuisine, shopping centre, endless variety of entertainment and recreational activities offered.

They offer a weekly presentation on the conservation of the *Caretta Caretta*, in collaboration with an NGO. Guests learn about the turtles, and if they like, can adopt one and thereby create a special bond with this species which will last much longer than their holiday.

Next to the hotel they have created a farm with organic vegetables, a botanical garden, a composting unit and plants and animals typical for the area. Every week they take guests on a tour through the farm, for an opportunity to get to know and interact with Greek nature. They explain which products they use in the hotel restaurant and invite them to smell the lavender, to cut oregano, to pick lemons from the tree and to help us with olive harvest.

"Colourful" activities for tourists that include: tours at the hotel's farm and botanical garden, olive picking activities, homemade treats, piano nights, arts and crafts, varied levels' exercise courses, scuba diving, hiking and biking tours.

#### 3.6.1.2 Why is it considered a best practice?

The core strategy of Zakynthos, Castelli Hotel is sustainability. Sustainability is fundamental for the business strategy. Around 1989, when today's "green trend" did not exist (or at least was not that vivid) they were already very conscious about the importance of the natural environment. In terms of "green" initiatives and activities offered to the hotel guests, they are deeply passionate about biodiversity protection. Since 1992, Castelli has been the first hotel on the island to actively support the protection of the endangered species of Zakynthos' National Marine Park.

Specific activities include Architecture, Composting, Pure products, Local suppliers, Local products organically grown produce, Guests' communication and involvement, Communication of practices and achievements on digital press, social media, local, national & international press Environmental education



Concerning saving on resources they adopted the following strategies:

- Energy saving bulbs/led & rooms' electricity saving system
- Natural lightening
- Solar panels (petrol oil consumption reduced to 1/8 )
- Water saving equipment in lavatories
- Linen policy
- Staff training
- Automatic and evening watering
- Materials
- Reusing, donating, bulk, NOT single packs

The hotel itself has been designed in an angle shape, to protect a fantastic eucalyptus tree that came to this field.

They recycle paper, glass, aluminium & plastic packaging, batteries, electric & electronic devices, cooking oil.

All the guestrooms have a sensor for blocking the a/c unit when balcony doors open, so no energy is being lost.

All the appliances are maintained regularly, so no energy is wasted.

At breakfast buffet, they serve homemade cake made with their own production's organically grown ingredients.

Also, they try to eliminate all individual units and use containers, dispensers, and pourers to serve most of the goods, to save on packaging & energy.

In terms of impact reduction, thus, the hotel is designed and managed merging comfort and environmental attention.

The engagement for sustainability, nevertheless, becomes also an experience offered to travellers. The activities proposed to guests, in fact, combine the pleasure of outdoor nature enjoyment with awareness raising experiences focused both on flora and fauna preserving and on the hotel choices of local products.

This approach contributes to identify a specific identity for the hotel, as well as to engage travellers in the environment preservation.

## 3.6.2 Slow tourism and social responsibility: AKSI – de Bottelarij (Belgium)

### 3.6.2.1 Overview

AKSI – de Bottelarij offers hosting service, food service, B2B activities, music & art. It has a strong focus on slow tourism by doing business in a sustainable & socially responsible manner. They are very locally focused: local produced food, local beers, local juices, local products in the shop, local artists, etc.

Together with the hosting service and a restaurant activities (that is the main source of income), they offer:

- An art gallery space (they host one (local) artist for a month)
- A theatre space for concerts, expositions
- A shop with local products with a tourism information point
- Business2business services: co-working space, meeting rooms & teambuilding activities

Nature in the surroundings offers the perfect occasion for cycle trips, interactive activities for kids, team buildings, etc.

AKSI – de Bottelarij has a Green key (ecolabel) certificate and won the Gaia green awards (achieved the audience award in September 2019).

In addition to a strongly ecological infrastructure, AKSI – de Bottelarij has a strong partnership with local suppliers and the local community that foster their slow tourism strategy focused on the enhancement of the province of Limburg and the Meuse-Rhine Euregion as a slow tourism destination through the implementation of a slow tourism network rooted in the Bottelarij.

A third focus of their strategy is the social responsibility through the creation of sustainable job opportunities for the more vulnerable (marginalized people) to enhance social integration. They also have partnerships with Steunpunt Vakantieparticipatie (Flemish government institution that empowers people who experience poverty by giving them the opportunity to enjoy a holiday as well).

### 3.6.2.2 Why is it considered a best practice?

AKSI – de Bottelarij is engaged in all the four aspects of sustainability: environment, culture, society, economy (cfr. units 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4). The ecological infrastructure and the low impact activities proposed in the surroundings, in fact, join the attention for the local community and the local development of the region. The infrastructure is managed using ecological products and implementing circular economy processes by recycling, upcycling and reusing their resources.

The strong focus on the development and implementation of slow tourism and slow food activities is based on a strong network of sustainable partnerships & co-creation with the local community, local suppliers, etc. to enhance the Bottelarij as a meeting point, as meaningful heritage for the community. Slow tourism creates meaningful experiences that benefit the local community, the Bottelarij and the region.

The restaurant has a strong focus on local offer: local products, local food, local drinks (beer, juices, etc), local artists and local heritage.



AKSI – de Bottelarij, moreover, has a strong social responsibility policy. It is engaged, in fact, in the creation of sustainable job opportunities for vulnerable groups of people (people with a disability, refugees, etc.) to enhance social integration.

The team has a strong out of the box thinking approach that creates a unique offer in the region. Their most important strengths are:

- Creating a relaxing atmosphere for their audience where different activities can take place
- Offering high hospitality quality and customer services
- Using local heritage as an authentic factor
- Using the full potential of their surroundings by organizing team-buildings, interactive kids' activities, terrace as part of the restaurant, use of the vegetable garden etc.

## 3.7 Figure references

- Figure 1: Lenzen, 2018.
- Figure 2: UNWTO, 2013.
- Figure 3: Scheyvens & Biddulph, 2018.
- Figure 4: Maguire, 2016.
- Figure 5: Report about Sustainable tourism worldwide, available at: <https://www.statista.com/study/21705/green-tourism-statista-dossier/>
- Figure 6: UNIDO (United Nations Industrial Development Organization). Available in: <https://www.unido.org/our-focus/advancing-economic-competitiveness/competitive-trade-capacities-and-corporate->
- Figure 7: Aquino et al., 2018.
- Figure 8: Padin, 2012.
- Figure 9: Daniele & Quezada (2017).
- Figure 10: Tan et al., 2010.
- Figure 11: Javed et al., 2019.
- Figure 12: Burke/Logsdon 1996.
- Figure 13: Korhonen et al., 2018.
- Figure 14: Available in: <https://hospitalityinsights.ehl.edu/circular-economy-tourism-sector>.
- Figure 15: PBL Netherlands environmental assessment agency, 2019 <https://themasites.pbl.nl/o/circular-economy/>.
- Figure 16: Einarsson & Sorin, 2020.
- Figure 17: Oreve, 2015.
- Figure 18: Midžić Kurtagić.
- Figure 19: <https://doughnuteconomics.org/about-doughnut-economics>.
- Figure 20: <https://naaee.org/eeapro/groups/global-ee/discussions/live-chat-dr-arjen-wals-ee-and>.
- Figure 21: Pine and Gilmore, 2011.
- Figure 22: adapted from Pine and Gilmore, 1998.
- Figure 23: VISITFLANDERS - Flemish Holiday Participation Centre, 2016.



## **Module 4: Authenticity, Tourism images and Promotion**

## **Unit 4.1 Developing a locally rooted tourism SME**

### Preliminary Self Assessment

1. **Which of these elements is not part of the cultural heritage?**
  - a) Language
  - b) Park adventures
  - c) Religion
  - d) Gastronomy
  
2. **Is it possible to involve local administrations for the creation of new tourist services?**
  - a) True
  - b) False
  
3. **What is the tourism cluster?**
  - a) A voluntary cooperation of companies and organizations that aim to achieve the same goal
  - b) An association of private entrepreneurs
  - c) A non-voluntary association of tourism businesses and organizations
  - d) An association of businesses and organizations that provides for a monthly payment
  
4. **Is tourism the only solution to boost the local economy?**
  - a) Yes
  - b) No
  - c) No, but it represents an important aspect
  
5. **When you build your tourism business, how can you enrich it?**
  - a) Taking into account only their own interests
  - b) Taking into account only your own profit
  - c) Taking into consideration the cultural identity of the place
  - d) You don't have to take anything into consideration, it's all a matter of luck



## Unit introduction

Many businesses try to fit into the notion of 'Locally rooted, globally connected' by emphasizing strong economic, cultural or social ties with the area they are located in and, at the same time, openness to the world, especially in the context of taking advantage of technological opportunities that currently facilitate the opening of markets to even the most distant physical locations. It is no different in the case of companies from the tourism industry.

Although a universally agreed definition of local economic development remains elusive, there is some consensus that it incorporates a focus on a defined territory, as well as a concern for sustainable economic, social and ecological welfare (Rogerson & Rogerson 2010:470). Small tourism business development fits with these overarching ideas in that they offer the prospect of utilising local resources and skills (Helmsing 2003) and provide 'significant and proven developmental benefits' for local communities (Scheyvens & Russell 2012:418).

Thus, small local companies acting in the network of supply and exchange of services can be suppliers of material, intellectual or cultural goods for local tourist business. The tourism industry does not function in a spatial vacuum and needs support in many areas related to e.g. catering, transport, cultural or wellness services.

This local rooting therefore refers to making the fullest possible use of the potential of resources in a given area, so that all players are able to benefit and more easily face competition from other areas or economic adversity in terms of the general market. It also refers to being embedded in a particular cultural code of a place or region. In addition, it fits into the specific physical conditions of a place.

### 4.1.1. Location

Probably, based on the previously quoted statement 'locally rooted, globally connected', it is possible to start a small tourism business anywhere. Ubiquitous and easily accessible ICT tools, information exchange and travel booking platforms allow even a small company to have a global presence, opening it up to customers from the most remote areas of the world.

Believe it or not, nearly every place on earth can be a place for tourists. Think about what your location has to offer. There will be a niche of people who want to experience it. Extreme weather, terrain, physical taxation, a place few have seen, there is something about where you live and work that others want. The best thing is to try and work with other businesses. Create a web page and target the "off the beaten path" travel sector. Travelers often want to experience "authentic" local flavor; whatever that may be (food, activity, and scenery).

However, it is still the case that for most tourism businesses, location is important because it directly translates into what is generally considered attractive regardless of changing trends.

#### 4.1.1.1 Identification of attractions and identities

When talking about the location values of a given place we should take into account physical factors, such as terrain, climate, accessibility of water reservoirs, accessibility to other natural resources, but also elements of the social - economic or administrative system. What is also important is what can be referred to as the "tourism subsystem", which will be created by

attractions or resources, accessibility, public equipment and facilities, as well as by the tourist supply.

When trying to classify the features that influence the attractiveness of a place we can also divide them into natural, human-modified and human-made.

The notion of "heritage" is also important in this context and includes everything that humans live on and that can be passed on to future generations, including natural, cultural and intangible goods.



Figure 1: Classification of tourist attractions, figure based on Ritche, Sins 1978, after Kruczek 2002

Cultural heritage:

- work
- clothing
- architecture
- folk art
- history
- language
- religion
- education
- tradition
- leisure artistry
- art and music
- gastronomy

Another criterion for ordering the attractions in terms of their ability to attract tourists is their rank. One can then distinguish assets of international, national, regional and local rank.

The attractiveness of an asset may be influenced by its seasonality. Some will remain available and attractive regardless of the season, others, on the contrary, will strongly depend e.g. on temperature but also other factors changing with the season (precipitation, or even its kind, sun angle, freezing and thawing of reservoirs or ground, changes in fauna and flora). Some of the



values, e.g. cultural ones, will be of incidental nature and will be connected e.g. with organisation of events (festivals, concerts, special events). Accessibility is also important from the point of view of the recipient because of the ownership of the particular value. Some of the places may be inaccessible due to private ownership and lack of availability, others may have limited and recorded access by means of entrance tickets and entry limits, and others will be available to the general public without restrictions.

With regard to the motives for tourist travel, three basic groups of tourist values can be distinguished: recreational, sightseeing and specialised.<sup>5</sup>

Thus, a tourist asset on which to base your own small tourism business idea can be the sea, a lake, mountains, a cave as well as an old city district, pyramids, post-industrial buildings, as well as a festival, a riding competition or a flea market.

A range of activities can be developed around these qualities, either directly or indirectly, depending on the motive of the potential customer.

When constructing the offer of one's own business, it is worth enriching it with cultural identities and considering e.g. adding workshops exploring local specialities such as cooking according to regional recipes, creating regional ornaments, learning the local dialect of the language, making handicrafts connected with the region's specificity. Many local small tourist businesses try to become independent from the place and focus more on the possibilities related to the skills of the owners themselves. And so we can find agritourism where you can focus on doing yoga, running training, psychological workshops. You can also consider introducing an additional value around which the narrative of the company will be built, such as breeding animals, creating a home manufactory producing specific products, creating an Indian village or a realm of trolls.

A tourism business rooted locally will first and foremost make use of local, regional assets and identities resulting from the natural or cultural values of a given place, including and exploiting the potential of various groups transmitting, maintaining and disseminating locality in various forms.

## 4.1.2. Network

### 4.1.2.1 Network and local community

While tourism may not be the complete solution to help local economies, it is certainly a big part of it. Both the local company and, on the other hand, the local community including other local businesses have a chance to work together for success. A tourism business almost always works in partnership with many others providing it with their products, trade or food supplies.

The local tourism business should therefore build relationships with other businesses in the area and, depending on the scale of the variety of opportunities, become independent of seasonality, for example. Co-operation also makes the local community more independent, often striving even for self-sufficiency. Such local close cooperation often contributes to an increase in attractiveness - when individual members - owners of individual companies recommend their services, they often extend their own offer with them.

According to the University of Wisconsin Center for Community Economic Development "Tourism strengthens a community's retail base. Communities that sell to tourists have significantly more retail establishments and divers mix of products and services". Thus, virtually any type of business is able to benefit from local tourism. Outside dollars stimulate the local economy overall.



The administrative bodies themselves, such as small towns and municipalities, should also become involved in such cooperation and stimulate contacts and the exchange of services. In such cases, regional chambers of commerce, training centres and, above all, local tourist attraction management institutions are extremely valuable partners for tourism business.

### **4.1.2.2 Networking and competition**

Networks are definitely easier to compete with than individual companies. Network cooperation is connected with the diversity of the offer, building the brand of the region based on a given identity or attraction, but also with communication support. It is more difficult for a single company to break through to the consciousness of the recipient, while joint efforts make it easier to finance this, acquire "ambassadors" or experts who can promote the region.

Today's economy is largely network-based, it is even referred to as a 'network economy' (after Lóránt Dávid et Csaba Szűcs). The literature mentions two main types of cooperation, networks and clusters; sometimes these terms are used interchangeably, but they imply a slightly different type of cooperation.

### **4.1.2.3 Tourism cluster**

The tourism cluster is a geographically concentrated cooperation between enterprises which includes all the companies and institutions that are capable of raising the added value created in the value chain. Considering its actual form the tourism cluster is a voluntary cooperation of

enterprises and organisations belonging to a certain production verticum, created in order to achieve common goals, and the network is based on civil law contracts. According to its operation the tourism cluster organises services for its members mainly in quality development, which is the key to competitiveness.

Cooperation based on clusters has many advantages, but one of its most important features is the use of common location. Therefore cooperation of tourism entities located in a given region can contribute to reducing costs of e.g. transport or supplies, and exchange of information and knowledge.

[...] Networks are suggested to function as systems which can organise and integrate tourism destinations, making the firms involved benefit, enhance destination performance and quality, as well as stimulate providing 'wholesome and memorable experiences' for tourists (Zach and Racherla, 2011, p.98).

Working together and taking full advantage of new global communication technologies can overcome barriers to customer reach and reduce costs.

The Internet has reduced the cost of interaction between the sellers and buyers and has also extended the scope of their relations turning it into a global experience.

## 4.1.3. Strategy

### 4.1.3.1 Strategy objectives

When creating a strategy for a locally rooted small business, it is worth sticking to a few guidelines:

1. Your business should stand out, be memorable, leave a positive impression, create a good tourism experience. Take care of your customer by providing excellent service. Also think of simple communication solutions that can influence a positive perception.
2. Find your main theme, around which you will build a narrative, a story about your company. This could be one of the natural or cultural identity of your region, the community in which you live or finally your hobby or your own way of life that you want to share with others.
3. Be an expert on the local community in which you run your business and the region in which you have located it. Be positive. Be aware of what you can recommend to your customers and don't be afraid to do so - even if you are recommending companies that are to some extent your own competitors. By doing so, you increase the chances that others will recommend you too.
4. Find your place in the local tourism community. Others can provide you with services and knowledge that you do not have yourself. Networking increases your attractiveness as a whole community or region.
5. Operate legally. By meeting all legal requirements you are guaranteed the legality of your own business.

The above strategy was created, among other sources, on the basis of a guide for small tourism businesses by Small Business BC.

### 4.1.3.2 Implementation of the strategy

We can look at strategy in several different ways, as:

- an idea for the uniqueness of the company
- a definition of priorities
- a long-term development concept, with specific ways of achieving them
- a definition of the direction in which the company will be heading in the coming years
- a definition of how the company will focus on its most important problems

The application and implementation of such a strategy should also take into account the possibility of variability of certain factors and the way work is organised. It is important to identify which activities are the most important, which ones require the greatest commitment (ours), and which ones can be delegated to other people / employees.

Individual tasks are key in implementing the strategy:

- designing an appropriate work organisation
- consideration of a realistic budget
- support activities such as procedures or information and control systems
- employee motivation
- adaptation of the organisational culture
- appropriate leadership

Even in the case of micro-businesses that rely on the work of one person or a group of the next few people, developing and implementing a strategy makes sense and gives direction. The more your business is recognisable from others and consistently run, the greater the chance that your business will be remembered.

When developing and implementing a strategy we can also base our actions on the popular marketing 5 P's scheme.

### Marketing Mix

Product	Price	Promotion	Place	People
Functionality	Selling Price	Sponsorships	Distribution Channels	Service Provided
Appearance	Discounts	Advertising	Logistics	Attitude
Warranty	Payment Arrangements	Public Relations Activities	Service Levels	Customer Service
Quality	Price Matching Services	Message	Location	Appearance
Packaging	Credit Terms	Media	Market Coverage	Employee Portrayal

Figure 2: 5P scheme

## Final self-assessment

1. **Is it possible to start a small business anywhere?**
  - a) yes through the use of ITC tools
  - b) no it is impossible
  - c) maybe but it must have specific characteristics
  
2. **Do the booking platforms allow you to have a global presence?**
  - a) True
  - b) False
  
3. **Which of these elements is not part of the cultural heritage?**
  - e) Language
  - f) Park adventures
  - g) Religion
  - h) Gastronomy
  
4. **Is it possible to involve local administrations for the creation of new tourist services?**
  - c) True
  - d) False
  
5. **What is the tourism cluster?**
  - e) A voluntary cooperation of companies and organizations that aim to achieve the same goal
  - f) An association of private entrepreneurs
  - g) A non-voluntary association of tourism businesses and organizations
  - h) An association of businesses and organizations that provides for a monthly payment
  
6. **What is needed to create a good strategy?**
  - a) Your business must include a gastronomic part
  - b) Your business must be low cost
  - c) Your business must be memorable and leave a good impression
  - d) Your business must be the only one in the area
  
7. **When you decide to implement your strategy, what should be given importance?**
  - a) To priorities
  - b) To the needs of citizens
  - c) To the environmental impact
  
8. **What individual task is needed to implement the strategy?**
  - a) Knowing how to speak 4 languages
  - b) Be a great story teller
  - c) Be multitasking
  - d) Consider a realistic budget
  
9. **Is tourism the only solution to boost the local economy?**
  - d) Yes
  - e) No
  - f) No, but it represents an important aspect



**10. When you build your tourism business, how can you enrich it?**

- e) Taking into account only their own interests
- f) Taking into account only your own profit
- g) Taking into consideration the cultural identity of the place
- h) You don't have to take anything into consideration, it's all a matter of luck



## Unit 4.2 The value proposition of a locally rooted tourism product

### Preliminary self-assessment

1. The concept of folklore was developed
  - a) In the XII century
  - b) In the fifteenth century
  - c) In the seventeenth century
  - d) In the nineteenth century
2. What does tourist gentrification consist of?
  - a) Is a travel model that tourists prefer to rent more real places like apartments rather than hotels
  - b) It consists of preferring luxury hotels and very expensive resorts
  - c) It consists of the travel model according to which locals must be asked to sleep in their homes
  - d) It is a fad that has developed over the last century
3. Gentrification of tourism concerns:
  - a) Large Urban centers
  - b) Private islands
  - c) Luxury hotel
  - d) Campings
4. What is the definition of Branded Tourism?
  - a) it is a niche tourism form
  - b) it is a form of tourism practiced only in some parts of the world
  - c) it is a very expensive form of tourism
  - d) it is a tourist form that allows you to immerse yourself totally in a unique, original and authentic way
5. Today's tourists prefer to avoid tourist theatricality as it is far from the concept of authenticity
  - a) True
  - b) False

## Unit introduction

Authenticity is almost automatically assigned to a locally rooted tourism product. However, in relation to tourism, with which the concept of transience and superficiality of contact is inextricably linked, it is not so easy to define. Nevertheless, when we, as entrepreneurs wishing to operate on the local tourism market, bind the fate of our company to the local community, the existing but also changing natural resources of a given place, we should consistently create a story and construct experiences having our potential or current customer at the centre of the design process.

### 4.2.1 Folklore

Folklore is considered an intangible cultural heritage [...] and as a body of expressive culture, it was developed as part of the 19th century ideology of romantic nationalism. It was associated with a sense of belonging and cohesion associated with a particular local/regional community and with a particular place. In this view it was part of the spirit of place. However, in post-modernity there is a tendency to use folklore for consumption purposes.

It is not uncommon for folklore to be used consumeristically as part of a show sold to tourists, and which very often subordinates itself to the needs of the market, fitting as best it can into the shape of a designed tourist experience. In doing so, it very often moves away from what tourists would be looking for in terms of "authenticity".

Even though it is not easy to define the concept of authenticity, it is one of the main trends in tourism. An increasingly popular opinion is that what is authentic is what we ourselves consider authentic (after: <https://tourismteacher.com/authenticity-in-tourism>).

Meanwhile, in a small tourist business rooted locally, it is much easier to have direct contact with this authenticity. It is the inhabitants of the local community who have the greatest chance to verify and pass on knowledge about traditions and customs. For them, what is authentic is what their memory and knowledge acquired from other community members, and often handed down from generation to generation.

Therefore, by engaging the local network we have the best chance of getting closer to what will be perceived as authentic.

Authenticity is more about soul than it is about 'original or traditional'.

#### 4.2.1.1 Transferred authenticity

In this context it is also worth mentioning solutions situated somewhere between authenticity and staging or folklore. Such solutions can be called borrowed or transferred identity. The core of their identification is not local culture, but culture taken from another, often distant place, such as a thematic village or breeding exotic animals combined with agrotourism. In many such places, the hosts can perfectly combine local conditions with a new element. What is more, such places are often very popular among visitors due to their specific character.

### **4.2.1.2 Gentrification of tourism**

As the way of making tourist decisions and purchasing offers is changing, often with the use of "sharing economy" services, more and more tourists are looking for authenticity by staying in a given place not in a typical tourist location such as a hotel or guest house, but more and more often they are looking to rent flats or flats directly on the local market. This is often driven by purely economic reasons - it is cheaper this way, but also by the search for the opportunity to touch the "real" and authentic life of the locals.

This travel model, especially in large and very popular tourist cities, often leads to the phenomenon of tourist gentrification. Over time the urban fabric becomes so adapted to the needs of tourists-customers, that there is not enough space for native inhabitants. Moreover, visitors are willing to pay more and more for short-term rentals over time and therefore housing prices rise faster than in places where this phenomenon does not occur.

Since in such places normal and authentic life ceases to exist, the service functions connected to the daily needs of the city's inhabitants - not the tourists - die, this situation can in time lead to an arrangement in which the tourists constitute for themselves an "authentic" local background, creating another tourist ghetto.

Gentrification of tourism concerns mainly large urban centres, but it is not excluded also in smaller towns and cities, which due to changing fashions related to a given place, including popularity of films, books and other cultural phenomena related to it, may succumb to this effect. Even in a small, locally networked tourism business, it is important to keep track of the changes associated with this phenomenon. They are certainly easier to spot and identify in such a case. However, it is not entirely clear what measures could be taken to effectively counteract such a scenario.

### **4.2.1.3 Authenticity vs privacy**

Finally, it is worth highlighting a very important aspect related to authenticity, which should be taken into account especially in a small tourism business. By showing the authenticity of life we share it with strangers.

For this reason not all cultural experiences are suitable for tourism. In other cases boundaries need to be set. Sometimes staging authenticity, for example creating a pretend tribal village - away from the real village - to demonstrate village life but protect a community from intrusion can be a good thing.

## 4.2.2. Photos

### **4.2.2.1 The role of images in tourism**

The relationship between tourism and photography cannot be described as anything other than very close. When we look at photographs, we make decisions about travelling or buying through a particular distribution channel. Photographs accompany the whole process of a journey at its individual stages. Thanks to the popularity of social media, we like to share our impressions at the stage of packing, transport, not to mention the destination. Entire branches of the travel business



are based on this sharing of impressions. We have not only travel profiles, but also blogs and book publishers profiting from it.

Photography endorses good memories about travel destinations and reflects travelling experiences through pictures (Berger, Denk, Dittenbach, Pesenhofer, & Merkl, 2007). Taking a photograph becomes a part of tourism activities which are rooted deeply in tourists' experiences [...].

In a small or medium-sized tourism business, photography will be no less important. However, due to the possibilities associated with spending on professional photography, such companies will be at a much worse starting position. Therefore, it is worth having knowledge of what is important in tourist photography and trying to acquire practical skills necessary not only at the stage of picture framing, but also its later processing or final application.

#### **4.2.2.2 Reinforcing a sense of authenticity**

By choosing the right subject matter, we can have an impact on creating a sense of authenticity among our customers - the audience. It may seem trivial, but if a company builds its narrative around a seaside location, the leading theme of their photos will certainly be the sea and the beach, and maybe also shells, sand, food typical of such a place but also fishing nets, elements of interior design associated with such a location, etc. If cultural values are chosen as the theme of a company, for example yoga or dancing, then in applying visual communication, the creators of the brand will repeatedly use places to practice, silhouettes of practitioners/dancers, images of relaxed and happy people, healthy food, the beauty of the environment in which to practice, etc. As you can see, each theme, each identity around which a business is built offers many opportunities. You just have to start by identifying them and following this path consistently.

Every destination has unique and different attraction characteristics. Therefore, many travel destinations try to present their attractiveness of the destination to pull people to visit their place. Moreover, tourists also seek beautiful places and perceive them as an important attribute to travel and revisit the destinations (Rittichainuwat, Qu, & Brown, 2001).

#### **4.2.2.3 Colour scheme**

The colours in your photos matter. Colours can be calming or exciting, which is something to consider depending on the effect you want to achieve. In a small tourism business it is relatively easy to determine the target group, sometimes it is even niche, and then it is easier to achieve the right effect by appropriate colour processing aimed at the selected group.

In his study "The Impact of Photography on Tourism: Photography Construction Perspective", Justin Kaewnopparat investigated the impact of colours in tourism photography on the audience by taking beach photography as an example. He confirmed that cool tones used in photographs evoke feelings of relaxation, to a greater extent than warm tones. The use of red reduces relaxation, blue and green increase it. Orange and red are responsible for increasing excitement and a surge of energy.

The mood of the photos through their colours can generally relate to the philosophy of the company, its location or the values we want to promote. [...] However, this marketing communication should reflect the organization's vision and its



strategy in order to express the concept of how the company desires to persuade their external audiences to receive the information that they desire to share (Balmer, van Riel, Jo Hatch, & Schultz, 1997).

