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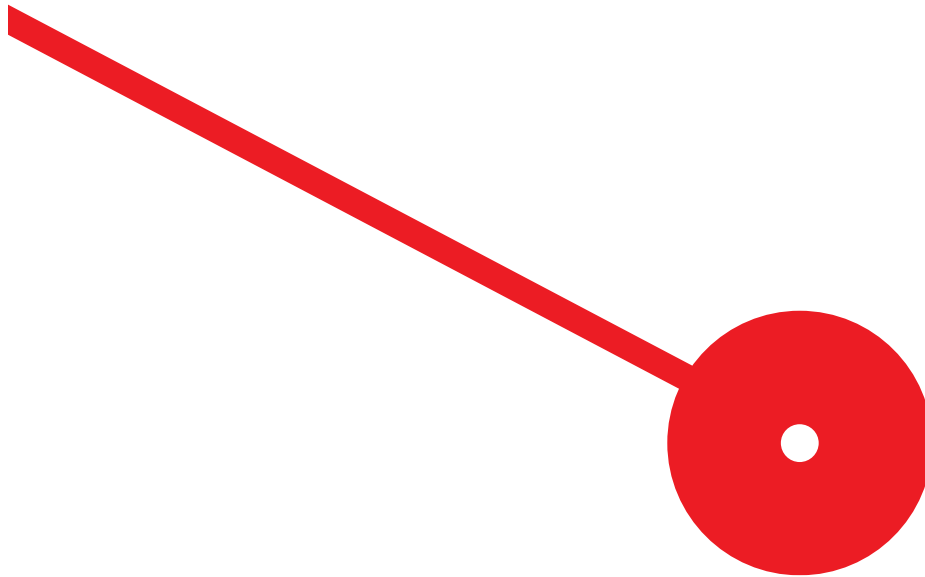


MASTER
INTERCULTURAL STUDIES FOR BUSINESS

Backpacking Culture: digital nomads in Porto - a Selina case study

Catarina Fernandes Barroso

12/2020



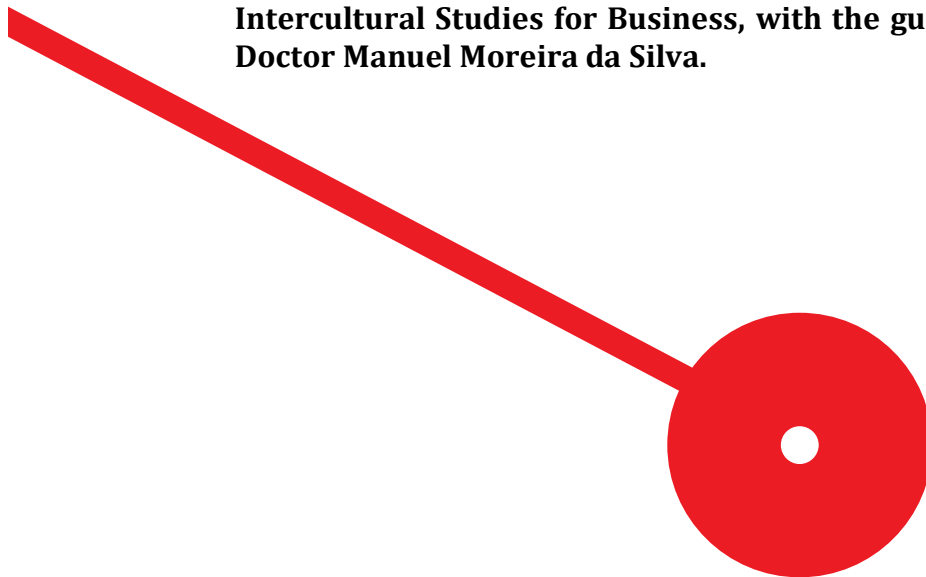


Backpacking Culture: digital nomads in Porto - a Selina case study

Catarina Fernandes Barroso

Internship Report

**Presented to Instituto Superior de Contabilidade e
Administração do Porto for the grade of Master's degree in
Intercultural Studies for Business, with the guidance of Prof.
Doctor Manuel Moreira da Silva.**



“Versão Final”

To my grandfather. I miss you every day.

Acknowledgements

First, I would like to thank my professor and supervisor, Manuel, for all the guidance, words of encouragement, the patience for my eternal doubts and questions, and for making this process seem a lot lighter with funny comments and references. I promise I will do my best to know the difference between in and on.

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I thank my parents for the education they have provided me. You always did what you thought was best, and even though I didn't always see it when I was younger, I couldn't be more grateful now. Dad, you are my biggest inspiration. Mom, I might complain, but we both know I will grow up to be exactly like you.

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Last but not least, I want to thank Selina, for welcoming me as one of their own since my first day. I met some great people and really enjoyed my time at the company, it was really fun while it lasted. A kind thank you to Hugo Neves and Pedro Silva, for always making me laugh, feel comfortable, never failing to help when I needed it, and for taking the time to teach me. You have shown me professionalism and friendship.

Abstract:

This report incorporates the curricular internship of the Master's degree in Intercultural Studies for Business, from Porto Accounting and Business School. The internship was performed at Selina Porto, an international company originally from Panama.

As globalization provides a more efficient path to mobility meanwhile facilitating the search for information, the urge to travel and seek new cultures became intense. People from around the world engaged in the act of traveling more deeply than what was known previously. The backpacker phenomenon evolved into a lifestyle, as being a tourist simply was not fulfilling for this new generation of travelers.

This type of culture also leads to the transformation of organizational culture. As digital transformation takes over due to a market in need of change and innovation, the work regulation adapts itself to flexible schedules and remote work. In this specific case, the hotel chain Selina faced the need of adapting their business in order to respond to the new demand, assuming a new role.

The purpose of this report is to present and analyze my internship at Selina, as an example of creativity and innovation in the hospitality business. This company targets backpackers and digital nomads, creating a market strategy suitable not only for them but locals as well, by enhancing national cultures. A study, based on qualitative research, was conducted by analyzing solo travelers' reviews on Booking – a reservation platform –, in order to better perceive what attracts this particular cluster of travelers and the vision conveyed by the company. Features such as location, staff and environment are decidedly the most attractive.

It is also proposed to depict in full detail the tasks and functions carried out throughout the internship, alluding to the evolution experienced, as well as the challenges and difficulties encountered due to Covid-19.

Keywords: backpacking culture, digital nomadism, creativity, innovation

Resumo:

O presente relatório insere-se no âmbito do estágio curricular do Mestrado em Estudos Interculturais para Negócios, pelo Instituto Superior de Contabilidade e Administração do Porto. O mesmo foi desenvolvido na empresa hoteleira Selina, original do Panamá.

O processo de globalização veio permitir uma mobilidade mais eficiente, ao mesmo tempo facilitando a procura e obtenção de informação. Sendo assim, a necessidade de viajar e conhecer novas culturas intensificou-se. Mundialmente, indivíduos serviram-se desta mudança e deram início a uma nova forma de viajar, diferente da realidade conhecida. O fenómeno da “mochila às costas” transformou-se num estilo de vida, uma vez que ser considerado turista já não era suficientemente gratificante para esta nova geração de viajantes.

Este tipo de cultura também proporcionou uma transformação da cultura organizacional das empresas. Assim que a transformação digital veio tomar conta de um mercado na iminência da mudança. com a necessidade de inovar, a regulação do trabalho também se foi adaptando a horários mais flexíveis e trabalho remoto. Neste caso, a cadeia de hotéis viu a necessidade de adaptação como resposta à nova demanda, assumindo um novo papel.

O principal objetivo deste caso de estudo é apresentar e analisar o Selina como um exemplo de criatividade e inovação no setor da hospitalidade. A empresa tem como público-alvo a nova identidade de viajantes e os nómadas digitais, criando uma estratégia de marketing adequada a ambos, assim como também aos locais, aprimorando a troca intercultural. Realizou-se um estudo qualitativo, através dos comentários realizados por viajantes individuais na Booking – uma plataforma de reservas –, contribuindo, assim, para a avaliação da empresa e dos seus clientes, concluindo que localização, staff e ambiente são os fatores mais atrativos.

Além disso, este trabalho propõe-se a retratar detalhadamente as tarefas e funções desempenhadas ao longo do estágio, possibilitando a avaliação da evolução experienciada, assim como as dificuldades e desafios encontrados devido ao Covid-19.

Palavras chave: cultura de mochila às costas, nomadismo digital, criatividade, inovação

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List of Abbreviations

CBT – Community-Based Tourism

DN – Digital Nomadism

LA – Latin America

F&B – Food and Beverage

S&M – Sales and Marketing

HA – Hotel Administration

HR – Human Resources

CS – Cowork Spaces

Introduction

The following case study comprises the internship report that occurred in the Master of Intercultural Studies for Business. The internship itself took place at Selina Porto and began on the 1st of February and lasted until the 31st of July with a workload of 40h per week (even though some months were spent in an environment of remote work due to Covid-19, months during which the company had to deal with a layoff situation).

The initial proposal was that the internship would cover all areas so that I could have a more enriching experience and understand how the business works as a whole. In that sense, the first department I worked in was Hotel Administration. Unfortunately, beyond that department, Sales and Marketing were the second and last area where I could learn, refine and demonstrate knowledge.

When in the act of choosing between internship report, thesis, or project, the internship sought out to be the most valuable option as it is a great opportunity to develop skills and also practice what has been learned throughout the years; on the Master's degree and previous education as well. As for Selina, it is a global company from Panama which has a lot to offer in terms of novelty, diversity, culture, and economy.

The choice was based on the fact that during the internship, there would be the opportunity to be in contact with people from all over the world, speak different languages (English and Spanish mostly), realize what made people interested in coming to Selina, how their ways of living affected the business and how the hostel answered the guest's needs.

Another objective was to comprehend how business is managed in the hospitality sector, which is a huge sector in Portugal's economy, in order to complete my research.

As society has been developing and becoming more mobile, culture has been changing and adapting. Therefore, many new concepts arose from that transformation. "Global Nomads", "Travelers", "Backpackers" are some labels that fit this new individual that focuses its lifestyle in a nomadic type of way. These denominations have not been in use for a long time; actually, only since 1990 have the terms appeared (Richards, 2015).

Since this is a company where those new labels are understood, this report will focus mostly on digital nomads/travelers in the specific case of Selina Porto and what Latin

American influences are felt. The main aim of this project relies on comprehending a new intercultural experience, provided by individuals for individuals based on accommodation and geographical influences, always in relation to business. At the same time, the report is planned as well to describe the curricular internship experience and make a constant critical reflection of the work proposed and finalized.

This work will be structured into five parts. The first will be composed of the introduction.

The first chapter concerns a brief analysis of the literature. First, the concepts of culture and marketing in co-relation to tourism will be examined. Due to this physical and psychological change, the identity of backpackers and backpacking culture will be introduced and analyzed. In addition, a connection with digital nomadism will be established, as well as the emergence of creative and innovative spaces.

In chapter two, the focus will be on the company – Selina. It will involve the structure, size, origins, and areas of business they operate in. This chapter will additionally combine different measures that were applied during the Covid-19 situation and how Selina managed to stay true to their creativeness, uniqueness, and innovative goals.

Chapter three applies to the description of Selina specifically in Porto, as well as its cowork space, as a cultural tool. The evolution of the act of coworking will also be noted, in correlation to the description of Selina Mosaico Club Porto.

Chapter four focuses on the internship experience, from functions and workplace to colleagues. Here every aspect will be detailed, explored, and an attempt will be made to maintain a connection to the cultural aspects of this report. Besides, in this part of the work, there will be a reflection and exposition of the results obtained over January and September, regarding foreign travelers.

The fifth chapter holds the conclusion of the results of this report and possible future work.

Considering the academic sphere, this report intends to bring more awareness to intercultural realities that support and create the ground for working business models and new practical reflections that contribute to the backpacking culture.

As an informative note, the research and work provided in this report started being developed on a pre-worldwide pandemic period. However, the majority of the work reflected upon and presented, as well as the internship and all its challenges happened mostly after its sad and turbulent beginning – in March 2020.

Chapter I

1.1 An introduction to tourism and its' many (new) faces

Primarily, the type of culture which will be approached in this research refers to the one experienced by backpackers only and their point of view on the concept of living: their values, identity, relationships, behavior, background, motivations, and difficulties.

Tourism has been identified as an important sector and a tool for development (O. Mtapuri, A. Giampiccoli, n.d.). It can be characterized by the act of traveling for fun or work-related purposes. It foresees a displacement to a different city, country, maybe even continent, for a certain period. "In fact, in the tourist perception there is a search for certain ideals of exoticism, a pursuit of perplexity and exposure to the permanent challenge of mastering and interacting with the different." (Sarmiento, 2010:xvi).

As irregular and flexible as it may be, depending on the agents of such action, it will certainly develop a sense of belonging (to one's home), leaving for the unknown (new location) and experiencing life through a different perspective, when exposed to language, beliefs, customs, ways of dressing, food, etiquette from other countries – in other words, a different culture. Williams (1958) concluded:

Culture is ordinary: that is the first fact. (...) We use the word culture in two senses: to mean a whole way of life – the common meanings; to mean the arts and learning – the special processes of discovery and creative effort. Some writers reserve the word for one or other of these senses; I insist on both, and on the significance of their conjunction. (...) Culture is ordinary, in every society and in every mind (p.93).

1.1.1 Tourism place in the cultural iceberg

The cultural iceberg (Hanley, 1999) has a correlation with tourism since when traveling, the direct or indirect contact with different people and different roots is almost impossible to escape. As can be seen in figure 1, on top of the iceberg there are the things that are visible on a first instance, such as typical food, dances, greetings; this will lead to a superfluous and false sense of knowledge about a certain group and its culture. Below the "water line" we can find the attitudes and core values, which as opposed to the characteristics previously mentioned, cannot be observable.

However, after an attentive observation, some of the aspects relating to attitude can actually be perceived, such as the case of customs, body language, behavior. The core values regard individual knowledge and also the relationships within a society: what are the laws, the dichotomy between what is acceptable and what is not, the importance of family, respect for others.

