EUROPE
TOUR

MODULE 6
NETWORKING AND
COLLABORATION

This Training Module is part of the Cultural Tourism Training Course which has been developed within the Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership EUROPETOUR, a European initiative aimed at unlocking the economic potential of Europe's outstanding cultural treasures and empowering rural areas to harvest the potential of cultural tourism.

You can find more information at the homepage: http://www.europetour.tips

Pictures: Wolfgang Eisenreich, Kees Grootswagers, Elena Paschinger, Jens Hackmann

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Contents of the Module

Just as tourism links people and places around the world, people working in cultural tourism also need to link up with other tourism business, government agencies and businesses to be successful. Tourism networking comes in a variety of shapes and styles, and this module will introduce to you the most relevant aspects.

Unit 1   How to establish a tourism network

Unit 2   Structure and administration of tourism networks

Unit 3   Building successful cultural tourism networks in rural areas

Unit 4   How to establish supply chains and value chains for cultural tourism networks

Learning objectives

After studying this module, you will understand which competences you should have (or trained)to be a good networker on a personal level.

You will know which organizational skills you need to establish a or participate in tourist networks.

You will understand the various types of tourism networks.

You will learn about networks and regional development concepts.

You will understand why creating supply chains and value chains are crucial for cultural tourism.

Unit 1
How to establish a tourism network

How to establish a tourism network

Networking on a personal level

Before attempting to create a tourism network, make sure that you have understood its basic characteristics which apply in all types of networking, whether it concerns your professional or personal activities.

The core principle that drives real networking is giving, not getting. Think about it, when you hear of a need you want to help. And when others see a way to help you, they feel good.
"Giver's Gain"

So, a useful networking definition could be:

> Networking is about building and enjoying great relationships, something that most of us like to do.

Go into your next lunch meeting, conference, or any other event with this thought in mind, "Whom can I help today?" Focusing on the other person will take the pressure off and reward you in the long run.

Three Personal Key Networking Skills

1. Be generous! Come prepared to share. Be a resource for helpful information, industry trends, great events, or other contacts. Listen carefully to others and look for ways to meet their need.

2. Be interesting! People will want to talk to you and develop a relationship with you when they see how helpful and fascinating you are. Ask intriguing questions, offer pertinent comments, and make insightful observations to keep your listener coming back for more.

3. Be positive! Walk into the room with a smile on your face. Enjoy relationship building. Approach each person with an enthusiastic attitude, knowing that as you give, you will also gain.

With these attitudes, you will be perfectly prepared for the bigger task, i.e. to establish a network for your cultural tourism activities.

Cultural tourism networking is especially important in rural areas explaining to an often sceptical public the reasons that cultural tourism is an important industry to contribute to the local and regional (tourism) economy. Despite travel and tourism's major positive economic impact, too many people do not understand the interrelationship between tourism and a local quality of life. All too often tourism leaders who are experts in marketing their community to visitors from abroad spend little or no time marketing their business to the local population. It is essential never to forget that if the local community does not support your tourism activities, the community will soon gain a reputation for being unsafe or unfriendly. In the end this will not only destroy cultural tourism business but also severely damage the economic development and viability.

Networking requires organizational skills. It does only a minimal amount of good if you do not have (1) a strategy to find the people with whom you are networking at a later time and (2) you lack a follow-up strategy.

Networking strategies

Here are a number of tips that most of us know but many of us either forget or fail to implement:

Make yourself known.

Tourism is a people industry. The better you are known the more frequently your name is mentioned, the better it is for your business. Attend as many functions as possible. These functions do not have to be tourism related, but they should be functions where the attendees may impact your visibility or name recognition. During such events, collect business cards. Make a note on the back of each collected card that tells you something memorable about the person's card you have just collected. After the event follow up by writing and calling the individuals you met.

Never be shy!

Make yourself accessible. When meeting new people ask them to tell you something about their life. Almost everyone likes to talk about him or herself and most people have a unique story to tell. By getting people to open up to you, you get a better idea as to what they need and how you can interact with them. Once you have this information, you not only can judge their needs but you can begin to measure your community's needs (and your professional needs) by the other person's interests and talents.

Don't be shortsighted.

