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Context

- 1 Tourism is one of the leading sectors in the Swiss economy, even more so in the Alps. Tourism is the epitome of an export industry, especially in French-speaking Switzerland where the proportion of foreign tourists is high. The tourism industry is one of the main export sectors in the country generating 4.7% of all export revenue in 2015 (Swiss Tourism Federation, 2017). According to the Swiss Confederation, the tourism industry must affirm its economic importance and gain market share in the Alps while acting sustainably. The Swiss Executive Cabinet's strategy for growth in domestic tourism drawn up in 2010 aims for better exploitation of tourism potential in Switzerland thereby creating employment and increasing regions' added value. The report goes on to say that seeing as how tourism products are provided in fragmented added value systems, providers must be capable of both cooperation and innovation. It is in this sense that the School of Management and Tourism through its research institutes set the objective to conceive concrete tools for stimulating cooperation through better networking which also encourages innovation.
- 2 Not only is the Swiss tourism industry fragmented from a geographical perspective, but it is also made up of small entities. Tourism providers tend to have an individualistic approach which leads them to only partially fulfill clients' expectations, with tourists

obliged to connect the dots which make up their holiday themselves. This fragmentation of tourism providers is connected to an economic activity flourishing up to present, tourism being a sector that bore the economic crisis relatively well. Additionally, customers are becoming more and more demanding in a tourism sector in which products are becoming more and more similar.

- 3 It is in this context that the School of Management and Tourism has developed and led a research project involving its institutes specialized in entrepreneurship, management, and tourism, as well as students in the DETOPS (Development of tourism products and services) module in the tourism bachelor's degree program, all the targeting regional tourism businesses and other industries as well as organizations supporting regional development. This action-research sought on the one hand to reduce the fragmentation of the tourism offer in the face of renewed competition and modes of consumption resulting from digitalization of services, and, on the other hand, to build bridges between regional tourism resources in order to refresh the offer.
- 4 This study allows for the testing of a methodology for creating projects which is conducive to coming up with ideas for projects that generate shared value for stakeholders, the environment and the community. This process is truly innovative making it possible to go beyond legal and geographical boundaries and to think in terms of client expectations. It is centered on imagining innovative products and services in the area of nocturnal tourism connecting stakeholders of two tourism regions with their clients in a spirit of bringing value to consumers as well as to the environment.

State of the art

- 5 The development of networks to support innovation is a priority of the New Regional Policy (NRP) of the Swiss federal government, just as the transfer of knowledge from networks is a priority for the new regional policy: "Networks and cooperation are the basis for regional chains of creation of added value and can be a starting point of business networks." (Regiosuisse, 2013, own translation).
- 6 At the same time, new paradigms for participation have emerged seeking to transform innovation processes, most notably *open innovation* (Chesbrough, 2006) and *crowdsourcing* (Howe, 2006). These methods constitute evolutions in techniques enabling participation and involvement of groups in the co-creation and generation of ideas, eventually leading to innovation, for businesses and project initiators. The main steps aiming to gather ideas are based on 5 steps outlined by Muhdi *et al.* (2011) (Fig. 1).

Figure 1. The five phases in the *crowdsourcing* process

Source: Muhdi *et al.* (2011, authors' translation).

- 7 These co-creation techniques invite businesses to use external knowledge and competences to accelerate their innovation processes. However, although co-creation has led organizations to conceive new ways of involving and collaborating with individuals (Kotler *et al.* 2010), the degree of collaboration varies from organization to

organization. In short, many co-creation techniques seem to be beneficial to single players.

- 8 According to Porter and Kramer (2011) the creation of shared values relies on the fact that social and environmental needs, not conventional economic needs, define markets. In addition, Kramer and Pfitzer (2016) state that businesses must collaborate with governments and NGOs, and eventually with their rivals, in order to benefit economically from social progress. Furthermore, Alberti and Giusti (2012) point out that economic *clusters* constitute regional resources supporting innovation and facilitating knowledge transfer. Following from these considerations, our applied research aims to answer the following question: **How can a tourist region be re-energized while supporting the creation of shared values?**

Methodology

- 9 The research team implemented an innovative method based on a process with two major steps. First, co-creation workshops structured around the five phases of crowdsourcing were carried out with a group of regional professionals. Alongside the workshops, surveys of the local population and tourists were used to identify an idea for a project aiming to create shared values in the region and benefiting tourists, professionals, the local population, and the environment (Table 1). A. Osterwalder and Y. Pigneur's (2010) (Fig. 2) framework for business model conception was used to transform the idea into a project.

