PROMOTION STRATEGIES AND THEIR EFFICIENCY IN THE CASE OF BRANDING TRANSYLVANIA AS A TOURIST DESTINATION

SMARANDA COSMA¹, MONICA MARIA COROȘ²

ABSTRACT. The current paper is dedicated to present the promotion strategy (the international marketing and communication plans) and the evaluation of the branding implementation process [both referring to Transylvania]. The steps that we considered to undertake were the implementation of the brand and the communication strategies, the evaluation of the results, and the periodical adjustment of the strategy.

In order to be able to fulfill our objective of promoting the brand Transylvania, the Heart of Europe – International Multicultural Ecotourism Destination, we consider that three strategies are needed. For ensuring an efficient implementation of the strategies, we need also to consider testing and evaluating them.

Introduction

Our intent is to analyze the current situation regarding Transylvania’s promotion as a tourist destination. Until now, none of the national, regional, or local authorities have considered to brand and to promote Transylvania as an international tourist destination. In fact, only a few months ago there have been initiated, at governmental level, a national branding strategy; but things are still at the beginning (in the phase of discussions) and nothing has been seriously undertaken. When it comes to the case of Transylvania, we need to state the fact that branding the region has not been considered.

Materials and Methods

Our research has focused on gathering information referring to the promotion of Transylvania as an international tourist destination. First of all we have analyzed specialized literature in order to identify the elements that need to be used in branding and promoting regions and places as tourist destinations. We have then focused on analyzing the statistical data referring to the numbers of international visitors who have come to Transylvania between 1990 and 2005. Another fact that has concerned us was to determine the numeric evolution of the region’s international visitors. Then we have tried to determine the peoples’ and

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¹ Lecturer, PhD, Faculty of Business, Babeș-Bolyai University Cluj-Napoca
² Master student, Faculty of Business, Babeș-Bolyai University Cluj-Napoca
region’s identity, as well as the region’s tourism potential, in order to be able to best positions the destination on the international tourism market. Determining the foreigners’ perception towards the region has been another fact of high importance for our approach. Thus, we have made use of tools belonging to marketing, communication, branding, statistics, sociology etc. We have also considered varied evaluation methods, with the purpose of best implementing our branding, promotion, and communication strategies, and also to adjust the implemented strategies.

**Results and discussions**

Unfortunately, the main results that our researches have offered us show the fact that tourism promotion in Transylvania is not a priority of any of the authorities. The Romanian National Statistics’ Institute has not made any studies referring to the international visitors of our region; the only data collected by the institution present the whole tourism activity of Transylvania. The great variety of natural beautiful places and the cultural heritage that Transylvania hosts, as well as the multicultural character of the region, grant us the possibility to consider promoting it as an ecotourist destination and also as a cultural destination. Until now, the authorities have made small efforts to promote the region, and only within the national strategies of tourism promotion.

Under these conditions, we may note that Transylvania’s international tourism has not been a priority for the authorities and no one has ever considered elaborating any coherent strategy in this respect. Therefore, we believe it is necessary to take initiative. We would suggest establishing three different promotion and communication strategies and their evaluation possibilities.

The first one is going to be a short-term strategy; it will aim changing the foreigners’ perceptions and attitudes towards Transylvania. The second is going to be a medium-term strategy; it is going to run in parallel with the first one (only during the second part of the first strategy); it will assess to launch Transylvania’s region brand. First of all we need to change the publics’ perceptions, and only after the first favorable results are to be seen, we may initiate the second strategy, that of promoting the region’s identity which will sustain the previous approach. Finally, after having launched the region’s brand, we may proceed to implementing the third strategy, a long-term strategy that aims to promote Transylvania as an international multicultural ecotourism destination, to strengthen and consolidate the brand, and to identify new co-branding opportunities [5, 6].

