

**THE JAPAN FOUNDATION GRANT FOR TOURISM RESEARCH AND PROMOTION**

**HERITAGE TOURISM RESEARCH PROJECT**



**VOLUME 3 - MARKETING STRATEGIES FOR ATTRACTING  
VIETNAMESE TOURISTS TO KYOTO, JAPAN**

Hanoi, 3 March 2017

## CHAPTER 1. REVIEW OF HERITAGE TOURISM PRODUCTS AND SERVICES IN KYOTO

### 1. 1. Main tourist attractions

#### Kinkaku-ji Temple (The Golden Pavilion)

The picture of Kinkaku-ji shining in the sunlight and reflecting on Kyokochi pond may be amongst the most popular images which remind tourists about Kyoto. The temple is located in the north of the city. It has two top floors completely covered by gold leaf. Kinkakuji was built as one of the buildings in the retirement complex of the shogun Ashikaga Yoshimitsu and after his death in 1408; it became a Zen temple of the Rinzaï sect. Time flew, several wars and unexpected matters happened, the most of the complex was ruined. Kinkakuji was then restructured and became the only building left of the complex. The Golden Pavilion has 3 floors which represent different styles of architecture. The first floor was built in the Shinden (700 – 1100 AD Japanese palaces). The second floor has the Bukke style (Samurai residence). The third floor was built as a Chinese Zen Hall and was capped with a golden phoenix, which can be seen on the ¥10000 paper money. However, tourists can only stand around the pond to observe it, because they are not allowed to enter the temple.



*The Golden Pavilion*

After viewing Kinkakuji temple, visitors head to the priest's former living area (hojo) which is well-known for its painted sliding doors (fusuma). However, this area is not widely opened to public. Next, tourists go to the temple's gardens which have retained their original design from Yoshimitsu's days. It is amazing that

Anmintaku Pond in the gardens is said to never dry up. There are also some strange statues, at that people throw coins for luck.

After sightseeing, tourist can find a corner to take a rest, to drink, to at the Sekkatei Teahouse, added to Kinkakuji during the Edo Period, before you exit the paid temple area.



*The yard in front of Sekkatei Teahouse*

Outside the exit are souvenir shops, a small tea garden where you can have matcha tea and sweets (500 yen) and Fudo Hall, a small temple hall which houses a statue of Fudo Myoo, one of the Five Wisdom Kings and protector of Buddhism. The statue is said to be carved by Kobo Daishi, one of the most important figures in Japanese religious history ([japan-guide.com](http://japan-guide.com)).



*Fudo Hall*

The site is opened from 9:00 to 17:00 and has no closing day. It charges the fee of 400 yen.

### **Ryoanji Temple (Rock Garden)**

Ryoanji Temple is located in the Northwest of Kyoto. Originally an aristocrat's villa during the Heian Period, the site was converted into a Zen temple in 1450. It is said that Ryoanji hide inside many secret messages. Only knowledgeable and subtle visitors can find the hint.

The famous rock garden of Ryoanji is considered as the best model of Japanese Zen garden (Karesansui, which means dry landscape). In order to construct the Zen garden, the gardener places rocks on an area covered by gravel to symbolize islands and mountains. Gravel is raked to imitate flowing water. Despite its simple construction, a Zen garden requires maintenance to keep the raked lines crisp and to get rid of vegetation that may grow through the gravel. This becomes a daily meditation practice for the gardener.



*Ranking the gravel (Source: Internet)*

The rock garden in Ryoanji temple is surrounded by low earthen walls. There are 15 rocks laid out in small groups. An interesting feature of the garden's design is that from any angle, at least one of the rocks is always hidden from the viewer. Traditionally, people said that you can only see all 15 rocks when you are enlightened.



*Rock Garden (Source: Internet)*

Ryoanji's garden is observed from the Hojo building, the head priest's former residence. Besides the stone garden, the Hojo features some paintings on the sliding doors (fusuma) of its tatami rooms, and a couple of

smaller gardens on the rear side of the building. In one of the gardens there is a small basin that is famous for its Zen inscription, and learner of Kanji may like it. When visitor pay more attention to these words, they can find a meaningful life message.



*The basin Ryoan-ji (Source: Youtube)*

Ryoanji's temple grounds also include a relatively spacious park area with pond, located below the temple's main buildings. The pond dates back to the time when the site still served as an aristocrat's villa and features a small shrine on one of its three little islands that can be accessed over a bridge (japanesquest.com, 2012).

