

destinations : wellbeing tourism



RESOURCE 2

DETOUR WELLBEING TOURISM
OPPORTUNITIES FOR REGIONS

CREATING A
WELLBEING TOURISM
DESTINATION OR
REGION

CREATED BY: MOMENTUM, IRELAND



Wellbeing tourism
is a megatrend when managed
can benefit regions social and
economic interconnectedness,
public and private debt,
sustainability, environmental
sustainability, economic
prosperity, and social wellbeing.

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INTRODUCTION WELLBEING TOURISM AS A DEVELOPMENT OPTION FOR DESTINATIONS AND REGIONS



Introduction Wellbeing Tourism

As explained in Resource 1 Wellness tourism is viewed as a potential and vital resource for tourism development.

Every destination has something unique to offer wellness travellers. Wellness Tourism is multidimensional bringing benefits to businesses, communities, and stakeholders beyond the wellness sectors in it's regions. This in turn creates opportunities for all kinds of businesses and providers spurring opportunities for regions to develop as wellbeing destinations. The sector spans the physical, mental, social, emotional, spiritual, and environmental spheres — wellness travel is also multifaceted – so it needs involvement and partnership between services, transport, accommodation, bars, restaurants. It encompasses a large and diverse set of activities and pursuits, including preventive health services, spa, beauty, fitness, personal growth, nature, and much more.

This resource is designed to assist regions in developing regional wellness destinations focusing on the integration of important tourism players, stakeholders, communities, and government. This resource covers four key sections each with a spotlight on case study examples across European destinations, regions and islands looking at different approaches, strategies and recommended best practices. Examples include supplementary videos, articles, research papers, and applications.

Section 1

Wellbeing Tourism Destination Development and how wellbeing has become a vital resource for sustainable tourism and economic development

Section 3

Destination Packaging and Itinerary Building and how regions can sell, promote, and distribute their wellbeing experiences in partnership

Section 2

Wellbeing Tourism Destination Branding guiding regions on how to develop a regional destination brand and identity

Section 4

Tourism Destination Digital Placemaking showcasing the power of regions having placemaking and digital placemaking as a smart tourism approach to strengthening market positioning in an ever-competitive, high expectation industry

“Wellbeing tourism is becoming firmly rooted in our societies and subsequently becoming part of our decision making when choosing our lifestyles, leisure, and holidays.”

We can expect to see this trend continue to soar as stress becomes a factor in most people’s lives combating work, family, health, and time pressures. As The Global Wellness Institute (GWI) estimated the size of the global wellness economy to be \$4.2 trillion in 2017, encompassing wellness tourism; wellness real estate; workplace wellness; spas; thermal/mineral springs; fitness & mind-body; healthy eating, nutrition, & weight-loss; traditional & complementary medicine; preventive & personalized medicine and public health; and personal care, beauty, & anti-ageing. It is beneficial for tourism regions to establish, prepare, and build their regional wellbeing tourism experiences so that they can accommodate this demanding consumer-led trend.

Importantly, both tourism and the overall wellness economy are projected to grow at a faster rate than the global economy.



Wellness tourism is positioned at an important intersection between many stakeholders — including the hospitality industry, wellness businesses, and residents and governments of destination countries and regions — stand to benefit from this opportunity. As one of the world’s largest industries, travel and tourism directly supports more than 118 million jobs and contributes 3.2% to global GDP (or \$2.6 trillion in 2017, according to the World Travel & Tourism Council).

“

According to the Global Wellness Institute

“The rise of the global middle class — alongside the modern human need for relaxation, adventure, and new experiences — continues to fuel a tourism industry whose worldwide growth has surpassed that of many major industries such as manufacturing, financial services, and retail.”



01

SECTION 1 WELLBEING TOURISM DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT: WELLBEING HAS BECOME A VITAL RESOURCE FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Section 1 Wellbeing Tourism Destination Development



Since wellness and wellbeing burst into mainstream consumerism and became part of people's daily lives a few years ago, wellbeing tourism has become an important part of the trend and evolved rapidly.



It is beneficial to also note that the continued rise of wellness tourism is enticing other new entrants into the market, as well as new forms of competition and partnerships in the form of sustainable, low impact, and socially responsible tourism.

Businesses and governments are jumping rapidly onboard to develop their products, experiences, and regions to take advantage of the trend. Striving on the race of being the market leader they are reviewing and updating their policies, strategies, and support structures to accommodate their wellness, hospitality, and travel sectors. These development approaches are designed to ensure regions converge in a flexible way developing regional business partnerships, wellbeing tourism business models, cohesive packages and itineraries, promotional and distribution systems so travellers can incorporate wellness into every aspect of their trips. It is vital regions are seen to be working together in a seamless way using adaptive robust technologies and placemaking to unify and strengthen their wellbeing destinations.

The integration of business areas along a continuum from hospitality to wellness and healthy lifestyles will continue to gather momentum and more will be needed but they also need to adapt to the 'needs' and 'demand' of the trend. Different types of integration will unfold over the future, as different players in the travel, hospitality, spa, fitness, and retail worlds are identifying that wellbeing is becoming a requirement to their core customers. They are seeking out new ways to join the trend through brand development, partnering with wellbeing businesses, and adapting wellbeing principles, activities, and services into their experiences and offerings. The next diagram is a reminder from [DETOUR Resource 1 How Regions Can Exploit the Wellbeing Tourism Megatrend](#), formulated by the [Global Wellness Institute](#) the holistic values, drive, activities, and choices of Wellness Travelers.

Holistic Values Drive Activities & Choices of Wellness Travellers



Wellbeing Tourism is a Mechanism to Manage Over tourism

The most important distinction to make in this section is wellbeing tourism is not mass or over-tourism so it must be developed in a low impact and sustainable way.



“Over-tourism and mass tourism have acutely affected destinations around the world and will continue to take its toll if not managed and monitored.”

Wellbeing tourism destinations are likely to be home to vulnerable populations, fragile ecosystems, and endangered wildlife, and require specific, more stringent safeguards to protect the special quality of the place. Regions and governments must implement sustainable, responsible, and environmentally friendly practices to combat such over-tourism. For many wellbeing tourism destinations, growth is quick and exponential. For example, the number of tourists in Iceland has tripled in the last six years, now totalling five times their local population. This section demonstrates how destinations can manage over-tourism and sustainably develop their regions and take optimum potential advantage of the opportunities presented by wellbeing tourism both economically, socially, and environmentally. Before this can happen, it is vital organizations responsible for development must proactively consider the level of risk of over-tourism and review strategies that will assist in the sustainable management of their destinations.



**Short-Term Plan-
Two to Three Years**

McKinsey, in a [report](#) titled ‘Coping with Success; Managing Overcrowding in Tourism Destinations’ indicates good long-term planning is a key way to prevent over-tourism. McKinsey notes that destinations may benefit by starting with a short-term plan—that is, two to three years, versus ten years—with realistic timelines that allow destinations to be agile and adjust as conditions change over time. Growth must take into account that wellbeing tourism is not over-tourism or mass tourism but is sustainable and low impact. Governments must be aware of wellbeing tourism’s future economic, social, and environmental impacts, but also addresses the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment, and host communities. *(McKinsey Report)*



Wellbeing Tourism is a Sustainable, Low Impact, Socially Responsible, Economically Beneficial Development Option

Environmental Protection Strategies



Sustainable development ensures nature is always supported. Environmental protection strategies integrated into the destination development plans ensures the economic, environmental, and social goals are achieved from the beginning. This ensures that development is maximized long term and across generations. Intact and natural habitats are essential for the tourism of the future. Wellbeing destinations require the cultural dynamics to be maintained and social satisfaction and relationships (socio-cultural dimensions).

In 2018, adventure tourism policymakers were forced to adopt integrated and holistic development plans that commit to sustainable tourism development. The same is currently being applied to sustainable Wellbeing Tourism development. The [Sustainable Tourism Index](#) compiled by the [Economist Intelligence Unit](#) identified a lack of integration of tourism policy between national, local, and regional levels as a threat to sustainable tourism development. In addition, it also finds a “vacuum at the national level,” which contributes further to the fragmentation of policy creation and implementation.

Therefore, wellbeing tourism Destination Development Strategies need to consider multiple dynamics at play when incorporating sustainable development e.g. monitor that the destination provides quality authentic experiences, there is minimal environmental impacts, incorporates sustainable development practices, is eco-friendly, and doesn't pollute or destroy in any way, has supply-side management....Guests need to have access to nature but this must be monitored and controlled. 'Nature and sustainability are often high rankings in importance' (Illing et al 2013). Hence, the regions need to protect natural resources that are unique to the destination (lakes, mountains, forests, coastlines, mineral springs, etc.) that are critically important because they are often the main reasons visitors come to a destination. They should all be managed and included in the **Destination and Wellbeing Development Strategy**. Management of such resources means charging for the privileged and reinvesting some of the money generated back into maintaining its sustainability. Wellbeing tourism regional stakeholders and developers should consider the following sample checklist when writing their Development Strategy.



Wellbeing tourism needs unspoiled natural environments, fresh unpolluted healthy air, and water, hygiene and safety



Food should be locally sourced, preferably organic and dishes authentically cooked



Marketing information i.e. videos and images must match what is experienced and expected by this high demand market



The destination branding and themes must be based on health and wellbeing



Conserve and protect ecosystems and species, save energy, use renewable energy sources, create natural ecosystem cycles. An immediate strategy is to include guidelines and advice in communications on how visitors can use natural resources at a rate they can be regenerated or sustained



Promote diversity in nature and ensure other regions are not affected (polluted or overused) as a result of your actions. Create a specific Solutions Approach Strategy for destinations and regions to combat typical environmental challenges or problems.



Include long-term goals and short-term gain when it comes to tourism numbers! Minimize impacts by minimizing crowd numbers but charging higher admission fees to cover costs, crowd control, regeneration periods blocked off on the calendar to ensure the economic, social, and environmental needs of the region are achieved



Promote eco-friendly and sustainable products and production processes as a standard across the board



Educate the industry on conservation, preservation, sustainability, alternative consumption practices, and technologies, impact measurement techniques, etc. Have a high **Standard of Practice Guide** and have access to experts in the field as a point of referral and advice

Wellbeing tourism destinations will also need to begin to consider other strategies and policies such as carrying capacities, quotas, and better public transportation.

In addition, robust and transparent **Monitoring and Evaluation Programs** need to be put into place. The wellbeing and adventure industry should seek to support these initiatives wherever possible, to facilitate the collection of data to support the case for further market development instead of more harmful forms of mass tourism. The **Adventure Tourism Development Index** stated successful adventure tourism development depends on a coordinated effort between industry, government, local communities, and project supporters. The same applies to Wellbeing Tourism. Actors need to take a development approach uniquely tailored to the local political, economic, social, and environmental landscape.

McKinsey's **report** states when it comes to the effects of over-tourism, prevention is easier than recovery. McKinsey and the World Travel & Tourism Council examine how destinations can reap the benefits of tourism while preserving their unique qualities. For destinations already struggling from overcrowding, the research found five approaches that have proved to help.

1

2

3

4

5

Smooth visitors over time by encouraging them to visit during nonpeak times of day, season, and year through actions such as arrival limits and ticketing systems

Spread visitors across sites, for example, by developing new attractions and promoting less-popular sites and areas. If accommodation is a shortfall (see Case Study POSHTEL Pop-Ups)

Adjust pricing to balance supply and demand by, for example, introducing variable or tiered pricing

Regulate accommodation supply through regulations on home-sharing and additional hotel rooms that are low impact (see Case Study POSHTEL Pop-Ups)

In dire situations, limit access and activities to protect natural and cultural integrity





Resource ETIS European Tourism Indicators System (ETIS)



Austria

The ETIS European Tourism Indicators System (ETIS) (2013) is designed for destination stakeholders so they can manage and monitor sustainable destination performances. It can improve economic sustainability while helping preserve the diverse natural landscapes that regions have to offer enabling access for everyone. The ETIS resource includes

- 1 An introductory to **sustainable destination management**
- 2 Step by step guide to the **implementation of a system**
- 3 A set of core and optional **indicators and evaluation form**
- 4 A guide for using destination **dataset and dataset sheet**
- 5 A detailed **indicator reference sheet**
- 6 **Post-event evaluation**, a **workshop** for Pilot Testing, Phase 1 and Phase 2 strategies, etc.
- 7 A **Toolkit** available in all EU languages

showcasing how it can be implemented and benefit different destination contexts; **Slovenia, Barcelona (Spain), Danube (Bulgaria), Italy, Milan (Italy), Montenegro**

CASE STUDY

POSHTEL POP-UPS Sustainable, Low Impact Accommodation



It is difficult to develop a well-being tourism destination and provide minimal impact accommodation. POSHTEL POP UPS are an option for prefab luxury accommodation in remote wellbeing destinations. **POSHTEL POPUP** is part of the sharing economy. They are refurbished prefabricated luxury pop up luxury hotel room cabins that SMEs or Development Authorities can lease as a solution to providing accommodation to their guests. POSHTEL works with SMEs, governments, and landowners who have space to host pop-up hotel rooms, and then leases the rooms over Airbnb. They are perfect for remote, luxury Instagrammable experiences. They are perfect for = businesses looking to diversify their offering, increase their bed capacity and earn extra revenue, and spread tourists to remote areas such as National Parks. Travellers experience authentic unique accommodation, immerse themselves in local ecosystems and cultures on their doorstep. Most importantly they leave without a trace.

How the POSHTELS POP UP Concept Works and Leaves Without a Trace

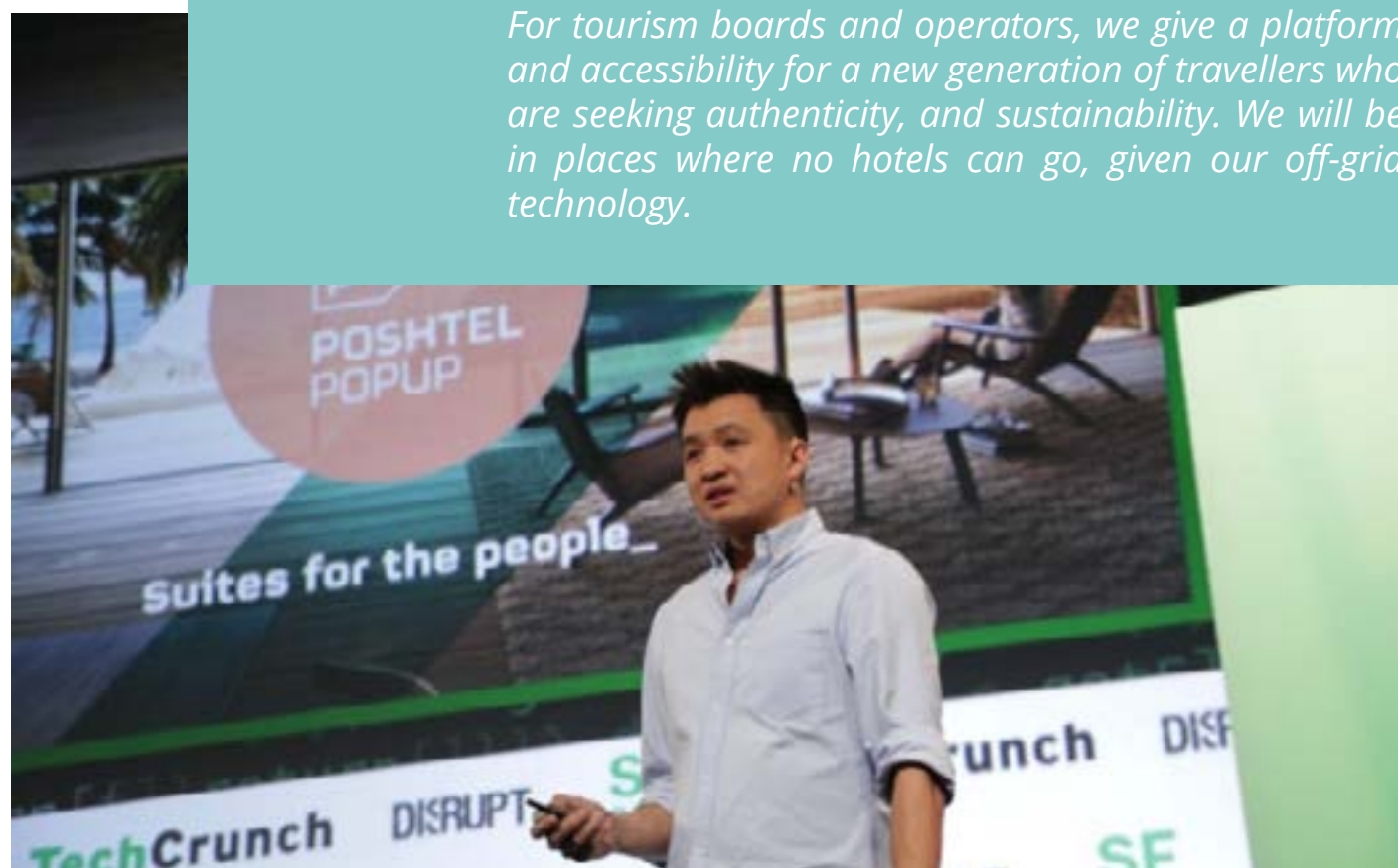


“

O Koo,
Cofounder,
Poshtel

POSHTEL POPUP is a chain of designer hotel suites available for rental. Anyone with a taste for adventure can pop up somewhere new in a luxurious, sustainable, and authentic space. POSHTEL POP - UPS are made from upcycled shipping containers and use the latest ecological and sustainable architectural design from Scandinavia, and our state - of - the - art off-grid technology will allow us to operate anywhere. This utility will allow us to be off - grid-dependent, giving the ability to pop up anywhere and leave without a trace.

For tourism boards and operators, we give a platform and accessibility for a new generation of travellers who are seeking authenticity, and sustainability. We will be in places where no hotels can go, given our off-grid technology.



All regional approaches need to consider different rules, regulations, taxes, and fees, combined with promotion, marketing, and the creative use of technology. There is no single answer to overcrowding; every destination is different, what works in one place may not work at another. McKinsey's report illustrates possible solutions from all over the world



1

Build a comprehensive fact-base and update it regularly collecting accurate statistics is often a challenge for adventure destinations, but good data is worth its weight in gold. Not only can it be used by nearly any tourism stakeholder from marketers to planners, but it can help identify trends before they cause negative effects. McKinsey specifically recommends measuring residents' attitude toward tourists, such as the [Mood of the Nation](#) survey in New Zealand.

3

Involve all sections of society: The development referenced above requires collaboration across government ministries, with the private sector and industry associations, both at the global level (like ATTA) and regionally (like guide associations).

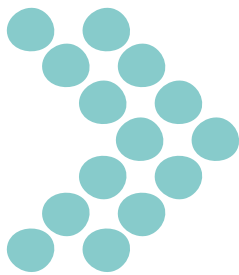
2

Conduct long-term planning to encourage sustainable growth. The Adventure Travel Development Index provides a useful framework for adventure destinations seeking to build sustainable adventure markets. It specifically identifies a range of interdependent factors that contribute to the enabling environment for successful adventure tourism. Adventure destinations must also reexamine how

4

Find new sources of funding: Investment is required to ensure the correct protections are in place. McKinsey recommends looking at innovative models of funding, i.e., beyond the traditional bed night taxes, to fund these investments.

Wellbeing Development Needs to be Integrated into Government Strategy and Policy



According to the Global Wellness Institute

When developing a wellbeing tourism destination or region, government involvement is vital to the process. They must have a clear sense of the value of tourism and wellbeing for their stakeholders and economies and invest accordingly. For wellbeing tourism to be successfully developed it needs to be integrated into National Tourism Strategies, is a Target for Investment Promotion, and Officially Promoted on the National Tourism Website. Governments need to work with businesses, services, destinations, and regions collectively and collaboratively to promote wellbeing tourism as part of their national tourism strategy. In the next section, we demonstrate in the Case Studies the different ways Governments can invest in Wellbeing Tourism initiatives and regional development; Iceland invests in developing its wellbeing experiences and invests by having a dedicated Directorate for Health. Below is a table of countries who are currently implementing such strategies



	National/Official Tourism Website Promotes Wellness Tourism	National Tourism Strategy Addresses Wellness Tourism	Wellness Tourism is a Target for National Investment Promotion
Andorra	Yes	Yes	No
Armenia	Yes	Yes	No
Austria	Yes	No	No
Azerbaijan	No	Yes	Yes
Bosnia Herzegovina	Yes	No	No
Bulgaria	Yes	Yes	Yes
Croatia	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cyprus	Yes	No	No
Czech Republic	Yes	Yes	No
Denmark	Yes	No	No
Estonia	Yes	Yes	Yes
Finland	Yes	Yes	Yes
France	Yes	Yes	No
Georgia	Yes	Yes	Yes
Germany	Yes	No	No
Greece	Yes	No	No
Hungary	Yes	Yes	Yes
Iceland	Yes	No	No
Ireland	Yes	No	No
Italy	Yes	No	No
Kazakhstan	Yes	Yes	No
Kyrgyzstan	Yes	No	No
Latvia	Yes	Yes	No
Lithuania	Yes	Yes	Yes
Luxembourg	Yes	No	No
Malta	Yes	No	No
Monaco	Yes	No	No
Montenegro	Yes	Yes	Yes
Netherlands	Yes	No	No
Norway	Yes	No	No



Galapagos Crab

CASE STUDY

Galapagos Holistic Approach to Mitigating the Negative Impacts of Tourism

One of the biggest challenges facing the archipelago today is inadequate biosecurity. The more people come to visit, the greater the likelihood that new, harmful invasive species will survive. The International Galapagos Tour Operators Association (IGTOA) provided support to several new biosecurity initiatives through their Galapagos Traveler Conservation Fund. To date, they have provided over \$1 million in funding.

They supported the front line of people and organisations preventing and mitigating the negative impacts by providing procurement and training of a new K - 9 biosecurity unit that will help detect potentially harmful contraband as it enters the islands.

They also invested and provided a new Professional Standards Development and Training and organized the first-ever Third-Party Guiding Certification Program in Galapagos history so recipients can be 'true ambassadors for Galapagos conservation' through their Conscious Community Tourism initiative.



“

Matt Kareus,
Executive Director,
IGTOA

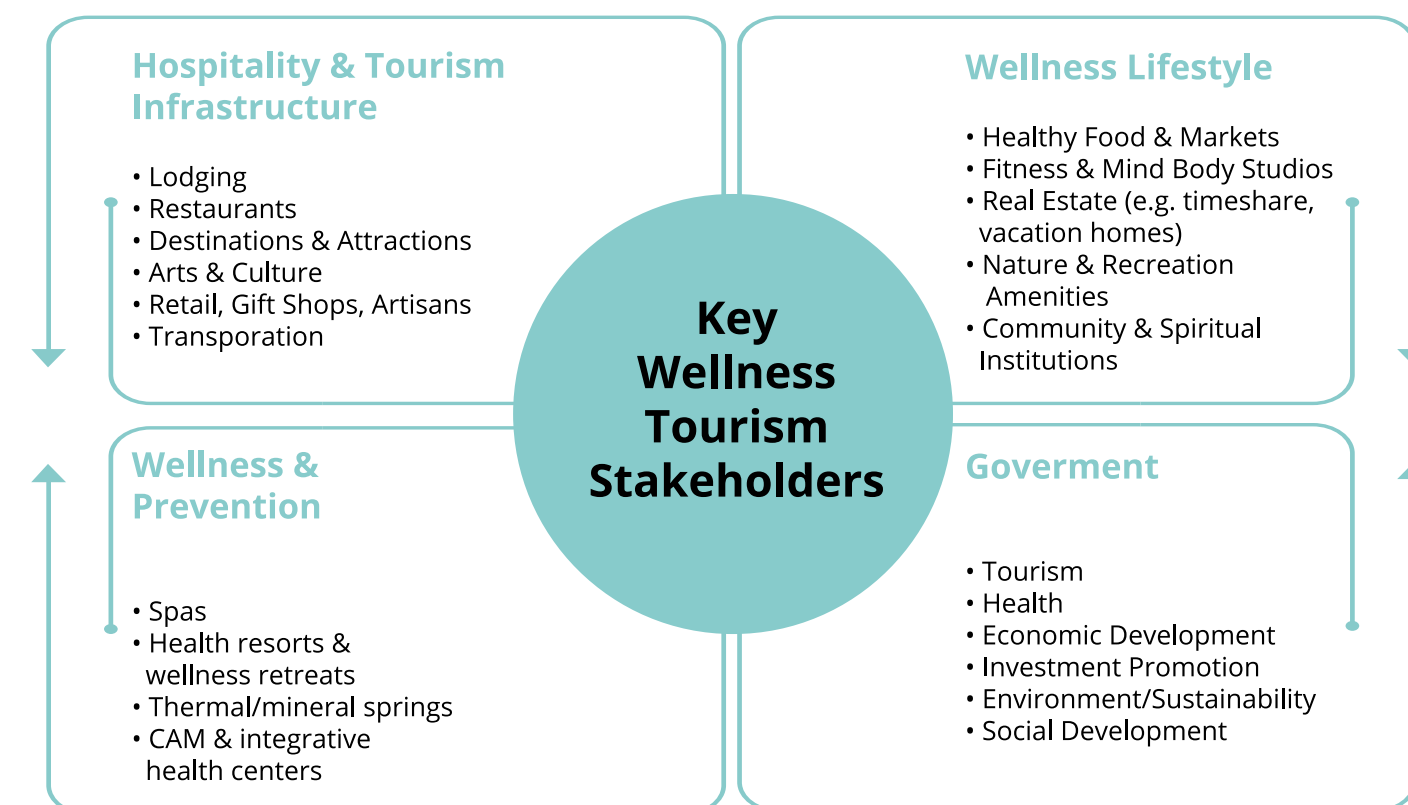
'One of the challenges facing the islands as tourism becomes more popular there is ensuring that the quality of visitor experience doesn't suffer. We are very involved in professional standards development and training for Galapagos guides. In conjunction with the Galapagos National Park Directorate and WWF - Ecuador, IGTOA sponsored and organized the first-ever third-party guiding certification program in Galapagos history. Through the course, Galapagos guides not only learn world-class guiding skills but gain the skills they need to become true ambassadors for Galapagos conservation.'





“Many additional stakeholders can and are needed to collaborate to develop and benefit from wellness tourism, including many government players involved in tourism, economic, social, health, and environmental development. The collaboration of communities, private businesses, and public-sector stakeholders across these sectors will be critical for destinations and regions to develop wellness tourism successfully and to maximize the positive economic and social impacts.”

Many Stakeholders Can Collaborate and Benefit from Wellness Tourism



Source: Global Wellness Institute

What underpins the development and management of a wellbeing destination is sustainable development.

This must include socio-cultural, ecological, and economic development to ensure it remains a success for all actors including SMEs. The cooperation between SMEs and the different actors is important so that they are aligned with the destination values, mission, goals, aims, and ethos are essential. You can see now that the wellbeing tourism destination involves a service and supply chain with everyone playing an important role to execute competitively and remain sustainable. Everybody should be involved in an ongoing development process and understand and agree with the vision and values and be proud of the development of the destination. Therefore, again governments need to have strategies in place to manage the development of their wellbeing tourism regions by managing stakeholder engagement, ensuring community participation, being informed, and having the right frameworks in place, examples.

1

Get the data needed for informed policy decision making and create important performance benchmarks

2

Prioritise action projects, identify the risks and manage them effectively

3

Establish an intelligent approach to tourism planning and identify areas that need improvement

4

Create inter and intra-generational relationships encouraging reciprocity and equal opportunities this is also a great way to get every generation on board, involved, and feel responsible

5

Encourage and improve the participation of local people in policy decisions regarding development. Include democratic voting and understand the objectives so that they support. Promote local and regional small and medium enterprises, they are at the heart of the wellbeing destination.

6

Build self-organizing social networks that include experts and knowledge holders for each department and area of development

7

Improve the information flow between businesses, politicians, government, universities, research, communities, and citizens by using various communication channels; e-news, meetings, virtual meetings

8

Develop transparent cause and effect change management frameworks and the different destination cooperation needed at each stage from different stakeholders

9

Decentralise decision-making powers so that all stakeholders have responsibility and consequences for their actions



CASE STUDY

Icelandic Government Invests in Three Different Wellbeing Development Strategies



1

Invests in its Wellbeing Experiences

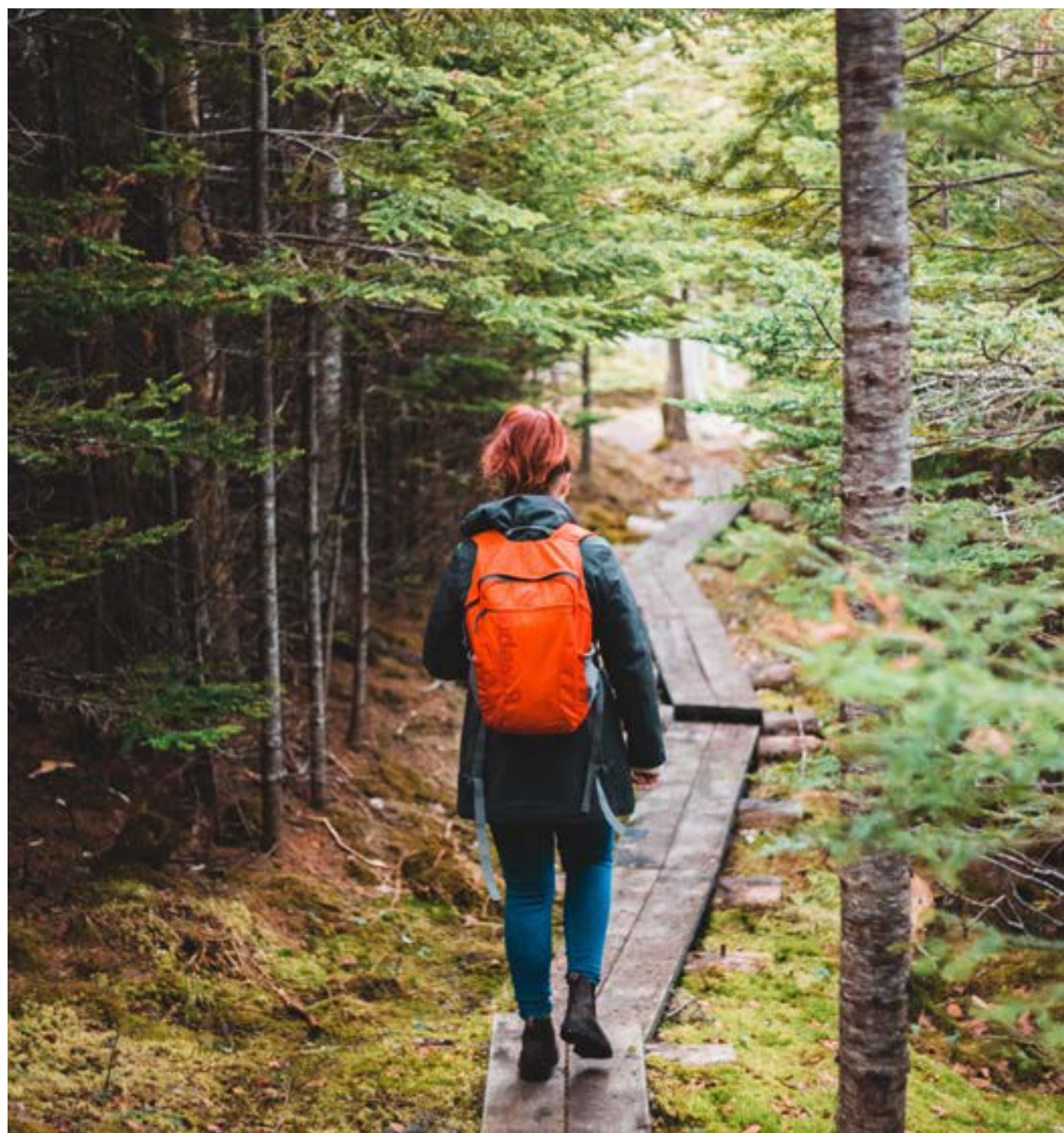
2

Invests in a Directorate of Health

3

Invests in a Dedicated Wellbeing Framework

This Case Study demonstrates 3 different approaches the Icelandic government invested in to provide a sustainable platform for sustainable wellbeing and its inclusive cultural growth. The Icelandic government worked with the tourism and wellbeing tourism industry implementing strategies to provide a strategic vision and well-articulated objectives to adopt an integrated approach. These approaches brought together not only the tourism sector but key stakeholders and the country itself improving their wellbeing and adaptability. Developing such comprehensive long-term plans that extend beyond the political cycle – will allow Iceland to identify and respond to emerging wellbeing tourism priorities flexibly and quickly.



