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ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
Department of Hospitality and Service Management
Graduate Studies

M.S. Hospitality-Tourism
Presentation of Thesis/Project Findings

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Recovery from Crisis: Jordan Tourism Facing Political Instability

Rasha H. Saoudi

Rochester Institute of Technology

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ABSTRACT

This study outlines tourism crises facing international tourism to Jordan. The study also examines major efforts taken by the public and private sectors to recover from the loss of international tourism arrivals to the country caused mainly by the ongoing political crisis in the Middle East. A number of internal and external tourism challenges are identified based on the opinions of key stakeholders in the Jordanian tourism industry. Different approaches to crisis management, drawn from an overview of recovery marketing literature and studies, are also presented. The study concludes that the continuous cooperation and coordination of tourism stakeholders before, during, and after a crisis situation is essential for recovery. Structural, cultural, and policy changes are among the first steps needed to recover from tourism crises.

CHAPTER I – INTRODUCTION

Crises can hit tourism destinations at any time and can come in many forms, including terrorism and political instability. The Middle East has experienced many crises in recent years, including the continuous Palestinian-Israeli conflict, the Gulf War (Hollier, 1991; Mansfeld, 1996), and the present War on Iraq. As a result, many countries in the Middle East, including Jordan, suffered from a damaged image and saw a sharp decline in international tourist arrivals (Sharaiha and Collins, 1992). For example, during the Gulf war, Jordan, Egypt, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates experienced a sharp drop in tourist arrivals—even though they were not all equally affected (Hollier, 1991).

Jordan is a country rich in historic, religious, archaeological, and tourist sites. Significant investment in the leisure, hospitality, and tourism sector has been made since the early 1990s. Tourism is an important sector in Jordan's economy and an important source of income as it is the second-largest employer and the second-largest producer of foreign exchange (NTS, 2004-2010). Though surrounded by instability, Jordan is the safest country in the Middle East (Pelham, 2002). But unfortunately, the country has been less successful than other Middle Eastern countries in attracting visitors from Europe and the Americas (NTS, 2004-2010).

The political instability surrounding Jordan has been hurting its traditional image as a safe and peaceful destination to visit. Just after the completion of the present study, three simultaneous terrorist attacks hit the Jordanian capital, Amman, on November 9th, 2005, impacting Jordan's image and its visitors directly. Three terrorist suicide bombers carried out attacks on international hotels, the Grand Hyatt, Radisson SAS, and Days Inn, killing 57 people and injuring more than 120. Most victims were Jordanians; one

American and three Chinese were among those dead (“Wedding Joy,” 2005). Jordan is now facing a considerable challenge to achieve recovery and carry out the task of restoring its marketing image.

Purpose and Significance of the Study

This study examines the literature of tourism crisis management as well as studies of recovery marketing solutions carried out in destinations hit by crisis. Major Jordanian tourism stakeholders were interviewed to explore the challenges facing international tourism to Jordan. The purpose of the study is to provide guidance to help Jordan manage the impacts of political instability and crisis events. The study may also be helpful to other destinations that are struck by crises and need recovery.

Problem Statement

This paper will study tourism crisis management solutions carried out by destinations that are hit by crises, in order to provide guidance to help Jordan restore the negative image caused by political instability in the Middle East.

Research Questions

The research questions in this study are broken out into three areas: challenges to tourism, responses to these challenges, and the effectiveness of responses.

To look into these questions, the paper will be organized to cover definitions, types, and impacts of tourism crises. In chapter II, issues related to influencing tourist behavior and decisions to travel to destinations are discussed to explain how a destination’s image is formulated. Then crisis management case studies are introduced to illustrate how destinations manage recovery. Chapter III explores Jordan as a tourism destination and outlines major crises that impact its tourism. Finally, in the last section of

the paper, a survey will introduce challenging issues facing tourism to Jordan and investigate the opinions of major Jordanian tourism stakeholders about how best to manage these issues.

CHAPTER II – LITERATURE REVIEW

Tourism, Crises, and Political Instability

This chapter introduces and defines crisis and illustrates the impacts of political instability on tourism destinations. The chapter also provides an overview of the major factors that influence travel decisions, including safety, risk perception, destination image, and media, in addition to the range of crisis management approaches that can be found in the literature. The chapter ends by providing many examples of crisis situations to demonstrate how these have been managed in various destinations.

Crises that hit tourism destinations can occur in a variety of forms. They can last for days, months, or even years (Durocher, 1994; Hall and O'Sullivan, 1996). Any tourism organization or destination is vulnerable to crises that can impact its image and marketability (Beirman, 2002). Some crises are controllable, such as those related to product quality, but most crises are uncontrollable and unpredictable. Recovery time varies with the event's severity, crisis management handling, and the strength of the tourism brand. Therefore, professional management is extremely important in dealing with such events (Middleton and Clarke, 2004).

Crisis (in business terms) has been defined by several authors; Glaesser (2003, p. 8) defined it as “an unwanted, unusual situation for an organization, which, due to the seriousness of the event, demands an immediate entrepreneurial response”. Crisis was also defined as a disruption that affects a system and threatens its basic assumptions, subjective sense of self, and survival (Pauchnat and Mitroff, 1992). In the case of destinations, crises do not necessarily threaten their survival or existence, but rather the

threat to survival can apply to businesses there (Glaesser, 2003). Beirman (2003) defined a destination crisis as:

A situation requiring radical management action in response to events beyond the internal control of the organization, necessitating urgent adaptation of marketing and operational practices to restore the confidence of employees, associated enterprises and consumers in the viability of the consumers. (p. 4)

For the purposes of the present study, a destination is defined as a country, state, region, city or town that markets itself as a place for tourists to visit (Beirman, 2003). In general most definitions agree that crises, whether tourism-related or not, are unwanted, threatening, and serious events that cause different negative impacts and therefore need immediate recovery actions and effective managerial response. Tourism crisis specifically was comprehensively defined by Sonmez, Backman and Allen (1994).

Any occurrence which can threaten the normal operation and conduct of tourism related businesses; damage a tourist destination's overall reputation for safety, attractiveness, and comfort by negatively affecting visitors' perceptions of that destination; and, in turn, cause a downturn in the local travel and tourism economy, and interrupt the continuity of business operations for the local travel and tourism industry, by the reduction in tourist arrivals and expenditures (p. 2.2).

Classifications of crises are broad in the literature. Sonmez (1994) categorized crises as natural disasters, man-made disasters, or national security hazards. In his classification, natural disasters include earthquakes, severe storms, floods, and volcanoes

(p. 22.1). Man-made disasters include aircraft accidents, building collapse, offshore oil spills, and air pollution (p. 23.1). National security hazards include terrorism, civil disorder, and chemical or biological attacks (p. 24.1). Furthermore, Sonmez (1994) mentioned other types of crises, such as image problems, tourism accidents, economic downturns, and damaging rumors (p. 20.1). Lerbinger (1997) categorized crises into two types, those that arise externally (natural disasters, technology failures such as oil spills and the Chernobyl explosion, confrontations such as labor strikes and boycotts, and malevolence such as terrorist attacks), and those that arise internally, including crises caused by management failure as a result of deception and misconduct (pp. 10-14).

Both natural and man-made disasters can have negative impacts on tourism destinations. It is generally agreed in the literature that man-made disasters, including terrorism can cause more negative consequences on tourism than natural disasters because the risk potential of man made-disasters can be of more influence on tourist behavior and decisions to visit destinations (Glaesser, 2003; Sonmez, 1998). Also it is argued that political crises can have longer-term consequences on the marketing of destinations because media coverage of political problems can continue for a long period of time (Beirman, 2002). Jungermann and Slovic (1993) explained this argument in the following statement:

Whilst natural risks are classed as involuntary, uncontrollable, not attributable to society and, therefore, as more or less as unavoidable—and obviously not as bad—civilian risks are seen as voluntary, controllable, attributable, and avoidable—and, therefore, obviously worse. (p. 100)

Political instability can take several forms: wars, coups, riots, strikes, terrorism and social unrest (Hall and O'Sullivan, 1996). Countries experiencing political instability and destinations that have neighboring countries facing political instability face a steep challenge in developing strong and successful tourism (Hall and O'Sullivan, 1996; Teye 1986; Teye, 1988). Harmful effects of political instability include the creation of a negative image, decline in visitor arrivals, deterioration in tourism receipts, and negative impacts on tourism development (Beirman, 2002; Hall and O'Sullivan, 1996; Mansfeld, 1999; Richter, 1992; Teye, 1986). In other words, a destination's competitive advantage can be threatened, weakened, or destroyed (Glaesser, 2003).

Moreover, political instability can cause the deterioration of economic conditions, and in countries heavily dependent on tourism for revenues, when tourism demand declines, the entire economy suffers. Africa is a good example of how tourism development can be impacted. Although Africa includes many countries that are rich in tourism sites, tourist arrivals are relatively low compared to other parts of the world. Due to political factors, Africa is perceived to be unstable; therefore both international and domestic tourism investments are rare (Richter, 1992).

Perception, Image, Media, Safety, and Crises

Many factors play an important role in influencing image formation and influence travel decisions because of their effect on the appeal of a destination. This section provides an overview of these factors and illustrates their importance in achieving recovery. Studying and understanding these factors can help destination authorities better plan their recovery marketing efforts. Authors such as Richter (1992) have argued that tourists' perception of a destination, not objective political events, determine which

places they will choose to visit (p. 38). As we know, perception is the process by which people select, organize, and interpret information in an individual way to form a meaningful picture of the world (Kotler and Armstrong, 2004). Perceptions of destination image can be created by media, tourists' previous experiences, and the destination's political system (Hall and O'Sullivan, 1996). Also, a destination's image can be created by its relationship with other nations; for example, because of poor relations and constant political tensions there, American tourists perceive Libya, Syria, and Somalia as risky destinations (Sonmez and Graefe, 1998).

A major factor that influences perception and travel decisions is safety (Hall and O'Sullivan, 1996). When the perceived risk, uncertainty, and insecurity become higher, demand will be lower (Herrero and Pratt, 1998). It is argued by some that a crisis cannot influence consumer behavior when it remains within the person's tolerance threshold (Gu and Martin, 1992; Schrattenecker, 1984). Tourists are willing to accept a certain amount of risk, depending on demographics (sex, age, and education), and on tourists' culture, which contributes to people's perceiving events in a different way (Sonmez and Graefe, 1998). Furthermore, the level of acceptance for a certain amount of risk depends on credibility, the speed of actions, and the event's repetition (Glaesser, 2003). For example, hikers and climbers continue to visit the highest peak in Western Europe, Mont Blanc Massif, although more than seventy hikers die there every year (Glaesser, 2003)..

Sometimes perceived risk is different from reality. For example, coconuts and coconut palm trees are perceived as the symbol of beach and sun holidays. However, every year around 150 people die from falling coconuts, while only between ten and twenty people die from shark attacks every year (Glaesser, 2003). Risk perception and its

mechanisms, then, should be well understood. After the September 11th, 2001 attacks, many US airlines tried to convince the public to fly with them by arguing that flying is safe and explaining that the chances of dying from a car accident in 1998 were greater (1 in 6212), while the odds of dying from an airplane accident were much lower (1 in 390,532). Although this argument was statistically accurate, it was still hard to convince consumers to travel by air (Glaesser, 2003).

Lack of consumer confidence is an important factor delaying destinations' recovery from crisis (Poon, 2002). Unfortunately, a crisis or conflict in a specific destination can effect not only the destination itself, but the whole region (Richter, 1992). In some cases, tourists may now perceive the region as unsafe place to visit (Sonmez, 1998). "Instability in the region may negatively affect neighbor nations because of interruption of air, sea, or overland routes or because publicity about instability makes the whole region sound volatile" (Richter, 1992, p. 35). For example, tourists perceive the African continent as one big risky region—although it is composed of fifty-four different countries. Media coverage of the outbreak of political instability or infectious diseases in one country can deter tourists from visiting another safe country in the same continent (Carter, 1998). Oddly, tourists may not know that the possibility of dying from lightning or in a bathtub is greater than the possibility of dying from political unrest (Richter, 1992).

Destinations that are not directly affected by political instability may still become image-damaged. During the 1991 Gulf War, Jordan, Egypt, Turkey, and Israel were perceived as unsafe, although they were not involved in the war (Hollier, 1991). The idea of missiles flying over to Israel carrying chemical and biological warheads was a main

concern to anybody coming to Jordan. US tourist numbers to Europe declined after the Gulf War, although the conflict was far from both Northern Europe and the East Coast of America (Middleton and Clarke, 2004). Moreover, Jordan experienced a drop in tourism arrivals after the outbreak of political turmoil between Israelis and Palestinians in September, 2000 (Beirman, 2003).

People want their travel experience to be enjoyable. When they feel threatened, the experience of joy is replaced by fear (Sonmez, 1998). Tourists are more likely to change their travel behavior when they have an unfavorable image of a certain destination; therefore, destinations depend on positive images. Having many alternative destinations, tourist will choose destinations that are perceived to be safe and carry low costs and low risk (Richter, 1992; Sonmez, 1998). For example, during the Bosnian war tourist arrivals declined, while tourist arrivals increased in other countries such as Greece, Cyprus, Italy, and Spain. Moreover, tourism arrivals shifted to Jordan, Turkey, Cyprus, and Israel during the terrorist attacks on Egypt (Wahab, 1996).

An image is “the sum of beliefs, impressions, ideas, and perceptions that people hold of objects, behaviors, and events” (Crompton, 1979, p. 18). It can become distorted and biased (Mansfeld, 1999). Beirman (2003) asserts that media coverage can lead to what he called “collateral image damage” when the attractiveness of a destination is affected by its perceived nearness to what he calls a “hot spot” (p. 232). For example, after the September 11th, 2001 attacks on the United States, many destinations in the Middle East suffered a decline in tourism due to their perceived proximity to Afghanistan (Beirman, 2003).

Media play a significant role in destination image formation (Schneider and Sonmez, 1999) for they convey information that changes attitudes (Glaesser, 2003). People all over the world are no longer isolated, as media and technological advances have made global information available to anyone. Hence, negative events have become difficult to hide (Glaesser, 2003). World political events receive great publicity and can be followed globally when they occur (Schneider and Sonmez, 1999; Wall, 1996). Visual images and reporting of political events have greatly affected travel to many destinations (Hall and O'Sullivan, 1996). Hall and O'Sullivan (1996) claim that media would be a major force in creating images of political instability in a destination region (p. 107). In addition, the level of media exposure can affect destinations' recovery. Media exposure depends on the country's political system and the openness of its society. For instance, the control that the Egyptian government imposed on media coverage after the terrorist attacks has been one of the factors contributing to the success of the country's recovery (Beirman, 2003).

Hunt (1975) argued that the identification, tracking, marketing, and management of images should be a priority of destinations (p. 2). Therefore, it is important for a destination's marketers to understand tourists' perceptions in order to design effective promotional messages and enable their destinations to better plan and implement recovery marketing activities (Herrero and Pratt, 1998; Sonmez and Graefe, 1998). Tourism stakeholders should also cooperate with each other in order to assess the effects of crisis, and discuss how to communicate effectively with media (Stafford, Yu, and Armoo, 2002). Providing continuous credible communication to the public and media is very important in achieving trust in a crisis situation (Glaesser, 2003). It is argued that

travelers who are better informed about negative events and their reasons react less severely and feel less threatened (Wall, 1996). Media often cover crisis events initially while they are “hot” but ignore the coverage of recovery and restoration stages; establishing strong relationships with media can encourage follow-on media coverage of recovery management as well (Beirman, 2003).

