

Managing and Marketing Regional Tourist Destinations: The Case of the Marche Region (Italy)

Simone Splendiani

Department of Economics
University of Perugia, Perugia, Italy

ABSTRACT

After an introduction to the basic theoretical concepts of destination management, the study focuses on the organizational model developed in Italy to manage regional destinations. In particular, the paper analyzes the strategic and organizational approach adopted by the Marche region through a longitudinal study over a congruous time period of three years, from 2012 to 2014, in order to assess the critical issues related to marketing management and their evolution.

The study reveals that for regional tourism managers the challenge is to identify the best mix of organizational solutions and strategic paths aimed at exploiting both resources and attractions through market-driven policies.

Moreover, the study aims to offer some insight on the Italian tourism context, opening up further research paths for scholars and helping policy makers to adopt effective tools and strategies in order to contribute to increasing the competitiveness of regional destinations.

Keywords: Regional Destination, Destination Management, Tourism Planning, Tourist Districts, Strategic Marketing Approach, Tourism Marketing.

DESTINATION MANAGEMENT: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The concept of a tourist destination often has different, and not always compatible, meanings, both in the literature and among practitioners (Pencarelli and Splendiani 2008). Some authors provide a definition of destination from a geographical point of view, as being a territory with a significant presence of tourist resources and tourist services (Tamma 2002; Brunetti 2002; Martini 2002). In other circumstances, the tourist perceptual dimension is preferred (Answorth and Goodall 1990; Davidson and Maitland 1997; Bieger 2000; Buhalis 2000; Keller 2000), while other views tend to overlap the concept of tourist destination and tourist product (Casarin 2002; Della Corte 2000; Furlan 2007).

In our opinion, it is appropriate to make a clear distinction between the two entities which are separate but strongly correlated (Pencarelli and Splendiani 2009). The destination is an area that can attract significant tourist flows due to the existence of attractions and is characterized by the presence of a system of actors/producers of goods and services to meet the tourist demand.

The tourism product should be considered instead as the result, the output derived from activities carried out by the local tourism supply system. In other words, a Destination is a place in which tourism products are set up and consumed.¹

From the supply point of view, managing a tourist destination means governing the group of organizations (for profit and non-profit) and tourist resources (environmental, historical, cultural, landscape, etc.) localized within it. These subjects may be qualified as belonging to a tourist district (Pencarelli 2001) when assumes a particular cultural setting and a way of working by the parties involved, without spontaneity and fragmentation; in this sense it is similar to an industrial district. The presence of an interdependent relationship among territorial actors and a recognized leadership capable of driving the system towards achieving the objectives appears to be crucial for the adoption of tourism development policies (cf. Bonetti et al 2006).

In this regard, Buhalis (2000) suggests that tourist destinations should be governed by a Destination Management Organisation (DMO),² responsible for the design and marketing of it and having the power and resources to undertake actions aimed at achieving strategic objectives. These include: “enhance the long-term prosperity of local people; delight visitors by maximising their satisfaction; maximize profitability of local enterprises and maximize multiplier effects; optimize tourism impacts by ensuring a sustainable balance between economic benefits and socio-cultural and environmental costs.” According to the author, the achievement of these objectives depends on the dynamic process between the various stakeholders of the destination (cf. Enright and Newton 2004).

The applicability of the principles and tools of destination management has different degrees of complexity. It depends on the configurations through which the supply system is presented. Where it appears fragmented, it is “extremely problematic to conceive of destination management actions that express a strong unitary government of supply system” (Tamma 2002). Conversely, in contexts characterized by cooperative models it is easier to build the negotiating table and identify key persons who can exercise their roles in the meta-management of the destination. The internal mechanisms of a tourist destination appear complex and difficult to interpret because of the variety and heterogeneity of the actors involved who have specific interests and goals. In this sense, the activation of collaborative pathways among local actors appears to be an indispensable element (Bramwell and Sharman 1999; Jamal and Getz 1995).

So, undertaking a process of destination management therefore implies the creation of a network of “producers” – tourist districts – lead by a governing body capable of driving the system towards the achievement of strategic objectives (cf. Franch 2002; Cf. Hall 2000). The destination manager should be “an entity capable of exercising highly complex and articulated functions (planning, coordination, support, advice, monitoring, marketing, promotion, etc.) and which all the destination actors hold to be legitimate” (Pencarelli 2001).

