

DESTINATION MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION IN THE MIDDLE OF A CORONA PANDEMIC



DESTINATION KVARKEN
Two countries, a world of contrasts



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DESTINATION MANAGEMENT ORGANISATION IN THE MIDDLE OF A CORONA PANDEMIC

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Abbreviations

| | |
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| BA | Botnia-Atlantica Programme |
| DMO | Destination Management Organisation |

Appendix

Questions

1. Background

The Destination Kvarken project, which aims at increasing the number of visitors to the area includes, in geographic terms, three provinces in Ostrobothnia Finland, the region of Umeå and High Coast in Sweden, and the following six tourist destination organisations: High Coast Destination Development, Visit Umeå, Visit Vaasa, Visit Seinäjoki Region, Visit Kokkola, Visit Jakobstad Region and Visit Kristinestad.

The project's main activities consist of networking and cooperation, R&D, digitalisation as well as market activities and product development. Hanken Svenska handelshögskolan (Hanken) is responsible for two work packages: WP1 Research and Development and WP2 Digitalisation.

The outbreak of the Corona virus in spring 2020 stopped dramatically all tourism, globally. This forced us in the project to rethink many of the activities planned for. In terms of research and development, we decided to study how the tourism companies in Kvarken area face Covid-19 and how a pandemic outbreak affects companies' thoughts about the future. A survey among tourism companies was conducted in April 2020 and the results were published in June 2020 (Pollari & Björk, 2020).

Destination management organizations (DMOs) are important partners for the development of tourism in the Kvarken area. In addition to the tourism company survey, we did also interview the DMOs to explore more deeply their view on the state of tourism in the Kvarken area. The DMOs in Finland and Sweden were contacted in June-July 2020 when the domestic tourism was starting to arise after a very challenging spring without or very few visitors and tourists. The CEOs at the DMOs, our interviewees, were very busy at the time of the interviews, as the high season for the domestic tourists was to start and new tactics were to put in practice as the consequence of the new situation. Despite of this, we received responses from all the destinations involved in the Destination Kvarken project, although many destination managers thought that some of the questions would be better answered after some time has passed.

2. Method

The method used for this study is of qualitative nature. We were interested in finding out how tourism organizations have experienced the impact of Corona on their organisation, what kind of actions have been taken at the DMOs during the pandemic and what kind of consequences pandemic has for local tourism. The purpose was to interview the tourism managers of all destinations in the project area.

The DMOs were approached by a personal email with the interview questions (Appendix 1 Questions). The interviews were conducted by video meeting online. The interviews took place in June and July 2020. All seven destinations in region were interviewed, two from Swedish and five from Finnish Destination Management Organisations (DMOs). One DMO answered questions by email. The interviews were analysed in August 2020 and report published in October 2020.

3. Findings

This report consists of DMOs' views on Covid-19 impact on the travel organization and local tourism businesses. The report describes how DMOs had to adapt to the new situation, e.g., for staff layoffs, and the measures taken to help tourism companies. We asked how the DMOs plan for the coming autumn when the future is very uncertain for all actors involved. According to interviewees, the normal planning has changed into scenario planning where they consider what can be done at one's destination following the safety and travel recommendations. Finally, the organizations were asked what they had learned from the crisis and whether there were any good practices that could be shared with other tourism organizations. The responses are summarised in this report with some additional themes that came up in the interviews.

The aim of this report is not to measure or compare the DMOs according to actions taken during the pandemic but to present what the DMOs have done and enlighten the importance the tourism organisations have played for the tourism companies in the crisis.


No tourists - No tourism organisations with full resources

Spring 2020 has been exceptional for destination management organisations. Some DMOs have not been fully staffed and part of the operations have been closed or only partially open during the corona spring. To pool resources in time when the DMOs have been forced to layoffs of staff has been a challenge. Another challenge has been to be able to give advices to tourism firms in time when uncertainty is the only thing what is certain. When interviewing DMOs it became clear that the Corona has had a major impact on their operations. In practice, tourist information of DMOs in Kvarken destinations have been closed throughout the Corona spring because of no tourists to serve. Some DMOs have maintained tourist information online and provided telephone services, but kept the physical offices closed. To balance the finances, DMOs have, as said, been forced to lay off staff, or the staff has been asked to keep their holiday vacations, meaning that part of the spring CEOs or managers have alone remained in charge of all activities.

