



SUS-TOUR
Community Based Tourism in Kenya

Funded by
The European Union
(EU)



GUIDELINES FOR MARKETING COMMUNITY BASED TOURISM PRODUCTS



@SUSTOUR_Kenya



Community Based
Tourism Kenya

Implemented jointly by





SUS-TOUR Marketing Guidelines

The objective of this material is to engage Community Based Tour Operators, Tour Operators and county officials in the development of marketing strategies that can help bringing CBT-developed products and services to the market.

It is important to highlight that this material completes the training on business modelling and innovation development developed by SUS-TOUR partners and builds up on the concepts and tools already introduced in the training workbook.

This Guideline is intended for SUS-TOUR capacity building activities and is accompanied by the handouts to be used during the marketing strategy development process.

This guideline is a draft to be reviewed during the Collaborative Innovation Workshop and the finalized version will be distributed among the certified SUS-TOUR trainers. Please note that no online version will be available for download.

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About SWITCH Africa Green

SWITCH Africa Green is an EU-funded project aiming at supporting African countries in their transition to an Inclusive Green Economy, and promoting a shift to more Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) patterns and practices, while generating growth, creating decent jobs and reducing poverty. Building on the experience of similar regional programs (SWITCH Asia and SWITCH Med – Mediterranean) and following up the UN Conference Rio +20, SWITCH Africa Green will support partnerships between governments and the private sector in Burkina Faso, Ghana, Kenya, Mauritius, South Africa and Uganda. The program will support a number of projects and initiatives developed under the national development plans and national indicative programs as it is intended to serve as a pilot for possible subsequent projects, achieving a broader coverage in the sub-Saharan region. Partners in the overall set of activities include UN agencies, notably UNDP and UNOPS, the African Union Commission, the African Roundtable on SCP (ARSCP) and the African Development Bank (AfDB). The partnership entails building on existing cooperation towards poverty alleviation, environmental protection, SCP, green economy and green growth¹.



1) UNEP (2012)

About SUS-TOUR – A SWITCH Africa Green Project

Kenya aims at being one of the top long-haul tourist destinations in the world, offering a high-end, diverse, and distinctive visitor experience. To this end, Community-Based Tourism (CBT) offers an opportunity by creating new high-value niche products that enable tourists to discover local habitats and wildlife, while celebrating traditional cultures, rituals and wisdom. Enhanced understanding of the market and its business principles are needed for CBT to improve and uncap the potential for improving livelihoods of rural communities in Kenya, and it is for this reason that, under the framework of SWITCH-Africa Green projects, SUS-TOUR was created.

The SUS-TOUR program aims at bringing together communities, tour operators, policy makers and university lecturers in order to identify and develop strong CBT businesses that can support Kenya's green growth. The program is designed to contribute to the sustainable development of tourism in Kenya through promoting customer-oriented innovation and marketing of CBT, fostering improvement in rural livelihoods, and enabling the conservation of culture and nature.

SUS-TOUR activities include:

- Identifying opportunities for sustainable tourism – by developing tools to understand and translate the demands of tourists into CBT innovation and marketing strategies;
- Knowledge transfer – by identifying and sharing international, regional and local best practices for innovation, marketing and partnership development for CBT;
- Capacity building – by supporting different CBT stakeholders in honing their skills for enhancing the business principles of CBT and integrating them into mainstream products; and,
- Guiding CBT forward – by providing recommendations for the improvement of enabling CBT policy frameworks and marketing structures.



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List of Abbreviations



AfDB	African Development Bank
AITO	Association of Independent Tour Operators
AITR	Italian Association for Responsible Travel
ARSCP	African Roundtable on Sustainable Consumption and Production
ATES	French Association for the Equitable and Fair Tourism
ATR	Agir pour un Tourisme Responsable
ATTA	Adventure Travel Trade Association
CBT	Community Based Tourism
CBTOs	Community Based Tourism Operators
CSCP	Collaborating Center on Sustainable Consumption and Production
CETR	Spanish Centre for Responsible Tourism (Centro Español de Turismo Responsable)
DMO	Destination Management Organizations
EARTH	European Alliance for Responsible Tourism and Hospitality
ECTAA	European Travel Agents' and Tour Operators' Associations
EK	Ecotourism Kenya
FECTO	Federation of Community Tourism Organisations
FITUR	International Tourism Fair in Spain
FTO	Federation of Tour Operator's
ITB	Annual Tourism Trade event
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
KATO	Kenya Association of Tour Operators
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
SCP	Sustainable Consumption and Production
TIES	The International Ecotourism Society
TOs	Tour Operators
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNEP-DTIE	Division of Technology, Industry and Economics
UNOP	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNWTO	World Tourism Organization
UVP	Unique Value Proposition
WTM	World Travel Market



Introduction

Community Based Tourism has gained relevance during the last decades, as a new product for consumers as well as a solid business opportunity for communities around the world. Besides the important environmental and social considerations for developing and offering a high-quality product, the communities should also hone their business skills for addressing the right customers and finding the right channels to do so.

New marketing practices for CBTs are spreading rapidly, going beyond visitors' word-of-mouth promotion and agreements with local tour operators. Media coverage, peer-to-peer reviews online and even social media channels have proved to be an opportunity for communities to develop business partnerships that can help diversifying their products and services, have more specific target groups and improve their financial models.

There is no "one to fit them all" strategy for successful CBT development; every community is unique and the reasons to develop tourism activities are just as diverse – they could be rooted in an interest for conservation of natural and cultural heritage, opportunities to improve living conditions, plain economic interests or participation in an increasing trend in their countries. Moreover, the reasons to engage in CBT also vary. Local tourism may prefer short-term planned activities like visiting markets and shopping, whereas foreign tourists may be looking for a longer-term experience of an environment different from the one they come from. Community tourism destinations should be able to define and market their products and services beyond handicrafts and foods, nature walks or home stays; they should find a way to focus on the creation of unique products and services to set themselves apart from their competitors while remaining financially viable in a long-term perspective. As entrepreneurs, communities must learn to manage their resources and provide the necessary quality standards to remain attractive and competitive; they should also be able to develop coherent marketing strategies that fulfil the promise they offer to their potential customers.

The success of CBT relies on the creation of partnerships, within the members of the community as well as with tour operators, other service providers, county officials, national and even international organizations.

About this guidebook

To facilitate the creation of market strategies that lead to strong partnership creation, this guidebook comprises two parts, targeted to two different actors relevant for the success of CBTO market strategies.

Part 1 – Marketing CBTs as part of CBTO's business strategy; designed for community-based tourism organizations (CBTOs) and Tour Operators (TOs).

Part 2 – Marketing CBT as part of inclusive destination management strategy; delves into the role of county officials and other relevant stakeholders.



PART 1: MARKETING CBT AS PART OF BUSINESS STRATEGIES OF CBT PRACTITIONERS



This section aims at building capacity and honing the skills of CBT practitioners aiming at high marketing quality and sustainable CBT products and services.

What you will learn:

- Understand the needs of your target customers
- Define your unique value proposition (UVP)
- Develop marketing material for your target customer
- Promote via potential marketing channels and partners
- Develop your marketing plan with prioritized activities

Introduction

“Marketing is the science and art of exploring, creating, and delivering value to satisfy the needs of a target market at a profit” (Kotler, 2016) this is a notion that reviewed under the marketing of sustainable products,

gives birth to the definition of “green marketing” this is, processes of selling products and/or services based on the benefits they provide to the environment and the society. They could be providing these benefits already by the way they are being produced (from raw materials, sources, energy efficiency, community involvement, etc.) to an added value to the consumer and power to change business models (Ward, 2017, van Beers 2014)

A breakdown of the major components of marketing includes:

- Knowing who your target customers are and what they need
- Developing products/service that meet people’s needs at a price they are prepared to pay
- Promoting the product via various channels to make purchase happen

This part of the guideline helps community based tourism organizations (CBTOs) and tour operators (TOs) to develop your marketing approaches with the following 4 major steps.



Figure 1 – Steps for developing a marketing strategy. Note: the section highlighted in red is fully explained in the *SUS-TOUR FACILITATORS’ WORKBOOK* which includes tools to go through the complete process before preparing a marketing strategy.



PART 1:

1. Prepare quality business for marketing

In order to have a successful tourism business it is very important that the enterprise has a **Marketable Tourism Product**. The most critical factor for your tourism business to be successful is that you have a clean, safe, accessible and welcoming product. Equally as important is the need for basic **Business Skills**. Without these skills, it is difficult to manage a tourism business effectively.

Each enterprise should also have a **business plan** that provides a roadmap for guidance. No matter what type of tourism enterprise you have, the principles of **Practicing Good Hospitality** must be in place. This means that every guest is welcomed when they arrive, and each employee and community member respects them and assists them with their needs, to ensure that they are comfortable during their visit.

Only if the product quality is good and meets the customer expectations, can you think about market access and marketing your product.

Marketing is the key to the success or failure of your business. Marketing includes the activities, tools and processes that you use to communicate your offerings to customers, clients and partners. No matter how unique, accessible, safe or attractive your product is, you will not get visitors if you don't effectively market your business. **The key to successful marketing is knowledge.** Knowledge is power in the tourism business. First, you should **know your product and its unique selling propositions**. Second, you should **know your competition**, what they do and what sets your business apart from them. And third, you should **know your market and to whom your product will appeal**. With this knowledge in place, you are in a strong position to embark on an effective marketing campaign.

Understand the markets of your products Why understand the market first?

