

**UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR  
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES  
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES**



**TOPIC:**

**“TOURISM PRODUCT BASED ON THE COMMERCIALIZATION OF ECOLOGICAL BAGS.”**

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## Contents

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| Abstract .....  | 1         |
| Introduction .....  | 2         |
| <b>CHAPTER I</b> .....  | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>PROFILE OF THE TOURISM PRODUCT</b> .....   | <b>3</b>  |
| Objectives .....  | 4         |
| Justification .....   | 5         |
| Description of the Tourist Product .....  | 6         |
| Application of Strategy for Human Development and Sustainability .....                | 18        |
| <b>CHAPTER II</b> .....   | <b>21</b> |
| <b>CONDITIONING ELEMENTS OF THE TOURIST SERVICE</b> .....                             | <b>21</b> |
| History of Tourism .....  | 22        |
| What Is Tourism? .....  | 24        |
| History of Tourism in El Salvador .....   | 29        |
| Natural Resources of Destination Areas .....  | 35        |
| Cultural Identity .....   | 38        |
| Principles of Sustainable Tourism .....   | 42        |
| Strategic Plan of Quality .....   | 51        |
| <b>CHAPTER III</b> .....  | <b>59</b> |
| <b>ENTREPRENEUR RESPONSIBILITY</b> .....  | <b>59</b> |
| Entrepreneur Profile .....  | 60        |
| Entrepreneur .....  | 61        |
| Entrepreneurial Ecosystem .....   | 61        |
| Characteristics of the Entrepreneurship Ecosystem .....                               | 64        |
| Types of Entrepreneurs .....  | 65        |
| Basic Characteristics of Successful Entrepreneurs .....                               | 68        |
| Attitudes that Destroy Versus Attitudes that Build in the Entrepreneurial World ..... | 71        |
| Responsibility .....  | 93        |
| Niche Market .....  | 96        |
| Importance of Niche Markets .....   | 97        |
| Elements to Select a Niche Market .....   | 100       |

|                                     |            |
|-------------------------------------|------------|
| Niche Market Strategies .....       | 101        |
| Niche Marketing of my Product ..... | 107        |
| Target Audience .....               | 108        |
| Niche of my Product .....           | 110        |
| Strategic Alliance.....             | 111        |
| Logo of my Product.....             | 113        |
| Slogan .....                        | 113        |
| Mission .....                       | 114        |
| Vision .....                        | 114        |
| Values.....                         | 115        |
| <b>CHAPTER IV</b> .....             | <b>117</b> |
| <b>REFERENCES AND ANNEXES</b> ..... | <b>117</b> |
| References .....                    | 118        |
| Annexes .....                       | 126        |

## **Abstract**

This work is presented as part of the specialization in tourism and develops the project "The Adventure Bag", a tourist product designed specifically to meet the needs of travelers in El Salvador. The proposed project, The Adventure Bag, seeks to materialize the principles of entrepreneurship through a comfortable and versatile backpack designed for tourists, which is suitable for different types of trips: beach, mountain or city. This work not only aims to create an attractive product, but also to integrate the knowledge acquired on tourism product design, customer loyalty and entrepreneurial responsibility. During the development of this project, different key aspects were addressed. First, the product profile, where the essential characteristics of the backpack were defined, as well as the elements that make it unique and desirable for modern tourists. Secondly, the conditional elements for the product design, analyzing the environment of the tourism market in El Salvador, and how it influences the creation of products that align with current trends in ecotourism and responsible tourism. Finally, the entrepreneur profile, which included a detailed analysis of the motivations, competencies and challenges that the Salvadoran entrepreneur faces when launching an innovative product to the market.

**Keywords:** sustainable tourism, tourism innovation, tourism development, tourist destinations, responsible tourism, ecotourism, tourist experience, tourism product.

## Introduction

*“There must be a better way to make the things we want, a way that doesn’t spoil the sky, or the rain or the land.”*

*Paul McCartney, 2014*

As the years have passed, it has been possible to notice how the world has been developing gradually day after day, and how change has come to reinvent humanity, the same change is what moves human beings to create or transform things again, in order to supply or satisfy their needs. Tourism has been the answer to one of many needs that people have had to turn to as a way to provide or receive a service.

The demand for providing a service is increasingly high and becomes a constant challenge since there has been a growing concern for environmental preservation which has generated unprecedented demand in the tourism industry. More and more travelers are looking for experiences that not only allow them to enjoy fascinating destinations, but also contribute positively to the conservation of local ecosystems. This trend has driven the need for tourism products that sustainably integrate natural beauty with environmental responsibility. In this context, the provision of tourism services related to the environment has become a highly demanded sector, where the quality of the experience is enriched by the commitment to protecting the environment. In this chapter, we present the creation of a new tourism product that can be adapted to meet the needs of travelers, raising awareness of the importance of protecting and prolonging the care of the environment.

# **CHAPTER I**

## **PROFILE OF THE TOURISM PRODUCT**

## Objectives

### General Objective:

Design a tourist product focused on Ecotourism and its subdivisions: Beach and Sun Tourism, Mountain Tourism and Urban Tourism of El Salvador.

### Specific Objectives:

- Offer an ecological backpack made of recycled materials that contribute to the needs of the environment.
- Promote sustainable tourism by incorporating an ecological kit, designed for the needs of the tourists and at the same time being environmentally friendly.
- Foment cultural awareness by offering a heritage excursion kit that includes local cultural guides, fair trade, and ecofriendly artisan products.

## **Justification**

El Salvador, nestled in the heart of Central America, captivates visitors with its stunning natural beauty and rich cultural heritage. From its beautiful beaches along the Pacific coast to its green mountains and majestic volcanoes, the country offers a diverse landscape to explore.

For that reason, The Adventure Bag is conceived as a tool to promote ecotourism in El Salvador, offering travelers a practical and conscious option to explore and enjoy the various wonders that the country has to offer. By using recycled materials and sustainable manufacturing processes, this backpack not only minimizes its environmental impact, but also contributes to reducing plastic waste and promotes a circular economy.

In addition to its commitment to sustainability, the Adventure Bag stands out for its durability and versatility. Designed to withstand the demands of travel, whether on the Salvadoran Beaches, mountain hiking trails or city streets, this backpack offers the resistance and functionality necessary to accompany adventurers on all their journeys. Its ergonomic design and multiple compartments ensure for the users, while its modern and attractive style makes it a versatile accessory.

Last but not least, the Adventure Bag recognizes the importance of making ecotourism accessible to everyone. Taking into account the above, this backpack offers an affordable option for those who want to travel responsibly and consciously. By doing so, the Adventure Bag not only democratizes access to sustainable tourism, but also educates and raises awareness among more people about the importance of protecting and preserving our natural environment.

## Description of the Tourist Product

### Name of the Tourist Product:

"Adventure Bag" is a backpack designed with a clear purpose: to facilitate and enrich the travel experiences of conscious tourists. The term "Adventure" reflects the exploratory and exciting nature of tourism, suggesting an attitude of openness to new experiences and destinations. The word "Bag" refers to the practical and functional component of the backpack, highlighting its usefulness for transporting essential items during the trip. The combination of both terms conveys the idea that this backpack is more than a simple accessory; It is an indispensable companion for any adventure, offering comfort, versatility,<sup>1</sup> and environmental awareness.



Figure 1: Adventure bag logo, presented by us.

### Location:

Considering that we are a 100% Salvadoran product and considering that El Salvador<sup>2</sup> is a country full of charm and diversity, our strategic points are the most prominent shopping centers and the most visited tourist destinations. From the vibrant capital, San Salvador, to the picturesque beaches in coastal of El Salvador, our presence is rooted in places that attract locals and travelers



Figure 2: Fast delivery truck online delivery express (2021). *truck delivery.com*

<sup>1</sup> Versatility: The ability to be able to change easily for different purposes.

<sup>2</sup> Varela, R. Santamaria, Flemion, Philip F., Schultze-Kraft, Markus and Browning, David G. (2024, October 19). El Salvador. Encyclopaedia Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/place/El-Salvador>

alike. We are committed to serving the Salvadoran community from strategic locations that reflect the wealth and vitality of our beautiful country.

We have an online store with nationwide shipping. Additionally, you will find us in emblematic shopping centers such as Metro Centro and Multiplaza, locations that offer convenience and accessibility for those seeking our products.

Regarding our location in tourist areas, we have 3 physical stores in the following places:

On the tourist beach of El Tunco, one of the coastal jewels of El Salvador, our point of sale faces the Pacific Ocean. Located among the bars and colorful craft shops, our space offers visitors the opportunity to purchase our "Adventure Bag" backpack before embarking on their water adventures or simply relaxing on the beach.

On the slopes of the majestic Santa Ana volcano, our point of sale is strategically located at the base of the mountain. Here, hikers and nature lovers can equip themselves with backpacks before undertaking the ascent to the peak, ensuring they have everything they need for a safe and comfortable experience at altitude.



Figure 3: The views of PLAYA EL TUNCO (2018). *Tunco Beach.com*

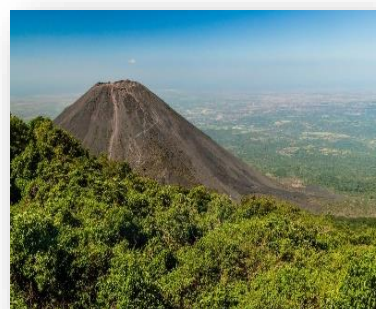


Figure 4: Santa Ana: El volcán más alto de El Salvador (2017). *volcan-de-el-salvador.com*

In Suchitoto,<sup>3</sup> one of the most charming and picturesque towns in El Salvador, our point of sale integrates perfectly into the magical atmosphere of its cobbled streets and colonial architecture. Here, travelers can discover our "Adventure Bag" backpack as they explore the rich culture, history, and natural beauty this destination has to offer.



Figure 5: Suchitoto, El Salvador 087 (2010).  
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/swigart/758302590/>

### **Adventure Bag**

In the current era, where concern for the environment is at an all-time high, the tourism industry has faced a paradigmatic shift towards sustainability<sup>4</sup> (UNWTO)<sup>5</sup>. In this context, Adventure Bag emerges as an innovative ecological backpack designed to promote sustainable tourism while offering comfort and functionality to conscious travelers. With a unique combination of practicality, environmental awareness and versatility, the Adventure Bag positions itself as an essential companion for those who want to explore the world responsibly.

The essence of Adventure Bag lies in its commitment to the environment and the promotion of responsible tourism practices. Made from eco-friendly and sustainable materials, this backpack not only reduces the negative environmental impact associated with conventional products, but also encourages a conscious consumer mindset among its users. Every detail, from fabrics to accessories, is carefully selected to ensure

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<sup>3</sup> El Salvador Travel. (n.d). Suchitoto. <https://elsalvador.travel/destination/suchitoto/>  
 Suchitoto: A place of birds and flowers.

<sup>4</sup> Sustainability: Ensuring the needs of the present without compromising the needs of future generations, always without relinquishing the protection of the environment, economic growth, and social development.

<sup>5</sup> Acronym meaning UNWTO: United Nation World Tourism Organization.

maximum quality and durability without compromising ethical and environmental principles<sup>6</sup>.

One of the most distinctive features of Adventure Bag is its focus on customization and adaptability to different types of tourism. With three specialized kits available: the Sun and Beach Kit, the Mountain Kit and the Urban Kit, this backpack becomes an invaluable resource for a wide range of adventures.

The Sun and Beach Kit is designed for ocean and sand lovers, including essentials like organic sunscreen, quick-drying microfiber towels, and a reusable water bottle. This kit not only facilitates comfortable experience in coastal environments, but also promotes environmentally friendly practices at beach destinations.

On the other hand, the Mountain Kit is designed for those seeking to explore the majestic natural wonders of mountainous regions. Equipped with a stainless-steel canteen, compass, and organic energy snacks, this kit provides everything you need for outdoor adventures while minimizing the impact on the surrounding ecosystem<sup>7</sup>.

Finally, Urban Kit is aimed at travelers who enjoy the excitement and diversity of cities. With items like a collapsible water bottle, a city map printed on recycled paper, and eco-friendly headphones, this kit offers a hands-on, mindful experience for exploring urban environments responsibly.

In addition to its functionality and commitment to sustainability, Adventure Bag also acts as a catalyst for environmental education and community awareness. Through

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<sup>6</sup> White Papers. World Economic Forum. (2022). *Ten Principles for Sustainable Destinations: Charting a new path forward for travel and tourism*.

[https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_Ten\\_Principles\\_for\\_Sustainable\\_Destinations\\_2022.pdf](https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Ten_Principles_for_Sustainable_Destinations_2022.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Ecosystem: An ecosystem is a geographic area where plants, animals and other organisms, as well as weather and landscapes, work together to form a bubble of life.

awareness programs and collaborations with local organizations, the brand strives to engage travelers in the protection and preservation of the destinations they visit.

Adventure Bag is not just a backpack, it is a symbol of commitment to responsible and sustainable tourism. By uniting a passion for adventure with environmental protection, this innovative travel companion is changing the way people explore the world, proving that it is possible to enjoy unforgettable experiences without compromising the future of our planet.

### **Product Attributes**

**Sustainability and Environmental Responsibility:** Adventure Bag is made with ecological and sustainable materials, making it an environmentally friendly option. From its design to its manufacturing, every aspect of the backpack is designed to minimize its environmental impact and promote conscious consumer practices.

**Versatility and Adaptability:** One of the most notable characteristics of the Adventure Bag is its ability to adapt to different types of tourism. With three specialized kits available (Sun and Beach Kit, Mountain Kit, and Urban Kit), the backpack becomes a versatile resource for a wide range of adventures, from days on the beach to mountain excursions or urban exploration.

**Functionality and Comfort:** Every detail of the Adventure Bag has been designed with the comfort and practicality of the traveler in mind, its compartments and pockets are strategically placed for easy access to essentials, while its adjustable straps and ergonomic design ensure comfortable carrying all day long.

**Quality and Durability:** Adventure Bag is built to the highest quality standards, using durable materials that resist the wear and tear of daily use and adverse

environmental conditions. This durability not only ensures a long product life, but also reduces the need for frequent replacements, thus contributing to the reduction of waste.

**Environmental Awareness and Education:** Beyond simply being a product, Adventure Bag acts as a vehicle for environmental awareness and education. Through collaborations with local organizations and awareness programs, the brand seeks to involve travelers in the protection and preservation of the destinations they visit, fostering a mentality of respect and care for the environment.

**Table 1.** Costs and Efficiency of the Adventure Bag and its kits.

| PRODUCT                                       | COMPONENTS   | PRODUCTION COST | SALE PRICE |
|---|--|-----------------|------------|
| Adventure Bag                                 | A backpack made with bamboo and recycled polyester that includes specialized compartments for each kit.  | \$10.00         | \$20.00    |
| Sun and Beach Kit<br>(Adventure Bag included) | Bamboo towel with Salvadoran art - Reusable stainless-steel bottle - Eco-friendly sunscreen - Biodegradable waterproof bag - Illustrated guide made of recycled paper that shows all the beaches you can visit in El Salvador. | \$20.00         | \$40.00    |

|  |   |                |                |
|--|---|----------------|----------------|
| <p>Mountain Kit<br/>(Adventure Bag included)</p> | <p>Recyclable thermal blanket, reusable stainless-steel bottle, ecological first aid kit, ecological compass, illustrated guide made of recycled paper showing the most popular mountains and volcanoes in El Salvador.</p> | <p>\$20.00</p> | <p>\$40.00</p> |
| <p>Urban Kit<br/>(Adventure Bag included)</p>    | <p>Recycled paper notebook, bamboo pen, wallet made of recycled materials, reusable stainless-steel bottle, ecological first aid ki, illustrated guide made of recycled paper showing the tourist towns of El Salvador.</p> | <p>\$20.00</p> | <p>\$40.00</p> |

Note: Own elaboration.

Ecological Backpack (Adventure Bag): Designed specifically for travelers, made with sustainable materials and with multiple compartments to organize kits. The production cost is \$10, and the selling price is \$20.

Sun and Beach Kit: Includes products aimed at beach and sun activities, all made with ecological materials. The production cost is \$20, and the selling price is \$40.

Mountain Kit: Contains essential items for hikers, all selected for their low environmental impact. The production cost is \$20, and the selling price is \$40.

Urban Kit: Designed for users in urban environments, each product is ecological and practical for life in the city in addition to being collectible objects. The production cost is \$20, and the selling price is \$40.

### **Tourism Typology**

Our product, the Adventure Bag, is mainly oriented towards **Ecotourism**.<sup>8</sup> One of the main objectives of ecotourism is based on minimizing the negative impact on the natural and socio-cultural environments; Thus, increasing awareness towards the conservation of natural and cultural assets, both among locals and tourists.

According to the UNWTO,<sup>9</sup> ecotourism is a type of nature-based tourism activity in which the essential motivation of the visitor is to observe, learn, discover, experience, and appreciate biological and cultural diversity with a responsible attitude to protect the integrity of the ecosystem and improve the well-being of the environment of the local community. **The Adventure Bag** aims for the public to see its use as a responsible and conscious way of helping our planet while enjoying the different types of tourism that El Salvador offers to us. Chon, K. (1990)<sup>10</sup> explains that we have to consider that for tourism lovers there are phases to choose a destination: first, the tourist builds a mental image of the destination, a process before making the trip, then the decision to travel, participation, return, and create a new experience. For this reason, and due to the design of the

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<sup>8</sup> Ecotourism and protected areas. (n.d.). UNWTO | World Tourism Organization a UN Specialized Agency. <https://www.unwto.org/sustainabledevelopment/ecotourism-and-protected-areas>

<sup>9</sup> Acronym meaning UNWTO: United Nation World Tourism Organization

<sup>10</sup> Chon, K. (1990). The role of destination image in tourism: A review and discussion. *The Tourist Review*, 45(2), 2-9. <https://doi.org/10.1108/eb058040>

Adventure Bag, this product is focused on the following subcategories of tourism: Sun and beach tourism, urban tourism, and mountain tourism.

### Sun and Beach Tourism

“Sun and beach tourism refers to holidays taken for the purpose of staying in or near beaches.

The most common activity for people on a beach holiday is relaxing, which means they go sunbathing, swim, picnic and play on the beach.” (CBI, 2021).<sup>11</sup>

For many young people, beach holidays also include

partying and clubbing. Travelers enjoy beach tourism for the combination of scenic beauty with fresh air and recreational activities. Sun and beach tourism is one of the most demanded types of tourism in El Salvador.

The Sun and Beach Route of El Salvador has an approximate extension of 321 kilometers and shows us the most beautiful of the Pacific Ocean in the Salvadoran coastal area. For this type of tourism, the **Adventure Bag** offers its first kit: The sun and beach kit. This kit is adequate for what an average tourist needs to have a good time on their trip and enjoy the sun and beach destination.



