

Repositioning of Barcelona's Image in the Light of a Redefinition of the Urban Tourism Planning Model

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Abstract: Barcelona's city tourism model over the last fifteen years has chalked up many successes in terms of soaring tourist numbers, overnight stays, cruise liner passengers, hotel beds and visits to priced sights. Growth in city breaks has soared to the point where Barcelona has become one of Europe's most visited cities. But this growth has come at a heavy price: mass tourism, concentration in certain neighbourhoods, competition for space between tourists and residents, lack of adequate inter-modal transport. All of these problems threaten Barcelona's competitive position.

The paper reviews the city's competitiveness, comparing Barcelona to ten other European cities. Starting out from a qualitative analysis of internal players and a Delphi Study with external players, we find the city's tourism model needs correcting. We also identify the vectors and most important factors for achieving this repositioning. The vectors reinforce the competitiveness concerning the model's sustainability, integrated management and governance, and client orientation. The proposed strategic repositioning will allow Barcelona to continue competing with Europe's main cities.

Keywords: Urban tourism planning model, urban repositioning, urban marketing, Barcelona's image, marketing cities, urban competitiveness, city breaks.

Title: Reposicionamiento de la imagen de Barcelona en la luz de una redefinición del modelo turístico de planificación urbana

Resumen: El modelo de desarrollo urbanístico-turístico de Barcelona en los últimos quince años ha obtenido un éxito extraordinario en cuanto a número de visitantes, pernoctaciones, llegadas de pasajeros de cruceros, incremento de camas hoteleras y visitas a monumentos de pago. De este modo, la ciudad se ha convertido en una de las ciudades más visitadas de Europa y de mayor crecimiento del número de turistas. Pero, este crecimiento cuantitativo ha generado masificación turística, concentración en determinados barrios, enfrentamiento por el uso del espacio urbano entre turistas y residentes, además de generar algunas deficiencias infraestructurales como la conectividad y la intermodalidad. Estos problemas amenazan la posición competitiva de Barcelona.

Este artículo revisa la competitividad entre las ciudades, comparando Barcelona con otras diez ciudades europeas. A partir de un análisis cualitativo a los *players* internos y externos y de un Estudio Delphi con *players* externos, se exploran las correcciones que hay que introducir en el modelo y los vectores del reposicionamiento. Esta nueva posición refuerza la competitividad en base a tres objetivos: la sostenibilidad del modelo, la gestión integral de la metrópolis turística y su gobernanza, y la orientación al cliente.

Palabras clave: modelo de planificación de turismo urbano, reposicionamiento urbano, imagen de Barcelona, marketing de las ciudades, competitividad urbana, viajes cortos a ciudades

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1. Introduction, objectives, methodology

Taking the economic success of Barcelona's urban tourism planning model over the last fifteen years as our point of departure, we examine whether it can maintain the city's competitive position among European cities. Should it prove unequal to the challenge, we shall identify the changes needed to tourism planning to maintain competitiveness; consequently, if this were the case, this paper aims to present the attributes of the Barcelona brand image in order to undertake the repositioning that would enable the city to respond to the new competitive environment.

First, we began by benchmarking Barcelona against ten competing European cities: Madrid, Paris, London, Helsinki, Dublin, Milan, Prague, Berlin, Frankfurt and Amsterdam. This analysis identified Barcelona's relative competitive position. Eighty two urban tourism competitiveness benchmarks were chosen for this purpose. Data from official sources for each of the cities was then homogenised, and each cities ranked on a scale from 1 to 5 (worst/best ranks, respectively). Each of the benchmarks was then given weights from 1 to 10 (least relevant/most relevant), following the criteria commonly adopted in urban tourism literature (Trullen and Boix, 2001; Trullen, Lladós and Boix, 2001; Boix and Trullen, 2007; OSE, 2006; Muñoz and Galindo, 2005; Trullen and Boix, 2006).

Second, a questionnaire was sent to 251 internal players who had led Barcelona's urban tourism planning over the last few years. The sample for this qualitative study was split pro-rata according to the following scheme: Catalonia's Architects Association (9,400); APROMA, Environmental Specialists Association (130); Political Scientists and Sociologists Association of Catalonia (1,800); Barcelona Hoteliers Guild (500); Barcelona Geographers Association (300); Environmental Association of Catalonia (750). The aim was to garner views of Barcelona's tourism development model over the last fifteen years and, where this model was considered uncompetitive, to identify corrective action to urban tourism planning to enhance the city's competitive position.

Third, a Delphi Study was conducted with sixty individuals split into three equally-sized groups: experts; managers of tourism firms; city managers. Two thirds were foreigners and one third were Spaniards. The Delphi Study was managed over the Internet, with a double round to identify the vision of the big international players regarding cities' competitiveness: (a) drivers and brakes on urban tourism; (b) the link

between tourism and other urban economic activities; (c) the kinds of city clients and a hierarchy based on the urban tourism model (bearing on co-existence between residents and visitors); (d) vision of tourism planning in the regional context. The last two pieces of field work—(c) and (d)—formed part of the documentation used in drawing up Barcelona's *Pla Estratègic Turisme* [Tourism Strategic Plan] for 2015, commissioned by the City Council in 2010.

2. The Competitiveness of Tourist Cities: The State of The Art

2.1 Competition among Cities

Cities are increasingly subject to the global economy (Sassen, 1998). The internationalisation and computerisation of the economy, globalisation of financial markets, global organisation of production, goods and services, the emergence of knowledge as the key to production, productivity and competitiveness have led to a "new economy of competitiveness" (Porter 2004; Castells, 2000). We understand competitiveness as a process for creating and disseminating skills that depend on micro-economic factors and the region's ability to foster economic activity (Sobrinho, 2002). "It is a question of creating a physical, technological, social, environmental and institutional setting capable of attracting and fostering wealth and job creation" (Bañegil and Sanguino, 2008:86), fostering players that act and compete with other systems rather than merely being passive bystanders (Leva, 2004:36). Regional competitiveness (be it based on a city or a larger unit) and a location's ability to lure investment (Harloe, 1977; Rykwert, 2000) have become the main drivers of 21st century economic growth policies. Competitive cities pose creative dialectical relationships between companies and productive sectors in the territory. SMEs lead competitiveness, whether independent, extended (inter-company network), or industrial (Camisón, Boronat, Villar, 2010); cohabiting with companies of other dimensions. The productive sectors make up clusters from partnerships with public support. And the territory is presented as the competitive arena, combining public sector planning efforts and private production.

