

A STUDY OF FESTIVAL EVENT TO STIMULATE LOCAL INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT: CASE STUDY OF THE RED DATE CULTURE FESTIVAL IN GONGGUAN, TAIWAN

Fan. I-Hsin

Institute of Economics and Social Studies,
National United University,
TAIWAN.

magfan2011@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Since joining the WTO in 2002, economic development and industrial structure in Taiwan have been facing a considerable impact, especially on agriculture and traditional industries. These disadvantaged industries undoubtedly are required to take certain restructure in management for future sustainable growth. To resolve the predicament in the rural area, Taiwan official has revitalized industries and enhance local economy by largely promoting cultural events across the country in recent years. With the government's support, most of the events were organized by the public sector and lunched the campaign through private sectors. Promoting local cultural festivals undoubtedly based on "Culture and Tourism" marketing strategies in order to reach "event marketing " purposes. The events not only tended to increase the local economic benefits, but also could help to enhance cultural identity or cohesion of local people.

Culture not only can become a source of accumulated assets, but also can produce effective economic benefits. Furthermore, the cultural activities could strengthening the city's marketing, competitiveness, and establish urban brand, it's also an unmistakable trend all over the world. The Gongguan Township in Miaoli gradually focused on the Red Date Culture Festival (RDCF) as the research topic. The first stage: through a literature survey to understand the historical development of red date industry, and the background organized RDCF. The second stage: through depth interviews to investigate local public sector and local industry viewpoint for the RDCF, and the benefits arising. The third stage: invited 8 persons who had participated the RDCF to perform the KJ method getting the 29 keywords, also to understand what the subjects impress about the RDCF, then confirmed the RDCF giving a certain degree of contribution to the local economy. As we know, festival events for local development is not only a single focus on the level of economic development, the most important objective is the overall revitalization of the region and sustainable development. Therefore, this study through the RDCF of analysis and confer, hope to be able to provide relevant local departments and units of references and suggestions and draw lessons as Taiwan's domestic cultural events.

Keywords: Cultural events, the red date culture festival, local industry

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, cultural events aiming to develop industries and improve local economy are in full swing all over Taiwan, most of which are supported and pushed by the government, planned by the public sectors and held by the entrusted nongovernmental organizations in the style of Festive. Beyond doubt, the cultural and festive events take cultural tourism as the

marketing method to achieve event marketing, aiming to not only bring actual growth to local economy, but also enhance the cultural identity or cohesion of the local people.

Cultural events have arisen increasing attention since Taiwan entered WTO in 2002 when the agriculture and traditional industries were threatened. In order to pursue the sustainable development of Taiwan agriculture, the government began to guide the rural areas to develop recreational agriculture and hold festivals, aiming to promote the local agriculture and assist the peasant transition. Moreover, the strategies of local transition and development have been discussed in many fields, such as cultural festivals and sightseeing orchards, which can attract tourists and push the development of local economy and industries. Besides, the two-day off grants people more spare time and chances to flee from annoying circumstance and arrange leisure activities. Thus, fleeing to the artless and peaceful countryside in the weekend becomes a choice of relaxation for modern people, and the corners with local characteristics become the hot scenic spots. According to the related researches, occupations in the rural areas of Taiwan tend to agriculture. Therefore, the villages based on agriculture have to follow the trend to develop the local economy and achieve the sustainable development of the rural areas.

Since the red date industry is affected greatly by both natural and human environments, it becomes the unique local industry in Gongguan Township, Miaoli County. However, the globalization and transitions in social structure and consumption market force the industry to change the modes of operation and marketing. Through forming the image of localization and introducing the cultural creativity, this unique local industry becomes more visible to attract people. In addition, through the promotion of the governmental units, organizations and practitioners of the red date industry, the tourist facilities are improved and the creative marketing strategies are drove to make the red date industry unique and local with the help of industrial culture and sightseeing. In this way, the industry will not only develop sustainably, but also bring local prosperity, speed up and activate the local economy, and further achieve the goal of local marketing. Taking the red date industry in Gongguan as the research subject, the study discusses whether Gongguan Township has achieved the following goals by the cultural policies such as holding and promoting the seasonal red date cultural events.

