

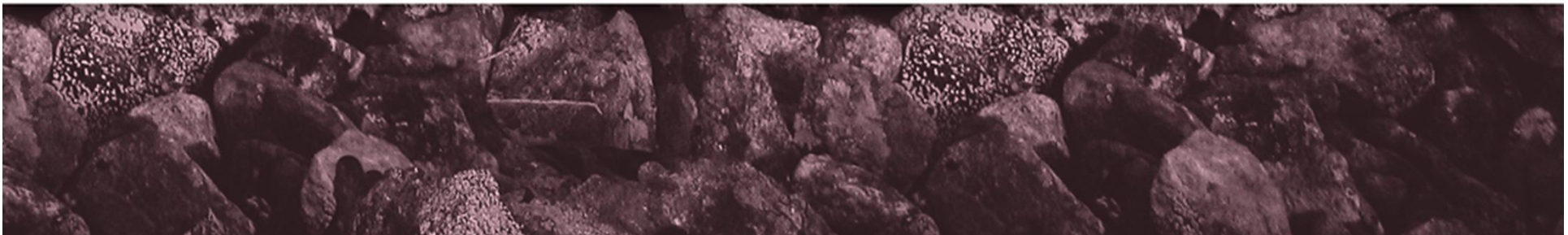
Tourism Product Developer's Handbook

Common Future for Baltic Tourism II
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"I seem to be unable to find the time for doing product development on an ongoing basis, and when I happen to find the time, it feels like I run out of gimmicks very fast."

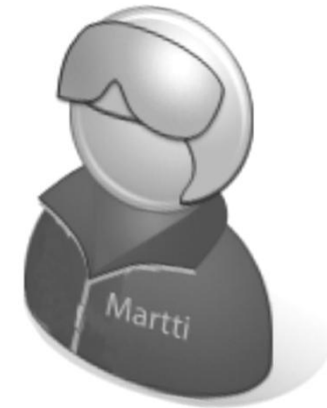


"It's difficult when business partners do product development differently... They talk about creating ideas, sales, communication, service design, logistic and distribution channels."

"What is on our bank account in spring (the end of our high season) has to be enough to hold up till next december."

"It's important to develop products that address the particular needs of different customer groups – instead of offering a standard product."

"It'd be great if we could differentiate our offerings... and instead of competing with one another we could promote the well-being of the whole village."



"We've found our own way of doing things around here."

Driving principles

- The handbook has been developed for small businesses interested in:
 - **Differentiating** their products and business operations
 - **Networking**
 - Conceptualizing their products and performance as **part of their destination**
- An innovative **way of thinking** and concrete **tools** for helping firms to recognize and improve their **own way of developing products**
- <http://matkailu.luc.fi/tuotekehitys>

