Developing and Marketing Crafts Tourism

The EUROTEX Project

Contents

Chapter 1: Culture, Crafts and Tourism: a Vital Partnership

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Introduction

Culture, crafts and tourism are rapidly becoming inseperable partners. Local crafts are important elements of culture, and people travel to see and experience other cultures, traditions and ways of living. Crafts products form an important element of the purchases made by tourists, providing an important economic input to the local economy. Tourism also supports the crafts themselves, ensuring the continuation of crafts production and strengthing local cultures.

This partnership between culture, local crafts and tourism has been recognised by the European Union as providing an important source of economic development and new sources of employment in the future. Making the most of such opportunities, however, means that Europe has to compete successfully in global tourism markets. Culture has a vital role to play in making the tourism product more competitive. The rich cultural diversity of Europe and its crafts products can help to differentiate its tourism products from competing destinations elsewhere in the world. Culture also provides the living element of the product - the experiences which are increasingly the aim of tourist trips. The fact that tourists travel to see local cultures and crafts can also generate pride in local culture.

However, bring culture, crafts products and tourists together is not enough to develop successful cultural tourism products. Local cultures are by definition more accessible to local people that to visitors. If tourists are to understand and enjoy their cultural experiences, therefore, these experiences need to be made understandable and accessible to them. A cultural bridge needs to be formed between the local culture and the culture of the tourist. This means that crafts products need to be based on the needs and wants of the customer - the tourist.

The development of crafts tourism products therefore needs to start with the tourist. Who are these tourists? What do they want? What is the tourist willing to buy? By answering these questions a marketing-orientated approach to crafts tourism can be developed. A marketing approach is important, because crafts products will only be produced if there is a demand for them, and if local people can earn a living by producing them.

This book provides some basic guidelines about how to develop cultural tourism from a marketing perspective. The book is the product of the EUROTEX project, funded by DGXVI of the European Commission as part of the Article 10 programme to develop innovative approaches to cultural development.

The Starting Point – The Market

Marketing always begins with the market. The market is also the starting point for the EUROTEX project. The fact that there was potential for the development of crafts and textile tourism followed extensive research on the European tourism market carried out by the European Asociation for Tourism and Leisure Education (ATLAS).

This research centred on the growth of ‘cultural tourism’ , and the increasing interest of tourists in local cultures, traditions and products (Richards, 1996). One of the important trends identified in the European market during this research was the fact that cultural tourists are increasingly in search of unique cultural experiences through which they can learn about other cultures. In developing crafts tourism, therefore it is important that the crafts products are linked to the local culture, and form an integral part of the local culture. The crafts production process can also become an important element of the cultural tourism product, but providing opportunities for tourists to learn about and see how textiles are made. In developing crafts and textile tourism, therefore, it is important to understand the market for cultural tourism.

The Cultural Tourism Market

One of the problems with cultural tourism is that it is a very broad concept. According to the World Tourism Organisation, for example, defines cultural tourism in broad terms as covering □all movements of persons ..... because they satisfy the human need for diversity, tending to raise the cultural level of the individual and giving rise to new knowledge, experience and encounters□. Under such a broad definition, almost all tourists are cultural tourists to some extent. The approach that ATLAS has adopted in defining cultural tourism is to look at the motivations of tourists (Richards, 1996). An important distinction is that cultural tourists are engaged in an active consumption of culture - they want to experience specific elements of the local culture, and to increase their knowledge about that culture.

The ATLAS definition of cultural tourism is:

"The movement of persons to cultural manifestations away from their normal place of residence, with the intention to gather new information and experiences to satisfy their cultural needs" (Richards, 1996:24).

This definition emphasises the role of learning about and experiencing different cultures and cultural products. Cultural tourism not only includes visiting cultural attractions and events, but also experiencing the □way of life□ of different peoples. Our research has shown that there is a trend away from traditional forms of cultural tourism, such as museums and monuments, towards more interactive forms of tourism, based on experiencing the way in which people live, and learning more about daily life as well as significant moments in history.

Recent research on the motives of cultural tourists confirms the importance of learning and gaining new experiences, as well as the growing importance of □atmosphere□ as an element of the cultural product. In contrast to the traditional image of cultural tourists as being predominantly consumers of □high□ culture, such as museums, monuments and the arts, the scope of cultural tourism is broadening to include a wider range of cultural attractions and events, many of which are related to □popular□ culture. The cultural tourist today is not just in search of knowledge and learning, but also wants to relax and have fun during their cultural trips.

Products offered in the cultural tourism market are therefore increasingly combining traditional cultural products with elements of □living culture□ and □popular culture□, in an effort to animate the product and provide a richer range of experiences for the cultural tourist. At the same time, the emphasis is shifting from passive consumption of culture to active participation. Tourists are increasingly being offered opportunities to become part of the cultural production process, or to experience cultural production from themselves. Not only does this enrich the nature of the tourist experience, but it also makes tourists more aware of the cultural context of the products that they purchase, and increases the liklihood of them purchasing cultural products.

In order to understand the cultural tourist more fully, it is necessary to collect information about their background, motives and behaviour. Such information can help to guide the cultural producer in designing and producing products suited to the needs of the cultural tourist.

Who are the cultural tourists?

Not all tourists who visit cultural atttractions are culturally motivated. Cultural tourists tend to be relatively well educated, with a professional occupation and therefore relatively wealthy. This reflects the fact that visiting cultural attractions often requires a certain knowledge of culture, or □cultural competence□. There have been many attempts to try and popularise cultural attractions to try and attract a wider audience, but the cultural tourist tends to remain stubbornly upmarket. This is also what makes the cultural tourist so desired as a visitor - they tend to have money to spend.

Not surprisingly, therefore, a majority of the respondents were either employed (50%) or self employed (11%). Students form an important element of the cultural visitors (18%), as do pensioners (11%). Of those currently working, many respondents had a professional occupation, and managers and directors (12%) were also well represented. The relatively high occupational status also relates to high average incomes. Almost 45% of the respondents came from households with a gross annual income of 30,000 Euro or more. The average income lay around 22,000 Euro, over 25% higher than the European Union (EU) average.

Most of the cultural visitors are also highly educated. Over 40% of respondents had had a higher education, and 18% were still studying in further or higher education. The proportion of visitors with a higher education is therefore much greater than the EU average of 21% of the adult population. Cultural tourists were in general even better educated, but this is partly related to the higher average age of the cultural tourists.

It is important to realise, however, that not all cultural visitors are tourists. About 60% of the cultural visitors were residents of the city or region in which the ATLAS surveys took place. The remaining visitors could be classified as tourists, either domestic (31%) or foreign (69%).

The indications are that about 5-8% of international tourists can be regarded as specific cultural tourists - those with a specific cultural motive for travelling. A further 15% can be regarded as general cultural tourists - tourists who engage in cultural consumption during their holiday, but who do not have culture as their prime reason for travel. ATLAS has estimated the total European cultural tourism market to consist of 22 million specific cultural tourists and a further 60 million general cultural tourists.

