

A Study on the Countermeasures of Promoting the Tourist Source Market in Xiangshan from the Perspective of Integrated Media Marketing

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Abstract:

In recent years, the tourism industry has been developing rapidly. In addition, with the goal of “high-quality tourism development”, tourism marketing has played an important role in the process of promoting the high-quality development of the tourism market. As one of the important subjects supporting the development of tourism economy, tourism attractions need to seize the opportunity to change their marketing methods during the 14th Five-Year Plan period, in order to take advantage of the fierce competition in the tourism market. This paper will analyze the results of the survey on the tourism source market of Xiangshan, in order to understand that there are problems such as small size of geographical distribution, single form of source gathering, weak urban radiation, low revisit rate and poor economic benefits in the tourism source market of Xiangshan. Secondly, this paper will propose corresponding countermeasures to tourist source marketing under the perspective of integrated tourism marketing, such as highlighting the focus, integrated marketing, and real-time marketing.

Keywords: *Integrated marketing, Tourism markets, Marketing countermeasures.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Tourist source markets refer to the overall realistic and potential demand for a tourism product within a certain period. It could be divided into the spatial structure, temporal structure, and tourism type structure according to the geographical distribution, temporal distribution, and type of motivation of consumers. In China, the success of tourism development does not depend entirely on resource abundance, as initially determined, but more importantly on the reliability of the tourist market.

Integrated marketing for tourism is the design of a marketing strategy based on the development objectives of a tourism destination, and the domination of various tourism resources of the destination to achieve the strategic objectives. The 4I model of integrated marketing was proposed by Don Schultz, a professor of marketing at Northwestern University in the 1990s. The 4I model refers to the principles of Interesting, Interests, Interaction and Individuality. The mass media has taken on a new form of communication which shift from a “communicator-centered” to an “audience-centered” model. Integrated marketing communication advocates a clearer concept of consumer orientation, thus the theory of integrated marketing communication has significant guidance and practical value for marketing in the new media era.

II. 4I INTEGRATED MARKETING THEORY ANALYSIS

The traditional tourism marketing is no longer applicable in internet and omnimedia tourism marketing. The tourism consumer is the king of the world, omnimedia is the king of the traditional communication era, while the tourism user is the new king of the network era. In the age of traditional tourism media, tourism information is disseminated in a “church-like” manner, with a top-down, one-way linear flow of tourism information, which is only passively accepted by tourism consumers. However, in the era of online media, tourism information is disseminated in a “bazaar style”, with a multi-directional and interactive flow of tourism information. Tourism online media has led to an explosion of a diverse range of “tourism self-media”, such as travel blogs, travel forums, IM, SNS and so on. With the help of tourism online platforms, every grassroots tourism consumer has their own “mouth” and “ears”. Traditional tourism marketing methods must be changed from “hunting” to “fishing”. Tourism marketing needs to learn to use the “fire of creativity” to stew up tempting “bait”, and wrap the tourism brand information as a “fish hook” in it. How can this transformation be accomplished? The 4I integrated online tourism marketing could provide guidance.

2.1 The Principle of Interesting

Tourism culture is the unity of the culture of attachment and fun, and the fantasy and implication of tourist attractions is the passport to tourism creativity and tourism explosion. The nature of the internet in China is entertainment. As a result, tourism advertising and marketing must also be entertaining and interesting in this “entertainment circle” of the internet. When we create some interesting, entertaining “sugar-coated” bait, the hook of the tourism marketing message is cleverly wrapped in an interesting plot, which is an effective way to attract the fish (tourists) to the hook. Successful tourism marketing is embedded with a fun soul, not a hard advertisement, because the fun and entertainment of tourism culture must have a soul attached to it. The elements of fun and entertainment can be cheesy, funny, emotional, sensual and so on. Whichever is the best, it can be called “Interesting”.

2.2 The Principle of Interests

There is a Chinese proverb that says: “All the world is bustling with profit”. The flood of tourism information and services in the tourism network makes it difficult to move forward if tourism marketing activities do not provide benefits to the target audience. Put yourself in the shoes of a tourism consumer and ask yourself “why should I take part in this tourism marketing campaign?” The “benefits” offered to tourism consumers in tourism online marketing are much broader in scope, and the first mapping substance in our minds is only partially, which may also include tourism information, tourism advice, tourism services. The highest level of tourism advertising is no advertising, only information. Tourism consumers resist advertising but need information about the tourism product they want. Direct sales have a high chance of being rejected, but information for tourism consumers is more likely to be accepted. When consumers are confronted with free benefits, acceptance will naturally increase dramatically.

