

DUBAI EXPERT: THE NEW FUTURE OF TRAVEL AGENTS





FOREWORD

“Happiness of customers is the government’s ultimate goal”

— His Highness Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai and Chairman of The Executive Council

Dubai has reaffirmed its leading position in government services development in the region by providing continuous positive experiences for customers, whilst achieving highest levels of happiness and satisfaction. Dubai has created a model that is now a benchmark for government services excellence.

Dubai’ The Model Centre (DTMC) reflects the Government of Dubai’s commitment to improving its services through innovative initiatives that create the necessary positive change, leading to unparalleled levels of excellence and leadership in both services provided by government entities and shared government services. DTMC also plays a key role in shaping the future of services by continuously studying and anticipating changes in customers’ expectations and demands. This ensures proactivity, efficiency and customer happiness and satisfaction.

The methodology of DTMC is composed of two main pillars: increasing government services efficiency, and fulfilling customers’

needs and expectations; it also ensures customers receive extraordinary experience that exceeds their expectations. This is achieved by developing innovative ideas and initiatives that enhance the quality of services and contribute to maintaining Dubai’s position as the best city in innovation in the government services.

Dubai Government entities have played a fundamental role in driving innovation. Since 2012, government entities have focused their efforts on a unified goal, with the support of DTMC, to improve more than 200 government services. This commitment led to the inception of 800 innovative initiatives, which significantly contributed to improving the quality of government services by 88%. The adoption of DTMC’s methodology by government entities resulted in the reduction of the average time of service delivery by more than 50%, and assisted in reducing customers’ visits and touch points needed to receive the service by 40%. In 2016 and 2017, the total savings were approximately 400 million dirhams, as a result of improving the efficiency of governmental services.

Dubai’s governmental work focuses on adapting a culture of continuous progress, innovation, and development, with a unified goal to reach new horizons, drive development, and most importantly support our leader’s vision of a happy and prosperous city.

Eman Al Suwaidi

Senior Director of
Dubai’ The Model Centre

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Case study period: 2017 – 2018

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Dubai Expert is an initiative of Dubai's Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing (Dubai Tourism) that incorporates gamification technology in a first-of-its-kind training programme. Designed as an online game, Dubai Expert allows travel agents to learn about the tourism offerings of Dubai and become a certified "expert" in a fun and engaging way. Dubai Expert increases general knowledge of Dubai among travel agents in key source markets, enhances their engagement with Dubai Tourism and improves the overall tourist experience.

This case study describes how Dubai Tourism elevated the tourist experience, by improving knowledge and resourcefulness of travel agents, guided by the methodology of Dubai's The Model Centre.

Dubai Tourism undertook extensive research on existing outreach initiatives and forged new partnerships with experts in online gaming and education. The government entity also worked closely with members of the target population - namely travel agents in key markets - on successful pilot programmes that provided valuable feedback and enabled the team to pinpoint areas where new technology was required to create a truly engaging and effective training tool.

The next pages narrate how the adoption of innovative strategies can transform Government entities' ability to provide better services to their customers.

The methodology for Government services improvement of Dubai's The Model Center triggered innovation and excellence, serving society at large.

Dubai Expert demonstrates how technology combined with collaboration and a customer-centric approach contributed to strengthening one of the most important sectors of Dubai's economy.

1 BACKGROUND

Imagine you have just returned from a trip to Dubai where you had the best experience thanks to your travel agent's inspired recommendations. Your travel agent had an almost uncanny ability to put together an itinerary of activities, attractions, and cultural events that blended together seamlessly. The travel agent knew about all the tucked away gems of the city and authentic local culture. Everything you visited was close to your hotel and fit perfectly with your taste and interests. How did your travel agent manage to put together such an amazing experience? Would you believe it was from playing a video game?

Dubai is a global city and a business hub. Over the last couple of decades, the growth in financial and business services, trade logistics and tourism activity has played an important role in fueling Dubai's emergence as a global city. Dubai Tourism has an impressive record of success in promoting Dubai as a top travel destination for people from all over the world. In 2012, Dubai welcomed 10,16 million visitors and that number grew to 15,8 million visitors in 2017. In 2018, Dubai was the fourth most visited city in the world, according to Mastercard's Global Destination Cities Index. Dubai Plan 2021 sets the goal for Dubai to be among the top five centres in the world for trade, logistics, finance, and tourism by 2021 and with Dubai Expo 2020, the Emirate, is expected to attract 25 million visitors to the country.

The Government of Dubai puts the happiness of its citizens, residents and tourists at the core of its performance measures. Dubai also values government innovation and pursues excellence through methodologies focused on the users of government services and improvements built around their needs and experiences. It has created over the years a number of initiatives, awards and programmes to support innovation and efficiency in Government services.

“We have great aspirations for the tourism sector, which is one of the main pillars of our economic development and an important source of national income.”

– **His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates, and Ruler of the Emirate of Dubai.**

About Dubai' The Model Centre

Dubai' The Model Centre is a centralized department established in 2011 by the General Secretariat of The Executive Council of Dubai. It focuses on researching, documenting, and disseminating best practices in the field of public service competitiveness at local and international levels. Dubai' The Model Centre seeks to raise the level of public services in Dubai to unprecedented levels of innovation and efficiency. The methodology of Dubai' The Model Centre, namely the Dubai Model for Government Services, positions customer experience and service efficiency at the centre of innovation, enhancing positive change in a scientific and structured manner. The implementation of Dubai' The Model Centre methodology in Government entities follows a five-phase order of service improvement as outlined in the visualization on page 4.

About Hamdan bin Mohammed Programme for Smart Government

One of the programmes of Dubai' The Model Centre is the Hamdan bin Moahmmed Programme for Smart Government. The Programme lays the foundation for a smart government by developing methodologies and systems and providing the necessary support to government entities for implementing them.

