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# Key Success Factors in Resort Hotels Practicing Moving Experience

Jen-Son CHENG<sup>1</sup>, Hsin -Yu SHIH<sup>2</sup>, Hui-Yao LIN<sup>3</sup>

## Abstract

Tourism travel has been stressed in Taiwan. In order to attract more tourists, the competition among resort hotels has become fierce to have consumers feel worthy of the trip. Such processes of tourist expectation, experience, comparison, satisfaction, and repurchase intention of products and the moving perception of consumers in resort hotels could establish the long-term and repeated consumption relationship between resort hotels and customers. Taking the tourists of Sheipa Leisure Farm as the research subjects, total 250 copies of questionnaires are distributed, and 174 effective copies are retrieved, with the effective rate 70%. By organizing the overall weight of the evaluation indicators from the key success factors in resort hotels practicing Moving Experience, the top five emphasized indicators, among 13 evaluation indicators, are ranked Brand Appeal, Advertising-Induced Emotion, Appearance Attraction, Advertising Content, and Repeated Exposure. Finally, conclusion and suggestions are proposed according to the research results, expecting to promote consumer experience, customer satisfaction, and revisit intention for leisure hotels.

*Keywords:* resort hotel, moving experience, key success factors, evaluation, international tourism, satisfaction, emotion.

## Introduction

Countries in the world are getting rid of the economic depression caused by globally financial crises by promoting various measures to boost the economy; however, the novel influenza A (H1N1) burst out in Mexico and expanding

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globally has resulted in great effects on the tourism industry in Taiwan. The government therefore promotes the tourism with the idea of Global Layout, Holistic Marketing, focuses on international tourism and the boost of domestic economy, and, aiming at major customer markets, collaborates with travel agents to continuously promote travel in Taiwan with significant effects. The effects of economic depression on Taiwan have reduced the income of national travel. In addition to the annually increasing self-service tourists, national travel is still a primary customer source for resort hotels.

In order to attract more tourists, Green & Pelozo (2011) mentioned that resort hotels should provide services with higher quality, segment the market, and establish the service brand in the fierce competition. However, the products should have the consumers feel worthy, i.e. the processes of tourist expectation, experience, comparison, satisfaction, and repurchase intention, when establishing the brand so as to establish the long-term and repeated consumption relationship between products and customers. Isaacson (2011) indicated that price was no longer the only concern of consumers, while accommodation environments, leisure facilities, and service quality were the emphases of consumer satisfaction. Resort hotels, when pricing, should also inspect the difference between consumer emphases of product quality and the actual experiences; when the consumers of a resort hotel are moved in the experiences, they would be satisfied and willing to visit again. Tourist Moving Experience therefore was a key factor in the consumption decision.

## **Literature Review**

### ***Moving Experience***

Chang (2010) considered that an enterprise should attract consumers through various marketing strategies; prices and functions of an object were no longer the sole evaluation criteria, while the moving experiences between the store and the consumers were Moving Experience. The appeal was to understand the inner emotion and mood of customers, and the goal was to create emotional experiences and to understand the stimulation to induce customer emotion for active participation and contact with the company brand or products (Dani-Elkebir, 2011). Dholakia & Zhao (2010) proposed that an enterprise applied moving marketing as the marketing concept to cause customer Moving Experience, which was different from the past sales of products focusing on the functions and prices. Nevertheless, Moving Experience stressed on customer feelings that, from the aspect of customers, having customers perceive the emphases and the importance as to family, from the customer concern to the reinforcement of service quality, could be the successful application of empathy in Moving Experience to achieve the customer

