THE INTEGRATED MARKETING IN ORGANIZING TOURISM ACTIVITIES

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Abstract: The objective of the paper is to provide a better understanding of the importance of marketing, especially integrated marketing, for tourism organizing. Under the conditions of dynamic and changing tourist market and tourism business, an appropriate use of integrated marketing is essential for achieving goals of the tourism activity; satisfying the needs and desires of tourist products consumers on the one hand, and making profit and achieving business goals for tourist companies, on the other hand. An integrated and comprehensive approach to marketing activities has proven to be a better business philosophy than striving to achieve partial goals. Marketing activities should be integrated not only for individual tourism entities, but for tourism destinations, regions and countries, as well.

Keywords: tourism, marketing, integrated marketing, tourist market

1. INTRODUCTION

A tourism market is very dynamic and subject to numerous and frequent changes. Therefore, the use of marketing is a prerequisite for tourism companies to be successful in conditions of increasing competition. Marketing in tourism makes contribution to and facilitates the process of exchange in the international and domestic tourism markets. Marketing activities must be well designed and coordinated, in order to achieve the effects of synergy and to increase the quality of services and customer satisfaction.

The tourism market doesn't differ much from commodity markets regarding its constituent elements. The tourism market also has its basic elements: the demand and supply, the object of exchange (product, service) and the price [1]. However, it's only through the interaction of these components, certain peculiarities of the market can be observed, so it can be spoken of as a market of a special kind, i.e. a market *sui generis*. The tourism market has evolved over time, especially after the Second World War. Fluctuation in demand for tourism products are now commonly so extreme that survival has become the driving concern of travel companies throughout the world, and price has come to dominate the marketing mix [2].

Defining a tourism product is one of the most controversial issues in the tourism marketing concept application. The basic goal of the marketing concept, which is satisfying the needs of consumers, should be the basis for approaching this problem. A tourism product is a set of interdependent elements that in practice is organized as a special value chain, composed of material products and services, natural values and cultural goods, tourist attractions, tourist superstructure and tourist infrastructure.

We can relate a tourism product to one place, as a sum of individual elements in a certain tourist destination. Therefore, it's a complex set of interrelated individual physical products and services and various commercial and non-commercial domains, which the visitor "consumes" during the trip. The definition of a tourism product must be based on the acceptance of heterogeneity as a characteristic of tourists' needs. Regarding the marketing for tourism industry, the tourism product is divided into partial product and integrated product. This means that forming of a tourism product can be viewed from the perspective of customer/consumer and from the perspective of producer/service provider. The travel and tourism industry's understanding of the concept and its willingness to apply it in its everyday business still varies significantly from company to company, and from sector to sector [2].

In the paper we will consider the basics of marketing in the organization of tourism industry, especially integrated marketing, as well as its importance for the efficiency of tourism business.

2. MARKETING FOR TOURISM INDUSTRY

Tourism industry is characterized by a very high degree of marketing implementation. That's because of the tourism market specifics, where the use of marketing is a prerequisite for the business success of tourism companies. The main goal of marketing in tourism is to achieve the best possible results for tourism industry and tourism organizations, achieving the highest possible realization, through the optimal volume of visits and maximizing profits.

The tourist product consists of certain elements. These elements can be offered directly to tourists or can be offered in a certain combination, as an integral tourist product. Some authors prefer an integral tourist product, because it represents an appropriate combination of tangible and intangible elements of the offer.

The main goal of marketing for tourism industry includes:

- collection, processing, storage, control and analysis of data and information on the tourist market;
- promotion of tourism supply and demand, as well as consumption possibilities;
- placement of an integral tourist product in order to satisfy the tourists' wishes and needs;
- communication with the market, in order to objectively inform the market about the state and development of the tourism offer; and
- marketing policy in tourism industry, in the form of development strategies and tactics.

The tourist product is characterized by marketing strategies of differentiation and diversification. Each element of the tourist product and the tourism offer in general, must be harmonized in an appropriate way, that is, all partial products should be integral parts of the integrated tourist product [3]. The product in marketing theory and practice is an essential part, and all other aspects of marketing observation are formulated based on it and are adjusted to it. In order to optimally connect supply and demand, the product itself is included as an integral part into marketing plans, maps, mixes, etc. The importance of the product is best seen through participation in the marketing mix. According to the classical marketing concept, the marketing mix includes 4 basic instruments: the product, the price, the promotion and the place (4Ps).

