CHAPTER- VII

COMPETITIVE STRATEGIES USED BY OTHER STATES

7.1) KERALA :

7.1.1 Introduction

Kerala Tourism has now become one of the best-acknowledged super brands in the world. With some leading academicians approving with this fact through their best selling book on marketing, named, Marketing Management: A South Asian Perspective, this fame has been well-recorded as well. Kerala Tourism finds its place in the 13th edition of the book, compiled by Philip Cotler, Kevin Lane Keller, Abraham Koshy and Mithileswar Jha. This book is regarded as one of the best in the field, since it reflects the latest changes in marketing theory and practice. The reference to Kerala Tourism occurs in the section in which the concept of 'brands' is discussed. It is to exemplify the effectiveness and relevance of branding that Kerala Tourism as a super brand under the registered name 'Kerala: God's Own Country', is being examined. The write-up, though short, is an enlightening one. The fact that Kerala Tourism is the first tourism board in India to register its brands and sub-brands is also mentioned in the book. The book commends Kerala Tourism's protecting the brand equity through baselines. The writers also laud Kerala Tourism for demonstrating “the economic rationale of branding a service category like Tourism” and describe it as “one of the most recognized tourism brands in India.” The 800-odd page book is an encyclopedia on marketing. Many concepts like marketing management, developing of marketing strategies and consumer markets are discussed in a relatively simple style. There are also case studies, with special reference to a variety of aspects, like the socio-economic characteristics of
urban and rural consumers, demographies and socio-cultural nuances of South Asian countries.

Kerala Tourism 2009 Case Study Kerala tourism Kerala, Gods own country is one of the favourite destinations for tourists in the world. Kerala situated on the south-western part of India. It is famous for eco-tourism initiatives and growing at a rate of 13.31%. Tourism industry is contributes US$2.86 billion in the year 2008, an increase of 14.84% over the previous 3 years. In the year 2008, 23.57% of total foreigners visited were from United Kingdom, France, and Germany, USA accounts for 8.72%, 7.26% and 7.23% 4. Kerala became “50 must see places in the lifetime to visit” (National Geographic Travel 2004) and also awarded in “super brand award” for 101 strongest brands in India by super brands India in the year 200711. The major attraction includes beaches, backwaters, boat race, hill stations, wildlife, Ayurveda and culture. The art forms of Kerala are embodiments of Kerala’s culture. Kerala Tourism bagged several international, national & state awards which made “Kerala Tourism” a super brand in tourism and hospitality. In recent time tourism is emerged as the major revenue generating business to government of Kerala. This contributes significantly towards the growth of Kerala state providing employability and overall productivity of the state. Tourism has contributed almost 8% of the total employment directly and indirectly. The most important turning point taken by Kerala state was the private-public partnership to promote tourism in Kerala.

