

Business case ID Card



Title: Explore the Arctic in a new way

Sector(s): Tourism, Leisure

Value chain: Ecosystem services

Name of the company: LAPLAND VUOLLERIM

Country: Sweden

Size of the business: 150 shareholders and the community as volunteers

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Video link:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=16&v=JWimrNCoF9A&feature=emb_logo

Background

The project started in 2006 with the title *'The bundling shed'* and the creation of a hotel in the Vuollerim region, in the North of Sweden, called *'Hotel Vuollerim'*



Business case factsheet LAPLAND VUOLLERIM

Gästgiveriet. It wasn't until 2010 that it became an independent company with approximately 50 owners.

The aim of the project was to offer real Vuollerim experiences to tourists and travelers, to strengthen the community economy. To achieve that, they came up with around fifty different experiences that could show what the region had to offer. Thanks to that, Vuollerim community products immediately went up to a high number in just a few years.

In Vuollerim, there is a high number of small businesses and NGOs, as well as some independent companies born and developed in the village. The aim of each company is the same: strengthen the village by reinvesting in it and developing their own services to offer better conditions to both locals and visitors.

Main activities

To get more people to visit the area, the first step of success taken by Vuollerim was to make sure that they provided information about interesting activities for the visitors. The smooth sharing of up-to-date information about the latest products and services in the area help guests find the information they need, as they are directed to local guides and activities, all to strengthen the local economy.

Lapland Vuollerim uses different marketing strategies to show their genuine lifestyle and the different experiences they can offer across a wide range of activities. Since they have two extremely different seasons, they offer eco-tourism experiences depending on the time of the year:

- Summer months: house jumping dinner, forest safari, horseback riding or fishing (among others).
- Winter months: skiing, dog sleigh tours, reindeer safari or ice fishing (among others).

Market

Lapland Vuollerim works as an open business model, in which local businesses and community collaborate to make the region a better place and strengthen its economy. And while tourism can mean many different things, luckily, nowadays tourists want more than just to consume and are interested in what the region can offer. This allows Vuollerim to create services and products based on genuine adventures and experiences, allowing them to be part the local life and culture in a sustainable way.

Challenges and solutions



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LAPLAND VUOLLERIM

In the late 50's and early 60's, Vuollerim had around 3.700 inhabitants and around 1990 the number went down to 1.000. This was caused by an important decrease in personnel from the town hydro-power company decrease, which affected the employment opportunities and options for leisure activities that were once supported by the company. During that period, the municipality and the community in Vuollerim had different discussions and had to figure out a way forward. This resulted in different community-based companies which have grown out of these societal changes, as a response on the challenges.

When Lapland Vuollerim project started, they main question raised was how to find a way to involve the whole community. Using the concept of crowdsourcing, the entire region was able to participate in the project, as well as develop their own businesses.

Funding

Lapland Vuollerim was founded by 'Visioner i Viollerimbygden' (VIVA), and its 150 shareholders made it possible to purchase the hotel from the Swedish Fortification Agency, creating 'The bunding shed', later known as 'Lapland Vuollerim', with a capital of 700 SEK.

As VIVA collaborated with the community volunteers, they renovated the building. With this open model of financing, every one of the volunteers could decide how to develop the hotel, by, for example, decorating the rooms or even naming them. In 2018 VIVA bought and renovated another hotel with the aim of doubling the capacity of the buildings to offer more rooms.

What makes this case innovative?

This project is innovative because of the type of business they are built on: open business model or crowdsourcing. The volunteering gives the community a sense of ownership and co-ownerships allows more voices and ideas to be heard which improves the collaborative and open business model further.

Lessons learnt

'Lapland Vuollerim' is a prime example for what happens when communities pool resources and ideas together when approaching the tourism sector. The potential that many rural areas still have is huge and the best way to unleash it is by harnessing the love and pride of the local community has in it, allowing for travelers to appreciate it as well.

