

## Study on Strategies for Increasing Tourist Satisfaction of Local Cruises——Taking Nanhai Dream Cruise as an Example

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**Keywords:** Sanya, local cruises, tourism projects, satisfaction

**Abstract:** As a "sunrise industry", tourism is an important strategic industry in China. It can not only promote the substantial progress of our regional economy, but also promote the rapid and stable development of our national economy. As a high-end tourism industry, cruise tourism has gradually become a new engine for the development of China's tourism industry and a new main force for participating in international tourism competition, which has a strong role in effectively promoting China's tourism soft power. At present, the supply structure of cruise travel in China is unbalanced. The supply of cruise travel mainly depends on foreign cruise companies in various countries. The local cruise company team is in short supply, and still they have many problems in operation management. Based on the international experience of cruise passenger satisfaction evaluation and Chinese practice, this article uses the cruise tourist satisfaction evaluation system including five modules to conduct in-depth interviews and questionnaires on cruise tourists from the Nanhai Cruise Company. Using cluster analysis, it is found that the overall satisfaction of cruise tourists is currently higher in the two sub-dimensions of on-board activities and shore-based sightseeing, while it scores lower in the other three aspects.

### 1. Introduction

From 2006 to 2018, in the past 12 years, China has become an important global cruise source market, and the international cruise company giants are full of expectations for the prospects of the Chinese cruise market and have settled in China, Asia. In the past 12 years, China's cruise industry chain has been continuously improved, the cruise port layout has been further improved, the maturity of cruise tourism has accelerated, the market recognition has continued to increase, and the demand for cruise tourism has continued to expand, however at the same time we must face development: there are still many problems, such as the slow development of local cruise companies, the lack of upstream and downstream of the cruise industry chain and so on. With the further expansion of the consumer market, China's local governments and related companies are keenly aware that the cruise industry will be a powerful opportunity for economic development and transformation. China's independent cruise industry enters the development period, and a large amount of capital poured into cruise companies or put into cruise operations.

China Communications Construction Group, in conjunction with China Travel Service(HK) Group Corporation and Sanya municipal government, intend to build a national brand for the cruise industry. In April 2016, these three Groups signed a cooperation agreement and established the Sanya Cruise Development Company. At present, they already own the "The Nanhai Dream" (it was built by Guangzhou Guangchuan International Co., Ltd., completed in 2012, 24572 tons), and opened the unique Sanya ---Xiasha Cruise Line route.

The ship is now operated and managed by Sansha Nanhai Dream Cruises Co., Ltd. In order to meet the needs of the Xisha route, the ship has undergone functional improvements in terms of operational qualifications, technical safety, and tourist experience, and on the basis of meeting national safety regulations and industry construction standards, the ship focuses on the hardware facilities' upgrade to improve the overall comfort of the ship.

## **2. Investigation**

Surveys on the satisfaction of cruise tourists abroad are mainly conducted by cruise companies, industry associations, and tourism departments in developed areas of cruise tourism. The survey scope of the cruise company's tourist satisfaction mainly involves "tourism motivation---decision-making process---boarding experience---on-board products and services---shore sightseeing---off-boarding experience", and the survey methods are mostly questionnaires and in-depth interviews. In 2013, the Cruise Association conducted a satisfaction survey of seven international cruise brands based on seven evaluation indicators: service, room satisfaction, catering, boarding/departure efficiency, entertainment activities, prices, and shore tourism. The results showed that Disney Cruise lines are at the top. For tourism departments in developed areas of the cruise industry, satisfaction surveys are more focused on the evaluation of tourists' satisfaction at cruise destinations: the entire process' Satisfaction of "arriving at the destination --- landing --- shore activities --- returning to port ". Domestic cruise passenger satisfaction assessment mainly focuses on catering, entertainment experience, language environment and port service research. This article is based on an understanding of the entire process of cruise travel (before cruise travel --- during cruise travel --- after cruise travel), and refines the satisfaction index into six secondary indicators: buying tickets, cruise cities, cruise ports, on cruise ship, shore sightseeing, satisfaction and revisit intention. Through long-term survey interviews and multiple questionnaire surveys of The Nanhai dream's tourists, combined with expert discussions, it is found that the current tourist satisfaction shows different results on different indicators.

### **2.1 Tourist characteristics**

According to the follow-up survey and research on the cruise passengers of the Nanhai Dream in recent years, first of all, the tourist age group is mainly concentrated in middle-aged or retired people over 50, and the salary is high, which is in line with the premise of our cruise consumption: enough money and time. Secondly, this route is mainly a patriotic trip to Xisha islands. During the winter and summer vacations, more student groups will join to embark on a patriotic education with a love for the motherland. Thirdly, the price of cruises on this route is really high (the price is 4,100 RMB-28,800 RMB/ four days and three nights voyages).