#### 4.2.2.4 Stock photos

As in many other businesses, not only tourist ones, entrepreneurs can also use stock photos available within image services and banks such as Pixabay (<https://pixabay.com/>), Pexels (<https://www.pexels.com/>), Depositphotos ([depositphotos.com](https://depositphotos.com)) or Coverr (<https://coverr.co/>). However, please note that this does not exempt you from recognising the copyright. You should always check under which license a given photograph is available and whether it belongs to the so-called open resources, i.e. whether you can use it free of charge also for commercial purposes and whether an attribution to the author is required. The variety of images available in image banks is huge, however you should bear in mind that despite their number and diversity they may also be used by a number of other companies with activities similar to yours and then you will not stand out with your offer, visual identity or mission statement.

#### 4.2.2.5 Food photography

It is worth treating food photography as a separate subject, as it has a special significance in the field of tourism.

The photography of food in a given tourist facility has a real chance to influence the decision to visit the place, assuming, however, that the company in question has food on offer. The entire narrative of a tourist company can be built around food or the art of cooking in general. In such places, the art of photographing it will be of utmost importance.

Food has become an important aspect of our lives. We consciously choose ingredients, follow a certain philosophy in nutrition, want to live in harmony with nature - to name just some of the current trends. But a good chef is only part of the story. You still need to be able to "sell" the results of his or her work, and this is what food photography should do.

Composition and light are key but a number of other factors come into play here. Inspiration and advice on how to get the best out of photographing food but also the places where you serve can be found on a number of profiles on Instagram, Pinterest or blogs about food photography among others:

- <https://www.sandynoto.com/blog/101-food-photography-tips-and-tricks>
- <https://digital-photography-school.com/5-tips-to-seriously-improve-your-food-photography-techniques/>
- <https://twolovesstudio.com/blog/99-food-photography-tips/>
- <https://cookieandkate.com/food-photography-tips-for-food-bloggers/>
- <https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/howto/guide/how-photograph-food>
- <https://www.chasinglenscapes.com/travel-food-photography-tips-for-food-travel-photos/>

### 4.2.2.6 Hardware and software

In the age of excellent cameras available on mobile phones, it is the phone that is becoming the primary tool of the amateur photographer. Moreover, it is in many applications available directly on social networks that such photos can be edited and published also from your own phone (Instagram, Facebook, Pinterest etc).

Other useful photo and video editing programs:

Canva - the possibility of preparing visually attractive content for social media, website elements, flyers, posters, etc. combining photos and text content. The ability to work on templates makes the editing process very easy

Vimeo - possibility to prepare attractive video animations, clips for use in social media and as elements of websites or other media

## 4.2.3 Experiences

Contemporary tourism is commonly viewed through the lens of the three 'e's: education, entertainment, excitement, and the experience itself becomes an integral part of travel or tourism. In fact, it constitutes the meaning of travel itself. It used to be treated naturally, as an inalienable part of travel. Today, it is more and more often emerging as its main purpose, or even the primary purpose of operation of tourism industry entities. This approach has changed with the popularisation of the concept of experience economy.

Today, many companies have a basic awareness that the travel experience starts very early and is already created at the planning stage. Contact with the websites of agencies or carriers or a visit to a travel agency is usually the moment when first impressions influence the overall perception of the travel process. Staging the desired experience can therefore become most important, as it can be the starting point for all other activities. This knowledge can be useful at the stage of creating solutions for customers, which should focus on building a service structure that puts the customer and their experience at the centre.

### 4.2.3.1 Travel modes

Regarding the approach to travel and the choice of possible modes of tourist experience, Erik Cohen distinguished the following 5 types and they may be related to different expectations about the course of the trip itself and the expected experiences:

- recreational mode - the trip is a pleasant way of spending free time, regeneration. Tourists are looking for authenticity, they just have fun
- variety mode - departure is a search for variety. Tourists enjoy mass tourism
- experience mode - a trip is a search for experience. For such tourists, authenticity is important
- experimenting mode - departure is a search for a world view, spiritual experiences. Such tourists can be found in Indian shacks or Israeli kibbutzim
- the existential mode - the trip is not an escape from a normal lifestyle, because the tourist has already started to live the trip, has changed his or her worldview, and during the trip possesses different values or behaviours than before. According to Cohen, he is a contemporary pilgrim.

### 4.2.3.2 Branded tourism experience

The concept of a "branded tourist experience" also appears in the tourism literature. Such an experience is, among other things, multisensory and gives the possibility to create factors of delight. It individualizes and personalizes experiences and allows to perpetuate this experience in various ways.

In particular, it is:

- involving - fully involving, absorbing all the senses, enabling the withdrawal from everyday problems (escapism), full immersion in the experience (immersion) and transferring to another reality,
- exceptional - unusual, original, unique (or at least difficult to repeat), ensuring the admiration or even envy of friends after returning from the trip
- authentic (or recognised as authentic) - original, based on local heritage and local specificity; the concept of authenticity in tourism is a subject of debate among researchers, and its significance for the tourist experience is not clearly defined

### 4.2.3.3 Tourist clichés and theatricalisation of space

The theatricalisation of the tourist space. The subtitle of the book by B.J. and Pine and J.H. Gilmore [1999] is: "Work is theatre and every business a stage", but in tourism the metaphor of theatre appeared much earlier. Today this trend is strongly present in tourist destinations. Staff and other people involved in serving tourism often wear period costumes, the surroundings are arranged appropriately by giving them appropriate lighting, props or sounds. All of this is intended to make it easier to emotionally involve the audience and engage their imagination, as well as their senses other than just visual.

Contemporary tourists less and less often wish to remain mere spectators. Increasingly, they also take on the roles of actors and participants in such a production. The audience is therefore involved in the course of such a performance, and often also has an influence on its ending.

The so-called emotional story. Traditional 20th century guiding (walking tours, sightseeing or city tours), as anachronistic and unattractive for contemporary tourists, is being replaced by modern forms of interpreting the heritage of the visited area. Discovering the sense of a given place (*genius loci*), its unique history and present is achieved, among others, by telling engaging stories concerning both epoch-making events, as well as the fate of ordinary people, with whom it is easier for tourists to identify. It is important to have an original, engaging narrative that triggers the imagination and engages the audience emotionally.

In authenticity-oriented local tourism, there is always the question of where to place the boundaries of such theatricality, and at what point a performance, even one attended by the interested parties themselves, is merely a performance and has nothing to do with authenticity. Here again the construction of the concept of authenticity and the perception of what is perceived as authentic by the tourist should be referred to.

The notion of "hyperreality" and "post-tourists" is referred to by Anna Wieczorkiewicz ("Apetyt turysty. O doświadczeniu świata w podróży" [The Tourist's Appetite.]) According to her, there is no question about whether an object, event or experience is authentic or not. Since the difference

between reality and imagination has ceased to exist, there is no point in ascertaining the "authenticity" of something. Nothing is authentic anymore - or everything is authentic. What is "artificial" becomes something real and authentic in postmodern culture. People crave this kind of 'authenticity: "Hence the characteristic hysteria in our time: the hysteria of the production and reproduction of reality".

'Post-tourists' are happy to indulge in various tourist games. They know that there is no such thing as an authentic experience, that there is only a series of games or scenarios to be played". Philip Parce expressed a similar conviction that authenticity in tourism is not for all tourists a value, a sought-after good, arguing that inauthentic experiences do not necessarily end in dissatisfaction, that authenticity or inauthenticity is not any given property of a tourist situation, but a perceptual category that depends on the needs, expectations and experiences of the perceiver.

Interestingly, in tourism negative feelings are also seen as valuable experiences, worth experiencing and recalling. Even if an event initially evokes strong and unambiguously negative emotions (anger, fear, disgust, anger, shame), over time its evaluation may change significantly, especially if it proves useful for building a "holiday legend".

#### 4.2.3.4 Creating experiences

According to John Urry, tourists consume a visually viewed reality. Viewing the world is not a unique experience, but a product of common practices and perceptions. So if there is a widespread view or a prevailing stereotype about the way people live and certain places function, and tourists have ready-made expectations, then this is how the reality that travellers will see will most likely be constructed in that place.

According to Urry, there are different kinds of looking at the reality. A perception is a process of interpreting the viewed reality, expressed at least in the choice of what is considered worth describing and telling about.

- romantic perception - the gaze of a tourist who contemplates the beauty of a place in silence and solitude
- collective perception - the presence of other people is necessary to view and share the experience (if there is a group of people standing in front of a church, it means it is an attraction)
- spectator perception - short, very many attractions in a short time
- reverent perception - this is the gaze of e.g. a follower of a given religion on a temple
- ecological perception - contemplation of nature
- Sexual perception

According to A. Stasiak, experiences should be sensual and not limited only to the "consumption of sights". Sight is extremely important in the process of perception, however, other senses also play an active role in the reception of a given experience, thanks to which we can remember sounds, smells or tastes closely related to a given situation, and even such fleeting impressions as touch or the softness of objects with which we will come into contact during the journey.

The most important ways of intensifying impressions and emotions of tourists he includes:

- transforming tourist infrastructure into unique tourist attractions,
- enriching old forms of tourism product with elements of experiences and emotions





- creating virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR),
- new forms of recording tourist experiences and sharing them,
- discovering new tourist spaces, which are to provide unique experiences and sometimes even extreme sensations
- development of new forms of tourism providing original, extraordinary emotions, as well as developing skills, creativity and personality of a tourist

## Final self-assessment

1. Folklore is considered
  - a) An essential feature of a place
  - b) An intangible cultural heritage
  - c) A specialty of a place
  - d) A tourist aspect
  
2. The concept of folklore was developed
  - e) In the XII century
  - f) In the fifteenth century
  - g) In the seventeenth century
  - h) In the nineteenth century
  
3. What does tourist gentrification consist of?
  - e) Is a travel model that tourists prefer to rent more real places like apartments rather than hotels
  - f) It consists of preferring luxury hotels and very expensive resorts
  - g) It consists of the travel model according to which locals must be asked to sleep in their homes
  - h) It is a fad that has developed over the last century
  
4. Gentrification of tourism concerns:
  - e) Large Urban centers
  - f) Private islands
  - g) Luxury hotel
  - h) Campings
  
5. Why do photos reinforce the sense of authenticity?
  - a) Because they can be changed
  - b) Because they are professionally made by professionals
  - c) They can't reinforce it
  - d) Because they enhance the cultural value of a place
  
6. What is the color scheme for?
  - a) To fix the saturation of a photo
  - b) To enhance the details of a photo
  - c) To enhance or calm an image for tourism purposes
  - d) To be able to publish it on social networks
  
7. Can photos taken of a place's signature food influence other travellers?
  - a) No because they might not be interested
  - b) No, because food has no relationship with tourism
  - c) Yes, because it intrigues travellers
  - d) Yes, but I don't know why
  
8. What is the definition of Branded Tourism?
  - e) it is a niche tourism form
  - f) it is a form of tourism practiced only in some parts of the world
  - g) it is a very expensive form of tourism
  - h) it is a tourist form that allows you to immerse yourself totally in a unique, original and authentic way



9. Today's tourists prefer to avoid tourist theatricality as it is far from the concept of authenticity

- c) True
- d) False

10. According to Stasiank, experiences should be sensual and not limited to the consumption of sights

- a) True
- b) False

## 4.3 Case studies

### 4.3.1 Mizioły (Poland)

#### 4.3.1.1 Overview

Mizioły promotes an active lifestyle in combination with exploring the natural environment and spreading knowledge about it (dendrology)

They offer accommodation, serving food, cooking workshops, organizing special events, e.g. hen parties, the possibility of organizing special solutions for various clients, e.g. yoga workshops or a specific type of training.

The place is located in a mountain area, in an old restored regional larch house where guests will also find a library. Accommodation and food serving activities are mainly directed at sports people but also medium-sized groups or families.

Their main target groups are: mountain runners, Nordic walkers, groups training in mountain areas, families with children, larger families who treat the place as a meeting place

Mizioły's strategy focuses on the natural environment in the surroundings and its protection, as well as on the local development of the region.

#### 4.3.1.2 Why is it considered a best practice?

The business model, vision and mission of Mizioły are based on the local identity of the region: mountain landscapes, the mountains of the Żywiec and Makowski Beskids, beech forests characteristic of these areas. The attention for nature protection, moreover, fostered the idea of developing, together with mountain tourism, tree science and dendrological meetings, the creation of a dendrological path,

The building is a larch regional house that has been renovated for business needs. Living in harmony with the surrounding nature, adapting to the changing seasons and day is always at the core of the strategy: currently, for instance, climbing is carried out with protection for tall trees.

Mizioły offers activities related to natural resources in the place - paths, routes and related running, walking, hiking together with developing experiences related to dendrology, being closer to trees, nature. In this sense, local identity becomes also the pretext for promoting awareness raising activities connected with nature protection.

In addition to nature, local folklore is also promoted through the preservation of regional architecture, as well as through the offer of regional food and of culinary workshops.

An important element of action and promotion is taking pictures and subsequent use in social media.

## 4.3.2 Bergi Azienda Agrituristica (Italy)

### 4.3.2.1 Overview

Bergi Azienda Agrituristica is a family-run agritourism and educational farm, Ecolabel awarded for its tourism services.

The mission of Bergi Azienda Agrituristica is promoting an inclusive lifestyle in connection with nature to discover again the ancient and original taste of products.

The farm has a certified organic production of olive oil, honey, manna<sup>1</sup>, fruits and vegetables.

Products are also processed: honey, olive oil, marmalades and preserves, made following traditional receipts, are sold in person and on the e-commerce of the farm.

Tourism services include holiday rooms and flats, a restaurant, outdoor activities, cooking classes.

Educational activities include visits at the farm as well as classes about manna, honey and beekeeping, baking, making marmalades and preserves.

Sustainability is at the core of the business identity of Bergi Azienda Agrituristica.

The infrastructure uses renewable energy and a system for sustainable management of water.

Waste production limiting, recycling and upcycling are promoted in the hotel, restaurants, tourism services and agricultural activities.

### 4.3.2.2 Why is it considered a best practice?

"Agritourism" is a form of diversification of farming businesses, including restaurants and holiday houses or rooms, sometimes together with other tourism services.

Bergi Azienda Agrituristica bases its business model, vision and mission on the local identity of the region, engaging in environmental and cultural sustainability (cfr. units 3.1 and 3.2).

Traditional agricultural activities are promoted and renewed for their more respectful approach to the environment, becoming also an experience to share with guests and travellers from all over the world. Apiculture and honey-making are among the most requested activities. On the other hand, these experiences become also awareness raising and educational activities, addressed in particular (but not only) to youngsters.

Together with agriculture, Bergi Azienda Agrituristica capitalises on local identity also in the framework of culinary tradition. Local produced food is prepared according to traditional receipts, both in the restaurant and for preserves sold in person and in the e-shop. The e-shop, in particular, is a very important tool contributing to the economic business sustainability. Traditional enogastronomy is promoted also during wine tastings and cooking classes.

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<sup>1</sup> "Manna" is a typical product from the region of Madonie, in Sicily. It is the secretion of the ash tree. It is used in gastronomy, cosmetics and natural medicine.

## 4.4 Figure references

- Figure 1: Classification of tourist attractions, figure based on Ritche, Sins 1978, after: Kruczek 2002.
- Figure 2: 5P scheme.



## Module 5: Digital Tourism

## Preliminary Self Assessment

The Integration of Information Communication Technologies (ICT) is especially essential for the success of tourism businesses; it can even be said that they are “a key determinant of organizational competitiveness” (Bethapudi 2014). ICTs allow customer-management relations and supply chain management to be combined into a single source that facilitates a variety of operations - product selection, ordering, fulfillment, tracking, payment and reporting to be performed with one easy-to use tool. ICTs ultimately cut costs by enabling the provider to be in direct contact with the consumer and also impact employment through the need for required maintenance of ICT equipment. They can also be meaningfully integrated into each phase throughout the customer journey.

Before you decide on different tools, you should always first clearly draw the requirements.

### Ask yourself the following questions:

- What exactly should the tool be able to do?
- How many users do we have - currently and in the future?
- How important is the availability of corresponding apps for smartphones to us?
- What are we willing to pay in terms of costs?
- What role does data security play for you?

## Module Introduction

This module is about digitalisation in tourism. The aim of the module is to show how to implement digitalisation more strongly in your own company in order to remain competitive in the face of the large number of competitors.

For this purpose, this chapter will first introduce you to the theoretical framework that you should always keep in mind when implementing digital measures: the digital customer journey. Afterwards, two holistic digitalisation strategies will be presented to you, each with an example, according to the customer journey: Influencer marketing and interactive tools.

### Learning outcomes and student skills

- many studies confirm the (small and large) effect of the Digital Customer Journey, for example through the use of customer journey analytics and storytelling techniques.
- understanding of a customer's touchpoints throughout their consumption process can be analysed using the 5 Micro-Moments of Experiences. These processes typically run through inspiration, information, planning and booking, experience and finally follow-up and sharing.
- the further involvement of influencers in social media can open up many opportunities in terms of marketing: It allows businesses to connect with their customers and reach a wider audience. To achieve this, you need to optimise your marketing strategy by, for example, going through the steps in this chapter on influencer selection and understanding the potential of influencers to influence and make your brand known.
- you can use different types of interactive tools and mobile apps to make your offer even more accessible to customers.



## Unit 5.1 Digital Customer Journey

The pressure to adapt in the tourism industry is enormous due to the high number of competitors. It is difficult for small tourism businesses to keep up with the large providers. But how can an SME convince the guest of its offers?

In the tourism industry, the guest comes first and this is also the starting point for a theoretical approach that explicitly focuses on the needs of the guest during his or her experience: The digital customer journey. The approach describes the "journey" of a potential customer through different touchpoints with a product or service, a brand or a company. This method enables the awakening of inspiration and need via information acquisition, search and the final target action. The customer journey analysis ultimately serves to gain insights into the behaviour and preferences of the target groups as well as their use of and reaction to digital advertising. The final target action can be, for example, a purchase, a newsletter subscription or an enquiry.

Storytelling is an integral part to any marketing campaign and is a very effective way to connect customers emotionally during their journey. It gives one's brand the opportunity to develop trust with customers and increase the conversion rate between customers and the company,<sup>1</sup> e. g. by sharing moving or memorable stories.

Stories provide an episodic structure that shapes our experience. By harnessing the inherent structure of storytelling, narrative-driven environments offer significant potential for creating both effective and exciting story-based marketing.

Many studies have approved that storytelling is useful to build loyalty and persuade them to consume. Authentic narratives foster emotional responses, build customer loyalty, and is based on the idea of "travel experience". Accordingly, the customer journey describes the consumer's or user's journey through the Internet, during which he or she comes into contact with several online contact points via views or clicks. Numerous communication channels are used by the advertising company, to track the need for tools for the entire "journey of the potential customer" – from the first need to the desired target action – becomes greater.<sup>2</sup>

An example of *Expedia*, an US-based online travel agency, is presented here to show a form of storytelling substantiated in a commercial in 2020 about travelling to Japan.

Click [here](#) to watch the commercial.



Figure 1: Passion passport 2020

<sup>1</sup> Russell 2021

<sup>2</sup> Heinrich & Flocke 2014  
Heinrich & Flocke 2014



The commercial shows a journey to different corners of Japan from the perspective of photographer Michael George. In this video, George is the narrator and reports on all the small unique details he experiences and admires on his adventure. The viewers can immerse themselves particularly deeply in the individual travel experiences through the descriptions. The whole video is supported by the emotional and moving background music. The warm and rich colours that can be seen in every scene and every image are meant to additionally captivate the viewer and finally underline the diversity of Japan as a travel destination. The whole video is meant to embody a certain character, such as the golden, autumn of Japan. In addition to the many impressions, yellow was chosen as the dominant colour. The colour yellow was used both aesthetically and as a rhetorical device. This is not an arbitrary choice, but a well-considered one: It is meant to reflect the warmth of the country on the one hand and Expedia's logo on the other. This should subconsciously connect the viewers emotionally with the Expedia brand.

Several techniques of storytelling in this travel ad are listed below:<sup>3</sup>

- **Images:** Help your customers get an accurate idea of your offer, Photos of employees can additionally build trust.
- **Videos:** To present tours, destination, tour guide or events.
- **Testimonials:** To build trust and share first-hand accounts of experiences; customers trust other customers (friends, family, colleagues).
- **Theme or character:** A certain character is more unique and therefore memorable towards customers, especially when it meets their personal taste or a certain trend.<sup>4</sup>
- **Music:** Background or title music, for instance, can trigger emotions such as joy or pleasure depending on the kind of music and mood you want to create.
- **Personal anecdotes:** Put a face and personality to your brand/experience, if you have a good and personal story (e.g. struggles to passion, cultural importance of tourism in the region, etc.) to tell don't hesitate to share it with your audience.

All in all, storytelling should accompany the customer throughout their journey, from searching for information on your website, through the experience, to leaving a review - just like the holistic marketing approach of the digital customer journey. It aims to make the journey from initial contact to purchase to post-purchase a true experience. The process is characterized by the use of a wide variety of channels through which customers make an initial connection with the company. You can take advantage of these micro moments as a tourism company and target these moments<sup>5</sup>. The following applies:

*"Does everyone have to do everything?"*

*No! What you do should be done well!"<sup>6</sup>*

Consider where your strengths lie and where you can achieve more success. Don't forget to always offer an offline alternative as well.

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<sup>3</sup> Russell 2021

<sup>4</sup> Marketing 360® 2016

<sup>5</sup> Wernet 2017

<sup>6</sup> Fraunhofer-Institut für Materialfluss und Logistik IML 2016

## 5.1.1 The 5 Micro-Moments of Experiences<sup>7</sup>

Understanding customers' touchpoints and pathways throughout their journey allows you to engage them best at each stage of the decision-making process. These are the core stages a person potentially goes through before, during and after he or she becomes your actual customer:



Figure 2: own graphic based on Wernet 2017

If you have already asked yourself the following questions during the different phases, you will be given useful Do's and Don't's that can improve your approach to potential customers.

<sup>7</sup> Wernet 2017



## Inspiration

*"I want more customers to be aware of my offers."*

**P Do:** Identify the places & settings your target audience is interested and try to represent those places.

**O Don't:** Don't be active on every social network and distribution channel.

## Online Marketing

- Social Media publishing/ advertising
- Blogs
- Search and SEO
- Review websites (e.g. TripAdvisor)
- Paid search (Google AdWords)

## Offline Marketing

- Traditional media coverage
- Print, TV, radio
- brochures
- Word of mouth

## How to inspire:

- nice photo album on Facebook
- funny spot on YouTube
- exciting story in a magazine
- Blog posts (tips from locals, snapshots, reports) (Attention: high personnel costs)
- virtual guest guide
- Websites/Apps
- Virtual tours (Attention: must constantly evolve)

## Information

*"I don't want to lose potential customers to competitors."*

**P Do:** Show the personal side of your business. A clear and emotional website is half the way to success, easy-to-find content takes care of the rest.

**O Don't:** Don't forget that the most powerful marketing tool is an exceptional customer experience.

## Online Marketing

- Professional website
- Webpages for all tours and activities
- Blogs
- Social Media
- Search and SEO
- Content Marketing
- Review websites
- Email marketing (e.g. Newsletter)

## Offline Marketing

- Brochures
- Word of mouth



### How to inform:

The customer should consciously become aware of your company when looking for Tours and activities in your destination. Take a close look at rating portals:

*How does my offer appear in comparison to my competitors?*

### Planning and Booking

*"My offer gets attention but I lose potential customers because it's too complicated to book."*

**P Do:** Use the "Book Now" call-to-action button to make it as easy as possible to book your listings. Depending on the target group, offline sales are also relevant in addition to online sales.

**O Don't:** Do not make the payment method too complicated. The booking system must work well right away, otherwise there is a risk that the customer will spontaneously change his mind.

### Online Marketing

- Professional website
- Integrated online booking system
- Book now button
- Live inventory

### Offline Marketing

- Point of sale bookings
- brochures

### Experience

*"I want my customers to become regular customers."*

**P Do:** SERVICE, SERVICE, SERVICE! Provide an excellent service to your customer before, during and after the experience, because they will rate you publicly. By doing so, you will exceed expectations and can expect that customer to turn into a repeat customer.

**O Don't:** You won't get regulars if the experience wasn't flawless.

### Online Marketing

- automated pre-trip
- follow-up emails
- voucher and discount codes

### Offline Marketing

- exceptional customer experience
- free add-ons
- voucher and discount codes

### How to make experiences possible:

- small attentions
- authentic atmosphere
- friendly locals, varied experiences
- well "shareable" experiences (something funny, beautiful or informative)
- enjoyable stay



## Follow-up and Sharing

"I want to rely more on word of mouth from satisfied customers."

**P Do:** Communicate openly to your customers that reviews contribute to the success of your business. Now you have a brand ambassador marketing you with free word of mouth. An emotional farewell influence where and how the experiences are shared later. This means free advertising with maximum credibility for you.

**O Don't:** Don't push your customers to share their experience.

## Online Marketing

- review websites
- Newsletter
- Email marketing
- Social media

## Offline Marketing

- Word of mouth

## 5.1.2 Influencer Marketing

The prime example of storytelling in action are influencers. Influencers can also influence every stage of the customer journey. An influencer is someone who has the power to influence or even control the buying decisions of others. Influencers can influence their followers so strongly because they convey authority or knowledge or because they are seen as experts/idols.<sup>8</sup> Therefore, they can build a strong relationship or connection with their followers. Influencers are usually active on social media to promote products or lifestyles, especially with regard to tourism offers.

Many studies have examined the impact of influencer marketing on tourism. The University of the Algarve study presented below examines the relationship between digital influencers and social media and the customer decision journey.<sup>9</sup>

In conclusion, this study points out these results:

- Most respondents do research on social networks to plan their trips.
- Female audience is most involved in travel planning.
- Those who otherwise spend less time on these platforms say they do more research on travel and tourist destinations.
- Instagram is the most used social network for finding inspiration and information.
- Followers who closely follow a digital influencer regarding travel are more likely to look at the digital influencer pages and value their reported travel experiences.
- Opinion shared by digital influencer does not have a huge impact on the purchase decision phase, but those who follow them closely tend to visit the places they recommend, they value their qualities in terms of credibility, sincerity, and trust.
- Post-purchase, most respondents use social networks to share their travel experiences.

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<sup>8</sup> Influencer Agency 2020

<sup>9</sup> Guerreiro et al. 2019

### Influencer selection<sup>10</sup>

It definitely makes sense to integrate an influencer into your own marketing strategies. Whether the future brand ambassador really fits your company's intended target group can be found out by answering these eight questions:

1. **Does the influencer's appearance fit my brand?**  
It needs an influencer who stands for the desired guest and accordingly produces posts that are consumed in this segment.
2. **Can the influencer cover the goals I have set?**  
Consider in advance what is expected from the cooperation (What kind of contributions, how often...).
3. **Does the influencer use the channels that are relevant to me?**  
Influencers have their own focus. Example: Photographers use Instagram; video bloggers use YouTube or Instagram TV. Each channel has a different level of effectiveness, which can usually be differentiated by time and intensity: Instagram and Facebook perform immediately, YouTube, blogs and Pinterest are more long-term.
4. **Does the quality of the content meet my requirements?**  
Do a quality check: deal with the potential influencer's content, read at least 2-3 blog posts carefully. Ideally, read posts from similar collaborations to get a better feel for it.
5. **Can I use the expected content for my channels?**  
Influencer collaborations often waive the sharing and use of the content produced. Take advantage of this and share the posts on your own channels.
6. **Do the quantitative performance values meet my expectations (reach, number of fans and followers, engagement rate)?**  
Pay attention to the engagement rate (= total number of engagements for a social media marketing post: like, comment, share, retweet, click etc.) and less to the pure follower count! Ask these performance values directly from the Influencer.
7. **Does the influencer adhere to the legal requirements for paid partnerships?**  
Pay attention to whether the influencer has already entered into collaborations in the past and whether these have been labelled accordingly. This speaks volumes for professionalism and protects against legal consequences in case of doubt.
8. **How exclusive is the partnership in the context of the influencer's other contributions?**  
Exclusive partnerships are rare and rather difficult in tourism. If you are aiming for a long-term exclusive partnership, you have to think about 3-4 campaigns per year with the influencer. Creative storytelling helps avoid reader attrition.