Market Positioning of Kerala tourism Backwater is the major attraction of Kerala, however enjoying beaches with power of Ayurvedha is the attraction which distinguishes Kerala tourism from Goa tourism. The main attraction of Goa tourism is 125Km of coastal line is dotted with beaches, rather than beaches Goa temples and Churches are major attractiveness. At the same time Kerala has a coastline of 580Km. The other aspect of Kerala is the eco-
tourism initiatives by Kerala state in the year 2007. Kerala is now trying to brand the medical tourism initiative which is very attractive because of efficient medical care in Kerala. Loads of people from Maldives, neighbouring states like Lakshadweep are coming to Kerala for better healthcare. Another major initiative is the branding of traditional art forms like Kathakali, Theyyam etc. This positioning gives more brand identity with the nearest competitor Goa & Maharashtra tourism which is one of the USP for Kerala Tourism. Boat race in the backwater of Kerala is another distinguishable product for Kerala Tourism. Another major offering in monsoon is the monsoon tourism. It can be seen that number of tourist coming to Kerala is more compared to Goa tourism in the case of foreigners and domestic tourists. It can be seen that Kerala tourism is far ahead in the domestic market. There is a decline in the number of foreign tourists arrived at Maharashtra last year. This is due to the social problems related to Maharashtra. There were rape murder and terrorist attack in Mumbai happened in last years. Another factor for the declining is the recession. Kerala Tourism 2009 advertising innovation is the main criterion that distinguishes Kerala Tourism from Maharashtra tourism. Kerala tourism is doing innovative and vibrant advertising campaign in mass media and also direct media up-to an extent. These are the different product offering of Kerala tourism. Products and destinations Major Beaches Kovalam, Varkala, Fort Kochi, Kappad and Bakal Major Wild Life Sanctuaries Thekkady, Parambikulam, Wayanad, Silent Valley, Aralam, Peechi-Vazhani, Chimani, Shenduruny, Idukki, Chinnar, Peppara, Neyyar Bird Santuaries Thattekkad, Kumarakom Hill Stations Ponmudi, Peerumade, Thekkady, Munnar and Wayanad Art Forms Kadakali, Koodiyattom, Kalarippayattu, Mohiniyattom, Koodiyattom, Kalaripayattu, Mohiniyattam, Chakkiyarkootu SWOT analysis Strengths • State is well known for smooth law and order • One of the ten paradise and top 50 places to be
visited in lifetime by National geographic traveller        • Innovative branding and positioning Kerala Tourism 2009 • Variety of product and services (monsoon tourism, medical tourism, culture and arts, houseboats, backwaters, beaches, wildlife sanctuaries etc) • Highly reputable, bagged various national and international awards • Kerala, India’s most advanced society with full literacy • High life expectancy • Excellent quality of life • Eco-tourism initiatives
Weaknesses • Inadequate infrastructure to match expectation • Provisional airline policies by Govt of India • Some shortcomings in Kerala tourism also exist which are as follows: Restrictive coastal regulation zone • Lack of efficient waste management system • Lack of regulatory mechanism for sustainable development • Shortage of funds for tourism expansion • Exploitation of tourists (overcharging for services) Opportunities • Lot of unused prospective on heritage tourism, medical tourism and pilgrimage tourism • Good brand image of “Gods own country” • Accessibility of quality human resource • Employability in tourism and related areas Threats • Growth of tourism may lead to pollution problem, ecological hazards etc • Over emphasis may lead to recession in the period of downturn • Growth of Maharashtra tourism with diverse offerings • Problems with natural calamities like Tsunami Recommendations Kerala tourism is focussed more towards mass media advertisements and PR activities which in a way effective. But to make use of the direct marketing techniques the customer retention, customer satisfaction can be achieved which is the one and only solution to compete with national competitor Maharashtra tourism and international competitor Malaysian tourism. At the same time mass marketing is the essential part to market tourism.

1) Use the word of mouth marketing effectively This can be done by sending monthly newsletter to the customers who enjoyed beauty of Kerala and subscribed opt-in email. Design the newsletter with photos
and small description of latest photos of major events, cultural festivals etc. There is a high chance to refer their friends or relatives about Kerala Tourism by the people who visited Kerala.

2) Installation of Bluetooth kiosks and hotspots Kerala Tourism 2009 The idea is to give options for the user’s to download content from the kiosk. The tourism content included mobile wallpapers, mobile themes, viral videos etc. This can be either a replaceable kiosk or permanent one installed in major malls, airports etc.

3) Design “Kerala theme” based contests Domestic market is major revenue generating market for tourism in Kerala; blended direct and indirect marketing method can be applied to tap the market. The best way is to announce an all India contest where the winner will get chance to visit and enjoy selected tourism destinations. The participating people should do blogging, photo blogging, twitter updates on the fly. Voting and rating can be done by the people to select the winner. This will have a multiplier effect on the brand and also sales will increase. The same contest can be applied to European countries also as Europe is one of the major foreign exchange contributor.

4) Inline international movie promotions this is one of the area which has to be concentrated more by Kerala tourism, Kerala tourism partnered with Ram Gopal varma for a bollywood film called Nishabd. But it is advisable to do such kind of promotions in Hollywood movies also.