### **2.2 satisfaction survey**

Through quantitative research, it is found that the overall satisfaction of the The Nanhai Dream Cruise tourists' overall satisfaction is still relatively high. However, there are still some problems:

(1) With regard to the tickets, as the main customers are mainly elderly people, traditional offline travel agencies are of importance. There are stores throughout the country for tourists to consult and book tickets. Tourists expressed high satisfaction with the service attitude and professionalism of service staff, however the cruise voyage and information promotion are relatively poor, and young tourists rarely know about it.

(2) In terms of cruise city's satisfaction, most of the tourists from the Nanhai Dream have visited Sanya more than three times, and they are familiar with Sanya's tourism resources and shopping environment. They showed low satisfaction with Sanya's public infrastructure, especially Sanya's high prices of seafood and fruits. Therefore, after disembarking, there is basically no schedule for local trips in Sanya.

(3) In terms of cruise ports, satisfaction is very low. The main manifestations are: the supporting facilities are extremely imperfect, except for the provision of toilets, drinking water, information consulting, shopping and entertainment are completely absent; secondly, the boarding process of Phoenix Island is very slow, resulting in long cruise line queuing time, which decreased satisfaction.

(4) On the cruise ship, tourists gave high evaluations on cruise room facilities, cruise dinner restaurants, cruise ship passenger interactions, cruise performances, etc., especially the Nanhai Dream Cruise's "vacation assistant" team, which accompanied tourists during the whole trip.

(5) In terms of cruise shore excursions, tourist satisfaction is high, and the beautiful glass sea of Yagong Island, Quanfu Island and Yinyu Island has become a tourists' coveted place. Therefore tourists are more satisfied with their destination sightseeing. And what's more, they hope to increase shore sightseeing time and enriching shore tourism projects.

### **3. Suggestion**

#### **3.1 Strengthening cruise product promotion**

First of all, pay attention to the promotion of our own cruise tourism project. During the promotion process, online and offline promotion methods should be applied. Some apps can be opened, for example the "Nanhai Dream" APP or some other applet, which provide more information about Cruises tourism knowledge, such as cruise tips, cruise strategies and so on. In the process of offline travel promotion, TV broadcasts and billboards can be fully used. Through such displays, domestic and foreign tourists can understand the advantages of China's Sanya cruises and attract more young tourists and other potential customer groups to increase market penetration.

#### **3.2 strengthening urban management**

Early studies have shown that the economic benefits of a cruise home port are more than 10 times the port of call, mainly because the cruise home port can, to a large extent, drive the consumption level of the entire economy and tourism of the home port city. Tourists generally stay in the home port city for at least one day before boarding and after disembarking. If the port city tourism activities can be carried out, it will bring tourism income. Sanya has unique tourism resources, however the number of tourists entering the island has shown a downward trend. Combined with the feedback from tourists, the construction of urban infrastructure should be strengthened, such as the improvement of main roads and road signs and the further improvement of public transportation systems to achieve seamless connection between scenic spots. In addition, the price consumption level in Sanya has been receiving much attention. Macro-control by government departments should be strengthened to provide Sanya residents and tourists with a price-friendly and resource-rich tourism experience.

#### **3.3 Improving port hardware facilities**

Combined with field investigations, Sanya Phoenix Island should further improve the port's infrastructure, such as increasing port infrastructure equipment, face recognition customs clearance technology etc., in order to attract more cruise companies, thereby increase port visibility and form a benign interactive loop.

#### **3.4 perfect shore excursion service**

The carrying-out of shore cruise tourism projects can provide tourists with a perfect patriotic travel experience. In order to improve the quality of onshore tourism, on the basis of increasing the time of onshore tourism as much as possible, enrich the content of onshore tourism, so that tourists can understand the ethnic customs of each island from multiple perspectives. In order to achieve this goal, the islands and customs should be explained in detail in the cruise itinerary, so that the combination of culture and tourism can be better achieved, and the satisfaction of tourists can be improved too.

### **Conclusion**

In order to better promote the development of local cruise companies, the domestic cruise market should be paid more attention. This study found that there are problems in the actual development of local cruise tourism projects, and the satisfaction of tourists is relatively low, especially in terms of the satisfaction of on-board and onshore sightseeing. Therefore, in order to enhance tourists' satisfaction, it is necessary to improve the travel itinerary plan, strengthen the promotion of local

cruise products, enrich local cruise consumer products, and increase the interaction of tourists in all aspects etc.

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