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# AQABA –CELEBRATING AQABA: THE 2011 MARKETING ACTION PLAN

AQABA COMMUNITY and ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (ACED)  
PROGRAM

October 2010

This publication was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared by Marwan Khoury and Tim Bartlett, Advisors to ASEZA's Marketing and Tourism Directorate (AMTD) under the Aqaba Community and Economic Development (ACED) Program.

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## DISCLAIMER

The author's views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development, AECOM International Development or the ACED Program.

## ACED Program Frequently-Used Acronyms and abbreviations

(Not all of the following will appear in every ACED Program document)

ACED Program	Aqaba Community and Economic Development Program (USAID)
ACT	Aqaba Container Terminal
ADC	Aqaba Development Corporation
ADS	Automated Directive Systems
AIDAR	USAID Acquisition Regulation
AIIE	Aqaba International Industrial Estate
AMTD	ASEZA's Marketing and Tourism Directorate
ANREPCO	National Real Estate Projects Company
APC	Aqaba Ports Corporation
ASEZ	Aqaba Special Economic Zone
ASEZA	Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority
ASRI	Aqaba Skills Readiness Index
ASYCUDA	Automated System for Customs Data
ATASP	Aqaba Technical Assistance Support Program (USAID)
ATM	Arabian Travel Market
AUC	Aqaba University College
AZEM	Aqaba Zone Economic Mobilization Project (USAID)
AGDTF	Aqaba Garment Development Task Force
BAFO	Best and Final Offer
BDC	Business Development Center
BDS	Business Development Services
CAI	Changi Airports International
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CMT	Cut-Make-Trim
CO	Contracting/Contracts Officer
COB	Close of Business
COP	Chief of Party
CP	Cost Proposal
CRM	Customer Relationship Management
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CTO	Cognizant Technical Officer
D&G	Democracy and Governance
DCA	Development Credit Authority
EG	Economic Growth
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessment
EO	Economic Opportunities
EOI	Expression of Interest
EPC	Executive Privatization Commission
ERfKE	Education Reform for a Knowledge Economy (USAID)
EU	European Union
ETF	European Training Foundation
FAR	Federal Acquisition Regulation
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FDR	Fixed Daily Rate
FHR	Fixed Hourly Rate
FTA	Free Trade Agreement
FTZ	Free Trade Zone
FZ	Free Zone
FZC	Free Zones Corporation

GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
GDA	Global Development Alliance
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEM	Gender Entrepreneurship Markets
GIS	Geographic Information System
GOJ	Government of Jordan (the central governing entity of Jordan)
GPS	Global Positioning System
HR	Human Resources
ICDL	International Computer Driving License
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
INJAZ	Economic Opportunities for Jordanian Youth Program
IPR	Intellectual Property Rights
IQC	Indefinite Quantity Contract
ISP	Internet Service Provider
IS-ASEZA	Institutional Support to ASEZA (EU funded project)
IT	Information Technology
JD	Jordanian Dinar
JITOA	Jordan Inbound Tour Operators Association
JIB	Jordan Investment Board
JNA	Jordan National Agenda
JNCW	Jordanian National Commission for Women
JSCED	Jordan Standard Classifications of Education
JUSBP	Jordan-United States Business Partnership
JUSFTA	Jordan-United States Free Trade Agreement
KOJ	Kingdom of Jordan (the country within its physical boundaries)
KSA	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
LCDD	Local Community Development Directorate (ASEZA)
LCL	Less than Container Load
LECP	Local Employee Compensation Plan
LOE	Level of Effort
LTTA	Long-Term Technical Assistance
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MFI	Microfinance Institution
MIS	Management Information System
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MOL	Ministry of Labor
MOPIC	Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation
MOTA	Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSME	Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises
NCHRD	National Center for Human Resources Development
NDA	Neighborhood Development Activity
NDC	Neighborhood Development Committee
NET	Neighborhood Enhancement Team
NICRA	Negotiable Indirect Cost Rate
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NTS	National Tourism Strategy
PACE	Participatory Action for Community Enhancement
PMP	Performance Management Plan
PPP	Public Private Partnership
PR	Public Relations
PSD	Private Sector Development
R&D	Research and Development
QA	Quality Assurance

QC	Quality Control
RFP	Request for Proposal
RFQ	Request for Quotation
RJ	Royal Jordanian Airlines
SABEQ	Sustainable Achievement of Business Expansion and Quality (USAID)
SEO	Search Engine Optimization
SIYAHA	The Tourism Project (USAID)
SFU	Satellite Factory Unit
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
SOW	Scope of Work
STTA	Short-Term Technical Assistance
SWOT	Strength, Weakness, Opportunities and Threads
TA	Technical Assistance
TBD	To Be Determined
TO	Task Order
TOT	Training of Trainers
TP	Technical Proposal
TRIDE	Trilateral Industrial Development
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar
VTC	Vocational Training Center
WAEDAT	Women's Access to Entrepreneurial Development and Training
WEPIA	Water Education and Public Information for Action
WTO	World Trade Organization
WTTP	Workforce Technical Transformation Program

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# 1. OVERVIEW

Aqaba, the once tranquil and quiet port city, is now emerging as a lavish resort on the Red Sea and is positioning itself distinctly from competition in the area. The entrepreneurial private sector has been engaged in building mega projects that will reshape the horizon of the city for times to come; together with several other residential developments and hotel projects.

It is the role of the public sector now to take the lead and complement the efforts and huge investments of the private sector by developing the city's tourism product and by leading the efforts to create a public private partnership to brand, promote and position Aqaba as a destination of choice. These are much needed and urgent steps that are vital to increase international awareness of Aqaba, to enhance the visitors' experience and to protect the huge investments already in town.

The financial crisis that hit the tourism industry internationally is now receding and giving way to growth once more. This growth, however, is still timid and requires further economic progression in tourism key source markets. This is the time, nonetheless, for aggressive marketing and public relations efforts through clear strategic guidelines and a shared vision.

Tourism in Jordan, unfortunately, has not been regarded as a serious economic activity and is consistently underestimated as a wealth and job creator. In reality, tourism creates and maintains jobs, earns substantial foreign revenues, generates taxes and supports a wide range of goods and services through indirect and induced circulation of wages, and purchase of goods and services through the entire economy.

Aqaba, as a new emerging destination with huge potential, can seize the opportunity and take the lead to launch a model of excellence. Already, the tourism sector stakeholders have agreed the need for a strategy that would optimize the sector's sustainable performance and improve its contribution to economic growth and development.

The strategy that would address both the supply and demand sides of tourism in an integrated way has already been presented to the sector and agreement on objectives has been reached. The road is currently wide open to initiatives and decisions that would upgrade the status of Aqaba's product offering and position it in the international market place.

## 2. BRIEF SITUATION ANALYSIS

During the past decades, Aqaba was marketed as part of the Jordanian product, offering one or two nights of relaxation at the end of a classical Jordanian tour. This was adequate when Aqaba was a peaceful port town with few beaches and in- town hotels with no planned major developments.

Everything changed after the city was declared a "Special Economic Zone" in the year 2000 and the Authority managed to attract huge investments that are manifested in the following mega projects:

- a) Tala Bay, which is located 14 kms south of Aqaba, offers over 400 villas, apartments, townhouses and duplexes overlooking a 2 km private beach. Three hotels, Radisson SAS, the Moevenpick Tala Bay and the Marina Plaza are up and running.
- b) The Saraya project is located in the heart of Aqaba and will consist of residential units and 3 hotels to be operated by Jumeirah, a Westin hotel and two hotels to be operated by Nikki Beach resort and Spa. The compound will also contain a conference centre. The project is expected to be completed by 2013.
- c) Marsa Zayed is a \$ 10 billion mixed waterfront project with high – rise residential towers, retail, recreation, entertainment and business districts as well as several branded waterfront hotels and resorts. Phase I is anticipated in 2014.

