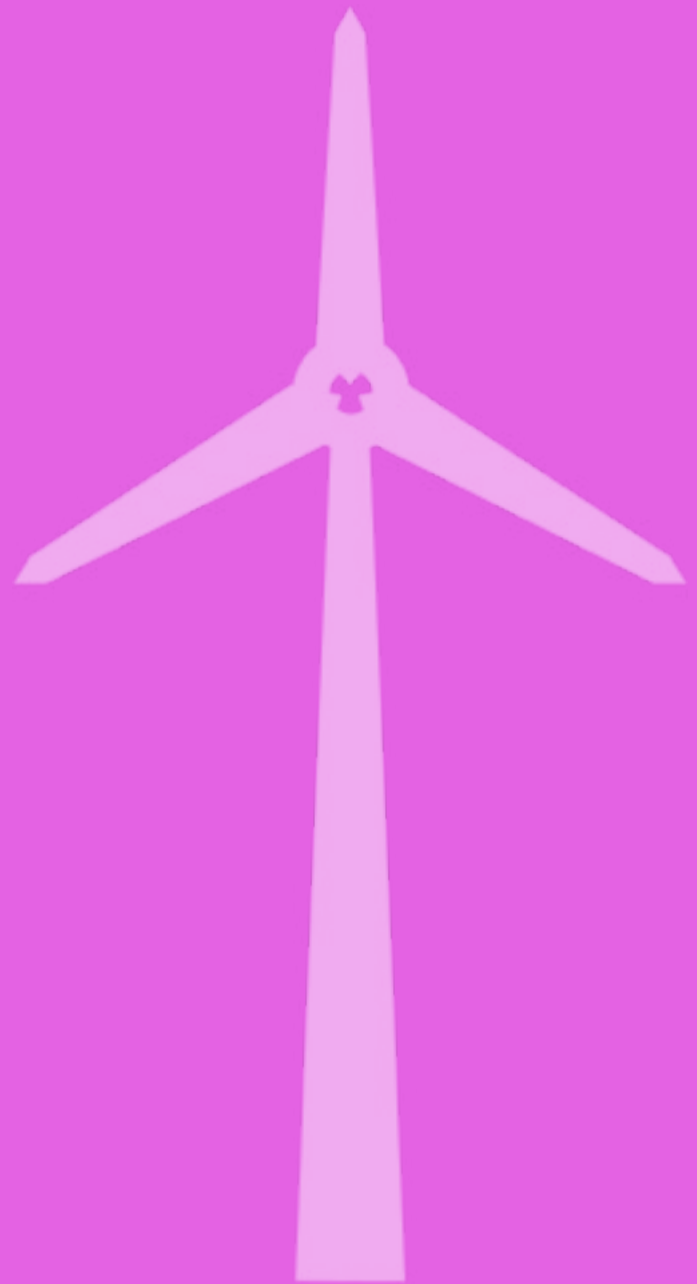


Exploration & Innovation



A report by the
Digital Tourism Think Tank
as part of the

12 Stages of Transformation Series



A report developed by the Digital Tourism Think Tank as part of the 12 Stages of Transformation Series

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ABOUT THE DIGITAL TOURISM THINK TANK



The Digital Tourism Think Tank is the industry platform that promotes digital leadership in the tourism industry. Comprising a tightly-knit network of highly engaged marketers, thinkdigital.travel is a truly connected market place, where thought leaders share experiences and best practices. We've put together a team of experts in diverse and varied fields of the tourism industry and we've been connecting destinations worldwide, from the Faroe Islands to Cape Town.



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INTRODUCTION

With an increasing demand for tourism and an expected annual growth of 4-5% in the number of international tourist arrivals, as forecast by the UNWTO World Tourism Barometer¹, there is no doubt that tourism is one of the major driving forces of the economy nowadays. The tourism sector is fragmented by definition, because it encompasses many different actors and players which form part of the tourism experience. But the role of the DMO is slowly shifting from a marketing-only perspective to a management perspective. This has fostered change in the sector and today many DMOs have already started their transformation journey to become the primary subject of reference for the coordination of the tourism players at the destination.

In fact, in order to be competitive on the market, destinations need to embrace the digital era and adapt to the ever changing needs of visitors, but starting a transformation journey for a DMO is not necessarily easy.

This is why the [Digital Tourism Think Tank](#) has developed a framework to help destinations to shift their role from *DMO* to *DxO*, where the “x” stands for the mathematical symbol.



The focus of this type of organisation nowadays is not marketing-only anymore, it can be experience, data, management, innovation, product, partnerships, storytelling, etc.

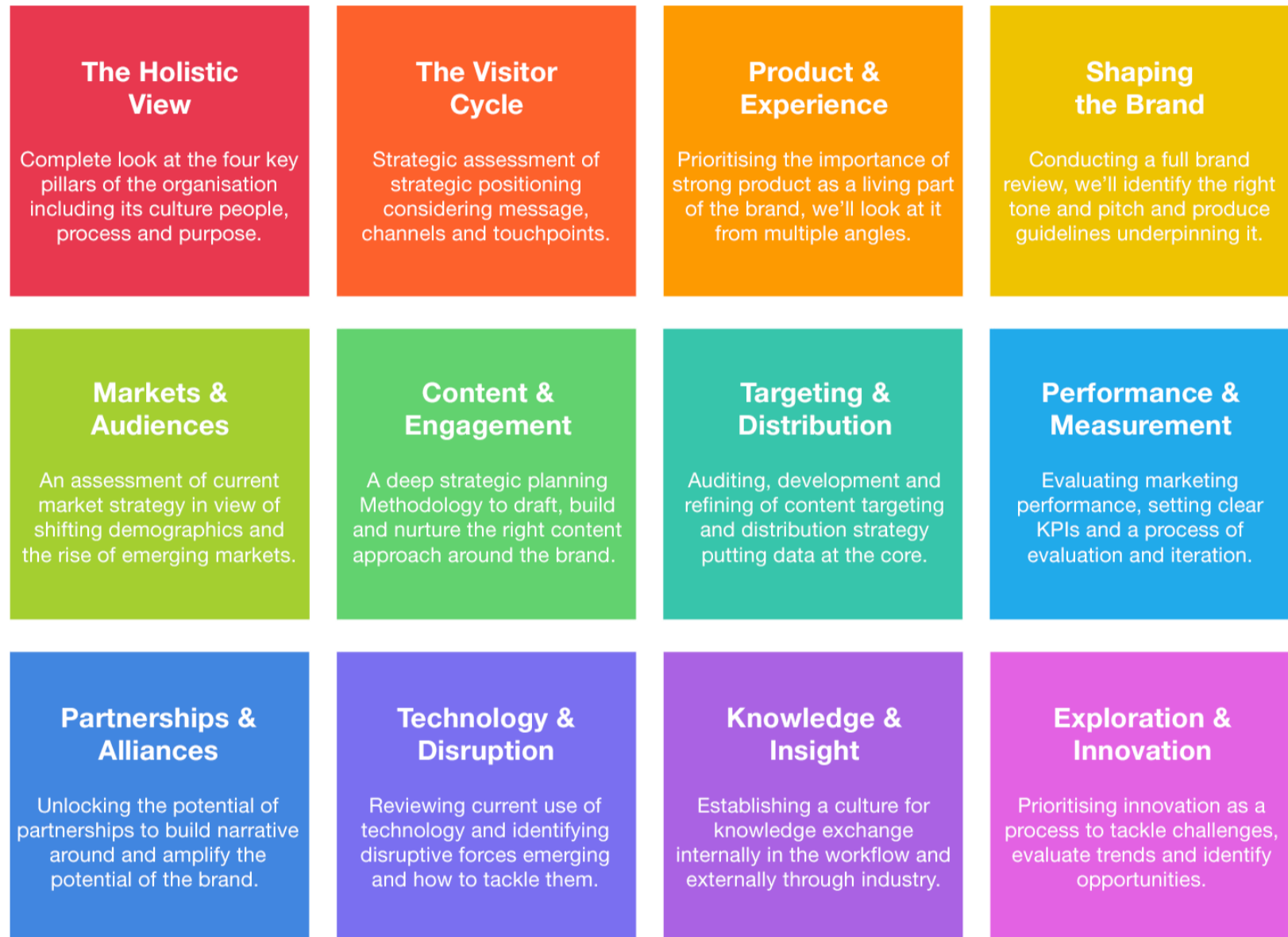
Transformation is not an exact science. We work with a thoroughly thought-through methodology and adapt it to the unique needs of each destination fostering collaboration, transparency and productivity within the team. The transformation journey in this sense is;



¹ <http://media.unwto.org/press-release/2018-01-15/2017-international-tourism-results-highest-seven-years>

The **12 Stages of Transformation Series** is a comprehensive pack of resources created by the #DTTT Team which follows the Transformation Framework, a model built around 12 key topics that form the basis for the Destination Transformation.

12 Stages of Transformation



Each month we are launching a chapter of the series according to each stage of the model, including:

- Relevant Case Studies and Best Practices.
- Relevant Talks from the #DTTT events.
- A package of Templates with relative explanatory video on how to use them.
- An online learning course to understand and embrace the digital transformation with your team.
- An Asana project plan to integrate into your workspace.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Chapter of the Transformation Series focuses on Exploration & Innovation. It will present how crucial it is to prioritise innovation as a process to tackle challenges, evaluate trends and identify opportunities. The first section is dedicated to giving exploration and innovation the right space within your organisation.

It is key to keep an eye out in the market and detect what changes and shifts are happening, and where the industry is fast-progressing. Considering to innovate, it is important to remember that the biggest opportunities can impact any aspect of the DMO, internally, the products and experiences and the way of engaging with visitors. Nonetheless, four factors can help measure innovation: economic, social, cultural and symbolic capital.

The best way to become innovative is to change the mindset of people within the organisation, and the most successful way of doing so is by applying Design Thinking methods. These will be presented in this chapter, where fundamentals, principles and activities, as well as heaps of useful resources, will be explained.

Moreover, the link between the DMO and the industry represents a crucial factor in moving towards an innovation strategy. For this reason, some examples of the most interesting and successful collaboration and ideas in the travel industry are presented.

A final focus will be given to how destinations are tackling the most interesting challenges and how great innovative ideas are taking place. The chapter concludes with a series of recommendations on how to be a tiny bit more innovative every day starting from now.

As usual, the chapter includes a series of further resources, such as Templates, Case Studies, Talks and an Asana Template that DTTT Members can access in the Launchpad.



EXPLORATION & INNOVATION

It is worth starting this report on Exploration & Innovation stating the main questions that most organisations ask themselves on a daily basis. What role does innovation play for today's destinations and what does it mean to be truly innovative? Is it still possible in such a busy world and a world where consumers are becoming more and more demanding to become pioneers of new ideas and launch projects that will overturn the whole industry?

These are also the questions that shaped one of the sessions of DTTT Global 2019 in Helsinki. Together with [Tourism Ireland](#), [Switzerland Tourism](#) and [Visit Wales](#), a definition of innovation has been given, as well as some best practices on how to be seen as truly innovative across the whole industry.

