Chapter-5
Opportunities of Tourism Marketing in Uttarakhand

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Throughout history people have traveled all over the world for a variety of purposes to trade to see different lands, to know people and culture, to fight wars and to educated themselves. Until recently only rich and leisured people in the society who had free time and money were taking up travel and tourism. But, with the change in demographic trends followed by increasing affluence and rising real incomes have made people to move out for fun, pleasure, adventures, and to educated themselves. Aside this, technological innovation has also offered greater mobility and access to travel. The growth of tourism industry thus reflects both the desire to travel for educational, recreational and cultural reasons and the development of means to do so.

Thus tourism is a popular industry providing employment opportunities for the people of the country and earning valuable foreign exchange, besides providing wide scope for the development of the region. It enables contacts among people from the most distant parts of the globe, people of various languages, races, creeds, political beliefs and economy standing. It provides greater scope for understand between people of different cultures and communities.

Opportunities is the another analysis of SWOT analysis. Opportunity means possibility of work which is to be done in the future. In the present analysis, what are the opportunity of tourism marketing in Uttarakhand? This is the question which arises after the study of weakness of tourism marketing of Uttarakhand. In the state of Uttarakhand, what the policies can be taken
into the consideration for the improvement of the tourism marketing? In the present scenario, without participation of private sector the development of tourism Industry is not possible. So from the private sector point of view, what will be the participation for the improvement of the tourism industry in Uttarakhand? In this particular research all the above question are treated as opportunities which are summarised in the following manner:

5.1 Vast Opportunity for Eco-tourism

Despite the world renown of the Himalayan mounnains and the huge capacity of the natural environment in Uttarakhand to develop tourism based on nature appreciation and interpretation, ecotourism is relatively poorly developed in the state. This is due to a lack of awareness of what ecotourism actually is and poor understanding of its potential to attract higher spending tourist that can bring significant environmental, conservation, social and economic benefits to all sectors of the society.

Key Objectives of the Ecotourism Strategy

- To increase awareness of the nature of, and potential for, ecotourism in Uttarakhand among all stakeholders.
- To strengthen established ecotourism products to make these state-of-the-art attractions;
- To ensure that the promotion of alternative livelihoods among communities represent an integral part of all ecotourism recommendations;

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To ensure that ecotourist have opportunity to contribute to the conservation and protection of the environment either directly or indirectly;

To focus on specific products which reflects the strengths of the available resources, notably sustainable use of wildlife; specialist ecotourism trekking; specialist wildlife observation; cultural tourism; village-based tourism;

To ensure adequate capacity building is available to targeted communities for the management of ecotourism including providing accommodation (including homestay, cooking and hygiene, guiding etc)

The World Ecotourism Summit in Quebec in 2002 organized by the WTO and the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) recognised that ecotourism embraces the principles of sustainable tourism but holds specific characteristics that distinguish it from this wider concept, namely that it:

- Contributes actively to the conservation of natural and cultural heritage;
- Includes local and indigenous communities in its planning, development and operation, contributing to their well-being;
- Interprets the natural and cultural heritage of the destination to visitor;
Lands itself better to independent travellers, as well organized tours.

For small size groups.

Although ecotourism should minimise negative impacts on the natural and socio-cultural environment, it is also a tool to support to protection of natural areas by:

- Generating clear economic benefits that can make people realise the conservation and care of the environment can be financially rewarding;
- Providing alternative employment and higher income for local communities;
- Increasing awareness towards conservation by both locals and tourist.

As ecotourism helps protect and improve the environment (unlike other forms of nature tourism which may in some cases cause harmful impacts) this form of tourism is considered to be most appropriate for Uttarakhand.

Types of Ecotourism Appropriate to Uttarakhand

The diversity of the environment in terms of the geographical spread of landscapes and natural features means that a range of different types of ecotourists may be targeted:

- General ecotourist: tourist with a general interest in nature who are drawn by the allure of the Himalayas and who would wish
to experience the landscapes, major fauna and flora, and cultural attributes of the region often in combination;

- Ecotourist Interested in Biodiversity: tourist specifically interested in wildlife, both on a general basis and as specialist enthusiasts such as birdwatchers;

- Adventure/Sports Tourists: activities such as rafting and mountaineering can also be combined with ecotourism, where an appreciation and interpretation of the environment is undertaken as part of the activity.

