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## How a 3D Tour Itinerary Promotion Affect Consumers' Intention to Purchase a Tour Product?

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**Abstract:** The past research paid less attention to three-dimensional tour itinerary promotion produced by Google Earth. This study aims to compare the performance (experiential marketing, customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions) between two-dimensional and three-dimensional tour itinerary promotion and prove the value of three-dimensional tour itinerary promotion. At the same time, to understand the respondents' behavioral intentions after viewing a three-dimensional google earth tour promotion video, the relationships between experiential marketing, customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions are verified. The results showed three-dimensional tour itinerary promotion is better than two-dimensional tour itinerary promotion in the perception of experiential marketing, customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions. Additionally, it demonstrated that experience marketing of three-dimensional tour promotion has a direct and positive affect on behavioral intentions to purchase or recommend a tour product. Also, it was proved that customer satisfaction of three-dimensional tour promotion has a direct and positive affect on behavioral intentions. Conclusions are then drawn and suggestions for future research are offered.

**Key words:** Experience marketing, customer satisfaction, behavioral intentions, tour itinerary promotion, google earth

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### INTRODUCTION

In the service industry, services are not usually concrete and readily displayed. Peattie and Peattie (1996) indicated the intangibility of services prompts consumers to look for surrogate "cues" to judge service quality. Some research have identified that promotions directly affect consumers' behaviors in a variety of ways (Doyle and Saunders, 1985; Gupta, 1988; Vilcassim and Jain, 1991). Thus, marketing and promotion are very important ways to selling service products. In particular, since tour products are 'confidence goods' that consumers are unable to test in advance, they must decide whether or not to purchase based simply on available descriptive information (Gratzer *et al.*, 2004). Therefore, it is difficult for travel agencies to market and promote them. That may increase consumer's skepticism and risk perception and ultimately affect their purchase willingness (Rozier-Rich and Santos, 2011).

It is already apparent that remarkable advances of information technology have continued to change how marketing is practiced (Kalliny and Gentry, 2010) and transforming 2D information experience into virtual 3D is easier than before (Ruzinoor *et al.*, 2011). In fact, many tour organizations have already utilized "virtual reality" (referred to as VR) or VR-type related technologies (Rome Reborn, 2010) to market tourism destinations or promote their tour products for attracting consumers. Williams and Hobson (1995) revealed that VR may completely change the product promotion and sales in tourism marketing. Wan *et al.* (2007) claimed that virtual experiences provided more effective advertising than brochures for both theme parks and natural parks. Also, some researchers proposed VR's applications and related research in the tourism field (Cho *et al.*, 2002; Vince, 2004; Berger *et al.*, 2007; Arbuckle, 2007; Cignoni and Scopigno, 2008; Guttentag, 2010; Owaied *et al.*, 2011). However, as with any implementation of technology, Patterson (2007) revealed there is a danger of insufficient

time and appropriate tools to meet the intended objectives for enterprises. Especially, from small-sized tour agencies' point of view, they usually have budget and information technology constraints. The VR technology seems not to be suitable for them. Subsequently, Cho *et al.* (2002) and Lee and Oh (2007) researched 'virtual tours' which is one kind of VR-type technology and also found their advantages. These 'virtual tours' are usually simple panoramic photographs that don't allow any free navigation. They were not real VR but they still acquired advantages in VR-type technologies. Since VR-type technology can provide more abundant sensory information than 2D to prospective consumers, it possesses tourism marketing potential. Consequently, even if some of technical features of VR technology are omitted such as "navigation" and "interaction", a low-skill, low-cost and value-added VR-type related technology is still considerable and valuable for small-sized tour agencies.

Schmitt (1999) thought different Experience Providers create a variety of experiential results which is helpful to shape the experience and increase customer satisfaction. As mentioned by Shukla (2007), experiential marketing tries to arouse a strong emotional response by the use of sensory techniques. Yuan and Wu (2008) also claimed one way in which experiences can be used to achieve differentiation is to focus on the design and delivery of service experiences. Google Earth (referred to as GE) may be one of the appropriate and potential Experience Providers, as well as provide a chance of tour experience in marketing and promotion for tour agencies. GE is a free Internet-based GIS software offered by Google that provides satellite images and three-dimensional (3D) graphics to allow users to explore our globe, including views of satellite photos, maps, 3D topography and even buildings. The application is user-friendly and is provided in High Definition (HD), making geographic information more comprehensive. Based on its user-friendly interface, stunning visuals and powerful functionality, GE has grown rapidly in recent years, becoming the hottest 3D GIS software in the world. Additionally, the free version of GE can be installed by any user at any time and anywhere as well as not be subject to licensing requirements. Although, GE is not a real VR, it, however, has been applied in many new areas. The applications include news about transportation, flying simulations, supervision and management of 3D engineering, project touring and teaching, etc. For example, Rome Reborn is a 3D virtual model of ancient Rome that was made available to the public through GE in 2008 (Rome Reborn, 2010). Patterson (2007) also proposed that GE is a very powerful teaching tool because of the combination of visual imagery and entertainment value.

