Marketing the Regions of France: A Creative Advertising Plan

An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

by

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Abstract

France has been a leader in the international tourism industry for many years but recent economic events, consumer attitudes, and the rising Euro have caused France to lose market share in the past 3 years. France is still the number one worldwide destination according to tourist arrivals. However, Tourists who once chose France first when traveling abroad are now heading to the neighboring United Kingdom which has gained market share in recent years. In response to this trend, I have formed a creative marketing campaign complete with advertisement designs and promotional suggestions to intice a specific target market to travel to France to discover what its regions have to offer.
j'adore!

2004 Creative Campaign for Provinces of France

for Maison de la France
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Executive Summary

France has been a leader in the international tourism industry for many years but recent economic events, consumer attitudes, and the rising Euro have caused France to lose market share in the past 3 years. France is still the number one worldwide destination according to tourist arrivals. However, Tourists who once chose France first when traveling abroad are now heading to the neighboring United Kingdom which has gained market share in recent years.

The problem is simple, France wants Americans back because more tourism revenues equal a greater GDP. Currently in France, tourism accounts for 7% of the nation’s GDP. In an attempt to gain American’s favor, Maison de la France(part of the French Government Tourist Office) began its “Let’s Fall in Love Again” Campaign in early 2003. That campaign included hefty discounts for American travelers and special incentives linked to tourism partners SNCF (France’s national rail company) and Air France. The campaign focuses heavily on the allure of Paris and its sights.

In an attempt to spark even more American interest in the country, I have proposed this creative advertising campaign to encourage Americans to travel to the different regions of France and not just to Paris. The Target Market consists of mostly Caucasian adults aged 35-60 who earn a household income of over $90,000. Their interests are varied, like the activities the provinces of France have to offer, but they are most likely to go sightseeing, visit historical landmarks, and frequent art museums on an international vacation. These successful individuals have fine an unique tastes and are experiencers and achievers on the Values, Attitudes and Lifestyles chart.

Treatment of France in an advertising campaign cannot come off as too risqué or vague. In the past, advertisements for France have been clear and clean, relying on large images and emotion to carry the message. Maison de la France would want this province-focused campaigned to be in line with those objectives.

“J’adore!” means “I adore”, or “I love” in French. This headline will attach the emotions of love and passion with the image directly beneath it. The idea is that in the regions of France, the target can discover hidden passions in the world/himself/life and love every minute of it. Each region will eventually have its own designed advertisement to be placed in strategic travel and lifestyle magazines to which the target subscribes. The ads will take an artistic approach, appealing to the target’s finer tastes, while at the same time educating them of all the joys and mysteries that await them in the provinces.

Promotional ideas will extend the grasp of the creative message by playing off of the campaign’s artistic appeal. The American press will be invited to a kick-off gala in honor of the provinces to create buzz about the regions and their specialties. Also, current promotional activities associated with the current advertising campaign will continue as they coincide with the “J’adore!” Theme.

By promoting regions of France with their own identity, France sidesteps current Anti-French sentiment felt by many U.S. tourists because of the Iraq war. Finally, the campaign will be monitored by surveys and creating a consumer database to determine this campaigns effectiveness. If “J’adore!” succeeds in U.S. market, Maison de la France would most likely alter the ads slightly to extend the campaign to other markets, especially their native traveler market.
Situation Analysis

Maison de la France Overview

An Association for Developing Commercial Interests

Created in 1987 and placed under the authority of the Ministry of Tourism (also called the French Tourism Government Office or FGTO), Maison de la France is an association for developing commercial interests that is responsible for the promotion of France as a holiday destination, within the country itself and abroad. It expresses the idea of a partnership between the State, region, groups, stakeholders in the private sector of the tourist industry, and the tourist industries of the various sectors of the economy.

Maison de la France cooperates with foreign representatives all over the world, with the exception of Paris. The organization is comprised of the following Departments:

- Marketing and Partnerships
  - Partnership Division
  - Product Marketing
  - Marketing Zones Committee
- New Technologies
- General Secretariat
- Human Resources Division

Representatives to Foreign Countries

Foreign Representatives are responsible for setting up and organizing the promotion of France as a holiday destination in their respective markets. A total of 33 offices are located in 28 countries, that have a field of activity in 40 countries over 5 continents.

The Partners

Maison de la France's more than 1,200 members are divided into 3 Colleges:

- College 1: Institutions in the tourist industry (Federations, Regional and Departmental Tourism Committees, Tourist Offices) - 34% of the membership
- College 2: Stakeholders in the private sector of the tourist industry (Hoteliers, travel agents, tour operators, transport operators...) - 38% of the membership
- College 3: Professionals connected with the development of the tourism sector and service providers, departmental, metropolitan, and regional agencies - 28% of the membership

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The organization also promotes the large number of over 1,200 tourism service providers, grouped into Product Clubs or Regional Committees. Examples include the France Club of France, the Regional Club of France, the Metropolitan Club and the Regional Club.

