

TERRITORY MARKETING STRATEGY: A LOW BUDGET WEB MARKETING STRATEGY FOR SÃO TOME E PRINCIPE

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Aiming to achieve an international recognition as a touristic destination, national travel and tourism authorities of São Tome e Principe might focus their strategies based on digital media for global communication results. Notwithstanding their reduced budget and sparse resources São Tome e Principe authorities have at their disposal a set of methods and instruments that would allow attain such objectives. Along this work it is presented a possible web marketing strategy for Sao Tomé e Principe territory, encompassing all activities and their dynamics. The results of this paper assists to clarifying the conceptual issues provided in the literature related to technologies or web applications comprised, also linking them to theoretical marketing knowledge foundations

Keywords: Web marketing, Digital media, Tourism, São Tomé e Principe, Communication

1. Introduction

Tourism players need to adapt almost as the same rhythm of technologies development. Indeed, technology and the internet have created a revolution in tourism marketing (Pease and Rowe 2005)

Actually despite the disparity of locations and related characteristics, all of them might compete for the same customer. Web technologies' doesn't only inspires and provides consumers powerful information's on potential travel destinations, but also pushes them to take immediate action. Moreover once in touch with potential or actual consumers, web technologies allow to tourism players to continue their endless efforts for a new visit or a return. Nowadays mobile devices (smartphones, tablets or any other computer portable based device) had already largely surpassed the number of computers or workstations (Pease and Rowe 2005) This tendency is much more than a technology issue – it represents a common social paradigm, at almost developed countries.

As a result it no surprise that easy access to unlimited information combines with peoples' craving to share their experience with others. Many of them are aiming to get some “out of formal circuits” information's. Such tendency has just created a huge shift in the types of offers that people take, where and when they go, how they book and what activities are they pursuing while travelling. The standard agency played offer has become almost obsolete facing the personalized and customized travel itinerary. At this step, consumers have powerful tools at their disposal and so tourism operators. Therefore, throughout web technologies powered by such social media society, nowadays it is almost possible that a hotel located at São Tome e Principe has just as much access to reach a potential visitor as a five star caribbean hotel.

Given that web marketing it is an almost low cost strategy and because online marketing is easily accessible, it has opened up global competition, accessible to all tourism players.

This paper draws a possible strategy for a small African country with sparse resources but with phenomenal tourism potential – São Tomé e Príncipe. Regarding such objective this research has just endorsed the follow questions:

What kind of presence is possible to maintain on web with STP available resources (financial resources and human resources)?

Which kind of dynamics among adopted tools and techniques would it be possible to address for STP tourism office?

How would it be possible to bring closer the users' personal preferences and the recommendation systems?

2. São Tomé e Príncipe

Discovered and claimed by Portugal in the late 15th century, the islands' sugar-based economy gave way to coffee and cocoa in the 19th century - all grown with African plantation slave labor, a form of which lingered into the 20th century. While independence was achieved in 1975, democratic reforms were not instituted until the late 1980s. The country held its first free elections in 1991. The recent discovery of oil in the Gulf of Guinea promises to attract increased attention to the small island nation (CIA 2013).

2.1. Country Dimensions

São Tomé e Príncipe (STP) has two islands located over equator line on Atlantic Ocean at 300km from Africa coast. Both islands are composed by a dozen of islets and rock scattered along 1000km². STP has little more than 188 thousands inhabitants, being one of the smallest countries of Africa in dimension but also in economy (CIA 2013).

Despite its small dimensions STP may have proud from its own scene of extraordinary beauty and the lush vegetation. Besides, the fantastic scenery and the exceptional climate, award the archipelago all the necessary conditions for the tourism development in this still unexplored country (Lima, 2011).

The most relevant aspects to the tourism development of STP focus: ecotourism (lush vegetation occupying more than 15% of territory, wonderful mountains which rise above the 1000 meters, fauna and flora), sea (magnificent beaches, dolphins and whales in a turquoise sea), cacao (STP has one of the best quality cacao in world), its friendly people and the security of its territory (albeit located in Africa, Sao Tome is a territory of stable governance and citizenship concepts well developed)

2.2. Social Characteristics

During many years STP population was acknowledged on basis of folk group. Albeit such notation remains, STP people are already characterized by its professional occupation.

STP population is homogeneous in gender and it is quite young (in reference to European standards), with 44% of the population under 14 years and 30% aged between 25 and 54 years (INSS, 2012).

STP population has a literacy rate about 69,5% (CIA 2013), an interesting value for an African country although a wretched value for developed countries. STP education system still needs for better improvements at many levels: schools network, professors formation and students conditions (Lemos and Cardoso, 2005).

The country has also registered significant improvements in human development front recently. Actually it ranks 144th out of 186 countries in UNDP's Human Development Index (IHDI), higher than the average in Sub-Saharan Africa and with consistently improving indicators.

