



# Manual

FOR TOUR GUIDES AND  
TOURIST ANIMATORS



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## ***Dear readers,***

In your hands you are holding a tool you can use to make your dream job come true. Tourism has such a vast potential it can be very hard to determine where to start and what to work on. This is what inspired us to write this guidebook for all the people motivated to get their hands busy deep in the noble professions of tourism.

This manual is developed by local tourism experts based on the answers of guides and tourism stakeholders from the region, a real input we provided to get a clear view into the current situation and the needs of the people working in the relevant field.

All the topics covered in the following forty pages are to some extent answering the needs of the tour guides to achieve their goal. This manual is about the position of the region on the global tourism map. It includes marketing and strategic orientation guidelines based on external and objective observations of the current situation on the market.

It describes the profile and the characteristics of tour guides and tourist animators for the development of skills and qualities each should have - in addition to the detailed description of work tasks and expected features, it includes 3 exercises (challenges) for acquiring key skills.

It also explains the preparation of a tourist product step by step and examples for rural tourist products are given. Sales and promotion are briefly explained, with examples how to be effective nowadays. It contains a description of what a tour looks like from beginning to end, and offers bullet points on what should and should not happen. And of course, we briefly explain how to become a tour guide in our region. Covering all these topics with this manual we hope to meet the needs of tour guides and animators and prepare them to promote the beauties and attractions of the wonderful region in which we live.

*By the authors,*

**Leonida Penka Basha Rizaova**  
**Irda Kureta**





# INTRODUCTION TO TOURISM

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Tourism has turned out to be an economic booster contributing to the economic development of many countries over the last few decades. People see holidays as a necessity, and not as luxury in the present scenario. Tourism calls for coordination and cooperation between travel agents, tour operators, and tourists. Tourism has a few major elements – destinations, attractions, sites, accommodation, and all ancillary services.

Tourism involves the activities of people travelling and staying in a place away from their home environment for leisure, business or other purposes.



Mathieson and Wall (1982) define tourism as follows –

*"The temporary movement of people to destinations outside their usual places of work and residence, the activities undertaken during their stay in those destinations, and the facilities created to cater to their needs" <sup>1</sup>.*

By definition, tourism is when a person leaves his/her place of residence - in order to visit other places, for pleasure, learning or business. When children leave the school and visit the nearby forest to study evergreen trees, they actually participate in educational tourism. At the same time, employees sent on a business trip by their employer immediately become business tourists. People who travel to the neighbouring big city or neighbouring country in order to buy better or cheaper products are tourists who go on a shopping tour.

Alternative tourism is an exclusively theoretical term, introduced to distinguish it from the mass tourism that was so popular until recently. Mass tourism involves large numbers of tourists during holiday seasons, ready-made holidays in the most organized way, whether travelling to the sea or to a mountain. Alternative forms of tourism are designed to offer a change in the scheme and to turn the visitor into a person with identity and specific needs, not to be seen only as a room number in a nameless hotel.

Tourism has mainly been traditional in its early form. With the evolution of cultures, economies, and knowledge, tourism took a different form called sustainable tourism with the aspect of well-planned tours, well-studied

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<sup>1</sup> Mathieson and Wall (1982)

destinations, and conservation of destinations. The World Tourism Organization emphasizes the term Sustainable Tourism: "Tourism that fully takes into account the current and future economic, social and environmental impact, meeting the needs of the visitors, the industry, the environment and the host communities".

Further in the theory, ecotourism is defined as "responsible travel to natural areas that preserves the environment and improves the well-being of the local population". While "natural tourism" simply describes the journey to natural sites, ecotourism is a kind of natural tourism that contributes to local communities and destinations ecologically, culturally and economically.

Ecotourism is a set of principles that are successfully implemented in different global communities and are supported by extensive industrial and academic research. Ecotourism, when properly implemented on the basis of these principles, demonstrates the benefits of social and ecologically sound development of tourism.

Like ecotourism, sustainable tourism and responsible tourism are rooted in the concept of sustainable development or development that "meets the needs of the present without jeopardizing the ability of future generations to meet their needs". Given this concept, sustainable tourism is defined in Agenda 21 of the tourism industry in 1992 as tourism that "meets the needs of the present tourists and the host regions, while protecting and improving the opportunities for the future".

According to the Adventure Travel Trade Association (ATTA), the industry lately focuses on: ecotourism, cultural tours, and environmentally sustainable tourism products, hiking and cuisine. Bicycle activities are also popular in certain regions.

### **Some figures and data**

The European Parliament stated that the number of visiting tourists in Europe is likely to double by 2025, reaching a billion and opening over 5 million new jobs.

It is expected to consist of about 10% of the Old Continent's GDP. During trips considered in alternative categories, more than in the mass categories, a total of 67 % of travel costs are estimated to remain in the local region.



*"The traveller sees what he sees;  
the tourist sees what he has come to see..."*

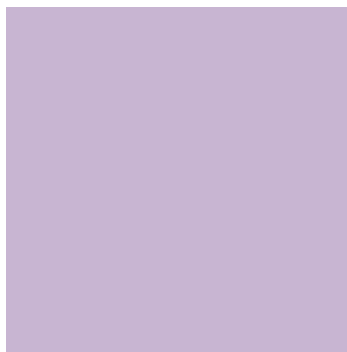
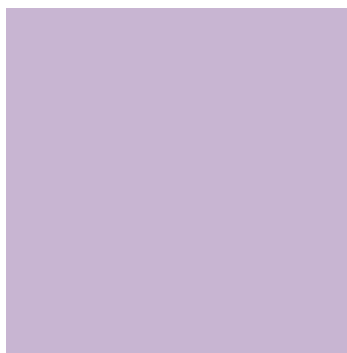
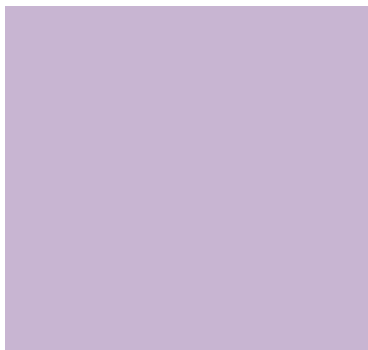
– G. K. Chesterton, an English Writer, Poet, and Philosopher.

Travel categories that get more interest from customers include "short trips", "long stays abroad", "custom-made programs" and "family - multigenerational trips".

Tour operators estimate that customers traveling in organization of travel companies spend about \$142 per person on local handicrafts or souvenirs.

Regarding the demographics of adventurous travellers, the largest group of around 40% is ranging between the ages of 50 and 70 and the average age of the adventurous traveller is 47.







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# CHALLENGES AND ADVANTAGES OF NEW DESTINATIONS

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# CHALLENGES AND ADVANTAGES OF NEW DESTINATIONS

This chapter will briefly explain the region's position in the global tourist image. Before you read it, it is very important to try to answer the following questions:

- 1) Where do your clients come from, which countries?
- 2) What percentage of residents of these countries is aware of the existence of your destination?
- 3) Which destinations or service providers are your competition?

If you search for travel destinations on Google, you will see a list that looks like this:

This Year's Most Popular Travel Destinations:

- Rio de Janeiro
- St Martin / St Maarten
- Playa del Carmen, Mexico
- Dubai
- Grand Cayman
- Kathmandu
- Bora Bora
- Cusco, Peru

Have you visited these places? Can you find them on the map without hesitation? These are the places that your future customers are visiting today. This is your competition. The ones you have listed above, answering the third question, are probably your potential strategic partners.



*"All you need is the plan, the road map, and the courage to press on to your destination".*

– Earl Nightingale – an American Radio Person, Writer, and Speaker.

Tourism is a relatively young, fast-growing service activity that is very flexible for innovation. Novelties are quickly applied and if they prove to be functional - they become a new norm. This is valid for both technological advancements (online

booking, online paying, sharing experiences and recommendations, mobile applications), as well as innovation in services and experiences (family hotels, pet friendly hotels, fly-drive hotels, accommodation with outside mountain spa, api-treatment, air-treatment etc.).

Recently on the world stage in tourism movements, predominant were tourists from Western countries who visited established or popular tourist destinations across Europe, the United States, Asia and island destinations. The global picture has recently changed due to two important factors: Increasing number of tourists and tourist movements and technological developments in the context of tourism industry.