Marketing a CBT business is, in principle, the same as marketing any other business. It is all about getting the right information to the right people. However, there are some aspects of marketing specific to responsible tourism businesses. Because your target market is relatively small and dispersed, it is vitally important to get your message across in your marketing campaign. **Appearance matters**, and a marketing campaign is your key tool for presenting your product and your desired image to the world. People will only buy a product if you are presenting it in a way that is **appealing and relevant** to them, which is why it is important to understand your target market. The tourism industry is demand-driven and often complex, with numerous small enterprises needing to come together to form a whole package. Hence, it is not immediately obvious which products, services or locations will succeed in the industry. There are several important questions you need to ask yourself about your market and your product, so that you can match the two more effectively. At a very basic level, there is a demand side (the customer) and a supply side (the product) to any community based tourism (CBT) business, and you need to **make sure they match**. A fantastic project will fail if there is no market for it. Conversely, even if there is a huge market for CBT in an area, if your product fails to meet the interests and demands of that market, it will not succeed.

Understanding your market and product will also help you **figure out what makes your business unique**. No matter what type of CBT business you are developing, it is rare that you will be the only business of that type in a particular location.

Thus, the key is to fully understand your market and your product so that you can **figure out where to get the most gains from your business and how to differentiate yourself in some way**.





How to understand the market of your products?

The key points in effectively evaluating your market and product include:

- Ensuring that there is tourism appeal
 - Does your site have genuine value for tourists?
 - Will they want to come?
 - Does it meet their needs and interests?
 - Does it provide an authentic experience?
 - Does your product offer something different or additional?
- Ensuring that tourism is possible
 - Does the site have enough potential for CBT?
 - Are there attractive elements that you can offer?
 - Can the area accommodate it?
 - Is there access to the area?
 - Is there adequate transportation and security?
- Ensuring that tourism is wanted by the host community
 - Will the project be accepted and supported by the local host community?
 - Does it create value for them?
- Ensuring that your product is viable and sustainable
 - Does it protect and conserve the local environment?
 - Does it benefit local communities?
 - Is it economically viable in the short and long run?

In order to create a successful business, you need to define and truly understand your target market. Although this may sound easy, it can be very difficult. You need to ask yourself:

- What type of person would be interested in your product and why?
- What would they be willing to pay?
- What level of style and comfort do they expect?
- What level of safety would be needed?

You should also understand your clients' motivations – are they coming to your region for an unusual or novel experience? Do they want to do something others haven't done? Defining the characteristics of your target market can help you develop your **customer profile**, which will tell you how your target audience thinks and acts, such as when and how they would travel, what channels they'd use for booking their trips. Such information will be useful for customizing your promotional strategies to reach potential customers. The tool SUS-TOUR is offering you to this end, is known as "consumer persona" which is a character that portrays the needs, conditions, demands and other important information about your consumer, so you can translate all the research into a "human" face.

TIP

When defining your marketing target, do not forget about those markets close to you, including local visitors and domestic travellers. For a lot of CBTOs, these groups are more likely to visit you in a higher volume than international tourists.



PART 1:

1. Prepare quality business for marketing



ACTIVITY – Develop 1-2 “customer personas” for your top 2 target markets (e.g. domestic and international tourists)

You may observe and have conversation with your current customers for building your “consumer persona”, targeting at better understanding your customers’ experience, wants and needs for improving your product/service and customizing your promotion activities for similar customers. You may create an interview guide to prepare for your conversations, following the examples below:

General open questions:

- Who are you and where are you from?
- Who makes up your family or household?
- Describe your last family meal. Who was there?

Then go deeper to explore the underlying needs:

- Why did you decide to visit us?
- How did you prepare for this trip?
- Please describe your experience with our venture. What did you like and why?
- What would you recommend us to improve and why?

<p>Name of the persona</p> <div data-bbox="132 1126 308 1274" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">Picture</div> <p>Nationality ___ / Age ___ / Gender ___</p> <p>Family status:</p> <p>Occupation:</p> <p>Travel needs:</p> <p>Average length of holiday:</p>	<p>Customer attitude:</p> <p>Diggest concern as a tourist:</p> <p>Traveling preparation, including information sources for planning the trip:</p> <p>Additional information (e.g. personal statement):</p>
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Figure 2 – Template for developing your customer persona



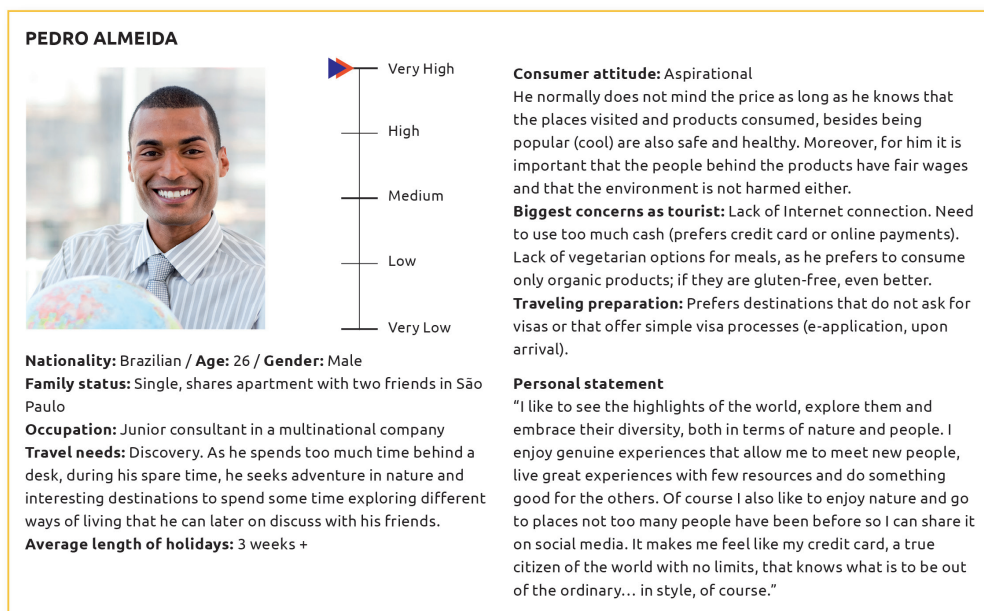


Figure 3 – Example of CBT customer persona from the SUS-TOUR facilitators' workbook

Understand your competition

Why do you need to understand your competition?

It is important to understand the market context in which you will be introducing your product. This requires an evaluation of your competition, to determine what value your product adds to the overall market. It is important to define this market not just from your perspective, but also from your customer's perspective.

Understanding your competition and the overall tourism market in your area is important for another reason, too. Travelers generally seek out clusters of tourism products on a holiday, including hotels, restaurants, visitor centres, cultural and historical attractions, activity providers and more.

How to understand your competition?

To understand where your product fits in, you may ask yourself:

- Are there other, complementary services?
- How far is my product from the other attractions?
- How easy is it to combine it with the other attractions?
- How will it increase the overall attractiveness of the area as a tourism destination, specifically a sustainable destination?

Ironically, the more CBT businesses there are in your area, the easier it may be to promote your business and attract customers and the more relevant it is to differentiate your product from others. To attract guests, you need to demonstrate how a particular CBT experience fits with other nearby tourist attractions, and position your CBT product as complementary to surrounding tourist activities. Also, collaborating with managers of surrounding tourist sites can potentially enhance your market outreach, as tourism operators can refer visitors to each other's destinations.

Therefore, rather than competing, you may consider ways to work together and encourage tourists to visit multiple destinations in the local area.



PART 1:

1. Prepare quality business for marketing

Understand your product: what is your unique value proposition?

Why define your unique value proposition?

Your business's Unique Value Proposition (UVP) is one of the most important elements of your overall marketing message. A UVP is a basic marketing concept, in which you define what makes your product or service unique and valuable to your target market. It tells potential customers why they should do business with you, rather than your competitors. A UVP is something that stands out, attracts visitors to your product and makes it special. It can be real or perceived, but either way, it gives the visitor a logical reason for choosing your product over another.

How to identify your UVP?

A good Unique Value Proposition describes:

- For which customers your products meet a need (the target market for your proposition)
- The benefits of your product (value)
- What makes you and/or your product different from the competition (unique feature)

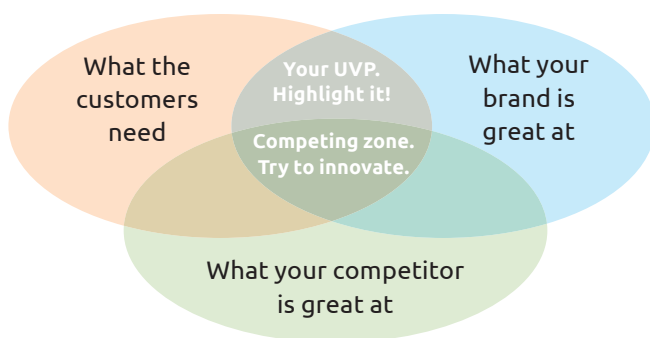


Figure 4 – Scope of the unique value proposition

Why should your ideal customer purchase from you, rather than from anyone else? If you can answer this question **in one catchy sentence** (that makes sense), you have a strong and unique value proposition. Examples of your potential UVP basis include:

- providing a unique product
- developing a product for a niche market
- providing superior facilities and/or services
- operating a more efficient service than your competitors
- offering a price advantage

From a basic business perspective, determining your value proposition involves **analysing the fundamentals of the business and the tangible assets that are available in the area**. For example, is the location accessible to tourists? How will they get there? If you are not providing accommodations through your business, where will they stay? Is there adequate infrastructure in the area, including transportation, waste management and water supply? Is there an adequate supply of workforce in the area, and do they have the necessary skills?