Crisis Management

There is no doubt that increasing visitors' arrival, promoting positive tourism destination images, and regaining travelers' confidence are challenges for crisis-impacted destinations. Crisis in general, and political instability specifically, present major challenges to the tourism industry (Sonmez and Graefe, 1998). Tourism is an important economic sector in many countries, which heightens the importance of creating effective solutions that can protect tourism and help destinations recover. Hall and O'Sullivan (1996) argue that the only response the industry knows nowadays is to increase its marketing activities, which they argue are just short-term solutions. Effective solutions need more assessment and understanding of traveler's responses to political instability and how they perceive threats (pp. 117-118). Planners must consider political auditing and risk analysis (Richter, 1992; Richter, 1999). Government policies and attitudes also have an essential role in achieving recovery (Huang and Min, 2002). Richter (1999) argued that tourism can be a part of a nation's recovery if it is planned carefully. He also believed that the first step for tourism recovery is to understand what cripples tourism (p. 44). Ritchie (2004) claimed that understanding the lifecycle and potential impacts of crisis will help marketers develop effective strategies. Evaluating the effectiveness of

crisis management strategies is required in order to ensure their improvement (Ritchie, 2004).

Beirman (2003) illustrated a system he adapted called DESTCON which identifies the status of a destination and classifies the severity of a crisis in terms of the threat to the destinations' marketability in order to help define suitable responses (pp. 19-20). The (nonmilitary) DESTCON Scale is analogous to the global forces scale, Defense Readiness Condition (DEFCON), which rates the status of military readiness in times of threat to security. Table 1 describes the DESTCON Scale:

Table1

DESTCON Scale

Level	Description
DESTCON 1	<p>Maximum crisis marketing readiness</p> <p>A crisis threatens the marketability of the destination and has a widespread global or regional consequence on tourism (example: like 2001, September 11th attacks on the US)</p>
DESTCON 2	<p>Further increase in marketing readiness, less than maximum readiness</p> <p>A crisis places large parts of the country under threat of war or destruction from natural disaster. Governments of source markets warn off travel or insist on complete avoidance. The problems experienced frequently have a negative impact on the marketability of neighboring destinations</p>
DESTCON 3	<p>Increased marketing readiness above normal</p> <p>There are major problems within identifiable regions in the destination, which are well publicized and present a credible threat to tourists. Major problems in a neighboring destination may impact the marketability of the principal destination</p>
DESTCON 4	<p>Normal, increased intelligence and strengthened marketing measures</p> <p>Isolated problems within the destination such as crime or low-level political disturbances, which may require avoidance of specific areas but have minimal impact on the overall marketability of the destination</p>
DESTCON 5	<p>Normal marketing conditions</p> <p>Minimal perceived threat to the marketability of the destination</p>

Note. From *Restoring Tourism Destinations in Crisis: A Strategic Marketing Approach* (pp.19-20), by D. Beirman, 2003. Cambridge, MA: CABI Publishing.

In the literature, there are various approaches for handling crises, but unfortunately the studies that address the issue of crisis offer few actual solutions (Ritchie, 2004; Sonmez, 1998). Sonmez (1994; 1998; 1999) has published a number of studies that address crisis issues. He emphasized identifying more solutions to overcome crisis situations (1998, p. 435). He also noted that traditional marketing efforts are no longer enough. Therefore, he suggested crisis management and recovery marketing as effective solutions to repair destinations' damaged images:

The effects of political disruption and violence on the industry need to be regarded as a crisis in need of management. Obviously, tourism is quite adept at utilizing proven marketing principles. When it suffers a serious setback due to negative occurrences, however, it can no longer rely on traditional marketing efforts. The industry must conduct "recovery marketing" or marketing integrated fully with crisis management activities. (Sonmez, 1998, p. 437)

Recognizing that crisis management is a strategic problem whose solution offers a competitive advantage (Burnett, 1998; Glaesser, 2003), Sonmez (1998) together with Arbel and Bargur (1980) emphasized the importance of having a crisis management plan in hand. The point of this argument is that making right decisions during a crisis will be difficult due to crisis pressures and inability of effectively analyze information after one occurs (Arbel and Bargur, 1980). Scherler (1996) defined crisis management as: "...measures of all types that allow a business to cope with a sudden occurring danger or risk in order to return as quickly as possible to normal business routine" (p. 17). Crisis management's main task is to identify negative events and refers to changes of tasks and

processes when a crisis happens (Glaesser, 2003). The phases of the crisis management process are depicted in Figure 1:

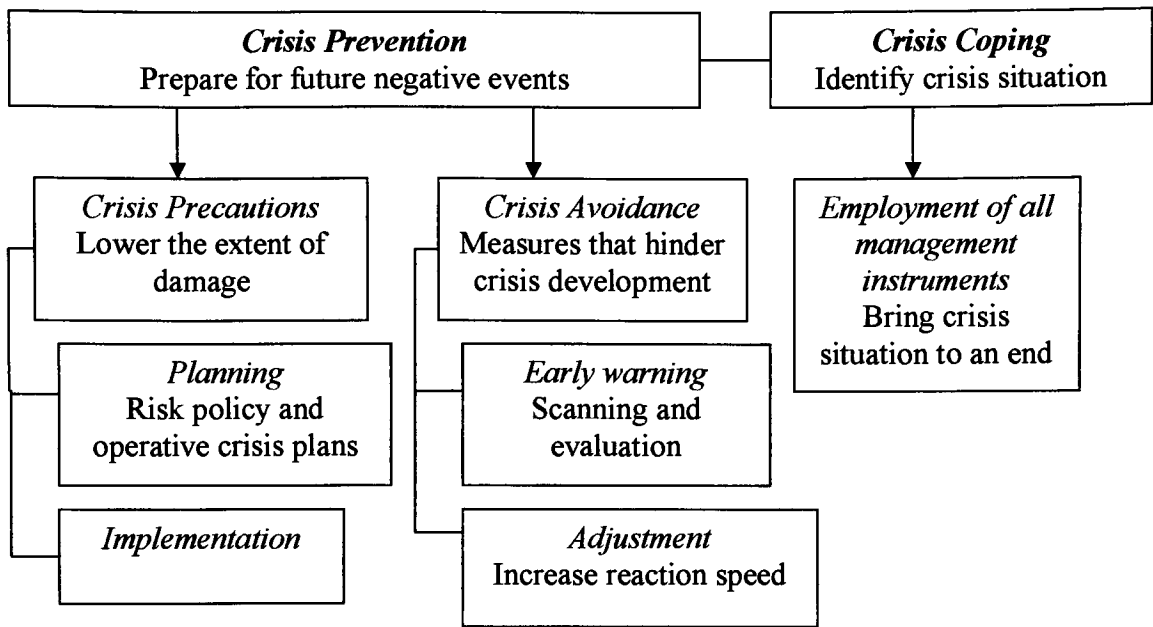


Figure 1. Phases of crisis management

Note. From Crisis Management in the Tourism Industry (p.13), by D. Glaesser, 2004, Oxford: Elsevier Butterworth -Heinemann.

Many authors asserted that crisis management plans should be integrated with tourism planning, marketing, and management strategies (Haywood, 2002; Sonmez, Apostolopoulos, and Tarlow, 1999). This argument holds that crisis management can be seen as a dimension of the hospitality provided to tourist, one of the services that should be provided to them (Sonmez, 1994). Other reasons given for being prepared with crisis management plans were: preventing the loss of valuable time, facilitating recovery, preventing loss of visitor confidence, preventing loss of revenues, and avoiding a damaged image (Sonmez, 1994, p. vi).

Furthermore, Sonmez (1999) emphasized organizing a specialized task force before negative events occur and creating a crisis management guidebook outlining the task force's duties and activities (p. 16). He suggested that the task force be composed of government officials, tourism industry officials, and community leaders who can all collaborate to carry out crisis management activities (1998, p. 441). All personnel in the crisis management task force can be trained in media and crisis handling (Haywood, 2002). Task force activities can include communicating with the media, public relations, fund-raising, advertising and marketing, developing strong relationship with the media, and organizing press conferences (Sonmez, Backman, and Allen, 1994).

White and Mazur (1995) disagreed with Sonmez (1994; 1998; 1999) and Arbel and Bargur (1980). White and Mazur argued that previously prepared plans might be an obstacle to dealing with crises. The reason they provided is that automatic preplanned responses may be inappropriate and may cause confusion and panic (p. 210). Mansfeld (1999) also observed that the impact of political events is unpredictable and differs across destinations; therefore it is impossible to provide a particular action plan that deals with

all types of events (p. 31). Because crises are different, so should be the response to each crisis (Burnett, 1998). Mansfeld's argument is realistic, as agreed upon by several others, but the existence of previously prepared plans should not be seen as an obstacle that causes confusion. Even if the crisis situation is not as predicted, having a crisis plan can provide hints and guidance to dealing with the crisis and facilitating post crisis recovery, and can save some time.

Mansfeld (1999) also recommended treating crisis management as a continuous process by taking measures covering the crisis and post-crisis periods. Furthermore, he emphasized cooperation among involved local parties and with other destinations that are affected (pp. 34-35). Mansfeld (1998) also believed that obstacles to managing a crisis include insufficient planning, uncertainty, poor data handling methods, changing management objectives, and not having enough time to learn (p. 478). Beirman (2003) noted that recovery programs should be conducted ethically. He argued that failure to truthfully assess a crisis situation may limit gains to the short-term gains; in the longer term it may reflect negatively on a destination's reliability (p. 15).

Glaesser (2003) illustrated two strategies to handle crises, offensive and defensive (p. 165). He asserted that those strategies should be temporary and compatible with long-term corporate strategies (2003, p. 173). An offensive strategy can be used to contain and eliminate causes and effects of a negative event by capitalizing on the event and changing negatives into positives. For example, when the 1988 wildfires broke out in Yellowstone and Glacier National Parks, the tourism season was affected negatively. Efforts were made to change visitors' awareness about fires and to encourage them to visit the affected area, and thus to turn the bad image of the destroyed landscape into a new attraction. The

park managers set up an educational program for visitors, illustrating the importance of fire in the ecosystem and its positive impacts on the evolution and natural stimulation of plants and forests. Managers also addressed the positive impacts of fires in publications, television, and radio to create public awareness (Glaesser, 2003).

The defensive handling strategy aims to put the situation under control by stopping all activities until the actual event is no longer in conflict with the public interest. But the strategy can lengthen the crisis duration and can result in degradation of image and credibility. Therefore this strategy is recommended only when a crisis cannot be explained or eliminated and when negative effects are limited and will soon pass (Glaesser, 2003).

Some authors suggested forecasting and contingency planning together with issue and scenario analysis to help in developing crisis strategies (Beirman, 2003; Kash and Darling, 1998; Prideaux, Laws, and Faulkner, 2003). Beirman (2003) noted that effective and detailed contingency planning results in long-term benefits for the tourism industry. It leads to improved infrastructure, security management, and more innovative marketing programs (p. 22). Scenario analysis deals with analyzing the environment and estimating the consequences of the organization's strategies (Kahn and Wiener, 1967). Moreover, authors suggested environmental scanning and collecting data on the political, economic, technological, and social environment (Kash and Darling, 1998).

Ritchie (2004) introduced a three-stage model for planning and managing crises strategically, including prevention and planning, then implementing, and finally evaluation and feedback. Ritchie claimed that the effectiveness of crisis management may be influenced by organizational culture, resource allocation, and management structure,

and emphasized the role of leadership to bring stakeholders together for integrated crisis management. Management of crises and recovery strategies were also discussed in the 1997 international conference on “War, Terrorism, Tourism: Times of Crises and Recovery,” which took place in Croatia. Suggestions were made concerning the use of information, education, publicity, and public relations. The conference emphasized the importance of exchanging experiences among destinations, and the importance of public and private sector cooperation for prevention and recovery. The conference also emphasized the availability of existing plans to help the industry recover from crises (Weber, 1998).

Mansfeld (1996) in his study “War, Tourism and the Middle East Factor” emphasized profiling market segments sensitivity to security events in order to ensure the right planning and allocation of resources for promotional activities. In addition, he agreed with other studies (Glaesser, 2003) regarding effective communication and the need to deliver clear messages to potential tourists about the degree of risk and crisis geographical distribution (p. 276). Haywood (2003) asserted that it is important to analyze all the issues that could affect the organization before planning any crisis or contingency plan (p. 231).

Finally, Beirman (2003) in his book “Restoring Tourism Destinations in Crisis: A Strategic Marketing Approach,” which addresses crises from a marketing perspective, asserted that lessons learned from crises should be incorporated into the day-to-day marketing of a destination, and proposed four steps to marketing management of a destination crisis (pp. 23-39). The steps are illustrated in figure 2:

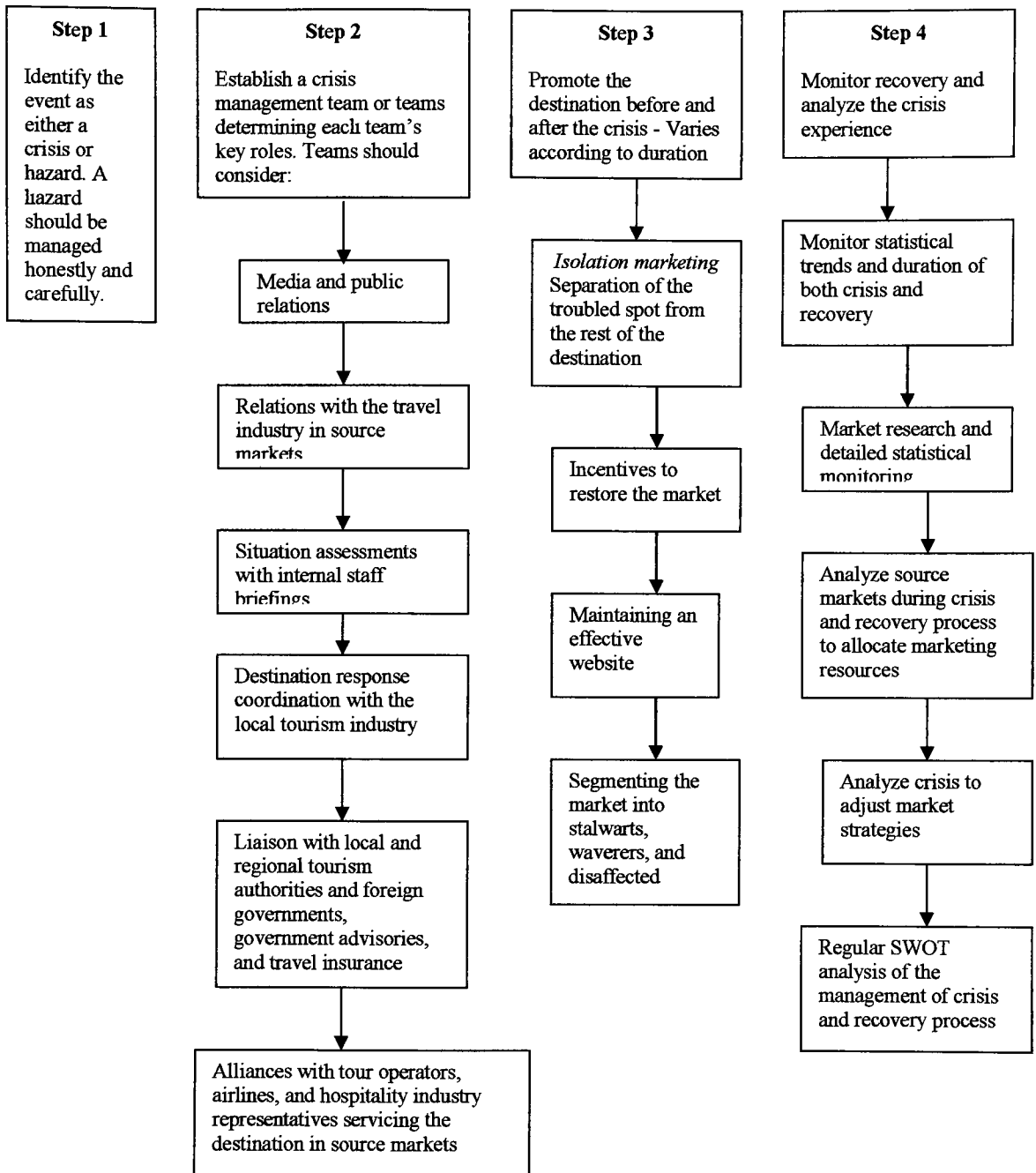


Figure 2. Steps to Marketing Management of a Destination Crisis

Note. From *Restoring Tourism Destinations in Crisis: A Strategic Marketing Approach* (pp.23-39), by D.

Beirman, 2003. Cambridge, MA: CABI Publishing.

