



# Rwanda's Innovative Marketing Strategies and Influence on Tourism Development: Case of Northern Tourist Destinations in Rwanda

Kalulu Ronald, Dr. Kabera Callixte, Tushabe Emmy & Niyinderera Pascal  
University of Tourism, Technology and Business Studies, Rwanda

Email: [kaluluronald@gmail.com](mailto:kaluluronald@gmail.com)

*Received March 9, 2020; Reviewed April 11, 2020; Accepted April 17, 2020*

**Abstract:** *The study examined Rwanda's innovative marketing strategies and its influence on tourism development. The study used a sample size of 123 respondents mainly from Rwanda Development Board (RDB), tour operators, tourists, park officials and transport officers who were conveniently and purposively selected in accordance to their availability and willingness to participate in the study. The major findings revealed that Rwanda has existing traditional marketing strategies. However, given their performance, they are not as effective as they are supposed to be. In a bid to attract more tourists, RDB introduced new innovative marketing designs which can capture the attention and the mind of the visitor. This is in agreement with Morgan and Pitchard (2000) who stated and argued that the battle for customers in the tourism industry will be fought not over price but over the hearts and minds, thus, RDB introduced Kwita Izina ceremony, diplomats country tour, partnerships with European football clubs, product innovation, MICE tourism, doubling gorilla price, improving service standards, and biodiversity conservation. This has increased visitor arrivals hence, tourism growth in terms of sales revenue, private sector investment, increased FDI in tourism sector among others. The study recommends more allocation of funds for the effective global marketing, particularly with a mix of both private and public efforts.*

**Keywords:** *Analysis, Marketing, Tourism, Strategy, Examining, Rwanda*

## 1. Introduction

Tourism is one of the three major economies that is changing societies globally. Tourism is the collection of activities, services and industries that deliver a travel experience and other hospitality services provided for individuals or groups travelling away from home (Birhanu K, 2016). It is the world's largest and rapidly growing industry after technology and telecommunication. Tourism has an impact in both the developing and the developed world GDP, (David J. Saunders (2002). This is true as a lot of revenue is generated due to interactions between tourists and destination. This creates a significant impact in many countries due to the multiplier impact of the tourism revenue including Rwanda (Bhatia, 2015). The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO,2019), puts France as

the most visited destination in the world followed by Spain, USA, China and Italy and that the global tourist arrivals in 2018 was 1.4 billion tourists, a rise of 6% over 2017 that was 1.326 billion visitors and is forecasted to increase to 1.8 billion by 2030. From the above figures, Africa managed to receive only 63 million (9%) tourist arrivals, while Rwanda, where the study was conducted received 1.7 million tourists and thus employing 142,000 Rwandans directly up from 90,000 in 2017(Clare Akamanzi, New Times-December 4,2019).

These visitors brought in a total global receipt worth \$1.7trillion or about 2% of total global GDP compared to \$1,340 billion in 2017, and \$25 million in the 1950s (Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report, 2017; WTO, 2016). Rwanda received a total share of the global tourism revenue of \$408 in 2018, an indicator that the industry is on a right way to development (RDB report,

2018). The above statistical representations have been propelled by globalization, which has brought competitiveness among destinations, states, sites, businesses and people. This means that, those destinations that market more and reach more to the customers, are always winners of tourist spending power hence tourism revenue. According to various scholars like (Drucker,1999) and (Kotler, 2000), marketing is the action of getting products known to potential and existing tourists as supported by (Fáilte, 2015; Khasawneh and Ibrahim, 2016; Rooney, Hearn & Ninan, 2015). Several destinations are bringing tourist destinations and locations near the customers using sophisticated means for instance, Cyprus and the Bahamas spend more than \$40 on each visitor through advertising, organising tourism fairs and direct marketing. (Anholt, 2005; Aronczyk, 2013). On the other hand, Scotland's national tourism agency "Visit Scotland", is widely considered to be a good model, spends \$40 millions a year marketing to 14 million visitors, who spend \$8 billions in return (Juan,2015; Tourism Australia, 2010a: 3).

Australia has the following slogan,

*"there's nothing like Australia" (TNLA) is a nation-branding campaign aimed at promoting tourism. This was done through the co-creation of an interactive map of Australia using 30000 holiday pictures shared by citizens on social media. The first stage of "TNLA" was developed in three phases: "inspire", "invite", "engage". First, Tourism Australia invited citizens to participate uploading photos of their holidays and a description of 25 words to the website [www.nothinglikeaustralia.com](http://www.nothinglikeaustralia.com). "Over 28 days – Tourism Australia reported – nearly 30,000 photos and inspiring personal stories were uploaded, making it one of Australia's most successful consumer-generated promotions ever. Today, the brand has almost 6 million fans on Facebook, 100 thousand followers in Twitter and 650 thousand on Instagram." (Juan,2015; Tourism Australia, 2010a: 3).*

In addition, Australia has invested a lot of funds estimated to AUD 5 billion (EUR3.4 billion), with the potential to generate more than AUD140 billion (EUR 97 billion) by 2020. It has also partnered with 19 airlines in 16 markets to promote Australia collectively with more than AUD32 million (EUR22 million), (Canning and Saurine 2010; Tourism Australia, 2010a: 2). In Africa, South Africa is getting exposure on prime-time television through partnerships with popular programmes such as "The Bachelor" that has a wide audience of over 20 million fans and it has generated a record website visitor and drove bookings. The Seychelles is marketing herself as the purest and most uncommercialized destination in the world, and the island received 300,000 international tourists to its 115 islands in 2015. In East

Africa, tourism marketing has taken the same shape but with a different approach of improving hospitality establishments, improving production efficiency, partnership building, and enhancing customer services. Tourism continues to grow with more initiatives being put in place by the government through Rwanda Development Board (RDB). Thus, tourism has been identified as a priority sector to achieve Rwanda's development goals as set out in Vision 2020, given an enormous pace of growth (Clarence Fernandes, May 15, 2015, New Times Rwanda).

