I-Archeo.S. - Integrated System of the Natural and Cultural Heritage and the Cultural Activities

PRIORITY AXIS 3 "ENVIRONMENT AND CULTURAL HERITAGE"

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3.3 NEW CREATIVE PRODUCTIONS

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CHART FOR EVALUATING
THE QUALITY PERFORMANCE
OF SERVICES

GUIDELINES

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Methodological Foreword

A Charter of Quality forthe services must be interpreted from two opposite points:

a) on one hand it is a clear commitment on the part of each service provider; this implies the easy option of measuring and evaluating the various services in a transparent and unequivocal way. Uch a monitoring proves useful for the provider itself, since it gives the picture of the needed adaptations, changes, corrections within a path of growth;

b) on the other hand it is a useful tool for final consumers and intermediary agencies in order for the degree of reliability and accoutnability of any service providers to be checked, measured evaluated and compared with the expenditure and effort levels required in order for the services to e accessed. It makes any feedback technically powerful and consistent.

The range of reactions to travel experiece, from awards to refunds, is made possible and credible by the shared adoption of a Charter of Quality. Of course it can be strengthened and finely tuned in the light of experience, nevertheless a strong and visible start is needed.

The acknowledgement of an emerging tourism based upon experience, relationship and personalisation, consistently with the emerging economic, social and cultural paradigm, proves crucial in order for a Charter of Quality to be structured in two parts: the former should consider general and common features of tourist supply, while the latter should be specifically crafted upon the needs and expectations of tourist demand in the various areas whose features are idiosyncratic.

Part One: Common requirements

1. The most general requirement is related to the *site-specific shape, structure, language and style of services* as a consistent bunch able to convey the essential elements describing the geographical area, its history and traditions, its content production, its creative orientations. This includes the structure of bulidings and sites, the materials, colours, forms and decorations of infrastructures, objects, tools, trails, and all the materials related to tourist experience.

2. A further requirement is related to the *use of space* on the part of tourists: the places, areas, buildings, and facilities must allow a varied and heterogeneous use of space, also considering the heterogeneity of individuals and groups using them. This implies a sharp attention to the physical distribution of users avoiding congestion, queues, uneven use of the variuous areas at stake, or excess density of specific options (e.g. highbrow vs. lowbrow trade).

3. A symmetrical requirement is related to the *use of time* on the part of tourists: although a soud organisation needs some time thresholds, a wide and unstructured use of time can allow various kinds of travellers to locate themselves in what they consider the right time for enjoying parts of their experience. It is important to focus upon the relevance that a flexible and generous use of time may allow users to express their full willingness-to-pay.

4. Once the cultural identity of a place is consistently expressed, and its space and time features allow travellers to craft subjectively their experience, logistic needs must be addressed through the *comfortable and close availability of services supporting such experiences*: information, means of transportation such as bycicles, technical tools both analogic and digital, food provision both on-site and take-away, relax areas, own language stewards, etc. must be granted.

5. Finally, the general services should consider the possibility of *specific needs generated by problems such as accidents, illnesses, and the like*. In such a respect the tourist supply should provide users with the comfortable and close availability of objects and tools repairs, technical assistance for everyday objects (from clothes to digital devices), medical services (that can be tuned in advance to specific needs), psychological assistance.

Part Two: Specific Requirements

a) School Trail

6. The main requirement, which the whole experience is going to be based upon, is the *consistency and effectiveness* of the various parts and stages of the experience *with school programs*, possibly emphasizing a multi-disciplinary orientation and hence reciprocally justifying, interpreting and strengthening the local features as source for identity appraisal and appreciation, also in connection with the place where the trip starts from.

7. Related to the previous requirement is the need for a sound and stable *quality of professionals active in the destination*, including skills and competences, past experience (also in terms of variety and versatility), kindness and interactive styles and protocols, ability to effectively combine analogic and digital experiences in a fertile hybridation, in order for the experience to elicit curiosity also through playful elements not losing its content and intensiveness.

8. A further requirement is related to the *time management* of the experience, also considering the need and desire for critical interpretation through chat, discussion, exchanges, games and all the possible tools and actions able to combine content appropriateness and spontaneous enjoyment. Time should therefore be loose and quite variable, in order for groups to experience their visit in a flexible way, with no too rigid timetables.

9. Laboratories and educational stages of the experience should be accurately prepared, with special attention to the need to avioid the school-like compulsion to learn in standardised programs, and simmetrically to grant *appraisal through involvement, participation, cross-fertilisation and feedback*, so that groups can learn in real time and convey their acquired knowledge in games, simulations, and experiments carried out on-the-spot.

10. Within each trail and area transports and leisure time should encourage a *normal use of local facilities and services*, in order for school groups (in any possible composition, possibly preferring various small groups) to explore the area within the resident community, and to personally experience ordinary life in a place where personal and professional life on one hand, and heritage, cultural activities and projects on the other are intertwined.

b) Eno-Gastronomy Trail

6. Eno-Gastronomy takes value from its *consistency with its territorial roots*: a) natural and material endowment of primary resources with solid past history; b) technologies, know-how, traditions, styles of production and elaboration; c) consolidated association of food, wine and other products (such as oil) with familiar, social, ritual, religious, civic habits, traditions and rules. These features must be clearly assessed and appraised in every trail.