Obviously, the GE technique may be an effective tool for experiential marketing and promotion. Tour agencies can take special advantage of the free virtual 3D GE by using the virtual 3D effects as a communication tool for consumers to promote and display their tour itineraries and schedules. It may not only help customers to acquire the experiential desires, reduce insecurity and increase the willingness to purchase but it may also overcome the issues mentioned above such as intangibility, budget and information technology constraints. However, in the past, tour marketing and promotion research focused more on preference and use of promotional travel narratives (Belch and Belch, 2004) such as travel brochures (Andereck, 2005; Molina and Esteban, 2006) and travel articles (Damn, 1999; Santos, 2006), perceived skepticism towards promotional advertising travel (Rozier-Rich and Santos, 2011), sale promotion (Peattie and Peattie, 1996), promotion slogans (Richardson *et al.*, 1993) and VR's contributions to tourism marketing (Guttentag, 2010) and so forth but paid less attention to 3D tour promotion produced by GE.

Combining the aforementioned, the purpose of this research is to apply 3D virtual effect of GE to produce a 3D tour itinerary promotion video based on the case study of a North American tour plan offered by Lion Travel Service Company in Taiwan. Next, the respondents filled out the questionnaires which record the consumer's perceptions of experiential marketing, overall satisfaction and behavioral intentions after viewing the 2D travel brochure and 3D virtual tour itinerary promotion video. The perception differentiation analysis then was conducted. Moreover, the theoretical model of relationship between experiential marketing, overall satisfaction and behavioral intentions of 3D tour itinerary promotion was verified. Finally, according the research results, theoretical contribution and practical implication were revealed and discussed.

## THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

### Theoretical background

**Experiential marketing:** Now-a-days, customers no longer care about the product or service, itself but rather the participation experience of the travel. Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) pointed out that customers not only enjoy feelings of excitement from the creative experiences but also look forward to the series of vivid experiences provided by the enterprises. Schmitt (1999) also thought that as information technology becomes widespread, the brand names take the lead and the all-round relationship between communication and entertainment gradually matures. The three elements will become more relevant as

the experiential marketing era approaches. Pine and Gilmore (1998) indicated that an experience occurs when a company intentionally uses services as the stage and goods as props, to engage individual customers in a way that creates a memorable event. An individual's experience originates from their interaction with their unique circumstances and no one will have, therefore, exactly the same experience. Schmitt (1999) believed that experience does not occur passively but it is generated by participation.

Schmitt (1999) proposed that experience marketing is based on a foundation of individual consumer's psychology theory and social behavior theory and this correlation provides a structure for the concept of customer experience management. Then, he further defined experience marketing as "the consumer's observation and interaction that stimulates their motivation, creates a consuming behavior or brand impression and then, positively enhances the product value." Experiential marketing contains two most essential concepts: Strategic Experiential Modules and Experience Providers. The five types of Strategic Experiential Modules which include Sense, Feel, Think, Act and Relate experience, are not only the basis of the experience marketing strategy but also provide different forms of positive consuming experiences. Experience Providers are the tactical experience marketing tools which include communications, visual and verbal identity, product presence, co-branding, spatial environment, electronic media and personnel.

To achieve the goals of the marketing, various experience providers intensify the customer's impression of products or marketing programs and allow the customer's five basic senses experience the positive attributes of experience marketing. If a tour organization can integrate strategic experiential modules as the latitude and experience providers as the longitude into the thinking blueprint of the experience matrix, it can choose the appropriate experience providers to enhance the creativity and design of the marketing programs to achieve their strategic goal (Schmitt, 1999). For consideration of convenience, technology and cost, this research tried to present a forward-thinking and VR-type alternative method (i.e., GE 3D tour promotion) to substitute the traditional Experience Providers (i.e., 2D travel brochure) and improve the beneficial results of experience marketing in regular tour promotions.

Because this research intended to evaluate customer perception of experience marketing for a 3D tour itinerary promotion, experience marketing is defined as, "customers receive motivation after viewing 2D travel brochure/3D tour itinerary promotion video which enhances the value

cognition from memorable memories" via referring to the related literature (Schmitt, 1999). For operationalisation of experience marketing, this research referenced the questionnaires and experience marketing theories of Schmitt (1999) and customized its questionnaire design for our specific circumstances. In the scale design of the Strategic Experience Marketing module, 16 items were contained in five major dimensions (Sense, Feel, Think, Act and Relate experience) to validate the content. To ensure expert validity of the scale, three highly-trained scholars provided review and suggestions. The Likert 5-point scale is the instrument of measurement for this questionnaire, with a higher point value indicating a higher value for experience marketing.