However, the philosophy of the marketing mix concept has evolved over time, so that it has been developed to date by defining 30 relationships (30 Rs), and this represents a new structure of marketing thinking. Relationship marketing is a very important contribution to tourism industry, because the phenomenon of tourism is based on relations.

The tourist product is a central part of the tourism marketing mix [1]. Other instruments depend on the product and base their action on it. Also there are opinions that price and promotion are more efficient instruments of the tourism marketing mix, because they are adaptable to possible changes in the tourism market, i.e. that their use is more efficient in the short term. The instruments of the marketing mix must be harmonized with each other, because the final realization, i.e. the realized profit depends on the use of their optimal combination.

Tourism is a leisure activity. So, marketing for tourism industry is part of a broader activity, called leisure marketing. When we talk about marketing for tourism industry, we don't mean a new and different "tourism marketing", but the application of already existed strategies and methods of marketing action to specific conditions in which relations are formed among market participants, i.e. the characteristics of the tourist product. When applying marketing in tourism industry, we are talking about two forms of application:

- marketing of individual companies, generating their income at the tourism market; and
- marketing at the individual area level.

In the first case, we are talking about marketing in hospitality industry, hotel industry, tourism mediation, passenger turnover, etc., and in the second case we are talking about the macro approach to the application of marketing. In both cases, the subject of interest of such marketing activity remains the satisfaction of the needs of tourists while achieving a certain benefit for all tourism offer participants. The marketing drivers in tourism industry are the tourism offer elements, which participate in the tourism market (providing their products and services) and satisfy the needs of tourists. At the same time, they must not neglect their own economic interests. When it comes to marketing for tourism industry, then the focus is on how marketing (especially as a business concept) can contribute to facilitating the exchange process at the international and domestic tourism markets. At the same time, one should always keep in mind the specifics of this market (heterogeneity, price elasticity of demand, seasonality, price inelasticity of supply, etc.). Therefore, because of specifics in the tourism industry, the application of marketing is not only possible but also logical and desirable.

The application of marketing in tourism distinguishes strategic from operational goals. Strategic goals are those that are set within the global tourism policy of marketing drivers, while operational goals are considered to be the goals of individual companies involved in tourism industry development. The formulation of marketing goals depends on the development of its drivers. Setting an adequate goal means setting a realistically possible goal, and whether it will be achieved depends on a number of factors such as the market situation, available staff, financial capabilities, etc. [4]. After defining the goals of marketing in tourism industry, the marketing policy and strategy are defined, and they should provide an answer to the question – how to realize the intended goals. Certain conditions are necessary for their realization.

2.1. Marketing in tourism industry at the "micro" and "macro" levels

It's very important to make distinction between the two approaches in marketing in tourism industry, because the goals cannot be achieved without including marketing, both at the "micro" and "macro" level. Marketing in tourism industry is not limited to the application in tourism companies, as well as those who are directly or indirectly involved in providing services to domestic and foreign tourists, but it is necessary to apply it at different levels of tourism policy (at

the level of tourist attraction, region, country, even internationally). In order to achieve synergy, it is important to coordinate and synchronize actions at the micro and macro level. These are "two sides of the same coin".

Generally speaking, we can say that "micromarketing" in tourism industry should mean individual marketing behaviour of a particular company (or consumer), while "macromarketing" should mean aggregate marketing behaviour, i.e. the behaviour of the entire marketing system. Therefore, micro-level marketing management is management at the level of a tourism company and practically consists of implementing various strategies related to marketing mix instruments and finding their optimal combination. Management at the macro level implies the application of the macromarketing model by the authorities that the society controls (formally or informally) [1]. In the modern literature (in the field of marketing and management in tourism industry), the interaction between the public sector and tourism has become increasingly important. In fact, there is a need for very serious management of tourism development at the "macro" level, where state bodies are also involved in this development. At the macro level, it is necessary to achieve a balance and consensus of different interests, which objectively (but also subjectively) exists among different stakeholders (interested participants), both those in the tourism industry and residents (local population). The marketing management process at both the micro and macro levels consists of three basic parts: planning, organizing and controlling.

