



Integrated Marketing Communication as a tool to promote
heritage destinations in Sri Lanka; with special reference to
Anuradhapura ancient City.

This dissertation is submitted as a partial fulfilment of the degree of Bachelor of
Hospitality, Tourism and Events Management
August, 2018

K.T. Udana
UWU/EX/14/0334
Department of Public Administrations

ABSTRACT

Heritage tourism Sri Lanka is one of most prominent areas of tourism in the country. Sri Lanka has many heritage attractions and hundreds of thousands of tourists visit those annually. But heritage destinations of Sri Lanka faces ever increasing competition from other South and Southeast Asian countries. Integrated marketing communication is selected as a potential promotional method for heritage destinations in the hope that it will be able to gain a competitive advantage over other competitors. Integrated marketing communication is the process of combining all the marketing communication method to send a consistent message to end consumers with using most effective methods.

Ancient city of Anuradhapura was chosen as the research ground for this study. Anuradhapura was the first capital of Sri Lanka with a history of close to 2500 years. This is also one of main heritage destinations in the country. In recent years there was a decrease of tourists to the area. This was the main reason this destination was chosen as the research ground.

This study is a mixed method research. It uses Explanatory Sequential Mixed Method. The study is done in two parts. The first part is the quantitative part. In this hundred tourists in the destination were given questionnaires asking them to rate what marketing communication methods were most influential in their decision to visit Anuradhapura. Those data were analyzed with using descriptive statistics. The second part was qualitative part. Ten tourism stakeholders in the destination were interviewed using semi structured interview method. All the data was analyzed using thematic method to gain a conclusion.

The findings of this study gave rise to the fact that integrated marketing communication can be used as a promotional tool for heritage destinations in Sri Lanka. Although before implementing the method there must be some systematic changes to destinations tourism environment. Or the full potential of integrated marketing communication will not be met.

Key words: Heritage Destinations, Integrated marketing communication, Anuradhapura, Promotion.