

Qualifi Level 4 Diploma

Operations Management in Tourism & Resort Operations

Level 4: Diploma in Hospitality and Tourism Management | UeCampus Study Guide



Academic Module



Study Guide



Online Learning

Course Overview

01

Tour Operator Industry Trends

Understanding digital transformation, dynamic packaging, experiential travel, sustainability, and post-pandemic changes shaping modern tour operations.

 8 Major Trends

02

Constructing & Marketing Holidays

The 10-stage process of holiday construction, contracting methods, promotional strategies, and alternative marketing approaches.

 10 Stages | 4 Contract Types

03

Resort Operations Functions & Structure

On-the-ground service delivery, customer support, safety management, and different resort office structures for various destinations.

 8 Functions | 5 Structures

04

Business Strategy Development

Key strategic areas including vision, market analysis, operations, marketing, finance, HR, risk management, and performance monitoring.

 9 Strategic Components

Learning Outcome: By completing this course, you will demonstrate comprehensive knowledge of tour operator industry trends, evaluate holiday construction processes, understand resort operations, and develop effective business strategies for tourism enterprises.

01

Tour Operator Industry Trends

Understanding the evolving landscape of tour operations in the modern tourism sector



8 Major Trends



Industry Case Studies

Recent Trends in the Tour Operator Industry

Digital Transformation

70%+ of **bookings** are now made online. Tour operators use digital platforms, apps, and AI-driven systems for bookings and customer service.

→ **Impact:** Streamlined systems, reduced physical offices, increased tech investment

Dynamic Packaging

Customers build **personalised holidays** in real-time, choosing flights, hotels, and activities based on live availability and pricing.

→ **Impact:** Requires sophisticated reservation systems and strong supplier relationships

Experiential Travel

Fastest-growing trend: Travellers seek authentic, immersive experiences—cooking classes, cultural workshops, adventure travel, and local community engagement.

→ **Impact:** Operators must research local suppliers and ensure quality standards

Sustainability Focus

Tourists are increasingly aware of environmental and social issues. Operators promote **responsible travel**, eco-friendly accommodation, and carbon offsetting.

→ **Impact:** Requires sustainability audits and ethical supplier selection

Data & Personalisation

Operators use **customer data and AI** to personalise recommendations, predict travel trends, and tailor offers to specific segments.

→ **Impact:** More targeted marketing, improved efficiency, enhanced customer satisfaction

Post-Pandemic Changes

Greater focus on safety, hygiene, flexible booking terms, smaller groups, and increased demand for domestic and nature-based travel.

→ **Impact:** Redesigned packages with safer transport and flexible cancellation policies



Key Insight: These trends collectively reshape how tour operators design products, manage supply chains, and interact with customers.

 Source: Industry Research 2024–2025

Industry Case Studies: Adapting to Change



TUI Group

World's Largest Tour Operator

Digital Transformation

Heavy investment in **mobile apps, online booking, and AI-driven support**. Travellers can book, check in, access itineraries, and communicate through a single digital platform.

Personalised Experiences

"**TUI Collection Experiences**" —small-group cultural, adventure, and wellness activities curated using customer data and delivered through local partnerships.

Sustainability Leadership

"**Better Holidays, Better World**" strategy includes reducing single-use plastics, investing in fuel-efficient aircraft, supporting marine conservation, and offering eco-certified excursions.



G Adventures

Adventure Tour Specialist

Experiential Travel Focus

Offers **homestays with Andean families, Quechua weaving workshops, and guided rainforest walks** led by Indigenous experts in Peru.

G for Good Programme

Partners with **women's cooperatives, eco-lodges, and conservation groups** to support local businesses and community projects.




Intrepid Travel

B Corp Certified Operator

Sustainability Leadership

First global tour operator to achieve B Corp certification —demonstrating commitment to ethical supply chains, fair labour, carbon reduction, and community partnerships.

 **Lesson Learned:** Successful operators combine digital innovation, personalisation, and sustainability to meet modern traveller expectations while maintaining operational efficiency.

02

Constructing & Marketing Holidays

The operational process of designing, pricing, and promoting holiday packages



10 Stages



4 Contract Types



Marketing Strategies

The 10 Stages of Holiday Construction

1 Market Research

Analyse trends, target markets, and preferences. Identify who the holiday appeals to and what competitors offer.

2 Itinerary Planning

Select destinations, choose transport, identify accommodation, and map daily activities with realistic timings.

3 Supplier Contracting

Negotiate with airlines, hotels, guides, and activity providers for rates, allotments, and service standards.

