

Sustainable measures bring savings of up to 30% for tourism businesses

- **Xavier Font, expert in tourism marketing and sustainability, told us today about the keys to optimising strategies in the sector**
- **The talk brought to a close Turisme de Barcelona’s campaign “From Barcelona: let’s care for the Planet”**

Barcelona, 14th June 2016. – Tourism businesses could save up to 30% of their costs by adopting sustainable measures. So says **Xavier Font**, an expert in tourism marketing and sustainability, who gave a talk today as part of **Turisme de Barcelona’s** Barcelona Sustainable Tourism (BST) Assembly. The talk brought to a close the campaign “From Barcelona: let’s care for the Planet”.

In his talk entitled “Marketing Sustainability”, **Xavier Font**, a lecturer at Leeds Beckett University (UK) and co-director of the International Centre for Responsible Tourism, told us how marketing and raising awareness of sustainable tourism can help reduce costs, create demand, improve tourist satisfaction, increase the number of stays and reduce the seasonal nature of visits. This morning’s talk took place at Barcelona’s Museum of Contemporary Art.

Lessening the environmental impact to boost customer loyalty

Recycling waste, reducing electricity and water consumption and promoting environmentally friendly tourist activities are an example of the sustainable measures that hotels and tourist businesses can offer visitors with the aim of cutting costs. **Xavier Font** said that, “providing guests with free bikes and cycle routes, reducing the cost of the stay if towels are reused and promoting longer stays that will reduce air traffic, are

examples of simple actions that will lessen the environmental impact and bring savings to hotels at the same time”. He went on to state that “businesses should make a commitment to sustainability as an added value, but most have problems getting their message across” and stressed that “a business that fails to understand this message has no future.

More sustainable measures and a higher profit margin

According to Professor Font, multinationals take careful account of the measures companies adopt to reduce the carbon footprint when holding a congress or making a hotel booking. “If they reduced costs and offered different products, they would be able to increase the price of their services and the profit margin would be higher”, he added.

This talk on marketing and sustainability, aimed at the tourism sector, brought to a close the campaign “From Barcelona: let’s care for the Planet”, which was launched on 5th June to mark World Environment Day. **Joan Gaspart**, president of Turisme de Barcelona’s Executive Committee; **María José Pujol**, president of the BST programme; **Carme Rubió**, deputy director general of the Catalan Government’s Tourism Plan; **Miquel Forns**, deputy CEO for tourism at Barcelona Provincial Council; and **Agustí Colom**, councillor for business and tourism at Barcelona City Council spoke before **Xavier Font** gave his talk.

BST members hold their general assembly

The members of Barcelona Sustainable Tourism (BST), Turisme de Barcelona’s programme that promotes the city as a sustainable destination, held their general assembly today. During the session, they assessed the different initiatives they will be implementing in environmental, cultural, social and economic fields.

Barcelona is the first city in the world to be awarded Biosphere World Class Destination certification, which recognises it as a sustainable destination that manages tourism responsibly.

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