

Tourism, Environment and Ecology in the Mediterranean Region

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in the Mediterranean Region

Edited by

Recep Efe and Münir Öztürk

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P U B L I S H I N G

Tourism, Environment and Ecology in the Mediterranean Region,
Edited by Recep Efe and Münir Öztürk

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PREFACE

Tourism has different appeal and significance to people of contrasting cultural backgrounds, sociohistory as well as geographical location in the Mediterranean countries. After industrial revolution they have become good homes for long-term investment but their environment is threatened. We need fundamental changes in basic values and practices, otherwise we will destroy the diversity and beauty of the region, as well as its ability to support diverse human cultures. Current investments in tourism are leading towards a biodiversity loss, extinction of species and destruction of habitat.

More our knowledge of “ecology” increases more we get astonished at the unity of life and its diversity. Ecological perspective means thinking about soils, waters, air, plants, animals, and all their relationships. Major aims being balancing of physical, biological and human dimensions. Time and space act as limiting factors at all levels in our environment. When any ecosystem is changed by us, it becomes fragile and there is a collapse. An ecosystem is not a bottomless pit, it is a depletable asset. People are dependent on ecosystem resources for tourism as well as environment.

There is a need for an emphasis on “ecology” and “ecowisdom”. Ecowisdom solution to our problems depends on ecologically viable, economically feasible and socially acceptable principals. The principles of “ecowisdom” are well-being and flourishing of human and nonhuman life together with the richness and diversity of life forms and realization of their values. We have no right to reduce this richness and diversity except to satisfy vital human needs. The flourishing of nonhuman life requires a substantial decrease of human population as the present human interference with the nonhuman world is excessive. The policies followed are affecting basic economic, technological and ideological structures.

This book with 472 pages includes 31 chapters from Bosnia, Turkey, Bulgaria, Kosova, Italy, Egypt, Georgia; covering such aspects as tourism, environment and ecology. The aim is to examine both natural and cultural environment in the Mediterranean Basin. Thirty-one reviewed chapters were accepted for publication. The editors hope that this book will upgrade the importance of awareness among public for protecting the fragile Mediterranean environment.

We would like to express their gratitude to the team at Cambridge Scholars Publishing for their collaborative efforts in preparing this book for publication.

The Editors

CHAPTER ONE

SMES NETWORKS ON DESTINATIONS: GEOGRAPHICAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACTS FOR NEW FORMS OF TOURISM

CARMEN BIZZARRI
AND MARGHERITA PEDRANA

Introduction

Enterprise Networks and Network Contracts in Tourism

In tourism, as in other economic areas, enterprise networks can assume the form of enterprise as an aggregation of business - for example, franchising, unions, confederations, and business associations - aiming to a greater bargaining power than others and making profits, creating incentives and facilitating harmonization of the existing provisions. Essentially, enterprise networks, more recently considered a form of lobbying in an outer environment, today could assume a new form of contract.

Therefore, in the present scenario enterprise networks are also considered as a new form of contract, the legally recognized, so-called network contract (law decree n.5/2009 and following), that brings about a new form of collaboration and cooperation between affiliated enterprises so as to reach a specific objective, that is a network project. To access said contract, enterprises must already exist and operate on the territory. In reality, this kind of enterprise network was defined as a “plot of relations that joins entities institutionally different, without damaging formal independence and without a unitary management and control, an organization based on cooperation and coordination between enterprises or other interdependent organizations” (Soda 1998, 66).

The new form of contract was established to develop all small and medium enterprises (SMEs) presently in crisis. Particularly in tourism, a time of crisis such as this is greatly felt, since global competition and

technology have actually reduced profit margins and the power of attraction.

In reality, globalization induces SMEs to compete with large enterprises and multinational and international corporations, which by nature can benefit from scale economies, agglomeration economies, reduction of cost transactions, credit legibility and external effects deriving from the various phases of production. On the contrary, without these benefits SMEs proved their insufficiency in international competition and in a short time saw their sales reduced.

The main causes for this can be found in the modest financing power, poor innovation and the inefficient spread of know-how. The first cause is the main obstacle to dimensional growth and competitiveness of the entire production system, since this element limits leading companies and consequently all enterprises associated with them. The second and third causes represent important breaks to competitiveness and the overcoming of barriers with the international market. As a matter of fact, innovation promotes entering into the international market, facilitating access to new markets.

