

Potencial de la comarca de creación Ocaña un clúster turístico

Potential of the region of creation ocaña a touristcluster

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Abstract: The city of Ocaña, along with the municipalities of La Playa, Ábrego and El Carmen, located in the department of Norte de Santander, Colombia, possess great cultural, historical and natural wealth, which allow projecting this region as a tourist destination, but nowadays the culture that prevails around economic activities focuses on trade; tourism is an activity that entrepreneurs do not see clearly and only a few of them have opted to develop projects in this area. After an inventory, it was found that there are enough attractions, but the business system must be organized so that the tourism sector can be empowered and to develop activities in a sustainable and responsible manner; For this reason, entities such as the Chamber of Commerce of Ocaña, The Francisco de Paula Santander Ocaña University, SENA, the City Hall, the private enterprise and other local and national institutions must design projects that favor the improvement of the business network that in an efficient and competitive way they point to the development of this sector. The idea is to propose associative and complementary strategies so that tourism can be offered with quality in a sustainable, responsible and participative way, generating a true economic development.

Keywords: Cluster, tourist structure, potential, tourism resources and tourism.

1. INTRODUCCIÓN

Ocaña is a Colombian municipality located in the northwestern area of the department of Norte de Santander, connected by national roads with Cúcuta, Bucaramanga and Santa Marta; it is the second population of the department after Cúcuta. Its extension is 460 square kilometers, located on the eastern mountain range; with an average climate of 22 ° C (Alcaldía de Ocaña Norte de Santander, 2014); has a great influence as the center of commerce, education, culture, and technology, in the region and its economy revolves around trade with 64%, followed by the sector services that represent approximately 23% of it.

Ocaña and its region could be offered as a tourist destination because of the great events that have taken place since its foundation that marked a milestone in the consolidation of the Colombian territory, as well as having a great variety of movable and immovable property, natural sites and intangible heritage, among them that can be mentioned: Agua de La Virgen Sanctuary, Historical Complex of La Gran Convencion, Unique Natural Area Los Estoraques, Column of the Liberty of the slaves, monument to Christ the King, the Museum of the city of Ocaña Antón García

de Bonilla, different religious and historical temples; equally great cultural aspects such as el desfile de Los Genitores.

Despite of the great tourist potential in Ocaña and its region, there is no culture, infrastructure, organization or specific projects that guarantee its tourist offer; This is why the creation of the tourism cluster is proposed, with inter-institutional support for the design of projects that favor the improvement of the business and the strengthening of organizations so that they can efficiently, sustainably, responsibly and competitively support the growth of the tourism sector of the region and through it, generates a true economic development where the entire population participates and benefits.

This research includes a review of the literature on tourism potential and the cluster as an alternative of development, the used methodology, the results obtained, the design of the website, and conclusions related to the objectives of the research.

LITERARY REVIEW

Tourism includes activities done by people during their trips and stays in places other than their usual environment, for a consecutive period of less than one year for leisure purposes, business or other

reasons. The local tourism corresponds then, to the fact that the citizens or residents leave from the locality where they live towards another locality or another place of destination within the same city, where they also carry out acts of consumption, interact with other citizens or with visitors and return to his place of origin, which is his usual residence. (World Tourism Organization, 1994)

The tourist structure is a group of resources that are developed on the infrastructure concurring in the provision of tourist services and includes lodging, restaurant, recreational facilities, tourism agencies, information offices, transport companies, and others.

Tourism as an economic activity has a major effect on the economy, due to the wide range and variety of production factors required to offer the goods and services requested by visitors and the broad spectrum of agents involved or affected by tourism; this is why associativity is proposed through the creation of a cluster that converts the sector into a competitive sector that generates true regional economic development.

In the article titled initiatives of local development and promotion of the tourist cluster (Varisco, 2007), the concept of cluster has been generalized in the tourist activity and among the multiple antecedents that contemplate its use, three approaches affecting the proposal can be distinguished for its promotion: the cluster as a tourist product, the diamond model of competitiveness, and the cluster as the interrelation of social actors.

The first approach is based on the use of the concept of a tourist cluster with no direct relationship with the theory that sustains it and without any more conceptualization than that referring to the definition of the term. Given the generality of this concept, which applies perfectly to tourist activity in consolidated destinations, it is common to find precedents where it is mentioned as equivalent to tourist destination or product.

