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Tourism promotion of Ibiza Island (Spain): Actions and plans of public administrations

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Abstract: Ibiza has been a world-famous island tourist destination for half a century. The aim of this paper is to review the past and present promotional actions that have been adopted to develop the island's brand image. This paper is a case study divided into two parts: the historical evolution of local tourism and promotion, and the main actions currently being adopted by public administrations, particularly the Ibiza Island Council. Despite some prior activity, it was not until the 1930s that the tourism industry began to organise for commercialisation. The public administrations did not take significant action until the 1960s, and the main impulse for the promotion of tourism came from media coverage of hippies arriving on the island. Currently, the Island Council takes care of the promotion of the Ibiza tourism brand and organizes various promotional activities. The article's main conclusion about the current promotional actions is that there are prioritized types of tourism that allow for de-seasonalisation and attracting more sustainable types of tourism – but the actions adopted by the public administrations are still very conventional and not very innovative, a risk that tourist destinations must avoid.

Keywords: tourism promotion; strategic plan; tourism campaign; Ibiza; de-seasonalisation; public administration

1 Introduction

Ibiza is well-known as a tourist destination; this is due to a century of promotional actions by both individuals and administrations and the decades of growth in the tourism sector that have led to current conditions (Ramón, 2001). Currently, Ibiza receives more than three million tourists a year (Ibestat, 2024). It has a very high economic dependence on the tourism sector, and there are no clear alternative sectors (Ramón, 2001). Local society and culture have been shaped by tourism, the economic improvements that have accompanied it, and the influx of tourists, seasonal workers, and new residents. Ibiza has an area of 572 km², and it had 160,644 registered inhabitants as of January 1, 2024 (Ibestat, 2024). The tourist development of the island has resulted in significant economic, population, and urban growth (Ramón, 2001), and this has created a cosmopolitan and diverse society. This has had innumerable positive effects, but also negative ones. These negative effects have led some people to propose that the tourism sector should slow down (Ramón, 2001), considering it absurd to continue carrying out tourism promotion actions (De Lama, 2017). However the enormous economic dependence on tourism makes a decrease in tourism inadvisable, and promotional activities continue to be carried out to maintain the current status quo.

Promotion of tourism in Ibiza is no longer focused on making the island known and attracting greater volumes of tourists, as this already happened decades ago. Instead, it is currently aimed at reminding consumers about the island's attractions and publicizing lesser-noticed alternatives to the more traditional activities. These current agendas would allow tourist arrivals to be more diversified and de-seasonalised.

De-seasonalisation is defined as the reduction of seasonality in the tourist activity, and it is taken up because tourist seasonality generates multiple economic, sociocultural, and environmental problems, making its sustainability difficult (Turrión-Prats & Duro, 2017).

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The main actors involved in tourism promotion on the island are of two types: private companies and public administrations. Among the private companies, hotel chains and large nightclubs stand out due to their capacity for promotional actions both on and outside the island. In the public sector, the island's highest institution, the Island Council, leads Ibiza's promotional actions as a tourist destination. The five town halls into which the island is divided also carry out promotional actions, usually in coordination with the Island Council (Consell d'Eivissa, 2024).

The private sector focuses its actions on the promotion of the companies themselves, with island promotion as a secondary aim. The public sector promotes the tourist destination and, complementarily, the destination's companies and their services. This makes the collaboration between companies and administrations an important one, depending on the respective sectors of business and government (Ramón, 2001).

The aim of this paper is to review the history of tourism and tourism promotion on the island, and to provide a description of the current institutional promotion actions of the Ibiza tourism brand. Specifically, the Results section describes the various tourism promotion activities and the plans carried out by the Ibiza Island Council, the institution responsible for managing tourism on the island and promoting the Ibiza brand. To date, there are no reliable measurements of the real effect of these campaigns, and success indicators are based solely on space in print media, time spent on audiovisual media, and views or likes on social media that specific campaigns entail. The promotional actions undertaken by the Island Council are quite conventional, and more innovative actions should be adopted, following the example of various local companies, especially the island's large nightclubs.

