

Roger Evans, Evanter OÜ
and
Kathy Velandar, Napier University

The role of rural tourism in rural development,
how is the sector changing: *considerations of change
in the last ten years – are there new roles for RT in the 21st
century?*

The Changing Face of Rural Tourism

Rural tourism can be defined as the “country experience” which encompasses a wide range of attractions and activities that take place in agricultural or non-urban areas.

Its essential characteristics include wide-open spaces, low levels of tourism development, and opportunities for visitors to directly experience agricultural and/or natural environments.

Traditionally – rural tourism fell into three categories

- Agritourism – accommodation, activities (e.g. tours, bird watching, shooting, fishing), sale of farm produce (e.g. pick your own, traditional cheeses)
- Activities that took place in rural areas sold as education or healthy living , e.g. writing and painting retreats, yoga, meditation retreats, mushroom picking courses, etc.
- Volunteer experience – e.g. WWOOF (ers)
(World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms)

Now –greater variety of experiences, services and diversifying products

Experiences: Motor bike racing, Bootcamps, Cliff top tours, adventure play areas

Services: Accommodation from 5 * brochs to alternative accommodation such as wigwams, yurts and hostels

Products: Cold pressed rape seed oil, chocolate coated strawberries, ice cream (and adventure play ground)

Developments in rural tourism

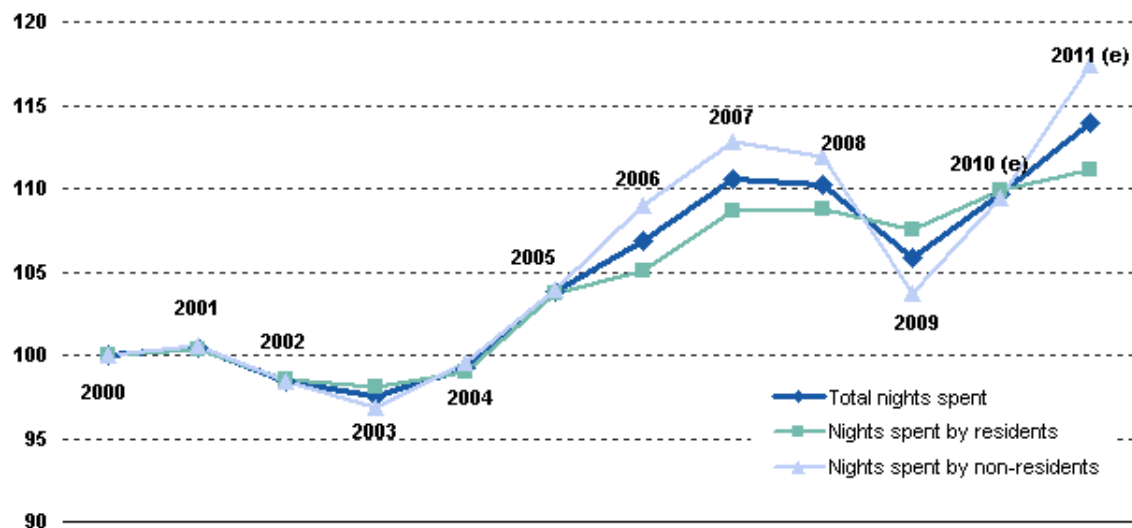
- The World Tourism Organisation predicts that most of the increase in **European** tourism receipts over the coming decade will come from alternative forms of travel not involving the classic 'sun and sand' tourism.
- Alternative types of tourism are expected to account for over 20% of all travel in the next 20 years and is set to grow faster than any other market segment.
- Some of the growth will come from a greater volume of tourists, but a significant portion will result from a shift in tourist numbers between the different segments.

Tourism trends

File: Number of nights spent in hotels and similar establishments, EU-27, 2000-2011.PNG

[File](#) [File history](#) [File links](#)