Moreover, great strides have been made in education and health outcomes. Recent achievements include a sharp decline in maternal and child mortality rates due in large part to an increase in the proportion of births attended by skilled birth attendants. Important progress has been achieved in the fight against malaria, with a record low incidence as well as HIV/AIDS prevalence at less than 1.5% . STP has also registered excellent progress in education, especially in primary education. STP is close to achieving primary education completion rate at 97%. Secondary education has not yet universal coverage with supply limited to main urban areas.

For the future some population concerns are usually addressed, such as:

- i) to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger;
- ii) to promote gender equality and empower women (high unemployment rate);
- iii) to reduce child mortality;
- iv) to improve maternal health;
- v) to ensure environmental sustainability and develop a global partnership for development

2.3. Economic

STP as a lower middle-income country and an archipelago of just over 1,000 square kilometers, is one of the smallest economies in Africa. STP has a per capita Gross National Income (GNI) of about US\$2,080, although it has been increased 3,9% in 2012. It is highly dependent on external support, with over 85% of its budget financed by Development Partners.

Accordingly to some recent studies, more than 60% of STP population lives below poverty line. These values have becoming worst since 2001, when, accordingly to World Bank, was 51% of population were on that conditions (WorldBank 2013).

The Government of STP has prepared a poverty reduction strategy paper, which identifies and sets forth the country's priority areas of intervention for a five-year period (2012-2016): promoting good governance and public-sector reform; supporting sustainable and inclusive economic growth; enhancing human capital and extending basic social services; and reinforcing social cohesion and social protection, particularly for vulnerable population groups.

In order to achieve the above vision, the following general strategic objectives have been defined: i) maintaining an annual GDP growth rate of at least 6%; ii) reducing the percentage of the population living in poverty by ten percentage points (through promotion of income generating initiatives so as to improve the economy's productive capacity); and iii) improving access to basic social services to the entire population (World Bank report, 2013).

External organizations such as World Bank and United Nations aid and international cooperation with occidental countries has made possible to satisfy main population needs and some economic development on recent years.

Actually STP produces and exports cacao and coffee as well as hand-made products and some food products and commodities. Principal countries buyers are Portugal, Netherlands, Germany, France and Angola (major). Apart, tourism has been considered from STP Government a strategic area for economy development. Actually the GNP main contributors are: agriculture and forestry - 13%, (2) industrial production - 19% and (3) provision of services (tourism)- 66% (CIA 2013).

Recently, the discovery of new petroleum resources allows forecasting economic improvement of the country for years to come.

3. São Tomé e Príncipe Tourism

São Tome e Príncipe (STP) very often is considered as a paradise of heaven on turquoise sea. Indeed, STP has considerable advantages as tourist location. There are tropical islands paradises, where's possible to have a small tropical island palm-fringed beaches, turquoise sea, waterfalls, rivers, unique species of birds and plants, and perhaps, most important in an African country, no violence. People from STP are kind, friendly and warm, given to the visitor a such experience of discover and life.

STP tourism potential may be travel around in five different perspectives: Ecotourism; Beach; Sea; Cacao; and, Secure territory.

3.1. Ecotourism

Down literature review it would be possible to find many different definitions for ecotourism. Often appear as related to "responsible", "sustainable" or "green". Nevertheless, the most common

explanation shortly and briefly defines ecotourism as “responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people” (IES, 2013).

Ecotourism comprises all forms of tourism whereas tourists’ main motivation would be the observation and appreciation of nature, in order to contribute to its preservation and minimize negative impacts on the natural and socio-cultural environment (OMT, 2012).

At STP ecotourism come into sight as a development strategy given the exceptional richness of fauna and flora as well the natural country resources. Considering World Tourism Organization ecotourism market have been growing more than 20% each year, while tourism general industry growing rate its around 7,5% per year. During last year’s, STP ecotourism have been rising from 15% to 25% each year. (OMT, 2012)

The ecotourism offer ranges from the sea to the mountain. From sea that will be possible to the tourist to dive on a bounty of colored fishes and corals. Tourist will have the opportunity to enjoy the sea in many different ways: sports (diving, bodyboard or fishing), observation (dolphins or whales on water or migratory birds)

On mountain side it would be possible to the tourist walk around on a natural protected area, the OBO Park. This park offers breathtaking landscapes, virgin forests over rivers and waterfalls. STP Mountains also permit tourists to go circuits and excursions for bird watching (it’s possible to watch 25 different world rare and endemic species) in combination with the possibility to stay overnight on the premises of the old plantations (STP roças).

Beyond above possibilities tourists also have the opportunity to look to experiment the archipelago attractive and unique cultural traditions, seeking to know the natural heritage of STP.

3.2. Cacao

Sao Tome and Principe is often referred to as chocolate islands country, for the reason that it was the first mainland African territory producing cocoa. During 80s, the dominant economic activity in the archipelago was cacao, representing then 52% of total exports, surpassing the importance of any other production. The quality of cocoa produced is worldwide recognized, given its biological characteristic (Mamata 2013).

Regarding agriculture production, cocoa still is the basis of the archipelago's economy, accounting for 92% of exports of agricultural products, which resulted in 2229 tones of cacao in 2012 (Mamata 2013).