Table 1: Method for generating ideas for a shared value project

Key crowdsourcing phases	Key tasks	Alinement of the process
1. Deliberation	1.1 Analysis of the overall crowdsourcing approach	The researchers interviewed project partners individually and then analyzed strengths and weaknesses in order to understand their innovation profile and their respective capacities. Objectives for creation of shared values were defined.
	1.2 Reflection on how problems can be handled	
	1.3 Promotion of acceptance of the method	
2. Preparation	2.1 Clarification of company expectations	Workshop 1: Analysis of interviews and summary discussions with partners.
	2.2 Definition of a question	Discussion and searching for convergence with all partners and formulation of a question and selection criteria for best results.
	2.3 Formulation of the question	Discussion about a communication plan.
	2.4 Reflection on the timing of the project and the duration of the phases	

	2.5 Definition of selection criteria for ideas	
	2.6 Allocation of internal resources	
	2.7 Reflection of useful strategies for increasing participation	
3. Execution	3.1 Grouping ideas	Idea collection 1 (<i>Crowdsourcing</i>): This first idea collection campaign was closed to the public and gathered only partners' ideas.
	3.2 Communication with the community	Idea collection 2 (<i>Crowdsourcing</i>): The second round of idea collection was open to the public. People were asked to propose new ideas and to evaluate the ideas presented on the online platform.
4. Validation	4.1 Choice of instruments for idea selection	The partners, the public and the researchers evaluated the ideas.
	4.2 Definition of a ranking strategy	Workshop 2: The partners evaluated the ideas and chose the best ideas relative to their estimated economic value.
	4.3 Rewarding best ideas	The partners rewarded the winner.
5. Application	5.1 Interpretation of results and planning of implementation	Workshop 3: Guided by the researchers, the partners conceived a business model and an empathy map with the customer segments.
	5.2 Management of side effects	

Source: Adapted from Grèzes *et al.* (2016, authors' translation).

10 Next, students in the DETOPS module applied a method for service conception (Fragnière *et al.*, 2012) over the semester and developed service proposals for a shared value project. This method relies on the following four phases:

1. An ethnographic approach including observation of and interviews with stakeholders in order to understand the needs and expectations of all;
2. Modeling of service and relational processes of those involved in the project: writing of a script and scenarios in order to make the attributes of imagined services tangible;
3. Prototyping of services and their testing in theatrical presentations which served to role play services and to test their adequacy and feasibility in real situations;
4. The development of operational modes and integration *in situ*.

Principal results

- 11 Initially, the crowdsourcing phases collected 65 ideas from professionals and private individuals (residents, tourists and day trippers). In a second phase, professionals, local residents and tourists selected the project to develop a star park in the commune in order to strengthen environmental protection while offering visitors a unique experience. The principle of this project is to switch off public lighting at certain times of the night to make it easier for people to observe stars from villages. These itinerant events will be organised in the various villages of the selected communes, namely Anniviers, and will be combined with new services (animations, catering, transport, information and security) to boost local economic activity.
- 12 The peripheral location of the central Valais region in Switzerland and the relative remoteness of the localities concerned make it possible to envisage high quality night sky darkness. The location is ideal for this: the administrative territory is also one of the largest in Switzerland¹.

Discussion

- 13 We will present considerations concerning the stance of the project in a historical context in order to examine its innovative character, then we will present reflections related to the economic, social and ecological effects of this project.

Historical considerations

- 14 Some two centuries ago, we were still living by the rhythm of the sun and the seasons. Night reigned and people went to bed early. Given the near-absolute absence of light on roads, paths and streets, it was preferable not to travel at night, both for identification and safety reasons or by means of a torch or lantern.
- 15 Man has always struggled with the dark, but the means at his disposal have long been very modest. Attempts were first made in cities and towns using torches, lights and oil lamps. In this way, key points were illuminated and, strictly speaking, brought to light. And, as Anne Cauquelin asserts, “it suffices (...) that a place be enlightened for it to attain existence” (1977, 23, own translation). A major breakthrough was achieved with the use of gas lighting (initially coal gas), first in the English and American urban centres as early as the first half of the 19th century (in Switzerland, 1843 in Bern, 1844 in Geneva, 1856 in Zurich [Illi, 2011]), which did not fail to contribute to the emergence of night-time entertainment (Savoy, 1844 in Geneva, 1856 in Zurich [Illi, 2011]). A much greater impact was brought about by the arrival of electricity, and this was decidedly so from about 1880 onwards. Thus, the first international electricity exhibition in Paris was held in 1881 (Savoy, 1987). Electric lighting started in towns and cities to gradually gain access to mountainous areas (picture 1), which are of interest to us here, but it should be noted that tourist regions, both in the lowlands and in the mountains, have often been pioneers in this field. Most often thanks to the initiative of technophile and intrepid actors.