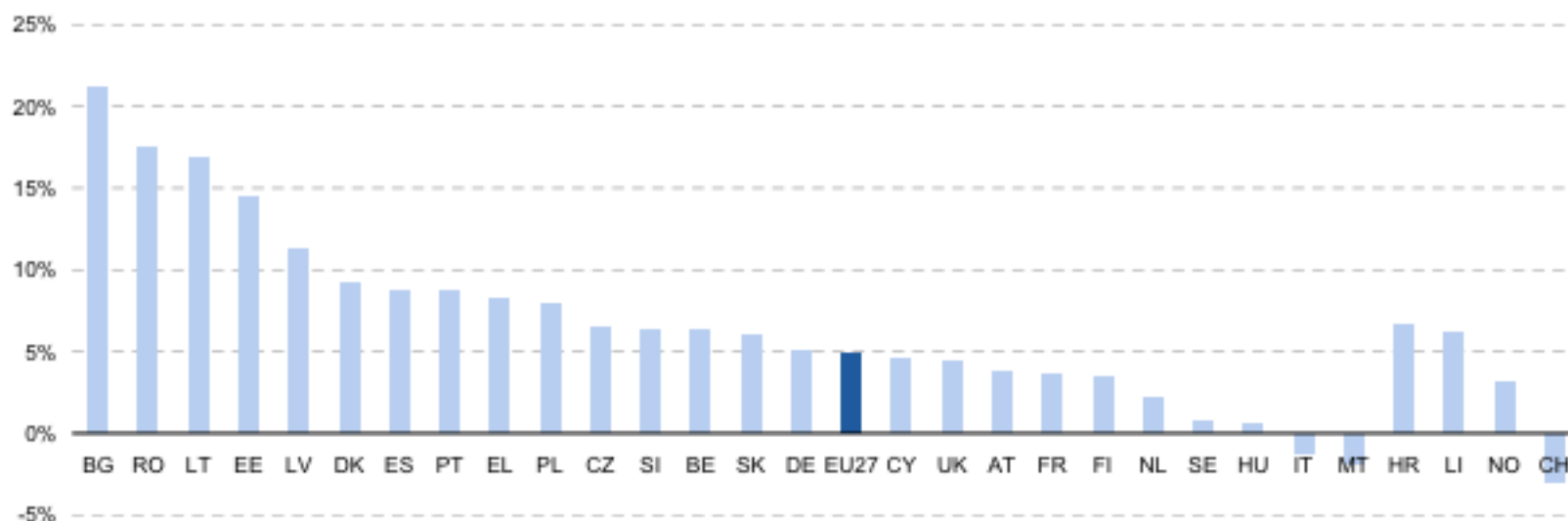
[Current revision](#) (unreviewed)



Notes: (i) Data for 2000, 2001 and 2002 include estimates for Malta (residents' nights); data for 2010 based on estimates for IE and LU using the available monthly data. (ii) Estimate for 2011 made for the purpose of this publication (see also the footnote to Table 1).

Changing trends

Figure 1: Percentage change in number of nights spent in hotels and similar establishments, non-residents and residents, June-September 2011 compared with the same period in 2010.



(¹) Note: EU-27 estimate made for the purpose of this publication, not including IE and LU.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: [tour_occ_nim](#))

Changing trends

There may be several reasons for shifting trends:

- people are becoming more experienced in travelling and discerning in their choice of destination, leading them to search for new places and new tourism products
- they are more mobile - cross border travel is easier than ever thanks to the liberalisation of the airlines, construction of new roads and European integration;

Changing trends

There may be several reasons for shifting trends:

- they are taking shorter but more frequent holidays throughout the year
- they are more active whilst on holiday, seeking out different activities
- the European population is getting older but staying active longer
- and finally people are increasingly concerned about the environment.

