Dip the Brits in Salt Salinas, Food and Portuguese Charm in and Around Aveiro

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Abstract

This work presents a proposal for a business that would be located in Portugal, specifically in and around Aveiro and that is designed to attract British clientele. The segment is here defined, giving the reasons for choosing this business model, how the model is viewed in this planning stage, the specificities of the offers and how the segment to be targeted is seen statistically and sees their destination when it comes to options regarding tourism.

Keywords: Aveiro, British, business, salt, tourism

Introduction

The present work is inspired on some of the previous assignments and on the knowledge acquired along the studies of the Master in Intercultural Studies for Business. We have been researching the British culture during three semesters, and thus have a notion of preferences that a British citizen could have. Last semester, we explored several hypothetical business plans, built around diverse offers, some of them marketable to the outside world, and even focused on the customers in the United Kingdom (UK). This experience called our attention to a combination of two factors: the tourism sector and the unique places and products that can be found in Portugal. Adding to that our personal preferences and knowledge of several appealing local "gems", we decided to integrate these two factors to form an attractive solution for the British public who seeks vacation options in Portugal.

This proposal is divided in 3 major sections: first, the grounding of both the choice of tourism sector, the British audience and the specific niche in terms of the exact tourism product. Second, we provide detailed description of what we are offering, in a format of four distinct packages that one can choose from. Third, the possible format of our advertising campaign is drafted, taking into consideration the current data on official information that is being conveyed to the travelers from UK to Portugal, as well as the preferences in media usage to determine the most appropriate communication channels.

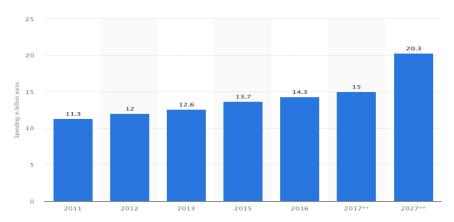
X – The "Why and How"

The travel and tourism industry is one of the world's largest industries. It is a sector with considerable direct economic impact and has demonstrated steady growth

almost every year. Destinations worldwide received an estimated 901 million international tourists (overnight visitors) in the first eight months of 2017, some 56 million more than in the same period of 2016. In 2016, more than half of the 1,235 million international tourist arrivals worldwide were accounted for by visits to Europe. Europe also provided the most international tourists in terms of region of origin. It is by far the world's most visited region: in the first eight months of 2017, Europe as a whole (both EU-28 and Extra-EU destinations) recorded an 8% increase in international arrivals compared to the same period last year. Most of the eight European Union destinations in Southern and Mediterranean Europe remain on the top list of popularity, with Portugal and Spain continuing the trend of strong growth registered already in 2016 (Statista, n.d.; UNWTO, 2017).

It is not surprising that more and more people these days choose Portugal as tourism destination. The country has become increasingly popular and there are many recent, easily recognizable, achievements that boost the international awareness, such as the victory in European football championship in July 2016 or, more recently, in the Eurovision song contest 2017. All this notoriety brings along other victories: this year, the city of Porto has won the title "Best European Tourism destinations" for the third time (the previous titles are from 2012 and 2014), and the Azores Islands were also contemplated with this prize in 2016 (European Best Destinations, 2017). It is thus easy to understand why tourism is perceived as a valuable business sector, and why it is so appealing for new business ventures.

The decision to create a new offer, new product in this domain is backed up with encouraging financial information. Data analysis carried out by the Bank of Portugal regarding the year 2016 shows how important is the role of tourism in overall growth, employment and external trade balances. The growth in exports of tourism services (sales to foreign citizens in this sector are recorded as exports) is increasing, and was able to compensate almost completely the Portuguese deficit in the trade of goods (Aníbal, 2017). The forecasts are also optimistic, showing a tendency of growth over the next years (Graphic 1).



