9. The management of tourism

Learning objectives

At the end of this chapter the reader will be able to:

• Describe the importance of community leadership to the management of tourism and show how leadership emerges and can be developed within a community.

• Describe the roles of leadership within a community.

• Develop a program to coordinate the community components of tourism.

• Understand the importance of visitor services and discuss how that function should be organized.

• Organize an effective program strengthening the public's awareness of tourism.

• Be able to define and correctly use the following terms: autocratic leader, democratic leader, laissez-faire leader, self-selection, promotional mix, advertising, publicity, public relations, sales promotion, personal selling,visitor services, hosting, tourist information center.

How to develop leadership[25]
The value of leadership to tourism development

Competent, motivated leadership is vital in the planning and development of tourism as an economic force within the community. Sufficient facilities, finances, and all the other aspects necessary to produce a comprehensive, coordinated tourism program stand still unless adequate leadership can direct the human, physical, and financial resources into a comprehensive, coordinated tourism program.

However, leadership is often the least considered aspect in tourism development. The concept itself has a variety of meanings. Some people think of leadership as an innate personal attribute. Persons may become "symbolic" leaders because they are presidents of banks or the managers of motels, but they may be completely wrong for the job of leader of a tourism council. The symbolic leader has the power associated with a particular role and its expectations. The symbolic leader is powerful because people expect him to be.

Effective leadership is a learned behavioral skill which includes the ability to help others achieve their potential as team members. Strong leadership is vital and every effort should be made to recruit leaders who have already gained the respect of the citizens and are capable of efficiently using all of the available resources.

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25 In 1978, the then United States Travel Service published a series of booklets titled *Tourism U.S.A*. The project was coordinated by Glenn D Weaver, Department of Recreation and Parks Administration, University of Missouri-Columbia. The series was updated in 1987.

This chapter consists of a reprint of sections of Volume II, *Development: Planning for Tourism*, and Volume III, *Implementation: Visitor Services*.

In general there are two types of individuals who obtain leadership positions: (1) those who have something to gain from the development, and (2) those who want to see the community grow and develop. Of course, one person may fit into both groups.

Leadership emergence and the organizational process

A common pattern of leadership emergence can be found in many communities. Suppose you are involved directly with the tourism and travel business, as manager of a resort. You see that tourism would increase through more publicity, better streets, or a better reservation system. You share your ideas with friends from the Chamber of Commerce or the local service club who have similar interests in increasing visitors to the community. Your friends agree to then organize a group to seek a larger support base and additional help. Visits with governmental or community committees, such as a planning and zoning committee, or the city council, might result in financial, physical, or human resources needed to accomplish your goals. *This is the first phase of leadership emergence.*

The initial thrust to develop tourism will likely come from one individual organization or special interest group, e.g. resort owners, hotel or motel managers, Chamber of Commerce members or an historical society. Regardless of who stimulates the development, strive for early commitment from leaders already in place within the community. The tourism industry will affect either directly or indirectly most community interests.

When your group sets out to achieve your objectives you see other things that could be accomplished to improve tourism. A group larger than the original three is needed. You might organize a subcommittee of the Chamber of Commerce on travel and tourism, a committee of the Rotary Club (a voluntary not-for-profit corporation), or an ad hoc committee on tourism, either as a part of the industrial development group in the community or as a part of the city council. *This is the second phase in the organizational process.*

The third phase comes when the committee realizes that some jobs can be done only by someone who shares your priorities. So you form an association and invite all people of similar interests to join. In many communities this is done through the Chamber of Commerce, particularly in those communities that have tourism as a major economic resource. Certainly many if not most of the enterprises benefiting from visitors would be members. This is the most common type of organization; other types may be directly under the city council as a part of the local government, or independent, such as the Jonesville Resort Association.

This process may be completed in any time from a few months to a number of years. The originators may now be encouraging others to take over positions of leadership, or, in the situation of phase three, official and formal elections may be held, officers elected, and committees established.

At some point the workload begins to be exceedingly heavy in distributing publicity, answering incoming mail, soliciting memberships—too heavy for a volunteer operation. Time does not permit some of the members with other job responsibilities to continue to meet all the demands of the association. Therefore, a regular office is established and a secretary is employed.

Many communities stop here. Others desire full-time tourism leadership and go on to hire a full-time executive secretary or executive director. *This is the fourth phase of organizational development.* It is then that the community begins to see its greatest growth, not necessarily because of the employment of a professional, but because the ground work has been completed and the relationships involved in organization and cooperation have gradually been smoothed out. With a knowledgeable and experienced person working full-time, the planning process can be implemented at increased speed.

Not all communities will even want to consider a full-time director of tourism; they may want to include these duties with those of the present Chamber of Commerce. It might do well at this point to suggest, however, the advantages of a strong tourism association with a full-time director.

While an individual operator can advertise and promote his facility through a number of means, there are some aspects of tourism development that are either too costly for an individual or that lend themselves to attracting people to an area, rather than to an individual facility. An organized approach can accomplish a number of things that could not be done individually.

Leadership, whether volunteer or hired, should be responsible at all times to a policy-making board or group. The leader should not make all the ultimate decisions.

Exhibit 67: Chambers of Commerce help promote tourism.

(Courtesy Jamaica Tourist Board.)

Rather he should share suggestions, perspectives, and recommendations and implement policy, planning, and direction. Never should he be in the position of being the principal advisor to the group to which he reports. This will cause inevitable problems in the long run.

The roles that local governments and Chambers of Commerce have played in providing leadership for local tourism are almost as diverse and numerous as the cities having tourism programs. In Springfield, Illinois, USA, the local city council appointed an historic sites committee which ultimately led to an extensive tourism program. While in other communities such as the American cities: Decatur, Alabama, Boise, Idaho, and Asheville, North Carolina, the Chamber of Commerce has provided the leadership for tourism. In Asbury Park, New Jersey in the US, a corps of newly elected city officials took the lead in promoting tourism, while in Boise and Decatur newly appointed directors of the Chambers of Commerce took the leadership role. Even in those communities in which the Chamber of Commerce is not providing the major leadership for tourism, the Chamber of Commerce usually cooperates with the tourism leadership. In most communities there is a strong working relationship between local government and the Chamber of Commerce.

In summary, no one type of organization or leadership is better than another. It depends upon the tradition, the resources available, the organizational structure in the community, the strength of the Chamber of Commerce, or the confidence in the local elected officials. Many ways are used and all ways have found success in some areas.

Whichever type of organization is chosen, there are a number of leadership roles which can be identified with particular organizational structures. Leadership roles are the activities and responsibilities to be assumed by the organization providing the leadership. Some of these, by category of leadership organization, are listed here.

Leadership roles

Leadership roles—where there is either a separate tourism organization or one functioning as a part of the chamber of commerce

Gaining public support or awareness. Create community awareness and acceptance of tourism through public information activities including: news articles, editorials, and public speeches to demonstrate the positive effects of tourism to local residents.

Keep all those involved in tourism aware of current and future plans and maintain high levels of identity and motivation through the use of news letters, newspapers, radio, and television coverage to publicize the activities and achievements of those involved in tourism.

Work to promote and support local, state, and federal legislation beneficial to tourism. Maintain a harmonious relationship with local political officials and both state and national legislators.

Gain support from auxiliary facility and service providers, such as hotels, motels, restaurants and service stations.

Coordination. Develop a tourism staff having technical knowledge of tourism, the ability to relate to others effectively, and commitment to the tourism program.

Establish short and long range goals and map out plans to achieve them.

Coordinate independently managed attractions and events in tourism development and promotion.

Develop programs to measure tourist satisfaction with attractions, events and support facilities, and services such as hotels and motels, restaurants, service stations, and other businesses serving tourists.

Work to achieve a feeling of unity through the development of goals which appeal to broad community membership, particularly where local, regional, or state tourism programs may be adversely affected by sectionalism, provincialism, and jealousy. Organizational activities must include representatives from all groups.

Operational. Seek funds from local, state, and federal governments and private resources.

Provide and direct visitor information centers.

Attract conventions, sporting events, cultural and other activities, by working with those in charge of local, state, and national organizations.

Research the impact of tourism on the local community.

Promotion. Prepare and coordinate all advertising and promotional pamphlets, brochures.

Prepare or direct the preparation of feature stories about local tourism for newspapers, journals, or travel magazines.

Develop close working relationships with radio, television, and newspaper media to assure thorough coverage of tourism projects, events, and attractions.

Promote local tourism through activities with professional travel associations, attendance at travel shows, working with professional travel brokers, and advertising in national travel magazines.

Leadership roles—chamber of commerce, when there is a separate tourism association

Gaining public support or awareness. Encourage Chamber members to actively participate in the development, promotion, and operation of the community's tourism program.

Develop community publicity materials which relate community economic development to the tourism industry and the success of a tourism program to overall community development including economic, social, and cultural.

Coordination. Create a committee or council to advise the tourism association and to present Chamber of Commerce interests.

Develop membership which includes representatives from the economic, political, social, historic, cultural, educational, and religious interests in the community.

Operational. Develop, if not otherwise provided for, a visitors information center.

Provide, or work with local government to provide, adequate rest areas and related facilities for visitors and tourists.

Promotion. Participate in regional and state programs to promote tourism.

Leadership roles—local government, where the tourism association is a part of chamber or separate

Operational. Provide zoning ordinances and building codes which facilitate the development of tourist attractions, protect historic structures or sites, and provide maximum assurance against alienating citizens with regard to tourism.

Implement ordinances which tend to maximize the effectiveness of advertising signs without detracting from the scenery, tradition, decor, or heritage of the community.

Establish regulations which protect important resources for local residents, for example, scarce water supplies.

Provide ordinances for effective crowd control to minimize disturbances which would be distasteful to both local residents and tourists.

Develop effective parking and traffic controls to minimize congestion.

Landscape public areas to enhance the beauty and attractiveness of the community for both tourists and local residents.

Provide adequate refuse control.

Give adequate financial support to the community's tourism program, for example, pass a lodging tax for funding the local tourism association.