It is important to remember that the concept of tourist district – as well as that of the destination – is also related to the recognizability of the territory from the point of view of demand. Despite the fact that there are various “outputs” of a territory that can be promoted

¹This “dialectical” relationship also emerges in light of the experiential conception of a tourism product (Pencarelli and Forlani 2002; Ferrari 2006; Ferraresi and Schmitt 2006; Resciniti 2004), to be understood as a bundle of personal and engaging events involving a physical displacement and a temporal duration that includes an overnight stay (Pencarelli and Forlani 2006).

²Likewise, Martini (2005) introduces the concept of a Destination Management Company (DMC), an organizational structure capable of ensuring greater coordination between and within territorial subsystems.

individually, within the same district they tend to be perceived as a “whole” (Hanna and Rowley 2008). The comprehensive perception of a destination by the public represents the destination image (see Konecnik 2004; Cai 2002; Hosany et al. 2006 Cf. Hankinson 2004; Tasci et al. 2007; Prebensen 2007. Konecnik and Gartner 2007).

We could say that the destination image embodies the set of values and beliefs that stakeholders connect to a destination. In addition, it communicates expectations and therefore plays a key role in the destination choice process. As Cai (2002) states: “Unlike other tangible products, tourists are not able to “test drive” and try the destinations before making a choice. Therefore, the decision involves greater risk and extensive information search, and depends on tourists’ mental construct of what a potential destination has to offer relative to their needs. As a result, destination image is a critical stimulus in motivating the tourist.” Hence, one of the most important objectives of a destination leader is to promote and exploit the destination image through destination branding policies.³

For a destination, the aims of branding policies are the same as those that are typical of private companies. However, the job of the tourist district’s governing body can be much more difficult, first of all because of the existence of the accidental brand (Anholt 2008), or its own identity and reputation, developed over time without any promotional activities (the name of the place, its history, etc.). This leads to the fact that the brand identity is already partially defined, or at least the identity you want to convey through the branding policies must take into account the already established reputation. This also applies if local operators want to create a brand from scratch, having to maintain consistency with the destination brand, in any case. There also emerges an additional critical aspect of destination branding, i.e. the coexistence within the same destination of various touristic brands, often introduced by diverse actors without a common strategy.⁴

Therefore, the public is the addressee of several branding activities and different communication messages. Each of them contributes to influencing the process of image formation and tends to generate an overall destination image in people’s minds.⁵ From the perspective of the strategic leader, branding destination is equivalent to coordinating and giving coherency to all brand activities by seeking a shared mission aimed at the enhancement of the territorial identity.⁶

³Cai (2002) defines destination branding as “selecting a consistent element mix to identify and distinguish it (destination) through positive image building [...] and serve to unify the entire process of image formation and building” (cf. Laws et al. 2002; Freire 2007).

⁴Different categories of brands can be found in the same destination (Pencarelli and Splendiani 2009): territorial, referring to a specific geographical area –linked to administrative boundaries (nation, region, province, town, mountain community, protected area, etc.) or natural resources (lakes, rivers, mountains, etc.); of tourist attractions; of networks of actors, referring to a supply system based on shared projects; of tourist products or events; of enterprises, referring to tourism businesses that provide goods, services and tourist experiences (tour operators, travel agencies, hotels, etc.).

⁵Cf. Pencarelli and Splendiani 2008; Buhalis 2000.

⁶In this sense, Morgan et al. (2002), in reference to NTO’s (National Tourism Organization) role, argued that “The role of the NTO is to take these and construct a singular point of differentiation from its competitors, but destinations operate in a global marketplace where many countries try to deliver a multitude of messages about what their country represents. In this, branding can help bridge any gaps between a destination’s strengths and potential visitors’ perceptions.”