2 Literature Review

Tourism promotion is a fundamental communication tool for making its product known and encouraging sales (Shchokin *et al.*, 2023; Zlatanov & Popescu, 2021). It transmits information about destinations, activities, within different segments of the tourism sector; it also helps revitalise the private sector through various promotional actions (Blain *et al.*, 2005; Pike, 2005; Hosany *et al.*, 2006).

Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) has been established in the literature (Batra & Keller, 2016; Elrod & Fortenberry, 2020; Keller, 2009; Kliatchko, 2008; Madhavaram *et al.*, 2005; Manser Payne *et al.*, 2017; Naik & Raman, 2003; Šerić & Gil, 2012a, 2012b) as a crucial

component of brand strategy, and is central to discussions of tourism promotion in general. IMC is defined as a process in which communications are managed holistically to achieve strategic objectives, but it can be seen as more than just a communication process (Batra & Keller, 2016; Kitchen *et al.*, 2004; Kliatchko, 2008; Madhavaram *et al.*, 2005; Manser Payne *et al.*, 2017). It is important to consider Eagle *et al.*'s (2007) conceptualization of IMC as the coordination of communication disciplines, and as a method with which to organize the business or company; develop and direct brand strategy; and convey unified messages through the coordination of promotion, advertising, and public relations programs (Eagle *et al.*, 2007). In any case, promotion, defined as "all the ways used to make customers aware of products, sharpen their desires and stimulate demand," should be considered an integral element of IMC (Middleton, 2001, p. 90).

There is a specific type of promotion carried out for a tourist destination (Moser, 2020). The promotion of tourist destinations can be defined in various ways, as compiled by Castillo-Palacio and Castaño-Molina (2015): "the conscious use of advertising and marketing to communicate selective images of specific locations or geographical areas to a target audience" (Hopkins, 1998, p. 66), and "communicating to potential consumer-tourists that the proposed supply is capable of satisfying their needs and demands; in short ... trying to convince the tourist that it is worth going to a destination, visit it" (Ejarque, 2005, p. 231). For the aim of this paper, promotion consists of communicating what a destination "supplies" to potential tourist-emitting countries, and relating this "supply" to the destination brand.

It must be kept in mind that tourist destinations' main promotional tool is their branding (Hemmonsby & Tichaawa, 2019; Shevchuk *et al.*, 2023; Utama *et al.*, 2023). Once the tourism product has been developed and there is possible market demand for that product, it is essential to make it known and to promote the tourist destination brand, thus generating strong brand equity (Bruhn *et al.*, 2012; Gartner & Ruzzier, 2011; Gómez *et al.*, 2015; González *et al.*, 2019; Im *et al.*, 2012; Keller, 2009; Pike *et al.*, 2010). This which allows for the development of a brand identity (Berrozpe *et al.*, 2017; Cai, 2002; Konecnik Ruzzier & de Chernatony, 2013; Lin *et al.*, 2011; Madhavaram *et al.*, 2005; Wheeler *et al.*, 2011), which builds visitor loyalty and allows for a premium on prices at the destination.

It is essential for tourist destinations to develop their own image (Zhu *et al.*, 2022) and to influence potential clients' opinion of the company or destination. It is about promoting a brand within a highly competitive tourism market, trying to influence potential clients, and positioning the destination brand in the market. Recently, the tourism

industry has evolved in a very globalized manner, and there is strong competition between tourist destinations. This is why branding and destination personality are some of the strongest tools within destination marketing to help a brand achieve its positioning (Blain et al., 2005; Ekinci & Hosany, 2006; Usakli & Baloglu, 2011; Pike, 2005; Hosany et al., 2006).

The positioning of a destination refers to the projected image of the tourist brand in the market with respect to other competing destinations (Castañeda-García et al., 2020; Taecharungroj, 2023). It is predicated on the notion that communication can only occur in appropriate environments and at appropriate times (Ries & Trout, 1981). Among other options, the most practical is to base the destination's positioning on its individual attributes (Lv et al., 2024). To understand the positioning of a tourist destination, it is also necessary to know its historical evolution, both in the sector and in tourism promotion. The analysis of the Ibiza's historical evolution, presented in the following subsection, is based on the Tourism Area Life Cycle model (Baum, 1998; Butler, 1980; Kubickova & Martin, 2020; Ma & Hassink, 2013; Ramón & Serra, 2014).