- Trekking Ecotourists: tourists whose prime motivations is to experience the mountain environment through trekking.

Many tourists visiting Uttarakhand will undertake different forms of tourism to which ecotourism can be an add-on attraction or be combined to improve the quality of products such as rafting, trekking or cultural appreciation.

**Existing Ecotourism Products**

The ecotourism sector is still very much in an embryonic state in Uttarakhand. With the notable exception of some prime, outstanding ecotourism products such as Corbett National Park, most of the natural resources in Uttarakhand, including the rivers and mountains, are mostly being exploited for adventure or specialist sports tourism and interpretation of the environment is very low. The major ecotourism products are found in the national parks (Corbett, Gangotri, Govind, Nanda Devi, Rajaji and Valley of Flowers), which
collectively cover nearly 5 million ha, as well as six wildlife sanctuaries (Askot, Binsar, Govind, Kedarnath, Mussoorie and Sonanadi). The main constraints for developing ecotourism as a prime product are:

- A general perceived reluctance amidst the Forest Department to engage in any other type of activity other than conservation in national parks.
- A lack of awareness of how ecotourism could help conservation by promoting interest, providing additional revenues and involving local communities;
- Poor interpretation of the environment in non-protected areas;
- The poor nature of ecotourism facilities in many national park areas and the lack of management procedures.

In 2006-2007 only 201,000 visitors stayed at guesthouses in all of the national park/wildlife sanctuaries (of which 139,000 stayed in Corbett). This is very low in comparison with destinations where ecotourism is highly developed: for example the English Lake District National Park, which has a total area, of 2,292 sq km (only some 61 percent of the land area of Uttarakhand’s six national parks combined), attracts 22 million visitors and 2.3 million visitors stays.

**Proposed Ecotourism Strategy**

The ecotourism strategy proposed for Uttarakhand comprises the following key actions:
Pursue the ecotourism agenda in the national and state tourism policy;
Set out priority actions at a spatial level;
Identify and develop key ecotourism sectors;
Introduce guidelines for community participation in ecotourism;
Improve the urban environment
Revise regulatory mechanisms to facilitate ecotourism;
Establish an effective implementation framework.

Setting Out Priority Actions at a Special Level

The Uttarakhand Tourism Master Plan has devised, through the structure plan, a spatial strategy for tourism development. The ecotourism strategy should therefore be focused on the main targeted areas defined the plan. It is especially important to focus investment that maximise benefits, lay down solid foundations for future growth and has replication value elsewhere in the state. It is recommended that the ecotourism strategy should firstly aim at strengthening the national parks and wildlife sanctuaries within the priority areas designated under the Tourism Structure Plan, with the ultimate aim of turning these into prime ecotourism destinations. The recommendation for each priority sanctuary/wildlife sanctuary are summarised in the table below.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Park/Wildlife Sanctuary</th>
<th>Main Ecotourism Recommendations</th>
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| Corbett National Park            | ○ Upgrade the interpretation center at Ramnagar and its setting into a state-of-the art attraction.  
○ Introduce themed ecotourism home stay and boutique hotels around Corbett to the north and west of the park.  
○ Increase and improve community involvement in ecotourism in selected villages around Corbett.  
○ Involve greater stakeholder arrangements between operators and Forest Departmet to ensure some of the revenue raised from tourism is channeled back into conservation. |
| Binsar National Park             | ○ Establish State of the Art ‘Edutainment’ Environmental Interpretation Centre |
Askot Wildlife Sanctuary

- Upgrade Government rest house into Five Star Ecolodge/Spa.
- Strengthen bird watching and eco-walks through the national park.
- Establishment of Green Shuttle Bus service and traffic controlled access in through the sanctuary
- Park and ride facility at Jauljibi
- Introduction of eco-tax to support conservation projects in sanctuary
- Planning of stop-over points for ecotourism trails and village visits at selected points in the sanctuary

