



TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN MAHARASHTRA: MARKETING APPROACHES

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ABSTRACT

The tourism industry in Maharashtra may thank the state's wealth of natural beauty, historical sites, and cultural activities for its success. There is a lot of opportunity for growth in the tourist industry in Maharashtra. This article discusses the marketing and development of the tourism sector in Maharashtra by looking at the experiences of visitors to the state's numerous tourist spots. Maharashtra The promotion of honesty requires an effective, all-encompassing, and strategic plan. In my business, happy customers are priority number one. The purpose of marketing is to increase product sales via means such as advertising, promotions, brand development, and brand building. Therefore, the present study's significance lies in its ability to shed light on the marketing landscape of Maharashtra's tourism industry and illuminate the gaps between what customers want and what businesses can provide.

KEYWORD: Maharashtra, Tourism, MTDC, Marketing, tourist.

INTRODUCTION

The tourism industry's positive effects on the economy, labor market, and international trade balance are among the reasons for its significance. Increasing tourism is a top objective for any nation. The sector of Indian tourism is expanding rapidly. The emphasis here is on the history and culture of the nation. The tourism industry in India accounts for 7.7 percent of all jobs and generates 6.2 percent of the country's GDP. Between 2011 and 2021, the World Travel and Tourism Council projects an annual growth rate of 8.8 percent.

Tax revenue, positive public perception, educational and cultural contributions, foreign currency, new jobs, and a more tranquil community are just few of the ways in which tourism marketing helps nations prosper. Tourists travel for a wide range of reasons and use a wide range of tourism practices. Marketing in the tourism industry has arisen as a means to meet the demands of today's vacationers and draw in an ever-increasing number of customers via the use of various promotional strategies. Itinerary packages that are both creative and appealing are a perfect illustration of the marketing mix in action. The central government of India maintains a dedicated tourism agency, and individual states have their own tourist boards to promote and keep tabs on the industry. It is essential for our country's economic and industrial growth that we invest heavily in marketing for the tourist industry. Those who want to go to India do so in large part because of the country's rich cultural heritage. As a major source of tax revenue and job creation, tourism is high on the state's priority list. Community building and national solidarity are two further benefits of tourism.

Government of India and State Government have adopted different policy steps for developing tourism as 'people's industry' and aimed to gain maximum advantages of tourist sectors due to the importance of tourism in economic growth. By working together, the state's public and commercial sectors have been able to successfully promote tourism in the state, opening up many previously untapped markets and making use of the industry's great potential. In terms of population, Maharashtra is India's third biggest state, and it is also one of the most urbanized and industrialized. Its location along the green Konkan area on the west coast is particularly attractive. The Western Ghats and Sahyadri have a number of water reservoirs and hill stations surrounded by semi-evergreen and deciduous forests. Vidarbha is a forested area in northern Maharashtra.

There are a number of national parks and animal preserves there. Unspoiled beaches, woodland, wildlife, one-of-a-kind hill stations, old cave temples, forts, temples, and a long legacy of fairs and festivals are just few of the natural and cultural attractions that exist in the state. The state of Maharashtra is known for its remarkable cultural variety, which is reflected in the dazzling array of its ethnic groups, languages, and practices. The state government sees tourism as a key driver of economic development. In 2013, Maharashtra saw 8.2 percent of all domestic tourist arrivals, or 82,700,556 people. It receives more international visitors than any other state, accounting for 20.80 percent of total international arrivals (415,634), and as a result, the state's budgeted allocation for promoting tourism has seen a significant growth.

The beautiful 720 kilometers of Konkan coastline have been included in the plan to develop as a tourism circuit. The metropolis of Mumbai, the hill stations, the beaches, and the caves are the country's key draws for foreign visitors. Traditional music from Maharashtra exists. Popular in rural regions are folk music shows like Gondhal, Lavani, Bharud, and Powada. Maharashtra's tourism sector has great development potential due to the state's well-developed public transport system and the wide range of attractions available in its cities and towns. The tourist sector and government organizations have barely scratched the surface of its rich historical and cultural legacy. The widespread availability of solid basic infrastructure inside the state would serve as an ideal springboard for new private investments in the expansion of tourism within the state, therefore generating a great deal of new chances for locals to find gainful work.

