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TAD Module 6

The Ability Advisor role:
entrepreneurial skills – how
can the TAD advisor act



Index

Objectives and Contents of the Module	3
Introduction to Module 6	5
Understanding the role of the Ability Advisor	6
Entrepreneurship	6
Consultancy	8
Accessibility Champion	11
Ability Advisor role, responsibilities, challenges and opportunities	12
Raising awareness about Accessible and Inclusive Tourism	15
How to prepare and make a pitch	15
Script of main ideas to use in your pitch	19
Applying diagnostic instruments	20
Local legislation	20
Diagnostic methodology	23
Examples of diagnostic tools	27
Developing Accessibility Action Plans for Advising and Guiding Business Owners/Managers	33
Planning process	33
Planning tools	34
Action Plan	36

Objectives and Contents of the Module



The Ability Advisor should help tourist companies develop their business in order to provide services that are accessible to everyone

This module explains how the Ability Advisor could apply their skills in different parts of the tourism chain. It is explained how the advisor can contribute to the quality of the business or tourist service as an employee, as a consultant for tourism businesses or as an expert appointed by a tourism organization or a local institution. A focus on national legislation and procedures is given for each country participating in the experimentation phase of the project.

Moreover, it is explained how to handle the requests of tourists with various access requirements, including tourists with disabilities, and to present strategic plans to business owners or project planners and decision makers, as well as advice regarding specific access issues.

At the end of the module, you will be able to:

1. Understand the role of Ability Advisor in an enterprise/tourism sector;

2. Raise awareness about Accessible and Inclusive Tourism among tourism stakeholders (business owners, managers, workers, clients, etc) facilitating communication between supply (business owners) and demand (tourists with specific access requirements);
3. Apply diagnostic instruments, develop action plans and advise business owners/managers;
4. Apply their skills in the environment of a concrete SME as an employee or as an independent consultant.

Main contents of the Module:

- The Ability Advisor role in the tourism value chain;
- Entrepreneurial and Advisor skills development;
- Being an Ability Advisor in different contexts (HORECA, Museum/Culture, Transport, Tour Agency, Tourism Activity, etc);
- Local legislation;
- Project/service definition:
 - Diagnostic: Observation Charts / Pantou - Accessible Tourism Directory / etc;
 - Enterprise / Organization Action Plan: SWOT + PDCA;
 - Implementation of the Action Plan.

Introduction to Module 6

The Ability Advisor's mission and acquired knowledge and skills will help Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) in the tourism field to develop their business and improve their services to the Accessible and Inclusive tourism market.

The Ability Advisor should have sound knowledge about accessibility and service conditions required by tourists with specific access requirements, should recognise the main assistive methods and technologies and should understand the Design for All guidelines.

The Ability Advisor could be a self-employment role as an external consultant or expert to a tourism entity or could be an internal service provider, an employee of any tourism entity of any part of the tourism chain.

As a consultant, the Ability Advisor should master the tools required to carry out accessibility assessments, inspections, consultations and audits, and should be able to analyse and inform SMEs managers and owners how accessibility can be successfully integrated in their businesses.

Understanding the role of the Ability Advisor

Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship is the capacity and willingness to develop, organize and manage a business venture along with any of its risks in order to make a profit.

The most obvious example of entrepreneurship is the starting of new businesses but it can also be the development of innovative activities on the part of established firms, in addition to similar activities on the part of new businesses.

Entrepreneurial spirit is characterized by innovation and risk-taking, and is an essential part of a nation's ability to succeed in an ever changing and increasingly competitive global marketplace.

Entrepreneurship is the process by which either an individual or a team identifies a business opportunity and acquires and deploys the necessary resources required for its exploitation.

Many authors consider leadership, management ability and team-building to be essential qualities of an entrepreneur.

Most successful entrepreneurs share certain competences:

1. Self-Discipline

The first competence that all successful entrepreneurs must possess is self-discipline. Self-discipline is the single most important quality for success in life and business. If you can discipline yourself to do what you should do, whether you feel like it or not, your success is virtually guaranteed. Self-discipline requires self-mastery, self-control, self-responsibility, and self-direction.

2. Integrity

The second competence that all successful entrepreneurs must possess is integrity. Perhaps the most valued and respected competence you can develop is a reputation for absolute integrity. Be perfectly honest in everything you do and in every transaction and activity. Never compromise your integrity. Remember that your word is your bond and your honour is everything when it comes to your business. All successful business is based on trust.

3. Persistence

The third competence that all successful entrepreneurs must possess is persistence. Persistence is the iron quality of character. As Napoleon Hill once said “Persistence is to the character of man as carbon is to steel”. It is an indispensable quality that goes hand in hand with all great success in life.

Here is one of the great secrets to persistence and success: programme your subconscious mind for persistence well in advance of the setbacks and disappointments that you are going to have on your upward quest toward success.

Resolve in advance that you will never give up, no matter what happens. The courage to persist in the face of adversity and disappointment is the one quality that, more than anything, will guarantee your success.

4. A Clear Sense Of Direction

The fourth competence that all successful entrepreneurs must possess is a clear sense of direction.

Because of the turbulence and rapid change in today's marketplace, most business owners have been reduced to operating day-by-day, almost like fire-fighters.

They are totally preoccupied with short-term problems and the need to get short-term sales and profits. They intend to spend more time thinking and planning for the future, but they don't ever seem to get around to it.

This is not for successful business owners. You need to set clear targets for yourself and for every part of your business. In fact, perhaps your most important responsibility for a business owner is to give its employees a clear sense of direction in their work.