These principles are much more connected to the individual, perspective on common life, and a day-to-day basis. The perception of the one traveling from the local can sometimes be shallow and based on stereotypes (Hanley, 1999), which generalizes individuals through simplistic representations, often not corresponding to the truth. So, traveling and being a tourist, assuming the trip as a life-changing experience, can be beneficial in terms of the social construction of identity, regarding both the tourist and the local.

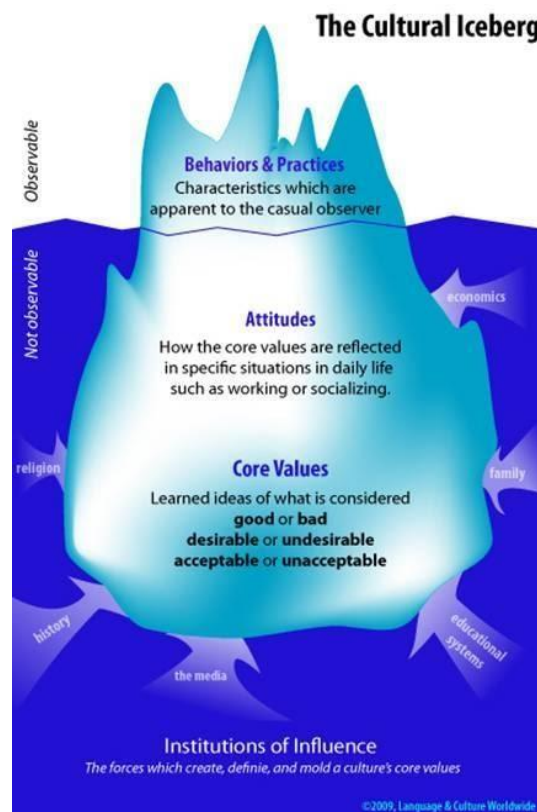


Figure 1 – The cultural iceberg (Duke, N.D.).

1.2 Globalization and mass tourism

As traveling became easier and more affordable, communication between people from different areas was normalized and access to information kept growing. The world went through a process of globalization, which would provoke a sense of unanimity and similarity among countries, concerning economic integration, society, politics, and culture; therefore, tourism evolved as well. The act of going into the unknown was now different, as realities kept growing closer and the traveler could now do all the research about the new location, prepare the trip, and might find a lot of resemblances from back home.

Due to this new turn of events, some travelers felt they needed to differentiate themselves from the “tourist” label in order to find deeper connections, traveling for a long time searching for a life-changing experience, totally out of their comfort zone (Cohen, 2011). So, the “drifter tourists” (Cohen, 2011; Currie et al., 2011; Edwards, 2013) are the base concept for the portrayed “backpacker”; which saw its impetus in the late 1990s (Cohen, 2011). Unlike the majority of tourists, some individuals might forseek an authentic experience, such as a deep involvement with ancient cultures (Sarmiento, 2020).

“The intersections of past and present, global and local, define the guidelines to explore the negotiation and evolution of concepts, as well as the material forces that influence individuals, communities and nations” (Sarmiento, 2014:606). The sensation of discovery and curiosity is prone to shape a person’s identity and that of those who come across their life path. Nowadays, with greater reason, a complexion of feelings, ideas, wills, drive today’s society into a more open, varied, and intertwined reality.

1.2.1 Community-based tourism and marketing relationship

Not only travelers were affected by this exponential growth in the economy, but small open-minded communities as well; there is one specific tourism branch called Marketing Community-based Tourism (CBT), created as a sustainable alternative to mass tourism (O. Mtapuri, A. Giampiccoli, 2017). It has the aim to help communities with lesser means (O. Mtapuri, A. Giampiccoli, 2017) to rebirth the sense of community between travelers and locals and to help proportionate a more traditional lifestyle. Of course, marketing is essential in order to bring attention and purpose to these small businesses. For

that to happen, the market needs must be satisfied as well as the target market well-identified; in this case, the travelers. On CBT, the population of the location is in charge of the touristic attractions, accommodation, activities, and its management, as can be seen in table 2 (O. Mtapuri, A. Giampiccoli, 2017).

Table 1 – Examples of CBT accommodation, activities, and attractions (O. Mtapuri, A. Giampiccoli, 2017).

Accommodation	Activities	Attractions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bed & Breakfast • Campground • Community lodge • Family-run guesthouse • Farm • Hammock • Local family/homestay • Open air • Tent • Tree house 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boat trip • Cycling • Cooking workshop • Dancing (traditional) • Handicraft workshop • Sporting activities • Tours, for example village, coffee, tea or wine tours • Volunteering • Nature trail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Archaeological sites • Cultural centres • Cultural, gastronomic, heritage and other routes/trails • Farms • Folk groups • Landscape scenery • Local markets • Museums • Plantations • Wildlife sanctuaries

Alongside a great marketing strategy, there is a thoughtful selection of partnerships (tour operators, ground healers, activities) (O. Mtapuri, A. Giampiccoli, 2017). The most effective way to reach the target market is through online marketing, such as emails/newsletters, design of a blog, making YouTube videos, and also operate quickly on social media (Instagram, Facebook, Twitter); this type of e-marketing is extremely actual and favorable, as it will build a strong relationship with the customers at an inexpensive cost (Juárez, 2011).

“Relationship marketing is characterized by attraction, construction, maintenance and improvement activities of relationship with customers” (Berry, 2002; Payne & Frow, 2006). The customer must be seen as a possible user of the space, someone who will sooner or later be emotionally involved with the community and not only a step of the marketing segmentation. It is essential to deal skillfully with the physical distance and cultural differences, to understand what the travelers need and what they can give back to the community (Juárez, 2011). Moreover, an international marketer should master the technique of focusing on the local customer whilst thinking on a global scale (Gesteland, 2012).

1.3 Backpacker identity

1.3.1 Who are backpackers?

As mentioned previously, Cohen's drifters (Cohen, 2011; Currie et al., 2011) were young people in their twenties who searched for new experiences and adventures with little money (Currie et al., 2011). What would be later called "backpacker" refers to a group of individuals that try to have their own touristic experience while escaping from mass tourism (Currie et al., 2011); the objective of the trip, and how it is organized is quite different from the regular tourist.

It wasn't until 1990 that the term "backpacker" started being studied and analyzed in academic literature (Richards & Wilson, 2004), and considered inside social sciences as part of tourism (Currie et al., 2011; Kerry, 2013). Backpacker research itself is mostly divided into two big dimensions: anthropological and market based (Wilson & Richards, 2008).

On one hand, through anthropology, it is possible to study the biology and culture of humans, in order to understand how beliefs and social customs have developed alongside humankind. With that in mind, that type of research is done by backpackers themselves (Wilson & Richards, 2008), which can be quite narrow due to the fact that it is focused on one experience; The method proposed is qualitative, based on personality and opinion, in hope to give the word "backpacker" a meaning (Wilson & Richards, 2008).

On the other hand, a market-based approach relays on economic potential lead by attracted backpackers; the ultimate aim being to grow the marketing of destinations chosen by the backpackers (Richards & Wilson, 2004; Wilson & Richards, 2008); there is a correlation between backpackers and other tourists, as well as a quantitative method supported by surveys in order to figure the importance and growth of backpacking community (Richards & Wilson, 2004). However, it is possible to say that nowadays there is a flow of combining both traditions (Kerry, 2013). This is an improvement on backpacker studies since it analyzes both the backpacker and the environment that they are in. According to Cohen (2011), the social construction of backpacking is done by every person involved, directly or indirectly.

Nowadays, the thematic of location-independent individuals is still to be explored more deeply in literature. However, due to the progression of the global nomad phenomenon,

especially in western societies, there has been a significant rise in its studies (Edwards, 2013).

1.3.2. Symbols of the backpacking culture

To travel means to escape the ordinary, to get out of the comfort zone in search of adventure and brand new experiences. For a backpacker, it is liberating to escape from a globalized modern society in search of personal growth (Currie et al., 2011; TingZhen Ee & Kahl, 2016). The authenticity of the trip should shine through the personality of the backpacker: an outgoing person, with an open mind who wants to seize the adventure by being their true self, with no imposed rules or constraints (Currie et al., 2011).

Symbolism has been a great tool in helping societies to communicate and establish relations between them if, of course, aligned with meaning (Currie et al., 2011). For symbols to be effective, they must help defeat communication barriers, anticipate what attitudes and behaviors are acceptable within that group, and also must unify the group as a whole (Currie et al., 2011). As explained by Sarmiento (2010), “Culture cannot organize the social environment without signs, and all the semiotic systems of a culture assist in understanding and explaining the world.” (p. xxii).

When it comes to backpackers, it is only fair that they share elements to separate themselves from other tourists (Currie et al., 2011; Hannam & Diekmann, 2010); usually, traveling on a low budget, with no returning home date and cheap sleeping/eating places (Currie et al., 2011), such as hostels for example.

Furthermore, as affirmed by Riley (1988), writing travel journals along the way is quite characteristic of these individuals. On a personal growth basis, it equals freedom and recognition among the backpacking culture. Additionally, the more adventurous, the better for recognition, as the share of stories within backpackers is quite common and leads sometimes to intense friendships (Currie et al., 2011; TingZhen Ee & Kahl, 2016). Another important symbol is the guidebook, which according to Vogt (1976) points out the meeting places for the community (e.g. Lonely Planet).

The facilities mentioned not only unify and identify the group but also help with sharing information and facilitate communication. When there is a reunion, whether at a coffee shop or at the common kitchen in the hostel, it is advisable to speak in English (Kerry,

2013), even if it is not the native language of any of the backpackers. It could also be quite disrespectful if two or more individuals start engaging in a conversation in their mother tongue when other people who do not speak it are present.

1.3.3 Preferred places and marketing strategies

To understand the culture of backpacking it is essential to acquire knowledge on the destinations that backpackers choose when traveling and why. Directly connected to that (as previously mentioned on CBT) is how and what do those destinations offer in order for the backpacker to notice and feel attracted to them.

Regarding destination, it follows a life cycle divided into five stages: “introduction, growth, maturity, saturation and decline” (Currie et al., 2011). Once again, it is important to define clearly the target market. In the introductory phase, the main purpose is to create good chances for the target to return to the tourist venue (Currie et al., 2011; O. Mtapuri, A. Giampiccoli, 2017); customer relationship should start being built at this point (Currie et al., 2011; Juárez, 2011). On the growth stage of the life cycle, there is already demand; as word spreads, backpackers will start to come into the new destination.

Naturally, once the peak is reached, the next phases can be a challenge and there should be new strategies to increase the popularity of the venue once again. As for the maturation phase, there will be a decrease in growth, which will be followed by a greater reduction in the next period of time, called saturation (Currie et al., 2011). Finally, the decline phase experiences a significant reduction in tourists. Nevertheless, concerning the marketing strategies as mentioned before, market leadership, market challenges, market follower, and market targeting are extremely important (Currie et al., 2011; O. Mtapuri, A. Giampiccoli, 2017).

Presenting backpackers with what they are looking for in a destination, by understanding their identity and personality can lead to a leadership position inside the market; venue managers can obtain knowledge through their symbols. It is also crucial to understand what other options are on the market, innovate, and be price friendly (Currie et al., 2011).

1.3.4 Enclave Experiences

A backpacker enclave refers to the group of travelers who are culturally and ethnically distinct from the community they are in. These are meeting points in many shapes; it can be a big city or country field (Wilson & Richards, 2008). Even though these are places for backpackers to meet, locals can join as well, so it is not possible to distinguish two worlds that do not interact with each other, as they are not exclusive. As declared by Westerhausen (2002), enclaves are “cultural home away from home”, as these are quite safe spaces where the backpacker can control their level of involvement and socialize up to a certain point.

Sometimes, what occurs is a suspension between local culture and touristic culture, as the enclave provides information and creates sensations of both sides (Wilson & Richards, 2008). For instance, the rest-leisure-work trio is opposing forces and can have both local influence and foreign influence. A hostel that is open to the general public as well, such as the case of Selina, has a garden and a cafeteria that can be enclaves for backpackers. What is curious about this feature is that even though backpackers are looking to get out of their comfort zone, there is a possibility that even in the furthest place they will find something familiar to them (Wilson & Richards, 2008), whether if it is a person from the same country, someone who speaks the same language, the same kind of music being played.

This situation in particular can be beneficial for both backpackers and locals, as the cultural shock is not so big itself and there is an opportunity to escape the “home rules” for locals (Wilson & Richards, 2008). In both cases, norms, expectations, and values are suspended.

1.4 Backpacking as a subculture

The concept of subculture determines a peculiar group of people within a larger group, with their own beliefs, occupations, and habits, which differentiates them from the majority (Longman Dictionary, n.d.-a).

For the backpacker, to drift meant to escape from a regular life-path (Cohen, 2011). It was essential to defy routine, to make decisions that made them feel free, out there in the world ready for any challenge ahead. It is through the backpacking culture that the traveler’s identity and life gain meaning, individually and as a group inside the tourism track (Cohen, 2011; TingZhen Ee & Kahl, 2016).

ATLAS (“Association for tourism and leisure education and research”, 2016; Richards & Wilson, 2004), an independent travel research group created in 2001, focuses its efforts on developing a more accurate definition of backpacker, also providing new ways of classifying this group inside the tourism and marketing contexts.

There were three specific areas that had special attention from researchers on this group; the first one being “Where have the drifters gone?” (Richards & Wilson, 2004). The realization backpackers have of their own trips is that they feel more connected with themselves, at the same time they absorb knowledge about different cultures and societies (Richards & Wilson, 2004). As O’Reilly (2006) declares, there is a certain prestige of returning home after a journey – it is considered a rite of passage the traveler went through. A greater point is that the harder the journey is, due to external factors, the more changes one experiences, then the better they will be prepared for any dares they may encounter (Richards & Wilson, 2004).

