

# Research on Relationship Marketing for Tourism Industry - A case study on Hong Chi International

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## ABSTRACT

Relationship marketing refers to a relationship behavior concentrating on customers. This behavior helps businesses to develop sound business relationship as they trust one another and rely on one another in their interaction process with emphasis on the interest materialized over the past years. As a branch of service industry, travel agencies rely on relationship to market their products and to build up their reputations. This study has incorporated intensive case interview method and categorized customers under the relationship hierarchy concept introduced by Kotler (1997) (translated by Fang, Shu-lung, 2000, p: 91) to define the partnership between the subject company, its customers, and members, which is considered an ultimate form of relationship marketing. Company renders services to customers and satisfies members' needs so as to find out the most effective way to help customers reduce costs through joint efforts, thereby helping customers to improve their performance and establishing a long-term cooperative relationship on a mutually beneficial basis. This study has, therefore, analyzed the effects of Hong Chi's relationship marketing via the effective relationship-marketing model introduced by Evans & Laskin (1994). Findings are summarized as follows: (1) Travel agencies have examined the performance of relationship marketing via the "relationship marketing" model and have thus become aware of the blind points of their relationship marketing. They have continued to improve their performance. As a result, the number of loyal members has increased and their revenue grew. (2) Travel agencies have developed a customer-oriented relationship-marketing model based upon mutual trust and mutual reliance so as to satisfy customers' needs and wants. Thus, the model serves as the turning point for the very survival of businesses. (3) Marketing channels are considered the primary goal to enhance the popularity of products. (4) Dominance of market changes and trend is the key to success. This study has interviewed all levels of multi-level businesses and has concluded that the number of members and revenue has grown continually over the past years. The finding is consistent with the unpredictable business climate and dynamic nature of tourism industry. The relationship-marketing model has fostered the dynamic interaction for relationship marketing with emphasis on feedback to customers and members in consideration with customers' dynamic needs. Therefore, the dominance of market changes — superior quality, low costs, customer-orientation, and market trend — is the key to success for tourism, health, and beauty.

Keywords : tourism industry ; relationship marketing ; relationship hierarchy ; effective relationship-marketing model of Evans & Laskin

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