**Customer satisfaction:** Cardozo (1965), the earliest scholar to raise the concept of the customer satisfaction, postulated that enhancing customer satisfaction would increase repurchase tendency and ultimately affect the purchase of other associated products. Customer satisfaction is formed from the comparison between the product's actual post-purchase performance and the customer's pre-purchase expectations according to many studies (Churchill and Surprenant, 1982; Cina, 1989). When the two factors coincide, the customer will be satisfied; otherwise if they differ, the customer willingness for future purchase of product or service will be affected. Oliver (1980) provided a disconfirmation of expectations module he believed the satisfaction depends on the customer expectation and the actual purchase experience. Woodside *et al.* (1989) felt customer satisfaction is an attitude formed after purchasing a product/service and it has an influence on the customer's willingness to repurchase.

When measuring customer satisfaction, Day (1977) believed that customer satisfaction is a general measure and therefore, just measuring their overall satisfaction is enough. Churchill and Surprenant (1982) integrated research from different scholars and considered that customer satisfaction contains multiple dimensions. Subsequently, Fornell (1992) pointed out the customer satisfaction is an overall measurement of the post-purchase attitude. Bigne *et al.* (2001) also thought recreational satisfaction comes from the tourist's overall evaluation of their trip history. Because the customer satisfaction is abstract and is difficult to express concretely, the measure of overall satisfaction allows the customer to answer the questions with less bias. Therefore, this research uses the concept of overall satisfaction to measure the satisfaction level after viewing GE 3D tour promotion. Furthermore, this research defined customer satisfaction as, "the overall perception

assessment reflecting the customer's positive emotional state after viewing the 3D tour itinerary promotion" by Cronin *et al.* (2000). Thus, this research used one item to evaluate and operationalize customer satisfaction. The Likert 5-point scale is the instrument of measurement for customer satisfaction, with a higher point value indicating a higher value for customer satisfaction.

**Behavioral intentions:** In defining behavioral intentions, customers apply their possible action and behavioral tendencies to the product or the organization after consumption (Engel *et al.*, 1995). Zeithaml *et al.* (1996) thought that behavioral intention is a subjective indicator of the customer loyalty and can predict behavioral action. The behavioral intentions encompass the customer's willingness for future repurchase of the product/service and drives recommendation behavior towards family or friends (Zeithaml *et al.*, 1996; Cronin *et al.*, 2000; Echchabi and Olamiyi, 2012). In the tourism field, revisit intention and recommendation intention were used mostly to assess the customer behavioral intentions (Boulding *et al.*, 1993; Baker and Crompton, 2000). After considering the circumstances of this research, related references and professional advice from scholars and experts, this study used "purchase intention" to substitute the "repurchase intention" and then used the purchase intention and recommendation intention to measure the customer behavioral intentions after viewing GE 3D tour promotion video.

Based on the previous literature, behavioral intentions was defined as "the specific action or behavioral tendency of the customer after viewing the 3D tour itinerary promotion" in this study. The operationalisation of the behavioral intentions was based on the literature (Boulding *et al.*, 1993; Zeithaml *et al.*, 1996; Cronin *et al.*, 2000; Baker and Crompton, 2000), research circumstances and expert recommendations. Two items (the purchase intention and recommendation intention) were applied to evaluate the customer's behavioral intentions towards travel products after viewing the 3D tour itinerary promotion. The Likert 5-point scale is the instrument of measurement for behavioral intentions, with a higher point value indicating a higher value for behavioral intentions.

**Research hypothesis and conceptual framework:** Schmitt (1999) pointed out that Strategic Experiential Modules (SEMs) cannot be communicated alone. They require multi-dimensional Experience Providers as the channel to enhance customer reception on products or marketing plans. Moreover, the customers can experience the charm of the experiential marketing offered by

experience providers. In addition, the experiential providers can enhance positive recognition and both psychological and physical responses towards the products or services which in turn improves customer satisfaction. Schmitt (2003) also proposed the five steps of customer experience management. Within which, step two, the construction of experience platform, is quite crucial. This shows that firms should employ appropriate experience providers to improve customer experience satisfaction and then motivate behavior intention (i.e., purchase and recommendation intention). Based on the literature referenced above, meanwhile, this study also intends to intensify customer's purchase and recommendation intentions toward tour products by employing different experiential providers. Therefore, this research proposed the hypothesis below:

- **H1:** There is significantly differentiation between experiential marketing perceptions of 2D/3D experiential providers
- **H2:** There is significantly differentiation between satisfaction perceptions of 2D/3D experiential providers
- **H3:** There is significantly differentiation between behavior intention perceptions of 2D/3D experiential providers

Oliver (1993) and Mano and Oliver (1993) showed a link between pleasure experience during the consumption experience (or positive correlation) and post consumption satisfaction. Schmitt (1999) pointed out that the purpose of experience marketing is to increase the customer's satisfaction and loyalty. The higher the effectiveness of the experience marketing, the higher the customer satisfaction and loyalty will be. Petrick *et al.* (2001) revealed that if enterprises can find factors that affect customers' satisfaction toward products or services, they may change customer experience. Wang and Lin (2010) also discovered the positive effect of destination experience marketing on customer satisfaction after researching the TV dramas watched by tourists. Based on the literature referenced above, this research proposed the hypothesis below:

- **H4:** Experiential marketing perception after viewing GE 3D tour promotion significantly and positively affects the customer satisfaction of GE 3D tour promotion

