

CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE JORDANIAN TOURISM INDUSTRY (CMP): EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT

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Abstract: This study evaluates the Crisis Management Plan (CMP) for the Jordanian tourism industry, based upon opinions of managers and policy makers in the Jordanian tourism industry. The study focuses upon those outcomes of the evaluation process that provide additional insights into the details of tourism crisis management. These insights provide a foundation for elaborating on, and refining, the CMP for the Jordanian tourism industry. The study involves an overview of the methodological issues relating to the evaluation process together with its criteria. The Crisis Management Plan (CMP) for Jordanian tourism industry is also presented. Positive and negative views of managers and policy makers within the industry about this plan are also presented.

The result of this study suggests that although the CMP for the Jordanian tourism industry involves responses and reactions of managers and policy makers in terms of one-off events, a strategic marketing approach to deal with the negative impact of the ongoing political crises in the Middle East should be identified by introducing a marketing and promotional approach for improving Jordan's image as a truly safe destination for tourists and for repairing image during and after a negative occurrence.

Key Words: - Crisis Management, Strategic Management, Marketing Approach, Jordan and The Middle East.

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1. Introduction

Unfortunately, the world continues to be a dangerous place and the tourism industry continues to be one of the most sensitive and affected industries when it comes to instability or crisis (Beirman 2003; Glaesser 2005). Crises have a considerable negative impact upon the tourism industry. Tourism crises are never identical, meaning that it is difficult for managers and policy makers within the tourism industry to alleviate the negative impact of crises without forward planning.

The literature review indicates that there are many different types of crisis which impact upon tourism. These include natural disasters such as earthquakes, tornadoes, volcanic eruptions and floods. Other crises (which often have more negative impacts) are instigated by humans; these include terrorism, war, religious/ political unrest and crime (Burnett 1998; Sonmez 1998). The dramatic effect that these crises have upon the tourism industry is almost incalculable. Recovery after their occurrence is often due to good public relations and the efficiency of a particular tourist board, as well as good relationships between the public and private sectors. Managers and policy makers in the tourism industry have to plan ahead before, during and after a crisis, to help them face and overcome its effects. Crisis management must be treated as a process rather than a one-shot operation. This involves two types of countermeasures in terms of timing. First, there are those measures taken all through the crisis cycle. Secondly, there are measures taken during the early, mid and post-crisis periods (Kash and Darling 1998).

The literature review suggested that, generally, it is easier to recover from natural disasters/crises because, as a rule, these are single occurrences and there is unity in the community when dealing with them. For example, after the Izmit Earthquake in Turkey in 1999 there was a quick recovery and tourism numbers soon returned to normal. Crises caused by humans, which are usually conflict related, create warfare and terrorism situations which are sudden and unpredictable. However, it is always difficult to assess a situation immediately after a crisis and there has to be a great deal of time and effort spent on alleviating the anxiety of all people directly or indirectly affected. It is a major challenge to facilitate a return to at least partial normality and to rebuild tourism revenue.

The literature review suggests that crisis management is the key to speedy recovery, whether the situation is instigated by natural or human elements. Previous research suggests a need to explore possible solutions and preventative measures for dealing with crises. Although many earlier studies advocate the necessity of crisis management, few have taken up the challenge to develop strategy. There are studies of war, crime and other natural disasters in a tourism context but, again, they fail to develop management strategies (see Henderson, 2003 & Sonmez, 1998). It is highly questionable whether these works shed sufficient light on our current understanding of how tourism can be protected from crises.

To summarise, a review of the literature of crisis management in the tourism industry reveals the following gaps (Ritchie 2004; Henderson 2003 and Sonmez, 1998):

1. Case study approaches are needed to test models and concepts surrounding crisis management in the tourism industry.
2. The relationship between political instability, including terrorism, and the tourism industry needs more investigation and explanation.
3. Consideration is required of the extent to which political violence influences destination image and how the mass media contribute to the development of destination image.
4. Need for understanding how image can be repaired after a negative occurrence, especially when accompanied by media scrutiny.
5. A phenomenological approach is needed to explore the attitudes and opinions of managers in the public and private tourism sector towards crisis management.

