

Economic and Legal Support of Marketing Communications in the Tourism Sector

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Abstract

The article deals with the economic and legal support of marketing communications in the tourism sector. It is established that marketing communications in the tourism sector consist in making the tourism enterprise, as well as corresponding tourism products and services recognizable and attractive to consumers at the national and international level. It is determined that marketing communication covers any activity of a travel company, informing and reminding consumers and the market about its activities and the provision of tourism services. Currently, the creation of a regulatory framework for marketing communications can be affirmed; however, the topic of marketing communications in the tourism sector is not sufficiently covered and regulated, especially in the advertising field. Among the variety of laws regulating marketing communications in the tourism sector, one can find particular articles concerning communication activities, although the specifics of regulating the process of promoting the sale of tourism products are not legally enshrined.

Keywords: Marketing Communications, Tourism Services, Regulation, Profitability, Activity, Market.

1. Introduction

Tourism has high profitability and is one of the most important sources of regular income for the state. Therefore, at the present stage, one of the conditions for the successful functioning of

tourism companies in the market is the organization of marketing activities. Contemporary marketing of a travel company means something more than developing high-quality tourism services, setting an attractive price, and engaging consumers of the target market.

In this case, the travel company must have a continuous communication link with existing and potential customers. After all, on the one hand, the development of marketing communications in tourism allows countries to be attractive in terms of tourism. On the other hand, the tourism sector, which is one of the most profitable and dynamic industries, as well as competitive in the world economy, has become the main economic powerhouse.

However, in the Russian Federation, no attention is paid to marketing communications in tourism, therefore this topic is extremely relevant. A significant number of travel companies operate by inertia, or are in a state of stagnation; their modernization is impossible without additional funding from the state and investors.

Due to the presence of a significant number of state-owned sanatoriums, recreation centers, children's health camps, boarding houses, and health resorts, the Russian Federation still occupies an important place in the spa sector among the competing countries, but their obsolescence and high competition require unprecedented efforts for further development. The state's attention to the tourism industry can become an important powerhouse for the economy and the tourism sector, while marketing communications will strengthen and accelerate this process.

The study of issues related to the regulation of the tourism sector is reflected in the works of A.P. Gorbunov et al. (2018), I.A. Karpov and A.F. Kryachkov (2019), A.V. Mikhailina (2018), Yu.V. Ryzhova (2018), O.V. Shpyrnya et al. (2020), L.M. Shcherba and M.Yu Shcherba (2020), and others. At the same time, currently, there are no clear determinants of economic and legal support for marketing communications in the tourism sector.

2. Methods

The theoretical and methodological basis of the research included an abstract-logical method, methods of induction, deduction, analysis, synthesis, and systematization, used to justify approaches to determining the features of economic and legal support for marketing communications in the tourism sector.

The information base of the article involved the statistical data of state bodies, legislative and regulatory documents governing the economic and legal support of marketing communications in the tourism sector, as well as the results of scientific research (Lobanov et al., 2020; Ogloblina et al., 2020; Zhukova et al., 2020).

The research aimed to systematize the features of the tourism sector development, work out measures for coordinating activities among the main participants in the tourism process, and consider the main types of marketing communications in the tourism sector and their features in different operating conditions.