Economic Impact

The cultural tourism market therefore represents an important potential market for crafts products. However, the economic impact of cultural tourism is perhaps more important than the size of the market alone might suggest. This is because cultural tourists tend to have high incomes, and are also willing to speand relatively large sums of money in persuit of their cultural interests. The price of specialised cultural tours arranged by cultural tour operators in the Netherlands, for example, ranges between NLG 4000 and NLG 8000 (1800-3600 Euro) per participant, compared with an average expenditure of NLG 1400 (635 Euro) for all holidays abroad.

The high level of expenditure by cultural tourists makes this market particularly attractive as a means of generating jobs and income, particularly in areas which do not have significant tourism development.

However, in order to maximise the economic potential of cultural tourism, it is vital to provide the cultural tourism market with the products that it wishes to purchase. As the ATLAS research has indicated, there is no single □cultural tourist□, but rather a range of different cultural tourism markets arranged around different types of cultural production and consumption. Each market therefore needs to be looked at individually, and research has to be conducted into the needs and wants of each market segment. By matching the right consumers with the right products, the economic potential of cultural tourism can be optimised. This has been the basis of the development of the EUROTEX textile tourism project, the background to which is described in the following section.

Developing Cultural Tourism: The Case of Textiles

Europe has a particularly rich and diverse heritage of textile crafts and technology. This heritage is now making an increasingly important contribution to the stimulation of heritage and cultural tourism in both the core and peripheral regions of Europe. While the modern clothing industry is dominated by cheap imports from outside the EU, small-scale production of textile handicraft goods provides an essential source of employment for local people in peripheral areas, and can also provide an important authentic local product for sale to visitors to the region.

Tourism is often seen as an effective means of economic development in peripheral regions. Tourists are keen to visit areas of unspoilt natural beauty and authentic cultural heritage. Tourism also provides an essential boost to craft industries in peripheral regions, because tourists want to purchase goods and souvenirs which are considered 'typical' cultural products of the region they are visiting. However, many of the goods and services which tourists consume often have to be 'imported' from other regions, causing high economic leakages and loss of employment opportunities in disadvantaged regions. Unless local production can be stimulated, tourism development is often economically and culturally unsustainable.

Textile craft production is particularly suited to sustainable development, since local materials and labour are employed. Specific methods and forms of textile production are also closely associated with specific regions, such as Shetland Wool and Harris Tweed in Scotland, or Arran sweaters in Ireland. Thus products can be offered to tourists which support the local economic base, as well as providing authentic cultural artifacts of the region.

This is the basic aim of the EUROTEX Project, which was established under Article 10 of the ERDF with fuunding from DGXVI of the European Commission. The project is designed to investigate the different ways in which the textile culture of disadvantaged regions can be used to stimulate economic growth and to conserve the local culture. The EUROTEX project is led by the city of Tilburg in the Netherlands, which is a former textile producing centre. Because of competition from low cost producers in other countries, the textile industry in Tilburg has all but died. The city has however decided to try and keep the textile culture alive, for example by opening a textile museum. The City of Tilburg has worked closely with Tilburg University, which coordinates the European Association for Tourism and Leisure Education (ATLAS). ATLAS has been conducting research on cultural tourism for the European Commission since 1992.

The expertise which has been built up in Tilburg about the relationship between culture, textiles and tourism, is now being applied to help the development of cultural tourism products in disadvantaged regions of Europe: the Alto Minho, Crete and Lapland. Although these areas are geographically disparate and culturally diverse, common problems can be identified in the area of textile production and distribution:

1) Dying Out of Traditional Crafts

Traditional methods of craft production are often in danger of dying out as the younger generation leaves rural areas, and the source of new entrants drys up. There is a need to maximise the employment potential of textile crafts, and to support skill development opportunities for those willing to learn traditional methods of working.

2) Lack of Information and Marketing Skills

Textile crafts producers are not always in a good position to take advantage of the heritage tourism market. Effective marketing of textile products requires an understanding of the needs of tourists, access to effective distribution channels and skills in design, sales and marketing. Textile producers also need to make their products known to those responsible for marketing the tourism product, such as local tourist boards and tour operators, in order to persuade them to feature textiles as an integral part of the regional tourism product.

Supporting the development of the living textile heritage of Europe therefore requires the development of traditional craft skills, alongside the development of new skills in the area of tourism management and marketing. These developments can best be supported through the exchange of skills and know-how between different regions of Europe. In some areas, for example, systems of skill transfer and marketing are well developed, while in other areas crafts are dying out because of a lack of skilled labour or access to markets.

The solutions to both of these problems arguably lie in providing textile producers with access to market information and outlets for their products. The growth of tourism in the peripheral areas of Europe provides an excellent opportunity to develop direct access to local markets for textile crafts. In addition, the increasing need among tourists for experience of authentic craft production techniques means that tourists can provide support not ony through purchase of the final product, but also through display of the production process. The resulting expansion of the market for textile crafts provides local employment and generates funds for the preservation of the material heritage. In this way, both the material and the living heritage can be effectively conserved and developed.

In order to unlock the heritage tourism potential of textile production in peripheral areas, these regions must be brought in contact which each other, so that skills and know-how related to production can be exchanged and developed. In addition, the peripheral regions can benefits from an exchange of information and know-how with regions in which the development of heritage tourism and tourism marketing is most developed.

In order to promote cooperation and exchange of skills and know-how in these areas, a network of local and regional authorities in partnership with private organizations and educational institutions was established, with the following objectives:

Objectives

1) To promote decentralised cooperation between local and regional authorities in the development and support of textile handicrafts and heritage in the EU.

2) Preserving and developing textile handicraft skills in local communities, thus developing employment opportunities.

3) Helping local communities to effectively exploit their textile heritage by exchanging information on production, distribution and marketing techniques.

4) Bringing textile crafts to a wider audience through the promotion of textile-related tourism.

5) Dissemination of information on textile crafts through new media.

Achieving these objective relies on having locally-based projects with easy access to information on market needs and developments. The role of the local partners in each of the project regions is therefore crucial. In each area there has been an attempt to create a project team which draws on the expertise of local government, higher education, local crafts associations, tourism promotion bodies and commerical tourism organisations. Such networks are essential in bringing together all actors involved in the creation of the tourism product. Such networks also have to be geared to the specific needs and circumstances of the local cultural and tourism industries. In the EUROTEX project each of the pilot regions has developed its own network of local partners, and its own approach to the problem of developing textile tourism.

The Partners

Alto Minho

The Alto Minho region of north-west Portugal is a predominantly rural area dominated by the fertile valleys of the Lima and Minho rivers which run from the mountains of the Peneda Geres National Park to the Atlantic coast. Tourism is concentrated along the coastal plain, with more limited development of rural tourism inland (Edwards et al, 1998). Most tourism in the area is domestic, with a substantial regional market from neighbouring Spain. In recent years, the region has been discovered by tour operators and independent tourists from the UK and other Northern European countries, although this market is still small in comparison with international tourism elsewhere in Portugal.

