

Article

A Strategy for Tourism Growth, Rebound, and Revival: Promoting Portugal as a Destination Post-COVID-19

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Abstract: The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact around the world on health, economies, businesses, equality and the movement of people in the form of tourism. In this context, this paper looks at the strategy chosen by Turismo de Portugal to adapt to the crisis in a country where tourism plays an important role in supporting the local economy, having grown significantly since 2010. The chosen strategy encouraged tourists not to visit Portugal during the pandemic, a turnaround from their previous digital marketing strategy, which invited tourists to discover the country. We undertook a survey that had 170 answers, predominantly from Ecuador, Mexico, the United Kingdom and Portugal but also from several other countries in Europe and Latin America. We aimed to understand whether their strategy was successful in encouraging people to consider Portugal as a holiday destination post-COVID-19. The Can't Skip Hope campaign was created in a work-from-home environment, with the voiceover recorded on a smartphone. Previously recorded footage was re-edited. Our survey found that respondents said the video matched their views of Portugal and that 79.5% would consider Portugal as a holiday destination when they next booked a holiday. In terms of inferential statistics, we performed chi-square tests of significance on the survey data. Thus, this paper contributes to the body of work because it offers insight into marketing strategy adaptation by a local tourist board during a period of crisis.

Keywords: Portugal; tourism; COVID-19; crisis; consumer decisions; digital marketing; destination marketing

1. Introduction

In March 2020, the world played host to a new common threat; Coronavirus, also referred to as COVID-19. This virus, whose origin is still unknown, has progressively spread around the world, where it has had a huge impact on the world's economy, affecting people in every corner of the globe. The world has been in varying stages of lockdown since the WHO officially declared COVID-19 a pandemic on the 11th of March [1] and, at the time of writing, varying attempts to return to a new normal are in place across the globe.

Countries have taken a variety of approaches and decisions to contain the spread of the virus [2], using methods humanity has not witnessed for over 100 years. There have been curfews, limited interaction between people, the use of masks, restrictions on business operations and travel restrictions. This last one has been the most affected so far. However, these methods of contention against the virus have caused a global economic

crisis, at a local, national and international level, particularly affecting tourism-related businesses. The authors in Gossling et al. [3] noted that “International, regional and local travel restrictions immediately affected national economies, including tourism systems”, with the impact felt on “all parts of the hospitality value chain” and that within a very short period of time of just a few months, tourism moved from a state of over-tourism to non-tourism.

For the purposes of this paper, we refer to tourism based on the definition established by the UNWTO wherein tourism is “a social, cultural and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/professional purposes. These people are called visitors (which may be either tourists or excursionists; residents or non-residents), and tourism has to do with their activities, some of which involve tourism expenditure” [4].

Tourism is an important part of many countries’ economies, and, for the purposes of this paper, we recognise that it is of particular importance to countries in the European Union. The sector directly contributes, on average, 4.4% of GDP and 21.5% of service exports [5], and as a result, one can expect that the decline in tourism over the course of the pandemic has affected not just travel-related companies but also the livelihoods of those whose jobs are related to tourism.

According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), there are three scenarios to look at when analysing a progressive reopening of tourism, namely, lifting restrictions on travel and supporting businesses, stimulating demand and building traveller confidence, and preparing plans to restart the sector. The OECD identified that international tourism could see a decline rate which could range from 60% to 80% between the months of July, September, and December [5].

Given Portugal’s reliance on tourism, as previously indicated by Kastenholz [6], a strategy was needed to combat the decline in visitors and the economic impact of this decline since the onset of COVID-19. This paper aims to examine the impact of the campaign Turismo de Portugal implemented online and to understand the likelihood of people visiting Portugal as a result of the campaign in the future. In addition to this brief introduction, the article is structured in four other sections. Next, the literature review is presented, primarily about the context of the crisis, the impact of COVID-19 on tourism in Portugal, Turismo de Portugal’s strategy and tourism marketing techniques. Then, the methodology used to achieve the objectives, the analysis and discussion of the results, constituting the focal point of the investigation and, finally, the conclusion follow.

2. Literature Review

2.1. A Crisis in Context

According to Sarpong [7], we live in a world characterised by risks and crises. A crisis is an “exceptional situation” [7], which given the increased interconnectedness of countries via the Internet, low-cost travel and global trade, leads more countries to face increased vulnerabilities together in a time of crisis. This interdependence is more formally referred to as globalisation which is defined as “the increasing economic interdependence among countries as reflected in the flow of goods and services, financial capital and knowledge across country borders” [8]. As a result, the vulnerabilities of our interconnected, global economy [7], are shared by “many actors, above and beyond emergency services” [9]. Baubion questions how governments can adapt their approaches, capacities and tools in various areas of crisis management, with a view to being more flexible and able to adapt to a situation [9], whilst Mair et al. [10], noted that “the management of crises and disasters is vital in order to reduce the impacts and improve recovery time both at an organisational and destination level”.

Even when the situation of the pandemic has limited human interactions, and it has had a negative effect on many human-dominated aspects of life, it has had a positive impact on the environment. According to Moraes Sarmiento [2] (2020), CO₂ levels have decreased in the Iberian Peninsula, and NO₂ levels have reduced by 80% in Lisbon and

60% in Porto, which represents a benefit for reducing respiratory problems and immunity to lung infections. Other results are the reduction in traffic jams and noise pollution.

2.2. *The Impact of COVID-19 on Tourism in Portugal*

The pandemic ended a strong growth streak in Portugal's tourism sector, registered since 2010 [11,12].

Since March 2020, this sector has seen a decreasing tendency due to the increase in COVID-19 cases registered in Europe [13]. The second of March was the first day a COVID-19 case was registered in Portugal [14], and the 18th of March was the first day of the state of emergency in the country due to the pandemic [15].