Picture 1. Electricians on an electric pole. Törbel (Valais), approx. 1940-1950

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- 16 It would be exciting to address the impact electrification has had over time on collective perceptions, representations and behaviours in mountain tourist zones. For example, by using methods of oral history, as Florian Blumer-Onofri did for the Swiss semi-canton of Basel-Landschaft during the period 1900-1960. This author not only tackled the technification of everyday life but also, even more originally, the trivialization of technology, in this case electricity, from a cultural perspective (Blumer-Onofri, 1994).
- 17 Electric lighting was only gradually imposed, first by arc lamps (invented in 1841, London and Paris in 1850) and then by filament lamps (invented in 1854). It was initially an occasional object of curiosity and entertainment during exhibitions, fairs and other patriotic celebrations. Arc lighting was first used in Switzerland in September 1877 at an agricultural exhibition in Fribourg (Savoy, 1987). A second and highly expensive Jablochkoff-style arched lighting system was a hit at the Engadiner Kulm Hotel in St. Moritz in 1878-1879, thanks to the initiative of hotel owner Johannes Badrutt, after visiting the Paris World Expo in 1878. Badrutt had a pronounced taste for innovation and expected a favourable publicity impact from his initiative. Electricity generated by a turbine driven by a cascade made it possible to light up the hall, dining room, kitchen and an adjoining lounge (Savoy, 1987). It was only later on that permanent lighting installations appeared in shops and some prestigious establishments.
- 18 In the next phase, electric street lighting was installed once the necessary investments had been found and the inhabitants were reassured by this novelty beyond the comprehension of the uninitiated. The presence of a transition phase during which gas lighting and electric light (arc lamps or light bulbs) may also have delayed the

appearance of electric streetlights. It was not until much later that electric lighting became almost universal in private homes after having invested those of wealthy and modernising actors open to technical innovation. Tourist resorts were among the first sites to light up their streets with the help of the “electrical fairy”, under the banner of Leukerbad and Davos since 1889 (Savoy, 1987), and Zermatt since 1892. Initially, the presence of electric lighting was limited to a few isolated points (Blumer-Onofri, 1994), including in the cities and destinations frequented by visitors, which would primarily illuminate emblematic monuments and places of tourist interest. To paraphrase Cauquelin, “[touristic] enhancement implies [touristic and hence economic] exploitation” (1977, 43, own translation).

- 19 In order to enable the diffusion of electricity, hydroelectric power stations were gradually set up here and there, generally thanks to private initiatives, starting with tourist areas (Lucerne in 1886, Lake Geneva Riviera in 1887) (Savoy, 1987). As Savoy (1987) asserts, there is a clear and strong link between holiday resorts and electric lighting through the installation of power plants or, in the case of favourable location close to a waterfall or a watercourse that can be exploited (picture 2), before the development of remote transmission of electric current which makes it possible to ignore geographical constraints. By illuminating historical monuments or geosites, some tourism actors did not hesitate to set up “sounds and lights” even before the term was coined, such as at the Rhine Falls, Schaffhausen, 1887, or the Devil’s Bridge at the Schöllenen Gorge, at Uri, in 1897, in order to “retain foreigners” (Savoy, 1987). More recent lighting projects were the subject of controversy and sometimes not carried out, such as that planned on the Matterhorn in 1988.

Picture 2. Transporting a generator. Bramois (Valais), 1914

© Charles Krebsner, Médiathèque Valais – Martigny.