Trends resulting from these influences have opened unlimited opportunities for new destinations in countries without centuries-old tourist history, as well as for 'unsuitable' and unknown places.



*"Travel makes one modest.  
You see what a tiny place you occupy in the world".*

– Gustave Flaubert, French Novelist.

Technological progress each day is transforming the tourism market. Websites, such as [www.agoda.com](http://www.agoda.com), [www.airbnb.com](http://www.airbnb.com), [www.booking.com](http://www.booking.com), [www.ebookers.com](http://www.ebookers.com), [www.expedia.com](http://www.expedia.com), [www.hotel.com](http://www.hotel.com), [www.lastminute.com](http://www.lastminute.com) and [www.trivago.com](http://www.trivago.com) are just some of the platforms without which global tourism cannot be imagined. Trends require even greater availability of information, booking and direct contact between the destinations and the consumers around the world.

With the increasing number of specialized web portals for accommodation, plane tickets, rent a car and package arrangements, new needs and challenges are emerging on the market. Some of these opportunities, relevant to new destinations, are:

- Direct online marketing;
- Instant communication between service providers and potential tourists;
- Tourists plan and reserve their own services;
- Social media impact.

Although the influence of classic travel agencies has been reduced due to this development and implementation of tourism technology, for new destinations not identified on the market, cooperation with a classic travel agency offers an opportunity to reach customers and tourists who would otherwise not be "encouraged" to visit a new, unknown destination. This is a special target group that is not available for us in any other way than through cooperation with travel agencies in the countries of the target zone.

Due to the availability of the offer and the commercial prices that can be found on the Internet, a common trap is the reduction of prices for the purpose of competitiveness. This is an amateurish and suicidal measure for new destinations. The price should always be formed with reservations and taking into account all the costs and quality of the offer. It is important to check what the competition is offering, but not to copy them in every move.

All of these conditions on the global market dictate the strengths and weaknesses of new destinations and specific service providers with limited positioning resources. But, in addition to all of this, it is impossible to develop any industry without proper support from the local and central government. Since the authorities in each country are inert and find it difficult to keep pace with the changed situation, the business sector in our dynamic industry should always openly and intrusively express its demands, and be persistent and consistent in them.

### **Destination development practices**

Destination is the basic component of tourism. Identifying and capturing the essence of the place is vital for the tourism business to do well. If an attractive place is turned into a destination, the place generates high revenue from tourism.

A tourist destination can be a city, town, or other area. It is dependent on the revenues accruing from tourism. It is marketed or markets itself, as a place for tourists to visit. It may contain more than one tourist attraction.

A tourist destination has certain characteristics that attract tourists to spend time there. It can attract tourists for its inherent or exhibited natural or cultural value, historical significance, flora and fauna, natural or built beauty, offering leisure, adventure and amusement.

Today, Destination Management focuses on the development and management of destinations to provide highly satisfying experience to the visitors without hampering the local culture and environment.



## **THE FOLLOWING FACTORS SHAPE THE DESTINATION APPEAL - THE FIVE A'S**

### **Accessibility**

It is the ability to reach to a place of destination by opting one or multiple means of transportation. The transportation should be timely, convenient, inexpensive, and safe. Today there are various means of transportation like airlines, railways, surface transportation and water transportation.

### **Accommodation**

It is a place where the tourists can avail food and shelter on payment. Today, a wide range of accommodations are available ranging from a basic budget accommodation to elite class seven-star hotel suites.

### **Attraction**

It is a place of interest where tourists visit, typically for its inherent or exhibited, natural or cultural value, historical significance, or natural or artificial beauty. The attraction creates a desire to travel to a specific tourist destination. They also offer leisure, comfort, adventure, or amusement.

### **Activities**

Activities are what the tourists perform for fun and amusement. For example, boating, mount biking, canoeing, horse / donkey riding and visiting a place.

### **Amenities**

Amenities refer to the beneficial services offered to the tourists like visitor information centres, telecommunications, roads, drinking water, toilet blocks, garbage bins, etc.

Here are some of the decisions that depend largely on regulators, and have a huge impact on the work and development of tourism in new and not popular destinations:

## Investments in tourist sites

Recognizing the value of tourism, many countries have begun investing in the development of new tourist locations, as well as improving the capacity of existing destinations, such as developing more attractions, building new hotels, etc.

Firstly, this is especially true for large countries, where domestic tourism may become more attractive as a substitute for vacation abroad.

Secondly, as the preferences and wishes of consumers change, and in the habits of the new generations that come, we can note a difference in the preferences of potential tourists. More often they choose to visit new and exotic places instead of traditional tourist destinations.

The development of transportation and better transport connections are a very important segment for which the new destinations should assert to the local authorities and to the transport providers as well. Highways and railways tend to encourage domestic and regional travel more than international trips. Modernized, renewed and efficient, they will serve to promote more domestic and regional travel destinations. On the other hand, the air transport infrastructure should be maximized in cooperation with low-cost carriers. Although this may not seem very significant in presenting the destination, still it plays a big role in affirmation of the destination on international level.

Whatever the pace of tourism development would be in the forthcoming years in our regions and countries, it cannot be done much without the professional enhancement of tourism professionals on a micro level. It might be one of those questions: what came first, tourists or tourism development? And the answer is: every development, especially the nature friendly and the sustainable one, is in a way a synergetic process. That is why we need the driver of the big wheel of changes in the tourism sector: the professionals.



*"In the end, all business operations can be reduced to three words; people, product, and profits. Unless you have got a good team, you cannot do much with the other two".*

– Lee Lacocca, American Automobile Executive.

Let's focus on two of the most crucial and most relevant professions in tourism in emerging destinations in the next few chapters.





# TOUR GUIDE - PROFILE AND FEATURES

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## TOUR GUIDE - PROFILE AND FEATURES

Theoretically, a tour guide is a person authorized by the national authorities, which takes the visitors to a specific location or region, while explaining the attractions, points of interest of cultural or natural heritage, and answering visitors' questions related to areas in which he/she is qualified.

From the tourists' aspect, a tour guide is the person responsible for a well-performed walk, where visitors are impressed by what they have seen, satisfied with the atmosphere of the walk, and at the same time gaining deep knowledge about the culture, history, the characteristics of the visited places, the natural wealth and especially the lifestyle of the local population.



*Being a tour guide is one of the most rewarding jobs in the world.  
You do for a living what others only get to do on vacation,  
you get to meet amazing people from all over the world  
and you get to marvel at some awe-inspiring sites on a daily basis.  
But that does not mean to say it is easy...*

Being a tour guide is also a very challenging job and one that is not for everybody.

### QUALITIES AND SKILLS - EVERY TOUR GUIDE SHOULD HAVE

From the tour guide's aspect, it is very important to love the job and to own and develop the following characteristics that will make him/her successful:

#### **Communication skills**

Being a tour guide means having effective communication skills. It is okay if you are an introvert person, but the job requires you to interact with new people on a daily basis, and you should be able to do it well. At a basic level, guides need to be excellent in projecting their voices in a group, so they can communicate in a clear, easily understandable manner. At the interpersonal level, to know how to interact well with people is a huge advantage. This leads us to the skills in the next paragraph no.2



## **Pleasant and approachable/friendly**

This skill brings the communication to the next level. Guides should not only be able to communicate well, they should be great talkers and open as individuals; what we call "the star of the show", which is not something you can learn. There is almost always a social discomfort when a new group of foreigners arrives, and the tour guide's task is to come out of this situation quickly and smoothly, turning the atmosphere into a relaxed and comfortable one for all.



*Vacations are not about sitting and listening to other people – they are about chatting and meeting people. This could be fellow travellers or the people guiding them on tours or activities. Make sure to engage with the people you are guiding and give them one more person to remember their trip by.*

## **Excellent memory – be knowledgeable**

Tour guides need to have wide knowledge and to know many facts. When you are with a group, it is almost impossible to use a written reminder, simply, whatever you want to tell the tourists you need to know it, to remember it well and to know the subject thoroughly, so that you can answer questions related to the topic. People are more impressed by stories than by dull facts, so remember well all legends and anecdotes related to the places you visit. Storytelling is no mean feat– it is down to timing, the length of the story, punch lines (if there are any) and more. Know exactly when you are going to tell a story, decide how long it should be and practice it over and over again until you've completely nailed it.