DESTINATION MANAGEMENT AT THE REGIONAL LEVEL IN THE ITALIAN CONTEXT

Today, the regions represent the administrative areas to which Italian law entrusts the power to plan tourism development, as a result of the legislative devolution that took place under the Title V constitutional reform of 2001.⁷ However, as stated above, a tourist destination does not always coincide with the administrative boundaries of a geographical area. This is especially true in Italy, where it is possible to encounter a great variety of tourism offerings specializing in specific tourist products, even within the same region. Therefore, the role and the aim of regional meta-management of tourism can be summarized in these words: to make the individual sub-regional tourist districts competitive in order to ensure the competitiveness of the entire region (Rossini 2010).

According to this perspective, it is first of all up to the region to identify the main tourist districts and ensure the creation of the same, possibly through the wide involvement of local actors, that is, through a bottom-up approach (Golinelli 2002). Subsequently, the strategies and operational policies designed for individual districts will be integrated into a comprehensive strategic plan.

Initially, the identification of sub-regional districts was described by the Framework Law on Tourism (National Law n. 135 of 29 March 2001). The Italian law defined *Sistemi Turistici Locali* (STL), or Local Tourist Systems (LTS), as “the instrument through which the public and private sectors cooperate to manage activities of tourist product formation” and described their mission as follows:

- Identify tourist products appropriate for the territory, even to the point of putting them out on the market, and create a comprehensive and integrated offering of local resources with particular attention to the specific characteristics of inland, mountain, and coastal zones;
- Organize reception activities, integrating and harmonizing these with other activities present in the territory.”

The process of identifying tourist districts, however, was delegated to the regions, which meanwhile had also obtained exclusive legislative power in the discipline of tourism (Constitutional Reform of 2001).

In this regard, different organizational models emerged, some inspired by the LTS model and some not. It is important to underline that this identification process is neither easy nor obvious. There are many factors to consider, including (cf. Rossini 2010):

- The attractiveness of tourist resources;
- The perception from the audience of a strong value proposition;
- The existence of a group of local operators and support services (accommodation, catering, tourist information, etc.);
- The possibility of creating a governing body for the tourist district.

In a previous study we analyzed two different approaches to the creation of sub-regional tourist districts highlighted in Italy (Pencarelli and Splendiani 2008). The first—adopted by the Marche region and based on the LTS model—was implemented through the creation of a specific and circumscribed sub-regional geographical areas, corresponding to the provinces, which have

⁷This reform has also contributed to creating several non-homogeneous regional models and organizational solutions, as well as different tourism marketing policies not always guided by a shared national strategy.

the task of designing and marketing tourism products produced and consumed inside the area. The second-adopted by the Emilia Romagna region – was based on the creation of so called “Product Unions” (PU). In this case, the tourist districts were created by aggregating public and private operators around the “tourist products of regional interest”, e.g., Adriatic Coast, Green Apennines, City of Art/Culture, Spa and Fitness, and not strictly according to the local area.

From the in-depth analysis of the two regional models, some important differences emerged (cf. Pencarelli and Splendiani 2009), namely:

- In the PU model the players are dispersed throughout the entire region; in the LTS one they are characterized by geographical contiguity;
- The value proposition of the PU model is more specific and thematic, therefore directed towards particular market segments; in the LTS model the tourist offering is diversified and comprehensive.

From the perspective of marketing management, there is a very close relationship between the identification of the tourist districts and the strategic marketing approach taken by the governing body of the region. In fact, this requires drafting a strategy based on the analysis of the following stages (Fyall and Garrod 2005; cf. Moutinho 2000; Gunn 2002; cf. Heath and Wall 1992):

- Segmentation, or dividing the market into segments that are defined and identifiable on the basis of common characteristics. Only after the determination of these segments will planners be able to make informed choices about the benefits to offer. The segmentation process can be defined as “the art of discerning and defining meaningful differences between groups of customers in order to form the foundations of a more focused marketing effort” (Fyall and Garrod 2005);
- Targeting. This phase consists in choosing the segment to serve on the basis of its attractiveness and ability of the tourist offer to meet specific needs;
- Positioning, namely the evaluation of the position the brand intends to occupy through appropriate communication policies. In this sense, branding policies represent a fundamental part of Destination strategy (Splendiani 2009; Beerli and Martin 2004), and their aim is to support marketing policies relating to differentiation and competitive positioning (Del Chiappa 2005; Gallarza et al. 2002; Morgan and Pritchard 2004, Cf. Hankinson 2007).

