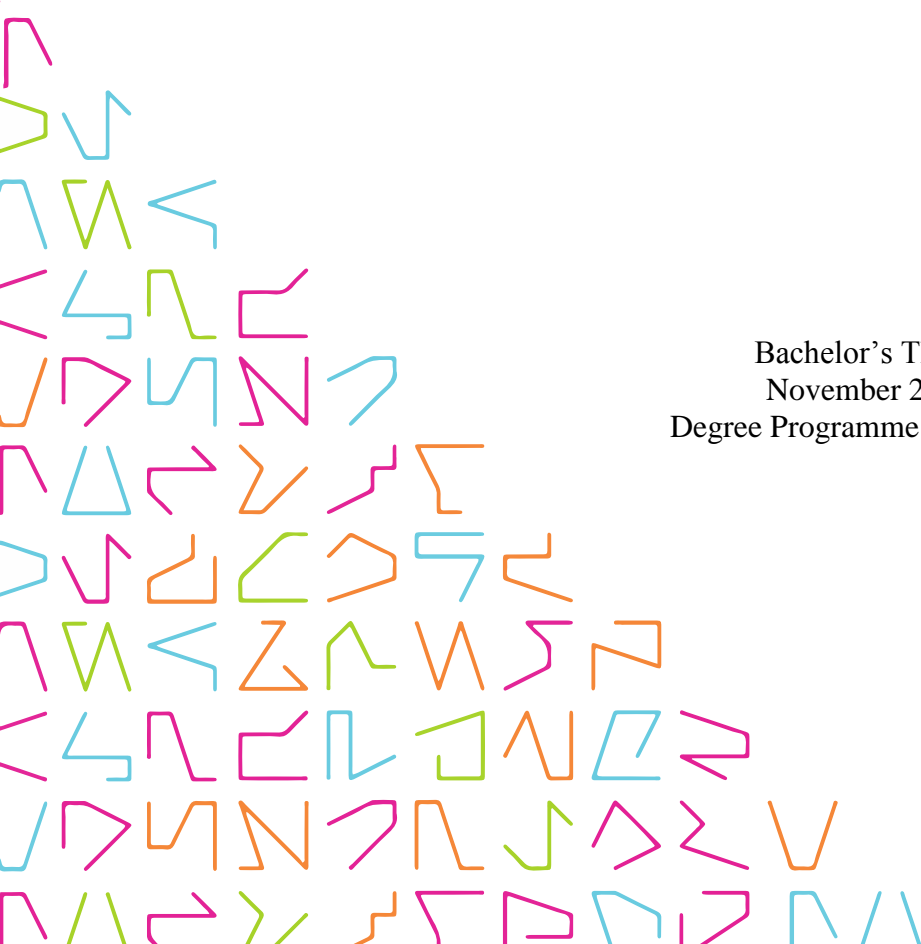


MARKETING OF ADVENTURE TOURISM DESTINATION IN NEPAL

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ABSTRACT

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Adventure tourism is one of the key factors of the Nepalese tourism industry. The main aim of this bachelor's thesis was to clarify the current situation and challenges for developing adventure tourism in Nepal and to evaluate the importance of appropriate marketing strategies. The thesis also focuses on promoting adventure tourism activities and rural tourism destinations. The objective of the thesis was to explore Dhorpatan Hunting Reserve as an adventure tourism destination at international level.

Secondary data collection method was used in the research. In the report, the concept of adventure tourism and the scope of adventure tourism in Nepal are described. Current marketing techniques of an organization working in this field have been explored in the thesis. This study describes the present scenario of Dhorpatan Hunting Reserve in more detail, and their development of infrastructure, safety and risk management. Hunting as a special interest sport, feedback from customers and future plans are discussed in the thesis.

Dhorpatan Hunting Reserve in Nepal as an adventure tourism destination is a case study in this thesis. In order to do the qualitative research, the author chose the phone interview method to accomplish the research.

Key words: tourism destination, adventure tourism, marketing

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ABBREVIATIONS

NRB	Nepal Rastra Bank
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
NTB	Nepal Tourism Board
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
WTTC	World Travel and Tourism Council
WTO	World Trade Organization
ATS	Adventure Tourism Society
IBA	Important Bird Area
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
DMO	Destination Marketing Organisation
ABC	Annapurna Base Camp

1 INTRODUCTION

Marketing is important for businesses to promote the products and to increase the sales revenue. Marketing also includes techniques to identify the strengths of the products/services and to differentiate them from the competitors' ones. Tourism today is a growing big industry, which includes multiple sectors. In the early ages people travelled only for a specific purpose but now due to the development of transportation and information technologies it is easy for people to travel for holidays, even for a short duration.

Many internal and external environments affect the market situation. It is important to have a positive impact in the market, because travelers nowadays check reviews through the internet before booking and using the product. Nepal is a destination for extreme adventure sports and even for solo travelers. Applying the appropriate marketing strategies helps to find customers as well as it helps customers to find the right service points.

Strong attractions; adventure sports activities like trekking and mountaineering, wilderness expeditions, culture and spiritual sites are the key tourism products of Nepal. Most of the international visitors are interested in extreme activities while Nepal also has a big market for religious and cultural tourism. Its unique climate, rich variety of cuisine and friendly environment make visitors to travel to the country.

