

BOOK REVIEW
By D. C. Frechtling

Nigel Morris and Annette Pritchard,
Advertising in Tourism and Leisure,
Butterworth Heinemann, Oxford, UK, 2000, xiii+346 pp.
Published in *Information Technology and Tourism Journal*, 2001.

There are several solid texts on tourism marketing (e.g., Kotler, Bowen and Makens 1999, Middleton 1994, Morrison 1996) to date there has not been a book devoted to tourism advertising. This book is a commendable first effort to expand on the communications element of the marketing mix.

The book features media advertising with some coverage of direct mail and merchandising. It addresses the subject in eleven chapters grouped in four parts. Part one is background and introduction to advertising creation. This includes basic concepts, campaign planning, client-agency relationships, advantages/disadvantages of different media, and advertising research. Part two covers macroenvironmental factors affecting advertising, market segmentation, and creative approaches to advertising.

Part three is the strongest, providing a detailed discussion on the nature of brands, how brands are built, advertising's role in building and repositioning brands, and advertising destination brands. Part four comprises one chapter on the latest developments in advertising and prognosis in a world growing more accustomed to Internet marketing, digital and interactive television, and virtual reality programming.

There are many short and medium-length case studies presented that add dimension to the topics treated. Eleven color plates of distinctive tourism ads are included, but these need to be integrated more explicitly with the text.

The book is aimed at "Advertising and marketing professionals in the leisure industries and undergraduates on marketing-related modules in tourism, leisure and hospitality courses" (flyleaf). It is deficient for undergraduates for at least two major reasons.

First, it does not provide the basic, broad foundation for the subject that undergraduates require. While traditions, conventional definitions and customary practices may seem limiting to creative impulses, they are essential to establish the boundaries of a given field and all that is within them. All authors have preferences and dislikes in their fields, but they should not ignore topics they dislike in a textbook aimed at establishing undergraduate understanding. Uninformed undergraduate minds should encounter the entire field, if only an inch deep, to operate effectively in it, to acquire the vocabulary to carry on effective conversations with practitioners in the field, and to gain familiarity with basic source material for in-depth investigation of topics that interest them.

For example, the authors don't think much of quantitative research, so there is no significant treatment of sample surveys. Indeed, they have an eccentric view of research that seems inappropriate for uninformed minds: "in some cases [research] has become a dangerous substitute for judgement" (p 90); "Advertising research, in essence, is designed to generate phenomenal amounts of information at any given point in the advertising process." (p 92); "Qualitative research offers depth and flexibility, whilst quantitative data provides the reassurance of the large numbers from which many organizations take comfort." (p. 102)

Indeed, one of the major practical deficiencies of this book is the lack of serious treatment of measuring advertising effectiveness. The marketing texts listed below all emphasize the importance of monitoring, evaluation and control. Moreover, destination marketers, to the extent that they are funded with public money, must justify their advertising expenditures through objective research, or they risk losing their appropriations. Those held accountable for advertising expenditures will find no assistance here.

This visceral dislike of research extends to serious treatment of psychographic research in marketing segmentation: there is none. Nor is there any reference to managerial research to develop and monitor advertising budgets.

Moreover, few terms are defined in this book. The scope of tourism is implied by the airlines, theme parks, hotels and destinations discussed. However, leisure is expressed quite broadly to include Marlboro cigarettes, Levi jeans, Benneton clothing, Molson beer, Reebok boots, and Pepsi cola. Again, at the undergraduate level, it is important to clearly define the field the textbook covers. In sum the scope of this book can only be inferred by the subjects treated, from wearing jeans and smoking cigarettes to visiting Langkawi, Malaysia.

The second shortcoming for undergraduate readers is that the authors present controversial statements as conventional wisdom without sufficient background or links to substantive research. Do most tourism/leisure advertisers agree that “the most highly successful long-term [advertising] campaigns are very simple” (p 92), that “US teens now direct a fifth of weekly household expenditure” (p 160), and that “after all, people tend to be as much alike as they are different, and the costs of one-to-one marketing are frequently prohibitive for many tourism and leisure organizations.” (p. 154) None of these statements is backed up by a reference citation.

Technology and tourism/leisure advertising is treated in the final chapter. Tips are provided on using websites and digital TV to advertise, the “e-consumer” is profiled, and a number of websites are listed to help one to understand and exploit the Internet. But the authors barely plumb the potential of interactive media: “At the beginning of the twenty-first century there is little fundamentally *new* [sic] about advertising – technological advance merely allows more creativity and more selective targeting.” (p 334)

Along with providing the basics of a field for undergraduate or graduate students, a new textbook is also a commentary on the state of the art of that field. If the flyleaf blurb is correct, this is what “advertising and marketing professionals in the leisure industries” will search for in this book. What is presented suggests we know embarrassingly little about the consumer decision making process, how advertising affects it in short-run and long-run, how to effectively reach different segments and measure this success, and how advertising should be integrated with personal selling, public relations, sales promotions, pricing, distribution and product development.

And, intentional or not, this reviewer believes the authors are correct. *We should* be embarrassed by how little we objectively know about tourism and leisure advertising in its effects, how consumers approach tourism purchase decisions, how they choose among competing offerings, how they develop their expectations and how they evaluate the satisfaction of these expectations after consumption. Research syntheses on these topics and how information technology is changing consumer behavior would make a great subject for a book on tourism and leisure advertising.

Kotler, P., Bowen, J., and Makens, J. (1999), *Marketing for Hospitality and Tourism*, 2nd edition, Prentice Hall, 720 pp.

Middleton, V. T. C. (1994), *Marketing in Travel and Tourism*, 2nd edition, Heinemann Professional Publishing, Oxford, England, 308 pp.

Morrison, A.M. (1996), *Hospitality and Travel Marketing*, 2nd edition, Delmar Publishers, Inc., Albany, NY, 582 pp.