

## Marketing, Competitiveness and Promotion of Tourist Attractions

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### Abstract

The purpose of this study is to identify, through a Systematic Literature Review (SLR), the marketing strategies used to promote tourist attractions and make them more competitive. Marketing strategies are important elements for the economic development of a tourist destination and to keep it competitive in the market. However, it is important for managers to be cautious when choosing strategies to promote their tourism offerings, as wrong strategies can compromise many factors, including economic ones. The methodology used in this research is the survey of articles using the keywords competitiveness, marketing and tourist attraction that guided the searches in databases of international relevance. In RSL, 649 articles were identified, which after three inclusion and exclusion processes reached the 07 articles that answered the guiding question of the research. The results show that the main marketing strategies used to promote tourist attractions are: organization and participation of regional and international fairs, participation in regional tourism events, conferences and festivals, use of social media, use of slogans in advertising material and websites. promotion, brochures with city slogans, sports and photo competitions, billboards, mass media (film and TV), promotional videos, photo CD provided to visitors, signage in historic centers and city slogans. However, the most used strategy, according to the studies, is digital media, especially social networks, where supply and demand can interact, creating a relationship and strengthening CRM (Customer Relationship Management). The results show that there are many marketing efforts used by managers, both in the public and private sector, to enhance tourist destinations and thereby increase visitor numbers. The use of the literature review methodology, through the RSL technique that makes an exhaustive review of empiric research published in relevant journals, allow a synthesis of the marketing strategies used in the promotion of tourist attractions. Although the study provides useful results it is not possible to generalize, since the number of articles that answered the guiding question was researched.

**Keywords:** Marketing Strategy; Commercial Competitiveness; Tourist Attraction; Systematic Literature Review

### Introduction

The changes that occur in the competitive environment in the tourism sector are very fast (Martínez, Galván & Lafuente, 2014), even though the service is considered a perishable product because it is not stored. In fact, it has to be consumed at the same time as it is sold, making tourist destinations offer higher quality services with added value to their consumers. Therefore, it is important to understand how to adapt to these changes and to use them as a competitive advantage (Boes, Buhalis & Inversini, 2016; Acar, 2018).

The competitiveness of tourism destinations is the ability of a destination to add value through the integrated management of benefits and processes to the economic and social model, and thus preserve the position in the market in relation to the competitors (Crouch & Ritchie, 2000; Hassan, 2000). And in order to become more competitive and attract more tourists, destinations should not focus their efforts solely on public policies, cultural and natural resources, infrastructure and the qualification of the workforce, but also on marketing to prospect potential tourists and innovation that leads to the long-term economic performance of individual firms, cities, regions and nations (Booyens, 2016; Crouch & Ritchie, 2000).

Marketing is a management strategy that uses a variety of tools with the objective of stimulating the consumption needs of products and services on potential clients. In the tourism sector, marketing should act as a facilitator of regional development, promoting the tourism activities of a region (Martínez, Galván & Lafuente, 2014). According to Kotler (2010), tourism marketing is responsible not only for attracting more tourists to the destination, but mainly for developing quality goods and services to meet the needs and desires of these visitors. It goes beyond the promotion of attractions, it is the management of the brand as a whole, it is the definition of the identity of the tourist destination, and its strengthening through strategies that can develop a strong image of the destination (Beni, 2012; Vignati, 2012; Kotler, 2010).

Marketing strategies are important elements for the economic growth of the tourist destination and to keep it competitive in the market, since its development depends mainly on the flow of tourists. However, it is important that managers are cautious when choosing strategies to promote their tourist attractions, since indicators with negative results due to the wrong choice of strategy can bring damage to several factors, not just the economic ones.

The objective of this study is to identify, through a Systematic Review of Literature (RSL), the marketing strategies used to promote the tourist destination to make them more competitive.

