

## DESTINATION MARKETING- OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

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Destination Marketing is all about enhancing the image of a tourist destination which results into increase in number of visitors and revenue of a country. It is an integrated and long term approach dealing with the marketing and brand building of tourist destinations. . Every Destination is a place but every place is not a destination. Over the coming decade the destination marketers are likely to be facing greater challenges which may impact on the future marketing of destinations. This paper is an attempt to sum up the techniques of “destination marketing” by which destinations can leverage benefits in form of destination popularity & visitors. Covering the challenges facing for destination branding we will end up with listing of all opportunities lying beside.

Keywords: Destination, Marketing, Branding, Tourists

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## Introduction

Destination marketing is process of making the places available for a person hypothetically before his/her actual travel to that place. Destination marketing is communicating with probable visitors for enhancement of their destination selection, desire to travel & planning to reach their final destination. It is showcasing the values & attraction of a particular place by communicating the desiring travellers. Destination marketing is directly influenced by the tourism policies, development & delivery of destination products as well as services. It's a truth that things on exhibition are more prone to sale and same rule applies on destination marketing. Creating the image of a destination in someone's mind which forces him/her to travel to that place is real destination marketing. Making a good image in someone's mind is product of deep knowledge as well understanding of particular place. Destination branding improves the countries revenues and consequently the growth of country by attracting more visitors to particular place. Developing country like India is a potential country for destination branding as deserts are converted to destination in a decade only. Diversification of various cultures, languages, traditions make India as one of most favorable country for global travellers.

Destination popularity can spark the fire of development of local people by increase of opportunities, business & earnings of that area. Uniform distribution of destinations becomes a vital reason for overall growth of a country. Global destination marketing gives presence & popularities on international level.

## Objectives

1. To understand about the destination marketing mix by which a place can be converted into a destination.
2. To highlight the techniques of destination marketing, which can increase the extent of tourism at a particular place.
3. To study & analyze the various opportunities & challenges of destination marketing.

## Requirements of a place to become a destination

“Every destination is a place but every place is not a destination”

A place can be just a place for person “A”, but a dream destination for person “B”. Finding the right destinations is integral part of destination marketing. A place can become a destination by

offering a complete package of attraction, facilities, accessibility, safety and services. An eye attracts the “change” from daily routine. Traveller residing near an iceberg will strive to feel the heat of desert but person living in desert is fed up of high temperature. Creating an opportunity for converting a place into destination is core strength of destination marketing.

### **Destination marketing Mix**

Destination marketing survives on basic “four –R” technique. “R”ight person at “R”ight time at “R”ight place by “R”ight way.

#### **“R”ight person**

Approaching a right person gives you suitable jump for major hurdle. Person having a pet tiger will never go out in a zoo to see showcased tiger. Diversification of culture in India gives birth to diversification of travellers. Understanding the need of traveller is important to find right traveller to be approached. Generally, trend and desire to see new places changes from person to person. Analyzing the trend correctly is second hurdle to get cross over. A traveller is understood as a person who is having different expectations from destinations. They seek values like fun, relaxation, knowledge, passion, satisfaction and many more. Showcasing the required value to the right person is core technique of destination branding & popularity.

#### **“R”ight Time**

Approaching a right person at right time makes the winning combination. Tasteless fruit can become a tempting food if consumed during hunger. A place can be a destination during some prescribed time for a person but is just a place during the other part of the year. Right time signifies, when traveller is seeking the expected value from destination travelling. Factors like weather, vacations, safety etc. are major driving factors to decide right time for travel.

#### **“R”ight Place**

Analyzing the value expected from travel will take you to the right place of traveller. Traveller will strive for things which are in scarcity in his/her area and getting that thing will make the place “right” for right traveller. Expected value can only be sufficed from right place.

#### **“R”ight Way**

Getting the right person at right time at right place in a right way is finally hitting the nail.

## **Techniques of Destination Marketing**

A place can be promoted as a destination by adopting various techniques. These techniques are helpful in promoting the tourism both at the national and international level.

### **Design the right mix of destination marketing**

As explained earlier the four “R” technique of destination marketing mix can promote the tourism. Understanding the needs and desires of traveler will give the right place by right way at right time.

### **Setting attractive incentives for current and potential buyers**

Getting something extra (incentives) gives you higher satisfaction. Incentives give motivation to do something. It can be in terms of cost discounts to make a travel more economical. Various private & public organizations are providing various incentives or benefits for availing their facilities or marketing their product which indirectly doing the destination branding.