Textile production is a source of additional income for many agricultural workers in the Alto Minho. Local products, such as flax and wool are used to make carpets and garments, most of which are sold to local people or visitors from other parts of Portugal. Techniques and equipment are largely handed down through the generations, and the depopulation which is affecting many areas of the Alto Minho is now beginning to take its toll. Over time, the process of textile production has become steadily more commodified, with a greater proportion of goods being produced for sale rather than own use. The development of market production has, however taken place in a fairly piecemeal fashion because of the relatively individualistic nature of the local people. In contrast to the south of Portugal, cooperative enterprises are relatively rare. At the same time, there is a limit to the extent of entrepreneurship in the region, because the agricultural community is orientated towards earning the minimum wage (about 250 Euro per month) rather than increasing living standards beyond this level. The lack of cooperative marketing systems or entrepreneurial networks means that the textile production system is relatively fragmented, and many individuals are considering stopping production because sales are poor. There is a tendency for local people to look for external solutions to such problems, such as the arrival of money from Brussels. External funding has in the past been aimed more at ‘hardware’ rather than ‘software’, which means a profusion of beautifully restored buildings, many of which are underused. This arguably creates a culture of dependency, in which outside ‘aid’ is expected and relied upon.

There is very poor linkage between textile production and tourism. There is no information in English or other foreign languages about textile products or producers.There are few opportunities for tourists to see production taking place. Most of the tourist shops in the tourist resort of Viana do Castelo sell cheaper items imported from elsewhere, while crafts producers find it difficult to sell their products.

Crete

On the Greek island of Crete, the project partners come from the Province of Rethymno. The city of Rethymno and the surrounding areas are important tourist destinations, with large numbers of package tourists from northern Europe. There were almost 2 million tourist bednights in Rethymno in 1996.

The development of mass tourism in Crete has not been without its problems. Uncontrolled accommodation development has caused significant environmental damage, and has threatened the very basis of the tourism industry itself. As a result, the hotel company GRECOTEL launched an initiative in 1991 to develop tourism sustainably, paying more attention to the need to conserve the local physical and cultural environment. GRECOTEL has recognised that local culture can only be conserved through stimulating local people to develop their own means of generating income though the production and sale of cultural products. The Environment and Culture Department of GRECOTEL has supported a range of local cultural projects through facilitating sales to tourists.

The context of crafts production is rather different than in the Alto Minho, thanks largely to the development of the Cretan tourism industry. There is an established demand for textile products among tourists visiting Crete. In many cases textile purchases are limited to T-shirts and other items produced as souvenirs, but a significant number of tourists also buy more traditional items, such as embroidered tablecloths.

In the mountain village of Anogia at one stage every house had a loom, but these are not being used on a large scale today, according to the locals because of competition from cheap imports. Individual entrepreneurs have begun to develop 'experiences' for tourism consumption in order to boost their income. In Anogia there are shops with looms in the window where tourists can see cloth being woven.

Part of the problem is caused by the way in which the textiles are marketed. Shops in Anogia sell both hand made items and factory made cloth without making a clear distinction between the two. Although the tourists can see the textiles being produced, there is no indication which items are made locally, and which are imported. The direct link between the local environment (for example, the sheep that wander the streets), local culture and the production of items for tourist consumption is not made.

The development of mass tourism has therefore paradoxically led to the undermining of local production by sucking in imports. On the other hand, tourism has not been exploited to full advantage to support traditional production methods, which many tourists are eager to see. Old looms still exist in many areas, but are not often shown working. There is also potential to use the skills of local textile artists to produce new designs using traditional methods. While people complain about the competition from cheap imports, little is being done to develop high quality alternatives. People stop making textiles, and young people move away to work in the tourism industry. Tourism is therefore one of the major causes of rural out-migration, but hopefully appropriate tourism development can also be used to stem the flow of young people out of the villages.

Lapland

In Lapland the low density of population tends to dominate social, cultural and economic life. Low population density is the reason why Lapland is included along with less advantaged regions in southern Europe in European Union regional development programmes. There are few opportunties for industrial employment, and the lack of population means that local markets are limited. The development of tourism is therefore seen as a means of spreading employment opportunities and making certain activities economicially viable again.

There is a thriving textile culture in Lapland, which has probably been protected to some extent by the long winter, which forces people to become far more home orientated than in most other areas of Europe. Much attention is therefore paid to furnishings, and time is invested in making textiles for the home. This production is not being oriented towards the market through local arts and crafts associations, of which there are over 200 in Finland. These local associations belong to a national umbrella body which has developed a corporate identity and cooperative marketing campaigns.

The textile culture in Lapland is therefore relatively healthy at present, but there are clouds on the horizon. In particular, the high cost of raw materials and labour mean that the price of the finished product is in general higher than in most other European countries. There is currently direct competition from Norway, which also produces a large number of knitted garments, but generally at significantly lower prices.

Local people have already realised that sales of their products will depend on diversification in two directions: the development of new products and designs, and the adaption of traditional products and designs to meet the needs of tourists. Significant progess has already been made in the development of new products and techniques, but there is a need to market these effectively. Finding out what the tourists want in terms of textile products is a major priority which is now being addressed by the EUROTEX project. Lapland also suffers from an increasing proportion of transit tourism, which means that many tourists do not stop long enough in the region to visit the tourist attractions which do exist. The attractions therefore need to offer added value in terms of the tourist experience to convince tourists to stop and buy local products.

The three regions participating in the EUROTEX project therefore have differing problems and different needs, but one thing they all have in common is a need to find markets for their textile products in order to keep craft production alive. Supporting textile crafts production and marketing textile products to tourists required a range of different activities to be undertaken by the project partners. The general activities undertaken by the project partners are described in the following section.

Project Activities

One of the guiding principles of the project was to allow each of the local partners in the EUROTEX network to develop activities which were appropriate to their own local situation. In order to provide guidance to the local partners, to give coherence to the project and to generate comparisons between the activities in the different regions, however, the local activities were structured within a system of general guidelines for the project.

The activities of the project were broken down into five main areas:

1) Promoting Cooperation
2) Establishing local demonstration projects
3) Developing skills transfer
4) Promoting textile-related tourism
5) Dissemination of information through new media

1) Promoting Cooperation

In order to develop an effective network to support the development of textile heritage in Europe, cooperation between local and regional authorities and commercial and voluntary sector organisations in different areas is essential. To this end, the project brought together organisations with a wide range of skills and expertise in the areas of textile handicrafts, tourism and education to form a European Textile Crafts Network (EUROTEX).