Finally, studies investigated the relationship between political instability and tourism (Sonmez, 1998; Wahab, 1996), and how political instability can impact tourism (Clements and Georgiou, 1998; Hall and O'Sullivan, 1996; Richter, 1992; Sonmez and Graefe, 1998). These studies agreed on the severe negative impacts of crises on both destinations and their neighboring regions. Crises may not only destroy a destination's image but also affect sustainability, the development of tourism, and the economy as well (Beirman, 2002; Hall and O'Sullivan, 1996; Mansfeld, 1999; Richter, 1992; Teye, 1986). Many studies have emphasized the importance of effectively managing destinations that are under crisis. But few studies provide destinations with management strategies and recovery marketing plans that can guide them in times of crisis (Ritchie, 2004; Sonmez, 1998). How tourism responds to crisis situations has not received much attention, although every destination might face the potential of natural or man-made disaster (Faulkner and Vikulov, 1999).

Suggested recovery and management solutions offer only general guidelines, leaving it up to destinations to develop specific, targeted solutions that suit their crisis situation. Almost no studies offer comprehensive strategies; instead they provide simple extensions of the basic functions of management, planning, staffing, organizing, and controlling (Burnett, 1998). Some authors noted that having a crisis management plan in hand will enable destinations to cope with disaster or crisis more effectively (Arbel and Bargur, 1980; Faulkner and Vikulov, 1999; Sonmez, 1994). Others claimed that previously developed plans may not be effective in managing all types of disasters (Mansfeld, 1999; Sonmez, 1998). Moreover, authors argued that previously developed plans may slow crisis recovery (White and Mazur, 1995). Every destination faces the

potential of crisis, but solutions created for one destination may not be effective for another (Sonmez, 1998). This should not be an excuse to omit the development of recovery marketing plans. Destination marketing during and after crises is a relatively new, under-researched field (Beirman, 2003). Therefore there is a need for more research concerning marketing recovery of destinations. As Sonmez notes:

Most crises are difficult to prevent, due to their unpredictable nature, especially those resulting from terrorism or political problems.

Furthermore, each crisis situation is different and difficult to resolve with simple formulas. Destinations need to prepare a plan of action specific to their needs. Having such a blueprint merely promises to save valuable time, energy, and other resources when a destination is faced with a crisis.

In light of societal and global complexities, no destination is immune to negative occurrences; thus adhering to an “it can’t happen to us” philosophy is naive, if not reckless. (Sonmez, 1998, p.443)

Crises Experiences

It can take several years to rebuild the tourism industry to pre-disaster levels after a natural or man-made disaster (Beirman, 2002; Huang and Min, 2002). For example, after the Gulf War in 1991, it took nineteen months for American arrivals to the Middle East to return to pre-war levels (Poon, 2002). The following case studies demonstrate a variety of crisis situations and recovery procedures. In these studies, many destinations and organizations experienced crisis. In all examples, declines in tourism or loss in consumer confidence were experienced. Many of the cases demonstrate the importance of public and private sector cooperation in managing recovery marketing. In some cases, the

role of consultancy firms in providing marketing advice is also shown. Some cases support Hall and O'Sullivan's (1996) argument that the only response the industry knows is just to increase marketing activities. Although many authors (Arbel and Bargur, 1980; Beirman, 2003; Faulkner and Vikulov, 1999; Glaesser, 2003; Sonmez, 1994) emphasize the importance of having previously prepared crisis management and contingency plans, they rarely existed in these cases. Furthermore, though the recovery efforts employed were fairly similar from case to case, the success of crisis management and recovery marketing efforts varied.

War, Terrorism, Political Instability Crises Experiences

Australia: In 1996, thirty-five tourists were shot to death, and many were injured by a young mentally-impaired man. Two Malaysians and two Singaporeans as well as many Australians were among the dead. Tourism authorities had to face a significant decline in tourist arrivals after the Port Arthur massacre. Authorities responded by briefly suspending media promotion of the State of Tasmania and Port Arthur. A state government committee was quickly formed, and a public relations consultant was appointed. Tourism Tasmania conducted marketing research involving interviews with Sydney and Melbourne residents to determine whether their decision to travel to Tasmania was affected by the massacre. Travel writers were encouraged to travel to Tasmania. Authorities introduced a variety of marketing campaigns in consultation with tour operators, and also offered discounts and value-added offers. Some projects took place to restore interest in the area, such as the construction of new beverage and food facilities (Beirman, 2003).

Beirman noted that recovery efforts were successful in increasing domestic tourism, but were not successful in increasing international tourism. He argued that tourism authorities should have taken advantage of the high international profile Tasmania had reached through the wide media coverage after the event (p. 223). Still, he asserted that the Port Arthur massacre crisis management was a decent model because of the high degree of cooperation between the public and private sectors as well as local and regional tourism authorities (p. 217).

Australia: In the aftermath of September 11th and the collapse of the national airline carrier, Asnett, the same week, a group of industry leaders was organized to provide a report on possible responses to both crises by the government. Authorities worked on creating a database and developing a national tourism crisis management plan to deal with potential crises. The plan also included developing a filter matrix scoring system to assist in recovery (Lewer, n.d.).

Croatia: Between 1991 and 1995, the Croatian tourism industry was severely crippled due to the Croatian-Serbian war, which introduced the massacre of entire towns and villages by rival ethnic groups. War and media coverage played a big role in damaging the country's image. Tourism arrivals in the country dropped significantly, and many tour operators and airlines stopped their services (Beirman, 2003).

Recovery efforts undertaken by the government after the war included improving the country's tourism infrastructure and improving rail and road links to Northern neighboring countries, because the majority of travelers came by land. The government tried privatizing hotels, resorts, and guesthouses along with offering tax

breaks to investors in the tourism industry. Croatian tourism authorities also worked on promoting the country as an eco-tourism and MICE destination (meetings, incentives, conferences, and events). Authorities also participated in international consumer and travel industry expos and shows. Other efforts included attracting new markets such as sport-oriented tourism. A tourism-related project supported by the United Nations was undertaken to restore the damaged port of Dubrovnik. The Croatian National Tourist Board used its website to promote coastal-based tourism, congress tourism, health tourism, pilgrimage tourism, sporting tourism, and eco-tourism. The website was also used to conduct a number Internet polls on potential and intending travelers' attitudes.

Beirman (2003) noted that Internet polls should not be considered to have any statistical validity; nevertheless their results were helpful (p. 236). He asserted that the Croatian recovery marketing process should have been managed more effectively by conducting extensive professional market research to create proper marketing strategies that appealed to targeted segments. He argued that over-reliance on private sector support was an unreliable marketing strategy, as when tourism authorities relied highly on private tour operators to promote Croatia to the travel industry and public (p. 241). He believed that although the Croatian tourism market recovery from crisis was successful, unfortunately tourism authorities failed to capitalize on the situation to promote an even more powerful Croatian image that draws additional travelers to the country. He suggested expanding programs to popularize Croatia within Europe and develop new markets outside Europe (p. 242).

Egypt: When terrorist attacks started in 1992, Egypt experienced a 22% drop in international tourist arrivals and a 42% decrease in tourism receipts. The crisis also caused Egypt to be removed from the programs of international tour operators. Egypt responded to this crisis by increasing security and stressing on the attacks' low risk level and limited effects. Every bus, train, and Nile cruiser transporting tourists had a police guard (Wahab, 1996). Additionally, the Egyptian government sought the help of an international consultancy firm, Burson-Marsteller, which conducted a survey of 1000 US travelers on their key travel fears in 1993. The survey results showed that 75% of respondents reported that news reports essentially determined their opinion of whether the destination was safe or unsafe to visit. The firm suggested many guidelines on managing the crisis, including defining the problem, focusing on measures to restore confidence, appointing one person to centralize and control information flow, avoiding lies and distortion, containing the problem by defining its actual extent, and clarifying what measures are being taken to address the problem. The government coordinated its efforts with Burson-Marsteller, an agency with headquarters in London and satellite branches in key source markets such as the United States, France, and Germany (Beirman, 2003).

Furthermore, the Ministry of tourism established a crisis management team, and after re-evaluating the existing marketing strategy, authorities carried out a new promotional plan in 1994 to change Egypt's negative image. The plan included producing positive publicity by using heavy promotion and advertising and creating an audio-visual library. The action program also included enhancing the quality of

promotion publications in order to compete in world markets, producing promotion films, tourist agendas, conferences, trade shows, and familiarization tours for media and travel agencies, and hosting special international events and festivals (Wahab, 1996). Foreign diplomats were invited to inspect the upgraded security in tourist centers (Beirman, 2003). In addition, authorities encouraged international investment in the tourism sector (Wahab, 1996), and the Egyptian Tourist Authority and Egypt Air cooperated with the private sector to encourage international tourists to visit (Beirman, 2003). Egypt was also marketed to the US, Canada, Japan, and Australia as a dual destination with Israel, and occasionally with Egypt, Israel, and Jordan as a triple destination. Tourism authorities launched marketing and information campaigns offering heavy discounts to the European market and showing that Egypt had addressed travelers' security concerns (Beirman, 2003). The European tourist market to Egypt recovered rapidly during the end of 1998 and throughout 1999. The success of recovery efforts was due to the centralized nature of Egypt's tourism marketing, which facilitated the development of a national marketing strategy, and the development of good promotional materials. Promoting Egypt as a pilgrimage destination to the Christian market also helped (Beirman, 2003).

Fiji: Suffering from two military coups in 1987 (Scott, 1988), and another in 2000 (Beirman, 2003), Fiji saw tourism numbers plummet. After the 1987 coups, countries such as Japan, the US, and Australia issued travel advisories warning tourists against traveling to Fiji. Despite the crisis, the annual Fiji Tourism Convention was conducted one month after the coup. Local industry leaders,

foreign airlines, tour operators, and trade media attended the convention and discussed the Fijian situation. The Fijian tourism industry formed a crisis management team (Tourism Action Group, or TAG) that concentrated on communicating accurate and correct information. The TAG worked on doubling the marketing budget, modifying travel advisories, offering special airfares and packages for limited periods, and organizing familiarization visits for trade representatives from their main markets (Scott, 1988). Tourism authorities also looked for alternative markets such as Asia to compensate for the drop in the US and Canadian markets. Fiji was promoted to the MICE markets, especially the Japanese, New Zealand, Australian, and US markets (Beirman, 2003). Authorities established a modern communication system that identified audiences to address individually such as airlines, domestic industry, foreign tour operators, and the general public. All overseas Fiji Visitors Bureaus appointed public relations consultants and cooperated with the Tourism Action Group to communicate with the public. Most importantly the Tourism Action Group prepared several plans and worst-case scenarios to deal with potential crises (Scott, 1998). In 1997, the government launched its tourism development plan and set a goal to build inbound tourism numbers to 600,000 by 2005. The plan included a number of focused tasks, such as encouraging tourism by simplifying investment procedures and securing additional investment in hotels and resorts, along with increasing the budget of the Ministry of Tourism and the Fiji Visitors Bureau (Beirman, 2003).

After the 2000 coup, the strategies employed in 1987 were employed again, with the notable difference of using the Internet as a marketing tool to travelers and the

tourism trade. The Fijian travel industry introduced a range of discounted packaged deals. Travel agents, general media, and travel writers were invited on familiarization trips. Also, an aggressive TV campaign targeted the Australian and New Zealand markets to convey the impression that nothing had changed (Beirman, 2003). The Fijian experience in 1987 showed the importance of having a framework to work within, and of identifying goals and resources to deal with a crisis (Scott, 1988). Moreover, Scott noted that the most important aspects of crisis management are the handling and distribution of information, and winning the support of media (p. 71). Beirman (2003) noted that the coordination between the government and the private sector during the 1987 and 2000 crises was one of the most excellent recent examples of post-tourism crisis marketing management, and asserted that the Fijian approach is a strong model for destinations facing similar crises (p. 149).

Israel: Since 1948, both Israelis and Palestinians living in the occupied territories have been experiencing continuous turmoil. The instability of the peace process between Israelis and Palestinians created a crisis for the Israeli hospitality industry during 2000-2002, as tourism to the country decreased significantly (Israeli and Reichel, 2003). In 2001 the Tourism Ministry conducted a conference in Jerusalem for all its public relations specialists worldwide in order to draw up a strategy to market Israel during and after the crisis. The Ministry targeted stalwart markets that had the strongest propensity to visit the country, mainly the Jewish community and Christian Zionists who have strong religious and emotional affinities with Israel (Beirman, 2003). The Ministry of Tourism and its international offices applied several strategies to deal with the country's image problem, including increasing

familiarization trips for travel journalists and travel agents, and providing press releases and briefings to travel media, and upgrading Internet sites (Beirman, 2002). Furthermore, the tourism industry concentrated on the local market and focused on practices such as marketing, cost cuts, special offers, and reduced prices (Israeli and Reichel, 2003). The Ministry of Tourism also adopted an isolation strategy that conveyed a message that the country was safe and maintaining normality except for certain areas such as the Dead Sea and Eilat (Beirman, 2003; Beirman, 2002). Nevertheless, Israeli and Reichel (2003) criticized the Israeli hospitality industry and doubted if the effectiveness of recovery procedures was examined when the crisis was over, because those strategies were used automatically every time a crisis occurred thereafter (p. 14). Beirman (2003) also stressed that Israel's major problem was managing and implementing a coordinated marketing campaign between the private and public sectors during and after a crisis (p. 116).

Mexico: After the Chiapas uprising in 1994, international arrivals declined by 70%. Recovery efforts aimed to increase domestic tourism by re-establishing confidence in Chiapas. Authorities sent one million letters to businesses in order to encourage them to hold their conferences in Mexico. Authorities also offered tax reductions for using Chiapas hotels and lowered hotel prices to encourage business travel (Pitts, 1996).

Northern Ireland: Civil unrest and political violence had a negative impact on Northern Ireland. In order to overcome the resulting sharp decline in tourist traffic and promote the country as a destination, the Northern Ireland Tourism Board organized special events such as festivals, shows, and cultural activities. The

tourism board also arranged other activities including travel trade fairs and press conferences (Witt and Moore, 1992). Witt and Moore's study results showed that international visitors to Northern Ireland were fewer than domestic visitors. They argued that special events will not be successful in achieving their objectives unless sufficient and effective promotion is carried out (1992, p. 74).

Philippines: Marketing the Philippines as a destination has been challenging for tourism authorities. Between 1986 and 2001 the country went through a variety of crises that caused the deterioration of tourist arrival numbers and negatively affected the country's image. Crises included natural disasters (volcanoes, typhoons, and earthquakes), political instability, terrorism, and the economic recession in Japan, South Korea and Taiwan (Beirman, 2003).

The government developed its first Tourism Master Plan in 1991. The plan attempted to manage the development of the tourism industry and predicted significant tourism growth between 1991 and 2010, but external economic crisis and internal political problems in 1998 kept them from attaining the predicted growth. From 1991 to 1997, however, tourism achieved significant growth. The Philippine department of tourism adopted a marketing strategy of promoting the country's cultural and scenic attractions together with conducting familiarization tours for media and travel professionals. Low prices and high-grade accommodations and services were offered, and the government worked on improving the country's image by taking action against crime and corruption. Between 1998 and 2001, tourism dropped due to the return of political instability and downturn in economic conditions (Beirman, 2003).

Beirman (2003) observed that the 1991 Tourism Master Plan promised great growth to tourism that was not totally achieved. The master plan lacked contingency plans, and its marketing tools, which included website, brochures, and audio-visual presentations, failed to address travel and safety concerns (p. 263). Beirman stressed on the need for cooperation between the private and public sectors to manage the crisis successfully (p. 264).

Singapore Airlines: In 2000, despite the bad weather, flight SQ 006 took off from Chiang Kai-Shek Airport in Taipei. The plane crashed and eighty-two passengers and crewmembers died due to human error. Singapore Airlines acknowledged responsibility immediately and expressed regret and distress. The airline provided briefings and press conferences to the media together with reassurances about preventing further accidents. On the day following the crash, families of the victims were flown to the site and staff members trained in giving aid and counseling was available to relatives. In addition, the airlines gave compensation to survivors and families of victims (Henderson, 2003).

