

Spa and wellness tourism tourism essay



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Austria is ranked as the ninth largest tourism market in the world and the sixth largest in Europe . 22. 2 billion Euros was generated from international tourism in the year 2007 in Austria. Only few countries can boast of the per capital income from tourist in the same league as Austria. Although Austria is not a big country in central Europe with a population of 8. 3 million people, it is one of the top tourist destination in Europe with 20. 8 million arrivals in the year 2007 because of its fantastic and extensive cultural history in addition to its interesting customs , artistic tradition and natural environment (Austrian National office, Austrian Tourism Monitor 2006/2007). International tourism expenditure in Austria has increased from \$7. 6 billion in year 1995 to \$14. 2 in year 2007. Vienna the capital of Austria attracts major part of tourists that visit Austria.

However, this report is aimed to develop a tourism marketing plan for Austria to attract spa and wellness tourist from United Kingdom and North America particularly Canada and the United States of America . This aim will be achieved through the analysis of the Austria tourism industry environment , using the available secondary data, identifying and applying theories where it is relevant.

Spa and wellness tourism has developed as a small but important market segment in developed countries such as Scotland, Switzerland, Greece , New Zealand, Israel , United States and Canada as well as developing countries such as Cuba, Cameroon & Maldives, Croatia, Caribbean, India, Singapore and Thailand which result in growth in competitiveness. For any business to succeed, planning is a very important step . The tourism industry in any country including Austria need to have an effective plan to be successful

because tourism industry has specific characteristics that will not be found in other industry.(Morrison, 2002)

The World tourism Organization projects that tourist to European countries will double by the year 2020, Conferences, business travel, beauty and wellness leading in the growth . The growth in wellness tourism is increasing worldwide with 18 percent per year and over ten percent annually estimated new demand. Ringer (2007) note that according to a research by Hawaii Wellness Tourism Association in 2006, the number of travel agencies that specialized in wellness travel as increased from 300 estimated in the last two year to over 500. Consequently, Austria can become the primary tourist destination in Europe for health and wellness travel if well-positioned should these global travel trends persist . Austria can take advantage of its central location in Europe and ease access from other European countries (in less than 3 hours people can get to Austria form any part of Europe). Austria has the potential to attract Spa and wellness tourism from other EU countries who do not want to travel far from home .

According to UNWTO world Tourism Barometer 2008, tourism demand could be hurt by the doubt over the global economic situation that is affecting consumer confidence. The present economic imbalance, particularly the rising cost of transportation and energy are likely to influence what people spend on tourism . However specific demand shift because of factor such as travel budget, disposable income and confidence which are different from country to country and region to region, depending on the labour market and local economies .

Travel Oregon (2005) note that sustainable tourism development and environmental quality is now another critical issue in international tourism. More Pressure is now been put on countries to preserve their natural resources as well balance growth with the possible impacts of tourism development. Consequently, any effort in Austria aim to expand tourism industry into other areas will need to consider environmental, social and cultural impacts and the image it will have on the Austria as a tourist destination .

The tourism market is also faced with the problem of international terrorism, war and H1N1 which make it more complex to attract tourists from a wider market (Videira et al 2006). This has increased the demands for product differentiation as well quality management and also significant market diversification. Austria government can capitalise on the high quality of tourist faculties and amenities in addition to fantastic and extensive cultural history as well as its interesting customs , artistic tradition and natural environment to increase the number of spa and wellness tourist visiting Austria .

3. 0 RATIONALE FOR THE SELCTION OF THE MARKET CHOSEN FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND EXPANSION .

Soukiazis and Pronca (2008) argue that tourism should only be employ has a stimulate to the growth of the economy if the supply characteristics can be enhanced to bring in more affluent tourists. Any move to attract tourists to a destination should focus on major markets, where the population is adequately affluent to increase number of tourist visiting the destination.

Consequently, United Kingdom and Canada and the United States of America are the choice naturally because of the high level of per capita income enjoyed in United Kingdom, Canada and the United States of America. Also this countries have a long list of people waiting for spa and wellness product. In addition the cost of spa and wellness this countries are high. Also Americans may begin to look for alternative medical services in other countries because American will likely have the same problem as in England and Canada.

The North America tourist coming to Austria will have to fly a fairly expensive transatlantic flight which will possibly make them stay longer and spend more in Austria to maximise experience. This will make Canada and the United States of America tourist more important than European tourists that will fly low cost airlines and lodge in cheap hotels for a short stay. Vienna the capital of Austria has transatlantic connections flights with major US cities.

4. 0 SOME PRODUCTS AND SERVICES OFFERED BY AUSTRIA AND THEIR RELEVANCE TO UNITED KINGDOM AND NORTH AMERICA PARTICULARLY CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

According to Austrian National office, Austrian Tourism Monitor 2006/2007 Austria has fantastic and extensive cultural history in addition to its interesting customs , artistic tradition and natural environment which will make Austria appeal to tourist from United Kingdom and North America particularly Canada and the United States of America who are keen to see more of traditional European culture and the natural environment . In words of Erich Falkensteiner , Co-owner Falkensteiner Michaeler Tourism Group ”

Austria is a small country with an extensive and fantastic cultural history and artistic tradition, interesting customs and a natural environment which can hardly be matched anywhere in central Europe. This makes a visit to Austria so rewarding.”

