

Chapter 5

A Business Model for Accessible Tourism

Maria Antonella Ferri
Universitas Mercatorum, Italy

ABSTRACT

The present contribution aims to propose some research on business models in tourism, with a particular focus on accessible cultural tourism. This chapter takes up part of a previous monograph on the reconfiguration of Abell's model that, in the final part, is applied to accessible cultural tourism. The main objective is to bring some of the reflections and results obtained during these years in tourism to an international level, whilst taking into account the particular role that culture has in tourism activities of an area, and how it may provide a key point for the development of certain businesses as well as accessible tourism. The chapter also considers tourism that is able to satisfy special requirements, which would otherwise limit or exclude some groups of individuals, such as those with mobility, cognitive or perceptual impairments (related to age and/or temporary conditions) from the process of touristic consumption.

INTRODUCTION

The study of the competitiveness of tourist destinations has requested an analysis of its determinants both in the logic of demand and supply. This analysis revealed an increasingly central role of the consumer/tourist that has evolved in parallel to changes in postmodern society. In order to understand how this process has affected the business decision-making it is necessary to study a specific part of the marketing discipline. From the outset the evolution of marketing philosophy is based on the ability to forge links between the company and the changing environment, which

according to historical periods have focused on the market or consumers¹. If modern societies are going through a period of profound transformation of the structures typical of modern society, then marketing as a social science, has long since begun to reshape its own methods and its own categories of interpretation. In the present historical period it is appropriate to recall some aspects, which have partly already emerged during the work on this philosophy:

- The market is part of the company and not a different system of rules of conduct created by companies.

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- The study of the consumer cannot be limited to traditional approaches to the market, inspired by the utilitarian view of the economy, the themes of the rationality of choices and focusing acts to purchase, neglecting the emotional, socio-cultural and experiential factors.
- The consumer cannot be considered in terms of non-differentiation and anonymity, the emphasis is on the relationship with respect to the transaction.
- Greater attention to issues not considered, such as environmental (eco-friendly, recycling, waste) and from parts of the population (the elderly, minorities ethical, have-nots) excluded because they are seen as unrelated to the logic of the market.

Globalization of markets can be added to the transformation of the demand side, the increasing competitiveness among enterprises, the evolution of technology (especially microelectronics). The effect has been the foundation of a “neo” or “post” marketing in the form of a manifesto: *The New Marketing Manifesto: 12 Rules for Building Successful Brands in the 21st Century* (Grant, 2000). It is assumed that marketing is a vital function for the modern business and, therefore, plays a central role in the possibilities of success of businesses, large or small.

However, if the company has changed and the needs of individuals are no longer in compliance with past models, then these should be redesigned taking into account what is really needed to do to compete in the markets. For some time it has gone from mass marketing to segmented marketing, hyper-segmented, niche. The growing autonomy of the consumer, its integration with the world of production and communication, has given rise to a new report more respectful of his individuality and his power as it is studied in relationship marketing and consumer marketing Knowledge. Similarly, the postmodern consumer in search of experiences, including being both spectator

and protagonist, has given rise to experiential marketing. The new forms of social identity of the individual are studied by tribal marketing.

These are just some “marketing panaceas”² (Badot, Bucci & Cova, 2007), which along with the size of unconventional marketing offer an extremely large quantity of models and techniques to be used for the management of enterprises (Cova, Giordano, & Pallera, 2012)³.

With regard to tourism enterprises, in order to apply the philosophy of marketing it is necessary to start from the definition of tourist according to the World Tourism Organization (United Nations World Tourism Organization) that “tourist is anyone who travels to places other than the one in which is his habitual residence, outside of their everyday environment, for a period of at least one night but not more than one year and whose usual purpose is different from the exercise of any remunerated activity in the place to which he goes.” This definition includes anyone travelling for leisure, rest and vacation, to visit friends and relatives, for business and professional reasons, for reasons of health, or religious pilgrimage.

In view of this definition, tourism presents the following constant characteristics: the centrality of the trip, the temporary nature, the inclusion of at least one night.

Modern tourism is, as has been said, a difficult phenomenon to analyze because of the multiplicity of actors involved (public and private) for the inter-sectoral nature of its production processes, for different sectors of investigation applicable (economic, social, managerial, psychological, environmental).

Tourism as a phenomenon of moving people and consumption from one place to another, requires the ability of the host territories to satisfy the different reasons that are the basis of this displacement. A successful tourist destination is one that is able to differentiate between the different types of customers on the basis of the attractiveness of both its territorial and instrumental components, as shown in Table 1.

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