Therefore, in order for Rwanda to gain a share of the global tourists, the country has been rolling out multiple efforts to attract more visitors in the country. RDB is continuously putting in place initiatives to complement the already existing ones to further grow the tourism sector. We are working on a "Focus and Dominate" strategy that includes aggressive marketing and product diversification. So far, we have kayaking and house boat experiences at Lake Kivu, Gishwati-Mukura is now a national park and very soon we shall open cultural centres in Rulindo and Rebero in Kigali," (Karasira, Chief tourism officer RDB,2015). Among the avenues the county adopted, it has been creating a diversity of wildlife in local parks with re-introduction of lions in 2015 and the addition of rhinos in 2019 in the savannah park of Akagera in the eastern province in 2015. In response, Wilson Habimana, a tour operator and founder of Wilson Tours says *"the presence of the Big 5 in Akagera has increased the number of trips his company makes to the park 12-fold. I am very interested in domestic tourism and I must acknowledge that the numbers of local people visiting local destinations increased specifically in Nyungwe and Akagera parks."* (May 15, 2015, New Times Rwanda).

The county has also, innovated other marketing designs that are more sustainable than the traditional ones. The single tourism visa under the auspices of the three-state is having a greater impact on the tourism sector. Under this strategy, the three states of Uganda, Kenya and Rwanda join together in marketing and increasing the visibility of touristic attractions in the participating countries. For instance, under the above project, Rwanda had talked with the Uganda and Kenya tourism boards to have exhibition stands during the Pope's visit to Kampala (November, 2015). "Rwanda is considering scrapping visa fees for citizens of the Commonwealth, as well as the African Union and La Francophonie member countries", President Paul Kagame announced. This, will among other things increase chances of Rwanda hosting global summits due to ease of access, among other benefits. The development could also see Rwandans easily access countries from across the globe in the event of reciprocity by beneficiary countries (New times newspaper, January 22, 2020). This initiative together

with the single tourism visa has seen a rise in leisure tourists from Kenya by 50 per cent (RDB report, 2015).

Rwanda is continuing to market her destinations through product diversifications and innovations with the aim of attracting new customers. These include, Kwita Izina ceremony, canopy walk, diplomats’ country tour, tour du Rwanda, and strengthening culture among others. Furthermore, the government, through the leadership of H.E. Paul Kagame, announced a sponsorship deal with Arsenal Football Club in 2017 worth £30 million given that the Football Club is seen 35million times daily globally and the club is a darling among the millennials who form the majority of the world market. This action alone, has seen an increase of British travellers coming to Rwanda by 20 per cent in just one year (RDB, 2018). Recently, in November 2019, the government again signed a marketing contract with Paris Saint Germain (PSG) football club as a way of winning French travellers and the young followers of PSG team to visit Rwanda. This has seen many tourists to increase in the country as confirmed by Virtuoso, an international travel agency network, which recognised Rwanda among the top 10 countries that have experienced significant increases by bookings especially among American travellers (New Times, August 19, 2019). The management of Akagera national park in Eastern province recorded more than 44,000 tourists in 2018 half of who were domestic. This earned the park alone USD \$ 2 million (over Rwandan francs 1.8 billion) in 2018 and expressed optimism for an increased number of tourists in 2019.

Moreover, the country wants to place herself as a luxury tourist destination by diversifying the country’s natural,

cultural, religious and other attractions in the country using unique and innovative tools such as investing and improving her hospitality facilities as well as coming up with new ones such as Bisate Lodge, Amakoro Songa lodge, One and Only Nyungwe and the newly opened Singita safari lodge in Kinigi sector. Additionally, Rwanda is also strong on growing tourism earnings through the conference tourism sector. Conference tourism commonly known as Meetings Incentives conferences and Exhibitions (MICE) is a new form of tourism in Rwanda, which targets travellers coming in for meetings, incentives, conferences and events from all parts of the world. According to a report published in Rwanda’s economic survey (2015), Rwanda Convention Bureau (RCB) was established to promote Rwanda as a premier MICE destination in the world. Since its launch in 2014, MICE tourism has become Rwanda’s source of revenue drawing thousands of MICE travellers from all parts of the world to Rwanda. In this respect, Rwanda hosted over 169 international meetings within a period of two years from 2016 to 2018, which attracted tens of thousands of travellers hence an indirect support for the service providers such as hotels, lodges, restaurants and Rwanda Air, which make it easy for travellers to connect to and from Rwanda. MICE tourism contributed \$56 million to Rwanda in 2018 and it intends to increase it to \$88 million by 2030 (NISR, 2018). The World travel awards in 2018 ranked Rwanda as a leading conference destination hosting the highest number of conferences, meetings, incentives and events in the region. These and many more have made Kigali city ranked the third most popular destination in Africa for international meetings and events as asserted by the International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA,2018), after Cape Town and Morocco as observed below.



**Fig 1.**World Celebrities join the Kwita Izina ceremony in 2018;Kwita izina is an annual baby gorilla namig ceremony. The function brings variety of personalities around the globe to give names to new born gorillas.

**Fig. 2.** Rwanda’s diplomat country tour:Several representatives of foreign missions and embassies in Rwanda are annually taken for a diplomatic country tour as a marketing strategy

**Fig. 3.** Arsenal Jersey Marketing Visit Rwanda

## Product innovations



**Figure 4:** A group of tourists are hiking the newly introduced Congo Nile trail in Rwanda

**Figure 5:** Canopy walk in Nyungwe forest National park

**Figure 6:** MICE infrastructures in Rwanda: Kigali convention centre and Kigali Arena

Despite Rwanda's considerable effort in improving the tourism sector, through use of traditional marketing tools, the sector is still shadowed by low tourist numbers. The only way forward to increase visitors, is by use of innovative marketing initiatives. This argument is in agreement with (Gross Pietsch, 2006) who noted that Rwanda's marketing has a lot to be done since her image has primarily been tainted by genocide. This was true as a market research conducted in 2012 in the neighboring countries showed that more than half of the international visitors believed that Rwanda was an unsafe destination (Kalembe, 2015). However, much has recently changed a lot in Rwanda today than when the research was done in that more tourists are choosing Rwanda as a preferred tourist destination today. Therefore, this study attempted to examine the contribution of Rwanda's marketing strategies influence on the development of the tourism sector. The study was guided by three research questions as follows; i) What is the contribution of marketing to Rwanda's tourism industry? ii) What innovative marketing strategies are appropriate for increasing and promoting tourism in Rwanda? and iii) What challenges does Rwanda face as it markets her destination?