loyalty. Chan *et al.* (2010) regarded Moving as the emotional consonance, the spiritual shock, the inward response, and a necessary mental nutrition. Besides, it was an understanding of life and the love of life. Moving created identity and further generated consonance to result in identification and action, acceptance and possession, and economic changes. However, moving often came from a story of success. Barber *et al.* (2012) proposed five points of touching stories about success, including definite subjects, complete understanding of conditions, search for the points of stories, increase of interactive opportunities, and emotional investment. Now, applying the power of Moving Experience in successfully managing a brand and the story to achieving the consonance and identification has become a common marketing strategy (Klaus & Maklan, 2011). In the writing of *Experiential Marketing*, Schmitt & Simonson (1997) indicated that Moving Experience was an individual event of an individual responding to certain stimulus, which contained the entire essence of life and was generally resulted from direct observation or participation in either true, dreamy, or fictitious events. Nonetheless, experiences were not spontaneous, but induced, and were formed by the interaction between event and the psychological state at the time (Wang & Liang translated, 2000). Eric *et al.* (2011) indicated that the exploration of the organizational work characteristics in the marketing in service industries was different from those in general manufacturing industries. Furthermore, service industries should pay attention to multiple crowds and targets, precede services with intangible products, and accept the supervision of crowds in the process. Such restrictions allowed the marketing strategies in service industries being different from general manufacturing industries, changing to emphasize the brand identification and orientation, and depending on oral spreading for effective promotion and persuasion (Klaus & Maklan, 2012).

### ***Key success factors in Moving Experience***

Schmitt (1999) pointed out four key characteristics of traditional marketing, containing focus on functional performance and efficiency, narrow product classification and competition, customers as rational decision makers, and methods and tools being analytic, quantitative, and oral. Moving Experience also presents four characteristics.

- *Focus on customers.* Experiential marketing focuses on consumer experiences, which are the results of encountering, experiencing, or living in some situations and could stimulate consumer sense, mind, and thought (Dell'era, 2010).

- *Inspection of consumer situations.* Consumers would like to understand the utility of products at different consumption situations and the experiences in such situations (Lofqvist, 2010).

- *Consumers being rational and emotional.* Consumers simultaneously perceive emotional and rational push and ask for entertainment, stimulation, emotional impact, and creative challenge.

- *Various sources for methods and tools.* Research method and instrument on experiential marketing are broad, multi-dimensional, and not restricted in the ideology of a methodology, and present various sources (Uhrich & Benkenstein, 2010).

Graa & Kebir (2012) classified Moving Experience into four categories: (1) Entertainment Experience pleased consumers and attracted the attention. It normally occurred when consumers watching ball games, listening to concert, and watching movies, in which they passively absorbed external information through feelings (senses). It was the most ancient experience model and the mostly developed form (Runyan *et al.*, 2010); (2) Education Experience referred to consumers actively participating in increasing knowledge and enterprise managers infiltrating the consumer mind, e.g. the experience model based on the acquisition of knowledge and skills like outdoor observation, going to schools, and sports camp (Yi *et al.*, 2011); (3) Escapist Experience was better preferred by consumers than Entertainment and Education Experience. Consumers would more actively participate in and integrate to the activity situations with deep involvement (Tseng, 2011); (4) Esthetic Experience referred to consumers completely integrating to a situation with little active participation, but deep individual perception, not being affected by the environment, but presenting a natural perception.

## **Research design and method**

### ***Delphi Method***

The AHP criteria are established in this study according to Delphi Method, which is also named expert investigation method. With mails, the problems are separately sent to the experts for the opinions, which are collected for the comprehensive opinions. Such comprehensive opinions and the predicted problems are returned to the experts for further opinions, when the experts would revise the original opinions. Repeating such processes for several times, the more consistent prediction result is then acquired. Based on systematic programs, anonymous opinions are proposed in Delphi Method. The experts cannot discuss with each other, no horizontal connection, but merely contact with the researcher. The expert opinions about the questionnaire are investigated for several runs, and the basically consistent opinions are finally organized as the prediction results after

repeated enquiries, conclusion, and revision. Such a method presents broad representativeness and is more reliable.

### ***Establishment of evaluation indicator***

The research questionnaire is sent to the experts in different fields through emails. The first feedback is organized for the considerations of resort hotels practicing Moving Experience. Such considered factors are classified with similar properties and returned to the experts for further opinions. With repeated processes, the major classifications are organized, and the experts are called for the conference to set the key factors in resort hotels practicing Moving Experience as Attitude, Advertisement, and Communication. Such key factors are regarded as the AHP dimensions, and the correspondent criteria are established the AHP questionnaire. *Figure 1* shows the research framework after the revision with Delphi Method.

