



The Implementation of Green Tourism and Hospitality

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Abstract

In recent years, companies around the world have been into the twenty-first century business era, as the demands for leisure and transportation have become more convenient. At the same time, the growing demand of modern travel, tourism, and visitors cannot be denied to be a factor of global warming. As a member of the Earth, we have the responsibility and obligation to promote the practice of low-carbon trip green tour. The rise in environmental awareness, emphasizing the low-carbon era today, green tourism will be the new direction for the future development of tourism.

In all aspects of the tourism process, "green tourism" includes tourists, hotels, attractions, tourist managers, travel agents, tour operators and travel guides. This green tourism will protect the green environment with concepts of green consumption activities, so as to achieve social responsibility, economic development and ecological sustainability of the realm.

In this study, the concept of green tourism, with the success stories, will establish a complete management of the green tourism market. Thus, in order to build a quality environment and service industry for our children and work towards a sustainable development while traveling the world combined with the latest trends.

Keywords: Green tourism; Green tourism market; Leisure and tourism; Global warming; Low-carbon era

Introduction

Green Tourism or Ecotourism is often highlighted and touted as the best way to enjoy your vacation but ask ten people what ecotourism or green tourism really is and you will likely get some very different and perhaps very interesting responses. Despite popular belief, ecotourism is about much more than just jumping on a jet to save the rain forests. That does not mean that eco-friendly tourism spots have to be boring either though.

Hospitality is one of the fastest growing service sectors [1]. Cetron, DeMicco and Davies [2] indicated that the hospitality industry will grow at a rate of greater than 5% yearly, and in the future, the jobs depending on tourism will be approximately 14% of the global workforce. Because tourism is a global business, it will open to every changes and improvements across national borders. Humans as travelers need to feel safe, free and at home, no matter where they will be [3]. Hotels, therefore, play a key role in individuals' traveling experience.

As tourism thrives, interaction between service-workers and customers becomes more frequent. The service quality has become increasingly important. In the meantime, tourism has become a highly connected industry and full of severe competition.

Due to government promotions and an increase of leisure time worldwide, many enterprises have over the years upped their investments in hotel market as they expect the hotel industry to bloom in the future.

The ensuring competition has prompted the hotels to use strategies to reach the customers while meeting their demands. Ham et al. [4] indicated that information technology play a primary role in improving productivity for the lodging industry. The front-line employees have a significant role in the quality of the service delivered [5]. High-quality services provided by hotel employees can attract customers. Perreault and McCarthy [6] emphasized the importance of marketing that focus

on hotels' ability to satisfy customer needs, desires and expectations via a flow of need-satisfying goods and services. However, customers' satisfaction hinges on the employee's satisfaction, which is fundamental to a hotel's ability to provide high-quality services to its customers [7].

The marketing managers have to understand how to satisfying customer needs and to build customer relations on the basis of customer-perceived values and customer satisfaction [8]. An effective relations-based marketing strategy requires accurate measurement of customer loyalty and complete understanding of its impact on performance. A relationship management is an important strategy for customer-relations management.

Communication plays a key role in motivating employees and improving service in an effort to build customer relations. Also, in order to maintain customers' respect, build loyalty and long term relationships, promises made must be kept [9]. The technologies used in the hospitality industry have been effective in marketing, booking, room service, communication, billing and payment [1].

On one hand, ecotourism or green tourism involves people traveling to endangered environments or locations where the ecosystem is overly fragile, offering them some type of education regarding the local ecosystem and offering solutions as to how it can be better preserved. Since the primary concerns on these types of vacations are environmental in nature and require people to study and actually learn, they are probably not something that a group of rowdy college kids

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will want to enjoy during spring break although there are exceptions to every rule.

Additionally, these vacations will offer the eco-tourists a limited amount of access to semi-virgin territory. Generally these are locations on the fringes of the endangered ecosystem and they can offer some spectacular scenery, some unforgettable Kodak Moments and even a rush or two in some of the more isolated environments that require a day or two of hiking to access. While it may sound more like an extracurricular course than a vacation, there truly are some amazing benefits to green vacations such as this.

