

White Paper on New Sustainable Tourism Destinations



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Tourism: an opportunity

Marc Castells, Mayor of Igualada

The city of Igualada has indisputable tourist potential thanks to its geographical location and its cultural, economic and gastronomic resources. Nevertheless, it does not rank as a major tourist destination. That's why we see this white paper as an opportunity to work collaboratively with Airbnb.

Efforts to promote the Healthy Destinations Lab are a good indication that this approach has been and continues to be relevant. This project has not been promoted with the aim of rapidly boosting the number of visitors to the city and the surrounding region. This is because we consider it much more important and effective to work on designing a sustainable tourist destination that reflects our region's unique qualities. This would not have been possible without the participation, commitment and cooperation of all levels of government, together with civil society, economic and cultural stakeholders, and entrepreneurs from Igualada and l'Anoia. Our goal, therefore, was not to increase the number of visitors significantly, but rather to determine how to promote tourism with a view to benefiting both the city and the surrounding region. Tourism should not be regarded as a goal in and of itself, but rather as a way to foster our development.

Events such as the New Destinations Summit, which brought representatives from over 30 countries to Igualada to discuss sustainable tourism, have helped make the collaboration between the city and Airbnb a point of reference on this issue. This collaborative approach is well worth publicizing. However, alongside various major institutional initiatives, this white paper also includes testimonials that highlight practical case studies, thus providing good examples of how to implement the analytical and planning work currently being carried out.

As you can see, the work done in this sustainable tourism lab confirms that we are on the right track and that we have accomplished a great deal along the way.

People-driven healthy tourism

Chris Lehane, Vice President Global Policy & Communications, Airbnb

At Airbnb, we believe that technology-enabled, people-to-people home sharing promotes healthy tourism—tourism that benefits the hosts who share their homes, the guests who are seeking authentic, affordable experiences, and the local residents whose cultures, customs and economies are respected, observed and supported. To expand our work in this area, we constantly seek out new ways to ensure the benefits of the platform are shared by more people in more places, strengthening human connections and spreading economic opportunity.

Tourism is one of the world's fastest-growing sectors and an increasingly important source of income for many countries. This growth presents both a series of opportunities and potential challenges for hosts and for their governments. Airbnb actively works with policymakers and local communities to identify sustainable solutions that benefit all, particularly in emerging destinations where it is so important that tourism be nurtured as a resource, and to ensure the returns stay within the community rather than being siphoned out.

This White Paper draws on the case of Igualada, a Catalan community of nearly 40,000 people, known for its industrial history, heritage of leather manufacturing, and vibrant local culture and traditions. Airbnb's work in Igualada provides a template for how a public-private partnership, enabled by technology, can help destinations design more equitable and innovative tourism propositions that benefit hosts, guests and the local community alike. This White Paper is intended as a tool to help public officials and community leaders use healthy tourism to better achieve their objectives by setting out a comprehensive, replicable process through which emerging destinations can take full advantage of the opportunity at their doorsteps.

The production of this White Paper would not have been possible without the support and participation of the municipal representatives and other officials who attended the Healthy Destinations Lab during 2019. In particular, I would like to thank Marc Castells, the Mayor of Igualada, for his vision and leadership; Àngels Chacón, Minister of Enterprise and Knowledge of Catalonia for her presence and for her inspirational speech at the New Destinations Summit; Inês de Medeiros, Mayor of Almada, Maria das Dores Meira, Mayor of Setúbal, Leoluca Orlando, Mayor of Palermo and all the Catalan mayors who participated in the event.

Through this White Paper, we hope to encourage the spread of healthy tourism to more places and to ensure more people are able to reap the rewards of tourism, both as travelers and as hosts. In a time of booming, technology-enabled expansion affecting all areas of life, at Airbnb, we still believe in people-driven tourism, and we want to ensure that the spirit of 'mi casa es tu casa' remains a powerful force for economic and societal good.

The findings in this report are the result of in-depth research to better understand how Airbnb ties into the sustainable tourism agenda. The report sets out which conditions need to be in place for Airbnb's platform to be best leveraged to benefit underserved communities, and identifies partnership opportunities with policy makers, international organizations and local NGOs.

Purpose

By Francisco Rodríguez Bautista

The growth in the tourism sector over the past few decades has led to a series of social and environmental challenges that are gaining increasing attention across the sector. While the increasing number of travelers is providing a welcome economic boost to many communities, there is a danger that popular destinations are becoming saturated, creating challenges for local governments in areas such as resource consumption and waste management.

The growth in the number of travelers is an opportunity for many potential destinations seeking to attract more visitors. By encouraging travelers to look beyond traditional destinations we can alleviate the strain on tourist hotspots and enable travelers to discover and experience new and diverse places. This tendency to find new destinations is growing in popularity as people become increasingly interested in authentic experiences.

Thanks to technology, and in particular digital platforms, once forgotten destinations are able to promote their cultural, historical and natural heritage, reaching millions of people in a far more direct manner. These platforms are able to connect people and places as never before, opening up the world to travelers and opening up a global audience to once hidden destinations.

As tourism becomes increasingly globalized there is a risk that the essence of travel, discovering and participating in local experiences, is lost. New technologies allow people to reconnect with different communities in different locations and enjoy a unique experience of travel, benefiting both travelers and host communities.

This document is a resource for municipalities who see themselves as potential tourist destinations. It explains how technology can support municipalities in becoming a new tourist destination. The report sets out an approach, as well as tips and tools, that will help municipalities identify and leverage their potential assets to increase their appeal as a tourist destination. This process includes guidance on:

1. Conducting an environment analysis.
2. Identifying the level of institutional support for the promotion of the municipality as a new tourist destination.
3. Reaching agreement and developing a plan with the community and other stakeholders on how to promote the municipalities as a tourist destination.
4. Developing a training package that includes workshops that highlight the potential benefits of new technology and tools.
5. Establishing clear and simple regulations to support and promote entrepreneurship in the tourism sector and within the community at large.

The report highlights the role and the importance of working across different sectors of the community to ensure tourism is contributing to the sustainable development of the whole community. It draws heavily on the learnings and experience of a partnership between Airbnb and the city of Igualada, Spain. The experiences gained from this public-private collaboration, that involved different sectors within the city and region of L'Anoia, have been key to shaping the content of this report. The goal is that these learnings, and the guidance contained in this document will prove to be a useful tool for other potential destinations.

Tourism, a Global Opportunity for Sustainable Development



Tourism: Data and Trends

The UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) recently set priorities to address and manage the challenges posed by the growth in tourism globally¹:

- Encourage smarter tourism through innovation and digital transformation.
- Enhance competition and entrepreneurship within the sector.
- Make tourism a leading source of more and better jobs.
- Make the industry a top provider of education and training.
- Make tourism a more inclusive sector.
- Ensure the sector is contributing to safeguarding and promoting social and cultural heritage.
- Highlight environmental sustainability.

According to UNWTO data², in 2018, international tourist arrivals increased by 6% to 1.4 billion, a figure that was reached two years ahead of the agency's forecasts.

In response to this growth, former UNWTO Secretary General, Taleb Rifai, stated that "the key is to manage growth in a sustainable, responsible and intelligent way, and to use the power of growth to our advantage."³

Rifai pointed to the need to sensitize communities about the benefits of the sector and to improve the use of macro data to measure and manage the impact of tourists. He also highlighted the need to diversify visitors' activities, both in type and in location, and support policies to reduce seasonality. According to the current Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization, Zurab Pololikashvili⁴, digitization, new business models, more affordable trips, and social change will continue to shape the tourism sector. Both the destination and businesses must adapt if they are to remain competitive.

The tourism sector experienced a number of challenges during 2019. The collapse of tour operator Thomas Cook marked a turning point in the industry, away from standardized packaged tours and towards more unique, personalized travel experiences. The rise of environmental awareness, manifested in the current flight shaming⁵ trend, also had an impact on the industry, as people sought out alternative means of transport to avoid the high CO2 footprint of airline travel. In Sweden, where this movement has been felt the strongest, 23% of people reduced their air travel in 2018, according to a WWF survey.⁶ Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg crossed the Atlantic ocean by sailboat to present to the United Nations Assembly and share a warning about the impact of climate change on our lives.

These tendencies indicate that despite the travel industry's projected higher growth figures for the coming years, there will be costs involved and the way people approach travel may change. Travelers are demanding better solutions to global problems and more sustainable options, and these solutions must become more and more competitive.

Technology as a Driving Force for New Tourist Destinations

Democratizing Tourism

The tourism sector has also experienced several regulatory and technological disruptions over the past decades. In the 1990s, deregulated air travel spawned the creation of new airlines and opened up new routes, including the so-called low-cost airlines.⁷ The rapid development of the internet changed the way many people search and book their trips. Another significant change has been the rise of digital platforms across many areas of the tourism sector, from free seat-sharing in cars to home-sharing, and even guided tours and cultural experiences. All of these offerings are now part of the tourism ecosystem. Despite this, there is still a real need and a demand for sustainable travel options that will support the long-term health of the industry and of the local communities people enjoy visiting.

Digital platforms have become a central part of the tourist experience and have significantly increased the options and opportunities available to travelers. These options are enriched by the participation of productive community members, who value their goods and services and who take great pride in making these available to others to enjoy. This generates an increase in both supply and demand of goods and services, as well as greater competition. It also leads to greater diversification of supply, higher standards, and a greater variety of options at better prices for users (many of whom are both suppliers and consumers).