Someone who may not be in a position to help you now, but that does not mean that she/he may not be a very valuable person at a later date. Good manners make good networking. Do not close doors by inconsiderate behaviour or assume that you only need to speak to people who appear to have immediate "value."

Ask others what you can do for them.

Networking is based on the sociological premise of "social capital." This term means that you have to give to others in order to receive back from them. The best way to gain something is to give something. Social capital has a limited life expectancy. In order for it to stay fresh, the person has to remember your name and who you are. To accomplish this, do not limit your relationships with a single event. Instead stay in the public's eye and let it be known that you are involved in the community. By becoming a community resource you establish yourself as a 'go-to' person, and those are people who network best.

Be a volunteer.

Volunteering not only gets your name out and into the community but also is a great way to meet other people. Pick the organization to which you want to become a volunteer carefully and make it clear just how much time and energy your can provide this organization.

Use active versus passive networking tools.

Webpages are great to provide information for someone who is seeking you. Never-theless, they only act as networking tools if the person wants to network with you. Using newsletters, teas, get-to-gethers, and open houses are a way to start your relationship. Once the relationship is established then you can steer people to your webpage.

Follow up!

That means that after you meet the person, follow up on the meeting with a thank you note, and then with whatever methods are comfortable for you to keep your name fresh. Remember people with whom you may want to network are also meeting lots of other people

Exercise

Which are your personal networks?

List your networks and reflect in the light of this unit, which networks could be improved.

Family
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Friends
_____

Workplace
_____

Suppliers
_____

Collaborators
_____

Competitors
_____

Politics
_____

Church
_____

Hobbies
_____

Other:..........
_____

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Unit 2
Structure and administration of tourism networks

Structure and administration of tourism networks

Just as tourism links people and places around the world, so people working in tourism also need to link up with other tourism business and government agencies and businesses to be successful.

The cultural tourism service providers in the rural area are predominantly medium-sized or more often micro-enterprises. Small enterprises rarely have sufficient human and material resources to be able to work in a market-oriented manner. Thus they cannot meet the demand and the different requirements for successful cultural tourism despite potential demand.

Approaches to entrepreneurial and organizational professionalization are often done in an isolated manner and do not take advantage of their added value. The interrelated processes between product development and sales are not defined or coordinated and thus leads to unnecessary competitive situations. At the same time it becomes clear that cultural tourism has a cross-cutting function for other sectors such as agriculture, crafts and trade. This means that networking and cooperation which includes a combination of public control and private self-organization, is becoming increasingly important.

> Networks for cultural tourism in the rural area need therefore to
> - Emphasize the inter-organizational collaboration of private and public actors.
> - Establish specific organizational constellations which include decision-making bodies and decision-making rules

The situation in rural cultural tourism requires an efficient division of tasks, which is most likely to be achieved with a process-oriented organization and a high understanding of the importance of networks. With network-like functions, new forms of control and integration are developing. In contrast to hierar-chical structures, networks work through self-organization and coordination between independent actors and different stakeholders who pursue a common goal. Synergy potentials can be found in many areas of action, whether through the joint purchase of services, e.g. from hotels, joint quality management of providers in the region, or joint marketing. The objectives can be purely economic, or marketing or customer oriented.

Within a network, the individual partners work together on one goal, which results in mutual trust as a definitive basis for success. Networks thus lead to a different understanding of competition and a feeling of belonging together. This promotes innovations such as the creation of new joint offers that would not be possible for isolated providers.

To form the network, however, formal procedures should be clarified, especially for entry, exit, and exclusion criteria. Also the relevant functions in a network (e.g. public relations work) must be distri-buted and decided. In principle, the distribution of tasks and responsibilities should correspond to the

competencies of the actors. Rights and obligations to participate in decisions and activities as well as procedures for the allocation and use of funds must be regulated.

An increase in efficiency is only possible if resources are not only simply merged but also syner-gistically linked, for example a joint product design that allows other sales channels.

