

# Strategies to Develop Tourist Sites and Get More Repeaters

Hirohide Konami (Dr. & Prof.)

Faculty of Modern Life, Teikyo Heisei University

2289 Uruido, Ichihara-City, 290-0193 Japan

E-mail: hiro@konamike.net

**Summary:** Japanese Government is promoting the inbound tourists by means of many deregulations. This paper suggests that deregulation is blessed a lot but it would be more important to have the strategies to develop tourist sites in better way and to increase the number of the repeaters. For this purpose, software development such as human resource development, cruise route development, preparation of discounted tickets and etc. is quite important. In case of Tokyo Disney Land, the ratio of repeater is 97.5% and more than half are coming over 10 times already. As the visitors are expecting something new or the feeling of "off the daily life" for each time, it is necessary to prepare some new facts every time, for example, new events, new findings of culture and history, and some new combinations with friendship programs. Then the figuration of "off the daily life" atmosphere is required.

**Keywords:** tourism, repeaters

## 1 Introduction

The Japanese Government established the new policy that the tourism should be the important industry in national economy and also the basic tool to promote the mutual understandings in the world. Then, "The Basic Law to Promote the Tourism" was enacted in 2007. Annual consumption of tourism in Japan is estimated to be about 250 billion US Dollars including the foreigners' consumption of about 5%. This is about 5% of gross domestic products of Japan. The government is expecting that it will grow by 20% by the year of 2010 because the number of inbound tourists will increase especially from China and Korea, the retired baby-boom people will become new tourists and the more number of Japanese young generations will tend to enjoy more holidays with pay. This perspective sounds good but more important matter would be how to make increase the number of repeaters in tourism.

## 2 Recent issues

There are many studies about repeaters.

Okinawa Kanko Renmei, (i.e. Okinawa Tourism Federation) made a research on repeaters by means of post cards distributed at Naha Airport and Churaumi Aquarium in 2007. Findings are as follows. Almost one third of repeaters were coming to Okinawa over 5 times. And their type of the first visit was a personal tour, a family tour or a group tour. They are neither the school excursions nor the honeymoon trips. According to the report of All About Corporation the tendency of Okinawa repeaters are interested not in sightseeing but in the daily life of Okinawa people. Then it would be also pointed out that the increase of repeaters means the decrease of the number of visitors to normal sightseeing facilities or areas. If those repeaters are too much inspired by Okinawa, some of them tend to choose Okinawa as their residence for lifetime. This may also function as the factor to increase the inbound visitors. There is another report in Shinjuku that Shinjuku-Ward in Tokyo absorbs so many foreign visitors because there are so many foreign residents over there. This means, the place where outsiders like to come and live will be the place where their friends will also visit from outside.

(<http://ryukyushimpo.jp/news/soryid-131016-storytopic-4.html>,

<http://allabout.co.jp/travel/travelokinawa/closeup/CU20050327A/>)

Another study carried out by Nikkei Sangyo Chiiki Kenkyujo (i.e. Nikkei Research Institute of Industry and Regional

Economy) found that the half of the foreigners visiting Japan are the repeaters and have the tendency to be interested not in the famous hotels and restaurants but in the traditional Japanese style ryokans and local foods. Many visitors from Australia and Taiwan are more interested in the nature of Hokkaido. Japanese cosmetics also attract Asian women because they fit better for Asian women's skin rather than the European or US made. Repeaters are also interested in Depa-chika, basement of department stores, because there are so many kinds of Japanese snacks and foods. This study was carried out through internet for 500 people each in Seoul, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Shanghai, Beijing and Sydney. (<http://ameblo.jp/tokyo-the-world/entry-10097626866.html>)

Mr. Naoyuki Hashimoto suggests in his homepage that, as the President of the Recruit Corporation said, the interest of tourists is changing dramatically and governmental deskwork leadership may not function anymore and above-mentioned tendency would be the same for Japanese domestic tourists.

### **3 Some Japanese hazards for tourism**

Japan has some serious hazards for tourism. They are the complicated language, people's passivity, governmental bureaucracy, considerable high cost and natural hazards.

Japanese language is really complicated and Kanji, Hiragana, Katakana and Romaji may make foreigners give up to study Japanese. Only solution may be to made Japanese people to study English. But the young generation of Japanese people are not good enough even in Japanese language and no such room to study English. Then the possible solution would be to make Japanese people to study English to a degree and make foreigners to study basic Japanese before entering into Japan. Such effort will keep good communication between guests and hosts and may contribute to increase the repeaters.

Japanese people's passivity is not easy to change. Japan is surrounded by sea and has few experiences of wars and civil wars. Even in the civil wars in 16th century, just the Samurais fought each other and people were kept safely. Therefore the best way to the Japanese people was to be passive and not outstanding in the group. This may change gradually but takes a long time.

Governmental bureaucracy is the common problem in almost every country.

### **4 What will make tourist to be repeaters?**

According to the study of gape producing are, Arita Kyohou Village, top 6 reasons of repeaters are as follows:

([http://www.affrc.go.jp/ja/research/seika/data\\_kinki/h14/ki202/](http://www.affrc.go.jp/ja/research/seika/data_kinki/h14/ki202/))

- ① Grape was so delicious
- ② He/She likes to eat grape
- ③ Good impression of previous visit
- ④ He/She could spend a good leisure time before
- ⑤ He/She likes the scenery around
- ⑥ Located near from home

These reasons are the very common reasons for repeaters. ① shows the attracted mind and nobody will repeat without such inspirations. ② maybe a personal reason and different from person to person but important. ③ is the hospitality itself. It is quite reasonable that a person likes to see again if he/she was absorbed by a good hospitality. ④ means the customers satisfactions mainly caused by the atmosphere there. To prepare such well disciplined atmosphere would be really necessary to make the visitors feel at home. ⑤ is the natural or man-made beauty. Beautiful scenery would be so important to get repeaters. ⑥ means that the visitors from vicinal areas would be more important than those from far distance. These six basic conditions would be the fundamentals to get repeaters.