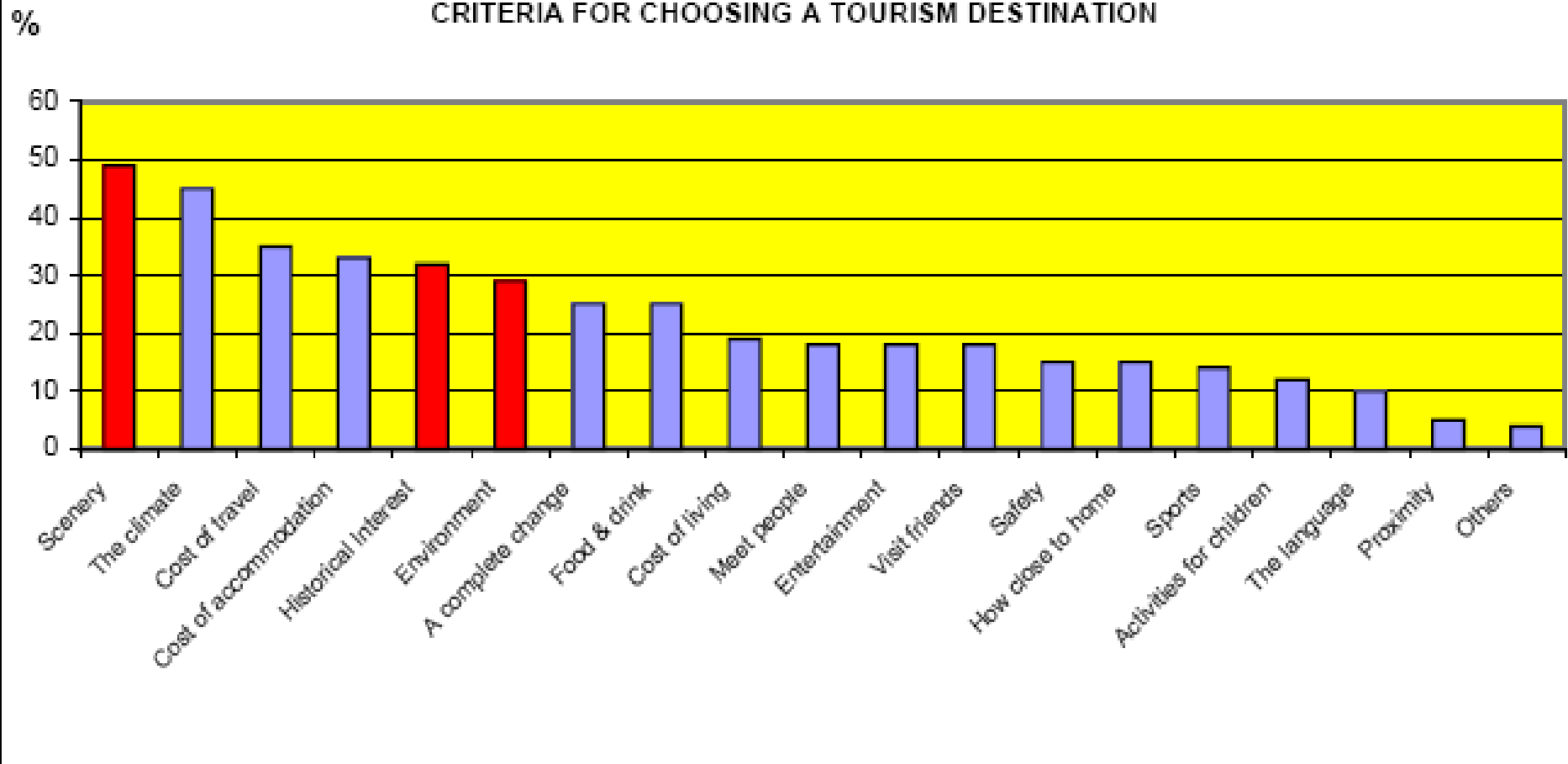
Choice of holiday

In a survey of Europeans on holiday at the end of the 90's:

- the sea was the most popular holiday choice, (63%) for Europeans but a significant number also give the countryside (23%) as a preferred destination.
- As to the criteria for choosing one area over another, not surprisingly the climate figures prominently (45%)
- but so do other factors such as scenery, historical interest and the environment, which are on a level with the cost of accommodation and travel.

Choice of holiday

CRITERIA FOR CHOOSING A TOURISM DESTINATION



Choice of holiday

- The previous slide and other market surveys clearly illustrate the growing popularity of alternative forms of tourism within Europe. But it seems that very little detailed market research has been conducted on these market segments to understand how they function.
- Yet, to be able to develop an appropriate and sustainable tourism product it is vital to have, as a minimum, reliable data on market potential and on the target group profiles and expectations.

Choice of holiday

- Part of the problem undoubtedly lies in the fact that terms like:
 - 'niche' market
 - 'eco' tourism
 - 'green' tourism
 - 'alternative' tourism,
- are not precise.

On closer inspection, each one of these is made up of a very heterogeneous mix of different market segments, which attract different people for different reasons.

Choice of holiday



Choice of activities

Typical tourism activities might include:

- Tourists in search of natural (and cultural) heritage seem to look for a wide range of different attractions and activities designed to satisfy different needs, be they for learning, relaxation, recreation or adventure, amongst others.
- Some are highly seasonal, but most can be done all year round or in the low season as well (thus allowing the tourism season to be extended).
- Some can be undertaken in a couple of hours, others need a couple of days, and yet others may require people to stay a week or more.

Choice of activities in rural tourism

Nature tourism:

- walking, hiking, cycling;
- general sightseeing and outdoors, admiring scenery, picnicking, swimming ...
- wildlife viewing : birdwatching, whale watching ... ;
- visiting nature reserves and park visitor centres;
- canoeing, cross-country skiing, horse riding, sailing, boating;
- hunting, fishing, harvesting (berry picking);
- participating in nature conservation: removing scrub, mowing fields

Choice of activities

Adventure tourism:

- dog sledging, skiing, skidooing;
- white water river rafting, body surfing, rock climbing, mountain biking, paragliding;
- orienteering, leadership building;
- incentive tours (for companies).

Choice of activities

Education tourism:

- field courses in conservation, species identification, rehabilitation;
- courses in local cuisine, making handicrafts, restoration ;
- courses in music, painting, language, photography;
- learning about local history, art, heritage.

Choice of activities

Cultural tourism:

- festivals and events, banquets;
- music, theatre, shows;
- village life and rural life (e.g. farms, Sunday markets,);
- gastronomy, visiting/tasting local products;
- general sightseeing, village buildings and 'atmosphere' ;
- visiting historic and religious monuments or vernacular buildings, ruins;
- famous people in the region.

Choice of activities

Normally, provided these activities are carefully planned, they should be environmentally friendly as they are non-consumptive.