Types of networks

By function:

- **Horizontal networks focus on the same rank in the value chain**, e.g. several hotel companies. Horizontal co-operation has advantages when the actors concerned have little experience of collaborating within networks and can define jointly achievable goals (e.g. common quality stan-dards).
- **Vertical networks include different value added stages**, e.g. a hotel and a mountain railway). Vertical co-operation offers additional joint effects about the joint approach of a target group or offers consisting of building blocks.
- **Lateral or cross-sectoral networks, such as culture and tourism**: Lateral co-operation is offered when a common topic is the focus, for example health tourism, where housing and health care have joined together to address their common target group and their offers.
- **Economic networks aim at generating income for their members and focus on business opportunities.** In cultural tourism they focus on the development of products and services, which can be offered on the tourism market.
- **Volunteer networks** can be organized in informal meetings for exchange of knowledge and news. In cultural tourism they are often organised temporarily, e.g. for the preparation of events and local fairs. Municipalities often use this instrument for getting local actors together for the preparation of recurrent events like Christmas markets or summer parties.

Needless to say, hybrid forms of networks are widespread, but if cultural tourism networks strive to get more ambitious, they have to decide clearly on their function. The generation of value added potentials is achieved, for example, via scale effects (measurable cost savings) and advantages in the formation of a brand as a customer loyalty instrument, establishing quality standards, synergies in target group-specific marketing, etc.

By use of space:

This leads to international, national, regional, local, or even virtual networks. Structurally, networks for cultural tourism in the rural area are initially formed by re-gional networks, but they can also work transnationally in a combination of spatial and subject related aspects.

According to legal position:

Networks can be established in relation to the coordination level, the organizational form or the corporate objectives. A distinction should be made between stable strategic networks (alliances), dynamic networks, heterogeneous networks with distributed control on all or sub-hierarchical networks

where one or more actors dominate. Networks in rural areas usually are found at a market related level and depend on the promters and actors in a hierarchical or non-hierarchical structure.

The central challenge in rural areas is the overcoming of strongly understood individuality, the role of individual combatant status or even egoism. The value added chain in tourism is suitable for net-working, as the tourist product is made up of many individual building blocks that lead to an individual holiday experience for the guest. The aim is to build up links between the value added stages, to search for and create interfaces and to use them for the customer. Often, only a first courageous step is needed to generate interest among the various stakeholder groups and to attract them to participate.

Networks and regional development concepts

Regional development concepts call for networks and cooperation between public and private actors and the organization of capacity to influence the market. Private commitment and public control do not exclude each other. The challenge for such networks lies in the development of a form of self-control which is essentially based on cooperation between the actors. The public sector makes this possible by creating an institutional context and shaping the formal organization and procedural rules.

The activities of the networks typically have to be subordinated to a superior destination strategy, for example a master plan. Tourism policy can set the course, especially for financial resources such as start-up funding and access to funding programs. Top Down meets Bottom Up!

In this process, the destination management organisation (see Module1) plays a key role because it knows and controls the network pool (actors, space, culture, values, standards), and is able to create a guidance framework. It can be both an initiator as well as take over coordination, organization and moderation tasks. Ideally, the different levels act in one context and fertilize each other.

In addition to strategic tasks such as market and target group orientation, the destination management organisation also manages and promotes cross-cutting themes such as sustainability, climate protection, accessibility and anchors them in the supply oriented networks. This corresponds to a recent trend in destination management which calls for a more content oriented monitoring of the supply process in terms of image formation, quality control and competence development.

Cultural tourism destinations are all the more competitive if the actors are able to act collectively. The policy regulates legal, financial and natural resources in many places and can apply various control instruments. Possible approaches to influence the development of tourism are structural policy, area management as well as specific regional action plans. An integrated strategic location policy aims at strengthening the actors, implementing intensive education and training policy, and creating a supporting framework that enables cooperative organizational structures

In addition, cultural tourism networks should have a workable size, with the participation of representatives of organizations and service providers who create real added value by, for example, being a pioneer in an area.

Exercise

Which are your personal networks?

Are you involved in which kinds of networks?

