**Reflective Account on Travel and Tourism Industry Experience: A Review of British Airways**

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**Module Name**: Entrepreneurship in Tourism

**Module Code**: BTM5EIT

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**Academic Year**: 2024/2025

**Date**: [Submission Date]

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Overview of the Travel and Tourism Industry

The global travel and tourism industry is broad-based, including transportation, accommodation, food and beverage, recreation, and entertainment. It has a substantial contribution to both national economies and cultural diplomacy. The sector, says Solvoll et al. (2015), contributes over 10% to the global GDP and one out of every ten jobs worldwide, making it a key engine of socio-economic growth. Harnessing the latest technological advances, changing trends in consumer behavior, and greater accessibility, Tourism has become an evolving competitive industry that needs to evolve constantly and adopt a spirit of entrepreneurism to survive in the modern-day scenario.

## 1.2 Aims and Objectives

This portfolio aims to scrutinize how entrepreneurship impacts development in the tourism industry and British Airways (BA) is a case in point. The objectives are:

- To assess the influence of innovation in the design of customer experience and competitiveness in tourism.
- To study the effect of organizational culture and leadership on entrepreneurial success.
- To gauge globalization's effect on tourism and the rise of social entrepreneurship.
- To ponder personal entrepreneurial ideas and visions of how academic knowledge could influence the development of a business.

## 1.3 Personal Perspective and Structure

As a person passionate about tourism and entrepreneurship, I am compelled to make reflective contributions to the sector. This portfolio is divided into five key sections, including innovation, culture, globalization, social entrepreneurship, and strategic entrepreneurship, each of which is tagged with academic theories and practical reflections. The conclusion looks back at how I have developed, what has been understood, and where there is room for improvement in tourism entrepreneurship.

## 2    Self-Reflection on Entrepreneurship and Career Aspirations

My passion for tourism grew from the change capability that tourism possesses for individuals and communities. Traveling and being exposed to other cultures, cuisines, and histories have inspired me to develop value-driven tourism products to meet modern travelers' diverse needs. Tourism is not simply a business but an emotional and educational experience for clients and suppliers. This view agrees with Walmsley's (2019) perception that the industry's tendency is to integrate cultural expression and economic enterprise. Being successful in tourism entrepreneurship requires adaptability, creativity, persistence, and interpersonal skills. I am self-consciously innovative, empathetic, and preemptive, which are important in managing the volatility and unpredictability in the travel markets (Kimball & Lussier, 2020). My experience working in team-based environments has enhanced my communication and leadership skills, while my curiosity attracts me to finding areas in the industry that remain underexploited where value can be added by individualizing services provided. I aim to create a consultancy that brings eco-sensitive travelers together with locally driven experiences that promote sustainability and culture preservation. Based on the focus on business maturity and ethical scaling by Burns (2022), I intend to use agile models and digital platforms to create systematic engagement for CX and delivery success. By aligning my values with a set of entrepreneurial values, I seek to create a brand that, through its innovation, responsibility, and inclusiveness, is unique.
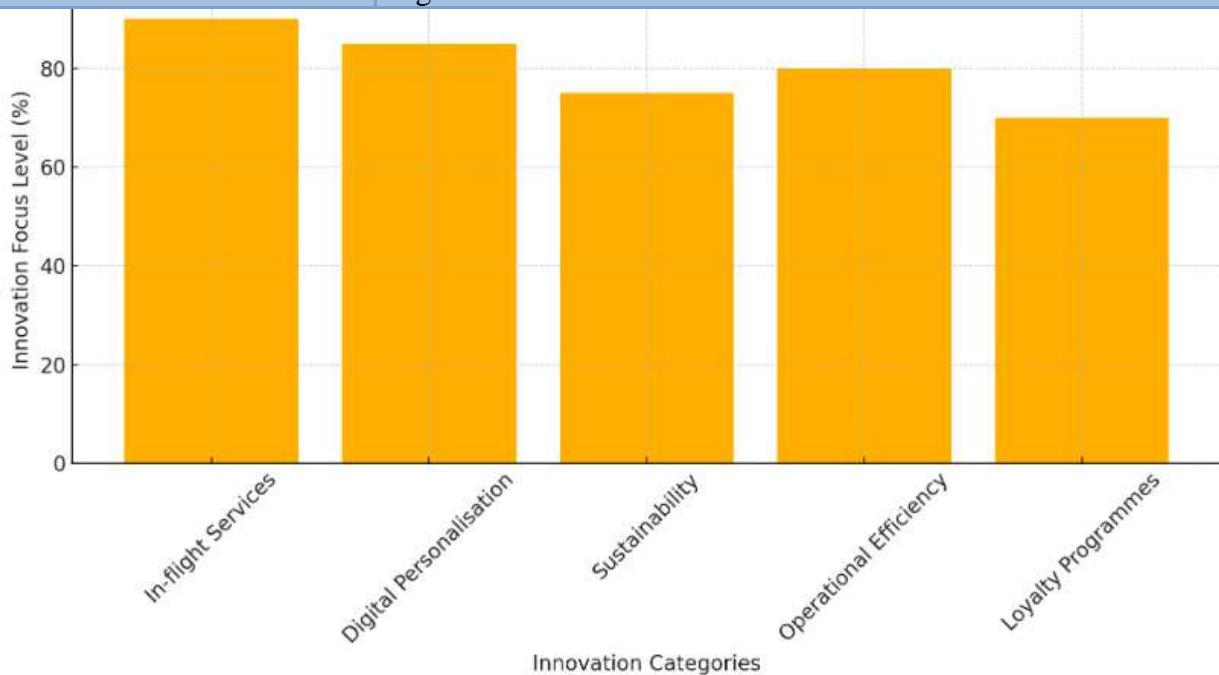
## 3    Understanding Innovation in Tourism and British Airways