Dhorpatan Hunting Reserve is a place with unique landscapes, valuable and endangered flora and fauna, high altitude pasture land and alpine, sub alpine and temperate vegetation. It is a protected area with a conservation program and aiming at income generation. DHR also focuses on tourism infrastructure development and facilitating tourism product. DHR is famous for hunting and trekking, it can be a destination for both domestic and international visitors.

The aim of this study was to develop and improve the marketing strategies for a tourism destination, also trying to find out new possibilities. The writer was trying to find the importance of Dhorpatan Hunting Reserve in international market. The theoretical framework of this thesis is about marketing of tourism destinations and adventure tourism. The writer also suggests new possibilities. A qualitative research was done to find out the outcomes. A phone interview technique was chosen. The interviews were done with different organizations, directly related to this field.

2 TOURISM IN NEPAL

Although Nepal is a small country compared with two big neighboring countries China and India, the Himalayan range and the cultural diversity make travelers worth every penny spent. Blessed with most beautiful nature, it fits for most of the exciting adventure sports that should not be missed. Beside the adventure sports Nepal is the birthplace of Buddha, who is known as founder of Buddhism. Pashupatinath Temple is famous for Hindu pilgrims all over the world and it is the most sacred temple in South Asia. On the other hand, adorable climate, fascinating festivals and ancient civilization characterize the country as an amazing tourism destination. Charming people around the country are always ready to welcome guests, and this is the biggest strength for promoting tourism in Nepal. Through online reviews and blogs most of the tourists say that Nepal is the most deserved and exciting tourist destination in the world.

2.1 Tourism overview

According to Department of Immigration statistics, Nepal received 313,512 tourists in the first six months of 2016. Compared to the previous year's statistics it is still low, the earthquake in Nepal in the beginning of 2015 might be a reason. Travel associations and Nepal Tourism Board have been marketing Nepal a lot for the upcoming tourism season. According to WTTC (World Travel and Tourism Council), the total contribution from the tourism industry in Nepal to GDP (Gross Domestic Product) was four percentages last year and it is expected to rise by 7 percentages this year. (ekantipur.com)

TABLE 1. Top 10 Source Markets

COUNTRY	ARRIVALS		CHANGES(%)
	2015	2016	
India	39,401	54,224	37.62
China	47,268	33,991	(28.08)
USA	19,454	28,676	47.40
UK	13,194	18,497	40.19
Sri Lanka	14,264	17,415	22.09
Thailand	18,294	17,231	(5.81)
Myanmar	13,829	12,927	(6.52)
Korea	10,518	11,332	7.73
Germany	3,744	9,673	15.8
Japan	9,267	9,415	1.59

Source: Department of Immigration, Nepal

Table 1 shows arrivals of visitors to Nepal from different countries. Based upon the data, Nepal receives most of the tourists from India and China, both are neighboring countries as well as most of the tourists from these countries are pilgrims.

2.2 Scope of adventure tourism and its market

Nepal is rich in culture, people living with different ethnic groups around the country. They have own culture, food and culinary, living styles and festivals. Nepal is also known as the land of festivals. Traditional crafts are also an attraction, Thangka painting, stone masonry and wood carving are available in tourism destinations. The traditions and hospitality make everyone to feel welcomed in all parts of the country. Nepal is also known as a country of festivals, so all around the year festivals are going on. (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Nepal 2016.)

UNESCO has listed 7 world heritage sites in Nepal. Most of these places are located around Kathmandu valley. These buildings and monuments are about 2500 years old and they have a high historical and religious importance. Chitwan National Park and Sagarmatha National Park are also listed as UNESCO natural world heritage sites. (visitnepal.com)

Due to the physical location, the country is divided into three regions, Terai, Mountain and Hilly. In the mountain there are low population and a bit cold climate during the year. It is surrounded by the mountain ranges.

Nepal is one of the emerging tourism hubs in South Asia and the best tourism destination for those tourists who are searching for thrilling adventure and the experience of a life-time. Many of the high altitude trekking routes and uncountable adventure activities are famous tourist attractions. Nepal is also famous for Pilgrimage site locations for Hindus and Buddhists.

Nepal is also known to world's adventurers due to its great travel destinations and popular trekking trails. Different culinary can be found in the capital city Kathmandu. Nepal is a country of monasteries and mantras, local secrets and hidden travel gems that will make the trip unique. According to Lonely Planet, Nepal ranks as 5th best travel destinations for 2017 (lonelyplanet.com, best travel destination for 2017). Nepal Tourism Board (NTB) has announced holiday packages targeting domestic tourists. The objective of the scheme is to promote domestic tourism. (kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2016-10-31.)

2.3 Relationship of tourism with the environment

The word tourism is becoming more complex, and tourism produces a variety of interactions with the environment. Environment, society, economics and culture are the key components of tourism. Since 1950s the flow of tourism started to be widely experienced. At that moment the attitudes to the environment became an instrumental use for wealth creation, while there was low level of participation in international tourism. Later of heightening on environmental awareness also incremented on international tourism. Asia and Latin America have made rapid economic development since the industrial revolution. (Holden 2008, 71.)

In 1990s ecotourism, green tourism and sustainable tourism became popular phrases in tourism development, also infrastructure development as well as global concern on environmental issues. According to (UNWTO 2006a), 800 million people are travelling over the world as international tourists. Global warming today becomes an issue of

global concern. Communication media, international conferences, different airlines and many organizations have been established and they focus on tourism development. (Holden 2008, 71.)