*If you are extremely knowledgeable and equally charismatic, but you do not interact with your group, it is going to make them feel like they are following their history teacher around. It will also feel like it is all one-way in terms of communication.*

## Good organisational skills

Timing is key when you are a tour guide. You need to be at certain places at certain times, then at those places you can only spend a given amount of time – spending any more or less time than you are supposed to, can throw off the entire itinerary for the day. Look at your itinerary and make sure you know where you need to be and when. Then, every day when you are at those places, review your time spent there and decide if the amount of time spent there was sufficient - do you need more time or do you need less?

Additionally, you might need to hold on to a bunch of entrance tickets to get your group into a national park or you might need to take care of a heap of bus tickets. Organisation, when you are a tour guide, is a key.

## Improvisation skills

Nobody wants improvisers, but the ability to improvise to adjust the conditions and boost the energy of the group is priceless for a guide. As a tour guide, your day can be unpredictable. The weather can quickly change, things can break, and your tour group could be very different from the last. It is so important to be flexible, prepared, and a master at improvisation. It will take time to be able to plan for any situation, but the key thing is to learn each time when something happens.

Tourists are likely to have additional questions or claims that have nothing to do with the tour before they arrive. It is important to answer the questions and to help them with solutions, just as it is important to follow the set agenda. The guide should find the ideal balance between devoting attention to individuals with questions and problems and using group time in group activities.



*If you adhere too much to the prepared scenario,  
you could make your guests feel like  
there is no room to say anything at all.*

## Enough enthusiasm

Tour guides and tourists are constantly exchanging energy, which if it is not positive - it is automatically negative, and if it is excessively positive, it can seem

fake and repulsive. The tour guide must believe and have a positive attitude to what he says, it is okay to be passionate about certain topics, but not at the cost of entering into conflict with any of the tourists.

### **Be empathic**

When you are dealing with multiple people in a host of situations, you are bound to occasionally find yourself in uncompromising situations with some members of your group. For these instances, empathy is key. You might be dealing with somebody who has just heard bad news from back home, or somebody who has an embarrassing fear or somebody who has a disability. Just know that with a little more empathy, a lot more understanding and problem solving can be done.

### **Humour**

You do not need to be a stand - up comic to be a tour guide, but being able to liven things up with a joke here or there certainly helps. While making fun of one of the members of your group can be risky, making fun of yourself is one way you can try to wrangle a smile from your group. Other methods can include bringing humour into aforementioned stories, having light hearted facts or taking advantage of (what could be) a funny situation on the spot.

So, humour can be a perfect tool for reducing tensions, improving the general atmosphere and encouraging friendship. The humour should be moderately dosed, in the right time and absolutely not at the expense of any of the visitors or of their characteristics.

### **Punctuality**

Punctuality is an important feature for tour guides, because they are the ones who often set the place and time for meeting or for a particular activity. If the tour guide is not on time at the specific place at the specific time, the incoming visitors will have an impression of unprofessionalism, and there will be confusion, frustration that will eventually result in unhappy tourists.

### **Developed orientation skill**

Whether you are a city or nature guide, you need to know where you are going. Moreover, you need to be able to give them precise instructions and directions, and to help the tourists to follow them. Lost and disoriented tourists are a

prerequisite for discontent. It may seem obvious, but some people do not have a natural sense of direction or can be hindered in a stressful situation. You never know when you might need to go off route, so a good sense of direction is key.



*Another thing that any tour guide will know is that customers tend to ask you for local information.*

*Where to hire a car?  
Where is the doctor's office? Where to go for dinner?*

*By doing your research, you can offer something extra to your customer's experience.*

### **Local knowledge**

Everyone can remember and recite facts that can be easily searched and found on Google. If you are a local from the region, you have a prerequisite to spice it up with your local insights, experiences and personal anecdotes. This can make the tour especially exceptional for guests looking for a real experience besides the typical tourist attractions.

### **Passion for the location**

Last but not least, real passion can turn the tour into an unforgettable experience. You need to awaken your love for the region and to transfer it to the tourists, free from everyday discontent and daily political events. Tourists have come to see what is good, and not what is bad in your country, and therefore keep the complaining and whining for your friends.



*You must be passionate about being a tour guide:  
If you are not excited about what you do or sharing an experience with new people, then being a tour guide probably is not the right job for you. Customers are paying for a memorable experience, and whether this is trip number 1 or trip 10,000, they should never know.  
A real passion for what you do does shine through, so always remember to share that with your customers.  
You will see it will be reflected in reviews every time!*

## CHALLENGES FOR SKILL ACQUISITION FOR TOUR GUIDES

### CHALLENGE NUMBER 1:

#### **A tour guide has to be fluent in some foreign language.**

However it is heart-warming to hear that someone speaks at least few words in you language. Get ready for the tourists by writing down few most common words in their language and learning them by heart. Say thank you, welcome, good morning and bye in their language all the time. You can use Google translate features to practice the pronunciation and after a while you will probably be able to chat in more than 20 languages.

If you want to use your free time to learn another language, check out [Duolingo app](#).

### CHALLENGE NUMBER 2:

#### **Traffic light answer**

Your first response is 'red light' - I do not know. The 'green light' is a topic you know about and you can give detailed answer about. You need to just find a link between the two topics, which you will use as a yellow light. For example, a tourist asks whether the name Shkup derives from a German word, because it sounds German. I am clueless in German language and I do not want to repeat the story of where the name of the city comes from, just say

Red light: I do not speak German, so I would not know,

Yellow light: but many words have derived from German in our language

Green light: my favourite example, our word for a king, is 'kral'. This is the title, but it derives directly from the German king Carl. The way Carl is pronounced is too hard for the Slavic pronunciation, so the word 'kral' emerged, literally naming the title after this particular king.

Try to come up with your own example.



### **CHALLENGE NUMBER 3:**

#### **Good orientation in open space.**

It does not matter whether you are guiding people in town, in nature or in the mountains, your space orientation must be on top level. You can practice it every time you have to plan a route or when you are out and about a certain place, by taking an alternative route from A to B and trying to guess how much time it will take. This way you learn the terrain better and minimize the opportunity to make mistakes once you are with a group.



*“People who spend money on experiences report being happier than those who spend money on objects”.*

– Anonymous, [thepsychmind.com](http://thepsychmind.com).







# TOURIST ANIMATOR - PROFILE AND FEATURES

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# **TOURIST ANIMATOR - PROFILE AND FEATURES**

One of the main roles of the animator is to help people feel comfortable talking to each other and to their guide. This ensures that later they feel free to add comments or ask questions about the activities, but also to relax themselves and contribute to the entertainment and good atmosphere.

Animation in tourism is a specific form of complementary product. Animation itself is not a stand-alone product or service, it can appear as enriching or perfecting an existing offer.

According to the etymological origin of the word, animation is an activity that aims to revive the tourist offer and motivate the visitors to participate in it. Most generally, it means enriching tourist content. The animation is a series of sports-recreational, cultural and entertainment contents, which motivate visitors to participate actively and dynamically in them during the stay.

A modern visitor, a resident of an urban environment, is often unable to establish contact with other people, although he feels the need for it. Communicating is an integral segment of animation. Under the animator's guidance, communication is accomplished by the formation of smaller groups within the mass of tourists, grouped spontaneously by common activity. The animator is a mediator with whose help visitors start easier communication, participate in a fun or relaxing activity.

For the successful realization of an animation activity, the animator must have a previous knowledge of social psychology: what is the motivation in each of the participants of the group - the activity itself, the attractiveness of the other members of the group, and the possibility of the participants to demonstrate their abilities.

The significance of the animation is reflected in an active and rich content and apart from the cost of the package tour offer, tourists tend to spend money additionally.

Local tourist spots do not have an animation service. They do not understand the importance of this segment in the tourist offer, and sometimes they even it out with simple entertainment by a talented individual. This degrades its function and prevents the optimal utilization of the benefits.

For successful animation of visitors, the animator must perform complex and dynamic tasks. It involves personal integrity, soft skills, a basic general education and specialization in certain activity.

The basic factor for successful animation is successful communication. Information is understandable only if the recipient understands it completely without the need of additional explanations. Tourism requires high professionalism from the communicator, and recipients are often a heterogeneous mass with different characteristics and understandings. It is therefore important that communication is as simple as possible: to use the language purely and grammatically, to keep an eye on the shape of the content, speech techniques, and concreteness.