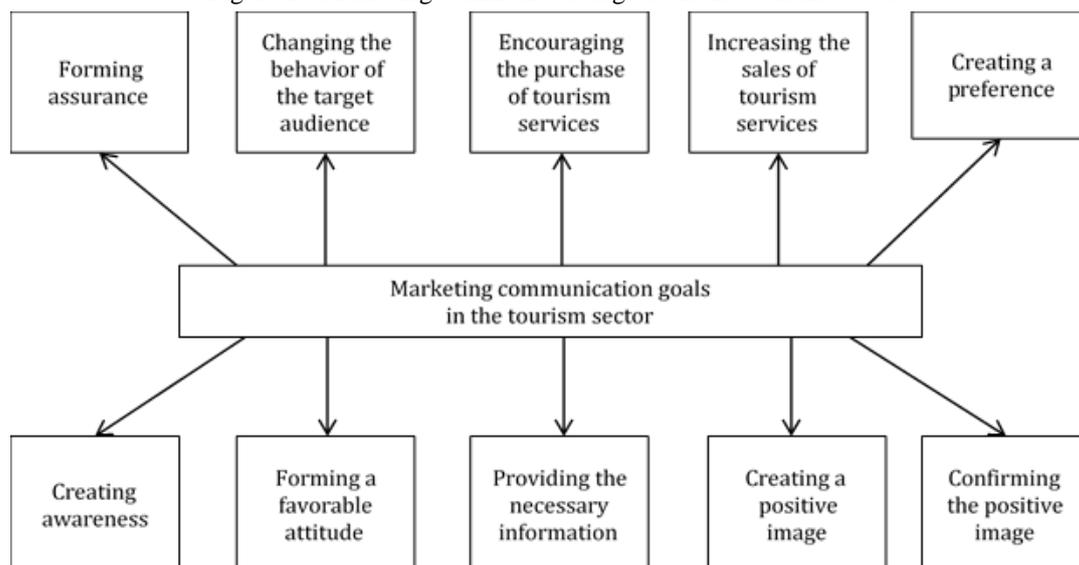
3. Results

The practice has shown that influencing the market is one of the main principles of marketing. Marketing is not only the solution to relatively passive tasks of detailed, comprehensive, and thorough study of customers' requirements, and adapting to them when offering the services, but also active generation of demand, sales promotion to increase sales, improve efficiency and profitability in the market. This is what the marketing communications complex is exactly designed to serve.

At the same time, the environment in which the travel company operates is permeated with a complex communication system. The company communicates with its clientele, banks, insurance companies, tourism services providers, and contact audiences. Moreover, these relations are multidirectional. In this case, the task of the travel company is to form and maintain a positive image of the tourism products and services offered in various markets.

However, marketing communications in the tourism sector consist in forming a belief among consumers, changing the behavior of the target audience, encouraging them to purchase a tourism product, increasing sales of tourism services, creating a positive image of a travel company, and forming a benevolent attitude among consumers of tourism services (Fig. 1).

Figure 1 - Marketing communication goals in the tourism sector



In this case, contemporary travel companies manage a complex system of marketing communications using various elements, including advertising as the most significant element of the communication complex in the tourism sector. It has great potential impact on all the other elements of this complex, being the most expensive one.

The effectiveness of tourism advertising consists in a strict division of the target audience according to socio-demographic and psychographic characteristics. Depending on this, completely different service packages and advertising promotion concepts are developed. It is also important to create visual images, since such images affect the tourist, not only creating the necessary mood and confirming the text component of advertising but also forming the participation effect.

The advertiser's reputation and public popularity also deserve attention, since the customer should trust the advertising promises of the travel company. Since the service quality cannot be checked before the purchase, travel companies offer their customers future services. Currently, there is a steady trend of growth in the share of television, Internet, and external advertising in the advertising of travel companies, as the most effective advertising media.

Studies show that direct advertising on television is ordered directly by the host countries. As for the major tour operators, they prefer to buy out sponsorship packages of the most rated TV shows related to the tourism and leisure industry. Medium-sized tour operators and large travel agencies actively use external advertising means, such as wall banners and cross-street banners, which actively

influence the target audiences, especially to inform about the release of new tour packages, individual tours, and last-minute travel offers.

Besides, all tour operators use billboards. Most travel agents can advertise on city signs. A significant number of host countries use the urban format in business districts and recreational areas of the city, as well as information and advertising booklets and catalogs with design and printing components.

At the same time, to promote services, all travel companies actively use site optimization in search engines, contextual and banner advertising on the Internet, as well as Internet PR (public relations) in electronic media, blogging, social networks, and thematic sites. However, the crisis and post-crisis trends require both maximum optimization of advertising budgets, and the development of more and more creative ideas and concepts of tourism advertising, as well as active impact on target audiences.

Almost all large and medium-sized travel companies and host countries address creative studios and branding agencies because the tourism industry requires a contemporary business vision in original offers, new trademarks, and well-known brands. Therefore, an important role in the development of the marketing communications system in the market of tourism services belongs to the state.

The next component of marketing communications in tourism is sales promotion, which is a variety of marketing activities that increase the initial value of a product or service for a certain period, and directly stimulate the purchasing activity of consumers (for example, trial samples), the work of distributors, and sales staff.

Sales promotion of tourism products and services is carried out in three areas: through resellers, who are offered discounts from prices, bonuses, incentive payments, gifts and souvenirs, joint advertising, and free tours; through customers (tourists), who are provided with discounts, souvenirs and gifts, coupons, contests, lotteries, and additional services; and through travel company employees, who pass training, as well as receive gifts, cash bonuses, and extra paid leave.

The practice has shown that public relations are a management tool with which a travel company presents its product in the media from the best side. However, the difference between public relations and publicity is that the latter only collects information (this information can represent the organization from both the best and the worst side), intended specifically for the media.

Public relations help the travel company to exercise a kind of control over the publicity and make sure that only a positive opinion is created about corporate products. At the same time, the system of direct marketing in tourism is formed through the following components: a) personal sales; b) catalog sales; c) telemarketing; and e) direct mail advertising, which is postal sending of letters, advertising aids, samples of goods, booklets and other means to potential buyers at addresses from the mailing lists.