According to World Travel and Tourism Council - WTTC (2007), tourism contribution to the global economy in year 2006 was 10.3% of GDP, 234.3 million jobs and 8.7% of the total employment. It has become a bigger industry nowadays and there is a rapid growth in international tourism. Although the statistics figures are impressive there might be negative environmental consequences of tourism such as the usage of natural resources, that effects on ecosystem and pollution of water, noise, air. So it is also important for the concerned bodies to think both parts of the coin. (Holden 2008, 71- 72.)

2.4 Most popular adventure activities in Nepal

According to WTO 2001, International tourism arrivals are expected to grow by 4.3 percent per year to reach 1.6 billion by 2020. Also based on increasing spending levels, it can be said that tourism is the fastest growing industry. Concerning the adventure tourism Adventure Tourism Society (ATS) says that adventure tourism is growing at the annual rate of 10 to 15 percentages. (Sport and Adventure Tourism, Simon Hudson) None of all travelers want unexpected to happen but adventures are for those travelers who expect the unexpected memories. It is an outdoor leisure activity that is done in wilderness destinations or remote areas, unusual and unconventional means of transportation. (Canadian Tourism Commission, 1995, 5, in Fennell 1999, 49.)

Real adventure can be felt in remote areas with engagement with nature and its beautiful creations around. There might be challenges, risk and danger while doing such things. Many of the adventure travelers discover new things and destination. (Swarbrooke et al. 2003)

Adventure tourism has relationship with other forms of tourism such as culture, nature and sports tourism. Adventure tourism experience activities can be categorized as hard and soft adventures. Hard adventure trips are risky in nature that require good physical condition. On the other hand soft adventure can be done by those travelers who get afraid with hard adventure. However, the figure of travelers is rapidly increasing in hard adventure trips.

2.4.1 Trekking

Trekking is such kind of an activity in which people travel through rural areas where the journey is undertaken by feet. Passing through the hills or mountainous areas with a challenging environment is the main feature of trekking in Nepal. ACAP (Annapurna Conservation Area Project) circuit and Everest base camp trek are the world's most popular trekking routes today. Many of the routes are developed in different remote areas and due to own cultural distinctive characteristics, the areas are unique. Travel agencies arrange packages with a very good equipment and skilled Sherpas, who are familiar with mountains and who have many years' experience. Image 1 is a view from Annapurna Base Camp trekking route area with travelers capturing pictures.



PICTURE 1. ABC Trekking (source: Trek Nepal)

2.4.2 Paragliding

Paragliding is one form of of adventure sports, where flying id done in the sky with the air pressure but not in such high altitudes like the planes.



PICTURE 2. Paragliding in Sarangkot (source: blue sky paragliding)

Pokhara is the best destination for paragliding lovers, flying over Fewa Lake with the view of mountains and local areas attracts people. Image 2 shows the views of a local village with a clear view of Himalayan range in the background, this view is from Sarangkot Pokhara. Only two people can fly at a time and it is a recreational activity. It is also one of the most selling packages in the Nepalese tourism industry. (paraglidingnepal.com.)

2.4.3 White water rafting

For a truly unique adventure, people can experience Nepal from its lively waters. Whether they are experienced or beginner rafters, they will find Nepal's rivers a real treat. They can enjoy simply drifting along, observing the natural beauty or for the more adventurous ones, they can tackle the exhilarating white waters. Adventure companies in Nepal offer for tourists a variety of river tours and adventures with experienced guides. This is an experience not to be missed. (travelnepaladventure.com.)



PICTURE 3. White water rafting in Seti river

In picture 3 foreign travelers are enjoying white water rafting in Seti river, which is one of the famous packages. Boating, kayaking, fishing, swimming are also fun water games. Many tour operators have developed 1 to 10 days rafting packages according to their length. As it is a seasonal game, river safety is also an important part of adventure tourism. (<http://www.raftnepal.com/> 2016.)

Beside the abovementioned popular activities other adventure programs in Nepal are bungee jumping, mountain flight, rock climbing, mountain bike riding, jungle safari, and honey hunting. The important part is safety and a very good equipment, and a proper planning. There is a relationship between activities traditionally associated with adventure and existing forms of niche tourism such as culture tourism, nature tourism, activity tourism and expedition tourism. The activities for such forms can be in contact with other cultures, nature based activities, physical and mental activity as well as journey. (welcomenepal.com.)

2.4.4 Bungee jumping

Bungee jumping is a free falling thrill adventure in extreme areas. Bhote Koshi is a popular bungee jumping destination where expert and qualified workers as well as consultants work. The location is nearby Kathmandu and designed by 4X safety factors.