The second approach is observed in the cluster studies that apply the theory of Porter, and its competitiveness model. The analysis focuses on the adaptation of the famous diamond: the conditions of the tourist demand; the analysis of factors, which includes the study of cultural and natural resources and infrastructure; the

strategy, structure and rivalry of the companies providing services; and the sectors of backing and support where the private sector institutions are analyzed, in addition to assigning a complementary role to the government, specifically to the functions performed by the public tourism agency.

The third approach considers the tourist cluster as a category of analysis within the theory of local development, and this means considering the competitiveness of the tourist destination as a necessary but not sufficient condition to generate development. It also involves analyzing the cluster in relation to a wide set of interrelations, which in some cases exceeds the strictly economic scope by recognizing the influence of social and cultural factors in the productive dynamic.

METHODOLOGY

The investigation is typified by the descriptive investigation of quantitative – qualitative character, where the information is taken from the primary sources, that means, from each of the companies that provide services and offer products to tourists and from the sites and tourist attractions that are located in the municipalities of Ocaña, Abrego, El

Carmen and La Playa; also through direct observation, deep interviews and document analysis; with the objective of evaluating the potential of the Ocaña region for the creation of a tourist cluster.

The population considered to perform the respective analysis, were the commercial establishments such as travel agencies, hotels, restaurants, recreational sites and tourist attractions, parking and transportation of the municipalities of Ocaña, Abrego, El Carmen and La Playa, which are registered on the Chamber of Commerce of Ocaña, according to information provided by this entity in 2014.

To meet the objectives, the information was taken directly through observation, surveys, and interviews with the owners and/or administrators of the tourism-related companies in each of the defined localities.

RESULTS

Among the inventory of tourist attractions in the Ocaña region, there are some that have been declared as Cultural Interest of National, Departmental and Municipal Character and are classified into Monuments, cult temples, museums, civil buildings of historical and architectural

interest, squares and parks of historical interest, natural means, festivities, and gastronomy.

Ocaña has 61 tourist attractions, highlighting the religious attractions such as The hermitage of the Virgen of las Gracias de la Torcoroma, church of Jesus Cautivo, Temple of San Francisco, Chapel of Santa Rita, church of San Agustín and the Cathedral of Santa Ana; also cultural and historical attractions, such as the Historic Complex of La Gran Convención, Holy Week and the Parade of Los Genitores.

The municipality of Ábrego has 13 tourist attractions, featuring natural resources such as Piedras Negras, Pozo de Las Pailas, Pozo del Burro, and the reservoir of the Oroque river.

La Playa de Belén has 20 attractions, emphasising the natural ones, such as the unique Natural Area Los Estoraques and Los Aposentos, and the architectonic one for its colonial and uniform structure, declared as the most beautiful Town of the Department. It is part of the Network of Towns Heritage of Colombia.

The municipality of Carmen is declared an Asset of National Cultural Interest for its architectural beauty of the colonial period

with its cobbled streets, it has 16 tourist attractions, and includes the Catatumbo Barí Natural Park where the Barí natives live and where the Catatumbo Lighthouse phenomenon is presented (permanent and continuous electrical discharges that help maintain the ozone layer).

Among the tourism stakeholders that will allow the development of the sector we can find travel agencies, there are only four in Ocaña that serve the entire region; The hotels, Ocaña has 25 of them registered in the Chamber of Commerce, whose capacity is 656 rooms arranged with 514 single beds, 459 double rooms and 33 semi-double beds, which represents the 87% of the hotel capacity in the region; in La Playa there are two hotels and an hostel, arranged with 22 rooms equipped with 42 single beds and 20 double, which represents the 3% of the capacity of the region and in Ábrego there are three hotels with 74 rooms that include 34 single beds, 61 double beds and a semi-double, for 10% of the regional hotel capacity; the municipality of El Carmen lacks of this service.

Regarding to parking, Ocaña has 35 registered with the Chamber of Commerce; with an operative capacity to park 1337 cars and 1538 motorcycles, the other towns

do not have this service. About passengers transport, there are eight companies, of which two are national and the rest are inter-municipal; but only 2 are from Ocaña, the six regional companies have their main offices in Ocaña and points of attention in the localities under the study. Respecting to restaurants, in Ocaña there are 54 registered, located throughout the city, in La Playa, there are four of them, in Ábrego four, and in El Carmen three of them.

As for recreational sites, it is worth mentioning that Ocaña has sports venues, some of them are private, but does not have sites that allow programming activities, as part of a tourist package; only in La Playa, in Ábrego, and in El Carmen exists this kind of attraction, for a total of three in the region.

