

Product Development & Innovation in shaping authentic experiences in adventure travel

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PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT & INNOVATION

THE RECIPE

Successful product development & innovation =
Relevance to industry (and societal) realities
+
Competitiveness in the global marketplace

POST- COVID-19 TRAVELER

CONSUMERS OF CONTRASTS

- Desire to indulge vs. Safety-obsessed
- Readiness to spend vs. Recessionary mindset
- Craving social vs. Fear from crowds
- Missing the real world vs. Expecting contactless
- Sustainability awareness vs. Crisis fatigue

TOP 5 MEDUSA ACTIVITIES

Hiking/Trekking

Leisure Cycling

MTB

Diving

Multi-activity

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT & INNOVATION

10 INDICATORS FOR SUSTAINABILITY PERFORMANCE

- **Sustainable planning** approach (e.g. seasonality and spread of visitors addressed).
- **High level of community benefits** (e.g. the main beneficiaries are local communities, revival of rural villages).
- **Conservation and active promotion of cultural heritage**, living traditions and the authenticity of the destination.
- **Low-impact tourism infrastructure** applied (e.g. existing shepherds' pathways used, revival of traditional buildings, villages).
- **Sustainable and green building** and construction.
- **Tourism activities of the practice generate the least possible impact** on the environment.
- **A great offer of local gastronomy and local products in place.**
- **Protection of biodiversity** and natural heritage.
- **Reliance on soft mobility options.**
- **Sustainable resource management among tourism businesses.**



Questions for Discussion

1. Considering supply strengths and consumer trends:
 - In what product development efforts should tourism businesses in the region invest their time and resources?
 - What support do they need to do this well?
2. How to make sustainability a non-negotiable element of the products offered in the region?
3. What product innovation efforts that can make the regional tourism industry more resilient to such crises in the future?
4. What is a healthy distribution of products geared towards international, regional and domestic audiences? How to achieve that?
5. What is the place of technology in future products/ experiences offered in the region? What is needed to incorporate the right technologies?
6. How to increase reliance on local products and services, and decrease dependance on imported ones?



Sustainability Marketing & Credibility

Dr. David Ermen

International Tourism Consultant



Marketing sustainability

- Sustainable travel will be more popular after COVID
- Businesses and destinations are building back better
- Sustainability marketing needs to be honest
- Walking the talk
- Goal will be balance between sustainability & safety



Certification for credibility

- Credible marketing is important in a competitive market
- Having a sustainability certification can help businesses stand out
- Certification creates trust with visitors and partners
- Analyzing sustainable baselines can help businesses differentiate themselves and to tell good stories.



Questions for Discussion

- What role does sustainability play in your marketing?
- How important was it to your region's customers?
- How do you back up your sustainability claims?
- Have you thought about sustainability certification to increase credibility?



Strategic Marketing Alliance Concept

Barbara Fritz, Sustainable Tourism Expert
AGEG Tourism for Sustainability



Background Scenario

- **Common challenges** in the MED:
 - 3 S tourism model (sea, sand and sun)
 - Economic slowdown - Covid-19 crises
 - Seasonal jobs, overtourism and related impacts
- **Growing competition worldwide** – especially from emerging destinations
- Each of the 5 MEDUSA Destination features **strong potential** for Sustainable Adventure Tourism (SAT) development
- **SAT Flagship products** in place & design of innovative flagship products ongoing
- The 5 M destinations - **a unique combination** of cultural diversity & natural beauty, spectacular landscapes, authentic traditions & Mediterranean art of living
- **Treasure chest** for authentic, sustainable adventure tourism
- **Covid 19 crises - opportunity to rethink & restart tourism** in the MED region - the vision of an innovative **sustainable** adventure tourism model?

Challenge and Perspective: Economic – restart in the destinations, select & fine-tune products (sustainability) and to introduce and position the 5 M destinations & flagship products **jointly** on the international sustainable tourism market!



