

# Tourism Destination Elements Analyses on the Construction of International Slow City of Leshan

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**Keywords:** Leshan; tourism destination; destination; tourism elements.

**Abstract.** With the improvement of people's living standards and the rapid development of transportation, more and more people begin to invest money and energy in tourism. As a city with rich tourism resources, complete infrastructure and entertainment facilities and unique tourism products, Leshan has attracted a large number of businessmen and sight viewing visitors. The leisure and relaxing atmosphere of the city helps Leshan to build a tourism destination of "International Slow City". But in the construction process, there are shortcomings which need to be overcome. This paper takes Leshan city as the research object, analyzes problems existing in the construction process from perspectives of tourism resources, tourism products and city image, and puts forward to corresponding improvement strategies according to the development of tourism in Leshan.

## Introduction

With the accelerated pace of urban life, "low life" has become gradually popular in recent years. Slow Cities have become another kind of tourist destination for tourists of all ages. In 2010, Yaxi, Gaochun was awarded as the first "International Slow City" in China. Since then, "International Slow City" has become the tourism brand of Gaochun. Leshan locates in the southwest of China. It also has the culture of slow life, as well as main elements which can be used to build an international slow city, such as slow travel, slow food, slow transportation, slow dwelling, and the most beautiful villages in southwest China. To explore the key elements on the construction of international slow city in Leshan is the allocation of construction elements of the tourism destination; it can improve the image of Leshan, create a good brand for the city, and enhance the overall competitiveness of the city.

## Element Analysis on Tourism Destination

The tourism destination elements refers to regional tourism organizations' activities on distinguishing tourist products, determining the target market, establishing related system of local products, and maintaining or increasing the market share of destination products. There are three main kinds of tourism destination elements: tourism attraction, tourism service and tourism environment. The process is carried out by regional or inter-regional tourism organizations, while its purpose is to maintain the image of destination. Tourism has become an important leisure way for citizens; the status of tourism industry has been greatly improved. Various provinces and cities are taking tourism as the new growth point of local economic development and one of the most important industry, or even the pillar industry.

## The Current Situation of Tourism Destination Elements on the Construction of International Slow City in Leshan

**Large number of tourist attractions.** Famous tourist attractions in Leshan include Mount Emei, Leshan Giant Buddha, Luocheng ancient town, Qingyin Pavilion, Wannian temple, ancient streets, leisure bars and Chengdu snacks. During 2010-2013, 8,511,200 people visited Leshan, among them 3,437,200 people stayed overnight. 92, 547, 500 visitors came from other provinces and cities; the annual average income of tourism was 902 billion 294 million yuan. [1] Suburban tourism mainly attracts citizens who live around the city of Leshan; the number of travelers and consumption volume

are relatively stable. Nevertheless, the "slow life" elements of Leshan have attracted many tourists to travel, and taken a large share of the market.

**Tourist attractions are scattered.** Apart from international tourism, major travel agencies also need to make full use of their brand effects, and increase their development efforts on domestic tourism. Tourism products and routes with unique features should be explored. Local travel agencies need to provide diversified tourism products include sightseeing, shopping, business and cultural products, in order to attract guests from other provinces and cities. Central District, Wutongqiao, Sha Wan, Jinkouhe and other districts and counties should be further planned. The big change of Leshan has attracted more tourists who come from other provinces and cities. Although Leshan is still in the middle level of economic development, but the entire city is in the pursuit of international slow city, and promotes leisure and comfortable life style. With the change of the road traffic methods and the increasing of income, more and more families have bought cars, which make tourists more willing to visit Leshan in small groups through this convenient and economical way.

**Traffic congestion is common seen.** The road traffic of is affected by terrain limitation, and the pursuit of slow rhythm of life. The layout is lack of strategic point of view. The city buildings are dense, and there is no enough space for transportation. Motor vehicle traffic and the fixed non-motorized travel are frequent, while road traffic is heavy during peak hours. The problem of traffic congestion is very serious. In tourist season, Leshan viaducts are often overloaded, while traffic congestion is frequently seen in the central city. During rush hours, traffic congestion is even more obvious. The length of vehicles can reach up to a few kilometers. The congestion due to large traffic flow has significant impacts on the transportation in Leshan during tourist season.

### **Problems Existing in the Construction of International Tourism Destination of Slow City in Leshan**

**Attraction factor of tourism destination is single.** The tourist market of southwest China is huge. The promotion of characteristics tourism helps Leshan to attract large number of businessmen and citizens from other provinces and abroad. Instead of looking for the new tourist destination, they are looking for markets and seeking for greater economic returns. By analyzing the number of tourists and their visiting time in the past few years, it can be found that foreign tourists tend to stay in Leshan for longer time. The current residence time in Leshan has reached 2.2 days. Leshan traveling destinations attract less than 1/6 of total tourists in China, and the number of tourists does not increase constantly. In 2014 the number was slowly growing, but then in 2013 the number increased by nearly 0.3%. The main problem is that tourism destinations in Leshan only have natural scenery. After seeing similar scenery, tourists will lose their interests in Leshan.

