Ways of Adapting to Covid 19 Pandemic: Prowad Link Project

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Objective and Scope

Objective: To understand how resources (social capital, parallel processes, natural capital) influence an enterprise’s ability to develop coping strategies during the Covid 19 crisis.

Scope: Focus on Small to Medium sized Enterprises (SMEs) related to the tourism industry operating within/bordering the Geirangerfjord, North Norfolk Coast / The Wash and the Wadden Sea nature protected areas.
Protected Areas

Geirangerfjord (NO)

The Wadden Sea (DE, DK, NE)

Norfolk Coast & The Wash (UK)
Descriptive statistics

• 22 in depth interviews conducted
• Businesses included hotels, hostels, activity providers, primary product manufacturers
• All businesses demonstrated strong social/cultural and environmental characteristics
• Age of interviewees ranged between 42 and 62
• Gender balance 80 % males
• Turnover ranged from £200,000 - £8,000,000.
• Staff ranged from 1 – 80
• High number of owner/managers with ownership mostly split between two individuals
Challenges for Enterprises

Government advice:
“I think having clarity is really important; vague makes everybody consider their options in different ways.”

Issues related to space:
“We have invested in a physical space with a physical location with a physical offering and that is very difficult to swap round”

Staff costs and management:
“Richard Branson said, ‘Staff are our biggest asset’ and the guy at Ryan Air said, ‘staff are our biggest liability’ I agree with both of them!”

Supply chains now / future (Brexit)
“…everything else is imported from the Netherlands, Germany Denmark and France, and I am really worried about this.”

2nd jobs and unpaid overtime
“I haven’t worked as hard at this business as I should have done because I have put my efforts elsewhere.”
Solutions Developed

Changing the product/service
“we spent the 1st week panicking; the 2nd week planning properly and changed the business around into a customer drive through at the brewery and home deliveries that has worked very well.”

“people are thinking more about adjusting their lives, connecting with nature, …so it is about making sure that what we offer ties up with the future trends.”

Targeting new customers
• Wealthier 2nd home-owners (Cheese cabaret!)

Limited space – take it outside:
• Drive throughs, Pop-up pub, Use of community spaces

Excess space
• Allowed one restaurant to increase its seating.
• Building of additional recreational areas.
Solutions and Resource Links

• Parallel processes - this switch was allowed for by wildcraft brewery producing multiple end products
• Social Capital and Natural Capital – “We have always set ourselves up as a community brewery”

Activity Company (Wellness Sails)
• Parallel processes – already engaged with free tours for vulnerable people
• Social Capital – “I have always understood that if you do something slightly different, most journalists are looking to write something interesting, so it is ideal for them”
• Natural Capital – nature heavily used to promote the offer, serene, calming environment.
What else helped?

Multiple (parallel) processes
- Businesses with multiple products or services were able to switch between them to focus on what was possible during the crisis

Government Schemes
- Financial assistance through grants
- Furloughing scheme for staff

Resource slack (space)
- Space allowed for many solutions to be implemented
Thank you

For more information on the project please go to:

https://northsearegion.eu/prowad-link/

Or contact me directly:

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