- d) Ayla, the “Arabian Venice,” on the Red Sea will include a variety of hotels, shopping and residential areas and a world-class international golf course.

The above new projects will not only change the skyline of Aqaba, but will also add around 3,000 hotel rooms of premium quality (table below). This will definitely instigate the decision makers in the public sector to seriously consider the pressing requirement of setting up a professional tourism marketing entity capable of branding, positioning and promoting Aqaba as a destination of choice.

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Net additional rooms		340	170	1500	0	700	300
Forecast rooms available	3691	4031	4201	5701	5701	6401	6701

One other thing of crucial importance is the fact that most residential villas are being purchased by locals. These facilities are only used for few weeks leaving the whole compound to look like a ghost town during the rest of the year. This will inhibit restaurant owners and shopkeepers from investing in those projects; a concern that will be partly solved by the hotel rooms within each complex, but that can only really be fully tackled by introducing the apartment short rental process, a method very successfully utilized during the summer season months on the shores of the Mediterranean.

As far as current marketing efforts and activities are concerned, it can only be said that they are modest. Aqaba is still viewed by the Amman tourism trade as an insignificant part of a general Jordan tour and can be easily replaced by Petra as a last night location. In addition, there is lack of expertise within the ASEZA itself.

However, it is only fair to mention that recent efforts to increase charter operation have paid off and did improve Aqaba’s arrival numbers and their average length of stay. Europeans coming as part of a Jordanian tour spent 2.08 nights in Aqaba while those coming on charters spent 4.1 nights. This difference demonstrates a development that can be improved still further by introducing a new incentive scheme for European tour operators and by launching professional marketing activities in key source markets as will be discussed later on.

Listed hereunder are the nationalities which spent 50 % or more of their nights in 5 star facilities in Aqaba:

- Sweden 63 %
- Spain 61 %
- France 59 %
- UK 55 %

### 3. OBJECTIVES

The strategy document has clearly identified the key source markets for Aqaba and specified the level of activity in each category. They were divided as follows:

- Primary Markets
  - (1) Europe + Russia
    - (a) Benelux

- (b) Sweden
- (c) France
- (d) Germany
- (e) Italy
- (f) Spain
- (g) UK
- (h) Russia
- (2) Regional Markets
  - Secondary Markets
    - (1) Czech Republic
    - (2) Hungary
    - (3) Poland
    - (4) Slovenia
    - (5) Ukraine
    - (6) USA
  - Potential Markets
    - (1) China
    - (2) Japan
    - (3) India

These, however, are the geographic targets; what are more important in Aqaba's case are the demographic targets which were defined in the strategy document, and they are:

- Best agers, 55 +
- Double income no kids ("DINKS")
- Families
- Affinity groups

The above segments will be discussed in more details as each primary target market is reported; however, it was found through research that most of the above can be combined under one title: "Experience Seekers," a term that is currently being used by some destinations and will be used in Aqaba's case until better information levels are achieved through research in the marketplace.

The objectives as per the strategy document are:

### *a. Visibility*

Target 1: Increase arrivals by 8 % and the average length of stay by 0.5 nights from West and North Europe and Russia

#### Group 1: UK, Germany, France and Sweden

This section is about the international marketplace and the required activities for market penetration and market sharing. This situation is of the utmost intricacy, requiring proper branding and positive imaging. In a normal situation, the national tourism board or the NTO would cooperate fully with the regional boards or the destination management organizations (DMO); and in Aqaba's case, this would be translated by allowing Aqaba to have an extension agreement with JTB's existing market based representatives. JTB should, however, allow ASEZA

or the newly established tourism marketing company to have full access to those representatives and to establish its own key performance indicators. This eventually should be in the form of daily direct contacts and monitoring.

This kind of arrangement will allow the representatives to go for a more sales oriented approach with the trade, as marketing is already being performed on a national level. Such cooperation would reduce Aqaba's marketing spending on such items as representation fees and expenses and trade fair participation. Funds will then be allocated towards more trade support and more sorely needed in-house jobs. For purposes of practicality, such cooperation is not assumed in this plan where Aqaba must rely on its own resources to carry out full marketing activities.

The strategy document has identified two regions as key source markets for Aqaba and called them the primary target markets. In this section, those markets will be profiled and marketing activities will be detailed. However for budgetary purposes and for the first year, only the UK, Germany, France and Sweden will be covered in full, including the appointment of Market Based Representatives. The Regional market will also be emphasized particularly in the first year due to the 2011 Arab Capital event.

Before starting the detailed exercise it is worthwhile mentioning here that Europe should be considered as a strategic market for Aqaba. The reason is that the diversity of the product offering combining sun and beach, nature, adventure and cultural heritage is a unique combination that is unparalleled in such a small geographic area. Such diversity appeals strongly to Europeans.

#### Action Plan: 1. Marketing activities in UK, Germany, France and Sweden

Activity	Date	Responsibility	Budget
Prepare an RFP for marketing and PR representation and send it to three companies in each of UK, Germany and France	Dec 2010 – Jan 2011	ASEZA	
Contact WTM in London and reserve 100 sq. m. for Aqaba's stand during WTM 2011	Nov – Dec 2010	ASEZA	JD 50,000
Search and choose a designer / constructor for the Aqaba stand at WTM	Feb – Mar 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	JD 35,000

<p>Choose one company from the UK and appoint as marketing and PR representative for Aqaba (MBR)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MBR's staff visit to Aqaba – Familiarization</li> <li>• Launch a general press release announcing the opening of the Office</li> <li>• Prepare a list of potential tour operators and media and send to ASEZA</li> <li>• Prepare a list of travel agents that need to be trained</li> <li>• Assess the London International Dive Show for future Aqaba Participation</li> <li>• Assess the major Consumer shows in London and other potential cities and recommend attendance during 2012</li> <li>• Prepare the first press release to the Trade</li> <li>• Prepare for the first visit of ATMC / ASEZA including press luncheons and trade dinners in London</li> <li>• Prepare a press release for the media (trade and consumers)</li> <li>• Work on tour operators' incentive scheme including co – op advertising.</li> <li>• Assess possibilities of on – line advertisement and recommend venues</li> <li>• Brochure fulfillment</li> <li>• Conduct training sessions for travel agents</li> <li>• Work on Advertorials to be published during WTM in November</li> </ul>	Jan - Feb 2011	ASEZA	JD 100,000
	Jan – Feb 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	JD 4,000
	Feb 2011	MBR	
	Mar 2011	MBR	
	Mar – Apr 2011	MBR	
	Mar 2011	ASEZA / ATMC MBR	JD 2,000
	Apr - May 2011	MBR	JD 1,000
	Apr 2011	MBR	
	May – Jun 2011	MBR ATMC / ASEZA	JD 10,000
	May 2011	MBR	
	Year Round	MBR	JD 150,000
	May – Dec 2011	MBR ATMC / ASEZA	JD 50,000
	Year Round	MBR	JD 3,000
	Jun – Dec 2011	MBR	JD 10,000
Jun – Jul 2011	MBR ATMC / ASEZA	JD 15,000	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tour operators' staff training</li> </ul>	Jun – Dec 2011	MBR	JD 10,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work on trade companies to hold photo shoots in Aqaba and Wadi Rum</li> </ul>	Sep – Dec 2011	MBR	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build and establish "friends of Aqaba" in UK</li> </ul>	Sep – Oct 2011	MBR	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First media visit to Aqaba from UK</li> </ul>	Oct 2011	MBR ATMC / ASEZA	JD 8,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First trade familiarization trip to Aqaba</li> </ul>	Oct – Nov 2011	MBR ATMC / ASEZA	JD 8,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend World Travel Market</li> </ul>	Nov 2011	MBR ATMC / ASEZA	JD 5,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrange a private media / trade dinner during WTM</li> </ul>	Nov 2011	MBR ATMC / ASEZA	JD 10,000
TOTAL UK			JD 471,000
Choose one company from Germany and appoint as marketing and PR representative for Aqaba (MBR)	Jan - Feb 2011	ASEZA	JD 100,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MBR's staff visit to Aqaba</li> </ul>	Jan – Feb 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	JD 4,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch a general press release announcing the opening of the Office</li> </ul>	Feb 2011	MBR	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare a list of potential tour operators and media and send to ASEZA</li> </ul>	Mar 2011	MBR	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare a list of travel agents that need to be trained</li> </ul>	Mar – Apr 2011	MBR	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess the major Consumer shows in London and other potential cities and recommend attendance during 2012</li> </ul>	Apr - May 2011	MBR	JD 2,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare the first press release to the Trade</li> </ul>	Apr 2011	MBR	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare for the first visit of ATMC / ASEZA including press luncheons and trade dinners in Frankfurt</li> </ul>	May – Jun 2011	MBR ATMC / ASEZA	JD 10,000