2) Establishing Demonstration Projects

In order to effectively develop the handicraft skills and the marketing knowledge and competence of handicraft producers, a number of pilot projects were undertaken in the regions involved. Each region adopted a different approach to the implementation of the project, dependent on local conditions, needs and resources. The experience of the different approaches was used to inform the work of other project members, and to identify fruitful approaches for future work. The results of a number of projects are reported in more detail in the regional case studies.

3) Developing Skills Transfer Systems

In order to create an authentic crafts product as a basis for sustainable tourism development, a number of skills must be developed in the textile production system.

a)Assessment of Skill Development Needs

First, it was vital to sustain the traditional handicraft skills involved in producing the basic textile product. Traditional skills are often under threat from direct competition from modern textile production techniques, and indirectly from other economic activities which offer a better rate of return. Sustaining traditional techniques therefore requires the passing of skills to new generations, as well as ensuring an economic return from the sale of traditional products. As traditional apprenticeship systems have often broken down in less favoured regions, these must be replaced by new skill development systems.

In the EUROTEX project, an assessment was made of the skill development needs in each area. Where an identified need is demonstrated, appropriate programmes were offered, with a particular emphasis on young people and the unemployed. The development of skill transfer schemes had a dual function. In addition to equipping local people with production skills, these techniques could be demonstrated to tourists, who were also be given the opportunity to learn textile handicraft skills themselves. This type of ‘atelier tourism' or ‘workshop tourism' is one of the fastest growing segments of the European tourism market. Tourists are increasingly curious to see how the products they buy are made, and they are also keen to improve their own craft skills.

This system has a number of advantages. It provides a direct income stream to support skilling provision; it caters to the need of tourists to experience the local culture at first hand; it emphasises to the local population the value of local textile products and it has spin-off effects in terms of use of local accommodation and catering facilities, as it can help to extend the length of stay of visitors.

b) Skill Development Programmes

In order to be able to create a market for the textile handicrafts produced, a certain level of marketing skills is required of the local producers. In the past, marketing and distribution has tended to be undertaken by commerical middlemen, who not only take a large share of the profits, but who also take control of the way in which products are presented to the consumer. By developing the marketing skills of the handicraft producer, local income and job creation potential can be maximised, and local people can be given greater control over the way in which their cultural heritage is presented to the outside world.

The project has therefore developed marketing skills in local communities through a series of skill development workshops. The workshops were designed to enable local producers to receive and sell directly to tourists, and to develop their products for the tourist market. The range of workshops provided in each area was dependent on the outcome of the assessment of skill development needs.

3) Developing sustainable distribution systems

Even though direct sales of products to tourists can provide an essential source of income, it is unlikely that this market will be able to sustain local production systems completely. There is therefore a need to develop distribution systems for the textile handicrafts produced.

A series of workshops were held for local textile producers which focused on the following issues:

Costing and pricing textile products

Securing distribution channels
Contract negotiation

The workshops were designed and led by experts in textile production, accounting and finance from network member organisations. Particular attention was paid to how local producers can make their products identifiable as authentic local products, thereby stimulating increased direct sales and helping to build the tourism image of the region.

4) Promotion of textile-related tourism

In addition to working directly with local producers, the project has also worked to promote textile tourism through other interested bodies, such as local tourist offices and tour operators. In each of the pilot regions, links were made with interested parties to develop tourism products of interest to textile tourists.

The basic step taken to develop textile related tourism has been to stimulate the creation of products which will appeal to both independent travellers and groups wishing to learn more about textiles and local culture. In all regions, the network of local partners has been used to develop textile related products, including cultural routes, cultural tours and attractions.

Each region has produced a brochure about the textile tourism products in their area, initially aimed at stimulating interest from potential tourists, and also providing basic information allowing tourists to develop their own tours. This Flexibility enables advantage to be taken of the growing demand for independent and Flexible modes of travel.

In addition, specific cultural tours and cultural routes have been developed by the EUROTEX project in collaboration with local tourist boards and tour operators. The regional case studies provide examples of the cultural itineraries developed in each region. The cultural routes and tours have been made as flexible as possible, to enable them to be sold to different types of tourist groups as well as individual tourists.

5) Dissemination of information on textile crafts through new media

In order to maximise the multiplier value of the pilot projects, it is important to ensure that the results of the projects are disseminated as widely as possible. Information on the projects, including the design, management and execution of each stage of the project, will be made widely available via new media.

The project has also made use of the INTERNET to distribute information about textiles and tourism opportunities to consumers. The project home page has been linked to home pages provided by local, regional and national tourism organisations. In this way consumers from all over Europe can gather information about textile tourism products in each of the pilot regions and can book products directly with local suppliers.

Researching the Market for Crafts Tourism

The marketing process begins with an assessment of the market. In the case of the EUROTEX project, this involved two important steps – an analysis of the demand for crafts and textile products among tourists visiting the pilot regions, and an assessment of the crafts prducers in each region.

Two basic types of consumer research were were undertaken during the project. Firstly, visitor surveys were undertaken in each of the pilot regions, to gain a quantitative picture of who the visitors are, what their motivations are, and to what extent they purchase textiles and other crafts products. The visitor surveys generated a total of over 1100 responses spread across the three regions (Table 1).

Table 1: Response to the Visitor Surveys

Region	Number of respondents
Crete	392
Lapland	300
Alto Minho	476
Total	1168

Secondly, interviews were conducted with organisers of textile tours and participants on these tours. In contrast to the visitor surveys, which were designed to quantify the relationship between tourists in general and purchasers of textiles, the interviews were conducted to examine the motivations of textile tourists in particular. The interviewees were selected from a list of textile tour participants provided by the Netherlands Textile Museum, and from further contacts provided by textile tour organisers. A total of six tour organisers and eleven tour participants were interviewed. Of the 17 interviewees, 16 were women, which reflects the stronger interest in textile tourism among women. The majority of the respondents were also aged 50 or above.

Results of the Visitor Surveys

The questionnaire used in the survey was designed to gather information on the profile of the visitors, their holiday motivations and consumption patterns, their craft and textile product purchasing patterns and their level of interest in textiles. The questionnaire was based on work by Stam (1998), and leans heavily on previous textile tourism research by Littrell in the United States, and previous studies of cultural tourism under the ATLAS Cultural Tourism Research Programme (Richards, 1996).

This section analyses the results of the textile tourism research, both in terms of transnational and regional patterns. The background of the respondents is analysed, together with their holiday characteristics and crafts and textile interests and purchasing patterns.

Survey Respondents

As the surveys were conducted during the summer period, it is not surprising that tourists accounted for over 80% of the visitors surveyed. Almost two thirds of respondents were foreign tourists, 17% were domestic tourists and about 18% were local residents. The proportion of foreign tourists varied greatly, however, from 100% in Crete to 36% in Lapland. This difference arises because Crete is an established mass tourism destination.