The second area of interest concerns the destination that backpackers choose and what is the base of that decision-making process (Kerry, 2013; Richards & Wilson, 2004), as they became a crucial factor in the youth tourism market (Richards & Wilson, 2004). It is most likely for these travelers to come across undiscovered attractions and places, as the unknown is the most appealing. The last area will be approached further on.

1.4.1 Relationship with other tourists and cultural baggage

Relationships begin at one’s first own conception, “It is often easier to say clearly what one is not than what one is.” Richards and Wilson (2004). By referring to themselves as “travelers”, the backpackers at a certain point end up rejecting other tourists (Cohen, 2011). There are already stereotypes concerning the “regular” tourist, their symbols being the map or the camera hanging from the neck. Moreover, the tourist is expected to act a certain manner, while the backpacker is unpredictable. Tourists plan their trip according to what they see on the internet or hear from other types of media, so they know exactly what they will encounter once they reach the destination and can be prepared (Sarmiento, 2020). As Riley (1988) affirms, the symbolism behind the backpacker subculture not only represents their identity to others but also has the goal to separate them from other types of tourists (Cohen, 2011).

There still is a flaw of agreement in literature regarding to what extent travelers and tourists differentiate. However, it is coherent on the thought that those differences exist and are capable of defining the traveler as a type of tourist.

A usual definition is that which distinguishes ‘tourists’ from ‘travellers’. Travellers visit places whilst searching for authenticity, either by observing natural landscapes or by taking part in local culture. Tourists, on the other hand, seek fun in the company of other people with similar goals. (Sarmiento, 2020:405)

As a group of backpackers, there are also norms and conceptions of their own: It is considered impolite to not participate in all the gatherings happening (at the hostel, coffee shop); there are five questions that usually initiate a conversation (name, nationality, age, number of countries visited, where to next); it is common to brag when telling a story of their journey (Kerry, 2013). In addition, the vision of the locals is created by opinions between them, not necessarily by engaging in a meaningful conversation directly with a local person (Richards & Wilson, 2004).

The cultural shock experienced by backpackers at the new destination is also followed by “reverse culture confusion” (Richards & Wilson, 2004) when returning home. The “obligation” to go back to old habits, old rules, and customs from their local culture can be a cause of stress and a new challenge (Richards & Wilson, 2004), as the person must fit into the little box that had overgrown a long time ago. Furthermore, often the motivation to leave home could have a personal negative situation behind (e.g. failed relationship; bad environment at home), which would cause a step back emotionally. It is also stated that keeping contact back home can have an influence on the travel experience by holding back (Cohen, 2011).

1.4.2 Backpacking as a lifestyle

In modern society, lifestyle travel is a phenomenon that brings together daily life and tourist experiences (Cohen, 2011; Hannam & Diekmann, 2010). Backpacking is considered an alternative lifestyle, where both identity and life belong in a backpack (Kerry, 2013).

On the ATLAS research, the last area concerns the “Tourist of the future” (Richards & Wilson, 2004). Concerning that backpackers will potentially become the new “regular tourist”, which, once again, depends deeply on marketing strategies from destinations (O.

Mtapuri, A. Giampiccoli, n.d.; Richards & Wilson, 2004). From this perspective, education can as well be part of the experience, since backpackers are usually younger at age (Richards & Wilson, 2004). Also, working while traveling could boost the opportunity for the trip to last longer, usually quite flexible jobs in terms of schedule and presence (e-g. technology IT, yoga instructor) (Cohen, 2011). It is on the basis of the backpacking phenomenon that the initial conception of the “drifter” as a marginal, poor activity, developed into a major global industry (Richards & Wilson, 2004).

1.5 Digital Nomadism: 21st century backpackers?

As technological development became more apparent, it created a possibility for engaging in work outside the regular office and 9-5 hour schedule every day. The cultural change that society went through also fueled noticeable adaptations in the labor market, creating new work modalities, nimble management practices, as well as collaborative entrepreneurship (Aroles, Granter, & de Vaujany, 2020; Orel, 2019). Therefore, having millennial workers (a generation characterized by open minds and nomadic ways) in mind, hotel chains felt it was necessary to bring together leisure activities and work duties (Aroles et al., 2020); this theme will be analyzed further on.

Digital Nomadism (DN) has its roots in the facility for individuals to be in contact with any person from any part of the world, at the same time that collecting information is as simple as going online (Aroles et al., 2020). This evolution enhanced cheaper, long-distance, and real-time communications, helping freelancers, bloggers, Youtubers, and writers to establish their business both as a professional tool and lifestyle (Aroles et al., 2020; Merkel, 2015).

Manuel Castells, whose professional endeavor is focused mostly on DN, analyzed the future of work, due to the rapid growth of artificial intelligence and change in economy, culture, and society (Mouratidis, 2018). Deleuze and Guattari (1986) considered the opposition between state power and individual freedom, that is to say, the nomads; the State is characterized as a striated space while the nomad represents a smooth space (Aroles et al., 2020; Mouratidis, 2018). This last concept embodies revolutionary potential, the simplification of codes, and openness to new territories and possibilities, which is why it challenges the natural order of things (Mouratidis, 2018).

Posner (2003) focused his work on a cultural semiotic approach to digital nomadism, describing mentifacts (a term which relates “sociofact” and “artifact”) as segments that devise the mentality of a society, its values, and ideas, as well as behavior and conventions. With that being said, artifacts and mentifacts together develop the very core values of a society, both being conveyors and producers of culture.

Therefore, as in any other community, there are symbols that unify the identity of digital nomads: portable gadgets such as laptops, smartphones, or tablets; the circulation of data; being able to work at any coffee shop that has WI-FI; cowork spaces (Mouratidis, 2018). When it comes to DN, there are no specific locations; the nomad is always changing places, never letting themselves become too comfortable. This leads to opposing notions: home/abroad, work/leisure, sedentary/mobile, isolation/sociability.

1.5.1.1 Motivations

DN occurs on the search for a more authentic lifestyle, where one can be in charge of their schedule, itinerary, and free themselves from the office as a workspace (Mouratidis, 2018). Digital nomads look for a boost on their work/life balance, so they are characterized as “lifestyle migrants” (Benson & O’Reilly, 2009) since in this case to be mobile is an option and not an obligation. Thus traveling to touristic places, the digital nomad, just like the backpacker, tries to differentiate from regular tourists, due to the fact that they are more involved with the community (Merkel, 2015; Mouratidis, 2018). The search for authenticity is a real factor in both backpackers and digital nomads.

1.5.1.2 Oppositions and antithesis

DN, due to its liberating and emancipatory nature, can be a romanticized lifestyle based on stereotypes alone (Aroles et al., 2020). Some difficulties demean the individual’s potential to work and travel; digital nomads still respond to nationality, citizenship, passport, and, of course, a work routine (Mouratidis, 2018).

However, there are more evident constraints that can be felt on a daily basis or long-term observation. Regarding finances, it is a two-way street. On one hand, DG represents self-development and personal growth; on the other hand, there is wealth and income

necessary in order to be successful working while traveling (Mouratidis, 2018). Concerning a more personal level, even though the digital nomad is part of a community, the long run can be quite lonely at times, due to the constant moving (Mouratidis, 2018); cowork spaces, which will be considered upcoming, are a solution for this feeling of isolation. Even though the environment of operations and motivations are different, DN brings up similar problems to more traditional ways of working, such as financial matters, amount of experience, the importance of regulations, fear of failure (Mouratidis, 2018).

1.5.2 Coworking environments: enclave spaces

The term coworking, defined as “working together as equals”, was first introduced in 1999 by Bernard deKoven (Brown, 2017). Due to the economic global crisis in 2007/2008, resulting in financial collapse, collective working spaces have started to grow in cities all over the world (Merkel, 2015).

The flexibility that these workers demonstrate at a creative level and the ability to perform any task successfully, in a short period of time, through a computer, is a personality trait that defines them (Merkel, 2015; Orel, 2019). As maintained by Forlano (2008), usually, the tendency is for digital nomads to look for an office outside their homes, such as a library or a coffee house.

Nevertheless, this flexibility of mind and geography can difficult the work/leisure balance (Orel, 2019), since it becomes harder to make a distinction between personal and professional life. Besides, human connections and communication are not done directly or profoundly, leading to isolation (Aroles et al., 2020; Orel, 2019) (as expressed before). Consequently, due to the bigger demand from flexible workers, the cowork spaces came to life – reshaping the shared office concept (Orel, 2019).¹

The main goal of the coworking environment is to transform the work process into a much more human connection (Orel, 2019) fighting against the feeling of isolation, the difficulty to balance work with leisure, the lack of creativity, and unproductiveness (Brown, 2017). Over the years, these spaces have become well-liked, as in 2017 there were 1.27 million users, and around 15.500 settled cowork spaces all over the world (“Statista,” n.d.).

¹ Cowork spaces in the pandemic are suffering some alterations.

According to Reichenberger (2018), digital nomads follow this specific lifestyle to have a more improved life quality, in which work, leisure, and travel are merged. Furthermore, cowork spaces provide events and activities that can blossom into new job opportunities and networks for their users (Brown, 2017; Merkel, 2015; Orel, 2019).

For the user of the space, communication and interaction are the main reasons for choosing to work there. These workers value random opportunities and meetings, social interplay, plus the share of erudition and common experiences. Different strategies are held in order to promote interaction and sociability. For instance, the creation of events conflating dance and food, creative workshops, courses, or seminars (Merkel, 2015).

1.6 Creativity and innovation

“Creativity is not a talent. It is a way of operating.”

John Cleese, 1991.

Creativity, by definition, can come across three different proposals: one is that it is a state of being creative; two, means the ability to think and step outside of the box, coming up with transcendental ideas in many forms; and three, it is a process where the ability of creation is stimulated (Longman Dictionary, n.d.-b).

This action can have many barriers, such as organizational, emotional, intellectual, or cultural (Catmull, Wallace, & Srilakshmi, 2015). When referring to organizational, it compresses a stressful routine and elements of distraction on an unpleasant environment; emotional barriers are related to the negative feelings that affect the individual (negativism, fear, uncertainty); intellectual difficulties are connected with lack of knowledge and being limited on the work field; finally, cultural obstacles are associated with the tradition- also important to mention are the stereotypes created by perception. Also related to this, are the “What?” questions on creativity, directly connected to the persons’ particular values, as portrayed in figure 2:

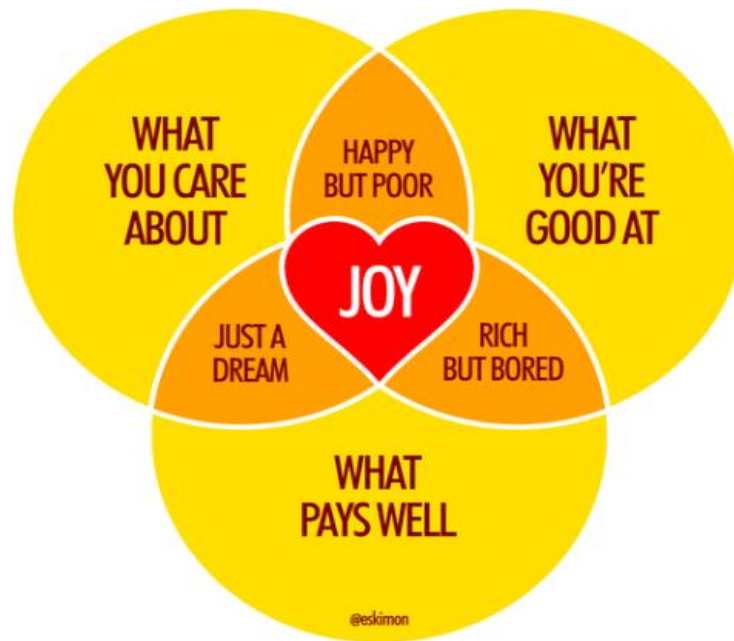


Figure 2 – Career planning in 60 seconds (“Career,” 2013).

Innovation is putting into practice the creative ideas one has had previously concerning different endings, whether it being social, environmental, financial, or economic (Catmull et al., 2015). Naturally, both concepts constitute a powerful association in cultural studies and entrepreneurship.

Entrepreneurship should be considered as the process of doing something new and different to create value for the individual and society as well; therefore, the binomial creativity-innovation is essential in an entrepreneurial attitude (Catmull et al., 2015; Lamas, 2012). The idea should be well considered and recognized as a response to an existential need on the market. Innovation does not necessarily create something new; it is equally referring to the improvement of a product or service that already exists. Ultimately, these two concepts are fundamental sources for organizations to differentiate and grow, as a company and as a community (Garnham, 1987; Lamas, 2012).

1.6.1 Creative industries: organizational culture, identity, and image

The tradition of cultural analysis, defined clearly by Raymond Williams in the British conception, has evolved into becoming exactly the opposite: part of economic activity and the principality of material production (Galloway & Dunlop, 2007; Garnham, 1987; Lampel

& Germain, 2016; Li, 2020). Culture has been classified as a creative industry, in which innovation (technical or scientific) contributes to any industry being perceived as creative (Galloway & Dunlop, 2007). As Krätke (2011) asserted, the creative industries alongside culture have been elevated as the new metropolitan growth sections.

Corporate identity differs from organizational identity in the degree to which it is conceptualized as a function of leadership and by its focus on the visual (Abratt, 1989; Balmer, 1995). At this point, management through symbols and graphic design surmise the main focus of identity, as they are visual. Companies embrace this visual characteristic and trust deeply on the corporate name, logo, and colors to make an impression.

This construction of identity is transmitted to organizational members by the highest position in management; however, it is understood by those same organizational members, based on their cultural patterns, social-environmental influence, and personal work experiences (Jo Hatch & Schultz, 1997).

When discussing organizational culture, it provides a reference to all the members of the organization, from the lowest to the highest person in charge, founded on a company history that will be exposed implicitly on the visual aspects that have been mentioned earlier (logo, buildings, name, products, top management) (Jo Hatch & Schultz, 1997).

A company is composed of different ancillary subcultures. Those peculiarities of its' organizational culture aim at professional groups, relationships with power, and work, which provoke cultural differences among the corporate community. The differentiation mentioned has two different perspectives on it.