Cacao importance for tourism may represent an opportunity for associated gastronomy or specialized events similar to any other country in world, such Switzerland or Belgium

3.3. Beach & Sea

São Tomé e Príncipe has a magnificent sea and awesome beaches. Those attractions are one of the most relevant for tourism work. STP beach and sea arguments lay on archipelago’s geography, white sand, clear water, wonderful sightseers with waterfalls or every year permanent mild temperature.

It can be said that there are four main regions that privilege sea and beach tourism: North region of São Tomé Island with the beaches of the tamarin, the shells and blue lagoon; The region of São Tomé Island that includes beaches and Micondó seven waves; the southern region of São Tomé Island, referring

beaches Pool, Jalé, Xixi, Cabana and the Rolas (turtledoves) islet; and autonomous region located at Principe Island which includes banana beach (Brito, 2010).

STP ocean waters are crystalline and abundant in fish and sea food. STP ocean is habited by tuna, dolphins, swordfish, barracuda or sharks. Some times on the year is often possible to watch some whales traveling around.

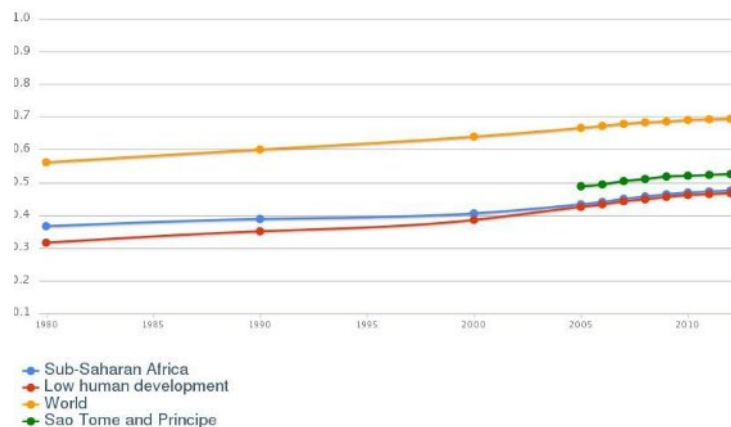
Since STP's social and economic restrictions it has been too much difficult to strive side by side with other world tourism destinations. Nevertheless for the time coming, STP represents an excellent opportunity for visitors to enjoy and to explore an almost virgin territory.

3.4. Secure Territory

Sao Tome and Principe tourism authorities strive to become recognized as an outside secure African country (usually underdeveloped territories with high index of crimes and accidents – unsecure countries).

As such, some efforts have been made towards a social and economic stability. Actually STP has a stable government and most important democracy and social structures already have an important role close to the population.

Moreover, STP already has one of the highest life expectancy (66.63 years) and the one of lowest rate of people with HIV among African countries. Regarding the human development index, STP has largely surpassed the majority of African countries (which holds an average value of 0.475) with a value about 0.525 (the rest of the world rates 0694). This value, accordingly to International Human Development Indicators had increased substantially as confirming the Graph 1 presented below (IHDI, 2012).



Graph 1 Human Development Index - Trends 2005 – present (source IDHI, 2012)

Also STP archipelago was ranked in 3rd place among 16 countries in West Africa and 11th within all set of 52 countries of the continent in the Ibrahim Index. This index assesses the quality of public services and goods of the countries involved (Ibrahim 2013). These values have been increasing, demonstrating governments' concern for the country development politics (OPLOP, 2012).

Related to safety it is almost clear that STP offers very reasonable conditions with low crime rates. (Portal Portuguese Communities , 2013). Accordingly with same Ibrahim Index STP is on 9th place on the

same set 52 countries with respect to the category " Personal Security " and 2nd in terms of " National Security" (Ibrahim 2013)

4. Web Marketing

Web Marketing is the combination of marketing and promotional strategies, applied to the web and the new behavior that the consumer displays when navigating. Web marketing it is not about one particular activity or another, but a coherent and efficient combination of strategies that build a permanent form of contact between a organization and their consumers or clients (Torres, 2012).

Social media applications or websites were largely accepted by among tourists' consumers and customers (Gretzel, 2006; White & White, 2007). Moreover, such applications smooth's the contents production. Then, web marketing tools provide organizations to develop their business, helping them to spread the message through technology based communication systems, among communities and networks.

4.1. Facebook

Facebook is the most popular social networking site (SNS). SNS are typical applications of what is termed web 2.0, they are web-based platforms that integrate different media, information and communication technologies that allow at least the generation of profiles that display information describing the users, the display of connections (connection list), the establishment of connections between users displayed on their connection lists, and communication between users (Fuchs 2011).

The essential feature of Facebook is the friendship relation between participants. It consists, mainly, in a permission to consult each others' friends list and posted content: news, photos, links, blog posts, etc; such permission is mutual (Catanese et al. 2012).

