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**COMBINING BUSINESS AND LEISURE – INTRODUCING THE TOUR AND
TRAINING PROGRAM FOR THE PRIME SPANISH FOOTBALL LEAGUE TEAMS**

Thesis

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<p>The purpose of writing the present thesis is to expand the business of the commissioning party Across Spain Ltd and to extend the customer market share of the company by developing an exclusive program for the team players of the Prime Spanish Football League. The program combines leisure and professional training facilities in order to meet the needs and wants of business customers.</p> <p>To define the best possible elements of the program and identify the customers together with their behaviour and expectations concerning the product, theoretical and qualitative researches were performed.</p> <p>The theoretical research defined strategies and directions of the commissioning company's future growth; analysed the business customers as well as the final ones; customers' features influencing the decision-making process and the stages of this process.</p> <p>In order to develop the product which can meet the customers' requirements, the qualitative research among the managers of the commissioning party was performed and analysed.</p> <p>Based on the information, received after analysing the research outcomes, the final program was developed.</p> <p>In the conclusion the outcomes of the work were analysed and suggestions to the commissioning party concerning the product's future promotion and distribution were given.</p>	
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PREFACE

I would like to say that I am very grateful to my mother, family and friends who always support me.

Special thanks and the very best regards to my coordinator and supervising teacher – Peter Stricker, who was teaching and helping me and my group mates during all these years of studying in Kajaani. Thank you for all the attention, efforts, time, open mindedness and patience.

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CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION.....	4
1.1. Aim of the thesis	4
1.2. Structure of the thesis.....	5
2. SPORT TOURISM.....	6
2.1. Introduction	6
2.2. Defining sport tourism type	6
3. ACROSS SPAIN	8
3.1. Business overview	8
3.2. Sport tourism in Spain.....	9
3.3. New product implementation	9
4. PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT	11
4.1. Developing growth strategies and diversification growth.....	11
4.2. Benchmarking.....	12
4.3. Business market target group analysis.....	13
4.3.1. Decision-making process	14
4.3.2. Influences on business buyer behaviour.....	15
4.3.3. The final customers.....	17
5. METHODOLOGY.....	18
5.1. Research aims and objectives	18
5.2. Data collection methods	18
5.3. Reliability and validity.....	19
6. RESEARCH OUTCOMES.....	21
6.1. Background of the survey	21
6.2. Analysis of the survey results.....	21
7. DEVELOPMENT PROCESS	24
7.1. Description of the facilities.....	24
7.1.1. Olivia Nova Resort	24
7.1.2. Teambuilding activities and attractions.....	25
7.1.3. Transportation	26
7.2. Preliminary program development	27
8. CONCLUSION	28

REFERENCES..... 31

APPENDIXES 33

 Appendix 1.Survey Questions & Answers..... 33

 Appendix 2.Preliminary Tour & Training Program 36

 Appendix 3.Tour & Training Program..... 38

 Appendix 4. Tour Cost Calculations..... 40

 Appendix 5. Junior Training Program of Across Spain..... 42

1. INTRODUCTION

The idea and base for the thesis project were formed during the internship period in the hosting tourism company – travel agency “Across Spain”, Barcelona, Spain. Core business of “Across Spain” occupies good position in the market. Company mainly works business-to-business with the outbound agencies. In the mentioned company, the author worked as the sales and marketing manager’s assistant, taking the part in sport events organization.

Purpose of the present work is to develop a tour product in Spain for specific target market along with the qualitative research. The mentioned organization previously has developed tour products that were presenting the passive side of sport tourism, connected with football. And the services suggested to the opposite side – to the sportsmen, were existing, but reduced. Nowadays the agency is organizing training programs combined with tourism, but for a limited amount of target auditoriums – for junior and amateur football teams.

Across Spain agency works successfully on its market share. However author believes that adding sport tour product for more specific target group could become a beneficial and attractive addition.

1.1. Aim of the thesis

The aim of the present thesis is to develop a unique and flexible tour package for specific target group in order to propose to the commissioning party an additional option that may be of interest for their clients. The certain flexibility is provided by readiness to adapt the program to the client’s requests, by the promptitude abilities of the staff.

The potential customers are requesting services from the company on and off (depending on the training season, can be few times a year). That gives to managers an opportunity of informing customers about these additional tour suggestions which can be organized for them.

The final product developed in the present thesis aims to diversify the business offer of the commissioning company and give them a tool to attract rare customers with new and exclusive services.

1.2. Structure of the thesis

The present work is composed of seven chapters. The first chapter reveals the purpose and aims of the thesis, shortly explains the idea of it, how the idea was formed and on which background it is based.

Second chapter describes the meaning of sport tourism in Spain and gives a theoretical background which defines the tourism type for the program development.

Third chapter is devoted to the commissioning party of the present thesis and explains the core the company's business and its directions. Moreover it explains the implementation of the new product in the company's business, and shows the meaning and value of tourism in Spain.

Fourth chapter explains the background for the product development of the thesis, its developing strategies and benchmarking issue together with the analysis of the potential business buyers and description of the final customers.

Fifth chapter displays the methodology of the thesis by presenting the final consumers of the product, aims and objectives of the research, the methods for the data collection. Further follows the issues of reliability and validity which are significant for the correct and reliable research results.

Sixth chapter discovers the research background and the analysis of the research results, which were collected from the respondents.

Seventh chapter provides the description of facilities that are included in the thesis final product and analysis of research results influencing the program's contents.

Conclusion contains the summary of the work done and defines research outcomes issued the thesis work; presents the author's opinion and derivation about the results of the work and possibilities of the project future implementation.

2. SPORT TOURISM

The present chapter observes sport tourism and its issues in an everyday environment. In the second part of the chapter the sport tourism type is defined. The table of Standeven and Knop (1999) is given as a visual explanation of the distinction, where the author emphasizes the appropriate sport tourism type.

2.1. Introduction

Sport nowadays is one of the most important issues in the world economy, development and great interest of many people. According to Weed and Bull (2004, p.12), “Sport and travel became central aspects of people’s life”. The growing interest in passive and active sport activities identifies the new century. “Sport and tourism have been directly impacted by globalization and in many ways the growth of sport tourism is an outcome of these processes” (Higham and Hinch, 2009, 34). Therefore in the present time it is a difficult task to find a destination without the facilities for sport and sport-related activities. The issue of personal and professional sport mobility around the globe is growing every year and infrastructure along with the tour offers in relation with the sport and sport facilities is growing accordingly.