2.3 The Principle of Interaction

Another significant feature that distinguishes online tourism media from traditional media is its interaction. If the tourism industry cannot make use of this feature and follow the traditional tourism advertising, that’s like buying a box and returning the pearl. In addition, the online tourism media have lost

the “compulsion” of traditional media on the communication level. Therefore, one-way advertising is certainly not the future of tourism online marketing. Only by fully exploiting and using the interactive nature of the online tourism media to communicate with tourism consumers can the strengths of the tourism online marketing function be fully exploited.

No longer does travel consumers simply receive information, as advances in digital media technology have allowed us to make the most of interaction on tourism marketing platforms in a cost effective and convenient way. Consumers can be fully involved in the interaction and creation of online tourism marketing. This personal involvement in the tourism marketing process could engrave a deeper imprint of the tourism brand in the cortical gutter of consumers’ brain. Secondly, treating the tourism consumer as a subject and initiating an equal interaction with the tourism brand could provide a unique competitive advantage in tourism marketing. The tourism brand of the future will be a half-baked product, half defined by the tourism consumer’s experience and participation. Besides, it is important that tourism marketing could find methods to be able to lead and dominate the interaction between the brand and the tourism consumer.

2.4 The Principle of Individuality

Individuality is becoming more and more prominent in online marketing. By comparing “mass consumption and customized consumption”, exclusivity and individuality are more likely to capture consumers’ hearts and minds. Because tourism is personalized, and it will be more precise and more attractive. Tourism marketing with individuality could create the psychological satisfaction of “focus” on consumers and is more likely to generate interaction and purchase action. In the traditional tourism marketing environment, the cost of achieving “marketing with individual” is too high to spread and is only rarely attempted by a few tourism brands. However, in online tourism media, the feature of digital streaming makes it easier and more inexpensive. It is possible to segment a small group of people, even a single person, to achieve one-to-one marketing.

III. PROBLEMS IN THE TOURIST SOURCE MARKET OF XIANGSHAN

Considering the directionality of tourists’ travel behaviour, this paper selected representative tourist attractions in Xiangshan, such as China Fishing Village, Songlan Mountain, Xiangshan Film and Television City, Shipu Fishing Port Ancient Town, Xiangshan Folk Culture Village, Jinshawan Hunting Resort, as well as major transportation hubs, such as Xiangshan Passenger Transport Centre, Leisure Fishing Boat Terminal, etc., as information collection points for field questionnaire distribution. The survey was conducted mainly on tourists and tourist flows that concentrated in the above-mentioned tourist attractions and tourist transit points. The analysis of the survey has revealed several issues[1].

3.1 The spatial distribution of the territory is distinctly regional and shows up as small-scale space.

On the whole, Xiangshan tourist source market space is relatively narrow and dominated by local sources, with provincial sources (including local and Ningbo) accounting for over 70% of the total number of visitors. It does not fit with the status of Xiangshan as a national outstanding tourism county (Xiangshan ranked 24th in the national tourism county). Besides, there is a considerable gap with the tourism development objectives on a large-scale space, such as the entire East China source market, or even the domestic source market[1].

3.2 A single form of passenger regional aggregation and a strong dependence on transport modes.

This dependence is mainly reflected in the choice of transport for their travel and in the satisfaction survey of the tourism infrastructure in Xiangshan. In terms of choice of transport, nearly 50% of tourists come to Xiangshan by car, and the journey takes longer, which indicates a strong reliance on the accessibility of the main highway. As the Ningbo-Jinhua-Wenzhou railway line is not yet in operation and there are no direct flights, the most unsatisfactory tourist infrastructure for Xiangshan is the tourist transport facilities. In conclusion, the single form of aggregation in the source area could affect the expansion of the tourist source market[2].