You also need to **evaluate the intangible assets of the product** by defining what exactly you will be selling. What are the attractions that will draw people to your area – landscapes, culture, history, activities and wildlife – and what kinds of activities are possible in the area?

While you are focusing on the community attributes that can help you differentiate and promote your business, it is important **not to lose sight of the core value proposition of your business**, in other words, the basic benefit that your customer gets from your product. For example, if you run a hotel, then your core value proposition has to suit the hotel business.





Based on the core value proposition, you can highlight your unique features that adds further value to customer needs and makes you stand out.

For example, if you are building a lodge, maybe it is using local materials, local products and local foods. If you are sourcing everything from the local area, then you may be able to show that you are limiting your impact on the global environment and supporting local communities. Show your target market that you know them and think about their wellbeing, for example, if you want to attract a market of people over 65 years old (pensioners) you can offer facilities for people with different mobility capabilities, i.e. access to wheelchairs. You can also highlight your impact on the local community, by hiring local staff, offering training and education to local communities, and involving local people in your project and business.

It's to be emphasized that your unique features can only be appreciated when the customers' basic needs are met.

All the local materials and recycled products in the world will not attract customers if the toilets are constantly overflowing. People don't want to know just that you are the eco-friendliest hotel in an area, but also that you are a good hotel in the first place. Similarly, even if you are the most ecological restaurant in town, you will not succeed if your food is terrible.



Example: UVP statement

- "Seafront bungalows offering good quality accommodation and a modern restaurant on a unique beachfront only 40 minutes from the international airport"
- "A guesthouse recognized as a green building in the centre of a tradition village which offers guests an insight into the old customs and ways of life on our island"
- "An eco-tourism community project offering unique access to the marine conservation area, perfect for travellers eager to be introduced to the natural diversity of Vanuatu"²

2) Vanuatu TVET (2015)



PART 1:

1. Prepare quality business for marketing



ACTIVITY – Define your Unique Value Proposition

You may take 30s to quickly draft your venture’s UVP based on the principles introduced above for self-evaluation:

- Have you listed the benefits the customer will value?
- Is your UVP defining something unique? Or can anybody else be described with that sentence?
- Does your UVP sell?
- Do you have a stated or implied Call to Action? What is it?

A good UVP will take longer than 30s to develop, and the mental work behind may help you to improve your business proposition for the targeted market. You may start with the UVP canvas to structure your thoughts.

Step 1: Define and understand your targeted customers and their needs. Specifically, to satisfy the needs, what results would your customer want to achieve, or what problems would your customers want to avoid by taking your products/ services?

Step 2: Enlist 5-10 benefits you offer to help solve the problem or deliver the expected results for your targeted customer. Highlight the benefits that makes your product/service valuable and unique to the target customer persona.

Step 3: Enlist your irresistible products/services for delivering the unique benefits to your target customer. Highlight the unique features that makes your offer distinguishable from your competitors, such as:

- English speaking guides (or other languages of your target market)
- All proceeds go back to the community
- Beautiful waterfall 5-minute walk away
- Located in a traditional village
- Learn how to make traditional handicrafts
- Cook your own Kenyan feast
- Learn how to make your own local handicrafts
- Go spear fishing with your host
- Recently built or new
- See the traditional water music dances

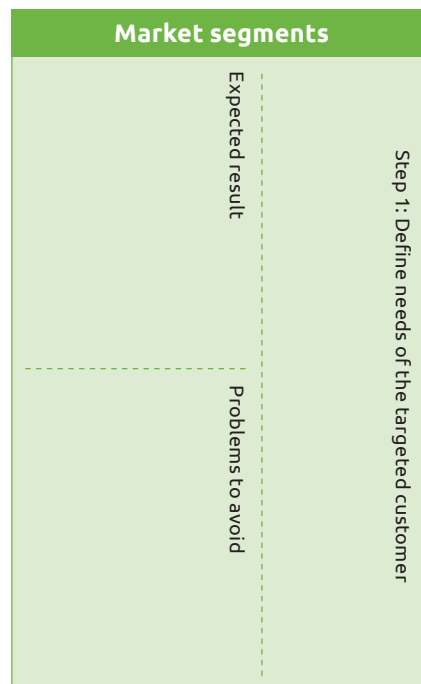
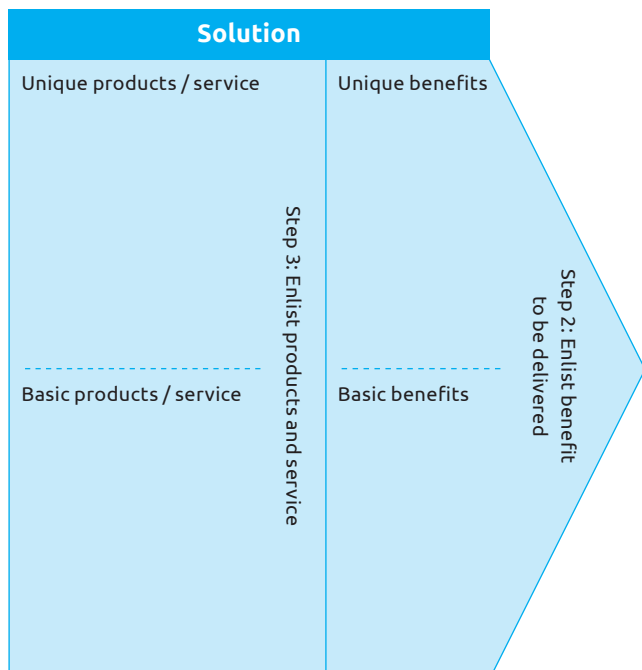


Figure 5 – UVP canvas
(Based on the work of Steve Blank, Clayton Christensen, Seth Godn, Yves Pigneur and Alex Osterwalder.)





Step 4: Combine and condense the information you listed into one paragraph. You may start with the following format:

Headline: *(Key benefits) for (targeted customer)*

Sub-head: *(Customers' problem or expected result statement)*

Sublets:

Unique benefits #1

Unique benefits #2

Unique benefits #3

Step 5: Roll out and deploy your UVP everywhere, including internal communication and external marketing and branding.

Develop a business plan

No matter how unique or attractive your product is, it could fail miserably if it is not supported by a long-term, well-considered business plan. What are the developments and running costs? What level of income is necessary to make a profit? What would be the break-even point? What price should you charge? What kind of partners is needed? Are there already any existing organizations that can support? (i.e. governmental institutions, associations, etc.) A business plan should address these and many more questions.

In your SUS-TOUR Facilitation Workbook you will find specific guidance regarding the development of your business plan. A very important tool is the Sustainability Business Model Canvas there presented, into which your UVP canvas result can be incorporated as "value proposition".

If you have questions on the SUS-TOUR Facilitation Workbook, please contact your Regional Training Centre and approach the SUS-TOUR Helpdesk.

Run sustainable operations

Overview

By definition, a CBT business should be a sustainable business. But that does not just mean respecting communities. True sustainability encompasses environmental, as well as socio-cultural and economic criteria. Sustainability may be good for the environment and local people, but it is also economically beneficial for business in many ways: operating sustainably can generate cost savings, help satisfy customers and be a source of innovation.

Running a sustainable operation can lead to higher customer satisfaction. In our daily lives, we are confronted with growing environmental, social and economic challenges. People these days are more and more aware of climate change, the value of clean air and water, high levels of poverty and the interconnectedness of global economies, and it may improve their impressions of your business to know that you are addressing one or several of these areas.

While there is growing demand for sustainable travel, the majority of travellers today may not choose travel destinations solely on the basis of their community and sustainability attributes. Nevertheless, the customers you are most likely to target are aware of sustainability issues. And as this awareness grows, businesses that are already operating sustainably will find themselves reaping the benefits from this changing market.



PART 1:

1. Prepare quality business for marketing

Checklist for success

Your Market

- ✓ What is your target market? Domestic or international visitors? long-term travellers or short-term tourists? Single travellers, couples, families or large groups?
- ✓ Do people want your product? Why?
- ✓ How much would they be willing to pay?
- ✓ What are their expectations?
- ✓ Who are your competitors? Complementary businesses?
- ✓ Have you identified your distribution channels and talked to distributors and partners?

Your Product and Assets

- ✓ Can people get to you? Can they find you?
- ✓ Where will people stay?
- ✓ Are there adequate facilities? Waste management? Water supply? Hygienic standards?
- ✓ Can the site handle the tourists you will bring?
- ✓ Can you find the people you need to make it all work?
- ✓ Have you identified genuine tourist appeal?
- ✓ Have you identified and highlighted your unique selling proposition?
- ✓ Will people come back?
- ✓ Will people tell their friends and recommend your experience?
- ✓ Are you also doing your core business right, in addition to being eco-friendly?

The Host Community

- ✓ Does the host community want tourism?
- ✓ Do they understand the project and all its consequences?
- ✓ Will the benefits reach the community?
- ✓ What are the potential negative cultural impacts?

Sustainability

- ✓ How will your visitors affect the system?
- ✓ What are the possible environmental impacts of your business?
- ✓ What is the potential cultural impact of the project?
- ✓ What are the consequences of increasing tourism beyond your expectations?





Ensure health and safety

Safety is not something that can be advertised as a benefit when providing a tourism product. It is an essential condition expected by consumers, and it can be costly to a business when things go wrong. This section discusses health and safety risk management and assessment, the basic elements of a health and safety action plan, and how to involve staff and suppliers in your health and safety efforts.

