

# 10 Potential DMO functions and activities

The DM Partnership should decide which of the DM functions the DMO should undertake in implementing the strategy and action plan; and likewise, the functions that should be undertaken by other organisations based on their work programmes, resources and legal responsibilities (Table 10.1).

**Table 10.1. DMO functions and activities**

Function	Potential implementation partners	DMO role
Research & intelligence	Partnership between: DMO, NTO, local govt, RDA, NGOs	Many DMOs gather <b>research and intelligence</b> from international, national and local sources to guide the destination strategy and their own operations, help tourism businesses develop and promote their operations most effectively, and monitor destination and DMO performance. Some commission primary (original) research of their own, to meet the specific needs of their destinations.
Strategic planning for destination	Partnership between: DMO, NTO, local government, RDA, NGOs	DMOs often have the responsibility of <b>developing the destination strategy, its related implementation plan(s) and overseeing its implementation</b> , working closely with major stakeholders and partners. In smaller DMOs, this may be handled by the DMO's chief officer, but in larger DMOs, it may be a separate function, usually linked to research. In many destinations, the strategy development and implementation is undertaken/ commissioned by the municipality or economic development agency, with the DMO as a key partner.
Destination marketing & sales	DMO with support from public and private sector partners	Nearly all DMOs have a <b>leisure tourism marketing</b> role, normally marketing direct to consumers and through the travel trade. DMOs in large cities or major tourism destinations usually have a <b>business tourism marketing</b> function as well, dedicated to the meetings and conventions market, for which they often establish a Convention (or Conference) Bureau. <b>Destination branding</b> may be undertaken by the DMO as an integral part of its marketing; or in conjunction with partners that have an interest in branding of the destination as a place to invest, live, work and study.
Visitor services	DMO and/or local authorities	Most DMOs provide <b>information services</b> for visitors - traditionally through visitor information centres and local distribution outlets, but increasingly through <b>digital channels</b> . Integral to this is obtaining accurate, up-to-date information from a variety of sources and tourism partners to make available through multiple outlets and digital channels under a coherent brand voice and content strategy. DMOs can be involved in <b>developing and managing tourism operations</b> . These may best be handled through subsidiary companies, ensuring they do not affect the financial and human resources of the DMO's core operations.
Destination & product development	Partnerships between national/local government, RDA (+ DMO and NTO?)	For many DMOs, particularly in emerging destinations, it is important to be involved in <b>product development</b> , a term that can mean either: (1) packaging of existing products in new ways, or; (2) creation of new tourism products and experiences. If the need is for (1), this is normally handled as part of the leisure marketing function. If the need is for (2), the DMO would need to work with entrepreneurs, communities and/or municipalities to develop experiences, requiring different planning and development skills to test, package and promote new products to potential customers.
Events development	Partnership between local government, events development agency, DMO/ Convention Bureau	Many DMOs are also involved in <b>developing and promoting festivals and events</b> , as a way of attracting more visitors, particularly off-season. This may be through bidding to host existing events (e.g. sports tournaments or annual conventions that go to new locations) - a process the DMO can lead through its convention service if it has one. Or, more often, by supporting the creation of new events specifically for the destination. The DMO should be involved in identifying opportunities and planning for such events, but the operation of the events is best undertaken by an organisation dedicated to the task.
Skills development	Partnership between local government and training providers	The DMO may be involved in providing <b>training and/or business advice</b> for sectors of the tourism industry, led by the DMO or specialist organisations working with the DMO.