One should highlight two of the factors driving city globalism: Internet use and the advent of low-cost airlines (Dunne, Flanagan, Buckley, 2007). Over the last ten years, E-commerce has made it easy to choose transport and lodging options—the building blocks of any trip—qui-

ckly and securely. Low-cost airlines have greatly boosted trips since 1997, when European airspace was deregulated, fostering big price cuts and expansion in the number of European airports. Tourists and cities have been the main beneficiaries of these phenomena. Tourists benefit because they have greater choice and cheaper air travel—making tourism soar. The latter benefit thanks to city breaks, which have become a popular option in the current economic crisis. Since 1990, while the number of ‘sun and beach’ holiday-makers has gradually fallen, city breaks have boomed, growing by over 10% per annum. Europeans increased the average number of trips they made a year from three to five between 2000 and 2010 (Valls, Sureda, 2011). This growth is a result of the rise in the number of city breaks (1-2 nights) and short holidays (3-4 nights). Cities have made themselves more attractive to tourists. Tourism has thus become the main creator of wealth, jobs, residents’ quality of life and thus of economic development (Carlino and Saiz, 2008). The small tourist circuit of major European cities has thus widened to include second-tier cities such as Barcelona, which have become important destinations. Competition is growing, even though London and Paris are still far ahead of the pack.

However, the tourist boom has not only brought benefits but also drawbacks which could make the model fail. These drawbacks include: tourists and residents vying for space; soaring tourist numbers; concentration of tourism in city-centre neighbourhoods, leading to blight, rising living and housing costs, forcing many residents to move to cheaper districts. After years of dizzying success, the tourism model has played itself out and needs re-working. Historic city-centres “act as magnets, with endless attractions, facilities and services that are much thinner on the ground in the outskirts and outlying settlements” (Nova, 2005:24). This is true of other parts of the metropolitan region and beyond, which thirst for tourism’s benefits. The indiscriminate use of urban space has turned cities into ‘commodities’, where growing, diverse hordes make competing, unregulated use of the urban fabric. Cities have allowed vast numbers of tourists into their city-centre neighbourhoods—the so-called ‘central recreational districts’ (Carlino and Saiz, 2008), fostering look-alike streets and shopping centres. In the process, these districts have lost much of their character and urban value. The emergence of segregated tourist neighbourhoods (van den Berger, 2000) as a result of the over-exploitation of

tourism will end up damaging the city’s brand image.

“Cities can create competitive advantage by: building efficient urban layouts, infrastructure and facilities to foster certain activities; setting up suitable training programmes, marketing and support organisations for given activities, and so on. Cities increasingly need to understand events and the broader context. This requires new methods and affects the context in which they operate. Hence the need for new working methods, and urban and regional planning instruments (Vegara and De las Rivas, 2005:271).

Studies covering the competitiveness of cities are relatively recent (Buhalis, 2000; Ritchie and Crouch, 2000). On the one hand, the academic debate on “Regional Competitiveness” (RC) is still wide open (Martin, 2006). It rages between those arguing that competitiveness only applies to companies, thus denying the existence of RC (e.g. Krugman, 1996; Leitner and Sheppard, 1998; Yeung *et al.*, 2007) and those who hold that regions play a key role in competitive advantage (e.g. Porter, 2001; Camagni, 2003). By contrast, the policy debate, especially since 2000, has considered RC as “the new paradigm for urban development” for growth strategies in developed nations (OECD, 2009).

However, there is little research on the competitiveness and sustainability of city tourist destinations and even less from the perspectives of integrated management, governance and clients as success factors (Paskaleva-Shapira, 2007). The integrated model of 21st century tourist city competitiveness embraces: (1) detailed analysis of tourist attractions and their infrastructure; (2) city tourism management (understood as the strategy and implementation of an organisational model covering all aspects of city destination management); (3) ongoing study of conditioning factors (in terms of destination location, centrality, competitors); (4) knowledge of demand factors at any given moment (in terms of destination advantages); (5) the use of performance indicators (Dwyer and Kim, 2003; and Valls *et al.*, 2004). Thus studies bearing on innovation in tourist destinations are gaining great importance in fostering competitiveness (Valls, Ferrer, 2011). The following are the fields we highlight:

- Cultural and heritage elements and everything linked to lifestyle, cultural industries, gastronomy, fashion (*ETC-WTO*, 2005) aimed at creating experiences
- Creating brand value
- The quest for sustainable solutions
- Marketing and sales efficacy and efficiency

- Incorporation of new technology in managing city tourism
- Introducing new business concepts
- Organisational integration and flexibility

2.1.1. City sustainability

Regarding city sustainability, the development of sustainable tourism in an integrated process in which social, economic and environmental factors are interrelated by the agents who manage them (Sancho, 2007). Each city must therefore choose its own path to sustainability (Bariol, 2010), depending on the needs in each urban development life cycle. Sustainability is based on:

- Economic viability. Using population wealth indicators ensures the city economy is most profitable at any given moment and, in the case of tourist cities, that tourism development fosters economic development for society as a whole.
- Socio-cultural viability. Citizens get visible quality of life in terms of training, quality jobs, health, housing, green spaces, culture, infrastructure, facilities and conservation of their cultural identity.
- Environmental viability. Tourism development must be based on exploitation of an area in which regeneration outstrips use. In other words, tourism must put right any environmental damage caused by tourists' land use.