## 5 Development of human resources

National government reported that the number of the facilities and departments of colleges and universities in Japan is increasing rapidly. The entrance capacity of them is now about 3,000 in 2006 and it means 50% increase within 5 years and became 5 times larger than that of 10 years ago. There are also hundreds of vocational schools all over the country. Therefore, the total number of supply maybe enough in Japan but their quality would be the problem.

On the other hand, the number of employees in the fields of travel, ryokan and hotel, and movie and leisure is going to decrease since 1995 as shown below.

Number of employees in the tourism related fields (Source: National Population Census) (in thousands)

Fields	1885	1990	1995	2000
Travel	92	127	144	132
Ryokan & Hotel	619	680	790	694
Movie & Leisure	601	743	927	881

Total number of employees is difficult to estimate because the classification of national population census is no good for our study. For example, restaurant workers may be partially tourism related employees but most of them would be the normal employees in the category of service industry. Also guides, transportation operators, information services, teachers and researchers in tourism, and some others are not included above statistics. Then the total number of tourism related employees would be roughly assumed as about 3 million. This means the total entrance capacity of higher education may still not be enough. The number of employees turned to decrease since 1995, but it was caused by the economy recess and will turn to increase soon after the economy is vitalized again.

Tokyo Disney Land attracts so many repeaters as 97% and more than half of the repeaters have repeated over 10 times. The reason of such high ratio of repeaters would be the education and training of human resources. Education is the study to know what is Disney Land and what is the purpose of this project. And training is the practice to remember the basic customer services and behaviors supported by complete manuals such as House Rule Manual and Operation-Service Manual. But human resource development is not enough to get so many repeaters. Repeaters will expect something new on each visit. Then there must be some new programs everyday or some new findings each time. These will be supplied by the management effort and study. Shin Yamada pointed out 3 conditions to get repeaters in his book "Hito to Okane ga Atsumaru Karakuri" (i.e. "TDL Mechanism to Attract Money and Guests") that to grow the expectation of the guests, to help the concentration of guests, and to give a strong emotion to guests. For this purpose, the landscape and the sound in whole park area are completely controlled to make the guests to forget their daily life. He also points out that in case of Universal Studio Japan in Osaka, Hanshin Express Way at the corner breaks the concentration of guests and makes them remind their daily life.

## 6 Proposals to develop tourism and get more repeaters

The strategy to develop tourism and get more repeaters would be concluded as follows:

### (1) To develop tourism resources

The most important strategy would be to develop tourism resources including human resources. There are many cities and towns in Japan where the old buildings were considered to be out of date and promoted their renewal. But in these days, such buildings were considered to be the historical heritage and the movement to preserve those ones has been developed. As TDL case, tourism resources should be always something new and located in the feeling of off the daily life. Human resources should be re-educated and trained continuously like TDL. It is also important to keep good employees in the same organization as long as possible. New employees don't have the skill to handle a good management for the guests.

History and culture are the fundamental tourism resources. By the development of Internet, tourists are easy to get some information ahead. Then they like to touch the living history and culture of the area.

(2) To improve transportation system and to deregulate the passport control

Improvement of transportation and deregulation of passport control would be also important. It may be a good idea to prepare discounted tickets for foreigners like Euro-rail Pass, but they should be valid for every transportation system if possible to include domestic airways.

Passport control is always troublesome and should be no visa control for tourists. Because the tourism would be the most effective way to deepen the mutual understanding and to keep the world peace.

(3) To give the guests something new every time

Guests are looking for something new at anytime and this emotion is the basic power to be a repeater. New programs, new historical facts, new natural findings, new tour cruise courses, new foods and beverages, anything becomes the emotion to be a repeater.

(4) To help the guests to feel the daily life off

Tourists like the feeling of the daily life off and expecting some new experience that cannot be realized in daily life. Sometimes it maybe the human atmosphere and the other time it maybe the landscape. Natural scenery maybe also a good help for guests to feel some extra world.

(5) To give the guests good and strong impression to live there

Like Shinjuku and Okinawa, if a guest got good and strong impression of the area to live there, it would be sure that he will be a repeater already. And if he finally lived there, his friends would be the new tourists visiting there.

(6) To supply discounted tickets and good information

Discounted tickets are not only for economic advantage but also for the special feeling of preferential treatment. Good information is essential for tourists, and if possible, it should be supplied by various languages.

(7) To prepare good foods and beverages

Foods and beverages are inevitable for tourism. Especially the well-cooked domestic plates and local drinks are very attractive for women and aged tourists.

(8) To keep a good security

Safety and a good security is the basic condition to develop tourism. No theft, no crime, no disaster, no accident are the basic requirement of tourists.

(9) To keep cleanness

Cleanness is another basic condition of tourism. Especially clean water supply is the essential for tourists.

(10) To prepare modern accommodations

Japanese young generation like the modern accommodation such as western style toilet, optic fiber outlet, fully air-conditioned room, and a convenience store.

## **7 Conclusion**

The circumstances of tourism are changing rapidly because of the wide spread use of Internet, the improvement of transportation systems, deregulation of passport control for tourists, and the growing world economy. Needless to say, tourism is the best way to deepen the mutual understandings among nations and different cultures. Decades ago, Japanese government rejected all of the requests of tourism development from under developing countries. But, now Japan, herself, noticed the importance of the tourism and established a new law named "The Basic Law to Promote the Tourism" in 2007. I hope that this paper can contribute for those purposes even a little bit and will be given a lot of reflections.