### ***Research subject***

Sheipa Leisure Farm, located in Wufeng Township in Hsinchu County and neighboring Guanwu Forest Recreation Area with the altitude 1,923m, is the most comfortable and luxury accommodation on the way to Chinquin hot springs and Sheipa National Park. In the farm, people could look far into the Sheipa holy ridgeline, have a cup of coffee in the cloud-surrounded outdoor garden, and enjoy the broad sky and sparkling stars at night. Aiming at the tourists in Sheipa Leisure Farm, total 250 copies of questionnaires are distributed, and 174 effective ones are retrieved, with the effective rate 70%.

## **Empirical data and analysis**

Having completed all hierarchical weights, the relative importance of the evaluation indicators in different hierarchies are distributed to show the importance of the factors in the entire evaluation system and to generate the overall weight of the service innovation evaluation in hotel industry in Taiwan, *Table 1*.

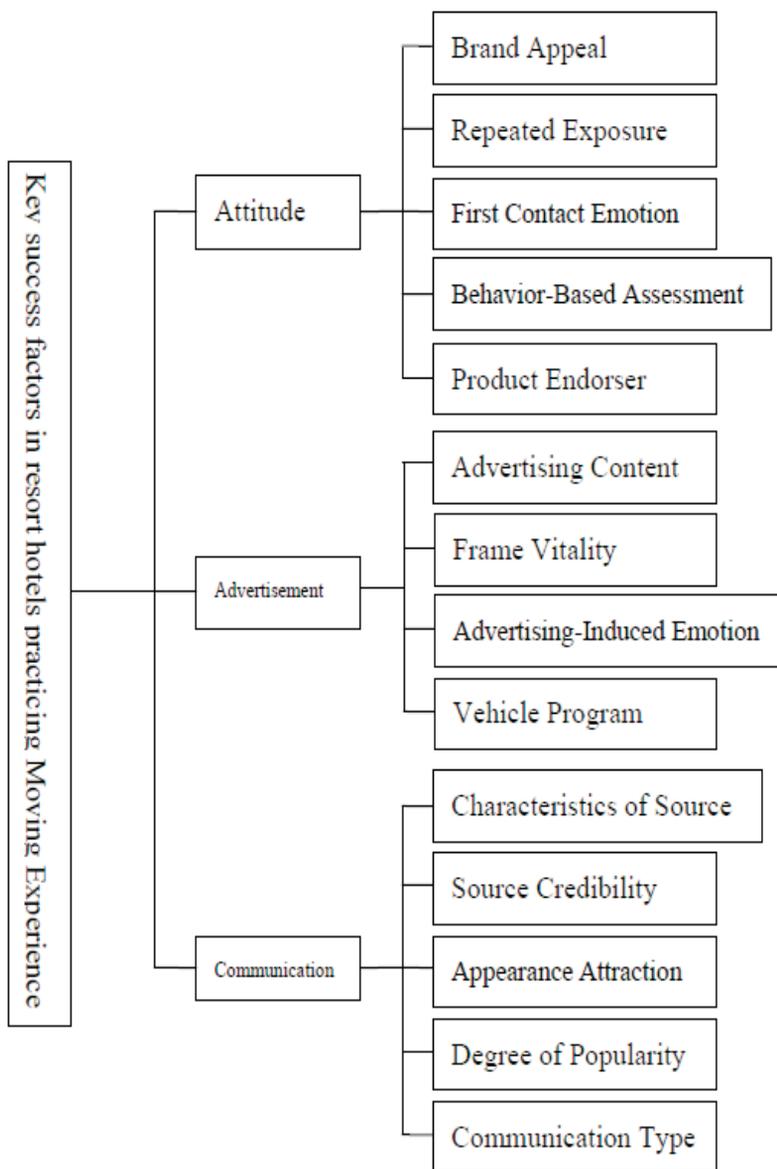


Figure 1. *Research framework*

Table 1: Overall weight of resort hotels practicing Moving Experience

Dimension	Hierarchy 2 weight	Hierarchy 2 ranking	Indicator	Hierarchy 3 weight	Hierarchy 3 ranking	Overall weight	Overall ranking
Attitude	0.428	1	Brand Appeal	0.322	1	0.157	1
			Repeated Exposure	0.275	2	0.076	5
			First Contact Emotion	0.226	3	0.068	7
			Product Endorser	0.177	4	0.053	10
Advertisement	0.387	2	Advertising Content	0.274	2	0.087	4
			Frame Vitality	0.231	3	0.054	9
			Advertising-Induced Emotion	0.298	1	0.136	2
			Vehicle Program	0.197	4	0.032	13
Communication	0.185	3	Characteristics of Source	0.108	5	0.049	11
			Source Credibility	0.211	3	0.063	8
			Appearance Attraction	0.276	1	0.109	3
			Degree of Popularity	0.238	2	0.071	6
			Communication Type	0.167	4	0.045	12

## Results and Discussion

The sales trend has changed from “customer satisfaction” to “customer moving” nowadays, as the standard of “customer satisfaction” could be formulated by anyone and strictly supervised and practiced, while “customer moving” reveals no standard and could not be monitored. For this reason, the special sales could be enhanced. A resort hotel therefore has to constantly create moving stories and build moving atmosphere to reach the sales peak and become the leader in the resort hotel market. When customers are moved, they would naturally share the pleasant experiences with the relatives and friends. The brand image of the resort hotel and the potential business opportunities could receive positive effects in such oral spreading. It would need to spend more energy on customer moving; however, from the input/output analyses, it not only maintains customers, but also acquires word-of-mouth and fame, which could not be acquired from pure money. It would be a win-win method for both resort hotels and customers.

