Sebastián Xamena's Abstract

There is no doubt that the development of tourism has meant that businesspersons belonging to the same locality or territory realize that they can no longer offer their "tourism services" and nothing else, and that they must band together in associations in order to create tourism products and – even more importantly – to promote their Destination jointly. Tourist destinations not only show interested persons the fine features of that particular territory; they also do much to convey the Country-wide Image.

No individual effort is capable of generating as much action as an Association's; naturally, the will to pull together must be developed in step with the destination's tourism businesspersons' growing awareness of what is on offer to visitors and, through the Seminars and Workshops which we put on, their becoming adept at transforming their territory into a DESTINATION.

The most radical change in holidaymaker's methods of selecting a particular destination and buying the services, package holidays and activities offered by that "destination" has come about through their growing on-line connectivity. In recent years this has produced a series of changes in patrons' behaviour when enjoying tourism products, leading to a transformation in the industry:

- **More competition, better planned:** more and more countries world-wide are entering the tourism market by developing attractive destinations and tourism products. The Tourist Industry stimulates economies, generating jobs, wealth, and the country's image abroad.

It's becoming increasingly difficult to attract and keep patrons, because we're competing in an increasingly global market-place with a need to attend to patrons' individual needs.

At the present time, when a patron picks a tourist destination, s/he does so exclusively on the basis of Information; hence destinations need to make the most of their strengths so as to make the visitor's experience as varied as possible. This calls for a set of technologies that will make the destination well-known in its target market-places. It's essential to have the tools to handle communication smoothly and rapidly, and create interesting content that will give rise to OPINIONS, VIDEOS, PHOTOGRAPHS, DISCUSSIONS, BLOGS, PRICE COMPARISONS, BOOKINGS CENTRE, NEW OPINIONS, etc...

- **The Internet's meteoric rise as a sales tool:** selling online has taken off in international markets and is a major market trend.

Because of this, tourist destinations need the technological tools that will provide their businesspeople with selling channels which will enable them to reach their target customers, whether national or international.

- **The Internet's meteoric rise as a promotional tool:** traditional sales are increasingly determined by the online channel, since the Internet has made full

information available to our customers, making consumers more knowledgeable and better informed.

Hence our customers are making their buying decisions on the Internet's websites and portals. When they know where to go to and what to do they decide where to buy. What's more, when they've had their holiday, they're willing to share their experiences with others: not only do they search and buy over the internet, they also use the network to write about their experiences and knowledge.

Based on this new market environment Brújula has created, as a complement to its current technology-based structure, a new structure which carries out projects under a strategic position which we've named:

e-destination

Aimed at public and private institutions wishing to develop tourism as an economy-stimulating, job- and wealth-creating strategic sector which raises the country's profile internationally.

Provides the necessary methods and tools for developing destination tourism and the organizations and businesses that participate in it, so as to co-ordinate their strategic and selling activities.

Enables potential visitors to access a large quantity of information on the destination's attractions and the services offered by the businesspeople grouped around it, placing at their fingertips all they require to make the decision to visit the destination and enjoy it once there.

Makes available to small local businesses the technology used by big international firms, putting them in a prime position to sell their products and manage their businesses.

Requires the introduction of effective training and association activity strategies; the sourcing of local and international tourism marketing specialists to run projects; consultancy on developing tourism products; and the introduction of national and international good practices for achieving high quality standards.