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Article

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PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE PURPOSE OF IMPROVING THE OFFER OF TRAVEL AGENCIES IN PRIMORJE-GORSKI KOTAR COUNTY–CROATIA

Jasna Lasinger Siladjev¹

Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to stress the importance of promotional activities in advancing offers of travel agencies and their overall business profitability. More specifically, the paper examines elements of the promotional mix used by travel agencies when communicating with their customers; it is divided into six parts which delineate the characteristics of travel agencies on the tourism market, the specifics of marketing communication on the tourism market, promotional activities of travel agencies, and promotional activities of travel agencies in Primorje-Gorski Kotar County, based on previously conducted empirical research. On the turbulent tourism market, it is common that tourist demand changes from day to day; therefore, it is important to monitor these changes to create products according to new tourist needs. After creating a product, it is crucial to select that element of the promotional mix that will present the new product on the tourism market in the best possible way so that it attracts the highly coveted-tourists. To research this issue, surveys of employees in marketing departments of travel agencies were conducted which, along with other research methods, produced the final and significant results.

Keywords: promotion, communication, demand, product, marketplace.

Jel Classification: M31

INTRODUCTION

The research topics of this paper are promotional activities and the possibilities of using them to improve the offer of travel agencies. The following preliminary hypothesis originates from the research topic and issues: promotional activities influence in the offer of travel agencies in Primorje-Gorski Kotar County in a positive way. Each company entering the tourism market with a new product immediately after creating it has to carefully consider how it will promote this product on the market. The purpose of this

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paper is to demonstrate the importance of promotional activities for advancing the offer of travel agencies. The main data collection instrument in this study is a questionnaire. In order to compose the questionnaire, knowledge gained from various books, scientific and professional papers and other publications from the area of research was used. To interpret the data the author used the historical method for existing knowledge, analysis and synthesis, the statistical method, as well as the inductive and deductive method. The paper consists of six parts. First of all, the introduction presents the purpose and objective of the research as well as an overview of the research methods. Then the second part outlines the characteristics of travel agencies on the tourism market. The third part elaborates on marketing communication in tourism. The fourth part deals with the promotion of travel agencies and demonstrates the relationship between travel agencies and tourist destination subjects, as well as how travel agencies promote these subjects. The fifth part displays the promotional activities of travel agencies in Primorje-Gorski Kotar County based on the conducted empirical research. The sixth and final part presents the concluding observations based on the conducted research and proves the proposed hypothesis.

1. BUSINESS CHARACTERISTICS OF TRAVEL AGENCIES ON THE TOURISM MARKET

Mediation in tourism, although already over 160 years old, only became affirmed after World War II, when preconditions for the mass development of tourism were created, such as increase of free time and excess of available resources. Pirjevac (2002) says it is precisely because of its massiveness, which tourism mediation bases its business on, that a wide circle of people are able to participate in tourism movements, and even those who, were it not for the actions of tourism mediators lowering service prices, would not even be able to join in such movements.

Today we cannot imagine the tourism market without tourism mediators, i.e. travel agencies. Their role on the tourism market has become astronomical, and they represent one of the strongest, if not the strongest, link in tourism. That is because travel agencies are intermediaries between tourists and hotel facilities or tourist destinations, and without them tourists would have difficulty reaching their desired hotel and tourist destination. Furthermore, travel agencies create their own product - the package tour. They thus make it easier for tourists who, by buying such an integrated tourism product, do not have to worry about which hotel to stay in and which mode of transport to use, since this has already been taken care of by the travel agency. According to Pirjevac (2002) the tourism market, like any other market, operates thanks to the interaction of supply and demand, which is manifested differently than on other, goods-based markets. In brief, tourism supply is usually spatially separated from tourism demand, which sets the tourism market apart from other markets, because the buyer has to come, or travel, to the place where the supply is located.

The difference between the tourism market and other markets is, therefore, that on other markets there is a certain number of buyers searching for precisely the goods or services of a specific provider, and tourists on the other hand want a more complex offer, i.e. several different interconnected services. Senecic and Grgona (2006) point out one of the specifics of the tourism market is also that tourism has properties, i.e. phenomena,

which become particularly apparent in the general and particular relationships between participants on the tourism market. Furthermore, another characteristic of the tourism market is that, unlike on all other markets, on the tourism market it is the consumer who moves (travels), and not the goods.

Without movement, i.e. without travel and travel motivation Songsan and Cathy (2009), Andreu, Kozak, Avci, and Cifter (2005), and Dann (1981) point out that there is no tourism. However, many relationships occurring on the tourism market and that make it specific stem particularly from this fact. This also includes personal consumption, that is, one particular type significant in tourism—“spends for tourism purposes”, which is also called tourism consumption in literature. What also makes the tourism market specific is the way it is financed, which is significantly different, especially compared to other goods-based markets. However Andrić (2011) concludes, the reason why this market is so different stems from the characteristics of the tourism supply and demand, as well as due to the particular characteristics of the goods exchanged on this market and the specific factors of the tourism environment. These above mentioned specifics of the tourism market account for the large number of definitions of the tourism market, however, we will select one of them for the purposes of this paper. According to Marković and Marković (1972) tourism market is aggregate of supply and demand relationships directed towards the exchange of goods and services by means of money, in the proportion determined by the price of these goods and services. Numerous types of travel agencies operate on the tourism market, which is a consequence of the development of the tourism supply and demand. Their diversity stems from differing work conditions in which they operate. Special material and personnel opportunities of different travel agencies point to the division of work among them. Various positions of travel agencies on the tourism market also influence the specific content of their line of work. These reasons, among many others, show that there are numerous criteria according to which travel agencies can be divided into classes and types.