*"Recreational activities amongst the significant factors affecting the extension of length of stay of tourists"*

- Van Doorn

In addition to general managerial skills, the animation manager is required to be a pre-eminent person full of eagerness and fantasy. It is his job to make the impossible become possible after all, because goods are not sold in tourism, but services, pleasures that are often quantitatively immeasurable. In fact, satisfying the needs of visitors should be the primary goal of all participants in tourism, because in addition to the immediate goal it accomplishes, this reflects on the reputation of the destination, the continuation of the tourist season and profit making in general.

By definition, animation management involves work with very limited resources, personal contacts, continuous planning, organizing, coordinating and controlling the resurgence of tourists. In practice, the management of animation includes: planning and making a program, organizing staff, technique and space, conducting activities, selecting and coordinating animators, communicating and ultimately evaluating the process.

There are several directions of animation: sports and recreation, cabaret - entertainment, outdoor activities, excursions and visits.

When it comes to the personal characteristics of individuals who want to deal with animation, because the animator's activity is bound to the subjective reasoning of the group members, their outward appearance should be pleasant and moderate.

So, we can conclude that each animator should:

- Be likeable, genial, tolerant, forbearing, trustworthy, contemporary, humanist;
- Have an excellent communication and perception skills and a sense of humour;
- Represent the group, the establishment, and the country;
- Be devoted to the establishment from the heart;
- Be a source of information;
- Consider both formal and informal relations;
- Have the skills to teach and demonstrate the activities;
- Have the ability to solve problems;
- Notice that the guests are from different nationalities and have different cultures;
- Be open-minded and objective.

The most desirable professional trait of an animator is “smile”, which also means inducing a smile among tourists. To achieve this, the animator needs to be energetic. Animation is a perfect profession for people who like to play the role of leaders; the animator is a “showman”, a charismatic person who people tend to follow. Public performances, acting, dancing or singing are not unfamiliar to him/her. Each animator is expected to be open to others, to see their needs, to be friendly, kind, polite and to have a high level of personal culture. One of the many tasks of animators is to popularize physical activity and encourage guests to be active. It is impossible to perform this task without being dynamic and physically fit. In addition, the animator needs to have an uncommon imagination and be very creative. He/she also has to know how to use persuasion and how to lead people.



*Passion and engagement are crucial  
in the performance of leisure time animation*

## **CHALLENGES FOR SKILL ACQUISITION FOR TOURIST ANIMATORS**

### **CHALLENGE NUMBER 1: Initiating an activity**

Motivating tourists to engage in activities beyond their comfort zone can be harder than it seems. Basically, there are two types of motivation - internal, which comes from the values, interests, characteristics of the person and the image for themselves, as well as external motivation that comes from the rewards for the activities, the attention and reactions of other people. The invitation to engage in certain activities should strongly encourage one of these two categories.

With what words would you invite a middle-aged couple, a family with young children, and a group of teenagers?

### **CHALLENGE NUMBER 2: Adapting content to tourists**

Regardless of the content that is the subject of the animation, you need to practice a quick assessment of the individual opportunities and needs of the involved tourists, and know the purpose of the activities and adapt them to specific situations. This may seem easy in the physical sense, but it does not only apply to it. There are subtle interpersonal relationships in smaller groups such as family or friends that make up the larger group of tourists. Activities should loosen these roles, but not to the extent that they violate some of the unwritten rules, so none of the participants may experience intense negative emotions.

### **CHALLENGE NUMBER 3:**

#### **Clear transmission of information and instructions**

Long sentences can exclude listeners' attention, but non-verbal communication: emphasis on words, rhythm of speech and properly used pauses will facilitate the listening and transmission of information.

We will achieve the specificity by applying journalistic techniques as information structure where information is structured to respond to "5W" - WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN, WHY. Such structured information would look like: the group (who) to come (what) in the back yard of the hotel (where) at 9 am (when) to go hiking (why).



One of the main roles of the animator is to help people feel comfortable talking to each other and their guide. This ensures that later they feel open to adding comments or asking questions about the activities, but also to relax and contribute to the ambience of the atmosphere.

## **BE A TOUR GUIDE IN THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA**

A tour guide, according to the law regulating this activity in the Republic of North Macedonia<sup>2</sup>, is a person who presents to the domestic and foreign visitors in the Republic of North Macedonia: the natural and anthropogenic tourist attractions, the country's history and cultural-historical monuments, art works, ethnographic and other attractions, historical events, legends and characters associated with those events, the form of government; has communicative abilities, general knowledge of tourism and psychology of tourism, and knows the language used by foreign tourists.

According to Article 40 of the same law, the tour guide must fulfil the following requirements: be a citizen of the Republic of North Macedonia and have a place of residence on the territory of the Republic of North Macedonia. The tour guide must have at least secondary vocational training and certificate for passing the professional tour guide exam.

Be prepared to be a freelancer, in the good and bad context of the word. One of the most difficult aspects of this profession is the seasonality of the work. The fact that you often work one-time deals or a "temporary service contract" means that you yourself need to take care of your own health and pension insurance, being a tour guide means to be hired as a temporary worker.

As usually health insurance is provided through employers, you may need to coordinate your private insurance on your own. You will also need to be responsible and up to date in planning the funds and keeping a tax record.

To become a licensed guide in North Macedonia, you need to apply to one of the following institutions that offer accredited courses and programs by the state institutions.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.pravo.org.mk/documentDetail.php?id=655>

Relevant bodies and institutions for studying and licensing of a travel guide:

UTMS University of Tourism and Management, Skopje

UKLO University Kliment Ohridski, Ohrid

UGD University Goce Delchev, Stip

ZTVM Association of Travel Guides

FPSM Federation of Mountain Sports

## **BE A TOUR GUIDE IN THE REPUBLIC OF KOSOVO\***

According to law No. 03/L-168, of the Republic of Kosovo a tour guide is an authorized person who accompanies visitors and provides information on historical, cultural and other values according to the program or interest of visitors. The tour guide has to accompany a group of passengers or individuals, according to a predetermined program and to explain them the natural curiosities, cultural-historical heritage, ethnographic and other events of Kosovo.

Concrete activities have started for the development of tourism in Kosovo as well as repurposing of houses into guest houses, finding new tours, creating new tourist destinations, training guides, etc. But, there are no licensed tour guides in Kosovo and the lack of licensed and specialized tour guides undermines the image of the area.

There are two universities that treat the tourism sector related to the economy:

University of Applied Sciences in Ferizaj - Hotel and Tourism Management

University of Peja "Haxhi Zeka" - Management in Tourism

What needs to be done, is structuring of the certification and licensing process through appropriate legal or sub-legal acts, as well as the preparation of appropriate training modules by various authorised organisations for the training of tour guides. It should be taken into account the fact that professional human resources are particularly important, because tour guides have the potential to influence the perceptions of tourists regarding the quality of the tourist product in almost all destinations.



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# TOURISM PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT: A WAY TO CREATE VALUE

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# TOURISM PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT: A WAY TO CREATE VALUE

The management of tourism destinations is closely related with the policies that affect local development and the creation of value in a destination. That is why a sustainable tourism development policy should try to obtain a balance between cultural values, environmental attractions and economic results that the development of tourism can offer to a destination. Moreover, the tourism development policy should also take into account three key issues: establish development guidelines, determine and control planning processes and define the most adequate marketing strategies for the destination.

The creation of value in a tourist destination can be determined by the specialization through the creation of products targeted toward specific market segments. The creation of tourism products is a process that needs different elements and follows some steps. The initial step is where all basic elements are taken into account, afterwards the product is created and finally it is communicated to the market so that it can be consumed by a part of tourism demand.

## What is a tourism product?

A tourism product is defined by Bhupender Dighliya<sup>3</sup> as the sum of the physical and psychological satisfaction it provides to tourists during their travelling route to the destination. The tourist product focuses on facilities and services designed to meet the needs of the tourist.

Each tourism product has four basic constituents: attraction, access, accommodation and attitude.

When it comes to tourism products, literature on tourism marketing differentiates between macro- and micro-level approaches:

- At the micro-level the concrete services offered by a tourism enterprise can be seen as a tourism product;
- At the macro-level a tourism product is actually a tourism destination itself and the thematic services offered to satisfy tourist needs.