Phase 1 – the short-term strategy (6 months; it may be longer if necessary) will aim to improve the way Transylvania is perceived; its steps are:

- the separation of Transylvania’s image from that of Romania, which sometimes negatively affects it;
- to discourage those who are multiplying sometimes negative image, created and promoted by dissatisfied international tourists, through the use of the power of positive examples; in this respect we suggest collaborating with the tourism
operators, in order to identify the satisfied tourist and the loyal ones (who constantly come to the region), and, with their agreement, to promote them as positive and successful examples;

- the cancellation of the myth of foreigners’ insecurity, by presenting the official statistics regarding felony and criminality (which in our country register lower rates than in the EU, USA or in other countries);
- the promotion of the region’s positive aspects: economic (stability of economic policies, monetary stability, high attractiveness of the region due to the optimal quality/price ratio), and political (governmental, political and social stability, respect of human/minority rights, foreigners’ possibility to make investments in Transylvania and Romania – that, in our case, is the chance to buy or build holiday houses etc); these factors determine the decisions and choices of foreign tourists (according to some Romanian NTO’s, these persons like to own their accommodation facilities, thus Transylvania might interest them due to its market conditions);
- to exploit and to promote Transylvania’s attractive quality/price ratio;
- to point out the multicultural character of the region; promoting the values of multiculturality.

The messages of the campaign will focus on the fact that Transylvania has changed (the public ought to understand and learn that the stereotypes are not valid) and that it is European (geographically, socio-politically and from the tourism point of view).

Phase 2 – the medium-term strategy (a year and a half) – will run alongside with the first one, during its second half; it will focus on Transylvania’s regional brand. The region’s identity will be the main element promoted through the previously launched brand.

The main theme of the campaign will be the brand: Transylvania – The Multicultural Heart of Europe, International, Ecotourism Destination; the great variety of offers, objectives and beauty spots (all belonging to ecotourism) that the region possesses will also be promoted.

As possible taglines, we would suggest:

- Transylvania, the Multicultural Heart of Europe;
- From Portugal to the Ural Mountains, through Transylvania;
- Natural and Multicultural Transylvania;
- Archaic and Modern: Transylvania;
- Transylvania, where Hospitality Was Born [5, 6].

Phase 3 – the long-term strategy (5 years) – will aim to consolidate Transylvania’s assumed position – Transylvania, the Multicultural Heart of Europe, International, Multicultural Ecotourism Destination —, and to promote its tourism offers; it is going to start after the second one has finished.

The phase implies the elaboration of a long-term international marketing strategy for the ecotourism international destination; it will cover the next steps:

1. The competitive analysis of the international tourism market: On this market,
there is a harsh competition; therefore, it is essential to position correctly and advantageously Transylvania, comparing with its main competitors. We wish to emphasize the opportunities offered by positioning the region as a multicultural ecotourism destination.

(2) Identification and selection of the existent and potential local attractions: The region’s ecotourism potential must be exploited at its maximum capacity, emphasizing its multiculturality and the elements of the mix, which offer essential differentiation means; the studies undertaken by the Romanian NTO’s are very useful in this respect.

(3) Identification of the target segments: This may be done according by using the following matrix: Segmentation Variables for the Tourists Market [8]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Desired attractions</th>
<th>Market localizations</th>
<th>Tourists’ features</th>
<th>Advantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mountain, Sport</td>
<td>Abroad</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Price</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural beauty/</td>
<td>- global range: USA/ Asia (Japan, China)</td>
<td>Income</td>
<td>Convenience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wild landscapes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recovery</td>
<td>- continental range: Europe (EU and non EU)</td>
<td>Families</td>
<td>Accessibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunting</td>
<td>- regional range: neighboring countries</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Comfort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture/History/People</td>
<td>Seasonality: during the whole year</td>
<td>Practitioners of a profession</td>
<td>Quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lifestyle</td>
<td>Food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme parks</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ethnic/Religious group</td>
<td>Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exclusivity</td>
<td></td>
<td>Seasonality</td>
<td>Diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arranged facilities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Arranged facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unique products</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Region’s character</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regarding present tourists, the following pieces of information will be gathered, by the tourism services providers, border authorities and tourism operators: Where do they come from?; Why do they come?; Which are their demographic features?; How satisfied are they with the provided services?; How many of them are loyal clients?; Which is their expenditures’ volume?; Which are the attractions they are interested in?; The length of the stay?; The visits’ frequencies? etc. [2]. These facts are also going to be used in the segmentation process.