France is the top vacation destination in the world with 76.5 million tourists in 2001. France is the third most popular destination in terms of revenue with 33.9 thousand million Euro in currency revenue in 2001.

The Proposal

Currently, North American tourists make up only 4.58% of France's 76.5 million tourists per year. Maison de la France would like to raise awareness levels among the target North American tourists of its many diverse provincial destinations.
Situation Analysis

World Tourism Industry Overview

Overview of the Republique de France
France today is one of the most modern countries in the world and is a leader among European nations. Since 1958, it has constructed a presidential democracy resistant to the instabilities experienced in earlier parliamentary democracies. In recent years, its reconciliation and cooperation with Germany have proved central to the economic integration of Europe, including the introduction of the euro in January 2002. At present, France is at the forefront of European states seeking to exploit the momentum of monetary union to advance the creation of a more unified and capable European defense and security apparatus.

France is divided into 22 metropolitan areas called regions or provinces. Each has a unique history, industry, amusements, and culture.

Industry History
Travel and tourism - encompassing transport, accommodation, catering, recreation and services for visitors - is one of the world’s highest priority industries and employers. A special quality of this industry is that it generates more profit than normal exports because it is generally a ‘service’ industry as opposed to a tangible product that would have to be manufactured.

International tourism will be defined here as any trip of at least 24 hours involving at least one border crossing, for business, pleasure, or personal reasons.

In this field, there has been exceptional overall growth with almost 23-fold increase in international arrivals over the last 50 years, from 25 million in 1950 to 570 million in 2000. According to World Tourism Organization statistics, worldwide international tourism in 2001 generated estimated revenues of US $462.2 billion. Of this, about 6.4% went to France.

Source: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Travel and Tourism Industries
Situation Analysis

World Tourism Industry Overview

Tourism in Europe
Tourism is especially important to all parts of Europe as it promotes collective economic vitality among all European Union members. Europe ranks first among both ‘departure’ and ‘receiving’ regions of the world.

The international tourism industry declined by almost 3% in 2001, as the September 11th attacks intensified the effects of the global economic slowdown, according to the World Tourism Organization. In Europe, the decline was compounded in 2002 by fears concerning the Iraq war and possible terrorist attacks, which peaked during the crucial spring booking period when most tourists typically plan vacations. Added to these woes are the rising value of the Euro against the American dollar, making it more difficult to entice valuable U.S. travelers to stay abroad. For example, a 200 Euro/night hotel in Paris for a week now costs $1,638 U.S., when previously in early 2001, the cost would have only been $1,520 U.S.

Another contributor to the downturn in tourism revenues is the economy of a few key countries upon whom the industry depends. Germany has historically had the highest numbers of citizens taking international holidays. For nearly two years, Germany has been in or near recession and unemployment has reached 10% of the total labor force. Americans are the second hottest commodity for the European tourism community. The recent lack of U.S. consumer confidence has kept U.S. economy stagnant, preventing Americans from vacationing abroad and instead, taking shorter trips that are closer to home.

Not all markets have suffered because of the events of the past two years. Turkey, the Dominican Republic, Senegal, Croatia, and countries in North-East Asia have experienced significant market growth since 1996, according to the World Tourism Organization. Meanwhile, markets in the Caribbean and Africa have been relatively unaffected by recent events.

Other Factors
A number of other factors in recent years have affected how international tourism has evolved.

• Discount Airlines - The rise of the discount airlines like Ryanair, BmiBaby, and EasyJet has made it easier for tourists to stretch their transportation budgets.

• Booking over the internet - for airlines, hotels, trains, and other tourism-based services has skyrocketed in recent years. Internet usage has changed the traveler in several important ways.

1. The traveler is more aware of the discounts that may be available to him through the ease of internet comparison.

2. The traveler is more likely to plan and book an entire vacation itinerary himself rather than relying solely on a travel professional such as a travel agent.

3. The traveler is very likely to go to the internet first to do preliminary research and planning, only moving on to more credible sources such as guidebooks after their internet search has been exhausted.

4. The traveler is more likely to pre-book rooms and buy advance event tickets over the internet, rather than waiting to do so upon arrival.
Because the internet has become a powerful research tool for tourists, the industry has responded by increasing advertising in that media. For example, in 2002 Spain launched an advertising campaign to be carried out solely through the means of internet advertisements.

Short Stays - Before 1997, typical long vacation stays gave way to shorter “excursions” of 2 days or less and short stays between 2 to 4 days. This trend has not reversed in the seasons since 1997 and in some cases has become more widespread. In 1999, short stays outnumbered long stays of four or more nights by 20% internationally, according to the World Tourism Organization. The nature of these shorter trips is different from its longer counterparts as well; short stays are more sporadic, spontaneous, and often off-peak.

European Union - the expansion of the European Union in 2004 will create new issues in the European market. When the number of member countries jumps from 15 to 22 the surface area of the EU will increase by 25%. Tourism arrivals to Europe are expected to double over the next 25 years due to the new additions.