DMOs are dependent on municipal funding and a vibrant tourism business community. With the weak numbers of visitors and tourists, tourist firms go bankrupt and the unemployment rate rise in the society with a set of negative consequences. Therefore, DMOs financially have challenging times as they receive their funding from cities, municipalities and tourism company membership fees. It was mentioned in the interviews that this year 2020 is balanced financially because companies have paid their membership fees, but the year 2021 may significantly reduce company funding due to the impacts of corona.

For some of DMOs in Kvarken sale of tourism products, such as conferences, concert halls, guides and group trips, is important for funding. Thus, the pandemic has lowered organizations' revenues as ongoing uncertainty negatively affects funding. The positive side is that some of the events sold by DMOs have not been directly cancelled but have been rescheduled. In Umeå, it is strongly believed that the popularity of the Umeå will remain a place for meetings, congresses and events. During the Corona, sales efforts at Visit Umeå have even been increased while the only trouble seems to be the decision of the date for the event to take place. Can the event be held, for example, in October 2021? On the Finnish side, DMOs hoped that the events of the late summer and autumn will be able to take place because many events in the summer had been cancelled.

Part of the DMOs have been able to continue projects in progress despite the pandemic. DMOs were asked the same as in our tourism company survey (Pollari & Björk 2020), i.e. whether the corona allowed time for development work. One interviewee stated that during the corona period in the spring, there was no time left for



the development of anything new, e.g. reorganizing the order book required a lot of work. This DMO has quite a lot sales activity. Most of the DMOs have operated with limited personnel. Some organizations say that during the corona it has been possible to continue development projects that were launched before the corona. Such projects have included the development of new websites and language versions. In addition, working with content of the websites of tourism organizations has continued as it would have been done without the corona.

What kind of support tourism companies have needed during the corona?

Tourism companies have asked for help filling in funding application and to get kind of mental support. However, the companies have been in contact with DMOs mainly in relation to applications for funding. They wanted information about who is going to do the application, they or somebody else? One can also say that some companies, especially the small ones, have needed very much help in the application process. Some of the DMOs have processed funding applications with the tourist firms, but in other situations, the tourist firms were asked to turn to the local development organizations, depending on the task division in the region. The need for mental support and the creation of future faith has played an important role. One interviewee informed that a local DMO has a special significance for small businesses in crisis when the livelihood, which is often also the passion of the entrepreneur, is in danger of being destroyed. Then they need an outsider view to lift the gaze from the ground towards the future.

The sudden exhaustion of customers has caused tourism companies to be in financial panic. Contacts with DMOs have mainly concerned finance. According to one informant, only a handful of restaurants and campsites have asked another type of question, what to consider in service due to Corona. It was noted by several Finnish DMOs that companies have not been in that much contact with DMOs (appeared clearly in Finland) but instead the DMOs have been calling companies to ask how it's going there. The difference between Finnish and Swedish organisations has been that there was no strict quarantine period in Sweden, so representatives of Swedish DMOs have been able to visit companies in the middle of the corona pandemic.


One informant said that perhaps restaurants and companies with meeting facilities have suffered most. First, in the spring, the meeting organizers ran out of all workplace wellness events (TYKY-toiminta) and next, weddings were cancelled for the summer.

What kind of actions the DMOs have done during the corona period?

DMOs have helped with funding applications. DMOs were asked what measures they had taken during the corona pandemic. As mentioned above, tourism companies have needed a lot of support in the funding application process. Training and hands-on assistance in preparing applications have been provided to companies. One interviewee said it well: "It is the tourism companies that have acted themselves, not us actually. But we have made sure that the companies get all the necessary information and we have helped with the funding applications".

