

Abstract

This case provides an opportunity for students to participate in a tourism management dilemma regarding the redevelopment and expansion of the passenger cruise industry in the highly successful destination of Charleston, South Carolina in the southeastern United States. The case provides a background on the successes of the destination, the controversy, the key stakeholders and their supporting documents, a theoretical underpinning, discussion questions, and references.

Teaching Objectives

This case provides an opportunity to achieve several objectives related to tourism management. At a minimum, students should discredit the cruise debate as simply a FOR or AGAINST scenario. The conflict around redevelopment of the Union Pier Terminal and expansion of the passenger cruise business provides students a chance to evaluate the detailed positions held by the stakeholders and the compromises and concessions necessary to manage tourism development. Challenge the students to identify each stakeholder in the case, list the specific issues of each stakeholder, identify solution or agendas of each stakeholder, and if necessary, provide an admirable defense of why that solution cannot be addressed or satisfied. The following teaching objectives are achievable with this case:

- To develop and synthesize a comprehensive understanding of the key stakeholders in the conflict
- To identify issues that remain unresolved in the cruise dilemma
- To examine and evaluate the documentation and material produced in tourism management
- To highlight the ethical responsibilities of community stakeholders
- To extract the relevant elements of advocacy research

Teaching Approach

The key stakeholders identified in the case produced position pieces that were made available to the constituents engaged in this debate; please see the additional readings. Introducing these documents to the students and asking them to paraphrase the position and justification of that position provides a starting point for the case. The first reading outlines the concept plan outlined for the Union Pier by the SCSPA. The second two readings reveal a strategic argument of the SCSPA in gaining support of the proposal. The fourth document by Miley & Associates provides a summary of the positions and criticism of the SCSPA strategy; the Historic Charleston Foundation sponsored this research. The Preservation Society of Charleston produced the last additional reading and provides an excellent historical overview of the passenger cruise business in Charleston.

After students examine the material produced by the key stake-

holders, introduce the current positioning of Charleston, SC by the destination marketing organization. The Charleston Area Convention and Visitors Bureau (CACVB) is an award winning organization for its promotion and leadership of the Charleston hospitality and tourism community. Their website provides phenomenal film, photography, and testimonials about the destination at www.explorecharleston.com. Instructors are encouraged to utilize these resources in the classroom because of their exceptional quality and captivating story telling. This introduction allows students to gain an appreciation for the historic preservation, the culinary delights, the stunning beauty of the low country, and the destination's diverse set of tourism products. Most importantly, it reveals the strategic positioning of the destination.

Discussion Questions

Depending on the class timeframe, sequence, and preference, instructors can choose whether students address the first set of discussion questions with a focus on a single stakeholder or all stakeholders. Experience reveals that evaluating and interpreting multiple stakeholders is beneficial to achieving the overall teaching objectives, but requires more class time, typically a minimum of two 50-minute class sessions, with the questions addressed as homework and the results shared during session two. The group approach is not recommended until students have evaluated the stakeholders positions themselves. To prepare for the first set of discussion questions, it is advised that students review the materials provided at the stakeholder websites and develop a one-page position overview for each of the following stakeholders: the SCSPA, Preservation Society of Charleston, and Coastal Conservation League. The second set of discussion questions brings the students back to the introduction of the case and facilitates a discussion about the role and place of destination management organizations in tourism management. The role of the CACVB in this debate makes for great discussion. The final set of discussion questions was developed to integrate tourism research into the case study. These questions are recommended for a senior seminar in tourism management or a graduate course with a research orientation. For these discussion questions, students should identify a research publication that was contracted by stakeholders to advocate their position. Students should recognize and challenge the strategy used to advocate the stakeholder's position. A more advanced lesson might evaluate and critique the research; require a literature review around cruise tourism issues identified in the case, or even develop a research question and methodology that addresses the dilemmas in the case.

Additional Readings

Cooper, Robertson & Partners. (September 2010). South Carolina States Port Authority: Concept Plan for Union Pier Waterfront.
Crotts, J. & Heffner, F. (2010, February). An estimate of the economic contribu-

tions of the SC State Ports Authority's 2010 cruise ship activity to the region's economy.

Crotts, J. & Heffner, F. (2011, November). The impact of cruise ship embarkations and debarkations on hotel demand in metro Charleston's major hotel markets.

Miley & Associates. (2012, February). The cruise industry in Charleston: A clear perspective.

Preservation Society of Charleston. (August 2011). Cruise Tourism Special Report. *Preservation Progress*, 55(2),