The first gap will be examined in this study in the context of a tourism crisis in Jordan. The major challenge for the Jordanian tourism industry is to overcome the misconception that Jordan is unsafe due to its geopolitical location.

Policy makers within the Jordanian tourism industry have recognised the importance and the need for tourism crisis management plan only after the three Amman bombs in November 2005. Fortunately, no tourists were involved in the attacks and damage to the tourism sector was limited, according to the Jordan Tourism Board (JTB), to a downturn in arrivals for the last part

of the year. Policy makers recognised that, after the deadly hotel bombings on 9 November 2005, the tourism sector recovered more quickly and easily than expected. However, tourism professionals recognized that a second terrorist incident could cause much more damage and undermine the nation's image as a safe destination, particularly if foreign tourists were involved. Therefore, representatives of the tourism sector from both the public and private sectors met with two consultants from the World Tourism Organization (WTO) on 6 July 2006 to discuss the need for a crisis management plan and to conduct a simple risk analysis for Jordan (JTB, 2006).

The next section will briefly explain the CMP for the Jordanian tourism industry, in order to evaluate its feasibility.

2. Crisis Management Plan for the Jordanian tourism industry (CMP)

The main aspects for the CMP emerging from policy makers who developed the plan are presented as follows (JTB, 2006):

2.1. Objectives

The objective of the CMP was to create the safest possible experience for visitors to Jordan through a coordinated and efficient approach to managing crises that might affect the tourism sector. This CMP adheres to the following basic principles:

- Timely actions should be taken to limit potential crisis situations by the crisis management team.
- Define roles, visions and responsibilities for the crisis management team.
- A top priority should be tourist safety.
- Widespread and reliable channels of communication.
- Timely, accurate and transparent communication about the crisis.
- A partnership approach with the private sector to recover from the crisis.

The CMP acknowledged the importance of leadership in good crisis management. To spearhead preparedness activities and the crisis response, the CMP involved an immediate response team, which meets regularly in non-crisis times and is convened immediately in case of a crisis. The immediate response team meets in the operations room of the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (MOTA). Each member of the crisis unit is assigned specific areas of responsibility to be carried out in the preparatory and response phases.

2.2. Risk analysis

According to the CMP, the first step of being prepared for a crisis involves identifying the type of risks that are most likely to occur in Jordan and analyzing the potential these types of incidents have to disrupt tourism activity. Nevertheless, as part of the process of assessing the likelihood and consequences of identified risks, the CMP noted that even a relatively minor incident, such as a bus crash, can blow up into a public crisis depending upon the quantity of media coverage and several other factors, including (JTB, 2006):

- *Number of people involved:* the greater the number, the bigger the crisis.
- *Age of the people involved:* the media are far more aggressive in reporting stories that affect children.
- *Nationality of people involved:* the media covers stories affecting their own nationals much more heavily than reporting on victims from other countries.
- *Nature of incident:* any incident following on from a similar recently reported incident, however coincidental, is more likely to attract attention than if it had been an isolated event.
- *Visibility:* in the age of portable video and digital cameras, graphic pictures of an incident site can be transmitted around the world within minutes.

Table 1-1 shows Jordan risk ranking according to the (JTB, 2006).

Table 1-1: Jordan Risk Ranking

	Chance of Occurring	Tourism Impact	Total Score
Environmental			
Earthquake	2.7	2.9	5.6
Chemical Spill	2.1	2.6	4.7
Widespread flooding	2.1	2.1	4.4
Wildfires	1.7	1.9	3.6
Oil Spill	1.7	1.8	3.5
Deadly heat wave	1.5	1.9	3.4
Wild animal attack	1.6	1.7	3.3
Red tide or similar	1.0	2.0	3.0
Geopolitical			
Terrorism (involving tourists)	3.4	4.4	7.7
Another hotel bombing	3.1	4.4	7.5
Terrorism, (not involving tourists)	3.6	3.7	7.3
Spillover attacks from in neighbouring countries	2.7	3.5	6.2
Attack on political figure	2.2	2.7	5.1
Rioting / Civil unrest	1.9	2.8	4.7
Societal			
Deadly bus accident	3.3	3.0	6.3
Avian Flu	2.7	3.1	5.8
Plane crash	2.4	3.3	5.7
Hotel fire	2.8	2.7	5.5
Disease (not avian flu)	2.2	2.6	4.8
Cruise ship accident	1.8	2.8	4.6
Adventure sports accident	2.4	2.2	4.6
Crime wave	1.7	2.4	4.1

Source: (JTB, 2006).