As social networking Facebook allows registered users to manage their own presence, creating profiles, uploading photos and video, sending messages and keep in touch with their "friendship" network. As main public features:

- Pages - allows members to create and promote a public page built around a specific topic.
- Marketplace - allows members to post, read and respond to classified ads.
- Groups - allows members who have common interests to find each other and interact.
- Events - allows members to publicize an event, invite guests and track who plans to attend.
- Presence technology - allows members to see which contacts are online and chat.

Within each member's personal profile, there are several key networking components. The most popular is arguably the Wall, which is essentially a virtual bulletin board. Messages left on a member's Wall can be text, video or photos. Another popular component is the virtual Photo Album. Photos can be uploaded from the desktop or directly from a cell phone camera. There is no limitation on quantity, but Facebook staff will remove inappropriate or copyrighted images. An interactive album feature allows the member's contacts (who are called generically called "friends") to comment on each other's photos and identify (tag) people in the photos. Another popular profile component is Status Updates, a microblogging feature that allows members to broadcast short messages or announcements to their friends. All interactions are published in a newsfeed, which is distributed in real-time to the member's friends (Dean, 2013).

Facebook offers a range of privacy options to its members. A member can make all his communications visible to everyone, he can block specific connections or he can keep all his communications private.

Members can choose whether or not to be searchable, decide which parts of their profile are public, decide what not to put in their newsfeed and determine exactly who can see their posts. For those members who wish to use Facebook to communicate privately, there is a message feature, which closely resembles email (Dean, 2013).

Although founded in 2004, Facebook is now an opportunity to contact and engagement with consumers around the world, given the presence of about 1billion active users, of which 50% are daily users (Facebook, 2013).

4.2. Instagram

Instagram is a free photo and video-sharing program and social network. This application service runs on mobile devices and personal computers. It enables users to take a photo or video, apply a digital filter to it, and then share it with other social network users (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter or other). Instagram has debuted by the end of 2010 as a photo sharing network but implemented support for video on June 2013. Actually has become part of Facebook Group and has now more than 130 million monthly active users. Those users have shared 16 billion photos on the service since it launched in late 2010 and Liked 1 billion posts every day.

Instagram users reveals six key trends emerged for application use: sharing, documentation, seeing, community, creativity and therapy. People wanted more than anything to exchange images with others throughout the network, find people with whom they had common interests, document the world around them and see provide "visual status updates" to their friends. A community evolved. People were excited about the visual social interaction, and used Instagram as a creative outlet. They also found Instagram to be, in some ways, rather therapeutic (McCune, 2011).

Regarding business purposes Instagram team has developed a set of applications as follows (McCune, 2011):

- Statisgram: statistics tool and account administration (personal or business). Enables to handle and manage photos easily, to insert comments and publish on other social networks. This tool, presents three main metrics (1) index of user involvement with the content, (2) index of user comments on your photos, and (3) rate of involvement of users that do not follow your account.
- Nitrogram: a management tool. allows users to manage multiple accounts simultaneously. Generates intuitive charts, with data on the geographical distribution of users, tags most used and results among followers.
- Instablast: sends a notification whenever a photograph is published in the accounts that you define, monitoring users and accounts.

4.3. Forums

Discussion forums or from the beginning, chat rooms, were the very first open community on-line discussion place.

Actually, an Internet forum is an online discussion site where people can hold conversations in the form of posted messages. Each forum might contain several categories (subject oriented). Each category contains topics or threads (category oriented discussion focus). Each thread contains the individual contributions (posts). Forum contents' are created by users or members, themselves hierarchy organized by their role and privileges (e.g., users, moderator or administrator). Also, depending on the

access level of a user or the forum set-up, a posted message might need to be approved by a moderator before it becomes visible. Consequently forum contents or contributions are hierarchical organized (tree structure)

Depending on the forum's settings policies, users can be anonymous or have to register with the forum and then subsequently log in in order to post messages.

The discussion forums are a valuable tool for promoting internet debates about certain themes or subjects. Forums also whole a privileged space for the ideas exchange and explanations. Often there is a crossing of ideas that build or deconstruct, question or answer feeding, thus the collective intelligence through collaboration.

Mainly discussion forums are characterized by: (i) an online environment for knowledge construction through contents submission, (ii) a open space that stimulates the digital communication between participants, (iii) to provide a space to strengthen interpersonal relationships, such as interactivity, cooperation, collaboration and affection, (iv) to be an environment where's one may submit reviews, suggestions, considerations and reflections.

From marketing perspective, forum are very interesting tool for (i) customer support, (ii) to customers discuss products or services, (iii) to manage projects, (iv) for knowledge management (and sometimes, manipulation)

Nevertheless forum it is a very powerful social information media, due is paradigm: everybody contributes having in mind those others users will also post their opinions.

4.4. Blog

Blog is a type of website that presents a framework that enables a quick update from articles or blog posts usually arranged in reverse chronological order. Also, it maybe considered as a type of content management system that makes it easy for anyone to publish short articles called posts" (Zarella, 2010, p. 9). The popularity of blogging has increased significantly now that virtually anyone with Internet access can easily set up a blog with any of the numerous free tools available (Safko & Brake, 2009).

