

ORIGINAL

Guidelines for the design of positioning strategies for HAVANATUR S.A.'S excursions in the domestic market

Pautas para el diseño de estrategias de posicionamiento de las excursiones de HAVANATUR S.A en el mercado interno

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ABSTRACT

Havanatur S.A. travel agency It constitutes one of the main receptive areas in the country; that provides tourist services to and from Cuba, highlighting, among other optional excursions. However, the entity's reports state that in recent years there has been a decrease in its income. Among the elements that negatively affect the agency's activity is the incipient growth of the business portfolio, the insignificant variation in the offer and, in addition, the decrease in the share of some markets. Due to situations beyond the agency's control, such as changes in structure, changes have been perceived in its market share and in its position as a receptive market. In correspondence with the constructive collaboration between the faculty and the agency, the following research was developed, which aims to: propose the bases for the positioning of the excursion's product in the Havanatur S.A. travel agency. To achieve this, a series of tools were used to obtain information such as interviews with the entity's specialists, documentary review, Porter's 5 Forces, the Cross Impact Matrix, and customer surveys. The above allowed the identification of the current situation of the company, as well as the performance of the attributes present in the excursions of both the entity and the competition. Finally, the triangulation of information made it possible to prove action guidelines for the agency, to improve its results.

Keywords: Travel Agency; Havanatur S.A; Positioning; Excursions.

RESUMEN

La agencia de viajes Havanatur S.A. constituye uno de los principales receptivos del país; que brinda servicios turísticos hacia y desde Cuba, resaltando, entre otras opcionales las excursiones. Sin embargo, los informes de la entidad enuncian que en los últimos años han existido disminución en sus ingresos. Dentro de los elementos que inciden negativamente en la actividad de la agencia se encuentra el incipiente crecimiento de la cartera de negocios, la poca variación de la oferta y, además, la disminución de la cuota de participación de algunos mercados. Debido a situaciones ajenas a la agencia, como a cambios en la estructura, se han percibido cambios en su cuota de mercado y en su posición como receptivo. En correspondencia con la sinergia entre la facultad y la agencia se desarrolló la siguiente investigación, la cual tiene como objetivo: proponer las bases para el posicionamiento del producto excursiones en la agencia de viajes Havanatur S.A. Para ello fueron empleadas una serie de herramientas de obtención de la información como las entrevistas a los especialistas de la entidad, la revisión documental, las 5 Fuerzas de Porter, la Matriz de Impactos Cruzados y las encuestas a los clientes. Lo anterior permitió la identificación de la situación actual de la empresa, así como el desempeño de los atributos

presentes en las excursiones tanto de la entidad como de la competencia. Finalmente, la triangulación de la información permitió establecer las pautas de acción para la agencia, en aras de mejorar sus resultados.

Palabras claves: Agencia de Viajes; Havanatur S.A; Posicionamiento; Excursiones.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is considered one of the world's largest economic activities due to its important role in world trade (Parra, 2021; Sánchez et al., 2022). It has positioned itself as one of the most important economic activities on a global scale; therefore, the creation of tourism products that diversify the offer of attractions in destinations and, therefore, satisfy the needs of visitors has become relevant (Ramírez, 2019).

Traditionally, travel agencies (A.A.VV.) have been the main distribution channel in tourism intermediation (Pastor & Rivera, 2022), "they constitute a key element of the distribution system of the tourism product, enabling the tourist to learn about the attractions located in the country visited, and multiplying the marketing of the different products and services offered by the sector" (Reyes, 2022; p. 23).

Salgado et al. (2021) state that, although in recent decades, these entities had diminished their advisory function with the arrival of COVID-19, their role as distributors par excellence in the tourism system is key to the recovery of activity in the destinations.

Although there are different definitions of V.V.A. within the tourism system, one of the most complete national studies is that provided by Ayala (2014):

Is a company that designs, organizes, manages, promotes, and sells travel and other services and provides assistance to tourists, making the tourism product-service available to the consumer, i.e., it brings the product closer to the consumer, which can currently be done in person or online, in the virtual space. (p. 49)

Therefore, one of its main functions is that of a producer. The A.A. V.V.V.s that fulfill this function create offers based on the client's needs and correspond with the destination offer and the existing resources. It is, therefore, of vital importance to approach consumers, where the study of positioning is an important aspect in the success of a business because its implementation is included in the marketing actions and is interrelated with the image, competition, and competitive advantages.

In this process, the study of product positioning is vital (Porter, 1980). In this regard, Serra (2002) states that "positioning refers to the place occupied by a product or brand, according to consumers' perceptions, about other products or competitive brands and a series of consumer preferences." (p. 214)

At present, it is decisive for a company to recognize the degree of positioning of its brand or the degree of positioning of the service it provides, that is, to find out through a market inquiry whether the client or the consumer recognizes its brand in addition to how it is positioned (Córdoba & Callao, 2019).

In the case of the V.V.A., we agree with González et al. (2009) that it is important for the managers of these entities to know the order of priority of their tourism products according to the client's preferences, their economic and financial advantages, and their environment. Based on the prioritization of products, it is necessary to outline strategies to enable agencies to position themselves in the market through their offerings.

Hernández et al. (2021) state that in Cuba, within the Ministry of Tourism (MINTUR), the Higher Organization of Business Management (OSDE) Viajes Cuba was created in 2014. Within it are four of the most important incoming agencies in the country: Havanatur S. A., Cubatur S. A., Cubanacán S. A., and Ecotur S.A. Each of them is in charge of marketing the destination.

Since 2018, the Faculty of Tourism and the FTour Student Scientific Work Group have developed research related to these entities and the different processes developed in them. Responding to the needs of OSDE and its particularities, the insufficient supply-demand coherence of its products has been recognized (Hernández et al., 2021; Reyes, 2022).