Figure 6: Turismo en El Salvador (2014). *El Salvador.com*

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<sup>11</sup> The European market potential for sun and beach tourism. (2021, January 20). Strengthening the sustainability of SMEs through exports | CBI. <https://www.cbi.eu/market-information/tourism/sun-beach-tourism/market-potential>

## Urban Tourism

The different activities which take place in cities and offer a broad range of experiences like knowing about culture, architecture, technology, social participation, and products for leisure and business are denominated as urban tourism (UN tourism. n.d.).<sup>12</sup>

**Adventure Bag** seeks to make known through its **urban kit** the way to introduce people to the different cities around El Salvador. Offering some accessories that will be useful in this kind of adventure.

The three greatest cities of El Salvador are San Salvador, San Miguel, and Santa Ana. The city most crowded by visitors is **San Salvador** the capital, since people can find a lot of culture and history through these places such as: La plaza San Francisco Morazán, La plaza Gerardo Barrios, and La plaza La Libertad. Over this area are located other



Figure 7: El resurgir turístico de San Salvador (2024).  
*Diarioelsalvador.com*

attractions, for example: museums, monuments, a theater, a library, the Rosario church, and Bicentenario park. Near to San Salvador city, there is another popular place La Zona Rosa where tourist can visit too by its restaurants, hotels, bars, museums, and entertainment centers.

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<sup>12</sup> Urban tourism. (n.d). UN Tourism, a specialized Agency of the United Nations. *UN Tourism Urban Tourism (unwto.org)*

**San Miguel City**, it is known for having high temperatures above 30°C, it is considered the hottest place in El Salvador. It may not be the place that visitors want to spend a long time, but without a doubt it is a place where you can enjoy its gastronomy, its warm people, its Cathedral located in the central square, also there is an impressive landscape of the San Miguel Volcano. Another reason for visiting this city is for the annual event “The Carnival” is considered the biggest in El Salvador.



Figure 8: San Miguel tuvo un carnaval espectacular (2018). *Carnaval.com*

**Santa Ana City** is another pretty place that caught visitors' attention for having marvelous preserved colonial architecture, particularly the Cathedral of Santa Ana located in the heart of the square. Besides that, there is a place where the prominent ruins of Tazumal can be appreciated, and if it is looking for something more colorful people can visit the famed Ruta las Flores, popular for its charming villages and beautiful landscapes, this city involves people in a great adventure from having a bath in the thermal pools or getting lost in the living labyrinth of Apaneca.



Figure 9: Santa Ana Cathedral (2022). *Cathedral. Santa Ana.com*

## Mountain Tourism

Mountain tourism refers to the activities which take place in a defined and limited geographical space such as hills or mountains with distinctive characteristics and attributes that are inherent to a specific landscape, topography, climate, biodiversity (flora and fauna) and local community (UN tourism, n.d.).<sup>13</sup> Among the activities you can enjoy in these

places are hiking, camping, and some extreme sports that will make this a unique experience away from the hustle and bustle of the city.

For everything that involves mountain tourism, the Adventure Bag offers its third Kit, which is the **Mountain Kit**. This Kit is specially designed for lovers of nature, adventure, hiking and mountains. people who want to have a more comfortable and strange experience at the same time. The Adventure bag will have all the accessories and all the necessities that a mountain climber needs in a

backpack for the development of their journey. **The mountain kit** is inspired by the relief of El Salvador, which constitutes one of the main charms of this small but at the same time great country. You can see throughout its geography, imposing volcanoes, and



Figure 10: Volcán de Santa Ana (2024)  
<https://elsalvador.travel/destination/santa-ana-volcano-ilamatepec/>



Figure 11: Senderismo en El Salvador (2023)  
<https://senderismo.info.sv/senderismo-en-el-salvador-es-possible-hacerlo-sin-guia/>

<sup>13</sup> Mountain tourism. (n.d.). UNWTO | World Tourism Organization a UN Specialized Agency. <https://www.unwto.org/mountain-tourism>

mountains, as well as hills, valleys, lakes, coasts, and beaches that adorn every corner of this wonderful land. (Cultura Azul, 2024).<sup>14</sup>

### **Application of Strategy for Human Development and Sustainability**

The implementation of strategies for human development and sustainability emerges as a fundamental pillar in the conception of innovative products that help the environment and our communities. In a global context where attention is increasingly focused on the intersection between human progress and environmental preservation, these strategies take on even greater relevance.

Adventure Bag addresses this ethos by combining tourism functionality with environmental responsibility. Below we present the sustainable strategies used for the creation and functionality of our product:

**One Planet:** "The One Planet vision reminds us of the importance of living in harmony with nature, recognizing that our individual and collective actions have a significant impact on the health of the planet and the well-being of future generations." (World Wildlife Fund, 2018).<sup>15</sup>

The Adventure Bag, a backpack designed for tourists with a kit adapted to different types of tourism, exemplifies how the "One Planet" sustainable strategy can be integrated into products to promote environmental and social sustainability.

The United Nations Environment Program (2019) highlights that the "One Planet" strategy is based on the fundamental principle of living within the limits of the planet,

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<sup>14</sup> Cerros y montañas de El Salvador. (2024). <https://culturaazul.com/el-salvador/cerros-y-montanas/>

<sup>15</sup> World wildlife fund (WWF). (2018). *The Grants Register 2018*, 976-976. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-94186-5\\_1283](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-94186-5_1283)

recognizing that natural resources are finite and must be used sustainably. In the case of Adventure Bag, this translates into the selection of recycled and biodegradable materials for the manufacture of the backpack and its complementary kit, thus reducing the environmental footprint of the product. For example, the outer fabric of the backpack is made from recycled polyester, thereby reducing dependence on virgin resources, and decreasing the amount of plastic waste in the environment.

Furthermore, Sonuç, N. (2020)<sup>16</sup> emphasizes the importance of sustainable tourism to minimize environmental impact and maximize social and economic benefits for local communities. Adventure Bag addresses this concern by offering a versatile and durable product that adapts to different types of tourism, encouraging a responsible consumption approach and reducing waste generation.

In terms of social equity, Adventure Bag is committed to fair and safe working conditions for the workers involved in its production. As mentioned by the United Nations Environment Program (2019),<sup>17</sup> social equity is a fundamental aspect of sustainability, ensuring that all people involved in the supply chain are treated with dignity and respect.

In summary, by applying the "One Planet" sustainable strategy for the production and use of our product, we promote environmental conservation, the social and economic well-being of communities, and encourage more responsible and sustainable tourism.

**Climate Change:** In the current context, where climate change represents one of the greatest environmental challenges, the sustainable "Climate Change" strategy has

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<sup>16</sup> Sonuç, N. (2020). Sustainable tourism (Sustainable development of tourism, sustainable tourism management). Encyclopedia of Sustainable Management, 1-8.

<sup>17</sup> Report of the United Nations environment assembly of the United Nations environment programme. (2019). Report of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme.

become imperative. This strategy seeks to mitigate the effects of global warming and promote practices that reduce greenhouse gas emissions. In this scenario, products such as Adventure Bag, a special backpack made for travelers, which comes with a kit that works for all kinds of travel activities, emerge as innovative solutions that contribute to this strategy.

Adventure Bag directly addresses concerns related to climate change by promoting a more sustainable lifestyle among tourists. By offering an included kit with basic elements depending on the type of tourism, the backpack encourages a more conscious and minimalist packaging approach, reducing the number of disposable products and therefore the emissions associated with their production and disposal.

The World Tourism Organization (2002)<sup>18</sup> emphasizes the importance of sustainable tourism in the fight against climate change, recognizing that tourism activities can have a significant impact on the environment. By providing an option for more responsible and conscious tourism, products like Adventure Bag contribute to this cause.

Furthermore, according to the report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC, 2008),<sup>19</sup> urgent and coordinated actions are needed to limit global warming to safe levels. Adopting products and practices that promote sustainability, like the Adventure Bag, is an integral part of this global strategy to address climate change.

In conclusion, Adventure Bag aligns with the sustainable "Climate Change" strategy by offering a practical and conscious solution for tourists, reducing emissions associated with tourism and promoting a more sustainable lifestyle.

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<sup>18</sup> Contributions of the world tourism organization to the world summit on sustainable development (English version). (2002). <https://doi.org/10.18111/9789284410910>

<sup>19</sup> Intergovernmental panel on climate change (Ippc). (2008). The Complete Guide to Climate Change, 236-240. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203888469-41>

**CHAPTER II**

**CONDITIONING ELEMENTS OF THE**

**TOURIST SERVICE**

## History of Tourism

Tourism is a very noticeable phenomenon worldwide. Except for those vulnerable areas that have been the center of political conflicts or war, they are places where people do not usually visit, but even so you can see the presence of some journalists, writers, researchers, who arrive at those places needing a local service to be able to establish themselves.

### Ancient Tourism

<sup>20</sup>The history of tourism has transcended from many years before, when people used to make long trips in search of new trade routes, and that were not yet known by the name of tourism. For example, the Egyptians, 3000 BC, traveled great distances in search of trade and souvenir shopping. Even some civilizations of Greece and Rome are also known for having traveled and sailed great distances. In Rome they built road networks designed for different purposes, one of them was to mobilize the passage of the elite soldiers of the Roman army, although military movements are not considered as tourism, but there were others created for purposes of commerce, health, religion, and sightseeing, which can be considered today as types of tourism. The Polynesians, a thousand years ago, sailed in canoes to explore new islands where they



Figure 12: image taken from:  
[https://www.freepik.com/premium-ai-image/map-world-with-ship-map-world\\_52865975.htm](https://www.freepik.com/premium-ai-image/map-world-with-ship-map-world_52865975.htm)

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<sup>20</sup> Morales, F. López, F. (2020). Historia del Turismo. Economipedia.

<https://economipedia.com/definiciones/historia-del-turismo.html>

Robinson, P. Luck, M. Smith, S. (2020). Tourism. (2Edition). CAB Internacional.

<https://books.google.com.mx/books?id=cDvqDwAAQBAJ&lpg=PR3&dq=tourism%20&lr&hl=es&pg=PP1#v=onepage&q&f=true>

could settle. Explorers such as Columbus, Magellan, Marco Polo, and Cortes were well known in Europe and the Americas and are also considered examples of tourists.

Besides that, The Hajj<sup>21</sup> is one of the oldest traditions in the world, attracting huge numbers of people every year. In Islam, the Hajj refers to the pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca in Saudi Arabia, which every adult Muslim must undertake at least once in their lifetime. These types of traditions fit the definition of tourism given by the United Nations



Figure 13: image taken from: [India.com/festivals-events/hajj](https://www.india.com/festivals-events/hajj)

World Tourism Organization (UNWTO),<sup>22</sup> for Muslims this is seen as a unique travel experience.

### Early Modern Tourism

<sup>23</sup>Tourism is a universal phenomenon that has existed throughout history and on a global scale, each city, region and country have a unique tourism narrative that sets it apart from other places. The shape and pace of tourism development in a destination is influenced by a variety of factors, including political history, social media, technology, environmental constraints and more. The history of tourism is occasionally discussed, usually touching on familiar themes such as “The Grand Tour” of Europe between the 17th and mid-19th centuries or Thomas Cook’s first package tour in 1841.

<sup>21</sup> Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia. (2024, August 12). hajj. Encyclopedia Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/hajj>

<sup>22</sup> Acronym meaning UNWTO: United Nation World Tourism Organization.

<sup>23</sup> Morales, F. López, F. (2020). Historia del Turismo. Economipedia. <https://economipedia.com/definiciones/historia-del-turismo.html>

## What Is Tourism?

Most people have many different ideas about the definition of tourism.<sup>24</sup> Some of the ideas that people can say are understandably accepted because many things have a close relationship with tourism. Some definitions are focused on traveling somewhere and staying away from home, it can be as well associated with leisure activities, but those are not considered enough clear.

Furthermore, difficulties are presented in identifying the relationship between travel and tourism. Due to this, Leiper offered in 1979 a model known as the tourism system. (figure 14)<sup>25</sup>. What the model shows is simply where people travel from and where they travel to, in the middle can be found the other elements that are part of the tourist's route, which can be done in different ways such as hiking, taking a ride or crossing a river, everything will be part of the tourist's experience.

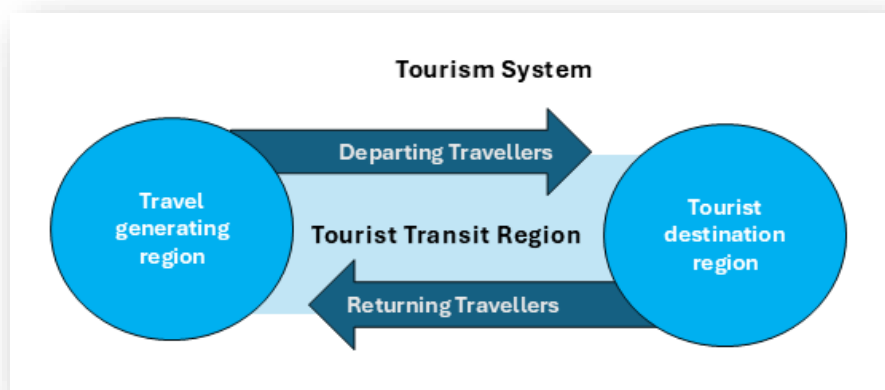


Figure 14: The Tourist System by Leiper

<sup>24</sup> Robinson, P. Luck, M. Smith, S. (2020). Tourism. (2Edition). CAB Internacional. <https://books.google.com.mx/books?id=cDvqDwAAQBAJ&lpg=PR3&dq=tourism%20&lr&hl=es&pg=PP1#v=onepage&q&f=true>

<sup>25</sup> Adapted from Tourism System by Leiper (1979).

Even so, when the tourist comes to the destination, they will look for accommodation, food, or some drinks which can be inferred as a welcome or hospitality of the place. Those facts are likewise mentioned by Medlik and Middleton in 1973 as a “bundle of activities, services, and benefits that constitute the entire tourism experience.” This means that all the activities, facilities, attractions, accessibility and costs are brought together in a single package and are shown as a tourist product that helps enrich the tourist's stay. This is also supported by Koutoulas (2001).<sup>26</sup>

In this way, the tourist product is made up of several elements:

The primary tourist supply includes all the components created for a purpose that draw the tourist to a destination such as natural or exotic attractions, historical sites, events, artistic recreation, secure environment, hospitable attitude, etc. (Krippendorf, 1971: 19; Kaspar, 1991: 64; Mrnjavac, 1992:117)

Secondly, tourist supply includes all the components created for satisfying needs by a tourist to visit a destination and to consume its attractions such as hotels, transportation, leisure activities, services provided by tour operators, parks, souvenirs, and others. (Medlik and Middleton, 1973:132; Coltman, 1989:80; Gunn, 1993:769).

A tangible product<sup>27</sup> refers to a physical object that can be seen, touched and felt. It is one that can be perceived by the senses and has a physical presence in the real world. These products are palpable and can be transported and stored. For example: a bed, a car, food, a telephone and others. These allow for a complete and satisfactory experience for the tourist.

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<sup>26</sup> Koutoulas, D. (2015). Understanding the Tourism Product. University of Patras.  
[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/280317594\\_Understanding\\_the\\_Tourism\\_Product](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/280317594_Understanding_the_Tourism_Product)

<sup>27</sup> Zone Green. (n.d). What is a tangible product? <https://zonagreen.com.mx/que-es-un-producto-tangible/>

An intangible product is a service or asset that cannot be physically touched or seen. These products are characterized by being experiences or results that are obtained after an activity.

In this way, the relationship between the words leisure activities<sup>28</sup> and tourism can be distinguished. Therefore, leisure is time spent freely and can be used for rest, recreation or entertainment. For example: swimming, horse riding, hiking, playing, singing, traveling, shopping, sunbathing and others. All leisure activities are associated with the set of activities that are planned and offered as a tourist product that also enriches the tourist experience.

Early definitions proposed by the United Nations in 1963 define a tourist as someone who stays away from home for at least 24 hours, and their reasons may be for leisure activities, family visits, meetings, even excursions that may be less than 24 hours or more. This characteristic is supported by the definition given by the UNWTO (2008)<sup>29</sup> on the term Visitor:

A visitor is a traveller who makes a trip to a main destination outside his or her usual environment, for less than one year, for a principal purpose (business, leisure or other personal purpose) other than to be employed by an entity resident in the country or place visited. A visitor (domestic, inbound or outbound) is classified as a tourist, if his or her trip includes an overnight stay, or as a day visitor (or excursionist) otherwise.

Since tourists are a specific kind of traveler, tourism is a subset of travel. For this reason, travel is defined as "the movement of people to countries or places outside their

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<sup>28</sup> John, Spacey. (2020, June 28). 90 Examples of Leisure. Simplicable.  
<https://simplicable.com/life/leisure>

<sup>29</sup> The United Nations. (2008). Glossary of Tourism Terms. <https://www.unwto.org/glossary-tourism-terms#O>

usual environment for personal or commercial/professional purposes," according to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) (2008). These individuals are known as visitors, and tourism is associated with their activities, some of which entail spending money on trips; they may be tourists or excursionists, residents or non-residents. In order to clarify its definition, the UNWTO described the three main types of tourism:

- **Domestic tourism:** where people travel within their own country.
- **Inbound tourism:** means when a visitor who is not a resident of the country visits the country.
- **Outbound tourism:** where residents of a country decide to explore international destinations.

### Economic Impact of Tourism

Tourism is growing over the years and is generating a greater impact on society, economy, and environment, therefore, new elements such as industry are being added. The collection of production facilities across various industries that supply the consumer goods and services that tourists require is known as the tourism sector. These sectors are known as the tourism sectors because attracting tourists accounts for such a large portion of their supply that they could not continue to produce them in quantities that would be meaningful without tourists.



Figure 15: image taken from: <https://bradfordjacobs.com/blog/5-economic-indicators-that-affect-business-success/>

Tourism is one of the largest and fastest-growing sectors globally, contributing 10% to global GDP, 7% to global exports, and providing one in every ten jobs worldwide. Its ability to attract substantial investment, create employment opportunities, boost exports, and embrace new technologies underscores its importance as a driver of economic growth, particularly for least developed countries (LDCs) and small island developing states (SIDS).<sup>30</sup>

However, this growth comes with significant impacts. Research by UN Environment highlights that the tourism sector's consumption of essential resources such as energy, water, land, and materials including fossil fuels, minerals, metals, and biomass is rising in tandem with its generation of solid waste, sewage, biodiversity loss, and greenhouse gas emissions. In a 'business-as-usual' scenario, tourism could see increases of 154% in energy consumption, 131% in greenhouse gas emissions, 152% in water usage, and 251% in solid waste disposal by 2050. Thus, integrating sustainability into tourism development is crucial for the 21st century.