The research findings will be of help to the community especially in understanding the impact of marketing and its role in the development of tourism industry vis a vis national development. Methodically, this research helps the academic community, whether students or lecturers, or another interested readers with useful information about Rwanda tourism industry product offering and how they are uniquely marketing globally. Government planners and policy makers will benefit from the research findings to guide them in enhancing tourism annual

revenue and employment. The study will be useful for policy makers, industry players like tour operators, travel consultants and tourism managers to make favorable tourism policies that can spur the sectoral growth and development.

## 2. Literature Review

This section presents review of related literature and the various studies done by several authors thus leading to academic discussions as follows.

### 2.1 Definition of marketing

There is no universally agreed definition of the term marketing as various authors define it differently depending on the product, service, the store one visits, or the media message you receive. The disagreement among scholars of marketing is crucial to the discussion about marketing (Koutoulas, 2001). The UK-based Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM) defines, marketing as:

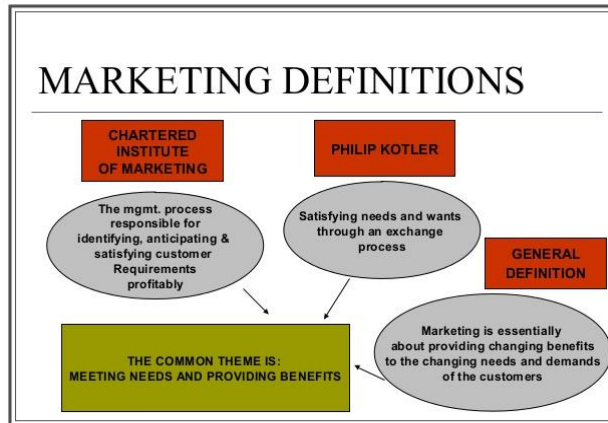
*"The management process responsible for identifying, anticipating and satisfying customer requirements profitably."*

While the American Marketing Association (2017) defines marketing as:

*"The activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large." (AMA,2017).*

Philip Kotler defines marketing as “the science and art of exploring, creating, and delivering value to satisfy the

needs of a target market at a profit as observed in the following figure 7.



Source: Kotler, (2011)  
 Figure 7: Marketing definitions

According to Moilanen and Rainisto (2008), marketing refers to the activities of a business related to buying and selling a product or service. It involves finding out what consumers want and determining whether it is possible to produce it at the right price. Other scholars refer to activities undertaken by a company to promote the buying or selling of a product or service and it includes advertising, selling, and delivering products to a wide variety of consumers (Aaker,2009 and Aaker & Joachimsthaler’s (2000). Marketing manifests in many ways as indicated in the figure 8 below;



Source: American Marketing Association, (2017)  
 Figure 8: Forms of marketing

## 2.2 Tourism Marketing

Tourism destinations ought to successfully appeal to probable tourists (Enright & Newton, 2004; Osman and Sentosa 2013). The only way of motivating them to travel is through marketing. Henceforth, tourism marketing refers to those methods used by tourism and hospitality suppliers to woo visitors to a particular country, location, city, or a heritage site (Bhasin, 2019). According to Edmunds (2015), tourism marketing is how segments of the tourism industry promote and advertise

their products or services to the customer such as transportation, hotels, restaurants, bars, attraction sites, resorts, amusement parks, and other entertainment businesses. However, Kotler (1994) defines it as the methodical and coordinated efforts applied by the national tourist organisations and individuals to attract tourist to their destinations and sites. According to Kotler, “marketing involves product/service development, place (location and distribution), and pricing. It requires information about people, especially those interested in what you have to offer (your "market"), such as what they like, where they buy and

how much they spend”. Anholt (2004) also notes that the countries’ ability to compete against each other and to win customers’ mind and share of tourist’s income, is significantly determined by the power of their marketing. On the other side, (Govers, R., F.M. Go, and K. Kumar 2007) emphasise that marketing internationalizes the tourism sector by bringing it to the forefront. So, it is clear, according to Schubert, Brida and Risso (2010, p. 377) and Kalembe, (2015) plus other tourism scholars, that tourism marketing, has a dimension of influence at the destination both in the short term and in the long run and thus, all efforts should be focused on marketing those destinations like Rwanda (Pike and Ryan, 2004). Hosany et al., (2006) and Park & Petrick, (2006) are in agreement that innovative marketing research is still in its infancy which is assented to by many academics and industry practitioners (e.g. Olins, 2002; Kotler & Gertner, 2002; Anholt, 2002; Papadopoulos & Heslop, 2002) and (Cai, 2002; Hankinson, 2007; Blain et al., 2005; Balakrishnan, 2008; 2009).

### 2.2.1 Tourism marketing theories

The field of tourism marketing has many theories that can be applied such as Ansoff Matrix, balanced scorecard, the marketing mix, SWOT analysis, stakeholder mapping, the consumer decision making process, Porters Five Forces, segmenting consumer markets, Maslow’s hierarchy of needs and PESTEL Analysis. However, this study adopted the marketing Mix model developed by E. Jerome McCarthy in 1960 given that the study subject scope was on innovative marketing as seen in figure 9 below.



Source: McCarthy (1960)

Figure: 9: The 7 p's of the marketing mix

#### a) The tourism product

The tourist product as defined by Koutoulas D, (2015), is the sum of functionally interdependent tangible and intangible components that enables the tourist to participate in a specific activity at a given destination(s) during the trip as quoted by (Paul, 1977:18) and Jovicic (1988:2-3). Tourist products can either be classified as **total tourist product** which comprises a combination of all the elements, which a tourist consumes during his/her

trip or **specific tourist product** i.e. combinations of elements that can be sold such as accommodation, transport, attractions and other facilities for tourists separately. Furthermore, one can ably state that the tourist product is same as the total travel experience of a visitor (Koutoulas, 2001:473; Middleton, Victor T.C. 1989). The tourism experience includes five elements: trip planning and anticipation; travel to the site/area; the experience at the site; travel back home; and recollection. Either way, the end result of all these purchases is a ‘package,’ (Medlik, Slavoj and Victor T.C. Middleton (1973). The package may take the form of the country’s natural attractions and heritage, beauty, weather, climate, history and culture, gastronomy and the people (Mrnjavac & Zeljko, 1992). In this regard according to (Kalulu, 2016), tourism products should follow the AIDA model (i.e. **Attractive, Interesting, Demandable, and bought AT a profit**) just as Rwanda is endowed with a lot of attractions like the mountain gorillas, national parks, rich culture, festivals, beaches, pilgrim centres, eco-tourist centres among other (Kalulu et al;2015). The above tourist products are consumed either at the destination(s) of the trip, the transit routes or near the residence (Leiper, 1990:81) and that consumption of these elements takes place before, during and after the trip.

