



Macroeconomics

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**MEANS OF MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS
FOR MAKING THE IMAGE OF UKRAINE
IN THE WORLD TOURIST MARKET**

Abstract

The image of Ukraine in the world tourist market is studied, and the instruments of communication policy are determined for its improvement.

Key words:

Image, tourist image of Ukraine, marketing communications, advertisement, tourist exhibitions, PR – activity.

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Present-day development of the world civilization processes is characterized with service area dominating in the system of international economic relations. For recent years the highest growth rates among the non-material areas were observed in the world tourism market. Tourism became one of the major categories of international trade. Nowadays, export income of international tourism takes the fourth place after the fuel-producing, chemical, and engineering industries.

International tourism is considered to be one of the most profitable businesses throughout the world. The governments of the countries where tourism is recognized as a priority sector of economic development, form the concept of international tourism development, and invest heavily into creation of tourist image of the country and promotion of national tourist product on the world market. For example, the USA invest \$ 1.5 bln. into image programs of the country, China – \$6 bln., since in the times of information and post-information technologies images are easily converted into tourist and investment flows [1].

Demand formation in the world tourist market needs creation of respective communication system which is a component of state marketing. For now Ukraine has adopted «State Program of Tourism Development in Ukraine for 2002–2010», «State Program of Positive Image of Ukraine for the Period till 2011». Nevertheless, there is no clear state program of tourism development support in the communication sector in the international market including promotional and advertising work in mass media, at the international tourist forums and exhibitions, and through Internet. This situation requires studying of opportunities to use the policy of marketing communications with the aim of creation of tourist image of the country.

The theory of communications was researched by the following known national and foreign scientists: M. Isenberg, H. Bahiyev, W. Berezin, S. Black, F. Boirie, A. Vovchak, D. Denisiuk, H. Carter, F. Cottler, T. Lukianets, D. Merrill, M. Montgomery, R. Stevenson, U. Hachyen, D. Shaw.

Among few publications on making the image of the country the researchers of S. Anholt, K. Balding, A. Pankrukhin, I. Rozhkov, A. Sullivan are worth marking. At that, the issues on theory and practice of marketing communication policy implementation for making the tourist image of the country are not completely revealed.

The object of this paper is the research of Ukraine's image in the world tourist market, and determination of the instruments for communication policy to improve that image.

Ukraine takes one of the leading places in Europe as for the level of availability of recreation, historic and cultural resources. Nevertheless, according to the figures of the World Economic Forum, in 2007 Ukraine was the 78th among 124 world countries in the area of tours and tourism (Czech republic – 35, Hungary- 40, Lithuania – 51, Poland -61, Russian Federation – 68, Romania – 76) [1]. It shows that in the international tourist market national tourist product is evaluated as less attractive and less competitive than in other countries where the global trend is observed for increasing the role of the government in ensuring the tourism development.

According to the World Tourist Organization in 2008 Ukraine took the seventh place in the world in a number of foreign tourist arrivals, making 25.4 mln. people, which exceeds the respective figure of 2007 by 9.8% [2]. However, in 2009 a number of foreign citizens who visited Ukraine made 20.7 mln. people, which is by 18.3% less as against 2008 [3]. It is explained by difficult economic and political situation in Ukraine, and the global economic crisis.

In modern conditions of tourist interest growth to different countries, the image of the country is among the most important factors influencing the choice of foreign tourists. The issues the tourists are greatly concerned with are both, those referring to the image of the country as a whole (e.g. cultural level, ecology, criminality, national and religious tolerance, political and economic stability), and those which refer to the development of tourist industry (availability of recreation resources and comfort for leisure, ratio of service quality to prices, tour security, luggage preservation and others). In most cases the decision does not depend on how much information the potential tourist has, but on the stereotypes formulated in mass media, and impressions of other tourists. Poor image, either its absence could nullify the efforts as for the development of the inbound tourism in the country.

As the research of the international image of Ukraine showed, which was made by specialists of Ukrainian O. Razumkov Center of Economic and Political Studies on the basis of the analysis of publications and information of foreign authoritative mass media, nowadays understanding of the country is rather incomplete, fragmented, and mainly negative.

More or less regular information about Ukraine emerges in American, Canadian, and West-European editions. People of those countries have the understanding of our country on the basis of the information on corruption, illegal emigrants, Chornobyl problem, defects of democracy, famine of 1932-1933, complicated relations with Russia, significant unrealized potential of Ukrainian science, and vulnerability of intellectual property rights [4].

Polish, Slovaks, Romanians and Hungarians see Ukraine much more attractive, though they also are concerned with the corruption rate in the country, the problems of illegal migrants, unreliability of Ukraine as a business partner, and all that effects its tourist image.

More or less aware with tourist opportunities of Ukraine are the residents of CIS countries. Though they also have mainly unattractive image of our country because of its information methods of competitive struggle for the consumer of tourist services. Russians who like to spend their vacations in the Crimea periodically are scared with the strikes of the Crimean tatars, poor epidemiologic and ecologic situation, economic and social problems, tense criminal situation, etc.

So, the image of Ukraine as a tourist country practically is not created, and the country is rated according to the real state of things instead of its rich potential.