The United Nation Environment Programme (UNEP) is dedicated to embedding sustainability in tourism development by showcasing the economic, environmental, and socio-cultural benefits of sustainable practices. We assist governments and stakeholders at local, regional, and international levels, advocate for sustainable consumption and production within the tourism value chain, and foster public-private partnerships. Additionally, we encourage demand for sustainable tourism products and services.

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<sup>30</sup> The United Nations Environment Programme. (n.d). Tourism. <https://www.unep.org/explore-topics/resource-efficiency/what-we-do/responsible-industry/tourism>

## History of Tourism in El Salvador

In the late 19th century, El Salvador's tourism industry<sup>31</sup> began with the construction of railroad lines and transportation routes such as paved roads, paths that are often only passable during the dry season, seaports, and international and local airports.

### Railway Network

Railway transport was formally established in 1882, but over the years its routes were modified. One of its main routes was to the port of Acajutla in Sonsonate. This place became very busy with passengers transporting their goods from the west to the center of the country. Nowadays this means of transport is no longer used, but it was undoubtedly very popular in its heyday.



Figure 16: image taken from: <https://www.globalconstructionreview.com/el-salvador-plans-first-modern-railway/>

### Roads

In 1950, the Salvadoran road network consisted of the San Cristobal and El Amatillo stretch of the Pan-American Highway, which connects the borders of Guatemala and Honduras. There are structures leading to the seaports of Acajutla and La Libertad. The coastal highway was built between the Pan-American Highway and the Pacific coast. In later years, Perquín, north of Morazán, and Santa Rosa de Lima, in La Unión. In the

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<sup>31</sup> Océano Grupo Editorial. (2002). Enciclopedia de El Salvador (tomo 1, pp. 151-162). Océano Grupo Editorial.

western area, Sonsonate, Ahuachapán and Santa Ana were joined to reach Guatemala via Las Chinamas.

## **Airports**

Campo Marte was the capital's main airport at the beginning of the 20th century. Later, the Ilopango International Airport was built, which functioned as the main airport, but was later converted into a runway for air shows and military exercises that continue to preside over the formation of the Salvadoran Air Force. Later, the international airport was built in Comalapa, department of La Paz, forty kilometers from the capital, which was later called El Salvador's international airport, and to this day it receives all passengers on international flights.

The construction of transportation routes had a positive impact on the development of El Salvador, as this benefited economic growth and generated greater accessibility to places, giving them a different view. Initially, huge numbers of people moved from one place to another by means of these routes, with different purposes such as transporting merchandise from the west to the center of the country. This could have been seen as a type of tourism, but it was not until later that El Salvador began to establish tourism as a very important sector.

## **Evolution of Tourism**

<sup>32</sup>During the administration of Dr. Alfonso Quiñónez Molina, the government of El Salvador observed the importance of promoting tourism in our country, by publicizing its progress, historical sites, as well as showing our level of culture. In view of the fact that the country needed to promote tourism, the Legislative Assembly established the National

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<sup>32</sup> Universidad Tecnológica de El Salvador, 2002, p.7-10). Historia del Turismo en El Salvador. Biblioteca UTEC. <https://biblioteca.utec.edu.sv/siab/virtual/auprides/30042/capitulo%201.pdf>

Tourism Board through Decree number 135 of August 14, 1930. This organization would connect the Government with the Departmental Road Boards. In 1939, the Board of Ornamentation of Roads, Spas and Public Gardens was established in each of the 14 districts of the Republic. In 1945, the Boards of Progress and Tourism were established, which would deal with everything related to material progress for the benefit of tourism. In 1947, tourism being a profitable means of development, the efforts of the government and private companies were combined to establish the General Board of Tourism, whose objective was to promote the material and cultural development of the country. In 1948, the General Board of Tourism was founded and the construction of a network of tourist centers throughout the country began, with the objective of offering healthy recreation to Salvadoran families.

The Salvadoran Institute of Tourism (ISTU) was founded in 1961 and would be connected to the government through the Ministry of Economy. Some of its plans were to promote and develop tourism in El Salvador, as well as regulate tourist companies, and help in the conservation of tourist heritage and the protection and conservation of tourist areas. In 1967, the Law for the Promotion of the Tourism Industry was created, with the aim of promoting the creation of companies and entities dedicated to this sector. The main year of the tourism boom was 1978, since some important factors were identified, such as:

A positioning strategy for El Salvador has been established and marketing tactics have been proposed in order to begin the inclusion of our country on the international tourism map.

A plan was established to promote the development of the coastal area, taking the Jaltepeque Estuary on the Costa del Sol as the main area.

In 1979, the escalation of the socio-political crisis and increasing violence led to the outbreak of war the following year. As a result, the international press began to portray El Salvador as a dangerous destination for tourists, leading to a negative change in its international image and a decline in visitor numbers. During the 1980s, tourism reached its lowest level ever due to the armed conflict that was raging in the country.

### **Tourism During the Armed Conflict**

During the armed conflict in El Salvador (1980-1991), the tourism sector suffered a significant decline due to violence and instability. However, from 1989 onwards, a slight recovery in tourism was observed, with revenues reaching levels higher than those before the conflict. This upturn prompted the development of the "Strategic Plan for Tourism Communication", which considered ethnic tourism, mainly Salvadorans abroad visiting the country, as a positive component for the sector.

The signing of the Peace Accords on January 16, 1992, between the Government and the FMLN<sup>33</sup> allowed the entry of numerous international observers, which generated expectations about the recovery of tourism. At the end of 1992 and beginning of 1993, the need to develop strategies to promote tourism in El Salvador was recognized.

### **Economic Impact**

In 1996, new tourism companies emerged, although the country had not yet managed to consolidate a positive image as a tourist destination. In 1997, tourism opening was considered as an alternative to improving economic and social policy. The

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<sup>33</sup> Spanish Acronym FMLN: Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional.

Foundation for Economic and Social Development of El Salvador (FUSADES)<sup>34</sup> was charged with developing a plan to revitalize national tourism.

In this context, the Government, with the initiative of the private sector, developed a bill to create the Tourism Development Corporation for El Salvador. The Legislative Assembly approved Legislative Decree number 779, establishing the Salvadoran Tourism Corporation (CORSATUR) as the highest authority on tourism in the country.



Figure 17: image taken from: <https://seeklogo.com/free-vector-logos/el-salvador>

Tourism has become increasingly important in El Salvador's economy over the past decade, reflecting an increase in competition and the need to adapt to changes in the sector. This industry not only provides crucial income for various economic actors, but also generates a large number of jobs. The construction of basic infrastructure, such as hotels and commercial areas, along with their operation and maintenance, creates job opportunities that benefit locally and raise the standard of living of many people from different socioeconomic strata, even those without specialized training.

One of the main advantages of tourism for El Salvador is its ability to diversify the economy and generate foreign exchange, promoting economic development in the country. Tourism revenues are widely distributed, reaching small communities and fostering regional development, political stability and social transformation.

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<sup>34</sup> Spanish Acronym FUSADES: Fundación Salvadoreña para el Desarrollo Económico y Social.

## Tourism Infrastructure

El Salvador has a variety of attractions that allow it to offer multiple destinations,<sup>35</sup> facilitating access to different parts of the country in short periods of time. This diversity of tourist options is an excellent opportunity to boost the development of tourism and, therefore, of the country in general.

In just over twenty thousand square kilometers, El Salvador is distinguished by its geographical diversity, which includes mountain ranges, volcanoes, lakes and a coastline of more than three hundred kilometers with wide beaches. This compact territorial extension becomes an advantage by offering a variety of landscapes and natural resources in a small space. In addition, the country has a rich historical heritage that includes significant pre-Columbian and colonial monuments.

To the north, there is an important mountain range with elevations of over two thousand meters, with El Pital being the highest point at 2,730 meters. Among the places of interest are the Montecristo National Park in Metapán (Santa Ana) and the hills of La Palma and San Ignacio in Chalatenango, both covered with pine forests.

In the central zone, there is a notable volcanic chain with low levels of volcanic activity. The most prominent volcanoes are San Salvador or Quezaltepec (San Salvador), Santa Ana or Ilamatepec (Santa Ana), and Izalco (Sonsonate).

The southern coast is characterized by cliffs in the western area and extensive beaches in the central and eastern areas, such as Costa del Sol in La Herradura (La Paz) and El Espino in Jucuarán (Usulután). Two main lakes, Ilopango (located in La Paz, Cuscatlán and San Salvador) and Coatepeque (in Santa Ana), have adequate tourist

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<sup>35</sup> Océano Grupo Editorial. (2002). Enciclopedia de El Salvador (tomo 1, pp. 151-162). Océano Grupo Editorial.

infrastructure. The country is also dotted with numerous lagoons, the most notable being Olomega (San Miguel), Metapán (Santa Ana), Alegría (Usulután) and El Jocotal (San Miguel).

As for archaeological remains, there are important indigenous buildings and homes. Among the pre-Columbian monuments, the ruins of San Andrés (La Libertad) and Tazumal (Ahuachapán) stand out. The remains of houses can be seen in Joya de Cerén (La Libertad), a site that has been declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO<sup>36</sup>. Also of interest are the colonial churches located in Izalco, Metapán, Panchimalco, Caluco and El Pilar de San Vicente.

The international image is crucial, as a good reputation can attract more public and private investment in the conservation and improvement of tourist destinations. This, in turn, can lead to visitors enjoying their experience and recommending El Salvador as a destination.

### **Natural Resources of Destination Areas**

El Salvador is a country located in the heart of the Americas, cradle of exuberant nature, cultural beauty and hospitality that makes it attractive to tourism. With a territory of approximately 21,000 km<sup>2</sup>, tourists can visit any place in the country in a single day and go from a mountain environment to a beach environment in a few hours. It offers 321 km of beaches on the Pacific Ocean coast, majestic volcanoes, archaeological parks and all the culture of its colonial towns.

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<sup>36</sup> Acronym meaning: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

## Natural Beach Resources

The waters of the Pacific offer impressive waves that turn the Salvadoran coast into a surfer's paradise, and its sands are the perfect base for sports practices for both local residents and tourists. On the coast of El Salvador is the Gulf of Fonseca located on the eastern border of the country in the department of La Unión, which has waters shared with Honduras and Nicaragua. The beaches of El Salvador offer the opportunity to do various activities such as water skiing, swimming, kayaking, snorkeling and fishing, in addition to having excellent access through paved streets.



Figure 18: image taken from: <https://culturaazul.com/el-salvador/playas/>

## Natural Resources of Mountains

Mountain tourism is a type of tourist activity that takes place in a defined and delimited geographical space such as hills or mountains, with characteristics and attributes inherent to a certain landscape, topography, climate, biodiversity (flora and fauna) and a local community. It encompasses a wide spectrum of leisure and outdoor

sports activities. Among the activities that you can enjoy in these places are hiking, camping and some extreme sports that will make this a unique experience away from the hustle and bustle of the city.

### **Urban and Rural Tourism**

Tourism is one of the industries that contribute most to the economic, social, cultural and ecological development of countries, since it is a segment with great potential for the wealthy generation and, together with social and cultural elements, is an alternative for the comprehensive development of different sectors.

According to UN Tourism, urban tourism is “a type of tourist activity that takes place in an urban space with its inherent attributes characterized by a non-agricultural economy based on administration, manufacturing, trade and services and by constituting transport nodes. Urban destinations offer a broad and heterogeneous spectrum of cultural, architectural, technological, social and natural experiences and products for leisure and business.” Urban tourism can represent a driving force for the development of many cities and countries and contribute to the progress of the New Urban Agenda and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 11, which dictates that cities must be made more inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.



Figure 19: image taken from:  
<https://elsalvador.travel/destination/cerro-el-pital/-el-pital/>



Figure 20: image taken from:  
<https://elsalvadorturismo.net/el-salvador-y-su-cultura-urbana/>

Tourism is intrinsically linked to the way in which a city develops and offers more and better living conditions to its residents and visitors.

El Salvador has three large cities: San Salvador, San Miguel and Santa Ana. Each with different tourist options, depending on their customs, history and location. But there are also other cities that are smaller but are always attractive to national and foreign visitors.

Salvadoran urban tourism offers visits to its buildings of all kinds such as: museums, monuments, religious temples, urban parks, green areas, such as the Bicentenario Park and the Cuscatlán Park. Cultural identity, intangible tourist resources: festivities, celebrations, syncretism, gastronomy, legends, stories or tales from El Salvador, if possible, from the destination areas.

### **Cultural Identity**

Culture is defined as the system of shared beliefs, values, customs, behaviors and artifacts that members of a society use in interaction with each other and with their world, and that are transmitted from generation to generation through learning. Similarly, identity can be defined as the subjective attribution to values or objective references that characterize the individual, which begin as mere descriptors, but with the affiliation to the group that defines it, they end up configuring it and linking it to said group.

Cultural identity is defined as the set of peculiarities of a culture or group that allow individuals to identify themselves as members of this group, but also to differentiate themselves from other cultural groups, and includes aspects as diverse as language, the system of values and beliefs, traditions, rites, customs or behaviors of a community. Identity is linked to history and cultural heritage. It does not exist without memory, without

the ability to recognize the past, without symbolic elements or references that are unique to it and that help to build the future. It can be approached from two different currents. The first considers that the various cultural traits are transmitted through generations, configuring a cultural identity over time. The second point out that identity is not something that is inherited, but something that is constructed. Therefore, identity is not something static, solid or immutable; rather, it is dynamic, malleable and manipulable.

### **El Tunco Beach**

El Tunco beach is located in the department of La Libertad, 37 kilometers from San Salvador. It is an area well known for its parties with live music, especially “batucadas.” This is the most emblematic surfing destination in the country. Its name comes from a huge rock half submerged on its beach, which, in some remote time, suggested the shape of this animal.



Figure 21: image taken from:  
<https://turismo.sv/playas/el-tunco>

The mouth of a small river is surrounded by restaurants that offer drinks, food and various tourist services at an affordable price, especially for surfers.

The pig-shaped rock formation is the product of prehistoric volcanic eruptions that were sculpted by the constant force of the waves, giving it the shape of a pig. This provides the ideal habitat for the ecosystem of oysters, lobsters and corals, which can be observed through diving and snorkeling. In addition, due to the geographical location of the country, it enjoys a tropical environment characteristic of the Salvadoran coastal area.

## Suchitoto

Suchitoto is a colonial town with immense architectural beauty. It is a place that contains great cultural wealth. Since 1991, artists from more than 30 countries have participated in the Permanent Festival of Art and Culture of Suchitoto. This festival was born as a desire to leave aside the sounds of war and begin to listen to poems, Gregorian chants, and



Figure 22: image taken from:  
<https://everythingelsalvador.com/what-to-do-suchitoto/>

Bach music again. In addition, at least one festival event is held throughout the year at the Teatro de las Ruinas.

Throughout the year, a series of activities of music, dance, art, theater, and poetry take place in different parts of the city, including portals, parks, cafes, and hostels. Among the customs and traditions, you can find:

- Permanent festival of art and culture in February.
- Day of the Cross on May 3, with a procession, flowers, fruits, and sweets to worship the Holy Cross.
- Anniversary party on July 15th highlighting the color and folklore of all the neighborhoods.
- Corn Festival in August, as a tribute to the sacred and toso grain.
- Traditional INSU parade highlighting different cultures September 14<sup>th</sup>.
- Guazapa Hill Festival January 12th.

## Santa Ana Volcano

The relief of El Salvador is fascinating and constitutes one of the main charms of this small, but at the same time great country. You can see throughout its geography, imposing volcanoes and mountains, as well as hills, valleys, lakes, coasts and beaches. The Volcanic Mountain Range, which is part of the relief of El Salvador, is divided into two chains:



Figure 23: image taken from:  
<https://elsalvador.travel/destination/santa-ana-volcano-ilamatepec/>

the coastal and the interior. The highest volcanoes are found in it. Between the two chains there are 22 volcanoes. As an extension of the mountain ranges of Western Honduras, in the northern part of El Salvador, there are three imposing mountains, namely: Mitacomecayo, Chalatenango and Cabañas.

Located in the department of Santa Ana, the colossus has an altitude of 2,381 meters above sea level, being the highest volcano in El Salvador, recording its last eruptions in 2005. It is part of the Los Volcanes Complex in the Apaneca mountain range, within a tropical mountain cloud forest, in a coffee-growing region about 65 kilometers west of the capital. The main activities in the region are agriculture and tourism, so you will not regret the landscapes you will see from the road, in addition to the fruit stands that characterize the area. Once you begin to climb the volcano, the experience with the flora and fauna will be incredible, also providing you with a fresh and delicious climate. The ascent is of medium level (5/10), with a climate that varies. Among the recommendations of hikers are comfortable clothing, water, sunglasses, sunscreen, cap or hat and footwear suitable for mountaineering or hiking.

## **Principles of Sustainable Tourism**

Tourism, whether practiced on a large scale or through alternative methods, has consistently shown over the time that it inevitably leads to various social and environmental impacts. While both forms of tourism have consequences, mass tourism is most frequently associated with the most significant and noticeable effects, particularly at the destinations themselves. These effects are largely negative, although there are exceptions that arise due to the specific attributes of certain destinations. In contrast, alternative tourism, also referred to as “modern” or “post-mass” tourism by some, intentionally steers clear of traditional mass tourism sites. Instead, it focuses on fostering responsible actions and ethical behavior among tourists who participate in these newer tourism models. Many of these new approaches to tourism are guided by the principles of sustainable development, although this is not universally the case.

Sustainable development is a multifaceted and internationally debated concept, often abbreviated simply as sustainability. It first gained attention in the early 1980s as a novel approach to economic development, aimed at mitigating the adverse effects on the environment. Over time, the concept evolved and was embraced by the environmental movement, which sought to safeguard and conserve the Earth's natural resources.

In 1993, the United Nations, following a decision made in 1992, established the World Commission on Environment and Development with the primary goal of protecting the environment and promoting sustainability. The Commission's initial report, published in 1987, is widely recognized for its definition of sustainable development, as outlined in the influential Brundtland Report. This report is notable for establishing the core principles and legal framework of sustainable development, dividing them into five main areas: the

conservation of the natural environment, the protection of biodiversity and cultural heritage, the promotion of development and regeneration, the consideration of future generations in present-day decisions, and the reduction of global economic inequalities.

A widely recognized definition from the Bruntland Report describes sustainable development as “development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (Bruntland Report, 1987).

### **Definitions and Principles**

The notion of integrating the concept of sustainable development into the tourism sector emerged in the early 1990s. This integration gave rise to the concept of sustainable tourism, a field that rapidly gained significance both in academic circles and in practical applications within the tourism industry.

Sustainable tourism fundamentally distinguishes itself from mass tourism, aligning more closely, though not entirely, with alternative or contemporary forms of tourism, often referred to as post-mass tourism. Essentially, sustainable tourism is characterized as the antithesis of mass tourism.

