Destination Management Opportunities and Challenges in Developing Destinations

DMOs, an independent organization to:

- Create a space for dialogue among industry
- Destination strategy and planning
    - Infrastructure
    - Conservation
    - Invest
    - Training
- Destination marketing and market research
- Destination sales (conferences and events)
- Provide cohesive communication to travelers
- Gather statics / monitoring and evaluation

DMOs: Traditional Functions

- **Meetings, Conventions & Incentives (MICE)** - to book conventions
- **Travel Trade Sales** -- to increase volume, visitor spending, length of stay
- **Marketing and Market Research**
- **Communications** – planners' guide, visitor guide, service guides
- **Membership -** Information dissemination, recruitment
- **Visitor Information Centers & Reservations Systems** - Direct client contact, Distribute information, Reservation systems

Destination Strategy
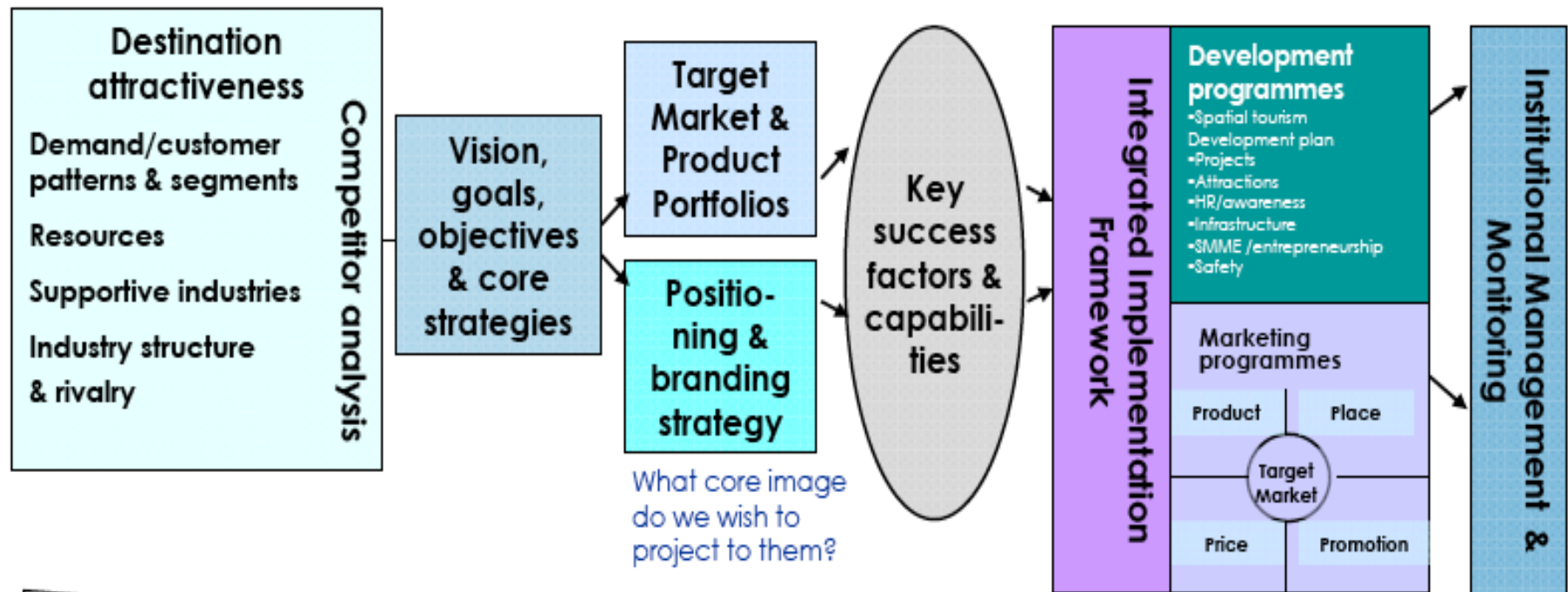

Where are we & how well do we compare?

Where would we like to be?

What are our dreams, goals to achieve and direction?