2.1 Tourism development and destination promotion in Ibiza

The book *Die Balearen*, written by Archduke Ludwig Salvator of Austria, described and popularized the Balearic Islands in the second half of the 19th century, but the first publication intended to promote tourism in Ibiza was written by Arturo Pérez-Cabrero and published in Barcelona in 1909 (Ramón, 2001). This guide documented the local interest in tourism for the first time. During the first half of the 20th century, the island was promoted as a winter holiday destination for people from Central Europe based on its local culture, architectural and archaeological heritage, and climate (Ramón & Sánchez, 2022).

After the end of the First World War, there were few tourists in Ibiza, but there were enough for calls for improvements to appear in the local press, including the construction of hotels, an increase in the number of shipping lines, the improvement of roads, the adaptation of streets, the expansion of the port, and the promotion of tourism (Cirer, 2004; Ramón, 2001; Ramón & Sánchez, 2022). These calls for improvements were made by a small group of businessmen who had been defending the new industry since the beginning of the century; however, they were still largely working on their own (Cirer, 2004).

The Fomento del Turismo de Ibiza was founded in the 1930s by tourism advocates and followed the Mallorca

model. It initially emerged because of the importance that tourism was beginning to acquire as an economic activity as the number of visitors constantly increased and new hotels opened. Although tourism numbers were still small, a positive change had undoubtedly occurred. The Fomento del Turismo was a small group with very limited resources, but its formation allowed its members to organize and coordinate their efforts over the following decades (Cirer, 2004; Ramón, 2001).

The Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) and the desolation of the post-war years abruptly ended the sector's upward mobility during the 1930s. Due to the lack of funding and the challenges involved in attracting tourists, and because of the war in Europe during the 1940s, any accounts of promotional efforts were purely anecdotal. During those years, a few entrepreneurs made their way through Europe alone and without help, promoting both their businesses and the island as a tourist destination. Fomento del Turismo activity was reactivated in 1947, becoming more organized and professionalized in the following years (Ramón, 2001). At that time, emphasis was still placed on traditional elements and cultural heritage in the marketing of the island (Ramón & Sánchez, 2022).

The leaders and businessmen of Ibiza recognized the need to differentiate themselves from Mallorca in the 1950s (Ramón & Sánchez, 2022) to avoid having too much direct competition. They did so by taking advantage of the fact that European avant-garde thinkers and artists had begun to visit and make prolonged stays at the island starting in the 1930s. Members of the counterculture appeared in Ibiza in the 1950s, and hippies arrived in the 1960s. This phenomenon was not exclusive to Ibiza, but those in charge of marketing the tourism industry chose to capitalize on the island's appeal to artists and hippies (Ramón, 2001). From that moment on, freedom and tolerance distinguished the island from other tourist destinations, while Ibiza's culture and heritage were somewhat marginalized until the end of the 20th century (Ramón & Sánchez, 2022). It must be kept in mind that in the 1950s, Ibiza was an exotic and very unknown destination, both in Spain and abroad (Ramón, 2001).

The local population's involvement in the tourism sector increased significantly in the 1950s and 1960s. This involvement was driven by the difficult post-war years and the emergence of mass tourism, which fostered the growth of the welfare state in Europe (Cirer, 2004). Despite this, the promotion continued to be a modest activity, led by a small group of local businessmen acting independently and / or coordinated by the Fomento del Turismo. Prior to the 1970s, advertising material was scarce; the physical presence of Ibiza at tourism fairs

was tokenistic, and its stands were very modest (Ramón, 2001).

The community of foreigners associated with the avant-garde in Ibiza made significant local artistic production possible, and, since the creation of the Museum of Contemporary Art in 1968, the national government has actively participated in the promotion of avant-garde art in Ibiza (Ramón & Sánchez, 2022), promoting Ibiza as a tourist destination by using its association with the avant-garde (Rodríguez, 2003).