Iceland possesses a great deal of valuable, natural resources such as hot and cold water forming many hot- and cold springs in Iceland's nature. The air is clean and fresh, the nature is spectacular and numerous possibilities are to enjoy outdoor activities in the wilderness. Therefore the Icelandic nature attracts a big number of tourists that see it e.g. as a natural healing and health destination and that is a decisive motivator for visitors wishing to use its products for health benefits.

Approach 1 Iceland Invests in its Wellbeing Experiences

Thermal and mineral springs and spas are water therapies that are extensive, highly sought after, and varied in Iceland: balneotherapy, thalassotherapy, mud, salts, algae, etc. Iceland is one of the European governments that provides access for residents to health or medical style health resorts. They are now providing government-funded patients with upgrades, private and different options. There are also some major expansions happening. Many facilities are receiving new investments to add a spa and complementary wellness services, facilities, and programming that will appeal to a broader range of guests, such as health food restaurants, beauty treatments, fitness studios, and mind-body classes. The Icelandic government has also invested in introducing cross-cultural bathing experiences e.g. introducing Japanese-style Onsens or Turkish baths to European bathers at existing or new thermal resorts.

Approach 2 Iceland Invests in a Directorate of Health

Iceland takes mental health very seriously and one of the few countries with a Directorate of Health. It is one of the few countries with a directorate of health. The director of health and wellbeing, Dóra Guðmundsdóttir, [has been interviewed on international media](#) about wellness and happiness and helped to uncover the "epidemiology of well-being"—this means how countries are faring in response to changing social and economic forces, such as inequality, recessions, and education policies. She helps country politicians and policymakers make better decisions to support the well-being of their citizens.

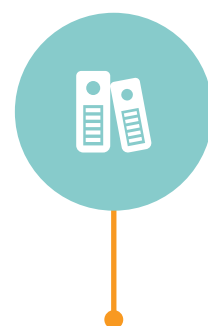
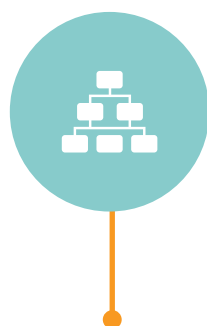
Article

[Governmental psychologist Dóra Guðmundsdóttir explains what makes a society flourish](#)



Approach 3 Iceland Invests in a Dedicated Wellbeing Framework

In September 2019 Iceland's government unveiled its **Wellbeing Framework**. Kartín Jakobsdóttir, Prime Minister, introduced the proposed indicators in the **Inclusive Growth and Well-being Symposium** in Reykjavík on 16 September. Before formulating the framework the government commissioned a survey to reveal the general public's views on health and wellbeing. Out of this, the indicators were introduced.



Wellbeing The measurements for Well-being in Iceland have a proposed framework of **Wellbeing Indicators (WBI)** 39 indicators 17 social, 15 economic, and 7 environmental dimensions of quality of life. These indicators are intended to complement traditional economic measures, such as GDP, and monitor trends in people's wellbeing. They are meant to look at the broader picture and inform government policy formulation. The indicators are linked to the **UN Sustainable Development Goals**. Developing such indicators is a step towards ensuring a common understanding of what factors make our lives better.

The wellbeing government economy project where Iceland is participating with among others New Zealand and Scotland – is an attempt to develop a new economic model, which is centered on wellbeing rather than on production and consumption. Reinforced by the OECD, the idea is not revolutionary in the sense it still focuses on the measurable.

Iceland's Lessons on building a wellbeing economy The BBC produced an in-depth report on Iceland's ambitions to build a wellbeing economy as part of the Wellbeing Economy Governments initiative (alongside Scotland and New Zealand). Things like trusting in politics, mental health awareness, preserving Iceland's natural beauty will become crucial to the GDP. Watch the video and read the report here to learn some lessons from Iceland on how we can move forward.

Read:

- [39 Indicators for measuring Well-being in Iceland](#)
- [How Iceland is Already using its Wellbeing Framework to Tackle Covid 19 Crisis](#)



Operational activities need to be constantly improved with regular wellbeing development training, quality control measures, and improvements. Customer satisfaction and expectation measures should be implemented as part of a target customer strategy and development. Having a **Wellness Sector Categorisation System** is a highly valuable and beneficial mechanism for stakeholders to use to ensure all stakeholders and SMEs understand the wellbeing tourism industry in their particular countries. It aligns industry and provides clear criteria by identifying and grouping the different types of wellbeing tourism business categories and types.

"Destination management must ensure all actors understand the wellbeing concepts and the demand of the target markets."



CASE STUDY

Failte Ireland Developed a Categorisation System and Platform For Health and Wellness Offerings In Ireland



In 2008, Fáilte Ireland, recognised the potential of the wellness sector and developed a categorisation system and platform for health and wellness offerings in Ireland. Since then, the health and wellness sector has developed into a highly significant area of both domestic and international tourism trade.

Approach 1

Initially, 72 properties were categorised under the new system to help existing and prospective customers better understand the variety of health and wellness offerings available to them. Ireland is the first country in Europe to launch such a complete categorisation. Under the new categorisation system, the broad range of health and wellness retreats were first defined under the following categories: hotel spas, destination spas, resort spas, and specialised retreats. The aim was to develop a representative categorisation system that is meaningful to consumers, reflects the nuance of different supplier offerings, and incorporates all elements of the spa 'experience'. Using the system, spa-goers and wellbeing travellers can now make informed choices on their break away and find the products that best suit their needs. This system has since updated and evolved to include other types of wellbeing experiences.



Approach 2

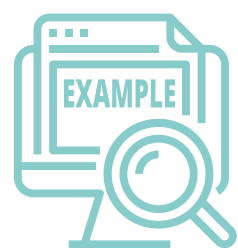
Broadened the Scope From Spas and Retreats Recently, the sector has broadened in scope from spa weekends and yoga retreats to activity-based and fitness-orientated holidays, providing increasing appeal to the emerging health-conscious consumer market. In tandem, demand for nutritionally balanced meal options has increased, thereby offering hotel, guesthouse, and local restaurant owners a unique opportunity to "Nutri-market" their menu offerings. Key to this process is the use of fresh, wholesome, and locally sourced ingredients, prepared and presented with care, but also, as leaders in the sector are demonstrating, the provision of accurate nutritional and allergen menu labelling.

Approach 3

Businesses Can Boost Their Wellness Appeal by Teaming up with their Nutrition and Dietetic Team at [healthpro Menu Mentoring®](#), have been helping a diverse range of Irish businesses to capitalise on the health and wellness market for almost a decade. Via their precise nutritional and allergen analyses, sophisticated menu and website labelling infrastructure, and dietitian-led menu advice, our clients have been successfully attracting and maintaining a demographic of customers previously unattainable. For example, patrons with specific nutritional requirements, such as those engaged in sports or heavy exercise regimes, or those subject to clinically prescribed dietary intake or specific food allergies, are expertly catered for. Furthermore, partnership with healthpro Menu Mentoring® has also contributed to significant indirect business growth - customers not subject to specific dietary needs appreciate and value demonstrated commitment to customer care.

Discover Ireland [Health and Wellbeing Experiences](#) Autumn Sea Swimming, Waterford Camino Tours, Ard Nahoo Retreat, Belleek Nature Trail, Revas Spa in Adare, Burren Yoga and Meditation Centre





WHO Demonstrates How Regions Can Integrate an Action Plan on Physical Activity

Resource [Global Action Plan on Physical Activity 2018 – 2030](#)



This is the new WHO global action plan to promote physical activity responding to the requests by countries for updated guidance, and a framework of effective and feasible policy actions to increase physical activity at all levels. It also responds to requests for global leadership and stronger regional and national coordination, and the need for a whole-of-society response to achieve a paradigm shift in both supporting and valuing all people being regularly active, according to ability and across the life course.

Investing in policies to promote walking, cycling, sport, active recreation, and play can contribute directly to achieving many of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Policy actions on physical activity have multiplicative health, social and economic benefits, and will directly contribute to achieving SDG3 (good health and well-being)

WHO Present Wellbeing Policy Options so Regions can Successfully Implement to the Individual Context of their Country

Resource [Health 2020. A European Policy Framework and Strategy for the 21st Century](#)



In 2012 the WHO Regional Committee for Europe approved Health 2020 in two forms. This publication gives both. The shorter policy framework provides European politicians and policy-makers with Health 2020's main values and principles, and key strategic advice to support action for health and well-being. The longer policy framework and strategy give more detail in terms of evidence and practice.

Approach

It has two strategic objectives, constructed around equity, gender, and human rights, and improved governance for health. It is aimed at those committed to improving health, wellbeing, and health equity, in a way that is sensitive to each country's situation and political and organizational circumstances. It is a "living" guide to policies and strategies. Addressing these questions is as much a political as a scientific endeavour and Health 2020 puts a strong emphasis on political commitment, as well as professional expertise and the engagement of civil society. Focused on "solutions", it offers practical and achievable, yet flexible, policy options capable politically of being successfully implemented in the individual context of each country.

Wellbeing Tourism Needs to Be Integrated with Regional Community Development

As governments' understanding of wellness tourism evolves, some regions no longer see it as an isolated niche tourism offering for a small segment of wealthy tourists, but rather as an opportunity to bring wide-ranging benefits to local economies and populations. In some places, wellness tourism development is starting to be integrated with local and regional urban planning, economic development, and community development initiatives.

A few regions and destinations are already connecting wellness tourism with the broader development of a wellness industry cluster that can grow local business and employment opportunities. (*See Case Study 'Cluster Wellness Tirol in the next section'*). Some regions are also developing their wellness tourism assets and amenities not as standalone offerings for tourists, but in a manner that will simultaneously benefit residents alongside tourists (*See Case Study 'Ibiza is Wellness' in the next section'*).



CASE STUDY Austria's Tirol Region Pioneering Cluster Wellness Development



Austria's Tirol region developed a "Cluster Wellness Tirol" initiative and was an early pioneer in developing and marketing wellness tourism over two decades ago. It launched its Alpine wellness concept developing wellness hotels that would also combat the seasonality of its mainstay ski tourism.

Approach

In the early-2000s, the region expanded on this success by creating the “Cluster Wellness Tirol” initiative to cultivate other economic opportunities and innovation around wellness. Today, over 100 wellness related businesses in the region are part of this cluster network, ranging from telemedicine, to food production and nutrition, to spa equipment and technology, to workplace wellness, and much more.

Development included key competencies of tourism, health, and technology creating a unique selling point. Most of the businesses in the wellness market are one-person businesses and micro-entities. To give them a boost and to help them become market leaders;

-  assisting them with their business strategy, research, and development
-  cooperative business models
-  deploying modern technologies
-  setting up new value chains by providing information and specialist events
-  funding advice
-  project management
-  as well as identifying and engaging with possible opinion leaders in complementary industries



The region established a showcase project for health/medical tourism, by basing product developments support on the strengths of the cluster partners and integrating the participating clusters into international networks and partnerships in health/medical tourism to learn from and with other regions.

Having a strong wellness brand and campaign behind tourism enterprises can provide them with an aligned platform and strategy so they can gain visibility to potential wellbeing visitors In Section 2:

Wellbeing Tourism Destination Branding we will go deeper into how to develop a regional brand identity. It is important in this section to understand that a strong brand is required so that all businesses follow the same branding principles to build a reputation, gain visibility so they can maximise market leader potential.





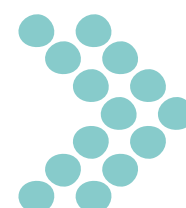
CASE STUDY

'Ibiza is Wellness' Rebranding Campaign Gives Visibility to Wellbeing Enterprises

'Ibiza is Wellness' is a new project of the Consell Insular d'Eivissa aimed at boosting tourism focused on wellness, beauty, preventive healthcare, sport, nature, and sustainability. The mission embraced by the project is to give visibility to enterprises and projects being carried out professionally along these lines.

Approach

As part of the rebranding campaign "Ibiza is Wellness" created an **online map** and directory of local businesses, facilities, and services across 16 categories of wellness. This effort aims to support residents in accessing local healthy lifestyle services, while also cultivating a healthy, holistic, and sustainable tourism product that builds on the island's natural and cultural assets and combats seasonality and low-value mass tourism.



Wellbeing Holidays in Ibiza, Spain include:

- Spa,
- Detox,
- Weight Loss,
- Solo Wellbeing,
- Retreats,
- New Wellbeing,
- Group Retreats,
- Family Wellbeing,
- Health and Fitness,
- Yoga and Meditation,
- Ayurveda Retreats,
- Medical Spas,
- Wellbeing at Home

Developing a Wellbeing Tourism Region from Grassroots

In this section, we will go through how a community, region, or community can develop a Wellbeing Tourism destination or region. For successful economic development stakeholders from across the tourism and local level spectrum are required to engage and commit from the get-go; tourism SMEs, council, tourism agencies, communities, locals, tour operators, government representatives, organisations, services, support agencies, development and environment agencies, tourism organisations to name a few.



The first questions wellbeing tourism regions need to ask are

- What are Your Regional Resources?
- What Type of Destination do You Have?
- Can You Meet Wellbeing Target Market Needs?

This is the level where a destination discovers its competitive advantage. The destination's resources must be first recognized and then assessed how they can be used as a wellbeing experience, service, or offering. It is important to recognise what is unique to your destination and focus on your hero wellbeing experiences as a priority.

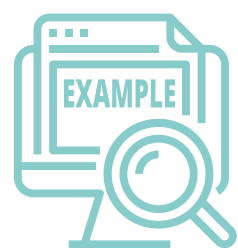
Wellbeing specific resources to consider are, high quality, eco-friendly and sustainable accommodation; plenty of peaceful parks, gardens, and forests; restaurants with nutritious foods made from local produce; clean, high quality, uncrowded peaceful public transportation; outdoor actives such as cycling, rowing, kayaking, walking with natural stunning scenery and fresh air; friendly locals and professional customer service to enhance satisfaction and ease stress. Resources are what distinguish or direct a destination or region to what its wellbeing tourism offering and future development could and should be.



At the core of wellbeing tourism, 'wellbeing visitors' require wellbeing to be engrained as a holistic destination experience.



They want access to all the services they need to deliver their chosen experience. They expect different wellbeing experience options e.g. a relaxing treatment, mental refreshment, escape to a peaceful or natural environment, nourishing healthy food, medical treatment, or engaging in an outdoor physical activity. Well-being travellers like all tourists also demand additional to their well-being needs to get involved in the local culture, heritage, and authenticity – they want to engage with genuine, unique local people, resources, traditions, food, drink, treatments, and natural activities. It is these resources and the sustainable development of them that enables a wellbeing tourism destination to offer a competitive all-inclusive unique experience to its visitors.



Iceland

1

Iceland's iconic Blue Lagoon

Iceland's iconic **Blue Lagoon** is world-famous because of its **unique natural resources** hot springs, geothermal spas and lagoons, formed as a result of its location on tectonic plates. These resources produce naturally free from the earth, relaxing, transformative healing minerals, salts, algae and mud that are applied to the body

Sri Lanka

Nepal

Bhutan

2

Sri Lanka, Nepal & Bhutan

Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Bhutan each promote unique, **culturally-rooted wellness resources** that create tourism experiences linking guests to local cultural yoga, Ayurveda, meditation, spirituality, pilgrimage, indigenous medicine, faith healing, and happiness



Hospitality, Professionalism, and Being Qualified in the Health and Wellbeing Sector is Critical.

This industry includes high contact services such as treatments, one-to-one consultations, instructors, guides, teachers, and therapists. All attending to an individual's wellbeing development needs. Staff need to have communication skills, confidentiality, qualifications, ability to speak in the individual's native language. Locals and community residents must understand and have a positive attitude towards guests, this is vital when welcoming guests. A destination needs several elements to be successful the following should be considered at the baseline level.

Successful Wellbeing Destination Resource
Elements Checklist

Destination reputation should be managed through dedicated wellbeing branding and marketing strategies <i>(covered in Section 2 of this Resource)</i>	
Destination reputation must have a hospitable attitude and atmosphere in the destination; have a customer orientation and seamless service chain; have qualified and friendly staff with customer service skills and experience	
High-quality primary and secondary wellbeing tourism experiences Primary relaxation, classes, nutrition, meditation, spa and/or medical treatments, outdoor nature activities Secondary culture, heritage, and other tourism experiences	
Nature, natural assets, attractive scenery, and environment so visitors can get mentally refreshed and physically restored. Also need supporting facilities and necessary infrastructure and accessibility e.g. cycle tracks, roads, toilets, equipment hire, and storage	
Nature, natural assets, attractive scenery, and environment; wellbeing travellers need to have accessibility and be able to legally access places to hike, walk, cycle	
Authenticity. The more authentic and unique a destination is and how it protects and manages its destination can up being a competitive advantage	
Social responsibility. Giving back to the local communities and considering local needs is imperative to wellbeing development as both visitor and inhabitants need to feel and experience ‘wellbeing’	
Supporting resources e.g. quality accommodation, restaurants, transport services, ticketing, information centers...	
Wellbeing facilities and services need to be capable of enhancing health and wellbeing e.g. practitioners, experts, consultants, saunas, yoga centers, meditation spaces...	
Sustainable development incorporating environmentally sustainable and eco-friendly practices and policies	

What Type of Wellbeing Destination or Region
Do You Have? Examples.

Ski
Destinations



Can attract wellness travellers interested in hiking and other outdoor activities in the summertime. Visitors want to breathe in the fresh air, feel sunshine, get immersed in nature, see the mountain ranges...

Beach
Destinations



Can appeal to travellers who are looking for a more tranquil environment to destress or take a retreat by the sea, feel the sand between their toes, sit in a hammock, watch the sunset, swim in the ocean...

Countryside or
Mountainous



Attract travellers who love outdoor activities, want to be among forests and wildlife, see mountain ranges and rolling fields, want to walk in the grass barefoot, and see beautiful natural scenery and wildlife, practice yoga in a beautiful outdoor place...

Island(s)



For those who love marine living, small remote living, the village life, ability to access and experience a destination in a short timeframe, go sailing, eat local fresh fish and produce, swim in the ocean, sleep by the beach, watch sunsets and sunrise....

CASE STUDY

Due to Its Unique Location
Iceland Can Offer Unique Iconic
Wellbeing Experiences



Due to this location and its resources, Iceland cannot physically or naturally be matched as a wellbeing destination by other countries. Its climate, balneological, thermal, and mineral healing waters and other healing elements along with other tangible and intangible products, other natural resources, and landscapes make it the wellbeing destination it is. Sitting on two tectonic plates that cut through the country. They are constantly thrusting together, creating a highly active geological system and a lot of geothermal activity. These hot water sources are everywhere, Icelanders have bathed in them since settlement. The endless water supply comes up from the ground and contains healing minerals.

Unique Resources vary from supposedly having the cleanest and freshest air, hot springs, lagoons, geothermal pools, waterfalls, lava fields, ice caves, wellness activities landscapes and environments, its weather, how it cooks is food, ice biking, snow sledging... As a result, Iceland has an immediate competitive advantage, it not only has this list of unique wellbeing experiences but offers one of the most internationally iconic wellbeing tourism experiences, the **Blue Lagoon**. A naturally heated hotspot attracting 700,000 visitors (2014), almost twice the country's popularity, from around the world just to unwind.

Next, a destination needs to understand the needs of the wellbeing traveller and constantly revert this information to how it assesses, realigns, and readjusts its offering or experiences. This is particularly needed when diversifying or developing packages. You need to know what they want and their motivations specific to your destination before you deliver. This can be conducted in many ways e.g. by asking them directly, inviting them to respond to a survey, or checking in on customer inquiries. Below is a checklist of what to consider when developing your wellbeing customer survey.

Checklist of What to Consider Developing
When Your Survey

Who are they? Who are my existing or potential wellbeing customers exactly? What is their age, gender? Where are they from?	
Maximum Reach Who will my guests be in the future so I can develop? Am I missing a new or potential wellbeing target market?	
Decision Making Factors Why do they choose my destination or experience over others? Is it cost, quality of the treatments, natural resources, distance, service provided, or other tourism offerings?	
Adequate Wellbeing Offerings What do they want? Are there other treatments or experiences they want and expect? Do I need to include better or alternative treatments or classes? Are my experiences matching their expectations?	
USP & Competitive Advantage What is my USP (Unique Selling Point) as a region? What are the USPs of my business?	
Brand and Reputation What is my reputation? How do my customers perceive my business and the destination?	
Adequate Needs Met Am I meeting all my wellbeing customer needs? e.g. the types and standard of accommodation I offer? Am I sustainable and eco-friendly enough? Do they need itineraries, certain packages, maps, more cultural experiences, more outdoor wellbeing activities... <i>(Section 3 of this Resource goes into developing packages and itineraries more)</i>	
Online and Offline Presence Where do they find out about me? Is it online, offline, or word of mouth? Where do I need to be so they can find me? How did they hear about me?	

Well-being destination development is an ongoing, long-term, **adjustable process** that requires: commitment, cooperation, and collaboration from all stakeholders from the beginning and consistently therein. Once it is decided what your key experiences, target market etc is everyone must be on board with the same mission, values, vision to achieve a long-term strategy for successful destination development. This extends from locals and SMEs to policymakers, government, destination and development departments, environmental departments, service providers, supporting services so that a collaborative approach is. Involving all tourism stakeholders is vital with wellbeing tourism SMEs at the heart, Destination Management Organisations (DMOs), tourism marketing organisations, tourism operational support networks, tourism networks, and other similar tourism organisations how to coordinate and collaborate.



Huge opportunities arise out of this effort such as pooling resources, developing packages together, including (particularly beneficial for SMEs who do not have a diverse offering)

- joint marketing activities
- pooling of data
- contribution to improving the destination at a wider level
- delegation of tasks and responsibilities
- greater knowledge when making strategic destination planning decisions
- monitoring trends
- observing changes as a collective
- developing the destination brand
- assessing destination support requirements
- collective destination evaluation and
- monitoring of its demand and quality



Firstly, leadership is required to manage all actors' network and communicate regularly to stay ahead of the curve, coordinate planning activities, and ensure private and public actors are connected.

The formal structure should have an equal 'stakeholder' footing, in other words, that 'Department of Environment' does not have the final or overruling say. A democratic voting system should be in place so that a majority vote succeeds, and each destination representative actor has an equal vote to the direction of the destination development. Support from all actors requires balancing competing interests and what is best for the overall sustainability of the destination. Below is a checklist to get you started on what your Wellbeing Meeting One topics should be for discussion and actions you can take to engage stakeholders

Meeting 1 Discussion Topics

Who does what in terms of network management? Leader, Treasurer, Minutes, Administration, Membership Management	
Structure? Should be a systematic participatory strategic destination planning structure and format, with a voting component, a log of discussions, etc	
Purpose Decide and write up the Mission, Vision, and Values?	
Branding and Marketing Who will manage the brand identity development, marketing, and management? How will stakeholders decide on the final brand?	
Agenda - Priority Discussion Topics e.g. What are the signature destination resources? How do you currently and need to in the future meet the wellbeing traveller's needs? What can you start with? What will be the destination level planning specifically supporting wellbeing tourism? How will you evaluate and develop the infrastructure, services and required for sustainable wellbeing experiences?	



Recommended Stakeholder Engagement Actions

- 1 Undertake a **Quarterly Survey 'How is business?'** What are your challenges? Any identified opportunities? Any co-operative marketing opportunities?
- 2 Organise **Quarterly Networking Event** with meeting after in each SMEs business, funding from membership. Introduce guest speakers, present other best practices in other countries, talk about potential funding initiatives and training programs
- 3 Send regular **internal e-news** about updates, changes, new products, extensions, or modifications to your business experiences or what is happening in the destination
- 4 Send a revised copy **external e-news** suitable for external supportive industry organisations e.g. National Tourism Marketing Organisations and National Tourism Industry Support Organisations
- 5 Open a **Community Facebook** to keep the extended wider community members daily engaged, informed, and how they can support and promote e.g. so they know opening times, events, employment opportunities...
- 6 Set up a **LinkedIn Group** so members can join and discuss topics of interest and share what is happening in the professional space
- 7 Organise an **annual wellbeing tourism awards** event to highlight enterprise best practice updates, new experiences, best staff award
- 8 Open a **Closed SME Facebook Group** only for the wellbeing SME network for private updates, discussions, advice, information sharing, support, and keeping each other in the loop
- 9 Organise an **Experience Development and Awareness Week** where all stakeholders can experience each other's products, tours, and services for free or discount so they understand your business, make recommendations, provide feedback and promote it on your behalf better

CASE STUDY

Sligo Wins EDEN Destination of Excellence Award, Failte Ireland



Adventure Sligo is a Wellbeing & Adventure Tourism Network located on the famous Wild Atlantic Way renowned for its beaches from Mullaghmore, Strandhill, Easkey to Enniscrone. The Network has multiple stakeholders which have developed Sligo as a Wellbeing Tourism Destination.

Destination Resources

Sligo is abundant in natural beauty, heritage, megalithic sites older than pyramids to inspire visitors. Choose from Ireland's Table Mountain Benbulbin, Megalithic sites in Carrowkeel, the prehistoric Caves of Keash, the wilderness of the Ox Mountain, and much more. If you prefer climbing rather than walking, Carraig Climbing can bring you to new heights in stunning surroundings.

Wellbeing Experiences

Surf incredible waves, go on relaxing walks, see secluded beaches, go sailing, angling, kayaking, SUP, climbing, or horse riding. The wellbeing experiences go from high adrenalin, thrill-seeking adventure sports to more leisurely and relaxing. The focus is on the Great Outdoors with experienced guides and teachers providing specialist expertise and equipment. For beginners, improvers, and serious sportspeople.

Approach 1



The network primary stakeholders are the Wellbeing and Adventure Tourism SMEs from the network, then the hotels, walking tour providers, organic café, wellbeing classes and treatments, Sligo Tidy Towns, Wellness Hub, Volunteer Centre Sligo Business Improvement District, Community Wellness Network, Sligo Food Trail, Sligo Leader Partnership, Sligo Sports and Recreation Partnership, Sligo County Council showcasing several activities and illustrating how enjoyable wellbeing adventures can be at any time of the year. Everyone is involved to develop and create memorable wellbeing adventure experiences and packages i.e. Strandhill Surf Experience, Sligo Kayak, Seatrails, and Island View Riding Stables to enhance their visitor's sense of wellbeing.



According to Adventure Sligo Wellbeing Network

'Any genuine health and wellbeing offering has to start in the community first, the services, landscapes, and amenities that are needed to provide for a community are the same services landscapes and amenities required to provide an exceptional experience to the visitor.'



A typical day of wellbeing adventure includes a sailing adventure with Dave and Paddy from **Wild West Sailing** on Lough Gill and a cruise to the magical Church Island. There, in the ruins for which the island is named, Blaithín then leads everyone to a peaceful meditation. Barry provides a welcome with alfresco lunch ready and waiting in a beautiful island setting. The lunch is a fabulous spread of organic soup with delicious homemade bread and hummus all from Sligo Wellness Centre and followed by locally roasted local Carrow Coffee. As a group or individual, you then board a powerful RIB (Rigid Inflatable Boat) to whisk you back to Sligo and reality.



Examples of SME Wellbeing Experiences Built from Destination Resources

1

Sligo Surf Experience Seamus Mc Goldrick a professional bodyboarder and Strandhill native offers the best surf experiences for youths, adults, families, and groups along Ireland's Wild Atlantic Way in a safe, fun environment. This 2.5 hours of guided experience includes all surfing equipment and access to changing rooms. Just bring swimming gear and a towel. Seamus has been surfing in Strandhill his whole life and is also keen to share his knowledge of the ancient history of the area.

2

Strandhill Surf Experience is owned and run by lifelong surfer Eddie Moran. Eddie is a highly experienced surf coach who has been surf coaching for 8 years at Strandhill beach and offers the highest standard of instruction from total beginner to advanced surfers. Courses in U17 Summer Surf Camps, Five days of surfing, ocean safety and awareness, Beach games and eco walks Daily surf lessons, Group lessons, Outdoor, yoga to surf and Hen's and Stag packages



3

Your Wellbeing Warrior provides fun and uplifting excursions that combine adventure with mindful practices. A gentle way to explore adventure activities whilst taking your mindful practice to spectacular locations. Adventures such as hiking, SUPing, and surfing, uplifting meditations and yoga sequences are designed to enhance your sense of wellbeing regardless of your experience or ability.



Other Wellbeing Experiences from the Network

1

Sligo Kayak Tours kayaking and canoeing

2

Wild Wet Adventures kayaking, canoeing, hillwalking, walking, bushcraft, archery, orienteering, trail runs, team-building with Wild Wet Adventures

3

Harbour SUP n'Sail ASI accredited SUP schools offering tuition, hire, and adventure tours

4

North West Adventure Tours guided biking, hiking, stand up paddleboarding tours

5

Island View Riding Stables offer a variety of scenic beach rides.