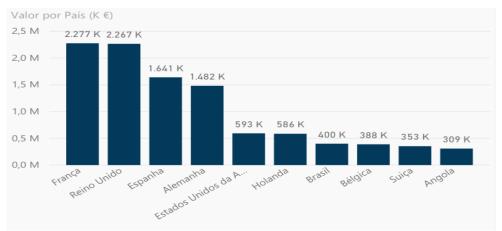
Graphic 1: Spending of international tourists in Portugal from 2011 to 2027 (in billion euros). Source: Statista, retrieved December 4, 2017.

Analyzing the total annual spend of international tourists (visitor exports) in

Portugal from 2011 to 2017, and based on the fact that in 2016 international visitors in Portugal spent a total of 15 billion euros, experts conclude that the amount spent is expected to increase in 2017 to 15.6 billion euros and a forecast for 2027 demonstrates further growth.

Why Brits?

For any business idea, the definition of target audience is a crucial step, so that all further actions can be more focused, the marketing strategies and communication efforts better directed, making the sales happen and getting a greater return of the investments. In terms of international tourism expenditure, 4 of the world's top 10 source markets belong to the EU-28. The United Kingdom reported 5% growth in spending in 2017 (UNWTO, 2017). Instituto Nacional de Estatística - INE and Banco de Portugal, places UK, France, Germany, Spain, and the Netherlands, alongside Brasil and USA, in the top positions when it comes to both number of guests that visit Portugal and also in the total of revenues (Figure 2). Most recent statistical data from the official national entity demonstrates that British tourists were the ones who visited Portugal in the largest numbers during the month of October 2017, and in terms of regions visited the most popular were the island of Madeira and the Algarve (Turismo de Portugal, I.P., 2017a).



Graphic 2: Spending of international tourists in Portugal by country in 2016 ($K \in$). Source: Turismo de Portugal, I.P., retrieved December 4, 2017.

Thus, the United Kingdom is clearly the main market for Portuguese tourism products, and the tendencies for 2017 are ones of increase for all the main indicators: overnight stays, number of visitors and total of receipts. According to an Euromonitor forecast, Portugal appears as the 6th most sought after destination by British tourists. The previous experiences with the country also do count: slightly more than a half of the Britons who visit Portugal have already been here before. The climate and the landscape, the warm reception, as well as the price of both the travel and the stay, come mentioned as the main criteria for choosing Portugal as a holiday destination and nearly all guests from the United Kingdom report their expectations as met or exceeded and are generally very satisfied with their holidays in Portugal (Turismo de Portugal, I.P., 2017b).

How – technicalities

Currently, Portugal has an elevated volume of air traffic from and to the United Kingdom. Data from the International Air Transport Association (IATA) indicates that the UK has a register of 359 direct flights weekly to Portugal for the Winter 2016/17 and 786 direct flights weekly for the Summer 2017. Air traffic between the United Kingdom and Portugal accounts for 19.0% of total passengers within the EU, while tourists from UK have a 15.1% share of total flights between Portugal and Portugal. Around 3.7 million British passengers landed at national airports in 2016, and in the period January-August 2017, the market continues to grow (Turismo de Portugal, I.P., 2017b). The northern part of Portugal is served by the Francisco Sá de Carneiro Airport in Porto, and it has connections to 9 different destinations in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland.

As to the airlines, in 2016, it was easyJet that transported the most of passengers to Portugal (28% share of the total available seats between the UK and Portugal), followed by Ryanair (23% share), TAP (share of 15%), Monarch Airlines (11% share) and British Airways (8% share). Overall aviation capacity within Europe has continued to rise throughout 2017. However, the collapse of UK airline Monarch Airlines and the cancellations of a number of Ryanair flights within Europe, along with some additional disruption due to Air Berlin's closure, may induce some impact on capacity towards the end of the year. Until March 2018 Ryanair will cancel 44 weekly flights with arrivals/departures to/from Portugal, and the bankrupt Monarch Airlines, responsible for over 10% of the incoming UK passengers to Portugal, will see its 128 weekly flights taken over by competing airlines (European Travel Commission, 2017; Turismo de Portugal, I.P., 2017b).

The well-developed road network enables easy access from the Porto airport to other cities. Aveiro lies on the northern coastline, and the connection with the involving area and the city of Porto is established via A29, A1, A25 and A17 highways. A simulation in Google Maps indicates roughly 1h of travel by car (Figure 1).