The proper identification of tourist districts is crucial in order to predict a differential benefit perceived as superior by the target segments as well as to increase the effectiveness of marketing efforts.

THE CASE OF THE MARCHE REGION

Aim, Methodology and Limitations

The study analyzes the destination management approach adopted by the Marche region in the years 2012-2014. The objective is to assess the content of the strategy and the critical issues based on the principles and tools of destination management and through the methodology of case study analysis (Corbetta 1999; Yin, 2009).

The data collection method relied on different sources and various investigation techniques, namely:

- **Primary data analysis:** Three-year tourism plan 2012-2014, Annual tourism plan 2012, Annual tourism plan 2013, Annual tourism plan 2014;
- **Secondary data analysis (April 2008 – to date):** Brochures, catalogues, regional website (www.turismo.marche.it), social network accounts (Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, Pinterest, Foursquare, Youtube, Issuu, Google +, Panoramio, Instagram), applications for smartphones and tablets; public statements and press releases; previous studies on tourism policy in Italy;
- Semi-structured questionnaires submitted to the Section Head for Tourism, Trade and Consumer Protection, and to the Head of Communications and Marketing within the same sector;
- **Participant observation (from April 2008 – to date):** in my capacity as a Councilor for Tourism Policies in a municipality of the Marche Region.

The main limitation of the study is related to the inhomogeneity of the legislative context of the Italian regions, due to the constitutional reform of 2001 which granted full legislative powers to the regions in terms of tourism organization and tourism development policies (Guidi and Splendiani, 2010).

AN OVERVIEW ON THE CONTENTS OF THE REGIONAL TOURISM PLAN⁸

The three-year plan, which is the reference point for the annual plans, can be broken down into the following main points:

- Analysis of the current market situation. A qualitative and quantitative analysis of tourism consumption and tourism offering is made. In addition, there is a specific focus on tourism demand in the Marche region;
- Objectives and strategies. This section outlines the main goal: to increase the number of nights' stays and arrivals, consolidating tourist activity even in the less touristy areas so as to make tourism development more balanced;
- Areas of intervention. This section describes the target segments indicating which of them are particularly attractive on the basis of descriptive variables such as income, occupation, consumption patterns, etc. Moreover, it uses a product-market matrix in order to identify what tourism products are promoted in the tourists' areas of origin and finally, it presents guidelines for brand positioning strategies;
- Planned actions. The last part summarizes and restates the objectives, the planned actions, and the monitoring indicators. The strategic objectives are:
- Information and assistance to tourists. The aim is to create a centralized tourist information system using the Destination Management System (DMS). That IT solution should be able provide comprehensive information to tourists and to develop a system of Customer Relationship Management;
- Communication, promotion, and support to trade through varied initiatives: off-line and on-line advertising, public relations, commercialization incentives, creation of thematic clusters to make the offer more attractive;
- Sustainability and quality of accommodation. In this regard the plan provides a series of projects aimed at achieving sustainable and accessible tourism as well as creating a quality label for tourist accommodations.

⁸ A comprehensive analysis of the Marche region tourism planning was carried out in a previous study (Splendiani 2014).

THE REDEFINITION OF THE TOURIST DISTRICTS: FROM LTS TO THEMATIC CLUSTERS

As previously explained, the organizational scheme adopted by the Marche region before 2012 was based on LTSs. Each of them had a specific geographical boundaries – corresponding to the provinces – and a governing body which represented all the economic actors of the territory, both public and private (Pencarelli and Splendiani 2008).