- However, certain extreme forms of adventure sports, especially when 'off piste' (skiing, mountain biking...) can be very destructive even in small quantities.
- The same is true for consumptive activities that are not properly managed or regulated (berry picking, fishing, ...).

A lot of products and experiences available, what gives you your USP?

Quality

High standards

Price

Individuality

Consistency

But also - your location, neighbouring businesses
and regional or district business management

Customer expectations

According to a recent ecotourism survey on German tourists, the four most important expectations for tourists seeking nature and culture orientated holidays were as follows:

- 50% expect small accommodation businesses run by locals
- 45% want to go hiking by themselves and want to be provided with good information
- 41% expect local cuisine (food) with local ingredients
- 41% expect strong local hospitality; they want to feel welcome.

Common motivating factors for natural and cultural heritage tourists

Different people are attracted to different forms of tourism for different reasons. Common motivating factors often include one or more of the following:

- physical well being and health
- discovery, intellectual stimulation and education
- enjoyment of unspoilt nature and beautiful scenery
- contact with people from different backgrounds and cultures in a more personalised and intimate setting than would be found in the mass tourism destinations
- or simply just adventure and excitement.

Supply issues in rural tourism

Tourism and especially rural tourism is unlike most manufactured products in that:

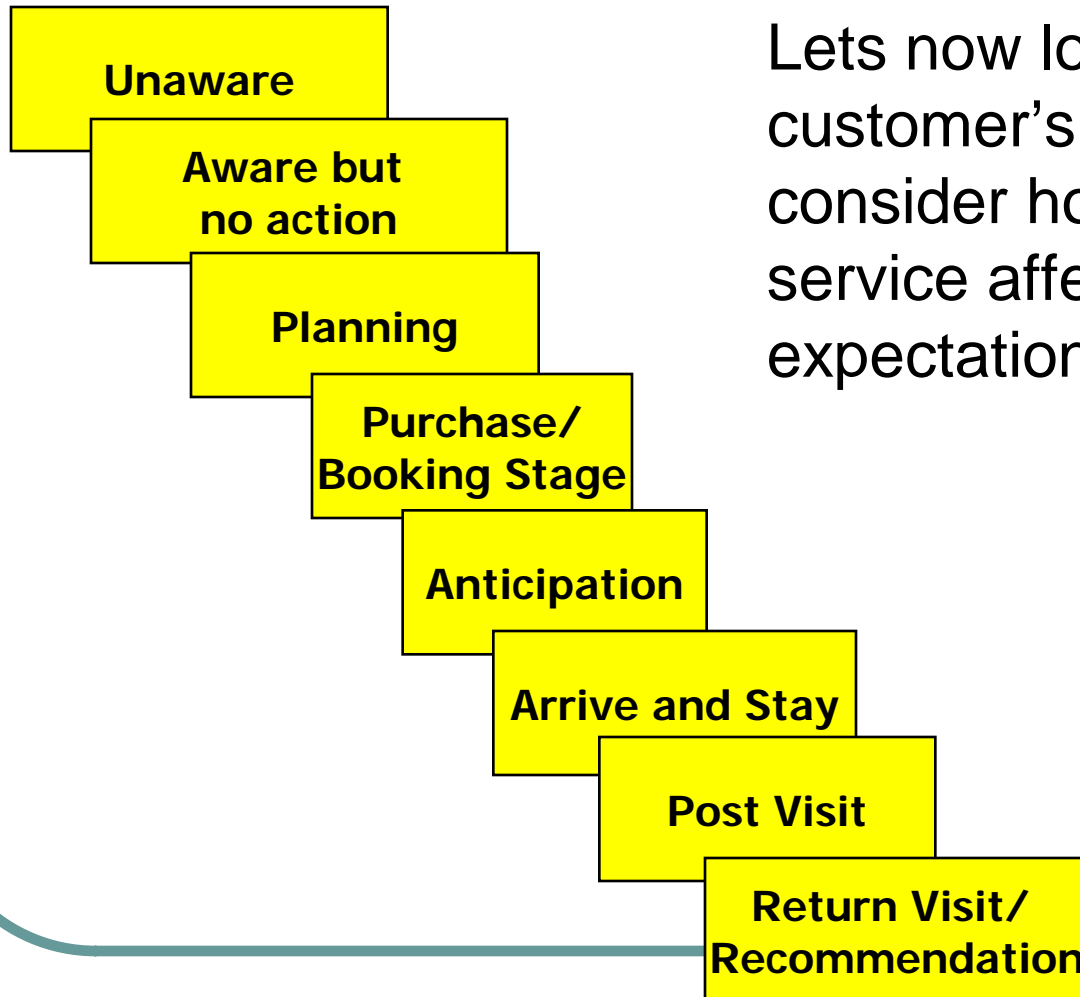
- it cannot be stored and “bulked up”
- difficult to examine before purchase/consumption
- it is necessary for the consumer to travel to the product
- strong emphasis on the natural and man made resources
- a number of components are required in chain of services which may be separately or jointly purchased and are consumed in a sequence