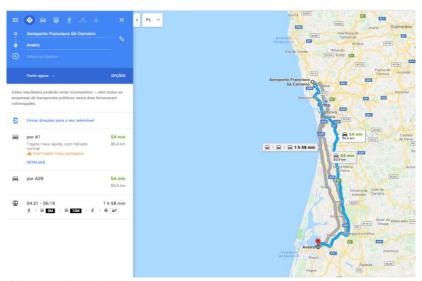


Figure 1: Possible routes from the Airport Francisco Sá Carneiro to Aveiro (Source: Google Maps, retrieved December 4, 2017).

Why salt baths?

Globally, the wellness industry is a huge market, consisting of several (and sometimes overlapping) branches (Figure 2). The interconnected web of economy was worth 3.7 trillion US dollars in 2015, according to the Global Wellness Institute.



Figure 2: Value of the global wellness economy in 2015 (billions of \$). Source: Global Wellness Institute, retrieved December 4, 2017.

A significant cluster is that of Wellness Tourism, which saw the revenues grow by 14% in the time period from 2013 to 2015. By definition it is all travel associated with the pursuit of improving or maintaining personal wellbeing during or as a result of the trip. The reasons why this specific sector is appealing for new business ventures, is the fact that wellness is a is a strong consumer trend, growing faster than the overall tourism industry, and usually wellness tourists are associated with a higher income level, thus meaning a potentially higher expenditure and a greater economic impact. Moreover, wellness tourism can support preservation of traditional culture and natural assets, a factor of great importance for all matters related to sustainability (Global Wellness Institute, 2014).

Europe is the number one global region for incoming wellness tourism trips and the second global region for wellness tourism expenditure - data points to roughly 7% annual growth rate between 2012 and 2017, with Southern Europe dominating the region. The everyday rush places European consumers under an unprecedented amount of stress, hence the increase in "desire for digital detoxes, uncompromising peace and quiet, and the need to be close to the forces of nature". Yet, the focus needs to be on the future and innovation, for today's wellness concept has grown broader, and includes nutrition, fitness, traditional medicine and mindfulness. (Hill, 2016).

Already back in 2007, the Portuguese National Strategic Plan for Tourism (PENT) established Health and Wellness Tourism as one of 10 strategic products to be developed. This sector had been progressively increasing in Europe and showed interesting growth tendencies, yet in Portugal it had clearly been little explored, since the 2007 report mentions only 1,9% of the incoming tourists as visiting for health or wellbeing purposes, insufficient infrastructure (thermal springs with antiquated installations, reduced number of spas and a limited range of services and activities available to tourists) and thus

acknowledged the reduced market share Portugal had in the European context. Nevertheless, PENT correctly concluded that there is a lot of potential within the sector of thermal springs, indicating that new business models based on health treatment towards wellness are to be developed, especially in the Porto and North and Center regions (Turismo de Portugal, I.P., 2007).

The growing interest in all products related to wellbeing of both body and mind, the quest for unique and personalized experiences in a new setting is the driving force behind the potential of expansion of the sector. What we propose to explore in our business idea are the strong roots and the know-how that exists in Portugal regarding the health and wellness sector, and combine it with innovative practice and creative approach to a byproduct of the salt production in the Aveiro region, as well as combinations of different other treats. According to European Travel Agency (2016), close to 70% of European travelers highly rate the importance of experiential authenticity. This means that standard guided tours with visits to monuments and a free afternoon in the city are no longer on demand, for the visitors to a foreign country look for a possibility to have authentic experiences while on holiday. This reinforces our value proposal, since what we do seek to offer is precisely an authentic experience.

Y - The "What"

Aveiro's region offers to visitors an excellent retreat for a quiet holidays. Here are what we consider to be some reasons to rest in Aveiro.