LITERATURE AND REVIEW

Harshada Satghare et al (2018) One of India's most visited states is Maharashtra. The Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation, the state's official destination marketing organization, recognizes the growing significance of social media marketing and is making concerted attempts to use this novel medium for the effective promotion of tourism on an international scale. The purpose of this article is to apply a user-judgment based technique to assess MTDC's social media marketing strategy. The researcher has presented the instrument to quantify the efficacy of social media marketing methods for destination promotion after conducting a thorough literature review. The effectiveness of the designed tool was evaluated in terms of three criteria: content variety, content quality, and overall effectiveness. The instrument's reliability and validity were proven by the tests that were performed. The researcher was able to get insight into the desirable characteristics of social media marketing thanks to the evaluations of tourists (collected from 300 respondents). According to the results, there is a major discrepancy (big difference) in the significance and performance of several traits that have been found. As a result, helpful recommendations were made for refining the prioritized elements of success. DMO may benefit from the results by better understanding E-consumer preferences and online information preferences.

Harshada Satghare (2018) Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) are emphasizing the use of the Internet in destination promotion due to the growing importance of the medium in marketing. The purpose of this research is to analyze how well Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC), India, uses Internet marketing strategies to promote tourism. In order to fully grasp the phenomena, the Data Triangulation Method was used. Searchers have also produced a SWOT analysis of these tactics, which may be used by tourism officials and promoters to better position their respective destinations in the market.

DR. AARTI MESHRAM (2022) One of India's leading commercial and industrial states, Maharashtra, has identified tourism as a key driver of economic development. Tourism has been recognized by the Maharashtra government as a means to increase the state's economy and create jobs. According to a 2011 study, Maharashtra was the second most popular entrance point into India, behind Delhi. While domestic

tourism only accounted for 3.5 percent of jobs, it contributed 20 to 22 percent of the state's GDP via activities including transport, storage, communication, commerce, and hospitality. Maharashtra is serious about developing its tourism business, as seen by its many efforts aimed at boosting the state's profile in the global tourist market. When it comes to the economy, tourism might have a net good effect on the number of jobs created and the amount of money brought in, but it could have a net negative effect on the environment. It's common knowledge that the tourist industry is vital to national growth. The environment is an invaluable tool for the tourism industry, since it is one of the primary draws for visitors. Cultural and societal changes are brought about by tourists' contacts with locals, businesses, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). That the environment is a finite resource that must be protected for future generations should be obvious to all parties involved. Future generations should be able to enjoy the benefits of tourism without having to compromise on the quality of the experience or the environment. Therefore, in order to have future growth in tourism and economic development, it is essential to maintain and support the environment, which is the primary source of tourist product. This article highlights the role of tourism in the sustainable economy of the state, as well as the importance of the job possibilities that arise as a result of tourist activities, for workers of all skill levels.

Pallavi Kamble (2020) As a result of intense rivalry in the tourist industry, DMOs throughout the world have experimented with a wide range of promotional tactics. For the purposes of this article, Maharashtra, a state in India, will serve as the case study. Therefore, DMOs must adopt bold and constructive measures to promote tourism in Maharashtra and change the state's current image. The purpose of this study is to assess how the perception of Maharashtra as a tourist destination compares with the realities encountered by both local and international visitors. Purposeful sampling was used to acquire information from 435 domestic and 663 international visitors at the sample sites. The paired t-test was used to assess the data. The findings point to an essential need for infrastructure development: the enhancement of accessibility for domestic tourists. It has been recommended that a variety of tourism items, such as Maharashtra's culture, wildlife, food, adventure sports, etc., be marketed to increase international visitors' average length of stay in the state of Maharashtra.

