



1191R4

European Cultural Routes
Transferring Experiences,
Sharing Solutions



Mod. 5B-CRT-5

GOOD PRACTICE FORM

*This Good Practice has been documented by CERTESS Partner
and it has been given the reference code*

P7

6A-GP-P7-1

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1. Name of the practice

Black Forest Card (Hochschwarzwald Card)

1.2. Organisation/s carrying out the practice

Black Forest Tourism GmbH (Hochschwarzwald Tourismus GmbH); Wilken GmbH (software solutions); local municipalities

1.3. Contact person/s

Name of contact person: Christian Schulte- Drevenack

Eva Winterhalter

E-mail: csd@kafeustel.com

ewinterhalter@hochschwarzwald.de

1.4. Location

Country: Germany

Region: Baden-Wuerttemberg

Area: Black Forest

1.5. Classification according to the component targeted primarily of a route development process (see Application Form, sect. 3.3.2)

- Route identification, reconnaissance and mapping
- Route physical infrastructure
- 2 Promotion of route enterprises and products
- 1 Development of instruments and services (e.g. media, ICTs, other fruition tools such as tourist pass/cards)

If more than one classification type is chosen, please use 1 for primary category, 2 for second category.



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2. DESCRIPTION OF THE PRACTICE

2.1. General definition of the practice

<i>Main activity</i>	<p>Black Forest card is a RFID chip card for tourist to use mobility, leisure and cultural offers in the Black Forest region for free. The card is based on an apportionment system. A part of the hotel's and guest houses' accommodation revenues go to leisure and cultural institutions and a smaller part (15% of the apportionment rate) is invested in marketing and support. Tourists who stay 2 nights and longer get this card for free. They are then able to use public transport and more than 60 leisure and cultural offers for free.</p> <p>The Black Forest Tourism GmbH invented the idea in cooperation with local municipalities to create a network consisting of various public and private institutions such as local guest-houses/hotels and private or public providers of social, cultural and leisure offers in the natural region of the Black Forest. The idea is quite simple but successful: The network is based on an apportionment system – while a part of the accommodation rate goes to cultural or leisure or public transport institutions, the hotels are able to attract more tourists because the tourists get something for free. The conception seizes on the “all inclusive trend” without pointing to saving effects or bargain offers. Rather it aims at offering an attractive added value and service advantage during holidays in the Black Forest region.</p> <p>The project initiators refine and improve the Black Forest Card continuously. Currently, the Black Forest Tourism GmbH integrates the Black Forest Card into their general eco strategy. Thus, eco services are getting implemented into the project's conception, e.g. with e-mobility units offered.</p>
<i>Main objective</i>	<p>The project's main objective is the establishment and extension of the network of local hosts and institutions (public and private, larger and smaller institutions and entrepreneurs) to strengthen the cooperation between tourism operators and in consequence increase the attractiveness of the Black Forest Region as tourist destination by offering a set of cheap but high-quality activities to experience and explore the region.</p> <p>In summary, the project could serve as a good practice to the following EU 2020 tourist destination/Cultural Route targets: Development of Public-Private-Partnerships and development of a cohesive SME involvement strategy; development of promotion strategies to promote diverse tourism products; development of route-based products and services that can be offered along a route (not destination based products and services); development of new and cheaper transport solutions, improvement of financial resources and establishment of a satisfactory relation between service quality and related costs.</p>

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2.2. Time-span

Started on	2009
Completed on	-
Ongoing	until today

2.3. Main objectives of the practice

With the Black Forest Card based on the wide network of local actors in the region, the organisers intend to build an alliance for a corporate presence and strengthen the actor's identification in order to tie tourists to the Black Forest region.

Additionally, with the integration of the Black Forest Card into the region's eco strategy there is the specific objective to establish sustainable mobility in the Black Forest region. This objective is also relevant against the background to tie tourists as the integration is a react to the specific mobility requirements of periphery regions. Besides, it fits into the project's ambition to sustainability.

2.4. Achieved results

Describe both qualitative and quantitative results of the practice:

Qualitative results:

More and more local and regional institutions and enterprises want to become a part of the initiative. Especially convincing is the safeguarding and promotion of local heritage. All participators, tourists as well as the partners of the network, benefit from the system.

Quantitative results:

The idea won 3 prizes: 'ERP system of the year 2011 (second prize winner)', 'ERP innovation prize (first prize winner) 2011', 'Baden-Wuerttemberg innovation prize (first prize winner)'. Above, an increase in tourists and overnight stays could have been detected. By the end of 2009 the Black Forest Card had already been handed over to 70.000 guests. About 270 local hosts and more than 70 private or public providers of social, cultural and leisure participate in the project by now.

