

**ABSTRACT FORMAT GUIDELINES  
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**Assessing Collaboration in the DMO Context:  
A Stakeholder Theory Approach**

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**ABSTRACT**

**Purpose**

This paper focuses on group decision making as the key success factor to achieve and preserve collaboration in the destination management organization (DMO) context. It applies stakeholder theory as a framework for the assessment of the DMO's performance with regard to its capability to gain stakeholders' support for decisions which contribute towards optimizing rewards while minimizing risks.

**Methodology**

The researchers applied a single case study approach. Barcelona was selected because of its structured DMO. Moreover, it is supported by a set of systematic strategies. Lastly, it has undertaken a repositioning process which required in-depth fostering of collaboration among DMO stakeholders. To assess the relationships between the DMO and its stakeholders we apply the Friedman and Miles (2002) model.

**Findings**

One of the DMO's main activities involves the interaction with tourism firms, particularly for the sake of new products development. A strategy of 'social inclusion' allows for contingent activities to be carried out jointly, stable relations, goals convergence, a decrease in free riding behaviour and consequently, a lasting collaboration between stakeholders in the DMO context.

**Research limitations/implication**

The conclusions derived from the present single case study are less reliable than those deriving from multiple case studies. Therefore, they provide a less consistent base for generalization.

**Practical implications**

The empirical evidences are relevant for institutional stakeholders in terms of developing skills and knowledge required to raise the future agility of DMOs.

**Originality/value of the paper**

Tourism literature seems to have addressed the issue about destination performance measurement and collaboration evaluation. Nevertheless, notwithstanding some remarkable exceptions, the issue of the evaluation of DMOs' performance is less common.

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**Keywords:** collaboration, destination management organization, stakeholders, destination strategy

**Type of paper:** empirical paper – case study

### **Key References**

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