From Table 1, the following conclusions are organized. Attitude, weighted 0.428 with 42.8% of the overall weight, is mostly emphasized in Hierarchy 2, followed by Advertisement (weighted 0.387) and Communication (weighted

0.185). From the results, Attitude is the most emphasized dimension for resort hotels practicing Moving Experience. The hierarchical weights of the evaluation indicators in Hierarchy 3 are ranked as below.

1. The evaluation indicators in Attitude are ranked Brand Appeal, Repeated Exposure, First Contact Emotion, and Product Endorser. 2. The evaluation indicators in Advertisement are ranked Advertising-Induced Emotion, Advertising Content, Frame Vitality, and Vehicle Program. 3. The evaluation indicators in Communication are ranked Appearance Attraction, Degree of Popularity, Source Credibility, Communication Type, and Characteristics of Source.

## Conclusion

Based on the experimental analyses, the following conclusions are proposed in this study, expecting to provide definite guidance and directions for resort hotels practicing Moving Experience. From the overall weight of the evaluation indicators from the key success factors in resort hotels practicing Moving Experience, the top five indicators, among 13 evaluation indicators, contain Brand Appeal, Advertising-Induced Emotion, Appearance Attraction, Advertising Content, and Repeated Exposure. The following suggestions therefore are proposed for resort hotels practicing Moving Experience.

Intentionally build the brand image with Moving Experience. A lot of businesses simply regard a brand as advertisement, activity, propagation, and mark design. Indeed, a brand is closely related to the value and the enterprise culture of a resort hotel from inside to outside. Many resort hotels believe that they could control consumers and produce moving to cheat the “cheap” emotion of consumers. It might occasionally “attract” or “move” the consumers, but it is not the inner Moving Experience of consumers. Different purposes of pursuit would cause distinct results, and consumers would eventually get rid of such resort hotels with no credibility. Consequently, the resort hotel should have the consumers embody the moving experience brand and present the brand appeal to Moving Experience.

Resort hotels apply advertisement to describing Moving Experience. It allows people associating the interactive relationship with the resort hotel, presents high persuasion on Moving Experience, and would largely affect consumer attitudes towards the resort hotel. When people appear strong affirmative attitudes, the emotional connection between consumers and resort hotels is established and reinforced. “Slowly getting old with you” is the moving experience for many people, and is the goal of Moving Experience for resort hotels.

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