#### b) The tourism prices

Tourism product is greatly influenced by price. The price of a tourism service or product widely affect buying decisions. Tourists compare prices between destinations while deciding whether or not to visit that destination as supported by (Peter. F, and Larry D,2014) in (Kwack (1972) and Kliman (1981) as well as the Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI). This therefore, means that tourism businesses and destinations should give attention to price as they manage their destination. Managers ought to learn strategies which may encourage off season and non-peak period sales, longer stays, group business, and the sale of package plans. The rise in price to one destination will boost visitor numbers to substitute destinations such as what is happening with gorilla trekking in Uganda, DRC and Rwanda. When Rwanda doubled her gorilla permit from \$750 to \$1500, customers crossed to either Uganda or DRC where the same gorilla permit can be obtained at \$650 or \$350 respectively.

#### c) Tourism Place

The study conducted by Lukrecija et al, (2014) revealed that the place of residence of a tourist strongly affects all phases of the decision-making process. Geographical location of potential tourists strongly affects their movements to other areas in order to experience the various tourist activities even though this is contested by the researchers of this study. This is supported by various scholars like (Kotler & Keller, 2006; Mathieson & Wall, 1982; Maričić, 2002; Wang, K., et al, 2004).

#### d) **Tourism Promotion**

Tourism promotion is aimed at letting people know your services/product offering as it provides target audiences with accurate and timely information to help them decide to visit. The information given should therefore, be accurate, practical to use, and easy to consume by potential or existing visitor. In Rwanda, the traditional promotion includes, radio/Tv advertising, Tembera au Rwanda, personal selling. However, of recent, the use of social media is gaining momentum and is being used to put across the destination message to the potential tourists. Promotion may also take the form of “positioning” (Keegan & Schlegelmilch, 1999). It is a strategy for “staking out turf” or ‘filling a slot’ in the mind of target customers as supported by Rivkim & Trout, (1996) and A. Ries and L. Ries (2002).

The other 3 dimensions of marketing include process, physical evidence and people. For instance, **people** who run destinations and sites are managers, tour guides, driver guides, reservationists, sales staff, managing director among others. This means that having the right people is essential to the success of any tourist destination-thus, Rwanda is emphasizing on human capital development through support of various tourism and hospitality institutions such as universities and colleges with aim of producing the needed human resources in tourism sector. In this case, University of Tourism, Technology and business is a leader in this cause.

### **2.3 The contribution of marketing to the tourism industry**

Africa is endowed with plenty of tourism resources such as sceneries, landscapes, culture, wildlife, flowers (Pitt et. all, 2007) which is all benefiting the continent in various forms like income, projects, local development and tax to governments as supported by (Brand Kenya Board, 2012; Govers and Kumar, 2007; Konecnik, 2004) just as tourism has benefited Rwanda beyond the genocide of 1994 to become one of the attractive nation (Pike, Bianchi, Kerr & Patti 2010).

Tourism development enables communities that are poor in material wealth but rich in history and cultural heritage to leverage their unique assets for economic development (Honey & Gilpin, 2009). It also, is seen as an important tool in promoting sector and national growth, result to sustainable development, effectively generate net benefits for the poor at the same time alleviating poverty in many localities. In this case, tourism is a principal export for 83% of developing countries, and it is the most significant source of foreign exchange for developing countries’ share of international tourist arrivals more than

doubled from 1973 to 2000 as urged by Robert B. Richardson, (2010) and (UNWTO, 2002). Tourists are attracted to remote areas with high values of cultural, wildlife and landscape assets hence internationalization of local sites and destinations like Kinigi sector in Northern Rwanda. Therefore, as stated by Robert B. Richardson, (2010; and Jaworski & Fosher, 2003) as quoted by (Kalembe A. et al,2015 pg2). In the case of Rwanda, statistics show that the tourism industry’s annual revenue has doubled from USD 200 million in 2010 to USD 400 million in 2016 to 408 in 2018 due to continuous marketing of the country abroad with the aim of making it a high-end destination and MICE tourism hub (RDB report,2017) and (Sanny Ntayombya, Head of Communications and Marketing, RDB,2018 and (Qu & Im 2011). The good example, is that of Italian domestic tourism brand as analyzed by Prayag et al., (2015) as supported by Rehan, (2014). Another example is Germany effort geared towards transforming Stuttgart from a traditional European city to an excellent place to live and visit. The features that were used included urban projects, city life per se, events and cultural activities, and signature architectural features (Berkel, 2010).

### **2.4 Challenges of innovative tourism marketing**

Rwanda has put a lot of efforts to get her tourism sector at the forefront but being a landlocked state without ocean coastline to provide for snorkeling, sandy beaches or marine – based tourism is challenging to the destination marketeers (Moses.M. Okello,2014). Seasonality of the industry is a test to tourism operators as well as more dependence on narrow tourism products such as wildlife, culture and national parks. This has exerted pressure on certain species creating Musanze tourism enclave and a narrow tourism revenue base yet Rwanda has potential attractions (such as culture, physical features, events tourism, scenic landscapes and some unique ecological phenomena). Other challenges are political stability and governance issues, economic management, infrastructure development and various issues around capacity in the industry as experienced in many countries hence affecting marketing. The insecurity at neighborhoods like DRC is a critical dimension on addition to epidemics and pandemics like Ebola, corona virus (COVID 19), among others.

