

**TOURISTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS ADVERTISING
IN A MALAYSIAN TOURISM CONTEXT**

Azizul Yadi Yaakop

Submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

**Faculty of Management and Law
University of Surrey**

November 2010

ABSTRACT

TOURISTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS ADVERTISING IN A MALAYSIAN TOURISM CONTEXT

by

Azizul Yadi Yaakop

Submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Faculty of Management and Law

University of Surrey

November 2010

1100083528

ABSTRACT

For almost half a century, advertising attitudes have been a popular topic of study among researchers in consumer behaviour (Bauer and Greyser, 1968; Petrovici and Marinov, 2007). In parallel with the long history and ever-growing interest in this area, the framework to examine consumers' attitudes towards advertising has also gone through a considerable evolution. The evolution demonstrates how researchers in the field want to look at this phenomenon from a very detailed perspective.

However, most of previous studies have not examined advertising attitudes from any specific frame of reference. Therefore, this present study is concerned with how consumers form attitudes towards advertising which are derived from a more specific source of advertising reference. In this study, Malaysia tourism is used as a context in order to (i) examine how tourists respond towards advertising media, particularly the ones that are utilized in promoting Malaysia as a top-of-mind tourism destination i.e. traditional print and television advertising as well as the modern-day internet advertising, and to (ii) exhibit a selection of advertising references exclusively for this study.

This study is a quantitative survey based on a sample of 425 respondents, 255 are international tourists (60%) and 170 are local visitors (40%). Data were collected between April and June 2009 in Malaysia. All international tourists who were approached based on quota sampling methods and based on international tourist arrival statistics (2007).

Based on extensive and rigorous literature reviewing, instrument design and subsequent pilot testing, the study shows that attitudes towards advertising in specific media (A_{Media}) emerged

as another important determinant to attitudes towards advertising (A_G). Specifically, the results indicated that A_G is best explained by the television advertising frame of reference. As a matter of fact, the study arrived at a noteworthy finding that attitude towards television advertising (A_{TV}) acts as the strongest predictor of A_G . Additionally, the study has also established the mediating effect of A_{Media} in the relationship among the tested variables. Other supporting findings especially concerning tourists' responses towards the three advertising media are also presented as well as the limitations of the research, and suggestions for future research endeavours.