The proportions of men and women in the total sample is fairly even, but significant differences emerge per region. Men and women were equally well represented in the Crete sample, but in Lapland almost two thirds of respondents were women, while in Portugal male respondents predominated. In the Alto Minho over 38% of those interviewed were in couples, compared with just over 10% in Finland. The tendency for men to respond to surveys in mixed groups may have raised the proportion of males respondents there. Most respondents were travelling either with their family (31%) or with their partner (26%). In Lapland a large proportion of those interviewed were part of a tour group.

Respondents in Crete were significantly older than those in the other regions, with almost half of the respondents being aged over 50. This is related to the surveys being conducted at the Grecotel hotel chain, which has an upmarket profile, and therefore tends to attract older guests. In all three regions, however, the age of the interviewees was higher than the average for previous studies of cultural tourism in Europe.

The majority of survey respondents were economically active, either as employees (47%) or self-employed (15%). A significant group of respondents were retired (18%), although the proportion of retired respondents was far higher in Crete (27%) and Lapland (23%) than in the Alto Minho (10%), reflecting to some extent the differences in age structures of these regions. The educational level of the respondents was relatively high, with 36% having had some form of higher education. This is higher than the level found across the EU as a whole but lower than the proportion found among other cultural visitors in Europe (Richards, 1996).

There were far more professionals and managerial workers in Crete and the Alto Minho than in Lapland, where sales and service personnel represented a far greater proportion of respondents. The proportion of respondents employed in the cultural sector was 6%, compared with 15% of cultural visitors to European cultural attractions in 1997 (Richards, 1998).

Of those respondents giving information about their income, and 28% had a household income between 7,000 and 14,000 Euro a year, which is relatively low compared to the EU average. This average is reduced by the relatively low income of domestic tourists in the Portuguese sample. Even excluding the Portuguese respondents, however, the median household income of the respondents was around 14,000 Euro, significantly lower than the median for cultural visitors in Europe in 1997 (about 20,000 Euro).

Comparing the profile of respondents in the current survey with cultural tourists surveyed in other areas of Europe, it is clear that the vast majority of the respondents have a general rather than a specific interest in culture. The proportion of visitors with an occupational link to culture is significantly lower. The tourists tend to be older, and have lower average incomes and educational levels than other cultural visitors.

Holiday Characteristics

The vast majority of respondents were taking either a one week or two week holiday, which is not surprising given the timing of the interviews during the summer season. A majority of respondents were staying in hotel accommodation, although it should be recognised that the interviews conducted under hotel guests will have inflated this figure. If Crete is excluded, the proportion of hotel guests falls to 37%. A significant proportion of respondents in the Alto Minho and Finland were staying in a tent or caravan (20%), or with friends and relatives (19%). The location of the interviews also had a significant effect on the type of holiday arrangements made. Over 85% of those interviewed in Crete were on a package holiday, compared with around a quarter of those interviewed in Lapland and the Alto Minho. Those on a second or subsequent visit to the destination were more likely to have made their own travel arrangements than first time visitors.

Most of the tourists interview in the three regions were on a long holiday (4 nights or more). Over a quarter of respondents were travelling away from home for 15 nights or more. The fact that many respondents were on a touring holiday meant that the average length of stay in the survey region was much lower than the total holiday length (Table 2).

Table 2: Length of Stay

	% respondents	
Nights	Away from Home	In Survey Region
0		3.7
1-3	5.5	33.1
4-7	26.5	26.2
8-14	41.1	25.1
15+	26.5	12.0

The length of stay varied considerably according to the survey region. The longest stays tended to be Crete and the Alto Minho, where there is a relatively high level of package holiday tourism. In Lapland the high proportion of domestic tourists tended to reduce the average length of stay considerably. In the Alto Minho there were more short stay visitors because of the strength of the regional market, with tourists coming across the border from Spain to shop in Portugal.

Table 3: Length of Stay in Region

Nights	Alto Minho %	Lapland %	Crete %
0	5.6	1.7	2.8
1-3	20.4	73.4	1.4
4-7	34.9	19.0	20.6
8-14	25.7	2.8	53.7
15	13.2	3.1	21.6

Motivations for Travel

The most important motivations for going on holiday were □relaxation□, □curiosity□ and □having fun□. Relaxation was by far the most important motivation for all age groups. Having fun was more popular among 20-29 years olds than for other age groups. Men were more likely to emphasise sports/activities as a motivation than women. Not surprisingly, spending time with friends and/or family was rated as more important by those travelling in family groups, while couples travelling together tended to emphasise learning new things and curiosity in their responses.

The type of holiday most frequently enjoyed by the respondents was a sun/beach holiday (47%). Touring holidays (29%) and rural holidays (22%) were also very popular. Cultural holidays were indicated by 10% of respondents as their □usual□ holiday type. The type of holidays taken by survey respondents compare closely with the holiday patterns revealed for European tourist in the European Travel Monitor. There were, however, significant variations by interview region (Figure 2), with beach holidays being far more popular among tourists in Portugal and Greece, whereas the usual holiday patterns of respondents in Finland was far more varied, and included more touring holidays (40%), city breaks (20%) and winter sports holidays (20%).

When asked about their reasons for visiting the destination, natural features such as weather (1.69 average score on 1-5 scale, 1=high) and landscape (1.84) were rated most highly. Weather was most important for those visiting the warm climate of Crete, whereas those visiting Lapland tended to score the landscape more highly. Hospitality (2.12) was also seen as being important, as was the quality of accommodation provided (2.13). Cultural attractions (2.57) and local traditions (2.92) scored relatively low, indicating that for many people culture is a secondary motivation for travel. Even among those indicating that they were on a cultural holiday, cultural attractions still only had an average score of 2.7. This tends to confirm that the tourists interviewed were predominantly general rather than specific cultural tourists. Cultural attractions and traditions were judged to be more important in Crete than in Lapland, where the landscape was placed much higher. Those respondents who indicated that their usual type of holiday was cultural were the only respondents who placed cultural attractions (2.7) and traditions (2.4) above the weather (2.9) in their choice of destination. Even for this group, however, landscape (2.0) was the most important choice factor, underlining the important links between culture and nature in the minds of many cultural tourists.

Even so, a majority of respondents (61%) had visited some form of cultural attraction during their stay, indicating that while culture is not the most important reason for travel, it does form an important part of the activities undertaken in the destination.

Visits to Cultural Attractions

Tourists were asked about their visits to cultural attractions during their stay in the survey region. Over half of the tourists in the Alto Minho and Lapland, and over 90% of tourists in Crete had visited at least one cultural attraction. The high level of cultural attraction visits in Crete is probably related to the relatively long length of stay on the island, and the tendency for package tourists to take organised excursions to cultural attractions such as Knossos.