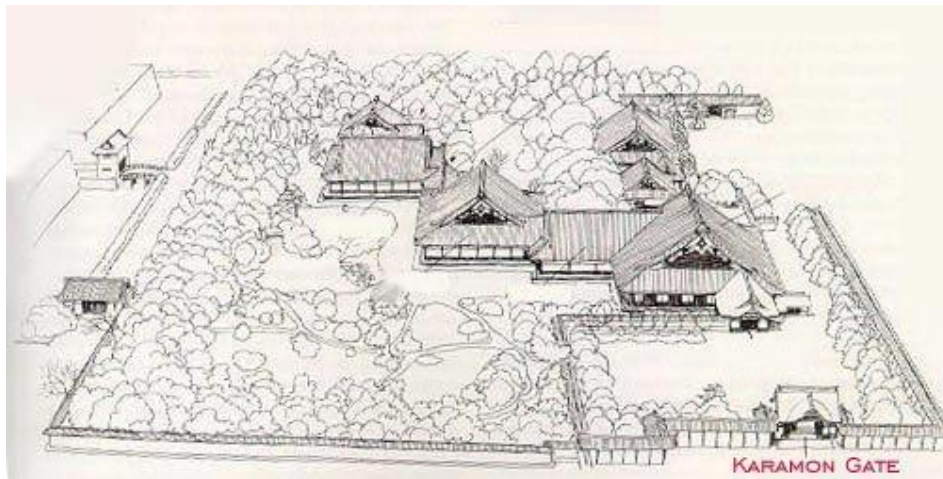
Besides some nice walking trails, the park also offers a restaurant which specializes in the Kyoto specialty of Yudofu (boiled tofu). The restaurant is beside a traditional Japanese garden. It is also possible for patrons to order just drinks or share one dish among some people, but an extra charge is applied.

Rock Garden is open from 8:00 to 17:00 (March to November) and from 8:30 to 16:30 (December to February). There is no closing day. Visitors pay 500 yen for a ticket.

### **Nijo Castle**

Nijo Castle was built in 1603 by Tokugawa Ieyasu, who is the first shogun of the Edo Period (1603-1867). This castle is a must-visit attraction in Kyoto because it remains the Japanese ancient structural identities. It

splurged the ruling and dominating power of Tokugawa Shogunate. Nijo Castle is recognized as a UNESCO world heritage site in 1994. The site contains palaces, massive gates, towers and gardens. It can be divided into three areas: the Honmaru (main circle of defense), the Ninomaru (secondary circle of defense) and some gardens that encircle the Honmaru and Ninomaru. The entire site is surrounded by stone walls and moats. The most popular areas in the castle are Ninomaru Palace and Ninomaru Garden.



*The map of Nijo Castle (Source: Internet)*

Ninomaru Palace is one of the central buildings of Nijo Castle. It is the Shoguns' office and place of residence. Inside the palace, many rooms are joined together, with each having a different use. For example, Tosaburai is a waiting room for guests; Chokushi-no-Ma is a room for imperial messengers. The unique feature of the Ninomaru Palace is Uguisu-Bari (the Nightingale floors). Should the intruders sneak in, shoguns could easily recognize. On the walls and ceilings of Ninomaru Palace, you will also find over 3000 paintings. Many of them were painted by the Edo shogunate's favorite painters from the Kano school.

Among three gardens in the castle, Ninomaru Garden has remained the same since the Edo period. The islands in the garden's pond are made to look like cranes and turtles, which are bring about the good fortune.

There is an automatic selling ticket machine at the site.

English/ Japanese audio guides are available. The tour route passes by multiple waiting and audience rooms. The highest ranked visitors were allowed all the way into the main audience room where the shogun would sit on an elevated floor, flanked by bodyguards hidden in closets. Lower ranked visitors would be allowed only as far as the adjoining rooms without direct view of the shogun. There are shoe shelves at the door. Outsides, there are automatic selling fish food machines. Entrance fees are 600 yen for adults, 350 yen for junior high and high school Students, and 200 yen for elementary school Students.

## Imperial palace



*Imperial Palace*

The Kyoto Imperial Palace used to be the residence and working place of the emperor of Japan from 794 to 1869. It is inside the Kyoto Imperial Garden (or Kyoto Gyoen). The current Imperial Palace was reconstructed in 1855 after it had burnt down. Ever since the emperor and capital were moved from Kyoto to Tokyo in 1869, the Imperial Household Agency has taken over the task of preserving the Kyoto Imperial Palace. .