Industry Success
The tourism industry measures success of a destination in two different ways: tourist arrivals, and tourism-generated revenues. France has consistently been the first-choice destination among international tourists for more than 10 years. However, it is only third in tourism-generated revenue, the United States and Spain vying for first place for the past 3 years.
Situation Analysis

World Tourism Industry Overview/French Tourism

The World’s Top Tourism Destinations
(International tourist arrivals)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Arrivals (millions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. France</td>
<td>76.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Spain</td>
<td>49.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. United States</td>
<td>45.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Italy</td>
<td>39.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. China</td>
<td>33.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. United Kingdom</td>
<td>22.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Russia</td>
<td>21.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Mexico</td>
<td>19.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Canada</td>
<td>19.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Austria</td>
<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

France Market Share
France currently holds about 6.5% of the market share, which is the third-highest share of the international tourism market. The United States is first with 15.6% and Spain is second with 7.1%. Italy and China round out the top five with 5.6% and 3.8% respectively.

Importance of Tourism in French Economy

The travel and tourism sector of France’s economy accounts for 74.1 billion Euros per year (U.S. $73.8 billion), which is equivalent to 4.7% of the total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for the country. However, travel and tourism touches all sectors of the economy either directly or indirectly so is actual impact is much greater.

Economic Impact

In France, the travel and tourism industry effects many economic areas. An increased rate of tourism into the country causes an increase in the following facets of the French economy:

- Total Demand
- Gross Domestic Product
- Employment
- Exports
- Capital investment

Historical Sales

France - A leader in International Tourism
Tourism in France is seen as an “export champion” due to the large and frequent surpluses over the past 30 years. The 76.5 million+ foreign tourists generated 24
French Tourism

billion Euros (roughly $29 billion U.S.) in revenue in 2002.

Success of France

France remained by far the most popular tourism destination, with 76.5 million incoming visitors in 2002. The success of France is attributable among other things to its varied scenery and landscapes, the multitude of different activities on offer and its rich historical and cultural heritage. Hotels remain the favorite type of accommodation accounting for almost 83% of value sales in 2002. The sector is highly developed and high standards prevail. Accor and Société des Hôtels du Louvre lead the sector.

The car rental market is a healthy growth sector reaching Eurol.6 billion value sales in 2002. Three major international companies share the lead of the market: Avis, Hertz and Europcar. The combinations of fly-drive, train-drive or hotel-drive are attracting an increasing number of customers who are tempted to use such formulas for short breaks.

Disneyland Paris is the leading attraction in France and in Europe in terms of visitor numbers, recording 12.5 million in 2002. Theme parks nowadays constitute a full holiday destination for many visitors, both resident and non-resident tourists. Casinos are also growing in strength due to the success of the newly authorised introduction of slot machines into casino outlets.

There were initially great fears that the French travel and tourism industry would suffer badly from the impact of the 11th September attacks in 2001. All sectors, with no exception, were affected as hotels, travel agencies, tour operators and airline companies were immersed in cancellations and unprecedented low booking rates. Travel agency sales also dropped 5.6% and ticket sales were down 4.8%.

The branches that shape the tourism sector in France are important to identify to understand what tourists consume when they travel to the country.

Tourism Revenue by Sector:

Transportation 61%
Total - Hotel Business 19.7%
Tours 14.3%
Leisure parks 2.5%
Related sectors 2.3%
Other .2%

Of total tourism revenue

Ten leading Transport Tourism Enterprises in France

Air France - air transport
SNCF - rail transport
ACCOR - Hotel industry
Club Med - Tours
Paris Airports - Air Transport
Novelles Frontieres - Tours
Euro-Disney - Leisure Parks
Jet-Tours - Tours
TAT - Air Transport
FRAM - Tours
Situation Analysis

French Tourism

Current Marketing Climate
The amount of tourism advertising emanating from French departments and regions has never been as abundant as it is now. The number of magazine ads is up and, in particular, posters are proliferating in Paris Metro stations. Currently, FGTO has travel alliances with Via Rail, Air France, and Jet set Travel.

Regional Tourism
Comparing the regions of France by their tourist revenue is difficult because there are no set guidelines for regions on what is or is not considered tourist revenue, according to the National Tourism Observatory. Thus, the only comparison can be made by rough estimates submitted by each region in terms of nights stayed (for foreign tourists only):

Thousands of nights stayed by Region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Nights by Foreigners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alsace</td>
<td>2677</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aquitaine</td>
<td>1574</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auvergne</td>
<td>440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bourgogne</td>
<td>1750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bretagne</td>
<td>1456</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centre</td>
<td>1730</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Champagne-Argonne</td>
<td>948</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corse</td>
<td>863</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Franche-Comté</td>
<td>430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Languedoc-Roussillon</td>
<td>1777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limousin</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lorraine</td>
<td>893</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midi-Pyrénées</td>
<td>3586</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nord-Pas-de-Calais</td>
<td>2087</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basse-Normandie</td>
<td>1471</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The 22 Regions of France

By this data, the most popular regions are Île-de-France which includes Paris, Provence and the Côte d’Azur, and the Rhône-Alpes area.