- a. Stimulating the development of local tourism and recreations;
- b. Driving the transition and sustainable development of the local industry;
- c. Forming the unique local image and culture through the seasonal red date cultural events.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The marketing strategies for cultural events can increase the output of local economy and trigger the cultural agglomeration effect. It is a quantifiable and positive performance of the policies for the government. However, before discussing the marketing strategies of cultural events, there are several dimensions or topics that need to be understood.

Cultural Events

Literally combining industry and culture, we can see that the actual situation of industrial culture up to now means the culture included in the industry. That is, during the developing history of a certain industry, unique culture are derived based on the careful experience of selecting and processing materials, as well as on the creativity and quality control of designing and producing products (Huang Shi-hui, 2002). From the perspective of economy, Guo Bai-xiu (1999), indicated that industrial culture is a process that transfers local culture

into products through a kind of organizational mechanism, and the process and the final deal are measured by money.

According to Getz (1991), with the open nature, festival event has specific or special theme. Regardless of the scale, it is held at given place in given time, attracting a great number of visitors, providing participants with special experience and driving the income of local economy. Combined with tourism development, the event forms attraction among visitors, enhances their impact on local specialty and becomes the activator of local tourism development through systematic planning, marketing and conducting. Robert Jackson (1997) believed that event is special and non-spontaneous. The fine-planned event providing visitors with joys and sharing sense can also be products, service, thoughts, information, groups and other events with special features and ideas. It is rich and diverse, requiring support and service from both volunteers and sponsors. In Taiwan, most of the events are held by government, which shows there are still shortages in the local events of industrial culture that needs improving. The shortages are listed as follows: whether there is proper structure and sufficient manpower in the event organizing; whether the contents are planned with high quality; whether the event has cultural depth and operational sustainability; whether the industry has been highly integrated; whether the expectations of local residents are found and communicated; whether the venue is well prepared and safe enough; and whether the funds are sufficient. Thus we can see the success of an event needs the complicated organizational operation and the combination of the networks both internal and external.

Table 1. Events held by the government and NGO from 1999 to 2002

Year	Event amount				Attendance			
	Held by the Govt	%	Held by NGO	%	Held by the Govt	%	Held by NGO	%
1999	12863	78.8	3487	21.2	51717	91.3	4936	8.7
2000	13776	77.8	3933	22.2	65451	91.5	6069	8.5
2001	13914	75.7	4461	24.3	71087	89.3	8536	10.7
2002	16573	77.1	4916	22.9	66661	87.1	9881	12.9
Annual growth rate								
1999	-9.3		-22.1		-19.9		-16.9	
2000	7.1		12.8		26.6		23.5	
2001	1.0		13.4		8.6		40.0	
2002	19.1		10.2		-6.2		15.8	

Cultural events are often presented as the Festive arts festival, culture festival, expo and other large festivals (Su Ming-ru, 2004:101). Since most of the events are non-profitable, the government plays the leading role. According to the statistical data of Council for Cultural Affairs (Table 1), there were 12,863 events held by the government in 1999, accounting for 78.8%. The ratio reduced annually as the nongovernmental events increased. In 2002, the amount reduced to 16,573, accounting for 77.1%, but the ratio was still above 70% (CCA, 2004:63). In recent years, the emerging industrial cultural events are carried out all over Taiwan with the support and stimulation of the government, which will form an important competitive strategy based on the city. According to the first city contest released by WEF in

2004, the rise of local competitiveness has already been a trend. Therefore, to enhance the city marketing, speed up the city development and improve the competitiveness has become the vital goal pursued hard by all the cities in the world and the key point in the global competition. As for Taiwan in recent years, governments from the central to the local all take culture as stunt, introducing creativity and marketing methods, integrating the governmental and nongovernmental organizations and holding various cultural events. By means of cultural tourism, the city marketing is expected to be achieved. Once the goal is achieved, not only will the local economy be driven, but also the confidence and sentiment of residents will be integrated, and the brand image of the city will be built faster (Ye Jie-sheng, 2005:1), (Tab 2).