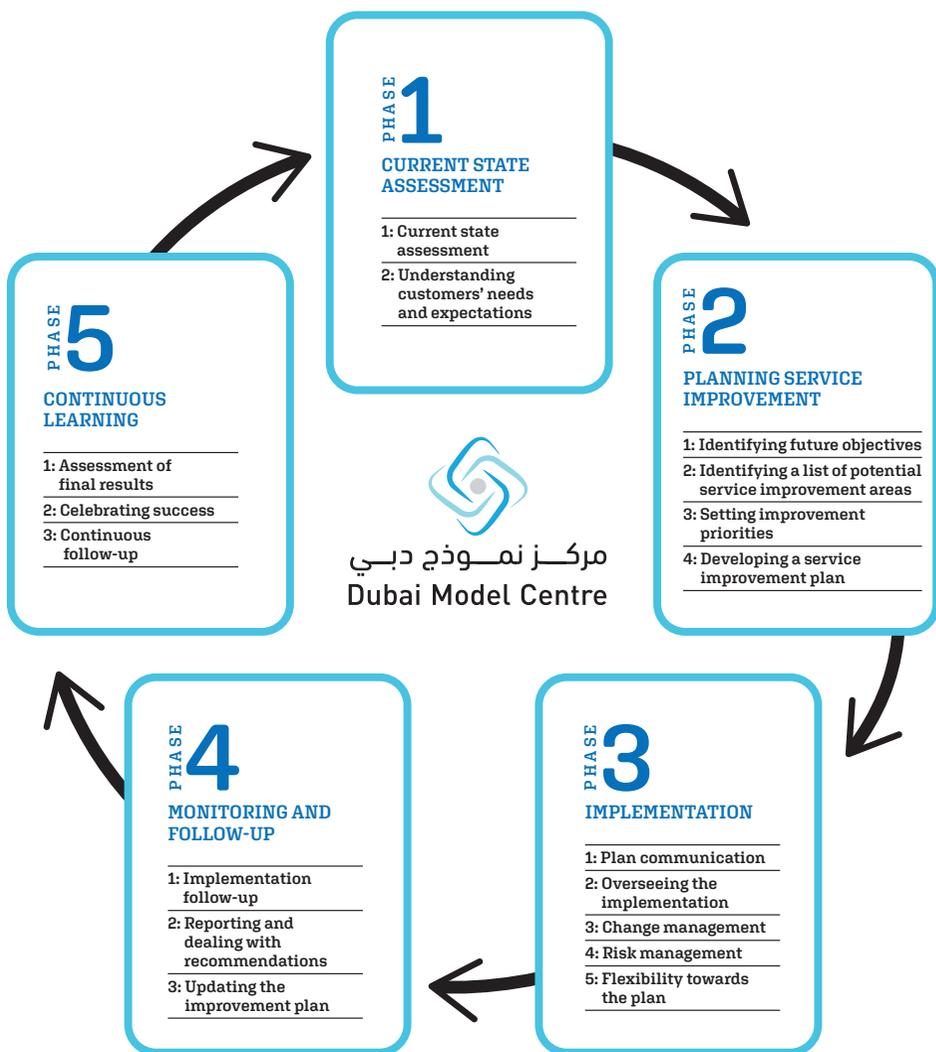
The most innovative government initiative is selected every year through a thorough evaluation process and public voting and is awarded the Hamdan bin Mohammed Flag (Raya).

“Dubai' The Model Centre will not only support the constant improvement of services in Dubai, but it will also carry the vision of a smart government. The Centre will inform the way in which we engage customers online and form long-term relationships with them through all of their transactions.”

– **His Highness Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai and Chairman of The Executive Council of Dubai.**

According to the Mastercard's Global Destination Cities Index, Dubai was the fourth most visited city in the world in 2018.

GOVERNMENT SERVICES IMPROVEMENT METHODOLOGY



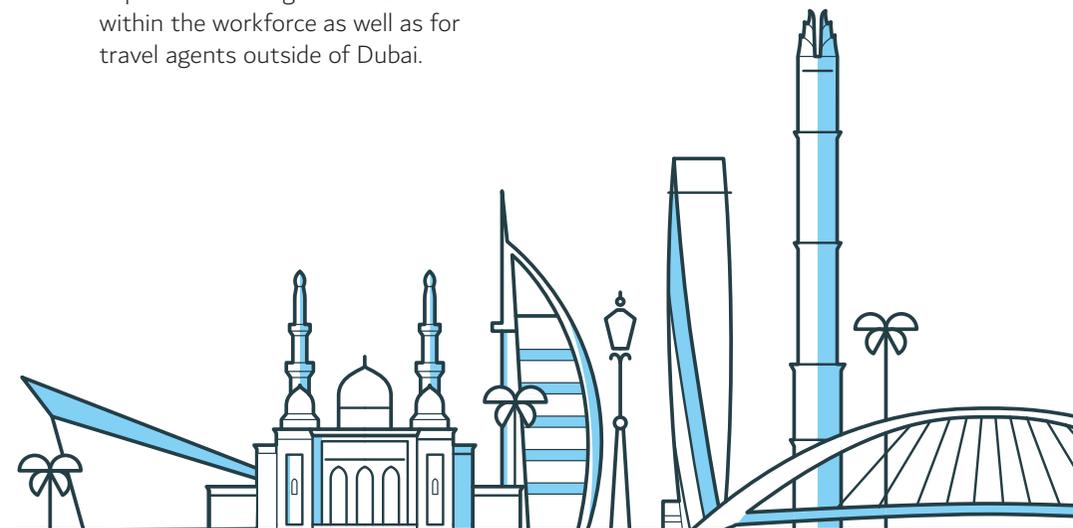
About The Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing

The Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing (Dubai Tourism) is the principal authority for tourism in Dubai. It oversees all aspects of making Dubai a leading tourist destination for people from all over the world and ensuring that this pillar of Dubai's economy continues to grow. Dubai Tourism is responsible for the licensing and classification of all tourism services in Dubai, including hotel establishments, tour operators, travel agents and other tourism services, in addition to operating a large network of overseas offices.

Human capital is at the core of Dubai Tourism's strategic plan, as research showed that tourists were not always satisfied with the level of knowledge and resourcefulness of the tourism workforce, including hotel staff, taxi drivers, food and beverage staff and others providing services in the industry. In support to the tourism workforce, Dubai Tourism created the Dubai College of Tourism to provide programmes that strengthen the depth of knowledge about Dubai within the workforce as well as for travel agents outside of Dubai.

Dubai Expert is a world-first, interactive game that also serves as an in-depth training programme for travel agents marketing Dubai around the world. The game elevates the tourist experience by improving knowledge and resourcefulness of travel agents working in key source markets for Dubai's tourism industry. The innovative game highlights the diverse experiences that await tourists in Dubai, from leisure and shopping, to cuisine, culture, family entertainment, and more. Dubai Expert is currently available in 14 languages and can be played from anywhere in the world.

The story of Dubai Expert is the story of how Dubai Tourism used a customer-centric methodology to promote innovation and revolution in its services. With the help of the tools and frameworks provided by Dubai's The Model Centre, Dubai Tourism created a new platform that benefited not only one of its direct customer segments, but also contributed to the overall growth of the tourism industry in Dubai. The initiative was a finalist of the 2017 "Flag" of the Hamdan bin Mohammed Programme for Smart Government.



2 INNOVATION THROUGH DUBAI MODEL FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES

EXPLORING THE CHALLENGE

PHASE 1

CURRENT STATE ASSESSMENT

1: Current state assessment

2: Understanding customers' needs and expectations

The purpose of phase 1 of the methodology of Dubai Model for Government Services is to study the performance of the services to be improved in their current state and customers' expectations regarding these services.

Back in 2017, Dubai Tourism realized that its workforce was not always aware of all of Dubai's offerings and opportunities for tourists. One of the key challenges that the organization needed to address was increasing the depth of knowledge in travel agents promoting Dubai. How could Dubai Tourism ensure that travel agents in countries far away – who may not have had the opportunity to visit Dubai themselves – would be familiar with the city's attractions and cultural events? How could travel agents gain an insider's understanding of the city's different neighborhoods, and what area and attractions would be best for every type of tourists in order to ensure each had a positive experience of Dubai?

From the onset, the team knew that relevant recommendations from travel agents can make or break a tourist's impression of a destination. If agents in key markets are not properly knowledgeable about a city, they might provide the wrong recommendations to tourists about attractions or accommodations, who in return will have the wrong experience. When depth of knowledge and resourcefulness are lacking, travel agents can inadvertently cause a tourist to be frustrated with the destination. Knowing this, Dubai Tourism wanted to find a solution to minimize instances where recommendations from travel agents led to a less than ideal experience for tourists.

