

*Crisis Management During Hurricanes in the Caribbean***Case Summary**

Recent Cat. 5 hurricanes named as; Irma and Maria have severely and negatively affected St. Martin and Puerto Rico, as two popular tourist destinations in the Caribbean region. After a long period of undesired and severe outcomes in the aftermath of Maria and Irma, several agencies, authorities and officials have recently embarked on very serious revival plans, strategies, and transitional efforts in both Puerto Rico and St. Martin. The primary objectives of the strategic implementation of the revival plan were on reestablishing the entire tourism infrastructure and industrial structure in Caribbean region. The secondary objectives of this case study is to enlighten readers (students) about the damage capacity and the global impact of hurricanes, typhoons, and other types of natural disasters on hospitality and tourism industry in the world. In this way, Ritchie's (2004) comprehensive holistic disaster and crisis framework can be used for this effort. The revival section of the holistic plan focuses on four areas. First, strategy implementation and control has to be achieved by evaluating the formulation of strategic alternatives. Second, crisis communication needs to be developed including use of a public relations plan; appointment of a spokesperson; use of crisis communication to recover from an incident; short versus long-term crisis communication strategies. Third, resource management is important as well for the redeployment or generation of financial resources, leadership styles and employee empowerment. Lastly, the islands have to collaborate with stakeholders both internal (employees, managers, shareholders) and external (tourists, industry sectors, government agencies, public, media). This case study discusses Puerto Rico and St. Martin's recent revival plan and its strategic implementation in the aftermath of hurricanes Maria and Irma. However, as previously mentioned, the practical and theoretical merits of this case study is very well adjustable and applicable to the existence of other natural disasters such as, tropical typhoons (cyclones) causing devastating flooding, infrastructural malfunction, and billions of dollars of damage in the hospitality and tourism sector as well as the entire economy globally. The discussions generated in this case study should provide an in-depth understanding of the challenges and revival strategies that the two islands and the other hurricane-sensitive parts of the world have been experiencing in the tourism industry after the two major hurricanes. The discussions are based on the critical actions, recovery attempts, and key practices of local government agencies such as, tourism bureaus and organizations as well as local and global practitioners and policy makers in the hospitality and tourism industry. Therefore, the bottom-line is that the students are going to focus on the abovementioned

aspects of how to manage natural crisis (hurricane and tropical typhoons) while they are building their discussions under the framework of Ritchie's (2004) comprehensive revival strategies.

Target Audience

The content of this case study, including the additional readings, is intended for undergraduate students enrolled in various hospitality and tourism courses. While the analysis of this case study and teaching note is more suited for the undergraduate level of study, instructors of graduate classes could also implement the content of this case study in their classrooms by replacing the additionally assigned materials with some advanced textbook chapter readings that discuss economic and financial formulation of the strategic efforts for Hurricane recovery.

Analysis of Teaching Objectives and Learning Outcomes

The primary objectives of this case study are multifold. This case study aims to provide extensive discussion grounds for students to create ad detailed strategic map with multiple key practices and recovery efforts while managing the resources in tourism activities in the Caribbean region. Parallel to this, this case attempts to guide students how to manage the communication, marketing, and economic issues with all the stakeholders in aftermath of natural disasters such as hurricanes. The discussions presented here aim to enhance students' critical reasoning, quantitative judgement, and analytical thinking skills in the crisis management and recovery domains. As a result, instructors will be able to engage their students in an active learning environment to discuss the strategic Hurricane recovery efforts and plans for the islands of St. Martin and Puerto Rico. Instructors might also assign this case study to students so that they can discuss the ramifications of these revival effort strategies from the multi-dimensional operational perspective in hospitality and tourism industry in the Caribbean region. The discussion actions regarding the recent revival plan and its strategic implementation will challenge students' critical thinking and enhance their reasoning skills with the integration of various hospitality and tourism courses such as and concepts, such as Tourism Marketing Concepts and Applications, Strategic Management for Travel and Tourism, Current Topics in Nature-Based Tourism, and Destination Marketing and Management courses.

Upon completion of this case study, students should be able to:

- Identify the main reasons for why Puerto Rico and St. Martin's tourism industry needs a revival plan.
- Discuss the various strategic measures and actions that can be implemented to both Puerto Rico and St. Martin by utilizing

Ritchie's (2004) comprehensive disaster revival plan.

- Analyze how the revival actions and strategies can affect Puerto Rico and St. Martin's tourism industry in the near future.
- Relate the revival plan to the other types of natural disasters in the world (i.e., tropical typhoons in Far East region of the world).
- Evaluate the pros and cons of the strategic actions under Ritchie's (2004) comprehensive disaster revival plan from four different focus areas.

Discussion Topics and Questions

Strategy Implementation and Control:

- How are the formulation and selection of strategic alternatives going to help authorities make effective decisions quickly?

Crisis Communication and Control:

- What are the best ways of developing crisis communication strategies including use of a public relations plan; appointment of a spokesperson; use of crisis communication to recover from incident; short versus long-term crisis communication strategies?

Resource Management:

- Explain what the consequences of creation of responsive organizational structures; redeployment or generation of financial resources; leadership styles and employee empowerment.

Understanding and Collaborating with Stakeholders:

- Discuss the need for Puerto Rico and St. Martin to collaborate with stakeholders at different levels such as, internal (employees, managers, shareholders) and external (tourists, industry sectors, government agencies, public, media) to resolve crises or disasters.