As soon as summer began, Portugal became more open to the idea of boosting tourism in order to recover from the financial impact of the pandemic, with measures such as stopping mandatory quarantines for foreign tourists and with Turismo de Portugal implementing a campaign to promote the fact that the country was once again open for business [16]. This campaign focused on international markets under the slogan Can't Skip Opening [17]. Although in the first eight months of the year, the total number of tourist accommodations was 62.5% less than in 2019, August mitigated these numbers with a decrease of 43.2%. This was the best result after the pandemic and still resulted in a decrease of 48.9% of the total income from tourist accommodation compared to the previous year. The only type of accommodation that did not suffer as much from the pandemic was rural tourism, with a decrease of only 13.9% in August, but unfortunately, rural tourism only formed 6.8% of the total tourist accommodation featured in the INE statistics [18].

At the end of the summer period, Europe bore witness to another exponential growth in new COVID-19 cases, and Portugal was no exception [13]. Portuguese tourism once again suffered from a strong decrease in comparison to previous years, and, with the imminent threat of a new state of emergency, this sector has seen a tendency towards maintaining low numbers until the pandemic starts to slow down [19].

In Portugal, there are around 65,000 enterprises that operate in the tourism sector, and 85% of workers related to accommodation businesses were laid off [20]. With this declining trend, it goes without saying that the situation of these companies is serious and may result in businesses closing their doors for good if the situation continues to be limited and uncertain.

2.3. *Turismo de Portugal's Strategy*

The ability to respond to a crisis is paramount to any business or industry, and in a country in which 8.0% of GDP is reliant on tourism [5], this is especially true. In 2017, the Portuguese government defined tourism as a priority [21]. Given the sector's role in supporting Portugal's economy, Turismo de Portugal had to respond to the challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Portuguese government first began international tourism marketing campaigns in 1974, following the fall of the Salazar dictatorship. Its first campaign was launched in London with the slogan Portugal feel free, reflecting on the new freedom in the country. Various campaigns have taken place over time under differently named government departments dedicated to repositioning campaigns and tactical campaigns. In 2013, Turismo de Portugal moved away from institutionally based campaigns to exclusively online/digital campaigns, reflecting changing trends and, in turn, reducing costs [22]. In 2017, Turismo de Portugal launched their Can't Skip Portugal campaign with a funding budget of €20 million for 2017 and 2018 and the hashtag #cantskipportugal [23].

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Turismo de Portugal adapted their 2017 Can't Skip Portugal campaign (Figure 1), which was publicised via social media and YouTube, maintaining the same method of message diffusion. The 2020 Can't Skip Hope campaign (Figure 2) used the hashtag #CantSkipHope and was created using previously recorded footage, seen in the 2017 and a subsequent 2018 campaign. The Can't Skip Hope campaign included a new voiceover which was recorded on a smartphone, whilst the creative team worked exclusively from home [24]. The follow-on campaign Can't Skip Opening focused

on an online target audience and was the response to the country once again opening up to visitors [17].

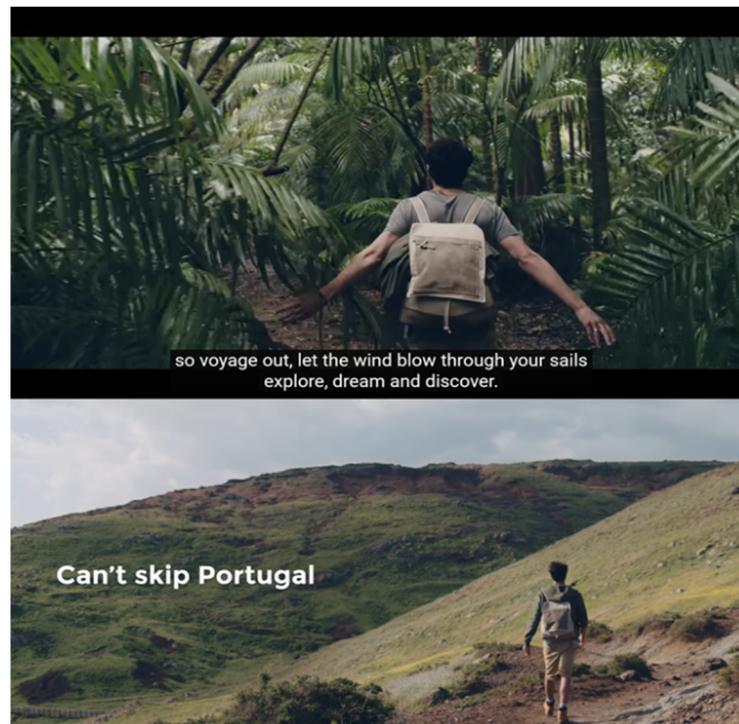


Figure 1. Can't Skip Portugal campaign, encouraging people to explore. Source: Visit Portugal, YouTube.



Figure 2. From Turismo de Portugal's Can't Skip Hope. Source: Visit Portugal, YouTube.

In addition to these campaigns, it is important for a country that is starting to boost tourism again to demonstrate that the places tourists wish to visit are certified as safe, thus giving tourists the confidence to feel secure in their choice of destination. Turismo de Portugal has created a support package that addresses this at various levels, from training and support for tourism-related businesses to tourist-focused on-site initiatives, such as the “Clean & Safe” seal [25]. This seal certifies that companies in the tourism industry comply with sanitary measures to operate as stated by the Direção-Geral da Saúde. This measure is aimed at companies that want to reactivate their business and provide a safe environment in the new guise that tourism has taken on. As of the 12th of February 2021, 1000 audits had taken place relating to the Clean & Safe seal (Figure 3), with 248 establishments losing their right to show the seal because they did not meet the seal’s strict guidelines [26].



Figure 3. “Clean & Safe” stamp provided and certified by Turismo de Portugal to ensure a safe place to visit. Source: Clean and Safe, Visit Portugal.