Seven days of a great experience with our sub-products, here presented as they would be offered. They are:

- o Rest and eat
- Rest and drink
- o Rest and buy
- o Rest and be merry

1. Salt baths that do the skin good

The typical salt pans of Aveiro offer more than the traditional extraction of salt. Two of them have been transformed into a spa that provides salt and mud baths known for their therapeutic quality. They have healing and regenerative properties, as well as exfoliating properties that are benefic for the skin. The high concentration of salt in the water allows the body to float effortlessly (a good option for those who cannot swim), as well as contributes to an increase in blood circulation and to treatment of respiratory diseases.







Image 2: Salty and mud baths. Source: www.trekearth.com

In addition to the baths, there is also a space for relaxation massages, with treatments based on mud, sea salt and essential oils.

Salty spa is a good reason for spend holidays here. Rest and be merry!

A guided pedestrian route to visit to the extraction area is available, allowing to get to know the activity better and listen to some interesting stories. Straw hat offer.

2. Aveiro, the city

Enjoy a pedestrian walk or take a bike ride on the so-called BUGAS and explore the city's attractions through the beautiful streets of Aveiro. With its elegant 19th century architecture and cobbled walkways, framed by pretty and imposing "Art Nouveau" buildings and the Museum of New Art, one of the attractions of the city.



Image 3: Art Noveau Museum. Source: http://litoralmagazine.com/.

Visit the Museums and the Cathedral as well as the various churches and the numerous museum houses. Cross the Fish Square, which at night is the center of the nightlife, and enjoy one of the most typical places of the city - the Fish Market with its unique iron architecture. Be fond of the experience of the city, delight in an esplanade in front of the *ria*, whose calm water like a silver mirror reflects the big sky.

3. The moliceiro

Enjoy a sightseeing in the colourfully decorated boats, the moliceiro, who for

centuries carried $moliço^1$, now going across the canals of the ria which serpents all over the cheerful city.



Image 4: Moliceiro boats. Source: www.silverkris.com.

Explore the fantastic Natural Reserve of the Dunes of São Jacinto, whether a stroll in the moliceiros or walking on the pedestrian paths to observe the natural habitat of local flora and fauna, with the reserve of marshes, wild ponds and sand dunes that are a natural bird observatory.

4. Costa Nova

The different houses, each with its color, embellish this zone of joviality. These wooden houses, painted with stripes of different colors, on a run of houses in front of the estuary of Aveiro, known as *palheiros*, in a picturesque and inviting village are just one of the attractions of the place, with pleasant beaches and interesting walking routes.



Image 5: Costa Nova houses. Source: Evasões (M.J. Gala).

The restaurants and the seaside esplanades are ideal for a rest after a walk!

Knowing the stories and traditions of a region essentially linked to fishing, through a pedestrian route, a circular urban track of about 3.5 km runs along the picturesque streets of Costa Nova.

Another route will be the Santo André Ship-Museum and Barra Lighthouse, located on the beach with the same name, is one of the former libraries of the Municipality of Ílhavo. The highest in the country, which, after a climb of 288 steps, offers one of the best coastal landscapes in the country with the beautiful golden sand beaches to lose sight of.

¹ Portuguese word for the submerged aquatic vegetation collected for use in agriculture.

5. Ílhavo

Turn around the most important points of Ílhavo with a visit to the Fishermen's Quarter, the Ílhavo Maritime Museum and the Codfish Aquarium, to learn more about cod and life in the estuary.

In the heart of Ílhavo it is possible to go around the Vista Alegre manufacturing community. The history of its community and industrial patrimony of the factory that exists since 1824, can be seen in the Museum Vista Alegre that includes collections of porcelain, glass, industrial and technical equipment, drawings, photography and various documentary collections.



Image 6: Vista Alegre Museum. Source: https://www.bangbang.agency/va-museu.

In this circuit, a visit to the Vista Alegre Palace is included, as well as a Manual Painting Workshop, visits to the Chapel of Nossa Senhora da Penha de França and the Workers Neighborhood.

6. Delicious tastes

As far as gastronomy is concerned, the region of Aveiro is famous for its typical dishes.