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare a press release for the media (trade and consumers)</li> </ul>	May 2011	MBR	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work on tour operators' incentive scheme including co – op advertising</li> </ul>	Year Round	MBR	JD 150,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess possibilities of on – line advertisement and recommend venues</li> </ul>	May – Dec 2011	MBR ATMC / ASEZA	JD 50,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brochure fulfillment</li> </ul>	Year Round	MBR	JD 3,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct training sessions for travel agents</li> </ul>	Jun – Dec 2011	MBR	JD 10,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trade Press Campaign in FVW, Touristic Report or Touristic Aktuell</li> </ul>	Nov 2011	MBR	JD 30,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tour operators' staff training</li> </ul>	Jun – Dec 2011	MBR	JD 10,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work on trade companies to hold photo shoots in Aqaba and Wadi Rum</li> </ul>	Sep – Dec 2011	MBR	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build and establish "friends of Aqaba" in Germany</li> </ul>	Sep – Oct 2011	MBR	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First media visit to Aqaba from Germany</li> </ul>	Oct 2011	MBR ATMC / ASEZA	JD 8,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First trade familiarization trip to Aqaba</li> </ul>	Oct – Nov 2011	MBR ATMC / ASEZA	JD 8,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact DRV and start working on their 2012 – 2013 annual conference</li> </ul>	Jun – Nov 2011	MBR	
Attend ITB and reserve a space for the Aqaba stand in 2012	Mar 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	JD 42,000
Search and chose a designer / constructor for Aqaba's ITB stand	Nov – Dec 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	
<b>TOTAL GERMANY</b>			<b>JD 427,000</b>

Choose one company from France and appoint as marketing and PR representative for Aqaba (MBR)	Jan - Feb 2011	ASEZA	JD 100,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MBR's staff visit to Aqaba</li> <li>• Launch a general press release announcing the opening of the Office</li> <li>• Prepare a list of potential tour operators and media in France and send to ASEZA</li> <li>• Prepare a list of travel agents that need to be trained</li> <li>• Assess the major Consumer shows in Paris and other potential cities and recommend attendance during 2012</li> <li>• Prepare the first press release to the Trade in France</li> <li>• Prepare for the first visit of ATMC / ASEZA including press luncheons and trade dinners in Paris</li> <li>• Prepare a press release for the media (trade and consumers)</li> <li>• Work on tour operators' incentive scheme including co – op advertising</li> <li>• Assess possibilities of on – line advertisement and recommend venues</li> <li>• Brochure fulfillment</li> <li>• Conduct training sessions for travel agents</li> <li>• Trade Press Campaign in French trade media</li> <li>• Tour operators' staff training</li> <li>• Work on trade companies to hold photo shoots in Aqaba and Wadi Rum</li> </ul>	Jan – Feb 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	JD 4,000
	Feb 2011	MBR	
	Mar 2011	MBR	
	Mar 2011	MBR	
	Mar – Apr 2011	MBR	JD 2,000
	Apr - May 2011	MBR	
	May – Jun 2011	MBR ATMC / ASEZA	JD 10,000
	May 2011	MBR	
	Year Round	MBR	JD 150,000
	May – Dec 2011	MBR ATMC / ASEZA	JD 50,000
	Year Round	MBR	JD 3,000
	Jun – Dec 2011	MBR	JD 10,000
	Nov 2011	MBR	JD 30,000
	Jun – Dec 2011	MBR	JD 10,000
	Sep – Dec 2011	MBR	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build and establish “friends of Aqaba” in France</li> <li>• First media visit to Aqaba from France</li> <li>• First trade familiarization trip to Aqaba</li> <li>• Contact SNAV and start working on their 2012 – 2013 annual conference</li> </ul>	Sep – Oct 2011	MBR	
	Oct 2011	MBR ATMC / ASEZA	JD 8,000
	Oct – Nov 2011	MBR ATMC / ASEZA	JD 8,000
	Nov 2011	MBR	
Search and choose a designer / constructor for the Aqaba stand at TOP RESA	Mar – Apr 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	JD 35,000
Participate in TOP RESA Trade show in Paris including space rent	Sep 2011	ATMC / ASEZA MBR	JD 63,000
Host a private dinner for selected media and trade during Top Resa.	Sep 2011	ATMC / ASEZA MBR	JD 10,000
Attend the International Luxury Travel Market in France and assess attendance in 2012	Dec 2011	ATMC / ASEZA MBR	JD 2,500
<b>TOTAL FRANCE</b>			<b>JD 495,500</b>

Choose one company from Sweden and appoint as marketing and PR representative for Aqaba (MBR) - partial representation concentrating on trade	Jan - Feb 2011	ASEZA	JD 50,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MBR's staff visit to Aqaba</li> <li>• Launch a general press release announcing the opening of the Office</li> <li>• Prepare a list of potential tour operators and send to ASEZA</li> <li>• Prepare the first press release to the Trade in Sweden</li> <li>• Attend TUR in Gothenburg</li> <li>• Prepare for the first visit of ATMC / ASEZA including trade dinners</li> <li>• Working on tour operators' incentive scheme including co – op advertising</li> <li>• Tour operators' staff training</li> <li>• Work on trade companies to hold photo shoots in Aqaba and Wadi Rum</li> <li>• First trade familiarization trip to Aqaba</li> </ul>	Jan – Feb 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	JD 2,000
	Feb 2011	MBR	
	Mar 2011	MBR	
	Mar 2011	MBR	
	Mar 2011	MBR	JD 2,000
	May 2011	MBR ATMC / ASEZA	JD 5,000
	Year Round	MBR	JD 150,000
	May 2011	MBR	JD 7,500
	Jun – Dec 2011	MBR	
	May – Dec 2011	MBR	JD 10,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend TUR in Gothenburg and reserve a place for Aqaba's stand in 2012</li> </ul>	Mar 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	JD 21,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select a designer / constructor for the stand</li> </ul>	Jun 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	
TOTAL SWEDEN			JD 247,500

Group 2: Italy, Spain, Benelux and Russia

Italy, Spain, Benelux and Russia have been defined in the strategy document as primary markets; however, due to budget constraints, there will be no representations in these countries during the first year of operation.