The East African Community partner states (Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda and Burundi, and recently South Sudan) have continued to strengthen their cooperation in Tourism and Wildlife sectors, but still challenges on standardization, implementation and adherence to the collective agreements is a real challenge. For example, Tanzania is reluctant to accept the single visa and the use of national identity cards to allow entry in her territory.

### 3. Methodology

The research used primary data as well as secondary data, and a triangulation of measurement processes was utilized to merge quantitative and qualitative research methods (Aliaga and Gunderson, 2002). The study data collection included, desktop survey, field observation and structured questionnaires developed to find out the impact of the innovative marketing strategies on tourism development in Rwanda. Additional data was collected through structured interviews with industry players, tourists, government key leaders in tourism at Rwanda Development Board and responses were analysed using descriptive statistics. A 5-point Likert scale was used to measure the level of agreement. The population of this study was 30 employees of Rwanda Development Board marketing department, 20 tour operators and 20 hotel managers purposively selected, 100 tourists conveniently selected, 4 park managers, 5 cultural and heritage managers, and 10 transport managers, thus making the total population of the study to be 189. However, only 123 respondents were sampled to represent the whole tourism market of Rwanda according to their convenience and purpose and their availability and willingness to participate in the study. However, the data gathering faced hardships such as the spread of the respondents in Rwanda, like city of Kigali, national parks, cultural and heritage centres and religious centres in the country. In addition, language of communication made the data collection hard and communicating with some respondents was not easy due to the fact that they did not understand English hence creating a language bottleneck. Despite the above limitations, the research team overcame the above using the available means such

as getting interpreters, permission from authority, field observations and photo elicitations as observed in the background on pages 4-8. The modified questionnaire was pilot tested on 30 tourism students at the University of Tourism, Technology and Business Studies Rwanda as these would be future tourism leaders and investors in the country. This was also more practical as students in colleges are more accessible and with the help of colleagues in other colleges similar testing environment could be assured (Ashmore, 2008). In the context of research, according to Saunders, Lewis and Thorn hill, (2015), the following ethics were observed in the research study: Confidentiality/Anonymity which led participants giving more open and honest responses. In addition, there was informed consent as participants were given the choice to participate or not to participate, and furthermore be informed in advance about the nature of the study. There was right to privacy and honesty was observed and that data was not fabricated to support a particular conclusion.

### 4. Results and Discussion

This chapter illustrates the general information regarding the findings obtained from the study about tourism marketing in Rwanda. The study was undertaken to achieve and to answer a variety of questions like; i) What is the contribution of marketing to Rwanda’s tourism industry? ii) What innovative marketing strategies are appropriate for increasing and promoting tourism in Rwanda? and iii) What challenges does Rwanda face as it markets her destination? Literature was reviewed, data was collected and analyzed and eventually presented in tables, figures and narrative language.

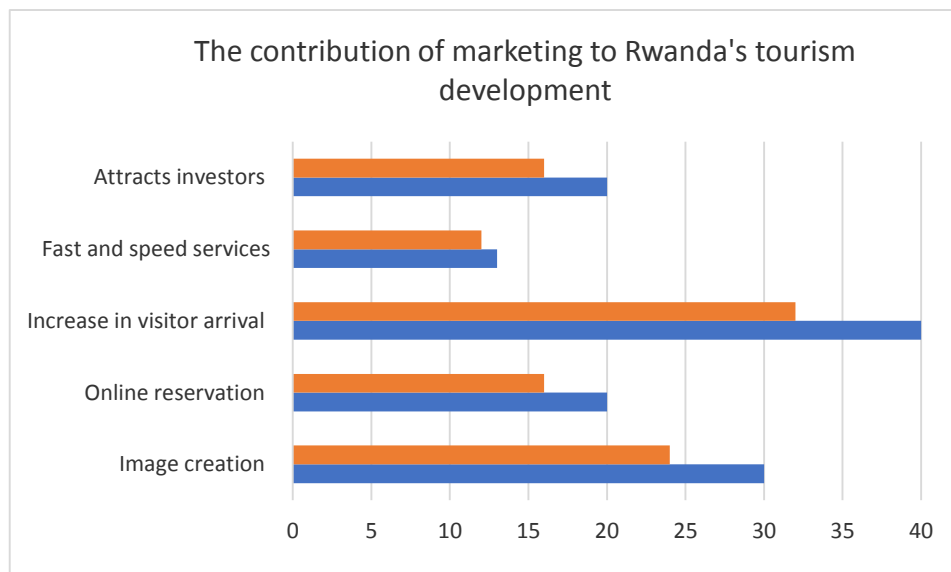
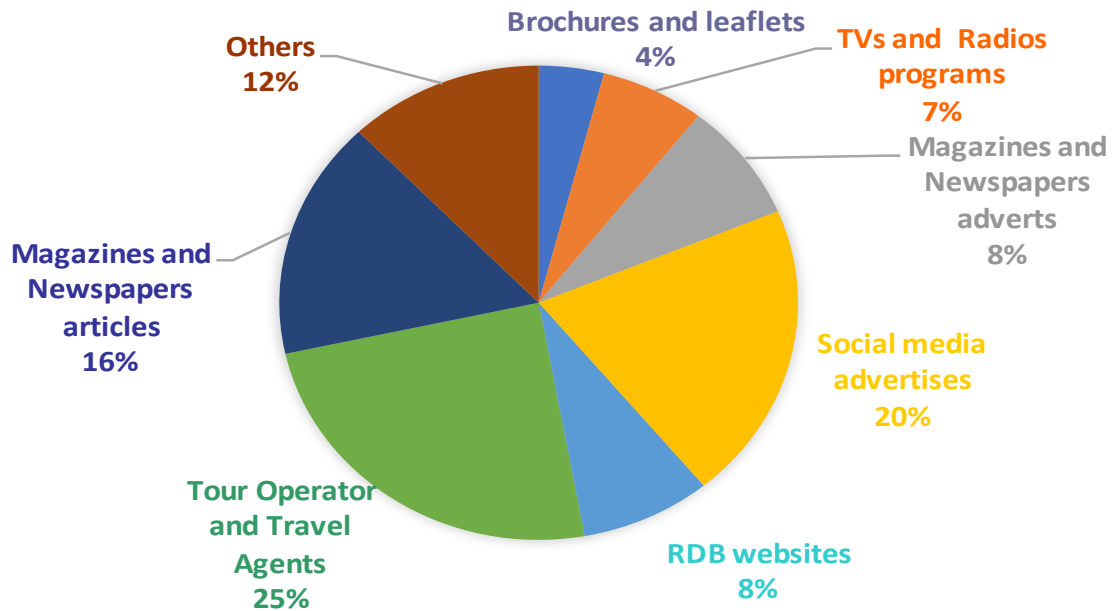


