

Executive Summary Vienna Economic Forum
OHRID Meeting April 20-21st 2007

The following priorities were discussed at the Panel discussion and Round table 2 and could be seen as an initial guideline for further activities of the Macedonian authorities:

- The issue of tourism needs the involvement (referral involvement) and coordination of various Macedonian ministries. Tourism secures the prosperity of Macedonia
- The development & implementation of a tourism master plan is of equal importance and needs competent guidance. Thus requiring the involvement of local – Macedonian – tourism providers (hotels, transport, training....) in combination with external resources.
- Standardise Hard (the tangibles of a product) & Software (Service).
E.g. Hardware: Develop and implement Hotel categorisation as an initial step.
E.g. Software: Provide training programme (to develop the soft skills “how to manage more effectively...”) for Macedonian hoteliers.
- Networking (e.g. marketing & sales, purchasing...) - cooperation- between destinations, hotels etc. strategically as well as operationally is a tremendously effective method to increase yield and effectiveness of all tourism related business activities. The principle being: “triple win” i.e.: Market/Hotel/Distributor.
- How do you (hotelier or any other Macedonian tourism services provider) find the (your!) market? How does the market find you?
The conclusive – professional and sustainable – answer of both these questions will lead to a market oriented marketing & sales approach.
- Design innovative products according – solely – to the market needs.
Create a cause to come to Macedonia (e.g. Film land Bitola, Golfing in Ohrid, Archaeological Society of Macedonia...); be unique and different towards your competitors; niche marketing!
- Be aware of the strengths a of your “Family Oriented Business (FOB)” tourism structure. Consider this as an asset of opportunity and build all your activities (strategy and implantation) on this “back bone” of your tourism industry.
- Use existing Austrian platforms (Austrian Trade Office, Austrian Development Agency) for further activities.

Last but not least: Quality is not expensive – it’s priceless! (© Mahatma Ghandi)

It was a great pleasure for me to contribute to this remarkable event.

For any further information I will be delighted to assist.

Plagoderam !

Andreas Vögl

April 23rd 2007