In this report, it will be possible to explore how different organisations are thriving thanks to an innovation-driven strategy and how they are shaping the future of the destination they operate in. Moreover, some of the best methods and communities where it is possible to learn and acquire Design Thinking skills will be presented, as a reference of the good resources, whom everyone can access to change the way they operate.

A focus on Exploration & Innovation in your DMO

Being innovative means finding harmony in the noise of marketing and business management trends that everyone hears about daily. The first suggestion is to consider innovation as an overall approach you can apply to every part of your organisation and not as something separate from the rest of your ordinary operations. It is important to visualise innovation as the shift that will enhance the way you promote your destinations, create experiences and reach out to people, and the impact all this makes across the industry.

However, this does not happen overnight. It is a long process that starts with exploration, goes through ideation and development processes before it is possible to measure the success of innovative initiatives. This is the reason why exploration shouldn't be just a phase of a long process that brings your organisation to adopting some sort of innovative technology, but must be an on-going process that is carried out routinely, both within the organisation and involving external expertise.

Moreover, it is impossible to exclude the last tech trends when discussing how to invest on innovation. Technology for the sake of technology does not make sense and must not be considered as the ultimate solution for your organisation. Developing experiences through AR and VR sounds interesting and revolutionary, but may not be the best solution if does not fit in your destination offering and branding.

Only through regular exploration of what the industry has to offer and how this can have an impact on your organisation, it is possible to quickly detect the right potential opportunities and work on how to develop them to innovate.

How innovation takes place

A new innovative idea may be conceived exploring something that is happening inside or outside the DMO: the first phase is carried out during the ordinary functioning of your operations, following your normal 'business model'. It is developed through an initial research phase and by questioning and investigating different situations and existing methods for fresh perspectives and new strategic thinking.

Once this first explorative phase has been carried out, it is necessary to empathise and analyse the current situation. Data and insights can confirm what the initial strategic thinking is, opening the ideation towards a new vision and goal for your DMO. It may be necessary to collect different inputs and points of view, both internally and externally.

When talking about vision, it is essential to think outside the box, dream big. At this stage, it is important to aim high, in order to see positive change at the end of the journey.

Once the ideal scenario has been decided, it is possible to start implementing an actual innovation trial. The goal in this is to make a change, enhance the current situation, having a positive impact in the way the DMO operates.

Insights and inputs that have been collected in the first phases are transformed into actionable solutions, articulated through powerful creative ideas. These can include involving innovative brands, partnerships or co-creating products or services.

The moment the effectiveness of these innovative actions has been verified, it is possible to integrate them into the usual organisational model. In order to maximise this potential, it will be necessary to carry out evaluations and analysis regularly, measuring progress and performance.

Where to focus your attention if trying to be innovative

Innovation can take place in many forms; nevertheless, there are three main areas that may require innovative rethinking.



Organisational Innovation

Pioneering innovative methods, like applying design thinking or launching a co-creation projects involving different players of the local industry.



Product & Experience Development

Identifying new opportunities that can enhance the way visitors, as well as locals, can experience your destination, creating new lifetime memories, offering more support and ways to interact with the audience, challenging the status-quo.



Visitor Experience Innovation

Enhancing the points of contact with videos, gamification, engaging UX on the website and breathtaking content on Instagram and other platforms, to reach out to people while they are in the destination or maybe just dreaming about it. Refine the role and purpose of the DMO in the destination.

How to measure innovation

Before and after undertaking a process that gravitates around innovation, it is important to measure the success of the organisation. This is done by measuring the value of the positive effect or 'capital' in all its forms.



Economic

The wealth that is generated



Social

The level of connections and networking with the stakeholders or third parties of interest



Cultural

Is the DMO playing a revolutionary role in the travel industry or relevant sector?



Symbolic

Is this meaningful and does it have an impact on the destination?

These are four different parameters that can help broadly evaluate if the DMO is moving in the right directions or if the decisions made are not having the desired impact. It is important to think about this 'wealth' as a whole: it is impossible to be really innovative if the final objective is to increase the amount of over-night stays or redesigning the website; the aim is bigger and broader and greater factors need to be taken into consideration.



HUMAN-CENTRED DESIGN THINKING

At the DTTT, as well as in many other innovative startups and companies, Design Thinking is the key to unseal opportunities and never stop exploring new ways of growing. Design Thinking is a mindset that helps organisations develop new ideas and stimulate discussion amongst people. There is nothing controversial about it - it is simply a different way of generating new ideas and asking opinions, that involves everyone's different skills and talents, with a focus on the final user.

Although it may sound confusing, this section of Chapter 12 of the Transformation Series will be completely dedicated to enlightening you about human-centred design, its fundamentals, the user-focused activities and much more.

It is important not to be put off this by the seemingly open nature of applying Design Thinking, as any organisation, of any nature and with any kind of team, can embrace this process to change the mindset and outlook of the whole organisation, even if it does not seem worth being prioritised.

Relevance of Human-centred Design Thinking

Generally speaking, we are used to doing things following a defined structure and a specific system, with norms, guidelines, morale and responsibilities. This is clear just by thinking about the easiest example, the driving system: everyone is aligned following the same norms, respecting the same rules, and driving along prebuilt routes that will bring to where is needed. As soon as the structure, in all its features, fail to work, the whole system collapses.

But what is at the core of every system? Why is the structure built in a certain way? The purpose of the driving system is to bring drivers, bikers and pedestrians from A to B, in the most efficient way possible, as well as safely. This demonstrated that when building any structure or setting up any system the most important focus is to make it work is the user.

In a DMO, where the main focus is clearly the destination and its offering, it is sometimes easy to forget about who the users are, or internally, setting up new work procedures, it may happen that these do not consider talents and roles in the best way. It is time to move the attention from the system to the person in the system, no matter who they are.

In other words, it is not important how fast new ideas and project come into place; what is really relevant, is how useful people will find it. Everybody has the potential to innovate and find effective solutions to their everyday challenges: this means that every member of a team can take part in envisioning what innovative initiative may take place in a DMO or in the destination. Yet, how design thinking will take form still needs to be further explained.

The principles of Design Thinking

Design Thinking is based on the scientific method of **Observing, Reflecting, Making**. These phases are part of an established approach that is proven to be effective.



Observing is the first phase and should be carried out constantly. This is done by looking at the data and insights you have available to get a perception of what the current situation is like. In order to get a more detailed and complete overview of the status quo, it is possible to organise ad-hoc research, such as surveys, focus groups or other forms of research that will provide with further data to support the observatory phase. It is essential to observe people and their behaviour to find something meaningful; this is also called empathising.

For instance, it emerged that fewer and fewer people are visiting the visitor centre. Some data previously collected show that there has been a decrease in the number of visitors that turn to the visitor centre to plan their stay once they are already in the destination. Many factors can play a role in this: did they already plan? Do they use the website? Do they use third parties' resources? Do they still need a visitor centre? In order to answer all these questions, it may be useful to observe people around the visitor centre, investigate why they are there, as well as interviewing visitors on their opinion about the visitor centre.

Reflecting is the following phase: it is about giving sense to the knowledge gathered in the first phase. The main aim of this is to completely understand the insights and see how different aspects are related. It is the phase in which it is possible to try to give answers to the questions of the first phase. It is also about starting to discuss new ideas on how to implement the situation and solve the challenge that emerged during the previous steps.



The last phase of the method is about '**Making**': at this point, it is possible to think about how to implement a possible solution, trying and experimenting what is the best way. Going back to the previous example, this can be the time to start thinking about how to attract more people to the visitor centre, which is also useful to gather their contacts and engage with them. A first, a very short-term solution could be providing visitors discounts or exclusive bargains when going to the visitor centre; on the other hand, a long-term solution could be the development of an AR itinerary around the city that starts in the visitor centre and goes to throughout the main attractions of the destination.



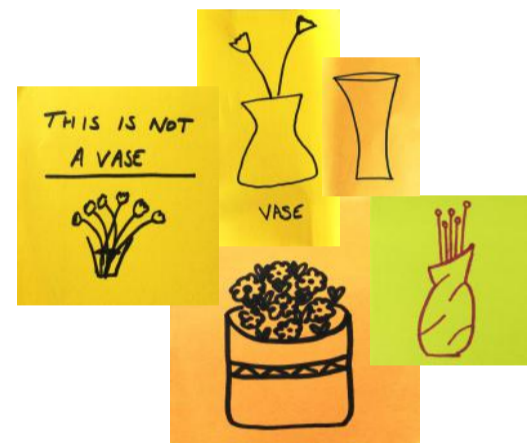
The Fundamentals of Design Thinking

The first thing that needs to be kept in mind is that design thinking has got nothing to do with mere design, and for this reason, it is not just for designers. Design thinking focuses on the experience of people and

aims to improve it: it is an effective method to search for smart solutions to everyday problems. Applying design thinking, even the things that have been the same for a long time, and look like they cannot be changed, can be reviewed and enhanced.

The only thing someone needs to be aware of before starting a design thinking journey is what an experience is. As long as it is clear how to reflect on experiences, it is possible to understand the needs of people. For example, when in the DMO's office the staff are having lunch, they are not just feeding themselves, but they are spending time together, taking a break from the usual workload, sharing their opinion about new projects and maybe also secretly complaining about what does not work. This is the experience of lunch simplified. If the goal is to make the lunch break a pleasant experience for your team, it is essential to understand the team's needs.

The first exercise suggested to make people feel at ease with design thinking is very simple and also a lot of fun. What it wants to prove is that everyone can think about experiences, who is involved in it and what are their needs. The exercise requires everyone to draw a vase. This will demonstrate that a vase is just a vase, a simple object that contains flowers, for example.



However, if everyone has to draw *how they would like to experience flowers at home or in the office*, the results will be completely different. This demonstrates that there are as many ways of experiencing the same thing as people that think about it because everyone brings in personal aspects and needs that will differ from those of somebody else.

As long as they can think about an experience, they can think like a designer: it is time to take up the role of Change Maker in the DMO. Design thinking is a mindset that helps improve the current experience of the people that are served, aka users. Three key aspects need to be kept in mind when design thinking: once again, the Focus on Users, the Restless Reinvention and the Diverse and Empowered Team.