Expectations
In 2003, France’s Travel & Tourism Industry is expected to generate 4.7 per cent of GDP and 1,337,180 jobs, while the broader Travel & Tourism Economy is expected to total 12.3 per cent of GDP and 3,398,630 jobs. Looking ahead, the forecast for Travel & Tourism Demand is expected to total 2.8 per cent real growth in 2003, and 4.6 per cent...
**Competitive Frame**

real growth per annum between 2004 and 2013. These figures are according to a report by the World Travel & Tourism Council.

**Key Competitors and their Promotions**

Although France remains the top international destination, it only captures the third highest percentage of the market share.

**Primary Competitors**

- **United States**
  
  Because France is targeting Americans, the United States will be the biggest competition to face when fighting for the American tourists’ dollar. The U.S. is closer and cheaper to the target, and it is perceived by Americans to be friendlier, easier to navigate and a better value than anywhere in Europe.

Currently, U.S. tourism marketing efforts are conducted through state governments for the promotion of state-focused tourism campaigns.

- **United Kingdom - VisitBritain.**

Where France experienced a sluggish American-produced booking season in early 2003, the United Kingdom went largely unaffected. According to the FGTO, France experienced a 39% dip in U.S.-originating night stays in May 2003 as compared with the same month from the previous year. VisitBritain reports an 8% gain during that same time period. From these figures, it can be determined that if U.S. residents are venturing abroad, they are going to the UK first. This could be due to the similarities in cultural and historical offerings by both France and the UK from the viewpoint of the American traveler, and yet in the UK, Americans already know the language.

VisitBritain was formed on April 1, 2003 when the British Tourist Authority and the English Tourism Council merged. VisitBritain uses a variety of internet, e-newsletters, magazine ads, and promotions to target prospective tourists. VisitBritain has also recognized the trend for vacationers to take shorter trips and in response has launched a “short stay” campaign.

In addition, VisitBritain uses 8 major targeting methods for its intended audiences: Outdoor Britain, Sporting Britain, Hidden Britain, UK City Experience, Movie Map (showcases sites and cities featured in famous cinema), Great Britain Heritage, Britain’s Gardens, and YouthBritain.

- **Spain - Spain Marks**

Spain is the second-largest holder of the international tourism market share and that makes it big competition for France, even if the country weren’t situated directly against French borders. Turismo, (Spain Tourist Office), launches a 4 million euros International “online” campaign to promote Spain as tourism destination. The campaign will be done in three phases. 90% of the
Situation Analysis

Competitive Frame/Brand Evaluation

campaign will be focused on Europe (UK, FRA, GER and ITA) and 10% focused on long haul (USA, CAN, JAP). The product communication will be Cultural Spain first, and then Sun, Beach, Sport and Business Tourism. Also 20% of cost is focused on Rural Tourism. Strategic alliances with Yahoo, Msn or Terra and with E-travel like: Expedia, Last Minute, Ebookers and Opodo. Other action that the campaign includes is CRM. They have bought some series of data bases of internet users who have expressed interest in travel who will be receive e-mails about the new Spanish web, www.spain.info.

In 2004, there will be an intense promotion of Spain as cultural destination, owed to the celebration of Forum of Cultures in Barcelona, the Salvador Dali’s centenary and the Holy Year in Santiago de Compostela. The international promotion for 2004 will have got with an ambitious investment plan in advertising campaign and familiarization trips for foreign journalists.

• Italy - Realize the Dream
Italy’s proximity, heritage, value, and cuisine make it a formidable competitor with France. Italy currently holds the 4th largest share of the international tourist market. The Italian Government Tourist board currently encourages North American tourists to visit Italy and “Realize the Dream.” Their web site includes links to Undiscovered Italy, What’s New in Italy, Museum of the Month, and a special Spotlight On... section to showcase its varied destinations to prospective travelers.

Secondary
Other European countries, especially Germany and Ireland, will be close competitors with France as they too share a significant market share, have histories of large amounts of American travelers, and have similar features to offer the American tourist.

South Atlantic Destinations including the Caribbean Islands have always been a big draw for American tourists. In 2002, 21% of American tourists who traveled overseas made the Caribbean their destination according to a survey of international air travelers.

France/ Regions of France Brand Evaluation

France is the largest country in Europe and is bounded to the north by the English Channel, the northeast by Belgium and Luxembourg, the east by Germany, Switzerland and Italy, the south by the Mediterranean and Monaco, the southwest by Spain and Andorra, and to the west by the Atlantic ocean. The country offers a spectacular variety of scenery, from the
Situation Analysis

Brand Evaluation

mountain ranges of the Alps and Pyrenees, to the attractive river valleys of the Loire, Rhone and Dordogne and the flatter countryside in Normandy and on the Atlantic coast. The country has some 2900 km (1800 miles) of coastline.

