Final Master Thesis

Analysis of “Voyage” travel agency in the Tourism Industry to enhance company’s recruitment strategy.

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Executive summary

*Due to company's confidentiality, the real name of the travel agency will not be disclosed. The name used throughout the project is “Voyage”.

Introduction: Tourism in Spain is one of the leading contributors to economy and employment. Having qualified talent in the tourism sector is vital for the proper functioning of the company, and in travel agencies, to deliver the appropriate services they offer. The current study was carried out in order to find the best way to attract and retain talent in “Voyage” travel agency through employer branding and EVP.

Methods: These quantitative and qualitative analysis were conducted by two surveys:

1. Evaluation of “Voyage” is perceived by employees, and their opinions of the company's actual employer branding. 9 employees from “Voyage’s” Human Resources department answered. Age or gender weren’t taken into account into the analysis.
2. Analysis of external employer branding of “Voyage” by students from Ostelea School of Tourism and Hospitality. The sample was composed by 10 students, which were the target audience due to being potential candidates of the company.

Results: A significant part of the study was the identification of main messages of EB which showed that 41.7% of respondents considered the most attractive reasons for applying to “Voyage” were opportunities of professional growth, and 33.3% reputation of the company. The second survey showed that 60% of students prefer to work in “Voyage”, however 40% responded that they prefer their main competitor.

Conclusions: Overall, the study showed that “Voyage” has positive external reputation (which is part of employer branding), but internal employer branding is underdeveloped and more time and money should be invested to generate appropriate strategies from the company.

Key words: Tourism industry, travel sector, Spanish economy, Human Resources practices, Employer Branding
**Resumen General**

*Debido a un acuerdo de confidencialidad con la compañía el nombre real de la agencia de viajes no podrá ser revelado. Por lo tanto el nombre a usar a través de todo el proyecto será “Voyage”.

**Introducción:** El Turismo en España es uno de los principales contribuyentes a la economía y a la generación de empleo. Tener talento calificado en el sector del turismo es vital para el funcionamiento apropiado de la compañía, y en las agencias de viajes, para entregar apropiadamente los servicios que se ofrecen. El estudio actual fue realizado con el fin de encontrar la mejor manera para atraer y retener talento en la agencia de viajes “Voyage” a través del análisis de la Marca Empleadora y Propuesta de Valor al Empleado (EVP por sus siglas en inglés, Employer Value Proposition).

**Métodos:** Estos análisis de método cuantitativo y cualitativo se realizaron a través de dos encuestas:

1. Evaluación de como “Voyage” es percibida por empleados y sobre sus opiniones de la compañía como marca empleadora. 9 empleados del departamento de Recursos Humanos de “Voyage” respondieron a la encuesta. Edad o género no fueron tomados en cuenta al momento de realizar el análisis.
2. Análisis externo de la marca empleadora a través de estudiantes de Ostelea Escuela de Turismo. La muestra está compuesta por 10 estudiantes que fueron el público objetivo al ser potenciales candidatos de la compañía.

**Resultados:** Una parte significativa del estudio consistió en la identificación de los principales mensajes de la marca empleadora. Esto reveló que 41,7% de quienes respondieron consideraban que las razones más atractivas para aplicar a “Voyage” eran las oportunidades de crecimiento profesional, y 33,3% la reputación de la compañía. La segunda encuesta mostró que 60% de los estudiantes preferiría trabajar en “Voyage”, sin embargo el 40% restante respondió que preferirían su principal competidor.

**Conclusiones:** Sobretodo, el estudio reveló que “Voyage” cuenta con una reputación externa positive (este aspecto forma parte de la marca empleadora), pero de manera interna la marca empleadora no está del todo desarrollada por lo que debería tener mayor inversión de tiempo, dinero para generar estrategias apropiadas para la compañía.

Palabras clave: Industria turística, sector de viajes, economía española, practicas de Recursos Humanos, marca del empleador
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Chapter I – Introduction (theoretical framework)

1.1. The economic essence and content of tourism industry

Nowadays, tourism is a sphere of socio-economic aggregate, which is turned into a rapidly developing industry in many countries. According to WTTC (World Travel & Tourism Council) every 11th work place in the world falls on tourism sector. Before going deeply into the study of tourism sector, let’s take a closer look at term of tourism.

“Tourism is a cultural, social and economic phenomenon which entails the movements of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for business/professional or personal purposes. These People are called visitors (which might be either tourists or excursionists; non-residents or residents) and tourism has to do with their activities, some of which imply tourism expenditure”

Tourism is one of the three largest export industries in the market, yielding place to the oil industry and automotive industry. At the present time, this sector is the most profitable area in the world economy. The basis for the development of the tourism industry are following significant points:

- Increase inbound tourism;
- Reduction of imbalance between resource support and degree of its use;
- Promotion of national tourist product;
- State support of domestic tourism.

In the table below we can see the different objectives of tourism:

Table 1: Objectives of Tourism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ECONOMIC obj.</th>
<th>ENVIRONMENTAL obj.</th>
<th>SOCIO-CULTURAL obj.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| - Employment creation  
- Increasing foreign currency earnings | - Environmental education and improvement  
- Preservation of wildlife habitats  
- Conservation and regeneration | - Promoting cultural understanding  
- Creating a national identity |

Source: Own table based on information of UNWTO

The tourism industry functions as an interbranch totality due to well-established connections with almost all government services and departments. In particular, there are links with such structures as (table 2).

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Chart 2: Government services and departments involved in tourism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legal</th>
<th>Financial &amp; Economic</th>
<th>Personnel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Security regulatory and normative base, customs and consular services.</td>
<td>System of tax and insurance, financial relations</td>
<td>Training of personnel for this particular sector, scientific research, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: own table based on data of TourFAQ.net

State support is to maintain and stimulate needs of the population in tourism services in the protection of tourism through creation of legal foundations and regulatory framework, favorable financial mechanism of the financial and economic regulation, simplifying travel formalities, training and conduct research in the field of tourism. An indicator of the effectiveness of state tourism policy is the profitability of the tourism industry and its contribution to the national economy.

The “tourism” system has been created and exists (nowadays) within three interconnected subsystems (pic. 3):

Chart 3: Interconnected subsystems of tourism

Source: Own table, based on research of K. Kaspar

According to Swiss researcher K. Kaspar, the “tourism” system has two internal subsystems:

- The subject of tourism, that is the consumer of tourist services – a person with all diversity of its tourist needs and motives of behavior;
- Tourism object, that consists of three elements: tourists centers, travel companies/agencies and tourism organizations (of social and public organizational and legal structure governing the development of tourism).
How psychological and economic factors of tourism linked with each other?
First of all, tourism – is a pleasure and satisfaction of curiosity.

The need of the people to obtain information about new places, traveling as a means of obtaining this information is an objective law of the development of society. Journey brings people pleasure and the opportunity to relax. People have always traveled at their own risk. Very often, the purpose of this trip is to get the person impressions of new places and phenomena of nature, etc.

At certain stage of development of the economy, when the needs of traveling have increased dramatically, the procedures (manufacturers) of these services appeared. This led to the formation of a special type of goods – tourism, which can be bought and sold in the consumer market. The situation of tourism as a commodity has demanded the formation of an appropriate material and technical base, the availability of qualified personnel in servicing tourists and targeted management of tourist economic entities. All this is due need for organizational separation of tourism, in an independent sector of the national economy.

Service providers designed to serve tourists, have united into the “tourism” industry. Tourism is not a commodity of the first vital necessity; however, it becomes an urgent need of people only at a certain level of their income and at a certain level of society wealth.

According to the report from magazine “Ефективна економіка” (ref.) the exact definition of tourism can be based on the following economic characteristics:

**Table 4: Tourism definition based on economic characteristics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Tourism is the result of moving people on different tourist routes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Tourism always includes two elements: 1) a trip to a destination and 2) a stop there</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>A trip means leaving a country (or region) where the tourist is permanently resident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Tourism is the temporary movement of a tourist on a tourist route (a tourist returns after some time to his place of permanent residence)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Tourism is a trip that does not include profit-taking activities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own table based on the electronic journal “*Effective Economy*”. Publishing house TOV (open company) DKS center⁴.

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Tourism is characterized by the temporary movements of people from one region (country, city, town, district) to another, if it is not connected with the change of place of residence and job. Tourism is defined as a pleasure associated with a trip for:

- Recreation
- Participation in: business, cultural or scientific meetings/events
- Treatment

Tourism as a product sold in the form of services. These services in general is the effect of a certain consumer value, which is expressed in a beneficial effect that satisfies one or another human need. In this case the service can be provided either by things (with the help of commodity) or during the process of the functioning of living labor itself, at the same time.

These two ways of manufacturing services, determine two types of services themselves:

**I type:** services which are mediated by the things, dealing with customer demand. Providing services of this kind in their content is no different from the labor process in material production, it is identical to it, because there are all five elements of the labor process are available:

- Means of labor
- Object of labor
- Labor itself (e.g. purposeful human activity)
- Technology
- Organization

This gives the reason to call the services of the first type of material (production).

**II type:** this type of services is aimed directly at people or their surrounding environment. Services of this type, are not related to material products, their production is inseparable from consumption. The creation of these services coincides with their consumption. These services are intangible. These include: services for the implementation of the tourist vouchers, tourists catering in hotels and catering enterprises, organization of concert performances and so on. As with any products, intangible services have a consumer value. The cost of non-material services is equivalent to the cost of social labor which is required for their production.

To summarize the deep definition of the tourism industry, its is easy to see that tourist industry – is a combination of hotels and other means of accommodation, transportation, catering facilities, entertainment facilities, educational, business, recreational and etc., organizations engaged in tour operator and travel agent activities, as well as institutions providing guided tours and translators (guides).