In the case of Havanatur S.A., despite having more than 40 years of experience in the sector, the year-end reports have presented nonconformities on the part of clients regarding the offers marketed. One of the products referred to in these non-conformities is the excursions offered during the different periods of the year. These products for their management within the entities are recognized, and the circuits are optional (Álvarez, 2021).

As a result of the dynamization strategies in the COVID stage, the number of clients in the domestic market grew in terms of the consumption of excursions in the national territory; however, in the last year, in the face of real competition in the market, the numbers have not continued to rise, which hinders the economic growth of the agency.

In the interviews conducted with the agency's specialists, there are indications that clients need to recognize the differences between the excursions offered by the agency and the rest of the agencies at the destination. Likewise, the results of the last periods show that some products are not marketed or others that, if accepted by a significant number of people, no longer provide the same level of income to the agency.

With the above, the following general objective is presented: to propose the basis for the design of positioning strategies for the Havanatur S.A. agency's excursion product for the domestic market.

METHOD

Initially, the methods, techniques, and procedures used are mentioned. In this case of the theoretical order, the following were used:

- Historical-logical: this method is to be used to know the research background on the behavior of the product excursions, which will allow us to know the evolution, approaches, and lines that have been assumed previously, emphasizing the most updated.
- Hypothetical-deductive: this method will be carried out based on consultation and investigation of the possible actions to implement, as well as the number and scope of the activities to enhance the development of excursions in the agency.

Of the empirical order:

- Bibliographic analysis: to nourish the researcher on the object and field of action. A study will be carried out on the open web in Spanish, French, and English related to the management of the V.V.A., the design of products, and positioning strategies.
- Interview: this method will make it possible to obtain first-hand information. It will be used in a semi-structured form since it will raise issues of interest to the interviewer, allowing the interviewee to respond openly with his or her nuances and impressions, adding value to the answers obtained.
- Expert interview: many necessary guidelines will be established with the collaboration of specialized professionals with years of experience in the sector in general and in developing products inside and outside the agency.
- Measurement: descriptive statistics will be used to collect, present, and characterize the data contained in the database, as well as those obtained through the questionnaires applied.

Initially, a study was conducted on the scientific literature on the open web, linked to studies of positioning in tourism, specifically within travel agencies. As a summary, the researchers consulted, and their contributions are shown in table 1.

Table 1. Research analyzed on positioning of tourism products

Author	Description
Reyes (2022)	Positioning strategies were designed for Cubatur S.A.'s self-designed events.
Mendoza et. al (2021)	The study concludes with the design of marketing strategies for the positioning of agrotourism products in the province of Manabí, Ecuador.
Valdés (2015)	A procedure for the formulation of commercial strategies in a receptive travel agency in Santiago de Cuba is presented.
González & Pérez (2011)	It is designed and validated a Management Model to evaluate and position tourist products in receptive travel agencies in Varadero.
Hernández & Machado (2010)	A study is carried out on the positioning of Villa Clara tourist destination in the Chinese market, with the objective of elaborating effective strategies to increase demand.
González et al (2009)	A methodology is proposed for the positioning and repositioning of products marketed by travel agencies.

The authors analyzed the above procedures, establishing the elements in common between each of the established phases with the support of Microsoft Excel software. The partial results are shown in figure 1.

Partial conclusions can be drawn from the above figure:

- None of the procedures used contemplates the same phases for obtaining the results.
- It contradicts the definition of product positioning that the procedures do not all include the study of demand and competition.
- The research by Reyes (2022) is considered to be able to coherently articulate the elements that affect the positioning process, even though it does not directly study the positioning of a travel product marketed by the AAV.

In constructing the procedure for this research, the methods and tools used in each research were taken into account, allowing the authors to increase the relevance of the final proposal. Based on this, the trajectory presented in table 2 was established.

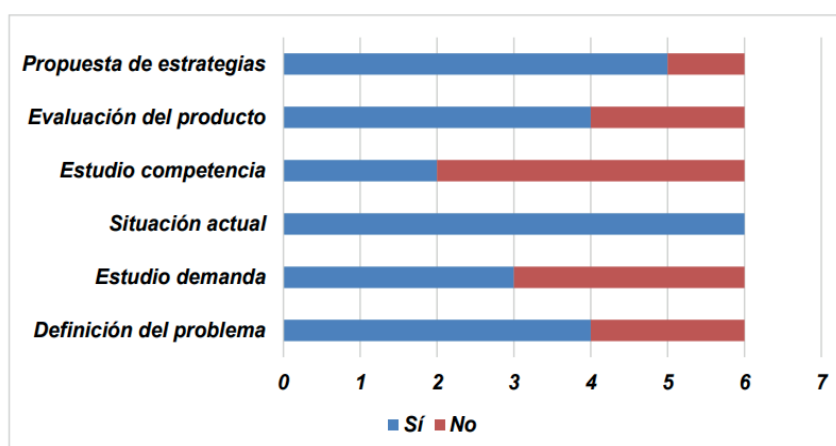


Figure 1. Elements in common and differences between the studies analyzed

Phase	Tasks	Methods, techniques and tools
Phase 1. Travel agency diagnosis	Analysis of the environment: 1.1. Macroenvironment and microenvironment 1.2. Internal analysis 1.3. Demand analysis 1.4. Situational closure	PESTEL Analysis Porter's 5 Porter's 5 Forces SWOT Analysis Interviews Literature review
Phase 2. Study of the competence	2.1. Assessment of the presence of the attributes in the competence	Benchmarking Surveys Interviews
Phase 3. Formulation	3.1. Design of lines of action	Brainstorming ideas

It is important to point out that the interviews with specialists were carried out based on the real availability of attention of the managers and workers of the entity. The above was added as a requirement to have worked in the entity for at least the last five years and the knowledge of the products marketed.

In the case of the customer surveys, García (2023) results were used as a basis. The author conducted her fieldwork during the first semester of 2023, through which she studied the potential demand for the entity within the national market.