Gangotri

- Ganga River Natural Museum
- Mountain Wildlife walks

5.2 Vast Opportunity for Nature and Adventure Tourism Such as Rafting

River rafting is about 15 years old in India and gaining popularity rapidly. Rafting is commonly done on the Ganges near Rishikesh and the Beas in Himachal Pradesh. Other rivers that are also run are The Alaknanda, Bhagirathi, Kali and Tons in Utarakhand. Only few rivers in the world have the mystique of the Ganges. The living mother Goddess of India. Rafting on its water of wisdom is certainly an unusual experience.
Each raft has a river guide with 4-8 people in the depending on whether it is a day trip or spread over several days. River guides are expected to have several years of on river experience, water proof drums or bags are kept abroad the raft for carrying cameras and for keeping baggage dry on longer multi-day expeditions. Every raft also carries rescue bags and flip lines for emergencies. A repair kit and a first aid kit are carried on board to ensure that the run compulsory for each person to wear a life jacket and a helmet with chin-straps. Both are widely available and on rent locally. Like any adventure sport, Rafting has its inherent risks, which are minimized by take basic safety precautions that include competent rain guides, excellent equipment and an attitude of vigilance.

There is a risk/skill factors so All rivers could be graded on a scale varying from grade 1 to grade 6 the grading indicates the state of water stretch and the skill level required to negotiable them. The same river could be graded differently at different places and grading also depends upon the time of the year, i.e. Monsson or non-monsoon period, Rivers rapids are graded as follows:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade I</td>
<td>Easy, Small waves No obstacles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade II</td>
<td>Moderate difficulty with clear passages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade III</td>
<td>Difficult, high irregular waves, narrow passages requires precise maneuvering.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade IV</td>
<td>Very difficult, powerful waves, very prices maneuvering.</td>
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</tbody>
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Grade V
Extremely difficult, long, violent, highly congested,
Team of experts only.

Grade VI
Unrunnable, Suicidal.

The Indian sub continent perhaps had the largest network of rivers in
the world. The northern rivers with their origins in the lofty Himalayas provide
an exciting adventure for the white water enthusiasts. These rivers race, surge,
whirl, from and crash over and around boulders as though rushing to get to
the freedom of the great plains, rejoicing in their escape from captivity the
mountains.

Of all the rivers, Ganga is the most beautiful river. The mighty Ganges
originates from Gaumukh in Garhwal region of the Himalayas. It is a superb
river for inflatable rafts.

5.3 Opportunity for Bird Watching

Bird watchers have been identified as comprising the largest group of
nature based tourists in the world. Potential revenue from this eco-tourism
activity does not emanate purely from the sighting of birds, but from whole
a range of ancillary facilities and services that can be developed around bird
watching. The value contributed to the economy by bird watchers in the UK
for example, though the purchase of equipment, bird food, membership
subscriptions travel, books and magazines, is well over $400 million a year.

Uttarakhand has a wide range of nature and migratory birds, including
many exotic species that migrate from Siberia to spend the winter months
south of the Himalayas over 632 species of birds have been recorded in the
state of which the oriental white backed and slender builled vultures are
critically endangered. Furthermore, 13 species are vulnerable and 15 are near
threatened.

There are 14 important Bird Areas (IBAs) in Uttarakhand six of these
lie in the national park. Despite the variety and exotic nature of the birds
watching the west Himalayan region, bird watching is still very much in an
embryonic state in Uttarakhand. The over whelming majority of users have
limited interest in and knowledge of birds and there is a low level of
interpretation of birds IBAs.

There is a huge opportunity by watching in the State, to develop this
following strategy can be adopted:—

- Improving the overall profile of bird watching sites to upgrade
  their status.

- Raising the level of interpretation at bird watching sites.

- Introduction management plans for each IBA.

- Enhancing awareness of bird watching and conservation among
  visitors.

- Marketing IBAs domestically and internationally.

- Promoting awareness of, and encourage, participation in bird
  conservation among surrounding village communities.

- Encouraging responsible tourism at all bird watching sites.
Rijoji IBA, Assam Barrage IBA and Binoy IBA are more local bird watching sites, even though many rare and interesting species of birds may be observed here. They are conductive to domestic tourists or highly specialised international bird watches that may visit all major avifauna habitats in the Bharbar Belt, Middle Himalayas and higher Himalayas as part of a wider tour of Uttarakhand.