Action Plan: 2. Marketing activities in Italy, Spain, Benelux and Russia

Activities	Date	Responsibility	Budget
Support the trade in Belgium, Italy, Spain and Russia with the Charter Incentive Scheme	Jan – Dec 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	JD 400,000
Plan attendance of MITT, BIT and FITUR and secure meeting appointments with the trade	Dec 2010 – Jan 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	
Attend FITUR in Madrid and reserve place for 2012	Jan 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	JD 25,000
Attend BIT in Milan and reserve a place for Aqaba's stand in 2012	Feb 2012	ATMC / ASEZA	JD 25,000
Attend MITT in Moscow and reserve a place for 2012	Mar 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	JD 30,000
Prepare a data base of all potential tour operators to Aqaba in Russia, Italy, Spain and Benelux	Year Round	ATMC / ASEZA	
Prepare and send press releases to tour operators in above mentioned countries	Jun 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	
Arrange for a media delegate from Italy and Spain to join one of the charters	Oct – Dec 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	JD 5,500
Attend TTG Incontri in Rimini and reserve a place for 2012	Oct 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	JD 20,000
Search and choose designers / constructors for Aqaba's stands in FITUR, BIT, MITT and TTG	Jun - Dec	ATMC / ASEZA	JD 50,000 (50% paid in 2011)
Total Benelux, Italy, Spain & Russia			JD 555,500

TOTAL EUROPE + RUSSIA	JD 2,196,500
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**Target 2. Increase number of arrivals from the Regional prime markets by 8 % and the average length of stay by 0.3 nights**

In a broad sense, this would mean the Middle East and North Africa; however and due to the current status of the product offering, only Lebanon, Syria, Saudi Arabia and Egypt will be targeted for the first year. In years to come and as the mega projects start to develop together with tourism products in the city of Aqaba, thus the ability to offer a high quality product that appeals to the families in the Gulf will improve

In contrary to Europe, the marketing approach in this region will be consumer oriented vis a vis the trade oriented approach in Europe. In this context, branding assumes a rather critical role and should be applied efficiently starting from the 30 seconds commercial and ending with A4 advertisements in prestigious magazines and newspapers.

The big opportunity in 2011 is that Aqaba will be the Tourism Capital of the Arab world, a premature event that needs to be utilized for the benefit of the city. To this effect, a marketing and PR campaign should be prepared, together with an impressive attendance at the Arabian Travel Market in Dubai.

A Media and Public Relations company would be chosen to work across the Arab World spreading the message of Aqaba, the new destination. Their main job is to create awareness and perception of the product, and eventually generate demand. Their job, however, is not only to target the Arab population; but also the expatriates living in the Gulf. The later segment, specifically the Americans and Europeans, are a potential target for Aqaba which is not only a more uninhibited environment, but which is also an authentic place of culture and amazing scenery. These expatriates are basically targeted by direct marketing campaigns, by internet and by English speaking newspapers across the Gulf.

The marketing and advertising campaign should include a 30 – second TV commercial that will be placed at significant times on the MBC, LBC, MTV and Future Satellite stations and within programs that have the highest ratings. The print ads would be placed in such magazines that are mainly read by wives and have a wide pan Arab circulation.

### Action Plan: 3. Marketing Activities in the Regional Markets

Activities	Date	Responsibility	Budget
Rent the space for the presence of Aqaba at the Arabian Travel Market	Nov – Dec 2010	ASEZA	JD 38,000
Choose designer / constructor of Aqaba's stand at ATM	Nov – Dec 2010	ASEZA	JD 22,000
Prepare the RFPs for choosing a PR and Media firm to cover Aqaba's presence before, during and after ATM; and one for the Region	Nov – Dec 2010	ASEZA	
Chose the Media and PR firm for the ATM and the Region	Jan 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	JD 75,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>First media trip to Aqaba before ATM</li> </ul>	Feb – Mar 2011	MBR ATMC / ASEZA	JD 10,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aqaba's Marketing Campaign in the Region including TV commercials and magazine advertisement</li> </ul>	Apr – Jun 2011 Sep – Oct 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	JD 750,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Direct marketing campaigns for expatriates in the Gulf</li> </ul>	Apr – May 2011	MBR ATMC / ASEZA	JD 30,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Press releases regarding Aqaba's presence at the ATM</li> </ul>	Apr 2011	MBR	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attend Arabian Travel Market and perform activities at the stand</li> </ul>	May 2011	ATMC / ASEZA MBR	JD 4,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attract large attendance to press conference during ATM</li> </ul>	May 2011	ATMC / ASEZA MBR	JD 5,000

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High profile event during ATM</li> </ul>	May 2011	ATMC / ASEZA MBR	JD 10,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Media trips from Lebanon, Syria, Egypt and Saudi</li> </ul>	Year Round	MBR	JD 25,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effect marketing activities in Lebanon and Syria including mall campaigns and direct marketing</li> </ul>	Apr – May 2011	MBR	JD 25,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Media trips from UAE, Bahrain, Kuwait and Qatar</li> </ul>	Sep – Oct 2011	MBR	JD 10,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Media trips from North Africa</li> </ul>	Oct – Nov 2011	MBR	JD 10,000
Attend AWTTE trade Fair in Beirut	OCT 2011	MBR ATMC / ASEZA	JD 4,000
Total Regional			JD 1,018,000

**Target 3. Increase number of arrivals from East European markets by 8% and the average length of stay by 0.3 nights**

The Secondary markets are, according to the Strategy, the East European markets and the long-haul markets including for example the USA China and India. In East Europe there are some markets which are developing satisfactorily and affluent middle class societies are being shaped. In such markets, it is recommended to work with the trade and stimulate charter operations during the summer season from May till September. ASEZA has experience of arranging a solely trade fair presence in Poland allowing the Aqaba private sector to attend. An evaluation of this activity should be done to assess next year's participation. The idea is, since ASEZA cannot arrange stands in all East European trade fairs, to organize an Aqaba stand in the fair that brings most East European tour operators.

As far as the USA, China and India are concerned: due to the scale and distance of such markets, it is recommended for all activities to be left to JTB. Once the product is fully developed in terms of the completion of the mega projects, then ATMC / ASEZA can become more creative in handling these markets in a highly targeted fashion.

Action Plan: 4. Marketing Activities in East Europe

Activities	Date	Responsibility	Budget
Arrange for a stand at the Warsaw Travel Trade	Jan – Feb 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	JD 18,000
Prepare a list of tour operators in the East European countries	Jan – Mar 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	
Provide tour operators' support by offering a summer incentive scheme for charter operations	Jan – May 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	JD 300,000
Send a press release to the East European trade	May 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	
Attend the Warsaw trade fair and arrange for trade and PR assistance during the fair	Sep 2011	ATMC / ASEZA PR Firm	JD 10,000
A second press release to the trade	Oct 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	
Total Secondary			JD 328,000

*b. Accessibility*

Target: Increase existing charters by an additional 6 new operations and the number of passengers on flights by 20%

If a country or a city is not served by regular airlines, then they can never become international destinations. Aqaba is currently served by two daily Royal Jordanian flights from Amman and by a number of intermittent charter operations. The lack of international accessibility to Aqaba will impede efforts to market Aqaba efficiently, and that is why accessibility was highlighted as a major weakness in the strategy document.