The realization of innovation policies, therefore, is essential to developing Italian tourism enterprises, which at present are blocked by financial obligations due to the limited guarantee given. Moreover, in tourism generally innovation does not derive from investments of large assets, but from ideas which on one hand are easily copied, since they are economical and not particularly risky, and on the other cannot be reproduced since they are associated with the cultural and environmental context in which they were conceived. Mainly, in the area of tourism, innovation doesn't produce a new tangible product, but a new action that changes the method of fruition of resources and the service offered.

The solution to these limits can be found in the network contract that make the whole network a guarantee, since it is the project being financed. Therefore, funding is subordinate to the evaluation of the project which must integrate the goal and the object of a network contract.

The decision to fund a project is actually oriented to appraising the material and immaterial assets of the single SMEs, sharing the risk connected to the project, though maintaining management autonomy and ownership of the associated companies.

Advantages and disadvantages of tourism enterprises in network contracts

In tourism, enterprises can greatly benefit from network contracts since aggregation processes are functional to the increase of business and the

realization of new investments. In reality, in tourism the latter are essential elements for developing and increasing the offer; a tourist that perceives innovation as a new product, in discovering how unique and irreproducible the good is, would be willing to pay a higher price, giving up part of the income and spreading, by word of mouth, the experience encountered.

Moreover, it seems very beneficial to activate this type of network contract for the entire tourism division due to the many advantages deriving from it.

Besides the feasible innovation and credit eligibility, we can find:

- greater efficiency relative to the specialization of the different enterprises
- reduction of cost transactions
- scale economy—for example tourism SMEs with such a contract can share costs by cutting supply expenses
- spreading of know-how
- enlarging supplier networks.

The last factor produces an important development in enterprises since, by increasing the number of supporters, both horizontally (all enterprises operating in the system) and vertically (of other economic areas, for example agricultural and food), it activates a collaboration grid that enables a greater specialization and consequent cost reduction.

Moreover, new relations allow for the creation of new tourism products, also increasing the offer in new markets.

Moving into different territories could cause many difficulties, such as:

- access barriers
- legal restrictions
- information costs.

Enterprises operating in such a territory can assist other enterprises participating in the network by sharing their own organizational model, supporting the intake in the market and thus making the network international.

An international network, that is a network composed of several enterprises operating in different regions, is much more complex than a national network since there are legal restrictions both in the contract and the company, especially in networks operating in Eastern European countries and in developing countries. Instead, in national networks enterprises are characterized only by contractual ties, even when representing several sectors that belong to the same region.

Therefore, a network contract has many advantages for corporate enterprises, but certain critical issues determined by the network governance and particularly management costs, and decision making and possible conflicts of interest that could arise should also be considered.

To realize the project, enterprises establish a Common Assets Fund, i.e. an ad hoc fund destined to the realization of a network program and entrusted to a common managing body. Essentially, a network contract limits the responsibilities, risks and obligations of single participants that are bound only for the part destined to the network.

Therefore, the tasks of the common agent are very delicate and complex, particularly if there is a predominant enterprise in the market wanting to be a leader. However, the presence of all the enterprises in said agent should guarantee a wide sharing of strategic goals of networks and a certain facility in the organization. In fact, the network government system was conceived to be simple and fast in making choices, precisely so as to activate the spread of know-how among enterprises.

In conclusion, this kind of networking determines many advantages for SMEs. But, at the same time, some limits must be mentioned, made up for the major part by interdependence and conflict risks deriving from the more predominant enterprises on the market, forming the network. Its expansion could comprise a further element of network instability, when if, from a starting group of a few, more join by increasing the potential of the common fund, the latter could reduce the trust among the original members due to the different needs that could arise.

Network contract for developing a tourism destination

The projected aim of a network contract could cause various impacts on the territory where enterprises involved in the network operate. Actually, if enterprises in tourism destinations establish networks to develop new attractions, deriving from the different use of local resources, the project would obviously be an element of change in the territory. Being an explosive project, a thorough, efficient and acceptable planning and political program aiming to organize both the resources involved and the welcoming services, the first damaged by new visitors in tourism, would be necessary. The introduction of new resources and the resulting new tourism flows spread positive and negative effects very rapidly both inside and outside of a specific area, since innovation, either of process or product, changes travel practices. This transformation has an effect “from the cradle to the grave” of the trip, i.e. from the beginning to the end.

In fact, in the usual locations where tourism flows start from, generally there are no suitable services to reach innovation attractions. New

connections and new infrastructures will be needed, not only as regards to transport but also for planning the trip, both from the standpoint of equipment as well as the new know-how for new attractions.