Though the state authorities do information work in the world space, these efforts are rather non-coordinated one-time actions, and are of spontaneous nature. Absence of drastic changes in the promotion of national tourist product is originated by the innovation and challenging character of the task, likewise by substantial and methodical shortcomings.

The attraction of foreign tourists is a strategic course of entering the global market with its specific laws and conditions. Therefore, it is necessary to pursue the systemic and interconnection communication policy. It should include step-by-step agreed use of various communication channels, able in their integrity to make the targeted audience create the required knowledge and stereotypes about Ukraine. That policy should take into account the peculiarities of national culture, and cultural values of the country to succeed in promotion of its image.

The formation of tourist image of Ukraine, promotion of its national tourist product, and planning of marketing communications is a system which integrates interrelated and complementary communicative marketing components (relatively statistic forms of communication) and promotion complex (relatively dynamic forms of communication) into a single logic aggregation. There should be applied the method of integrated marketing communications allowing to select the means of communications, and concentrate responsibility in one hands.

The instruments of communication mix to be applied for the formation of the image of Ukraine as a tourist country could include advertisement, participation in exhibitions and fairs, and PR-activity.

Tourism advertising aims at making an image and positioning of tourist product, as well as informing the target groups. Catalogues and prospects, likewise the graphical vehicles are efficient printed advertising means. Catalogues should provide general information on the places of recreation in Ukraine, its climate and so. Prospects are of general character and give basic information about the country. Also it is good to use image booklets visualizing the image of the country. A specific kind of printed advertising means should become the tourist guides which are issued as books or magazines. Other graphical means of advertising include advertisements placed in newspapers and magazines, posters to draw attention, which play an important role in image advertising. In addi-

tion, visual means of mass information should be actively used, implying all kinds of films, as well as slides transmitted by TV, in the cinema or through Internet.

During the campaign to create the tourist image of Ukraine the cultural differences among the countries should be taken into account. The factors aggravating cross-cultural advertising are the following: different languages, different consumer behaviors, different market segments, different conditions for advertising; different criteria for evaluation of advertisement, and different economic and social conditions.

Dissemination of mass media and opening of the capabilities of the latter in advertising enables application of new technical facilities to increase the demand in tourist area. Therefore, the advertising in Internet provides great opportunities to orient the information at different targeted groups. Unlike traditional advertising the Internet actions have their peculiarities, since in addition to advertising they are the means of mass information, means of communication, and interactive media. The Internet provides many instruments for influencing the target population, including web-sites, banners, advertisements during Internet-conferences, and through e-mail.

Participation in tourism exhibitions is one of important means for Ukraine's makeover and promotion of tourist product on the world market. It enables to attract attention of professional and consumers, to obtain the required information on the country and make direct comparisons. The importance of fairs and exhibitions for the communication policy lies in their highly targeted focus. They produce great multiplier effect, since the obtained information is transmitted from the users to other people. Face-to-face communication at the fairs and exhibitions enables to inform the clients effectively and fast (middlemen, tourist agencies, etc.) on Ukraine and its destinations.

Among the PR methods the following trends should be actively applied:

1. Work with mass media: information in papers and magazines, through radio and TV. Primarily, there should be produced a documentary about Ukraine and videos for television. Second, to hold an educational and entertaining tour for different groups of people. Third, to set the bureau of Ukrainian tourism which would regularly provide information to major consumers and to journalists who are involved in tourism, also it would disseminate special press-packets and press-releases, organize publication of materials in mass media.

2. Issue of information materials. The step to create the country's tourist image is affected most severely by absence of information. The development of information booklets, maps, and other tourist guides by the State Service of Tourism and Resorts of Ukraine will facilitate the work of tourist operators in different countries and enable to increase the tourist traffic into the country.

3. Arrangement of advertising tours:

- for foreign clients. It should be a cheap or free of charge tour to a high quality resort with full set of excursions offered to the lottery or quiz winners. The objective of the action is to produce a good impression of Ukraine, and the tourists would share it with their friends and acquaintances;
 - for employees of tourist agencies. It should be about a free of charge tour all over Ukraine visiting the major tourist centers to produce positive impressions of the country, to familiarize the probable clients with the recreation opportunities, and to establish business relations;
 - for foreign journalists, which will enable them to see the places of interest in Ukraine, to make sure in reliability and good service provided by the organizing firm, to establish good relations between the representatives of tourist business and press.
4. Arrangement of Euro-2012 in Ukraine, likewise other actions which attract foreign tourists.
5. Holding of international seminars on tourism with visiting places of interest of Ukraine.

In addition, Ukraine should take part in a global campaign in communications in tourism industry which is held by UNWTO. Here the accent should be made on the following five basic components: banners, logos, posters, post cards and 30second ads on the available communication channels. All that is directed at transmitting the information on the advantages of tourism in Ukraine.

Those actions should create stereotypes of positive perception of Ukraine by foreign citizens, and be implemented as a unique complex of public awareness campaign conducted by state authorities. Application of modern means of marketing communications breaks new grounds for positioning and expanding the proper image of Ukraine. Nevertheless, it can not set the task to reach in a short-term perspective provision of all-scale and full information in the global tourist space ensuring mainly its positive and adequate perception of Ukraine by the community of foreign countries.

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