Digital platforms have also brought with them greater self-regulation thanks to user-driven rating systems. These platforms, along with more traditional tourist outlets, have diversified the options available to travelers and created the potential for a more personalized tourism experiences grounded in local knowledge.

Empowering Host Communities

Economically, digital platforms, such as Airbnb, have empowered people to convert underutilized assets into profit. This has generated more revenue for municipalities through taxation, and has created employment and revenue for millions of people. In 2018, Airbnb travelers and hosts in the top 30 countries visited generated €86 billion (over \$100 billion USD) in profit. More than €6 billion was generated in Spain⁸ the third highest country in terms of revenue behind France and the United States.

In terms of sustainability, digital platforms have made it possible to use existing resources to accommodate new tourism that may not otherwise be absorbed by

the traditional supply and makes it possible for tourists to visit areas where there is no traditional tourist accommodation. Efficient use of resources, increases the possibility for municipalities to grow into potential destinations, while retaining their authenticity and essence.

As travel and tourism account for 10% of the global economy—and continues to grow—it is essential to use technology to promote more efficient and sustainable ways to travel⁹: Airbnb is taking a leading role in efforts to ensure this:

88 %

of Airbnb hosts around the world incorporate green practices, such as eco-friendly cleaning, recycling and composting, use of renewable energy such as solar panels, and encourage guests to use public transportation or bicycles. This includes over 88% of hosts in Europe (over 94% in the UK) and over 90% of hosts in North America.

66 %

of Airbnb guests say that the environmental benefits of home-sharing are important factors when choosing to stay with Airbnb. Homes advertised through Airbnb generate less waste, use less water, and expend less energy than traditional hotels.¹⁰

Airbnb and Healthy Tourism

Up to 97% of every dollar, euro, or pound spent on Airbnb goes directly to the hosts who rent out their space.¹¹ These earnings are then reinvested in a variety of ways back into local economies in areas such as household expenses, rent or mortgage payments, cleaning services, home improvements, health care, and education. This contrasts significantly with the hotel industry, where between 14 and 36 cents of every US dollar spent is extracted from the local area and does not reach the community tourists visit.

Airbnb offers a new way of traveling that represents an opportunity not only for destinations, especially those with limited accommodation supplies, but for an entire sector that faces the challenge of continued global growth.

”Airbnb was created with the idea that home-sharing allows travelers to live authentic experiences, ones that are as close as possible to the inhabitants and real-life places. We are convinced that our community can be a solution to mass tourism and that it enables sustainable growth that benefits everyone.”

Nathan Blecharczyk, Airbnb co-founder and Director of Strategy

The Triple Balance Approach

This new way of traveling based on community empowerment is reflected in Airbnb’s Triple Balance approach. The Triple Balance is a set of values and processes aimed at creating economic, social, and environmental value simultaneously, understanding that economic returns depend on the social wellbeing of our communities and the health of our environment.

Social value is an incredibly important part of the Airbnb Triple Balance approach, as 79% of guests said they wanted to “live like a local” was important in their choice in booking on Airbnb. Also, 49% of guests said that they chose to book on Airbnb because they wanted to meet new people. Environmental value is reflected both in the search by hosts (86%) and guests (66%) for more sustainable practices in their touristic experiences. Airbnb is also committed to working with hosts and guests and municipalities to reduce our environmental footprint.

The economic value is demonstrated by percentage of profits (up to 97%) that stay with local hosts and within the community. This economic value is also spread to non-traditional tourist zones, in emerging destinations and also to areas outside tourist hotspots within established destinations, where the lack of traditional lodging prevents local communities benefiting from tourism.

55–70 %

The UN Sustainable Development Goal 5 on gender equality¹², of women are employed in tourism-related jobs globally¹³. If we focus on Airbnb, we find that more than

50 %

of users are women, making their role in the community an essential driver. Specifically, in 2018, the hosts of the platform earned more than

10.4 billion

euros globally. Spain was the 4th country in the world in which women hosts earned the most, with figures that exceed 578 million euros¹⁴.

”From the destination’s point of view, tourism can be traced through a spectrum ranging from beneficial to problematic. At the most beneficial end, we can state that a sustainable trip is good for the visitor and good for the destination: its people, its environment, its culture and its character. The aim, of course, is to avoid conditions that fail to do so, as in the case of leakage, when a high proportion of tourist income goes towards profiting a distant company or corporation rather than staying within the destination in the end.”

Jonathan Tourtellot, founder of National Geographic’s Center for Sustainable Destinations



A global commitment to sustainable, healthy tourism

Airbnb has launched a number of initiatives around the world to promote sustainable, healthy tourism. It has partnered with municipalities to promote green practices among its users and has been involved in numerous sessions and conferences on sustainable travel and partnered with organizations that share its vision of how tourism can benefit as many people as possible. Some recent involvements include membership in the World Tourism Organization, participation in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) forum, and the World Tourism Organization’s International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development. Airbnb’s healthy tourism initiatives include the following:

Airbnb Office of Healthy Tourism

Airbnb’s Office of Healthy Tourism (OHT) is an in-house initiative designed to promote local, authentic, and sustainable tourism in countries and cities around the world. Through partnerships, programs, and events, the OHT aims to expand Airbnb’s efforts to empower communities financially, take travelers to lesser-known locations, and support eco-friendly travel habits.

External advisors include David Scowsill, former president of the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) and Taleb Rifai, former Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization.



Community Tourism Programme

In 2017, Airbnb launched a €5m Community Tourism Programme. Part of the Office of Healthy Tourism, the initiative was designed to support innovative projects in local communities that encourage healthy tourism in ways to strengthen communities, empower citizens, and preserve and promote local culture.



The Italian Sabbatical: Grottole, Italy

Through the Community Tourism Programme, Airbnb partnered with a local non-government organization (NGO) to save the historic village of Grottole, Italy. With only 300 inhabitants and more than 600 empty houses, the village was at risk of disappearing. Airbnb selected five volunteers to become temporary citizens of Grottole and work with Wonder Grottole to help restore the village, while experiencing Italian rural life for three months in 2019.

Revitalizing the Ancient Village of Civita, Italy

Until recently, Civita di Bagnoregio was a village in ruins with a population of only ten individuals. Through a unique collaboration aimed at revitalizing the village's artistic heritage, it is now the site of the first public building in Italy listed on Airbnb. In collaboration with the Mayor of Civita, Airbnb completed the restoration of Casa Greco, which is now a House for Artists and open to visitors through the Airbnb platform. All the income earned from bookings goes towards the village's ongoing restoration.

Africa Travel Summit

- In September 2018, Airbnb brought together 150 tourism innovators in Cape Town, South Africa, to discuss how technology can be used to accelerate inclusive, healthy economic growth on the African continent.
- This event marked the start of the Airbnb Africa Academy, a partnership with Open Africa and the Social Enterprise Academy to promote entrepreneurship in rural and low-income communities across the continent, helping hosts and co-hosts understand tourism opportunities for their communities, how to access the Airbnb platform and how to be a successful host.
- Airbnb has pledged \$1 million to promote and fund community-led tourism projects in Africa until 2020.



Astro-tourism with Airbnb – La Palma (Canary Islands)

Eco-friendly, authentic astro-tourism is a sustainable way of traveling that can economically empower rural communities and lesser-known destinations around tourist hotspots.

To promote astro-tourism, Airbnb partnered with the Canary Islands Institute of Astrophysics, Gran Telescopio Canarias and the Starlight Foundation to host a unique stargazing experience at the world's largest telescope.





Airbnb's Guilin Rural Empowerment Project, China

In 2017, Airbnb and the Tourism Development Committee of the City of Guilin, China, signed an agreement to explore how home sharing can support low-income families in the rural village of Jinjiang on Longji Terraces. The year-long project saw globally renowned designers come on board to redesign local, traditional stilt-style homes to create functional home stays with unique cultural features. Local government agencies in Longsheng County have also kickstarted efforts to improve infrastructure and public service systems in order to attract more visitors.

Antarctic Sabbatical

In partnership with Ocean Conservancy, Airbnb organized an opportunity for five volunteers to join a scientific expedition to investigate the presence of microplastics on the planet's most isolated continent. Airbnb and Ocean Conservancy will use the research findings from this expedition to support educational and advocacy efforts on the issue of plastic pollution.



“Travel is becoming more accessible as the world gets richer. One billion more people will be in the global middle class by 2030, and these new entrants will be looking to travel to enhance their horizons. The concentration of tourism in key locations is creating a threat to their future, by causing congestion, overcrowding, and a deteriorating quality of life for residents.

By bringing guests to new places, and putting more money in the hands of local residents, Airbnb has proven to be a pioneer. Spreading the tourists around each city and each country geographically is an important step to solving this overcrowding problem. They lead the way in this exciting new venture.”

David Scowsill, former President and CEO of the World Travel & Tourism Council

Igualada: Healthy Destinations Lab Pilot Project



Healthy Destinations Lab

In 2018, Airbnb and the Catalan Town of Igualada in Spain launched the Healthy Destinations Lab pilot project (the Lab). This initiative set out to test how a new tourist destination could be created while respecting its local culture, and its social and environmental uniqueness, and involved the local community and regional stakeholders.

Igualada is located about 65 km away from Barcelona and accessible by road and rail, though public transport is rather slow. The town is not part of Spain's traditional tourist circuit, yet it has tremendous touristic potential, that includes abundant cultural and commercial resources, incredible landscapes and natural geography. The local government, headed by mayor Marc Castells, was keen to participate in the project and willing to draw in nearby municipalities from the region of L'Anoia. Igualada proved to be an ideal location for a pilot project exploring the possibilities of healthy, sustainable tourism.