For a new tourism product to succeed it would be advisable to consider the participation of enterprises and territories from where new tourism flows start. In reality, such an expansion would be essential to the attainment of an efficient management and would be optimal for the network. The arrangement of welcoming services and infrastructures ad hoc are essential for acknowledging the good outcome of the project on the part of the tourists. In fact, communication and word of mouth among tourists constitute the only vehicles to confirm the innovation.

Furthermore, if it is true that networks arise to improve business performance, without an initial and evident participation of the territory, it is also true that in tourism, a network contract project in most cases includes the use of resources favouring access and availability of joint local goods. At this point we must consider the problems and environmental and social impacts deriving from the increased flow of tourists to the destination from where the network started and the likely subsequent welcome overflow in the area produced by the crowding of both traditional and new tourism flows.

In order to determine costs and benefits of a network on the territory it would be suitable to carry out a SWOT analysis to check the strengths and weakness, opportunities and threats of a network contract project.

We can certainly state that the key strength is the innovation and originality of the project, both:

- (a) internally among enterprises participating in the contract—the spreading of the new know-how enables a different use of resources, developing agglomeration economies and new know-how among enterprises.
- (b) external to the network with a double effect—the first consists in attracting new tourism flows that cooperate, wherever existing, with the traditional circuits interested in innovation, while the second consists in spreading innovation, not only in the destination but also the entire region, providing a permanent development in tourism.

In this virtuosity the weak point is reported outside the network, i.e. when enterprises do not inform the territory and all stakeholders about the new established network and the new know-how and the relative project, triggering a vicious circle introducing outer diseconomies such as congestion, difficulty with waste disposal, traffic, etc. that force new tourists to run from the destination.

Also within the network the weak point could be the fragility with which the network is managed. As mentioned, since the network is made up of intersectorial enterprises, often these do not have the same risks or results, in the sense that for some enterprises it may be very convenient, while for others it is not so important to participate.

Hence the greatest threat for a network contract is the internal governance where an enterprise, either a leading one, or several that form a coalition, could adopt a ruling position and would be inclined to an unlawful behaviour that would harm enterprises participating in the network. If enterprises were to act in such a way the network would break up and the consequences for the territory would be cascading distrust towards all enterprises, and consequently the entire tourism system would deteriorate.

At the same time, the weakness of this network fluidity could become a great opportunity since its being easily accessible could not only constantly renew the network by developing new projects and consequently create other contracts with the same and other enterprises, but could also easily expand and be absorbed into another existing network, if it held the same goal.

Therefore, a network contract is a great opportunity for enterprises, which together can both participate in public competitions requesting a series of services and goods that an enterprise alone cannot produce, and also have incentives for appraising and protecting resources that could be part of the project.

Therefore, cooperation with local agents is essential for the success of tourism networks, since tourists will appreciate and return to a territory where the regional organization provided for the realization of a holiday as a good experience.

Such public-private synergy can also take place in regions and territories different to those where networks start. In fact, a public body could endorse some networks for the attraction and strategies that they hold, offering incentives and support. In tourism, in reality, some services which are not necessarily connected to the resources of a locality could relocate since they do not need big infrastructures or large capital. Therefore, if a network does not have a local cooperative body, it could choose a different area from where it started, and afterwards also involve the other enterprises of the locality.

Territorial economic policies in SME networks

In the field of complexity and differences among policies and projects related to enterprise networks there are many examples, especially for

what concerns SMEs. Firstly, we have to notice that many regions have development plans in which public announcements evaluate policies and contracts which aim at creating a pool of competences and skills—both public and private—whose purpose should be to stimulate territorial growth and development. In particular, tourism is the sector that had more benefits from these public interventions.

As an example, the Tuscany region of Italy proclaims to select industrial and development experimental researches in the field of sustainable and competitive tourism. Also, the Lombardy region gives public contributions to the sector defined as CTS (*commercio, turismo* and *servizi*—trade, tourism and services). The main purposes of these public investments are connected with the increase of the competitiveness of aggregated enterprises, managing costs, improving and modernize spaces, and supporting the development of informal networks also aimed at knowledge exchange and innovation diffusion. The regional government aims at the financial support of old and new enterprise networks.

Why do regional and territorial institutions try to finance enterprise networks? Which are the advantages for the development of territorial areas? In particular, why finance enterprise networks in the tourism sector? The main purpose of this chapter is to answer to these questions through a case study.

Tourism is a sector that cannot ignore the territory and its future development. The territory is the area in which the enterprise works and to which tourists come. Therefore, the future deterioration of the area and the lack of attention to the themes of sustainability, both from environmental and a socio-cultural points of view, may lead to losing the heart of the tourism sector, which is the territory and its attractiveness.