It is significant to ensure the provision of high-quality tourist services to tourists and at the same time further development of tourism industry. That is why in tourism it becomes a priority to search for more efficient use of relatively limited resources – which is one of the economic science tasks.

The economy of tourism is a system of relations that arise in the field of tourism, in the process of production, distribution, consumption or exchange of the results of tourism activities.

Economics of tourism firms/agencies is a set of factors of production, funds of circulation and intangible assets, income (profit) received as a result of the implementation of the tourism
product and the provision of various other services (work performed). Valuable evaluation (grade) of assets and income of the tourist firm characterizes the level and extent of its development. The last one depends on the ability to find the optimal balance between resources used, the quantity and quality of tourist products realized on the one hand, and the volume of realization of tourism products and profit from its implementation.

To summarize, the chart presented below indicates which are the sectors included in the tourism industry.

**Chart 5: Components of Travel and Tourism industry**

![Chart 5: Components of Travel and Tourism industry](image)

**Source:** Own chart based on research from web-site Quora, [www.quora.com](http://www.quora.com).

### 1.2. Concepts of tourism Industry

Let’s start this question with the Leiper Model of “Tourism System” which was updated in 1990 in order to show changes in studies. According to Leiper, a model should be used to present the complete scope of tourism in the most dynamic way possible. The tourism system should develop its market in order to meet the requirements of the tourist. The illustration below describes the whole tourism system.

**Illustration 6: Leiper Model “Tourism System”**

![Illustration 6: Leiper Model “Tourism System”](image)

**Source:** Leiper, 2004
In above model Leiper identify three basic elements of tourism system:

1. **Tourist** – is one person who is engages in tourism.

2. **Geographical Elements**:
   a) Traveler Generating Region, - it is from where the tourist conducts excursions and begins his journey to get to his destination of choice
   b) Tourist Destination Region, - the region chosen by tourist which is actually the destination of (tourist) from generating region.
   c) Transit Route region, - it is the Region through which traveler goes from his/her generating region to the tourist destination region. The transit rout region which is blue arrow between two columns in the illustration, includes both, the short period of travel from their home/region to that destination or/and other places on his/her way which might make them stop to visit.

Regarding to the explanation of Leiper, Transit Route it is the region or area that visited on route: “There is always an interval during the trip, when travelers feel that they have left their homes `region but have not yet arrived to the place which they chose to visit”5.

3. **Tourism Industry** – is the last (third) element of Leiper Model, that we can determine as a business and organizations involved into provision of tourist product. This model allows us to identify the location of many industrial sectors. The tourism zone which is shown in green triangles in the transit zone as a tourism industry, takes the role of travel facilitators in that region; as well as it shown at work in the tourist “Generating Region” and “Destination Region”, perhaps for the purpose of marketing and promotion.

These activities “play role” in the environment: of political decisions, technical updates, socio-cultural conditions, etc.

Travel system is basically reflexed to as a system of tourism based on the push – pull factors. In the traveler`s region (Generating Region) there are some factors that: “pushes” (encourages tourists to go on an excursion, while certain factors, such as tourist attraction in his/her destination (Destination Region) which pull them to it. There is a Tourism system where mentioned factors should work simultaneously with each other for any tourism activities.

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Illustration 7: Model of “push – push factors” by Leiper

Source: Based on research of “push- pull factors” by (Leiper, 198) Photo: created in google PP

In the previous paragraph mentioned push and pull factors which help the tourism system to work. Those factors can also be classified as a motivation factor of tourist/traveler, in order to move out of his/her home region for tourism activities. We can explain motivation as a driving force for individuals and stimulate them to act. McIntosh, Goeldner, Ritchie⁶, declare that in tourism exist four motivation categories:

**Table 8: Motivators in Tourism**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical Motivators</th>
<th>Cultural Motivators</th>
<th>Interpersonal Mot.</th>
<th>Status &amp; Prestige</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Those related to the refreshment of body and mind, health purposes, sport and pleasure. These groups of motivators are seen to be linked to those activities which will reduce tension. <strong>Push people to travel to destinations where physical activities can be taken (e.g. Skydiving, Hiking)</strong></td>
<td>Identified by the desire to see and know more about other cultures, to find out about the natives of a country, their lifestyle, music, art, folklore, dance, etc. <strong>Push people to travel to destinations which provides an opportunity to visit historical monuments, participate in music</strong></td>
<td>This group include a desire to meet people, visit friends or relatives, and to seek new different experience. <strong>Travel is an escape from routine relationships with friends or neighbours of the home environment</strong> or it is used for spiritual reasons.</td>
<td>Include a desire for continuation of education (i.e. personal developments). Such recognition and attention from others, in order to boost the personal ego. This category also includes personal development in relation to the pursuit of hobbies and education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


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The question still arises, is the Tourism an Industry? Well, some authors and researchers argue regarding this topic, below is some of the statements from different point of views.

**Table 9: Expression of views on Tourism Industry**

- **Robert Christie Mill** - states that "Tourism is not an Industry, although tourism gives rise to a variety of industries. Tourism is an activity engaged by people who travel".

- **Wahab** states that "the appellation of the term Industry to Tourism is justified because of the modern approach to the definition of industry as a group of firms producing identical goods, e.g. which the consumer regards as being substitutes for one another although they may be physically different.

**Source:** Based on authors statements (Robert Christie Mill & Wahab).

According to Roger Doswell, there are some levels of tourism which work together:

**Table 10: Three levels of tourism**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First level:</th>
<th>Tourism policy and strategy framework, the Government Tourism Administration (GTA)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Second Level:</td>
<td>Hotels, Accommodation, Catering, Attraction, Transportation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Level:</td>
<td>Network of supporting services</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** based on Roger Doswell state

However, the UN has identified 7 industrial areas, which can be considered that they belong in varying degrees to the tourist sector, although they do not relate exclusively to tourism.

- Attraction management
- Restaurants
- Accommodation
- Tour operator and travel agents
- Passenger transport institutions/enterprises
- Agencies concerned with tourism
- Manufacture of souvenirs and handcraft
Tourism is not the only one single industry, but a mix of many industries and unified industries.

- Transportation (surface- Road & Rail);
- Aviation;
- Water Transport;
- Hospitality;
- Attraction Management (monuments, theme parks);
- Travel Facilitators (travel consultants, escorts, guides);
- Communication (CRS, internet).

In the end of this paragraph, it is visible that Tourism Industry outlined as individuals, organizations & business, which are working in order to provide and promote the tourism product and services (including information). These institutions: work in: beverage & entertainment and food, lodging, transportation.

There is a close relationship among tourism industry, tourism and tourists (Supply → tourism industry; Demand → tourists). According to Leiper research, the tourism industry it is the merger/mixture of different industries such as: Airlines, Hotels, Travel Agencies; these all elements of Tourism Industry System interact with each other in a varies situations/contexts.

### 1.2.1. Tourism in Spain, its contribution to Spanish economy and employment

In many countries in the world, tourism is developing as a system that provides all the opportunities to get familiarized with the culture and history, religious and spiritual values of certain country and its people, and also generates profits for the national treasury. Tourism is one of the most powerful factors in strengthening the prestige of the country, increasing its importance in the eyes of the world community and typical (ordinary) citizens.

Spain is the most mysterious and most visited country in Europe. It is a country of the most beautiful cities, the best museums of the world, ancient monuments and unusual landscapes. Taken into the depths of the history of Toledo and Madrid, the elegant Barcelona, striking the magnificence of the Mediterranean beaches.

Tourism in Spain is a beneficial and highly profitable industry, which has a great influence on the economy of the country. The level of tourism development determines the distribution of workforce and financial flows, standards of living, infrastructure development, which forms demand for goods and services. It is through tourism geographical situation of the state, its climatic and natural resources and cultural and historical monuments, becomes a common good.

Tourism is the most important branch of Spain, which accounts 16% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and provides employment for 13% (2.5 million) of active population, (According to Caixa Bank, the percentage in tourism-related GDP increased between 2018-2019, and they forecast some growths (data is unavailable))\(^7\). The country ranks the second place in the world by popularity among tourists: more than 75 million come from abroad every year (by 2016), and

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\(^7\) According to Caixa Bank research [https://www.caixabank.es/particular/holabank/home-holabank_en.html](https://www.caixabank.es/particular/holabank/home-holabank_en.html), access 4\(^{th}\) of April 2019.
according to the research of El Pais the tourist spending grew by 7%, which means they bring 40 billion euros\textsuperscript{8}.

**Chart 11: Contribution of travel and tourism sector to GDP in Spain by 2017 (in billions)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Value in billion euros</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>148.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>163.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>172.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>177.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2028</td>
<td>224.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** picture created in Excel based on information from [https://www.statista.com](https://www.statista.com)

Today Spain firmly holds the leading positions in the World rankings of world tourist countries in terms of arrivals and income in the industry. In the past decade, revenues from tourism in Spain have increased by 82%. This is explained by a policy of the Spanish government aimed to build the tourism industry into the main economic sector, giving huge revenues to the state budget. Thus, due to the increased of tourist flows, Spanish Government invested 5 billion euros into the country’s tourism industry by 2012.

Tourist infrastructure is well developed in Spain, has quality and diversity. According to the National Spanish Institute of Tourism there are over 15 thousand hotels.

\textsuperscript{8} According to the research of El Pais, [https://elpais.com/](https://elpais.com/), access 4\textsuperscript{th} of April 2019.
However, to a bigger extent, Spanish tourism is targeted to the middle-class tourist, whose income involves vacation in 3-star hotels, which define the high demand of seasonal tours. There are several types of housing that are different in prices, location or/and quality of service. This are:

- Hostels;
- Hotels;
- Holiday apartments/ apartments;
- Campsites & Resorts.