The Lab facilitated an ongoing dialogue between local stakeholders, and served as a catalyst for developing a new tourism model. The approach focused on the use of technology to allow the community to highlight and enhance the value of local resources, infrastructure, and entrepreneurial initiatives. The Lab highlighted the role of technology to enable travelers to discover a new destinations and to learn about its history, cultural heritage, and natural environment and to experience tourism from a community perspective.



Through workshops and learning sessions, the pilot project was able to engage a range audiences to analyse the resources available within the town and develop strategies to enable it to become a sustainable destination for travelers. The process allowed the project team to harness the power of group intelligence, empowering members of the Igualada community and the surrounding region.

“We’d like hosts to be our first ambassadors.”

Jordi Marcé, Director of Economic Promotion, Trade and Tourism, Igualada

Action with the Local Community

Airbnb signed an institutional agreement with Igualada Town Council, and committed to working with the local government, public interest groups, and the existing community of Airbnb hosts. The project started with a series of public meetings and a promotion campaign to publicize the project and engage the general public. These public meetings aimed to:

- Engage local hosts who were offering either places to stay or experiences.
- Involve participants in all Lab sessions, especially the co-creation workshop, to leverage their knowledge of the region and their unique needs.
- Share knowledge about the specifics of technology-enabled sustainable tourism and provide insight into current tourism trends.
- Conduct personal interviews to collect feedback on the process to learn about the diverse ranges of personal visions for the project.

Getting to Know the Local Community

Airbnb and the town of Igualada set up a public space to give citizens an opportunity to share their thoughts on the town’s future and potential as a tourist destination.

This initial public outreach helped provided a general understanding of the town’s tourism and raised awareness of the project among residents and the local media. People were asked the following questions in a questionnaire:

- What could we teach visitors about Igualada or the region?
- What are travelers who don’t visit Igualada or the Anoia region missing out on?
- What is the most authentic experience a traveler can experience in Igualada or l’Anoia?



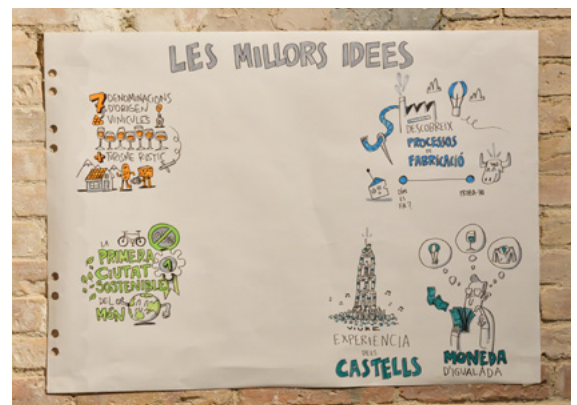
Co-Creation Workshop

“This project is a great opportunity to bring our land (L’Anoia) closer to the world through healthy tourism.”

Maria, Catalan flavors: wine and gastronomy



Following the first public meetings, a co-creation workshop took place with leaders from other towns in the region, associations, entrepreneurs, sports and cultural groups, wineries, restaurants, real estate, and media outlets. The workshop included facilitated working groups on different topics that gave local stakeholders and influencers an opportunity to connect, share ideas, understand the local resources, and collectively look for ways to turn the region into a sustainable tourist destination.



02 Igualada: Healthy Destinations Lab Pilot Project

The objectives of the co-creation workshop were to:

- Understand Igualada's available tourism resources.
- Identify opportunities based on these resources.
- Identify and analyze the profile of targeted travelers.
- Look at ways to attract these travelers and optimize their experience.

The co-creation workshops were well received by participants and lead to some interesting discussion on the following issues:

- Developing Igualada's wine sector, with new wine routes and wine tastings tours to better publicize the region. Many participants did not know that L'Anoia has seven wines with designations of origin.
- The sharing of authentic local experiences such as the tradition of Castellers (human towers).
- Creating a healthy, sustainable tourist destination that reflects the region's peaceful image and that attracts a traveler profile that is family oriented, middle aged (above the age of 40), looking for tranquility, health and well being.
- Building awareness of Igualada's offerings as a destination for tourists looking to enjoy rural landscapes and authentic rural life—in contrast to Barcelona's cosmopolitan experience of city and sea.
- Establishing a tourism office, regional promotional website, and a local innovation round table to work on topics such as healthy tourism.
- Identifying ways to address a perceived lack of leisure activities and develop complementary services to attract visitors passing through Igualada or the region.



From Igualada to the World Seminar

This seminar was designed to allow people to connect with Airbnb's local hosts learn more about their experiences. This form of direct participation by local hosts and entrepreneurs was key to the success of the Lab. Several hosts gave talks about their personal ventures, with a focus on healthy and accessible tourism.

By sharing personal experiences, the seminar fostered synergies within the community that will allow the creation of more complex tourism products. Overall, it was a positive opportunity for the local community to become informed about the Airbnb community and its benefits, both as hosts offering places to stay and through experiences.

Technology for Healthy Tourism Educational Seminar

This four-hour educational seminar, lead by Airbnb, provided information on the benefits of technology for creating new tourist destinations and generating inclusive, sustainable economic growth. Participants, representing local government and public agencies, had the opportunity to learn more about digital marketing, hospitality, experiences, accessibility, and green housing practices. The session also enabled attendees to identify common challenges in relation to tourism and establish an open, productive discussion to find ways to address these.



Healthy Tourism Focus Topics

- Accessible and inclusive tourism
- Airbnb's global accessibility initiatives
- How to develop online marketing and personal branding
- How to host unique and culturally relevant experiences
- Methods for Marie Kondo inspired tidiness, organization, and hospitality
- Ideas for developing green, eco-friendly houses

Airbnb Policy Lab

The Policy Lab brought together hosts, academics, civil servants, members of local competition authorities (CNMC and ACCO), competition experts, and experts in platform economics to understand technology's impact on the tourism industry. Industry experts gave a number of presentations that enabled participants to understand the opportunities and risks posed by new forms of tourism; analyze the regulations affecting these new tourism channels; and propose a strategy to start up a new tourist destination.

Participants brainstormed ideas for developing new tourist destinations using digital technology, and discussed the regulatory framework necessary to create the enabling environment that would protect users and the local communities.

New Destinations Summit

The New Destinations Summit was organized in Igualada as part of the Healthy Destinations Lab project. It welcomed representatives from more than 30 countries and 30 international municipalities to discuss healthy tourism and the challenges facing global tourist destinations. Also present were influencers from the tourism sector, such as former UNWTO Secretary General Taleb Rifai, former WTTC president David Scowsill, Maribel Rodríguez, regional director of Europe and Latin America of the WTTC, as well as ministers of tourism from Thailand, Colombia, and Peru.

Panel discussions explored the possibilities for building a better future through the development of responsible tourism, synergies between the tourism and technology sectors, public-private partnerships, and proactive community participation.



Lessons Learned from Igualada and the Healthy Destinations Lab

- The involvement and participation of public agencies are crucial to the success of creating sustainable tourist destinations.
- Public - private collaboration and public involvement increases the potential for regions to become sustainable tourist destinations
- The objectives, responsibilities, and roles of stakeholders must be clearly defined, both in terms of project content and duration. For example, Airbnb's role was to facilitate and transmit knowledge in technological and sectoral fields.
- The active participation and presence of local government and public administrators is very important.
- It is critical to have a reliable local contact to act as a link between stakeholders and to mobilize local groups within the tourism, economic, cultural, and public sectors.
- In creating a new tourist destination, one of the project's aims must be to secure a consensual agreement between local parties, even if it is not completely mutually satisfactory.
- Workshops and seminars to ensure all stakeholders are engaged and engaging in the process and committed to the outcomes are necessary. It's important to establish a clear process and to ensure all stakeholders are provided with necessary materials on time for each activity to ensure participants can come up with actionable outcomes.
- Community meetups, involving hosts and local associations, are valuable to incorporate their contributions into the design of the project.
- Direct participation from local hosts adds valuable context to the project and is a great way to inspire others in the community to participate. In regions with few available places to stay and experiences, this is essential for growth and optimizing locally available resources.
- The connections and synergies created by participant collaboration promote greater regional insight and greater potential to create attractive products that will impact the area.
- The entire process needs to be documented and communicated to participants, especially lessons learned. Follow-up is worthwhile for understanding how to best proceed with the project's ongoing development.
- It is important to show that digital platforms and the digital economy are not just for big cities. These tools can have a positive impact on areas developing a new tourist destination. It should be made clear that there is no standardized approach or product, both technology and tools must be adapted to suit the area where the project is being promoted.



Sustainable Destination Creation Analysis



03 Sustainable Destination Creation Analysis

According to the UNWTO, tourist destinations are places travelers decide to visit. The term includes the location and all the attractions that lead travelers to make the trip to that place. Tourist destinations are defined by geographical and political borders, and have clearly perceived physical or cultural features. These factors and features can be divided into tourism resources, infrastructure, services, and tourism products and need to be available in sufficient supply to meet travelers' needs and expectations.

For tourism to be sustainable, these resources must be utilized in a way that minimizes the negative impacts of tourism on the host community and the local environment, and must lead to positive outcomes for all.

The following section outlines the criteria necessary for creating a sustainable, healthy tourist destination. A detailed analysis based on these recommendations is laid out to enable a better understanding of the basic infrastructure and services need to in order to enable a place to become a tourist destination.