One of the primary benefits is learning what can be done for the environment. Despite any controversy that there may be regarding global climate change, it is not very probable that many people actually seek to do harm to the environment. Many of these ecosystems are home to creatures and plants that have never been seen in other parts of the world. If you are looking for a unique opportunity, it really does not get any more unique than that. Still, it is best to take nothing but photographs and leave nothing more than footprints when you do go on an environmentally friendly eco-vacation.

Another type of ecotourism or green tourism involves visiting many of these same areas but generally with a bit less of the schooling and within ecosystems and environments that are not nearly as fragile or as endangered. In some cases, portions of the endangered environments are opened up to a limited number of people in order to raise funds to protect the rest of the project.

No matter what type of Green Tourism or Eco-Friendly Tourism we are considering, there really are benefits and if we want to really get out and about and away from it all, there are precious few places left in the world to do so. Visiting some of these spots actually allows us to do our part to preserve fragile and endangered ecosystems while at the same time seeing things that very few other people will ever have the opportunity to see. Green tourism doesn't necessarily mean a vacation spent roughing it with little or no comforts. On the contrary, many people believe that it can be a wonderful adventure. Ecotourism resorts and ecology exist in almost every style. From recycling and gray water systems to tents on tree house-like platforms with a rain forest canopy, there are numerous vacationing options. Simple efforts, such as keeping to designated pathways, eating where locally grown cuisine is served and visiting cultural areas instead of typical tourist attractions, can go a long way toward "greening up" a standard vacation.

Literature Review

A review of relevant literature was undertaken using the internet, library catalogue and database. The review of literature helped to inform our understanding of hospitality and green tourism.

According to Dictionary of Leisure, Travel and Tourism [10], hospitality is friendly and welcoming treatment given to guests." Lodging means "accommodation" and tourism was the business of providing travel, accommodation, food, entertainment, etc." The term hotel has multiple definitions, such as "a place which supplies board and lodging," "a place for the entertainment of the travelers," "a large city house of distinction" and a "public building" [11]. The hospitality performs three functions: accommodation, food and beverage and entertainment [1].

Pyhr et al. [12] said "A hotel is an establishment that provides transient lodging for the public and often meals and entertainment. Factors affecting the success or failures of a hotel development vary

according to its primary function." The frequent turnover of guests means that hotels require more constant management than most other categories of space.

Hotels and tourism development are often criticized for destroying the attractiveness of a sensitive location. However, this view must be balanced against the extensive economic benefits derived from tourism. Care should be taken when selecting sites which may provide the means for financing conservation. Hotels are often developed from restored historic buildings and are used as catalysts in attracting reinvestment into depressed urban and rural areas. Mindful of need to regularly attract visitors, most designers carefully respond to their environmental settings, whether to blend into the landscape or to make a dramatic statement in the otherwise bland surroundings [13].

Cooper and Hall [14] identified four basic elements of a geographic tourism system:

- (1) A generating or source region: The places where the journey begins and ends.
- (2) A transit route: The path departing the source region and reaching the destination region.
- (3) A destination region: The region a tourist has chosen to visit.
- (4) The environment: Those surrounding the transit region or route as the guests travel to destination and return home.

Beaver [15] defined related terms as follows:

- (1) Hotel: A place that provides residential accommodation and food to members of the public. Usually, a hotel is a superior type of accommodation that offers a range of other services.
- (2) Lodging industry: A North-American term for the accommodation industry.
- (3) Hospitality industry: the hotel and catering industry, broadly the provision of accommodation, food and beverages.

Overall, the definition of the hospitality industry is wide, including hotels, restaurants, food-beverage service and entertainments. A hotel is a public place, a temporary home which provides rooms, food and drink, facilities and entertainments for travelers.