Figure 10: The contribution of marketing to Rwanda’s tourism industry



The graph above, clearly reveals that marketing has a greater role as far as Rwanda’s tourism industry is concerned. The biggest was an increase in visitor arrivals who multiply their dollars to cause multiplier effect in Rwanda. This is followed by image building and attracting FDI and making online reservations for private tour companies. This means that the government should work hard and invest much in tourism marketing due to

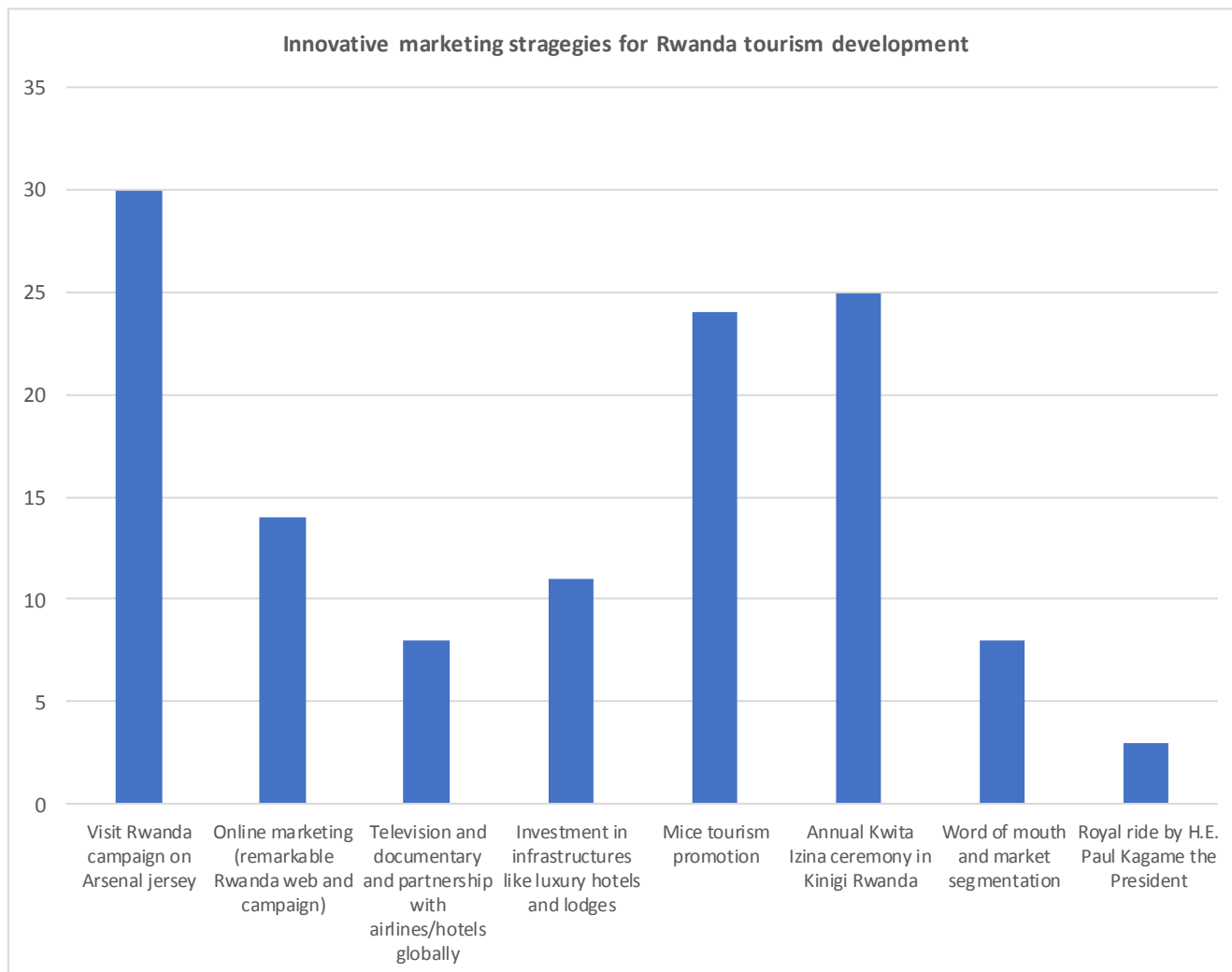
its influence. This was in agreement with the chief Executive officer of RDB in 2018, Clare Akamanzi, who stated that “we sell 96 gorilla permits a day, each gorilla permit costs \$1,500, that means we make more than \$50 million a year.” <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/destinations/africa/rwanda/articles/rwanda-increase-uk-visitors-arsenal/>



**Figure 11: Current marketing tools used by Rwanda**

The above graph 2 shows that tour operators and travel agents play a lot in marketing the country’s tourism globally. This is followed by use of social media,

magazines/newspapers, television and other avenues as observed from the graph below.



**Figure 12: Rwanda’s new Innovative marketing tools**

From the above graph, the new innovations that will keep customers coming to visit Rwanda’s tourism are several but the outstanding is the visit Rwanda print on Arsenal Jersey and PSG agreements where Rwandan coffee will be sold in the stadium of Paris Saint Germain in France

and the continuation of Kwita Izina ceremony. Mice tourism is also a key tool to attract visitors to Rwanda. The Royal ride by H.E. Paul Kagame will strengthen confidence and security in the tourism industry.

