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AMIR 2.0 Achievement of Market-Friendly Initiatives and Results Program

Contract No. 278-C-00-02-00210-00

National Tourism Strategy Launch – Hotels

By:
Frank Magee

Submitted to:
U.S. Agency for International Development/Jordan

Submitted by:
Chemonics International Inc.

October 31, 2004

This publication was made possible through support provided by the U.S. Agency for International Development, under the terms of Award No. 278-C-00-02-00210-00. The opinions expressed herein are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Agency for International Development.

NATIONAL TOURISM STRATEGY LAUNCH- HOTELS

Final Report

Contract No.:	278-C-00-02-00210-00
Contractor Name:	Chemonics International, Inc.
USAID Cognizant Technical Office:	Office of Economic Opportunities USAID/Jordan
Date of Report:	October 31, 2004
Document Title:	National Tourism Strategy Launch- Hotels Final Report
Author's Name:	Frank Magee
Activity Title and Number:	Achievement of Market-Friendly Initiatives and Results Program (AMIR Program) F/Filing Preparation, BMI Component Work Plan No. 262.1

Funded by U.S. Agency for International Development

This report is prepared by Frank Magee under the direction of Ibrahim Osta, BMI Team Leader, in collaboration with Chemonics International Inc., Prime Contractor to the U.S. Agency for International Development for AMIR Program in Jordan

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Executive Summary

Short-term consultant Frank Magee was required to lead a workshop for the hotel and restaurant sector as part of the launch of the new National Tourism Strategy by Government. This report outlines the background, approach to and the recommendations following on from the workshop.

Attendance at the workshop was up to sixty. There was a good cross representation of hotels and restaurants. There was a good understanding and awareness of the strategy. The industry committed to playing their role in delivering through the “Coalition for Marketing”.

The workshop established that there was a need to participate as partners at two different levels, one for external marketing and the second for internal marketing. The most effective way of giving reassurance to potential visitors is through the media and familiarisation visits. The industry is prepared to provide complementary food and accommodation as part of their effort in hosting media and trade visits and this may represent an important breakthrough in terms of shared responsibility.

There is now a new opportunity to coordinate the marketing effort of the industry and the public sector. The industry is prepared to play their role in this. At the same time the notion of a value chain approach to the visitor experience was developed and accepted. This requires the trade to look outside of its own sector to other service providers and to develop synergies with them.

Through this increased collaboration and improved visitor experience the value of tourism would be increased. Jordan’s position as a boutique destination can only be made viable through improved visitor experiences. This can best be guaranteed through the industry working together.

An essential part of the plan is to instigate and carry out market research to establish the precise needs of the customer and to help position Jordan as a “Boutique Destination” against its competitor destinations.

At the conclusion of the workshop there was a confidence that the strategy, which had been launched, presented great opportunities for Jordan and tourism and that the hotel and restaurant sector were committed to playing their role as partners in delivering on the strategy.

Introduction

A group of short-term consultants were recruited to work with Consultant, Matt McNulty to act as facilitators during the Tourism Strategy Launch Day of the NTS in Amman, Jordan.

The adoption of the new National Tourism Strategy by Government, in collaboration with the strategy steering committee, the Board of JTB and the Industry Associations marks a milestone for Jordan.

All of the partners are committed to plan, work and invest together to build the growth necessary to meet the targets – roughly 10% per annum cumulatively is needed.

Short-term consultant Frank Magee was required to lead a workshop for the hotel and restaurant sector, to explore and develop the sector's response to the strategy and its challenges. Putting their own house in order, working with other sectors, joining the partnership for marketing with the JTB, being competitive, offering quality services and creating marketing opportunities.

Background

The consultant was required to:

1. Develop a plan and agenda for the Hospitality Workshop during the National Tourism Strategy Launch Event on 27th September 2004.
2. To lead a workshop targeting the Hospitality Industry representatives and aimed at creating a better understanding among hoteliers of the principles of the National Tourism Strategy 2004-2010, and their role in its implementation. The workshop should serve as the first step in the implementation plan for hotels to achieve strategic targets.
3. To work with Consultant, Matt McNulty to ensure the understanding of the National Tourism Strategy principles, which are related to the hotels industry and ensure a coherent launch event.
4. Develop and deliver a proper power point presentation for the Hotels Workshop.
5. Work with mixed groups in the afternoon sessions as per topics, which are identified later.
6. To develop a report with findings and recommendations to help the hospitality sector development under the National Tourism Strategy.

In addition, to examine during the workshop how the sector can integrate with other sectors of the tourism industry and the JTB to contribute to the coalition for marketing. To identify in particular any barrier issues that are perceived and seek to find solutions for these during the session and to list these barriers issues and proposed solutions for advice to Matt Mc Nulty and the JTB immediately following the workshop.

