

To Tell or Not to Tell? The Impact of Explicit and Implicit Sustainability Communication Through Loyalty Programs

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Abstract:

Tourism's environmental impact remains a critical issue despite efforts to promote sustainability within the sector. Sustainability loyalty programs aim to encourage sustainable behaviors, yet how to effectively communicate them has not been thoroughly researched, particularly in hedonic contexts such as tourism. This paper introduces a conceptual framework to explore how implicit and explicit communication influences consumer behavior and attitudes. We propose that not emphasizing sustainability intentions enhances intrinsic motivations, which positively impacts trustworthiness. In turn, an increased sense of trustworthiness more strongly enhances purchase likelihood and brand attitudes when communicated implicitly rather than explicitly. Thus, this paper proposes that implicit communication in the context of tourism and hospitality sustainability loyalty programs leads to multiple positive effects.

Keywords: Communication, loyalty programs, sustainable tourism

Track: Tourism Management