Every destination claims to have a unique heritage, culture and landscape, in addition describing itself as having the highest standards of customers service, friendliest people and best facilities. As a result, the need for destinations to create a unique identity that will differentiate it from their competitors is more critical now than ever (Ana 2008). Austria has some of the best tourism offerings. Examples of tourism offerings in some part of Austria are.

Vienna is referred to as the world capital of music . It has 3 opera houses , over 50 theatres and 100 museums. Vienna is described as a model environmental city with its extraordinarily low rate of population where people can drink mountain spring water from the tap. Tourists can also enjoy a mild climate and diverse landscapes in Burgenland which is referred to as the land of the sun. In addition to some of the best festivals and different offerings of thermal baths as well as fantastic wines (Austrian National office, Austrian Tourism Monitor 2006/2007).

Lower Austria houses some world cultural heritage sites designated by UNESCO and it is also recognized as a splendid location for physical and spiritual regeneration offers a well developed network of biking trails which make it one of the top tourist destinations. Carinthia is also a major tourist destination in Austria to visit because of the 1, 200 lakes and ponds, 8 golf

courses and natural medicinal spring and radon healing galleries among other offerings.

Consequently, all this offerings make Austria suitable destination for health purposes, relaxing, holidays and adventures(Austrian National office, Austrian Tourism Monitor 2006/2007).

5. 0 AUSTRIA COMPETENCIES AND SOURCES OF COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE.

Austria has most of the element required to meet the demands of a tourist destination such as well-preserved environment with scenic beauty, natural resources, a well-managed cultural landscape, green meadows and mountain pastures, crystal-clear waters, fresh air and much more. These natural treasures, in addition to the most diverse possible cultural offering, the highest quality of life and the greatest security as well as the best environmental situation give Austria a future as one of the top potential tourism sectors of the world (Austrian National office, Austrian Tourism Monitor 2006/2007).

Falkensteiner 2007 indicate that Austria is not only a beautiful and interesting country but also have good infrastructure for tourism, an exceptional workforce, and attractive business opportunities.

6. 0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PLAN AND THE SETTING OF FUTURE OBJECTIVES .

For any business to succeed, planning is a very important step . The tourism industry in any country need to have an effective plan to be successful because tourism industry has specific characteristics that will not be found in

other industry (Morrison, 2002) . Thus, Austrian need to understands the United Kingdom, Canada and the United States tourism market and its major tourism segments after which different offerings must be develop to appeal to each segments and attract tourists form the market to Austria. As a result, more tourist from those market will develop interest in Austria, which is important in consumer decision making process.

Schultz 2005 argue that AIDA model is more appropriate than the other theories for consumer decision making process in tourism because tourist are likely to only consider destination which they fine interesting and have attracted their attention . Blumberg 2000 supported this view when he said many tourism destination use marketing advert that will focus on putting the destination on people mind, rather than attempting to get them make a decision to visit the destination. This plan aim to increase the interest of tourist from United Kingdom and North America particularly Canada and the United States of America in Austria. When more tourist from United Kingdom and North America particularly Canada and the United States of America are interested in Austria, one of the future objective will be to increase the numbers of tourist coming to Austria for spa and wellness products.

7. 0 RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

International tourism are important pillar of many destinations creating much needed employment in the destination and opportunities for the general economy development. Tourism is ranked fourth worldwide in export category after oil, chemicals and automotive products in many developed nations while in some developing counties tourism is ranked number one in export category .

Austria has the potential to attract tourism from other countries but a lot of research have showed that many country possess a significant tourist attraction but they fail to utilize the tourism potential. Inadequate promotional and positioning strategy has been identified by research has part of the reason for this, especially on the part of the government of the country concerned.

In 2003 Kotler , Dubois and Manceau noted that promotion is a extremely important tool in the positioning of a tourist attraction mainly because of its immobile and intangible nature. According to Awaritefe 2003 “ Promotion has an important role to play in the positioning of a country’s tourism potential especially bearing in mind that tourism unlike manufactured products is an experience which cannot be tested before purchase”. Government and private bodies should put together more strategies to promote it spa and wellness markets. For example developing trade relationship with travel agents and airlines based UK, US and Canada .

According to Ana (2008) tourism is like a crowded marketplace where building and maintaining a brand value is the key to business success and as a result, brand management is moving fast from a peripheral marketing concern to the core strategy in business . Government and private hospitals can partner with the major hotels to enhance the standards of medical facilities and also provide discount deals for tourist . Marketing research should also be engaged from time to time to find out what tourist need and how to meet the needs.