RESULTS

Phase 1. Diagnosis of the current situation of the AA.VV

Analysis of the environment: macro-environment and micro-environment

From the documentary analysis and the interviews conducted with the agency's managers and workers, we proceeded to study the environment. In general terms, the economic, commercial, and financial blockade imposed by the United States on Cuba is a measure of political pressure that has historically acted against many spheres of the country for more than 60 years. This government has prohibited the travel of U.S. citizens to Cuba as tourists and has eliminated cruise ship and U.S. airline flights to the entire island, except Havana. One of the most exasperated actions has been the inclusion of the island in an arbitrary and unilateral list of state sponsors of international terrorism, which has important effects on Cuba's international financial and socio-cultural relations.

According to the Economic and Social Policy Guidelines of the Party and the Revolution for the period 2021-2026, the contribution of non-state labor to the economic and social development of the country is sought. Regarding political stability, the combined action of the Central State Administration Organs (OACE) and the Communist Party of Cuba (PCC), governed under the supreme law of the Constitution of the Republic of Cuba, guarantee the political stability of the country as well as citizen security.

From another point of view, in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Cuba, Decree 49 on the activities to be carried out by Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), non-agricultural cooperatives, and self-employed workers stimulates the activities of administrative and support services, with no emphasis on travel agencies and tour operators, nor on reservation services and related activities that include other reservation services

related to travel and tourism products.

The global economic crisis has strongly affected the international tourism sector. This has caused a change in the travel prospects and behavior of tourists, opting, in this sense, to make trips only in their region or country of residence.

Furthermore, in Cuba, the economic crisis is determined by several factors, among them the intensification of the economic, commercial, and financial blockade imposed by the United States, even in conditions of humanitarian emergency due to COVID-19, as well as the accentuated shortage of foreign currency due to the reduction of international traveler arrivals in the period of the last three years.

At this time, the complexities of the country's financial and monetary environment, due to the recent currency exchange measures and the opening of the foreign exchange market, have caused a rise in the prices of many of the borrowers, bringing with it a decrease in the number of tourists who buy the excursion packages prepared by the AAV. In addition, new forms of non-state management have entered the market, which often has more attractive prices for international and domestic tourists who prefer to hire non-state lodging services, to mention one example.

Monetary inflation has affected Cubans, and this, together with the rise in prices, has affected the consumption of tourism products in this market in the last two years.

Wagner (2020) states that the pandemic has generated a greater social awareness, which will contribute to deepening sustainable environmental and social behaviors, so it can be assumed that post-pandemic tourism will feel committed and related to those organizations that reflect these same values of sustainability (Torres, 2023). In this epidemiological situation, the need for adaptation to virtual means of communication arose, adding to the basic needs of society the connectivity factor, seen as a priority for social relations, work, education, means of supply, and distraction.

Taboada & Campos (2017) point out that the country has several competitive advantages, such as the excellent infrastructure network, accommodation and complementary offers, a network of airports in the main tourist poles of the country, at the same time it has staff with years of experience in the design of tourist excursions. Despite the above, the structure of excursions within the country has weakened due to the impact of climate change on the Cuban landscape. This situation has led to other forms of excursion tourism, transferring visitors' interest to new practices and experiences related to excursion tourism.

Companies increasingly demand more experienced personnel, backed by appropriate qualifications, with very good preparation and the ability to execute command jobs that respond to clients' needs. The Cuban population exceeds millions of inhabitants, and it is considered a country free of illiteracy and with one of the lowest infant mortality rates; the security and stability breathed in the country is a quality to be considered by tourists when choosing Cuba as a destination.

Heritage cities, Cuban landscapes, cultural traditions, popular festivities, the existing mix of religions, and the idiosyncrasy of the Cuban people, with their characteristic hospitality and joy, are important attractions that offer a quality cultural tourism product.

According to Díaz-Canel (2021), science and innovation constitute a pillar of Cuba's government policy. The country's goals pose highly complex challenges that can only be met by mobilizing all available research, development, advanced knowledge, education, and highly qualified human potential. The objective is not only to do more science and good science but to direct it to society in the most convenient way that suits the nation's interests.

Despite what has been said so far, there is insufficient development of management software, as well as statistical systems that allow the analysis of the behavior of the excursions and the satisfaction with the purchase of visitors for this product, among other variables that allow the creation of future projections.

As Rodríguez (2019) explains, Law No. 81 (Environmental Law) constitutes the core of the environmental legal framework in Cuba. This represents the legal tool that aims to protect the environment and contribute to achieving the country's sustainable development objectives. In addition, the Council of Ministers approved the new national environmental strategy 2021-2025, which is more concrete and precise than the previous one and defines the main strategic directions and procedures in the territories and sectors.

According to the experts consulted, tourism after the pandemic has opted for new tourism trends and modalities, highlighting above all those of nature within these excursions since they allow open spaces and contact with the natural environment. This may detonate the interest and the need to develop this modality in its function, giving rise to new lines of research in its improvement and study.

Porter's 5 Forces were analyzed for the study of the microenvironment. The receptive travel agencies with the largest excursions offered are Viajes Cubanacán, Havanatur S.A., Ecotur S.A., and Cubatur, which are part of OSDE Viajes Cuba. It is recognized within the product portfolio of all entities with similar products and without major differences in their value propositions to the client. In addition, some people informally market excursions largely similar to those offered to the domestic market. Therefore, it is considered to be high.

Due to the pandemic unleashed in the world due to the Sars-CoV-2 virus, tourism was severely affected,

and with it, the profile of the “new tourist.” The situation has led to distrust, insecurity, and uncertainty among visitors. According to a study by Feijoó (cited by Hernández et al., 2021), the coronavirus will lead to a predominance of family tourism by car and local destinations. This will lead to a trend against the demonstration and in favor of responsible tourism. Tourists will be more sensible in choosing nearby destinations that offer more confidence and a sense of control.