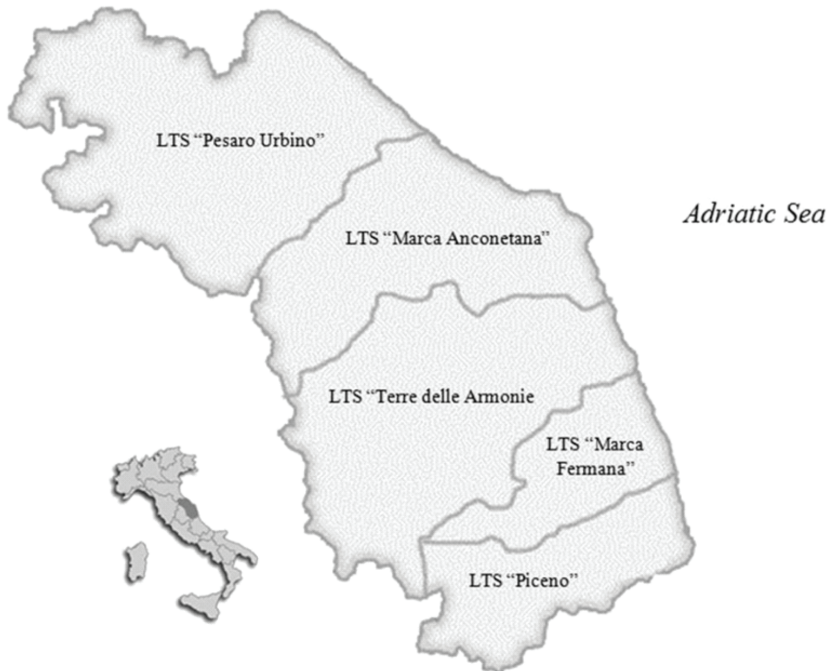


Fig. 1: The LTS model in the Marche region⁹

Several research studies have been conducted in Italy on the effectiveness and efficiency of local tourist systems (Sciarelli 2007). In particular, previous studies have highlighted the weaknesses of the Marche LTSs regarding marketing policies, financial sustainability, and entrepreneurial commitment (Pencarelli and Forlani 2006; Pencarelli and Splendiani 2008). The latter, in particular, is often weakened by the sometimes excessive public component as well as the lack of cooperation between players. In addition, what emerged was the lack of recognisability of the LTS by market segments due to the fact that the LTS tourist offering seemed undifferentiated and too diversified.

Such considerations-also shared by touristic operators and policy makers-led to the decision to completely change the identification of tourist districts according to a different perspective capable of supporting the promotion and the commercialization of tourism products through the clear definition of value propositions with greater experiential content.

Thus, the three-year plan introduces so-called 'clusters', namely thematic groupings of the regional tourism offer aimed at making the promotion and sale of tourism products more effective.

⁹The boundaries of the LTSs are approximate.

The “cluster logic” is the same as the one introduced years ago by the Emilia region through Product Unions, with the objective of combining public and private players that are non-contiguous territorially but linked from the point of view of the tourism product offered.



THE COAST AND THE SEA

A 180 km long coastline, beautiful beaches, 26 seaside resorts on the Adriatic Sea where you can spend quiet holidays. »



FOOD AND WINE

The food in the Marche region equally shares from the bounty of the sea as well as from the countryside. »



CITIES OF ART

500 squares, more than 1,000 important monuments, approximately one hundred cities of art, 37 fortresses, 106 castles, 15 strongholds. »



ANCIENT VILLAGES

The Apennines on a side, the Adriatic coast on the other, and, in-between, a sea of soft hills, which are filled by old villages. »



NATURE

In the Marche there are 12 protected areas: 2 national parks, 4 regional parks, 6 nature reserves, 15 state forests...»



SPIRITUALITY

The Marche region offers an extraordinary amount of sites of great spirituality: churches, monasteries, abbeys and shrines are widespread all over the region...»

Source: en.turismo.marche.it

Fig. 2: The cluster model in the Marche region

The clusters identified by the region were:

- The Marche. Region in Blue – The Coast and the Sea;
- Made in Marche – Food and Wine;
- The Genius of Marche – Cities of Art;
- Rolling Hills and Ancient Villages;
- Parks and Active Nature;
- Spirituality and Meditation.

The new definition of tourist districts represents a profound change, not just in marketing activities, but also in the internal organization of private and public actors. In this sense, the regional plan—in particular the 2014 plan—contains an analysis of the tourist themes that indicate the actions to be carried out for the sharing and dissemination of a new cluster-logic to local stakeholders, the creation of a logo for each of them, a dedicated website, and a specific marketing plan.

MAIN MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

One of the primary reasons behind the new cluster approach is the greater ability to commercialize tourist products that such organizational solutions could provide. The analysis of these plans, in fact, shows a remarkable effort to support trade, summarized through the expression “sales-oriented promotion”. Sales support has become a stronger objective through better visibility of the clusters and the co-marketing activities with the intermediaries have been strengthened.