5) Marketing brochures in flights Kerala tourism had partnered with Indian Airlines and distributed Kerala cuisine and celebrated “Festival of Kerala”. It would be advisable to distribute brochures and digital contents in major Airlines in Europe and India.
6) Mobile application for tourists Identifying the potential of mobile, it is better to develop free mobile application for all tourists who are coming into Kerala. This is in a way viral marketing; the application can be integrated with free maps and some viral games which promote services of Kerala tourism. If the game is addictive the tourists will distribute the applications to their friends and relatives. Conclusion says that Kerala tourism is one of the “super brand” in the world for tourism. But they are currently focussing more on mass media tools even they are using the tool effectively. As majority of the revenues are from domestic Indian market, direct media should be used effectively for brand building and sales as direct marketing is very cost effective compared to mass media. One of the cheap and cost effective methods is the power of newsletter; this will in-turn adds up sales because of the “word of mouth” marketing by the tourists. Medical tourism is one of the major areas which need to be branded a lot. KIMS along with Kerala tourism is trying to identify the market, direct marketing and social media are effective media for marketing health care. Kerala Tourism 2009 Appendixes Source: Kerala tourism Statistics 2008 Current communication strategies of Kerala Tourism is currently concentrating more on indirect medium like TV, newspaper and internet (11th planning commission). Currently promotion is carrying out through two schemes. 1) Domestic promotion and publicity 2) Foreign promotion and publicity. The current marketing strategies of Kerala Tourism include event based promotions, mass media promotions, social media marketing, road shows, consumer shows, mobile marketing, internet & digital campaigns, inline movies and series ads and private partnered campaigns. Moreover they offer toll free numbers for enquiries, mobile web and fully fledged websites.
7.1.2 Event Based Campaigns

1) The event based campaigns promote the brand “Kerala Tourism” and tagline “Gods own country”. According to 11th planning commission government is spending US$ 12K for single local event and US$ 24K for national events. • Kerala travel mart • Indian international boat shows • Mystics of Malabar • Nishagandi dance and music festivals (Onam, Christmas, Ramsan etc) • Theme state in Dubai Shopping Festival in year 2004 • Kerala’s initiatives in promoting South India • Participation in international and national tourism marts • World travel mart London • International road shows.

2) Mass media campaigns Kerala tourism is currently focussing more towards mass media campaigns to build the brand. Strong media presences are there in major print medium and TV medium to cater domestic market. • TV campaigns • Print campaigns • Inline movie campaigns • Advertising film for Kerala Tourism • Internet promotion (Youtube, mobile WAP, SEM) • MoU with flying players • Partnering with private players • Promotion of digital videos and DVD Social media marketing is the latest adoption of Kerala tourism in the financial year 2009. Identifying the penetration of social networks and internet strategic promotions has been started since last year. Partnering with Jet Airways, Kerala tourism announced a tour package couple with air tickets. The main promotion of the jet Kerala was done through twitter. The campaign was able to generate 15% of the sales thorough twitter campaign itself. Another major marketing strategy is the tie ups of Kerala tourism with private agencies to promote tourism. Kerala tourism will
give affiliation to private companies which satisfy quality standards. For instance the tie-up with Club Mahindra Holidays is a typical example for successful promotion strategy. So the private agencies will promote their products and services backing Kerala tourism brand.

Realising the importance of tourism in stimulating the economic development of the state, the Government of Kerala declared tourism as an industry in 1986. Today tourism is Kerala’s boom industry, and one of the fastest growing, high income and employment generating sector. Constant efforts are on to promote Kerala abroad and marketing strategies are being evolved along with new and exciting tourism products. The latest of these innovative projects are ecotourism and heritage tourism.

In addition to a wealth of natural beauty, Kerala has a rich and unique history and heritage. A new, two pronged development project aims at preserving the heritage of the land to promote tourism. The countryside bounds in sprawling traditional homesteads most of which are fast going to ruins. The proposal is to turn these heritage homes to tourist accommodations. This is also in view of the increasing preference shown by foreign tourists to stay in traditional buildings during their visit.