Horizontal networks
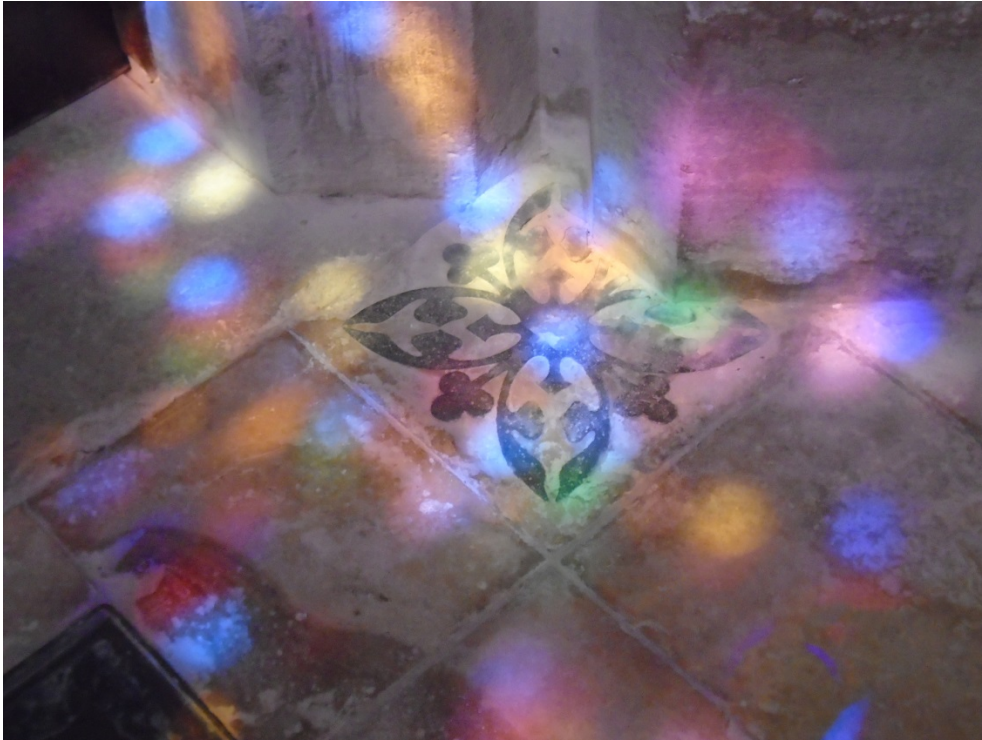
_____

Vertical networks

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Lateral networks

_____

Economic networks

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Volunteer networks

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Unit 3
Building successful cultural tourism networks in rural areas

Success factors for networks

Just to be very clear: There are no ready made concepts, which can be easily transferred for building cultural tourism networks in rural areas. Existing concepts and guidelines are based on conditions in urban areas, but their transfer to rural areas would not be well advised. Therefore, we have to state that good examples are rare. Some of them you will find described as good practice in this module.

From the existing good examples, we can derive some success factors, which might help you to understand the complexity behind setting up a cultural tourism network:

- Successful networks are long term initiatives based on solid financing models, which were developed cooperatively over the years.
- A timespan of 10 - 15 years is needed in order to establish and operate a successful network.
- These networks are often led by strong networking personalities, people who understand that cultural tourism networks are sensitive bodies which need strategy, rules and sustainable structures.
- Leading and organising a network is not a voluntary job but needs time and professional commitment.
- Successful networks are based on a common understanding of the needs of tourism representatives **and** culture-active people. People in the cultural sector are often strong individuals. Networks have to cope with individual ambitions, be aware and sensitive to the fact that they can destroy a process of mutual trust and understanding.
- Cultural tourism networks are open to new partners and never organised as a "closed shop". They encourage and welcome new members as friends and contributors, not as competitors.
- They are strongly linked to public authorities and regional planning organisations.
- They encourage their members into further education or offer their own training programmes.
- They meet according to a clearly defined and reliable schedule without bigger gaps.
- Cultural tourism networks also have a social dimension and encourage friendships.
- Cultural tourism networks need patience and a chance for growth and development in small steps.

Ensuring the sustainability of cultural tourism networks

Keeping a cultural tourism network in rural areas alive and running is not an easy task. Network members want to see a quick return of investment in terms of more visitors and more income. This is definitely the long-term objective of a network, but the overall vision is different, as we have explained above.