Provide or work with other community organizations to provide adequate rest areas and related facilities.

Imposed organization

A word about imposed organization: because tourism is many times regional or statewide in nature, and because states are sometimes willing to share some of their financial resources in the form of matching funds, some specific types of organizations may be dictated in order to qualify. In the US, for example, to qualify for state matching funds Huntington County, Pennsylvania had to develop a formal organizational structure which met the requirements of the state. A travel promotion agency had to be organized with its directors appointed by county commissioners. The directors, in turn, appointed all staff members including a full-time executive director. Thus, the operations of the tourism effort are subject to some political control.

9. The management of tourism

To facilitate the restoration of New Harmony, Indiana a county trust commission was formed with an operating unit, the tourist council, to activate state support.

Exhibit 68: Local areas can landscape tourist areas. (Courtesy New Zealand Tourist & Publicity Office.)

Historic New Harmony, Inc. was founded as the operating arm of a new state memorial commission. While there had been state influence involving the leadership of the restoration project, significant state financial support was also provided.

Regional leadership in developing tourism may be imposed at the state level in the USA as in Utah or may be voluntary as in the sixteen county Alabama Mountain and Lakes area. There is no single approach to developing regional tourism. For example, in Chattanooga, Tennessee the tourism program was taken from the Chamber of Commerce and placed under a newly organized Chattanooga Area and Convention Bureau. In the coastal area of Georgia, a number of Chambers of Commerce organized the Coastal Area Planning and Development Commission to take a regional approach in developing tourism. Regional requirements then may dictate the type of local organization for tourism.

Developing leadership within the community

Now that we have a picture of how leadership emerges and the types of organizational structure that provide the vehicle for that leadership, let's look at leadership itself. **Leadership begins with people creating a mental picture of what they want to do for themselves or the community,** who then sell this to others to gain their support. Leadership begins to be a part of planning: resources must be obtained, goals and objectives set, work assigned, accepted, and evaluated. The type of leadership can affect success. The traditional categories of leadership, autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire, may be appropriately discussed here.

There probably is little place in the tourism development process for an autocratic leader. Shared leadership improves the quality of decisions. **Those who will be affected by the ultimate decisions should be involved in the decision-making process.** The question should not be who makes the decisions, but how they can be made more sensibly. This suggests more of an "operational leadership" method rather than leadership as a "status" or "symbol". Leadership, as a function within community processes, can be shared and does not have to be concentrated. People can be leaders in some situations and followers in others. Development of tourism in a community results in diverse objectives, plans, and methods of implementation. These occur at different times and places and require a variety of leadership styles, skills, and structuring. The leadership patterns, therefore, have to vary with the nature of the function.

It is not a question of who should lead the process—professionals, politicians or interested citizens—but how to group the abilities needed for the leadership function. It can be a partnership in which professional, political, and citizen roles can all be delineated.

The interaction among these various elements, each with its own perspective, provides the motive for getting things done. There should be no question as to what is most important. All participants must work together. Cooperation is not everyone doing the same thing, but doing different things together.

This positive interaction among professionals, officials, and citizens does not imply total agreement or lack of controversy. In fact, disagreements can increase understanding of situations. What is necessary is that the parties accept the legitimacy of each other's activity in attempting to influence and exercise leadership. Many things in tourism are private matters. They depend on individual or firm business decisions on investments, operation, and management and are not subject to group decisions. At the same time many things in tourism development involve public decisions and public investments.

Remember: in the public sector keep the democratic process open—public policy is involved. This does not mean that everyone must be involved in every decision. Further, there are many operations that do not require committees or extensive involvement. Some jobs can be done best by an individual or select team. People do not want to participate in everything.

In fact, when things are going well, participation decreases. But when there are difficulties, questions, and anxieties, people make an effort to get involved. The key is to keep the process open so that people can see how things are going. Be responsive to concerns, suggestions and information from citizens. The democratic process, then, whether with the public or with the tourism group, is not marked by unremitting participation. Involvement tends to be distributed at different intensities at different points in the system. It usually is intermittent. Most people simply do not want to be involved in the actual day-to-day working operations of the association, or in those matters of widespread interest. The responsibility will usually fall on a relative few. These few should make every effort to keep the lines of communication open with their constituencies.

Reconnaissance

It is important that any leader take reconnaissance of other organizations, individuals, or people in like businesses to see what they are doing before taking initial steps. A leader may automatically assume that he must create an organization to meet his goals. He should be aware, however, that communities are already organized, and no matter what ideas he has, someone else probably has had similar ideas and might be pursuing similar objectives.

9. The management of tourism

Resistance

Every leader has faced resistance, whether a leader of a small informal group, or a community-wide leader with an interest in tourism development. The consideration of planning or of strategies for enlisting participation or legitimization will bring resistance—someone is sure to dispute the idea or the timing.

It is necessary to understand the source of the resistance if it is to be overcome to any degree. Strong resistance may mean discontinuing the project.

Apathy is the greatest problem to be overcome by those involved in leadership situations. Nevertheless, effective leadership must not develop a tendency to give up when a lack of interest is encountered.

To reduce resistance and enhance participation, the leader must meet others halfway; avoid taking total control of the circumstances and work out ways to get others to participate.

Citizen involvement

A successful tourism development has the support of the citizens in that community. Many people, however, feel that citizen participation complicates the planning and implementing process. This is a short-sighted philosophy. While it may be a problem, in the end it will pay off in support and other types of dividends, such as development of new supporting facilities and attractions.

Citizen participation does not substitute for having experienced, trained, specialized professionals involved. The leadership must enlist the support and blessing of those who seem untouched by the tourism development process.

Representation

Another basic tool of the good leader is to achieve adequate representation. There is usually considerable pressure to establish a representative arrangement rather quickly when plans begin to move. This is one reason why those who are to be represented in the system may not be consulted about how this is to be done. Adequate representation and shared leadership will improve the quality of decisions.

Division of labor

This is the cornerstone on which good leadership is based. For any substantial task within communities there are many things to be done, ranging from minor housekeeping to sensitive and demanding negotiations. Tourism development work takes time and the duties required to adequately support it continue, adjusting to meet new situations and stages. In any sizable effort, the work-load has to be shared. No one person or group has the time, energy, or the range of skills to do it all. **A system for dividing the labor is essential.**

The key to division of labor is in cooperation. *Cooperation is doing different things together.* The leader, then, must find practical and equitable ways to divide up the work among those willing to take part. It may seem impossible to do fairly and efficiently. Certainly it is a thankless responsibility to carry the task of assigning specific work to particular people and organizations and then following up to see if it is done when promised.

In tourism development, seldom is there any clear or formal basis on which to direct authority over others. Most of those involved are working on their own volition, voluntarily, and are not subject to commands. This even applies when a director of tourism is in place. Most of the work has to be done by persuasion and influence. If someone is assigned a job he does not like, has not the time, or feels ill-equipped to perform, he probably will not do it.

Rather than attempting to put the burden on one person or organization to separate and assign the specific jobs, it should be a group responsibility. A small group of active and concerned people should decide what needs to be

done. When a job list is developed and a sequence established, the total active group can be informed. Assignments then can be made on the basis of *self-selection*.

When people know the range of jobs and are given some choice, they will likely pick things they can and will do. This does not assure every job will be selected or that there will not be clusters of the most-popular and least-popular jobs. Experience, however, does indicate that in a reasonably sized group there will be a diversity of interests and preferences enough to cover a great many jobs.

Some people prefer to be assigned to jobs. In the process of self-selection they are likely to let this preference be known. The existence of these persons will help in assigning every job. It is important that you exhibit confidence in the willingness and ability of people to pick jobs for themselves.

In the process of self-selection and/or delegation, it is implied that unless otherwise stated, the individual is free to do the job the way he wants and to his expectations. Many leaders have fallen from grace because they expected the individuals to do a job as a leader would have done it. Particularly in volunteer organizations, the leader must be willing to accept the effort of the individual if it is satisfactory at all. This is not a business where employees must please the boss to receive a salary. It is very difficult for the leader not to react or respond negatively when things do not meet his expectations, but it is also the quickest way to eliminate the volunteer leader or to ruin the self-selection process.

Supervision and follow-up

Once the projects have been assigned, and procedure is agreed upon, the leader must check periodically to see whether or not the work has been completed. This is a vital aspect of leadership. All of us are aware of the many projects which people agree to do and then just do not seem to find the time. Establish a deadline at the time work is selected or assigned. If it is not completed by that time, the leader must then go to the individual and ask about progress and whether the individual intends to do it. If he does, additional time may be allowed, or the work should be reassigned. The follow-up function is one of those vital parts of the leadership process which many times is forgotten or ignored, causing a breakdown in the planning process.

Coordination of tourism

A community's tourism industry requires a diversified organizational structure capable of handling many responsibilities. Promotion, budget and finance, training and education, research and data collection, and communications are also responsibilities of the tourism organization. Coordination of this organization is not a process which just happens, it has to be planned; each element in the organization should contribute to the success of the master plan. Whoever leads the program must be responsible for coordination—the tourism council, a tourism committee in the Chamber of Commerce (COC), a tourism committee in the city council, or a hired director of tourism.

One aspect of coordination is flexibility (the ability to change objectives as needed). Close coordination between organization elements helps avoid duplication of efforts. Clearly defined objectives and assignment of responsibilities will also be beneficial to the coordination process.

The problem faced in overall coordination is to see that each goal established fits into the master plan and that committees work toward goals at the proper pace. Usually, the overall plan will call for certain priorities. To avoid bottlenecks certain actions have to happen before other things can happen. The coordinator must be aware of this process and organize the plan of action so it is done in the proper sequence.

In its simplest form coordination is a communications issue concerned with the two-way sharing of information at each level of development (initiating, developing, implementing, evaluating) and by each component of the tourism industry. These components will be discussed in the section that follows.

Communications

Coordination requires efficient ways of communicating. Channels should be as direct and simple as possible; they must be well-defined and understood by everyone involved in the organization. Each person in the program should know how word about each activity is to be spread to those who need to know.