Table 4: Visits to Cultural Attractions

% visiting	Alto Minho	Lapland	Crete
Museum	17.4	15.3	39.8
Monument	30.3	10.7	45.2
Gallery	6.1	12.0	12.2
Historic House	21.0	28.0	31.6
Performing Arts	20.0	26.2	7.4
Festivals	18.0	5.7	9.7
% visiting at least one cultural	52.2	51.5	90.7

% visiting attraction	Alto Minho	Lapland	Crete

Purchase of Crafts Products

Over 60% of the respondents had bought crafts products during their stay in the destination. The products bought ranged from food products, such as olive oil and wine, to decorative objects such as tapestries and embroidery

The most popular types of products were food and drink (48% of respondents) and textiles (32%). It is clear, therefore that textiles form an important element in the souvenir purchasing patterns of tourists. Most of the textiles purchased, however, were manufactured textiles such as T-shirts. This type of purchase was particularly important in Crete, where T-shirts and other clothing items accounted for 40% of all textile purchases.

Table 5: Products Purchased by Visitors

Crafts products purchased	% purchases
textiles	31,5
food and drink	47,7
leather, shoes, animal skins	0,8
souvenirs	5,3
ceramics	7,2
jewellery	3,8
clothes	1,4
other	2,4
Total	100,0

Those buying crafts products were significantly more likely to be women. Over 68% of female respondents made a crafts product purchase, compared with 54% of men. In general, the propensity to purchase crafts products increased with age. Only 47% of 20-29 year olds bought crafts products, compared with 74% of those aged 50-59. Those with higher incomes and higher educational qualifications also tended to be among the more frequent buyers.

The visitors were also asked what meaning their crafts purchases had for them. The most important reason was to have a reminder of the region visited (32.6% of respondents), closely followed by the fact that the object was useful (31.5%). Other reasons were far less important. The memory function was most important, however, as the ability of the purchase to serve as a memento either for the visitor, their friends or family, accounted for 70% of the total responses. The fact that the decorative function of the purchases was rated very low (4.6%) indicates a shift in the role of crafts objects towards wider signification than just to show that a visit has been made.

Products were more likely to be purchased by women because they were useful than by men. Older people were more likely to be looking for useful products, whereas younger visitors were more likely to make purchases for friends. Those with a high status occupation were significantly more likely to buy products as a memento for friends.

Table 6: Meaning of Crafts Products for Purchasers

Meaning	% Purchasers
something useful	31,5
will remind me of the region	32,6
a memento for friends and family	11,7
will remind me of this holiday	8,6
memento of regional culture	10,1
decorative object	4,6
other	0,9
Total responses	100,0

Authenticity

Authenticity is considered to be important in the decision to purchase crafts products. Almost 80% of purchasers indicated that authenticity was either □very important□ or □important□ in their decision to buy. Authenticity was significantly more important for older visitors and for those with a professional occupation, and least important for those in lower occupational groups. Authenticity was also more important to those who had already made a previous visit to the survey region.

People assess authenticity in different ways. When asked what criteria they used to judge if an object was authentic, the most important factors were that the product exhibited a high degree of craftsmanship and was produced by a local craftsperson.

The realism of the object or the fact that it was made from original materials were judged to be less important.

These results contrast significantly with earlier research conducted by Littrell, which suggest that tourists tended to emphasise uniqueness as the most important criteria of authenticity. For tourists in Europe it seems that links with the crafts people making the objects and local culture and history are more important. The findings did, however, support the observation of Littrell et al that older tourists tend to emphasise links to local culture and history more strongly than younger tourists in judging the authenticity of crafts products.

Table 7: Criteria Used to Judge Authenticity of Crafts Products
(Ranked on a scale from 1= most important to 10= least important)

Criteria	Mean Rank
Craftsmanship	2.9
Made by local people	3.3
Usefulness	3.8
Linked with local culture or history	3.9
Hand made	4.0
Unique	4.2
Genuineness	4.6
Decorative	4.6
Made from original materials	4.6

Textiles

Textiles form an important part of the souvenir purchasing behaviour of many tourists. 30% of those interviewed indicated that they had bought textile products during their stay. Almost half of the respondents had bought clothes, of which T-shirts formed an important part (a third of all clothes purchases). It is clear that much textile purchasing is directed towards manufactured items, rather than hand-made products. Almost a third of those purchasing textiles bought tablecloths, which indicates the importance of these items. Considering the fact that table sizes are different in different tourist origin countries, there is probably some scope for increasing tablecloth sales if these are geared more directly to the needs of tourists (van Oss, 1997). The next most important items were bags (12.7%) and handkerchiefs and towels (11.4%). The overall picture which emerges is that textile purchases are overwhelmingly related to useful items, particularly clothes and household textiles.

Table 8:Textile Purchases

Items	% of purchases (n=317)
tablecloth	32,9
t shirt	15,2
silk	3,4
napkin	2,5
jumper, sweater	1,7
bag	12,7
sheets	0,8
pillowcases	0,4
embroidery	3,4
lace	1,7
clothes	32,1
carpet	6,8
blanket	0,4
curtain	0,8
Linen	7,6
Handkerchiefs, towels	11,4
Total responses	100,0

There were considerable variations in the extent and type of textile purchases according to the region, however (Table 9). The level of textile purchases was high in Crete because of the large number of people buying tablecloths, T-shirts and other clothes. These items are particularly likely to have been manufactured than hand made.

Table 9:Textile Purchasers by Destination

Region	% respondents
Alto Minho	16
Lapland	17
Crete	56

Over 80% of purchases were related to items for direct personal or household use, and less than 20% could be considered as primarily decorative items, such as lace or embroidery. Women were responsible for the majority of purchases of all products, with the exception of T-shirts and linen. Younger respondents bought bags, clothes and T-shirts, older respondents were particularly likely to buy tablecloths and handkerchiefs and towels. Not surprisingly, those with higher occupational status tended to make purchases of more expensive items, and also more decorative items rather than functional textiles. Clothes, linen and bags were the items most likely to be evenly spread over different occupational and income groups.

In general, the amount spent on textiles was related to income. Those with a household income above 35,000 Euro accounted for less than 15% of all purchasers, but 30% of the total value of all purchases.

Table 10 : Proportion of Textile Purchasers by Country of Origin (Major Origin Countries Only)

Origin Country	% Purchasing Textiles	Average purchase value (Euro)
Finland	25	145
France	13	52
Germany	50	200
Netherlands	30	95
Portugal	24	175
UK	50	159

There are also considerable variations in the value of textile purchases according to the country of origin. German tourists not only make a high proportion of textile purchases, but also have the highest spend per head. This is related to the high average income of the German tourists in the sample. British tourists had a slightly lower average income, and a lower average spend per head. In contrast, the Portuguese tourists had the lowest average income but the second highest textile expenditure level. This indicates the strength of domestic textile tourism in the Alto Minho region.

The level of textile expenditure was also strongly related to the length of stay in the destination region. The highest expenditure was accounted for by tourists staying between 8 and 14 days in the region. Tourists who spend more time in the region are likely to have more opportunities to make purchases, and they are also likely to develop a stronger link to the local culture than short stay visitors.