Furthermore, sport in many destinations contributes to tourism by attracting sportsmen and tourists interested in sport event from all over the globe. Nowadays due to the globalization, development of transportation and infrastructure many people have a chance to participate actively or passively in their favourite sport activities. Even it is far from their home and usual environment (Higham and Hinch, 2009, 34).

2.2. Defining sport tourism type

The important issue is to define the type of the sport tour program. And that is done with the help of “Sport tourism” by Standeven and Knop (1999). As a visual example for classification the sport type, serves Table 1.

As described in Table 1, tourism relevant to sport can be divided into two main categories – business and holiday tourism. In the case of the present thesis author concludes that the program is

related to the business active sport type. Because sportsmen do not look for any vacations, they are interested in the active sport participation – in professionally organized trainings.

However if the table could be modified to contain description of business sport tourism too, it could be defined that the project is devoted to the single (football) business sport activity. The clients here – Prime League teams, are experiencing the professional business training week with the few added leisure tourism activities.

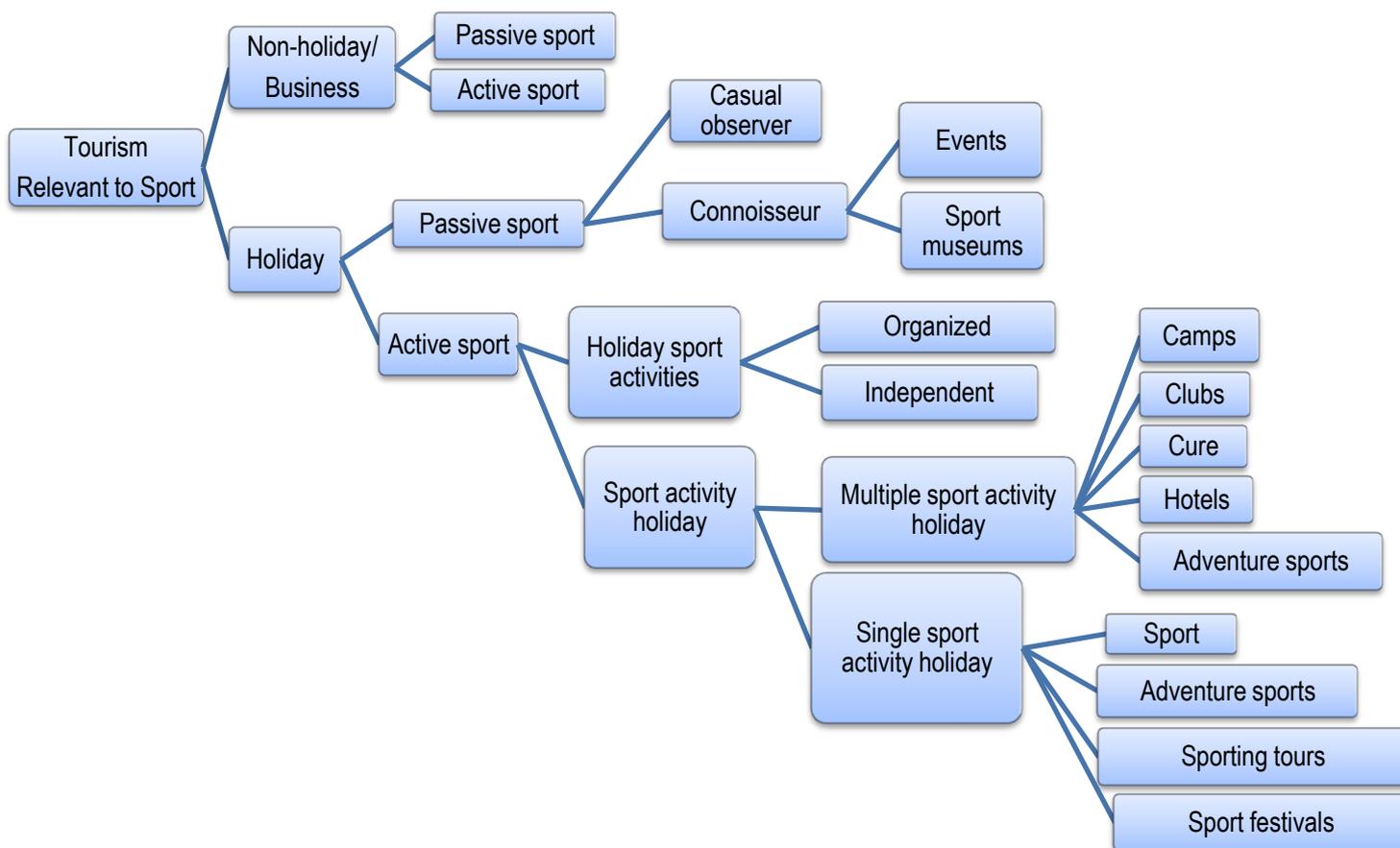


Table 1. Types of Sport tourism (Standeven, Knop, 1999); emphasis by the author.

3. ACROSS SPAIN

In this chapter commissioning party of the thesis and its business is described. Further is discussed the importance of sport and tourism in Spain, what affect the business of tour agencies, who work with domestic tour organisations. After that issues of the product implementation in the current business of the commissioning company are presented.

3.1. Business overview

Across Spain travel agency, where the author had the practical training is a wholesale retail licensed travel agency specialized in corporate and leisure travel.

Company was created in 2004 by professionals devoted to developing Spain as a tourism destination. Main distribution markets of the company are Europe, Russia, Australia, China, India, South America and South Africa. Main market areas are Spain and Portugal. However company also organizes tours to Morocco and Andorra, where it has good cooperation with the local tourism companies, who are responsible for services on the spot (Across Spain, 2011).

Main values of the organization include quality (as a core value) of provided services and meticulous selection of the local partners along with the thorough monitoring of services required. Other main values include sustainability of services to internal processes of the company; corporate social responsibility (awareness of community concerns), collaboration with UNICEF, Food Bank of Madrid, ACNUR, etc. More than that, company is also concerned on fostering the local products and services in responsible way; keeping and preserving original roots of local communities and cultures (Across Spain, 2011).

Working with constant customers and reliable partners, Across Spain nevertheless has a good distribution system. Advertisement is performed through the company's web page, as well as on such networks like Facebook, YouTube, Twitter (Across Spain, 2011).

Organization has two offices – in Barcelona and Madrid, the total amount of staff working is 14. The head of the company is Ignacio Grijalvo, co-directors are Marta Rios and Gemma Calsina (Across Spain, 2011).