The web channel has become fundamental in the three years of planning. The main innovations concern the adoption of a DMS (Destination Management System) platform, with obvious improvements that include more extensive and complete information, enriched contents present on the www.turismo.marche.it portal, the creation of mini-sites and dedicated apps for every cluster. In addition, the introduction of online booking services has enhanced the commercialization of tourist products, thus giving greater support to sales. Finally, the DMS has made it possible to create a database of contacts and a newsletter service.

Beyond the cluster, two cross-cluster networks of tourism enterprises were created. These offer specialized services to specific customer segments: Spa and Wellness (a network of spas and wellness centers) and Meetings (a network of convention centers, theaters, convention bureaus, and hotels with meeting rooms). In the future four additional networks will be activated and dedicated to as many strategic tourism segments, namely: Family, Culture, Biking, and Trekking. The ultimate goal is that each network, provided with a brand and a user’s charter, will be joined voluntarily by those firms that pay the most attention to the quality of their services.

CONCLUSIONS

The aim of the study was to analyze some critical issues relating to the application of the principles and tools of destination management at the regional level in Italy, focusing on the case of the Marche region. The case was found to be particularly interesting because the organizational architecture of the Marche has undergone profound changes over the last three years, moving from a model based on local tourism systems (LTS), i.e. geographical areas corresponding to the provinces, to a model based on clusters. Despite the enthusiasm with which this choice was received by many of the local stakeholders, it is necessary to pay attention to some underlying issues in order to understand the possible future evolution of destination management in the Marche.

As mentioned above, the creation of tourist districts should correspond to some specific requirements. From the point of view of demand, it is essential that the tourist district is able to offer an attractive value proposition, building and marketing tourism experiences starting from the tourist resources owned. In this sense, it is possible to affirm that the cluster-logic adopted by the Marche region allows a better recognition of the value proposition thanks to the theming of tourism offerings. This finding had already emerged in a previous study on the Emilia Romagna model, the first Italian region to adopt the tourist cluster-approach (Pencarelli and Splendiani, 2008). From that research the findings showed that this approach had allowed a greater push towards the commercialization of products and towards marketing efforts in general, also thanks to a district organization based on specific projects with the significant participation of private subjects. However, the risk is that the mono-thematic offering provided by the cluster

could perhaps not be able to match the needs of demand segments looking for multi-thematic and multi-experiential travel.

Further questions arise from the supply side. As mentioned above, the effectiveness of destination management activities at the cluster level are related to the existence of a group of operators connected by mutual cooperation and to the existence of a system-wide governing body. In the case of the Marche, it is plain to see that the path is still being completed, that there is still no cluster-wide governing body in which stakeholders actually participate. This difficulty is probably due to the geographical distance between the subjects and by the fact that the districts have been created according to a top-down logic from the regional level. Nevertheless, on a positive note it should be noted that an association of public actors corresponding to the cluster “The Marche Region in Blue” (Marche in Blu) has been established in an effort to aggregate the coastal municipalities.

In conclusion, it would appear from the study that there is no “one best way” to organize the tourist districts at the regional level. Different organizational patterns can be effective as long as they are consistent with the strategic marketing approach adopted by the regions and that they foresee the strong involvement of private actors in partnership with the public entities in order to pursue common objectives of tourism development.