Sri Lanka: Civil war and conflict between Sinhalese and Tamils have been a long-term problem impacting tourism growth in Sri Lanka. Many Tamil attacks, such as the 2001 attack on Colombo international airport that destroyed most of Air Sri Lanka's passenger aircraft and killed many people and tourists, further damaged the country's tourism image, but since 2002 there has been a cease-fire between the Tamil Tigers and the government (Beirman, 2003).

Beirman noted that from the late 1990's until 2001, a highly professional image-building campaign showed the country as a safe and friendly destination to visit.

Moreover, authorities' encouraged foreign investment, enacted an open skies policy (p. 119), and offered discounted prices (p. 126). He asserted that low labor costs made it possible to offer service to travelers at highly competitive prices (p. 120). After the 2001 attack, Sri Lanka marketed itself in association with India and Maldives, especially to long haul markets. Beirman (2003) argued that the small international marketing budget made it hard to compete with other Asian destinations. Although the Ceylon Tourist Board website provided comprehensive information, nevertheless it failed to address the security concerns of travelers, tour operators, and travel agents, and failed to offer reliable security and safety advice (pp. 122-123). Beirman asserted that the biggest factor contributing to Sri Lanka's tourism marketing failure has been its policy of denying that a security problem exists; he suggested that a successful crisis marketing strategy should address travelers' security concerns (pp. 130-131).

The United States: The September 11th, 2001 terrorist attacks had a great negative impact on the tourism industry in the United States and all over the world. The US had a decrease of 1.8 per cent in total GDP and 1.1 million jobs were lost, the European Union had a 1.9 per cent decrease in total GDP and lost 1.2 million jobs. Given that the US lacks a centralized national tourism marketing authority, the country faced a big challenge to implement a coordinated crisis destination marketing approach. This meant that each state and city had to manage its marketing with limited reference to a national marketing campaign (Beirman, 2003). After the attacks, no national destination marketing campaign was proposed, nor was there any available contingency plan to deal with a national tourism crisis.

The US Government, however, did introduce the “Travel America Now Act” and proposed legislation that provided subsidies and tax reductions to airlines and the tourism industry. Also, the government established a central national tourism marketing crisis management team consisting of representatives from the American Society of Travel Agents, airlines, airport authorities, railway authorities, hoteliers, car rental firms, cruise companies, federal authorities specializing in security, inbound tour operators, representatives of international tour operators, and media and public relations representatives. A group of people from the team were chosen as representatives in communicating a coordinated marketing message to the media. Furthermore, the government established a website to address travelers’ concerns and to communicate recovery measures to industry and travelers (Beirman, 2003). New York City’s approach to dealing with the crisis was to direct marketing efforts towards the domestic market on the basis of solidarity and patriotism. The city’s hotels, restaurants, and attractions offered discounts and value-added offers. Delta Airlines offered 10,000 tickets for promotional purposes. The New York City tourism authority and NYC and Company addressed safety and security concerns, and introduced a campaign to host American and foreign travel writers and let them see the city. Tourism authorities concentrated on the Internet to communicate real-time information, offers, messages, and tourism information to the industry, media, and consumers (Beirman, 2003). However, Beirman noted that despite New York City’s tourist authority, NYC and company, and other private and state companies’ efforts to increase tourist arrivals to the US, the lack of a national marketing

approach to restoring domestic and international confidence to the country weakened the approach for effective recovery (p. 67).

Washington, D C Hotels: After the 9/11 terrorist attacks the media depicted Washington as unsafe to visit. As a result, Washington hotel occupancy fell by 52%. Directly after the event, managers of Washington D C hotels sent staff members into public areas to calm guests and inform them about the situation. Televisions were placed in public areas and meeting rooms so that guests could monitor events. Management mobilized emergency equipment to prepare for the possibility of additional security breaches or potential terrorist attacks. Managers also consulted and coordinated with external agencies such as the fire department and the D C Emergency Agency (Stafford, Yu, and Armoo, 2002).

In order to cope with the situation, hotel managers offered discounts on room rates and lowered operating costs by reducing work schedules and laying off employees. But they discovered that this was not an effective way to manage the crisis; therefore, they cooperated with local tourism and convention authorities and other related industries to develop a marketing plan targeting local, regional, and national markets funded by private industry donations. Hotels carried out advertising activities including public relations, direct consumer promotion, Internet marketing, and targeted online booking rates (Stafford, Yu, and Armoo, 2002).

Summary

It should be observed that the all previous natural and man-made disaster situations required quick responses. Media coverage of incidents played a great role in negatively damaging destination's images. Destination authorities employed many practices to

overcome the impacts of man-made disasters including war, terrorism, and political instability. It appears that most destination authorities tend to look for short-term solutions in order to achieve recovery. Crisis-vulnerable destinations were not prepared with crisis management plans. One major practice carried out by almost all destination authorities included positively using and controlling media through press releases, public relations, and communication messages, and conducting familiarizations trips for journalists and travel agents in order to emphasize the destination's safety and positive image. Another practice shared by destinations was conducting marketing or promotional campaigns, including price cuts, packages, and special events to attract visitors. The third main practice was providing financial support and tax relief to the tourism industry. Other familiar practices included rebuilding infrastructure in the case of war, concentrating on domestic tourism, and in some cases using the Internet.

Marketing, promotional, and public relations campaigns are important activities; however, many essential practices required to achieve effective long-term recovery were employed in few case studies. Those practices include conducting market research, acquiring the help of consultancy firms, developing crisis management teams, and creating crisis management plans. Table 2 illustrates the observed recovery practices used by destinations in crisis:

Table 2

Recovery Practices Used by Destinations in Crisis

Recovery Practices

Media Relations and Communications

Financial support, including tax relief and low-interest loans

Promotional, marketing, and public relations campaigns

Consultancy firms

Internet for marketing and providing information

Cooperation between private and public sectors

Creating a crisis management team

Promotion in conjunction with other destinations

Providing reliable information

Surveys and market studies

Increasing security procedures

Promoting to new markets or targeting stalwart markets or domestic tourism

Simplifying investment

Brief suspensions of promotions

Increasing national tourism organizations' budgets

Infrastructure improvements

Developing a tourism crisis management plan

CHAPTER III – BACKGROUND – JORDAN

Jordan's Historical and Natural Sites

Jordan possesses a wide range of unique attractions, including sites of ancient historical and cultural significance, as well as religious and eco-tourism sites. Petra and Jerash are the most important historical sites in Jordan. Petra, a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1985, is a Red-Rose city carved in rock more than 2000 years ago by the Nabatians. Petra's monuments include tombs, buildings, temples, baths, funerary halls, and a 3000-seat theatre. Its most famous monument is the Treasury, which appeared in *Indiana Jones and the last Crusade* (Jordan Tourism Board, 2000).

The ancient Roman city of Jerash or Gerasa is acknowledged as of the best-preserved Roman provincial cities in the world, surrounded by temples, theaters, public squares, baths, fountains, gates, and colonnaded streets. In July of every year, a Jerash cultural festival is held in the Roman ruins to provide entertainment to visitors. The festival is an important event that attracts tourists especially from the Gulf area and promotes Jordan's national culture and folklore as well as that of the rest of the world ("Jerash Festival." 2004). The Festival hosts performances by artists, poetry readings, folkloric dance, ballet, concerts, plays, opera, and sales of traditional handicrafts. ("Jordan Offers," 2004).

Amman, since 1921 the capital of the Emirate of Trans-Jordan and since 1945 the capital of the independent Kingdom of Jordan, is one of the oldest cities in the world. The city witnessed many civilizations throughout the history. In the Iron Age, Amman was the capital of the Ammonites and was called Rabbath Ammon, and it was known as Philadelphia in the Greco-Roman times. Mingled with modern buildings, the city offers

many historical and archeological sites like the Roman Theatre, which is the largest Roman amphitheatre in the Middle East. It is carved into the mountain and its seats are built to accommodate an audience of 5000. Visitors can also find many international 4- and 5-star hotels, together with a variety of traditional and international restaurants (Taylor, 1992; Jordan Tourism Board, 1998).

Madaba, the city of Mosaics, is a Roman Byzantine town where visitors can enjoy seeing mosaics from the 5th through the 7th centuries. Most popular is the magnificent 6th-century Byzantine mosaic map in the Greek Orthodox church of St. George. The map is made from two million pieces of colored stone and shows Jerusalem and other holy sites (Jordan Tourism Board, 2000).

Pella is another ancient historical site that offers visitors the opportunity to see the remains of different eras: the Chalcolithic period, the Bronze and Iron ages, Byzantine churches, and remains from early Islamic occupation (Taylor, 1992).

Mount Nebo is believed to be the burial place of the Prophet Moses. Its first church was constructed in the 4th century to honor the place of his death. From a platform in front of the church tourists can view the Jordan valley, the Dead Sea, Jerusalem, and Bethlehem (Taylor, 1992).

Bethany beyond the Jordan, located at the southern end of the Jordan River is recognized as the place where Jesus was baptized, and where John the Baptist preached and baptized as well. Pope John Paul II visited the site in March, 2000 to emphasize its historic and spiritual significance. The Jubilee of the year 2000 was a celebration of the 2000th anniversary of the birth of Christ, and the first year which marks the turn of a millennium. Bethany beyond the Jordan is one of the five pilgrimage sites in Jordan

designated by the Great Jubilee Committee of the Vatican for special commemorations. The other sites are the Shrine to Our Lady of the Mountain, the birthplace of Elijah, the castle where John the Baptist was beheaded, and the site of Moses' death ("Jordan Welcomes," 2000).

Jordan is also full of natural reserves and eco-tourism sites. Aqaba, Jordan's only seaport has been developed as a tourist resort. Aqaba's activities include water sports, scuba diving, snorkeling, and exploring coral reef which host 1000 kinds of fish, 110 species of soft corals, and 120 of hard corals. Furthermore, tourists can visit the world's oldest church, from the late 3rd century AD (Taylor, 1992).

The Dead Sea is an important healing site and one of Jordan's best-known natural sites. Located at the northern end of the Great Rift Valley, it is known to be the lowest point on the surface of the Earth, more than 400 meters below sea level. The Dead Sea is four times saltier than normal seawater and rich in minerals. This area is warm and sunny all year through and has both historical and spiritual importance. Other medical sites include Ma'een Falls, Jordanian Hummah, and Afra Falls. They all include spas and clinics that provide treatment for people with skin diseases, blood circulatory problems, and bone, joints, back, and muscular pains (Jordan Tourism Board, 2000).

Wadi Rum (Rum Valley) is a natural site best known for its connection with T.E. Lawrence, the British officer who was based here during the Arab Revolt at the time of the First World War. It is also known as the setting for David Lean's film *Lawrence of Arabia*. In the Valley of Rum, visitors can take part in many activities including climbing, hiking, hot air ballooning, 4x4 vehicle tours, and camel rides. Furthermore, in spring tourists can view 2000 species of wildflowers (Jordan Tourism Board, 2000).

Jordan Tourism and Crises

The Middle East is perceived by many as a relatively unsafe destination to visit (Hall, 1994). The region has been a theatre for many events like the Gulf war in 1991 and the outbreak of the Israeli-Palestinian violence in 2000. The situation is challenging for many countries in the Middle East as their tourist numbers declined significantly (Mansfeld, 1996; Hollier, 1991; Shraiha and Collins, 1992). This can be considered a real problem, for tourism can be easily damaged if destinations are not able to manage crises effectively.

A mismanaged disaster can easily destroy the destination's image of safety while evolving into a long-term crisis for the local tourism industry. Through a domino effect a tarnished image can threaten tourism's sustainability, which in turn can jeopardize the area's long-term economic viability (Sonmez, Apostolopoulos, and Tarlow, 1999, p. 13).

Sharaiha and Collins (1992) in their study "Marketing Jordan as a Tourist Destination: Potential and Complexity" argued that Jordan has not taken full advantage of its historical and natural sites. Moreover, they claimed that the country, which is surrounded by regional disturbances, has not been able to solve negative image problems. Jordan tried to overcome the damage to tourism from the Gulf war by reinforcing a joint promotion strategy with Egypt, but Jordan's immature marketing failed to bring international recognition (Sharaiha and Collins, 1992). Table 3 shows the events that have impacted Jordan since 1991.

Table 3

Political Events that Impacted Jordan's Tourism Sector Since 1991

Year	Event
1991	Gulf War
2000	Outbreak of violence between Israelis and Palestinians
2001	September 11 th attack on US
2002	Palestinian-Israeli conflict
2002	US diplomat shot dead in Jordan
2003	War on Iraq
2005	Terrorist suicide bombings in three hotels

Furthermore, Jordan's tourism has been facing an internal crisis. Plans to develop the Jordanian tourism industry were suggested by UNESCO, the US Agency for International Development (USAID), and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), but unfortunately those plans were not implemented. Kelly (1998) mentioned that the government is considered the biggest barrier to tourism development in Jordan. As she explained, "Jordan consequently sought advice from various international parties for developing tourism. However, almost identical development plans designed years before by some of the same parties remain unimplemented. This is because major responsibility lies with the government and its personnel policies, taxation rates, micromanagement, and unreliable record keeping" (Kelly, 1998, p. 904).

Government policies and attitudes play a vital role in the recovery process (Huang and Min, 2002), but bureaucracy, poor management, inaccurate record keeping, lack of expertise, and unreliable tourism regulations are some of many reasons that cripple tourism growth in the country (Kelly, 1998). For example, high capital requirements and minimum levels of investment and deposits limit foreign and domestic investment (NTS, 2004-2010). In addition, the Jordanian Ministry of Tourism has had a succession of ministers who usually come to the job without knowledge or training in tourism and drop former projects and plans (four ministers between the years 1991-1996 (Kelly, 1998)). Further, improvements to the country's infrastructure could not cover the growing needs of the tourism industry. For example, Jordan's network of major roads and highways is good, but the quality of secondary roads outside Amman and within tourist sites is generally poor (NTS, 2004-2010).

Although Jordan contains a wealth of historical and natural sites, attracting tourists is challenging due to a negative image of potential tourists. Jordan has been trying to make the most of its limited resources to develop a competitive tourism sector (Schneider and Sonmez, 1999), but as mentioned earlier, international tourism has been decreasing considerably in recent years, with a drop in tourism receipts and the expenditure balance of the sector. Based on the DESTCON system (Beirman, 2003, p. 20), Jordan's ranking has fallen to DESTCON 3, which requires an increase in marketing readiness above normal readiness. Destinations are ranked by DESTCON 3 when there are well-publicized major problems in a neighboring country in the same region that may present threats to tourists and impact the marketability of the destination. Figure 3 shows Jordan and its neighboring countries.