5.4 Vast Opp. of Identifying and Viewing Other Wildlife

Founda in Uttarakhand include rare and exotic species, which are very attractive to both domestic and international visitors. These include the bigcats, which are in increasingly endangered throughout the world, and are ever more sought after as an ecotourism attraction. It is recommended that the highly restrictive policy of access to wildlife reserves be revised, so that sustainable levels of tourists may enter these. A prerequisite is that:

- Parks are well managed so that wildlife is not disturbed and;
- A proportion of revenues from such visits are directed towards conservation.

It is imperative that management of tourism flows is therefore improved and codes of conduct introduced so that the carrying capacity of the parks may be increased. Management can be improved by increasing ecotourism attractions both inside and outside the reserves; planning new circuits to disperse tourists more evenly and; by improving the transport of tourists around the park (for improving tours and limiting independent travel)
Codes could focus on:

- Awareness on the relationship between the location and distribution of animals and observers;
- Greater awareness of species behaviour and knowledge of what causes disturbance to individual species.
- Discretion over release of information on rare and protected species's habitat.
- Alertness of signs of disturbance and courses of action to mitigate these.
- Making full use of hides to observe and record species.
- Minimising impacts from movement (by keeping visitors graded and vehicles or walking expeditiously on track);
- Precluding all forms of littering disturbance to flora.
- Getting visitors involved in habitat restoration and protection where possible;
- Making interpretation a key element and continually highlighting the importance of habitat for wildlife.

Interpretation meanwhile should be provided for a combination of natural trails where wildlife can be observed in habits ranging from the Bharbar belt to the higher Himalayas. Good interpretation should allow feedback and participation among visitors and combine pleasure with education. Measures should:
Bring interest value in the wild the natural history of the area;
Clearly show the importance of wildlife in the ecosystem and in conserving the environment;
Make clear the threats to wildlife in the area not least from tourism;
Interpret tracks and traces of animals to visitors if well explained;
Highlight the work of the conservation agencies at work in the national parks and sanctuary, including the forest department and relevant NGOs.
Use wherever possible technology to display interpretation (Such as touch screen facilities) or view wildlife (as through remote viewing system).
Display means by which visitors can be involved in the conservation of the area (donation joining conservation organizations, purchasing souvenirs etc.)

With the above measures wildlife trails could then the designated and shown on simple maps or brouchers and marked on the ground through footpath, and signage.

5.5 Hill Station of Almora, Nanital and Bageshwar, Mussoorie and Kausani offer a Solid basis for Developing Quality Resorts

Development of the tourism sector can help the local economy in a number of ways. The most important impact is the creation of employment for
the local people. Employment will be created in the hotels, restaurants and other kinds of lodgings as well as in the tour operating sector. In order to promote high value tourism in the state, the sector has to provide a high quality tourism experience the most important factor for the development of high value tourism is the availability of quality resorts. While this sector should be developed through the private sector, there are some issues here that need policy intervention. The first problem is the availability of land. There may be a number of problems including land-use laws, environmental clearance, etc. and the state must act as a facilitator, enabling the private sector to acquire land for the development of resorts, lodges, etc. the other problem with the hotel industry is the seasonality of tourism leading to largely unused capacities and low return during significant parts of the year. This problem may be dealt with by encouraging a policy of market segmentation coupled with price discrimination. This involve a separation or segmentation of different groups of consumers and charging different segments differently. For example, discounts on 'Standard Prices' such as reduced air forces for particular groups viz students, senior citizens and so on. The tourism policy must also break the seasonal pattern by developing winter tourism. So, It is the urgent need to develope quality resorts in main Hill Stations.

5.6 International Renown of Gangas as a Holy River and Himalayas as a Natural Attraction

As the Ganges and Himalayas is very popular all over the world. So, we should try to renown them as a natural Attraction. The main attraction for
tourists in the State is of course, the Himalayas. The experience of watching the snow capped peaks from a close range is a sublime one, and the tourism infrastructure must make sure that this experience, can be provided to the tourists without compromising on comfort, and in new and innovative ways. Apart from developing the infrastructure of hill stations, this should involve aerial tours of the Himalayas ranges using helicopters of course, a high value tourist would want other forms of recreations a well, and this means that the state must offer a package of activities that will attract the tourists. The forest areas and the protected sanctuaries in the state are ideal for the development of nature tourism. The upper ranges of the mountain can be used to develop adventure tourism with activities like skiing, paragliding, etc. The mountain rivers are also appropriate for the promotion of rafting koya king etc. Most importantly, all these activities must be coordinated with the hotels and tours operators so that tourist find it simple and easy to apt for these activities.

