

Role of Media in the Promotion of Tourism Industry in India

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Abstract

The role that the media are playing in the various aspects of life is becoming increasingly greater day by day, especially in spheres like social interaction, and cultural and educational aspects of our life. As archaeological monuments can articulate the traditions, customs and heritage of the past, the media can in its turn clarify today's values and civilizations of the different countries and hence attempt to correct any widespread erroneous information. Both the media and archaeological monuments have messages and missions with various dimensions. The media contribute greatly in activating tourist attractions. Media are playing an important role in the growth, development and promotion by creating a better awareness and understanding to cater to the needs and requirements of domestic and international tourist as one knows is every traveller is a 'potential' tourist, It depends upon the campaign of professionals (media professionals and tourism experts) of the industry to tap this potential and convert the 'potential' into the 'actual' clients (tourist).

In this world of constant technological evolution, consumers especially tourists are changing their behaviour patterns looking for more "tourist-friendly" sources of information. Thus this paper focuses on the impact of media in promoting Indian tourism industry worldwide.

Keywords: social media, tourism industry, tourism in India,

1. Introduction

Media communication technologies are imperative for frontline investments for sustainable globalised tourism development indicators. The powerful effects of media communications can bring sweeping changes of attitudes and behaviour among the key actors in local, national and global tourism for peace, security and sustainable development. The social, cultural, economic, political and environmental benefits of tourism would usher in monumental and historic changes in the country.

Development in communication is one of the best ways to go in developing eco-tourism. This strategy involves the planned communication component of programmes designed to change the attitudes and behaviour of specific groups of people in specific ways through person to person communication, mass media, traditional media or community communication. It aims at the delivery of services and the interface between service deliverers and beneficiaries where people are empowered to by informed choice, education, motivation and facilitation effecting the expected changes. This can be done by media advocacy targeting all key stakeholders involved in the tourism industry. Effective use of communication techniques can break barriers and promote better uses of participatory message design which combines both traditional and modern media. The internet granted the freedom enjoyed by print media and common carriers such as letters, mails, and cable to the public media. Through audio streaming it is possible to enhance the reach of radio signals to any part of the world. The vast capacity of internet enables each media house to exhaustively investigate and publish depth analyses. Internet radio is not limited to audio as pictures, images, digital files and graphics are accessible to the users. Advertisers and their audiences can easily interact via the internet broadcasts.

1.1 Need for the Study

International and domestic tourism industry contributes more to India's GDP. India attracted 6.85 million international tourist arrivals and \$18.4 billion in foreign exchange earnings from tourism receipts in 2013. Tourism to India has seen a steady growth, year on year, from 4.45 million arrivals in 2006 to nearly 7 million arrivals in 2013. In this competitive world media plays a vital role in all industry. The Indian tourism Industry has flourished like never before in the recent years. This extraordinary growth that the Indian tourism industry has witnessed is a result of the improvement GDP of the country.

2. Objectives of the Study

The following are the major objectives of the paper

1. To study about the negative social impact of tourism
2. To understand the local cultural, social and environmental issues

3. Review of Literature

The term social media is generally understood as Internet-based applications that contain consumer-generated content and facilitate a higher level of social interaction among travellers. From customer's viewpoint, the value of using social media lies in its richness on personal experiences and trustworthiness as electronic word-of-mouth. The impact of user generated content by social media on a traveller's decision making is well recognised in various market research reports. A number of prior studies have also examined the effect of social media on travellers' information search behaviour suggested that travel reviews on social media sites help add fun to the planning process and increase confidence for travellers' decision by reducing risk.

3.1 Different Types of Media

1. Media include Communication channels through which news, entertainment, education, data or promotional messages are disseminated.
2. Media include every broadcasting medium such as newspapers, magazines, TV, radio, billboards, direct mail, telephone, fax, and internet.
3. The growing popularity of the internet and social sites such as Face book and Twitter, social media is now an important channel that allows messages to be spread to the public.

3.2 Relationship between Media and Tourism

Both media and tourism belong to the Service industry. Both of them work together hand in glove. Media contribute to 80% of tourism revenue and tourism contributes to 25% of media's revenue. The role of tourism in media industry such as journalism is ever growing. In most of the universities offering journalism as a course students have to do compulsorily project on tourism and its allied areas for their respective degrees. The media have a crucial role to play in putting emerging destinations. The relationship between tourism and media is vital and complex. Tourism is highly dependent on media reporting because the vast majority of travel decisions are made by people who have never seen the destination first hand for themselves. When there is bad news or a crisis the impact on tourism can be devastating. Tourists are scared away from destinations caught in the glare of round-the-clock disaster coverage, causing communities dependent on tourism to lose their source of livelihood.