5. Decisive And Action Oriented

The final competence that all successful entrepreneurs must possess is being decisive and action-oriented. They must think and make decisions quickly. They discipline themselves to take action and to carry out the decisions they have made. They move fast and they get quick feedback from their actions. If they find they have made a mistake, they quickly self-correct and try something else.

Main sources:

<http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/entrepreneurship.html#ixzz3xv9ci0nt>

<https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/282962>

For inspiration you can read here

(<https://www.businessnewsdaily.com/7275-entrepreneurship-defined.html>) what 20 company founders and business leaders told Business News Daily about what they think makes a truly successful entrepreneur.

Consultancy

A consultant is a professional who provides expert advice in a particular area (in this case Accessible and Inclusive Tourism).

A consultant (or advisor) is usually an expert (because he/she studied this theme in great depth) or an experienced professional in this specific field and has a wide knowledge of the subject matter.



The Ability Advisor must possess communication skills and work well with others.

The role of consultant can fall under one of two general categories:

- Internal consultant: someone who operates within an organization but is available to be consulted on areas of their specialization by other departments or individuals (acting as clients);
- External consultant: someone who is employed externally to the client (either by a consulting firm, a tourism organization or a local institution) whose expertise is provided on a temporary basis, usually for a fee. Consulting firms range in size from sole proprietorships consisting of a single consultant (freelancer), small businesses consisting of a small number of consultants to large consulting firms.

One of the most important skills a consultant needs is the **ability to work well with others**. You have to be able to get along with, listen to, speak to, and handle other people in order to consult. If you do not enjoy long hours of collaboration then this line of work is not for you. Your **communication skills** must be very well developed in order to be successful.

Besides being good at relating to other people, another equally important quality needed to consult is having a **service-oriented** personality. You have to be motivated by meeting all of your client's needs. You could be excellent at whatever you consult on, but if you can't fulfil what the client wants then you have wasted their time as well as your own.

Even though you are constantly working with other people as a consultant, **leadership skills** and the **ability to come up with ideas** on your own and use **logical reasoning** are a must. You are in charge of fixing or improving an aspect of a company or business.

The owners and managers are looking to you to tell them what to do to make their business better. You should come into every job with a fountain of ideas that are reasonable and useful and be ready to take charge and get started. There is no sitting back and letting someone else pick up the slack when it comes to consulting. You are the only one with the ability to make yourself and your work a success.

Can you **problem-solve**? Hopefully you can because the answer to a quandary for a consultant may be easy but the execution is not always as simple. In dealing with different types of businesses with different rules and policies, depending on one answer to a problem to be the only answer is not only silly but downright wrong. You will need to be able to think of many solutions to the same problem to be successful in your work.

Main sources:

<https://www.dictionary.com/browse/consultant>

<https://www.experience.com/advice/careers/ideas/consulting-the-skills-you-need-to-succeed/>

You can reflect about this proverb: “**Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day, teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime**”.

Accessibility Champion

The Accessibility Champion is an essential role in a tourism entity as he/she creates the business case for accessibility, pointing out why the business needs accessibility (identifying the risks and benefits), and why it can't be delayed.

An Accessibility Champion is passionate about the topic, is keen to learn, is collaborative and an enabler, is a change agent, proactive and pragmatic. He or she is not necessarily the team member who knows most about accessibility but someone who can lead and inspire others to engage with the issues concerning access for all.

An Accessibility Champion is someone who is responsible for embedding accessibility throughout the business by assessing access provision and promoting equality and diversity.

He/she inspires everyone within his/her business and builds accessibility into the business plan and has the drive to implement best practice and encourage other team members to participate and understand.

They are the driver behind developing access for all and should ensure that everyone works positively to provide inclusive customer experiences.

The key qualities of an Accessibility Champion are:

- To be inspired by inclusive tourism and the value and potential this has for the business;
- To be passionate about making improvements to current services and facilities in order to offer an inclusive experience for all your customers;
- Wants to drive change and inspire colleagues;
- Wants to make a real difference for disabled customers;
- Acts as a role model by communicating, sharing, leading and inspiring both management and staff;
- Drives best practice by increasing understanding of the wants and needs of disabled customers and how these might be met;
- Recognises, advocates and supports equality within the workplace;

- Keeps up to date with developments in inclusivity and implements them where appropriate.

Main sources:

<https://members.businessdisabilityforum.org.uk/resource-category/resource/the-role-of-the-accessibility-champion>

https://www.visitbritain.org/sites/default/files/vb-corporate/accessibility_champion_2_508v2.pdf

Ability Advisor role, responsibilities, challenges and opportunities

The Ability Advisor **key responsibilities** can be divided in **3 groups**:

1. Awareness Raising about Accessible and Inclusive Tourism among tourism stakeholders (business owners, managers, workers, clients, etc) facilitating communication between supply (tourism businesses) and demand (tourists with specific access requirements);
2. Application of diagnostic instruments to collect reliable information about the accessibility and inclusive service conditions of a tourism entity;
3. Development of action plans to introduce improvements to current accessibility and inclusive service conditions providing advice and recommendations to business owners/managers.



A touristic site with no accessible stairs: the Ability Advisor will have the challenge to face some inertia from tourist agents regarding Accessible Tourism.

An Ability Advisor must be ready to work in different contexts (e.g. HORECA, Culture/Museum, Transport, Tour Agency, Tourism Activity, etc) in order to contribute to the improvement of accessibility and inclusive service conditions in different parts of the tourism value chain.