- 20 In Switzerland, an advanced country and one of the “most electrified countries in the world” (Paquier, 2010, own translation), electric light was imposed at the expense of gas lighting with the appearance of metal filament bulbs at the beginning of the 20th century, but also the outbreak of the First World War and the resulting increasing difficulties in fossil fuel imports (rationalization and price increases) (Savoy, 1987). Subsequently, and for reasons of accessibility and lower costs, hydropower also favoured this transition, as did the practical aspects of electric light (glare, regularity of brightness, simplicity and cleanliness). In the 1920s, the majority of Swiss cities owned a public electric lighting system (Savoy, 1987). The profusion of light as we know it today is, after all, even more recent and can be traced back to the aftermath of what Savoy (1987) calls the “habituation phase” to electricity and the emergence of the mass consumption society. To the extent that electric lighting nowadays plays an essential role in terms of the playful and consuming dimensions of the “night city”. Latter is increasingly invested by the advertising and economic sphere to the point where, as Anne Cauquelin has brilliantly shown, lighting “expresses” the commercial structure of the daytime city” (Cauquelin, 1977, 34, own translation). Without forgetting that electricity in general also has an impact on production by extending working days (Savoy, 1987) by freeing us from biological and organic rhythms.
- 21 Nowadays, in an increasingly competitive world, tourist destinations want to distinguish themselves from others at all costs. On the other hand, tourism demand is increasingly segmented, particularly in the wake of the development of the Internet. There is therefore a growing demand for atypical offers, such as those linked to night tourism, for example “stargazing tourism” or “star parks”. Scientific studies showing the negative impact of artificial light on the circadian rhythm of animals, including humans, have led to proposals to limit the power of public lighting and even to restrict its daily running time. Many people feel the same need, especially since the “conquest of the night” - made possible by artificial lighting - contributes to the increase in stress that some people feel. From the very beginning of electrification, have we not talked about “electrical life” or used the term electricity as synonymous with “liberating progress” as well as “speed”? (Savoy, 1987). This makes the new offers of dark sky tourism even more relevant.

Economic considerations

- 22 The following illustration (Fig. 2) represents the business model co-created by the professionals involved in the project, following the ideas proposed by the population contacted during the crowdsourcing process. For visitors, this project would provide a new experience by creating a darkness reserve that would become an ideal place to observe the sky. For the commune, the project would strengthen local skills by incorporating best practices in energy saving. This business model is based on the development of local resources: dark spaces (due to the location in a narrow valley), a local astronomical observatory, local specialists (e.g. an astronomer), and communication reinforced by regional marketing authorities and specialized labels.
- 23 Built on these capabilities, the business model in question proposes values of sky and star discovery and experiences (astronomic discoveries, local products, novel activities related to silence, nocturnal concerts) for a varied audience (e.g. tourists, families, the elderly and the active). Visitor experience will be enhanced through the provision of

weekly sky charts while their distribution could be developed with partners (scientific camps, public transport, craftsmen and local associations). During this design phase of the project, the revenue flows and cost structure elements were not addressed due to the limited time available at the workshops and the necessary distribution of income according to the respective involvement of each partner in the future.

Figure 2: Business model of the Star Park

Source: Authors data

- 24 The expected economic effects are mainly based on the bundled and combined offers of local products and services during the creation of the Star Park, in an itinerant manner rotating on a monthly basis, in the various villages of the valley.
- 25 The energy balance linked to consumption, particularly of electricity, induced by the new products and services developed to strengthen the basic sky observation offer will enable an estimate of the overall cost and energy savings of the project. This could help to provide documented examples to other communes (municipalities) wishing to adopt the project in order to achieve energy savings or even budgetary savings linked to the reduction of electricity consumption. Finally, the aim is to create an example of good practice that can be adapted to other interested regions and municipalities.
- 26 Similar examples of success, particularly in France, are quite numerous. The concept has a tendency to develop and spread due to the energy savings observed by the communes and the attractiveness of the concept for the local population and visitors. In 2015, 202 French municipalities, in 61 departments, were labelled "Star villages and cities" by ANPCEN. A sign informs visitors at the village entrance of the commune's efforts by awarding one star per year of participation in the program. This label allows guests to learn about the ecological practices and involvement of the visited site in an astronomical, tourist and environmental project.
- 27 Other experiences around the world were identified²³⁴⁵ and recommendations for developing dark reserves were made⁶⁷⁸. However, the state of the art reveals very little research produced on the theme of night-time activities creating shared value, a fortiori in terms of environmental protection and energy savings. It must be noted that most literature still focuses on the investigation of the night as a continuation of

daytime activities, or focuses on the classic nightlife activities such as festivals or outdoor discotheques.

Social considerations

- 28 The proposal of a star park aims to create links between professional actors by creating an event allowing to offer products and services to a renewed clientele. On the other hand, it is also a question of involving the population in this activity by creating a place and an opportunity to meet in the nature during an exceptional and unusual event.
- 29 In addition, the DETOPS training students laid the foundations for new relations between players by carrying out observations and interviews with potential partners, particularly in the fields of transport, ticketing, hosting various events to complete the star observation offer, catering, and post-event activities. These actions make it possible to forge new or renewed links between stakeholders in the context of this new event. An opportunity is thus also given to the multiplication and strengthening of tourist encounters between inhabitants and visitors, which, in addition to purely environmental considerations, is also important for achieving genuine sustainable tourism.