(4) Coordination of the local authorities’ efforts with those of the tourism operators: Coordination is an essential element of the promotion strategy of Transylvania’s image as an international ecotourism destination; it has three components:

- **Development of tourism packages** – tourism operators include in their offers the objectives promoted by the local and regional authorities, thus the public administration has to consider investing in local patrimonies and infrastructure;
- **Promotion of tourism destinations** represents the effort of the collaboration of
the authorities with tourism operators for advertising certain areas or objectives; it depends on the authorities’ willingness to invest money in promotion activities;

- Providing for sustainable tourism is the result of the first two actions, and assumes the definitive entrance of beauty spots in the tourism circuit [2].

5) International marketing – promotion strategy: “Tourism destination international marketing is the effort of a team” [2] and is carried out by different communication means and with the support of stakeholders. There are several actors of the urban marketing [8]. Adapting this list to region branding, we may present the actors of the region’s promotion:

- Local actors: the mayor and the city hall’s employees (services of: tourism, culture, education, transportation and cleaning); the bureaus for tourism, conference organizing, and public information.

- Private sector actors: the region’s promoters; tourism agencies and tour-operators; professional associations of service providers (accommodation and alimentation); travel agencies; economic institutions and agencies; other economic agents (from the small investors, to utility providers and multinational companies that have businesses in the area); taximeter/cab companies, water transportation (normal and motor boats, ships, hydrobicycles etc), old fashioned transportation (slow miniature trains, carriage) or traditional transportation (wagon, cart, sledge).

- Regional actors: prefects and county councils’ presidents and employees of their institutions; regional agencies for tourism development and promotion; regional tourism bureaus and offices.

- National actors: central public administration representatives (especially the Tourism Ministry and the Romanian National Agency for Tourism); the National Development Agency; the country’s NTO’s (National Tourism Office) and National Tourism Associations (Romanian National Association of the Tourism Agencies; National Association of Rural, Ecological and Cultural Tourism; Romanian Federation of the Hostelling Industry; Romanian Federation of the Tourism Patronages) etc.

- International actors: the country’s embassies and consulates; the public administrations of settlements fraternized with Transylvanian towns/villages; the Romanian Diaspora; the international tourism agencies, the tour-operators, and the travel agencies; the international tourism associations; the foreign partners; the lobby and advocacy groups.

Offices for tourism, conference and workshops organizing can usually be found in big cities [8] but we consider that, in our case, they can also appear at a regional level, because they are separate institutions that handle ordinary tourists, respectively business tourists; most of the time they compete each other for public financing.

Another aspect extremely important for any brand and marketing strategy is the promotion budget. Due to reasons linked to the impossibility of obtaining all the information regarding the real costs of implementing such strategies, and because of the area’s complexity, we consider that we should not dare suggest a
promotion budget. It is a known fact that the important media packs bought by governments are negotiated at top levels [for example, the huge scandal, that tied Ion Iliescu’s name to the album *Eterna șî fascinanta Românie*, financial situation not yet clarified], and only people responsible of such tasks know the exact costs.

We shall only show that, in the case of each stage, there are personnel costs; organizational and logistic costs; evaluation costs (past, present, and future events); advertising and communication costs; payment costs – for the collaborators; traveling costs, relevant for the region’s branding process etc.

In order to cover these costs, there can be identified several financing sources: budgetary (national/state budget) and non-budgetary (nonrefundable funds from the EU, EBRD and from other institutions; PHARE funds; a part of the costs may be covered by tour-operators, tourism agencies and all the direct and indirect beneficiaries of the branding campaign). Alternative financing sources are also to be identified.

In the strategies’ designing, one should know that these have to be very flexible, in order to easily and fast adapt them to any changes, and to be able to make necessary corrections, in case there appear errors.

The next aspect we need to focus on is choosing the communication and message promotion channels; we have considered identifying them for each of the phases [5, 6].