3.3 The ripple effect of tourism attraction is small, and the city's radiance is not strong.

The tourism attraction ripple effect is small mainly in the distribution of tourism motivation in the source market. More than 71% of tourists choose Xiangshan as a tourist destination for sightseeing and leisure, while other aspects of tourism motives only account for 8.9%, which indicates tourism attractions in Xiangshan are too single and have a weak influence. At the same time, Xiangshan as a strong tourism county does not have a strong urban radiance. The radiality is manifested in the expansion or limitation of the tourist attraction radius by the level of development of the city's inhabitants' economy and the growth pattern of the urban population. Within Ningbo, Xiangshan ranks last among all county-level cities, both in terms of enterprise size and in terms of major economic indicators. Obviously, Xiangshan is not a regional economic center within the scope of the larger city of Ningbo and does not have the dual effect of aggregation and diffusion in terms of the regional economy. As a result, it does not have strong radiation in terms of expanding the tourist market space[2].

3.4 Tourist consumption levels and revisit rates are low, and the economic benefits of tourism are not high.

In terms of tourists' income, a greater proportion of tourists have a monthly income of RMB3,000 or more, accounting for 52% of the total number of tourists. In terms of the quantitative results from the tourists' consumption affordability, 70% of the tourists consider the tourism consumption level of Xiangshan moderate and acceptable. However, from the distribution of tourists' per capita consumption level, it is surprising to see that 51% of the consumption level is in the range of RMB 500-900. Tourists' income structure and consumption structure do not match, and there is a great deal of consumer purchasing power that has not been fully released. At the same time, 60% of the tourists are first-time visitors, with less than 20% of repeat visitors. In summary, Xiangshan as a tourist destination does not have a good solution to the contradiction between the low-end of the tourist consumption level and the low revisit rate, which would affect the overall tourism economic benefits of Xiangshan[2].

3.5 The channels and scope of tourism information dissemination are not wide enough.

terms of the effectiveness of information dissemination channels, tourists attach more importance to word-of-mouth, while focusing on the mutual evidence of multiple information channels and information reinforcement. The survey shows that the audience group of network information accounts for 28%; the audience group of travel agencies is 21%; the audience group of television and promotional materials are both 14%; 11% of the audience get their travel information from friends or colleagues; only 12% of those

with dual information channels. In summary, the channels and scope of Xiangshan tourism information dissemination are not wide enough[3].

3.6 Tourists' travel preferences tend to be convergent and post-tour impressions are not deep.

The convergence of tourist travel preferences is reflected in the concentration of tourist flows in traditional attractions, including the four well-known tourist spots in Xiangshan. The quantitative analysis shows that tourists' interest preference for Songlan Mountain, Chinese Fishing Village, Shipu Ancient Town and Xiangshan Film City is 29%, 26%, 12% and 11%, while the preference for other tourist attractions in Xiangshan is only 3%-6%. Tourists' overall impressions of the Xiangshan tourism resources after the tour are mainly focused on seafood and natural scenery, with impression values of 37% and 26%, but less than 10% for other tourism resources. This shows that the tourist source market in Xiangshan tend to be convergent in terms of preference, and tourists are not impressed after their trips[3].

3.7 Tourist satisfaction is not high and supporting facilities for destination are not perfect.

Tourist attitudes and satisfaction are subjectively related to the quality of tourism products and services, as well as the main basis for evaluating the popularity of tourist destinations. The survey shows that tourists are dissatisfied with 23.4%, 26.5%, 18.1%, 10.4%, 9.8% and 11.8% of the facilities of tourist transport, accommodation, entertainment, sightseeing, dining and shopping in Xiangshan; 14.8% of the tourists even states that they would not consider visiting Xiangshan again. If the tourism authorities in Xiangshan do not strengthen the comprehensive management within the tourism industry including services, markets, products and tourism facilities, Xiangshan would lose this part of the tourism market share[3].

IV. PROMOTIONAL MEASURES FOR THE TOURIST SOURCE MARKET IN XIANGSHAN

4.1 Stimulating potential and focus - developing local characteristics.

In order to effectively integrate local tourism economic resources, form local tourism characteristics and promote the orderly development of the overall source market, Xiangshan tourism should have an overall marketing strategy. It is important to implement government-led strategy to create the source market as a whole, and to develop an overall marketing plan on the basis of a full investigation and research. Furthermore, make co-ordinated arrangements for the direction and objectives of marketing development for tourism in Xiangshan, determine the corresponding marketing timing, product mix, information dissemination channels and specific marketing methods in response to the characteristics and preferences of each source market and its distribution area, constantly launch new products with attractive and selling points, integrate resources and give full play to its advantages. Take corresponding promotion strategies to achieve better promotion effect, i.e. make scientific selection, configuration, control and evaluation of promotion objects, promotion inputs, promotion methods and promotion effects.

