



CREA Comprehensive Voluntourism Brand Strategy DRAFT

November 2016



THE CREA BRAND STRATEGY CHALLENGE



For What Traveler Problems Is CREA Voluntourism Solving?

- Wanting to contribute in a meaningful way to climate research.
- A safe, easily accessible but still international destination for a study abroad or service program for students and travelers.
- Course credit for doing important research in a fun, well-known destination.
- Looking for a physically active travel experience that offers unique volunteer activities in a comfortable, upscale mountain setting that's centrally located and easy to get to.
- A summer faculty-directed study abroad experience that is credible and fits a limited window of time (versus a semester-long program).
- A unique, one-of-a-kind environmental research program different from anything else in the market.

The Brand Strategy Challenge

Elevate CREA to a place of recognized international significance as a trusted voluntourism organization and destination, and increase the awareness and appeal of its work as a must-do global travel experience.

Attitudes Towards CREA Are Affected by Perceptions of All Voluntourism Experiences

Brand perceptions of CREA Mont-Blanc are influenced by the perceptions of other voluntourism activities, positive and negative.

CREA must overcome those perceptions as well as any that may be unique to it by clearly demonstrating its differences and benefits.



NEGATIVE VOLUNTOURISM PERCEPTIONS

Boring
Hard to Get To Locations
Risky or Dangerous
Exploitive
Of Limited Benefit
Temporary
Expensive

Brand Differentiators--How Do We Distinguish CREA from Other Voluntourism Experiences?

CREA's Six Brand Differentiators:

- 1. Authentic scientific research**
- 2. Trusted and established**
- 3. Alpine environment as the “laboratory”**
- 4. Chamonix and Mont-Blanc as destinations**
- 5. Service—to our guests, our community, our planet**
- 6. The significance of what we do**

Brand Differentiators--How Do We Distinguish CREA from Other Voluntourism Experiences?



CREA's Six Brand Differentiators:

1. Authentic scientific research

The work done here every day is performed with passion by globally respected scientific professionals working in the field at 70 different sites and in the historic Mont-Blanc Observatoire.

Brand Differentiators--How Do We Distinguish CREA from Other Voluntourism Experiences?

CREA's Six Brand Differentiators:

- 1. Authentic scientific research**
- 2. Trusted and established**

CREA has been in existence as a globally respected science organization for 20 years, and has been collecting data from the Mont-Blanc region for a decade. It has a proven record of scientific contribution, funded in part by the French government.

Brand Differentiators--How Do We Distinguish CREA from Other Voluntourism Experiences?

CREA's Six Brand Differentiators:

- 1. Authentic scientific research**
- 2. Trusted and established**
- 3. Alpine environment as the “laboratory”**

No other scientific voluntourism trip offers the dramatic scenery of the French, Italian, and Swiss Alps as the setting for an unmatched experience combining science, service, and an Alpine adventure.

Brand Differentiators--How Do We Distinguish CREA from Other Voluntourism Experiences?



CREA's Six Brand Differentiators:

- 1. Authentic scientific research**
- 2. Trusted and established**
- 3. Alpine environment as the “laboratory”**
- 4. Chamonix and Mont-Blanc as destinations**

Chamonix and the surrounding Mont-Blanc region are known worldwide for their scenery, charm, mountain sports, and hospitality. The destination is easy to reach for travelers from around the world. It is one of only a few European locations to experience climate change voluntourism.

Brand Differentiators--How Do We Distinguish CREA from Other Voluntourism Experiences?



CREA's Six Brand Differentiators:

- 1. Authentic scientific research**
- 2. Trusted and established**
- 3. Alpine environment as the “laboratory”**
- 4. Chamonix and Mont-Blanc as destinations**
- 5. Service—to our guests, our community, our planet**

We treat our volunteers as guests in our home, with hospitality, respect, and patience. We are an integral part of a community of Alpine residents who live and work here year-round. We serve our planet with research on topics of global importance.

Brand Differentiators--How Do We Distinguish CREA from Other Voluntourism Experiences?



CREA's Six Brand Differentiators:

- 1. Authentic scientific research**
- 2. Trusted and established**
- 3. Alpine environment as the “laboratory”**
- 4. Chamonix and Mont-Blanc as destinations**
- 5. Service—to our guests, our community, our planet**
- 6. The significance of what we do**

The work we do is part of a worldwide network of scientists engaged in climate change research, dedicated to making the world a better place.

CREA Voluntourism Brand Audiences— To Whom Are We Speaking?

**Teachers and Academic
Professionals**

**Intermediary Trip
Organizers**



Students and Parents

**Adult Travelers and
Voluntourists**

Brand Differentiators--How Do We Distinguish CREA from Other Voluntourism Experiences?