During the years of the Francisco Franco regime, the administration was small and had very limited resources. This implied that the administration favoured tourism more by omission than by action. Despite this, there was support from the central government for some actions starting in the mid-1960s, mainly related to contemporary art and Adlib fashion (Ramón, 2001; Ramón *et al.*, 2022). However, the media attention given to the hippie scene served as Ibiza's main marketing driver (Rozenberg, 1990). The impact of the press and television reports would have been difficult to match through institutional or private advertising. Paradoxically, the hippies went from being located outside society to integration into a very distinctive aspect of society and island folklore as Ibiza adopted countercultural and anti-system movements as a differentiating element in its tourism promotion (Ramón, 2001; Rozenberg, 1990).

One of the economic activities that appeared in those years was Adlib fashion. Adlib is a native fashion inspired by the clothing tastes of the hippie movement and is considered the heir of this counterculture, along with craft markets (Ramón *et al.*, 2022). Since its origins in 1971, Adlib fashion, rather than marking the beginning of a new textile industry, was intended to be a tool to promote tourism abroad. The aim was to find another reason to promote the liberal and cosmopolitan atmosphere of Ibiza. A distinctive image conveyed by clothing could also be used to distinguish the location (Ramón *et al.*, 2022). In the promotion of tourism and Adlib fashion, Smilja de Mihailovitch was of great relevance, due to her abilities in public relations and her friendships and contacts (Ramón, 2001).

Public promotion initiatives suffered during the second half of the 1970s and the early 1980s due to political turmoil and the oil crisis, but the sector was largely unaffected due to the strength of the growth that had begun in the 1960s and had grown into international recognition. In November 1983, the newly created Autonomous Community of the Balearic Islands received powers in tourism from the national government. Since then, decisions on public promotional actions have taken place on the islands. The only drawback is that the islands of

the archipelago are, to a certain extent, destinations that compete with one another, especially Ibiza and Mallorca.

In 1989, the Ibiza tourism brand was officially created (Ramón, 2001), and the large nightclubs, such as Amnesia, Pacha, and Ku, had a significant media impact throughout the 1980s (Ramón & Sánchez, 2022). Subsequently, the Tourism Department of the Balearic Government took advantage of the importance of these nightclubs to promote the local tourism sector (Ramón, 2001).

Tourism supply and demand were significantly affected by the economic crisis of the late 1980s and the early 1990s, which forced government agencies and businesses to take a series of measures. On the one hand, it was important to modernise offerings, limit the number of places, improve services, and take measures to protect the environment. On the other hand, it was necessary to promote tourism more vigorously (Ramón & Sánchez, 2022). Both the promotion of destination in the European tourist-emitting countries and the distribution channels were in the hands of European tour operators, with destinations themselves taking very little initiative. In the 1990s, it was determined that greater local control over distribution and marketing channels was necessary (Ramón, 2001).

In November 1996, tourism competencies passed into the hands of the Island Council, although promotion remained centralised in Palma (Ramón, 2001). Since then, each island has designed its own tourism strategy, but an integrated image of the four islands has been maintained and managed by the Balearic Government. The tourism promotion on Ibiza continued to emphasise its nightlife, in addition to sun and beach tourism (Berrozpe *et al.*, 2017).

The turn of the century brought about changes in both the businesses and the government. Many entrepreneurs improved and modernised their businesses, sometimes even innovating in the services they provided. Historically, three-star hotels have made up most of the island's accommodation, with four- and five-star options being extremely rare (comprising between 2% and 5% of available rooms). Thanks to these reforms, however, by the 2000s, four- and five-star hotels accounted for 25% of Ibiza's accommodation supply (Ramón & Sánchez, 2022). These changes made it possible to attract celebrities and project a glamorous and cool image (Berrozpe *et al.*, 2017).

In the last ten years, the island's image has combined the freedom and alternative life created by the hippie movement of the 1960s and 1970s with the glamour, sophistication, and luxury produced by the supply reforms, as well as the arrival of the rich and famous in the first years of the 21st century (Berrozpe *et al.*, 2017; Ramón & Sánchez, 2022). Despite recent changes, Ibiza's image

still emphasizes nightclubs and beaches (Berrozpe et al., 2017). For this reason, the Island Council and the Balearic Government have been collaborating for some time to promote tourist activities that residents consider to be of great value, but that have had little promotion (Ramón, 2014), as such activities would allow for greater sustainability, as well as the diversification and de-seasonalisation of the island's tourism.

