



SUPPORTING TOURISM BUSINESS IN NIGERIA VIA INTEGRATED MARKETING

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ABSTRACT

Tourism in Nigeria could be a big business; however, the nation has not capitalized on it. When 30 black mayors from American cities came to Lagos for the Black Heritage Festival, a carnival parade followed by some traditional culture and a visit to Badagry, a former slave-exporting port; the then governor of Lagos State, appealed to the mayors for advice on how to attract American tourists. Nigeria is considered the largest black nation in the world, with the total population at 170,123,740 (million) people last recorded in July 2012 (Inde.xmundi. Com, 2012) and 250 languages; she is rich in oil, gas, and other natural resources such as gold, diamond, animal games, tropical rain forests, savannah grasslands, mangrove swamps and the shale savannah near the Sahara, and diverse culture. Being strategically located at the end of eastern part of West Africa, she is equally rich in tourism; nevertheless, the tourism industry in Nigeria is experiencing no growth, because of some fundamental problems. Therefore, this paper is to offer possible business (marketing) solutions on how tourism could be promoted in this nation, so as to have an impact on the economy.

Keywords: Tourism, Nigeria, Infrastructures, Marketing, Economic impact, Corruption, Terrorism.

1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is considered as one of the world largest growing industry and despite the occurrences of terrorism, air catastrophes, tsunamis and other natural disasters and even the present global economic meltdown, it has remained robust as there is no sign of slowing down in growth trend. In today's challenging economic climate, every business needs an organization-wide commitment to a comprehensive marketing strategy so it will stand out among the growing number of competitors competing for consumers (Iyiola and Oni-Ojo, 2013); however, tourism business in Nigeria has failed to do this. Despite many obstacles facing the continent of Africa, tourism is having an impact on the economy of the continent.

According to WTO (2009) international tourist arrivals have continued to experience a growth trend from 25 million in 1950, to 277 million in 1980, to 438 million in 1990, to 684 million in 2000, and reaching 922 million in 2008. The robust growth market for tourism has been in Africa, with most destinations showing steadily more than above average increases in arrivals and receipts. For example, from 2000 and 2005, international tourist arrivals to Africa increased from 28 to 40 million - an average growth of 5.6 % a year, compared to a worldwide ANNUAL total of 3.1 %. During this period total Africa's International tourism incomes jumped from US\$ 10.5 billion to US\$ 21.3 billion (WTO, 2009).

The World Tourism Organization, a United Nations agency, has denned tourism as: "the activities of persons traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business, and other purposes" (Middleton and Hawkins, 1998). Since the 1950s, the numbers of international tourists and their expenditures have grown from an estimated 25 million arrivals in 1950 to more than 500 million in the late 1990s. It is projected that global tourism will grow 3 to 4 percent a year between 1995 and 2010 (Middleton and Hawkins, 1998). If one considers the amount of money spent in travel, lodging, food, and entertainment, then tourism is currently the world's largest industry. But the question arises: what will be the impact of increased economic activity of this type in Africa? Tourism, unlike more measurable commodities (i.e., minerals, cocoa, and coffee), provides services to visitors who travel to the source to consume them.

Well-known for its unique wildlife, captivating scene and friendly communities, Africa is supposed to triple the size of its tourism industry by 2020 as appropriate efforts are made to guarantee the safety and security of visitors. The World Tourism Organization (WTO) is confident that Africa will attract about 77.3 million people in 2020, up from 27.8 million in 2003, hotel operators are investing heavily to ensure they offer the services and standards that international visitors look for when traveling on holiday or business.

Tourism differs from other industries only in the sense that it uses a different mix of marketing factors; in view of its distinctive features: (i) as an export service and (ii) it actually necessitates the consumer visiting the country (destination) in question. Activities associated with tourism involve monetary transactions. Part of these activities include visitor spending on trips and durable goods, expenses on development and construction of tourism and recreation amenities, and operational costs of these facilities and programs. Both public and private agencies are interested in the economic impacts of tourism for the following two reasons:

- (a). The roles of cost-effective influence investigation answers the basic essential questions raised by government legislators, regional developers, and the general public. How will tourism bring economic development to the community?
- (b). Economic Impact Activity (EIA) is important in terms of decision making for evaluating a new or existing project and allocating budget funds. The information gathered by an EIA, can be used to determine the relative benefits and costs of alternative tourism and recreation

development strategies (Archer, 1982). EIA's can also help to assess the degree of dependence of the local economy on tourism and the potential economic growth from tourism (Frechtling, 1994).