Sustainable tourism has been defined as “a positive approach aimed at mitigating the tensions and conflicts that arise from the intricate interactions between the tourism industry, tourists, the natural environment, and the local communities that host these tourists” (Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 1993). Furthermore, the 1992 report “Beyond The Green Horizon” by Tourism Concern offers a definition of sustainable tourism as “tourism and its associated infrastructure that, both in the present and in the future, operates within the natural capacity for the regeneration and ongoing productivity of

natural resources; acknowledges the essential role that people, communities, customs, and lifestyles play in enriching the tourism experience; ensures that these communities receive a fair share of the economic benefits of tourism; and is guided by the desires of the local populations and communities in the host areas” (Tourism Concern, 1992). According to Daniela Dumbraveanu (2007), sustainable tourism represents a form of alternative tourism rooted in several core principles:

**Minimizing Environmental Impact:** Sustainable tourism strives to achieve ecological sustainability by reducing the environmental footprint of tourism activities. This includes reinvesting a portion of tourism revenue into the conservation and enhancement of protected areas. It emphasizes the practice of tourism that does not degrade the environment.

**Reducing Social Impact:** Sustainable tourism seeks to minimize the adverse effects of tourism on local communities, thereby achieving social sustainability. This involves developing tourism practices that do not disrupt the daily lives of the local population at the destination and avoiding situations that may lead to hostility.

**Preserving Cultural Integrity:** Sustainable tourism aims to protect the cultural sustainability of local communities by minimizing the negative impact on their traditions, customs, and cultural practices. It focuses on promoting tourism that helps preserve the authenticity and uniqueness of local cultures, rather than overwhelming them with external cultural influences.

**Maximizing Economic Benefits:** Another key principle of sustainable tourism is to maximize the economic benefits for local populations, ensuring economic sustainability.

This principle is vital for the protection and economic development of local communities and protected areas.

**Education and Awareness:** Education plays a critical role in sustainable tourism. Tourists need to be educated to heighten their awareness of the impact they generate, fostering a more considerate attitude towards the environment and reducing their negative impact. This principle includes ecological education for visitors, locals, local authorities, and both rural and urban populations, which is crucial in ecotourism.

**Local Control:** A fundamental principle of sustainable tourism is local control. It is essential that the local community be actively involved in and consulted on all matters related to sustainable tourism development. The local community should have a significant role in decision-making processes, particularly through local ownership of tourism infrastructure, such as accommodation facilities. Local administrations and communities should hold control, particularly through financial mechanisms, to ensure that sustainable tourism aligns with their needs and priorities.

## **10 Principles for Being a Sustainable Destination**

The World Economic Forum (2023) has presented a set of ten fundamental principles designed to guide tourist destinations towards sustainability. This report provides a framework that helps businesses, governments, destinations, tourists, and local communities better manage tourist destinations, with the goal of aligning with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.

### ***Principle 1: Certification and Monitoring of Sustainability Based on Science***

This principle emphasizes the importance of using scientific methods to certify and monitor sustainability in tourist destinations. Implementing certification systems based on

scientific criteria ensures that tourism practices are truly sustainable. For example, a destination could use environmental indicators such as air and water quality, biodiversity, and waste management to assess its environmental impact. Additionally, these indicators must be constantly reviewed and updated to reflect scientific advances, ensuring that the destination continues on a sustainable path.

### ***Principle 2: Training and Raising Awareness Among Industry Professionals***

It is crucial that tourism professionals are well-trained and aware of sustainable practices. This principle promotes continuous training for those working in the tourism industry to enable them to implement and promote sustainable practices. A practical example would be organizing workshops and courses for hoteliers, tour guides, and operators on how to reduce their carbon footprint, manage resources efficiently, and educate tourists about the importance of sustainability.

### ***Principle 3: Prioritizing Local Communities***

Prioritizing local communities means ensuring that they directly benefit from tourism and that their interests are central to the planning and management of the destination. This could include policies that promote local employment, the purchase of local products, and community involvement in decision-making. For example, in rural destinations, tour operators could collaborate with local farmers to offer fresh produce in hotels and restaurants, ensuring that the benefits of tourism stay within the community.

### ***Principle 4: Aligning Visitors with Sustainability Goals***

This principle seeks to guide visitors so that their behavior and expectations align with the sustainability goals of the destination. Awareness campaigns can be effective here, educating tourists on how they can minimize their environmental impact during their

visit, such as using public transportation, respecting wildlife, and supporting local businesses. For instance, a destination could provide guides and informational materials that explain the sustainable practices tourists should follow.

#### ***Principle 5: Protecting Cultural and Natural Heritage***

Protecting heritage means safeguarding the cultural and natural elements that make a destination unique. This principle involves actions to preserve historical monuments, local traditions, and biodiversity, ensuring that these resources remain intact for future generations. For example, limiting access to certain sensitive archaeological or natural areas and promoting low-impact activities, such as guided tours, are ways to protect heritage.

#### ***Principle 6: Conserving Nature***

Nature conservation is fundamental for a sustainable destination. This includes preserving ecosystems, protecting endangered species, and carefully managing natural resources. A destination could, for example, implement reforestation programs, restrict construction in sensitive areas, and promote nature tourism, which has a low environmental impact and contributes to biodiversity conservation.

#### ***Principle 7: Responsible Production and Consumption***

This principle promotes the adoption of production and consumption practices that minimize environmental impact. In the context of tourism, this could mean using recycled and sustainable materials in infrastructure construction, reducing the use of single-use plastics, and promoting the circular economy. For example, a hotel that adopts this principle might use solar energy, offer local and organic products in its restaurant, and encourage guests to recycle.

***Principle 8: Adjusting and Calibrating Infrastructure***

Tourist infrastructure should be developed and managed in a way that supports sustainability. This involves designing infrastructure that minimizes environmental impact, uses resources efficiently, and can adapt to future changes. For example, building hotels with LEED certification, which ensures lower energy and water consumption, would be a practical application of this principle.

***Principle 9: Effective Governance***

Effective governance is essential to ensure that tourist destinations are managed sustainably. This includes creating clear policies, involving multiple stakeholders, and ensuring transparency in decision-making. A destination with good governance could establish a sustainability committee that includes representatives from the government, local community, and private sector to ensure that all voices are heard and that decisions reflect the common good.

***Principle 10: Integrating Resilience***

Finally, resilience refers to a destination's ability to recover from crises and adapt to long-term changes. Integrating resilience into tourism planning means preparing destinations to face challenges such as climate change, natural disasters, and economic crises. An example could be developing contingency plans for extreme weather events or diversifying the tourism offer to reduce reliance on a single type of tourism.

**Practical Implementation of Sustainable Tourism**

Addressing the needs of both alternative and sustainable tourism, along with those of local communities, requires the adoption of specific practical measures:

**Creation of Protected Areas:** This involves designating special zones such as national parks, nature reserves, biosphere reserves, and other ecologically significant regions. Within these areas, strict regulations govern access, visitor behavior, duration of stays, and permissible activities to ensure the preservation of the natural environment.

**Visitor Management Strategies:** To prevent overwhelming natural and cultural resources, various techniques are used to manage the flow and impact of visitors. These strategies include:

**Assessing Capacity:** Evaluating the ability of different zones within protected areas to handle varying levels of visitor traffic according to the area's tourism zoning plan.

**Clustering and Dispersion:** Organizing visitors into specific areas or spreading them out across different regions to reduce environmental stress.

**Selective Access:** Implementing policies such as differential pricing and selective admission to control the number of visitors, especially in sensitive areas.

**Restricted Access for Vulnerable Areas:** Prohibiting tourist entry to particularly fragile zones like scientific reserves to prevent any damage.

**Transportation Limitations:** Controlling the types of transportation allowed within protected areas to minimize environmental impact.

**Educational Interpretive Systems:** Developing tailored educational programs and materials that enhance visitors' understanding and appreciation of the local environment.

**Carrying Capacity Considerations:** This concept refers to the maximum level of use that the environment can sustain without suffering long-term damage. Carrying

capacity helps determine the critical thresholds beyond which tourism activity may start to harm the area. Different types of carrying capacity include:

1. **Ecological Carrying Capacity:** The point at which further use would cause environmental harm.
2. **Economic Carrying Capacity:** The level at which the local economy becomes overly dependent on tourism, risking instability.
3. **Social Carrying Capacity:** The threshold where the presence of tourists starts to irritate locals or erodes local cultural practices.
4. **Psychological Carrying Capacity:** The limit at which overcrowding leads to discomfort and dissatisfaction among visitors.

Specific limits are often established for particularly sensitive areas to define the level of tourist impact that can be tolerated.

**Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA):** EIAs are essential tools for evaluating the potential effects of tourism development. Alongside carrying capacity assessments, EIAs are critical in any strategy aimed at sustainable tourism. They help identify, measure, and classify the impacts of tourism, leading to the implementation of appropriate management measures.

**Engagement of Local Communities:** The active involvement of local communities in tourism planning and decision-making processes is vital for the success of sustainable tourism. This ensures that community interests are considered and integrated into tourism development.

**Ethical Guidelines:** Establishing codes of conduct for tourists and tour operators is crucial in promoting responsible behavior. These guidelines help protect the destination's integrity and ensure the well-being of local communities.

**Regulatory Framework:** Developing and enforcing laws, rules, and licensing requirements for tourism activities is necessary to ensure that tourism development aligns with sustainability principles. While there is often a push within the tourism industry, particularly from the private sector, for minimal regulation, this can compromise sustainability. A balanced approach is required: while state institutions should empower local authorities, communities, and the private sector, they must also intervene when necessary to keep tourism development on a sustainable track. Effective legislation and regulations are essential for ensuring that tourism practices adhere to the principles of sustainable development.

In conclusion, while sustainable development may be a challenging and sometimes debated concept due to the complexities involved in its practical application, it remains a valuable framework for guiding tourism planning and ensuring the long-term viability of tourism activities.

### **Strategic Plan of Quality**

A strategic plan is a fundamental tool for maintaining high quality standards and ensuring customer satisfaction. It acts as a road map that directs efforts toward achieving long-term goals, particularly in the competitive tourism sector.

Quality control is essential to delivering high-quality experiences to tourists. A strategic plan helps us establish the processes and standards necessary to maintain excellence in our service and operations. This approach helps us identify potential

problems early and implement corrective measures to ensure that all aspects of the tourist



Figure 24: Own elaboration.

experience meet or exceed expectations.

In the tourism industry, customer satisfaction is very important. A strategic plan allows tourism companies or entrepreneurs to systematically collect and analyze visitor or customer feedback, allowing us to tailor services and improve the overall travel experience. By focusing on aspects such as personalized services, proper communication, and attention to detail, a strategic plan ensures that every touchpoint in the tourism experience is positive and memorable. This approach not only builds trust and loyalty, but also encourages repeat visits and purchases and positive recommendations, which are crucial for long-term success in the tourism area.

## **Detailed Analysis of the Strategic Plan for “The Adventure Bag”**

The strategic plan designed for "The Adventure Bag" represents a solid roadmap for the successful launch and positioning of our backpack in the travel market. The plan details the strategic guidelines that will guide our actions, from product design to interaction with our customers. Each of the key points of the plan is detailed below:

### ***1. Exceptional Quality:***

The first point of our strategy is focused on exceptional product quality. By offering a backpack that combines functionality, durability and design, we seek to build a long-lasting relationship with our customers based on trust and satisfaction. Quality is not just a product attribute, but a value proposition that we convey in every interaction with our customers.

### ***2. Customer Knowledge:***

Through market research, segmentation and data analysis, we will ensure that we fully understand the needs and preferences of our customers. This information will allow us to design backpacks that perfectly adapt to the different profiles of travelers, from those looking to enjoy extreme activities in nature to those who want a quiet visit to an urban center.

### ***3. Product Design:***

The design of our backpack is fundamental to conveying the essence of adventure. By combining functionality and comfort with eco-friendly design, we created a product that not only meets the practical needs of travelers, but also reflects their values and aspirations.

#### ***4. Quality and Sustainability:***

Sustainability is a very important aspect in achieving our goal. By selecting high-quality, environmentally friendly materials and optimizing our production process, we demonstrate our commitment to the planet and contribute to a more sustainable future.

#### ***5. Customer Experience:***

Customer experience is the key to an increasingly competitive market. By offering personalized attention, loyalty programs and transparent communication, we seek to build long-lasting relationships with our customers and foster loyalty to our brand.

#### ***6. Feedback:***

Our customers' feedback is invaluable in identifying areas for improvement and developing new products in a better way. By actively listening to their opinions and suggestions, we can adapt our offering to the changing needs of the market and ensure the relevance of our brand.

#### ***7. Communication and Marketing:***

An effective communication strategy is essential to promote our brand and connect with our target audience. Through a combination of digital channels and also through traditional channels, we will transmit the values of our brand and the benefits of our backpacks and each of the travel kits.

### **Detailed Analysis of the Action Improvement Plan**

The “Adventure Bag” is a comfortable and eco-friendly backpack designed to meet the needs of tourist travelers by offering essential items in a single, convenient package. To enhance our market presence and improve customer satisfaction, we have devised

three key strategic actions (Table 1). Each action aims to leverage different aspects of marketing and customer engagement to maximize the impact of our product.

Through these three strategic actions we aim to elevate the market presence of the "Adventure Bag," increase customer satisfaction, and foster long-term loyalty. Each action is designed to leverage specific marketing and engagement strategies to maximize the product's appeal and drive success.

**Table 2.** Strategic Plan of Action.

| ACTION   | PERSON IN CHARGE   | IMPROVEMENT   |
|--|--|---|
| <p>Collaborations with ecological influencers to generate product visibility on social media (Instagram and Facebook).</p> | <p><b>Ada Velasco:</b> Ada, together with the public relations and marketing team, will identify relevant influencers in the field of ecology and sustainable tourism. They will be introduced to the concept of the "Adventure Bag" and how this eco-friendly backpack can improve the tourist experience of its followers.</p> | <p>By partnering with green influencers, the "Adventure Bag" will gain visibility among audiences who value sustainability and responsible tourism. As a reward, Influencer's followers will have access to raffles to win exclusive accessories from our product line.</p> |

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <p>Implement exclusive membership for customers granted in our stores or through our website (www.adventurebag.com.sv)</p> | <p><b>Héctor Martínez</b> will be the retention manager at Adventure Bag, will launch an exclusive membership program. This program will offer progressive discounts, early access to new collections and a platform for the community of owners.</p> | <p>By offering discounts and early access to new collections through membership, you not only increase purchasing frequency, but also customer satisfaction. Customers will have exclusive Access to Private Sales: Program members will receive up to 30% off on selected products accessible only to community members.</p> |
| <p>Serve the customer and help them successfully make their purchase, whether in-store or online.</p>                      | <p><b>Erika Chicas</b> will ensure that as a company we get to know the clients and thus provide them with options that fit their needs. In addition, we will announce seasonal promotions and answer your questions and</p>                          | <p>Better customer service will be provided, and people will be encouraged to acquire points when purchasing and participating in our monthly raffles that involve 2x1 promotions,</p>  |

|  |  |                                  |
|--|--|----------------------------------|
|  | guide our customers to make a successful purchase. | 25% discounts, or free products. |
|--|--|----------------------------------|

Note: Own elaboration. The Strategic Plan of Action was elaborated to illustrate the responsibility that each participant represents.

Below is a detailed explanation of each action and how it will contribute to the success of the "Adventure Bag."

### 1. Collaborations with Ecological Influencers

**The person in charge:** Ada Velasco, together with the public relations and marketing team, will carry out identification and collaboration with prominent influencers in the fields of ecology and sustainable tourism. These influencers will be introduced to the "Adventure Bag" and its benefits, showing how it aligns with their values of eco-friendly travel and responsible tourism.

**Improvement:** By partnering with eco-influencers, the Adventure Bag will gain visibility among people who prioritize sustainability and responsible tourism. This targeted exposure will enhance the product's appeal to potential customers who are aligned with these values. Additionally, influencers' followers will have the opportunity to participate in raffles to win exclusive accessories from our product line, further driving engagement and interest in the "Adventure Bag."

### 2. Implement an Exclusive Membership Program

**Person in charge:** Héctor Martínez, the retention manager at Adventure Bag, will launch an exclusive membership program available both in-store and through our website ([www.adventurebag.com.sv](http://www.adventurebag.com.sv)). This program will offer members progressive discounts,

early access to new collections and a dedicated platform for the Adventure Bag owner community.

**Improvement:** The membership program is designed to increase customer satisfaction by offering valuable benefits such as discounts and early access to new products. These incentives will encourage frequent purchases and enhance the sense of exclusivity and belonging among members. As a reward, members will have access to private sales with discounts of up to 30% on selected products, further strengthening their loyalty and commitment to our brand.

### **3. Serve the Customer and Enhance the Purchase Experience**

**The person in charge:** Erika Chicas will ensure that our company provides exceptional customer service, both in-store and online. This includes understanding customer needs, providing personalized options, announcing seasonal promotions, and guiding customers through the purchasing process.

**Improvement:** Better customer service will improve the overall shopping experience, making it more personalized and personal. Customers will be encouraged to accumulate points with their purchases, which they can redeem as prizes. As a benefit for customers, there will be monthly raffles with 2x1 promotions, 25% discounts and free products that will encourage purchases and increase customer loyalty.

**CHAPTER III**  
**ENTREPRENEUR RESPONSIBILITY**

## Entrepreneur Profile

“Successful entrepreneurs thrive when the economic and institutional environment is favorable and drives innovation returns” Lederman, Daniel et al. (2014).

The Dictionary of the Royal Spanish Academy defines the word undertake as: “To undertake and begin a work, a business, an endeavor, especially if it involves difficulty or danger.”<sup>37</sup> From the definition given, it is necessary to note the emphasis placed on the word difficulty or danger, that is, they are initiatives that cost more than normal to bring to a real level or to execute them, which leads to the conclusion that not all "starting" is entrepreneurship.

It is also said that to undertake is: To start doing a certain thing, especially when it requires effort or work or when it has a certain importance or magnitude; example: starting a business; undertaking a mission; undertaking the relevant legal actions.

“Entrepreneurship is a way of facing the world, it is a way of understanding life that not everyone feels comfortable with. And what is that way of life? It is one in which the person enjoys the uncertainty and insecurity of what will happen tomorrow. The true entrepreneur is the one for whom uncertainty gives a special pleasure” (Trias de Bes, 2007, p. 43).

Entrepreneurship means becoming the precursor of a business facing challenges and risks, however, the outlook may encourage the decision taken.

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<sup>37</sup> Definition adapted from the dictionary of the Royal Spanish Academy.

## **Entrepreneur**

Also, the Dictionary of the Royal Spanish Academy indicates that an entrepreneur is the person “Who undertakes difficult or risky actions with determination.”<sup>38</sup> It is important to highlight the words resolution, difficult or risky, which mark the difference between doing something and undertaking. It refers to a person who is determined and unafraid of facing adverse situations; that is, even of losing or putting their investment at risk.