A focus on what's good for your user

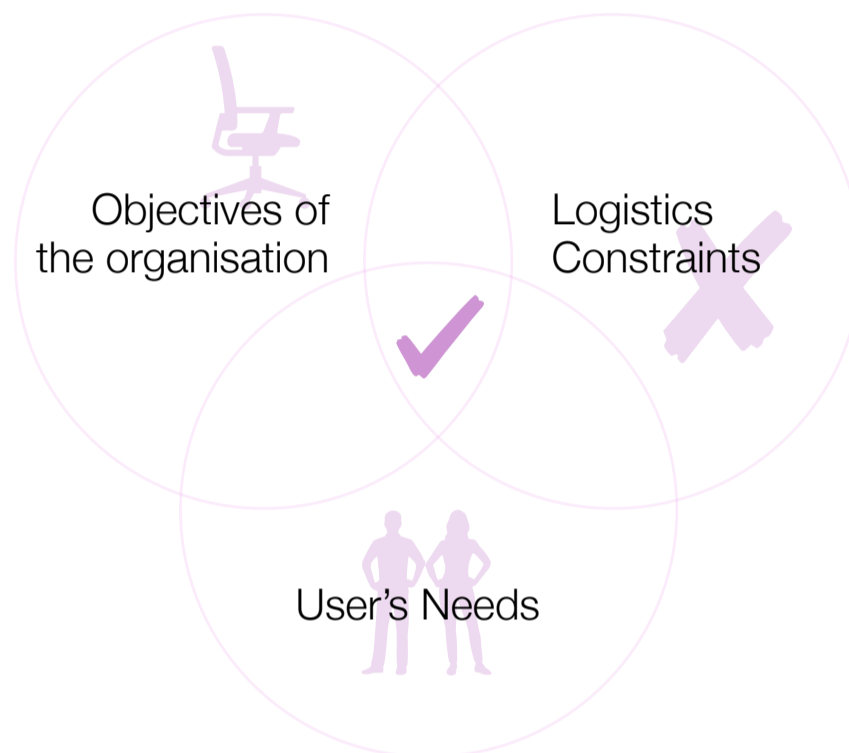


The first thing that should necessarily be considered is the focus on users. Problems that the destination, or better, the organisation, may have, are considered 'non-human'. However, these problems are primarily related to people.

To find a solution to the challenge being worked on, it is essential to focus on the Users that are affected by this problem. For example, Uber has recently installed machines at the airport to request riders without the need of the app. This is because many people did not have access to the network, or were not able to use the app for any reason.

Hence, it is necessary to assess who the users are and what they do in that situation, as well as collecting an overview of what they do outside that situation. It is also important to evaluate the current experience of this users and how it can be improved.

"A problem well-stated is a problem half-solved" (Charles F. Kettering); in other words, whenever stating a problem or a challenge that is meant to be discussed in a meeting, for example, use the following structure from the user's point of view: *Our users struggle to achieve some tasks today because they have this limitation.*



Of course, assumptions aren't allowed: to be as accurate as possible, it is essential to address any assumption by observing, learning and understanding design research to genuinely empathise with the users - as previously explained.

Restless reinvention



Restless reinvention refers to an active process of on-going experimentation, testing and learning, to implement the solution of a problem through iteration. The prototyping phase is essential to verify the effectiveness of ideas, before launching the final version; every little step is important to change the status quo.

It is sometimes hard to come out with ideas that are truly innovative and go beyond ordinary thinking. To boost brainstorming, it is essential to rely on absurdity. The brainstorming process is one of the most engaging and involved parts of design thinking, where everyone is called to give ideas and discuss them. The secret of a successful brainstorming session is to prioritise quantity over quality in the ideation process to come up with as many ideas as possible. A sound recommendation is to write down the idea before saying it out loud: in this way, no one will comment it or criticise it, interrupting the flow of ideas.

Eventually, amongst absurd and ordinary ideas, something truly innovative will catch the attention and will be used for the realisation of a prototype. It is important not to be afraid of taking risks. Risks mitigate failure: failure is something that does not work simply because it did not excel or was particularly interesting. Taking more risks allows getting to the next improvement more quickly and cheaply, and for this reason, must be considered as an opportunity.

Diverse and Empowered Team



If people are important in the challenge that is being solved through design thinking, then the people that take part in the process are equally important. This is when the term 'Diverse Empowered Team' comes to place. One of the advantages of using design thinking is the chance to gather multiple and diverse perspectives.

No one is considered less or more important than someone else in design thinking. It is essential to break the silos - go beyond the hierarchy of roles and power-gaps existing in the organisation. The origin of innovation lies in the mind of a group of people with varied perspectives that successfully make decisions together and work toward shared goals.




This principle applies easily to the everyday work routine: when in a meeting where the conversation spins in circles, it could be useful to ask every participant to grab something to write with, visualise thoughts and then take turns sharing. Innovative ideas are, indeed, discussed and built together. Or another example could be to hold a silent and anonymous voting session to expose everyone's viewpoint, in case the people in the meeting are not succeeding in discussing and sharing.

Another perfect method to make the most of the role of an empowered and diverse team is to build meetings and discussion around storytelling - as it helps the visitor to learn something about your destination, internally storytelling can be useful to build an environment of knowledge-sharing and open discussion.

Tactics for maintaining alignment according to IBM's Enterprise Design Thinking

The Keys

Tactics for maintaining alignment

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| <p>Hills</p> <p>Hills are concise statements of the goals we aim to help our users accomplish. By making these goals explicit and evaluating them regularly, we align teams around a single shared mission.</p> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;">  </div> | <p>Playbacks</p> <p>Playbacks are regular check-ins that bring users, stakeholders and teams together to tell stories and exchange feedback. They allow us to measure progress on a regular basis while uncovering and addressing any misalignment that may exist.</p> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;">  </div> | <p>Sponsor Users</p> <p>Sponsor users are real-world users that provide teams with deep expertise and knowledge on the problems they're facing. They are crucial to keeping us aligned with our users' reality throughout the course of a project.</p> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;">  </div> |
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Useful resources to apply Design Thinking in your destination

The team at Digital Tourism Think Tank use many resources that provide guidelines and useful material on how to apply design thinking. *This article is useful for more references and inspiration, you can read the DTTT insights article [on how to use design thinking to solve any destination problem](#).*

IBM Enterprise Design Thinking

IBM Design

The team have followed and have been certified by IBM's Enterprise Design Thinking. The course comprises different levels from Practitioner to Co-creator. IBM also provided a diversity of tools to innovate and improve the expertise of the organisations in many different fields, always using design:

- [IBM Design Language](#)
- [Enterprise Design Thinking](#)
- [IBM Design Research](#)
- [IBM Design for AI](#)

Ideo

IDEO

Another example is [Ideo](#), a global design company that tries to solve a variety of challenges in different industries through design. The most interesting thing is that, at Ideo, experts, designers, facilitators, communities work together aligned for the same goal. It is a good source of inspiration to work on how to grow and compete creatively and in an innovative way. It also provides different tools and platforms where material is available for download and templates can be used to design workshops.

Luma Institute

LUMA INSTITUTESM

[LUMA](#) enables people to innovate by transforming the way they work. The LUMA System of Innovation offers a unique framework of Human-Centred Design that equips people to be more innovative in their daily work. It's the most practical, flexible and scalable system in the world.

Mural



[MURAL](#) is a digital workspace for visual collaboration: it is the most straightforward tool to create templates and spaces to develop new innovative ideas through design thinking and brainstorming. MURAL enables innovative teams to think and collaborate visually to solve important problems. People benefit from MURAL's speed and ease of use in creating diagrams, which are popular in design thinking and agile methodologies, as well as tools to facilitate more impactful meetings and workshops. This one is part of daily work at the DTTT.

Stanford d.school



[Stanford d.school](#) build on methods from across the field of design to create learning experiences that help people unlock their creative potential and apply it to the world. Adding the d.school's tools and methods to a person's skill set often results in a striking transformation. Newfound creative confidence changes how people think about themselves and their ability to have impact in the world.

Changing the mindset with Challenge Camp and Academy

As stated before, being truly innovative, implementing agile working within the organisation, using design thinking to solve the biggest challenges, requires a lot of time, but most of all, it implies a real change in the mindset of people. It is necessary to create the perfect environment, to boost productivity, ideation and innovation.

As shown in the previews paragraphs, there are many ways of boosting innovation and exploring where new tech opportunities lie. To provide an example of how a DMO can concretely engage in a design thinking process or partner in an innovative programme, this paragraph will introduce the role of challenge camps and academy.

Acknowledging that there are many incubators and accelerators, start-ups and big corporations that create the right environment and provide the industry with on-going researching and experimenting, it seems more likely for an organisation like a DMO to play an active role or even lead this incredible trend. The DMO knows the industry and has an interest in broadening the technology spectrum through innovation.

At the DTTT, industry programmes and events are always encouraged: the DMO can take the lead in organising an event that gathers start-ups, industry experts, students etc. to take part in a competition to solve a challenge or develop new ideas.

The DTTT Academy

In September 2019, Digital Tourism Think has launched the first edition of a one-of-a-kind event that took place in Canterbury, the [DTTT Academy](#). This is a 2-day Bootcamp designed to inspire and empower teams with a host of practical skills and expertise to work better in the DMO. The two days are packed with hands-on workshops where there is the opportunity to express the creativity, ideate with a team, develop design-thinking skills and apply the knowledge to challenge sessions, roundtable discussion and real case studies.

As passionate digital experts and design-thinking champions, the DTTT's Academy is all about equipping DMOs with the skills and knowledge to support the activities of a destination. Collaboration and innovation are at the heart of everything that is related to design-thinking and agile working development, which are invaluable skills that need to be adopted within any DMO. With today's increasingly competitive market and ever-changing consumer needs, the Academy is all about integrating Design-Thinking and Agile working to



drive change, transform your productivity and output. The most important aspect of this kind of events is 'learning by doing', enhanced by interactive group sessions.

The Launchpad includes useful resources to run workshops and design thinking session:

- [#DTTT Design Pack](#)
- [Overtourism Challenge Pack](#)

INDUSTRY INNOVATION AND COLLABORATION

Industry Development Programmes

An Industry Development Programme is a programme designed to help DMOs deliver a structured plan to support the digitalisation, growth and competitiveness of their tourism industry. The programme is built according to the destination's needs and can be run in a series of stages. The aim is to provide targeted action on specific needs, addressing challenges faced by SMEs of the destination on an everyday basis.

DMOs have the power to lead and transform their industry. Every DMO has also a responsibility to their industry, to help them develop and keep the destination competitive. As a DMO, it is good to align businesses that operate in the travel industry to align under your brand, recognising and becoming ambassadors of the core pillars of the brand, to help translate into strong brand-rich visitor experiences and expand the brand's social footprint through a coherent content plan.

If the DMO plays, or aims to play the extremely relevant role of leader and manager of the industry, it is extremely important that the challenges of small businesses are understood and addressed. Every tourism industry, even in some of the most successful destinations, is made up of a myriad of small and micro-enterprises, all working to succeed in their individual business ideas. With an acute understanding of the needs and challenges of micro-enterprises - often 'one man band' outfits - the DMO helps them with highly tactical steps they can take, as well as shifting mindset to embrace the wider strategic opportunities.

The first step to really get to know your industry is to assess the businesses and see how they rank according to certain parameters that the DMO can adopt from third parties or create from scratch. The aim is to audit businesses across a range of different factors, looking at all aspects of their business. This will allow a deep exploration of the industry's strengths and weaknesses, disclosing where opportunities to innovate lie.

Spending 2-3 hours with an expert, in person or in a virtual room helps businesses get access to direct support on specific decisions within their business activities. Expert advice and business coaching provide concrete recommendations to business about how they perform and on how to fulfil the expectations of the DMO. Complimenting assessments and coaching with a broader capacity-building programme helps you to provide vision and strategic guidance, followed-up with hands-on operational guidance.