2.4. Marketing Strategy Types

We identified a number of marketing strategy types that Turismo de Portugal applied for the development of their Can’t Skip Hope campaign and discuss them here. These are Destination Marketing, Inbound Marketing and Storytelling, which our review of the literature suggested were the most pertinent with regard to this campaign.

2.4.1. Destination Marketing

Over the years, Portugal, like many other countries, has seen the need to exploit every opportunity for economic growth, and, without a shadow of a doubt, tourism is a major part of this strategy. Since the 19th century, tourism has become more organised in the way it develops attractions and catches consumers’ attention [27]. With this idea in place, destinations have become ever-increasingly recognised as an economic force.

As a result of this, there has been a greater need to focus on marketing and its role in making a country a sought-after destination amongst visitors from all over the world. This specific type of marketing is called “destination marketing”, which is based primarily on promoting a destination, such as a country, a city or a region, and aiming to gain visitors by developing strategies across the world wide web [28]. This branch of marketing has peculiarities of its own and is considered a field in its own right, making it an essential study area for anyone entering the tourism sector, given its growth in importance [27].

At first glance, tourism can be thought of as a product that catches the eye of the consumer as a result of the way it is promoted. For a destination to be seen, in today’s world, the Internet is an essential tool because it is the go-to tool to connect with almost anyone, anything and everything. As a consequence, it is the main tool for destination marketing campaigns, and destination marketing strategies must be forward-thinking in order to attract consumers through virtual channels, such as social media and search engines, which are proven to be today’s choice for discovering new places.

The use of hashtags, naming campaigns, partnering with celebrities who are natives from a country and influencers, are just some starting points to launch a destination marketing campaign, both before the COVID-19 pandemic but increasingly so during and

most likely after the pandemic, using international TV, social media, and Online Customer Review sites, such as Trip Advisor, as the chosen marketing channels.

COVID-19 has, however, changed this globalised strategy to some extent. According to Hassan and Soliman [29], Destination Social Responsibility (DSR) must take place in order for tourism-related enterprises to continue to do business. Country tourist boards have needed to adapt for tourism to survive by developing strategies that mitigate the effect of the reduced transit of tourists from other parts of the world. To this end, as the borders closed, instead of focusing on encouraging foreigners to visit, destination management organisations encouraged their own citizens to enjoy domestic tourism in a responsible way, maintaining some economic benefits for local tourism-based companies.

2.4.2. Inbound Marketing

It has been recognised by Teba et al. [30] that “The digital era has radically changed the context in which the tourist service is delivered and experienced, changing the decision processes of consumer and company business models.” Tourist boards and tourism-related businesses need to contact consumers at the start of their travel search, using “non-intrusive techniques” and “accompanying them until their final transaction”.

Brian Halligan [31], discussed in Teba et al. [30], the owner of the HubSpot company, coined the term Inbound marketing in 2009 in response to the purchase process identified regarding the changing face of consumer purchases. Attracting customers from the get-go is key to attracting users, gaining loyalty and providing the information consumers desire during the purchase cycle and thereafter. It is recognised by Del Santo et al., [32] that “the nature of inbound marketing is to change the role of advertiser to that of socializer, and that a prospective client’s attention is caught by content meaningful to them and not by indiscriminate adverts”. Thus, building on this, one can assert that meaningful content is the way forward, and it is what consumers now seek in a minefield of advertisements on a plethora of social media platforms.

In the case of Turismo de Portugal, we believe that there is an Inbound marketing approach. Given that the channel strategy chosen involves social media, namely YouTube and Visit Portugal’s Social Media channels, and follows the AIDA technique, we believe that the AIDA purchasing process, also known as the customer journey, can be applied to Turismo de Portugal’s campaign (Figure 4). According to Teba et al. [30], the first three phases are now predominantly undertaken online, and as such, Turismo de Portugal’s Can’t Skip Portugal and consequent Can’t Skip Hope campaigns tie in with this first stage of raising awareness of Portugal’s tourist destinations (observing), before driving customers to investigate further at the second stage, before making a decision at the third stage and ultimately taking action as they book a holiday, flight, accommodation or other tourism-related activities.

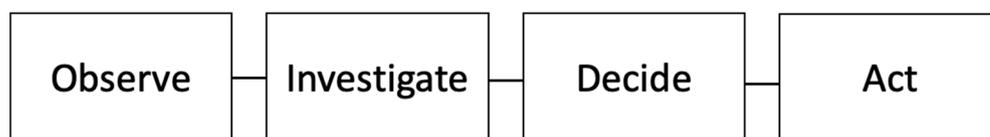


Figure 4. OBIDA Model. Source: Authors’ own based on Hassan et al. [33].

Inbound marketing is described by Bleoju et al. [34] as a marketing technique that creates content that is at once useful and also remarkable, using a multi-channel approach, including blogs and social media, which all come together to further reinforce and reassure consumers.

In response to COVID-19, Teba et al. [30] noted that, “lead nurturing, is more effective in the case of post-COVID tourist attraction since it can directly affect the purchase process via customizing the promotional content by adding elements that generate trust and security in the destination”. In the case of Turismo de Portugal and their Can’t Skip campaigns, several promotional videos have been shot, and footage has been adapted to fit different

target markets. For example, the original Can't Skip Us, Can't Skip Portugal campaign featured four different videos to target consumers looking for a range of holiday types [35].

2.4.3. Storytelling in Tourism Marketing

Joseph Campbell's studies of storytelling presented us with the hero's journey. The hero's journey dates back long before stories were written down. Stories were narrative in a time when people could not read or write and were passed on from generation to generation. These stories continue to capture attention today. The art of storytelling is often chosen as the tool by which consumers are guided to a purchase decision, and according to Pera et al. [36,37], quoted in Mitchell and Clark [38], storytelling is a technique that is particularly recognised for its use in tourism and the luxury goods sectors (Hughes et al. [39]; Kim et al. [40]). In the case of Turismo de Portugal, this is particularly relevant through the use of visual media whereby storytelling is applied to guide a consumer to research Portugal as a tourist destination, based on promotional videos with imagery designed to create awareness, interest and drive a consumer to research Portugal as a potential holiday destination, in conjunction with targeted campaigns in pre-defined countries.