Planning as a phase of the marketing activity management process can be defined as a process in which decisions are made about the goals, policies, strategies, programs and plans of marketing activities. It is based on respecting the position, motives and needs of consumers in the market, noticing the basic characteristics of the economy and society development and on information on expected changes, in order to accept and take risks. The main characteristic of planning marketing activities in tourism industry is the orientation towards the future, which implies an active approach to the relationship between the influence of the environment and one's own resources. As a counterbalance to the planning of marketing activities in tourism, there may be a "sense" of market trends, intuition or vision. Experience shows that those who rely primarily on intuition and vision have had short-term success. This, of course, does not mean that the importance of imagination, intuition and vision should be neglected, which is especially important in doing business in the tourism market. However, it is necessary to fit these positive characteristics of successful tourism managers into a systematic, coordinated and integrated planning process, in order to achieve long-term successful business results.

3. APPLICATION OF INTEGRATED MARKETING IN TOURISM INDUSTRY

In organizing marketing at the level of business policy makers in tourism, it is important that this organization starts from satisfying the wishes and needs of tourists and continuously building good relations with them and creating loyalty. The overall activity of the company should be overwhelmed by the spirit of marketing, i.e. that all activities and functions are incorporated so that the whole company (all its parts and all employees) are directed towards a single goal, enabling timely adaptation to changes in the economy and society.

Coordination of activities can be observed at several levels. First of all, all marketing activities should be coordinated with each other, secondly, the marketing sector should be coordinated with other sectors and thirdly, the coordination of the whole company with other companies and institutions at the micro and macro level is needed. In the first case, it is about the coordination of various marketing activities (such as market research, procurement, sales, finance, etc.). In the second case, the marketing function should be viewed as a *primus inter pares* of other functions. It is not separated, autonomous and independent of other functions. It is intertwined with and related to other functions in the company. Finally, the coordination of marketing activities between tourism companies and various tourism policy drivers at the macro and micro level is especially important. The starting point should always be the current and future situation on the tourism market, definition of internal weaknesses and strengths, as well as the requirements and needs of tourists, in order to make effective decisions [5].

The global business decision-making framework should be based on the application of integrated marketing in tourism entities, which in the field of conceptualizing strategic alternatives, or more precisely, strategic inputs for certain marketing activities, functions and instruments (strategic planning), should mean overcoming the logic of business behaviour, where partial goals are set above common goals. Strategic planning as a logical assumption implies that the marketing function is an element of business policy of every business entity. It is logical to treat market research, product planning, various promotional activities, etc., as creative activities and strive to raise them in the company to a level that will allow their strategic component to be fully expressed. On the other hand, operational activities such as procurement, sales, transport and others must also be integrated, but here, as in the first case, it is important to separate the strategic from the operational component in each of the activities, and on that basis get the so-called *critical mass* for establishing an adequate form of their organizational coverage. An integrated approach includes support for other functions as well (personnel, financial, etc.). Only in this way could synergy in time and space be expected.

Above mentioned interaction in the "production" of services includes the following domains:

- 1. Interaction between producers and consumers it's very important for the quality of the service (e.g. a tired passenger on arrival at the hotel has the first contact with the receptionist, and he has a very important function to reduce consumer tension and offer appropriate service);
- 2. Interaction between the consumers themselves they basically create the spirit and atmosphere in which the service is consumed (e.g. it can be the atmosphere that is established in a restaurant or bus during a group trip);
- 3. Interaction between the producer and the system in which the service is produced;

4. Interaction of environment and consumer – this relationship can take really diverse forms (e.g. hotel design says a lot about style and level of service).

These interactions influenced the introduction of a new term in the field of services – servuction. It should replace the use of the terms service + production. Practically, in integrated marketing in tourism industry, "servuction" should mean the following:

- establishing marketing at all levels;
- careful setting of operating procedures;
- well-developed support system; and
- effective coordination.

In the strategic approach to successful integrated service marketing, four phases are suggested:

- 1. Emphasizing the importance of consumers;
- 2. Emphasizing the importance of direct contact with consumers;
- 3. Emphasizing the importance of an adequate support system; and
- 4. Emphasizing the importance of minimizing consumer dissatisfaction.

