TOURISM MARKETING: CRIMINAL ACTS AGAINST TOURISTS AND STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME

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Abstract: Crime, today a salient fact, an integral part of the risks we face in everyday life. In order to enhance the image of a country as a global tourism destination, the safety of the foreign tourists while touring the country must be given the highest priority by the local authority. This article offers some insights on the various criminal acts against tourists as well as strategies to overcome or minimize the problems

Keywords: Tourism Marketing, Tourists Behavior, Destination Marketing

I. INTRODUCTION

Crime is the breach of rules or laws for which some governing authority (via mechanisms such as legal systems) can ultimately prescribe a conviction. While every crime violates the law, not every violation of the law counts as a crime; for example breaches of contract and of other civil law may rank as "offences" or as "infractions". Crime in the social and legal framework is the set of facts or assumptions (causes, consequences and objectives) that are part of a case in which they were committed acts punishable under criminal law, and the application of which depends on the agent of a sentence or security measure criminal. Usually includes a felony violation of a criminal rule or act against law, in particular at the expense of people or moral. A crime may be illegal (as is the cause of evil or injury) or perfectly legal (when the act done is not a necessary consequence of the conduct of the agent but determined by others).

II. CRIMINAL ACTS AGAINST TOURISTS

Snatch Thieves

Although many travelers spend a lot of time worrying about becoming victims of terrorist activity including kidnappings and bombings, the fact remains that they are far more likely to become victims of petty crimes. Perhaps the most common crime of this nature is mugging, which often occurs in busy urban areas where travelers need to focus their attention upon crossing the road and negotiating the packed streets. Travelers walking along the road can have their handbags snatched by individuals in passing vehicles. In most incidents, two thieves on a motorcycle speed up from behind a victim, and the passenger on the back snatches a purse, handbag, or cellular phone. Thieves have also conducted snatch-thefts while leaning out of the passenger side of moving vehicles. Increasingly, robbers will confront a victim in larger groups. These types of thefts can occur at all hours and often in front of large groups of witnesses, even in upscale neighborhoods frequented by expatriates. Women walking by themselves or with small children are the most common targets, but men walking or jogging alone have also been targeted. Victims have been injured and even killed after falling and being dragged by thieves in cars or on motorcycles.

ATM and Credit Card Fraud

Credit card fraud continues to be a problem throughout the world, although enhanced technology has reduced reported instances of fraud. Unauthorized charges may not show on a credit card account for several months but can unexpectedly appear in amounts of $5,000 or more. One of the more common methods is for retailers to swipe the credit card under the counter where a machine containing a mobile phone SIM card receives the card's information and transmits it to a criminal organization for reproduction. In some cases, sophisticated criminal organizations have tapped into data lines emanating from retail establishments. Credit card information is then stolen while it is being transmitted to financial institutions. ATM cards are safer as long as the machines where they are used are associated with reputable banks.

Gambling Card Scams

This scam is normally quite sophisticated and extremely well executed. First, tourists were approached by a friendly local who invites them home for some reason (kid's birthday party, niece is moving to tourist home country). Back at his/her place, which is likely to be far out in the suburbs, an uncle shows up and tells that he is working as a dealer at a casino and of course knows some great tricks. He will invite victim to start practicing Blackjack and victim will quickly pick up his hand signal system so they can tell what the other players have.

Drink Spiking

Drink spiking refers to the practice of an individual adding a mind-altering substance to another person's drink without their knowledge. These substances include drugs and alcohol. Drink spiking may be a precursor to further criminal activity, including rape

or robbery. Local criminals often plague the bars of major towns and smaller, rural areas, in the hope of targeting a naïve backpacker who has let their hair down in an environment which seems safe.

III. TOURIST AS OFFENDERS

It is worth noting that tourists may be the perpetrators, as well as the victims, of crime. They may riot at sporting events, for example, or cause disturbances on aircraft. They may also solicit prostitutes, buy illegal drugs, or smuggle goods out of the country. Furthermore, syndicated criminals may pretend to be tourists, known as transnational crime. Transnational crime is the activities of many criminal groups across national boundaries and escape the control of governments and law enforcement agencies . The problem of transnational crime is severe and consists primarily of drug trafficking, illegal migration, terrorism, money laundering, transnational prostitution, piracy, arms smuggling, credit card fraud, and corruption.

