

Extraction of know-how for attracting international conventions from a questionnaire survey of experienced person

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Abstract

This study focuses on staffs of convention bureaus and clarifies their know-how for attracting international conventions from a questionnaire survey. Convention bureaus play an important role to attract international conventions. A qualitative questionnaire survey highlighting issues raised in hosting international convention was conducted in February 2013 during Japan Congress and Convention Bureau (JCCB). Machine learning was conducted to clarify the experiences of those convention bureaus that had held more than one hundred international conventions in previous three years. The survey instrument was consisted of eight qualitative questions highlighting issues raised in hosting international convention. A total of twenty-seven questionnaires were collected from eight regions. The results show that the convention bureaus emphasize the importance of establishing formal meals, avoiding unreasonable demands, building large-scaled facilities, and offering environmentally-friendly alternatives.

Keywords

convention industry, international convention destination, MICE, convention bureaus, questionnaire survey

1. Introduction

This study focuses on staffs of convention bureaus and clarifies their know-how for attracting international conventions from a questionnaire survey. Convention bureaus play an important role to attract international conventions. For example, convention bureaus act as the liaison between prospective visitors to the destination [Pearlman, 2009] and provide official information to the future visitors [Lau et al., 2005].

Therefore, convention bureaus can be one of the critical factors in an environment where competition among destinations for convention intensifies. Promotion of convention industry is included in one of the aims of the tourism nation promotion basic plan of Japanese government.

The total number of foreign visitors in 2017 reached over 28.69 million in Japan, which is the highest growth rate recorded since 1964. In a tendency to increase the number of foreign visitors, convention industry is rapidly emerging as one of the most powerful segments because it produces huge economic impact.

According to Japan Tourism Agency, economic ripple impact which convention industry produces in 2015 is 590.5 billion, which totals 265.5 billion as direct economic impact and 325 billion as indirect economic impact.

In addition, convention industry has been acknowledged as helping destinations gain a better tourism image and attract profitable exhibition [Getz and Page, 2016]. Since convention industry has increased considerable in the last couple of decades, many countries have begun to compete with other countries to increase their shares in this market [Caber and İsmayıl, 2017]. Motivation to decide the convention venue is

investigated in existing research [Oppermann, 1996].

However, researches on convention industry and especially convention bureaus are still limited. The research questions of the current study are as stated below:

- Are there any differences between convention bureaus with extensive experience and those with limited experience? Is it possible to clearly distinguish any such differences using a questionnaire survey instrument?
- What are the key characteristics of the two categories of convention bureaus? Are any differences easily recognizable or do they require more complex investigation?

The findings of this study help us not only to clarify staffs' thought of the convention bureaus on a practical level, but also to share their idea to attract international convention.

2. Previous research

Previous studies emphasize that convention bureaus can be a critical factor in an environment where competition among destinations for convention intensifies because of the provision of the highest level of service quality [Kim et al., 2003].

When convention organizer or/and association determine the place to hold the conference, accessibility, local support, extra-conference opportunities, accommodation facilities, meeting facilities, information, site environment are recognized the most important attributes from the data shown in the literature review [Crouch and Ritchie, 1998].

However, there is few studies which focus on convention bureaus in Japan. In the researches related to convention bureaus, Iwamoto et al. [2016] conducted a questionnaire survey to clarify important attributes for invitation of international convention. The results showed that it is necessary to take sufficient measures against area information, local service such as

a variety of multilingual sign, and convention facilities such as available of day care center for kids.

Referring the previous studies, this paper analyses convention bureaus' evaluation of regional characteristics as international convention destination by different method.

3. Method

3.1 Data collection

The questionnaire survey for this research was conducted in February 2013 during the workshop in Japan Congress and Convention Bureau (JCCB). The Japan Congress and Convention Bureau (JCCB), established in June 1995 and incorporated on June 2009, is an organization to contribute to promotion of the MICE industry in Japan.

The survey instrument was consisted of eight qualitative questions highlighting issues raised in hosting international convention. A total of twenty-seven questionnaires were collected from eight regions.

The questionnaire items are given below.

- A convention organizer asks you to set up a welcome board near the venue which is not related to your international convention. How will you deal with that?
- A convention organizer misunderstands that convention bureaus are professional congress organizer who hire for free. How do you resolve this problem?
- A convention organizer who hasn't hosted international conventions tells you that the budget of the convention is

only two million yen. What do you advise the convention organizer?

- Branding is one of the most important factors in MICE industry. Please tell me strengths and weaknesses of your region. How do you resolve the weaknesses of your region?
- A convention organizer asks you that he/she needs an additional room for the international convention, but there is no empty room. How do you resolve this problem?
- During the international convention, a convention organizer makes a complaint that the internet connection is slow. How do you resolve this problem?
- A convention organizer asks for your advice to make the participants surprised by offering good venue/food during international convention. How do you answer the question?
- Have you ever been asked to accept unreasonable demands? If you have, please tell me what you are asked for.

3.2 Data analysis

As shown in Table 1, eight convention bureaus had held more than one hundred international conventions in three years.

Machine learning was conducted to analyse the differences between the qualitative data from eight convention bureaus as positive examples and seventeen convention bureaus as negative examples.