The main challenge the Ability Advisor must face is the “inertia” and lack of interest from tourism professionals in Accessible and Inclusive tourism.

In general, this lack of interest stems from both personal and cultural attitudes that are very unfavourable to the adoption of accessible and inclusive tourism practices.

A first critical point is the idea that accessible and inclusive tourism does not seem to be an interesting business issue; it is often taken to mean tourism for people in wheelchairs; that it is mainly a question of offering "adapted rooms" and investing heavily in the removal of architectural barriers; and that it will be, at most, a small, very demanding and not very rewarding market niche.

A second critical point is the idea that accessible and inclusive tourism is tourism for "the disabled" ("disabled" is wrongly understood as people with different, strange,

more or less unpleasant behaviours and who may even cause some discomfort to other common clients/tourists).

This is obviously a wrong idea, but it is unconsciously and inadvertently deeply rooted in ancient culture, related to our ancestral difficulties in understanding and accepting disabilities, limitations, weaknesses, defects, either in others or in ourselves, leading to attitudes of strangeness, indifference, or rejection of certain situations, without us knowing exactly why.

A third critical aspect relates to the idea that accessible and inclusive tourism is something new that falls outside one's respective "comfort zone", outside of their usual relationships of trust or outside one's areas of knowledge. People may also be uncomfortable if they find it difficult to share, to work together, to cooperate with other people, companies and entities).

The big opportunity that the Ability Advisor must take advantage of is that the tourism industry is beginning to be aware about the relevance and importance of this emerging market segment of tourists with a broad range of specific access requirements.

It is not only a question of taking advantage of a short and medium term business opportunity but also a natural and normal evolution of tourism that always followed the trends of the populations (demand) and adjusted the tourism services (offer) to their new needs.

Main sources:

TAD – A Tour Around:

http://abilityadvisor.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/A-Tour-Around_TAD.pdf

BRENDAIT Manual (Building a Regional Network for the Development of Accessible and Inclusive Tourism):

<http://www.perfil.com.pt/Brendait/documents/D2BRENDAITManual-ENG.pdf>

Raising awareness about Accessible and Inclusive Tourism

How to prepare and make a pitch



As an entrepreneur, the Ability Advisor should create a good presentation pitch of his/her service.

A **pitch** is a set of activities (including a talk or a way of talking) intended to persuade someone to buy a product or take a specific course of action (e.g. embrace a new idea). It can be seen as a planned sales presentation strategy of a product or service designed to initiate and close a sale of the product or service.

A pitch is essentially designed to be either an introduction of a product or service to an audience who knows nothing about it, or a descriptive expansion of a product or service that an audience has already expressed interest in.

A good entrepreneur should have more than one business pitch ready to deliver.

The most important pitch to bring to your first meeting with a potential customer is the **elevator pitch**.

The elevator pitch is a very concise presentation of an idea covering all of its critical aspects, and delivered within a few seconds (the approximate duration of an elevator ride).

If executed well, this short pitch will spark the curiosity of the client and encourage them to ask more questions (leading for example to the scheduling of a face to face meeting).

Another type of pitch is the **live plan pitch**, which relies on visual aids and on speaking.

The general idea of this pitch is to produce a neatly formatted single page (or a presentation) containing relevant information about the product / service.

To help with your pitch structure, we've put together **seven simple steps** for you to use in order **to create your best sales pitch** that's guaranteed to sell:

1. Find the perfect hook

If you're planning to send your sales pitch via email, crafting the perfect subject line is imperative. Your subject line or opening sentence will be the hook to capture your buyer's attention. It is the difference between your client reading or simply dismiss your pitch altogether.

Taking inspiration from the points stated above, your hook needs to connect with your buyer's needs while also communicating the story of your business. By getting these two aspects right, you can successfully engage your customers and convince them to read on.

2. Solve the problem

Once you've convinced your buyer to continue reading your pitch, you next need to show how you can help them. Are you aware of a common issue that your buyer faces, which your product or service can solve?

In your written pitch, directly address the issues that your buyer faces. Then focus on how your product or service can help fix these problems. By tackling the problem head on, your customers will see that you have taken their needs into account and found the fix. What better way to prove the brilliance of what you have to offer?

3. Back it up with facts

Your pitch needs to be full of facts and statistics that back up your claims.

When it comes to writing your pitch, be sure to include testimonials and case studies, which also contain statistics and figures to prove the success of your product or service. If you claim you can solve your buyer's main problems, show them how with facts.

4. Ask for the sale

You should now have a pitch that addresses your buyer's problems, shows how your product or service offers a solution, and backs this up with facts and statistics to support your claim. The next step is to give your buyer some clear instruction on what they need to do next.

So what would that be? Ask for the sale of course!

Incredibly, 85% of the interactions between salespeople and prospects end without the sales person ever asking for the sale.

Yes, you read that correctly, 85%!

By now, you've convinced your prospective customer of the brilliance of what you're offering and next up is how they can take advantage of your product or service. Do they need to click a link to your website? Or pick up the phone and call you directly?

Whatever action is required; make it clear with a well-written call to action.

5. Short and sweet does the trick

The length of your pitch is important. If it's too long, there's a good chance your buyer will lose interest and fail to read on. But getting your written pitch to the perfect length is likely to result in your buyer maintaining an interest right through to the end.

The number of words you use differs depending on the recipient. Try to be strict with your word count to avoid information overload, which will result in your buyers ditching your pitch.