## **Methodology**

The present paper was elaborated from the methodology of the Systematic Review of Literature (SRL). A SRL is one of the methodologies used in bibliographic reviews, being a form of research that uses scientific literature studies on a specific topic, enabling the researcher to have a broad view of what is being studied in a given period, or country or year. It is a complete and "indispensable" research to discover studies already carried out on a certain area of knowledge (Saur-Amaral, Ferreira & Conde, 2013; Santos, Firme & Barros 2008; Sampaio & Mancini, 2007).

For this study, three keywords were chosen: Competitiveness, Tourist Attraction and Marketing (Competitiveness, Tourist Attraction and Marketing), which were submitted to the search process in the national and international scientific-journals: Science Direct, Scielo, Social & Behavioral, MEDLINE / PubMed, LILACS, Bireme and ISI Current Contents. However, only two, Science Direct and Scielo, obtained positive results in the searches. During the search, an AND was used, with the purpose of giving more amplitude to the search and restricting the keywords.

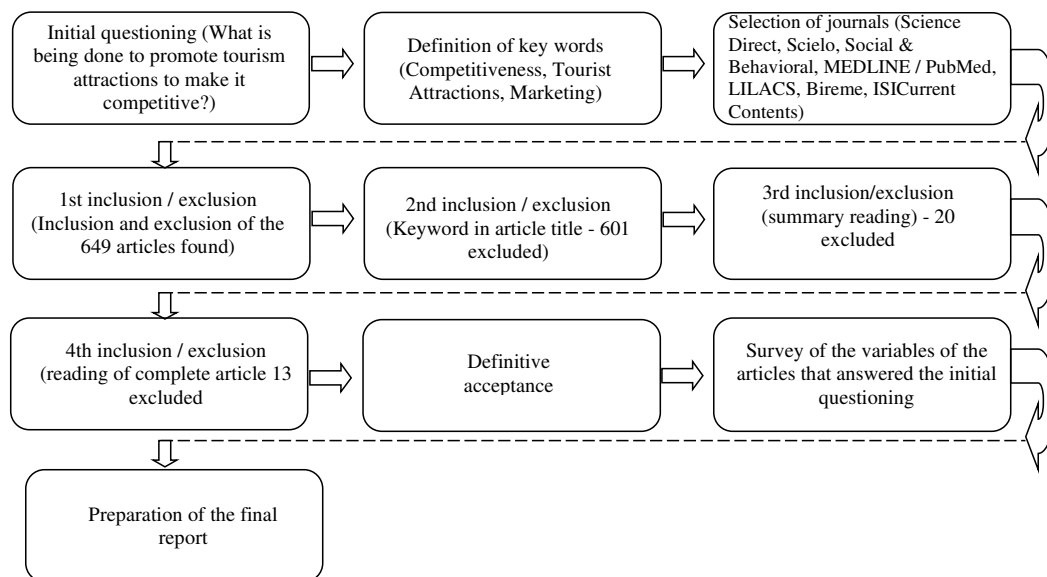
For the better reliability of the searches and the results of this study, three exclusion processes were carried out: In the first, papers that did not contain any of the keywords in the title of the work, the chapters of books and bibliographic studies were excluded, and included for analysis that contained at least one of the keywords in the title. The second process was through the reading and analysis of the summaries of the articles, where the methodology and results were analyzed, excluding those that did not respond to the initial questioning; In the third one, the papers were analyzed in a more thorough way: only those that responded to the initial questioning were included.

The papers selected in the third triage were once again analyzed in more depth and the data extracted from variables to compose a table with the results of the study, namely:

- Title: The title in the original and translated language;

- Author / year: Identifies which authors are studying tourism marketing;
- Journal: Which scientific journal publish on tourism marketing;
- Methodology: Which methodology did these authors use to study tourism marketing;
- Location: Which sites have already been studied;
- Sample: Number of subjects searched;
- Subject: Who are these subjects;
- Keyword repetition: Displays the relevance of each keyword within each paper;
- Marketing strategies used: They present which marketing strategies are being used in tourism marketing;
- Conclusion: Where relevant parts of the completed study are scored.

In Figure 1 it is possible to observe all steps performed in RSL to answer the guiding question of the study.



**Fig. 1: Research design**

Source: Prepared by the authors.

