

## Case study: Limousin

### 1- Presentation of the destination

Limousin is a French region, located in the Massif Central and composed of three departments: Creuse, Corrèze and Haute-Vienne.



On the website of Limousin, six assets are highlighted:

- Nature and landscapes: Nature is one of Limousin's main assets. This area offers a wide variety of landscapes, there can be found thousands of streams, steep valleys, picturesque villages, peat bogs, moorland, bucolic pathways and hills.
- Towns: Six of "France's Prettiest villages" are located in Limousin. The Limousin region also has two villages classified "City of Art and History", and four gardens classified as "Outstanding Gardens".
- Culture and heritage: Limousin has a rich medieval past: castles, towers, knights and troubadours. The region features exceptional places and some unique and very interesting museums with ultra-contemporary style architectures.  
Examples of museums: The Adrien Dubouché National Porcelain Museum in Limoges where Limoges's porcelain heritage is preserved. There is a display of 15.000 pieces: the world's largest collection of Limoges porcelain.
- Gastronomy: Limousin cultivates the art of eating tasty, particularly with its famous beef, the limousine cattle race which is eaten all around France and exported all over the world.
- Limousin expertise: Limousin is a land of traditions. There is a unique and historical expertise in Limousin in many areas such as Limoges porcelain, enamel, tapestry, Stained-glass. Indeed, the know-how of Limoges porcelain is famous worldwide and the Aubusson tapestry was listed as World Heritage by UNESCO in 2009.
- Sports and leisure: Limousin is the place for sport lovers with its 6.200 kms (over 3.850 miles) of hiking trails and its golf courses. Moreover, Limousin is also a horse lover's heaven: Pompadour is world famous as the birthplace of the Anglo-Arabian breed of horses.

### 2- Context

Limousin is a little-known region. But this region has many strengths and can be very charming and attractive for new visitors and new comers.

Moreover, this region has a range of many themes and niche products that can appeal to new customers.

The challenge of the Limousin region is to capture the interest of customers seeking for new and authentic holidays. Limousin suffers from a poor image. That is why Limousin has created an international tourist brand "Limousin New Sensation". The aim is to position Limousin as THE trendy destination to discover through a strong promise: "live new and revitalizing experiences". This new positioning suits all the segments chosen by the Limousin region and delivers the idea that the destination is particularly preserved, authentic and true.

### 3- Limousin's objectives about creating a new segmentation

Limousin was not a very famous region and not focused on tourism. Therefore, they decided to change their marketing strategy and to adopt a new approach to promote their territory.

From this perspective, Limousin set up a new tourist destination policy in 2010 for the 5 following years.

The new marketing plan is based on several aspects:

- Communication: The aim is to target loyal tourists, local people and discoverers to make them ambassadors of the region in order to raise awareness and develop a new image.
- Segmentation: They decided to change from classical segmentation to segmentation, based on behaviors and interests.

Classical segmentation is defined as the division of a population according to social demographical criteria (gender, age, occupation ...). A contrario, behavioral segmentation is based on specific interests of people. Limousin is a very specific region because it is not a famous place, Limousin used tourism marketing and behavioral segmentation to become an emerging destination and attract tourists.

Our report is going to focus on Limousin case study to show how can new segmentation, through niche market segment, help a place to become an emerging destination?

#### 4- The new segmentation criteria

Segmentation of Limousin is very interesting because Limousin is based on niche markets to become a destination.

In order to define the new tourism segments, the Limousin region used several methods:

- They led and analyzed a survey answered by tourism professionals to get their opinions on the situation
- They did a market study to determine the asset of the region
- They worked in collaboration with the Auvergne region because they have a similar positioning and both want to appeal to moto lovers.

They decided to segment their tourism market by using behavioral criteria which has led to the creation of niche market targets. Niche segment is composed of a low number of people interested in very specific interest and similar passions.

Limousin decided to switch from classical segmentation with demographics to behavioral and psychographic segmentation because it is relevant to promote a destination to groups of consumers who have the same knowledge, attitude, lifestyle, activities and opinion. In fact, these methods allow to create more homogenous groups than a classical method. For example, demographic segmentation is not relevant because every student have not the same interests, needs ...

Limousin's DMO described these new segments to the Limousin tourism professionals in a very interesting way. First the region described and established a typical profile for each segment thanks to the classic criteria of segmentation. Indeed, they use demographics to define the typical profile of the tourists.