What could be worse than your pitch being ignored because it's simply too long?

6. Grammar and spell check

Finally, once you've written your sales pitch, don't forget to check your spelling and grammar. There's nothing worse than being let down by a few mistakes that could be corrected before clicking send.

Once you've checked through your written pitch, it's time to send it out to your buyer. Remember to tailor your pitch to each individual and make it as personal to him or her as possible.

7. Don't forget to follow-up

A recent study from Yesware found that 70% of unanswered sales email chains stop after the first email attempt.

However, there is a 21% chance you will get a response to your second email if the first goes unanswered. These statistics further prove the importance of a follow up email after the initial sales pitch.

The conversation doesn't stop at the first attempt of your sales pitch. Don't be shy to try and try again. After all, there is a 30% chance of you hearing back from your prospect after several follow-up attempts.

Remember to keep your individual buyer's needs at the forefront of your mind. Tell the story of your brand and the success of your products and services and back up with facts and statistics. Work hard to engage your audience and you're sure to find a winning formula to close all future sales pitches.

Main sources:

<http://www.investorwords.com/3706/pitch.html>

<http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/elevator-pitch.html>

<https://study.com/academy/lesson/business-pitch-definition-types-importance.html>

<https://www.superoffice.com/blog/sales-pitch/>

Script of main ideas to use in your pitch

In order to prepare a winning pitch about Accessible and Inclusive Tourism, you need to master the contents of the previous Modules, namely:

- What is Accessible and Inclusive Tourism?
- What are tourists with specific access requirements?
- What are the main types of specific access requirements?
- What are the requirements for Accessible and Inclusive Tourism?
- Some examples of tourist needs and requirements that are different from common clients.
- What are the advantages of providing Accessible and Inclusive Tourism services?

Applying diagnostic instruments

When considering the application of diagnostic instruments to carry out accessibility assessments, inspections, consultations and audits, the Ability Advisor must have significant knowledge about the local legislation about the subject and must develop his/her own methodology for the application of the diagnostic tools.

Local legislation

Bellow You can find an example of national acts related to the tourism accessibility legislation. We recommend You to use it as example to define the national legislation base.

Portuguese Law 46/2006 prohibits and punishes discrimination on grounds of disability and the existence of aggravated health risk.

The purpose of this law is to prevent and prohibit direct or indirect discrimination on the grounds of disability in all its forms and to penalize the practice of acts that result in the violation of any fundamental rights or in refusal or conditioning the exercise of any economic, social, cultural or other rights by any person, due to any disability.

Portuguese Law 163/2006 approves the system of accessibility to buildings and establishments that receive public, public roads and residential buildings.

The promotion of **accessibility** is a fundamental element in people's quality of life and is an indispensable means for the exercise of the rights conferred on any member of a democratic society, contributing decisively to a greater strengthening of social ties, to greater civic participation of all those who are part of it and, consequently, of a growing deepening of solidarity in a social State.

The State has the responsibility of putting in place actions with the purpose of guaranteeing and assuring the rights of people with special needs (people facing environmental barriers, impeding an active and full civic participation, resulting from

permanent or temporary factors, intellectual, emotional, sensory, physical or communicational deficiencies).

People with special needs include people with disabilities (people in wheelchairs, those who are unable to walk or are unable to travel long distances), people with sensory difficulties, such as blind or deaf people, and those who, by virtue of their life course, are temporary conditioned, such as pregnant women, children and the elderly.

According to the Constitution of the Portuguese Republic, the State is responsible to promote the well-being and quality of life of the population and the real, legal and formal equality among all Portuguese, as well as:

- the implementation of a national policy for the prevention, treatment, rehabilitation and integration of people with disabilities and support for their families;
- the development of a pedagogy which will make society more aware of duties of respect and solidarity with them;
- the assumption of the responsibility for the effective realization of their rights, without prejudice to the rights and duties of parents and guardians;
- the promotion of a society for all through the removal of barriers and the adoption of measures aimed at the full participation of persons with disabilities.

Accessibility was already regulated by Portuguese Law 123/1997, which introduced technical standards, aimed at eliminating urban and architectural barriers in public buildings, public facilities and public roads.

The Portuguese Law 163/2006 aims, in a solution of continuity with the previous law, to correct the imperfections in it, improving the control mechanisms, giving it greater punitive effectiveness, increasing the levels of communication and accountability of the various agents involved in these procedures, as well as to introduce new solutions, in line with the technical, social and legislative developments in the meantime verified.

Among the main innovations introduced by this law is the extension of the scope of technical standards for access to residential buildings, thus ensuring mobility without constraints, both in public spaces (as was already evident from the previous diploma and the present one), and in private spaces (access to dwellings and their interiors).

Portuguese Quality Standard NP 4523-2014 about Accessible and Inclusive Tourism in hotels, apartment hotels and inns defines the standards that an

accommodation establishment must achieve to provide the same quality of service to customers with or without special needs.

The accommodation establishments to which this Quality Standard is addressed are already covered by legislation about accessibility for all and prohibiting discrimination of people based on their disabilities but, in order to promote the same level of quality to all customers, two factors play a key role:

- the way the tourism services are provided (inclusive service);
- the material conditions for the provision of the service (accessibility of the physical environment).

With this Standard, the aim is to make available to the tourism sector an instrument to facilitate the meeting between "supply" and "demand" to provide all potential customers with a reliable indication that conditions are that clear and objective information is available at the level of infrastructure and service.

