

Strategic Management for Travel and Tourism

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Preface

There are of course a number of existing strategic management titles, including *Exploring Corporate Strategy* by Johnson and Scholes (Financial Times/Prentice Hall, 2002), *Corporate Strategy* by Lynch (Financial Times/Prentice Hall, 2001) and *Business Strategy: an Introduction* by Campbell, Stonehouse and Houston (Butterworth-Heinemann, 2002). There are, however, few textbooks that apply strategic management concepts to a 'services' context and particularly to the travel and tourism industry and the hospitality sector. The important human phenomenon of tourism and the industry which has grown up in order to support it – the travel industry – have grown to represent one of the world's most important industrial sectors. Furthermore, travel and tourism is an industry which exhibits a number of distinctive characteristics and has a growing academic literature associated with its study. Consequently, it is appropriate that a dedicated text should consider the strategic implications of managing in this important and rapidly developing industry in particular.

This textbook aims to be the textbook of choice for students studying strategy units on courses related to travel, tourism and hospitality. The book represents a 'contextualization' of generic strategic material content. This is achieved through:

- the application of concepts and principles;
- the emphasis of key points affecting this industry in particular; and
- the use of short illustrative examples and longer case studies.

The purpose of the textbook will therefore be to provide an in-depth review of the subject area but applied to the travel and tourism industry and its component sectors. Each chapter contains specific references to travel and tourism, but it should be stressed that this book is concerned with strategic management *for* travel and tourism, thereby implying that the theory is generic but it is adapted and applied to the needs of this particular industry. The book explicitly recognizes that the industry's sectors are service rather than manufacturing based. Consequently certain aspects of strategic management are particularly emphasized and the language used modified accordingly. For example, 'operations' will be used in place of 'production' and the intangibility, perishability, cash flow implications, and difficulty of maintaining quality standards etc. of service based products are emphasized.

It can be argued that 'hospitality' represents a separate sector with its own literature and constructs. It can further be argued that the term has rather different meaning in North America than elsewhere. Whilst in North America it broadly tends to encompass travel and tourism, elsewhere hospitality has come to represent that part of the travel and

tourism product that deals with accommodation and catering. The approach here will be to include hospitality as a part of the broad travel industry since many of the companies involved are integrated and to exclude accommodation from consideration would be to exclude a major part of the tourist product offering. Furthermore hospitality (at the strategic level) shares many of the same characteristics as other areas of the travel industry. For example, the focus on customer service, the perishability of the product, price discrimination, yield management techniques, distribution etc. are common to hospitality and other parts of the travel industry.

The use of the word 'tourism' sometimes causes problems. Whilst the 'travel industry' can be identified broadly as a certain sub-set of mostly larger companies (such as airlines, hotel groups and tour operators) providing services to tourists, 'tourism' also encompasses a diverse, highly fragmented network of small to medium sized companies and other organizations. Much of the strategic management literature relates primarily to larger businesses. However, many of the principles embodied in the literature are applicable to smaller businesses and 'not for profit organizations', but they need to be applied in a rather different way. The approach adopted here is to focus primarily on larger scale businesses but the principles can usually be adapted and applied to smaller and not for profit organizations.

The book features:

- Short illustrative cases throughout, while longer cases for analysis appear at the end of the text.
- Each chapter includes a brief introduction and overview.
- Each chapter includes a number of learning objectives, clearly stated at the start of the chapter.
- Definitions and key concepts are clearly labelled throughout the text.
- Each chapter includes references and a guide to further reading.
- A glossary of terms is included for reference.

The authors would be grateful for any and all feedback or criticism, good or not so good, on this volume. It is likely that the second edition will contain a larger suite of cases and the authors are grateful to Amanda Miller for donating her case on Leicester Promotions. Comments on the book would be most welcome. In the first instance, please contact the publishers.

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