6

Seatrails heritage walking tours

7

Carraig Climbing specializes in rock climbing and hiking tours

02

SECTION 2 WELLBEING TOURISM DESTINATION BRANDING: A GUIDE TO DEVELOPING A REGIONAL DESTINATION BRAND & IDENTITY



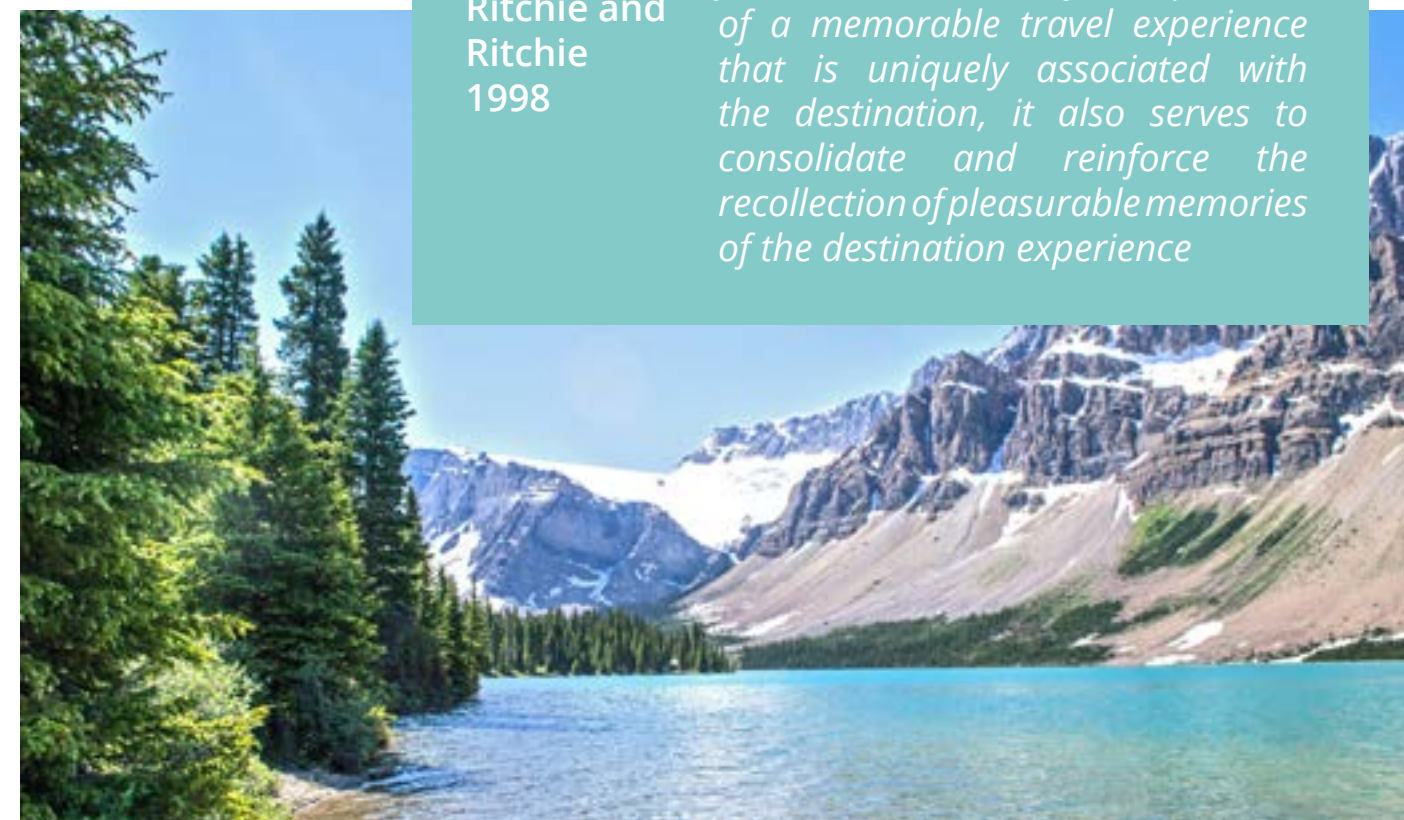
Section 2 Wellbeing Tourism Destination Branding

Destination Tourism Branding

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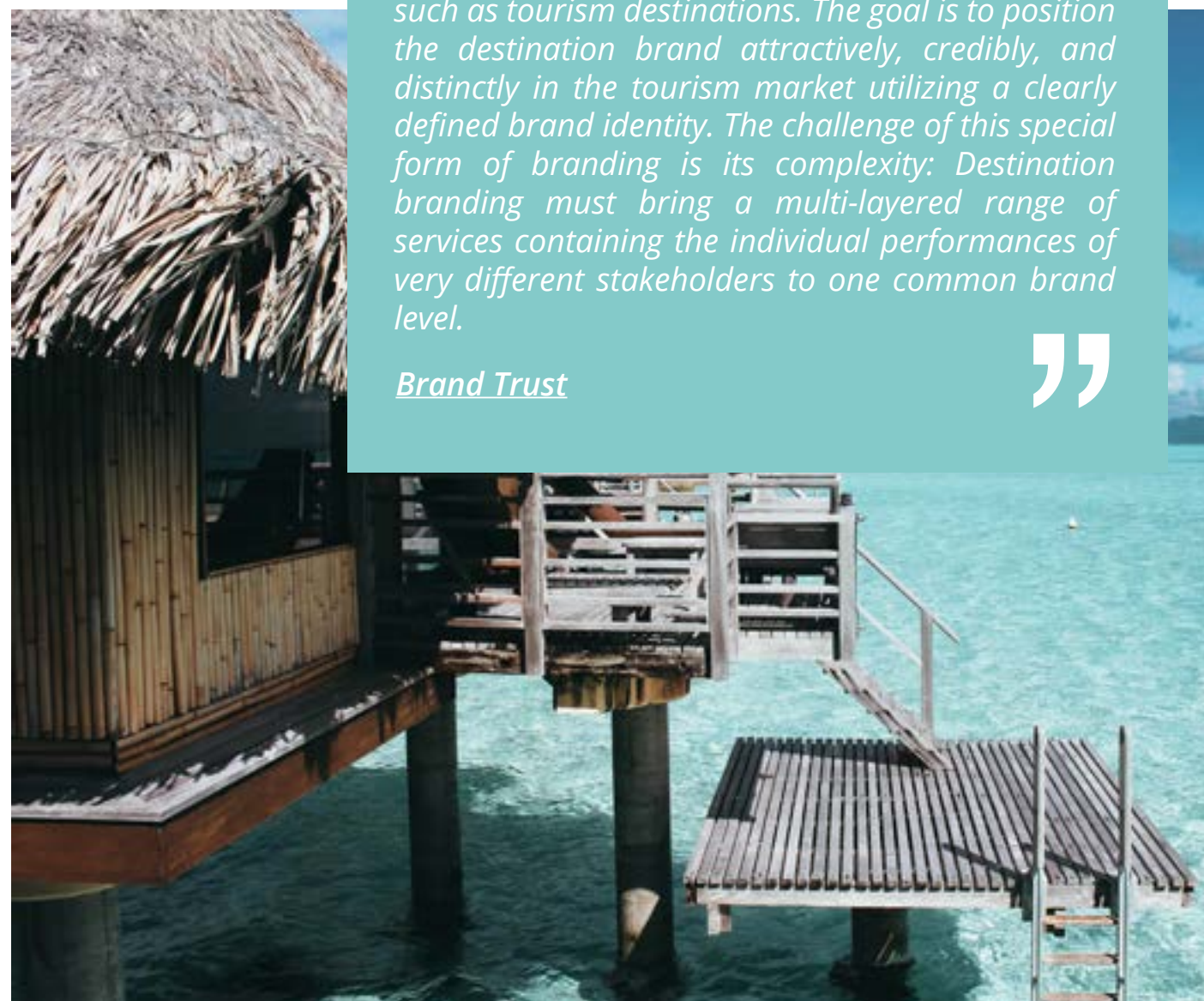
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Destination Tourism Branding. A name, symbol, logo, word, or other graphic both identifies and differentiates a destination, furthermore, it conveys the promise of a memorable travel experience that is uniquely associated with the destination, it also serves to consolidate and reinforce the recollection of pleasurable memories of the destination experience



This section looks at the importance of building a wellbeing destination brand image. It provides a guide and a fresh insight into building a destination brand accompanied by Case Studies to illustrate various concepts, present best practices from European destinations. Branding regions has never been more important with national governments and tourism ministries rapidly catching on to the growing consumer interest in and enormous potential of this sector. It's important to note that nature is now their focus on wellness tourism branding and marketing development. This is because they are understanding their target markets are even more sophisticated looking for authentic and unique experiences.

Tourism Destination Branding



Tourism Destination Branding. The term describes the brand-centric orientation of geographical areas, such as tourism destinations. The goal is to position the destination brand attractively, credibly, and distinctly in the tourism market utilizing a clearly defined brand identity. The challenge of this special form of branding is its complexity: Destination branding must bring a multi-layered range of services containing the individual performances of very different stakeholders to one common brand level.

Brand Trust

”

Destination Image

“

Destination image is ‘not only the perceptions of individual destination attributes but also the holistic impression made by the destination’

(Echtner and Ritchie 1991)

When it comes to differentiation and positioning a destination brand image is the cornerstone of destination tourism, marketing, and communication strategies. The brand needs to be built bottom-up with input from all stakeholders and target markets, then strengthened and communicated with the brand values back to all actors at the destination level so they are all on board and endorse.

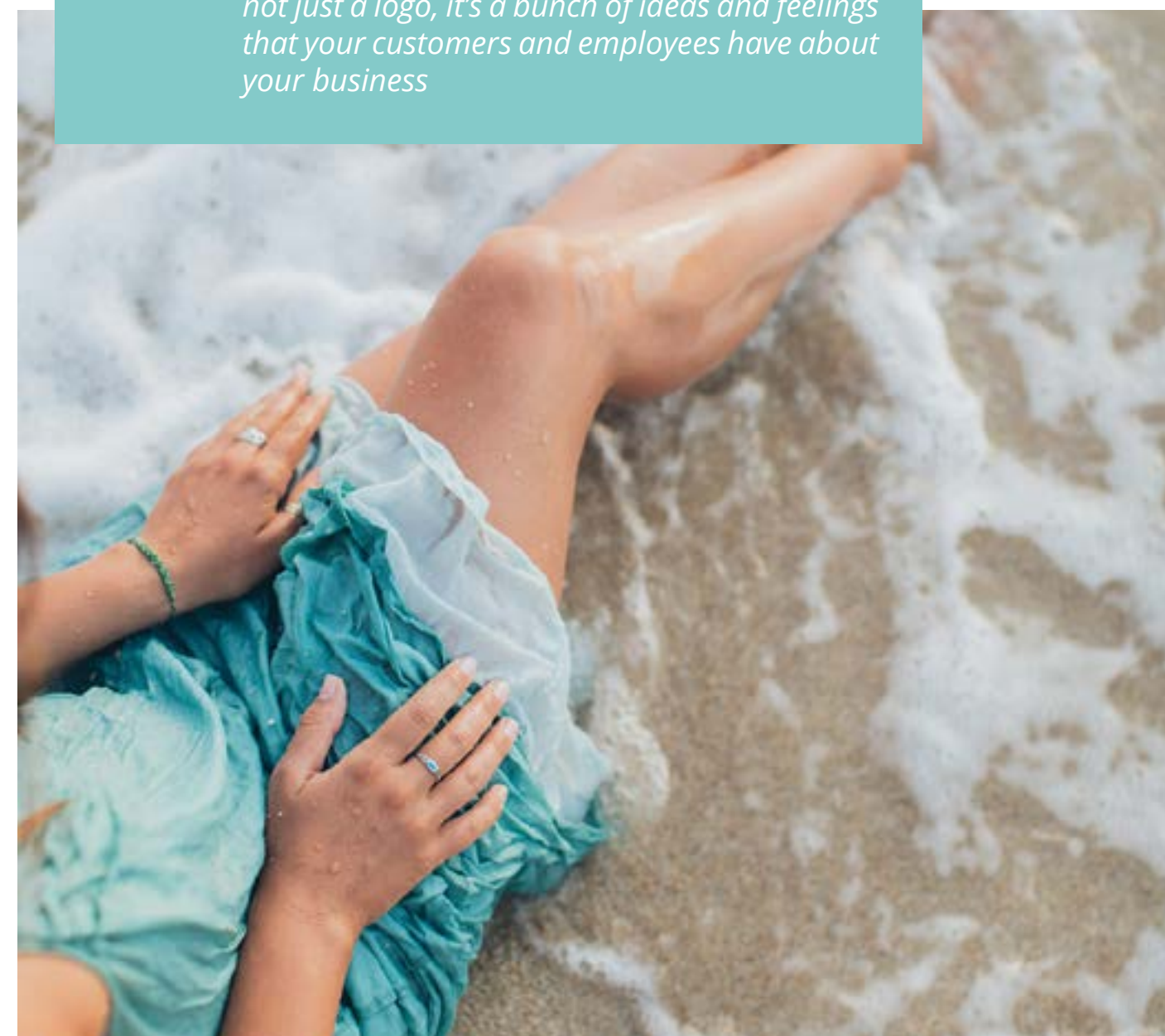
The Benefits of Having A Strong Destination Brand

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According to Tourism School

Your brand is the most powerful marketing weapon your tourism business has at its disposal. Your brand represents your Reputation and your Promise to potential customers. A brand is not just a logo, it's a bunch of ideas and feelings that your customers and employees have about your business

Destination Tourism Branding



1

Destinations need to create a brand to help their positioning and to emphasize the uniqueness of the place.

To keep up as a competitive wellbeing destination branding and marketing strategies need to be regularly doubled down to wellbeing experience-driven marketing. This means recognizing your strongest local wellbeing experiences and having a unified vision of what your destination offers. It is not about attempting to market everything you offer but focusing on the wellbeing experiences that set your destination apart. Think of your iconic or hero experiences, top walks/cycles/tours, most visited natural resources, 3 highest demand experiences and activities, reasons visitors have decided to stay longer. Build these into all destination branding and marketing strategies

2

Customers are assured quality and assured perceived risk

when a brand can distinguish a high quality, high-end customer service accommodation from a low grade, no customer service, minimal quality accommodation

3

You become a destination of choice

if you have a high value, positive destination brand it reduces your search costs; reduces the amount of time it takes your customers to find you; reduces the need for lots of detailed information, you ultimately become the wellbeing destination of choice

4

Differentiates and maintains destination competitiveness

when many wellbeing destinations promote similar attributes e.g. scenery, history, treatments, culture, activities, etc however effective destination branding has a USP (Unique Selling Proposition) that allows it to be sustainable, believable, relevant, and motivates your target audience.



'competition wants and can copy but they cannot surpass your USP' (Morgan, Pritchard and Piggot 2002)



Hankinson Place says branding destinations perform the following 4 functions:



Brands are communicators as they represent a mark of ownership and a means of product differentiation manifested in legally protected names, logos, and trademarks

Brands are perceptual entities because they appeal to the consumer's senses, reasons, and emotions

Brands are value enhancers

Brands are the relationship when a brand is construed to have a personality which enables destinations to form a relationship with the consumer

Wellbeing Branding Strategies

Every Business Decision that is Made in Your Destination Should Reflect What Your Brand Wants to Accomplish and Your Core Values.



"All stakeholders need to support the brand – everyone should believe in it, breathe it, speak it, live it, and deliver it."



Thinking of ways that you can represent your brand in any way your destination communicates will build a cohesive brand. When building your brand make sure you are asking the right branding questions and considering the right branding strategies

Branding Strategies

1

Mission, Vision, and Values

2

Brand Ambassadors (employees and representatives)

3

Strong Brand Identity includes the main logo, logo variations, key colours, additional colours and palette options, typeface or font, image style, graphical elements, brand personality. Is it vibrant, laid back, monotone...

4

Brand Image is how customers perceive your brand and expect from it. This keeps you in line with your branding strategy. Are your images, photos, and videos used representative of your destination, high quality?

5

Your Brand Story is where you consider your purpose and benefits to customers, what is your brand story? Think of your favourite wellbeing destination brand and what it encompasses. The important thing is to highlight what is unique about your destination, the experiences, and the people in it.

6

Your Brand Promise is what are you committed to delivering to your wellbeing audience. This is how you develop a strong community of followers and customers.

7

Value Proposition is especially important and articulates value to potential customers, provides persuasive reasons to learn more about your experiences, purchase and engage – e.g. highly qualified staff, end to end solution wellbeing experiences, smart online booking so programs can be personalized, flexibility and experiential intelligence, integrated wellbeing experience environments

Exercises to help discover your USP and Value Proposition

8

Messaging and Communication are tied together, this is delivered by what you say through marketing collateral, website, description content, key messages, tagline flyers, pop up banners, stickers, brochures, signage, advertisements, campaigns.....It should be tailored and consistent across all communication

From this, a strong brand identity is achieved by integrating the above Branding Strategies into a Destination Marketing Strategy. This will ensure the wellbeing destination brand is effectively communicated to external online and offline through communication channels to target markets and other potential audiences. The brand identity needs to become part of the destination landscape e.g. signage, physical settings and structures, clean streets, uniforms, marketing collateral, website, images promoted, communications spoke, food, décor, products produced, tag lines, etc.

CASE STUDY

Scandinavia Tells its Wellbeing Branding Story Through its Lifestyle Concepts



Some Scandinavian countries are consistently ranked as the happiest in the world and among the best places to live. The release of the [2019 World Happiness Report](#) again confirms that the four Nordic countries are in the top five happiest nations. Scandinavia tells its story through its lifestyle concepts integrating them into its wellbeing destination branding.

Approach 1

Scandinavia incorporates Nordic lifestyle [concepts](#) such as hygge ('cosy' for the Danish and Norwegians) and lagom ('balanced' or 'just right' for the Swedish), into its wellbeing facility design, guest experiences, wellness offerings, and marketing/promotion

Developing a Destination Marketing Strategy

Once a region's branding is in place it will next need a Destination Marketing Strategy to officially launch it strategically.

A destination marketing strategy is a plan to accomplish a key objective, usually attracting more visitors to a city, region, or country. The [Destination Marketing Strategy](#) is how a region defines its target market(s) and competitors, and the different types of market actions or campaigns you should implement. Strategies are based on principles and can be viewed as the overall "game plan". On the other hand, marketing actions or tactics are the specific means by which a strategy is executed. For example, you can devise a strategy to attract more tourists. One of the tactics involved could be to create a social media campaign in a specific target country attracting them to experiences they are typically motivated to travel for. This illustrates the main difference in that strategies are high-level plans for accomplishing a goal, while tactics are the specific ways you can employ to reach that goal. It is important to remember that Marketing Strategies are not set in stone and often need to be modified according to business goals.

You first need to analyze, define, and segment your target market before you develop your marketing strategy. Then you need to understand and know where you are now and where you want to go (your business goals) e.g. increase visitors during low season. Only then can you choose the best strategy to match your goals. It is essential to segment the market and allocate a budget specific to priority target segments. Then decide on the marketing channels specific to those segments. The easiest way to segment the market is to

- 1 **First, identify their needs and wants.** Build a persona if it helps. What are they coming for? What do they want? What are the top-selling services and experiences, level of packages, and accommodation? What do they want as secondary activities e.g. walks/cycling or helicopter ride or ice caving...?
- 2 **Where are they from?** What are the most popular visitors geographic area/region e.g. the highest number of visitors come from which three countries?
- 3 **What are their demographics?** i.e. age, gender, where are they in the life cycle e.g. families, young working couples, elderly?
- 4 **What are their beliefs, customs, cultures, and attitudes?**

Then you need to match your products and marketing efforts to your target market and study what other wellbeing destinations are doing to attract the same customers. Then devise a set of KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) for monitoring your progress (increase/decrease visitor numbers, spend, length of stay, etc.) In the table below is a list of marketing strategies you should consider as part of your overall Destination Marketing Strategy.

Marketing Strategies for Wellbeing Tourism Destinations



Online Adverts or Digital Adverts

Make sure to test and refine your advert message to reach more people with an offer or a package. Include a Call to Action to get users to visit your site, book, or come back



Website & Destination App.

Website optimisation is paramount for mobile devices or better again have a destination App with a dedicated section on wellbeing highlights, attractions, and information



Be Data-Driven

It is important so you can base your decisions on hard data instead of assumptions. You will know more about both your online visitors (analytics, bookings, inquiries, clicks, landing time, types of purchases, etc.) and offline visitors (inquiries, increase in airline passengers, increase in the number of foreign cars, on-site tickets sold, etc.). It is then you can tailor your offerings, you will know what appeals and what does not, track information and what your customers are not happy about, who is buying what and when. You can even find out your visitor's age, sex, why they visit, location, how much they spend, how they arrived, etc.



Work with Influencers (tourism travellers, wellbeing...)

Think bloggers, vloggers, social media superstars and get connected to the people that are following them. Build a relationship and partnership and leverage their reach similar to advertising. They can be expensive, you get the best value if you can offer them free trips and accommodation in exchange for a video, photos, or article promoting your destination.



Personalise the Experience for Your Target Visitors.

Find and decide on your best target markets and tailor your propositions to their needs otherwise, you will get lost or ignored in the online clutter. But that doesn't mean ignoring everyone else. We will show you later what this looks like in the **Packaging Section**



Start a Market Place

and work with local businesses and the public sector. In effect, you also get a bigger influence over the end customer experience. Connect with other local businesses and stakeholders and sell their experiences online that complement or build on yours (e.g. if you need accommodation, to add other experiences to your packages)



Down to Online Marketing and Nitty Gritty.

To reach your target markets, you need to make sure, they can find you. This involves different marketing strategies and activities. Here are a few of the key marketing activities to get you started.

- **Social Networks and Viral Marketing.** Make sure it is conversational, offers information or something interesting
- **Paid Media Advertising** that is geo-targeted, at the right people with the right interests with high AIDA potential Attention, Interest, Desire, Action
- **Internet Marketing and Direct Selling** with live calendar and book ability options
- **Storytelling Building** to build reputation via YouTube videos, blogs, articles, marketing campaigns, and messaging



CASE STUDY

Slovenia's Wellbeing Destination Brand 'I Feel Slovenia' Creates Identity Differentiation and Positioning



Slovenia has branded itself 'I Feel Slovenia'. The Slovenia brand combines all areas of Slovenia, including tourism, and a mix of emotions, sensibility, and the Slovenian green colour are at its core and identity. This smart destination branding supports sustainable tourism and encourages responsible travel aimed at enhancing experiences and attracting the right visitors – those who love and appreciate its many natural and cultural attractions. The evident respect for the natural environment is part of the Slovenian lifestyle and identity.

Approach 1 The National Tourist Board focuses on sustainability

The National Tourist Board focuses on sustainability as one of its key themes for its economic development and destination positioning. Why focus on sustainability? Similar to New Zealand, Slovenia has a special connection to their natural environment that is deeply rooted in history and culture. This facilitates its mission and values in sustainable tourism in Slovenia.

Approach 2

It promotes and builds sustainable and wellbeing tourism via its destination brand ambassadors:

It promotes and builds sustainable and wellbeing tourism via its destination brand ambassadors: individuals who live and work in Slovenia incorporate the brand personality, love for Slovenian culture, and its natural environment into their daily communication, actions, and business activities.

“

'Love for nature is deeply embedded in us and the essence of our I feel Slovenia brand identity. Slovenians have a tight connection with nature and attachment to the local environment: most Slovenians are very active in nature – we spend afternoons after work and at weekends on trips, walks, bike rides, skiing in winter. We love to do gardening – balconies of Slovenian houses are always full of flowers. We use seasonal and local food, preserve customs and traditions, and have the biggest number of beekeepers per inhabitant... This is all reflected in I feel Slovenia. We are green, we develop Slovenia in a green manner and we proudly promote it as green.'

*Maja Pak,
Director of the Slovenian Tourist Board*





CASE STUDY

The First International District for Wellness and Quality of Life for Everyone



The Wellness Valley is the first international District for knowledge in Wellness and the Quality of Life and the first example of a Wellness Community in the world. Since 2003 Wellness Foundation has been leading and coordinating this initiative which involves over 250 public and private stakeholders, including institutions, municipal administrations, schools, companies, medical doctors, research centers, health authorities, the university, sports and cultural associations, gyms, spas, and hotels. Today the Wellness Valley is regarded as an international benchmark for the realization of effective, inclusive, and sustainable integrated health systems. A place where the aspiration to well-being is confronted with the real ability to offer innovative experiences and opportunities to improve the quality of life and social, economic, and environmental sustainability, with positive effects on the whole community. It even has its [Wellness Valley App](#).

Approach

Wellness Valley became popular basing its overall wellness design and the culture of its residential community. Wellness Valley recognized its target markets seek out and expect healthy rooms, food, amenities, and programming, are increasingly interested in how people live and if people are well cared for in the places that they visit. By recognizing that the wellness of its region is the DNA of its authentic wellness. Wellness Valley

Wellness is a social opportunity for everyone: for people firstly, for companies, for the institutions, for the territory, for the whole community.

prioritises the wellbeing of its residents and their environment to create their own unique wellness value proposition and brand to their visitors.

The Wellness Valley project leverages the human, economic and social capital of Romagna and networks the excellences to produce innovative projects and initiatives that bring wellness into the lives of thousands of people, with benefits at both an individual and a collective level. Therefore, the Wellness Valley builds its brand and destination reputation using a social innovation model that focuses on people and their health and promotes well-being for everyone of all ages. It creates an environment that supports and encourages healthy lifestyle choices for visitors and residents.

Over the years more than **70 best practices** have been developed in the Wellness Valley which makes this territory a true living lab and demonstrate how it is possible to create a **"Wellness Ecosystem"**: from the educational programs against childhood obesity to free physical activity in public parks for active ageing, from the prescription of physical exercise for the prevention of chronic diseases to the promotion of lifestyle events up to active holiday packages that combine movement, food, and wine, nature, art, and culture.

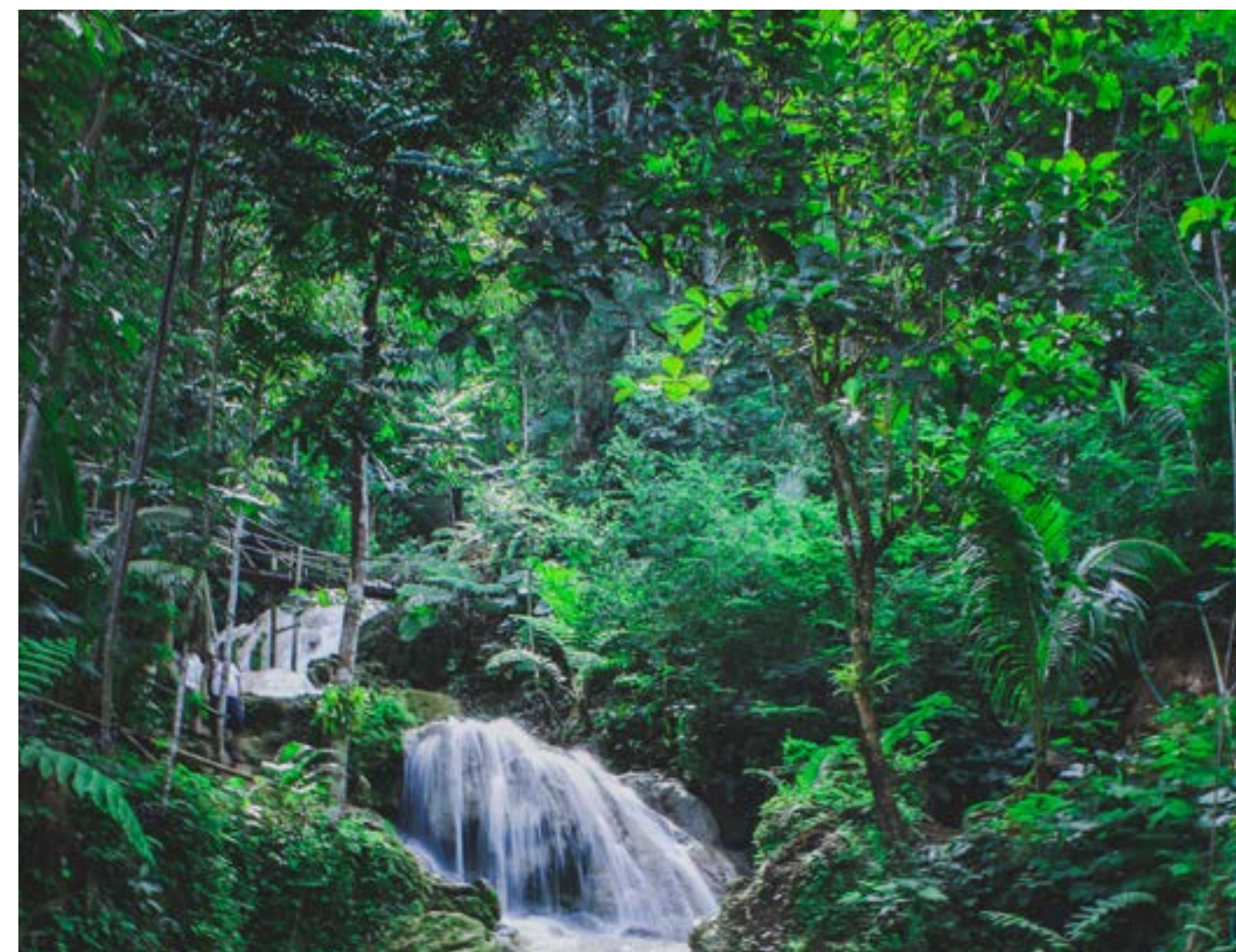


Wellness Valley



Some Wellness Valley Destination Milestones

- 2002** ● Nerio Alessandri, founder **officially launches** the Wellness Valley project. In an interview with the local newspaper, he appeals to all the stakeholders of the territory to join forces and collaborate to develop new initiatives that focus on their quality of life.
- 2003** ● **The Wellness Foundation was established, as a non-profit organization** in charge of coordinating the Wellness Valley initiative. The 10th Wellness Congress is held in Cesena in the presence of 3,500 local and national stakeholders.
- 2004** ● Start of the **trial period of experimentation of the medical prescription** of physical exercise for the prevention and treatment of chronic diseases
- 2011** ● **“Parks in Wellness” is born**, a free physical activity program opened to all of the population
- 2012** ● Opening of the Technogym Village, the **first Wellness Campus** in the world, and the gateway to the Wellness Valley. The Wellness Valley is recognized by the Italian Government as a reality of national interest and is **added to the geographical map**
- 2016** ● **The World Economic Forum** presents a study on the Wellness Valley as an **international benchmark of a system that promotes long-term prevention and sustainability**. The Emilia-Romagna Government establishes “Wellness Valley” as the official brand for the promotion of Romagna in the global market as a tourist destination specialized in wellness.
- 2018** ● The **Observatory for the study and analysis** of the Wellness Valley is established, an independent body with the purpose to measure the effects of the projects in Romagna



03

SECTION 3 WELLBEING DESTINATION PACKAGING AND ITINERARY BUILDING: HOW TO DEVELOP, PROMOTE, DISTRIBUTE AND SELL REGIONAL WELLBEING EXPERIENCES



Section 3 Wellbeing Destination Packaging and Itinerary Building

According to *tourismtribe.com*

A package can be defined as a combination of two or more products, presented as a single sale, so the customer gains an advantage compared with buying the items separately. The packaging is not a new concept, is available to all sizes and types of tourism businesses, and thanks to the digital age is a strategy that can be more easily implemented by using the resources available on the internet.

”

**What
Is
Packaging?**

What is an Itinerary?