In many countries of the world, the move towards deregulation of skies has led to the emergence of the low cost carriers which increased aviation's significance for short and medium tourism trips. This, however, is not the immediate solution for Aqaba; rather it is the regular airlines that are currently serving Amman regularly from major European cities. ATMC / ASEZA can start discussions with Royal Jordanian in order to allocate one of their weekly flights to Aqaba. This might need a sponsorship package to encourage RJ, and in this case an incentive scheme should be created for such a purpose. In case RJ is not interested, discussions can continue with other European airlines serving Jordan.

Low cost carriers usually carry independent travelers on business or leisure trips and do not carry tourism groups as such. Until Aqaba develops its product to allow independent tourism, then not much can be expected from international LCCs. Newly emerging Jordanian LCCs can be interested if an incentive scheme is provided.

Another activity that enhances accessibility, albeit in a limited way, is the cruise business. The Middle East, particularly the Gulf States, is experiencing growing interest from the cruise lines as evidenced by the increase in cruise ship activity in the area in recent years. As a general rule, however, and in order for a resort city to become a cruise destination, it should create the quality of the shore side experience to be equal to that of the shipboard experience. The brand of such a city should, as well, interest cruise lines and travel agents.

Shore excursions play an important role in the cruise industry. For passengers, they are an opportunity to learn more about the destination and they contribute to the overall cruise experience. For destinations, shore excursions provide the opportunity to showcase local attractions and culture to large numbers of visitors, in addition to generating revenue and creating jobs. For cruise lines, the availability and variety of shore excursions are key factors when deciding where to visit. As such, Aqaba has a basic weakness in its product, obliging current cruise passengers to bypass Aqaba on their way to Wadi Rum and Petra.

Before serious work is done in terms of Aqaba's product development, ASEZA can at least initiate a pleasant disembarkation procedure. Instead of being greeted by aggressive, irresponsible and reckless taxi drivers, tourists should be surprised by flowers, refreshments and folkloric groups.

Most of the activities required to meet the above target have been stated in the visibility targets, specifically, the incentive scheme and other trade support activities,

#### Action Plan: 5. Accessibility

Activities	Date	Responsibility	Budget
Tour operators incentive scheme	Year Round	ATMC / ASEZA	
Initiate talks with Royal Jordanian	Jan 2011	ATMC / ASEZA / ADC	
Sponsor one weekly flight direct to Aqaba	Jun – Dec 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	JD 70,000
Continue discussions with European airlines	Feb – Mar 2011	ATMC / ASEZA / ADC	
Initiate discussions with other private airlines in Jordan	Feb – Mar 2011	ATMC / ASEZA / ADC	
Attend the 17 <sup>th</sup> World Route Development Forum in Berlin	Oct 2011	ATMC / ASEZA / ADC	JD 2,500
Prepare and implement welcoming activities at port	Year Round	ATMC / ASEZA	JD 10,000
Attend Seatrade Miami, assess participation and meet potential cruise lines	Mar 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	JD 3,000
Attend Seatrade Middle East Maritime in Dubai	Oct 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	JD 1,500
Attend Seatrade Mediterranean, assess participation and meet potential cruise lines	Nov 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	JD 2,000
Prepare a list of potential cruise lines	Apr 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	
<b>Total Accessibility</b>			<b>JD 89,000</b>

### c. Seasonality

Target: Increase DOMESTIC tourism by 10% and during low months by 15 % and arrivals from East Europe during Summer months by 12 %.

The domestic market in Jordan was never dealt with in a serious manner. In different countries the domestic market is utilized by destination marketers to fill gaps during the low month seasons. Aqaba should do the same, and ATMC / ASEZA should be able to gather all accommodation facilities in Aqaba through the Aqaba Hotel association and work with them to produce a reduced price package during summer months.

Later on, this package will be announced through a media and advertisement campaign that will detail each participating facility and their reduced packaged price. However, and as a support for participating hotels which are usually the 2 and 3 stars, ATMC / ASEZA will provide transportation through one of the tourism transport companies.

Moreover in order to boost the impact of the 2011 Aqaba Event as Capital of Arab Tourism, it is recommended to appoint a local PR firm to promote the message of Aqaba within Jordan and to create a positive image of Aqaba as an internal destination.

In addition, an incentive scheme will be applied on East European summer charters.

#### Action Plan: 6. Marketing Activities during low month's occupancy

Activity	Date	Responsibility	Budget
Offer East European tour operators, an incentive scheme for summer operations	Year Round	ATMC / ASEZA	Under Different Heading
Chose a local PR and Media company to launch the 2011 event in Aqaba	Year Round	ATMC / ASEZA Media Firm	JD 50,000
Work with the private sector in Aqaba to arrange for reduced package during low months season	Jan – Mar 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	
Launch a campaign in the media to announce low priced packages	Jun – Aug 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	JD 30,000
Arrange for transportation to hotels participating in campaign	Jun – Aug 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	JD 45,000
Arrange a special offer during the month of Ramadan and support the media and ad campaign	Aug – Sep 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	JD 20,000
Install billboards at the airport and other strategic locations to promote Aqaba 2011	Apr – May 2011	Media Firm ATMC / ASEZA	JD 50,000
Total Domestic			JD 195,000

#### *d. Partnerships*

Target: Establish partnerships with tourism stakeholders in Aqaba and tour operators in Europe and the Region

Since the early 1980's, most of the developed countries started establishing public – private sector partnerships for tourism marketing; this happened on the national, regional and city level. Recently and since the mid 1990's, a new concept emerged where partnerships formed private shareholding companies for marketing. These were chaired and managed by the private sector, but were regularly monitored by the public sector; Netherlands is an example on the national level and the City of London is another example on the city level.

During 2009, a study was conducted to establish a tourism marketing entity taking Aqaba's needs and challenges into consideration. After gaining insight into the situation and into the outlook of different industry stakeholders, the private shareholding company model was agreed as the best structure for the new proposed Aqaba Tourism Marketing Company (ATMC).

According to this model, ASEZA and ATMC will enter into a five year agreement to brand, position and promote Aqaba internationally. The model proposes the formation of a shareholding company that is based on Equity and Service Agreements to execute such an agreement. This company could be incubated within the ADC. The capital of the company was proposed at JD 2.5 million and to be paid up fully during the first year of operation. However, during the first year and thereafter, the Aqaba Tourism Marketing Company will sign "Service Agreements" with the shareholders in an amount not to be less than JD 2.5 million during the first year and JD 5 million annually thereafter. These service agreements are general in nature and are proposed to cover the core program of the company; however if existing shareholders or any other stakeholder wish to enter into a specific service agreement with the ATMC, they can do so under a separate contract and for additional fees.

Efforts should start gaining momentum to establish such a firm, with ADC playing a primary role and acting as an "incubator" for such a proposed entity, until it can go on its own as a legal partnership with private sector control. The proposed structure of the company is shown below, and besides the internal structure or the executive team, there are four committees:

- Higher Performance Assessment committee that acts as a "Board of Trustees" and convenes every three months to monitor and evaluate key performance indicators. It is chaired by ASEZA's Chief Commissioner.
- Three specialized committees elected and chaired by the private sector, and reporting to the Board of Directors. They assist the executive team by drawing attention to areas of weaknesses, conduct research and make recommendations to the Board. They specialize in Marketing, Product Development and Quality Control.

A normal budget for first year of operation is around JD 5 million. ASEZA is already allocating such amounts in its budget for marketing; thus the private sector should be able to start with 25 % or JD 1.25 million and then increase its share to a majority by year 4 or 5. If a destination is to be marketed efficiently in the international marketplace, then JD 5 million is a minimum to start with. Below such a figure, it will be an inefficient exercise lacking the needed resources to achieve market penetration and share.