Three key issues need solving in connection with this triple sustainability. The first concerns the model's long-term economic viability. The viability of tourism projects and rehabilitation work has been effectively tackled in those French cities (some 2,500 municipalities) and world ones (among them, Amsterdam, Brussels, New York, and Tokyo) that have levied a tourism tax on overnight hotel stays. The approach has created standing funds earmarked for ongoing development of local tourism. It is true that such taxes are solely borne by hotels (hoteliers complain it makes their accommodation more expensive while leaving other tourism products unscathed). On the other hand, public spending on tourism will not rise over the medium term given the economic crisis. More advanced tourist cities will have to balance contributions in this area. Cities that do not levy a tax on tourist hotel stays are forced to fund tourism from citizens' taxes, who end up paying for the dubious privilege of sharing city facilities with tourists. Whichever way one looks at it, a direct tax on

tourists yields a balanced solution over the short term for most cities.

A second key issue linked to sustainability is the link between 'carrying capacity' and 'ecological footprint'. An area's carrying capacity is the extent to which peak demands can be met without these seriously affecting the area's functioning (Ingurumena, 2003). The ecological footprint is the amount of resources an area requires to meet the demands made upon it by lifestyle and consumption habits (Rees, 1992; Wackernagel, 1994; 1996).

Some pioneering cities, of which Venice is a shining example, have established automatic measures to stop tourism crossing certain thresholds. However, as with the previous issue, knowledge of the carrying capacity of main streets, the most visited sights and neighbourhoods is key to achieving city sustainability, which is the main aim of local Agenda 21 plans.

The third issue regarding the planning of competitive, sustainable tourist cities concerns 'resilience', which means a city's ability to reinvent itself and strike a new balance after alteration by external agents (Alberti *et al.*, 2003). The UN's World Tourism Organization, UNWTO, set up a Tourism Resilience Committee in 2009 specifically to help tourist economies face the crisis and to create and pool knowledge regarding ways of adapting and changing the tourism model.

2.1.2. Integrated Management and Governance

Apropos management and governance, it should be borne in mind that city tourism planning is a system of interconnected functions and processes to yield quality products and services for and sustainable management of the urban community" (Paskaleva-Shapira, 2007). In this connection, most large European cities have set up tourism boards (most of which are publicly-run but there are some public-private partnerships) for promoting their respective brand images. As cities have focused more on this task, they have largely ignored others such as: creating tourist products; actively developing human capital and tourism logistics throughout the city; exploiting technology; co-ordinating tourism. Planning economic and financial resources for long-term city development has been overlooked completely (Valls, 2004). The way powers are split between various municipal bodies has led to poor co-ordination of city tourism planning and implementation of its strategies and poli-

cies. One of the aspects worst affected by this lack of co-ordination is treatment of segregated areas for tourists (van den Berger, 2003).

In Barcelona's case, the tourists hordes in certain areas of the city and the concentration of many of the services catering to them means some residents feel they are being pushed out of their neighbourhoods.

2.1.3. Client orientation

From the client orientation standpoint, cities have carried out little segmentation. There is a dearth of analysis on internal clients (residents) and little money has been spent on identifying strategic and preferred clients. The market thus seems to be based on demand rather than supply. Low differentiation has hindered analysis of the city's clients, both internal and external, and the management required by each group. An approximation of city clients has helped us identify the following groups:

Internal clients

- People who live and work in Barcelona
- People who live in Barcelona and work outside
- People who live outside Barcelona and work in the city
- Recent immigrants and their families

External clients

- Visitors not staying overnight who visit the city for holiday, cultural, business, health, sports, M.I.C.E. (Meetings, Incentives, Conferencing, Exhibitions) or other purposes
- City Break travellers visiting for holiday, cultural, business, health, sports, M.I.C.E. or other reasons
- Travellers making short stays for holiday, cultural, business, health, sports, M.I.C.E. or other reasons
- Travellers making longer stays for holiday, cultural, business, health, sports, M.I.C.E. or other reasons
- Travellers spending lengthy spells in the city, for example degree and master students, learning entrepreneurs, those creating start-up firms, scientists

At the urban level, the contribution of ideas on co-creation appears to be extremely valuable. "The consumer is also co-producer" ... "The consumer is also co-creator of value" (Ba, Lush, 2008:2). This co-creator dimension of the companies, groups, residents and visitors to the city generates value. Interaction and networking become instruments of co-creation, which are further invigorated through the role of tech-

nology. The result of this interaction of all the agents involved is the experience phenomenon; the experiential city.

2.2. Barcelona's case

Barcelona's city tourism model exhibits four success factors, which were worked on during the following stages:

- 1984-1987. Strategic reflection. Drawing up of the Barcelona 2000 Strategic Plan, led by the City Council and to which the private sector made a considerable contribution. The plan involved no fewer than 1,500 institutions, Civil Society and a host of experts. As a result, the plan was soundly based and provided the foundations for the Barcelona model's success.
- 1987-1992. Re-invention of the city. New tourism products were created: culture, gastronomy, sport, sailing, cruise liners, health, leisure. Value was also placed on various tourism assets, among which was the notion of Barcelona as a modern, Mediterranean city and the historical capital of Catalonia. Urban renovation work was carried out and Barcelona was given the infrastructure and services fitting a modern city, including better roads and transport connections.
- 1992. Exploitation of the 1992 Olympic Games
- 1994. Set-up of a powerful institution for promoting the city—*Turisme Barcelona* [The Barcelona Tourist Board]—a perfect partnership between the public and private sectors (in this case, between the City Council and The Chamber of Commerce). The Board turned the fame gained by Barcelona during The Olympic Games into tourist numbers.