Important Features:

1. Heritage: No less than 27 natural and cultural French sites are classified as “World Heritage Sites” by UNESCO. Religious edifices constitute a big part of World Heritage Sites. Four French cathedrals were thus distinguished by UNESCO: Chartres, Amiens, Bourges and Reims. Cities steeped in history in France are a part of the cultural heritage of humanity. Paris, Lyon, Strasbourg, and Avignon are just a few centuries-old cities which offer the traveler the feeling of a time past.

2. Art of Living: French wines, cheeses, cuisine and love of love are world-renowned and can be found in any part of the country. The areas of Burgundy, Franche-Comté, and Champagne are renowned for their wines. Normandy, Picardy, and Nord-Pas-du-Calais are known for their exquisite cheeses.

3. Seaside Resorts

France has 1800 miles of coastline from the rocky cliffs of Brittany to the sunny shores of the Mediterranean. The country boasts over 10,000 resorts along its varied coast, each offering something unique to the sun-seeking traveler.

4. Mountains: France is a skier’s paradise. With over 8000 km of pistes, France has the largest ski areas in the world. France’s ski resorts are spread out through 7 major ski areas: the Northern Alps, the Southern Alps, the Pyrenees, the Vosges, the Jura, the Massif central and in Corsica.

5. Countryside: One of France’s finest qualities is the scale and diversity of its countryside. From north to south, east to west, 80% of France is countryside. Full of contrasts, it invites you to explore. The 1,001 facets of nature in France are expressed in the warm welcomes given by its different regions.

Other

Other important features of the country include its cultural activities, shopping, fetes and festivals, sporting events, fine food and wines, and open-air markets.

Tourism and the French Economy

As of January 1, 2002, metropolitan France had 59.3 million inhabitants, making it the twenty-first most populated country in world and the third most populated in the European Union (EU) after Germany and the United Kingdom. The overseas departments have 1.7 million inhabitants.

With a GDP of $1.4 trillion, France is the fourth-largest Western industrialized economy. It has substantial agricultural resources, a large industrial base, and a highly skilled work force. A dynamic services sector accounts for an increasingly
Situation Analysis

Economy and Past Themes

large share of economic activity and is responsible for nearly all job creation in recent years. GDP growth averaged 2% between 1994 and 1999, with 3% recorded in 2001.

Of $1.4 trillion GDP:

- 7% tourism
- 6% agriculture
- 17% manufacturing
- 4% construction
- 3% energy generation
- 63% goods and services

Tourism is big business in France because it contributes so much revenue. The government realizes that just because France is already the #1 tourist destination in the world does not warrant a dip in advertising one of this country’s biggest assets.

Past Themes

• Bonjour! - 1994-2001

France launched it’s “Bonjour” campaign designed to keep tourists coming and to coax them to stay longer, spend more, and return. As part of the campaign, those working in the tourism industry were invited to sign a “contract of welcome” and abide by its principles. These included providing a personal welcome, advising and informing visitors and listening to complaints. Participating hotels, restaurants and other businesses then posted a copy of the contract in their establishments.

The “Bonjour” campaign was launched in 1994 to buff up France’s image as a tourist destination. The effort has apparently paid off, with the number of international visitors increasing steadily - but spending less than they do elsewhere, statistics show. A record 75 million tourists visited France in 2000, compared to 60 million in 1995.

• J’aime la France (I love France) - 2001-2002

France conducted this massive advertising campaign on European markets and in the U.S., Canada, and Japan, at a cost of 12.6 million Euros. “J’aime la France” featured clips of international celebrities mouthing the words “J’aime la France” in front of French monuments and scenery.

“Let’s Fall in Love Again” - 2003

In March of 2003, when tourist bookings were at an all-time low, the Maison de la France reinvented the J’aime la France campaign to specifically target American tourists. Part of the decisions was bolstered
Situation Analysis

Past Themes/Brand Awareness

by American-Franco strained relations over the Iraq war. France wanted to remind America of their history as great friends, and to not let political disagreements affect that.

For this campaign, the French Government Tourist Office/Maison de la France teamed up with Air France, Rail Europe, Hertz, and the Paris Convention and Visitors Bureau, among others to offer Americans special deals for travel to France in the summer and fall of 2003.

Finally, the Club France card was introduced as a way for tourists to experience even more discounts from over 1,000 French tourism businesses; all for the low price of a $25 annual membership fee.

A Mission: the promotion of “Destination France”
The current marketing mission as defined by Maison de la France relies on a strategy defined with all the partners every 3 years. The latest marketing plan (2002 - 2004) set an objective of keeping France as the number one destination in the world and to develop its share of the market.

Brand Awareness
Awareness of France as a tourist destination is extremely high due to its position as the top destination in the world. However, knowledge of specific regions of France and the special activities they have to offer is much less known. For this reason, I have created a creative campaign to add to the already successful “Let’s Fall in Love Again” and “J’aime la France” campaigns, this time directly focusing on specific regions of France.

