

**WHEN A FISH OUT OF WATER BECOMES THE KING OF THE POND. INNOVATION AT AQUARIUM DU QUEBEC, A CASE STUDY**

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**ABSTRACT**

Over the past 10 years, the Aquarium du Québec (Province of Québec, Canada) went from being a fish out of water to being the king of the pond by doubling its attendance. To do so, it offered its customers a new or significantly improved product, while changing its organizational and marketing methods. The purpose of this qualitative study is to identify the incremental and / or radical innovations that supported its current success. Specifically, the paper aims to answer the following questions by discussing the innovations implemented between April 2002 and April 2012: What innovations were introduced? Among these innovations, which can be described as radical innovations? Did the introduction of radical innovations mark a turning point in respect to attendance? By focusing on the same organization, the analysis provides clear findings on the types of innovations that are more successful in that context. This case study shows that a combination of incremental innovations, especially at the organizational, product and marketing levels, introduced over a ten-year span, has allowed the organization to make the necessary adjustments and increase attendance. The introduction of radical innovations is therefore not a turning point in respect to attendance. Thus, the case study of the Aquarium reveals that even without implementing radical innovation, a tourist attraction can succeed in changing its image, double its attendance and significantly increase the quality of its offer. The paper provides researchers and industry practitioners indications pertaining to a successful innovation implementation model in the tourism industry.

Keywords: *Incremental Innovation, Radical Innovation, Services, Aquarium, Case Study, Interview, Attendance.*