Nigeria has a total land area of over 356,000 square miles and it is a country with remarkable tourist attractions - such as wide range of wildlife and thrilling places for vacationing, exploration and sightseeing. Visitors to Nigeria will be thrilled by the marvels of nature that abound in the land, rare, amazing plants and animals seen only on special television programs or magazines. Nigeria is endowed with many natural resources and some of the wonders of the natural world, which can be observed by visitors to those locations.

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

While tourism industry in Nigeria has never been fully developed in a large scale capacity, it has suffered tremendously during the past military and (even) civilian rules (Iyiola and Akintunde, 2011). Gray (1989) concludes that Nigeria is still not a popular tourist destination as tourism services in are not geared in as large degree towards tourists, unlike Kenya and Ivory Coast. Tourism, although beginning to perform well in other African countries such as Ghana, South Africa, and even Tanzania; is almost non-existent in Nigeria; owing to the country's poor international image, combined with the obstacle placed in the way of visitors, for example difficulties in obtaining visas and the lack of suitable accommodation, few people visit Nigeria solely as tourists (Iyiola and Akintunde, 2011). In late 2002 the government declared tourism as one of its six key areas for economic development in 2003-07; however, this has not come to reality yet. Therefore, this paper outlines how tourism could be well promoted and what should be done by the government so as to attract tourists into the country.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

By any standard, tourism has become the world's number one industry. By the World Tourism Organization (WTO) assessments of international travelers, over 528 million people participate annually with gross receipts exceeding US\$320 billion. Globally, it is projected that a total of 74 million people gain direct employment from the tourism business; from travel and transportation, accommodation, promotion, entertainment, visitor attractions and tourist retailing. While tourism has greatly contributed into the global integration within areas such as the European Union (EU) or as a facilitator for modernization, economic development and affluence in developing nations in the Third World (Williams, 1998). According to Iyiola and Akintunde (2011) not much work has been done extensively in the area of marketing tourism in Nigeria; therefore, few literatures are available for review; however, extensive body of literature in the field of tourism has been incorporated; promotion strategies are particularly invaluable to tourism business in Nigeria, because of its intangible and immobile nature and, quite importantly, tourism is an experience that cannot be inspected or tested before purchase. Numerous

destinations in Nigeria with a variety of attractions have failed to achieve their tourism capacities because their promotion is not effectively targeted. In view of the fact the nature of tourism is intangible, immobile, and most especially, because tourism as a 'product' that cannot be inspected or tested before purchase; contrasting manufacturing, which allocates products to market, tourism transfers market to products (Fakeye, 1991). These peculiarities in tourism pose trials that involve pronounced promotional strategies, planning and management practices (Awaritefe, 2003).

One of the primary aims of destination promotion is to project images of destinations to potential tourists, to make the destinations become desirable to them. The images projected will therefore, represent the real experience or product as they give the potential tourists a pre-taste of the destinations. According to Awaritefe (2003), "the functions of tourism promotion may be summarized as involving initiating changes in purchase behavior or reminding tourists of an existing destination. To achieve these functions, tourism promotion is usually designed to be informative, persuasive or reminding. Informative promotion is more relevant to prospective tourists, defined in the study as individuals who had not visited a destination on vacation within the past year(s) but had previously indicated interest in visiting." One of the ways to generate tourism interest in Nigeria is to involve consumers in activities involving leisure/recreation, cultural appreciation and appreciation of nature, history and cultural artifacts were dominant experiences, values and motivation for destination visit. Past studies have examined the spatial behavior of tourists of various cultural, economic and social groups in divers Western environments. Such studies include Adams *et al.* (1975), Burch (1976), and Goffman (1971), and more recently, Moscardo (1992; 2001), Eftichaidou (2001), Woods (2000), Lubbe (1998) and Oh *et al.* (1995).