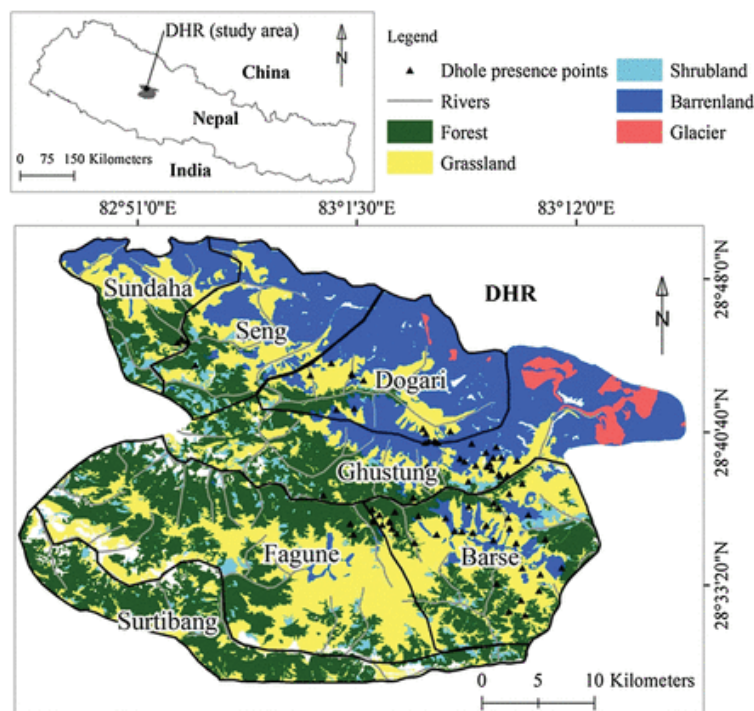


PICTURE 4. Bungee jumping in Bhote Koshi (source: the last resort)

3 DHORPATAN HUNTING RESERVE

3.1 History and establishment

Dhorpatan Hunting Reserve (DHR) is situated in Western Nepal, and it lies in the lap of mount Dhaulagiri. It is a special hunting spot in Nepal with unique landscapes. It is the only legal hunting reserve in Nepal, hunting of some species is allowed. The main attractions of DHR are hunting and trekking. Its vegetation is characterised by mixed forests, what make a perfect climate. It covers the area of 1,325 km², which touches three districts Rukum, Myagdi and Baglung, and the altitude ranges from 2,850 to 5,500 m (9,350 to 18,000 ft). Blue chip, Himalayan Tahr and Gumbo hunting are popular for this area.



PICTURE 5. Map of Dhorpatan Hunting Reserve

3.1.1 The internal management and government body

DHR works under the government body of Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation, Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation which was established in 1987 (forestrynepal.org 2016). The main purpose of DHR is to conserve endangered wild

animals and to preserve the ecosystem of high altitude in Nepal. Hunting also helps to control the population of certain animals as well as to promote adventure tourism.

DHR has set up rules and regulations for the visitors during their visits which are as follows (Dhorpatan Hunting Reserve):

- ❖ Entry fees should be paid before proceeding to the routes.
- ❖ Purchasing animals and plants is illegal.
- ❖ Using or disturbing natural resources is prohibited.
- ❖ Visitors have to take care of waste material themselves.

DHR is divided into six hunting blocks named Fagune, Barse, Seng, Dogadi, Ghustung and Sundaha. All the sides of the reserve are surrounded by rural villages except the north. According to this year's permission, the reserve has been given permission for allowing the hunting of 19 wild animals in five blocks of its area. The licences have a limitation to hunt fixed number of animals. According to the chief of DHR officer, around 20-25 workers are employed for every hunter in the reserve. Certain amount of the funds from hunters will go to the local community for environment conservation. It helps the local community to increase in the income level and the revenues are also used for different types of community developmental activities. Every year the revenue is increasing from hunting, the fee is set through the bidding process. (dhunganabishweshwar.blog.)

3.1.2 Accessibility

Reaching DHR takes time for the international visitors. The destination can be reached in three ways. Chartered helicopter may be available in request but it is more expensive than the motorway. Public buses can take people from Kathmandu to the nearest cities like Baglung or Tansen Gulmi. After that it takes at least 3 days walking to reach the headquarters.

3.2 Dhorpatan as a tourism destination

Nepal is a beautiful country with amazing untouched land. Dhorpatan Hunting Reserve offers real adventures of highland hunting. DHR is a hidden park in the lap of the beau-

tiful Himalayan range. The aim of this reserve is to preserve high altitude eco system in western Nepal. Himalayan Tahr is one of the famous hunting targets, a real hunting in unique high altitude environment is the main attraction of DHR. In the world, Nepal is known as a challenging hunting place in an extreme environment. DHR is also important for amazing array of rare bird species. Although many countries that have fashion of canned hunting (practice of killing animals that have been bred in captivity for the sole purpose of trophy hunting), the Dhorpatan Hunting Reserve has a certain area to hunt limited amount of animals, thus controlling the general population in the area. (Global Safaris Nepal.)

3.2.1 Hunting

Among many adventure activities hunting is an expensive one, but some of the tourists have a great passion for hunting. The best season for hunting is October-November and March-April. Normally the package duration is 2-3 weeks, trekking or walking takes more time than travelling by helicopters.



PICTURE 6. Trophy hunting in DHR

International tourists after arriving in Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal, can get to Dhorpatan with crew members and start camping. The crew members are always professionals and available with necessary equipment. Before this package it is important to take the permissions from the concerned authorities such as Department of National Park, Ministry of Forest Affairs, District Administration Office Kathmandu, Department of Custom, concerned district administration office, Dhorpatan Hunting Reserve, Animal health of directorate and local community. (nepaltravels.com 2016.)

3.2.2 Trekking and other attractions

Due to its location in high altitude Himalayan range and its natural beauty, it is the best trekking place in Nepal. Dhorpatan is rich in flora and fauna, there are 58 vascular plants and 36 different endemic species, including fir, pine and birch, rhododendron, hemlock, oak, juniper and spruce. 18 mammals including Blue chip, Himalayan Tahr, Leopard, Ghoral, Serow, Himalayan black bear, Barking Deer and many other herbivores. DHR is an Important Birds Area (IBA) out of 27 IBAs of Nepal. One hundred forty-nine species of birds were recorded in DHR. The higher areas of this region are covered by snow most of the time. While passing the trekking routes one covers high passes, jungle ravines, very remote areas, mountain trails as well as the Tibetan culture. Around the area mixed patterns of cultures can be felt by different ethnic groups.