Table 11: Relationship Between Length of Stay in Destination Region and Textile Expenditure

Length of Stay (Days)	Expenditure on Textiles (Euro)
1-3	30
4-7	87
8-14	117
15+	87

The majority of textile purchases were made by female respondents. Over 36% of women had bought textile products, compared with 22% of men. In Lapland and Crete women also spent more on average on textile purchases than men. In the Alto Minho, however, men spent an average of 2,5 as much as women per purchase. Expenditure was also significantly higher for family groups than for other types of party composition.Textile purchasers tended to be older than other tourists.

Most expenditure on textiles was also made by respondents who indicated that it was not important that their purchases were cheap. As there was no correlation between the desire for cheap products and income, this may indicate that textile purchases are unlikely to be increased among current buyers by making the products cheaper.

Interest in Textiles

In order to establish the extent to which a special interest in textiles has an influence on tourism among tourists visiting the pilot regions, respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which textiles had influenced their decision to visit the region. Only 0.4% of visitors said that textiles were the most important reason for their visit, and a further 3% said that textiles had some influence. Textiles are therefore extremely unlikely to be a primary motivation for travel, but may act as a secondary motive for a small number of visitors. Most of those indicating that textiles had influenced their visit were women, and these special interest tourists were also likely to be older than other respondents.

The importance of textiles as a motive for visiting the destination had a strong influence on the level of textile expenditure. Those respondents who indicated that textiles were their primary motive for travelling spent over four times as much on textiles as those for whom textiles had no influence on their decision to visit. It should be borne in mind, however, that the numbers of tourists specifically motivated by textiles is still very small, so that the total expenditure of this group is currently far less than that of general tourists.

Table 12: Textile Motivation and Textile Expenditure

Influence of textiles on decision to visit	Average value of Textile purchases (Euro)	no of respondents
most important reason	347	4
some influence	108	30
no influence	83	80
Total	99	114

Visitors interviewed in Portugal and Finland were on average more likely to be interested in seeing how textiles were made than those in Crete. Visitors interviewed in Portugal exhibited the highest level of interest in learning to make textiles, followed by visitors in Crete. In Lapland the average level of interest in learning textile techniques was lower, but this hides a significant division of opinion among the respondents. This may indicate that the healthy textile culture in Finland means that many visitors are already familiar with textile techniques, and therefore have no desire to learn.

Women were more likely to be interested in seeing how textiles were made, and were more interested in learning how to make textiles. Twice as many women as men indicated that they were □very interested□ in learning textile making.

Table 13: Interest in Textile Production and Learning to Make Textiles by Age Group

Age	Very interested in Production techniques %	Very interested in learning %
20-29	4	5
30-39	6	9
40-49	6	12
50-59	15	20
60+	10	13

Visitors were more interested in active participation - learning to make textiles themselves - than in passive observation of textile production techniques.

Table 14: Interest in Textile Production and Learning to Make Textiles by Destination

Region	Very interested in production techniques %	Very interested in learning %
Alto Minho	2	6
Lapland	5	11
Crete	18	19

Results of the Interviews with Tour Organisers and Participants

In addition to the survey research carried out among tourists in the three regions, interviews were conducted with both tourists and tour organisers visiting the regions. Qualitative research is more suitable than a survey for uncovering the motives of people for undertaking textile tourism and for purchasing textiles as part of their tourism experience.

The Market for Textile Tourism

Interviews with textile tour organisers provided some indications of the size and nature of the textile tourism market in the Netherlands. There are currently 15 tour organisers in the Netherlands, most of whom organise at least one tour per year. The average number of textile tours organised by Dutch organisers can be estimated at an average of seven per year, each with 20-30 participants, usually lasting between 9 and 22 days each. The tours are relatively expensive, with prices ranging from 700 to 2000 Euro. Based on an estimated total market volume of 1000 Dutch textile tourists and a level of repeat trips of about 40%, it can be estimated that there are about 400 □regular□ (more than one textile tour) and 600 □ sporadic□ (one tour only) textile tourists in the Netherlands.

A Profile of the Textile Tourist

Most of the textile tourists interviewed were aged between 50 and 60, and this age group is characterised by a large amount of leisure time. Many of the textile tourists have a direct connection with textiles, either through their work or education. Few of the respondents work full time, but were dependent on their partners□ income in participating in the relatively expensive textile tours. In general, the □regular□ textile tourists have a higher household income than the □sporadic□ textile tourists who have only undertaken one or two textile trips. this difference in income is also reflected in the higher number of holidays taken each year by the group of regular textile tourists.

Most of the textile tourists are active weavers, and many are also members of the National Weavers Federation. This is particularly true of the regular textile tourists, who also tend to be involved in other creative hobbies, such as pottery, painting or photography. The sporadic textile tourists, on the other hand, are more likely to be motivated by their former professional contact with textiles than a general interest in creative activities. In general, however, the textile tourists form a relatively homogeneous group, for whom the social contacts with other textile tourists with similar interests is also an important motive for participation.

Tourism Experience

Most of the textile tourists are experienced travellers, who undertake two or three long holidays a year. These are mainly touring holidays, which include both city trips and visits to rural areas. Pure beach holidays tend not to be popular. Almost all the holidays undertaken have a cultural element. The regular textile tourists in particular are happy to undertake organised tours where the selection of itinararies and cultural elements are left to the organiser. Sporadic textile tourists are more likely to organise their own holidays. Asked about their potential interest in a textile tour of one of the pilot regions in the EUROTEX project (Lapland, Crete and the Alto Minho), most respondents indicated an interest, but said that their decision would depend on the content and theme of the tour. It was felt to be important that a tour should be □special□ and have □an interesting story□.

Textile Purchases

Regular textile tourists tend to buy more textile products than the sporadic textile tourists. Stam attributes this to the high price of the textile tours, which tends to reduce the spending power of the sporadic textile tourists who tend to have lower incomes. In spite of the higher expenditure by the regular textile tourists, their total expenditure proved to be no higher than “normal” tourists without a textile motivation. The regular textile tourist spends an average of about 85 Euro on textiles during a trip, compared with 70 Euro for the sporadic textile tourists. This compares with an average textile expenditure for tourists without a textile motivation of 83 Euro per trip. Although there is little difference in the amounts spent on textiles, there is a significant difference in the type of articles bought. For the textile tourists these tend to be hand made textiles, and the “normal” tourist tends to spend more on manufactured textiles, such as T-shirts.

It is clear that the total direct economic impact of organised textile tours is likely to be relatively small because of the small number of tours organised per year. Stam estimates that the 140 Dutch textile tourists that take a textile tour each year spend a total of 11,500 Euro on textiles during these tours. The major advantage of this expenditure is that it almost all goes directly to local producers, while the spending of other tourists is more likely to benefit retailers or manufacturers. It should also be recognised that there is a further economic impact in the regions visited through expenditure on accommodation and food. With an average turnover of about 35,000 Euro per tour, about 40%, or around 14,000 Euro is likely to be spent locally. This produces an estimated indirect impact of around 100,000 Euro a year from Dutch organised textile tours alone.