On the one hand, it helps to create flexibility in times of change (as we are facing right now), due to the enveloping parts inside the company, each with different visions of reality, nevertheless based upon the same values; this factor will enhance an effective and faster solution as well, protecting performance levels. Diversely, this differentiation of cultural order must be followed by a single, own identity - that of the founder organization itself; this will grant the subcultures with a unique identity (Da Camara et al., 2016).

As it is possible to understand, symbolic cultural artifacts are present when trying to communicate organizational identity; however, the image depicted will have different

interpretations for everyone that will be interpleaded by it, depending on their cultures, inside or outside the company, stated on figure 3.

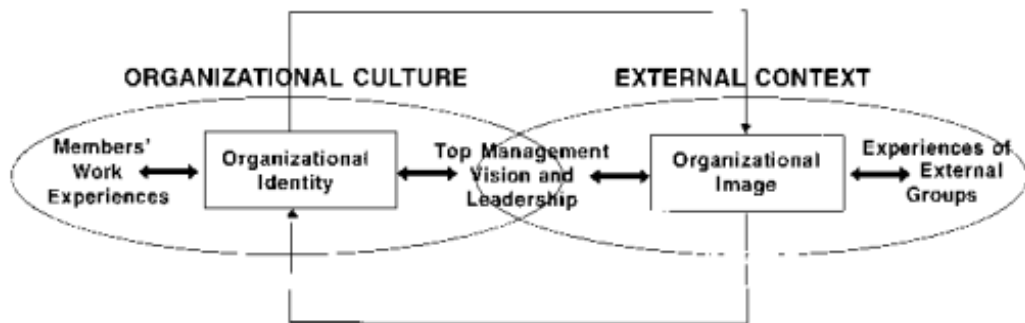


Figure 3 – Organizational culture (Bingöl, Şener, & Çevik, 2013).

The distinction between the two models (organizational culture/ corporate culture) relies upon the perspective of each one. The first sees culture as a way of management, while the second holds an ethnographic perspective² characterized by the diagnosis and comprehension of the organizational process (Da Camara et al., 2016).

Furthermore, Selina craves originality and differentiation in the hospitality business, carrying the core values that classify the brand in the form of people and buildings throughout continents.

² Through participant observation, the observer will decipher the culture of the company. (Da Camara et al., 2016)

Chapter II - Selina: A Latin American Company

This chapter is divided into three parts and presents the institution where the internship occurred.

Firstly, the focus will be on the origin of the company and its cultural motives (Gringo Trail), its internationalization regarding creative, novel aspects, and outstanding characteristics. Moreover, the different areas in which the company works and that shape its identity will be interpreted and discussed: accommodation, cowork space, personal brand plus retail. Last but not least, and of extreme importance, will be introduced Selina's response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

2.1 History and origins

Having its foundation in Latin America, more specifically in a surf town called Venao, in the year of 2014, Selina was born by the minds of Rafael Museri and Daniel Rudasevski (current CEO's) (Selina, n.d.-a). Previously running real estate businesses, to develop their own town and create a sense of community with locals and the travelers who came to visit, they both decided to revolutionize the hospitality field.

Selina is a concept which focuses on five main aspects: stay, explore, surf, cowork, and wellness. In the present time, it has developed into sixty new destinations worldwide. Independently from location, some specific traits can be found in all of them, mostly concerning design, upcycled materials, and locally-sourced artwork. Nevertheless, each location offers its own culture in different forms, such as in food, outdoor and indoor activities, music, and art.

Naturally, there are various types of accommodation, from luxury suites to community rooms and glamping tents. Surfing plays a huge role in the company's DNA as well, as the Surf Club illustrates the desired lifestyle: reaching out to nature in order to enjoy a good time with an amazing company. The club itself is divided into lessons and rentals: proposing different classes to each level of the sport that participants might have, and the surfing equipment (surfboards/paddleboards) are available for every person that wishes to access them.

On a more professional note, in the matter of DN, the cowork spaces are offices beautifully designed which can be found in city centers or beaches, for instance. These spaces provide great flexibility for working remotely, helping to boost creativity and productivity.

Community-related programs constitute an important meaning to the company too. Vida by Selina, installed only in Costa Rica, establishes relaxation with workshops and festivals (arts and music). As for the Stay and Play program, it provides the opportunity for interaction between individuals on their health and wellness knowledge. Lastly, the aim of Luna Loyalty (Selina, n.d.-b) is to give the travelers who choose Selina as their mobile home tokens, which can result in welcome drinks, free accommodation, among other benefits in any location.

2.1.1 The Gringo Trail

Latin America (LA) has grown considerably throughout the years in the tourism industry. Most of the countries depend deeply on foreigners for the economy to survive; especially the travelers who wish to spend a good amount of time there, either staying in one place for months or jumping between locations. With that in mind, the gringo trail is a journey along forty regions in thirteen countries of LA (Pattara, 2016).

The word “gringo” itself is frequently heard among locals in LA, connoted with the foreigners and visitors that do not share a Latin background (Edwards, 2013). In terms of access and planning, the trail is sectioned into two parts as a result of the swamp dividing Colombia and Panama (Darien Gap); therefore, the travelers will usually either choose to explore South America or Mexico and Central America altogether.

Without a doubt, this trail connects culture, and history, fitted for each traveler’s taste. Nonetheless, it can be characterized as traditional and quite outdated due to the development of backpacking (Pattara, 2016). There is a real investment from countries that are part of the trail in order to bring tourists along. For instance, some foreign investors are constructing the new tourist facilities on site. By following this track, the travelers face the risk of becoming mainstream; in order to escape the beaten path, it is essential to dominate the Spanish language (Edwards, 2013).

2.2 Size and structure

Since 2014, Selina has had a remarkable development in terms of the company's size. From Latin America, just after six years, the hospitality company can now be found in European, Asian and American continents: South America is the most fruitful region, with 29 different locations; Central America just a little behind, counting 20; the United States of America and Mexico with 14; last but not least, Europe accommodating 15 Selina's (Portugal being the dominating country in Europe with six of them) (Publituris, 2018; Selina, n.d.-c).

In terms of internal organization and staff, there are between 1500 to 1900 employees involved in the company currently. The contrasting areas cover the following: repairs and maintenance, housekeeping, bartending, interior design, food and beverage (F&B), hotel administration (HA), security, architecture, development, sales and marketing (S&M), operations, front desk, accounting and human resources (HR), insurance, experience/cultural. Hierarchically, each location in every country has a manager for experience, S&M, operations, F&B, and an area general manager, which is the highest position. As for accounting and HR, there is usually a supervisor.

2.2.1 Employees and careers

Openings for new employees are quite common at the company, especially due to the many locations and job categories available. To work at Selina, the general application must be done through the website fulfilled with the following information: region of the world, location, job type (full-time, part-time), and category.

While working at Selina, there is a list of benefits which the workers can be keen on, such as discounts for accommodation in any location (along with friends and family), participate in cultural events and wellness activities for free along with participating in online career development opportunities and training sessions (Jobvite, n.d.). Furthermore, the usage of a recruitment platform entitled Jobvite ("Jobvite," n.d.), designed to empower businesses and create trustworthy interactions, helps to find new positions and relocate employees within the company, unaided to where the worker is established at that moment.

2.2.2 Internships

Interns play a massive role at Selina since there are quite a lot at each location and positions are open regularly.

To become one, the criteria is simple and straight-forward (Selina, n.d.-d): being older than eighteen, enrolled in an educational institution or university (followed by approval of the regulation containing the internship period), and, finally, an open mind who is willing to do and be better. On one hand, the learning plans or junior internships are characterized by a period of three to six months at one location in specific, in the departments of F&B, Hospitality Operations, Hotel Marketing, and Experience, plus Hotel Administration.

In a different manner, senior internships with the same duration are more designed towards location management and corporative work at a country or global scale. Lastly, the Young Professional Trainee Program has a longer duration (six to twelve months) and fits the singular location, country, and global management levels. Besides the employees' benefits mentioned formerly, the intern has the birthday day off, no dress code, as well as food allowance on site (breakfast and lunch).

2.2.3 Selina real estate and partnerships

Considering it is a hostel, space and design are of extreme importance to stand out from the competition in the hospitality business. As landlords, Selina considers themselves experts in bringing value to a property, generating a new wave of travelers to the community. When it comes to searching for projects in development in the market, the hunters and brokers are chosen wisely to find the best opportunities (Selina, n.d.-e).

To partner with the company, the person/people of interest should be aware of the succeeding details: storytelling through buildings is required (old buildings are very welcome), the property in question should have strong infrastructure, open spaces and common areas, coping with vibrant neighbors and/or dealing with remote, off the beaten track destinations.

The connection between partners and the real estate field empowers the strategic growth of the company and Selina's exclusive brand (which will be specified), at the same

time that it provides the ultimate goal: to create meaningful connections between travelers, locals, and nature.

2.3 Areas of business

2.3.1 Accommodation/ Cowork space

Firstly, as introduced before, Selina's main field is that of hospitality; therefore, there is great emphasis on the housing as the face of the brand and actual living space for its customers.

The base of Selina's accommodation is quite location independent, which means that the infrastructures and typology of bedrooms/apartments/tents are very similar. The only matter is that they are always adaptable to the environment in the surroundings and to the type of traveler who may come their way. The detailed description of the hostel in Porto, accommodation wise, will be presented later on.

In relation to pricing, the more people fit into one community room the cheaper it is. It is possible to find luxury suites, which will of course be high ranked and priced. Overall, the company tries to fit all customers best, from the backpackers who want to spend the least amount of money to the tourists who wish to enjoy without looking at the price tag.

Coworking is as well an area of Selina's expertise. As working digitally in a nomadic way started to grow within society, pioneer companies started to benefit from that modernization of a 9-5 job. Decidedly, there was a market need to create spaces where any person could rent a few hours for meetings or for working alone.

2.3.1.1 History and economy

Going back to the year 2014, the founders of Selina immediately invested in cowork spaces (CS), aiming at digital nomads who were simply visiting for a few months or staying at the destination for a couple of years. In 2019, there was an increase in their budget (around US\$100 million) for finding new properties, with the goal set at 400 CS by 2023 (Davison, 2019).

Price and fees wise, naturally depending on the country's economy and development, starts at around 211,13\$. The typology shares between private offices, dedicated desks, and

an open plan (rented by the day) (Selina, n.d.-f). Memberships are possible and quite beneficial in the long run if the client of the space wishes to spend a few months working there.

This ongoing trend not only has been felt in Latin America but across all continents. The benefits of being able to work anywhere with free Wi-Fi, with an individual desk, free coffee, and water, without any schedule defined, have outgrown the traditional perspective of working. The target market is usually remote professionals, independent freelancers, and entrepreneurs (Konya, 2019). In detail and further on, will be the analysis of the CS in Porto.

2.3.2 Personal brand plus retail

Supporting creative artists, national artifacts and international talents is one of Selina's biggest goals and accomplishments. Apart from being a brand, owing their own merchandise, it is equally predominant to share clothes, jewelry, handmade crafts, paintings, drawings, and sculptures from different street artists that wish to have their work displayed at Selina. Retail plays an important role not only in the business, but mostly in creating an atmosphere of sharing, creativity, differentiation, and uniqueness.

Furthermore, partnerships with surf and yoga brands are central as well to reinforce the atmosphere of tranquility, nature, and life equilibrium between work and leisure; such is the case of DEEPLY.

2.4 Response to the Covid-19 pandemic

The tourism sector has suffered a tremendous change due to the situation of calamity that the world has been facing since the end of 2019 and the beginning of 2020. These are times that ask for fast, effective solutions in order to preserve businesses, professionals, and clients.

Global wide, Selina had most of its team sites' in each location going into lay-off at a certain point; however, those who kept working (mainly managers) and those at home still had counseling and guidance from the headquarters in Panama.

Concerning the employees, throughout all quarantine there were newsletters, explaining the situation at that moment, the boosting of the CULTURE! Survey, which is done each month and has the aim to understand if the employee is happy with their monthly tasks and decisions, which also creates the opportunity to mention if something was not so pleasant.

Besides, through ZOOM, the nominal “Bonfire Talks” consisted of meetings with any worker/intern that wanted to join, where the CEO and usually three more people of choice would talk about the virus and its’ implications, as well as what was Selina’s vision for the following months and the decisions that were being taken. In the Bonfire that took place on the 31st of March, some relevant decisions were shared: it was decided to not expand to any more location in the following months; to shut down 99% of the location, not expecting tourism to come back in great force; to stop for three/four months would allow the company and its’ staff to do an introspection and learn more about themselves; during September/October millennials will start traveling again; Selina has enough capital to pilot itself for a few months until it is possible to get closer to normality again.

Also, there was great concern for those who, as a consequence, lost their job. Therefore, the “Selina Employee Relief Fund” was created with the objective to support employees facing hard times due to natural implications. Through GoFundMe, colleagues could donate and the money would revert to the ones most affected by the pandemic; the only criteria were that the individual had been working at Selina for at least six months, their income was the minimum wage, and was recently fired. Another initiative was “Hello Neighbor”, consisting of virtual learning, support groups, and food deliveries at medical staff and nursing homes.

On a softer note, since March there were webinars and workshops about helping the workers stay sane and safe at home, using meditation exercises, simply talking and discussing mental health, mentioning tips and tricks on how to still be creative and find inspiration.

As for the clients, taking advantage of digital platforms like Facebook, SIMS Online, and Instagram, Selina invested in live streams of DJ performances almost every evening, artistic and sportive workshops, as well as open webinars of different themes. Around June/July, depending on the country, ambitioning to bring tourists back, a lot of sales

promotion arose in accommodation, also allowing people to live at Selina, with all the bills included at a reasonable price (in Portugal, around 230-250 euros per month).

Giving back to the community was additionally important. Since the hostel was closed, it was decided to offer the rooms to nurses and doctors to live in while working at the hospital. Besides, when the virus started to spread, a quarantine room was immediately distinguished, in case any worker or client started having symptoms.