Who are our clients & what are their preferences?

How do we get there?

What do we need to do well to comply to their needs?

What should we develop & sell to them, at what price, how & through what mechanisms?

Stay ahead?

How do we ensure & measure success?

Destination attractiveness

Demand/customer patterns & segments

Resources

Supportive industries

Industry structure & rivalry

Competitor analysis

Vision, goals, objectives & core strategies

Target Market & Product Portfolios

Positio-ning & branding strategy

What core image do we wish to project to them?

Key success factors & capabili-ties

Integrated Implementation Framework

Development programmes
- Spatial tourism Development plan
- Projects
- Attractions
- HR/awareness
- Infrastructure
- SMME /entrepreneurship
- Safety

Marketing programmes

Product	Place
	Target Market	
Price	Promotion

Institutional Management & Monitoring

Macro environment:

Technological   Economic   Political   Socio-cultural   Natural

Common Characteristics of the DMO

- Non-profit
- Board and published regulations
- Membership organization of diverse stakeholders
- Revenue from:
    - membership, taxes, bookings
- Services mostly provided free

- Who uses a destination management organization
    - Visitors, businesses and meeting planners

- Why?
    - Unbiased information about a destination
    - One-stop shop – saves time
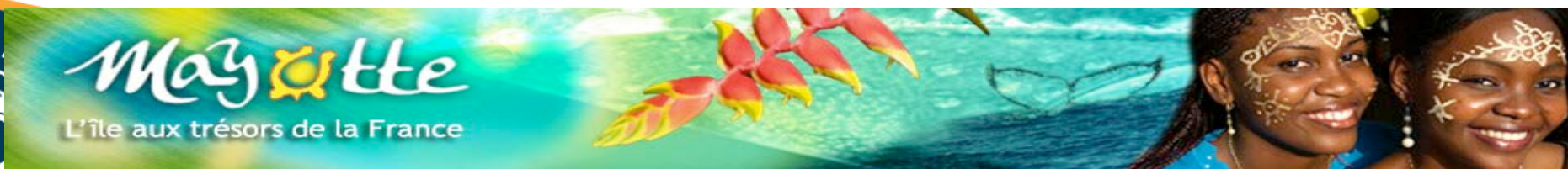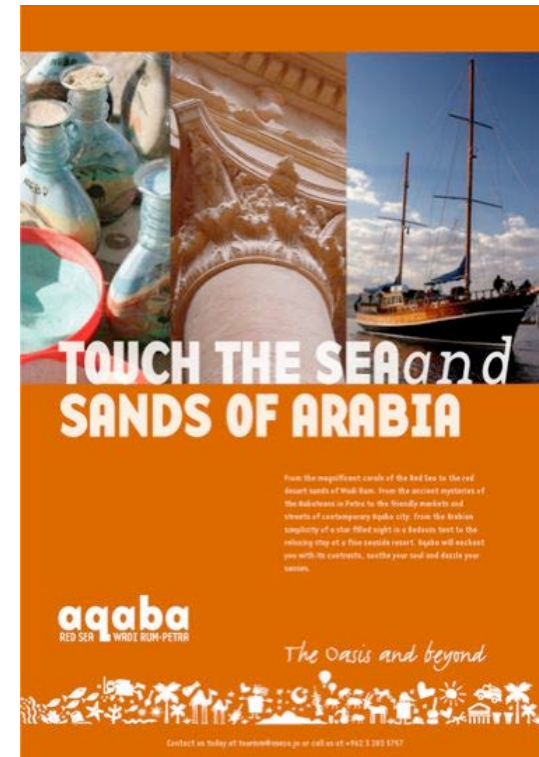
Categories of DMOs

- **National** Tourism Authorities (NTAs) or Organisations (NTOs), responsible for management and marketing of tourism at a national level.

- **Regional**, provincial or state DMOs, responsible for the management and/or marketing of tourism in a geographic region defined for that purpose.

- **Local** DMOs, responsible for the management and/or marketing of tourism based on a smaller geographic area or city/town.