Methodology

In advance of arrival in Jordan the following reports were studied and considered: -

- National Tourism Strategy Document.
- Comparative Competitive Study for Jordan.
- Marketing Sub-Strategy Draft.
- Product Development Work Group Report.
- Jordan Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities website www.mota.gov.jo.
- Jordan Tourist Board website www.see-jordan.com.
- Jordan Restaurants Association website www.jra.com.jo.

In advance of arrival in Jordan a power point presentation (see appendix 1) was prepared.

On arrival in Jordan there were meetings with Matt McNulty, Deirdre Lennon, Mark Mortell and Frank Magee to prepare for the National Tourism Strategy Launch.

There were subsequent meetings with the AMIR BMI component staff.

On Sunday 26th September a meeting was held, attended by the facilitators and all those stakeholders who would be involved in any aspect of the Strategy Launch, or the Workshops and panels that would follow.

Following from these meetings and the inputs made a revised power point presentation was prepared to lead the workshop (see appendix 2)

Report on Hotel and Restaurant Workshop

Attendance at the workshop was up to sixty. The majority of attendees were hoteliers and there were approximately eight restaurateurs. There was a good geographical spread from those attending and a good cross section of size of operations.

There was a good engaged and animated discussion on all of the issues, with excellent audience participation. The consultant was particularly impressed with the understanding of the issues and the willingness of those present to take ownership of the resolution of the issues.

Six of the ten top challenges that the sector could assist with were addressed during the workshop:-

- Perception of Jordan as a risk destination- the fear factor.
- Up scaling the marketing effort and changing approaches.
- Establishing working partnerships- “The Coalition for Marketing”.
- Increasing the value of visitors to Jordan.
- Establishing the strategic positioning as a boutique destination.
- Competitiveness and quality in everything is always a challenge.

Workshop recommendations

Ms Julian Noursi, a restaurateur was nominated as reporter and in conjunction with Frank Magee developed the following Action Plan representing the discussion and agreement from the workshop:

Action	Responsibility	Time Frame
<p>1. <u>Overcoming Fear Factor</u> Tourist Office- Visitor Information Centre Awareness data to visitors prior to or on arrival (at airport and in hotel bedrooms) Offer international media complementary trips to Jordan Offer free accommodation and meals to journalists and familiarization visits</p>	Industry, Jordan Tourist Board, Airlines and Industry	12 months Immediate Immediate
<p>2. <u>Up scaling the Marketing Effort</u></p> <p><u>Resources</u> Free Rooms, complementary products Welcome/care and aftercare Marketing Budget planned with the industry</p> <p><u>Niche market</u> Partnership with the industry (city tours, shopping, taxi drivers, evening entertainment)</p> <p><u>Additional Distribution System</u> e-commerce Industry cross promotion Develop databases Menus outside restaurants Collaboration with rent a cars, tourist guides and concierges Central website</p> <p><u>New Markets</u> High spending singles Identify SWOT analysis on competitive markets (e.g. Egypt) Segment the market (by season, by group, by activity)</p>	Industry/ MOTA Industry/MOTA Industry/MOTA Government and industry Industry/MOTA/JTB Industry/MOTA/JTB Industry/JTB Industry Industry/JTB Industry/JTB/MOTA JTB/MOTA/Industry Govt and industry JTB	Ongoing Immediate 6 months 6 months On going Immediate Immediate 6 months 6 months Immediate 6 months 6 months 6 months

Action	Responsibility	Time Frame
<p>3. Coalition for Marketing</p> <p>Membership of coalition:</p> <p>(i) External Market Hotels, Airlines, Tour Operators, Car Hire - (all international players) JTB*</p> <p>(ii) Internal Market External market coalition + Tour Guides, restaurants, Activities, publishers etc*</p> <p>* Commitment to share information, participate in committees and pool resources</p>	<p>JTB & Industry</p> <p>JTB & Industry</p> <p>JTB & Industry</p>	<p>Immediate & ongoing</p> <p>Immediate & ongoing</p> <p>Immediate & Ongoing</p>
<p>4. Increase value of visitors to Jordan</p> <p>Total quality control required Eliminate gaps in visitor experience Offer quality</p>	<p>JTB & Industry</p>	<p>Immediate & ongoing</p>
<p>5. Boutique Destination</p> <p>The boutique destination offer requires a closed circle with regards to quality</p>	<p>JTB & Industry</p>	<p>Immediate and ongoing</p>
<p>6. Competitiveness & Quality</p> <p>Services & quality Enrich the visitor experience-pinpoint our uniqueness and make it more attractive Market research SWOT Analysis</p> <p>Improve awareness of the industry for Education Training Standards</p>	<p>Coalition</p> <p>Coalition</p> <p>Coalition</p> <p>Coalition</p> <p>Coalition</p>	<p>Immediate & ongoing</p> <p>Immediate & ongoing</p> <p>Immediate & ongoing</p>

Recommendations

Following the success of the Launch and the Workshops the momentum gained should be maintained and not allowed to dissipate. From the Workshop it was evident that there was an awareness of the requirements and a willingness by the industry to play their role.

