

WHICH QUALITY FOR SYSTEM COMPETITIVENESS? THE “LONG-TAIL” TOURISTIC SERVICE CASE

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Introduction

The increased diversity of demand for tourist services requires continuous rethinking of the trade-off between specialization and breadth of the offer for the management of the "long tail". For this reason there is the necessity to find the nature of competitiveness in the territory, considered as a fundamental driver both in global competition and in the tourism sector in particular. In this regard, consideration must be that in literature there are different notions of territory and hence competitiveness: on the one hand, the traditional economic literature refers to the territory as a macro system and secondly the literature on territorial marketing considers as a subject of analysis geographical or urban circumstances. Finally, the other still more recent developments in tourism services marketing takes the concept of territory "destination" as micro component of the product / offer. These latter approaches also lead unidirectionally the concepts of marketing management both to territory-city and to - territory destination, thus ignoring the product ecological-territorial connections' investigation. In our work, however, these connections are retrieved by reference to a meso spatial dimension, namely an "eco-territorial system" that can take different levels and size depending on the competitive position sought and that is at an intermediate level between the country system(macro-area) and the touristic destination (micro-area). The ultimate objective of the work is actually to explore "evolved" matching among territorial economy, territorial marketing and marketing of tourism services. It is know that the competition in the tourism sector does not only occur between individual players/locations, but increasingly between multi-territorial systems quality and positioning of individual service components, but on the one the overall "multi-level ecological system"¹.

The latter, in particular, comes from a dynamic balance among different system levels (territories, networks, enterprises and other stakeholders), which requires adequate internal and external governance systems. The competitive quality of multi-local territorial eco-systems (mLTS) is therefore not evaluated as the sum of "individual quality" but as " aggregate quality", the level of which comes from consistency of quality system and quality of individual services. On the other hand, to define the sources of the competitiveness of a region, a territory or a city has become a major issue, as measured inputs (resources) and output of destination management. policies. In this context, the article discusses the main drivers of mLTS's competitiveness and their sustainability in relation to the resources held and activated, in view of satisfying and creating of confidence among the different stakeholders to enhance the attractiveness and value and therefore the purchase by consumers, increasingly segmented and discontinuous, compared with an increasingly flexible and accessible offer.

The paper deals with these issues starting from the definition of the competitiveness of territorial tourism system.

Subsequently a synthetic review of the specialized literature of the destination management is effected and particularly of the contributions that dealt with the competitiveness of the tourist destinations highlighting the need of their integration to take account of current changes in global competition, which in fact amend the same drivers of competitiveness.

¹ Ecosystem is a system in which individual actors (actors, institutions, communities) move through strategic actions both passive and active and pose the different bases to generate value for the governance of interdependence. A system in which value creation takes place in a world of non-zero-sum-based dominated by innovation and common growth . In this regard see Pilotti (2006)

Such contributions are reassembled (paragraph 3) in an integrated model for the analysis of competitiveness considering a larger concept of destination, which refers to multi-local tourism systems. In the latter part of the work is finally suggested an empirical application of the proposed model with regard to mLTS of Garda's Lake highlighting the need to aggregate the various components through meta-organizers, respecting their excellence by developing inter and intra system co-petition mechanisms for a sustainable governance of the more suitable matching between long tail e fat tail. This means exploring on a meso-system level the more suitable matching for a medium-term growth from a "*long tail*" (long tail as diversification of de-specialized forms of offer and radically different niches of demand) in transition towards a "*fat tale*" (nonlinear and a-symmetric segmentation / distribution and defined as specialized diversification of offer's forms and of simple differentiation of demand's niche)