- **Product Based** – bringing together stakeholders related to a specific type of tourism product (ie Birdwatching, adventure, etc)

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1: Ensuring a Sustainable Form of Development

- **Defining Sustainable Tourism**
- **Triple Bottom Line**
- **Tools to Help Manage Destinations More Sustainably**

Triple Bottom Line

- Social
- Economic
- Environment

Engage the Community

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC™

Building Stewardship and Collaboration

Engage the Tourists

SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL INTERNATIONAL™

TourismCares™

Lindblad Expeditions

SMED — System of Measuring Excellence of Destinations

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC — Center for Sustainable Destinations' Geotourism Charter

Public Use Plan to manage volume of traffic, fees, protection of sensitive areas, interpretation, signage, etc.

2: Tourism Inventory, Vision and Goal Setting

Create a tourism supply inventory checklist
- Accommodations
- Tour Operators
- Natural and Historical/Cultural Attractions
- Entertainment
- Dining

Create a vision for the destination

Steps to outline Goals

"Get tourists to stay in the area another day" – Economic

"Organize more recreational offerings, concerts and plays monthly" - Social/Cultural

"Undertake long-term cleanup of entrances to town" - Environment

SOLIMAR INTERNATIONAL

3: Auditing the Visitor and Resident Experience

| Dream of Travel | Select the Destination | Take the Trip | Look Back on the Trip |

Visitor Experience Value Chain

Design a Residents Survey
- Current attitudes towards tourism
- Positive/Negative effects of tourism
- Level of involvement with tourism
- Employment due to tourism
- Outlook on tourism for the local society

Design a Visitors Survey
- Number of visits to the destination
- Method of travel (solo, tour, family, etc.)
- Primary reason for visit
- How did you hear about the destination
- Attractions you expect to visit
- Activities you hope to experience
- Products, Services and Hospitality ratings
- Demographic information

Keys to Successful Destination Management

Establishing a Destination Management System (DMS)

4: Utilize Clusters to Gain a Competitive Edge

Competitive Diamond – Tourism Clusters

- Easy to get there/competitive prices Tourism resources & attractions
- Human, financial and technological resources
- Infrastructure and other public services & equipment

- A business environment that stimulates best management practices
- Strong rivalry between local competitors
- Competitive local suppliers & support services

Tourism Operators & Suppliers

Factors

Demand

Public Sector

- Efficient administration
- Effective public services
- Responsive public investments
- Competitive tourism policy

- High volume of demand
- Trade buyers and end customers demanding & sophisticated
- Good understanding of the demand
- Cluster's brand awareness

Source: E Bordas, WTO Adapted from M. Porter

Keys to Successful Destination Management

![Solimar International logo]

How to unite existing stakeholders into effective clusters

How to implement sustainable business practices into organized clusters

"Top 10"

- Begin with an objective facilitator
- Include all stakeholders
- Identify a champion
- Initiate cross-industry collaboration
- Encourage members to contribute
- Improve public awareness
- Prioritize local capacity
- Work with the public sector
- Develop performance measures
- Be patient and persistant

The Abraham Path

Route of 2006 Harvard Study Tour and 2008 Kellogg Fellows Tour

Abraham's Possible Routes

5: Establishing a Destination Management Organization (DMO) Using a Partnership Approach

Utilizing the power of partnership to advocate for the destination and the industry as a whole.

DMOs strategic services of DMOs:
- Tourism Master Planning
- Tourism Statistics and Monitoring
- Asset Advocacy
- Industry Support, Growth, and Training
- Resident Engagement

6: Developing Destination Marketing & Positioning Strategies

SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
Opportunities	Threats

Establish Marketing Objectives

Branding

Measuring Marketing Effectiveness

7: Building the Destination's Online Presence

Website Design Elements

Search Engine Optimization

Social Media Landscape

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8: Developing a Visitor Information Program

Information Kiosks

Visitor Information Centers

Rwanda VC

Belize

Keys to Successful Destination Management

1: Ensuring a Sustainable Form of Development

2: Tourism Inventory, Vision and Goal Setting

3: Auditing the Visitor and Resident Experience

4: Utilize Clusters to Gain a Competitive Edge

5: Establishing a Destination Management Organization (DMO) Using a Partnership Approach

