

Role of Destination Management for Responsible and Sustainable Tourism Development

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Abstract:

In recent years, Destination Management become a mainstream factor in identifying successful development of a responsible and sustainable tourism management and its perspectives for better position in highly competitive tourism industry, they are not only representing a specific destination but are also striving to community development that bring long-term benefits such as attracting more visitors, increasing the economic gains, facilitating future marketing and product development decisions, and mainly contributing to sustainable development through improving product and service quality and managing different components of tourism over the destinations. This paper discusses the roles of destination management in responsible and sustainable tourism management and their structure in relation to regional development. The destination mix elements and networking among various stakeholders being presented. It is rapidly establishing itself as a tool for sustainable development and is working hard to strengthen the links between all tourism stakeholders directly or indirectly connected to the destination management.

Key words: Destination Management, Responsible Tourism, Sustainable Tourism Development, Destination Management Organization (DMO).

Introduction:

The process of globalization and urbanization in modern world have led a number of challenges before government and destination management organizations related to sustainable tourism development and policies targeted to overcoming economic disparities, strengthening social inclusion, reducing poverty and assuring safe and quality products and healthy living environment at the tourism destinations. Tourism development is influenced by various factors as: destination management, implementation process, competitiveness, structure of various organizations, development of regional employment structure, soft

factors considering life quality. Most often tourism development is discussed in the context of rural areas as they are in poor status regarding economic and social development, which is the object of different strategies for future development. Destination development will be marked by special support measures in the field of environmental protection, sociocultural practices and raise of attractiveness through encouragement of tourist activities, employment and sustainable development. Tourism is a key sector of economic development in many countries, There are many official reports and surveys that support with numbers this statement and highlight the importance of analyses in trends influencing tourism development and it is scrutinized as an inducer of positive changes for community development in three different directions: as a conservation tool, as a social catalyst and as an income and employment opportunity. Responsible tourism is determined as “the most economically, socially and environmentally efficient approach, a real opportunity for exploiting and promoting local products and services” stimulating interest in nature, traditions and communities, respect towards environment minimizing the negative and maximizing the positive impacts through harmonization between nature and traditional living environment, unique customs and lifestyle of communities as part of the tourist attractions and Identification of tourism potentials is closely related to the achievement of destination competitiveness on tourism market and future actions should be related to promotion of tourist products within the regions, respect of principles for sustainable development, protection of natural environment, urgency of defined policy, priorities and activities.

There is an increasing interest in the destination management, as more and more places are striving to put their name on the map of the world tourism. On the other hand, tourists also become more demanding and looking for new and unique ways to experience the destinations. Moreover, different factors influences their choices, price and quality correlation; green and sustainable footprint; collaborative consumption and authentic services, etc. The demand change directly affects the marketing mix of the destination which has been slowly transforming in to experiences, Current study examines the role of destination management in sustainable tourism development through establishment comprehensive destination management. Special focus is put on the responsible and sustainable tourism, having been in rise for several years because of the special support measures undertaken by the local authorities and effectiveness of networking between stakeholders which is in the essence of destination management and marketing.