Channels need to be established; within the community; between the community and the tourist; between the community and external segments of tourism such as other organizations, travel agencies, and tourism organizations; and among the various interests that make up the tourism industry.

Some of the most common methods for constructing an effective communications function follow.

- **The tourist center** is most effective for welcoming tourists, providing information about all attractions in the area, local customs, and laws. Community attractions literature and fliers for special events can be distributed here.

  The visitor center can provide a communications vehicle between tourist and community. Compliments and complaints should be handled with equal ease. Complaints should be given special attention, however, because poor handling indicates a disregard for the tourist.

- **Well-trained service people.** In many communities service personnel will interact with more tourists than the visitors' center. It is most important that they know the community and current events.

- **Good signing on the streets and highways.** This is a basic type of communication. It says to the tourist: "We are concerned that you do not waste your time finding our attractions."

- **Meeting, forums, discussion groups, board and committee meetings open to the public,** and special planning or problem solving meetings. These are especially important in communicating with people in the community.

- **Organized dissemination of information** through newsletters, special reports, local newspaper editorials, radio and television news reports. Publicity (non-paid advertising), though generally administered through the promotion committee or department, may also emanate from local government and political sources, private business, and other organization sources. When they are issued by other organizations, it is important that the tourism organization be informed beforehand so that potential conflicts do not occur.

Obviously, *communications and coordination must go hand in hand if the organization's efforts are to succeed.* Good communications require good coordination and good coordination demands good communications. Therefore, in planning the communications and coordination functions, one must be careful to select those persons who can create the environment in which these functions may effectively occur.

Research and data collection

The process of determining what is happening and what is most likely to happen is a continuous one and basic to good organization and management. Managers also need to know what their best alternatives are for each decision. Supplying these types of information is the responsibility of the research arm of the organization.

Exhibit 69: Tourists like a warm welcome. (Courtesy Hong Kong Tourist Association.)

Size and degree of sophistication of this arm depends upon the amount of resources the organization feels it can, or wants, to devote to it. Small communities can use fairly simple ways of collecting information, but should keep in mind that the results are likely to have some errors. The study of the section on data collection will reveal a number of basic rules which can be employed to cut error in the results.

Likewise, the amount of analysis to be expected from the research arm depends upon the quality of personnel working there. For many uses, the analysis can be quite simple. For others, this may not be true. Information is basic to good decision making and every possible effort should be made to get the best information available and have it delivered in the most usable form.

The following are illustrations of problems where good information is important to the solution:

- **Promotion:** the kinds of promotion, geographic areas in which it is done, and timing depend upon a knowledge of the potential market for a community's attractions. It would not do much good to advertise in a magazine having only national circulation, if your only chance to draw customers was from within 800 kilometers of your community. You do not usually advertise a ski area in the spring. Certain kinds of attractions appeal to older people, so promotion of these in media they read gives you the best return on advertising dollars.
- **Visitor satisfaction:** You always want to know if you are sending away satisfied customers. The only way you can really find out is to devise some way of asking them or of keeping track of repeats and referrals.
- **Changes in numbers of tourists:** Season to season comparisons enable managers to determine how much change to expect in the present year and when to increase promotion efforts. Expenditures by tourists

for various goods and services combined with some knowledge of size of the local multiplier would enable administrators to communicate the importance of tourism to the local economy. This will help to gain community support.

- **Knowing types of people visiting your community** could be of help in planning for future operations, understanding some of the problems you are facing, and improving your communications. Knowing changes in the supply of tourism attractions and facilities in your region, state, and nation could help you gauge plans for expansion in your community. This may not now be a problem in your area, but it would be well to know when it might be.

Each community has to decide how much importance to attach to research. The general inclination seems to be to do too little of it. Making decisions based on inadequate or erroneous information leads to waste. Many communities never know whether their operations are getting results or not since their research is inadequate to tell them.

Education and training

Since tourism is a hosting industry, methods of training those who come into contact with tourists are very important. The development plan should examine ways of doing this most efficiently and lay out a blueprint for its accomplishment.

A major problem in training employees of service stations, cafes, motels, and retail stores is reluctance of employers to give them time (with pay) for such training. Even though most of these firms are regarded as part of the industry, they sometimes fail to identify their welfare with that of tourism. The tourism organization needs good communication on this point with employers.

In addition there should be methods developed to have a well-informed public. Both of these functions should be allowed for in the organizational structure.

Data collected on the number of tourists visiting the area, what they do, how much money they spend in the community, and where the money goes, should be explained to the general public. This assures that the public will be aware of the importance of tourism to the local economy and that their contacts with tourists could also affect its success.

For the tourism organization to be effective, it must not only communicate the information the community wants, but also communicate with the community itself. Here, residents as well as special interest groups must have a mechanism available for communicating complaints, ideas, and opportunities, and for reporting on changes that should be made in some aspect of the tourism program. A good mechanism would be periodic public meetings of the tourism council. Having the tourism director or an associate available for discussion at regular times could also help.

Promotion

Although promotion is really a part of the overall communications concept, its importance in most tourism programs indicates that it should be viewed in the organizational structure as a separate and specialized function requiring professional expertise. It includes:

- advertising
- publicity and public relations
- sales promotion

• personal selling

The manner in which these are integrated is called the promotional mix.

Exhibit 70: Know the types of people who visit your community. (Courtesy Hong Kong Tourist Association.)

Advertising involves developing a campaign theme, selecting those media that best reach target market audiences, and preparing or ordering the necessary art work, copy, printing, and other production materials to meet media schedules.

The publicity function manages all matter relating to the issuance of news releases to local and national media; staging publicity events; and performing supportive services for the other functions comprising the promotional mix.

When a community commemorates a special day, occasion, or historical event, it uses the vehicle of publicity to promote interest in it. The main purpose of publicity is to focus immediate attention on the subject. If the event is well staged, the news releases are well written and placed with appropriate editors, and are of real news value, they will be published or presented by the media. If it is a gimmick of little news value, and is an obvious attempt to focus attention on a minor event, it will be ignored.

Many communities hire publicity agents to create and publicize various events such as beauty pageants, contests, auto shows, and Easter parades. A good publicity agent can get a great deal of experience out of a well-presented event. He can also get a lot of bad publicity for the community if the event is a flop or if something unfortunate happens as a result of the event. Some events have been so well publicized that they attracted too many people to the area, and this resulted in fighting, drunkenness, and considerable police action which turned a good event into a bad one. Several "rock music shows" and some state fairs have had such negative experiences.

While publicity and public relations are usually considered simultaneously, they tend to have different perspectives and responsibilities in contributing to a successful promotional mix. Whereas publicity is generally designed to focus attention on special events and communication of specific information, public relations is designed to be an ongoing function that performs a supportive service for the entire tourism organization as well as the community.

In public relations (PR), the concern is with the various "publics" whom the organization has identified as being important to the accomplishment of its mission. Those publics that usually require special relationships and programs are:

- general public
- media
- governmental agencies
- employees of the tourism organization and support facilities
- special interest groups (historical societies, attractions and amusement operators; hotel, motel, restaurant groups, and others)

The PR function may also be a troubleshooting function in problem-solving situations, or it may be a function that helps spread community good will, and provides the "grease" in implementing the decision process.

Sales promotion is the sub-function responsible for strengthening the advertising and personal selling function. This function is also described as the "enhancer" or the "extender" of the advertising and selling of the community's satisfactions at special shows, such as recreational vehicle shows, boat shows, hotel, motel and restaurant association shows. It also develops exhibits, displays, and other materials that encourage tour directors and travel agencies to include the community in their patrons' travel plans. It provides for concessionaires and the distribution of promotional items such as t-shirts, maps, directories, souvenirs, and other special promotional devices that add to the overall program.

The personal selling part of the promotional mix addresses its efforts to the personal contact work that must be done with tour directors, travel agents, and private organizations that may want to vacation in a community. The selling function is also utilized along with public relations' efforts and trade shows and other activities where it is advisable to have personal community representation available to provide added sales pressure in selling the community to others.

Budget and finance

The organization structure must have a sound system of fiscal management. This system will include provisions for generating or receiving funds as well as sound policies and practices for expenditures and accounting.

All organization structures require operating funds. The funds for salary and wage, office space and equipment, supplies, postage and funds necessary for accomplishing special responsibilities such as promotion and advertising, education and training, research and data collection, are a part of the normal operating expenses of the organization. The amount of funds needed will depend upon the size and scope of the organization and its responsibilities. Inadequate funding can kill a good program.

A good accounting system will identify where money is spent, how much, and for what purposes. The system needs to include features and procedures which demand honesty and periodic accurate reporting.

Initial planning for the organization's responsibilities and objectives must consider the method of financing the program. You waste time planning something for which adequate funds are not available. Careful consideration should be given to the conditions and procedures through which funds are collected and allocated to the tourism organization.

An example of how this issue could be a concern may be found in the collection of the lodging tax by a city with allocations made to the tourism organization by the city council. From year to year the attitude about tourism may fluctuate and funds may be directed to streets, sewers, and other municipal concerns. Although these projects may be deserving, the problem is that the tourism budget remains uncertain and dependent upon the whims of individuals with other interests.

Methods of funding fall into two major groups: funding of operations and promotion and funding for capital improvements or development. These probably represent 75 per cent to 80 per cent of the ways in which communities support tourism development and promotion. The list is by no means exhaustive and continued investigation turns up many unique and creative methods of funding Chamber of Commerce and tourism associations.

Several of the methods to be discussed will require state, regional, or local legislation or ordinances. Some of these methods may not be legal in some areas because of lack of state "enabling authority". Investigation will be required in each specific locality to determine whether or not some of the alternatives suggested are available. This is not to say, however, that groups local, regional or statewide could not together promote such efforts in the future.

Funding of tourism operations and promotion

Communities vary widely in how they organize to provide ongoing and sustaining emphasis for tourism both internally and externally. In many communities, the Chamber of Commerce provides the vehicle, in others it is a committee of that group, a separate visitors and convention bureau, a department of the city for tourism development, or in other cases a privately organized group representing tourism related business. Some of the options listed below will not be available or appropriate for each group, others may apply more directly to some groups than others. For example, allocations from the general fund would be more likely to fund a city organized department than a private group.

