



Advertising Media Selection in the Tourism Industry

Dr. Gracious James

Assistant Professor

Post Graduate Department of Commerce

Maharaja's College, Ernakulam, Kerala

Email: graciousjames@gmail.com

Abstract

In selecting channels for communicating to the prospective customers, there is a wide range of choices. While considering advertising media, the providers can consider high-tech possibilities involving computers or low-tactics such as fliers, leaf outs and booklets. Not every advertising tactic will be appropriate for every business in every situation. The state of Kerala is one of India's largest developed tourism destinations. The purpose of the present study is to analyze the advertising media selection process in the different tourism sectors of Kerala. The methodology undertaken has basically been to do a cross-sectored study of the advertising media selection within the different classified and non-classified tourism units in Kerala. While comparing the 'advertising media selected' by the different categories of tourism units, significant differences were found among the units in the case of 'National and International Print Media, Television, Outdoor and Direct Mail advertising'.

Key words: Advertising media selection, classified and non-classified tourism units, effectiveness of advertising media

I. Introduction

Tourism advertising is an area that has been researched intensely in international level. However this has not been the case in India. The choice of media types is wide. Six types which are commonly used in travel and tourism are analysed here. Finding effective memorable ways to operate on consumers' minds is the creative aspect. Arranging to be seen and heard is the job of media selection and buying space.

Marketing communication forms a core principle of the delivery tourism product and services. There is a need to introduce new products or services and create advertising channels to promote existing and new ones. For tourism destination marketers, it is imperative to know what forms of advertising should be used to attract and convince consumers to make travel-purchasing decisions. This study compares six major types of tourism advertising media. The purpose is to explore which form is most effective in getting consumers to make tourism-purchasing decisions from the marketer's perspective.

II. Review of Literature

Marsha et al. (2005) examined the persuasive effects of message presentation (i.e. advertising or publicity) on the effectiveness of marketing a tourist destination. Results of the study show that publicity created significantly higher mean scores than advertising for three of the four dependent variables tested. This study confirms that publicity is an important element in the tourism marketing mix. David and Mary (2008) examined media selection practices by tourism business competing in Alaska. Two media selection decisions, media use and media mix, were investigated. A market structure analysis revealed that both media selection practiced were affected by organizational, task, and demand characteristics facing firms. The market structure analysis also suggested that media mix decisions were likely to be more highly constrained than are individual media use decisions.

How to communicate the right information about a tourism destination through the right form of



media are pertinent advertising decisions, as the information that consumers acquire about possible tourism destinations may help sensitize the consumer favorably towards a vacation location, and therefore assist them in choosing a vacation destination (Gartrell, 1994). Densil and Andrew (2010) assessed the impact of advertising, along with a number of economic variables, on tourist arrivals in Jamaica. The results revealed that it is exchange rate, not advertising that is most influential in stimulating tourist arrivals to Jamaica. The Internet serves as a major marketing and communication tool in the tourism industry. The study conducted by Shwu-Ing Wu (2008) focused on determining how Internet-based advertising has influenced travel agencies operating in the tourism industry.

International experience reveals that movies constitute an important marketing tool which can effectively serve the strategy for promotion of tourism destinations. Vagionis and Loumioti (2011) explored the prospects of movies as a tool of modern tourist marketing. Hudson and Ritchie (2006), suggest that film tourism is the tourism that is generated as a result of the appearance of a destination or attraction in the cinema, video or television. Seabra et al. (2007) reveals that using non-media information sources for planning tourist trips influences fulfillment of expectations. The use of non-media information sources also has a direct impact on the future use of mass media information sources for future tourist trip planning, as well as an indirect impact through expectations fulfillment.

III. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to analyse the advertising media selection process in the different tourism sectors of Kerala. The state of Kerala is one of India's largest developed tourism destinations. Kerala is blessed with golden beaches, beautiful lakes, splendid waterfalls, calm backwaters, cascading rivers, well-kept wildlife

sanctuaries, tempting hill resorts, graceful valleys, numerous historical areas, pilgrim centers, art forms and festivals in which tourists are especially interested in. Yet, Kerala has not achieved the much expected growth rate. Kerala has tremendous potential for promoting tourism in the state, which will provide employment, increase business and earn foreign exchange for the country. But this can be made practicable only if the State takes proper care in addressing all issues connected with this sector. How tourism products are advertised in Kerala? is therefore, an important consideration. In this context, a study is needed on the media selection for advertising tourism products by various tourism units in Kerala.