4. Results

Machine learning found out 10 positive key words of convention bureaus holding large number of international conven-

Table 1: The number of international convention shows the total of previous three years (2014-2016)

Number of respondents	Number of international convention in three years	Organization
1	3	Miyazaki Convention and Visitors Bureau
2	5	Tottori convention bureau
2	12	Takamatsu Convention & Visitors Bureau, Matsuyama Convention and Visitors Bureau
1	14	Morioka Tourism & Convention Association
1	20	Saitama Tourism and International Relations Bureau
1	24	Kunibiki Messe
3	27	Gifu Convention and Visitors Bureau, Nagasaki International Tourism and Convention Association, Sasebo Convention & Visitors Association
1	43	Association of Kumamoto International Tourist convention
2	47	Shizuoka Convention & Visitors Bureau
1	52	Fujisan Tourism & Communication Bureau
1	76	Kanazawa Convention Bureau
1	81	Nagaoka Incorporated Association of Tourism and Conventions
1	129	Nara visitors Bureau
1	204	Chiba Convention Bureau and International Center
1	430	Sendai Tourism, Convention and International Association
1	516	Kobe Convention & Visitors Association
2	576	Nagoya Convention & Visitors Bureau
1	591	Yokohama Convention & Visitors Bureau
1	776	Osaka Convention & Tourism Bureau

tions and 10 negative key words of convention bureaus holding small number of international conventions and reached to 90 % of identification, which totally clarified key characteristics of the convention bureaus that had held one hundred international conventions.

According to Table 2, *F*-measure and accuracy showed the highest scores in number nine, that is, these 18 key words positively affects the number of international conventions.

Table 2: Discrimination performance extract only upper score of vocabulary

<i>N</i>	Precision	Recall	<i>F</i> -measure	Accuracy
1	0.3407	0.5717	0.4021	0.4459
2	0.741	0.7421	0.7115	0.7819
3	0.7155	0.7146	0.6707	0.7592
4	0.7324	0.7087	0.6720	0.7591
5	0.8919	0.7629	0.7913	0.8515
6	0.9060	0.7979	0.8320	0.8796
7	0.9054	0.7954	0.8298	0.8836
8	0.9774	0.8463	0.8902	0.9292
9	0.9702	0.8942	0.9194	0.9446
10	0.9357	0.8304	0.8542	0.9019

Precision is the ratio of correctly predicted positive observations to the total predicted positive observations. On the other hand, Recall is the ratio of correctly predicted positive observations to the all observations in actual class. Moreover, *F* measure is a measure of a test's accuracy. Accuracy means simply a ratio of correctly predicted observation to the total observations.

Table 3 shows key words of convention bureaus holding large number of international convention as positive words and key words of convention bureaus holding small number of international convention as negative words.

Scr (wi) show the influence on identification of positive and negative words and also freq (wi) shows the number of re-

spondents who used the key words. For example, 'Q7: course' means that the respondents used the key words in Q7. (Wi) shows significant key words. Moreover, the key words without questions mean that they are characteristics regardless of responses to the questions.

Therefore, the results show that convention bureaus holding large number of international conventions emphasize the importance of establishing formal meals (Q7), avoiding unreasonable demands (Q8), building large-scale facilities (Q4), and offering environmentally-friendly alternatives.

In addition, convention bureaus holding large number of international conventions frequently uses *sa* which means suffix of adjective. The adjectives such as weak, good, cheap, high, and low positively affect number of international conventions.

5. Discussion and conclusion

The findings of this study indicate that the convention bureaus holding large number of international conventions can offer various meals, that is, plenty of choices in cheap price.

That helps a convention organizers and participant to offer low-cost and high-quality food. By enhancing the information sharing, the staff can address unreasonable demands. The results indicate that it is necessary to build large scale of facility to attract international conventions. PR is also an important factor to attract international convention. That the region is working on environmental issues gives good images for convention organizers and participants.

The study was not without limitations. qualitative data from twenty-seven conventions was collected. There are seventy-three convention bureaus in Japan. Therefore, more research is required to find out the important factors to attract international conventions.

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Table 3: Difference of key words among convention bureaus

<i>N</i>	Positive words			Negative words		
	Scr (wi)	Freq (wi)	(wi)	Scr (wi)	Freq (wi)	(wi)
1	0.0144	9	Q7: <i>couse</i> (course)	-0.0342	8	<i>kankei</i> (relation)
2	0.0144	9	<i>couse</i> (course)	-0.0293	13	<i>gyousha</i> (vendor)
3	0.0134	4	Q8: <i>ukeru</i> (accept)	-0.0288	8	<i>shitsu</i> (room)
4	0.0126	7	<i>hoka</i> (other)	-0.0288	8	Q5: <i>shitsu</i> (room)
5	0.0125	4	Q4: <i>sei</i> (gender)	-0.0275	13	<i>teian</i> (suggestion)
6	0.0124	8	<i>youkyu</i> (request)	-0.0257	11	<i>mono</i> (thing)
7	0.0120	9	Q4: <i>shisetsu</i> (facility)	-0.0250	15	<i>hitsuyo</i> (need)
8	0.0109	6	<i>sa</i> (suffix)	-0.0248	11	Q7: <i>seigen</i> (regulation)
9	0.0108	5	Q4: <i>kankyo</i> (environment)	-0.0246	10	<i>sagasu</i> (search)
10	0.0105	6	Q8: <i>yokyu</i> (request)	-0.0246	17	Q2: <i>setsumei</i> (explanation)

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