Only when the first qualitative parameters have been answered positively it makes sense to think about quantitative performance values or area exclusivity.

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<sup>10</sup> Gebel 2020

## 5.1.3 Travel Influencer Jacob Riglin

Unlike other influencers, [Jacob](#) prefers to be called photographer and international entrepreneur. From Slovenia to Dubai to Taipei, Jacob has visited many places around the globe. He has worked in the past years with top destinations, luxury resorts and many top brands like Amazon, BMW etc. He founded his own media company which offers photo presets and photography workshops.

Jacob Riglin, originally from UK, became very successful with his projects. There are many strategies that keeps him and his business busy and influenceable:<sup>11</sup>

1. Jacob reminds people that authenticity is very important and must fit with the personal brand. In that way, the content feels genuine towards followers.
2. "Posts of Interesting pictures rather than normal pictures": Jacob prefers to post extra-ordinary and artistic pictures to challenge himself and to be abnormal.
3. Creating content has to be fun for companies and destinations. The happier the influencer, the better the content.

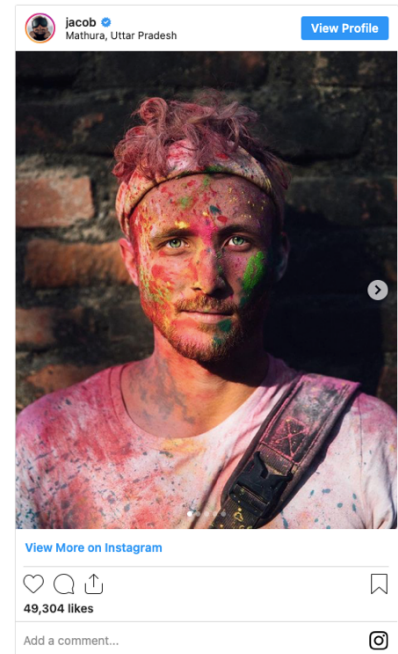


Figure 3: Jacob Riglin: influencer, photographer & entrepreneur

Most of his content is shared on his Instagram profile. The fact that his account is currently followed by one million people underlines him as a very influential person.

As presented here, Jacob posts an esthetically edited photo of Japan as destination. Through the powerful colors and showing the traditional side of Japan, Jacobs creates inspiration on his followers by these kinds of posts. Moreover, as it can be read on the capture right next to the photo, Jacob announced some offers from his own company based on artistic and digital work in photography. People might get interested in his offers after seeing this edited picture as a part of his work.

Furthermore, he does not only make advertisements for his own company, he also collabs with external brands, especially with touristic ones. In that post, he took a picture of himself enjoying his staying in that luxury resort with a stunning view on nature. Through this photo, he promotes Slovenia as a travel destination and intends to trigger inspiration among his followers to travel there. This photo has reached at least around 42,4k Instagram users, as it can be seen on the number of likes.



Figure 4: Jacob Riglin's typical advertisement for a destination.

<sup>11</sup> Boom Creative Lab GmbH 2019



## 5.1.4 Interactive Tools



*Figure 5: pixabay*

Besides all the strategies for the effective use of Digital customer journey, a business needs appropriate platforms and tools to digitally implement all the techniques mentioned before. The use of apps has become indispensable in the tourism industry, as many customers perceive and book offers virtually. Especially „Mobile apps” are applications that refer to any type of application software.<sup>12</sup>

The customer journey is not only important for how one person reacts, but for how every potential customer around each of your customers is reacting along with them. For instance, a potential customer might walk past a physical store and ignore it before interacting with the brand online. Once customers interact with their app, however, they discover many facilitating services such as order, pay or collection rewards points through the app. Many people also use the app to share on social media and interact with the community. Every step of a potential customer produces value data which helps to optimize and create a pleasant and integrated mobile customer journey. All these aspects are definitely beneficial in gaining customer engagement towards the company. It's important to master different types of apps services to make a full use of its potentials.<sup>13</sup> Besides native apps, there are mobile as well as hybrid solutions. These will be examined in more detail in the following table:

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<sup>12</sup> [www.tourismus-it.de/](http://www.tourismus-it.de/) 2021

<sup>13</sup> Dataroid 2021

## Types of mobile Applications<sup>14</sup>

<p><b>Native Apps</b></p> <p><i>Native apps are tightly coupled with the platform on which they run and can fully integrate with its hardware and operating system. Native apps can be considered analogous to most PC applications that are downloaded to the hard drive of a desktop or laptop. They can interact with the built-in resources (contacts, calendar, browser).</i></p> <p><i>Leading platforms: Appstore, Playstore</i></p>	
<b>Pros</b>	<b>Cons</b>
<p><b>Functionality:</b> direct access to all the functions of a mobile device: Graphics hardware, motion, location, proximity, vision, and audio sensors.</p> <p><b>Performance:</b> run at the highest possible performance because they run directly on the platform</p> <p><b>Usability:</b> can seamlessly fit into the operating environment; thus avoiding disruptions to the user experience</p>	<p><b>Cost:</b> must be written in specific programming languages for the respective platform, coverage of each device in a mobile market requires double or triple the development and maintenance effort</p>
<p><b>Web Apps</b></p> <p><i>Web apps are built using the same tools used for mobile website development (HTML, CSS stylesheets, and JavaScript). It is possible to mimic a native app look-and-feel on the mobile device. Web-based apps run within the mobile web browser.</i></p>	
<b>Pros</b>	<b>Cons</b>
<p><b>Costs:</b> lowest cost among the three approaches; Initial cost is lower because open standards and open source tools can be used to build the apps; can run on any platform, regardless of the operating system</p>	<p><b>Performance:</b> lower than in a native app</p>
<p><b>Hybrid App</b></p> <p><i>The hybrid application is developed using both native and web technologies.</i></p>	
<b>Pros</b>	<b>Cons</b>
<p><b>Functionality:</b> enjoys the functionality of both apps</p> <p><b>Performance:</b> can match native app performance for the part of the app that</p>	<p><b>Costs:</b> while native part enjoys high performance, web-based part suffers from the same shortcomings as web-based app</p>

<sup>14</sup> Optimus Information 2015

runs natively, especially in offline mode.  
**Costs:** are more or less in the middle between those for native and web-based apps

When implementing an app, you always need to reflect on what your customers could want and need from the app:<sup>15</sup>

- **Kick-off:** Guest moves on platforms that are not consciously associated with planned vacation to get inspiration for traveling before realizing the desire of traveling.
- **Vacation preparation:** Accommodations are booked, routes/attractions researched
- **On-location information:** Guest asks for factual information and route planning on location.
- **Post-trip processing:** Reports on the vacation, evaluates the offer.

### 5.1.4.1 Mobile App “Visit Singapore”

Singapore offers limitless opportunities for visitors. Many tourists need an overview of all the attractions and are looking forward to have a nice trip in Singapore. In this case, apps are very effective, especially when it comes to optimizing travel plans and maximizing the enjoyment during the trip. Travel or guiding apps can provide many important features including navigation or collecting and managing essential information and destinations. The travel app particularly can be considered as a model example because of its many features according to these categories of interests and needs:<sup>16</sup>

- **Inspiration:** weekly spotlights, “whats new?” category, recommendations for restaurants, shopping, activities
- **Information:** Answers to travel questions, currency exchange rates or nearby Wi-Fi hotspots
- **Planning & Booking:** Guides, Saving favorites: Users can save their interests zon a list or map; Redirection to different providers
- **Experience :** Maps, discovering routes and spots,
- **Follow up and sharing:** Local Recommendations

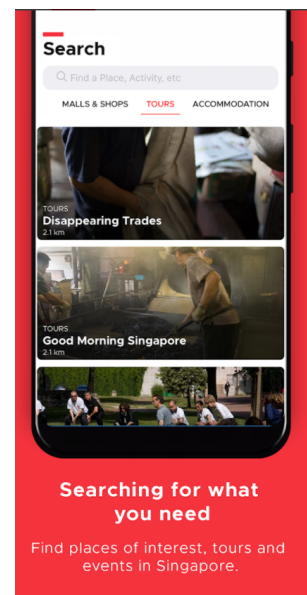


Figure 6: App “Visit Singapore”

<sup>15</sup> Realizing Progress 2010

<sup>16</sup> Singapore Tourism Board 2021

## Unit 5.2 ICT Tools

### Unit introduction

The next chapter is about possible ICT tools that can be used during each phase of the customer journey. Thereby, tools that can be used during the phase of booking and planning as well as experiences are examined in more detail.

Learning outcomes and student skills:

- Capability to mine the opinion of potential customers in a positive direction.
- Create a content strategy.
- To use different social media channels to market their own business.
- Basic knowledge to create digital content.

### 5.2.1 Tools overview<sup>17</sup>

In the first chapter of the unit, you've already learned about the digital customer journey. This journey should be supported in the process by suitable ICT tools. The following table shows which ICT tools are available for the tourism sector and in which phase they can be implemented:

Phase of the customer journey	Guest-centric services products and	Digital business model/ digital strategies
<b>Inspiration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Search Engine Marketing (= SEM)</li> <li>▪ Online PR</li> <li>▪ Display Marketing</li> <li>▪ Web Content</li> <li>▪ Social Posts and Ads</li> <li>▪ Influencer Marketing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Content Production</li> <li>▪ Design Thinking</li> <li>▪ Storytelling</li> <li>▪ Target group profiling</li> <li>▪ Market Intelligence</li> <li>▪ Market Data Analytics</li> </ul>
<b>Information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Own Homepage</li> <li>▪ third party website</li> <li>▪ Blog</li> <li>▪ Recommendation</li> <li>▪ Mobile Apps</li> <li>▪ Chatbots</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Content Management System</li> <li>▪ Smart Marketing</li> <li>▪ Customer Data Analytics</li> <li>▪ Cloud solutions</li> <li>▪ Digital cooperation</li> <li>▪ Search engine advertising (= SEA); search engine optimization (= SEO)</li> </ul>
<b>Planning &amp; booking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Digital booking and event calendars</li> <li>▪ Comparison platforms</li> <li>▪ Deals</li> <li>▪ Reviews</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Channel Management</li> <li>▪ Revenue Management</li> <li>▪ Benchmarking Systems</li> <li>▪ Forecast Control</li> <li>▪ Conversation Tracking</li> </ul>

<sup>17</sup> Hörburger 2018

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Webcams &amp; Webcasts</li> <li>▪ Virtual Reality</li> <li>▪ Own Booking Client</li> <li>▪ Computer reservation system (=CRS); Global distribution systems (=GDS)</li> <li>▪ Online travel agency (= OTA)</li> <li>▪ Dynamic Packaging Engines (dynamic combination of travel services such as flight, transfer, hotel and meals into a package tour)</li> <li>▪ Blockchain Powered Booking Systems</li> <li>▪ Pre-Stay Chats</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mass Customisation</li> <li>▪ Integration of Property Management System (= PMS)</li> <li>▪ Integration of destination management system (= DMS)</li> <li>▪ Inquiry Management</li> <li>▪ Capacity optimization</li> <li>▪ System integration</li> </ul>
<b>Experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Destination &amp; Company Apps</li> <li>▪ NFC Beacons &amp; Smart Mirrors</li> <li>▪ Augmented Reality</li> <li>▪ Mobile Check-in/ Check-out</li> <li>▪ Smart Robots</li> <li>▪ eKey, digital guest card &amp; eTicket</li> <li>▪ eConcierge &amp; Instant Messaging</li> <li>▪ Seamless Services</li> <li>▪ Co-working/Co-creation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Digital assisted Service Design</li> <li>▪ eStaffing &amp; Personal App</li> <li>▪ Outsourcing (Platform Economy)</li> <li>▪ eProcurement</li> <li>▪ Smart Home &amp; internet of things (= IOT)</li> <li>▪ Personalised Service Profiles</li> <li>▪ Cross Selling</li> <li>▪ ePayment</li> </ul>
<b>Follow-up and sharing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Frequent Traveller Cards</li> <li>▪ Review Platform</li> <li>▪ Newsletter &amp; Aftersales Mailings</li> <li>▪ Social Media Networks</li> <li>▪ Communities &amp; Forums</li> <li>▪ Real time-Feedback</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Open Innovation</li> <li>▪ Data Security</li> <li>▪ Key Account Management</li> <li>▪ Machine Learning</li> <li>▪ Loyalty Program and Events</li> <li>▪ Review Management</li> </ul>

At this point, not all ICT tools can be examined in more detail, which is why only individual tools of the planning and booking as well as experience phase, are discussed in below.

### 5.2.1.1 Booking tools

Good service is an necessary part of *planning and booking* a tourist offer. The connection to the common online channels is therefore becoming more and more important. This includes online booking of rooms, table reservations or booking of activities and events. Online sales enable a higher range and topicality of the offer.

#### Advantages

- customers perform booking and payment themselves
- less personnel costs
- the booking form and payment tool is always online and available, even outside business hours

- customers can cancel or change their appointments themselves
- synchronization with popular calendar systems like Google Calendar, Outlook, or Office 365 possible
- Customers want to book via mobile devices

### Risks

- only works online
- the target group may not be familiar with online booking
- security risk

There are three options for online distribution: **In-house distribution** via the company's own booking platform, **third-party distribution** via external providers and a **mixed form** of distribution.

## 5.2.1.2 Booking.com

**Third-party distribution** is particularly worthwhile for SMEs that do not yet have a high reach and want to achieve it. An example of a platform through which one can offer accommodation worldwide is the leading booking site **booking.com**. The advantages that booking.com affiliate partners have when participating in the partner programme are explained in more detail in the following [promotional video](#):

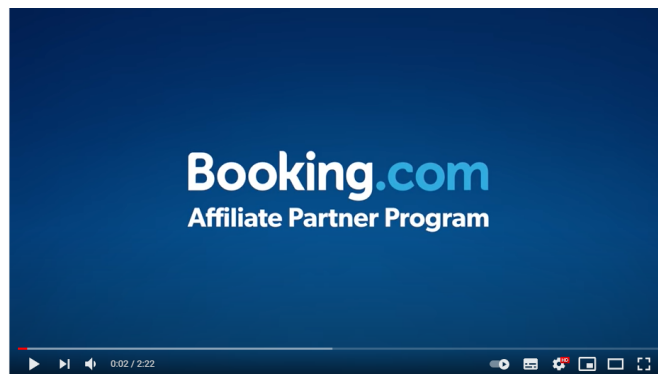


Figure 7: booking.com partners

Booking.com uses the **Digital Value Creation Framework (DVC)**<sup>18</sup>. The idea of this framework is based on the technical infrastructure that determines how business models can be implemented digitally. The focus is primarily on the free design of exchange relationships across digital platforms. A digital business model therefore consists of six elements:

1. Platform
2. Performance
3. Gratification
4. Performance group

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<sup>18</sup> Hoffmeister 2018

5. Interface
6. Transaction

Besides Booking.com, many other large providers such as HRS or Airbnb operate a business model that is based on this framework. However, the principle should be illustrated in more detail using the example of booking.com:

There are two performance groups under the booking.com platform: The group that searches, books and administrates hotels and the group that offers hotels. Each group receives services from the provider, but must also give something in return.

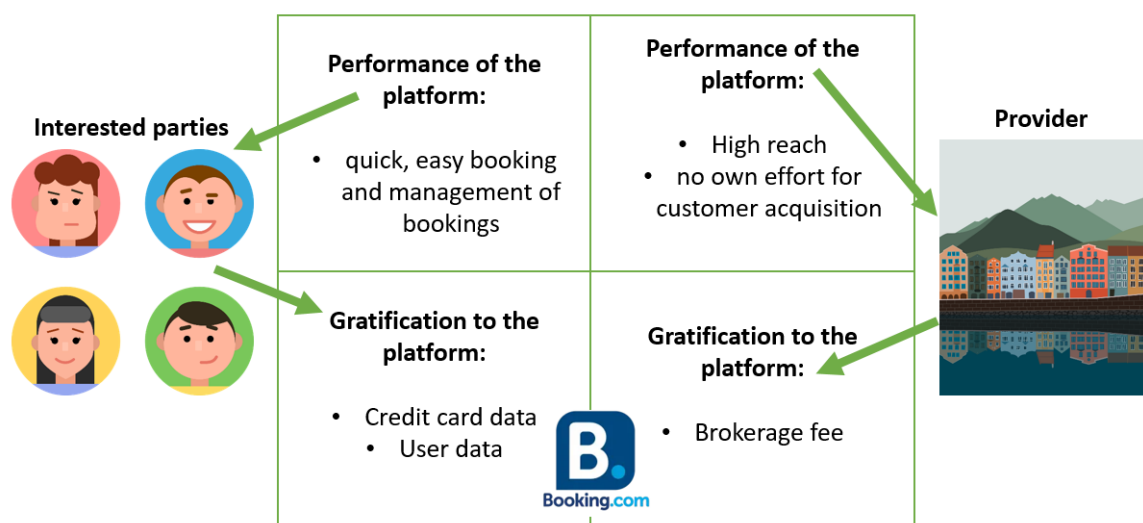


Figure 8: own graphic based on Hoffmeister 2017

However, if you want to make yourself independent and competitive of other providers and have achieved a high reach anyway, you should consider **in-house distribution**. Advantages would be, among others, that your customers can book directly on your website, that you save the commission for online distributors and that the image of the company looks more modern. To profit from both types of distribution, you can also offer a **mixed distribution**.

### 5.2.2.3 Customer service tools

Digital tools that can be used in customer service are intended to do one thing above all: relieve service staff and offer the customer faster service. Service tools can facilitate many processes such as communication with customers. By using chatbots, you can handle requests 24/7 without having to increase the size of the your own team.

### 5.2.2.4 Chatbots

Artificial intelligence is increasingly integrating our lives with the aim of simplifying it. A typical example of an AI system and one of the simplest and most widespread examples of intelligent



human-computer interaction is a chatbot.<sup>19</sup> A chatbot is a computer program that can simulate a conversation to a human user.

There are many advantages for users and developers:

- The implementations are mostly platform-independent and immediately available to users, no installations are required for this.
- The user's identity is ensured as the chatbot never leaves the messaging app in which it "lives".
- Payment services can be integrated into the messaging system and used securely.
- A chatbot is fast, reliable in communication and uncomplicated in development.

One easy way to offer chatbots is through messenger services, because most internet users already use them and are very familiar with them. Among the messenger services, WhatsApp is the top dog. [www.whatsapp.com](http://www.whatsapp.com) is a communication app for smartphones in real time. In addition to text messages, videos and pictures can be sent or groups with multiple users can be created.

But how can the chatbot be integrated into the customer journey?<sup>20</sup>

### Inspiration and Information

Customer advice in the decision-making phase can be provided by a combination of service staff and chatbots. The chatbot answers general questions and sends the customer the first appropriate information, while the service employee answers individual questions.

### Planning and Booking

Notifications can be sent for selected customer service scenarios. However, the customer must first give their consent for push notifications. For example, if a suitable offer is found, the booking confirmation can be sent as a notification. Other conceivable notifications are Real-time information, Alert Updates - travel warning, notification of new check-in time, Appointment Update - appointment arrangements or Ticket Update - reminder of an excursion etc.

With the help of the chatbot, the customer can be prepared for their upcoming activity. The chatbot could answer frequently asked questions for that destination.

### Experience

Here, you can use chatbots to help your customer get started on a great experience. Maybe your customer doesn't really know where to start and needs inspiration.

Exclusive and customised offers could, however, be sent by the service staff. For example, if he is planning a trip by car to the next larger city, you can suggest a suitable car rental.

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<sup>19</sup> Adamopoulou & Moussiades 2020

<sup>20</sup> Mehner 2021



## Follow-up and Sharing

If your customer is satisfied with his/her experience, it would of course be ideal if he/she shares his/her experience with others or that he or she will choose your offer again for the next activity.. But how can this be initiated?

Measures can also be implemented here via Messenger. First, however, the customer's satisfaction should always be asked. The best way to do this is standardised via chatbot. Based on the results, you can talk to your customer about the next holiday and initiate the first sales-promoting measures. Send him or her the right offers and make them more attractive with an early-booking discount. It is also advisable to cross-promote by giving recommendations for suitable hotels, events, websites or travel literature that are in cooperation with you.

Feel free to watch the demo video of a chatbot Whatsapp message history [here](#):

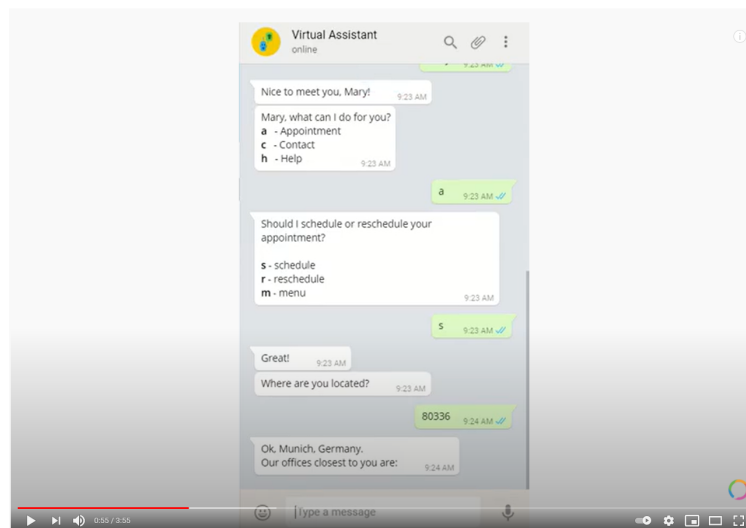


Figure 9: MessengerPeople

## 5.2.2.5 TUI support via WhatsApp

In 2019, tourism group TUI AG, the world's largest tourism company, saw the potential of using WhatsApp as a direct and personal channel to customers.<sup>21</sup>

TUI gradually introduced WhatsApp to its customers to determine demand. After the test phase, TUI used all digital channels to market the service. A separate WhatsApp service team was set up to deal with the enquiries. Incoming enquiries are initially answered by the FAQ chatbot. If it becomes more specific, TUI employees take over and create suitable offers.

On average, 90% of all enquiries can be answered directly by the chatbot, allowing TUI to handle multiple customer concerns in parallel and make the volume of enquiries more efficient.

<sup>21</sup> messengerpeople 2021

### 5.2.2.6 Smart tourism

The intensive use of ICT in tourism and the associated increased innovation and technology orientation of industry and consumers has led to the evolution of Smart Tourism.<sup>22</sup>

Gretzel et al. (2015) define smart tourism as tourism “supported by integrated efforts at a destination collect and aggregate/harness data derived from physical infrastructure, social connections, government/organizational sources and human bodies/minds in combination with the use of advanced technologies to transform that data into on-site experiences and business value-propositions with a clear focus on efficiency, sustainability and experience enrichment.”

### 5.2.2.7 Smart hotel

One example of smart tourism is the concept of smart hotel. This concept stands for a networked, technical system that strengthens guest and employee satisfaction through comfort, quality of well-being and security, relieves service staff and improves energy efficiency.

Since the beginning of the Corona crisis, the issue of security has been more central than ever. Before, the tourism industry was a “high touch industry” because a lot revolved around personal and direct service. With the onset of the crisis, however, a rethink had to take place, towards a “low touch economy”. The future of the tourism industry lies in contactless solutions.

The four strategic fields of action that can be implemented in the hotel industry are examined in more detail below:<sup>23</sup>

### 5.2.2.8 Smart services

Smart services are provided as services that can be booked online and are often accompanied by a physical component. However, digitalisation enables guests and staff to have less physical contact with each other without having to forego comprehensive, warm and personal service.

Smart services in the hotel connect both guests and employees digitally and ensure personalised communication in real time despite physical distance. Real-time communication is becoming increasingly important in the service sector and should also be a central part of hoteliers' own digitalisation strategy.

#### Possibilities of the Smart Service:

- **Check-in/check-out:** via smartphone, at a check-in terminal, at a vending machine.
- **Digital room key:** on the smartphone, e.g. via barcode or in an app.
- **Demand-oriented housekeeping:** The organisation for cleaning the rooms can be (co-)controlled by the guests themselves: Via an app, they can express their wishes and communicate whether they are currently in their room and whether they want their room to be cleaned. If room cleaning is not possible at the desired time, the guest may prefer not to have the room cleaned that day.
- **Guest communication:** support through assistance functions (chatbots).

<sup>22</sup> Nguyen et al. 2020

<sup>23</sup> Borkmann 2020

- **Video communication:** Use of existing displays in the lobby/reception area/rooms to engage with guests. Staff on duty (e.g. also in the home office) can introduce themselves on the displays during their shift. Information or current offers can also be provided on the displays.

### 5.2.2.9 New work

Work itself is also becoming smart. The place, time and content of work are becoming increasingly flexible. New work stands for innovative working environments and new forms of work. Since travel times are eliminated, working time is used more efficiently, which greatly reduces the workload in many areas. However, the rethinking of work is also accompanied by challenges such as greater use of technology, more personal responsibility and self-determination.

#### Possibilities of the new work:

- **Digital goods ordering/delivery/acceptance.**
- **Online accessibility of employees:** The prerequisite for this is a digital data management system in the company so that all information can be accessed by employees at any time/any place via the internet. Not every activity can be carried out from home, but access to information and the availability of employees make it possible to carry out individual activities from home at flexible working hours.
- **Use of audio and video conferencing systems:** In hybrid meetings, people can come together physically but also in real life, even educational and further training measures are increasingly taking place online. This is an enormous opportunity for qualification measures or in-service training in the hospitality industry.

### 5.2.2.10 Digital business

Digitisation leads to the precise use of resources (keyword sustainability) as well as to the automation of standardised processes and thus to greater efficiency of business processes. A quick adaptation of processes and reaction to changing needs turns out to be a competitive factor, especially in times of crisis. However, the reliability, signal strength and bandwidth of the internet connection must be considered challenging.

#### Possibilities of the digital business:

- **Organisational management:** The online hotel management system allows access to data and information from anywhere at any time. Staff planning and organisation can be controlled via the system according to demand. These processes can take place digitally or automatically and are demand-driven.
- **Digital time recording & access controls:** Realtime time tracking via software or app allows employees to manage their time more flexibly. This requires an intensive coordination process with the staff. Digital access controls offer the possibility to control who goes through which door in a company and when, which is particularly relevant in a crisis to regulate the number of contact points a person has with others, for example, when visiting a restaurant or breakfast area.

- **Applicant search:** Applicant management can be supported by software and artificial intelligence. For example, the onboarding of new employees in the company can be made pleasant and personal by digital tools.
- **Online marketing:** Personalisation of the speech through software or AI (data analysis and bots). For this, it must be possible to access personal data and at the same time ensure privacy and data protection.

### 5.2.2.11 Smart building

Digitalisation leads the operation, management, regulation and control of buildings to an economic and ecological optimum based on demand. The building and its interiors are becoming smart.

#### Possibilities of smart building:

- **Use of voice assistants or hotel apps:** Guests control the environments via the spoken word or their own smartphone. The interaction between people and space becomes interactive.
- **Intuitive control of the interior by hotel staff:** For example, external window control to check whether the windows are closed during storms in rooms where no guests are staying. External temperature control is also conceivable.
- **Energy efficiency:** Smart regulation and control of systems, cost reduction through automated energy management (e.g. automated water flow).
- **Remote facility management:** Through the installation of sensor technology and the use of corresponding software. This includes intelligent room control (light, air conditioning, ventilation, water) through sensors. Room factors can thus be adapted to certain framework factors (e.g. intensity of solar radiation, air quality).
- **Room booking and room management systems:** Maximum room occupancy per floor can be digitally controlled to contribute to singling out in times of crisis.
- **Use of robots, driverless transport systems, drones and virtual/digital assistants:** The service staff guides them, but does not have to be on site itself, which makes physical distancing possible.

Accessibility to the smart building management system at any time and any place turns out to be a real competitive factor in the crisis.