Dubai Tourism also realized two important trends when it comes to travel agents:

- > Emerging markets are of key importance to Dubai's tourism industry. These markets depend heavily on travel agents in buying and selecting travel destinations.
- > Travel agents use more and more new tools, such as technology, in their daily work. As such there needs to be new ways of engagement to ensure travel agents' attention.

With its key challenge defined, Dubai Tourism understood the need for a new initiative. Rather than improving an existing service, the entity decided to address its challenge by creating a new service from scratch.

Dubai' The Model Centre aims to support Government entities in their quest to balance two strategic objectives: raising the efficiency of services and increasing focus on customers.

1. Raising the efficiency of services

The optimal use of all kind of resources during the provision of government services

2. Increase focus on customers

Put the customer at the heart of providing government services; processing and focus on customer's needs and expectations

What was the challenge?

Lack of knowledge on Dubai's offering and opportunities for tourism has a direct impact on Dubai's ambitious goal of attracting 20 million tourists and increasing the economic impact of tourism by 2020. Dubai Tourism realized that:

- > Lack of depth of knowledge about Dubai in the travel and tourism workforce, could lead to bad experiences for tourists.
- > There was a lack of adequately accessible training programme for travel agents based outside of Dubai.

The methodology of Dubai' The Model Centre is based on a framework composed of three main components, which were considered by Dubai Tourism to overcome their identified challenge:

- > **Model government for service delivery criteria, which incites Government entities to look at all key requirements essential for providing high-quality services.**
- > **Unified government service assessment tools, which provide service assessment tools for the service delivery capability.**
- > **Government service improvement methodology, which consists of a detailed methodology for service improvement that can be applied by all government entities.**

The purpose of this methodology is to provide a common, integrated system and a framework of service measurement, assessment, and improvement. Dubai' The Model Centre's framework allows Government entities to evaluate the impact of their service improvement through a series of tools such as baseline data analysis, comparing before and after improvement results. In the case of Dubai Tourism, their improvement initiative focused on the creation of a new service. As such, they were not in a position to look back at previous data.

Innovation team

Based on the methodology of Dubai' The Model Centre, the government entity needs to put together a team responsible for service improvement, the Innovation Team. While Dubai' The Model Centre's methodology provides a conceptual overview of how to improve government services, it is the role of "Innovation Team Leaders" within government entities to be in charge of implementing change. A leader within the government entity is assigned to form a team, pulling from different departments and perspectives in order to look at the government service and the customer experience from multiple perspectives.

The Innovation Team is in charge of leading the improvement effort within the government entity. It provides regular implementation progress reports to Dubai 'The Model Centre as well as feedback and comments on the overall implementation process. The Innovation Team participates in training workshops and seminars and contributes to enriching the tools and standards of the Dubai' The Model Centre.

For Dubai Expert, team members within Dubai Tourism were chosen based on a wide range of criteria to ensure that the right expertise and characteristics would be represented for the creation of their new initiative. The selected team at Dubai Tourism combined skill sets including technology, education, and knowledge of the travel industry, both within Dubai and internationally.

What does the methodology of Dubai' The Model Centre say about the Innovation Team?

The team should include diversity in capabilities and areas of expertise. It is also recommended that this team is made up of people who are able to lead and create the change, who are known for their dedication, and who will have a positive impact on their colleagues.

Current state assessment

Once the Innovation Team at Dubai Tourism was put in place, members of the team could start assessing their current performance, in line with the first phase of Dubai' The Model Centre's framework. The team analyzed the current situation of their service offering by looking into its detailed flow path to ensure that all members understood the current method of service delivery and to determine the possible points of improvement.

Understanding customers' needs

In line with the customer-centric approach of the methodology of Dubai' The Model Centre, the team from Dubai Tourism also looked at how to reach their customers with their new initiative. In this case, customers were travel agents and other travel industry agents responsible for promoting Dubai and creating itineraries for tourists. The team knew it was important to focus on travel markets where travel agents play a large role. They studied the extensive research conducted by Dubai Tourism on target markets, and on which countries tend to favor travel agents. The Innovation Team also determined that the role of travel agents is high in countries like Australia, Germany and Nigeria, low in Arab countries and lower in countries like the United Kingdom and the United States. Using this information, the team determined what countries and travel agents they wanted to focus on the most for their initiative. The Innovation Team at Dubai Tourism carefully looked at the issues the travel agents were experiencing.

Tourism companies abroad often promoted Dubai through printed materials and promotional packages, based on poorly-prepared research. As a result, mistakes were made in names of tourism attractions and important tourist spots were missed, which overall contributed to a negative impression for tourists.

Reaching customers also require creative thinking as the profile of travel agents is more tech-savvy than in the past. Travel agents are less receptive to traditional training techniques and more open to innovative and immersive experiences. In studying their target markets, the team learned that in many emerging travel markets, agents tend to be more inclined to use technology in their daily work. At the same time, the Innovation Team also realized that travel agents from these countries would not have had the opportunity to visit Dubai or develop deep knowledge of the city as a tourist destination. They understood they would need an engaging, hands-on way for the travel agents to become more familiar with Dubai's tourism offerings.

It was not practical or cost effective to bring them all to Dubai, so what could be done to bring Dubai to them?

Top targeted markets for Dubai Expert



IDEATING AND INNOVATING

PHASE
2

PLANNING SERVICE IMPROVEMENT

- 1: Identifying future objectives
- 2: Identifying a list of potential service improvement areas
- 3: Setting improvement priorities
- 4: Developing a service improvement plan

The purpose of phase 2 of the methodology of Dubai Model for Government Services is to determine how services will look like after improvement and how to achieve that.

Having determined which segment of customers they wanted to target, and their challenges, it was time for the Innovation Team to begin exploring solutions. Guided by the framework provided by Dubai’ The Model Centre, the team hypothesized how their initiative could take shape and started evaluating the steps needed to achieve their desired outcome.

One of the central elements of the planning phase of Dubai’ The Model Centre’s methodology is to analyze the outputs of all existing studies, reports and benchmark analysis in order to pinpoint improvement opportunities. The team at Dubai Tourism began by conducting benchmarking research into programmes offered by other tourism entities. The team reviewed training and certification programmes from six countries recognized for their high volume of tourists. The programmes they looked at included everything from powerpoint presentations to videos and quizzes. One thing they noticed and wanted to address was the lack of interactivity of many of the programmes used in other markets. Some consisted of watching videos, but there was no built-in mechanism to ensure interactivity or that a user had actually watched, let alone absorbed the required information.

During this phase, the Innovation Team also prepared, discussed, and confirmed their improvement plans. Team members held meetings in order to draw up the domains and opportunities for improvement and the priorities to plan implementation.

The expected impact of their initiative was also taken into consideration when vetting the areas for improvement. They also imagined the ideal customer journey, envisaging the optimal number of touchpoints required to enhance travel agents’ experience.

Identifying future objectives

As per phase two of the methodology established by Dubai’ The Model Centre, it is crucial that the government entity determines its future objectives for the service to be improved. Service improvement objectives should:

- > Be aligned with the government entity’s mission, future direction, strategic objectives, and priorities.
- > Focus on the key measurements of the services, such as the customer experience results, service efficiency, service delivery standards, and capabilities of service centres, etc.