It was identified that two different levels of coalition were required, one for the international market and the second for the domestic market and this may be an important consideration in structuring the coalition for marketing. The hotel and restaurant workshop demonstrated a willingness to participate and to contribute to the coalition.

- **Perception of Jordan as a risk destination- the fear factor**

The risk factor is not unique to Jordan and travellers in general are likely to feel varying levels of insecurity when travelling away from home. The Workshop identified this fact and agreed that the most effective way of addressing the fear factor is by providing information and reassurance. Media and familiarisation visits would be the most effective ways of helping to address this issue. The Workshop indicated that they would be prepared to enter a coalition to plan, arrange and support these visits. Their contribution would be free accommodation and meals to visiting trade and media.

Information on safety and giving reassurance should be available at points of entry to the country and in hotel bedrooms. The need to establish a national information centre to collate all of the information that is needed by visitors was identified. This information then could be disseminated through different channels to the visitor. Once this has been established the establishment of a central tourist information office could be considered. Again the industry indicated a preparedness to pay towards the cost of doing this.

- **Up scaling the marketing effort and changing approaches**

By sharing information and better planning the outcome of budgets for overseas marketing could be greatly enhanced. Trade partners could plan their activities to coincide with those of the JTB and vice versa. One of the most effective ways of promoting Jordan is through media and trade familiarisation visits. The trade are prepared to support these through complementary accommodation and meals. They are conscious of the need to improve the welcome and care of their visitors and are happy to work through the coalition in doing this.

With regard to niche marketing and the establishment of Jordan as a boutique destination, it was realised that improvements were required in the overall visitor experience. A total care program needed to be developed involving hotels, restaurants, city tours, shopping, taxis, evening entertainment, border guards, visitor attractions, coach companies, etc.

There were many additional distribution systems identified, including

e-commerce and cross industry promotion. Databases needed to be developed and where appropriate shared. Information to be made accessible to visitors. Menus for nearby restaurants displayed in hotels and outside the restaurants. There could be greater collaboration with all of the sectors in selling to the visitor. A centralised website with all accurate and up to date information that anticipated all of the visitors needs was regarded as a priority.

- **Establishing working partnerships- “ The Coalition for Marketing”**

There was awareness that there was a need to a twin track approach to marketing. The first to the international market and the second for the domestic market, including international visitors in Jordan. Whilst airlines, tour operators, car hire companies and JTB are logical members of the international coalition, the national coalition would include the international players, along with restaurants, guides and some of the smaller players.

- **Increasing the value of visitors to Jordan**

Total quality control is required in order to achieve this. Gaps in the product need to be identified and filled and a minimum level of service developed right through all sectors of the industry. Cross selling and a partnership approach to caring for the visitor will enhance this.

- **Establishing the strategic positioning as a boutique destination**

As a boutique destination Jordan is positioning itself to attract high spending, high yield tourists. It will require niche products to be developed and the introduction of the quality circle approach. The hotel and restaurant sector are aware of this and understand that through the coalition they will strive to bring the rest of the industry with them in sharing this vision. They will work with the JTB and MOTA in developing this.

- **Competitiveness and quality in everything is always a challenge**

Market research is critical in establishing the needs of customers and at the same time identifying ones position with regards to consumer needs. Whilst internationally Jordan offers good value for money relative to other destinations, it was pointed out at the Workshop that Israel is a cheaper destination for food, drink and accommodation. Without market research and the development of a quality chain all of the efforts in positioning Jordan as a boutique destination will be futile. There was an awareness of this at the workshop.

Appendix 1

Hotels and Restaurants Workshop

“Tourism cannot exist without hotels and restaurants but it is about more than hotels and restaurants”

Introduction

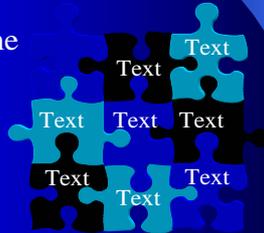
- Pride in the business and sector
- The hospitality vocation
- Services and experiences
- It's a people business
- Beating competition
- Success is exceeding expectation
- Targeting “to thrive not to survive”

Recipe

- Be aware of the need for competitiveness
- Building the capacity and capabilities of staff
- Understand customer range of needs and how these are changing
 - accommodation
 - food and drink
 - entertainment and leisure
 - ease of information and purchase
 - unique selling points
 - experiences
 - emotional needs

accommodation

- A Range is necessary
- Hotels
- Self Catering
- Guest House/Home
- Hostel
- Camping
- Campus



food and drink

- Restaurants
- Cafes
- Bars
- Fast Food
- Dinning experiences
 - International cuisine
 - Ethnic cuisine
 - Local cuisine