The popular *ovos moles* - typical sweet of the city of Aveiro can be a delight of many, provided you you egg yolks and sugar, and require a stop in the city to observe the way they are manufactured and enjoy some tasting.



Image 7: Ovos moles. Source: http://fotos.ua.sapo.pt/ydwF3W47YNQppapWLaiW.

But there are other delightful surprises in the area as well. Enjoy a beautiful dish of roasted suckling pig, one of the best-known and best-loved regional dishes, accompanied by regional Bairrada wine.

Delight yourself with the traditional sweets, "ovos moles". Rest and eat!

Relax in Luso or Curia, two neighboring sites known for their magnificent thermal waters and natural beauty.

Intimately connected to the sea and the estuary, besides the delicious grilled fish, Aveiro offers other specialties like the *Caldeirada de Enguias* (eel stew), the Stews and the Seafood, without forgetting the popular codfish.

It is in the port of Aveiro that almost all of the cod transported by Portuguese vessels operating in the North Atlantic are unloaded. This is where the largest number of companies engaged in this fishery are located, representative elements of the social and economic history of the region.

7. Bairrada, the wine circuit

The wine route is represented by Bairrada, at south region of Aveiro district. A visit to the Bairrada Wine Museum is essential. The permanent exhibition, called "Routes of Wine", is located on the ground floor of the museum and is exposed along six thematic rooms, with pieces of archaeological, ethnographic and technical value. The Bairrada Wine Museum also has an Enoteca and a Wine Shop.

Tasting of the famous Bairrada sparkling wine. Rest and drink!

Enter in one of multiple Cellars and Wineries of the region to taste their products and visit their facilities and their vineyards followed by a tasting the sparkling wine quality.



Image 8: Aliança Underground Museum. Source: http://www.alianca.pt/.

This is the case of Aliança Underground Museum of the famous wine producer, the first underground museum where they brew sparkling wines and spirits, in perfect union with artistic collections.

8. Shopping delights

Aveiro's shop windows reflect the typical products of the region. *Ovos moles*, salt, salt flower, canned fish, ceramics or wine - you name it.

The 100% natural handmade salt is collected by handmade methods in a protected area in the Aveiro estuary, as well as the salt flower without any addition or dehydration process, is formed by very delicate vane, with a high moisture content.

The famous convent flavor was an inspiration for the production of a Liquor of *ovos moles*, which must be served chilled, in a glass made out of waffer.





Image 9 and 10: Ovos moles and Liquer of ovos moles. Source:. http://fotos.ua.sapo.pt/ydwF3W47YNQppapWLaiW.

Ceramics continue to be the most representative and highest quality traditional art. The offer is vast throughout the region, from the handicraft to the ceramics produced at Vista Alegre.

Take advantage of being here. Rest and buy!

Take with you the intense, full-bodied and fruity wines of Bairrada with aromatic and gustatory characteristics for your later delight.

After all, what else does one need to be happy?

Z – The "Where "

We come to the point of defining the Where of the business plan. Where do Brits go to find their holiday options and what does that show us? These are the main questions we hope to reply to in a satisfying way. We will start by (1) analyzing information about us from the perspective of the British Government and a global organization. With this we hope to see what British people value and how we stand in those values internationally. We will then move to see (2) statistics about the media British people use and then further on, to which are considered more effective. Lastly we are aiming at giving an idea on the type of (3) briefing we would give to a publicity campaign manager about our product, so the manager would know where we want to stand in our advertising.

1. According to the British Government's webpage, around 2.6 million British nationals visited Portugal in 2015, but most importantly, most visits have been trouble-free. Several advices are given, and we may take them into consideration as a basis to what British people usually appreciate, so we may tackle the points where we come out less valued and show that our product keeps British people safe in these stances, such as street crime protection,

valuables stolen if left unattended in cars avoidance, adequate security in accommodation guarantee, sexual assaults, water related incidents and driving on the right as a pre-thought of type of situation. We will do so on our third point below.

