

The Role of Guides in Tourism Destination Marketing

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ABSTRACT

The guides play a vital role in the tourism destination marketing, who are not only the bearer of cultural and historical information, but also the shaper and disseminator of the brand image of the tourism destination. Through the direct interaction with visitors, they greatly influence the quality of visitors' experience and visitors' overall impression of the destination. In this paper, the specific role of guides in tourism destination marketing is discussed in detail, aiming to reveal how guide services enhance the market competitiveness of tourism destinations by improving visitors' experience, so as to provide suggestions for the optimization of the overall marketing effect of tourism destinations.

KEYWORDS

Tourism destination marketing; the role of guide; visitors' experience; competitive advantage

With the acceleration of globalization and the improvement of people's living standards, tourism has become one of the main ways for people to relax and cultural exchange. In this context, the competition among tourism destinations is becoming increasingly fierce, and how to effectively attract visitors and meet their needs has become the key to achieve the sustainable development of tourism destinations. Among the many marketing elements of tourism destinations, guides directly face visitors and deliver personalized service and professional knowledge to greatly affect visitors' travel experience and overall impression of the destination. Therefore, an in-depth research of the specific role of guides in tourism destination marketing is of great significance for tourism managers to design and implement tourism destination marketing strategies more effectively, so as to further improve visitors' satisfaction and loyalty, and ultimately promote the healthy development of tourism. Based on this, according to the relationship between guides and tourism destination marketing, this paper will discuss the influence of tour guides on the brand image of tourism destinations, and reveal the role of guides in tourism destination marketing in combination with specific cases, and provide suggestions for the better utilization of the potential of guides, so as to optimize the overall marketing effect of tourism destinations.

1 The Relationship between Guides and tourism Destination Marketing

1.1 The Role and Responsibilities of Guides

First of all, a guide is an excellent cultural communicator. Through the in-depth explanation of the history, culture and traditional customs of the tourist attractions, the guide provides a window for visitors to better understand and feel the local cultural characteristics. Guides should have rich

knowledge reserves and superb narrative skills, and be able to convey complex historical information and cultural knowledge to visitors vividly and accurately, so that visitors can experience and understand the cultural connotation of tourist attractions from multiple angles and dimensions. This kind of in-depth cultural transmission can not only enrich visitors' travel experience, but also enhance visitors' sense of identity with the tourism destination culture^[1]. Secondly, guides are a key factor in improving the overall travel experience. Modern tourism pays more and more attention to providing personalized and emotional services, and the kindness, response speed and ability to deal with emergencies of guides are particularly important in this process. Visitors sometimes encounter various unexpected problems during the journey, so that the guide needs to ensure the smooth progress of the journey with efficient countermeasures and considerate services.

1.2 The Definition and Objectives of Tourism Destination Marketing

Tourism destination marketing refers to promoting the popularity, image and attractiveness of the tourism destination through marketing strategies and means to attract visitors to travel, consume and experience there. The fundamental goal of marketing is to adopt effective marketing strategies and strategies to build a strong brand with the perfect unity of the popularity, reputation and loyalty of tourism destinations. The realization of this goal requires tourism destination marketing to constantly explore and implement new methods, use digital media platforms to tell destination stories, or use virtual reality technology to provide visitors with interesting and meaningful interactive experience, so as to more vividly show the cultural characteristics and natural landscapes of the destination, deepen visitors' impression and stimulate their desire to visit^[2]. At the same time, in the context of globalization, there is a need to understand the preferences and behavior patterns of consumers in different cultural backgrounds to conduct the tourism destination marketing, so as to realize the accurate market positioning.

2 The Influence of Guides on the Brand Image of Tourism Destinations

2.1 The Language and Behavior of Guides in Shaping the Brand Image

As for the language expression of guides, the use of vivid language, appealing stories and appropriate humor in guides' explanations can greatly enhance visitors' interest and sense of participation, and make visitors' travel experience richer and more memorable. For example, when a guide describes the history of an ancient castle, it makes visitors feel as if they are traveling back in time by telling legends and anecdotes of historical figures associated with the castle. This attractive narrative can effectively enhance visitors' sense of identity and emotional connection to the tourism destination culture, thus enhancing the brand image of the destination. As for the behavior of guides, the professional behavior of guides includes their attitude toward visitors, service quality and ability to deal with emergencies^[3]. A professional, friendly and efficient guide is able to provide necessary assistance when the visitor is in trouble, such as being able to adjust the itinerary in unfavorable weather conditions or provide timely assistance when visitors have health issues. This kind of care and responsibility reflected in the details can win the trust and praise of visitors, and establish a good service brand image of the destination in the minds of visitors.