IV. Objectives of the Study

1. To make a cross sector analysis of the media selection for advertising tourism products by different classified and non-classified categories of tourism units in Kerala.
2. To compare and analyse the advertising media selection of different categories of tourism units in Kerala according to their marketing experiences.

V. Methodology

The present study is an empirical one based on survey method. The methodology undertaken has basically been to do a cross-sector study of the advertising media selection within the different classified and non-classified tourism units in Kerala. The aims of this research were achieved by means of a survey that was distributed among 217 tourism Marketing Managers. An effort was also made to broad base the sample in major 'identified tourism centers'. The study focuses on six forms of media that were used to advertise a particular tourism product.

VI. Sample Frame

Of the total 217 tourism units constituting the sample, there are 38 (17.51 per cent) respondents



from Classified Hotels and Resorts and 32 (14.75 per cent) from Non-classified Hotels and Resorts. Data were collected from 65 (29.95 per cent) Ayurveda Health Centers, out of which 35 (16.13 per cent) are from classified category and 30 (13.82 per cent) from non-classified category. Out of the total respondents, 52 units (23.96 per cent) are from House Boat Operators category and in this category 18 units (8.29 per cent) from classified and 34 units 15.67 per cent) from non-classified category. From the Approved Tour Operators and Travel Agents category there are 30 respondents (13.82 per cent).

VII. Results and Discussion

VII (A). Advertising Channels Selection

In selecting channels for communicating to the prospective customers, there is a wide range of choices. While considering advertising media, the providers can consider high-tech possibilities involving computers or low-tactics such as fliers, leaf outs and booklets. Certainly each communication vehicle has both advantages and drawbacks, that's why it is wise none to be used exclusively but in one combination or another. Not every advertising tactic will be appropriate for every business in every situation. Again, before making media selection for delivering advertising message, determine the number of potential customers they can reach, returns on investments, and the best cost-effective method for conveying advertising strategy.

To find the nature of media selection for advertisement among tourism units, an analysis based on the common types of advertising media is made. For this the prominent advertising media are grouped as given below.

1. Print – Regional, National and International
2. Television – Regional, National and International
3. Radio – Regional, National and International
4. Outdoor
5. Internet
6. Direct Mail
7. Others

Table 1 shows the comparison of 'advertising media selected' by the different categories of tourism units. It reveals that there is significant difference among the units in the case of 'National and International Print Media, Television, Outdoor and Direct Mail advertising'. For these types of media the χ^2 value is significant at 1 per cent level. But in case of 'Regional Print Media, Radio and Internet', they do not show significant differences. In Table 2 the media selected for advertisement by different categories of tourism units are ranked by using 'spearman's rank correlation'. It shows the higher concentration of tourism units in 'outdoor' media for advertising their products. 79.3 percent of the respondents (when all the categories are combined) selected 'outdoor' as one of their advertising media followed by 'internet' and 'direct mail' with 75.1 percent and 73.7 percent. In all, only 4.6 percent of respondents use 'radio' for advertising.



Table 1: Comparison of Advertising Media Selected - According to Category of Units

Media	Hotels and Resorts	Ayurveda Centers	House Boat Operators	Approved Tour Operators and Travel Agents	Total	Chi
Print-Regional	51 (72.9)	40 (61.5)	33 (63.5)	14 (46.7)	138 (63.6)	6.426
Print-National	46 (65.7)	54 (83.1)	31 (59.6)	27 (90)	158 (72.8)	14.292**
Print-International	13 (18.6)	52 (80)	1 (1.9)	24 (80)	90 (41.5)	106.728**
Television-Regional	24 (34.3)	11 (16.9)	5 (9.6)	10 (33.3)	50 (23)	13.441**
Television-National	20 (28.6)	37 (56.9)	7 (13.5)	25 (83.3)	89 (41)	49.805**
Television-International	1 (1.4)	8 (12.3)	(0)	11 (36.7)	20 (9.2)	38.112**
Radio-Regional	1 (1.4)	1 (1.5)	2 (3.8)	(0)	4 (1.8)	1.816
Radio-National	2 (2.9)	1 (1.5)	(0)	(0)	3 (1.4)	2.278
Radio-International	2 (2.9)	1 (1.5)	(0)	(0)	3 (1.4)	2.278
Outdoor	63 (90)	58 (89.2)	48 (92.3)	3 (10)	172 (79.3)	101.781**
Internet	55 (78.6)	49 (75.4)	33 (63.5)	26 (86.7)	163 (75.1)	6.369
Direct mail	47 (67.1)	47 (72.3)	49 (94.2)	17 (56.7)	160 (73.7)	17.43**
Others	1 (1.4)	(0)	1 (1.9)	(0)	2 (0.9)	1.652