7.1.3) **Introducing Grihasthali: The heritage protection scheme of Kerala Tourism**

Grihasthali is a well thought out scheme to preserve Kerala traditional architecture by converting them into excellent accommodation options with modern facilities. In addition to offering a taste of the authentic Kerala lifestyle which is increasingly becoming popular across the world, Grihastali will also
inspire public participation in the promotion and development of Tourism in the State. The Department of Tourism has designed an exclusive package of incentives and financial assistance to projects which are approved. The financial assistance proposed has been arranged in collaboration with the Kerala Financial Corporation and nationalised banks. Grihasthali also envisages registration of those properties where owners would not like to convert their buildings themselves but are interested in identifying a potential partner/buyer for the property. This will help the creation of an authentic database for investors, as well as property owners.

Kerala tourism is going all out, making a bold statement and wooing tourists from all over India to Kerala by getting the Rajdhani train painted in Kerala colours. With the tag “Go Kerala” or “Chalo Kerala” beckoning tourists into the lush green state. It’s not just one or two coaches, but the entire train, all 17 coaches of the air conditioned Rajdhani Express are now painted with colourful images of Kerala. Painting the Rajdhani Express is like having a giant moving billboard that goes through Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa and Karnataka on its way to Thiruvananthapuram and back. Think of the number of people who will be seeing the splendour of far-off Promoting domestic tourism is the motive here and when the summer months begin in the north of India the train with its beaches, backwaters and green landscape should lure people to the state. I’m thinking of the effect it will have in dry Rajasthan and busy Maharashtra - the dreams it will weave of holidays in Kerala in the people who see the train. I think all trains could do with a splash of colour, a reminder of how beautiful the country is, and we could all do away with those red coloured trains which look dusty even after the coaches have had a wash. According to the data available with Kerala Tourism, domestic tourist arrivals to Kerala last
year touched 75 lakh (against 7.5 lakh international tourists), reports The Hindu.

Marketing and PromotionKerala’s striking achievement in tourism has been its effectiveness in selling the state abroad. This has been done through focused marketing and promotion efforts.

7.1.4) The key highlights of Kerala’s marketing strategy have been:

- The state’s focus on target international markets, for example Europe.
- Initiating focused marketing efforts directed at the media and tour operators in select markets.
- Direct interaction with the key international players on home ground.
  The Kerala Travel Mart wherein the state hosts tour operators and media from select international market, and buyers and sellers directly interact to close deals and packages highlights this aspect.

7.1.5) The state has appointed the following professional promotional agencies to manage its marketing efforts:

- Stark Communications, based in the state, which leads the marketing initiatives acting as the communications consultant to the state.
- Crayons, based at Delhi, which manages vernacular advertisements.
- Grey Worldwide, based at Bangalore, which manages internet-based marketing on the Web.
- Invis Multimedia, which manages the multimedia-based promotional and presentation materials and digital content creation, in addition to web designing.
The Department of Tourism is closely involved with these agencies, coordinating the efforts to ensure constant alignment between the strategy and marketing objectives.

Building the Kerala Brand
Kerala has relentlessly marketed itself as a quality brand to the rest of the world. Beginning with its immensely successful brand slogan ‘God’s own country’, the state has continued to make rigorous efforts to build and sustain its image in the world tourism market.

Some of the key aspects of this brand building have been captured below:

- **Quality promotional materials**: The promotional materials are in the form of CDs, videos, presentations, brochures of the highest quality, technology and style. The state has produced a kit of seven brochures called ‘Life in a New Light’ and a series of CDs called ‘Expressions’, covering all its major products and aspects.

- **Advertising focus on source markets**: To enable value for money spent on promotion, the state has focused its advertising efforts on key source markets and identified tourist segments. Accordingly, the focus has largely been on tour operator magazines.

- **Participation in international fairs**: Kerala tourism participates in all the major international events related to its identified source markets. Some of the key international fairs the state has participated in the year 2003 are the following:
  - International Tourism’s Bourse (ITB) 2003, Berlin
  - Arabian Travel Mart (ATM), 2003, Dubai
  - PATA Travel Mart 2003, Singapore
  - World Travel Mart (WTM) 2003, London
  - OTDYKH Leisure 2003, Moscow
- China International Travel Mart (CITM) 2003, Kumming
- Road shows: To widen the tourism base and showcase the state to new select markets, Kerala tourism conducts several road-shows at hitherto unexplored markets in addition to the existing traditional ones. The state has conducted road shows at the following national and international locations:
  - Domestic markets: Jaipur, Nagpur, Agra, Ahmedabad, Delhi, Pune, Hyderabad, Goa, Chandigarh, Bangalore, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata
  - International Markets: Colombo, London, Berlin, France, Dubai, Singapore