These four, linked stages provided the impetus for mass tourism, enabling Barcelona to compete with big European cities and to cut down the vast lead held by London and Paris. The growth in tourist numbers is made clear in Figure 1, which compares figures for 1990 and 2010. The number of tourists leapt from under two million a year to over seven. The proportion of holidaymakers rose from 22.7% in 1990 to 50% in 2010; air passengers more than tripled to just short of 30 m a year; cruise liner passengers soared to 2.3 m; hotel rooms tripled to over 35,000; six sights attracted over 1.3 m visitors apiece. It should be borne in mind that this success was accompanied by two elements. The first was that tourist prices were reasonable. The price of a coffee, taxis, two museum tickets, a restaurant meal, a hotel room all stayed below those in London, Paris, Munich, and Rome (*Ofi-*

cina Pla Estratègic Turisme Barcelona 2015, 2010). Second, the setting up of various strategic business groups set up by the Barcelona Tourist Board such as the health, sports, and university clusters, among others.

- We analysed eighty two items from eleven European tourist cities to create The Tourism Innovation Capacity of Barcelona Index, 2008 (Anex). The items chosen were based on the following four fields:
- Territorial limits (surface area); demography (population and density) economic (unemployment rate); GDP per capita; % service sector and GDP; economy's growth rate). Transport connections by air, train, bus and underground, stressing journey times and inter-modal transport. In the case of air transport, the following were taken into account: number of domestic and international flights; annual passenger traffic; number of airports; cities linked by air. In the case of railways: the number of high-speed rail stops; cities within one hour's travelling distance. In the cases of bus and underground services: the number of kilometres of lines and service frequency.
- Tourism competitiveness; number and origin of tourists; ratio of tourists to residents; occupation rates; attractions linked to culture and monuments; number of visitors to main monuments; the structure of accommodation and cultural offerings.

- Components of excellence for a creative city; training; universities and leading business schools; number of doctorates; scientific production in terms of journal articles and patents; percentage of population engaged in R&D; international presence; level of research and inhabitants' use of technology.

We have taken these four index groups – basics, connectivity, tourism and creative society – to obtain a more clear positioning of European cities, taking into account the competitive vision of the city as per projected in this paper. We consider that indicator packets such as the World Economic Forum, WEF 2011, and the World Travel and Tourism Council, WTTC 2001, are extremely valuable for countries from the tourist perspective. However, the peculiarity of European cities and their current competitive environment forces us to present this indicator model that integrates elements related to infrastructure, connectivity aspects, strictly tourist aspects and the idea of creative society. Secondary sources were used which were categorized from 1 to 5 (1, lowest; 5, highest). In order to obtain the synthetic index, a compendium of all, it is presented weighted on a scale of 1-10 (1, least relevant, 10, most important), and through this weighting the relative values of each indicator have been calculated for each city. The sum of the relative values, arranged

Figure 1: Barcelona 1990-2010

	1990	2010
Tourists	1,700,000	7,100,000
Overnight stays	3,700,000	14,000,000
Holiday	22.7 %	50.1
Business and other	77.3 %	49.9 %
Passengers, El Prat airport	9,048,600	29,209,500
Cruise passengers	115,100	2,350,200
Hotel rooms	10,200	35,800
Tourist attractions (1.3 m tourists a year and upwards)		Sagrada Familia (2.3 m); Cosmo-Caixa [Science Museum] (2.1 m); Aquarium (1.6 m); CaixaForum [Art & Cultural Centre] (1.5 m); Picasso Museum (1.3 m); Barcelona F.C. Museum (1.3 m)
Tourist Bus ['Bus Turístic'] users	23,700	1,925,200
BCN Card users	10,200	130,700
BCN Walking Tour users	1,500	15,200

Source: data taken from *Turisme Barcelona*, 2011

by city, determines the positioning of each metropolis compared to the synthetic index, The Tourism Innovation Capacity Index of Barcelona, 2008.

As for the list of cities chosen, it was taken from a study in which these top ten cities were ranked as being the most attractive in Europe (Sureda, Valls, 2008).

The competitiveness strengths were linked to demographic factors and tourist numbers and their growth over the period, and in particular the emergence of six pay sights attracting over 1.3 m visitors a year. This represented high tourism productivity in such a small area. The main weaknesses covered: some of the regional and economic indicators; air and high-speed rail links (especially when it came to inter-modal transport); a creative society in terms of both training and output; the information society. Despite the persistence of these weaknesses, Barcelona rose to third position in the index, coming some way behind Paris and London but slightly ahead of Frankfurt, Berlin and Madrid. Before beginning its programme for tourism development fifteen years ago, Barcelona was not among the 15 main European cities listed in this index. Crossing the creative society and transport connection factors with tourism competitiveness (Figures 2 and 3), shows the main strengths lie in tourism competitiveness and the main weaknesses in transport connections and a creative society.

The indicators reveal excellent positioning, which is the fruit of a great deal of planning to overcome the city's uncompetitive situation one and a half decades ago.

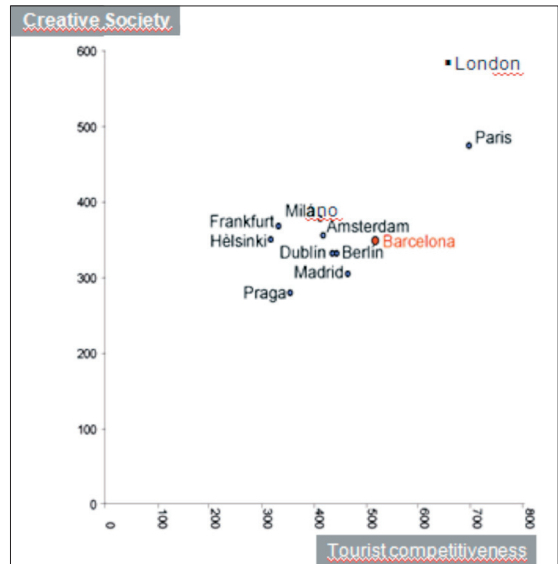
2.3. Vision of internal players

The growth of city tourism is viewed as a success by internal players (70%), though 30.8 % consider the process has speeded out of control since 2000. Only 15.3% reject the model for failing to share out the benefits of tourism. No less than 57 % consider the cycle has come to an end; 9.8 % that is petering out; while 32.4% say they see no sign of the tourist boom slackening off. There is general awareness of success in this field but also of the need to re-examine its nature.