Human Trafficking

Trafficking in women and children is the worst form of violation of the human rights of women and children. It is one of the greatest human rights challenges of our time. Aside from being a cross violation of human rights, trafficking threatens the world community by allowing a safe haven for trafficked syndicates, funding illicit activities and facilitating the spread of sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS. A characteristic of trafficking is that the victim is restricted in her freedom of choice. Trafficking has no borders, involving both developing and developed countries and has become an organized, trans-national crime and an increasing booming global business.

International Fraud And Scams

In the Black Money scam, victims are told about a stash of bank notes which had been dyed black to avoid Customs detection. The money was supposedly kept in a safe somewhere and the victim should purchase a type of chemical to wash off the dye which would then unveil “genuine” US dollars. The victim would be promised a share of the money. The supposed origin of the riches varied with each new victim. Victims are given the “washed” bank notes and are encouraged to verify their authenticity at a money changer.

IV. STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME OR MINIMIZE

Strengthening The Legal Mechanism

The effective implementation of the enforced laws can be achieved by reviewing and improving the laws especially on investigation and prosecution. The existing Standard Operating Procedures shall be reviewed when deemed necessary to facilitate better investigation, protection, and prosecution to be in line with the current needs. With the inclusion of trafficking in persons offences under the Acts related to Anti Money Laundering and Anti Terrorism Finance, it is hoped that it will be a deterrent to the potential perpetrators from committing the crime. Especially in cases involving tourists, the investigation should be carried out with special SOP which being supportive system for tourist as a victim and also prevention for tourist as criminals.

Integrated Actions among Enforcement Agencies

Implementation of integrated action among enforcement agencies such as Police, Immigration Department, Customs, Maritime and others with respect to information sharing, prevention, investigation and prosecution so as to ensure the victims are given timely protection and the perpetrators are being punished. Especially in human trafficking cases, integrated actions among these agencies plays a big part in entry point control and delimitation The implementation of integrated action shall focus on coordinated operation, ad-hoc raids and the use of modern equipment and logistics to locate various anti-trafficking acts, such as the use of CCTV. The enforcement agencies shall also make available system that simplifies the public to make timely reports for prompt action. The reporting system and hotline service should be user friendly and efficient.

Public Awareness and Prevention

One of the most important strategies for crime prevention is public awareness in order to create an informed, responsible and responsive society as crimes involving tourists is a concern of all. A full scale publicity program must be carried out utilizing all forms of mass communication to inform and educate the public about the seriousness of these crimes, its implications to economy and national security.

Capacity Building

Capacity building is an essential element in ensuring that the personnel of all the agencies and NGOs involved in the efforts to overcome crime involving tourists have the relevant knowledge and skills particularly in the areas of policy, prevention, protection and prosecution. Engagement and strategic alliance with foreign partners is of paramount importance to share knowledge and experience with the relevant experts on the professional development programs for these personnel. Special courses by experts and academicians from local universities for the personnel would gain their knowledge and skills.

Information Management

Most of crimes involving tourists are a complex crime that would commonly involve crime syndicates

which operate in organized, structured and well established networks. Hence, systematic and effective information management is vital to ensure better coordination and integration among all relevant agencies such as Police and Immigration. The relevant information can also be disseminated to the public to create awareness. The information management system will enable the government agencies to gather up-to-date, fast and reliable information for the purpose of intelligence sharing. Through establishing systematic and effective information system, efficiencies of the agencies in tackling the crime involving tourists would be increased.

Smart Partnership

The local governments need to work with relevant stakeholders especially the NGOs, the civil society, private sector and the general public to address the crime involving the tourists. Bilateral and multilateral cooperation at regional and international level between the government and strategic partners including International Organisations will intensify the collaboration to address the issue in tourism industry. The working relationship will among others include the aspect of intelligence sharing, mutual legal assistance, extradition, capacity building and public awareness. In some cases, it is hard to trace criminals that fled to their home country, with collaboration with foreign governments, this suspects can be detained easily.

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