### **Delivering a place’s products and services in an efficient way**

Tourists travel to some place to gain destination products & destination services. Providing these services in a better way makes their travel memorable & they will be willing to come back & refer the services to their friends & families. Providing licensed travel guides are one of good example for this type of destination marketing.

### **Promoting the place value and image**

Today is world of communication & media. A destination can be promoted to all parts of globe using media. Making own websites showing the better part of a place, sending emails for various seasons, travel packages, adventures available, demo photographs etc. can make your focused place in front of every eye.

### **Assure the basic services and infrastructure**

Destination shall be equipped with various basic services as well as shall have proper infrastructure. All basic services like safe accommodation, hygienic food, bearable climate & other services like helplines & emergency services shall be easily available for new & frequent travellers. Services shall be flexible enough to absorb individual needs.

### **Communicate the improved features**

Nothing is perfect in this world & there is always a scope of improvement. Have feedback from various users/tourists that has experienced to travel the place before & try to improve the place in

terms of products & services. Communicating the implementation of improvements through social media or by any other internet services complete the process actually.

### **Destination Themes**

Presenting your product in a particular way becomes your theme. Different themes make more excitement in someone's mind. Perfect examples are state tourism like Gujarat Tourism, Madhya Pradesh Tourism etc. India's national tourism theme "incredible India" has successfully attracted the various global tourists.

### **Challenges & Opportunities of Destination marketing**

An achieved challenge is an opportunity. Destination marketing can be structured in following challenges cum opportunities:

#### **Traveler**

Creating new travellers is biggest challenge & once achieved is a biggest opportunity. Creating desire in someone to explore the destinations is called traveller creation. Making a tempting image in someone's mind can ignite the spark of travel. Assurance of getting expected value from a particular destination will drive the person to reach its final destination.

#### **Destination**

Making a traveller aware about his desired destination is another important challenge. Communicating with travellers by advertising the destination products & services will realize travellers about destination. Tourism organization can play a vital role in creating destination for new as well as existing travellers. Providing comprehensive & integrated facility to a place can attract people from the globe.



Pivot of Destination marketing revolves around these opportunities/challenges

### **Value potential**

Creating a potential of desired value in a destination attracts the tourist. A destination sufficing the diversified values attracts diversified tourists. Realizing all the values like fun, relaxation, knowledge, adventure etc. in a destination count the value potential.

### **Accessibility**

Accessibility to desired destination makes more tourists. The world of technology & communication has made many unknown places as destinations. Providing integrated packages including all facilities like travel tickets, accommodation, fooding etc. has made easy access of global tourists to desired destinations. Tourists can get assured of all the required facilities before start of their travel.

### **Competition between facility providers**

Today is world of competition. Every facility needs to be competitive for survival. India has emerging market of travel modes & tourism packages. Everything comes with a cost so is for

getting to the desired destination. During last half a decade, there is fare war of airlines for getting maximum travellers. Many travel agencies got birth during last one decade in India. Ultimately these price wars make the traveller as beneficial party.

### **Innovation and diversification of tourism products**

Tourists are diversified in respect of diversified value they are looking for. Some people travel for fun, some for adventure and some for education, relaxation, vacation and many more. Innovating new products for travellers will attract more travellers & will enhance the place branding.

### **Partnership between public and private sector**

Major destinations belong to public sector organizations. Today is world of privatization to make it economical & organized. Joint venture of various public & private organizations can make the products & services available to travellers in an effect way.

### **New Technologies**

New technologies of communication like mobile apps, pre-bookings, clubbing of services etc. makes a travel easier.

### **Conclusion**

Concluding the above discussion, it can be said that a place can become a destination with the help of appropriate marketing strategies and techniques of destination marketing. By providing the right mix of destination marketing the extent of tourism can be increased. There are many challenges in the way of destination marketers but those can be converted into opportunities by adopting the appropriate techniques of destination marketing. Established network of communication has played a vital role in connecting the people worldwide. Marketing organizing committees such as state tourism organizations, private facility provider & other destination managing organizations can play a major role to manage the tourism of respective area, which can make “feel like home” factor, though you are mile away from your home. State tourism like “Gujarat tourism” & national themes like “Incredible India” has attracted the tourists a lot. Keep Travelling.

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