Chapter III- Selina in Porto: a creative, intelligent urban city

“The movement of persons to cultural attractions away from their normal place of residence, with the intention to gather new information and experiences to satisfy their cultural needs.”

Richards, 1996.

Creative clusters are the outcome of the development and change felt in society, brought to life to capture cultural life, a sense of community, and to encourage city identity. Metropolis creativity, not only creates value but also allows the growth of innovative products quite fast; most of the time, the resources are local and therefore more sustainable. (Evans, 2009).

Research about modern cities cannot be executed without the dimensions of urban life, divided into three sectors: social, technological, and physical. Together, they hold graffiti, informal architecture, photograph albums, virtual mediations, and cognitive maps. (Kantaris, 2019). These are all actions of representing intervention through space. (Lefebvre, 1991). The author Itami (1991) affirms that there are three main features each individual represents: Firstly, a consumer; then, an income earner; and, finally, a cultural actor and contributor to community life (Okano & Samson, 2010).

Creative city and creativity are presented by international institutions, for instance, OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation) plus UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization). Creativity is referred to as being an individual process related to the arts or entrepreneurial field. However, at the present moment, it is also a crucial component of urban city planning. Directly connected to this fact, are the citizens who may show their appreciation and involvement in the community, proving its creative outcome and achievement.

At the same time, digital transformation is occurring. There is an upcoming urge for balancing priorities within society, comprising people’s businesses, hobbies, and relationships. Bettering the quality of living for all, and especially young people, are extremely important since they play an active role in society, culture, and politics.

Altogether, these urban spaces come to redefine working sectors, technology, culture, education, infrastructure, arts, and sports. The key element is to innovate local, sustainable businesses, cultural issues, environmental politics, and the sense of community, to be able to address global change successfully (Deffner & Vlachopoulou, 2011).

The core force being human potential, the citizens of creative cities are denominated “creative class” (Cooper & Florida, 2005). The potential these people offer is of extreme magnitude for shaping the metropolis’ ideology, identity, and cultural image; often, these individuals are academics, artists, businessmen who wish to enhance the city’s value, enjoying its’ modernism, attractiveness and life quality. The “Creative Class”, as Florida announces, is described by their flexibility and autonomy in the creative process, as well as demonstrating a sense of individuality and an open mind for the new and distinctive (Deffner & Vlachopoulou, 2011; Schnook, 2013).

For an urban city to stand out from the competition in the market, there are a few steps to take into consideration. Primarily, it should make the best use of their natural sources and environment, contributing to captivating business opportunities. Followed by the identification of new sub-markets, for the creation of new jobs, generating income, and inspiring investment. Besides, an equilibrium between living quality and economic growth is key, as well as between social and economic development (Deffner & Vlachopoulou, 2011; Schnook, 2013).

As stated by Florida (2002), the results of creativity in the economy can be absolute through the three T’s of economic development: talent, technology, and tolerance; this way, a concentration of diversity in the forms of people, skills and ideas in the same place will occur. The author’s theory of the Creative Class has been assumed by a large number of local governments in cities around Europe, North America, and Australia (Schnook, 2013).

3.1 Creative Spaces

...space is neither a mere 'frame', after the fashion of the frame of painting, nor a form or container of a virtually neutral kind, designed simply to receive whatever is poured into it. Space is social morphology: it is to lived experience what form itself is to the living organism, and just as intimately bound up with function and structure.

(Lefebvre, 1991:93-94)

It was already in the Renaissance that an urge to thrive spaces for writers and artists came to life. These were meant to be spaces where they could be creative and let their imagination and work flow. Nowadays, their creation is highly connected to this tradition, moreover followed by modern technology in the 21st century.

Space itself can be designated as a haven for creativity and learning, depending naturally on the personal preferences of the users, allowing a wider worldwide sense of community within foreigners and locals. Creativity, while the latter activity, desires stimulation to develop and grow, allowing for new ideas to flourish (Williams, 1999).

Thus, due to the expanding demand in the market, companies are dedicating their time to developing new physical areas with the aim to simplify the creative process of their clients. This process is usually symbolized by the exchange of ideas, thoughts, and thinking outside of the box (Wentworth & Osborn, 1955).

Kang and Yoshimi (2001) introduced the division of public space dimensions into four categories. Firstly, the descent of the public space from nature and of an exact place; secondly, spaces with multifaceted identity in the profoundness of globalization; thirdly, public spaces renounceable of different cultures, trying to compel an egalitarian identity; finally, global public spaces, which perform as a collectivist force, with the ambition to reverse the previous space types. For that global governance to happen, it is essential to incorporate a structure that overcomes countries' differences, conflating them all, managing from a global point of view (Okano & Samson, 2010).

3.1.1 Practical cultural tools

Selina in Porto was one of the first Selina's in the whole of Europe, due to bigger proximity with Latin America, in language and distance. The company supports creatives in the areas of music, dance, wellness and education too. During Covid-19, most of the celebrations were done online.

Selina welcomes creatives in the music/film making industry, by putting into practice the "Film Residency" program; the person in charge of creating digital content for the location in exchange has free accommodation and access to all facilities of the hostel, for an

unlimited time. Regarding exercise, the same also occurs with yoga teachers. This reciprocity is beneficial for both parties, as most of the time workers are from a foreign country, which allows them to be in contact with a completely different culture and maybe open new professional doors for them.

Specifically, there is a celebration of the International Day of Creativity and Innovation, on the 21st of April which was celebrated among the community of Porto. On this particular day, there was an appeal to visit a platform called World Creativity Day (World Creativity Day, 2020) to promote creativeness through free activities with communities around the globe. This online platform cherishes its motives by assembling leaders to each city and giving them the task to organize a special event. Right now, in 2020, the initiative was raised online, for anyone who wishes to join the creative movement.

Furthermore, International Relaxation Day was also found important to be commemorated among the community, on the 15th of August. As mentioned before, contact with nature and escaping everyday life is a well-known characteristic of backpackers. Therefore, the appeal was to experience yoga lessons, followed by breakfast, and finalize with a surf lesson.

3.2 Selina Mosaico Club Porto

3.2.1 Digital Transformation

Simon Marginson defines a new “global synchrony”, the diverse communication which determines the will individuals hold to be connected with others, at the same time that a sense of individual autonomy is being explored (King, 2012). Creativity, imagination, and knowledge are key factors in the current global age of business, economics, and culture as well.

The social and organizational turn perceived since the industrial revolution values the ability to think outside of the box economically but culturally also. Sometimes, one needs to distance himself from personal relationships and possible cultural baggage; contrastingly, it is also crucial to establish routines, as they too are a need in the creative process, preventing its rupture. In the global creative economy, the surroundings are both openness and closeness (King, 2012).

Digital transformation is generally theorized as a process by which social existence is increasingly affected by digital processes, digital tools, and an abundance of information. The culture industry economizes leisure, discussions, opinions, and information, transforming intellectual phenomenon into economized entertainment for a passive audience of mass consumers (Ossewaarde, 2019).

As concerns this new era, digitalization is the act of alternating data into a digital configuration, which can be treated by a computer. As explained before, it does not apply only to the sector of technology. There is a new business model named “Platform” which is using technology as a means for organizations, people, and resources to connect, by creating and exchanging value. Momentarily, it is transforming the economy, society, and business. Digital transformation is not only technology, it is strategy, culture, and people open to change.

This new business model defeats the traditional one at different scales: platforms are more efficient, as they have no intervention of a gatekeeper, facilitating contact and rapid growth; new fountains of supply and addition of value to new creation are discovered; data-based means are used for creating a sense of circular communication, therefore constant feedback follows.

The biggest concern and focus in this type of business are the clients, from both perspectives: the one that is offering (supply) and the one that is providing (demand). The network effects consist of the impact that the number of users has on the value produced for each one. The bottom line is this: the ability each platform community is capable of offering to its users, as well as gratifyingly-management (Parker et al., 2016).

Addressing tourism as an intercultural business is both an opportunity and challenge. The opportunity to develop routes of cultural tourism while empowering and engaging communities in the protection of cultural heritage; the challenge to enhance sustainable tourism, with an impact on employment, economic growth, poverty reduction, environmental protection and the general preservation of authenticity in culture and heritage. (Sarmiento, 2020:400)

The example of Selina demonstrates how local culture attracts and boosts the opportunity for different experiences, creating value for the company. At the location in Porto, similarly to other cities, an embracing of the local customs and traditions occurs in order to enhance the Portuguese culture at the eyes of the foreigners, as well as perpetuating

a huge commitment from the business to adjustability and will of integration where it fits its purpose (for instance, encountering the target audience).

At Selina Porto, the most notable resemblance to the Portuguese culture can be found in the reception of the hostel, as shown in figure 4. There belongs a wall painting of the heads of Fernando Pessoa, Mário de Sá Carneiro, and José de Almada Negreiros, important names of the arts and literature. This art piece aims to pay tribute to the first Portuguese literary magazine – Orpheu.



Figure 4 – Orpheu at Selina Porto (EUROBOOKINGS, N.D.).

Besides, at Selina Secret Garden in Lisbon, a huge street art portrait of António Variações can be found, as can be observable in figure 5. This artwork refers to one of the most influential singer and songwriter Portugal has ever witnessed. Also, it is important to mention that the authors of this work are Draw&Contra, two notable Portuguese street artists.



Figure 5 – António Variações at Selina secret garden Lisboa (BOOKING, N.D.).

Both examples are considered to be magnifying the local culture, since those involved have played a great part in Portuguese literature, arts, and music, with great influence on our culture as a whole, still to this day. Through creativity in architecture, design, and especially art, Selina has managed to honor great Portuguese influences, allowing foreigners to take notice of national figures who shaped the city and country they are visiting.

3.2.2 Concept, layout, and activities

Just the street above the hostel, Selina's cowork space was designed and implemented in an old Arabic building (news about its opening can be seen in figure 6). This is a space purposeful to enhance creativity and productivity, with maximum flexibility to bring work and travel together (Selina, n.d.-f).

It aims its efforts at freelancers, digital nomads, entrepreneurs, and local start-ups to outgrow themselves. It is an area influenced by the past and future, finding the work/fun balance in a well-equipped technological place.

The layout division incorporates six distinct zones: a work area with big, shared desks; a lounge for group purposes; a multipurpose space for presentations and meetings; a

bar for small work breaks; Grab & Go station for picking up meals; and, finally, a common kitchen with water, free tea, and coffee, plus fruit. Members of the club may join after hours for networking events, stand-up comedy night, Roda de Samba, and even tours around the city; there are many paths to become part of the community (Selina, n.d.-f). As affirmed by Marko Orel (2019): “This confirms the assumption that cowork spaces are not only frequently used services but have become an integral part of digital nomad’s life” (p.8).

Members can choose from three different loyalty plans: Basic Nomad (one month), True Nomad (three months), and Country Nomad (six months). The last one provides access to discounts on the hostel, regarding accommodation and different services too. The price range goes from 180€ to 220€ per month (Portoalities, 2020). It is also possible to choose to stay for only a day or a few hours.



Figure 6 – The opening of Selina’s cowork space in MAGG magazine (MAGG, 2019).

3.2.3 Response to international growth and personal maneuver

With the fast progression of the coworking phenomenon around the world, it is expected that in 2022 there will be around 25,968 spaces globally, as depicted in figure 7. Ever since 2015, there has been a significant increase in the number of CS (Workstreet, 2020). The rise of coworking in Portugal started in Lisbon, with Manutenção Militar holding Web Summit, one of the biggest international conferences, in their facilities (this event involves more than 50,000 entrepreneurs) (Selina, n.d.-f).

Due to its continuously changing and developing nature, these areas can also be considered a living space (Workstreet, 2020). Some cowork spaces offer their members the chance to both work and live there, supplying accommodation plus desk/offices (Selina, n.d.-f).

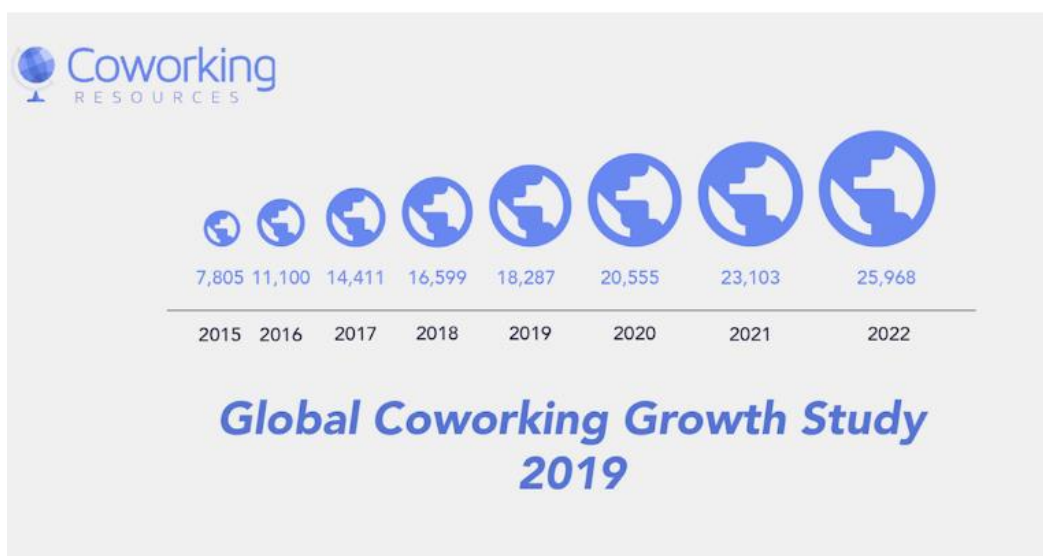


Figure 7 – Habits of attending cowork spaces in 2019 (Workstreet, 2020).

Selina is often characterized as an ecosystem for explorers, digital nomads, and travelers, reconceptualizing the meaning of work and travel. As expressed before, digital nomadism also follows to expand at an exponential rate (Medium, 2018).