### Core Drivers of Innovation in Tourism

Five major factors stimulate innovation in the tourism industry: The Growth Drivers, The Valued Drivers, The Economic Drivers, The Structural Drivers, and The Demographic Drivers. From the customer's perspective, changing expectations, digital disruption, global competition, sustainability imperatives, and expanding global markets (Solvoll et al., 2015). Businesses in the tourism sector need to be innovative in any way possible to ensure their customers remain loyal while profitability remains high amid a changing ecosystem. Morrison et al. (2016) explain that innovation brings differentiation, facilitating customer-centric service design.

**Table 1: Five Key Drivers of Innovation in Tourism**

| Reason | Description |
|---|---|
| Customer Expectations | Demand for personalized, digital, and immersive experiences. |
| Technological Advancements | Use AI, VR, and mobile apps to enhance service delivery and operations. |
| Global Competition | Innovation to stay competitive amidst international players. |
| Sustainability Goals | Pressure to adopt eco-friendly practices and reduce environmental impact. |
| Market Expansion | It needs to appeal to emerging economies and diverse travel segments. |



Figure 1: Focus Areas of Innovation At British Airways

British Airways (BA) has been heavily involved in innovation activities, especially in relation to the in-flight experience. These have included premium seat configuration, an enhanced entertainment system, and enhanced meal options from Do&Co, among others. Innovations like biometric boarding and digital boarding passes have simplified operations and improved satisfaction (Blank & Dorf, 2020). Their mobile app makes it convenient to travel with real-time updates, luggage tracking, and customized travel content. This data-driven approach to personalization reflects the entrepreneurial competencies outlined by Mitchellmore and Rowley (2010), strengthening competitive agility.

# 4    Personal Innovation Strategy and Risk-Taking

## 4.1    Creativity and Entrepreneurial Thinking

Creativity is the bedrock of entrepreneurship, especially in such industries as tourism, where experiences are intangible and customer expectations change fast. In my entrepreneurial road, I use divergent thinking to test unorthodox alternative travel models, such as hyper-local, sustainability-based tourism packages for slums. As Kimball and Lussier (2020) indicated, creativity allows entrepreneurs to transform abstract ideas into tangible services, thus adding new value for the customer and the business. I often use design thinking frameworks and mind mapping tools to set off ideation and tune concepts before investing resources.