The transient guest tax is gaining popularity as the desired method of financing operation and promotion. It goes by many names including bedroom tax, lodger's tax, hospitality tax or resort tax, but basically it levies a tax, generally from 2 per cent to 5 per cent on hotel rooms, in some areas on apartments rented less than a year, or on restaurants or bars. This can raise considerable sums of money. In many smaller areas from USD 50,000 to USD 300,000 per year can be raised. In almost all cases, this requires passage of an ordinance by the city which may require a local public vote, and in many cases, requires state legislation authorizing such a tax. Communities are advised to check the state authorization before preparing campaigns on the local level.

In some cases, these funds are earmarked. This method of financing is usually resisted by local motel and restaurant groups as unfair taxation and imposing an extra burden on their business, while the larger chains usually see the benefit of it. The local residents usually will support such a tax since it is paid by visitors.

Mill levy on real estate property. This is not a commonly found method of financing local tourism operation and promotion. This method of financing, like the previous method, gives a consistent, permanent source of revenue.

Exhibit 71: Taxes on meals can help fund tourist projects. (Courtesy New Zealand Tourist & Publicity Office.)

This method tends not to reflect inflation as would general fund allocations or a per cent of the room cost, but stays at the same relative level except when new real estate property or new hotels, etc., are constructed.

General revenue funds from city, county, or region. This source of funding is probably used more widely than might be expected. A number of local tourism promotion agencies, whether they be Chamber of Commerce or other, receive allocations from the general funds of the city or the county, or in some cases, the state. Cities have excellent opportunity to expand the general revenue funds through statutes. The advantage of a general allocation is that the allocation can increase in size as the amount of funds coming into the city increases.

Some forms of the specifically earmarked general revenue funds in US states include:

- earmarking of funds, such as, in Rapid City, South Dakota where the state gasoline rebate funds go directly to the tourism promotion agency;
- Nashville, Indiana, which has merchant's license tax of USD 50, which goes directly for tourism purposes.

Limitations of this type of financing would be that the city is normally reluctant to allocate general revenue funds to agencies outside the city government framework over which they have little or no control. In some areas this may not be legal.

Matching funds. A number of states have programs where local funds can be matched by state or regional departments of tourism primarily for outside marketing and promotional efforts. Several states allocate funds to regions, which in turn match funds with local tourism promotion agencies.

In those states where matching funds are not now available, it is sometimes extremely difficult to get the legislature to pass legislation authorizing this arrangement, or to get them to fund the state department of tourism at sufficient levels to allow funds to be available for this purpose. However, this provides an excellent incentive and seems to provide a good deal of cooperation in the marketing area in those states which have it.

Membership dues and assessments. The most common method of financing the local tourism promotion agency or visitors' bureau is through membership dues, the method the Chambers of Commerce have used for years. In many locations, the visitors' bureau is a function of the Chamber of Commerce and a portion of the membership dues is allocated for that purpose. In other locations, the visitors' bureau is a separate agency, and is made up primarily of resort owners and/or other businesses that receive a major portion of their income from the tourist dollar. Their membership dues operate the center. In addition, there may be assessments for specific programs, activities, or projects.

Many times the membership dues are on a sliding scale depending upon the size of the business, the number of employees, and the benefits derived from tourism. The amount of funds received, of course, depends upon the size of the community and, to some degree, the success of the director of the bureau or center in convincing the secondary businesses that they are receiving benefits from the tourist dollar. Many communities have less than 50 per cent of their businesses as members of the Chamber of Commerce which presents a problem of limitation on the membership dues' method of financing.

The number of tourism businesses, resorts, or enterprises that are members of the local tourism organization will depend upon how high a priority the tourism industry has within the group in which it is organized. If the primary purpose of the Chamber is tourism promotion, more tourism-related industries will be members. If it is a secondary function, the number will be consistently less. The number of members also depends a great deal upon the ability of the executive director or secretary to educate the businessmen as to the value of the organization, its purposes, and the extent to which the businesses and enterprises benefit from the tourist dollar.

Special events and other "direct income producers". A number of communities use special events to provide or supplement their budgets for tourism operation and promotion. Asbury Park, New Jersey (US), has an annual Grant Prix Race by the local Chamber of Commerce primarily for fund-raising purposes. Hermann, Missouri (US), has an annual Maifest as well as periodic antique auctions sponsored by the local tourism and visitors' bureau to help fund the operations and provide funds for promotion. Numerous examples could be used to illustrate how events of a festival or special event nature can be used for these purposes. Cheyenne, Wyoming (US), has a tourism program financed by the receipts from "Frontier Days".

Festivals USA, a bulletin from the United States Travel Service, lists numbers of these by state which are organized by the local bureaus for the purpose of raising funds for tourism.

The disadvantage of this method of financing is that it requires an exceptional amount of work to organize and promote, as well as requiring the cooperation and support of a majority of businesses and organizations in the city. The amount of funds raised may fluctuate depending upon the weather, the interest of people in the activities, and such things as the availability of energy.

Advantages, however, include the fact that it does provide a focal point for community cooperation.

Other direct income producers would include such things as the following:

- Many communities have visitors' bureaus with souvenirs and other items for sale.
- Frankenmuth, Michigan (US), has guided tours for a fee.
- Several communities contact local commercial tour businesses to arrange for tours to stop in the community and have handled all of the lodging, food, and sightseeing arrangements for a standard fee.

These few ideas are samples of the potential in this area. Local creativity could add many more.

Funding of capital improvements or development

Sources of funds for capital development differ somewhat from those available for operation and promotion.

Local resort tax. A number of communities earmark a certain percentage of the local resort tax to be spent for capital development projects related to tourism. This insures a balance between internal expenses to upgrade the product to be sold as well as external expenses for marketing to bring the public to the facilities.

City capital improvement budgets. Another related form of capital funding is the inclusion of some building projects on the capital improvements development list of the city. While some facilities, such as historic redevelopment of homes, and for the most part of direct benefit to tourists, other capital developments such as golf courses, tennis courts, and restroom facilities, while primarily for the local public, can be of equal value to the tourist. The local park and recreation department may have a number of capital project needs which could be related to tourism development and their cooperation should be sought. Tourism concerns should be included in all planning of community facilities, particularly park and recreation areas, but also construction of other schools, buildings, and community facilities which might indirectly lend themselves to tourism appeal.

Exhibit 72: Some resorts earmark a percentage of the local resort tax for capital projects. (Courtesy New Zealand Tourist & Publicity Office.)

Voluntary contributions. Traditionally, voluntary contributions are more available and easier to generate for capital projects than for operation and promotion expenditures. In some communities asking for contributions is

not considered at all, while in other communities, such as New Harmony, Indiana (US), over USD 21 million has been generated through various kinds of grants, contributions, and solicitations. Contributions are usually more substantial and consistent when a local historic foundation s involved, which can be the recipient of these contributions for tax deduction purposes.

Disadvantages of this method of financing capital improvements are the inconsistency of funds over a long period of time and the effort required to generate them.

Foundations. A very significant source of funds for capital projects and tourism development is the historic or museum foundation. Several communities visited had foundations that had as their primary purpose the acquiring and restoration of historic places, or the development and operation of a museum or both. Historical Savannah (Georgia) Foundation, Historic New Harmony (Indiana) Foundation, Historic Williamsburg (Virginia) Foundation, Greater Memphis (Tennessee) Foundation, Historic Lexington (Kentucky) Foundation, and Historic Fredericksburg (Virginia) Foundation are examples of foundations in the United States working in close association with local tourism councils to develop tourist attractions. One of the advantages of such a foundation is that it usually has a program of fund solicitation which is independent from the tourism council or the city. It is attractive to those who want to leave part of their estate to the foundation, or as a tax advantage for contributions. The independence of the foundation gives the donors additional assurances that their donated funds will be used to the best advantage of the community, and will be cared for in years to come.

Other types of foundations may also be of help. The Blandin Foundation in Grand Rapids, Minnesota, has USD 4 million of annual income which has to be spent on projects to enhance the local community. Much of this goes for projects which have tourism potential.

New Harmony, Indiana, received a grant from the Lilly Foundation of USD 25,000 for planning Historic New Harmony. Several years later, as they were progressing in their plan, this foundation contributed an additional USD 3.5 million.

Miscellaneous sources of funding for capital development. Sources under this heading may be for both operation and/or capital projects and are from a variety of sources. For example:

- USTS provided a grant of USD 10,000 to Fall River, Massachusetts, to promote Bristol County to foreign tourists.
- Bishop Hill, Illinois, received a National Endowment for the Humanities Grant to develop an orientation film.
- Bishop Hill also received a federal community redevelopment grant from the Historic Preservation Act of 1956, National Park Service.
- Several agencies have received Comprehensive Employment and Training Act funds for personnel salaries, consumer research programs, and evaluation of agency activities.
- One community received a Housing and Urban Development 701 Grant to establish a new master plan for tourism.
- Another community received 50 per cent matching funds for a water system from the Farmers Home Administration.

Once tourism has been established, funded, and coordinated and public facilities have been provided, you have something to sell the tourist.

Visitor services
What are visitor services

Visitor services are probably the single most important group of activities that a community offers its visitors because these activities are what make the visitor feel welcome and well served. They include all the normal city services that pertain to police and fire protection, health and sanitation, public utilities and facilities, as well as the range of services provided by local businesses, civic organizations, and others involved in making your community a pleasant place to visit. Of paramount importance among all the services provided are those included under the heading of hosting.

What is hosting

Hosting is one of the functions of communication. It provides information for visitors on where to go, how to get there, what to see, and what to do to enjoy their visit. It includes being *hospitable, knowledgeable,* and carrying on the art of all members of a community whether or not they are actually involved in tourism activities. It is an *attitude* that pervades the community, making the tourist-visitor feel comfortable s a guest of the community. Being a good host will bring visitors back to the community because they will talk to their friends and neighbors about their experience, urging them to visit the community to receive these same satisfactions.