7.1.6) Creating International Platforms:

In addition to formal marketing and promotional efforts, Kerala tourism has explored all avenues to place the state on an international and global platform. Some of the initiatives are as follows:

7.1.7) Kerala Travel Mart (KTM)

Formed as a society in 2000 with all players as members (tour operators, travel agents, airlines, hotels), the KTM is an occasion where ‘buyers’ (international tour operators and the media) are ‘hosted’. It is an international forum for tourism buyers and tourism sellers (resort owners and the state) to meet in dynamic sessions where destinations are discussed and packages finalized. The 2000 KTM hosted 450 buyers; the 2004 KTM, to be held in October, is expected to host over 750 buyers from all over the world, who are to be wooed by over 230 sellers.
The Kerala Travel Mart, which has been enormously successful the last two times it has been held in the state, offers an opportunity for resorts, tour operators, houseboats and ayurvedic centres, among others, to showcase their products and services, and for the state to showcase its brand.

7.1.8) Swarnam’ Kerala Gold Fest

The first Kerala Gold Festival was held in 2003 and branded as ‘Swarnam 2003’. Organized by Kerala Tourism, in association with the World Gold Council (WGC) and the All-Kerala Gold and Silver Merchants Association (AKGSMA), the festival is planned to last for a month, and will involve all gold and silver merchants. Events that showcase the history and traditions of gold in Kerala, exhibitions of gold jewellery and designs, interactive sessions with gold workers, and cultural programmes, will be the highlight of special events in the state's five major cities. The Gold Festival is intended to position Kerala as the gold capital of the country. Turkey, which is a major tourist destination, earns approximately Rs.2,500 crore from gold jewellery sold to tourists. Kerala intends to leverage its expertise in gold to exploit this potential. Information Dissemination In addition to marketing and promotion, core information dissemination also forms an important part of creating awareness about Kerala tourism and the products offered. Key efforts in this direction have been detailed below:-
7.1.9) Attractive and Dynamic Website

Kerala Tourism has been using IT and its various applications into tourism promotion. The state’s official website, launched on 24th December, 1988, has won critical and popular acclaim as a premier tourism website. Recognised by PC World India as “one of the 10 best Indian sites”, it provides extensive information on Kerala and tourism in the state. The site receives nearly 1.5 million hits and 2.50 lakh page views per month. The target audience of the site are tourists – both national and

Key contents of the Website

- Ayurveda
- Cuisine of Kerala
- Boat Races
- “Plan Your Trip”
- Festival Calender
- Shopping Options
- Picture Gallery
- Music Gallery
- Video Gallery
- Destination Gallery
- Performing and Ritual Arts
- Visitor Queries

National/International Acclaim for Kerala

- ‘Mecca of the oldest and holistic health system’ - Geo Saison, February 2002
‘The Quest for the Herbal Holiday’ – Newsweek, July 2002
‘Exotic Fragrance of Kerala’ - Conde’ Nast Traveller, March 2002
‘The dreamy lagoons, curving waterways, damp paddy fields, swaying greenery and singularly beautiful people of Kerala’ – Cover story, Weekend Financial Times, January 2001
‘Kerala’s inquiring sophistication and state of enlightenment.’ - National Geographic, April 2001
‘One of the 50 destinations of a lifetime’; ‘Paradise Found - one of the 10 in the world’ - National Geographic Traveler, October 1999
‘India’s Shangrila’ - India Today, August 2002
‘One of India’s most global non-corporate brands’ - Business Today, August 2002.
‘Afoot and afloat, Kerala is worth the journey’ - Time Magazine, April 2002.
‘Among the 100 top brands in India’ - Super Brand India Limited
‘One of the 100 great trips for the 21st century’ - ‘Travel and Leisure’
‘One of the ten hot spots for the millennium’ - ‘Emirates In-flight Magazine’
‘One of the ten love nests in India’ - ‘Cosmopolitan’
‘One of the six destinations of the millennium’ - ‘Khaleej Times’