“

A travel itinerary is a schedule of events relating to planned travel, generally including destinations to be visited at specified times and means of transportation to move between those destinations. For example, both the plan of a business trip and the route of a road trip, or the proposed outline of one, would be travel itineraries. (Wikipedia)

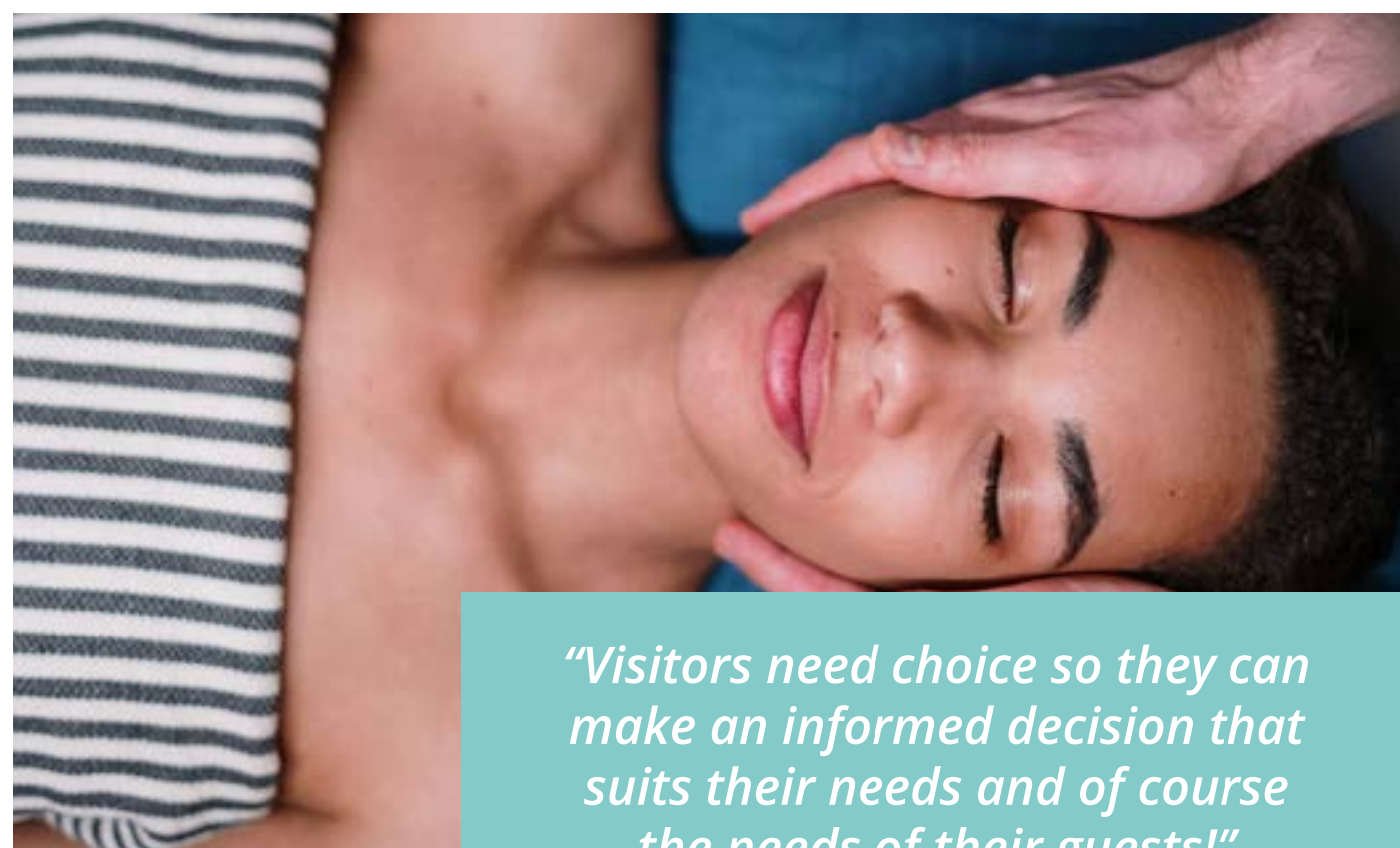
The construction of a travel itinerary may be assisted by the use of travel literature, including travel journals and diaries, a guide book containing information for visitors or tourists about the destination, or a trip planner website dedicated to helping the users plan their trips. Itineraries can be linear, circular, and radical. They are distinguished by mode of travel (walking, cycling, driving, train, etc.). They should be designed to be flexible and easily modified to suit the traveller's needs and available time.

Typically, a travel itinerary is prepared by a travel agent or tour operator that can be modified to the traveller's preferences. They can also be pre-prepared and pre-planned where the traveller picks their preferred. With the advent of the internet, online maps, navigation, online trip planners, and easier access to travel information in general, travellers, now travellers prefer a more do-it-yourself approach to travel planning.

Packaging and Itineraries are Growth and Competitive Strategies!

Well-being tourism businesses, small and large can gain a competitive advantage by working with each other to create irresistible wellbeing destination travel packages and itineraries.

Working with other local and regional businesses to create new packages and itineraries are strategies to create increased appeal for your ideal customer and to make it easier for your potential guests to understand more about the experiences in your destination and ultimately to commit to your destination and book with you. They should be designed to improve the customer experience, increase the customer spend and length of stay, and increase revenue. As growth strategies they demonstrate value for money, get visitors to stay longer, it gets them to make decisions easier and quicker because you have taken the hard work out of it for them. You will save your visitors spending time putting their holiday together, they don't have to compare and do a price comparison etc. Make sure to create easy and understandable maps and show your visitors the best way to get to different attractions, what facilities, amenities and other services are at each attraction.



"Visitors need choice so they can make an informed decision that suits their needs and of course the needs of their guests!"

By reflecting tourists' preferences for certain attributes, destinations can:

- 1 expand their international tourism
- 2 improve resource utilization (e.g. staff, supplies, spaces)
- 3 enhance and diversify tourists' experiences
- 4 strengthen destination development
- 5 share equipment and facilities
- 6 share fixed costs on (e.g. premises or admin) or
- 7 cross-sell each other's products

The Opportunities are Only Limited by the Product Available and Your Imagination



Partnering with other tour and activity companies in your destinations can be highly beneficial. Your job is to work together and share expertise and detailed information taking the hard work out of organizing a collective package or itinerary. This means decision making should be easy to understand and book – the experience must be seamless and flexible to their needs. Your customers will benefit from having more choice, confident decision making, and you can benefit from marketing your business to a larger audience. It is always preferable to have multiple different versions and flexibility suited to your different target markets needs and demands i.e. optional time scales (e.g., 3,7, 10 days), different price points, value for money and include iconic attractions, etc.

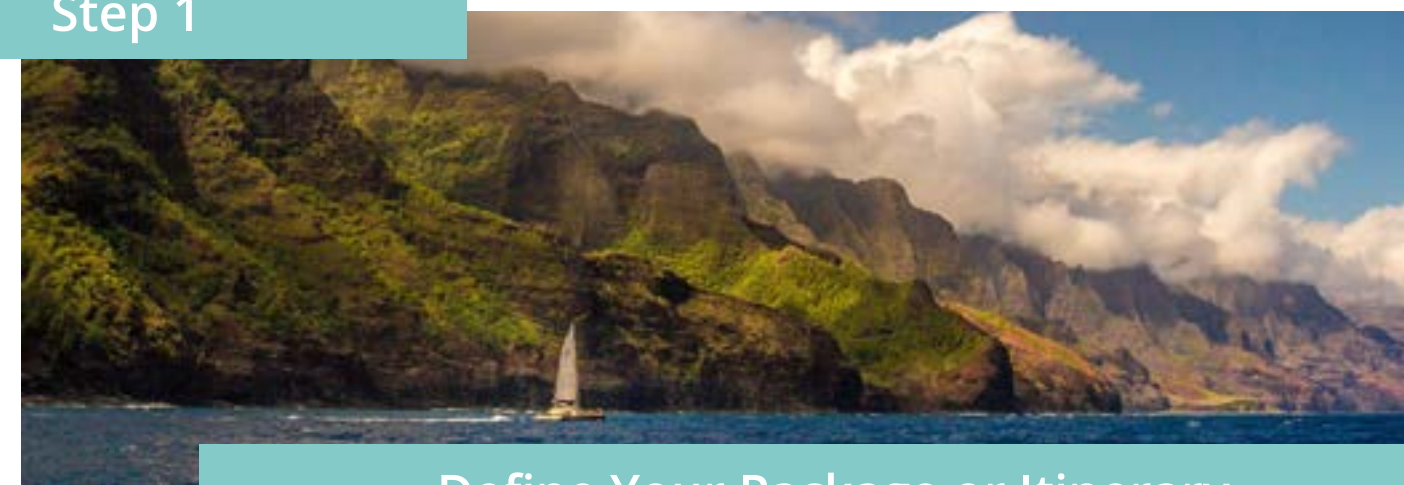
5 Steps to Developing a Package or Itinerary

There are several different kinds and forms of packages. Whether it is an SME developing a package or itinerary or collective SMEs partnering to develop a destination or regional package. It will involve a bundle of tangible and intangible components i.e. products, services, people, interactions, programs, infrastructure, experiences, environment, entertainment, etc. This section will go through 5 steps on how to develop a Regional Package then it will go into further explanation of how to add transformative wellbeing experiences and how a region can create synergies and opportunities through joint up distribution and promotion.

- Step 1 — Define Your Package or Itinerary
- Step 2 — Partner Up to Develop a Competitive Package
- Step 3 — Distribute Partner Roles and Responsibilities
- Step 4 — Make Sure You Think of Everything
- Step 5 — Review, Develop and Refine



Step 1



Define Your Package or Itinerary

Be clear about what the business driver is for you! What are your business needs first then develop your package based on those needs? Do you need more midweek accommodation bookings? Longer stays? More low season tour sales? Higher spend? Or do you need to diversify your offering so you can target the wellbeing market? The next important thing is that it must have a 'pull factor' or 'primary motivation to travel' that your visitors demand. Remember wellbeing visitors have their own specific needs and motivations. They are also motivated to preserve, promote, or enhance their health. They most likely are already practising wellbeing in their daily lives, are highly educated, and have a good income so they have certain standards and expectations.

Packages should be developed based on the information you know about your target markets, their needs, wants, requests, and what they highly demand. Choose the package(s) based on the most important attributes to your visitors (e.g., The Blue Lagoon focuses on its two key signature experiences 'The Lagoon' and 'Retreat Spa', and includes them in all packages). If you are not sure the best place to start is



- 1 assess existing most popular existing needs through bookings
- 2 assess what could be lacking through inquiries, existing trends
- 3 look at what similar destinations or your competitors are doing
- 4 have meetings and talks with your partners
- 5 look at already developed itineraries and packages your customers may have already developed and put online (TripAdvisor, Travel Blogs, Travel Networks) and build from there.

Elements of Developing a Basic Package

Value for Money

Consider different formations and **life cycles** (retired, honeymooners, single) of your target groups and set the best value for money according to their **formation** (group, couples, tour bus, large group, solo travelers)



At least **ONE wellbeing experience as primary motivation**
Alternative health therapies, meditation, and relaxation, adventurous, nutrition conscious, fitness fanatic, weight loss, immerse in nature, spa, and treatments...
e.g. spa treatment, yoga classes, peaceful relaxing meditation space, outdoor activities, guided wellbeing tour...



At least **ONE OTHER secondary motivational element**
Accommodation environmentally friendly hotel, glamping, self-catering....
Food evening meal, lunch, breakfast using locally sourced or organic or vegetarian or healthy food
Tour or 2nd Wellbeing Experience or nature, cultural, heritage, famous iconic attraction



OPTIONAL Amenities/Services also known as value adds
Airport transfers, storage for equipment, transport, tickets/ vouchers to another experience, private guide, access to gym/ swimming pool or spa, slippers/dressing gown/towels

Wellbeing travellers usually stay longer to gain full advantage of their treatments and get sufficient rest.



'Wellness tourists spent on average 130% more than the average tourists' (Ellis, 2013)

Decide on your package structure and elements. Think of the



delivery or format (business package or destination package, itinerary self-guided, itinerary self-drive)



what will the **structure** be (just one business or multiple businesses or an existing network or cluster business region)?



geographical coverage (destination or a region, country or island)



how many **experiences**, will you include any **add-ons**? (minimum of 2 experiences or elements need to be included)



how many **days** or will there be a few different options (3 days, 1 day, 4 hours, 8 hours, 7 days, 10 days, 3-day midweek, 3-day weekend etc.)



in what period of the year will it be **available** (Winter, Summer, all year, shoulder season only)?



what is the **added value** or **value proposition** you are offering (stay longer, get free admissions or experiences, cheaper, stay in a higher-end due to staying off-season)



what does the customer need to do to **achieve the added value** (stay longer, purchase early, buy more, stay off-peak)? and



what are the **price points** needed to suit your target markets (budget, high-end, luxury)?

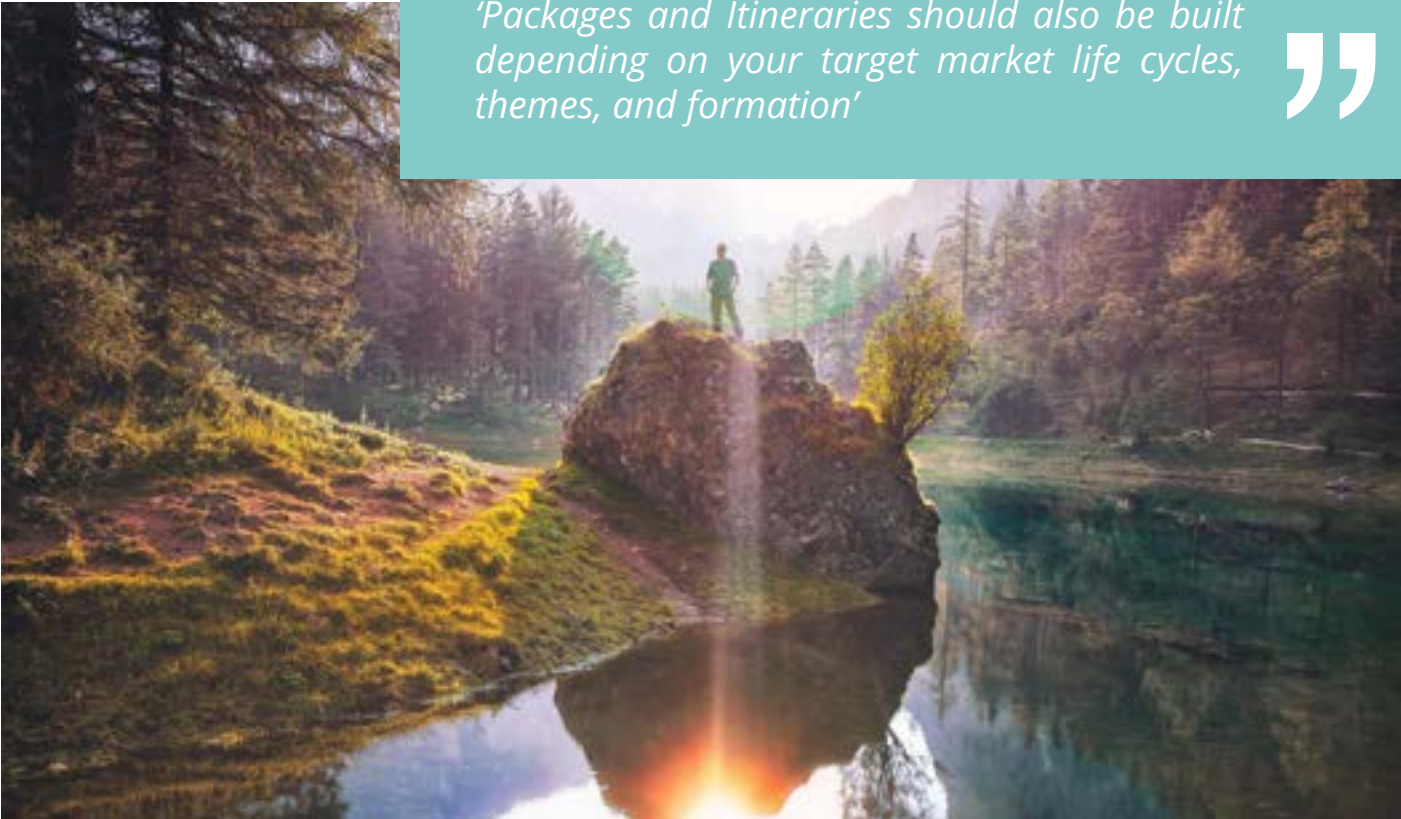
In the next section, we will look at different configuration Case Studies considering the above.



The package must be designed around your wellbeing customers' needs and interests so that it is also instantly appealing to them.

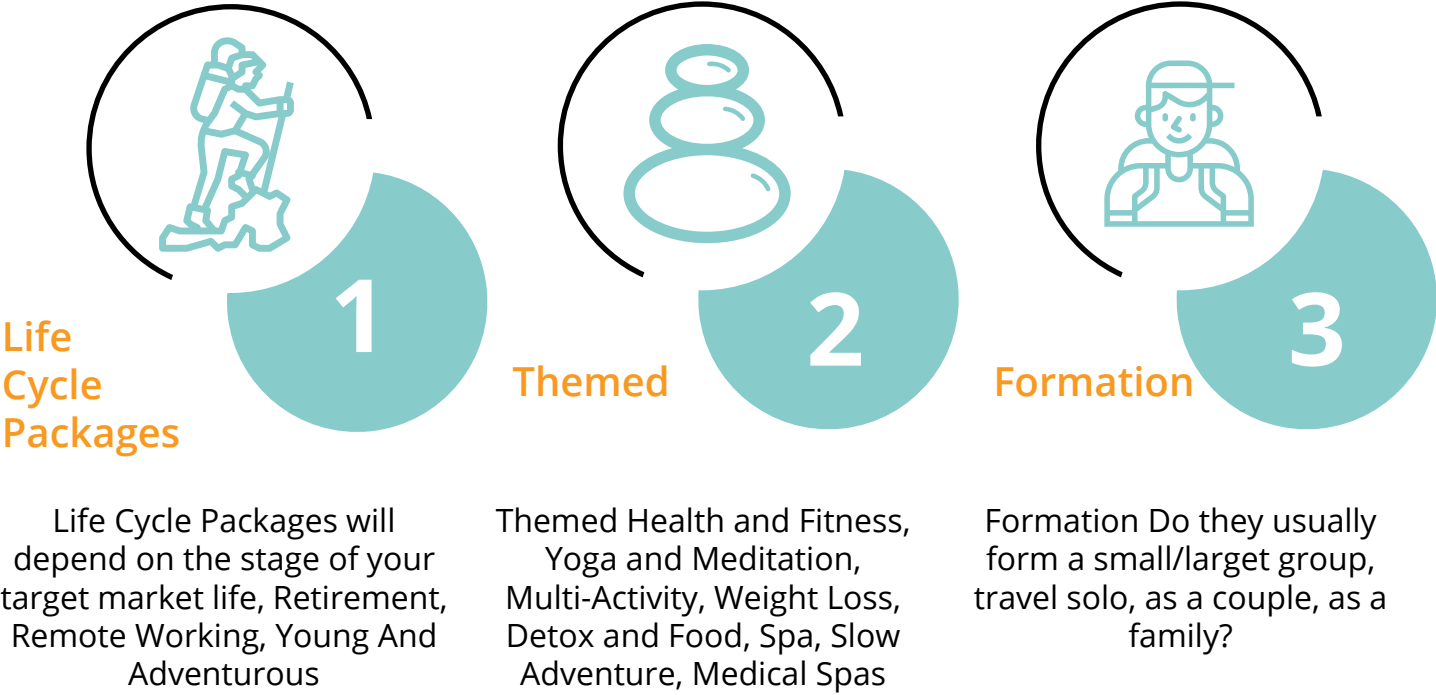
By this we mean wellbeing tourism packaging typically incorporates several specific destination elements to create a holistic wellbeing experience; throughout the journey...

- the welcome, the reassurance, stress taken out of all travel,
- quiet, private, safe environments with peaceful ambience,
- engagement with the locals, way of life, culture and heritage
- the natural scenery and fresh air,
- the physical beauty and care provided,
- a healthy and nutritional diet,
- achieved relaxation, inner peace, mental and emotional wellbeing
- engagement in spiritual practices, mental or physical activity,
- education.



According to *Tourism Tribe*

‘Packages and Itineraries should also be built depending on your target market life cycles, themes, and formation’



Then include all the secondary motivations, services, amenities and needs your visitors have and deliver in the most logical, efficient, and economical way possible. Once you have selected the components of your package and got a basic agreement with the players that will be involved to proceed, you can create and map out the detail of the package or itinerary

Developing Your Package: Basic 6 Step Approach

Step 1	<p>Who is the package or itinerary for? Who is your target market?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Try to Profile your Target Market taking into account the below factors. Remember each target market and profile can differ significantly depending on these factors. <i>Origin, culture, gender, disposable income, age, life cycle,...Part of a family, married, single, Couple, Large Group, Retired, Solo Traveler, Asian, European, American...</i>It is a valuable exercise to develop your target market's personas as an exercise before you start designing an innovation package.Picture the customer as they go through the decision making, purchasing, and buying process and try to think of all their needs and preferences.
Step 2	<p>What is the main motivation for your target market?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">What is the main or primary motivation or reason visitors want to engage in your region? <i>'adventurer & foodie', 'health & activities', 'spa & medical', 'holistic health & nature, 'vegan& foodie', 'meditation & spa'...</i>What are the experiences you have to meet this motivation?
Step 3	<p>What secondary experiences does your target market want to engage in?</p> <p>Think what other motivational inclusions need to be included?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">non-wellbeing experiences (<i>history, culture, iconic attraction, guided tour, accommodation, restaurants, meals, access to natural resources, be part of a group...</i>)a second wellbeing experience (<i>yoga, spa treatment, spiritual practice, nutritional program</i>)activities (<i>cooking lessons, canoeing, sailing, whale watching...</i>)facilities and equipment (<i>bike hire, car hire, fishing equipment, bathrobes...</i>)services (<i>transport, parking, catering, airport transfers, booking agent, pickups drop-offs</i>)
Step 4	<p>How long do they usually stay?</p> <p>Next is usually the length of stay and if you can develop your package so your guests stay longer or spend more.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">How long do they typically stay?How long can they stay or would like to stay?When do they usually come?Can you motivate a longer stay by adding value or discounting, offer a cheaper price during quieter periods, book early?

Step 5	<p>Decide on your package type, structure, and availability?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">What type of package do they like; do they prefer all-inclusive, flexible, or build their own or all three options?Will it be available based on 1 day, 2 nights, 7 nights, or have a few options?
Step 6	<p>What is your Target Market Willing to Pay?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">What are their identified price points (low-mid-high)?What adds value and is more appealing for your customers?Does your target market like to self build or add on extras while in the destination? <p>Price is making sure all elements including commissions are included in the overall costing. (Do not discount to a point where you reduce profits and/or quality.)</p> <p>What does each component cost so you can accurately price it?</p> <p>Lower Price Points can be accommodated by reducing the number of <i>days, service level, accommodation rating, number of extra activities, purchasing in advance or during quieter periods, sign up for a membership, book now pays later, stay longer, book a package.</i></p>



Step 2



Partner Up to Develop a Competitive Package

Appropriate partner selection is key, not only should their wellbeing experience or product appeal to your target audience, but they should have similar business principles and values. Based on your target market’s main motivations start by writing down a list of wellbeing or complimentary wellbeing tourism businesses that can help you develop your wellbeing package or itinerary. It might be an activity, a transfer operator, or even a tourism business in a neighbouring region. Use the internet and your networks to source potential partner businesses. It helps if you have an existing relationship with them, but it is not essential. Before approaching potential business partners;

1

Research online to find exactly what you need to add to your package

3

Check if they have a functional and well-presented website

2

Check if they have a good reputation

4

Research if they have existing packages you can add to or complement

Then list all those partners who have what is needed to develop a competitive package. Contact them to see if they want to partner and participate in the development, promotion, and distribution. Ask them how they can contribute. Your aim is to produce a better experience for the customer. To do this the business arrangement needs to be mutually beneficial for it to succeed, so you may need to soft-sell the concept to the other party and you’ll need to spell out the benefits for each party (What’s in it for ‘me/them?’).

Step 3



Distribute Partner Roles and Responsibilities



Now that you have the package defined, the next step is to bring all partner's staff on board, trained, aware, and well informed about the package(s)/itinerary(s). Then collectively outline and document the operational and promotional processes. If you set the rules of engagement up early, it may save you grief in the long run. You will need to plan How to take it to market? And who is going to do what and when? Consider

- 1 Who takes the bookings?
- 2 When is it available? When is it not available?
- 3 How will you manage the inventory?
- 4 Who takes the payment; and what are the agreed terms of funds transfer?
- 5 Who handles any complaints; and what is the process?
- 6 Are there any "block out periods"?

Step 4



Make Sure You Think of Everything

Before you finalise your package or itinerary the next step is critical. As they say, **the devil is in the detail**. Everything needs to be considered in detail, partners need to think of everything to make sure visitors get the best out of their wellbeing experience. Review each other's services and offerings. It is your job to do all the hard work and guide visitors through their decision-making process and prevent them from wasting time trying to find information, compare products and prices, research reviews, and recommendations. It is up to you to be able to simplify the process. Address all their needs, questions, and anything else they need to make their experience enjoyable.

- 1 Timings and sequencing the itinerary;
- 2 Health and safety, emergency information;
- 3 Where they can rent or hire what they need, facilities, what they should bring;
- 4 Restrictions, terms and conditions, availability, GDPR;
- 5 Recommended places to eat, stay and sleep entertainment;
- 6 Prices, cancellations, tickets, payment channels, payment programs, different payment methods (online, offline, remote and in-destination);
- 7 Special deals, optional add-ons or upgrades;
- 8 Weather permitting experiences are their alternative options?... the list is endless.

Step 5



Review, Develop and Refine

This last step is often forgotten and is vitally important. Listen to your customers and watch your online reviews to gather feedback. You must deliver on your promise. Be flexible enough to adjust your package to meet consumer needs. You may even consider adding a new product to your package or developing an existing experience to capture new enthusiasm.

Transformative Wellbeing Experiences

Well-being travellers crave transformative experiences, desire personal growth, and change.

Tour operators need to focus more on the way the elements of the trip deliver motivational factors such as personal growth, learning, and ultimately transformation. Wellbeing travellers want experiences that allow them to unplug, focus inward, and tap into the mental health benefits of travel and adventure travel. The trend is also growing for adventure itineraries to include an element of wellness, but not as the primary motivation of the trip. Wellbeing businesses and destinations can tap into this trend by ensuring their marketing speaks to this core motivation of adventure travellers. See in the Case Studies in the next section how different providers and regions provide transformative experiences to their wellbeing visitors.



Six Senses Douro Valley, Portugal

- 1 transforms its visitors by their six senses. Their packages are intimate, full of unexpected delightful surprises, designed to stimulate, energise, and revitalise the human mind, body, and spirit. Their Six Senses Wellness Pillars focus on their visitor's sleeping, eating, spa treatments, movement, mindfulness, and growth.

Blue Lagoon, Iceland

- 2 heals and replenishes the skin. Visitors are said to return yearly to the Lagoon and some to its dedicated center for psoriasis and other similar skin conditions.

Slovenia's Wellness Program

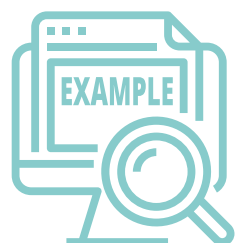
- 3 focuses on the preservation and restoration of health, self-discovery, selfness programs, mental physical and mental health, pampering and relaxing, engaging and immersing in nature, special experiences, exploration and engaging in positive energy



“*‘Experience design involves knowledge about the importance not only of different elements in an itinerary, but also the sequencing of activities, the time spent in different activities, balancing effort with the sense of achievement, and the emotions surrounding the challenge.’*
‘Physical and mental health are key motivations for travellers when they seek out adventure travel. We’re seeing more trips offered as restoration, wellness, recovery, and digital detox, which seek to offset the intensity of modern life’

*Milena Nikolova,
 ATTA Adventure EDU director*

Think about how you can transform your guests. Even travel brands want to transform and alleviate travelling as a stressful experience by supporting customers with wellbeing services in their offerings, packages, and itineraries.



Air France

4

partnered with the **Mind** mobile app allowing guests to take advantage of free meditation sessions while flying.

Swissotel

5

recently launched a **program** encouraging guests to commit to wellness and healthful habits even when they are on the road (e.g. their Vitality Rooms are where guests can revitalise the mind-body and soul. It is a sanctuary, soothing blackout blinds, discreet technology, dedicated space for exercise and relaxation, cyber training, vitality snacks, and drinks....)

VisitEstonia

6

is one destination that has tapped into this trend with their **Stress Buster Campaign**. The campaign deployed face-recognition technology in busy cities to identify stressed people and then offer them a trip to Estonia to relieve their stress. The campaign highlighted all the activities tourists could do in Estonia to minimize their stress, such as birdwatching, canoeing, and visiting national parks.

Create Synergies and Opportunities by Joint Up Distribution and Promotion

Currently, tourism SMEs are not used to working together or forming partnerships.

To create and develop a wellbeing tourism destination tourism SMEs need to start working together bundling their services and distributing on each other’s channels but also on a dedicated ‘wellbeing’ destination website or page. Get your online presence & timing perfect. Before you start promoting and distributing, it is important to carefully consider the timing of the release of the package and you will need to plan well in advance, allowing adequate time for promotion and booking. (Do not forget to incorporate your average booking lead times.)





Make sure the dedicated Wellbeing Website's online presence and functionality are perfect (i.e. your website has all the information, images, and videos it needs, is running smoothly, your branding is on point, technically runs well, and has all the functionality).



Have any information in a downloadable or printable; (i.e. example maps, itineraries, packages, event calendars, services and facilities, safety and advice...)



Include a booking function. Even better have a live calendar and availability so customers can book online. Offer a private code for partners so you can track their bookings and commission.



Build your reputation by integrating positive ratings from Facebook, Google, and TripAdvisor into your website. Partners need to track and customers need to know your reputation to build confidence that they will have a memorable wellbeing experience for the right reasons.



Make sure to thank your customers and send them after their trip a thank you email. Include a link to a review site of their choice and ask them to post a review.

Consider Your Distribution and Promotional Channels

A distribution channel or channels are needed to get your products or services to the wellbeing tourist on a global scale. They are how you market and sell your experiences, tours, and activities. There are mainly two types.

Direct Channels

Are where you directly secure bookings through your business or destination website, social media, Google advertising, customer recommendations...There is no middle man involved.

Indirect Channels

Are where third parties market your experiences to a larger audience on your behalf. They are often where you partner with another tour or accommodation provider, a travel agent or regional representative, an online marketplace, or a travel agent. Usually, involve a higher cost but they have a large resource pool of your target audience and effective marketing engines. You usually have to pay a percentage fee. Always check the fine print every operator works differently.





Take Advantage of Your Direct Distribution and Promotional Channels.

It is important to work across different distribution networks for maximum engagement and booking potential. Make sure when you are working with partners that you are providing them with quality experiences for their customers to protect their reputation and yours.

1

Make sure your local **visitor information center** is aware of the package and is equipped to promote and book it (videos, maps, photos, brochures, online downloads)

2

Make sure your wellbeing packages are **available on all partners'** websites and downloadable as a PDF. Joint logos or branding could enhance the promotion and demonstrate the professionalism behind the package. Mutual online listings, including content and imagery (e.g. photos and videos that specifically match the experiences)

3

Offer a referral commission if someone outside your business sells your experience (e.g. hotel receptionists can be very powerful marketers and brand ambassadors when suggesting your products or activities to their guests). Offer them a commission as an incentive when they promote and sell your experiences.

4

Offer partners to experience your tour or activity themselves so that they understand what is involved and get to benefit from the experience themselves. This forms powerful word of mouth and there is no better way to turn partners into brand ambassadors than to give them your experience for free. You could also give hotel owners a free experience for their VIP guests for every 10 sold, so you are making them also look good in front of their customers.