Once, they hosted public tours of the buildings only several times a day. However, the palace grounds can now be entered and explored without joining a tour and without any advanced arrangements (although tours in English are still available). Visitors can see the palace buildings and gardens, but they cannot enter buildings.

The Shodaibu-no-Ma building used to be the waiting area for courtiers paying official visits to the palace. There are three rooms served respectively for the highest ranking visitors to the lowest ranking, arranged from east to west. The highest ranking room is Toranoma (the Tiger Room). The second highest ranking room is Tsurunoma (the Crane Room), and the third one is Sakuranoma (the Cherry Room). These rooms are named after objects painted on their sliding doors.



Shishinden is the most important building. It was used for important ceremonies, such as coronations. Inside Shishinden, there are the imperial thrones of the emperor and empress, which were used during the coronation ceremony. In front of Shishinden, there is a garden filled with white sand. In the garden, there is a cherry tree to the east and an orange tree to the west. This garden, like Shishinden itself, served an important role in ceremonies.

The Oikeniwa Garden is a strolling garden. Its main feature is a large pond with an artificial shoreline toward the front and steppingstones across to a mooring place. There is the arc-shaped Keyakibashi Bridge, which stretches across the pond. You can enjoy this beautiful scenery from many different angles along the shore.

There are automatic washing hand faucets around the garden. A big waiting room is available for visitors with fan, television. Information stalls (Free brochure/ leaflet in Japanese, Chinese, and English) are sufficient. There are on-site guides. Tours in English are available when required advance reservations.

### **Kyomizu**

Kiyomizu is located in the East of Kyoto. The temple was founded in 778, and added to the list of UNESCO world heritage sites in 1994. This is definitely the most celebrated temple in the city. It bears many interesting things.

The first fun thing is the slope that leads to the temple. Numerous souvenir shops and restaurants can be found around this area. You can feel you are in the ancient time in Kyoto.



*The slope leading to the temple*

Next, Kiyomizu stage will delight you. It is a large wooden stage, 13 meters high (43 feet), and built without nails. The view of the Kyoto city from the Stage is magnificent.



Kyomizu

Besides, The Kiyomizu temple complex includes several other shrines. Jishu shrine is one of them, and it is dedicated to the god of love and matchmaking. In front of the shrine, two stones are placed 18 meters (59 feet) apart. It is said that “If you success to find your way from one stone to the other with eyes closed, you will find your true love.”



*Jishu shrine*

Beneath the wooden stage, there is a Otowa waterfall. Those three streams coming from the roof are believed to have different wishing power. One is for “longevity”, the other one is for “success at school”, and the left one is for “fortunate love life”.

The temple is opened every day, from 6:00 - 18:00. Admission is 300 yen

It should be noticed that: Spring and Fall illumination hours are from 18:30 to 21:30 (mid-March to mid-April and mid-November to early December). The admission is 400 yen.

### **Arashiyama District**

Ranking number 1 in 10 best places to visit in Kyoto, Arashiyama attracts many tourists from all around the world. Since the nobles in the Heian period (794-1185) started building their villas in the Arashiyama district, this area has been a very popular destination for Japanese tourists, especially in spring for the cherry blossoms and in the autumn for the fall colors.

Reaching the district, visitors are warmly welcomed by Togetsukyo Bridge. This is a 155-meter-long bridge that spans the Katsura River. The name Togetsukyo means “Moon Crossing Bridge” in Japanese, which derives from Emperor Kameyama and his 13th-century poem. He described the bridge in one of his poems,

“as if the clear moon is crossing the bridge.” Ever since, the Togetsukyo Bridge has been an icon of Arashiyama.



*Togetsukyo Bridge*

Another symbol of Arashiyama is the bamboo forest. It is intersected by a 700-meter path that starts from the north of Tenryuji temple, passes through the Nonomiya shrine, and ends near Okochi-Sanso villa.

In addition, visiting Arashiyama, tourist can have chance to sit on the Sagano Romantic Train, which is a train that runs along a scenic route between Torokko-Saga Station and Torokko-Kameoka station. On this 25-minute train ride, you can enjoy the magnificent sights of Arashiyama. The ride shows different sceneries during each season: cherry blossoms in spring, tender green in summer, red leaves in autumn, and occasional snow flake in winter. However, spring and autumn are the two most popular seasons, when tickets are likely to be sold out a month before the departure date.