As far as Ganges is concern, Its orgin is in Uttarakhand. At Gangotri, is one of the four Char Dhams in Uttarakhand and no other location along for Ganges Gangotri is more commonly popular as a destination for a spiritual cultural or adventures journey. The pilgrimage to the Gangotri Temple and Gaumukh is among the most valuable experiences for a Hindus believer. The sacred location and the many myths and legend linked to its through, centuries have attracted swamis, pilgrims and adventures generation after generation for hundred of years.
During the 19th Century British explorers began exploring the upper ranges of the Gangas for the purpose of finding its source and the first foreigner to experience the Gangotri Glacier and the source of the Ganges was a young British officer who reached it in 1813. Since those days Gangotri has been on the agenda of adventures from all over the world.

Gangotri town and Temple, Boajwas a Base Camp, Gaumukh source of the Ganges, the Gangotri Glacier and camp sites, the spectutor mountains and paramount to all of these the river Ganges the spiritual artery and foundation of India, Make this location Uttarakhand’s “Most unique selling point”, with unlimited potential for high quality, high value tourism, attracting also the more discerning domestic or foreign tourist. However for this to take place much improvement is needed.

5.7 Potentially Large Domestic Market Offers Specific Niche Opportunities for Ecotourism

Uttarakhand has the potential of attracting a variety of markets. The main market is by far the religious market, pilgrims who come to worship at the Char Dharms. However spirituality and wellness are growing market segments as well as rafting and adventure tourism. Leisure and relaxation tourism mostly enjoyed by the domestic market is becoming important around the lakes of Nanital, the Kumaon hills and valleys as well as the different hill stations (for both domestic and international visitors). There are specific opportunities for ecotourist particularly bird watchers). The ecotourism sector

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5.8 Cluster of Higher Education

As the Uttarakhand state has to its credit some of the country’s best institutes of higher learning like:—

- G.B. Pant University of agriculture and technology in Pant Nagar.
- Indian Institute of Technology in Roorkee.
- Forest Research Institute in Dehradun.
- G.B. Pant Institute of Himalayan environment and development in Almora.
Rural Biotechnology Complex in Kosi and Herbal Research and Development Institute, Gopeshwar.

State plans to achieve 100% computer literacy for students by the end of the 10th five year plan. For this purpose the state has worked at improving the IT infrastructure at all levels beginning with educational institutions. Inspite of above said institutions, There are some other institute and research centres of environmental studies and conservation at Regional level. That are working at grass routs level in the state such as :-

- The Himalayan Foundation
- The Himalayan Trust
- Academy for Mountain Environics
- Himalayan Action Research Centre
- Uttarakhand Environmental Education Centre

Above mentioned all institutes and research centre offers opportunities for advanced environment centre combining research education or general conservation awareness among students and visitors.

5.9 Opportunity of Developing Key Eco-tourism Sectors Combining Trekking with Eco-tourism

Eco-tourist are those that engage in activities that are environmentally sustainable and have a natural area focus including bird watching, observation of mountain, savannah and forest fauna; wilderness/long distance trekking with a natural focus (for example visits to glaciers or typical high mountain
Valley or forest walks with varying or unique flora such as the primeval oak forests; development of ‘day-wise’ visits to natural features such as mountain waterfalls; and designation of eco-lodges in area designated for tourism.

Ethical and responsible tourists are those who wish to contribute financially to the environmental sustainability and consideration of destinations and/or help bring real improvements to host populations. Responsible tourism markets are recommended to be a target for the major trekking routes in Uttarakhand.

To turn trekking routes into ecotourism products the following facilities may be considered:—

1. **Establishment of Interpretation and information Centres:** These should be introduced at the beginning of the treks or in the designated gate-way towns or villages. At Gangotri an interpretation centre could focus on the Ganga river, highlighting its cultural and ecological rate not only along the river’s stretch in Uttarakhand. Monies raised from attraction or sales of guide books, t-shirts maps etc. should be ploughed back into maintaining and expanding the conservation of the area and found other worth while wildlife conservation efforts.