Why? Role of Strategic Marketing Alliance

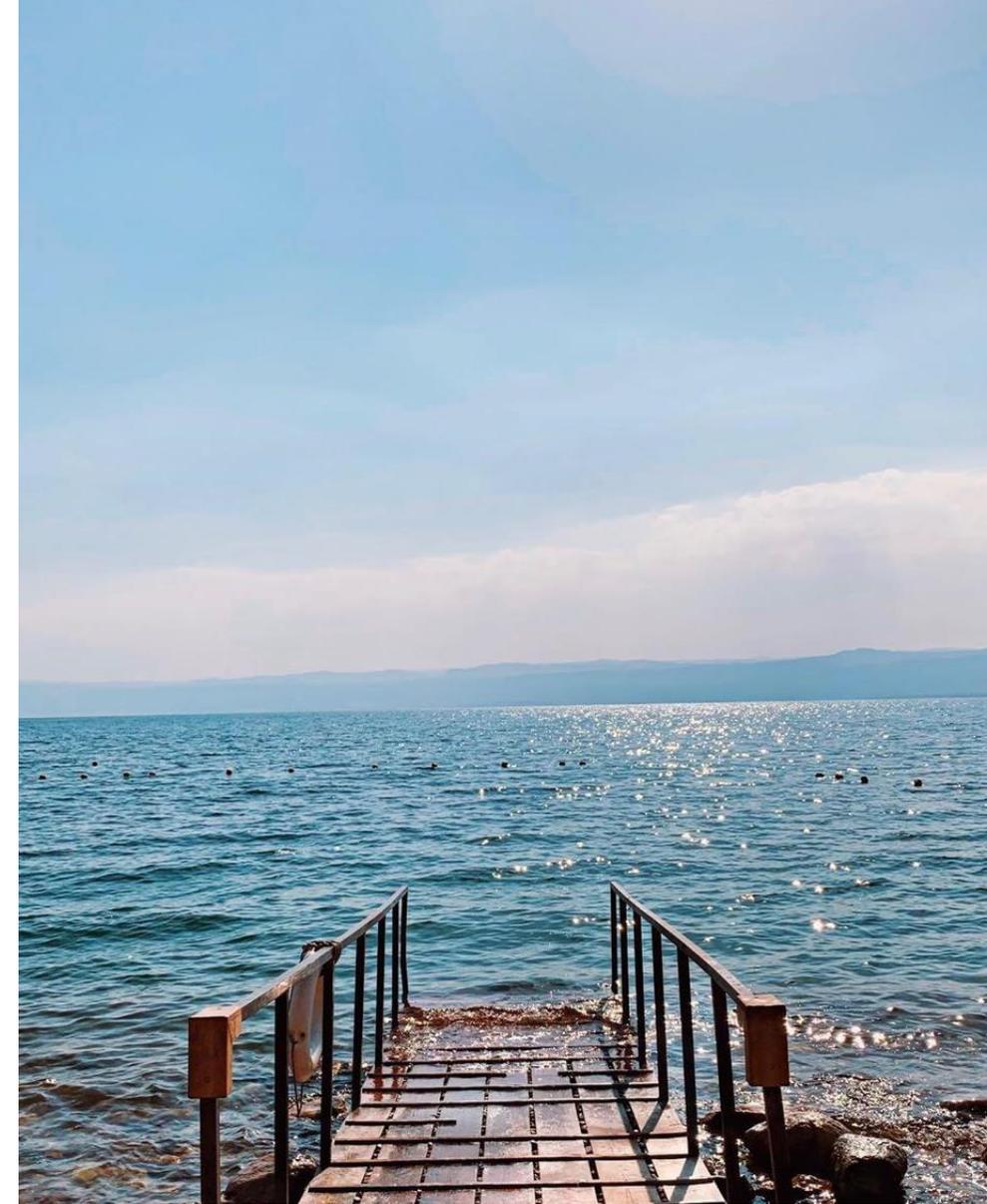
- **Assure the sustainability of the MEDUSA project outcomes**
 - Established joint structures
 - Future cross-border routes and products
 - Exchange among the tourism stakeholders “learn & inspire & cooperate”
- **Role:** Set-up a viable structure enabling joint marketing activities
- **Growing competition worldwide** – especially from emerging destinations
- **Strong market positioning** and added value as “one joint product “– under one umbrella (brand) e.g., “Mediterranean Adventure Treasures”
- **Visitor trend goes to “passion comes first destination second”** – change from a geographic selection to a cross-border passion-based selection bundled in specific themes (hiking, trekking etc.)
- **How** can the 5 M destinations possible be successful on a highly competitive market?

For a long-term success on the tourism market, it's crucial not to copy from other successful destinations but to develop destinations and products reflecting the **cultural identity** and **authenticity!**



How? Good Practice Examples

There are **multiple marketing alliance** and cooperation concepts, two are selected here to briefly demonstrate the concept of marketing alliance.