After taking the Sagano Romantic Train to the Torokko-Kameoka station, visitors can come back by riverboat. The Hozugawa River Cruise is a 2-hour, 16-kilometer journey with seasonal scenery and thrilling rapids. Boatmen pilot a boat with bamboo poles and guide the way through the deep ravine. However, this cruise may not suit everybody, as it costs 4,200 yen (about 40 dollars) per person, and the boatmen speak only in Japanese. However, the natural scenery of the largely ravine is worth seeing.

Along the street of this district, there are numerous stores, groceries selling various types of goods and souvenir, many food stores to cater the patrons.

### **Nishiki Market**

It would be a big mistake to discover a culture, a destination without getting to know its food art and food identities. Being well-known as Kyoto’s Kitchen for long time, Nishiki market sells almost all typical Kyoto

food-related things such as Kyovegetable, Tukemono, Tofu, Yuba, fresh seafood, eel and so on. Almost everything sold at the market is locally produced and procured. The market goes along a 390-meter street, with more than 130 shops.



*A store in Nishiki market*

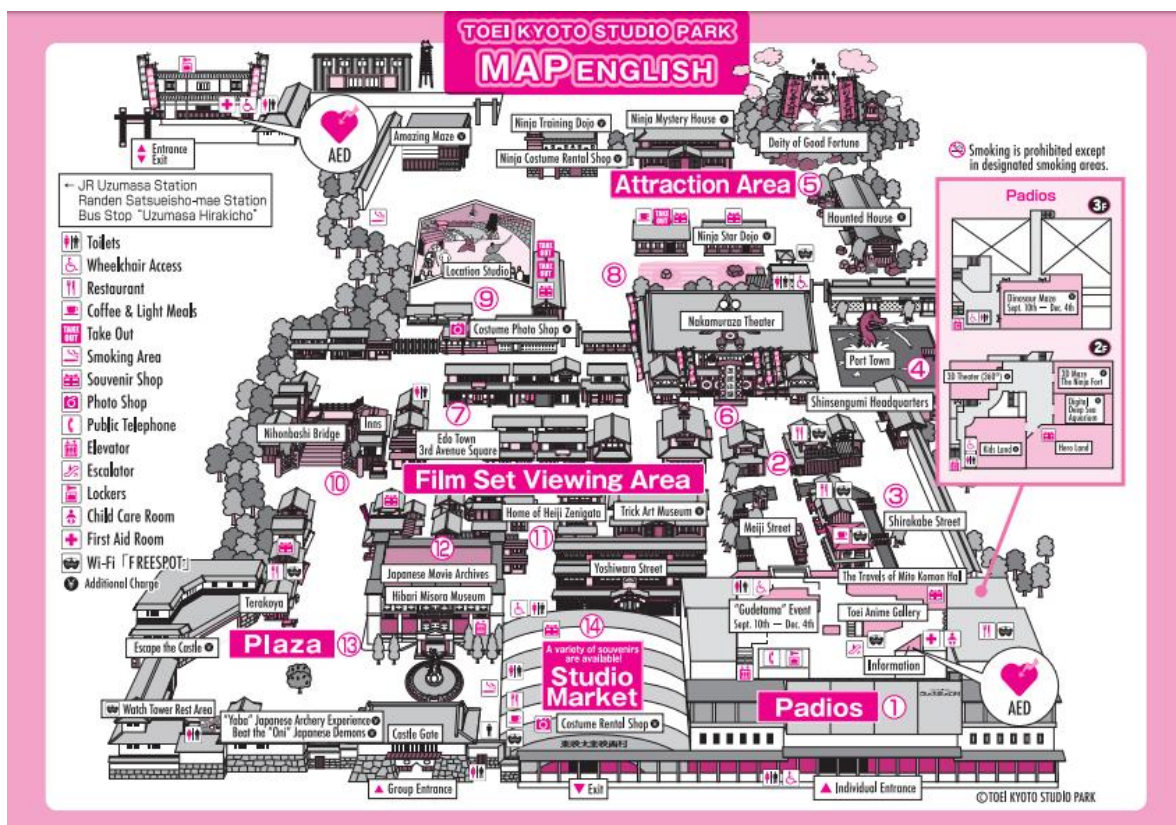


*A shop in Nishiki market*

**Toei Kyoto Studio Park**

Toei Kyoto Studio Park is a theme park located in the west of Kyoto. Visiting this park, tourists have chance to observe building structure from Edo period, enjoy the atmosphere of ancient Japan. Throughout the year, numerous movies and episodes of TV period dramas are shot here, therefore, Toei Studio Park is called "Hollywood of Japan". The studio park also offers various entertainment activities for all ages. Coming to the park, tourists are recommended to pay a visit to Movie Culture Hall, where they can get to know more about history of the Japanese movie business. Besides, there are some classes or shows opened regularly that reenact the lifestyle and activities of ancient Japanese such as Samurai Sword Fighting Lesson, Terakoya -Edo Period Classroom Re-Enactment, Street Performance Re-Enactment and so on. In case families want to have more fun and recreational activities for kids, they can join Super Heroes & Heroines Meet & Greet Event, Iga-ryu Shuriken throwing high-score contest or Laser Mission "Escape the Castle". There is also a 3D movie theater inside the park.