1. In order to fulfill the objective of characterizing the companies that would be part of the cluster, only those that expressly expressed their willingness to associate, that comply with or are willing to comply with the requirements established for the exercise of their activity, are taken into account. Economic and for the offer of quality tourist services and that are located in

places that do not represent any risk to visitors.

Among the hotels that were selected we have Hotel El Zaguán de Las Aguas, company of family tradition with more than 30 years of service and experience in the hotel industry, located in the heart of the city of Ocaña, Carrera 11 No. 12-66, El Tamaco neighborhood. It has 13 rooms with four double beds and twenty single beds; attended by four employees, with primary, secondary and university studies. Its facilities are spacious and cozy; however, the bathrooms require adaptation to make it more pleasant to the view and demands of its visitors; has a large space as an event room, cable TV, hot water, restaurant, and Wi-Fi. The type of guest who most frequently solicits their services is businessmen, traveling agents, contractors, athletes, and religious figures.

Hotel Real. Founded in the year of 1949, with 66 years of hotel career, it maintains its colonial structure of Spanish architecture, has beautiful gardens and wide corridors, located in the center of the city, on 12 Street No. 12-39. Its operational capacity includes 27 rooms, arranged with 17 single beds, 13 doubles, and 5 semi-double beds; has seven employees; four only with primary studies

and three bachelors. It offers room for events, cable TV, hot water, Wi-Fi, restaurant and parking; receive debit and credit cards as payment options for their clients. It has no record of the kind of guests it receives and currently manages agreements with a parking lot, Hotel Colonial and the Pitta Galván agency.

Hotel Plaza Real de Ocaña. Located in career 13 No. 11-25, it was established in 2006. It offers its services in 20 rooms with 23 single beds and 18 doubles; it operates with four women and one man, they have primary school studies, two of secondary school and one is a professional. It offers services like restaurant, hot water, Wi-Fi, cable TV, parking in convention with Lava Park Azul parking and takes credit and debit cards. The type of guest that receives the most is businessmen, tourists, contractors, medical visitors, religious personalities and musicians. They manage agreements with travel agencies in Cúcuta and Bogotá.

Hotel Tarigua. It is the most modern hotel that exists in the city, located in the downtown, carrera 12 No. 8-47. Its mission is focused on offering excellent hotel services at the level of the most demanding guests; for this reason, it offers a highly qualified human team and the necessary

infrastructure to always provide satisfaction and comfort during their guests stay. His priority is to work every day for his welfare and to position the name of Hotel Tarigua as well of the city of Ocaña. To offer its services, it has 52 modern and comfortable rooms, a Master Suite with Jacuzzi and spa cabin and nine Junior Suites. It counts with a group of 13 employees, three men and ten women, seven bachelors, two Technologists, and four Professionals. It offers hotel insurance services, security box in the rooms, events room for 200 people, restaurant-bar, room service, parking, elevator, local and national calls, Wi-Fi, and breakfast; it also offers the wedding night plan and the anniversary plan, as payment options receives check, cash, debit and credit cards. Normally businessmen, tourists, travel agents, and speakers are lodged. Manages agreements with travel agencies in Medellín and Francisco de Paula Santander Ocaña University.

Hotel Hacaritama. On March 28, 1983, the hotel was blessed and inaugurated, known in its beginnings as a Tourism Hotel "Hacaritama", on 10 street No. 12-57, the lodging services are offered in 48 rooms with 55 single beds, 12 double beds and 24 semi-double beds; its staff is composed for nine men and four women, of whom there

are three with primary school studies, six bachelors, a technologist, and three professionals, also has a room for events, parking, cable TV, Wi-Fi, hot water and elevator; receives debit and credit cards. It is affiliated to the Hotel and Tourism Association of Colombia COTELCO. The largest influxes of guests are traveling agents and tourists. It has an agreement with travel agencies in Cúcuta and Bogotá.

Hotel El Príncipe Sede Campestre, it began its hotel activity in 2009, is currently expanding and modernizing its facilities, is located on street 10 No. 9-14 La Costa neighborhood. It has 22 rooms, equipped with 21 single beds and 21 doubles; it has four workers, two men and two women with levels of primary education (one official) and technical education (three officials). It offers services of events room, Jacuzzi, parking, cable TV, Web page, Wi-Fi, hot water and fan. Services can be paid in cash, debit or credit card. It is registered in the Chamber of Commerce, National Registry of Tourism and COTELCO.

It receives especially traveling agents, medical visitors, tourists, religious personalities and athletes and works in conjunction with the Hotel El Príncipe Centro.