It is the purpose of this publication to address the need for having a visitor services plan as a part of the tourism master plan; the necessary service training that must be given to all persons involved in tourism in the community; and *evaluation* of the adequacy and nature of the services provided.

Identifying visitor service needs

Tourists sometimes present special problems and not all tourism activities in smoothly. Tourists do get sick, some will have heart attacks and heat strokes, others create accidental fires, cause civil disturbances, and have boating and auto accidents. Some of them will even die. Therefore, a community and its attractions must be prepared to deal with these problems efficiently and effectively.

Consider, for example, that a special event, a sailboat regatta, is being being planned in your community for the US Independence Day on the 4th of July. Inquiries, reservations, and tickets sold indicate that this one event could attract in excess of 70,000 persons.

It will be a long weekend and those attending will have probably driven 160-480 kilometers on a 32 degree Celsius day. By the time they arrive, they will be hot, tired, thirsty, adventurous, fun seeking, careless, anxious, and impatient!

How does one prepare for all of the possibilities of things happening that may not only affect the success of this event, but which might also destroy much of the goodwill and community image building your community has worked so hard to develop? How do you prepare for this onrush of humanity so that each visitor will feel that he is being treated hospitably? How do you look out for, comfort and protect, manage and control, all of these forces, and make it appear orderly, convenient, organized and efficient? You . . .

Develop a visitor services plan

You plan for:

- the number of police and firemen needed and their positioning
- a special crowd control force
- parking and crowd movement

- concessionaires to feed your visitors, adequate lodging facilities to house them
- the sanitation department to pick up litter and provide facilities for personal needs
- paramedics, doctors, nurses, and a treatment station to handle emergencies
- trained tourist information personnel to answer innumerable questions
- programs and souvenirs to be distributed and people to do it

The plans list seems endless.

While the above examples might seem exaggerated, the point is that things do happen during the tourist season which can tarnish a community's image; which can result in inept handling of crowds, traffic, parking, and sickness; which can turn a happy event into a disaster.

That is what visitor services programs are about: **the preparation and implementation of a specific plan to insure that visitors are well served by trained personnel when they visit your community**. This plan should not only be developed for special events, but also should cover the spectrum of services needed for continuing tourism development.

Exhibit 73: Visitors require many services.
(Courtesy Hong Kong Tourist Association.)

The manner in which these services are performed affects visitor satisfactions, the image that the community projects, and the very valuable word-of-mouth advertising that brings new tourists.

The visitor services program

The development of visitor services programs generally progresses through four stages:

Stage I—anticipating and planning service needs.

Stage II—determining how these needs will be coordinated.

Stage III—training visitor services personnel.

Stage IV—evaluation of training and services performed.

These stages will be discussed in the sections that follow.

Anticipating and planning service needs

Every community has tourists—a motorist who stops for gas, people visiting their relatives, or the vacationer who spends his holidays at your lake resort. Some visitor services are already provided in your community. While

visitor service base plans and programs may differ slightly from one community to another, almost all tourism development is structured on a service base that includes most of the following considerations:

Public and private support services

Business: food, lodging, entertainment, recreation, auto-amusement, concessionaires.

Information: visitor information centers, local and state organizations, and associations.

Security

Police and fire protection, lifeguards, beach patrol, crowd control, traffic control, and accident prevention.

Health and sanitation

First aid stations, emergency and rescue, hospital and clinic, garbage and litter disposal, personal facilities.

Pubic utilities and facilities

Water, electricity, telephone (primarily for campers), campgrounds, parks and recreation areas.

Before you can plan more or improved visitor services you must first evaluate quantity and quality of present hospitality in your area.

Your preliminary assessment of existing visitor services should include the following questions:

- Does your community have a tourist information center (or does the state or region have one in your area)? Where are these located (major transportation terminals, office buildings, the university, convention center)?
- What travel agents, auto clubs, travel clubs offer services to tourists and what do these services include?
- What hosting services are provided by hotels, motels, hostels, campgrounds?
- How do the attractions themselves help tourists? The ticket offices? Cultural institutions? Historic sites? Recreational facilities?
- Are the food services (restaurants, street vendors, fast food chains) showing hospitality to their tourist customers?
- What services are provided by postmen? Policemen?
- What services are provided by the many other people and businesses who interact with tourists—gas station attendant, librarian, newsstand clerk, convenience store keeper? Everyone in your community?

As you can see, there are many people in your community who can and do help host your visitors. When you have inventoried and evaluated what your community offers and reviewed problems and solutions from previous years, you can plan to meet present and future tourism demands.

Effective visitor service programs must be carefully planned, and while most parts of the service base are already in place, they probably will not be adequate for the tourist season. Additional personnel may have to be hired and trained and a coordinative system of organization will have to be created to insure that services are available when needed. An evaluation methodology must be designed to continually measure and improve the effectiveness of the services rendered.

Coordination of visitor services

Coordinating visitor services requires not only a knowledge of how these services are performed, and by whom, within the framework of each service area, but also understanding the problems that these various service organizations face.

Coordination is the control function that establishes what the channels of communication are going to be among the various service agencies and organizations, the community at large, and the tourism organization. To achieve good coordination and control, *everyone* involved in tourism must understand what are the tourists' needs and services required and be prepared to respond to these needs effectively.

Close cooperative effort among all agencies and organizations is vital, and the coordination of this effort is best managed by an individual who is a "perfectionist" on details, has insight into, as well as a firm grasp of, all facets of tourist service problems; be able to analyze how these services may be better performed; recognize the needs for new services; and evaluate past performance to assess future needs.

Furthermore, he or she should concentrate on making contacts in the community, making sure that the program meets the needs of the people involved, and that all phases of management are running smoothly. He or she must be able to plan, to organize, to conduct seminars, to manage, and to coordinate all visitor service activities.

Exhibit 74: Recreational services are part of visitor services. (Courtesy New Zealand Tourist & Publicity Office.)

Who pays for and provides visitor services?

Obviously, the community itself will be paying for most of these services, but much of the money will be coming from the tourists themselves through parking fees, admissions, local sales and use taxes, and from the hotels, motels, restaurants, theaters, and other tourist businesses. Community development grants and some state and federal programs also assist in providing funds for visitor services' programs, as well as local businesses and civic organizations and those involved in the tourism program.

Special service needs

As international travel expands, American communities are being discovered by more foreign tourists. There may be communications problems unless specific services are planned and provided. Persons within the community who speak foreign languages should be identified and be ready to service foreign visitors when needed.

There are standard signs and symbols, recognized by people all over the world. Small communities may consider themselves too isolated to invest in such signs. But such signs are very important in offering specific directions and instructions to *all* tourists regardless of what language they speak. What's more, the symbols are more explicit than words and require less space than most phrases which they replace. Symbols adopted by the United States National Park Service are in the public domain and can be used for local application without any charge or prior permission.

Training for visitor services

Visitor services training programs must extend into almost every area of tourist interface, from the unskilled but important jobs of busboys, bellmen, porters, and ticket takers to those who have the more sophisticated jobs of arranging tours and giving out tourist information, as well as to the citizens of the community. Furthermore, the program must be continuous because people change jobs, or get careless or forgetful, and need refresher course training.

The primary focus of the visitor services training program is always on *hosting:* How to be a good host when entertaining or serving strangers. Sound easy? It is not. Hosting is much more than putting on one's best smile, being cordial and courteous, or just being "nice". To be a good host, one must understand the tourism philosophy of the community as well as the individual tourist on his level of intellectual and emotional being.

Tourists are complex beings. Away from their own familiar environment, they are trying to relate to a community's environment as quickly as possible so that they may absorb, ingest, and partake of everything that a community has to offer them to satisfy their needs. They are guests in the community, and they expect to be treated as guests.

Who needs to be trained?

Everyone! In differing degrees, everyone in a community should receive some training, even though the training may only be informational. Generally, the segments in the community which must receive training are:

- *Those who render personal services,* are highly visible and have frequent opportunities to speak with tourists such as hotel, motel, restaurant and service station employees; city employees; and those involved in the attractions, amusements, and tourist businesses who give out tourist information.
- *Those who must perform specialized services* for the community as well as for tourists. These persons include police, firefighters, sanitation employees, security guards, health services personnel, and the bankers, and shopkeepers and their employees.
- *The general community* itself must be informed about tourism development, so a spirit of friendliness prevails, and so tourists feel they are welcome. The better they feel about a community, the longer they will want to stay and the sooner they will wish to return.
- *Persons staffing the tourist information centers* (TIC).

The general training focus should be on hosting and hospitality, but there should be some specific tourism training for each of the above groups. Specifics of training personal and specialized services personnel are discussed in hospitality training. Specifics for training members of the community are in the public awareness program, for TIC staff in establishing tourist information centers.

Exhibit 75: Training is necessary for personnel who have tourist contact. (Courtesy New Zealand Tourist & Publicity Office.)

Training for personal services personnel

Because personal services personnel have frequent opportunities to interface with tourists, their training program should include the following:

- *The impact of tourism on their jobs and on the community* should be discussed. The more they realize how important tourism is in terms of dollars, jobs, and community betterment, the more they will develop a respect for the need to be hospitable and to give good service.
- *They should receive hospitality training.* Learn to answer questions, how to be polite, how to be friendly toward strangers, and how to make strangers into friends.
- Some will need training in *personality development* so they will automatically show the best side of their personality. Visitors get a poor impression of a place if they are ignored, or if they are confronted with rudeness or sullenness.
- They should learn how to do their own jobs with greater efficiency and effectiveness. They should develop *an attitude of "professionalism"* about what they do, say, or how they act.
- They should be aware of their *general appearance and impressions that are created* by being clean, well groomed, dressing appropriately, and speaking clearly.
- They should *become informed about the community* and area in which they work. They should know the highway system and know about the natural resources, history, attractions, special events, and places of interest so they can answer tourists' questions.