Supply issues in rural tourism

The following components combine to create a chain or composite of services including:

- travel/transport
- accommodation
- catering
- entertainment
- natural resources
- other services- banks, travel agents/tour operators, locally purchased food and fuel,

The Customer Journey



Lets now look at a tourism customer's journey and consider how and where service affects their expectations

The Customer Journey

This places you in the shoes of the Customer

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the telephone enquiry• response to the enquiry• the sales visit?• customer details | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• booking procedures• on the day/holiday• how did it go• customer loyalty (repeat visits) |
|---|--|

How to manage rural tourism?

What are the issues and how has rural tourism responded to these challenges?

Rural tourism as a sector is unlike much of the rest of the industry:

- small scale and locally owned
- business operators have a wide range of differing objectives
- companies are inter-reliant on each other
- often highly seasonal operation
- extremely reliant on cooperation to be effective
- often distant from main customer entry points to their region

How to manage rural tourism?

Challenges facing rural tourism providers

- Economy in general and particularly fuel prices
- Lack of market awareness – an entrepreneur has a vision, but doesn't look at demand, local competition or how to develop it into cluster tourism
- Product - location linkages – need to ensure product fit for purpose for the location
- Cost of getting heard in the market place
- Lack of suitable training – tailor made to suit their business operations and business style, but also need to understand what tourists want
- Standards – accommodation and tours should be rated and not just on trip advisor or some other uncontrolled web site
- Product placement – National/International? Where do you fit in?

How to manage rural tourism?

How has the sector developed

Rural tourism operators across broad areas of Europe have made great strides in terms of:

- professionalism
- the number of rural tourism co-operations and networks
- quality of product and service provision
- the level of entrepreneurship, innovation and product development
- understanding of customer expectations – especially internationally
- the number and variety of enterprises, infrastructure provision and information
- cooperation and engagement with local communities: ecomuseums, EDEN & Pan Parks

What future for rural tourism?

Political & EU policy:

Tourism: keeping Europe the world's top destination

To achieve these objectives, actions promoting tourism may be grouped under the following four priorities:

- (1) Stimulate competitiveness in the European tourism sector;
- (2) Promote the development of sustainable, responsible and high-quality tourism (EDEN, NECSTouR);
- (3) Consolidate the image and profile of Europe as a collection of sustainable and high quality destinations (portal **visiteurope.com**);
- (4) Maximise the potential of EU financial policies and instruments for developing tourism.

Common Strategic Framework funding

Rural development and LEADER

Structural Funds

Community-Led Local Development

Cross border initiatives

DISCOVER

PLAN

SHARE

Why visit?

History

People

Regions

Themes

Countries

Outdoors... Baltic States

Biking & Cycling

Ecotourism

Nature

Horse riding

National parks

Beaches

Leisure... Baltic States

Cuisine

Beverages

Nightlife

Shopping

Culture... Baltic States

Cultural routes

Museums

Music

UNESCO

Festivals

Visit the local National Tourism Organisation websites to find out more

Estonia

Latvia

Lithuania

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Useful Links

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Tweet

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Flora and Fauna in the Baltic States

The Baltic States, hugging the south coast of the Baltic Sea and extending inland, offer vast expanses of forest and barely untouched wilderness where you can almost feel you're travelling back in time, there's so little disruption from us humans. Verdant flora and robust fauna abound in the region, as will your delight at discovering them!



Lithuania

Lithuania

Firstly mentioned in 1009, Lithuania boasts of an eight hundred years statehood tradition...



Latvia

Ancient history, traditions, nature, the Baltic Sea and beautiful forests on the shores - Latvia



Estonia

An amazing place of natural beauty and steeped in colourful history...

How to manage rural tourism?

One man band – with the right product you can succeed

Cluster of businesses – can be effective and relatively inexpensive to run, but funding can be problematic

Regional or District Organisation – effective, but expensive

One man band

- Cream O' Galloway – opened in 1992 went from 7,000 to over 60,000 visitors per year, income over £500,000 just from visitors and sale of ice cream in the farm visitor centre (also market products elsewhere)
- Also serve meals, sell gifts and crafts, arrange functions and run classes in ice cream making
- Other entrepreneurs in area now based on their success
- One man bands can themselves become destinations (everyone thought Walt Disney was mad)

What can I see on the farm tour?