### 5.2.2.12 Eccleston Square Hotel

The [Eccleston Square](#) boutique hotel is located in central London. The exterior and public areas of the hotel, with its historic 19th century façade, make visitors feel like they are in another century. However, once inside their room, they have a variety of high-tech amenities.

#### The hotel rooms feature the following smart technologies:

- smart-phones (for the duration of the stay), allowing free calls (also to international countries) and unlimited data volume, which can also be used for sightseeing;
- control of the most important room functions takes place via the smart-phone;
- flat-screen TVs embedded in the bathroom mirrors;

- "smart" booking procedures via the official website with the help of chatbots offering the best available price as well as complementary services and welcome gifts;
- Chatbot "Velma" offers a 24h service;
- iPad to control heating, lighting and music;
- iPad for communication with room service and concierge service;
- showers have instant fogging glass that can be turned on and off with a button...



*Figure 10: Eccleston Square.*

- ICT tools can facilitate the management of different competences, for instance customer services, payment and booking areas and other features. Also, they help your services to be more effective and user friendly for all stakeholders of your brand.
- before integrating these tools in your company, you need to plan exactly what you want to achieve, what kind of role these tools should play in your brand and for what kind audience these tools are. Eventually, you should make sure to fulfill the conditions according to handling ICT in the tourism sector.
- your relevant tools should go along specifically with the phases of your customers' journey (inspiration, information, planning & booking, experience, and follow-up & sharing)
- implementing ICT in the booking system is particularly effective if you use either one or more options (depending on your brand) of online distribution such as in-house distribution, third-party distribution or a mixed form of distribution.
- Customer service tools make several areas easier, such as communication with customers or payment transactions. In this case, tools like chatbots and messenger apps appear to be suitable for customer services but need to be integrated along every phase of customer journey.
- Smart tourism can be adapted into your hotel or company by many possibilities in Smart Services, New Work and Smart Building.

## Unit 5.3 Digital Marketing

### Unit Introduction

*"There is not a single aspect of the travel and tourism industry that hasn't benefited from the widespread use of the internet, and smart marketers within the sector are using the technologies available to help convert desire into action."<sup>24</sup>*

The last chapter deals with the digital marketing of one's own offer. For this purpose, the structure of one's own content strategy is examined more closely, followed by the topic of content creation. In addition, the topic of ratings is addressed, which also plays an important role in remaining competitive.

Learning outcomes and student skills

- Digital Marketing requires several competences including understanding the strategy behind the content creation in general and establishing a step-to-step plan in it.
- Social media is a core element in Digital Marketing, because it has a big influence and reachability in customers' behavior and in each stage of customer journey. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter etc. are nowadays irreplaceable sites for promotion, advertising and addressing your or new target groups.
- Content creation for social media platforms are also combined with specific steps and tools, for instance editing, writing and content analytics; that you need to follow and use while doing so.

Traditional options were slim: ads on TV/ in travel magazines and newspapers, booth at a travel trade show, brochures, etc. The marketing methods of the time were static, brochures had to be revised and reprinted over and over again. Websites, on the other hand, are dynamic and make it possible to include high-quality images, photos and videos as well as compelling texts, which can be adapted as needed.

According to Wilson (2018) "Nimbleness and a willingness to evolve with the trends are key to ensuring that you can produce the kind of messages that are relevant to potential travellers and up your chances of converting 'I'd love to visit one day' to 'I just booked a trip!'"<sup>25</sup>

### 5.3.1 Content Strategy

To be able to market your products and services properly, you need to define a content strategy first. Content strategy refers to the strategic and harmonised planning, creation and distribution of content.<sup>26</sup> In addition to the questions: WHERE do I want to publish WHAT, WHEN and with what OBJECTIVE, you also need to take a closer look at your target group.

This six-step plan will help you establish and apply your own content strategy in order to market your offers appropriately.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Wilson 2018

<sup>25</sup> Wilson 2018

<sup>26</sup> OnlineMarketing.de GmbH 2021

<sup>27</sup> McCoy 2021

## First Step: Understand the basics of Digital Content Strategy

### 1. Know Your Content Goals

Identify your goals before you do anything else.

### 2. Know Your Content Differentiation Factor (CDF)

Answer the following questions:

- What sets you apart from your competitors?
- How do you help your customers/audience differently?
- How do you help them better than anybody else in your industry?

### 3. Know Your Topic Area(s)

You need a content to write/talk about. It is supposed to be:

- Relevant to what you sell
- Relevant to your audience
- Related to your industry expertise

Your topic area – the place where what your audience wants and your expertise collide.

## Second Step: Understand Your Audience

You might ask yourself: Who are you creating or writing content for? Who is your target audience? If you target the wrong audience, or to wide an audience, then the chances are your post will be lost and be irrelevant to anyone that sees it.

### 1. Do an audience research

If you're just guessing what your ideal target audience looks like, you're probably not going to hit the target. Connect with your ideal customers and have a conversation.

### 2. Create an Audience Persona

Personas are fictitious persons, a kind of customer model with specific characteristics. These include socio-demographic data as well as basic values and attitudes. This is an example of filled out persona development checklist:<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Gebel 2020, p. 95

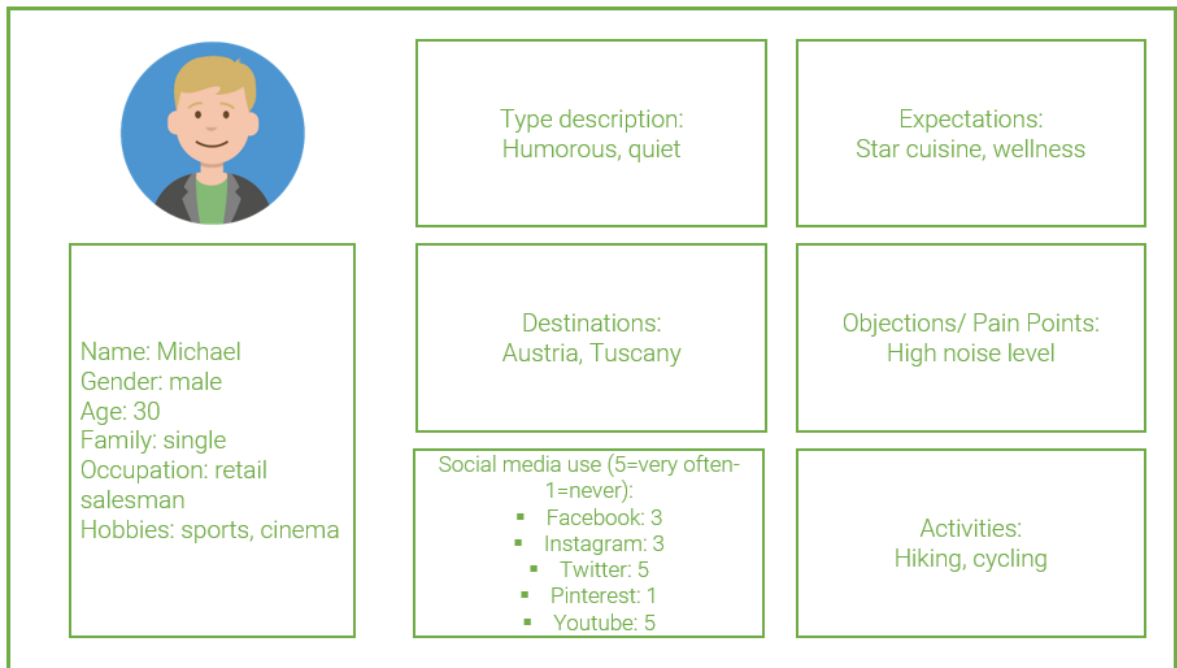


Figure 11: own graphic based on Gebel 2020

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Step: Know How SEO works

Your target audience will most likely search for information on Google. If you target the keywords your customers type in, they will find you much faster. This approach is called search engine optimization (SEO).

#### 1. Research of Keywords

To find highly relevant and low-competitive keywords, there are, for example, the following tool: <https://keywordtool.io/>

### 4<sup>th</sup> Step: Build and solidify your online authority on your website

- What's the main web address that will be associated with your brand?
- Where will all outside links to your content point to?

External platforms (bloggers and social media channels etc.) come and go, and control over the content you publish is never guaranteed there. On your own website, on the other hand, you have the total control of it and your content will be there as long as you maintain it.



## 5<sup>th</sup> Step: Create something

Once you have identified your target audience and personas, as well as relevant keywords, your topic area(s), and your content goals, you're ready to start with the content creation.

### 1. Optimize Your Content with Keywords

It's time to use the found out keywords. Write content around these keywords. Use keywords in key places in your content: headline, meta description, page URL, first and last paragraphs, sprinkled throughout, including synonymous keywords.

### 2. Find a work flow

Establish the key steps you take every time you sit down to create content. This includes these three steps:

- **Ideation** - Develop content ideas that fall within your topic area(s) and align with your content goals.
- **Write, research, draft and edit your content.** Also add images and keywords.
- **Preparation** - Strategically plan your content for publication. Use an editorial calendar to organize your schedule.

### 3. Map Content Topics to Your Content Goals

Your content should always serve a purpose. It shouldn't just exist - it needs to do something to move you closer to your idea of success. The content pillars for a hotel business could be for example:<sup>29</sup>

- Facilities (room, wellness)
- Food & Drinks (restaurant, bar)
- Activities (excursions)
- Services (massage, fitness, guided tours)
- Offers
- Places of interest
- Events/ Current events
- Quotes/Sayings
- Team or partnerships
- History of the company

### 4. Guest blog

If you run a guest blog, it will lead your target audience directly to you.

## 6<sup>th</sup> Step: Set up processes to manage & maintain your content

In the last step you need to set your budget as well as the promotion.

### 1. Budget for your major content activities

Some resources and investments have to be booked externally, such as

- Web hosting
- Help with content creation (copywriters, editors, etc.)

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<sup>29</sup> Gebel 2020, p. 95

- Tools and software for keyword research, topic research, email marketing, etc.
- Tools and software for tracking and measuring your content performance.

You should therefore calculate everything you want to use to implement your content strategy.

## 2. Promote your content

In addition to SEO, you should find other ways to promote your content. This could include the following:

- Emails and newsletters to your subscribers
- Posts on social media
- Paid advertising such as Facebook and Instagram ads

## 3. Maintain your digital content strategy

Review your content, track your progress, and measure your results. Without these activities, you will never be able to see how far you have come. Review your content for quality and currency - many of your old blogs and content will have outdated information. Updating these posts is a good idea for your digital content strategy. Track and measure your success. For example, monitor the following indicators:

- Organic website traffic
- Unique visitors
- Engagement (bounce rates, click-through behaviour, page views)
- Comments
- Social shares

## 5.3.2 Social Media

If you already know how to set up your content strategy, it's time to think about the publishing channels. Social media offers many ways to share your content and achieve a high reach of attention. If you are not yet using social media and haven't decided yet to use it for your business in future, the following comparison between traditional media and social media may help you decide.<sup>30</sup>

Traditional Media	Social Media
Fixed, unchangeable	Instantly updateable
Commentary limited and not real time	Unlimited real-time commentary
Limited, time-delayed best-seller lists	Instant popularity gauge
Archives poorly accessible	Archives accessible

<sup>30</sup> Gáti & Markos-Kujbus 2012, p. 6

Limited media mix	All media can be mixed
Committee publishers	Individual publishers
Finite	Infinite
Sharing not encouraged	Sharing and participation encouraged
Control	Freedom

Source: own table based on Gáti & Markos-Kujbus 2012

Social media has become a big influence on customer travel behaviour. According to a study about the social media platform Facebook with more than 3000 participants, the biggest topic on Facebook is vacation and travel, with a full 42% of shared content related to this.<sup>31</sup> These findings further came out about the role of Facebook in each stage of the customer journey:

- **Inspiration:** 83% confirm that the vacations of friends and family are an inspiration to them, even when they're not considering going away
- **Information:** 58% say friends' and family's experiences have encouraged them to visit a place they've never considered before
- **Planning & Booking:** 74% agree they will only book when they're confident they know exactly what they're getting; 95% use Facebook for vacation-related activities before booking
- **Experience:** 97% of those those who go online while abroad for information use Facebook
- **Follow up and sharing:** 99% do something on Facebook when they get back from a vacation (to extend their feeling of vacation excitement, to show-off what they've been up to, to offer their own recommendations to others)

This study clearly shows that social media platforms like Facebook can be used for a holistic digital customer journey.

The most important social media platforms, together with a brief description and possibilities to share content, are presented in the following table.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Roth 2013

<sup>32</sup> Gáti & Markos-Kujbus 2012, p. 6

Platform description	Content
<p><a href="http://www.facebook.com">www.facebook.com</a> is <b>market leader</b> in the field of <b>social networks</b>. You can post and share pictures and texts on this platform.</p>	<p>Share your content with your own communities <b>via Facebook groups</b>, or, if you want to reach a wider audience, use <b>Facebook pages</b>. Get the most interaction with <b>questions</b> and <b>videos</b>. By posting and sharing pictures and texts there is a possibility to bring your guests closer to the region.</p>
<p><a href="http://www.instagram.com">www.instagram.com</a> is a platform for uploading and <b>sharing images and short videos</b>. Images can also be included in other social media channels.</p>	<p>Best for sharing <b>high-quality images</b> and <b>short videos</b> with short descriptions. Relevant <b>hashtags</b> work well on this platform. <b>Stories</b> let you interact with your followers and share polls, questions, or videos in real time.</p>
<p><a href="https://twitter.com/">https://twitter.com/</a> is a platform for sharing <b>short messages</b> (max. 280 characters).</p>	<p>Twitter is all about being as <b>brief as possible</b>, using images and relevant hashtags, and retweeting content from other Twitters'. Especially suitable for the dissemination of information e.g. upcoming events.</p>
<p><a href="http://www.youtube.com">www.youtube.com</a> is the <b>worldwide market leader</b> in the field of <b>video platforms</b>. Users can watch, rate, post, share and tag videos.</p>	<p>Since Youtube belongs to Google, the video platform is enormously <b>important for search engine optimization</b>. Tip: You can <b>embed</b> your videos in your own <b>homepage</b>. The most popular videos on YouTube include tutorials, vlogs, product reviews and informative videos.</p>
<p><a href="http://www.pinterest.com">www.pinterest.com</a> is a Platform for saving, sharing and rating images and videos (= pins). Pins are collected on pin boards on specific topics.</p>	<p>The platform allows you to <b>visually</b> showcase your products/services in the <b>virtual scrapbook</b>.</p>
<p><b>Blogs</b> are <b>frequently updated websites</b> where the content is presented in chronologically descending order. The posts usually consist text and appropriate images. The circle of authors can be restricted or open, e.g. for locals and guests.</p>	<p>Content should be used to <b>attract visitors</b> and generate qualified leads.</p>

### Social media channels offer many opportunities...

- addressing new target groups
- increase reach
- market research about own customers



- image care
- make contacts
- monitor competitors
- integrate different platforms into your own online strategy
- appealing contributions through uniqueness, emotionality, information
- increase credibility: timeliness of posts and a short response time to messages and comments from guest's
- continuity in social media: monitoring to be able to react quickly to criticism and praise
- place ads
- cost-effective

### ...but also challenges...

- information must be up to date
- harder to find via Google
- not all target groups are reached
- large time investment
- bought followers

### Checklist for your Social Media appearance

- You are represented on social media platform(s).
- This has enabled you to reach new target groups.
- The social media activities are anchored in your online strategy.
- You have designated personnel responsibilities.
- You have a corporate identity for creating posts (recognition value, uniformity, topicality and uniqueness).
- You are responding quickly to news and posts.
- You engage in social media monitoring.
- Your posts have recognition value and are consistent when addressing customers.

On **YouTube**, you can find a **webinar series** (digital for tourism) on the **EU Growth channel** in which the following social media channels are examined in more detail:

**Facebook:** <https://bit.ly/3wi5WaP>

**Twitter:** <https://bit.ly/3hDkVqq>

**Other social media platforms:** <https://bit.ly/3huVqaQ>

## 5.3.3 Content Creation

Now that the content strategy has been defined and you know the benefits of social media channels, it's time for content creation.

Several steps must be considered for this as well:<sup>33</sup>

### First Step: Search engine optimization (SEO) research

The topic of SEO has already been addressed in the content strategy. The SEO provides information about the search volume for a particular keyword phrase. This will help you decide if it's worth creating content around a particular keyword.

Consider what questions your persona might ask to you and conduct keyword research on those questions. There is a rule of thumb: try to rank for achievable keywords. These are keywords with a monthly search volume and difficulty level that match your domain authority. If you have just started posting, you should target long-tail keywords with low volume and low difficulty (<50). This corresponds to a monthly volume of 200-1,000 searches. This will give you the best chance at keyword ranking and ensure that your content is seen by many users.

#### Methods for keyword research:

- Use Tools like SEMRush or Moz Keyword Explorer
- Type your keyword into a search engine and note the search suggestions.
- Look at the related search section on the search engine results pages (SERPs).

### 2nd Step: Topic development

After you have defined keywords, identify suitable topics that you would like to write about. Link the keywords to content on related subtopics. You can also refer to appropriate books, industry studies, or competitor websites for inspiration. Create an editorial plan once you've gathered ideas.

### 3rd Step: Writing

Write for your persona, use the phrasing, content and possibly even humor that resonates best with your persona. Use the title to make clear why it is profitable for the visitor to read your content. Also, besides the title, use meta descriptions and other teasers to make the content interesting for the target audience. Create unique content and put your own stamp on it. Be concise and precise. There should be a common thread throughout the content.

### 4th Step: Editing

You can either edit the content as you write it or wait a few days to look at it from a different, fresher perspective, detached from the topic. Alternatively, you could ask a colleague to give you objective feedback.

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<sup>33</sup> Lapp 2021



Pay attention to the following when editing: Avoid passive constructions, use clear language, use short sentences and lots of whitespace. To help you edit text, the following OER tools are available, for example: <https://www.grammarly.com/> and <https://hemingwayapp.com/>

### 5th Step: Upload

Upload your content to a place that is freely accessible to your customers. You can use a content management system (CMS), for example, to do this. A CMS is software that hosts digital content and allows you to display it on your website.

### 6th Step: Publish

Consider a suitable time to publish the posts to get the best impact. If you're a content newbie, timing doesn't matter much yet, but that could change over time. If you follow a set schedule, your audience will adjust. Consider events and holidays in your planning. Some social media channels like Facebook offer the function to pre-schedule posts for Facebook pages as well as for the Instagram feed to the minute.

### 7th Step: Content analysis

The most important step of content creation is content analysis, only on the basis of this you will know whether your target audience likes the content or you need to improve it.

Here are a few suggested indicators that you might want to take a closer look at:

- **Page views:** Number of visitors of your content.
- **Organic traffic:** traffic generated by search engines.
- **Bounce rate:** percentage of visitors who leave your site after viewing only one page.
- **Conversion rate:** percentage of visitors who click on a call-to-action.
- **Interaction rate:** number of people who become aware of your content via likes or shares, for example.
- **Audience growth:** new subscribers or leads generated by a content element.

The content creation process is always evolving. You should definitely pay attention to the good and bad reactions, because good content increases the number of your customers.

## 5.3.3.1 Homepage

Your homepage is the digital flagship of your own company and should therefore be the central instrument of your online marketing strategy. For website content, focus on your persona, your target keywords, and your solution to your customer's "problem." The content should show the way to the solution (= booking of your offer).

Pay attention to these following points:<sup>34</sup>

- **Timeliness:** Update your website content and information regularly and seasonally. Blogging can help you do this.
- Your website should **address specific stages of the customer journey**.

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<sup>34</sup> Fraunhofer-Institut für Materialfluss und Logistik IML 2016

- Make sure your design is **user-friendly**, including links, navigation, and images.
- **Publish only the best content**. Prioritize quality over quantity.
- Make your website **multimedia** (e.g. photo, video, audio, tourist maps).
- **Use language translations** that are relevant to your target audience.
- Use **responsive web design**. With Responsive Web Design, the layout of the homepage adapts flexibly to the size of the end device used.
- **Integrate social media channels**, blogs, YouTube videos into your homepage **by linking them**.
- Your website should be **findable via the appropriate search terms** (keyword: search engine optimization).
- Your homepage should be **barrier-free**.
- Use your **own booking platform** on the homepage.
- Use **call-to-action** buttons.

### 5.3.3.2 Reviews from other customers

In the past, due to the lack of information, people interested in tourism had difficulties in deciding to book an offer that was not in a travel guide or recommended by an agency. Today they have a problem of oversupply of information. The Internet is a huge data warehouse with new information from online users being added every day. It is almost impossible to read everything and extremely challenging to find relevant information to get a general overview.

In the tourism sector, numerous online reviews are added in particular. Potential customers read these reviews and are influenced by them.<sup>35</sup> Digitally shared travel experiences in the form of electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) play an important role in shaping tourists' awareness, expectations, perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours.<sup>36</sup>

#### Advantage of rating sites

- Access to information and feedback in real time
- making users to prefer online booking
- consumers' decision can be influenced by others buyers' opinions

#### Problems with reviews

- Some sites only offer a rating system by stars or scales without text; this does not provide enough information for potential customers
- Reviews are not concise
- Scalar ratings make it difficult to compare SMEs with different service offerings
- Completely different opinions from one user to another, which can be confusing towards readers
- Some aspects are more important than others, so the overall rating is not objective, but rather influenced by these aspects
- Some reviews include responses from the hotel to customer complaints

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<sup>35</sup> Cristian 2015

<sup>36</sup> Pratiwi 2020



### First Step: Integrate and visualize ratings on your own website<sup>37</sup>

Ratings are an important decision-making aid for digital target groups before booking. According to a study<sup>38</sup>, in which reviews in the customer communication of tourism companies and the influence on the booking behaviour of a digital target group were investigated, 90 percent of the digital customers used rating portals as a decision-making aid. However, digital target groups themselves are only moderately active when it comes to writing ratings themselves. Research has shown that guests are 3.6 times more likely to leave a review when prompted. In doing so, 80 percent of those prompted rate positively, so collecting reviews most likely leads to a good rating for the company and helps improve the overall rating. So tourism businesses should become proactive and collect their own reviews and share them openly on the website.

### 2nd Step: Build trust through authenticity and credibility

Fake news, bought likes and click-baits make customers suspicious, so reviews must be credible, authentic and trustworthy. Independent authenticity checks will cost customers too much time in the process, so reviews on independent platforms such as Trip Advisor or HolidayCheck are considered as a very trustworthy source of information and offer a quick solution for confirming credibility.

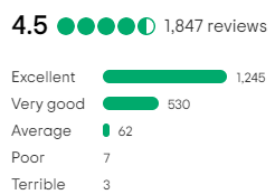
#### Reviews are credible for digital audiences when...

- the writing style and the language of the author appear authentic and personal,
- the content of the review provides details, e.g., about the accommodation, location, service, etc., and the author's own pictures indicate that he or she was actually there,
- is not older than 3 months and therefore very up to date,
- when the self-similarity to a certain group of people (for example couples) is determined, therefore filter functions are very helpful

#### Ratings are less trustworthy if...

- only pictures of organizers are to be found
- if the ratings are suspiciously too positive
- ratings are too short
- only percentages and no more detailed descriptions are available
- the rating is written in incomprehensible technical language

### 3rd Step: Compact presentation of the most relevant reviews



Ratings should be as simple as possible, and it should be possible to submit them clearly and in detail. The daily flood of information explains the desire for clarity and simplicity here. The most common forms of visualization are scales:

**Numeric scales:** clear and easy to understand; calculated from the average values

Figure 12: Example of a numeric scale

**Example:** [www.tripadvisor.com](http://www.tripadvisor.com) (Old Town Nuremberg)

<sup>37</sup> zur Oven-Krockhaus et. al 2019

<sup>38</sup> zur Oven-Krockhaus et. al 2019



Figure 13: Example of a scale with stars

**Semiotic signs (stars, dots, sun-shaped emoticons in combination with a bar chart or percentage display):** often used in tourism to clarify the overall result; Rating range mostly at five, which makes the rating more detailed; in the hotel industry often stars, as they are a widespread and common measure of quality (Star classification); the sun arouse the emotional involvement of the bookers, vacation feeling.

**Smileys:** enable simple evaluation process, very clear display type with limited selection options, internationally known and unambiguous symbols

**Different categories:** offers bookers as detailed an impression as possible of the various qualities and weaknesses; simplicity of evaluation may suffer as a result

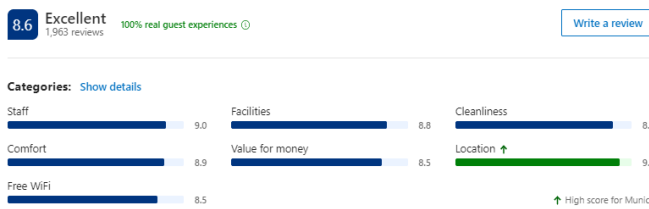


Figure 14: Example of a scale with different categories

#### 4th Step Creating achievable expectations through visual content

Visual elements are also important to make a booking decision. Customers prefer a mix of professional images provided by the company and authentic photos posted by other guests. By embedding your Instagram feed below the offer or including reviews, you can actively engage these visuals and thereby build trust with your customers.

Customers should continue to be supported throughout the entire customer journey, but especially after the end of the trips, because ratings from independent private individuals exude a higher degree of credibility, unlike traditional marketing methods.<sup>39</sup>

### 5.3.3.3 TripAdvisor

One of the world's best-known platforms for reviews of tourist attractions is [TripAdvisor](https://www.tripadvisor.com). In 2018, a total of 155 million content items were submitted by users on TripAdvisor, including 6 million reviews.<sup>40</sup> The 6 million ratings were distributed across all continents: 53% of the locations were in Europe; 23% in North America. With such a high number of users, it is worth taking a closer look at the platform and possibly even using it for your own business.

<sup>39</sup> zur Oven-Krockhaus et. al 2019

<sup>40</sup> TripAdvisor 2019



According to Murphy (2018), Head of Restaurant Products, there are three important rating criteria that need to be considered in order to be successful on the platform:

- **the overall rating:** as the name suggests, this is the number of ratings overall
- **timeliness:** recent reviews carry more weight than older reviews
- **relevance:** certain criteria (e.g. keyword sights, location) receive a higher rating than the overall rating, at this point you can stand out from others

To increase your own reviews, Murphy recommends asking customers directly for reviews and explicitly mentioning aspects you are particularly proud of in the review.

Using neutral review platforms pays off: of the 6 million reviews in 2018 mentioned at the beginning, 81% had an overall rating of 4 or 5 (5 is the highest possible rating on the scale); only 10% had an overall rating of 2 or 1. Fake reviews are thoroughly screened in the process, as before submitted reviews are published, they go through a moderation process that uses digital analysis techniques to identify potentially problematic reviews. For violations of the applicable rules, TripAdvisor imposes penalties on businesses and individuals who attempt to circumvent the rules of the system.

## Final Assessment

1. Which of the following techniques can be used for storytelling?
  - a. **Images**
  - b. **Music**
  - c. **personal aneddotes**
  - d. **facts**
  
2. Which phases belong to the digital customer journey?
  - a. Planning and Booking
  - b. Disinterest
  - c. Introduction
  - d. Inspiration
  
3. Which statements belong to the Don'ts in the digital customer journey?
  - a. Don't openly communicate with your customers, those reviews contribute to the success of your business.
  - b. Don't be active on every social network and distribution channel.
  - c. Don't push your customers to share their experience.
  - d. Don't forget that the most powerful marketing tool is an exceptional customer experience.
  
4. What defines an influencer?
  - a. Influencers are a prime example of storytelling in action.
  - b. Influencers do not aim to promote products or lifestyles through their channels.
  - c. Influencers can influence every stage of the customer journey.
  - d. Influencer can build a strong relationship/connection with their followers.
  
5. What types of mobile applications do exist?
  - a. hybrid solution apps
  - b. web apps
  - c. native apps
  - d. digital app
  
6. What potentials do ICTs have?
  - a. ICTs are essential for the success of tourism businesses.
  - b. ICTs are a key determinant of organizational competitiveness.
  - c. ICTs can be integrated into each phase throughout the customer journey.
  - d. ICTs will increase costs, but allows the provider to have direct contact with the customer.
  