CARE Analysis

The CARE analysis system¹⁵ is a tool that sets out a process for municipalities to use when considering becoming a tourist destination.

After deciding where they want to visit, tourists or travelers, will consider what resources—economic, human, technological, and infrastructure—are needed for them to reach their chosen destination and check in to their accommodation.

The CARE system enables municipalities to better understand and leverage this decision making process. It outlines several critical points for understanding available resources and requirements needed to develop a sustainable tourist destinations. The CARE system covers four specific areas: Capacity, Access, Resources, and Environment. Co-creation workshops with local stakeholders are the ideal forum for using the CARE system as it enabled more productive discussion and in-depth analysis.



Capacity and Accommodation

When analysing the capacity of a destination to host tourists, authorities need to conduct a full inventory of capacity to accommodate visitors. This includes spaces in hotels, self catering apart-hotels, hostels, guest houses, rural houses, campsites, and tourist apartments¹⁶ as well as home sharing spaces¹⁷, and holiday homes used for touristic purposes. It is also important to consider potential stock and how many homes or parts of homes (rooms) are under utilized and could be used and given value on digital platforms such as Airbnb. This information will allow authorities to consider how the existing and potential accommodation capacity aligns with the overall strategy of becoming a sustainable tourist destination.

Additionally, it is important to assess the quality of available tourist service systems, including local language skills, public and private signage, security services, as well as the convenience and availability of the reservation technology. These components must be consistent with the destination's targeted traveler profile.

Access and Connections

Measuring Distance to Tourist Destinations

Distance to destinations is another critical aspect of a destination's appeal. Distance should not only be measured in kilometers, but also in terms of time and cost required to reach the destination, and the different access options available. The connection between a secondary destination¹⁸ and a main destination is very important for the development of this secondary destination. Minimal barriers to arrival and higher departure barriers encourage more overnight stays.

Mass Transportation

Plane: More than 67% of tourists who visited Spain in 2018 arrived by plane¹⁹. Globally, air travel for tourist reasons accounted for 55% of all air travel in 2016, according to UNWTO data. Potential destinations should be in a position to harness this competitive advantage and work with public and private agencies to ensure quick and easy connections to nearby airports.

Bus: One of the most common means of travel, bus transportation accounted for 39% of all tourism transit in 2016. One of the keys to boosting tourism is generating enough demand for a destination in order enable bus operators to increase the frequency, quality and lower the cost of services. The need to open up adequate bus transportation routes should be understood and potential agreements with the private sector should be explored. In Spain, steps are already being taken to rethink the current model and better connect areas with little or no bus access²⁰.

Train: Due to its nature and the complexity of railway infrastructure, train travel is used far less frequently than other modes of transport. However, it is important to carry out an analysis of local and regional stations and consider plans that would improve access and connectivity to the destination, including combining train and other modes of transport to create new routes. It is important that the information (routes, schedules, prices) relating to all existing means of transport are accessible, available in different languages, and updated regularly.

Private and Shared Transportation Options

For inter-urban transport, sharing economy options can be good alternatives for tourist transportation, especially in less connected destinations. Carpooling²¹ is a journey sharing option, often accessible via digital platforms, that can help increase a destination's connectivity²² and increase cost savings while reducing environmental emissions. This option is becoming so popular that it is already included in the official tourism surveys in Spain²³. Destinations should take into account shared and sustainable mobility options beyond regular public transport, such as car-sharing, motorbike-sharing, and bike-sharing²⁴.

Other forms of intra- and inter-urban transport should also be assessed, including private car rental services, taxi services and the Spanish ride hailing licensed services - Vehículos de Transport con Conductor (VTC) — many of which are now available via digital platforms²⁵. Digital technology makes it is easy and more secure for tourists to make reservations and pay for services. The ability to access a location through the use of this technology becomes a clear differentiator for potential tourist destinations and demonstrates a strong commitment to improving the tourist experience.

Destinations should focus on offering a diverse selection of transport and mobility options, centered around travelers' preferences for efficient resource use, shared deployment, and low environmental impact.

Accessibility for Individuals with Reduced Mobility or Disabilities

"A tourist destination will be accessible when all environments, services and products offered to tourists allow everyone to use and enjoy them, in a standardized, autonomous and safe way."

03 Sustainable Destination Creation Analysis

According to Predif data, there are 3.85 million people in Spain with disabilities or reduced mobility, this figure represents approximately 9% of the population. Of the 3.85 million: 67% have mobility requirements, 28.1% have hearing impairments, 25.8% have visual impairments, 19.4% have a communication-related disability and 16.6% have learning difficulties. Furthermore, in Europe, Spain's principal market there are 138.6 million people with accessibility needs.

Millions of people around the world with disabilities and accessibility needs are excluded from using basic products and services in tourist destinations. This is compounded by an aging demographic, which currently constitutes 19.379%²⁶ of people over 65 in Spain and is set to double by 2066.

The rights of these individuals to travel comfortably and safely should be seen as an opportunity for the tourism sector. Currently, in Europe only 9.2% of tourist amenities and services have some level of accessibility. It is necessary to present data on accessibility to highlight that this is not as an expense, but as investment in a social good that yields positive economic outcomes.



The travel patterns of this segment of the population could contribute to the reduction of the impact of seasonality, one of the great challenges faced by many destinations²⁷. In Europe, people with accessibility needs made an average of 6.7 trips per year in 2013 and in Spain 7 trips per year in 2015. Instead of concentrating holidays during peak seasons, these travelers diversify their trips. They also spend approximately 28% more than other tourists to reserve accessibility features. Additionally, they are frequent repeat customers and are more loyal than other tourists.

Accessibility needs were specifically addressed during the Igualada workshops. At one workshop, a local Airbnb Superhost, Jordi, described his experience with Can Morei²⁸, an old Catalan farmhouse renovated

in 2016 as one of the few rural houses with accessible options in the area. As we have seen with the data provided for this sector, this fact represents a clear competitive advantage for Can Morei compared to other places to stay which do not have these features.

In 2018, Airbnb announced 21 new filters would be added to the platform to facilitate the search for accessible homes around the world²⁹. These new features allow guests to identify listings with specific accessibility features, such as room access without steps, roll-in showers and baths, and spacious wheelchair entrances.

Resources and Amenities

To leverage the potential of a destination, a number of essential amenities are needed for traveler comfort and safety.

Basic internet access is needed to market hotels, vacation rentals, and experiences on digital platforms like Airbnb. Access to a wifi connection is also required to make it easier for tourists to access information on local products and offerings. Lack of connectivity is a significant barrier for any potential destination. Digital coverage is an issue that all potential destinations will need to resolve with public agencies. In Spain, for example, connectivity projects are being carried out through³⁰ public policies to provide internet access in less populated rural areas.

It is also important to be able to facilitate easy payments in stores and restaurants, especially, especially for foreign visitors. Providing for card and electronic payments, as well as ATM cash withdrawals, is essential and helps increase travelers' spending at the destination. Working with local banks or financial service providers is an important step to make this happen.

Other essential amenities that impact the safety of tourists include basic health services, such as medical centers, pharmacies, as well as cleaning and food control systems. A destination must have a minimum standard of health services available to residents and tourists.

Tourist Resources

In terms of tourism resources, an inventory of existing resources should be made. This document can help identify some of the many potential resources that can be put to use to create products for both tourists and residents to use and enjoy.

- **Cultural Resources:** It is useful to learn about the local area's history and culture, identifying what elements might be attractive to visitors and understanding how best to package them. For example, museums, monuments, castles, historical routes or cultural performances all have a positive and memorable impacts on visitors.
- **Gastronomic Resources:** This includes both traditional bars and restaurants, but also experiences with local residents who want to share local flavors with travelers. Local specialties should be featured and promoted, especially those made from locally produced ingredients.
- **Ecological Resources:** Nature is one of the most attractive resource available in many destinations, but often the most ignored. Local fauna and flora can attract many visitors. The natural environment can be a competitive advantage that draws in visitors seeking relaxation, tranquility, and contact with the great outdoors. Ornithological tourism or bird watching, for example, is in very high demand with British tourists³¹. Astro-tourism has become popular in less urbanized areas with minimal light pollution. In Yarmouth, Canada, visitor numbers increased by 221% due to the influx of star-gazing tourists³². Sports tourism is another option to consider in regions with access to bodies of water or mountains. Destinations can promote these types of tourist activities and offer incentives (training, financing, taxation, etc.) to local entrepreneurs to develop businesses.
- **Experience Resources:** Coupled with other resources, new experience products, centered around concerts, festivals, gastronomy routes, or guided nature tours, can be created and developed with local entrepreneurs.

Based on the lessons learned by local entrepreneurs in Igualada, tourist products were developed that offer a combination of these resources create powerful and attractive packages for tourists.

It is important to bear in mind that systems for measuring environmental impact need to be in place. This is not only out of respect for the local community, but also because authenticity is part of any tourist destination offering, and managing this sustainably is critical to a destination's long-term success. The European System of Tourism Indicators (ESTI)³³ is a useful tool for managing sustainable destinations and preserving resources.

Business and Regulatory Environment

Implementing a balanced, sustainable, and successful project depends on good relationships and giving voice to stakeholders from all areas in the community and surrounding area. Synergies between public agencies, private organizations, and the local community should be harnessed. Municipalities must also seek the engagement of other public agencies, regional entities, and other municipal governments to support the destination development.