At the same time, focus on the development of special cultural tourism products, in response to its single tourism product type and insufficient cultural content to create cultural tourism boutique project. Firstly, integrate the cultural characteristics of Xiangshan's own region, including historical culture, ethnic culture and folk culture, and to optimise the system of cultural tourism specialties. Continuously adapt to the diversified market demand to meet the tourist demand for cultural connotation and cultural experience, focusing on the development of health and wellness, landscape tourism, leisure tourism, ethnic culture, and

other tourism products to enhance the influence of special tourism. Secondly, to create the integration of cultural tourism quality projects. Tourism attractions could rely on their own unique scenery, develop theme-based, customized cultural tourism projects, cultivate cultural tourism performance projects with international influence, and form a new trend of cultural tourism development with distinctive features and complementary advantages[4].

4.2 Differentiation and have a definite target in view - targeted marketing.

Tourism market segmentation is not based on the type of tourism products to divide, but from the perspective of consumers. It is based on the theoretical basis of market segmentation, the needs, motivation and the diversity of behavior and differences of tourists to divide. Appropriate tourist market segmentation would play an important role in tourism marketing, which is conducive to the accurate selection of target markets and the development of marketing strategies, to explore market opportunities and develop new markets, to the concentration of human and material resources into the target market. Thus, the combination of expanding the radius of the business area by creating products and deepening the content of products through market refinement. In simple terms, this means not sticking to the “product and market” rules, but rather that the tourism product needs to be constantly “planned and transformed” and the tourism market segment needs to be constantly “guided and renewed” under the conditions of a restricted market radius. This could create a two-way interaction between “product and market” and focusing on increasing the rate of repeat visits and the profitability of each visit[5].

Specifically, the primary target source market is mainly tourists from the province: tourists travel for a weekend holiday with the main purpose of being in nature, relaxing and eliminating fatigue. The characteristics of Xiangshan tourism resources can be combined to develop tourism products with the themes of leisure and holiday, health and wellness, and ecological agricultural tourism, and to combine nature and humanity, and sightseeing and leisure. As for the secondary target source market, which is mainly tourists from neighboring provinces: with a larger source coverage, the focus can be on public-facing promotional activities to stimulate the growth of market demand and broaden the source layer. Furthermore, the source market can be divided into the youth market, working-class market, self-help tourism market, family group travel market and weekend leisure market for key cultivation.

4.3 A higher perspective and systematic thinking - adopt the DMS marketing system.

The Destination Marketing System (DMS) is a complete solution for urban tourism informatization and tourism marketing propaganda. It uses modern information technology (Internet) to structure the destination information system, with a website as the main portal and expressions, together with the corresponding system of support service (cross-media channels and publicity), integrating tourism information services, internet e-commerce and tourism industry management. For historical reasons, tourism attractions have long been organized in a fragmented manner, with each attraction operating independently. This decentralized organization form in the early stage of the development of tourism attractions is conducive to individual attractions “forming market shockwaves, structuring brand footholds, accounting independently, and recovering investment as quickly as possible”. When entering the “platform” period from the seller’s market to the purchaser’s market, this decentralized business organization has led to the regularization of “ONLY-ONE” promotions. The fierce competition for the limited “cake” has worsened the business environment of

the scenic spots, resulting in rising costs of human resources, advertising and service quality, and declining profitability of per tourist. To avoid the negative effects of this “decentralized organization”, it is necessary to realize a “joint operation model” in the form of business organization, to build up the advantages of large-scale operation and to form a unified “DMS”[6].

In conclusion, the DMS could be used to effectively collect and integrate destination information, and establish an effective market feedback mechanism for the tourism industry, as well as to effectively plan and promote the destination and provide various marketing services for local tourism enterprises in conjunction with the national Destination Marketing System. At the same time, the comprehensive reception capacity of Xiangshan tourism should be strengthened to make tourists have a satisfactory experience in Xiangshan. Improve the regional traffic, environmental appearance, tourism reception services as soon as possible, establish a good tourism environment and enhance the image of the city and tourism. Ticket prices should be set to take into account the response of the consumer market, and a combination ticket system and a split ticket system can co-exist to allow tourists to make their own choices.