Initiatives regarding enterprise networks are many, both vertical and horizontal, in particular considering their applications in the tourist sector. For the purpose of this chapter it is interesting to analyse some specific features which, in some of the analysed case studies, lead to the evaluation of the territory development with a strong tourist propensity. Among the different case studies, the initiative of enterprise networks usually starts from institutions which know enterprise organization and all interested actors in the promotion. More often enterprise networks are born on specific projects and develop on permanent enterprise networks in the territory, with long-run purposes for the promotion of the tourism sector and the cultural tissue of the territory itself.

Destination management and management issues

Economic and territorial policies, in the tourism sector, have developed through the tourism destination concept, defined as an organized system of actors in a territory whose purpose is the organization and systemic-territorial management of the tourism activities. This paragraph aims at the evaluation of problems related to the management at consortia and network contract levels.

Globalization underlines some issues at the territorial and local levels, creating the phenomenon known as “glocalization.”¹ Tourist destinations concern problems of globalization on local and territorial entities. The need to define what we understand by tourism destination is essential for the definition of policies and network contracts in a specific territory. Tourism destination is defined as the “place objective of a journey” (Franch 2010). The concept is linked to the local system of tourist supply (in Italian SLOT²), defined as all activities and factors of attractiveness organized in a system of tourism hospitality (Della Corte 2000).

The development of enterprise networks in a tourism destination, especially if supported by territorial policies, may lead to the strengthening of tourism organization. In enterprise networks and in tourism destinations, public interventions are often fundamental, especially at the local level.

The main problems of the management of tourism destinations, also through the destination management organization, start from the complex heterogeneity of actors in the local area. Actually, there are different types of enterprises, some of which may be dedicated exclusively to the tourism sector. The strategic-territorial vision may be efficient if we take into consideration three important factors.

First is the different strategic vision of the tourism destination, which has to widen the strategic vision of the specific actor and specific category of operators. The second is the involvement of the actors that deal with all the different aspect of the holiday, which are different according to the territorial systems. The third and last factor is the long-term planning quality of every strategy concerning the tourism destination, in comparison with the short-term strategies of the individual actors.

An association of enterprises in a territory aims at the improvement of efficiency, decrease of costs, increase of the efficiency of the promotion

¹ “Glocalization” comes from sociology, and is a term created in juxtaposition to the excessive use of “globalization.”

² From the Italian “*sistema locale di offerta turistica*.”

and distribution of the tourism activities and level of internal competences, and influences the competitiveness of enterprises. All these objectives are long term and aim at the valorisation of the association in comparison with the individual interests linked to the kinds of enterprises or individual actors.

The consortium contract is defined as a common organization among entrepreneurs “for the management of some phases of the own enterprises.”³ In particular, the hotel consortium often has support functions to the connected enterprises in order to provide for the problems connected to SMEs. The consortium has some specific objectives:

- reduction of the service costs for enterprises
- economies of scale, both operative and management
- valorisation of the contract power both on national and international markets
- development of individual enterprise skills thanks to network economies and cooperation between enterprises and consortia.

The main activity provided by a consortium may concern the centralization of purchases, the central management of bookings, consulting services, learning and promotion. The nature of the consortium participant is very important because they can be also public institutions, which should grant general interest towards the interests of individual actors.

Another important fact linked to the tourism destination is the concept of industrial district. Starting from the first definitions, there are some peculiar characteristics for the local development of industrial districts, especially in specific areas. These features are the spatial concentration, the productive specialization, the small dimensions of enterprises and the strong linkages with the territory. These indications are also in the tourist sector which, although it is not an industrial sector, presents some characteristics of industrial districts. In particular, the kinds of cooperation and competition typical of industrial districts may be strong assets in tourist destinations organized at the central level. The organization and territorial policies may be potential inputs important for the area and the economic development, especially if inspired by governance principles of tourism destination in a systemic-organizational view.

Destination management is defined as the management of the tourism destination, understood as a set of different activities, sometimes not in the tourism sector, which have to be organized for tourism purposes. The organization and management of enterprises belonging to different sectors may lead to some problems, especially for different time strategies and

³ Article 2602 of the Italian civic code.

objectives that a systemic organization has in comparison with the individual enterprises.

Obviously, problems related to organization of destination management are those typical of consortia and enterprise networks where, especially for what concerns the hospitality sector, the double role of competition-cooperation is often an obstacle to the tourism system, investing the government, organizational, management and reporting of kind of marketing, supplying and tourism production (Ruisi 1999).

