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Travel and Tourism

TT05

**(Specification
8651/8653/8656/8657/8659)**

Unit 5: Marketing in Travel and Tourism

Report on the Examination

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General Comments

What was done well

1. In relatively few of the previous 'Marketing in Travel & Tourism' papers had there been questions on 'place' and it was pleasing that candidates mostly showed a good understanding of the concept, although some drawbacks suggested for the different distribution channels were rather unlikely or trivial.
2. Candidates were asked how the features of the Big Bus Tour might enhance the visitor's experience and in a majority of cases this was done very well, clearly showing how a feature added to the appeal of sightseeing bus tour.
3. Candidates provided better factual knowledge than in previous examinations of the promotional methods used by a travel and tourism organisation that they had studied.

What was not done so well

1. Some candidates were writing as many as six lines of an answer restating the question. For instance, starting an answer with "The Big Bus company does many things to enhance the experience for its customers..." or "There are a number of comparisons that could be made between the merits of the two methods..." does not help the candidate to begin earning marks.

Question 1

This was a reasonably straightforward question on which most candidates scored well. Some marks were lost simply through insufficient explanation - for example, 'on the internet' was the sort of inadequate answer seen, rather than "information is given on the Visit Britain website".

Question 2

Candidates generally understood well how the marketing staff could make use of the information about characteristics of overseas visitors but a number of candidates tended to repeat ideas. If three characteristics are asked for, they should be of three distinctly different types.

While most candidates answered well, others were able only to reel off a list of the features of a Big Bus tour. The key word in this question was 'enhance'. Candidates should not have assumed it was self-evident how those features added to the experience for customers. While phrases like '*expert* guide' and '*free* extras' would convey the idea of benefit, for most of the features referred to candidates needed to spell out how a customer's experience was improved.

Question 3

This question was not done especially well - most candidates were clear about using results from a survey but gave a limited answer, mostly repeating what information was provided rather than explaining how the company could benefit from using the information it gathered

Some candidates stretched the meaning of 'survey' to include face-to-face questionnaires with individual customers. They would have been better to opt for observation, focus group, mystery customer or desk research methods, which are unarguably *not* surveys.

Question 4

This question was about press releases in general, and that shown on page 8 of the preliminary material was merely an example. When candidates wrote about how the features of the ten new buses would attract more customers, it became evident that they did not understand how a press release works. Newspaper editors might use the factual content of a press release in their columns without needing to research the information themselves, but only if they think the story will interest their readers.

Question 5

Several candidates apparently misread this question. They needed to write about factors like 'an increase in overseas visitors to London', which encouraged the companies to provide more open-top London bus tours rather than what has helped the Big Bus Company to be successful in selling the tours it provides.

Question 6

Candidates were required to give more than one reason for the channel of distribution they chose and many candidates missed the 2nd mark. While some comparison was anticipated in the answers to part (b), few gave any. However, a first requirement was that both the advantages and drawbacks of the distribution method under discussion should be expressed from the company's point of view, not the customer's. The most plausible disadvantages given were that sales were not maximised or that commission would have to be paid.

Question 7

On the whole the strategies chosen were plausible, but candidates needed to give some *outline* of their scheme. Most candidates suggested there could be discounts and often referred to examples like theme parks giving a voucher worth 10% off the price of a future visit. While good customer service might help customers to return to a particular airline or hotel, it is more likely that only discounting or a significant change in the product would encourage people to go on a second London bus tour.

For the second part of the question candidates needed to go beyond reasons why customers would or would not repeat the bus tour and make an assessment of how likely it was that they would do so. On the whole this was addressed, though without always calling on the evidence for saying so.

Question 8

A large number of candidates did not adopt the correct approach to the question. Either, they reviewed the difficulties that the Big Bus Company faced, or suggested solutions which were not feasible, such as lowering prices enough to match the regular London bus prices. On seeing that they had to 'propose a strategy', the better candidates realised that they should use the concept of the marketing mix. Answers which included more than one of the four Ps earned more credit so long as their proposals were plausible.

Question 9

Candidates understood the general idea of joint marketing but did not often succeed in describing an advantage and how it would work. They tended to hamper themselves by starting with an eventual benefit such as 'more profit', which is not an advantage of joint marketing but of the benefits that it might bring. Instead they needed to start their answer with a statement of the basic advantage, such as lowering the costs of promotion or doubling the exposure of advertising, and from there develop their description of how this could be done.

Question 10

Many candidates were able to list promotional methods and thereby illustrate the range. There was credit for good factual knowledge of the methods, perhaps gained through an educational visit, but general answers about leaflets or newspaper advertising which could apply to any travel and tourism product did not score well. There were very few discussions of specific campaigns, which might have been an easier route to the top marks that were gained for assessment of how successful the promotion had been.

Suggestions for teachers to prepare future candidates

1. Centres should teach candidates that a press release is not a form of newspaper advertising but is the supply of information to editors which companies hope will get published in a news item in order to get positive news across.
2. Candidates should avoid writing lengthy introductory sentences that take time and space but do not give an answer to the question and do not earn any marks.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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