3 Methodology

The applied methodology consists of a descriptive case study (Yin, 2018) and is focused on analysing the past and present efforts of tourism promotion to enhance the destination brand “Ibiza.” These promotional actions have been carried out by various business associations and administrations, and are currently being led by the Ibiza Island Council. For this reason, the actions of the individuals and companies focused on the promotion of specific companies or activities have not been analysed.

To analyse the promotion of tourism in Ibiza, existing academic literature on this topic (Gómez et al., 2014; Medina et al., 2010) and the reports of the Tourism Promotion area of the Island Council were consulted. For historical background, the Tourism Area Life Cycle model (Baum, 1998; Butler, 1980; Kubickova & Martin, 2020; Ma & Hassink, 2013; Ramón & Serra, 2014) has been used as a theoretical support tool and methodology in reviewing the available literature on the historical evolution and, for the most recent events, searching through the archives of the main local newspapers. To describe the actual institutional tourism promotion of the Ibiza brand, reports from the tourism promotion area of the Ibiza Island Council were used (Consell d'Eivissa, 2024). Technicians from this department were of great help and clarified various aspects of the actions taken. This second part is properly the case study, and consisted of applying tools and analysis typical of historiography to an actual situation (Yin, 2018). In this way, it impliedly brings the analysis of historical developments into the present day.

The Ibiza Island Council, which is the public administration responsible for tourism management on Ibiza Island, has an intermediate rank between the town halls and the Balearic Government, and since 2015, it has had extensive powers in tourism promotion. Currently, the Department of Tourism Promotion and Rural and Marine Environment is responsible for the promotion of tourism on Ibiza Island; it is one of the eight departments into which the Island Council is divided, and depends directly

on the president of the Council. Within the area of tourism, it has powers in “matters of tourist information and promotion, as well as the coordination of tourism policy, inter-administrative relations in this matter and creation of tourist products” (Consell d'Eivissa, 2024). In relation to tourism promotion, the Island Council manages specific promotional actions through the public company Ferias, Congresos y Eventos de Ibiza, SAU.

This second part of the study is mainly descriptive, because there are no quantitative analyses to measure the effectiveness of the tools and campaigns implemented by the Ibiza Island Council. The Council considers that the lengthening of the season that has occurred in the last 15 years is to their merit, but there are indications that it could be more of a demerit, such as the high prices and the overcrowding during the central months of summer. For all these reasons, no concrete figures have been provided on the real impact on demand, since these data do not yet exist. This analysis will have to be carried out in future studies.

4 Results

Institutional promotion is determined by a strategic marketing plan, which is a fundamental tool for the management of a tourist destination. This is a document that sets out a plan of action based on the values and objectives to be achieved, and is useful as a reference document in which goals, and the intended strategies to achieve them, are clear. The most recent plan has been in place since 2023. To carry out the strategic plan, the tourism promotion area considers the annual budget allocated for the development of a given activity in all its areas (Consell d'Eivissa, 2024).

The first aspect to be addressed in institutional promotion is the definition of branding strategy, which has the intention of creating a recognizable product identity that conveys what the product wants to sell (Blain et al., 2005; Ekinci & Hosany, 2006; Usakli & Baloglu, 2011; Pike, 2005; Hosany et al., 2006). What is mainly sought in Ibiza's branding is a connection between the destination and the tourist (Femenía, 2011). Its current branding strategy considers the following points (Consell d'Eivissa, 2024):

- Promote the tourist brand through web platforms. For example, through the Ibiza Travel website, one can see all the activities and offers on the island.
- Determine the target market. In the case of Ibiza, the current market is very young; thus, the aim is to reach

a more mature audience with greater purchasing power. This group would include families, tourists with a more select profile, and young people interested in culture, sports, and gastronomy.

- Transmit the values and differentiation of the tourist brand. Through the creation of the Strategic Tourism Segments (STSs), the intention is to develop seven product clubs: sports, gastronomy, culture, ecotourism, active tourism, luxury, and Meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions (MICE). This is an initiative launched by the Tourism Strategy Agency of the Balearic Islands (AETIB), dependent on the Balearic Government, for the implementation of these product clubs on each island. This strategy seeks to launch territorial commissions to create and promote the STSs.