As stated, the governments of such associations should follow objectives which may also be different compared to the individual actors. In particular, many difficulties of management and organization of innovation may emerge from the individual interests, which may transform into interests of the whole organization, leading the purposes of the organization to be the same for just one or a few members. In the ideal model of management of the destination, the governance should evaluate general objectives in the long term to get common interest results. These problems of management may lead to abuse of interests of some in general, imposing on the global government individual interests.

For instance, the definition of the market target for the destination may be linked to the needs of specialized travel agencies in a specific market with long-term perspectives, which have perhaps not yet been explored. There may also be problems in terms of management of destination and its perspectives, which may lead to a long period of stagnation or the decline of the tourism destination. Moreover, the centralized booking system may not find the potentiality of new solutions leading to a monopoly of the supply for the whole destination and the management system, with lock-in effects. All these evaluations have to be done in the planning phase of the tourism destination to avoid further management problems, and first of all the objectives and functions of enterprise associations have to be analysed.

In the next paragraph we will analyse a case study of an enterprises network concerning both the industrial and tourism sectors. Therefore, the industrial tourism through the enterprises network has a complexity of organization, which has to be managed to be effective in both the industrial and tourism sectors.

Industrial tourism in Friuli-Venezia Giulia⁴

The case study concerns industrial tourism in the Friuli-Venezia Giulia region, and in particular Udine. Confindustria Udine⁵ elaborated a project

⁴ Friuli-Venezia Giulia an Italian region located in the north east of the country.

for the promotion of the territory, which concerns industrial tourism, defined as the valorisation of the industrial heritage through architecture, infrastructure, enterprise museums, historical archives and industrial villages. This kind of tourism allows for the presence of firms in a territory and an enterprise network, which may support it.

Industrial tourism had a great development from the association of SMEs that, especially at local level,⁶ allowed for the use of the economic tissue already present through associations and enterprise networks. Industrial tourism is a part of cultural tourism based on the presence of enterprises, allowing visitors to visit firms and find out the history of some sectors and enterprises. The fields of visit range from industrial archaeology to enterprise museums, visits to the firms of products and services in industrial districts, and industrial villages to enterprise shops.

At local and territorial levels, industrial tourism may have a threefold objective. The first purpose concerns the knowledge and promotion of the territory, including not just the natural and historical-cultural attraction, but also the cultural tissue at enterprise level and enterprise culture spread throughout the territory, exploring the economic part of the area. The second purpose, linked to corporative and enterprise associations which often promote this kind of tourism, concerns the promotion of the enterprises through tourism and the knowledge spread on techniques and production processes specific to this kind of sector. The third objective concerns the industrial tourism dedicated to traditional museums and the re-qualification of areas with a reduction and closing of important enterprises for the territory and the re-qualification of the history of such enterprises through industrial museums and exhibitions. This last purpose may also be linked to the project of eco-museums and the re-evaluation of former industrial areas.

The specific kind of tourism, also defined as “economic discovery tourism,” and the project which involved the enterprises of Friuli-Venezia Giulia and the entrepreneurs, usually not directly involved in the tourism sector, through an enterprise network, lead to an enterprise network which is both horizontal (the enterprises become tourism destinations) and vertical (involving tourism activities and the tourism supply chain which is in the territory).

The first objective of this project of enterprise network for industrial tourism concerns the promotion of territory. Therefore, industrial tourism

⁵ Confindustria is the association of Italian Industry. The source is the Confindustria Udine and the project is “*Industria e turismo. Andata e ritorno*” (“Industry and Tourism. A Return Trip”).

⁶ The level in this case is usually the regional or provincial one.

communicates the territory value, especially in a territory with a high rate of enterprises, allowing for knowledge of the product, the productive process and the entrepreneur. As already said, this kind of tourism is linked to the territory and productive tissue promotion, promoting the excellence of the territory. In fact, industrial tourism in this case is articulated through three different products, following three different routes. The first concerns enterprises in the design sector in the region. The second concerns the food and promotion of excellence in the food industry, such as San Daniele ham and the Sauris area. The third route concerns so-called industrial archaeology, which is enterprise history both with industrial museums and tourism in enterprises which are closed, but that were very important in the past.

An important characteristic for industrial tourism is the de-seasonality of tourism. Therefore, the product may promote the territory and modify the typical seasonality of tourism, leading to the use of the territory by interested tourists who would visit in different periods from the usual ones. This is also important for the tourism supply chain in the period characterised by the low season.