Effective management of risks involves identifying, analysing, assessing, handling and monitoring any potential risks associated with your product or services. A thorough risk assessment includes seven steps:

1. Identifying hazards;
2. Deciding who might be harmed and how;
3. Evaluating the probability of occurrence;
4. Evaluating the seriousness of occurrence;
5. Recording your findings;
6. Taking actions to mitigate the risk; and
7. Monitoring and reviewing your progress.

With the help of tour operators and publicly available guidelines, you could develop a self-audit checklist for yourself. When establishing a business, you should first look at the regulations of the country. A local hotel or tour operator association will most likely have a list of regulatory requirements. Then you should also review regulations of any country from which you expect your clients to travel, as those clients will expect the same levels of health and safety practice that they are used to at home.

A good place to find comprehensive safety guidelines is in the Federation of Tour Operator's (FTO) Codes of Practice, which were developed in response to the confusion that arose for tourism businesses when dealing with tour operators that all had their own auditing forms. The FTO Codes of Practice (available at www.fto.co.uk) are based on European regulations and good practice.



PART 1:

2. Prepare marketing material

Once your product and organizational identity are established, you can start preparing your marketing materials. As your marketing material is the key media for your potential customers and partners to learn about you, it should highlight the best parts about your business as well as relevant information including contact details, business descriptions, features and facilities, UVP, pricing and photos. The marketing material can then be tailored for distributing via the promotion channels, such as your website, flyers and brochures or your intermediaries' network.

Remember, however, that although your goal is to present your product in the best possible light, what you say and how you say it should be consistent with how you do things. You should be honest and accurate, promoting the highlights of your product while managing expectations. CBT marketing material should ideally inform visitors about what to expect from the CBT experience. This will ensure that the 'right kind' of visitor is attracted to the destination.

Basic information in the marketing material Contact Details

The contact information allows the interested guests and potential partners to reach you, which should include

- Business name
- Location
- Telephone number
- Email address (optional)
- Website or Facebook address (optional)
- PO BOX number (optional)

This information cannot be changed. Once you have chosen a telephone number, name for your business and email address you must stick with it so that visitors will know how to contact you and make bookings. If you change your phone number your guests will not be able to reach you and you will lose business.

Business Descriptions

Create two separate descriptions of your business. First, a short, sharp 20-word description to 'pull' potential visitors in and then a longer 100-word description with more details about your business. These descriptions can then be displayed on flyers, information sheets or internet websites to help promote your business and be used every time you need to present your products.

Remember to include details such as:

- Business name
- Location
- Business Type [guesthouse, bungalow, tour, dance group, trek, café...]
- General property description
- Attractions nearby
- Extra services offered

Features and Facilities Descriptions

Create a short description of the features and facilities of your business including the exact location (GPS coordinates). This description should include more specific detail about your business including the type of facilities you offer and nearby activities. Be specific about your product. Remember to include details such as:

Tours or Activities

Types of transport available

Itinerary of tours

Length/duration of tours

Map of location

Level of difficulty and equipment needed

Accommodation

Size and material of your accommodation

Type and number of beds/rooms

Bathroom facilities

Location/view

Terrace or veranda

Mosquito protection

Water/power

Wi-Fi (internet) available

Other activities available like kids' club etc.





Key Selling Points

This is a list of some of the best reasons for customers to come and visit your business. This list can be displayed at the airport, information office or used by distributors to create brochures and other advertisements. The list should include the nicest aspects of your business and what makes it special. To make this list, imagine someone was to ask you “Why should I come to your business?” Think of 10 reasons why they should come and write them down. You may refer to the UVP canvas result to enlist your unique benefits.

Photos

Most of the CBT ventures market their offers as an opportunity to step into the lives of the locals and get to know a particular destination and culture. You may show pictures featuring the native people, indigenous arts and activities, and the natural and cultural landscape, which may provide a strong contrast to western lifestyles. You may emphasize the quality instead of quantity of the pictures. These photos need to be of a clear standard with good resolution.

TIP

- You can ask your visitors to share their photos with you on your Facebook page or send via email once they return home.
- Always use the same best photos for all publications to help potential customers identify your product and keep a consistent image for your business.

Price

A price list helps potential visitors to understand the expenses they will need to cover on their trip such as transfer fees and food. This list can be used in your marketing materials and also be displayed inside your restaurant, tour or accommodation.

In your price list, it is important to include:

- Prices per person for your business (room/ bungalow/ tour/custom dance etc.)
- What meals or extras are included in this rate, and what is additional?
- Restaurant prices (lunch & dinner)
- Prices for additional activities/services

These prices cannot be changed once the guests have booked as they will expect the current price. If you decide to update your price list, all communication material must also be changed.

Visitors expectation management

The marketing material should provide a clear and accurate description of what the visitor experience will be like. This kind of information helps the visitor decide if it is the right destination for them. In addition, good communication material prior to the visits adds value to both the community and the tourist, and helps to manage the tourists' understanding and behaviour. When you have a promotion channel such as a website that allows you to present your offer in a more comprehensive way, you may consider presenting a pre-departure guide for your visitors, which can include Do's and Don'ts and a handbook with information on the community's history, occupations, beliefs, etc. Also, advice to help tourists prepare for a safe, responsible visit can also be sent per e-mail, and repeated by your guides to the tourists at the orientation meeting. A tourist code of conduct onsite can be of great help as it helps the visitors to interact with the local communities for a better experience in a responsible way.



PART 1:

2. Prepare marketing material



Example: CBT tourist code of conduct

CBT tourist code of conduct for Andaman discoveries Thailand³

Thailand is a diverse country with many different religions and customs. Please take note of the following points in order to respect the villagers who are welcoming you into their homes.

- *There is no alcohol or pork allowed in Muslim villages, please respect this important village protocol*
- *It is customary in Thailand to remove shoes before entering a house*
- *In traditional Thai culture women dress modestly. When visiting villages, women should keep shoulders covered and avoid short skirts. It is acceptable to wear swimsuits on the beach but we recommend wearing a t-shirt as well*
- *It is not normal for Thai people to show strong affection in public, please refrain from doing so whilst in the villages*
- *Please ask before taking photographs*
- *We advise you not to take valuables on the trip; if you choose to, be sure to keep them in a safe place at all times*
- *Please do not feed monkeys or other wild animals*
- *Take only photos, leave only footprints! Please respect this protocol and do not take shells or coral from the beach or sea — leave them where they can be appreciated by all.*

³) *Andaman Discoveries (2017)*





3. Promote via the communication channels

Tapping into the right channels for marketing, a tourism product is one of the key elements of a viable tourism venture. This section discusses the available promotion channels for CBT (from websites and brochures to trade shows and word-of-mouth), and how to choose the right marketing tools for your business.

There is a wide variety of promotion channels and marketing tools available to promote your business, from websites to traditional paper brochures. Pinpointing the best tool depends on your product, the location, your budget, the season and where your customers are traveling from. It also depends on the demographics of your clients. For example, if you are looking for senior citizens, social media may not be as effective as for younger people.

An effective marketing plan might integrate different tools and a common look, theme and message. It is important, however, to limit your marketing efforts to a few channels. **A common error in marketing is losing focus.** Thus, you should identify just two or three means of marketing and do them right. That can be far more powerful than trying to do a bit of this and a bit of that, particularly if your financial means are limited.

To determine what will be the most effective tools for marketing your business, you need to put yourself in your customers' shoes and retrace their steps before they arrive at your door. What will those customers be doing when they go to book their services and products? Talk to your customers and find out what appeals to them. The more you understand how your target clients are researching and buying your product or others like yours, the more effectively you can market your product to them.

Use your developed customer persona to help you with your planning. Look at their lifestyle, needs and expectations. Imagine they're already consuming your product, and ask them the question: HOW COME YOU ARE HERE?

Web-based promotion

90% of travels nowadays start with Google, so an internet presence is a vital marketing tool that you shouldn't be without. The key component of your web-based strategy will be your website. The most important thing is not that you have the fanciest website, but that **you provide the most authentic information on your website.** If your content is appealing, that takes you a long way towards effective marketing.

Your website should be colourful and attractive, with interesting photos (make sure you own their copyrights!) and interactive elements, but not too saturated with information and graphic elements. Navigation should be straightforward, and it should be easy to read.

Another important consideration is that you need to be reachable. Your website doesn't need an elaborated booking functionality, but it should at least have a current email or phone number so customers can contact you to make reservations and give feedback and you must make sure that the appropriate person will answer to these calls and emails on a timely manner, this is also a crucial part of your customer service. Your website should also provide basic information on what your product is and what you offer, as well as where it is located (and how to get there). If you are certified, feature the relevant certification seal prominently on your home page. Update your web content regularly to keep users coming back.



PART 1:

3. Promote via the communication channels



Designing and promoting your website

Designing a website from scratch requires lots of efforts and expertise. An easier and cheaper option is to use templates. You can also try to develop your website from “easy-to-use” website design software available on the internet, such as www.weebly.com or wix.com. Weebly service belongs to Google and is free of charge. You will have to pay only to use additional features.

Also, to design and maintain an attractive website can make your service look more professional. One option for achieving an advanced website will be to work with computer technology students. Increasing the visits to your website is as important as having a quality website. One option is to use the proper Meta tags on the website, registering it at search engines and directories and starting a Google AdWords campaign.

