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Marketing Planning in Travel and Tourism

1.The importance of marketing planning

1.1 What is marketing planning?

Marketing planning is the process by which an organization attempts to analyse its existing resources and marketing environment in order to predict the direction it should take in the future.(Lumsdon, 1997)

1.2 Why should we plan?

- **Failure to take advantage of potential growth markets and new marketing opportunities.**
- **Lack of maintenance of demand from a spread of markets, and erosion of market share due to the actions of competitors.**
- **Demand problems in low-season periods, leading to empty rooms and unused facilities**
- **Low level of awareness of the destination's product offering.**
- **Poor image of the destination.**
- **Lack of support for co-operative marketing initiatives.**
- **Poor or inadequate tourism information services.**
- **Decline in quality levels below acceptable limits.**
- **Difficulty in attracting intermediaries to market or package holidays.**
- **Disillusionment and lack of motivation of employees.**

1.3 Purposes of the marketing plan

- To provide clear direction to the marketing operation**
- To co-ordinate the resources of the company or destination.**
- To set targets against which progress can be measured or reviewed in due course.**
- To minimize risk through analysis of the internal and external environment.**
- To examine the various ways of targeting to different market segments.**
- To provide a record of the company's or organization's marketing policies and plans.**
- To think about the long-term business objectives so that the company or destination can be in the best position to achieve its future aims.**

1.4 Reasons for poor planning

- **Lack of support from the top management.**
- **The problem of the system of planning.**
- **Lack of planning expertise.**
- **Impact of unexpected changes.**
- **Disregard of the involvement of others in the planning process.**
- **Overabundance of information.**

2. How to do it?

- **Where are we now?**
(What is our current position?)
- **Where do we want to go?**
(Where does the organization aim to be?)
- **How do we get there?**
(Which is the best route(s) to follow?)
- **Where did we get to?**
(Have we arrived?)

A Model of Marketing Planning



Source: Middleton (1994), adapted by the author

Stage 1: Diagnosis (situational analysis)

(1) The market situation and your position.

(2) Customer analysis

(3) Product analysis

(4) Business/economic environmental analysis (PEST analysis)

- ***Political*** - taxation, duty, regulation, tourism policies, etc.
- ***Economic*** - inflation, unemployment, fuel costs, exchange rates, etc.
- ***Social/cultural*** - demographics, holiday/leisure-time entitlement, values (consumerism), lifestyle, male/female role changes, education, etc.
- Technological*** - innovations, new systems (reservations), electronics, etc.

Stage 2: Prognosis (forecasting)

For example, in the given years to come:

*Will the tourist arrivals in this city increase or decline?
Your sales volume? Your market share? etc.*

*Will your customer change? How will they change? Who
will become your main target markets? etc.*

*Which products or services will be the “star”? Which
products or services will be your “cash cow”? Which
products or services will be the “dog”? Which will be your
priorities? etc.*

*How about the direction and the speed of the possible PEST
changes?*

Stage 3: SWOT (strength, weakness, opportunity and threat) analysis

Stage 4: Setting marketing objectives

Stage 5: Budgeting

Stage 6: Providing an effective marketing mix strategy.

Stage 7: Monitoring and control

2.2 The marketing planning process: Tourism authority perspective

(a) Market audit (Marketing research and analysis)

- an analysis of the tourism supply of the destination, identifying gaps and oversupply;
- visitor surveys, which indicate flows of visitors, trends and profiles, including origin of the trip, length of stay, socioeconomic detail, level of spend and attitude toward the destination;
- investigation and statement of intent on the part of suppliers as to the direction of their businesses, levels of investment and the nature of their focused marketing activity.

(b) Marketing objectives (strategic and annual)

(c) Marketing strategy

(d) Tactical marketing plan (Action plan)

(e) Monitoring and control

2.3 A case : the Wales Tourist Board

Overseas Marketing Plan.

The overall long term strategic marketing objectives for 1990s:

- *To improve Wales' market share of the overseas visitors that come to UK;*
- *To develop a clear and cohesive branding for Wales and to improve Wales' image in key markets.*

Encouraging factors

- History
- Culture
- Language
- Natural beauty
- Sightseeing

Impediments

- Perception of food
- Somber
- Masculine image
- Distance
- Not fashionable

Source: Wales Tourist Board (1995) based on BTA Tokyo information

Key segments

Office ladies (a major segment)

Semi-packaged London arrivals

Honeymooners

Middle aged Ladies (a growing segment)

Pre-graduation students and English Language study

Europe-based 'exiles'

UK-based 'exiles'

Source: Wales Tourist Board Overseas Marketing Plans
1995-6

the **marketing objectives for 1995/6** :

- to increase visits to 22 500;
- to increase visitor spend by £ 3.5 million;
- to improve Wales' market share to 3 per cent.

The marketing tasks for 1995/96

- to extend positive image building by increasing core material to the travel trade in a number of planned steps;
- to explain the Celtic roots of European culture so as to appeal to the Japanese respect for 'unique cultural antiquity';
- to publicize aspects unique to Wales across the spectrum of tradition and folk custom;

- to enhance London and Tokyo based travel knowledge of Wales, reinforcing the perception of the 'elegant city Cardiff, capital of the country and people of Wales';
- to expand on existing London and Tokyo based media contacts and to enhance positive perceptions of Wales and its people;
- to enhance Wales' coverage in BTA themed publications;
- to involve the Japanese community in Wales in marketing activity;
- to develop Wales' trade perception of the Japanese market;
- to familiarize BTA Tokyo information staff with Wales;
- to build links with the Japan Centre, London.

MARKETING/ACTION PLAN 1995/96

1. CONSUMER MARKETING

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Consumer brochure – *Wales for free Travellers*. Timing: May '95

BUDGET: £2K REVENUE: £17K TOTAL BUDGET: £19K

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National Orchestra – Tour of Japan – Support activity. Timing: December '95

BUDGET: £10K TOTAL BUDGET: £10K

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Seminar – An educational for the trade in Wales. Timing: May '95

BUDGET: £1K TOTAL BUDGET: £1K

2. TRADE MARKETING

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Elegant Britain Mission – The annual mission to Japan, for destination, attractions and transport products in Tokyo and Osaka with structured sales calls. Timing: May 21 – 28.

BUDGET: £7K

TOTAL BUDGET: £7K

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JATA Congress – Osaka – Major trade fair occurring every 2 years. Timing: November 30 –December 3.

BUDGET: £7K

TOTAL BUDGET: £7K

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Miki Travel – Attendance at 2 workshops arranged by Miki in Tokyo and Osaka. Dates to be advised.

BUDGET: £8K

TOTAL BUDGET: £8K

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Destination Wales – Revision of current brochure in Japanese and English.

BUDGET: £7K

REVENUE: £1K

TOTAL BUDGET: £8K

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Activity – Trade educational for Kayokai and Japanese Trade and London Sales Calls. Timing: Spring and Autumn 1995.

BUDGET: £8K

TOTAL BUDGET: £8K

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Incentive to Operators – Lovespoon Gift and Harpist to play at events.

BUDGET: £6K

TOTAL BUDGET: £6K

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TABS – The continued attendance at TABS.

BUDGET: £2K

TOTAL BUDGET: £2K

3.PRESS/PR

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Any media activity not supported by BTA.

BUDGET: £2K

TOTAL BUDGET: £2K

REVENUE TARGET: *£18K*

TOTAL BUDGET: *£7.8K*

Source: Wales Tourist Board Overseas Marketing Plans 1995/96.

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