Source: Survey data

* Significant at 0.05 level

** Significant at 0.01 level.

Note : Figures in brackets indicate percentages to respective category of respondents

The ranked positions of ‘advertising media selected’ as per Table 2 were compared and presented in Table 3. This shows significant similarities between different categories of tourism units in the matter of ‘media selected for advertising’, except between Approved Tour Operators & Travel Agents and Hotels & Resorts and between Approved Tour Operators & Travel Agents and House Boat Operators. The correlation value between Hotels & Resorts and Ayurveda Centers is 0.81 which is significant at

1 per cent level. Similarly the ranked positions are significantly correlated between Hotels & Resorts and House Boat Operators, Ayurveda Centers and House Boat Operators and Approved Tour Operators and Travel Agents and Ayurveda Centers. The correlation value is 0.86, 0.7 and 0.74 respectively, which are also significant at 1 per cent level. Therefore, it can be concluded that tourism units in different categories are selecting more or less the same media for advertising their products.



Table 2: Ranking of Advertising Media Selected According To Category of Units

Sl No	Media	Category of Units								Total	
		Hotels & Resorts		Ayurveda Resorts		House Boat Operators		Approved Tour Operators & Travel Agents			
		%	Rank	Percent	Rank	Percent	Rank	Percent	Rank	%	Rank
1	Print-Regional	72.9	3	61.5	6	63.5	4	46.7	6	63.6	5
2	Print-National	65.7	5	83.1	2	59.6	5	90.0	1	72.8	4
3	Print-International	18.6	8	80.0	3	1.9	9.5	80.0	4	41.5	6.5
4	Television-Regional	34.3	6	16.9	8	9.6	7	33.3	8	23.0	8
5	Television-National	28.6	7	56.9	7	13.5	6	83.3	3	41.0	6.5
6	Television-International	1.4	12	12.3	9	0.0	12	36.7	7	9.2	9
7	Radio-regional	1.4	12	1.5	11	3.8	8	0.0	11.5	1.8	10
8	Radio-National	2.9	9.5	1.5	11	0.0	12	0.0	11.5	1.4	11.5
9	Radio - International	2.9	9.5	1.5	11	0.0	12	0.0	11.5	1.4	11.5
10	Outdoor	90.0	1	89.2	1	92.3	2	10.0	9	79.3	1
11	Internet	78.6	2	75.4	4	63.5	3	86.7	2	75.1	2
12	Direct mail	67.1	4	72.3	5	94.2	1	56.7	5	73.7	3
13	Others	1.4	12	0.0	13	1.9	9.5	0.0	11.5	0.9	13

Source: Survey Data

**Table 3: Rank Correlation Matrix
(Advertising Media Selected According to Category of Units)**

Category of units	Hotels and Resorts	Ayurveda Centers	House boats	Approved Tour Operators & Travel Agents
Hotels and Resorts	1			
Ayurveda Centers	0.81**	1		
House Boat Operators	0.86**	0.7**	1	
Approved Tour Operators & Travel Agents	0.55	0.74**	0.53	1

Source: Survey Data

*Significant at 0.05 level,

**Significant at 0.01 level



VII (B). Effectiveness of Advertising Media Selected

In tourism research, evaluating the effectiveness of travel destination advertisements has focused largely on the extent to which a promotional campaign “stimulates” visits to a particular destination. A variety of approaches have been taken, including advertising tracking studies, conversion studies, and other forms of programme evaluation (Burke and Gitelson 1990; Messmer and Johnson 1993; McWilliams and Crompton 1997). To compare the

perceived effectiveness of advertising media, the tourism units were asked to state ‘three most effective’ advertising media they had been using. The respondent’s opinion about the most effective advertising media was then ranked and given in Table 4. The table suggests that ‘International Print’ media is most effective for tourism business as this has the highest mean of 0.71 and apparently with the ‘First Rank’ position. It is evident that ‘regional television’ and ‘regional radio’ advertisements are not effective as these two media got the least rank positions of ‘ninth’ and ‘tenth’ with mean value of 0.07 and 0.00.