Why are CREA's brand differentiators important to teachers and academic professionals?

1. **Authentic scientific research**—CREA's work is genuine science and respected by scientific and fellow academic professionals.
2. **Trusted and established**—CREA has been doing research work in the Alps as a true scientific organization for longer than many voluntourism providers have been around.
3. **Alpine environment as the "laboratory"**—The setting is both unique and well-known, and will be appealing to students.
4. **Chamonix and Mont-Blanc as destinations**—The region is relatively easy to access, is considered safe, and has an abundance of activities for students.
5. **Service**—They are looking out for our best interests, and those of the globe.
6. **The significance of what we do**—The work done at CREA is an important part of what all climate change scholars are doing around the world.

Brand Differentiators--How Do We Distinguish CREA from Other Voluntourism Experiences?



Why are CREA's brand differentiators important to students and parents?

1. **Authentic scientific research**—CREA's work is genuine science and will look good on resumes and future applications, and will generate college credit.
2. **Trusted and established**—CREA is not a “fly by night” organization with no track record of success in scientific work.
3. **Alpine environment as the “laboratory”**—Voluntourists are provided the opportunity to combine academic science and outdoor recreation in a dramatic, photo-worthy mountain setting.
4. **Chamonix and Mont-Blanc as destinations**—The region is relatively easy to access, is considered safe, and has an abundance of activities.
5. **Service**—CREA will take care of its guests, and its activities offer a lesson in selfless dedication to the needs of the Earth.
6. **The significance of what we do**—This is a chance to be a part of something very big and respected.

Brand Differentiators--How Do We Distinguish CREA from Other Voluntourism Experiences?



Why are CREA's brand differentiators important to intermediary providers?

1. **Authentic scientific research**—The work that CREA does can make us look good and enhance our credibility as an experience provider.
2. **Trusted and established**—CREA's record of success will be important to our clients, particularly those in the academic realm.
3. **Alpine environment as the “laboratory”**—The setting is both unique and well-known, and will be appealing to clients.
4. **Chamonix and Mont-Blanc as destinations**—The region is relatively easy to access, centrally located, considered safe, and has an abundance of activities that we can potentially package and sell to our customers.
5. **Service**—CREA will provide a memorable experience and will not embarrass us by partnering with them.
6. **The significance of what we do**—Climate change is of great interest to many travelers.

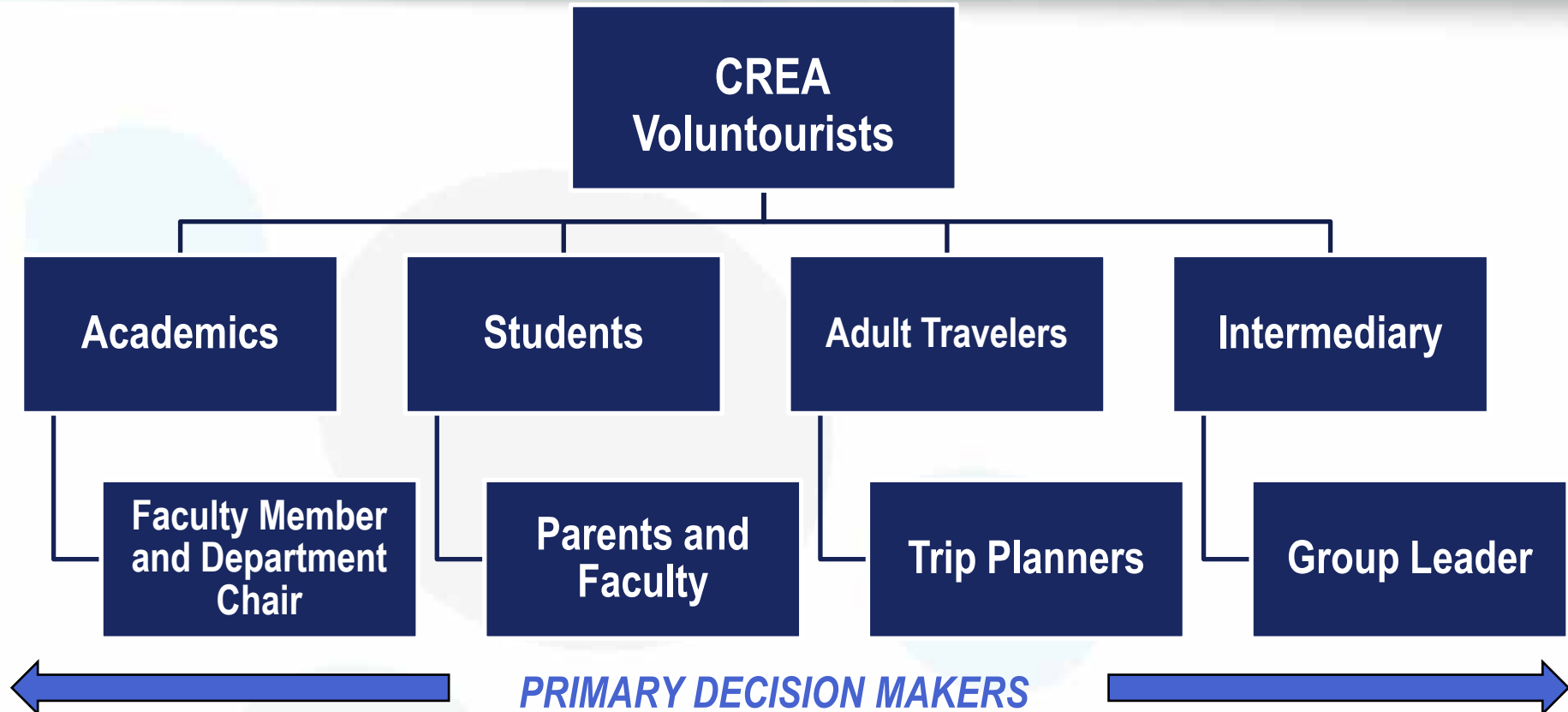
Brand Differentiators--How Do We Distinguish CREA from Other Voluntourism Experiences?