Secondly, Limousin identified the motivations of each tribe.

Thirdly, Limousin selected points which correspond to each tribe.

#### 5- The new segments

##### **The Nature lovers**

Motivations: They are seeking for nature, discoveries and peaceful environment. Their priority is limit their environmental footprint and practice ludical activities.

Profile: They are 25/35 years old upper class people coming from cities with or without kids.

Key words: authenticity, nature, hiking, original experiences, local interaction, family sharing, environment.

Examples: They stay in yurts, trailers or huts perched in the trees.

##### **Lovers of family adventure**

Motivations: They practice new activities, physical efforts and camping.

Profile: They are dynamic urban families with children between 25 and 45 years old and have kids from 3 to 15 years old with limited free time.

Key words: Sharing hapiness, unusual adventures, simple life.

### **The tribes: broken families, classmates, ...**

Motivations: They are seeking for authenticity, improvisation, and have a sense of belonging to a group by sharing experiences with other families.

Profile: They are various upper class families with children or can be friend gatherings for special events.

Key words: Family, friends, children, various activities.

### **Lovers of well-being and expertise**

Motivations: They are handicraft lovers and fine food lovers.

Profile: They are 35 years old and more urban couples living in cities. They are passionate and seek for pleasure as hedonists.

Key words: discovery, back to the basis, know-how, traditions.

## **6- Focus on Motorbike lovers /Old car owners**

Limousin has distinguished 2 specific niche segments. Even though we can see above that there are other segments, Moto lovers and old cars owners are the most distinctive segments.

Bikers and old car collectors are targets which require very specific development actions in terms of accommodation, parking area, trips, and services to facilitate their travel in the region. Indeed they have very specific needs and expectations. They want to enjoy the outdoors, feel the sensation of freedom. It's important to organize tours combining different cultural and riding experiences. Destinations need to find accommodation with private garages and a lot of capacity to host a motorcycle or car club.

Limousin website explains why this destination is perfectly adapted for bike and car trips.

As it is only 3 hours from Paris only and in the very centre of France, the Limousin region is ideally located for tourists. Also, winding roads in the middle of beautiful landscapes, so as fine gastronomy.

### **Focus on old car lovers :**

Since 2013, various developing actions (*details in the following paragraph "promotions" and "press"*) have shown that this market is very receptive and promising for the region. Therefore, those actions were extended in 2014 and 2015.

Limousin was the first region to develop an offer on this specific theme and to introduce it to the "retromobile" fair in Paris. Retromobile is an international fair dedicated to old cars. In 2015, it attracted 120 000 visitors, 26% more than 2014 (94 000 visitors).

The majority of car collectors are members of a club with whom they travel and discover new locations to ride.

They are 40 years old and more or young retirees. They have high income, passionate people and collectors

Key words: mechanics, nostalgia, collection, beauty, cabriolets, club of passionate people, roads

They are seeking for discoveries, speed and sharing the passion with others car collectors and have a high sensitivity to beauty and to enjoy oneself.

The Limousin region has therefore set up objectives:

- Conquer this clientele which is passionate of speed and mechanics offering them products that suit their needs such as quality, group trips, rallying in Limousin...
- Enhance and promote old car tourism
- Organize actions that might foster social relations between Limousin and old car lovers.

Offer:

For example, the Limousin region has created three all inclusive packages which plan a 350 km, 430 km or 450 km tour for car clubs members (minimum 20 people) and including 3 nights in a 3 star-hotel, with private garage, and 4 days of driving and visiting (abbey, castles,...).

In order to reach their target, their strategy of communication has been based on:

Promotion:

- Update and reissue the brochure "on the road again" dedicated to old cars lovers introducing group offers, events program...
- Stand at the "retromobile" fair in Paris and the "epoqu'auto" fair in Lyon. Epoqu'auto is an fair organised by members of old car collectors club. There are 540 exponents and shows 3 days long in November. It attracted 55 000 visitors in 2014.
- Commercial prospection thanks to the customer database created during the fairs
- Create and print of personalized rally plates in the colors of the club and the event.

Press:

- Write press kit and press conferences to promote Limousin as a destination for old car owners and to attract members of car clubs.

**Focus on motorcycle lovers:**

They are people from 35 to 60 years old couples or friends with higher incomes.