As the future of work follows a new tendency, where remote jobs and flexible timetable prevails, it is highly expected that the community of the cowork space in Porto will continue to develop, grow and be innovative in itself³. Ditto, this extension will undergo other Selinas in the rest of the country and locations in Central and South America, Asia, and Europe.

³ On behalf of the Covid-19 pandemic, it is expected that CS will have to compromise in financial terms (landlords and memberships wise), in order to entice new and fellow members to join, creating a bigger corporate demand. As the remote work movement grows, workers may choose to work outside of their homes, with the advantage of being placed in a safe environment following all the hygiene rules. Also, these spaces may present new forms, such as “pop-up”, only temporarily for specific events/projects at a certain local. Definitely, the pandemic came to redefine the practices and dynamics of the CS (Pitts et al., 2020).

Chapter IV- Internship Experience and Description

This chapter will analyze the internship in which I engaged in various levels: the tasks I had to perform and their evolution throughout time; the workspace and environment I was surrounded by; as well as the relationship developed with my colleagues and tutors for each department. Therefore, it is divided into three parts.

Being a curricular internship with a duration of six months (from February 1st until July 31st), with a 40h/week work journey (including weekends) the biggest aim was to explore each department of the company in order to obtain a better understanding of its function as a whole.

Immediately after I was officially accepted as an intern by Panamá, I was given a Selina e-mail, which I would be using throughout the whole internship, as well as an account on BAMBOOHR; a platform in which all Selina employees must be registered on. On this app, each employee will be able to see information about other colleagues, request for days off, see how many days it is possible to be working remotely, and, finally, consult the working and birthday calendar. As the proper name indicates, BAMBOOHR facilitates the work of the human resources department as it creates a sense of belonging to everyone in the company. On February 1st, Hugo Neves was the one in charge of my welcoming into Selina.

As for the facilities of Selina Porto, it is equipped with a cafeteria, a restaurant/bar, the reception of the hostel, a lounge room with bunk beds and tables, and a beautiful garden. For guests only, the private individual rooms (unique, deluxe, standard), shared rooms (dormitories of 4/6/8/15 people; triple; quadruple) as well as the common kitchen and a library on top of the building are available.

4.1 Functions and work progress

4.1.1 Hotel Administration

Firstly, I began as an intern at the reception of the hostel, which is open 24h the whole week. According to the internship plan designed with Manuel Carneiro (tutor), it was essential to start here in order to get familiar with the system and programs used and also to

comprehend how the hostel is organized, what is the main target and how its administrative part works. For the greatest part of the month, I was involved in the department of Hotel Administration.

As for reception work, the five most important tasks consisted in:

- Doing check-in and check-outs;
- Extending stays;
- Informing the travelers about Selina's cultural activities plus partnerships (Wine Tours, Surf Lessons, Yoga Lessons, Douro Cruises; Free Walking Tours);
- Selling clothing, artistic pieces, or jewelry from Portuguese handmade brands (La Luna, Mariana Baldaia, SUFILOU);
- Making posters and doing stocktaking.

The hostel's property management system is WINKSHOTEL ("Winkshotel," 2016), which is one of the most used in the hospitality business. It is constantly updating so that each Selina in every country has the newest version. Also, it is connected to the central in Panama, as they are the ones who insert the reservations on the system. WINKS provides a quite intuitive setup and way of working, it is online so there is no need to install any program or be at the workplace to control what is happening at the moment with customers and reservations. When it comes to retail or any sales (such as food, towels, or lockers), they are also notified through this system.

Regarding checking in and checking out, the procedure has different steps for both. As for the check-in, the first thing is collecting the guest's ID/Passport and inserting the data on the system. Then, print the registration card with their data and rules/information of the hostel for them to sign. Once that is done, comes the payment which always includes the tourist tax (for the City Hall), which is 2€ per night and per person. The only thing left is providing the guest with the key to their room (usually just one for reservation) and offering the Selina bracelet; each location has a different one adapted to its place and culture (ex: Porto's has a blue background reminding the typical tiles).

Checking out is a lot simpler and quicker: the room key is collected and the guest is free to leave the facility, with the choice of leaving their bags at the reception and coming back later to pick them up at any time.

Another quite relevant tool is SALTO Systems (“SALTO Systems,” n.d.), which is dedicated to creating keys to the customer’s rooms. It offers the highest control technology, aligned with an intuitive program allowed in any computer. It grants perfect security not only for guests but for every employee that might be in any common area at Selina. Moreover, this system is in constant updating as well.

The main travel agents which cooperate with Selina are Booking, Expedia Group, and Hostel World. These partners provide the information on their websites and keep the hostel updated on every question regarding reservations: guests’ information, rates, reviews, and messages. On the extranet of each site, it is possible to manage Selina’s account and presentation to the public. Another important aspect is that it is viable to observe on WINKS if the pick-up (Xotels, n.d.), a term which relates to the number of bookings created by an agent, has been growing or declining; therefore helping to realize if the partnership should continue or not.

Regarding cultural activities which are offered to the guests, they also include many partnerships, especially with Wine Cellars and Douro Cruises. In the first place, one of the most famous tours among travelers consists of the Free Walking Tour, happening each day at 9:30 am, 11 am, and 4 pm; the morning ones being more historical and the afternoon one is more culture-oriented. Then, *Don’t Whine Drink Wine* is also quite requested, with the price of 25€ per person. On this tour, the customers have the opportunity to go to one cellar and two bars alongside the city of Porto, as they try all different types of wine (Port, White, Red, Green) while also eating some Portuguese traditional tapas.

For the younger travelers, the Pub Crawl is very appreciated, as it is 10€ per person and the goal is to enjoy the city life at Galerias Paris, with free entrance at any club and the option to consume 2 shots and 1 soft drink at 11 pm every night (except Sundays). The Douro cruises also have some interest from the guests, but as they are quite expensive the demand is not that huge. On a more sportive basis, the yoga lessons are free, happening on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 8:30 am to 9:30 am, meanwhile the surf lessons (occurring mostly in summertime) have a price of 25€ per person with the durability of around 3 hours.

Over the month of February, I also had the opportunity to go to the most recent Selina in Portugal, located in Gerês. There, I performed various tasks regarding reception and organization of the place, as it was still a working site and functioning only at about 20%.

In this particular case, we encounter a soft opening (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.) since December. This is the final verdict to realize what is functioning perfectly well and what needs to be improved based on a limited number of guests until the official opening, which was supposed to happen in April/May, but due to the Covid-19 had to be postponed.

4.2 Workplace

The whole structure of Selina Porto is involved in an artistic environment; therefore, the working areas are as pleasant as the proper areas for guests or customers.

Due to my first internship task, I spent most of my time at the reception of the hostel. It is like no ordinary reception, as it has a peculiar design that emerged in the Portuguese culture, as discussed earlier. One of the most intriguing features is the wall painting of Fernando Pessoa, Mário de Sá Carneiro, and José de Almada Negreiros, the creators of *Orpheu* (the first Portuguese literary magazine). Another asset is the TV that displays at all times the videos of various Selinas in Latin America, and of course, Porto produced and directed by foreigners from the Film Residency program.

When moving to the Sales and Marketing department, my new working space was the office at the top of the library. Here, I spent most of my day with Pedro Silva and Sandra Lopes, each at our own desks. This space was quite more formal than the rest of the facilities, as only employees were allowed. However, it had a simple, clean, white design, which ended up being welcoming and cozy as well.

Each month, there is a poster displaying the calendar of events that will occur every week and weekend at Selina Porto. These events and activities can be workshops, art galleries, poetry sessions, and many other cultural activities. For instance, since February, in the common hall we could see and visit an exhibition called *Alquimia*, a jewelry exposition, and each week there were poetry workshops happening. As music also plays a huge role in the company's vision, there were a lot of DJ performances, especially at night. During winter the productions were hosted in the restaurant and during summer in the garden area.

4.3 Colleagues

As this is quite a recent company, with innovative and creative ideas that would soon begin to change the hospitality world, the people that work at Selina share that same free spirit and enjoy working in a non-conventional environment. Surrounded by art and artists, people with totally different ways of living, an employee has to have an open mind and be able to adapt to the circumstances.

From what I could experience these past months, the workforce is quite young and friendly, regardless of the hierarchy. From the general manager to the housekeeping ladies, we are all sure to greet everyone once we arrive and before we leave. Certainly, this laid off attitude does not affect the personal values or each individual nor the company's way of working; for sure, this is a Latin American characteristic in business that prevailed all the way through the Atlantic Ocean.

Also, being a global company, I had the pleasure to work with people from different continents. One of my first contacts was with a girl from the cafeteria, originally from South America; also, a month later than me, came an intern from Iceland to stay at Selina for a couple of months as well. Naturally, we would speak in English, but Portuguese was welcome too, even though it was harder for them. These two girls, Anyka and Gudrum, represent exactly what Selina is and how you should feel: welcomed and happy at your job/internship.

Finally, I think it is crucial to mention that working with us, were also young adults from Santa Casa da Misericórdia. They were around 21 years old and worked mainly at the cafeteria/bar and in the kitchen. For them, it was a great opportunity to not only be in contact with different people, but also to see themselves in a working environment, and develop their skills as individuals and professionals. Each day, they would be left at Selina in the morning and picked up at the end of their shift, around 5 pm.

4.4 Sales and Marketing

After my first month of experience in Hotel Administration, in March I proceeded to the Sales and Marketing department. For the first few days, I worked directly with Pedro

Silva in order to see what kind of work I would be dealing with and to be aware of its dynamic. This section will be divided into the Sales part and the Marketing part.

On Sales, the main tasks I performed included:

- Answering emails about groups and events that wanted to collaborate with Selina;
- Create reservations on Winks for specific groups;
- Making rooming lists on Excel;
- Writing service orders.

When there are groups wishing to stay at Selina, it is directly coordinated with this department, whether it is a big or small number of people, which means we are responsible for creating their reservation and inserting all the data of the guests. In this case, there is a procedure one needs to follow in order for the reservation to advance.

Firstly, when the agency or person in charge of the group gets in contact with us through email, the first thing to do is check the availability for those specific days; once that is done, there will be a price-checking so that we can communicate the values estimated for the whole group and reservation (the rates can be changed due to the demand). Also, we will inform about the half-board and full-board price range (17.50€ and 30€, respectively).

For the reservation to be completed, the group will have to pay a commission of 50% of the final value and the rest at check-in time. If for some reason, there is a cancellation, it has to occur on 15 days' notice. At Selina, for invoicing, we operate with FACT ("FACT," n.d.), a system where the company controls its sales, does all the invoices, keeps track of bank transfers, products, clients, and reports. It is a very important tool especially for Human Resources, but I also worked a lot with it further on.

Secondly, once everything is settled and the group is arriving within a week, the following step is to prepare the rooming list in Excel (table 2). There will be contained all the information regarding the guests (name, ID, nationality, gender, date of birth), as well as their room typology, number, and bed, as can be seen on the following example:

Table 2 – Rooming list of MBO college airport at Selina.

Rooming Selina Porto MBO College Airport									
#	Type	Hab	Name	Surname	Gender	Nationality	ID/ Passport	Birthday Date	Issuance Date
1	DIU	2003							
2	DIU	2006							
3	DIU	2007							
4	4 beds	4001-1							
5	4 beds	4001-2							
6	4 beds	4001-3							
7	4 beds	4001-4							
8	4 beds	4002-1							
9	4 beds	4002-2							
10	4 beds	4002-3							
11	4 beds	4002-4							
12	6 beds	3004-1							
13	6 beds	3004-2							
14	6 beds	3004-3							
15	6 beds	3004-4							
16	6 beds	3004-5							
17	6 beds	3004-6							
18	6 beds	3005-1							
19	6 beds	3005-2							
20	6 beds	3005-3							
21	6 beds	3005-4							
22	6 beds	3005-5							
23	6 beds	3005-6							
24	6 beds	3006-1							
25	6 beds	3006-2							
26	6 beds	3006-3							
27	6 beds	3006-4							
28	6 beds	3006-5							
29	6 beds	3006-6							
30	6 beds	4004-1							
31	6 beds	4004-2							
32	6 beds	4004-3							
33	6 beds	4004-4							
34	6 beds	4004-5							
35	6 beds	4004-6							

Concerning events, usually related to the Food & Beverage department, Pedro and I were in charge of them as well. The operation mode is not so different from the groups, as the clients contact Selina by e-mail and the same procedure follows. Nevertheless, the typology is quite different.

As Selina consists of a lounge room, a bar/restaurant, and a big garden, they are usually quite requested for meetings of various principles. When the event includes a buffet, the kitchen also has to be informed so that a menu can be prepared. In some cases, there can be bracelets that every participant has to wear in order for the employees at Selina to know they belong in the event, as in LEVI'S case. Usually, the facilities remain open for the public, but the event area is restricted to the participants.

With both groups and events in mind, it is necessary to write an email with the Service Order which will be sent to everyone involved: the managers, the kitchen, and the reception. This is an explanatory e-mail, concerning all the information regarding the guests (how many people, arrival/departure time, half-board or full-board, which rooms, and any other important details specific to that case) or clients (how many people, the buffet menu, arrival time).

Almost finishing with the Sales section, one of the most prestigious Selina's partners is CN Travel, a Spanish travel agency. In order to keep track of the profit and to continue

the good relationship between both companies, for every guest that comes here from CN Travel, we must create an invoice and upload it to their basis. Around this time, I started working with FACT and became familiar with the system, as this was one of the most significant tasks I had done until that time.

In order to prepare the invoice, the first action is to open the guests' reservation on Winks and create a credit note, so that afterward it can appear on FACT directly. On the invoice itself, the rates of bed, breakfast, and any other activity (for instance, yoga class) must be included. Since it hasn't been paid yet, we are dealing with a simplified invoice, whether if it had been paid already it would be called an invoice-receipt. The simplified invoice has three essential aspects: the locator number, the due date, and must always be in the name of the company (CN Travel's example: Seijas y Otero, S.L). Once it has been emitted, an Excel should be updated with the following information on each invoice: name of reservation, locator number, check-in/check-out, amount, and payment.

