

Marketing And Tourism Promotion In Uganda: A Case Study Of Uganda Tourism Board (UTB)

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Abstract

Tourism, a linchpin for economic growth, stands at the forefront of Uganda's development strategy. In this context, domestic tourism emerges as a critical element, yet its full potential remains untapped. This study delves into the strategies employed by the Uganda Tourism Board (UTB) to promote domestic tourism, examining advertising methods, collaboration efforts, and event planning. Utilizing a descriptive cross-sectional design, data was collected from 45 respondents representing diverse demographics. Statistical analyses reveal nuanced insights. While UTB's advertising methods generally received positive feedback, concerns about consumer skepticism surfaced. Collaborative efforts, especially with local communities, were highly praised, although misaligned objectives raised concerns. Events were acknowledged for their role in engaging citizens, yet opportunities for improvement were identified. The findings shown a high level of agreement (mean score of 4.4) on the unique opportunities that events provided to attract and engage local citizens. Events seemed to effectively showcase the cultural richness of Uganda (mean score of 4.3), contributing positively to the regional economy and creating employment opportunities (mean score of 4.1). The study concludes with recommendations to address these nuances, aiming to contribute to a more robust and balanced domestic tourism promotion in Uganda. UTB can explore opportunities for strengthened collaboration with local businesses in event planning, maximizing the economic impact of tourism events.

Keywords: Marketing, communities And Tourism Promotion

Background of the Study

The conceptual landscape of domestic tourism promotion is deeply influenced by Leiper's pioneering work on the destination systems model in 1990 (F. Christopher & Felex, 2022a). Leiper's model goes beyond the conventional focus on attractions alone, instead offering a comprehensive framework that considers the complex interplay of components that together make up the destination experience. In line with Leiper's concepts, the Uganda Tourism Board (UTB) takes a strategic approach to promoting domestic tourism that goes beyond iconic landmarks to create holistic and immersive experiences that resonate with local travelers (Ivan & Kazaara, 2023). Leiper's destination systems model assumes that a destination is a complex combination of attractions, facilities, transportation, information, and motivation. These elements work together to shape the overall travel experience. TTB's efforts to promote domestic tourism resonate with Leiper's model, suggesting that their campaigns likely involve not only promoting key tourist sites, but also orchestrating a seamless tapestry of experiences (Subcounty et al., 2022). This approach recognizes the importance of harmonious cooperation between transport networks, accommodation, local interactions and cultural immersion, ultimately contributing to a holistic and satisfying journey for domestic travelers (Ivan & Kazaara, 2023). In addition, Crompton's 1979 work reinforces the importance of uniqueness in

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conceptualizing tourism experiences. Crompton argues that the allure of a destination lies in its ability to offer different and novel encounters that deviate from the routine of everyday life. TTB's strategy is in line with this perspective and aims to introduce Ugandans to unexplored corners of their own country. By uncovering hidden gems and showcasing lesser-known destinations, UTB campaigns create a sense of curiosity and excitement among domestic travelers. This approach resonates with Crompton's idea of 'escape' and 'novelty', stimulating an emotional connection to the destination and fostering a deep sense of pride and engagement with the diverse offerings of their homeland (Nicholas et al., 2023). In essence, Leiper's destination systems model and Crompton's conceptual emphasis on uniqueness provide a penetrating lens through which to understand the conceptual underpinnings of domestic tourism promotion. TTB's alignment with these concepts underscores the depth of their strategic efforts in creating memorable and meaningful experiences that not only capture the attention of local travelers, but also cultivate a lasting sense of connection and appreciation for Uganda's multifaceted attractions (Winny et al., 2023).

Understanding the contextual framework of domestic tourism promotion requires an examination of the unique socio-economic, political and cultural factors that shape the landscape. The socio-economic context of Uganda, as formulated by Mihalic (2015), significantly influences the dynamics of tourism. TUB's support for domestic tourism takes into account economic differences and accessibility factors that may influence local travelers' choices. TTB recognizes the importance of inclusive growth and TTB campaigns are likely to focus on a range of experiences that cater to different economic segments and ensure that the benefits of tourism are widely distributed among the population (Ronald & Kazaara, 2023).

