VISUAL MARKETING THROUGH PHOTOGRAPHIC IMAGES OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA: MEASURING ITS EFFECTIVENESS IN ENTICING POTENTIAL INTERNATIONAL VISITORS

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PRESENTATION OUTLINE

• Introduction/Research Background
• Research Motivation
• Research Questions
• Limitations of the Study
• Methods
• Discussion/Findings
• Conclusion
• Recommendations
Introduction

- Tourism in PNG is an important contributor for wealth creation.
- The country, being blessed with unique natural attractions with vast endemic flora and fauna species and a very diverse culture, attracts various types of travellers.
- PNG-TPA (NTO and DMO) is the government’s tourism marketing and policy arm.
- Despite rigid marketing activities, PNG, for several years, has a low level of awareness in the international marketplace as a potential destination for tourism (SPTO, 2005).
Research Motivation

- Visual marketing is essential for successful destination marketing and can be successful depending on the interpretation and perceptions of the images by the potential international visitors.
- Conducting research on the effectiveness of the photos in enticing potential international visitors is of paramount importance.
Research Questions

• What are the selection factors considered by TPA for the photographic images used for their visual marketing activities?
• How do potential international visitors perceive Papua New Guinea as a tourist destination after seeing the photographic images?
• Are they feel enticed to come and visit Papua New Guinea after seeing the photos?
Limitations of the Study

• Limited photos
• Due to resource constraints limited respondents were only considered (FB friends and friends of friends)
• Future researchers are encouraged to identify and bridge the gap of this research
• In contemporary marketing communications, images claim centre stage (Borgerson & Schroeder, 2004) and visual marketing can be a part of every aspect of the communication mix.
MARKETING

Persuades consumer behavior

Visual Marketing

Enhances that by factors of recall, memory, and identity.
• Destination photography communicates images that shape and re-shape travellers’ destination perceptions (Stepchenkova & Zhan, 2012).
• Photographic image becomes an influential factor in the formation of the destination image.
• Photographs depicting life, people and feelings are infinitely more suggestive than any other visual image (Ravari, 2011).
Visual Marketing Challenges

- Targeting the right market with the right message at the right time which attract consumers from several geographical regions as well as cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

- Come up with photographic images that encapsulate total package and personality of PNG.
Methods

• Qualitative Research
• Social Media (Facebook) as a platform in gathering data.
• Utilized photographic images from TPA to solicit respondents’ perception
• Snowball or chain referral sampling
• Respondents are potential international visitors from Asia, Australia, Canada, USA, London & Germany
1. Factors in the selection of images by TPA

- Photos should fit all kinds of marketing mediums while maintaining its quality and sharpness without variation.
- Photos should represent the products being promoted,
- Place where photos originated
- Purpose of the campaign to ensure that these photos best fit the event and occasion
- Images should be striking and can create impact on the people.
2. Perception of potential international visitors on the photographic images (on nature)

- Photographic images describe Papua New Guinea as a country with rich biodiversity, an ultimate destination and haven for photographers.
- PNG is serene, charming and mysterious and will be perfect for tourists who would want to commune with nature.
Discussions

2. Perception of potential international visitors on the photographic images (on culture)

- The photographic images describe the rich, diverse and colourful culture of Papua New Guinea
- The photos illustrate that the country is a place yet to be discovered by modernity
- The photos depict that PNG has a strong cultural tourism value that enticed visitors with passion in knowing and understanding other people’s way of life
- Some respondents perceived that photos do not create huge impact when it comes to their decision-making for their next vacation.
Discussions

2. Perception of potential international visitors on the photographic images (on people)

✓ The photos show a possible way of interaction with community and its people.
✓ An image with visitors dancing with local people conveys a friendly and welcoming attitude of the people.
Discussions

2. Perception of potential international visitors on the photographic images (on people)

Striking Comments:

✓ Some respondents viewed the photo of a native man with bow and arrows posed in front of natural falls extremely different. Accordingly, “the photo looks creepy and scary”. “It looks to me that he is ready to kill someone, not a welcoming picture at all”; “Honestly, when I look at one picture, it gives me mixed emotions and feelings. There is excitement and fear at the same time”; “This photo will scare some people especially his serious face. Maybe you can ask him to smile to give sense of welcoming to tourists”
3. Are the potential international visitors enticed to come to PNG after seeing the photos?

✓ Mixed responses from the potential international visitors
✓ Some are enticed because of PNG’s natural beauty and unique culture
✓ Some are uncertain because of the following issues:
  • Overall packaging and proximity to modern facilities and amenities.
  • The inclusion of accommodation facilities and other tourist amenities within close proximity of the photographic nature site will assure visitors that their important human needs will be met.
  • The inclusion of available urbanized tourism facilities and city life, indicating nature tourism can be complemented with urban tourism
  • Security issue was raised
Conclusion

- Photographic images are essential in the overall effectiveness of the marketing campaign.
- Perception of the potential market on the photographic images seems vital to continuously pave the way for much improved and enhanced marketing efforts.
- Photos significantly influence the decision making process in the choice of destination of the potential international visitors.
- Photos that depict positive destination image builds interest and eradicates negative impressions based on pre-conceived judgment about the destination.
- Feedback and perception of potential international visitors vary. The divergence of perceptions on the photographic images of travel products and destinations is attributed to their cultural background (Dewar et al., 2006), to their origin, demographic traits preferences and influence of their preconceived perception about PNG.
- The enticing factors do not largely depend on the photographic images but on the overall perception collated from various sources.
- Security, accessibility, tourist amenities, food and cost are the complementing agents of beautiful and captivating photographic images in the choice destination.
Recommendations

- Re-examine the marketing plan to implement a more comprehensive marketing activities that research based and oriented.
- TPA may consider expanding on existing attractions and activities or engaging in new tourism products, especially in the provinces with the heaviest visitation volumes.
- Consider other cost effective marketing mediums like the social media. Social media is becoming the primary medium by which travel information is shared (Xiang & Gretzel, 2010).
- Revisit the on-going visual marketing campaign to (1) identify the strongest photos that will convey positive message and perception to different market segments (2) identify and exclude photos that generate undesirable feedback and (3) establish the best platforms for effective visual marketing activities.
- Strengthen the positive image formation of PNG as a destination through collaboration with stakeholders.
THANK YOU