VISITOR CENTRE

- VISIT US
- Activities
- Events
- Ice Cream
- Food at Cream o Galloway
- Wildlife
- Special Offers
- Parties & Functions
- Group Visits
- Keep in Touch
- About Us

GREEN TOURISM

- Green Tourism
- Sustainability
- Organic Farming
- Environmental Work

SIGN UP TO SCOOP

- Sign up for SCOOP here
- Scoop 2012 #9
- Scoop 2012 #8
- Scoop 2012 #7
- Scoop 2012 #6
- Scoop 2012 #5
- Scoop 2012 #4
- Scoop 2012 #3
- Scoop 2012 #2
- Scoop 2012 #1

Cream o' Galloway Visitor Centre

Fill your day with fun and flavour with a trip to Cream o' Galloway

This section of the website contains a wealth of information about things to see and do. You'll find everything from [opening times](#) and [pricing information](#) to [suggested itineraries](#) and [birthday parties](#).

There's action and adventure with our [adrenaline pumping slides](#), [pedal karts](#), [bikes](#), our unique woodland [adventure playground](#) and [indoor play areas](#).

You can explore the [nature trails](#), do some [wildlife spotting](#) in our hide or take part in one of our [special wildlife events](#). There's a designated [dog walk](#) where your canine friends can run free and walkers with dogs under control are welcome on the green or purple waymarked nature trails.

There are [events](#) taking place every day we're open at Cream o' Galloway and lots of [special events](#) that run at particular times of the year, such as [Meet the Lambs in Spring](#) or [Pond Dipping in Summer](#). Our most popular events are the [Farm Tour](#) and the [Ice Cream Experience](#) which are available each day we are open.

We hope you enjoy planning your adventure at Cream o' Galloway and we look forward to welcoming you soon.



DUMERIES

cream o' GALLOWAY
SIMPLY NATURAL

ice cream
WOW!

form
adventure
yummy
make
drop
tours
scenery

trails
garden
bikes
picnics
slide
fun
tower

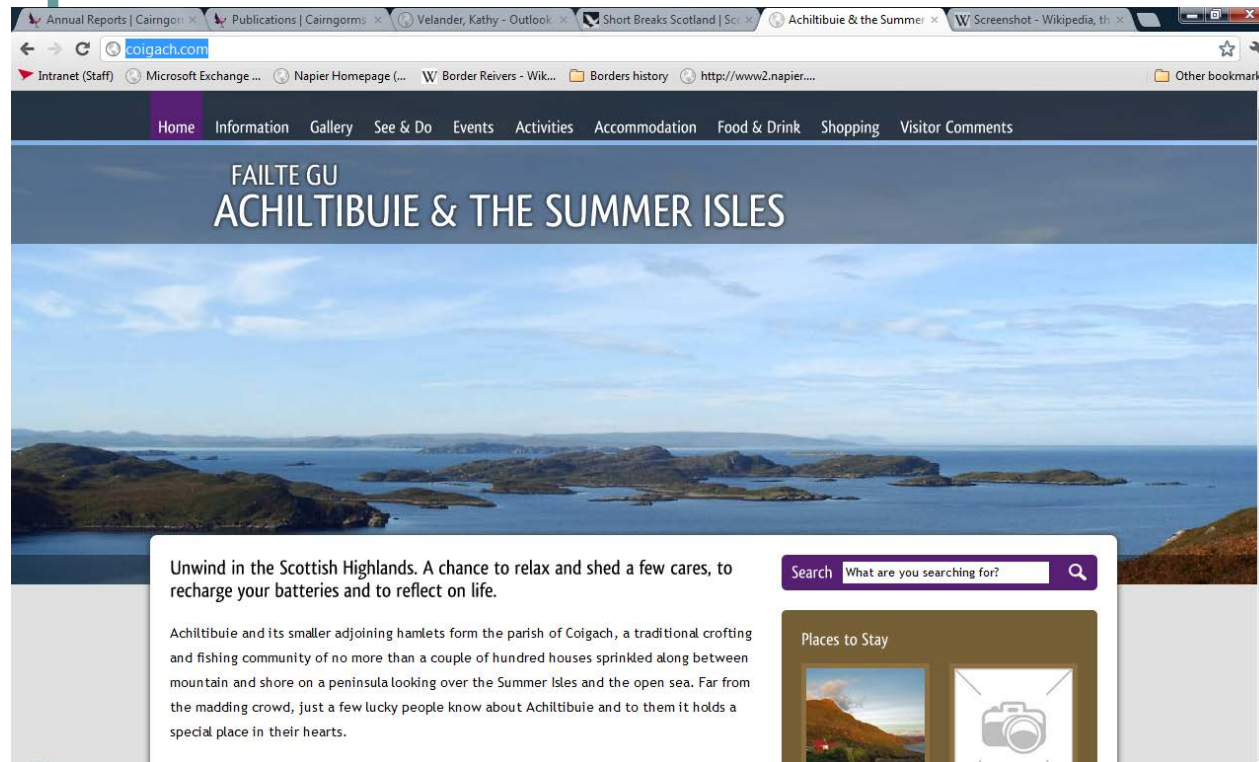
play
sundaes
explore
woodlands
enjoy
challenge
delicious