Once such an entity is established, it can extend and form partnerships with international tour operators through joint marketing and co-op advertising. And, it can also allow the local stakeholders in Aqaba to share and sponsor advertisement and media campaigns.

#### Action Plan: 7. Forming partnerships

Activity	Date	Responsibility	Budget
Present proposals to establish ATMC to major stakeholders	Late 2010	ASEZA / ADC	
Establish the Founding Committee from public and private sector members	Late 2010	ASEZA / ADC	
Legalize the company, elect the Board of Directors and committees	January 2011	Founding Committee	
Appoint CEO and Department Heads	Jan – Feb 2011	Board of Directors	
Allow private sector partners to share in the Regional Ad campaign	Mar 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	
Develop international partnerships through joint marketing	Year Round	ATMC / ASEZA	
Develop a detailed monitoring and evaluation plan to be used by the Assessment Higher Committee	Jan 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	

## 4. PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

### Target: Enhance Visitors' Experience

The tourism product provides the essence for any holiday and is the principal stimulator and differentiator in terms of attractiveness and competitiveness of destinations. Its character and current state and future development is a key element of any destination success.

Issues of product variety and diversity are critical to the success of marketing growth strategies responding, mainly, to customization trends and niche marketing. Such issues are also vitally important to visitors' experience, length of stay and spend. Tourists today are highly sensitive to the quality of service they receive and are not prepared to compromise on this aspect which they regard as a very important part of a tourism experience.

Aqaba's tourism product, thus, should be looked at from this perspective. Currently Aqaba's current and future product offerings are confined to the mega projects (Tala Bay, Saraya, Ayla, and Marsa Zayed) in addition to a few 5 and 4 star hotels. The city seriously lacks cultural and entertainment facilities and there is fear and concern among the locals that the city, in the near future, will only be composed of gated resorts. This means that tourists will spend all their times in the resort without any direct benefit to the local community. As an example, the people of Aqaba these days are sadly watching the cruise passengers disembarking for a quick trip to Petra and Wadi Rum without anyone setting foot in Aqaba. To address this issue and to make Aqaba a real destination, the following developments should be tackled during the years 2011 and 2012:

- i) The development of a city centre where information and other conveniences are found in one place. Upgrading the Arab Revolt Plaza area could be considered as a location.
- ii) The development of an "old Souq" where tourists can interact with authenticity and culture.

- iii) The development of a pedestrian street and a marina with restaurants, cafes, handicraft shops and other cultural activities.
- iv) The development of an authentic visitors' information centre.
- v) The initiation of a "city tour" and "daily tours". The city tour can be done in an attractive double decker or a trolley. Daily tours, on the other hand, can replace the current mess in this activity where suppliers are not delivering as promised.
- vi) Establish state -of-the-art aquarium facilities that reflect the richness of the Red Sea.
- vii) Make use of the Sherif Hussein Bin Ali house and transform it into a museum.
- viii) Revitalize the Aqaba castle and make it alive with the heritage of the past.
- ix) Upgrade and maintain the site of Ayla and the oldest church and other archaeological sites.

#### Action Plan: 8. Product Development

Activity	Date	Responsibility	Budget
Establish RFPs and eventually choose a consultancy firm to draw up plans for the Arab Revolt Square and Sherif's House	Jan – Mar 2011	ASEZA / ADC	
Construct and upgrade the new Square + House to become a tourism centre	Jun – Dec 2011	ASEZA / ADC	JD 4,000,000
Conduct a study to close Sa'adeh Street and transform it into a pedestrian street + implementation	Jan – Mar 2011	ASEZA / ADC	JD 1,500,000
Conduct a study to transform the Mamluki Aqaba castle into an experience by bringing it back to life	Jan – Mar 2011	ASEZA / ADC	JD 250,000
Conduct a study to upgrade the Ayla and Oldest Church sites	Jan – Mar 2011	ATMC / ASEZA ADC	
Initiate daily tours from Aqaba to Wadi Rum, Petra and Dead Sea	Jan – Feb 2011	ASEZA / Private Sector	JD 15,000
Assist in establishing a weekly flea market that sells handicrafts and traditional items	Jan – Feb 2011	ASEZA / ADC	
Total Product			JD 5,765,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allocated</li> <li>• To be Funded</li> </ul>			JD 1,100,000
			JD 4,665,000

## 5. SUPPORTING PROGRAMS

### *a. Market Research*

The tourism sector in Jordan and in Aqaba is in desperate need of reliable information; the government needs the information to understand the contribution of the sector towards the national economy and for policy formulation, and the marketing partnership needs it for proper marketing decisions. Investors on the other hand, need it to understand visitors' attitudes, behavior and trends, and airlines need it for proper planning in terms of routes and carrying capacities

In the long term, a proper research center should be established as a partnership. It should be financed and managed independently and should be able to serve interested parties by undertaking marketing and economic research. Until this can happen, a department / unit in the proposed ATMC, can do the following:

- i) Carry out projects, studies and analyses concerning the development and management of tourism at the local level and organize specialized educational conferences and seminars drawing its expertise from scientific work, from continuous market research, and from observation of the business environment.
- ii) Work on the long-term research projects - 'Tourism and economic development' and 'Regional-environmental and socio-cultural aspects of tourism' - which have been approved by the industry. The common goal of these research projects is to explain the complex cause-and-effect relationships in tourism, to gather the knowledge that will make the processes of decision-making and management in tourism easier and, at the same time, to plan a modern tourism development. The proposed unit will work on the projects at all levels from companies, through the local and regional to, even, the national level.

#### Action Plan: 9. Market Research

Activity	Date	Responsibility	Budget
Conduct visitor satisfaction survey	November 2010	ASEZA	
Conduct ongoing visitors' satisfaction surveys	Spring and Autumn 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	Funded
Conduct a survey to show tourism impact on local economy including an analysis report	Second Half 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	
Buy international reports on trends, travel habits and the changing demographics in Europe and the Region	May 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	From JTB
Develop a database of specialist niche operators, agents and special interest groups such as dive clubs, museums, societies, etc	Jun – Dec 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	

## *b. Market Segmentation*

In normal terms, destinations that are not targeting mass tourism and that do not boast big budgets, favour the market segmentation approach which is highly recommended for Aqaba's case especially in the primary target markets. It will be treated with significance within this plan as it will help to:

- iii) Maximize the return on investment of marketing activities
- iv) Segmentation helps to identify segments in the international target markets where the return on investment for marketing spending will be greatest. By profiling the market segments, one can identify which segments will be most receptive to what Aqaba has to offer, which will provide the greatest yield. Marketing activities can then be directed at those segments, rather than at the market as a whole and marketers can better direct marketing funds through more efficient targeting.
- v) Understand the composition of the market better
- vi) By segmenting the market, the composition or groups that exist in the international market place can be better understood. This will lead to more appreciation of why travelers visit Aqaba and why they don't. Travelers who are most likely to visit will be identified and those who won't. We learn how they plan and book their holidays, where they get information, what they like to do on holiday and much more. All this information will help to develop more effective marketing activities and more attractive tourism products.
- vii) Communicate more effectively to target segments
- viii) Psycho-graphically based segmentation is based upon the emotional and rational motivations that drive people's travel choices. It also provides insight into where the segments look for travel information and what media channels they pay most attention to. This information enables marketing planners to develop marketing communications campaigns that are specifically designed to the targeted groups.
- ix) Common segments have been identified across different target audiences and different cultures, and a target consumer with a mixture of interests across segments has been recognized and will be referred to as a "Universal Experience Seeker". Whether they are best agers, dinks, families, or belonging to the affinity segment, they all have one thing in common: "they are looking for an experience rather than a visit". Many destinations such as Australia have successfully identified this global customer who has shared characteristics in outlook to travel, personal development and everyday life. In simple terms travelling is a big part of their life. They are experienced travelers and are often interested in travel for travel's sake and regard it as an important aspect of their lifestyle and well being. Compared to the average tourist, Experience Seekers want to get off the beaten track, interact with local people and engage in the lifestyle.