Factors which push an enterprise to participate are usually of a sales-based nature. Industrial tourism allows for direct promotion and sale of products. There are also communication and industrial factors which lead to promoting excellence and enterprise culture communicating a positive image, also through an integrated communication and diversifying of the relationship instruments. Also at the internal communication level, industrial tourism involves employees who may be motivated by a new project, and communication with all stakeholders and shareholders, in order to exploit the enterprise at the economic-financial level. Finally, industrial tourism may create new meeting and exchange opportunities between professionals and enterprises, leading to a promotion and a communication linked with business to business.

From the other point of view, tourism is stimulated by visiting enterprises through a project of wider tourism and territory knowledge. There is an untapped tourist demand which wants to discover the territory through enterprise culture and knowledge, especially from foreign tourists who want to evaluate Italian fineries and places where they are produced. There are many opportunities at the enterprise level to encourage this kind of tourism, through many initiatives and projects in different Italian areas, such as publicising the enterprise and its culture through the territory promotion. The most important strengths in such a kind of enterprise network linked to this kind of tourism concern the former presence of enterprise associations, which may have this opportunity to increase the

seasonality of tourism and help in the promotion of the territory through integrated communication.

The most important challenge concerns the opportunity to promote this kind of tourism at the national level, both for the re-qualification of the area with many enterprises and the economic tissue and product promotion that help in the de-seasonality of tourism. At the national level, obviously, industrial tourism may be promoted through enterprise associations and networks. The most important weaknesses concern the coordination of the needs of enterprises and tourism actors and try to use these initiatives in an integrated promotion of the territory, which may not be out of the evaluation of all possible kinds of tourism, in a project for the sustainable use of the territory. The coordination and organization of this kind of tourism have to also consider the economic tissue and tourism seasonality and its composition.

In conclusion, industrial tourism and this use of enterprise networks already on the territory may lead to a better coordination of productive activities in a tourism destination, also helping in the de-seasonality of the tourism product.

Conclusions

In the tourism sector, enterprise networks are an element of valorisation of both economic activities and territorial resources. The contract of enterprise networks, in particular, may be considered a strong factor of innovation for the development of new projects and may influence the tourist and territorial systems because of its positive effects on the tourism life cycle. The SWOT analysis helped to positively value the added value of the enterprise network contract for the local entrepreneur tissue. It is very important to consider the instability and possible conflicts that network governance may create both inside and outside the network itself.

In conclusion, the phenomenon of enterprise networks is positive as the case study on industrial tourism in Friuli-Venezia Giulia shows. Enterprises have created an ad hoc enterprise network for the valorisation of entrepreneur and cultural local resources. The success of the enterprise network comes both from the coordination of involved enterprises and tourism activities and public institutions in the territory.

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CHAPTER TWO

BRANDING POLICIES FOR MARGINAL AREA COMPLEXITY AND MULTIDIMENSIONALITY IN A REGIONAL CASE STUDY

DANIELA LA FORESTA

Introduction

Technological, economic and political changes have occurred in recent years, sometimes altering relations between nations and sometimes the meaning of words of territorial identities, geographies, economies and alliances between various places. These processes have been determined by globalization that has shrunk the world, led to new opportunities and new problems as well as new forms of competition, and has attracted attention to new spaces. The competition now operates through different channels, using innovative tools, to assure the constant availability of products and services in the global market.

The first challenge for the territories, then, consists in the ability to ensure its presence in new spaces created by globalization; innovation, inclination and the capability to exploit local potential are fundamental in the management of territory.

Territorial competitiveness is the most important and most difficult challenge for every country in the world, because it requires effort and constant attention, as a dynamic concept in continuous change.¹

An area becomes competitive when it is able to compete in the market while ensuring an environmental economic, social and cultural sustainability, based on network organization and inter-territorial relations.

To compete territories have therefore grown and developed, using the intangible resources deeply embedded within them, such as skills, relationships between people, and trust in products, services and people.

¹ The reference to the concept of territorial competitiveness, however, is not unique in the scientific literature.

Local governments might therefore face the difficult challenge of aggregating the various stakeholders in the local context around a specific mission (territorial competitiveness). The operation is centred around the need to integrate all the resources and activities of the area into one system and create a high-density experiential offer for the chosen target. To this end it is essential to initiate territorial strategic management based on "a shared vision and a shared cultural model able to promote the construction of ongoing working relationships between all stakeholders both internal and external to the territory" (Sicca 2000).

Competitiveness, however, is measured in a comparative perspective that needs specific operational strategies aimed at increasing the internal and external visibility. To this end, specific promotion policies have been made in territories and widely analyzed by scientific literature; social and cultural transformations, however, now require a review of the promotional models traditionally used and the continuous search for new means of communication and promotion.