For the first phase we have chosen the following promotion and communication means:

- All formal and informal communication channels of the national, regional, and local authorities shall be used;
- The Saxons are a very important asset for Transylvania’s promotion;
- Diaspora and international lobby and advocacy groups are to be used;
- Advertising in written international media (*Financial Times*, *Fankfurter Zeitung*, *Le Figaro*, *The Times* etc – the main papers that are distributed in airplanes and trains, and that are usually read by most of the foreigners); thus, twice a week, for 6 months, there will be published positive articles (advertising interviews and reportages) referring to Transylvania’s evolution; at the same time, advertising space will also be bought, in order to publish ads created on the region’s brand essence (multicultural ecotourism international destination); advertising in the *National Geographic* (monthly magazine) will also be considered for the same time span of 6 months;
- TV advertising: a 30 second TV spot will be created; advertising time will be bought on the following channels: Discovery network (Classic, Civilization, Travel and History), National Geographic, TV5, BBC, CNN, Euronews and Eurosport, for a 6 month long time span, twice a day, on Sundays and Saturdays; advertising interviews and reportages will also be used;
- Radio advertising: 30 seconds spots, thrice a day, on the main radio stations from the EU, USA and Asia; BBC will for sure be one of them, due to its high credibility and quasi-global coverage;
On-line advertising: a web site is going to be created and launched; it will be linked to the ones of the local and international tourism operators, government, ministries and public agencies and institutions; the promoted idea will focus on the fact that Transylvania changes regarding offered services’ quality, and also on the region’s brand – the promotion of an international, multicultural, ecotourism destination.

For the second phase, we have considered a similar promotion and communication strategy, as follows. A 30-second long TV spot will be advertised under the conditions above. The spots are going to focus on the promotion and illustration of the multicultural character of the region and on the promotion of Transylvania’s ecotourism patrimony. The sound/musical background may be based on traditional and folkloric creations, interpreted by the artists of “Transylvania” State Philharmonic or of the Transylvanian String Quartet.

Other promotion instrumentss would be the creation of a web site for the region, this time focusing on ecotourism; the strategies regarding this site will be similar to the ones previously presented. The site is also going to offer a discussion forum on a given topic: Transylvania, the Multicultural Heart of Europe, International Ecotourism Destination. In this case too, we consider using the members of the Diaspora and all the other formal and informal communication channels. Moreover, local authorities will also play an important role in the promotion of the region’s brand – due to their fraternization projects – etc.

A very useful way to realize the promotion of tourism destinations is to include them in the manuals published by prestigious editing houses. Cultural and artistic events are also important for the promotion of an ecotourism destination.

Finally, for the third phase – the most important one – we have identified the following international communication channels:

- **Formal channels** are specific to the state and administration institutions;
- **Informal channels** are based on settlements’ relationships of fraternization;
- **Media channels** (international TV stations, national and regional TV stations that also broadcast internationally; radio stations – especially, BBC; written media – we have already detailed these aspects in the above paragraphs);
- **Ethnic communities** (Hungarians and, especially, Germans who left the region and established abroad; and the Romanian Diaspora); they constitute another important resource for the promotion strategy;
- Romanian NTO’s (National Tourism Organizations) opened on the main target markets (EU, USA and Asia);
- Bureaus for tourism and tourism information offices (in Transylvania and in Romania);
- Associations of national and international tour operators, and their specific means of communication;
- Internet – the most advantageous means of communication; it offers global coverage at minimum costs;
- Tourism fairs and exhibits – one of the most important means of communication.
and promotion for tourism destinations (we shall focus both on global fairs, as well as on regional and local ones);
- Tourism workshops and seminars – very efficient communication and promotion instruments for tourism destinations;
- Trips for journalists offer the possibility to promote the region through the representatives of the media – who due to such trips, they get the chance to visit and discover the region, and then write about it;
- Trips for opinion leaders generate similar effects as the ones above;
- Advertising tourism through philately may represent another solution for the region’s promotion; postal cards and stamps are typical materials that can be produced – with the theme: Ecotourism in Transylvania; evidently, such an approach has a limited impact at the level of people who collect stamps and cards; also a more important effect is generated at the level of the persons who still use classical correspondence.

