







Research study on Slow Tourism international trends and innovations

























CHAPTER 7: Innovative ICT solutions applicable to the Slow Tourism offer

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Ascape

Ascape offers to the Slow Tourism travellers the opportunity to explore a place through virtual reality, a trend in the Tourism Industry. A way to feel the Slow Tourism approach of a destination in an innovative way, using the technology to explore and make an idea of how wonderful living an experience would be once at the destination. An alternative to promote a destination or an experience that captures the essence of slow travel.

TECH CATEGORY

- Mobile and tablet technology
- Virtual reality

PRODUCT PHASE APPLICABILITY

This innovative solution is applicable to the following phases of the Slow Tourism product design and/or execution:

- Communication and promotion
- Conceptualization and management

DESCRIPTION

Ascape is a curated platform where professional Virtual Reality (VR) creators upload their 360° travel videos for users to consume via mobile app for both iOS and Android devices.

Ascape is a leading supplier of VR travel solutions. They work with both B2B and B2C clients.

About 80% of the videos on the platform are free to watch and the rest are paid (they charge users an amount per video and share the revenue with the content creator). They currently have the largest library of high-quality 360° travel videos in the world (more than 700 videos from over 60 countries).

On the B2B side, they help travel brands to create and acquire 360° video content cheaper. By employing their network of professional creators and small studios around the world (in over 40 countries), they reduce the production cost of 360° videos.



WEBSITE AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Website: www.ascape.com
Email: contact@ascape.com

- A wide range of 360° virtual reality travel videos
- Thanks to the virtual reality the user feels like they are in another place
- Using VR sound technology, the user can hear the "real world" around them
- The user can enjoy the most iconic places in the world with realistic 360° tours
- New 360° videos uploaded often so users can take a different virtual reality tour every day
- The user feels the immersion right on their smartphone screen, without a virtual reality device
- Compatible with any virtual reality device: Google Cardboard, Zeiss VR ONE, DoDo Case VR, HOMIDO, Durovis Dive, Fibrum, etc.

SOLUTION

Ascape is a virtual reality app with many 360° travel videos. Ascape VR allows the user to explore and experience high quality interactive tours and relaxing movie videos even without leaving home. Their scenic VR tours are designed for travel inspiration. Ascape captures reality in 360° so users can see hundreds of destinations as they would discover them in real life.

The user uses their own smartphone or Google Cardboard, or any other virtual reality device to take the most immersive tours that take them through different tourist destinations on the planet.

Users can, for example, take a 360° virtual reality tour of San Francisco with the mayoral candidate, explore the ancient temples of Petra, fly over St. Petersburg, walk with the elephants of Botswana or even swim with the dolphins, all from their smartphone.

Ascape VR is a go-to source for licensing VR travel footage for use in any video, commercial, or multimedia production. Travel brands (airlines, hotels, travel agencies, and tourism boards) license their 360° videos to help frame their marketing messages. They work with brands like JetBlue, Lonely Planet, Yellow Pages, Thomas Cook, and Amadeus.

HIGHLIGHTS

Users can download the application for free (available for Android and iOS). There is a free catalogue and premium access.

Ascape VR lets visitors' experience the planet's best locations from anywhere: what users have to do is simply rotate the phone and find themselves on the beach in New Zealand or Miami, meeting people in San Francisco, watching a parade in Disneyland or enjoying a sunrise at the Sydney Opera House.

PRODUCT PROMOTER

Founded in 2015, Ascape VR Inc is based in San Francisco, California, United States.

Ascape is the first ever travel agency for virtual reality trips connecting travel brands to VR creators and travel lovers. Ascape is for those with a 'wanderlust gene' looking for travel inspiration and people who cannot travel in real life like those with disabilities, retirees, low income and even kids.

DESTINATION

Ascape has videos from many destinations. A prominent example is their virtual reality tour 'You Are Here: San Francisco' which was nominated for a Digital Hollywood Award in 2015.

This was the first in a series of You Are Here travel entries.

You Are Here: San Francisco is a guided tour of one of America's most iconic cities with Stuart Schuffman, 2015 San Francisco mayoral candidate and the host of IFC's 2011 travel show Young, Broke, and Beautiful.

Recorded using 360-degree VR video and realistic positional sound, proprietarily developed by Ascape VR. You Are Here: San Francisco immerses the viewer in the city as they explore the hidden gems of San Francisco with Schuffman, such as Balmy Alley and the Musée Mécanique.