Taylor and Baker (1994) studied the four different types of services and revealed the relationship module on service quality, customer satisfaction and customer

purchase intention. They discovered that customer satisfaction and purchase intention have a positive correlation. Fornell *et al.* (1996) illustrated that customer satisfaction can induce customer loyalty and the customer attitude will be formed after purchasing the specific product or service. If customer satisfaction is achieved, the possibility of repurchase will be greater. Gradually, it will transform into loyal attitude and behavior, promoting word-of-mouth for the specific product and sharing the experience with friends and relatives. Reichheld (1996) showed that the promotion of customer satisfaction reduces costs and expands profit for the organization and it also has the ability to generate referral business, builds on the brand reputation and stabilizes prices. Besides, Baker and Crompton (2000), Bigne *et al.* (2001) and Turk and Avcilar (2009) also presented customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions have an existing positive correlation. Furthermore, once customers are satisfied with a service and its associated products, they become more likely to shop or repurchase which then increases company profits (Gupta *et al.*, 2007). Based on the literature referenced above, this research proposed the hypothesis:

- **H5:** Customer satisfaction after viewing GE 3D tour promotion significantly and positively affects behavioral intentions of customers towards tour product

In fact, all the personal psychological senses of belief, motivation, learning and attitude influence customers' purchasing behavior (Kotler, 1994). Foxall *et al.* (1998) have also stated "the consumer's positive experience ... in the past helps him or her to interpret the current 'behavior setting' in ways that encourage appropriate behavior". Thus, experience marketing not only has an intermediate effect through customer satisfaction but also has a direct impact on the behavioral intentions (Schmitt, 1999). In addition, Gabbott and Hogg (1994) mentioned that experiential consumption by individuals is increasing and individual consumer behavior is motivated not by rational decisions but by emotions and experiences. Based on the literature referenced above, this research proposed the hypothesis:

- **H6:** Experiential marketing perception after viewing GE 3D tour promotion significantly and positively affects behavioral intentions of customers towards tour product

Based on the above hypotheses, research model was then presented as Fig. 1.

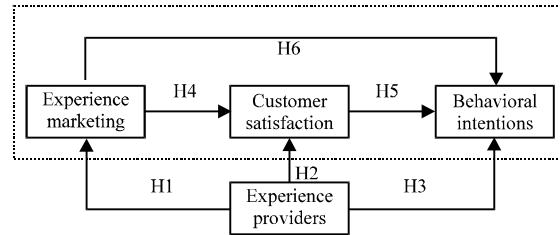


Fig. 1: Research model

## RESEARCH METHODS

### Questionnaire design and sampling

**Questionnaire design and pretest:** The variable definition and operationalisation in the previous paragraph were applied to measure each construct. To ensure the scales of this paper possess good content validity, the draft questionnaire referenced and calibrated the scales of related literature with good reliability and validity based on research circumstances of this study. In addition, to keep the integrity and accuracy of this research, three professional scholars with plentifully practical experience have examined the questionnaire and relevant descriptions. The scholars, then, provided revised suggestions when they find any lack of clarity or response difficulties. Moreover, because this research has referenced original foreign literature, a foreign language teacher has been hired to complete the back translation for the questionnaire scale in Chinese to avoid translation errors and ensure the original meaning is expressed. As a result, the draft questionnaire was finalized and should achieve a high level of expert validity. The draft questionnaire contained three sections. Section one included basic information and demographics of the respondents. Section two and Section three respectively contained 19 questionnaire items related to the respondents' perception of the experience marketing (16 items), customer satisfaction (1 items) and behavioral intentions (2 items) after viewing the 2D tour itinerary display and 3D tour itinerary promotion video.

Furthermore, this research performed the pretest and used convenience sampling, with the main pretest sample coming from the students of a technology university in middle Taiwan. After viewing the content of the 2D tour itinerary display and 3D tour itinerary promotion video, respondents filled out each item in the questionnaire according to their agreement, ranging from 1 (disagree strongly) to 5 (agree strongly). The study collected a total of 88 valid questionnaires. In reliability analysis, it was revealed that the Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficients of Feel experience for 2D and 3D tour itinerary display are 0.635 and 0.587 (<0.6), respectively. If Item 7 is deleted, then the

Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficient of the revised Feel experience sub-dimension up to 0.823 and 0.725, respectively. Hence, Item 7 was deleted in this paper. The Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficient of the other four sub-dimensions (Sense, Think, Act and Relate experience) and overall strategic experiential modules were between 0.7 and 0.9 for 2D and 3D tour itinerary display which were considered above-average on the reliability scale (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994). The Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficient of behavioral intentions for 2D and 3D tour itinerary displays were 0.718 and 0.657 which were still considered acceptable on the reliability scale. Based on the pretest result mentioned above, the questionnaire items were revised for the formal questionnaires used in this study.