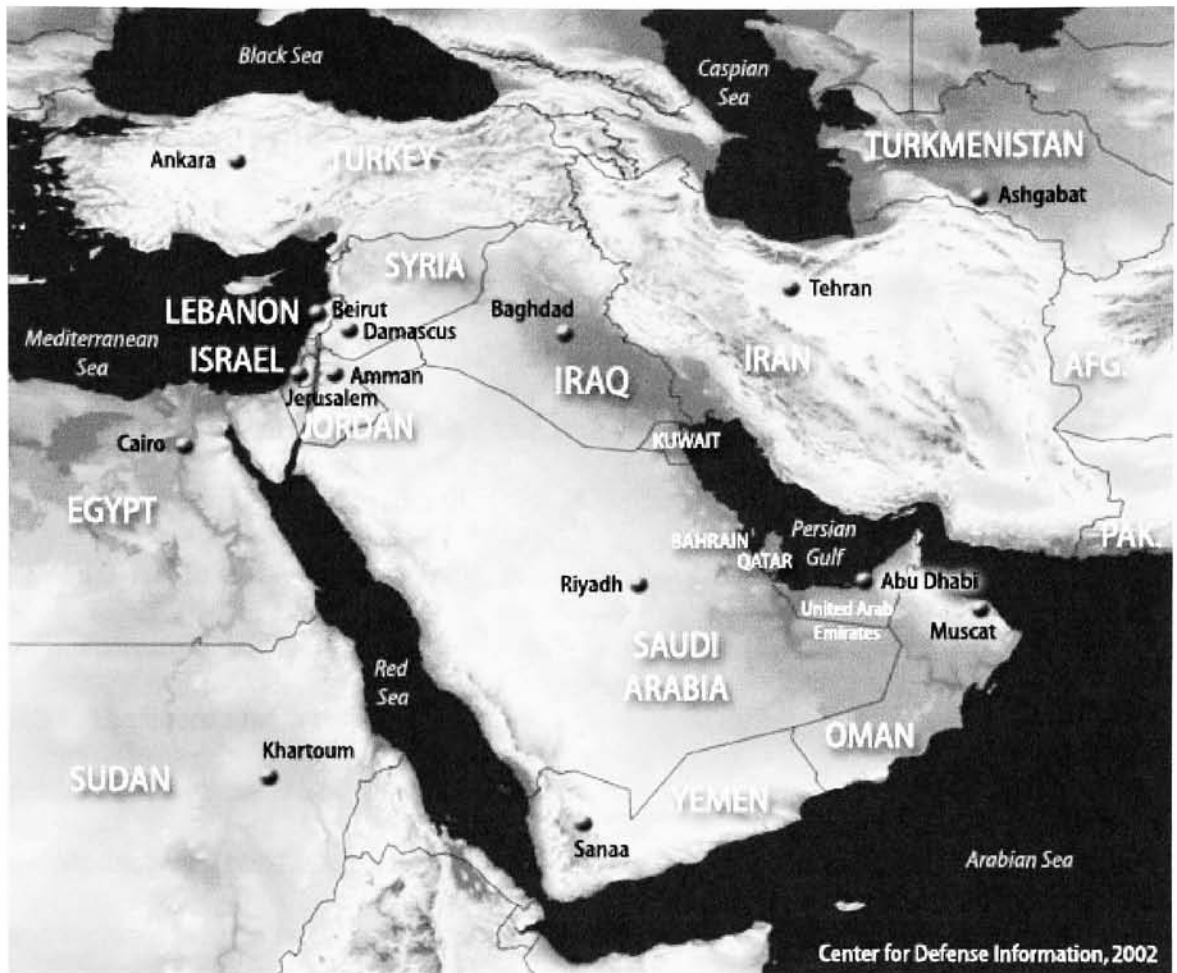


Figure3. Jordan and Neighboring Countries

Note. From Center for Defense Information website, http://www.cdi.org/terrorism/iraq_map.cfm

Jordan Facing a Tourism Crisis

In a study addressing Jordan's image, Schneider and Sonmez (1999) suggested that Jordan needed to differentiate itself both from and within the region. They asserted that efforts should be taken to remove any image barriers to potential tourist travel. They suggested enhancing Jordan's tourist facilities and service sectors and recommended conducting more visitors and potential visitors' research. Furthermore, they claimed that Jordan could easily expand its market and tourist offerings by increasing visitor awareness of its natural resources (p. 541).

To address the challenge of attracting tourists to the country with an independent public/private sector partnership, the Jordan Tourism Board (JTB) was established in 1998. The board's main responsibility is to promote and market Jordan as a tourism destination overseas. The tourism board carries out promotions with the cooperation of the Ministry of Tourism and Antiques. The board is headed by the Minister of Tourism and includes private sector members representing hotels, tour operators, and tourism transport companies. The JTB was envisioned and planned for by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in the early 1990s, but the USAID plans for the JTB were not realized as originally envisioned (Hazbun, 2002):

The formation of the JTB, though, became mired in politics. The USAID, the ministry of tourism and various private sector representatives spent years sorting out the funding and governance mechanism of the JTB.

USAID preferred that the JTB have joint private and public funding but be privately managed. In the end, though, the Jordanian authorities, fearing that it would become a slush fund for private agents, refused to give it this

sort of decentralized autonomy. After a series of unsuccessful meetings USAID abruptly pulled out of this project ... The ministry of tourism eventually established the JTB on its own terms, but without the funding, strong private sector leadership, and skilled staff originally envisioned by the USAID plan. The JTB for years was able to do little more than represent Jordan at tourism trade fairs. While the JTB has vastly expanded its capabilities and functions since, this came too late to help the sector through the boom and bust cycle in the wake of the peace (p. 341).

Following the first Gulf War, Jordan worked on restoring its relations with Western countries through its participation in the Middle East peace process. After signing the peace treaty between Israel and Jordan in 1994, the country enjoyed a rapid growth in visitor numbers and earnings. Tourism investment expanded and local investors began randomly opening tourism-related businesses. The majority of local investors in tourism lacked either experience in this field or knowledge about the international tourism market (Hazbun, 2002); therefore, hotel distribution in many areas was not well-planned and as a result many tourist sites such as Jerash and Ajloun still have a limited number of hotels and accommodations (NTS, 2004-2010). On the other hand, many private-sector companies were established to take advantage of the expected growth in tourism in the region. These companies carried a variety of projects that involved international hotel groups, such as Marriott, Hyatt, Sheraton, Movenpick, and Hilton (Balch, Roblit, Levine, and McConnell, n.d.). In 2003 Jordan had 329 classified hotels, compared to 129 in 1994 (NTS, 2004-2010).

Since 1994, Israel and Jordan have been working closely to promote their destinations as a single region. The marketing of Jordan, Israel, and the Palestinian authority was coordinated in the European and North American markets (Beirman, 2002). International visitors came on packaged tours, either with Jordan as a destination, or as part of a longer Holy Land or Middle East tour (Dixon, 1998). Although Jordan benefited from the packaged tours and increased Israeli and international tourist arrivals, it enjoyed minor economic impact due to short stays and the perception of limited experiences within the country (Schneider and Sonmez, 1999). Before the new millennium, considerable infrastructure growth in the tourism and hospitality industry took place (Beirman, 2002). Investments which increased the number of hotels and hotel rooms took place at a rapid rate and were based on information that the market would grow strongly, but that proved to be incorrect (Marketing Plan, 2003). Occupancy rates decreased from 39% in 2000 to 32% in 2002. Tables 4 and 5 show the increase in tourism numbers after signing the peace treaty until 2000, and the average length of stay from packaged tours:

Table 4

Tourist Arrivals by Areas

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Americans	103,346	107,960	107,676	108,612	123,525	126,411
Europeans	255,496	251,820	239,411	219,445	292,757	326,574
Arabs	566,561	572,657	604,101	772,427	761,598	770,795
Israelis	100,079	121,196	125,625	119,261	125,528	136,737

Note. From Japan International Cooperation Website, http://www.jica.go.jp/jordan/activities/09_01.html

Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (NA)

Table 5

Average Length of Stay on Package Tours

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Americans	2.30	2.38	2.53	2.45	2.68	2.70
Europeans	4.49	4.41	4.79	5.10	5.19	5.22
Gulfs	4.99	5.45	4.16	4.19	6.12	6.16
Israel	3.58	3.20	3.54	3.61	3.28	3.31

Note. From Japan International Cooperation Website, http://www.jica.go.jp/jordan/activities/09_01.html

Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (NA)

The new Millennium brought an increase in tourism arrivals to Jordan and several other countries in the Middle East. In the first nine months of 2000, arrivals to the region were up by 20% as tourists visited historical sites associated with Jesus Christ on the 2000th anniversary of his birth (“Millennium Tourism,” 2001). Thousands of pilgrims gathered on the East Bank of the Jordan River to celebrate in the place where Jesus was baptized (Plett, 2000). Nevertheless, the outbreak of the Palestinian *Intifada* and the violence between Israelis and Palestinians later the same year, and the events of September 11th 2001 afterwards, again affected the flow of tourist to the region (Beirman, 2002; “Millennium Tourism,” 2001). Suffering from what Beirman (2003) called “collateral image damage” (p. 232), Jordan experienced a significant drop in tourism arrivals, even though the country's security was not affected. Media coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict created a fear factor among potential international tourists to Jordan (Beirman, 2003).

As a response to the 9/11 attacks, Jordanian private and public sectors participated in the 2002 International Tourism Exchange, ITB Berlin, which was conducted to exchange marketing and promotional experiences among industry representatives from all over the world (Dajani, 2002). Nonetheless, as stated in the 2003 marketing plan, in the absence of effective crisis management plans, the investments in tourism were threatened and the tourism industry faced economic crisis (Marketing Plan, 2003). Table 6 shows the significant drop in 2001 in the numbers of visitors to some of the best-known tourism sites:

Table 6

Number of Visitors to Tourism Sites

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Petra	337,221	414,448	380,527	347,109	429,644	481,198	231,203
Jerash	283,397	279,092	246,555	226,099	264,000	299,750	167,650
Madaba	169,258	164,183	152,545	124,714	173,505	180,637	68,056
Ajloun	97,350	100,999	136,241	145,013	154,574	189,476	155,792
Wadi Rum	67,971	70,997	63,214	71,458	78,352	102,904	44,051
Pella	41,343	32,500	42,074	67,480	42,882	67,867	17,998

Note. From Japan International Cooperation Website, http://www.jica.go.jp/jordan/activities/09_01.html

Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (NA)

In 2002, tourism was affected again by the Palestine-Israel conflict; in addition, the country witnessed a unique crisis which affected Jordan's image particularly in the United States. On October 20th, a US diplomat was shot dead in front of his house in Amman. The event shook Jordan's claim to be the safest county in the region for foreigners. Two assassins were arrested, and since the incident, as a preventive procedure armed guards have been placed in Western residential neighborhoods (Pelham, 2002).

Also in 2002, due to the prevailing Palestinian-Israeli conflict, the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities suspended all joint tourism-promotion activities with Israel ("Jordan Stops," 2002). Facing a challenge to differentiate itself from Israel, Jordan's marketing became associated with Egypt rather than Israel and new tour programs combining Egypt and Jordan were created (Beirman, 2002). The drop in international tourist arrivals from Europe and North America, however, still prevailed. Yet it appears from the 2002 and 2003 marketing plans that the tourism board (JTB) did not give up its efforts to keep its presence in the international market. For example, the Tourism Board's 2002 marketing plan suggested fulfilling a number of objectives including differentiating Jordan from the rest of the Middle Eastern countries, maintaining the same number of visitors of 2001 from Europe and North America, increasing the number of visitors from the Arab countries by 20%, and increasing the number of visitors from Eastern Europe, mainly Russia and Hungary, by 15%. The plan had a proposed budget of JD 5,000,000 from the Government, JD 400,000 from the private sector, and JD 335,000 from membership dues, trade fairs, workshop participation, and interest income (Marketing Plan, 2002).

For the North American and Western European markets, activities were limited to a few press releases, maintaining media contacts, sales calls, and in-house presentations, according to the 2002 marketing plan. Also, the plan included increasing the number of Jordanian cultural weeks in chosen European cities and maintaining the Jordanian tour operators' brochures. It should be noted that no advertising campaigns were carried out in the North American and European markets due to financial reasons. As for the Russian and Hungarian markets, the plan suggested a small budget for a consumer advertisement campaign to be launched there (Marketing Plan, 2002).

According to statistics from the next Ministry of Tourism, the 2002 marketing plan did not achieve its objective of increasing tourism numbers from North America and Europe. In fact, the number of US tourists decreased marginally from 58,825 in 2001 to 58,195 in 2002, and the number of tourists from all of North America decreased marginally from 69,927 to 69,638 in 2002. The total number of tourists from the Americas decreased from 74,568 in 2001 to 72,919 in 2002. The total number of European tourists decreased from 207,332 in 2001 to 167,181 in 2002. Tourists from Russia decreased from 5,031 to 4,909.

As for the 2003 plan, it was similar to the previous year's. It suggested similar activities for maintaining a presence in the North American and European markets, and suggested enhancing promotional activities in regional markets along with carrying out more aggressive communication, media, and public relations campaigns targeting consumers and trade. Additionally, the plan suggested concentrating on tourism sites rather than on Jordan as a destination, and suggested spotlighting the Royal family to build up Jordan's image. The plan also suggested the possibility of penetrating the Far

East markets, especially China, Japan, and Korea, but again no advertising took place because of the lack of funding. The plan did not achieve recovery but to a certain extent helped direct the JTB to perform its best to maintain its presence in Western markets (Marketing Plan, 2003).

Despite a series of difficult years, from 2001 to 2003, efforts were continuously made to overcome the crises caused by the continuous Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the murder of the US diplomat. The Middle East performed positively in 2002 as the region's visitor totals grew by 17% to an estimated total of almost 28 million international tourist arrivals, while Jordan specifically showed an increase of 10%. This was a result of successful promotion to intra-regional markets and investments in tourism infrastructure ("Inbound Tourism," WTO). The promotion efforts to Arabic countries covered the decrease in international tourists. The Jordan Tourism Board's 2002 Gulf campaign covered marketing, sales, advertising, and public relations and introduced eco-tourism to attract visitors ("Jordan Tourism Board, "2003; "Jordan Offers," 2003).

In 2003, particularly in February, March, and April, Jordan's tourism industry suffered from the crisis in Iraq. The results from the WTO World Tourism Barometer showed that there was a significant decline in tourist arrivals to the Middle East in that year ("First WTO", 2003). On the other hand, there has been an increase in inter-regional travel as efforts to promote Jordan to the Gulf aimed to increase the awareness of Jordan's MICE potential (meetings, incentives, conferences, and events). To highlight its potential as a MICE destination, Jordan hosted a number of events and conventions such as the World Conservation Congress, the Global Summit for Peace in Tourism, the Arab League Summit, and the World Economic Forum 2003 ("Jordan Tourism Board," 2004).

Table 7 illustrates the increase in Arab and Gulf tourist numbers from 2000 through 2002, and the number in 2003 during the war in Iraq:

Table 7

Arab and Gulf Tourist Numbers

Nationality	2000	2001	2002	2003
Total Arabs	770,795	963,051	1,131,287	1,046,602
Total Gulf	594,720	772,092	910,831	847,633
Saudi Arabia	471,142	602,665	687,498	680,617
Kuwait	58,102	80,533	108,523	67,100
Bahrain	37,874	56,884	72,580	60,807
Oman	7,994	10,962	14,672	14,651
Qatar	6,722	7,711	8,987	8,133
United Arab Emirates	12,886	13,337	18,571	16,325
Total other Arabs	176,075	190,959	220,456	198,969

Note. From Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities, Nationality/Tourist 27/10/2004

In 2004, generally, Middle Eastern destinations recovered from the effects of the Iraqi conflict ("Spectacular Rebound," 2004). The October 2004 issue of the WTO World Tourism Barometer revealed that most destinations in the Middle East continued to perform positively since 2003, based on the continued strong development of the intra-regional market ("First WTO," 2003). Jordan's humble 2004 increase in the intra-regional market was due to the continuous promotion of tourism sites at travel fairs and exhibitions in the Gulf ("Jordan Tourism Sector," 2004). Also, the JTB introduced the country as a family entertainment center in the Middle East, and launched a new festival, "The Global Village," modeled after the one held in Dubai ("Jordan's Global," 2004). The festival is an international cultural event that reflects each participant country's traditions and culture, and showcases entertainment activities such as comedy shows, musicals, and plays. The 2004 festival included 24 pavilions representing different Asian, African, and Middle Eastern countries that exhibited their traditional art, handicrafts, and national products, as well as folkloric performances ("Jordan Gears," 2004).

In 2004, Jordanian authorities prevented a crisis that would have had a great negative effect on the country's image and tourism. Authorities arrested a group of terrorists who were planning an attack that would have killed thousands of civilians (Agence France-Presse, 2004). The same year also witnessed the development of the National Tourism Strategy (NTS) 2004-2010. The NTS was developed as a joint public/private initiative to grow the tourism economy by 2010. The strategy assumes that there will be an increase in the JTB budget from JD 9.6 million in 2004 to JD 26 million in 2010. The strategy focuses on training, marketing, and increasing private-sector involvement in developing the tourism sector. Key elements of the strategy are based on

four pillars: product enhancement, effective marketing, human resource development, and institutional/regulatory platforms (NTS, 2004-2010).

CHAPTER IV – METHODOLOGY

A qualitative case study was used to carry out this research. To complete this case study an open-ended survey questionnaire was administered. Interviews, research studies, available statistics, literature review, and newspaper articles about international tourism in Jordan were all employed as a method for data collection.