DMOs have shared information. During the Corona period, one of the main tasks of the DMOs has been to manage communications. The DMOs in Finland and Sweden have provided information on state restrictions and funding channels. In Finland, DMOs have communicated to companies about Business Finland support. There has been the "Corona helpline" that companies have contacted.

DMOs have tried to maintain a positive atmosphere among the tourism companies. Entrepreneurs in tourism companies have been encouraged and loaded with future faith. DMOs have maintained a positive image of the destination, e.g. through marketing activities. There have been campaigns on social media being aware of the travel restrictions caused by the pandemic.



In crisis, DMO's role has been to speak to policymakers and politicians on behalf of tourism companies of the region. Kvarken destinations are geographically located away from major cities and for them the local airport is a lifeline for international tourism. The Covid-19 pandemic has caused air routes to be stopped as well as partially airport closures. According to interviews, at least one DMO has done active lobbying on behalf of its own airport. Air travel is important not just for tourism, but also for other industries. Consequently, it can be noted that the pandemic has united local actors to fight for the region. And in this struggle, the DMO represents local tourism businesses. During the pandemic, part of the DMO have taken a position on the issue of tourism, for example, on regional tourism permits or financial subsidies for tourism companies.

DMOs have organized training for tourist businesses. One Swedish DMO informs that they have created a project to develop the skills of tourism companies in the region in areas such as product development and digitalization (content, language versions, SEO).

DMO's role and tasks in the region affect what measures DMO has actively taken during a pandemic. Some of the DMOs are very careful about the future and others are selling services more than ever before. As previously mentioned for part of destinations the sale of services such as conferences is an important part of their activity. One DMO says that they have substantially grown sales operations during corona spring. Work will be planned and carried out in this organisation on a long-term basis. The events sold may not be held until two years from now.

Planning for future activities has been challenging for DMOs because nobody knows what a pandemic will cause in tourism regionally and worldwide. The DMOs have had to act in uncertainty. The managers of DMOs told that in order to get the operation going, there must have been a new plan almost every week for how to operate once the corona restrictions have regulated tourism industry. In one interview, it appeared that the DMO had considered it important to maintain a state of readiness, in order to be ready as soon as travel opens again. At the time of the interviews in July 2020, the domestic tourism had already begun, indicating that maintaining a standby mode was proven to be the right decision. Overall, there was a lot of discussion during the interviews about the scenarios. The DMOs have developed different scenarios and every week a new scenario has come to the table as the pandemic progresses.

DMOs measures in the corona spring and summer 2020:

- Communication and information (funding, restrictions in the corona period)
- Hands-on help with funding application process
- Lobbying for air transport in the region
- Marketed companies which are not closed during the corona (restaurants with take away)
- Helpline for companies
- Mental support
- Creating a positive image of the destination when not allowed to travel physically
- Maintaining the organization's state of readiness for the opening of tourism
- "We have increased the momentum in sales, we have sold much stronger in the spring than before. Guests want to hold congresses and meetings, but the difficulty is not being able to lock in dates."
- Developed different scenarios depending on the restrictions of the authorities, and, for example, people's desire to travel
- DMO has created a project to develop the skills of tourism companies in the region, e.g. product development, digitalization (content, language versions, SEO)



What kind of plans for autumn 2020? Has Corona caused changes to the plans?

DMOs are very cautiously planning for autumn activities, as a possible second wave of Corona creates uncertainty. However, the DMOs' long-term plans remain the same. Some of the daily operations have had to be modified due to the pandemic. Despite the Corona the tourism development in the regions continues. Decision-making is difficult because nobody knows how the pandemic will continue during the fall and winter. For example, the annual travel fair 'Matka' is in consideration of whether or not it is worth investing money in it as before. In ordinary times, 'Matka' and other travel fairs would be planned for in this time of the year.

