



Technical Report

ISO/TR 25734

Tourism and related services — Staff training of tourist information services — Case studies

*Tourisme et services connexes — Formation du personnel des
services d'information touristique — Études de cas*

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Foreword

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This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 228, *Tourism and related services*.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at www.iso.org/members.html.

Introduction

Due to the rapidly expanding trend for online and onsite tourism information services (TIS), an increasing number of Tourist Information Offices (TIOs) have begun raising their requirements for staff regarding the application of multimedia tools, data statistics, complex tourism-related information and guidance, and even more globally in terms of language ability. In order to implement and maintain good quality TIS, a number of requirements and recommendations for staff training can be met by TIS management organizations, as laid out in ISO 14785:2024 [\[1\]](#), Clause 7.

The purpose of this document is to support TIS management organizations in understanding how to apply the requirements and recommendations of ISO 14785:2024 [\[1\]](#), Clause 7, through the use of case studies, which provide situational understanding and practical illustrations for the relevant requirements and recommendations. Case studies for staff training can help TIS management organizations to identify, clarify and achieve relevant requirements and recommendations by sharing practical and effective solutions and experiences. By understanding and referring to the use cases in this document, TIS management organizations can learn about applicable practices and strategies, and apply them under similar circumstances to promote or improve the quality of their TIS.

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Tourism and related services — Staff training of tourist information services — Case studies

1 Scope

This document provides real use cases, situational understanding and practical solutions applicable to the provisions concerning staff and training in ISO 14785:2024 [1].

This document can be used as a reference or inspiration for tourism information services (TIS) management organizations analysing and improving their TIS staff training and pursuing quality TIS through the application of ISO 14785:2024 [1].

2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 14785, *Tourism and related services — Tourist information services — Requirements and recommendations*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 14785 apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminology databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

- ISO Online browsing platform: available at <https://www.iso.org/obp>
- IEC Electropedia: available at <https://www.electropedia.org/>

4 Methodology and overview of selected cases

4.1 Methodology

This document contains use cases taken from various countries with detailed descriptions of practices, for use in the creation of quality staff training for TIS.

The relationships between elements from ISO 14785:2024 [1] and the practices outlined in the use cases in this document are identified in [Table 1](#).

Table 1 — Relationship between elements from ISO 14785 and use cases and practices

Element	ISO 14785	Case 1	Case 2	Case 3
Training needs analysis	7.2 a)	1-1	2-1	3-1
Training target audience	7.1, concerning different job positions at the TIS	1-2	2-2	3-2
Training curriculum design	7.2 c) and 7.2 from 1) to g)	1-3	2-3	3-3

Table 1 (continued)

Element	ISO 14785	Case 1	Case 2	Case 3
Training implementation and monitoring	7.2	1-4	2-4	3-4
Assessment and improvement		1-5	2-5	3-5
Resource assurance		1-6	2-6	3-6
Continuous improvement of training		1-7	2-7	3-7

4.2 Overview of selected use cases

An overview of the selected use cases is shown in [Table 2](#).

Table 2 — Overview of use cases

No.	Country	Overview
Use case 1	China	<p>Use case 1 represents Hangzhou’s largest Tourist Information Office (TIO) and is one of the 20 key social welfare initiatives launched by the Hangzhou Municipal Government to advance the city’s tourism internationalization. Since its inception in 2004, the TIO has served over 1,5 million domestic and international tourists, distributed more than 2 million travel brochures, and established a comprehensive network of tourism consultation outlets. These outlets are strategically located in major transportation hubs, popular scenic spots, and central commercial districts, operating under the unified Hangzhou Tourism Service Hotline “96123.” Complemented by the e-commerce platform www.96123.com as its digital extension, the TIO has developed a multifunctional and integrated tourism consultation, promotion and service network, adhering to the principle of convenience and public benefit.</p> <p>Currently, the TIO operates 6 sub-TIOs in Hangzhou’s districts, offering tourists and residents comprehensive assistance with dining, accommodation, transportation, attractions, entertainment and shopping, as well as access to Hangzhou travel guides. In 2021, the TIO embarked on a digital transformation of its consultation points. Leveraging the online system developed by the Municipal Bureau of Culture and Tourism, integrated with the Urban Brain Cultural and Tourism System, the TIO combines offline spatial interaction with expanded scenario applications. Through the “Hangzhou Digital Tourism” mini-programme, users can now scan a single QR code or access a unified interface to obtain information, services, and public products. This digitization has enhanced the intelligence and efficiency of tourism consultation services, significantly improving tourists’ satisfaction.</p>
Use case 2	Spain	<p>Use case 2 represents a Tourist Information Office (TIO) established in April 1995 at the “Casa de los Talabarteros” in Plaza de San Fernando (Carmona, Spain). On World Tourism Day (September 27, 1996), it relocated to its current location, the Alcázar de la Puerta de Sevilla, a monumental gateway that has served as Carmona’s entrance for over 3 000 years.</p> <p>This municipally-owned building falls under the jurisdiction of Carmona City Council’s Tourism Delegation and is managed by the public company SODECAR, S.A. (as approved on September 14, 1994). As part of the Municipal Tourist Reception Center, the TIO benefits from its strategic placement adjacent to one of the city’s most iconic landmarks. This prime location within Carmona’s most valuable heritage site significantly enhances the office’s visibility and reinforces the destination’s image. The TIO’s mission is to provide professional, high-quality tourist services while promoting Carmona’s rich history and cultural heritage, with particular emphasis on its artistic, religious, landscape-related and ethnographic values preserved through generations.</p>
Use case 3	Italy	<p>Use case 3 represents the experience of Appennino Slow, a network of TIS operating in the Apennine area of Bologna, Italy. This model is rooted in close cooperation with the Metropolitan City of Bologna and represents an integrated, sustainable and progressive approach to the professional training of tourism personnel.</p>