At the Portugal Resident webpage it is said that the "current situation in Portugal does not come about by accident. Portugal may not be a rich country, but I have found, in my experience working closely with the police and other entities, that it is 'rich' in terms of developing initiatives aimed at ensuring it is a safe and secure destination.", among them are projects such as the free access to "Estou Aqui – I am Here" project, run by the PSP, for children between 2 and 9 and vulnerable adults, and also the police force investment in languages learning and GNR's initiative by introducing training in sign language for some of its staff, in English and German. The presence of these forces in patrolling, "ensures visibility, a deterrence to crime and support to tourists who are in need", as mentioned by the same webpage.

We also want to consider that the fact that we are number 3 in the Global peace Index is proof enough that a visitor may look at us and see a valuable destination for safe holidays.

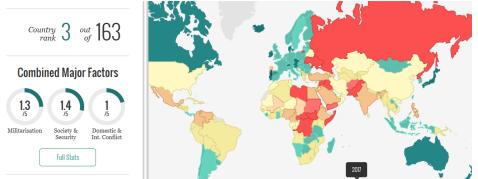
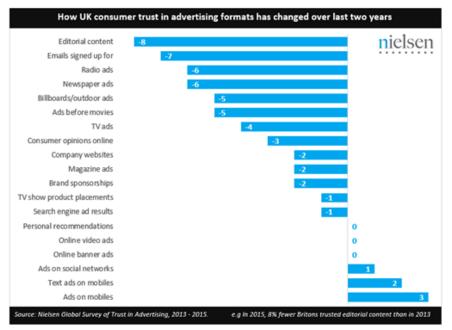


Figure 3: Portugal in the Global Peace Index. Source: http://visionofhumanity.org/indexes/global-peace-index/.

2. We may now move on to statistics about the media British people use and which are considered more effective. We easily infer that our product will need to be conveyed by trusted means to have success when we read this information on the website Smart Insights, where it relates the importance of trust in advertising success:

Trust is a hugely important factor in advertising success. If you don't trust someone, you generally don't take their advice, whereas if someone recommends something and you trust their judgement, you are far more likely to do it. If everyone trusted all advertising formats 100% then we'd all be getting ripped off by people using advertising for nefarious means. In reality, trust matters a lot, and this research shows that we trust some advertising formats much more than others. For example, emails signed up for are trusted approximately twice as much as text ads on mobile phones.

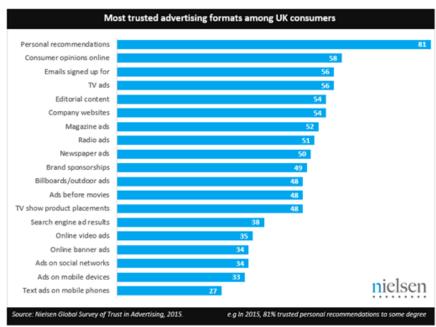
So what are the trusted channels we should use to reach a British public? We had a look at the Nielsen Global Survey of Trust in Advertising to see the recent trends and we set side by side both the consumer trust changes in advertising formats in recent years and the most trusted formats among UK consumers:



Graphic 3: How UK consumer trust in advertising formats has changed over last two years. Source: https://www.nielsen.com/.

It shows editorial content had the highest drop and adds on mobile the highest rise. At the same time, trust wise, editorial content is still in the top five and ads on mobile is still bottom three.

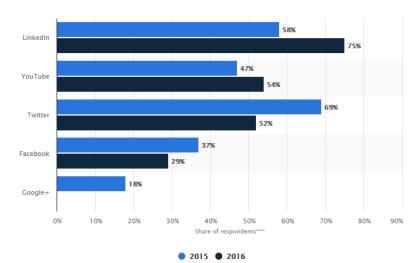
Although email sign up has also dropped it is still the 3rd most trusted source in the UK. At the same time this may show overuse of this means of advertising. We may, nonetheless look into growing organically our email list – personal recommendations, number one in trust, may also come from this type of communication /advertising of our product. More than regular TV ads, our business' website, where recommendations and consumer opinions may be given, seems the best way to go, as they are both middle way in decline in trust and top side of most trusted ways to advertise in the UK.



Graphic 4: Most trusted advertising formats among UK consumers. Source: https://www.nielsen.com/.