7. What kind of online distribution should companies choose that already have a relatively high reach but want to get even more?
  - a. mixed distribution
  - b. in-house distribution
  - c. third-party distribution

8. New work provides...

- a. the conversion of people to technology so that less employees are needed.
- b. management of data that is accessible for the whole staff any time and at any place.
- c. new possibilities like goods ordering, online accessibility of employees, video conferences
- d. a lot of challenges because it is not about mastering new technologies, it is about retraining and schooling your whole team.

9. It's not quite easy to digitalize your business, because...

- a. there is no proof that online processes are more effective and facilitating.
- b. in times of crisis, your online systems that is necessary to manage your company won't be accessible.
- c. a quick response to changing needs and unexpected problems cannot be guaranteed after all.
- d. it relies on many technologies that are rare and unaffordable.

10. Why do many companies offer online room booking?

- a. Because it is a lot cheaper for customers to book online. In that case, the hotel can gain more loyalty.
- b. Via online bookings, the hotel is able to get a better overview of room capacity or occupancy. It can control the contribution of floors and rooms, for instance in times of COVID-19 restrictions.
- c. Because a lot of companies do not have enough staff members to manage booking issues, so online bookings can replace a lot of staff members.
- d. Because customer data of booking issues can be analysed that way and help the company to optimize their marketing.

11. What is content strategy about?

- a. Content Strategy is a guideline of how to create content about your company referring to the main questions you have to ask yourself: what and for who do I want to create content, and on what platform do I publish it?
- b. Content Strategy helps your company to create content based on your own experience and journey with the services and offers.
- c. Content Strategy is a method in marketing to maximize profits and to make savings plans in order to manage your company financially.
- d. You need to define a content strategy by planning, creating and distributing a specific content to market your own product and services and to reach your target group.

12. How can I identify my target audience and connect with them?

- a. I can do an audience research and develop an audience persona with the help of a sample referring to my identified audience, to whom I create my content.
- b. I can publish an online feedback about personal properties on my general website.
- c. I can write my posts referring to my ideal audience in consideration of their needs and interests to provoke a conversation or connection.
- d. I can ask my customers that are already my target audience for a genuine review towards their journeys at my business.

13. How can I manage and maintain my content in a correct way?
- I need to calculate my budget for my activities on content creation and what ways I want to publish my content. Also, I must keep my progress on track to adapt new changes.
  - It is important to note that outdated information cannot be corrected or deleted that easily because it was part of your strategy.
  - I should not review and track my progress on my content that often, because it will impede my creativity and freedom.
  - It's better to deactivate free comments on my content to protect vulnerable parts of my audience.
14. What effects do keywords have regarding to content creation?
- They make your content seem more useful and reduce a lot of text production.
  - I could write my content along the selected keywords, so searchers can find my content with the help of these words.
  - I can frame my current topic on these keywords to follow a specific character or guideline.
  - Keywords are effective on research because they can copy your keywords in their own posts to make your content more viral.
15. Social media has become essential for tourism because...
- they provide real-time commentary, an instant update 24/7 and can help you to reach popularity for your destination in a very fast way.
  - on these platforms you have much freedom on what and how you want to create your content.
  - they are effective tools which companies consistently use to do advertisements referring to their audiences' demands and to trigger inspiration.
  - because you can publish content without any agreement to sharing your data with the social media provider.
16. What problems are possible when customers share reviews?
- Opinions can be very different from each other which is not helpful for potential customers or your company.
  - The reviews might be fake and you are forced to delete them without being sure.
  - Some users only prefer using scalar rating which is not accurate.
  - It's quite hard to compare different kinds of reviews with different kinds of bookings. This qualitative comparison leads to too much effort.

## 5.4 Case studies

### 5.4.1 Bayerische Staatsforsten AöR (Bavarian State Forest AöR, Germany)

<https://www.baysf.de/de/wald-erkunden/baumwipfelpfad-steigerwald.html>

#### 5.4.1.1 Overview

Bayerische Staatsforsten AöR offers activities related with natural environment based on the Bavarian forest, called Steigerwald. Activities, like hiking and climbing, mostly in treetops and along paths through the forest offer guests impressions around the natural habitat

Baumwipfelpfad, placed in the Franconian-Bavarian area called Steigerwald, is known for its unique topographical varieties. It provides visitors to get learn about the local forest and forestry.

By going up to the treetop, visitors can enjoy an impressive 360° view of the natural environment around and below them

Bayerische Staatsforsten AöR bases its strategy on the sustainable exploitation and use of the forest, with the intention to save the biodiversity. Sustainable forestry is the aim, while keeping ecology, economy and social function of forests in balance as well as providing renewable and ecological rough material out of wood. For this reason, outdoor activities become also awareness raising activities: visitors are able to comprehend topics of forest and forestry as well as new perspectives on natural, economic and living space of the forest.

Bayerische Staatsforsten AöR, moreover, offers audited accessible services.

Three towers can be booked for different uses: not only for touristic interests, they also can be booked for business or private events.

#### 5.4.1.2 Why is it considered a best practice?

Digital technologies are one of the most important tools for the sustainable forestry Bayerische Staatsforsten AöR promotes.

Promotional and educational materials can be downloaded on their creative and well-designed website. It offers, moreover, images, videos and 360° top view.

Bayerische Staatsforsten AöR uses a VR-alike tool through an app called "Wipfel-App" that also give the possibility to find some extra impressions and information while inspecting the prescribed paths.

They are also very active in public relations through several social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, etc.

Pictures and videos are their main promotional tool, making the most of the wonderful view from the top. Moreover, they are active in various group offerings and discounts.



## 5.4.2 eDialog Sp. z o. o. (aplikacja Tropiciel / Tropiciel mobile application, Poland)

[www.edialog.pl](http://www.edialog.pl)

[www.geotropiciel.pl](http://www.geotropiciel.pl)

### 5.4.2.1 Overview

eDialog Sp. z o. o provides IT solutions, virtual city games and themed walks.

In the field of tourism: creators of the Tropiciel application, available on mobile devices and being a platform for city games, field games, electronic guides, virtual walks addressed to individuals, families, couples, groups (e.g. professional, schools, kindergartens), both city residents and tourists.

They focus on the city of Łódź because it is a city of contrasts that intrigues at almost every step. It is full of factories, yet very green, eclectic and avant-garde at the same time. Łódź dazzles with the splendour of factory palaces and amazes with artistic installations. Today it is a creative city, a city of festivals, a city of avant-garde art.

The application is available on both IOs and Android systems for mobile devices and it can be used both in the field and remotely.

Originally developed for promotional purposes, this application offered interesting solutions during the Covid-19 health emergency, showing wide opportunities for virtual tourism.

### 5.4.2.2 Why is it considered a best practice?

Digital technologies for eDialog become powerful tools for promoting local cultural heritage both for tourists and residents. City/field games, in this sense, are not only leisure, but also awareness raising activities.

Digital tourism tools, actually, are not very well developed among SMEs. Nevertheless, eDialog is also an example of virtuous cooperation with local stakeholders (city hall, local media, local ambassadors, tourist organizations) for the promotion of the region, basing of local identity.



## 5.4 Figure references

- Figure 1: Passion passport 2020
- Figure 2: own graphic based on Wenet 2017
- Figure 3: Jacob Riglin: influencer, photographer & entrepreneur
- Figure 4: Jacob Riglin's typical advertisement for a destination, retrieved from [https://www.instagram.com/p/B3nWleTAELV/?utm\\_source=ig\\_web\\_copy\\_link](https://www.instagram.com/p/B3nWleTAELV/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link)
- Figure 6: pixabay
- Figure 7: App "Visit Singapore"
- Figure 8: booking.com partners
- Figure 9: own graphic based on Hoffmeister 2017
- Figure 10: MessengerPeople
- Figure 11: Eccleston Square, retrieved from [https://www.ecclestonsquarehotel.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/IMG\\_2275-1-scaled.jpg](https://www.ecclestonsquarehotel.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/IMG_2275-1-scaled.jpg)
- Figure 12: own graphic based on Gebel 2020
- Figure 13: Example of a numeric scale
- Figure 14: Example of a scale with stars
- Figure 15: Example of a scale with different categories.



## Module 6: Soft and practical skills

# Unit 6.1 Soft skills: Social and Communication skills

## Unit introduction

This course is for everyone who is interested in improving their communication and social skills, particularly those working in tourism. This study would include an overview of the most critical life skills, with an explanation of how communication works and strategies for properly understanding interpersonal communication. It will go into how to develop networking and communications skills as well as the conversation process.

Before we get into the details, here's a quick rundown of what will be covered in the following pages:

- Messages are exchanged between people during a chat.
- Each message is built around an idea, thought, or goal originating from the cognitive system.
- If one person, the sender, wants to convey this idea to another person, the receiver, they must encode it in a signage scheme (e.g., language) to deliver a comprehensible message.
- The receiver will receive the coded message in several ways.
- The recipient comprehends the signage system, may read (decipher) the message, and grasps its basic concept.

## 6.1.1 Communicative Competences & Communication Skills

### 6.1.1.1 What is communicative competence?

Communicative competence is linked to sustaining personal relationships, including marriage, romance, and friendship; and to social integration versus loneliness; and thus, also to health and happiness, all of which rely on the social connections of an individual. For academic and occupational performance, skills in a range of communicative roles are also important.

Communicative skills can vary in importance across various environments, such as private versus organizational environments, dyadic face-to-face situations, person communications, social media, group contact or public situations, symmetric versus asymmetric relationships, language practice settings in the classroom, health care contexts, work interviews, etc.

The involvement and importance of components varies also between different communicative functions, such as persuasion, negotiation, arguing, instruction, emotional support, socializing, conversation, social problem solving, public speech, etc.

Top Resume Skills: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_bZi-34IFxs&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_bZi-34IFxs&feature=emb_logo)

#### Types of Communication

There are 2 primary forms of contact that you can use every day, including:

1. **Verbal:** To communicate via a spoken language.
2. **Nonverbal:** communicating through body language, facial and vocal expressions.

- **Written:** By means of written words, symbols and numbers, correspondence.
- **Visual:** Photographic communication, art, drawings, sketches, charts, and graphs.

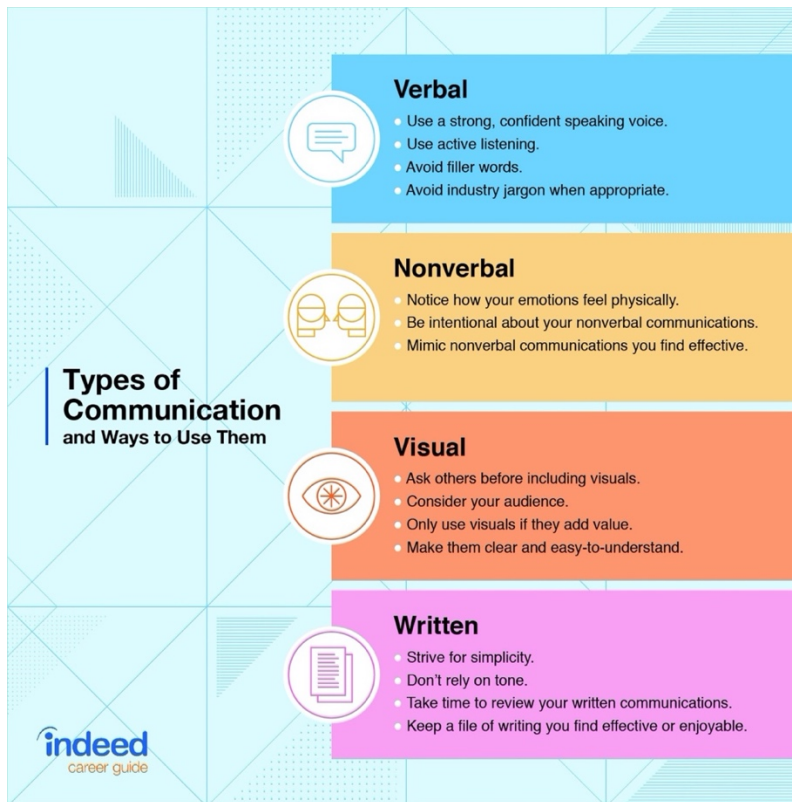


Figure 1: Types of communication

## 6.1.1.2 Important communication skills

Here are some tips to look out for when looking to enhance your ability to interact with others effectively:

### 1. Listening

It is important to be a good listener to become a good communicator. Practicing active listening is essential, paying close attention to what others say and clarifying ambiguities by rephrasing their questions for greater comprehension.

### 2. Conciseness

In as few words as possible, convey your message. Rambling is going to make the listener tune out or be uncertain about what you are talking about.

### 3. Body Language

Use eye contact, use hand gestures, and watch the voice tone.

In communication, eye contact is important. Look at the person in the eye to indicate that you are focused on the conversation. But make sure that the person is not stared at, as it may make him or her uncomfortable.

#### 4. Confidence

Be sure in what you say and of your experiences with others in conversation. It can be as easy to be positive as holding eye contact, maintaining a relaxed body posture, and speaking with concision. Try not to ask questions about comments and stop attempting to sound aggressive or demeaning.

#### 5. Open-Mindedness

It is important to sympathize with their point of view in cases where you disagree with what someone else has to say, whether it be with a boss, a co-worker, or a friend, rather than simply trying to get your message across. Respect others' opinions and never resort to insulting those who disagree with you.

#### 6. Respect

A significant part of communication is understanding what others have to say and accepting them. It can be as easy to be polite as paying attention to what they have to say, using the name of the person, and not being disturbed. The other person will feel respected by respecting others, which will contribute to a more truthful and fruitful conversation.

#### 7. Using the right medium

There are many different means of communication to use. Choosing the right one is crucial. For example, it is more important to speak in person about serious matters (layoffs, adjustments in compensation, etc.) than to send an email concerning the matter.

### 6.1.1.3 What is the meaning of communication?

#### Communication is important

The term communication comes from the Latin word '**communicare**', which means to share. It is the exchange of information between two or more people. It entails the exchange of thoughts, concepts, imaginations, behaviours, and written material. Paul Watzlawick has a well-known term that emphasizes the importance of communication. "One cannot not communicate," it says<sup>1</sup>.

What is the starting point for communication? Before you can start talking, you must first understand what you want to say, compose, or explain. This definition is conceived 'in the brain.' To phrase it another way, it's in the cognitive system<sup>2</sup>. This is a general term for all a person's knowledge, expertise, and abilities, or in other words, everything you've learned and processed in your life.

#### The Cognitive System

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<sup>1</sup> Paul Watzlawick (25 July 1921 - 31 March 2007) was an Austrian-American family therapist, psychologist, communication theorist and philosopher. He dealt with family therapy and general psychotherapy. Watzlawick believed that people create their own suffering precisely by focusing their attention on "repairing" their emotional problems. Watzlawick and his research group also postulated 5 axioms (i.e., principles) of communication. The statement "One cannot not communicate" is the first of these 5 axioms. This sentence sounds illogical at first. But every behaviour that is displayed sends a message to the environment. Even if a person on the bus just stares at the floor and does not speak a single word, he or she is sending a message to his or her fellow human beings: it makes it clear that they have no interest in being in contact with anyone.

<sup>2</sup> The term cognitive system refers to all mental activities of the human being such as perception, attention, memory, thinking, problem solving, speech comprehension and speech production.

Everyone comes up with an idea and wants to share it with someone else. This is what communication is all about. The definition is defined based on the human cognitive structure. If you try to demonstrate to others the advantages of a particular manufacturing process, for example, your idea is based on how well you comprehend the process, what interactions you have had with it, and so on.

Your thought cannot be conveyed to another person in the same manner that your own cognitive system cannot be transmitted to another person. It is impossible to decipher someone's mind.

### Misinterpretations

It seems to be plain and straightforward, but closer examination reveals that it is not. Ideas are insignificant in comparison to the cognitive system: an individual's cognitive system is enormous and all their memories, information, thoughts, and emotions, etc. are interconnected and form a dynamic structure. In addition, a single term tends to be very small. As a result, it can only express a fraction of what should be articulated.

Not everybody is familiar with the signage system: in certain signage systems, the recipient must recognize the sender's message to decode it. The majority of this is granted if they both speak the same language. However, when it comes to specialized languages or foreign contacts, things can get complicated easily. It becomes much more difficult if the signage scheme is based on facial expressions, gestures, and abstract artifacts rather than spoken or written words.

How miscommunication happens: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gCfzeONu3Mo>

## 6.1.1.4 Communication as Interaction

### Interaction

We've always thought of contact as a one-way street: one person delivers, the other receives. True human touch, on the other hand, is almost always a two-way operation. Any sender becomes a recipient in a communication, and vice versa. This is referred to as contact.

### Feedback

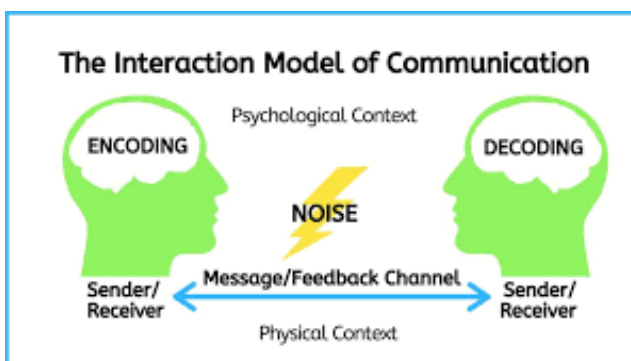


Figure 2: Communication process Model

All people transfer details on to one another. Any message sent is inspired by the responses to previous messages sent by the partners. As a result, everything said is a reference to what the other person said previously, and therefore a reaction. Not only are queries, answers, and further questions linked to this, but each communicative act is often influenced by previous dialogue messages, and feedback is often given. Again, words aren't necessary in this situation.

Feedback is nothing more than messages extracted from an idea through encoding. This idea could be a reference to what the communication partner said before or what was understood in discussion. Your own input concept develops under the control of the other's meaning (as you have perceived it). Around the same time, it is influenced by your own neural structure. The sender encodes and decodes feedback, and the receiver transmits it to his or her own neural system. No one would guess that



there was a first answer that wasn't suggestions at any point. While logically correct, this is not the case in practice.

The first words you say to others are influenced by their gestures, movements, facial expressions, and overall appearance. Knowing that someone you're going to criticize is sensitive, for example, can influence your own language just before you say something or make eye contact. You don't really need to have been conscious of the other person's sensitivity. It's enough to have heard stories from a third source.

When it comes to media-mediated communication and cooperation, the last paragraph is now the most significant. It is always the case when you transmit something to others without first receiving a present message from the recipient (not including facial expressions) - or by phone, e-mail, fax, or short message. In a chat, you should at least take a brief peek at the other person's face. In media-mediated correspondence, one must send messages without providing up-to-date information about the receiver.

### Neutral Wording

The following should be considered in all communications, especially media-mediated contact through e-mail or voice messages on the answering machine, to avoid potential errors and misunderstandings: Formulate and listen to messages in a neutral manner!

Why is it so important to write in a neutral tone? You have much less detail about the recipient's present state when you file an e-mail, for example. Consequently, write your messages so that they sound neutral and don't depend on being perceived in a certain way, for example:

- Stop irony if you can't be certain that the recipient would be open to it in either case.
- If you can't be certain that the receiver will grasp allusions without precise explanation, don't use them.

Understand neutrally: Of course, the same is true as well. Reading between the lines in other people's e-mails is not a good idea. Often note that a formulation may have easily been expressed in an inelegant fashion. It's a mistake to let a few lines of text paint a complete picture of the writer's personality in your mind.

### Flexible Messages

Have instructions for how to read your communications, such as:

- "This is not so urgent, please take your time with an answer" or "It is extremely urgent, please reply immediately." - Caution: You can only get someone to rush if you give them plenty of time every now and then. It will inevitably lose its efficacy if anyone is actively encouraging you to rush.
- "I'm sure you're familiar with the project's device specifications," says the speaker. If this is not the case, please contact me via e-mail or phone," or as an introduction e-mail: "I'd like to go over my plans for our project with you in depth." "Can you tell me what you already know so I don't have to waste your time with pointless information?"

Before engaging with others, whether face-to-face or via e-mail, you can make assumptions about their mood. In a straightforward dialogue, you have the advantage of conveniently correcting erroneous conclusions. In media-mediated communication, this is more complicated. Evaluate your beliefs about the recipient of your message more carefully, intentionally, and without prejudice in this situation, and be open to corrections.

### Channels of Communication



There haven't been any additional details on how a message goes from the sender to the receiver so far. This happens using a contact system, which is the 'way' through which a message is sent. Communication gets more complex and costly as technology progresses.

We suggest:

- Controlling the technology's function is an essential aspect of media-mediated communication.
- Never presume that things would fall into place on their own.
- Give yourself plenty of time to troubleshoot and solve problems.

### 6.1.1.5 What networks are open to us?

Make sure the person who receives your message has access to your contact channel. It's not a smart idea to include a zipped file in an unusual graphic format as an e-mail attachment. As opposed to an e-mail, a written letter that looks formal may seem exaggerated in some situations. Both are often needed, and e-mails and letters must be written in color or on high-quality paper. More alternatives have several advantages, but they also introduce new problems.

#### Nonverbal Communication

There's a misconception that just 35% of the speech is verbal, and 65% is nonverbal when you talk. That isn't exactly accurate since so much depends on the circumstance and meaning. Nonverbal contact, on the other hand, has the power to make or ruin the post. Here are several examples of nonverbal contact and the impact they can have on your communication's success:

- **Facial expressions:** –happy, depressed, angry—assist you in conveying your message. When you speak, and particularly when you listen, be mindful of your facial expression. It's easy to forget.
- **Gestures:** While speaking, a gesture will amplify the message. Nonverbal contact that makes your message known includes pointing out something you want your audience to look at more closely.

Such movements, such as extending a warm hand to a co-worker who needs special attention or forming a fist to express indignation or rage, help to better reach the audience as you talk.

- **Proximity:** When you speak, your proximity to your audience sends a nonverbal message. It's possible that your nonverbal contact would be intimidating if your height is imposing, and you leave a very limited gap between you and your listener. Giving others so much room, on the other hand, is an uncomfortable nonverbal contact that can confuse the listener.
- **Touch:** Nonverbal signals such as shaking an audience member's hand or placing your hand on his back will influence the success of your speech. Touch elicits feelings of affection, but it also elicits feelings of control. When a woman touches a listener, it's often believed that she's being affectionate or expressing love, while when a man touches a listener, it's often interpreted as a symbol of control or even superiority.
- **Eye Contact:** When orally speaking or listening, making eye contact with an audience shows the other person that you're involved and engaged in the dialogue. The trait of integrity is also communicated to the other group by good eye contact.





- **Appearance:** Clothing, hair, and jewellery all play a role in nonverbal communication. When you have a pet dachshund, wearing a dachshund pin on your lapel each morning means much about you as a human. Similarly, the quality and condition of your clothes, as well as how it suits and whether it is suitable for the season, all speak volumes about you as a communicator.

Nonverbal contact shows a great deal about your communication style and how you interact with others. It pays to be mindful of the components of your nonverbal interactions so that your message has the most effect.

### Summary

In conclusion, conversation is still a two-way path. Interactors are constantly influencing one another. Each message is a form of feedback, and the other way around. There are various networks for communications, each of which transports a message across a medium (e.g. paper, copper wire, fiber optic cable). There is nonverbal communication in addition to verbal communication. All your contact skills do not tempt you to dissect any conversation. The goal is to increase your understanding, and you can put this experience to good use. The advantages of these suggestions should, in any event, outweigh the initiative. The aim is to communicate in a manner that others can understand.

Types of Communication Interpersonal, Non-Verbal, Written & Oral:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7BIYJVr7M2U&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7BIYJVr7M2U&feature=emb_logo)

## 6.1.2 The Interaction Process

### 6.1.2.1 Four sides of a message

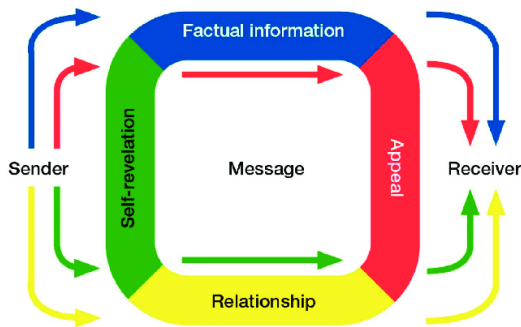


Figure 3: 4 Sides Model (Schulz von Thun 1981)

The meaning of a message, according to Schulz von Thun, has four sides. A sender delivers a message that includes all four aspects of the meaning, and the recipient receives it from four separate interpretation ears. If all four sides of a message are known, it can only have one interpretation.

Based to how the sender interprets a statement, it may have multiple interpretations. Some stages are difficult to discern from one another. The sender specifies a deadline by which a project outcome must be available.

#### Different Interpretations of a Statement

**Factual Information:** "The project's deadline is the first of June. That's getting a little close, so we'll have to move quickly ", according to the statement.

**Relationship:** What is the relationship between you and the sender? That isn't entirely obvious. "The project's deadline is June 1st," says the positive. Negative: "It was clear you wouldn't be able to do it in time again." "I think it's awesome that you've performed so easily and consistently up to now," you might say neutrally.

**Self-revelation:** "The project's deadline is the first of June. You perform at an excessively slow pace. I believe your career is in jeopardy if you do not make an effort to reach the deadline ".

**Appeal:** "The project's deadline is the first of June. And make haste!" "Now will be a good time to present a first interim result," for example.

It's impossible to tell where one-dimension ends, and another begins. It's always difficult to tell the difference, particularly when it comes to relationships and self-revelation. Relationship messages begin with "you" and include a statement about the receiver, which is a good distinguishing criterion. Self-revelation messages start with the letter 'I' and contain statements about the sender. The sample formulation "I don't think there's any need for you to be concerned about it" shows how it combines.

It is important to note that the claims on the four sides of the message cannot be determined clearly. Most of the time, messages focus on one page. Then it's easy to recognize their declaration.

#### Accept vague signals or ask for clarification

Which of these statements is correct is determined by several factors: from previous conversations between the conversation partners, from other communications in the same context (possibly the exchange or e-mail continues), and even more. If this is a real case and you have more information about the sender of the letter, it is likely that you do understand what is being said.

However, it is often ambiguous and can only be answered by asking. Always keep this restriction in mind: accept messages that are unclear or inquire about them.

How to Prevent Quarrels and Communicate Better with Your Peers:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cY9Ofvr2ouw>



## Preferred sending sides and preferred ears

In certain messages, one side is more critical than the other. In objective debates, the focus is on conveying accurate information. This is your only source of strength. Personal interests may also influence which hand gets the most attention. It's common for the most emphasized side to be shielded behind vocabulary that seems to be distinct on the surface. Appeals can be served up with phrases like 'It's always fun when you...'

There are preferences on both the sender's and the recipient's hand, just as there are on the sender's side. Many people focus on some aspects of a message while ignoring others.

Employees with different ears could understand a Happy New Year message differently. The self-revealing ear hears that the boss is very relieved, the factual information ear hears problems have been solved. The appeal ear hears the home office continues to get better and better; the relationship ear hears he is particularly fond of home office employees.

The model has two benefits:

- It can help clarify interactions by sensing and responding to "secret" signals, such as an appeal.
- It will assist in deciding the communication's impact: Different sides of a message produce different outcomes. For example, factual information has a mainly informative effect, while the relational facets of relationships and self-disclosure have a strong emotional impact, and the appeal clearly promotes intervention. As a consequence, if you find a message's impact that you don't understand, you can search for the message's accompanying hand.

## 6.1.2.2 Conversation Techniques

In this part, we'll introduce some specific strategies to help you communicate successfully:

- Goal-oriented communication: aligning communication with previously identified objectives
- Reciprocity: achieving a certain equilibrium between the shares of the respective interaction parties.
- Use of "I" formulations: emphasizing your own views, concepts, and desires.
- Feedback: The 'right' kind of feedback.