Within the B2C segment, Grębosz-Krawczyk [41] argued that stories and storytelling are an important part of the marketing mix for successful brand management, connecting a brand's identity with its target marketing group. Brand personality is of the utmost importance and forms a connection with a customer, and as a company creates a brand image, brand stories are often the marketing tool chosen to create loyalty, authenticity, and a consumer relationship through the implementation of key emotional elements in the stories.

According to Moscardo [42], storytelling is identified in a number of areas, namely tourism planning (often linked to sustainability), promotion (or communication) and experience co-creation (innovation), and tourist management, each one intertwines depending on the person charged with the story, be it tourists themselves, tourism practitioners or destination communities, as shown in Figure 5 (own elaboration).

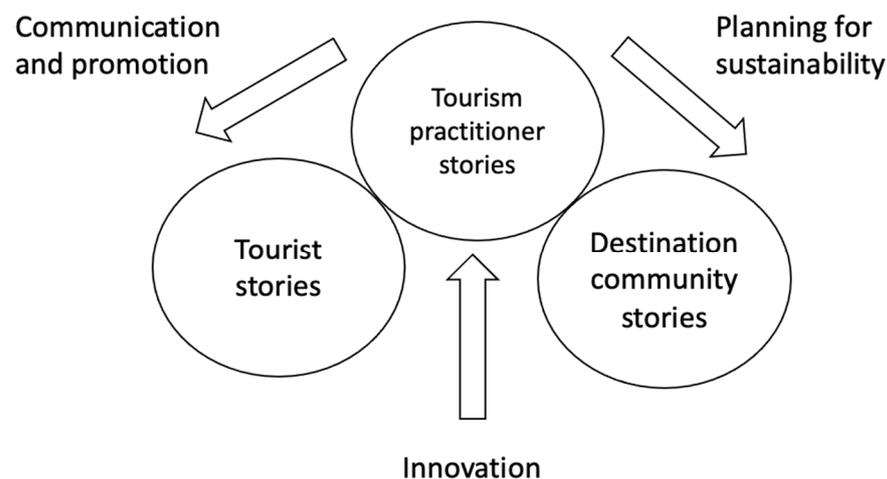


Figure 5. Stakeholder tourism stories. Source: Authors' own based on Moscardo [42].

3. Methodology

One of the purposes of this article was to identify the impact and effectiveness of Turismo de Portugal's Can't Skip Hope campaign on YouTube, in presenting Portugal as a destination, post-COVID-19. Aiming to make people stop with plans and stay at home for the time being, at least, a message reiterated throughout the video, the video ultimately encourages those who have watched it to visit Portugal. This article also seeks to assess Portugal's appeal as a tourist destination, asking respondents what they feel Portugal offers them when booking a holiday and what they actually look for, no matter what the destination country is, when they research and book a holiday.

The survey did not have a specified geographically located audience; however, respondents from outside of Portugal could offer a more international insight into what international clientele look for in a holiday in Portugal and the effectiveness of a campaign to which they are not pre-informed or biased, by nationality, education, or residence in Portugal.

Both qualitative and quantitative research methods were used for the purposes of this research. Qualitative research in the form of a Literature Review [43] served to understand crisis management and Portugal's governmental reports in relation to tourism's role in the country's economy. Quantitative research served to collect opinions and experiences as well as assess the impact of Turismo de Portugal's Can't Skip Hope campaign.

A survey was created using Google Forms to collect opinions, experiences and feedback on holiday choices, holidays in Portugal and the Can't Skip Hope video's impact. The survey gathered data over a two-week period in November 2020, a time when according to data cited by the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and World Health Organization (WHO) [44], 54 countries had confirmed cases, and these cases totalled 20,733,940 cases with 642,995 deaths. It is not known whether these figures could have affected the respondent's answers, given that respondents' countries were at different stages of dealing with the pandemic. The data obtained from the survey was deemed necessary to collect a convenience sample, which can be described as a selection of "individuals [into our sample] based on their availability to the investigators rather than selecting subjects at random from the entire population [45]—something which was particularly challenging at the time given the circumstances concerning the restricted movement of people in which people were living, working and studying on a global scale. The survey was shared on the authors' social media networks, including Facebook, LinkedIn, and WhatsApp. Considering that the sample used in the present investigation was 170 and that the population is indeterminate, or tends to infinity, a sampling error of 7.52% at a 5% significance level was assumed for the calculation of the sample size, which was determined by convenience. The survey contained within it an embedded video of Visit Portugal's Can't Skip Hope campaign, and respondents were asked to first watch the video then respond to a series of questions. Considering the fact that this survey was undertaken during a period in which international travel was out of the question for most people, with international borders closed, and the extreme likelihood that people were not booking nor even looking for a holiday, the authors consider that the number of respondents represents a sufficient sample size for the time period during which this study was carried out.

The data were analysed in Excel to determine key information, such as the nationality of respondents, age, work status, response to the video, and this information can be found in the next section, Analysis and Discussion of the results.

In terms of inferential statistics, we performed chi-square tests of significance on the survey data which we discuss in Section 4.2.

4. Analysis and Discussion of the Results

4.1. Data Overview

The survey aimed to gather data from a range of nationalities, ages, professions, and life stages. The survey gathered a total of 170 responses, primarily from Ecuador (34%), Mexico (27%), the United Kingdom (17%) and Portugal (9%). These results reflect the nationalities and family ties of the authors of this study, with these being Ecuador, the United Kingdom, Mexico, and Portugal.

The survey had one qualitative question, with the remaining questions being quantitative

With regard to gender, a total of 65.5% of respondents were female, 34.5% were male. Eight percent of the respondents were aged between 18 and 25 years old, 37.5% between 26 and 41, 39% between 42 and 57, 12% between 58 and 75, and 3.5% above 75 years old, meaning the most represented generations were Millennials (Generation Y) and Generation X.