2.5 Partnership

List of partners involved in the practice:

Partner 1

<i>Name of Institution</i>	Black Forest Tourism GmbH
<i>Description</i>	The Hochschwarzwald Tourismus GmbH is the largest tourism association in Germany. It is responsible for the entire marketing, information and service, product development as well as event management for the whole region.
<i>Contact Person</i>	Eva Winterhalter
<i>E-Mail:</i>	ewinterhalter@hochschwarzwald.de
<i>Role in the practice</i>	For the Black Forest Card the Black Forest Tourism GmbH takes the role of the initiator, editor of the card, project developer as well as bundler of marketing activities and financial resources.

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Partner 2

<i>Name of Institution</i>	Wilken GmbH
<i>Description</i>	The Wilken GmbH is a specialist for the development of standard business software, especially in the fields of finance and accounting, enterprise resource planning, materials management, controlling, energy and e-businesses.
<i>Contact Person</i>	
<i>E-Mail:</i>	w@wilken.de
<i>Role in the practice</i>	The Wilken GmbH is the technical developer of Black Forest Card.

2.6. Target groups

Identify target groups/customers of the practice: .

- National authority
- Regional authority
- Local authority
- Private companies (large)
- Private companies (SMEs)
- Chamber of Commerce / Economy
- Regional Innovation Agency
- Financing institution
- Business incubator
- Research institution
- University
- Technology transfer institution
- Regional Development Agency
- Planning institution
- Educational institution / training centre
- Association (e.g. friends of the theme)
- Employers' association
- Trade union
- Environmental interest group
- Cultural initiative group / organization
- Non Governmental Organisation
- Other interest groups (*provide details*)

The main target group is the tourists, the usage of the Black Forest Card is dedicated to. As the Black Forest Tourism GmbH points out the Black Forest Card is not geared towards a specific touristic target group. Rather the card is conceptualized to be attractive for nearly every kind of tourists, e.g. hiking tourists, wellness guest, culturally interested guests and families.



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2.7. Instruments and services

Describe specific instruments and services I developed in the framework of the practice (i.e. websites, newsletters, catalogues, software, agreements or other regulations, etc.):

The project's main instrument, of course, is the chip card itself (see 2.1 General definition of the practice).

Above, the whole spectrum of available channels is used for the Black Forest Card marketing and communication. This spectrum contains classical marketing tools like advertisement in print media, flyer and trade-fair appearances as well as a comprehensive online marketing with a microsite specifically designed for the Black Forest Card, the integration of social web and Google AdWords in combination with specialized landing pages. At the same time more than 270 partner hosts communicate the Black Forest Card as attractive offer.

In order to develop the Black Forest Card further and ensure the card's quality guest and host surveys as well as product development workshops are carried out. See 4. Monitoring and evaluation for more details on guest and host surveys.

3. RESOURCES

3.1. Financial resources

Specify the resources utilized for financing the different stages of the practice:

The Black Forest Card is based on a pay-as-you-go financing. The apportionment is paid over to the Black Forest Tourism GmbH by the participating hosts per overnight stay (up to 5 euro per person). It is then distributed by the Black Forest Tourism GmbH to all participating providers according to an appointed distribution key. Approx. 3 million euro are made available per year.

The apportionment is integrated into the host's calculation and is not reported separately. To what extent the amount is passed from the host to the guest is up to the particular host.

The apportionment is used in order to finance the project's marketing. 15% of the proceeds remain with the Black Forest Tourism GmbH whereas 85% are distributed among the approx. 60 participators.

In order to introduce the Black Forest Card the Black Forest Tourism GmbH invested about 500.000 euro in technics and introductory marketing. Accompanying, the Black Forest Card was co-financed by the European Union's LEADER Funding (LEADER Southern Black Forest) as well as the Baden Wuerttemberg national funding. These investments can be refunded one step at a time in the course of the project.

Specify the source/s of financing (divided between public and private funds, in % terms):

100% from private dues

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3.2. Human resources

Specify the persons (type & n°) engaged in the practice, including their specialization / background:

Currently there are 4 members of staff working in the fields of product/project management, relationship management as well as technique/ systems management.

3.3. Legal framework

-

4. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

As pointed out in 2.1 General definition of the practice, the Black Forest Card gets redefined and improved continuously. This redefinition and improvement is based on a monitoring system important aspect of the project development.

4.1. Assessment methods and tools

Comparison of project development numbers (based on own survey data and data of the development of the overnight stays in the Black Forest region provided by the local municipality), qualitative/ quantitative interviews of guests and users in order to get data, experiences and qualitative feedback from the user/ guest perspective

4.2 Indicators

Specify the qualitative and quantitative indicators used to assess the practice:

Development of guest and user numbers and numbers of card use, e.g. number of overnight stays (per year), number of cards handed out to guests (per year), number of services made used of by guests (per year) etc.

