Marketing sustainable tourism products and destinations

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What can marketing do for sustainable tourism?

Because right now we are in trouble...
Either you are greenhushing...

70% of your sustainability actions are NOT communicated

... or you are greenwashing

25% of what you communicate is not happening

Or you are being harmful - at the expense of customer goodwill

Volunteer tourism needs to be regulated, including the claims made

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

... and what you communicate is poor and confusing

Unclear (12%)/Business (15%) ➔ Society (50%)/Guests (21%)
Explicit (85%) ➔ Implicit (15%)
Passive (89%) ➔ Active (11%)
Logic (33%) ➔ Appeal (67%)
No experience (94%) ➔ Experience (6%)
No social norms (99.8%) ➔ Social Norms (0%)

Your communication can cause the opposite outcome

1. Deny the threat of climate change
2. Realign tensions arising from travel
3. Apportion blame for the impacts of travel,
4. Increase demand, particularly with respect to threatened destinations
5. Dismiss value of threatened behaviour

Consumerism
Individuals value their perceived freedom to make choices and why they react negatively to any threats to their freedom

We need new routes to behaviour change...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sustainability awareness</th>
<th>Sustainable consumption</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>UNAWARE OF BUYING UNSUSTAINABLE PRODUCTS</td>
<td>UNAWARE OF BUYING SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTS</td>
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<td>SUSTAINABLY AWARE BUT UNWILLING TO BUY</td>
<td>PURPOSEFULLY BUYING SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTS</td>
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... to then improve your sustainability messages...

... and avoid poor communication

Reactance
Moralisation
Assertiveness
Cost
Rebound effect
Moral licensing
Objectives: let’s set the agenda...

...and use marketing for good!
01 Reduce environmental and social impacts

Normalise the consumption of sustainable tourism products and services
Public sector as buyer of services
Benefits for certified businesses

Copenhagen 70% hotels certified, 80% of food bought by the public sector is organic

Indicator: Percentage of tourism services certified as sustainable

Sustainable Copenhagen

Copenhagen is truly a green city surrounded by water and parks, with climate-friendly citizens to match. Copenhageners excel in combining sustainable solutions with growth and a high quality of life. In fact, Copenhagen was European Green Capital 2014. The ambitious green profile of the city has a clear goal: The City of Copenhagen aims to become the world’s first CO2
02 Reduce the carbon footprint from transport

Reduce the distance travelled by tourists
Increase length of stay
Optimise methods of transport

Target to fight climate change: 2 tonnes CO2
Average consumption in Europe 6.5-10 tonnes

New York to Barcelona flight: 2.3 tonnes
London-Barcelona flight: 0.5 tonnes

*Indicator: Carbon footprint for transport per traveller per day*
03 Normalise the behaviour of travellers

Increase customer loyalty
Target families and small groups
Target tourists that are not visible

Indicator: Percentage of travellers that repeat
04 Reduce seasonality

Reduce seasonality and redistribute tourism geographically

101 things to do in New York

Indicator: Index of saturation of tourism
05 Compensate the negative impacts caused by tourism

Increase visitor expenditure on products and services benefiting the destination
Promote small, new and locally owned businesses
Promote businesses employing minority and disadvantaged groups

Indicator: Visitor expenditure that benefits the destination
(TSA applied to market segments)

If you liked that, here are some ideas for businesses
1. Reduce your negative impacts

Shorter flights, longer trips
Normalise sustainability
You are a buyer as well as seller
Appropriate customers

1a. Ask nicely
1b. Be trustworthy
1c. Be honest
1d. Be humorous
1e. Be engaging

➢ www.travindy.com
2. Attract more customers

2a. Be unique
2b. Be seen
2c. Be found
2d. Be remembered
2e. Be shared

Business travel, conferences and leisure differ
3. Improve your customer satisfaction

3a. Make them feel good
3b. Use appealing language
3c. Tell customers what’s in it for them
3d. Make it easy
3e. Help them take decisions
4. Increase your customer expenditure

“wow that’s really cool!” is what you are aiming for

4a. Make them feel special
4b. Give them things to do
4c. Improve the experience
4d. Package services
5. Increase loyalty and reduce seasonality

5a. Make them aware
5b. Weather proof your offer
5c. Add a calendar
5d. Give them reasons to return
In summary

Sustainability communication tells us about the values of the organisation, and their expectations of how the marketplace will react.

Corporations have largely been reactive to stakeholder demands.
Small firms lack the marketing skills and do not believe the marketplace will value their actions.
Both types of firm need different forms of support to improve the quality, credibility, persuasiveness and impact of their sustainability practices for marketing and communication purposes.

Marketing usually promotes unsustainable consumption.
It’s about time we use it to do good.