animals
natural
walks
friends
fantastic
burgers

rides
enjoy
fun

2012

Cluster of businesses



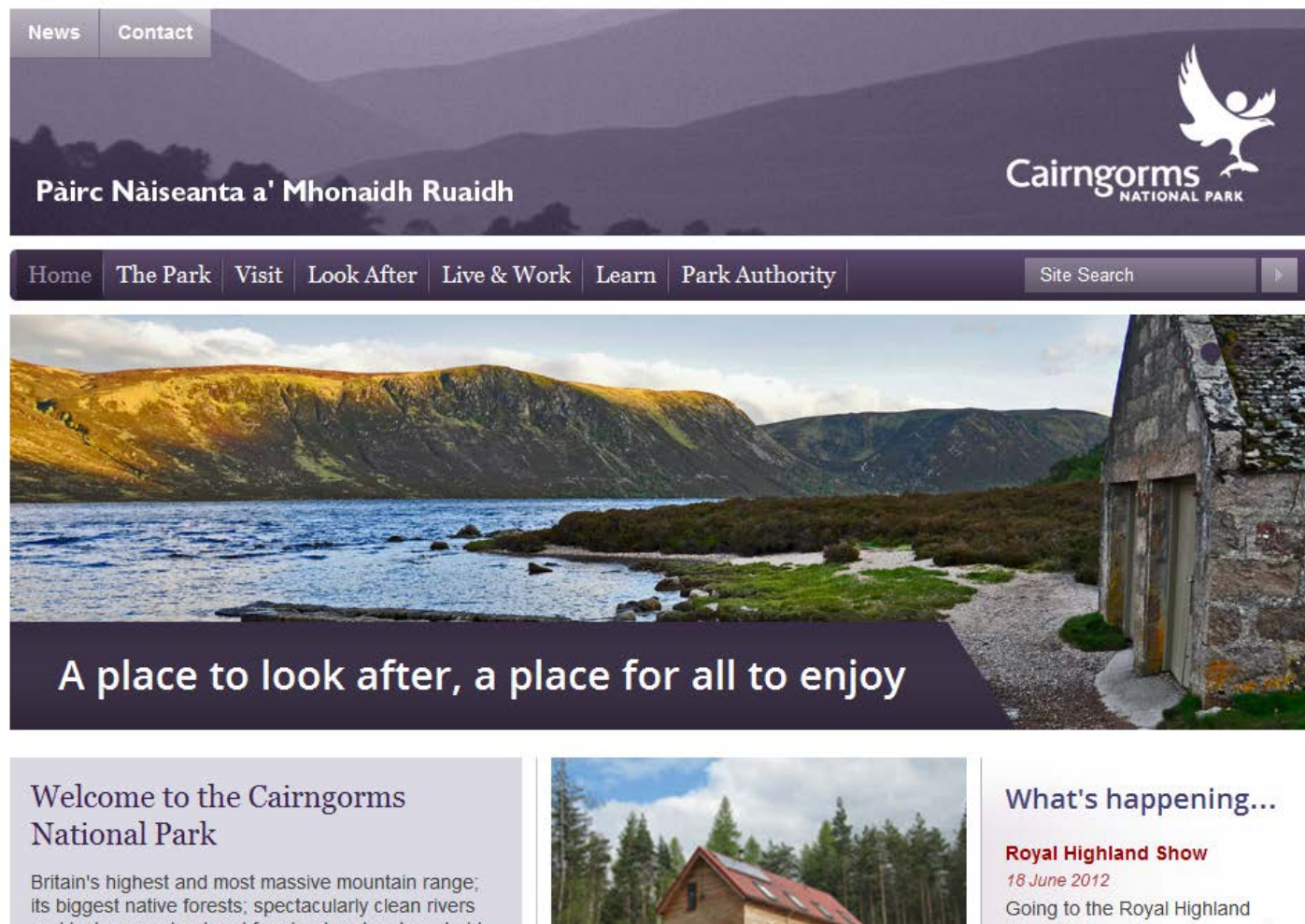
Advantages

- Low cost – cost of web site, server and designer (or can be self designed)
- Joint marketing
- Easily managed and updated
- Professional presence for SMEs

Disadvantages

- Web sites can look amateurish
- Listing order may disadvantage your business

Regional Organisations / District Management Organisations (DMOs)



Largest National Park in Scotland. Established – 2003

Funded by Scottish Government (£3.5m/start , £1.5 in 2004 rising to £4.5m by 2007)

Aims:

- to create a world class national park
- to create an internationally renown destination
- to be an exemplar in sustainable development

Tourism in the **Cairngorms** National Park accounts for almost a third of the Gross Value Added (GVA) at around £115m out of a total of £399m GVA.