**Sampling and questionnaire investigation:** According to Anderson and Gerbing (1988), the minimum acceptable sample size is from 100 to 150 samples. Besides, Loehlin (1998) indicated that a minimum sample size of 200 has been recommended to avoid frequent convergence failure and improper solution problems in Structural Equation Model analyses. In this study, because the questionnaire interviews were conducted face-to-face with respondents, including showing them a 3D tour promotion video on a notebook PC beforehand, this type of sample collection is time-consuming. Due to the limitations of human resource, cost and time, this research only targeted the residents of Taichung City in Taiwan for its investigation population. Travel agencies in Taichung City were asked to invite their customers to participate as respondents. As a rule, the sample was acquired through mixing Purposive sampling and Snowball sampling. In order to minimize the errors in the data collection process, the respondents were divided into two groups-the odd and even number of respondents. The respondents with an odd number first watch the 2D tour itinerary display method and then fill Section two of the questionnaire, next, they watch the 3D display method and then fill Section three of the questionnaire. At the same time, the respondents with an even number take the experiment process in the reverse order. From 7/16/2010 to 8/30/2010, during a period of one-and-a-half months, six trained interviewers handed out a total 325 questionnaires and 276 valid questionnaires were returned. The rate of valid questionnaires returned was 85%.

**THE ANALYSIS OF EMPIRICAL DATA**

**Demographic profile of respondents:** Table 1 showed the demographic profile of the respondents in this research. In terms of gender, 47.10 and 52.90% of respondents were male and female, respectively. The ratio is quite close.

**Table 1: Profile of respondents**

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	130	47.10
Female	146	52.90
<b>Age</b>		
18-24	68	24.64
25-34	89	32.25
35-44	78	28.26
45 and up	41	14.86
<b>Education level</b>		
Senior high school/vocational school and below	66	23.91
College/University	185	67.03
Master and above	25	9.06
<b>Occupation</b>		
Students	56	20.29
Public officers	50	18.12
Industrial sector	63	22.83
Business sector	72	26.09
Other	35	12.68
<b>Times of trips abroad in recent two years</b>		
Never	13	4.71
1	47	17.03
2	58	21.01
3	65	23.55
4	50	18.12
5 and up	43	15.58

Approximately 61% of respondents were between 25 and 44 years old. The sample is quite educated, with 76.09% having at least a college or university degree. In terms of occupation of respondents, most work in the business sector (26.09%), while the others are distributed sequentially; industrial sector (22.83%), students (20.19%) and public officers (18.12%) etc. In recent two years, approximately 78% of the respondents have taken at least two trips abroad.

**Descriptive statistical analysis:** From Table 2, the top-three-ranking items that garnered the highest average scores are R14 (This tour itinerary promotion reinforces my impression of the tour destination), R13 (This tour itinerary promotion causes me have some associated ideas about the sightseeing attraction) and S3 (This tour itinerary promotion is vivid and rich in detail), respectively. The average score of R14 is above 4 (Agree) points. The remaining items are between 3 (Neutral) and 4 (Agree) points.

**Model validation:** According to the theoretical foundation, this study constructed a conceptual model for 3D tour itinerary promotion comprising of experience marketing, customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions (Fig. 1). To assess and verify this model, the analysis of structural equation model was performed with AMOS 6.0 and SPSS 12.0 and then Maximum Likelihood Estimation was adopted to estimate the parameters. Before processing the verification of structural equation model formally, normality and outlier of the sample data first should be checked. The age of the respondents was relatively young.

Table 2: The means and matched-t tests of questionnaire items for 2D and 3D tour itinerary promotion

Items	2D means	3D means	t-value	Comparison results
<b>Sense</b>				
S1: This tour itinerary promotion is very attractive	3.314	3.833	-7.892***	2D<3D
S2: This tour itinerary promotion has the great audio and visual effect	3.265	3.899	-8.227***	2D<3D
S3: This tour itinerary promotion is vivid and rich in detail	3.292	3.920	-7.802***	2D<3D
<b>Feel</b>				
F4: This tour itinerary promotion generates a positive emotion	3.360	3.746	-5.243***	2D<3D
F5: This tour itinerary promotion is interesting	3.253	3.703	-6.544***	2D<3D
F6: This tour itinerary promotion is touching	3.023	3.478	-7.446***	2D<3D
<b>Think</b>				
T7: This tour itinerary promotion is unique	3.314	3.482	-2.818	
T8: This tour itinerary promotion makes me more curious	3.266	3.855	-7.979***	2D<3D
T9: This tour itinerary promotion inspires some creative thoughts	3.068	3.659	-6.830***	2D<3D
<b>Act</b>				
A10: I am glad to share the experience of this tour itinerary promotion with others	3.213	3.710	-6.861***	2D<3D
A11: This tour itinerary promotion makes me want to check out the tour web site	3.315	3.772	-6.435***	2D<3D
A12: This tour itinerary promotion makes me want to know more about the details	3.362	3.819	-6.542***	2D<3D
<b>Relate</b>				
R13: This tour itinerary promotion causes me have some associated ideas about the sightseeing attraction	3.393	3.924	-6.966***	2D<3D
R14: This tour itinerary promotion reinforces my impression of the tour destination	3.317	4.033	-9.054***	2D<3D
R15: This tour itinerary promotion makes me want to visit the sightseeing attraction personally	3.113	3.728	-8.385***	2D<3D
<b>Overall satisfaction</b>				
OS16: I am satisfied with this tour itinerary promotion	3.325	3.913	-8.903***	2D<3D
<b>Behavioral intentions</b>				
BI17: This tour itinerary promotion increases my willingness to purchase the tour product	3.323	3.612	-5.136***	2D<3D
BI18: I am more than willing to recommend this tour itinerary due to this tour itinerary promotion	3.026	3.127	1.653	