- Specifically, they should be given a one-day tour through the community which highlights the area's attractions and services. (Employers should be willing to grant this one day with pay to improve their employee's ability to interact with tourist customers.)
- They should know *what to do in an emergency* whether it be a fire, robbery, fainting spell, heart attack, or someone choking on food (applying the Heimlich maneuver); whom to call first; how to, and how not to, react in an emergency situation.

Training for specialized services' personnel

In addition to knowing their own specialized jobs, service personnel should receive additional training as it relates to tourism and to the individual tourist.

Here again, the training should emphasize the impact that tourism has on their job or business. They should welcome tourists as they would any other guest. Their hospitality training should emphasize "doing the extras" that tourists like, but may not expect:

- extra help in giving directions;
- extra time to explain the nice things about your community and specific things that tourists should do while visiting the community;
- extra explanations that help tourists find whatever they are seeking.

Training the members of the community

Community training programs may be accomplished in two ways.

- Normal communication channels, for example, press releases, public meetings, or progress reports may be used.
- Special presentations to community interest groups by tourism personnel or by the community's leaders may be made.

What instruction should the members of the community receive? The most important training should tell citizens about the economic and social impact of tourism. They should know how tourism affects their taxes and where these dollars go in schools, hospitals, street repair, and community beautification.

The community members also must be taught the importance of civic pride, clean-up campaigns, and maintaining a good community image. Citizens must learn to understand tourists.

Who should do the training?

Ideally, the training should be done by experts in tourism training, or by the tourism organization personnel. Frequently, however, tourism training is handled by employers, or by osmosis, and, of course, is only minimally effective.

The tourism organization, if it does not provide the necessary training, should prepare a list of the training needs, based on the community's tourism objective, and establish a mechanism for training that it can coordinate or supervise and evaluate.

Some communities offer tourism courses in local high schools and colleges. The tourism organization should encourage all tourist-oriented businesses and their employees to take these courses. In other communities, the Chamber of Commerce or other civic organization or association may offer instruction-orientation in tourism.

The public awareness program

Successful implementation of a tourism program involves two distinct promotional efforts. Naturally, you must promote your community to the traveling public, a task discussed in Marketing tourism. Less obvious, but of equal importance is promoting tourism to your own community. This is accomplished through the community awareness program.

The purposes of advertising have been described as *to inform, to persuade,* and *to remind.* It is helpful to think of the community awareness program along the same lines. The community should be informed of the benefits of tourism and the nature of the tourism organization's activities. They may need to be persuaded these benefits are worth the cost. Finally, they must be reminded of the program from time to time and brought up to date on its progress, just to keep them "in the fold".

Some might question the allocation of resources to this task. A possible challenge is: "Spend the dollars or time devoted to the public awareness program on advertising to tourists; the benefits will speak for themselves". This seems ill-advised for several reasons.

Community leaders are likely to have mixed feelings toward tourists and tourism. An early effort to bring people on board may be necessary before a concerted effort at promoting the community is possible.

The benefits people receive from tourism differ in degree and kind. For those actually collecting tourist money, the advantages are obvious. Second order, or multiplier effects are more subtle and difficult to identify; even experts do not agree as to their magnitude. These may not be recognized without careful and thorough explanation. It may appear community resources are being spent to benefit the owners of a few attractions, restaurants and hotels.

The public awareness program is extremely important and should be planned and initiated before beginning to promote the area to vacationers. A manufacturer wouldn't advertise a product until he had a product to advertise. In tourism, an important part of the "product" is the community's receptiveness. Developing, or reinforcing the friendly, helpful attitudes that are so essential is a task of the community relations program.

Value of tourism

A central purpose of the public awareness program will be to educate the community as to the value of tourism to the community.

Relevance

The term "community" has been used as if its population were completely homogeneous. In fact, a community is a collection of individuals, families and groups with diverse attitudes, goals, and aspirations. This diversity must be recognized in planning and conducting the public awareness program. It is important to identify the audience for a particular communication and tailor the message to its needs. A critical factor to be considered in explaining the benefits of tourism is relevance. One must analyze the interests, aspirations, backgrounds, and life styles of the audience one is addressing. Only benefits which are relevant to a particular group should be selected for emphasis.

Taking an example, an increase level of banking activity might be a benefit of tourism of interest to the financial community. It would be a ridiculous theme for a campaign directed toward disadvantaged youths; it is not a concept that is relevant to their world. Even a reduction in the unemployment level might be too remote a notion, since this audience may often have been left unemployed in periods of rapid economic expansion. A discussion of the number and kinds of new jobs this group can fill would be focused on a benefit to which they can relate.

Tourism offers many values to the community and nearly everyone gains from some of them, either directly or indirectly. While the public awareness program should help citizens recognize these benefits, not all can be explained to all audiences. It is necessary to select and stress those a particular audience experiences and to explain it at a level they can understand.

Importance

Time, resources, and the audience's capacity to absorb will limit the amount of information that can be presented in any one message or in a total campaign. In selecting benefits to be promoted, it is necessary to consider not only their relevance, but, their importance. Given limited resources, it is necessary to concentrate on educating the public about those which it will feel to be most desired.

Some benefits, such as economic growth, would be counted as important by most communities. The ranking of others, such as diversifying the economic base, would be more situational. People in most communities might acknowledge this to be desirable. Among those recognizing its desirability, persons in areas whose economies were subject to wide cyclical swings would probably rate it as highly important. Were the local economy "recession proof", diversification would probably be of minor interest.

The importance attached to particular values may vary widely among groups within a single town or city. Again, it is necessary to tailor the message to the audience. All may agree expanding the property tax base would be a good thing. Homeowners and businessmen are likely to feel this is a highly important benefit while apartment dwellers would probably place it far down on their list of priorities.

Exhibit 76: Many retail outlets benefit from tourism. (Courtesy Hong Kong Tourist Association.)

Every benefit is of interest to someone. In communicating with an audience, it is necessary to concentrate on those they are likely to consider important.

A sort of filtering process has been described. First, all benefits of tourism are considered. In developing a message for a particular group those values that are relevant to their lives and goals are identified. This reduced list

is then ordered as to probable importance and the important values are emphasized in the public awareness program.

Understanding the tourist

In addition to building acceptance of tourism, the public awareness program must help the community to understand the tourist. This involves two separate topics: understanding who the tourists are, and their problems, and understanding their motives for journeying to the area.

Tourists and their problems

It is important for residents to know what kinds of people are coming into your area. This will involve various methods of informing the community of the demographic and economic characteristics of visitors and of their geographic origins. In many instances, these profiles will show travelers do not differ markedly from the area's own population. Similarities can be emphasized to facilitate acceptance of visitors.

Where differences affecting tourists relations with the community do occur, they should be explained so as to be understood and accepted. These may be illustrated with two differences that are certain to be encountered: the tourist is from somewhere else and he is on vacation. Geographic differences exist and affect individual tastes and preferences as well as speech and behavior. In the US, Northerners' brisk manner and more rapid speech may seem rude, and even insulting to natives of a southern locale. The most sophisticated of southerners may be branded as a "hick" in the north because of his drawl. To the uninitiated, a New Yorker's praise may sound less friendly than a Georgian's insults. Residents must be educated to expect and respond appropriately to these differences.

"The tourist is you" has been mentioned several times as a possible theme for a public awareness program. We frequently observe those on vacation acting differently than they would at home. Those visiting your community are probably no worse, and no better than your own residents vacationing elsewhere. Realistically, the theme should be qualified to *"The tourist is you, on vacation"*.

Three factors seem helpful in understanding these modes of behavior: normlessness, strangeness and pressure. We will illustrate these with a simple case of undesirable behavior; dumping trash in a park.

Normlessness. Solid citizens, who live amidst meticulously trimmed suburban lawns and complain about school children dropping an occasional gum wrapper, can be observed indiscriminately strewing trash when on vacation. Normlessness is frequently offered as an explanation. The idea is that once the individual is away from the restraining influence of friends, neighbors and associates, his true (animal) nature emerges.

This explanation obviously rests upon a pessimistic view of human nature. If it is appropriate, there is little the community can do to prevent the behavior. Yet it is important for the community to understand some visitors, like some residents, will respond in this manner. As in raising children, it helps to know about the various phases you should expect, even if you can do little to influence them.

Strangeness. The traveler is in a new and strange environment. Odd, and normally unacceptable acts may merely be a response to unfamiliar circumstances. Taking the trash example, the visitor might willingly have deposited his litter in a garbage receptacle if he had known where to find one. He may even have carried it around for a while looking for a place to put it. Admittedly, this example seems a little far-fetched. The important thing is to realize people respond differently and, perhaps unpredictably, to unfamiliar circumstances.

Pressure. Americans supposedly go on vacation to relax and get away from the restraints and pressures of everyday life. They then set a grueling pace for themselves. The resulting pressures may be as great as those they

face during their normal routine and of a sort they are not accustomed to handling. An executive who competently manages tens or hundreds of subordinates may be completely frustrated by the pressures of controlling his own children on a full-time basis. The trash dumper may have been a person who is normally neat and orderly responding to unfamiliar pressures. Similarly, kind and considerate individuals may behave rudely as a result of cumulative frustrations.

While the example, trash, seems trivial, there is an important principle involved. The more the community understands and attempts to alleviate the problems of tourists, the fewer the problems the community will have. Normlessness can be reduced if the tourist feels those he meets are interested in him. If he has been befriended by someone in the area, he is less likely to act objectionably. Emphasize the necessity of responding readily to questions, even if they seem absurd; they are very real to the person making the inquiry. It may not be apparent to everyone passing through that the cute op-art frogs with gaping mouths are trash cans. By easing the frustrations and pressures of traveling, your community can reduce the number of unpleasant incidents with tourists. Maybe the litter in the park did not get there by careless dumping. Maybe, to borrow an American term from the late sixties, it was a case of (subconscious) trashing!

Understanding tourists' motives

We are all familiar with the biblical golden rule. George Bernard Shaw's comment is less well-known, "Don't do unto others as you would have them do unto you; they may not share your taste". Both are relevant to understanding and responding to the tourist. It is important for the community to understand tourists are families much like their own, rather than a mob or rude, intrusive litterbugs. Visitors appreciate and will respond to friendly, courteous treatment.