In other words, a tourism product is the union of the activities - potential set of services based on one attraction or several attractions, satisfying all needs of the guests that a tourist can pursue in a given destination. A complex tourism

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<sup>3</sup> BhupenderDighliya, PhD Research at Institute of Hotel & Tourism Management, MDU, Rohtak

product involves the total of attraction, accessibility, catering and hospitality. An effort must be made when making the tourism product for the optimal use of the opportunities of tourism.



*“Do not give up and always keep on believing in your product. Because if you do not, how can you make others believe in it?”*

– Niels Van Deuren, Founder, [housinganywhere.com](http://housinganywhere.com).

The tourism industry as a whole survives because of various tourism products and services. Tourism industry is flexible. The products of tourism cannot be easily standardized as they are created for the customers of varied interests and demands. As the tourism products are mainly the tourists' experience, they can be stored only in the tourists' memories.

### **Types of Tourism Products**

Tourism products are grouped into the following types:

- Tourism Oriented Products (TOP). These are the products and services created primarily for tourists as well as for the locals. These products need a great share of investments in the private sector.
- Residents Oriented Products (ROP). Here, the products and services are created mainly for the local residents staying at a particular tourist destination. This category requires investment in public sectors more.
- Intangible Products of Tourism. They include: Bookings of accommodations, theatres, and various sites. Tourists' experience by visiting a destination, eating at a restaurant, or performing an activity. Tourists' memory which is created by storing the details of events and experience on the tour. The high degree of satisfaction or dissatisfaction is often stored as a long term memory. Transportation of tourists and their luggage from one place to another.
- Tour Operator's Products and Services. To realize the facilities and experience a tourism product offers, service is required by skilled and qualified staff. The tour operator provides the following typical products and services: Accommodation; Reservations; Guided Tours; Transport Facilities (surface and air transport); Dining Facilities.

## **ELEMENTS OF A TOURISM PRODUCT**

The following are the key elements of tourism product:

### **The Physical Site**

It is tangible and is composed of various resources on which tourism is based. Plainly, the physical site is nothing but the destination with sound and catchy architecture that enhances tourists' experience. It can be:

- A natural attraction such as landscape, wild life, natural structure;
- A man-made attraction such as a resort;
- A fixed property such as an accommodation;
- A mobile property such as a ship or an airbus.
- A natural or manmade condition such as weather, crowd, infrastructure at the destination.

### **Service**

The features or facilities of the physical plant are put to use for the tourists with service. Providing services calls for a major contribution from human resources. It pertains to performing tasks for the benefit and satisfaction of tourists. For example, serving food in a hotel is a service by the staff there.

### **Hospitality**

It is the attitude with which the service is provided. Hospitality includes performing the service with a smile, enthusiasm, untiringly, and with dedication. For example, arranging guest room supplies or serving food or beverage in a presentable manner is part of hospitality.

### **Freedom of Choice**

It is offering tourists an acceptable range of options in order to elevate their experience. The degree of freedom varies greatly depending on the type of tourism (pleasure, business, family, or other), the tourist's budget, previous experience, knowledge, and reliance on a travel guide / agent.

A good tourism product must include some choice for its consumers. By offering some freedom to the tourists, the product gives some sense of control to the tourists. The freedom to choose an airline, a route, a seat, an accommodation,



or a restaurant can enhance a tourist's satisfaction. Freedom also implies good surprises. When the tourists come across unanticipated events, they get the feeling of being very fortunate to be in the right place at the right time, thereby gaining extra value from the visit.

## **Involvement**

It depends upon the quality of inner four elements. These elements prepare the tourists for physical, intellectual, and/or emotional involvement in tourism services. Involvement is not only the physical participation, but also a sense of engagement in an activity - may it be for pleasure or business.

The greater the involvement of tourists, the more they are interested in striking conversation happily with others, they are more enthusiastic and curious to try out new things, and time passes fast for them.

Thus, a combination of tourists' involvement, freedom of choice, service with hospitality and perfect destination (with all A's present) can make the best tourist product.



*The tourism product is not just presence of all five elements but it is also the interaction of these elements among themselves.*

## **Key Principles of Tourism Product Development**

A tourism product can be of any type from cultural, educational, recreational, heritage site, or a business hub. Tourism Product Development should:

- Be authentic and should reflect the unique attributes of the destination.
- Have the support of the host community.
- Respect the natural and cultural environments.
- Be different from the competitors, avoiding copying developments blindly.
- Be of sufficient scale to make a significant economic contribution, but not very large to create high economic leakage.

## Creation of tourism products

Based on the defined product portfolio and the specialized destination, it is time to create products and services to complement the basic tourism supply of accommodation and restaurants.

The creation of products follows a process that includes different elements. There are 5 different areas and the result is the stimulation of tourist consumption in a destination:

- **Initial stage:** existence of a motivation to travel.
- **Basis:** resources and attractions are the basis of a destination.
- **Creation process:** it requires not only the existence or creation of infrastructures, facilities and services but also the development of specific activities or experiences. The result of the process can be seen as the tourism supply of a destination.
- **Communication:** once tourism supply is created, there will be functional and emotional benefits that can be communicated to markets and target audiences through the creation of an image and the correct positioning. The values provided by the product should also be communicated and promoted to stimulate consumption.
- **Result:** the consumption of tourism products in a destination.

The process to create products is complex and it requires the existence of a management organization that should lead, coordinate, structure, develop and implement the process. It will also be necessary that all the different issues related to the process of product creation are coordinated to be able to guarantee its success, always taking into account the economic perspective, social development and protection of the environment.

## STEPS OF TOURISM PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

The following general steps are taken for tourism product development:

### Market Research

At this step, the tourism marketing force conducts research on the current market to identify the opportunities. It includes economy, study of various market segments and their varied requirements, past market data, and current market and tourism trends.

## **Match the Product with Market**

By assessing the market segments and conditions for tourism, different packages are created for various market segments such that they can satisfy the requirement of each segment of individuals.

## **Destination Assessment**

Since destinations form the basis of product development, the product development will attract more visits of this prospective tourism destination. Therefore, there is a need to assess its tourism potential and its ability to accommodate and serve the tourists, features of the destination, and its shortcomings. It is assessed to judge if the destination is fulfilling the requirement of Accommodation, Attractions, Activities, or Amenities. It is also checked for the ease of Accessibility.

## **Understand Role of Stakeholders**

Tourism product development is the result of collaborative efforts of various stakeholders. It involves identifying all the stakeholders in private and public sectors, DMOs (Destination Marketing Organization), Tourism and allied businesses, and their respective roles in creating or developing a part of a tourism product. The stakeholder meetings are conducted for creating a project plan. The project goals are set to realize long-term vision, medium-term action plans, and short-term progress assessments.

## **Product Building**

At this step, the product is actually built using required resources and consultations of the expertise to create intermediate inputs (facilities and amenities) and intermediate outputs (services). It encompasses not only development of destination infrastructure but also support for special activities and experiences.

## **Marketing & Promotion**

The functional and emotional benefits of tourism at the tourist destination are communicated to the market. The marketing people create brochures, place advertisements on business portals, and contact media to promote the destination and the product on television and radio. They also use various other marketing techniques to increase product visibility.

## **Providing Human and Technical Resource**

It includes providing skilled staff and contemporary technology to cater to the needs of tourists efficiently, to handle all tourism related operations at the destination effectively, and to communicate with the staff easily.



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# MARKETING MIX – SALES AND PROMOTION

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# MARKETING MIX – SALES AND PROMOTION

In order to achieve commercial success, tourism product designers and distributors offer products specifically adapted to consumer needs. These are sold at competitive prices and should be perceived to have a good quality—price ratio. The tour guides packaging and selling tourism products should enjoy a high reputation and an image of quality. Success depends on an expert knowledge of the market, skilful packaging of products and ability to commercialise them.

The tourism industry as a whole survives because of various tourism products and services. The tourism industry is flexible. The products of tourism cannot be easily standardized as they are created for the customers of varied interests and demands. As the tourism products are mainly the tourists' experience, they can be stored only in tourists' memories.