The team wanted a product that their intended audience would find engaging and appealing. They also wanted to ensure that in order to receive certification through the programme, a customer would have to demonstrate a strong understanding of tourism in Dubai. In line with the methodology of Dubai’ The Model Centre, the team also considered how the improvement could be achieved. To help them in their brainstorming

process, the team used one of the tools of the methodology: the value quadrant.

Identifying improvement areas and priorities

With this tool, the Innovation Team arranges its list of improvement areas in the value quadrant according to the expected impact of each initiative.

After brainstorming various ideas, the team decided on one key innovation: Gamification

The game was considered as the best way to achieve user engagement and knowledge enrichment. But what type of game should it be?

“Keeping in mind our target customers, and that we wanted something that could translate to many different countries, we asked ourselves, ‘what kind of game would everybody in the world be able to play’? The most universal thing that we could think of is playing cards”

- Innovation Team member

Developing an improvement plan

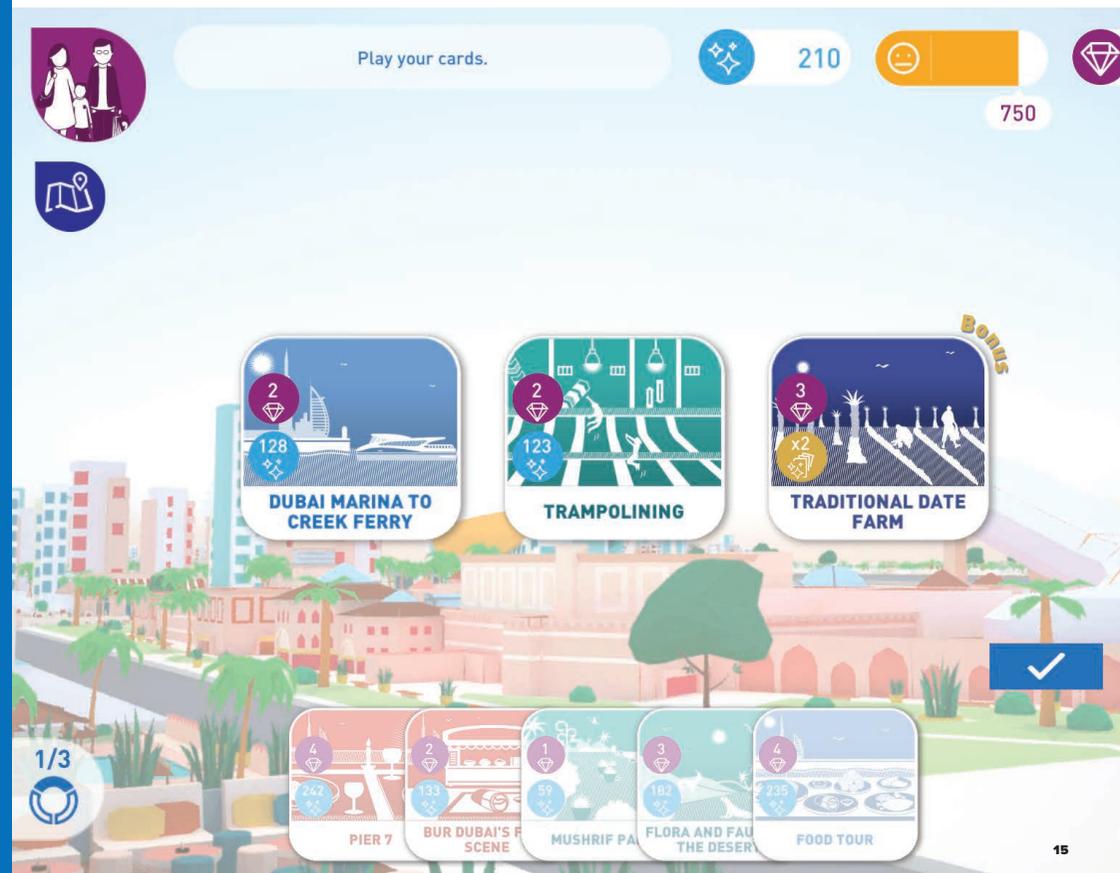
With their concept decided, the team started to identify the internal and external resources they would need to create their initiative. Using the principles set in the methodology of Dubai' The Model Centre, they looked at what would be the improvement priorities of their solutions and the plan to implement it. As part of their planning process, the team understood that in order to create the best online game and training programme they would need to identify the right external partners, beginning with a company that could create the game itself. "There are a lot of gaming companies, but a limited number who do gaming as education," a member of the team explained. The team chose to work with a company that had experience building educational gaming products. They also identified a gaming expert who could work with them to ensure they created a game that people would want to play.

What is gamification?

Gamification is the process of taking something that already exists, like a website or a training programme, and integrating game elements, such as points, achievements, competition and rules of play to create a fun and engaging user experience. Gamification motivates participation and loyalty and encourages users through positive feedback.

Now that their external partners were on board, the Innovation Team moved forward to create **Dubai Expert**. Once again, in line with the methodology provided by Dubai' The Model Centre, the work began with conceptualizing, researching, and building the thinking behind the game. The team wanted to ensure the game would provide players with an understanding of Dubai's neighborhoods and geography, and as such it was designed based on a map of the city. The Innovation Team at Dubai Tourism also wanted travel agents to be able to learn about what attractions would appeal to different types of tourists. Using their internal research, they constructed profiles of different 'personas', the most typical kinds of tourists that travel agents were likely to encounter and

what each would be most interested in experiencing. They embedded informational videos into the game to provide further understanding of each attraction and neighborhood. They wanted the game to be accessible, something that people could download easily and begin playing right away. Finally, they wanted a mechanism to test people's knowledge and ensure they had actually absorbed enough information to truly be considered an expert before receiving certification.



In line with Dubai' The Model Centre's customer-centric framework, Dubai Tourism's research department tracked what tourists of different nationalities tend to like and dislike, mapped across the 8 "pillars" of Dubai's offerings, including beaches, shopping, entertainment and cultural experiences. The input of travel agents was taken into account in the process of developing and improving services. The team at Dubai Tourism knew that getting information on tourists would be very helpful to travel agents to understand what attractions and activities their customers would most enjoy. Thanks to this customer-centric approach, the team was able to incorporate an algorithm that automatically tailored Dubai Expert to the tastes of tourists from the country where the player was located.

Depending on the country, different attractions will have different point values, based on how appealing they are to people from that country. This way, the game would serve as an excellent content management system, with targeted and effective training for travel agents, allowing them to explore what will be most useful to the customers they serve.

In order to ensure information learned by players was translated into real-world knowledge of Dubai, the game was designed to also include an interactive 3D map of the city. Players would learn about attractions, and then place them on the 3D map, as well as see actual videos and images of the attractions in different parts of the city.