More than all, we believe that honesty in any means will pay-off, as this is a product that will be sustained by a sense of well-being and safety.

We now move to a look at cost effectiveness in advertising in the UK when it comes to social media platforms. The website Statista ranked the effectiveness for content marketing in 2016, comparing it to 2015 as follows:



Graphic 5: Effectiveness for content marketing in 2015 and 2016. Source:https://www.statista.com/statistics/290966/social-media-platforms-ranked-by-effectivness-for-content-marketing-uk/.

We see a rise in LinkedIn and YouTube and a decline in Twitter, Facebook and Google+. We believe this helps us set the need to create content for LinkedIn (articles) and YouTube (vloggers reviews).

The same website offers information on the reach of selected social networking

websites in Great Britain from November 2014 to February 2017. In a survey with 932 respondents, aged 15 or older, 69 percent of responding online adults visited Facebook at least once in the previous three months. Perhaps this cannot be neglected and we may try to associate the Facebook possibilities of photo, video and consumer opinion to our benefit.

- 3. At this point we will try to create a briefing we would give to a publicity campaign manager about our product.
 - The Guardian sets defining differences in ads between the UK and the US, and in doing so, it also sets some traits for UK for us to consider:
 - i. "The 2012 Olympics, Great British Bake Off and Harry Potter have gone some way to boosting our sense of national pride, but only as far as bunting strictly no flag waving (unless of course there's a royal wedding)." we should therefore avoid publicity that focuses on national pride and boasting it.
 - ii. "British sincerity tends to come in the form of smiling, empathy and real-world settings like tea and biscuits around the kitchen table." we should therefore take the publicity to real world images and a setting to show similarities in the Portuguese way of acting.
 - iii. "When we think of celebrity endorsement in Britain, we think of Michael Winner saying "Calm down dear, it's only a commercial" in a maddeningly condescending way." we would not be using celebrity endorsement.

Adding to these, we hear Ricky Gervais speaking of the British humor as this: "We mercilessly take the piss out of people we like or dislike basically. And ourselves. This is very important. Our brashness and swagger is laden with equal portions of self-deprecation. This is our license to hand it out ..." – so we are to set a campaign where we use humor but believe it may be more effective if we mash it with the previous traits and the idea that in Portugal we understand and accept you the way you are, a type of "We get you more than you think".

To this effect we would use the public list of observations made by an American tourist about small-town Britain, which went quite viral, being shared over 76,000 times. We would play on the idea of "We know you". These comments would be complemented in the end with the idea of "because you are like this... that is why we have this and that in this or that offer in our product". For example: to "Cake is one of the major food groups", we would add "Which is why we will take you to this Bakery X".

To end we would also ask for a play on the warnings made by the UK government, in their official webpage, to those coming to Portugal:

- O Because leaving possessions in hired cars is a target loved by thieves, we will just take you around in cars that are not hired. Also, we won't take you around in crowded transportation, so both car thieves and pickpocket will not be having dinner at your expense. Or tipping.
- You will stay in secure holiday accommodation. The only risk you'll take is never wanting to leave. We can help you with that too.

- We know the police number, the firemen number and the British Consulate number. You'll be fine.
- o Going to bars and leaving your drink unattended? Not a problem. We will watch them for you. Like a sober hawk.
- Driving on the right is hard and you're on holidays, so we will do the driving. You just do the sightseeing.

Conclusion

When choosing the area for a business travel and tourism, as one of the largest industries in the world came as an easy choice. Portugal, with recent international accomplishments and boosting current financial stance looks to tourism as a source for further growth, internal employment and international recognition.

The product here presented has been decomposed in four options for the public it aims at, one regarding food, another beverages, a third shopping and a fourth joining all previous three for those that wish and can stay longer than the weekend required for the first three.

And who are these people we aim to attract? We let them define themselves by their statistical choices and had a look at how their government describes Portugal and also how Portugal is now presented in internationally in the aspects described by them as valued. To finish we tried to present a possible briefing for any campaign manager looking to sell this product.

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