**Service needs of tourists cannot be met.** The rise of individual tourism promotes the city of Leshan to transform into tourism destination. The differences between regions, attractions and services gradually improve group travelers' requirements on the quality of tourist destination. If an individual tourist cannot enjoy proper services in the destination, the tourist will choose to complain. The parking spaces are not enough. There are also complaints on scenic spots management from some individuals. Ticket scalpers and arbitrarily parking fees are main targets of criticism. Visitors have to wait in the queue for a long time, while services in scenic areas are not humane. Frequent travelers set high standards on scenic spots of Leshan; they need better services in hotels, scenic spots, scenic journeys and other aspects. Individual travelers need a convenient service platform which can solve their problems of eating, living and traveling in Leshan. They have different tourism requirements compared with group visitors. Group visitors prefer to in-depth travel with more freedom and leisure times. Driving and backpacking become popular traveling methods. Meanwhile, individuals' demand on travel tickets, transportation, tour guide services and tourist destination ground service are also increased.

**Environmental pressure caused by transportation and accommodation.** Road networks outside downtown area of Leshan are in low density. Main lines are too concentrated. Thus, drivers have to bypass downtown area, which may cause congestion. The development of Pudong New Area and the river-crossing traffic are under construction. But these roads are also saturated. Drivers

frequently brake and start, which lead to a large number of traffic accidents, and make traffic congestion worse. The number of motor vehicle in Leshan has reached 8 million 100 thousand, of which about 15 thousand are taxi, 2 million are moped, and 120 thousand are bicycles. Traffic congestion in the city cannot be alleviated, while the traffic pressure is increasing. [2] During tourist season, tourists travel by bus or private cars, the illegal car parking can cause road occupation. The roads are narrowed, vehicle velocity declines, and transportation pressure increases. Leshan has high level of economic and consumption, but the land area here is small. In order to obtain more economic benefits, real estate companies fight for the land use rights of commercial houses. The number of hotels in Leshan is declined. Existing hotels cannot meet the accommodation requirements of tourists during the tourist season.

### **Countermeasures in the Construction of International Tourism Destination of Slow City in Leshan**

**Combining modern culture, developing new features of the city.** Regional tourism destination is more conducive to tourists who want to visit more attractions in a short period of time, and stay in the destination for longer time. Leshan has unique cultural and commercial buildings and rich humanistic spirits, which would play a dominant role in the short-term construction of tourist destination. Under the policy of "connect the dots to form lines, and connect lines to form a side", the whole city can be explored as tourist destination. For example, the famous Leshan Giant Buddha scenic area is highly populous. So when exploring tourism elements on international slow city, economic values of Buddhist products and souvenirs, together with the spirit of kind and tolerance in Buddhism should be emphasized. It can reflect that Leshan is a city which can accept different kinds of culture. Activities like drinking tea, reading books and poetry appreciation should be added to allow visitors feel the humanity atmosphere of Leshan. Activities can be divided three types according to the ages of tourists, namely youth, adult and elderly tourists. Each project should be less than 4 hours. Activities include appreciation the poems in Dadu River, movie literature script Robbers in Emei, and poems written by Cu Ye. [3] Visitors seminars can also be organized as a relaxation and leisure tourism project. Individual travelers and members of tourist groups can choose to participate.

**Moderate traffic controls and centralized management of congestion to reduce environmental pressure.** The geographic shape of Leshan is thin and narrow; the central area of Leshan city is the smallest city center, in which the economic and commercial development is relatively advanced. The famous Leshan Giant Buddha scenic spot lies near the center of the city, many tourist buses run through the center of downtown area. Customers need to buy goods and souvenir in the city center, which cause great pressure on urban traffic. Leshan government can be build roads around the district, as well as parking lot for tourism buses. In tourist season, 300 taxis are needed. Network platforms which provide taxi services should be introduced to scenic spots. In train stations, air ports, scenic spots and other key areas, transport capacity reservation mechanism should be constructed. The special "River Bus" travel routes should be explored, spacious and safe camping space for motor homes should be provided in cultural parks with complete infrastructure.

**Strengthen the management of scenic spots to enhance the quality of service elements.** In order to keep individual travelers and increase tourism income, the management of scenic areas should be strengthened. Managers of scenic spots need more flexibility. For instance, in peak periods of tourism, the number of individual tourists should be controlled. The maximum capacity of each A-level scenic spots should be calculated by relevant departments, and published on websites and entrances of the scenic spots. Detection and control mechanism on tourist flow should be established; latest data on traffic information should be timely released through micro-blog, website and broadcast. During holidays, the number of tourists will increase. Corresponding measures should be taken in advance to keep the order in scenic spots. If necessary, the opening period of the garden could be extended, temporary ticket window could be opened. Additional staff and security forces could be arranged. Emergency medical team, emergency toilets, emergency water points and notice boards could be added. Entertainment facilities, equipment for water projects and emergency measures should be frequently checked and maintained. For large recreation facilities, spot investigation should

be applied to ensure safety. Take the water projects in suburbs of Leshan as an example. Facilities provided for individual tourists must be checked in advance, including buoy, raft, and sunshade. Parking area and waiting area should be separated with each other. Dangerous road must be marked or prohibited.

### **Conclusions**

The ultimate goal of international slow city is to keep visitors stay in Leshan. The attractions of accommodation, transportation, scenic spots and humanities all come from timely publicity and the management timely. Management on personnel's quality should be strengthened, too. Tourism projects on slow city of Leshan will draw attentions from international tourists and citizens who come from different provinces.

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