Of all the respondents, 45.5% worked on a full-time basis, employed by others, 13% were self-employed and working on a full-time basis, 12.5% were students, 12% were retired and 11% were stay-at-home parents, all of which could be considered target markets by the disposable income, time, or the propensity to travel.

Regarding the reasons for booking a holiday, 68% of respondents answered it was to discover new places, 47.5% to enjoy new experiences, 46% stated it was to relax, 44% to enjoy the local gastronomy, 36.5% to visit family or friends and 30.5% to enjoy the nature.

When questioned regarding Portugal, specifically, 74% of respondents had never visited Portugal. Of the 26% who had, 65% had visited Oporto/Porto, 48.5% had visited Lisbon, 35% had visited the Algarve and 16% had visited Madeira. The remaining answers include Aveiro, The Azores, Valença, Coimbra, Fátima, the Alentejo and Nazaré with percentages below 5.5%. The most visited places were cities (78.5%), beaches (65%), religious sites (35%), castles and museums (29.5% each) and mountains (13.5%). Whilst the most listed reasons why respondents specifically chose Portugal were price/value for money (62%), travel time (38%), friendliness of locals and recommendations (32.5% each), as well as low crime rates (13.5%).

The only qualitative question in the survey before the video, “Was there anything you didn’t like about Portugal?”, resulted in just three responses saying it “can be expensive at times”, “some of its bureaucracy [sic. bureaucracy] is old fashioned and time consuming” and “Lack of pedestrian paths next to roads in many areas, making walkers vulnerable [sic. vulnerable] to traffic. This must be a problem for people with prams and for the disabled”.

Respondents were asked to watch the video from Turismo de Portugal’s Can’t Skip Hope campaign and answer four questions. The video was embedded in the survey before the questions which corresponded to it. The first question asked if the video matched their opinion about Portugal, with 67% agreeing that it did, whilst 9.5% disagreed. Twenty-three-point five percent of respondents said they were not sure. Based on the video, respondents believed that Portugal is good for outdoor activities (64.5%), families to visit (60%), visiting beaches (57%), city breaks (52%), food and wine experiences (46%), surfing (29%), visiting religious sites (22%) and luxury holidays (16.5%). Of those who watched the video, 87.5% said they felt the video gave a sense of hope for a return to normal holidays, post-COVID-19, whilst 4% said they did not feel the video showed this. Eight percent of respondents said they were not sure.

Finally, taking the video into consideration, respondents were asked how likely they were to consider booking a holiday to Portugal when they next planned a holiday with a generally positive response of 44% who were very likely to consider Portugal, 35.5% who were likely, 13.5% who were neither likely or unlikely, 6.5% who were unlikely and 0.5% who were very unlikely to consider Portugal for their next holiday. Overall, the video was positively received. In a country that relies heavily on the tourism sector, every opportunity to highlight the country’s qualities and show both well-known and undiscovered places counts.

Given that 74% of the respondents had never visited Portugal, 68% showed a preference towards discovering new places, and 47.5% wanted new experiences, demonstrating that Portugal has a lot of potential as a future destination.

Furthermore, bearing in mind that 78.5% of the people who visited Portugal visited cities and 65% visited beaches, there is a lot of unexplored territory in the interior of the country, thus representing an important opportunity for rural tourism to grow.

Finally, most respondents said that they were hopeful with regard to the future (87.5%) and being able to visit Portugal in the future (79.5%). This demonstrates that the Portuguese tourism sector needs to look to itself and reflect on its strengths in order to return to being one of the most important sectors for the country’s economy.

These results showed the strengths that Portugal has from a tourist’s point of view when determining where to choose as a holiday destination, showing that in the case of Portugal, cities, beaches, cultural attractions, rural locations and safety are key drivers when a consumer books a holiday to Portugal, making this a source of key data which

Turismo de Portugal could use in its future campaigns. The results demonstrated that a greater percentage of respondents were likely to consider Portugal as a destination for holidays as a result of seeing the video the next time they looked at booking a holiday. A total of 79.5% were very likely or likely to do so, demonstrating an extremely positive result in reaction to the video. With a take-up of 79.5%, it could be determined that the video's aim to get people to consider Portugal as a future destination was successful.

The results demonstrated that in terms of Portugal as a destination, the country was viewed positively by those looking to travel with family, to enjoy a beach-centric holiday, to enjoy outdoor experiences and food and wine-based experiences with both surfing and luxury holidays also highly rated. This data suggested that Turismo de Portugal could base future campaigns on these consumer choices—not as a mutually exclusive campaign but grouping key drivers in with one another to appeal to a wider target customer base. For example, targeting those who believed that Portugal was a good destination for families with those who said it was good for beaches or those that favoured city breaks and those that were looking to enjoy food and wine experiences. Further to this, those that sought beach holidays could be targeted with those that sought surfing experiences, luxury holidays and outdoor experiences.

4.2. Inferential Statistics

The chi-square tests of significance performed were as follows:

Null hypothesis H0 and alternative hypothesis H1:

