

Planning and Implementation of Tourism Signage Project – A Case Study in Uttarakhand State

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Abstract — Tourism signages are needed for development of tourism in any region or state having tourism potential. Installation of tourism signages needs careful planning. Proper planning and implementation of tourism signage project is not easy. The paper describes Author's experience in planning and implementation of a state level tourism signage installation project.

Index Terms — Tourism Signage, Signage Type, Quality Control, Existing Signages.

1. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

Tourism has a great potential for economic development and employment generation in a region or state having tourism potential. To enhance tourism, necessary tourism infrastructure should be planned and installed. Tourism signage is an important component of tourism infrastructure and plays a vital role in promotion of tourism. Therefore, tourism signage project needs to be planned and implemented in areas having tourism potential.

2. THE CASE STUDY

The project as case study was for supply and installation of tourism signages in entire Uttarakhand State. In the signage project, existing signage support system for the tourists and visitors in Uttarakhand State was proposed to be improved. The project was intended to provide necessary information distinctively to tourists with adequate clarity and prominence so that they will never feel inconvenience in searching tourist destinations and finding facilities in the same. About 1800 numbers of tourism signages were proposed to be installed covering all districts of the state. Five different types of tourism signages were selected for the project. Out of them, four signages were directional signages on routes to tourist locations, while one signage was installed at the tourist locations depicting its history and significance. Messages were written on both sides of the four types of directional signages. The details of different types of tourism signages installed in the project are as below:

- i) Signage Type 1: Over Head Welcome Sign Boards with Two Legs
This type of signages was installed at all the entry points to Uttarakhand State.
- ii) Signage Type 2: Shoulder Mounted Sign Boards with Double Posts
This type of signage was used for one place identification.

- iii) Signage Type 3: Shoulder Mounted Sign Boards with Single Post

This type of signage was also used for one place identification.

- iv) Signage Type 4: Over Head Cantilever Advance Direction Sign Boards with Two Legs

This type of signage had more display area. Therefore, it contained more information.

- v) Signage Type 5: Special Signage

Apart from the above mentioned four types of signages to be installed on the roadsides, a special signage was designed and erected at selected tourist locations. Each of the special signages erected at the tourist locations displayed historical information about the tourist locations.

The locations and quantities of the proposed signages were decided based on the following criteria:

- i) Signages at Entry points to Uttarakhand State: Signage type 1 was proposed at all entry points to Uttarakhand state.
- ii) Road signages on motorable part of the route of Manas Sarovar Yatra: Signage type 4 was proposed on the motorable route part of Manas Sarovar Yatra. Due to single destination with long distance motorable route, spacing of signage proposed on the route was 10 Km.
- iii) Road signages on trekking part of route of Manas Sarovar Yatra: On the trekking part of route of Manas sarovar Yatra, signage type 3 was proposed. For convenience to trekker, a spacing of 5km was proposed.
- iv) Road Signages on State Highways of all Districts: Signage type 2 and 4 was used in State Highways. Out of these two signage types, 50% of the required numbers were Signage type 4 and balanced numbers were type signage type 2. These road signages were provided considering existing signages so that spacing of road signages on state highways becomes about 5Km.
- v) Road signages on major and other district roads of all districts: Signage type 3 was proposed on routes of major and other district roads of all districts. These signages were provided on all road junctions and also for showing locations and directions of tourist destinations. An average signage spacing of 5Km was considered.
- vi) Special Signage for Char Dham Yatra: Signage type 5 or special signage was proposed at prominent locations on routes to Char Dham.
- vii) Special Signages for Manas Sarovar Yatra: Signage type 5 or special signage was proposed at prominent locations on route of Manas Sarovar.
- viii) Special signages in all districts: Signage type 5 was installed at prominent tourist locations in all districts.

The major activities performed in the project are:

- i) Determination of types of signages to be installed.
- ii) Collection of details of existing road signages.
- iii) Identifications of exact locations of new signages.
- iv) Preparation of messages in each new signage.
- v) Structural design of signages.
- vi) Preparation of detailed project reports and bid documents.
- vii) Engagement of contractor for supply and installation of signages at sites.
- viii) Quality control during fabrication and erection of signages at sites.

3. MAJOR FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS:

The following are the major findings and conclusions in the project:

- i) Tourism signages are essential tourism infrastructure required to promote tourism in any state or region. Tourism signages also act as road signages and in remote areas they are useful for people to navigate.
- ii) Identifying locations of signages and preparing messages for each location needs detailed field studies.
- iii) Details of existing road signages need to be collected to find out present deficiencies. In large signage project, the major challenges are in collecting details of existing signages, finding out locations of proposed signages and messages to be written in the signages.
- iv) Accuracy of messages written on the signages is important to avoid serious criticism from public.
- v) For contractor engaged to install tourism signages, works are not easy to execute. This is because, work locations are many and constantly changing.
- vi) Structural design of the tourism signages is important for long life and for preventing damage from storm.
- vii) Quality control during installation of signages is difficult as locations of installations are scattered. Proper curing of concrete pedestals of signages becomes difficult due to scattered locations of signages covering vast areas.
- viii) Long term maintenance of signages after installation is a big issue. Necessary arrangement needs to be made for periodic repair and maintenance and painting of metal posts and frames of signages.
- ix) Signage projects taken up by NHAI or State Public Works Department are mostly directional signages for locations or places. They are not focussed for promotion of tourism or for benefits of tourists. Therefore, there is large scope for taking up tourism signage projects in many states and regions of India having tourism potential. Such project can be implemented without any issue of land acquisition. Tourism signage project should preferably be implemented by Tourism Department only. Tourism department needs to allocate sufficient fund to take up large tourism signage project.

Disclaimer: The findings and conclusions presented in the paper are personal opinion of the author.