7.1.10 Well-Planned Tourism Information Centers:

Kerala Tourism has around 17 tourist information centres (TIC) at entry points like airports, railway stations, bus stations and key destinations like Kovalam and Varkala. The TICs are manned by personnel who are trained at the Kerala Travel and Tourism Institute, one of the premier tourism management institutes run by the state. The information centres are fully equipped with all information
pertaining to the state and also perform facilitatory services on demand. In addition to the TICs within the state, Kerala also maintains information centres at key metros including Kolkatta, Delhi, Mumbai Chennai and the tourist state of Goa. One-to-one Interactions with International Tour Operators Random information dissemination is not preferred in Kerala. The state is extremely focused in where, how and to whom it gives information. It is understood that the marketing agencies of the state maintain personal and direct interaction and on-going relationship with international tour operators, integrating the relationships built during international and domestic trade shows and travel marts. It is a key strategy of the state that information dissemination is focused and specifically targets the selected market and segment.

7.1.11) Quality Fairs and Festivals

Information and awareness on the products, culture and heritage of Kerala is also spread through fairs and festivals, most of which are linked to Kerala’s key religious, historical and cultural events. Kathakali, Kerala’s celebrated dance form, Kalaripayattu, Kerala’s martial art form, the boat race of Alleppy, the elephant march of Thrissur, and the Onam festival are mediums for communicating Kerala’s culture and heritage to the national and international communities. As per the primary survey, the following exhibit shows the sources of the tourists’ ‘first awareness’ about Kerala. It clearly emerges that a good feedback about the experience in Kerala from friends/relatives forms the most important ‘first awareness’ for most domestic and foreign tourists.
7.1.12 Kerala Tourism to rely on social media marketing

Strange-sounding words such as twitter, flickr, dopplr, shutterfly and tripwolf could give superbrand Kerala Tourism what a hundred visual or print ads had never ever managed to: universal visibility at virtually no cost. Social media marketing, or the online conversation model, is the new mantra of Kerala Tourism. It involves the use of all the informal social media tools available on the internet. Social networking sites, social bookmarking sites, message boards/internet forums, blogs, microblogs and the like. Spreading the word through the net has three major advantages over conventional marketing techniques.

1) It feels impromptu and does not sound like a promotional campaign, and therefore is perceived as infinitely more authentic.

2) It is not financially demanding because a blog or a profile in a social networking site can be created for no cost at all.

3) Unlike conventional campaigns that are like shooting in the dark, it micro-targets. To begin with, Kerala Tourism will make its presence felt in internet forums and travel-specific social networking sites.

7.2) Madhya Pradesh:

Creating a tourism friendly image for the state and marketing the state tourism is an extremely important function, which has to go hand in hand with improvement of the product and infrastructure. As per consultants opinion survey that the tourism image of the state has received a set-back due to negative word of mouth publicity because of poor connectivity and below standard level of facilities. These need to be countered by aggressive publicity,
which portrays a favorable but realistic image of the state. There is also a need to carry out a detailed Market Research exercise to find out the potential tourists, their spending patterns, the budget and the high spending tourist etc. and their expectations and thereby arrive at a detailed marketing strategy.

There is also a need to carry out the marketing activities such as (a) Marketing Campaigns in selected domestic markets (b) Marketing Campaigns in international markets such as the USA, UK, Japan, Europe and South East Asian markets (c) Publication of attractive print and promotional material (d) Active participation in trade fairs, travel marts, and exhibitions (e) Organize familiarization tours of national and international tour operators, travel writers and photographers and (f) Enlist co-operation of industrialists, Chamber of Commerce, trade Unions and service organizations. Some of the key elements of the Marketing Strategy are as follows which are being used as a competitive strategy:

7.2.1) Development of Tourism Friendly Image

(a) Spruce up the heritage sites with proper signage, civic amenities and environmental improvement. The sites should be tourist friendly with guides, courteous people and amenities.