The Experience Seekers have a number of key demands to satisfy their travel experience:

- Authentic personal experiences;
- Social interactions – meet and interact with the locals;
- Experience something different from normal day-to-day life;
- Understand and learn about different lifestyles and cultures;
- Participate in the lifestyle and experience, rather than observing it;
- Challenge themselves – physically, emotionally and/or mentally;
- Visit authentic destinations that are not necessarily part of the tourist route; and
- Exposure to unique and personally compelling experiences

If the Aqaba product offering, including Wadi Rum and Petra, cannot satisfy the desires of such travelers, then who can? In any case, these target customers can be reached through

- Internet;
- Cable television;
- Lifestyle channels and programs/documentaries;

- Digital media; and
- Cinema.

In brief, Experience Seekers are an overarching segment whose values, needs and motivations have relevance and therefore resonate with more than one travel style, holiday type, etc. It is however recognized that Experience Seekers values, needs and motivations are more common in some particular psychographic holiday segments. The result of this is that, at an over-arching brand communications level, the Experience Seeker is the global target market. However, when communicating information regarding specific products and activities, the opportunity exists to fine tune amongst appropriate holiday segments within each individual market. While Experience Seekers have similar broad drivers for their holidays, the manner in which these can be realized through consuming products or activities can vary among the different holiday segments within each market. More specific segments to be targeted in future years need to be progressively defined through detailed consumer research.

#### Action Plan: 10. Market Segmentation

Activity	Date	Responsibility	Budget
Conduct qualitative research in UK, Germany and France	Mar – Apr 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	JD 100,000
Develop industry knowledge and skills to understand and apply research findings	Apr - May	ATMC / ASEZA	
Support combined presence at niche trade shows such as cruise shipping, diving etc	Year Round	ATMC / ASEZA	
Create internet links or sites themed according to niche, e.g. dive or ecotourism operators, special events and festivals etc	Jun 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	
Develop a database of specialist niche operators, agents and special interest groups such as dive clubs, museums, societies, etc	Jun – Dec 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	
Total Segmentation			JD 100,000

#### *c. Branding*

This is a term that is not yet comprehended in Jordan. In spite of various efforts, Jordan is not yet properly branded. Aqaba had a successful model back in 2002 – 2003, but this was never used appropriately, while the Jordan Tourism Board lacks a suitable “Destination Brand”. In the context of this plan, it is recommended for Aqaba to reinstate their excellent previous branding exercise and only change the theme line. There is no use in starting a big and costly exercise just to come up with more logos and more theme lines.

Branding and imaging of destinations are relatively new terms and are of great importance to destinations that need to be differentiated from their surroundings and from their competition. However, because destinations can be seen as products and services, imaging and branding can make all the difference and can have an even more significant role with destinations that are located in “negative” zones.

Action Plan: 11. Branding

Activity	Date	Responsibility	Budget
Write RFP and send it to several known destination photographers	November 2010	ASEZA	
Contract a reputable photographer to take new stock images of Aqaba and Wadi Rum	Feb – Mar 2011	ASEZA	JD 5,000
Update previous branding work	Nov – Dec 2010	ASEZA	JD 10,000
Write RFP for marketing / advertizing firms to produce ad images and a 30 - second commercial	Nov 2010	ASEZA	
Choose a marketing firm and produce a theme line for 2011, ad images and designs and a 30 – second commercial for the Arab World using existing footage whenever possible.	Dec 2010 – Feb 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	JD 150,000
Update Aqaba's collaterals and produce new ones in 8 languages	Nov 2010 – Jan 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	JD 35,000
<b>Total Branding</b>			<b>JD 200,000</b>

#### *d. E-Marketing*

According to the World Tourism Organization, the internet and on line marketing have changed the tourism industry in an unprecedented way, and to a degree that has not been seen in any other sector. The speed of change and development is fast, and keeping pace is becoming more and more of a challenge. Online information is now one of the primary influences on consumer decisions in nearly all major markets. And when figures show that 41% of all tourists arriving in Spain last year booked their trip through the internet or that in the United States of America, in 2007 for the first time ever, the number of trips bought online exceeded those purchased offline, it is clear that the internet and new technologies have become a key competitive factor for both destinations and enterprises alike. Much is going on in the technology arena today that is influencing the way consumers decide, buy and exchange information. Additionally, these changes are impacting on the way destinations and companies manage and market themselves. In a marketplace where consumers are becoming more demanding, distribution more transparent and supply increasingly competitive, keeping pace with the challenges will determine any player's competitive positioning.

E-tourism, in general, offers the potential to make information and booking facilities available to large numbers of consumers at relatively low cost. It enables the tourism sector to make large-scale savings on the production and distribution of print and other traditional activities such as call centers and information centers. It also provides a tool for communication and relationship development with the end-consumers as well as tourism suppliers and market intermediaries. Tourism, however, can be viewed as very different from most other sectors of e-commerce as the consumer goes and collects the product at the point of production which is the destination. Consequently, tourism avoids the need to deliver products around the world.

Starting with an effective website and experienced on line marketing experts, Aqaba has the opportunity to become a model for Jordan and the region. Developing the destination website as a first phase and training the tourism private sector on establishing their own on line selling system can be the start of the winning model.

Action Plan: 12. E Marketing

Activity	Date	Responsibility	Budget
Choose a local technical firm to upgrade Aqaba's tourism website	On going	ASEZA	TBD
Initiate and organize workshops for Aqaba Tourism Industry	March 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	JD 10,000
Upgrade Websites of 4 and 3 star hotels to coincide with destination website	Jun – Dec 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	TBD
E Marketing Campaigns in UK and Germany under different headings		MBR	
Total E Marketing			JD 10,000

*e. Training*

Training should be an ongoing task of the new marketing company; whether it is staff training or industry training at large, it should be continuing and results motivated. Experts from around the world will be conducting regular workshops to improve existing knowledge or to introduce novel and innovative subjects of interest.

Action Plan: 13. Training

Activities	Date	Responsibility	Budget
Marketing and product development staff training	Jan 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	
Organize and attend tourism trade fair workshop	Mar 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	JD 3,000
Website development training program	Mar 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	JD 3,000
Events management training workshop	Apr 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	JD 4,000
Incentive travel training workshop	May 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	JD 3,000
Crisis management workshop	Jun 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	JD 2,000
Tourism statistics workshop in collaboration with UNWTO – Tourism Satellite Accounts	Sep 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	JD 4,000
E marketing workshop	Oct 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	JD 4,000
Maximizing business opportunities from Aqaba cruises	Nov 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	JD, 4000
English training programs for employees in the tourism industry	Mar 2011 Sep 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	JD 7,000
Tourism awareness campaign targeting the local community for Aqaba 2011 Event	Jan – Feb 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	JD 6,000
Eco tourism awareness in Aqaba and Wadi Rum	Apr – Jun 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	JD 3,000
Expanding Tourists Friends Club in all Aqaba schools	Year Round	ATMC / ASEZA	JD 2,000

Cross cultural awareness campaign	Year Round	ATMC / ASEZA	JD 1,000
Aqaba Town Guides, a training program in cooperation with Aqaba University College and Vocational Centre	Jan – Jun 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	JD 5,000
Total Training			JD 51,000

## 6. EVENTS

Organizing events in Jordan remains an undeveloped activity which lacks sustainability. This is for various reasons, the most important of which is the lack of expertise at all levels. The private sector, however, witnessing the nation's failure in sustaining large events, is currently taking the lead and developing major events, albeit slowly. It is the obligation of the Government to safeguard these private companies and support them financially until they are able to operate independently. The criteria should be very strict allowing only events with tourism attraction capability to prevail and grow effectively.