It is also helpful to seek partners at the national level, or beyond in the case of the European Union. Many subsidies and sponsorship programs are available to support the development of rural areas for tourism³⁴.

In the private sector, cooperation must be encouraged between different tourism sector operators (accommodation, transport, other amenities) to create more more striking products. Businesses and business associations represent an important voice in supporting the economic interests of the area and need to be fully engaged in plans and projects to develop tourism.

Regulations

Understanding and working with tourism-related regulations is key to developing a healthy, sustainable destination. Co-creation workshops are ideal settings to involve and gain the perspective of different stakeholders, government administrators, and regulatory bodies. These working groups can help determine what programs and policies function effectively and what adjustments needs to be made to achieve the destination's goals.

Accounting for the needs and challenges of local entrepreneurs is also critical and it is important that this group is properly represented and part of the regulatory process. The goal should be to develop regulations that support the tourism sector, without imposing unreasonable limits or restrictions, or imposing regulations restricts one sector to the benefit of another.

Regulatory Best Practices

Regulation of an activity is a neutral endeavor. Developed and carried out effectively, it upholds best practices, and protects all those involved and impacted by tourism and its related activities. A set of basic criteria should be kept in mind to empire the creation of a positive, pro-tourism regulatory environment.

- Work in harmony with high-level regulatory bodies, regionally and nationally.
- Regulations should differentiate between the activities carried out by commercial or professional entities and activities carried out by private individuals in their own homes.
- Establish a single online registration system that does not impede start-up activity
- Regulatory compliance control should be enforced only after the start of the tourist-related activities.
- Any associated fees should be non-prohibitive and based on a realistic assessment the each provider affected.

Principles of Efficient Regulation

- The following list is a summary of the efficient regulation principles outlined by the Catalan Competition Authority (ACCO in Catalan)³⁵.
- Necessity principle: Any rules introducing restrictions on competition must be preceded by a definition of the rule's objectives and a clear justification for the introduction of the regulations. The goal should be to carefully balance the need for improving social welfare and the risk of restricting economic activity.
- Proportionality principle: Any restriction should uphold social wellbeing and should not be more severe than necessary.
- Minimal distortion principle: Among the possible tools used to achieve a given objective, one should choose the option that provides the lowest negative effect on competition.
- Efficiency principle: The capacity of any regulation to achieve its desired objectives or effects as efficiently as possible.
- Transparency principle: Transparency and clarity should be present throughout the regulatory framework, in the drafting process, and in through the implementation.
- Predictability principle: Operators must be provided with a stable and reliable framework, free from any uncertainty and supported by legal protection.

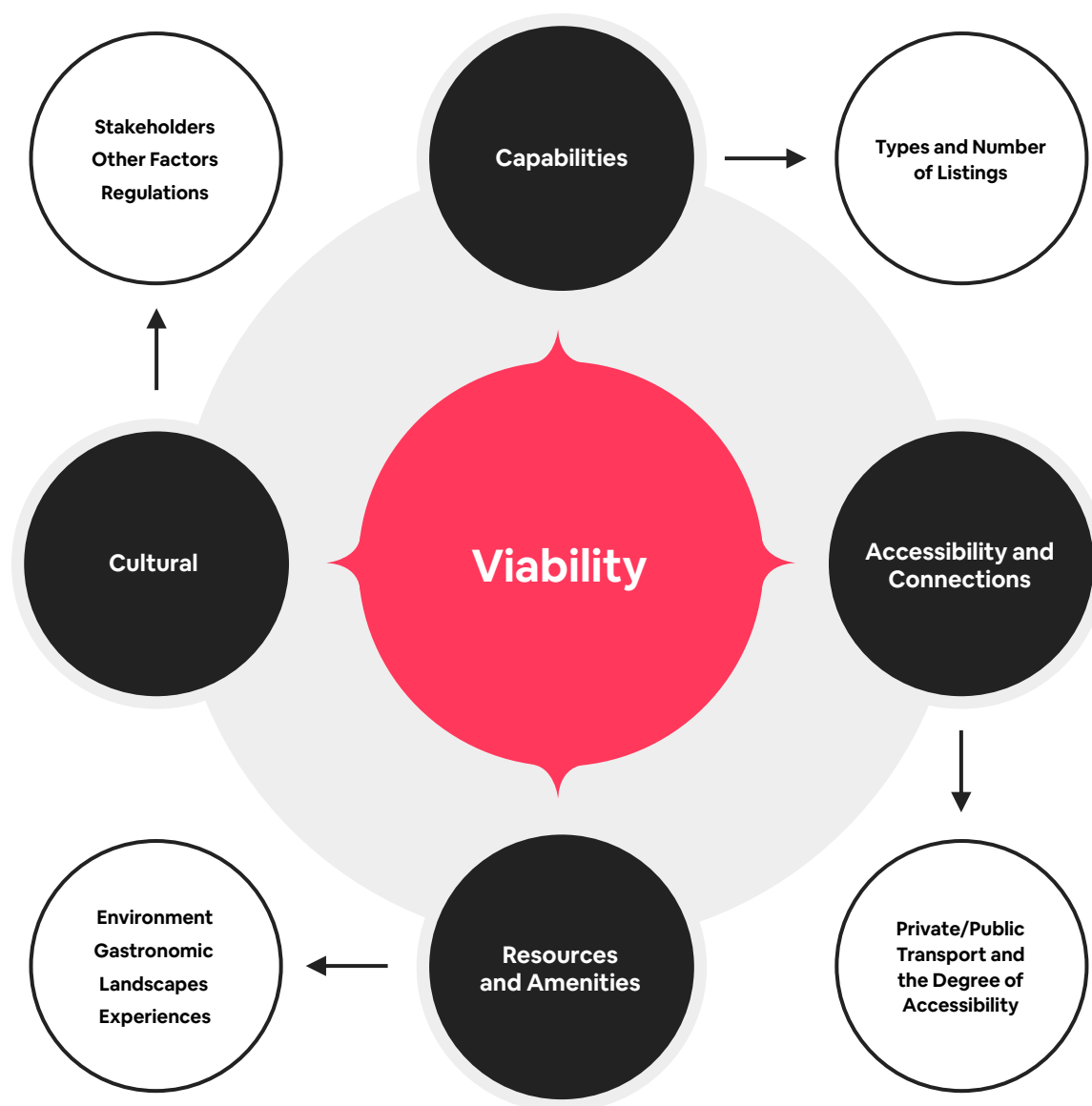
Viability

The CARE analysis provides an overview of a destination's potential and a guide to identifying the minimum elements to be considered when strengthening the tourist-related resources of a region. Not all destinations will have all the necessary elements required to create a new destination, however this should not be a deterrent but a motive for seeking out more support that will enable the authorities to achieve their objective. The CARE analysis is a simple, process driven tool to help authorities. Depending on the type of destination and its location, these elements will have greater or lesser impact in the growth and development of tourism to an area.

Co-creation workshops, similar to the ones presented at Igualada (Annexes I and II), are very useful in assessing the viability phase of a project to create a destination and help to paint a realistic picture of the actual chances of achieving the objective. It is up to each region to determine whether the steps needed to become a destination are feasible and whether appropriate regulations are in place for its development.

