Marketing sustainability and influencing travelers’ preferences

Prof. Xavier Font
University of Surrey
x.font@surrey.ac.uk
@xavierfont
/xavierfont
Moral disengagement: we are all hypocrites

Behaviour locus
• We **moral justification** flying in order to do our job, ironically often to teach others how to be sustainable
• We **sanitise language** by saying that we are just *popping over* to the Azores for a conference
• **Exonerative comparison** allows us to identify other people in the room that flew further than us

Agency locus
• We **displace responsibility** by blaming flying on our employers, the conference organisers, the need to attend conferences in order to do our job
• We also **diffuse responsibility** by saying that all other sustainability experts are also flying (probably to the very same conference).

Outcome locus
• Limit our moral obligation by **minimising, ignoring or misconstruing** the impacts of flying
• The recipients of the negative impacts from flying are **depersonalised, marginalised** and potentially even **blamed** for their destiny
• The messengers of bad news are **derogated and discredited**

In a society of instant self-gratification facilitated by technology, we need new routes to behaviour change…

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sustainability awareness</th>
<th>Sustainable consumption</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO</td>
<td>UNAWARE OF BUYING UNSUSTAINABLE PRODUCTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>SUSTAINABLY AWARE BUT UNWILLING TO BUY</td>
</tr>
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Step A: greenwashing: 25% of what is communicated is not happening

Step A: Immaterial communication

Only 18 of 50 largest hotel groups in the world produce CSR reports – and they do not respond to stakeholder expectations.

Step B: Sustainability as unique selling proposition

It works for sustainability aware markets
But this market is highly critical of anything you do that is perceived to not be sustainable

But it is insufficient to mainstream change
Consumers are not seeking ecolabels or sustainability differentiation to make purchase choices

Focus on benefits to the self
Step B: Greenhushing. 70% of sustainability actions are NOT communicated

Step C: Due diligence and quality assurance

Adapt your business model, embed sustainability as part of your quality offering

1. Reduce environmental and social impacts.
   – *Indicator: Percentage of tourism services certified as sustainable*

2. Decarbonise your products and services.
   – *Indicator: Carbon footprint (for transport) per customer per day*

3. Normalise the behaviour of travellers.
   – *Indicator: Social impact assessment per market segment*

4. Reduce seasonality and redistribute tourists.
   – *Indicator: Index of saturation of tourism*

5. Optimise sustainable profit.
   – *Indicator: Visitor expenditure that benefits the destination*
Step C: Use traditional marketing techniques for sustainability benefits

Measure emotional meaning of sustainability as part of product development and distribution channels

Eye-tracking: visual processing and attention captured by a special eye tracking camera

Facial Expression Analysis: small muscular movements of specific areas of the face: Joy, Anger, Surprise, Fear, Contempt, Sadness, Disgust

Galvanic Skin Response (GSR): the level of perspiration on the surface of your skin captured by electrodes attached to fingers
Step C: Use smart technology to nudge behaviour

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Route C/D: Plan your sustainability marketing objectives

1. Reduce your negative impacts
2. Attract more customers
3. Improve your customer satisfaction
4. Increase your customer expenditure
5. Increase loyalty and reduce seasonality
Sustainability is too abstract
Break it down to meaningful and manageable actions

Cost: (real or perceived)
- Money, time, pleasure, convenience, knowledge, immediacy, searchability…

Benefit: (self, others, planet)
- Fun, service, exclusivity, cultural immersion, sense of belonging, sense of self worth…
Route C/D: Communication needs to help/nudge customers

Nobody is deliberately unsustainable. It is a byproduct of our choices. So help customers make better choices

1. Prior to booking/purchase
2. Between booking and arrival
3. On arrival
4. During the stay/visit
5. After the stay/visit
THANK YOU

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