7. A related requirement is the need for *experienced and assessed skills and compe-tences on the part of professionals* active in the various layers of the eno-gastronomic system (production, treatment, conservation, elaboration, etc.), so that travellers can appraise and enjoy the uniqueness of the regional system, interact with professionals in order for actions and processes to be properly observed and interpreted within the wider territorial identity.

8. A further requirement is related to the *cultural connections of food, wine, oil and the like*, in order for travelers to understand and enjoy the various and multiple views in-corporated in tales and stories, paintings and decorations, music and language. In such a way the complex and rich network of connections between territorial eno-gastronomy and its cultural evocations grown and safeguarded by the local community will generate unique value.

9. Laboratories and experiences should be consistent and accurate in *keeping identity and tradition as the hardware of territorial eno-gastronomy on one hand, and should prove able and eloquent to show the creative trail of hybridations and innovations* leading to a range of new products, recipes, uses and values of eno-gastronomy on the other, without violating its roots and tight relationships with the area, its community and its identity.

10. Within each trail and area transports and leisure time should combine a *respectful appraisal* of local eno-gastronomy on one hand with the likely *expectation to indulge in a slow, relaxed and possibly shared enjoyment*on the other, including direct experi-ence, tutorials, workshops and discussione, also involving non-professional residents willing to offer their experiences and stories to external visitors; informality and spon-taneous action should be preferred in any case.

c) Art Trail

6. The most important specific requirement for such a rich and multifold trail is related to the *cross-consistency of each theme* (handicrafts, food and wine, art and music, pilgrimages) *with its territorial cradle and its history*, from the material infrastructure and architctural style and language, to art and decotration, to stories and legends, so that each thematic traveller can properly understand the value and site-specificities of its wide cultural production.

7. Related to the previous requirement is the need for a sound and stable *quality of professionals active in the destination*, possibly emphasizig the diacronic evolution of territorial know-how, technology, links with natural resources, space and time framework, social orientations and symbolic values. Art, handicrafts, food and wine, creativity share their ability to offer the possibility to be embedded in local culture and lifestyle. Professionals keep local identity.

8. A further requirement is related to the *time management* of the experience, possibly overcoming the risk that each theme adopted and experienced may exhaust the multiple features of territorial identity. Each theme should be smoothly related to each other, avoiding acritical immersions, but aiming to a clear and consistent network of connections. A part of the day should be devoted to walkabouts in the various areas, keeping atéliers and buildings open.

9. Laboratories and educational stages of the experience should be accurately prepared, with special attention to the need to avioid the school-like compulsion to learn in standardised progams, and simmetrically to grant *appraisal through involvement, participation, cross-fertilisation and feedback*, so that groups can learn in real time and convey their acquired knowledge in games, simulations, and experiments carried out on-the-spot.

10. Within each trail and area transports and leisure time should encourage a *normal use of local facilities and services*, in order for school groups (in any possible composition, possibly preferring various small groups) to explore the area within the resident community, and to personally experience ordinary life in a place where personal and professional life on one hand, and heritage, cultural activities and projects on the other are intertwined.

d) Identity Trail

6. The clear perception of the local specific features appears to be fundamental: this requires an *integrated action* providing voyagers with a *complete spectrum of elements*, from the physical accessibility and territorial network of connections aimed at facilitating visits, experiences, and leisure time, to the formally granted site-specificity of products, services, and information. *Sustainability* is strongly recommended in services related to energy and transports.

7. Accommodation must be *consistent and actively tuned to the local styles and habits*; technology must be friendly and above all the use of space and time should in any case clearly combine with the *rythms and praxes of the territorial community*. This should encourage the opportunity to experience a wide range of self-managed trails, due to the *general availability of many tools and services*, in order for voyagers to find themselves in a familiar eco-system.

8. Also the catering chain must give the *clear perception of local identity*, from the infrastructure to the social network evaluations. The *material structure, style and design of restaurants and venues for meals and drinks* must convey the local social conventions related to space and time, and smoothly invite voyagers to absorb such features *in order for their experience to combine appraisal and appreciation*, enjoying the option of *direct purchase of territorial products*.

9. Action performed in various ways on the territorial infrastructure (squares, streets, buildings, etc.) must be *consistent with the social life occurring naturally*, in order for the visitors to feel *embodied in the resident community* and to reflect their behaviour into the *socially prevailing lifestyle*. In such a respect both events and merchandising should carefully avoid the logic of special effects (son-et-lumière, or mass souvenirs), and *reflect territorial culture*.

10. In such a framework a crucial role must be played by the *local cultural heritage* (built, monumental, material and intangible). It must be *accessible for an extended part of the year*, certainly in every season and possibly for at least three hundred days per year. The heritage experience must be facilitated by the *organisation of supply* and by the *even accessibility to services* (from guided tours to augmented reality).