There are essentially three types of blog: (i) personnel, who act as online diary, (ii) the corporate or organizational and (iii) that address particular theme or subject in particular (gender blogs)

A blog has as main function to keep informed their followers, being an inexpensive tool and easy to maintain, with the disadvantage of requiring a constant update time and (Lehtimäki et al, 2009). The typical blogs combine text, images and links to other blogs or want to webpages related to the topic.

A key component of Blogs is its interaction with the reader, as it allows the constant monitoring and participation through comments.

It is estimated that there are over 152 million blogs (Fagundes and Michelsohn, 2010). Relation to users, it is confirmed that more than 389 million people are attending the blogs in more than 13.3 million pages per month. Currently it is posted over 500,000 posts and 400,000 comments made per day (IWS, 2013).

The main themes of blogs are mainly focused on: (1) art (2) photography (3) and videos (4) music.

In the business, it is estimated that about 60% of companies worldwide have a blog. However, only 35% of them are updated at least once a month (IWS, 2013). The success of blogs is measured taking into account the number of subscribers and their comments (Lehtimäki et al, 2009). Actually many of the marketers are using blogs to access the information what others say about their companies and large

number of the people are using blogs for their marketing purposes in their marketing strategies (Scott, 2010).

The most common blog platforms are (1st) Wordpress - 43%, (2nd) blogger - 35%, (3rd) Tumblr + + TypePad Posterous - 16%, and (4th) Others - 6% (IWS, 2013).

4.5. Youtube

YouTube is a web portal application where it's possible to share video clips. It was founded in 2005. YouTube users' might upload own videos, see the videos from others and comment on them although there are limitations on how big the videos might be. The videos vary from movie clips, blogging, music videos to ads. To upload videos user must have to be registered and obey to specific terms and conditions. However, everyone may see the videos. Actually youtube has more than 800 millions of registered users (source: youtube.com)

YouTube search engine may be used through different criteria such as: relevance, time of upload and rating. YouTube uses what they call "buzz targeting" algorithm. This algorithm determines which video that is about to go viral. It looks at different things such as: acceleration of views, favorites and ratings (Jakobsen and Skov, 2009). Advertisers can therefore target their ads specifically to these videos that have high potential to be popular in the future.

Youtube is actually a global society paradigm, it is the 3rd most visited world website and the second search engine used. Everyday people are watching hundreds of millions of videos on YouTube, and uploading hundred of thousand videos. Every minute 20 hours of video is uploaded¹³. According to Nielsen NetRatings, YouTube had more than 10 millions streams and more than 150000 unique streams in September 2013.

Within marketing perspective YouTube is an excellent vehicle for communication since enables multimedia for all kinds of circumstances, allowing, as example to an user to access to an illustrative or demonstrative video. One of the best examples are the promotional touristic videos or presentations of products or services.

4.6. Search Engine

Search engines are software programs aggregators and classifiers of all the information available on the web. Simplifying, search engines have a similar function to a librarian on a library: whine ones need to reach a publication or information he knows very well where is it. Instead of asking the librarian, say, Jaguar and having her direct you to those resources, now it's only need to type in Jaguar, and the search engines respond with links to the resources on that topic available on the web. Those links (sometimes accomplished with some texts or images) are the Search Engine Results (Hubspot 2013)

There are two different groups of search engine results: sponsored results (paid results), which is a term for results that an advertiser paid to show up on that page; and there are organic results, which means the entry is there by virtue of the relevance of its web content and the repetition of certain keywords on its web pages (Lutze 2009).

Search Engine Marketing (SEM), a term used to describe all marketing strategies for search. SEM entails both organic and paid search. With paid search, you can pay to list your website on a search engine so that your website shows up when someone types in a specific keyword or phrase. Organic and paid listings both appear on the search engine, but they are displayed in different locations on the page.

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is the way in which a search marketer attempts to influence the search engines in making their determinations about what constitutes a relevant result for a search. The “optimization” objective concerns a strategy that involves organizing a website properly adapted for search engines. It requires that web masters need to write, to publish and to link contents in optimized for search engines discovery maximizing the chances to get a good position under the search terms where they want to be found. This search process is totally independent from web masters work. They don’t have control over whether, where, when, and how to appear on any given results page under any given keyword (Lutze 2009). This is much important such as the first set of results receive more than 90% of users’ selection (click)

5. Web marketing strategy framework formulation

Having as premises that: marketing is a science that thinks the market in order to attain a defined target for some organization purposes; marketing aims to achieve customers or consumers; actually consumers or customers work, communicate live or share experiences through technology applications; then, marketing must be developed towards consumers or costumers are, that is, on the web. Therefore web marketing would be definitively a possible solution for organizations’ marketing problems.

