

Qualifi Level 4 Diploma

# Operations Management in Tourism & Resort Operations

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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

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# 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.