Part of the general conclusion reached in these studies is that economic status alone cannot be used to be the major determinant in tourism behavior, just as an individual's culture, social group or class does not adequately explain tourism behavior and taste patterns. While showing variations in quality of environmental features between tourists in various destinations and between foreign and domestic tourists in their spatial behavior, values and motivations, the position that cultural, socio-economic or demographic factors determine visitor behavior, activities and use patterns in destination environments is still inconclusive (Awaritefe, 2003). One of the benefits tourism can bring is to boost the economy of the state, according to Josiam *et al.* (2005), shopping is reported to be the most popular pastime of American vacationers, so malls and shopping centers can be major tourist attractions. Consumers (tourists) gain satisfaction from shopping itself, apart from the purchases, it can be a social activity conducive to spending time with friends and relatives (Christiansen and Snepenger, 2002). Souvenirs become tangible evidence of the travel experience purchased to sustain memories of the trip (Littrell *et al.*, 1994).

3.1. Consumer Behavior

According to Knudson (1998), people will generate impact on the environmental resources they use, just as diverse environmental elicit different influence on the individual's behavior. Notable environmental psychologists, such as, Rapoport (1976), and Odemerho (1986), suggest that differences in culture, socio-economic and demographic characteristics may reflect differences in environmental resources use and activity patterns amongst visitor groups. Different groups of tourists would possess different destination images, and thus require different promotional messages. While such a position has attracted some research interest in the West, the situation in third-world environments, especially tropical Africa, differs. The postulation that destination images of non-tourists, termed organic images, differ from destination images formed by tourists through personal experience, termed complex images, has not been rigorously substantiated by empirical research in third-world Africa (Awaritefe, 2003). "Unfortunately, poor propensity by Nigerians to patronize tourist destinations in the country while on vacation is equally matched by a corresponding paucity of tourism studies. One consequence of this is that the competitive strength of the various types of destinations to sustain different domestic tourist groups in Nigeria is yet to be properly understood. There is still much to know concerning the types of tourism that are most desired and valued by various domestic tourist groups, especially prospective and actual tourist groups in the country" (Afolabi, 1993). It is with the purpose of providing such information on destination environment 'images' that this study is undertaken. The paper thus aims to provide salient information on the destination experiences or images of both potential and actual domestic tourist groups in Nigeria, and to interpret the underlying factors influencing both groups in their destination selection decisions. Among other factors that could affect tourist behavior is convince to access location, basic infrastructures that will make their visit a pleasant and memorable one. According to Mullen and Johnson (1990), the following will play a vital role in ways consumers make a (purchase) decision:

3.1.1. Feeling

"Emotions are strong, relatively uncontrollable feelings that occur when environmental events or our mental processes trigger physiological changes, such as increased heart rate; thereby, affect our behavior" (Iyiola and Iyiola, 2011). In the framework of consumer behavior, the result of the inner process of emotion is a feeling toward the product.

3.1.2. Knowledge

Almost all human behavior is learned; however, most part of learning is incidental and it induces change in our behavior due to our experience. By definition *learning* is the improvement or attainment of a relationship concerning two stimuli, or between a stimulus and a response. In the field of consumer behavior the outcome of this association is a change in the ways consumers behave toward a product.

3.1.3. Perception

When a person is motivated, he is ready to act; however, how he acts depends on his view of the situation. In marketing, the manner consumers perceived things have emotional impact on their behavior. Perception, according to [Berelson and Steiner \(1964\)](#) "is the process by which we select, organize, and interpret information input to create a meaningful picture of the world." Frequently, perception is used to refer to consumer's beliefs about a product.

3.1.4. Incentive

Motivation denotes a state within the individual that stimulates, upholds, and guides behavior toward certain goal. It is usually assumed that attaining the goal leads to satisfaction.

3.1.5. Objective

Intention can be distinct as a strategy to accomplish some specific behavior. Within the context of consumer behavior intention refers to the plan to acquire or use the product, and consumer refers to the actual acquisition or use of the product. In this chapter, we begin our consideration of intention and consumer by examining the relationships between the internal processes, intention and consumer.

