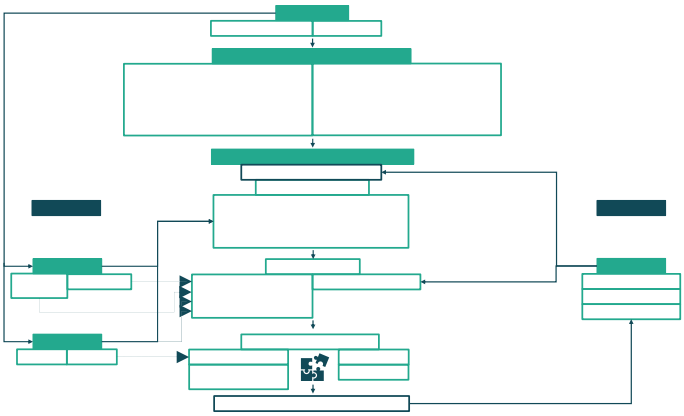
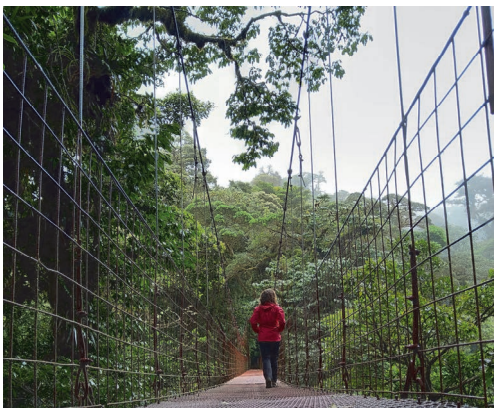
It is all about traveler experience: Towards a site-applicable conceptual model exemplified with Sustainability Tours by Cayuga Collection, Costa Rica



by Carolin Seiferth

SENDA MONTEVERDE HOTEL

Where it all began…



- How to design experiences that increase tourists' awareness of environmental issues and stimulate pro-environmental behaviour – at the destination and at home?

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My methodology

Looking into literature…

Experience Economy

- Rising demand for experiences, especially immersive and emotionally rich ones
- Transformative travel and life-altering experiences

Educational Theories

- Focus on contemporary educational approaches
  - Mindful learning
  - Experiential learning
  - Transformative learning

=

Edutainment

Dimensions of Tourist Experience

- Influential and personal realm

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My methodology

Looking into literature…

- Goals:
  - Educating on environmental and social sustainability problems
  - Encouraging reflection
  - Providing entertainment and pleasure
- 3 Indispensable Components
  - Interpretation
  - Reflection
  - Co-creation

    (Engagement and immersive experiences + personalization)

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My methodology

Research and Analysis

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Let‘s zoom in…

	I. Interpretation – Guest more like a spectator –	
	Educational Dimension	Entertaining Dimension
Goals and desired outcomes	• Increase knowledge	• Support education through knowledge delivery mode
	→ Change behaviour and attitudes	
Tools	• Use of core problems to raise awareness for issue • Use of ‘The Exemplary’ to relate special example to general core problem • Incorporation of mindful learning	• Storytelling instead of simple interpretation • Incorporation of emotions in narrative

Author’s own (2020)

My methodology

Research and Analysis

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Further strengths of the model

- Adapting narrative to influential and personal realm
- Offering further components to be incorporated in experience
- Tourists’ take-away: satisfaction; impacts on knowledge, attitudes, and behaviour

My methodology

Research and Analysis

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The model's validity

- Qualitative interview with Cayuga's owner Hans Pfister
- Gap analysis of Senda's current Sustainability Tour experience

My methodology

Research and Analysis

Limitations and Conclusion

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One's behaviour is hard to change…

Areas for further research:

- Tourists' personal realm

- Effects of sustainable tourism experiences on tourists' knowledge, attitudes, and behaviour