REFERENCES

- Anholt, S. (2008). Place branding: Is it marketing, or isn't it?. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy* (4): 1–6.
- Ashworth, G. and Goodball B. (1990). *Marketing Tourism Places*. Routledge: London.
- Beerli, A. and Martin JD. (2004). Factors influencing destination image. *Annals of Tourism Research* 31 (3): 657-681.
- Bieger, T. (2000). *Destination Management e finanziamenti*. In *Destination Management. Fondamenti di marketing e gestione delle destinazioni turistiche*, Pechlaner H, Weiermair K (Eds.). TUP: Milan.
- Bonetti, E., Petrillo, C. and Simoni, M. (2006). *Tourism System Dynamisc: A Multi-level Destination Approach* in Lazzaretti L., Petrillo C., Touriam local sistema and networking. Elsevier.
- Bramwell, B. and Sharman, A. (1999). Collaboration in local tourism policy making, *Annals f Tourism Research*, Vol. 26, No. 2, pp. 392–415.
- Brunetti, F. (2002). Il Destination Management: aspetti problematici, significato e percorsi alla ricerca di una qualità ad effetto prolungato. In *Destination Management. Governare il turismo fra locale e globale*, Franch M (Eds.). Giappichelli: Turin.
- Buhalis, D. (2000). Marketing the competitive destination of the future, *Tourism Management*, Vol. 21.
- Cai, L.A. (2002). Cooperative branding for rural destinations. *Annals of Tourism Research* 29 (3): 720–742.
- Casarin, F. (2002). *Il marketing dei prodotti turistici*. Giappichelli: Turin.
- Corbetta, P. (1999). *Metodologia e tecniche della ricerca sociale*, Il Mulino, Bologna.
- Davidson, R. and Maitland, R. (1997). *Tourism Destination*. Hodder & Stoughton: London.
- Del Chiappa, G. (2005). Il ruolo della marca nella gestione delle destinazioni turistiche, *Economia e diritto del terziario*, N. 3.
- Della Corte, V. (2000). *La gestione dei sistemi locali di offerta turistica*. Cedam: Padua.
- Enright, M.J. and Newton, J. (2004). Tourism destination competitiveness: a quantitative approach, *Tourism Management*, N. 25.
- Ferraresi, M. and Schmitt, B.H. (2006). *Marketing esperienziale. Come sviluppare l'esperienza di consumo*, Franco Angeli, Milano.

- Ferrari, S. (2006). Modelli gestionali per il turismo come esperienza. Emozioni e polisensorialità nel marketing delle imprese turistiche, Cedam, Padova.
- Franch, M. (2002). Destination management. Governare il turismo tra locale e globale, (Eds) Giappichelli, Torino, 2002.
- Freire, J.R. (2007). 'Local People' a critical dimension for place brands. *Journal of Brand Management*: 1–19.
- Fyall, A. and Garrod, B. (2005). *Tourism Marketing. A collaborative approach*, Channel View Publications.
- Furlan, M.C. (2007). Il marketing della destinazione turistica. In *Il marketing dei prodotti turistici. Specificità e varietà*. Vol. II, Casarin F. (ed.). Giappichelli: Turin.
- Gallarza, M.G., Saura, I.G. and Garcia, H.C. (2002). Destinazione image. Towards a Conceptual Framework. *Annals of Tourism Research* 29 (1): 56–78.
- Golinelli, CM. (2002). *Il territorio sistema vitale*. Giappichelli: Turin.
- Guidi C. and Splendiani S., (2010). La legislazione turistica in Italia in Pencarelli T. (Eds) *Marketing e Management del Turismo*, Edizioni goliardiche, Trieste.
- Gunn, C.A. (2002). *Tourism Planning. Basics, Concepts, Cases*, Routledge.
- Hall, C.M. (2000). *Tourism Planning. Policies, Processes and Relationships*, Prentice Hall.
- Hankinson, G. (2004). Repertory grid analysis: An application to the measurement of destination images. *International Journal of Non-profit and Voluntary Sector Marketing* 9 (2): 145–153.
- Hankinson, G., (2007). The management of destination brands: Five guiding principles based on recent developments in corporate branding theory, *Journal of Brand Management*, N. 14.
- Hanna, S. and Rowley, J. (2008). An analysis of terminology use in place branding. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy* 4 (1): 61–75.
- Heath, E. and Wall G. (1992). *Marketing Tourism Destinations: A Strategic Planning Approach*, John Wiley & Sons.
- Hosany, S., Ekinci, Y. and Uysal, M. (2006). Destination image and destination personality: an application of branding theories to tourism places. *Journal of Business Research* 59: 638–642.
- Keller, P. (2000). Le organizzazioni turistiche nazionali a una svolta. In *Destination Management*, Pechlaner H, Weiermair K (Eds). Touring University Press: Milan.
- Konecnik, M. (2004). Evaluating Slovenia's image as a tourism destination: A self-analysis process towards building a destination brand. *Brand Management* 11 (4): 307–316.
- Konecnik, M. and Gartner, WC. (2007). Customer-based brand equity for a destination. *Annals of Tourism Research* 34 (2): 400–421.
- Jamal, T.B. and Getz D. (1995). Collaboration theory and community tourism planning, *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol. 22, N.1, pp. 186–204.
- Laws, E., Scott, N. and Parfitt, N. (2002). Synergies in Destination Image Management: a Case Study and Conceptualisation. *International Journal of Tourism Research* 4: 39–55.
- Martini, U. (2002). Da luoghi a destinazioni turistiche. Ipotesi di destination management nel turismo alpino. In *Destination Management. Governare il turismo fra locale e globale*, Franch M (ed.). Giappichelli: Turin.
- Martini, U. (2005). *Management dei sistemi territoriali. Gestione e marketing delle destinazioni turistiche*, Giappichelli, Torino.
- Morgan, N., Pritchard, A. and Piggott, R. (2002). New Zealand, 100% Pure. The creation of a powerful niche destination brand. *Brand Management* 9 (4–5): 335–354.
- Morgan, N. and Pritchard, A. (2004). Meeting the Destination Branding Challenge, in Morgan N., Pritchard A., *Destination Branding, Creating the Unique Destination Proposition*, 2nd Edition, Butterworth-Heinemann Eds, Oxford.
- Moutinho, L. (2000). *Strategic Management in Tourism*, CABI Tourism Texts.
- Pencarelli, T. (2001). *Marketing e performance dell'industria turistica*. Quattro Venti: Urbino.
- Pencarelli, T. and Forlani, F. (2002). Il marketing dei distretti turistici-sistemi vitali nell'economia delle esperienze, *Sinergie*, N. 58.