The 360-degree VR video experience was shot in 4K and is compatible with a number of currently available mobile VR head-mounted displays (HMD), including Google Cardboard, Zeiss VR One, Merge VR, and any others that are compatible with Android smartphones.



COST

We have no information on the cost to use this solution for commercial purposes.

OTHER APPLICABILITY

Ascape VR also provides VR Solutions for Trade Shows, Hotels and Resorts:

- Immersive projection for venues of any size
- Preloaded Ascape VR experiences
- 3 walls + ceiling projection
- Plug and play setup
- Works with any VR/360° media
- Built-in speakers
- No VR headsets needed
- No Internet connection needed

Note: All the information has been extracted from the company's website.

Authenticitys

Authenticitys is a platform that connects travellers who seek to live an authentic experience based on sustainable and local perspective. This is a perfect online platform to promote and commercialize Slow Tourism activities and experiences, since they share the same philosophy and approach of how tourism could be a good motor for social and environmental sustainability while travelling.

TECH CATEGORY

- Internet platform
- Sharing economy platforms
- Co-creation of experiences

PRODUCT PHASE APPLICABILITY

This innovative solution is applicable to the following phase of the Slow Tourism product design and/or execution:

Conceptualization and management of tourist products

DESCRIPTION

Authenticitys is an online platform that connects visitors with local, authentic experiences that make visiting cities better for travellers.

They design and host experiences with local entrepreneurs to curate a good time that will leave a positive impact in the city the tourists visit.

They curate experiences with NGO's and social organisations for travellers who want to leave a positive impact.

Authenticitys allows local entrepreneurs to promote and disclose educational experiences in order for travellers to be informed prior to booking via Authenticitys' website.



WEBSITE AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Website: www.authenticitys.com
Email: info@authenticitys.com

- Enhance the travel experience for tourists
- Allow visitors to discover new places off-the-beaten-path
- Experiences are run by non-profit or social organizations that employ people from local communities
- All experiences are carbon neutral or negative
- Some of the experiences create awareness about environmental challenges and provide an insightful view from those who are most affected by them
- Educational and pedagogical background of the experiences
- Travellers leave transformed and inspired

SOLUTION

Authenticitys is a boutique platform for social impact experience in cities. A social impact experience is a two-three hour transformational tour that changes the visitor's perspective on the city as well as leaves the city better than they found it.

The philosophy of Authenticitys takes into account the sustainable development goals proposed by the UN.

The company brings local initiatives into contact with visitors.

They are willing to work with any local initiative that meets their philosophy:

- Social and community integration, meaningful and sustainable employment
- Education of travellers
- Environmental sustainability

Experiences are designed taking into account six dimensions:

- Education
- Employability
- Environment
- Happiness
- Health
- Freedom & Equality

USE

On the company's website, travellers can discover the activities on offer in the different cities. Presently, it offers almost 100 proposals in 27 cities throughout Europe, Asia and Latin America.

The client can book the experience that they find most attractive and interesting via the company's website and it will be the local provider who will provide the service.

PRODUCT PROMOTER

Authenticitys Experiences SL is based in Barcelona and has been certified as a Certified B Corporation.

Certified B Corporations¹ are the businesses that meet the highest standards of verified social and environmental performance and help to face challenging problems of a community. These so-called 'B Corp companies' aim to achieve a more inclusive and sustainable society and a positive impact for employers, culture and environment. Certified B Corporation Companies serve as exemplary pioneers in our society, to effect a positive change in order to leave an impact and footprint on this planet for the following generations.

DESTINATION

Below is an example of an existing product available on Authenticitys platform: San Sebastián, Spain

"Eat one feed one" social impact food tour in San Sebastián is a foodie immersion in real, ordinary San Sebastián to get a real sense of community, understand how locals live and eat while learning about the history and culture.

For every person that joins the experience, Authenticitys helps a person in need by donating a meal to the local soup kitchen.

This type of experience is for people who love food, travel and happen to be keen on a sustainable future and want to give back to the city they visit by supporting a social foodpreneur.

This experience includes:

- Time: 3h
- Guide: Local expert food guide
- Languages: Spanish and English
- Frequency: Every day by appointment at 12.00 pm or 6pm
- Good for: Adults, families, students, groups and professionals
- Participants: 1-8
- All food is included: five stops with five *pintxos* (Basque tapas) and four-five wines or local appetizers. Non-alcoholic beverages are also available. Vegetarian friendly, more limited options for vegans but doable
- Cost for adults: €118 (18 and over)

¹ Link to the official website: https://bcorporation.eu/



COST

There is no a cost for organizations or institutions.