The economic and rural tourism near the issuing centers will return relatively faster, as will beach and adventure tourism. In short, tourism is away from overcrowding. This indicates that visitors will be looking for more individual proposals, away from the crowds, looking for greater hygienic-sanitary safety, and more commitment to sustainability.

According to data from the National Office of Statistics and Information (ONEI) 2022, in 2022, there were a total of 1 614 087 visitors by country, the main issuers being Canada with 532 487 representing 33 %, the United States with 100 494 representing 6,2 % and the Russian Federation with 54 383 representing 3,3 %.

The domestic market has grown in terms of purchasing power and spending on travel products. It therefore has within its reach offers to choose and make their excursions in different destinations, which is considered high.

Havanatur maintains contracts with various companies that provide tourist services, which are inserted in the same area or other areas of the country, such as accommodation services, catering, transportation, and others, which contribute to developing tourist options marketed and sold by the agency.

As for digital marketing, a new online platform will allow the commercialization of the Cuban tourist product, which is the result of the alliance between Havanatur and Cinesoft, to form the first global distribution system developed by Cuban professionals, designed to make commercial management of the island's tourist product efficient and personalized. There is also the collaboration of the Empresa de Telecomunicaciones S.A. (ETECSA) and the Banco Nacional de Cuba with Havanatur, which provides the official website with a secure national payment platform.

The entity has eTravel Agencias De Viajes, software that Datys Tecnología & Sistemas created. It keeps all the offices interconnected and guarantees maximum efficiency by modeling the processes linked to the activities carried out, such as the sale of excursions, product design, customer quotations, reservations, operation control, and invoicing, among others.

Havanatur works with the Amadeus Global Distribution System, which can sell tickets for more than ten airlines in real-time. At the same time, numerous important tourist attractions in Cuba are included in the global travel sales network. They can be requested from anywhere in the world.

The rest of the services demanded at the destination are almost the same in totality for all the agencies in terms of lodging, restaurants, and transportation, so it is considered that these suppliers are the ones who have the power.

Although the direct or personalized treatment of the commercial specialist or seller of tourist facilities plays a determining role in the direct sale of a specific product or service, many people sometimes seek faster and more accessible services to save resources and time as much as possible.

It is Havanatur's case to consider as substitute products the facilities conferred by the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), such as the Internet, which allows online reservations and obviates the intermediation activity since they make the products or services available to the clients. Accommodation bookings through this channel have the greatest negative influence on the agency.

However, other products and services are similar to those provided by the entity, either individually or included in the tourism options. These are offered in various entities and ways and are considered substitute products.

Internal analysis

It is important to note that the marketing in the travel agency until May 2020 was traditional, in points of sales, and with an online marketing platform, the domain name www.havanaturcelimar.com was created in December 2018. In addition, they had a site with another domain, named namewww.havanatur.com, as a promotional and advertising website, a domain name that was usurped by a foreign agency, which caused a traffic diversion to users interested in accessing Havanatur's site.

In July 2020, with the expansion of the COVID-19 pandemic and the development of e-commerce, the web page www.havanatur.com was created as a sales channel integrated to national and international payment gateways and linked to commercial processes, hotel contracting, invoicing, and conciliation, as well as online collections. Thanks to its creation, the agency has increased its online sales, corroborating the significant diversion of user traffic caused by the domain www.havanatur.com. In addition, the agency publishes some of its products, such as excursions, tours, and others, on the platform www.cuba.travel, which is available in five languages and has a direct link to its Facebook page.

Havanatur's current social media strategy has a pyramidal structure. The information is first focused on HAVANATUR CUBA accounts and then distributed through the country's branches. Priority is given to the Facebook social network, which has the greatest impact on Cuban society and is replicated on Instagram and

Twitter. WhatsApp and Telegram's direct communication channels have been enhanced. The objective is to promote tourist destinations focused on e-commerce and maintain direct and instant communication with the audience, similar to several agencies in the rest of the world (Ledesma & Malave, 2022; Linares et al., 2023).

In addition, we proceeded to a study of the sales and revenues of the entity in the period 2018 to 2022. About the number of pax attended who purchased the different tourism products in the study period, a total of 323874 visitors to the different tourism offers were counted, with the year 2022 being the year with the highest number of visitors with 112 137, as shown in figure 2.

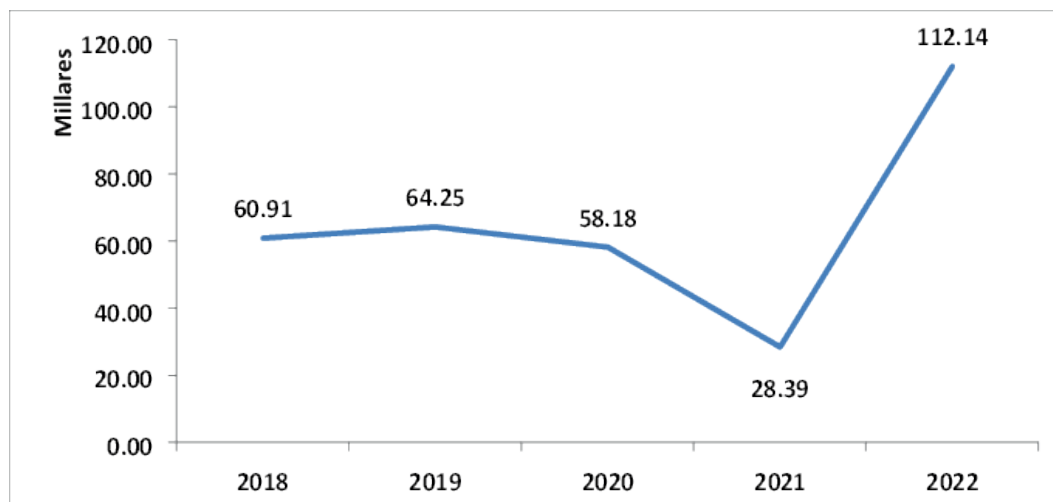


Figure 2. Agency product sales 2018-2022

Regarding sales from 2018-2022, 1 071 982 519 CUP was received, including all the optional tourist offers to both the international and domestic markets. The year that generated more economy for the country was 2022, with an income of 512 824 764 CUP, as shown in the graph. Therefore, the year with the highest cost was 2022, with 457 298 002. During this period, the cost had a value of 950 029 519. The increase in sales implied an increase in costs. In addition, in this case, it was possible to identify how, in the year 2020, which was almost completely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, the values of both sales and costs decreased (figure 3).

