

An Overview of Promotional Activities in Tourism Industry of India-A Case Study

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Abstract: This paper is an attempt to find out the role and impact of promotional techniques with special consideration to tourism industry. Salesman alone cannot maximize the profit of the organization; he/she needs the assistance of promotional tools. Tourism Industry is considered to be the most environmental and eco-friendly industry. The mushrooming of tourism industry worldwide has brought cut throat competition among the tourist destinations to attract more and more tourists by better promotional strategies. With the utilization of different tools, the marketer tries to attract the potential tourists' to visit the promoted destination. Promotion stimulates consumer purchasing and dealer effectiveness. The promotional tool are now being viewed individually and their applicability for different markets need to be studied. The marketing tasks is needed to be identified for various tourism products. Tourism and travel markets are one of the few service sectors to make excessive use of a varied promotional techniques. The Promotional activities of tourist product has of late emerged as popular methods of attracting consumer. Promotion of any tourism product deals with offering something as an incentive to motivate an early purchase. Promotion aids in achieving both the push and pull elements of a promotional strategy in tourism industry. It is important to understand that promotion is an important function of every tourism industry, besides it is essential to choose an innovative and creative promotional activities to attract more and more potential tourism clientele. Promoting a destination can influence a good numbers of tourists but the sustainability and carrying capacity of promoted destination is also indispensable to be taken care off. The author through this paper would also like to find out the most preferred sales tool as preferred by tourism industry.

Keyword: Promotional techniques, eco-friendly industry, push and pull elements, sustainability, and carrying capacity.

I. Introduction

The Tourism industry is considered to be the second highest foreign exchange earnings to our country economy. Our colourful country India which has rich diverse culture is a land for tourist to cherish. But, the present situation of tourism industry is not up to the mark. With a motive to promote tourism in India, the authors through this paper analyze the promotional strategies which are needed for developing country like India which is mushrooming in the field of tourism. Thailand, Singapore, China has better ranking in tourists flow as compared to our country. The Government needs to take active promotional role for developing tourism industry of the country besides the tourism stake holders and tourist enterprise also need to leave no stone unturned to procure the positions one of the best preferred tourist destinations of the world. It is very true that the competitive and challenging marketing compel marketers to adopt fruitful promotional strategies to upgrade the sales of the organization. The monopoly market no longer exists. The Lamarck theory survival of the fittest seems to be true in tourism marketing's. Every nations of the world have something to attract tourists, then why tourists will come to India? To retain and to attract maximum tourists in our country, we need to adopt right marketing strategies also the most appropriate promotional strategies for Tourist generating regions. Tourism promotion differs from industrial goods as in tourism the consumers only get an experience of the place which he/she visits but in the case of industrial goods, the consumer is getting tangible products of the money which he/she has invested. The leading travel agencies of the world adopt various means of promotional techniques to attract tourists. Personal selling, advertising, direct marketing, public relation, sales promotion are some of the common modes which the organizations adopt. To push up sales is not only the task of salesman. Selling of tourism products is really a Herculean task as the clients carry home only a piece of bill with him/her after his journey. Before going for any promotional techniques the tourism organization needs to analyze the markets and then only go for promoting their products. A promotional strategy without market research is just like tea without sugar. Many organizations spend thousand of rupees for promoting their products but yield no results. The growing internal and external threats of the country also effects the promotional strategies of the country as this does not give any output of the amount that we have invested for promotional techniques. The government

policies at regular interval have to be borne in mind while going for promotional activities of the tourism products. The uniqueness in tourism products should be highlighted while going for promotion.

II. Objective of the Study

1. To find out the preferred promotional techniques as used by the selected travel agents in India
2. To find out the latest trends in the promotional techniques adopted by travel agents in India

III. Research Methodology

The primary data is collected through a web based survey of selected online travel agencies, tour operators, airlines, etc. Telephonic interview was done with the managers of selected travel agencies to find out their promotional techniques which they implement for their organization. Personal observation of the authors was also the mean of gathering the data. The secondary was collected from newspapers, magazines, articles in the newsletters, etc.