Portuguese Law 83/2018 defines accessibility requirements for websites and mobile applications of public bodies by transposing EU Directive 2016/2102.

The Portuguese Government has as priorities the improvement of the relationship between citizens and the Public Administration and the construction of a more equal society, as an ethical, legal and constitutional imperative, namely through the enhancement of social responsibility and corporate ethics, promoting the diversity and non-discrimination as factors of competitiveness, innovation and development.

Whereas developments in a digital society provide users with new ways of accessing information and services, measures should be taken to make websites and mobile applications more accessible to all, including those with serious functional, sensory, cognitive or physical characteristics, for which digital information presents itself as a privileged possibility of access.

More recently, the Portuguese Republic made the commitment to take appropriate measures to ensure that persons with disabilities have access, on a basis of equality with other citizens, to information and communication technologies and systems, to develop, promulgate and monitor the application of standards and guidelines access to facilities and services open to the public or for public use, and to promote the access of people with disabilities to new information and communication technologies and systems, including the Internet.

The above mentioned EU Directive is intended to approximate the laws, regulations and administrative provisions of the Member States of the European Union relating to the accessibility requirements of websites and applications of public sector bodies by ensuring that such websites and mobile applications become more accessible to users, in particular for people with disabilities, and by removing barriers to the practice of website design and development in the domestic market.

Main sources:

<https://data.dre.pt/eli/lei/46/2006/08/28/p/dre/pt/html>

<https://data.dre.pt/eli/dec-lei/163/2006/08/08/p/dre/pt/html>

<http://www.inr.pt/content/1/119/legislacao>

<http://www.inr.pt/uploads/docs/acessibilidade/GuiaAcessEmobi.pdf>

Norma Portuguesa NP 4523-2014 relativa a Turismo Acessível em Estabelecimentos Hoteleiros (IPQ)

<https://data.dre.pt/eli/dec-lei/83/2018/10/19/p/dre/pt/html>

Diagnostic methodology



The Ability Advisor should analyze which diagnostic methodologies are most appropriate for each situation.

The Ability Advisor should review the facilities and services of the tourism offer (e.g. HORECA, Culture/Museum, Transport, Tour Agency, Tourism Activity, etc) and check them against the minimum accessibility and inclusive service requirements and desired quality levels.

The **suggested diagnostic methodology steps** are:

1 - Observation Charts

Observation Charts are the instruments that will support the analysis, registration and evaluation of the accessibility and inclusive service requirements necessary for the provision of tourist services to people with specific access requirements.

These documents should contribute to provide relevant information on the adjustment between the needs of the "demand" (customers with special needs) and the conditions of the "supply" (accessible and inclusive tourism services) in two dimensions:

- Macro dimension, standardized, making a comparison between the conditions of accessibility and service of one specific tourism entity with the corresponding predefined standards (organized by type of tourist services and by type of tourism needs);
- Micro dimension, individualized, indicating the conditions of accessibility and inclusive service of the particular tourism entity, in a detailed way, including conditions not yet conforming to the standards, to provide each client with the possibility of comparing their individual needs to the specific conditions of accessibility and service of the tourism entity.

Remember that it is up to each client to decide whether or not to use those services under those conditions and that their needs depends on:

- The disability or limitation of each individual;
- The type of aide they use (e.g. cane, walker, wheelchair);
- The personality of the individual.

The Ability Advisor should prepare Observation Charts that make it possible to refer the accessibility and inclusive service conditions of the company or organization to different typologies of specific access requirements (related to motor, visual, hearing or intellectual limitations), with a view to enabling the company or organization to position itself in the accessible and inclusive tourism market in a logic of gradually extending its offer to different sub-segments of demand.

The Ability Advisor should develop an Observation Chart for each sector or area of tourist activity, with two types of complementary documents:

- The reference standard of accessibility and service requirements, which provides a detailed description of the reference requirements (including information on legislation, quality standards, good practices and the use of drawings and photos to facilitate their understanding).
- The checklists that are elaborated by reference to the corresponding requirements standards.

In each tourism service sector / area, the requirements are identified and organized following the sequence of the work process inherent in the provision of services to the common customer, so that the specific accessibility and service requirements of customers with special needs can be systematically perceived as complementary to the basic material, technical and human-transversal requirements of providing services to any client.

2 – On site analysis

Before visiting the tourism entity to conduct the diagnostic, the Ability Advisor should make a plan of the diagnosis on site analysis covering the objectives, the planned tasks and the resources needed.

The Ability Advisor should try to involve the business owner/manager (or at least some staff member) in the diagnosis process as this will both improve the quality of the diagnosis and the quality of the final report (in terms of clarity and acceptance).

In the case of the audit of a small company/entity, establishing the overall diagnosis plan should not be a complex or time consuming exercise, as it should be proportionate to the size and complexity of the entity.

Once you've completed the planning process, it's time to execute your plan. Essential elements of a strong roll-out include:

- Efficient scheduling – optimize the use of available resources (namely time);
- Attention to detail - the ability to achieve thoroughness and accuracy when accomplishing every task (every observation) is a crucial skill;
- Communication – it's critical to communicate the benefits and expectations around the diagnosis. Emphasize that the goal is to work together to identify problems and create solutions (not to assign responsibilities);
- Corrective action – you should be able to quickly identify the main issues/problems and assign corrective actions on the spot (quick fixes or medium/long term solutions).

Remember that adequate planning helps to identify and resolve problems on a timely basis so that the diagnosis can be performed in an effective and efficient manner.

3 - Report

A good diagnosis is only complete with the development and presentation of a good final report.