The purpose of this exercise, according to the CMP, was to increase awareness about the types of potential crises that would demand attention from the immediate response team. It also underscored the need to match the level of crisis response to the severity of the crisis. For example, while a chemical spill was rated quite likely to occur, it was recognized that as a domestic accident it would not likely have much impact upon tourism.

While terrorism tops the list of potential tourism crises, it ranked relatively low on “chance of occurring” indicating the great confidence that tourism professionals have in public security measures already in place. It is worth noting that other types of incidents are also recognized as potentially harmful to the tourism sector, particularly transport accidents and avian flu according to the CMP.

2.3. Readiness

The main objectives of this part of the CMP are to ensure that tourism facilities in Jordan are as safe as humanly possible and to ensure that relationships and communication systems are in place so that important messages can be relayed efficiently in a crisis situation.

The CMP recommended that the MOTA is required to set up an emergency operations room or "op center". This part of the CMP also involves a safety and security readiness strategy as well as a communications readiness strategy.

Table 1-2 shows the readiness checklist in the CMP for the Jordanian tourism industry.

Table 1-2: Readiness checklist

Administration

1. Set up and equip operations room
2. Secure endorsement of crisis plan at highest level of government.
3. Train spokespersons and crisis unit in media communications.
4. Rehearse crisis management plan.

Safety and Security

5. Hold face-to-face meetings with public safety and health agencies.
6. Review safety standards and upgrade where needed.
7. Meet with embassy officials from important generating markets.
8. Add tourist safety advice to website.

Communications

9. Update databases of local and international media and travel trade.
10. Assess adequacy of telephone and computer communications equipment.
11. Prepare simple, low-resolution map that can be inserted into news releases.
12. Add media section to website.
13. Prepare "dark page" on website for use in emergencies.
14. Organise seminar on tourism for local media.
15. Meet with telecom to determine emergency hotline set-up

Source: (JTB, 2006)

2.4. Response

There are two key objectives to the crisis response according to the CMP. First, to take care of affected tourists, some of the required services will be provided by national emergency agencies, while others are the responsibility of the MOTA and the private industry. The second objective is

to immediately activate a two-way communications system to gather information and convey the appropriate messages to tourism partners and the public.

A series of step-by-step actions have been identified in this part of the CMP to put the immediate response team into crisis mode. The main steps and their actions are presented in Table 1-3 below.

Table 1-3: Steps of a crisis and actions required

Steps of a crisis	Actions required
<u>Hour: 1</u>	Minister decides to go into crisis mode, coordinator calls members of immediate response team for meeting; the team meets to discuss level of severity and which measures to take, initial statement drafted by the JTB communications department, hotel association makes phone inquiries to hotels or other tourism facilities in the vicinity of the disaster, and the JTB gather all related information and alerts representative offices abroad by telephone.
<u>Hour: 2</u>	The immediate crisis team holds second meeting to share information 1 to 2 hours later and organize any immediate victim assistance that is needed, such as transport, accommodation or food. The JTB communication department begins compiling a written version of all facts known about the crisis to be used as a script for the hotline and a fact sheet for communication with overseas offices and foreign embassies.
<u>Hour: 3</u>	The JTB calls back representative offices and major foreign tour operators to brief manager on crisis and what is being done. Fact sheet is sent to representation offices, Jordanian embassies and Jordan Information Bureaus. Staff called in to work hotline.
<u>Before end of day 1</u>	News conference held with the Ministry of Tourism and private sector leaders to express concern/sympathy for victims and explain what is being done to end crisis. Media centre set up at crisis scene (if needed). Full news release drafted and sent to local and international media, travel trade, overseas representative offices and foreign embassies.
<u>Day 2 and beyond</u>	Additional emergency funding from government is requested (if needed). Daily meeting of the immediate response team are held, followed by briefings for staff members and email or telephone communications to overseas representative offices and foreign embassies. Regular media briefings are held and media is advised when the next one will take place. WTO is contacted for support and assistance. A joint public-private "Tourism Recovery Group" is convened to plan recovery actions.