## Results

The results are summarized in Tables 1 and 2, where Table 1 presents the related variables, plus the characterization of the papers and Table 2 the variables related to the results.

As can be seen in Table 1, 649 papers were identified with the RSL in the databases Science Direct (645) and Scielo (04), of which 601 were rejected in the first stage, leaving 48 papers for the analysis of the abstracts, that, after this analysis, 20 were rejected and 28 papers were for the reading stage of

the paper, of which 21 were rejected and only 7 were included as they answered the guiding question about what is being done in the promotion of the tourist attractions to make them competitive.

All rejected papers were unrelated to the keywords and / or did not answer the guiding question of the search. From the analysis of the collected material it was possible to verify that the studies related to marketing strategies in the promotion of the tourism are relatively recent, published in their majority of them in the years of 2015 and 2016.

In relation to the keywords, it can be observed that there are no papers that relate the keywords tourist attractive with competitiveness and marketing. Besides the word tourist attraction does not relate to the other keywords in the research, it is not mentioned once individually in the papers, while the word competitiveness was cited 15 times and the word marketing 360 times. This result shows the importance of studies that relate the word tourist attraction with the other two, in addition to showing that tourism marketing is a topic that has been discussed and widely discussed. Of the magazines, the Journal of Destination Marketing & Management was the one that most presented papers with the keywords were published. Of the seven papers that answered the guiding question of the research, only one was done by Brazilian researchers. Regarding the methodology addressed in the studies, the qualitative, through a case study with in-depth interviews is preferred by the researchers.

**Table 1: Characteristics of Selected Articles in RSL**

Item	Original Title	Author/Year	Journal	Methodology	Local	Sample	Subjects
11	Joint destination marketing in the South Central Coast region of Vietnam	Lan Thi Phuong Nguyen and Douglas Pearce (2015)	Journal of Destination Marketing & Management	Qualitative/ interview/website analysis	Central Coast of South Vietnam	8 provinces	Target marketing Organizations
22	Traditional cultural manifestation marketing and service quality- The case of Dubrovnik Summer Festival	Marija Dragicevic and Ana Tevsic (2015)	Procedia Economics and Finance	Quantitative/ interview	Dubrownik (Croatia)	200 interviewed	Festival participants
33	Innovación en la promoción turística en medios y redes sociales: Un Estudio Comparativo entre Destinos Turísticos	Guilherme Mendes Thomaz, Alexandre Augusto Biz and José Manoel G. Gândara (2013)	Estudios y Perspectivas en Turismo	Qualitative/ exploratory	Paraná (Brazil)	5 countries	California (USA) Valencian community (Spain), Emilia Romagna (Italy), French riviera (France) e Paraná (Brazil)
44	Dynamic destination image formation and change under the effect of various agents: The case of Lijiang, 'The Capital of Yanyu'	Honggang Xu and Tian Ye (2016)	Journal of Destination Marketing & Management	Qualitative/ observation and interviews	Lijiang (China)	41 interviewed	32 tourists/ 7 public workers / 2 bar staff
55	The image of the creative city: Some reflections on urban branding in Turin	Alberto Vanolo (2008)	Cities	Qualitative/case study	Turim/Italy	1 country	Promotional materials and political documents
66	Destination branding and reconstructing symbolic capital of urban heritage: A spatially informed observational analysis in medieval towns	Aleksandr Michelson and Katrin Paadam (2016)	Journal of Destination Marketing & Management	Qualitative/ multicases/ analysis of promotional material and official websites	Germany	7 cities	Bruges (Belgium), Lübeck (Germany), Stral-sund (Germany), Tallinn (Estonia), Toruń (Poland), Visby (Sweden) e Wismar (Germany)
77	La imagen del Camino de Santiago: Análisis de su representación promocional como producto turístico	María José Andrade Suárez and Iria Camaño Franco (2016)	Tourism & Management Studies	Quali/quantitative/ questionnaires	Santiago de Compostela	2.131 interviewed	Pilgrims

Source: Prepared by the authors.