The population for this study is defined as members of public and private tourism organizations that deal with international tourism and of those that work on marketing and promoting Jordan internationally. The sample included members of domestic and international Jordan Tourism Boards whose duties are to market and promote Jordan internationally. These included one domestic tourism board and nine international boards. The sample also included members of the Jordan Tourism Board who represent major stakeholders in the tourism industry. Participating members included the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, which represents the public sector, the Jordan Hotel Association, which represents 400 classified and unclassified hotels, the Jordan Inbound Tour Operators Association, which represent 30 inbound tour operators, the Jordan Society of Tourism and Travel Agents, which represents 350 travel agencies, the Royal Jordanian Airlines, and major inbound tour operators. A list of participating organizations can be found in Appendix C. The sample was drawn using the non-probability sampling method and selected based on judgment sampling.

The survey contained 11 questions developed to provide answers to the research questions. Consequently, every survey question is related to a survey objective and based on many claims in the literature. As argued in the literature, the first step to developing solutions to a crisis is to find out what cripples tourism. It is also argued that crisis and

political instability represent major challenges to tourism; therefore, questions were developed to determine what kind of crises tourism in Jordan is facing. Given that neighboring destinations are facing political instability and, as cited in the literature, that tourism numbers have been decreasing in recent years, some questions were developed to determine the impacts of crises and to learn how the public and private sectors handled them based on their understanding of the problems. Further questions were developed to learn indirectly whether crisis management is among the public and private sectors' responses.

Then, in order to gather more information, participants were asked to provide their opinions regarding the responses' effectiveness and Jordan's current tourism situation to learn if responses could counter the impacts of crises. The survey questions were developed after determining the mode of administration and the sample size. Several drafts were prepared and open-ended questions were finally developed with the help of the researcher's instructor to gather complex information. A copy of the survey can be found in Appendix A.

The researcher contacted the sample to arrange for personal or phone interviews. Initial contact started in March, 2005. The International Jordan Tourism Board (JTB) offices were contacted by sending e-mails containing a cover letter and a copy of the survey (see Appendix B). Those who were willing to participate in the survey were either interviewed by phone or allowed to answer the survey questions by e-mail due to time limits. Organizations situated in Jordan were contacted by phone to arrange for interviews. Fifty percent of the sample was willing to participate in the survey. By the middle of May, 2005 a total of 14 interviews were conducted with directors, managers,

and marketing executives from the sample. The researcher conducted three phone interviews, two e-mail surveys, and nine personal interviews of which five were voice-recorded. The survey questions were translated into the Arabic language in order to carry out nine interviews. A copy of the questions in Arabic can be found in Appendix D.

CHAPTER V – RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The following analysis will include opinions of interviewed participants based on their answers to the survey questions. The survey findings are given in three sections, which are introduced by general survey questions. The sections include: challenges to tourism, responses to challenges, and responses' effectiveness. Survey answers and results can also be found detailed in Table 8.

Introduction

In order to analyze the survey questions, all interviews were typed into word processing documents. Answers were coded and divided into categories and subcategories. The number of answers that fell into each category was determined and the percentage of answers in each response category was presented.

Based on the survey responses, participants believed that safety and security in Jordan and political conditions in the region are the main concerns for international visitors when considering a visit to Jordan. Price, distance, and information availability came second. Participants also asserted that tourism conditions in Jordan are getting better compared to the years 2001 through 2004. Tourism to the country has been growing steadily since the last quarter of 2004. Many participants claimed that demand is up for all markets and that bookings of tourism groups from Europe and America are good as well, but asserted that tourism numbers are still low compared to the year 1999. Conversely, other participants stated that the increase in numbers that the country has been experiencing is due to international corporate businesses that have been increasingly helping in rebuilding Iraq since the war in Iraq ended, a participant commented: “The influx that we expected did not happen in the country. What really revived was the

tourism sector; let's say hotels and restaurants are the American companies that come from Iraq and that consider Jordan as a backbone to Iraq. So we did not have real tourism in the country until now. We are in 2005, yet we are still operating at 50% capacity.”

However, all participants anticipate that international tourism numbers will increase due to the country's good security conditions and reputation and the unstable situation in Egypt and Lebanon. “The fear factor is not a big issue now. People are not scared to travel because the issue of terrorism has become a norm.”

Challenges to Tourism:

Q: What are the current challenges facing international tourism to Jordan?

The Ministry of Tourism, which represents the public sector, considers that Jordan tourism faces only one problem, which is marketing to some international places, because the governments funding for marketing is not enough to finance successful international advertising and marketing campaigns. On the other hand, many other challenges have been identified by organizations that represent the private sector (see Appendix C), including the following: Many participants saw political instability (57%), world events (36%), misperception (43%), marketing (36%), geographic ignorance (29%), infrastructure (29)%, and competition with other destinations (29%) as major challenges facing international tourism to the country.

Participants acknowledge that Jordan suffers from misperception, as it is considered a conflict destination due to its proximity to the conflict between Palestinians and Israelis, the War on Iraq, and the recent problems in Lebanon and Egypt. Additionally, the unstable region and the political situation around Jordan are major challenges for tourism development and growth. People consider Jordan part of the

turbulent region, and even small issues are spotlighted by media; therefore, anything that happens in the region greatly affects tourism in Jordan. As a result, many tour operators omitted Jordan from their brochures because they perceived the Middle East as an unsafe region to travel to. Consequently it is a challenge to show that Jordan is friendly and safe as a tourism destination. In the last three to four years, Jordan faced a problem where international tour operators were not encouraged to include Jordan as a tourist destination in their brochures.

Furthermore, participants acknowledged that the war on terrorism and the perception outsiders have about Arabs and Muslims greatly affect international tourism. It is believed that after the 9/11 attacks many people, especially in the United States, perceive all Muslims and Arabs as terrorists; therefore most people do not consider visiting many Middle Eastern countries. Moreover, some participants asserted that media coverage of terrorism and the Middle East convey a false image to people which very much affects tourism in the region.

All participants stated that there has been a decline in international tourism to Jordan as a result of the War on Iraq. Some participants mentioned that the decline was due to other factors, including the war on terrorism. Most private sector organizations lost their business when the war started and actually a few months before, with the increase in promotion for the war. The years 2001, 2002, and 2003 were a disaster for the tourism industry. Many organizations laid off staff and worked with less than 20% capacity (R. Soudah, personal communication, April 16, 2005; M. Nazzal, personal communication, May 7, 2005).

Another point mentioned is that Jordan suffered a lack of outside knowledge of the region (29%). Participants in the survey believed that the geography of Jordan is not clear internationally especially among Americans, while Europeans know it somewhat better. Many people do not differentiate between Jordan and the West Bank or even between Jordan and Iraq. “Jordan is the Middle East in people’s perception and anything happening to the Middle East is also what is happening to Jordan. Any conflict in the area is a conflict that impacts Jordan. On the other hand if the Middle East is perceived as a place of peace, so is Jordan” (JTB, personal communication, April 5, 2005).

Of those surveyed, 36% believe that the public sector is a main challenge for marketing Jordan internationally. Tourism ministers are consistently changing every 1-2 years and those that come to the job are not qualified enough and do not have enough knowledge and competencies. Also the ministry does not help tour operators in doing their job. The government requires tour operators to deposit approximately \$71,000 as a financial guarantee to prove their financial stability. A tour operator commented: “The service provided by our tour operators is one of the top in the world. If one tour operator made a mistake, all would be punished. They impose banking bonds on tour operators, so we put our money in banks instead of using them in our work and in marketing Jordan.” Also, some regulations made by the Department of State may contradict regulations made by the Ministry of Tourism. For example, some regulations imposed by the Department of State do not facilitate visa issuance for some nationalities in countries targeted by the Tourism Board and the Ministry of tourism in the Asian market.

Many problems related to marketing were also identified. 64% of participants believed that lack of funds is a major challenge to marketing Jordan internationally.

There are shortages for marketing in many international countries because required funding is not available. The government does not have enough funds to finance successful marketing campaigns and advertise in international TV stations, as Jordan spends no more than 6 million on marketing while other countries spend much more. It is believed that Jordan is not being marketed in a proper manner, as some participants think that the people working in marketing are not qualified enough to do the job. Other problems affecting Jordan's marketing include political instability (43%) and competition with other destinations (29%).

The competition represented by other countries such as Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, Turkey, and Greece is considered a challenge because the markets are going for the best price, and all the above-mentioned destinations are selling similar tourism products at very low prices in the same markets where Jordan competes. Egypt and Lebanon seem to attract the majority of international tourism to the Middle East, but Jordan attracts the majority of tourists from Saudi Arabia. Also, participants stated that destinations in the Middle East compete with Jordan in airfares and package prices. Tourism sites in Jordan are somewhat costly for tourists. One tour operator said: "I notice tourist feedback after they visit Petra; we give them an offer and when they find out that they have to pay \$29 in order to enter Petra, this does not help in selling the country". Moreover, other countries in the region may compete unethically with Jordan and use politics to negatively affect Jordan's marketing. For example, during a tourism exhibition in Russia, the Israeli delegation spread a rumor that a coup would happen in Jordan.

29% of participants believe that the level of service provided is not good enough to satisfy tourists. There is a lack of well-trained and qualified workers in the tourism

industry. Tourists may stay in a 5-star hotel that is in full operation, yet they may notice that there is some kind of failure in providing services. For example tourists may encounter some delay in receiving services because there is a lack in staff, which makes it hard to serve all tourists promptly and competently. There is also a trend among workers in the tourism industry where their attitude and service is different if the tourist is a foreigner. Most of them provide foreign tourists with a top service while domestic tourists do not get the same level of service. Moreover, Jordan is being promoted as a boutique destination but tourists may get less than 5-star service. Some participants also criticized the hotel classification system, and believed it should be reconsidered.

Some participants believe that the infrastructure in Jordan is not good enough to effectively promote the country, as the existing infrastructure cannot support large numbers of tourists. The country also does not have organized transportation; for instance, well-planned local bus stations do not exist for tourists traveling from one place to another as they do in their home countries. The number of hotels is good in the capital Amman, but they are not well distributed throughout the country. In general, Jordan does not have enough hotels to accommodate large numbers of tourists. The problem exists in many other cities and tourism sites, as they lack the needed tourism infrastructure.

“Tourism does not exist only in Amman. A tourist may wish to stay for a night or two in a tourism site such as Oum Kais, but there are no hotels available there. There is one restaurant, which is not very good either. When a tourist visits Ajloun, he might wish to stay in a resort or sleep for a day or two, but there are no hotels available there. The tourism infrastructure in the provinces is poor.”

21% mentioned that the Royal Jordanian (RJ) Airlines flights and seating capacity are a challenge. Participants stated that RJ Airlines does not have the capacity to move large numbers of tourists. For example, the Royal Jordanian flights from many countries such as Spain are not considered adequate. One flight daily from the United States is not enough to handle incoming volume. Another problem is that RJA does not have direct flights to some international countries; flights become too long for tourists, and this does not encourage them to visit Jordan.

Response to Tourism Challenges:

Q: Has there been a response to these challenges by either the private or public sector in Jordan. If so what was it?

The industry has responded to some challenges, and not to others. 86% believe there have been steps toward cooperation between the public and private sectors, including the National Tourism Strategy development in 2004, the JTB development by the public sector in 1997, and meetings between both sectors. The JTB was established to better market Jordan as a tourism destination. The JTB has public relations companies to help with the technical aspects and represent the JTB internationally. The board is an example of a public/private sector partnership. Funding from both the public and private sectors are combined, and it is managed by the private sector and only headed by the public sector through the Ministry of Tourism. Thus, the minister of tourism knows every step the JTB takes, as all decisions go through the ministry in order to agree on implementing them (M. Khouri, personal communication, May 8, 2005; S. Zawaydeh, personal communication, April 28, 2005). The private sector has responded by entering new markets and promoting the country individually.

Results show that 43% of participants did not do anything to prepare for the potential loss of international visitors due to political conditions in the region. Many reasons were given: They believed that nothing could be done; they did not have funds to do anything; no one would come to the country even if promotions were utilized; the political situation was more than the industry could handle and therefore nothing would have helped.

Before the War on Iraq started, efforts were made to attract the regional market. Also efforts were made to increase international press and familiarization trips to the country. The JTB worked on maintaining a presence in source markets by running marketing campaigns and tending consistent relationships with media and tour operators to keep Jordan in international tour operators' catalogues. Royal Jordanian Airlines tried to increase tourism by conducting other promotional efforts like developing new tourism programs such as the "*zuwar* stop over." This program encourages transit travelers to visit tourism sites in Jordan and spend their stay, which might be for a night or two, in Petra or by the Dead Sea, instead of staying in the hotel, for a nominal price. The airline also had agreements with some hotels in Amman and by the Dead Sea to offer rooms for just \$19 a night. The goal of these programs was to show visitors tourism sites even if it was just for few hours, in order to encourage them to come back again for longer periods (B. Kilani, personal communication, May 3, 2005).

There has been a great decline in international tourism numbers since the War on Iraq, up until the first half of 2004, but there has been an increase in production in other ways as Jordan started welcoming the foreign companies which are helping in rebuilding Iraq (R. Soudah, personal communication, April 16, 2005). Participants also noted that

the situation got better by itself specifically since the end of 2004, as political and security issues got better, which helped in increasing tourism numbers after the war. Still, the tourism industry did not return to normal till now. Another thing that helped tourism in Jordan since the war started was that tourists from the Arab countries visited Jordan instead of traveling to international destinations due to the situation (N. Reyal, personal communication, April 19, 2005; S. Zawaydeh, personal communication, April 28, 2005; H. Lukasha, personal communication, April 27, 2005). Also, many businesses in the industry were able to compensate for the lost tourists with an increased influx of Iraqi businessmen and Iraqi citizens who moved to Jordan during that time and stayed in hotels and used restaurants and other facilities (M. Nazzal, personal communication, May 7, 2005).

In 2004 and in order to increase tourism numbers, the JTB, with the cooperation of the Ministry of Tourism, started an incentives program for the JTB offices abroad. The program aims to bring a certain number of tourists to Jordan. If they achieve this goal, offices will be provided with incentives; otherwise they will not be paid to cover their expenses. Promotional materials have been revised to sell Jordan as a stand-alone destination (H. Abadi, personal communication, April 30, 2005; S. Gamouh, personal communication, April 27, 2005).

In general promotion was the main response after the War on Iraq ended. Promotional activities included offering special prices to tourism groups, promoting Jordan as a stand-alone destination, concentrating on promoting Petra, and revising promotional materials.

The Jordan Inbound Tour Operators Association (JITOA) was established in July, 2003 because the country had been in a difficult situation. JITOA took the initiative and arranged meetings with the tourism industry, hoteliers, and tour operators. The association tried to make the War on Iraq good for business and created a market for meetings and conferences to overcome the problems facing tourism (A. Bashiti, personal communication, April 22, 2005). Also, the Ministry of Tourism, the JTB, and JITOA concentrated on certain markets that were not affected by the war, like the Gulf market. People in this market know the situation and they do not have the high fear factor we see in international markets. Huge promotions and road shows for the Arab market were conducted (H. Lukasha, personal communication, April 27, 2005).

In order to overcome the challenges of geographic ignorance and misperception due to political instability, the JTB Amman, through its international offices, worked on developing good relationships with international tour operators and journalists and providing them with positive information about Jordan. Furthermore, JTB offices contacted radio and TV tourism programs and participated heavily in those shows, sending a message of peace to the tourism sector. They targeted top tour operators and travel agents to convince them to keep Jordan in their brochures as a tourism destination. They also invited journalists to visit Jordan and see for themselves the country's reality as a peaceful tourism destination (personal communications from J. Polo, May 5, 2005; M. Asfour, May 20, 2005; and P. Oviedo, April 28, 2005). For example, the JTB office in Spain targeted the Travel Agents' Associations in top Spanish areas such as Madrid and Catalonia as well as the National Federations of Tourism Writers and convinced them to have their annual international meetings in Jordan. The JTB also partnered with its loyal

distribution network and split costs with them 50/50 on advertising to customers in international magazines and newspapers that specialize in tourism (M. Khouri, personal communication, May 8, 2005).