My methodology

Research and Analysis

Limitations and Conclusion

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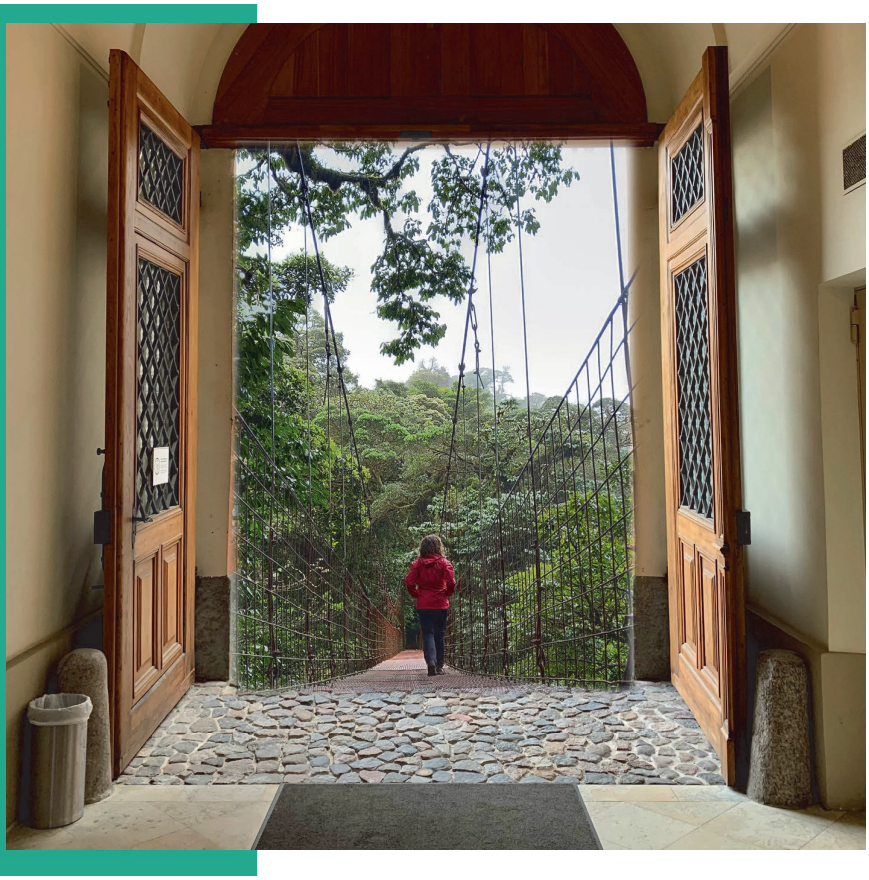
The future ahead

- Collaboration with Cayuga Collection
- Inclusive and equitable tourism experiences



Thank you for your attention!

If you want to learn more about my model:

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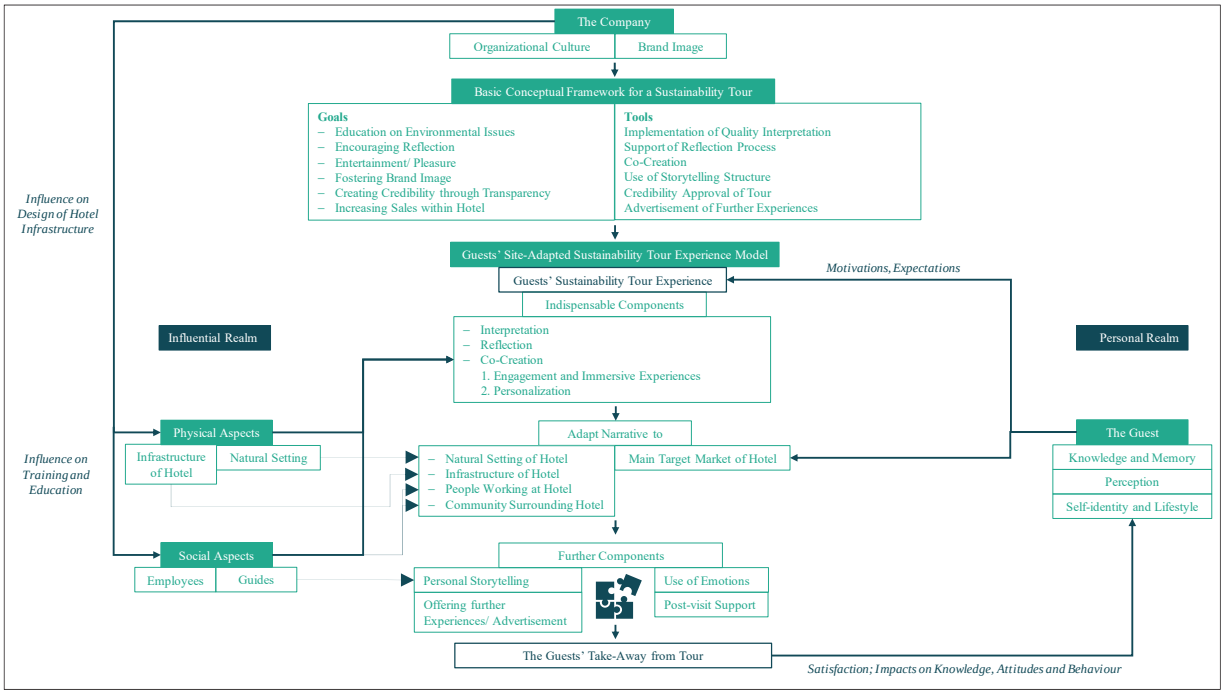
Back-up slides…