IV. Promotional Methods

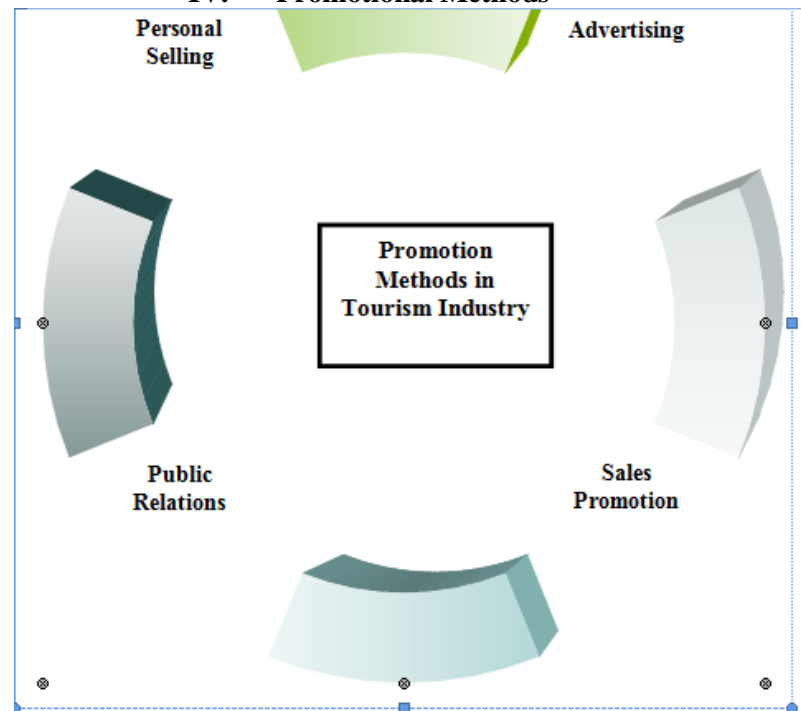


Fig.1 Promotional methods in Tourism Industry

1. Advertising: Advertising is a popular promotional method which is used by all constituents of tourism industry world wide. There are different mediums of advertisements like print, radio, television, direct mail, billboard, brochure, catalogs, posters, banners, etc. Travel agents, airlines, national tourism organizations (NTO's), cruise, etc. uses advertising as an effective tool of promotion. In India also, we see lot of TV advertising like of incredible India, Atithi Devo Bhava, Tourism advertisements of various state tourism departments like Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, etc. Travel agents, airlines also uses print media like news papers, magazines, etc to provide their product information to the customers.
2. Sales Promotion: It describes promotional methods using short term techniques, to persuade members of a target market to respond or undertake certain activities. Sales promotion is very popular in tourism industry in the form of discounts, contests, offers, gifts, etc.
 - (a) Discounts/Off: Various discounts are offered for the customers like
 - 10% off on domestic hotels,
 - Rs. 100 off on domestic flight,
 - Rs. 500 off on international flights,

- Up to 25% off on group tours for holidays, Ex. Ezeego is offering 30% off on any hotel.
- (b) Contests: Various contests includes
- Win a 3N/4D trip to Manali,
 - Book a ticket and get travel bag free,
- (c) Gifts: These include free holiday, gift vouchers, etc.
- (d) Offer: Offers include
- Book a holiday to Europe and get a 2nd Istanbul holiday free,
 - Buy the ticket and get a camera on international flights,
 - Get up to Rs. 1200 cash back
 - Visit Australia and get a 5 day holiday in New Zealand absolute free
 - Buy one and get one free
- (e) Reward points: Various travel agents, hotels and airlines offer reward
- Points for the customers by which they can get different types of benefits and with that they can attract the customers for the long run.
3. Public Relations: PR involves measures designed to improve the image of the service, to create a more favorable climate for its advertisement, sales support activities. In the field of tourism, PR is very important for destinations, travel agencies, tour operators, airlines, etc. NTO's regularly organize familiarization tours for travel agents, travel writers, etc. In the same way, the travel agencies, airlines organizes press conferences, press releases, also arrange seminar, workshops, contests, cultural programmes. They also give sponsorships for musical, cultural and sports events.
4. Personal selling: It is a promotional method in which one party(eg. Sales person) uses skills and techniques for building personal relationships with another party. Example those involved in a purchase decision that results in both parties obtaining value. It is used frequently used by the travel agents, tour operators, hotels, airlines, etc.

V. Latest Trends in Promotional Techniques Used in Tourism Industry

The growing use of internet in the country has brought dramatical change in the promotional techniques. Tourism industry today is using web marketing for promoting their products and services. Every state department has its own web site to promote their respective tourism destination. Travel agencies, airlines, cruises, rent a car companies, also use websites for B2B, B2C transactions, to provide information, promotion purpose. E-brochures or electronic brochures are used by the tourism industry today to promote their products. Customers can easily download these and can obtain the required information. Mobile marketing is also used these days by the tourism industry. It is also used for the purpose of promoting the newly designed tour packages by the tour operators. The use of social networking media like facebook, twitter, etc. is doing wonder for the travel trade, as this media has given them an additional channel to communicate with their prospective and current customers. This media gives them a platform to maintain guest relations, CRM, share photos, videos, chatting, etc. Reward points are also offered to the customers as the part of loyalty programme.

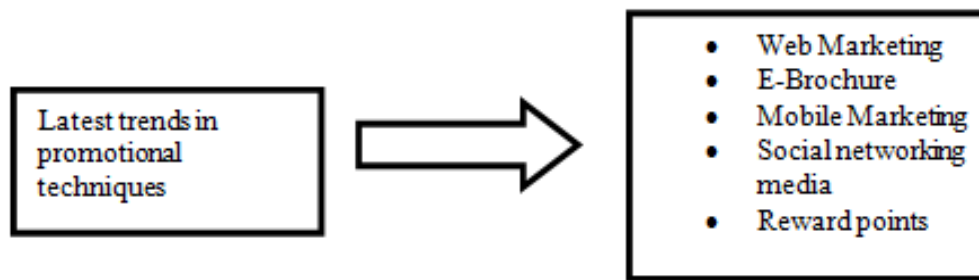


Fig 2: Latest trends in promotional techniques

VI. Findings

1. It is observed that advertising is the most preferred promotional technique adopted by the travel agencies.
2. Sales promotion is also widely used by the companies to attract the potential customers.
3. Social networking sites are gaining popularity among the tourism industry as it gives added advantage of promoting their products.
4. The use of mobile marketing is also showing an upward trend in the tourism industry
5. Road shows are also used by the various constituents of the tourism industry. NTO's are emphasizing more on road shows and advertising than Sales promotion and PR.

VII. Conclusion

The growing trends of spending huge in promotional techniques in tourism industry has brought a question marks of how much is needed to be spend for promotional purpose. The main objectives of the organization are maximization of profit with limited resources. Every organization uses different modes for promoting their products. Every promotional technique is important in itself and companies should make a correct combination of applying various promotional techniques if they want to become successful in their business.

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