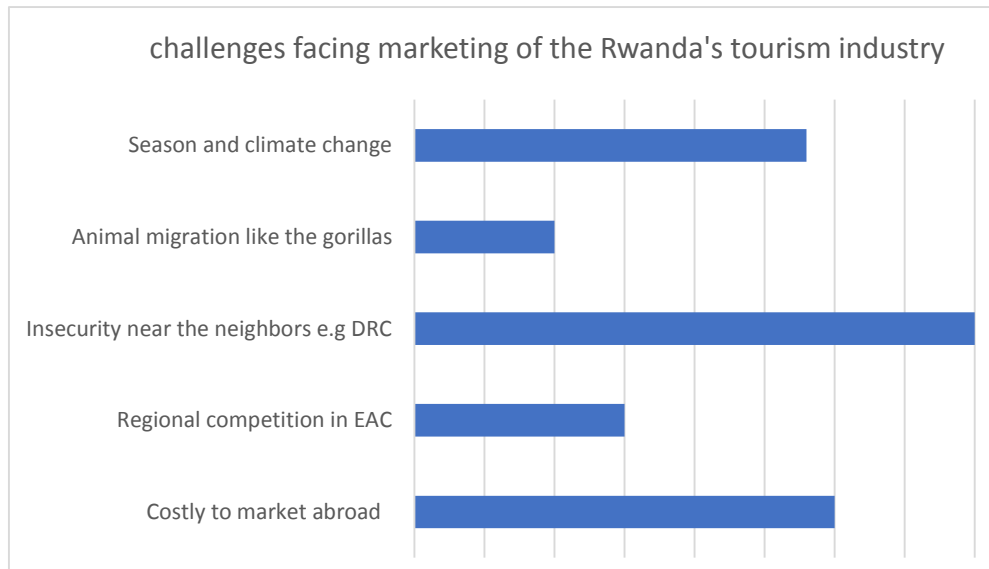
**Table 1: The influence of the new marketing strategy on Rwanda’s tourism**

NUMBER OF TOURIST ARRIVALS IN RWANDA		
Year	Number of tourist arrivals	Change, %
2018	-	-
2017	1,200,000	8.20%
2016	932,000	-5.57%
2015	987,000	6.59%
2014	926,000	7.18%
2013	864,000	6.01%

Source: OTF Group, 2015b, p.1 based on data provided by ORTPN), RDB & Directorate General of Immigration and Emigration, 2015

**Tourism Revenues of Rwanda**

- \$438million in 2017 was received
- \$404 million in 2016 was received
- \$318 million (about Rwf250 billion) in 2015
- \$305 million (Rwf240 billion) in 2014



**Figure 10: Challenges faced by marketing tourism industry**

Evidence from figure 10, shows the challenges faced by marketing the tourism industry. It is clear that tourists rely on security to book and reserve destination attractions. However, the increasing insecurity in DRC is impeding the marketing efforts of Rwanda as tourists fear for their life though Rwanda is safe. The other major challenges are seasonal changes due to climate change and the cost of advertising outside Rwanda is a test for a growing destination like Rwanda.

## 5. Conclusion and Recommendations

### 5.1 Conclusion

After data analysis and interpretation, the study came up with the following conclusions:

**First:** There would be major economic and visitor changes at destinations and at host communities if the government together with private sector invested much effort in marketing tourism activities in Rwanda. This effort will change tourists' level of perception and attitude towards visiting Rwanda. This means that the tourism revenue gained would create a greater tourism multiplier impact even in remote areas of the country hence communities and destinations would be experiencing new inventions of products and services, minimising and reducing the levels of poverty hence wealth creation, more tax revenues to the governments. However, the study found out that there is still a lot to be

done although what is in place now is promising. This is in agreement with Morgan and Pitchard (2000) who stated and argued that the battle for customers in the tourism industry will be fought not over price but over the hearts and minds.

**Secondly,** when most respondents were asked what should be done to increase tourism revenue in the country, majority mentioned strengthening marketing efforts by becoming innovative than our neighbours. For instance, strengthening Kwita Izina ceremony, product innovations, and signing more agreements with influence personalities and sports teams as they have influence and a lot of following. Others that were introduced included diplomat's country tour, MICE tourism, improving service standards, strengthening security, making Rwanda a luxury destination through high conservation and segmenting the tourism market to high end customer.

**Third,** the study found out that the challenges facing tourism destinations in Rwanda were the increasing insecurity in DRC as tourists fear for their life though Rwanda as a country is very safe. The other major challenges are seasonal changes due to climate change and the cost of advertising outside Rwanda is a test for a growing destination like Rwanda. This is in agreement with (Auken, 2006) who pointed out five key constraints like social and cultural attitude, access to finance/start-up financing, administrative and regulatory framework, and business assistance and support.

## 5.2 Recommendations

Based on the above discussions and conclusions, the paper proposes the following recommendations to enable Rwanda destinations to develop and grow:

1. There is a need to work with close neighbors like Uganda, DRC, and Burundi to enhance cross border security. As this strategy, will give assurance to potential customers of Rwanda.
2. There should be a creation of a tourism fund in Rwanda that can help private players to gain access to finance that can be used to strengthen their marketing efforts.
3. Benchmarking successful tourist destinations in Africa and beyond. This kind of mechanism is a good strategy as Rwanda destinations will learn how to market their services and products outside using the benchmarked methodologies.
4. More financial support should be given to tourism and hospitality training institutions in the country as they are the source of human resources. This support can be used to establish tourism incubation centres where students and field players can go and learn new ideas about tourism.
5. More needs to be known about the efficacy of different types of tourism finance to address the undercapitalization of hospitality and tourism businesses set up by young people. This is important because undercapitalized businesses are more likely to fail. This paper recommends a demonstration pilot project which tests which forms of finance are best able to support tourism entrepreneurs.