The ownership of a programme led for the whole industry is essential to work on experiential travel - one of the biggest trends impacting the industry right now and a shift that DMOs cannot afford to ignore. Assessing, exploring, leading the industry through and towards innovative ideas will benefit the market and guarantee the sustainable development of the whole destination.

Collaboration with Innovative Businesses

As reiterated many times before, start-ups are key to develop the destination and innovate. Providing them with a space to innovate, like Paris and London are doing - presented below - is great to support the whole industry. Moreover, a regular look at some of the emerging areas where innovation is having an impact on travel, tourism and hospitality is essential.

There are various areas where it is possible to see a big change; just to mention some, innovation is creating a more seamless customer journey, as well as making it 'wow!', unique and outside of traditional expectations. Further attention is drawn on micro social networks and communities, reaching out to niche markets through a well-defined brand offer. Of course, sustainability plays a crucial role and many innovative businesses are committed to making destinations more sustainable. And finally, it goes without saying that innovation has a lot to do with technology, tools and platforms that benefit from the introduction of AI or blockchain. These are also changing the very essence of social media today with incredible new features, such as gamification.

Developing a Platform for Innovation in Tourism with Espoo Marketing

The Finnish city of Espoo is an ecosystem of collaboration and innovation, boasting a wealth of successful talent from large international corporates such as Nokia and Rovio (best known for the Angry Birds franchise), to growing start-ups with bright futures ahead. It is the largest innovation community in the Nordic countries and one of the six winners of the European Capital of Innovation Award 2019 (iCapital), alongside many other titles. For this reason, the city continues to attract budding entrepreneurs, pioneers and the like to its exciting hub of innovation and growth. To put this into context, at least one startup is formed every week!

For Espoo, it is all about growing for the greater good. Co-creating and collaborating with universities, companies and residents is the key element of Espoo's approach. Jaana Tuomi, CEO at Espoo Marketing, talked about the timeline of Espoo's [Innovation Ecosystem](#) and how the city actively nurtures sustainable growth together.

The destination is one of the most sustainable areas in Europe and, thanks to the close collaboration with the industry, a pioneer of sustainable development. Visit Espoo aims to develop the destination into a financially, ecologically, culturally and socially sustainable place, with the help of the most innovative businesses in the industry, who are committed and willing to grow sustainably too; of course Experiences and innovations are the frontier themes when marketing Espoo.

Innovation contributes to the achievement of the bold goal of becoming carbon neutral by 2030, and in order to so it is essential to have a strict relationship with the industry, boosting the collaboration with the most responsible companies. This reflects a lot the broader vision of Finland as a country where sustainability is at the heart of every activity and to stick to the Sustainable Travel Finland (STF) programme.

In the destination, it is possible to take part in sustainable events, and take advantage of sustainable services around the year. The city's beautiful nature is an invitation to enjoy activities on land and at sea. Espoo is an innovative actor within sustainable development, and Visit Espoo, together with its partners, wants to be an integral part of this making the right choices and operating with the right methods. Espoo was the first city to join the Finnish Society's Commitment to Sustainable Development. Its objective is to make Finland a wellbeing place that guarantees nature's carrying capacity and is globally responsible.

In conclusion, Visit Espoo managed to bring open innovation spirit to the travel sector in order to develop a range of different services; it was a long journey full of challenges. Two separate worlds, such as tourism and innovation, have been merged and now coexist, allowing Espoo to be recognised as one of the most innovative centres of excellence of Europe.

Singapore Tourism's Accelerator

The Singapore Tourism Accelerator (STA) is a 6-month program offered to the world's most promising technology startups that can power the travel and tourism industry. The STA is organised by the Singapore Tourism Board (STB) and its appointed corporate innovation partner, Found8. 12 selected companies gain exceptional access to work with some of Asia's and the world's most important industry players. They undergo a two-month intensive accelerator program identifying a potential pilot project and scope, followed by 4 months of pilot implementation with selected industry partners for the top 10 companies.

The accelerator entails an all-out program to learn critical market entry skills, pilot design and implementation skills, building a company and culture that scales and fundraising strategies via workshops, 1:1 mentoring, peer learning, expert feedback, intimate lunches with founders and investors, and industry events. The 6 months will end with a Demo Day with industry partners and investors. During pilot implementation, the top 10 companies will receive funding support, showing the great interest of Singapore in playing a role in boosting innovation.

The programme is designed for promising startups and pre-scaleups that can drive growth in the travel and tourism industry of Singapore. The main goals are attracting quality tourists to Singapore, create a seamless and personalised visitor experience, maximise the profit by boosting efficiency, increase revenue for tourism businesses as well as visitors' spend; and finally, gather more in-depth and relevant insights from the market.

To go more in-depth with the kind of technologies and innovative features the companies have to work on, here are some examples: Data Analytics, Natural Linguistic Programming, such as multi-language translation or chatbots, Cognitive Technologies, like Biometric Recognition or wayfinding, MarketingTech and CRM, Hospitality automation, multi-platform UI/UX, VR/AR applications, etc.

The programme includes different stages: the first two months will focus on developing product-market fit, either for a new solution, or for an innovative solution with existing market validation to be tailored and

scaled within Singapore. The top 10 teams selected to advance to Phase Two of the program will work closely with corporate partners to design, launch, and measure the success of solutions in a pilot with industry leaders, such as Singapore Airlines, Urban Redevelopment Authority, Regent and many more.

Centres of exploration and innovation

The Camp

The first example is [thecamp](https://thecamp.fr/en). Located in Aix-en-Provence, in the south of France, this is the place where it is possible to give life to projects that will transform businesses and the world we live in. Around 20 partners are funding this initiative, including big corporations (Accenture, Airbus, Accor, AirFrance KLM), as well as start-ups and smaller organisations of experimenters and disrupters.

Sustainable Development is at the heart of this location, and it is respected throughout the architecture, the team's attitude and the products and programs that are launched, so that the future that everyone will be able to benefit of what is being co-created.

The people that work and are based at *thecamp* is part of a new generation of creatives like designers, digital, artists, programmers, entrepreneurs, students, researchers and experts. Their vision and mission are clear: they want to combine talents from all over the world, inspire and develop solutions to the challenges the society is facing.

The experiments that are being currently conducted are related to sustainable energy, mobility using blockchain technology, autonomous vehicles etc. This place is such an inspiring centre of exploration and innovation that it attracts brilliant ideas and initiatives.



Credit: The Camp <https://thecamp.fr/en>

Just a couple of examples of some of the projects launched or in progress: Audio Crumbs is a collective audio experience. It is an innovative way of stimulating interaction and communication between individuals, whether they know each other or not. Using a mobile application and headphones, participants are guided by the narrator, who tells them where to go and what they have to do. Focusing on a specific theme, each session can be experienced in a specific space or anywhere in the world, bringing together people who log in simultaneously.

Each person has a different role to play and different instructions to follow, thus making for an experience that is individualised yet collective. In a world where people are glued to their smartphone screens and more and more isolated in their various digital worlds, Audio Crumbs is an offbeat solution designed to raise awareness of the importance of face-to-face exchanges and physical interaction. Audio Crumbs addresses the UN's Sustainable Cities and Communities Sustainable Development Goal.

The Demoiselle project explores solutions for mobility in zones that are not served by traditional transport. This project specifically aims to develop a public transport solution between the Aix-en-Provence TGV station and the Aix La Duranne business park (where thecamp is located), taking the form of an autonomous, clean-energy shuttle, with three main goals: reimagine the passenger experience to improve the attractiveness of public transportation; reduce the environmental impact of trips, by using clean energy, limiting the use of personal cars and using existing infrastructure; bring partners together to co-build a solution. At the end of the 3-year experiment, the goal is to integrate this solution into the metropolitan network, and to replicate it in other local areas, and in other regions or countries.

Guam's Tourism Accelerator Conference

In the U.S. territory of Guam, the Guam Visitor Bureau is working on an interesting and ambitious project: becoming the next Sun Valley of Travel Technology. To do so, they have launched a conference that smaller gathers tour operators and well as big brands like AirBnB, Booking and United Airlines.

In the summer of 2019, they hosted the first digital tourism summit, the #InstaGuam Travel Talks, which focuses on building connections between local travel operators and global brands. The final goal is the acceleration of the Guam's tourism economy and the creation of new business opportunities for the inspiring young entrepreneurs of the island. Influencer marketing and social media strategies were the main topics of the presentations, that allow the audience to learn about strategy from people highly-engaged in the market.

This event is the first step of a longer innovation-booster journey. The outcome of this effort is the creation of a Hub for Tourism Innovation, considering the key importance of the industry for the destination, providing 21,000 jobs on the island. The result of this, other than boosting conversation and interest around the destination, has allowed a series of concrete developments and investments. Both AirBnb and Booking have increased the number of offers in the destination on their platforms. The Visitor Bureau is collaborating

with United Airlines and Line Travel Japan to launch new routes to the island from Japan - this is the power that the conference had.

Guam is working hard keeping an eye to the future of the destination. . Innovative startups have contributed to making this summit memorable: for example, Zero Zero Robotics has presented the prototype of their drones, that will hopefully one day substitute the selfie stick. A 5G Open Lab is allowing to create a hot test bed for other innovative initiatives and applications, making innovative ideas become reality at a really fast pace. Every DMO has the potential to commit to innovation on a daily basis for the growth of the destination.

Paris Welcome City Lab

Paris&Co is the innovation and economic development office of the Paris metropolitan area. It supports innovation by incubating more than 500 French and foreign startups each year, conducting experimentation for innovative solutions, and organising national and international tech events. Its development is based on an open innovation approach, in close collaboration with more than 120 major corporations and institutions.

The most interesting project they worked on with the City of Paris, BPI France, Paris Convention and Visitor Bureau and the General Directorate of Enterprise, is the Welcome City Lab. Paris is certainly considered one of the world's leading tourist destinations; hence, their commitment to design the future of tourism and be the capital of tourism innovation is understandable.

[Welcome City Lab](#) is a programme to spur innovation in the tourism sector and it includes the world's first incubator that is exclusively dedicated to this industry. Its founding members are Aéroports de Paris, Air France, Galeries Lafayette, RATP, Skyboard, Sodexo Prestige, Viparis, Paris Inn Group, Caisse des dépôts, and Pierre&Vacances - Centerparcs group.

The innovation platform offers start-ups and players in the tourism industry a full range of services: an incubator, a place to meet, for discussions and co-working, a test platform and a monitoring unit.

London and Partners' TravelTech Lab

London and Partners have built a partnership with [The Trampery](#) and have opened The Travel Tech Lab in 2014 to create a global hub for innovation in travel, tourism and hospitality. This was London's first incubator space focusing exclusively on the travel and technology industry. No other destination in the world has developed such a close collaboration with its local technology sector and startup community to develop digital platforms that will shift how we will all travel in the future.

They focused a lot of attention on the shift of consumer's behaviour and have invited investors and start-ups to meet up and work together to learn how to be innovative and keep up with the fast changes in the market. Thanks to the collaboration with The Trampery they managed to create a community that fosters

innovation, collaboration, and creativity and brings together technology startups with big corporates within the travel industry.