ASEZA should do the same and initiate an event incentive scheme that will produce an annual flagship occasion capable of attracting domestic, regional and international visitors. This event should, in any case, integrate with the local culture and develop into a celebrated account of people, places and history. ASEZA should also identify three other themes that are totally local in spirit and character, and that are capable of exposing traditional crafts that have lapsed over the years. These should be sponsored by both private and public sectors until they reach a mature stage of professionalism and independence. Examples are sand sculpturing and bottling, camel racing, and sea and food fun and games, etc.

### Action Plan: 14. Events

Activities	Date	Responsibility	Budget
Choose a local event organizer capable of coordinating and organizing events for Aqaba 2011	Nov – Dec 2010	ASEZA	JD 100,000 retainer
• An inaugural flagship event	Mar – Apr 2011	ATMC / ASEZA Organizer	JD 300,000
• Three local and sustainable events	Jan – Dec 2011	ATMC / ASEZA Organizer/s	JD 300,000
• Year round local events	Jan – Dec 2011	ATMC / ASEZA	JD 100,000
Various small events during Eids and holidays for domestic tourism i.e. circus, fun fares etc	Year Round	ATMC / ASEZA	JD 40,000
Total Events Allocated			JD 400,000 Rest from Sponsors

Grand Total	JD 4,587,500*
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\*This number does not include budgets for overheads and administrative costs and product development costs.

## 7. QUALITY CONTROL

Quality control remains the most important factor in achieving sustainable tourism. So far, Aqaba has not been engaged in a serious plan that will give it the quality image required to enhance the branding exercise. During 2011, a modest plan is recommended to enforce quality as a major pillar of tourism and to provide sustainable actions. The most important action that is needed urgently is to establish a Quality Control Committee that will have power of inspection over such activities as taxis, glass boats, carts, souvenir shops, etc.

### Action Plan: 15. Quality Control

Activity	Date	Responsibility	Budget
Establish a public – private sector Committee for Quality Control	Jan 2011	ASEZA	
Implement the Blue Flag program to upgrade beach standards	Year Round	ASEZA	JD 20,000
Implement the Aqaba Quality Label	Year Round	ASEZA	JD 50,000
Mystery shopping activities	Oct – Nov 2011	ASEZA / ATMC	JD 5,000
Provide passenger terminals with ATM machines, telephone cabins and well-appointed waiting halls	Jun – Jul 2011	ASEZA	TBD
Total Quality			JD 75,000*

\* From ASEZA's Budget

## 8. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The key performance indicators in this action plan for the first year are as follows:

- Media coverage in UK, Germany and France, through the ad equivalent ratios as agreed with market based representatives, and in a value not to be less than €3,000,000 for each country.
- Six additional new tour operator programs selling Aqaba as a destination.
- Media coverage in the Region calculated as ad equivalent ratios at \$5,000,000.
- Yield remains a very important aspect and will only be taken into consideration after a proper visitors' survey is carried out in Aqaba.
- Increase the average length of stay as follows:
  - i) Europe and Russia : 0.5 nights
  - ii) Other markets: 0.3 nights
- Increase the number of arrivals: 8 %
- Increase East European arrivals during summer: 12 %
- Increase domestic tourism during summer: 15 %
- One scheduled direct flight to Aqaba.
- Aqaba's new city center upgraded and ready to use.
- New Visitors' Information Center functioning.
- Reliable daily tours to Wadi Rum and Petra.
- A new MOU signed with JTB allowing more understanding and cooperation.

A Brief Action Plan for Year 2 and 3

Budget Estimate for 2011 – 2013

Activity / Year	2011	2012	2013	Remarks
Market Based Representatives	JD 425,000	JD 625,000	JD 750,000	Adding Italy and Spain year 2 and then Russia year 3
Trade Fairs	JD 475,000	JD 570,000	JD 650,000	Adding FITUR, BIT,TTG Incontri and TUR in Year 2 and MITT in Year 3 together with selected specialized shows
Trade Incentives including co –op adv.	JD 1,300,000	JD 1,600,000	JD 1,500,000	Adding 6 new tour operators by year 2 and further 6 by year 3
Marketing & PR Campaigns including co – op adv.	JD 900,000	JD 500,000	JD 500,000	Year 1 goes mostly to the Region for the 2011 event, later some will go to support operators who are not receiving incentives
Events	JD 400,000	JD 200,000	JD 200,000	Year one is more, due to Main Event for 2011. Later it is mostly supporting , basis criteria
Research & Training	JD 100,000	JD 300,000	JD 350,000	More qualitative research in primary markets
Film & Photo production	JD 170,000	JD 70,000	JD 200,000	Production of 30 seconds commercial in year one and production of a 6 minutes promotional HD film for Aqaba
E marketing & Website Development	JD 200,000	JD 250,000	JD 300,000	More e marketing campaigns in primary and secondary markets
Local Campaign	JD 180,000	JD 100,000	JD 100,000	More in year 1 due to the 2011 event
Familiarization Trips	JD 85,000	JD 85,000	JD 100,000	Adding more journalists and trade on familiarization and media tours
Airline Support	JD 70,000	JD 150,000	JD 200,000	Increasing funds to attract more direct flights to Aqaba
Private Sector Support	JD 30,000	JD 50,000	JD 50,000	Marketing support for 3 and 4 star hotels
Publications	JD 35,000	JD 50,000	JD 50,000	
Trade Supplements	JD 30,000	JD 50,000	JD 100,000	Producing more trade supplements especially during trade fairs periods
Training	JD 50,000	JD 75,000	JD 75,000	
Other Activities	JD 137,500	JD 100,000	JD 100,000	
Total	JD 4,587,500	JD 4,775,000	JD 5,225,000	

Notes as regards to the above table and concerning major activities

1. Representations started in the UK, Germany, France and Sweden during 2011, and will expand to Italy and Spain during 2012 and to Russia during 2013.
2. Trade fairs will follow suit, as representatives are appointed, so does attendance to trade fairs in those source markets. So in the first year it is WTM in London and Top Resa in France, and second year it is FITUR in Madrid, BIT in Milan, TTG Incontri in Rimini and TUR in Sweden. Year three it is Moscow and specialized (Niche) shows.
3. Trade incentives will continue on the same momentum, attracting 6 new operations in year 2 and another 6 in year 3.
4. Marketing campaign will mainly include the Region in year 1, however, later on it will include focused campaigns in the Region and the rest will go to co – op advertising with tour operators in Europe.
5. During 2011, Events are directly connected to the main event of Aqaba being the capital of Arab Tourism. Later on, the role will develop into support for local events to become sustainable and a magnet for tourism attraction.
6. Market research will grow steadily to support the market segmentation approach both on the local scene through visitors' satisfaction surveys; and internationally through qualitative research.
7. Films and photos production is an essential branding activity. It includes producing 30 – second commercials during the first year and, after that, a six minutes promotional film about Aqaba and advertising materials.
8. E-marketing activities will grow in intensity throughout year 2 and 3 to include most primary markets.
9. Airline support is basically an activity to attract regular airline services to Aqaba and will include regular airlines and low cost carriers as 2013 is approached.