After 9/11 the JTB started bringing 700 journalists a year to Jordan in order to encourage them to write credibly to their readers after they had been in Jordan and seen that it is safe. JTB's international offices worked on sending groups of journalists and radio and TV writers to assert that Jordan was safe and maintained a consistent relationship with the media channels on one side and tour operators on the other to keep people informed on what was happening in Jordan. Mainly they worked on increasing familiarization and press trips for better education and balanced coverage of political issues, maintaining a presence in every source market, and maintaining marketing campaigns in every source market (personal communications from J. Polo, May 5, 2005; M. Asfour, May 20, 2005; P. Oviedo, April 28, 2005; and M. Khouri, May 8, 2005).

As for the funding problem and poor infrastructure, most recently, in 2004 the public and private sector cooperated in developing the National Tourism Strategy (NTS), the most important goals of which are to increase tourism numbers, increase tourism income, and develop tourism products. But some participants criticized the public sector and stated that they talk more than they work. Therefore they believed that the new National Tourism Strategy will be difficult to implement. The private sector believes that they have been always working to maintain the business, especially tour operators. These responded by investing money individually in marketing themselves and the country internationally, and by attending exhibitions and increasing their promotional activities (B. Sawalha, personal communication, May 7, 2005). A tour operator commented: "I

don't believe that the ministry of tourism or the JTB had an effective role in this. I believe that the private sector is doing this work.”

The Jordan Hotel Association was the only participant that entered into a crisis management setup. An international consultancy firm was brought in to conduct lectures and seminars with members of the association to advise them on what to do and how to do it. The presentations talked mostly about cost reduction (M. Nazzal, personal communication, May 7, 2005).

As for the competition and high prices challenge, in 2004 the ministry reduced for a short period the tourism sites' prices by 50% and encouraged more charter flights to the country. The Royal Jordanian airlines gave special prices to tourism groups and increased charter flights from countries where the RJA usually does not fly. The Ministry, with the cooperation of the JTB, tried to reduce barriers to visiting Jordan, gave two nights free for visitors, and tried to concentrate on promoting Petra. Hotels and many tourism businesses concentrated on promotion and depended on price reductions (H. Abadi, personal communication, April 30, 2005; B. Kilni, personal communication, May 3, 2005).

Based on participants' opinions, the image that is being marketed about Jordan includes these points: a safe and friendly destination, beautiful and affordable, civilized and full of history, hospitable and warm people; a variety of experiences and tourism choices including religious, adventure, health and wellness, historical; meetings, incentives, conferences, and events (MICE) tourism; eco-tourism; year-round destination, and stand-alone destination (personal communications from H. Abadi, April 30, 2005; M. Khouri, May 8, 2005; S. Zawaydeh, April 28, 2005; M. Nazzal, May 7, 2005; H.

Lukasha, April 27, 2005; S. Gamouh, April 27, 2005; J. Polo, May 5, 2005; M. Asfour, May 20, 2005; P. Oviedo, April 28, 2005; B. Sawalha, May 7, 2005; B. Kilni, May 3, 2005; A. Bashiti, April 22, 2005; N. Reyal, April 19, 2005; and R. Soudah, April 16, 2005).

Effectiveness of Responses to Tourism Challenges:

Q: Do you think this response was sufficient and effective? Explain.

In general, 79% of participants thought that the response to challenges facing international tourism to Jordan was not efficient for reasons related to public sector management, promotional programs, and limited cooperation between sectors. But 64% believe that the responses after the War on Iraq were effective, mainly because international tourism numbers are increasing.

The government believes that efforts made have been effective: "We are satisfied with our efforts as a government, as tourism numbers have been increasing steadily since the second half of 2004". Many claim that the way the country is introduced and promoted is not effective and believe that responses to issues are slow: "The public sector's response was not effective. After the 9/11 attacks on the US till the year 2003 they didn't do anything different to promote the country. The JTB did their best but I believe that they didn't promote the country right. They should have acted in a different way. For example, after the terrorist attacks in Egypt it took the Egyptians approximately 6 months to recover but in the case of Jordan it took few years." Another participant said: "I wouldn't say it was effective, because unfortunately to get on TV worldwide is very expensive, so we had to be very selective as we couldn't go and spread ourselves thin, to have ads in one country and a clip in another, and so on."

Furthermore, they believe that promotional activities are limited and insufficient to convince people that the country is safe and secure. Information about Jordan does not reach people in many international countries. It is hard to convince people to visit the country when promotional activities are lacking. Many people do not even know where Jordan is or know anything else about Jordan, especially in Eastern Europe and in new markets targeted by the tourism board such as the Russian and Chinese markets (personal communications from N. Reyal, April 19, 2005; B. Kilni, May 3, 2005; A. Bashiti, April 22, 2005; and M. Khouri, May 8, 2005). A participant believed that even if promotions were used heavily they would not have helped tourism numbers during crises: “We have seen growth in the first months of 2005 and we anticipate a 50% increase in number of tourists in groups and individuals. Of course the promotional activities have brought people in, but now that the safety factor is not a concern, tourists will come. We would have promoted during the previous two to three years but they would not have come anyway.”

Changing Jordan's image and external misperception seem to be successful for some participants. The Spanish tourism writers produced 160 articles as testimonies of Jordan's safety as a tourism destination (P. Oviedo, personal communication, April 28, 2005). For hoteliers the situation has become better: “Knowing that this year we have reached 70% occupancy through the country, yes, it has been effective. But of course we have lost three years.” Other international tourism board participants also said: “We are glad to report that the most important tour operators in the market have kept Jordan as a tourism destination in their brochures and catalogues.” “We have not experienced one single case of a journalist's returning afraid or convinced that Jordan is not a place to

visit. The same is true for tour operators who have the responsibility to sell Jordan as a tourism destination in their brochures.” The gradual increase in international tourism numbers since the end of 2004 seems to be an indicator for the success of efforts to engage those participants. “Jordan has become a new destination for many countries as Egypt has become a known product to everyone. People are looking for a new place to visit, especially those who have already visited Egypt and want to see something else. So the activities JTB does are reflected in the numbers of visitors” (personal communications from J. Polo, May 5, 2005; M. Asfour, May 20, 2005; P. Oviedo, April 28, 2005; and S. Zawaydeh, April 28, 2005).

Many believed that the response was ineffective and weak for several reasons: “The National Tourism Strategy puts the crisis and challenges aside and focuses on developing the tourism industry and marketing it. I wouldn't say the response was effective because unfortunately it is very hard to do research and promote Jordan effectively when we have a small budget. The government focuses on numbers and ignores the tourism product. They do not forecast ahead and no one reads reports. You can also find some conflicts of interest within the JTB board of directors.” Other reasons were given for efforts' failure: “Meetings with the public and private sectors are few and limited.” “The challenge is that tourism parties may compete unethically and do not cooperate totally with each other. For example, one tour operator controls the Hungarian market. One or two companies control sea transportation. So we have some kind of a monopoly.”

As for competition and prices, some participants asserted: “No single response is totally sufficient; tourism is a business with much competition and we cannot just work

on one solution, we must continue responding to the market changes and the market reality of every day.” “We can't oblige tourists to come to visit Jordan. We just provide them with the choice to come. The demand has been increasing gradually. But if we can decrease prices more, tourists will come.”(personal communications from J. Polo, May 5, 2005; S. Zawaydeh, April 28, 2005).

Some participants believe that the National Tourism Strategy (NTS) will not achieve its goals by 2010 because the NTS works through a framework that should be followed by action plans—but unfortunately, reliable action plans have not been developed. One participant asserted: “One of the strategy's goals is to simplify tourism issues for the tourism sector, but what we are seeing is completely different. They impose difficulties and barriers. For example, one day they put restrictions on a certain nationality; the next day they do the opposite. Once they say you have to get a visa for a certain nationality, and the next day they cancel that. Procedures in a Northern border crossing can be different from that in the South or at the airport.” Another participant stated: “I doubt that the NTS will achieve the drawn objectives. When they have a vision like this, which is to achieve a certain number of tourists, 2 million or so, the country should be ready to accommodate this number. I don't know on what basis the strategy was built.”

But the good thing is that the public and private sector parties have been trying to move in the same direction, which is something new. There have been attempts by the JTB, the Ministry, the Hotel Association, and the JITOA, but still there are some difficulties including lack of coordination and cooperation. and conflicts of interests among tourism parties (personal communications from A. Bashiti, April 22, 2005; N.

Reyal, April 19, 2005; R. Soudah, April 16, 2005; S. Gamouh, April 27, 2005; and M. Asfour, May 20, 2005).

Table 8

Survey Results

<i>Question</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>%</i>
1	Infrastructure	4	29%
	Hotel distribution	2	14%
	Can't accommodate high numbers	2	14%
	Lack of organized transportation	1	7%
	Political situation in the region	8	57%
	Palestinian-Israeli conflict	8	57%
	War on Iraq	7	50%
	Syria/Lebanon/Egypt	2	14%
	World events	5	36%
	SARS	1	7%
	September 11 th	5	36%
	Media coverage	3	21%
	War on terrorism	1	7%
	Middle East	3	21%
	Misperception	6	43%
	Middle East unsafe	5	36%
	Arab-Muslim	1	7%
	People's attitude towards tourists	1	7%
	Geographic ignorance	4	29%
	Lack of knowledge about Jordan and Middle East	4	29%
	Service	4	29%
	Lack of staff	2	14%
	Workers' attitudes	2	14%
	Deficiencies	2	14%
	Marketing	5	36%
	Lack of promotion to new and existing markets	4	29%
	Funds	3	21%
	Approach and activities	1	7%
	Jordanian Airlines	3	21%
	Direct flights	1	7%
	Number of flights	3	21%
	Competition within industry	1	7%
	Prices	1	7%
	Unethical	1	7%
	Competition with other destinations	4	29%
	Unethical	1	7%
	High prices	3	21%
	Airfares	1	7%

Table 8 (continued)

<i>Question</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>%</i>
	Increase visitors' stays	1	7%
	Specialized tourism offices	1	7%
	No challenges	1	7%
2	Cooperation between public and private sectors	12	86%
	NTS development	4	29%
	JTB development	8	57%
	Meetings with industry	2	14%
	Enter new exhibitions and markets	1	7%
	Promote the country individually through private sector	2	14%
	Groups report the country is safe when they come back	1	7%
3	<i>Not sufficient</i>	11	79%
	Limited cooperation between sectors	3	21%
	Limited meetings	2	14%
	Unethical competition	1	7%
	Efforts by public and private sector not enough	1	7%
	JTB can't impose anything on private sector	1	7%
	Promotional programs	3	21%
	Limited to small periods	1	7%
	No general promotional policy	1	7%
	Companies depend on their own promotions	1	7%
	No funds	1	7%
	Since 9/11 nothing new has been done	1	7%
	Public sector	5	36%
	Talk too much	1	7%
	Government efforts are not enough	2	14%
	Management of tourism sites / high prices	3	21%
	<i>Sufficient and effective in some way</i>	2	14%
	Tourism numbers increase due to Jordan's reputation and Promotional activities	2	14%
	<i>No single response is sufficient</i>	1	7%
	<i>Can't judge</i>	1	7%
	<i>Depend on the crisis</i>	1	7%
4	Yes	14	100%
5	Promotion	2	14%
	New tourism programs	1	7%
	Reduced prices for tourism sites for tourists	1	7%
	Concentrate on the outgoing tourism	1	7%

Table 8 (continued)

<i>Question</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>%</i>
	Concentrate on regional market	5	36%
	Increase marketing efforts and budgets	5	36%
	Encourage more charter flights	1	7%
	Increase press trips and familiarization trips	3	21%
	Increased investment in distribution network	1	7%
	International consultancy firm/ cost reduction	1	7%
	Maintain existence in every source market	3	21%
	Maintain marketing campaigns	2	14%
	Keep Jordan in tour operators catalogues	1	7%
	Consistent relationship with media and tour operators	2	14%
	Did not prepare	6	43%
	Nothing could be done	4	29%
	No funds to do anything more	2	14%
	Not yet established	1	7%
6	Promotion	10	71%
	Special offers or prices to tourism groups	7	50%
	Promote Jordan as a stand-alone destination	1	7%
	Concentrate on promoting Petra	1	7%
	Reproduced promotional materials	1	7%
	Participation in radio and TV tourism programs	1	7%
	Continue and increase tourism programs in regional markets	3	21%
	Develop charter flights	1	7%
	JITOA established July 2003	1	7%
	Incentive programs for JTB offices	2	14%
	Partnered with distribution network	1	7%
	Cooperated in advertising in magazines and newspapers	1	7%
	NTS development	1	7%
	Develop good relationships with top tour operators and travel agents	5	36%
	Keep Jordan in their brochures	3	21%
	Participate in international exhibitions	3	21%
	Continue press and familiarization trips	3	21%
7	<i>Effective</i>	9	64%
	Ministry made 50% price reductions in 2004	1	7%
	Programs helped in lessening the loss after the war in Iraq	1	7%
	Good reaction from private sector	1	7%
	Association of journalists and tourism writers	1	7%
	Produced 160 articles /testimonies to Jordan's safety	1	7%

Table 8 (continued)

<i>Question</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>%</i>
	Entering new markets is an indicator	1	7%
	International numbers are increasing	3	21%
	Got to 70% occupancy, but lost 3 years	1	7%
	Journalists and tour operators who visit are convinced that Jordan is safe	1	7%
	<i>Not effective</i>	5	36%
	The way products are introduced and promoted	1	7%
	No reliable action plans for NTS	1	7%
	Don't believe that the ministry of tourism or the JTB had an effective role in this; tour operators are doing this work.	1	7%
	Demand has been increasing steadily but need more work	1	7%
	Can't determine the real reasons for the increase	1	7%
8	Funds	9	64%
	Promotion and advertisement	9	64%
	Develop trained guides	1	7%
	Develop good airlines	1	7%
	Political situation	6	43%
	Stability and peace in the Middle East	6	43%
	Competition with other destinations	4	29%
	Prices	2	14%
	Limited flights	1	7%
	Unethical competition with other countries	1	7%
	Media	3	21%
	Misperception	2	14%
	Attract the right media	1	7%
	Public sector	4	29%
	Efficient staff	4	29%
	Changing Minister	3	21%
	Laws and regulations	2	14%
	Support tourism growth	1	7%
	Visa law an obstacle to promoting to new markets	1	7%
	Interaction of regulations	1	7%
	Obstacle to achieving NTS	1	7%
	Communication problems between public and private sectors	1	7%
	Geographic ignorance	1	7%
	Lack of information internationally	1	7%
	Marketing in proper manner	2	14%
	Distance	1	7%

Table 8 (continued)

<i>Question</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>%</i>
9	Safety and security	14	100%
	Civilized	1	7%
	Price	1	7%
	Distance	1	7%
10	Safe country	9	64%
	Hospitalized and friendly people	3	21%
	Boutique destination	1	7%
	Civilized	2	14%
	Variety of tourism products	6	43%
	Affordable	3	21%
	Year-round destination	2	14%
	Stand-alone destination	1	7%
11	Expect to grow steadily	8	57%
	Good but not perfect	1	7%
	Stable tourism	2	14%
	Safety	2	14%
	Individual competences and efforts of the private sector	1	7%
	American companies that come from Iraq	1	7%
	Back to normal	1	7%
	Excellent compared to 2003 but numbers are still low compared to 1999	2	14%

CHAPTER VI – CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Jordan has been experiencing crises for many years. Tourism has been affected by political instability in the Middle East, represented mainly by the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the War on Iraq. Events such as September 11th attacks on the US as well as the war on terrorism affected international tourism flows to Jordan (as they did worldwide). Interviews revealed that safety and security have become the main concerns of tourists, and many participants believed that international media have had a big role in promoting wrong ideas about Middle Eastern countries (Beirman, 2003). Although Jordan has been the safest country in the region, it is still considered part of a turbulent area.