Internal players identify the main benefits as:

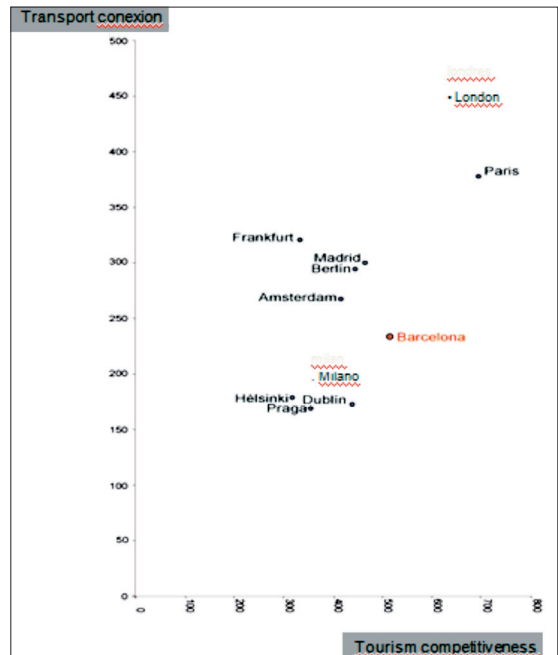
- Greater offerings in leisure, culture and commerce and opening up to tourism (25%)
- Urban renewal (23.6%)

Figure 2: Barcelona's positioning regarding Creative Society/Tourism Competitiveness compared with ten European cities



Source: ESADE-Intelligent Coast, 2008

Figure 3: Barcelona's positioning regarding Transport Connections/Tourism Competitiveness: comparison with ten European cities



Source: ESADE-Intelligent Coast, 2008

- The building of an international brand (20.4%)
- Greater self-respect on the part of the city's inhabitants (19.7%)

In addition:

- Urban policy over the last fifteen years has been to attract more tourists to Barcelona. Fully 81.9 % of respondents in the sample agreed with this policy. This figure breaks down as follows: 'completely agree' (23.0%), 'strongly agree' (35.5%) 'agree' (23.4%)
- The tourists hordes now flock public spaces to bursting point (25.3%); have pushed up living costs in general and housing costs in particular (13.9%); make a lot of noise (6.4%); have worsened public spaces, especially those in the city centre (6.0%); have driven 'mobbing' practices by landlords in certain neighbourhoods who are eager to evict long-standing residents so they can cater to tourists or other kinds of residents (5.6%).

The internal players identified the vectors for correcting the model by:

- reducing the overall amount of tourist accommodation available (18%), and share it out among new tourist areas (32.9%)
- studying the carrying capacity of the city's most popular tourist areas (85.2%) in order to manage visitor flows better
- increasing the amount of public space (24.6%) to improve residents' lives and tourists' experience of the city
- decentralising tourism products to take in the whole of Catalonia (58.6%), and at the metropolitan level (23.8%)
- investing in inter-modal transport and links (45.4%)

Internal players' vision is thus not one of serving tourists whatever they want—a feature of the traditional model—but rather one of creating an innovative, enriching city that boosts residents' quality of life and attracts more discriminating tourists and visitors.

2.4. External players' vision

The next step in our study was to establish a general framework to project expectations of corrections to Barcelona's positioning. For this purpose, we used a Delphi Study with external players. The fieldwork yielded the following results:

- International players agreed on various aspects bearing on the competitiveness of cities:

- The city is viewed as an inter-sectoral activity (6.2 out of 7) in which tourism is considered:
 - The main activity (5.66 out of 7)
 - The sole economic activity (6.1 out of 7)
 - Just another economic activity (4.90 out of 7)
 - A less important activity (3.49 out of 7)
- The factors driving city tourism are:
 - The setting: price trends, exchange rates, the course of the crisis, keeping prices low
 - The quality of attractions: heritage and cultural attractions, infrastructure, facilities and services, the ability to forge alliances with major brands in the metropolitan and regional setting
 - Lifestyle: gastronomy, fashion, cultural industries, folklore, social and sporting events.
 - Maintaining or boosting purchasing power
 - The value of differentiation
 - Maintaining the city brand, especially through the Internet and social networks
- Leaving the attractiveness of a city's tourist products aside, a city's competitiveness is strongly linked to various competences such as: transport connections (6.3 out of 7); direct contact with clients through the Internet (6.1 out of 7); cultural dynamism (6.0 out of 7); a tourism tax (5.56 out of 7), re-investment of revenue from tourism in maintaining and improving environmental quality (5.9 out of 7); innovation, interpreted by the respondents in the sample from the urban standpoint and as a constant re-invention of cultural content and lifestyles (5.8 out of 7).