## References

- Akama, J. S., & Kieti, D. (2007). Tourism and socio-economic development in developing countries: a case study of Mombasa Resort in Kenya. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 15 (6), 735-748.
- Dwyer, L., P. Forsyth, and P. Rao. 1999. "Tourism Price Competitiveness and Journey Purpose." *Turizam, Special Issue on Competitiveness in Hospitality and Tourism* 47 (4): 283-99.
- Dwyer, L., N. Mistilis, P. Forsyth, and P. Rao. 2001. "International Price Competitiveness of Australia's MICE Industry." *International Journal of Tourism Research* 3 (2): 123-40.
- Dwyer, L., N. Mistilis, P. Forsyth, and P. Rao. 2001. "International Price Competitiveness of Australia's MICE Industry." *International Journal of Tourism Research* 3 (2): 123-40.
- Edwards, A. 1995. *Asia-Pacific Travel Forecasts to 2005*. Research Report. London: Economist Intelligence Unit.
- Edwards, W. (1954). The theory of decision-making. *Psychological Bulletin*, 51, 380-417.
- Filiatrault, P., & Ritchie, B. (1980). Joint purchasing decisions: A comparison of influence structure in family and couple decision making unit. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 7, 131-140.
- Fodness, D., & Murray, B. (1998). A typology of tourist information search strategies. *Journal of Travel Research*, 37, 108-119.
- Honey, M., & Gilpin, R. (2009). *Tourism in the Developing World: Promoting Peace and Reducing Poverty*. Washington: United States Institute for Peace.
- Kalulu (2015). Work Environment, Service Quality and Customer Retention in Guesthouses in Uganda; Case of Kampala District. *Journal of Tourism, Hospitality and Sports* ISSN (Paper) 2312-5187 ISSN (Online) 2312-5179, Vol.14, 2015
- Kalulu, R., & Tushabe, E. (2018). Broadening of Uganda's Tourism Products and Its Impact on the Tourism Industry: A Case of The Batwa Trail in Uganda. *Journal of Research Innovations and Implications in education*. ISSN 2520-7504 (Online) Vol.2, Iss.1, 2018 (pp. 15-24).
- Koutoulas, Dimitris. (2015). *Understanding the Tourism Product*.
- Koutoulas, Dimitris (2001), "The Theoretical Determination of the Tourist Product as a Presupposition for Tourism Marketing", doctoral dissertation, University of the Aegean, Chios [in Greek]
- Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L. (1994). *Marketing management*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: *Pearson Education Inc.*
- Kotler, P., Keller, K. L. (2006). *Marketing menadžment*. Beograd: Data Status.

- Maričić, B. (2002). Consumer behavior. Belgrade: Modern administration. (in Serbian). Mathieson, A., & W Kwack, S. Y. 1972." Effects of Income and Prices on Travel Spending Abroad, 1960 III–1967IV." *International Economic Review* 13: 245–56.
- Lim, C. 1999. "A Meta-Analytic Review of International Tourism Demand." *Journal of Travel Research* 37 (3): 273–84.
- Leiper, Neil (1990), "Tourism Systems: An Interdisciplinary Approach," *Occasional Paper* No. 2, Massey University-Business Studies Faculty, Palmerston North, New Zealand.
- Lukrecija Djeri, Tanja Armenski, Dragan Tesanovic, Milan Bradić & Svetlana Vukosav (2014) Consumer behaviour: influence of place of residence on the decision-making process when choosing a tourist destination, *Economic Research-Ekonomska Istraživanja*, 27:1, 267-279, DOI: 10.1080/1331677X.2014.952108.
- Little, J. S. 1980. "International Travel in the US Balance of Payments." *New England Economic Review* May/June: 42–55.
- Medlik, Slavoj and Victor T.C. Middleton (1973), "The Tourist Product and its Marketing Implications," *International Tourism Quarterly*, No. 3. Reprinted in Burkart, A.J. and Slavoj Medlik (eds.) (1975), "The Management of Tourism," Heinemann, London.
- Menges, Günter (1973), "Tourism Marketing Decisions," in AIEST, *Tourisme et Marketing: Rapports présentés au 23e Congrès de l'AIEST*, Editions Gurten, Berne.
- Middleton, Victor T.C. (1988), "Marketing in Travel and Tourism," *Heinemann Professional Publishing, Oxford*.
- Middleton, Victor T.C. (1989), "Tourist product," in Witt, Stephen F. and Luiz Moutinho (eds.), *Tourism Marketing and Management Handbook*, Prentice Hall, Hemel Hempstead.
- Mill, Robert Christie and Alastair M. Morrison (1992), "The Tourism System: An Introductory Text," 2nd ed., *Prentice-Hall International*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ.
- Mrnjavac, Zeljko (1992), "Defining Tourist Product," *Acta Turistica*, Vol. 4, No. 2, pp. 114-124.
- Okello MM (2014) Economic Contribution, Challenges and Way Forward for Wildlife-Based Tourism Industry in Eastern African Countries. *J Tourism Hospit* 3: 122. doi:10.4172/2167-0269.1000122.
- Paul, Hermann (1977), "Marketing für Fremdenverkehr: Leitlinien für die Dienstleistungs- und Absatzpolitik im Herstellerbereich der Fremdenverkehrswirtschaft," RKW Rationalisierungs Kuratorium der Deutschen Wirtschaft, Frankfurt.
- Raju (2009). Marketing of Hospitality and Tourism Management pp-46-48 *Mangalam publications Delhi*.
- Rosenzweig, J. A. 1986. "Exchange Rates and Competition for Tourists." *New England Economic Review* July/August: 57–67.
- Song, H. and L. Turner. 2006. "Tourism Demand Forecasting." In *International Handbook on the Economics of Tourism*, L. Dwyer and P. Forsyth, eds. Cheltenham, UK and Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar. 89–114.
- Song, H. and S. F. Witt. 2000. *Tourism Demand Modelling and Forecasting: Modern Econometric Approaches*. Cambridge: Pergamon.
- United Nations, D. o. (2017 Revision). *World Population Prospects*. Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division.
- UNWTO. (2006). *Poverty Alleviation Through Tourism: A Compilation of Good Practices*. Madrid: United Nations World Tourism Organization.
- UNWTO. (2000). *Sustainable Development of Tourism: A Compilation of Good Practices*. Madrid: United Nations World Tourism Organization.
- UNWTO. (2002). *Tourism and Poverty Alleviation*. Madrid: United Nations World Tourism Organization.
- UNWTO. (2004). *Tourism and Poverty Alleviation*:

Recommendations for Action. Madrid: *United Nations World Tourism Organization*.

Wang, K., Hsieh, A., Yeh, Y., & Tsai, C. (2004). Who is the decision-maker: The parents or the child in group package tours? *Tourism Management*, 25, 183–194.

World Bank, (March, 2000). Can Africa Claim the 21st Century? World Bank.

WTTC. (2010). The Economic Impact of Travel and Tourism: Mali. London: *World Travel and Tourism Council*.