Hotel El Príncipe Centro. It started in 2003, located in the downtown on 10th Street No. 10-49. Its operational capacity is given by its 48 rooms, equipped with 26 single beds and 41 double, which are served by seven employees six of them are women and one man, six with high school studies and only one professional. Its facilities are arranged with additional services such as events room, parking, cable TV, Web page, Wi-Fi, hot water, restaurant, sauna and a mini shop where some food and hygiene products can be find. Receives credit and debit card, also handles direct credit with some companies. Comply with the mercantile registry and the National Registry of Tourism and COTELCO; it also makes the corresponding records of its guests and its business operations. Its visitors are mostly traveling agents, medical visitors, musicians, and academics.

2. Regarding to the seasons of greatest demand, it was observed that in Ocaña there is a trend of greater flow of visitors on holidays of December, January, and June, a special break week in October, Holy week and holidays. During weekdays is also busy because Ocaña is a commercial city and many sales agents and medical visitors come by.

Hotel Catatumbo in Abrego is considered too. Located in the downtown area, in Carrera 6 No. 13-39, it has been running for 23 years with 20 rooms arranged with 15 single beds, 18 double beds and a semi-double bed; attended by its owner and daughter; provides restaurant services, hot water, Wi-Fi, cable TV and laundry. It only has the mercantile registry and it keeps track of its operations and guest entry. In this hotel, businessmen, medical visitors, and tourists are staying every day, receiving their largest number of visitors during holidays in January, at the end of the year, and Holy Week.

Hotel San Miguel Plaza. Located in the center of the town in Carrera 6 No. 13- 66 Ábrego Norte de Santander, it offers lodging services with cable TV and Wi-Fi, in twelve 12 comfortable rooms, arranged with seven single beds and 11 double beds. The restaurant's facilities are leased to a third party, who offers the service when the guests require it. Parking service lends it in an agreement. Within its staff plant, it counts with three women, two of them with primary school studies and one professional. It is only registered in the Chamber of Commerce. The visitors, in their great majority, are businessmen, travel agents, and contractors; the season

of higher demand is on weekends and holidays at the end of the year.

Hotel and Restaurant El Laguito. It is located at Kilometer 31 on the road Ocaña-Cúcuta, it has 42 rooms with 12 single beds and 32 double beds, staffed by three male and eight female employees; four of them with elementary studies, five with a high school, a technologist and one with professional studies. It offers services of parking, restaurant, cable TV, Wi-Fi and, gas station. Within the requirements to develop its activity, only fulfills the commercial register, is pending to carry out the procedure before the National Tourism Registry, it keeps records of guests and their economic operations; the class of guests that receives the most are traveling agents and heavy load carriers. January holidays and June holidays are the seasons in which the hotel receives the most visitors.

The municipality of La Playa de Belén for being part of the Network of towns of the Colombian Heritage, the class of clients that usually receives are tourists and they can stay at:

Orquideas Plaza Hotel was the first hotel built in this town and has been providing services since 2008, located at Avenida Los Fundadores No. 0-71. It offers 11

rooms with 26 single beds and 9 double beds; offers pool service, events room, cable TV, hot water, restaurant, parking, and Wi-Fi. Served by two men and two women, with basic primary, high school, and technical studies. It has registration with the Chamber of Commerce and the National Registry of Tourism, also keeps records of its guests and economic operations. The greatest demand is presented in the festive bridges, Holy week, holidays in June and at the end of the year.

Finca Hotel Casa Real. It was born in 2013, under the idea of an integral farm; it aims to offer a Tourist-Agronomic alternative, where a direct harmonious relationship between land, natural and colonial landscapes is experienced. It is located in Rosa Blanca village, has six rooms that offer 7 double beds and 12 single beds; serves with four workers a man and three women with primary school and a professional. Provides restaurant services, hot water, events room, parking, cable TV. As an indispensable requirement, it is registered with the Chamber of Commerce and the National Registry of Tourism; it also registers the origin of its clients and controls its operations. Its greatest activity is presented

in The Holy Week, June holidays and the end of the year.

Posada Marmacrisli. It starts to provide services in 2013, it is located on 2nd Street No. 5-65. It is an inn that offers a very familiar atmosphere in its five rooms, equipped with four single beds and four double beds, attended by a manager, with high school studies and a waitress, with elementary studies. It offers lodging services with cable TV, Wi-Fi, hot water and restaurant. It keeps the records corresponding to their guests and their economic operations, is duly registered with the Chamber of Commerce and states that the National Tourism Registry is in process. The seasons with the highest demand are the Holy week and the end of the year holidays.