Why are CREA's brand differentiators important to adult travelers and voluntourists?

1. **Authentic scientific research**—CREA's work is unique and interesting, not found in other voluntourism destinations.
2. **Trusted and established**—CREA has been doing research work in the Alps for longer than many voluntourism providers have been around.
3. **Alpine environment as the “laboratory”**—The setting is one-of-a-kind, and combines real science with popular activities like walking and hiking.
4. **Chamonix and Mont-Blanc as destinations**—A “bucket list” destination for many. It is relatively easy to access, is considered safe, has an abundance of activities, and is close to other European destinations.
5. **Service**—They understand my needs as a traveler.
6. **The significance of what we do**—I can help leave a lasting legacy to the planet by participating in this work.

CREA Audiences— To Whom Are We Speaking?



Ultimate Desired Brand Benefit:

The confidence of knowing other members of their party will be provided a rewarding experience that justifies the investment in time and money

What are the DESIRED Perceptions of CREA for Each Voluntourist Audience Segment?

Academics



- Meaningful work
- Immersive field research
- Respected scientific partner

Students



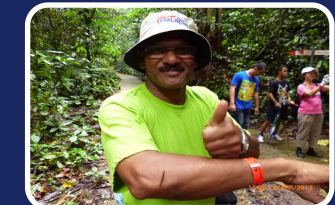
- Interesting research that is largely performed outdoors
- Course credit and experience in an appealing destination
- Their work benefits the planet

Adult Travelers



- Opportunity to work in a renowned world-class destination
- Provides a safe, unique, and accessible experience
- Being a part of something bigger than myself

Intermediary



- Trusted partner
- Minimizes logistical challenges
- Appealing work and destination for clients

Brand Mantra

- Concise summary of the brand's benefits
- Easily understood by anyone in the organization
- A “promise-centric” statement

Examples:

- Nike: *Authentic athletic performance*
- Disney: *Fun family entertainment*
- Starbucks: *Rewarding everyday moments*
- BMW: *Ultimate driving machine*
- Crest: *Healthy beautiful smiles for life*



**Performing vital Alpine research
and creating life-long memories**

Rationale

- **Matches the work of CREA with the needs of its voluntourist audiences.**
- **Makes a promise-centric statement that is reflective of both CREA's scientific work and its service to its guests.**
- **The word “Alpine” provides a location for the research and the experience, and is highly appealing to travelers.**

Brand Positioning Statement

- Establishes differentiation from competitive experiences
- Shapes external behaviors and messaging—our unique selling proposition in the marketplace
- Is aspirational in nature

Format:

To (Target Audience), (Brand Name) is the one (Category) that provides this (Specific Benefit).

Recommended CREA Volontourist Experience Positioning Statement



To physically active and intellectually curious travelers, CREA offers a transformative scientific voluntourism experience that provides an unmatched combination of serious research in a setting of breathtaking Alpine beauty.

Rationale

- **With this statement, CREA is positioned within its peer cohort of other voluntourist and service trip experiences.**
- **“Transformative” speaks not only to the work being performed by CREA, but also to a compelling, deeply personal experience for those who serve as a voluntourist.**
- **“Serious research” distinguishes the CREA experience from non-science trips and those organizations without a 20-year track record.**
- **The statement also makes clear to the kind of traveler this experience will appeal.**

Brand Promise

- **A commitment from the organization to the client.**
- **Establishes trust—a critical part of the emotional connection needed for brands to thrive.**
- **Focuses upon delivery of the brand and value received.**

Recommended CREA Voluntourist Experience Brand Promise



**To change the way our guests see the world
through a remarkable scientific experience.**

CREA's voluntourists are more than visitors. They are valued guests in an environment of spectacular Alpine beauty, helping us transform the world through authentic scientific research. The work we share with them is powerful and personally transformative.

