

## **Implementing Destination Governance**

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### **Abstract**

In the tourism management literature, several authors (Nordin, Beritelli et al, Pechlaner) have promoted the concept of destination governance, to define a coalition of disparate parties with common interests, as a productive approach to tourism promotion at the destination level. In 2005 WTO forecasted that public – private partnerships in tourism promotion will become more and more prevalent during 2006 – 2010 particularly in the more developed countries with a federal political system or a strong degree of decentralization. Although the theoretical concepts in this nascent literature are appealing, little evidence exists as to the operational reality of governance (Beritelli et al, 2007). The open questions include “how governance is produced, who governs, what roles have the actors and the institutions in the process” (Pechlaner, 2009).

In Switzerland, tourist destinations have begun to feel strong competitive effects in international and regional markets, governmental authorities have increased their efforts in collaborative destination governance with private tourist destination operators. Such collaborations often encompass a wide range of players that may include leaders of the public sector from tourists’ destinations, federal or cantonal level government representatives, academic scholars with market and economic analyses, and companies that invest in capital-intensive tourist attractions.

Although observers of the Swiss tourism industry have recognized the need for a more collaborative approach, destination governance is a new phenomenon in many Swiss locations (Beritelli et al, 2007). Furthermore, reports of successful implementation of such alliances are rare. To explore the questions raised above and deepen our understanding of both the theory and practice of destination governance, guided by the “three lenses” of Ancona, et al (2004), the author undertook an action research approach to the study of one such attempt, in Bosco Gurin, a small Swiss resort in the Southern Canton of Ticino.

Key words: governance, 3 lenses, action research