Dhorbaraha is an interesting place to visit for Hindu pilgrimage. Dhorbaraha is also located near Dhorpatan within one of the block (adventuresnepal.com). Most of people living around DHR are specially Magar, Chhetri, Bishokarma, Chhantyal. There are around eight casts.

4 MARKETING

Marketing is a process of selling products/services and finding customers. It has been widely experienced and has many definitions. Good marketing begins with proper planning, with first finding out the current situation and then dealing with objectives. After implementing the plans, a good management also looks for the results and feedback. Marketing of tourism in a destination or in a country is not like marketing of products of a company. Good marketing concept in tourism should always favour sustainable tourism as maintaining the diversity, supporting the local economy, training staff, and taking care of waste management and proper use of resources. (Kotler et al. 2006)

4.1 Importance of marketing for a tourism destination

This chapter deals with the importance of marketing for tourism destinations. It also demonstrates marketing techniques and the relation of marketing to tourism. The concept of marketing now is better and widely understood compared to the early stages. Considering travel and tourism, many of the organizations adopt marketing strategies that have a positive effect on the results. The systematic strategies should be used according to the needs and expectations of the market. Organizations such as hotels, travel agencies, airlines and other organisations in tourism nowadays face a big competition.

Marketing has a lot of economic importance such as it generates more revenue, creates employment opportunities, brings in foreign currency earnings and influences on the economic development. Only effective tourism marketing strategies, tools and technologies help to find the potential clients and the clients to find the travel businesses. (solimarinternational.com.)

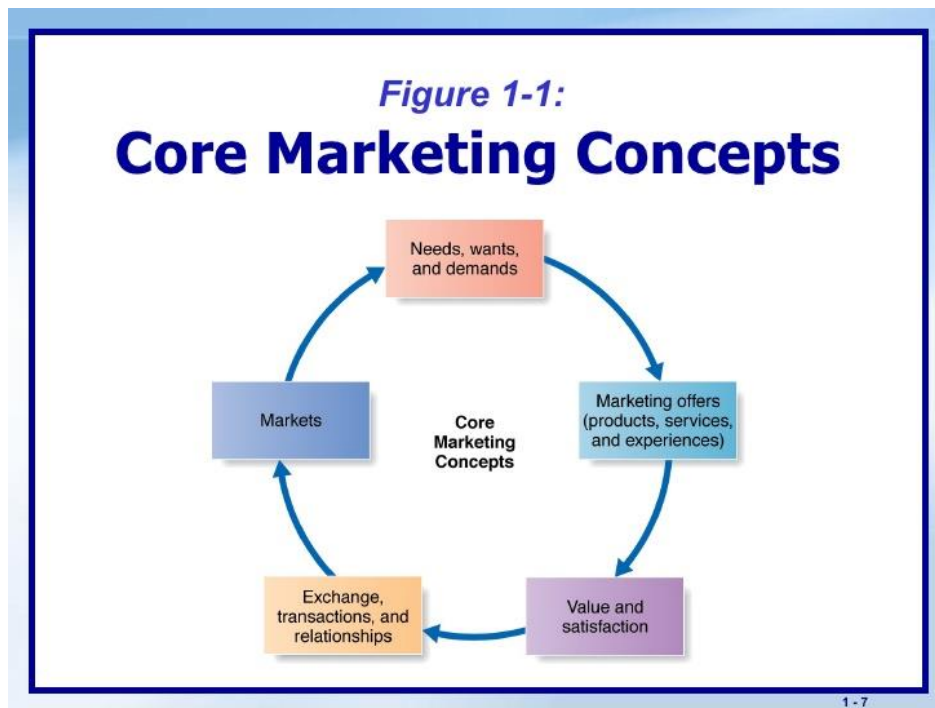


FIGURE 1. Core Marketing Concept

The concept of marketing clarifies every consumer's needs, wants and demands for a product and through marketing the product is offered. If customers are happy with what they get in exchange to money, they are satisfied. So market is not only buying and selling products, in wider knowledge it is exchanging the product with some transactions and having relationship marketing. (Kotler et al. 2006, 13.)

4.1.1 Destination based marketing strategies

The world is a global village today, due to the access to information technology people can get a lot of knowledge from the internet. People are more educated and also discovering new tourism destinations so there is more competition in the expanding market. Well-designed marketing strategies help a destination to create more jobs and more revenue. In destination-based marketing the external and the internal environment like organisational structure, government policies, branding, image, target markets and marketing communications are important factors.

Managers of DMOs (Destination Marketing Organisations) in a group meeting in USA listed as the challenges: adapting to technological change, destination management, new level of competition and finding new measures of success. It is also important to have

knowledge of current research results, best practises in the market, case studies and conference reports. (Pike 2008, 10-11.)

4.1.2 Promotion

To promote products means to make easier for finding the customers. It is very hard for a company to exist in global markets without proper promotion. Although there might be many ways of promoting, digital marketing makes the concept wider. There are many media online and in the internet that are not expensive.