It should be notable than in recent years – number of people arrived to Spain for studies or business has doubled. The undisputed leader among tourist destination in Spain: The Canary and Balearic Islands, Andalucia, Catalonia, Madrid and Valencia. Tourists form European countries such as: Germany, Great Britain, Italy, France, Portugal, Belgium are attracted by geographical proximity, comparative cheapness of tourist services and climate; from Japan, Canada and US – the rich historical and cultural heritage of Spain, and high level of services.

In addition to the hospitality sector, Spain has developed good network of transport communications: wide and extensive road and rail communication in order to make the country very convenient for self-exploration, and 2 state airlines. In Spain there are more than 2 000 mineral and thermal springs (fountainhead) the healing properties which are known far beyond Spanish borders.
Regarding to **Management Models** and **Human Resources** the Spanish tourism management is divided into private and public sectors. In the public domain, authorities are slit between different administrative areas and levels of governance. This situation is complex than in other environments, and requires the adaptation model management, which is leads to the necessary changes in the sector, (e.g. many institutions involved in promotion and marketing without a fully coherent strategy, without ROI (return on investment), and weak private sector participation, undermines effective adaptation of the incentive model to the changes in the environment)\(^9\).

Spanish Tourism Model Management system is based on a difficult system of internationally recognized statistics; however, they were effectively cover the new need of the sector. In addition, there is lack of communication channels between departments which is responsible for information processing and end-users and potential users.

In the private sector, managerial potential was influenced by the model of relations that Spain had with the commercial channels in the supply market, as well as the competitive advantages which exist for many decades, which led to a delay in the need for innovation, especially in the field of marketing and product design. The commonness of medium-sized and small enterprises in the sector (almost 84% of enterprises are organizations with less than 10 employees) complicates the implementation of effective innovation policies and attracting and retaining talents\(^10\). Private sector, for its territorial dispersion and diversity, failed to implement cooperation in the field of innovation. Although, it is true that there are certain exceptions, such as hotel`s offer that has a degree of implementation of technological infrastructure above the national average.

Human Resources Management is characterized by the lack of qualified staff and complexity of finding portfolios, as the growth rate of the sector clearly exceeded the supply of the labor – in the labor market. This reality has generated a human resources management model, which limits the ability to attract and retain the new talents, needed to solve problems/meet challenges facing the sector in the medium term.

There are the strengths of the tourism sector in Spain (presented in the table below).

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\(^9\) Beatriz García Moreno, “*Employment in the Spanish tourism industry and its key role in the economic crisis recovery*”. Barcelona, S.A., 2015, - p. 34

\(^10\) Beatriz García Moreno, Employment in the Spanish tourism industry and its key role in the economic crisis recovery. Barcelona, S.A., 2015, - p. 36
To summarize this paragraph, let’s see which role international tourism plays in socio-economic and cultural aspects of life in Spain.

As was mentioned earlier, tourism is the driving force of the economy in many developed countries in the World. It allows to use all the recreational resources, and use the cultural, social and industrial potential of the region. Every year tourism is becoming an increasingly profitable industry, which plays significant role in shaping GDP and creating jobs/workplaces.

An increase of 1% in GDP in tourism, leads to the creation of 2.200 new workplaces in the commercial sector and about 10.5 thousand new workplaces in hospitality sector and public catering sector. The tourism sector includes a wide range of activities, from car and food, to the production and distribution of electricity; with the development of tourism the most popular/common were following areas of activity: advertising business, media and cartography.

Until this moment, the most common tourism industry in Spain is – beach tourism. The industry has a seasonal nature, which in turn leads to an important under-utilization of the tourism infrastructure. However, other countries which offer a similar type of tourism, like Italy, are even more seasonal. Despite overall number of tourists over past few decades, this pattern has
remained very stable in Spain. The seasonal character of tourist services in Spain is also extended the labor market, (and employment is more concentrated in the high seasons, like summer). Thus, one of the priority tasks which is set by the Tourism Secretariat in Integrated National Tourism Plan of the country (2015-2020), is the development of concrete measures to alleviate this problem.

Except this, the main goals are:

- Uniform distribution of tourists, in order to avoid overload during high seasons.
- Getting rid of under-utilization of resources (objects labor) in the low season.
- Implementing a flexible tariff system based on the number of passengers and the capacity of each airport.

The huge influence tourism has on the social and cultural side of life. As a rule, tourism “touches” and bring improves in different areas to the region where tourism is developed, such as medical care, since tourist pay big attention to all aspect of health. This improvement also extends to other services and facilities, like: lightning, transport communication, garbage collection, new branches of financial institutions and so on.

A lot of modern roads, airports and stations have been built. Improved the system of urban transport. In addition, the passenger traffic has also increased to 29.9 million people, 8.4 million of which are passengers of cruise liners. In the segment, the leading position not only in Spain but also in whole Europe is the port of Barcelona city.

Tourism also helps to stimulate the interest of the Spaniards in their own traditions, culture, cultural heritage. Since, many elements of the culture were restored and stored only for purpose of tourist’s attraction. Such cultural awakening, can be a positive experience for the inhabitants, which gives them some awareness of historical and cultural continuity of their community, and for particular regions increasing its tourist attractiveness; as well as tourism can be a factor in accelerating positive social change in items of greater tolerance and well-being.

Despite all the positive aspects or impacts, international tourism has also negative effect. In Spain, it is source of social tension (one of them). In almost each city of Spain, we can find the “ghetto” areas, where prevails poverty. Even if, the large number of workplaces appears with the growth of international tourism, a lot of them is given to not qualified candidates or foreigners. Also, seasonality of tourism leads to migration (seasonal) of the local population. For instance, during the period of the biggest tourist activity, the population of Costa-Brava grows from 2.000 to 27.000 of people.

As we see from the given information above, tourism affects all aspects of life: from economic to socio-cultural. It is linked to the main sectors of the economy: real estate, agriculture and transport. This sector is also involved into job creation, expansion of international contracts and cultural development. Tourism of Spain plays important role in the formation of GDP. Its activities create source of the foreign currency of the state and promote maintenance of the

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balance of payments in the current account. This is why Spain, pays a lot of attention to the developing and financing of tourism activities

1.3. The concept of tourism activity as a travel company in the market

Organizations/companies involved in the collecting and sale of tours, also the preparation activities and management of excursions, which called tourist-excursion organizations/ travel agencies.

In practice they could be called in different ways:

- Tourist offices
- Travel agencies

However, in terms of the kind of entrepreneurship, they might be divided. Nowadays, there are 2 types of tourism organizations which operating in the tourist market: travel agents, tour operators.

Tour operator is the tourist organization, which is involved in the development of tourist route and completing the set of tours, makes sure of their functioning, calculates in conset/accordance with the actual standards and in charge to approve in the established order: the prices of tours, on these routes, organizes advertising, sell tours to travel agents in order to release and sale the vouchers for their licences.

Tour operators (travel agencies) play the main and leading role in the tourism, as they package different services like:

- Transfer
- Entertainment
- Accommodation
- Food, etc.

Into a one single tourist product, which is sold to the consumer using the agency network. A tour operator also could sell tourism services separately. This is done for the reason of profit or any other necessity.

Table 14: Four types of tour operators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The mass market</th>
<th>A specialized market segment</th>
<th>The domestic market</th>
<th>The external market</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tour operators of the mass market - the most common type. They sell packages to popular resorts. Travel of tourists is carried out by charter or regular transportations</td>
<td>Tour operators specialized segment of the market specialize in providing a certain direction.</td>
<td>Domestic tour operators (local, insider) sell tour packages within their country of residence, i.e. they organize tours in their own country.</td>
<td>Tour operators of the foreign market (entry-incamings, exit-outgoing) sell tour packages to different countries. They organize various services for foreign tour operators.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: based on study from electronic resource http://tourlib.net

The functions of tour operator in the market could be compared to activities of wholesale agencies: he buys in huge volumes of hotels and services, transport and other organizations in
the tourism industry and finish their own tour programs, which then sells through mediator or directly to consumers.

The terms “tour operators” and “tour agents” define of the business type activities of a tourist company or firm. What do these definitions mean?

Tourist product is shaped from the services of the companies or enterprises which are involved in the maintenance of people on holiday and during travel.

These are:

- Transport companies and other companies;
- Hotels and restaurants, cafes;
- Sightseeing companies;
- Museums and exhibitions;
- Amusement parks;
- Leisure and entertainment companies (shows, video business, cinema, gambling, sports and resorts organizations).

In short, all companies which can provide the necessary services.

Set of tourist product → shaping of a set of services which are called “tour”, engaged tour operators. These people (in some countries called tour organizer) produce differentiated tourist products from the component services, in accordance with the wishes and needs of clients/customers.

The travel agents sell the tourist products to the client as a complex (inclusive tours) or in the form of a free set of services (custom tour).

The travel agent – is the company/organization involved or engaged in the sale of tours which are organized by the tour operator. The travel agents (travel organizations) receive a commission fee for their activities (approximately 7-15% of the tour price). Moreover, travel agent is not responsible for the quality of the tour, unlike tour operators.

Basically, travel agents act on the specific and certain segment of the tourist market, where they sell the tourist products.

Below is presented travel agent functions:

- In charge of contacts with the clients;
- Informing clients, consulting them in order to make them choose the tour;
- Registration of the purchase;
- Informing the operator and advice on organizing certain tour.

To summarize the difference between tour operator and travel agents: generally, agencies/travel agents differ from the tour operator by offering intermediary services for retail sales of both program tour packages of tour operators, as well as services provided for individual touristic companies (hotels, airlines).

The main role in the market of these organizations is the combination of service providers with tourists who are could be disassociated: in the time or geographically. This is a specific type of
business (tourist). It is significant there are: the right choice of service providers is based on the high professional knowledge of the tourism business, market, functions and levers of its management and development.

