

Summary Workshop 1: GLOBAL TO LOCAL – BUILDING STRONG TOURISM PARTNERSHIP (Etihad)

Adelbert Bütler:

Talks about tourism in Switzerland with focus on Lucerne Tourism, as one of the most known cities in the world (strengths, weaknesses, challenges). Cooperations are very common but not with airlines so far.

Tim Jones:

- Etihad is the second most important partner for Tourism Australia (after Virgin Australia)
- Australia tourism is heavily airline-driven; therefore the organization seeks for partnerships with airlines. Selling Australia is very difficult, because it's not an option just a weekend trip ("strong decision").

"Partnerships are always built around common goals and on common ground."
(Christian Schneider).

Christian Schneider:

- Focus on Europe. Challenge through low cost carriers. One option to counter them is through partnerships with tourism and airports). Airlines facilitate travel from a to b.
- E.g.: Lord of the Rings (made in NZ). Air NZ and NZ tourism branded together the films (holistic approach with a final product: Aircraft with LotR look; "Welcome to middle earth" at the airport).
=> They took together advantage of the coincidence that the films were made in NZ.

Discussion (lively discussion between different people with different backgrounds [academia, tourism, airports, think tanks, marketing])

- Digital Marketing: Partnerships is one big issue. Destinations often do not understand to reach large numbers with social media, they need partners.
- Successful partnership: Tourism organisations know destinations very well. Airlines know the air passenger market well. Each partner has its strength he can bring in the partnership.
- People decide where to go and then which airline to choose. Etihad is a channel of sales for Australia tourism and a way to build up customer loyalty. Example: Food/Wine is a marketing gap in Australia (perception=>bad, reality=>world's best ratings). Australia went to Etihad and for them it's a way to differentiate (Australian food).
- Success factors: Share the game, but also share the pain. Partnerships are joint venture and not just cooperation.
- In the fast changing tourism market, one has also to know when to walk away.
- Triangle between airlines, airports (home and foreign) and regional/local tourism organizations is a natural way to establish new connections.
- The job of airlines/airports: Ensure access and connectivity
- Strategic partnerships with mature players like an airport: If both see win-win-situation, go for it. Maturity is no obstacle.



- Tourism is very dynamic with a lot of players and goals. Therefore always new solutions have to be found. Flexible and sometimes temporary Partnerships are often a solution.
- Do not go for too many partners (need for some degree of exclusivity).

Summary/Take away:

- Need to secure buy-in by local communities to tourism. Starting point is the local community that welcome tourists (very local ground work has to be conducted). People must accept and see the value of tourism. Partnerships are there to decrease the level of resistance.
- Need to secure increasingly innovative, initiative multi-stakeholder win-win partnerships at the local level. Each actor brings in its strengths. Trusting partnerships on the input and the output level.
- Someone has to open the gate=Need to remove all obstacles to travel and tourism (eg. Visa requirements, air connectivity), i.e. supporting liberalisation of air access and fighting protectionism. Marketing is all about attracting. Attracting only works if the door is open.