- Pencarelli, T. and Forlani, F. (2006). Il marketing dei prodotti tipici nella prospettiva dell'economia delle esperienze. In Marketing Trends, Venice.
- Pencarelli, T. and Splendiani, S. (2008). Il governo delle destinazioni e dei prodotti turistici: analisi di alcune esperienze. *Mercati e Competitività* (2)
- Pencarelli, T. and Splendiani, S. (2009). The Role of Brands in Dialectical Relationships Between Destination and Tourist Products, A.Fyall, M.Kozac, L.Andreu, J.Gnoth, S.Sibila Lebe (Eds), *Marketing Innovations for Sustainable Destinations*, Goodfellow Publishers.
- Pencarelli, T. and Splendiani, S. (2012).
- Prebensen, NK. (2007). Exploring tourists' images of a distant destination. *Tourism Management* (28): 747–756.
- Resciniti, R. (2004). Il marketing orientato all'esperienza: l'intrattenimento nella relazione con il consumatore, Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, Napoli.
- Rossini, L. (2010). La pianificazione turistica a livello territoriale: il piano di marketing regionale. In *Marketing and Management del turismo*, Pencarelli, T. (Eds). Edizioni Goliardiche: Trieste.
- Sciarelli, S. (Eds.) (2007). Il management dei Sistemi Turistici Locali. Strategiee strumenti per la governance. Giappichelli: Turin.
- Splendiani, S. (2009). Management della comunicazione e branding nei piani turistici territoriali: analisi comparata di quattro regioni adriatiche, in T. Pencarelli, G.L. Gregori (Eds), *Comunicazione e branding delle destinazioni turistiche. Una prospettiva manageriale*, Franco Angeli, Milan.
- Splendiani, S. (2014). Regional Tourism Planning: the case of the Marche region (Italy). *Proceedings of 2nd International Conference on Contemporary Marketing Issues (ICCM)*, pp. 319 – 326. Athens, Greece - June 18–20.
- Tamma, M. (2002). Destination management: gestire prodotti e sistemi locali di offerta, in Franch M., (Eds) *Destination management. Governare il turismo tra locale e globale*, Giappichelli, Torino.
- Tasci, A., Gartner, WC. and Cavusgil, ST. (2007). Measurement of destination brand bias using a quasi-experimental design. *Tourism Management* (28): 1529–1540.
- Yin, R.K. (2009). *Case study research: design and methods*, Sage.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. **Simone Splendiani** is faculty member in Business Management of Department of Economics, University of Perugia, Perugia, Italy