4 Costing & Pricing

Calculate total costs (transport, accommodation, meals, excursions) and add mark-up for profit to set competitive prices.

5 Risk Assessment

Assess safety risks, environmental factors, supplier reliability, and local regulations before finalising the holiday.

6 Legal Compliance

Ensure compliance with Package Travel Regulations, ATOL/ABTA bonding, insurance, and consumer protection laws.

7 Packaging

Assemble components into a single product with clear descriptions, itinerary details, and unique selling points (USPs).

8 Marketing Materials

Develop websites, brochures, social media campaigns, video content, and travel agent training materials to promote the holiday.

9 Sales & Distribution

Sell through direct online bookings, travel agencies, call centres, and third-party platforms. Provide pre-departure support.

10 Monitoring

Collect customer feedback, assess supplier performance, identify operational issues, and improve future packages.



Critical Success Factor: Each stage supports the creation of high-quality, profitable holiday experiences while ensuring competitiveness.

 Continuous Improvement Cycle

Contracting Methods in Tour Operations



Fixed Contracts

Allotment-Based

Operator purchases **fixed number of rooms/seats** for a season, paying regardless of sales.

✓ **Advantages:** Guaranteed availability, lower prices, easier planning

✗ **Disadvantages:** High financial risk, limited flexibility

🏢 **Best for:** Mass-market operators (TUI, Jet2Holidays), high-volume destinations



Free-Sale Contracts

Flexible Sales

Suppliers allow sales **until capacity is reached**. No fixed allotment pre-purchased.

✓ **Advantages:** Low risk, greater flexibility, suitable for unpredictable demand

✗ **Disadvantages:** No guaranteed availability, prices may fluctuate

👥 **Best for:** Smaller/specialist operators, boutique or seasonal operators



Allocation-on-Request

AOR Model

Operator **requests availability each time** a customer books. Supplier confirms or denies.

✓ **Advantages:** Very low financial risk, suitable for tailor-made bookings

✗ **Disadvantages:** Slower process, no guaranteed availability

📍 **Best for:** Specialist/niche operators, smaller lodges, remote destinations



Ad Hoc Contracts

On-Demand Booking

Services purchased **on a one-off basis** when needed—maximum flexibility.

✓ **Advantages:** High flexibility, perfect for personalised itineraries, no commitment

✗ **Disadvantages:** Often more expensive, availability not guaranteed

👑 **Best for:** Luxury tailor-made operators, small adventure companies, last-minute arrangements

📌 **Key Decision Factors:** Business scale, market type, destination characteristics, risk appetite, and product type all influence contracting method selection.

Promotional Strategies: Traditional vs Digital

Traditional Brochures

AIDA Principle

Awareness → **Interest** → **Desire** → **Action**. Grab attention, maintain interest, create desire, enable booking.

✓ Trusted, tangible, detailed

✗ Expensive, hard to update, limited reach

Digital Brochures

- ✓ **Easy updates** —instant price and content changes
- ✓ **Interactive** —videos, links, QR codes, 360° views
- ✓ **Global reach** —instant distribution via email, web, social
- ✓ **Cost-effective** —reduce marketing costs by up to 60%
- ✓ **Eco-friendly** —paper-free, sustainable option

Travel Websites & Portals

- ✓ Unlimited content space with detailed info and galleries
- ✓ **Instant booking** functionality with real-time pricing
- ✓ SEO improves visibility in search results
- ✓ Immediate updates and content changes

Email Marketing

- Cost-effective and targeted
- Personalised content based on data
- "Book Now" links for immediate response

Mobile Apps


- High customer engagement
- Real-time updates and alerts
- Integrated booking and support

Social Media Marketing

- ✓ **80%+ of travellers** research holidays online before booking
- ✓ Instagram, TikTok, YouTube for visual storytelling
- ✓ Two-way communication with potential customers
- ✓ **Most influential format** for 18–35 age group

Virtual Tours

- 360° videos and VR experiences
- Boost confidence for long-haul destinations
- Highly engaging and modern

 **Best Practice:** Most successful operators use a **blended approach**—combining digital tools with selective printed materials to reach diverse customer segments effectively.

03

Resort Operations Functions & Structure

Understanding on-the-ground service delivery and destination management



8 Core Functions



5 Office Structures

Functions of Resort Operations



Airport Welcome & Transfers

First point of contact—greeting guests, managing luggage, coordinating transfers, providing initial information. Sets the tone for the entire holiday.

