

THE IMPORTANCE OF PROMOTION IN THE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

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Abstract:

Promotion in tourism is dependent on the elements that individualize the tourism market in general. This must relate to the particularities of the internal and international customers. In order to have an adequate policy in tourism, it must be carried out with appropriate strategies, put into practice with the help of related tactics. All this is achieved through proper management. The promotion strategy must be correlated with the strategies of the other components of the marketing mix: product, price, distribution. This must follow the alignment with the general objectives of tourism development and participate in their achievement: increasing tourist flows, entering new markets, diversifying destinations and products, ensuring a sustainable development of tourism.

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The promotion expresses the key image concept of the tourist activities carried out by any economic agent in this field of activity. Also, promotion contributes decisively to a better level of entry and positioning on the profile market.

Along with the evolution of the tourism industry, the trend of deepening and specialization of tourism marketing became more and more obvious. The evolution of its structure was a phenomenon related to the socio-economic dynamics of human society, to the increasingly rapid changes in the attitudes of potential consumers. The evaluation of promotion in tourism must start from the context of the particularities that define marketing in this economic field.

Tourist activities are constituted as a whole made up of several well-individualized components that imprint a series of particularities on marketing and, of course, promotion. Any planning of a tourism marketing strategy addresses the specificity, components and objectives of the promotion.

The promotion of the tourist product is a specific form of communication, which consists in the transmission of messages and information through different channels intended to inform the tourism operators and potential

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tourists about the characteristics of the tourist product and about the component elements of the tourist services offered for sale, to develop a positive attitude towards companies providing tourist services, with the aim of causing favorable changes in the mentality and habits of tourists.

- ✓ The focus is on increasing the fame of the tourist product, encouraging the purchase of a new tourist product, encouraging the purchase of existing tourist products, building the loyalty of existing customers, presenting other new tourist products. From the totality of product promotion techniques, those that are able to best value a specific tourist product are selected.
- ✓ The means of promotion are selected depending on the particularities of the product, the presence or absence of competition, inciting the customer to buy a tourist product, the form of presentation etc. As the data and information transmission technique develops and modernizes continuously, the promotion policy tries to use the most appropriate and efficient means.
- ✓ In the new CRM system, the emphasis in the relationship with customers is on promotion. The increasingly modern promotional tools try to deepen the relationship between the client and the repeated purchase of tourist services. An important strategic tool in the marketing-mix, but also in the customer-focused one (CRM), promotion has the role of strengthening the relationship with customers. Trust, fidelity, balance are pillars of support for such a relationship.
- ✓ The new way of conceiving promotion has several notable effects in the field of tourism:
 - achieving a high responsiveness to all tourist requirements and motivations in order to be able to include several market segments and a constant demand for the products offered;
 - the evaluation and permanent knowledge of tourist motivations depending on the particularities of tourists and those of the economic and social ones that can influence purchase decisions;
 - the continuous adaptation of the activities that make up the tourist products and services, which implies great flexibility in changing some of their components;
 - the use of the spirit of creation and invention to be able to bring to fruition all existing tourist resources in a given space and the creation of original and authentic products;
 - the application of a unitary concept in all stages and on all the components that make up the tourist products and services so that there are no dysfunctions in their development;

- achieving maximum efficiency in terms of consumption of raw materials and energy, in the use of employed personnel given the fact that in the future we want to recognize quality through eco-labelling of tourist products and services.

In this context, promotion ensures the systematic building and permanent correction of the relationship with customers. This fact shows that promotion is a very dynamic phenomenon subject to the increasingly strong pressures of the tourist markets.

An integral part of marketing, promotion also benefits from strategic management. Although included in tourism, within the mix strategies, promotion must face the increasingly complex problems of the contemporary economic environment. Thus, the elements of creativity and originality are increasingly appreciated.

In this context, a close relationship is identified between communication and careful planning of the promotion action. Orientation towards the customer implies an increasingly intense and interactive communication.

