

*Mobility learning: Intensive Programme
Marketing and Management Strategies in
small and medium sized (family) hotels*

Renato Medei

An Intensive Programme (IP) is a short programme of study which brings together students and staff from higher education institutions of at least three participating countries. It can last from two weeks or ten continuous full days to six weeks of subject related work. The IP programmes are one of the branches of European Commission Erasmus Programme.

The Erasmus Programme helps Europe's universities and other higher education institutions to better work together through projects and networks in different fields in order to organize student and staff mobility, and to reach common objectives, especially in modernization of curricula funding and governance. The ERASMUS Programme offers the following programme action lines to higher education institutions:

Mobility actions for students and staff

Cooperation: ERASMUS focuses its project support on modernisation and innovation in the higher education sector. Joint projects involving higher education institutions from different countries in ERASMUS can be in the form of intensive programmes, multilateral projects, academic and structural networks or other measures accompanying the main ERASMUS actions. In most cases, such projects are also open to other actors.

Preparatory Visits.

Intensive programme is a part of Cooperation action line. Faculty of Economics Rimini is a partner in IP "Marketing and Management Strategies in small and medium sized (family) hotels", the University of Gerona is the leader of this project and the other partners are Plantijn Hogeschool Van Der Provincie Antwerpen, Université de Savoie, Technologiko Ekpedeftiko Idryma (Tei) Of Kavala, Vilniaus Kolegija, Cyprus College. The first and second edition of this IP are now closed, more than sixty students and fifteen staff members was engaged in the two editions.

The main aim of the IP "Marketing and Management Strategies in small and medium sized (family) hotels" is to deepen and broaden professional understanding of the effectiveness of the actual marketing strategies used by small hotels regarding the competition with the chain hotels. The comparative interdisciplinary intercultural approaches in searching lead to new marketing strategies, useful for small & medium sized family hotels in the EU. The comparative interdisciplinary intercultural approaches in research and cooperation lead to a better understanding of the overall aim. The first edition of "Marketing and Management Strategies in small and medium sized (family) hotels" was held in Rimini in March 2008, the second edition was hosted from University of Gerona in March 2009. During the two editions the students produced a final report with the strategies. All the reports was published

from the European Commission and disseminated around the Europe in the main local office involved in touristic decisions.

Intensive programme is a great possibility for student and staff to meet and cooperate with people from other universities, it is very difficult to explain what is a real IP experience because it is cultural emotional too. We want use the students words to try to explain it :

“The IP in Girona was a wonderful opportunity to discover the different strategies used for marketing and business of a small hotel in three different faces: city, holiday and business. It was great discussing the opportunities which should have each country, and find a common strategy for all 7 european countries we were from. So we had also the opportunity to know how are the different cultures and uses in our cities. I hope that our work should be useful to the small hotels in Italy too

Vera Sigalotti

“The IP was a unique experience that gave the opportunity to put into practice the knowledge acquired during the studies at the university. The lessons that had been held were beneficial and adequate. They gave a detailed idea of important subjects that are regarding the marketing and management strategies for Small family hotels in Europe. The participation of different countries gave the possibility to see which the common problems are and how they can be solved concerning the environmental and economical changes. The lessons helped to understand that even if we have different cultures and habits, the problems that we are facing in nowadays (in the field of tourism) are the same and we should work together, having mutual understanding, trust and tolerance.”

Dimitrova Sylvia

“The Intensive Program on marketing strategies for family run, small and medium size hotels was overall a complete and satisfying experience. Every part of the program had been well organized, including the accommodations and all the learning activities. The lectures that took place were useful and relevant to the goals. The cooperation between professors and students worked out fine, even though there had been some arguments between students from different countries, due to dissimilar backgrounds. Girona has been a perfect location for the IP; the facilities offered by the “Universitat de Girona” fulfilled totally the needs of students among with professors. The 3 main groups came out with very significant reports which I think will benefit and give important advices to hotel managers from all over Europe”.

Mario Di Martino

“We had a great experience in Gerona. every morning there was a very interesting lesson from teachers of all Europe. in the afternoon we had groupworks: there were 3 groups: one for leisure hotels, one for business hotels and one for city hotels. it's been so hard working together, but at the end we found a lot of good ideas to improve our final report. the university gave us great rooms, internet connection

and all the things a student needs. before going in Gerona, we had some meetings in Italy, in our university, for making us ready to compose a good strategy for small family hotels. it's been a lovely experience and i'm ready to do it again. A lot of friendships are born and in our free time we've had a lot of fun. I really hope to be a member of the IP for next year too"

Marco Zavatta