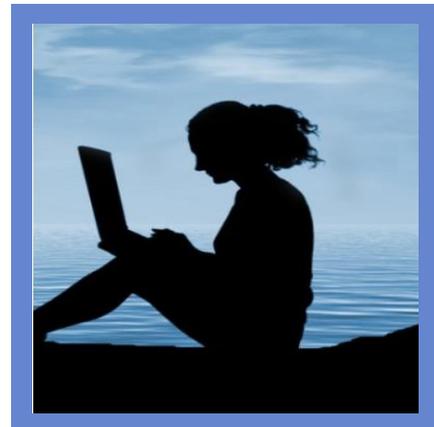




National tourism organizations' online training offers and travel agents' perception

Role of eLearning
Applications within the
tourism and hospitality
sector

October 3, 2013
Barcelona



Nadzeya Kalbaska

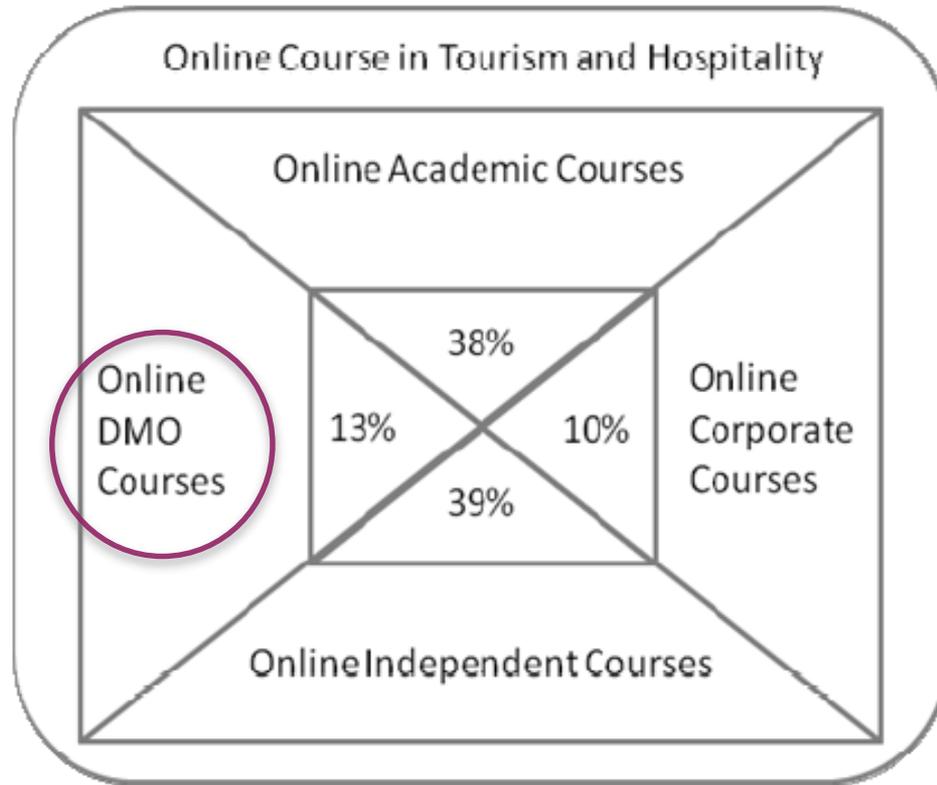
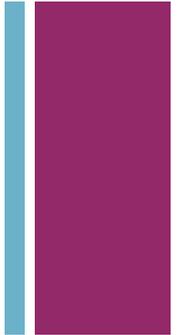
webatelier.net
Universita' della Svizzera italiana
Lugano, Switzerland



research gap

- new concept of training
- growing interest by tourism practitioners (ABTA, 2012; Tnooz, 2011; Travel Market Report, 2011)
- limited attention from eLearning and eTourism scholars (e.g.: Braun & Hollick, 2006; Haven & Botterill, 2003; Baum & Sigala, 2001; AACE, 2009).
- no empirical research on HRM of travel trade and eLearning use for knowledge upgrade among travel agents



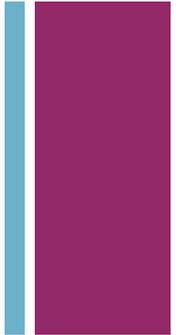


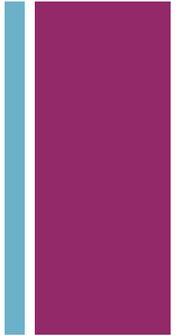
Cantoni, L., Kalbaska, N., & Inversini, A. (2009). eLearning in Tourism and Hospitality: A Map. *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism Education*, 8(2), 148-156.