In traditional marketing method promotion is done through advertising on radio, TV, newspapers and magazines. Sending mails, having billboards in the street and sponsoring for programs are also traditional ways of promotion. Digital ways of promotion in inbound marketing are a fast way of spreading the message, especially in social media and search engine optimization. (Stewart Swayze, cora.com.)

4.1.3 SWOT-analysis

SWOT-analysis is a necessary systematic step in identifying the problems and solving the problems related to the current market situation. In preparing a new marketing plan, the marketers always have to aware of the socio-cultural, economic, political, technological, environmental and legal factors. Many of the internal and the external marketing forces affect the current shape of the market. The idea of the SWOT-analysis for the organization is to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the business and the opportunities presented by the trading environment and any threats faced by the company. This helps to take the further action in the company. (Holloway & Robinson 1995,18.)

Prior to creating marketing strategies, the SWOT-analysis method helps to find organizational strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. This level of analysis enables an organization to determine whether there are factors present that will aid in the achievement of specific objectives (due to an existing strength or opportunity) or if there are obstacles that must be overcome before the desired outcome can be realized (due to weaknesses or threats).

In the field of tourism these have to be seen from the perspective of the client, not the organization. Location and brand image are very important factors for both clients and the company. Strong and positive image is always a key strength for the target market. (Holloway, 2004, 31.)

4.2 Marketing tools

Increasing the level of digital marketing is important, these days, because people search for most of the things in the internet. Different search engines, mobile phone design, email marketing, photo and video marketing are such extensive digital marketing, and web development also helps to break down e-marketing strategies. (brandaction.com.)

4.2.1 Branding

Branding makes the product unique and helps the identification in the market. Today there are so many similar products in the market from different brands. As branding is the process of marketing it helps to make the product image and differentiate from the competitors. Branding also attracts customers in significant way. Destination branding is also an example of it, and popular destinations, such as Great Wall of China, Niagara Falls have their own names that are famous all over the world.

... a brand name is more than the label employed to differentiate among the manufacturers of a product. It is a complex symbol that represent the variety of ideas and attributes. It tells the consumers many things, not only by the way it sounds (and its literal meaning if it has one) but more important, via the body of associations it has built up and acquired as a public object over a period of time (Pike 2008, 174.)

According to the mentioned paragraph, customers believe on the brand name and to maintain the brand name the companies have to identify the market situation and customer relationship. Therefore, branding a destination helps to find potential customers in a competitive market.

4.2.2 Social media

Social media are very essential tools for marketing tourism destinations. With new technologies old strategies have to be replaced. Social media are quick marketing tools, because nowadays many people all over the world use social media like Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn, TripAdvisor, Google+, Twitter and many more.

5 RESEARCH PROCESS, METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS

DHR is the only licenced hunting reserve in Nepal. It is an official and government authority, established for tourism development in Dhorpatan area, wildlife conservation and maximizing the profits for the local people. DHR has been doing the internal management of the park as well as documentation and survey.

Due to its physical location, Nepal has lots of opportunities in adventure tourism. Nepal can be the best tourism destination having a better scope of rural, nature, religious and cultural tourism. Thus growing tourism activities and making tourism a big industry, Nepal has a future on it. Marketing is an essential tool nowadays that increases the flow of tourists that can generate more foreign currency. This brings big economic advantages to the government with a lot of employment opportunities to the local people. What Nepal has to focus on is promoting the tourism destination for international tourists as well as domestic tourists.

Secondary data collection method was used in the research. For the report totally 10 questions were used. The first question was about the concept of adventure tourism. The second one dealt with the scope of adventure tourism in Nepal. The third question was for figuring out current marketing techniques of organizations working in this field. Target customer is always an important factor in marketing, and the forth question was about the target groups. Fifth question concerned about infrastructure and transportation that are also known as the backbone of the development. Question number six dealt with safety, security and risk management for adventure sports. Last part of the questions discussed about hunting as a special interest sport, feedback from customers and future plans.

5.1 Qualitative research

The author used the qualitative research method and phone interviews were done. The qualitative research was chosen in order to select professional participants which helped the author to find solutions. While doing the research, such as actors, events, processes and locations were important factors effecting it. There were more chances of getting the truth but it depended on and differed from individual knowledge.

The objective of a qualitative research is to gain information through thoughts and opinions. Usually qualitative research deals with small number of respondent to generate results. In this research method, the data analysis is always non-statistical. The advantage of using qualitative research might be flexible for the parties because it is easier to overcome with the research questions.

5.2 Data collection Method

According to the thesis topic, experts working in the related field were chosen for the interviews.

Phone interviews were done to accomplish the research. Qualitative interview technique is a method for collecting details and rich information from the professional people about how they experience and understand the topic. Organisations that have been working in tourism field were chosen and especially Dhorpatan Hunting Reserve was on the focus. Every interview had a time limit of 35 minutes but some of the interviews were a bit faster. The author gave a chance to choose as the language English and Nepali, two of the respondents chose English and rest of them Nepali.

TABLE 2: Interviews with the interviewees

Organisation	Position	Name	Date	Duration
Dhorpatan Hunting Reserve	Office secretary	A	15/10/2016	35 minutes
Nepal Tourism Board	Official	B	26/10/2016	24 minutes
Global Safaris Nepal	General manager	C	09/10/2016	26 minutes
Dhorpatan Hunting Reserve	Staff	D	25/09/2016	23 minutes

5.3 Planning

Planning is an important starting point for the research. The author intended to choose the professionals in the related fields. It was a bit difficult to choose the individual interviewees. According to the thesis topic and its goals, marketing of adventure tourism destination in Nepal, interviewees having different positions were chosen. However, their daily working life is directly related to this industry. Hence, for the phone interview, the interviewees were informed beforehand and the appropriate time for both parties was booked.