3.2. Sport tourism in Spain

Spain for over few years is one of the most popular tourism destinations. Many tourists within the last years chose Spain as their tour destination (European Commission, 2014).

Spanish tour companies suggest to the visitors numerous kinds of sports together with the sufficient level of the infrastructure and facilities for organizing sport activities and events.

“Despite the harsh economic crisis – mostly affecting domestic spending capacity – tourism continues to contribute substantially to the Spanish Economy” states UNWTO (World Tourism Organisation, 2014).

The Spanish government considers tour sector to be one of the strongest economy drivers and main strategic direction of the economic growth in agenda plan of 2012-2015. And sport-based tourism was identified between the products that deserve special investment in view of their potential to increase revenues of the sector (World Tourism Organisation, 2014).

According to the WTTC (World Travel & Tourism Council) Spain was the most popular tourism destination in 2013 and left behind other strongest competitors on this field – Italy and France. This reflects as well the wider tourism impact in the economic issues and also implies greater spending on the further development of the sport facilities for national and international sportsmen (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2014).

Total amount of the government investments in sport reached 454.7 million euros in 2012. Mainly these investigations are directed at maintaining the competitions and activities of sport federations, the construction and management of various facilities for sport, development of the sport promotion programs (Hallmann & Petry, 2013, 155).

3.3. New product implementation

A new product for the commissioning organization will be formed on the base of one of the company’s core product lines. The new product to be implemented – Prime League Teams training program combined with holiday, aims to become an ascent from the basic level of the company and its usual core. And make a difference from the agency’s facilitative products - organizing leisure and business trips, training programs for football junior players (Appendix 5, 42) and amateurs (Kotler, Bowen & Makens, 2006, 304).

The new product to be implemented is becoming a product with the combination of facilitative and supporting products. The basic program offered will consist of the core product and include a number of supporting products as well as facilitating ones. By supportive products are understood such services that offer an added value. These services make the core product become more attractive and gain extra attention of the potential customers. Supporting products aim to create a competitive advantage, however for that they should be properly organized and implemented to meet and exceed the customers' expectations and wishes. On the example of the present topic supporting products are the facilities offered to guests by the training center for their leisure time or optional facilities which can be included in the program on the buyer's request (Kotler, Bowen & Makens, 2006, 305).

By the core product line taken for development and upgrading understood the company's great experience and frequency in organizing training programs for junior and amateur football teams in Valencia and Barcelona. By adding supportive products like exclusive excursions and teambuilding activities, along with the upgrading of the standard facilities, there is produced another kind of product for the specific target business market (Kotler, Bowen & Makens, 2006, 304).

4. PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

This chapter analyses the growth strategies for the company's business and its opportunities for future growth. Also, the chapter defines benchmarking elements of the growth and presents the target group analysis. The chapter describes main steps in decision-making process of customers and factors, influencing the buying behaviour. Further the overview of the product's final customers is given.

4.1. Developing growth strategies and diversification growth

The present work is devoted to the business of Across Spain, and it follows as the consequence of the old and known product raised on the higher level of services and facilities offered. Therefore, the new product is composed of other kinds of the similar constituents and appeals to another specific niche and category of the market.

The company has experience in organizing football packages for the junior football teams (Appendix 5, 42) and is offering the training programs combined with leisure tourism activities, like sightseeing and visiting tourist attractions. In promoting and organizing these kinds of services, the company gained certain success and reputation.

However in order to gain the attention of another category of clients – the professional teams of Prime Spanish League – the services and facilities are to be modified and raised on another level, together with compiling the itinerary that suits the best.

Finding out the way to widen the business share and attract this kind of clients by developing the product arisen from the current business is the goal the company should acquire.

Table 2 shows the marketing structure for achieving profitable business growth by evaluating and selecting future opportunities and applying strategies to achieve them.

This framework can be implemented on the basis of Across Spain agency, where responsible managers take in consideration the current markets and product (training programs for amateurs and junior teams) and identify that by moderating these products into the synergetic trade line with the new and upgraded facilities and services, they potentially can attract other group of customers – Prime League teams' managers. Therefore, the bigger market share can be gained.

	Existing products	New products
Existing markets	market penetration	product development
New markets	market development	Diversification

Table 2. Product-market expansion grid (Kotler, Bowen & Makens, 2006)

For the further expansion of the company's business there should follow the diversification growth. It will help to find opportunities for business growth and development outside the current business area. Looking through Across Spain travel company, which has a mix of business strength, makes sales profit and succeeds to attract many customers, can be concluded that the use of diversification growth methods may be a good opportunity to rise the income and attract more valuable customers (Kotler, Bowen & Makens, 2006, 88).

The suitable type of diversification for Across Spain is "concentric diversification strategy". This strategy applies when the company seeks for new products, which have similar basics like the old ones, but become moderated and adapted for the new group of customers (Kotler, Bowen & Makens, 2006, 88).

Concerning the present organization it can be applied to the tour programs that Across Spain has developed for the junior and amateur football teams. By upgrading the level of facilities and adding the services which make a significant difference in the level and specification of the product, the new customers – teams of the Prime Spanish League, become a new target group.

4.2. Benchmarking

Looking through the development and diversification concepts is possible to capture the features of benchmarking.

Benchmarking is "a process by which one measures and compares the performance of one entity against another" state Chaman & Malehorn (2006, 16).

In other words, the standard approach here is set against the improvements that can be performed.

Across Spain, while organising training programs for juniors and amateur was also providing certain booking services for some of the Prime League teams. And According to Palmer (2001, 220) "The

nature of customers' quality expectations in other similar service industries can be a useful source of information for managers". It means that the company's benefit will be to use their managers' knowledge about the customers in the new product line.

Many common traits and dimensions through the product lines can be applied to the services in general – courteous and competitive staff; pleasant environment, suitable for the specific leisure and training needs; high level of services, etc. Therefore, it can be advantageous to investigate the nature of service provision in the areas that have a close relation in between, and draw upon the findings of the thesis research (Palmer, 2001, 220).

The level on which the benchmarking is taken place in relation with Across Spain current business projects is called "functional benchmarking". "Functional benchmarking" applies when there arises the task to compare some functions of the company with the best practice (Palmer, 2001, 220).

In the current study case it implies to comparison of two product lines of the company – booking services for the teams of Prime League and tour and trainings organisation for juniors or amateurs.

4.3. Business market target group analysis

For better understanding the business buyers with whom the company is going to cooperate with the aim to promote and sell the product, there is composed the business analysis and analysis of the business buying behaviour.