In most, if not all, businesses, an entrepreneur may be forced to lose significant amounts of resources, face difficulties, etc. before making a profit, but he never loses confidence that his decision to undertake something is viable and that he will succeed in his purpose.

According to McCormick, C. (2012), Guy Kawasaki in one of the prologues of his book *The Art of the Start*, points out something very interesting: “The truth is that being an entrepreneur is not a job. It is the mental attitude of people who want to change the future.” It could be said then that entrepreneurs are persevering, brave, determined people, unafraid of failure, and capable of overcoming adversity with the confidence that they will achieve their goals.

## **Entrepreneurial Ecosystem**

An entrepreneurial ecosystem is much more than just a set of businesses. It is a living and complex network involving various actors who interact to create an environment

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<sup>38</sup> Definition of the Spanish word “Emprendedor” adapted from the dictionary of the Royal Spanish Academy.

conducive to the birth, growth and development of companies. The central idea is that business success does not depend solely on the individual talent of entrepreneurs, but also on the context in which they operate. This ecosystem includes a network of people, institutions and resources that work together to foster the creation of companies, supporting everything from the most incipient ideas to consolidated organizations.

To better visualize the ecosystem, let's imagine an environment where multiple actors—both from the private and public sectors—collaborate and interrelate. In this circle, each element plays an important role in nurturing entrepreneurship:

- ✓ **People and Entrepreneurs:** They are the heart of the ecosystem, those who have the ideas and courage to embark on an entrepreneurial adventure. Their skills, knowledge and ability to identify opportunities are essential.
- ✓ **Laws and Regulations:** A country's legal framework and policies are also critical components. These laws can make or break the process of starting a business. A healthy ecosystem has regulations that promote ease of starting a business, legal protection for entrepreneurs, and clear regulation of taxes and labor rights.
- ✓ **Supporting Institutions:** Universities, incubators, accelerators, and research centers are essential to generate knowledge and prepare entrepreneurs. These institutions play a role in the development of human capital, fostering business education, innovation, and creativity.
- ✓ **Financial and Non-Financial Capital:** Entrepreneurs need access to resources, both financial (banks, investors, venture capital) and non-financial (mentors, industry experts, networks). A balanced ecosystem should facilitate

- both capital investment and access to valuable knowledge and networking opportunities.
- ✓ **Entrepreneurial Culture:** A dynamic ecosystem is supported by a culture that values entrepreneurship, innovation and failure as part of the learning process. A society that celebrates entrepreneurs and embraces risk fosters the emergence of new ideas and businesses.
  - ✓ **Success stories and Role Models:** Successful examples inspire others to follow the same path. The ecosystem needs stories of entrepreneurs who, despite facing difficulties, have come out ahead. These models serve to motivate new entrepreneurs and offer a clear vision of what it is possible to achieve.
  - ✓ **Infrastructure and Technology:** Access to physical infrastructure such as offices, coworking spaces, or internet connectivity is vital to the ecosystem. In addition, technology plays an important role in allowing business ideas to scale quickly and reach new markets.

## Characteristics of the Entrepreneurship Ecosystem<sup>39</sup>

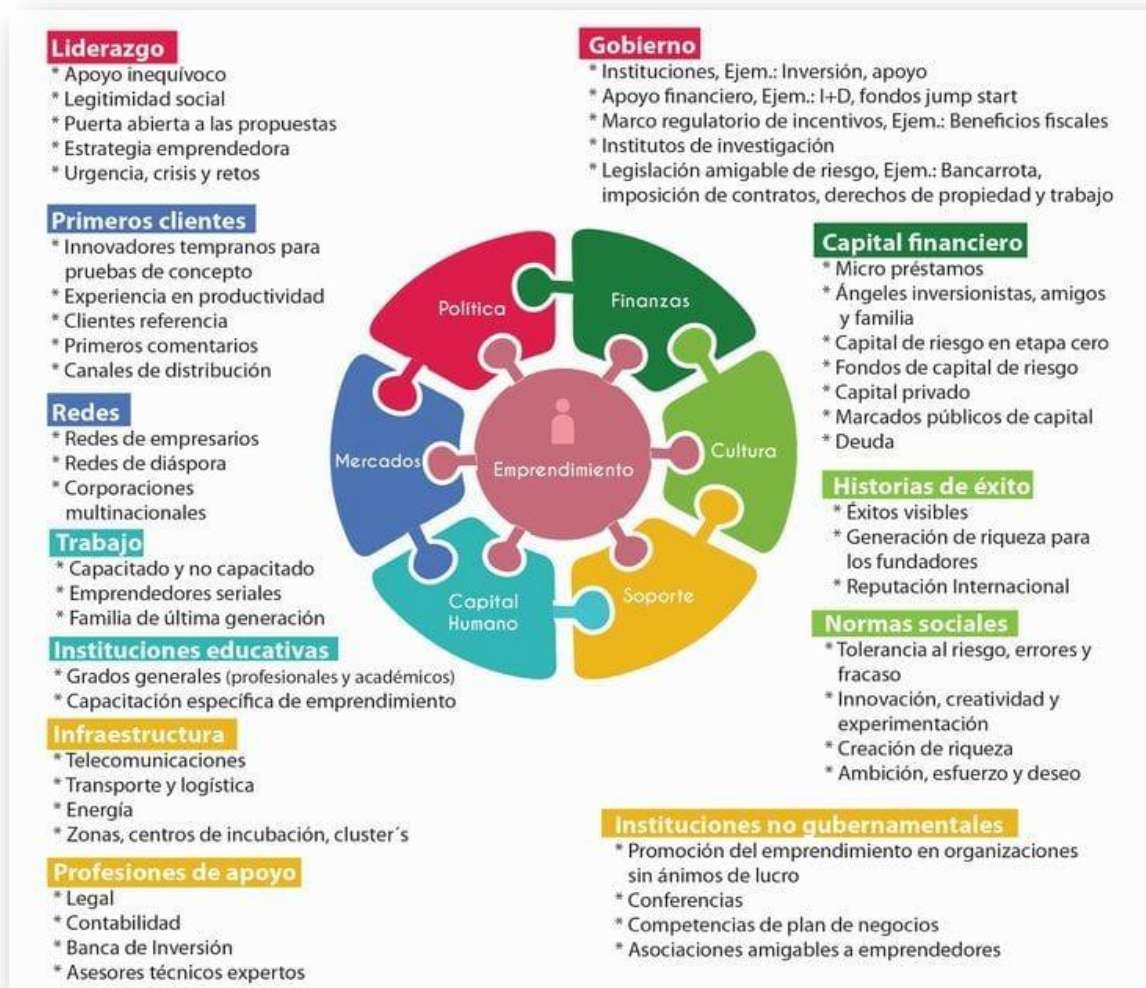


Figure 25: Babson Global's Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Project, Isenberg, D. (2016). Applying the ecosystem metaphor to entrepreneurship: Uses and abuses. SSRN Electronic Journal.

### Entrepreneurial Ecosystem in El Salvador

The entrepreneurial ecosystem in El Salvador is made up of several fundamental elements that interact to foster the development of new companies in the country. This system encompasses aspects such as leadership, participation of local and national

<sup>39</sup> Characteristics of the Entrepreneurship Ecosystem schema taken from the article "POLÍTICA NACIONAL DE EMPRENDIMIENTO El Salvador" (p. 18) by MINISTERIO DE ECONOMÍA (MINEC) COMISIÓN NACIONAL DE LA MICRO Y PEQUEÑA EMPRESA (CONAMYPE), 2014.

governments, human and financial capital, support networks and infrastructure, all of which are essential for business growth.

However, one of the biggest challenges of this ecosystem is the lack of articulation and coordination between the actors that make it up. Although there are initiatives, success stories and an emerging entrepreneurial culture, the level of cooperation and communication between the different sectors is limited. This situation reflects that, although the basic conditions for entrepreneurship are present, entrepreneurs often face barriers related to the fragmentation of resources and available support.

For example, entrepreneurs can access financial and human capital, but the lack of strong networks and coordinated support structures hinders their growth. Furthermore, although training and education programs exist, the practical application of this knowledge is not always aligned with the real needs of the market.

Thus, the Salvadoran entrepreneurial ecosystem has potential but requires greater integration and cooperation between key actors to be more effective and functional. (Ministerio de Economía y CONAMYPE, 2014)<sup>40</sup>.

### **Types of Entrepreneurs**

Entrepreneurship in El Salvador is driven by a variety of types that vary depending on the context and needs of those who decide to take this important step. According to the "National Entrepreneurship Policy" of the Ministry of Economy (MINEC) and the National Commission for Micro and Small Enterprises (CONAMYPE). (2014), the types

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<sup>40</sup> Adapted from "POLÍTICA NACIONAL DE EMPRENDIMIENTO El Salvador" (p. 15-18) by *MINISTERIO DE ECONOMÍA (MINEC) COMISIÓN NACIONAL DE LA MICRO Y PEQUEÑA EMPRESA (CONAMYPE)*, 2014.

of entrepreneurs are classified into two main categories: entrepreneurship by necessity and entrepreneurship by opportunity (MINEC & CONAMYPE, 2014).<sup>41</sup>

### **Entrepreneurship by Necessity**

This category refers to those entrepreneurs who are forced to start a business due to the lack of income necessary for their subsistence or the desire to obtain an additional source of income. Within this classification, two types of entrepreneurships are identified:

- **Subsistence Entrepreneurship:** This is characterized by being an entrepreneurial action aimed at generating daily income for survival, often in the form of self-employment. This type of entrepreneurship usually lacks planning and vision for growth and is unlikely to generate significant surpluses. It is the most common type of entrepreneurship in contexts where formal employment opportunities are scarce, leading people to create their own sources of income.
- **Traditional Entrepreneurship:** Unlike subsistence entrepreneurship, this type has a more defined organizational structure and is based on technical knowledge to generate surpluses. Although it seeks formality in traditional markets and sectors of the economy, its products and services generally do not present significant differentiating elements. This type of entrepreneurship seeks greater economic stability through more conventional methods.

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<sup>41</sup> Adapted from "POLÍTICA NACIONAL DE EMPRENDIMIENTO El Salvador" (p. 13-14) by *MINISTERIO DE ECONOMÍA (MINEC) COMISIÓN NACIONAL DE LA MICRO Y PEQUEÑA EMPRESA (CONAMYPE)*, 2014.

## Entrepreneurship by Opportunity

In contrast to necessity entrepreneurship, opportunity entrepreneurship arises when people identify a market opportunity that motivates them to start an economic activity. This type of entrepreneurship is divided into two subcategories:

- **Dynamic Entrepreneurship:** This refers to business actions with high growth potential, where knowledge, technological management and human talent play a crucial role. These companies usually have access to financing resources and have a corporate governance structure that allows them to generate competitive advantages and differentiation in their products or services. Their proactive and adaptive nature makes them key players in economic development.
- **High-Impact Entrepreneurship:** This type of entrepreneurship stands out for its ability to transform and energize the economy through innovation and job creation. High-impact companies are those that grow quickly and in a sustained manner, generally backed by high levels of financing or investors. Their focus on innovation not only allows them to prosper, but also contributes to the economic and social advancement of the country.

The motivations that drive entrepreneurs in El Salvador are diverse and complex. From the need to survive to the search for growth opportunities, each type of venture reflects the realities of the country's economic and social environment. By recognizing and fostering these motivations, a more inclusive and dynamic ecosystem can be created that supports entrepreneurs on their path to success.

## Entrepreneur profile

In theory, anyone can undertake a project; however, success requires certain personal and professional characteristics. Being an entrepreneur means having motivation and having the resources that this implies.

The entrepreneur has characteristics that facilitate not only undertaking, but also doing so successfully. Among them, some of the most mentioned are “Creativity and innovation; Confidence in himself and his abilities; Perseverance; Ability to handle problems; Acceptance of risk”.

Other authors add other qualities, which are added to those proposed by Alcaraz; in general terms, an entrepreneur should meet the following qualities:

- ✓ Creativity and innovation
- ✓ Clarity of ideas
- ✓ Ability to face and assume risks
- ✓ Knowing how to prioritize
- ✓ Ability to communicate and socialize
- ✓ Tenacity and persistence
- ✓ Flexibility and ability to adapt to circumstances
- ✓ Optimism and self-confidence.

### Basic Characteristics of Successful Entrepreneurs

Each author, from his or her point of view, points out which attributes entrepreneurs should possess; however, most of them agree on the following:

1. **Passion:** Entrepreneurs devote themselves to their activity with body and soul to achieve the goals and objectives set. Passion is an essential component that

- guides other behaviors and makes them survive the sacrifices required by the company.
2. **Vision:** The work begins by defining the strategic steps that will lead to achieving the results. By establishing the goals, a clearer perspective is gained on what the immediate priorities and needs are in the present. To achieve success, every entrepreneur needs a plan and a visualization of the ultimate goals.
  3. **Learning ability:** Not being willing to listen and learn is denying yourself many opportunities. A successful entrepreneur recognizes that they are always learning and that they can learn from everyone every day.
  4. **Determination and courage:** Entrepreneurs must anticipate difficulties and be able to identify when something is wrong in order to correct it. Entrepreneurs accept problems, assimilate them and make timely and firm decisions to solve them effectively.
  5. **Creativity and innovation:** Creativity is the process by which ideas are generated, developed and transformed into added value. It is not necessary to invent what has already been invented, but it is necessary to identify new possibilities of doing things and ensure differentiation.
  6. **Persistence:** Every initiative must be persistent. Trying once and giving up is not enough. You have to take it one step at a time and try to perfect it in a creative and organized way if it has not given the expected results the first time. Persistence must go hand in hand with common sense.

- 7. Sense of opportunity:** The entrepreneur identifies the needs, problems and trends of the people who live around him and tries to conceive alternatives for satisfaction or solution as the case may be.
- 8. Teamwork:** The entrepreneur's leadership seeks to unify ideas and achieve consensus in the face of problems that arise, making the human group involved in the entrepreneurship work in harmony.
- 9. Self-esteem and confidence:** The entrepreneur is optimistic and confident. Having confidence in oneself and in one's own skills and abilities gives rise to the magical power of being positive and attracting success.
- 10. Assertiveness:** Not beating around the bush and getting straight to the point to express what you think, feel and want without hurting others is a basic characteristic to be able to achieve the objectives set.
- 11. Long-term strategic planning:** An entrepreneur must not be reactive; he must be forward-thinking not only about changes in the market and the environment, but also anticipating them by making appropriate and timely decisions; success and survival will largely depend on anticipation and opportunity.
- 12. Organization:** Establish a schedule of activities that is programmed with the ability to receive permanent adjustments. This programming is short-term and is derived from strategic planning and feedback.

## Attitudes that Destroy Versus Attitudes that Build in the Entrepreneurial World

Here are some aspects that allow us to identify and differentiate an entrepreneur from one who is not:

### Negative Attitudes Versus Positive Attitudes

| NEGATIVE ATTITUDES | POSITIVE ATTITUDES |
|--------------------|--------------------|
|                    |                    |
| Indecision         | Initiative         |
| Conformism         | Enthusiasm         |
| Impatience         | Dynamism           |
| Fear               | Self-confidence    |
| Distrust           | Perseverance       |
|                    | Flexibility        |
|                    | Tenacity           |
|                    | Progressive        |
|                    |                    |

Figure 26: Own elaboration. Negative attitudes versus positive attitudes of an entrepreneur.

### Profile of the Entrepreneur in Latin America

Entrepreneurship is essential for economic growth and development in Latin America. According to an analysis by Raúl Francisco Quejada-Pérez and Nelson Ávila-Gutiérrez, published in *Panorama Económico* (2016), the characteristics, skills and motivations that define entrepreneurs in this region are outlined.

## **Demographic Characteristics<sup>42</sup>**

The demographics of entrepreneurs in Latin America reveal important patterns that help us understand who they are and how they position themselves in the market.

### **Age and Gender of Entrepreneurs**

The majority of Latin American entrepreneurs are in the 30-45 age range. This age range is particularly significant because it represents a stage of life where individuals possess a valuable combination of energy, maturity and experience. By this age, many entrepreneurs have accumulated work experience in various sectors, which gives them a deeper understanding of market dynamics and business management.

In addition, there is a growing female participation in entrepreneurship. Although entrepreneurship has historically been dominated by men, women are increasingly present in this field. This change is not only an indicator of social progress, but also brings diversity and different perspectives on business culture. The inclusion of more women in entrepreneurship contributes to a broader focus on problem solving, opportunity identification and innovation.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Adapted from "Aproximación al perfil del emprendedor en America Latina. Panorama Económico" by Quejada Pérez, R. F., & Ávila Gutiérrez, N. (2016).

<sup>43</sup> Adapted from "Aproximación al perfil del emprendedor en America Latina. Panorama Económico" by Quejada Pérez, R. F., & Ávila Gutiérrez, N. (2016).

**Table 3:** Distribution by Age and Gender

| AGE         | MEN | WOMEN |
|-------------|-----|-------|
| 18-29 years | 30% | 20%   |
| 30-45 years | 40% | 25%   |
| 46-60       | 20% | 10%   |
| 60+         | 10% | 5%    |

Note: Elaboration based on the article by Quejada Pérez, R. F., & Ávila Gutiérrez, N. (2016). Aproximación al perfil del emprendedor en America Latina. *Panorama Económico*, 24, 249-268.

### Educational Level

The educational level of entrepreneurs plays a crucial role in their ability to succeed in a competitive environment. Most of them have a higher education, which provides them not only with credibility but also with a solid foundation of knowledge and skills applicable to business management. This phenomenon can be seen in the growing number of universities and training programs focused on entrepreneurship that are emerging in the region.

Entrepreneurs with postgraduate studies often have a deeper understanding of concepts such as finance, marketing and management, which allows them to develop more effective strategies to tackle business challenges. In addition, higher education not only offers theoretical knowledge, but also fosters practical skills through projects and internships that prepare them for the real world.

**Table 4:** Educational Level of Entrepreneurs

| EDUCATIONAL LEVEL    | PERCENTAGE |
|----------------------|------------|
| Primary education    | 5%         |
| Secondary education  | 20%        |
| University education | 50%        |
| Postgraduate         | 25%        |

Note: Elaboration based on the article by Quejada Pérez, R. F., & Ávila Gutiérrez, N. (2016). Aproximación al perfil del emprendedor en América Latina. *Panorama Económico*, 24, 249-268.

The high rate of entrepreneurs with university and postgraduate degrees suggests that theoretical and practical knowledge in key areas is an essential asset for those wishing to start their own business. This underlines the importance of fostering education and ongoing training to develop a robust entrepreneurial ecosystem.

### **Skills and Competencies**

Skills and competencies are critical to an entrepreneur's success. Below are some of the key skills that are essential in today's business environment.