So how to keep members attracted to a network and its overall vision? How to make networks sustainable and beneficial for their members? Sooner or later, networks based on generating income need

- a structure,
- formal commitments of the network members,
- a responsible person working full-time / part-time on the tasks,
- a financing model.

The right structure for your cultural tourism network

Eventually, the question will arise, what kind of structure is the right one for a cultural tourism network. Should it be organised as an informal network, as an association, a co-operative, a foundation, a company? Should it be linked to a local tourism organisation, which takes over some of the organisational tasks? Could it be managed by an existing organisation as an additional task? Who is going to do the work or how can the workload be shared between the network members?

Every European country has different forms of organisations. Deciding on the structure and the legal status of the network is a crucial process with an outreach into the future and the sustainability of the network. It also means a legal commitment of the members. So you are well advised to check carefully and to get legal advice before you make your decisions. Regional and national authorities in all European member states offer free brochures and consultations in this process, which you should make use of..

Commitments of the network members

Having decided on the organisation of the network, the commitment of the network members is going to be the next step. This commitment can be very different: members can decide to pay a membership fee; they can make a donation, decide on certain In kind contributions or services, buy shares. Most important is the commitment itself that shows that members share the vision and dedication to the network.

Staff for implementing tasks

Networks usually agree on objectives, schedules, tasks and implementation steps. But who does it? The more professional the network is, the more a professional is needed with clearly dedicated and adequately paid time for implementing tasks. Professional networking is not a voluntary job done during the leisure time of single network members. Therefore, recruiting professionals and offering them paid employment is the most important success factor for cultural tourism networks.

Financing a network

Economic networking is always based on a reliable financing model. What exactly is it to be financed? Staff cost, office space and office equipment are the most important cost factors. In kind contributions of network members can complement cost coverage, but they will never cover a long-term and sustainable financing strategy.

Financing the network might depend on the organization and structure of the network: as a legal entity, access to finance will be easier, but the expenditures for tax accountancy or registrations in registries will be higher. Therefore, it will need considerable thought for the network to decide in what kind of legal and financial framework it wants to operate.

Financing of networks is mostly organized by membership fees (see our best practices in this unit) or by money raised for projects, which can come from local, regional, national or even European sources (please see Module 7 for funding sources). Financing opportunities are available on the funding market, but applications need time and expertise that has to be based in a consortium of network members.

Networking in Cross-Border-Cooperation – Power Endurance Requested

Cultural tourism does not stop at national borders – think about the many European regions that lend themselves for cross-border co-operation in cycling and hiking routes, in cultural events, gourmet traditions and ancient customs. In fact, visiting a border region might offer additional experiences and pleasures to visitors as shown in cross-border tourism activities in countries along the Danube[1] (Germany, Austria, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria, Moldova and Ukraine), the Hamburg-Öresund Region[2] (Northern Germany, Denmark & South Sweden), Croatia and Montenegro[3], and by the activities in the so called "Klosterland" region (Germany and Poland)[4].

Europe makes it easy for visitors to travel across borders. Meanwhile, cross border tourism is a developing topic all over Europe. Specifically, cross border cultural tourism has come out as an additional dimension to tourism in cross border regions by motivating visitors to travel across the border and experience two countries in close proximity. But let's not kid ourselves: Many things that make travelling in border areas more pleasant are still not sufficiently considered, be it bilingual signs at train stations, bilingual restaurant menus or hiking maps.

Therefore, challenges should not be underestimated and without political and administrative support of the neighbouring municipalities on both sides of the border, success might not come that easily Sharing of infrastructure such as airports fosters a win-win-situation for all, joint marketing supports to reach distant markets, knowledge sharing and the creation of innovative solutions help to cope with common challenges.

So what are the critical issues facing cross border collaborations in cultural tourism?

- The language barrier and cultural differences might be a serious challenge for the stakeholders as well as for potential visitors; in fact, it might be a genuine inhibition threshold.
- Border controls might be different and therefore confusing for visitors.
- Uneven political power and national interests on each side of the border are always a big challenge for collaboration.
- Social and cultural differences influence cross border collaboration and create barriers for cooperation decision.
- Coordination and decision-making procedures might be different and therefore time consuming.
- A great variety of municipalities may lead to difficulties in creating cohesion and joint visions.
- Competition among the many destinations in both region might hinder synergies.
- Actors of different scales and perspectives need negotiation power in order to come to solutions.