The main features or tourist agencies/organizations are presented in the table below

**Table 15: Main functions of tour organization**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Complete function</th>
<th>Service function</th>
<th>Warranty function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is a complete set of tour of individual services - for a receptive tour operator; complete set of combined tours from receptive tours - for the initiative tour operator; package travel packages with transport and some other types of services - for travel agent.</td>
<td>It is servicing tourists on the routes, serving tourists in the office when selling packages of tours.</td>
<td>This function is to provide tourists with guaranteed pre-paid tourist services in a specified amount and at a specified level.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: website [http://tourlib.net](http://tourlib.net), access 26th of April.

Generally, a tour operator is a bigger organization than a tourist agent, which has a majority of tour operator offices and few affiliate agencies. Larger part of tour operators has agency networks around the World. Regardless of the existence of their own agent network, the tour operators conclude agency agreement with an independent travel agency for the sale of its tours. The tour organizations (partners) travel agents than in more regions and countries they are located, the bigger (wider) the sales, and respectively, higher profit, more tourists, more successful.

Travel operator and travel agents can have different forms of ownership. They can be: state, private, joint-stock agencies- the essence of market functions and entrepreneurial activities do not change from this.

The biggest and the main market task of these two types of organizations: tour operator and travel agents is to gain a stable position in the tourist market and to obtain high profits, constantly. They have to find their niche, their segment of consumers, which is based on the differentiation of the tourism market.

Due to the fact that we will be working directly with a travel agency to implement strategies in their HR department, it is relevant to conduct a SWOT analysis of this specific sector, as you can find below:
Table 16: SWOT analysis of the travel agencies sector

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Strong marketing department</td>
<td>• High level of competition (e.g. according to Statista in Spain 9650 different agencies)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Excellent client/customer list (e.g. companies and people)</td>
<td>• Dependence of sale on seasonality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Excellent supplier relationship</td>
<td>• High cost of tour package</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Travel agencies offer clarity and safety for the service customers are</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>looking for (e.g. Internet might be uncertain for this specific sector)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Opportunity to book and pay online for provided services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Dynamism of the product: constantly updated list (e.g. attractive tour</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>packages)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Threats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The growing flow of tourists</td>
<td>• Negative public perception about travel agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The traveling is becoming more and more trendy</td>
<td>• Natural disaster (climate disaster), war, revolutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Traveling is more accessible</td>
<td>• Economy uncertainty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Geographic and cultures awareness</td>
<td>• Low demand form recent generations (Y &amp; Z)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Market opportunities in a specific niche (baby boom generation)</td>
<td>• Adverse political and climatic changes in other countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Current technologies (e.g. Internet)</td>
<td>• Unqualified travel agents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Failure to attract young people</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own analysis

1.4. HR practices and challenges in travel industry

Hrout & Mohamed (2014) described internal and external factors that affect Human Resources Practices across countries. One of the external factors they mention is economically internationally changes, in which HR practices become more important owing to the development of global economy. Technological changes also affect HRM directly, since technological development may modify the usual HR practices impacting the way we work, the roles we take, and the interaction through which work gets executed. The particular industry/sector characteristics can also influence HRM practices in the organization, as well as legislations/regulations of each country in which HRM practices must be adapted to meet these regulations. Additionally, actions of competitors and actions of unions have a direct impact, but possibly the biggest external challenge facing HRM practices is globalization. HRM needs to be in constant development to maintain quality in their services not only in a local level, but globally as well.
Some of the internal factors that play a strong role in HRM practices according to Hrout & Mohamed (2014) consist in the organization size and structure, which is important to determine:

- HRM practices
- Flexibility
- Integration.

The business strategy of the company affects HRM practices, since looking forward to have competitive advantage in the organization forces the HR area to research and implement more ambitious methods. Further to this, the Human Resources strategy of the organization has a direct impact on the HRM practices of such since factors like the history, traditions and past practices can develop certain resistance to change. Implementing innovation in HRM practices might have some resistance from top management and line management, and can also be influenced by organizational power and politics.

Human Resources practices in the travel industry, being an area which is aimed at offering quality service to their company, must have the certain organizational strategies in order to have the best approach. Some of these strategies were outlined by Redman and Matthews (1998), and include: recruitment and selection of staff with the correct attitudinal characteristics, retention to avoid the development of “turnover culture”, training and development of interpersonal skills, appraisal, rewarding quality, and employee involvement and relations. On a day to day basis, the Human Resources department of a company must first attract an effective workforce with HR planning and Recruitment and Selection, maintain an effective workforce with rewards and welfare and proper labor relations, and at last, develop an effective workforce through training and development (Nickson, 2007)

Bednarska (2013) analyzed job characteristics that influence work quality in tourism in the situation of earning competitive advantage on the field. The dimensions of quality of work life were examined, and it is relevant to mention that the perception of these varies geographically. For example, those employees that work in tourism-dependent economies, find work quality dimensions to be much more poor than those working in countries where there is lower travel economic impact. Based on data collected from the EWCS (European Working Condition Surveys) on 2010, the tourism industry had lower scores on the dimensions tested than other sectors. Interesting to acknowledge, is the fact that one of the facets of strength of their job and field in particular, is the relationships with other co-workers. Some of the factors that were perceived as bad in the study, consisted in: intrinsic value of work, financial compensation, job security management process, and opportunities for vocational development. Special attention is required for three specific aspects which were rated much more unfavorably in tourism industry, than in the rest of the economy: work-life fit, job content and career advancement.

Furthermore, some more obstacles that the tourism field faces consist in lack of education and training institutions, managing workforce diversity, updating skills with changing environment, working with networked organizations, balancing the work-life conflict and coping with temporariness (Ashraf, 2016). In his analysis of “Characteristics of Human Resources Management in the Tourism Industry of the Republic of Armenia”, Atoyan (2015) takes up on a few number of benefits that training in HRM of the hospitality industry could offer, such as: helps employees learn jobs more effectively, can improve work performance of employees and update them in specialist skills required, greater volume of productivity due to fewer mistakes and elevated rapidity, reduces turnover among new and older staff, fosters attraction to potential employees and creates an attitude more open to cope with any upcoming changes in the organization.
Possibly the biggest challenge that HRM in the tourism industry faces is the high rate of employee turnover. A study carried out by Hady & Chible (2018) had the purpose of measuring the turnover rate in travel agencies, impact of HRM practices on the employee’s will to quit, and the factor leading up to it. One of the indicators Hady & Chible (2018) mention as influence on employees turnover level, is job satisfaction. Job satisfaction and turnover are highly related, due to the fact that a satisfied employee will be more effective and productive, and will stay longer in the company. Especially in the HRM area of the tourism field, having job satisfaction is essential, since it is linked to positive employee behavior and better customer orientation, two key factors for success in this sector. Furthermore, loyalty can minimize turnover rate since it describes how faithful a person is to an organization and will determine if the employee is prone to look for another job. Similar to this, organizational commitment is how the employee feels regarding the organization, such as a bond between him and the company. An employee who has a high level of organizational commitment, influences his or her intention to stay in the company.

When the employees of a company have trust or organizational commitment, it results in lower turnover intentions. According to the analysis of predicting turnover intentions of hotel employees by Hemdi & Nasurdin (2006), the influence of trust as a mediator in the relationship employee-company is of huge importance. Apart from the impact that training, development and career advancement as HRM practices that prevent turnover, performance appraisal is also significantly related. Employees who perceive that the company conducts formal performance evaluations and feedback systems in order for them to keep growing professionally, influences on their decision to stay in the company. For employees to experience greater trust in the organization, they should perceive better prospects of internal promotion, objective promotional criteria and the opportunity of career advancement within.

To address labor shortages, present in the tourism field, managers can implement basic strategies that have a direct implication on the Human Resources department. One of them is selecting the correct persons for the job to reduce turnover rate, and the use of tactics to retain staff members and keep the people currently employed. Selecting the right personnel will increase productivity in the company, and provides a better professional development. Another useful strategy that can be used is recruiting from nontraditional labor markets. It has been proven that hospitality managers revel in employing “empty nesters” (which refers to parents of grown children that no longer live at home), older workers who look for part-time employment as a counterpart of retirement income, and persons who struggle with physical and mental challenges but that are quite capable of performing necessary tasks for the tourism company (Hayes & Ninemeir, 2009).

Four key forces are the ones that shape the tourism labour market. The first one is tourism demand, since it is seasonal and can have periods of low and high activity. The second one is the nature of employment, due to the fact that some jobs are temporary, part-time and low skilled. Management practice and working conditions is the third force, since it might not be described as “ideal” by some of the employees in the field. The fourth one consists in the nature of tourism workers and the key role they play in their company. A clear example of this is that some characteristics of the labor market is that seasonality can be linked with low salary wages and poor working conditions. These factors can directly affect an employee’s levels of motivation and engagement in their work. A well implemented Human Resources strategy approach is needed to address these forces, in order to have the best productivity and development. It is interesting to mention that there is a strong paradox regarding that even though many persons working in the tourism field declare that the working conditions are less than ideal and there can be a high turnover, workers do not report low levels of job satisfaction (Lee-Ross & Pryce, 2010).

As any other field of activity, tourism agencies require high qualifications and professionalism, knowledge of technology, marketing tools and market (“Kukiani”, 2018).
The main points that tourist operators and agents should pay close attention to are:

- The future of the tourism company depends on how consistently and decisively it will fight for its place in the market.
- The market situation is variable, old opportunities can be exhausted and new ones can appear. It should be taken for granted that if at the moment the company sells a product, this does not mean that it will always be so it is necessary to look for new opportunities constantly and develop new types of tourist offers.
- Professionalism, since a travel company today needs more than before in terms of knowledge, promptness, and efficiency of actions.
- It is better to specialize in high-quality products.
- Constantly worry about updating the product, improving the composition of services, diversification, follow the variant needs of customers, taking into account such things as market trends.