Table 4: Ranking of Most Effective Advertising Media

Sl.No	Media	Mean	Rank
1	Print - International	0.71	1
2	Direct mail	0.35	4
3	Television - National	0.35	5
4	Print - National	0.43	3
5	Internet	0.63	2
6	Print - Regional	0.18	6
7	Outdoor	0.11	8
8	TV - International	0.14	7
9	Radio - Regional	0.00	10
10	TV - Regional	0.07	9

Source : Survey Data

While comparing the ‘advertising media selected’ by the different categories of tourism units, significant differences were found among the units in the case of ‘National and International Print Media, Television, Outdoor and Direct Mail advertising’. In case of ‘Regional Print Media, Radio and Internet’, they did not show any significant differences. When ‘spearman’s rank correlation’ was applied, it was found that there was a higher concentration of tourism units in ‘outdoor’ media for advertising their products.

It was also observed that significant similarities existed between different categories of tourism units in the matter of ‘media selected for advertising’, except between Approved Tour Operators & Travel Agents and Hotels & Resorts and between Approved Tour Operators & Travel Agents and House Boat Operators. Similarly, the ranked positions are significantly correlated between Hotels & Resorts and House Boat Operators, Ayurveda Centers and House Boat Operators and Approved Tour Operators & Travel Agents and Ayurveda Centers. When another type of comparison between different classified



categories of tourism units had been made, a slightly assorted picture was obtained.

The ranking suggests that 'International Print' media is most effective for tourism business as this has the highest mean of 0.71. The category wise ranking reveals that for Hotels & Resorts and House Boat Operators, 'internet' is the most effective advertising media. On the other hand, 'international print' is the most effective advertising media for Ayurveda Centers and Approved Tour Operators & Travel agents. It is inferred that the different sectors of tourism units show no uniformity in their opinion about effectiveness of the advertising media.

VIII. Conclusion

The purpose of tourism destination advertising is to convince consumers to actually travel to particular tourism locations. It is crucial to use the most effective forms of media to advertise tourism destinations in ways that are appealing and attractive to consumers. This study explored the effects of six types of tourism advertising media. The study reveals that there were significant differences among various classified categories of tourism units in their selection of advertising media. This leads to the conclusion that tourism units in different classified categories are selecting varied types of media for advertising.

References

- Burke, J. F., and R. Gitelson (1990) "Conversion Studies: Assumptions, Applications, Accuracy, and Abuse", *Journal of Travel Research*, 28 (3) pp. 46-51
- David Snepengera & Mary Snepengerb (2008) *Market Structure Analysis of Media Selection Practices by Travel Services*, *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, Vol. 2 (2-3)
- Densil A. Williams and Andrew Spencer (2010) *Advertising and tourist arrivals: Evidence from Jamaica*, *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, Vol.10, 4, pp.359-366, <http://thr.sagepub.com/content/10/4/359>, accessed on January, 20, 2012.
- Gartrell, Richard B. (1994) *Destination Marketing For Convention and Visitor Bureaus*, Kendall-Hunt Publishing Company: Iowa
- Hudson, S. & Ritchie, B. (2006) *Promoting Destinations via Film Tourism: An Empirical Identification of Supporting Marketing Initiatives*, *Journal of Travel Research*, Vol. 44, pp.387-396
- Marsha D. Loda, William Norman & Kenneth Backman (2005) *How Potential Tourists React to Mass Media Marketing*, *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, Vol. 18, Issue 3
- McWilliams, G. E., and J. L. Crompton (1997) "An Expanded Framework for Measuring the Effectiveness of Destination Advertising", *Tourism Management*, 18 (3) pp.127-37
- Messmer, D. J., and R. R. Johnson (1993) "Inquiry Conversion and Travel Advertising Effectiveness", *Journal of Travel Research*, 31 (4) pp. 14-21
- Seabra, C., Abrantes, J.L., and Lages, L.F. (2007) *The impact of using non-media information sources on the future use of mass media information sources: The mediating role of expectations fulfillment*, *Tourism Management*, Vol. 28, pp.1541-1554
- Shwu-Ing Wu, Pao-Lien Weib and Jui-Ho Chenc (2008) *Influential factors and relational structure of Internet banner advertising in the tourism industry*, *Tourism Management*, Vol. 29, Issue 2, pp. 221-236
- Vagonis, N and Loumioti, M (2011) *Movies as a tool of modern tourist marketing*, *Tourism: an international multidisciplinary journal of tourism*, Vol. 6, No. 2, pp. 353-362