5 Practices of training needs analysis

5.1 General

ISO 14785:2024 [\[1\]](#), 7.2, requires training to be offered periodically, according to the needs. This practice describes an ecological model of training needs analysis (TNA) encapsulated in four aspects: challenges, initiatives/practices/solutions, results, remaining issues or areas.

TNA serves as the foundation for effective TIO personnel training in Hangzhou (use case 1). The process aligns with strategic human resource development, integrating organizational goals with employee development.

In Carmona (use case 2), comprehensive initial training for new staff is essential to ensure high-quality tourist services and maximize team efficiency.

5.2 Overview

Training programmes for TIO staff are designed to ensure the consistent development of professional competencies required to deliver high-quality information and consultation services to domestic and international tourists. The programmes aim to align with international best practices, national tourism development goals, and the evolving needs of travellers in the digital age.

In Hangzhou (use case 1), TIO personnel training involves a three-tiered approach:

- organizational analysis (assessing Hangzhou's tourism strategy),
- task analysis (evaluating job-specific requirements),
- individual analysis (identifying employee competencies and gaps).

This ensures that training supports Hangzhou's vision of becoming a world-class tourism destination.

In Carmona (use case 2), the training programme focuses on:

- a) organizational familiarization: understanding the organizational structure, corporate philosophy and ongoing projects;
- b) role competencies: mastering job functions, responsibilities and service protocols;
- c) operational skills: developing service techniques, sales methodologies and demand data recording;
- d) safety fundamentals: learning basic safety measures and procedures.

Additionally, the programme emphasizes destination knowledge enhancement, ensuring staff are well-versed in Carmona's primary tourism offerings.

5.3 Challenges faced during implementation

A range of challenges that vary across countries and regions can arise in the implementation of training programmes for TIO staff. These challenges often stem from the dynamic nature of the tourism sector, diverse stakeholder expectations, legal and cultural considerations, and limitations of traditional TNA methods. The following examples (see [Table 3](#)) illustrate common obstacles encountered during implementation, highlighting the need for adaptive, context-sensitive training strategies.

Table 3 — Examples of challenges faced during implementation

Country (region)	Challenges faced during implementation
China (Hangzhou)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Misalignment between organizational, task-related and individual needs, often resulting in overlapping or conflicting demands. Additionally, traditional TNA methods (e.g. surveys and interviews) struggle to capture the dynamic needs of a rapidly evolving tourism sector, particularly with seasonal fluctuations and emerging tourist expectations. — Diverse needs reconciliation: balancing organizational goals, specific job requirements, and individual competencies is complex, as these levels often have conflicting priorities. — Dynamic industry changes: The rapidly evolving tourism industry, driven by shifting tourist expectations and technological advancements, requires frequent updates to the TNA.
Spain (Carmona)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Differences in the prior knowledge levels of staff. — Dynamic nature of the activity. — Need for multilingual support.
Italy (Bologna)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Lag in digital skills. — Inadequate preparation for emergency cases. — Weak narrative or storytelling around the territory.

5.4 Initiatives/practices/solutions

5.4.1 General

To address the diverse challenges encountered during the implementation of training programmes in TIOs, various countries and regions have adopted innovative and context-specific approaches. These initiatives aim to enhance the relevance, flexibility and effectiveness of training through strategic alignment, competency-based frameworks, stakeholder engagement and the integration of digital tools. The examples in this subclause illustrate practical solutions that have been successfully applied to ensure that training remains responsive to evolving sector demands and local priorities.

5.4.2 Use case 1: China (Hangzhou)

Hangzhou employs a strategic TNA approach, detailed below, integrating modern techniques like competency-based models and performance consulting. For instance, the TIO conducts in-depth organizational analysis to align training with Hangzhou's tourism strategy, such as promoting cultural heritage and sustainable tourism. Task analysis focuses on front-line skills (e.g. tourist guidance and emergency handling), while individual analysis uses employee feedback to tailor training. Advanced tools, such as psychological profiling and detailed questionnaires, enhance the depth of needs assessment.

- Three-tiered approach: the TIO employs a structured TNA at three levels:
 - organizational analysis: aligns training with strategic objectives, such as promoting Hangzhou's cultural heritage;
 - task analysis: identifies role-specific skills, like tourist guidance or information dissemination;
 - individual analysis: assesses employee competencies through performance reviews and feedback.
- Strategic orientation: training is designed to support long-term organizational goals and employee growth, incorporating advanced methods like competency-based models and performance consulting.
- Employee-driven needs analysis: the employee-driven needs assessment programme builds complete cycle from diagnosis to decision-making. Its structured workflow systematically converts front-line staff feedback into actionable training plans, boosting both programme acceptance and learner engagement.