The level of detail of the report depends on the circumstances of the diagnosis but it should always include:

- Executive Summary;
- Introduction (that provides the context for the report and outlines the structure of the contents);
- Body (it's where you include the contents in a structured way);
- Conclusion (where the various elements of the report connect in a clear and concise manner).

Remember that the report must highlight the level of adjustment between the needs of the "demand" (customers with specific access requirements) and the conditions of the "supply" (accessible and inclusive tourism services).

In each tourism entity, it's crucial to show what are the current conditions of accessibility and inclusive service that already achieve the corresponding predefined standards (for each target) and which conditions need to be improved in order to successfully provide tourism services to people with specific access requirements.

It's strongly recommended to use photos, images and diagrams to illustrate with some degree of detail the existing conditions and the improvements needed.

The report should be the key document to support the development of Action Plans targeted at the improvement of accessibility and inclusive service conditions of a specific tourism business.

Main sources:

BRENDAIT Manual ("Building a Regional Network for the Development of Accessible and Inclusive Tourism" manual):

<http://www.perfil.com.pt/Brendait/documents/D2BRENDAITManual-ENG.pdf>

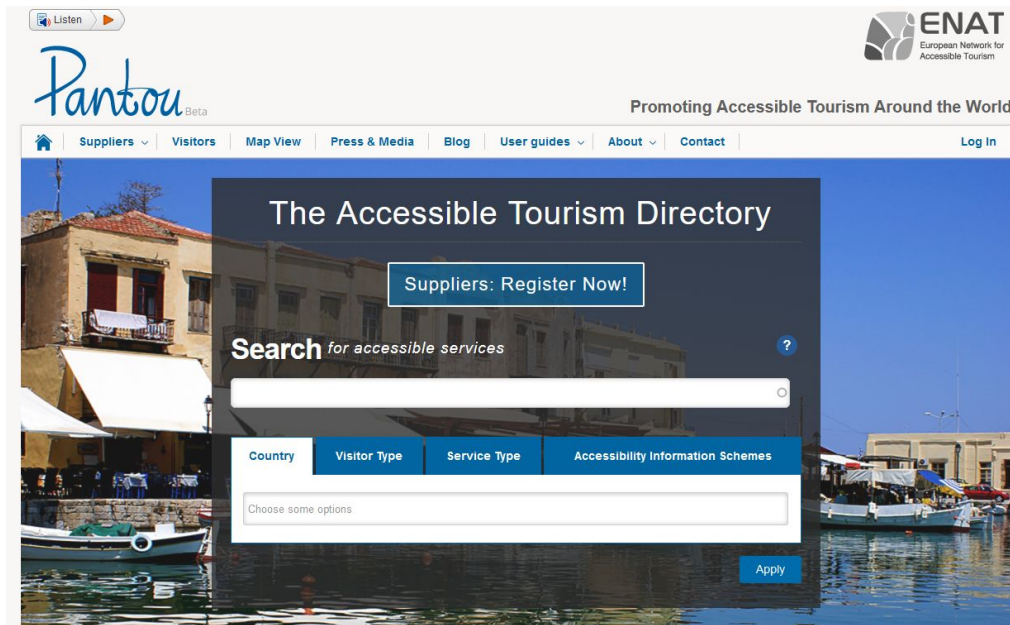
<https://www.visitenglandassessmentservices.com/about/advisory-visits>

<https://www.brightwork.com/blog/7-steps-effective-report-writing>

Examples of diagnostic tools

1 – Pantou

Pantou is a register for suppliers of accessible tourism services around the world, catering for tourists with disabilities or specific access requirements.



The Pantou Directory's website

The Pantou Directory:

- makes it easier for tourists with any kind of special needs to find what they are looking for when planning a visit;
- promotes accessible tourism suppliers, showing places to go and things to do – in safety and with convenience and comfort;
- enables suppliers and destinations to find new partners and build networks of accessible services, for the benefit of visitors, local businesses and communities.

To be listed with Pantou, tourism suppliers must indicate the type of service(s) offered and the particular target groups they can serve.

When registering, suppliers should indicate their membership of a national, regional or local "Accessibility Information Scheme" (AIS) that verifies the accessibility of the services offered.

You can find the Table of Accessibility Information Schemes referenced in the Pantou Directory here: <https://pantou.org/accessibility-info> .

If the supplier is not a member of an AIS that has been verified by Pantou, then the supplier is requested to provide accurate and reliable information by filling in and submitting a self-declaration form called **Pantou Access Statement**.

An Access Statement is a document written by a service provider (or an appointed agent) describing the accessibility characteristics of a tourism service and/or facility, as objectively and factually as possible.

Pantou has created a Template so that suppliers can create their own Pantou Access Statement.

The Template contains three main sections and all the necessary questions to create a full Access Statement. Use the multiple choice questions to describe the accessibility of your services and venue. Add short descriptions as necessary.

You will need to take some measurements if you need to answer questions about your buildings and facilities. Pantou provides a Photo and Measurement Guide to see how to take suitable photos and make accurate measurements of door-widths, guest toilets, ramps, etc.

You can find both the template and the guide here:

<https://pantou.org/access-statement>.

2 – The National Accessible Scheme (NAS)

The National Accessible Scheme (NAS) is an English scheme which helps persons with disabilities to find accommodation that suit their needs, independently assessed by trained assessors against demanding criteria.

Assessed properties will have facilities such as handrails, ramps, level-access showers, hearing loops and colour contrast.