### Techniques

Conversation strategies are used to guarantee that individuals make the most of their interactions. A business is like a large system made up of various 'parts,' or workers. Media-assisted collaboration necessitates a much more evolved contact community than simple face-to-face interaction. This covers topics like transparent agreements, explicit assignments, and clear outcomes. Communication techniques are aimed at improving this culture of communication.

It takes two steps to make the contact priorities crystal clear:

1. Be as precise as possible when describing the communication's objectives: It usually takes just a few minutes of reflection to be certain of one's own preferences. Several brief moments of 'self-reflection' during the day are normally necessary, although in some cases, a little more time could be needed. This 'becoming transparent' is particularly feasible and easier to do in the case of digital communication.

2. Communicate these goals to your communication partner: In the second step, you can also inform your contact partner of your goals. You will do so by following three 'laws':
  - 1) When defining the goal, be as precise as possible.
  - 2) Provide a benchmark for deciding if the goal has been achieved.
  - 3) Create a date for completing the goal.

Define a benchmark for determining whether the target has been met. The deal should be target-oriented, and there should be a deadline for achieving the goal. In the case of digital media, the 'becoming transparent' is especially possible and easier to obtain.

### Mutual reciprocity

Reciprocity ensures that the percentages of communication in a conversation between two individuals should be equally divided in two directions. Both can chat for about the same amount of time, and e-mails should be about the same length. At some point, the person who writes a lot more will infer that the other person lacks commitment, while the person who writes less may inevitably avoid reading the writer who writes a lot's many or long e-mails. Of course, an appropriate distribution of time and resources does not always mean equivalent length or distance, such as when someone joins a project team and must adapt to their new surroundings. They'll then devote more time to listening or reading rather than contributing. The word 'appropriate' implies that they are free to ask questions and make comments.

This means that one communication partner should not reveal too much information while the other keeps a low profile, or that one participant should not be emotional while the other remains objective. Of note, there are several exceptions to the rule: If you were talking with a customer support person about a product problem, for example, it would be understandable if you only talked about the "stupid product" while the customer support person dealt with the problem factually. These exceptions, on the other hand, should be rare. Furthermore, some situations where such an exemption was previously considered to be permissible are now being questioned.

### First-person formulations

Communication is often about one's own neural structure, as the psychological paradigm of communication showed. At any given time, a person may only make comments about themselves. Therefore, it's a smart idea to use as many "I" sentences as possible to prove that it's a comment from you, such as: "I've found that this app sometimes crashes."; "I don't think we'll make any money on this task" ("I feel that our new colleague is too uncooperative.").

#### *Observations and suggestions*

The following are the three rules that guide the usage of "I" formulations in conversational contexts:

- Share your own thoughts and emotions.
- Have as much information as possible on how the feeling/impression occurred and what it relates to.
- Describe how you think your feeling or intuition relates to the current situation.

### Feedback

The importance of feedback was already emphasized when we addressed the communication process. There are also guidelines that make the whole negotiation process easier and more effective. This includes any situation in which you are reacting to someone else's message, whether it be a spoken phrase, an e-mail, or the result of a work. The feedback will usually be on



what you wish to do, such as changing things about the other person's behaviour, protecting their sympathies, and so on.

The following are some suggested feedback rules:

- Avoid making any conclusions
- Describe a concrete attitude
- Provide feedback as soon as possible after a comment

Of note, the request to use "I" formulas also applies to ratings. If you follow all of these rules, you'll have the highest chance of convincing the other person to accept your advice and, as a result, accomplishing something yourself. For example, harsh or general comments are quickly seen as insulting and are either not tolerated or readily dismissed ("I am not always like this").

Giving Feedback: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Id\\_uG8Djdsc&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Id_uG8Djdsc&feature=emb_logo)

## 6.1.3 Improving Networking Skills

### 6.1.3.1 Definition

The word networking expertise encompasses all the skills required for effective relationship management. Relationship management entails the establishment, maintenance, and targeted usage of social connections. One clear reason for why we build social networks is that we foresee certain benefits from them. Relationships account for roughly 60% of career success! Furthermore, social contacts account for 30% of all job placements. In addition to the workplace, networking skills can be used in the private sector. To begin with, this entails the opportunity to form and sustain friendships.

To strengthen your networking skills, you must first gain a better understanding of networks. The three models/principles mentioned below are intended to help you get a better understanding of social networks and, as a result, to improve your own networking abilities.

Interpersonal Skills: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x8vWVWNbk48&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x8vWVWNbk48&feature=emb_logo)

The word networking can leave a sour taste in certain people's mouths. Many of us are unsure where to begin, what to say when we make a connection, or how to keep the connection going. Even though we think networking and creating authentic relationships are both an art and a science, we are going to summarize what we've learned over the last few years. So, here's a no-nonsense networking guide.

#### Stage 1: Mindset

Delete the term "working" from the system when you consider networking. People talk about getting on their "networking game," and we can't help but think how many baths they'll need to get rid of the inauthenticity afterwards. It's possible that the people you're aiming to target are contacted by thousands, if not hundreds, of people much like you, and it's not impossible for them to pick out the fakers.

Genuine partnerships, not business cards, have the best networking opportunities. Treating the person, you're trying to form a friendship with as a friend rather than a business contact would get you much further in the relationship. Consider if you would treat a new friend in this situation. Find something in common with them, keep things light-hearted, crack jokes, and most importantly, prove that you care.

#### Stage 2: The destination

It's hardly a smart idea or a good use of the resources to do something just for the sake of doing it. It's the familiar analogy of driving a fully charged vehicle without a destination in mind. As many of you may already know, it is important to set goals and to concentrate all of one's efforts on achieving them. What is your ideal customer? How do you see your company in the future? What do you do to be the most pleased, content, and motivated version of yourself? Make a list of your goals for the next five years.

Then, in a year's time, write down the aim you need to achieve to get closer to your five-year goal.

Finally, write down what goal you need to achieve in 90 days to get closer to your one-year target.

Let's presume your ambition is to make \$1 million in the next five years. You'd need a car to get to your destination, whether it's your own company, savings, or something else financially viable. In this example, your one-year target would be to get your company up and running with monthly revenue of \$5,000. So, to reach \$5,000 a month in your new company one year from now, what will you need to do in the next 90 days? Finding the best partner with similar skill sets or seeing the first paid client over the next 90 days, are two examples.



Make \$1 million in five years.

1-year goal: Increase new company revenue by \$5,000 a month (\$60,000 per year).

Target for the next 90 days: Obtain the first paid client.

Now is the time to write down your objectives. Yes, you should write them down!

### Stage 3: The roadmap

Create your map so that you know where you want to go in five years, with specific, short-term targets to help you get there. Keith Ferrazzi has a strong technique for connecting your networking strategy with your priorities called the Networking Action Plan (NAP), as he describes in *Never Eat Alone*.

The first step is to write down your objectives and destination (which you completed in Stage 2). Step 2 is to review the three objectives you've set down. Then, next to each of your objectives, write down three individuals who can help you achieve your objectives. There might be people you already know, people you're related to on a second-degree level, or people you don't know at all.

The three people may be a possible partner, an investor, or a potential customer if you're trying to start a business. The three could be your agent, sales partners, or publisher in the case of a best-selling novel. It's critical to spend some time doing extensive analysis to ensure that the three individuals are critical in assisting you in achieving your objectives more quickly.

### Stage 4: Building human connections

When you talk with others, whether on Skype, the internet, or in person, how can you make a genuine connection? We believe it comes down to the following factors:

- Pose thought-provoking questions (to get the other person thinking). The quality of a person's questions will reveal a lot about him or her. The quality of your questions, according to Tony Robbins, is related to the quality of your life.
- When you ask better questions, you'll get better answers. Peter Thiel encourages us to think about how we can achieve our 10-year targets in six months. When you ask better questions during a conversation, you not only place yourself in the category of someone who thinks differently, but you also force the other person to think in a new direction, which makes them learn.
- Pay close attention (as if your life depended on it). With certain individuals, this may come easily, and for others, it may be incredibly difficult. Paying attention is a requested "skill" in our mobile age that many of us neglect. How many times have you had a conversation with someone who was fidgeting, wandering about, or interrupting you at any turn? You will set yourself apart from the crowd by merely keeping eye contact, listening intently, and engaging with pertinent questions. You'll be well on your way to developing a real friendship.

Listen, Ask good a good question, repeat!

### Stage 5: Superconnecting

Introducing two people who will learn from each other is the quickest way to expand your own network. This technique, as basic as it can be, is seldom used by most citizens. When was the last time anyone went out of their way to introduce you to someone after hearing about your problems? You've met a superconnector if you're one of the very few who have.

With over three billion users online today, separating the fog from the sun is becoming more complicated, and superconnectors can play an increasingly important role in making the distinction. Here are a few of the most effective methods for being a superconnector.

1. Don't keep track of the score. This is by far the most significant distinction between superconnectors and the rest of the world. Superconnectors think in terms of abundance, and they're always ready to give, connect, and share.
2. Make mates rather than "contacts." To put it another way, choose consistency over quantities. Put your business cards aside and make real connections with the people you encounter. We make it a point to never bring up business in the first meeting with anyone unless it's absolutely necessary. It's worth ten times more to make ties with five high-quality people at an event than it is to make 50 "contacts" whose names you won't recall.
3. Connect other superconnectors. Do you know two people who might profit from being together? Have they met before? Introducing two superconnectors will be the simplest relation you make because: they are instinctively polite and will almost certainly have mutual friends. And you'll not only be able to assist them in achieving their objectives, but you'll also be remembered by them for any possible partnerships that will support you.
4. Interview people. If done correctly, this could be one of the quickest ways to expand the network. This could be done as part of a study article, a book, or a podcast.
5. Follow-up is needed. This is the crucial move that we all overlook. However, checking in to see how the introduction goes, or randomly following up a couple months later with no motive will not only help you preserve your relationships, it will also help you take the partnership to the next step. In a world where everyone is looking for themselves, being able to demonstrate that you care for anyone as a friend would place you in a different group from everyone you know.



## Final self-assessment

1. Communicative skills cannot vary in importance across various environments
  - a) True
  - b) False
  
2. How many types of communication there are?
  - a) 2
  - b) 6
  - c) 4
  
3. What is the starting point for communication?
  - a) Before talking, you must first understand what you want to say, compose, or explain.
  - b) Before talking, you must first, expose the phrase
  - c) Before talking, you must first, explain the concept
  
4. The term cognitive system refers to all mental activities of the human being such as perception, attention, memory, thinking, problem solving, speech comprehension and speech production.
  - a) True
  - b) False
  
5. What is the activity in which the recipient decodes the meaning encoded in the coded form?
  - a) Coding
  - b) Decoding
  - c) Misinterpretation
  
6. The term communication comes from the Latin word '**communicare**', which means to share?
  - a) True
  - b) False

7. What is the feedback?
  - a) Feedback is nothing more than messages extracted from an idea through encoding
  - b) Feedback is nothing more than messages extracted from an idea through decoding
  - c) An interaction
  
8. Four sides of a message
  - a) Receiver, factual information, Appeal, Relationship
  - b) Sender, factual information, Relationship, Receiver
  - c) Factual information, Appeal, Relationship, Receiver, Receiver
  
9. Which are the main forms of contacts?
  - a) Verbal, non-verbal
  - b) Written, visual
  - c) Visual non-verbal
  
10. A significant part of communication is understanding what others have to say and accepting them?
  - a) True
  - b) False
  
11. The sender decodes the meaning encoded in the coded form
  - a) True
  - b) False
  
12. Which are in the list below example of nonverbal communication (select more than one):
  - a) Facial expressions
  - b) Gestures
  - c) Proximity
  - d) Touch
  - e) Words
  - f) Eye contact
  - g) Appearance
  - h) Sentences



13. Which kind of the following strategies help you to communicate successfully (select more than one):
- a) Goal-oriented communication
  - b) Reciprocity
  - c) Use of "I" formulation
  - d) Feedback
  - e) All the previous are ones correct
14. Reciprocity ensures that the percentages of communication in a conversation between two individuals should be equally divided in two directions.
- a) True
  - b) False
15. When are you consider the networking system you should delete the term "working"?
- a) True
  - b) False

## 6.2 Multilingualism Promotion

### Preliminary self assessment

1. The term "multilingualism" refers to:
  - a) Individuals that speak many different languages
  - b) either the language use or the competence of an individual or to the language situation in an entire nation or society
  - c) to territories that have their own language which is not officially recognised as an official language of the country
  - d) to countries that have several official languages in their public document
  
2. \_\_\_\_\_ is the ability to use communicative conventions of people from other cultural backgrounds and to modify own forms of expression correspondingly
  - a) behavior flexibility
  - b) tolerance of ambiguity
  - c) communicative awareness
  - d) empathy
  - e) knowledge discovery
  - f) respect for otherness
  
3. Linguistic competences are characterized by:
  - a) the adequate use of written language and structuring of content
  - b) reading and writing of documents in the reader's native language
  - c) reading, writing, and translation of documents to other non-native languages, particularly in the most used
  - d) all of the above
  
4. \_\_\_\_\_ highlights how communicative problems can be managed through the repetition of items that constitute obstacles to understanding.
  - a) Repetition strategy
  - b) Retrospective strategy
  - c) Reformulation strategy
  
5. When people are employed by organizations that conduct business with clients from different culture backgrounds, like all the tourism companies, there can often be misunderstandings that occur due to the difference:
  - a) In language
  - b) In Age, education
  - c) In Culture, values, beliefs
  - d) In gender
  
6. Non-verbal communication includes all external stimuli apart from words uttered.
  - a) True
  - b) False



7. Which of these is the greatest means of conveying information?
- a) Writing
  - b) Words
  - c) Signs
  - d) Pictures
8. There is a barrier to communication when words are uttered in a \_\_\_\_\_ sense.
- a) negative
  - b) positive
  - c) polite
  - d) good

## Unit Introduction

This unit aims to provide an introduction to the concept of multilingualism and its linkage to the tourism industry. Several aspects will be investigated such as, linguistic competences, intercultural communication as well their relationship with tourism industry and their importance in the environment of a tourism company. The unit has been kept as lean as possible while providing enough information to allow an effective understanding of the general concept for all the target groups that will use it.

### **Unit objectives**

Students will be familiar with the concept of multilingualism, linguistic competencies and intercultural communication.

### **Learning outcomes and student skills**

1. Define multilingualism
2. Define linguistic competencies
3. Define intercultural communication
4. Identify the importance explore the concepts of multilingualism, linguistic competencies and intercultural communication for himself as a person, a tourist and future professional in the tourism industry
5. Outline the important steps for a multilingual marketing strategy
6. Develop an open attitude and willingness to communicate and cooperate in a multilingual and multicultural environment
7. Effective intercultural communication
8. Complete a multilingual marketing strategy
9. Integrate solutions for a multilingual and multicultural environment

### **Keywords**

Multilingualism, tourism, multilingual marketing strategy, linguistic competencies, intercultural communication,

### **Unit Motivation**

The motivation of this unit is lying upon the growing interest in multilingualism and its relationship with the tourism industry. However, multilingualism is a highly complex with many aspects phenomenon which has direct effects on the working environment of the tourism sector. In many cases, language and culture diversity often lead to language barriers and miscommunications which eventually has become challenges encountered by tourists in tourism sector. In this direction, this unit will demonstrate the main aspects of the subject.

## 6.2.1 Introduction to Multilingualism

Multilingualism is a very common phenomenon that has received much attention in recent years, especially among social scientists. However, multilingualism is also an interdisciplinary phenomenon that can be studied from both an individual and a societal perspective. Multilingualism is a very common phenomenon all over the world. This is to be expected, considering that there are almost 7,000 languages in the world and about 200 independent countries. It is not only that there are more languages than countries but also that the number of speakers of the different languages is unevenly distributed, meaning that speakers of smaller languages need to speak other languages in their daily life. Multilinguals can be speakers of a

minority indigenous language who need to learn the dominant state language. In other cases, multilinguals are immigrants who speak their first language(s) as well as the language(s) of their host countries. In some cases, languages are learned as they spread internationally, and it is considered that they open doors for better economic and social opportunities. This is currently the case with English, which is the most widespread language and is very common as a school subject and as a language of instruction in schools and universities all over the world (Cenoz, 2013).

### 6.2.1.1 Multilingualism

The term “multilingualism” can refer to either the language use or the competence of an individual or to the language situation in an entire nation or society. However, at the individual level it is generally subsumed under the term “bilingualism”. At a societal or national level we must distinguish between ‘official’ and ‘de facto’ multilingualism. Official multilingualism refers to countries that have several official languages in their public documents ect, while de facto multilingualism refers to territories that have their own language which is not officially recognised as an official language of the country (Clyne, 2017).

Multilingualism is a complex phenomenon that can be studied from different perspectives in disciplines such as linguistics, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics. There are many definitions of multilingualism (Cenoz, 2013). A well-known definition of multilingualism is given by the European Commission (2007): “*the ability of societies, institutions, groups and individuals to engage, on a regular basis, with more than one language in their day-to-day lives*”. Multilingualism is at the same time an individual and a social phenomenon. It can be considered as an ability of an individual, or it can refer to the use of languages in society. Individual and societal multilingualism are not completely separated. It is more likely that the individuals who live in a multilingual community speak more than one language than for individuals who live in a monolingual society. Traditionally, there have been more multilinguals in areas where regional or minority languages are spoken or in border areas. However, the intense spread of English as a lingua franca and the mobility of the population to urban areas across nations have resulted in other situations as well. Today, it is possible to find many individuals who have learned English and live in traditionally monolingual areas. It is also possible to find many monolingual speakers in big cities in Europe or North America where there is a very high level of linguistic diversity as a result of immigration, particularly in contexts in which English is the majority language (Cenoz, 2013).

### 6.2.1.2 Linguistic competence

Linguistic competences refer to the use of language through the expression and interpretation of concepts, thoughts, feelings, facts, and opinions in order to communicate orally and in written. Communication may take place in diverse social and cultural contexts, which will determine the characteristics of the written or spoken language, such as the grammar, pragmatic, and sociolinguistic characteristics.

Linguistic competences are highly related to communication competences; sometimes they are even seen as equal. In the scientific production and communication field, linguistic competences are related to the adequate use of language, especially written, and they are characterized by: (1) the adequate use of written language and structuring of content; (2) reading and writing of documents in the reader’s native language; and (3) reading, writing, and translation of documents to other non-native languages, particularly in the most used. Linguistic competences are also

related to information competences, because the correct writing of documents demands the demonstration of information seeking, selection, compilation, and processing competences, which are supported in the comprehension and production of texts for diverse audiences. Linguistic competences involve a set of skills, knowledge, and attitudes that are interrelated and mutually supported in order to conduct a successful communication (Tarango & Machin-Mastromatteo, 2017).

Linguistic competence is also present in any form of tourist activity as it is present in every discipline of economic activity. Linguistic competences tend to be wide, transversal, multipurpose, and basic for all individuals, they are also inherent to every culture and discipline. Such competences are necessary for the collective interaction and knowledge production of diverse groups of people, either specialists or the general public. According to international organizations such as the OECD (2007), linguistic competences have diverse applications, especially oral, written, and through the use of ICTs (Information Communication Technologies), expressed both in the native language as well as in other languages. However, their application to written language is emphasized, as it is a determining element to publish tourism products that may be registered and measured as part of the communication of an individual, institution or region. The use of linguistic competences for the construction of services, texts and products – and more specifically of tourism services, texts and products - implies: (1) a certain level of knowledge about the topic that is being developed; (2) development of individual and collective skills under topical, syntactical, and lexical conventions; (3) the adequate use of the language goes beyond a correct writing style, it means having the capacity of understanding, deciding, and acting upon criticisms received and distinguish among opinions and facts; and (4) capacity of confronting the consequences of what has been expressed in writing, as this is generated knowledge (Tarango & Machin-Mastromatteo, 2017).

### 6.2.1.3 Intercultural communication

Intercultural communication has many definitions. For some researchers is defined as *'the exchange of information between individuals who are unlike culturally'*. Social and cross-cultural psychologists refer to intercultural communication as the *'exchange of information (verbally or non-verbally) between members of different cultural populations'* (Jackson, 2019). Intercultural communication can be defined also as *"the sharing of information on different levels of awareness and control between people with different cultural backgrounds, where different cultural backgrounds include both national cultural differences and differences which are connected with participation in the different activities that exist within a national unit"* or *"Intercultural communication takes place when individuals influenced by different cultural communities negotiate shared meaning in interactions"*. Several definitions are provided in order to have the full working framework of the notion. However, one of the most acceptable definitions is the following: *"intercultural communication generally refers to interpersonal communication between individuals or groups who are affiliated with different cultural groups and/or have been socialized in different cultural (and, in most cases, linguistic) environments. This includes such cultural differences as age, class, gender, ethnicity, language, race, nationality and physical/mental ability"* (Durant & Shepherd, 2013; Jackson, 2019; Bargiela-Chiappini, 2009).

Communication can have two forms: (a) Verbal Communication: the exchange of ideas, thoughts, feelings, opinions, and experiences through spoken or written words. (b) Non-verbal Communication is an exchange of ideas, thoughts, information, emotions, opinions, feelings, attitudes and experiences through both sign language (charts, photos, pictures, symbols) and body language (facial expression, eye-contact, head, hand and leg movements, posture, physical



appearance, and space). Body movements are culturally specific symbols, and they are always based on a specific communication context (Arqoub & Alserhan, 2019). See Figure 1, for a more graphical presentation, where the term 'context' refers to the situation, circumstances and, in general, the entire setting in which the communication takes place.

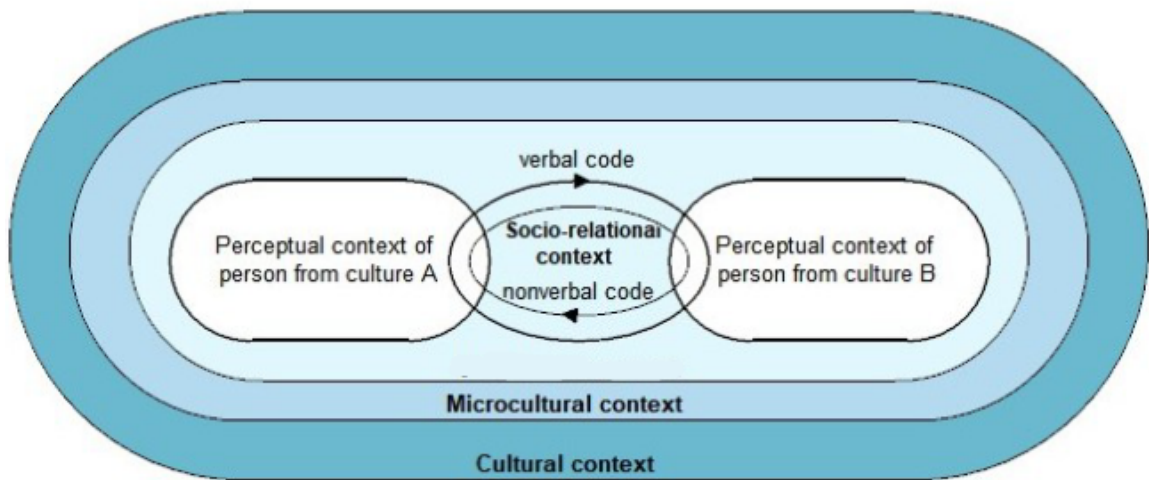


Figure 4: Intercultural communication.

It is evident that nowadays, the trends of globalization and informatization have important implications at the foundational level for intercultural communication theory, namely, our very understanding of culture, society, and communication.

### 6.2.1.4 Multilingual promotion in tourism

Tourism industry development follows the general economic and societal development trends, shifting to service-dominant logic, consumer orientation, personalization and long-lasting customer relationship. Tourists' behaviors are multi-motivational and very diverse. Even though needs, wants and motives for tourism experiences are few in numbers and can be identified as basic and common across countries, the expressions of these needs are socially determined and thus usually do vary greatly from culture to culture (Gnyria & Svobodova 2013).

In this context, translated tourism promotional texts (TPTs) have frequently been the subject of criticism, about the fact that they are not given the professional attention they deserve. In addition, it is observed that translators tend to focus on the micro (linguistic) level of the language of tourism promotion leaving the macro (cultural) level largely ignored. This is despite the fact that the creation of TPTs involves a dual-level process, in which the macro-level is the determining factor which shapes and guides the construction of the micro-level. The importance of this macro-level of the language of tourism promotion has been acknowledged by reserchers who stress that in order to be able to convince potential tourists to become actual tourists, their needs and motivations - which are deeply rooted in culture - must be addressed (Sulaiman, 2014).

Here are 4 essential steps to creating a multilingual promotion strategy in tourism.

1. Develop a compelling core message



Each company has a brand image they can leverage off.

## 2. Translate and localize the message

People are more likely to respond to web content in their own language. However, translating content alone will not suffice, cultural nuances, tone of voice, local references and celebrities as well as choice of color and words need to be taken into consideration. Or in other words the macro-level as mentioned above.

## 3. Content management for a multilingual content marketing strategy

Managing a multilingual content marketing strategy can seem like a nightmare especially when multiple platforms are being used. Having said that today's content management system allows for integrated content management and makes disseminating content much easier. Also, it helps to hire local staff for positions like social media management.

## 4. Multichannel integrated communication strategy

Conveying your message to reach your audience and engage with them is best done across multiple channels and with an integrated communication strategy that includes paid ads (Gnyria & Svobodova 2013).

## 6.2.1.5 Importance in tourism sector

In this section, it is provided an overview of approaches to the study of language(s) (multilingualism) and intercultural communication within the specific context of tourism, with specific focus on the importance of their relationship.

Tourism is an economic sector in which communication with representatives of different cultures takes place nearly constantly, often in the form of challenges requiring knowledge and effort. In the communication process and in tourism there are elements which determine the correlation between these two areas. Culture is maybe the most important link between communication and tourism, which makes them very closely related disciplines. In general, we could argue that, the more culturally different is the environment in which a tourist communicates, the more difficult the communication process is. That is why anybody who engages in a conversation with a representative of a different culture must take into consideration many factors influencing it, but, first of all, the customs and culture of a given country, because the cultural differences are the most difficult obstacle in effective communication. The key to overcome this is the knowledge of intercultural communication. It is useful not only for tourists, but for anyone entering interactions with the representatives of different cultures, for example, employees of international hotel chains, airlines, residents, tour guides, or participants in business tourism. This knowledge allows us to decrease the level of uncertainty and anxiety during the conversation as well as to enhance confidence in contacts with foreigners (Kiebasiewicz-Drozdowska & Radko, 2006).

In Appendix I you can find an extensive analysis on common ground between communication and tourism.

Moreover, it should be noticed that except from the great economic significance of the tourism sector, it is also a meaningful exchange of local cultural knowledge between individuals. There are, of course, many kinds of tourists with different motivations and travelling lifestyle, and thus different degrees of interest in interacting with locals. These variations in type and perspective on tourism influence the nature and extent of tourist engagement in intercultural communication. For some tourists, the opportunity to practice a foreign language while on holiday and to learn about new cultures and ways of life might be key to travel and the particular choice of destination. For others, perceived

cultural and linguistic differences between themselves and their hosts might be viewed as potentially discomforting, and can form the basis of prejudice. These emotional, or affective, elements of attitudes towards the culturally different can influence tourists' choice of holiday destination or type of accommodation, and even their loyalty to a specific destination (Jack & Phipps, 2012).

Every aspect of language in general, is in great relationship with tourism. The so-called hospitality language, hence "*all linguistic expressions which relate to and represent hospitality concerns*" throughout the stay of the guest, follows some distinctive rules, such as the use of a rather fixed vocabulary of welcoming and serving a guest and the formal behavior rules –including accepted phraseology, idioms –slang, gestures, handling problematic situations, cultural interpretations to social issues, etc. –relating to the cultural background of each guest. Therefore, problems in intercultural communication may arise if sufficient use of the target language is not accompanied by the ability to understand, think and act accordingly to the target culture (Tziora et al., 2016; Leslie & Russell, 2006).

Foreign language skills have indeed been identified as important managerial skills by several researchers. Managers should be equipped with both communicative and intercultural competence to be able to adapt and excel in the competitive work environment and foreign languages are the way to avoid stereotypes and gain insight into foreign people's mentality (Tziora et al., 2016).