De-seasonalising the arrival of tourists is a priority for the tourism promotion area. Institutions and companies have sought to extend the tourist season and thus obtain the highest possible return in the form of economic, sociocultural, and environmental benefits.

There are many issues to consider when making a destination touristy all year round. In the case of Ibiza, most of the tourist activity is concentrated in the months of July, August, and September, causing high human pressure and a saturation with major adverse effects (Turrión-Prats & Duro, 2017). It is impossible for Ibiza to have the same receptive capacity in both winter and summer, but it is possible for de-seasonalisation to help decongest the peak tourism months. To achieve de-seasonalisation, promotional campaigns are developed from August to April. Among the most common promotional activities are international, tourism, specialised and product fairs; workshops; events for the public; and familiarization trips.

The seven STSs (sports, gastronomy, culture, ecotourism, active tourism, luxury, and MICE) are seen as part of the strategy to attract tourists in the low season. These STSs are a priority for the sustainability of local tourist activity and mitigation of the negative impacts of the current tourist seasonality (Turrión-Prats & Duro, 2017). They encourage the use of infrastructure and resources that are underused in the low season, facilitating economic sustainability through an increase in economic benefits with a minimal increase in costs. They are activities that are respectful of local culture and traditions and value them, and are characterized by their positive assessment by residents (Ramón, 2014). Most of these types of tourism also value the landscape and nature, promoting the conservation of the natural environment and environmental sustainability. In essence, these are the reasons why STSs are prioritized in the institutional promotion of tourism.

It should also be noted that potential tourists do not make up a uniform mass, and it is necessary to divide them into market segments (defined as homogeneous groups of consumers with similar desires and purchasing habits), and adjust the proposed promotional actions to their characteristics. For this, the support offered by Turespaña is very useful. Turespaña is a national agency segments the global market into eight main areas: North America; Latin America; Northern Europe; Central Europe; Southern Europe and the Mediterranean; Eastern Europe; Asia Pacific (Zone A: Middle East, India, Southeast Asia and the Pacific) and the Middle East; Asia Pacific (Zone B: Far East); and Spain. It should be noted that Turespaña has 39 tourism offices around the world that provide support to the tourism sector for promotional actions, in addition to carrying out market studies and communication actions at both the Business to Business (B2B) and Business to Consumer (B2C) levels. In general, Turespaña provides marketing and tourism intelligence resources to support tourism professionals in their promotion and marketing activities abroad (Turespaña, 2024). Ibiza's tourism promotion actions are concentrated in Europe, especially in the main tourist-emitting countries, which include the United Kingdom, Germany, Spain, Italy, France, and the Netherlands. The prioritization of these markets is based on the likely interest of people within them in visiting the island.

Now that the main parameters that define the institutional tourism promotion of Ibiza have been defined, it is possible to briefly list the specific actions carried out for this purpose (Consell d'Eivissa, 2024):

- Attendance at international tourism fairs is one of the pillars of institutional tourism promotion and has the support of Turespaña. Currently, there are more than 100 tourism fairs around the world, but Ibiza focuses mainly on fairs organised in Europe. Although they are one of the most traditional tools used in tourism marketing, these events are still a very useful strategy for publicising a tourist destination. The fairs bring together a huge number of visitors, exhibitors, professionals in the sector, and potential tourists looking for new holiday destinations. The fairs are used to hold face-to-face meetings with agents in the tourism distribution channel. The Ibiza Island Council attends an average of 40 fairs a year. The international tourism fairs of a generic profile are the most important, and the three largest in Europe are the Internationale Tourismus Börse (ITB), the Madrid International Tourism Fair (FITUR) and the World Travel Market (WTM).