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[1] http://danubecc.org/about-dcc/
[2] http://www.stringnetwork.org/string-themes/tourism-culture/
[3] http://www.crossbordertourism.com/
[4] http://www.klosterland.de

The Klosterland experiences in Cross Border Cultural Tourism

Klosterland is a German-Polish association of former monasteries. From its establishment in 2010, the network had the aim of developing tourism in the border-region, as in the first years of Polish membership of the European Union, cross-border cultural tourism did not exist. It was regarded as a unique chance to link both regions with topics of shared history. The monasteries in both countries seem to fit perfectly as the history of orders is a pan-European history very well suited for European cross border cultural tourism.

However, the communication challenges became obvious very soon: Between Germany and Poland the language-barrier is very high. In Germany, Polish is not a frequently learned foreign language, and in Poland only a few people spoke German or English at that time. The difficulty in linguistic communication came out as one of the main reasons for constant different opinions on traditions, culture and mutual prejudices.

Meanwhile, Klosterland has developed its own Code of Conduct for the successful handling of cross border communication:
- The board takes care of the language communication employing staff speaking foreign languages.
- The common work is based on respect and patience regarding the situation of the other.
- The activities are to be developed in a way that the other national members can participate.
- The board takes care of a parallel development of the network in both countries.
- The board has members from both countries.
- The member meetings and other activities take place on both sides of the border.

The activities reflect the Klosterland Code of Conduct:
- a common website in German, Polish and English offers information for members as well as visitors
- the presence of representatives from both countries at tourism fairs
- development of Klosterland-products defined and in line with the traditions of monasteries
- organisation of cultural events for all members: monastery markets, exhibitions, concerts with inclusion of members of the other country
- communication of the pan-European culture of the orders with workshops, congresses, publications and projects.

It is greatly appreciated that some members, like the abbey of the Dominican convent in the Polish city of Myslibórz, offer bilingual (German/Polish) or trilingual (German/Polish/English) signposting at cultural and religious heritage sites.

The network is run on membership fees and on financial funding from different partners. After the founding period with members in the close German-Polish-border-region Klosterland now accepts also members from other parts of Germany, Poland and European countries in order to reflect their pan-European approach – a success of good working together.

Exercise

Is your organisation part of networks?

Now think of your organisation or business which networks it forms a part of. Reflect in the light of this unit, which networks could be improved.

Horizontal networks _____
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_____
_____

Vertical networks
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_____
_____
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Lateral or cross-sectoral networks
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_____
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Exercise

How sustainable is you network?

Now think of your network structure and financing. Reflect on the advantages and disadvantages of the current organisation and on the financing sources:

Advantages of your current network organisation
_____
_____
_____
_____

Disadvantages of your current network organisation
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_____
_____
_____

Financing your network: What is the most urgent financial need for running the network?
_____
_____
_____
_____

Financing your network: Which funding sources do you already have?
_____
_____
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Unit 4
Establishing supply chains and value chains

Establishing supply chains and value chains for cultural tourism networks

Creating supply chains and value chains may sound very strange to people from culture, but in fact, this is what every artist and every museum tries to create: Think about the artist who co-operates with other artists at an "Open Day of Artists' Workshops" or the museum, which co-operates with local schools. All of them are creating supply and value chains in order to communicate their work and to show them as attractive partners.

What exactly are supply chains and value chains in the context of cultural tourism?

Supply chains – or how to create common offers

The supply chain concept originates in economics and explains how different businesses enter into relationships to supply services and products, and how these are assembled into new products and services. So if the local artist co-operates with other artists and participates in an Open Day, s/he creates a new product which has an added value for her/his customers.

Cultural tourism networks provide access to possible co-operative partners (e.g. other artists or museums with exhibition space). They operate through business-to-business relationships and supply chains improve the business operations of each supplier in the supply chain. Supply chains should always improve the customer service. Supply chains for example may enable efficient transportation systems, give access to special temporary offers and include a variety of suppliers so that they meet or even exceed their customers' expectations.

