

Understanding Canadian and US tourists: A self-concept based segmentation study

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Abstract

This study aims to identify the distinctive market segments based on tourists' self-concept, gain a better understanding of U.S. and Canadian tourists' travel patterns, and provide implications that are beneficial to destination marketing organizations (DMOs). This study advances the knowledge of self-concept in the tourism context by validating its measurement and employing it as a segmentation base. This study used 2 percent of cases (N=1,012) of secondary data collected by an Ontario government agency, and a factor-cluster approach for analysis. Principal component analysis was utilized to identify specific characteristics of self-concept

items and the results yielded three selves (extravert self, explorative self, and depressive self). Then, the study segmented U.S. and Canadian tourists by three self-concept factors and obtained four distinctive segments: Energetic Segment (ENT), Adventurous Segment (ADT), Conservative Segment (COT), and Escaping Segment (EST). ENT tourists are characterized as active, inquisitive and confident with a medium level of perceived value, satisfaction, and recommendation. ADT represents tourists who are older, open-minded, and optimistic with the highest level of perceived value, satisfaction, and recommendation. COT is relatively passive and had the lowest level of perceived value, satisfaction, and recommendation. EST is a group of nervous and stressful young female tourists who had a low level of perceived value and a medium degree of satisfaction and recommendation. This paper concludes with appropriate advertising and promotional strategies for the different segments.

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