

**THE STRATEGIC IDENTIFICATION AND INTEGRATION OF CRITICAL  
SUCCESS FACTORS TO ACHIEVE INTERNATIONAL  
COMPETITIVENESS FOR SOUTH AFRICA AS A TOURISM  
DESTINATION**

**BY**

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## ABSTRACT

The objective of this study was to theoretically develop and empirically test a destination competitiveness model that can be used to identify and integrate critical success factors for an international tourism destination. This was done by:

- Postulating a destination competitiveness model that allowed for the meaningful identification and integration of critical success factors.
- Testing the postulated destination competitiveness model in practice by using it to identify and integrate critical success factors for South Africa as a tourism destination.

An analysis of various contemporary sources on critical success factors, strategic management, destination strategic management and destination competitiveness models was undertaken in an endeavour to find a theoretical framework for the development of a destination competitiveness model that could be used for the successful identification and integration of critical success factors.

The destination competitiveness model that was consequently developed and tested in the South African context consists of the following main components:

- **Strategic assessment:** representing an international as well as a national analysis. The international analysis focuses on the execution of an international competitive assessment as well as the identification of international trends while the national analysis concentrates on a national environmental analysis, a stakeholder analysis and a resource and capability analysis.
- **Strategic information creation and dissemination:** this phase represents the information flows from formal assessments as well as informal processes in the destination that will form the backbone of strategic learning and knowledge creation.
- **Strategic decision-making:** consisting of two parts: the determination of the strategic direction and positioning of the destination, and the identification and

integration of critical success factors. The strategic direction and positioning section reflects the shared values, shared vision, strategic position, strategic guidelines and success factors of the destination and can serve as the “nerve centre” from where critical success factors can be identified and integrated. The identification and integration of critical success factors is done within a balanced framework of four perspectives: sustainable growth, customer, destination management processes and learning and growth.

Against this background a survey was undertaken by means of a structured questionnaire among all the primary tourism stakeholders involved in attracting and servicing international tourists in South Africa. The survey was used to identify critical success factors in all four perspectives of the model and to investigate integration relationships between these factors by analysing correlation results. Specific conclusions were made and specific actions recommended based on the results obtained.

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