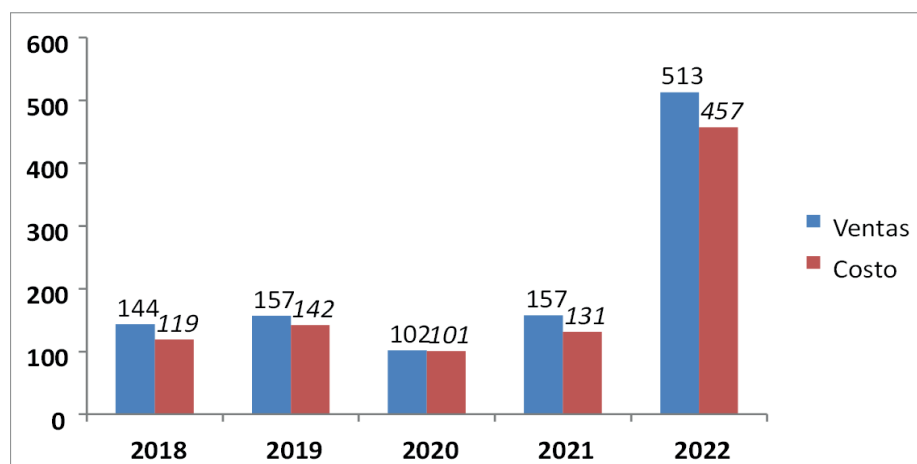


Figure 3. Sales and costs of tourism offers during the period 2018-2022

Note: Original data in CUC, converted to CUP

In addition to the above data, a brief analysis of the current marketing situation of excursions aimed at the domestic market was carried out jointly with the entity's specialists.

The AA.VV. Havanatur, as a marketer and organizer of the excursions product, has developed a wide itinerary of optional tourist excursions of great importance for the domestic and international markets. Until 2019, the tendency to increase was growing since the income from this modality reflected a large percentage within the agency. This was so until 2020, as the pandemic represented a strong shock for the commercialization of this product within the agency, bringing the income and the number of travelers in this sense to a practically null point, where for several months, there were no operations.

For years, the agency's historical participation in the creation of excursions has positioned it as an important reference within the national inbound travel industry. This has influenced several organizations to become loyal to the agency and to develop their events under its reception, but this is only the case for some of them.

All of the above can be summarized in the fact that the agency does not have a commercial strategy capable of guiding the development of the management of the excursion product; no objectives have been set for staff training, promotion, and publicity of the excursions that are marketed, not even to take advantage of the agency's web page, capable of marketing the products through direct sales.

Demand analysis

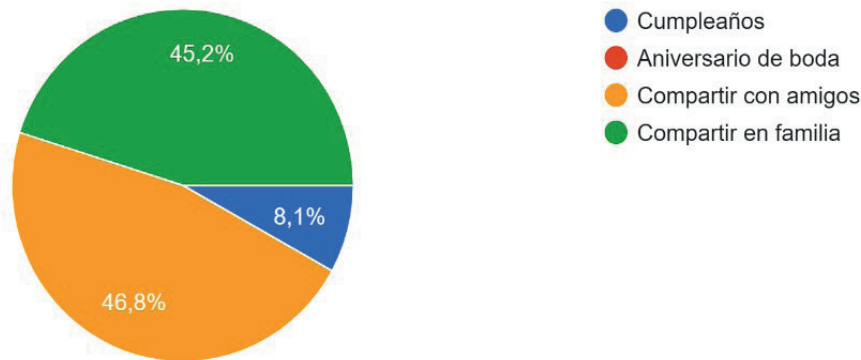


Figure 4. Fundamental reasons for booking excursions

The demand analysis was based on the study presented by García (2023) and developed as part of the research activities of the FTour Student Scientific Working Group.

During the survey, it was found that 66,1 % of those surveyed knew about the excursions offered by Havanatur, while 33,9 % did not know about these tourist offers. This shows that the main reasons for making reservations are to share with friends, with 46,8 % being the highest percentage. Forty-five 2 % of the reservations are made to share with the family, as shown in figure 4.

The results also refer to how visitors find out about the excursions, where the majority, 51,6 %, do it through a friend or family member due to their experiences. In addition to the other ways, from Facebook and Instagram, while passing through the agency and Others.