### **Innovation**

The ability to innovate is one of the main characteristics of entrepreneurs in Latin America. This innovative drive allows entrepreneurs to differentiate themselves in a competitive market, where creativity and originality are essential to capture the attention of the consumer. Innovation is not only limited to the development of new products and services, but also encompasses the continuous improvement of existing processes and the search for new ways to deliver value to customers.

In a context where markets are constantly changing, entrepreneurs must be able to adapt and anticipate trends. This requires not only creativity, but also critical analysis of the market and a willingness to experiment with new ideas.

### **Resilience**

Resilience is presented as an essential characteristic in the profile of the entrepreneur. Facing adversities, from financial problems to unexpected changes in the market, is an inherent part of the entrepreneurial journey. The ability to adapt and find solutions to these problems is what usually distinguishes successful entrepreneurs from those who abandon their projects.

Resilience doesn't just involve overcoming difficulties, but also learning from failures and using them as opportunities for growth. Entrepreneurs who manage to maintain a resilient mindset tend to develop greater confidence in their abilities and are better equipped to face future challenges.

### **Networking**

Establishing and maintaining networks is vital to business success. In Latin America, social and professional relationships allow entrepreneurs to access resources, financing, and collaboration opportunities that can make the difference between the success and failure of a venture.

Networking not only provides access to funding, but also facilitates the exchange of knowledge and experiences. Participating in entrepreneurial communities, attending events and conferences, and collaborating with other entrepreneurs are effective strategies for building and strengthening these networks.

## **Motivations**

The motivations that drive entrepreneurs are diverse and can vary considerably between individuals. However, there are some common trends that can be observed on the entrepreneur:

### **Independence**

One of the strongest motivations for entrepreneurs is the desire for independence. For many, the ability to be their own boss and make decisions autonomously is a powerful incentive to start their own business. This longing for autonomy translates into greater job satisfaction and a sense of personal fulfillment. Furthermore, independence often allows entrepreneurs to follow their passions and make a difference in the world through their companies.

### **Opportunity**

Entrepreneurs are often individuals who identify opportunities where others see obstacles. This ability to recognize market niches and emerging trends allows them to develop products and services that meet specific consumer needs. This proactive approach is a hallmark of the successful entrepreneur, who is characterized by his or her ability to innovate and adapt to a changing environment.

### **Social Impact**

Entrepreneurs are increasingly motivated by a desire to create positive change in their communities. This focus on social impact reflects a growing awareness of corporate responsibility and sustainability. As companies seek to balance profit with social responsibility, this approach becomes a differentiator in the marketplace.

Social entrepreneurs, in particular, seek to solve social problems through sustainable business models. This type of entrepreneurship not only contributes to social welfare but can also be a source of inspiration for others, creating a ripple effect in the community.

### **Challenges**

Despite opportunities, entrepreneurs in Latin America face several challenges that can hinder their long-term growth and success.

### **Financing**

Access to financing is one of the main obstacles faced by entrepreneurs. They often have difficulty obtaining venture capital and bank financing, which limits their ability to start or expand their businesses. The lack of affordable financing options can discourage potential entrepreneurs or lead those already in the market to operate in adverse conditions.

There are financing initiatives and programs in the region, such as venture capital funds and microfinance, that seek to support entrepreneurs. However, there is still a significant gap in access to financial resources, which underlines the need for public policies that encourage entrepreneurship and facilitate access to capital.

### **Regulations**

Regulations and bureaucratic barriers are another significant challenge. Entrepreneurs often face a complex regulatory environment that can discourage the creation of new businesses. Lack of clarity in regulations and procedures can further complicate the process of starting and operating a business.

Simplifying bureaucratic processes and creating entrepreneurship-friendly policies are essential to foster a more dynamic business environment. Governments can play a crucial role in this regard, by creating incentives and supporting the training of entrepreneurs.

**Table 5.** Principal Challenges

| CHALLENGE      | PERCENTAGE |
|----------------|------------|
| Financing      | 45%        |
| Regulation     | 35%        |
| Competition    | 15%        |
| Infrastructure | 5%         |

Note: Elaboration based on the article by Quejada Pérez, R. F., & Ávila Gutiérrez, N. (2016). Aproximación al perfil del emprendedor en América Latina. *Panorama Económico*, 24, 249-268.

Competition in the market also represents a considerable challenge. As more entrepreneurs enter the market, differentiation becomes crucial to survive and thrive. This highlights the importance of innovation and the ability to adapt to changing consumer preferences.

### **Entrepreneurship in El Salvador**

The context of entrepreneurship in El Salvador is characterized by a high prevalence of ventures arising out of necessity. According to Gutiérrez Montoya (2012), 60.8% of entrepreneurs in the country start their businesses due to a lack of formal

employment, while only 37.6% do so to take advantage of a market opportunity. This scenario reflects an economy in which entrepreneurship acts as a subsistence strategy, especially in the informal and rural sectors.

An important aspect within the Salvadoran entrepreneurial ecosystem is female participation, since 57.8% of businesses are managed by women (Gutiérrez Montoya, 2012). This suggests that entrepreneurship, in addition to being an economic driver, is also a key mechanism for women to support their families. However, this prevalence of necessity-driven entrepreneurship represents a challenge for the country's economic development. Necessity-driven entrepreneurship tends to be less sustainable and less innovative than opportunity-driven entrepreneurship. The latter tend to have greater growth potential and generate a greater impact in terms of employment and competitiveness.

Another significant challenge is limited access to financing. Many entrepreneurs in El Salvador lack the financial resources necessary to start or expand their businesses, which limits the ability of startups to grow and compete in the broader environment. Added to this is the lack of effective public policies to support entrepreneurs. Gutiérrez Montoya (2012) points out that government policies aimed at promoting entrepreneurship are perceived as inefficient and, in some cases, even negative for the sector. This perception is reflected in the lack of robust support programs, such as business incubators or accelerators, that can help entrepreneurs transform ideas into successful projects.

### **Entrepreneur Profile in El Salvador**

Entrepreneurship in El Salvador has emerged as a fundamental response to the economic and social challenges facing the country. In an environment characterized by

the search for opportunities, Salvadoran entrepreneurs are agents of change that contribute to sustainable development and innovation.

Furthermore, the country's cultural and economic context influences its decisions and strategies, encouraging the creation of businesses that not only seek profitability, but also align with principles of social responsibility and sustainability. This panorama highlights the importance of institutional support and collaboration networks, which are essential to strengthen the entrepreneurial ecosystem and foster the growth of new initiatives in various sectors.

### **Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Entrepreneurs in El Salvador**

In the context of entrepreneurship in El Salvador, it is essential to understand the socio-demographic characteristics of those who start their own businesses. A recent analysis provides valuable insights into the behavior of Salvadoran entrepreneurs.

Gutiérrez Montoya (2013) emphasizes that understanding these demographic aspects is crucial to foster a more inclusive and dynamic entrepreneurial ecosystem, where both men and women can contribute to innovation and the economic development of the country.

### **Age and Gender of Entrepreneurs in El Salvador**

The study conducted by Gutiérrez Montoya (2013) provides detailed information on the gender distribution in different age ranges among entrepreneurs. The table below shows that the majority of entrepreneurs are concentrated in the age group of 31 to 45 years, where 28.5% are women and 19.4% are men, representing a total of 47.9%. In contrast, the percentage of entrepreneurs under 21 years of age is relatively low at 5.3%, while the 45 to 64 age group accounts for 19.3% of the total.

**Table 6.** Gender Distribution by Age Range of the Entrepreneur<sup>44</sup>

| <b>AGE</b>              | <b>FEMININE</b> | <b>MASCULINE</b> | <b>TOTAL</b> |
|-------------------------|-----------------|------------------|--------------|
| Under 18 years old      | 0.3%            | 0.4%             | 0.7%         |
| From 18 to 21 years old | 2.2%            | 3.1%             | 5.3%         |
| From 22 to 25 years old | 6.5%            | 3.5%             | 10.0%        |
| From 26 to 30 years old | 8.6%            | 6.8%             | 15.4%        |
| From 31 to 45 years old | 28.5 %          | 19.4%            | 47.9%        |
| From 45 to 64 years old | 10.7%           | 8.6%             | 19.3%        |
| Over 64 years old       | 1.0%            | 0.4%             | 1.4%         |
| <b>Total</b>            | <b>57.8%</b>    | <b>42.2%</b>     | <b>100%</b>  |

Note: Elaboration based on the book by Gutiérrez Montoya, G. (2013). El comportamiento emprendedor en El Salvador. Contexto, características y factores de éxito del emprendedor salvadoreño (2013).

This distribution indicates that, although the number of male entrepreneurs is notable, women represent a significant portion of the entrepreneurial population, especially in the age range of 31 to 45 years old. Gutiérrez Montoya (2013) highlights that diversity in the profiles of entrepreneurs can have a positive impact on innovation and economic development, suggesting that policies that support both genders in their business initiatives should be promoted.

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<sup>44</sup> Data taken from the book by Gutiérrez Montoya, G. (2013). El comportamiento emprendedor en El Salvador. Contexto, características y factores de éxito del emprendedor salvadoreño.

## Educational Level of Entrepreneurs in El Salvador

The educational level of entrepreneurs in El Salvador is a key aspect to understand the profile of those who start a business in the country. According to data from the study conducted by Gutiérrez Montoya (2013), 41.8% of entrepreneurs have a high school education, with 26.6% of women and 15.2% of men in this category. The next largest group is made up of those with a university degree, representing 19.5% of the total (9.7% women and 9.8% men). In addition, 11.6% of entrepreneurs have studies up to ninth grade, broken down into 6.7% women and 4.9% men.

Another relevant fact is that 10% of entrepreneurs have attended university, although they have not completed their studies, with 4.9% of women and 5.1% of men. Finally, 10.1% of the entrepreneurial population does not have any type of formal education, with 6.6% of women and 3.5% of men in this group.

**Table 7.** Level of Education of Entrepreneurs in El Salvador, Grouped by Gender

| LEVEL OF EDUCATION  | FEMALE | MALE   | TOTAL  |
|---------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| None                | 6.60%  | 3.50%  | 10.10% |
| Up to ninth grade   | 6.70%  | 4.90%  | 11.60% |
| High school         | 26.60% | 15.20% | 41.80% |
| Diplomas/Technical  | 0.30%  | 0.10%  | 0.40%  |
| Unfinish university | 4.90%  | 5.10%  | 10.00% |
| University degree   | 9.70%  | 9.80%  | 19.50% |
| Doctorate (degree)  | 0.20%  | 0.10%  | 0.30%  |

|                 |               |               |             |
|-----------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|
| Master's degree | 2.50%         | 3.50%         | 6.00%       |
| Others          | 0.20%         | 0.00%         | 0.20%       |
| <b>Total</b>    | <b>57.80%</b> | <b>42.20%</b> | <b>100%</b> |

Note: Elaboration based on the book by Gutiérrez Montoya, G. (2013). El comportamiento emprendedor en El Salvador. Contexto, características y factores de éxito del emprendedor salvadoreño (2013).

These data highlight that, although a considerable proportion of entrepreneurs have at least secondary education, there is also a significant portion that has not completed their studies, which can influence their opportunities and the way they manage their businesses. Gutiérrez Montoya (2013) suggests that improving access to education and training could strengthen the entrepreneurial ecosystem in El Salvador.

### **Skills and Competencies of Entrepreneurs in El Salvador**

Entrepreneurship in El Salvador is marked by a rich diversity of skills and competencies that are essential for those who wish to make their way in the business world. These qualities are not only characteristics of a good entrepreneur, but also represent the tools that allow them to face the challenges of the business environment. Below, we explore the ten key skills that make up the profile of the Salvadoran entrepreneur.

- 1. Initiative:** The Salvadoran entrepreneur is a person who does not wait for opportunities to come knocking on his door. He takes the initiative and seeks to create his own path. That initial spark is what ignites the engine of his projects, driving him to take the first step towards the materialization of his ideas.

- 2. Persistence:** In the journey of entrepreneurship, obstacles are inevitable. The ability to persist and keep going despite setbacks is what separates successful entrepreneurs from those who give up. Persistence is a testament to an entrepreneur's determination to achieve his goals, no matter how steep the mountain he has to climb.
- 3. Responsibility and Compliance:** A successful entrepreneur understands the importance of taking responsibility for his or her actions. Fulfilling commitments is essential not only for personal growth, but also for building trust and credibility in the business environment.
- 4. Demand for efficiency and quality:** The constant search for efficiency and quality is a distinctive feature of Salvadoran entrepreneurs. This demand not only improves the products and services they offer, but also sets a high standard in the market, which distinguishes them from the competition.
- 5. Risk-taking:** Fear of failure can be a huge obstacle, but entrepreneurs know that growth often occurs outside of their comfort zone. The ability to take calculated risks is critical to seizing opportunities that present themselves and innovate in their respective industries.
- 6. Setting goals and objectives:** An entrepreneur with vision is one who can define clear goals and work towards them with determination. Setting goals not only provides direction but also serves as motivation to keep the focus on the path to success.
- 7. Information seeking:** Curiosity and a willingness to learn are valuable characteristics in an entrepreneur. Seeking out relevant information and staying

- up to date on market trends are practices that help make informed and strategic decisions.
- 8. Systematic planning:** The ability to plan effectively is crucial. Organizing resources and establishing a clear plan of action not only facilitates project execution, but also minimizes the risk of errors and misunderstandings.
  - 9. Building support networks:** In the world of entrepreneurship, no one is an island. Entrepreneurs who know how to build and maintain meaningful relationships have access to valuable resources, advice, and emotional support. These support networks can be crucial in times of uncertainty.
  - 10. Self-confidence:** Last but not least, self-confidence is the driving force that drives entrepreneurs to face challenges. Believing in their capabilities and the viability of their ideas is what allows them to get up after a fall and move forward with renewed energy.

These skills and competencies not only define the profile of the Salvadoran entrepreneur but can also be the catalyst for a more prosperous future for the country. By fostering and developing these qualities, we can contribute to a more dynamic and resilient entrepreneurial ecosystem, where innovation and creativity flourish.

At the end of the day, every entrepreneur is a beacon of hope and an example that, with the right combination of skills and determination, it is possible to transform dreams into tangible realities (Gutiérrez Montoya, 2013).

### **Motivations of Entrepreneurs of El Salvador**

In El Salvador, the motivations that drive entrepreneurs show a mix of personal aspirations and economic factors. According to Gutiérrez Montoya (2013), entrepreneurs

not only seek to improve their income, but are also driven by personal and social factors. Below are the main motivations that lead Salvadoran entrepreneurs to create their own businesses:

**Personal fulfillment:** The search for personal satisfaction is one of the most common motivations among Salvadoran entrepreneurs. Many see entrepreneurship as a way to achieve goals and dreams that they would otherwise be unable to achieve. This motivation reflects a deep desire for self-discovery and personal growth through business.

**Applying their knowledge:** Another important motivation is the opportunity to use the skills and knowledge acquired, whether through education or previous experience. Entrepreneurs find in their businesses a platform to put into practice what they have learned and face new challenges.

**Improving their income:** The economic factor remains relevant, as many entrepreneurs see entrepreneurship as a way to improve their financial situation. While this is not the only motivation, improving income represents a practical and tangible reason for many.

**Contributing to society:** Beyond personal benefits, a significant group of entrepreneurs are motivated by the desire to positively impact their environment. Through their businesses, they seek to create jobs, solve local problems or contribute to the general well-being of the community.

**Being their own boss:** Professional independence is a common desire among entrepreneurs. The possibility of having control over your own professional destiny, without depending on third parties, is a powerful motivation that drives many to start their own business.

**Role models:** The influence of successful entrepreneurs also plays a key role in the decision to start a business. By observing successful examples, many are inspired to follow a similar path, using these role models as guides for the development of their own companies.

**Gaining social recognition:** Social recognition and the status that entrepreneurial success can bring are also significant motivators. For some entrepreneurs, being seen as successful in their communities adds personal and professional value to their activity.

**Carrying on the family tradition:** In some cases, entrepreneurship is part of a family legacy. Those who inherit family businesses or continue an entrepreneurial tradition find in this a reason to start their own business, keeping the business within the family unit.

**Getting rich:** Although it is not the primary motivation, for some, the desire to achieve high levels of wealth remains a factor. However, this drive is less pronounced in El Salvador compared to other contexts.

**Unemployment:** Finally, for some individuals, entrepreneurship emerges as a solution to the lack of job opportunities. Self-employment is seen as a viable alternative to unemployment, although it does not always involve a structured business growth plan.

### **Challenges for Entrepreneurship in El Salvador**

In El Salvador, entrepreneurs face various challenges that can hinder the development and growth of their businesses. Among the main problems are:

**Table 8.** Main Challenges for Salvadoran Entrepreneurs

| <b>MAIN CHALLENGES FOR SALVADORAN ENTREPRENEURS</b>  |
|--|
| <p><b>Hiring Qualified Employees:</b> Many entrepreneurs face difficulties in finding and hiring staff with the necessary skills, which directly impact on the productivity and efficiency of the company.</p> |
| <p><b>Financial Management:</b> Maintaining a balanced cash flow is a significant challenge. Proper management of financial resources is crucial to ensuring the long-term viability of the business.</p>      |
| <p><b>Business Administration:</b> Managing the company effectively is essential, as it involves making sound decisions and coordinating the different areas of the business.</p>                              |
| <p><b>Attracting New Clients:</b> Constantly seeking new clients is essential for business growth, and many entrepreneurs struggle to implement effective marketing strategies.</p>                            |
| <p><b>Finding Appropriate Suppliers:</b> Having reliable suppliers is key to ensuring the quality of the products and services offered.</p>  |
| <p><b>Acquisition of Adequate Equipment:</b> Lack of access to appropriate equipment and technology can limit the productive capacities of companies.</p>  |

**Obtaining Market Information:** Many entrepreneurs face challenges when trying to access up-to-date and relevant market information, which is vital to making informed decisions.

**Operations Management:** Efficiently managing daily operations is a significant challenge that requires specific management skills.

**Hiring Leaders and Managers:** Difficulty in hiring skilled managers can impact on the direction and success of the business.

**Adapting Products to Customer Needs:** Entrepreneurs often find it difficult to adjust their products and services to changing market demands.

**Quality Standards Certification:** Meeting the quality standards required in the market is a significant challenge. The inability to certify products can limit sales opportunities.

Note: Elaboration based on the article: CONSULTING, B. (2024, October 14). Obstáculos Que puede enfrentar UN emprendedor. Business Consulting.

## Entrepreneur Profile of my Product

### 1. Socio-demographic data of the entrepreneurs

Our team at "The Adventure Bag" is made up of young entrepreneurs committed to sustainable tourism. Here are the key characteristics that define us:

**Table 9.** Socio-Demographic Data of the Adventure Bag Team

| CATEGORY            | DESCRIPTION   |
|---------------------|---|
| Average age         | 20-30 years old   |
| Gender              | Mixed (equal representation of women and men)                               |
| Educational level   | University, specializing in tourism.  |
| Geographic location | El Salvador, focusing on key tourist destinations (beach, mountain, urban). |
| Previous experience | Some members have experience in small businesses.                           |

Note: Own elaboration. Socio-demographic data of the Adventure Bag team.

