

# GTP Case Study 2012

## Innovation in Tourism



## PaddyWagon Tours

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**I**n the field of tourism one can be innovative in many ways. But to be innovative in the Irish tourism sector you have to identify both the weaknesses and strengths of Irish tourism. The strengths of the Irish tourism industry lie in the rural, historical and natural uniqueness of the tourist attractions e.g. The Burren, Newgrange and Glendalough. These are all major tourist attractions but their weakness is that they all lie in isolated, rural parts of the country and this makes it difficult for non-native tourists to find and visit them. This is where PaddyWagon Tours comes in. They have noticed the weakness in the Irish tourism industry and come up with an innovative service that makes coming to Ireland to visit most of the major rural tourist attractions a more attractive option for foreign tourists.



The PaddyWagon Company was started in 1997 by three friends and grew steadily into a national business with customers from all over the world. They cater for all languages and have a big fleet of buses that range from 14 seater to 54 seater buses. But a tour with a lot of strangers is often not for everyone. If there is a group of people who want to travel together, they provide a private tour service for groups between 2 and 200 people. There wide target market shows that the company is attracting people from all over the world to the rural attractions that were in danger of being visited less by non natives.

In recent years there has been a growing interest in holidays that aren't in sunny, tourist locations. People want to see the natural beauty of the country and the PaddyWagon tours company is an innovative way of providing this for all tourists while still preserving Ireland's natural beauty for future generations. Another reason why PaddyWagon Tours works well is because a big tourist town in the middle of Ireland wouldn't work. There isn't enough interest for such a big scale project and people don't stay on any long term visits at any one location.



The PaddyWagon Tours Company is a great and innovative way of using the weakness in Irish Tourism. They provide a relatively low price for the service they provide but still make a profit. They have a monopoly at the moment because there aren't many tour companies that are as world famous as PaddyWagon and they were the first company to make it big in this market. If a new company was to start in this service then they would have to invest a lot of money and they wouldn't earn as much money as PaddyWagon because then there would be competition and the prices will have to go down.

The PaddyWagon company is therefore save for the time being and is getting plenty of business because with every tour the give each customer tells his or her friends about it and spreads the word about the company. It is a proven fact that the word of mouth is the best form of advertisement. The company also works as a middle man who earns profit. All in all the PaddyWagon Tours Company has helped stimulate Irish Tourism and brought more money into the country.



As was previously mentioned, the success of PaddyWagon tours lies in the fact that it catered for a need, a demand, for such a service as the one it provides. But another factor in their success, one that is almost as important, is the image of Ireland and its people it shows to tourist from the outside of Ireland. The image of the PaddyWagon tours company is what sets it apart from any other tours operators in Ireland.

It shows foreign tourists what they want to see, an overly exaggerated, romanticized, friendly, happy-go-lucky image. It's what they expect to see when they come to Ireland; Green everywhere, especially hospitable people and shamrocks and leprechauns.

When American tourists come to Ireland, they come here for the "old" Ireland, the Ireland that they heard of in stories and from elderly emigrants. They want to see the rural and historical Ireland. Similarly, tourists from Europe, they visit because Ireland is renowned for its hospitality and it is promoted as a quiet, easy going place.

The image of PaddyWagon tours gives us the impression of being 100% Irish and the way in which they organize and design their tours gives people the feeling of being in on something special, as if they are getting the "real" Irish experience. It isn't just another bland coach journey between places of interest, it makes even the journey there itself a unique experience.

The innovation of PaddyWagon Tours is an asset to the Irish tourism industry in many ways; it is a unique service that gives Ireland another selling point; it promotes rural attractions; it makes Ireland seem a more attractive location for a weekend excursions, to mention but a very few.

It is a great innovation in the “day trip” tourism sector as it now provides a well known and advertised service to these tourists, where before tours of such kind would be little known or non-existent. PaddyWagon provides these tourists with a well informed, well run tour of possibly many rural and isolated areas in one single tour. This makes the idea of visiting these areas many times more attractive to tourists, as the navigation and information problems are solved.

Another way the PaddyWagon tours is innovative is in how they organize the tours. Tourists can be collected straight from where they arrive, and be immediately immersed into the Irish culture. This is important as some tourists would like to feel that they are part of the Irish way of life and culture for their whole stay.