Jordan's tourism sector had to turn to the regional market, primarily the Gulf and Saudi Arabian markets, to balance the decline in international arrivals to the country. The Gulf market brought fewer revenues to tourism compared to the international market. One reason may be that regional tourists' needs are different as they tend to stay in furnished apartments rather than hotels and usually do not ask for packaged tours like internationals. Nonetheless, the increase in regional Arab visitors somewhat counterbalanced the decrease in international visitors' numbers. The Jordanian tourism sector has also worked on attracting American corporate business that has increased since the War on Iraq, by promoting meeting, incentives, conferences, and events tourism (MICE) as another step to compensate for the decrease in international numbers.

No country is immune to crises, but Jordan's tourism losses due to political, economic, and organizational reasons seems to be surrounded by internal and external problems. As the Jordanian tourism sector is small relative to other destinations in the

region such as Egypt, it is not yet capable of producing enough funds to counter misperception through promotion and advertising in the media. The private sector depends largely on government funds, but unfortunately the Jordanian government cannot be considered that rich either; therefore, it is very difficult to produce enough resources to promote Jordan as a safe and sound destination. Furthermore, the marketing budget of the Jordan Tourism Board (JTB) is not large enough to implement effective promotional campaigns, so the JTB had to settle for humble expenditures on an image-creating strategy that many of the study participants interviewed believed to be a waste of money because of its ineffectiveness. Ironically, in other cases, destination marketing organizations can be criticized for spending large amounts on advertising campaigns while ignoring what needs to be achieved, which is market research into visitor interests, behaviors, and attitudes (Middelton and Clarke, 2004).

When the responses to Jordan's tourism crises after the War on Iraq (Table 8) are compared to recovery practices used by destinations (Table 2), it can be observed that destinations usually depend on similar traditional marketing and public relations activities without assessing travelers' risk perception. It also can be observed that lack of funding, the JTB's over-reliance on public relations activities, the absence of crisis management plans, and conflicts of interests between the public and private sectors are among the many factors that hinder Jordan's quick recovery from tourism crisis. To clarify, interviews revealed that international visitor numbers did not start to increase until the end of 2004, which means that the JTB did not rapidly achieve its objectives, which are to change Jordan's image and increase its international tourism numbers. It is well known that public relations have become one of the most powerful marketing communication

tools and can be an important brand-building tool. However, advertising and PR should work hand in hand to achieve targeted objectives (Kotler and Armstrong, 2004).

Therefore, the study argues that if Jordan had had enough funds to plan effectively for promotional campaigns, and had incorporated PR as well as crisis management activities with them, real recovery could have been achieved earlier.

Moreover, the development of effective marketing strategies and successful images need assessments, market knowledge, information, and detailed research. Unfortunately, no JTB research department existed until the beginning of year 2005. Nevertheless, tourism research by the Ministry of Tourism was limited to gathering data about in-country tourism activities and volumes. It is important for the new JTB research department to conduct research regarding actual and potential travelers and their needs, which will help in determining which target markets to serve and help in the development of appropriate promotional programs. It is also essential to examine tourists' perceptions in order to design effective promotional messages and effectively plan and implement promotional programs. Additionally, it is important for the research department to be able to evaluate tourism promotional activities and analyze market competition.

Many case studies, such as the foot-and-mouth disease crisis in Britain, the massacre of tourists in Australia, and Fiji's coups, proved that a high degree of cooperation and coordination between the government and the private sectors in managing and marketing a crisis is crucial to achieving successful recovery. Other examples such as 9/11 in the United States and the Croatian crisis revealed that government's support of the tourism industry had played a big role in overcoming these crises. Nevertheless, as in the case of Jordan, there seems to be an atmosphere of mutual

blame rather than cooperation between the public and private sectors, despite some humble steps of cooperation that were initiated by the development of the Tourism Board in 1988 and the launching of the National Tourism Strategy (NTS) in 2004.

Furthermore, many parties in the private sector challenge JTB's and the public sector's competencies. Others criticize the public sector because the Ministers consistently change; by the time they get to know what to do, they are gone! Also, many doubt if the NTS will be able to succeed in achieving its objectives because of the public sector's regulations and interferences with other government regulations, current weak tourism infrastructure, and lack of funds. In addition, there seem to be many parties involved in the process that have conflicting interests, which makes cooperation between these parties difficult. Moreover, the private sector seems to know the problems facing tourism well while the public sector seems to ignore them.

The National Tourism Strategy can be considered a guide to tourism development and growth and is supposed to increase tourism receipts to US \$1.84 billion, create 51,000 tourism-supported jobs, and bring in more than US \$637 million in tax revenues for the government by year 2010. These optimistic assumptions are based on predictions that the tourism market will grow due to government policy corrections that are expected in the near future. Unfortunately, to date the government has not implemented any regulatory or any policy corrections suggested by the NTS, such as amending the financial restrictions on the tourism sector. Furthermore, although Jordan is still very vulnerable to any potential crisis, which can be an obstacle to achieving the predicted growth and identified objectives, the NTS did not prepare any contingency plans and has failed to address crisis management issues.

Both the private and public sectors recognize the negative effects of crisis situations, but interviews revealed that neither is aware of crisis management practices and their planning benefits—in view of the fact that crisis management was not used by either sector before or after any crisis. Therefore, the industry is not yet prepared to deal properly with possible future crises. Only one organization entered into a crisis management setup and acquired the help of an international crisis consultancy firm. Yet that firm mainly provided cost reduction consultancy rather than a thorough crisis management plan (M. Nazzal, personal communication, May 7, 2005).

This examined marketing efforts and responses to challenges taken by the public and private sectors in order to change Jordan's image internationally. Members of the public sector in particular believe that tourism is in good health based on the present stable political situation and the steady increase in international and regional tourism numbers since the year 2004. Visitor numbers to Jordan increased by 43% during the first four months of 2004 compared with 2003. An estimated 469,750 tourists entered Jordan, mostly from Arab countries, and hotel occupancy increased by 28% compared with 2003 (United Press International, 2004), but this increase in visitor numbers can be misleading because it is measured against the 2003 first quarter decrease in visitor numbers due to the War on Iraq. Therefore, the humble increase in tourism numbers can be considered a result of the events in the region, and does not indicate an improvement in tourism's health in the country. Furthermore, statistics of the Ministry of Tourism do not provide analysis and real tourism numbers, as they are not comprehensive enough to provide clear differentiation between transit travelers and tourists, or differentiate between those who come for political reasons and those who come for business (Fakhoury, 2004; Marketing

Plan, 2003). The public and private sectors both think that things are already just fine and do not understand the need to learn and change. The main questions are:

- When will the policy corrections take place?
- Is it a good strategy to ignore the future?
- What will happen if another political crisis occurred?
- What will happen when the Iraqi issue ends and the corporate American companies are gone?

This study makes the following recommendations to help in managing Jordan's tourism crisis:

1. The first step is to start internally. The public and private sectors should learn from their mistakes, past crises, and other destinations' experiences with recovery in order to transform crisis situations into an improved state:

An improved state is [made] possible by the ability of an organization or destination to learn from crises and disasters, make policy changes, and adapt and modify strategies that did not work effectively ... however, the ability of organizations to learn is determined by their interest in learning from incidents and perhaps their organizational culture. (Ritchie, 2004, p. 679)

Therefore, organizational changes, particularly in the public sector, should be the main priority. These changes should include improvements in structure, policies, and culture. Change should begin with top management, who should be competent and professional in order to plan and communicate organizational change. Middle management should be trained and restructured by assigning competent individuals to the right jobs.

Another good strategy is to increase communications and meetings within the public sector itself and between the public and private sectors. A strong leader is required to bring stakeholders together and coordinate their efforts, policies, and regulations. Also, the public sector should make more aggressive efforts to convey the need for continuous cooperation between all parties in the tourism sector, thus enabling them to understand the economic benefits of tourism and to encourage productive cooperation. Buhalis and Cooper (1998) argued that tourism suppliers at destinations need to mature and understand that they should not compete but should join forces to develop and implement comprehensive marketing strategies which will allow them to compete with other destinations.

2. The Tourism Board, with governmental partnership, should be given the authority to impose legislation that is consistent and beneficial to the tourism industry, considering all stakeholders' needs, and that helps in reducing the degree of conflict between stakeholders. Further, the government should make regulatory changes to improve the currently weak geographic distribution of accommodations. Regulations should also encourage private investment and simplify international investment in order to develop and upgrade the tourism infrastructure in various sites.

3. Moreover, this study argues that the private sector should not only be involved in marketing the country, but also be jointly involved with the public sector in tourism product development and planning activities, which can be an additional step towards enhancing the tourism infrastructure in the country.

4. Additionally, it is necessary to establish a crisis management team consisting of representatives of the main competent tourism stakeholders. This team should cooperate

with the JTB board of directors in analyzing all issues related to tourism in Jordan. After that, the team should coordinate its efforts in order to create a general tourism planning and promotional strategy, integrated with crisis management plans, to better promote and market the country. Security and safety and how they influence travel decisions are essential issues that should be well understood in order to create effective recovery marketing plans and help regain travelers' confidence in the country. As demonstrated by the Egyptian and Turkish examples, an expert consultancy firm can be of great help in preparing crisis management plans that provide a range of scenarios and contingency plans. The costs related to consultancy and preparation for crisis and contingency plans may be seen as high and as unworthy expenditures. But in the long run, this will be money well spent; it will increase recovery speed, prevent a decrease in tourism numbers, and limit additional losses in revenues caused by a negative image.

5. As demonstrated by the examples of United States and Britain, websites are good tools that help in recovery. Therefore, the JTB websites should be enhanced to address tourists' safety and security concerns rather than ignore them.

6. Rather than targeting many markets with a small budget, the JTB should concentrate on certain profitable markets based on market research and on assessing tourists' needs and concerns, in order to plan marketing and PR activities more effectively, and to enable allocating more funds to the targeted markets. It is advisable to expand gradually to other markets when funds are available. Building additional strong relationships with the industry, international tour operators, and media channels will help in establishing Jordan as a target destination and in restoring confidence and building a more positive image. In addition, it would be helpful to stretch the JTB's budget by

cooperating with one or more destinations in the region in joint marketing and advertising efforts. Also, Jordan should work on enhancing its tourism offerings and differentiate its products in the region. A variety of promotional activities can be used such as conducting international themed promotions to convey unique experiences, and introducing international special events such as fairs or sports tournaments

Jordan has great tourism products, great potential, and is diverse in archeological and natural sites; it is the Holy Land, and it has the lowest point on earth, the Moon Valley, and Petra. Other Middle Eastern destinations such as Dubai do not have similar offerings, but Dubai's leadership, funding, planning, and creativity conveyed to the world that it is one of the most attractive cities to visit.

Richter (1999) emphasized that the first step for tourism recovery is to understand what cripples tourism (p. 44). In Jordan's case, empowering structural, cultural, and policy changes is essential to recover from and plan for tourism crises effectively. Additional research is required to understand how organizational learning and change can influence a destination's recovery. And further research is needed to examine the impact of governmental policies on tourism recovery.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix A

Survey Questions

1. What are the current challenges facing international tourism to Jordan?
2. Has there been a response to these challenges by either the private or public sector in Jordan. If so what was it?
3. Do you think this response was sufficient and effective - explain?
4. Was there a decline in international tourism to Jordan as a result of the war in Iraq?
5. Did your organization do anything to prepare for the potential loss in international tourism before the war in Iraq - explain?
6. How did your organization respond to the decline in international tourist arrivals after the war in Iraq?
7. Was the reponse effective - explain?
8. What are the major challenges to marketing tourism to Jordan internationally?
9. What do you think is the number one concern international visitors have when considering a visit to Jordan?
10. What is the current image Jordan is trying to promote regarding its tourism?
11. How would you describe the current health of international tourism to Jordan?

Appendix B

Cover Letter

Dear...,

I am working towards fulfilling my requirements for a Masters in Hospitality and Tourism Management from Rochester Institute of Technology, Rochester NY. One of my degree requirements is the completion of a Research Thesis. The attached survey is the instrument used to gather data for the research. The research is being conducted in order to better understand challenges facing international tourism to Jordan.

Your input and participation is very valuable, and most appreciated. Therefore, I would greatly appreciate arranging for a conference call to conduct this survey. If not possible, I appreciate your completing the attached survey and returning it as soon as possible.

Please be assured that your responses will be held in the strictest confidence. If you choose to complete the survey by e-mail, kindly provide as much information as possible on the survey as your extensive data is very crucial for the success of this study.

Thank you in advance for your time and help. If you have any questions about this study, you can contact the person(s) below:

Rasha H. Saoudi

Richard M. Lagiewski

Hospitality & Tourism Management

Hospitality & Service Management

College of Applied Science & Technology

College of Applied Science & Technology

Rochester Institute of Technology

Rochester Institute of Technology

Jordan

USA

Waiting to hear from you soon

Sincerely,

Appendix C

List of Participant Organizations

1. Jordan Tourism Board, Amman-Jordan
2. Jordan Tourism Board, North America
3. Jordan Tourism Board, Barcelona-Spain
4. Jordan Tourism Board, Madrid-Spain
5. Jordan Hotel Association
6. Jordan Inbound Tour Operators Association
7. Jordan Society of Tourism and Travel Agents
8. Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities
9. Petra Travel and Tourism Company
10. Plaza Tours
11. Royal Jordanian Airlines

Appendix D

Survey Question in Arabic Language

- 1- ما هي التحديات الحالية التي تواجه السياحة الخارجية (الأجنبية) إلى الأردن؟
- 2- هل كان هناك استجابة من قبل القطاع العام أو الخاص في الأردن لتلك التحديات؟ ما هي هذه الاستجابة؟
- 3- هل تعتقد أن هذه الاستجابة كانت كافية وفعالة؟ الرجاء التوضيح؟
- 4- هل حصل هناك هبوط في عدد السياح الأجانب القادمين إلى الأردن نتيجة الحرب على العراق؟
- 5- هل قامت وزارة السياحة بالتحضير للهبوط المحتمل في عدد السياح قبل الحرب على العراق؟ ماهو؟ الرجاء التفسير؟
- 6- كيف قامت وزارة السياحة بمواجهة الهبوط الحاصل في عدد السياح الأجانب بعد الحرب على العراق؟
- 7- هل تعتقد أن الرد كان فعالاً؟
- 8- ماهي التحديات الرئيسية التي تواجه تسويق الأردن إلى الخارج؟
- 9- ماذا تعتقد هو الشاغل الأول الذي يشغل السياح الأجانب عند التفكير بزيارة الأردن؟
- 10- ماهي الصورة السياحية التي تحاول الأردن ترويجها؟
- 11- كيف تصف الحالة الحالية للسياحة الخارجية إلى الأردن؟

Anne Zachmeyer

From: Jim Walter
Sent: Wednesday, June 14, 2006 1:02 PM
To: Anne Zachmeyer
Subject: course of study
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Red

I spoke with Jake today and this is what we have mapped out:

Aug- Strategy

Online:

Fall Breakthrough

Winter Workforce and CRM

June 2007

Metrics

Futures

August

Leadership

How do I do the online stuff?

Jim

Jim Walter

Executive Director

Madison County Tourism, Inc.

6/19/2006

5.0 Course Materials and Texts

- 5.1 Pine, Joseph and James H. Gilmore (1999). The Experience Economy. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.
- 5.2 Lanning, Michael J. (2000). Delivering Profitable Value. New York: Perseus Press.**** *This text also used in The Elements course.*
- 5.3 Bossidy, Larry and Charan, Ram (2002). Execution: The Discipline of Getting Things Done. New York: Crown Business.
- 5.4 Fahey, Liam and Randall, Robert (1998). Learning From the Future: Competitive Foresight Scenarios. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- 5.5 Prahalad, C. K. & Ramaswamy, Venkat (2004). The Future of Competition: Co-Creating Unique Value with Customers. Harvard Business School Press.

5.6 Selected Readings from, but not limited to, the following:

5.6.1 Morgan, Bruce (1998). Strategy and enterprise value in the relationship economy. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold.

5.6.2 Pate, Carter and Platt, Harlan (2002). The Phoenix Effect. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

******All of the above will be included in the course pack and must be read prior to class sessions.**

5.6.3 Forbes, Fortune, The Wall Street Journal, and Other periodicals.