Green tourism

Green tourism is a term that can be applied to any form of tourism that relates to the natural environment and cultural heritage of an area or that undertakes good environmental management (or green) practice. There are three methods included by which a tourism practice would have to demonstrate practices for preventing or minimizing impacts to the environment if it were to be considered a green operations as follows:

- a. The wise use of resources such as raw materials, water and energy.
- b. The prevention of pollution (air, land, and water).
- c. The protection and where possible the enhancement of biodiversity.

Sustainable tourism

Sustainable tourism is all encompassing term which can also be applied to many green tourism practices, although a sustainable tourism operation would also include social and economic principles as well as green environmental practices. The tourism industry is heavily

reliant on its natural environment and sustaining and enhancing that environment has to be a key long term objective for the industry. There is also a growing market for green products and in the tourism industry the green tourist is becoming increasingly interested in ensuring that their holiday experiences are undertaken sustainably and that environmental management and sustainability principles are adopted and evident in the service provision.

Eco-tourism is described as a more “alternative” and ‘hard’ form of tourism that is primarily nature-based. It must in some way assist with the conservation effort for biodiversity and involve the participation of local indigenous people and cultures in a way that protect their quality of life and sustains their well being. It should involve a learning experience and be carried out in an ecologically sustainable way.

Purpose

Green tourism, a form of ecotourism, is low-impact tourism with an eye toward protecting the environment and culture of an area. The United Nations has set up certain criteria for ecotourism, but green tourism can cover a wide range of standard conditions, from fully compliant to less stressful on the environment than standard tourism. There are many opportunities for green travel available worldwide. The number of tourists traveling the world has been increasing, which makes green tourism not only preferable but a necessity in some areas. It might seem wiser to some people to protect natural habitats and pristine, fragile environments by banning visitors completely to these areas, but many areas depend on the income from tourism to support the local economy. Green, sustainable tourism is considered offer the best of both worlds, protecting the ecology of an area while keeping local schools and business thriving.

A very green holiday can be spent studying the local flora, fauna and cultural heritage of the area, as well as learning ways to protect and preserve it. Guides, tours and wildlife- viewing platforms help tourists experience all that an area has to offer while making little or no impact on the environment. There also are trips available in which vacationers take an active part in improving the local area by working to preserve the natural habitat, helping to build a school or performing other services that benefit the area. These vacations can be a lot of work, but many people find them to be very rewarding and interesting learning experiences.

As green tourism becomes more popular, there are likely to be more vacationing options available. More resort areas likely will take steps to have less of an impact on the surrounding environment, and sustainable tourism could easily become the standard. Local economies might be able to take full advantage of the booming tourist trade without compromising the local environment, allowing tourists to enjoy the beauty that these areas have to offer for many years to come.

Research

The research of this study is to investigate the green ecotourism best practice and to examine the characteristics that will contribute to green tourism success at strategic level an at a business level. The purpose of this study is to:

1. Study what best practice green tourism operators are doing and what characteristics are contributing to their success.
2. Study what characteristics are present in countries that had been identified.

Incorporates sustainability issues

The lodging and hotel industry accounts for 8% of energy consumption in the services sector. The hotel industry is one of the world’s largest employers and represents more than 19.5 million jobs and 10.2% of the world’s GDP. In addition, the industry reports annual capital investments of \$685 billion [16].

The tourism industry has forecasted to approach more than 1.56 billion people by the year 2020, and the hotel industry will need to accommodate the demand by providing more properties. Industry participants recognize that new hotel construction must occur in a manner to incorporate sustainability issues [17]. The industry recognizes the need to enhance sustainability, but many of the efforts in operations have occurred independently by various hoteliers [18]. The International Business Leaders Forum (IBLF) and Green Globe certification represent two attempts to draw consensus about sustainability efforts. In 2005, the IBLF and Conservation International developed a plan for implementing sustainability into hotel planning and development to help guide planners, investors, hotel owners, and developers [19]. This plan was developed in conjunction with nine of the world’s leading hotel companies: Accor, Carlson, Four Seasons, Hilton, InterContinental, Marriott, Rezidor SAS, Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide Inc., and Taj Hotels Resorts and Palace. This plan focuses on site selection, building design, and construction.