- The main activity — one that is continuously carried out — is the online promotion through Ibiza's official tourism website (Ibiza.Travel) and social media accounts (Bruhn et al., 2012; Mangold & Faulds, 2009; Shevchuk et al., 2023; Zlatanov & Popesku, 2021). Different awareness campaigns have promoted landscapes, gastronomy, culture, creative workshops, and events that can be enjoyed out-of-season (Hemmons-bey & Tichaawa, 2019), among other examples. With this, Ibiza is presented as a UNESCO World Heritage destination (Ramón & Sánchez, 2022) that is ideal for practising outdoor sports (Rejón et al., 2020) and rich in gastronomy (Ramón & Sánchez, 2022). It is also presented as a place with a cast of artists and bohemians who exhibit their works in art galleries and exhibition halls (Ramón & Sánchez, 2022).
- Advertising in specialised magazines is purchased with the aim of reinforcing Ibiza's tourist image. Advertisements can be one-offs promoting specific cultural, sporting, gastronomic, or heritage events, or they can be featured periodically in different magazines. It is very common to have these advertisements coincide with the celebration of international fairs. For example, in *Hosteltur* magazine, between four and eight pages are usually purchased for the presentation of new promotional campaigns that coincide with fairs such as FITUR and ITB.
- Another alternative within the campaigns is to purchase advertising on radio and television. These are conventional communication channels where the impact of advertising can be notable compared to other media. On occasion, the tourism promotion area has had a presence on radio stations such as Onda Cera Ibiza, or on television channels such as Televisión de Eivissa y Formentera (TEF), both of which are local media.
- Creating promotional videos is a fundamental tool for the presentation of a tourist destination. New promotional videos are usually presented to coincide with one of the large tourism fairs in which Ibiza participates. Promotional videos capture the attention of visitors by offering a range of out-of-season possibilities, such as gastronomy, natural landscapes, architecture, local culture, and heritage and tradition, among others. In addition to general presentation videos on the tourist destination, small videos are also made on specific topics (heritage, folklore, sports, gastronomy, etc.) for use during specific events, or to highlight specific offers.
- Traditional brochures are a good resource because they provide official descriptions of tourist attractions, along with specialised visual content. They also influence how the destination's reputation is created.

Because brochures use positive language to describe locations, they are more credible than other sources of information and are therefore used as primary promotional tools (Nicoletta & Servidio, 2012). As tourism is a visual industry, photographs are believed to be of great importance in successfully creating and communicating the tourist destination (Hunter, 2008; MacKay & Fesenmaier, 1997), and they are therefore essential in brochures. Within the range of promotional brochures for Ibiza, two types can be distinguished: general information brochures about the island, and brochures with specific content (families, heritage, MICE, LGBT, gastronomy, events, sports, etc.).

- Merchandising is another type of support material that helps promote the Ibiza tourism brand. This advertising medium is used for distribution at tourism fairs and workshops. Promotional material is also delivered on familiarisation trips for travel agents and journalists. Among the most common promotional items are raffia bags, cloth bags, pens, aprons, notepads, and pins.
- Familiarisation trips consist of work trips for a short period of time that aim to provide the participants with knowledge about the tourist destination and to create familiarization with a place, its tourist attractions, its traditions, and its most important selling points. A distinction is made between fam-trips, which are those organized for travel agents, and press trips, whose participation is made up entirely of journalists. The familiarisation trips carried used to promote tourism in Ibiza are classified according to their intended markets and are prepared with special attention to the profile of the members. The advertising results of press trips arrive in the months following the trips.

Normally, promotional actions are structured as part of campaigns. A campaign is a set of activities that are planned for a predetermined period and have a set of objectives and strategies. Through the campaigns, it is possible to strengthen the tourism brand, attract new tourists, and build loyalty. With a maximum duration of one month, each campaign has an approximate cost of €10,000.00. A tour operator or travel agent will run a campaign with the intention of driving sales in the target market through various marketing channels. There are usually between 20 and 25 campaigns in a given year, mainly focused on five tourist-emitting countries: Belgium, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Germany, and Spain (Consell d'Eivissa, 2024).

5 Discussion

Tourism promotion has been a very important tool for the development of Ibiza's image as a tourist destination (Bruhn *et al.*, 2012; Mangold & Faulds, 2009; Shevchuk *et al.*, 2023; Zlatanov & Popescu, 2021). The arrival of artists, beatniks, and hippies was not a phenomenon exclusive to Ibiza Island (Ramón, 2001; Rodríguez, 2003; Rozenberg, 1990), but the administrations and businessmen of Ibiza knew how to take advantage of it to generate a lot of publicity for the island in the media (Ramón, 2001). In more recent times, the large nightclubs of Ibiza have used events as a reason (or excuse) to generate content that they have then disseminated across both conventional and social media, encouraging comments and content generation by individuals (Bruhn *et al.*, 2012; Mangold & Faulds, 2009; Shevchuk *et al.*, 2023; Zlatanov & Popescu, 2021). As a result, Ibiza enjoys a continuous presence in the most followed media while avoiding an unaffordable financial outlay on the part of the administration or any company. This event-based buzz marketing strategy (Thomas, 2004) must be applied by the destinations themselves to achieve their communication objectives and thus the sustainability of their tourist activities.