What the company does is connecting the supplier with the client.

The company charges a percentage of the sale to the final consumer.

Evaneos

On the Evaneos website, travellers can design, imagine, prepare and share their trip, centralizing everything in one place. All this is done with the advantage that it helps them to get in touch with local travel agents in different cities of the world to create 100% personalized trips. From a Slow Tourism perspective, this website can be the perfect platform where travellers can start looking at slow activities and experiences developed and designed by local tour operators or small businesses.

TECH CATEGORY

- Customised travel journeys
- Online platform and sales

PRODUCT PHASE APPLICABILITY

This innovative solution is applicable to the following phases of the Slow Tourism product design and/or execution:

- Communication and promotion
- Management

DESCRIPTION

Evaneos is an award-winning platform that allows travellers to create 100% tailor-made tours directly with a local travel agent based in the destination.

Evaneos sources the best local agencies in each destination, make them available via their website and app, and then provide both tools and guarantees to ensure that traveller's entire Evaneos experience runs smoothly and securely.

Local agencies are selected based on a strict level of criteria, including quality and professionalism in the industry, from Evaneos' own in-house sourcing team. In addition, the selected local agents are not only experts of their destination; they are also all English-speakers.

Local agent's job is to create the perfect itinerary, activities, guides or accommodation to satisfy visitors' wishes. By booking via Evaneos, tourists will also receive a direct quote from the agent, without an intermediate fee.

Evaneos has a community of 1,000,000 members, 2,000 partner agencies in 160 destinations, and over 500,000 people that have travelled with this company since 2009.



WEBSITE AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Website: www.evaneos.com

Phone number: +33 1 82 83 36 36

- Put the buyer in touch directly with the local travel agent
- Allow travellers to create tailor-made tours directly with a local travel agent
- Help tourists with travel itineraries
- Customize tours at the destination

SOLUTION

Evaneos, by means of the website and a mobile application called "Evaneos", offers the following services to users wishing to organise their travel:

- Information, advice and factsheets
- Making contact with local travel agencies specializing in devising and delivering customized travel services
- System of transmission of personal contact details and other information to selected contacts and partners
- System of secure payment to local travel agencies
- Information on and sale of travel insurance after purchase of travel services
- Online display and sharing of travel dossiers and photos
- Creation and sharing of testimonies, comment and advice
- Creation and sharing of feedback and content of experience

USE

Travellers can make contact with a local travel agency through the Evaneos website and app to organise their trip.

Following a simple process, users will receive information about a product/tour according to their preferences. This process includes to select a destination, to choose a local travel agency and a proposed itinerary. Then, users will be given some details such as travel preferences, expectations in terms of accommodation, travel companions and pace of travel.

PRODUCT PROMOTER

Founded in Paris in 2009, Evaneos has helped more than 500.000 people travel to more than 160 destinations, and the satisfaction rate is 96%. This company is currently active in nine source markets, which are France, Italy, Germany, Switzerland, Netherlands, UK, USA and Canada.

Evaneos' Manifesto is as follows:

- Create the tools that allow each of local travel agents to design their travellers' perfect trip.
- Innovation is the key to revolution.
- Protect the diversity of our beautiful planet via a commitment to responsible tourism.

DESTINATION

As this innovative solution is an online platform that aims to create tailor-tours contacting local travel agents, there is not a unique destination involved. However, Evaneos shows in its website several destinations all over the world where they can plan a tour, divided by areas: Africa, Asia, Central America, Europe, Middle East, North America, Oceania and South America.



COST

Evaneos does not apply charges to travellers. The platform remuneration is made up of commissions paid by local travel agencies. Evaneos provides a service whereby members are put in contact with local travel agencies. Evaneos shall not bill travellers for the service and add no further costs to the cost estimate provided by local travel agencies. The sums paid have no effect on the website listings of local travel agencies nor on the choice of local travel agencies proposed to members when raising requests for cost estimates through the website or mobile application.

OTHER APPLICABILITY

In this case, the applicability of this innovative solution is limited to an inspiration of how this company promotes and communicates as well as operates the tours they sell.