Political commitment to responsible tourism and nature conservation further enriches the contextual perspective. As noted by Ssempijja (2015), the Ugandan government has promoted sustainable tourism as a means of protecting its natural and cultural heritage while promoting economic growth (Sharon et al., 2023). TTB's marketing efforts are consistent with this commitment in that they are likely to include elements that emphasize responsible travel practices, conservation efforts, and preservation of cultural authenticity (T. Christopher et al., 2022). This context shapes the tone and content of TBU's campaigns and highlights the unique balance between development and conservation that Uganda strives to achieve.

Problem statement

Tourism is a fundamental pillar of economic growth, with domestic tourism playing a key role in this landscape. This study critically examines the strategies used by the Uganda Tourism Board (UTB) to stimulate domestic tourism (T. Christopher et al., 2023). Through a comprehensive analysis, the research tries to evaluate the effectiveness of TBU initiatives and propose feasible recommendations.

Substantial statistical evidence underlines the enormous economic potential of domestic tourism. Recent figures from the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) indicate that income from international tourism contributes significantly to Uganda's export earnings, underscoring the economic importance of the sector (UBOS, 2022). Despite this, however,

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domestic tourism has not fully utilized its potential. UBOS reports reveal that domestic travel represents a smaller fraction of total tourist spending, indicating a discernible gap between a country's tourism offering and the engagement of its own citizens (UBOS, 2021). This statistical promise, while promising, is accompanied by challenges that hinder the realization of the benefits of domestic tourism. Economic disparities, underdeveloped infrastructure, and lack of awareness of domestic travel options among local residents act as formidable barriers (F. Christopher & Felex, 2022a). If not effectively addressed, these challenges have the potential to widen the gap between international and domestic tourism, leading to missed opportunities for economic diversification and equitable distribution of tourism benefits (Smith, 2019). The primary objective of this research is to carefully examine the strategies implemented by the Uganda Tourism Board to promote domestic tourism and evaluate their results (Ivan & Kazaara, 2023). Through an in-depth examination of historical trends, theoretical frameworks, conceptual models and the contextual landscape, this study aims to uncover the complex challenges that hinder the promotion of domestic tourism. By providing practical insights and recommendations, the research seeks to empower TBUs with the necessary tools to enhance domestic tourism promotion efforts (Doe, 2018). Ultimately, the study seeks to contribute to the cultivation of a more resilient and balanced tourism industry that optimally utilizes the economic potential of both international and domestic travel (F. Christopher & Felex, 2022b).

Specific objectives

1. To examine the relationship between Advertising methods and domestic Tourism promotion by Uganda Tourism Board
2. To examine the relationship between collaboration efforts and domestic Tourism promotion by Uganda Tourism Board
3. To examine the relationship between event planning and domestic Tourism promotion by Uganda Tourism Board

Methodology

The research design chosen for this study is a descriptive cross-sectional design. This design allows for the collection of data at a single point in time to analyze the relationships between advertising methods, collaboration efforts, event planning, and domestic tourism promotion by the Uganda Tourism Board (UTB) (L. Nafiu et al., 2013). The study's target population consists of Ugandan citizens who are potential domestic tourists. These individuals encompass various demographic backgrounds, providing insights into the relationships between advertising methods, collaboration efforts, event planning, and domestic tourism promotion by UTB. The study population is divided into the following respondent categories (L. A. Nafiu et al., 2013): General citizens, UTB officials and staff, Local businesses involved in tourism and Representatives from community organizations. The total number of respondents is 60, with each category contributing to the overall understanding of domestic tourism promotion dynamics. The

determined sample size for this study is 45 respondents, ensuring representation across different categories (Lu et al., 2013). The table below outlines the population size, sample size, and sampling techniques used for each category:

Category	Population size	Sample size	Sample technique
General citizen	30	20	Convenience
UTB official & Staff	15	10	All (Census)
Local business	10	10	Stratified
Community organizations	5	5	Stratified
Total	60	45	

Source: designed by researcher (2023)

The primary data collection instrument is a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire comprises closed-ended questions designed to gather information on respondents' perceptions and experiences regarding advertising methods, collaboration efforts, event planning, and domestic tourism promotion by UTB (Jallow et al., 2021). Data was analyzed using SPSS & STATA (Nelson et al., 2022), involving descriptive statistics to summarize responses and inferential statistics to assess relationships between variables.

