

**An Evaluation of The Marketing Communication Strategies Used In Promoting Tourism
In Selous Game Reserve**

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The overall objective of this study was to evaluate marketing communication strategies used in promoting tourism in Selous Game Reserve. Specifically the study looked at the current marketing communication strategies and gaps in promoting tourism, as well as assessed the influence of marketing communications on tourists decision to visit particular attraction(s) in a destination. In addition, suitability of the management structure of Selous in implementing marketing communication analyzed, and a model has been proposed. Data was collected using questionnaires, interviews, observation and review of various literatures. The sample of the study comprised of sixty tourists, thirty service providers and ten senior staff from the ministry. The study found out that, for tourists who visited Selous their main source of information were through advertising, international exhibitions and word of mouth. For tourists visited other attractions, media used to communicate were through advertising, international exhibitions, publicity and interactive marketing. In one way or another, these findings reflected the marketing communication strategies applied by stakeholders to promote tourism products. In comparison to other strategies, managers prefer advertising and international exhibitions. Similarly, most tourists agreed that message communicated using various advertisements highly catch the attention and influence their choice of attractions to visit. Despite of cost implications use of advertising, international exhibitions and international agents are highly recommended. Other strategies like events and experience, interactive marketing, publicity, word of mouth can be used occasionally, as well as directing extra efforts on capacity building and increase fund for marketing research.