5

Make sure that partners have your brochures particularly where wellbeing travellers rest (accommodation), eat (restaurants and cafes), or look for information (tourist offices, hotel lobby, airport arrivals).

CASE STUDY

Douro Resort focuses on a Holistic Wellness Package Using the Human Six Senses



Has a unique style that is authentic, personal, and sustainable, and in harmony with individual surroundings; local, yet in tune with the wider world. They offer intimate, experiences with an emotionally intelligent approach to anticipative service, which supports delightful and unexpected surprises. Crafted guest experiences stimulate, energize, and revitalize the human spirit, spa, and wellness programming is all-pervasive.

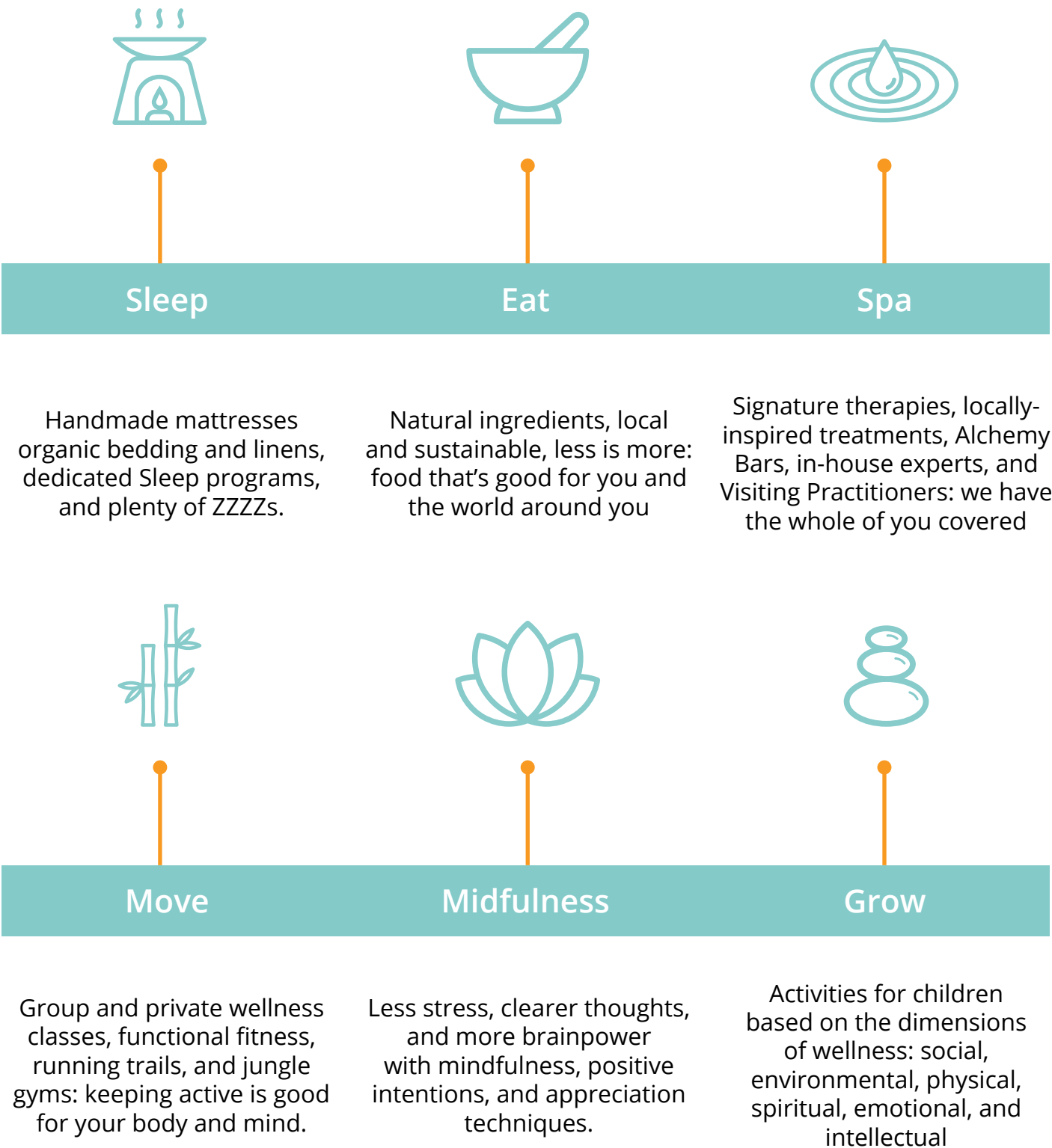


Packages and Experiences Configuration

Structure	One business, Multiple Offerings, Working with 30 Well-being SME Partners in the Douro Valley Region	
Douro Hotel and Wellness	Douro is a 60 guest accommodation with wellness and spa offerings, dining , experiences in an idyllic destination .	
Geographical Coverage	Douro Valley, Portugal	
Added Value Packages	Guests can take advantage of added value with Package Options terms and conditions based on Douro business needs; Extended Stay – Five Nights, Early Booking (30 to 60 days in advance), Winter Escape to combat seasonality. Visitors can subscribe to hear about other offers and updates	
Added Value Guest Services	Airport meet and greet, wine tastings, bar workshops, integrative wellness assessments, extensive weekly activity guide, meeting spaces, chefs table, guest experience staff to book all your needs. Fact Sheet and Resort Map .	
External Add-ons	Douro works with local businesses and guests can choose from over 30 destination experiences. Add on any of the Douro spa treatment or any of the programs or visit a practitioner	
Packages are categorised by theme	Wellness and Spa, Treatments, Programs (Fitness, Sleep, Yoga, Detox, Yogic) and Visiting Practitioners	
	Sample Package ‘Sleep Wellness Program’ combination with 3 nights, 5 nights, and 7 nights. So, each package and experience offered is different and varies according to customer booking ensuring packages are flexible. Outlines the benefits of the program. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Yoga Consultation• Yoga, 60 minutes• Yoga Nidra, 60 minutes• Personal Training, 60 minutes• Holistic Massage, 60 minutes• Indian Head Massage, 60 minutes One guest - EUR 493 (3 nights) Price is inclusive of all taxes	
Price Point	Is a luxury but is reduced depending on added value options	
Available	All year round, different package configurations 3, 5 7 nights	

Approach to Package Development

Six Senses Integrated into Wellness Packages. All aspects of the **Six Senses Wellness Pillars** help people reconnect with themselves, others, and the world around them through their six senses. Get closer to nature, rekindle connections with each other, achieve a deeper connection with your body. From the food you eat to the way you sleep and the earth beneath your feet, wellness is integrated into your whole Six Senses experience.



“

“Of course, hospitality is never just about a place to stay. We want our places and spaces to help you reconnect and explore what it means to be mentally, physically, spiritually, and emotionally happy.”

*Neil Jacobs,
Chief Executive Officer*



Base its Six Senses Experiences and Packages on 6 Core Elements

Embrace Unique Natural Resources

Portuguese tradition meets the elements of water, stone, and wood in a great setting for rural relaxation. Take a swim in the indoor pool while immersing in the floor-to-ceiling garden views, sip a glass of organic local wine or venture outside and practice forest bathing.

1

Local sensitivity, global sensibility

2

Responsible and caring to hosts and local communities. Committed to preserving the environment and sustainable operations

3

Approximately 30 **Crafted Experiences** unique to the destination designed to stimulate, energise, and restore guests. Historical Gardens, Winery Tours, Off the Beaten Track Trails and Viewpoints, Medieval Attractions, Historical Village Tours, Tree Climbing, Helicopter Tours, Canyoning, Rafting, Trail Walking, Kayaking, Mountain Biking, 4x4 Tours, Water Sports, Picnics, Cooking Classes, Classic Car Excursions...

4

Pioneering Wellness. Delivering the latest most effective wellness programs and experiences in partnership with leading experts

5

Emotional hospitality with an emotionally intelligent approach to service that begins with empathy

6

Fun and quirky with aesthetics and experiences that are always unique often expected and sometimes unusual to deliver curiosity and willingness to experiment

CASE STUDY

The Blue Lagoon Day and Overnight Packages Developed Based on Hero Experiences and Target Markets Budget



Structure

One Business with Multiple Offerings, 2 Hero Experiences, Multiple Packages to Suit Different Price Points and Length of Stay

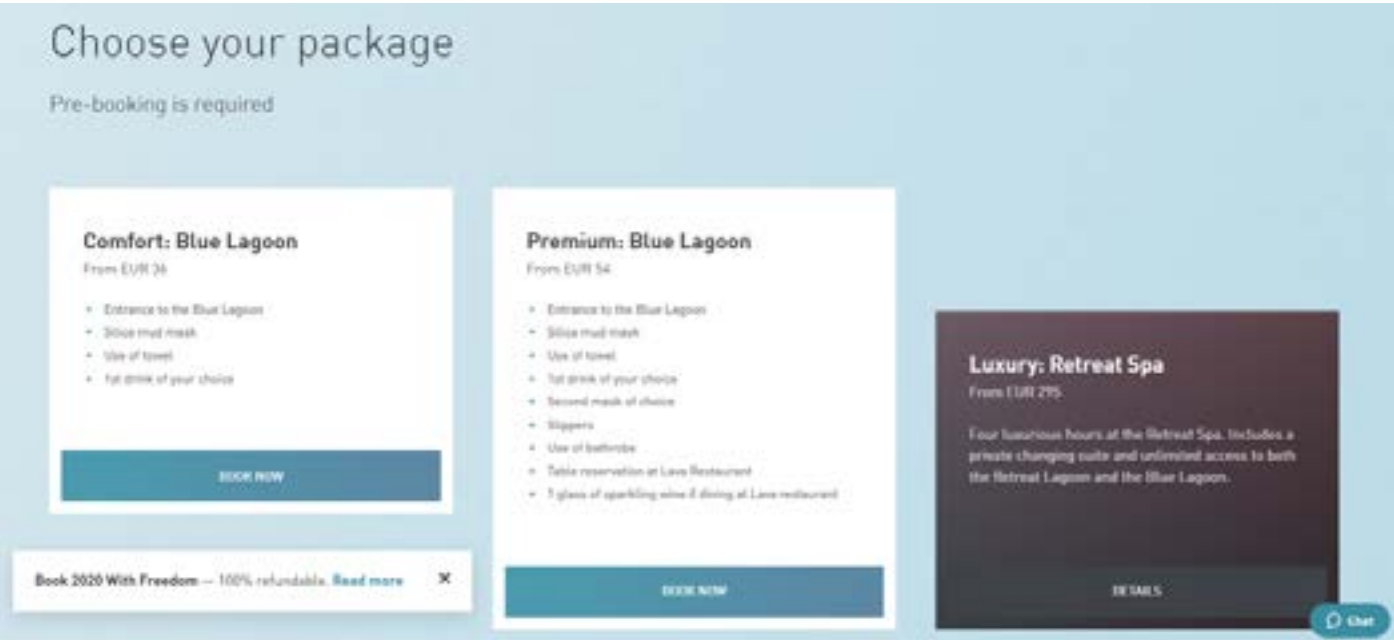
The Blue Lagoon Spas' main signature experiences are 'The Blue Lagoon' itself and 'The Retreat Spa'. It has two hotels, two restaurants, and a café, subterranean spaces, private changing rooms, spa ritual treatments, suspended **nest chairs** in a spacious room encased by floor to ceiling windows, outdoor spaces, has a hidden cove, own retreat lagoon, own beauty products. The Lava Spring lets you gently hear mesmerizing sights and sounds of water falling. A sauna made from the dry heat of hot rocks and views of the Lagoon outside. A burning fireplace and so much more. They truly have encapsulated wellbeing at every touchpoint of their experience.

Approach

It has two main target markets those who spend the **Day** and those who **Stay Overnight** who require a lower tier and a higher tier package price point. Out of the two target markets (Day and Overnight), it has developed 5 main packages with three different Day package options and two different Overnight options.

Day Options	Blue Lagoon Five Package Options	
	1 Day Comfort	Package Blue Lagoon
	1 Day Premium	Package Blue Lagoon (with added extras)
1 Day Luxury	Package Blue Lagoon and The Retreat Spa (4 hours)	
Overnight Options	Blue Lagoon Five Package Options	
	1 Night Comfort	Package Lagoon, Silica Hotel, and Lava Restaurant
	1 Night Premium	Package Blue Lagoon (with added extras)
	1 Day Luxury	Package Lagoon Retreat Spa, Retreat Hotel and Moss Restaurant

Blue Lagoon Day Package Options with three different price points; Comfort, Premium, and Luxury



Customers have the flexibility to self-build their packages online and pick any hotel accommodation, restaurant, Blue Lagoon Package, Spa Retreat Package, and extras...

Blue Lagoon Overnight Package Options

with two different price points; Comfort and Premium. **Silica Hotel** is the lower end accommodation described as 'sublime comfort' and **Retreat Hotel** at the higher end is described as 'timeless sophistication'. Both are distinguished but equally high quality according to budget and customer preferences. Both packages include accommodation, breakfast, admission to the Blue Lagoon and Silica Lagoon, dinner at one of their restaurants.



Comfort Package Experiences

€434 per night

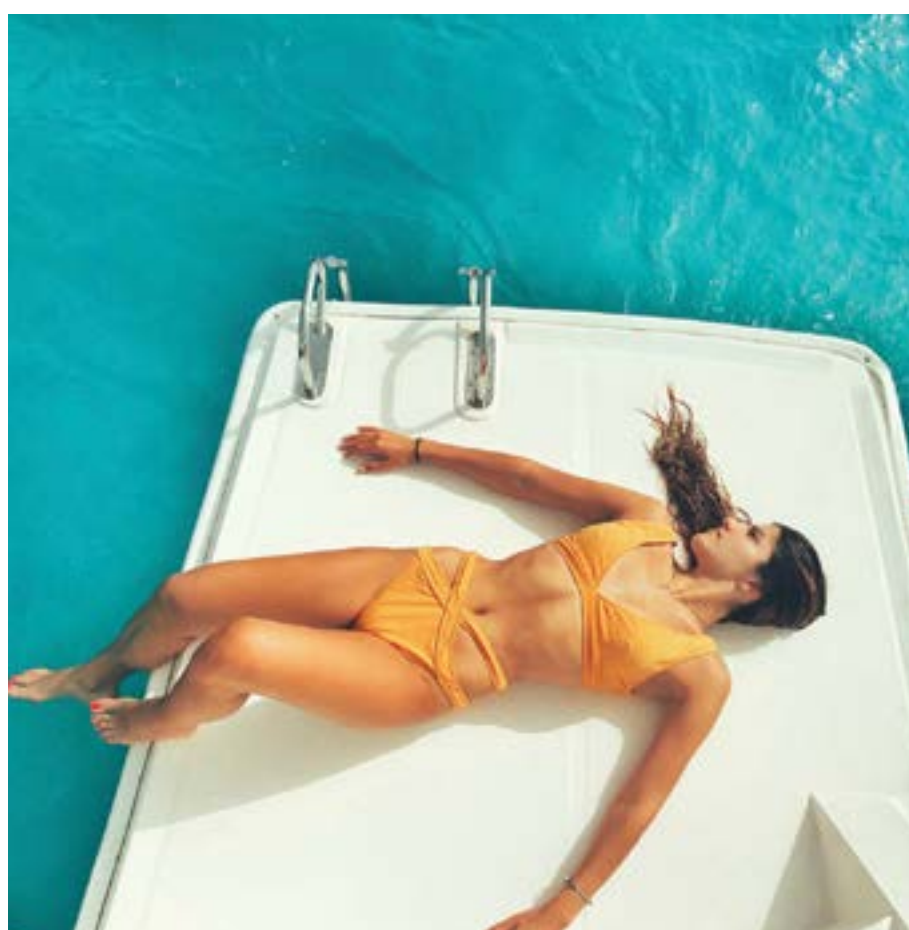
Silica Hotel (sublime comfort) (1 night)
Accommodation
Complimentary breakfast *Food*
 Premium Admission to the
Blue Lagoon *Experience 1*
 Unlimited access to
Silica Lagoon *Experience 2*
 Dinner at **Lava Restaurant** (culinary
 classics). Tasting menu for two,
 excluding drinks) *Food*

Premium Package Experiences

€1,044 per night

Retreat Hotel (timeless sophistication)
 (1 night) *Accommodation*
 Welcome drink upon arrival
 (Complimentary Welcome)
 Complimentary breakfast *Food*
 Unlimited use of the **Retreat Spa**, the
Retreat Lagoon, and the **Blue Lagoon**
Experience 3 Unlimited
 Dinner at **Michelin-rated Moss**
Restaurant (7-course set menu for
 two, excluding drinks) *Food*

Both day and overnight visitors can purchase other **wellbeing experiences** separately; Spa Restaurant (gourmet delicacies), Café (snacks and beverages), Mask Bar, Sauna and Steam Room, In Water Bar, and In-Water Massage.



CASE STUDY

Slovenia Ramps Up Wellness Packages by Adding New Wellbeing Experiences



Structure

One Country (Slovenia), Working with Multiple Partners across the country to create a wellbeing tourism destination under its Wellness and Selfness Brand

Slovenia has **fifteen registered natural health resorts and spas** which are included in the public health network of Slovenia (*Development Strategy of the tourism product "Wellness" in Slovenia - "Tourism Well-being"*). Slovenia is home to 87 natural thermal springs. Slovenian health resorts have always been connected with the preservation and restoration of health, fitness, Turkish and Finnish baths, whirlpools, and various baths and massages. Some wellness centers offer massages and other services that are based on the knowledge of the ancient East (Shiatsu, reiki, Ayurveda, Sawadee, Watsu, Tui-Na, Scen Tao, Hot Stone massages) Balneotherapy and physiotherapy services. Wellness services are provided only by trained professionals with certificates.



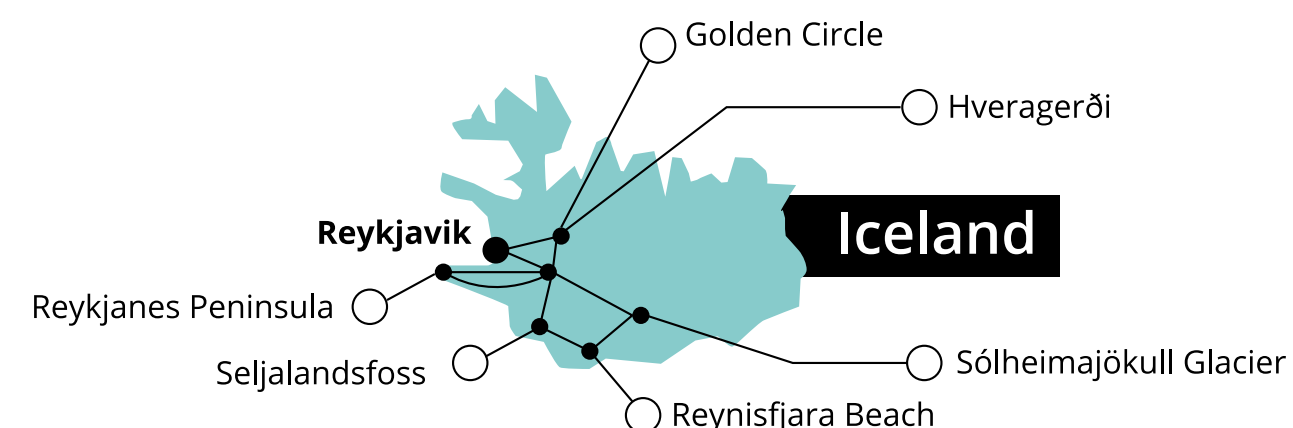
Approach

Slovenian spas have added new well-being products, and experiences as well as new programs for maintaining health and preventing disease. Their wellbeing experiences now include the natural environment, features of the local countryside, and their traditions intertwined with top-quality medical knowledge. The focus is on the beauty of both the body, mind, and soul and the individual desires of modern-day people. The amazing range of health, pampering, recreation, and socialising programs offer the height of indulgence. Slovenia has four new and improved wellbeing offerings

- **Spas and Health Resorts** improve your health with the additional help of nature, knowledge, and experience.
- **Prevention – Medical Wellness** – preserves your health and prevents disease with alternative non-medical treatments.
- **Wellness and Selfness** where you choose to be pampered, relax and regain your strength in wellness centers and nature.
- **Aquafun and Thermal Water Parks** offer fun water experiences for all the family focusing on wellbeing and fun.

CASE STUDY

Wellness Tour Itinerary Package, Iceland



Name	Wellness and Adventure Iceland
Structure	All-Inclusive Itinerary with Packages Included, Multiple Partners, Reykjavik Region, Multiple Destinations
Price	€2124+
Primary Details	7 Days Reykjavik to Reykjavik
Description	<p>The otherworldly landscapes of Iceland offer perhaps the closest thing one can have to an out-of-body travel experience. Equal parts rugged and tranquil, the country's beauty offers the perfect sanctuary from daily distractions back home. Your soothing journey across the country's southern coast starts with a hike up Öskjuhlíð Hill overlooking the mosaic-like architecture of Reykjavik. Private transportation offers you the luxury of time to see the iconic sights of the Golden Circle and Thingvellir National Park before heading to the stunning black-sand beaches of Reynisfjara for a unique meditation session. And, of course, a visit to Iceland wouldn't be complete without a stop at the Blue Lagoon, a naturally-heated hotspot for travellers willing to go halfway around the world just to unwind.</p>
Travel Style	<p>Wellness: It's time to introduce your inner traveller to your inner self. Discover awe-inspiring destinations combined with rejuvenating activities like yoga and meditation, and healthy food experiences to recharge the body and nourish the mind.</p>
Highlights	<p>Meditate atop the volcanic slopes of Mt Hengill, Learn to cook bread in a geothermal bakery, Marvel at the majestic manes of Icelandic horses, Hike behind the towering Seljalandsfoss waterfall, Practice meditation on Reynisfjara's black-sand beach, Suit up with a pickaxe to hike Sólheimajökull glacier</p>
Timing	May to September
Wellbeing Focused Inclusions	<p>Your Welcome Moment: Meet Your CEO and Group Your Wellness Moment: Yoga Practice in Thingvellir National Park, Þingvellir</p> <p><i>Enjoy a session of hatha yoga in one of the most extraordinary geological sites in Iceland. Practice yoga postures and breathing exercises where the Eurasian and North American tectonic plates meet. Achieve peace to the mind and body in this energy-filled site.</i></p> <p>Your Foodie Moment: Rye Bread Cooking Class, Laugarvatn Your Wellness Moment: Geothermal Baths, Laugarvatn</p> <p><i>Experience the healing powers of geothermal springs. Soak in natural pools and allow your body and mind to relax and unwind. Listen to bubbling hot springs, warm up in steam rooms or take an arctic dip in a nearby refreshing lake.</i></p> <p>Your Wellness Moment: Reykjadalur Hike & Meditation, Reykjadalur</p> <p><i>Hike along the scenic Reykjadalur trail. Walk along the rolling hills and pools of bright blue water. Follow the steaming pools that line the footpath until you come to the hot springs - natural pools heated by geothermal activity. Enjoy a CEO-led meditation session.</i></p>

Details	<p>Your Foodie Moment: Locally-Sourced Farm Dinner, Hveragerði</p> <p>Your Wellness Moment: Black Sand Beach Mantra Meditation, Reynisdrangar</p> <p><i>The black sand and ominous rock formations offshore provide an intriguing backdrop for peaceful meditation. Take some time to watch the foaming white waves crash over the jet black shores and let the landscape unfold its secrets as you meditate.</i></p> <p>Your Wellness Moment: Waterfall Guided Meditation, Seljalandsfoss</p> <p><i>Calm the mind and set intentions while participating in a guided meditation session set to the flow of cascading water.</i></p> <p>Your Wellness Moment: Geothermal Rift Lake Yoga, Kleifarvatn</p> <p><i>The incredible depth of Kleifarvatn lake, which has no visible outlets, makes the perfect backdrop for a peaceful Vinyasa yoga practice. Take some time to be still before discovering the connection between mind and body as you move through a series of poses.</i></p> <p>Your Wellness Moment: Restorative Yoga, Hveragerði</p> <p><i>Slow down and open your body through a series of passive stretches allowing complete relaxation and rest.</i></p>	
	<p>Accommodation: Different hotels for 6 nights</p> <p>Meals: 6 breakfasts, 1 lunch, 2 dinners. Allow USD310-405 for meals not included.</p> <p>Transportation: Shuttle bus at the airport leaves every 30 mins, private vehicle, walking.</p> <p>Staff & experts: CEO (Chief Experience Officer) throughout.</p> <p>Service Level: Quality accommodations and more inclusions than on other G Adventures tours, like meals, private transport, and activities.</p> <p>Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner (varies) locally sourced farm meals.</p> <p>Transport: to/from all included activities and between all destinations</p> <p>Physical Rating: 3 – Average includes light hiking, biking, rafting, or kayaking in addition to walking.</p> <p>Trip Type: Small group experience; Max 16, average 12.</p> <p>Age Requirements: 12+. All travellers under age 18 must be accompanied by an adult.</p>	
	Promotional methods	Partners Websites, CRM, Instagram, Facebook, Tourist Office
	Places & Activities	Öskjuhlíð Hill hike, Golden Circle sightseeing, Þingvellir National Park visit, Geysir Hot Spring visit, Gullfoss waterfall visit, Visit an Icelandic Horse Farm, Solheimajokull glacier hike (including all required equipment), Visits to Skógarfoss waterfall and Seljalandsfoss waterfall, Dyrholaey visit, Blue Lagoon entrance and airport transfer
	Available extras or add-ons	Add these to your tour when you book
Whale Watching from Reykjavik: From €81.00	Take to the water from Reykjavik Harbour for whale watching. Try to spot minke and humpback whales, dolphins, and porpoises from your vantage point aboard the boat. As you explore Faxaflói bay and the surrounding water, feel free to ask the expert guide accompanying questions about the area.	
My Own Room: From €639.00	If you are travelling solo and would prefer to have your own private room throughout your trip, select this option during the online booking process.	

High-End Price
Point Option

Adjusting price
points to
seasonality

Other
important travel
confidence
information

Make it a private tour

Book this tour as a private departure - with your own CEO and all the benefits of a G Adventures group tour - for any group, big or small (even just one traveller).

Join from another high-end hotel



Disclaimer, Itinerary Notes, Important Notes, Group Leader Description, Group Notes, Arrival Complications, Emergency Contact, What to Take, Packing List, Visas, Entry Requirements, Spending Money, Money Exchange, Covid-19 Policy, Tipping, Emergency Fund, Optional Activities, Health, Safety and Security, Rules, Travel Insurance, Social Responsibility, Local Dress, Feedback, Newsletter Subscriptions, Minimum Age, International Flights information

Each **Wellness Package element** goes into detail in the **Full Itinerary** with further decision making information




CASE STUDY

Two Simple Regional Destination Packages, Greece



Structure	Multiple Packages & Multiple SME Partners, 2 Different Regions (Zagori and the Ionian Sea) Multiple Partners and Businesses (Package 1 has 9+ SME partners and Package 2 has 6+ SME partners)
Geographical Coverage	Zagori and the Ionian Sea, Greece
Wellbeing Experiences	Package 1 Spa Treatments, Yoga Classes, Massage, Aroma Retreat Package 2 Diving
Main Motivation	
Secondary Motivation	Package 1 Wine Tasting, Cooking Lessons, Archaeological and Cultural Experiences Package 2 2 Excursion Tours
Added Value Packages	All-Inclusive accommodation, meals, guides fees, transport, admission fees
Packages are categorised by theme	Package 1 Wellbeing + Food, Culture, and Heritage Package 2 Wellbeing + Diving and Adventure
Price Point	Is it budget or all-inclusive (e.g. Package 2 is double up accommodation)
Available	All-year-round Package 1 is for 5 nights Package 2 is for 7 nights, diving dependent on weather

Package 1











Zagori, Greece Integrating Food Culture, and Heritage into a Wellness Package



Zagori is un-hyped heaven where visitors only find respectful overtures of nature made by man. It is in the region of Epirus that is famous for its Pindus mountain range. In the inspirational **landscapes of Zagori**, visitors have an uplifting experience. They get a chance to explore 46 alpine villages. The area is connected with zigzag roads. It has two stunning national parks, and everything tucked in mountain ranges.

Approach

Target Market’s main motivations are wellbeing, food, culture, and heritage. Their wellbeing package is developed by first starting with the main wellbeing experiences are spa treatments and yoga classes then it integrates additional motivational experiences around wine tasting, cooking lessons, culture, and heritage. Then adds secondary motivational package elements, accommodation, transfers, guide fees, and admission fees. It took 9+ partners to develop this regional package.

-  Accommodation for 5 nights, at a boutique hotel (partner 1)
-  All the meals according to the daily itinerary
-  All Transfers and guide's fees (partner 2)
-  **Cooking lessons** and One wine tasting tour (partner 3 & 4)
-  Spa services and treatments (partner 5)
-  6 days of yoga classes with Vinyasa and Hatha Yoga (partner 6)
-  Vital essential oil massage. Aroma retreat sections (partner 7)
-  Admission fees to archaeological & cultural places (partners 8 & 9)

Focus on the destination description and its unique natural resources to entice visitors to the destination as a motivation. Zagori is one of Europe's most rewarding and unspoiled location. Once in the area, visitors feel like they have entered something pure. Visitors mostly enjoy the amazing yoga lessons and spa treatments.

Uses popular hashtags #wepromotehealth #wellbeingholidays to increase promotional reach. preserve the health, health is a state, crammed with thoughts organs, disease or infirmity, present moment, state of complete physical, intercontinental hotels group, hotel groups, medical tourists, quality of life.



Package 2



The Ionian Sea, Greece Integrating Wellbeing Adventure

Indulge in the beautiful Ionian Sea and experience wellness of physical, mental, and social wellbeing by diving with experts who train visitors over the 8 days of stay. Then they explore the life beneath the water on their own.