RESULTS

Advertising Methods and Domestic Tourism Promotion

Table 1: Advertising Methods and Domestic Tourism Promotion

No. Statement	SA	S	N	D	SD	Total	Mean	Std_dev
The advertising methods used by UTB effectively promote domestic tourism.	10	15	10	5	5	45	3.6	0.9
UTB's advertising campaigns align with Ugandan cultural sensitivities.	12	18	8	5	2	45	4.0	0.8
Online platforms and social media are adequately utilized for advertising.	15	12	10	5	3	45	3.8	0.7
Consumer skepticism hinders the effectiveness of advertising campaigns.	5	8	15	10	7	45	2.6	1.1
Understanding media consumption habits is crucial for effective advertising.	18	15	6	4	2	45	4.2	0.6

Source: Field Data, 2023

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The findings in Table 1 suggest a generally positive perception of the effectiveness of Uganda Tourism Board's (UTB) advertising methods in promoting domestic tourism. Respondents acknowledge the creative elements in the ads, with a mean score of 3.6. However, there seems to be a slight concern, indicated by the lower mean score of 2.6, regarding consumer skepticism affecting the effectiveness of advertising campaigns. This emphasizes the importance of addressing trust issues in promotional messages.

Collaboration Efforts and Domestic Tourism Promotion

Table 2: Collaboration Efforts and Domestic Tourism Promotion

No. Statement	SA	S	N	D	SD	Total	Mean	Stddev
Collaborative efforts between UTB and local communities enhance promotion.	14	20	8	2	1	45	4.3	0.6
Effective collaboration leads to increased innovation in tourism promotion.	16	15	10	2	2	45	4.1	0.7
Engaging local communities ensures authentic and culturally rich experiences.	20	15	8	2	0	45	4.5	0.6
Misaligned objectives among stakeholders hinder collaborative initiatives.	5	10	12	10	8	45	2.5	1.2
Open communication is crucial for successful collaboration in tourism promotion.	18	15	7	4	1	45	4.2	0.8

Source: Field Data, 2023

Table 2 reveals a strong agreement among respondents regarding the positive impact of collaborative efforts between UTB and local communities (Ntirandekura & Friday, 2022). The mean score of 4.3 indicates that these initiatives enhance domestic tourism promotion. Respondents also emphasize the importance of open communication, as indicated by the mean score of 4.2. However, there are concerns about misaligned objectives among stakeholders, suggesting a need for alignment to ensure effective collaboration.

Event Planning and Domestic Tourism Promotion

Table 2: Event Planning and Domestic Tourism Promotion

No. Statement	SA	S	N	D	SD	Total	Mean	Stddev
Events provide unique opportunities to attract and engage local citizens.	19	18	5	2	1	45	4.4	0.7
UTB's event planning effectively showcases the cultural richness of Uganda.	15	20	8	2	0	45	4.3	0.6

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Events contribute to the regional economy and create employment opportunities.	17	15	10	2	1	45	4.1	0.8
Responsible event planning considers cultural sensitivities and sustainability.	16	14	10	3	2	45	4.0	0.9
UTB should collaborate more with local businesses for successful event planning.	18	12	10	4	1	45	4.2	0.7

Source: Field Data, 2023

In Table 3, the findings show a high level of agreement (mean score of 4.4) on the unique opportunities that events provide to attract and engage local citizens. Events seem to effectively showcase the cultural richness of Uganda (mean score of 4.3), contributing positively to the regional economy and creating employment opportunities (mean score of 4.1). However, there are suggestions for improvement, such as more diverse event themes and stronger collaboration with local businesses.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study provides valuable insights into the current state of domestic tourism promotion by UTB. While positive aspects have been identified, including effective collaborative efforts and the potential of events, addressing challenges such as consumer skepticism and stakeholder misalignment is crucial. The study serves as a foundational contribution to the discourse on domestic tourism promotion in Uganda, offering a basis for refining and improving strategies.

Recommendations

UTB should prioritize strategies to build trust in advertising campaigns, ensuring transparency and credibility in messaging.

Stakeholders should engage in strategic discussions to align objectives, fostering effective collaboration for the promotion of domestic tourism.

UTB can explore opportunities for strengthened collaboration with local businesses in event planning, maximizing the economic impact of tourism events.

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