

BLUTOURSYSTEM

Developing decision makers seminars
and networking workshops

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Document references

Project: BLUTOURSYSTEM “*Knowledge platform, skills and creative synergies for blue tourism ecosystem development*”

Axis: BLUE INNOVATION

Specific Objective: 1.1 - Enhance the framework conditions for innovation in the relevant sectors of the blue economy within the cooperation area

Work Package N.: 4

Work Package Name: Capacity building process, networking and pilot scenarios for Blue tourism development

Activity N.: 4.2

Activity Name: Developing decision makers seminars and networking workshops

Deliverable N.: 4.2.2

Deliverable Name: networking workshops for peers learnings and knowledge transfer and to increase coopeition capacities

Credits

Partner in charge: PP1 - Veneto Region

Partners involved: contributing Veneto Region; collaborating others

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Abstract

BLUTOURSYSTEM provides tourism operators with tools and skills to develop new business ecosystems. Capitalizing the knowledge gained with TourMedAssets, the project steers decision makers to rethink tourism, reduce gaps and design eco-innovative scenarios thus to promote sustainable growth.

The project aims to stimulate competitiveness, innovation and creative enhancement of the tourism offer.

The main aim is to enrich the analytical skills of stakeholders in order to improve the sustainable and creative tourism sector, while developing new knowledge based on advanced tools and services.

For this reason, learning sessions have been activated in some pilot areas in the eligible areas of the program and other dissemination and formative activities, for local actors.

Specific information about gaps and needs have been thus collected through interviews submitted to stakeholders, who represent both public and private sector in the tourism field.

WP4 has been then planned to achieve the specific objective 2 “Improving skills and capacities to develop new Blue Tourism CB networks and business ecosystem”. Deliverable 4.2.2: networking workshops for peers learnings and knowledge transfer and to increase cooperation capacities constitute the essential trigger mechanism and the driving force of sustainable competitive advantage and prosperity in the CB tourism sector.

Introduction

During the Living Labs, the important necessity to network in the face of a constantly evolving market has emerged several times, especially in the tourism sector, accelerated by the spread of the web. All the meetings aimed at strengthen social capital, however the Living Lab Workshops gave actors concrete suggestions about tools supporting network creation, decision making process and helping placing “community” at the centre of the destination management.

The destinations are increasingly competing in a global context in which competition is no longer tied to the macro product (sea, mountain, etc.) but to the ability to know how to offer products that are increasingly personalized and customizable, flexible or made ad hoc for each personality: unique, exclusive and unrepeatable experiences to be protagonists of.

The consumer seeks added value in terms of content, capable of be enriched emotionally, of making them feel good and of producing change, awakening creativity and their hidden talents.

It is therefore becoming increasingly difficult, if not even impossible, for the single company, the single hotel, to be able to satisfy these needs and to be positioned independently on the market.

The ability to create a network is one of the essential elements for sustainable development and constitutes an element of strength towards competition, even at the level of cross-border planning.

The network of operators is fundamental because without it, obviously, the system of services that constitutes the backbone of the tourist product would be missing. The network provides a system for that set of services (transport, accommodation, parks, cultural attractions, events, wineries, etc.) that can be of interest and motivate the tourist and the various tourist niches, coordinated by the destination management.

The network is useful because stakeholders can participate in the planning process and if well guided they contribute in identifying actions, channels and solutions to enrich the tourist offer.

The network must participate in the identification of the Brand that reflects the destination cultural identity, without the sharing process the Brand would not be felt and internally acquired by the local community.

The network also serves to activate private economies to finance and co-finance marketing actions. The small operators find support to finance and participate in promotional actions.

Starting from these considerations it is possible to highlight how during the seminars and the workshop much has been aimed at urging the participants to network with each other and with other operators, aiming at the collaboration between private publics also with an innovative perspective (where the public is not just a mean of income/funding, but an operational partner). And this not generically but with a view to increasing the competitiveness of the destination starting from a planning that takes into account:

- how to identify/establish the tourist markets and targets that are intended to be reached, such as market orientation; which strategy to adopt;
- how to package the product and which image and communication strategy to adopt
- which distribution channels to use (B2B, B2C, etc.) web, fairs, etc. to reach the targets;
- which innovative ICT tools and applications to use.

Retracing the tools covered by the growth path and presented in the context of the Living Labs, it can be emphasized that at the base of each of them it is necessary to have a collaboration between subjects in a multi-level network:

- **between public subjects:** the Federated Tourism Observatory is an important example of a network between institutional subjects (Region, Local Authorities, Universities, Unioncamere, etc.)

that through the union of their competences make available to all other subjects, public and private, analysis, data, information otherwise difficult to find;

- **between private subjects:** the analysis tools are more effective the more representative of the companies in the territory they are. For example h-benchmark referring to a territory provides for the minimum participation of 5 accommodation facilities, but its effectiveness grows when participation increases, and this can be done more easily thanks to the capacity and availability of the structures to network. Similarly, participation increases the effectiveness of the solutions proposed for the non-hotel sector;

- **between public and private subjects:** the DMS is based on the closest collaboration and participation between local authorities, companies and all those working in a tourist destination. In fact, the system brings together information, managed by the public, also through subjects of private law, with marketing that is exclusively for the private sector.

Living Lab workshop

The management of a tourist destination: information and networking promotion

The Living Lab Workshops organized in the Veneto destinations had the aim to enhance the social capital, both putting actors at the centre of the stage and supporting their ties by means of innovation, such as the Destination Management Systems.

The DMS represents an important opportunity for the territories and for the companies for the purpose of promotion and marketing, introduced by the Tourism Department of the Veneto Region.

It allows the creation of personal sites of destination, area, club or network location, with sections dedicated to information, events, accommodation offer and services also for marketing purposes and can also be used for single functions.

In particular, with regards to booking and dynamic packaging activities, the accredited subjects, in addition to tourist information offices and DMOs, include networks such as product clubs, tourist consortia, wine roads and other representative associations

During the seminar the participants were able to learn about the system architecture that underlies the platform's operation. It is in fact a complex system in which each organization, based on its role in the institutional framework, can hold the function of "data owner" (insertion, updating, deletion) and/or "point of sale" (distribution of information and contact with the guest).

While the role of "point of sale" is independent of the relationship with the customer/guest and the relative data, the role of "data owner" in the relationship with the service providers and the relative data can be shared when two or more organizations should refer to the same territorial area (even if only with partial overlap).

Each operator is authorized to enter his organisation as data manager in it and is responsible for them (insertion, updating, deletion) in the municipalities assigned in line with the sharing policies at the base of the system itself and in respect of the current regulations.

As a point of sale, it can also display and supply the contents of all the other destinations in the Veneto, aggregating them in a dynamic form to respond to users.

A further aspect concerns the connection with www.veneto.eu, the regional tourism portal that has among other things an area reserved for tourism operators and professionals in the Region that contains useful information, news, data and initiatives of interest for the sector.

It should be emphasized that the DMS DESKLINE 3.0 is granted free of charge to the accredited regional tourism system subjects who must give equal opportunities to all accommodation facilities or to other companies in the tourism sector, for inclusion in the regional DMS, for no charge and without any form of exclusion or discrimination.

The workshop allowed the participants to learn the different functionalities of the DMS and the real possibilities that it offers both for the territories and for the companies, especially when they work in a network.