Structure

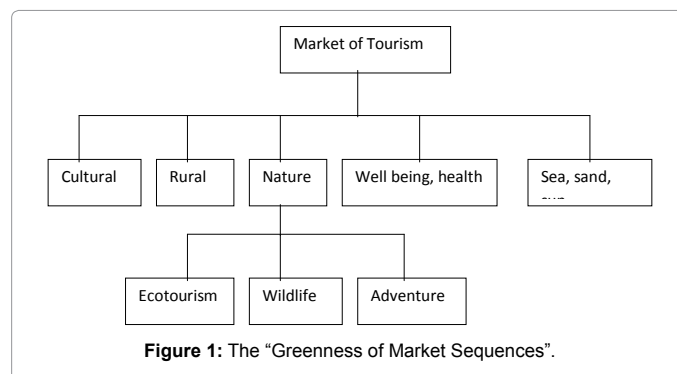
There is inevitably some cross over between best practice green tourism and ecotourism. The green tourism is understood to move left along the green tourism scale as its level of “greenness” rises. Best practice green tourism will therefore lie somewhere on the far left hand side of the scale. Ecotourism is the type of tourism that is most often found at the end of the green scale (Figure 1).

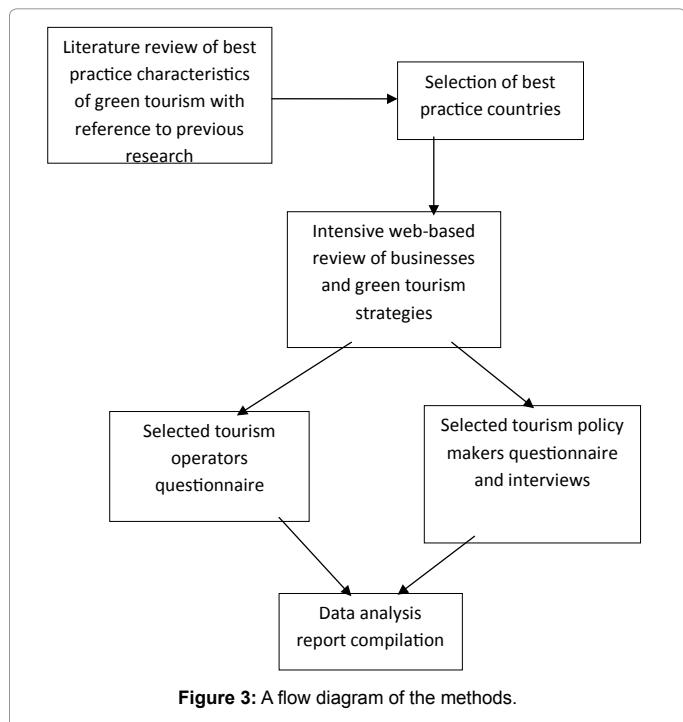
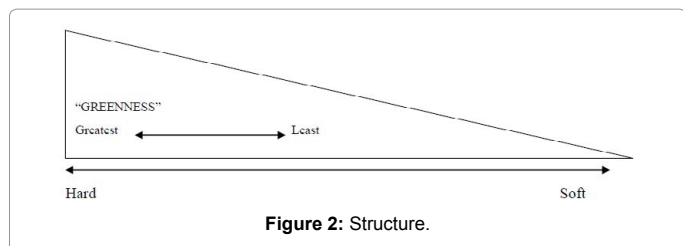
The above organization illustrates how market of tourism represents the different green market sequences fit the content of the overall market of tourism. They are arranged from left to right to indicate their order of greenness from ecotourism at one extreme to sea, sand and sun at the other. There is also an attempt to indicate the range within the ‘hard’ to ‘soft’ categories of tourism. (Source: modified from World Tourism Organization) (Figure 2).