It is worth mentioning that, although The Trampery is still active as a business, the TravelTech Lab by London & Partners does not exist anymore. This is a case that is still worth mentioning as it was one of the first. It is also crucial to remember this kind of projects can take place in a limited period to specifically boost the tech companies at a certain time of their development. However, this is not a straightforward initiative and requires full commitment from the DMO and partners, as well as leadership and awareness.

Wakalua Tourism Innovation Hub

[Wakalua](#) is a tourism innovation hub that aims to design collaborative and innovative solutions for tomorrow's traveler. It boosts innovation, disruption and sustainability through unique public or private partnerships across 150 countries. The approach is completely based on collaboration in order to create an efficient ecosystem of multiple startups across the globe. From this hub, multiple programmes originate worldwide, with the aim of creating a better future for the travel industry of the destination.

The main objectives are:

- Boosting the tourism innovation ecosystem globally
- Boosting partner countries national innovation ecosystem
- Accelerating digital transformation
- Creating strategic partnerships, connecting startups with the global venture capital network
- Mobilisation of the entrepreneurial tourism ecosystem for infinite networking opportunities at a local level (Madrid)

DESTINATION INNOVATION

It is impossible to present the topic of innovation without discussing the critical role that technology plays in it. Many technological trends are currently influencing the way we work, how we move around and how we exchange money. It does not matter if these technologies are not strictly related to the tourism industry; it is important not to forget that anything can be explored and a lot of innovations can be adopted in the destination. Technologies enable the future solution to the challenges that destinations are facing nowadays. These challenges can be related to sustainability, transportation, energy production etc.

In this section, we look at some examples of destinations that have applied technology for innovative ideas. These examples are unique and serve to demonstrate how many different ideas can take place in a destination with innovative design thinking.

Technology to enable a positive impact in the future

Over the next few paragraphs, some examples on how to be innovative with technology have been presented. However, technology and disruption have been further discussed in Chapter 10 of the Transformation Series.

Blockchain: Shifting the Behaviour in the destination

Using blockchain it is possible to make tourism revenue positive by creating a visitor spending ecosystem which is tilted towards small businesses through local coins or loyalty-based rewards. Distributed networks built on blockchain can help increase security and protection of hoteliers from having rates reduced and their bottom line shredded away.

Blockchain can be used to create networks of certified businesses, whether by approval of a common distribution technology or influencing consumer decisions to choose businesses using a set coin or initiative.

Off the shelf solutions are available, making blockchain something that's relatively easy to get started with. Early ideas focus on currency and loyalty and offer great opportunities to empower smaller businesses and create a 'fair trade' or 'tourism for good' visitor economy.

As claimed many many times, the role of the DMO is not limited to engaging with visitors, but in order to keep a balance with the local community, it is important to engage with residents. **Colu** is a platform that helps cities engage with residents by rewarding them for taking actions that promote their strategic goals, using a unique City Coin to promote local spending.



Credit: colu.com

Dynamic destinations are those that control their key institutions to help achieve strategic goals. The DMO can facilitate seamless collaboration among stakeholders around common goals in many innovative ways, and one is cryptocurrency. Amongst the destinations that are using this platform, there's Liverpool, which has created the **Liverpool Pound**, a city currency that is accepted by the main stores of the city centre and is used especially by millennials, and Bristol, of course, with its **Bristol Pound**, which is the UK's largest local currency.

Finally, Colu allows others to create their own cryptocurrency, specifically designed for their destination. It allows four key outcomes for your destination:

Awareness



Engagement



Take Urban Actions



Keep it local



Smart Tourism

A great example of an innovative way of thinking of innovating and becoming a smart destination is [5G-Enabled Smart Tourism](#) in the West of England. Working with telecoms partners, the West of England has been considered 'early adopter' of this new advancement and a testbed or beacon for other destinations and attractions. The project has £8million of funding and is about multiple partners coming together to put this region on the map.

Smart tourism explored:

Experiences

- Airbus A330 landing gear recreated in a VR environment
- AR tech to see the Roman Baths through history

Audiences

- Network slicing enabling better emergency response to unexpected incidents during busy events at Bristol Harbourside

Brand

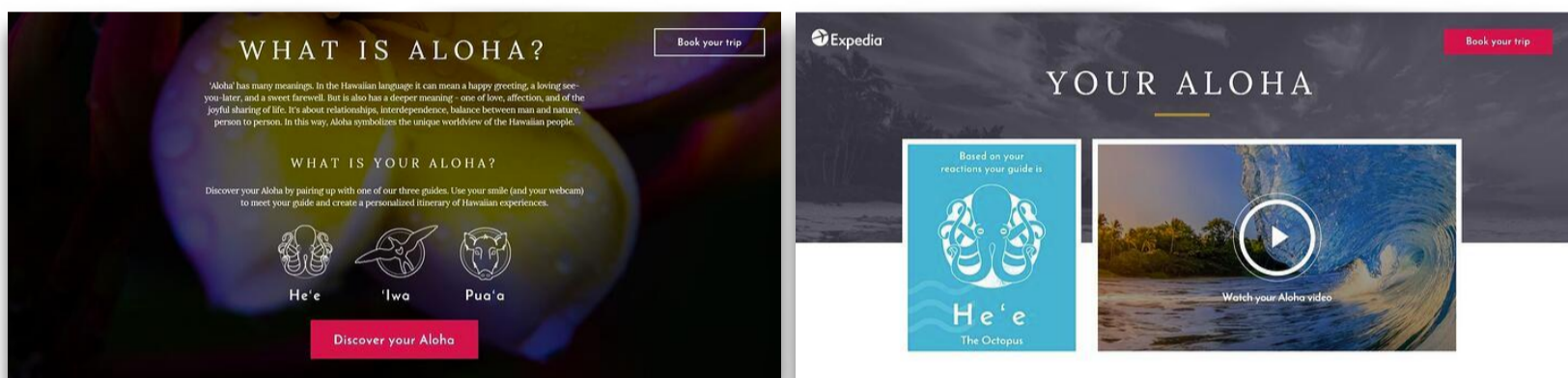
- Streaming of interactive VR content filmed at major Bristol tourist events (Bristol Pride, Harbour Festival) to multiple users wearing VR headgear

Conversion

Augmented reality app allowed visitors to see additional information about exhibits in the museum

Facial Recognition

A further example of an innovative campaign that uses an exceptional type of technology is the Hawaii Tourism Authority's initiative "Discover your Aloha". This a campaign integrating facial recognition technology, that will allow to recognise the moment in which the viewer smiled watching an amazing video about the destination. As the video plays, then custom-built facial recognition software analyses the physical reactions to the content and identifies which footage evokes the most positive reaction from the viewer. The algorithm identifies the personal preferences of each viewer and pairs them with their 'Aloha' represented by animal guide of significance to Hawaiian culture, including Iwa (Bird) the all-knowing guide, He'e (Octopus) the loving spirit and Pua'a (Pig) the bold adventurer.



At the end of the viewing, the audience will then have the chance to book a personalised Hawai'i holiday with discounts of up to 50%. The campaign ran in the U.S., Canada, Japan, Australia and New Zealand on Expedia, Hotels.com, Orbitz, Travelocity and Wotif sites throughout the year.

Diverse innovative approaches

As said before, it is possible to look at innovation in tourism on different levels, and from diverse perspectives. Innovation can be applied to products and experiences, for example, Airbnb opening their doors to authentic and local experiences, as well as premium and exclusive experiences. Another example of this is [Visit Faroe Island and their voluntourism initiative](#).

On another level, innovation can be applied to the marketing strategy. For instance, the campaign "Go Back to Africa", a campaign design to fight racism, diversifying travel advertising and encouraging black Americans to visit Africa and the beauty of what it has to offer. The brand's visibility has increased 315% since the campaign started, including social media impressions and traffic to both the brand's site and [GoBackToAfrica.com](#), which has in turn translated into new bookings. The success of this is bringing this innovative idea to the next level, with the launch of personalised ancestry trips to Africa based on DNA tests. This shows how innovation is hidden in a provocative idea.

Tourism Australia is a great example of DMO that should be monitored constantly, considering the incredible campaigns and marketing ideas they come up with. For example, the way they use Instagram stories,

After each adventure, the audience decides what to do next.



presenting different destinations, experiences and people according to the choice of the audience, who can vote what they want to see via poll. Many other campaigns, videos and content they produce are highly evocative and storytelling is always driven by a new innovative way of telling something about the destination.

On a brand level, Eindhoven is a great example of how to co-create and brand together with industry and local, with the DMO taking the lead of this diverse and empowered group of designers, creatives, artists etc.

Not long ago, Alaska Airlines came up with a truly unique idea, offering discounts on flights to Hawaii based on the size of the ocean waves. The airline collaborated with the forecasting site, Surflin.com, to determine the value of the discount, which could have been up to 30% off: the bigger the waves, the higher the discount. This is an innovative way of promoting a product addressing a young public such as Millennials and Gen Z because this is one of the unique initiatives that manage to reach out to and engage with the always online generations.

The innovative opportunity lies in the use of data: Alaska Airlines has turned data on wave fluctuations into a campaign that engages surfers and encourages them to keep checking back in to see how waves (and discounts) have risen or fallen.

TIPS FOR DMOS

So far, this Chapter has provided some theory and heaps of examples to get some inspiration before starting the journey towards innovation. But how can a DMO concretely undertake an innovation process? What are the goals and expectations?

The first recommendation is that the organisation always stays up to date with exploration. This means that every DMO should dedicate some time in exploring new trends and technologies, collecting insights on what is happening in the market. This will allow an on-going flow of inspiration entering the organisation and boosting the creativity of teams.

What simple steps can you take to make your work more creative?

Here are some DTTT recommendations on how to boost exploration and become more innovative in the DMO.

How do we encourage regular knowledge exchanges?

- If there are people dedicated to research, it would be great to run regular meetings and presentations about the most intriguing insights in the market, or maybe just to present and discuss a case study that seems rather interesting.

How can we involve the team?

- Considering the importance of involving a diverse and empowered team to collect different perspective, an interesting idea is to run sprints and brainstorming sessions within the team. This will allow room for exploration and ideation inside the organisation.

How do we tackle a new challenge?

- In the hypothesis of a challenge the DMO is facing, why not running a design thinking session, to tackle the challenge and ideate together on possible solutions. This is a great way of innovating, piloting and experimenting with various solutions that, in the long run, will allow a more comprehensive implementation.

How do we keep track on innovation?

- If a lot is going on in the DMO and it is hard to keep track of the development: an ideal scenario would include the creation of an 'innovation board', an actual canvas where people can interact and monitor the progress of activities. This board can be either digital or concretely exist in the office, maybe on the wall of a common space. This board can be divided into different vertical sections, one



for ideas, one for short-term actions and one for long term actions. Moreover, it will be possible to write down deadlines, updates and notes about what is progressing and what is not. Having a visual representation of what is happening in the organisation will help keep the awareness of what is going on high, motivating the staff to explore something new or express new ideas.

What if we are stuck in the same ideas?