Undergraduate students are the future of the labor market, and a study designed by Groblenma & Marciszewska (2016) identified which was the motivation of this crowd of specifically tourism and hospitality scholars towards work. The geographic location of the analysis was carried out in the North of Poland, and one of the study’s attempts was to measure these motivating factors order to acquire a better managerial approach from the company. The investigation’s importance lies in the fact that tourism employers should take into account that “baby boomers” are now entering retirement, and young graduates are a valuable resource for recruitment, and these graduates tend to leave the tourism industry quite quickly when being exposed to low job satisfaction, poor working conditions and an absence of motivating factors. Since tourism and hospitality is a customer service-oriented business, employee work motivation is essential, and focusing explicitly on the Generation Y main motivators, the highest ranked one was good pay followed by opportunity for advancement and development and feeling that they have an interesting job. To attract competent young employees, managers should take these generational characteristics into consideration to have a strategic approach into their recruitment.

A study carried out by Enz (2009) analyzed HRM issues in various parts of the globe, and deciphered which is the most persistent problem of the Human Resources area for international hotel industry. The biggest concerns for general managers in the hospitality business, consist in attraction, retention and training of employees, followed by: morale, career opportunity, employee skills, labor shortage, benefit costs, and compensation costs. For hotel managers, finding the time to train employees was considered to be the most challenging part, while for hotel executives mentioned that finding top talent for general manager positions was turning out to be more strenuous over time. In addition to this analysis, Enz (2009) evaluated which HR issues are of more concern divided by six different global regions. From most part of the world, the main issues of concern are: attraction, retention, training and morale. For managers in North America and the Middle East, attraction holds the most priority, retention issues are the most relevant for European respondents, and training for Asian region. For South America, retention and training remain tied as being the most important issues to attend in HR, and for Africa: attraction, retention and morale.

As mentioned earlier, tourism industry faces a shortage of skilled staff which is a challenge due to the rapid growth rate in the industry. A researched carried out by Katoch (2017) concluded that to promote tourism, Human Resources is an essential aspect, since it increases
employment opportunities and development of the economy through tourism industry. It mainly highlights the need to develop and give specialized training of the required HRM practices in segments of tourism industry, which requires professionally qualified personnel at all levels (managers, supervisors, and subordinates) to be well adapted to the international standards. An efficient Human Resources department increases customer satisfaction, and gives the company a competitive edge in the current globalization need. The demand and supply pattern of human resources for this industry in particular has been adjusted, and now they are searching for more specialized and educated employees. Some of the suggestions Katoch (2017) mention, consist in implementing refresher training courses for the staff of the tourism industry, as well as seminars and workshops to take up on the Human Resources challenges of the sector.

Buneta, C´osic´, & Tomascic´ (2016) led an analysis in which they examined the trends of in employment in the tourism industry in the Republic of Croatia. HRM in tourism industry must have high education, expertise, knowledge of the latest tourism trends, and openness to new experiences. They concluded that a company’s success depends on the quality of its employees’ performance, and suggested basic policy specifications on HRM to exceed challenges (mainly directed to large hotels, but could apply for the entire hospitality industry):

- Execute a mentoring system with the objective to develop trainees and young employees, and therefore diminish the generation gap and precipitate the transfer of knowledge to new and upcoming managers.
- Efficient reward system for Human Resources development
- Qualitative education system for the personnel (the study claims that the current tourism education system in Croatia does not adjust fully to the needs of the tourism economy sector).
- Assessment of employees
- Implement “Folder Inheritance” strategy, which is targeted to an employee’s development, who could launch demanding business tasks and head positions.

Chapter 2: Company profile/ HR information (analysis of process)

2.1 Company Profile

The company “Voyage” was the first travel agency in Spain, born in November 1969 with the purpose of responding to the needs of business trips of the different companies of one of the biggest Spanish holding Group. Under this dynamic structure of this business group, remains their travel agency which has a vast network of delegations which serve to offer trips to all customers. It holds a recognized prestige in the sector and has been more than 40 years active in service, becoming one of the main commercial groups of the company. Besides its national network 497 offices, it has an international presence with more than 108 offices abroad in the following countries: Italy, France, Portugal, Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, United States, Mexico, Panama, Peru, Dominican Republic and Uruguay. However, the headquarter is located in Madrid.

Nowadays “Voyage” counts with more than 5.000 employees.

In the image below, the matrix-based organizational structure of “Voyage” is shown:
To secure lasting growth in sales, improving customer service levels and the company’s profitability based on certain aspects is “Voyage” mission. These aspects consist of: introduction of new technologies, ongoing training of the team, cost control, and adapting to a changing market. This leading agency has a view of being an omnichannel group, bringing quality products and guarantee as a reference in Spanish Speaking countries, by always being aligned on the values of the bigger company’s group and its human capital. The vision of “Voyage” is that the actual leadership position in the travel agency sector define a strategy for the future based on the present. The company affirms that their commitment to succeed in the development of the future is based on technological innovation, optimization of “Voyage” at an internal level, improvement and promotion of the main alliances with the suppliers.

Trips in family and couples, weekend proposals, summer holidays, honeymoons, professional and business trips, conventions and congresses, and incentive trips are among the most sold services “Voyage” offers. They give an advantageous economic rate, granting a variety of promotions to have a financial advantage. The trips provided by Voyage have an assortment of budgets for the market, conveying an eminent quality and customer service.

For “Voyage”, their customer service is their grand hallmark. They are committed to their customers, offering excellent attention and humane treatment, since they consider this to be their authentic vocation as travel agents. Staff are expected to have expertise on the subject, and bring decades of experience and specialized assistance to the table to provide the maximum quality in their service. This travel agency has a high commitment to guarantee the quality of its services by implementing quality improvement programs, in which they employ as reference the international standards to ensure a diligent and appropriate value to each customer. The travel
providers they select are adapted to the client’s needs, both in national and international markets, to verify specialized attention.

**B2C:** They offer services to customers of high incomes, and they divide this services under other two brands (“Paradise”, Personalized trips with native travel agents from the destiny countries and “World Tour”, a brand that dedicates to offer packages to mature generations).

**B2B:** Nowadays their main focus and their main income, they offer executive traveling plans, or business trips for big Spanish companies such as Telefónica. This business model has made them to open offices all around the globe, specifically in Latin America.

The agents are focus in both profiles, and they give assistance, and work at the same time with B2C as well as B2B.

The profiles for travel agents in “Paradise” differ from “Voyage” and from “World Tour” because this brand is more focus in personalized trips for B2C, and they want travel agents who have lived in the destination and have a more day to day point of view and as well a closeness with the native culture.

**Chart 18: Organizational structure in Commercial Department of Voyage company**

![Organizational Structure Diagram](chart.png)

**Source:** Own chart based on information provided by HR director of the company

In the image above is a representation of the organizational structure in the Commercial Department of “Voyage” is detailed. This is the organizational structure of the Commercial department (designed with the provided information) and here are the job positions needed for “Voyage” and its brands.

Another important aspect of their commitment is ethics and compliance, studying the company’s culture to be aware of every detail. Holding a leadership position of being the most renowned travel agency in Spain, Voyage has defined a strategy for a sustained future in the present. They are constantly in research of technological innovation, optimization of the company at an internal level, and improving strategic alliances with suppliers to enhance
the future development and success of the organization. The values that have allowed Voyage to be the first choice in the tourism sector are warranty and quality, and every service they offer is aligned to this strategy.

### 2.2. HR practices in given company & recruiting processes and its needs

Human Resources practices in Voyage are for the most part traditional and can be seen as “conventional”. Their main recruitment source remains as 2.0, which is known as social recruiting through online job boards, C.V. searches and social media. The company uses prospection, headhunting, and job portals such as: Infojobs, Turijobs, Linkedin, their careersite, as well as asking for recommendations of people who might fit in the job which is one of the best recruitment strategies for the organization.

The company does not have a specific strategy for recruitment processes, if they did they would have to be changing it constantly. Voyage follows a protocol of good manners, and are always aligned to compliances’ procedures. When a candidate goes to an interview in Voyage, he or she is perceived and treated as the client. HR director of Voyage states that the interviews are quite common, very generalist and democratic. Dealing with clients, and potential and actual employees is completely equal, regardless of anything (gender, sexual orientation, etc). There is no age limit; in Voyage they can hire someone below 20, or someone above 55 years old. Below you can find a timeline of the recruitment process in Voyage, which is essential to the company.

**Chart (timeline)**: Timeline of recruitment process in “Voyage” company

![Timeline of recruitment process in “Voyage” company](chart.png)

**Source**: Own timeline based on information provided by HR recruitment director.

According to the HR recruitment director they are hiring constantly however, there is a specific period of the year in which they have to hire more people than usual due to the high season that occurs from May to September (Summer).

Voyage’s recruitment policy is focus on diversity (they hire people in 15 countries), which provides more globalized ideas; according to the recruitment policies the company should hire certain percentage of handicapped and victims of domestic harassment due to their priority.

Taking into account the recruitment strategy of the company, there are 3 types of contracts.
Contracts

Illustration 20: Types of contract in Voyage company

![Diagram of Types of Contracts]

1. **Temporary contracts**: fixed-term contract that is less than 2 years. Basically, company employed people for high season on this conditions (for 6 months). Moreover, (e.g. If company hires 100 new talent for high season, as a result 70-80 out of 100 are tend to get extension of 12 months). These contracts demanded in big cities like Madrid, Barcelona.

2. **Works and services contracts**: cover autonomous work and services that require a limited and uncertain period to complete. Voyage use this kind of contracts for one-time activities (e.g. conventions).