★ Shapes first impressions



Welcome Meetings

Conducted within **first 24 hours**—providing safety info, local insights, excursion options, hotel facilities, and emergency contacts.

i Informs and reassures guests



Customer Service

Frontline support—handling complaints, liaising with hotels, resolving issues, providing personalised assistance throughout the stay.

🛡️ Protects operator reputation



Health & Safety

Conducting **safety audits** of hotels, pools, playgrounds, excursion providers. Checking hygiene, fire safety, and first-aid standards.

✓ Legal compliance & safety



Excursion Management

Revenue stream—presenting and selling excursions, coordinating guides and transport, ensuring quality and safety standards.

💰 Enhances experience & profit



Supplier Coordination

Working with **hotels, transport, restaurants, attractions**—monitoring service quality, ensuring contract compliance, managing changes.

🔗 Maintains service consistency



Crisis Management

Responding to **medical emergencies, flight cancellations, extreme weather, political unrest**—arranging alternatives, maintaining communication.

🚑 Guest safety priority



Feedback Collection

Confirming transfer times, providing departure info, **collecting satisfaction feedback** to improve future operations and products.

📈 Continuous improvement



Critical Insight: Resort representatives are often the **most influential factor** in customer satisfaction for package holidays—positive rep interactions significantly increase repeat bookings.

Reps work 6-7 days/week in peak season

Resort Office Structures



Centralised

Single main office manages operations for multiple hotels in a region. Staff travel to properties for daily visits.

- ✓ Cost-efficient, easy communication
- 📍 Best for: Malta, Madeira, small islands



Decentralised

Multiple offices across different resort areas, each managed by regional reps for faster response times.

- ✓ Faster response, strong local relationships
- 📍 Best for: Turkey, Spain, Thailand



Virtual / Digital

Support through **apps, messaging, video calls** with limited physical presence. Popular post-COVID.

- ✓ 24/7 support, cost-saving
- ✓ Reduces need for physical offices
- 📍 Best for: City breaks, multi-country tours



Hotel-Based

Reps based directly inside hotels with dedicated lobby desks for immediate on-site support.

- ✓ Immediate support, premium service
- 📍 Best for: All-inclusive resorts, Dominican Republic



Mobile / Rep-on-Road

Reps visit multiple hotels following scheduled routes without a fixed office—highly flexible.

- ✓ Cost-effective, flexible for niche operators
- 📍 Best for: Safari circuits, trekking tours

Decision Factors

- 👥 **Customer Numbers** — High volume needs multiple offices
- 🌐 **Geography & Distance** — Large regions need decentralised
- 🏨 **Product Type** — All-inclusive → hotel-based
- 💰 **Cost Considerations** — Centralised/virtual reduce costs
- 🛡️ **Safety Needs** — High-risk areas need physical presence

Blended Approach: Many operators use **mixed structures**—e.g., central office for administration + hotel-based desks for large properties + mobile reps for remote areas.

04

Business Strategy Development

Building competitive and sustainable strategies for tour operations



9 Strategic Areas



Strategic Planning

Key Areas of a Business Strategy

Vision & Mission

Clear **long-term vision** and mission defining company purpose and customer promise. Provides direction and builds brand identity.

Market Analysis

Target market segments, competitor analysis, demand trends, and SWOT analysis. Ensures strategy responds to real customer needs.

Product Strategy

Holiday packages, excursions, resort services with clear **Unique Selling Points (USPs)**. Differentiates from competitors.

Operational Strategy

Resort operations structure, **supplier management**, health & safety procedures, technology systems. Ensures smooth delivery.

Marketing Strategy

Branding approach, promotional tools (digital, social media, OTAs), pricing strategies. Drives sales and brand recognition.

Financial Strategy

Budgeting, cost control, revenue projections, pricing models, investment planning. Ensures financial stability and profitability.

HR Strategy

Recruitment and training of resort reps, guides, and staff. Performance management and professional development.

Risk & Sustainability

Health, safety, and emergency policies. Environmental sustainability measures, crisis management plans. Protects customers and business.

Monitoring & KPIs

Key Performance Indicators for sales, operations, satisfaction, and safety. Customer feedback systems for continuous improvement.



Key Takeaways for Tourism Operations

Success in tourism operations requires **continuous adaptation to industry trends**, meticulous planning in holiday construction, effective on-the-ground resort management, and strategic long-term thinking.



Adapt to Trends

Digital transformation, sustainability, and personalisation



Plan Meticulously

10 stages from research to monitoring



Manage Operations

8 functions ensuring seamless delivery



Think Strategically

9 areas for competitive advantage

By mastering these areas, future tourism professionals can deliver exceptional experiences while building sustainable, competitive businesses.