2. **Information signs and look out points:** These should be planned at designated points along the trek providing ecotourists with further interpretation and advice concerning what to observe on the treks. Development
of ecotourism infrastructure and facilities. The following facilities should also be considered along trekking routes at selected places:

(a) Development of eco-lodges, both luxury and basic;
(b) Hides to observe wild life;
(c) Special eco-resorts on specially designated conservation areas;
(d) Natural camps for students to enhance awareness of environmental protection.

5.10. Opportunity to Increase for International Tourism

The development of the tourism sector should also give more thrust to international tourism. In order to adopt appropriate policies for this sector, it is very important to understand certain aspects of the international tourism industry. Unlike standard manufacturing industries, International tourism does not have a unique base as an comprising main by of three important sub-sectors, i.e. (i) The international tour operators and travel countries (ii) The civil Aviation and transport industry that carried tourists to their destinations, and (iii) The Hotels and accommodation sector in place of tourist interest.

International tour operators are basically intermediaries between the producers and consumers of tourism related services. Their main function is to reduce information and transaction costs for the tourists and promotional expenditures for the supplier of tourism services. However, the rising profitability of tour operators owing to the increasing competitiveness of the civil aviation market has led to a highly monopolistic international tour operator industry.
Thus, a number of tour operators have a very large share of clients in the US and Europe. On the other hand, in the civil aviation industry, the gradual movement from a regulated to a deregulated regime in the nineteen nineties has led to cut throat price competition and minimum profits in the international airline market. The growth of foreign tourists to any country is also greatly influenced by the nature of its hotel industry. The present structure of the international hotel industry is highly skewed in favour of multinational corporation who are mainly based in developed countries. Not only are these multinational hotel chains able to produce goods and services more cheaply owing to significant also considered to have better managerial and organizational skills to their domestic counterparts.

The three sub-sectors that make up the international tourism industry, i.e., The international tour operators, the civil aviation industry and the international hotel chains, are closely inter connected through cross ownership. Thus, large players in the tour operating and civil aviation industry have major stakes in the multinational hotel chains. This result in each sector having a stake in the success of the other sectors and the three sectors act as a part of the overall supply chain in international tourism. This has important policy implications for the international tourism sector. To put it simply, any tourist destination that becomes part of this supply chain has an assured supply of foreign tourists visiting it regularly. It follows that any region that wants to attract foreign tourists through this supply chain has to encourage multinational
hotel chains to build and acquire hotels and resorts in the tourist destinations. The state should also encourage the multinational civil aviation firms to invest in the tourist sector in Uttarakhand.

5.11 Opportunity of Participation of Locals in Tourism

There is a vast opportunity for locals of their participation in tourism in Uttarakhand in many ways. The development of tourism requires land for various purpose and the state can encourage local landowners to earn an income by leasing their land. The state can enable the local farmers to fulfill the demand for fresh fruits, vegetables and dairy products consumed by the tourists. Non-form employment can be created for the hill people by developing the production of handi-crafts and ethnic products the production of handicrafts and ethnic products that can be sold to the tourists. The tourism sector can be encouraged to provide employment to the local people in the hotels and the tour operative business. Employment can also be created for the locals as tourist guides and instruction of adventure sports activities. It must be clearly understood that the development of high value tourism may not automatically lead to better livelihoods and incomes for the local people. If the tourism sector does not integrate itself with the hill economy, then the demand created by this sector will lead to an increase in incomes in the plains or in other parts of the country. The policy package for inclusive growth must ensure that the forward and backward linkages from this sector ensures growth in the local economy. There are two kinds interventions that can be undertaken to achieve
this objective. The fist is a fiscal intervention where the state can collect revenues by taking the sector and spending it on the development of the local economy. The second form on Intervention is as a facilitator ensuring that the goods and services of the local people and their assets are used by the tourism sector. These linkages between the tourism sector and the local economy context many forms as stated above.

So, there is a great potential for local persons in tourism industry in Uttarakhand.

In Uttarakhand, these are many strengths and weaknesses of tourism marketing means various factors for strengths are present and some weakness are found but with the strength and weakness there are unlimited opportunities also present. On the basis of the above particular factors of opportunities the tourism marketing can be improved easily.