

Abstract

Author: Vittoria Sartori	Supervisor: Frieda Raich
Title: COOPETITION IN TOURISM DESTINATION: FORMS AND MOTIVATIONS A study in the alpine tourism destination of Madonna di Campiglio	
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Abstract:

Tourism destinations are complex units of analysis and management, including a large number of stakeholders with different individual objectives, but united by the common goal of improving the destination's competitiveness. Tourists usually experience a destination as a cohesive entity, engaging with various tourism businesses throughout their journey, calling for coordination and collaboration among them. In this respect, coopetition, namely simultaneous cooperation and competition, emerges as a particularly relevant strategy in tourism destinations, since they are characterized by co-location and interdependence among tourism stakeholders but also by competition for tourist's individual budget. This master's thesis investigates the different forms that coopetition can take among tourism stakeholders of a tourism destination and explores the underlying motivations that drive them to engage in such relationships, taking as example the alpine tourism destination of Madonna di Campiglio. The research employs a qualitative approach, using semi-structured interviews. Sixteen interviews were conducted with key tourism stakeholders all located in the alpine destination Madonna di Campiglio. The data were analyzed using the structuring qualitative content analysis according to Mayring (2015). The findings reveal that coopetition in alpine tourism destinations can take different forms, depending on stakeholders' category, relationships' structure, and underlying motive(s). Dyadic relationships emerge especially among vertical competitors and tend to be driven by individual motivations, while network relationships focus on achieving collective outcomes. Coopetition relationships emerge spontaneously and informally, rather than from strategic planning, and tend to shift with seasonal dynamics. This study shows that coopetition motivations vary by relationship type and stakeholder. Key drivers include co-location, strong personal relationships, and the small-community context, which foster trust, seen as a crucial enabler. Other motivations include resource and knowledge sharing, and economic benefits. Horizontal relationships often focus on sharing costs and market information, while vertical ones aim to combine complementary resources to enhance tourist experience. This study suggests that existing theories, such as Game theory, Resource-based view, and Value network theory offer valuable perspectives to examine coopetition in tourism but differ in their applicability. The conclusion provides practical recommendation to tourism stakeholders and highlights coopetition as a source for competitive advantage to improve destination competitiveness, provide high-quality service, and keep tourist offers up-to-date with market changes.

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