Approach



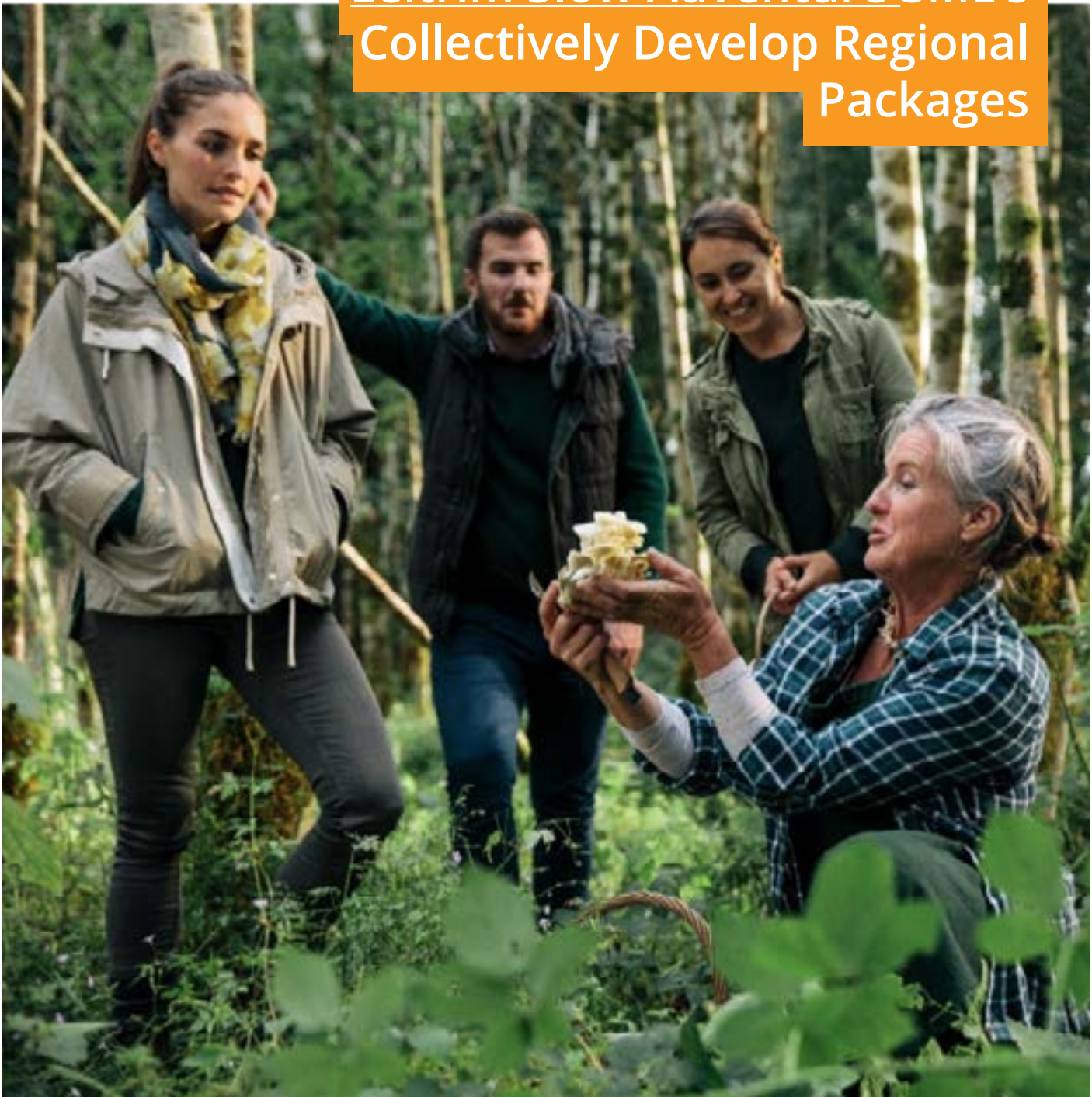
Target market's main motivations are adventure wellbeing experiences in diving. Wellbeing package main wellbeing experience is teaching the target market on how to dive over 8 days. Then adds secondary motivational package elements, accommodation, meals, and excursion tours. It took 6+ partners to develop this regional package.



-  All the transportation from and to the airport (partner 1)
-  Accommodation for seven nights in Kefalonia island (Double occupancy) (partner 2)
-  2 dives every day, including 1-night dive (partner 3)
-  Two excursion tours in Kefalonia, with English speaking certified guide (partner 4)
-  Included, seven breakfasts and meals. Influenced by popular Greek cuisine (partner 5)
-  Optional: Advanced Open Water level & Deep Diver Specialty during the trip (partner 6)

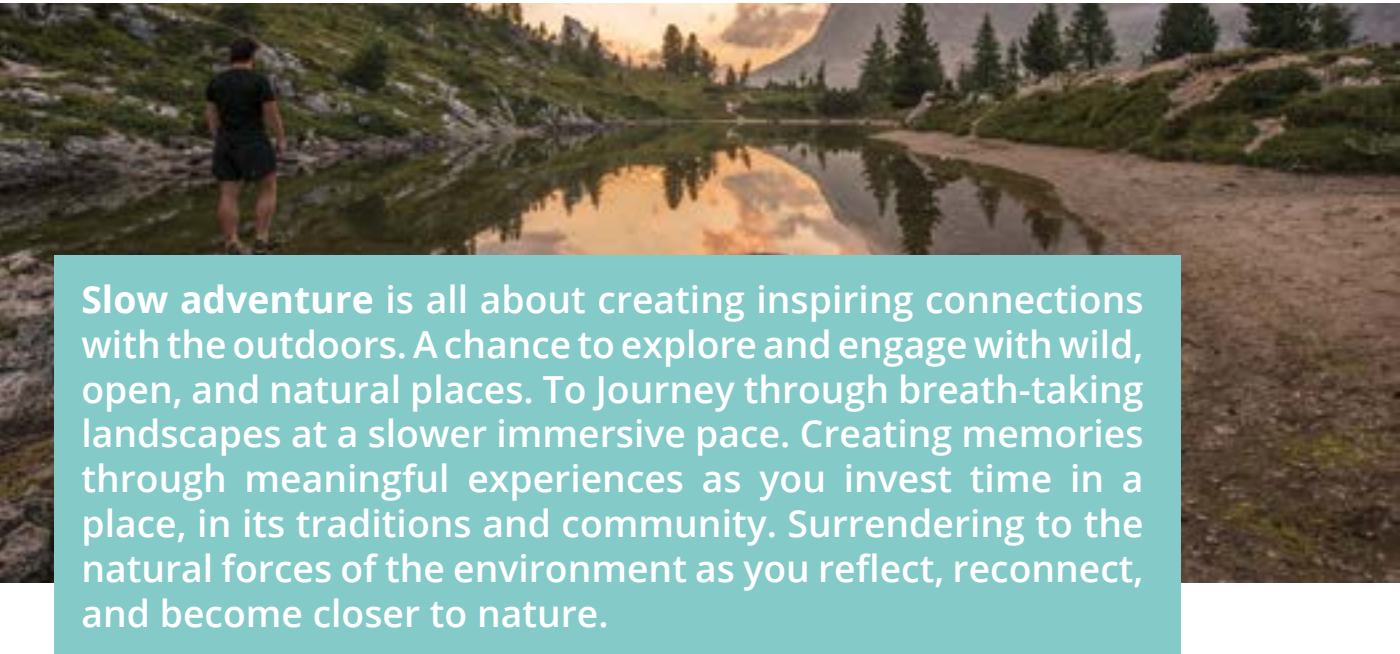
Uses popular hashtags to increase promotional reach the tourism industry, destination spas, largest tourism market, wellness travel destinations, tourism industry, body-mind, and spirit, physical mental and social, complete physical mental.

CASE STUDY
Leitrim Slow Adventure SME's
Collectively Develop Regional
Packages



Slow Adventure, County Leitrim Ireland, was set up by a group of rural tourism SMEs who invite their target markets to immerse themselves in stunning peaceful Leitrim. The visitor experience is about reflection, reconnection, learning something new, enjoying spellbinding storytelling, and indulging in its food, culture, and heritage via guided tours through the landscapes and rivers.

Structure	1 Region (County Leitrim), Multiple Packages, Multiple Partnering SME's Working as a Regional Wellbeing Network Multiple All-Inclusive Day Packages (7) or Overnight Packages (3). Multiple Partners and Businesses from across the Leitrim Region (10 Wellbeing Experiences and 5 Accommodation Providers).
Geographical Coverage	County of Leitrim, Ireland (Regional Approach).
Wellbeing Experiences	Dining Experience, walks, cycling, a Canadian canoe tour, alternative accommodation, SUP, sailing, organic garden center, spa retreat, surfing, and canoeing.
Main Motivation	
Secondary Motivation	Accommodation: small, authentic, self-catering to hosted, all-inclusive.
Added Value Packages	Accommodation, lunches, meals, guides fees, transport, admission fees. Each Package has a different Add Value. Some offer cheaper prices for staying midweek.
Packages	Self-Built – visitor chooses experience(s) then accommodation or chooses Day Trip and can add accommodation as an option All-Inclusive – packages already built around themes (accommodation, meals, experiences included) A mixture of 2 nights, mid-week, day trips only 1. Relaxed Slow Adventure (2 nights at an eco-cabin resort, organic food, all meals, sauna, hot tub, guided walk, canoe trip, yoga session) 2. By the River Slow Adventure (2 nights at river cottage, meals, guided historical walk, cycle and bike rental, Canadian canoe, guided SUP, craft session) 3. Step Back in Time Slow Adventure (2 nights Old Rectory B&B, guided history walk, guided cycle and bike rental, Canadian canoe, guided SUP, craft session) 4. Explore the Wilderness (Day Trip Only, guided walk, canoe trip, and bushcraft) Option to add accommodation 5. Down by the River (Day Trip Only, guided Canadian canoe trek, lunch, afternoon tea, bike rental) 6. Pedal Paddle and Learn (Day Trip Only, guided SUP, picnic lunch, Blueway River cycle) 7. Paddle the Waterways and Forage as You Go (Day Trip Only) 8. Adventure in Nature (Day Trip Only) 9. Learn about Bushcraft in the Wilds of Lough Allen (Day Trip Only) 10. Forage the Northern Glens of Leitrim (Day Trip Only)
Price Point	Is a budget, all-inclusive, day trip and add accommodation suitable to visitors different price points
Available	All year-round



Approach

Step 1
Visitors Choose
their Wellbeing Slow
Adventure

- [Edergole Kitchen \(vegan and vegetarian dining experience\)](#)
- [Landscape Walks](#)
- [Leitrim Cycling](#)
- [Teapot Lane \(alternative accommodation\)](#)
- [Way to Go Adventures \(canoeing, SUP, and cycling\)](#)
- [Leitrim Surf](#)
- [Organic Garden Centre](#)
- [Ard Nahoo Spa Retreat](#)
- [Lough Allen Adventure](#)
- [Adventure Gently \(Canadian Canoe trip\)](#)

Slow Adventure Leitrim brings together wellbeing accommodation and experience providers who enjoy sharing their sense of place with visitors by sharing traditional skills, local knowledge, storytelling, and spending time together in nature. Visitors can pick from one of the predesigned 10 unique packages or pick their own or choose and build their flexible package. For the self-build option, there are 10 different unique wellbeing options available. Overnight packages are available as well as unique 1-day adventures. Rest assured, each of the businesses and providers are hand-picked for their quality, attention-to-detail, and environmentally friendly credentials.

Step 2
Visitors Choose
their Wellbeing Slow
Adventure

Then they Choose their Accommodation There are 5 accommodation providers who each offer more than just a comfortable night's sleep. They also each offer their own unique wellbeing experience

- Ard Nahoo Eco-Cabins
- River Cottage
- Old Rectory
- Tawnylust Lodge
- Ardvarney Country Lodge

Promotional
Approach

Each package has a video showing what is included and a video of the destination covered, package description, what is included in the price, what guests need to bring and CTA (Call to Action Buttons) Book Now, Contact Us, Accommodation



Or visitors pick a
pre-designed
package



Example of a Package

Relaxed Slow Adventure	Midweek 2 nights' accommodation in one of Ard Nahoo's award-winning eco-cabins with a continental breakfast of locally produced organic food. Dinner is provided on both nights by Edergole Kitchen.
Day one	Arrive at Ard Nahoo's eco-cabins. Experience Uisce hour and complete relaxation in tranquil surroundings. Dinner will be provided by Edergole Kitchen that night.
Day two	Breakfast will be self-prepared with the locally produced organic food from your welcome basket. Guided walks with a local historian who will bring you through some local sites and the Ard Nahoo story. Graham from Adventure Gently will guide you along with the River Bonet by canoe. Dinner is provided that night at the Edergole Kitchen Supper Club.
Day three	Continental breakfast prepared from your welcome basket. Take some time out for yoga which will be conducted by a top-class yoga teacher – suitable for all fitness levels.
Price from	€323 <i>(Subject to availability, terms, and conditions apply)</i>
Ard Nahoo price includes	Midweek 2 nights' accommodation with breakfast (continental), Uisce Hour, Guided Walk, Canoe trip, Lunch, Yoga Session, Slow Food dinner on both nights
Extras	Drinks – guests to bring their own
Guests to bring	Loose clothing, Walking shoes, Rainwear



Sample Self-Guided Regional Itinerary, Terceira, Azores

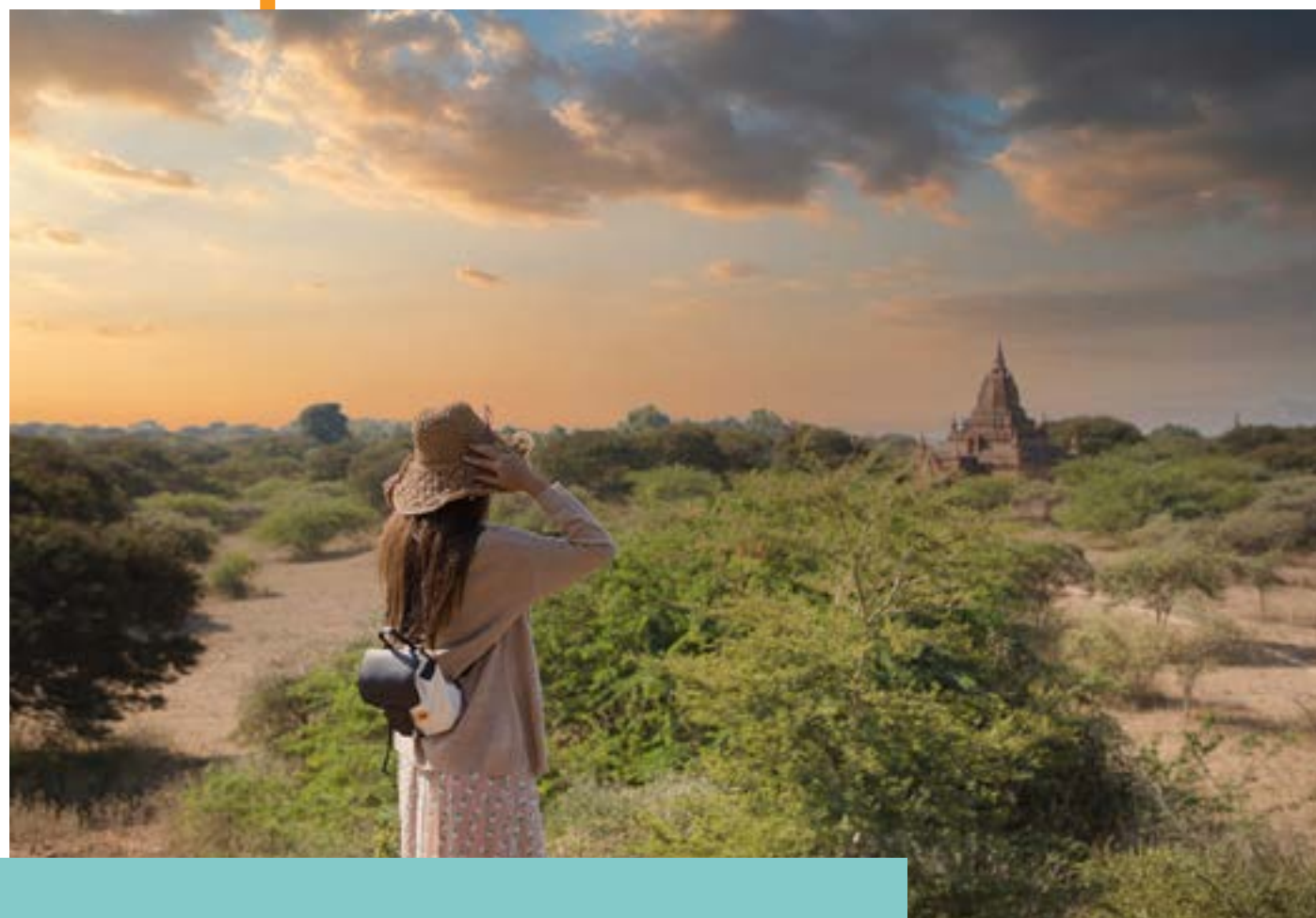


Name	Cycling, Terceira Azores
Structure	Self-Guided Itinerary, Multiple Partners Working with a Tour Operator, 1 Region (Terceira, Azores)
Price	€895 - €1355
Primary Details	7 Days (excluding flights)
Description	<p>Sustainable, environmentally friendly, 7-day cycling covering between 20 km and 45 km each day around Terceira, through lush green forests, refreshing dip in the sea, scenic picnics overlooking a lagoon, windsurfing, kayaking, golf, boat trips, coastal and volcanic scenery, Angra do Heroismo, Serra de Santa Barbara, Serreta, Wine tasting at the Biscoitos Wine Museum, Praia da Vitoria. Optional watersports, golf or whale watching, visit a volcano pit, Ilhéu das Cabras, giving back to the community (disadvantaged children) campaign, responsible tourism</p> <p>Cyclists stay at locally owned accommodation so they can experience the local island culture. Cyclists are equipped with a high-quality mountain bike, GPS and route notes, a helmet.</p> <p>Encourages their guests and tour leaders to follow certain policies (e.g. wash dishes in a container instead of leaving the water running, always use a biodegradable soap for hiking or biking activities and never near a lake or a river, never pour water with oil or food residues in a watercourse, etc). The tours also promote respecting and protecting the fauna and flora of the visited places: do not feed or touch the animals and to not collect flowers or leaves. It has a Social Responsibility Campaign.</p>
Socially and Environmental Responsibility	
Add-ons	Airport and luggage transfers, route maps, and all information needed, accommodation and breakfast included, provides travel guidelines, what to know about the destination, helmet and bike, GPS Garmin and 24/7 route support Self-Guided so guests choose and book their own experiences en-route
Timing	May to September



04

SECTION 4 THE POWER OF REGIONAL TOURISM DIGITALISATION & DIGITAL PLACEMAKING: A SMART WELLBEING TOURISM APPROACH



The Power of Regional Tourism Digitalisation & Digital Placemaking

According to *OECD, 2018*

As digitalisation evolves, emerging technologies are combining in novel ways to push the digital transformation in new and often unpredictable directions

”



Our physical and digital worlds are colliding in ways most people would not have thought possible just a decade ago. This trend is especially apparent when we look at digital placemaking, which has begun to enhance destination experiences around the globe. Digital placemaking over the next decade will take tourism to new levels of digitally enabled experiences. The ways that people understand the public realm and — critically for businesses and public services — *expect to interact with these spaces*, has already been transformed by digital tech. In this section, I will go through placemaking, digital placemaking, and digital and how it has intersected people, place, and technology and how it applies to the new phenomena wellbeing tourism.

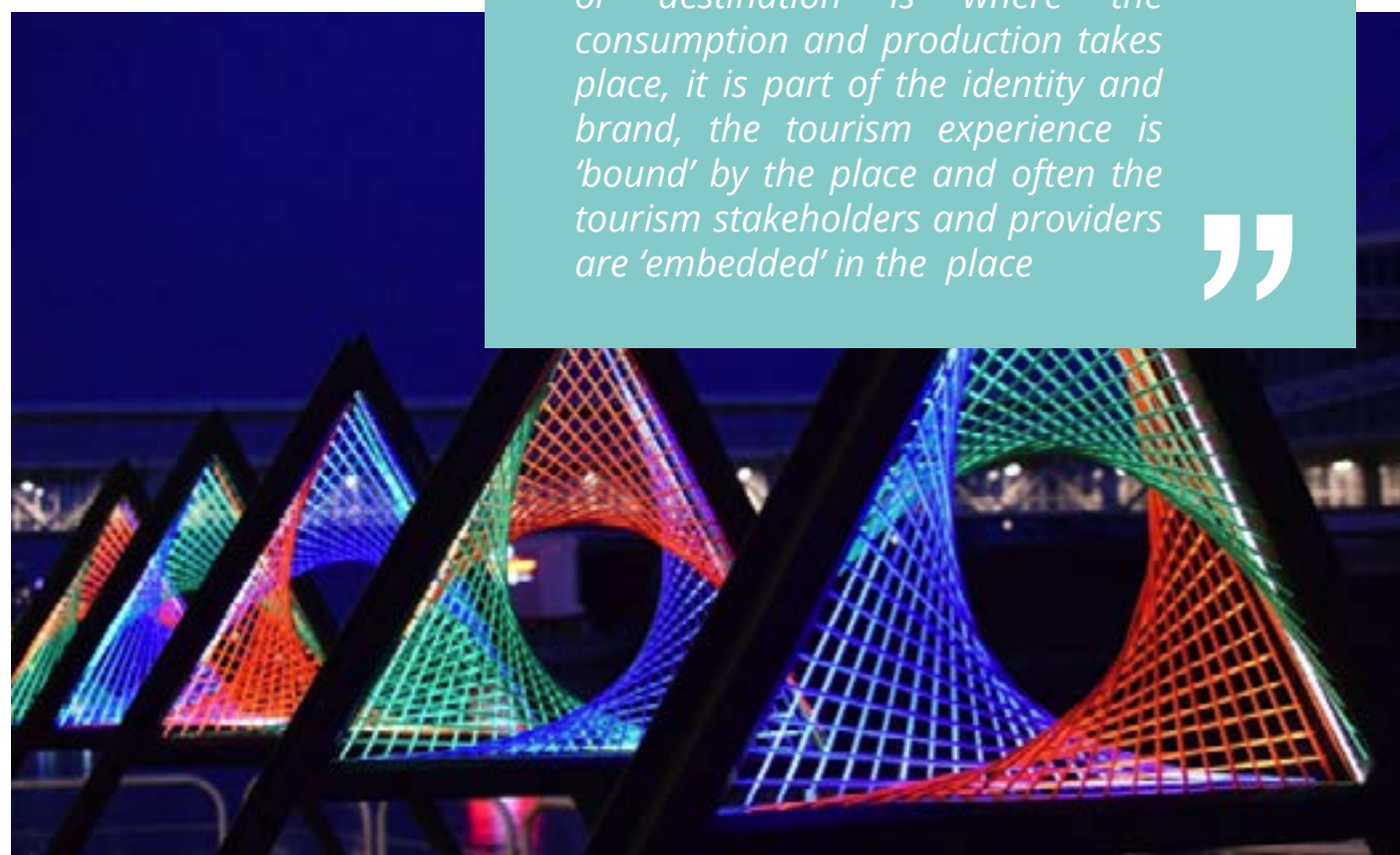
Digital Placemaking will continue to grow as digital technologies become more and more apparent in people's physical spaces e.g. shopping centers and high streets, parks, airports, and train stations. It is designed to connect and communicate with people through technology and place in an immersive way. At its core, digital placemaking is focused on making places better, attracting communities of all types to deepen their connection with the public realm and, in turn, with each other.

Smart Digital Tourism Definitions

Placemaking

According to arrow.tudublin.ie

'Place' is key for tourism, when you think the location, environment, or destination is where the consumption and production takes place, it is part of the identity and brand, the tourism experience is 'bound' by the place and often the tourism stakeholders and providers are 'embedded' in the place



Artistic Cultural Digital Placemaking Installation



Tourism destination planning and marketing are fundamentally place-making actions intended to shape the image of a place. An objective of place-making in tourism is to increase the attachment of tourists to places, thus increasing the likelihood of return visit and positive recommendations (Wikipedia)

Pancholi et al (2015) shows how placemaking can facilitate knowledge and innovation spaces while Markusen and Gadwa (2010, p.6) show how 'through creative placemaking arts and culture make substantial contributions to local economic development, livability, and cultural industry competitiveness'

According to Solfield (2017)

Tourism has co-opted the concept of placemaking... placemaking in its most striking form creates an identity, an image, a difference from other places



The concept of place-making originated in the urban development literature where the focus is on 'planning, design, and management of public spaces in urban environments to improve the urban environment and quality of life of communities' Solfield (2017)

Digital Convergence

In tourism, digital convergence is happening in two key areas: the coming together of digital technologies, and digital technologies merging with the physical world (e.g. wearable technologies, AR, image recognition, etc.). Digital convergence is when one or more digital technologies come together to operate in sync, where data and information are shared, innovations emerge allowing for seamless interactions across the full visitor journey.

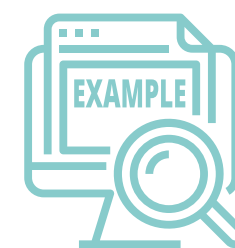


After **transport is booked**, travellers can be sent automated suggestions based on their previous behaviours for transfers, accommodation, and things to do at the destination. With minimal clicks, a car is booked, hotel check-in completed, a restaurant reserved, and tickets secured.



According to WEF, 2017

Automation, artificial intelligence (AI), and big data analytics facilitate the interoperability of booking systems, but pre-existing partnerships can also lock in customer choices to preferred partners and lockout SMEs offering alternative products and services. Data analytics and algorithms can work to favour certain suppliers, customising and bundling products, and prompt customer engagement before, during, and after travel. The challenge for SMEs is to understand, engage, and strategize so they can assert a presence in these digital networks as customers can choose the convenience of a suggestion over doing their research. Dynamic data collection and analytics refine knowledge about the consumer, facilitate customisation, and enhance visitor satisfaction



Another example of digital-physical convergence in tourism is demonstrated by **augmented reality, wearable technologies, and the Internet-of-Things** to generate new hybrid products, services, and experiences.

For example, e-bikes, e-scooters, and e-cars can be accessed anywhere, anytime with a mobile app, reducing the need for a front office presence and staff, to potentially be replaced by tech support and maintenance facilities. When scaled across cities, regions, or a country, smart tourism development is possible. **Wilderness Ireland**, e-bikes are electric bikes that enable visitors to explore longer bike trips and cover larger areas of a destination with ease and comfort.

Digital Placemaking

According to Calvium.com

Calvium defines Digital Placemaking as “the augmentation of physical places with location-specific digital services, products, or experiences to create more attractive destinations for all.” Fundamentally, digital placemaking boosts the social, cultural, environmental, and economic value of places by using location-specific digital technology to foster deeper relationships between people and the places they inhabit.



Digital placemaking is the intersection of digital media and technologies with the built environment to communicate with the public, **encouraging community interaction and even play, and creating more livable cities.** (destination.think.com)



Why Placemaking, Digital Placemaking, and Digital Convergence is a Game Changer to Wellbeing Tourism



The key objective from a tourism perspective is to increase place attachment for tourists. This Place attachment affects the intention to revisit a destination (Stylos et al 2017, Hosany et al, 2016)

Digital Placemaking enhances products and experiences and radically transform people's perspective and relationship with tourism destinations' natural and built environments. Digital placemaking creates meaningful experiences for people in public spaces. For this to be achieved it means creating location-specific digital services, bespoke products, or rich experiences that are informed by, and meaningful for, the communities that engage with a place. These communities can include local or prospective residents and workers, commuters, visitors and employers, or any other group that uses space. Digital Placemaking benefits all who interact with the 'place' or 'space' – visitors, communities, locals, and the entrepreneurs themselves.

- 1 Builds a seamless easy to use digital visitor experience for tourists e.g. automatic check-in, ticketless attractions, immediate finger touch information, real-time notification of promotions, availability, and events
- 2 Tourists get more, flexible and detailed information in an App than they would a brochure
- 3 Tourists and those who visit destinations will increase in demand to expect such engaging experiences
- 4 Diversifies your wellbeing tourism experience, spa or accommodation offering at the destination allowing visitors building their awareness and knowledge of the destination encouraging repeat visitation

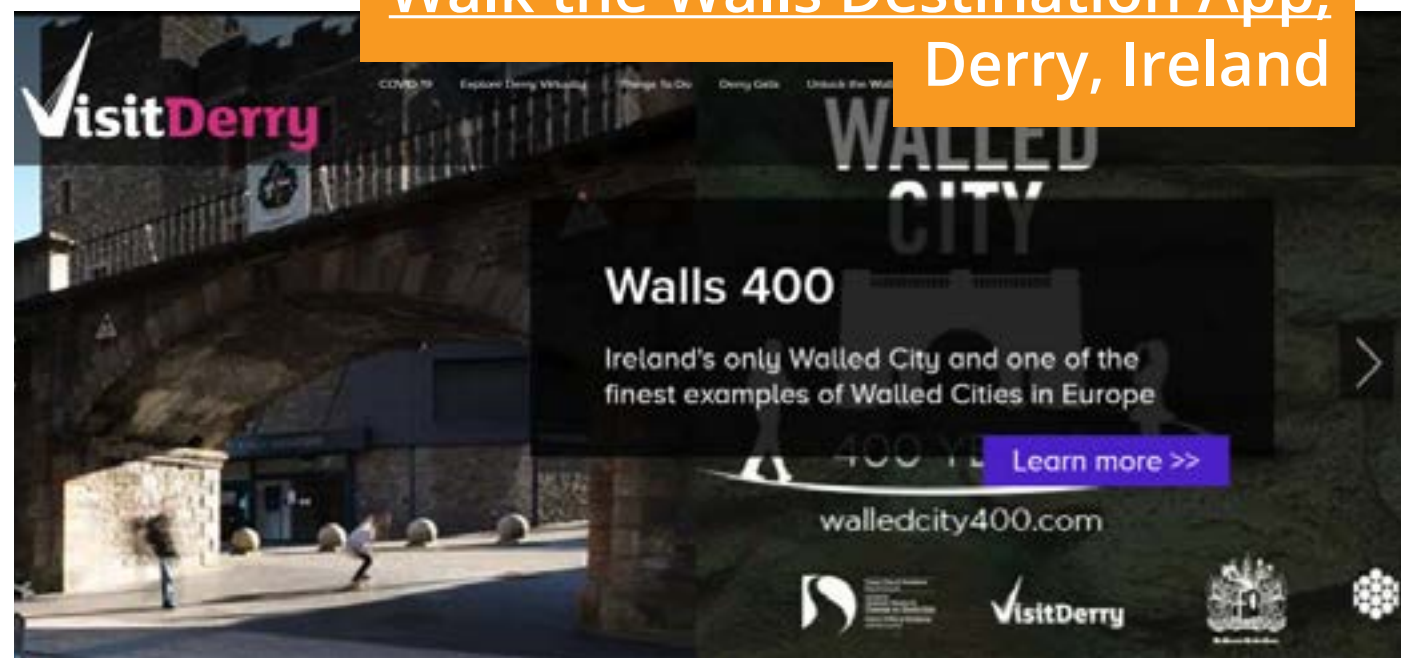


Determined by People and Place. Irrespective of technological approaches, digital placemaking is people and place centered. Rather than being shaped by one digital technology – like mobile apps or interactive installations – successful digital placemaking solutions are determined by people and place (Calvium.com)

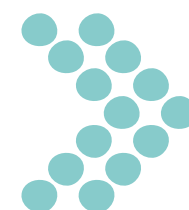
When designed well the intersection of digital technology, creative design, information, and storytelling brands can improve customer's experiences, build reputable brands, and increase revenues. These inclusive and authentic experiences foster a sense of belonging and can be delivered through fixed means – like digital kiosks and other types of connected street furniture – or via mobile and personal devices, including smartphones and wearable products and devices. Think of how destination apps are already paving the way to digital placemaking allowing travellers to have a personal tour guide in the palm of their hand. Visitors get access to your packages, travel directory, itineraries, directions to points of interest, offline maps, information, and more. Derry's [Walk the Walls App](#) demonstrates destination digital placemaking using a smartphone.



Walk the Walls Destination App, Derry, Ireland



The Walk the Walls App focuses on Derry's historic walls allowing users to catch a glimpse of the city as it was in the 17th century, with rich historical and archaeological information combined with computer-generated visualisations, a GPS-linked map, image galleries, and videos. Visitors just hold up their phone and get to interact with the historical city in its modern context. Clickable hotspots around the walls contain detailed interesting information e.g. Stories of the Siege. The App ultimately allows visitors to deepen their experience of the walls by seeing the city from a different historical view.