The business market occupies entirely different market share than the consumer market, therefore in purpose to build an effective analysis different models and systems should be used.

Business market can be characterized as a market, where various organizations are making their purchases (services or goods) of the productions and services supplied by other companies (Kotler, 2000, 192).

Business market and consumer market have a number of differences between each other. For instance, business markets usually deal with the reduced amount of buyers. Though the importance of these buyers as well as the volume and the complicity of their purchase, is normally bigger. The organizational buyers often spend large sums of money, require complex technological features, interactions between many people at different organisational levels, economic considerations. These characteristics provide close supplier-customer relationship, whereas suppliers often moderate their

offers in accordance to the customer's needs and preferences (Kotler, 2000, 192), (Kotler, Bowen & Makens, 2006, 234).

Across Spain remains strong and beneficial position on the business market by working with many corporate organizations in tour organisation for their stakeholders, managers and staff. That is an advantage which gives the confidence of the company's success working with business clients.

Talking about the buying situations, Across Spain is aiming to meet the "new task" buying situation. That means that the future buyer will use certain services of the company for the very first time. And on this level occurs higher cost of risk, the wider number of participants who are making decisions, more time required for information gathering. There exist several steps that the "new task" buying is processing. First of all the potential customer should become aware of the product; secondly the interest in the product occurs; thirdly follows evaluation. After goes trial and final step is adoption (Kotler, 2000, 195).

4.3.1. Decision-making process

The unusual feature of the buying process comes out from the specifics of the chosen groups of customers and final clients who experience the product. The product is developed for the team players, but it is not their decision to purchase it. There is a number of people involved in the decision-making process, depending on the organizational structure of the club. Most general and common organizational structure of the football club consists of few level of workforce, which are divided in accordance of specific job roles and responsibilities to undertake work.

In Table 3 is presented a general graphic picturing the chosen "buying centre" – all those individuals and groups who participate in the purchasing decision-making process, who share some common goals and the risks arising from the decisions" (Webster and Wind, 1972).

Describing the main roles of decision-making process participants, author defines team players as "users", who will use and experience the final product. "Influencers" are couches and event coordinators of the club. They influence the decision and often define specifications and alternatives for the product/services. Couching directors or chief scouts decide on product requirements and named as "deciders". Executive directors approving the decision made - "approvers". And heads of the club or owners are purchasing/not purchasing the product and called "buyers" (Kotler, 2000, 196).

However one more challenge on the way to promote and sell the product is presented by “gatekeepers”. “Gatekeepers” are all those purchasing agents, assistants and secretaries who prevent sellers from reaching the “buying center” members (Kotler, 2000, 196).

The main effect of “gatekeepers” is to act as a certain filter for the commercial buyers, their task is to filter services that enter the decision choice set (Palmer, 2001, 96).

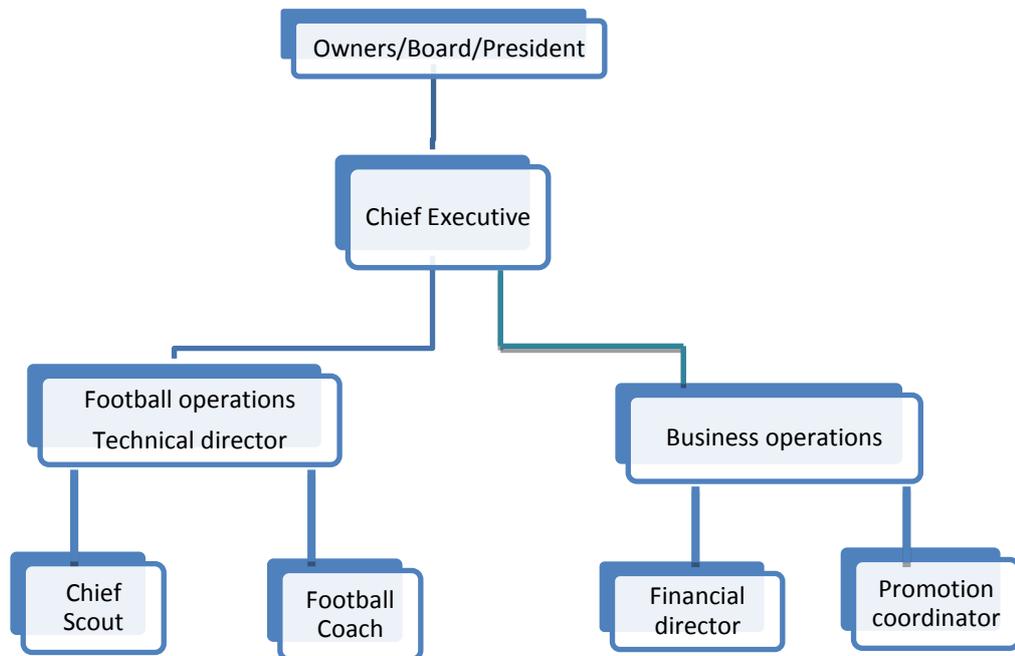


Table 3. Organizational Football Club Chart Europe (Benitez, 2013)

In accordance with the current business of Across Spain, four managers are working mostly with the “Football operations” department or “Technical office”. Thus looking at Table 3 can be observed that in the selling process the most difficult threshold with the biggest number of “gatekeepers” is left behind. This circumstance facilitates and accelerates the selling process by shortening the decision-making process chain.

4.3.2. Influences on business buyer behaviour

There is a certain amount of issues which affect the business buyer decision-making process. The main four influences are described in Table 4.

In the case of the customers of the thesis final project – managers of the Prime League teams, the major environmental factors to be considered. One of the most important factors is the level of demand, which is not going to be high due to the product’s specifics – teams are very valuable but unstable clients. They have too many options and possibilities to remain loyalty to one product. Rate of technological change – this depend on the right choice of suppliers for the program, like hotels with the latest technological equipment and highest level of facilities. As before, training facilities are playing the significant role. Competitive developments of other companies could be a challenge also, therefore the aim of the program is to suit the customers’ preferences the best; be flexible to meet their needs and wants. Social responsibility concerns – the organization and the suppliers are known for their quality of services, however social factors essentially need to be carried out with great consideration, and high class clients need privacy and non-publicity.

Organizational factors mainly influencing the potential buyer should be the concern of “centralized purchasing” department – managers that are working with fewer buyers of the higher level and are aware of their needs and expectations (Kotler, 2000, 198).

Interpersonal factors on the customers are vulnerable due to the diversity of the buying center that includes several people with various status, empathy, authority, etc.

