

ANALYSIS OF FLAMENCO AS A TOURISM RESOURCE IN ANDALUSIA

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Flamenco is an art born in Andalusia as a result of a fusion of cultures that coexisted in this land for centuries. For Andalusia and also for Spain, flamenco represents a trade mark leading to a demand from afar and an influx of tourists familiar with flamenco or curious about it.

Our intention is to introduce the art of flamenco into cultural tourism as one of its most requested products for national and international tourists. The article begins taking a stand on cultural tourism, to later focus on three aspects of flamenco art: the evolution of flamenco, an analysis of the current situation through the SWOT matrix and an analysis of the current situation through the vantage point of the Business Model Canvas.

Tourism has evolved from the massive demand for traditional sun-and- beach tourism toward the more selective and minority segment of cultural tourism in its various forms, where tourists wish to know more about the area they are visiting for its contributions to culture or heritage. Cultural tourism, then, plays a very important role in presenting, preserving and enjoying the cultural and touristic heritage of a country.

Cultural or heritage tourism can seek knowledge about the tangible or intangible. This can involve architecture, gastronomy, religious and industrial exhibitions, shopping, languages and ethnic-folklore tourism. Flamenco tourism belongs to this last ethnic-folklore tourism. Every place has tourism offers that distinguish them to a greater or lesser degree. But Andalusia possesses an art that has crossed borders, and been capable of reaching and being valued by the whole world: folklore is an artistic expression linked to and located in a geographical area. Flamenco is linked to Andalusia but its impact has spread internationally.

Flamenco is a musical expression that transmits feelings, and was born of peoples living in a crossroads of cultures: Christian, Muslim, Jewish and Gypsy. The first mention of the existence of flamenco artists who earned their living by performing at private events was in the 18th century. In the 19th century «singing cafés» appeared on the scene; they

were the origin of today's flamenco shows, and the door that opened to flamenco professionals the passage from private events to being acclaimed publicly by the masses. And it is in the first half of the 20th century when the expansion of flamenco reached theatres, with festivals called «Flamenco Opera», and then crossed national borders. Flamenco now sells outside of Andalusia and outside of Spain.

Currently both public entities as well as private ones are aware of the economic and touristic potential of this art, especially after its recognition by the UNESCO in 2010 as an Intangible Heritage of Humanity. Data confirm the over 100% increase in 2010 of the revenues derived from flamenco performances, although there has not been the same increase in the number of people attending these performances.

In the following years, performance revenues again reached five million euros a year according to data from the SGAE report in 2014. In 2009, flamenco tourism revenues rose to 550 million euros. Similar to the income from flamenco after the increase in 2010, in the following years revenues continued to reach amounts near those of 2009, and one could extrapolate the same trend in flamenco tourism revenues in the years after 2010.

There are several factors that have a direct or indirect influence on the development of flamenco as a product of cultural tourism, some being external and expressed as either threats or perhaps opportunities, or as strengths and weaknesses if these factors are intrinsic to flamenco as an artistic expression or in its business management. Consequently, the SWOT analysis here presented allows us to appreciate the potentials of this form of tourism and will be a starting point for strategic proposals.

Regarding weaknesses, some which could be highlighted among others are the existence of an underground economy in this sector, the shortage of professional event managers, the lack of brand awareness and, very directly related to tourism, the existence of poor quality performances oriented toward this sector that hurt both flamenco and tourism.

On the other hand, there are many strengths held by flamenco as a cultural offer, like its very recognition as an intangible Heritage of Humanity, that simultaneously has influenced and is influencing the attraction of a great deal more attention from public and private sectors, providing it with better media coverage and granting more relevance to the training necessary to improve the offer. The great strength of flamenco is that it is an inimitable trade mark.

The most outstanding external factors representing significant opportunities for flamenco are linked to the growing recognition of flamenco within and outside our borders, as an art to be learned, to reproduce or to enjoy in its performance: there are many countries with an import demand for flamenco and also many tourists who travel to Andalusia in search of this art in one of its many facets. On the other hand, the evolution of flamenco in its fusion with other musical styles or incorporating instruments from other cultures is another opportunity to attract new enthusiasts.

There are also some threats, to a certain extent, that can be due to our current crisis that results in less financing from the public sector, for culture in general and for flamenco performances in particular, as well as higher taxes; this is also counterproductive with respect to support from private initiative.

Looking at flamenco tourism as a whole, as a single enterprise, its business model can be defined which is why it is possible to apply the Business Model Canvas tool.

It is a question of schematically clarifying to whom this project is being directed, the profile of potential recipients, its value for recipients, how this value could be conveyed to recipients and, finally, how this process can be quantified from the perspective of cost and income.

With respect to whom it is directed and the value of the proposition, the starting point proposed in this article is to define two groups of clients: on the one hand, those tourist connoisseurs of flamenco who travel in search of events or for specific purposes; on the other hand are those tourists in general who, on arrival, may be attracted by flamenco. The main proposal of value for the former is participating in the emotion of an exclusive art whose quality is guaranteed. For the latter, the value proposal is going to be to experiment this exclusive art for the first time.

It will be necessary to reach out to this flamenco tourist on-line, although personal and direct attention in the place of origin is also very important so that when tourists arrive at their destination, they already have a defined route and a predesigned plan of action. Tourism flamenco needs a perfectly defined marketing plan.

To provide clients with value, how to do it necessarily involves the main agents, public organisms, private companies and flamenco associations, and, of course, the performers. The coordination of all these agents is necessary and required in order to guarantee a homogenous and coherent bid for quality. It is important to maintain contacts with hotel chains, travel agencies and corporate sponsors of flamenco events.

When considering expenses, there are three blocks of cost: the mounting of flamenco shows and activities, publicity costs and the fees of performers and other professionals involved; these have to be compensated by revenues from show and performance tickets and everything else associated with sectors of consumerism related to flamenco.

Flamenco tourism is and should be a profitable business venture that must go on growing. Andalusia, which is the cradle of this art, has to broadcast its flamenco trade mark and maintain the links that attract further demand. That is why it is necessary to develop strategies for artistic training and management formation, strategies for coordination, quality control strategies and media coverage strategies.