Values are significant at \*\*\*p<0.001

Table 3: The reliability and validation analysis of structural equation model

Items	Factor loading	CR	AVE
<b>Sense</b>			
S1	0.810***	0.816	0.596
S2	0.783***		
S3	0.721***		
<b>Feel</b>			
F4	0.858***	0.824	0.614
F5	0.848***		
F6	0.622***		
<b>Think</b>			
T7	0.642***	0.773	0.536
T8	0.848***		
T9	0.690***		
<b>Act</b>			
A10	0.647***	0.789	0.557
A11	0.776***		
A12	0.807***		
<b>Relate</b>			
R13	0.736***	0.811	0.589
R14	0.747***		
R15	0.817***		
<b>Behavioral intentions</b>			
BI17	0.860***	0.791	0.655
BI18	0.755***		

\*\*\*p<0.001, CR: Composite reliability, AVE: Average variance extraction

According to suggestion of Kline (2005), when the absolute value of the skewness coefficient is approximately within 2 and the absolute value of the kurtosis coefficient is within 8, the sample data can be regarded as a normal distribution. The result of data analysis revealed that the absolute values of the skewness coefficient and the kurtosis coefficient in this research meet the above criteria and therefore, this study's sample data can also be considered normal. For the outlier test, according to the squared Mahalanobis

distance, the significant gap among observations is the possible outlier that may be deleted. And then, observing whether or not the relevance index is better than one of the original model after removing the possible outliers. The analysis showed that no significant outlier has been found in this study. Therefore, the sample data of this research was suitable for the verification of structural equation model. Its path model for this research was shown in Fig. 2. Next, two major parts, the measurement model and the structure model, were evaluated and tested as following.

**Analysis of measurement model:** The main purpose of testing the measurement model is to understand whether the observation variables can properly reflect and explain the corresponding latent variable (or dimension) or not. That is, it tests the reliability and validity of measurement model. The analysis results of measurement model for each construct were presented and revealed in Table 3.

Table 3 showed that the factor loadings of all observation variables in this study are significant (minimum factor loading is 0.622), thus, the scales have convergent validity. All CR (composite reliability) values are greater than 0.7 and the latent variables (dimensions) appear to have good composite reliabilities (Hair *et al.*, 1998). All AVE (average variance extraction) values are greater than 0.5 and reveal each dimension has significant explanatory power on measurement validity and also shows that the reliability and convergent validity of each scale is excellent (Fornell and Larcker, 1981; Bagozzi and Yi, 1988). In addition, the square roots of the AVE values of all latent variables are greater than all correlation



Table 4: Reliabilities, scales means, standard deviations, square roots of AVE values and correlation coefficients between dimensions

Dimensions	Cronbach's $\alpha$	Means	SD	Sense	Feel	Think	Act	Relate	BI
Sense (3)	0.812	3.884	0.611	0.772*					
Feel (3)	0.810	3.642	0.618	0.718	0.784*				
Think (3)	0.772	3.665	0.600	0.513	0.523	0.732*			
Act (3)	0.780	3.767	0.661	0.589	0.561	0.577	0.746*		
Relate (3)	0.815	3.895	0.637	0.611	0.560	0.584	0.700	0.767*	
BI (2)	0.788	3.369	0.646	0.448	0.405	0.576	0.536	0.700	0.809*

\*The square roots of AVE values, the correlation coefficients between dimensions are presented on the bottom left of the diagonal line, BI: Behavioral intentions, Values in brackets are the number of items

Table 5: The fitness indices between model and data

Fitness indices	Acceptable range	Result of the model	Meet requirement
X <sup>2</sup> /df	<3	2.932	Yes
GFI	>0.8	0.864	Yes
AGFI	>0.8	0.818	Yes
RMSEA	<0.08	0.074	Yes
RMR	<0.08	0.036	Yes
NFI	>0.9	0.872	No
CFI	>0.9	0.911	Yes

Table 6: Summary of effect analysis

Dependent variables	Independent variables	
	Experience marketing	Overall satisfaction
<b>Overall satisfaction</b>		
Direct effect	0.796***	0.645***
Indirect effect	0.00	0.180**
Total effect	0.796***	0.825***
<b>Behavioral intentions</b>		
Direct effect	-	0.226**
Indirect effect	-	0.00
Total effect	-	0.226**

\*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001

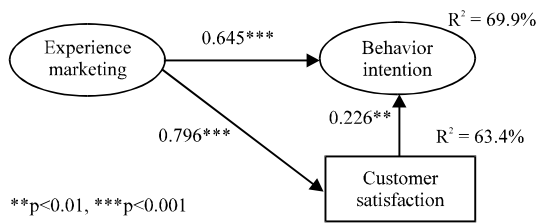


Fig. 2: Path diagram of relationship model of behavioral intentions

coefficients among each dimension in Table 4. It appears that each dimension has a good discriminant validity (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). To sum up above analysis, it showed that the reliability and validity of measurement model has achieved a decent level.