3. **Indefinite contracts**: does not set a time limit (the duration of the contract cannot be easily estimated), as it is known that Spanish Employment Law is based on principle that duration of Indefinite Contracts are the general form of employment relationship, and the use of fixed-term contracts as opposed to contracts of indefinite duration is therefore exceptional. According to HR recruitment director, the company employ this type of contracts in a small cities; also depending on the level of urgency.

Voyage is currently trying to implement 4.0. which can consist on crowdsourcing and gamification. A gamification strategy was applied indirectly for IT processes, and was used mainly to enhance employee engagement, an essential aspect in the Voyage HR culture. Employee engagement is defined as a workplace method to improve an employee's feelings to the company, and it is used as a tactic to boost productivity and wellbeing. For the company, employee engagement also means employee retention, and some of the strategies they use are: offering cards that give discounts in the company’s stores, life insurance, individual and family scholarships, and a flexible compensation plan.

The structure of the job interview is unstructured and is built by the recruiter focusing on discovering the candidate’s competences and abilities; at the end of the interview the recruiter is giving to applicants/candidates a grade and feedback. From the first hand, they seek for the candidate's honesty, since Voyage handles a lot of money, that's why one of the goals for the recruiter is to make a contrast incident interview, where they try to find out if the candidate quit or was fired from previous jobs and which were the reasons. On the other hand, is curiosity, and
how well the candidate can adapt to the company culture and job, as well as the ability to develop and get the promotion in different position internally in the “Voyage” agency and its subsidiaries.

Delivering a positive candidate experience is also very important for the company, since it is how job seekers perceive and react to the organization’s recruiting process. Voyage writes clear job descriptions, make it easy for candidates to apply for their jobs, give follow up early and often, and communicate and thank candidates during each part of the hiring process. The company also considers themselves to be an interview guru, tells the candidates what to expect and informs them if they are no longer considering them through a systematic approach by email (with certain exceptions of confidential positions).

One of the biggest challenges nowadays in Voyage is that there is not enough people working in the tourism sector. The market that the company asks for currently consists in two groups: young in experience, but fundamental for temporary position, and experienced candidates who have between five and ten years of expertise in the tourism field. The talent gap in the tourism sector of the Spanish population will be a huge problem in one or two years, and this is the reason why Voyage is searching to employ the strategy to bring people (especially travel agents and specialists in travel products) from other countries, for example Latin America and East Europe, and pay for their bureaucratic processes to work here. For these positions in particular, when people apply in Infojobs in the job postings of Voyage, of approximately 700 people that sign up, only 6 fit the profile the company needs. The organization is in need of a well thought strategy to bring this talent to Spain, and one of the attractive catches is that salaries are better, and the country can offer a safer lifestyle.

Some of the requirements to work on Voyage as a travel agent is a concluded Bachelor’s Degree in Tourism or a related career. Depending on what profile the specific job is asking, there is a minimum years of experience in the labor market of the tourism field. Generally, it is one year of experience which can be proven by letters of recommendation or telephone references from former employees. The age is variable, since it also depends of the job position the company is looking for. Since Voyage focuses on the service sector, it is crucial to have time availability, excellent customer service and an ability to be constantly adapting to the new learnings and discoveries of the tourism field. Having a proactive attitude is always smiled upon, since it can exhibit potential to have a great service to clients, as well as being empathetic to understand the customer’s needs and tolerance for a possible scenario in which it will be needed.

2.2.1 Onboarding process in “Voyage”

In Human Resources terms, onboarding refers to a systematic process that is used to establish a positive trajectory in the initial phase of the employee’s cycle. Having a good onboarding process with the appropriate phased implementation in the company, guarantees a strong strategic advantage (Derven, 2008). Increased job satisfaction, increased performance (employee’s objectives and expectations from the company and vice versa clarified), and reduced turnover, are some further benefits this process offers. “Voyage” provides an informal onboarding, which indicates a process by which an employee learns about the job without an exact organizational plan (Bauer, 2010).

An onboarding process covers four specific levels, which are:

- Compliance: teach employees legal and policy-related regulations.
- Clarification: ensure employees comprehend their job and expectations to be fulfilled.
- Culture: Grant employees a sense of the organization’s norms (formal and informal)
- Connection: interpersonal relationships employees must set up.
According to Bauer (2010), the levels of onboarding in a company can be categorized in: passive, high potential, and proactive. In Voyage’s particular case, their onboarding strategy is a high-potential one, which varies in precision and detail depending on the location where the employee will work. This makes reference to the fact that compliance and clarification are included in the process, but only some culture and connection tools are directed to the new employee. The table below can help illustrate what level the specific company resides:

### Table 20: Onboarding levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Onboarding Level</th>
<th>Compliance</th>
<th>Clarification</th>
<th>Culture</th>
<th>Connection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Passive</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Some</td>
<td>Little to none</td>
<td>Little to none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High potential</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Some</td>
<td>Some</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proactive</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** SHRM Foundation’s Effective Practice Guideline Series “Onboarding New Employees: Maximizing Success)

On the other hand, “Voyage” focuses on offering an excellent candidate experience for their potential employees. Candidate experience refers to how job seekers perceive the employer’s recruiting, hiring and onboarding process of the company they apply to. For “Voyage”, the strategies they use to pitch a positive candidate experience, are:

- Writing clear job descriptions.
- Make it easy for the candidates to apply to the job.
- Give follow up early and often.
- Communicate and give thanks to the candidates during each part of the hiring process.
- Become an “interview guru”- master the art of interviewing, which is the best selection asset according to “Voyage”.
- Tell candidates what to expect (clarity)
- Inform the candidates if they are no longer considering them (usually through a systematic email, except for “difficult” or “confidential” positions).
### 2.2.3. Compensation and Benefits design

**Table 21:** Compensation system of the Voyage company

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Month Brute</th>
<th>Annual Brute</th>
<th>Plus of monthly transport x11</th>
<th>Plus of annual transport</th>
<th>Total brute annual salary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 1</td>
<td>918.71 €</td>
<td>14.699.36 €</td>
<td>115.69 €</td>
<td>1.272.59 €</td>
<td>15.971.95 €</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2</td>
<td>1.001.39 €</td>
<td>16.022.24 €</td>
<td>115.69 €</td>
<td>1.272.59 €</td>
<td>17.294.83 €</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3</td>
<td>1.091.52 €</td>
<td>17.464.32 €</td>
<td>115.69 €</td>
<td>1.272.59 €</td>
<td>18.736.91 €</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 4</td>
<td>1.189.75 €</td>
<td>19.036.00 €</td>
<td>115.69 €</td>
<td>1.272.59 €</td>
<td>20.308.59 €</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 5</td>
<td>1.249.25 €</td>
<td>19.988.00 €</td>
<td>115.69 €</td>
<td>1.272.59 €</td>
<td>21.260.59 €</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 6</td>
<td>1.311.71 €</td>
<td>20.987.36 €</td>
<td>115.69 €</td>
<td>1.272.59 €</td>
<td>22.259.95 €</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 7</td>
<td>1.377.30 €</td>
<td>22.036.80 €</td>
<td>115.69 €</td>
<td>1.272.59 €</td>
<td>23.309.39 €</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 8</td>
<td>1.501.21 €</td>
<td>24.020.00 €</td>
<td>115.69 €</td>
<td>1.272.59 €</td>
<td>25.292.59 €</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 9</td>
<td>1.636.36 €</td>
<td>26.181.76 €</td>
<td>115.69 €</td>
<td>1.272.59 €</td>
<td>27.454.35 €</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 10</td>
<td>1.783.62 €</td>
<td>28.537.92 €</td>
<td>115.69 €</td>
<td>1.272.59 €</td>
<td>29.810.51 €</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Own table based on information provided by a company

The actual design of the compensation system of Voyage, based on the “Sindicato Profesional de Viajes” of 2018.

The company has a division of the positions by levels, which means that all the salary structure is represented by this table. From level 1 to level 5 are the clerical positions, travel
agents, call center agents among others. From level 6 to level 8 are the managerial positions, and
in the levels 9 and 10 are the directive positions.

All travel agencies in Spain are under a collective agreement that they have to comply
according to the Spanish laws. The collective agreement regulates the base salary and plus of
transportation that all travel agencies must pay to the different levels of employees. In a year, a
travel agency must make 16 payments for the salary, and 11 payments of plus of transportation
(11 because the payments of transportation don’t apply for holidays or vacations). In order to
differentiate from others agencies in payment terms, they include two options in the retribution
model to increase the total salary of an employee:

- ‘Personal plus’: A fixed extra payment that can be linked to a specific feature of the
  employee. For example: a plus of 100 euros each month for the experience of the employee. This
can also apply when the company wants to improve the salary of an employee without making
any promotion, so the company will apply this extra payment on the ‘personal plus’.

- ‘Function plus’: A variable extra payment linked to an extra function of the employee.
  For example: when a travel agent covers the position of a Delegation Chief while the company
finds a new one for that office, in the meantime, the agent will receive an extra payment. When
the new Chief arrives, the travel agent gets back to his normal functions and will lose that extra
payment. (Tablas salariales 2018 Convenio Colectivo Estatal para las Agencias de Viajes
estatal-para-las-agencias-de-viajes.pdf)

According to Voyage, part of their compensation system is a differentiate formation
strategy, having an intern formation team, own facilities with classrooms, as well as an online
platform. Also, as a part of the formation strategy they motivate their collaborators to study, so
they give a 30% in retribution of the total fee for their studies.