## 4.2    Identifying Market Gaps

Effective entrepreneurs are opportunity seekers; they find the hidden customer needs and turn them into business opportunities. I keep a close eye on trends in the industry, do a competitor analysis, and interact directly with future customers through surveys and focus groups. For instance, I have noted the absence of culturally inclusive travel packages targeting diaspora and minority groups, a niche that frequently eludes mainstream operators. This is consistent with the view of Burns (2022), who asserts that market sensing is one of the vital entrepreneurial competencies that allows firms to get a first-mover advantage in previously unexplored spaces.

## 4.3    Risk-Taking and Mitigation Strategies

Any entrepreneurial venture carries risk, more so in tourism, as the geopolitical, pandemics, and environmental hazards risk having the severe effects of disturbing the business. However, as Blank and Dorf (2020) outline, it is not the avoidance of risk that is the key. Instead, it is the strategic management of such risk. I use some mitigation tools, including MVP (Minimum Viable Product) testing, feedback loops, and lean budgeting.

**Table 2: Entrepreneurial Risk Management Strategies**

| Strategy | Description |
| --- | --- |
| Minimum Viable Product (MVP) Testing | Developing a basic version of the product to test with real users before full investment. |

| Customer Feedback Loops | Collecting early feedback to validate assumptions and make iterative improvements. |
|---|---|
| Scenario Planning | Anticipating and preparing for potential market and operational disruptions. |
| Diversification of Revenue Streams | Spreading risk across different services or customer segments to mitigate failure. |
| Lean Budgeting | Allocating resources conservatively to maintain flexibility and control expenses. |

Such strategies guarantee that risk-taking is not haphazard but designed using research and up-to-the-moment market information, allowing for increased flexibility and future-proofing.

# 5   Organisational Culture and Leadership at British Airways

Organizational culture in the tourism industry is a defining element that determines customer interaction, employee morale, and working effectiveness. It represents a firm's value system, attitudes, and practices that guide its internal and external engagement. An open, innovative, and team-based culture is usually well-positioned to cope with external shocks and changing market needs (Morrison et al., 2016).

## 5.1   The Culture at British Airways

British Airways has developed a performance-oriented but service-based culture anchored to its brand ethos, "To Fly, To Serve." This motto depicts a high synonymy of operational objectives with customer service excellence. However, cultural challenges have also emerged, especially during industrial action and restructuring. Such internal pressures indicate that with all that BA purports to be (collaborative and innovative), maintaining this is far from easy and cannot be enforced consistently across all levels. Professionalism, precision, and prestige are among the pillars of BA's culture. These values reflect how the airline manages branding, service delivery, and employee expectations. For example, service protocols are drilled into the staff, a clear indication of top-down culture shaping.

## 5.2 Leadership's Role in Driving Innovation

British Airways' leadership plays an "influential role in shaping innovative, resilient organizational culture." Strategic leadership (Walmsley, 2019) requires not only vision setting (re-envisioning) but also encouraging teams to experiment, learn, and adapt. At BA, senior leaders have driven the facilitation of fleet modernization and blending digital technologies and sustainability efforts, such as investing in sustainable aviation fuel (SAF). In addition, BA leadership has adopted collaborative strategies – cooperating with culinary brands and techie firms to improve customers' experience. This kind of shared leadership aligns with the traits in the Mitchellmore and Rowley (2010) construct of entrepreneurial leadership, where empowerment, strategic thinking, and innovation become the major sources of competitive advantage. Thus, British Airways presents how leadership and culture are integrated, where strategic direction endorses cultural norms that will foster excellence and innovations in the tourism and aviation industry.