Source: Produced by the researcher based on the CMP, 2006.

2.5. Recovery

While media attention may quickly and easily shift to the next crisis in a different part of the world, repairing the damage caused by a tourism disaster requires immense effort. There is often physical damage to repair, but far more insidious are the lingering negative perceptions left behind in the minds of potential tourists. Overcoming these negative perceptions requires a redoubling of promotion and communications, which in turn require additional resources, both human and financial. Four different strategic lines should be applied when devising a tourism recovery policy: product, price, communication and promotion. A successful recovery plan to restore previous levels of tourism activity as soon as possible following an emergency will depend upon the appropriate and balanced combination of these four lines, according to the (JTB, 2006).

3. Evaluation Methodology

According to Faulkner and Vikulov (2001) there are four effective contributors in terms of evaluation and assessment: historical data, research data, expert opinion and comparison with similar or other cases. This research adopted a qualitative approach to explore the opinions of managers and policy makers toward crisis management in the tourism industry, around twenty open interviews were conducted with individual tourism policy makers and managers and representatives of key organisations in order to evaluate and assess the CMP for the Jordanian tourism industry. The evaluation process for the CMP therefore will be based upon the qualitative data emerging from the key representative organizations within the Jordanian tourism industry. The main aim of this process is to evaluate the feasibility of the CMP as a strategy for alleviating the impact of crises in upon tourism in Jordan. This evaluation process involves two objectives. These are:

- To identify the main strengths and weaknesses of the CMP.
- To gain insights into how managers and policy makers evaluate and assess the CMP in terms of its feasibility for dealing with and managing tourism crises in Jordan. .

To summarise, due to the lack of qualitative research in the area of crisis management in the tourism industry, the researcher has adopted a qualitative approach that enables him to generate a series of accounts of how managers and policy makers in the tourism industry understand and interpret the impact of crises, and how, based upon their understanding and interpretation of crisis management, an evaluation and assessment approach to crisis planning and management for the Jordanian tourism industry has been emerged . A qualitative approach is more likely to reveal new insights and validity statements in the field of crisis management through the construction of social realities via the interpretation processes of individuals. By adopting this stance the investigation is far more open to new insights and better placed to interpret the political, economical, financial, contextual and cultural factors which are influential in the development of crisis management within the tourism industry.

3.1. Justification for using Jordan as a case study

The use of Jordan as a case study description method within an interpretive approach addresses the research problem and aims and allows information to be added to crisis management knowledge. The period from 2000 to date has been characterised by serious crises in the Middle East. Moreover, the personality of the researcher is likely to influence the choice of the topic, the intellectual approach adopted and their ability in the field (Bryman, 1988, Silverman, 2001, Denzin, 1998, Stake, 2000). It is therefore important that the identity and past experiences of the researcher which provide familiarity with the topic, setting or participants, be made explicit from the outset and the possible impact on the research process explored.

Israel and the Palestinian Authority conflict, the September 11th 2001, the war on Iraq in 2003) and more recently the Arab Spring with its consequences, have had a negative impact upon the tourism demand in Jordan. Since the tourism sector has become a significant part of Jordan's national economy, the researcher hopes that this study will provide additional insight into crisis and that it will help managers and policy makers within the Jordanian tourism industry to overcome problems and plan for change.

4. Evaluation and assessment of the CMP for the Jordanian tourism industry based upon opinions of managers and policy makers in Jordan.