(b) Prominent welcome signage at entry points like airports, railway stations, bus stands and at the boarder entry points. These signages should also be put up at the entry and exit points of the tourist centers.

(c) Institute and celebrate Tourism Weeks at least twice a year with the active participation of local inhabitants. There could be place wise Tourism Weeks also. Such Weeks will focus attention of local population on importance of tourism friendly image and will also be a plank for special activities for a burst of tourist arrivals.
(d) Focus the attention of state functionaries on tourism by involving them in tourism related inaugurations seminars and events. This will also be a signal for others on the importance attached by the state to tourism.

(e) Organize road shows depicting tourist wealth, tourist facilities and the economic benefits and make tourists and the tour operators conscious of the tourist wealth of the state.

(f) Encourage local people to welcome the tourists. They should be made aware of the socio-economic benefits of tourism so that cheating and harassment could be avoided and tourist is accorded a warm welcome.

(g) Set up a Tourist Police Center at each tourist entry point for tourist assistance and control of exploitation, cheating and harassment. This will give the tourist a feeling of safety, and of discipline.

7.2.2) Marketing of M.P. as a Tourism State:

a) Appoint a national level Public Relation and Advertising Agency which should be able to:

- Project a tourism friendly image of the state.
- Heighten the awareness of the tourism potential of the state.
- Advertise MP as a prime tourist destination

b) Create a strong trade relationship by:

- Developing a close liaison with major travel agencies and tour operators dealing in international tourists and with the domestic sector. Travel and tour operators are an important marketing channel and should be wooed.
- Institute awards and special prizes for those agencies, which generate the maximum traffic for the State. Provide progressively increasing incentive slabs on the lines of airlines.
c) Reorient Tourist Information Offices and Satellite Offices into marketing outlets instead of the limited activity of reservation and information. These offices should have a special thrust of marketing the MP tourism products to Public Sector Units to tap the LTC market. The HRD departments and the house magazines of these PSUs are also the ideal medium for communication and creating awareness of the potential of MP tourism.

- The tourist information offices could also market special incentive tours for the trade travel and for incentives and prizes to the employees. Such packages could be marketed both directly and through travel agents. Khajuraho and Gwalior can be developed for such traffic and packages complete with sight seeing and evening entertainment should be offered.

- The tourist offices should also send feedback on tourist reactions, their satisfaction or complaints with their tour to MP, the changing demands and opportunities for tourism to the H.Q for planning and marketing. They should also give feedback on trends and competition from other states.

7.2.3 Maximize Benefit from Internet and Websites

(a) The existing web site should be upgraded to be more user friendly. Special attention should be paid to its speed of opening, as many surfers do not have patience. The web site should prominently display any packages and special offerings and should also incorporate on-line reservation facilities.

(b) The web site should be well advertised in print media for wider awareness.

(c) The web site should have linkage with other on-line reservation sites and attain a prominent placement by offering special discounted packages.
(d) The web site should have linkages with other popular portals like Yahoo, India Times, India overland tours, Google search etc.

7.2.4 Increasing Tourist Traffic to M.P.

The tourist traffic to M.P. can be increased in several ways. These include, improving connectivity to some of the important destinations, improving some of the locations which have potential but not fully exploited because of less development and by marketing packages and special offers to the domestic and pilgrimage tourists.

7.2.5) Increasing Foreign Tourist Arrivals:

a) Build up a strong case with facts and figures and persuade airlines to connect Khajuraho to Mumbai via Jaipur by air. Mumbai is the second largest entry point of foreign tourist in India and is currently not connected to Khajuraho. Similarly Jaipur is a favorite destination of foreign tourists.

b) Market Gwalior as a destination for foreign tourists ex Delhi or en route to Khajuraho as it is well connected to Delhi by train. Gwalior has rich history and culture. Improve and upgrade the facilities at Gwalior by developing better hotels, transport and entertainment facilities. Also develop adjacent heritage sites to provide more attractions in Gwalior.

c) Promote Sanchi in the market of Japan, Korea and Thailand for Buddhist pilgrim tourist. Special festival weeks on Buddha Poornima and on the exposition of the relic for the disciples of Buddha.
d) Market MP as a jungle state since it is the biggest forest state of the country. Introduce tours covering its prime forests with wildlife and introduce wildlife safari packages of Pench – Kanha – Bandhavgarh National Parks.