*SUS-TOUR intends to pair the CBTOs with the student groups for implementing the identified improvement measures for enhancing product and marketing, such as supporting website development and maintenance. For further support, please contact SUS-TOUR Helpdesk.

While your website is very important to your success, as it is working for you 24 hours a day, all over the world, you should also capitalize on the significant and growing power of social media as a tool for promotion of your business, such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

In addition, there are a variety of internet platforms (e.g. TripAdvisor, Holidays Uncovered) that not only market the tourism products, but also allow the tourists to share their experience of particular products, thus becoming an important medium for tourism marketing. It is important for you to list your offer to such platforms, as well as following comments on your product/service.

Examples of online communities devoted to CBT include⁴:

- 12 Visit Me – www.12visitme.com
- Community Tourism – www.community-tourism.org
- Ecoclub – www.ecoclub.com
- Hallbar Turism – www.hallbarturism.com
- Responsible Travel – www.responsibletravel.com/community
- Tribal Travel – www.tribaltravel.org
- I like local – www.i-likelocal.com

⁴) CBI Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2015)

TIP

- Maintain a strong internet presence, including social media. Try encouraging e-marketing and guest reviews in interactive websites.
- Make your current customers ambassadors for your business. Put a sign of the online platform you are using at your front desk and encourage your customers to share their experience, feedback, photos and videos.
- Use social media to do your market research, tracking your customers' posts and managing your reputation.
- Post photos and videos on your website and social media to help travellers explore your destination and product from home and bring your story to life.





Brochures, leaflets and flyers

Traditional promotional materials such as leaflets and flyers can also be important for marketing and good tools to enhance positive word-of-mouth, if visitors pass them to other potential clients. As with websites, such tools must be produced to a high standard, preferably designed by an experienced professional with graphics and a theme that match your other promotional materials. You should also think about how you will distribute the brochures or leaflets, for example through tourism offices, travel agents, restaurants, transit centres, overseas tourism offices and other relevant outlets.

Although brochures and leaflets can sometimes be helpful tools, they can also be very expensive, and their effectiveness is not always worth the expense.

Marketing through intermediaries

Why market through intermediaries?

Once you have your website and any other promotional material, it is time to get others to help you with your marketing, including leading guidebook publishers, major tour operators and travel agents in your region, and popular responsible tourism websites.

Developing relationships with tour operators can be particularly effective if you want to focus on selling your product through intermediaries. There are two

basic types of tour operators: inbound tour operators are located in the destination and usually choose products on the local level. These are the operators that you are most likely to work with, at least at first. Inbound tour operators then sell the various local products (hotels, excursions, tours, transfers, etc.) to outbound tour operators, who are located in the source market. The outbound tour operator then sells packages to its customers.

Before approaching tour operators, it is a good idea to determine if your product is stand-alone or whether it can be integrated into an existing tour or package deal.

How to market via intermediaries?

Before selling your products through tour operators, you need to **think in the shoes of the tour operators and understand what they would expect from you to satisfy their clients' needs.**

All tour operators are looking for products that can add value to:

- 1) Their company: do you offer a CBT product/service that helps your targeted TOs to attract more customers and helps to build their UVP?
- 2) Their customers: will you enable your targeted TOs to offer their customers memorable experience and tell other people about it?
- 3) Their destinations: does your product/service have positive impacts on local communities and the environment?



PART 1:

3. Promote via the communication channels



Quote from EU Tour Operator

Most important the product needs to walk the talk – what does it mean? What we as European tour operator promise to the customer in terms of product and service quality and experiences has to be delivered. As you are delivering a service on our behalf you have to understand what our values are and what our customers' needs are. Only if we have consistency and quality in the delivery of the product and service the customer will be satisfied in the end. I can give you an example: If we tell them they get traditional and local food, a good service and what they get is some snacks, a bottle of Coke and an unfriendly service it is for sure they will complain. If you prepare a traditional food, probably with some local tea or coffee (or a Tusker beer ☺) they will be happy. If you tell them the accommodation is basic and clean and there might be no hot water – it is our and the customers' choice to sell and buy it. But do not promise a 4-star service in a basic homestay!

Apart from this we expect clear pricing structures, responsiveness, information on accessibility, excursions, language skills of the guides, number of hotel rooms in your product and restaurant capacity. Of course, the product has to meet some basic standards in terms of security, quality, food hygiene, health & safety – but this is something you know for sure!

Example: Our clients want to feel like they are doing things other tourist are not doing because they are looking for unique experiences; BUT they also want to visit popular historical sites that are very crowded – what can you do? Organise visits early in the morning, when the site is empty so that our clients can take great pictures (improved product). By the time all other tourists arrive, take our clients on a tour of the local market to the nearest village (new destination) where they can buy food, which they could cook for lunch (new product/unique experience). This is an experience they will never forget.





Quote from Kenyan Tour Operator

Authenticity of the product is a key factor. The product should not be Stage managed- making it a typical tourist cash trap. When the product is authentic, it makes the tourist feel part of the experience and not just a visitor.

The product must be a positive experience for the visitor. It should not be an opportunity to bring out the infamous begging bowl. We believe successful tourism doesn't just boost economies – it builds pride, too! We reject the practice of capitalizing on the drama of vulnerability! We insist on positive experiences and ensure respect for both host and guest.

We believe Responsible and Sustainable Tourism is the only future. Our vision in this regard extends beyond the commercial. We choose to link our success with the well-being of the local community alongside the longevity of the environment at the destination, and we require the CBTO to freely demonstrate that they share in this belief.

Clients expect genuine cultural experience(s) with high quality items/goods - authentic African items, - they should emphasise the products authenticity in their marketing; they may have many/large different choices of items/goods and we should be able to provide unique items - curios, fabrics, ceramics local jewellery, tee shirts, small gift items, souvenirs, etc ...

CBTs should keep their promises/ be clear and honest about the facilities, have competitive prices / reasonable prices / price lists, or items price-tagged to reflect honesty and openness. We expect the members of the community to be friendly, giving a cheerful atmosphere and clean environment. It is important that the communities aren't begging to clients or requesting special help - e.g. personal issues, school fees, medical, etc. Please don't harass or jump at clients to buy; allow them to move around freely ...(give them space and time) If accommodation is offered - comfort, reasonably good quality beds, food, shower, ... (offer different options in accommodation) for the good environment is great to have some nice, low, gentle, African music in the background would help ... (Jambo, jambo bwana, habari gani ...)

Advertise in local establishments and information centres in the area and try to be located preferably not far from major tourist route or sites. A good way to be known is to network with other tourist establishments, - lodges, hotels, tourist organisations – KATO, EK, FECTO.

You should emphasise safety of the location and offer interesting activities for young and old - may be playground for visitors/locals to engage in, say, football with locals, etc ..

Show/write what the community does with the money they earn from tourism, jobs for community, women welfare, education, and incorporate information about your sustainable practices - e.g. working with local products, solar power, water saving devices, etc...

Include interaction with locals or between visitors and hosting families, dining with locals, working on the land or on a local project



PART 1:

3. Promote via the communication channels

Based on the understanding of your targeted TOs' needs, you can **make your offer known to them** with your marketing material. Most outbound tour operators would expect you to have a website as a professional organization.

In addition to your marketing material, you may prepare a detailed description about your product/service, including

- a short description of you and your business
- a short description of the product/service and its overall purpose
- information about accessibility
- net & rack rates, costs
- a short list of some of the risks involved and what you've done to minimise them
- details of insurance if your products include outdoor activities
- your website address & contact details
- pictures

TIP

How to make yourself known to the tour operators

- Ask people from the tourism industry to recommend you – both inbound and outbound TOs will work with the CBTOs that have an excellent reputation;
- Contact popular local hotels, travel agencies and guides and invite them to experience your excursion for free. If they like you and your excursion, they will take the initiative to recommend you.
- Sometimes, Tour Leaders will hear about you and decide to try your excursion with a group of tourists to see if they like it and if they should recommend you to TOs. Ensure that you make the most of this opportunity.

* **SUS-TOUR offers the matchmaking support for CBTOs to connect with the TOs. For further support and details, please contact SUS-TOUR Helpdesk.**





How to reach out to international market?