3.3 Role of Media in Indian Tourism

In a country like India the travel journalists, media experts on travel, leading attractive, popular and branded newspapers mainly published from Indian Metro cities, and electronics media are always highlighting the clients about the places of tourist interest, tourism, tourist

season (peak and lean), image, scope of shopping, resources, hospitalities, peoples, culture and heritage to cater to the needs of prospective and actual tourists.

One of the prestigious newspapers of India, Economic Times, published from Chennai, brought out a report on 28-03-2002 regarding the promotion of Indian tourism in Australia, ‘Sir Edmund Hillary, who along with Tenzing Norgay first conquered the Mount Everest, has volunteered to promote Indian tourism in the Australia region by doing a television commercial free of cost. The first of three such 30-second commercials hit the Australia small screens on 24th March and was aired during one of the highest rated channels nine current affairs programmes’.

Another report is published by the Business Line, from Bangalore. It is written by Nina Varghese on 17-04-2002 regarding the Australian Tourism promotion in the Indian market to attract the Indian clients. It is about the tourism resources of Australia and is titled ‘Australia lures Indian travellers’, The Australian tourism industry is hoping to grow its numbers. An increasing interest at the Indian outbound travel market estimated 45000 Indians in various categories visiting Australia during last year. The ATC is targeting mainly family groups and DINKS (double income no kids) followed by the honeymoon couples and business mens. The primary market that the ATC is targeting is Mumbai and Delhi, followed by Chennai, Kolkata and Bangalore.”

Tourism earns revenue through foreign exchange. This foreign exchange is necessary for the government for reducing its deficit and media are responsible for creating awareness about tourist destinations available in India to the overseas travellers. Media industry works with hotels, travel agencies, tour operators, airlines and the various government agencies to bring revenue to the country by promoting tourism. Without the assistance of media and its support many places would have remained unexplored as the awareness about the place is very minimal to the foreigners. For e.g.: Chennai has the second longest coastline in the world. This information would not be available to outside world without the support and patronage of media. Even social networking sites like face book and twitter are also promoting tourism. The Tirunelveli Halwa became popular only after media started promoting it and it caught the people’s attention towards the mouth-watering and Irrutu Kadai Halwa became an instant success. The fish curry of Malabar and Goan fish curries which are popular in the European countries attribute their success to the vigorous campaign by the media and hospitality sectors of India.

Print, visual and electronics media are trying to project the Indian tourism resources and products in different process. According to the Indian Express, published on 04-01-2002, in Bangalore the Tourism Department plans to make India a cultural destination, “The Union Ministry is working on a special package-linking the cultural heritage of the country with

tourism, to make India a cultural tourism spot. The new packages aim at good accommodation and infrastructure for tourists. Some of them, like the Vivekananda Circuit, will cover places like Kolkata, Kanyakumari, and Rajasthan- where Swami Vivekananda travelled in his life, the Buddha circuit- which would go through Sarnath, Gaya and other places where Buddha travelled. These circuits will attract tourists from the eastern countries like Japan, Korea and Thailand, who were neglected so far”.

Communication affects tourists (clients) directly and indirectly. Now a day's almost all the leading newspapers regularly feature tourism news in their daily publications. Sometimes a few organizations are sending their journalists to make a coverage on Indian and foreign destinations. Every year before a long vacation like Pooja vacation in West Bengal, Summer Vacation in northern India and southern India number of magazines like (Outlook Traveller) regularly feature different excellent and magnificent articles to attract one segment of tourist community to participate in long trip and short trip either in India or in abroad.

3.4 Impact of Media in Promoting Tourism Industry

Over the years media have contributed towards shaping tourism into a responsible industry by promoting the following good practices;

1. It protects the environment and minimizes the negative social impact of tourism.
2. It generates greater economic benefits for local people and enhances the well-being of host communities.
3. It makes positive contributions to the conservation of natural and cultural heritage and promotes the world's diversity.
4. It provides more enjoyable experiences for tourists through more meaningful connections with local people.
5. It helps to understand the local cultural, social and environmental issues.

4. Conclusion

Indian tourist travelers and excursionists are being influenced by different types of attractive presentation by specialized television channels, articles by renowned journalists, and fantastic coverage by travel magazines. Gradually all these media are creating a positive image and a picture of tourism in the attitudes, minds, perception, psychology, behaviour or and in the final selection of the site (inbound and outbound tourist).

As the verdict goes, media have a social responsibility to enhance the blending of local, national and international cultural values for enriched politics, society and economy. Public communications strategy based on access to quality information and knowledge will drive the new global tourism through partnership initiatives such as: peace and security, conflict resolutions for eco tourism, quality tourism, Joint ventures, technology transfer, and the like.

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