Keywords: small roads, reknown addresses, cultural discoveries, road book, motorcycle culture.

They want to spend time with their partner or friends during day tours and short organized stays or weekend breaks.

Motorbike lovers are a very interesting segment in Europe, because there are over 33 million motorcyclists, of which, approximately 10 million are active motorcycle tourists. Motorcycle tourists spend an average £100 – £150 per day on accommodation, food and beverages, petrol, entrance tickets to museums, galleries and other attractions, shopping (according the website *Motorcycle life expo*)

Limousin wants to become a famous destination for bikers. The destination has, therefore, set objectives:

- Conquer bikers by offering a range of services that meet their specific needs.
  - Develop the reputation of Limousin as a bikers destination. The French market is a priority and then, extend to the foreign markets (Germany, the UK, Belgium and the Netherlands).
- Limousin is interested by the Dutch market because in 2014, Atout France, the agency in charge of French tourism development, made a campaign dedicated to bikers from this market. Moreover, Germany, the UK, Belgium and the Netherlands are the priority markets. The Netherlands are the first foreign clientele in term of number of nights in 2012, the UK are the second, Belgium, the third and Germany, the fourth.
- Involve local actors in this approach (accommodations, restaurants, motorbikes dealers..).

Offer:

- Creation of 6 roads books by Alexis Aubertin, a highly experienced biker. He travelled the roads of Limousin to create the Limousin Motorcycle Tour. In these road books, there are Limousin's main sight-seeing attractions, a selection of delightful restaurants and accommodation for bikers. Moreover, technical information such as the location of dealerships, garages and gas stations are listed.
- Creation of 11 packages for bikers with specific accommodation and visits.

Limousin actions to become a famous motorcycle destination rely on:

Promotion and communication:

- Creation of the website [www.limousinamoto.com](http://www.limousinamoto.com) which gathers all the pieces of information for bikers trips in the region (restaurants, accommodation, dealerships and garages, gas stations ...).
- Creation of 6 road books
- Creation of partnerships with clubs, partners and dealerships.
- Partnership with the brand "Dafy moto": advertisement in the Dag magazine and creation of merchandise "Limousin, new sensation".

- Edition of a leaflet to introduce the Limousin Moto Tour during the Moto Fair in Limoges. This fair attracted more than 11,000 visitors over two days. During the fair, there is an exhibition on the history of the bike and new ranges of motorcycles are presented.
- Promotion of the opportunity for bikers on the Tourism Limousin website: Motorcycle Tours are highlighted.
- Advertisement in the Road Trip magazine.

#### Press relations

- Creation of a press kit in favor of the actions of Limousin
- Press conference in the Maison du Limousin in Paris to introduce all the actions created by the Limousin region to present the new side of the region to the national motorcycle press the first April 2014. The aim is to demonstrate the asset's Limousin for bikers to the national motorcycle press to promote the destination as "a heaven for bikers".
- Press conference in Limoges to get the local press and the local actors (concessionaires, clubs...) to know the actions.
- Welcome the motorbike specialized press.

#### Management of the bikers community of Limousin:

- Creation and management of a Facebook page dedicated to this community updated daily by Limousin's DMO: special events, stays, roads in Limousin and the most famous national events.

### 7- Results on revenue income and number of visitors

In order to change the tendency of decline, the region has put a lot of efforts to reverse it. The region is now more visible on the tourism market. They hired consultants to provide an offer that suits at the most the needs of the new clientele the region wants to reach.

- Since the beginning of the new marketing plan, Limousin has evolved positively in terms of tourism balance. Indeed, the region was sixteenth in 2010 and is now twelfth (national rank). It means that Limousin has earned more than before after deducting its expenses.
- In terms of attendance, since 2013, there has been an increase of 5 million of nights from 17 million in 2013 to 23 million in 2014.
- The poor image from which the region was suffering has improved and it has now a better reputation in France and it better considered by the bikers and old car owners.

It is difficult to appreciate the direct cause and effect link between the implementation of the new segmentation and the improvement of the results but we can still tell and notice positive tendency ever since.

- The old cars owners have registered a turnover of €180000 coming from the selling of package directly in tourist offices, fairs...
- The bikers have registered a €210000 turnover from the direct sellings of packages.

#### References:

Catherine Fossati, Promotion and Communication manager, Limousin's DMO  
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