3. Discussion and proposals

Against a background of wholesale economic globalisation and despite having smaller municipal boundaries than its rivals, Barcelona has risen by leaps and bounds in the rankings over the last fifteen years and is now comes after London and Paris. However, the fact that it occupies third place should not hide the fact that there is rising competition among cities and that others covet Barcelona's hard-won position. Discussion is based on Barcelona's successful tourism model and the need to alter it to strike a better balance in the use of public space and thus benefit all the city's clients. Correcting 'the more, the merrier' model of tourism should take into account the following reflections:

- Tourism should remain the city's economic mainstay, which in these times of crisis, drives development
- Tourism differentiation should help Barcelona lead in innovative activities:
 - Treating city tourism as something that creates tourist experiences; creating value through brands; seeking solutions to problems of sustainability; adopting intensive online marketing and sales channels, and new technology for managing city tourism; creating new business models; organisational integration and flexibility to gain in scale and global reach; ongoing cost-cutting through effective management and control of risks.
 - At the city level—and linked to R&D plus innovation—technology transfer: creating innovative companies and human capital; fostering integration between training, research and production.
- A better balance needs to be struck between residents and tourists in the use of public space. This balance will avoid both the maintenance and emergence of segregated tourist districts (van den Berger, 2000). The idea is to ease the burden on the 'central recreational districts' (Carlino and Saiz, 2008) by spreading tourists to other city neighbourhoods, the metropolitan area and the rest of Catalonia: improving communications and inter-modal transport—two of Barcelona's weakest points at the international level.
- The indiscriminate pursuit of ever higher visitor and tourist numbers ought to be ended. Sustainability should be achieved by fostering the city's intrinsic values: culture and architectural heritage; lifestyle; cultural industries; beliefs; gastronomy; fashion; language; folklore; Barcelona as capital of Catalonia. The combination of these elements creates a brand image of an attractive city, turning experience into the central plank of a new model: the selection of clients and value.
- Ongoing innovation in the tourism field requires a constant stream of money to turn the city into a stable attraction. A tourism tax is an essential, balancing element for those cities that have yet to adopt it. The most modern systems for levying the tax use Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) on the lines of Business Improvement Districts (BID) (Valls, Vila, 2004)

Enhancing the city's competitiveness means planning based on the three aspects mentioned earlier, namely: sustainability; integrated management and governance; client orientation.

3.1. Sustainability

Addressing the three aspects just mentioned involves: fostering the city's ability to reinvent itself (in terms of products, management models and technology); guaranteeing long-term viability by introducing a tax to make tourists bear a fair share of the financial burden. If the tax is not collected through hotel stays, another solution would be to levy it through the public-privately managed BID. Here one should not the success of this approach adopted by The Barcelona Tourist Board.

3.2. Integrated management and governance

Developing tourist products requires the following infrastructure and facilities:

- Control over the carrying capacity of monuments and streets
- Transport
 - Inter-modal transport connections
 - Varied transport options
- Signposting
- Security
- Cleanliness
- Hospitality
- Information
- Talent and innovation

and the following services:

- Shopping
- Gastronomy
- Lodging
- Day and night life
- Suitable opening hours
- Guided visits

With regard to governance, there are various hurdles that need to be overcome to make the city more competitive. The Barcelona Tourist Board, which currently does little else but promote the city's brand image, should have its management remit extended to other fields of governance such as: creating tourist products; city technologies and logistics; planning the human capital needed; co-ordinating tourism with the city's other economic activities; shaping general planning of the city and of investments, given that tourism is a key economic activity.

3.3. Client orientation

The tourism model based on indiscriminately attracting tourists to the city worked well in the early stages of Barcelona's international expansion. However, the quest should now be to seek

better clients for the city rather than just more of the same. This approach is needed to sustain growth and delay market maturity, we crossed city use with the value contributed by each group of clients (see Figure 4). The following are strategic clients:

- The first block comprises those who live and work in Barcelona and those who live and work outside the city. These are the main clients, who use the city intensively and add the greatest value. Furthermore, they form part of the city's cultural identity. Two main aspects need to be managed in connection with this group: (1) it is important they do not feel left out; (2) they benefit from tourism and see it as contributing to the city's development. Failure to enlist the support of this internal public means no tourist city.
- The second strategic block comprises 'city break' travellers spending short spells for health, sports or business reasons. These visitors add a lot of value to Barcelona while using the city much less intensively and hence are highly profitable. This external group is vital for projecting Barcelona's brand image.
- The third block of strategic clients consists of those making long stays for training, entrepreneurial, and research purposes. They are among those adding most value to the city and make somewhat greater use of it. This external

group is also vital for projecting Barcelona's brand image.

The planning process needs to give special consideration to these strategic clients, without of course ignoring the rest who also city clients.

Given knowledge of the client hierarchy, this takes us on to building the right portfolio for this clientele: culture; business; sports; cruises; knowledge; innovation; shopping; architecture and design; city breaks; university centre ('The European Boston'); health; beaches; gastronomy.

We have selected the attributes that best suit these strategic internal and external clients (Figure 5). These attributes are proposed for the repositioning of Barcelona's brand image, in order to compete in the new, more demanding environment of the great tourist destination cities. The list is also in line with the proposals put forward by internal players:

- Knowledge
- Innovation and attracting top talent
- Culture
- Business and entrepreneurship
- City Breaks
- Cruises

