

Destination **Feel Good**

Case Study: Pine Ridge Bed and Breakfast

How can wellbeing enhance the customer experience?



The Project

The importance of wellbeing is increasingly recognised as a crucial aspect of tourism and an area of strategic growth amongst tourism providers.

However in the local area of Bournemouth and Poole and surrounding environs, although wellbeing is an emerging area of interest from a policy perspective, the tourism potential of a positioning towards wellbeing has not been fully realised, providing an ideal platform to launch new product initiatives aligned to better population health. Through the creation of a network of tourism destination stakeholders, Destination FeelGood aims to establish Bournemouth University as a central knowledge exchange partner and the National Coastal Tourism Academy as a knowledge broker, sharing tourism wellbeing expertise with the local public and private sector, inspiring innovation in healthy lifestyle products and enhancing business performance and ultimately the local tourism economy.

This case study is a useful example of how wellbeing can be used as a marketing strategy and to competitive advantage.

The Background

Destination FeelGood offers the opportunity for connecting different destination stakeholders. Through inter-stakeholder dialogue, tourism businesses will be in a position to increase their marketing effectiveness, and develop new products and services that will provide an enhanced value-added experience for visitors. This project will accelerate tourism business growth via an improved understanding and implementation of wellbeing and it will facilitate the exchange of knowledge between tourism businesses, policy makers (both public health and tourism), and wellbeing academics.

Ideas cafés were run and a network established to share examples of best practice and act as a catalyst to foster innovation in co-creating destination and wellbeing products.

Case Study



This case study is based on a local bed and breakfast operator; Pine Ridge located in Broadstone, Dorset, owned and managed by Jill Webber. Having worked as an accountant and then run a pub Jill decided to return to her birthplace and open a B&B in 2009. The business targets adults, mainly business people, and has four rooms. It is situated in the picturesque area of Poole and is ideally placed in the centre of cycle trail ways and 8 miles from the ferry to Cherbourg in France.

The Action – “Light-bulb moment”

A major outcome of the Ideas cafes was a need for the University and other stakeholders to connect with the local business community in innovative and emerging areas of commercial interest. Attending the meeting, Jill was inspired to use wellbeing as an added value to promote her business. She realised that providing secure cycling storage facilities could be a low cost investment but generate extra business especially as coastal path cycling is a growing trend in Europe.

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Results

The results of the case study are discussed in this section with a focus on how wellbeing can be used to enhance the customer experience.

The location of the bed and breakfast was an important factor in terms of the target market and potential customers.

Jill has noticed that over the past two years more visitors have been coming with bicycles, identifying cycling as a growing interest and therefore these consumers as an attractive mainstream market and reflective of society in general being more health conscious. She therefore decided to install bicycle racks and promote the opportunity to explore the nearby Poole Harbour and cycle trails. The next step is to connect with cycle groups and form alliances with major triathlon events in the area. Another example of Pine Ridge supporting sustainability is installation of an electric charger for cars. It was obtained through a government scheme, therefore no costs for the business arose, and on the contrary benefits to the business, customers and the environment.



Conclusion

This project offers the opportunity for connecting different destination stakeholders, with the specific aim of facilitating innovation in healthy lifestyle products while contributing to a competitive local tourism economy. Through inter-stakeholder dialogue, tourism businesses such as Pine Ridge will be in a position to increase their marketing effectiveness, and develop new products and services that will provide an enhanced value-added experience for visitors. The main impact of this project is seen as the co-creation and fusing of academic and practitioner expertise to innovate within the emerging wellbeing agenda and hence

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maximise commercial potential, while providing a platform for dialogue for tacit and explicit knowledge exchange. The concept of wellness tourism is an area where strategic priority is being given in many European destinations and policy documents from the World Health Organisation adds corroborating evidence of currency. This project will enable SMEs in local economies to use wellbeing to increase their global attraction, encourage more visitors, and strengthen their overall competitiveness through wellbeing led innovation, improving their income and long-term sustainability.

In conclusion, the collaboration between public health and the tourism sector will lead to the promotion of sustainability. Wellbeing as a driving concept will contribute to the development of new products while also enhancing and persevering local natural resources. To strengthen the competitiveness of a destination or a tourism business in a crowded marketplace the concept of wellbeing should be placed in a core branding position rather than viewing it as a niche product or experience. This could be achieved if the tourism sector worked together with public health as complementary actors, for example, co-branding with health care providers, food and beverage suppliers, sporting and activity associations/ societies.

This project offers the opportunity to capture change in market positioning while concurrently developing strong competitive local tourism economies. Through an increased understanding, tourism businesses will be well placed to increase their marketing effectiveness, developing new products and services that will provide an enhanced experience for visitors to the destination. This will help accelerate tourism business growth via an improved understanding of how wellbeing can 'sell' while facilitating the exchange of knowledge between tourism academics and tourism professionals.



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