# 6    Reflection on Organisational Culture and Business Planning

## 6.1 Aligning Organisational Culture with Personal Values

To be an aspiring entrepreneur, adapting organizational culture with personal values is central to operational success and ethical consistency. Businesses in the tourism industry should go a long way in the foundation of values: inclusive, sustainable, and innovative values. Poor alignment between personal and organizational values may create internal conflicts among workers and, consequently, lower employee engagement levels, hence customer dissatisfaction (Burns, 2022). Consequently, I want to create a company culture that promotes free flow in communication, social responsibility, and learning. For example, I would focus on team structures where taking action is equal, and there is feedback for the rest; thus, employees will feel they own their work. Training programmes would also be introduced to enhance shared values and conceptualize entrepreneurial thinking among team members.

## 6.2 Organisational Culture and Business Success

Organizational culture is not a mere organizational mechanism but a strategic asset. A good culture promotes the sharing of knowledge, diminished employee turnover, and brand image. Culture, a neglected donor of innovation readiness and long-term growth, is an often overlooked

factor (Mitchellmore & Rowley, 2010). In my conception of a business model, the culture would be an enabler of entrepreneurship crediting creative ideas, accepting calculated failure, and supporting agile decision-making. Such methods will ensure that the firm is at the forefront of delivering innovative community-focused tourism solutions. By embedding entrepreneurial values in the organizational DNA, the business will be better positioned to deal with changes in market trends and customer requirements.

# 7   Globalisation & Smart Tourism

## 7.1   Globalization and Tourism Link

The process of globalization has transformed the tourism industry through the expansion of people, goods, and information movement across borders. Increasing cost-effective airlines, digital platforms, and online booking systems mean that international travel has become easier for travelers to discover new destinations and experiences (Buhalis et al., 2024). The increased global integration of markets, brought about by developments in technology and communication, has led to the emergence of "smart tourism" where the integration of technology not only enhances the efficiency of tourism-related services but also improves the traveler's experience has come to the fore (Calisto & Sarkar, 2024).

## 7.2   Benefits and Challenges of Globalisation in Tourism

The advantages of globalization in tourism are obvious. It has made destinations easier to access, improved the economy of hosting countries, and diversified the available activities for tourists. In other words, globalization helps create more travel options, thus encouraging cultural exchange (Ma et al., 2024). For example, new technologies such as virtual reality (VR) enable tourists to 'experience' destinations even before they arrive, even changing the planning phase of trips (Calisto & Sarkar, 2024). However, the problems of globalization for tourism are not small. More tourism causes a decline in the environment, over-tourism, and dilution of the cultures of the locals. In addition, globalization may heighten the income gap between prosperous developed nations or major multinational corporations and the people who live locally (Kumar et al., 2023); therefore, the tourism industry should embrace sustainable practices to check for such negative effects.

*7.3    British Airways' Response to Globalisation and Smart Tourism*

British Airways has responded to globalization by using new smart tourism strategies, such as artificial intelligence and machine learning, to provide personalized services (Buhalis et al., 2024). This includes customized travel suggestions and a smooth, digital-first customer experience. Another area that BA has invested in is sustainability, which is a form of Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF), and in ensuring its carbon footprints have been reduced, aligning with global expectations for responsible travel (Ratna et al., 2023).