Table 2. Industrial Events List in Taiwan

<i>Type</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Place</i>	<i>Industry</i>
	New Year Goods Street	Taipei City	New Year goods
	Glass Arts Festival	Hsinchu	Glass artworks industry
Protogenesis	Sanyi Woodcarving Festival	Miaoli	Woodcarving industry
	Flowers Expo	Changhua	Flower potting
	Gukeng Coffee Festival	Yunlin	Coffee
	Baihe Lotus Festival	Tainan	Lotus and lotus seeds
Derivation	Toys Festival	Yilan	Toys
Dependence	Taipei Lantern Festival	Taipei City	Folk lanterns

Cultural Marketing

Cultural events evidently need the support from business, and cultural marketing is evidently a way to develop cultural products by combining with business. Cultural marketing is like a stage for performers rather than evil and cultural events indeed have to be promoted or sponsored properly. The definition of cultural marketing is specified as follows.

- a. The marketing of various cultural products or forms such as video products, books, dances and acrobatics since they are all products, they of course have their target groups. Those groups have their own demand features. Thus their marketing has no significant difference from that of the common products or services.
- b. The product marketing with the help from various cultural products or forms is quite common in the market nowadays, for example, the fashion show, singer live, background music and artworks hanging on the board on a new car launch.
- c. As for the marketing affected by the social culture, although Philip Kotler, the marketing giant, never gave a clear concept of cultural marketing, he pointed out those cultural factors (including culture, subculture and social class) are the basic factors that affect the purchasing decision. So what's the culture in sociology? According to the sociologist David Popenoe, it refers to the achievements both material and mental shared by a human group or society. Marketing in Beijing for example, the intangible culture such as values, language and knowledge of

Beijingers and the tangible culture such as architectures, transportation and vegetables should be taken into consideration.

- d. To form a culture beneficial for competition and sales, the culture here can be considered as a complex containing various elements such as brand image, brand connotation, brand loyalty and culture of unique community (formed by the existing and potential consumers).. Once it is formed, the owner of the brand will get aids from its community and gain the advantage in the competition with other companies.

METHODS

Through literature review, the study collects and discusses the theories and opinions on cultural events proposed by various experts and scholars. Cases related to cultural events at both home and abroad are collected to find the reasons why the governments all over the world are dedicated to cultural events zealously to market the cities or develop local industries. Meanwhile, through profound interviews, the study casts light on the plans and contents of seasonal red date cultural events, as well as on the influence the events bring to local residents and industries. Finally, Affinity Diagram (KJ) is conducted among the people highly involved in red date season and the tourists who have participated in seasonal red date cultural events. The views on the current situation of seasonal red date cultural events are proposed, and the innovative suggestions on future event planning are given.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Themes and Contents of Red Date Cultural Festivals over the Years

Since the 97th year of Republic of China, Tourism and Recreation Peasant Union of Gongguan Township has held seasonal red date events, which are supposed and responded warmly by farmers. Therefore, more marketing and product strategies are conducted to carry out events with various themes in the picking season of red dates every year. The study lists the themes and contents of seasonal red date events over the years in Table 3.

Besides, according to the analysis on print media, network, and blogs, there were 67 related reports on the seasonal red date cultural event in 2008, while there were 133 reports on the fifth seasonal red date cultural event in 2012 (statistics up to Sep. 30)., among which the blogs increased most. The report contents were also changed from the introduction of Gongguan producing area and industrial development history of red date to the focus on event theme.