1. Null hypothesis H0: The video shown and the matching with the opinion of Portugal is independent of gender. Alternative hypothesis H1: The video shown and the matching with the idea of Portugal is not independent of gender. Tables 1 and 7 show the calculations. The null hypothesis is confirmed.
2. Null hypothesis H0: Having seen the video, being likely to consider booking a holiday to Portugal when you next plan a holiday is independent of gender. Alternative hypothesis H1: Having seen the video, being likely to consider booking a holiday to Portugal when you next plan a holiday is not independent of gender. Tables 2 and 8 show the calculations. The null hypothesis is confirmed.
3. Null hypothesis H0: Having seen the video, being likely to consider booking a holiday to Portugal when next planning a holiday is independent of being hopeful about a return to normal holidays, post COVID-19. Alternative hypothesis H1: Having seen the video, being likely to consider booking a holiday to Portugal when next planning a holiday is not independent of being hopeful about a return to normal holidays, post COVID-19. Tables 3 and 9 show the calculations. The alternative hypothesis is confirmed at the significance level of 0.10%.
4. Null hypothesis H0: Having seen the video, being likely to consider booking a holiday to Portugal when next planning a holiday is independent of the nationality of those who live outside of Portugal. Alternative hypothesis H1: Having seen the video, being likely to consider booking a holiday to Portugal when next planning a holiday is not independent of the nationality of those who live outside of Portugal. Tables 4, 10 and 13 show the calculations. The null hypothesis is confirmed.
5. Null hypothesis H0: Having seen the video, being likely to consider booking a holiday to Portugal when next planning a holiday is independent of age. Alternative hypothesis H1: Having seen the video, being likely to consider booking a holiday to Portugal when next planning a holiday is not independent of age. Tables 5 and 11 show the calculations. The null hypothesis is confirmed.
6. Null hypothesis H0: Having seen the video, being likely to consider booking a holiday to Portugal when next planning a holiday is independent of having visited previously. Alternative hypothesis H1: Having seen the video, being likely to consider booking a holiday to Portugal when next planning a holiday is not independent of having visited previously. Tables 6 and 12 show the calculations. The null hypothesis is confirmed.

Table 1. Contingency table—Does the video match with your opinion of Portugal? (F = female; M = male).

	Yes	No	Not Sure	Total
F	75	10	26	111
M	39	6	14	59
Total	114	16	40	170

Table 2. Contingency table—Having seen the video, please rate how likely you are to consider booking a holiday to Portugal when you next plan a holiday (F = female; M = male).

	F	M	Total
Yes	88	47	135
No	23	12	35
Total	111	59	170

Table 3. Contingency table—Having seen the video, please rate how likely you are to consider booking a holiday to Portugal when you next plan a holiday.

	Likely	Unlikely	Total
Hopeful	126	23	149
Not Hopeful	9	12	21
Total	135	35	170

Table 4. Contingency table—Having seen the video, please rate how likely you are to consider booking a holiday to Portugal when you next plan a holiday.

Nationalities	Likely	Unlikely	Total
Ecuador	47	10	57
Mexico	36	8	44
UK	20	9	29
Other countries *	8	4	12
Total	111	31	142

* see Table 10.

Table 5. Contingency table—Having seen the video, please rate how likely you are to consider booking a holiday to Portugal when you next plan a holiday.

Age	Likely	Unlikely	Total
18–33	26	5	31
34–41	31	16	47
42–49	39	8	47
>50	39	6	45
Total	135	35	170

Table 6. Contingency table—Having seen the video, please rate how likely you are to consider booking a holiday to Portugal when you next plan a holiday.

	Likely	Unlikely	Total
Visited	28	9	37
Never Visited	83	22	105
Total	111	31	142

Table 7. Calculation of the chi-square statistic.

O	E	O – E	(O – E) ²	(O – E) ² /E
75	74.44	0.56	0.32	0.00
10	10.45	–0.45	0.20	0.02
26	26.12	–0.12	0.01	0.00
39	39.56	–0.56	0.32	0.01
6	5.55	0.45	0.20	0.04
14	13.88	0.12	0.01	0.00
				0.07

Table 8. Calculation of the chi-square statistic.

Yates' Correction.					
O	E	O – E	O – E – 0.5	(O – E – 0.5) ²	(O – E – 0.5) ² /E
88	88.15	–0.15	–0.35	0.12	0.00
47	46.85	0.15	–0.35	0.12	0.00
23	22.85	0.15	–0.35	0.12	0.01
12	12.15	–0.15	–0.35	0.12	0.01
					0.02

Table 9. Calculation of the chi-square statistic with Yates' correction.

O	E	O – E	O – E – 0.5	(O – E – 0.5) ²	((O – E – 0.5) ²)/E
126	118.32	7.68	7.18	51.50	0.44
9	16.68	–7.68	7.18	51.50	3.09
23	30.68	–7.68	7.18	51.50	1.68
12	4.32	7.68	7.18	51.50	11.91
					17.11

Table 10. * Other countries—Countries with less than five respondents.

* Other Countries	Likely	Unlikely	Total
Brazil	3	0	3
Croatia	0	1	1
Germany	0	2	2
Greece	1	0	1
Italy	1	0	1
Netherlands	1	0	1
Portugal	1	0	1
Slovakia	1	0	1
Trinidad and Tobago	0	1	1
Total	8	4	12

Table 11. Calculation of the chi-square statistic.

O	E	O – E	(O – E) ²	((O – E) ²)/E
26	24.62	1.38	1.91	0.08
31	37.32	–6.32	39.99	1.07
39	37.32	1.68	2.81	0.08
39	35.74	3.26	10.66	0.30
5	6.38	–1.38	1.91	0.30
16	9.68	6.32	39.99	4.13
8	9.68	–1.68	2.81	0.29
6	9.26	–3.26	10.66	1.15
				7.40

Table 12. Calculation of the chi-square statistic with Yates' correction.

O	E	O – E	O – E – 0.5	(O – E – 0.5) ²	((O – E – 0.5) ²)/E
28	28.92	–0.92	0.42	0.18	0.01
83	82.08	0.92	0.42	0.18	0.00
9	8.08	0.92	0.42	0.18	0.02
22	22.92	–0.92	0.42	0.18	0.01
					0.04

Table 13. Calculation of the chi-square statistic.

O	E	O – E	(O – E) ²	((O – E) ²)/E
47	44.56	2.44	5.97	0.13
36	34.39	1.61	2.58	0.07
20	22.67	–2.67	7.12	0.31
8	9.38	–1.38	1.91	0.20
10	12.44	–2.44	5.97	0.48
8	9.61	–1.61	2.58	0.27
9	6.33	2.67	7.12	1.13
4	2.62	1.38	1.91	0.73
				3.33

The overall results of the inferential statistics showed that the likeliness of booking a holiday to Portugal when planning the next holiday only depends on being hopeful about the future of the pandemic.