**Table 3: Benefits and Challenges of Globalisation in Tourism**

| Benefit | Challenge |
|---|---|
| **Increased accessibility to global destinations** | Environmental degradation and over-tourism |
| **Economic growth for host countries** | Income inequality and uneven benefits |
| **Diversified tourism experiences** | Cultural erosion and loss of heritage |
| **Enhanced cultural exchange** | Dependence on external tourism markets |
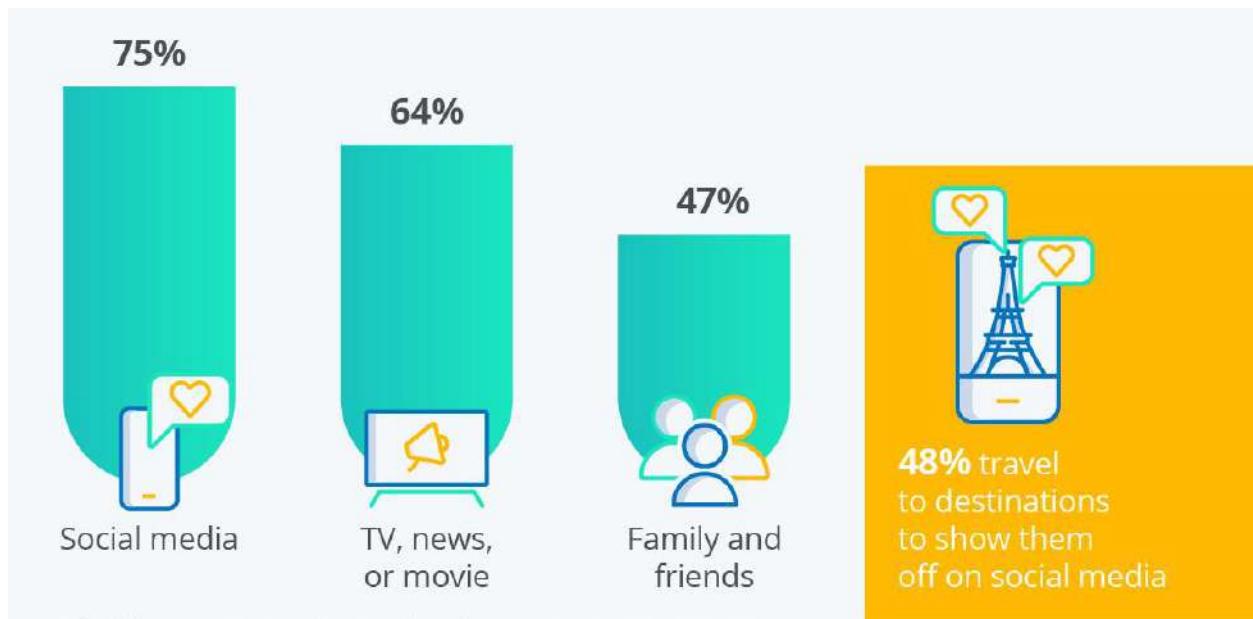
# 8    Personal Perspective on Globalisation

The world has transformed my personal travel experiences by making traveling across borders easy and inexpensive. With Budget Airlines (my first experience with budget travel), online booking, and technology, travel has become main-stream and I can experience cultures and regions that remain out of my reach. This corresponds to the results of Zhan et al. (2024), who underline the importance of digital platforms in making tourism inclusive. The traveling that has opened up the world to me has enriched cultural interchange, enabled by globalization, and has been one of the most important. Culinary experiences, language or traditional crafts globalization provide an opportunity to get to know the world better and to engage in cross-cultural communication (Wang et al., 2023). It also goes a long way towards dismantling the stereotypes and cultivating mutual respect, as evidenced by the high global tourism level that impregnates local cultures. Social media platforms like Instagram and TikTok have been integral in how we view and plan our travel. This upsurge in "influencer culture" has made destinations more visible

and accessible and has shaped travel patterns and tastes (Chu et al., 2020). Besides, other technologies such as augmented reality (AR) and AI-powered travel apps have increased the planning-in-travel process, which provides personalized itineraries and real-time updates based on personal preferences (Amine et al., 2024). These digital tools enable the development of more connected and informed travelers, and global tourism is more dynamic than ever.

## 9    Social Entrepreneurship in Tourism

Social entrepreneurship in the tourism industry is the creation of businesses that aim to solve social and environmental problems while doing business sustainably and financially. Unlike traditional tourism businesses concerned with profit, social enterprises in tourism focus on the improved well-being of local communities and the conservation of cultural and natural heritage (John & Supramaniam, 2024). These are businesses based on the principle of the social value creation, which tackles questions such as poverty elimination, environmental sustainability, and community empowerment. Social entrepreneurs are innovators who promote entrepreneurial practice for social challenges, creating opportunities for community members and improving local economic development. As Davari et al. argue (2023), such initiatives tend to target niche markets, and their target audience represents populations that are underserved or promote sustainable tourism practices that help to reduce environmental degradation.