Consumer Perceptions and Attitudes
Many Americans still feel harbor ill-feelings towards the French due to the Iraq war and political disagreements. However, research indicated that France was still a top destination among American tourists, 2nd only to the United Kingdom.

A scene from the movie, “Let’s Fall in Love Again”

A short film entitled “Let’s Fall in Love Again” featuring Woody Allen, Daniel Boulud, Wynton Marsalis, and George Plimpton, among others, was produced by the FGTO.

Maison de la France also launched a new website, www.franceguide.com, which offers travel tips, suggested itineraries, news for travelers, information on hotels, air, and rail, as well as a chance to view the video “Let’s Fall in Love Again.”

Special hotel offers from Sofitel, Relais & Chateaux, and Abotels were contributed for the campaign.
Target Market

Target Market Prospects.
The primary target market for this campaign consists of 35-60 year old men and women who have a household income in excess of $90,000/yr. The target is skewed slightly more male than female. This market includes married, divorced, and single individuals. Most of the people including in this target are empty-nesters, or will not be traveling with their children on a France trip. Research revealed only 7% of U.S. travelers bound for an overseas destination brought young children with them.

This target is financially successful and secure and have already had many life experiences. They are very likely to be re-examining their work priorities or current job, dealing with adult children and, relating to aging parents, reassessing personal priorities and values, and seeking a youthful outlook on life through new experiences. The market consists of mostly Caucasians, but is not exclusive.

VALS
On the values, attitudes and lifestyles diagram, the target consists of both achievers and experiencers.

Experiencers
Experiencers are motivated by self-expression. As young, enthusiastic, and impulsive consumers, Experiencers quickly become enthusiastic about new possibilities but are equally quick to cool. They seek variety and excitement, savoring the new, the offbeat, and the risky. Their energy finds an outlet in exercise, sports, outdoor recreation, and social activities.

Experiencers are avid consumers and spend a comparatively high proportion of their income on fashion, entertainment,
Target Market

Achievers
With many wants and needs, Achievers are active in the consumer marketplace. Image is important to Achievers; they favor established, prestige products and services that demonstrate success to their peers. Because of their busy lives, they are often interested in a variety of time-saving devices.

Geography
Geographically, the target primarily comes from the East coast from cities like Boston and New York, and from the Southeast coast, from cities like Miami and Charleston.

Other Characteristics
The target is highly sophisticated in its tastes and has a penchant for both self-expression and analyzing the art of others. They are very creative individuals who seek what is prestigious yet unique. Much of this target has some basic knowledge of the French language and has perhaps even visited parts of France (most likely Paris) in the past. Francophiles, those who identify themselves with French culture and are extremely knowledgeable about its language and history, are also to be included in the target market.

Target Market Research
A few important facts about the habits of U.S. tourists who travel abroad for pleasure. Among the most important, Europe was their first choice destination, according to Statistics from the U.S. Department of Commerce. Here are a few other key revelations:

Target Market Statistics
From the U.S. Chamber of Commerce

Means of booking air trip
Travel Agent 46%

Information Sources:
Travel Agency 42%
Personal Computer 32%

Travel Companions
Traveling Alone 37%
Traveling with Spouse 31%

First International Trip 5%
Repeat Visitors 95%

Leisure Recreational Activities
Visit Historical Places 56%
Sightseeing in Cities 48%
Visit Small Towns/Villages 48%
Art Gallery/Museum 32%
Recreational Activities 30%

Average Expenditure Outside U.S.
Per visitor, per day $74

Demographics
Sex: 54% Male, 46% Female
Average Age: 45.4 Male, 42.9 Female

Occupation
Professional/Technical 38%
Manager/Executive 25%
Retired 11%
Student 8%
Homemaker 6%
Clerical/Sales 5%

Annual Household Income
Average: $103,000
Situation Analysis

Problems and Opportunities

P: Americans are currently unaware of the different regions of France and what they have to offer.

P: Americans are not sure how to get to other regions of France.

P: The current exchange rate makes American tourists suffer in France as currently, 1 Euro = $1.17

P: Currently there is a trend for travelers to stay only a short time in France while they travel to a different final destination.

P: Americans do not view France and its regions as their first choice destination because they perceive that France does not want Americans in their country and will treat them rudely because of American foreign policy decisions.

O: French regions are rich in diversity offer a variety of activities for all travelers.

O: All regions and their attractions are very accessible due to easy-to-understand SNCF train routes.

O: France is a good value in that its regions have so much to offer within their borders and staying in a provincial region is usually cheaper than the more-popular Paris.

O: There is so much to enjoy in France that it is impossible to see everything in a short stay.