Due to the Covid-19 situation, around the middle of March, we started experiencing a lot of cancellations, not only regarding groups and events but individual reservations as well. This eventually led to a lot of capital loss and kept employees and interns from working at Selina, so I started working remotely, from home. During this time, I was in charge of checking the cancellations' rates each day and uploading it on an Excel file, so that we could observe how Selina was being penalized economically singularly on reservations. Just as described previously on how the company dealt with Covid-19 worldwide, I too took part in the strategy to outgrow the situation at Porto, realizing the impacts in order to obtain a possible solution as an individual location (both hostel and cowork space). The measures applied to the hostel were the same as in the rest of the countries, clarified previously on the response to the pandemic matter. With respect to the CS, the description of the task will be delineated henceforth.

4.4.1 A small contribution to Selina's Marketing department

Concerning the Marketing domain, there were three main tasks in my professional care. The first one is related to Booking, with the aim to answer the reviews each guest has made, whether they are good or bad. If for some reason, there is a bad commentary on Selina's page, we immediately take action and send an email to the person in question to try

to understand what went wrong, and also to offer them a free stay. Booking is not only the most famous travel platform online to find accommodation during vacation, but one of our biggest partners, as most of the reservations are done through there.

To be able to access the reviews and personal information regarding the hostel and manage its representation on the site, the engine used is called Booking Extranet; this tool is only available for a person who holds a property. When answering guests, it is very important that they feel welcomed to visit Selina again and that their experience has been heard and each suggestion will definitely lead to improvement on Selina's behalf.

The second task refers to conduct a check up on the Google Account, as well as answering guest reviews. For the Google My Business, I had to do small updates on each of these areas:

1. Internet
2. Food & Drink
3. Policies & Payment
4. Activities
5. Services
6. Children
7. Pools
8. Parking and Transportation
9. Wellness
10. Accessibility
11. Business & Events
12. Pets

In addition, aesthetic wise, I did some changes to the site's design. Throughout the whole page, I went for a clean, neutral look, with a hint of a purple/blue color. I figured the images should draw the attention of possible future customers immediately, therefore the basic information, such as number and directions, was left to a second plan.

As captured in both images 8 and 9, to create a sense of closeness and warmth, I reckoned to write a small, informal resume, highlighting the most important features of the company. With this simple and brief strategy, identifying in bold the keywords, it is possible

to capture the visitor’s attention without overwhelming them; on the contrary, the objective is for them to be interested in learning more about the hostel and its mission.

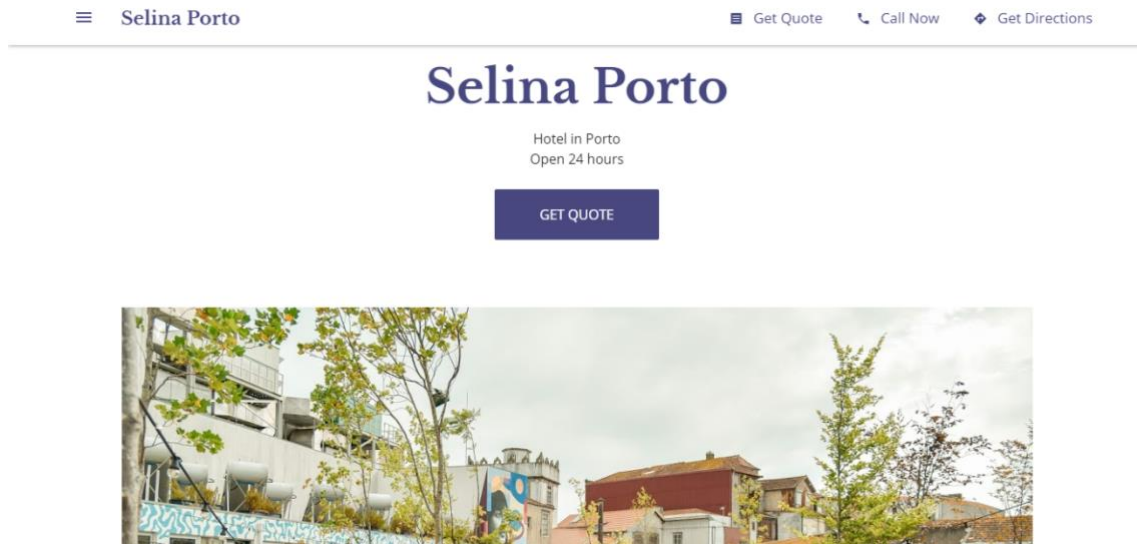


Figure 8 – Selina Porto Business Site (“selina Porto-Hotel in Porto,” n.d).

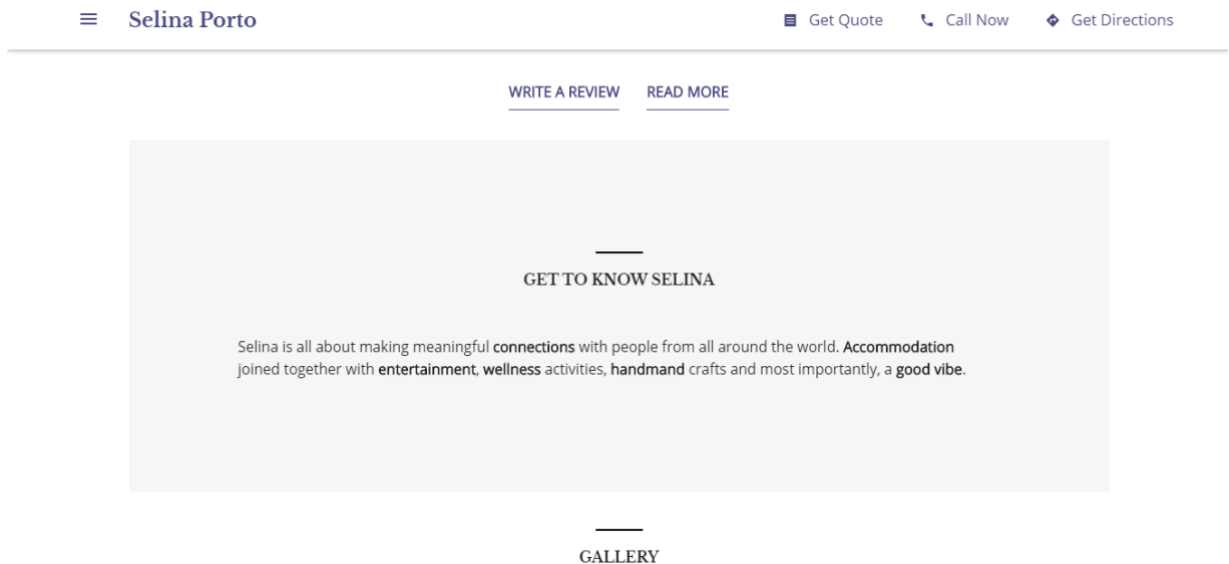


Figure 9 – General presentation of the company in the Selina Porto Business Site (“Selina Porto-Hotel in Porto,” n.d).

The final task in the matter of Marketing had to do with a Mission proposed by the European manager to all managers. The goal was to find several new travel agencies, national and international, that would have a possibility to become Selina's partners. In order to do that, I had to find a personal email or phone number that belonged to an employee who worked there, so that in the future a possible first contact could be done. To perform this task the social network used was LinkedIn.

4.4.2 Data Solo Travelers Booking

To be able to better understand and to complete these tasks, thus contributing to Selina's performance in Porto, I decided to develop a Study to best interpret the company and how it is seen by its customers. In order to communicate in the best way possible what I have learned and experienced, how to interact with the people I welcomed every day, as well as realizing the impact of this business model and to contribute to its expansion and development, conveying the message Selina strives to achieve, this analysis felt as a natural practical procedure.

4.4.2.1 Methodology

I decided to collect and analyze the data from the Booking online platform, under Selina Porto Hostel. This decision was based on the fact that it is the biggest partner Selina holds concerning reservations and a top leader on this area of business worldwide.

For that I developed a qualitative research based on guest's reviews sorted by nationality, divided into the following criticism: staff, decoration, environment, concept, location, outdoor space, cowork space, pet friendly, activities/events, cleanliness, price/quality, food and beverage. Depending on the individual appraisal, up until three characteristics will be stood out on an Excel file. This data collection counts a total of 143 individuals, excluding Portuguese people.

4.4.2.2 Data collection- Sources/ Context

The data compilation contains only reviews done by solo travelers (an existing option on the website) through the Booking platform about their experience at Selina. The guests stayed at the hostel in the period between January and September of 2020. Furthermore, all assessments were written in the English language or the native language of the guests; in which some were anonymous.

It is important to analyze if the vision Selina has of itself is actually in concordance with that of their guests. In other words, understanding if they feel welcomed, inspired and creative by the environment and space, comprehend what features are the most appealing, as well as realizing if a large percentage of travelers it attracts are backpackers and digital nomads (as expected).

4.4.2.3 Brief analysis of the data selected

In the successive Graphic 10, we can see the nationality of the travelers that held a review on Booking. As can be observable, the nationalities which stand out the most are Brazilian (23), German (18), French (15), and Spanish (14).

On the opposite side, American, Argelian, Austrian, Chilean, Danish, Ecuadorean, Greek, Lithuanian, Luxembourger, New Zealander, Norweigan, Peruvian, Polish, Thaiandese only refer to 1 individual.

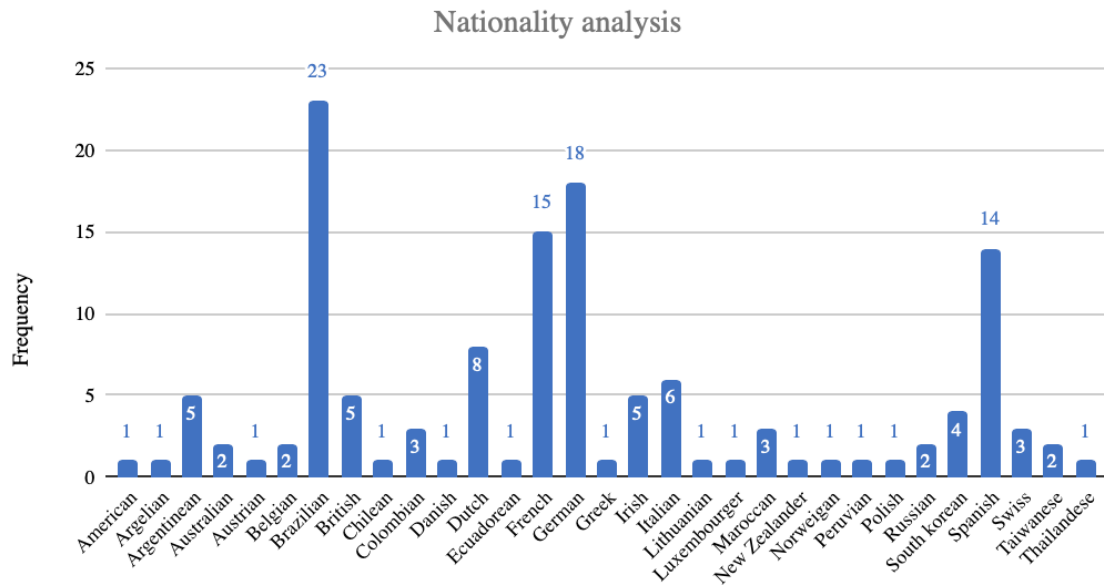


Figure 10 – Nationalities of solo travelers.

To what concerns the features most appreciated at Selina Porto, through the analysis of graphic 11, the most preferred by guests are the subsequent: location (29), staff (23), environment (20), outdoor space (12), and decoration (12). In contraposition, being the last expressed by guests with only 1 person each, are the cowork space, food and beverage, as well as being pet friendly.

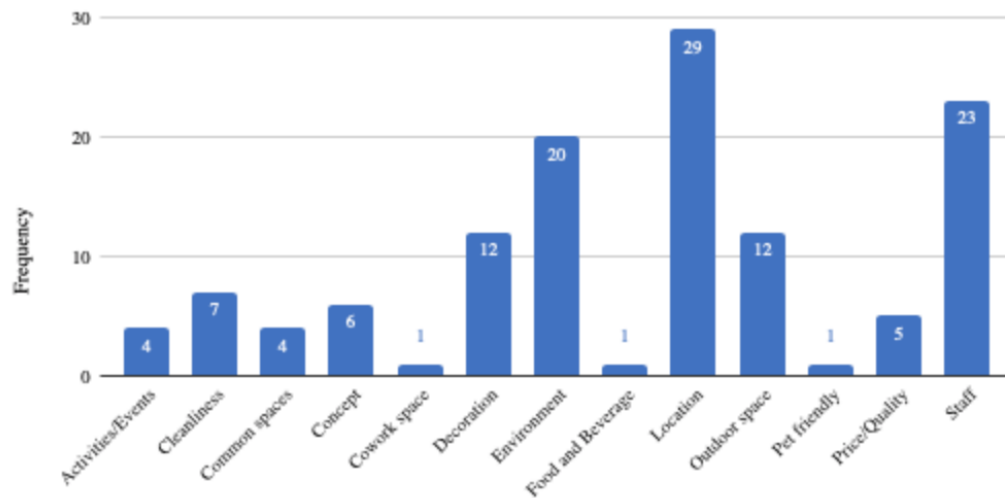


Figure 11 – Features mentioned on Booking reviews.

After the collection of data and studying it, the remaining questions can now be approached with a response. In fact, through the guests' brief opinions based on their stay, it is possible to gather conclusions on the efficiency of Selina's message.

First of all, it is possible to reckon the ambiguity of solo travelers who come to Porto from different parts of the world. Naturally, during the months most affected by Covid-19 (March, April, May), the hostel was either closed or functioning partially.

By the most acquainted features, it is safe to say that people who come to stay at Selina feel welcomed, not only by the staff but also feel safe and happy in the environment they are in. The identity of a brand is also highly connected to its visual appearance, by bringing its original culture in small details, but at the same time adapting to the local culture. Definitely, certain aspects are fundamental for the good functioning of the hostel, but specially for the achievement of business realization.