- Sometimes it is hard to leave space for innovation and let new ideas flow during the ordinary and daily operating of the organisation. In this circumstance, it is probably better to rely on external parties. This will help gather insightful ideas from the market and diverse and impartial opinion on things. At the DTTT, complete design thinking programmes are available to be run in every DMO. These include ad-hoc workshops and templates to carry out a complete design thinking programme as well as exclusive meetings to boost innovation and gather precious insights to give a fresh start to the journey that can boost the development of the DMO.

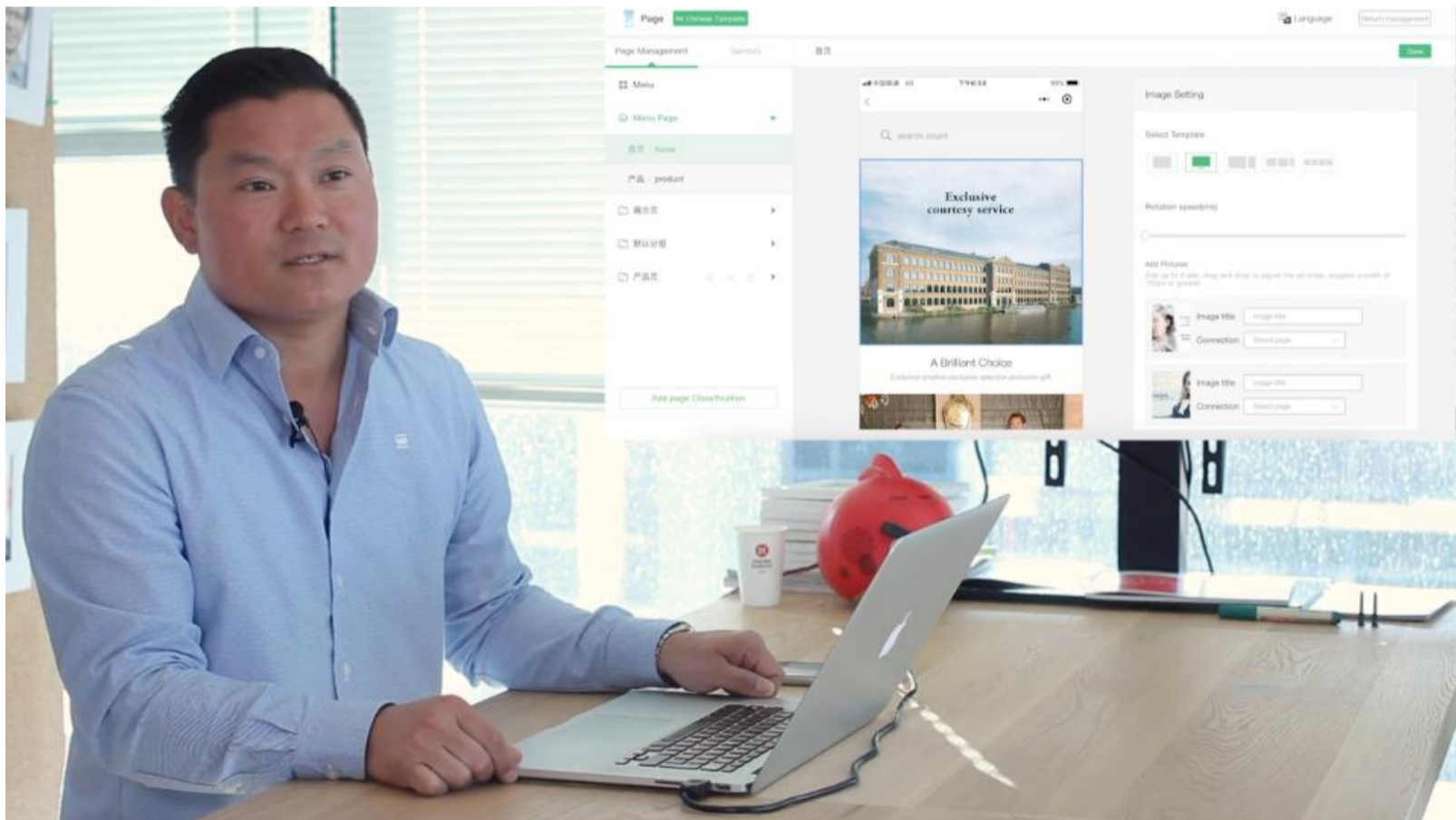


CASE STUDIES AND TALKS

WeGoEU - Connecting Chinese Travellers to Europe through WeChat

[WeGoEU](#) is a joint venture between KPN and The Sunway Group which successfully connects European and Chinese markets when travelling, to facilitate seamless travel for Chinese visitors through the power of technology.

The WeChatGo Europe Mini Program connects the WeChat environment to Europe, enabling Chinese travellers to use their native apps when in Europe, exactly as they would at home. This provides travellers with the opportunity to connect directly with the destination and discover everything it has to offer in one convenient place. For DMOs and other service providers within the tourism industry, this provides a valuable platform on which to directly reach this key audience.



[Watch the Case Study](#)



Visit Valsugana: Experience Finder Tool

With so much to do and so little time, it is always a challenge to find the most suitable attractions, activities and routes within a destination. This is why recommender systems, which filter out and deliver the most relevant pieces of information based on a tourist's profile (age, preferences, time, etc.), have been said to hold huge potential for tourism. A few years ago, the Valsugana Tourist Board announced the launch of an innovative new platform, which delivers personal recommendations for visitors. But it is not just any ordinary recommender system. It was a truly inspirational best practice; read the case study to learn more!



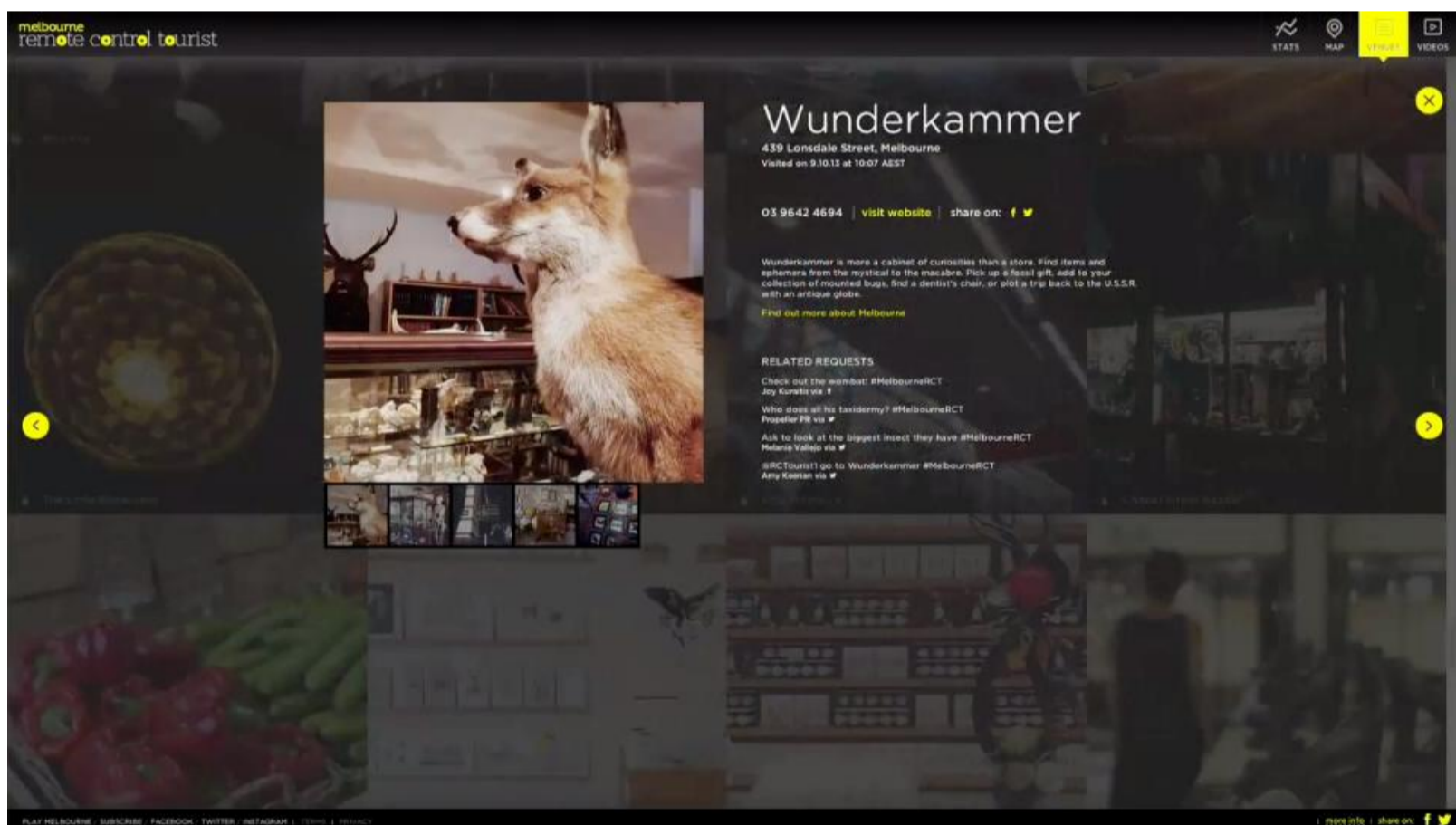
[Watch the Case Study](#)



Tourism Victoria & Real-Time Campaigning

The Remote Control Tourist (RCT) campaign was a first of its kind digital campaign, run by Tourism Victoria to increase tourist arrivals from other Australian states and New Zealand to the city of Melbourne. This campaign, which cost in total \$3.6m and involved over 100 people working on it, provided a unique, fully digital and interactive pre-trip experience for potential visitors.

The campaign comprised of two people, the so called 'remote controlled tourists' (RCTs), who explored the city of Melbourne for 8 hours a day, and for a total of 5 days. Equipped with helmet mounted cameras, GPS tracking devices and live streaming technology; all of their movements, interactions and experiences were broadcasted live on the web. The audience could follow each of their moves and actions, and give them instructions in real-time via a dedicated website and social media channels (Twitter and Facebook). Thus, users could send requests to the remote control tourists, asking them to visit certain locations within the city, undertake specific activities, explore places and interact with locals on their behalf.



[Watch the Case Study](#)



Eindhoven 365 - Technology, Design, Knowledge

Eindhoven365 has high ambitions and a passion for city marketing. They demonstrate that even without significant monuments, a city can still create an exciting tourism product, based on unique and out of the norm tourism experiences. Staying in line with communicating the Eindhoven vibe might seem a bit unusual at first but has proven to be a success for them. By organising year-round events, the city continues to engage people worldwide, enticing them to come and visit Eindhoven. We consider this a great recipe for success for Eindhoven and would recommend for other cities struggling to set themselves apart from their competitors to learn from the city of Eindhoven, clearly being the ones to watch in this field. The city's streamlined brand approach and strategy emphasise the uniqueness of the city where even the citizens agree that it is sometimes 'easier to find a designer than a bakery'.