To rank the mean scores of the experience marketing sub-dimensions from highest to lowest, Table 4 showed the order being Relate, Sense, Act, Think and Feel experience. The average score for each sub-dimension of experience marketing and behavioral intentions is between 3 (Neutral) to 4 (Agree) points. Overall, all items and sub-dimension of experience marketing, customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions are generally higher than 3 points.

**Analysis of structure model:** Analysis of structure model included the fitness analysis and tests of structure model. They were presented as below.

**Evaluation of the fitness between model and data:** Generally speaking, whether the data fit the model or not is determined by the Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) indices. Among them, X<sup>2</sup>/df, GFI, Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), Root Mean Square Residual (RMR), Normed Fit Index (NFI) and Comparative Fit Index (CFI) are commonly used (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988; Hair *et al.*, 1998;

Hall and Page, 2009; Connolly *et al.*, 1998; Sudhahar *et al.*, 2006; Amah, 2010; Emari *et al.*, 2011). Thus, the fitness indices of the model were provided in Table 5. Since MacCallum and Hong (1997) suggested that GFI and AGFI can be broadened to 0.8, the GFI and AGFI of this study meet this requirement based on this theory. All the Fitness indices meet the acceptable range, except for NFI (0.872). Although NFI value is less than 0.9, it is still greater than 0.8. Therefore, the fitness between proposed model and collected data in this study should be acceptable.

**Effect analysis and hypothesis tests:** The structure equation model was tested using AMOS 6.0. Fig. 2 showed the analysis results of the structure equation model with standardized path coefficients between variables. Table 6 was used to explain the direct, indirect and total effects relationship between variables. A direct positive effect of experience marketing on the customer satisfaction is 0.796 (p<0.001) which meet a very significant level. It also proved that customer satisfaction is a function of experience marketing. This result supported the hypothesis H1. Furthermore, the determination coefficient (R<sup>2</sup>) indicated that experience marketing explained 63.4% of the variance in customer satisfaction. A direct positive effect of satisfaction level on the behavioral intentions is 0.226 (p<0.001) which reached a very significant level. It revealed that satisfaction level positively affects behavioral intentions. This result supported the hypothesis H2. The direct positive effect of experience marketing on the behavioral intentions is 0.645 (p<0.001) which reached a very significant level. It proved that experience marketing positively affects behavioral intentions. This result supported the hypothesis H3. Besides, the experience

marketing can strengthen behavioral intentions through the customer satisfaction and this indirect positive effect is 0.180 ( $p < 0.01$ ) which reached a significant level. Hence, the total effect of experience marketing on behavioral intentions is 0.825 ( $p < 0.001$ ) which meet a very significant level. The determination coefficient (69.9%) demonstrated that experience marketing and customer satisfaction explained approximately 70% of the variance in behavioral intentions.

To sum up, experience marketing has a direct effect on behavioral intentions and an indirect effect on them through customer satisfaction. And meanwhile, it was also proved that customer satisfaction has a direct effect on explaining behavioral intentions. Based on the above mentioned, the relationship model proposed by this study should be an acceptable and useful model for estimating and predicting the customer behavioral intentions after viewing 3D tour itinerary promotion.

#### **CONCLUSIONS AND MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS**

As previously mentioned, the perception of all sub-dimensions of the Strategic Experiential Modules after viewing the 3D tour itinerary promotion are between "Neutral" and "Agree" and at the same time, overall satisfaction and behavioral intentions also acquired approximate results. Clearly, the results of the empirical analysis above revealed that the 3D tour itinerary promotion offered by this paper was generally accepted by respondents. The perception of the sub-dimensions of the experience marketing from highest to lowest is sequentially "Relate", "Sense", "Act", "Think" and "Feel" experience. According to the Rule 20/80, the "Relate" and "Sense" experience marketing of the 3D tour itinerary promotion sequentially may have effects on reducing the customers' skepticism and hesitations as well as increasing customer satisfaction and purchase intention of travel products. If one wants to raise the quality and effectiveness of the 3D tour itinerary promotion video, improving on the "Feel" experience (especially on F6, "This tour itinerary promotion is touching") and "Think" experience (especially on T7, "This tour itinerary promotion is unique" and T9, "This tour itinerary promotion inspires some creative thoughts") is a start.