Figure 4: City clients

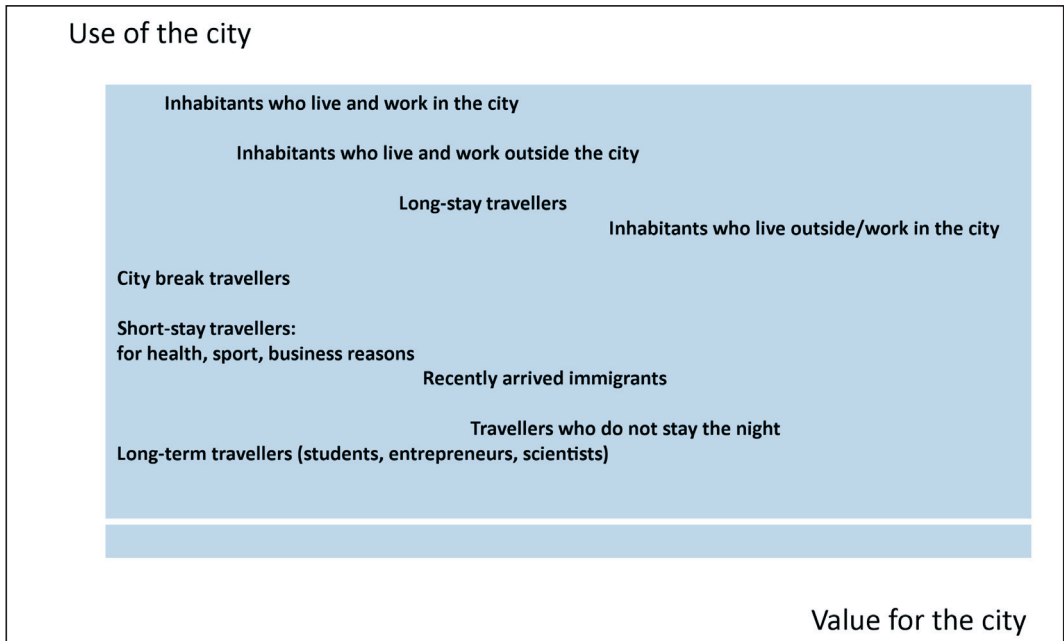


Figure 5: Proposed positioning



4. Conclusions on and the limitations of Barcelona's new city tourism model and international competitiveness in times of crisis

Barcelona's tourism planning model over the last fifteen years has turned the city into one of the most attractive to visitors in Europe. However, its shortcomings now need to be tackled if the city is to maintain its competitiveness.

Correcting this model should recognise that tourism is what is driving the city's economy, especially in times of crisis. That is because the industry is capable of creating investment and jobs. This turns the city into a powerhouse of innovation not only in the tourism and leisure sectors but also in other city activities.

The existing model does not discriminate between tourists. The proposed model clearly differentiates the city from its European competitors and both segments and seeks those who place greatest value on their experience of the city. This repositioning links Barcelona's brand image with cultural products, lifestyle and Barcelona's role as the capital of Catalonia. The aim is to reposition Barcelona as: a city of knowledge and innovation that draws business, entrepreneurs and top talent; a bustling metropolis attracting cruise liners and offering a wide range of city breaks.

The new model requires a better share-out of public space between residents and tourists, turning both into city clients. City and tourism planning should always take into account the needs of all city clients both internal and external and the special needs and nature of its strategic external clients (in this case, 'city break' travellers and those spending long spells in the city for training, entrepreneurship or research purposes).

The sustainability of a tourist city depends on ongoing allocation of resources. These resources must be funded by a tax levied on tourists. This will be collected by players coming into contact with visitors through some kind of public-private partnership, of which Barcelona already has considerable expertise.

Tourism management should have a much greater impact on general planning of the city and requires better co-ordination of tasks and governance.

Any task linked to urban renewal has a huge impact on many economic sectors. This needs to be taken into account in the current crisis in which unemployment is rife and consumption sluggish. The crisis has had an adverse impact on infrastructure firms, public services, public spaces, buildings and dwellings.

This study has three limitations. The first concerns the benchmark weighting, which we had to invent given that there was nothing in

the literature that might have served as a guide. The second relates to the make-up of the sample of internal players. The sample takes account of the size of each group but not on the impact of each on the city's management. The third is linked to the reliability of Delphi Studies. Despite all the precautions taken in the two rounds, the results reflect a group's opinions on a subject at a given point in time. In later studies, we shall tackle the first limitation by building a testable construct. The second limitation will be addressed by tweaking our sample to reflect the social impact each group has on urban and tourism planning. There is little we can do to overcome the third limitation yet the method remains a valuable research despite it.

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Annex: four blocks of indicators**basics**

	1	2	3	4	5
Demographics					
Population					
City (M)	0.5-1.1	1.1-1.7	1.7-2.3	2.3-3	3-3.6
Metropolitan area (M)	1.9-4.3	4.3-6.7	6.7-9.1	9.1-11.5	11.5-14
Density					
City (x 1000)	2.4-5.2	5.2-8	8-10.8	10.8-13.6	13.6-16.4
Metropolitan area (x 1000)	0.1-0.4	0.4-0.7	0.7-1	1-1.3	1.3-1.6
Foreign population (%)	5-14	14-23	23-32	32-41	41-50
Economics					
Unemployment rate (%)	2.2-4.3	4.3-6.4	6.4-8.5	8.5-10.6	10.6-12.7
GDP x capita	23000-35200	35200-47400	47400-59600	59600-71600	71600-83800
GDP services	50-60	61-70	71-80	81-90	91-100
Economic growth rate	1.1-1.8	1.8-2.5	2.5-3.2	3.2-3.9	3.9-4.6
Territorial					
Surface					
City (km ²)	100-260	260-420	420-680	680-840	840-1000
Metropolitan area (km ²)	900-6900	6900-12900	12900-189000	189000-249000	249000-309000
Other rankings					
Europe Best Cities to Locate Business 2007*	from 25 a 30	from 18 to 24	from 13 to 18	from 7 to 12	from 1 to 6
Most expensive cities in Europe (ECA International)	from 41 a 50	from 31 to 40	from 21 to 30	from 11 to 20	from 1 to 10
Europe's largest cities (population)	from 101 a 125	from 76 to 100	from 51 to 75	from 26 to 50	from 1 to 25
Richest cities and urban areas in 2020	over 120	from 91 to 120	from 61 to 90	from 31 to 60	from 1 to 30
The world's best financial cities	over 60	from 46 to 60	from 31 to 45	from 16 to 30	from 1 to 15
The world's most expensive cities in 2008	from 41 a 50	from 31 to 40	from 21 to 30	from 11 to 20	from 1 to 10
The top 10 European business cities	over 10	from 9 to 10	from 6 to 8	from 4 to 5	from 1 to 3
Europe's 61 richest cities	over 61	from 46 to 61	from 31 to 45	from 16 to 30	from 1 to 15
GDP (€) per capita in 2001	under 15000	from 15000 to 30000	from 31000 to 45000	from 46000 to 60000	from 61000 to 75000