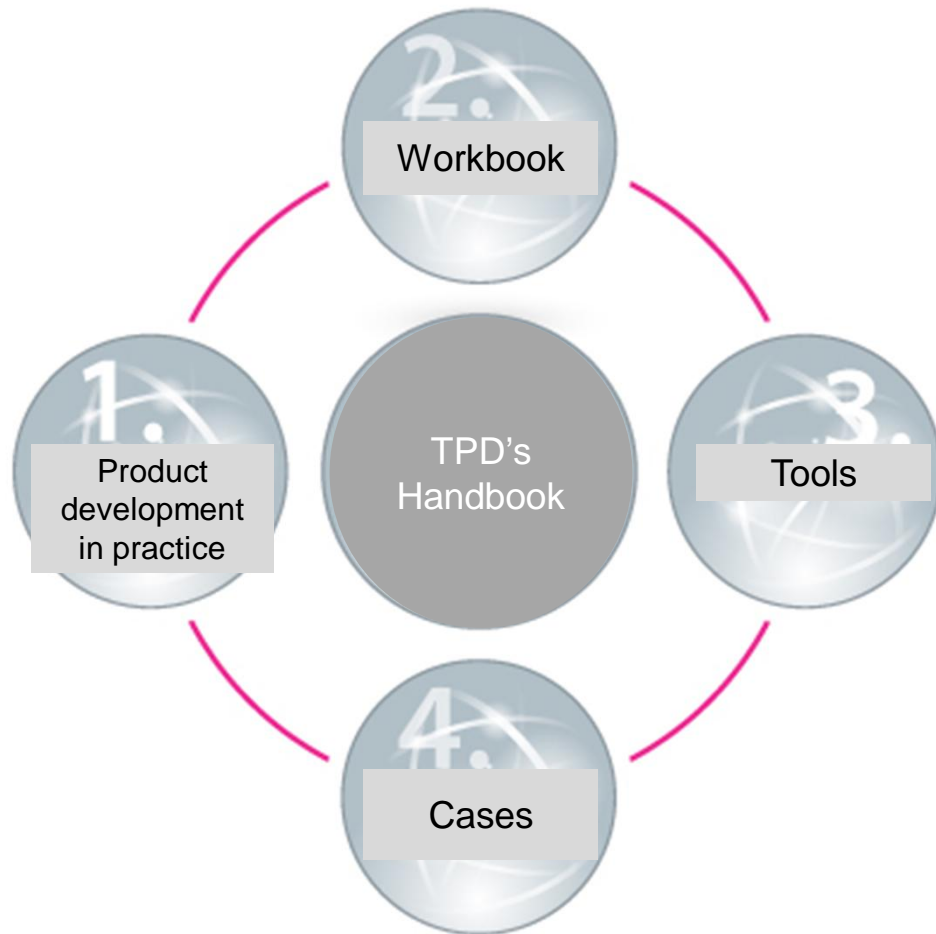


What is there for Baltic Tourism?

The handbook:

- a) brings product development closer to the everyday life of Baltic tourism practitioners, encouraging them to explore it as a holistic process
- b) contributes to the differentiation of Baltic tourism companies, their products and the creation of new business opportunities
- c) offers concrete tourism product development tools for promoting the sustainability of Baltic tourism products and the entire destination

Four essential parts

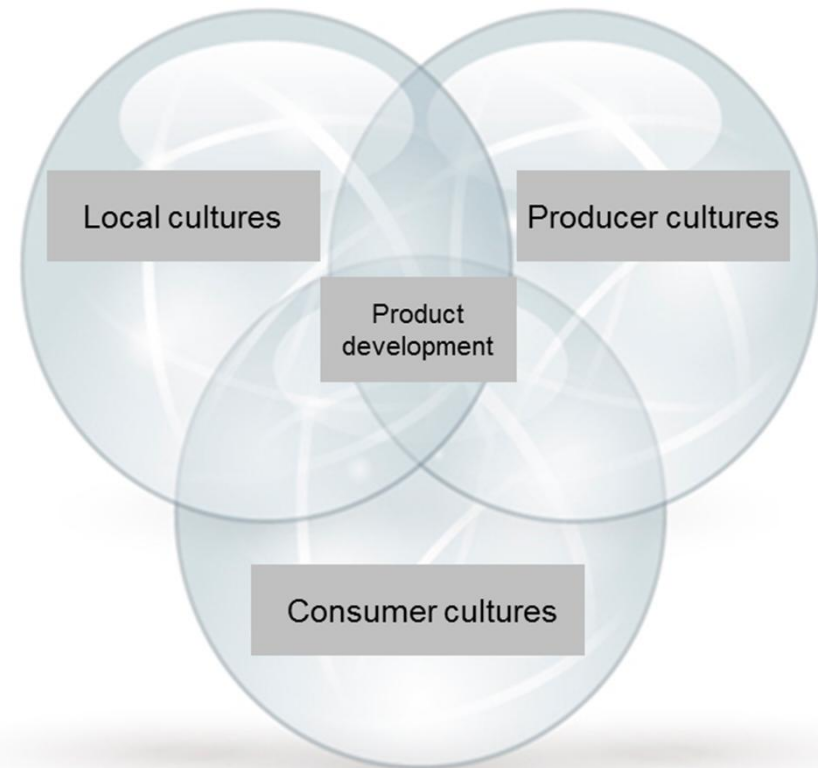


All these four parts help develop profitable, sustainable, and meaningful products, which create long-term competitive advantage.

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Encounters

Meaningful experiences are created at the interplay of tourism service providers, customers, locals and other stakeholders. These encounters occur always in a particular place, whether it's a village, a hotel or a website.



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Holistic perspective

- A holistic perspective on:
 - The **operational environment**, where tourism product development takes place and tourism products are produced and consumed.
 - **Products**, which are seen as meaningful experiences and practices created at the interface of stakeholder interactions.
 - **Customership**, where not only consumers but also business partners, employees, local community members are seen as customers and key product development players.