The following advertising materials are going to be used: leaflets, brochures, maps, tourism guides etc. We are proposing 30-second TV spots that will periodically be adjusted in order to promote the region’s very diverse tourism offers. These are going to be presented during the first 11 months of the first year (out of the 5), three times per week (of which at least once during the weekend), twice a day, on the above mentioned TV channels. During the last month of the first year, there will be created a reminding 30-second TV spot, which will contain information and images from the previous ones; advertising frequency will be the same as before. Audio spots are going also to be created, similarly to the previous cases. Ads are going to be inserted in written media: advertising materials, interviews and reportages, twice a week, in the above-mentioned publications. Authorities are going to permanently actualize the web site: Transylvania – International Multicultural Ecotourism Destination that will offer varied information about the region and about ecotourism, and also about the mentioned discussion forum; the site is going to give the possibility to evaluate several aspects: the region’s and campaign’s degree of notoriety; the level of tourists’ satisfaction; the rating of facilities, services and objectives. This strategy will also focus on identifying co-branding opportunities.

Further on we are going to focus on presenting the measurement possibilities for the efficiency of a region’s branding promotion campaign. This is actually the last step of the region’s branding process: evaluation of results and the continuous adjustment of the strategy.

Evaluating the whole impact when creating and promoting the region’s brand: Transylvania – the Multicultural Heart of Europe, International Ecotourism Destination can only be done after 8 to 10 years form the brand’s launching moment. Still, beginning with the first steps of this complex process we are going to be able to measure the effects generated by the different implemented strategies (of international marketing, of international communication etc). We may measure
their impacts generated upon the targeted segments, by the periodical quantification of the international visitors’ number who travel to Transylvania.

The evaluation of Transylvania’s region brand’s efficiency will focus on the brand and on the positive image that it manages to promote through its implementation. The feedback of the international marketing and communication campaigns, realized with the purpose of promoting Transylvania as an international multicultural ecotourism destination will cover the used promotion strategies.

For evaluating the effects of the promotion of a tourism destination, we need to take into consideration at least the following aspects:

- Quantitative and qualitative evaluation, through monitoring the way in which the international media have managed to perceive the essence of the communicated messages and the way in which they have further transmitted these messages;
- Quantitative and qualitative evaluation, with the help of the opinion polls, surveys, inquiries, interviews and focus groups; these will aim to determine the way in which the target have perceived the messages of the promotion campaigns, conducted through the written instruments of communication and through the TV and radio advertisements; another aspect that needs to be evaluated regards the way in which the branding campaign’s messages have improved the perception of the foreigners concerning Transylvania;
- Opinion surveys and inquiries among the foreign visitors of Transylvania;
- Using the Internet as the main instruments for collecting information referring to the effects of the initiated attempt to promote Transylvania as a tourist destination; for our specific case, the Internet represents a very efficient media, due to the low costs of using it but, still, it also implies a disadvantage that needs to be taken into consideration: not all the tourists use virtual networks;
- The e-Mail may also be used both for promoting the region and for carrying out inquiries but its main inconvenience is given by the fact that the users may consider that these messages belong to the category of spam;
- Tourism services’ providers, tourism agencies, national and international tour operators, and the custom and border authorities can be used. We would need to focus on gathering information and data concerning the following facts: the reasons that have determined the tourists to choose Transylvania as a destination; the degree in which Transylvania’s promotion campaign has influenced their decision; their level of satisfaction; their intent or wish to return here; their negative experiences (in case there were any); their desire of having certain facts changed; the measure of their agreement with the way the region is promoted abroad; their agreement to be involved in the region’s promotion (as positive examples);
- Evaluating the situation at the place of the targeted publics – by realizing inquiries, surveys, and interviews at the tourism fairs and exhibits where Transylvania is promoted as an international tourist destination;
- Collecting information through the Romanian embassies and consulates, through the NTO’s opened abroad;
Quantitative measurement of the persons who have accessed the promotion sites of Transylvania as an international multicultural ecotourism destination; as well as the qualitative evaluation of the messages posted on the discussion forums; The best indicator of the success of the strategies’ implementation is given by the increase of the foreign tourists who choose Transylvania as their destination; The increase of the length of the stays of the foreign visitors in Transylvania, may also be considered an indicator for the measurement of the success of the promotion campaigns; The increase of the number of international visitors during the times of different cultural, folkloric etc. events offers us another instrument to evaluate the impact of the promotion of the destination through ecotourism.