Tourism marketing is different because the customer purchases a series of services. While marketing a tourism product, the sales or marketing person insists on the positive facets of the following four components:

## **Product**

Tourism being a service, sold to customers, tourist experience is the product, which is intangible, and non-storable. The quality of the tourist experience as a product is directly proportional to the quality of the service a tourism business provides. The product must be designed to highlight its features and to satisfy the tourist's needs. If the product is branded, the customers find it more reliable.

## **Price**

Determining the price of the product requires consideration of three key factors:

- **Operating costs** – Operating costs include both fixed and variable costs. Fixed costs remain same regardless of the sales which involve building, insurance, and equipment costs. Variable costs include costs for wages, gas, electricity, cleaning, maintenance, repairing, materials used in production, office stationery, linen, food, petrol, machinery, uniforms, bank fees, marketing research expenses, and expenses for advertisements, promotions, brochures, and conducting consumer or trade events.
- **Profit Margins** – this is determined by comparing the competitors' offers and the own product offers. Profit margins are set without compromising the competitive advantage.

- **Intermediaries' Commissions** – Working with intermediaries incurs commissions. Commissions are the fees paid to the intermediaries to distribute and sell your product.

## **Place**

The place is where the tourists visit and stay. The potential of a tourist destination lies in its attractiveness or aesthetic value, accessibility, and the facilities it provides to the tourists. The tourists also seek a place highly ranked for the activities it offers, the amenities and skilled workforce it provides, and its location.

## **SALES IN TOURISM INDUSTRY – SELLING TOURISM PRODUCT**

The ability to sell and market products and services in the tourism sector is highly valued, especially when combined with excellent customer service. The following are some very important aspects for sales in tourism industry.

### **Free sale**

"Free Sale" refers to the selling of tickets (seats, accommodations) by a reseller or agent without any specific availability restrictions or, in some cases, a date requirement.

The Free Sale contract can be regarded as a sort of insurance contract regulating a "risk-transfer" transaction, through which the Tour guide grants against the economic risk of unsold rooms by booking in advance a certain number of rooms. The Hotel then gives in return a discount on booking price. Through this contract the Tour Guide purchases the agreed number of rooms (accommodations) related to a certain limited period of time and commits itself to pay the entire agreed price before the actual demand is known, independently of the future actual rooms' occupancy.



## **Partner sale**

Partnership is usually defined as a voluntary collaborative agreement between two or more parties in which all participants agree to work together to achieve a common purpose or undertake a specific task and to share risks, responsibilities, resources, competencies and benefits. Partner sales refers to businesses that offer together the same service or product. A channel partner is a company that partners with a manufacturer or producer to market and sell the manufacturer's products, services, or technologies. Also partnerships are what makes many tourist guides, travel companies and other related services in the area, to grow. By sharing with others, hotel companies, airlines, destinations, car rental companies can direct resources and capabilities to revenue improvement projects and growth ambitions. Today the most successful individuals / companies build bridges, and the selection of strategic partners with whom to collaborate is becoming more and more important.

## **PROMOTION OF TOURISM PRODUCTS**

Promotion is any form of communication an individual, business or organization uses to inform, persuade, or remind people about its products and improve its public image. Promotions refer to the entire set of activities, which communicate the product, brand or service to the user. The idea is to make people aware, attract and tempted to buy the product, in preference over others. In other words, Promotion is intended to inform the customers about the products, create an image about the product, and position the products on the market.

Based on the above, there are various effective ways of promoting tourism products, such as:

- Advertising the products in television commercials, newspapers, radio stations, and websites.
- Distributing promotional material through small gift items designed for promoting the product such as diaries, brochures, key-chains, wallets, purses, water bottles, pens.
- Setting Point of Sale, displays at various places such as retail stores, shops, malls, or petrol pumps.
- Promoting tourism products at local fairs.
- Promoting the products with their attractive features on the website of the tourism enterprise.

- Conducting programs of sponsorships, or promoting products by offering them as incentives.

## DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY IN TOURISM

Today, tour guides, tour operators and tourists, are all equipped with the latest technology. It has empowered the tourism business managers and tourists to explore, discover and reach new places by facilitating online travel and accommodation bookings, and more. Tourists use various mobile apps as simple as a compass app, online booking apps, currency converter apps, world time apps, language translation apps, weather apps, google maps, and restaurant or accommodation locating services on their mobile device. Tourists can also add their own data to create overlay on the Google Map and explore all possibilities in visiting a location by using Google Maps API. Some apps help to plan the tour, find out cheap flights, local transport, food services, and destination attractions.

Today, large tour operators invest finances to create their own mobile apps. They are inclined to use as little paper as they can and prefer to send pdf documents of itineraries to their customers and insurance documents to insurance service providing clients. They also use most of the apps the tourists use; plus, they highly rely on some webs / apps such as TripAdvisor, Kayak, mTrip app, which can connect them with the tourists on the trip, track the itinerary, and get on-the-fly information of the tour.



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Since technology is making tour guides / reach their customers and clients at the speed of light, the tour guides / use it for promoting their business and various products, increasing their brand awareness, knowing tourists' preferences, and providing easy access to their products and services.

## CREATIVE IDEAS TO MARKET YOUR DESTINATION

While searching for ways to boost your tourism marketing strategy, you have probably come across the same tired tips and advice on most of the sites you visit. Also, plenty of tourism businesses are marketing themselves in fun and creative ways that are both more efficient and more effective than what you are currently doing.

So let's jump right into the list...

1

### CREATING A TOURISM MARKETING PLAN FOR YOUR DESTINATION

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You might be thinking that this is not a creative marketing idea, but it comes in at number one because it is the base for the rest of your marketing activities. Without an effective marketing plan you are driving blind.

Creating a tourism marketing plan may be the most important thing you do for your internet marketing. Without a plan in place you will have a difficult time achieving your goals, have a hard time keeping track of what you are doing, why you are doing it and if it is even being effective!

The most effective marketers and marketing agencies are those with a detailed plan in place that they use to guide their marketing actions.

Creating a tourism marketing plan allows you to map out your step-by-step process to success, so start creating a marketing strategy document that you regularly update as your strategy changes.

2

### DRIVE EXPOSURE WITH INFLUENCER PROGRAMS

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Using online influencers as a way of marketing for hospitality is becoming more and more popular for a reason. It works!

Influencers are people who have established a following around their personal online brand. Think bloggers, YouTube vloggers, Instagrammers, etc.

Many influencers have large followings and a highly engaged audience. They have been creating content for a specific niche for a long time and their audience is always happy and even eager to see more from them.

So what do you do? Find an influencer that caters to your business and set up an exchange. It is a win-win. You help them create content and experience something new and you get to expose your business to a new audience.

For example: your mountain hostel could offer a few night accommodations in exchange for a short video on a travel Youtube vlogger's channel. Your destination 'winery' may want to be even more specific and ask a popular blogger who writes exclusively about wine to come for a visit and even a stay on the property for an all-inclusive, behind-the-scenes look.

The goal is to find someone who creates content that relates to your business and whose audience would be interested in what you have to offer. More often than not, the exposure costs you very little out of pocket. When you start working with influencers with a larger following you may be required to compensate them further, but the exposure is typically far greater.

### 3

#### CREATE AN AMAZING GUIDE ABOUT YOUR AREA

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Travellers are the lifeblood of the tourism industry. Therefore your tourism marketing needs to be focused around their wants and needs.

Most of them would not know your area as well as a local would (yes, you), and a fun, informative guide is something that they would consider extremely valuable.

Make the guide easy to read and understand. Make it skimmable. No matter how good it is, very few people will read it word for word. Include lots of ideas for things to do and places to see, as well as all of the other information you feel is important to know about your area. The more super-secret, "locals only" advice, you provide, the better.

Create a guide that you would want to sell or be willing to pay for, then give it away for free. That means high-quality photos and professional design.

### 4

#### BUILD A DISCUSSION PLATFORM ON FACEBOOK

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People visiting your area will have plenty of questions that they need answered before they come.

Are you beginning to see a theme here?

A great way to supercharge your tourism marketing is by creating a discussion platform around your Facebook page. Some businesses use their Facebook page as a customer-service platform.

You will be using it in a similar way, but instead of dealing with customer complaints you will be answering questions regarding your area quickly and informatively.

“What type of activities do you recommend for couples?”

“Do you know of a dog-friendly hotel in this part of town?”

“Is it difficult to use public transportation to get from here to there?”