O: Each region of France is a friendly, prestigious destination with unique offerings for a diverse range of interests.
Situation Analysis

Creative Strategy

Business Objective:
To increase total tourism revenue from 5.6% to 7% in the campaigns first year, thus having the second largest share of the international tourist market behind the United States. This will be done by motivating American tourists to discover the art and prestige the regions of France can offer them.

Cognitive Objective:
To increase awareness among the target of the regions of France and the specialties each has to offer, beginning with four lesser-visited destinations and expanding from there. Also, to separate the regions in the target’s mind so as to diminish any negative thoughts about the country as a whole and instead focus and her regions as their own destinations.

Affective Objective:
To convince men and women of the target to feel that they can have an artistic and emotional relationship with the regions of France, thereby rediscovering their youthful outlook on life. Also creating the regions in their minds as a place of legend, mystery, and passion.

Conative Objective:
To stimulate tourists to make reservations in hotels in the regions of France and explore the sights, or making reservations through an airline directly or a travel agent.

Competitive Frame:
The major competitors for the regions of France are the U.S., the U.K., Spain, Italy, and other European countries. The U.K. currently receives more U.S. travelers than any other European country but Spain and Italy are not far behind France. The U.K., Spain and Italy utilize scenery picture-heavy advertisements and a large amount of internet advertising in their respective campaigns.

Consumer Promise:
The French provinces provide a new view of France by showing the consumer what is unique, artistic, and passionate about the provinces. The diversity of attractions and the smaller scale of a regional holiday identifies with the target’s need to be creative, unique and esteemed.

Claim Support:
The provinces each have unusual features which make them truly their own regions. A wide variety of sport activities, breathtaking scenery, impressive architecture and hidden treasures await for the tourist who comes for a visit.

Tone and Manner:
Each region will eventually be depicted in its own ad. The manner in which each region will be depicted is artistic, prestigious, and mysterious. The idea presented in the copy of each ad will be that the each province is an amazing place with amazing potential to fulfill hidden passions within the reader.

“J’adore” means “I adore” or “I love” in French. Using this as the headline of each ad reinforces the already successful campaigns France has used for the past few years, “J’aime la France” and “Let’s Fall in Love Again.” Consumers will immediately recognize the word as French and will automatically connect the visual with its meaning. The copy will strengthen the visual and build upon it by explaining that the pictured scene/activity is just one of the many to enjoy in that particular region. The tone of the copy will be simple, informative, and friendly.
Creative

Rationales & Vehicles
A web site address leading to more information (including booking options) will be placed at the bottom of each ad along with the Maison de la France logo.

The visuals of each ad will be reminiscent of the Art Deco style of design, which historically was a successful way to advertise destinations in the early 20th century. Using this style will build upon France's image as a historical mecca for art and design as well as tourism.

Campaign Make-up
Maison de la France needs to identify the regions of France as their own tourist destinations in their own right without taking away from the current and past messages advertised about France. Thus is born the “J’adore” campaign. Because “J’adore” is another way to say “I love” it fits perfectly with previous campaigns “I love France” and “Let’s Fall in Love Again.” The visuals allow each region to create its own identity while remaining a part of France as a whole.

The campaign would be launched in January of 2003 in order to give consumers time to consider all of the regions before making booking choices in March, the typical month for booking summer holidays.

Rationales
Because internet marketing and niche marketing is so important to this target, it has been determined that creating a television ad would create too much waste. Instead, Maison de la France will create an eventual 22 magazine ads, each featuring a different province. At the launch, only 5 will be released, which are the 5 presented in this book. Maison de la France will also engage in heavy internet marketing through the use of a special web sites, www.provinces.fr, through E-newsletters, and by traditional internet advertisements.

One-half page newspaper ads will be placed in key markets on the East coast, where the majority of the target lives. Key cities include New York, Boston, Miami, Charleston, Washington, D.C., Richmond, Philadelphia, and Atlanta.

Media
+ Magazines
A variety of magazines will be chosen as vehicles for the creative executions. Travel magazines like Condé Nast Traveller, Frommer’s Budget Travel, National Geographic Traveler, Vacations, VisitEurope. Target specific magazines will be used as well like 50 & Beyond, Bon Appetit, Food & Wine, and Smithsonian Magazine

+ Internet
Many internet sites will be utilized for the campaign including the web sites of Maison de la France partners such as SNCF and Air France. Other travel related sites to be used include: Google, Travelocity, Expedia, Orbitz, Odopo, and Monarch Travel. Other web sites include: AOL, Yahoo, and MSN.com.
Come, be inspired by the history, beauty, and most of all, passion of the provinces of France. Each unique region has something unforgettable waiting for you. Whether you seek the famous castles in the Loire valley, or a delectable crêpe in Brittany, you will find your passion in the provinces. Maison de la France is now offering special train rates for travel throughout the country. Contact your travel agent today or visit our website to find your passion in the provinces.