My methodology

Research and Analysis

Framework and Model Development

Basic Conceptual Framework and Guests' Site-Adapted Sustainability Tour Experience Model



Author's own (2020)

My methodology

Research and Analysis

Framework and Model Development

Indispensable Components of a Guests' Site-Adapted Sustainability Tour Experience Model

I. Interpretation – Guest more like a spectator –

	Educational Dimension	Entertaining Dimension
Goals and desired outcomes	• Increase knowledge	• Support education through knowledge delivery mode
	→ Change behaviour and attitudes	
Tools	• Use of core problems to raise awareness for issue • Use of 'The Exemplary' to relate special example to general core problem • Incorporation of mindful learning	• Storytelling instead of simple interpretation • Incorporation of emotions in narrative

II. Reflection – Guest actively involved –

	Educational Dimension	Entertaining Dimension
Goals and desired outcomes	• Increase intellectual and practical skills • Increase integrated and applied learning	• Support education
Tools	• Incorporation of mindful learning • Incorporation of transformative learning	• Provision of time for reflection on and Re-evaluation of transformative experience • Personalization • Use of emotions

III. Co-Creation a) Engagement and Immersive Experiences – Guest actively involved –

	Educational Dimension	Entertaining Dimension
Goals and desired outcomes	• Increase personal and social responsibility	• Active participation • Physical engagement
Tools	• Use of experiential education • Use of experience as "The Fundamental"	• Hands-on experiences • Creation of sensorial engagement • Creation of touchpoints (social interaction)

III. Co-Creation b) Personalization – Guest actively involved –

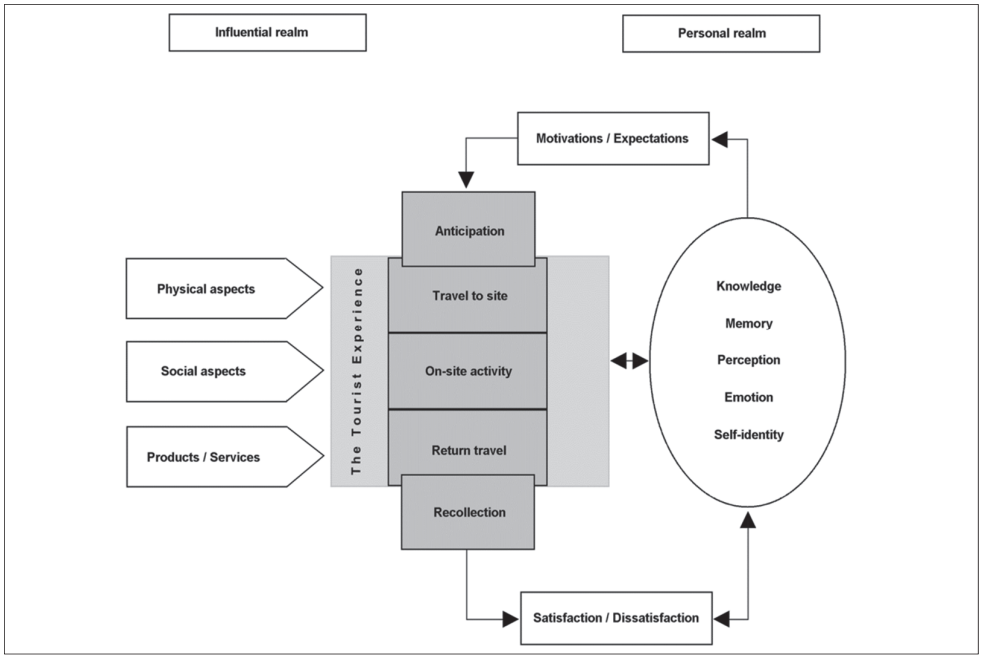
	Educational Dimension	Entertaining Dimension
Goals and desired outcomes	• Deliver suitable content for learner	• Create relationship
Tools	• Application of Klafki's 5 basic questions • Application of insights of research on socialisation	• Tailoring of experiences • Creation of touchpoints (personal interaction)
	→ Knowledge on personal realm	

Author's own (2020)

My methodology

Dimensions and Components of Tourist Experiences

The Dimensions of the Tourist Experience



Cutler and Carmichael (2010), p. 8