If the impact of textile purchases by tourists travelling independently is taken into account, it is clear that the economic benefits of textile-related tourism can be far greater. Stam estimates that around 2500 Dutch Grecotel clients spend about 250,000 Euro each year on textile products. Although much of this expenditure is currently related to manufactured products, it clearly indicates the potential to generate sales of hand-made textile products.

In terms of direct economic impact on textile production, however, it is clear that an significant increase in economic impact is most likely to be derived from an increase in textile purchases among □normal□ tourists.

The basic motivations for textile purchase among regular textile tourists are that the textiles should be beautiful, with colours, designs and materials associated with the local culture. The quality of the product is also important in stimulating purchases. Authentic products are considered to be more attractive than □unique□ pieces. Uniqueness is seen by the tourists as relating to textiles which come only from a particular region. Sporadic textile tourists also tend to emphasise the beauty of a textile, and pay less attention to materials or authenticity. They are also more likely to consider the usefulness of an item in their buying decisions. The authenticity criteria employed by the textile tourists vary greatly, but can be summarised as relating to hand made products which are typical for a particular region or culture.

Most of the interviewees expressed no desire to learn how to make textile products themselves. Most of them have already had plenty of textile experience, and therefore have no need to combine this with a holiday. All the respondents find it interesting to see how textile craft products are made, however. Most expressed an interest because they themselves have a textile hobby.

Conclusions

The results of the quantitative and qualitative research give a clear picture of the textile tourism market in the study regions.

The tourists present in the regions can broadly be described as □general cultural tourists□ (Richards, 1996), with a strong secondary interest in culture, which can include textile culture. These tourists tend to be older and have lower incomes than the cultural tourists present in the metropolitan centres of Europe (Richards, 1998). These tourists make a large number of visits to cultural attractions, but are not specifically motivated by culture. The primary motives of these tourists are relaxation, curiosity and fun, and their activity patterns contain a mixture of beach, rural and cultural tourism elements characteristic of the □New Tourist□. Natural features were more important than cultural attractions for most of those interviewed.

Most of the visitors interviewed in the Alto Minho and Lapland were independent tourists. Package tourists were only important in Crete, where the sampling of guests at a major hotel chain had an important influence. Most of the respondents were on long holidays (4 nights or more), in contrast to the traditional view of cultural tourism as being short break, city based tourism.

Most respondents had made purchases of crafts products during their stay in the survey region, and textiles formed an important element of souvenir purchasing patterns. Textile purchases were higher for those staying longer in the region, and for those with a specific interest in textiles. This finding contrasts with the research by Stam (1998) which indicated that "regular textile tourists" spent less on average than other tourists. This may however be related to her observation that many of her interviewees travelled on expensive guided tours, and the price of the tour itself may have had a negative impact on the amount spent at the destination itself.

There is a relatively high level of interest in seeing and learning about textile production techniques among textile purchasers. Levels of interest are highest among older tourists, and among those visiting Crete and Lapland.

Tourists who purchase textiles on holiday can be divided into two groups: textile tourists and "normal" tourists. The characteristics of these two groups can be related to the factors identified by Littrell in her studies of souvenir purchasing. In general, the "normal" tourists are orientated towards clothing and shopping, and the textile tourists are more likely to be in search of authenticity, to enjoy textiles for their own sake, and are "special interest tourists".

Factors influencing textile purchases

The motivation to purchase textile products is related to the meaning that the buyer attaches to the product and the aim of the purchase. For all textile buyers the physical and aesthetic aspects of the product and its association with a particular place or culture are important. For the "normal" tourist, factors such as the usefulness of the product, its function as a reminder of the trip and its ease of transport are also important. For the textile tourist emphasis is laid on the intrinsic qualities of the product, the attitudes, behaviour and experiences which are related to the product and the observation of the techniques employed by the producer.

In terms of the meanings attached to the products purchased, all tourists tend to emphasise the aesthetic pleasure that can be derived from the textile. The textile tourist attaches additional meanings to the purchase, such as the discovery of the "authentic life" of a culture, and integration with others.

Comparing the motivations of the tourists studied with the reasons for textile purchase outlined by Littrell, it is clear that the beauty of the textile product is the most important fact for both groups of tourists. The "normal" tourist, however, tends to emphasise the usefulness of the product in their buying decisions, whereas the textile tourist is more likely to see the textile as a reminder of the culture or place.

Which aspects of the textile products determine the buying decision?

The basic features of textile products which determine purchasing decisions are summarised in Table 15.

Table 15: Features of Textile Products Influencing Purchasing Decisions by Tourist Type

Normal Tourists	Textile Tourists
* Usefulness * Decorative aspects - Colour, patterns and designs related to personal preferences	* Decorative aspects - Colour, patterns and designs related to personal preferences - Colour, patterns and designs typical for region * Authenticity * Quality

Although for the buyers of textile products price is not usually an important factor, the price of a piece of textile is often a crucial factor in the decision not to buy. If the aim is to increase the penetration of textile products among ‘normal’ tourists, therefore, attention has to be paid to the pricing of the products.

Recommendations

Stam (1998) makes a number of recommendations concerning the development of textile related tourism in Crete. These recommendations are probably applicable to some extent in the other project regions as well.

In terms of promotion it is clearly important to raise awareness of the existence of textile crafts on the island among tourists. The textile tourists are not really aware of Crete as having a textile culture, and the normal tourists make their decision to visit based on other criteria, including the general aspects of the Cretan culture. The textile culture of Crete therefore needs to be promoted as a part of the wider Cretan culture, which is becoming more important in marketing the island as competition from other beach destinations increases. For promotion of textile tourism among normal tourists, information on textile products needs to be more readily available through existing information channels, such as tour operators and hotels.

The lack of association of Crete with a rich textile culture means that textiles are not viewed as being part of the island’s tradition. Yet 40% of Dutch tourists indicate that traditions are important in influencing their decision to visit the island. The link between textiles and the wider cultural traditions of the island needs to be made clearer through the provision of special tours incorporating textile culture.

The authenticity of crafts products is very important in the decision to purchase. In order to enhance the perceived authenticity of textile crafts products, greater efforts should be made to sell the products in the places in which they are produced. If textile craft products are to be sold through retailers, these should be specialist retailers rather than souvenir shops, where the craft products are likely to be sold alongside manufactured products. This not only undermines the perceived authenticity of the products, but also provides an unfavourable price comparison with the much cheaper manufactured products.

Many of these recommendations have been followed in the project regions. In the following sections, Fred van Oss provides guidelines on marketing crafts tourism in general, and case studies are presented of how the research findings were put into practice in each region.

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