Additionally, to their compensation system, they offer the following benefits:

- Family Checks (Kindergarten)
- Discounts
- Ticket Restaurant
- Health insurance
- Life Insurance
Table 22: SWOT analysis of “Voyage” agency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Agency of prestige and good reputation in Spanish tourist market (as well as Latin countries)</td>
<td>• Old fashioned system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Highly trained staff</td>
<td>• Lack of young talent that can bring an innovative perspective to the company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Big sales volume</td>
<td>• Lack of needed profiles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Good percentage (25%) of participation in the market</td>
<td>• Inadequacy in professional development of employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Apply creative marketing strategies</td>
<td>• Absence of Employer Branding tactics in order to attract new employees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Covers a vast number of worldwide destinations</td>
<td>• Retribution package is not enticing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Existence of packages addressing each niche’s needs.</td>
<td>• High cost of tour packages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• No willingness to implement changes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Standard Compensation System.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Threats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The company takes charge of bureaucratic and legal documentation for nonresidents</td>
<td>• The risk of not implementing the contemporary and upcoming trends might result in turnover and the lack of new personnel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Opportunity of prestige for people working in the company due to its name and reputation</td>
<td>• Losing position in the market due to undeveloped online strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Development of EB strategies to attract recent generations (Y &amp; Z)</td>
<td>• Risk of competition (forthcoming travel agencies with physical offices of sales)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Change of the company's culture to be updated of the current needs in the market</td>
<td>• Scarcity of flexibility to the tourism market (prices, innovation,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Improve the Comp&amp;Ben strategy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Collaboration with online companies/web-portals (air bnb, skyscanner)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own table
Chapter III - Analysis and proposals to the company

3.1. Employer branding

According to the company, its main focus is on customer satisfaction meaning that all of their commercial strategies are developed in order to ensure it. Due to the scarcity of new talents, their new goal is to work on their candidate attraction strategy. By working on that, we have identified that the best option for this company will be: build and work on Employer Branding. For “Voyage” company, having an appropriate Employer Branding strategy would enhance the attractiveness of the company and therefore enhance the employment rate of selection and retention. “Voyage” reputation is quite good, and this generates a suitable competitive advantage.

Employer branding was introduced as a concept in 1996 by Ambler and Barrow, being defined as a package of functional, economic, and psychological benefits that are provided by the employing company. It is what could be called a hybrid between human resources management and marketing, and what makes an organization distinctive and attractive for their employees. Employer branding could be analyzed through factors such as: a company’s reputation, quality of products and services, attractiveness of the sector, work environment, economic conditions, employee benefits, people and culture, work/life balance, and many more. An effective employer branding strategy can offer long-term results that include a greater competitive advantage, increased employee engagement, employee retention, stronger corporate culture and workforce diversity (Figurska & Matruska, 2013)

Employer Branding is known as “a new direction in Human Resources Management”. Every company which is not just willing to enter the market of young talents, but also to gain reputation as a powerful employer, by providing a long-term solution to human resources; has to think about developing own brand of affective employer. The employer’s brand includes two segments. The first one is visual range: an artistic image and slogans that shows the company’s strengths, corporate values; and identify its specific position on the labor market. Secondly, it is also known as a company’s policy which is related to work with young people. It is a comprehensive program within the organization, focuses on the development and adaptation of young talents/specialists. Moreover, it is significant to notice that both segments of the employer’s brand must be linked by a common idea and consistent with reality.

3.1.1 Analysis and results of the study.

The following quantitative and qualitative analysis was first intended to be conducted in order to evaluate how Voyage is perceived by its employees, and the positive and negative opinions of the company’s actual employer branding. Due to legal reasons and confidentiality clauses of the company, this was not possible. The survey was adjusted to be directed specifically to the HR department in Voyage, in order to be able to evaluate from the HR perspective, the employer branding of the company and how do they perceive it as employees.

- Demographics:

The sample was composed of nine people from Voyage’s Human Resources department. No age or gender was taken into account in the analysis, due to the fact that the study’s intent is to evaluate the HR department’s perceptions of employer branding as HR and as employees in general. Shown below, are the results gathered from this survey. It is of relevance to mention that the survey was
composed of twenty questions, but the results shown below are specifically from those more pertinent to the employer branding of Voyage.

In the left pie chart, regarding the candidate experience vs the employee experience of the respondents, 66.7% state that both experiences were similar and “good”. 11.1% of respondents affirm that both experiences were similar and “very good”, while 22.2% of the employees consider it was “neutral”.

The pie chart on the right, which refers to the evaluation of candidate experience, states that a 55.6% consider it to be “good” and a 44.4% acknowledges the experience as “very good”.

When it comes to the feeling of belonging of the employees to the company, 77.8% of respondents rate it as being as “good” and 22.2% classify it as “very good”.

44.4% of respondents state that their perception of importance of the company is “very good”. For a 33.3%, their perception is rated as “good”. Equally distributed in 11.1%, are the respondents’ perceptions of their importance to the company being as “neutral” and “bad”.
Concerning the flexibility of the company (teleworking, etc.), 44.4% of respondents estimate that the flexibility of Voyage is “bad”. 33.3% of respondents perceive it as “neutral”, and 22.2% as “very bad”.

55.6% of respondents rate the satisfaction of their co-workers and supervisors as “very good”, and 44.4% rate it as “good”.

The strongest reasons for the respondents to continue working in the company are equally distributed into 36.4% and consist in the opportunity of growth and coworkers. For 18.2% of respondents, the reputation of the company is the main reason for them to stay, and a 9.1% consider the company’s benefits to be the most crucial incentive.

Equally distributed into 30.0%, respondents state that team and family are the best concept to define the company’s culture. 20.0% affirm it to be competitive environment, and again equally distributed into 10.0%, supportive environment and goals.
When it comes to the main motivators for applying to the company, 41.7% of respondents state that opportunities of growth is the most meaningful instigator. For 33.3%, the reputation of the company was the biggest reason for them to apply. 16.7 of respondents affirm their main motivator to be to get more work experience, and for 8.3%, the company’s benefits were the most attractive reason to apply.

41.7% of respondents declare the opportunity of growth to be the most attractive element for potential candidates. In equal distribution, 25.0% state that the reputation of the company, as well as the promising work experience, are the most engaging aspects. Last but not least, an 8.3% refer the most attractive element, to be the benefits of the company (discounts, health insurance, etc).

Analyzing the internal perception of the respondents (HR department’s employees of Voyage) showed that in general, they consider the candidate experience of the company to be good. Their employee and candidate experience was perceived to be quite similar, which is a positive response regarding the questionnaire’s objectives. The feeling of belonging of the employees to the company is overall regarded as good, however some respondents of the survey claimed that their perception of importance of the company is neutral or low. When it comes to the company’s flexibility, almost half of the respondents perceive it as neutral or as very bad.

There is a high level of satisfaction from the employees, in relation to their coworkers and supervisors. The opportunity of growth and the good relationships with coworkers are considered to be the best reasons for the respondents to continue working in the company, as well as the reputation and their benefits. Opportunity of growth is also the main motivator that respondents considered to apply for the company, and the most attractive element for the potential candidates as well. Team and family are the highest rated concepts used to define the company’s culture.

Nonetheless, a second survey was implemented throughout the project which involved Ostelea School of Tourism and its students. The objective of this survey was to analyze the external employer branding of Voyage company.

- **Demographics:**

  The sample was composed by ten Ostelea’s students, and they were the target audience due to the fact that they are the potential candidates of the company.
The implemented survey was answered by students from tourism sector aged approximately from 20 to 31 (could be more than 31). Their experience in the tourism sector varied from having no experience at all (12.5% in total), to more than three years (37.5%).
The second part of the survey intended to analyze which was the preferred company of our target audience, being Ostelea’s tourism students. 60% stated that Voyage would be their preferred company, and 40% acclaimed that they would prefer B The Travel Brand (Avoris).

The main concepts that drive these applicants to apply for the job consists in their professional career plan (70%), and the rest is equally divided by 10% each: reputation of the company, salary, as well as job description (which refers to the job’s responsibilities) and diversity in the company of choice.

Overall, it may be said that Voyage holds a good reputation regarding their company as a great place to work in the tourism sector in the Spanish market. Since Voyage focus is mainly on designing a strategy in which they can enhance foreign talent attraction from Latin American and East European countries, they have to invest more in employer branding outside of the Spanish market in order to gain interest from the target audience. A practical methodology in order to implement the employer branding of a company is the ART model, which will be further explained below.

3.1.2. ART Model Methodology

To manage the process of employer branding in a company, the ART Model can be used in order to give it a thorough structure. The ART Model is a practical methodology designed by a specialist in the subject Almudena Rodriguez Tarodo, which is established on her experience of designing and managing various employer brands in several worldwide countries, as well as in a comparative analysis of international best practices. It is based on a profound analysis of the organization, and the information to work with it can be collected through the existing organization’s documentation, work sessions and active listening to understand the needs of the organization (Rodriguez, Recuero & Blasco, 2018).

The ART model consists of five steps, which are the following:

1. Define EVP.
2. Know the talent and the competitors.
3. Create a differential brand.
4. Communicate and activate the experience.
5. Evaluate its impact.

3.1.3. EVP of Voyage Company

Due to the fact that Voyage has a shortage of talent, especially commercial profiles, we would like to propose to the given company to implement the EVP (Employee Value Proposition) tool which is a part of employer branding. According, to electronic magazine “Management.ua” the deficit of skilled professionals continuous to grow; nowadays employers do not choose candidates anymore, this works opposite (when candidates choose preferable place to work). To attract those needed for the Voyage company profiles, the strengthening of their employer brand might save budget for recruitment technology such as online platforms or recruitment agencies, to make candidates want to work there. Employee Value Proposition, or EVP, will be used to indicate the competitive strengths of a position in comparison from that same job in a different company (usually the competitors). Having a strong EVP in the company, enhances the employment's brand making it an attractive place to work for the candidates (Murdock, 2018).