Increasing domestic tourism is believed to improve the situation for the tourism companies. In the summer 2020, at the time of interviews, DMOs are waiting with interest for how domestic tourism gets underway. Everyone hopes that domestic tourists will fill up the destinations which probably will be left out of foreign tourists. Businesses need revenue to get them through the Corona crisis. Outdoor events, such as Jaakon päivät in Jakobstad and Kristiinankaupungin markkinat in Kristinestad, are important events for tourism in Kvarken destinations. Some of the Finnish DMOs said that they were aiming to make autumn's event calendar larger in order to compensate for cancelled ones. Some of the events were planned to be held virtually.

DMOs hope that the situation would ease in the fall but from the booking calendar it seems that people are afraid to organize events. "It seems that large gatherings will not be held in the fall. Only important and smaller management team meetings are held." This comment came from a Finnish DMO whose activities include conference sales as an integral part.


In both Finland and Sweden, tourism organisations have invested in marketing to domestic tourists since international tourism disappeared. With marketing the DMOs have gone with to the corona situation. DMOs in both countries have been involved in nationwide tourism marketing campaigns to boost domestic tourism.

Virtual FAM-trips have been launched. One DMO said that they have organized virtual FAM trips and will continue to do so in the autumn if the situation does not return to normal. The problem is that virtual tours never replace genuine people-to-people encounters or on-site visit to the destination. Virtual FAM-trips allow organizations to recall that they exist while maintaining a tour operator relationship. In the interview it was obvious that the DMOs want to return as soon as possible to organize traditional FAM trips instead of virtual tours.

What has we learned from the crisis? What has succeeded? What hasn't worked? Do you come up with good ideas or practices that other tourism organizations could take advantage of?

DMO interviews were conducted perhaps too early meaning that the interviewee found it difficult to assess what was successful and what was not during the crisis. Coronavirus has caused such a surprising situation that the DMOs thought it was too early to answer some of the questions. The Corona did not cause layoffs in every DMO as there were jobs that could be continued despite the Corona. For example, there was enough work to develop the contents of a new website. The DMOs have been able to take advantage of the Corona period as they have had ongoing projects.

The Corona crisis has brought the DMOs and tourism companies closer together. Tourism companies have not only received mere advice but have also received very concrete support, namely, how to apply for funding. According to one DMO, companies prefer explicit hands on help. According to this DMO, it is very important for DMO staff to be familiar with current affairs. The entrepreneurs need clear instructions on what is possible and what is not. Tourism companies want very hands on basic advices. Visit Finland is already on a too abstract level.



Local advice and actions are needed. It is not enough to share links and material to read. Entrepreneurs need and want to a local contact, a DMO, which explains and inspires - a face-to-face contact (who do a lot of "footwork").

At the same time, entrepreneurs seem to have been very grateful to receive the support and the fact that they have also been listened to. The lesson from all this has been how much support companies need to apply for funding. The success has been based on good contact with companies in the area.

As one interviewee put it: "We have worked on strengthening the dialogue with the tourism companies. And it is this dialogue that has been what we have done right. Companies have been grateful that interest has been shown in them and have been listened to. Because there are many companies that are very alone in the middle of this crisis." The same interviewee tells that DMO has managed to support companies by creating positivity and faith in the future as entrepreneurs wrestle with big questions such as what to do with staff or do he/she have to close his/her business.

Are there lessons to be shared with other tourism organizations? Communication with companies is important. Companies need to be told regularly what is going on and in what way the DMOs can help. According to one DMO, the crisis has made us (DMO) think about how things can be done differently than before. Related to the sales for example, an issue was, how to sell virtually and keeping a touch with authenticity still.

Communication is everything. At the time of the interview, in the middle of the crisis, the DMOs are thinking a lot about the importance of communication. Whether they communicate enough to businesses about everything the tourism organization does. Do the tourism companies really know for example the amount of work the DMOs has done with the reduced number of employees?

As a success factor, it was perceived that the tourism organization remained on standby during the spring. The DMO was ready to start tourism activities as soon as the restrictions receded. And standby was an asset as domestic tourism got off to a busy start as soon as restrictions allowed and the warm weather in June also helped tourism to rebound.