Participants were asked "to what extent do they believe that a strategic approach to crisis planning and management is beneficial and needed for managing a tourism crisis in Jordan"? Participants confirmed that a strategic approach to crisis planning and management is extremely beneficial for Jordanian tourism in order to alleviate the negative impact of crisis upon tourism in Jordan. The following quotations are indicative of responses:

"It is absolutely correct to be clear that a strategic approach to crisis planning and management is necessary for tourism in Jordan. This approach factors in crisis as something to be expected and planned for, rather than something of a surprise. However, a proper crisis response plan should consider all reasonable possibilities, terrorism, health (SARS), natural disaster (i.e. earthquake), and manmade disaster such as nuclear ... etc."

Matt McNulty (Adviser of Achievement of Market-Friendly Initiatives and Results Program in Jordan, Interview 16).

"Crisis management planning and capacity are critical to Jordan's tourism industry. Crisis management must focus on stemming the impact of a crisis, response to restore status, and then rebound to a growth pattern."

Ibrahim K. Osta (Senior Policy Advisor Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities Interview, 10).

Furthermore, all participants believe that a strategic approach to crisis planning and management for the Jordanian tourism industry not only has an impact on tourist arrivals, but is a critical determinant in foreign direct investments flows. The healthier tourism is, the more foreign direct investments will flow, especially now that the tourism sector is the largest source of investment capital in Jordan according to the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ, 2014). In addition, capable management of a crisis situation will enhance the reputation of Jordan's tourism sector in terms of aptitude and effectiveness. This was explained in as follows:

"A strategic approach to crisis planning and management for the Jordanian tourism industry is certainly needed because it builds a positive evenhandedness into the image of Jordan as a safe destination by virtue of the fact that Jordan has good security system. Consequently, this likely to encourage foreign investors to invest into Jordan and develop the tourism sector."

Haidar Qussous (Director of Information and Statistics Dept, MOTA, Interview 3).

Participants were asked, "Are the actions presented in the CMP suitable and feasible for dealing with a tourism crisis in Jordan"? All participants agreed that the actions are logical for dealing with a short tourism crisis in Jordan:

"The actions are correct and logical to be used by managers and policy makers in Jordan for alleviating the negative impacts of short crises upon tourism in Jordan."

David Symes (Sales and Marketing Manager for the JTB in London, Interview 1).

According to Evans (2003), a strategic option is suitable and feasible if it will enable the policy makers in the organization to achieve their strategic objectives. A strategy might be regarded as suitable and feasible if it:

- Exploits opportunities in the environment and avoids threats.
- Capitalizes on an organization's strengths and avoids or addresses weaknesses.
- Addresses the expectations of key stakeholder groups.

Building upon these criteria, all participants believed that the CMP presented above was logical and suitable for dealing with short tourism crises in Jordan. Although participants criticized some of the tools presented under some actions, they were generally satisfied with the whole structure of the CMP.

However, discussions of this concluded that Jordan as a tourist destination has been negatively affected by the ongoing political crisis in the Middle East and that the major challenge for managers and policy makers within the tourism industry is to overcome misconceptions and alleviate fears that Jordan may be unsafe due to its geopolitical location, not only for dealing with a short tourism crises as has been presented in the CMP.

For the evaluation purposes, participants were asked "do they believe that the CMP should involve the ongoing political crisis in the Middle East as a main negative factor upon tourism in Jordan"? All participants agreed that the ongoing political crises in the Middle East should be considered as the main factor that has had a negative impact upon tourism in Jordan. Participants

also recognised the importance of other factors (i.e. terrorism, natural disasters and so on). This was indicated as follows:

The plan introduced risk analysis based on the situation analysis for tourism in Jordan as well as Jordan risk ranking. Risk analysis when you prepare for the crisis situation is essential step in order to dealing and managing the crisis successfully.”

David Symes (Sales and Marketing Manager for the JTB in London, Interview 1).

The majority of participants said that although the CMP has taken into consideration the negative impact of political crisis in the Middle East upon tourism in Jordan, but has not suggested a strategic approach for dealing with its negative impacts. For example, spill over attacks from conflicts in neighbouring countries has ranked 6.3 out of 10 (see figure 1-1), a high ranking. Although terrorism and hotel bombings were ranked more than the negative impact from the conflicts in neighbouring countries, the majority of participants believe that the reason behind these activities which have taken or might take place in the future are mainly because of the ongoing political crises in the Middle East either directly or indirectly.