Cultural tourism supply chains involve many components - not just accommodation, transport and catering, but also arts and crafts, food production, access to heritage. These all form a part of the holiday product that is expected by culturally interested visitors. A further aspect of the cultural tourism supply chain is the activities of visitors while on holiday, particularly in relation to their special interests, be it castles, churches or historic gardens

Value chains – how to create business opportunities for more than one supplier

Cultural tourism networks have an incredible potential for generating value chains for many participants and to offer highly attractive products and services for visitors. Value chain development is a kind of economic upgrading for more than one supplier: If you network your offer with offers of other network members, there is a new product or service that triggers your visitors to stay longer and to spend more.

An example: As a small museum, in a rural area it might not be enough that you have a nice exhibition (there are numerous nice exhibitions all over the region). Visitors might expect services that you are not able to provide yourself: catering, transfers, additional delights. So why don't you create a kind of package that your visitors might be able to buy a picnic basket with home-made regional cake

and have a picnic in your museum's garden, and that the transfer back to their accommodation or to another place of interest (another museum in the region?) is done by a horse drawn carriage?

So your service (the exhibition) is accompanied by two more services (the picnic basket could be done by a local farmer; the horse drawn carriage might be organised by a local provider). Your providers can earn some money with their services and your offer gets much more attractive.

Exercise

How to create a value chain with your offer

Now think of your organisation: Who could be an interesting partner for a networked offer?

_____
_____
_____
_____

Create a networked offer with at least 2 more partners

_____
_____
_____
_____

What are the benefits for each of these partners including your own organisation?

_____
_____
_____
_____

Are there any barriers which could impede this new offer (legal, organisational, practical, qualitative)?

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## Route of Delights – regional German initiative to network producers and service providers closely linked to culture

The Route covers the region from Western Franconian city of Aschaffenburg to the city of Würzburg and includes parts of northern Baden-Württemberg region and the Romantic Route. It is led and organised by Tourismus Region Wertheim GmbH (tourism agency of the German Wertheim region).
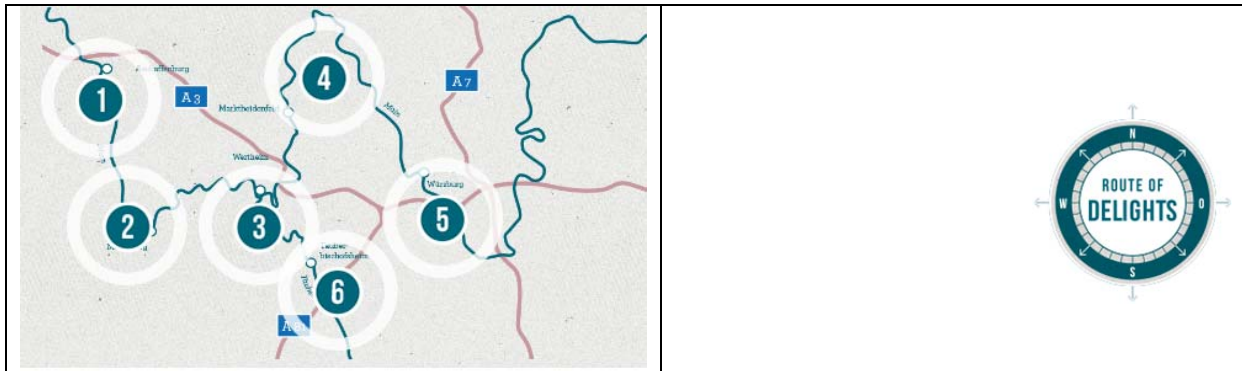
The Route of Delights comprises products and services from cultural heritage organisations, (churches & monasteries, galleries, art & craft producers, fashion), small manufacturers of food (chocolates, spices, pastries, farm products) and beverages (breweries, distilleries, coffee roasters, and wineries), restaurants and accommodations.

Each producer or service provider has its own character and strives to offer a particular delight. These people lead their (mainly) small businesses with passion, knowledge and dedication. In the Route of Delights, the products and services are directly linked to the persons who create and produce them and who dedicate their enthusiasm to an idea, a product or a service. More than 60 partners are networked in the initiative having agreed on visitor-orientated quality standards.

