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"LEISURIZED" MARKETING: DISCOVERING AND UNDERSTANDING
A SIGNIFICANT TREND

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ABSTRACT

The use of "leisure" in marketing of products and services has become a popular technique. It has been very effective as a marketing tool.

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A SIGNIFICANT TREND

"Leisurized" marketing is the utilization of recreational products and services to promote other products and services in our society. It is the author's contention that this is a highly significant trend in our society. This trend is of great significance to the market for recreational activities. Recreational activity makes people happy, relieves stress, and promotes health. It follows that providers of services and products of all kinds would want to have their products and services associated with recreation.

Some of the major items which can be sighted that emphasize the "leisurized" marketing craze include:

1. Themed indoor shopping centers and restaurants - These types of facilities are becoming commonplace in all shapes and sizes and range from single themed restaurants such as the Aero Squadron and Bomb Group (which are themed World War I and II restaurants respectively) to huge restaurant and shopping complexes such as the megamall which has become a major tourist attraction in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.

2. Trade Shows Trade and consumer oriented trade shows are perhaps the epitomy of "leisurized" marketing. These shows where sometimes as many as one thousand plus exhibitors show their wares either to a specific "trade group" or to the general public utilize a leisure oriented approach to selling which can be referred to as "leisurized" selling.

3. Advertisements Advertisements of all kinds increasingly have recreational themes. Products and services of all kinds are given images via their associations with recreational activity. One such magazine advertising campaign recently touted a cigarette as having a "leisure length". Although this advertisement is one of thousands of examples of "leisurized" themes that could be sighted this is obviously an ad which illustrates the extensiveness of this trend. The preliminary results of a study conducted by the author illustrates the significant increase which has occurred in the utilization of recreational themes in advertising over the past 15 years.

4. Corporate Sponsorships The sponsorship of recreational activities of all types of corporations has taken the marketing world by storm in the past five years. These sponsorships range from the sponsorship of rock concerts to the Olympic Games. Perhaps the success of the 1984 Olympic Games in Los Angeles, California best epitomized the use of corporate sponsorships as a marketing tool and a form of event financing in recent years.

The use of "leisurized" marketing is of great significance to all practitioners in recreation, tourism and leisure services and product marketing. The use of leisure themes in all types of promotional activity is and will undoubtedly continue to produce added value to all recreational and related products and services. Management should try to tap this added value and establish the channels to exploit it. Additionally, "leisurized" marketing has and will continue to improve the status of people who work in recreation and tourism related work organizations because it makes the work of these professionals more valuable to the society.