Research goals

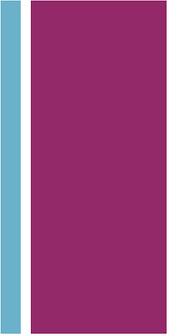
1. Understand eLearning (eL) offer about national tourism destinations for travel agents
2. Recognise travel agents reaction on such offers and their motivations on attending eL courses





Destination Management Organizations' eLearning offers and Travel Agents' perceptions and motivations





Phase 1. Benchmarking study



DMO needs

- coordinate all the partners/industries involved in the production/delivery of the tourist product
- spread clear, up to-date, appropriate and catchy messages
- add additional channels to impact the market
- save on training costs

Travel Agents need

- overcome competition from OTAs
- satisfy the needs of a new consumer
- constant upgrade of knowledge and skills
- get certification
- can't leave their main business (SMEs, geographical location)



Destinational eLearning courses



Phase 1. Benchmarking study_1

Goal: Understand the issue statement and map eLearning offers by NTOs

When: Fall 2009 and 2012

How: content and functionalities analysis

<http://www.elearning4tourism.com/elearning-programs/>

Model used: triangular model of eLearning courses evaluation (Cantoni, et. al, 2007)

Limitation:

- Only English versions of courses were analysed
- Only courses provided by NTOs were taken into consideration



Preliminary benchmarking – autumn 2009



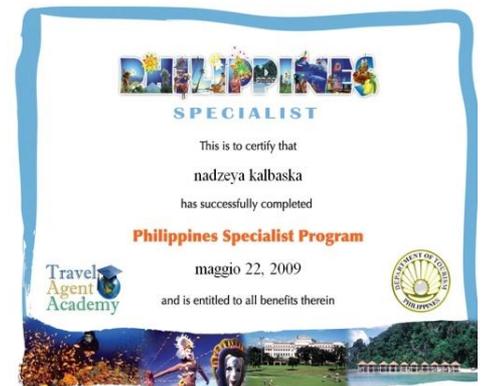
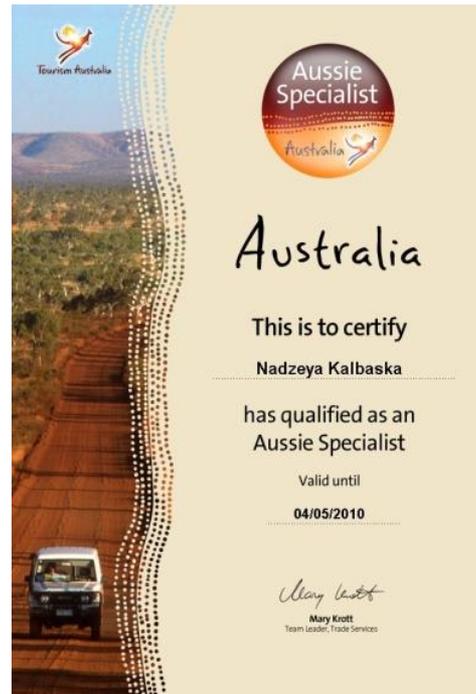
Benchmarking study – autumn 2012

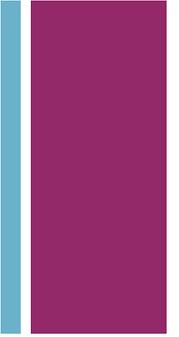
- Cantoni, L., & Kalbaska, N. (2010). eLearning Offers by Destination Management Organizations. In U. Gretzel, R. Law., & M. Fuchs (Eds.), *Information and Communication Technologies in Tourism* (pp.247-259). Wien-New York: Springer
- Kalbaska, N. (2012). Travel Agents and Destination Management Organizations: eLearning as a strategy to train tourism trade partners. *Journal of Information Technology & Tourism*, 13(1), 1-12.



Phase 1. Benchmarking study_2

- **Main public:** Travel Agents/Travel consultants
- **Contents:** info about Destination (Geographical position, Demographics, Languages Spoken, etc.); History and Culture, Accommodation and Transportation; Formalities; Itinerary Planning; Selling tips
- **Methods and strategies:** text, video, glossary, suggested websites, interactive map
- **Time frame:** from 40' Mauritius Training Course to 25 -30 hours Explore New Zealand (average: 4-5 hours)
- **Costs:** Free of charge for travel agents, sponsored by a DMO





Phase 2. Case studies



Phase 2. Case studies_1

Goal: Identify and present best practices in the field

When: February 2012 and 2013

How:

- semi structured interviews
- analysis of the usages
- available internal reports and historical data

Model used: ADDIE (-Analysis, -Design, -Development, -Implementation and Evaluation)

Results: interviews with the representatives of Swiss National Tourism Office and New Zealand Tourism



Switzerland.
Specialist.



History

First idea – 2004

First implementation – 2006.

International version +

USA & Canada, China, Germany, India, UK/Ireland, Korea, Australia, Russia, Spain

Usages

German version - 3000 registered TAs since 2006

Indian version - 1347 registered since June 2011, 131 certified

Korean version - 60 registered in 2011, 0 certified

Chinese platform has certified 20TAs in 2011

US/ Canada platform - 38 certified

GCC - 10 certified travel agents

Registration: is needed

8 training modules

Time: Each seminar 2-4 h.