5.4 Analysis of the interview

Using the qualitative research, the author did phone interviews with different professionals. The information provided by the interviewees have not been modified. The names of the interviewees have not been published and they were given the letters A B C D. There were ten questions, and the answers of the interviews are presented here.

5.4.1 Response from A

Well, adventure tourism is experiencing new things in extreme environment. Although the concept is new, it has a huge market, every people

want to try new things in their life. Yes, Nepal can be the best place for adventure tourism because of its natural locality with nature made environment. Marketing media used are radio, television and newspapers for local levels. Online marketing is used for international level. The focus target group is young people and of course who want to do adventure things. Basically they receive customers from different nations. Nepal is a developing country itself, may be the development is not enough. But in another way it is also a strength for the tourism. Suppose roads in the villages destroy the trekking routes, also effect the jungle and wild animals. Well-equipped companies and more experienced travel staff makes the journey easier. As well as there are health post and hospital in local level. Some kinds of packages are risky, where they have compulsory have health report before departure. Nepal is rich in culture and a country of natural beauty, what can be say is tourist can have different experience from their society. And lots of things to do. Most of the visitors say they are happy and plan to visit again. Well hunting is an expensive game so there are limited seats. Of course the government has policy over it. Nepal has a future in tourism and can generate more economy. They have to focus more on international marketing such as organising travel fairs and providing more information.

According to the 1st interviewee he described adventure tourism as a new concept in Nepal. As an executive officer of DHR he clearly said Nepal has future in extreme sports games. He has been working in the same field for more than 15 years. He explained that natural beauty of such destinations attracts more international tourists not only for travelling but also for lifetime experience. Due to lack of knowledge still many destinations are unknown. Although hunting seems to affect in a negative way for animal rights, a country can generate more economy by hunting old animals. He was not satisfied with current marketing. He said that he has been planning and discussing with the management team and the government about adopting new techniques.

5.4.2 Response from B

Adventure tourism is done in an extreme environment with special interest. Most of them are outdoor activities and also physical challenges. Nepal is a different country in the world with so many games for adventure lovers. Although most of the travellers come for religious purposes but highly paying guests come for adventure purposes. Nepal tourism board as an official tourism council has had many marketing strategies. Joining and organizing many exhibitions, champions, tourism fairs over the country as well as in international level. NTB is also active in fast communication like social media and internet. The aim of tourism board is to promote tourism in Nepal, although Nepal receives most of the religious tourists but Nepal can be a destination for adventure seekers all over the world. Adventure activities are with more risk so it is recommended for people with good physical condition. Nepal tourism board is working on infrastructure development, safety and security, also specific police force called tourist police makes travellers the trip easier. Professionals and high skill workers work in the specific areas such as Sherpas who have experience of climbing mountains and have more knowledge on it, expert tour leaders, paragliding pilot. There are also schools and training centre for such people who are interested in it. Nepal has enough entertainment with nature and culture but still lack of virtual entertainment such as casinos, night clubs. Most of the travellers have always given positive response and they feel like once is not enough. Hunting is special game for special people and it has own limitations. Stable government and flexible rules always encourage in promotion of tourism industry.

Nepal Tourism Board is an official organization of Nepal working for promoting tourism activities, finding new possibilities, upgrading flow of tourism in Nepal. According to the interviewee B, Nepal has a lot of new possibilities in adventure tourism. Amazing landscapes, a variety of culture and friendly environment are the strengths of the Nepalese tourism. NTB has been participating in international tourism fairs and it also is active in current marketing affairs. In the norms of safety and risk management they have been giving training, schooling for special activities and also culture saving champions. Concept of tourist police has established who specially deal with tourists, their problems and activities. Later he described that tourism can add a big surplus in Nepalese economy. Just what we need are experts and more professionalism as well as best marketing.

5.4.3 Response from C

Global Safaris Nepal organizes wildlife activities tours over Nepal, especially hunting in Dhorpatan area. Nepal is a country of opportunities, as their experience adventure packages done in Nepal never can be found in other parts of the world. Friends, through the previous client's Global safari experiences are famous over hunting in Nepal. The most target groups now are European customers, beside that Americans and sometimes from other nations they received customers. The age group they received is above twenty-five plus but the average is 40 to 60. Customers have to be physically and mentally fit for the tour. They use helicopters for the transportation to reach the hunting destination. They have qualified and professionals license hunters with all the necessary equipment, as they have experience they have not faced any accidents yet. They received 90 percentage of foreign guests, and because their guests' holidays have a short duration, there is enough entertainment for them. Almost all tourists were happy with the experience and service. Hunting never has disadvantages because they hunt only the old animals that would die within two years. It also is beneficiary for the young animals to grow up. Government has the old rules and regulations, of course customers pay high tax but not get services at that level.

The travel agency Global Safaris Nepal is especially organizing hunting trips to Dhorpatan areas. Doing the adventure package the interviewee suggested to have good physical condition, also he prefers limitations for children and older people. Global Safaris is famous for organizing such trips, they are up to date with the current marketing strategies. In the view of private sector like such travel agencies they have contributed more in tourism sector. Many travel agencies opening every day have challenges to give the best service for their customers. Most of the travel agencies are doing digital marketing through social media online and on the internet.