By May 2016 the team had a prototype of the game ready for pilot testing. One other important takeaway of the methodology offered by Dubai' The Model Centre was to carefully take into account customer's needs and feedback. The team traveled to London and held the first pilot tests of their prototype at Dubai Tourism' office in the city. The entity's staff in London gathered local travel trade contacts to test the game. The team put out laptops and watched them play to observe where they encountered problems. The Innovation Team noted that players did not always intuitively understand how the game was supposed to be played, so they realized a built-in tutorial that would train players during the first 3 rounds of the game was required. With a better understanding of the travel

agents feedback, they also decided to fine-tune the graphics so that players would understand better what each different icon meant. They noted carefully where players were having trouble following the game and took steps to correct it.



Dubai Expert is a world-first and leading game from a Destination Marketing Organization (DMO). It is a fully-online video-based training programme relying on the latest technologies targeting travel agents and tour operators marketing and selling Dubai experiences around the world.

“I would definitely recommend this game to my colleagues. This is an innovative way of learning and a useful learning tool.”

— Pilot tester

Results from the first pilot test were positive. The team asked pilot testers to fill out a survey after playing the game. Of the respondents, 78% agreed they were satisfied overall. The same percentage, 78%, agreed that they learned a lot about Dubai through the Dubai Expert game. And again 78% also responded that they enjoyed learning through Dubai Expert.

Next, the team conducted the same type of pilot testing in the Dubai Tourism office in Paris. The result of the second pilot test was even more positive. According to survey responses filled out after playing the game, 100% of respondents agreed they were satisfied overall. All of the respondents agreed that they learned a lot about Dubai by playing the game, and 100% agreed that they enjoyed learning through Dubai Expert.

Pilot testers also shared comments about the game and one of them stated that the focus on putting together itineraries for a broad range of different types of tourists had really gotten him to think about what the client’s needs are when putting together an itinerary.

RESULTS: DUBAI TOURISM OFFICE IN LONDON - FIRST PILOT TEST

78%

Satisfied overall

78%

Learned a lot about Dubai

78%

Enjoyed learning through Dubai Expert

RESULTS: DUBAI TOURISM OFFICE IN PARIS - SECOND PILOT TEST

100%

Satisfied overall

100%

Enjoyed learning through Dubai Expert

Overall, pilot testers were very happy with the game. However, some of them found the process was harder than they had expected. They felt the game was difficult and that it took too long to gain the ‘expert’ status. At that time the team made a conscious decision to leave the game difficult. They knew that in order to be called an expert, the travel agent should possess and demonstrate a real depth of knowledge about Dubai and work hard to earn a certification.

To complete the planning phase in accordance with the methodology of Dubai The Model Centre, the team worked to incorporate all of the feedback from the pilot projects and made improvements to the design of the game. They were then ready to take Dubai Expert to a wider audience and fully implement it. They tested the game in various Dubai Tourism overseas offices. They asked people to play versions in different languages including Japanese, French, Russian and Korean. Some players were internal Dubai Tourism staff, and others included local travel trade representatives. Finally, Dubai Tourism was ready to launch Dubai Expert.



FROM CONCEPT TO REALITY

PHASE 3

IMPLEMENTATION

- 1: Plan communication
- 2: Overseeing the implementation
- 3: Change management
- 4: Risk management
- 5: Flexibility towards the plan

The purpose of phase 3 of the methodology of Dubai Model for Government Services is to transform the plan for service improvement developed in Phase 2 into reality, by implementing specific improvement initiatives.

Throughout Phase 2 of the methodology of Dubai' The Model Centre, the Innovation Team focused on planning the "front end" and creating a top product their target audience would truly enjoy. They had succeeded in doing so and were ready to share it with the world. During the third phase of implementation, the team clarified the responsibilities and circulated all improvement plans to the concerned team members within Dubai Tourism. At this stage, the Innovation Team realized they had not yet considered the "back end" - the administration they would have to manage. This was part of implementing the final initiative and assessing the various risks associated to it. The team realized that they had underestimated the amount of work required and learned the success of the game also depended on very crucial behind-the-scenes elements.

The team also realized that data and overall reporting were crucial elements to integrate to the initiative not only to be in line with Dubai' The Model Centre's principles but also to provide data to Dubai Tourism's concerned departments. Once the team realized the necessity of being able to track and report on the data generated by the game, they were able to fix the issue internally. All the baselining, prioritizing and planning that took place in the previous phases of the methodology proved to be very useful.

Once all technological challenges were overcome, the team was ready to fully implement their initiative as per the third phase of Dubai' The Model Centre's methodology.

During the implementation phase, the Innovation Team worked directly with the Dubai Tourism's offices in each of the target countries to introduce Dubai Expert. Each overseas office was in charge of the roll out of Dubai Expert. The team also worked closely with the Dubai Tourism staff in each of their overseas offices to develop strategies that would reach the target customers in each market.

Dubai Expert was launched in English in May 2017. By August 2017, 11 additional languages were added and the game was updated with two new languages in 2018.



HOW DUBAI EXPERT WORKS

1. Home

The homepage of the game is a 2D map of Dubai with purple dots representing areas of interest.



3. Select accommodations

Players hover over different areas on the map to choose the best hotel category for the mission.



2. Launch

Players choose an unlocked mission. A Mission Profile will pop up, explaining who the tourists in the mission are, what they are interested in and their length of stay.



4. Select attractions

The game presents a selection of cards - either an attraction or an activity - to players, who must choose cards that match the Mission Profile.



5. Validate cards

Players earn extra points by playing combinations of cards or adding bonus special activities.



6. Timed questions

Quizzes pop up at the beginning or the end of a mission to test a players' knowledge about Dubai.



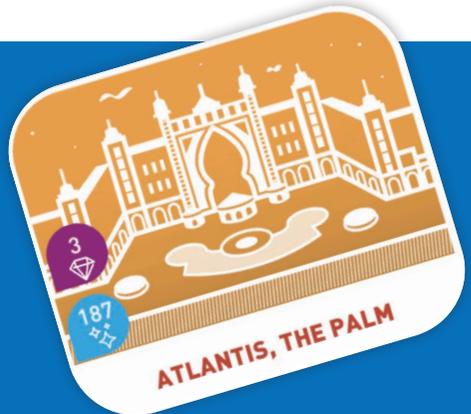
8. End of mission rewards

Players gain extra attractions, energies, and bonus cards.



7. Feedback

Players see the results of each mission (failed, completed, perfect), and they can expand each turn, check the questions they answered, the cards they played, and the combinations they created.



ACHIEVEMENTS

There are 30 missions total in the game. Once a player has completed 20 missions and earned a "perfect" score for each tourist persona and watched all 25 videos included in the game, they will have unlocked the achievement and can request to be awarded the status of "Dubai

Expert". Players also have the option of becoming a "Dubai Expert Plus" by completing 30 missions with a perfect score, viewing all 25 videos, answering 55 of the timed pop-up questions and populating a 3D map of Dubai with at least 129 attractions.

CERTIFICATE

Once a player has earned Dubai Expert status and that Dubai Tourism has verified he or she is a registered travel agent, the player receives a Dubai Expert certificate and an electronic file containing a Dubai Expert logo that can be used on marketing materials.

MEASURING AND MONITORING

PHASE
4

MONITORING AND FOLLOW-UP

- 1: Implementation follow-up
- 2: Reporting and dealing with recommendations
- 3: Updating the improvement plan

The purpose of phase 4 of the methodology of Dubai Model for Government Services is to ensure that the implementation of the improvement plan is proceeding in the right direction and as planned.

