



# Developing a strategic and integrated approach to seaport marketing communications

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# Overview

- Services marketing focus
- 3 major purposes of seaport marketing communications
- Marketing communications tools and Integration and consistency with:
  - Word of mouth communications
  - Servicescapes and physical evidence
  - Image
- Managing communications strategically



# Benefits of marketing commns

- Raise awareness
- Influence expectations and attitudes
- Positioning of seaport
- Enhance seaport's image
- Customer loyalty
- Effective communication
- Objective - increase trade





# Seaport marketing research

- Physical product emphasis
- Marketing = advertising
- Lists of promotional activities
  - Insufficient for strategic approach
- Little discussion
  - Personal selling and CRM
  - Corporate communications, Web
  - Services marketing focus





# Basis of current research

- Commercial Australian seaports
- 30 mainports representing 61 seaports
- Respondents – senior managers
- 100% response rate
- Telephone interviews
  - 184 items
  - Duration 45-105 mins





# Purposes of seaport marketing communications

1. Attracting new customers and informing current customers
2. Informing and reminding the local community about the seaport's contribution to the region
3. Information sharing with the seaport sector and maritime industry





# 1. Attracting new customers and informing current customers

- Trade development communications
- Communications need to be targeted
- Justification of expenditure
- Advertising
  - Questioning benefits of advertising
  - Benefits when repositioning





# Why we don't use marketing...

- *Everybody who needs to know we exist and what we have to offer, already know us. This is the discussion I have quite often with newspapers and periodicals that want to do special features on the State ports or shipping. Sometimes we participate, but more in a sense of making us feel good rather than achieving anything. It is almost like a corporate citizen role, just to let the public know that we are here and creating some community allegiance and awareness and so on.*







# Marketing communication tools

- Brochures, newsletters
- Television, radio
- Slogans
- Seaport information handbook
- Website – passive approach
- Word of mouth communications





## 2. Informing and reminding the local community

- Corporate communications
  - Manager Corporate Comms and PR
  - Marketing and Comms Manager
  - Senior Manager Corporate Relations
- Need to engage the community
  - *“Industrial tourism is sexy”*
- Educating the community





# A strategic approach to education

- *It's about getting into the hearts and minds of the school children and teaching them what ports are about and the value of ports to their social well-being. These are the things we are doing to differentiate ourselves from other ports in this country.*

*- Senior seaport manager*





# Corporate communications

- Contribution to the region
- Consultation and seminars
- Newspapers – PR and publicity
- Sponsorships
- Community-related funded
- Symbiotic relationship





### 3. Information sharing within the industry

- Education and upskilling communications
- Increasing knowledge within sector
- Attending conferences
- Presenting papers
- Industry level associations
- Lobbying for seaport interests





# Word of mouth communications

- Benefits
  - More credible than advertising
  - Less biased
  - Reduces perceived risk
  - Relationship with price, commns, PE
- Manage and encourage WOM
  - Viral marketing, canned WoM
  - Testimonials, WIIFM, PE





# Servicescape and PE

- Provides tangible clues of:
  - Quality, efficiency, corp responsibility
- Many sources – consistency needed
- PE confirms marketing commns
- Servicescape facilitates service delivery
  - Workplace productivity
- Role of physical evidence
  - Stationery, giveaways





# Proactive approach to image

- Professional reputation of the seaport
- If image vague:
  - Customers form own image
  - Rely on WoM and PE
- Develop the seaport's image
  - Strategy for positioning in mindsets
- Use corporate image/culture surveys







# Concluding comments

- Wide range of marketing commns
  - All must be integrated
  - Consistent message
- Manage strategically and holistically
- Based on market research
- Focused on target markets
- Further research
  - Effectiveness of communications





# Thank you

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