The integrity of marketing activities is not only implied for tourism economic entities, but also for the tourist offer of a given tourist attraction, region and country as a whole. In this context, the problem of determining the level for planning a consistent tourist offer on the one hand, and the coordination and connection of these activities between business and tourism policy makers on a strategic basis, on the other hand, is identified. The plan at the macro and micro levels is necessary to make the basis for the harmonious development of individual marketing activities and functions (market research, propaganda, sales), constantly bearing in mind the need to achieve synergistic effects of each activity and function. At the same time, support must be provided through various measures taken: stimulating expanded reproduction in tourism, protection of products that would be or are in the function of tourism development, various measures of economic policy, etc.

3.1. Integrated marketing for hotel companies

We have already seen from the general approach to integrated marketing that three levels of coordination are important in its establishment:

- mutual coordination of all activities;
- mutual coordination of sectors (in the company); and
- coordination at the macro level (the company itself in relation to the environment).

The success of hotel business entities, but also of all other participants in providing services to tourists (restaurants, museums, galleries, etc.) depends on the ability to incorporate the spirit of marketing into entire company, all its activities, sectors and employees. The focus of marketing orientation is on consumer. The best way to achieve business goals becomes integrated marketing through the orchestration of all activities, functions and employees in the company. Large hotel chains (Hilton, Hyatt, Intercontinental, Sheraton, etc.) have realized long ago that efficient demand and capacity management implies a variety of strategic and tactical alternatives, related to all activities and functions of the company. Market research, product planning, procurement, sales, financial and personnel function, promotional and sales activities are so coordinated in the organizational sense that they depend on each other, influence each other, incorporate the spirit of marketing, all with the aim of achieving a competitive advantage at the market. Each hotel company is suggested several basic tasks in the context of strategic marketing efforts, as a prerequisite for successful business:

- Planning the most profitable business mix of segments and products;
- Determining the position (positioning) and image for each of the parts (in the hotel chain);
- Developing the concept of "frequent users";
- Development of integrated marketing between individual parts of the chain (hotels in the chain), or voluntary cooperatives if the hotel is independent.

In other words, these are recommendations to management structures on how to translate various creative ideas based on the results of market research, available financial resources, human and other capabilities of companies into specific profitable products intended for pre-determined consumer segments. In the world of hospitality industry, there are many practical examples of orchestrating overall marketing efforts in a product/market context. There is a growing need for sports and recreational activities, so many hoteliers are introducing "fitness" and "health" programs for their guests, jogging trails around the hotel, and even on the roof of the hotel. There is also a concept of "hotel in hotel", which emerged as a result of individualization and the growing role of business travel and the need to offer extra service to this segment (teleconferencing, a secretary, etc.).

Within this framework, sales improvement is gaining in importance as a tactical shift of the demand curve for own product, prices are reduced in the short term, "increased" product elements are further promoted and sales channels are stimulated for each segment individually. In short, they tend to orchestrate all instruments and activities, increase consumer satisfaction and experience regarding products, either through its physical elements (food, drink) or through other benefits (sensual or psychological) [1].

By combining a product mix and a promotional mix, in a situation where products or services are similar (hospitality industry, hotel industry and restaurant industry), positioning as a strategy can be problematic. The distance that is made to "move away" from the competitor through positioning, can take different forms. One of the most frequently applied

nowadays is the concept of "frequent users", "bonus" or "club system", which reflects the effort to include the environment (tourists) in the business policy of the company, which objectively expands the areas of integrated marketing [6].

3.2. Integrated marketing for travel agencies

Tour operators represent a modern form of organizing travel agencies, and as their own product they place trips, popularly called "package tour". It is a carefully selected combination of different partial tourist services (accommodation, meals, transportation, entertainment), which is placed at the market under special conditions and a single price. The travel organizer combines the attractiveness of the destination, different services, accessibility, image and price. Tour operators exist not only to satisfy changing demand, but also to coordinate external variables on which they base their attractive packages.

The success of travel organizers in the market is almost unthinkable without the application of integrated marketing. Having in mind their overall business, it can be stated that the need for the application of integrated marketing is caused by three factors: the nature of the product itself; business relations of travel organizers and their associates; and the formation of special sales channels for package tours.

In order to form a (standardized) package tour (e.g. for the summer season) which is placed on the market from season to season, it is necessary to have numerous elements that will be creatively integrated into the whole. This means that the package includes elements of accommodation, meals, transportation, attractiveness at a given tourist destination and other services (insurance, entertainment, etc.). The product is placed on the market through a catalogue, strongly promoted through various means of promotional mix at a single price, where the cost of each individual element is not known to the end user.