On the other hand people differ. The area's primary appeal might not be one that would attract its own residents, were they vacationing in the region. People in the community must be helped to understand, and accept as legitimate, the various reasons visitors do come.

Suppose the major attraction is a geological feature that is only of real interest to those with formal training in geology. Residents would not be likely to share visitors' enthusiasm. They might even feel anyone willing to spend good money to come and "look at the silly rock" is a little weird. A task of the public awareness program is to help the community understand and be supportive of travelers' interests even though they do not share them.

Further, even though an area may have a central appeal, say flat water recreation, different aspects will appeal to different travelers. The community must be made aware of the multifaceted nature of its offering. Imagine the plight of the tourist who hates fishing and is only seeking a little solitude, when he is cornered for a 30 minute discourse on the best fishing techniques.

This facet of the public awareness program is largely a matter of promoting the area to its own citizens. Residents must understand the reasons visitors come to their community: what it has to offer. Strategies for the public awareness program are discussed below. Those encouraging the local populace to sample the area's offerings seem most appropriate for this step. These could range from distribution of brochures within the local community to programs encouraging citizens to visit its attractions.

The latter might include tours, off-season rates, resident passes and other devices encouraging local tourism.

Exhibit 77: It is important to understand what tourists are looking for. (Courtesy Hong Kong Tourist Association.)

Methods for communicating with the public

In the preceding paragraphs we discussed the message to be conveyed to the public and the necessity of tailoring these to specific audiences. Attention will now turn to methods or channels for delivering these. Channels will be categorized as passive spokesmen, personal communications, mass media, and direct experience. Before turning to specific strategies, one other, more general item should be considered.

One-sided versus two-sided arguments

How many times have you heard "There are two sides to every story"? This is as true of tourism as of any other complex issue. The problem for a communicator is whether to present only one side, "Tourism helps the economy" or both sides: "Admittedly, tourists create congestion but they help the economy". The evidence is mixed as to which strategy works best. On the one hand, a two-sided argument seems to make the communicator seem more credible. On the other, the speaker risks delivering his opponent's view to people who had not heard them.

The decision as to which strategy to adopt should be based on the prevalence of opposing views and the strengths of your counterarguments. If opposing views are not widely held or your arguments may sound weak by comparison, a one-sided approach is safer. This situation could be encountered when your case depends on complex arguments and your opponent's rests on simple, but erroneous assumptions. If negative views are commonly accepted but you can muster strong reasons for your position, there is little to lose and much to gain by a two-sided approach.

The refutational approach. If a two-sided campaign is selected, the following sequence, termed the refutational approach, has proven superior.

- State the negative. Briefly, but honestly, identify the issue you are addressing. Focus the audience's attention, but do not argue the opposing case. "It has been stated that tourists will create congestion and put a drain on public services."
- Give the counterarguments. Forcefully present your case. Be explicit. "Tourists contributed USD X million to the area's economy" is better than "The economic benefits of tourism are immense."
- Draw the conclusion. Clearly state the conclusion you wish your audience to draw. "The benefits of tourism are more than worth the costs."

Two-sided campaigns have often failed by stopping after step two. Communicators apparently felt their case was so strong any thinking person would come to the desired conclusion without assistance. Many did not!

Passive spokesmen

Some strategies involve using objects, rather than words to communicate. An anecdote will explain. The commander of a major military installation was dismayed at the hostility citizens of the neighboring community displayed towards the post and his troops. Having tried various public relations activities that failed, he hit upon one final idea. He secretly arranged to have the entire command paid entirely in USD two dollar bills. The program was conducted without comment. This mass of currency silently flowing through the community demonstrated the installation's importance more powerfully than words could ever have. Best of all, the program involved almost no direct cost. It was free.

Several communities have employed variations on this theme.

- One actually encouraged tourist establishments to make change in two dollar bills.
- Tourist establishments in another stamped one-dollar bills "tourist dollar".
- For a time establishments in a third had "tourist dollars" printed on their checks.

Other silent salesmen, such as souvenir buttons and bumper stickers distributed free or at cost, can effectively highlight the number and importance of tourists to the economy.

Face-to-face communications

Communicating on a face-to-face basis is the most effective method of delivering a message. Most communities rely heavily on this mode in their public awareness program. This may either take place in an informal one-on-one setting or in the more structured atmosphere of a group. In the latter instance there is usually an implicit notion of a two-step process: tourism representatives meet with, or address, groups hoping the members will, in turn, convey the message to their friends and associates.

Meetings. Meetings offer an opportunity for one, or a few tourism representatives to discuss their plans, programs and problems with the citizenry. In areas where formal tourist promotion organizations exist, officials usually consider attending or addressing meetings to constitute a major portion of their responsibilities.

Examples of how this approach may be used are listed below. These fall into one of two general categories: (a) meetings held specifically to discuss tourism with interested parties, or the general population and (b) providing speakers and programs for groups formed for other purposes.

- Hold town meetings to discuss and obtain reactions to the general topic of tourism.
- Hold public meetings focused on particular problems with tourists or tourism.
- Organize booster breakfasts or lunches to bring supporters up to date on tourism's progress and problems.
- Tourism leaders meet with the community's business and financial leaders.
- Tourism representatives get together with elected officials and other political leaders.
- Organize a formal speakers' bureau where a file of representatives willing and able to address groups is maintained.
- Arrange programs specifically tailored to the desires and needs of particular groups.

Personal communication. Except for meetings with key influential people, the purpose of the strategies outlined above is seldom only to deliver the message to the few people who attend. As we noted, there is usually some notion

they will pass it along in that most effective of all communications situations: direct, one-to-one personal communication.

More structured efforts also exploit the advantages of face-to-face communication. Tourism leaders often have programs of meeting privately with key influential people on a regular basis. In other instances, personal contact has been effective in membership drives or fund raising efforts where supporters agree to quotas of new members or contributions. This is often a particularly effective method for reaching those who have recently allowed their membership or support to lapse.

Mass communication

Face-to-face communication is the most effective mode since listeners have an immediate opportunity to respond, question and clarify. Unfortunately, the time available for this task is never as great as the need and part of the task must be accomplished through the use of mass communication.

Opting to use mass communications involves trading off effectiveness for efficiency. Admittedly, the message is not delivered as effectively and completely by mass means. Yet, it is efficient in that larger numbers can be reached for a given allocation of time or money.

In discussing mass communication, it is conventional to distinguish between advertising and publicity.

Advertising. Advertising differs from publicity in that advertising is paid for while publicity is free. The most obvious use of advertising is the purchase of space in newspapers or time on radio or television. An alternative is the publication of newsletters or brochures.

Media advertising seems to be used less frequently than other modes in public awareness programs. The amount of information that can be conveyed is limited, the relative cost is high and the amount an organization can afford is frequently viewed as being so small as to have a negligible impact.

In the communications program, paid advertising seems best adapted to one-shot efforts such as countering specific criticisms. Since the use of public resources to influence the public is politically sensitive, a tourism organization may not wish to pay the cost from its own funds. Often it will be advisable for the organization's officials to coordinate campaign that is underwritten by one or several members.

Brochures and newsletters are more frequently used since their relative cost is low and larger amounts of information can be included. Examples include:

- information sheets and newsletters for distribution to the general public;
- newsletters for members or members of sponsoring organizations such as a chamber of commerce;
- brochures describing the benefits of membership to prospects.

Public service spots made available by radio and television stations resemble both advertising and publicity. They are like publicity in that the time is free, like advertising, there are costs involved; the advertiser usually must prepare, or pay for the content. These can be valuable if they are offered at times when desirable audiences are available. Otherwise, the organization may find itself in the situation experienced by one federal agency.

The department was prohibited by Congress from using paid television advertising, and relied entirely upon public service time. They still had to pay the considerable cost of preparing and distributing commercials. A study revealed that, since few were watching, the total cost per viewer worked out to be greater than if the organization had purchased prime time.

9. The management of tourism

Publicity. Publicity is free and is carried among the regular articles, stories or programming of the medium. Sometimes it is unsolicited. Dodge City, Kansas (USA) residents' consciousness of their heritage was raised immeasurably by the American sitcom "Gun-smoke". The Poconos area in Pennsylvania, (USA) was pleasantly surprised to be the subject of a five minute interchange about second honeymoons on another sitcom: "All in the Family". These cases are exceptions. A successful publicity program usually requires at least as great an effort as advertising.

In considering publicity, remember media representatives are anxious to find newsworthy items of interest to their readers. This sentence contains two key ideas: "newsworthy" and "their readers". Those who have experienced difficulty getting an item published have frequently ignored one or both.

An item must be news. The day to day activities of the organization or its officers usually do not qualify. The appointment of a new director may be an exciting event for those in tourism, but most of the community will not share their enthusiasm.

Media have different audiences with different interests and items must be tailored accordingly. An agency's news releases may often be ignored because they are intended for mass distribution in the hope someone will see fit (or be desperate enough) to notice them. Higher success rates will be experienced if items are tailored for specific audiences.

Some examples of successful publicity efforts follow.

- Arrange for and assist media representatives in the coverage of tourist events as news items.
- Arrange for documentary type coverage of the area's attractions and events.
- Participate in the development of a documentary or series of articles on the impact of tourism.
- Prepare news releases with individual outlets in mind.
- Try to stimulate editorial coverage of tourism and its impact. If the editor is friendly, great! If not, write and submit thought-provoking letters to the editor.

Exhibit 78: Some resorts offer special prices for residents. (Courtesy New Zealand Tourist & Publicity Association.)