Environmental	Organizational	Interpersonal	Individual	
Level of Demand			Age	<i>Business Buyer</i>
Economic outlook	Objectives	Interests	Income	
Interest rate	Policies	Authority	Education	
Rate of Technological change	Procedures	Status	Job position	
Political and regulatory developments	Organizational structures	Empathy	Personality	
Competitive developments	Systems	Persuasiveness	Risk attitudes	
Social responsibility concerns			Culture	

Table 4. Major Influences on Industrial Buying Behaviour (Kotler, 2000).

4.3.3. The final customers

The final customers of the program developed through the present thesis work are the players of the Prime Spanish Football League.

Spanish people often say that soccer, or football for many of them is some sort of a religion. Thousands of people across the country on every match show their devotion to the Spanish players by cheering them up at the stadiums, waving football flags and singing team's hymns on the streets, rooting for their favourite teams in front of the TV monitors.

“La Primera Division” or First Division of the “National Football Professional League” (LPF) of Spain, or “La Liga”, has an official name Liga BBVA, regarding to the sponsorship of the BBVA (Banco Bilbao Vizcaya Argentaria). Liga BBVA is the top professional Spanish football division of the football league system.

Liga BBVA is one of the strongest leagues in Europe over the past five years according to UEFA (Union of European Football Associations) and it consists of the twenty best Spanish teams (Union of European Football Associations, 2014).

The league has four team standings identified by the level of the team's success in the competitions. The highest division is UEFA Champions League, where are now three strongest teams – Real Madrid CF, FC Barcelona and Atletico Madrid. The second division is UEFA Champions League Preliminary where Valencia CF stands. Third one is UEFA Europa League and it includes Sevilla FC and Malaga CF. And the fourth is UEFA Europa League division, which depends on domestic cup results and for now is presented by Celta de Vigo. Then there are ten teams in between, competing to take a place in one of these divisions and the Relegation group – Deportivo La Coruña, Elche CF and Cordoba CF. These teams are proving their right to stay in the Liga by competing with the other Spanish teams who are not yet on the list (Federation Internationale de Football Association, 2014).

5. METHODOLOGY

Present chapter concentrates on the research part of the thesis. It explains the research, its aims and how the research process was conducted. Moreover, the chapter identifies factors affecting the research, its reliability and validity.

5.1. Research aims and objectives

The aims of the research are to compile the tour program in the best suitable way. Important issue is also to show the sufficient experience of the company's managers for proving their ability to meet the customers' expectations, to conduct the best possible variations of the program for the clients and to minimize the risk of the failures. The last can be done by finding out their main expectations and preferences concerning the products and services (Appendix 1, 33).

Hereby main questions of the research are concerned on gaining information about:

- Proficiency of the Across team's members and their experience;
- If the destination and services chosen for the program are meeting the needs and wants of the customers;
- If the contents and length of the program are suitable for the clients,
- If the final product goes in accordance with the future needs and wants of the customers.

5.2. Data collection methods

In the present work the research is done across the tour managers, which have a lot of experience in selling and providing similar services that are combined in the final tour project. The program is developed with the help of results, which identify the best tactics and give a conclusion about future demand, threats, and opportunities.

The research is qualitative, question-based and in the electronic "respondent-completion" format (Veal, 2011, 235).

Survey has open-end questions, as the aim of qualitative research is to collect detailed and rich information about the chosen subject.

The questioned group consists of managers of the commissioning party. All the managers have great professional experience, creativity and understanding how to provide the best services and facilities for their clients. That makes them the suitable focus group for the “standardized” qualitative research method (Veal, 2011, 235-237).

Moreover all the questioned managers of Across Spain travel agency are experienced in organizing services which are included in the project. Therefore, defining their opinions concerning the issue had a significant influence and each respondent’s opinion carried big value for the thesis work.

The qualitative research of the project undertakes evaluative aims that seek to assess the success of product building policies, what affects the final product.

For the data collection method in the research there is used the mail survey conducted via internet. One of the biggest problems for this type of survey is the high rate of non-response and low speed of the process. The respondents will get the interactive questionnaire by “hybrid email” (Email and attached on-line questionnaire) (Veal, 2011, 268-372). The questionnaire enclosed to the mail is conducted via “Survey Monkey” research program.

The present research is referred to the certain “captive group”, and that will assure the responses. However, the due to group’s work occupation the process of receiving the answers takes long time (Veal, 2011, 235).

5.3. Reliability and validity

Validity and reliability are the significant extents of the research studies. These dimensions are two important criteria for assessing the quality of the researched information and ensuring the level of generalizability of the survey (Veal, 2006, 56).

Validity is the extent to which the information collected during the research process is reflecting the real and dry facts of the phenomena the researcher is studying about (Veal, 2006, 307-308).

Reliability on the other hand is dealing with the subjects included in the research. It is an extent to which the final findings of the survey would be identical, if the research would take place on the later date and with the different group of subjects. In order to minimize the chance of error to occur, should be selected large and representative samples (Litwin, 1995, 5).

For the questionnaire-based data collection research there are existing certain threats and problems to validity. The core aim of the validity assurance is to measure the level of validity of the survey and minimize the risk of gaining the wrong information from the research results (Litwin, 1995, 25).

Validity of the research will be ensured by the appropriate qualitative in-depth research applied to the selected members of the sample (Across Spain offices). The measurement instrument in the form of the questionnaire will measure the best way of organizing the program and define components that should be included. The risk which occurs due to the complexity of the participants chosen (level of engagement can vary), will be minimized by the contents of the questionnaire, which implies the general scope of the issue, narrowing it to the certain points, influencing the project the most (Veal, 2006, 235).

Research reliability is identified by the certain degree of generalizability and devotion to the subjects closely involved in the research process which is applied to the results (Veal, 2006, 47).

6. RESEARCH OUTCOMES

The chapter reveals survey's background. Also, it reflects the results achieved during the research process and discusses their significance for the product development and its future promotion and realization.

6.1. Background of the survey

The research as stated in Chapter 5 was qualitative and was conducted in the form of on-line surveys which were suggested to the managers of Across Spain team. The on-line questionnaire was sent to the managers via electronic mail. It contained the cover letter and link to the on-line survey, which was created with the help of web program for researchers – “Survey Monkey”.

The final number of respondents was seven: three men and four women, which are currently working as selling managers and organise tour and sport packages, manage booking, handle clients, etc.

Apart from the questions in the survey the preliminary program (Appendix 2, 36) of the thesis was introduced to the respondents. Consequently, the respondents not only shared their knowledge and professional opinion, but also analysed the program suggested and gave their advices for improvement (Appendix 1, 33).

