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Consider your product: review or bundle

“Working in partnership with other local attractions has enabled us to diversify our product by creating a number of joint tickets and experiences. We are fortunate to have excellent attractions The Mary Rose and Portsmouth Historic Dockyard on our doorstep. Collaborating with these partners strengthens Portsmouth’s standing as a world-class tourist destination. The benefits are passed on to our guests through joint ticket discounts.”

Tony Sammut, General Manager, Emirates Spinnaker Tower

What is a product?

Your product is the combination of ‘goods and services’ that make up the visitor experience, including the standard of your facilities and equipment, the level of service you provide and the quality of your interpretation.

An individual product will make up only part of the total travel experience for a consumer. The complete travel experience includes all the elements that a tourist consumes from the time they leave home until they return. This includes transport, accommodation, meals, attractions and activities. These may be purchased independently by the consumer or bundled into a package for sale by a tour operator, wholesaler or DMC etc.

All products should be reviewed to ensure market alignment prior to releasing rates and product information for the next season.



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What should I consider when reviewing or developing new products?

- **Market Suitability** – Does the product suit the markets that I am targeting? Look at the characteristics and product choices of the consumer from this market and is there a match? The development of your product should be guided by the type of experience your target market seeks
- **Product Tailoring** – Do I need to make product changes or enhancements to suit certain markets, as consumer tastes vary per market? Small changes to tailor-make your products can have significantly positive impacts
- **Unique selling points** – Do you still have a point of difference from your competitors? Review your Unique Selling Points
- **Product feedback** – What feedback have you received on your products? Review your customers' feedback including websites such as Trip Advisor. Have any of your customers or trade partners provided suggestions for new products or changes? What would your consumers like to see?
- **Product Pricing** – Is the product competitively priced and does it allow for all levels of commission? Is the product profitable?
- **Location** – are there attractions and facilities nearby which enhance the appeal of your product? Are you promoting the destination as well as your products?
- **Accessibility** – is your product accessible enough? Could you provide better transport links?
- **Seasonality** – are you open to coincide with peak arrivals from your target market?
- **Hours of operation** – are they regular and compatible with transport times and meet the needs of your markets?
- **Time** – how do you fit into an international itinerary? Consider providing suggested itineraries to demonstrate this
- **Information availability** – for both tourists and your distribution partners
- **Reservations** – How easy is it for consumers to book your product?
- **Sustainability** - make your business more sustainable to save money, reduce your impact and wind more customers

What is product bundling?

It is often difficult to attract international visitors to an area outside established destinations as they may have limited time and knowledge of the area. By working cooperatively with your region to promote the destination as a whole, there is a better chance that visitors will take the time to visit. If a potential visitor can see that within your local/regional area there is a plethora of attractions, day trips, activities and more, they are more likely to extend their stay, thus bringing more value to the area.

To achieve a full destination proposition, work in cooperation with local operators and create a bundle that will make your product more enticing. Bundling refers to aligning and marketing complementary products together to form compelling and unique experiences for the consumer. It helps to improve visitation through regions and increase tourist revenue through multiple suppliers offering complementary products, or via single suppliers providing services that complement their core offering. It also assists by offering a stronger commission-able proposition for distribution partners.

For example, if you were a bed and breakfast operator in an area known for its outdoor activities, you could work with other operators such as walking tours, bike hire, restaurants and attractions to provide a combined product that could offer the ultimate food and wine holiday experience.

Bundling can be done in many ways. It could be as simple as having links to other organisations' websites on your website. Or it could involve joining forces with other businesses in your region to create more substantial marketing activity and promotions. Most importantly, the key to effectively bundling your experience is to cross-promote like-minded experiences that enhance the overall visitor experience in your region.



What should I consider when bundling products?

- **Target** – Who do you want to target? What markets, who are your customers? Does this market align with your products?
- **Inclusions** – Based on your customer profiles what package inclusions would appeal to them and at what price? For example, a 'Romantic Package' for an accommodation provider could include dinner at an exclusive restaurant, or a picnic basket option, a personalised tour or spa treatment
- **Time elements** – be careful not to 'over package' and remember that some customers enjoy flexibility in their travel choices
- **Partnerships** – what specific product partners will you need? What agreements will you put in place? Ensure these are mutually agreed and confirmed by legal agreements
- **Price** – distributors might expect that the sale price would be lower based on a bundled product, due to the shared costs for promotion meaning that the need for a margin on the rate would be lower, or due to volume of services purchased
- **Branding** – Think creatively when naming your bundled product, the name must appeal to the target market
- **Promotions** – With your product partners, agree on all elements of marketing the bundled product including what promotional mediums you will use, what promotional copy and PR activities. Develop a communications strategy to consumers and trade partners, decide on what sales activity will be undertaken, what the marketing budget will be and how you will jointly review the return on your investment. These details should also be included in your agreement
- **Agreed terms of operation** – work out all the logistics with your product partners and include these in the agreement. For example: What period will the product be available, how will you price your product ensuring you allow distribution system commissions, how will the bookings be handled, what booking lead times does each component need, create a specific tour code, ensure all reservations and operations staff are cross trained on each product, ensure all legal and insurance compliances are met



Remember to consider the Package Travel and Linked Travel Arrangements Regulations 2018 when product bundling. More information can be found in the VisitEngland Pink Book: Legislation for tourist accommodation and attractions: <https://www.visitbritain.org/business-advice/know-your-legal-obligations>



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