The aim of this work is to promote a critical reflection on the effectiveness of traditional policies of territorial branding through the analysis of promotional choices made in the Italian regional context based on the most recent developments in scientific thinking.

Trends and challenges in branding policies

The watchword for each territory becomes "differentiation" and the primary goal is to raise awareness and appreciation of the managed area.

Differentiation allows those who do not live in the territory concerned to immediately recognize the cultural, historical, geographical, social and economic features of a place. To obtain recognition of a place, however, it isn't enough to increase the advertising business, because people are subject to a daily chaos of information, meaning that the message would not have the necessary resonance, reducing the usefulness of the investments and efforts. The regional managers, therefore, have sought new tools to place their areas in people's minds and, in the wake of corporate literature searches, identified the geographical brand as a powerful tool to positively influence people.

Brand management, the potential of which has been widely discussed in the literature of the field,² is known as the application of marketing

² Within companies one of the most widely used management tools to improve the competitiveness of enterprises and impose their presence in world markets is the brand. According to the American Marketing Association, "brand is a name, term, sign, symbol, or any other characteristic that is intended to identify the goods or services of one seller and to distinguish them from those of other sellers." For

techniques to a specific product or a product line. The brand name may perform the functions of identification, warranty, guidance and symbolism as well as protection from imitations, competitive positioning, strengthening of market power and influence in the internal and external relations (van Gelder 2003). The aim is to increase the perceived value by consumers of a product or an offering which determines, as a consequence, an increase in brand equity (brand value).

The brand is characterized, therefore, as a great tool for the differentiation of tenders, and a fundamental element to create a preference for consumer trust, because it is the only resource that is not imitable by competitors.

The brand, in its generic sense, is an intangible instrument of great impact in fantasy and in the opinions of people because it creates familiarity and confidence in the products, charges them with meanings and expectations, and gives them an identity and "life."

It allows for the establishment of "a lasting relationship with customers, generating an amount of value that, at least potentially, implies functional, emotional or self-expression benefits and giving credibility to the guaranteed products."³ Its purpose is to make sure that the brand can last over time, communicating consistent messages that are realistic, positive and relevant. It is precisely this set of aspects and features that have led the branding policies from consumer products to territories.

Kotler & Gertner (2002) were the first to say that the brand "is the primary tool to transfer the value proposition of territory because branding strategies create involvement, evoke emotions and influence the behavior of people." The territorial brand is, therefore, "the result of a continuous and dynamic process of construction in the mind of the user of the territory

Kotler (2002), brand "is a name, term, sign, symbol or design or combination thereof that is used to identify products or services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of their competitors." Aaker (1991) argues that a brand "is a set of assets (or liabilities) linked to a distinctive mark (brand, name, logo) that you add (or subtract) to the value generated by a product or service."

Pratesi & Mattia (2006) state that "the brand has its own expressive event, so it is a set of signs and symbols, tangible and intangible, which connote character and personality, as is the case for an individual." According Fiocca, Marino & Testori (2007), "the brand is for businesses and consumers a moment of attraction and connection between what the company is able to offer and what consumers perceive and desire."

³ Aaker & Joachimstaler (2001).

which, therefore, is influenced by the experiences, memories and opinions expressed by other users with whom they come into contact.⁴

The territorial brand derives, therefore, from specific attention to identity factors and distinctive features of a territory that allow a clear strategic positioning versus competitors reorganizing the offer to the needs and/or interest of the potential beneficiary of the promotion (Kotler 2002).

The brand, directly related to the concept of region or regional reputation, is characterized by a multi-identity dimension (economic, political, socio-cultural, environmental, etc.) and a positioning aimed to highlight one or more "positive" aspects that can create reasons of attention/attraction.

The development of an institutional brand as a priority vehicle for a modern and homogeneous communication of tourism offer allows, when well designed, both short- and long-term benefits. Associating the multifaceted system of the offering to a distinctive graphic sign becomes the glue that holds together the different tourist offers, ensuring identity and common purpose, requiring a strategic and integrated vision developed into a geographic perspective of overcoming the institutional constraints that may impede a common and effective strategy. The first action therefore concerns the increasing of the reputation and the placement of a "new" proposal in the imagination of tourists.

In particular, the main problems that must be taken into account for the effective management of branding policies relate to administrative and political management, the multidimensionality of the factors of communication, effectiveness of the scale to which they relate and, finally, to the ability to respond to the new challenges posed by contemporary society.