A website and booklet present the route and give plenty of inspiring information about the cultural and landscape treasures of the whole region.

http://route-of-delights.com   http://www.tourismus-wertheim.de

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Tel. +49 9342 93509-0

KIRA – the cultural touristic network for the Northern Baden-Württemberg region

The cultural tourism network KIRA for the Heilbronn-Franconian region has been developed since 2011 together with actors from the fields of culture, tourism, business development and municipalities. It covers the Northern Baden-Württemberg state with the regions Taubertal, Hohenlohe and Heilbronner Land.

KIRA stands for the "Cultural Tourism Initiative of Regional Offers" and links cultural and tourism for the North of Baden-Württemberg with the aims of fostering employment, competitiveness and sustainability. Representatives from culture, business and tourism are invited into the network.

Activities:
- Regular network meetings bring together cultural institutions, tourism agencies, economic promoters and administrators. These round tables are a platform for mutual exchange, but they also offer training courses devoted to different topics relevant for cultural tourism.
- IRA operates a platform with articles about the treasures of the region. The articles provide information about the actors and their products and services on an equal footing and without a competitive edge.
- The KIRA blog publishes articles with relevant information and best practice examples about cultural tourism in rural areas. It is a knowledge base for interested parties trying to get selected information relevant for the field of cultural tourism.
- The KIRA Facebook page posts the articles of the website and is the communication channel for interested parties outside the regional network.
- A Facebook working group is dedicated to the collegial exchange on cultural tourism topics and, above all, on the use of social media. It is aimed primarily at the KIRA members in Heilbronn-Franken, but is open to all interested parties nation-wide.

The network is organised by in-kind contributions from the partners, who make available meeting rooms, technical facilities or knowledge. Kultur und Arbeit e.V. offers an office infrastructure and a

contact address. By using regional, national and European funding the network implements projects and training courses. The members work voluntarily.

So far, the networks has around 360 members. The network has no legal organisation form yet but is managed by a non-profit organisation (Kultur und Arbeit e.V. / Association Culture & Work).

http://kiratour.de/
https://www.facebook.com/kiratour/
https://www.facebook.com/groups/Kiratour/ (closed group, membership is available by invitation)

Contact:
Karin Drda-Kühn / Kultur und Arbeit e.V.
kira@kultur-und-arbeit.de , Tel. +49 7931 56 36 374
www.kultur-und-arbeit.de

Kreativ Reisen Österreich – a network promoting creative travel in Austria

Kreativ Reisen Österreich – Creative Tourism Austria is an Austrian association and has been developing creative tourism in Austria in close cooperation with the Austrian National Tourism Board since 2011. It covers all of the country's nine provinces Vienna, Burgenland, Lower & Upper Austria, Styria, Salzburg, Carinthia, Tyrol, and Vorarlberg.

The main offers are grouped into the three categories "Art & Culture" (Kunst & Kultur), "Crafts" (Handwerk), as well as "Gastronomy" (Kulinarik). Interested members can join the network based on an annual membership fee, available in different categories according to business size and type.

Activities:
- Regular network meetings bring together members from across Austria, such as hotel businesses, tourism destination management agencies, cultural institutions, craftspeople, and administrators. These round tables are a platform for mutual exchange, but they also offer training courses devoted to different topics, such as marketing, branding, and storytelling / Social Media.
- Creative Tourism Austria organizes regular press conferences & blogtrips with the aim of promoting its members unique stories through digital opinion leaders, bloggers, and journalists.
- There is a strong cooperation with the Austrian National Tourism Board, notably through Social Media (Instagram Takeover, presentation on each other's websites, and newsletters, as well as other marketing campaigns)
- Besides, the network is also active at a European level, notably by providing a knowledge base for the development of cultural tourism in rural areas, and Social Media Management.
- Creative Tourism Austria acts as a platform promoting existing offers of its members, ideally redirecting traffic and interest directly to the partners. The network supports the development of linked products and services between the members.

The network is run on the membership fees it receives from its members, as well as European funding, in part. Besides, money is also raised by organizing networking events, and through sponsors / media parternships. So far, the networks has around 30 members, but this is set to increase.

http://www.kreativreisen.at
https://www.facebook.com/kreativreisen

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