

**The effects of formal networks on territorial tourism offers.  
Current usage of network contracts in Italy**

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**Abstract**

This study aims to understand the benefits contractual inter-firm networks offer to existing territorial tourism systems in Italy. Preference has been given to a qualitative approach. Data collection was based on document analysis (i.e. information reported in written contracts as well as text and images published on web sites) and in-depth semi-structured interviews. Results indicate that usage of a relatively new legal mechanism (the network contract) designed to form stable inter-organisational networks is increasing in the tourism sector. These networks help promote existing territorial tourism systems in different ways and to different extents. In some

cases, alliances create and promote a tourism proposal that enhances the territorial offer, while in other situations alliances succeed in identifying and communicating a specific territorial area previously left unmanaged.

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