These elements are provided by tour operator and he uses its own or leased capacities. On this basis, the product is created and marketed, most often (such was the case until the emergence of strong use of the Internet in the tourism business and especially in the sales area – e-Commerce) through indirect sales channels, or sales network through a number of small travel agencies (retailers).

The complexity of the process and connections doesn't mean that the process is not logical or coherent. On the contrary, the logic of applying integrated marketing in the business of these entities at the market achieves significant effects: it facilitates the organization of tourist travel, many countries and tourist destinations within them become available, prices are stimulative because the prices are lower for integrated product (package tour) than if you were to buy individual elements and create a product on your own, the tourist offer becomes available to more customers, capacities are better used, etc. The business policy of tour operators (which includes the application of integrated marketing) can be based on various elements of distinctiveness:

- Period during the year for which products are formed (off-season, season, as well as narrower time periods and different segments);
- Type of transport (most often it is air transport, but other types of transport are also used);
- Types of accommodation and their category (all forms of basic and some forms of complementary accommodation);
- Content of accommodation and food service (full board, half board, etc.);
- Length of stay; and
- Number of tourist destinations (usually not large number of destinations).

3.3. Integrated marketing for the national tourism organization

The National Tourism Organization (NTO) is very important for the organization of tourism industry in every country. Its importance can be determined by the role that this organization has in the development and promotion of tourism, either at the national, regional or local level. When we say this, then we have in mind the economic and social aspects of improving the development of tourism in a particular area.

The results of market research, management of the tourist marketing information system for promotional activities and other activities for the promotion of tourism that contribute to the consistent identification of market opportunities, which is the basis of many NTOs, are vital for improving tourism industry. However, there are different forms of defining this organization, so there are different ways of functioning and tasks that are predominantly in their focus.

From the level of tourist site where tourist associations and bureaus are formed, the organization is built "from the bottom up" to the regional and national levels. These are organizations in the place of permanent residence of tourists (various societies and associations), which stimulate the inclusion of membership in tourism developments. At higher levels, The International Social Tourism Organization (ISTO) is given tasks regarding promotion at the foreign markets (even domestic one).

When the NTO functions as a state authority, i.e. as an organization through which the state implements its tourism policy, the following basic tasks and functions could be summarized:

- Informative function
- Legislative function
- Regulatory function
- Creative function

- Innovative function
- Marketing function
- Coordinating function

When the NTO is outside the state administration, when it has looser ties with these authorities, or when there is an autochthonous emergence of a social organization from the local to the national level, we can talk about two basic functions of the NTO:

- function of facilitating the creation of an adequate tourist product (at different levels); and
- promotion of a tourist product at a specific market.

It is important to keep in mind that the first function of the NTO in creating adequate tourism products should be to facilitate the understanding of market developments in the overall marketing activities of the NTO. It is often said that NTOs should enable (through various research and publications) an understanding of "determinants and motivations", i.e. the influence of economic and other factors on market developments, especially tourism demand. On this basis, the NTO helps to create such a product that includes all the strengths (comparative advantages of a given geographical unit which correspond to market opportunities). In addition, NTO makes every effort to coordinate the various marketing activities (planning, organizing, and even control) of many participants on the side of the tourist offer and at different levels.

The second function implies that the NTO has the task to organize the promotional activity on a strategic basis at the macro level (country, region, specific destination) and to help create promotional strategies at the micro level. In this context, a distinction is made between two strategies:

- 1. Leading role strategy; and
- 2. Strategy of support.

It's, in fact, a distinction in relation to general tourism propaganda (which creates a positive image and influences better positioning of an integrated tourist product at the market) and commercial propaganda (led by companies on the tourist offer side, with the help of NTOs). These functions of the NTO differ on how these activities are financed. In the first case, the dominant source is the budget, and in the second case tourism companies and other entities interested in the development of tourism provide financial resources, on their own.

In the case of certain promotional campaigns that contribute to the achievement of various predetermined goals at the macro level, NTOs also partially participate in financing [1]. Let's mention, for example, a campaign that was launched in the USA under motto "I Love New York", where the funds were predominantly provided by the tourism industry and in a smaller amount by the travel agency (NTO) of the state of New York. The campaign lasted for more than 10 years, and significantly influenced the NYS (among other states in the United States) to position itself in European emitting markets, especially in the United Kingdom.