The identification of the boundaries of the tourist destination area to which the brand reports is inevitably related to the identification of the governing body responsible for the branding activities and the resulting co-existence of different levels of land management, each with different goals and philosophies of branding. This condition in multi-brand territorial management overlaps with the need for coexistence between public and private brands. The cooperation between different sectors, both public and private, is one of the strongest needs for defining competitive identity, as it provides a reversal of thought - identity management is not a practice that stands alongside the normal practice of government, but must

⁴ The literature coined the terms "Place Brand," "Country Brand," "Nation Brand" and "Brand City" to define specific fields of action of the various policies of territorial branding. This document refers to regional branding policies with the objective of promoting tourism purposes.

be an integral part of this. This objective can be realised only if institutions, entrepreneurs and civil society are involved in a joint effort.

Territorial multiplicity is also reflected in the presence of multiple stakeholders (with not always compatible expectations and for which the tourist development of area is not necessarily a priority) and the difficulty of synthesizing, through a single brand, a portfolio of very heterogeneous territorial activities. Frequently, the use of these territorial options is characterized by their experiential nature and for the existing territorial hierarchy that can be marked by the coexistence of geographical and historical brands consolidated alongside the newest products and tourist destinations.

As for Italy, the promotion of Rome and its region Lazio is emblematic. For some years, these territories were promoted as one, trying to realize a single promotional activity that exploited the driving effect of the reputation of the city of Rome to launch the "Lazio brand" on domestic and, especially, international markets. It has now returned to a model of communication that considers the two territories as separate, and which required the adoption of completely different models of communication.

The geographical configuration of the reference scale is a matter of considerable importance. In a regional branding policy, in fact, the geographical contexts of proximity are without doubt the most receptive. Physical proximity determines neighbourly relations and, therefore, of knowledge, solving the issues of accessibility and travel times that are among the main factors influencing the choice of a journey, effectively promoting it.

The brand strategy declined in these terms, therefore, favours the short-range approach, considering the contiguity not only as a spatial dimension but also, and especially, a temporal one. The infrastructure links that reduce travel times, and particularly air links (point to point), define a new horizon of contiguity of accessibility in a short time, determining a new geography of relationships.

In the long term this correlation is dramatically reduced and regional brands are less powerful. As a result, on domestic markets a localistic promotional approach, based on regional singularities, has good value and a considerable impact; on international markets, however, the visibility must be achieved by connecting to a well-known and accredited institutional brand.

The branding policies, then, cannot avoid considering the contemporary dimension of communication, more and more characterized by the specific gravity assumed by the technological component and with the processes of fragmentation and convergence of information simultaneously appearing.

The progressive approval of the message and the uniqueness of evocative contents risk producing the opposite effects to that intended, such as homogeneity rather than differentiation, and approval rather than innovation.

Under the pressure of these factors, promotion of the territories has to rethink the classical setting of communication, founded on unidirectional and hierarchical dynamics, exploring the new opportunities offered by the digital society but constantly holding the difficulty of capturing the attention in a landscape populated by a multiplicity of overlapping ideals.

In this respect, the technique of guerrilla marketing that attempts, with unconventional marketing actions, to capture the attention on identity, values and offers of the territories gains some interest

Basilicata. What a discovery!

The Basilicata region, a new entry on the touristic market, is of some interest in terms of brand positioning. The market, though not particularly large, is steadily growing, with 517 million arrivals in 2012, representing a slow but progressive growth index of increasing attractiveness even in a time of deep economic and financial crisis on a global scale.

However, the growing interest in this place of culture, nature and adventure, proposed as a destination for the "good life" and "well-being," a place for those who want to take care of themselves, has not yet been translated into real and effective travel choices.

These transformations take place only thanks to attractive and competitive offers and through the quick adoption, by the private system supported by the public, of strategies and advanced tools in the promotional marketing.

The growing market shares are, furthermore, those of the domestic market related to the Italian regions - international tourism comprises only 5% of the total, a dimension which reflects a regional infrastructural deficit (only the eastern part, and in particular Matera, are able to attract a significant share of foreigners), and the difficulty of a marginal and little-known brand to succeed in international markets or geographically farthest.

Considering the Italian case, it is easy to detect that mass schooling has contributed to spreading a geographical and historical culture. So, a region like Basilicata, perceived as small and fair, is not completely absent in the imagination of Italians, though scarcely present in terms of its cultural, historical, economic and social status. However, even though it enjoys some notoriety in the neighbouring regions of Puglia, Campania and Calabria, further away, in other regional contexts, this is not the case.