In the report of the European Business Forum for multilingualism it has been acknowledged that although the English language will remain the lingua franca, it is not enough to offer a company and its staff the key to excellence. Furthermore, the cultural awareness and breaking of stereotypes is promoted when it is enriched by more cultures than the ones expressed through the person's first and second language.<sup>3</sup>

In table 1 there are presented the benefits of foreign language competence to organizations as they are presented in the paper of Leslie & Russell in 2016. Despite that the benefits refer to organizations in general, if we look closely, it is obvious that they also apply for the tourism sector.

- Whilst employees may have qualifications in foreign languages from school this does not equip them with enough skills to be able to communicate in a business environment and hence the value of study at undergraduate or post-graduate levels.
- Better interpersonal relationships between home base and foreign colleagues.
- Flexibility, e.g. new positions for staff in another country.
- Better communication with overseas customers/contacts resulting in better understanding of overseas business; enhance/improve customer service.
- Business clients—including customers—prefer to converse in their mother tongue—in the absence of such abilities companies are at a disadvantage as they cannot communicate as efficiently and effectively with foreign markets.
- Organisations need to have available foreign language skills in order to promote better interrelationships between organisations based in different countries.
- Potential competitive advantages—for example, the value of knowing cultural variances in protocol; knowledge of the local language and thus greater awareness of culture and cultural norms will be influential—for example, if negotiating contracts; may lose contracts due to language and cultural barriers.
- Forging business links with foreign organisations will be more effectively achieved if there is an understanding of, and ability to partake in, a foreign organisation's different cultures and traditions.
- Enhanced image overseas.
- Strengthens ability to not only maintain external markets but also expand into new markets.
- Language learning broadens the mind and shrinks the world.

and particularly in tourism context:

- more effective and efficient communications;
- more attractive to potential visitors;
- increase potential of foreign visits and thus related expenditure;
- be able to greet clients in their own language.

In a nutshell:

Language learning broadens minds, opens up new horizons and facilitates understanding between people in any situation.

Figure 6: Benefits of foreign language competence to organizations

<sup>3</sup> EC Business Forum for Multilingualism (2008, July 11). Recommendations from the Business Forum for Multilingualism established by the European Commission. Available in: <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/d5ee6ef0-986c-49e6-b8ac-71da8401efc6>

## 6.2.2 Language Management Strategies in Tourism

Although research in LMSs is quite extended, the specifications about tourism industry are not many. The majority of the research focuses on how English constitutes a key resource for *in situ* meaning making in comparable situations of intercultural contact and on English as a lingua franca (ELF). One key finding from ELF research focusing on pragmatics has been that speakers seem to give precedence to understanding rather than to the form of what they are saying. Rather than aiming for 'grammatically correct linguistic forms', speakers of ELF devote energy to developing pragmatic strategies in order to understand others and make themselves understood. These strategies are used to counter both real and potential obstacles that could impede the co-construction of meaning. In other words, speakers prioritize the establishment and maintenance of "common ground" (Mauranen, 2006; Wilson, 2018).

Research from different disciplines has identified a large number of strategies that facilitate this process, including clarification, appeals for help or code-switching. However, the strategy that has received the most attention is that of repetition which highlights how communicative problems can be managed through the repetition of items that constitute obstacles to understanding. Another strategy which has been relatively unexplored in ELF research but widely studied elsewhere is that of reformulation. Reformulation, which can be defined as the repetition of information using alternative linguistic forms. Despite the fundamental importance of meaning making in the elaboration of tourist destinations, and the fundamental importance of pragmatic strategies to this process, next to no research has been undertaken which focuses on such strategies in tourism (Wilson, 2018; Stalnaker, 2002).

However, it could be argued that repetition clearly constitutes a key feature, and strategy, of English use in tourism. In contributing to the maintenance of common ground, 'repetition' strategy contributes not only to mutual understanding between participants but also to the discursive and semiotic creation of the tourist context. This happens on two levels. Practically speaking, 'repetition' strategy helps to ensure the transmission of directions or advice that will shape a tourist's actual experience. Discursively speaking, 'repetition' strategy ensures that the semiotic constructions of tourism are communicated in the encounters between tourists and advisers. **Additionally**, it could be argued that reformulation constitutes a key feature, and strategy, of English used for the specific purpose of tourism (Wilson, 2018).

The Directorate-General for Education and Culture, in 2011, launched an information initiative designed to promote the greater use of language management strategies (LMSs) by European small and medium-sized enterprises also focusing in tourism industry. The initiative is called 'PIMLICO' which stands for *Promoting, Implementing, Mapping Language and Intercultural Communication Strategies in Organizations and Companies*. It was a two-stage promotional initiative spanning 27 countries aimed at international small and medium-sized export companies, and demonstrates the value of employing effective language and communication strategies to overcome linguistic and cultural barriers in international trade. Essentially, the PIMLICO Project examined 40 best-practice SMEs and focused on identifying and describing the ingredients that make up a successful company's language management strategy (LMS). The project's objectives were to:

- Raise awareness of the nature of linguistic and cultural barriers in trade;

- Promote best practice amongst SMEs in how to overcome linguistic and cultural trade barriers and improve their bottom line by employing language management strategies;

- Support communication strategies through the EU's Lifelong Learning Programme aimed at awareness-raising in governments and business intermediary organisations;



Identify magic formulas that SMEs can apply to improve their cross-border trade, particularly in global markets;

Increase the volume of European SMEs making strategic use of LMSs to improve their trade.

(Brandt & Chancellor, 2011)

## 6.2.3 Effective intercultural communication

At the most fundamental level, each individual's interpretation of the world is different, but according to the groups to which people belong (national, regional, local, and professional) they share some interpretations with others. Keeping in mind this, along with the provided analysis so far, the skills described below are essential in order to achieve an effective intercultural communication:

tolerance of ambiguity (the ability to accept lack of clarity and to be able to deal with ambiguous situations constructively)

behavior flexibility (the ability to adapt own behavior to different requirements/situations)

knowledge discovery (the ability to acquire new knowledge in real-time communication)

communicative awareness (the ability to use communicative conventions of people from other cultural backgrounds and to modify own forms of expression correspondingly)

respect for otherness (curiosity and openness, as well as a readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about own cultures)

empathy (the ability to understand intuitively what other people think and how they feel in given situations)

(Inoue, 2007)

Given all the above, we understand that people who communicate effectively between their own and a target culture seem to create a "third culture perspective" – a neutral third zone into which they step to communicate. There they retain their basic native acculturation while partially adapting to traits of the target culture. If they are fortunate, they will communicate with others who can do the same and will meet them in this third zone. In communication, however, it is often necessary and useful for one person to consciously assume the responsibility to adapt in order to communicate with another as successfully as possible, because sometimes the other person cannot or will not do the same.

In this context, Novinger (2001) proposed a really interesting guide to communicate between any two cultures. Common feature with the skills mentioned above is evident. The guide consists of 9 steps:

To communicate with another culture, start by knowing your own.

Have a positive attitude. To go beyond simplistic understanding of communicative meaning, such as attacking with a stick or greeting with flowers, goodwill in intercultural communication is essential. Obstinate or extremist interpretations of words and behavior do not contribute positively to cross-cultural communication.

We need to overcome our subconscious tendency to automatically interpret anything or anyone "different" in a negative manner. To avoid or overcome intercultural communication obstacles usually requires enough effort that one must engage one's will to succeed.



Overcome ethnocentrism. Replace ignorance with knowledge through education. Through knowledge, you will become more objective and will not automatically make negative judgments about that which is different.

Learn the target culture's rules. To do so the rules must be identified.

The category of context stands out as common and greatly significant in intercultural communication. We should constantly seek to determine if communication is high-context or low-context<sup>4</sup>.

Be flexible – adaptability is competence for intercultural communication.

Take responsibility for successful communication if you want to achieve it. You may have to do most of the work, especially if you are in customer service and tourism industry.

The mind-sets that may be the most universal for successful inter-cultural communication are a positive attitude, adaptability, effort, and assuming responsibility.

## 6.2.4 Communication challenges in a multicultural learning environment

When people are employed by organizations that conduct business with clients from different culture backgrounds, like all the tourism companies, there can often be misunderstandings that occur due to the difference in the culture, values and beliefs which can lead to communication barriers due to misinterpretations of a certain cultural norm that are prevalent in one's culture but is not in the others. In doing so, this could lead to a high level of anxiety ending up in breakdown in communication between the two and affecting the outcome. The projects can fail, the conflicts can rise –thus it is very important for the management to be aware of these differences and they should incorporate strategies for dealing with such cross-culture barriers that may arise.

People who work in tourism spend more and more time with people who speak different languages, relate to different values and interact to different principles, compared to the ones of their own. Finding of ways how to enter into different cultural space, understand values and norms of this space will be an important task. Without it, tourism industry will not be able to operate efficiently and will lack general knowledge of conditions how international tourism business is done.

Another important element that affects this discussion is the emerging tourism markets. Emerging international tourism markets represent different cultural type and communication context. In analysis of culture and elements; two cultural types can be distinguished, the individualist cultural type (USA, Canada, Europe – UK, Germany, Scandinavia, Australia, New Zealand, individual goals are primary versus collectivist) and collectivist cultural type (Asia (Japan, China, Korea, India), Africa, Mediterranean countries, Middle East, Central and South America (Brazil, China, Argentina). Individualist and Collectivist cultures also represent different approaches on how emotions towards service supplier are expressed. Individualists are concerned only about personal concerns, while in collectivist cultures the worth of entire group is considered.

It is also offered an interesting categorization of cultures from communicational: the low context and high context communication. Cultures with Western European roots rely are characterized by low context communication where details are specified and context must be explicit in the

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<sup>4</sup> See section 6.2.3 for definition about high-context and low-context communication

message. Message itself means everything. Low context cultures are German-Swiss, Scandinavian, English (both American and British). On the contrary, high context communication is where all is understood from the context and where verbal messages have little meaning without the surrounding context. In countries as Japan, China, Arab Countries and whole Latin American we meet high context communication. In these cultures, relations are close and personal, like in a family (Hooker, 2009: 250). Practically, classical international tourism market leaders can be considered as low context, while current ongoing market changes means that high context cultures are expected to enter to these markets.<sup>5</sup>

However, there many obstacles or problems or challenges that breakdown the communication process because they prevent the flow of information between a sender and a receiver. There are numerous barriers to communication, and these may occur at any stage in the communication process. They can be classified into the following categories: mechanical, physical, psychological, social, noise, religious, cultural, and verbal and non-verbal language barriers.

In this context, language is the most powerful tool of communication. Its function includes the: communication of ideas, thoughts, opinion and emotional expression, social interaction, using the power of sound, recording facts, expression of identity. However, it is, at the same time, a common barrier to effective communication. Language barriers arise when a lot of words or symbols or signals have more than one meaning, and a sender and a receiver try to communicate in the language, which themselves do not understand properly. So, communication is not always successful. There may be some obstacles in the communication system, which may prevent the message from reaching the intended receiver or its destination. Language barriers are generally arising in five areas: the way a message is originated and sent by a sender, the context (environmental interruptions), and the way it is received and understood by a receiver. Verbal and non-verbal language barriers are significant because they are often an impediment to building and maintaining relationships with others. They can cause misunderstandings that lead to conflict, frustration, offense, embarrassment, racism discrimination, violence, hurt feeling, frustration, disappointments, and wasting time, effort and money. In summary, language barriers are problems or issues that interfere with a person's ability to send, receive, and understand a message. They are one of the main obstacles that limit or block effective communication. They can lead to misunderstandings and misinterpretations or verbal and non-verbal messages between people across cultures. They can also refer to the complete absence of communication between the two people who speak different languages and from different cultures (Arqoub & Alserhan, 2019).

In this context, the following differences in nonverbal communications across cultures are the most common:

**Eye contact.** In most Western cultures, eye contact is considered to be a good thing. It demonstrates attentiveness, confidence and honesty. In Asia, the Middle East, Hispanic cultures and Native American cultures – eye contact is often considered disrespectful. In many Eastern cultures, women are discouraged from having eye contact with men as it conveys authority or sexual interest. In some cultures, gazing at someone is normal but in most cultures, staring is considered rude.

**Touch.** Cultural expressions and communication is often derived through touch. However, touching other people is often taken as rudeness in many cultures. Yet, shaking hands is considered to be acceptable in most cultures. People in Asia are more conservative in these types of non-verbal communication. Patting head or shoulder also has different meanings in different cultures. In some Asian cultures touching children (or anyone for that matter) on the head is quite disrespectful as the head is considered to be sacred. There are also a wide range of cultural

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<sup>5</sup> Lingeberziņš, Ē. Intercultural Communication and International Tourism Business Environment, available in: [https://dukonference.lv/files/proceedings\\_of\\_conf/53konf/ekonomika/Lingeberzins.pdf](https://dukonference.lv/files/proceedings_of_conf/53konf/ekonomika/Lingeberzins.pdf)



viewpoints on the appropriate rules regarding physical contact between both similar and opposite genders. In parts of the E.U. it is common to kiss someone you greet informally on both cheeks but not in the U.S or other areas of the world. In the Middle East and India, the left hand is customarily used to handle bodily hygiene, so using the left hand to accept a gift or shake hands (or eat) is considered extremely rude.

**Gestures.** Gestures are a common form of nonverbal communication. When traveling in Costa Rica, pedestrians give drivers a thumb up if they allowed the foot traveler to walk by. In the United States, the thumb and index finger in a circle means "Okay" but is seen as vulgar in other cultures.

**Physical Space.** Also known as proxemics, the physical space between other people is a form of nonverbal communication. There are four zones of proxemics: intimate, personal, social and public. People in different cultures have various levels of tolerance for proxemics. In many cultures, people are uncomfortable with close proximity (intimate and personal) to others and prefer a more social distance (four to seven feet) when communicating.

**Facial Expressions.** Facial expressions are responsible for a huge percentage of nonverbal communication. A simple smile, frown or smile can convey a ton of information. A person's face is often the first thing we see even before we hear what they have to say, giving rise to a lot of nonverbal speak. Interestingly, the facial expressions for happiness, sadness, anger, and fear are universal around the world.

**Appearance.** How we present ourselves to the public eye through our outward appearance is nonverbal communication. People are often judged or assessed based on their appearance.. Many cultures are offended by shoulders or legs exposed even while visiting museums and places of worship.

**Body Movement & Posture.** Body movements can clearly convey intent, emotion and communication. It can show how people feel or think about you. Whether you face a person while talking, how you hold yourself when expressing confidence or simply whether you sit near or far from another person can provide nonverbal communicative messages.

**Paralanguage.** Paralanguage includes factors such as tone of voice, inflection, loudness, speed and pitch. Simply changing your tone of voice may change the meaning of a sentence (Hess, 2016).

In Appendix II, we provide some pictures with several examples of non-verbal communication differences among different cultures.

As non-verbal communication is the most challenging in Figure 1, we provide some strategies in order to overcome potential problems. Those strategies can also be applied in the tourism sector.



Use the receiver's body language .	Frequently check for understanding by asking for feedback.
Politely ask for clarification and avoid any assumptions.	Build awareness of body language of the peoples from different cultures.
Use non-verbal messages appropriately.	Observe and try to do like the others.
Avoid stereotyping.	Hire qualified interpreters and translators
Adjust your behavior according to the cultural context or situation or environment.	Do not judge immediately body language has different meanings in different parts of the world.
Respect cultural differences.	To communicate effectively you need to learn the other's body language and to use it with words.
Check meanings. When communicating across cultures, never assume that the other person has understood your message.	Do not judge people's behavior from the first impression.
Use pictures, diagrams, graphics charts, because they speak a thousand words, communicate across language, and explain complicated concepts to help the receiver understand what the sender is trying to convey.	Do not judge gestures individually but in a cluster. Do not interpret hand or face gesture in isolation, because a whole cluster is more reliable than trying to interpret individual behavior.
Forgive of others and yourself – give the benefit of the doubt.	Individual linguistic ability is important train your people.
Have an understanding of how the message may impact the feelings of the receiver.	Thinking about your receivers and how they best receive your message.
Do not take stranger's non-verbal behavior personally, even if it is insulting in your culture.	Do not judge someone from other cultures by your own cultural values until you know them well.
Be patient with the people that have a different culture.	Develop an awareness of your own non-verbal communication patterns that might be insulting in certain cultures.
Recognize that you cannot change a culture ( or Yourself) overnight.	Be open to understand and to respect others' cultures.
Do not assume you understand any non-verbal signals or behavior unless you are familiar with the culture.	-To be sensitive to the actions of the people and try to understand without any judgment
Avoid using body language that contradicts your words, for example smiling when irritated, laughing when worried.	Cultural competence of other cultures.

Figure 7: Strategies to overcome or reduce non-verbal communication challenges

Trying to sum up, and given all the analysis so far, it would be really useful to provide a more general guideline for solving a communication problem, as in the tourism industry, complaints and communication problems must be solved so the tourists and the hosts are not embarrassed or harmed (Taufatofua, 2002)

- Identify the problem.
- Identify the possible causes.
- What are the issues and possible consequences (what could happen because of the problem)?
- Identify possible solutions.
- Study the solutions and put them in order from the best to the worst.
- Decide on the action to take.

(Taufatofua, 2002)

## 6.2.5 Solutions for a multilingual and multicultural environment

Employees in the hospitality and tourism industry may represent multiple nationalities, cultures, religious affiliations, lifestyle preferences, values and beliefs and at the same time have to communicate with different nationalities, cultures ect. It is important for future managers and employees to understand the benefits of diversity training as they prepare to manage or work in a diverse workforce (Wilborn & Weaver, 2002).

A factor ensuring effective management of a multicultural environment is a training program. To meet the challenges the multicultural environment, companies in the tourism industry should have sensitivity to differences. Diversity training and education are necessary and essential to help companies in the industry to become competitive and successful. The increased globalization of tourism industry has made it necessary for international companies in the industry to work effectively in foreign environments. Diversity management training program such as cross-cultural training can help oversee managers and employees to earn knowledge about different cultures and help them to develop skills of managing cultural diversity issues, which can therefore significantly reduce the potential costly failure caused by cultural difference problems. For international tourism companies, preparing current and future employees with cross-cultural sensibilities is important. The cross-cultural training section should be added into the training program to direct and help the trainees to understand the cultural expectations and their additional nonverbal behavioral manifestations as explained above. These training programs help to diminish stereotypes and allow trainees to see the cultural differences and the truth about other cultures. By the training, employees will show more respect to other people with different cultural backgrounds, and achieve more understanding of others' beliefs and their traditions (Gong, 2008). Moreover, training initiatives should be emphasized because research have shown that employees in the tourism industry consider such actions as very important as they enhance their skills (Wilborn & Weaver, 2002).

Generally, there are three goals of implementing cultural diversity training. The first training goal is to help trainees who learn to handle cultural differences to increase awareness of cultural diversity. This goal is founded upon the axiom that people learn from each other. By learning in a multicultural workshop, trainees can build an awareness of how people are culturally different and how others view them from the point of view of impressions, perceptions, and stereotypes. It is the starting point for proper cross-cultural sensitivity (Day, 2007). Besides of increasing trainees' awareness of diversity, the cultural diversity training program has a goal to help trainees to obtain knowledge of possible differences between cultures. By participating the training, trainees get to know where these differences come from and what forms they might take. For example, how relationships are established in other cultures, what expectations an employee with different cultural background might have; or how the communication styles are different in various cultures. Recognizing and understanding these differences can help people build trust, communicate more efficiently, avoid misunderstanding, and enhance harmony in the workplace. The training program of handling cultural differences includes a third goal: to develop skills of managing cultural diversity. With the increased awareness and knowledge of cultural differences, trainees need to develop more skills to manage, communicate, or negotiate in a cultural diverse environment (Day, 2007). The diversity training program can prepare trainees these know-how skills. In a sentence, the goal of the cultural diversity training can be simply described as to prepare individuals to become competent intercultural communicators with cultural awareness and sensitivity (Baum et al., 2007).

## Final self-assessment

1. The term "multilingualism" refers to:
  - a) Individuals that speak many different languages
  - b) either the language use or the competence of an individual or to the language situation in an entire nation or society
  - c) to territories that have their own language which is not officially recognised as an official language of the country
  - d) to countries that have several official languages in their public document
  
2. \_\_\_\_\_ is the ability to accept lack of clarity and to be able to deal with **ambiguous situations constructively**
  - a) behavior flexibility
  - b) tolerance of ambiguity
  - c) communicative awareness
  - d) empathy
  - e) knowledge discovery
  - f) respect for otherness
  
3. \_\_\_\_\_ is the ability to acquire new knowledge in real-time communication
  - a) behavior flexibility
  - b) tolerance of ambiguity
  - c) communicative awareness
  - d) empathy
  - e) knowledge discovery
  - f) respect for otherness
  
4. \_\_\_\_\_ is the ability to use communicative conventions of people from other **cultural backgrounds** and to modify own forms of expression correspondingly
  - g) behavior flexibility
  - h) tolerance of ambiguity
  - i) communicative awareness
  - j) empathy
  - k) knowledge discovery
  - l) respect for otherness
  
5. **Linguistic competences are characterized by:**
  - e) the adequate use of written language and structuring of content
  - f) reading and writing of documents in the reader's native language
  - g) reading, writing, and translation of documents to other non-native languages, particularly in the most used
  - h) all of the above
  
6. **"Nowadays, the trends of globalization and informatization have important implications at the foundational level about our very understanding of culture, society, and communication."** This statement is:
  - a) Always right
  - b) Always wrong

- c) Sometimes right/sometimes wrong
7. \_\_\_\_\_ highlights how communicative problems can be managed through the repetition of items that constitute obstacles to understanding.
- Repetition strategy
  - Retrospective strategy
  - Reformulation strategy
8. A factor ensuring effective management of a multicultural environment is:
- Using only one language to communicate
  - A strong management structure
  - Clear instructions and job positioning
  - A training program
9. Which of the following does NOT refer to high-context communication:
- In countries as Japan, China, Arab Countries and whole Latin American we meet high context communication
  - Details are specified and context must be explicit in the message
  - All is understood from the context and where verbal messages have little meaning without the surrounding context
10. When people are employed by organizations that conduct business with clients from different culture backgrounds, like all the tourism companies, there can often be misunderstandings that occur due to the difference:
- In language
  - In Age, education
  - In Culture, values, beliefs
  - In gender
11. *"Finding of ways how to enter into different cultural space, understand values and norms of this space will be an important task for every agent in the tourism sector."* This phrase is true because:
- In this way tourism industry will be able to operate efficiently
  - In this way there will be efficient general knowledge of conditions about international tourism business.
  - Both of the above
12. Which of the following are goals of implementing cultural diversity training:
- to increase awareness of cultural diversity
  - help trainees to obtain knowledge of their culture
  - to develop skills of accepting cultural diversity
  - prepare trainees know-how skills to manage, communicate, or negotiate in a cultural diverse environment
  - to prepare individuals to become more competent with their colleagues for how is going to be a good intercultural communicator
  - to help trainees learn to handle cultural differences

13. Non-verbal communication includes all external stimuli apart from words uttered.
- c) True
  - d) False
14. Which of these is the greatest means of conveying information?
- e) Writing
  - f) Words
  - g) Signs
  - h) Pictures
15. There is a barrier to communication when words are uttered in a \_\_\_\_\_ sense.
- e) negative
  - f) positive
  - g) polite
  - h) good
16. Personal appearance is an element of non-verbal communication.
- a) True
  - b) False
17. Which of these is not an element of non-verbal communication?
- a) Personal appearance
  - b) Posture
  - c) Eye contact
  - d) Name of the speaker
18. Which of these is a main element of non-verbal communication?
- a) The volume of the speaker
  - b) Name of the speaker
  - c) Name of the listener
  - d) Age of the speaker

## 6.3 Customer Service

### Preliminary self assessment

1. **Which of these defines the term customer service better?**
  - a) Customer service is the service provided in support of a company's core product
  - b) Customer service is all customer-provider interactions, other than proactive selling and the core product delivery that facilitate the organization's relationship with its customers.
  - c) Customer service is the sum total of what an organization does to meet customer expectations and produce customer satisfaction
  - d) all the above
  
2. **A characteristic of excellent customer service is:**
  - a) Telling the customer about yourself
  - b) Seeing the customer as a commodity
  - c) Minimum customer interaction and contact
  - d) Asking the customer information (needs, wants, and expectations) whenever possible.
  
3. **To be an effective listener, the most important thing to do is to:**
  - a) Empathy
  - b) Respond to the message
  - c) Try to figure out the meaning of the message
  - d) Nod
  
4. **Which of the following is NOT a step of the process of customer service evaluation:**
  - a) Determine the rule of evaluation index
  - b) Determine the evaluation criteria
  - c) Determine the final service quality score
  - d) Make adjustments in the staff and if necessary, make redundancies
  
5. **Which of the following is NOT an example of non-verbal communication?**
  - a) Smiling or relaxed mouth
  - b) Talking about the product
  - c) Making eye-contact
  - d) Nodding the head
  
6. **What are the benefits of having a customer service policy?**
  - a) Managers can control their employees better
  - b) There is a consistency in the way customers are treated
  - c) Managers can control the way employees treat the customers better
  - d) Complaints cannot be handled
  
7. **In tourism sector, effective customer service is essential for survival and growth because:**
  - a) Every tourism enterprise has many employees
  - b) Tourists should have nice experiences from their destination country in order not to damage country's international image
  - c) It is a people-oriented industry
  - d) It has great share of GDP in every country



## Unit Introduction

The aims to provide an introduction to the customer service concept by investigating the definition of the term, customer service skills and techniques. The unit has been kept as lean as possible while providing enough information to allow an effective understanding of the general concept for all the target groups that will use it.

### **Unit objectives**

Students will be familiar with the concept of customer service and some of its basic elements when focus is on tourism sector.

### **Learning outcomes and student skills**

The student will be able to:

- 1 Outline the different approaches to customer service in different travel and tourism organizations
- 2 Analyze the needs of different types of customers in the travel and tourism industry
- 3 Display the skills and techniques needed to provide good customer service in the travel and tourism industry
- 4 Use a plan for implementing, evaluating, and following up customer service
- 5 Demonstrate customer service and selling skills and techniques in travel and tourism situations.
- 6 Manage the customer's expectations

### **Keywords**

Customer service, tourism, travel, customer service skills, customer service techniques.

### **Unit Motivation**

The last decades services become more important as consumers spend a higher proportion of their available income on services, such as educational, recreational and of course tourist services. In this context, products are often sold as a product-service combination, for example in tourist accommodations the service provided by the staff are openly advertised as a special asset that accompanies the accommodation. Thus, the motivation of this unit is to broaden the theoretical and practical background of the students in the field of customer service.

## 6.3.1 Introduction to Customer Service

Many attempts were made in order to define customer service. In the Following we provide some of the available definitions:

- *“The service provided in support of a company’s core product”*
- *“Customer service is all customer-provider interactions, other than proactive selling and the core product delivery that facilitate the organization’s relationship with its customers.”*
- *“Customer service is the practice of delivering products and services to both internal and external customers via the efforts of employees or through the provision of an appropriate service scape”*



The Institute of Customer service (2017) prefer to stress the importance of customer expectations and satisfaction in their definition calling customer service *“the sum total of what an organization does to meet customer expectations and produce customer satisfaction”*

(Hudson & Hudson, 2012)

### **6.3.1.1 Customer service in tourism and travel**

Although tourism grows in the most parts of the world, in Western countries the industry of tourism is considered to be mature. In the mature industry of tourism, characterized by severe competition and limited promotional costs standing out from the competitors is not an easy task. In this context, customer service is increasingly becoming a differentiator in this sector. Many organizations in hospitality and tourism industry excel in the art of customer service (Hudson & Hudson, 2012).

Many organizations describe their customer service policies in Customer Charters. These might include:

- what information the organization will provide, how it will provide it and when
- the performance levels they will aim for (e.g. punctuality, quality)
- their payment and refund policies
- what they will do in the event of a disruption to arrangements (e.g. delays, cancellations)
- the compensation they will provide.