Improved service efficiency emphasizes the use of resources in an optimal way to deliver the best government service possible. By focusing on efficiency and being customer-centric, Dubai' The Model Centre adds value to government-customer interactions, reduces unnecessary waste and contributes to cost reduction.

Having implemented Dubai Expert, it was now time for Dubai Tourism to monitor the service and ensure that the implementation of the improvement plan was as planned. As per Dubai' The Model Centre's methodology, during this phase the Innovation Team collected information on service assessment to update the improvement plan if necessary. This phase proved to be very useful as Dubai Tourism realized that they needed a reporting mechanism towards their management and Dubai' The Model Centre itself.

More specifically, the Innovation Team ensured that the implementation of the improvement plan was proceeding in the right direction by:

- > Collecting information on service assessment after the improvement.
- > Meeting with Dubai' The Model Centre to present initial implementation results.

Dubai' The Model Centre Improvement Measures

Dubai' The Model Centre incites Government entities to use a series of indicators when evaluating their performance in service delivery. Some of the indicators are listed below:

- > Service quality attributes
 - > Speed of delivery
 - > Accessibility
 - > Professionalism of front-line staff
 - > Ease of use
 - > Service information quality
 - > Customer privacy
 - > Waiting time
 - > Service delivery time
- > Customer satisfaction level

As part of assessing the service after improvement and monitoring its success, the Innovation Team looked into a series of key performance indicators. Coming back to the core principles of Dubai' The Model Centre, two strategic objectives were monitored through a series of indicators:

- > Has Dubai Expert improved service efficiency?
- > Has Dubai Expert focused on greater customer centricity?

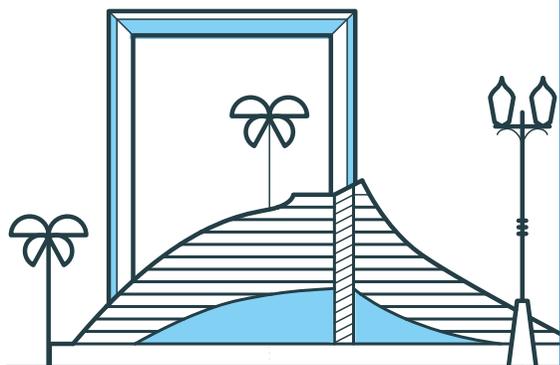


Number of players

The goal of Dubai Expert is to enable travel agents to better promote travel to Dubai, and drive tourist numbers. The key measurement of effectiveness for Dubai Expert is the number of players. Within four months of being launched, Dubai Expert had 840 players in target markets. Less than two years later, the number of players had grown to nearly 5,500 in target markets, and over 8,000 users worldwide. Ultimately that entire ecosystem of players and increased interaction with overseas offices has a positive effect on travel to Dubai, as it increases the chances of attracting more tourists to the Emirate.

Customer satisfaction

During this fourth phase, the Innovation Team realized that players genuinely enjoyed Dubai Expert, and that feedback was very positive. Downloading the app took about 2 minutes and registering an account took 45 seconds. In 2017, Dubai Tourism achieved 85% Customer Satisfaction Index for Dubai Expert. Their overall experience improved as well as the number of touchpoints reduced, impacting their satisfaction positively.



