

Original Research Article**Study on management strategies for improving travel agency service quality***Ying Zhang**Taishan University, Tai'an City, Shandong Province, 271000, China*

Abstract: With the vigorous development of the tourism industry, travel agencies, as organizers and providers of tourism activities, have a direct impact on tourists' travel experiences and the sustainable development of the industry through the quality of their services. This paper discusses the main issues currently facing travel agency service quality, including severe product homogenization, uneven quality of tour guide services, and lack of after-sales service. Based on these issues, management strategies are proposed from multiple dimensions such as product innovation management, tour guide team construction, customer relationship management, and internal quality management, aiming to help travel agencies improve service quality, enhance market competitiveness, and promote the healthy development of the tourism industry.

Keywords: Travel agency; service quality; management strategies; tourism industry development

The tourism industry has become one of the most dynamic and largest in scale in the global economy, and travel agencies play a key role in the tourism supply chain, connecting tourists with tourism resource providers, and responsible for the design, organization, and sales of tourism products. In an increasingly competitive market environment, the quality of travel agency services has become a core element in attracting tourists, building brand image, and gaining competitive advantages. How to effectively improve the quality of travel agency services to meet the increasingly diverse and personalized needs of tourists is an important issue that travel agency managers urgently need to address. It is also key to promoting high-quality development throughout the entire tourism industry.

1. The main issues existing in the quality of travel agency services**1.1. Severe homogenization of tourism products**

Currently, many travel agencies offer tourism products that are quite similar in route design, attraction selection, and activity arrangements, lacking innovation and individuality. For instance, the conventional routes to popular tourist destinations are often repeatedly used by numerous travel agencies, with only slight differences in price. This makes it difficult to meet the diverse interests and needs of different groups of tourists, leading them to focus more on price when choosing a travel agency, thus falling into a vicious cycle of low-price competition.

1.2. The quality of tour guide services varies greatly.

In tourism activities, tour guides are indispensable figures, and the quality of their services is closely linked to the experience of the game. Currently, the professional quality and service quality of some tour guides are inadequate, and the service effects vary from person to person. Some tour guides lack a solid theoretical foundation, making it difficult to comprehensively, systematically, and deeply introduce the scenic spots to tourists, resulting in a poor experience for tourists, making it difficult to enrich the travel experience, and making it difficult to learn about the local history, culture, and customs. Some tour guides also have poor service attitudes, which can induce tourists to consume, making it difficult for service quality to be improved, and making it difficult to form a good reputation.

1.3. Lack of after-Sales service

Many travel agencies pay more attention to service during the pre-travel and itinerary phases but do not sufficiently value after-sales service. After the trip, they rarely actively collect feedback from tourists, and they do not promptly or adequately address issues and complaints raised by tourists. Some even shirk responsibility, which prevents the effective resolution of tourists' dissatisfaction, damaging the travel agency's reputation and hindering the continuous improvement of service quality.

1.4. Insufficient standardization of internal management

Some travel agencies have disorganized internal management, lacking scientific and reasonable systems in personnel recruitment, training, and performance evaluation. For example, the recruitment process is not strict enough, resulting in a mixed quality of new hires; the training system is incomplete, preventing employees from receiving systematic business knowledge and skill training; and unreasonable performance evaluation indicators make it difficult to effectively motivate employees to improve service quality. These internal management issues ultimately reflect on the external service quality.

2. Management strategies for improving travel agency service quality

2.1. Innovative management strategies for tourism products

2.1.1. In-depth market research

Travel agencies should regularly conduct comprehensive and in-depth market research to understand the changing needs of tourists from different age groups, consumption levels, and with various interests and hobbies. Through methods such as questionnaires, interviews, and big data analysis, they should collect tourists' evaluations of existing tourism products and their expectations for travel experiences, grasp the latest market trends and developments, and provide a basis for product innovation.

2.2. Creating personalized products

Based on the results of market research, break away from the fixed patterns of traditional tourism products and design and develop personalized tourism products. For example, offer themed routes like hiking and adventure, mountaineering, and camping for tourists who enjoy outdoor sports; create in-depth cultural experience tours for cultural enthusiasts, including visits to niche museums and participation in folk culture workshops; and design family-oriented travel products that include children's play facilities and interactive experiences for families, meeting the unique needs of different tourist groups and enhancing the appeal of the products.

2.3. Strengthening product cooperation and integration

Actively cooperate with various types of tourism resource suppliers, such as scenic spots, hotels, and transportation companies, to integrate the strengths of all parties and create more comprehensive and higher value-added tourism products. For instance, collaborate with high-end hotels to offer vacation products that include unique accommodation experiences; partner with airlines to provide all-inclusive travel packages that include flights, hotel stays, and attraction tickets, offering tourists more convenient and higher quality service experiences while enriching the variety and content of the products.