Another appropriate experience providers (ex., co-branding and personnel) can also be employed to enhance the design of the marketing programs and complement the lack of the 3D tour itinerary promotion to achieve marketing and promotion goal based on the experience matrix (Schmitt, 1999). Besides, the path analysis indicated that experience marketing has a direct

and positive effect on behavioral intentions and an indirect and positive effect on them through customer satisfaction. At the same time, it was also proved that customer satisfaction has a direct and positive effect on explaining behavioral intentions. Therefore, "Relationship model of behavioral intentions after viewing 3D tour itinerary promotion" should be acceptable and useful for estimating and predicting the customer behavioral intentions after viewing 3D tour itinerary promotion. Consequently, it may be regarded as an important and potential promotion tool for travel products. An improvement in the strategic experiential modules of experience marketing held by a 3D tour itinerary promotion can enhance consumers' satisfaction, as well as even consumers' intentions to purchase and to recommend it in the future.

In addition, the scholars and professionals also recognized the 3D tour itinerary promotion as a useful and cost-effective promotion tool towards tour organizations or agencies. Even though the 3D tour itinerary promotion without interaction and navigation functions is not genuine VR, they still thought that using free GE platform with other applied software to produce a 3D tour itinerary promotion video possessing subtitles display (text description for guiding a tour itinerary), visual effect (effect of visual 3D), auditory effect (audio commentary and music), dynamics and semi-VR functions (viewing, surrounding and overlooking the destination attractions from proper angle and distance in the sky) under the constraints of human resources, cost and technology but it may improve some of the shortcomings of traditional 2D tour itinerary promotion and possesses innovative and practical values. Moreover, hardware, software and methods employed by this research have low-skill, low-cost and value-added characteristics. Therefore, it is a considerable and valuable promotion tool for small-sized tour agencies in Taiwan.

To sum up, this study has expanded on the contribution of critical factors of the tourism marketing success to generate both practical and academic value (Alhroot and Al-Alak, 2009). Academically, in the past, tour marketing and promotion research focused more on preference and use of promotional travel narratives such as travel brochures and travel articles, perceived skepticism towards promotional advertising travel, sale promotion, promotion slogans and VR's contributions to tourism marketing and so forth (Peattie and Peattie, 1996; Belch and Belch, 2004; Andereck, 2005; Santos, 2006; Guttentag, 2010; Rozier-Rich and Santos, 2011) but paid less attention to 3D tour promotion produced by GE. Also, it is rare that literature explored the effect of experiential marketing on customer satisfaction and

documented their resulting behavioral intentions in their 3D tour experience. This research set up a foundation for "Relationship model of experience marketing, customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions after viewing 3D tour itinerary promotion" based on the associated literature and theories and took this empirical verification to make up for the shortcomings (insufficiency) in this area of research.

In practical terms, this research offered a unique tour itinerary promotion method via the free, value-added GE software for tourism to allow the travel promotions to be more specific and closer to customer demand and furthermore increase the acceptance and desire to purchase the travel product. This low-skill and low-cost technology is a considerable marketing tool for small-sized Taiwanese tour agencies. This research highlighted these tour itinerary promotion features like 3D visualized effect and audio guide for customers and they allow customers to experience the tour itinerary content and destination in order to reduce the customer's risk cognition and then to increase their purchase willingness for travel products. Since the human resources used by this study are still acceptable and the budget of the software equipment is not costly, it might be a marketing solution of worthwhile recommendation if the 3D tour itinerary promotion video made by this research team can offer its production idea and method to the tourism industry. If the human resources, time, information technology and the upgraded software equipment of the video production are limited, it may be better to prudently set up and gradually focus on a specific part of tour promotion.

Even though, this research pursued rigorous accuracy during testing and processing the questionnaires, there were still limitations. For instance, due to the limitations of human resource, cost and time, this research uses Purposive and Snowball sampling to perform the questionnaire investigation. Thus, the sample randomness and external validity of the study may be affected. The inference ability has been reduced. In addition, the research scope and the objective are only based on residences in Taichung city as well as the samples and the sampling method may not be good enough. The representative and inference range, therefore, were also limited. Expanding the research scope and objective and increasing the sample size and the optimization of the sampling methods may solve the above shortcomings.

For future research consideration, the tourism industry is information-intensive, so this research is crucial for it. Compared with the traditional media, internet media contains these characteristics: immediate,

interactive, informative, multimedia, personnel, low-cost, virtual, not limited by time or region, globalization and many-to-many relationships, etc. Scholars like Law (2000) and Buhalis and Licata (2002) thought the internet and tourism industry are complementary and some scholars' studies even demonstrated that tourism industry will be one of few successful long-term industries on the Internet. Clearly, the Internet will play an important role, gradually developing for the tourism industry (Fajuyigbe *et al.*, 2007). Surely, the future trend is that organizations will use the Internet to aid in their management and marketing. This research used GE as the platform to create a 3D tour itinerary promotion video. We could eventually tour the entire world in 3D, if problems like the human resources, cost, information technology and network transmission can be overcome in the future, even strengthening the function of interaction and free surfing. As a result, organizations could provide free downloaded 3D videos for viewers that would highlight the advantages of the internet (Experiential Providers) and also the effectiveness of the experience marketing as it could be showcased fully anywhere at anytime.

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