We are a team that seeks to bring high-quality products to national and international tourism, relying on experience and training to generate an impact on the sustainability of tourism in El Salvador.

## 2. Competencies and Skills

To compete in the market, we have developed the following skills that are key to our success as entrepreneurs:

**Table 10.** Competencies and Skills of the Adventure Bag Team

| COMPETENCIES SKILLS | DESCRIPTION  |
|---------------------|--|
| Initiative          | We are always on the lookout for new market opportunities and improving our product. |

|                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <b>Persistence</b>               | We face challenges with determination, always looking for creative solutions.            |
| <b>Decision making</b>           | We assess risks and make strategic decisions with a focus on growth.                     |
| <b>Strategic planning</b>        | We create clear plans for long-term business expansion and execution.                    |
| <b>Information seeking</b>       | We continually research tourism trends and markets.                                      |
| <b>Creating support networks</b> | We establish connections with influencers, suppliers and experts in sustainable tourism. |

Note: Own elaboration. Competencies and skills that drive the team to move forward in the tourism industry and to overcome the daily challenges of entrepreneurship.

### 3. Entrepreneur Motivations

The reasons that drive us are varied and align with our desire to positively impact tourism in El Salvador, as well as our community:

**Table 11.** Motivations of the Adventure Bag Team

| <b>MOTIVATION</b>       | <b>DESCRIPTION</b>   |
|-------------------------|--|
| <b>Self-realization</b> | We seek to achieve our personal and professional goals through entrepreneurship. |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Improve income</b>                  | We want to generate a sustainable source of income for ourselves and our team.              |
| <b>Contribute to society</b>           | We promote responsible and environmentally friendly tourism, contributing to the community. |
| <b>Putting knowledge into practice</b> | We use our skills acquired in tourism to create innovative solutions.                       |

Note: Own elaboration. Motivations of the Adventure Bag team.

#### 4. Entrepreneurial Challenges

Despite our strengths, we face several significant challenges that, if not overcome, could jeopardize the growth of "The Adventure Bag". These are obstacles that will require ingenuity, resilience and collective effort:

**Table 12.** Challenges Found in Entrepreneurship

| <b>CHALLENGE</b>                      | <b>DESCRIPTION</b>   |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Maintaining Balanced Cash Flow</b> | Revenue must be carefully managed to cover production, marketing and expansion costs, which require precise financial planning. A mistake here could jeopardize the viability of the venture, so it is a challenge that demands close attention. |
| <b>Finding the Right Suppliers</b>    | Since sustainability is a central part of The Adventure Bag's mission, finding suppliers that meet quality and sustainability standards becomes a major challenge.   |

|                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| <b>Get<br/>Market Information</b> | Understanding changing tourist preferences, identifying trends and adjusting the product in time are challenges that require constant monitoring. Without this accurate information, it is difficult to adapt and offer what customers really need, which could limit brand growth. |
|-----------------------------------|---|

Note: Own elaboration

. Challenges found in entrepreneurship. These challenges are part of the obstacles to overcome, but they are also areas where each advance strengthens the ability of the enterprise to prosper in El Salvador's competitive tourism market.

## **Responsibility**

### **Entrepreneurship Responsibility**

Corporate social responsibility (RSC)<sup>45</sup> refers to a conscious and voluntary commitment that companies make to actively contribute to the social, economic and environmental development of their environment. It is not just about complying with laws and regulations, but going beyond that, integrating ethical practices into every aspect of the business. The main purpose of RSC is to generate a positive impact on society, while strengthening the company's competitiveness and positioning in the market.

From a broad perspective, RSC implies that companies recognize that their role is not limited to making economic profits. They also have a responsibility for the community in which they operate and to the environment on which they depend. This approach allows companies to adopt measures that improve the quality of life of their workers, promote

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<sup>45</sup> Acronym for the Spanish phrase: Responsabilidad Social Corporativa.

environmental sustainability and, at the same time, contribute to the economic development of their community.

The following table presents the main responsibilities that an entrepreneur must assume, both in the management of his business and in his interaction with society:

**Table 13.** Entrepreneurship Responsibilities

| <b>TYPE OF RESPONSIBILITY</b>         | <b>EXAMPLE</b>  |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| Corporate Social Responsibility (RSC) | The entrepreneur must contribute to social, economic and environmental well-being, assuming sustainable practices that benefit the community. | A company that creates eco-friendly backpacks like The Adventure Bag, reduces the use of plastic materials to protect the environment.      |
| Responsibility to Employees           | Ensure the physical, emotional and professional well-being of employees, creating a safe and motivating work environment.                     | In our business we implement equality policies, fair salaries and continuous training.  |
| Responsibility to Society             | Be aware of the impact that business generates in society, supporting social causes or contributing to community development.                 | As entrepreneurs we seek to contribute to the improvement of local tourist areas through our product.                                       |
| Responsibility to Customers           | Guarantee quality products, meet customer expectations and be honest in communication and dealings.   | We offer a product like The Adventure Bag that is durable, comfortable and delivers what it promises in terms of quality and functionality. |

Personal  
Responsibility

Accept responsibility for business decisions, mistakes and successes, developing resilience and adaptability.

If a marketing campaign is unsuccessful, we must learn from our mistakes and create a new strategy instead of looking for blame.

Note: Elaboration based on the article (¿Qué es RSE Y cuáles son los tipos de Responsabilidad social Empresarial? (2023, April 27).

- ✓ **Corporate Social Responsibility (RSC):** The modern entrepreneur does not limit himself to maximizing his profits, but also contributes to the well-being of the planet and people. By choosing sustainable practices, such as manufacturing products with recycled materials or reducing waste, the entrepreneur not only takes care of his image, but also shows that his company is committed to the future.
- ✓ **Responsibility to Employees:** Employees are the heart of any company. A responsible entrepreneur is one who not only ensures a fair salary, but also cares about the professional and personal development of his team. A positive work environment that encourages creativity and growth is key.
- ✓ **Responsibility to Society:** Entrepreneurs must be aware of the impact their business has on their community and society in general. It is not enough to sell a product; it is also crucial to give something back to society. This can be through job creation, collaborations with NGOs, or participation in community projects.
- ✓ **Responsibility to Customers:** Attracting customers and keeping them satisfied is one of the biggest challenges for any entrepreneur. But the real

responsibility lies in ensuring that what is promised is fulfilled. Being honest, offering quality and generating trust are fundamental pillars.

- ✓ **Personal Responsibility:** Mistakes are opportunities to learn, and successes are the result of effort. Every entrepreneur is the driving force behind his or her own project and, by assuming this personal responsibility, he or she becomes a stronger leader. When things do not go as expected, it is vital to learn from the experience, adjust the strategy and move forward because the greatest challenge is to overcome one's own limits.

## Niche Market

### What is a Niche Market?

A niche market is a specialized segment of a market or industry that has its own distinct needs, interests, and behavior patterns. The individuals within a single niche market generally share similar desires, making it easier for marketing messages to resonate with them. Additionally, niche markets tend to be quite specific, which decreases the likelihood that products or services will appeal to a broader audience (Adobe, 2022).<sup>46</sup>

For example, Brands divide almost every market into subsections according to things like:

- **Geographic** location
- **Psychographic data** (interests, attitudes and values)
- **Demographic base** (age, income level, gender, education level)
- **Quality level** (premium, moderate, high, low)

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<sup>46</sup> Adobe communication team. (2022). Learn about niche markets, benefits, examples, and strategies. Learn about niche markets — benefits, examples, and strategies (*adobe.com*)

- **Price** (high, discount, wholesale)

Even consumers exhibiting similar buying behaviors may have different motivations, which are vital for marketing and promotion strategies. For instance, organic consumers were once primarily recognized for their environmental concerns, but now there are various segments that purchase organic products because they believe these foods offer greater nutritional benefits. Understanding target consumer segments is essential for assessing whether a business has the necessary resources, interests, and operational elements to meet the needs of potential customers.

### **Importance of Niche Markets**

A market, business, or personal event often compels companies to make significant decisions regarding the future direction of their operations. Niche markets are particularly appealing for businesses aiming to grow or evolve. One possible decision might involve expanding the size or scope of the operation. Generally, growth objectives include increasing sales, expanding the workforce or capital resources such as land, buildings, and improvements, or diversifying the range and number of enterprises within the operation. This desire for growth is typically fueled by optimism about market opportunities or new resources, such as the business skills of a family member that were previously untapped.

Conversely, some businesses may prioritize improving or stabilizing their financial returns instead of pursuing growth. Most changes necessitate some form of diversification or the creation of new revenue streams. Niche-driven changes are often prompted by strong indicators of shifting consumer preferences or changes in the interests of family

members or long-term employees. Without careful planning and thoughtful consideration of the desired outcomes, new business directions are unlikely to materialize.

Whether the goal is to increase sales and enterprises to achieve financial targets, boost direct sales to fulfill personal ambitions, educate consumers to build a loyal customer base, or initiate organic production in response to evolving values around environmental stewardship, the internal business objectives must align with external niche market opportunities. When internal goals match available opportunities, it may be the right time to formulate a sustainable and effective action plan.

### **What is Niche Marketing?**

<sup>47</sup>Niche marketing is the strategy used by businesses to promote and sell products or services specifically designed for the Niche market. It involves tailoring marketing efforts to address the unique preferences and behaviors of the target audience within that niche. This can include specialized advertising, content creation, and promotional campaigns that resonate with the specific needs of the niche. For instance, a company may use social media influences within the vegan community to promote its vegan skincare line, thereby directly engaging with its target market.

### **Benefits of Niche Marketing**

Niche marketing offers significant advantages for your brand by attracting attention, building a loyal customer base, and creating opportunities for potential expansion into new markets. The following are the five significant benefits of niche marketing to leverage:

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<sup>47</sup> Deskera. (n.d.). What is Niche Marketing? <https://www.deskera.com/blog/niche-marketing/>

- **High ROI:** Niche marketing targets a specific group of consumers who are more likely to purchase the product. The focus is primarily on quality rather than quantity, which leads to a higher return on investment (ROI). Additionally, niche marketing is advantageous because it typically requires lower marketing expenses due to the limited audience. By employing targeted marketing strategies, businesses can expand their reach more effectively and ultimately achieve the desired sales outcomes.
- **Builds customer loyalty:** Niche marketing is crucial for fostering customer loyalty. By focusing on this approach, customers feel that their specific desires are being met, increasing their intention to purchase the product or service. Moreover, niche marketing provides a competitive advantage by highlighting your Unique Selling Proposition (USP), allowing you to differentiate your offerings from those of your competitors.
- **Feasible for all business:** One of the most notable advantages of niche marketing is that it benefits brands, businesses, and companies of all sizes and industries. Even if your business has limited resources, niche marketing can enable you to succeed in the marketplace.
- **Effective use of resources:** Since niche marketing concentrates on catering to a specific group of customers, brands can leverage their resources more effectively within their target market. This approach leads to increased marketing effectiveness and a more efficient allocation of resources overall.
- **High-profit margin:** In niche marketing, companies experience lower competitive pressure, enabling them to sell their products and services at

optimal prices and, consequently, achieve higher profit margins. They can also implement offers and discounts that encourage customers to pay the desired prices for quality products. Many brands and companies are embracing this niche marketing model, generating millions in revenue through increased sales.

### **Elements to Select a Niche Market**

Clustering consumers allows a business to plan more targeted and effective marketing activities, especially if the venture understands the consumers' motivations for buying products or visiting specific shopping or tourism venues.

After the niche is identified, the next step is to find this buying public and grab their attention. This takes thoughtful promotional planning and development of messages to connect with potential buyers. Marketing materials, such as websites, brochures, personal communications, packaging, public image, etc., need to integrate credible claims, motivational messages, and consistent images to connect to (and build loyalty with) niche market consumers. In summary, consider these three rules<sup>48</sup> for niche marketing:

Meet the market's unique needs: The benefits offered must resonate specifically with your target niche market. What new and appealing solutions can you provide? Identify the distinct needs of the potential audience and explore ways to customize the product or service to address those needs. Begin by considering all possible variations of your product or service that you could offer.

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<sup>48</sup> References Gordon, K.T. (2002). "3 Rules for Niche Marketing." Entrepreneur.com. Online. Retrieved May 2008 from <http://www.entrepreneur.com/marketing/marketingcolumnistkimtgordon/article49608.html>.

Say the right thing: When approaching a new market niche, it's imperative to speak their language. In other words, you should understand the market's "hot buttons" and be prepared to communicate with the target group as an understanding member--not an outsider. In addition to launching a unique campaign for the new niche, you may need to alter other, more basic elements, such as the company slogan if it translates poorly into another language.

Test market: Before proceeding, evaluate the direct competitors in the new market niche and decide how you will position your business against them. To gain insights, conduct a competitive analysis by examining competitors' advertisements, brochures, and websites to identify their key selling points, pricing strategies, delivery options, and other service features. But what if you find there's no existing competition? Surprisingly, this isn't always a positive indicator. While it may suggest that other companies haven't figured out how to effectively provide a product or service that this niche wants, it could also mean that many have attempted and failed to enter this market. Always conduct careful test marketing to assess the market's receptiveness to your product or service and messaging. Additionally, proceed cautiously to ensure your risks remain manageable.

### **Niche Market Strategies**

As niche markets often demonstrate inelastic demand, companies involved in niche marketing must devise strategies to prevent competitors from entering the market or continuously work to boost demand for their products to maintain stable and growing prices and sales. Many niche markets have started small, with just a few producers commanding high price premiums, only to become more mainstream as additional suppliers entered the market, ultimately driving prices down. Understanding this

phenomenon is crucial for producers assessing the potential profitability of a new market or niche product. It's important to recognize that product prices are likely to change over time and that strategies to differentiate their niche product from those of other suppliers should be planned in advance. If the product gains traction and attracts more customers at the same time new suppliers enter the market, prices and quantities may remain stable.<sup>49</sup>

**Loyalty Program:** The first strategy to consider is retaining current customers by fostering customer loyalty, often achieved through product differentiation. While larger firms utilize patents, trademarks, and branding to sustain their price premiums as new competitors enter the market, the costs associated with these strategies can be prohibitive for small producers.

Instead, small producers can achieve similar outcomes through more affordable methods, such as implementing unique production practices (e.g., natural, organic, humane), emphasizing the location of production (e.g., local, state, regional), and sharing the story of the product or producer. These strategies help to position the product as distinct and convey to customers that, despite the presence of close substitute products, theirs is not the same.

**Innovation:** The second strategy is to innovate in order to stay ahead of the competition by continuously seeking new products that appeal to the niche market. This could involve exploring new varieties of produce or developing different packaging options. By focusing on new products that will resonate with an existing customer base, businesses can minimize the marketing costs associated with attracting a new audience.

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<sup>49</sup> Thilmany, D. (2012). What are niche markets? What advantages do they offer? Assessment and strategy development for agriculture.

**Market Expansion:** A third potential strategy is to expand the market at a pace that stays ahead of new entrants. This entails identifying new customers who are interested in the product. If awareness of the product increases and new customers are acquired, the resulting demand may match the rising supply, leading to stable prices. However, it's important to recognize that even with the influx of new customers, their rate of consumption must meet or exceed the growing supply; otherwise, prices or price premiums may still decline.

**Product Differentiation:** Using these strategies can be useful for differentiating a product or service from the competition. It's important to remember that the most effective differentiation strategy will likely stem from just one or two approaches.

**Product Features and Benefits:** What makes the product unique and desirable? Consider various product characteristics such as style, handling, taste, quality of ingredients, comfort, production methods (e.g., natural or organic), certifications, and more. ¿Are these characteristics significantly different from those of currently available products? ¿Can the venture effectively provide these features or benefits?

**Location:** The physical location of a business can significantly affect accessibility for customers, supply chain logistics, and market reach. A strategic location can attract more customers and provide advantages in sourcing materials.

**Staff:** A skilled and knowledgeable staff is essential for providing quality service and product Offers, Employee training and engagement can lead to improved customer experience and operational efficiency.

**Operating Procedures.** Efficient operating procedures ensure consistency and quality in products and services. Streamlined processes can reduce costs and improve customer satisfaction through timely service delivery.

**Price:** Pricing strategies play a critical role in attracting customers and positioning the business in the market. Competitive pricing can drive sales, while premium pricing can convey quality and exclusivity.

**Choose the Platform.** When a brand targets a small audience, selecting the right social media platform is crucial. To develop an effective strategy based on the niche, it's important to address the following questions. What are the customers' preferred methods of shopping? Through which channels do they typically find products? Which social media platforms do they actively engage with? Additionally, it's essential to recognize that using a mix of both paid and organic media tends to yield the best results in niche marketing.

**Guarantees and Warranties:** Offering guarantees and warranties can build trust and confidence in your products. They demonstrate a commitment to quality and customer satisfaction, which can differentiate your brand from competitors.

**Goodwill:** Goodwill refers to the positive reputation a business has built over time. It can lead to customer loyalty, positive word-of-mouth, and a competitive edge in the marketplace.

**Value-Added Products/Services:** Offering value-added products or services enhances the customer's experience and can justify higher prices. This can include additional features, customization options, or complementary services that meet customer needs.

**Extended Growing:** Businesses with an extended growth or operating season can take advantage of market opportunities and increase revenue. This can be achieved through innovative practices like greenhouse farming or climate-controlled environments.

**Soils, Buildings, Location, and Landscape:** The quality of soil and the physical attributes of buildings and landscape can affect production capabilities and overall operational efficiency. A well-designed facility and suitable environment can enhance productivity and product quality.

**Weather:** Weather can significantly influence market strategies for various businesses, particularly in sectors like agriculture, tourism, and outdoor retail.

**Plants and Animals:** Utilizing plants and animals as part of a market strategy can create unique opportunities for businesses, particularly in sectors like agritourism, organic farming, and specialty food production.

**Organization and Alliances:** Some businesses can combine resources to create a unique offering, often through cooperative arrangements. These alliances can enhance product offerings, reduce costs, and increase market reach, providing a competitive advantage in the market.

**Customer Experience:** Customer experience encompasses every interaction a customer has with a brand, from initial awareness to post-purchase support. It plays a critical role in customer satisfaction and loyalty, influencing whether customers choose to return or recommend the brand to others.

**Quality:** Successful ventures consistently deliver quality, making it crucial for any business to consider how quality will be perceived and measured. In some instances, quality may be linked to value-added strategies, such as acquiring third-party

certifications for organic products, kosher production, and so on. In other cases, quality could be associated with offering a product that has superior physical attributes compared to competitors or providing exceptional customer service.