Nabil Moheemmed AL-hazmi et al (2020) The purpose of this research is to explore and isolate the factors that prevent hotel guests in Al-Kharj, Saudi Arabia, from becoming more knowledgeable about the range of tourist services available at the city's various accommodations. In order to determine the quality of these services, a random sample of (500) hotel guests were surveyed, since the quality of tourist services is a crucial factor in the competitiveness of the tourism facility in light of the market economy's circumstances. In order to determine whether these services may be improved, it is necessary to define their current quality levels and the opinions of their target audience. Important findings from the research include that consumer knowledge of a tourist service have no bearing on the intangibility of that service or the effectiveness of different forms of promotion. Recommendations were made based on the study's findings, the most essential of which was to educate staff to deliver tourist services utilizing cutting-edge technology and techniques of promotion.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Primary data from the following respondents helped form the basis of this study:

- i. Tourists - 2000
- ii. Tour operators, / Travel Agents - 251
- iii. Hotels and Resorts Managers - 245
- iv. MTDC- Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation official – 3 and
- v. Ministry of Tourism, Government of India official – 1

This study's data was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics, and the researcher made good use of all the tools at her disposal to do so. We have utilized analysis of variance and chi-square. Our data analysis was performed using SPSS 19.

The data was analyzed using Chi-square and One-Way ANOVA. The primary goal was to examine the marketing approaches used and to examine the similarities and differences between these approaches, as well as to assess the effect on the tourist industry.

DATA ANALYSIS

To better understand the current state and future potential of Maharashtra's tourism industry, the research team surveyed a statistically significant sample of visitors, tour operators/travel agents, hotels/resorts, MTDC authorities, and Ministry of Tourism (Government of India) representatives on their experiences with tourist attractions, travel agents, and hotel/resort hospitality management.

Analysis of Feedback from Tourists

Favourite / Popular Region for Tourists in Maharashtra:

Konkan, which encompasses the greater Mumbai area, Western Maharashtra-Desh (the Pune region), North Maharashtra-Khandesh, which encompasses five districts (the Nashik area), Marathwada, which encompasses seven districts (the Aurangabad area), and two regions in Vidarbha are the six revenue divisions that make up Maharashtra State (Nagpur and Amravati). To satisfy his or her own curiosity, the researcher wanted to determine which area in the State had the highest and lowest population. She now has all of the answers to this question. Below, Table 1 displays comments made by vacationers:

Table 1

Tourists favourite region of maharashtra for touring

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
7.2-Konkan-favorite region of Maharashtra for touring	1716	1	4	3.29	.933
7.5-Desh, Pune-favorite region of Maharashtra for touring	1771	1	4	2.88	.920
7.4-Khandesh, Nashik-favorite region of Maharashtra for touring	1667	1	4	2.51	.959

7.3-Marathwada-favorite region of Maharashtra for touring	1366	1	4	2.41	1.117
7.1-Vidarbha-favorite region of Maharashtra for touring	1126	1	4	2.16	1.058
Valid N (list wise)	724				

Source: Compiled from Primary data collected by the researcher

With a mean score of 3.28 μ , the Konkan area has been shown to be the most popular choice for out-of-state visitors considering a transfer inside the state of Maharashtra. Second place belongs to Pune with a mean score of 2.87 μ , then comes Khandesh (also known as north Maharashtra) with its headquarters in Nashik at 2.51 μ , Marathwada at 2.41 μ , and finally Vidarbha at 2.16 μ .

Analysis of Feedback from Tour Operators / Travel Agents

Most Favourite Destinations in Maharashtra:

Tours both domestic and abroad are among the specialties of travel agencies. The Travel Agents were questioned about the number of times they offered prearranged excursions to various parts of Maharashtra. The state of Maharashtra is divided into five distinct areas: the Konkan (which encompasses Mumbai and its suburbs), the Western Maharashtra (Desh), which encompasses Pune and South Maharashtra, the Northern Maharashtra (which comprises Nashik, Ahmednagar, Jalgaon, Dhule, and the Nandurbar District), the Marathwada, and the Vidarbha (Covering Nagpur and Amravati regions). Table 2 displays the responses collected from tour operators.

Table 2

Destinations in most demand in maharashtra

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
6.5- Desh, Pune destinations in	210	1	4	2.67	.959

Maharashtra are in more demand					
6.2- Konkan - destinations in Maharashtra are in more demand	167	1	4	2.60	.911
6.4- Khandesh, Nashik -destinations in Maharashtra are in more demand	249	1	4	2.38	1.010
6.3- Marathwada - destinations in Maharashtra are in more demand	135	1	4	2.10	.933
6.1- Vidarbha - destinations in Maharashtra are in more demand	30	1	4	1.60	.814
Valid N (listwise)	6				

Source: Compiled from Primary data collected by the researcher

Desh-Pune, at 2.67 μ , is the most desired area in Maharashtra, followed by the Konkan Region (2.06 μ), Khandesh/Nashik (2.38 μ), Marathwada (2.10 μ), and the least priority belongs to the Vidarbha region (1.6 μ). This information was gathered from primary sources among Travel Operators/Travel Agents.