6: Developing Destination Marketing & Positioning Strategies

7: Building the Destination's Online Presence

8: Developing a Visitor Information Program

Destination Management Challenges & Obstacles

- Government policy favours centralized management

- Businesses and individuals favour fragmentation

- "Complaining" versus "doing"

- Lack of sustainable financial support

Bocas del Toro

Using the Geotourism approach developed by:

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

A Familiar Situation

- Rapid tourism development with limited multi-stakeholder planning and dialogue

- Negative environmental impacts caused by tourism

- Tourism development changing the "character of place" – local cultures and traditions being lost

- Lack of public private partnership for destination management and promotion
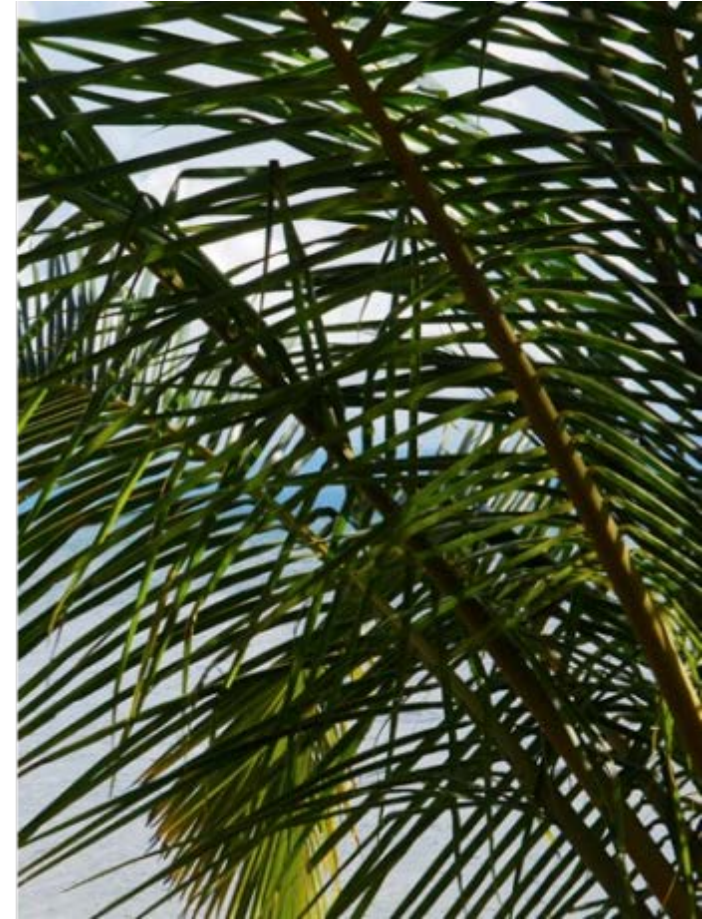
Objectives for the Area

1. Formalize a Sustainable Tourism Cluster with key public and private tourism stakeholders

2. Develop and implement a business model for the tourism cluster

3. Develop and market demand driven tourism packages

4. Expand the service quality and product development of local suppliers

5. Improve the environmental performance of private businesses

Methodology

Individual Consultations → Formed a Geotourism Stewardship Council → Obtained Inputs → Facilitated Consensus → Established Action Committees → Business Planning for Sustainability → Membership Program → Destination Marketing Campaign → Training & Capacity Building

Mission

To support sustainable tourism development, promote responsible travel & give incentives for travelers to understand & protect the local culture & environment they are visiting

Results

- Over 50 new members joining the BSTA within its first year of operations

- Local committees established and working collectively to address issues facing the destination (a local waste management committee has already been formed);

- Sustainable tourism packages and day tours developed that create direct linkages between various groups within the DMO;

- A comprehensive marketing and branding strategy developed and implemented;

- Ten hotels with improved environmental performance through the implementation of Rainforest Alliance's best management practices

Questions?

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