Approach

Northern Ireland Environment Agency worked in partnership with Tandem Design and **NoHo** who produce captivating digital experiences for the museum. Together they developed a series of videos, images, information, and storytelling. 6 videos are the cornerstone of the project. Apps like this can involve a lot of different developmental elements managed by experts in the field; UX (User Experience) and UI (User Interface) design, information architecture, technical development, FAQs section, interactive design, etc.

The Difference between UX and UI Design

UX (User Experience)

Encompasses all aspects of the end-users' interactions with the company, its services, and products (*Nielsen Norman Group*). It makes sure the design is easy, engaging, efficient, relevant, and enhances the user experience.

UI (User Interface)

Is the point of interaction between the user and the digital device or product – like a touchscreen on your smartphone. It considers the look, feel, speed, functionality, and interactivity with the experience.



Internet of Things (IoT)



is about technologies connecting and exchanging data with other devices and systems over the internet. IOT's can fuel a data-rich tourism sector and support smart tourism by making regions more efficient and sustainable

Interoperability of sensors - RFID tracking and security for luggage, airport sensors

data and automation produces real-time insights and information for marketing and managing tourism, location information and travel status

Improving and personalising visitor experiences - wearable devices telling us how we slept, how many calories we ate, how happy we are and how many steps we walked. Driverless cars, in-room tablets to control temperature/TV/lights etc

Increasing operational and resource efficiencies - smartphone check-in using electronic phone keycard, AI Artificial Intelligence, networking software to track energy efficiency and plans maintenance

Reducing environmental impacts - transport sensors collecting data and habits of travellers, their footfall numbers and patterns, smart energy-saving,

Augmented reality/ Virtual Reality (AR/VR)

The tourism sector gains huge benefit from AR and VR primarily because it enables tourism experiences and businesses operating in this field to enhance the physical environments. Augmented Reality shows online or through digital technology virtual objects in the real world. Visitors can perceive the physical surroundings for themselves by viewing through a particular device. The technology has similarities with virtual reality, but AR does not replace the real-world environment but augments it by overlaying digital components. Uses in tourism can include

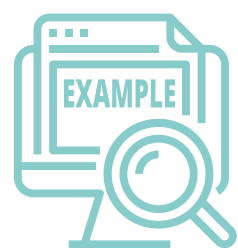
- Replacing paper-based marketing and advertising materials,
- Gamification and
- Augmented visitor experiences before and in destination,
- Gamification, and
- Travel assistants that guide users through complex public transport systems in real-time.



Pokemon Go, Augmented Reality Gamification App



Samsung Gear, VR Wearable Device



Augmented Visitor Experience

1

The Hub Hotel, London, made augmented reality compatible with the wall maps it places in hotel rooms. When viewed through a smartphone or tablet, the wall map comes to life providing the viewer with information about local places of interest, serving as a kind of tourist information tool. Guests can also control their TV, room temperature, lights...



Augmented Visitor Experience

2

Starwood Hotels using beacon technology to allow customers to unlock their hotel room when they are within close proximity to the door. However, it can also be used to send maps, reviews, menus, special offers or discount vouchers to users at the point they are most relevant.

Gamification

3

Best Western Disney Themed AR allows children to see Disney characters in their premises and interact with a life-sized cutout of Zendaya, the star of a new Disney Channel original movie. The app has been tapped more than 48,000 times and has reached more than 1.9 million Facebook users in a few months.

Example of AR Florence
Travel Guide Italy



Digital Placemaking Opportunities in European Destinations



Digital Placemaking opportunities allow destinations to remain competitive as they adapt to technological change and meet their visitor expectations and meet the demands of the 'experience economy'. It can enhance both experiences and environments to boost engagement, reputation, regeneration, and improve the lives of those in the spaces.

1

Regional Regeneration



One of the prerequisites for wellbeing tourism is that communities also receive value in terms of social cohesion, economic prosperity, cultural richness, and environmental sustainability. With the collaboration of key tourism stakeholders and policy drivers, digital placemaking can regenerate the destinations and regions. It can assist education, public wellbeing, economic sustainability, and the green agenda.



Soundwalks is an App providing artist-led soundwalks in Belfast. It uses sonic art to engage the public by sonically enhancing the experience of several places in Belfast including those not traditionally accessed as attractions or undervalued by residents.

2

Increases Deeper Connections and Sense of Place



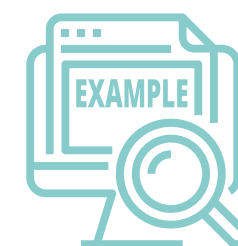
by revealing the hidden secrets, stories, and qualities of a place, make spaces more accessible and relevant to a wider number of people.



Street Stories is a heritage App-based around **Kings Cross Station, London, UK**. It offers users direction and content before, during, and after they visit a site of interest motivating them to stay longer or return.

3

Encourages Visitors to Move Around a Region



by providing a wayfinding system with the mapping and points of interests it can assist in bringing visitors around the destination, bring them on a journey and organise a customisable itinerary or choosing a place to visit depending on their desires, needs, and preferences.



Irish Day Tours, removes the thinking, hesitation, and challenges in exploring. Tourists have a personal digital tourist guide equipped with digital maps, suggests multiple destinations, in 5 different languages, audio functionality so they can put on their headset and explore conveniently by their language. You can interact with the App [here](#).

UCAN Go, the wayfinding app developed to make theatrical venues in Cardiff and London more accessible to visually impaired users.



4

Increases Authentic Community and Visitor Engagement



by encouraging them to visit a place, stimulate conversation, share stories, and information. In the same vein, it can connect them via different theme topics e.g. culture, heritage, wellbeing, and green ethics. Visitors end up spending more time there and having more enjoyable experiences.



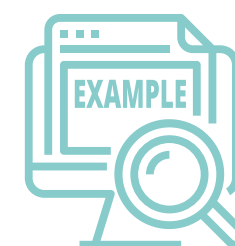
Bristol's European Green Capital Program, UK developed an easy to use App called **Parkhive** that offers residents and visitors information about the cities 200 green spaces to encourage people to explore their local area more.



5

Improve Regions as a Place to Live, Work, and Play

Digital Placemaking is a bespoke practice. Regions can develop projects that are unique to their destinations to stimulate economic growth, enhance wellbeing, and demonstrate environmental sustainability. Places can create a hybrid space (both physical and digital) using digital placemaking to radically change the perception of a place without changing the physical environment itself.



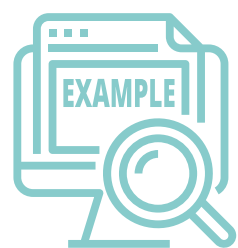
Ideascape, Port Teigr, Cardiff, UK (one of the world's busiest seaports) wanted to explore with stakeholders how to develop the area as a place where people wanted to live, work and play. Port Teigr Community Development organised a public live event on the promenade inviting residents, workers, and visitors. They installed several temporary digitally interactive installations exploring digital placemaking so guests could understand the history of the neighbourhood and the proposed development plans but most importantly connect and converse. Attendees were given access to an audio trail app to reimagine the history of the Lock Keepers cottage; peer through Augmented Reality binoculars to see the future of Porth Teigr and meet our prototype 'Digital Town Crier'. Most importantly, share their ideas on they might see and shape Porth Teigr's digital+physical future.





Enhancing Tourism SME Management Through Data

Data is a key resource in the digital economy, and the ability of tourism businesses to use data to inform business planning, operations and service delivery is gaining importance. Regional data is particularly useful for businesses (accommodation) to enhance revenue management practices and employ dynamic pricing. Regions can assess supply and demand, analyse and track visitor numbers, distribution patterns and transactions, manage and check availability of registered businesses, and their activity patterns. This can be done by having one regional destination platform collecting large amounts of online and offline data from individual businesses, customers, and tourism market transactions.



Manage and Monitor, Croatia, the **eVisitor system** acts as a central platform for tourism data management to simplify the process of tourist check-in and check-out of accommodation providers and the control of tourist tax payments. The statistical information allows them to understand and monitor their guests so they can be more proactive in implementing strategic active marketing practices.

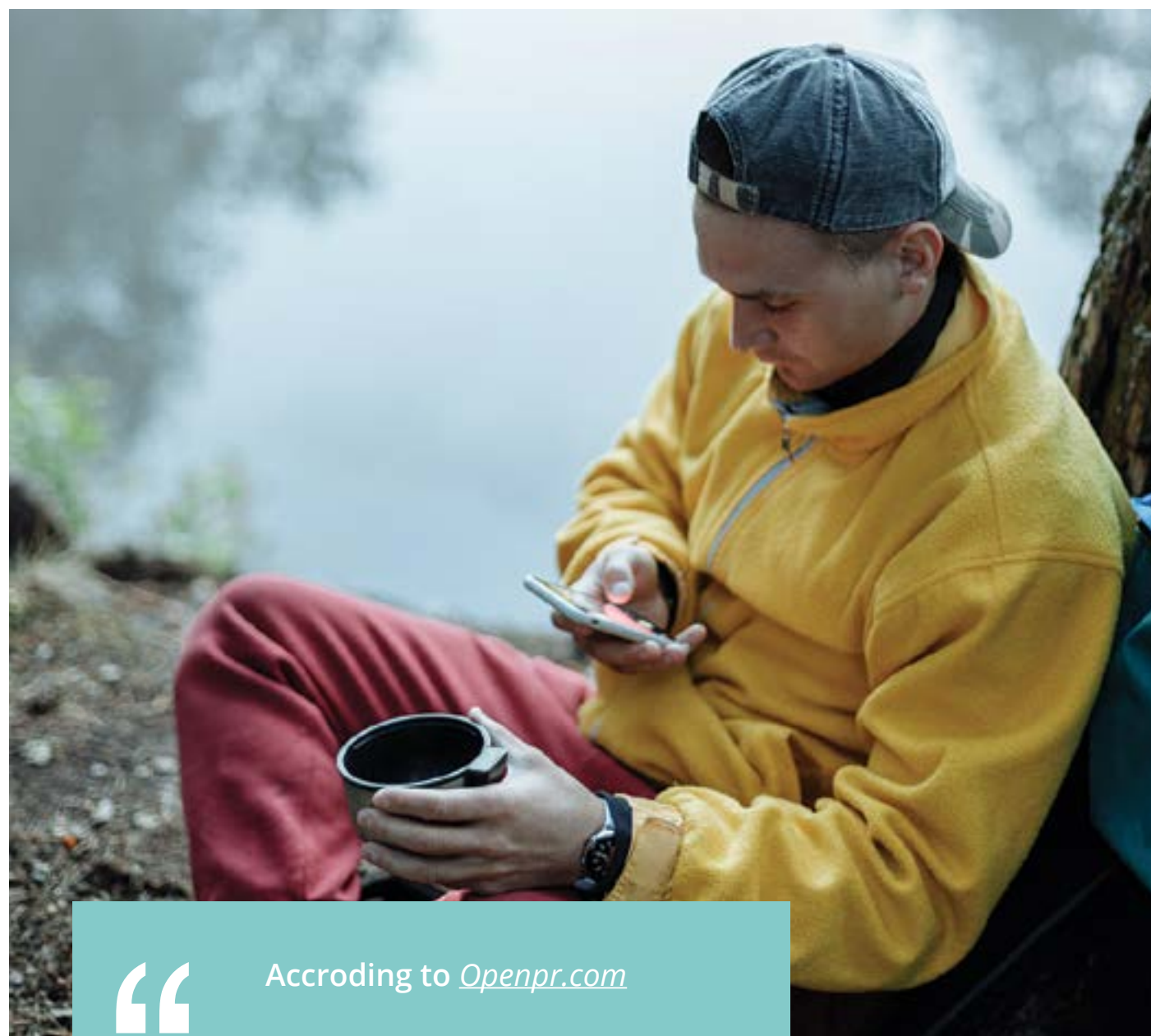
Better Data, Better Decisions, Portugal, a new business intelligence tool, **TravelBI**, is a live data hub for the tourism sector, bringing together traditional data, new data sources, geodata, and open data services, as well as data analytics tools to transform the data into an easily digestible format for tourism businesses. Loads of valuable decision-making live data on overnight stays, total revenue, receipts...



Improve Quantity and Quality of Tourism Providers, Poland, **"Open Data Plus"** aims to increase the quantity and improve the quality of open public data, and encourage tourism providers to use the data to their advantage. The project will be implemented in the tourism sector and provide example registers adapted to applicable law, will be made available online providing a central register of the hotel and accommodation base, mountain guides, training organisers for Mountain Guides.

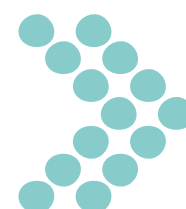


Digital Transformation is Smart Tourism for SMEs and Regions

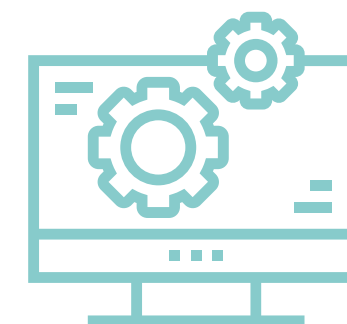


According to [Openpr.com](https://openpr.com)

Digital transformation in Tourism Market, the \$7.5 trillion global Tourism industry with its 277 million jobs is charting a new course into the digital future.



Digital Transformation in Tourism Market is one of the fastest-growing and most important economic sectors in the world providing benefits to both host communities and destination areas. Well-being tourism business models can take advantage of the evolution of digital technology transforming and reshaping their businesses that can implement efficiencies, reach new markets, engage customers, and build their brand. However, it is always better for regions and businesses to work together and build these technologies together so that they can access new technology resources and increase regional connectivity. Together businesses are more effective in enhancing their experiences, productivity, and innovation in an increasingly competitive marketplace.



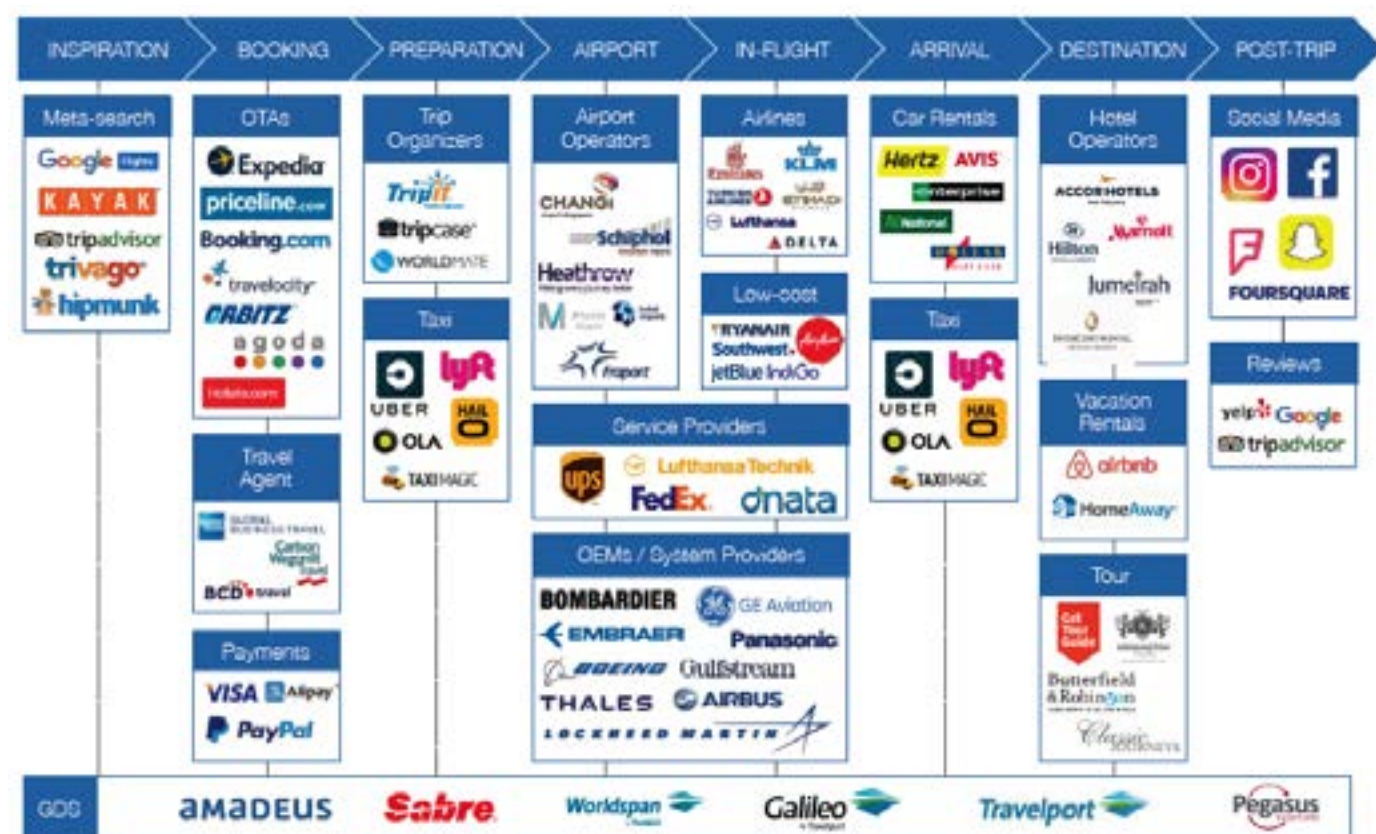
Productivity-enhancing technologies (e.g. cloud computing, data analytics, revenue management software) have generally received low uptake in tourism, while innovative technologies (e.g. augmented reality, geotagging) are generating, customising, and delivering in ever more novel ways, new visitor products, services and experiences (OECD, 2018)



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OECD, 2018

With consumers increasingly using digital technologies to search, plan, and book travel, it becomes increasingly important for tourism businesses to incorporate digital technologies and leverage advanced capabilities. The diagram below lists some of the digital platforms travel consumers use in pre-and post-holiday engagement. The bottom line is if wellbeing tourism SMEs and regions do not invest in their digitalisation they will not survive, let alone be competitive in the future. They need to fully embrace new technologies, take advantage of the innovation, productivity, and enhanced experience and value potential. The benefits are endless for businesses; increasing social, economic, and environmental activity; boosting innovation; increasing productivity, and improving efficiencies. In the next section, we will look at different regions and businesses that are already benefiting from digital efficiencies by implementing customised booking platforms and software.



Source: World Economic Forum/Accenture analysis

Your website is one of the key communication platforms between your business and your customers. Your website should be able to provide all the information and functionality to assist them in their decision making and making a booking. Most importantly if your website is not mobile optimised you may be losing out on almost half of your potential customers.

According to Google

'48% of experiences are booked once travellers reach their destination - and a majority of those searches happen on a mobile device'



By creating a smooth and fit-for-device booking journey on your website, you are likely to avoid this scenario whilst your parallel marketing efforts get a higher return on investment. (If not conversion, what is the point of generating traffic to your website?) Alongside an attractive tour description, an integrated "book-now" button makes it easy for website visitors to instantly check live availability, reserve a spot, enter special requirements and proceed to check-out in a few simple steps. (TrekSoft)



Icebike Adventures is a small family-owned and operated bike tour operator in Iceland who were the first in Iceland to do multi-day mountain bike trips. They do **Heli Biking, Fat Biking,** and other Mountain Bike Trails.



Approach

Icebikes use immersive digital media to communicate their business and experiences. They use state of the art digital media copy using primary positioning throughout their website to communicate their experiences. Once you open the website you will see stunning videos capturing the different experiences, they have on offer in the stunning different scenic environments they take place.

Icebike use a highly interactive and functioning website where visitors can check out itineraries, book in real-time with streamlined and a well-designed booking platform. As soon as you click to book a tour you are brought into their booking step by step booking function so you can tailor and customize your trip. This lets you choose your bike, dates you would like to come, what's included, what you need to have and know, They also provide multiple ways for customers to communicate directly using Chat Bots, email, mobile phone, etc. They offer a series of different tours that are created as recommended staff picks for those who are unsure what to pick from multi-day trips, day trips combination between Mountain Biking and Heli Biking, etc.



CASE STUDY

The Azores Adapts Regional Wellbeing Placemaking into all Regional Promotional Elements



Key Wellbeing Experiences nature-based, adventure, safe, hot springs, nautical, cultural, volcanos

The Azores consists of 9 distinct Islands with each having a range of different wellness products and experiences and many new companies are being created. The Visit Portugal website has a page dedicated to Health and Wellbeing offering products and services such as; **Thalassotherapy, internationally recognised spas and resorts, therapeutic therapies** (healing e.g. respiratory ailments). The ATTA (2018) **reports** that *adventure travellers seek wellness and mental health benefits in their itineraries*. The Azores continue to build their wellbeing region and facilitate this target market with additional new products, experiences, and developments from local companies, including **holistic experiences** by **Holistika**; **hard adventures complemented with wellness experiences** with **Azorean Active Blueberry**, and **combinations of nature, adventure, and wellbeing** with **Epico Uactive**.

These incredible experiences are especially focused on deep contact with nature that makes tourists disconnect from their daily lives and enter an extraordinary hedonic world, ranging from

- 1 Adrenaline-pumped activities,
- 2 Whale watching,
- 3 Peaceful hikes and rides through lavish trails,
- 4 Hot springs, relaxing geothermal water pool sessions,
- 5 Gardens, stunning natural environments and natural formations,
- 6 Eating fresh seafood and delicious traditional local dishes and treats,
- 7 Or experiencing the sunset or the sunrise in unique locations,
- 8 Relax on paradise-like beaches or privileged sightseeing points in the volcanos' slopes.

Approach

Have a Dedicated Website to Health and Wellbeing so SMEs can become part of its regional approach

Visit Portugal use digital assets such as YouTube videos to communicate its Sustainability messaging and that it is the **World's First Certified Archipelago** to achieve international certification as a sustainable destination by entity accredited by the Global Council for Sustainable Tourism.



Visit Portugal uses a series of campaigns and virtual tours. They have produced a series of videos called '**Azores Outdoor Stories**' made up of '**Green Azores Outdoor Stories**', '**Blue Azores Outdoor Stories**', '**Red Azores Outdoor Stories**' and '**Colourful Azores**' to showcase the authentic and unique the Azores Islands with never-ending experiences, pristine landscapes, nature, sports, and outdoor activities. Active in sustainability, responsible tourism, and respecting local culture, the creators of these stories aim to reveal the most beautiful corners of our Mother Earth that must be preserved for future generations. View the full story at www.outdoorstories.co/azores



The Azores is focused on exploiting this megatrend via technology by promoting the region with an indoor simulation of a hiking trail and a 360° VR experience inside a fair stall (2017).

SME wellbeing experiences use digital media copy and powerful engaging branding to deliver their Place Making messaging connecting their experiences to the places and environments they occur.



Holistika, Azores Expand Awareness by Connecting its Visitors with Nature and Environment



Holistika is a wellbeing tourism SME dedicated to exclusively expand awareness of and the pure connection with nature **'Meet Your Own Nature'**. Holistika's main goal and innovation is to promote holistic tourism throughout the Island of Sao Miguel by offering its guests a privileged connection with the surrounding nature and environment. Owners Jorge Valero is a tour guide, hand pan musician, and nature enthusiast. Lisa Moreira is a psychologist, mediation instructor, and wellness events, planner.

Holistika provides so many wellbeing experiences; sightseeing, tours, events, retreat, therapies, Hand Pan Music, Dharma Yoga, massages, connecting with nature, hot springs, volcanos, waterfalls, hiking mountains, water springs, float on a volcano lake, hidden beaches, gardens, nautical trips, little local villages, canoeing, meditation, Contrology Pilates. They use words and tag lines connecting wellness experiences with nature, environment, senses, and inner healing of mind, body, and soul.



Approach

Holistika developed their experiences around the destination's unique characteristics. From the destination, they developed a series of activities and studios, sightseeing, events, retreats, tours, and therapies with a focus on nature and adventure experiences. Visitors can also combine sessions of yoga, meditation, therapies, and therapeutic massages in the hot springs and natural surroundings. In their events, the intention is to liberate the language of the heart through the manifestation of various arts and therapies.



To get the ball rolling tourism regions and SMEs can latch onto existing attainable opportunities to access new markets, develop new wellbeing tourism products and services, adopt new business models and processes, upgrade their position in global tourism value chains and integrate into digital ecosystems. Digitalisation brings significant potential benefits to SMEs - it can help them to

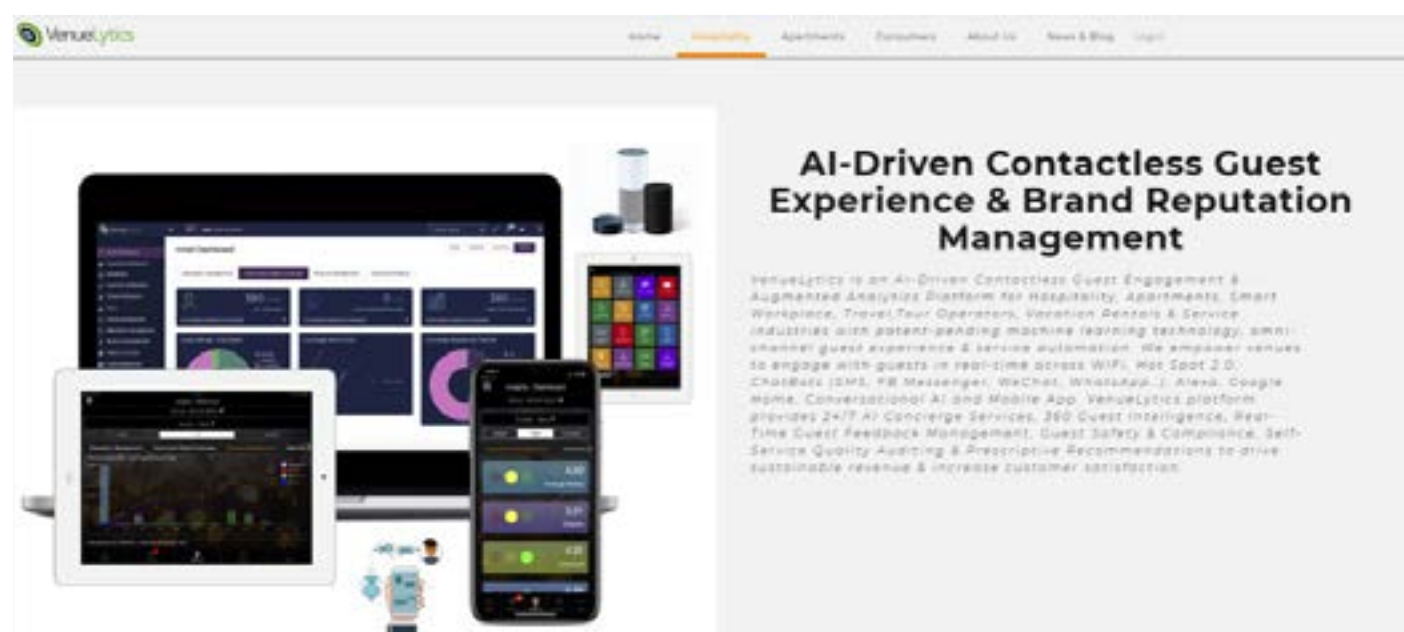


Issue	Traditional Businesses	Digital Business	Implications
Customer Interaction and Engagement	Face to face product facing selling strategies	Customer-facing tools and technologies facilitate a seamless customer journey with multiple customer choices, touchpoints, and customer-led interaction	Customers – enhanced visitor experiences through mixed face-to-face and digital interactions SMEs – reduced transaction costs, real-time engagement
Market Analysis and Marketing	Market projections, segmentation	Data analytics, intelligent decision making, real-time customer data, and data sharing	Customers – customised products, experiences, data privacy concerns SMEs – increase product customer match, data security, and privacy management
Business Management Processes	Management cycle (annual, quarterly, monthly)	Process automation, increased efficiencies, adaptive management	Customers – price reductions, product improvements SMEs – management efficiencies and timeliness increased cost efficiencies
Business Planning	Business projections and strategic planning	Adopt continuous improvement, rapid testing, real-time feedback, and decision making	SMEs – management efficiencies and timeliness, increased cost efficiencies, production innovation
Product and Experience Development	Led by product and experience investment and financial assets	Customer led and driven by information assets and co-creation and collaboration	Customers – greater choice, customisation, satisfaction SMEs – increase competitiveness, cost efficiencies, reduced risk in a new product, and experience development
Business Models	Traditional business, as usual, supplier and customer roles clearly defined	Collaborative, networked commerce, open architecture, multi-sided platforms blur roles of consumers producers (prosumers)	Customers – greater choice, seamless experiences, increased satisfaction SMEs – management efficiencies and timeliness



“ According to ANZ, 2018

Research shows that using digital tools can save small businesses in general (defined as those with between 0 and 19 employees) ten hours a week and can boost revenue by 27 per cent

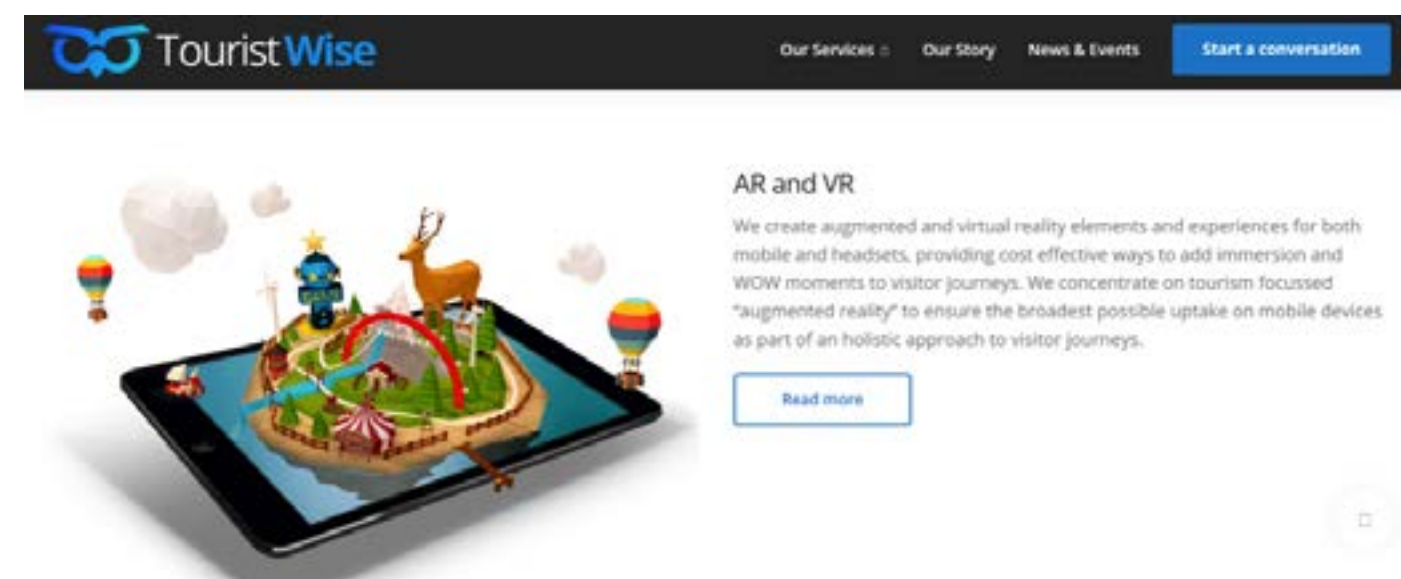


VenueLytics –

Is an ‘AI-Driven Contactless Guest Engagement & Augmented Analytics Platform’. It has a mobile app start-up that created software integrating guest engagement and a digital concierge platform using AI and machine learning. “Digital concierges” are technologies that can have an impact on small hotels, tour operators, rental businesses. as they reduce human resource needs. The software replaces the front desk and acts as a hotel guest services platform using mobile, voice, chatbot, and Wi-Fi, processes guest hotel requests, two-way chat, provides hotel information, check-in/check-out features, acts as a digital concierge, and promotes hotel offers.

