

AGRITOURISM “Gateway to Growth”

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Conference Proceedings



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General Information

The International Society of Travel & Tourism Educators (ISTTE) is an international organization of educators in travel, tourism, and related fields representing all levels of educational institutions. Our membership ranges from professional schools and high schools to four year colleges and graduate degree granting universities. Current membership is represented by travel and tourism educators in the United States, Canada, Mexico, Australia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Great Britain, Korea, China, Taiwan, and others.

Our 2014 Conference theme is “Agritourism: Gateway to Growth” and will again devote several keynote and breakout sessions to this and a wide range of topics related to education, research, and management in the field of travel, tourism, and hospitality services.

While the overarching conference theme is Agritourism, empirical and conceptually based academic research contributions were welcomed in a variety of other areas including the following broad subject themes:

Paper Themes

1. Agritourism and other sustainable tourism planning and development niches
2. Emerging issues in travel, tourism and hospitality education and training
3. Innovative and creative teaching and learning methodologies
4. International travel and tourism issues and trends
5. Curriculum Design and Development
6. Impacts on the travel and tourism industry

All submitted papers represent original research that had not been presented in other conferences or published in a journal. In addition, each proposal was examined via a double-blind review by the Paper Review Committee.

Types of Proceedings Papers:

In these Proceedings, papers are presented in alphabetical order by author’s last name in each of four sections:

- Full Research Papers
- Working Papers

Recognition of Review Committee

The following were selected to serve on the ISTTE 2014 review committee because of their expertise and commitment to excellence in the tourism industry and tourism education.

Their service to this 2014 ISTTE conference is sincerely appreciated.

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THE IMPORTANCE OF COLLABORATION AMONG FESTIVALS FOR CROSS-RETENTION OF FESTIVAL VISITORS

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ABSTRACT

This study examines how a group of relevant festivals can collaborate to best promote repeat visits and referrals between/among them. For this, theory of planned behavior is adapted with theoretical and empirical findings of satisfaction, involvement, and variety seeking to theorize a model of visit intentions to collaborating festivals. This study seeks to make both practical and conceptual contributions to marketing of community-based agrifestivals, and specifically to repeat visits and referrals by examining the role of collaborative cross retention programs between/among a group of different yet relevant festivals.

Keywords: Cross-retention, Involvement, Variety-seeking, Theory of Planned Behavior, Satisfaction, Festivals.

INTRODUCTION

Festivals have rapidly gained popularity throughout Korea and elsewhere due to potential economic benefit, boost of local tourism industry, and extension of tourism season (Getz, 2005). This proliferation of festivals has increased the level and intensity of competition between cities, communities, and regions wishing to successfully organize festivals. It seems increasingly important, therefore, to understand how to attract local residents, visitors, and tourists to the festival, provide them with satisfying experiences, and then ultimately retain them for their return visit. For community-based agrifestivals, repeaters are of importance as those agrifestivals are highly dependent on repeat visitors (Huang, Li, & Cai, 2010; Silva, Mann, & Daniel, 2010). Several studies have examined this topic by adopting motivation and quality/satisfaction theories but most have approached its importance just within its own festival (Grappi & Montanari, 2011; Lee, Lee, & Choi, 2011; Lee, Lee, & Yoon, 2009).

According to scholars, festival planning and marketing often involve some forms of collaboration not only within organizations but also among different organizations in achieving desired outcomes (Getz, Anderson, & Larson, 2007; Long, 2000). In marketing and tourism, the concept of collaboration has been proliferated with many forms of inter-organizational programs offering mutually attractive benefits for partnering corporations, brands, and entities. Examples of the program include co-branding, strategic alliance, joint product production, co-promotion, referrals, co-marketing, and so on (Farrelly & Quester, 2005; Sheth & Parvatiyar, 2002). The

collaboration in festivals has mainly been examined within the organizations and among festival stakeholders, but this can be also applied between/among discrete festivals as in general businesses. Festivals having similar theme or festivals located nearby have the potential to develop a degree of collaboration where the product, program, brand image or customers of the collaborating partners are marketed together for mutual benefits (Long, 2000). These participating festivals can benefit from moving beyond the stand-alone marketing towards collaborative marketing activity (Che, Veeck, & Veeck, 2005), including cross retention of each current visitors. Marketing through collaboration of similar or relevant festivals can create the opportunity for loyalty to be forged not just at an individual festival, but through their cross retention of current visitors (Clarke, 1995). This extended scope of loyalty will provide a potential to increase the number of visitors and jointly retain part or many of those, capturing repeat visits derived from visitors of partnering festivals having a variety of motives, such as variety-seeking, frequent recreational options, and exploration of new festivals (Clarke, 1999).