7.2.6 Increasing Domestic Tourist Arrivals:

a) Market package tours of different duration for tourists originating from Maharashtra, Gujarat and West Bengal.

b) Market Pachmarhi as a hill station for residents of Nagpur, Bhopal and Jabalpur and arrange convenient and comfortable coaches and packages etc.

c) Market MP to film producers and attract film units to shoot films at the scenic areas of MP, which would not only advertise those locations but would later become tourist attractions by themselves. Offers of providing on-ground assistance and concessional rates of accommodation and transport could also be made.

d) Market custom build packages for LTC traffic from PSU’s by liaison with their HR Department.

e) Market incentive packages for incentive traveler of business houses for Khajuraho and Gwalior. Market Ramnavmi Mela at Chitrakoot in South-east Asian countries of Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand where Ramayana is popular with different versions.
7.3) RAJASTHAN:

7.3.1) Tourism Marketing Rajasthan

In an evolved state like Rajasthan, the overall responsibility of marketing of tourism in the state rests with the State Government, while individual private sector participants (hotels, tour operators, etc.) are involved in marketing and promotion activities at local firm level. A large part of tourism success would depend upon marketing the attractions and products to precisely targeted bases. A professional tourism marketing approach needs to be developed at state as well as the industry participant level to co-ordinate in the promotion exercise as indicated below.

7.3.2) Research based marketing and promotion campaign

- Constitutionalist a market research and monitoring cell
- Establish a system of collection and analysis of statistics related to tourist arrival in the state
- Co-ordinate / co-operate with the Central Governments programme of detailed market research in key markets of Europe and Asia
- Design./ Create specific activities targeted at segments and riches for which products have been developed

7.3.3 Reorganisation of Tourism promotional activity in the state:

- Establish joint- sector promotion body ensuring effective representation of all tourism shareholders
- Co-ordinated marketing efforts with the Central government and with other states
- Standardisation of communication material
- Developing consistent sales training and product education for personnel at customer touch points
- Building close working relationship with the carriers and wholesale inbound operators

7.3.4 Attracting new tourist categories/groups

- Focus on MICE segment (Meetings, Incentives, Convention and Exhibition) and Creation of convention centres
- Developing spin-off business from major national and international events
- and activities particularly in Delhi Niche tourism activities like Eco-tourism and Rural tourism.

7.3.5 Online/Internet booking

- Interactive itinerary planning (locations to visit, travel options, accommodation)
- Online reservation system (for example, internet booking at all RTDC hotels showing status of occupancies). Also extending ‘early bird’ incentives to tourists planning their tour itineraries well in advance.

7.3.6) Following marketing and promotion strategy are also followed:

- Establishment of Tourist Information Centres
- Provision of Infrastructure facilities
- Joint venture schemes and PPP
- Community Participation and Employment Generation
- Encourage sustainable tourism
- Appointment of marketing agents
- Publishing of high quality literature
- Promoting Eco – Tourism
- Promoting private participation:
  - Land Bank
  - Single window clearance
  - Attractive incentives

The key would be to design marketing strategies and tactical campaigns that will match Rajasthan’s competitive strengths with the needs of specific tourist groups; thus a segmented approach is required rather than a ‘mass promotion’ approach. Thereby building market share and deliver revenue and yield performance.
REFERENCE

b) Twenty Year Perspective Plan of Tourism for the State of Maharashtra March 2003.
c) Twenty Year Perspectives Plan of Tourism for the State of Rajasthan Final Report.
d) Report on Kerala Approach to Tourism Development: A Case Study
e) Kerala Tourism Marketing Strategies & Recommendations www.slideshare.net
f) www.keralatourism.org
g) www.hotfrog.in
h) Kerala Tourism to rely on social media marketing www.expressbuzz.com
i) www.blogcatalog.com
j) Kerala-branded cabs in UK to promote tourism www.thefreelibrary.com/
k) gad.maharashtra.gov.in
l) Tourism.gov.in