

## MARKETING IN TOURISM: PRACTICAL EVIDENCES

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**Abstract.** One of the most effective strategies that has recently developed in tandem with the advent of new technologies is undoubtedly marketing. According to this perspective leadership behavior and marketing practices are closely related. This relationship becomes much more apparent when discussing industries where the performance of businesses in the area, such as the tourism industry, directly affects people and their daily interactions. On this basis, paper focuses on tourism marketing as a philosophy and psychology of targeting the tourist's thoughts and preferences. Accordingly, the author discussed on that no matter what marketing strategies business uses, and whatever it advertised, as it has to meet the tourist face to face.

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### Introduction

We can list several important statements and leadership lessons by looking at the relevant literature. All this was made possible by the development of human relations theory, which first appeared in “leadership theory” in the late 1980s and early 1990s. They signify both the emerging human-machine-human mediated relationship and the impending “change” in the social contract. Peter Drucker, Simon Cooper, John Maxwell and other notables wrote the first important works on the idea of leadership and leaders based on this idea. Although there are some differences in the way leaders are perceived and managed in business, they are all based on their ability to create personalities that transcend the conventional restrictive frameworks that control people's social behavior and increase the effectiveness of human endeavors.

John Maxwell goes beyond the situational approach to leadership, discovering that leadership involves developing interpersonal relationships to achieve corporate goals that followers perceive as their own. Iliev et al. (2015) define leadership as “the ability and potential of a business organization to discover, build, motivate and develop leaders at all hierarchical levels of the organization.”

These concepts allow us to accept their definition. The most highly motivated person in an organization is usually the leader, regardless of company status or leadership position.

On the other hand, speaking of marketing leadership, achieving “good management practices” requires building certain leadership practices. It is defined as one of the main elements of the marketing process, creating the prerequisites for the participants in the marketing organization to clearly understand and accept their roles in the organization, as well as the competencies necessary to produce, manufacture and sell the company's products. In other words, marketing leadership provides management leadership. Following Sterev (2018), the following conditions for marketing leadership can be derived:

- Achieving balance in the enterprise: while managing marketing, it is extremely important that company goals (which are often managers' personal goals – a.n.) be separated from employee or customer goals. The idea that stakeholders must “work” together for a firm's commercial success is a core principle of modern marketing management.

- Using a process-oriented approach to management: this revises the conventional marketing functional organization by aligning different functional units. For example, in reality, the functions of advertising and sales are often separated, which forces sales representatives to use means of communication, even if they may not fully believe in the efficiency and effectiveness of their efforts. Selling in the context of downstream marketing is a process that begins with pre-purchase communication, moves through the closing activities of the sales team, and is often combined with post-purchase communication. Business and marketing require all of this to be managed by using or creating a single production and sales process.

- Achieving success through people: marketing personnel are constantly on the “battlefield” of the market. This suggests that their knowledge and skills are essential to the company's market success. Moreover, these knowledge and skills must be continuously improved to meet the continuous change of the market and customers.

Another view of leadership approaches applicable to innovation and marketing is provided by Minchev, Hristova and Stoyanov (2023) and Yordanov (2023). They identified 10 employee skills that make a significant contribution to marketing leadership, including:

- creative problem solving;
- digital literacy and ability to use digital innovations;
- innovative and entrepreneurial thinking and reasoning;
- effective communication skills;
- ability to persuade others;
- teamwork and dealing with uncertainty.

### **1. Marketing leadership in tourism**

In accordance with the understanding of leadership, the following conditions for marketing leadership can be derived (Stereov 2018):

- There is a clearly defined marketing organization with clear and comprehensible basic duties and responsibilities for each individual, as well as clearly defined key knowledge and skills needed to perform the tasks specific to each employee or worker in the creation, production and sales of products.

- There is a highly motivated sales team that is a partner both to users and to all other units and individuals in the company's organization.

- There is a clearly defined and built business culture that is based on a defined and understandable added value of products for consumers. As a part of the business culture, the adopted orientation of the company's personnel for each position in the organizational structure towards knowledge and understanding of the company's position in the market and corresponding creation of aspiration, resp. internal motive, not only to preserve it, but also to steadily improve it.

Following the above, the literature review reveals that several studies have validated individual traits or their combination regarding the positive influence of leadership and leaders in different sub-sectors of the tourism business. There must be leaders in the tourism industry. Evaluating the choice to assess the many sub-elements of leadership in the tourism sector without classifying each department – from the front desk to the kitchen – is the first step towards creating a thorough assessment technique.