For both CBTs and TOs, there are several ways to find potential international trading partners. It is suggested by CBI that specialized outbound TOs offer the best opportunity for inbound TOs to market the CBT products in Europe, as they usually offer more customized products, to which the CBT products can be an easy add-on. Also, the specialized outbound TOs would rely more on the local suppliers. You can identify interesting specialized tour operators via trade associations, events and databases. Some examples are⁵:

- Adventure Travel Trade Association (ATTA) – global trade organisation for the adventure travel industry
- ECTAA – national associations of travel agents and tour operators per European country
- European Alliance for Responsible Tourism and Hospitality (EARTH) – European network of member and partner organisations in responsible tourism
- ITB - annual tourism trade event, March, Berlin
- The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) - global network of ecotourism professionals and travellers
- Top Resa - annual tourism trade event in Paris
- Tourism Review - tourism portal with international tour operator directory
- World Travel Market - annual tourism trade event, November, London

In addition to options such as meeting prospects at trade fairs, the internet is a highly valuable source to reach to outbound TOs. Relevant country-specific sources to find prospects in Europe are⁶:

- Association of Independent Tour Operators (AITO) – www.aito.co.uk. Search their site for tour operators offering CBT; search for the theme 'Culture & Arts'
- Dutch Association of Travel Agents – www.anvr.nl. Search their website for tour operators offering CBT; look up your destination under 'bestemming';
- Ecoclub – <http://www.ecoclub.com> – contact them for direct marketing to consumers
- German Association for Tour Operators / Forum Anders Reisen www.forumandersreisen.de. Search their site for tour operators offering CBT

- Participants of tourism fairs, such as Vakantiebeurs, TUR, WTM, FITUR and ITB; see the list of exhibitors on their websites
- Responsible Travel – www.responsibletravel.com. Offers CBT holidays from different tour operators
- Swedish Travel Agencies Association – www.srf-travelagent.se. Contact them for Swedish tour operators interested in CBT
- Tourism Concern – www.tourismconcern.org.uk. Contact them for tour operators interested in CBT – try to get your CBT initiative featured in their Ethical Travel Guide
- World Association of Non-Governmental Organisations – www.wango.org. Search the NGO directory
- Italian Association for Responsible Travel (AITR) – www.aitr.org. Search their site for tour operators or non-profit associations offering responsible travels in Italy
- Spanish Centre for Responsible Tourism (CETR) – www.ceturismoresponsable.com. Search their website for contacts or suppliers offering responsible tourism
- French association for the equitable and fair tourism (ATES), reference national network of responsible tourism with 35 members, www.tourismesolidaire.org/france
- Agir pour un Tourisme Responsable (ATR), French network of tour operators for the promotion of responsible tourism, www.tourisme-responsable.org
- Voyageons-autrement, information on responsible tourism, www.voyageons-autrement.com

5) CBI Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2016)

6) CBI Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2015)



PART 1:

3. Promote via the communication channels

Word of mouth advertising

Another important – and totally free – marketing tool is word of mouth advertising. People typically tell at least five other people about their vacation experiences directly or through social media. If you have a good product and try to do your best to satisfy your customers, then people will refer your product to their friends and family, who may be more likely to visit you in the future. They may also be more likely to return to your business again.

You need to be careful, though, because word of mouth works in both ways. If customers like you, they can really help, but if they were not happy with your product, they can do a great deal of damage to your business with very little effort, on sites such as Facebook, Trip Advisor and others. It is advisable you visit these sites every now and then to see what your customers are telling about you.

Joint marketing efforts

As a small CBT business, just starting out, you may have limited resources for marketing your product. One way to increase the leverage and reach of your marketing efforts is to work with other CBT businesses in your destination to develop a broader and more unique product or itinerary for visitors in the area. Working with similar organisations can give you an opportunity to reach a wider audience and increase the attractiveness of your offering. Here the business associations like Ecotourism Kenya and FECTO can be of great support.





Checklist for success

Know your product

- ✓ Have you determined what makes your product special?
- ✓ Why should tourists come to visit?
- ✓ Have you identified your unique selling propositions?

Website

- ✓ Have you found an experienced web designer to ensure a good look and high visibility among prominent search engines like Google?
- ✓ Have you asked a qualified English-speaking editor to review it, to ensure the text is well written? In case of aiming at having non-English speaking markets (i.e. Chinese) make sure all your information has been reviewed by a proper editor of the language you want to communicate in.
- ✓ Does your site present basic information about your product, its features and location?
- ✓ Does the site send a clear message to your target audience?
- ✓ Does the site sell your business and generate potential clients?
- ✓ Are there options to request more information and make reservations?
- ✓ Does it contain enough information for the reader to be able to make informed decisions?
- ✓ Are you planning to promote your website via other relevant websites and social media (Facebook, Twitter, TripAdvisor, Lonely Planet ...)?
- ✓ Do you have the staff necessary to manage these platforms and keep them updated and relevant?
- ✓ Do you own the rights of use of the images you want to make publicly available?

Brochures, leaflets and flyers

- ✓ Have you looked into hiring a professional designer?
- ✓ Does your brochure have a clear message for your target audience?
- ✓ Does the brochure sell your business?
- ✓ Do you have a clearly defined distribution plan, including tourism offices, travel agents, guesthouses and hotels, restaurants, bars, transit centres, overseas tourism offices and other relevant outlets?
- ✓ Does it include useful information that will not become out-dated, so that your reader will want to keep the brochure?
- ✓ Do you own the rights of use of the images you want to make publicly available?

Commercial relationships with tour operators and travel agents

- ✓ Have you contacted tour operators and travel agents in the country to let them know about your project?
- ✓ Are you prepared for tour operators' inspections?
- ✓ Have you prepared a complete information package that includes distances and journey times?
- ✓ Have you discussed pricing and commissions up front?
- ✓ Do you have the staff to respond to the queries of these agents?

Responsible Tourism websites

- ✓ Have you contacted local, regional and international websites promoting community based, responsible tourism and sustainable tourism?
- ✓ Have you requested a link to your website and a recommended listing, if possible?



PART 1:

4. Prepare your marketing plan

To be sustainable, a CBT operation requires an effective and appropriate marketing strategy to inform and attract tourists. A marketing plan guides your organization to prepare, process and track your marketing activities.

Define your goal of marketing

It is important to identify achievable objectives or goals within a given timeframe for your marketing activity. The goal helps to provide direction for decision making, measure the progress and provide orientation for staff.

Objectives are more useful when they are quantified. Some examples of marketing objectives could be to:

- increase the average number of passengers on each tour from 12 to 15
- increase room occupancy from 50% to 60%
- raise the awareness of over 5,000 tourists in the county of your business
- increase the net return from the business from 10% to 15%

Prepare your people

At its heart, tourism is a people business. Your employees will be the most important point of contact with your customers and the ones who ensure that your business is being run the way you want it to be run. Their expertise, skills and attitudes are the key elements of the brand. People play a vital role in effective marketing. In fact, they represent the actual service one is marketing and are also a critical factor in service business. Most tourists can think of a situation where the personal service offered by individuals has made or tainted a tour, vacation or restaurant meal. Remember, people buy from people and people buy a service that they like, so the attitude and skills of all staff constitute the main aspect of the brand and define the service quality. People's wellbeing is a crucial starting point to ensure best quality services.

One of the most important parts of establishing a responsible business is assembling a qualified and enthusiastic staff to help you operate the enterprise.

Your employees are the face of your business and will be the most important points of contact with your customers. Thus, it is key to find the right people, who are committed to providing your customers with a positive experience and to helping you run your business the way you would like it to be run. In thinking about who you are going to hire, think about yourself (and any partners) and the particular strengths that you bring to the business. Then hire people who can fill in the gaps. For example, if you are more of an idea person, make sure you surround yourself with practical people who can help with the day-to-day specifics of running a business. Again, put yourself in the shoes of your customers, how would you like to be treated?

Develop a marketing plan

What is a marketing plan?

A marketing plan describes how your product is going to be sold and to whom. There are five key elements that should be included in every marketing plan:

People: Clearly identifying the kind of tourists that your venture community is seeking to attract is the core step for you to define other parts of your marketing strategy. The customer persona developed can be used for understanding the tourists' needs and behaviour, which helps to define the interesting products, fitting price and effective channels and messages for outreach. In addition, characterising the target customer is important as it allows the community to effectively market the offering, and to ensure that the tourists would have a shared philosophy with community operators, in terms of respect for local culture and an interest in supporting sustainable and equitable local development.

Product: Your product has to be designed in such a way that it is appealing to your target market. Bear in mind that the product has to speak for itself; if it is a good





product, you've already done much of the marketing. The product is the sum of your actual offering, the destination it is in, and the added value that it offers to customers.

Price: While there are many fancy approaches and terms for pricing, including competitive pricing and cost pricing, it all basically comes down to what you think someone will be willing to pay for your product. That is what the customer is going to ask himself. Thus, it is important to get the value for money equation right. You need to consider your customers' ability to pay and where they are traveling from. What the customers pay has to match what they perceive as the value they get for their money, although you need to make sure you don't price your product too low in an effort to attract customers, because you will soon find yourself out of business, nor too high which will make your offer altogether unattractive. Make sure your pricing covers all your expenses (raw material, salaries, etc.) and gives you a profit you can improve your operations with.

Place: This describes the distribution channel that you are going to use to sell to your customers. If you are selling indirectly, via tour operators or travel agents, you need to think about marketing to the middle man, through business-to-business marketing. For effective business-to-business marketing, you should seek affiliations with tour operators and travel agents, team up with national associations like KATO, seek possibilities to have your product included on responsible tourism websites and establish a presence at events such as trade shows where you can sell to intermediaries. However, if you are planning to sell directly to your customers, you need to focus on high-quality, updated websites, brochures and other means. In this case, effective marketing is all about getting access to your target group in the first place.

Promotion: Once you have crafted a message that sells your product, you have to deliver this message through the most effective channels to reach your customer. This involves figuring out how you are going to communicate your message to your target market, and



Figure 6 – 5Ps of a marketing plan

also how you are going to encourage repeat visits from existing customers. There is a wide variety of promotion channels and marketing tools available to promote your business, from websites to traditional paper brochures. Pinpointing the best tool depends on your product, the location, the season and where your customers are traveling from. It also depends on the demographics of your clients. For example, if you are looking for senior citizens, social media may not be as effective as for younger people.

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PART 1:

4. Prepare your marketing plan



ACTIVITY – Develop your marketing plan

You may start by answering the following guiding questions based on your insights generated from exercises in previous chapters.

Product What product(s) is the community offering visitors?
Is it a high quality and desirable product from the visitor’s point of view?
What kind of visitors would this product appeal to?

Positioning How should this CBT venture be positioned in the market?
What makes this product unique?
How is this tourism experience different to others on offer in the local area or in places visitors are likely to travel to before and after your destination?
In other words, what “added value” does this experience offer?