### 9.1 Community Development through Social Enterprises

Social enterprises in tourism are important for community development because they give developing populations opportunities in the economy, particularly in rural or disadvantaged regions. For instance, ventures such as community-based tourism and eco-tourism support local culture with an opportunity to earn a living through employment opportunities and streams of residents' income. Such businesses also promote cultural conservation and responsible tourism (very important in ensuring that the strata of local societies are not compromised) (John & Supramaniam, 2024).

### 9.2 Collaboration between Governments, NGOs, and Private Companies

The role played by government, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and private enterprises in this field often determines the effectiveness of social entrepreneurship in tourism. For example, collaboration with local governments can ensure the needed infrastructure support and the work of NGOs will implement community involvement, such as conservation works. Private companies, however, can provide funding and business interpretation, ensuring the enterprise is sustainable for the long term. As Zhan et al. (2024) pointed out, such types of partnerships are vital for scaling the social impact and the volume of outreach.

# 10 Reflection on Social Enterprises

**Local and Global Examples of Social Enterprises**

Social enterprises in tourism can be based and work on local, regional, or global levels to resolve social, economic, and environmental problems through innovative business management practices. An outstanding local one is The Village Tourism Project of Bali, Indonesia, whereby communities have embraced cooperation and offer tourists value-added and eco-conscious experiences highlighting the local cultural heritage while earning livelihoods (Ali & Khan, 2023). The TOMS Shoes Model is just one of the worldwide efforts that show how a for-profit business can incorporate social good into its business model and work toward community building through the "One for One" program. Another famous worldwide case of social entrepreneurship is the G Adventures initiative, which builds on the idea of supporting local community development projects through participation in educational and sustainable travels, with the proceeds of the participation divided between the foreigners and the local population. This initiative also considers sustainability concerns, as described by Buhalis et al. (2024), who argue that businesses should also be concerned about returning what is rightly theirs to society.

**Personal Interest in Social Entrepreneurship**

My fascination with social entrepreneurship is rooted in the desire to develop sustainable, high-impact traveling experiences for tourists and the host community. After observing how tourism has changed even the underserved regions, I am especially passionate about creating business models to help the local community through responsible tourism. Building upon the findings of Kwantes and Boglarsky (2018) concerning leadership effectiveness in the context of cultures, I believe social enterprises can close the gap between global opportunities in the market and local populations' needs and grant them the necessary tools to thrive while preserving their cultural integrity.

**Entrepreneurial Skills for Social Enterprises**

Entrepreneurial skills in various fields are imperative to succeed in social entrepreneurship in tourism. These are strategic thinking, market analysis, and social impact assessment. In addition, being a strong leader and collaborating are essential in engaging stakeholders- local

communities, governments, and nongovernment organizations. According to Horta (2024), emotionally intelligent leadership is essential in motivating groups and directing social enterprises to deliver their mission. We must manage sustainability, cultural preservation, and customer experience in tourism so that all stakeholders receive benefits equitably.

# 11  Strategic Entrepreneurship in BA

Strategic entrepreneurship is joining an organization's innovation, opportunity identification, and strategic management processes to achieve competitive advantage. Beyond conventional entrepreneurship, it emphasizes long-term goals, coordination of resources with strategic aims, and constant innovations to adapt to market needs (Bandura, 2023). Strategic entrepreneurship can be seen within British Airways (BA) in its initiative to innovate while taking a competitive stand in the global airline industry. This entails adopting new technologies and new market space and countering with customer-centric services that build lasting loyalty.

