

## Defining Innovation in Tourism Development

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The need to 'innovate' and the importance of innovation in tourism to achieve a competitive edge for a country, destination or a product is always highlighted as a requirement to succeed.

In all the International Benchmarking Studies undertaken by The Stevens View Partnership the leading destinations are places where innovation was constantly taking place. This was evident in all aspects of the destinations' visitor experience.

The classic dictionary definition of innovate is ... "*to renew, alter, to introduce something new, to make changes*". Add to this "... *in order to maintain a market led, customer focused tourism offer*" and we have a useful definition of tourism innovation.

In a new book written by Paul Sloane (published by Kogan Page) ten ways to boost innovation are promoted:

- (1) Establish a **vision** and express it in an overarching statement.
- (2) Fight the fear of change by promoting the need **always to do better**.
- (3) Consider lots of proposals to **balance the risk** of losing with the upside of winning.
- (4) Encourage stakeholders to **propose new ideas**.
- (5) Challenge traditional assumptions and be prepared to **break the rules**.
- (6) Always ask **is there a better way** of doing the job.
- (7) **Collaboration** is the key.
- (8) Encourage a **culture of experimentation**.
- (9) Don't debate new ideas, test them ... **build prototypes**.
- (10) **Focus passionately** on things that have to be changed.

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