2.2 Case study: Take Zhang Yang, a foreign language guide from China Youth Travel International Tourism Co., LTD., as an example

Zhang Yang is a foreign language guide of China Youth Travel International Tourism Co., LTD., with

rich professional experience and excellent service awareness. In his career, he has not only enhanced the cultural experience of visitors through well-prepared tour guide speeches, but also demonstrated excellent emergency response capabilities in emergency situations, which are mainly reflected in the following aspects. When Zhang Yang explains the Summer Palace and other famous gardens in Beijing to foreign visitors, he tells the depth and details of landscape art in vivid language, so that visitors can better understand and appreciate the unique aesthetic and cultural values of Chinese gardens. At the same time, he explains the differences in design concepts and landscaping techniques between southern and northern Chinese gardens and western gardens in a simple way, which not only enriches visitors' knowledge, but also enhances their understanding and interest in Chinese culture. His practice effectively deepens visitors' goodwill and memory of the tourism destination and helps improve the brand image of the destination. In addition, Zhang Yang showed great professionalism in dealing with an emergency situation in which a visitor of the Nordic business group suffered a heart attack. He not only promptly took effective first aid measures, but also properly handled the follow-up medical treatment and transport work to ensure that the guests could get timely treatment. This ability to stay calm at critical moments reflects a high level of professionalism and human care, and enhances the trust of visitors in the travel team and the destination.

These behaviors of Zhang Yang not only set up a professional, reliable and caring guide image in the minds of visitors, but also indirectly enhance the brand image of the travel company and tourism destination that he serves, thus bringing more positive comments and recommendations to the tourism destination, and further enhancing the attraction and market competitiveness of the destination.

3 The Role of Guides in the Competitive Advantage of Tourism Destinations

3.1 Enhance Visitor Interactivity

During the tour, guides can organize some small interactive activities, such as quiz games, live role playing or other participatory tasks, to encourage visitors to participate more actively in the tour experience, so as to increase their understanding and interest in the tour content. For example, when visiting a history museum, the guide will not only explain the historical stories of the exhibits to visitors, but also guide visitors to increase the depth of experience by simulating the lifestyle or clothing of ancient people, which can transform visitors from passive acceptance of information to active participation in the experience, so that every moment of travel is full of joy of discovery and the value of education ^[4]. At the same time, the guide also makes use of modern technology and tools, such as providing intelligent devices for visitors to see the virtual reproduction of historical events in real scenic spots or to identify different types of plants and animals in nature reserves through the application of equipment, thus greatly enhancing the interactivity of on-site tours. With the support of these technologies, guides can not only provide more diversified information, but also effectively strengthen the sense of participation and experience of visitors, and improve the attractiveness of tourism destinations in the fierce market competition.

3.2 Enhance Cultural Identity

Guides serve as a bridge for cultural experience by organizing visitors to participate local festivals, handicrafts or traditional performances. In practice, some guides lead visitors to participate in a traditional tea ceremony experience or try on ethnic costumes, so that visitors can experience and learn in actual operations. This sense of participation and experience is an important way to

improve cultural identity. In the firsthand experience, visitors can more deeply understand and appreciate the cultural values and meanings of these cultural activities, and then form a unique memory and deep emotion for the culture of this region. When visiting a modern art museum or attending a local music festival, the guide explains how these art forms relate to the local social context and cultural values in a simple way when introducing the art works on the display or the content of the performances to the visitors ^[5]. This interpretation not only increases the visitors' understanding of the art works, but also enables them to feel the living atmosphere and cultural characteristics of the local community more deeply, thus strengthening visitors' sense of identification with the culture of this region. In the field of ecotourism, when guiding visitors to explore nature reserves or carry out ecological observation activities, the guide will also explain the local ecosystem, biodiversity and the importance of protecting the environment, which not only enhances the visitors' environmental awareness, but also enables visitors to have deep respect and recognition of the natural environment. By participating in these activities, visitors not only learn about ecological protection, but also establish a spiritual connection with the land. The guide's guidance and education in this process make every ecological trip a profound cultural and emotional experience, which strengthens the visitors' cultural identity with the destination, thus helping to enhance the image and attractiveness of the destination.

4 Conclusion

To sum up, this paper discusses the multiple roles and practical functions of guides in tourism destination marketing. Through the teaching of professional knowledge and storytelling, the guide not only enhances visitors' cultural identity, but also builds the emotional connection between the visitors and the tourism destination. At the same time, the guide also organizes various interactive activities to let visitors personally experience and participate in the local culture, which increases their satisfaction. In addition, the professional competence and agile response shown by guides in responding to emergencies and providing personalized services further prove visitors' important role in enhancing the brand image and customer loyalty of tourism destinations. Based on this, more attention should be paid to the professional training of guides in order to improve the development quality of the entire tourism industry.

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