

# EXTENDED ABSTRACT

## INNOVATION IN TOURISM MARKET: EXPERIENCES IN STREET ART

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Tourist consolidated destinations require a governance management that constantly monitors the competitiveness of the brand, the attracting of the tourists' interest and the residents' complaisance. Dealing with these challenges are the main concerns of current destination management organizations (DMO), and therefore offer diverse and quality tourist experiences and keep destinations as sustainable tourist enclaves. Usually, central spaces in tourist cities are those which gather the cultural heritage that tourists enjoy visit and they join the major transformations of the neighbours' lifestyle. In that sense, one strategy of DMOs is to diversify the wide variety of attractions to expand tourism flows across the rest of the less central areas in the city. Another action is to offer innovative and memorable experiences to keep the destination on a permanent trendy enclave. The last priority is to achieve the citizenship collaboration and enthusiasm in these actions as it is essential for its continuity and sustainability. The case study that is analysed in this paper illustrates this triad.

Thus, the aim of this research is to better understand how a tourist city as Barcelona, tries to be constantly rejuvenated or updated to maintain its position in the international brand ranking, creating new experiences and decentralising its set of attractions to decongest the historical centre. *Pinacoteca a Cel Obert* (Open Air Art Gallery) is the specific case analysed. It consists on a street art exhibition, with differentiated characteristics compared to the strict concept of urban art as it depicts classical paintings of history of art and thus its content moves away from its original activist nature. Furthermore, *Pinacoteca a Cel Obert* is a new experience for consumption in a public space, located away from the famously crowded streets of Barcelona, implemented in a neighbourhood with small tourist attractiveness with the aim to revitalise culturally, commercially and socially the area for its neighbours. That is, Sants-Les Corts commercial area. This tourist experience is designed according to the key components to reach holistic satisfactory visits, that is: participation, hedonism, knowledge, local identity, tasting and nostalgia.

Methodologically, primary data was collected through in-depth interviews to the responsible individuals who develop and implement this project, to better understand the successful aspects for a shared governance in tourism destinations. Furthermore, the

acquired information by the survey to 150 participants to the guided itinerary through the open-air gallery in the neighbourhood let us understand the essential attributes to build satisfactory tourism experiences. The conclusions state that tourist planned experiences have to provide an important dose of added value and memorabilia for its final satisfaction.

Collaborative interaction and networks that have been built among the different involved stakeholders during the creation and development of this project are the key that explains its success. This shared and participative governance from the public administration, private business (grouped in the Sants-Les Corts Shopkeeper Association -*Associació de Comerciants Sants-Les Corts*- and the cultural organization *Rebobinar*) and citizenship (under the cooperative guides named *Revivint el Patrimoni*) responds to this sustainable model of tourist destinations that looks for the harmonization the tourism interests with the residents' daily life. Each collective had their own interests, and sharing them, they found the necessary coordination and determination to reach the implementation of *Pinacoteca a Cel Obert*. The aim of the public administration was to revitalise the cultural and commercial heritage of the area. The shopkeeper association wanted to invigorate economically the zone and embellish it to favour the neighbours' strolls. The cultural organization supported the promotion of street art through the different neighbourhoods of Barcelona. Finally, the cooperative of tour guides (former unemployed) endorsed their future job positions.

Specifically, this open-air art gallery consists of 24 shop shutters painted by two famous street artists (Jalón de Aquiles and Lucie Blin). The act of painting the doors of shops is common in the city of Barcelona, most of which are tagged with the artist's personal mark. However, in this case they represent famous works of art by major traditional artists, and this is the key aspect of these 24 painted shutters. Murals on different local businesses reproduce famous classical pieces from the history of art, rather than personal, critical and even invasive "real" street art. In that sense, this reconceptualization of street art in the *Pinacoteca a Cel Obert* has the ultimate aim to embellish, decorate, revitalise, and raise awareness of local and traditional trade in the city, providing a new consumer experience to tourists and visitors, included on Barcelona's must-see list. Therefore, the designed itinerary to enjoy this open-air gallery bases on specific components, as detailed below.