6.2. Analysis of the survey results

Analysing the responds of the questioned group there can be defined that the managers generally have a great experience of working with the clients which require special attention and specific services: “as project manager working in a Spanish domestic, I have handled full programs for VIP clients in Spain, including accommodation and ground services”; “long experience, 14 years, working with VIP groups and individuals in Incoming services”; etc.

Five of seven managers responded that they were handling often with exclusive groups of clients or individuals and organized for them full programs, corporate events, accommodation and other services in Spain and Portugal. These results are ensuring the managers' ability to perform the program organisation for clients in confident and professional way.

Summing the managers' competence in such work, the average length of working experience is from three to fourteen years. Half of questioned managers have been intensively working with exclusive clients and making intensive researches: "most experience past 10 years, intensive research, good contact with clubs/facilities and specialised clients".

Three managers have been working with football teams from five to ten years and have good contacts with football club managers, specialized facilities holders and exclusive clients, who are already familiar with the company and trust it: "working with returning guests for 8 years".

In opinion of the competent managers, the present target client group requires special attention ("need to feel that someone is taking care of them 24/7"), fast answers, high quality services, good interaction, flexibility, fast reaction to get solutions, good knowledge of available products in the destination, confidentiality (use of non-public attractions, private services, private transfers, etc.).

Responding the question concerning the differences between organising programs for amateurs (what company often does) and professional, is possible to conclude that professional teams need more detailed programs, they need more exclusive services and confidentiality (for instance breakfast in hotel to be organised in private hall or delivered to the room). Moreover, budget issues are less important for them (Appendix 4, 39). Amateurs and juniors are flexible and more adaptable to timing and destinations since they decide about the best price, as the respondents are stating in their answers – "most important, budget. Amateurs are easily adaptable to timings and destinations since they decide upon best price".

For professionals matters more the weather conditions and privacy. Professional team managers firstly will think about quality of training facilities and services offered by the training complex, and after will consider the details. Of course, the demanded level is higher and the offers are more precise.

After getting familiar with the program managers gave their opinions: "it can be a possibility to pique the interest of the clients"; "may be more marketing use of this program". To sum it all the program is fitting, though professional sportsmen are not often looking for any entertainment before their trainings, or often the trainings are combined with entertainment (during the training week). The program suggested goes more often along with the juniors and amateurs (Appendix 2, 36). However, managers agreed that it could be an option to suggest to their clients in the future if some points in the program will be changed (Appendix 3, 38). These points included paella cooking experience and stadium visit. For the professional sportsmen as concluded by managers, these activities have less interest.

General conclusion about the managers' answers on last questions is that the program is better to be tailor-made. However flexible template which is easy to adopt according to the clients' requests ("may be used as a draft/base for programs"), can be a useful marketing tool (e.g. to send it as an approximate program) or serve as a groundwork for the future program.

Moreover, the research shows the sufficient professional level of managers, their ability to organize and promote exclusive programs and work with clients who require more than a standard customer. These advantages will assist them in further business development with the help of the current product. And the thesis outcome will become a useful tool for marketing and building the final programs.

7. DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The last chapter is devoted to the description and beneficial features of the facilities included in the final product. After the facilities delineation there are defined the significant elements of the product, which are to be improved and developed in accordance with the research results analysis.

7.1. Description of the facilities

The facilities included in the product have big importance - they are playing a fundamental role in the tourism organisation and building the value, which in the end brings satisfaction or dissatisfaction to the client.

The product which the present work was aimed to develop consists of the leisure activities part and time devoted to professional trainings. According to the program clients arrive in the destination of interest – Valencia. And upon the arrival they participate in teambuilding activities and visit the places of interest (across Spain, 2011).

After the leisure part is performed, clients are being transferred to the final destination of the program – Olivia Nova Golf and SPA resort.

7.1.1. Olivia Nova Resort

Olivia Nova is stated as a unique resort of the highest level, located between Valencia and Alicante. It presents the certain level of facilities for sport and non-sport guests.

One of the advantages of the Olivia Nova – is an exclusive custom-made training camp that meets the needs of professional customers. The resort has all the necessary facilities for accommodating the teams and providing the training facilities for them on the required level of quality.

The facilities include superior rooms, personalized services, and four football natural grass pitches in small walking distance from the hotel with all the necessary equipment, showers and dressing rooms adjusted. Another range of facilities is presented by techno gym, SPA center, indoor swimming pool, etc. Nearby the resort there are situated two medical centers: Hospital Policlinico San Carlos in Denia city, which is 15 km from the resort; Clinica Tecma in Alzira within 35 km distance. Medical

centers have X-rays, Magnetic resonance, Emergency service 24 hours, sport medicine, physiotherapist (Olivia Nova Beach and Golf, 2013).

Moreover there are plenty of sport and leisure activities at the resort and in the cities nearby, Gandia is in 15 km, Denia is in 20 km, Valencia is in 85 km, Alicante is in 98 km distance from the resort (Olivia Nova Beach and Golf, 2013).

Olivia Nova has experience in hosting such famous football teams. Therefore for the team players and their coaches there are provided special packages including accommodation (with upgrading for director/coach); full board in the private restaurant – breakfast, lunch, snack and dinner buffets (halal food available); laundry services; conference facilities; exclusive full size grass pitch with changing rooms; water and ice during the trainings; friendly game organization service; SPA circuit and techno gym machines; rooms with space for equipment manager and physiotherapists including massage tables; coach to/from the airport; exclusive praying room (Olivia Nova Beach and Golf, 2013).

7.1.2. Teambuilding activities and attractions

The first part of the constructed tour and training program is devoted to the leisure time, acknowledgement of team players with the culture of the region and team building activities (Appendix 3, 38). Services' providers are suggested to the author by Across Spain agency and are reliable partners of the company, with whom it has commissioning contracts and agreements.

The idea of the leisure part of the program is not just fun time for players, but an opportunity to develop trust, effective collaboration and problem-solving capability between each other. Team building is a cooperative process that helps a group of individuals to solve physical challenges and put down mental barriers between each other (Midura & Glover, 2005, 2).

The suggested activities in the program include Paella cooking, private sailing tour to Albufera or Valencia visit, Flamenco show and sailing Regatta competition.

Across Spain agency has partner agreements with many service providers in Valencia, therefore organising these activities or combining them with other ones, depending on the clients' requests will be an easy task.