“Building sustainable competitive advantages revolves around differentiating a product from the competition along attributes that are important and relevant to customers.” (Barone and De Carlo, 2003).<sup>50</sup>

### **Niche Markets in El Salvador**

<sup>51</sup>According to SIS International Research, El Salvador has three key industries ripe for developing new businesses or ventures: agriculture, tourism, and manufacturing. The tourism sector is particularly noteworthy, encompassing various services, including commerce and financial services. Within tourism, there is a growing emphasis on ecotourism and cultural tourism, which has significantly impacted the country's economy, as reported by CORSATUR in 2020 and MITUR in 2024.<sup>52</sup>

To support this growth, new initiatives have been launched, such as the MIPYME<sup>53</sup> project. This innovative program, coordinated by the Ministry of Economy of El Salvador and other state institutions, aims to promote productive investment and competitiveness in micro, small, and medium-sized businesses. The program provides facilities and technical assistance for entrepreneurs looking to invest and expand their businesses.

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<sup>50</sup> Barone, M.J. and T.E. De Carlo (2003). “Emerging Forms of Competitive Advantage: Implications for Agricultural Producers.” Midwest Agribusiness Trade Research and Information Center Research Paper 03-MRP 5

<sup>51</sup> SIS International Research. (n.d.). Market Research in El Salvador. <https://www.sisinternacional.com/es/cobertura/las-americas/investigacion-de-mercado-de-america-latina/investigacion-de-mercado-el-salvador/>

<sup>52</sup> Gobierno de El Salvador. (2023). *Guía Sectorial of tourism*. <https://investinelsalvador.gob.sv/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Guia-Sectorial-Turismo-2023-1.pdf>

<sup>53</sup> Spanish Acronym MIPYME: Micro, Pequeña y Mediana Empresa

These developments are part of the reason why the Adventure Bag team is interested in this sector, as there are ample opportunities to grow this venture in a thriving market. Importantly, innovation and a strategic approach to marketing are essential for effectively introducing our product to consumers.

Therefore, our focus on this market is justified by the growing interest of both international tourists, who seek new adventures, and national tourists, who wish to take advantage of and appreciate the richness of their own country.

In addition, Adventure Bag can partner with sustainable tourism organizations, eco-tourism companies, or even tourist destinations committed to ecology. These collaborations can open new doors for distribution and promotion in the eco-conscious traveler niche. The combination of tourism and sustainability is a value proposition that not all luggage or travel accessory brands offer. This allows Adventure Bag to stand out from the competition and build a solid reputation in these two sectors.

### **Niche Marketing of my Product**

Adventure Bag chose the tourism and ecological market as its strategic focus due to a series of factors that align its business objectives with current trends and consumer needs. Considering that El Salvador is growing in the tourism sector, there has been an observed increase and demand for sustainable tourism and ecotourism, where travelers seek experiences that respect the environment and promote conservation. Adventure Bag decided to align with this trend by developing products that facilitate and encourage this type of tourism. The growing awareness of environmental issues has also led many consumers to seek eco-friendly and responsible products and services. Adventure Bag

aimed to be part of this transformation by offering a backpack designed with sustainable materials.

### Target Audience

To determine the target market, the study carried out by Invest El Salvador,<sup>54</sup> was taken into account, which describe the characteristics of the Tourism Sector in El Salvador. Where it can also consider the study that **CORSATUR**<sup>55</sup> does to identify the type of traveler, tastes, preferences, etc.

<sup>56</sup>The study mentions that most national and international visitors arriving to El Salvador are between the ages of 25 to 44 and 45 to 64. Based on that information, is identified both local and international travelers, who seek authentic and diverse experiences in El Salvador, a country with rich cultural and natural beauty that makes it an attractive tourist destination. It offers beaches, mountains, archaeological sites, and historic towns. Additionally, the warmth of its people and the authenticity of its traditions enhance the tourist experience, creating a unique value that appeals to this segment (Jose Zepeda, 2024).<sup>57</sup> Therefore, Adventure Bag offers a multifunctional and modern backpack, designed to be used in each of these adventures.

Brands that advocate for social or environmental causes tend to create a deeper connection with their customers. If Adventure Bag promotes environmental cleanup or conservation campaigns, it will build loyalty among consumers who identify with these

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<sup>54</sup> SIS International Research. (n.d.). Market Research in El Salvador.  
<https://www.sisinternacional.com/es/cobertura/las-americas/investigacion-de-mercado-de-america-latina/investigacion-de-mercado-el-salvador/>

<sup>55</sup> Spanish Acronym CORSATUR: Corporación Salvadoreña de Turismo.

<sup>56</sup> Gobierno de El Salvador. (2017). Boletín Estadístico de Turismo.  
[https://www.transparencia.gob.sv/system/documents/documents/000/277/966/original/Boletin\\_\\_final\\_2017.pdf](https://www.transparencia.gob.sv/system/documents/documents/000/277/966/original/Boletin__final_2017.pdf)

<sup>57</sup> Zepeda, J. (2024). *El Turismo Como Motor de Desarrollo en El Salvador. El turismo como motor de desarrollo en El Salvador - Diario El Salvador*

initiatives. This will allow us to position ourselves as a solution to reduce waste in natural tourist destinations. Offering products that encourage waste collection and cleanup in these areas adds extra value and practicality for responsible travelers.

### Problems

El Salvador can be a wonderful experience, but it also presents some challenges. Here are some problems that travelers might face. Fundación iO. (n.d.).<sup>58</sup>

**Transportation:** The public transportation system can be complicated and not always reliable. Roads may be in poor condition, and traffic in urban areas can be heavy.

**Weather:** The tropical climate can be hot and humid, which may be uncomfortable for some travelers. The rainy season, from May to October, can cause flooding in certain areas.

**Health and food:** It's important to take preventive measures to avoid contracting diseases or viruses like dengue and chikungunya. Additionally, it's advisable to avoid consuming food of questionable origin. For added safety, it's wise to carry daily medications if you have them, or to acquire health insurance while in the country.

**Safety:** Although this has been one of the aspects that El Salvador has improved, travelers should still take precautions, such as avoiding isolated areas away from tourists. It's also important not to stay in places that do not have the required permits.

Adventure Bag is aware of those situations, in order to reduce these affections is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of travelers by forming strategic alliances with various tour operators, accommodations, and restaurants. These collaborations are

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<sup>58</sup> Fundación iO. (n.d.). Riesgos Locales El Salvador. *Riesgos locales El Salvador - Fundación iO* ([fundacionio.com](http://fundacionio.com))

designed to provide comprehensive and quality service to our clients, ensuring they have a pleasant and safe experience during their visit to El Salvador.

### **Secret**

Eco-conscious consumers prefer products that are durable, reusable, and that minimize the use of plastics and other polluting materials. As a result, Adventure Bag is born as a brand dedicated to enhancing environmental well-being through the development of products made from eco-friendly and sustainable materials, offering the flagship product the adventure backpack, designed to be the ideal choice for a variety of situations.

### **Niche of my Product**

Adventure Bag is an innovative brand dedicated to promoting a sustainable lifestyle through high-quality, eco-friendly products. Therefore, we have developed additional items of interest for those who enjoy beaches, urban, and mountain tourism, providing a different travel alternative that meets the needs of both tourists and local travelers. The market segment is aligned with various strategies that will allow us to position ourselves as a brand of quality and sustainability in the industry.

### **Characteristics of the Tourist Service Niche Market**

Features of the Adventure Bag:

**Sustainable Materials:** Made from recycled material, such as recycled polyester, bamboo, or biodegradable materials.

**Ethical Production:** Manufactured under fair and safe labor conditions.

**Multifunctionality:** This backpack is suitable for a range of activities, from outdoor excursions to everyday use in urban settings.

**Comfort:** Designed with an ergonomic focus, it ensures easy and comfortable carrying, even over long distances.

**Modern Style:** Its contemporary design aligns with current trends, offering a practical solution without compromising aesthetics.

**Resistant:** designed to withstand various tough conditions, making it ideal for adventurers and travelers.

## Strategic Alliance

### Definition

According to Wallstreet mojo (2024),<sup>59</sup> A strategic alliance refers to an arrangement between two firms to collaboratively benefit from a specific project. Both parties commit to sharing resources, leading to synergistic effects that enhance project execution and increase profit margins. Furthermore, each company maintains its independence beyond the parameters of the project.

The concept of a strategic alliance is multi-dimensional, encompassing a wide range of strategic partnerships that span inter-firm and inter-organizational boundaries. There are many different types of alliances or arrangements, as noted by Koka and Prescott (2002). These include joint ventures (Kogut, 1988), franchising and licensing (Combs et al., 2011), business networks (Gulati et al., 2000; Min & Mitsuhashi, 2012), public-private partnerships (Hart, 2003), vertical supplier-buyer alliances (Carmeli et al.,

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<sup>59</sup> Wallstreet mojo. (2024). What is a strategic Alliance? *Strategic Alliances - What Is It, Examples, Types, Advantages* (wallstreetmojo.com)

2017; Wilson, 1995), consortia (Ring et al., 2005), and concentric partnerships (Bustinza et al., 2019), among others.<sup>60</sup>

## **Benefits**

A strategic alliance allows companies to share risks and expertise with one another. Consequently, both parties can access new markets, complement each other's core competencies, and collaborate on various projects. However, it is crucial to recognize that outside of these partnerships, each company remains independent in its other business activities.

### Selection of Strategic alliances

Adventure Bag seeks to establish strategic alliances with eco-friendly brands and organizations that align with our commitment to sustainability and responsible tourism. By collaborating with entities specializing in outdoor equipment, sustainable travel solutions, or environmental conservation, we aim to enhance our product offerings, broaden our market reach, and implement joint marketing initiatives that mutually benefit both parties.

These strategic partnerships will facilitate the sharing of resources, expertise, and networks, enabling us to innovate and develop new products that address the evolving needs of environmentally conscious consumers. Together, we can penetrate new markets and amplify our collective impact while maintaining our respective independence in other business endeavors.

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<sup>60</sup> He, Q., Meadows, M., Angwin, D., Gomes, E. & Child, J. (2024) Problematizing Strategic Alliance Research: Challenges, Issues and Paradoxes in the New Era (p4). *International Journal of Management Reviews*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijmr.12353>

## Logo of my Product

The Adventure bag logo reflects the spirit of exploration and versatility that characterizes our brand. The triangular figure symbolizes the mountains and landscapes of El Salvador, evoking the connection with nature and outdoor adventures.

The horizontal stripes represent the diversity of experiences we offer, from sun and beach tourism to

the urban environment and mountain adventures. This design captures our essence as a brand committed to the modern traveler and active lifestyle, highlighting the pride of our Salvadoran roots.



Figure 27: Own elaboration.

## Slogan

**CARRY THE ADVENTURE ON YOUR BACK**

Carrying adventure on your back is an invitation to explore the world with a backpack full of dreams and possibilities. It is the essence of the traveler, one who does not fear the unknown and sets out to discover new landscapes, cultures and experiences. The adventure on your back symbolizes the freedom to move without ties, to learn and grow with each step taken. It is a reminder that life is a constant journey, and true wealth lies in the experiences lived and the knowledge acquired along the way.

### **Mission**

At Adventure Bag, we are dedicated to creating tourist backpacks that combine innovation, sustainability and quality. Our goal is to provide travelers with backpacks that adapt to any type of environment, whether the beach, the mountains or the cities, guaranteeing comfort, functionality and style. Through our products, we seek not only to facilitate tourism experience, but also to promote more ecological and conscious tourism, contributing to respect for the environment. We strive to offer a comprehensive solution that enhances the tourist identity of El Salvador and positions the country on the world map of responsible tourism.

### **Vision**

To be the leading brand in backpacks and accessories for tourists globally, recognized our ability to innovate and offer products that improve the traveler's experience. At Adventure Bag, we envision a future where sustainable tourism is the standard, and where our backpacks represent the perfect fusion between functionality, style and respect for the environment. We aim to be ambassadors of Salvadoran tourism, promoting not only the beauty of our country, but also the value of traveling consciously and respectfully of nature and local cultures. We want each Adventure Bag backpack to accompany tourists on their adventures while they connect with the world and become agents of change for a more sustainable and enriching tourism.

## Values

**Responsibility:** Is one of our core pillars. We are committed to creating unique backpacks for tourists of all ages, respecting the environment and ensuring the highest quality in each of our products. This responsibility is reflected in every stage of our process, from the selection of sustainable materials to the creation of designs that meet the needs of the modern traveler.

**Quality:** Is at the heart of everything we do. Every backpack we design for tourists is the result of a meticulous manufacturing process, where we select the best materials and apply innovative techniques to ensure durability, comfort, and style. We strive to create products that are not only functional but also offer a unique experience on every journey, guaranteeing that our customers receive backpacks that exceed their expectations and accompany them on their adventures for many years.

**Passion:** Drives every backpack we create. We are passionate about design, functionality, and innovation, which motivates us to develop products that uniquely connect tourists with their adventures. Our dedication goes beyond simply making backpacks; we strive to inspire unforgettable experiences, combining style and practicality in every detail while honoring our Salvadoran culture. This passion for tourism and exploration is what pushes us to continuously improve, offering backpacks that accompany travelers on every step of their journey.

**Innovation:** Is key to the design of our backpacks for tourists who enjoy exploring mountains, beaches, or magical towns. We focus on creating modern solutions that adapt to the needs of every adventure, integrating lightweight, durable materials and functional technologies like specialized compartments and ergonomic features. We are always

striving to stay at the forefront, offering backpacks that not only accompany travelers but also enhance their experience by connecting with nature and discovering new destinations. Innovation is our way of transforming every trip into something unforgettable.

# **CHAPTER IV**

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Figure 1 image taken from: [https://www.freepik.com/premium-ai-image/map-world-with-ship-map-world\\_52865975.htm](https://www.freepik.com/premium-ai-image/map-world-with-ship-map-world_52865975.htm)

Figure 2 image taken from: <https://www.india.com/festivals-events/hajj-2019-history-date-and-significance-of-muslim-pilgrimage-3740149/>

Figure 3 The Tourist System. Adapted from Tourism System by Leiper in 1979

Figure 4 image taken from: <https://bradfordjacobs.com/blog/5-economic-indicators-that-affect-business-success/>

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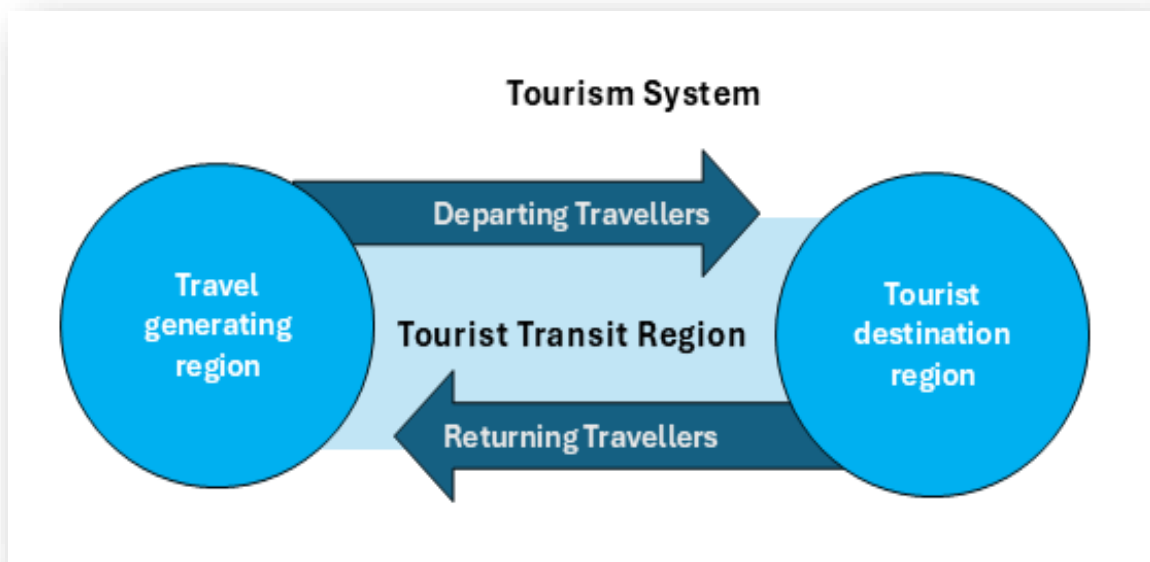
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## Annexes

### Annex 1. The Adventure Bag Logo



### Annex 2. Tourism System by Leiper



## Annex 3. Strategic Plan of Quality Design



## Annex 4. Characteristics of the Entrepreneurship Ecosystem

### Liderazgo

- \* Apoyo inequívoco
- \* Legitimidad social
- \* Puerta abierta a las propuestas
- \* Estrategia emprendedora
- \* Urgencia, crisis y retos

### Primeros clientes

- \* Innovadores tempranos para pruebas de concepto
- \* Experiencia en productividad
- \* Clientes referencia
- \* Primeros comentarios
- \* Canales de distribución

### Redes

- \* Redes de empresarios
- \* Redes de diáspora
- \* Corporaciones multinacionales

### Trabajo

- \* Capacitado y no capacitado
- \* Emprendedores seriales
- \* Familia de última generación

### Instituciones educativas

- \* Grados generales (profesionales y académicos)
- \* Capacitación específica de emprendimiento

### Infraestructura

- \* Telecomunicaciones
- \* Transporte y logística
- \* Energía
- \* Zonas, centros de incubación, cluster's

### Profesiones de apoyo

- \* Legal
- \* Contabilidad
- \* Banca de Inversión
- \* Asesores técnicos expertos

### Gobierno

- \* Instituciones, Ejem.: Inversión, apoyo
- \* Apoyo financiero, Ejem.: I+D, fondos jump start
- \* Marco regulatorio de incentivos, Ejem.: Beneficios fiscales
- \* Institutos de investigación
- \* Legislación amigable de riesgo, Ejem.: Bancarrota, imposición de contratos, derechos de propiedad y trabajo



### Capital financiero

- \* Micro préstamos
- \* Ángeles inversionistas, amigos y familia
- \* Capital de riesgo en etapa cero
- \* Fondos de capital de riesgo
- \* Capital privado
- \* Mercados públicos de capital
- \* Deuda

### Historias de éxito

- \* Éxitos visibles
- \* Generación de riqueza para los fundadores
- \* Reputación Internacional

### Normas sociales

- \* Tolerancia al riesgo, errores y fracaso
- \* Innovación, creatividad y experimentación
- \* Creación de riqueza
- \* Ambición, esfuerzo y deseo

### Instituciones no gubernamentales

- \* Promoción del emprendimiento en organizaciones sin ánimos de lucro
- \* Conferencias
- \* Competencias de plan de negocios
- \* Asociaciones amigables a emprendedores

**Annex 5. Work team on the second field trip, Laguna de Apastepeque**