One interviewee commented: "Our absolute best learning is that creativity and close interaction with the industry. These are our success factors. In a very short time, the action plan of DMO was rewritten. In addition, the dialogue with the region and politicians has gone really well."

Cooperation nexus

It has been learned that we still have a lot to do with the attitude of destinations. We need to start to talk about common target groups and how to get tourists to stay longer in the area. Destinations need to know what kind of offer; services and products other destinations have.

According to one interviewee, cooperation between companies could be important. The interviewed says that during his long career in tourism, cooperation between companies has improved and now it also appears that the common Corona crisis has brought tourism businesses closer to the region. Maybe a positive Corona effect?

Interviews showed that work should be done on cooperation between companies. Even in the area of destination, companies do not know each other than perhaps superficially. Field trips are a good way for entrepreneurs to network and it was unfortunate the field/benchmarking trip to Sweden was cancelled.

In order to achieve genuine cooperation, one should forget about the different governance models in the regions and focus on common product packages and joint marketing of the region.



What DMOs think about the summer season 2020

Kvarken region has become the destination for domestic tourists in Finland. It appeared in the interviews that new groups of customers have entered Kokkola in the early summer of 2020 for example. The passenger lists of the ship cruising to Tankar show that tourists have arrived from the capital region and from other new regions, such as Eastern Finland, Tampere and Turku. This is a big change compared to previous years. Another change is that tourists have stayed longer in Kokkola. Domestic tourists come for several days because they have not visited the destination before.

When the domestic tourism began to open there was a lot of demand for cabins and camping. Demand for hotels has started at a slower pace.

Tourism looks brighter in terms of summer. Tourism managers say in the interviews (June 22-July 6) that tourists are starting to move around their destinations. Tourist information has been opened in various parts of the Kvarken from mid-May onwards, so the total stop has lasted just over 2 months.

In the interviews, DMOs tell that there are a lot of micro companies of one or two people in the Kvarken. These companies have had difficulties in spring and unfortunately in the autumn there may be a wave of bankruptcies if Corona troubles continue.

In the Kvarken region, the main target group of many destinations are domestic customers. Therefore, the Corona may have not been as challenging as it is for example for Finnish Lapland tourism, for which foreign customers are a very important target market.

4. Discussion

The Corona pandemic has had, and still has, a dramatic effect on tourism. First to suffer the consequences were all destinations leaning on the summer season, Kvarken destinations included. With a focus on DMOs we asked in this study about how the DMOs are doing, actions taken and plans for the Autumn. We did also ask about lessons learned.

The results clearly indicate how vulnerably, situation dependent the whole tourism sector is. The “season economy” does not enable the small tourism firms to build strong financial depots for “rainy days” but are very dependent on a situation when every season must be a good season. There is no surprise that the main task during this summer has been to guide the tourism firms in the subsidy application process and be there for them with the most updated information. The role of the DMOs is, once more, proved important, also as a discussion partner, a mental coach. In this, an interesting finding is the importance of being local, physically close to the companies. Not, only, a website with information, but the human contact and being able to explain what all the information means.

Based on interviews, DMO has been an important discussion partner for tourism companies during the crisis. It seems that tourism companies need a DMO that understands their industry and that conveys information, such as nationwide things (Visit Finland, Visit Sweden), locally. In other words, there has been a clear need for DMO in a crisis; to communicate information and act as mental coach for entrepreneurs in tourism.

When we asked the DMOs what they learned from the crisis, they told that it is a little early to analyse while the crisis was still on in the middle of summer. However, DMOs were able to tell some of their learnings in the corona crisis.

Lessons learned in the DMOs during the crisis:

1. DMO is a local and personal coach for tourism companies

DMO is a local and personal coach who provides guidance, mental support and information for tourism companies. Companies need a local contact who shares information and who can have a personal conversation with. Especially "DMO's importance as a discussion partner" is highlighted in the case of micro and small businesses where entrepreneurs manage every "department" themselves. Companies have needed a lot of hands-on assistance with funding applications.