4.4 Strengthen efforts and take care of the whole situation - strong media integrated marketing.

Xiangshan source market is regional in its spatial distribution, and this regionalism is dominated by the provincial source, which is constrained by transport conditions. If Xiangshan locates its market in this source market pattern, the already limited market space will be affected by various market variables, which will inevitably lead to a decline in the market trend or shrinkage of the market space. Therefore, it is necessary for Xiangshan to analyze the relevance of the source market, redefine the market positioning and adopt strong media to promote across the region. For instance, it could choose influential CCTV (1 set and 4 sets), tourism TV and mainstream media in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Southeast Asia, Japan, Korea and other major source countries to increase tourism promotion about Xiangshan during primetime. Besides, take various forms such as direct promotion to the source, network promotion and joint promotion to expand the influence of Xiangshan tourism[7].

4.5 Regional association, international vision - city association and scenic area association.

Urban tourism marketing refers to a new type of urban tourism marketing concept and marketing practice in which urban tourism-related interest groups share the costs of urban tourism marketing through the establishment of urban tourism marketing alliance cooperation mechanism, and collaborate in marketing activities such as communication, brand building, and product promotion of urban tourism marketing, in order to achieve the goals of enhancing market development capability, sharing marketing resources and consolidating marketing networks. Along with the process of globalization and the further deepening of the geographical division of labor, economic competition goes beyond the national level and becomes more inter-regional and inter-city. Seeking regional cooperation and common development has become an increasingly consensus in the development of a market economy. Based on the shared nature of tourism resources, regional joint promotion is an effective way to enhance the effect of tourism marketing. Modern tourism competition has become a competition for the overall strength of the tourism industry, thus the implementation of integrated marketing strategies is an inevitable choice for China's tourism. Cities with tourism-related interest groups should establish and cultivate the “win-win” idea that “joint marketing of urban tourism is an inevitable way to achieve the common development of both the parts and the whole”.

Only with a unified consensus on the concept will there be a better prospect for joint marketing of urban tourism[8].

It is important to make use of the joint marketing platform of the Yangtze Delta cities to jointly promote to the outside world and fully develop international and domestic marketing, especially to strengthen international marketing and fully expand the influence of Xiangshan tourism in order to achieve the goal of attracting a large number of tourists. Moreover, Xiangshan should join with the Yangtze Delta cities to participate in a variety of international tourism events, with a focus on establishing urban tourism counterparts in key neighboring source countries, such as Japan and South Korea, as well as strengthening cooperation with national tourism offices abroad.

Joint marketing of attractions means that the tourism administration of Xiangshan takes the lead in setting up special joint collaboration structures (such as tourism image shops) with outstanding domestic tourist attractions and well-known tourism nodes, establishing long-term cooperation mechanisms and local tourism information image release platforms to expand the tourism audience and share the tourism market[9].

4.6 Seize the moment, create demand - insight into the market and marketing at the right time.

As the saying goes, there are three realms of marketing: the first is to keep up with the market and meet demand; the second is to grasp the market and guide demand; the highest marketing realm is to gain insight into the market and create demand. First-class marketing pursues a higher level of marketing - to gain insight into the market and create demand. Therefore, to achieve scientific marketing, Xiangshan tourism must change two concepts: one is to study the thoughts and behaviors of the tourists; the other is to think about the future trends of the tourist source market[10]. In addition, Xiangshan should strengthen contact and cooperation with the planning committees of famous festivals in various cities in China (including various cultural festivals, sports festivals, art festivals, etc.), and take various famous large-scale activities and festivals as platforms and opportunities to seize the marketing moment and gradually expand their own publicity and popularity.

V. CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, with the rapid expansion of tourism industry in China, tourism market competition is becoming increasingly fierce, tourism marketing has become a significant means to seize the market and improve the competitiveness of each tourism destination. In the increasingly fierce competition in the tourism market, Xiangshan should no longer cling to the traditional marketing approach of sitting and waiting for tourists to come, only combined with their own conditions and location advantages, to seize the opportunity to develop and innovation, seize the opportunity to stand invincible in the tide of competition. In the face of the unpredictable tourism market, in addition to consolidating the mature market, Xiangshan should follow the development trend of the tourism market, follow the laws of the market, adjust the marketing strategy at the right time, and develop new markets.

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