Role of Destination Management Organizations and Companies

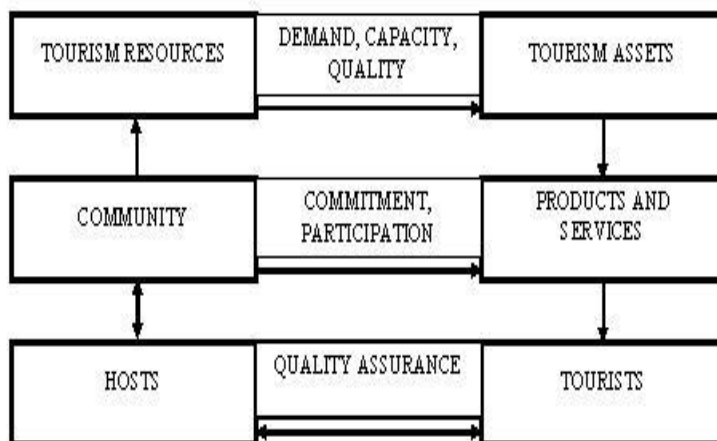
Destination management organizations are defined by the Destination management Association as organizations “charged with representing a specific destination and helping the long-term development of communities through a travel and tourism strategy” regarding the organizations as valuable for visitors, business travelers or planners especially because of the information provided and saved time and energy and they are viewed as tool for sustainable destination development, The most important point is the networking opportunities and realities bearing great benefits for all involved in the process of destination management. Destination management is the coordination and integration of all of the elements of the destination mix in a particular geographic area based upon a defined tourism strategy and plan. The destination mix elements are the attractions and events, facilities, transportation, infrastructure, and hospitality resources. In addition, destination management encompasses the image-making, branding, and marketing and communications of all that the place has to offer to tourists. Destination management organizations (DMOs) have the overall responsibility for the coordination and integration of the destination mix elements, destination marketing and management of destinations. They are scattered throughout the world and spanning many different organizational sizes and types as many DMOs are governmental departments, while others are quasi-governmental. DMO structures vary according to local practices and governmental systems. Roles of the DMO in destination management as leadership and coordination, research and planning, product development, marketing and promotion, partnerships and team-building, and community relations. The main role of a DMO consists of fulfilling marketing, promotional and sales tasks, as well as coordinating long-term destination planning and management since the consumer perceives and buys a destination as one integrated product.

The management and marketing roles DMCs are identified in tourism destinations as follows: network management organizations, organizer, community brand builder, funding agent, catalyst, advocate, tourism product developer, convener and facilitator, information provider, partner and team builder, collaboration with tourism destination stakeholders in achieving mutual benefits in management of resources, marketing of tourism products, positioning, host community well-being, brand building and tourism loyalty to destinations , Roles of destination and marketing organizations could be divided in two groups underlying the framework of such organizations and the need of good management. The fact that tourism is connected

to other sectors development (infrastructure, communications, transport, agriculture, food industry, etc.) should be carefully considered and different synergy effects from the interaction of tourism and other local industries are categorized, product synergy – local food industries offer tourist products based on existing ones and market synergy effects of tourists visiting and tasting products, and joint advertising of the place.

Destination Mix and Sustainability:

Implementation of the destination mix concept in tourism can be achieved through the use of a variety of marketing tools and techniques. Market segmentation and the marketing mix targeting appropriate matching of tourist needs with the experience being offered, and, in the case of sustainable tourism, the need for this match is particularly important. Tourism organizations need to give greater consideration to segmenting their market with a view to concentrating on those categories of visitor that are not only economically attractive, but are also likely to be susceptible to messages aimed at encouraging them to adopt sustainable behaviors. The targeting of inappropriate tourists not only jeopardizes business objectives because the needs of inappropriate tourists will not be met, but also may cause environmental damage or act insensitively towards a tourism development. Moreover, there are important components of destination mix must be managed effectively and efficiently viz; Human resource development, Destination marketing communication, Finance and budgeting management, Destination positioning and branding, Safety, security and crisis, Management of tourism assets, attractions management and sustainability , Politics (government, non-governmental organizations, community relations and industrial relationships), policy and destination strategy, Service quality, tourist experience and customer's relationship management, Monitoring service quality, standards and destination performance management and development and management of tourism products. So, that clearly mean destination mix is the only tool for responsible and sustainable tourism development at any destination, without proper integration of various components of destination mix , we cannot imagine about responsible and sustainable tourism development.



Destination Mix Plovdiv

Conclusion:

To visualize any destination as responsible and sustainable in today's world is difficult to imagine. Even after great efforts, cannot prevent people to travel as they need all kinds of assistance from tourism service providers to make their trip not only hassle free, but also a lifelong experience. One side there is existence of opportunities for tourists to continue visiting destinations in future, while on the other hand, service providers may have more urgency rather than quality. Frankly speaking, nobody wants popular destinations to disappear, therefore continuous education programs, more sensitive environmentally aware attitudes and the adoption of long-term perspectives towards tourism resources rather than exploitation them,. It is also important to recognize that tourists are now well educated and are competent to select products and destinations that are not creating undue problems to them and would have better experience. Moreover, it is the responsibility of each one who is associated with the tourism directly or indirectly to ensure responsible and sustainable tourism development over the destinations in all means, not creating any negative impact on environment and societies.

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