The evaluation or feedback of the international marketing and communication campaigns, carried out for the region’s promotion, will focus on the strategies that have been implemented. Evaluation methods used here will be: continuous, during the implementation, and final tests. The evaluation during the implementation process is extremely important because it helps to identify problems and errors of the implementation process, and to make the necessary corrections, thus granting the maximum flexibility of their implementation. We would like to present the usual measurement methods of promotion campaigns, because we believe that they are appropriate for each of the three strategies we have suggested.

Burnett and Moriarty consider that in order to determine the impact of promotional activities, it is necessary to identify the answers to the following questions: What should be tested? Is it worth testing? If yes, when should it be tested? and How should it be tested? [3]. We believe that in our case the following aspects should be tested: the relationship between the increase of the region’s notoriety and the decisions of the tourists to visit it; the measure in which advertising has managed to change the target public’s perceptions; the evaluation of the chosen communication instruments’ efficiency; the relationship between the competitors’ evolution on the market and the region market share development; the communication efficiency, through the analysis of the communication factors [the variables of advertising messages (title, words, music, visual elements, color, shape), the variables of information sources (the popularity of the persons who present the information and messages etc), the variables of communication channels (mass-media, Internet, outdoor advertising, billboards etc; in these cases, there will be both a quantitative and also a qualitative analysis) and through the analysis of behavioral factors (intention to buy; respectively, intention to visit Transylvania, and brand loyalty, as well as loyalty towards the region – as a tourist destination – by determining the number of stays intended to be made here)] [3].

Referring to the second question, we consider that all the above actors are worth to be tested, even though such an activity implies certain costs; it is obvious that these costs are lower than the ones of the campaign implementation. In the case of testing procedures absence, errors may occur. If errors are not identified
and corrected, they may lead to important image and financial costs. The moments of the testing, as already shown, are supposed to be before, during and after the region’s promotion campaign. Referring to the last question, we are now going to present a few testing methods.

Evaluation of advertising activities’ efficiency is very important for the correct implementation of the strategy; it assures a smooth carrying out of branding and advertising processes. A first aspect that needs to be taken into consideration is the measurement of the advertising campaigns’ efficiency. For this we can consider determining the following indicators: the cost of the advertisement per thousand (CPT or the cost of the advertisement for every 1000 targeted tourists, per each instruments of communication), the percentage of public touched by each means of communication, the publics’ opinion referring to the contents and the efficiency of the advertisement, and the cost of one request of information; residual effects of the advertising campaign also need to be tested etc [4]. The elements that are usually used in the research of the efficiency of advertising are: media factors (coverage, GRP – gross rating point, CPT as against the target public, the average frequency and the frequency’s distribution), sources of the audience’s determination, evaluation of the effects of communication (degree of remembering, degree of exposure to advertising, advertisement cognition and the attention granted to advertising) [4].

Communication instruments that have been used need to be evaluated from the following perspectives: their capacity to reach the target public, their capability to send out the messages and their capacity to valorize the message [4].

Measuring of the efficiency of Transylvania’s promotion campaign will develop at the following stages: pre-testing, testing during the campaign and post-testing. The pre-test measures communication and behavioral factors; it can be carried out through different methods.

A first method is offered by the measurement of the opinion or of the cognition [4]. This is based on the use of sociological tools, especially the questionnaires. It aims to determine the degree of the public’s familiarization with Transylvania. There can be used three different types of questions: “Have you ever heard about Transylvania?”, with the “Yes/No” answering options; “Are you familiar to the tourist destinations of Central and Eastern Europe?”, with complex answering options; or “How well do you know Transylvania’s tourism offer?”, with scaled answering options: “Very well/Well/A little/Not at all”. We suggest using this method because it offers two advantages: low costs and fast implementation [4].