On the first day of the program author suggests organising a private Valencia tour or shore excursion to Albufera. That may be of interest due to the team's internationality, because the region

of Valencia has much heritage and culture to show. The duration of the excursion is 4 hours, organised by Quality Guided Tours. Shore excursion suggests sailing by boat through the natural routes of Albufera natural park's wetlands and after presents panoramic "Barraca Valencia" – typical houses of Valencia's traditional village, fish market. On the whole route qualified guide is provided (Quality Guided Tours, 2014). As an alternative of this excursion can be suggested private guided Valencia tour (Guias Valencia, 2014).

Another activity featuring team building along with cultural acquaintance is "Paella cooking and Heritage" evening in Valencian traditional restaurant. This activity is guided by the local chief and will discover another tradition of Valencia – recipe of rice dish "paella", originated in the middle of the nineteenth century near Albufera lake (Quality Guided Tours, 2014).

Regatta competition will be organised by the agency's partners Mundo Natura Veleros company. The competition is organised in a way that the group divides into few teams, each of which gets a sailboat with a crew member who is responsible for the safety. The team with more dedicated and cohesive crew is winning. This activity is aimed to develop personal effectiveness, team relationships and communication, results orientation and self-resource management. Duration of the competition is few hours; participants are given all the needed equipment and instructions. Safety is provided by experienced staff members of Mundo Natura Veleros (Mundo Natura, 2014).

Whole evening of the next day will be devoted to flamenco show and dinner – what is especially traditional for Valencia. During the performance, the team will see traditional Spanish dance performance and can attempt to learn it. After follows traditional dinner, where vegetarian and halal menu options are available (Mundo Natura, 2014).

7.1.3. Transportation

The transport for the clients will be provided with the help of reliable partners of Across Spain – Mundo Bus Autocares Transport Company. This company provides transfers and transportation services of different categories and classes. Services of this company will be used for getting the group to/from destinations and transferring the equipment if necessary. The level of services is sufficient for exclusive clients and transport facilities provide safety, as well as meet other requirements (Autocares Mundo Bus, 2013).

7.2. Preliminary program development

To develop the tour and training program for the BBVA teams was used knowledge gained from the previous education as well as experiences acquired from the practical training place. The program structure was based on the theoretical analysis of the customers.

After getting the research results, it appeared that the program needs certain changes in order to meet the customers' expectations better. The respondents – managers of the Across Spain travel agency, gave their professional opinion about the preliminary program and suggested to improve it by changing few facilities and up-grading the services: “needs exclusive attractions”; “add more unique offers” (Appendix 1, 33).

Reasonable advices of the managers led to the replacement of museum visit and football match attendance by more unique and exclusive options – Sailing Regatta Competition organisation and Private Tour Visit of Valencia. It was performed in order to make “up-grading” of the services and add “exclusivity” as the managers suggested.

Moreover, the transportation services required development, due to the specific features of the sportsmen. After the survey analysis was revealed the missing circumstance– “needs separate van for sport equipment”. Due to the clients' high professional level they respectively may need more personal equipment for the training organisation, than team players of lower level, who may be satisfied with facilities provided by the training centre.

8. CONCLUSION

The objective of the present thesis was to introduce the business of Across Spain and basing on its current product line to present the specific tour program for Professional Football teams of BBVA.

In the scope of this work, certain researches and theoretical studies were done. These researches and studies revealed the specifics and strategies, which were necessary to understand and implement during the thesis writing process.

In the first thesis chapter the ideas of the thesis were introduced, and the tourism type of the product in the work was defined.

Further, the author introduced the product development features; discover the company's potential business growth and diversification strategies which can become the outcome of the product implementation in the current business of the commissioning party. After follows the description of the facilities, which were used in the program and the business market target group analysis.

Major amount of theoretical research was devoted to the business market target group analysis, in regard to the speciality of customers, who are not performing as the final consumers of the product. The product is aimed to be promoted within the managers of the teams of the Spanish Prime league, therefore in the customer analysis they are playing significant role and they are making decisions for the final participants of the program, whereas the final price is not the strongest factor influencing the purchasing process (Appendix 4, 38).

It is evident that the preferences, needs and wants of the final product consumers – team players of high professional level, are not to be left behind; therefore there a qualitative research was performed. Though the final customers could not be questioned due to the busy schedule of their trainings and games, the tour managers who frequently organise various tour services for them were questioned. They have enough experience to think ahead how to meet the needs of such clients.

Consequently, Across Spain travel agency's awareness of the emphasis, which author makes on the customers' analysis, may serve beneficially during the marketing or selling process of the product.

Nevertheless individual factors are not to be forgotten. Different styles of buyers ("keep-it-simple", "own-experts", old school "toughies", etc.) are to be known for the successful use of selling tactics and best attitude to build (Kotler P., 2000, 199).

In accordance with the research analysis the flexible program was composed, which can serve the commissioning party as a marketing tool for the product promotion. For instance, it can be suggested to the customers as an example or a standard base for a tailor made program, which can be adapted according to the clients' requests.

The theoretical and qualitative research of the thesis proves that in regard to the great commissioning agency's experience in working with exclusive and sport clients, as well as being an official agent of famous football clubs (Barcelona FC, Real Madrid) the company can make good use of this thesis project and widen its business market by suggesting another type of training program to the special clients.

It is expected that the company can extend its business line with the use of the present thesis work and its outcomes by applying the theories and referring to the author's suggestions for its promotion.

The product marketing can be firstly distributed by phone and email conversations with the company's returning clients (who however usually ask for other kind of services, not for the full program), who may have an interest of it. Further on the promotion can be performed through the business connections of the agency's managers with the football clubs.

Selling arguments for the constructed program include:

- the combination of all the necessary features, needed to meet the customers' expectation (identified by the theoretical background and the research outcomes);
- beneficial features, which make additional value for the program and gain customers' attraction and interest (teambuilding activities);
- flexibility – program is easy to adapt to the customers' unique requirements and timings.

Doubtless that the teambuilding activities included in the program (Sailing Regatta Competition, Paella cooking, sailing in Albufera or exploring Valencia via private tour) bring significant value to the team – it raises common spirit; brings shared positive emotions; brings players together in order to accomplish common goal; reinforces trust and cooperation. One cannot deny that this benefits every team and builds a friendly environment within it, what is necessary if living, training and playing together.

