

The Role of Public Relations in Promoting Rural Tourism in Armenia

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May 15, 2019

Table of Contents

- Introduction
- Literature Review
- Research question
- Methodology
- Research findings and Analysis
- Discussion-conclusion
- Bibliography

Introduction

- Tourism in Armenia
- What is rurality?
- Public Relations as a mean of communications for rural tourism development
- Capstone Argument

Literature review

- Rural tourism revitalization plan in China
- The experience of Andalusian women
- Info trip of “Rediscover Bucovina”

“In tourism, public relations aim at maintaining a favorable image of a destination and at establishing connections with different types of audience able to develop and improve the touristic offer”.

(Arionesei & Ivan, 2012)

Research Question

What role could Public Relations play in promoting rural tourism in Armenia?

Methodology

- Basic Communication Model
- Diffusion Theory of Innovation in Communications

“Diffusion is the process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system”.

(Everett Roger, 1961)

- Interviews with tour companies, villagers and local governmental body representatives
- Online and face-to-face surveys with tourists

Research Findings and Analysis

- The results of the interviews with local tour companies proves that there is demand and interest for rural tourism in Armenia.
- The results of the interviews with the local governmental bodies in a rural area proves that governmental interference could be motivational for the villagers.
- The result of the interview with a villager from Agarakadzor village proves that a goal-oriented and devoted person is the key towards development.
- The results of the surveys with tourists proves that there is interest in experiencing rural tours in Armenia.

Discussion-Conclusion

- Rural tourism is an innovative approach towards touristic sphere in Armenia.
- The diffusion theory of innovations proves that for the recipient –the tourists –to accept the innovation some amount of time is required.
- Villagers are the ones to develop their villages and raising awareness about them.
- To reach their target –the tourists –they need to communicate effectively with tour companies –the “brokers” between the product owners and customers.
- The use of public relations strategies could ensure proper image making and promotion of the villages.

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