The studio park is opened every day, except from December 25<sup>th</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>. From March to November, the opening time is 9 am to 5 pm. From December to February, the opening time is 9:30 am to 4 pm. Entrance fee is ¥2,200 for adult, ¥1,300 for student and ¥1,100 for kid.



Toei Kyoto Studio Park map

## Kimono

Kimono is considered as one of the most outstanding national costume. This type of clothing requires the sophistication in both making and wearing process. No need to be sexy, Japanese women and maiden still look attractive in kimono, which cover most parts of the body. Throughout centuries, there are many changes in designing and wearing kimono. Nowadays, most Japanese no longer dress up in kimono in daily activities. They set kimono aside for holidays and important celebrations. Kimono is often made from made from high quality fabric and mixed with many accessories. It costs a fortune.



*Kimono (Source: Internet)*

All Japanese must wear kimono at least several times in their life. Between 30 and 100 days after a child is born, family often visit a shrine together to report the child's birth. The baby is dressed in a white under-kimono. On top of that kimono, the baby wears a brightly colored yuzen-dyed kimono if it is a girl, and a black kimono decorated with the family crest if it is a boy. Another occasion to wear kimono is Shichi-Go-

San ("seven-five-three") festival. Parents take their five-year-old boys and seven-year-old or three-year-old girls to the local shrine to thank the gods for keeping their children healthy and making them grow. At the age of 20, young people celebrate their mature. Girls will wear furisode (kimonos with long sleeves) and boys will wear haori (half-coats) and hakama. In weddings, the bride wears a pure white kimono known as a shiromuku. The color white implies the beginning of a journey.

In Kyoto, visitors can easily find a shop or studio to hire a set of kimono. The quality and price is various. Relating services such as taking photos, make-up, hair making and so on are also available.

## **1.2. Other Tourism Services**

### **Transportation**

Public transportation is very convenient. The system is well-organized.

### **Accommodation**

Hotels and dorms are modern and secured. However, the price is pretty high.

### **Restaurant**

There are many types of restaurant with various level of price that can cater different types of patrons.



## **CHAPTER 2. SUGGESTIONS ON TARGETED MARKET SEGMENTS, HERITAGE TOURISM PRODUCTS AND SERVICES, DESTINATION PROMOTIONAL STRATEGIES FOR VIETNAMESE TRAVELERS**

### **2.1. Targeted market segments**

#### **Family market**

People aged over 45, whose jobs are stable and don't have to worry too much about their children

#### **Cultural enthusiasts**

- Those who are interested in discovering, studying about culture and history (especially Japan has a long time of history and culture)
- Those have educational purpose of visiting

#### **Young employed/Just married no children**

- already have fixed job/just married couple who are still enthusiastic about travelling and don't worry too much about children
- budget can afford for the trip (ex: hotel in Japan quite expensive)
- easier visa application to Japan

### **2.2. Suggestions about Heritage tourism products and services for Vietnamese travelers**

First of all, Vietnamese tourists, especially the young ones are pretty price-conscious. If visa to enter Japan is set free, more Vietnamese travelers may consider visiting here rather than other countries such as South Korea, China, and so on.

In addition, many Vietnamese tourists travel in groups with their family, or with colleagues. In order to attract more tourists from Vietnam, some recreational activities should be added and sell in bundle with these Heritage tour.

### **2.3. Destination promotional strategies for Vietnamese travelers**

#### ***a. Internet & e-marketing***

Going with the speedy growth of information on Internet, more and more Vietnamese people make use of these convenient sources to make decision on their holiday's destination. Vietnamese people have tendency to access the famous and reliable websites to search information for their trips. Additionally, it is obvious that whilst internet marketing is highly effective if well designed (probably better value for money than traditional marketing), it is by no means cheap and is dependent on having servicing methods to deal with enquiries, such as a well- designed destination website that will track results.

Therefore, Internet marketing strategies that will be considered include the following ways.