Benefits on Local Industry Brought by Red Date Cultural Festivals

According to profound interviews, it's found that the local red date industry has become famous since Gongguan Township held the red date cultural festival in 2008. With the promotion of peasant union and the efforts of production and marketing class, the channels of red dates and the transition to sightseeing orchard have been mature. Red dates have been developed diversely rather than the image of pure herbal fruit.

Thanks to the red date cultural festivals, more visitors facilitate other related industries and the scenic spots around Gongguan to transfer to the recreation industries. Therefore, both local residents and the government show affirmative attitudes to the benefits brought by red date cultural events, and give great expectation to the future events.

Experimental Results based on KJ

KJ is conducted among the people highly involved in red date season and the tourists who have participated in seasonal red date cultural events. By KJ, their opinions about the red date cultural events are discussed. The study also explores whether the red date cultural events have brought actual benefits to the local industry and the shaping of the city image.

In the first step, brainstorming is used to find the opinions of the participants on red date cultural festivals and the city (Table 3). In the second step, keywords gained from the former step are collected and summarized (Table 4).

Table 3. Keywords of the red date cultural festivals

<i>Keywords</i>		<i>Keywords</i>		<i>Keywords</i>	
1	Herbal medicine	10	Red date restaurant	19	Local specialties
2	Night market	11	Beauty contest	20	Gongguan porcelain
3	Fucaï (sauerkraut in southern Fujian). Festival	12	Picking fruit in red date orchard	21	Red date finca
4	Fule noodle shop	13	Golden town	22	Foretaste
5	Miaoli Farm	14	Red date popsicle	23	Coloring DIY
6	Mountains of rubbish	15	Local events	24	Gongguan Peasant Union
7	Chicken soup with red dates	16	Singers of “Star of Tomorrow”	25	Agricultural products trade fair
8	Dahu strawberry	17	Sightseeing farm		
9	Mask DIY	18	Chinese wolfberry		

Table 4. Classification and nomenclature

<i>The second level category</i>	<i>The first level category</i>	<i>Keywords of red date cultural festivals</i>			
Recreation industry	Health food	Herbal medicine	Chicken soup with red dates	Chinese wolfberry	
		Picking experience in rural areas	Dahu strawberry	Picking fruit in red date orchard	Sightseeing farm
	Related local industries	Fucaï (sauerkraut in southern Fujian). Festival	Fule noodle shop	Dahu strawberry	
		Miaoli Farm	Red date restaurant	Golden town	
		Local specialties	Gongguan porcelain	Red date finca	
	Main axis of events	contents	Mask DIY	Beauty contest	Singers of “Star of Tomorrow”
			Foretaste	Coloring DIY	
patterns		Night market	Local events	Agricultural products trade fair	

According to the descriptions of respondents and the overall experimental results, it's proven that the visitors who have participated in red date cultural events are impacted most by the contents of the events, followed by the catering in travel, the surrounding visiting events and the link to scenic spots, all of which are what tourists emphasize. Therefore, local government or sponsors of the events should integrate the local resources better, which will benefit the red date cultural events themselves, and even provide great competitiveness to the recreation industries in Gongguan or Miaoli. However, it's also found in the experimental results that respondents didn't give acclaims to the patterns of the existing red date cultural events. It requires the related organizations to find the reasons and make improvement when holding the events in future to help the sustainable development of the events and Gongguan Township.

CONCLUSIONS

The Industrial Tourism Market Formed By the Combination of Industry and Festival Has Been Gradually Developed

In recent years, industrial tourism has been developed all around Taiwan, presenting mainly as local festivals. Marketing is conducted through media to gain the effects of advertising and attracting visitors. Local industrial festivals with various themes and features are springing up. Indeed, the industrial tourism combined with festivals has already been developed maturely in foreign countries.

Industrial tourism is derived from the industrial heritage in the west remained from the beginning of 20th century. Industrial areas once were developed for traditional industries such as manufacturing. Due to the economic recession, staff was drained and industries were depressed. Industrial innovation was crying out to be achieved to drive the consumption of tourists and to increase the tourism income (Rudd & Davis, 1998). The tourist activities correlated to the architecture, culture and landscape of the industry are defined as industrial tourism, which can help activate the economy and find the transition way for traditional industries.