Despite the existence of critics within the local society of Ibiza (De Lama, 2017) that hold positions against tourism, it is necessary to continue working on promoting tourism on the island with rigor and with a clear strategy to maintain this economic pillar for Ibiza (Ibestat, 2024; Ramón, 2001). Tourism promotion for Ibiza includes reminders to avoid losing the brand value achieved amongst consumers, and publicity for STSs, which could help de-seasonalise the destination and increase the sustainability of tourism activity (Consell d'Eivissa, 2024). Attending international fairs continues to be of great importance for connecting the different national and international tourism intermediaries, as well as for publicising the destination in potential tourist-emitting countries, particularly in Europe (Ibestat, 2024).

Currently, the main aim of Ibiza's tourism promotion is de-seasonalisation (Consell d'Eivissa, 2024). This is a challenge that tourism institutions and companies have been pursuing since the last century (Ramón, 2001). Despite the difficulty of achieving de-seasonalisation, a reduction in the summer peak of tourism has been observed, and visitors have increased in the months outside of the high season for a higher annual total (Ibestat, 2024). It should be noted that it is not possible to know whether this trend is the outcome of promotional actions or due to overcrowding and high prices in the central summer months. The decrease in overnight stays and tourist spending that

occurred in July and August 2024 suggests that the latter is the most plausible explanation, although without reliable quantitative measurements, it is not possible to confirm this. The de-seasonalisation strategy also involves promoting different STS market niches, thus encouraging tourists interested in culture and nature to visit during the low-season months (Consell d'Eivissa, 2024).

6 Conclusions

Promotional actions are always necessary, although their objectives change depending on the developmental phase of a destination (Baum, 1998; Butler, 1980). In mature destinations, promotion focuses on reminders about the destination, and on refocusing demand towards more sustainable offers that allow the maintenance or improvement of income with reduced negative impacts on society and the environment. In the case of Ibiza, such actions seek to de-seasonalise the arrival of tourists through the STSs. Traditional promotional methods have lost significance due to the evolution of Western societies, but they must be maintained for the sake of visibility and presence in traditional channels; new channels must be sought, but without abandoning the classics. The case of Ibiza shows that it is essential to look for differentiation and reasons to continually generate content as part of a buzz marketing strategy (Thomas, 2004). In this respect, the hippie movement in the 1960s and 1970s (Ramón, 2001; Rozenberg, 1990) and the large nightclubs from the 1980s onwards (Ramón, 2001; Ramón & Serra, 2014) were fundamental. These elements favoured unpaid content in the press, on television and at social events—the precursor to today's social media (Bruhn *et al.*, 2012; Mangold & Faulds, 2009; Shevchuk *et al.*, 2023; Zlatanov & Popescu, 2021).

The main challenge facing the promotion of tourism in Ibiza is the lack of reliable studies that measure the results of various campaigns. This should be the aim of future studies on the tourism promotion of Ibiza. The actions adopted have been quite conventional, and the communication has been very focused on the well-known opinion leaders. In future works and studies, the effectiveness of actions currently being adopted should be measured, and new promotional actions should be proposed that are more innovative and in touch with the times. The current lack of innovation in promotional actions is a risk that all tourist destinations must avoid, and is probably due to the inertia of public administrations, which are already famous for their rigidity

and slowness to change. In the case of the Ibiza Island Council, these tendencies are exceptionally strong.

The main limitation of this work is that it is a descriptive study based mainly on bibliographic information and testimonies from those involved in tourism promotion; thus, it lacks quantitative analysis of how these promotional actions affect demand.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors of the article “Tourism promotion of the Ibiza Island (Spain): Actions and plans of public administrations” declare no conflict of interest.

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