Nexto

Nexto is a good, innovative and technological solution to apply to Slow Tourism terms, not only for promotional purposes but also to allow users to get immersed and experience the destinations thanks to augmented reality (AR) features. It is a self-guiding app that also helps visitors to get to know the destination.

TECH CATEGORY

Mobile technology

PRODUCT PHASE APPLICABILITY

This innovative solution is applicable to the following phases of the Slow Tourism product design and/or execution:

- Conceptualization
- As part of the tourist experience (execution of the product)

DESCRIPTION

Nexto is an app designed by Slovenian developers that creates game-like learning experiences with augmented reality. This storytelling app aims to give added value to the sightseeing experience by engaging tourists. It combines traditional audio guides with additional features, such as puzzles, riddles and a collection of items by scanning objects with a smartphone.

Nexto provides a service that allows destinations to post, link, store, share. This app can also make available certain information, text, graphics, videos, or other material "content" in the app. Additionally, Nexto is a service that collaborates with marketing representatives to display content in order to enhance the travel experience for tourists. They mainly work with institutions and organizations representing tourist destinations (cities, provinces, countries). It also has a highly flexible storytelling format that is suited to any destinations like Slow Tourism destinations.

Nexto offers an innovative solution to destinations and cultural venues that want to create a new innovative experience. With Nexto's own content management system, the start-up provides assistance for creating more immersive content.

Finally, Nexto was awarded "Best practice in digitalization" by European Capital for Smart Tourism initiative. The European Capital of Smart Tourism initiative recognises outstanding achievements by European cities as tourism destinations. In 2019, the initiative recognized Nexto as one of the best practices in digitalization for the way it transformed the sightseeing experience of Ljubljana and made it accessible to a wider range of audiences.

Booking.com also awarded Nexto as the number one App in Sustainable Tourism solutions.



WEBSITE AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Website: http://nexto.io/ Email: info@nexto.io

- Gamified sightseeing
- Enhance the travel experience for tourists
- Discovery of beautiful new places
- Audio guides, information and alerts with relevant information
- Available for iOS and Android smartphones (App on Apple App Store and Google Play Store)

SOLUTION

This technological innovation helps to improve tourist experiences, thanks to the following characteristics:

- Containing interactive maps that help visitors discover a destination's hidden gems and utilizes location aware technology that activates the audio guide whenever the user is near a point of interest.
- The app can also be used offline as the content can be downloaded beforehand.
- The multimedia tours and games can be downloaded for offline use to avoid burning roaming data.

PRODUCT PROMOTER

The product promoter is NAVIPRO D.O.O., an independent private limited company located in Ljubljana (Slovenia) and is a part of the Information Technology Services Industry.

USE

Nexto App has several options and benefits:

Nexto Guided Stories

Nexto has designed a new format for location-based storytelling: Nexto Guided Stories.

This is a new type of navigational experience that uses a familiar conversational interface to tell the story gradually, through audio, visual and augmented reality elements. Nexto Guided Stories are a highly flexible storytelling format that is suited to any destinations. It can be used to tell immersive and complex stories as well as build exciting scavenger hunts, quests and escape room experiences.

Guided Tours

A new option is to connect points of interest in a linear sequence and create routes towards destinations on the map. Travellers will be able to navigate through the designated path smoothly and with ease. Guided tours are marked in the app with the freedom to create as many destinations as the users wants and can add labels with additional information such as duration, payable content, etc.

· Augmented Reality (AR) Effects

The experiences combine traditional audio guide content with mini games like puzzles, riddles, and hunting down virtual items at real-world locations when visitors scan with their phone. Through AR, ruins can be reconstructed to their old glory, and different layers of famous paintings can be revealed.

Social Networks

Destinations can reward their visitors for completing quests in Nexto guided stories with Facebook and Snapchat filters. This is a way to promote a destination's stories or brand through AR effects that visitors can share with their friends on social media.

DESTINATION

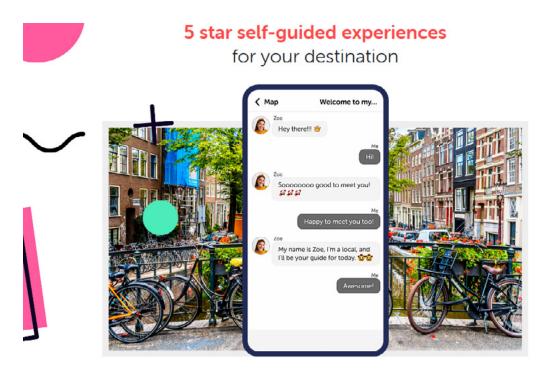
Some real examples of the use of Nexto App are:

• The Ljubljana Castle, Slovenia.