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Questions for Discussion

- (1) How could a **viable strategic marketing** alliance for the 5 Medusa destinations look like ?
- (2) What potential **benefits** do you imagine?
- (3) What are potential **constraints** or **threats**?
- (4) Do you have any **experiences, innovative approaches**, concepts you would like to share we us?





Building Travelers' Needs into Business Planning & Growth in Adventure Tourism

Dr. Manal Kelig– Executive Director MENA Region – ATTA



The New Norm ... Is your Business Ready ?

Travel will be different post COVID-19 pandemic and the purpose of this breakout room is to discuss how to respond to the needs of “The Post COVID-19 Traveler” in the short- to medium term.



Emerging Trends that Shape Travelers' Needs

1. HYGIENE IS NON-NEGOTIABLE
2. CONTACTLESS IS EVERYTHING
3. SOCIAL WITHOUT CROWDING
4. CARE IS THE NEW SERVICE
5. VALUE IS THE BASE CURRENCY



Emerging Trends that Shape Travelers' Needs

Hygiene Is Non Negotiable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travelers will expect hygiene to be weaved across services/ products/ experiences (facility design, service design and communications). • Hygiene and protection might fuel the popularity of new travel accessories (fashion masks, protection glasses, protection gloves, etc.) and perhaps souvenirs. • Likely demand for formal hygiene standards and certification
Contactless Is Everything	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travelers will expect the ability to register, check-in and pay through mobile, virtual and contactless solution • Likely demand for new levels of security of digital services and identity protection.
Social Without Crowding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demand for smaller-group experiences and family/ friend travel • Expectation that destinations/ operators incorporate measures to avoid crowding at all costs • Demand for more isolated off-the-beaten path experiences
Care is the New Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expectation that care for each other will remain a core characteristic of services and experiences also after the COVID-19 crisis • Expectations that companies and brands will continue being good members of society and will be proactive in taking stance on topics that are important for society
Value is the Base Currency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travelers will be more focused on the value that travel experiences offer and will evaluate prices on that basis. • Destinations and service providers have a chance to be inventive and highlight the emotional, wellness, self-enhancing and other benefits that their experiences offer.

Questions for Discussion

Rebound & Rebuild

The key takeaways highlight that the industry must stay creative, agile, adaptable and work together. COVID-19 has changed the boundaries and will inevitably influence the way travelers will think about, plan and consume experiences.

- **How to respond to Travelers new needs as travel demand shows signs of revival?**
- **As your business picks, are you emphasizing sustainable travel even more now?**
- **What are the challenges & opportunities for Business Development & Growth?**



Role of Adventure Tourism in Economic Sustainability of Parks & Conservation Areas

Othman Al Tawalbeh
Ajloun Forest Reserve Manager



Why Visit Nature Reserves?

- ✓ To enjoy the grandeur of nature.
- ✓ To escape from the pressures of urban life.
- ✓ To explore different landscapes.
- ✓ To experience outdoor adventures in a natural setting.
- ✓ To learn about the environment.
- ✓ To participate in conserving the environment.
- ✓ To experience rural life.



Ajloun Forest Reserve Example

- ✓ Ajloun Forest Reserve is managed as a pilot model reconciles between oak forest conservation and local development requirements .
- ✓ Established in 1987 , 12 square km
- ✓ 573 kind of wild plants and flowers & 105 wild animals and birds
- ✓ 23 wooden cabins , 2 restaurant Oak & Roe deer
- ✓ Network of hiking trails differs in distance 2km-18 km
- ✓ 3 socioeconomic projects
- ✓ Longest Forest Zipline 330 m long
- ✓ Having the Royal Academy for Conservation of Nature



Adventure Tourism contribution in developing Local Communities

Increased awareness on environmental issues

Minimizing environmental impact

Diversifies local economy

Maximize benefits to local communities

Create new job opportunities for locals

Satisfy the visitors need and meet their expectations

Building partnerships with Tour & adventure operators

20% increased of income

30% increased number of visitors



Questions for Discussion

1. What are good practices in ensuring a good balance between tourism and nature conservation?
2. What are the obstacles that face Adventure Tourism development in and around nature reserves?
3. What are the best ways of engaging local communities and increase economic benefits to both communities and reserves?
4. How to ensure sustainable development of tourism in the parks and reserves while ensuring sustainability of natural habitats?
5. Good examples in overcoming COVID-19 effects on reserves and parks?





THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS!

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