Environmental considerations

- 30 The expected environmental effects are mainly based on the reduction of light pollution and energy consumption. Indeed, while the reduction of energy consumption is relatively well accepted among the population, at least in terms of discourse, the reduction of light pollution still seems to require awareness-raising actions. The effects of light pollution on flora and fauna are still relatively unknown to the general public, despite awareness campaigns by organizations such as the associations *Ciel Noir*⁹ and *Lamper*¹⁰. In addition, this topic is part of the considerations of the Swiss Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN)¹¹.
- 31 Two images taken from the sky were able to identify the potential for reducing light pollution: one during a normal event and the other when the lights were turned off at the location of the "Star Park" (Fig. 3-4).

Figure 3: Normal lighting conditions

Source: Author's data.

Figure 4 : Reduced lighting conditions

Source: Authors data.

Conclusion

- 32 Overall, the project and its preliminary results were generally welcomed. The implementation of the park was scheduled for July 2017, but weather conditions prevented the first planned observation from being carried out. The main actors involved, i.e. those responsible for the regional astronomical observatory and the municipal representatives for tourism affairs are, however, enthusiastic about the project, and we have no doubt that the park will be able to see the light of day in the near future.
- 33 The main limitations and difficulties encountered so far in carrying out this project are the identification of leadership outside the research team, a digital and physical

backbone to coordinate the different stakeholders, as well as the establishment of a common agenda and a system for measuring results.

- 34 Further research will focus on the measurement of the economic impacts of switching-off the lights with the support of the Federal Office for the Environment and the Swiss Federal Office of Energy (SFOE). The process used to generate the project idea proposing the creation of shared values can also be replicated in other situations and applied to other problems.

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NOTES

1. The commune of Anniviers has a surface area of 253 km² and is one of the four largest municipalities in Switzerland. This territory has a low population density (11 inhabitants per km²), which generates relatively little light pollution. Moreover, the topography of the region is protected from light pollution: the Val d' Anniviers is a valley surrounded by high mountains. The valley is close to population bases such as the Vallon de Réchy and the towns of Sierre, Sion, Visp and Brig.
2. Lights out in Sydney (Australia): <http://www.24matins.fr/topnews/une-heure-pour-la-planete-extinction-des-feux-a-sydney-et-en-asie-299525>
3. Lights out in Normandy (France): <http://www.paris-normandie.fr/nature/en-normandie-des-villes-eteignent-la-lumiere-pour-voir-les-etoiles-BF6263605>
4. Competition for the “Villes et villages étoilés” label awarded by the National Association for the Protection of the Sky and the Environment at Night (ANPCEN): http://www.anpcen.fr/index.php?id_rub=19
5. Mont Mégantic International Dark Sky Reserve: <http://ricemm.org/reserve-de-ciel-etoile/>
6. Swiss Agency for Energy Efficiency: http://www.topstreetlight.ch/francais/home_fr.html
7. National Association for the Protection of the Sky and the Environment at Night (ANPCEN): http://www.anpcen.fr/index.php?id_rub=&id_ss_rub
8. National Association for the Protection of the Sky and the Environment at Night (ANPCEN): http://www.anpcen.fr/docs/20160207215004_st8ba7_doc187.pdf
9. International Dark-Sky Association: <http://www.darksky.org>
10. Swiss Agency for the Protection of the Night Environment: lamper.ch
11. Swiss Federal Office for the Environment: <http://www.bafu.admin.ch/lumiere>

ABSTRACTS

The Val d'Anniviers, a relatively peripheral valley in the Valais Alps has been at the heart of an applied research project seeking to reinvigorate its tourism. In fact, the School of Management and Tourism in Sierre via its Entrepreneurship, Management and Tourism Research Institutes, has set into motion a process of co-creation bringing together institutional, economic and tourism actors from the region enabling the conception of a novel tourism offer which could be of interest to part of the potential clientele. The product, the creation of the "Star Park", is a likely candidate for success thanks not only to a location and a topography conducive to star gazing but also thanks to the presence of the village of St. Luc situated in the same valley, as well as an observatory and a trail of the planets which reproduces the solar system on a human scale. What is more, there is a clearly increasing demand at present for original products involving deceleration, stresslessness and going back to nature, all trends which are to be found in the proposed starry sky offer which aims to facilitate star gazing by reducing light pollution. This article presents the methodology used in this co-creation process within its historical, economic, social, and environmental contexts so that it may be reproduced elsewhere with regard for local conditions.

INDEX

Keywords: Swiss Alps, electrification, touristification, night tourism, co-creation of shared values

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