Thus, according to Brown, M. E., Treviño, L. K., & Harrison, D. A. (2005), one of the earliest definitions of ethical marketing leadership in tourism is “demonstrating normatively appropriate behavior through personal actions and interpersonal relationships and promoting such behavior among followers through two-way communication, reinforcement and decision-making”. These are the traits of moral leadership. A component of several leadership paradigms, including servant leadership and transformational leadership, is seen as ethical leadership. Behavioral patterns lead to the development of critical thinking, benevolence, moral attachment, moral management, and effective two-way communication.

Evaluating the literature, the following list of important character traits of the marketing leader in tourism can be derived. Based on Iliev et al. (2015), Sterev, N. (2023) the following attributes of recognized marketing leadership qualities in the tourism industry can be identified:

- Charm: It inspires people to get work done and achieve their goals by radiating good energy.

- Ability to inspire – encourages workers to strive for excellence and demonstrates admiration and respect for them; offers fair evaluations and appropriate recognition of partners' efforts based on the types of recognition they value.

– Communicativeness: the ability to communicate comprehensibly, openly and sympathetically while emphasizing the 'important stuff' and the emotions of others. makes everything so confusing that it's easy to understand.

– Positivity: He is kind to his colleagues, maintains friendly relations, earns their trust, is loyal, gives thanks for a job well done on time, radiates positivity and encourages future leaders.

– Building and maintaining workplace relationships by mentoring and encouraging colleagues, finding solutions to problems, maintaining a happy atmosphere and respecting individual differences. This is not the place to spread gossip.

– Building trust: He earns the trust of colleagues by constantly demonstrating his sincerity, openness and consideration for others.

– Will: to have the motivation to keep in mind the goals of the organization and to get rid of unsuitable people; a successful group needs dedicated members.

– Decisiveness: shows calmness and poise under pressure, makes bold but controversial choices, acts with precision and shows composure.

– Influence: the ability to persuade; to gather like-minded people and like-minded people for the fulfillment of duties. A manager who is also a marketer.

– Accountability and responsibility: acceptance of personal responsibility, consideration of possible risks and delegation of responsibilities to partners. The leader ensures that every duty is completed once assigned.

## **2. Applied aspects of marketing leadership in tourism**

Many people think that marketing is a battle between products. A large part of marketing specialists, even teachers, have the illusory thinking that if their product is of better quality, sooner or later they will be the first on the market.

But such an objective reality does not exist in marketing. In the world of marketing, there is only the "perception" of tourists, customers, buyers, patients, etc. Marketing is the most direct way to enter the perception of the tourist (customer) so that he is ready to exchange his wealth and money for your service or product. Marketing is a targeted approach to future success, and the future is coming fast.

Every truth is relative, for you it is one thing, for others it is another, as many people live on this wonderful earth and there are as many opinions. When you say I'm right and you're wrong, the other person thinks that way. We humans think we perceive things better than others. This is how our psyche is constructed.

Humans perceive everything with our own perceptions, and marketing is precisely the manipulation of these perceptions. It is wrong to think that the product is the hero of the marketing program or the manufacturer will win or lose depending on the quality of the manufactured product, but it is not so, if it were so, Chinese goods would not conquer the world markets. And what comes out is that the world's way of marketing a given service or product is wrong.

But if we study how perceptions are formed, then we will build the right marketing strategies. In tourism marketing it is important to know that we are all born with a sense of importance embedded in our DNA, it is in this direction that we must build our marketing strategies according to this penetration.

Everyone on planet earth sees the world through their own eyes, whether they are hoteliers, distributors, students, etc. A perception that exists in the mind is often taken as the absolute truth. Humans believe that we are always right. At least in your own mind.

The perception of a given service, of a given tourist region or a cultural-historical place is based on our expected perceptions before we visit it. For example, Perperikon, Utrobata, Patmos, Kardzhali dam, lead the ranking of the most visited cultural places in the Kardzhali region. What determines which area we will visit is what tourists who have visited that area think, the Womb, etc.

Marketing is a battle of people's perceptions and how to feel important. For example, the cultural and historical areas are the same, but the visitors from Sofia and Varna are more than those from Plovdiv and Stara Zagora, even though they are closer to these destinations. The answer is simple, the upbringing of the people of Sofia and the people of Varna is that they like it there more than the cafe in front of their house. There they feel appreciated and significant.