Regarding to parking services, initially, it was decided not to be included any in the proposal, as the hotels in this study offer this service in their own facilities or under an agreement.

In relation to the restaurants in Ocaña, only seven are considered, because only they meet the characteristics of registration, quality of their services, facilities and location, such as El Corralito Ocañero, Calabongas Plaza, Gourmet Plaza, Río

Restaurant Pub, El Huerto, Uq Uku and Colombia 76.

In Ábrego, only two restaurants are included, they expressed their interest in doing the necessary procedures for this purpose, which are Hotel and Restaurant El Laguito and Rancho Rey, located towards the exit to the city of Cúcuta.

In La Playa de Belen are three restaurants that have been working to form a tourist package such as El Establo, kind of country style, grill Donde Edgar and restaurant Los Arrayanes.

Within the tourist attractions, Table 1 shows the relationship by categories of those included in each of the towns under the study.

Table 1: Tourist attractions of Ocaña, La Playa, Ábrego and El Carmen.

CLASIFICACIÓN	NOMBRE	LUGAR
MONUMENTOS	Monumento a cristo rey	Ocaña
	Monumento a Antón García de Bonilla	
	Monumento a Leonelda Hernández	
	Monumento a la virgen de la Torcoroma.	
	Columna de la Libertad de Los Esclavos.	
	Monumento a Mercedes Ábrego de Reyes.	Ábrego
	Monumento a la Santa Cruz	La Playa
	Monumento a la virgen del Carmen.	El Carmen
Monumento a la Santa Cruz		
TEMPLOS E IGLESIAS	Iglesia de la virgen de Torcoroma.	Ocaña
	Templo San Agustín.	
	Catedral de Santa Ana.	
	Capilla colonial de Santa Rita.	
	Iglesia de Jesús Cautivo.	
	Ermita de las Gracias de Nuestra Señora de la Torcoroma.	
	Templo san Francisco.	Ábrego
	Templo Santa Bárbara.	
	Iglesia San José de La Playa	
Iglesia Nuestra Señora del Carmen	El Carmen	
MUSEOS	Museo de la ciudad de Ocaña Antón García de Bonilla	Ocaña
	Museo de la Gran Convención Ocaña	
PREDIOS CIVILES	Complejo Histórico de la Gran Convención	Ocaña
	Monasterio de Monjas Dominicanas.	
	Cabecera municipal de La Playa de Belén	La Playa
	Centro histórico del Carmen	El Carmen
	Centro Cultural Manuel Guillermo Giraldo	
PLAZAS Y PARQUES	Parque 29 de mayo.	Ocaña
	Plazuela de la Gran Convención.	
	Parque principal Mercedes Ábrego de Reyes.	Ábrego
	Parque Ángel Cortes.	La Playa

Fuente:

propia

Clasificación Classification corresponds to the type of attraction, and the attractiveness is related to its respective name and the municipality where it is located and which is part of the study population such as the city of Ocaña, La Playa de Belén, El Carmen and Ábrego, municipalities located in the Norte de Santander department in Colombia.

Referring to recreational sites only El Tun Tun located in Ábrego and Yaraguá in La Playa Natural Park, which offers the flight cable adventure, are included.

In order to show the potential and the historical, cultural, architectural and natural wealth of each one of the municipalities that make up the region that is the object of this work, the website is created, there the protagonists, such as the travel agencies, hotels, parking lots, tourist attractions, restaurants, recreational sites, and land transport companies are visualized and that allows to develop tourism as an activity in a sustainable and responsible way.

The website corresponds to www.ocanaturistica.com; in it, it can be observed each of the aspects listed in the previous paragraphs.

After reviewing the secondary sources and field visits to determine the tourist inventory of Ocaña and its region, it can be said that there is a great potential that allows it to be projected as a tourist destination; however, for this sector to become a pole of economic and social development, requires the determined work of each of the actors related to tourism and the support of public and private institutions for the training of human resources, improvement of organizational structures, regional infrastructure and the establishment of policies and strategies that motivate and promote this region as a tourist destination, for its historical, architectural, cultural and natural wealth.

Both, the institutions of education for work, and those for higher education, must initiate offering technical and professional programs in the area of tourism, since the human resources that work in the companies investigated, do not have the appropriate training to perform the different functions that must be fulfilled in the tourism companies. Likewise, the culture of bilingualism in the entire population must be created.

The desire of the owners and managers of the different companies studied for the possible creation of the cluster was evidenced, which is why the diagnosis process can be started for each one of the interested parties and the design of tourist packages for their commercialization.

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