The current interests of modern-day consumers of tourism have changed. Contemplative sightseeing has almost disappeared, and participative experiences that satisfy emotions are vigorously emerging everywhere, in reflection of new demands and trends (Vogeler & Hernández, 2002; Bordas, 2003; Bonilla Moya, 2006; de Rojas & Camarero, 2008; Cuenca & Prat, 2012; Rivera Mateos, 2013). Changes in tourism demand mean people now seek new experiences that are far-removed from their daily routines: new activities with the opportunity to discover and learn about different cultures, and other leisure spaces where they can feel and revive past moments and memories (Crespi-Vallbona, 2020). Thus, a memorable itinerary requires that its value chain presents an added value, a set of feelings that are suggested, recalled, remembered and communicated through the visit. Consequently, the attributes that shape these innovative and holistic experiences include diverse aspects such as participation, hedonism, local identity, knowledge, taste and nostalgia. These attributes are associated to different tourists' needs, interests, motivations, and expectations, providing the global and satisfactory experience that postmodern consumers

seek (Tsay, 2016). The McDonaldisation of tourism products has become a way of life in the context of postmodernism, but new tourism demands are shifting from commercialised to living tourism, which is important for attaining sustainable development in tourism. *Hedonism* is an intrinsic attribute of any tourist activity, as visitors look for pleasant, multisensory, enjoyable moments (Malone *et al.*, 2014). *Participative tourism* also leads the current market, as visitors love dynamic, interactive, participative activities (Herbert, 2001), which include *cognitive actions* to learn and gather knowledge and information (Larsen & Meged, 2013; Sharpley, 2014). Preferentially, the *local identity*, the tangible and intangible heritage rooted in the destination, are the most coveted and appreciated images for tourists (Edensor, 2008), as they reveal the singularity of a place, differentiating it from elsewhere in the globalised, homogeneous world (Wearing, *et al.*, 2010; Modlin *et al.*, 2011). *Tasting* local food has a decisive impact on satisfactory experiences and offers real immersion in a destination's everyday life (Boniface, 2003; Henderson, 2009). Finally, *nostalgia* must be included in tourism experiences as it triggers significant personal and specific feelings from the past (Hung *et al.*, 2016; Campos *et al.*, 2016), which hence reinforce the experience. These six components, that is, participation, hedonism, local identity, knowledge, taste and nostalgia, must shape the guided itineraries in current tourism experiences to provide holistic satisfaction to their visitors.

These attributes are fundamental elements for the design and implementation of the itinerary of *Pinacoteca a Cel Obert*. In fact, respondents to the survey state that they enjoy the active participation during the visit, learning about urban art and classical painters, remembering private past moments through the paintings, interacting with other visitors, explaining their lived feelings, and experiencing a warm atmosphere to share private aspects. This active experience, this emotional trip, this satisfactory visit is achieved when the design of the product includes: the participation and interaction of tourists among them, the acquirement of new knowledge, especially related to the local identity, with the chance to experience nostalgic and hedonic moments and culminated with tasting local food.

On the other hand, this paper also highlights the role of street art as a driver to revitalize a community, to reinforce a commercial area, to support the local entrepreneur, to embellish a public space. In that sense, it states the need to rethink urban areas to economic promotion. These areas guarantee spaces where commerce is supported and taxes are paid for all businesses, avoiding mistrusts derived from the current shopkeeper associations, with a voluntary and corporatist nature. In the *Pinacoteca a Cel Obert*, just shops and businesses belonging to the Associació de Comerciants Eix Sants-Les Corts (Sants-Les Corts Shopkeeper Association) could embellish the shutters of their establishments through *street art*. However, other businesses were rejected. Thus, it is interesting to design urban areas focused on commerce or economic interests to define and promote these unified spaces.