EVP entails five essential areas, such as: compensation, benefits, career, work environment and culture. Below are some options from what “Voyage” could start:
1. **Determine the HR strategy of the company:** By doing this, “Voyage” has to decide what they should pay more attention. Normally, when the organization/employer is just starting to work on employer branding, the first goal is to reach more skilled/qualified professionals; which is the case of “Voyage” company.

2. **Identify the target audience:** this is not about clients/customers, but about potential employees. First of all, by analyzing the company and having the interviews with the directors; there was one issue found- there is no clarity in which kind of employees is the company primarily interested in.

3. **Create key-messages of EVP:** this concept should cover all attributes that “Voyage” as an employer might offer to its candidates. Various parts and elements of motivation system, training programs, distant work, interesting business trips, joint projects with the global team (which are not present in this company). Voyage handles business in more than one country by creating global teams (relocation is not mandatory, since they can work online) - this is the opportunity to do something significant for the company. It is important to note, that all components of EVP have to be based on real needs and desires of Voyage; in given case - candidates and employees (e.g. if the target audience is young people or students, then the company should rely on those conditions that young talent will appreciate, such as: rapid career growth, flexible schedule or the chance to get permanent job before graduation). This approach might help to attract the right candidates, as well as to ensure that already hired employees are motivated and loyal. The “Voyage” company should determine what could be of interest to potential candidates, how the company is attractive to internal or external audience. Grasping exactly how “Voyage” can stand out among competitors, plays the most important role. The EVP of the company should be unique and exclusive for the sector.

4. **Selection of channels and EVP promotion tools:** here based on “Voyage” target audience, they can think about what resources they are using. These could be: social networks, articles in the media, professional communities, career websites. Voyage uses several social media outlets such as: Facebook, Instagram and career websites: Turijobs, Infojobs, LinkedIn etc., where they do not show company's EVP. It is necessary to divide the market brand and HR brand, since these concepts are not identical. According to
different online business articles such as “HR-Портал” written by Vera Solomatina (ref), it occurs that the biggest market leaders in their segments (traveling in this case) is not always attractive, however, smaller companies can have loyal employees and larger attractiveness. While preparing the material for placement in internal and external sources, it is necessary for company to clearly understand its purpose, which is to promote employer branding. Voyage can use for example, analytical articles about their systems or participation of teams or ambassadors in corporate or charity events (due to closed information, there is no possibility to give more examples/propositions). This information has to help set the company’s position as a successful player in the labor market. It is important to remember that all provided information in any way that it is presented has an impact on Employer Branding.

5. Measurement of first results: it is worth to take into account that Employer Branding is first of all the perception of the company by employees and applicants. At each step of the creation of its EVP, it is necessary to implement an analysis of its development. As each company, “Voyage” is not willing to spend much budget, so we could propose fast and priceless measurement of Employer Branding with just two metrics - 1) recognizing the “Voyage” company in the labor market and 2) its attractiveness for employees. Another way is monitoring information space; (e.g. to check what others write about “Voyage” on the Internet, or the reviews from the previous employees. They can also interview the employees during dismissal processes as the general rule while changing jobs, people will talk honestly about the company’s disadvantages or dignity. This is an appropriate way to make focus groups (the new hires from their target audience) and to implement surveys among them.

The company needs to understand that the development of employer branding is tedious and sensitive, day-to-day work, but this effort and investment are worth it. Strong employer branding contributes to the creation of an efficient employer branding system and might allow the company to achieve results that exceed their expectations.

3.1.3. “Know the talent and the competitors” of Voyage Company

Talent:

The target audience that “Voyage” is looking to attract and recruit consist in two groups mainly: young people with limited work experience (which are fundamental for those temporary positions) and highly experienced candidates but that have stopped working in the tourism sector due to a lack of opportunities. It is important to mention that there is a strong talent gap in the tourism field, and this is an issue that “Voyage” is well aware of. Most of the people who were working in the tourism sector changed to another field six to seven years ago, due to the lack of employment.

The two profiles they are searching for are: travel agents and specialists of products, both being difficult to find. For example, on Infojobs’ posts, of 700 people that apply to the job, only 6 fit the profile that the company is looking for. One of “Voyage’s” ideas consists in bringing people from other countries (such as Latin America and East Europe), and pay for their bureaucratic processes to work in the company. Latin Americans and East Europeans tend to accept the job offer, due to lower salaries in this specific sector in which they work for in their countries, as well as a higher sense of security for Latin Americans.

3.2. Benchmarking:

Below you can find the benchmarking of Voyage company in comparison to the largest travel agencies in the Spanish market and the ART model.
Main competitors: Halcón Viajes, B the travel brand, Carlson wagonlit travel.

_Halcón Viajes:_
- Second largest travel agency in the Spanish market with 1.180 millions of euros in sales in 2016. They’re a retail agency that have as a main target non corporate travelers. (Focus in B2C).
- It’s not possible to apply to a job from their main webpage: halconviajes.com, it is only possible by applying through the home company website that is: Globalia, owner of Halcón Viajes and Air Europa.
- For the position of travel agent, they look for people with two years of experience.
- Candidates can apply from Turijobs directly, on the others job portals they redirect the candidate to Halcón Viajes job portal which is different from their main website.
- They use different job portals, such as: Turijobs, Mytjobs and Jobijoba.
- Their account on LinkedIn has 12.024 followers, but they don’t have any publication of job offers. The publications are more related to marketing of tourism sector and digital transformation.
- The most easy job to find on any of the different portals is the ‘travel agent’ with publications from the different cities in which they need those travel agents.

_B The Travel Brand:_
- One of the biggest travel agencies in the market, with sales of 857 millions of euros in 2016, and belongs to Avoris a tour operator that has other brands under its name. B the Travel Brand is the retail division of Avoris (doesn’t include business trips or congress and is B2C focus).
- It has the option of “Work with us” on their website, and that link directs you to a different website called Avoris where they explain to the candidate what is the company,
their history and what do they expect from them. They also have a video explaining the kind of people they expect to work with them (a profile that likes to travel and that wants to transform the travel sector, people that have experience but that want to develop a career path with them).

- They have 10,384 followers on LinkedIn and 470 employees profiles, as well as updated job offers on their profile.
- Ávoris has a very complete profile in Infojobs where they explain who they are, and what are their brands, including a tab just for their vacancies (for all their brands, including B The Travel Brand).


Carlson Wagonlit Travel:

- It is the fourth biggest seller travel agency in Spain, with sales over 480 millions of euros in 2016 just in Spain.
- This travel agency is dedicated to business to business travels, meaning that their target market are companies and its employees.
- It is possible to access directly from their website through the option of ‘Empleos’, leading you to their career portal working globally, and lets you apply for any of their subsidiaries around the world.
- Stories of actual employees from the company and from different parts of the world are shown on career site.
- Possible to find in their website the different steps for a candidate, from the moment of application until they arrive to the onboarding process.
• They have different LinkedIn profiles for different countries, such as Italy or Egypt, but don’t have a universal account. It is easier to find job offers in LinkedIn individually, but it is not possible to find a complete profile.
• Carlson Wangolit Travel depends completely on their career website for candidates, they don’t have any offer on job portals such as Info jobs or Turijobs.

By doing this benchmarking, there was discovered that two out of the three main competitors of “Voyage” company have a clear EVP strategy, as well as clear target audience. Some of them show strong employer branding; according to HR Director of “Voyage” just 6 candidates out of approximately 700 match with company’s requirements of needed profiles.

Chapter IV - Conclusion and proposals

The tourism industry in Spain has a colossal impact on the national GDP. Tourism in Spain not only contributes to the economy, but to employment and the labor market. Consequently, the need to attract and retain talent is crucial for the business’ continuity. There is an insufficiency in qualified personnel in travel agencies due to employee turnover and lack of talent in the market, a problem that is not alien to “Voyage”. Being a remarkably hierarchical and bureaucratic Spanish organization, the company has a lack of young talent which is needed in order to offer an innovative perspective in the organization. Not only this, but there is a deficiency in the willingness to implement changes and a lack of employer branding tactics to attract and retain talent. Due to its fast expansion, they do not have the time to develop a strategy to attend this matter.

The analysis conducted was in order to evaluate how Voyage’s employees from the Human Resources department perceived the employer branding of the company. At the
At the beginning of the analysis, it was thought that there was a lack of a clear strategy of promotion or career path for candidates. Throughout the study, it was found that these employees considered the candidate experience of the company to be quite similar to the employee experience, meaning that the expectation as a candidate matched with the real work and the real benefits. Opportunity of growth, reputation, relationship with coworkers, and benefits were considered to be attractive elements to keep working in the company, as well as for potential candidates. This information is given to the candidate once they apply and have an interview, but this advantage is not exploded or taken into its full potential for possible candidates. Voyage could have a stronger impact by making more publications about its advantages in their social media networks, or creating specialized social media profiles for potential candidates. This will instantly increase the amount of people applying to the company, and will attract talent that wasn’t reached before.

Enhancing the recruitment process through employer branding and EVP, which are a new trend in Human Resources, is essential to be updated for the new generations of potential candidates and to retain those employees who already form part of the company. In behalf of the demand, we made some proposals: increase flexibility from the company to reinforce work/life balance for employees and create wellness program as a health benefit from the company to complement the EVP. In addition, we would propose to create clear job descriptions since they are currently outdated and there is a lack of accuracy between the job responsibilities, requirements and skills needed. Furthermore, the company must take into account the difficulties and cost of relocation policy, as well as the time-consuming legal procedures of foreign candidates (sponsorship, contract or any required documents from the consulate in order to get the Spanish work visa).

Investing in employer branding and EVP, not only gives the company a competitive advantage, but increments the number of potential candidates that want to work there as well as retaining the employees that already do. If there is a valuable employer branding and EVP methodology implemented in the company, there will be no need to invest in expensive attraction strategies. Having a steady employer branding of Voyage will attract talent by itself.
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