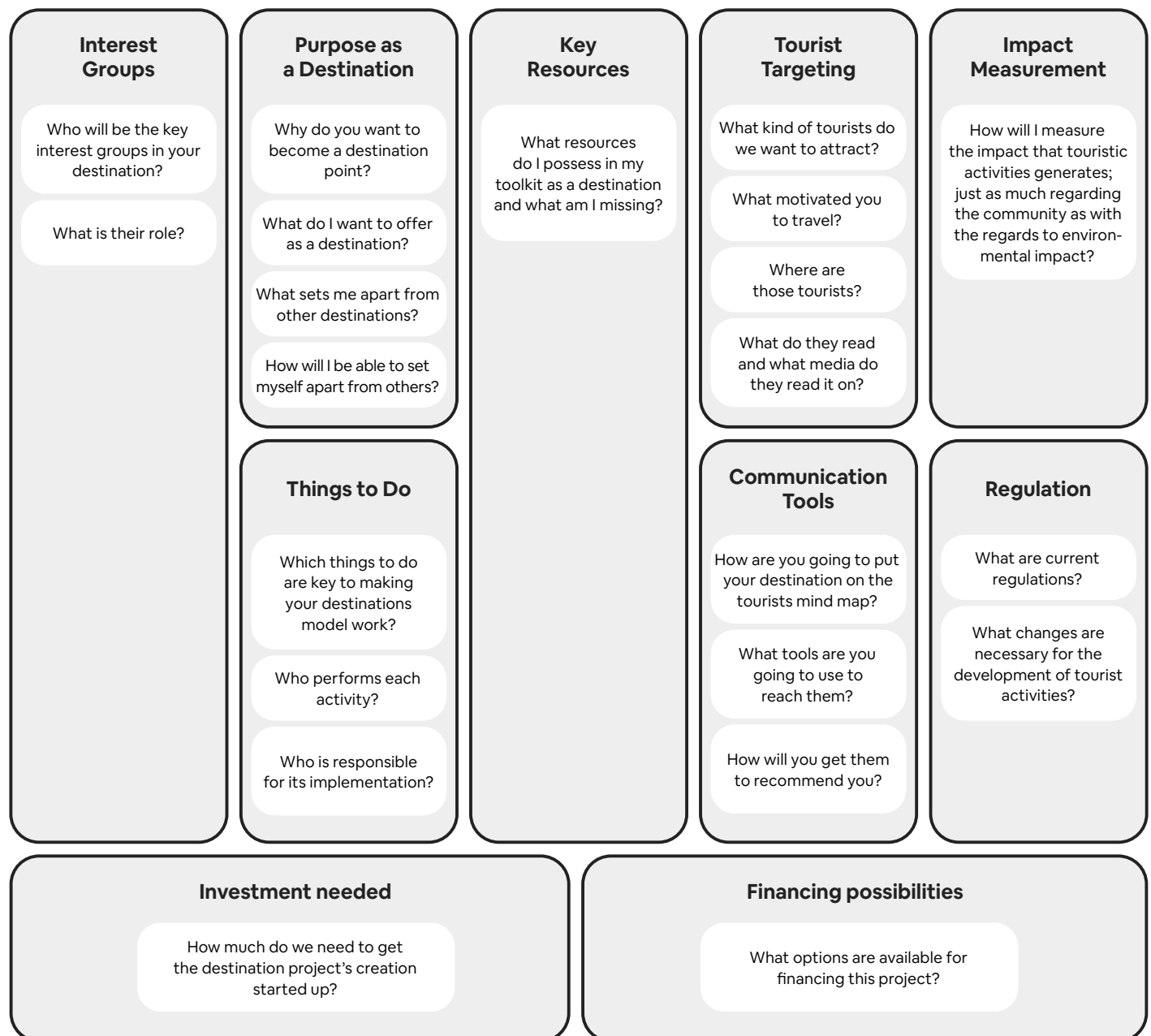
ANNEX I

CARE Analysis



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Healthy Tourism Model Canvas



Communication Strategy

“The question each potential destination should ask themselves is not what local people like, but what the visiting international customer would enjoy.”

Jordi, Airbnb Superhost, Can Morei Cottage, Igualada, Spain

Having developed a strategy for creating a destination, based on existing resources identified through the CARE analysis, the next goal should be to develop a promotion and communications strategy. This guide offers a basic model for devising strategy for reaching a targeted tourist profile.

Identify Tourists Segments to Target

After analyzing a destination's tourist offerings, the next step is to understand who the destination will target as potential visitors—the target audience. This tourist profile must be thoroughly researched and clearly defined to ensure that marketing and communications messages reach them in the most efficient and effective way. The Tourist Empathy Map (Annex III) is a helpful tool to guide this process.

Tourist Empathy Map

- Name
- Nationality
- Age group, gender, education, and income level
- What passions and general interests do they have? What are their pursuits in life and when traveling?
- How do they like to travel? Do they use the internet to search for information? Do they book trips online?

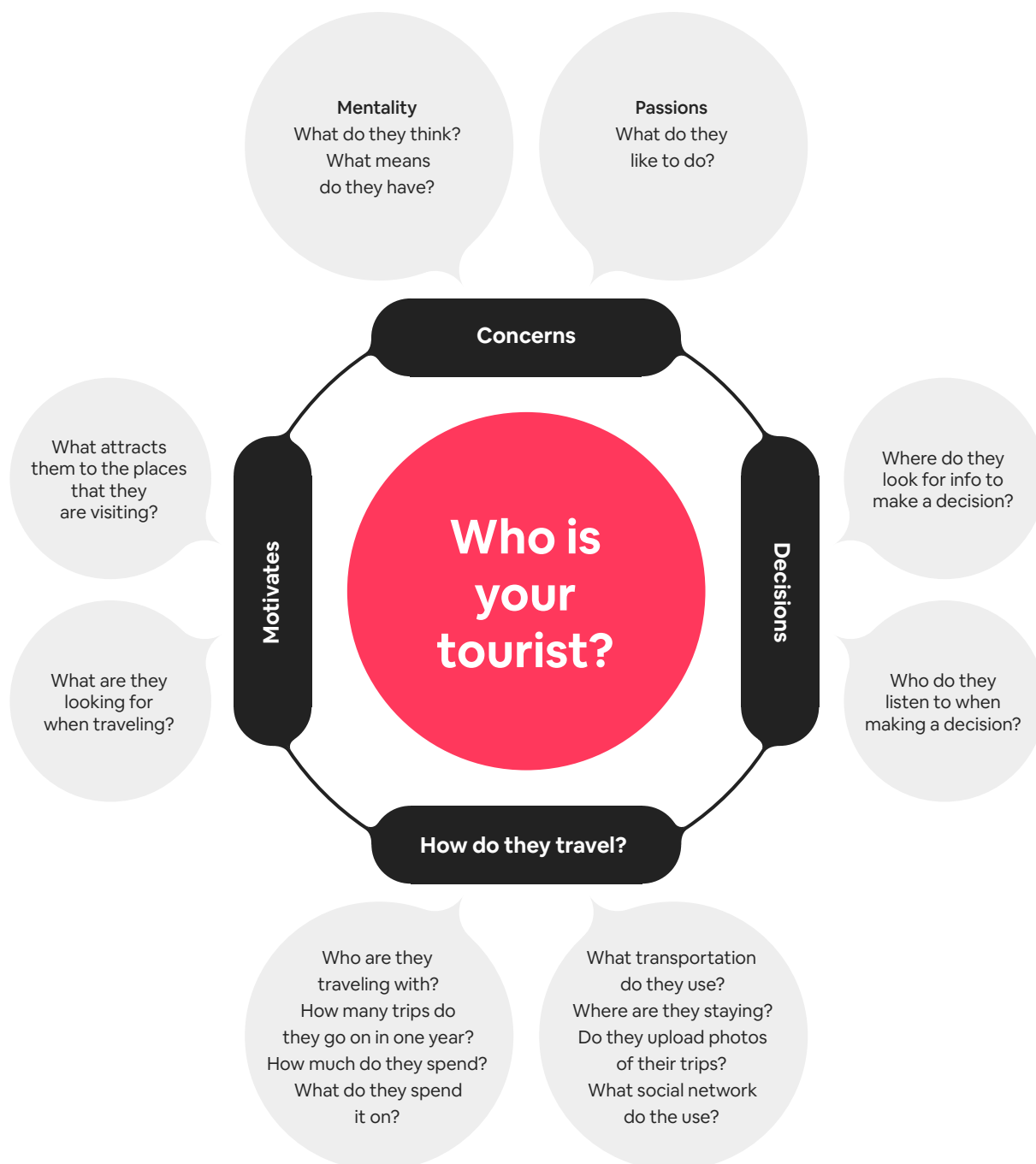
- Why do they travel? What type of experience are they looking for? Is a destination's sustainability credential an influential factor when choosing where to spend holidays?
- Which language(s) do they speak?
- What social media platforms do they use?
- What type of media do they read?
- How do they shop?
- What inspires their decision making when it comes to choosing something?
- What region(s) or country(s) is the primary target located in?

All these questions are essential for developing a communications that will have an impact on the target audience.

Destinations don't only survive through resources generated by a specific type of seasonal foreign visitor. There are many intersecting niches that can appeal to tourists at different times of the year that would differentiate a destination's tourist products, such as pet-friendly destinations, adult-only or family-friendly services, Halal and Kosher destinations, or LGBTQ friendly destinations.

ANNEX III

Touristic Empathy Chart



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Creating a Destination Image

A coherent brand image generates demand if it is well-designed and well-targeted. One of the most common comments during the Igualada co-creation workshops was about the need to create a coherent tourist product. In order to be effective, the product must adhere to the destination's brand position and perceived brand image—this is what resonates in the minds of potential tourists.

One of the ideas that emerged at Igualada, was to present the region as the Tuscany of Catalonia. This approach is effective because it uses a very successful and well known brand image that can easily be related to Igualada's own abundant cultural resources, gastronomy, and picturesque landscapes.

The destination's brand image must be authentic and meet tourists' expectations of being in that location. This clearly differentiates one destination from another and influences a tourist's decision to visit. This important concept must be worked on throughout the co-creation workshops, as it is a calling card of any destination.

A good example of a genuine destination image is Brihuega³⁶, a town in Guadalajara (Spain). The town's brand image and tourist industry revolves around the cultivation of lavender. This is reflected on the town council's website, on local billboards and advertising displays. The town's brand and the tourist experience that can be expected are clearly and consistently communicated.

Connecting with Target Tourists

There are various channels for direct digital communication with tourists, including websites, events, social media, and traditional media outlets.

Websites

In terms of design, destination websites must be attractive, user-friendly, fast to load, and easily accessible on mobile devices. A website should be built around a consistent brand image and display the destination's main attractions, products and services.

Analysis tools, such as Google Analytics, allows people managing the website to understand where online visitors come from, both geographically and from across the Internet (traffic sources, such as social media, blogs that mention the destination, news...).

All this, of course, should always comply with legal regulations on personal data and their processing (General Data Protection Regulation³⁷ (GDPR) in the case of the European Union, or the equivalent in other countries or regions).

A website is mainly a display portal, it is important to also build and maintain a relationship with the tourist and encourage them to visit the website. This can be done directly, by the destination or through local businesses. Email marketing is a good tool for this, sending periodic emails with interesting and valuable content to inform tourists about new products or offers thereby maintaining potential interest.

Local Media

The local media is an ideal channel for communicating the new destinations project, in particular highlighting its different phases and its conclusions. In Igualada, local, regional and national media covered the Healthy Destination Lab's launch and contributed to its success. Media coverage was not just limited to sharing information with local participants, but also helped at a national level to put Igualada and the L'Anoia region on the map as tourist destinations.