TouristWise –

‘A fully featured self-managed mobile app and content cloud management system developed specifically for the tourism sector’. A tourism app with scalable properties that can be used by tourism organisations to develop, manage, and grow visitor experiences, enhance engagement through AR, gamification, language translation, promotion, and ticket sales. Data analytics and tracking also enhance destination management and scale-up visitor attractions and experiences into journeys.



‘We help organisations large and small to imagine, curate, and deliver great visitor experiences’



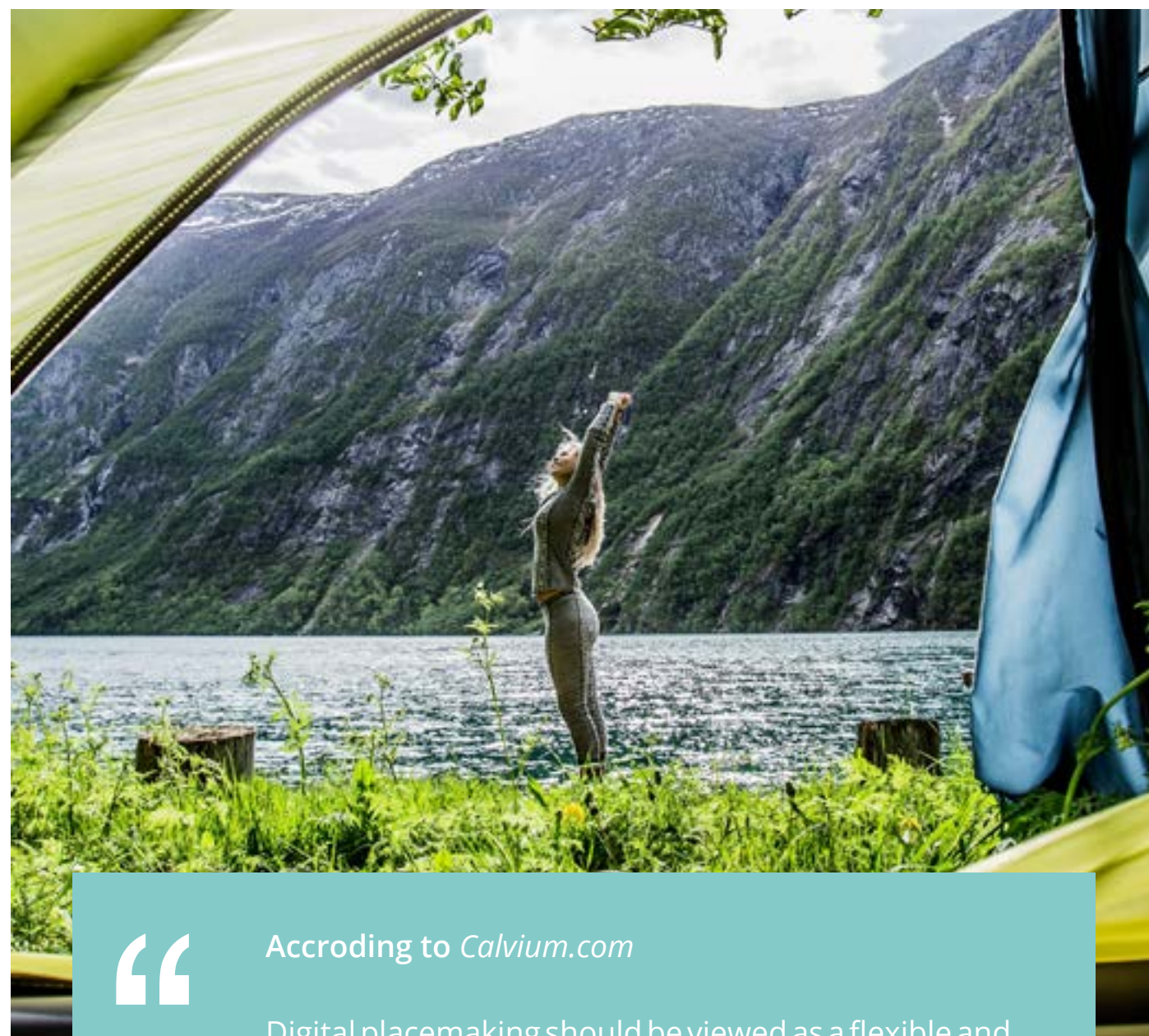
TrekSoft

Is a tour and activity booking system that helps regions connect online, offline sales channels to take bookings and scale while simplifying back end management. You can use TrekSoft to bring together all the players in your local tourism industry, big or small, and grow the destination together. Their software gives DMOs and smaller suppliers access to top-quality technology, creating a vibrant and collaborative tourism economy. TrekSoft can help regions provide leadership in unifying their region’s many assets and presenting them to the world as one breath-taking experience. One effective strategy to take this further is to encourage the use of a standardised booking system in your region. With TrekSoft, you can also build a network of suppliers that cross-sell each other’s inventory through the Partner Network feature. TrekSoft offers regions a range of in-destination booking capabilities and access to experiences for customers to book pre-arrival.

With the Agent Desk Feature, a concierge at a hotel can instantly book a wellbeing tour or activity for their guest with a few simple clicks, eliminating the hassle of additional phone calls, emails, and administrative work.



Digital Placemaking is a Collaborative Multi-stakeholder Engagement Process



“

According to *Calvium.com*

Digital placemaking should be viewed as a flexible and holistic practice with a set of creative tools, methods, and approaches for those seeking to positively affect the public realm. Like placemaking, the practice is collaborative and context-dependent, requiring multi-stakeholder engagement for best success.

Wellbeing regions and stakeholders having a clear conceptual understanding and definition of digital placemaking is important. It allows for stronger communication when developing and using the approach and, in turn, stimulates more interesting and innovative ideas from the stakeholder groups involved. Stakeholders need to be diverse and include those involved in tourism development, environmental sustainability, heritage regeneration, urban development...and other sectors, developers, planners, architects, designers, heritage trusts, and local governments.

Calvium recommends some **Golden Rules** for the successful implementation of Digital Placemaking. Some specific ingredients are also listed; leadership, strategy, creativity, technology, bandwidth infrastructure, collaboration, community context, and approach - all combine to build an idea of the meaning of a space, and a sense of belonging for the communities who use it.

Digital placemaking is beneficial to all stages of development and regeneration and supports a smoother development process. Digital Placemaking allows destinations to be flexible in providing wellbeing experiences that are adaptable over time through digitally-enabled content, temporary and mobile installations, technology, augmented reality, and devices. Visitor experiences can be changed and adapted over time according to their preferences and trends avoiding disruption to the physical environment.



According to *Solfeld, 2017*

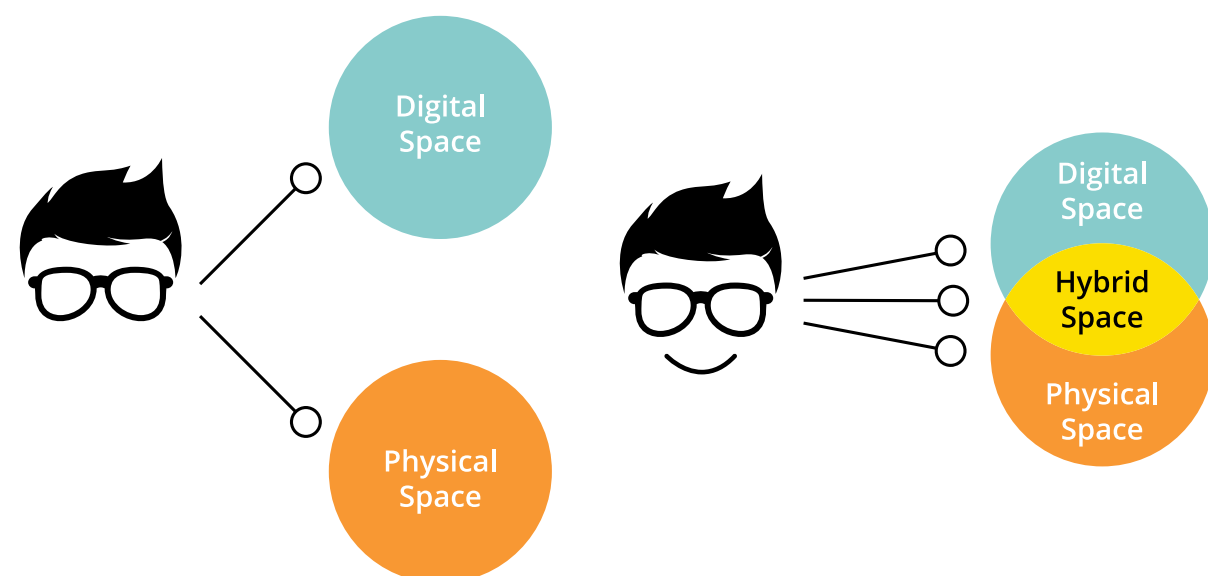
Tourism place-making can be driven by the local community, tourism network or local government, or a combination of both

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Also important is the place attachment and sense of place of communities in tourism areas (Kajan, 2014, Amsden et al, 2010, Gu and Ryan, 2008)

Regional wellbeing tourism stakeholders need to understand how they can enhance the visitor's experience by understanding their engagement patterns with different spaces and communities. What will best enable them digitally to have a better placemaking experience? How can you make their physical space and digital space interconnect (a hybrid space) in a way that the digital enhances the physical space around them?



Vivid Sydney, the festival that transforms the city into the world's largest outdoor art gallery featuring hundreds of light sculptures and projections. This Destination NSW-owned event has been hugely successful, to the tune of 2.3 million visitors during 2016 alone, an aspirational goal for digital-savvy DMOs around the world.



Digital Tourism Transformation Needs Regional Policy to Push It, Forward



Accroding to *OECD*, 2019

Tourism SMEs are lagging in the digital transition



However, tourism SMEs are lagging in the digital transition (OECD, 2019), and many small traditional tourism businesses are struggling to understand the opportunities and reap the benefits. Regional policy needs to start with how digitalisation can reshape their tourism region and SMEs, how they operate, what the emerging business models are, and how they can support its implementation. Digital transformation pushing tourism into new and unknown waters. Digital technologies have important implications for tourism regions and businesses of all sizes, for the structure and operation of tourism value chains, and the sector. Facilitating and enabling digitalisation in tourism is therefore a key policy challenge.



The OECD **report** on **Going Digital: Shaping Policies, Improving Lives**, highlights that the gap between technological developments and public policies will need to narrow significantly to reap the benefits and address the challenges of the digital age. Many current policies of the pre-digital era, delaying implementation, and adaptation. Users will find themselves with little time to understand and adapt. So, understanding and developing a policy around the digital transformation of regions and places is imperative to the entire society and economy.



According to OECD, 2019

It is important for regions to develop policies for the digital age and consider.

- The main elements of the evolving digital technology ecosystem and some of the tourism opportunities (and challenges) resulting from their application

- Understand the data revolution that is taking place, and how data and data flows affect tourism, visitors, the economy, and society in general

- Identify the key properties of digital transformation, including how they are driving new and evolving wellbeing tourism business models, and what their implications are for public policy.

Source: OECD (2019b)

Government and policy should respond and build on the knowledge network and cluster development instigated by public authorities and professional associations. They should work in consultation with others who can help regions strategically focus digital policies on appropriate e-business, e-commerce, and e-governance needs of SMEs at local, regional, and national levels. Technical assistance in the form of digital training should be delivered to different groups and targeted to their needs i.e. those just starting digitising, in the transition, and those that are highly digitalized and experimenting with new technologies. They should work together and share experiences; rural areas need access to the digital infrastructure of the right capacity and functionality. Digital development should be incorporated into smart tourism growth strategies to secure long term thinking and promote sustainable digital placemaking practices. This requires collaboration and integration from all tourism-related stakeholders and into the wider economic value chains of their regions.

A well-conceived policy approach involves a mix of short and long-term initiatives that foster conditions to increase digital technology uptake; it will encourage SME participation by reducing barriers and enhancing opportunities for digitalisation; it will encourage new ways of working, new approaches to management, and new digital cultures.

Actively Champion the Digital Transformation of Tourism.



Governments need to establish the framework conditions to support digitally enhanced tourism models, value chains, and ecosystems to ensure uptake of digital technologies, perception of risk, trust, and confidence.



They may provide support and capacity development through travel-tech incubators, accelerators, training, mentoring opportunities to promote digital adaption and digital mindset

Encourage uptake and investment in new digital technologies by tourism businesses.

Enhance access to human resources, skills, and information to improve awareness of digital opportunities and benefits, facilitate uptake of digital technologies, and strengthen capacity to participate in new and emerging digital ecosystems. Support accessibility and affordability of digital technologies, tools, and solutions for tourism SMEs, including initial investment and ongoing costs.

Encourage uptake and investment in new digital technologies

Examples by adapting data analytics and other enabling technologies and innovative business models that optimise the benefits of digital transformation. Facilitating increased access to high-speed broadband and other digital infrastructure for tourism businesses and the regions to benefit from seamless tourism experiences, tourism management, data sharing, and analytics.



Regional Initiatives That Have Leveraged Technology to Develop Smart Tourism

Capitals of Smart Tourism



Were selected for 2019 (Helsinki and Lyon) and 2020 (Gothenburg and Malaga) which recognises outstanding achievements by European cities as tourism destinations in four categories: i) sustainability, ii) accessibility, iii) digitalisation, and iv) cultural heritage and creativity. The initiative aims to establish a framework for the exchange of best practices between cities and to create opportunities for co-operation and new partnerships and strengthens peer-to-peer learning and innovative development of tourism in the EU.

www.smarttourismcapital.eu

The Explorer's Road, UK



Is a new 300-mile touring route that stretches the length of England intending to highlight parts of the country that rarely get attention from international travellers. The focus was equipping SMEs with digital tools and training, including, dedicated one-to-one support to develop booking functionality and help businesses take advantage of new distribution channels, the route currently showcases 118 businesses, 19 destinations, and 9 counties.

Digital Tourism Platform Malta

Ai

Uses AI to better target marketing activity and improve strategic planning by combining psychological characteristics with demographic data to enhance the personalisation. This will be enhanced by machine learning as the platform matures. These developments are expected to generate positive benefits for businesses, including generating higher value-added, improved business activity, and cost mitigation through predictive analytics.

Five Digital Facilitators, Belgium



Focuses on Digital Sector, Digital Business, Skills and Education, Public Services and Digital Territory to help SMEs develop new ways of promotion and new quality (and customised) products according to the territory (and also increasing their turnover), following the digital strategies of the Wallonia region.

Digital Innovation Hubs, Slovenia,



A complete package of incentives for the digital transformation of companies is available, including to the tourism sector. Financial incentives are offered by the Ministry of Economic Development and Technology to support the creation of digital innovation hubs, e-commerce supports for companies entering new markets, and public supports for the digital transformation of businesses. Digital vouchers of up to EUR 10 000 are a practical tool for use by SMEs to raise digital competencies, developing a digital business strategy, move to digital marketing, and improve cybersecurity. Investment supports are also available

NUMerique, France



Is designed to help and support small businesses and SMEs in their digital transformation. It aims to support the digital transformation of micro and small businesses by providing information and tools through an online platform focused on business models, upgrading technology, and understanding options for SMEs. An accompanying network - Activators France Num provides a self-diagnosis tool for businesses to learn how to digitise their tourism business. The performance of the platform and the associated network is being monitored and will inform future improvements to the initiative (www.francenum.gouv.fr/).

Fit 4 Digital Initiative, Luxembourg



Is committed to supporting and promoting the digital transformation of the tourism sector, making use of new technology to enhance the promotion of the country, providing tourists with better information to help informed decisions and improve their experience while visiting. Developing a more efficient digitalised system for registering tourists in accommodation establishments. Planning a single national platform to connect as many services as possible. The platform will provide tourists with information and guidance, making the planning process easier.

Digital Marketing Toolkit, VisitEngland



Was launched to help tourism businesses improve their understanding of digital marketing and better promote their business. It also operates the Tourism Experience Great Britain (TXGB) platform, which is a one-stop exchange for tourism suppliers to manage live availability, pricing, and bookings across multiple distributors via an online booking system and connect with new customers.



Resource
Digitalisation in Tourism Report
(In-depth Analysis of the Challenges and Opportunities)

This report analyses the challenges and opportunities of digitalisation in tourism, how these challenges and opportunities affect different stakeholder groups, and to discuss how they might be addressed. The authors drew from a quantitative survey of 2.897 SMEs, 73 public administrations, and 85 professional associations conducted in 2016 by third party consultants.

The Needs of SMEs are covered from skills, finance, infrastructure, mentoring support, and the policy support required. The report concludes that Digitalisation in Tourism.

- Leads to creativity and innovation in tourism
- Facilitates increased customisation of visitor experiences
- Enhances customer satisfaction
- Contributes to new destination configurations
- Inspires new business models, new value chains, and new business ecosystems
- Opens up new roles for consumer and producers (i.e. prosumers)
- Prompts new roles for DMOs to support SMEs and regions
- Prompts new roles for DMOs to support SMEs



Aalborg University Denmark, [Digitalisation in Tourism Report \(In-depth Analysis of the Challenges and Opportunities\)](#)



Aalborg University Denmark, [Digitalisation in Tourism Report \(In-depth Analysis of the Challenges and Opportunities\)](#)

Wild Atlantic Way (WAW) Ireland Placemaking Initiative Brings Regions & Stakeholders Together



The Wild Atlantic Way (WAW) 2,500 km touring route in Ireland was established in 2014 in a bid to attract tourists to the West of Ireland to experience the scenery and heritage of this coastline. This road along the coast already existed, the WAW project primarily engaged in signposting the route, developing brand architecture, and undertaking an international marketing campaign. The objective is to use this 'tourism initiative of scale and singularity' (Fáilte Ireland, 2015) to attract international tourists to this area. It is a response to the challenge of encouraging international tourists to leave traditional tourist hubs in the country and to encourage them to stay longer in Ireland. In effect, this strategy has created a new 'place' in the Irish and tourist lexicon. In effect, this strategy has created a new 'place' in the Irish and tourist vocabulary. This case study assesses if this place-making initiative has impacted innovation in the area involved. The research in the article uses the frameworks of entrepreneurial ecosystems and innovation ecosystems, and interviews with entrepreneurs and key stakeholders, to explore how place-making has impacted the different elements of these models along the Wild Atlantic Way. (TUDublin)



According to (Fáilte Ireland, 2015: 7)

The Wild Atlantic Way was devised as a new 'experience' and 'destination' by Fáilte Ireland to present the West Coast of Ireland as a compelling international tourism product of scale and singularity. It is an over-arching brand which individual destinations and businesses can trade collectively with much greater potential visibility and clarity of message in the international marketplace'

”

The route was developed to address the following challenges:

“

*The fragmented nature of the West Coast as a destination
The low level of co-operation between west coast destinations, beyond county boundaries (Fáilte Ireland, 2015)*

How is this Place-Making?

New place concept Wild Atlantic Way was developed by the national tourism authority and marketed to tourists (domestic and international). Google search returns more than 1m mentions and 94% of Irish people have viewed a WAW advertisement and there were 2.9m social media engagements re. WAW during 2018. (*Failte Ireland, 2019*). Pre 2015 the term and concept of WAW did not exist. The WAW is made up of existing towns and villages which all have their own independent identities

Approach



1

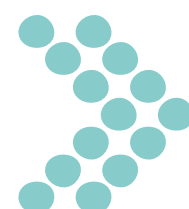
Different types of innovation have been identified. Some entrepreneurs **adapted their business and service identity** to encompass the Wild Atlantic Way brand, **new entrepreneurs have emerged**, particularly in the adventure tourism sector, and in some cases, businesses have **expanded the length of the season**

2

For others the big change created by the WAW is that entrepreneurs and **'places think more about the [tourist] experience'** and they have adapted or expanded their service to incorporate this.

3

The emergence of the WAW has impacted the pillars of the entrepreneurial ecosystem as **markets have become more accessible** with the national marketing campaign, **new local entrepreneurs have enriched the human capital** in the areas, there are **increasing supports and training courses** offered and the culture is enhanced by **visible success and international reputation**. Innovation ecosystems **focus on the interrelationships** between institutions such as government, education, businesses, and external bodies and the WAW place-making initiative has brought together such stakeholders. (*TU Dublin*)



Virtual Reality and Immersive Experiences Brings the Wild Atlantic Way to Life



Immersive experiences like surfing, horse riding, climbing, or biking are closer to reality than before because of a series of Virtual Reality and 360° videos developed by Failte Ireland. They give potential visitors and tourism buyers the chance to experience Ireland from a distance, plunging into activities like surfing under the Cliffs of Moher or climbing the sea stacks off Donegal. The experiences were filled using a combination of drones, custom-built camera rigs, and go pro equipment. The videos are available on Apps including LittleStar, Samsung Milk VR. Viewers can click and drag their screen to change their viewing angle, it can be viewed on a desktop, mobile, VR headsets, and Google Cardboard.

How They Did It – Behind the Scenes!



How Place Making Affected the Entrepreneurial Eco-System?

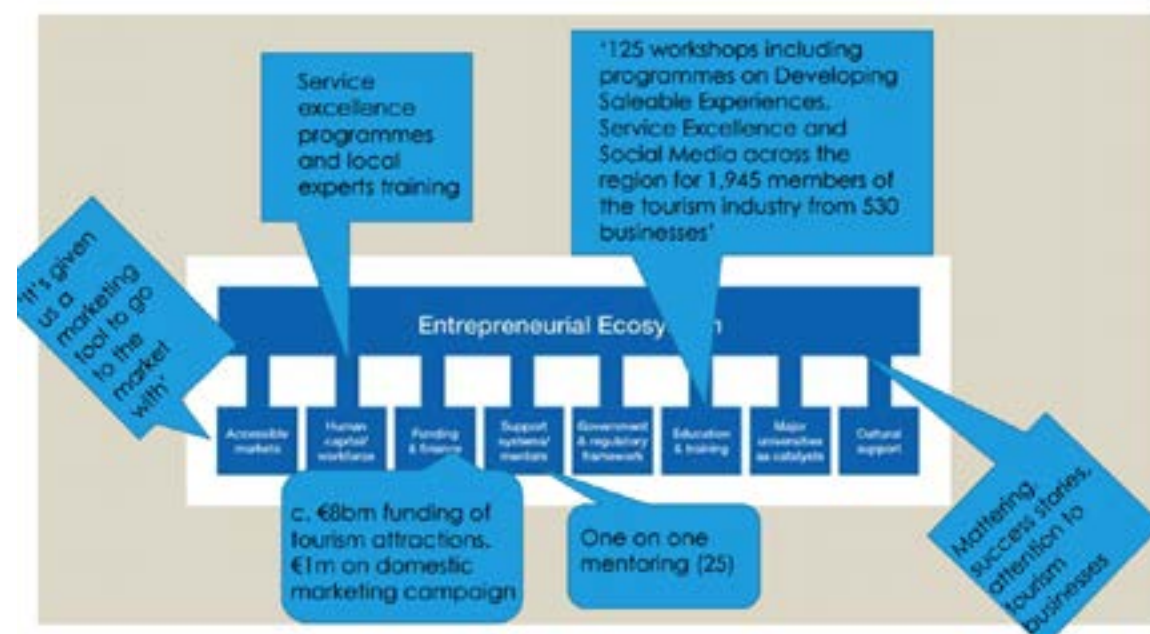


Image by (TUDublin)

Technological University Dublin,

(An Examination of the Role of Placemaking in Tourism on the Entrepreneurial Eco System)

Resource Digitalisation in Tourism Report (In-depth Analysis of the Challenges and Opportunities)

- New businesses have emerged especially activities, bus tours, walking guides.
- 'We open much earlier in the season... it has lengthened our business';
- 'It has definitely brought more of the foreign tourists into the area that has never been here before'
- 'Now we are on the map'
- 'We didn't get recognition before but now we've been recognized and we're on the route and it's fantastic'
- 'It gave people a boost to try and do a little more' (TUDublin)

What Has the Impact Been?

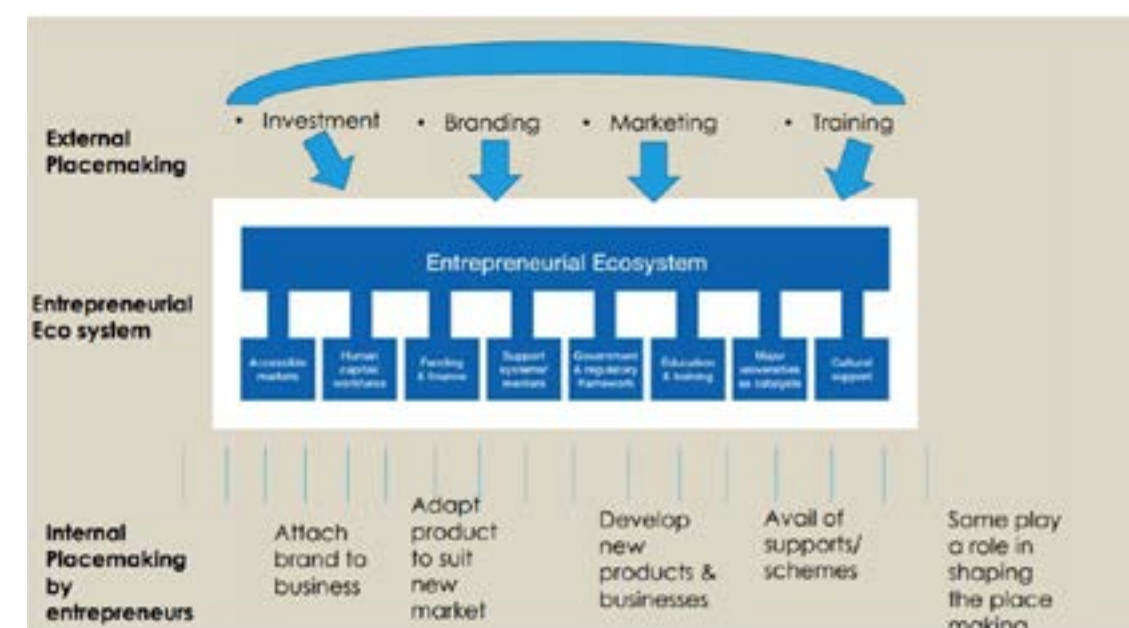


Image by (TUDublin)

Technological University Dublin,

(An Examination of the Role of Placemaking in Tourism on the Entrepreneurial Eco System)

- 1 More tourists, more investment, more advertising, more attention, more competition...
- 2 Local entrepreneur and community attitudes have changed: mattering, belonging, being part of something, pride.
- 3 Local entrepreneurs have harnessed the changes in the entrepreneurial ecosystem brought about by national strategy to maximise the local impact (TUDublin)

Roles that entrepreneurs play in terms of place making		
Role	Description	Activity/Engagement
Adopter	Adopt the concept and use it for their own purposes	Mentions WAW on website primarily in terms of things to do while at the destination.
Adapter	Adapt their products/ services/activities in reaction to WAW	Branding of their product New adventure products Providing bundled products
Contributor	Participates in determining what the identity will be	Attends focus groups and meetings organized by Fáilte Ireland. On local committees.
Creator	Creates new identity	Creators of Greenway and Loop Head. They work with others (contributors) then to make the idea a reality.

Image by (TUDublin)

Technological University Dublin,

(An Examination of the Role of Placemaking in Tourism on the Entrepreneurial Eco System)

The key findings of this research are that place-making does indeed have an impact on the entrepreneurship and innovation ecosystems in tourism destinations, and consequently, entrepreneurship and innovation are enhanced. This is an example of how a national policy focused on attracting international tourists can have a significant impact at the local level. This local entrepreneurial and innovative activity is also essential to ensure that the place-making concept is delivered to the tourist at the local destination. It is clear that Place Making has an effect on tourists and residents and creates a fertile environment for entrepreneurship and innovation, and this is worthy of greater exploration ([TUDublin](#))

Conclusions

- Place-making can directly affect the entrepreneurial ecosystem
- Individual entrepreneurs then choose the role they play in place-making
- The final impact of the changed entrepreneurial ecosystem depends on how local entrepreneurs harness the changes.
- So although the externally effected changes may be consistent across lots of local entrepreneurial ecosystems, the effects may be different (e.g. developed versus developing areas, different types of entrepreneurs)
<https://arrow.tudublin.ie/tfschmtcon/86/>



CONCLUSIONS CREATING AND DEVELOPING WELLBEING TOURISM REGION



Since wellness and wellbeing burst into mainstream consumerism governments are jumping rapidly onboard to develop their products, experiences, destinations, and regions to take advantage of the trend's potential.

To be successful in wellbeing tourism development government players need to become more involved holistically i.e. through tourism, economic, social, health, and environmental development. They need to implement strategies to manage the development of their wellbeing tourism regions by managing stakeholder engagement, ensuring community participation, being informed, and having the right frameworks and supports in place. Wellbeing tourism development should start from the grassroots by being integrated with local and regional urban planning, economic development, and community development initiatives.

When developing regional packages and itineraries visitors will appreciate and be more likely to engage and book your wellbeing experience. Not forgetting that there are so many other advantages and opportunities that can arise for SMEs participating in the process e.g. pooling resources, developing regional packages, joint distribution and management, co-operative marketing activities, cohesive collective training etc.

The most important distinction to make is wellbeing tourism is not mass or over-tourism so it must be developed in a low impact and sustainable way. Regions need to buy in and ownership to from local, national, and regional levels to create, develop and implement streamlined sustainable, low impact policies. Actors need to take a development approach that is uniquely tailored to the regions specific political, economic, social, and environmental landscape.

Wellbeing regions need to be underpinned by a strong brand reputation that is cohesive among locals, businesses, stakeholders, tourism representatives and government so they can manage the growing expectations and interest in this enormous potential of this sector. All players need to feel, understand, live, think and speak the brand. Going forward digital placemaking is a fantastic possible platform to create and enhance better experiences and further deepen the connection with the public realm and, in turn, with each other.

Digital Placemaking will continue to grow as digital technologies become more and more apparent in people's physical spaces. It is vital regions are seen to be working together in a seamless way using adaptive robust technologies and placemaking to unify and strengthen their wellbeing destinations. This in turn creates opportunities for all kinds of businesses and providers spurring opportunities for regions to develop as wellbeing destinations.

Well-being tourism business should take advantage of the evolution of digital technology transforming and reshaping their businesses that can implement efficiencies, reach new markets, engage customers, and build their brand. However, going back to the previous point it is easier for businesses to work with regions and build these technologies together so that they can access new technology resources and increase regional connectivity.

www.detourproject.eu