3. Tour guide team construction and management strategies

3.1.1. Strict recruitment process for tour guides

Establish stringent recruitment criteria for tour guides, evaluating not only the applicants' basic language proficiency and tourism-related professional knowledge but also their professional ethics and service awareness. Through a multi-stage selection process including interviews, written tests, and on-site interpretation assessments, select outstanding individuals with a solid professional foundation, good service attitudes, and professional integrity to join the tour guide team.

4. Improve the tour guide training system

Establish and improve a comprehensive tour guide training system, including induction training, regular business training, and specialized enhancement. The content of induction training covers company profile, service standards, basic knowledge of tour guiding, accelerating the growth process of newly hired tour guides; regularly carry out business training, covering new knowledge, new attractions, new routes, etc., comprehensively honing the skills of tour guides, enabling them to better serve the vast number of tourists; specialized enhancement of various strengths of tour guides, carrying out more targeted training, such as skill training, emergency handling training, etc., ensuring that tour guides have outstanding comprehensive service capabilities.

5. Establish a reasonable tour guide incentive mechanism

Develop a more scientific and reasonable tour guide performance evaluation system, incorporating indicators such as tourist satisfaction and explanation quality, comprehensively assessing the overall quality of tour guides, linking the evaluation results to performance, and efficiently implementing the reward and punishment system. For outstanding tour guides, provide material rewards and spiritual incentives, ensuring that the forms of rewards are diverse, thereby stimulating the ambition and work enthusiasm of tour guides, prompting them to work diligently and tirelessly in their jobs.

5.1. Customer relationship management strategy

5.1.1. Strengthen pre-sale consulting services

Increase the training of customer service personnel, ensuring they are familiar with various types of travel products of the travel agency, service processes, and situations related to travel destinations, cultivating their enthusiastic and patient service attitude, promptly answering questions raised by tourists. In addition, flexibly use hotlines, official websites, and other channels to enhance communication with tourists, provide them with timely and accurate information, offer professional advice and necessary support for tourists to plan their trips, book travel services, etc., leaving a good impression on the vast number of tourists.

5.2. Value post-sale feedback collection and processing

After the completion of the trip, actively collect tourists' feedback through telephone callbacks, online surveys, text messages, and other means to understand the satisfaction and issues encountered during the travel process. Establish a dedicated mechanism for handling complaints and suggestions from tourists, follow up promptly, analyze carefully, take effective measures to resolve the issues, and provide feedback to the tourists. This makes them feel the travel agency's attention to them, enhancing customer satisfaction and loyalty.

5.3. Establish a customer relationship maintenance system

Use customer relationship management software(CRM)and other tools to record and analyze basic tourist information, travel history, consumption preferences, etc.By regularly sending personalized travel recommendations and information about special offers, maintain long-term contact with customers, cultivate a sense of belonging among them, and promote repeat business and word-of-mouth referrals.

5.4. Internal quality management strategies

5.4.1. Optimization of recruitment and training systems

In terms of personnel recruitment, in addition to recruiting tourism professionals, individuals with different professional backgrounds but possessing good communication skills and a sense of service can be absorbed to enrich the service team of the travel agency, providing diverse thinking for service innovation.Improve the comprehensive training system, not only for tour guides, but also for other positions such as travel arrangers and customer service staff, regular business training and service awareness training should be carried out to enhance the overall quality and professional competence of all employees.

5.5. Establish and improve internal supervision mechanisms

Establish specialized quality supervision departments or positions, formulate detailed service quality supervision standards and processes, and conduct regular inspections and random spot checks on various service links of the travel agency.For example, check whether the design of tourism products meets the standards, whether the tour guide services meet the criteria, and whether customer feedback is handled promptly, promptly identify problems and urge relevant departments or personnel to make corrections, ensuring the stability and continuity of service quality.

5.6. Create a positive corporate culture atmosphere

Cultivate a positive, customer-centric corporate culture, through internal publicity, training, team-building activities, and so on, so that every employee deeply understands the importance of service quality for the development of the travel agency, integrate the concept of high-quality service into daily work, and form a good atmosphere where everyone participates and jointly improves service quality.

6. Conclusion

The improvement of travel agency service quality is a systematic project that requires a scientific and effective management strategy to be implemented from various aspects such as product innovation, tour guide team building, customer relationship management, and internal quality management.By deeply understanding market demand, creating personalized products, building a high-quality tour guide team, strengthening communication and interaction with customers, and improving internal management mechanisms, travel agencies can continuously enhance their service quality, strengthen their market competitiveness, and win the trust and recognition of tourists, achieving sustainable development in the booming tourism industry.

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