Analysis of Feedback from Hotels and Resorts

Purpose of Tourist Visits:

Questions were also asked about the reasons travelers report at hotel front desks when they check in, in order to learn more about the attractions they visit. The responses they provided are summarized in Table 3 below:

Table 3

Purposes of tourist visits to hotels

Descriptive statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
4.1-frequency of Official purposes for the guest visiting your Hotel?	245	2	4	3.91	.319
4.4-frequency of Leisure purposes for the guest visiting your Hotel?	245	2	4	3.21	.429
4.3-frequency of Pilgrimage purposes for the guest visiting your Hotel?	132	1	3	1.66	.846
4.5 -frequency of Heritage and culture purposes for the guest visiting your Hotel?	125	1	4	1.55	.828
4.2-frequency of Adventure purposes for the guest visiting your	80	1	1	1.00	.000

Hotel?					
Valid N (listwise)	80				

Source: Compiled from Primary data collected by the researcher

The majority of the hotels are full due to official visitors. All hotels have customers who are there on vacation to relax and unwind from their regular lives. When ranked by mean, however, guests on official duty come in front (with a 3.90), followed by guests in search of enjoyment during their free time (3.21). Third place, with a mean score of 1.65, goes to pilgrims; fourth, with a score of 1.55; and fifth, with a score of 1, goes to adventurers.

An Interview with the MTDC officials based on the questionnaire

It worked out well for the researcher to schedule time with the MTDC representative (General Manager of MTDC).

One of the most compelling arguments made in favor of delivering on the promise of Maharashtra's tourism attractions came in response to a question regarding marketing the state. According to the MTDC representative, there is a significant challenge in Maharashtra regarding tourism since no one knows where to begin. Maharashtra's wide variety makes it a challenge to create cohesive themes. In addition to the difficulty in pronouncing and writing Maharashtra, most non-Indians are more familiar with the city of Mumbai than the whole state. We must now realize that Maharashtra is not only Mumbai, and that we cannot promote Maharashtra by focusing on the city alone. The question then becomes how to market the state of Maharashtra by identifying its USP. An official from the MTDC felt that the current situation of tourism in the state might be improved by bolstering both the state's human resources and its infrastructure. The official felt very strongly that MTDC, as a government agency, should go where the private sector has not gone in the tourism industry and do things that the private players would not think of doing but would make a difference.

An interview with the Ministry of Tourism official

ITDC's only support center serves the whole state of Maharashtra from its headquarters in Mumbai. The investigator then contacted the Indian government's Ministry of Tourism and conducted an interview with its Assistant Director, India Tourism.

The Ministry of Tourism is responsible for educating visitors about India's many tourist attractions; they are not authorized to advocate on behalf of any country. They are only allowed to respond to the specific questions asked by the visitor. The Ministry of Tourism was also responsible for regulating and keeping tabs on the state's numerous initiatives; for instance, if money has been allocated for a project in Satara, that money must remain in Satara and cannot be used for anything else. According to the source, the Ministry of Tourism has provided MTDC a substantial amount of money that has not been used efficiently. The same should be allocated to certain tourist destinations in a targeted manner.

CONCLUSION

Tourism is become a major global industry. Even if we haven't fully exploited the potential, India has come to recognize the industry's significance. Both natural and man-made sights abound in Maharashtra. Despite being blessed with such treasures, Maharashtra's tourist industry is floundering. Despite its status as the most visited state in India by international travelers, few visitors actually go into the state's interior, Maharashtra. Ineffective marketing is a major contributor to this underwhelming results. The tourist industry must take the initiative to promote the growth of tourism based on active pursuits. The research shows the following overarching findings: A sizable and steadily expanding population of vacationers, tour operators, and travel agencies. Almost all travel agencies belong to a trade group or association.

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