Nevertheless, participants pointed out that in order to deal with the negative impact of crisis upon tourism in Jordan, tourism crises should be classified before managing and dealing with their negative impacts. Therefore, the CMP must distinguish between the negative impact of one-off events and the negative impact of the ongoing political crisis in the Middle East. Different methods and techniques should be developed to managing both types of crisis. For the long term crisis (ongoing political crises in the Middle East), marketing and promotional approaches must be suggested to deal with each level of the crisis, for the one-off event (terrorism, natural disasters, and so on), the CMP was developed in Jordan is sufficient.

Some participants also believe that dealing with the negative impact of the ongoing political crisis upon tourism in Jordan requires entirely different methods and techniques than dealing with the one-off event. Managing the negative impact of political crisis demands increasing readiness to promote and market tourism in Jordan during the ongoing political crisis.

In terms of the proposed structure for the Crisis Management Team (CMT), nearly all of the participants agreed with the shape of the structure presented in the CMT. This was explained in the quote that follows:

“In my view all crisis must be handled by Government (the JTB can help, the MOTA can help, and may play a large role, but not in the front media line up). The reason for this is to try and avoid direct connections between crisis and tourism. I always advise and did recently that the Tourism Minister should never be the official spokesman. The Tourism Minister kicks in later and the JTB are very active, but not on the media interface until later. However, a group (committee) are certainly necessary to work on crisis planning. It should contain instructions and preferably drafts for communication. For example, a critical element in the initial response and stabilisation period is looking after people visiting and in hotels and people and those due to arrive in the immediate period. Hotels, tourist guides and the JTB have roles here as you have indicated.”

Michael Boulos (Regional Manager UK and Ireland/ Holland/ Royal Jordanian, Interview 6).

The participant also added that the proposed structure for the CMT needs to be broken down into three areas:

- “The tourism area, public and private, is one sector, which combines through the MOTA with the Minister as its head.
- The second group, and most important, are the security agencies of the state headed by Minister of the Interior. In reality these remain separate as they have information that cannot be shared, and they have high responsibility for the security of the State.
- The third group are the other Government services such as Information, Foreign Affairs... etc. This group leader is the PM and it is this group, which lead and become the public and media interface, usually through the Deputy PM.”

Michael Boulos (Regional Manager UK and Ireland/ Holland/ Royal Jordanian, Interview 6).

Another participant suggested that the CMT should include a communication department for pre-crisis preparation. This is illustrated in the quote that follows:

“A communication department pre-crisis preparation is needed and should be responsible in developing first-rate contact databases and has copy in crisis management folder. The checklist of contacts should include: Foreign tour operators and Tour operators in Jordan, Domestic media, Foreign correspondents based in Jordan, Major media in key international markets, Foreign embassies and consulates in Jordan, Jordanian hotels, Travel agencies and transport companies, Overseas representative offices, Royal Jordanian overseas offices, Jordanian embassies abroad and Jordan Information Bureaus”.

Ibrahim K. Osta (Senior Policy Advisor Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities Interview, 10).

The participant also said that the communication department for pre-crisis preparations should have communication equipment ready in place and staff members trained to work equipment when a crisis situation.

The participants were asked: "do they believe the CMP implementation listed above is suitable and feasible for dealing with short tourism crises in Jordan"? Nearly all pointed out that the options listed in the CMP implementation are feasible and that the objectives given are achievable. One of participants also suggested that:

“The implementation actions are correct. The implementation actions can also consider crisis as being in four phases:

- The immediate response period (part of first 24 hours).
- The stabilisation period (up to 3 or 4 days).
- The management period (8th day for 2/3 weeks).
- The recovery period (3rd or 4th week onwards).”

Matt McNulty (Adviser of Achievement of Market-Friendly Initiatives and Results Program in Jordan, Interview 16).

The participant also added that:

“An action portfolio can be assigned to each, setting out choices and sequences of actions. I recommend this is like a menu with mandatory actions and optional actions.”