The castle now offers a unique hands-free audio tour experience that guides visitors through the history and secrets of this mighty fortress, using Bluetooth beacon technology. Rich multimedia content, clearly marked maps and the support for over ten languages.

• The city of Belém, Portugal.

The user has the possibility to visit the city through an interactive tour provided by the Nexto app. Through a map, the user can visit certain places, learn about its history through historical characters and interact dynamically by responding to quests.



COST

Destinations and venues can then decide whether to make content free to users, or charge a fee for visitors to unlock experiences. Users pay Nexto a monthly subscription to the platform based on active users, and/or a creative agency fee for content creation assistance.

Note: All the information has been extracted from the company's website.

Routemotion

Routemotion is an ICT solution which facilitates the task of designing personalised Apps to destinations and other tourist actors. For instance, it is possible to design an App offering information related to local restaurants, sustainable options for travelling, slow packages experience with detailed information, etc. In terms of Slow Tourism, this tool could be a good way for DMOs and travel agencies to create Apps addressed to tourists looking for Slow Tourism experiences. Also, it can be used for travellers to find all the offer related to Slow Tourism of a specific destination in a single place.

TECH CATEGORY

Mobile and tablet technology

PRODUCT PHASE APPLICABILITY

This innovative solution is applicable to the following phases of the Slow Tourism product design and/or execution:

- Communication
- As part of the tourist experience (execution of the product)

DESCRIPTION

Routemotion is a service that collaborates with marketing representatives to create mobile apps that attract and enhance tourism in the user's local area.

Routemotion is designed to be used in cities, villages, museums, parks, and any other entity that wants to attract travellers and enhance their experience.

With Routemotion, those in the travel industry have the ability to create sleek and functional custom-made applications.

These resulting apps will have many benefits for tourists: guide travellers through custom itineraries, offering a host of helpful information in the different forms such as audio, video, articles, etc. The applications will also have the ability to showcase the recommended sights and amenities, including places to eat, hotels or inns, and all kinds of activities. Along with in-app routes, geo-tags can be created alerting tourists to interesting points or triggering audio guides.

They work with different tourism actors as destinations, museums, cities, villages, parks, tour guides.

These mobile apps will work on iOS and/or Android devices.



WEBSITE AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Website: www.routemotion.com
Email: info@routemotion.com

With the apps developed thanks to Routemotion, it is possible to:

- Enhance tourist's travel experience
- Allow to discover beautiful new places
- Help tourists with travel itineraries
- Customize tours of the destination
- Self-guide museum or park tour
- Audio guides, information and alerts with relevant information
- Ideas for the best restaurants, hotels, museums, etc.

SOLUTION

This company focuses on developing applications that help destinations show their potential. It is a tool for promotion and communication, thanks to a modular, flexible custom App Building Platform. The company develops a personalized app that can be as simple or as extensive as the destination wants.

USE

Routemotions is a SaaS (software as a service) solution that allows the development of custom mobile Apps supporting many types of contents and features that destinations can easily activate or deactivate in the app. These include:

- Dynamic trails and routes
- Geo-tagged audio segments
- Geo-tagged observation points
- Multi-language content
- Multimedia articles
- Maps
- Online/offline support
- Places to eat, sleep, and relax
- Suggested equipment

It also works with an administrative console that controls the app allowing the destination to:

- Activate or deactivate various features and modules within the app
- Publish new content and offer new features
- Create itineraries and routes for users to enjoy
- Add navigation features and maps to help users get from place to place
- Create geo-tags at interesting points, triggering audio guides, music, etc.
- Provide multiple languages for visitors to choose from
- Create rich multimedia content
- Customize the app by adding recommended hotels, restaurants, agritourism, museums, and more along the route

PRODUCT PROMOTER

Routemotion is developed by a team of experienced mobile and web app developers at Palmologix Technologies, a technology company based in Berlin.

DESTINATION

It was not possible to find a specific example. For more information contact: **info@routemotion.com**



COST

Routemotion proposes a personalised budget depending on the characteristics of the app to be developed, the maintenance required, etc.