Over time, promotional activity has diversified its forms of manifestation, from simple to complex and very modern ones. The variety that exists today is given by the content, means used, way of manifestation which are determined by the existing potential, strategy and financial strength of a company. Along with the general, very brief presentation of the specific forms of promotional communication, it is also important to address their main characteristics in tourism.

Promotion activity in tourism is dependent on all the elements that individualize the tourism market in general. Its very definition focused on the equation of sale - purchase of tourist products leads to particular aspects of promotion.

In this context, promotion depends on the attributes of tourist products and customers, and at the same time, it must take into account the characteristics of the tourist market. Also, tourism promotion must be related to the particularities of the domestic and international clientele.

The promotion strategy must be correlated with the strategies of the other components of the marketing mix: product, price, distribution. Also, it must follow the alignment with the general objectives of tourism development and participate in their achievement: increasing tourist flows, entering new markets, diversifying destinations and products, ensuring a sustainable development of tourism, etc.

The role of promotion results from the fact that it balances tourism demand and supply and must take into account the following major requirements:

- identifying the expectations of potential consumers, in order to favor the purchase decision;

- addressing the essential aspects of tourist products in order to highlight their originality and uniqueness;
- highlighting next to first-rate tourist objectives and other less well-known ones;
- providing consumers with correct information in order to choose an informed package of tourist services;
- knowledge of close and distant competition in order to use promotional tools suitable for a certain segment of the tourist market.

The excessive development of the Internet and the development of virtual products can attract potential customers to visit such sites, but not to buy those presented products in the end, because either they were not made according to the requirements and lifestyle of the visitors or they are very expensive .

These problems show that there are actually two markets, in which the promotion must establish its action strategies:

- the partial market, which can take place at the regional, local level and which focuses on the idea of specialization "product - segment" and on the strategy of low prices;
- the global market with a wider spatial orientation, focused on "quality governance", with aggressive strategies of higher prices.

The phenomenon of extensive or exclusive distribution has as a support point different promotion tools through which they can select and attract their customers. Moreover, no actor on the tourist market can sell his products, services on an ever wider market without benefiting from the concrete and real support of promotion.

Therefore, in tourism, another mode of action of promotion is highlighted, focused much more as a strategy for attracting and satisfying customers, their loyalty. Today's information technology has all the attributes to support this process.

Moreover, what emerges as a novelty from what has been presented is the fact that the process of conception-implementation of any promotion action is based on the strategy of differentiation.

During the course of the promotion, two types of analysis must be carried out:

- analysis of the industry (field of activity) that can be carried out at the international, regional, national, local level and which determines the level of competition;
- the analysis of the economic agent, which, depending on the existing business environment, must have its own promotion strategy.

Under these conditions, the success of tourism at the level of a country, region, locality also depends on the promotion strategy and the objectives proposed and put into practice; moreover, promotion is shown to be the link

between customer expectations and what exists as an offer on the tourist market at a given moment.

The variety of promotion objectives also interferes with the type of strategy applied (permanent, intermittent, concentrated, differentiated etc.). The positive results are due to creativity and performance in the communication process. All promotion objectives must be integrated into the marketing strategy, as a unitary vision, intended to ensure an upward evolution of national tourism.

The promotion of tourism at the European and international level depends on several factors. Among them, the strategic objectives of each country, the experience, the budget at its disposal, the way of organizing the activity of the central tourism administration etc. can be included.

Promotion policies have become essential components of tourism policies in most of the destination countries. Considering the high costs of international promotion campaigns, the development of these policies and their application are carried out, in most cases, at the joint initiative of public authorities and tourism entrepreneurs.

The national tourism administrations or authorities ensure, mainly, the promotion of national tourism, the sectoral orientation of tourism activities, based on general development strategies. To them can be added the local and regional administrations, which are increasingly involved in the promotion of tourist destinations.

Professional tourism organizations are also involved in tourism promotion, especially in terms of the professional activity or the market segment they represent.

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