At the same time, the process of personal sales of tourism products and services consists in organizing the reception and establishing contact to find out the needs and demand of customers for tourism services. Besides, the most common type of sales promotion is seasonal discounts, long-stay discounts, discounts for certain categories of customers (children, students, and young people), bonus discounts for regular customers, as well as last-minute tour discounts.

The practice has shown that existing organizations that influence the processes of self-regulation of marketing activities do not distinguish the features of the tourism business, although it is the tourism activity that involves a constant conflict of marketing communications among the participants of the tourism process. At that, the process of establishing the legal regulation of marketing in the Russian Federation takes place in challenging socio-economic conditions. The package of legislative acts regulates the competitive market environment and controls marketing activities for each component of the marketing mix.

At present, it is already possible to state about the creation of a regulatory framework for marketing activities, but marketing activities in the tourism sector are not sufficiently uncovered and regulated, especially in the advertising field. Among the variety of laws regulating tourism activities, one can find particular articles related to communication activities (namely, advertising), although the specifics of regulating the sale promoting process of tourism products are not enshrined in law.

The most common conflicts arise due to:

- placing external advertising without permission that must be proved properly (the main argument is related to the inability to prove and identify the owner of external advertising);
- identifying the distributed information as advertising and recognizing advertising as unfair (advertising can be recognized as unfair only by a specially authorized state body);
- using copyright or related rights protected items in advertising (proof of permission to use copyright is an agreement on the intellectual property rights transfer, which may contain inaccurate definitions).

Moreover, the legislative principles of advertising and marketing communications are set out in many regulatory acts, which can be conditionally divided into the following groups: laws regulating any type of professional activity; laws that are considered as specifically informational and advertising (those that regulate information, advertising, television, and radio broadcasting); and legislative acts concerning the legal regulation of advertising activities in the tourism sector (Fig. 2).

In general, it is necessary to note the lack of legal ederation.

Figure 2 - Sources of legal regulation of advertising activities in the tourism sector



Even applying a distribution agreement, one cannot count on a certain behavior of the court in the event of a dispute, because the court is trying to apply the law either concerning the provision of tourism services, agent's services, or the commission agreement. Thus, there is no stability in judicial practice. Therefore, in the absence of compulsory rules, the only way is the detailed regulation of relations directly in the contract.

Another problem hindering the development of a network of tourism marketing is its similarity with the sales pyramids. It is important to distinguish network structures from sales pyramids. At the same time, there are no mechanisms to protect against pyramids in Russian law. The state takes responsive measures only in the presence of the fact of nonfulfillment of obligations (when the pyramid eventually bursts). Therefore, no criteria are available to distinguish the sales pyramid from the network structure.

4. Discussion

The reliability of the presented approaches is confirmed by the fact that marketing communications play an important role in forming and promoting tourism products and services on the national and international tourism markets (Agamirova et al., 2017; Lukiyanchuk et al., 2020; Zavalko et al., 2017). At the same time, the main elements of marketing communications are advertising, public relations, sales promotion, and direct sales.

Special attention should be paid to public relations because they influence the tourist unobtrusively and cause more trust than advertising. At that, sales promotion can be used to revive tourist demand, increase customer awareness of tourism products and services. Besides, in the tourism sector, it would be advisable to use innovative methods of promotion, for example, targeting. This method is an advertising mechanism that allows identifying the target audience according to certain criteria and working with this category of customers.

At the same time, forming an effective system of marketing communications in the tourism sector allows creating a positive image of the Russian Federation in the tourism services market, which will lead to investment revenues in the country, reduce unemployment, and attract foreign currency. Besides, the process of regulating marketing and advertising activities in the tourism sector is constantly evolving. However, there are still many problems that require further improvement of the legislative regulation of advertising and marketing communications in the tourism sector, bringing them closer to international standards.

In this regard, it seems appropriate to study the world practices of legal regulation of marketing activities, direct sales, and marketing communications, in particular, advertising and sales promotion. At the same time, the international experience should be adjusted and creatively transformed to meet the demands of the Russian national market. It seems necessary to create a unified organization that would resolve ethical aspects of marketing communications in the tourism sector that would contribute to the development of tourism and the marketing formation process, as well as marketing communication in the tourism industry.

5. Conclusion

Summing up, it can be noted that marketing communications in the tourism sector consist in making a tourism enterprise, and corresponding tourism products and services recognizable and

attractive to consumers at both national and international level. Besides, marketing communication covers any activity of a travel company, informing and reminding consumers and the market about its activities and the provision of tourism services.

Besides, the legislative guidelines of marketing communications in the tourism sector are set out in many regulatory enactments. In general, it is necessary to note the lack of legal regulation in the field of the direct sales of tourism services. The practice has shown that in the Russian Federation, there is still no regulatory framework governing the network marketing of tourism services at the federal level.

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