Top entertainment facilities

- Hotels/Restaurant facilities
- Cabaret
- Nightclubs
- Health wellness and exercise
- Unique entertainment
- In room entertainment

There needs to be alternatives

Alternative night time activity

- Dining experiences
- Late night shopping
- markets
- Concerts
- Local dance/ music
- Night clubs
- Jazz clubs/ piano bars

Access

- Air
- Road
- Sea
- Local access
 - taxis
 - limousines
 - shuttles
 - buses
 - other transport – walking tours

Community Support

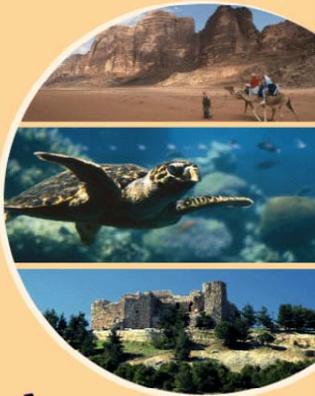
- Appreciation of the value of tourism
- Respect and friendliness towards visitors
- Understanding needs of communities and consumers
- Matching these
- Appreciation of outside factors

Appendix 2

**National Tourism
Strategy Launch**

**Hotels &
Restaurants
Workshop**

Lead by
Mr. Frank Magee



Jordan
NATIONAL TOURISM STRATEGY 2004 - 2010



Today's Program

1. Discussion on selected strategic challenges
2. Develop sector specific 2005 action plan for strategy implementation
3. Proposed Action Plan to present from group 14:00 hrs.

Jordan
NATIONAL TOURISM STRATEGY 2004 - 2010

Challenge 1

➤ **Overcoming the fear factor**

Tourists perceive Jordan to be a higher risk destination

- How can you understand visitors' mindset?
- How can you give REASSURANCE ?
- How can hospitality industry counteract this?

Jordan
NATIONAL TOURISM STRATEGY 2004 - 2010

Challenge 1

continued

Perceptions are gathered mainly from media – any response should use the media plus other factors:

- How can you get the media and opinion makers to Jordan to see for themselves?
- Can you use the positive experiences of current tourists – each can influence up to 15 people ?

Jordan

NATIONAL TOURISM STRATEGY 2004 - 2010

Challenge 2

➤ Up scaling the marketing effort

Changing methodologies and approaches

- What marketing resources do you have?
- How can you maximize the benefits?
- How do you Organize marketing?
- Can Niche marketing help?
- What additional distribution systems can you access?
- Web capabilities
- New markets

Jordan

NATIONAL TOURISM STRATEGY 2004 - 2010

Challenge 3

➤ Establishing working partnerships

The coalition for marketing

- Who should be Members?
- What should be the Functions?
- What are the Commitments?
- How can it Operate?

Jordan

NATIONAL TOURISM STRATEGY 2004 - 2010

Challenge 4

➤ Increasing the value of visitors to Jordan

Current value per visitor is low but it can be increased - a 25% increase is possible

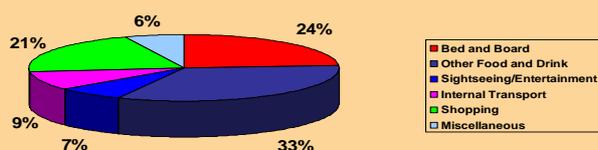
Jordan

NATIONAL TOURISM STRATEGY 2004 - 2010

Challenge 4

continued

How Overseas Tourists Spend their money



Jordan

NATIONAL TOURISM STRATEGY 2004 - 2010

Challenge 5

➤ Jordan's strategic positioning as a Boutique Destination

- Where is Jordan positioned now?
- Where has it to be moved to?
- How can it be moved to a new positioning?

Jordan

NATIONAL TOURISM STRATEGY 2004 - 2010

Challenge 6

➤ Competitiveness & quality in everything

- How can your sector become more competitive?
- Can you reduce cost, add value or introduce incentives?
- Does Jordan's product match the highest quality in its class?
- How can quality be guaranteed as required for branding?

Jordan

NATIONAL TOURISM STRATEGY 2004 - 2010

Challenge 7

➤ Changing Jordan's over reliance on traditional attractions

- How can the experiences be linked?
- How can the experience be enriched?
- What added value can be gained?
- What are the essentials to complement the attractions

Jordan

NATIONAL TOURISM STRATEGY 2004 - 2010

Next Steps

- The results of the workshop will be reported on at 14:00 hrs.
- Follow up meetings with sector representatives on actions implementation

Jordan

NATIONAL TOURISM STRATEGY 2004 - 2010