WhaiWhai

WhaiWhai is an innovative solution that combines gaming with travel guidebooks, a different way to learn and discover a place while playing. In terms of Slow Tourism, where learning takes on a new meaning and relevance, WhaiWhai guides help to improve the tourists' experiences allowing them not only to discover places but to have fun and to be aware of the environment at the same time.

TECH CATEGORY

- Co-creation of experience
- Guide Books and gaming

PRODUCT PHASE APPLICABILITY

This innovative solution is applicable to the following phases of the Slow Tourism product design and/or execution:

- Communication and promotion
- Conceptualization and management

DESCRIPTION

WhaiWhai guidebooks are unconventional guides for tourists and travellers who are looking for an experience that is out-of-the-ordinary.

In the WhaiWhai guidebook series, readers will experience an interactive treasure hunt through different cities, unlocking their mysteries and discovering their most charming corners.

In order to experience this treasure hunt, the visitor will need the WhaiWhai guidebook of the destination and a mobile phone. The phone can send text messages to WhaiWhai that includes a special code and the traveller will immediately receive the first clue. As the customer travels to each new location throughout the city, a new clue is revealed.

WhaiWhai Guides are available in different cities, where each one hides a different treasure. In addition, each experience combines history and fantasy, allowing readers to step into a story that plays out inside the city.



WEBSITE AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Website: www.whaiwhai.com
Email: info@whaiwhai.com

- Gamified sightseeing
- Enhances the travel experience for the tourists
- Allows travellers to discover beautiful new places
- Helps visitors in travel itineraries
- Gamified tours of the destination

SOLUTION

The company has created these innovative tourist guides, which combine a guidebook with an elaborated game around the destination.

On the game book's first pages, the consumer will find all the indications that will explain how to play and the game.

This innovation helps to improve the tourists' experiences, thanks to the following characteristics:

- A non-traditional printed guidebook
- Catchy storytelling that aims to give added value to the sightseeing experience of tourists by engaging them
- Combining traditional guidebook characteristics with a treasure hunt experience
- Creating game-like learning experiences
- Helping visitors discover a destination's hidden gems by stepping into a story that plays out inside the city and making them the hero of an adventure

USE

WhaiWhai does not use any app or internet platform. Instead it uses text messages via mobile phone for a real-time interaction during the games. It consists of printed city guides that invite tourists to explore the city as a treasure hunter. By sending a text message and setting the duration, difficulty level and start location, the game begins.

The participant will receive different challenges and riddles while walking through the city, and get a part of the story that is told about the city every time. Users can either play alone and enjoy an atypical tour of the city, or in a group. It is also possible to live the WhaiWhai experience from home, solving the challenges and riddles without actually going to the locations.

PRODUCT PROMOTER

LOG607 is a company based in Venetia (Italy) that sees the game as an instrument and not as a goal, as a means of presenting an experience.

In addition, LOG607 is an Italian publisher that has been producing a series of playful guides, mostly to Italian cities that combine books with games users play through text messaging.

DESTINATION

Each game experience lets the visitor read about six stories and see six locations: New York, Milan, Verona, Rome, Venice and Florence.

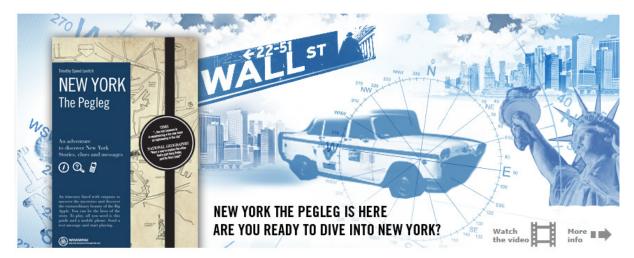
The traveller can play two times with one guide. The system will remember customer and lead them to different places and different stories when they play again.

Below is an example of a destination that has a WhaiWhai guide:

• New York Guide. The Pegleg

Readers will find themselves flung back to 1647.

Through a fictional story, the visitor will discover streets, hidden places and squares, stories and original tales about the city.



COST

The company will propose a personalised budget depending on the characteristics of the guidebook and the story to be developed, etc.

OTHER APPLICABILITY

Despite the fact that guidebooks are usually related to their destination, this innovative solution can be applied to experiences, including museum experiences and even tourist packages. It consists of developing a game around an experience, so this idea can be extrapolated to other slow tourism options, including the exploration of heritage and nature sites.

Note: All the information has been extracted from the company's website.









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