Another advantage is that such program gives wide multiplicity of various combinations of activities to be added during the training week at the resort, which suggests numerous opportunities for leisure and other sport participation.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix 1. Survey Questions & Answers

1. What kind of experience have you had in working with exclusive VIP clients?

- “as project manager working in a spanish dmc, i have handle full programs for vip clients in spain, including accommodation and ground services”
- “always have many requests for corporate events and VIP services, organized group leisure also”
- “i am working with sport organizations, we have special offers for VIP clients and groups looking for exclusive services and activities”
- “usually handle individuals and work with accommodations – villas, cottages, etc”
- “experience as sales manager for individuals and groups. many exclusive clients we hae from india and russia”
- “long experience, 14 years, working with VIP groups and individuals in Incoming services”
- “i am marketing and sales manager, not often work with VIPs”

2. What in your opinion do they require from a service organization?

- “flexibility, full disposal 24h presentially or by phone, fast reaction to get solutions, good knowledge of available products in destination, confidentiality”
- “speed, highest quality, responding their exact requirements”
- “demand level higher tan standard clients. more precise offers”
- “they require tailor-made programs, fast answers, high quality services”
- “ best accommodation, VIP transport facilities, exclusive offers, immediate responses, especially they need to have the feeling that someone is taking care of them 24/7”
- “hear to their request, submit a proposal and interact constantly”
- “constant attention and high quality of all facilities and services. awareness of all available suggestions”

3. How experienced are you in organizing tour/booking/services for the football teams?

- “m ost experience past 10 years, intensive research, good contact with clubs / facilities and specialised clients”
- “long experience, 14 years, working with VIP groups and individuals”

- “6 years in incoming services for groups”
- “i have been working with this clients almost 5 years”
- “more than 3 years”
- “fully experienced, working with returning guests for 8 years”
- “we are working closely with football teams but personally I handle attenders and individuals”

4. What in your opinion are the main differences between organizing training programs for amateurs and professional teams?

- “hotel services, confidentiality, ground services”
- “professional teams have more strict timings. easier to organize for amateurs, they are flexible”
- “most important, budget. amateurs are easily adaptable to timings and destinations since they decide upon best price”
- “proff teams decide upon quality of training facilities and services offered by the complex, level of privacy, weather on destination”
- “amateurs have lower budget but also they need lower standards professional teams require a more detailed planning”
- “professionals need highly professional service, amateurs often satisfied with average quality services”
- “higher level of services, clear-cut program, privacy”

5. After reading the present program, do you think it may be of interest for the managers of BBVA league teams?

- “starting with lower grade teams it can be a possibility to pique their interest”
- “good work, with some addition it may be successful. but final one has to respond clients requests”
- “it may be”
- “can be. however mostly such programs are tailor-made”
- “they know what the team needs before making request. it may be more marketing use of this program”
- “it could serve as preliminary template to attract attention and suggest some services”
- “less public services and exclusivity it is main principle”

6. Does in your opinion the program meet their expectations?

- “possibly after up-grading”
- “see answer for quest. 5”
- “try to add unique offers, thus may be an option for less famous teams”
- “good accommodation choice, needs more exclusive attractions, separate van for sport equipment”
- “for me looks more for juniors, be aware of time limits”
- (no answer)
- “i think yes”

7. Do you think that this program is flexible enough to be used as a base for developing the product for the teams?

- “yes, elements here easy to replace”
- “in my opinion could serve as a draft for programs”
- “it is possible”
- “the program is flexible enough”
- (no answer)
- “maybe in certain cases it can be used as a base”
- “flexible, not necessarily need a use of it”

Appendix 2.Preliminary Tour & Training Program

Day	Program
1 st March Sunday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrival to Valencia airport • Meet & greet by representative; private transfer • Check in at the hotel • Paella cooking & heritage • Return to the hotel
2 ^d March Monday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breakfast • Excursion to the football stadium • Lunch • Flamenco show and dinner
3 ^d March Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breakfast • Football match visit • Lunch • Transfer to Olivia Nova Resort
4 th – 12 th March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Olivia Nova Resort • Optional activities upon a request
12 th March Wednesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breakfast • Departure to Valencia airport

Program includes:

In Valencia

- Accommodation, dinners and breakfasts
- Excursion to the football stadium
- Football match visit
- Flamenco show and traditional dinner

In Olivia Nova Resort

- Full-board and accommodation
- Training and football facilities
- Organization of friendly matches
- Resort facilities

Private group transfers included.

Not included:

- Flights
- Tips
- Extra services not mentioned in the program

Appendix 3.Tour & Training Program

Day	Program
1 st March Sunday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrival to Valencia airport • Meet & greet by representative; private transfer • Check in at the hotel • Paella cooking & heritage • Return to the hotel
2 ^d March Monday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breakfast • Private sailing tour to Albufera or private Valencia tour • Lunch • Flamenco show and dinner
3 ^d March Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breakfast • Sailing Regatta Competition • Lunch • Transfer to Olivia Nova Resort
4 th – 12 th March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Olivia Nova Resort • Optional activities upon a request
12 th March Wednesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breakfast • Departure to Valencia airport

Program includes:

In Valencia

- Accommodation, dinners and breakfasts
- Guided tour of Valencia or Albufera sailing trip
- Sailing regatta competition
- Flamenco show and traditional dinner

In Olivia Nova Resort

- Full-board and accommodation
- Training and football facilities
- Organization of friendly matches
- Resort facilities

- Responsible person for the group

Private transfers for the group and its equipment during the whole trip.

Not included:

- Flights
- Tips
- Extra services not mentioned in the program

Appendix 5. Junior Training Program of Across Spain

In renovated resort & spa with training facilities, situated in costa blanca, only 5 minutes walk to the beach. Modern style, all inclusive service, large garden areas, pools, complete the offer of this resort.

recommended for

- training stages all year round, perfect in winter due to the mild temperatures in the area
- teams looking for all in one resort, with hotel and training fields in the same area, added to it complementary leisure services

accommodation

next to the training facilities and walking distance, the complex offers over 400 apartments and top class lodges, distributed in 12 2-floor blocks. All accommodations fully equipped with kitchen, lounge and terrace. other services: heated swimming pool, outdoors pools, spa ...

Day	7 day programme
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - arrival at the airport. meet and greet by our staff & transfer by private - check in and move into the hostel/hotel - optional: technical session and briefing
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - breakfast at the hotel - morning training session - afternoon training session
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - breakfast at the hotel - morning training session - afternoon at leisure
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - breakfast at the hotel - morning training session - afternoon at leisure
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - breakfast at the hotel - morning technical clinic with local professional trainer - afternoon friendly match
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - breakfast at the hotel - morning training session - free time, optional tour to Alicante
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - breakfast at the hotel & transfer to the airport