Since web marketing requires further work besides web sites or applications development, the proposed model is based in three levels (Figure 1):

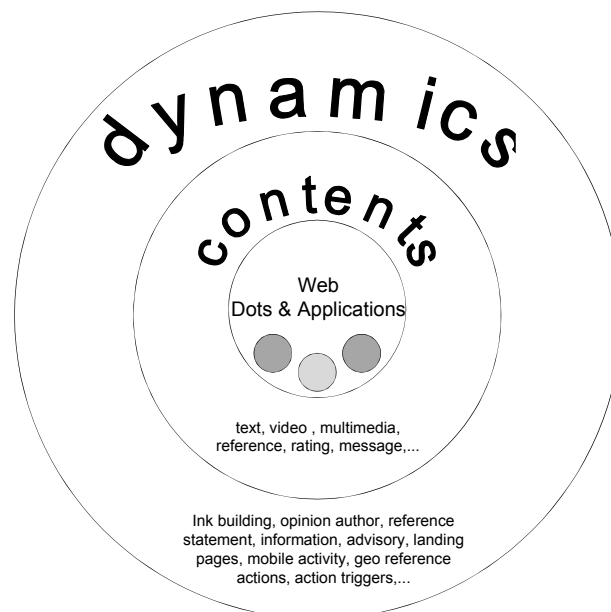


Figure 1 Strategy framework overview

Web dots and applications objectives: Web marketing strategy is performed over a set of organization, product or service “web dots” (e.g. web site, micro site, blog, microblog, landing page, product page, social media page, youtube channel, promotion page among others) where related specifications, promotions or any other information subject is available. Each page, site or application is to have a function within the overall web marketing strategy. That is, while the main STP tourism portal represents the institutional reference acting as a central information delivery, some youtube channel may exist in order to demonstrate some activities or illustration of STP territory.

Contents: Since any website or application needs too much work on backoffice to remain “still alive” during the time pass, a contents production approach needs to be developed. Hence, regarding each

“dot” belonging to the group, contents needs to be developed. Contents production is technology dependent, e.g. for YouTube channel, video contents should be delivered.

Though its technology dependence, contents are required to act in a context of marketing objective. Thus, regarding each marketing campaign, normally a newly set of contents re required to be produced. Main contents items include: text documents (clearly adapted to the web platform or application); video (short or full length movies regarding their purposes); general multimedia contents (animated presentations, video schemas or audio and video objects); reference (adequate contents for sharing or cite purposes, may include some technical reports, demonstration documents or videos among others); rating (get rating results on web related platforms or applications); and, message (improve communication skills through message politics – adapted to technology, platform and targeted audience).

Dynamics: Dynamics are the oxygen to any web marketing strategy. Without dynamics any web presence success it will fully compromised. Hence, it is compulsory to have an active and actual message feed over the web. It is required to establish a contents dynamics, focusing all organization, product or service “web dot”. This dynamics include all kind of link building (links between any other organization web dot or application); opinion author (documented opinion shared and delivered through at important outlook channels); reference statement (positives information gathered from reference sites must be amplified); information (continuously at a reasonable rate target audience feed); landing pages (lead converting pages development); mobile activity (mobile messages, application contents); geo reference actions (get in touch whenever and wherever with context oriented information); or action triggers (pre programmed set of actions to be activated by target audience in a pre defined expected action: email click) .

6. Web Marketing in practice

Once defined a general framework for web marketing strategy, the next step focus the practice based on web marketing tools. Since the objective of this work it is to study a low cost proposal, there were only considered applications free of charge.

Henceforth, pondered web marketing tools encompasses two main operational characteristics:

- Low cost resources: mostly of web applications have the possibility to be explored through free access permissions. Web marketing often only needs to have access to some applications functionalities which sometimes are free of charge.
- Time consuming. Notwithstanding from free of charge, mostly of web applications are extensive time consuming. Hence, the common place for web marketing tools: free of charge but time expensive.

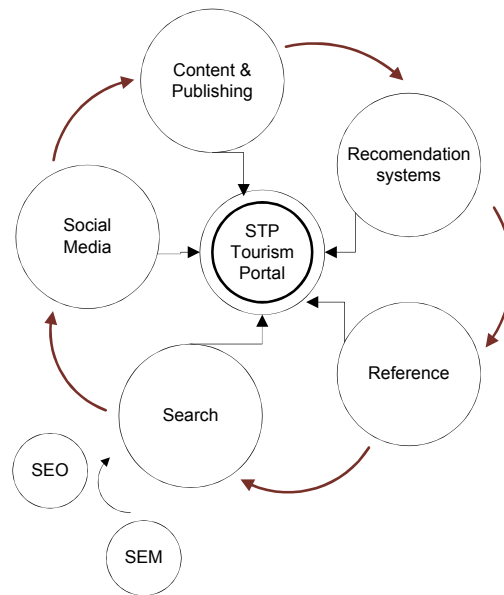


Figure 2 web marketing actions development

São Tomé e Príncipe (STP) it's a small country with sparse human, technological or financial resources. Thus, marketing strategy based on web technologies promises to be an interesting and possible way for STP tourism agency and local operators.