Media is a very powerful tool if managed correctly, this requires understanding understanding the audience and reaching out to them with newsworthy content. This content, again, must be consistent with the brand identity of the destination. Other possible options to attract media attention is to inviting journalists to visit the destination and sample its products and services, so that they can share it with others.

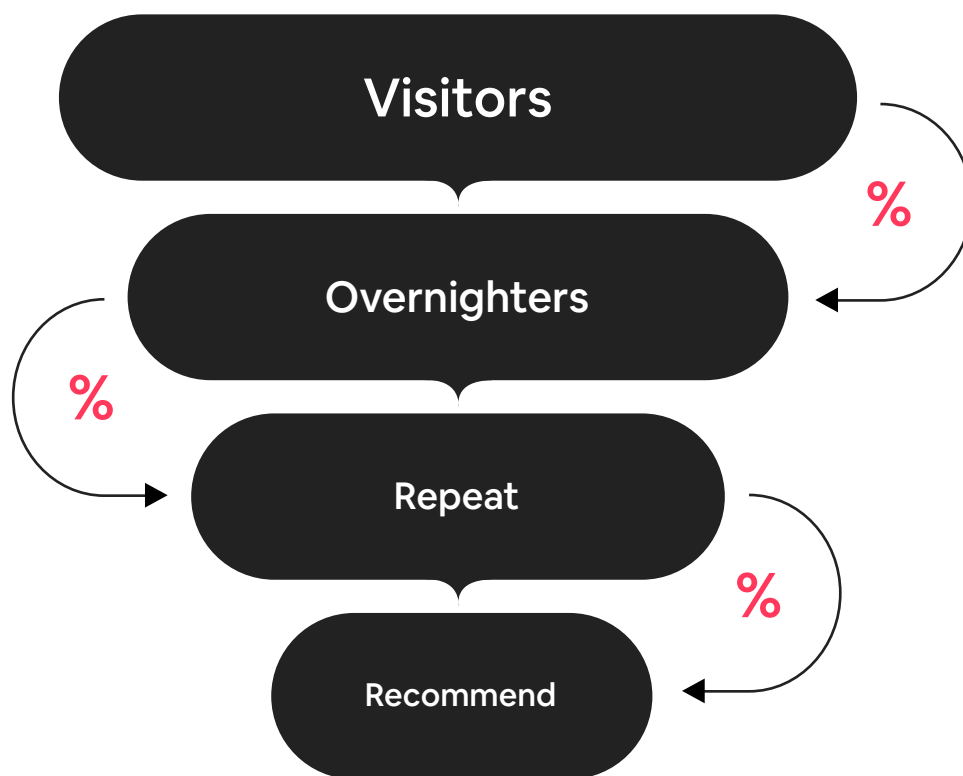
Data-based Digital Strategy

While we can't force a tourist to search for offerings, we can learn what tourists are looking for and see how this behavior fits our strategy for promoting that destination. Data available through different social media platforms, blogs, and referral platforms provide extensive information on sector trends.

Success does not occur by magic or chance. The implemented strategies must be continuously measured and monitored to ensure results consistently match the forecasts. The different components of the marketing conversion funnel must be analyzed (see Annex IV) to identify problems and quickly develop solutions. For example, if overnight stays are lower than expected, analyzing accommodation quality, pricing, and user feedback can point to new ways of improving the offer or developing new digital strategies to promote the destination.

ANNEX IV

Conversion Funnel for Tourist Destinations



Events to Showcase a New Destination

Events of any kind, such as concerts or music festivals, provide a valuable opportunity to attract potential tourists to a destination and publicize its attractions. If the destination already has its own events, these should be linked to ongoing tourist activity. For example, in Iqualada, the hot air balloon festival was used to enhance its image with potential visitors and helped attract national and international attendees. Additionally, the event is regularly covered by international media outlets, helping to further develop its positioning.

It is possible to work on creating similar products during the co-creation workshops. Products should be designed that will help establish the brand image the destination wants to convey and generate demand by leveraging communication linked to the event.

In the case of Brihuega³⁸, where large lavender fields bloom annually, a series of activities have been programmed around the plant's blossoming. These activities range from balloon and paragliding trips over the fields, guided tours, classic car exhibitions and workshops to learn how to photograph this spectacular sight, to concerts both in the historic downtown, and in the lavender fields.

Social Media

Social media can help increase a destination's visibility, not only through local user accounts but also through visiting tourists themselves. This requires a clear strategy and sound knowledge of the target tourist audience profile.

It is necessary to understand which social media platforms are most used by targeted tourist profiles³⁹. Social content should be created to reflect the destination's image, based on the tourist audience. Social content can also be created from tourists' own experiences through videos, photos or testimonials written by them. Different strategies for promoting content through social media on different platforms can be developed.

Measuring Progress

Without measurement, it is difficult to understand whether a strategy or a set of actions to attract tourists are having an impact. It is necessary to put mechanisms in place that allow us to obtain and analyze data and compare the analysis with predicted results.

Metrics—qualitative and quantitative—can be gathered both online (website traffic, social media mentions, online bookings) and offline (surveys, tourist office questions, accommodation feedback)

General Destination Metrics

- Number of visits recorded over a year: How many people visit the destination for leisure or business, with and without overnight stays.
- Number of nights recorded: Differentiating between day visitors and overnight tourists. Additionally look at if lodging offered is suitable, fairly prices, and any additional services are sufficient.

- Number of return visits by tourists: This measures the degree of loyalty tourists have to a destination, and is also a good measure of the tourist satisfaction with the value provided by the destination.
- Social recommendations from visitors: This metric can be reinforced with visuals that remind people of social media and hashtags that can be used when uploading photos or posts about the destination.

Metrics for Online Content

- Social media mentions: Not only is the number of followers important, you also have to measure the degree of engagement or interaction with those followers.
- Mentions in online press: Record media mentions and check that the message transmitted is consistent with the destination's image. It is also important to understand the targeted audience and if it aligns with the targeted tourist profile.
- Page views: Number of website visits, how many of those visits become contacts asking for information, and how well the website serves as an information point for the destination.
- Opening rate and email marketing clicks: It is good to know the real impact that these communications have to know the interest it generates: how many openings there have been per send, how many times the link was clicked on and how this data compares to industry averages are good ways to measure this.

It is very important to establish measurement objectives beforehand and ensure that actions are leading to tangible changes towards the goals set. This also allows the destination to make necessary course corrections where no progress is achieved. Understanding where the problem lies in the value chain is essential to correct it efficiently.

“Tourism is a horizontal and interconnected sector; our success depends on collaboration, that is, giving a hand to others, sharing intelligence and sharing experiences.”

Taleb Rifai

How to Become a Healthy, Sustainable Destination



Performing a CARE Analysis for Healthy Tourism

”Do we have to choose between comfort and respect for nature? Today we have the resources and technology to create a sustainable world.“

Beatriz, The Green Island

1. Determine what resources, attributes, infrastructures, amenities, and tourism products are available in the region to be analyzed. This can be done through a CARE analysis via participatory co-creation workshops using the annexes included in this document.
2. Draw conclusions and summarize the region’s potential as a destination and possible collaborations with other public and private entities in the region.
3. Define and understand the destination’s brand and purpose. Clearly define the reason for wanting to be a tourist destination and who is the targeted tourists will be.
4. Determine the systems that will ensure the destination’s environmental sustainability, for example impact measurement, clean energy, water recycling, and waste management⁴⁰.

Establish the Will or Institutional Commitment to Promote the Destination

- There must be a clear political will to commit to the creation and promotion of a healthy, sustainable destination.
- An agreement must be reached and endorsed by the local interest groups and political forces who will be responsible for implementing and developing the project.
- At least a small team and basic resources should be dedicated to this purpose.
- The public and political will should be reflected in an institutional arrangement with the private sector, which should serve as the starting point for the project.

Involve the Community: Seek Support and Consensus Among Local and Regional Stakeholders

- Active participation of the local community is essential to the successful development of a tourist destination.
- The community’s contribution to co-creation workshops and participation in trainings is essential for gaining an in-depth understanding of the potential destination, its resources and its differentiating qualities.
- Encouraging the use of under-utilized resources, such as empty rooms or homes, and the use of technology to enhance their value should be a priority for destinations with limited accommodation supplies.
- Strategically engage other local governments and agencies, regionally and nationally, to optimize resources and successfully implement the destination’s development.

Educate Stakeholders about the Power of Technology

- The local community must be involved to ensure local ownership of the project and clearly understand local challenges.
- Co-creation workshops and training sessions are essential for pooling resources and utilizing collective intelligence.
- Participation from local trade, culture, technology, and any other related sectors is critical for success.
- Document all results and all findings and results and share with all participants.
- Use the Healthy Tourism Model Canvas to begin the creation process.
- Make an Empathy Map to identify a target tourist profile that best represents the destination and its tourism products on offer.
- Establish achievable metrics and measure results to correct strategy and activities, if needed.
- Meet with local community associations, neighbors, and hosts to bring their contributions into the subsequent planning work. These meetups can be enriched with training actions to show how technology can help give more value to a destination or what types of promotional activities can be carried out to increase the destination's visibility.

Establish Regulations that Promote Entrepreneurship and Community Empowerment

- Local and regional authorities seeking to convert their regions into tourist destinations must take into account that regulation must accompany the development of any activity, ensuring his regulation does not unduly limit or prohibit the activity.
- Good regulation is a key factor in encouraging the generation and growth of ideas that allow a region to increase its appeal as a destination.
- Efficient regulatory principles must be taken into account to provide legal certainty for the initiatives aimed at improving the potential destination.
- Seek collaboration between the different government agencies that have jurisdiction over the development of the destinations.
- Harmonization with high-level regulations is required to avoid fragmenting the destination market and ensure its adaptation and proper promotion.
- Leverage technology's benefits in terms of registration, activity management, and the collection of taxes and fees.