Most of the questions you receive will be simple and the trust you will earn from the people visiting your page will be extremely valuable.

## 5

### CREATE AWESOME DESTINATION VIDEOS

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The whole online world is moving toward videos. It is time to get on the bandwagon. Videos convey a huge amount of information in very little time, so it is a great way to showcase who you are and what you do.

But do not go out and make a video that is just all about your business. Instead, show people your destination and help them out at the same time. We already talked about creating an informational guide about your area, why not turn that information into bite-size videos?

Create helpful videos that showcase things to do in your area, helpful tips about getting around, fun facts, and locals-only secrets. Share these videos on your website and social media. (Facebook is highly promoting videos and providing them with more exposure in users' news feed.)

## 6

### USE A CHALLENGE TO SPARK INTEREST IN A DESTINATION

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Challenges have become a well-loved internet sensation. Today, promoting your own challenge is easier than ever because people are far more likely to participate and share with their networks.

A challenge is when you challenge a group of people—this could be your email subscribers or Facebook fans—to do something for a certain amount of days.

Create a fun challenge related to your niche and get your existing customers to help spread the word via email, social media, etc.

For example, if you are an info point trying to get people excited and thinking about your location you could challenge your Facebook fans to share what they would do on a trip to your location. You would ask them to share every day for 7 days what they would do if they were visiting. You select one winner and provide them with a trip as a prize. Imagine the amount of buzz you could generate, if properly executed of course.

People love sharing this kind of content and the challenge will benefit you in another great way....



## GATHER USER-GENERATED CONTENT AND PROMOTE IT

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Challenges like the one described above can be used to create tons of awesome user-generated content. People love real-life examples of others using your product or visiting your destination.

The trust generated from a positive review or even a challenge photo will be highly influential and help others get to know your brand. People buy from brands they like and trust!

You do not need a challenge to find user-generated content though. People love to share and someone has probably already shared about your brand in one way or another.

Use tools like Social Mention.

**socialmention**  <http://socialmention.com/>

If someone shares a photo on Instagram or includes your business in a glowing YouTube video of their trip, ask permission and share it with your network.

If it is really good, pay to promote it and expose new people to these positive remarks about your brand!

## 8

### SHOW OFF WHAT MAKES YOU UNIQUE ON SOCIAL MEDIA

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Every business has something special that nobody else does. Whether it is the way restaurant servers carry wine to the table on three fingers, it is a stunning view, or even the unique way your staff greet your guests, it is something to show off.

In tourism internet marketing, these types of campaigns highlight the human side of your business and build trust with the people exposed to it.

Even if your business is not able to showcase a 5-star customer experience, you have something special to share. Just look a little harder!

If you or a member of your staff brings their pet to work, make a series of videos about the funny things it does or the way it interacts with your customers. These campaigns are easily shared, especially if they are funny, cute, entertaining, heartfelt, etc.

## 9

### FOCUS YOUR MARKETING BY TRAVELLERS TYPE

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One of the most important parts of any tourism marketing plan is to know who you are selling to. If you do not focus your approach, your efforts will get lost in the ether amongst the crowds of competition in your highly competitive industry.

Millennials (and anyone born from 1997 onward as part of a new generation), families, couples, seniors, backpackers.

Whom are you targeting? Do you know where to start?

If you own a vacation rental house in a mountain destination and your typical customers are families, start by targeting families interested in hiking instead of the general population. As you learn more about your customers, you can adjust the parameters and branch out.



## 10

MAKE THE MOST OF MOBILE

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Seventy-five percent of millennials would rather text than call, and spend more time on their phones than all other devices combined. They also travel more frequently than any other generation.

Market to them on mobile platforms and make sure your website is optimized for mobile devices when they end up there. That means: easy to navigate, fast loading, and a user-friendly layout.

Make the most of mobile tourism marketing by getting on the level of the majority of mobile users. Pictures tell a story faster, so create an Instagram account and post your best photos to it regularly.

Show your followers a unique view of your city that others are not sharing. Guide them through a virtual tour of your favourite things to do and see, with thoughtful photos.

Tell your story where they want to see it...on mobile.

## 11

HIGHLIGHT WHAT IS NEW IN YOUR AREA

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One of the best ways to differentiate your message from that of your competitors is by highlighting the things that are new and exciting in your area. Keep visitors in the know about important events and unique goings-on around you.

Put yourself in their shoes and showcase the things that would seem interesting, fun, and exciting if you were visiting from another part of the country (or world) and you had never experienced before.

## 12

**BONUS:** CONTACT TOURISM MARKETING COMPANIES & ASK FOR IDEAS

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Schedule a free consultation with tourism marketing companies.

Marketing companies that specialize in tourism marketing are experts in helping businesses like yours reach their ideal customers at different stages of the buyer's journey.



*Time to Get Started!*

*There you have it, now it is time to get marketing. You now have a lot of creative ways to start marketing your destination, so do not hold back. The worst kind of marketing is that which never gets done, so make yours a priority and get started today.*

*Who knows, this could be your best year yet!*

## **REALIZATION OF A TOUR FROM A TO Z**

Let's look at the practical realization of a tour. Here is a description of a typical tour.

### **Starting the tour**

To simplify the example, we will assume that you are meeting the group at the starting point, although often the tour can start with picking up the group from the airport, hotel or from another pre-destination.

The starting point is where you gather your group, you are introducing yourself and trying to learn as much as possible about the visitors. Of course, you will not be able to remember all the names, and there is no need, especially if it is a short tour. However, it is good to find out if the tourists were in this area / country before, what are their general interests? How much they already know about your topic (hiking, history, etc.).

If it is planned to take them to a hilly or mountainous terrain, it is also good to know how capable and fit your visitors are and if they have experience. At this point, you also need to check if they are ready (well-equipped) for the tour - this is especially important if you do not use a transportation vehicle. They should wear appropriate shoes, have enough water, sunglasses and sunscreen, etc. It is good to have a list of what is necessary and to check it and inform them before you start, so as you do not miss something. Briefly, in a few sentences, you explain to them what you will do together and how long it will last. Then you invite your visitors to follow you and you are guiding them on the predicted route.

### **Techniques and games for an upbeat atmosphere**

Do not forget, the tour should be a fun experience. You can fire your imagination and creativity here to the maximum; you can think of tricks to entertain your audience, preferably related to the topic and the route. It is advisable to include

tourists with an interactive game or discussion. The list of possibilities is endless, here are just a few examples:

Questions and Answers - the easiest method of involving your audience, especially when it is not just a general question for the whole group, but a personalized questionnaire directed to one or more people. The question itself can be very simple, such as "Who knows what this is?" Or more complex - "What do you know /what have you heard about ..." It may be a series of questions and this can be done as a game, for example, if you run a "circular" question where each participant must answer the question, and then ask the next participant to answer the next question.

Problem solving – another method with wide-range possibilities - that can include real solving of real problems (mathematical, logical) or various forms of puzzles, crosswords, riddles, etc. It can also be organized in the form of a competition, but do not forget that you should then have a prize for the winner.

Playing games - this method is always effective because we all want to play games, regardless of our age. Children's games are very suitable for adapting to different subjects, for example, charades (when one person has to explain the title of the movie without a single sound) or the telephone (the players form a line and a story has to be whispered from one person to other) are also very convenient for adaptation.

Most recommended are competitions in different forms, like Treasure hunt- a very popular method that can be used in almost every environment, hunting of many different types of treasures. The game "Hot and Cold" is a very eloquent example of a treasure hunting (participants look for a hidden object at one location and the host gives indications regarding the distance of the object, whenever someone gets closer to the object the host says that is "Warm", and "Cold" or "Colder" when away). Another example is word games. Tourists can also search for various signs in the forest. Again, the possibilities are numerous.

Practical tasks - when you ask the tourists to do something physically, such as walking on all fours as a bear that carries a thick fur (no need for real fur, you can use a carpet for the "bear's shoulders" and explain it: this is actually 1/3 of the body's weight of the animal). You may ask the tourists to "build" a fortress for you, on the place where a fortress really existed back in the past, by extending their hands and setting one to the other until it resembles the shape of the fort.

Dramatization - it is harder to organize, but it is usually very fun. You can have your own script/scenario and simply give roles to people. You can assign them a task to write a short scenario on a particular topic, or with given keywords, and then dramatize it. You can also split them into several groups and assign them a task to prepare a different end to the same story beginning, etc.