**Contemporary marketing in tourism is a battle of perceptions, not products. Marketing is a process of handling these perceptions!**

Some restaurant executives think marketing is a battle of tastes, but they're wrong. One believes what one wants to believe, because you first decide to visit a tourist site, to try some local cuisine, only after you have visited that place you first heard, then you visited that place. Everyone's taste buds are different, like fingerprints.

Darwin's theory of natural selection is extremely important to understand in depth for building marketing strategies in the tourism sector and beyond. In humans, natural selection is achieved through thought. They determine in what environment we want, with whom we want, where we want, what we want and why we want it.

Oftentimes, our perceptions are shaped by a foreign influence on reality. This is exactly where tourism marketing comes in, to turn every tourist visiting the ancient fortress of Patmos into an advertising transmitter to shape the perceptions of subsequent visitors, their friends, colleagues, etc. I recently watched a program where our spa resorts were compared to those in Austria and Switzerland.

According to the advertisements, our ski slopes and facilities were ranked first by tourists. Do you believe this? I do not. But it doesn't matter because marketing is a battle of perceptions, not of products or destinations. And only 10% if they believe our ski resorts will increase their income by 10%.

The most powerful weapon in marketing is to have a word in the mind of the customer, tourist, etc. Turn a given service into a household name, eg “Golden Sands”, “Sunny Beach”. In the same place there is a beautiful sun, and in another. amazing beach, that's the trick of marketing. To be leading or first in a given category in the mind, perception of the tourist.

**One believes with one's thoughts!**

A policy aimed at reaching the heart of the user (tourist, client, patient) in the fastest and timeliest way, which sets him up, predisposes him to change his perception in a positive direction towards your product, service, is called “Marketing”. But we must realize one thing that individual people have different preferences, therefore marketing for different age groups should include different satisfying needs of the targeted groups.

The main marketing message is that: **Tourism is healing, attraction, entertainment, learning. Tourism is an emotion of ultimate satisfaction.**

The difference between a diamond and coal is the temper and the pressure you put them under. At high temperatures, coal turns into diamond. It is the same with people management as well as marketing in the tourism enterprise. In the tourism sector, the tourist comes to the specific area or hotel, etc.

And not the hotel next to the tourist, therefore the information about your hotel is always secondary. One believes what one wants to believe. He likes the taste of what he wants to like. Tourism marketing is a battle of perceptions, and what makes the battle even more difficult is that when visiting, the tourist very often makes a decision that is based on someone else's perceptions.

Who has visited this area before him in this case of almost 80% colleagues, instead of using their own impressions, they trust someone else. This, colleagues, is the principle called "everyone knows" that the restaurant “Meattsa” makes the best steaks and beef tenderloin. Very often the decision to visit a geographical region is precisely because someone else has been there before us. Peer marketing is a struggle of perceptions and the products or locales we see or have.

If we want to manipulate people's minds, come up with a word easy to remember, come up with words easy to remember, come up with short and easy to remember names for your products and everything you produce. Etc. Bijou, Apple, Meattsa – Yadreya, etc. All names that are easy to remember and with exact location for places that are preferred by many people.

The most successful names and words for naming tourist sites are simple and focused on a given quality. Regardless of the complexity of a product or location. Regardless of the needs of the market, the job of marketing in the long term in the field of tourism is to concentrate on a simple, easily remembered name or a single quality. Then the halo effect kicks in.

If you advertise your restaurant as cozy - the customer attributes several other qualities to you, such as warm, clean, etc. The job of marketing colleagues is to have a say in the minds of tourists, customers, patients and for everyone using your travel services. This is an important part of my insights into making a region more preferred than another with almost the same geographic characteristics.

### Conclusion

One of the most effective strategies that has recently developed in tandem with the advent of new technologies is undoubtedly marketing. According to this perspective, according to the analyzed literature, leadership behavior and marketing practices are closely related.

This relationship becomes much more apparent when discussing industry where the performance of businesses in the area, such as the tourism industry, directly affects people and their daily interactions. On this basis, tourism marketing is the philosophy and psychology of targeting the tourist's thoughts and preferences.

But one thing we must remember, unlike other economic sectors, here it is the person who has to overcome the distance to the tourist destination and that is the beauty of the sector. We have to know and whatever marketing strategies we use, and whatever is advertised, in the end we have to know that we have to meet the tourist face to face.

Then the truth will shine, so it is advisable to be genuine and full of “Empathy” in marketing and advertising. **Marketing leadership in tourism is management of personal perceptions of managers, employees and customers, not management of the tourism product!**

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