Afterword

By the Igualada City Hall

Between 2018 and 2019, Igualada developed an internationally recognized initiative stemming from collaboration between Igualada City Hall and Airbnb: the Healthy Destinations Lab and the New Destinations Summit. This initiative has helped reinforce Igualada's capacity to use sustainable tourism as a tool for the development and revitalization of the city.

The project has created the synergies required to consolidate various tourism-related initiatives already underway in Igualada, such as the tourism plan completed in 2018, along with efforts to promote events in the city as drivers of economic activity. In addition, the project has offered an opportunity to evaluate and promote the initiatives carried out to date.

Various initiatives undertaken by Igualada City Hall have been supported and influenced by the Healthy Destinations Lab in the following areas of activity:

1 Regulation

An urban master plan will be developed for the emblematic Rec d'Igualada district, spearheaded by the Generalitat de Catalunya. In this regard, emphasis will be placed on sustainable and inclusive planning aimed at strengthening the district while making the relevant zoning changes to allow a range of activities to be carried out there.

Rec d'Igualada is a unique neighborhood and its transformation is part of a cross-cutting initiative including a number of participatory processes.

In the first of these processes, we identified a need to rethink the neighborhood's public space, with the support of the Rec district council. This debate included input from residents, architects and urban planners at both national and international levels via the "Rethinking the Rec District" contest.

The master plan, which is being prepared in collaboration with the Generalitat de Catalunya's Department of Territory and Sustainability (DTS), will also be a participatory process designed to encourage urban transformation/recycling in an area closely associated with industrial activity. In this regard, sustainable urban planning will be a key part of efforts to establish a sustainable tourism model in Igualada.

At the same time, the master plan is just one aspect of a future urban transformation process for the entire city of Igualada.

Under the auspices of the Healthy Destinations Lab, the participatory process also allowed information on the future of the neighborhood to be collected with a view to meeting present and future needs, with sustainability foremost among them.

2 Promoting the city

Igualada hosts a large number of national and international events primarily designed to serve as economic drivers, particularly in the sports and culture sectors. They include the following:

- European Balloon Festival (the largest festival of its kind in southern Europe)
- VolCAT, international mountain bike trials organized by UCI, the governing body for sports cycling
- Rec.0, a pop-up store festival
- Zoom Festival
- FineArt
- Children's and youth theatre exhibition
- Christmas market/campaign
- Three Kings of Igualada parade (Jan. 6)

Thanks to the lessons learned from the Lab, Igualada will seek to transform these events into experiences with major tourist appeal. Experience tourism is the defining feature that will help Igualada take a giant step forward in boosting the quality of its promotional efforts. Moreover, the planning for these events, which currently attract a large number of visitors, will include measures to create a mobile tourist information point and establish a data collection system. In addition to shedding light on the profile of visitors to Igualada, this will enable us to make strategic marketing decisions and map out future actions.

3 Tools and projects supporting sustainable tourism

The Healthy Destinations Lab underscores the need to work on a training plan aimed at further strengthening the capacities of local stakeholders in the field of sustainable tourism. Under Igualada's "tech-tourism" plan, technology will be used to foster sustainable tourism, entrepreneurship, commerce and experience tourism. The workshops held as part of the Lab will be the inspiration for this training plan.

Indeed, the Lab has served as a learning tool by providing a clearer understanding of the possibilities that already exist within platforms to promote relevant tourism-related activities. For this reason, the tourism and ICT sectors must work together to tackle challenges involving the city's visibility and the key aspects to be promoted.

ICT is a key tool in promoting the area as a tourist destination. Currently, there is no single website that brings together all Igualada's tourist activities. The city's website does have a tourism section, but the information is not sufficiently structured or up to date. In addition, the city's major events each have their own website. To address this situation, a website is being created to bring together all of Igualada's tourist information and the related services. This website will provide a forum for dialogue in the areas of technology, history, culture, urban industry, modernism, medieval heritage, etc.

The Lab has also highlighted the need to use social media to promote the city's tourist potential. In addition to launching the tourism website, specific tourism profiles have been created on Facebook and Instagram, and also on Twitter and YouTube where possible. These social media accounts are designed to raise awareness of Igualada's tourism offering and to enhance the city's status as a tourist destination while also managing potential queries.

Alongside other European partners, Igualada City Hall has also presented a project for the COSME program called In Tour. This project seeks to promote sustainable tourism around the design and fashion industries, focusing on cities with a strong industrial heritage such as Igualada. Thanks to the analysis carried out during the sustainable laboratory project, together with work previously done in conjunction with the Diputació de Barcelona in drawing up the city's tourism plan, we have discovered our potential and will be putting it to good use.

Igualada is also promoting sustainable routes such as the green ring and the blue road, which will establish 200 miles of footpaths in the vicinity of the Llobregat, Anoia and Cardener Rivers.

We would also like to highlight the following sustainability projects and uses of ICT in the tourism sector:

- Km2 Ciutat: a methodological and technological environment using GPS-equipped mobile devices to facilitate collaboration on local projects with a view to enabling all residents and stakeholders to discover places of interest, recreation spaces, events and the city's commercial, historical and natural heritage.
- Audio guides: a collaborative public-private project allowing visitors to listen to guides in three different languages for the city's main tourist sites.

4 Strategic planning

Igualada City Hall recently finalized its plan to develop, manage and promote tourism in association with the Diputació de Barcelona. This document involves collaboration with the local community with a view to reflecting on and developing 21st-century tourism initiatives based on sustainable experiences and values.

This plan is closely linked to the Healthy Destinations Lab and proposes strategic action in the following areas: experience management, visitor attraction, city promotion and communication.

- a. Leveraging our uniqueness: as the plan is implemented, the unique qualities of various aspects of the city will be promoted by means of tourism projects geared toward specific audiences. Examples include architectural tourism in the Cementiri Nou (cemetery) and experience tourism involving various city events. In parallel, a plan will be developed to promote tourism entrepreneurship, benefiting small hotels, small businesses and tourism-related entrepreneurship.
- b. Innovation as a strategic focus: Igualada, inspired by Lab-related collaboration and discussions, has launched an innovation roundtable. The roundtable is a new space for permanent collaboration between public and private stakeholders in the city. The goal is to systematize work between City Hall and local stakeholders to jointly deal with urban challenges requiring an innovative approach.
- c. Locally sourced products: We will work within a new market designed to promote sustainable and locally sourced products, focusing on the land and agriculture. We will also be working with events promoting the Anoia region and its unique products.

5 Team: Cal Maco tourism promotion, reception and information center

Igualada City Hall's Cal Maco tourism promotion, reception and information center, presented under the auspices of Projects for the Conservation, Protection, Promotion and Development of Natural and Cultural Heritage, received an €871,000 grant from the EU's European Regional Development Fund to co-finance an initiative valued at €1.7 million. Cal Maco is one of Igualada's best-known historic heritage buildings.

The visitor service center will be located on the ground floor, together with the reception area. The common areas will be located on the first floor, including a room with a reading area, a workspace, a dining room, a kitchen for visitors/pilgrims, and public bathrooms. The rest of the building will be used for guest accommodation. There are also plans to make the upper deck accessible to the public so that visitors can enjoy the views to the south and a few moments of peaceful and personal reflection. Finally, minimal work is planned for the courtyard as this space is essentially designed for relaxation purposes.

Cal Maco is expected to be fully usable in January 2020. Consequently, the renovations will begin in June 2020 and the facilities will be operational in 2022, coinciding with the celebration of the Ignatian Year.

Currently, one of the routes on the Way of St. James to Santiago de Compostela passes through the capital of Anoia. It also happens that the Ignatian Way, which begins in Lloia and ends in Manresa, has one of its last stops in Igualada.

Thousands of pilgrims are therefore expected to pass through the city during the Jubilee Year. More specifically, an average of 40 pilgrims per day will pass through the city from April to September, with 10 per day expected during the rest of the year. In addition to providing accommodation for pilgrims, however, Cal Maco must serve as a new reception center for visitors taking part in other cultural, sporting or tourist events in Igualada.

Cal Maco will house the tourist office, replacing the facility currently run by Anoia's regional council. Although the Culture and Tourism Point (PDCT) has taken over a few of the tourist office's functions, the visitor services are still lacking.

Conclusions

After implementing the Healthy Destinations Lab, the city is in a better position to undertake initiatives aimed at promoting sustainable tourism.

For one thing, government alliances established thanks to the Lab involving public institutions such as the regional council, local city halls, the Diputació, the Generalitat and private stakeholders demonstrate that it is possible to work and take action together with a view to finding solutions to tourism-related challenges.

These solutions, which will continue to be developed with the local community, are based on local technology and assets that are already in place in some cases.

Collaboration with Airbnb has been an important starting point in terms of strengthening the city model and boosting the area as a sustainable tourism destination.

The city has worked on a tourism plan and has collaborated with the Healthy Destinations Lab, allowing us to arrive at a more accurate assessment of what we have to offer. In addition to developing the tourism office project, we are working on various initiatives with city stakeholders to promote sustainable and environmentally friendly tourism. Drawing on everything we have learned, it is now time to make further progress in the area of international promotion.

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