However, the role of DMO varies in the Kvarken region depending on the task division with other development organizations in the region. For instance, the hands on-assistance with the funding applications has not been on the desks of all DMOs involved in the Destination Kvarken project.

2. Improved dialogue between DMOs and tourism companies

Certainly, companies are in touch with an organisation that can help get funding in the middle of a crisis. On the other hand, companies have become familiar with the operation of DMOs by being in contact and receiving hands on help from them. The DMOs of certain regions note that the crisis has improved the dialogue between tourism companies and DMOs. The role of DMO as information sharing has become more highlighted during the time of the corona. As one DMO puts it: "This has been this kind of crisis communication all the time." The DMOs of Kvarken have been actively sharing information about national restrictions, recommendations as well as financing alternatives. According to interviews, Kvarken's tourism companies prefer to seek information locally rather than from the national tourism organisations (Visit Finland, Visit Sweden).

3. Regional togetherness – We are in this crisis together

The Corona has also had positive effects, as the crisis has increased the togetherness of companies in the regions. The DMOs told that the companies have become closer with DMO as well as with each other. It is also mentioned that there is a stronger sense of togetherness in the region. Collaborations have been made during the crisis, for example, to maintain the regional air connections (although it appears that regional airports are in great difficulty). Some DMO estimates that discussion has been good with the actors and politicians in the region.

4. Creativity

There has been enough creativity in DMOs to remain functional in a crisis. DMOs tell being successful in reorganizing activities. Action plans have been re-written, different scenarios have guided the planning, and physical appointments are arranged in a virtual way, to mention a few examples how the work is changed at DMOs.

5. Difficulty in organizing resources

The standby mode of DMO was a good solution for the opening of domestic tourism. The learning by one DMO was that they did the right decision to maintain organisational in a standby mode. That decision helped when the domestic tourism season kicked off with a speed in early May 2020. DMOs are together with tourism companies to tolerate the uncertainty caused by the corona. It is challenging to set resources right when nobody knows what

happens next with the Corona. If domestic tourism kicks off in the summer 2020 after lockdown, how to serve incoming customer numbers? How to schedule the staff holidays, what to do with summer workers and such decisions. Depending on the restrictions on tourism, it is very difficult to estimate the numbers of tourists. In addition, DMOs are willing to market destination and keep a positive tourism image even during corona, but limited resources make work difficult.


Even if the organizations interviewed when the crisis was still ongoing, they could still tell what of their activities have been successful or in which they have been good at. It can be interpreted from DMOs' responses that the corona has shown that DMO is an important support for tourism companies in Kvarken.

Cooperation between tourism companies and DMOs has strengthened in the crisis but how to continue towards the recovery of tourism? It is obvious that the DMOs have worked to support the companies in the crisis. It appears in almost every interview that tourism companies in Kvarken have needed local DMOs under this exceptional period. Perhaps the crisis has also united regional players and there is an aim to get through Corona together, as a region. We (at Hanken) named our previous report on the tourism company survey "We will survive the coronavirus crisis together" because no single company will survive this crisis on its own. In order to bring a pandemic to an end, cooperation is needed. In order to bring domestic tourists to the Kvarken region, cooperation is needed and if we seek popularity as a safe destination for foreign tourists, even more cooperation is needed. DMO's role is to be an assembling force for tourism in the region, but does a DMO have some new tasks in post-corona tourism?