3.1.7. Culture

Nigeria which has been labeled "a country of many nations," is a cultural melting pot where influences from many directions have joined to produce a rich cultural complex ([Leavy, 1990](#)). The culture of a society can be defined as the society's ways of life, in terms of the, arts, sciences, customs, politics, religions, and economics that differentiates one society from another, and that can influence the individual consumer's behavior. Nigeria's culture has enjoyed worldwide attention for centuries, in its dance, sculpture, drama, and music. Traditional bronze and brass sculptures from Benin and Ile-Ife, and the wood carvings of the Yoruba people are in millions of private collections and are also showcased in some of the world's most prestigious museums.

3.2. Condition of Tourist during Military Rule

From the late 1980s and 1999; when Nigeria returned to civilian democracy of sorts, were marked by blatant state of repression by the intense activity of an aroused civil society. The standard of living declined even further than before, external debts increased, and 1970s programs of development that had emphasized the provision of basic human needs were abandoned in favor of export-led strategies. It was also a period of conflict as poor people protested government policies ([Falola, 1999](#)). As Nigerian look for ways to diminish their obstacles, they are becoming progressively self-assured that some newly executed actions to boost tourism and foreign involvement in business will not only strengthen their prospects for the future but also attract the attention of African-Americans ([Leavy, 1990](#)).

3.3. Nigeria New Economic Frontier

As a nation, the economy of Nigeria had relied mainly on oil as the source of income. An economy that swung solely on the fulcrum of one commodity was bound to run into trouble; the unstable price of oil in the international scene, there is a need to tap into other sectors of the economy to augment her income. Tourism is a prime sector for this augmentation. As the returns to democracy in 1999, the government began to take bold steps in restructuring the economy.

3.4. Dishonesty

One of the major challenges that have faced the nation over the years is the issue of corruption and its debilitating ancillaries – bribery, fraud, and nepotism. Corruption has become so entrenched in the country that it had inhibited growth in all sectors and has been the primary reason behind the country's difficulties in developing fast. An international agency -Transparency International that watch on corruption rankings worldwide rated Nigeria among the five most corrupt nations in the world, a humiliating track record that has inhibited growth in all areas of venture in the country – tourism inclusive. When oil shoved groundnuts, cocoa, tourism and rubber into oblivion and became the nation's main source of earnings, it opened Nigeria to inflow of large sums of money. Revenue made from oil in one year is much greater than had ever been made from agro based sources for several years. In an effort to connect with the new sudden wealth, there is need to develop the infrastructures of the nation such as – power sector (electricity), airports, roads, bridges etc., which led to awards of massive contracts lacking standard procedures. Money was spent by government uncontrollably, as corruption escalated and has soared out of control. Running a government that is transparent is difficult in Nigeria and this has made Nigerians suffered as corruption made it hard; the poor economic growth of the nation can also be traced to corruption.

4. SUPPORTING TOURISM IN NIGERIA

According to [Iyiola and Akintunde \(2011\)](#) destination marketing executives must understand that information search behavior of travelers is vital for designing effective marketing campaigns because it represents the primary stage at which marketing can provide information and influence travelers' vacation decisions; as consumers will use that information to form a perception of a particular destination on which such information is gathered. The following measures are suggested:

a) Promotion Management

Consumers are to be informed, as this is very essential. In other to effectively market tourism, adequate promotion must be in place to inform consumers of various tourist locations and what they stand to gain by visiting such locations. Sufficient campaign schemes must be implemented to arrive at preferred end. Therefore, the following promotion strategies are suggested. There are

various promotion strategies that could be employed to promote tourism in Nigeria. Some of these promotion ideas are discussed below.

b) Informative Promotion

Information promotions seek to provide potential tourists with information on a particular destination so that they are aware and well informed of it in their selection (purchase) decision.

Persuasive promotion: Persuasive promotion is more pertinent to repeat tourists. Repeat visitors are defined in this study as individuals who had previously visited the destination on vacation. Persuasive promotion is thus intended to persuade such potential tourists who had visited previously to repeat purchase. Similarly, reminding promotion is targeted at visitors who had experienced travel to a destination previously.

c) Reminding Promotion

Reminding promotion is intended to keep destinations in the minds of previous visitors so that they consider repeat visiting. Implicit in the discussion on the various types of tourism promotion and their functions is the assumption that the destination images of non-visitors who are prospective tourists would be different from those of actual tourists. In fact, building on such assumptions it has been postulated that destination images among prospective and actual tourists evolve through three stages, organic, induced and complex, with the tourists in each stage requiring different types of promotional messages. It is further posited that destination images held by prospective tourists prior to exposure to promotional information, termed organic images, would differ from images formed when individuals are exposed to promotional messages from tourism suppliers, termed induced images. Similarly, images formed by tourists through personal experience at destinations, termed complex images, would differ from the organic images of non-tourist groups.