840

Players in target markets within four months of being launched

5.5K

Players in target markets in less than two years

8K

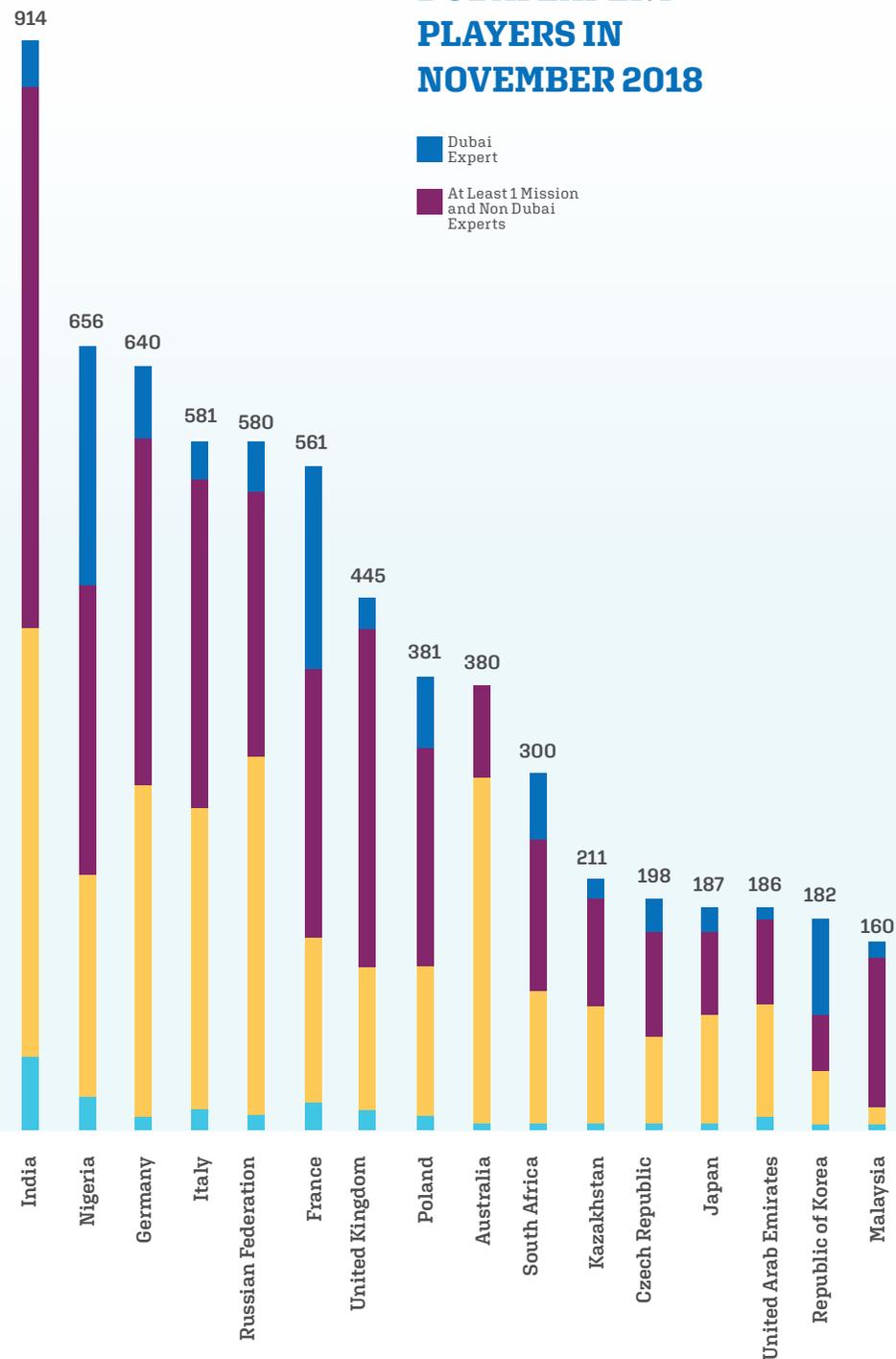
Users worldwide

85%

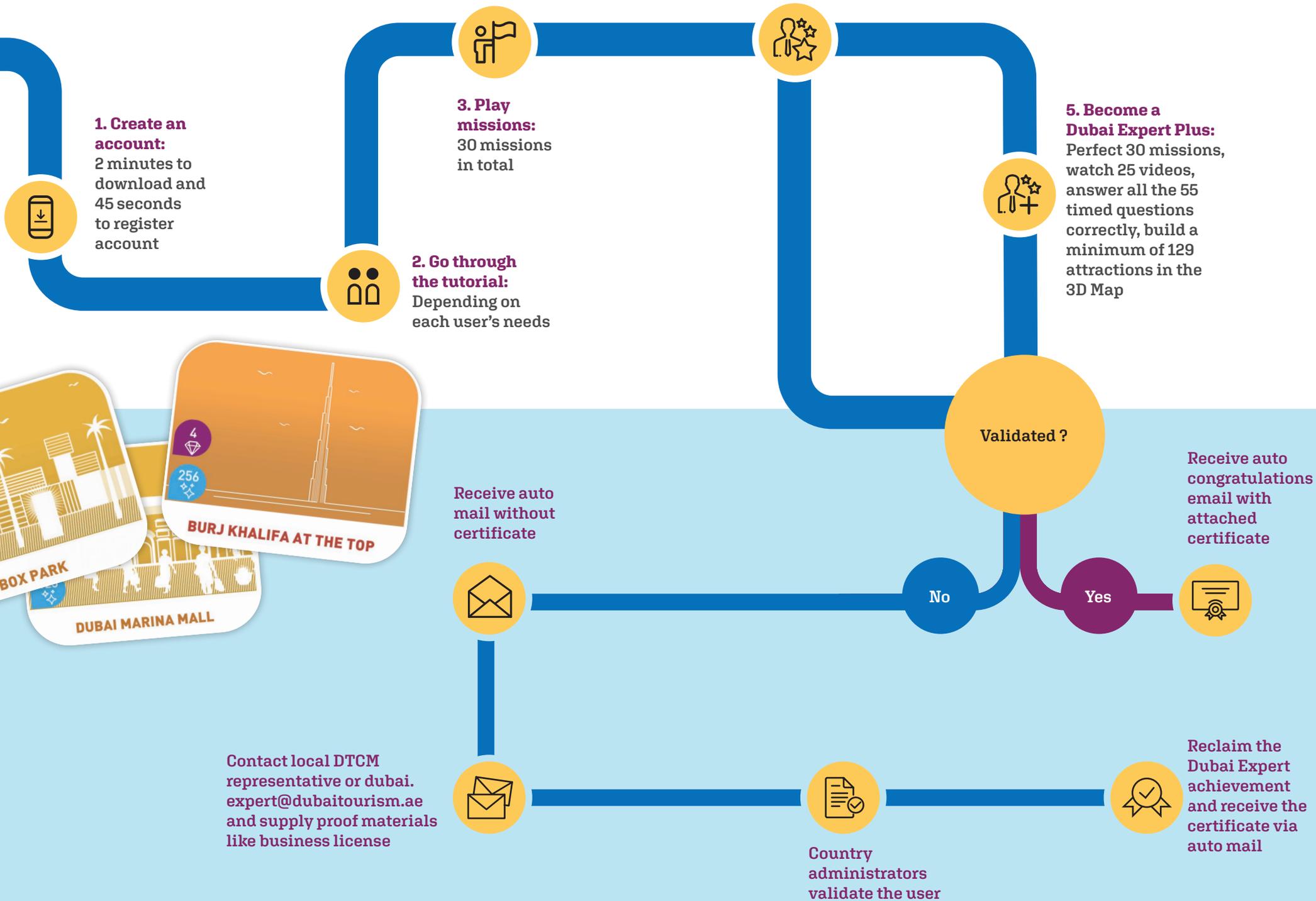
Customer satisfaction in 2017

DUBAI EXPERT PLAYERS IN NOVEMBER 2018

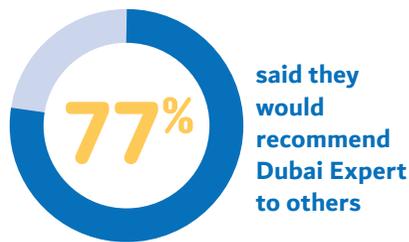
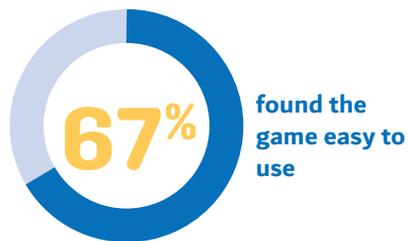
■ Dubai Expert
■ At Least 1 Mission and Non Dubai Experts



DUBAI EXPERT CERTIFICATION PROCESS



As part of its assessment and in addition to the feedback of the pilot testing, Dubai Tourism conducted a survey to provide feedback on the game.



Players also reported that they appreciated the ability to use Dubai Expert to provide itineraries directly to their customers. When the game indicates a player has built a perfect itinerary for a certain type of customer, the travel agent has the possibility to print it out and save it for when a client comes in with the same interests as the personas in the game.

Dubai Expert also proved to be very helpful to Dubai Tourism's overseas offices in their outreach efforts. It gave them a reason to connect with travel agents and let them know about the new training programme. It also allowed them to stay in touch and provided incentives based on players' performance and demonstrated interest in Dubai. By including a "Leader Board" that tracks the highest-scoring players, Dubai Expert provides overseas offices with valuable data about which travel agents demonstrate the highest interest in Dubai and helps them decide who to contact with offers and further incentives.

Compared to performance standards for older Dubai Tourism programmes dedicated to training, Dubai Expert is much more efficient and easier for travel agents to use. Before Dubai Expert, training and certification programmes for the tourism workforce required between 1 to 3 visits to service centres and could take weeks. Dubai Expert requires no visits to service centres, can be downloaded within minutes, and is available to travel agents at all times.

Dubai Tourism's staff in overseas offices also reported back to the team and shared positive feedback they had received from travel agents.

"What a great initiative of Dubai Tourism to create such a creative approach to learning about Dubai as a destination. I had no clue what there was in Dubai and this triggered me into really wanting to go. It also makes sure that Dubai is on your mind for a longer period. Great initiative and a great success."

"The game is very very well made. I really liked it."

"The travel agents loved it and have continued to play and have informed their colleagues to play it as well. It was really positive and so different to their usual Destination Workshop."

Dubai Tourism as an entity has a goal of providing more of its training and certification services and materials electronically. For certification programmes outside of Dubai Expert, they have succeeded in migrating 70% of customer touch points to be available as e-services. Inspired by the methodology of Dubai's The Model Center, Dubai Expert is a 100% e-service programme, with all customer touch points available electronically.

In 2017, Dubai Expert was nominated as one of the eight finalists of the "Flag" of the Hamdan bin Mohammed Programme for Smart Government. Government services improvement initiatives from across Dubai were nominated and finalists selected through a series of evaluations based on criteria that measure efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and commitment to Dubai's Smart Government approach. When nominating Dubai Expert as a finalist in 2017, the selection jury explained its strengths and why it was chosen: "This is a bold and out of the box innovation where Dubai Tourism is not just 'going for it' but founded on high quality research that may multiply reach in the market in a way unparalleled by any other tourist destination."

