

## Article

### Tourism “In Exchange for”

*An initiative that proposes to improve the competitive position of companies and entrepreneurs without cash disbursement. “Win to win” combining the traditional system of payments and the exchange of goods and services.*

A few months back, surfing the web I found an entrepreneur who had set up his website promoting exchanges of goods and services between businesses and freelancers. The page is [www.acambiode.com](http://www.acambiode.com). The *a priori* idea attracted me, more from a romantic side that from the rational side or economic efficiency.

However, little by little, I discovered that this system is very effective and complementary to our "eminent" monetary exchange system.

The examples multiplied; a hotelier who commissions the redesign of their corporate image to a Graphic Designer hundreds of miles away, agreeing to pay with a stay in his Hotel; Magazines and Publications exchanged miscellaneous services such as advertising administrative duties, catering, electronic items, etc.

Nevertheless, I discovered a large group of strong and very serious companies that use it, and have rediscovered Exchange (or barter) as a way to make business easier. One case is companies like of Nike or Ralph Laurent that use this system as part of payment for contracts with sponsors. Another case is Hewlett-Packard; they exchange hardware and software for training programs for their employees. Another one is Hyundai which exchanges 0 Kilometers for advertising; large Hotel chains trading room nights for advertising (and *vice versa*, large companies that exchange advertising campaigns promotional nights).

Another example is Starbucks (the famous coffee shop chain) that allows the dissemination of musical content - especially created for them - in exchange for advertising and promotion of a national chain of radio.

And last but not least, Google who exchanges the work of digitalizing books from the libraries of the University of Michigan (7 million volumes), most of the libraries of Stanford and the University of Oxford, as well as books from Harvard and the New York Public Library; and in return introduces advertising in the final digitized versions. Both sides benefit, liquidity of the company does not suffer, and generates an added value for the whole society.

Acambiode.com has obtained the quality label of IQUA agency and has launched a major international expansion, mainly in Central and South America, soon to include North America and China.

But what I found most interesting is that this system of exchange and support between companies, business people and entrepreneurs can not only serve to situations of liquidity constraints, or "crisis", but is equally useful and effective in situations of economic growth.

Let me exemplify with a situation that occurs daily in hotels. A feature of the hotels is that his "capacity" and "product" (accommodation) cannot be stored. So, if at the end of the day a hotelier has X number of unoccupied rooms, this represents a "missed opportunity" of income or benefits. In turn, it is normal that indicators of occupancy in hotels differ from 100% ideal (for a given year); in fact, this happens in rare or very rare occasions. Therefore, the usual would be, for example in a



buoyant market would, to get (say) 85%, this means that we would have a 15% of the "productive capacity hotel" idle or unused.

So what if, instead of paying some supplies and hotel inputs (cleaning materials, advertising, professional services, amenities, printing, stationery, etc) in cash, we exchange it for unused excess capacity? Well obviously increases the benefit of the hotel, both in absolute figures as well as percentage of total invoicing.

Therefore, I applaud [www.acambiode.com](http://www.acambiode.com) initiative, and reiterate its aspect of complement to the monetary system and "traditional" exchange. The main thing is to be creative and generate positions where parties win and create value together.

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