Table-1. International Tourists' Arrivals and Earnings in Nigeria

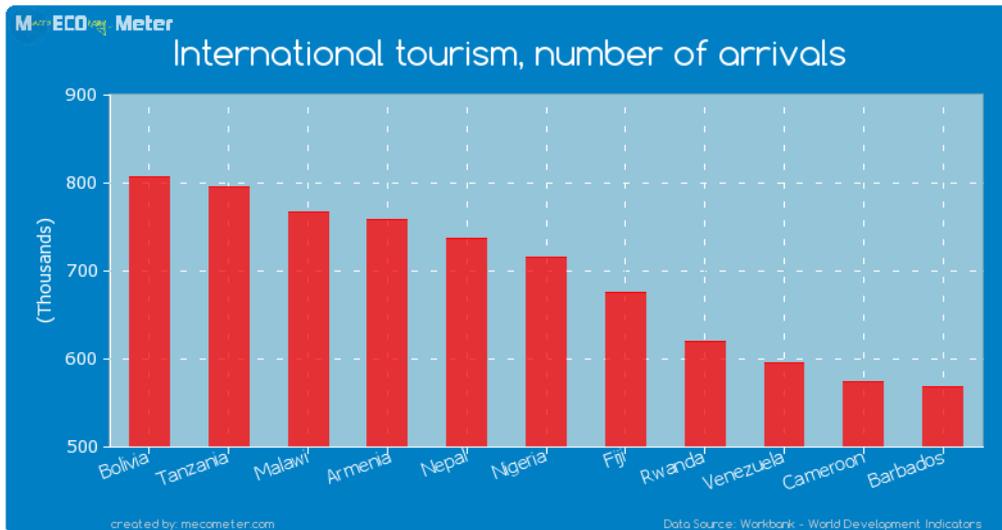
Year	Total Number of Arrivals	Value
1995	656	\$47,000,000
1996	882	\$58,000,000
1997	611	\$83,000,000
1998	739	\$81,000,000
1999	776	\$99,000,000
2000	813	\$186,000,000
2001	850	\$168,000,000
2002	887	\$256,000,000
2003	924	\$58,000,000
2004	962	\$49,000,000
2005	1010	\$139,000,000
2006	1111	\$209,000,000
2007	1212	\$337,000,000
2008	1313	\$958,000,000
2009	1414	\$791,000,000
2010	1555	\$738,000,000
2011	715	\$688,000,000

Source: (<http://www.indexmundi.com/facts/nigeria/international-tourism>)

4.1. International Tourists' Arrivals and Earnings in Nigeria

The average international tourists arrivals to Nigeria is about 1.09 millions; of which represents a negative growth (decline) of 15.9 (%) in the last 10 years from (2001 to 2011). In 2009, according to the World Bank, international tourists' arrival in Nigeria was at last measured at 1,414,000.. Over the past 16 years, the value for this indicator has fluctuated between \$23,000,000 in 1996 and \$389,000,000 in 2008.

Figure-1. Arrivals in selected African nations



Source: (<http://mecometer.com/whats/nigeria/international-tourism-number-of-arrivals/>)

4.2. Discussions and Suggestions on Government Roles in Improving Tourism

Nigeria's efforts to diversify and encourage greater foreign investment will come to deaf ears if the transport infrastructures, water supply, telephone system, hotel/motel industries, and electricity, currently in a fairly dilapidated state, are not upgraded. In associations to travel and tourism Nigeria has immense potential. The following are suggestions on how tourism could be improved in Nigeria. While it seems that most of these are directed towards the government, it is equally important to note that individuals also has a part to play.