PLANNING & CARING FOR THE PARK

- Conservation Projects
- Land Ownership
- Land Management Forum
- Mountains
- Moorlands
- Forests & Woodland
- Farmland
- Deer
- Lochs & Rivers
- Climate Change

Cairngorms Landscape Toolkit >

Planning >

Cairngorms National Park Design Awards >

SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES & THE ECONOMY

- Communities
- Going to School
- Cairngorms Local Action Group
- Feel the History
- Economy of the Park
- Cairngorms Business Partnership
- Sustainable Tourism Forum
- Tomintoul and Glenlivet Regeneration Project
- Digital Connectivity - Broadband and Mobile

Cairngorms Landscape Toolkit >

Cairngorms National Park Design Awards >

“Tourism ...creating 3600 jobs (full-time equivalent) and about £100 million annually”

EDEN

The key feature of EDEN destinations is their commitment to social, cultural and environmental sustainability. Estonian sites are:

- 2008 – Tourism and local intangible heritage
 - Viljandi Town, Estonia
- 2009 – Tourism and protected areas
 - Soomaa National Park, Estonia
- 2010 – Aquatic Tourism
 - Lake Võrtsjärve, Estonia
- 2011 - Tourism and Regeneration of physical sites
 - Lahemaa National Park Manors (Estonia)

EDEN



Lake Vortsjarve, Estonia



Soomaa National Park, Estonia



Viljandi Town, Estonia



**Lahemaa National Park Manors
(Estonia)**

Ecomuseums

European Network of Ecomuseums (2004) provided a concise definition, namely that: “An ecomuseum is a dynamic way in which communities preserve, interpret, and manage their heritage for sustainable development. An ecomuseum is based on a community agreement”.

Davis (1999:228) suggested that the following list of attributes can be applied to most of them:

- 1.The adoption of a territory that is not necessarily defined by conventional boundaries.
- 2.The adoption of a 'fragmented site' policy that is linked to in-situ conservation and interpretation.
- 3.Conventional views of site ownership are abandoned; conservation and interpretation of sites is carried out via liaison, co-operation and the development of partnerships.
- 4.The empowerment of local communities; the involvement of local people in ecomuseum activities and in the creation of their cultural identity.
- 5.The potential for interdisciplinarity and for holistic interpretation is usually seized.

Staffin Ecomuseum-Skye, Scotland

Staffin Community Trust
Urras an Taobh Sear



Staffin Ecomuseum - It's out there!

Scotland's only ecomuseum is on Skye

Where can you -

Discover the footprints of a flesh-eating dinosaur?

Touch 175 million-year old wave ripples?

Find the best rock pools for plant and animal life?

Explore the original hunting grounds of Skye's stone-age people?

Watch eagles and take a bird's eye view yourself?

Communicate in Gaelic as a living language?

Feel the rhythms of crofting life?

Watch a waterfall tumbling down a 200 ft basalt cliff with a kilt like appearance?

Or drive through a theatre of geology along Europe's longest inland cliff??...

Ceumannan (footsteps or paths in Gaelic) invites you to explore Staffin's Ecomuseum in north-east Skye. There are 13 unique sites to be discovered in the landscape - each with its own story to tell. For three years Urras an Taobh Sear (Staffin Community Trust) - has been creating Scotland's first 'ecomuseum'. The work was financed by the North Highland LEADER+ Programme, Scottish Executive, Heritage Lottery Fund, SNH, HIE Skye & Wester Ross, The Highland Council, Highland 2007 and Comann na Gàidhlig.

What makes Staffin unique is the assemblage of natural and heritage elements. The Trust has built on the natural resources of the area, by opening up the landscape for all to explore through interpreting the vast

LOCAL INFO

Churches

School

Bus Timetable

Weather

Community Council

Nature

Dinosaurs in Trotternish

Archaeology

Staffin

Walks

Staffin Museum

Ecomuseum

Campsites

Staffin Campsite

Accommodation

Bed and Breakfast List

Hotels

Flodigarry Country House Hotel

Glen View Hotel

Hostels

Dun Flodigarry Hostel



Conclusions

- Rural tourism has come a long way, but still suffers from entrepreneur lack of knowledge about tourism, lack of overall direction and leadership, fragmentation of locations, access to appropriate skills and training
- However, no matter of how good your product is, without customers it is valueless
- Think about demand when creating a product

Workgroup: Supply issues in rural tourism

The supply of any tourism product or service is a complex issue because of the nature of the product and the process of delivery:

In workgroups consider the unique characteristics of rural tourism:

1. which make it different from other types of non-tourism products that people purchase
2. how these characteristics impact on the provision of rural tourism
3. what steps rural tourism operators can take to overcome any disadvantages which derive from this
4. in what ways can rural communities exploit the unique characteristics of rural tourism to ensure continued growth of the sector

Thank you for listening