Connectivity

	1	2	3	4	5
Connectivity					
Plane					
Distance from the city to airport (Km)	40-48	32-40	24-32	16-24	8-16
No. national and international flights	15.000-135.000	135.000-255.000	255.000-375.000	375.000-495.000	495.000-615.000
Number of annual passengers	10.000-22.000	22.000-34.000	34.000-46.000	46.000-58.000	58.000-70.000
Number of airports in 100 km radius	1	2	3	4	5
Main airport intermodality	0	1	2	3	4
Secondary airport intermodality	0	1	2	3	4
Number of cities connected with the city by air	100-142	142-184	184-226	226-268	268-310
Airlines	35-55	55-75	75-95	95-115	115-135
Train					
Number of AVE stops	0	1	2	3	
Cities connected in 1 hour	0	1-11	11-22	22-33	33-44
Bus					
Number of bus lines	6-41	41-76	76-111	111-147	147-182
Number of bus lines per km ² urban region	108-188	188-268	268-348	348-428	428-508
Underground					
Number of underground lines by city	1-4	4-7	7-10	10-13	13-16
Km of underground per km ² city	20-100	100-180	180-260	260-340	340-420
Tram lines Km	7-117	117-227	227-337	337-447	447-557
Other rankings					
Top 20 passengers at European airports, 2002-06*	over 20	from 16 to 20	from 11 to 15	from 6 to 10	from 1 to 5

Tourist

	1	2	3	4	5
Tourist					
Tourists					
Number of tourists (M)	3-8.6	8.6-14.2	14.2-19.8	19.8-25.4	25.4-31
Ratio tourist / resident	2.5-4.9	4.9-7.3	7.3-9.7	9.7-12.1	12.1-14.5
Ratio beds / tourist	55-125	125-195	195-265	265-335	335-405
Overnight stays (M)	3-28	28-53	53-78	78-103	103-128
Number of hotels	40-330	330-620	620-910	910-1200	1200-1490
Number of beds	14000-45000	45000-76000	76000-107000	107000-138000	138000-169000
Hotel structure					
5*	6-16	16-26	26-36	36-46	46-56
4*	5-40	40-75	75-110	110-145	145-180
% 4* and 5*	5-10.5	10.5-26	26-36.5	36.5-47	47-58.5
Average occupancy	45-53	53-61	61-69	69-77	77-86
Average stay	1.6-2.2	2.2-2.8	2.8-3.4	3.4-4	4-4.6
Origen of tourists					
National	16-24	24-32	32-40	40-48	48-56
International	46-54	54-62	62-70	70-78	78-86
Number of cultural facilities by type					
Number of cinemas	4-79	79-154	154-229	229-304	304-379
Number of theatres	5-15	15-25	25-35	35-45	45-55
Number of cultural centres	0-5	5-10	10-15	15-30	20-25
Number of museums	5-30	30-55	55-80	80-105	105-130
Other rankings					
Euromonitor ranking* - most dynamic cities in terms of tourist arrivals	from 81 to 100	from 61 to 80	from 41 to 60	from 21 to 40	from 1 to 20
Most popular cities*	from 17 to 20	from 13 to 16	from 9 to 12	from 5 to 8	from 1 to 4
Top ten international congress cities according to UIA 2005-06*	over 10	from 9 to 10	from 6 to 8	from 4 to 5	from 1 to 3
Top ten international congress cities according to ICCA 2005-06*	over 10	from 9 to 10	from 6 to 8	from 4 to 5	from 1 to 3
Most expensive shopping-streets in European cities 2006 (ranking worldwide)*	over 25	from 18 to 25	from 13 to 18	from 7 to 12	from 1 to 6
Brand strength (Saffron Consultants)	from 25 to 30	from 18 to 24	from 13 to 18	from 7 to 12	from 1 to 6
Asset strength (Saffron Consultants)	from 41 to 50	from 31 to 40	from 21 to 30	from 11 to 20	from 1 to 10

Creative Society

	1	2	3	4	5
Creative Society					
Education					
Number of universities	2-8	8-14	14-20	20-26	26-32
Number of PHD Science and Technology students in 2005	2000-10000	10000-18000	18000-26000	26000-32000	32000-38000
Main cities of scientific production (Number of scientific publications)	3000-8000	8000-13000	13000-18000	18000-23000	23000-28000
Gross public expenditure on education compared to GDP	0-1%	2-3%	3-4%	5-6%	6-7%
Employment					
Population employed in technological sectors in the European regions in 2004	6-8.5	8.5-11	11-13.5	13.5-16	16-18.5
Population employed in technological services in the European regions in 2004	3-4.6	4.6-6.2	6.2-7.8	7.8-9.4	9.4-11
Use of ICTs by businesses	0-20%	20-40%	40-60%	60-80%	80-100%
Exports. By technological content (R&D)	0-7,5%	7,5- 15%	15-20%	20-25%	25%-3%
Social					
Number of households with Internet access	0-20%	20-40%	40-60%	60-80%	80-100%
EGovernment. Use. Public companies	50-60%	60-70%	70-80%	80-90%	90-100%
Other rankings					
Top cities in scientific production	over 35	from 28 to 35	from 19 to 27	from 9 to 18	from 1 to 8
Number of scientific publications	under 3000	from 5000 to 3000	from 9.000 to 5.000	from 19.000 to 10.000	from 30.000 to 20.000
Best European cities in quality of life for workers 2006	from 25 a 30	from 18 to 24	from 13 to 18	from 7 to 12	from 1 to 6
Internet use by exchanges in Europe*	from 17 a 20	from 13 to 16	from 9 to 12	from 5 to 8	from 1 to 4
Overall ranking of the European eCity Award	from 81 a 100	from 61 to 80	from 41 to 60	from 21 to 40	from 1 to 20
Office prices in European cities (ranking worldwide)*	under 40	from 31 to 40	from 21 to 30	from 11 to 20	from 1 to 10

Source: Intelligent Coast, 2008

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