Following the results (Table 2), it is possible to identify that the marketing strategy most used in promoting tourism attractions is digital marketing through social networks and official sites of tourist destinations. The other used strategies that also contribute to the promotion of tourist attractions are: organization and participation of regional and international fairs, participation in events, conferences and festivals of regional tourism, use of social media, use of slogans in publicity material and official websites, promotional posters with slogans of the city, holding of competitions of photos and sports, publicity panels, mass media (cinema and TV), promotional videos, photographic CD provided to the visitor, signage in the historical centers with UNESCO logo and city slogan.

**Table 2: Characteristics of Selected Item Results in RSL**

Item	Repetition of keywords			Tourism Marketing Strategies			Conclusion
	Competitiveness	Tourism attractiveness	Marketing	Fairs and events	Media Digital	Other Strategies	
11	22	0	144	Participation of regional and international fairs / Organization of fairs / events and conferences / regional tourism festivals	Social Media	Printed Folders / Photo & Sports Competitions	The DMOs of the eight provinces studied carry out marketing activities individually and others together.
12	11	0	25		Internet in general	Advertising Panels / Mass Media Vehicles / Promotional Folder	Modern marketing practice requires the segmentation and direct evaluation of the segment market.
33	0	0	75		Social Media (Facebook / Twitter / Youtube / Flickr)		Well-planned and used social media and media together can increase the number of users, achieve greater visibility and create a great competitive advantage for the business or tourist destination.
44	11	0	37		Internet	Mass Media / Film / TV / Promotional Videos	The findings reveal that this anomalous image has been formed under the forces of the market with the combined effect of various agents and nowadays become well known.
55	2	0	25	Host sports events	The use of the slogan "increasingly beautiful" in advertising material on the official website	Advertising brokers, Promotional DVD of passion lives here, the photographic CD provided to foreigners to help them compile articles in the city.	Tourism seems to persist in the Fordist heritage that is still challenging to deal with, persisted in a deeply Fordist culture in promoting a cultural brand for the city.
66	5	0	41		Official website	Signage in historic centers with UNESCO logo and city slogan / Folders with slogan / In touristic promotional materials	The construction of symbolic capital over built heritage, with socioeconomic and cultural practices as significant contributors to the creation of unique selling propositions, can result in a successful destination brand.
77	4	0	13		Social Media	Advertising campaigns on TV / posters with slogan and promotional video "Now is when, Galicia is where" / "Galicia, thinking back to you" / can you keep a secret? / "People who want to recommend you Galicia"	The results show that in general, tourists visiting Santiago de Compostela are not driven because of the publicity but because of the experience they expect to find and that the projected image in advertising is precisely to provide information.

*Source: Prepared by the authors.*

According to the study carried out by Nguyen and Pearce (2015), the most developed destinations are the most active in terms of marketing, and the least developed have their most modest marketing actions. For the destinations that wish to receive ISO 9001 certification, the study did by Dragicevic and Tevcic (2015) shows that certification is directly related to the improvement of product quality and the creation of new marketing strategies; and that sponsorship and financial support are a tool to strengthen the image of fate and not an expense.