[Watch the Case Study](#)



Space Nation: Tourism of the Future

Is space the next big destination? Sounds absurd but it may be reality. Looking at [Space Nation's website](#), it's hard not to be impressed and wowed by the brand – from the clean and tidy design, functional navigation and informative content, you're already feeling inspired to strap on a jetpack and go boldly where no one has gone before. Space Nation has set out to make galactic space travel an attainable and accessible experience for everyone. According to their website, Space Nation's vision is global and they believe in a world without borders and prejudice

This case study breathes innovation, teaches how to build something amazing and concrete from an idea, thinking outside the box and without limiting imagination.



[Watch the Case Study](#)



Tourism Ireland on using Machine Learning & AI in Digital

Recent developments in AI and Machine Learning show us where technology is heading at both consumer and enterprise level. For our visitors, ML is now possible with the latest smartphone chips able to process vast amounts of data in real-time, yet further transforming technology-enabled experiences.

At an enterprise level, the same technology is changing the very processes which have defined our 'traditional' approach to digital as brands. This is the case both at a productivity level, shifting how we work day-to-day but also when we look at what's possible and our role as destinations.

Master Data Elements

Audience

Source

Engagement

Asset

Time

Cost

Region

Permissions

Tourism Ireland's Marketing Data

#dtttglobal

[Watch the Talk](#)



Switzerland Tourism Transforming the DMO Website through Data & AI

Switzerland Tourism recently launched its [brand new website](#) and it's a really fantastic example of a destination website that has been thoughtfully crafted around market behaviour and the user journey to create something different and completely immersive. If you haven't seen it already, take a look. Markus Dittli, Head of Digital Platform & Project Management, headed up this project and joined us to discuss the learnings and challenges of the process.

The presentation focused on 3 parts, focusing on inspiration to make it truly immersive, listening to guests to build its digital services and personalisation.

The image shows a presentation slide titled "AI / Machine Learning." with the "Schweiz." logo in the top right. The slide displays three wireframe versions of a website interface, each featuring a scenic image of skiers on a snowy mountain slope. The wireframes illustrate different layout and content arrangements. To the right of the wireframes is a small inset video showing a man in a suit, identified as Markus Dittli, presenting on a stage. The slide also includes the hashtag "#dtttglobal" in the bottom left and the "DTTT Global" logo in the bottom right.

[Watch the Talk](#)



Repositioning the Destination Digital First with Visit Wales

In destination marketing, branding is not about logos. It's a holistic, 360-degree approach to crafting, developing and nurturing an authentic identity for the destination. For our final presentation, we were delighted to welcome Jon Munro, Digital Director and Strategist at Visit Wales, to share the story of how the destination has completely rebranded, repositioning the destination digital-first.

The discussion focused on brand, digital, content and key learnings of the process, with the objective to 'build a contemporary, engaging nation brand, that promotes Wales on a UK and International stage, while also inspiring the people of Wales to venture forward with confidence'.



[Watch the Talk](#)



Les Îles de la Madeleine: Applying Design Thinking

Îles de la Madeleine is an archipelago composed of about a dozen islands, six of which are linked by long sand dunes. Located in the middle of the Gulf of Saint-Lawrence, the islands are accessible by ferry (5-hour crossing from Prince-Edward Island), cruise (both domestic and international) and plane from Montreal and Quebec. The islands, or «Les Îles» in French, are a well-known getaway for Quebecers looking for breathtaking scenery, beaches and escape from the hustle and bustle of urban lifestyle.

The DMO is a best practice of how to apply design thinking throughout a co-creating process. The museum networking project is a good example. Following an Open Innovation event, a project was initiated to help island museums define and developing a new offer together. The user-centred approach put the visitors at the heart of the development and innovation process of the museum sector of the Îles de la Madeleine. The project partners combined a series of participative activities. One of the project highlights was the 4-day [cocreation sprint](#). In addition to involving every organisation of the Islands Museum Network, this creative 'blitz' welcomed local ICT professionals, as well as residents and visitors, both invited to take part in the various activities offered.



[Watch the Talk](#)



Designing Signature Experiences to Build Brand and Narrative with Destination Canada

Gloria Loree, Vice President of Global Marketing at Destination Canada, joined us for a truly fantastic talk about how the DMO has evolved from a destination brand to a passion brand, with insights into the brand journey of this transformation, alongside how to successfully keep up with the speed of change and ever-changing traveller.

This Talk is included in this chapter for its relevance about agile working, fear of failure and willingness to keep experimenting.



[Watch the Talk](#)



Accelerating Innovation through Hacks and Challenges

Learn how to create a powerful platform to put innovation at the heart of your destination's activities. Many of us talk about innovation but few really know how to take our ideas out of ideation and into a forum where others can do great things with our brand, partnerships, data and of course the challenges which we're trying to solve. Hackathons and Challenges are not new, however in this session we're going to really drill down to how, why, when and where such platforms can really work. Pooja Surani shares her extensive knowledge and experience of working on many open innovation solutions with brands in and outside of the travel sector and explain where she sees the opportunities for tourism organisations to lead on these.



[Watch the Talk](#)



Unconventional Ideas X Collaboration = Energy

Peter Kentie, Managing Director of Eindhoven365, shares insights on how the city successfully developed one dynamic, open source brand, and how the role of the DMO is an open discussion in Eindhoven. Using the city's strategic advantage of creative and tech talent, and focusing on three key domains of technology, design and knowledge, Eindhoven brought together a team from all different industries within the city to create a truly dynamic identity.



[Watch the Talk](#)



What do innovators want from destinations

The private sector has been championing data & tech for some time, with some really great examples of product and service innovation arising from various initiatives. More recently we've seen the world's major cities also champion open data, particularly in fields such as transportation.

#DTTT Expert Alex Bainbridge shares some thought-provoking ideas on the potential for Data in Tourism. What data can destinations create, commission or locally facilitate that innovators need (today and in the near future)? How can destinations actively work with innovators that change the industry? Digital innovator and entrepreneur, Alex Bainbridge takes us through examples and discuss where destinations can lead where commercial companies cannot.



[Watch the Talk](#)



How Mural is pioneering Remote Design Thinking

Remote Design is one of the most exciting things that the #DTTT Expert Team has got to grips with over the last year and we're delighted to have Head of Sales of MURAL, Aaron Richman, join us for this year's flagship event. If anybody knows about Transformation, Aaron Richman is surely well placed. Here at the #DTTT, we champion MURAL as one of a small selection of excellent cloud-based tools we use to transform the workflow within our team and also when working with DMOs. Remote Design is a concept pioneered thanks to MURAL, taking the amazing benefits of Service Design into a remote digital environment which enables Service Design to happen at scale.

MURAL is central to our workflow and is the tool upon which we've built around forty marketing templates for subscribers of the Launchpad to plug-in and use as part of their own team's work when they're ready to adopt remote design thinking themselves. We can't wait to hear Mariano's fascinating insights about why he build MURAL and what needs drive its continued development.



[Watch the Talk](#)



TEMPLATES

12.1 - Exploration & Innovation Sprint

This template is the best way to run a sprint in your organisation. A sprint is a brainstorming session in which you can gather different people to brainstorm about a topic. In this case, it will be possible to explore new opportunities and see where to apply innovative methods and technologies to enhance the destination and the organisation. The first thing is to evaluate the current level of innovation and see what needs to be changed to enhance the work culture. This will allow to find the 'X' of the DXO and consider how it can become a centre of excellence and knowledge for the whole organisation.

This Template is a great tool to gather different ideas, organise thoughts and opinions and see how the whole team can contribute to the journey to become more innovative. Printing this big worksheet and putting it on a wall in a meeting room will create the right space for a dynamic and effective internal workshop.

The worksheet is titled "Exploration and Innovation - Sprint" and is divided into several sections:

- Current DMO's Innovation level:** A section for reflecting on current innovation levels and identifying areas for improvement.
- Change the mindset:** A section for discussing how to change the organizational culture to become more innovative.
- What is the X in your DXO:** A section for identifying the 'X' (center of excellence) in the DXO model.
- 4 Areas for Exploration & Innovation:** A central Venn diagram with four overlapping circles labeled "Sustainability", "Technology", "Smart Tourism", and "DMO".
- Using new technology:** A section for discussing how new technologies can be used to enhance the destination.
- Table:** A table with columns for "What will change?", "Where can we explore?", and "Opportunities for future success".

[Download the PDF](#)

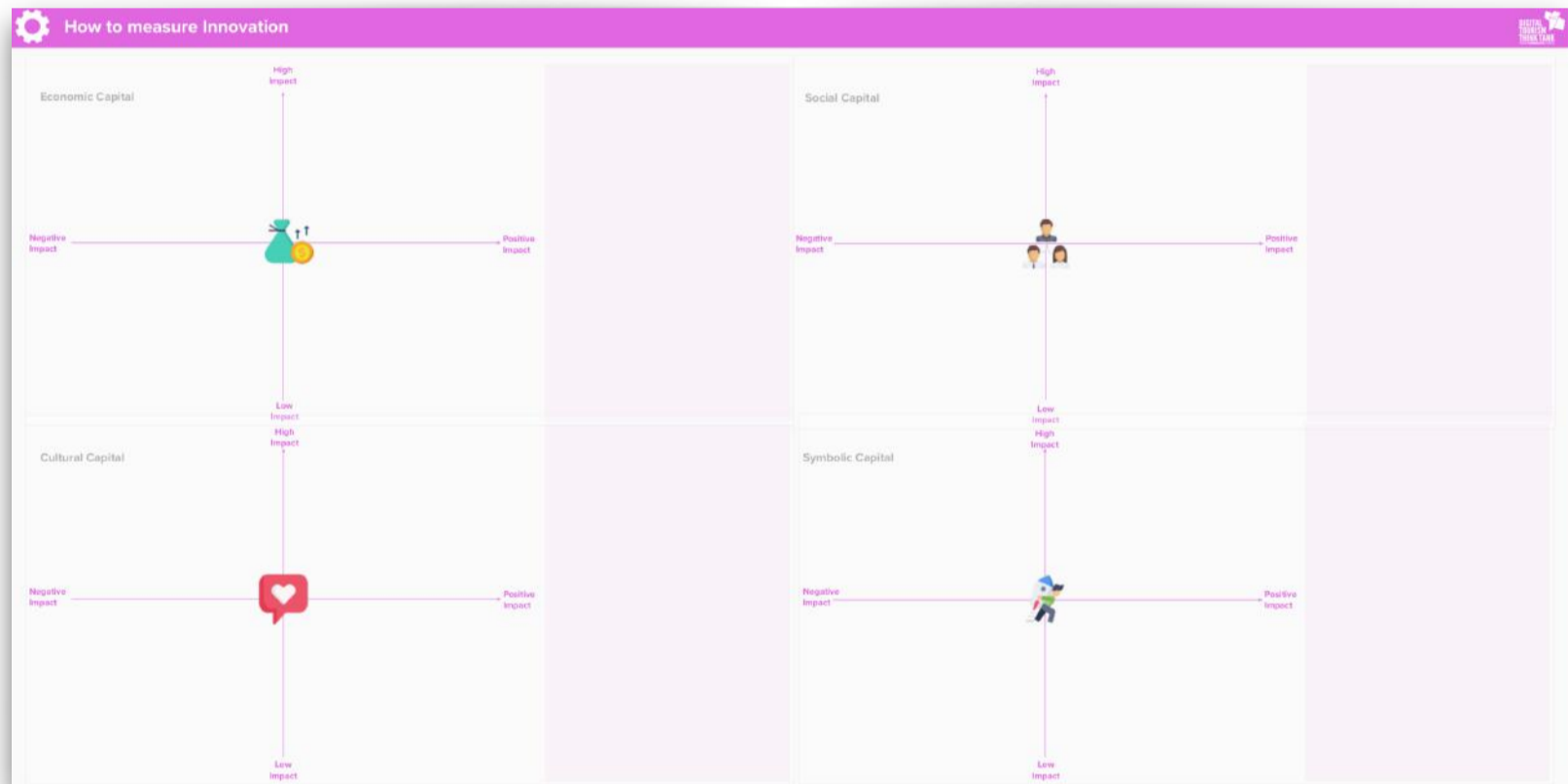
[Mural template](#)



12.2 - How to measure Innovation

As explained in this document, it is crucial to evaluate the performance of the DMO in terms of innovation and in order to do so, it is relevant to take into account four types of capital. This will allow to consider if the technology implemented is having a positive or negative impact and if this impact is high or low. With this template it will be possible to consider different factors that you feel are included in the innovation and put them in the right position in the graphs. Some extra space is left for further considerations.