In the 19th century and the early 20th century, large factories in North America and Western Europe such as wineries, mines, oil refineries and machinery plants were once the common landscapes in people's daily life (Mansfield, 1992).. The changes of market demands and competitions from multinational operation made those factories depressed, only remaining the deserted buildings that became the industrial heritage. There is great spacial charm and culture hidden behind the industrial heritage, and thus they become the retrospective places for the former staff and residents to travel back (Harris, 1989; Prentice, 1993).

Japan tended to industrial tourism in the similar background of time and space. Due to the downturn of domestic and foreign demand, the hollowing industries, declining international competitiveness and high unemployment, Japanese industries began to develop industrial tourism to increase the living chance in the market. According to Hiroshi Suda (2001) the concept of industrial culture is the industrial heritage. The hardware machines and devices once used in production, the architectural construction of the factory, industrial leftovers and landscape are all the tourist resources full of attraction.

However, industrial tourism can not only find ways for traditional industries, but also maintain the local cultural characteristics and industrial styles. It has the effects of developing industries and activating economy, as well as the functions of education, culture, recreation, experience and perception. It upgrades the previous primary industries to knowledge-economic industries to bring actual benefits. Industrial tourism is also considered as cultural

tourism (Edwards & Liurdes, 1996; Yang & Hsing, 2001). The events combining industry and culture produce the effects the same as industrial tourism. Zhang Yong-jin (1999). believed that events of industrial culture is the three-in-one of industry, culture and tourism, benefiting the local industries, realizing the culture rooting, stimulating the local spontaneity, developing the special tourism and building the city charm.

Based on the findings of the study, the current contents and goals of the red dates cultural festivals are limited to the orientations of pursuing transition of the red date industry, activating local economy and developing local industries. However, the further orientation of the red date cultural festivals in Gongguan should focus on how to integrate the local cultural characteristics and create the local image and city charm of Gongguan.

Application of Marketing in Local Development

Marketing is a process that individual or group produce and provide valuable products and services, and send them to the target market to meet consumers' demands through perception, price, promotion and distribution, taking the clients as the organizational vital knot (Kotler, 1986). Besides individuals, marketing also contains organizational activities, which speed up the trade in a set of dynamic environment (Pride & Ferrell, 1980). Not only are the goods and services involved in marketing, but the locations are also the objects of marketing. Destination refers to the place tourists reach. It is also a kind of tourist product and can be positioned and promoted as the object of marketing. A destination can be scenic spot, country, region or city (Cao Sheng-xiong, 2001). The strategies of location marketing mean to activate the economic development through local strategical marketing. Effective marketing strategies contain reconstructing the local infrastructure, developing and attracting high-quality manpower, stimulating the expansion and growth of local companies and organizations, developing strong cooperation between government and nongovernment, attracting companies and industries suitable to the local interaction and dependence, as well as creating unique local charm and kind service culture (Chen Li-fei, 2004). Location marketing begins with the overall image design and advertising (Haider & Reun, 1994). The process of advertising contains vision and audition, spreading the overall information of the city to consumers through media and gaining feedbacks. The feedbacks refer to the preference assessments, perception assessments and consuming behaviors on the tourism resources of the location, and the communication is conducted through the marketing channels of media (Fan-jiang Qun-hao, 2003).

No matter for the most basic product marketing, industry marketing or city marketing, it's found from the marketing plan of the red date cultural events that the lack in uniqueness and culture misleads the visitors to position the events as agricultural products fairs or the night markets selling snacks. When it comes to the advertising methods, there is no overall image building or effective communication design that should be emphasized in the city marketing. Although practitioners have already gained profit from the red date industry, we can't ignore the important and urgent topics about sustainable operation of the industry and the shaping of city image.

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