The first one is Internet display advertising. It is wisdom to use web banners or banner ads placed on a third-party website to drive traffic to a tourist board's own website and increase destination awareness or campaign response. Some recommended websites are: (<http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2158.html>) (<https://www.camnhannhatban.vn/japanindepth/worldheritagesites/kyoto.html>) (<http://thekyotoproject.org/>) (<http://www.vietnamtourism.com/>)

The second way is social media marketing. Vietnamese may be crazy fans of social network. Therefore, gaining traffic or attention through social media websites such as Facebook, Instagram, Zalo... could be the fastest way. As a result, we can build and manage a Facebook or Instagram fan-page to promote Kyoto's image to Vietnamese people with real, updated and frequent information.

The other way is about referral marketing. We could promote tourism products or services to new customers through referrals, usually word of mouth. The most popular and reliable sources are through TripAdvisor, Ivivu.com, phuot.vn, Expedia.com ...

Besides, inbound marketing should be contained. It is better to create and freely share informative content as a means of converting prospects into customers, and customers into repeat buyers (e.g. through a regulated blog). One of the most trustable web blog in Vietnam is of MsHà Sa Pa (<https://hasapa.wordpress.com/author/hasapa/>); or even of the Japanese professor like Mr JEFF BERGLUD (<http://www.jeff-kyoto.com/>)

In addition, video marketing should be developed. So creativity of videos will engage the viewer into a buying state by presenting information in video form and guiding them to a product or service (e.g. YouTube clips)

Moreover, it can be used online booking: e-marketing with online agencies (e.g. Agoda, Lastminute.com) as well as the provision of direct booking opportunities, which makes people feel easier and more convenient to realize their desire to travel to a strange area.

Last but not least, creation of destination website plays an integral role to allure visitors. So developing a top quality multi-language website with full of necessary destination information could be the best travelling means for tourists. Some websites with multi- language could be considered as references are (<http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2158.html>)

(<https://www.camnhannhatban.vn/japanindepth/worldheritagesites/kyoto.html>)

(<http://thekyotoproject.org/>).

### ***b. Public relations & familiarizations***

Beside Internet and e-marketing, public relations and familiarizations could be a good way to attract tourists, especially Vietnamese.

- Specific public relations campaigns will be initiated in each main market featuring the main brand themes and market-appropriate product and new product, particularly cultural activities in 2017 (festivals).
- Press visits will be hosted from main markets where it is cost effective to do so, and where there is airline or private sector support.
- Organizing some contests for Vietnamese people to write about Kyoto, which the winner can get a tour to Kyoto. The most famous one could be named as “Cảm nhận Nhật Bản” on official Japanese tourism website. (<https://www.camnhannhatban.vn/japanindepth/worldheritagesites/kyoto.html>)
- Furthermore, it could be better to invest and organize culture exchange programs like “The Kyoto project” for Vietnamese students to explore, do survey, and research of Kyoto. As a result, students would be interested in Japanese culture, particularly Kyoto ways of life; they would care for the famous attractions in Kyoto and write valuable researches.

### ***c. Exhibitions & travel trade***

The last marketing strategy is recommended is in terms of exhibitions and travel trade. First, Prioritizing trade fairs that link in with other marketing campaign activities (advertising, public relations or travel trade support). Eg: VITM 2017, “Lễ hội hoa anh Đào Nhật Bản 2017”... would allure Vietnamese; especially those are adored by Japanese culture.

Second, destination marketing organizations could strengthen joint activities (e.g. in organizing familiarization trips and PR visits) with Vietnam Airlines, the national carrier whilst at the same time strengthening relationships with other leading long haul carriers from existing and new destinations. Therefore, cheaper flights would drive Vietnamese to desire to travel to Kyoto. Then the number of tourists to Kyoto, of course, would be increasing.

Lastly, in partnership with the private sector (and facilitated by VNAT), destination marketing organizations (DMOs) in Kyoto could focus on travel trade and charter operators currently featuring competing destinations but not yet featuring Vietnam. Therefore it is better for Kyoto DMOs to cooperate with Vietnamese tour companies to create wonderful tours to Kyoto with the best price. Some big name of Vietnamese company tour operators are Saigon tourist, Viet travel, Fiditour.

In conclusion, Vietnamese people are always keen on the destinations which own wonderful sceneries together with various heritage sites, shopping paradises with high quality of products. So Kyoto is suitable to promote to attract Vietnamese. Through some integrated marketing communication strategies, the Kyoto's image could be familiar with Vietnamese, and then urge them to decide to visit Kyoto as soon as possible.