CONTINUOUS LEARNING

PHASE 5

CONTINUOUS LEARNING

- 1: Assessment of final results
- 2: Celebrating success
- 3: Continuous follow-up

The purpose of phase 5 of the methodology of Dubai Model for Government Services is to finalize the improvement initiatives implementation, to facilitate collective learning within the government entity, and ensure continuity of the improvement.

In accordance to the methodology established by Dubai' The Model Centre, it was time for Dubai Tourism to finalize the initiative's implementation, facilitate its collective learning and ensure its continuity.

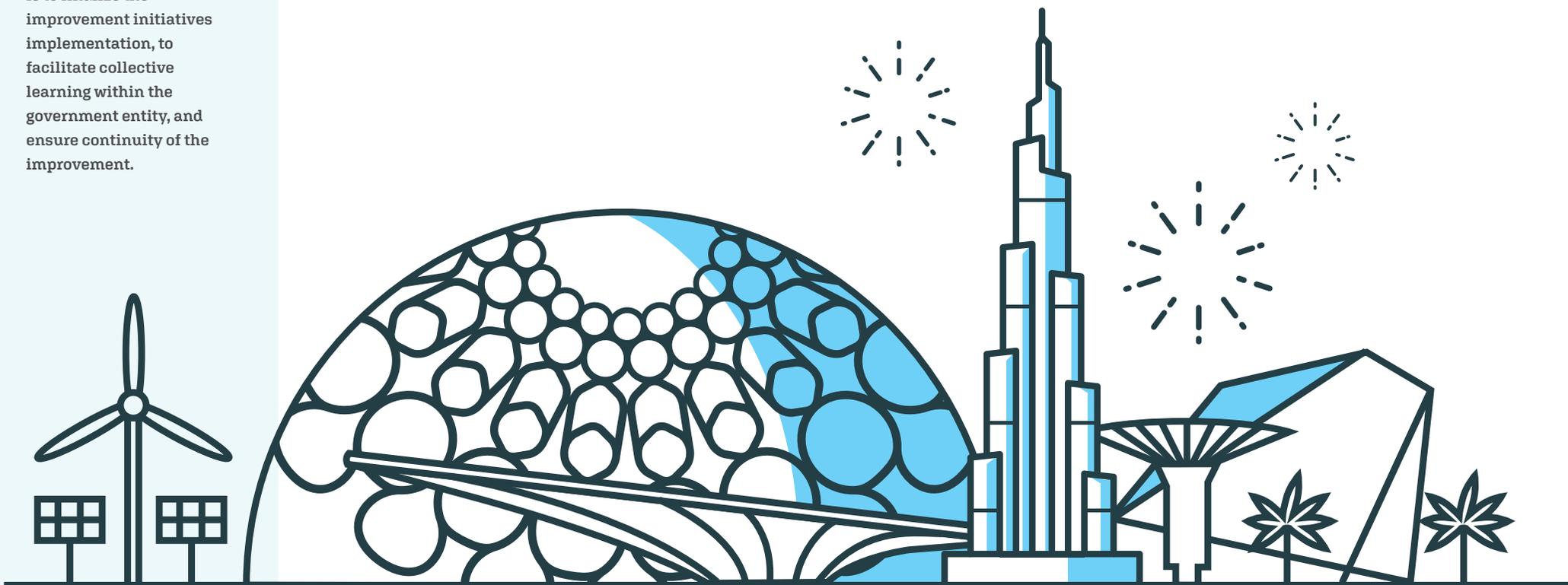
The Dubai Expert certificate is valid for two years, after which the travel agent must return to the game and complete 20 additional missions. This very component of the initiative is key in ensuring its sustainability and relevance. Because Dubai is a fast-growing city with constantly expanding options for tourists. Dubai Expert can be updated to keep travel agents informed about all that Dubai

has to offer. The game also provides information about Dubai's calendar of events. Frequent updates keep travel agents engaged with the game, and constantly learning about new developments in Dubai.

Looking into the future, the next update of Dubai Expert will contain in-depth information about Dubai Expo 2020, a world fair that will open in October 2020 and run for six months. More than 130 nations from around the world will be participating in the World Expo. Dubai is expected to attract 25 million tourists in 2020. By providing travel agents around the world with in-depth information about

Dubai Expo 2020, Dubai Expert can contribute to its success and attract more tourists.

The Innovation Team is also planning to add additional features to keep the game fresh and engaging. One of these features include a tournament mode that would allow the team to run competitions across agencies, cities, and even countries. The team also plans to keep innovating and researching what other destination marketing organizations are doing and what new technology is available to continue to improve Dubai Expert.



3 THE WAY FORWARD

The team at Dubai Tourism expects that Dubai Expert will reach 10,000 players in 2019. The creation of Dubai Expert has inspired teams all across Dubai Tourism. It has paved the way for new technology initiatives by improving the IT systems within the entity. Dubai Expert challenged a lot of internal systems and traditional ways of thinking. It made other teams within Dubai Tourism reflect on how they could introduce new and innovative ideas. The Dubai Expert team has become a valuable resource for others, and they often find themselves answering questions and sharing the information they learned through creating Dubai Expert.

Dubai Tourism embodies the approach that Dubai' The Model Centre strives to inspire in government entities. Dubai Tourism has pioneered a creative, innovative and customer-focused approach in every aspect of its services, and the results speak for themselves. The department's efforts have propelled Dubai from the 7th most visited city in the world in 2013, to the 4th in 2018.

“We are always innovative in our thinking and our approach. It is a need, a must, something we do in order to reach our goals”.

- Innovation Team member

“It is built into our culture as an organization. We are customer-driven. We need to be very creative about how to make Dubai one of the world's top destinations. The whole of Dubai Tourism is designed around technology and creativity. We are a very innovative department, from the way we designed our offices to the way we would like to be perceived. Everything we do has to be very agile. We have to evolve, to be creative. We make sure every day in Dubai is interesting.”

- Innovation Team member

Dubai Tourism plays a key role in ensuring a strong future for Dubai and the success of Dubai Plan 2021 - a vision designed to achieve the best experience for Dubai's citizens, residents and tourists. The plan focuses on making Dubai one of the top five centres in the world for trade, logistics, finance and tourism.

Dubai Tourism contributes to achieving this visionary goal by ensuring that the tourism industry remains strong. With Dubai Expert it proved it is an agile government entity; one that is creative and innovative at all times.

Dubai' the Model Centre supported Dubai Tourism to achieve this goal. The Centre and its methodology provided a path to innovation that begins with looking through the customer's eyes to find creative solutions that can ultimately affect residents' and tourists' experience in Dubai.

“We welcome visitors from across the world and provide them with an exceptional tourism experience. We want them to leave with lasting memories that they can share in their countries and communities.”

- His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates, and Ruler of the Emirate of Dubai.





مركز نموذج دبي
Dubai Model Centre

**For more information about
Dubai' The Model Centre,
please visit**

 @dtmcentre

 @dtmcentre

 dtmc.gov.ae

 dubai.model@tec.gov.ae