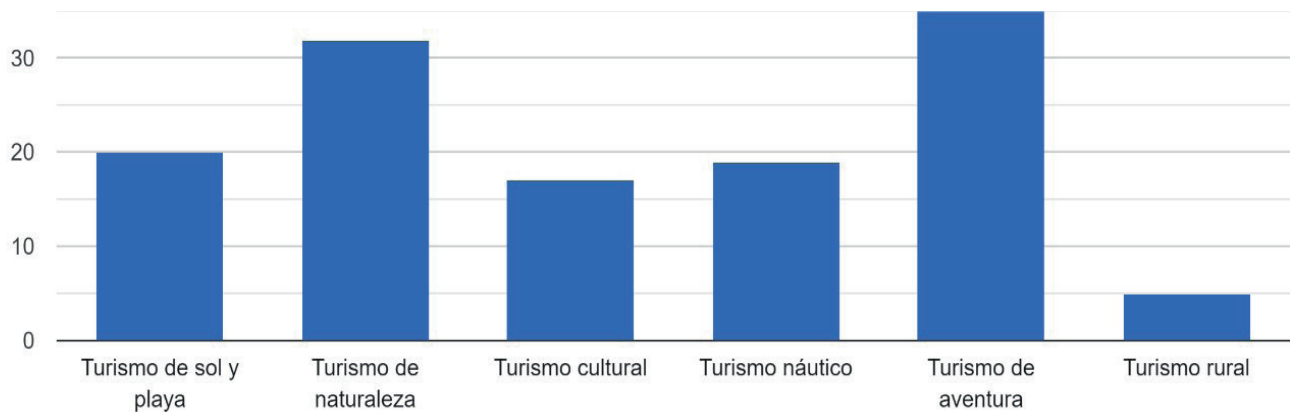


Figure 5. Respondents' motivations for travel

According to the study, on a scale of 1 to 5, the service offered by the agency, with 5 being the best rating, the majority generally evaluates it at 3, representing an average value. It is, therefore, essential to implement strategies to improve these evaluations. In general, the clients surveyed would like more focused excursions in Adventure Tourism due to the opportunities, outdoor activities, sports, and exciting and challenging experiences. Nature tourism is for its recreational activities, appreciation, and knowledge of nature through interaction with nature. Sun and beach tourism are among the main reasons tourists visit the country. Also and no less important are the offers of cultural tourism, nautical tourism and to a lesser extent rural tourism (figure 5).

Another aspect evaluated in this case are the elements that cause doubts in booking excursions with Havanatur compared to other agencies, where among the main elements are little knowledge of the availability of the offers, very high prices, absence of online managers for booking, and that the pick-up points are very

distant from each other.

The results of the surveys also allow us to identify some of the attributes most sought after by clients in the agency. These include safety, personalized attention, comfort, experience, and value for money.

Situational closure

Based on the previous analysis, the main strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities can be detailed, as shown in table 3.

Table 3. Summary of the situational analysis of Havanatur S.A. agency	
Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>The only totally Cuban international tour operator strongly positioned abroad, with a prestigious brand image and its own incoming agency.</p> <p>Existence of Tourist Offices distributed throughout the Island and in the main issuing markets.</p> <p>Existence of the website <i>havanatursa.com</i>, which represents a direct distribution channel to customers through the sale of its products and services.</p> <p>Presence in multiple social networks: Facebook, Instagram, Telegram, You Tube, Twitter, LinkedIn.</p> <p>Presence of Apps such as <i>Transfermóvil</i> that allow payments to be made.</p> <p>All the offices of the agency are interconnected.</p> <p>It has several job profiles in charge of digital marketing actions exclusively.</p> <p>It has a multichannel distribution through a contract with the Amadeus Global Distribution System.</p> <p>Mostly young staff, with technological capacity, innovation and new ideas.</p>	<p>Lack of a corporate mobile application that provides information about the company and allows the sale of its products.</p> <p>Limited user interactivity with the company through the website.</p> <p>Limited presence in social networks..</p> <p>Existence of three institutional profiles.</p>
Opportunities	Threats
<p>Government willingness to use ICTs for economic and business development in the tourism sector.</p> <p>Increased use of the Internet by users to purchase tourism products and services.</p> <p>Increased use of social networks as intermediaries in the electronic promotion and distribution of tourism services.</p> <p>Exploitation of the potential of the municipalities related to nature and landscapes for excursions.</p> <p>Technological advances that allow the creation of new digital marketing tools, such as mobile applications.</p> <p>A gradual process of relaxation of travel regulations in the main issuing markets.</p> <p>In the world ranking of the percentage of the national population that buys things online, the agency's main markets are in the first eight places (Canada, the United States, Russia, the United States and the United States).</p>	<p>Renewal of the economic-financial blockade imposed by the United States, which hinders online transactions for the sale of products and services through websites.</p> <p>Competition from other travel agencies in the offer of excursions.</p> <p>Increasing effect of climate change on the nature and landscape of the national territory.</p> <p>World economic crisis that has caused millions of unemployed and lack of economic solvency in families.</p> <p>Emergence, expansion and positioning in the international market of online travel agencies (OTAs).</p> <p>Existence of the domain name <i>www.havanatur.com</i> usurped by a foreign agency.</p>

Then, the Cross Impacts Matrix was designed to define and interpret the strategic position of the entity. Through this, it was possible to define the variables that have the greatest impact and the current strategic situation of the entity:

- The key strengths were 1, 2 and 3.
- The main weaknesses found were 1 and 3.
- Opportunities 1, 3 and 5 were identified as the ones that should be exploited the most.
- Threats 2 and 3 are the ones that most affect the company.

In general terms, AA.VV. Havanatur S.A. is in a favorable strategic scenario in which the number of strengths exceeds the number of weaknesses; in the same way, it is necessary to enhance the strengths and mitigate or eradicate the weaknesses to take better advantage of the environment's opportunities. Therefore, the agency must focus on an offensive strategy concerning the excursions, which facilitates taking advantage of the opportunities offered by the external context based on its strengths.

If competition from other travel agencies in the supply of excursions in the territory continues, in the presence of the domain name www.havanatur.com usurped by a foreign agency, as a fundamental threat to the environment, even having the strength of being the only Cuban international tour operator strongly positioned abroad and having presence in multiple social networks: Facebook, Instagram, Telegram, YouTube, Twitter, LinkedIn, then it will not be possible to take advantage of the opportunities that arise such as the increase in the use of the Internet by users for the purchase of tourism products and services and taking advantage of the potential of the municipalities related to nature and landscapes for the realization of excursions. Given the above, this is defined as a strategic problem whose strategic solution is described below:

If Havanatur S.A. relies on the fact of being the only fully Cuban international tour operator strongly positioned abroad and having a presence on multiple social networks: Facebook, Instagram, Telegram, YouTube, Twitter, and LinkedIn, it will be possible for it to take advantage of the opportunities that arise such as the increase in the use of the Internet by users for the purchase of tourist products and services and the use of the potentialities of the municipalities related to nature and landscapes for the realization of excursions; and it works towards implementing and consolidating the bases for the design of strategies to position the offer of excursions within the agency Havanatur S. A, making use of all the existing potentialities in the country's territories, it will be possible to counteract the existence of the domain name www.havanatur.com usurped by a foreign agency.