## 11.1  Competitive Strategy at British Airways

BA's competitive strategy revolves around premium service, technology, and sustainability differentiation. By paying attention to high-quality customer service and the digitalization of operations, BA has developed a unique value proposition in the rather competitive airline industry (Buhalis et al., 2024). Its use of AI to customize customer experiences, from booking to everything in between and flying in the company, puts the airline above its rivals and reinforces its status as a leading luxury air travel brand.

Moreover, BA's strategy involves expanding the company's wide network of routes globally, through which passengers can make flexible travel choices. The worldwide extension is crucial for BA, considering the growing mobility of international travelers and the need for frictionless, interconnected services (Ali & Khan, 2023).

## 11.2  Partnerships and Market Expansion

Besides establishing strategic alliances with other major international airlines with whom it codeshares to increase its market share, British Airways has also entered into orbital-share alliances with other credible organizations in the same spheres of operations to co-ordinate its services in a way that will help it compete in the market. Such partnerships help expand BA's

reach into emerging markets and underserved regions, thereby giving the company a competitive advantage (Demerouti et al., 2019). Besides partnering with airlines, BA has also partnered with technology companies to implement sophisticated services such as mobile check-in and biometric boarding, enhancing operational efficiency and the customer experience (Hsu & Lin, 2023).

Such collaborations and planned initiatives demonstrate how BA's strategic entrepreneurship model supports its long-term aspirations while navigating changes in market trends. According to Coghlan et al. (2024), integrating innovation into strategy can increase the organization's resilience and sustainability.

# 12 Strategic Thinking in Your Business

## 12.1 Differences from Traditional Entrepreneurship

Strategic entrepreneurship is distinguished from traditional entrepreneurship by its focus on long-term sustainability, the creation of opportunities, and the alignment of resources. Although traditional Entrepreneurship is based on product development and profits, strategic entrepreneurship is based on strategic management and innovation to rival others over time (Demerouti et al., 2019). In my case, I intend to implement a strategic approach for my business, combining near-term business needs with long-term goals. This will require continuous market analysis, loops through customer feedback, and proactive innovation to remain one step out in front of the competition.

## 12.2 Building Team Culture

Team culture is critical to any business's success, particularly in the tourism industry, where customer experience is key. A collaborative, open, and innovative team culture can only provide a creative environment and accelerated problem-solving. I will develop a culture of continuous learning, cross-functionality, and adaptability. Team reflexivity (i.e., periodical self-reflection on team performance and readjustment of strategic moves) will, as Hsu and Lin (2023) note, play an important role in creating agile and resilient business conditions.

*12.3  Startup Strategy*

For my tourism startup, I intend to use a lean startup model, which entails testing ideas in quick time through MVP to validate assumptions and challenge its business models iteratively. With a somewhat extensible approach, I will make my business responsive to the changes in preferences, market conditions, and technological advances of the customers. Ali and Khan (2023) theorize that an adaptive strategy is important for new businesses, particularly those operating in rapidly changing industries such as tourism, where consumer preferences change too rapidly.

# 13  Conclusion & Final Reflection

This portfolio has focused on the role of entrepreneurship in tourism, emphasizing British Airways and social enterprises. The analysis identified ways in which innovation, leadership, and culture determine a business's success in the tourism industry. The theory of strategic entrepreneurship and how BA holds its advantage were also discussed. The portfolio also touched on the importance of social entrepreneurship in tourism, especially community development and sustainability.

This assignment has enabled me to appreciate better how entrepreneurship works in tourism. After reviewing the case studies and theoretical frameworks from different sources, I learned much about strategic thinking, innovation, and leadership in determining successful businesses.

One of the challenges experienced in developing this portfolio was synthesizing much information from multiple sources. Though the study was extensive, it was sometimes difficult to integrate the information into a cohesive story. I intend to develop my research organizing and time schedule skills to achieve chronological writing. Besides, I emphasize applying theoretical insights to practical, real-world examples and increasing the application of academic knowledge to business strategy.

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