4.3. Reaction and Recovery

Of key importance for any country where tourism is an economic driver is the need to address the issues raised by a crisis, be that at a local, national, or international level. “Tourism is also an important economic sector for many countries and many destinations are dependent upon tourism for their growth and survival”, according to Ritchie [46] and thus, in a country such as Portugal with a high dependency on tourism, a positive yet planned reaction and planning is required to lessen the impact of COVID-19 on the tourist sector. Meanwhile, this exploratory study demonstrated that Turismo de Portugal successfully identified the need to encourage potential visitors to the country to wait for

the opportunity to visit and adapted not only existing content but also their strategies for using this content, as well as forward planning and re-targetting their visitors from those previously identified for the original campaigns.

Figure 6 shows this as a three-stage process, which is relevant not only to tourism recovery from COVID-19 but could also be applied in other circumstances wherein a local, national or international threat (as is the case of COVID-19) sends shockwaves through the industry and a response must be sought to minimise the impact. At Stage 1, it is important to identify whether the issue is at a local level, national level, or international level. At Stage 2, identifying where existing campaign materials can be reused or adapted to fit the market's needs at that time or in future is key, and forward planning for eventualities, such as borders reopening, should be accounted for before a response is created which can then be swiftly implemented to maximise opportunity. Finally, at Stage 3, these response recommendations should be summarised and implemented when conditions permit.

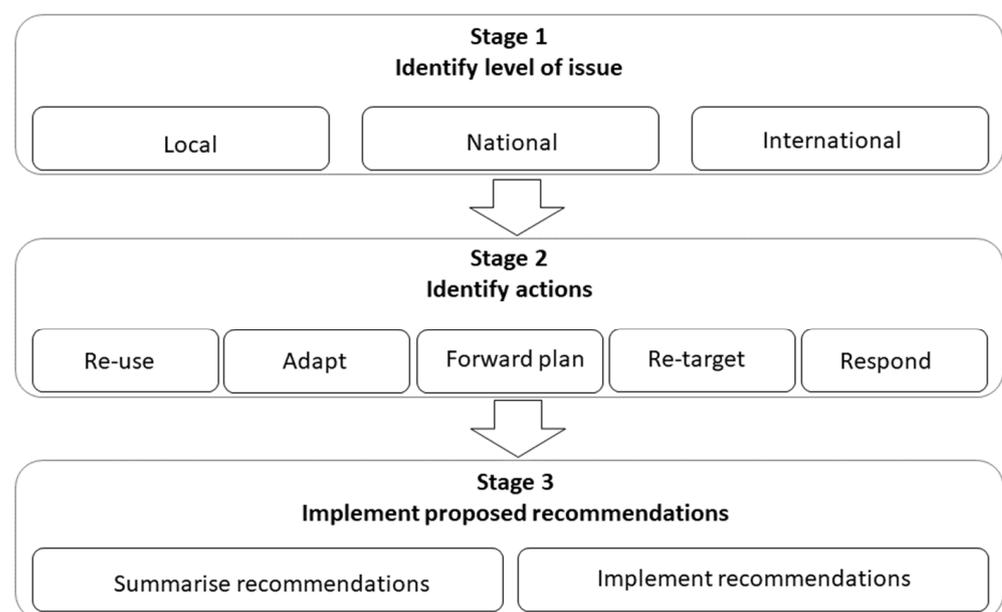


Figure 6. Three stage process for crisis-affected campaign adaptation. Source: authors' own.

4.4. Theoretical Application of Learnings

This paper presented a literature review that examined how a crisis can be approached and discusses both the Portuguese economy and the role of tourism within this. Furthermore, it analysed how Turismo de Portugal approached the crisis and ultimately how the organisation promoted the campaign in the Portuguese press, as well as on social media. Further to this, the literature review analysed existing literature regarding tourism marketing, focusing on Destination Marketing, storytelling in tourism and inbound marketing.

Section three presents the methodology used in the study, including the survey method chosen, analysis methods and platforms chosen to reach the population to complete the survey.

Figure 7, below, summarises the questions included in the questionnaire and analysed these in light of Figure 6 and the theoretical framework presented in the literature review.

Figure 7 shows that previous research by Pike [27], Hassan [33], Pera [36], Moscardo [42] and Lomanenko [28] was of particular relevance in terms of a theoretical framework for the questionnaire. In terms of the stages of the three-stage process for crisis-affected campaign adaptation, as shown in Figure 6, the information given in Figure 7 shows that Stage 2 and Stage 3 were most relevant to this study, given that, in the case of the questionnaire, they refer to questions which include responses relevant for the adaptation of existing marketing content and the implementation of recommendations.

		Relevance to Figure 6	Relevance to previous studies discussed in the Literature Review
About you section	Questions or data collection including gender, age, work status, nationality and country of residence plus main reasons for booking a holiday. Respondents selected most appropriate response.	N/A	N/A
Visiting Portugal	Question with YES/No response		
If you have visited Portugal:	Respondents asked to answer where they have visited. A list of major cities given plus option of other (respondent to insert).	Stage 2	Pike (27)
	Respondents asked to answer what they have visited. A list of activities given plus option of other (respondent to insert).	Stage 2	Pike (27)
	Respondents asked to answer why they previously chose Portugal. A list of reasons given plus option of other (respondent to insert).	Stage 2	Pike (27)
	Respondents asked if there was anything they didn't like about Portugal and to insert a response/comments if so.	Stage 2	N/A
Can't Skip Hope campaign	Can't Skip Hope campaign - embedded video.		Hassan (33), Pera (36)
	Respondents asked whether the campaign video matched with their opinions of Portugal. Yes/no/not sure answer scale	Stage 2	Moscardo (42)
	Respondents asked whether the video showed that Portugal was a great place for a pre-determined list of reasons. Any additional reasons were requested via the insert response option.	Stage 2	Pike (27). Lomanenko (28)
	Respondents asked whether the campaign video gave a sense of hope for a return to normal holidays post COVID-19.	Stage 3	Hassan (33)
	Respondents asked to state how likely they were to consider booking a holiday to Portugal when next planning a holiday. Responses measured using Likert scale.	Stage 3	Hassan (33)

Figure 7. Questionnaire analysis with reference to the literature review and Figure 6. Source: Authors' own.