Phase 2. Study of the competition

Assessment of the presence of the attributes present in the products

After analyzing the offer of the excursions offered by Havanatur and its competition and consulting the seven experts defined for the research, a total of 20 attributes were determined, which allowed the positioning of the excursion product to be defined for the domestic market.

The excursions currently marketed by Havanatur SA have a wide variety of attributes, which for their analysis were generically named using letters ranging from A1 to A20 to facilitate the work of the researcher with the Microsoft Excel application, obtaining that only 4 of them, according to the criteria of the experts have a high presence A1, A10, A13 and A17 (Natural et al. of Activities and Convenient Transportation). Figure 6 shows the weighting of the attributes according to their presence in the excursions marketed by Havanatur SA.

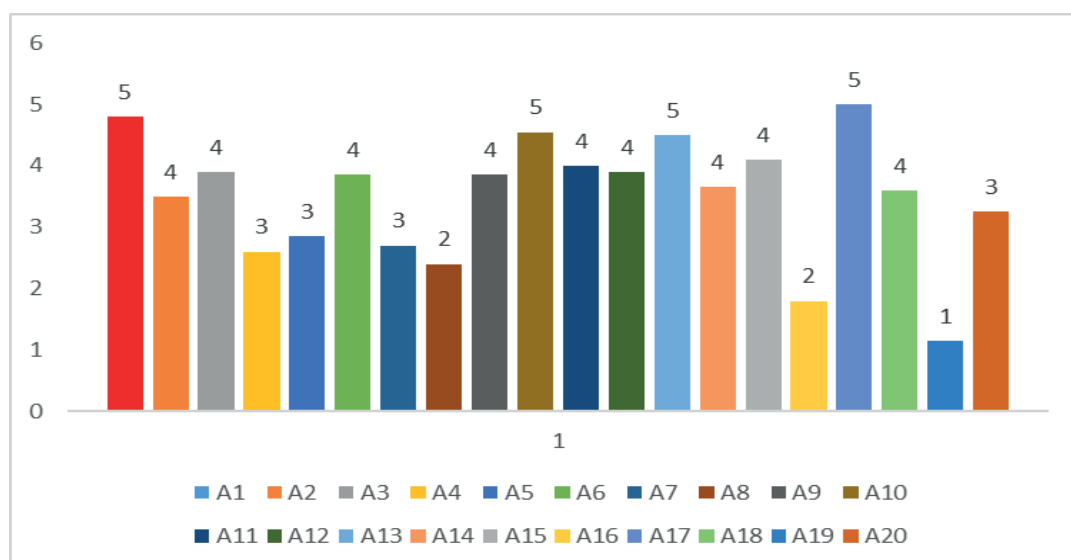


Figure 6. Presence of attributes in Havanatur's Excursions

The Havanatur excursions currently marketed are 20, generically named by numbers from 1 to 20, being the same Varadero, Viñales, Guanabito, Caleta Buena, Guamá, Isla Paraíso, Playa Santa María del Mar, Terrazas, Casita de Coral, Playa Tarrará, Plaza Américas, Punta Perdiz, Soroa, HTL Arenas Doradas, HTL Barlovento, HTL BRISAS DEL CARIBE, HTL Kawama, HTL Solymar-Arenas Blancas, HTL Tortuga and Tropicana, all of which have in common that the travel time is one day.

Cubanacán, on the other hand, has three excursions in its catalog, which are currently marketed, Varadero, Terrazas con Canopy and Soroa, where they have a varied group of attributes, which, when analyzed according to the experts' criteria, only 5 of them were found to have a high presence A1, A3, A10, A11 and A17 (Natural et al. Level, Photography Opportunities, Relaxation and Convenient Transportation) (figure 7). In addition to the Cubanacán excursions, it is known that they have in common the travel time, which is one day, and the presence of natural beauty.

Once the performance of the previous agencies was determined, we proceeded to the analysis of the excursion product portfolio of the Cubatur S.A. agency. It is important to point out that Cubatur SA has a catalog of 13 excursions: Viñales, Soroa, Terrazas, Jardín Botánico, Playas Del Este, Guanabito, Casita De Coral, Varadero, Josone, Playa Larga, Ciénaga De Zapata, Cobre and Tropicana, which have a group of attributes that when analyzed showed that the attributes (20) that were most present were 6: Natural Beauty, Level of Adventure, Accessibility of the destination, Photography Opportunities, Relaxation and Quality of the Tour Guide (A1, A3, A9, A10, A11 and A15 respectively) (figure 8). In addition, the excursions of this agency have a travel time of one day, except for the excursion to Cobre, whose service is spread over three days.