(Hudson & Hudson, 2012)

For tourism, as a people-oriented industry, effective customer service is essential for survival and growth, and its employees may be easily classified as “frontline” service workers. In this framework, it is argued that what contributes to the provision of quality customer service in tourism is an organizational climate that emphasizes in employee welfare. There is a direct link between organizational culture (including empowerment and training, organizational climate and operating procedures), that impacts service quality, customer satisfaction and ultimately organizational performance (The shaded component of Figure 1) (Davidson, 2003). In short, looking after staff is one strategic way of supporting customer service and ultimately profits. Additionally, such interaction will require the employees to demonstrate a willingness to be of service and to show the appropriate emotion to the client.



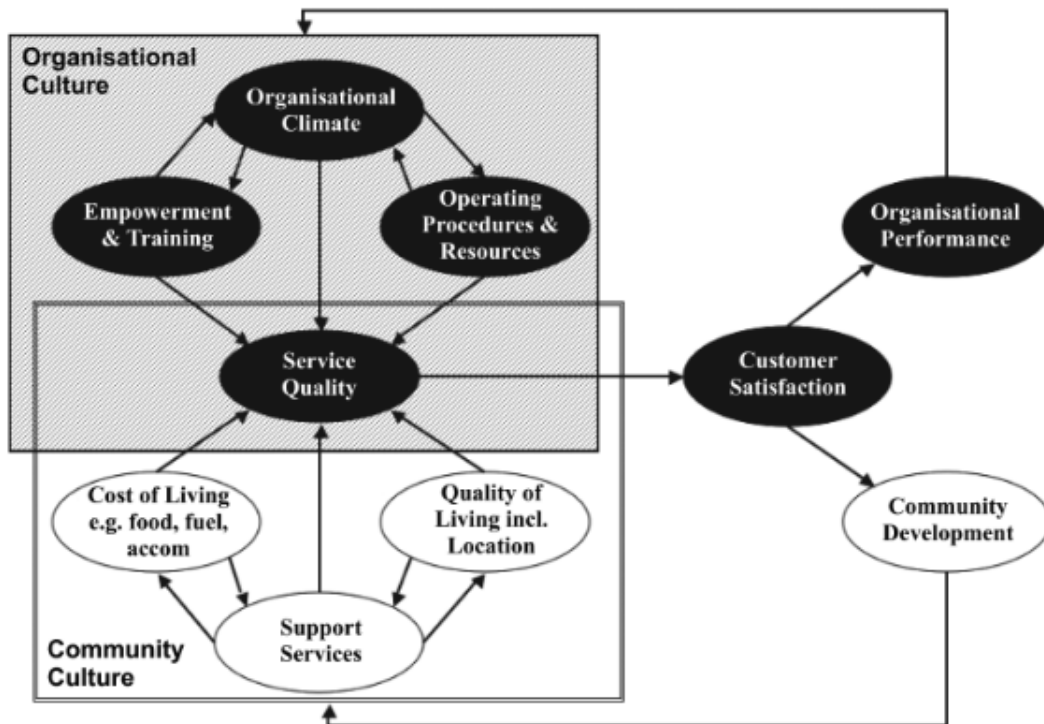


Figure 8: Customer Service quality in tourism

Another special feature of the tourism sector is the differentiation of the customers. It is possible to define several customer typologies:

### Families

Families are one of the classics in the hotel sector and this type of customer has essentially had the same priorities for years. The family decision-maker, i.e. the person making the booking, knows that leisure and catering services are essential. For this reason, during the research process, they will only consider establishments that can adapt to suit their family.

### Tourists

Tourists are a type of customer for whom the hotel is an experience in itself. A tourist looks for the comforts offered by the establishment, so all additional services play a fundamental role in the enjoyment of their stay. However, the guest also wants to discover the essence of the destination in a way that is simple, so visits (often guided) will be key.

### Travelers

Leisure, tours and the most active experiences are fundamental for self-proclaimed travelers (non-tourists), a type of customer for which the establishment is solely an addition, as they are interested in the destination and the experiences they have there.

### Special

Whether they are elderly customers or have a disability, special guests have very specific needs and are looking for a more specialized or adapted type of accommodation. In these cases, although the final customer may be of one type or another, this may not coincide with the decision maker, i.e. the person researching and making the booking. These special customers choose



destinations and activities that suit their abilities and, in many cases, group experiences are valued.

### **Business**

20% of global travelers do so for work and consequently, these business travelers could become the most important market for many inner-city hotels, a market which, occasionally, is not solely work-based, as we will see. This is a type of executive customer that has very specific needs in terms of commodities which enable them to continue with their routine, in addition to having access to all the technology required in order to work.

### **Luxury**

Although in the other groups we can identify disparate purchasing powers, the type of customer that demands luxury is clear that the cost of its demands and preferences can be high. This customer looks for exclusive, unique experiences, an excellent, limited service, with privileges that are not offered to the general public.

### **Eco-friendly**

The main goal for eco-friendly travelers is to enjoy the environment in its purest, most natural state. This growing type of traveler goes in search of sustainable experiences and takes into consideration the impact of their actions and the services they acquire, in order to reduce the consumption of natural resources. This type of customer demands specific information and consciously aims to contribute to the local economy.

There is also the classification that could be made according to the purpose of the traveling. The Annual International Passenger Survey carried out by the British Tourist Authority distinguishes five types of tourism-related visit:

1. Holiday independent
2. Holiday inclusive
3. Business
4. Visiting friends and relatives (VFR)
5. Miscellaneous

The attempts to classify tourist motivation, are several, however, it should not be forgotten that many trips have multiple purposes and are likely to involve different forms of transport and accommodation types. Hence, this tends to limit the usefulness of any classification. Despite these limitations, Figure 2 is an extra attempt to classify tourists (Mason, 2020).

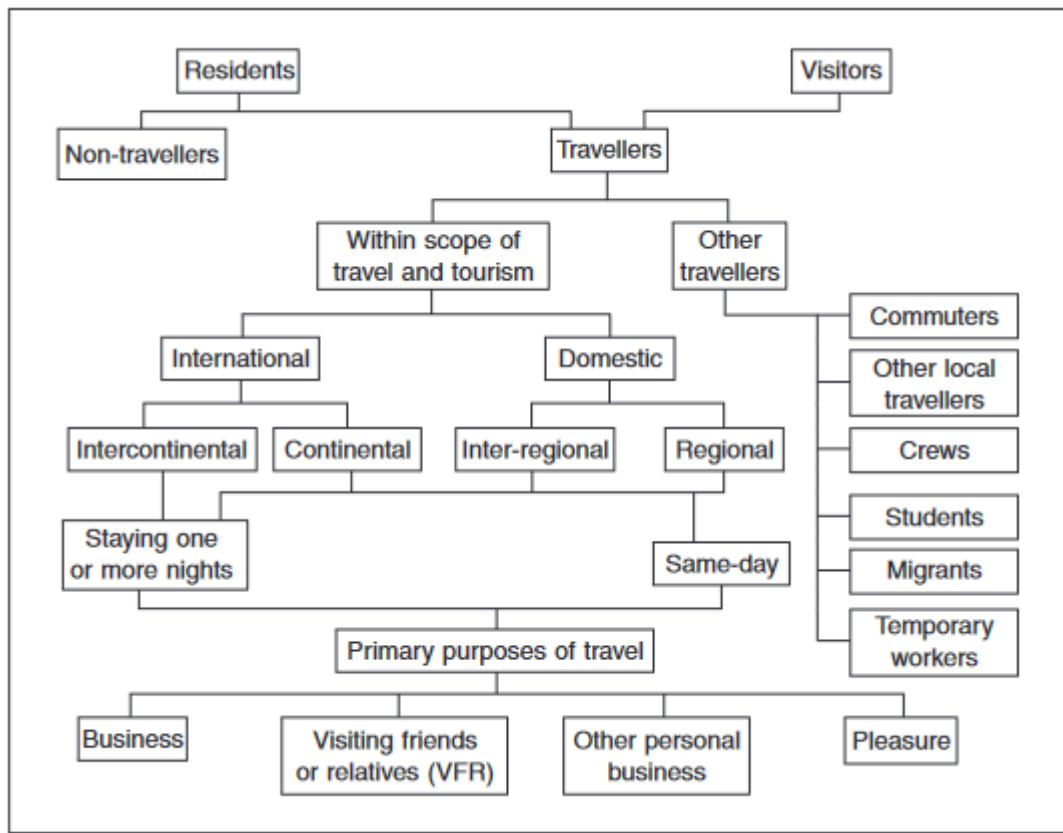


Figure 9: A classification of travellers and tourists

### 6.3.1.2 Skills and techniques needed to provide good customer service

In order to succeed into a customer service an individual should have:

- Verbal Communication skills
- Non-verbal Communication skills
- Ability of active listening of the customer

Effective verbal communication is crucial in aiding the exchange of information. Customer satisfaction and successful product and service fulfillment hinge on the ability to transmit and receive messages freely and effectively with current and potential customers.

In order to strengthen customer communication, the individual providing the customer service should develop the following techniques:

- Gather Information. Asking for customer input whenever possible is crucial. By knowing more about customers' needs, wants, and expectations, the provision of services and products will be better.
- Be consistent. Provide information and updates to customers on a regular basis, not just when it is convenient to you. This is especially true when you are working on a problem or service breakdown.



- Demonstrate openness. Customers often want to see that service providers understand them on a personal level.
- Be personable. Connecting on a personal level and showing compassion and concern for your customer and their emotional needs.
- In the following box, more information regarding the aforementioned techniques are provided.

To be successful in the service profession, an individual should be aware that he/she constantly send nonverbal messages to others. Through this awareness, when working in customer service, the effectiveness in customer encounters is increased. A significant fact to remember is that when messages are transmitted between two people during communication, nonverbal signals can contradict or override verbal messages. This is especially true when emotions are high. Do not think that this means that your words are not important; they are just typically overridden by nonverbal cues. When in doubt about your message's meaning, people tend to believe the nonverbal (facial, body, and vocal) parts. Although nonverbal cues carry powerful messages, you should remember that there is considerable room for misinterpretation of the cues used by different people. Based on personality type, cultural and educational background, environment in which people have been reared, and many other factors, they may send and receive nonverbal cues differently from the way you would.

Listening effectively is the primary means that many customer service professionals use to determine the needs of their customers. Many times, these needs are not communicated to the employee directly but through inferences, indirect comments, or nonverbal signals, as we already mentioned. A skilled listener will pick up on a customer's words and these cues or nuances and conduct follow-up questioning or probe deeper to determine the real need. Most people take the listening skill for granted. They incorrectly assume that anyone can listen effectively. Unfortunately, this is untrue. Many people are complacent about listening and only go through the motions of listening. (Lucas, 2009)

### Strengthening Customer Communication

Customers who feel that they have an active role in and control of a service-provider interaction often feel more important and valued. Improved interpersonal communication can lead to higher levels of customer satisfaction and retention and reduced stress for you and your co-workers. Take advantage of the following strategies to build stronger relationships with your customers.

#### **Gather Information**

Ask for customer input whenever possible. By knowing more about their needs, wants, and expectations, you will be better able to provide services and products that satisfy them. Use strategies you will find in this chapter to gather valuable information from people who you encounter on a daily basis.

#### **Be Consistent**

People tend to like what is familiar. If customers come to know that they can depend on you and your organization to regularly provide timely, factual information, they will likely be more loyal. Provide information and updates to customers on a regular basis, not just when it is convenient to you. This is especially true when you are working on a problem or service breakdown. Remember that they do not know what you know. For example, if you are gathering information or need more time than expected, come back to the customer with periodic updates to give him or her a status check.

#### **Demonstrate Openness**

Customers often want to see that service providers understand them on a personal level. The worst thing you can do as a service provider is to hide behind policy or deflect responsibility when dealing with a customer issue or question. Think of how you likely react when a service provider says something like, *"I can't do that because our policy says ..."* You probably feel the hairs rise on the back of your neck and become agitated. Your customers are no different. When interacting with them, take the time to put yourself in their place before saying something or taking an action that might create an adversarial situation.

#### **Be Personable**

Service providers who tend to be "all business" or robotic in their service delivery often fail to get high marks from customers. Even if you are knowledgeable, are efficient, and follow all the rules in delivering service, you could end up with a customer who is dissatisfied if you do not demonstrate some degree of humanness. This means connecting on a personal level and showing compassion and concern for your customer and their emotional needs. For example, if someone tells you during an interaction that he or she is celebrating a special event, take the time to ask, explore the topic briefly, or relate a personal example. If it is the customer's child's birthday, you might wish the child an enthusiastic "Happy Birthday" and ask the child how old he or she is or what the child hopes to get for his or her birthday. Depending on the type of business you are in, you might even offer a small present (e.g., a free dessert, a piece of candy, a toy, a coupon for a discount on his or her next visit, or whatever might be appropriate). At the least, upon concluding the transaction, wish the child well or congratulate him or her one more time (Lucas, 2009).



Figure 10: Characteristics of good customer service

### 6.3.1.3 Manage customers' expectations

It is very much difficult for any service organization or company to meet all the expectations of the customers as they are changing from time to time. Hence, expectations should be managed in order to fit into the capabilities and scope of the process that a firm possesses. Therefore, a firm should check its capabilities and specify the factors of expectations. Setting the expectations is the key to fulfill the gap between what the customer is expecting and what competitors are providing. When customers have high expectations and the service is failing to fulfill them, then there is maximum dissatisfaction (Suresh, 2020). In this context, customer service, service strategy and the firm should be closely associated to the customer. In order to achieve this, a strategy model should include:

- Segment characteristics (expectation)
- Concept formulation
- Operationalization and
- Delivery system

The above elements provide the framework for strategy in customer service. Customer service is successful in managing expectations only when it is targeting to customers in a straightforward and transparent way. So, if we tried to sum up some specific guidelines for successful management of expectations, for employees in the service sector, those should be the following:

- Focus, don't get blurred
- Segment by expectation than needs
- Rank customers in a segment by their value
- Stick with the segment you know best and can serve most effectively,



- Fill the gap between customer's expectations and competitors' offerings.
- Train and develop employees to share common value
- Manage expectation, don't always meet them
- Under promise and over delivery to create a customer franchise

(Suresh, 2020)

A useful and well-known process to manage customer expectations is IDEA (Identify, Evaluate and Act); the first step is to identify what customers expect through collecting information via informal customer contacts, formal surveys, knowledge of the industry and technological trends, knowledge of what competitors do; the second step is to evaluate which expectations are congruent while others are unrealistic and unattainable; the final step is to act by modifying plans, by incorporating expectations into development efforts, by educating customers about the impracticality of their expectations. Last but not least, we should keep in mind that when some consistent expectations cannot be met, some actions should be taken, because inaction may create situations in which expectations exceed potential performance (Miller, 2000).

### 6.3.1.4 Plan for implementing, evaluating, and monitoring customer service

Customer service acts as a joint action of the service provider and the customer. The role and importance of customer service had already been highlighted. However, the accurate measurement and evaluation of customer service is also of great importance (Van Raaij & Pruyn, 1998).

Customer service can be monitored with the SEVQUAL model which investigates the relationships between service quality, consumer satisfaction and purchase intentions. The model has five generic dimensions referred to as dimensions of service quality as presented in Table 1 (Scott & Brian, 1996; Sekajja, 2006).

Dimensions of service quality (Sekajja 2006)	
Dimension	Description
Reliability	Ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately
Responsiveness	Willingness to help customers and provide prompt service
Assurance	Inspiring trust and confidence
Tangibles	Representing the service physically (physical facilities, equipment, and appearance of personnel)
Empathy	Caring, individualized attention that the firm provides to the customers

Customer service measurement in the tourism and hospitality industry has unique aspects. The expectations of the visitors at the holiday destinations are high because they visit for holidays and they also expect excellent facilities and services. Inevitably, the visitors need the best from all five dimensions to experience a pleasant and memorable holiday, and customer satisfaction. To meet

these expectations, the organization must consistently analyze the level of customer service. If the requirement is not fulfilled by the organization, then it will become a hurdle for the progression of the sector. Guests who are not satisfied will spread the news which will also create many obstacles to the business (Sekajja, 2006). Effective customer service is important in order to get loyal guests and also guest that refer their friends also. This improves the sales and also the profit of the organization. The reputation and the image of the organization are improved if the customer service is good. This in turn brings more shares in the market. Especially the internal customers i.e. the employees get more of job satisfaction by caring the customers<sup>6</sup>. In Figure 3 we see the steps to create a customer service evaluation norm.

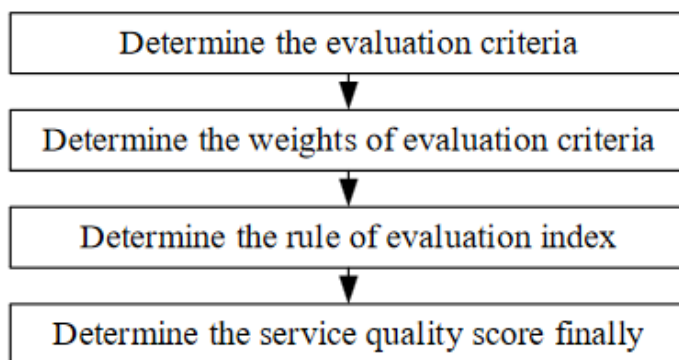


Figure 11: The overall process of customer service evaluation

In addition, there is also the importance-performance analysis (IPA) that treats customer satisfaction as a function of two components: 1) the importance of a product or service to a customer and 2) the performance of a business in delivering that product/service. IPA is used to evaluate satisfaction in a wide range of business sectors and especially tourism and hospitality services. IPA recognizes that travelers consider some attributes of a destination more important than other attributes. Those attributes perceived to be more important may weigh more in the overall evaluation of the service (Chu and Choi, 2000). In applying IPA, a destination plots tourist rating of importance and performance (satisfaction) in a quadrant model shown in Figure 4. The method allows an overall view of satisfaction within clear directives for management focus and resource allocation. For instance, destination attributes within Quadrant A are where the destination fails but these attributes are important to visitors. Destination attributes in Quadrant D display great satisfaction but they do not matter much to visitors. Immediate destination management efforts, therefore, need to concentrate on strategies to improve the design and delivery of attributes in Quadrant A (i.e., the destination's major weaknesses). Resources need to be shifted from Quadrant D to Quadrant A to support these strategies (Wang, 2016).

<sup>6</sup> UKEssays. (November 2018). Evaluating The Effectiveness Of Customer Service Policies Tourism Essay. Retrieved from <https://www.ukessays.com/essays/tourism/evaluating-the-effectiveness-of-customer-service-policies-tourism-essay.php?vref=1>



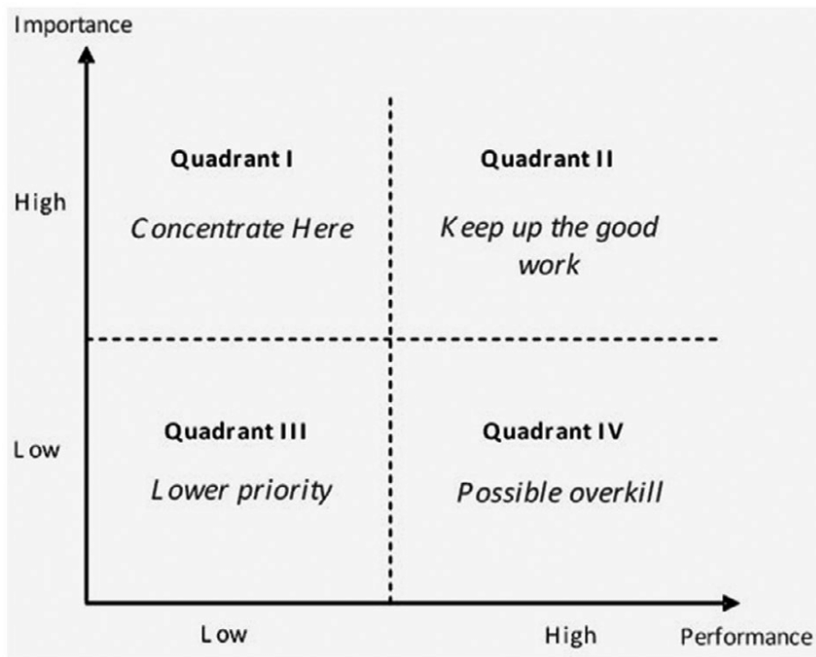


Figure 12: Importance and performance in a quadrant model

## Final self-assessment

1. **Which of these defines the term customer service better?**
  - a) Customer service is the service provided in support of a company's core product
  - b) Customer service is all customer-provider interactions, other than proactive selling and the core product delivery that facilitate the organization's relationship with its customers.
  - c) Customer service is the sum total of what an organization does to meet customer expectations and produce customer satisfaction
  - d) all the above
  
2. **A characteristic of excellent customer service is:**
  - a) Telling the customer about yourself
  - b) Seeing the customer as a commodity
  - c) Minimum customer interaction and contact
  - d) Asking the customer information (needs, wants, and expectations) whenever possible.
  
3. **To be an effective listener, the most important thing to do is to:**
  - e) Empathy
  - f) Respond to the message
  - g) Try to figure out the meaning of the message
  - h) Nod
  
4. ***"Every service organization or company has to be able to meet all the expectations of the customers as they are changing from time to time."* This statement is:**
  - e) Always right
  - f) Always wrong
  - g) Sometimes right/sometimes wrong
  
5. **Which of the following is NOT a step of the process of customer service evaluation:**
  - e) Determine the rule of evaluation index
  - f) Determine the evaluation criteria
  - g) Determine the final service quality score
  - h) Make adjustments in the staff and if necessary, make redundancies
  
6. **Which of the following are NOT included in the specific guidelines for successful management of expectations:**
  - a) Segment by expectation than needs
  - b) Rank customers in a segment by their value
  - c) Service in every segment, and act like you know best
  - d) Fill the gap between customer's expectations and competitors' offerings.
  - e) Manage expectation, don't always meet them
  
7. **Many organizations describe their customer service policies in Customer Charters. Which of the following could NOT be included in a customer charter:**
  - e) the performance levels they will aim for (e.g., punctuality, quality)
  - f) their payment and refund policies
  - g) what they will do in the event of a disruption to arrangements (e.g., delays, cancellations)
  - h) when an employee is being fired
  - i) the compensation they will provide

8. Which of the following is NOT an example of non-verbal communication?
- Smiling or relaxed mouth
  - Talking about the product
  - Making eye-contact
  - Nodding the head
9. Which of the following are important for building customer loyalty?
- Having a quick response time
  - Being honest and reliable
  - Having expert product knowledge
  - All of the above
10. What are the benefits of having a customer service policy?
- Managers can control their employees better
  - There is a consistency in the way customers are treated
  - Managers can control the way employees treat the customers better
  - Complaints cannot be handled
11. An organization works hard to manage customer expectations. Why is this important?
- To provide additional products
  - To meet staff needs
  - To demonstrate knowledge
  - To maintain profitability
12. "Feedback by clients or customers is not important". This statement is:
- Always true
  - Always wrong
  - Sometimes true/sometimes wrong
13. \_\_\_\_\_ refers to the ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately
- Empathy
  - Tangibles
  - Assurance
  - Responsiveness
  - Reliability
14. \_\_\_\_\_ refers to the knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to convey trust and confidence
- Empathy
  - Tangibles
  - Assurance
  - Responsiveness
  - Reliability
15. Importance-performance analysis (IPA):
- Is multilevel-component assessment to measure customer satisfaction
  - Is used to evaluate satisfaction in a wide range of business sectors and especially tourism and hospitality services
  - It measures only the importance of a product or service to a customer



**16. In tourism sector, effective customer service is essential for survival and growth because:**






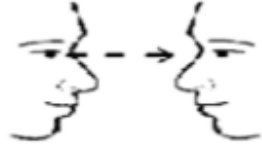



- a) Every tourism enterprise has many employees
- b) Tourists should have nice experiences from their destination country in order not to damage country's international image
- c) It is a people-oriented industry
- d) It has great share of GDP in every country

## 6.4 Annexes

### 6.4.1 Common elements for the communication process and tourism according to Kiełbasiewicz-Drozdowska & Radko (2006)

COMMUNICATION	TOURISM	COMMENTS
Communication is a social process and always takes place in a social context; intracultural and intercultural.	Tourism depends on the change of social environment, getting to know other environments, entering interactions with new surroundings.	Each interaction implies the process of communication. In tourism it is inevitable because of a high frequency of making contacts and entering interactions which usually take place on an interpersonal level.
Communication serves the purpose of getting to know the world, and acquiring the knowledge about it; helps to build interactions and group relations being the existential foundation of each society.	One of the main reasons for a tourist trip is the desire to know the world, people and different cultures, to compare one's own culture with a foreign one.	Going abroad is particularly conducive to making contacts with people from different cultural circles. The cognitive nature of such trips is the greater and closer is contact with the culture and inhabitants of the visited country.
Communication uses symbols and signs and depends on the exchange and reading of symbols in the context of the culture known to us.	A tourist visiting a given country first notices the material products of its culture, being a reflection and materialisation of the accepted beliefs, views, ideas and standard symbols.	Each culture has shaped its own system of symbols and meanings, usually comprehensible only to its representatives. Tourism understood as a meeting of representatives of different cultures creates a chance to know and understand other people and their cultures by way of exchanging information, beliefs and views in the content of the culture's announcements.
In order to reach full agreement between the participants in the interaction, a semiotic community is necessary, i.e. using the same signs, symbols and meanings. Total communication between the representatives of different cultures is nearly impossible, so the awareness of the existence of differences between cultures, their acceptance and the attempt to understand them is very important.	Tourists are most often people from outside the cultural circle of a visited country, using a different repertoire of symbols and signs than the natives. The divergence is not, however, a sufficient criterion for assessment of a given culture as better or worse.	Symbols and signs define the ways of thinking specific to a given culture; they define meanings and establish the sense of events and phenomena. The lack of knowledge about symbols, signs and meanings constituting the culture of the visited country contributes to difficulties in communication and to incorrect interpretation of the announcements, leading very often to the lack of agreement, discomfort of interlocutors, and being the grounds for the negative assessment of other cultures.

## 6.4.2 Diverse Cultural Interpretation of some Nonverbal Communications

 <p>Pointing with Thumb Malaysia: Respectful Other culture: Meaningless</p>	 <p>Calling with index finger United States: Respectful Other culture: Offensive</p>	 <p>Extending palm upfront to the face Asians: Greetings Nigerians: Abusive/Offensive</p>
 <p>Pointing with index fingers America: Pleasant Others: rude/ offensive</p>	 <p>Thumb up Iran: Obscene Others: Goodluck</p>	 <p>Eye Contact United States: Attentiveness Asian/Hispanic: rude</p>
 <p>Patting Kid's head Thailand: Offensive United States: friendly</p>	 <p>It's OK with fingers Asian: Ok and fine Others: Meaningless</p>	 <p>Touching/ Expanding left hand Muslims' culture: Inappropriate Others: Appropriate</p>

Source: Adetunji & Sze, 2012

## 6.5 Figure references

- Figure 1: Types of communication
- Figure 2: Communication process Model
- Figure 3: 4 Sides Model (Schulz von Thun 1981)
- Figure 5: Intercultural communication, adapted from Dumitrașcu-Băldău & Dumitrașcu, 2016
- Figure 6: Benefits of foreign language competence to organizations, source: Leslie & Russell, 2006
- Figure 7: Strategies to overcome or reduce non-verbal communication challenges, source: Arqoub & Alserhan, 2019
- Figure 8: Customer Service quality in tourism, source: Davidson, 2003
- Figure 9: A classification of travellers and tourists, source: Mason, 2020
- Figure 10: Characteristics of good customer service, retrieved from [https://willenbooks.co.uk/OLD\\_download/04472%20Unit%20%20-%20Exploring%20Customer%20Service.pdf](https://willenbooks.co.uk/OLD_download/04472%20Unit%20%20-%20Exploring%20Customer%20Service.pdf)
- Figure 11: The overall process of customer service evaluation, source: Shen, 2015
- Figure 12: Importance and performance in a quadrant model, source: Ritchie, 2008

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