As one can conclude, planning interpretation tools can be just as much fun for the guide as for the visitors later. Just make sure that the instruments you use are appropriate for each specific target group.

### **Planning and handling materials**

While planning the tools you will use to engage your tourists, you must also plan the materials you will need. The materials can set some limits on which methods you can use. For example, do not carry the aforementioned "fur of the bear" with you in a mountain.

This tool is better to use only in the visitor centre, in the park, or in the museum of natural history. Remember that support materials should be exactly what their name suggest - support. This means that you use them only to illustrate or strengthen the impression of what you want to say or demonstrate. They should not be repeated or duplicated - for example, boring Power Point presentations. We all know how some people today have written their speeches on slides and simply read from the screen as if the audience was illiterate and cannot read for themselves.

### **The ending of the tour – techniques and opportunities**

Furthermore, whatever you share should draw you closer and should not be contradictory or distance you from the conclusion of your story. The conclusion should be clear, it can be packed with emotions, open-ended, or it can end with a question. The end of the tour is the time for great thoughts, quotes and strong emotions because it sums up the impression of the entire tour. But this is also the time to ask if anyone has additional questions, wish them all the best and invite them to come back again.

The second one is of particular importance because it is part of a successful marketing. From that moment these people will become your messengers and can bring you more business and more customers. This is the time for exchanging visiting cards or gifts.

### **TIPS FOR GUIDES AND ANIMATORS IN TOURISM**

Accept the fact that you work with people. Being a tour guide means being a "man of the people". Be prepared to answer questions constantly, to manage 'difficult' personalities, and to control the group at the given locations. You need to be cheerful and optimistic while you are working.

To be a good guide, you need to have a lot of information memorized. Your primary task is to give visitors interesting facts about the places you visit. Find time and sources to learn about the locations and the characteristics of your tours. Visitors will ask you questions that may be a bit off-topic. Knowing a wide range of topics will impress the audience and make you a better guide. If you do not know the answer to a question, then tell them you do not know. Tell the tourist that you are not sure, but that you would like to know the answer and look for it as soon as possible.

Be a storyteller to make the facts interesting to your audience. The stories are the soul of your profession. Do not just enumerate a list of names, dates, and events. Give the tourists a performance and information that they will remember long after their visit.

React quickly when something is wrong. When you coordinate people, travel plans and visits, there are many possible risks! Do not panic if someone feels sick, the bus has a malfunction or the place you visit today is unexpectedly closed. Your task is to think immediately and to deal with similar situations when they occur. Regardless of whether you can solve the situation with a single call or you do not know what to do, you are the leader of the group and all the tourists will look at you and follow your reactions.

Distance yourself from your needs when you lead a group. Remember that your tourists are on vacation, and you are at work. Do everything you need to do to keep the group happy and safe. Stay focused on them during working hours, even if it is 24/7.

Being a tour guide also requires from you to stand on your feet and be active most of the day, more days one after another. You will need to be physically healthy and able to keep up with the working rhythm.

You also need to make sure that you and your group respect the environment you are visiting. You are obliged to instruct the visitors what is expected from them and you will be responsible for enforcing the rules.

Always address the tourists, stand up in front of the group and make sure that all interested parties can see and hear you.

### **Real life situations to reflect on:**

Take a look at the following situations based on real events, locate the problem and suggest a more elegant solution:

1. A group of teenagers arrived from Poland. They immediately asked the guide where to buy ice cream to cool off because the high temperatures surprised them. They made it clear that they want free time for shopping. The city's sightseeing lasted three hours, the guide fought for teenage attention in an attempt to explain which hero participated in which medieval uprising. They heard stories about over 40 people, from all the names they only recognized Mother Teresa. In the end they got 20 minutes to go shopping.
2. During a dinner with a hiking group, a tourist suggested that the tour instead of the order A, B, C, should have taken place B, C, A explaining that it would have been less time travelled and more in activities. The guide began to tune in to explain all the technical challenges of organizing the tour, and the conversation turned into a quarrel, which made most of the tourists leave the table early.
3. A group from Norway took part in a hiking tour, they had wine tastings during the evenings. One tourist liked the wine so much that he suggested that everyone take a bottle with him on the next day in the mountain. The guide did not allow them.
4. The group visited a tourist complex, half an hour away from the restaurant where they had a lunch at 14 o'clock. Several tourists insisted that their shopping time be extended. The guide allowed it. When they returned, several others went to the loo. They left the complex a few minutes before 14:00 and when they arrived at the restaurant the food was too cold to eat.
5. Two hikers from the mountain group were less fit than the others, and halfway hiking they started begging the guide to leave them behind and let them not climb to the top. The guide promised them that he would leave them in one location where the group would return again from the top. And so they walked with the group for a long time, after a while on a steeper and steeper terrain, until they reached five hundred meters from the very top and realized that such a location does not exist. They realised the guide, in the opinion that they could climb, "lied" to them to motivate them

## CONCLUSION

Tourists travel all over the world and compare the skills, knowledge, behaviour and professionalism of tour guides from one country to another. It is clear that the traditional communicative role of the tour guide as a one-way presenter and entertainer is inadequate for the marketplace of 21 century tourism. The literature points to the value of an experience-centred approach for improving and maintaining the relevance of guided tours, and thus to the need for tour guides to be equipped to deliver enjoyable, memorable and in some cases interactive and personally-relevant experiences. Together with responding to technological and socio-demographic trends, guides need to utilize new and diverse communication approaches. The future of the tour guiding industry requires guides to choreograph and in some cases co-create experiences, which in turn requires guides to adapt their communication approach and skills to match the context and client expectations.

In conclusion, trends such as changing technologies, socio-demographics and tourists' expectations come with the need for broadening how the communicative role of the guide is conceptualized. Many tourists want not only enjoyable but memorable and in some cases meaningful experiences, including the opportunity to co-create experiences that are customized and personalized to their interests and needs. Research that can elucidate this new approach to communication by tour guides is central if tour guides in 21 century are to maintain relevance and guided tours are to be sustained..



*"No matter why and where you travel,  
there is always something wonderfully new to be found."*

– Anonymous



## **ABOUT THE PROJECT**

The Manual for tour guides and animators in tourism is prepared in the frame of the “Backing Regional Tourism Potentials” Project, with an aim to enhance tourism potentials and promote regional values of CB (Cross Border) regions and more specifically to work on: (1) Introduction of new tourism opportunities and quality improvement of the products and services and (2) Development of competitive tourism products - promotion/marketing actions to attract more domestic and foreign tourists.

Rural tourism, in the targeted Polog and Prizren regions, fits perfectly into contemporary trends among foreign travellers, who seek authentic, unique experiences and local lifestyles. These travellers want to experience rural, natural, unspoiled landscapes and authentic accommodation. Rural communities in targeted cross - border regions have great resources for offering such experiences. Hence, the identification and upgrading of tourism potentials is closely related to making the destination competitive on the tourism market and future actions should be related to promotion of tourist products within the regions, respect of principles for sustainable development, protection of natural environment, urgency of defined policy, priorities and activities.

So, the Action will encourage further growth of tourism by influencing tourists to spend more time in cross - border regions, and motivating higher number of tourists to visit the beauty of Shar Mountain.

All of you are welcome to visit Shar Mountain and discover unspoilt nature, breath taking scenarios, and unique landscape and enjoy the company of generous hosts, tasting traditional recipes.

You can find valuable information on the web page [www.sharmountain.com](http://www.sharmountain.com)

## **About the Project Partners:**

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A.B.A.T. BALKANIA Balkan Association for Alternative Tourism

[www.balkania-association.com](http://www.balkania-association.com)

Alpine Association Marimangat of Peja

[www.marimangat.org](http://www.marimangat.org)

Mountaineers Association SHARRI - Prizren

[www.shbsharri.com](http://www.shbsharri.com)

## **Links used for the preparation of the Manual for tour guides and tourist animators:**

[https://www.tutorialspoint.com/tourism\\_management/  
tourism\\_management\\_developing\\_product.htm](https://www.tutorialspoint.com/tourism_management/tourism_management_developing_product.htm)

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# Manual

FOR TOUR GUIDES AND  
TOURIST ANIMATORS