5. Conclusions and Future Research

The study showed that whilst Portugal is a country that has implemented a number of contingency measures to combat the pandemic, these have also taken their toll on one of its primary economic activities, tourism. Portugal has demonstrated that it is capable of reacting quickly and adapting strategies to continue to attract tourists, reassuring a community of travellers that the country is, in fact, open for business and ready to receive them in a safe environment.

The survey does, however, have its limitations. Given a longer time period in which to collect data, a greater number of respondents could have been achieved from a wider range of countries, thus offering a greater ability to analyse country and cultural bias in line with the countries the campaign is targeted at, to determine if, in fact, new countries could be identified as a target market and new marketing alliances sought. The study is also limited with regard to question range after the video was viewed, and we believe that a very small number of additional questions could have been included to give respondents the freedom to comment further on their experience of Portugal as well as their personal impressions of the campaign video in an 'unguided' format. Finally, the survey was undertaken some months into the pandemic, in different stages of lockdown in the respondents' countries. Mexico and Ecuador, for example, by the very nature of the spread of the virus, lagged behind Europe in terms of peaks and shutdown dates, and different approaches were taken in the respondents' countries, whether in Europe or in Latin America, to protect the national health services, businesses, and citizens. This could have caused a limitation in terms of how COVID-weary respondents were and could have impacted their responses. Ideally, a future survey would be undertaken as a longitudinal study at various points in the pandemic's timeline, thus also assessing psychological factors and response to national media.

As the survey outcomes demonstrate, a number of people from outside of Portugal are now more aware and open to visiting the places shown in the video, thus showing a

sign of hope for the future of tourism in the country. As discussed, the pandemic has had a tremendous impact on the number of places that have already had to close their doors. Nevertheless, the tourism sector must find a way to get back on its feet and draw customers to the country once again, particularly given the economy's reliance on the sector. A move towards promoting Portugal as a safe place to visit is one of the ways in which Turismo de Portugal can continue to promote the country in potential markets.

In terms of the campaign's message, our data suggest that respondents who have seen Turismo de Portugal's Can't Skip Hope campaign are now considering Portugal as a destination worth exploring. However, with the feedback given by the audience, a number of recommendations could be made to Turismo de Portugal to generate a desire and interest to go on holiday in Portugal.

One area of focus for Turismo de Portugal is to continue to invest in publicity which demonstrates how Portugal has adapted to its own government's initiatives in order to return to growth for both the economy and the tourism sector. Initiatives such as the "Clean & Safe" stamp, for example, are one route to go down to reassure tourists that travelling to Portugal during the pandemic is a safe way to take a holiday and experience the country for themselves.

Feedback from both Ecuadorian and Mexican respondents was that they do not feel that Portugal is promoted enough in those countries. It was suggested that Portugal should aim to feature on the much-trodden tour package holiday path of France, England, Italy, and Spain. Given that visiting Europe on a tour is often the standard travel/holiday method for people from those countries, Portugal could thus place itself on the tourist map outside its traditional target markets. It was also felt that a video could have been made available with subtitles or a voiceover in Spanish, given that one of Portugal's target markets is Spain which shares the same language.

In terms of further avenues of study, one approach we suggest is to compare Turismo de Portugal's campaign and message during and immediately post-pandemic to those of other tourist boards. Given the number of responses from Ecuador, Mexico, and the United Kingdom, we propose that a future study could include a comparison of those countries' tourist boards' campaigns undertaken during the same period to better understand the key message and approach they took. For example, Ecuador's Ministry of Tourism has implemented the Be well in Ecuador campaign [47] and the We're Good To Go seal in the United Kingdom [48]. The 2014 #AllYouNeedIsEcuador campaign, for example, was particularly successful with a Super Bowl spot in 2015, a new cultural phenomenon for the campaign [49]. Given the nature of the successful campaign, which led to an increase in tourists from all over the world, the country saw a setback with the Coronavirus pandemic and, learning from the 2014 campaign, launched Be Well in Ecuador, which promotes the safety of the country via 22 biosecurity protocols. The United Kingdom and Mexico, on the other hand, unlike Ecuador and Portugal, have not, to date, gone down these campaign routes with such gusto.

Staying with future avenues of study, the authors propose that an interview with a spokesperson from Turismo de Portugal would provide valuable insight into the success of the campaign. An interview would help to understand Turismo de Portugal's assessment of the campaign in terms of reception and how this converts into an impact on businesses and visitor numbers during the continued period of reduced local travel as well as post-pandemic. An interview would offer the opportunity to discuss what Turismo de Portugal felt worked well and what the organisation would do differently or look to focus on in the future. Understanding Turismo de Portugal's approach to developments of the campaign and how this changed as Turismo de Portugal assessed feedback on social media, moving from #cantskiphope to #cantskipopening would provide learnings and focus areas for future social media campaigns and how to address new potential audiences.

Finally, based on the literature review, another way to improve Portuguese tourism, especially at a time when crowds are not recommended nor desired by visitors and locals alike, would be to boost rural tourism. Kastenholtz [6] previously identified that "Portugal

is not as well-known as a rural tourist destination”, and now, 12 years on, our research suggests that this may be a starting point from which Turismo de Portugal and the rural tourism boards can look at in greater detail, given that the accommodation type that was least affected by the pandemic is found in these areas. As a result, our suggestion would be that Turismo de Portugal could focus even further on the potential of this field.

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