4.2.1. Immigration Visa

Way before the events of September 11, 2001, Nigerian immigration service center around the world have been too rigid in their demands for potential tourist to meet in order to secure tourist's visa to Nigeria. "Oddly enough, Nigeria still is not a popular tourist destination. Unlike Kenya, with its vast game preserves, or the Ivory Coast, services in Nigeria geared in as large degree to tourists...the first thing you need to get is the visa. Information can be obtained from the Embassy of Nigeria in Washington, D.C., or the Nigerian Consulates in Atlanta, New York,

and San Francisco. Start the process two months ahead of your departure date or let a travel agent handle it. A yellow fever vaccination is required and a hemoglobin injection is highly recommended. Travelers should start taking malaria pills at least a week before departure” (Gray, 1989).

4.2.2. Airports Improvement

Recently, an American traveled to Nigeria and said he started to form negative impressions about the nation right from the international airport. The airport is dirty, poorly light, and unnecessary long lines were formed to pass through immigration and customs. It is therefore, a suggestion to the government of Nigeria to bring the standard of all airports to international standard. It is also important to develop local airports for easy travel.

4.2.3. Construction of Good Roads

Let us face the fact, Nigerian roads are bad. Tourist must be able to have a comfortable ride to and from their destinations; this is not the case in Nigeria. There are pot holes everywhere; because of this, the conditions of the vehicles are in a deplorable state. Similar to Route 66 in the United States and the Explorer Highway in Australia, the 3,000km tarred highway offers a great diversity in tourist attractions -- a choice of game parks each unique in their own way, ghost towns from mining heydays and frontier outposts, desert adventures, hiking, shopping, historical sites, game fishing and beaches. Good roads are keys to not only safety but also to the comfort of tourists.

4.2.4. Hotels/Accommodations

Most good hotels are located in Abuja, Port Harcourt, Benin, and Lagos. Most of the tourist’s centers are without comfortable accommodations. In order to attract tourists, comfortable hotels must be provided, either by the government, private companies or individuals who want to cash in on the business.

4.2.5. Clean Environment

Nigeria is dirty. A quick glance of the streets will discourage an average tourist. There are no designated landfills. Trash is everywhere. Most of the citizens are not disciplined enough to make sure that their environment is clean and free of trash. Adequate land must be provided and be designated as landfills. Trash must be picked up on regular basis and individuals must also make sure that they adhere to this arrangement. Without clean environment, tourists will be afraid for their health.

4.2.6. Safety / Security

The marketability of individual destinations and global tourism is vulnerable to sudden changes in market perceptions. The attacks of September 11, 2001, in which hijacked Boeing 767 and 757 commercial aircraft were used as flying missiles which blew up the Twin Tower of the World Trade Center in New York City and part of the Pentagon in Washington DC, massively disrupted global tourism. This 2001 attacks generated panic, thereby, compromising the security of commercial aircraft and global tourism safety worldwide. Personal safety and security is a big issue in Nigeria, as the 'Boko-Aram' terrorist sect is having a free for all terrorist acts in the country, has not helped the already volatile situation. While it is important to note that most tourists are not safe in the hotels, their safety however, could not be guaranteed while on the streets. Night travel is highly discouraged because of armed robbers and unending corrupt police check points.

4.2.7. Promotion / Advertisements

Nigeria should aggressively promote tourism to outside world and open their borders. Such promotion should be done through mass media and by integrated marketing in foreign lands. All the embassies must be instructed to take an active role in promoting tourism to their host country. Mass media such as: television, radio, newspapers, magazines, billboards should be used in promoting tourism. Since this will cost a lot of money, the Federal Government should include in their annual budget funds specially allocated for promoting tourism.

5. CONCLUSION

While this non-empirical article has been able to determine that tourism is a big business and that through tourism, the economic, political, and social life of the people in Nigeria can improved greatly, it is ironic therefore, while this industry has not been fully developed by the government of Nigeria. Mostly, the environmental attributes of the destinations such as infrastructure/facilities/amenities, attractions and security / safety factors that were revealed to be of central concern... it is therefore, suggested that any policy strategy to enhance tourism destinations must be adopted (Awaritefe, 2003). The bottom line is how the consumers will behave in the tourism market in Nigeria. Due to all these negative information provided in this article, a tourist will have to think twice before selecting Nigeria as their number one choice of a place where to spend their vacation.

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