Phase 2. Case studies_2

History

First idea – 2003

First implementation – 2004.

International version +

India, Singapore/Malaysia & Indonesia, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Korea, Thailand, UK & Europe, North America, China

Usages

Accounts - 28,383

Travel sellers in the database - 20,982

Certified agents - around 5000

Kiwi Specialists - 378

Registration: is needed to pass the tests

10 mandatory modules and **6 optional**

Time: Each seminar 2-3h.



Phase 2. Case studies_3

Evaluation:

- Final exam consist of 30 multiple choice questions (database of 500/600 questions)
- 3 chances to pass

Certificate: valid forever

Evaluation:

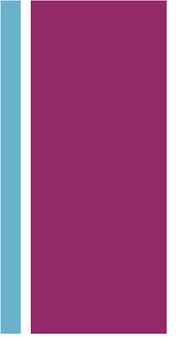
- 20 questions per training module. Need to get 100% to pass
- unlimited tries to pass

Certificate: valid for 2 years

To become **Kiwi Specialist** an agent needs to :

- complete 10 mandatory modules every 2 years
- make a trip to New Zealand
- attend another training activity (a market training or a webinar)





Phase 4. Phone interviews



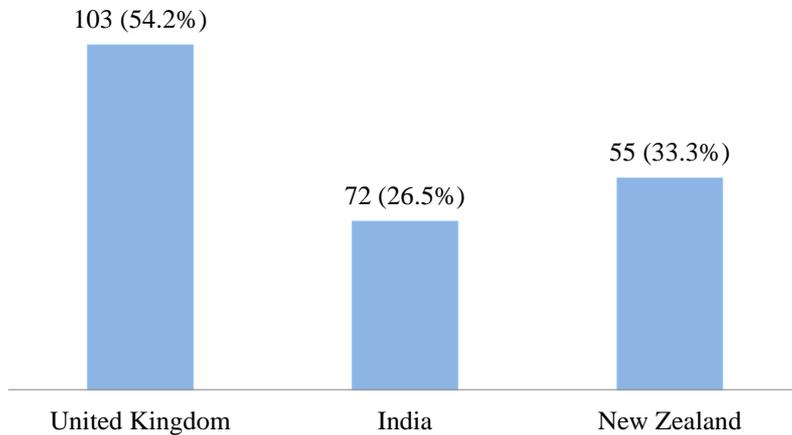
Phase 4. Phone interviews_1

When: Oct 2012 – Feb 2013

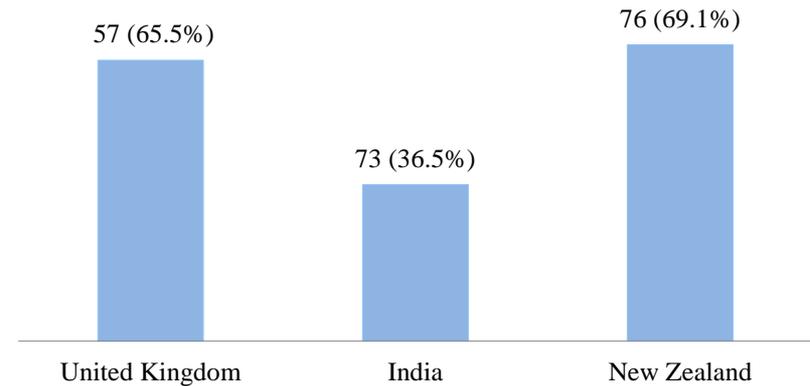
How: Simple random sampling of officially registered travel agents in the UK, India and NZ

Respondents: 1093 phone calls → 627 interviews

Country	United Kingdom	India	New Zealand
Number of calls done	341	364	388
Number of interviews done	190 (55%)	272 (75%)	165 (42%)



Rates of participation in destinational eL courses



Rates of awareness about destinational eL courses



Phase 4. Phone interviews_2

Full Factorial Model of the Univariate ANOVA showed that **participation in eL courses**

- depends on travel agents **origin** ($p=.000$), **gender** ($p=.006$) and **type of the agency** ($p=.042$) they work for
- doesn't depend on the **age** ($p=.236$) and **educational level** ($p=.314$)

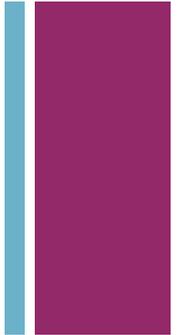
Full Factorial Model of the Univariate ANOVA confirmed that **awareness about the existence of eL courses**

- depends on the **country of origin** ($p=.000$)
- doesn't depend on the **age** ($p=.470$), **gender** ($p=.071$), **type of the agency** ($p=.086$) and **educational level** ($p=.790$)





implications



Academic community

- First empirical research in the field of HRM for travel trade and eLearning usages within on-the-job training in tourism industry;

Industrial community

Better understanding of the eL offer by DMOs through the analysis of both:

- the supply side: evaluation of the existent eL practices
- the demand side: evaluation of the travel agents participations



Thank you

www.elearning4tourism.com

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