How DMO can participate in recovery of tourism? Levy (2020) suggests taking three following steps: 1. Respond 2. Restart and 3. Reimage. After first step 1, the DMO has responded the acute needs of the tourism sector in the Corona crisis. The second step concerns restarting the activities to get visitors back to the destination. At the time of writing this report, October 2020, the second wave of coronavirus is on and destinations wish to welcome visitors but the time is not yet as there are travel restrictions and it is not generally acceptable to travel and spread the virus. Third task would be to reimagine the tourism in a destination. Levy (2020) among the other in tourism development calls to involve residents and local communities in development of "new tourism" in destinations. Levy (2020) states that the task that destinations (DMOs) now have, 'rebuilding tourism' is a once-in-a-generation opportunity. Levy (2020) lists means to rebalance tourism in a more sustainable direction, such as sustainable transport, better connections, off-season opportunities, diverse tourism offerings, development of sustainability skills for tourism companies and support for conservation. Perhaps Kvarken has a chance to be reborn as an even more interesting destination in post-covid tourism. For this, of course, it is essential that tourism companies in the region are committed to respond to new tourism preferences and the DMOs stay tune to the new tourism demands that may emerge.

The post-corona era presents an opportunity to restart tourism in a sustainable way. The Tourism Ministers of G20 countries have committed to put efforts towards a sustainable recovery of Tourism (UNWTO 2020). The aim for the G20 meeting was the fair and sustainable tourism growth in which the tourism's benefits are shared equally to all. In the framework that the tourism leaders have put together, the sustainable recovery of tourism means, the strong emphasis on locality in the development of tourism; the development of local communities, nature and culture and moreover there is strong emphasis on support addressed on women and young people. The framework includes the tools and recommendations, how governments and the key actors in tourism are encouraged to rebuild the tourism to be more sustainable, resilient and inclusive (UNWTO 2020). DMOs are naturally the regional actors who can foster local culture, nature and communities and involve locals in the tourism development.

Health and safety issues might emerge as an important part of DMOs' work in post-corona tourism. Sam Hancock (2020) comments that DMOs are with travel agents in crucial role in the future tourism by guiding that the safety protocols are in shape in the destinations. In his comment, DMOs keep travel agents updated that safety issues in



destinations are handled correctly for tourists to safely travel there. The trends are showing that the travels become fewer and more about the quality and the customers become more demanding. Thus, the travel agents with the aid of DMOs must keep up the good work producing interesting journeys to respond this type of demand (Hancock 2020). In the interviews in this study appeared that DMO has played an important role in information sharing. In post-corona times, when tourism is shaping into new tracks, the DMOs will surely continue to provide tourism companies with latest news and information about the travel industry.

In sum, DMOs and tourism companies are in the same boat in terms of Corona. The whole tourism industry is to work continuously towards the 'new normal in tourism'. How to modify the company's services and products to serve the customer in the new normal. And from DMOs' perspective, how to support tourism companies when the whole business idea may be changed due to circumstances and need re-thinking. Tourism companies and DMOs need to be as adaptable as chameleons, that's for sure!

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Appendix

Questions

Till den regionala turistorganisationen, (suomeksi alla)

Hanken har under Corona våren genomfört en enkät hos turistföretag som är anslutna till Destination Kvarken. Enkäten gällde stämningar hos företagen och deras aktuella tankar om läget. Resultatet publicerades nyligen. För att vi ska lyckas föra projektet framåt på ett bra sätt, är det värdefullt för projektet att känna till företagarnas insikter och planer under och efter coronatiden. Nu kontaktar vi även er på turistorganisationer för att få veta mer om organisationernas aktuella arbete, såväl som om era planer inför hösten 2020. Undersökningen kommer att ske som en telefonintervju och tar cirka 20 - 30 minuter.

Vänligen meddela mig, annika.pollari@hanken.fi när under tiden 22.6 - 3.7. det skulle vara lämpligt att genomföra ett Microsoft Teams-möte! Jag kommer sedan att skicka ut en länk för att ansluta sig till videointervju. Tack!

Intervjufrågor:

1. Hur mår turistorganisationen mitt i coronapandemin?
2. Vilka åtgärder har er organisation gjort under pandemin?
3. Vilka planer har ni för hösten 2020? Har ni fått ändra på era tidigare planer pga coronapandemin?
4. Har ni dragit några lärdomar av krisen? Vad har varit lyckat? Vad har inte fungerat? Någon bra idé/ bästa praxis för andra turistorganisationer att tillämpa?