Operating Environment as a Business Opportunity

Product developers should learn to **live according** to their operating environment.

Instead of being reactive to our operating environment and lamenting changes taking place in it, we can try to **forsee, influence and change** it?



Product as a meaningful story

An appealing product is a **significant, meaningful experience** that can **improve people's lives**.

The product reaches the customer when it can be seen as **part of a large identifiable narrative**.



The Official Hometown of *Santa Claus*[®]



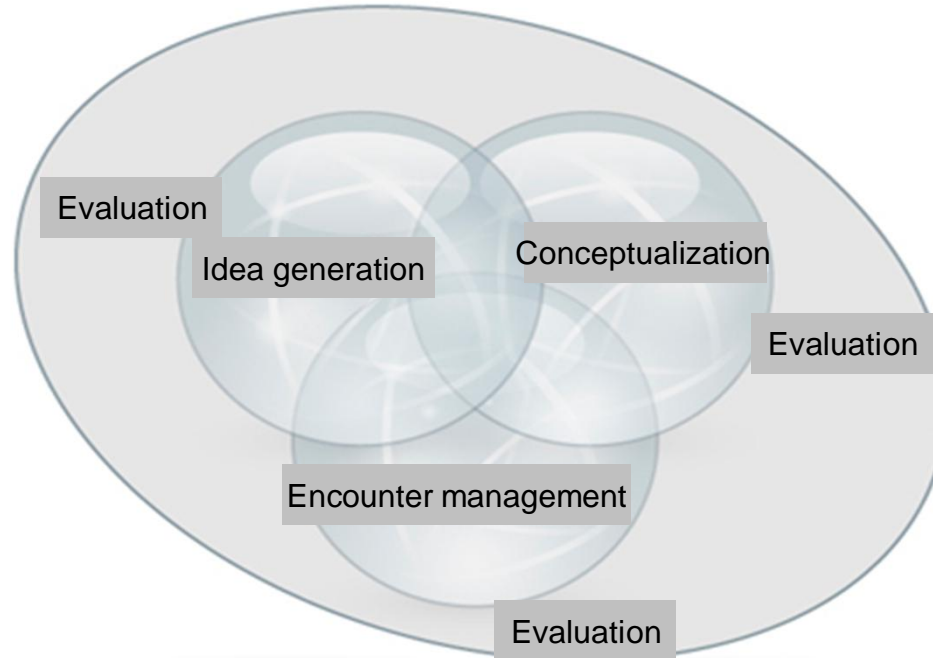
Customership joint co-creation

In addition to **tourists**, employees, locals, business partners and local authorities play a significant role as product developers and **active co-creators**.

Rich and varied **information from different sources** are needed to gain relevant and deep customer/market knowledge.



Product development



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Some of the tools

Idea generation tools help to engender ideas by outlining the operational environment.

What? Adhesive map workshop is an inspiring tool that helps participants to wake up memories, feelings, experiences and meanings related to a particular site or destination.

Why? *Though destinations are full of stories and meanings, only some of them are widely known. Most stories are told in some circles and they don't reach a wide audience. However, this stories (hidden knowledge) can become useful ingredients for product development.*

Miten? By using a large map of the site to be evaluated, participants look for places with personal, historical, romantic, spiritual meanings. They put adhesive colour label on the spot with a short explanations on the margin of the map.



Some of the tools

Encounter Management Tools help gain insight into customer experiences, to implement and evaluate service concepts in practice.

What? Observation is a fun tool, because we all enjoy watching and observing others. Nevertheless, it's not conducted randomly but systematically. It focuses on human activities, practices and behaviours, such as how the service under scrutiny is used or how users behave and interact in a particular context.

Why? *Observation is well-suited to find out about how customers interact within a particular tourism context (e.g. event, program, service space) and how such a context affects their practices and behaviors. It enables product developers to gain insightful customer and market knowledge. It allows access to natural situations.*

How? *In addition to note-taking, observations can be documented by photographing, recording or videotaping. Usually observations are conducted without disturbing the ones under observation (e.g. tourists, employees, business partners). An exception is the so-called "participative observation", in which the observer participates in activities of the group/community as a full member.*



Where to find the handbook

On the website of the Lapland Institute for Tourism Research & Education!

<http://matkailu.luc.fi/tuotekehitys>



Thank you!



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