Place How do you make your product accessible to visitors?

Price How do you price your CBT to make it financially sustainable, affordable and competitive in the marketplace?

Promotion What possible avenues are available for spreading the word about your CBT venture?
What is your message?
How do you use your networks and partnerships to reach out to visitors and inform them?

List your marketing action plan according to the following template.

Goal	Marketing activity	Targeted outcome	Resource needed	Timeframe



PART 2: MARKETING CBT AS PART OF DESTINATION MANAGEMENT STRATEGY



This section is mainly developed for destination management organizations, including national tourism authorities, and regional and local destination management organizations (e.g. county tourism board). The purpose of its content is to identify ways to develop partnerships with counties and government agencies to support the overall visibility of CBTs.

What you will learn:

- Developing an overview of the unique resources for tourism in my destination
- Crafting destination development strategy
- Integrating CBT in the tourism marketing strategy

1. Background

Having a proper plan of land use, business permits, zoning controls, environmental regulations, business association initiatives, implementing techniques to shape the daily operation of tourism-related activities, are some of the aspects that Destination Management convey.

The United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) offers a broad definition of destination as “an area where tourism is a relatively important activity and where the economy may be significantly influenced by tourism revenues. Destination management is complicated by the fact that a single, recognizable destination may include several municipalities, provinces, or other government entities - in island environments it may be the entire country.”⁷ There are “Destination Management Organizations” (DMO), governance structures that are often led by local authorities, involving local civilian organizations, representatives of the communities, academia, local chambers of commerce and form networks like local tourism boards, councils or organizations that support the management of needs, expectations and anticipated benefits of tourism.

DMOs also need to develop proper marketing plans to succeed in their intentions of developing sustainable Community Based Tourism initiatives, and this is why this part of the marketing guide focuses on the basic elements for developing a marketing plan and meeting green destination standards in the integration of CBTs as part of a sustainable destination management strategy.

2. What is destination marketing?

Following UNWTO’s definition, the green destination guideline defines a **tourism destination** as: “a physical space in which a visitor spends a day or stays overnight. It includes tourism products such as support services and attractions, and tourism resources within one day’s return travel time. It has physical and administrative boundaries defining its management, images, and perceptions defining its market competitiveness. Local destinations incorporate various stakeholders often including host community, and can network to form larger destinations.”⁸

Destination management refers to the co-ordinated and holistic process of managing all the elements that make up a destination to ensure maximized value for the tourists while generating positive economic, societal and environmental impacts to the communities.

Similar to tourism product marketing, the **destination marketing** is often misunderstood as a narrow concept on promotion and sale of the destinations with particular measures like advertising or through channels like brochures or websites. While promotion is important, destination marketing has broader scope, including the procedure for planning and developing products that delivers the best value to the tourists.

⁷ UNEP-DTIE (2009)

⁸ African Wildlife Foundation/ Ecotourism Kenya (2016)



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Therefore, successful destination marketing should involve various stakeholders covering the product lifecycle, such as

- national, regional and local authorities/ governments
- attraction authorities and management organizations
- attractions, events and cultural organisations
- product/service providers for accommodation, food and beverage, excursions, transportation etc.
- intermediaries (e.g. tour operators)
- media
- relevant tourism trade associations and partnerships (e.g. for hotels, restaurant, tour operators, travel agents etc.)
- capacity building organisations
- NGOs
- donors and investors

3. Why including CBT in destination marketing

Destination marketing aims to improve the sales of the destination, provide good experience while contributing to community development. CBT, which is *"tourism in which local residents (often rural, poor and economically marginalised) invite tourists to visit their communities with the provision of overnight accommodation"*⁹⁾, has large potential to contribute to the goal, as it:

- creates additional revenue sources to the community, and ensures the economic benefits and ownership remain within the community
- allows the tourists to enjoy and value the authentic local culture
- potentially offers complementary products to the mainstream tourism products, thus enabling the destinations to enhance their identity and competitive advantage

However, CBT has the best chance to succeed if its surrounding areas offer complementary tourism experiences, as a tourist will unlikely invest time and money for a single CBT attraction. Therefore, **destination marketing offers the basic conditions that increase the visibility of CBT options.** Successful destination management and market CBT products should develop that can diversify the current tourism products and enhance tourists' satisfaction.

4. How to include CBT in destination marketing?

This guideline will investigate 4 phases of destination marketing:

- Market research
- Destination planning
- Destination development
- Promotion

9) *Responsible Travel* (2017)



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Market research

What it is and why it matters to CBT?

Destination research is to investigate the supply (e.g. attractions, activities, transportation, food and beverages and accommodation) and demand (e.g. total number of people who travel, how long they stay for, and what services they require) of tourism in order to determine the best market to target for, and guide tourism planning and development for improving product quality and enhancing tourist satisfaction.

Destination research typically focuses on 3 dimensions:

Potential demand	Who are our potential customers? What are their motivations for visiting us? What do they need?
Current supply	What attractions, activities, transportation, food and beverages and accommodation are currently offered in the destination? What natural and cultural resources do we have as raw material of the tourism products? What tourist facilities (including infrastructure, equipment and services) do we offer? How accessible are the tourism destinations and products?
Competition	What similar/complementary/alternative tourism products are offered by other businesses or destinations?

Although there are many CBT initiatives in Kenya, many of them fail due to various reasons, such as lack of understanding of the market for product development or poor business management skills. Research on demand of CBT products offers opportunity for the destinations to identify consumer needs and trends on CBT product. Meanwhile, research on what the CBT can supply, including the community heritage and natural environment, can help the destinations to identify resources and products that may offer an “authentic” community experience to the tourists.



Community heritage is the set of tangible and intangible manifestation shared by people, including values and beliefs, knowledge and practices, techniques and skills, tools and artefacts, representation and venues etc.

Discovering and presenting community heritage can strengthen the community’s pride of the local area, as well as enhance the identity of the destination to provide unique experience for the tourist.

When the supply and demand of information is shared with the CBTOs, it can also support the communities to better develop their business plans and unique value propositions, as they can find ways to utilize the local resource and heritage for developing and marketing their products for sustaining their business and generate value for the community.



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Potential actions

You may start integrating CBT in your destination research by thinking about:

- What information do you need to support your planning, development and marketing of your destination with CBT as an important component?
- Which organizations may have the information and how to access it?
- What are the information gaps and how can we start to gather the data?

Examples of potential information include:

Research on CBT supply

- What are the most important attractions of the destination, including both exploited or unexploited?
- What is the community heritage in my area?
- What CBT products and services are offered and what is the performance?
- What tourist facilities (including infrastructure and services etc.) do we offer?
- How accessible are the CBT products?

Research on CBT demand

- Who are our potential customers of CBT products and what are the market trends?
- What are their motivations?
- What do they need?

Research on CBT competition

- How complementary are CBT products with the main attractions in my destination?
- What similar tourism products are offered by other destinations?

Good practice: Collecting information on community heritage

The Australian government has developed the online portal Australia's Community Heritage (<https://www.communityheritage.net.au/>) to engage people in heritage across Australian communities. The website allows people and groups to share information and stories about Australia's heritage. For the places where tourism activities are offered, they provide contact information for visitors.



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ACTIVITY – Develop your research plan on CBT development

Reach area	Marketing activity	Targeted outcome	Resource needed
CBT supply			
CBT demand			
Competition			
Existing partners			

Destination planning

What it is and why it matters to CBT

Inclusive destination planning requires the communities working together to agree on what their shared values are, discuss ideas about how to create a sustainable tourism destination and define what they can offer. These shared values should be expressed in the destination tourism vision, which will underpin decision making processes for other destination marketing aspects.

Often, the national and/or local governments have established the value and vision in its development plan document (e.g. Kenya Vision 2030), which needs to be adapted to the local tourism context. It's important that the local tourism development can contribute to the community's vision for the future. This inclusive tourism planning allows the destination to develop a distinctive destination brand that encapsulates the essence or spirit of the communities and will fulfil the tourists' requests for memorable experience.

Many destinations claim a superb cultural and natural experience. It's essential for the destinations to develop a unique and clear identity that reflects the strength and personality of the communities while offering exceptional experience to the target market. CBT as the tourism product provided by the local communities can contribute to developing a distinguishable destination identity by offering products reflecting the local reality and values, while promoting collective responsibility from the communities.

Potential actions

You may start integrating CBT in your destination planning by:

- identifying your unique culture, nature and landscape jointly with the communities to highlight your advantages
- discussing with the communities to determine how the advantages can be translated into your destination personality that resonates well with the target market
- crafting the brand essence based on the value and culture of your destination
- creating a tagline representing your identity



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Good practice: Including the communities as part of the destination vision

Gambia has developed a Responsible Tourism Policy, which was prepared by the Responsible Tourism Partnership and has been produced and agreed through a multi-stakeholder process.

The vision states *“to make The Gambia a better place to visit and a better place to live in – recognising that it is the interaction between guests and hosts in a secure and enjoyable environment that is the experience of The Gambia and which encourages people to return.”*¹⁰ It has highlighted the interaction with the local communities as part of its vision, which underpins its tourism product development and promotion, such as:

- assisting local SMEs to establish themselves, market new products and services and grow, creating additional jobs and other livelihood opportunities.
- maximising economic benefits for local communities by encouraging tourists to purchase locally produced crafts and curios.

Destination development

What it is and why it matters to CBT

Destination development refers to the process of creating and maintaining visitor experiences with products and services that meet customers' needs and reflect the destination's identity.