5.4.4 Response from D

Activities that feel like different from the normal (everyday) environment, lifetime experience are called adventure things. People travelling from one place to another in purpose of such games is known as adventure tourism. Nepal has

scope in adventure tourism not only in one part but in all parts of the nation. Some of the beautiful places are still behind the scene because of rural part and low knowledge of marketing. DHR is one of the adventure tourism hubs that is located in high altitude. The beautiful Himalayan range and mixed geographical locality of Nepal makes the country itself an adventure tourism destination. Travelers nowadays are always looking for new experiences in different environments, target customers of DHR are professional hunters and who love trekking in high altitude. There has not been much development in infrastructure but hunters who came to DHR used to take charter helicopters, also bus route is one option but it is time consuming. Travel agencies have managed to keep the skilled and experienced tour leaders and porters for their travel packages and they are used to those critical situations. Nepal and its travel destinations are such natural and beautiful that foreigners feel fully satisfied. Most of the tourists fall in love with the nature, they say there is no heaven behind Nepal. Hunting itself looks to raise negative thoughts of animal rights but in reality every animal has records so it is allowed to kill only limited amount of animals in a year. If the government is taking high taxes from hunting, they also have to facilitate to the areas and also give training and schooling for such adventures games as well as motivation and skill development programs.

As the staff member of Dhorpatan Hunting Reserve, the interviewee D directly works in the field. He more focused on training and skill development of workers and development of English language. He wants to focus more on safety and workers' secure future who work on such kind of adventure sports.

Analyzing the responses from A, B, C and D; Nepal is a country of adventure games, such kinds of adventure tourism destinations are all over the country. A destination is a product in tourism industry, proper management and good marketing strategies make a place a perfect tourism destination.

Basically adventure tourism in Nepal is on-going new concept although Nepal has a long history in other tourism themes. Nepal is known for being a safe country to travel to, for affordable prices, and all seasons have equal importance for travellers. In modern tourism era everyone planning the next holiday wants to make it memorable.

5.5 Finding and conclusion

Based on the research, Nepal can be the best tourism hub in South Asia. The author makes a conclusion that there are so many places like DHR in Nepal, but due to traditional marketing strategies and not proper access to the destinations they still are looking for their own market. However, private companies have done effective marketing in this field, and there is a lack of government policies, rules and regulations.

In the research, questions were asked related to the concept of adventure tourism in Nepal, its scope and current situation. Secondly, the research aimed to carry out the marketing strategies and tools used by the organizations and tourism management as well as target customers. Last part of the questions dealt with future plans. All interviewees were directly related to tourism field. Two of them were chosen from Dhorpatan Hunting Reserve, respondent A works for the management team and D works in the field.

6 DISCUSSION

Although Nepal is in the list of developing countries, it is rich in natural beauty. Previously tourists used to come for traditional tourism packages like mountaineering, trekking and religion. Twenty years ago, Nepal was an emerging tourism destination in South Asia but due to ten years' internal civil war, there was a decrease in the flow of tourism and people were not beneficiary from this industry. These days there are lots of opportunities and also challenges of saving old culture and monuments.

Nepal itself is a destination for different types of tourism. Due to its physical location, adventure tourism is one of the popular tourism packages nowadays. Games, such as paragliding world cup, elephant polo, white water rafting, honey hunting and bungee jumping, are special interest tourism. Professionals in this field are trying to create new packages like motorcycle tours to Rara lake. Training and information are also provided to local people for making the tourism destination easier. According to different tourism destination records, these years there is huge increment in domestic tourism. Among adventure tourism games, hunting is a special interest game. According to the interviewees A, B, C and D, they have managed this game in an ecofriendly system.

Friendly environment, food, culture and giving respect to guests is not enough. Not only concerning the adventure tourism, Nepal can be the best touristic destination, which also has scope for rural, nature, religious and cultural tourism, thus making tourism as a big industry, which can generate more input to the economy and increase in foreign currency. Political establishments and good governance only can maintain good systems and provide positive information at international level

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Email request sent to the interviewees

Dear Sir/Madam

I am Nirajan Baral, Student of Tampere University of Applied Sciences, Tampere Finland. I am a Bachelor's Degree student in the Degree Programme in Tourism. Now I am working for the bachelor's thesis with the topic of "marketing of adventure tourism destination in Nepal".

As I know you have been working in the same field for a long time. I decided to take some of your valuable experiences, which can be of great help for my thesis project. I hope you can manage me a time for taking a phone interview for around half an hour. You can forward me your available date and time with the phone number. Thank you for your valuable time, the suggestions will be highly appreciated. Hopefully the information will be of great help and source for my thesis project.

Sincerely

Nirajan Baral

Tampere University of Applied Sciences

Tampere, Finland

Appendix 2. Questions for the interview

Marketing of adventure tourism destination in Nepal

1. How you define adventure tourism?
2. Do you think Nepal is a tourism destination for adventure tourists? Why?
3. What are the marketing strategies you have used in your organisation? Future plans?
4. Who are the target groups and what groups of customers are you serving now? Countries?
5. What do you think about the infrastructure and transportation?
6. Adventure activities are of high risk. How risk management, safety and security are handled?
7. Do you think there is enough entertainment for foreign tourists?
8. What kinds of feedback you have received from them?
9. How do you think about hunting as an adventure tourism? Is it good for animal rights?
10. What are your future plans and expectations from the government to improve?