Best practice green tourism operator

For the purposes of this research a best practice green tourism business is one that

- (1) Meets the criteria identified the green tourism definition.
- (2) Markets itself according to its green credentials.





(3) Has received a rational or international eco-tourism (or equivalents) accreditation award.

(4) Stands out as doing something that extends beyond the standard criteria to be recognized as best practice in its respective country.

Approach and Methodology

A flow diagram of the methods which have been used to undertake the research is presented. The approach is briefly discussed below (Figure 3).

Environmental development

The plan has focuses on site selection, building design, and construction. The main facets of the plan include [20]:

Sustainable building site and design

Design concerns examine architectural features such as site location, passive solar design, day lighting, renewable energy, water conservation, and landscaping. In addition, the pal examines environmental considerations associated with windows, insulation, and other building materials. The design also calls for resource-efficient technologies and appliances.

Sustainable construction

Sustainability in construction involves ensuring that modifications

to initial plans do not impair the sustainability features of the design, nor do they reduce energy efficiency. The environmental integrity of the site is to be preserved at all costs. Additionally, the site must be a clean and safe workplace.

Conclusion

Green tourism is a growing agenda for the future development of tourism. The growth in this agenda and increase in demand for green tourism are underpinned by many drivers [21-23] including:

(1) The development of a world-wide societal consciousness about nature protection and appreciation, fuelled largely by the environment's higher media profile.

(2) A growing interest by individuals to 'reconnect' with nature and seek out experiences of a more spiritual thought provoking and physically challenging kind.

(3) Pressure in the workplace and the highly competitive lifestyles led by many in the developed world.

(4) Improved access to the countryside and more free time and disposable income for an increased number of people.

The Scottish enterprise network recognizes that while some businesses are responding to a growth in demand for green products there is more that can be done, by government agencies and businesses to better develop green tourism in Scotland. Other countries around the world are capitalizing on the increasing interest in nature, wildlife and green tourism and the desires of people to seek out a wilderness experience. The purpose of this research was to investigate best-practice green tourism examples from around the world to understand how they are capitalizing on this interest and what Scottish tourism businesses and strategists in turn can learn from these experiences around the world. This research presents the outcome of this research and presents some best-practice characteristics of countries and businesses that are succeeding in green tourism.

In this paper, green tourism is also called ecotourism, which is a kind of low Impact to environment but contributing or protecting to the environment and culture inherently. As we can see from the criteria for ecotourism set up by the United Nations, green tourism has a wide range of conditions and standards, but which also means there are many possibility and potential development for green tourism worldwide.

With the increasing number of traveling around the world, people prefer green travel and make it to the locations. So, it is kindly of wisdom to promote and advocate people to cultivate the awareness and good habits in travel, such as protecting natural habits and fragile tourism sites. However, simply banning the entrance to the sites might decrease the experience of tourism and the local economy. Green traveling, here is also has another meaning of sustainable tourism, which contains two aspects, contributing not only to the ecology but also the local economy thriving. In other words, green tourism, doesn't necessarily mean the leisure time spend in tourism sites with comforts and contributes to local environment, culture or economy, but on the contrary, it is also an adventure to balance the relationship between people and environment in the sense of physical and emotional.

Take one kind of green tourism as an example, office people can take their green holidays to study the local flora, fauna and cultural heritage at their chosen tourism destination, by wildlife-viewing guide and tour, which might help them to enrich their experience and involvement locally with little or no negative impact on the native

environment. Also, the relationship between tourist and environment gets improved when tourists are learning how to protect and preserve local environment. Meanwhile, the learning experience from tourist will be brought to their residence places, and rewarded back to the places where they are working and living. Furthermore, the booming tourists are not only contributing to the local economy of the tourism sites, but also improved the relationship between people and environment nearly and remotely.

Companies operating in the lodging and hotel industry can increase the level of sustainability from proper building site and design, refurbishing and reusing existing buildings, and sustainable construction.

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