It is obvious that the NTO functions can be viewed from two aspects. The first one implies an initiative function; its task is to create a positive image at emitting markets; and is strongly influenced by general economic and social trends. The second one implies a receptive function and its task is to strengthen the role of "tourist host" at different levels. A consistent marketing approach of any NTO should include several elements:

I - Analysis of the current situation (internal focus):

- Analysis of basic indicators of existing demand and consumption;
- The country's position at the tourism market;
- Analysis of the basic elements of the tourist product (weaknesses and strengths);
- Promotional mix analysis; and
- Analysis of the compliance of the promotion with other instruments of market performance.

II - Strategy as a vision (external focus):

- Strategy of promotion (and other instruments) in the context of other strategic approaches to the external environment;
- Characteristics of foreign and domestic tourism demand and trends;
- Characteristics of the environment (demographic, sociological, political, technological, economic);
- Opportunities and threats at the tourism market;
- Defining priority markets and segments,
- Goals to be achieved; and
- Positioning and other strategies.

With an internal focus, it is necessary for NTO to have a well-developed market research function and access to (based on primary or secondary sources of information) a series of data on tourism and consumption, as well as other indicators, at any time. At the same time, it implies the availability of relevant information on the country's development at the tourism market. The analysis of the promotional mix should show the situation in the use of propaganda, in sales promotion, in public relations and other elements, while focusing on the harmonization of all instruments of market performance.

With an external focus, forming a positive image of the country through the NTO must take into account the different strategies of the country, regarding inclusion into the international environment. For policy to be based on existed trends, those trends must be observed and understood [7].

The strategic window will open the NTO towards individual markets and focus on individual segments according to the predetermined goal to be achieved. In doing so, the NTO will apply various strategic alternatives, in order to be better positioned. At the same time, in its receptive function the NTO will create opportunities for the contribution of all

interested participants up to the level of every citizen, to be able to participate in this work. Moreover, the control function must be developed in such a way as to enable feedforward control i.e. control is performed in such a way that unwanted disorders are detected in the selection (of promotional actions) and the situation of *post festum* reaction is avoided.

4. CONCLUSION

In recent decades, the marketing concept has been increasingly used in the service sector and hence in tourism industry. This is very important and emphasized in the context of present conditions of turbulent changes in the environment. These changes include: changing consumer preferences, increasing costs, stagnation or even declining productivity, changing consumer preferences in the price-value ratio of products in favour of the latter, the rapid growth of the use of modern information technology, etc. The essential question is how and in what way to develop tourism activities (i.e. what strategies to use in order to enable this development) so that they do not collide with the development of other activities and to be sustainable; and if there are already dissonant goals (either at the micro or macro level), how to mitigate or even reconcile opposites.

The key to the success of tourism companies increasingly depends on understanding the place and role of integrated marketing and strategy as a planned decision through which to communicate with the environment. By performing integrated marketing activities, companies try to operate rationally in a given environment. Integrated marketing must be applied to all participants relevant in the provision of tourism services. For all entities, whether they are at the micro or macro level, it is important to respect the specifics of the tourism market, focusing on the requirements and desires of consumers, their satisfaction, thus achieving business goals.

In a word, all activities of the company should be permeated with the spirit of marketing and have to be integrated so that the whole company with all its parts is directed towards a single goal, while adequately adapting to changes in the economy and society. The need to integrate all marketing activities and business functions in the company is the *conditio sine qua non* of successful business nowadays.

From the above it can be concluded that a number of integrated marketing activities are necessary for the survival and competitiveness of the tourism company at the market (foreign or domestic). The absence of such activities could have negative consequences for the tourism business: inability to exploit market potential, inability to maintain the level of demand for tourism services, decline in the overall quality of tourism services, etc. In order to avoid these consequences and situations, it is necessary to plan and implement integrated marketing activities, which must be well designed at all times and focus on the consumers and their wishes and requirements, as well as the principles of sustainability of tourism activities and environment. Finally, it should be emphasized that it's very important for the marketing makers to determine realistic goals, i.e. goals that can be achieved with certain commitment and effort.

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