STP tourism web marketing strategy is conceived on follow strands (Figure 2):

- *STP tourism portal*: National STP tourism agency has a portal that will gather all information from local or national operators. The tourism portal will act as the heart for all STP global communication strategy;
- *Content and publishing*: nowadays technologies are based on contents consuming. That is users spend most of their time trying to reach the expected information;
- *Recommendation systems*: one of the most interesting paradigms on the web communities is the possibility to the users to rate their experiences. Therefore organizations must handle with care most of rating levels posted by users;
- *Social Media*: probably one the icons of actual web technologies state of the art. Social media encompasses all relations among users connected through social networks. This new social paradigm is a powerful option for those organizations with enough backoffice support ready to accomplish and answer in almost real time;
- *Reference*: references applications and web sites have become popular since users may rate, evaluate and share their experiences related to some product or service;
- *Search engine*: search engines embody them self's the actual internet. Nowadays is almost universally assumed that users use search engine applications for almost everything that they want to do but they don't know how to do it. Such mass behavior has empowered search engine results as one of the most important applications on technology society and turned them as a benchmark. Over search engines it is performed two kinds of marketing activities: SEM (search engine marketing: marketing developed within search engine application) and SEO (search engine optimization: web sites presence programming efforts in order to appear on the first search engine organics' results).

Based on above model, the general overview for webmarketing actions his depicted on Figure 3.

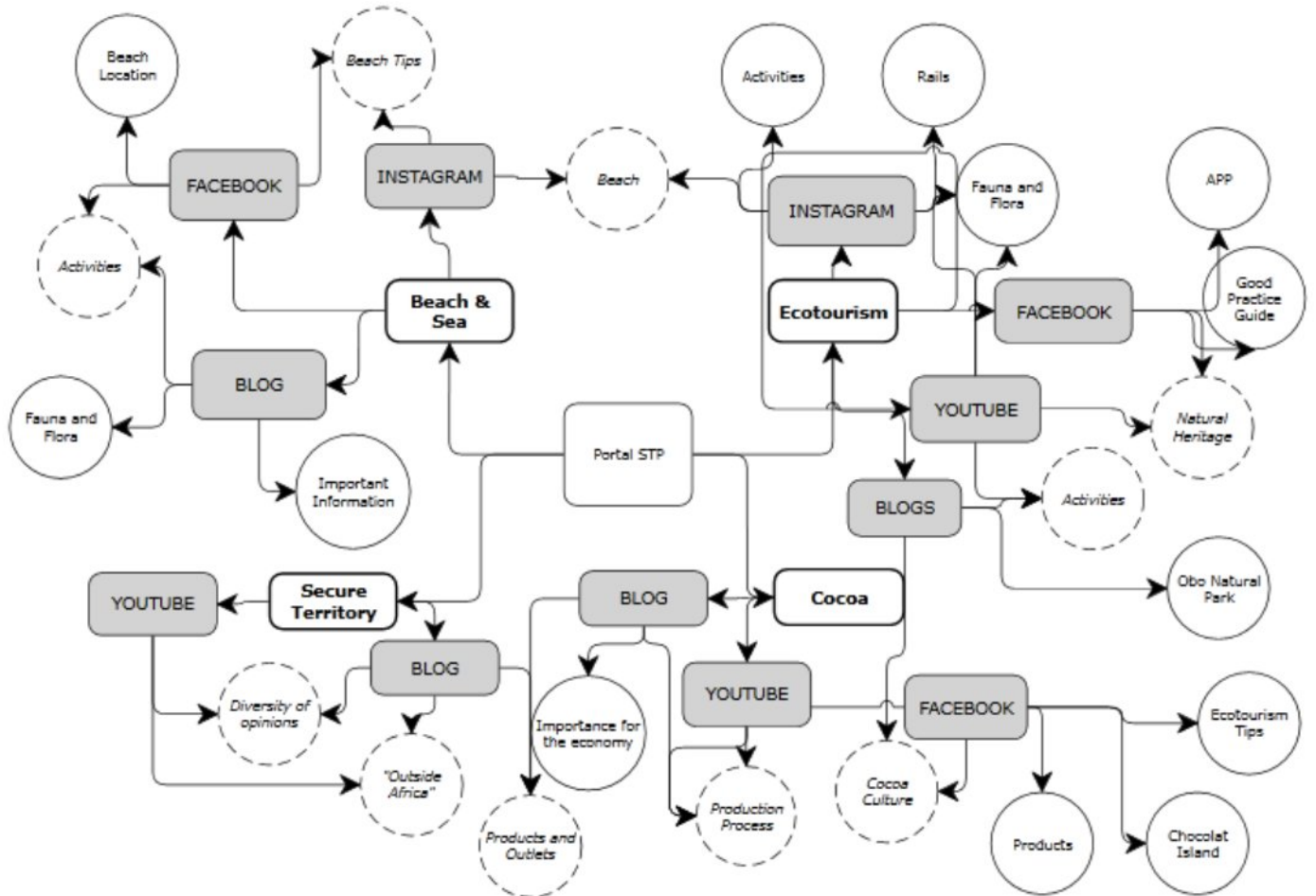


Figure 3 General web marketing actions overview

Downing from the theory to the practice it will be used Ecotourism thread (depicted on Figure 4) to demonstrate how does the web marketing tools work on a tourism marketing campaign. STP Tourism portal it has to be the digital centre for all STR tourism related activity. Hence all published or shared contents should have at the end (or incorporated on it) a link to the STP tourism portal. Therefore it would be expectable that all performed marketing activities would conduct targeted audience to the web site.