The CREA Brand Challenge: Brand Strategies

- 1. Promote the spectacular uniqueness of CREA's laboratory environment through extensive use of imagery and video depicting volunteers and scientists in Alpine settings.**
- 2. Position Chamonix and Mont-Blanc as a “must-see” world-renowned destination that offers an abundance of activities, and shopping, dining, and cultural experiences.**
- 3. Facilitate an understanding of CREA's scientific gravitas and its research in an approachable manner for the “citizen scientist.”**
- 4. Utilize testimonials from past voluntourist participants as a means of establishing trust and confidence in CREA.**
- 5. Implement a new CREA voluntourism brand identity.**

The CREA Brand Challenge: Brand Strategies

Promote the spectacular uniqueness of CREA's laboratory environment through extensive use of imagery and video depicting volunteers and scientists in Alpine settings.

- **The Alpine location is what helps sell the experience and distinguishes it from other scientific voluntourism trips in the marketplace, particularly those that offer greater opportunities for wildlife encounters.**
- **Imagery and video can be used and re-used extensively for content in social media and on the website.**
- **Communicate pre-visit the sweeping depth and breadth of the CREA experience—from both a scientific and visitor perspective. This includes emphasizing and demonstrating the geographic and topographic variety of research locations.**

The CREA Brand Challenge: Brand Strategies

Position Chamonix and Mont-Blanc as a “must-see” world-renowned destination that offers an abundance of activities, and shopping, dining, and cultural experiences.

- **Partner with the Office de Tourisme to be a recognized official scientific voluntourism provider for Chamonix and Mont-Blanc.**
- **Create a Chamonix and Mont-Blanc page on the CREA voluntourist website, with customized content that promotes the destination (as a summer season place to visit) and CREA’s role in the community, and link to the Office de Tourisme website.**
- **Communicate the ease of getting to Chamonix and its proximity to other well-known destinations.**

The CREA Brand Challenge: Brand Strategies

Facilitate an understanding of CREA's scientific gravitas and its research in an approachable manner for the "citizen scientist."

- **Demonstrate how CREA's voluntourists are an integral and valid part of CREA's research and not just performing menial, non-scientific tasks.**
- **Provide a clear understanding of the importance of the Mont-Blanc Atlas and other components of CREA's work to climate change.**
- **Show how CREA scientists work with climate change specialists and other scientists in related areas to study the Mont-Blanc region.**
- **Demonstrate legitimacy of CREA's work by noting support of French government.**

The CREA Brand Challenge: Brand Strategies

Utilize testimonials from past voluntourist participants as a means of establishing trust and confidence in CREA.

- **Testimonials on the website, in social media content, or in printed materials are helpful to reassure prospective guests of CREA's service and experience delivery.**
- **Testimonials should emphasize guest service provided by CREA, the fun and excitement of the work, the importance of the research, the destination setting, and the shared experience with researchers and other guests.**
- **Encourage guests to share their experiences on social media, and repost on CREA's own social channels.**
- **If testimonials don't exist, seek out past participants for their comments and reviews.**

The CREA Brand Challenge: Brand Strategies

Implement a new CREA voluntourism brand identity.

- **CREA Mont-Blanc is the scientific partner and organizational provider of the voluntourism experience. To really create an emotionally connected brand, and to distinguish the voluntourism experience from its other initiatives, CREA should brand it as a separate but still-related effort.**
- **This brand can utilize the visual identity already in place for CREA.**
- **The verbal brand identity should work equally well in both English and French.**
- **Continue to leverage the 20-year equity of the CREA name by association.**

The CREA Brand Challenge: Brand Strategies

Some CREA voluntourism verbal brand identity options:

- **The Alpine Citizen Science Program**
- **Climate Science in Chamonix**
- **Summer and Science in Chamonix**
- **Scientific Adventures in the Alps**

The CREA Brand Challenge: Brand Strategies

Some CREA voluntourism brand identity options paired with a brand byline:

The Alpine Citizen Science Program

An Initiative of CREA Mont-Blanc

Climate Science in Chamonix

An Initiative of



Next CREA Brand Strategy Steps

- **Review recommended CREA voluntourism brand messaging strategies and their associated components.**
- **Outline tactical brand implementation plan for 2017 and beyond.**
- **Determine messaging media and content for inviting fam visit participants.**