ETC & UNWTO
Handbook on Marketing
Transnational Themes and Routes

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The Handbook

• A Global Overview of transnational themed tourism and routes
• A European Mapping
• A Practical Guide to development and marketing
• 80 cases, including 18 longer case studies

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Part 1: Themes and routes
The context: some observations

Tourism is not about assets, but about experiences.

We are seeing the emergence of routes as a tourism phenomenon, and many of the more significant routes operate internationally.

What are the implications for how we plan tourism?
A look to the future

Transnational tourism will continue to grow

It will be structured according to themes: experiences, emotions, values.

It will change the way we plan tourism. This is just the beginning.
This webinar

We need to understand:

- Why this is happening
- Where it is going
- What to do about it.
Where is tourism coming from, and where is it going?

1950s to ‘70s: ‘Get-away’ focused
‘80s to ‘000s: Destination focused
21st century: Experience focused
Destination-focused tourism

Concentration of tourists around iconic attractions

CITIES WITH MULTIPLE ASSETS

Providing a strong cultural offer

Driven by powerful DMOs, backed by a structured local tourism industry
Driven by: low cost, multi-destination travel
Driven by: short break tourism

City Breaks from £79
Driven by …

- Competition between destinations
- Protection of existing markets; emergence of new markets
- Increasing professionalisation of tourism providers
The weaknesses in this model

Overcrowding around key sites
Concentration on cities; tends to neglect rural areas
Pressure on transport hubs
Low incentive for repeat visits
Uncertain or negative impact on local businesses and residents

... Therefore increasingly seen as unsustainable
An alternative: theme-based tourism

- More varied and flexible, in terms of location
- Could be urban, coastal, rural or other
- More likely to generate repeats
- Higher engagement with local businesses and communities
Some implications

• Bottom up rather than top-down. Encourages grass roots engagement
• A theme can differentiate: help the visitor see and understand
• A theme is a story, and the story can have many chapters and sub-plots.
New models of tourism, and how to manage them
The new role of the DMO

• Providing infrastructure
• Making the experiences accessible and understandable
• Encouraging networks
• Becoming a listening organisation
• Providing a structure
Linking up the assets (1)
The Alsace Wine Trail
End of Part 1

QUESTIONS?
Part 2: Going transnational
Linking up the assets ... internationally

Example of a route for bikers
Addressing niche markets

Black Paris Tours

A richly unique cultural experience, providing travelers with insight and little known facts about the wealth of Black history in Paris.

The hang outs, haunts and places made famous by African American musicians, soldiers, writers, artists, historians, celebrities, and political exiles.
One third of Europe’s adult population consider themselves to be ‘hikers’.

In Germany, it is over half that claim they have taken a significant walk for leisure in the previous week.
... through routes and through events

Festival of African masks, Burkina Faso

Countries where masks are used traditionally
Appealing to romantics: The magic of travel and distance

Trans-Siberian railway
The importance of scale

Qhapaq Ñan

The Silk Road
As much the journey as the destination
Networks of routes in Europe
Opportunities for transnational theme-based tourism in the western and central Mediterranean include the following:

Food and drink tourism, with vineyards, olive trees, and the common, shared landscape of the Mediterranean basin.

Maritime life, including nautical routes.

Transnational historic heritage, including both Christian and Muslim traditions.

Ecosystems and landscapes, creating opportunities for ecotourism and outdoor activities.

Pilgrimage routes and spiritual travel.

The arts, including painting, architecture, sculpture, literature, and music.
Key criteria

What makes a transnational initiative work?

• The strength of the story, and how well it is heard
• The engagement and the partnership
• Time and persistence
Journey and imagination: the Alaska Highway
Story and spirituality: Turas Columbanus
Journey and locality: St Olav Ways
Journey and activity: the Danube cycle path

Highlight:
• 1,800 miles
• 10 countries
Journey and culture

The Roman Emperors Route and The Danube Wine Route

Highlight:

- Spreads through four countries of the Middle and Lower Danube Region – Croatia, Serbia, Bulgaria and Romania
- Encompassing 20 archaeological sites and 12 wine regions
Key words to retain

• Experiences

• Stakeholders, ambassadors

• Partnership, coordination
Implementation

Planning & Preparation (Chapter 5)

Targeting the Customer (Chapter 6)

Developing the Product (Chapter 7)

Taking it to Market (Chapter 8)
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End of Part 2
Thank you for your interest!

QUESTIONS?
ETC & UNWTO Handbook on Marketing Transnational Tourism Themes and Routes

Themes that are close to a destination’s identity become the heart of the brand. They serve to present and promote a range of tourist attractions and activities.

European examples

The Handbook provides an overview of transnational initiatives in Europe, where the potential for cross-border tourist products is particularly evident.