To begin with, the staff is a huge participant on Selina's behalf, as they are the first contact customers have when they arrive. Just like in any organization, if the staff does not portray the values of the company in which they are involved, then all efforts to transpose the right message will immediately fail. As discussed earlier, there is a posture (body language and intellectually) to be held by employees.

The fact that the hostel is located in the center of Porto is no casualty. Primarily, in the heart of the city is where everyone wants to be; however, the twist is exactly on that particularity as well. While traveling, observant of where one is, but being transported to another place else is a magical moment for most, tourist or not. So, even though the fuss of the city, the noises of transportation, the rush of the people of Invicta is just outside the door, at Selina you can find an environment for relaxation, tranquility, almost as if its location were on the countryside, somewhere quiet. All tangible elements visible enrich the experience, complemented by those nonmaterial, acquired by communication, integration, and culture.

The accommodation while traveling should be more than just a momentary place to sleep in. It is meant to attract new travelers and empower them to share their experiences and beliefs, to encourage them to make new friends, and be involved in the community of

the hostel. According to some Booking evaluations, that is exactly what happens at Selina, as is expressed by the subsequent citations: “Il concept, l’atmosfera, l’internazionalizzazione, lo staff giovane e disponibile”; “La decoración es hermosa y es muy agradable pasar tiempo en el hostel. Hay diferentes espacios y se organizan actividades diversas en el bar”; “Completemet dans l’espirit backpacker”; “Le jardin de l’hôtel est un gros +++: très propice aux rencontres, super pour les voyageurs solo donc”.

To finalize, graphic 12 represents the general evaluation from guests on the Booking platform, combining all types of travelers (solo, families, groups, couples, business) without a specified date. Accordingly, solo travelers have the biggest number of reviews, holding a total of 992 at present.



Figure 12 – General Booking overview on reviews (Booking Selina Porto, n.d.).

4.4.3 Creating a new approach for Selina’s Cowork Space

Towards the middle of April, regarding the cowork space (Selina Mosaico Club), it was necessary to launch a new campaign with a model adapted/adaptable to the Covid-19 situation in order for it to be profitable again. Since the beginning of the pandemic there were no longer rented offices, events or meeting happening.

The goal contained creating virtual offices with the possibility of renting clouds and private servers for national companies, including autonomous regions as well. With that being said, Hugo Neves, the operations manager, gave me access to documents which carried out local companies and small businesses all across the country divided into regions: Azores, Madeira, North, Centre, and South. The task consisted of gathering the e-mails to each company and upload it to an Excel file. This process was not always easy, as some companies belonged to small businesses and entrepreneurs and did not provide much information online.

My experience at Selina Porto as an intern came to an end after this last duty, which took place during remote work. Unfortunately, it was not possible to go back to the company in person once the lay-off was over since only a few workers were able to do so. Besides, two months later my internship ended officially.

Chapter V- Conclusion

The evolution felt on the tourism field has led to the emergence of unequal lifestyles caused by modifications in the insight of living, working, and personal realization. The lifestyles which emerged from social and economic change, as well as a change of heart, led to a revolution on the work-field, with a remarkable place for remote work. Consequently, companies had to thrive for a new course of action, by providing intercultural exchange, adaptability, creativity, and innovation. At the same time, the role of cities has become even more essential, as they belong in the central focus of the decision-making process for these travelers.

As a global company, the values of differentiation, adjustability, and prominence, while assembling artistry practices and past history influence hold extreme importance for Selina, with culture being the principal foundation, starting inside the firm. As evolution progressed, so did the company, ambulating accordingly to the new trend, transporting those same values and ideals to the outside: for backpackers, digital nomads, as well as locals. Even in the hard times we are still currently experiencing, on account of COVID-19, the biggest concern remains upon (fired) employees, the local communities at each location, and the small number of allowed customers.

Selina is in itself a creative cluster, creating an environment for cultural life to be captured, city identity encouraged, and to explore the idea of being part of a community. This is possible in regards to the evolution of digital transformation, which considers businesses, hobbies, and relationships.

The hostel in Porto and the Mosaico Club are portrayed as a space for creativity to flow, to explore all options, and obtain a wider perspective on hobbies and business, on the modern times being faced. The cowork space is displayed to attract digital nomads, combining an appealing design and architecture, as well as the hostel itself to attract backpackers. Furthermore, perception of oneself and from the nominated “other” are essential for the identity of both and for understanding the relationship they take part in.

The internship experience served the purpose to witness the values of the company in the raw. The evolution of responsibilities and relationships enabled an optimal usage of the general professional background, benefiting from work practice in an intercultural

environment. Despite being on-site for a small percentage of the time, the acquisition of knowledge was intense, managing the appliance of the acquirements learned throughout the Master's degree in various fields.

Future research relies upon events arbitrated at these new work environments – the cowork spaces – to capture how what they offer can entice digital nomads to participate and become part of an ever-evolving intercultural community, instead of committing only to work methods. Moreover, due to the fast pace at which digital nomadism is growing worldwide, it would also be interesting to assemble information on Selina's cowork space in Porto through the managerial perspective and what are the thoughts on remote work's evolution.

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Annexes

Annex A – Contract



CONGRATULATIONS!

CATARINA BARROSO

WELCOME TO THE EXPERIENCE OF YOUR LIFE AT SELINA

Selina is a new generation of hospitality, a new generation of workplace, a new generation of lifestyle. And we want you to be part of this revolution. Our goal is to create inspiring co-work and co-play spaces for travelers, entrepreneurs, and digital nomads. We have found in you a great fit for our company, and we believe that we can grow together. Joining Selina is like being part of a new family and having endless opportunities of development. We hope we can count on you to live this adventure with us!

Our locations are thoughtfully designed for those with a zest for life and appreciation for conscious living. They are for people looking to play, work, rest, and connect within a beautiful environment and carefully curated atmosphere.

Travel is an inherent part of working with Selina. Exploration and adventure are part of the job. We are the biggest hostels chain in Central America and will be opening in all Latin America soon.



www.selina.com



**CATARINA, WE LOOK FORWARD
TO YOU JOINING OUR SELINA FAMILY!**

Porto will be your home for the next 6 months!



**START DATE: 02//01//2020
FINISH DATE: 07//31//2020**

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MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

This MOU is made between:

SELINA HOSPITALITY ACADEMY S.A. a Panamanian company with offices in Calle 5ta Oeste, Casa 8-38, Casco Viejo, Panama City, Panama, legally organized pursuant to the laws of the Republic of Panama and registered under the document N°155634368 of the of the Microfilms (Mercantile) Division of the Public Registry of Panama. **SELINA HOSPITALITY ACADEMY** is a subsidiary company of **DEKEL HOSTELS S.A.** and part of the **SELINA HOSTELS** brand.

Name:

Date of Birth:

Country of Birth:

Passport number:

Nationality:

Home street address:

Email:

Emergency contact person:

Telephone:

University:

Year coursing:

Degree Level

Graduation Date:

Program:

Named together as **THE PARTIES**

Whereas it is agreed that:

1. The Parties will enter into a binding agreement (THE AGREEMENT) in respect of the internship and the practical training that **Catarina Barroso** will receive during a period of **3 months** starting in **02/01/2019** and ending in **07/31/2020** with a schedule of **40** hours per week.
2. The Parties discussed and agreed upon the terms and conditions specified further on this MOU
3. **SELINA HOSPITALITY ACADEMY S.A** shall prepare the Agreement, and it will contain all the details referring to the schedule and the internship system.
4. The Agreement will commence on the specified date and can finish before the term with a previous written notice of minimum 14 working days by both parties. **SELINA HOSPITALITY ACADEMY S.A.** has the right to terminate the contract immediately if the intern is not following the rules and policies of the hostel.
5. This MOU has a confidential character that will be respected by both parties.
All the information regarding the functionality of the hostel and his clients or personal should not be divulged under no circumstances.

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GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES & GOALS

Most of your responsibilities are (but not limited to):

- You will be the Brand guardian in locations.
- Ensure all the branding materials are in good condition and manage stock (menus, flyers, TVs, signs, promotion materials at rooms, etc.).
- Support printing, with payments and delivering all promotional materials, close to the sales and marketing manager.
- Promote interactions between guests and Selina's Social Media.
- Welcome and attend influencers and VIP's at the location.
- Provide audiovisual content to headquarters office.
- Create material for events, activities, tours, parties, restaurant, bar, etc.
- Assist PR and Selina Gives Back Volunteer initiatives on the location.
- Support the Events team as needed by being the contact person at location and help prepare, promote, execute and report Selina events.

Waiver of Civil Liability

DEKEL HOSTELS, S.A. does not provide liability coverage insurance for foreign people who serve as interns-volunteers. The purpose of this liability release form is to notify the prospects or interested persons to carry out internships that they do not have insurance by DEKEL HOSTELS, S.A. and document that the intern is in full knowledge that he/she is providing volunteer services at his/her own risk and responsibility.

By signing this document: you agree that DEKEL HOSTELS, S.A. does not provide insurance coverage for interns or volunteers for any losses, damages, liabilities or death, resulting from the service of unpaid internship to DEKEL HOSTELS, S.A.

This MOU is signed by both parties today: _____

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Julio Mosquera".

Julio Mosquera
SELINA HOSPITALITY ACADEMY S.A.
Legal Representative

INTERN

www.selina.com



GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

1. To accomplish all the tasks given by the designated supervisor.
2. To respect all the policies of Selina.
3. To announce the designated coordinator about any changes in the schedule.
4. To respect and behave properly with both the employees of DEKEL HOSTELS, S.A. and the customers.
5. To respect all the schedule changes that will be made during the internship period.
6. To practice in a period between five (5) days per week, eight hours (8) per day.
7. To have a valid international health insurance through the full period of the internship.
8. To make sure that all the visa or immigration requirements are accomplished before arriving.
9. The interns must provide all the details regarding his arrival and departure flight at least working days before their arrival to the country.
10. Drugs and Alcohol consumption during your work hours is prohibited. Neither to start your shift under the effects of these substances.
11. If during the shift and under your responsibility in Reception, PlayGround, Marketing, Events and Tours something gets lost or is stolen, the cost will be assumed by the responsible of the shift and not by Selina.
12. If the Intern is facing problems with his direct supervisor or colleagues, he/she must face a process of conflict solving with all the parties. This must be communicated to the Internship Coordinator at the right and precise time in order to solve the problem faced.
13. If the Intern decides to quit the program before the 3- or 6-months period, he/she must send a formal letter at least 2 weeks in advance, explaining the rational argument behind and copy the Hospitality Academy team, his direct supervisor and the entity he represents (University, AIESEC, etc). This is order to make valid his resignation.
14. To bring to work since the first day all they necessary work instruments and devices (Laptop, cellphone, etc.).
15. Intern must abide to the Selina location policy.
16. The intern will be responsible for their personal objects and belonging during the time of the internship and if they are staying in a shared or staff dorm. Selina won't be responsible for lost belongings.



ABOUT BENEFITS & RIGHTS

Internship Agreement to the following offered benefits:

1. To participate in the Internship Convention provided by Selina, the Academic content of the convention is free, other expenses such as accommodation and food will be announced with each invite communication.
 2. The Intern is entitled to three (3) free nights at another Selina location (in dorms, private rooms not applicable for this benefit.). Does not apply for national holidays.
 3. The Intern is entitled to have free breakfast and lunch for the duration of the internship. (does not include extras, only breakfast and lunch is included during the internship period.).
 4. The Intern is entitled to receive the 30% of employee discount in any type of accommodation and 25% discount for Friends and Family to use in any Selina location in the world. Does not apply for national holidays. Any discount is subject to availability and might change according to the reservations policy.
 5. To have two (2) rest days a week according to the Selina hotels policy.
 6. Certificate of completion of the internship.
 7. 20% discount in Selina's Food and Beverage during internship. Any discount is subject to availability and might change according to the reservations policy.
 8. Free access to a variety of culture activities.*
 9. Free access to wellness activities.*
 10. Possibility to lead and implement an academic project.
 11. Free access to online Selina training opportunities.*
- *subject to availability and with the approval of his/her supervisor.

If the intern decides to not take any of these benefits, specifically related to accommodation and food, there is not any exchange or negotiation that we can make, unless it is directly discussed with the manager and approved.

I Catarina Barroso have read the Internship General Rights, Responsibilities and Benefits and I understand what is being offered to me during my Internship Period.

Catarina Barroso
The Intern

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ONCE AGAIN CONGRATULATIONS ON THIS OPPORTUNITY!

We hope you accept this invitation to join us in our journey.

Location Address: Selina HQ: Calle 12 Oeste y Calle 12 B Casco Viejo, San Felipe, Panamá

Bocas Isla Colon: Provincia de Bocas del Toro, Distrito de Bocas del Toro, Urbanización Isla Colon, Calle Primera, Antiguo Edificio Tropical Market, Local 1, Calle Primera

Bocas Isla Red Frog: Isla Bastimentos, Bocas del Toro, Panama

Venao: Provincia de los Santos, Distrito de Pedasí, Corregimiento de Oria Arriba, Urbanización Playa Venao, Calle Principal, frente al océano Pacífico, Casa sin número

Pedasí: Provincia de los Santos, Distrito de Pedasí, Corregimiento de Pedasí, Urbanización Pedasí, Calle Agustín Moscoso, Casa 2

Intern Reports to: Manuel Carneiro - manuel@selina.com

MuñozMain contact at Selina Headquarters (Panama): Maritvely Rodriguez— maritvely@selina.com

Sincerely,
Maritvely Rodriguez
Internships Recruiter



www.selina.com

4 - POSTURA

- a - Aptidão técnico-profissional
- b - Idoneidade ética e deontológica
- c - _____

1	2	3	4	5
				X
				X

5 - OBSERVAÇÕES A REPORTAR AO ISCAP

Uma excelente aluna e de bom nível
importante para o Grupo Selina

16/11/20

Assinatura e Carimbo da entidade de acolhimento:


SEUNA
PORTO
SEUNA OPERATIONS PORTUGAL UNIP., LDA.
514 891 106