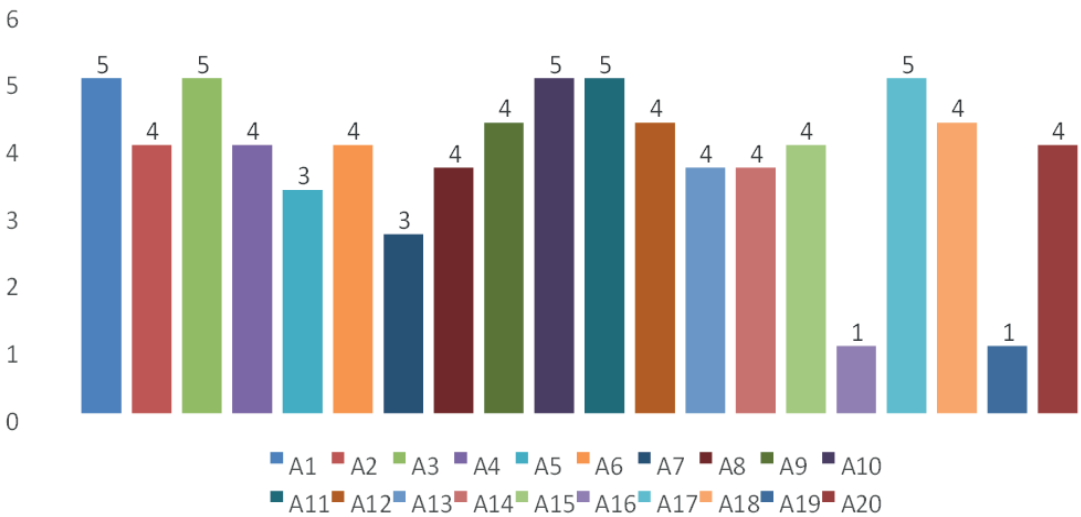


Figure 7. Presence of attributes in Cubanacán’s Excursions

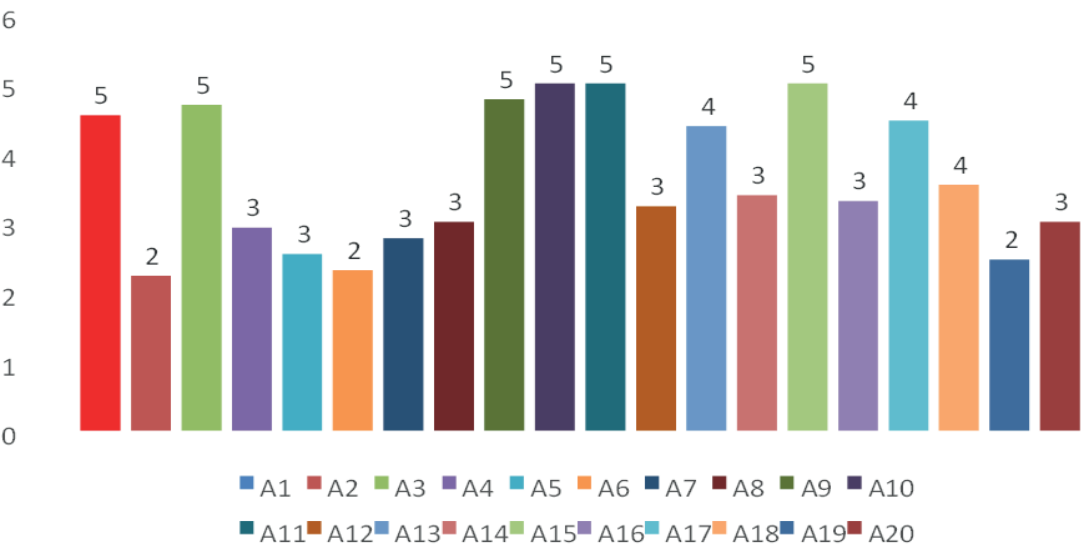


Figure 8. Presence of attributes in Cubatur S.A. Excursions

Regarding the excursions marketed by the agencies Havanatur S.A. (20), Cubanacán (3), and Cubature S.A. (13), according to the results, it was determined that the three agencies have similar excursions in their catalogs, such as Varadero, Las Terrazas and Soroa, having in common the travel time of 1 day and the pick-up place, in addition they share the same attributes such as Natural Beauty, Adventure Level, Accessibility of destination, Photography and Relaxation Opportunities, where the domestic market likes them.

The aforementioned makes it clear that there is competition among the agencies for positioning the excursions as a product of preference of the domestic market when taking a day of relaxation and recreation during their vacations.

From the analysis carried out, it was determined that, of all the competitors, the excursion offers of the Havanatur S.A. Agency are the most suitable for positioning and satisfying the needs of the domestic market since they contain products of short duration and short trips, which mix the different attributes and allow the domestic tourist to enjoy a quality day out, interacting with the Cuban landscape.

Phase 3. Formulation

Strategic objective: to position the Havanatur S.A. agency's excursions product in the domestic market

Operational objective: to increase the share of the domestic market in relation to excursions by 5% by the year 2025.

Overall strategies:

- Ensure greater participation of Havanatur S.A. as an inbound tour operator in trade fairs and customer acquisition caravans.
- Strengthen communication with contracted TT. OO.

Competitive strategy: to achieve the differentiation of the Havanatur S.A. agency's excursion product based on the definition of attributes.

Priority segments: aimed at the domestic market demand segment (national tourists).

Positioning: a positioning strategy by attribute will be implemented, highlighting the characteristics of the excursions that differentiate them from the competition. In this case, Havanatur S.A. must position the excursions as products with an adequate quality-price ratio, excellent service, and a varied offer of tourist activities during the excursion according to the profile of the domestic tourist.

CONCLUSIONS

- Tourism, as a dynamic and changing sector, requires adjusting to the needs of demand to ensure the success of all its activities. This is achieved with the coherent design of differentiation and positioning strategies based on the benefits offered by the attributes present in the products and services.
- Havanatur has established itself internationally as the only tour operator in Cuba, which stands out for the different products and services it markets. However, it still lacks strategies to position its offers, including excursions for the domestic market.
- The analysis of the company's current situation made it possible to identify its strategic position in the market and its main weaknesses and strengths for the future design of concrete strategies for its management with the domestic market.
- The identification of the behavior of the current and potential demand for the agency, together with the evaluation of the performance of 20 attributes in its own and competitors' offers, allowed the author to establish the guidelines for the positioning strategy to be designed and implemented during the year 2025.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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AUTHORSHIP CONTRIBUTION

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