The scheme's standards provide guidelines on how to make reasonable adjustments to services to meet the needs of disabled people. They are split into three category standards, for:

- Mobility impaired and older people;
- Visually impaired and blind people;
- Hearing impaired and deaf people.

You can find the NAS Standards Booklet here:

- https://www.visitbritain.org/sites/default/files/vb-corporate/visitengland_national_accessible_scheme_serviced_standards.pdf

3 - BRENDAIT (Building a Regional Network for the Development of Accessible and Inclusive Tourism) Project Self Diagnosis Tools



**Building a Regional Network for the Development of
Accessible and Inclusive Tourism**

BRENDAIT project logo

BRENDAIT (Building a Regional Network for the Development of Accessible and Inclusive Tourism) was a capacity building project aimed at designing and testing the practical implementation of a strategy to develop, at a regional level, a tourism destination accessible for all.

The main goal of the project was to create a capacity building scheme to overcome the general "inertia" that providers of tourism services show regarding accessible and inclusive tourism, tackling the key barriers identified in the 2014 EU Commission study – Directorate General for Enterprise and Industry "Mapping skills and training needs to improve accessibility in tourism services".

BRENDAIT project designed and tested an intervention model that encouraged the development of business practices and strategic planning to overcome the 3 major hurdles identified concerning tourism players ("inertia"; lack of knowledge and management skills; lack of holistic approach in the qualification and promotion of tourism destinations) in order to successfully captivate this new segment of the tourism demand and that now can be replicated or used as a reference in other regions facing similar obstacles.

The regional network included key operators/stakeholders in the tourism supply chain (with a special focus on tourism managers and entrepreneurs of SMEs and micro-SMEs) and centered its efforts on the development of an intervention model along **3 main axis**:

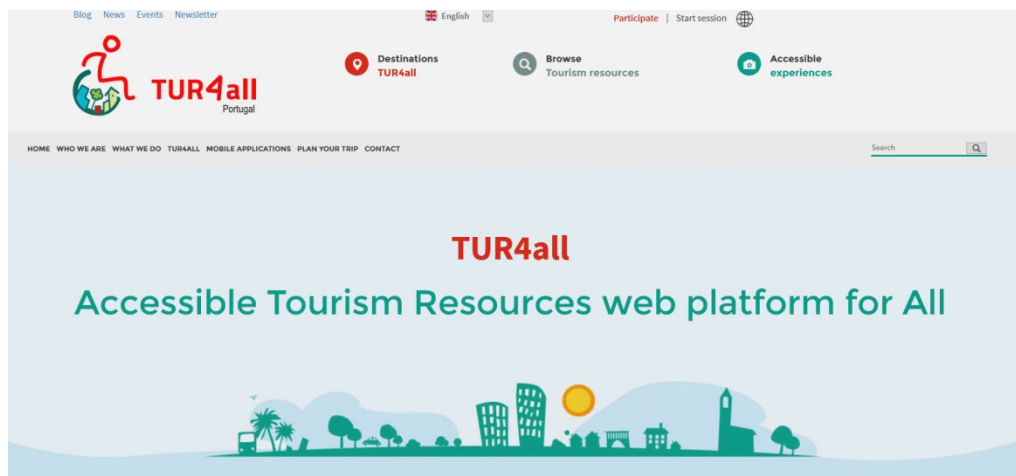
- active networking and cooperation;
- lifelong learning and training;
- innovation and quality.

During the Project a significant number of tourism entities conducted a self-diagnosis concerning their accessibility and inclusive service conditions for the provision of tourist services to clients with special needs.

You can find here the tools /grids (D.10) used here:

<http://www.perfil.com.pt/Brendait/documentos.htm>

4 - TUR4all



TUR4all website

TUR4all, “Accessible Tourism for All”, is a collaborative platform (Mobile App and Web Page) where everyone is able to provide feedback about tourism establishments, resources and services based on accessibility for all.

TUR4all is a dynamic platform that provides information on accessible tourism resources in Spain and Portugal and it is expected that other countries will soon come on board. The aim is to provide accurate and up-to-date information on the accessibility of hotels, restaurants, museums and monument, adapted transport, among others.

Up until 2016, all tourism resources published in TUR4all were reviewed by accessibility experts. As of 2017, users have been able to add new resources themselves by completing an accessibility evaluation survey. TUR4all has essentially become a collaborative platform where both users and experts can evaluate, allocate a score and add comments about the accessibility of tourism establishments.

Furthermore, it acts as a promotional channel for accessible tourism establishments and destinations. Through strategic alliances, such as the one signed with Accessible Portugal in 2017, TUR4all aims to become an international platform, to act as a local partner network across multiple countries to improve accessible tourism in each respective country and around the world. It also wants to provide people with accessibility needs a greater degree of confidence when planning their trips.

TUR4all has a Users Accessibility Survey to ensure that the information provided by TUR4all users is objective. This simplified survey was created to collect basic information about the accessibility of tourism resources. It was adapted into an easy-to-read format and translated into 11 languages to make it easier for more people to use.

You can find relevant documents here:

<https://www.tur4all.pt/news/manual-de-utilizador-tur4all>

Main sources:

<https://pantou.org/about-pantou>

<https://www.visitenglandassessmentsservices.com/our-schemes/national-accessiblescheme/>

<http://www.perfil.com.pt/Brendait/documentos.htm>

<https://www.tur4all.pt/>

Developing Accessibility Action Plans for Advising and Guiding Business Owners/Managers



The four phases of PDCA

Planning process

Developing Action Plans is part of the Planning process.

PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act) is an iterative, four-stage approach for continually improving processes, products or services, and for resolving problems. It involves systematically testing possible solutions, assessing the results, and implementing the ones that are shown to work.

The four phases are:

1. **PLAN:** identify and analyze the problem or opportunity, develop hypotheses about what the issues may be, and decide which one to test;
2. **DO:** test the potential solution, ideally on a small scale, and measure the

results;

3. **CHECK**: study the result, measure effectiveness, and decide whether the hypothesis is supported or not;
4. **ACT**: if the solution was successful, implement it.

When focusing on the identification and analysis of a problem or situation a SWOT analysis is recommended.

SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis is a strategic planning technique used to help a person or organization identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats related to business competition or project planning.

It is intended to specify the objectives of the business venture or project and identify the internal and external factors that are favorable and unfavorable to achieving those objectives. Users of a SWOT analysis often ask and answer questions to generate meaningful information for each category to make the tool useful and identify their competitive advantage.

Main sources:

https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newPPM_89.htm

https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTMC_05.htm

Planning tools

The Ability Advisor should use several types of planning tools.

Schemes, diagrams and charts enhance the understanding of the process by showing all involved parts and how they are interconnected in an easy to follow format. They are useful tools both for designing new processes and for improving existing processes. In both cases these tools provide a quick, visually clear view of the work and may rapidly lead to process points of interest.

Task Management tools are used by individuals, teams and organizations that help complete projects more efficiently by organizing and prioritizing related tasks.

Task Management tools come in many forms, like basic spreadsheets or online project management applications. At every level, task management tools help people:

- Work efficiently and reduce waste;
- Stay organized;
- Ensure teams and individuals are being utilized in the correct ways;
- Meet deadlines.

Task management tools addresses a general need to organize, prioritize and visualize work. Through analysis, you learn how to get things done in more effective ways.

Organization – At its most basic level, a task management tool is used to help individuals, teams or businesses stay organized. Part of being organized includes setting priorities for tasks, visualizing the progress of tasks as they pass through stages of completion and compiling analysis or reports to direct future tasks and workflows.

Prioritization – A task board lets you organize your tasks by priority so you can ensure that the most important things are completed first. That being said, task management tools are easy to update. By prioritizing tasks we are able to focus on how work should be attacked, rather than jumping from one item to another without any direction.

Visualization – Not only will visualizing tasks help you remember what you need to do, but it helps you better understand a project as a whole. This means task management tools are easily accessible by everyone. When every item is laid out in a way that is easy to comprehend, dependencies become clear and collaboration is natural.

Analysis – Task management tools produce concrete data that can be reviewed and digested so end users can easily grasp what they are doing, what they have done and how things can be done better. Task management tools always provide for some form of analysis, whether it is a formula that you have created or something built into the tool. This is an essential part improving the way things get done.

Collaborative work tools help people to collaborate. The purpose of a collaboration tool is to support a group of two or more individuals to accomplish a common goal or objective.

Collaboration tools can be either of a non-technological nature such as paper, flipcharts, post-it notes, whiteboards or they can also include software tools and applications such as collaborative software.

Time Management tools will help you managing the hours of the day. It's about planning and organizing how much time you will spend carrying out certain activities, whether it's professional or personal.

Effective time management enables you to plan and perform daily tasks within set deadlines. In this way, activities don't accumulate and can be developed with greater dedication.

There are countless time management tools and techniques that help you understand your work routine and develop methodologies that you can use to optimize every minute of the day. Fortunately, it's now possible to have technology as an ally in the time management process.

Main sources:

https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newHTE_04.htm

<https://asq.org/quality-resources/new-management-planning-tools>

<https://leankit.com/learn/project-management/task-management-tool/>

https://www.mindtools.com/pages/main/newMN_HTE.htm

Action Plan

Action Plans are a sequence of steps that must be taken, or activities that must be performed well, for a strategy to succeed. An action plan has three major elements:

- Specific tasks: what will be done and by whom;
- Time horizon: when will it be done;
- Resource allocation: what specific funds are available for specific activities.

Also called action program.

To draw up an Action Plan simply list the tasks that you need to carry out to achieve your objective, in the order that you need to complete them.

Use the three-step process below to help you:

Step 1: Identify Tasks

Start by brainstorming all of the tasks that you need to complete to accomplish your objective.

It's helpful to start this process at the very beginning. What's the very first action you'll need to take? Once that task is complete, what comes next? Are there any steps that should be prioritized to meet specific deadlines, or because of limits on other people's availability?

Step 2: Analyze and Delegate Tasks, Assign Resources

Now that you can see the entire project from beginning to end, look at each task in greater detail.

Are there any steps that you could drop, but still meet your objective? Which tasks could you delegate to someone else on your team, or could be dealt with by a freelancer? Are there any deadlines for specific steps? Which resources can be used? Do you need to arrange additional resources?

Step 3: Double-Check with SCHEMES

Use the SCHEMES mnemonic to check that your plan is comprehensive. SCHEMES stands for:

- Space
- Cash;
- Helpers/People;

- Equipment;
- Materials;
- Expertise;
- Systems.

You may not need to think about all of these to complete your project.

Don't forget to add the time dimension being very clear about when will the tasks need to be done (deadlines).

Also, you should include a list with all the resources required for each task.

Once you've completed your plan, keep it by you as you carry out the work, and update it with additional activities if required.

Main sources:

<http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/action-plan.html>