www.provences.fr

* 20 *
Be inspired by the history, energy and sheer brilliance that is Normandy. The picturesque seaside province offers everything from spectacular views like Mont-St-Michel, to the Giverny gardens of artist Claude Monet. Make arrangements today to explore your passions in the provinces.
Be captivated by the architecture, industry and serenity of the Loire Valley.
This castle-filled province stuns with its array of vineyards, historical landmarks, and views of the spectacular Loire river.
Make arrangements today to explore your passion in the provinces.

www.provences.fr
adventure excitement passion

Be moved by the enthusiasm, energy and epic history of Picardy. This once-home to the French ruling families will dazzle. Whether you long to experience a Jules Verne-style hot-air balloon ride, or the splendor of a day at the races at Chantilly's famous courses. Make arrangements today to explore your passion in the provinces.
Be entranced by the beauty, uniqueness and amazing diversity that is Brittany. The awe-inspiring coastal province will surprise you with its friendly charm, special cultural heritage, and breath-taking vistas. Make arrangements today to explore your passion in the provinces.

www.provences.fr
Discover your passion in the provinces!

Events with SNCF

The magic of SNCF awaits you in the provinces.
The provinces of France invite you to

experience the passion of the provinces

visit www.provinces.fr
or click here
Promotions

Recommendations

Discover the Regions Train Pass
Since Maison de la France already has an alliance with SNCF, the National French railway company, this friendship can be utilized to promote travel to the different provinces. Tourists may obtain a special, passport-like card at any SNCF rail station with the purchase of any rail ticket. The tourist keeps the card and whenever he/she enters a different region, he/she receives a “stamp.” Each stamp entitles the cardholder to receive a discount on future rail tickets equivalent to 5 Euros per stamp. There will be no limit to how many stamps a person can collect but once they have 22 the holder will be issued a new card. This promotion will only last for the summer months of May through September, 2004.

WWW.provinces.fr
Maison de la France will launch a separate web site intended specifically for the marketing of the provinces. www.provinces.fr will include special itineraries for the province-traveling tourist, a link where prospective tourists can construct their own itinerary, activity links guiding consumers to their respective regions (i.e., clicking on “skiing” will take the web surfer to the Rhône-Alpes), regional recipes, current weather conditions, special events calendar and more. The web site will use both real pictures and the posterized style used in the print ad campaign.

Postcards from France
Maison de la France will conduct a direct marketing campaign repeat American tourists. Those in the target will receive a postcard in the mail of one of the many regional destinations. The postcard will look much like the magazine advertisements on the front in it they will be artistically stylized, but the copy will be omitted. On the reverse side, information about current travel deals from participating hotels and restaurants in the area will be printed along with a short, seemingly hand-written line saying how much France misses you.

Picture Posters
Because the advertising campaign is highly artistic and the target is inclined to be an art enthusiast, large posters in varying sizes will be sold through the regional web site www.provinces.fr. Each poster will depict one of the 22 regions and may be purchased through the web site for 10 Euros each. This will stimulate interest in the campaign and at the same time capitalize from the Art Deco poster craze of the past.

France E-newsletter Updates
By becoming a member of either the Maison de la France web site (www.franceguide.com) or www.provinces.fr, the person is automatically signed up for e-newsletter updates about his/her favorite interests in France. Through the web sites, a person can tailor his/her newsletter to specific interests, regions, or events and then be alerted when there is news.
Campaign Evaluation

Recommendations

J’adore PressKit
Maison de la France will construct a J’adore presskit to send out pertinent media outlets in the United States. Each kit will contain a full-sized poster of one of the French regions, a set of playing cards featuring 2 different pictures of all 22 provinces as well as 8 of the countries largest cities. Members of the press will also be invited to a “J’adore” gala in honor to the campaign kick-off January 1, 2004. At the gala, every region will be represented by its own tourist office and regional arts, foods, crafts, wines, and photographs of their unique scenery will be on display and for consumption.

Ongoing Promotions
Because the “J’adore” campaign meshes well with previous campaigns, certain current promotional efforts will be expected to continue throughout the duration of this new campaign. These include continuing to offer special hotel rates from campaign partners Sofitel, Relais & Chateaux, and Abotels, as well as keeping and expanding upon the Club France card promotion, which gives tourists discounts at over 1,000 French tourism businesses.

Campaign Evaluations
An evaluation of this campaign will allow the French Government Tourist Office, and Maison de la France to better understand its American target market in future campaigns. Evaluating this campaign’s effectiveness will help the company reach marketing and business objectives.

Many factors must be evaluated, marketing and promotions will be monitored using annual surveys and various direct mail pieces. A database specifically designed for consumer feedback will be linked to www.provinces.fr, the official web site of the provinces.

It may also be helpful to survey feelings and attitudes of Americans about France after this campaign to see if they are more positive.

Specifically, the evaluation should include:

- Awareness and attitudes of the J’adore campaign for the provinces of France.
- Successful capture of the 35-60 year old American tourist market.
- Effectiveness, interest, and participation in promotions.
- Success of public relations efforts.
Marketing the Regions of France: A Creative Advertising Plan

An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

by

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