4.3. Monitoring material available: Yes/No

Yes.

If Yes, please specify

In general: Positive development of the project - numbers for 2011:

The Black Forest Card partner hosts report about 933.000 overnight stays, which means an increase of 7.9% compared to 2010. Increase in detail: hotels +5.0%, guesthouse +5.0%, holiday apartments +22.7%, camping sites +8.0%

207.000 Black Forest Cards were handed out to guests by partner hosts. The project's service partner reported a number of 450.000 card uses. This means each guest uses the card 2.3 to 2.5 times during his



stay in the Black Forest region – a number the Black Forest Tourism GmbH names “balanced” in terms of the use ratio.

5. SUCCESS FACTORS / DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED

5.1. Enablers of the practice

List of enablers involved in the practice:

N° 1

<i>Name of Institution</i>	State of Baden Wuerttemberg
<i>Description</i>	involved in the European Union LEADER programm (see N° 2)
<i>Contact Person</i>	
<i>E-Mail:</i>	
<i>Role in the practice</i>	Basic Funding

N° 2

<i>Name of Institution</i>	European Union - LEADER Action Group Southern Black Forest
<i>Description</i>	Program of the European Union to support the development of periphery structurally weak areas.
<i>Contact Person</i>	
<i>E-Mail:</i>	
<i>Role in the practice</i>	Basic Funding

N° 3

<i>Name of Institution</i>	Black Forest Tourism GmbH
<i>Description</i>	The Hochschwarzwald Tourismus GmbH is the largest tourism association in Germany. It is responsible for the entire marketing, information and service, product development as well as event management for the whole region.
<i>Contact Person</i>	Eva Winterhalter
<i>E-Mail:</i>	ewinterhalter@hochschwarzwald.de
<i>Role in the practice</i>	For the Black Forest Card the Black Forest Tourism GmbH takes the role of the initiator, editor of the card, project developer as well as bundler of marketing activities and financial resources.

5.2. Success Factors of the practice

Describe success factors:

The concept of the Black Forest Card is the main success factor as it creates a win-win situation for all involved in the practice. For guests the apportionment based card means an added value as well as an attractor to spend holidays in the region. Further stakeholders benefit from joint marketing and



communications, the interaction within the steadily growing partner and host network and the growing attractiveness of the region as touristic destination.

Above, another success factor is the continuous further development of the card concept as it is currently done in regard to the implementation of the eco strategy, which hints at an alert mind of the card initiator and project developer. This further development ensures a continuous attractiveness of the Black Forest Card.

5.3 Difficulties encountered

Describe difficulties encountered and solutions adopted to overcome them:

At first, one of the main difficulties of the Black Forest Card can be identified regarding the project scope. The coordination and quality management of the project with the large amount of partners and hosts but a relatively small scope of human resources (see 3.2 Human resources) can be considered as challenge.

Above, and as the Black Forest Tourism GmbH points out the main challenge is to convince the region's key player, option maker and critics of the Black Forest Card of the concept and project as well as to get them involved in the practice. In this context further difficulties occur if single hosts that do not participate in the project obstruct the proceedings of the project work which is not rarely the case with such projects.

Another difficulty is to ensure the maintenance, establishment and success of the project. In order to ensure the attractiveness of the project for all guests as well as project partners and hosts, in a first step the Black Forest Card's status quo has to be retained. In a second step, a further, suitable and appropriate further development of the concept is necessary. In this respect, the project developer on the one hand confirms frequent negotiations with partners and hosts. On the other hand, the Black Forest Tourism GmbH stresses the integration of innovative ideas and approaches into the project design (see 5.2 Success factors).

6. INNOVATION AND OTHER SUCCESS FACTORS

Assess the innovation and other success factors according to the effect they have had or may have on the region or the group of the stakeholders:

The practice shows the success of the region-wide network of the whole spectrum of player and stakeholders and the building of the public-private-partnership in combination with the exemplary apportionment based finance system. A win-win-situation is made for all participants of the practice. With the implementation of e-mobility strategy, the project developer signifies an open eye on innovative developments. The Black Forest Tourism GmbH does not seem to hesitate to seize on such ideas in order to ensure the quality and ongoing success of the practice. The Black Forest region has become an attractive and vivid tourist destination with rising guest numbers.

Although the project can be regarded as a successful and innovative practice, a stronger focus on further aspects of sustainability (see 7.5 Sustainability), e.g. culture and identity would be desirable.