Regarding Ecotourism marketing activities it is proposed to use the follow platforms: Instagram, Facebook, YouTube and Blog

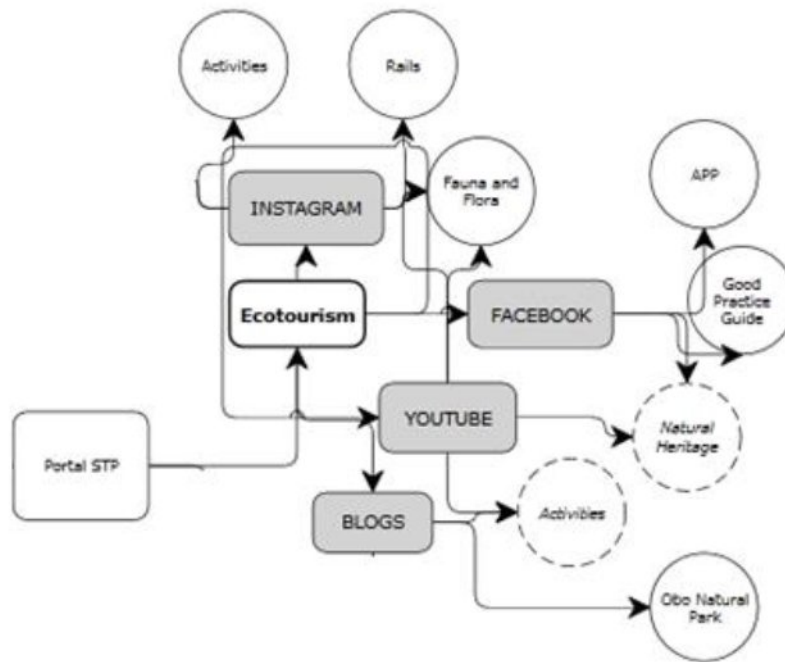


Figure 4 Ecotourism web technologies adoption

Instagram may reveal a very interesting and powerful marketing instrument for tourism purposes. Using Instagram, the objective focuses transmit powerful images of STP Fauna, Flora, interesting trails, related sports among many others. Each published photo will have content links for two (at least) others web places blog and YouTube. The former will be used as proper source for more reliable information. YouTube will be considered as destination link of each photo regarding practical place information, such as how to reach the see sight as displayed on photo or a demonstration marketing interests related to the photo contents. By the end of these threaded contents users will always be routed to STP tourism portal.

Facebook application platform is very common for tourists' status update or posting. Having such behavior wits it is suggested to create a set of STP tourisms facebook Page and to promote it among at targeted audience in different approaches:

- Actual or new coming visitors, inviting and urging them to post on their personal page an updated status. This visitors profile would be target by means of direct communication through hotels, travel agencies or on their arrival at local airport. Regarding the success of such activity a series of rewarded actions would be defined;
- Past visitors, through a contact database created by contacting agencies or hotels where they would have been house during their stay at STP. Them, through a direct contact, by email or social media, they would be invited to post, their best images, videos or comments about their STP visit;
- Potential visitors, through a specific facebook campaign through ad services or sponsored events. Every post should have a link for specifics' landing pages where potential visitors may register for further information.

STP tourism pages would have to have many links and documentation support, such as tourism guides, maps or even specific events for fans.

On YouTube, STP tourism authorities would have to start a channel video regarding incoming links from produced contents or incoming links. As such, those videos must be developed with quality enough to be shared or included at any other web site.

The blog system would be the STP contents' battle field. Blogging allows to tourism players to reinforce their arguments and introduce their hot points. Regarding Ecotourism, it would be created three different blogs: one for fauna, another for flora and a third for outstanding trips and discovery

challenges inside STP territory. These blogs should be updated every week with contents and links for each other institutional web dot.

7. Conclusions

Tourism it is a challenge for their actors. As exposed, to attract and to get visitors for a tourist place it is nowadays a global challenge. This work developed a possible tourism strategy for a territory with sparse resources. As explained, such approach uses web technologies and actual paradigms for visitors engagement in order to explore their word of mouth. Besides, use strategy also includes a possible strategy to potential visitors, through social media and related applications.

Actually, to the best of our knowledge there's any web strategy for STP tourism territory. This study, has demonstrated how it would be possible to adopt and develop such strategies with low resources consumption. Regarding research questions, it has been established that it is possible to develop and maintain a digital marketing strategy for STP territory. Also it has also been revealed how does web tools and techniques should be used in order to bring closer users' preferences through promoted dynamics based on contents shared and link building strategy.

Regarding future work, authors expect and increasing web marketing activity from STP authorities and therefore the possibility to validate and to refine possible strategies for any others specific sectors.

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