Matt McNulty (Adviser of Achievement of Market-Friendly Initiatives and Results Program in Jordan, Interview 16).

The study yielded several other noteworthy findings. When asked how the participants compared tourism in Jordan to tourism in other countries in the Middle East, Egypt was seen as Jordan's real competitor, followed by Israel, Lebanon and Dubai. Participants in this study recommended that, in order to make tourism in Jordan more competitive compared to the other countries in the region, the Tourist Authorities in Jordan should enhance Jordan's image, brand Jordan as a boutique destination, maintain its position in current markets and enhance market intelligence. Furthermore, Jordan should diversify tourism products; for example, make available attractive and competitive Red Sea resorts, upgrade hotels services out of the capital and improve tourist services (i.e. Eco-nature parks and reserves with tourist services and standard accommodation facilities). Participants also advised that Jordan must focus on attracting high-yield visitors,

developing niche products, enhancing the visitor experience, increasing international marketing, and improving infrastructure and the regulatory environment .

Tourism advertising for Jordan was evaluated by nearly all participants as being weak. Participants pointed out that the marketing and promotional activities of the Jordan Tourism Board were inadequate. They were dissatisfied with the negative travel advice or travel tips regularly issued by the Ministries of Foreign Affairs in Western Europe and America, and suggested that positive action should be taken by the Jordanian Authorities.

Although participants believed Jordan to be a safe destination, their general perception was that it was in a very difficult geographical position, close to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and sharing borders with Iraq and Syria. However, participants pointed out that, in the international market, what counts is the perception of a destination and not necessarily its actual condition; this opens a door to press campaigns, publicity, and promotional activities destined to change that perception in the market place.

The ongoing political crises in the Middle East have continued to negatively affect the Jordanian tourism industry and the image of the country as a whole in recent years. This study indicates that the growth of Jordan's tourism industry has been subject to frequent interruptions due to the ongoing political crises in the Middle East. These crises include the on-going conflict between Israel and Arab countries, the attacks in America on September 11th 2001, the war in Iraq from 2003, the war between Lebanon and Israel in July 2006 and more recently the Arab Spring and its negative consequence through the area. These crises have filled TV screens with images of conflict but have not imparted a fair and balanced analysis that would inform a better understanding of causality, history, tolerant religious beliefs and social values. Many receiving the news do not differentiate between trouble spots close to Jordan and safe havens, such as Jordan. In the past few years, this has led to a decline in tourist arrivals, and in their receipts, according to the policy makers in Jordan.

5. Conclusion

Generally, evaluations of the CMP outlined above by managers and policy makers, indicated that the actions of the CMP are logical, suitable and feasible for dealing with short time crises might accrue in Jordan. Findings generated from the evaluations process also indicated that the CMP developed in 2006 adhered to the following fundamental principles and elements:

- The strategic approach included risk analysis to assist the stakeholders to make a correct decision when dealing with a crisis situation.
- The CMP provided a structure and method that aims to manage the crisis using existing staff from both the private and public tourism sectors as well as equipping a Crisis Management Response Centre.
- The CMP provided an efficient approach to managing and overcoming a short time crisis.
- The CMP included policies and practical actions to be carried out during and after a crisis.
- Finally, and significantly, the CMP has not defined and distinguished between the one-off event and the ongoing political crisis.

Although tourism in Jordan is faced with successive tourism crises reflecting political instability in the Middle East, this research demonstrates that Jordan does not have a especial tourism crisis management response plan to deal with unstable political situation in the Middle East. The CMP presented responses and reactions of managers and policy makers in terms of one-off events, A strategic marketing approach to deal with the negative impact of the ongoing political crises in the Middle East , therefore, should be identified by introducing a marketing and promotional approach for improving Jordan's image as a truly safe destination for tourists and for repairing image during and after a negative occurrence should be enhanced.

In conclusion, the CMP was developed by policy makers in Jordan in 2006 should be modified as a result of the evaluation process outlined above include actions for dealing with the ongoing political crises in the Middle East, the researcher, therefore, suggest that such strategy should be developed.

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