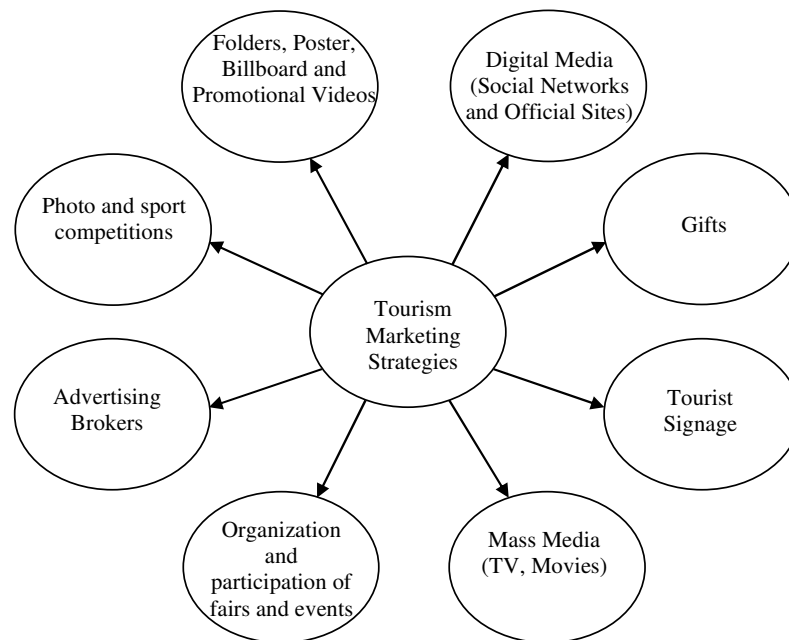
Public and private tourism organizations should interact with users on their social networks, allowing interactivity between supply and demand, and should also create innovative marketing strategies. For Thomaz, Biz and Gandara (2013), for marketing strategy in media and social networks to be efficient, they need to work in an integrated way with others and with the main site.

In the study carried out by Vanolo (2008), the use of video technology for mobile phones, and in the subway system driven by a computer, although not as innovative, is a very used strategy with an excellent return; Vanolo also pointed out that more economical heterogeneous actions such as supporting local artists in public spaces create a public consensus, in addition to zero risk.

Tourist destinations with historic centers offer tourist experience in various ways, according to the study of Michelson and Paadam (2016). These unique experiences intensify the reproduction of the symbolic value that can be used in the destination brand strengthening the heritage of local culture. The offerings of products anchored in this cultural inheritance integrated in the brand creates a differential, which guarantees its competitive position in the international market of cultural tourism.

Creating an identity of the destination is one of the first, and perhaps the main marketing strategy that fate management should worry about, because the image becomes a key issue in the analysis of the behavior of tourists before, during and after living the tourist experience, besides guiding the choices of the other strategies to be used in the marketing planning of the destination (Suárez & Franco, 2016).

The marketing strategies used to promote the tourist attractions found in the study are represented in Figure 2. The most used is digital media, especially social networks, where supply and demand can interact, creating a relationship and strengthening CRM (Customer Relationship Management).



**Figure 2: Marketing Strategies Used to Promote Tourist Attraction**

*Source: Prepared by the authors.*

What may be contributing to managers investing in digital media as a marketing strategy is the use of the Internet in the world. According to research conducted by the Internet World Stats (2017) are 3,366,261,156 users worldwide, about 51% of the world population, and 139,111,185 users in Brazil, 65% of the Brazilian population, and of these Brazilian Internet users, 80% access social networks, and besides the most accessed social networks in the country, Facebook is in first place with 70%. This data corroborates with the most used social media, according to the results of the study, they are Facebook, Official sites, Instagram, WhatsApp, Twitter and Blogs.

Besides the interaction of supply with demand, social media has a low cost. Some marketing strategies that could be used as well as outdoor advertising, radio and catalogs with tourist attractions did not appear in any of the papers studied, so the reasons for their exclusions.

The important thing before selecting the marketing strategies to be used in the promotion of the destination is to make a plan, identifying the profile of the tourists, and with this data in hand select the strategies according to the ratings, so the return will be greater.

## Conclusions

The use of the methodology of bibliographic review, through the technical RSL allowed a synthesis of the marketing strategies used in the promotion of tourist attractions. The results show that there are many marketing efforts used by managers, both in the public and private sectors, to boost tourism destinations and consequently increase the number of visitors.

In addition to identifying the strategies being used, the study provided information that can strengthen the development of the local site with other strategies such as the use of CRM, the creation and use of slogans in advertising material, joint marketing actions with other destinations, as well as develop products anchored in the unique identities of integrated cities.

It was also possible to identify that there are many studies that mention tourism marketing with a focus on brand management, but few are exploring strategies used to promote the destination or its tourist attractions.

It is expected that new studies that relate marketing to competitiveness and tourist attractions will be made, since their results can be used to guide tourism managers and future researchers.

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