Destination development is not only restricted to hard infrastructure such as transport, accommodation and attractions. The development of soft infrastructure, such as service provider capacity, quality certification or guiding policy for sustainable products development, are also a key to ensure that the destination can offer satisfactory experience to the customers.

As visitors are increasingly interested in enjoying unique and fulfilling experiences that bring a destination to life and make it memorable, CBT has the potential to satisfy these expectations by creating most authentic visitor experiences beyond the regular tourism offering. CBT provides opportunities for visitors to get a different type of involvement with the landscape, people, lifestyle, culture and food enjoyed by the local community.

Potential activities

You may start integrating CBT in your destination development by:

- identifying gaps in the tourism experience offering based on the needs of the target market
- highlighting areas where current and potential CBT offers may provide complementary and exceptional experiences
- identifying and prioritizing areas where soft or hard infrastructure development may improve the customers' experiences
- implementing the improvement measures

It is to be noticed that even though CBT can provide complementary products/service for tourists to enjoy the local experience, the product quality, including hygiene and safety, has to reach an acceptable standard to be marketed. Tourism authorities can develop and promote quality standards to guide the sustainable and quality development of CBT products. Also, award programmes for CBTOs may also establish quality benchmark by highlighting and rewarding the best practices.

¹⁰ Gambia Information Site (2017)



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Good practice: Developing CBT as part of the unique offer of the destination

Thua Thien Hue Province of Vietnam invested in developing the CBT apart from its conventional landscapes and monuments system, aiming at upholding the cultural values of Hue and linking more tourist spots in this area.

The province supported the development of the tourist route "village market in festival", which has become a favoured destination for both domestic and international tourists. This allows the local communities to improve its infrastructure system and the local people have been capacitated on their tourism knowledge and skill to serve visitors.

Furthermore, the Thua Thien Hue Province's Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism would coordinate with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to set up a tourism office and a tourism management board for the village focusing on developing tourist products, improving local community livelihood and encouraging the involvement of travel agencies for the destination development¹¹.

Promotion

What it is and why it matters to CBT

After researching, planning and developing your destination with the communities, you need to define the communication strategy for driving visitor traffic and enabling sales in your destination. This requires clear communication on the unique value proposition of the destination and its offer before and during the customers' visits. Including CBT in your communication strategy can raise the customers' awareness of the rich and unique options of your destination and encourage them to spend more time enjoying the local culture with the community members.

Promotion channels may include traditional, electronic and social media to attract and inform visitors and key stakeholders. It may also include events and other interactive public relation activities as part of an awareness raising and engagement strategy. Importantly, customer service delivered by industry may positively or negatively impact upon a destination's brand and reputation.

Ecotourism Kenya, in collaboration with various local stakeholders, has concluded a process of developing "green destination guidelines" for the recognition of "Green Destinations" in the country. From 2017 on, destinations using these guidelines will be accredited. The list below comprises some of the "low hanging fruits" to consider for the improvement of the quality of the CBT products in your destination.

- Certification – for prioritizing the quality products
- Quality boards through private-public partnerships
- Marketing material that suits your budget and needs

Potential activities

You may start integrating CBT in your destination development by:

- communicating your destination's vision and values via a clear brand statement, which ideally also mentions how the communities are part of the brand
- encouraging the visitors to participate in tours to the local communities where appropriate
- presenting local crafts and food products through visitor centres and facilitating distribution through mainstream tourism enterprises
- encouraging tour operators to be more innovative in their itineraries by including e.g. attractions managed by the local communities or including local arts and craft shops and local ethnic restaurants in their tour itineraries
- proactively communicating on the quality standards of CBT in your region and listing CBTO options that have been awarded
- introducing the CBT tourists code of conduct at the visitor centre to encourage visitors to interact with the local communities in a responsible way

11) Vietnam National Administration of Tourism (2012)



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Good practices:

Showcasing the CBT products as part of the unique offer of the destination

Meteora (www.visitmeteora.travel) is an online destination marketing portal for Meteora, Greece, developed by a group of travel professionals and local destination experts who jointly formed a Destination Management Company. The online portal has hosts and markets various accommodation facilities, excursions, outdoor activities, transfer options and many more. Particularly, the destination marketing portal offers various memorable excursions as the major exclusive product category of the destination. Visitors can directly book from the website as prices and detailed descriptions are included.

Please note that SUS-TOUR support package for trainers, already has a collection of BEST PRACTICES (Module 2 of the facilitator workbook) that you can also download from the SUS-TOUR website by clicking on the link or going to Knowledge Bank / Publications / CBT Best Practices

5. Potential support from SUS-TOUR

During the Collaborative Innovation Workshop, you will have the opportunity of exploring different ways for partnership development through the discussion with other Kenyan stakeholders and with the support of international experts. After the workshop, SUS-TOUR will provide you with a reviewed version of this guideline and, through the Regional Training Centres and the CBT Heldesk, guide you in the processes of developing your business plans and marketing strategies.

More specifically, through these channels, SUS-

TOUR helps you to:

- develop private-public partnerships between Tour Operators, certified SUS-TOUR trainers, organizations of the civil society, county officers and other communities as well
- build capacity further by facilitating training branches for CBTOs and TOs that use the material developed for this program, like the Sustainable CBT Framework, the Training Workbook and this marketing guide
- diagnose the status of counties for developing destination marketing strategies



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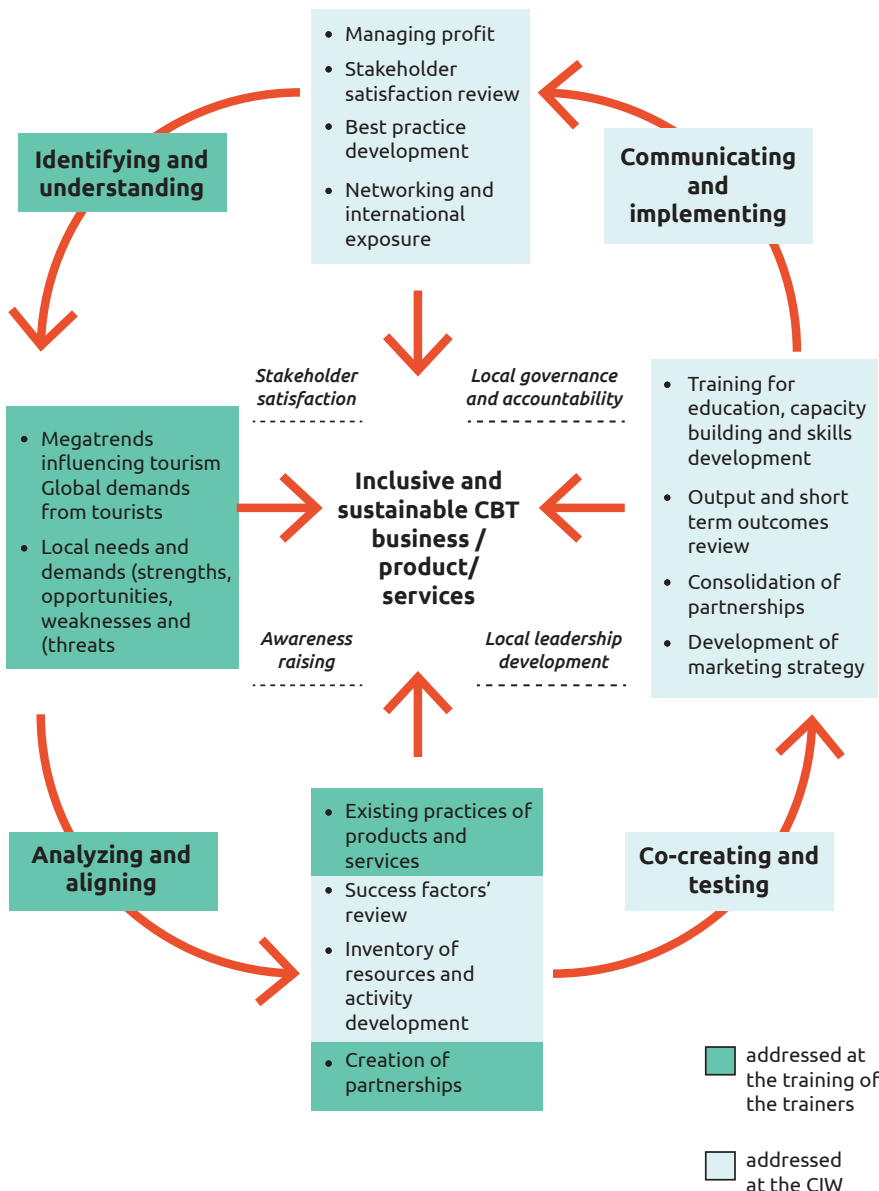
To this end, SUS-TOUR needs your support and commitment, mainly by:

- developing a destination marketing plan incorporating CBT
- completing the checklist to understand the CBT for your destination marketing potential
- approaching the helpdesk with concrete questions regarding how to incorporate CBT in your destination marketing

Now you are officially acknowledged as a SUS-TOUR participant. This guide BELONGS TO YOU and you can use it to develop your own CBT products/services and/or deliver trainings to support others in becoming SUS-TOUR trainers.

You have now reached the end of the training program, which means you are now ready to take the next steps towards the creation of sustainable CBT products and services; either as an innovator or as a trainer, motivating others to get involved in this fascinating endeavour.

The diagram below shows the **Sustainable CBT framework**, presenting what was covered during the training of the trainers and what was discussed during the Collaborative Innovation Workshop.





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