Another approach is given by the use of laboratory methods; these ones measure emotional experiences generated by advertising (galvanometer, pupilmeter, audiometer, tachometer, diaphanometer, and eye chamber) [4]; these methods are very difficult to be used and a lot more expensive, therefore we do not suggest their use in our case.

Psychological measurements evaluate the subliminal level of the advertisements’ perception. The most commonly used tool is the unstructured
interview, with durations between one and three hours; focus groups can also be used; other techniques may also be used: visual tests, narration tests, words’ association tests, and tests of sentences’ completion [4]. We believe that these methods can be periodically used to measure the efficiency of Transylvania’s promotion, because they imply moderate costs and offer consistent information.

The second method, testing during the carrying out of the campaign is of high importance, because the information gathered together during this time span permit the readjustment of the messages and to correct the strategies. A first way to carry out this method is the use of aleatory inquiries. These are specific to the research of cable TV users; a number of persons are telephonically asked if they watch a TV commercial that is running at that moment, on a certain TV station. We believe that the use of this method would be benefic in our case. Another way to realize this kind of testing is offered by the supervision of the attitude; it is carried out by: semi-structured interviews, options’ lists, semantic differential or straight questions with simple answers. These methods could be also used in our case but they are not the most appropriate, because they have the following disadvantages: long durations for gathering of information; relatively inconsistent information etc. We believe that recording researches, as methods of testing (during the process and after it) are very useful to our case. These ones consist of the supervision of buying activities of target publics; these information are then put against the costs of promotion activities [4]. From this perspective, tourism offers a great advantage when it comes to measuring the efficiency of Transylvania’s promotion, through the possibility to quantify directly the region’s international visitors, to ask them questions in order to verify the measure in which their decision to visit the region was influenced by the promotion activities.

The last phase is the post-testing; this method aims to analyze communication factors and behavioral factors. Referring to the measurement of the communication factors, there are three ways to carry out this process. First of all, there is the measurement of the remembrance degree. This is the most commonly used method when it comes to measuring efficiency of advertising, because it evaluates both, the remembrance of the advertising theme and also the association to the promoted product, as well as the comprehension and credibility of the advertising message [4].

The post-testing method can be carried out either assisted or not assisted. It permits to verify the way in which the impact of advertising has raised or decreased. There are several problems related to this method: the confusion of and mistaking the promoted products; the recognition of the message during the interview is different from the one registered during the moment of the buying; the danger of misinterpreting the results. There are two other tests: the Day After Recall tests (carried out the day after the advertisement has been run; interviewed persons are asked to mention whether the previous day, they had been in front of their TV’s, and whether, they had watched the commercial; they are then asked to: remember it without any help or with few hints, and then to detail it); and the sort
and count tests (these ones consist of the sorting and counting the advertising correspondence received from the targeted public) [4]. The last method offers the possibility of gathering low cost information; it is still a known fact that only very few persons respond to such promotion activities. Anyway, we believe that these methods can also be useful for the measurement of our strategies’ impact.

Regarding post-testing behavioral factors’, there can be identified two methods. The first one is the post-exposure interview test that verifies the efficiency of the advertisements through the questions addressed to the people who have watched them [4]. We consider that the second method is the most appropriate to our case; it is the measurement of the results referring to sales (in our case, the number of international visitors who come to Transylvania) before and after the advertising campaign. In our case, the measurement can be carried out by quantifying the foreign visitors who come to our region.

Conclusions

To conclude, we may state that Transylvania definitely needs to be promoted as an international tourist destination. In this respect, we have suggested three different promotion strategies that are needed in the case of Transylvania and we have identified the communication channels we consider useful for carrying out our messages. The results that we have obtained through our researches have helped us identify the present day situation. We could thus offer solutions for promoting, communicating and evaluating our approaches. As we have already mentioned, different evaluations will be carried out at the beginning, during and after the implementation of the strategy. The pre-tests are meant to establish the starting point of the strategy (it is the most important landmark, in comparison to which we may establish and measure the success or fail of the strategy). The tests during the processes’ implementation aim to correct, adjust and modify the strategy. The post-tests focus on quantifying the whole impact that the strategy has generated over the target public.

REFERENCES