This study therefore examines how a group of similar and/or relevant festivals can collaborate to best promote repeat visits and referrals between/among them. The context of this study is a community-based agrifestival where the primary goal lies in celebrating the benefit of locality not only among local residents but also with external visitors. Two community-based agrifestivals located in South Korea were selected to consider if current customers of each festival are interested in visiting the other collaborating festival. This study seeks to make both practical and conceptual contributions to marketing of community-based agrifestivals, and specifically to repeat visits and referrals by examining the role of collaborative cross promotion between/among a group of different yet relevant festivals.

LITERATURE RIVIEW

This study attempts to determine the factors that influence behavioral intentions to visit collaborating festivals. To this end, this study develops a conceptual model that adopts and extends co-branding theory and theory of planned behavior (TPB). As this study focuses on festivals, instead of products with which the co-branding theory is originally derived, constructs are modified relevant to the festival context. As suggested by Ajzen (1991), behavioral intentions are motivational components of a behavior and represent the degree of conscious effort that a person will exert in order to perform a behavior. Loyalty scholars often focus on frequent patronage behaviors, but some tourism scholars have also identified the problem of spurious loyalty showing not positive attitude but high repeat visits. For this reason, behavioral intentions could be as important as actual behaviors in loyalty.

Attitude towards Collaborating Festivals

The essence of co-branding is to transfer overall evaluation of the primary product to the brand which it is paired with and this process has been demonstrated through joint marketing of those co-branded brands. The transfer of post-consumption evaluation enables consumers to link

the two branded products, and thus facilitates the strengthening of the shared brand evaluation. According to attitude accessible theory (Fazio, Powell, & Williams, 1989), an individual is more likely to access attitudes related to a product that are more salient and accessible. This theory has guided scholars in attitude toward co-branded products to the assertion that evaluation of constituent brands is automatically retrieved and transferred to the co-branded product(s) (Chan & Cheng, 2012). In addition, post consumption attitudes are comparable to the evaluative perceptions mainly drawn from satisfaction. Therefore, satisfaction of a primary product will be critical for intentions to experience its co-branded product.

Social Norms and Perceived Behavioral Control

In addition to attitudes, TPB suggests subjective normative pressure to act and perceived behavioral control are factors in predicting and explaining one's intention to act. The subjective norm is a social factor referring to perceived social pressure to perform or not to perform the behavior. Perceived behavioral control refers to the perception regarding whether the performance of the behavior is easy or difficult, reflecting previous experience as well as anticipated impediments and obstacles. The relative weight of these components in TPB in predicting behavioral intentions depends on the type of behaviors and on the contexts and situations in which the intention are formed.

Involvement and Variety-Seeking

The co-branding literature also suggests that variety-seeking and involvement can help explain behavioral intentions. The involvement has become one of the most important concepts explaining product choice of consumer behaviors and co-branding scholars have developed the concept of continuing involvement specific to the product category of the co-branded products. The continuing involvement suggests that the assimilation of two brands into one product represents a leverage of complementary know-how to the new, different product. The importance of involvement for a product category is also recognized for some specific product categories (e.g., fresh meat, fresh fish, or seafood) where evaluation for purchasing and its decision making are primarily involved in the level of product category (Olsen, 2007) rather than individual brands. For these types of products, loyalty at the product category level is practically more important than conventional loyalty toward a brand within the product category.

Consistent with this reasoning, this study recognizes the need to analyze if visitors with a high involvement in the festival demonstrate a greater desire to try a new or different one than do those with a low involvement. Empirical results in the co-branding literature support the relationship between involvement and the purchasing behavior and between involvement and shopping enjoyment; one dimension of shopping enjoyment is the desire to gain an overview of all relevant products, especially new products. Additionally, the size of a consideration set positively related to involvement, indicating that highly involved consumers choose among a

greater number of products. Therefore, highly involved festival visitors have a greater desire to try new co-branded products that enlarge their consideration sets.

Studies on switching behavior for products often adopt the variety-seeking of consumers.

By switching the brand, variety seekers derive utility from the change itself. To keep customers brand loyal, while addressing their variety seeking, providers can adopt co-branded products to develop new alternatives from existing product categories. The previous research confirmed that variety seekers switch more easily within alternatives of a specific brand than between brands. According to this finding, consumers seek variety while trying to remain loyal to a brand.