6.1. Innovative content of the practice

Specify additional information useful to justify the practice under review as innovative, compared to similar route planning and implementation practices:

-

Describe the innovation content in relation to one or more of the following:

<i>Process:</i>	Continuous further development, continuous enlargement of the already large partner and host network in combination with frequent negotiations to ensure quality, thematic refinement, e.g. eco-strategy
<i>Product:</i>	huge variety of offers of the local partner and host network to be used and combined by guests
<i>Result:</i>	rising guest numbers (see. 4.3 Monitoring), won prizes (see 2. Achieved results)
<i>Partnership:</i>	Public-Private-Partnership
<i>Other (indicate):</i>	-

6.2 Excellence of the practice

Specify additional information useful to justify the excellence of this practice being potentially selected as a best practice/practice of excellence:

See 2.4 Achieved results

6.3 Influence on development of cultural route in the area and regional development at large

Specify the influence exerted by the practice on the development of cultural route in the area and on the regional development at large

Regional development: establishment as vivid, high quality tourist destination, strengthening of local identity, support of local economy

6.4. Profitability of the practice

Specify returns, generated revenue, other results as applicable:

After the initial funding which will be refunded step by step the financial system will work independent from outside financing. Furthermore the Network aims to integrate more and more local partners, hosts as well as service partners, to provide a wider range of services. Part of this development will be the integration of new and innovative trends.

7. TRANSFERABILITY & SUSTAINABILITY

7.1. Transferable activities and features

Transferable activities and features from the practice Black Forest Card are the development of a Public-Private-Partnership, the financing solution, the strategy of a joint marketing and communication

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(promotion strategy), the building, maintenance, enlargement and management of the network and, especially, the continuous further development of the concept in regard to innovation to ensure the success of the project. With the connection of the Black Forest Card to the region's eco strategy the project developer seizes on the sustainability trend, which more and more gets established in the European society. Finally, the card concept itself can be regarded as transferable for the development of cultural routes.

7.2. Conditions required for the practice to be developed in other contexts

As the Black Forest Card is a project of wide scope a huge amount of criteria have to be considered. In consequence, general conditions for the practice required for the successful development in other contexts, e.g. in other regions and in regard to cultural routes, can hardly be named. Nonetheless, the willingness of a region's main players and the project developers open eye on innovation and trends can be argued.

7.3. Previous transfer experience (if the practice has been transferred already to another context)

The Black Forest Card has not been transferred to another context yet, but is based on apportionment guest cards used in tourism as location based solutions. Here, the pioneering role takes the Allgau municipality Oberstaufen. It launched the Oberstaufen PLUS card in 2008. This card was the first comprehensive added value offer of this kind. In 2009, the project gained the German Tourism Prize. In 2010, the card concept was adapted by the neighbouring municipality Bad Hindelang (Bad Hindelang PLUS). The initiator of the Black Forest Card, the Black Forest Tourism GmbH, then transferred the concept from the local to the regional scale concomitant with the enlargement of the project scope.

The Black Forest Tourism GmbH stresses the intensive cooperation and vivid exchange of experiences regarding organisation, strategic aspects and technical challenges between the three project initiators and developers.

7.4. Other information

List articles, press notes, links to available information:

Project's website: www.hochschwarzwald-card.de
 Press releases (German only): www.hochschwarzwald.de/Presse/Pressemeldungen-Press-releases-Dossiers-de-presse
 Regional press (German only):
www.badische-zeitung.de/titisee-neustadt/hochschwarzwald-card-jetzt-soll-mundpropaganda-wirken--40096686.html;
www.badische-zeitung.de/kreis-breisgau-hochschwarzwald/hochschwarzwaldcard-im-ersten-jahr-434-000-mal-genutzt--56097836.html
www.badische-zeitung.de/kreis-breisgau-hochschwarzwald/hochschwarzwald-card-als-erfolgsmodell--52888521.html
www.badische-zeitung.de/titisee-neustadt/liftbetreiber-mit-einfuehrung-der-hochschwarzwaldcard-zufrieden--57036215.html

Specify any achieved public recognition of the practice:

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See 2.4 Achieved results

7.5. Sustainability

Specify factors which can make the practice sustainable:

The Black Forest Tourism GmbH especially focuses on ecological aspects of sustainability. Next to the given incentive to use public transport (free use, KONUS cooperation) the project developer seizes on sustainable, individual mobility via the already mentioned integration of the card concept into the regional eco strategy. Currently, the project developer works on an e-mobility strategy. The conception and development of a comprehensive and free of charge e-bike network (approx. 100 bikes), a free of charge segway use as well as also free of charge use of 15 e-Smarts (pilot phase) is an exceptional approach in Germany.

Currently at the planning stage is the enlargement of the e-mobility strategy in terms of the provision of a carsharing offer with more than 50 e-Smarts, which should base on the experiences of the e-Smart pilot phase. This offer is planned to be combined with region wide and free of charge eco-power charging stations conception.

Additionally, the practice can be regarded sustainable regarding the emphasis and support of the local economy and culture as wells as the strengthening of local identity.

Compiled by KIT, P7

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