Direct experience

No method of building the community's appreciation of its attraction and of tourists' motives for visiting is as effective as direct experience. Many methods might be pursued to develop the public's understanding of the area's offering. Those listed below have proven effective in successful public awareness programs:

- special resident rates
- off-season rates and privileges that are particularly attractive to natives
- passes and tours for school children
- open houses
- behind the scenes tours of hotels, restaurants and attractions
- making brochures prepared for the traveling public easily available to residents
- displaying a booth designed for a tourism show in a mall, shopping center or at a local fair
- giving residents, particularly students, priority in filling jobs

Summary

The public awareness program is largely a matter of educating the members of your community in the value of tourism. In this process it is important to tailor the message to the audience and emphasize benefits that are relevant and important to the listener. The necessity of developing an understanding of who the tourists are, their problems, and motives was noted.

The public awareness program is a communication task. One may use any or all conventional methods: personal contacts, advertising, and publicity. Facilitating resident visits to the area's attractions was viewed as particularly appropriate to building an understanding of the area's appeal and tourists' motives.

One opportunity for the community to show the tourist that he is a welcome guest in the community is to establish a Tourist Information Center.

Establishing tourist information centers

Tourist Information Centers (TIC) are the most important visitor service facility in a community. They are important because they frequently provide the initial contact with most tourists who visit a community, and because they have the opportunity and the responsibility for creating the first impressions a tourist will perceive. Therefore, it should be one of the first duties of the tourism organization to establish TICs in and near the community, provide them with complete information on the area, and staff them with well-trained personnel.

The Community TIC offers specific information about the local area, its attractions, events, facilities, and services. It also assists in gathering data about tourists, such as where they come from, how long they will stay, what brought them to the area, and other significant data that a community needs to assist in the development of its tourism plan.

As pointed out in a guide published important to the listener. The necessity of developing an understanding of who the tourists are, their problems, and motives was noted.

As pointed out in a guide published by the Texas Tourist Development Agency, most visitors or "passers-by" are strangers to the community and unaware of the variety of attractions offered. Therefore, the TIC must be able to provide *complete* information about the community. Types of information which should be available to tourists should be classified for easy reference, and could include most of the following major categories:

Accommodations   (hotels, motels, campgrounds, hostels)

9. The management of tourism

Auto repair garages

Attractions/amusements

Children's services churches

Cultural attractions (museums, galleries, lectures, musicals)

Complaint referrals

Community events

Directional information

Directories of:

    Emergency information

    Employment information

    Entertainment

    Foreign visitors and interpreters

Health services and hospitals

Historical sites, places, buildings

Local industry

Local government services

Local newspaper, radio and television services

Maps

Parking

Parks and recreational places (tennis courts, swimming pools, golf courses, horseback riding stables, and other sports information)

Restaurants (showing type, price range, reservations needed etc.)

Shopping information

Sightseeing services

Special tour services

Twenty-four-hour services

Transportation services

Of course, the TIC may expand this list of categories, or use only those which represent a large portion of the questions that are most often asked by tourists.

The initial compilation of the information represents a major commitment of staff time for researching, organizing, and determining the form in which the information is to be presented to the tourist. Therefore, it is important that the information be inclusive, accurate, up to date, easy to understand, and attractively presented.

The TIC makes it easy for travelers to get reliable answers to their questions and provides an excellent opportunity to sell them on the area's attractions as well as gather information about them. By placing a facility of this type in a central, easily reached location, one stands a good chance of stopping many travelers who might otherwise just drive through the community.

The information center should be placed strategically along the major route through your community—or at the intersection of major routes. It should be conveniently located at ground level with plenty of free parking space available. In congested areas reserved parking areas adjacent to the center should be arranged. By all means, keep the building and grounds attractive. If possible, provide for well-landscaped grounds.

The center could be located in a store, hotel/motel, or the Chamber of Commerce office. However, it is preferable to have it in a building of its own. It is not necessary to have much space as long as the center is attractive, easily recognized, and large enough to provide display racks for brochures on local and area attractions.

One approach is to have a center with an unusual type building—a tepee, covered wagon, log cabin, grist mill, replica of historic building (The Alamo or Judge Roy Bean's saloon perhaps). The center should be unusual and attractive on the inside as well as the outside. It must draw attention to itself. A large sign should identify it. Posters, photographs, and historic artifacts are appropriately displayed inside. Welcoming signs on the major routes to town should give the location and hours of operation. It is important that your staff, volunteers, or paid employees, be well-informed and enthusiastic individuals who understand their purpose and have a knowledge of and pride in their community.

Exhibit 79: Tourist center must carry information on area activities. Panning for gold near Queenstown, New Zealand. (Courtesy New Zealand Tourist and Publicity Office.)

Visitor centers can double as a reservation bureau for your hotels and motels. Often the hotels and motels help finance such projects and their operation. Alternatively, a leading hotel or motel can be sought out to donate the necessary space to the community or at least provide rent at a minimum rate.

In sum, hospitality and tourist information facilities are important in promoting the attractions of the community. Additionally they serve the important purpose of providing a method for surveying the tourist population. These are the places where valuable information can be gathered through registrations, questionnaires, and interviews with little contamination of data from the non-tourist or the risk of alienating the visitors (in this latter case they have voluntarily stopped which is far different from being stopped or interrupted as would be required in some information gathering situations).

The number and quality of the information centers in your community should be assessed. Do you have an information center and is it adequately attracting people to stop? Is the exterior and interior attractive and is it strategically placed and identified so visitors can be enticed to stop without feeling they have to go out of their way?

Comparing registrations at lodges, various attractions, or restaurants with the registrations at tourist information facilities will give a good index of how many take advantage of such facilities. Various questionnaires may be used to assess tourism and can include questions about visitor center usage and usefulness.

An additional role and service that the visitor center can play is providing the visitor something to do and see. The economic rewards of delaying the visitor one extra day is well known. The Texas Tourism Development Agency in the United States suggests that the community should encourage visitors to use the community as a base of operations for seeing all of the attractions within easy driving distance.

Evaluating the visitor services program

In evaluating the visitor services program, there are two perspectives to consider:

- monitoring on a continuous basis;
- analysis of specific complaints and preferences (formal and informal);

The first perspective is an ongoing activity, a process, a measuring system. To make the system operate smoothly, it must have rather subjective standards in terms of "good", "bad", or "needs improvement". Here, the person making the evaluation simply prepares a complete checklist on which he rates the various qualities that are important to having an effective system. The more subjectivity, however, the more disagreement there will be about accuracy.

Another similar method is to establish a rating scale ranging from "very good" through "very bad", on which persons doing the evaluation can each offer their own subjective ratings, and then discuss or average them to arrive at a specific rating.

Ultimately, however, in any monitoring system, the one(s) doing the monitoring is searching for details, and with this type of system, there is continuous and detailed input that inevitably leads to an improved output. If it is a good system and if it has the continuous attention of key service program personnel, it will yield a smoothly functioning and polished visitor services program.

Analyzing and evaluating visitor satisfaction in terms of visitor complaints and preferences is a more objective measurement approach and allows the tourism organization to focus on major and specific problem areas; to identify new attractions and promotional opportunities; to recognize trends in community tourism; and to study tourism's impact on the community.

Generally, evaluation procedures rely on surveys or observations. Whatever procedure is used, the data or information on the situation, program or service must be as objective as possible, must be verifiable, must be usable in the decision process, and have some degree of predictability as to decision outcome and/or results expected.

For example, using observational procedures, a person or team of evaluators may observe tourists enjoying themselves on the ski slopes of Aspen, Colorado in the United States. They observe what tourists do when they are not skiing. They observe how tourists relate to each other. They observe what tourists are purchasing. They observe the lift operation to see how well it is functioning. They observe access routes, traffic patterns, accidents—everything literally that may affect tourist satisfaction.

The scene is played and repeated daily, and after numerous observations, they are able to arrive at general measurable conclusions on skier behavior patterns, adequacy of service facilities, and additional opportunities for improvement of skier services.

In evaluating visitor satisfaction, one would classify and analyze the types of complaints received, or one could ask tourists a list of questions that develop answers from which conclusions can be drawn.

Exhibit 80: Are tourists satisfied? (Courtesy New Zealand Tourist & Publicity Office.)

The steps involved in designing a survey of visitor satisfaction follow:

- determine objectives of survey
- determine survey procedure
- design questionnaire
- test questionnaire
- design and select sample of persons to be interviewed
- conduct the interviews
- code and tabulate the questionnaires
- analyze the results
- prepare report of recommendations

Probably the most important point to be made is that evaluations should be performed repeatedly to offer continuity of information. Providing reliable data over a period of time allows comparisons with previous evaluations and makes the evaluation process a continuous one.

Remember too, that as you are evaluating visitors services, the visitors themselves are doing their own evaluating based on how they perceive your community and its attractions, your approach to tourism development, the manner in which you manage and provide service for visitors, and the satisfactions they have received during their visit.

Watch them, listen to them, and respond to what they want and like. They will talk to others about your community, and what they tell others will depend upon how well the visitor services program operates. Make it a good one!

Study questions

- ➢ What are the four phases of leadership development in the organizational process?
- ➢ What are the leadership roles where there is:
  - ➢ (a) a separate tourism organization or one that functions as part of the chamber of commerce?

- ➢ (b) a chamber of commerce and a separate tourism association?
- ➢ What are the three common leadership styles?
- ➢ What is the greatest problem to be overcome in leadership situations?
- ➢ What is the biggest problem in coordinating the tourism effort?
- ➢ What are the most common methods for constructing an effective communications program?
- ➢ Identify the various methods used to fund tourism operations and promotion and capital improvement or development projects.
- ➢ What items should be included as part of a visitor services plan?
- ➢ In what ways can the benefits of tourism be communicated to local residents?

Discussion questions

- ➢ How does leadership emerge within a community? What are the components of successful leadership?
- ➢ How should the following components of community tourism be coordinated?
  - ➢ communications
  - ➢ research and data collection
  - ➢ education and training
  - ➢ budget and finance.
- ➢ Compare and contrast the advantages of the various methods of funding the development and operation of tourism at the community level.
- ➢ What is a visitors services program? What questions need to be answered when planning and coordinating such a program?
- ➢ Develop a visitor services training program for
  - ➢ (a) those who work in a tourism business and
  - ➢ (b) the general public. What topics should be covered? How should the information be presented?