Class Instruction and Teaching Methods

The content of this case study can be taught in a variety of ways and it allows educators to implement several different teaching techniques. For instance, time permitting, two separate class periods could be utilized to address Puerto Rico and St. Martin's short- and long-term revival strategies in the comprehensive plan. Alternatively, one class period could address both and each topic could be divided among small groups. Regardless, each area of discussion requires about an hour and fifteen minutes of instruction and teaching time to introduce, understand, explore, discuss, and check for understanding. Although this class plan is designed based on the minimal time allowance of 75 minutes, instructors can expand and/or allocate more time according to time available for the instructional phases mentioned in detail below.

Prior to Lesson:

Students will be asked to read the case study along with the additional reading materials for the comprehensive disaster plan and the strategic implementation of the plan. After reading the documents provided, students will be asked to have a good understanding of the content areas:

The main ideas of the case study.

- The current condition of Puerto Rico and St. Martin's tourism industry.
- Broad view of Puerto Rico and St. Martin's revival situation in the aftermath of hurricanes Maria and Irma.
- Globally recognized hurricane-related news and possible discussion areas in the world.

Furthermore, students should be able to discuss the following topics:

- Puerto Rico and St. Martin's need for comprehensive disaster revival plan for the entire tourism industry.
- The objectives and focus areas of Puerto Rico and St. Martin's revival plan.
- The operational and strategic implementation of Puerto Rico and St. Martin's tourism industry.
- Potential future disaster precautions and practices for operational stability and industrial sustainability in both Puerto Rico and St. Martin.

Phase I (Introduction and Open Class Discussion of the Case Study – approximately 30 minutes):

- Start the class with the introduction and the purpose of the case study and then deliver the learning outcomes of the case study (5 minutes).
- Deliver a brief lecture on the following discipline-specific subjects: (15-30 minutes).
 - Organizational revival strategies.
 - Financial and economic performance analysis (i.e., predictive economic modellings and analysis for future tourism arrival and receipt).
 - Resource and human management processes.
 - Operational restructuring and revitalization.
 - Managerial decision-making process and management control.
- Ask students about their own perceptions and understanding of the case study and encourage them to share their personal opinions about management outcomes in operations, overall industrial strategy, organizations, and human and resources in the revival plan. Also, stimulate brief student discussion on future industrial value in tourism of both Puerto Rico and St. Martin (10 minutes).

Phase II (Discussion on Ongoing Strategies and Actions for Puerto Rico and St. Martin's Revival Plan – approximately 30-40 minutes):

- Divide students into small groups (maximum 4-5 students per group) and ask them to prepare answers for the following specific topics outlined below. Give each discussion group about 15 minutes to write up the answers for the discussion topics and have a general in-class discussion about 5 minutes so that they can analyze all the primary discussion topics (20 minutes).
- The major challenges and primary causes that led Puerto Rico and St. Martin to need a drastic resurrection and revival from a disaster.
- Puerto Rico and St. Martin ultimate strategies, actions, and the new policies of tourism industry after hurricanes Maria and Irma.
- The most significant possible changes in St. Martin and Puerto Rico's global destination position and in the entire tourism industry after the implementation of the revival plan.
- A comparison of Puerto Rico and St. Martin's financial and economic conditions before and after the implementation period of the revival plan.
- Specific examples/elements that positively affected Puerto Rico and St. Martin's overall revival and restructuring in the tourism industry.
- Critical areas that are sensitive to natural disasters such as hurricanes and tropical typhoons and a comparison of Ritchie's (2004) comprehensive revival plan according to different regions of the world.
- Let each discussion group present their answers and perspectives about the key discussion topics and encourage them to provide their recommendations (10 minutes).
- Briefly lecture on the impact of each revival strategy on both Caribbean region and the different regions of the world (5 minutes).
- Recap the discussion and check student learning and understanding in regard to the in-class discussions (5 minutes).

Phase III (Check for Understanding – approximately 10 minutes):

- Summarize and outline the key points and the main themes of the case study (5 minutes).
- Ask student groups whether their initial thoughts and perspectives about the main topics of the case study have changed after hearing the opinions from the other class members during the in-class discussions (5 minutes).

Phase IV (Written Assignment):

Students will be required to write a case analysis report after they complete all of the aforementioned instructional phases. In their report, students will examine and defend their ideas about the current situation of Puerto Rico and St. Martin and the revival strategies in the tourism industry, evaluate the financial and evaluate the implementation of these strategies in the aftermath of hurricanes Maria and Irma, and analytically structure their perspectives of the current issues presented in the case study. Also, students should include four to six related references other than those provided by the instructor. Lastly, if needed by students, additional information might be given along with the related additional industrial data (i.e., tourist arrivals, receipts, and GDP contribution of tourism industry to overall economy in both Puerto Rico and St. Martin). Lastly, students should relate the revival strategy that are implemented to Puerto Rico and St. Martin regions to the other hurricane and typhoon-sensitive regions of the world.

Assessment of Student Learning

Student's learning assessment will be measured by an extended writing assignment in the form of a case analysis report. The assessment criteria for the students' level of competency about key recovery strategies for Hurricanes Irma and Maria includes the following:

- Understanding: Reading and executing the ideas from multiple sources of information.
- Analysis: Thinking through reasoning and reflecting the opinions in the report.
- Effective Communication: Integrating information and clear coordination of the ideas with expressing insights of the case study.
- Content Accuracy & Analysis: The development of a sustained and well-substantiated argument or point of view. Ability to facilitate the related information to cover the discussion topics.
- Completeness: Critique all of the issues and topics mentioned in the case study.
- Evaluation and Synthesis: Ability to evaluate the options and offer clear recommendations.

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