Furthermore, in this template you will be able to evaluate the wealth that is generated from the implementation of some innovative ideas, measure the level of connections and networking with the stakeholders or third parties of interest, measure the revolutionary role that the DMO is playing in the industry and, finally, decide how meaningful this is for the destination and people.



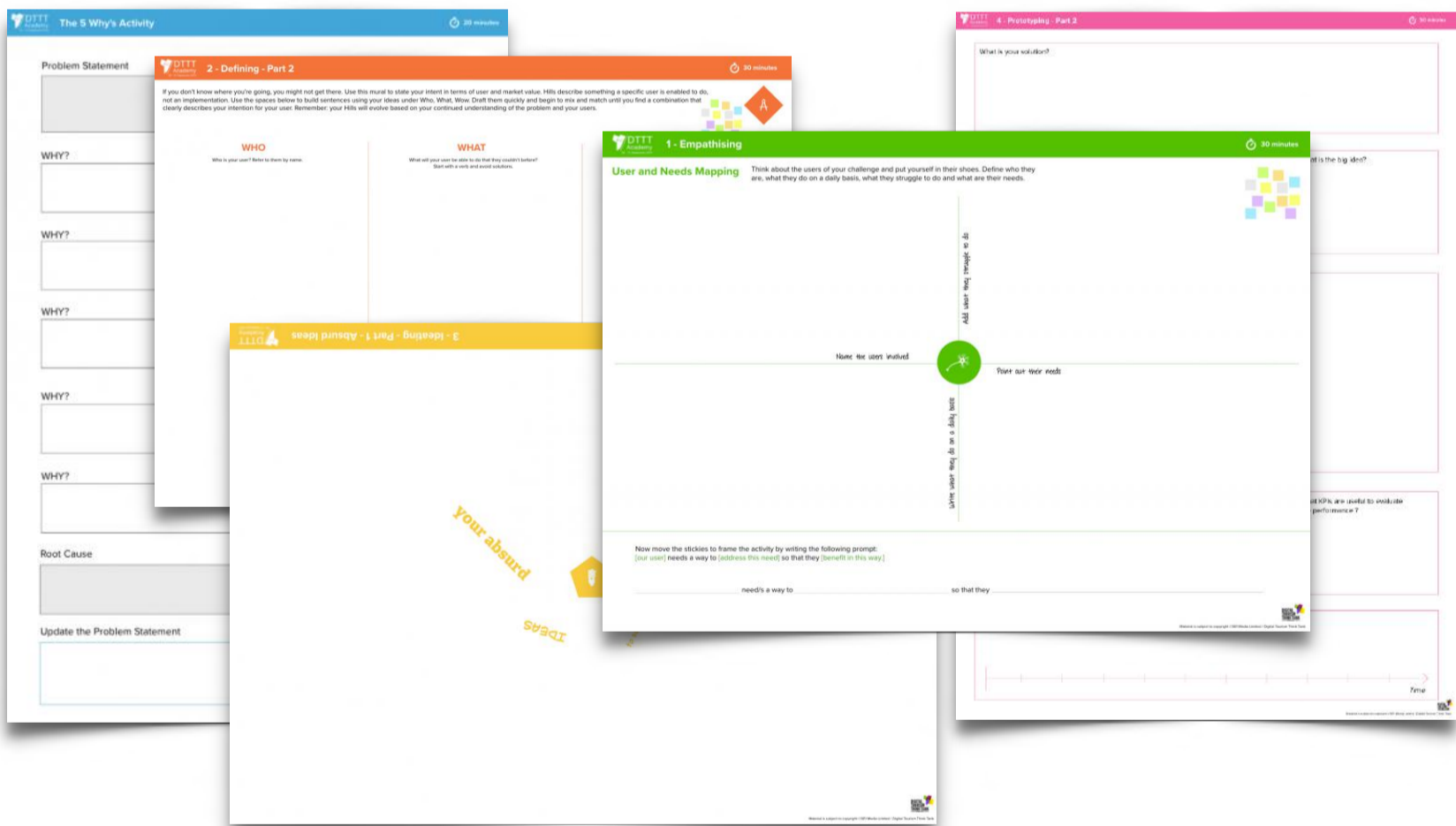
[Download the PDF](#)

[Mural template](#)

DTTT Design Pack

The Launchpad includes a series of templates to work on solving any challenge a DMO or organisation may face. This is all the material used at the first edition of the DTTT Academy, in September 2019 in Canterbury. The event was all about Human-Centred Design Thinking and what here you can have access to the whole process to be followed with your diverse and empowered team in the office.

- 1x The 5 Why's Activity: ask *why* you are facing that challenge; transform your challenge statement into a Problem Statement.
- 1x Empathising: understand and be aware of the feelings, thoughts and experience of another individual user.
- 2x Defining: cluster common actions, thoughts and feelings under the same group. Identify small actions that can be taking to start solving the challenge
- 2x Ideation: come up with ordinary and absurd ideas to solve your challenge.
- 2x Prototyping: decide on a solution, gather the previous thoughts and come up with a pilot idea to test if your solution can work.



[Access the Design Pack](#)

Overtourism Challenge Pack

If one of the biggest challenges your destination is facing is overcrowding, it is a great idea to organise a design thinking session that aims to find a feasible solution to the challenge with this pack.

The templates included in the pack are six:

- 2x Inspiration Canvas, where it is possible to learn how two big cities like Paris and Amsterdam have overcome the challenge of overcrowding in tourism.
- 1x Empathising Template: gather different perspectives and look into the problems to understand the challenge.
- 1x Defining Template: organise problems and define needs.
- 1x Ideating Template: put ideas together and vote those to take forward.
- 1x Prototyping: taking one idea forward and developing initial prototype concepts.

Access the Challenge Pack



ONLINE LEARNING

The resource pack of the 12 Stages of Transformation Series related to this topic includes the access to the module of the 12 Part DMO Transformation Online Course about [Exploration & Innovation](#), that gives you an overview of the topics covered in this report in the form of video lessons with additional extracts from the selected case studies and talks mentioning the topic of exploration and innovation. The online course is meant to guide you in a more interactive way into the topic and assess your knowledge.

Once completed, you'll get a certificate which shows you are equipped to start changing your organisation with the #DTTT's seal of approval.

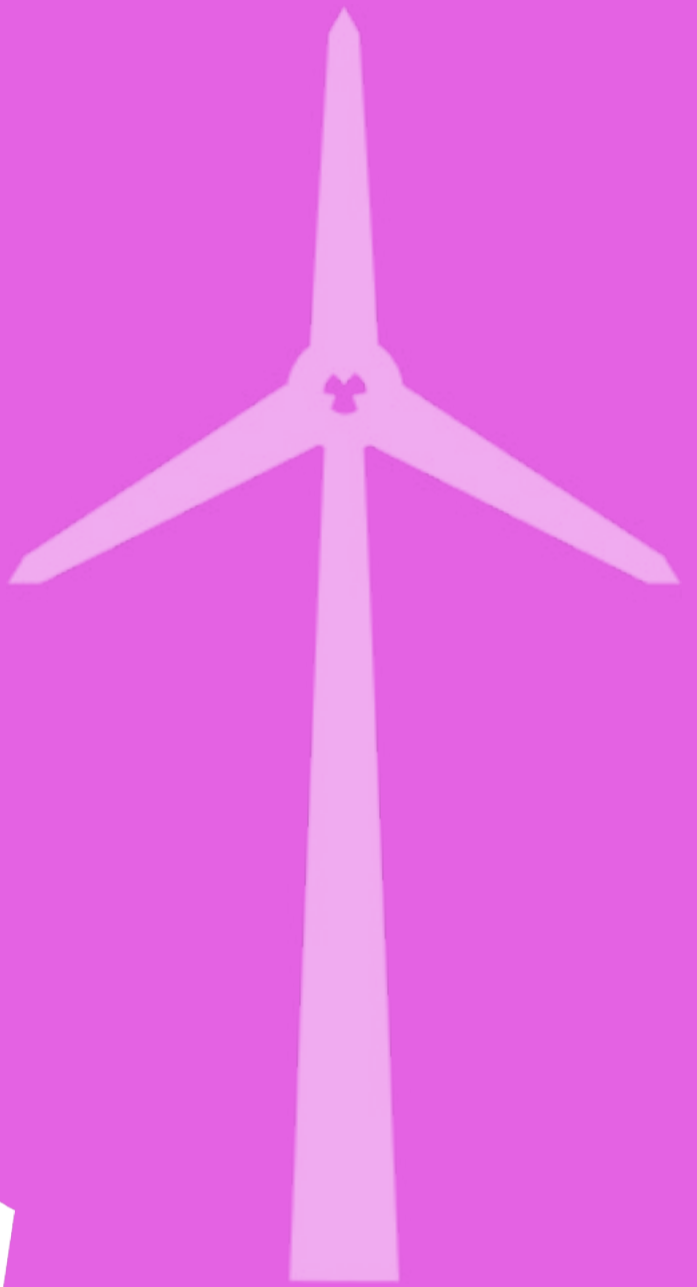
The online learning course is available for Members[+]. If you are a Member[+] you can click on the link below to join the course. If you don't know how to connect to the online learning course, ask the DTTT Buddy of your DMO how to access the course, or contact the #DTTT Team through the chat on the Launchpad or by email at knowledge@thinkdigital.travel.

[Go to the online course!](#)

ASANA PROJECT TEMPLATE

Along with this report, templates and the online course about this topic, we created an Asana Project Template that you can import into your [Asana](#) workspace to start working on your strategies. With this, you'll have a project with multiple tasks to plug-in and play, including the actions you need to take to transform your DMO.

[Go to the Asana Project](#)



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