Förhoppningsvis möts vi för en intervju de kommande veckorna.

Sommarhälsningar från Vaasa,

Annika Pollari, projektkoordinator
Hanken / Destination Kvarken-projektet

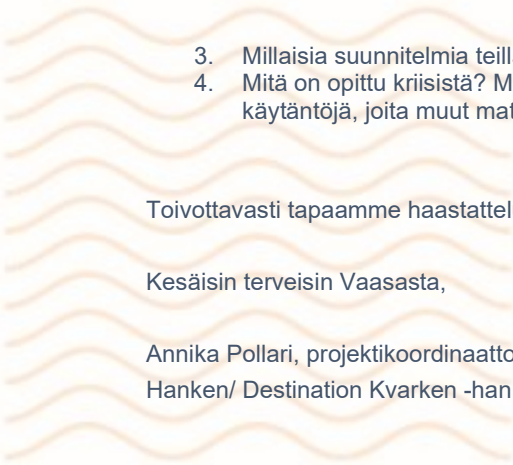
Hyvä matkailun alueorganisaation edustaja,

Hanken toteutti kyselyn Destination Kvarken-projektin yrityksiin koronakevään aikana. Matkailuyritysten tunnelmia ja ajatuksia on nyt kuultu ja tulokset on julkaistu. Jotta voimme viedä projektin toimenpiteitä paremmin eteenpäin, on hyvä selvittää eri toimijoiden näkemyksiä, miten työskentely matkailuyritysten kanssa jatkuu koronan jälkeen (tai koronan kanssa). Otamme nyt yhteyttä teihin, sillä haluaisimme tietää matkailuorganisaatioiden toimenpiteistä koronan aikana sekä tulevista suunnitelmista syksyllä 2020. Kysely tehdään puhelinhaastatteluna n. 20-30 min ja vastaukset analysoidaan ja koostetaan yhteenvedoksi.

Ilmoita ystävällisesti minulle annika.pollari@hanken.fi milloin sinulle sopisi toteuttaa Microsoft Teams haastattelu 22.6-3.7. välisinä päivinä. Lähetän sitten linkin, josta pääset videohaastatteluun. Kiitos!

Haastattelukysymykset:

1. Miten matkailuorganisaatiollanne menee koronapandemian keskellä?
2. Mitä toimenpiteitä matkailuorganisaationne on tehnyt koronapandemian aikana?

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3. Millaisia suunnitelmia teillä on syksyksi 2020? Onko korona aiheuttanut muutoksia suunnitelmiin?
 4. Mitä on opittu kriisistä? Mikä on onnistunut? Mikä ei ole toiminut? Tuleeko mieleen hyviä ideoita tai käytäntöjä, joita muut matkailuorganisaatiot voisivat hyödyntää?

Toivottavasti tapamme haastattelun merkeissä lähiviikkoina.

Kesäisin terveisin Vaasasta,

Annika Pollari, projektikoordinaattori
Hanken/ Destination Kvarken -hanke

The Destination Kvarken project will help small and medium enterprises with focus on hospitality industry to reach out to new and bigger markets for more growth and competitiveness.

The purpose is to increase the amount of visitors in the region.

Read more: kvarken.org/destinationkvarken

Projekt Destination Kvarken ska hjälpa exportmogna små och medelstora företag med fokus på besöksnäring att nå ut till nya marknader för ökad tillväxt och konkurrenskraft.

Syftet är att öka antalet besökare i regionen.

Läs mer: kvarken.org/destinationkvarken

Hankkeessa Destination Kvarken autetaan matkailuelinkeinon parissa toimivia vientikelpoisia pk-yrityksiä saavuttamaan uusia, yrityksen kasvuun johtavia ja sen kilpailukykyä parantavia markkinoita. Tavoitteena on lisätä alueen kävijämääriä.

Lue lisää: kvarken.org/destinationkvarken

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