Travel agencies are best known for four functions: providing information and counsel, propaganda, mediation and organization. Providing information and counsel is one of the oldest functions of travel agencies. Even today it is still present in the work of travel agencies around the world and it consists of providing free tourist information and useful tips in the area of passenger travel, hospitality, hotel industry, foreign currency regulations, passport and visa issuing regulations, information about entertainment, culture and other events, about natural, cultural, historic and other sights and attractions of certain tourism areas and places, etc.

Vukonić (1998) points out that this information is free of charge and non-binding for clients who request (and receive) it, and the services that the client enquired about can be executed, i.e. used, outside the agency that provided the information. The organizational function is extremely important for travel agencies. The organizational function refers to the development of the travel agency product—the package tour. The emergence of the first travel agencies also marks the occurrence of the first package tour, i.e. all-inclusive tour, which is a special form of organizing and executing travels and holidays. Package tours combine several different coordinated services, both in content, time and space, which are connected to travelling and accommodation and are offered in one package and for one all-inclusive price. These package tours can not be purchased from accommodation providers, but only from travel agencies.

The term “package tour” is variously defined in tourism literature, which also indicates that this is an exceptionally complex term and it is very difficult to provide a single, universal and comprehensive definition that can account for all the characteristics and specifics of this travel agency product. Creating a new package tour is a demanding task for a travel agency and it requires a lot of time and effort. For this task, travel agencies should select their best staff who are able to use their skills, imagination and innovativeness to create a different and unique tourism package which will be appealing to potential buyers. One of the oldest tasks of travel agencies is also to serve as an intermediary in the sales of tickets, first these were train and ship tickets, and then bus and airline tickets. In order to be able to act as a mediator in the sales of passenger tickets the travel agency has to first sign a contract with the carrier, and in the case of airline tickets it also has to obtain a permission from the International Air Transport Association (IATA). In order to secure rail or bus tickets the travel agency has to, on a case to case basis, secure a certain ticket quota, which is then cancelled or terminated at a certain time before the train or bus departs. The mediation of travel agencies in the sales of passenger tickets is one of the oldest functions of travel agencies. For many years travel agencies have reserved and purchased tickets for a certain mode of transport according to the client’s wishes by procuring a certain number of seats which will be sold to their customers. According to Vukonic (1997) The propaganda function of travel agencies is manifested in two ways:

- by pure commercial propaganda message distributed by the travel agency via the available channels and various propaganda media,
- by promoting tourism as an occurrence and phenomena (by emphasizing the benefit from travelling for tourism, the conditions for arriving to tourist areas, the right to rest and relax as a tourist, to participate in various associations and forums which decide on factors that have to be met in order for a tourism exchange to take place, etc.), in which the commercial message is less emphasized.

One can say that the first function of travel agencies on the tourism market mostly emphasizes tourism propaganda activities, and the second form refers to general promotional activities or tourism propaganda. This function of travel agencies is highly present in countries that are just beginning to develop their tourism industry. In these countries travel agencies function as a general promotor of tourism and, therefore, represent the country’s highest operative tourism body.

Eagle and Kitchen (2000) emphasized that there is no doubt the tourism industry is transitioning through a period of marked, sometimes turbulent, change, forcing a reexamination of roles and responsibilities of both marketers and marketing communication suppliers. However, competitive advantages must also sustain over time and in the face of competitive reactions. It is simply dependent on tangible assets – it may be built in terms of strategic assets and associated skills.

2. MARKETING COMMUNICATION OF TRAVEL AGENCIES ON THE TOURISM MARKET

Using marketing vocabulary we can say that to communicate means to establish a mutual connection between the sender and recipient of the information, i.e. message. It is a complicated process which, for marketing providers, not only includes sending and

giving information, but also accepting feedback from the market. In other words, it is a dialogue between tourism offer providers and tourists, as well as other buyers.

The literature sometimes talks about manifold dialogue or multilogue, because it also includes many economic and other subjects (such as banks, insurance firms, health institutions, etc.) that have a vested interest in this communication. The control of these information flows is one of the fundamental problems of the marketing system. According to Senecic (2005), the intangibility of the tourism product (services) and the indivisibility of the sales and consumption process indicate the complexity both of the delivery and of the communication when providing tourism services. It is precisely through communication that a service can be made “tangible” and that a uniform quality can be established. “It is therefore no surprise that “communication is the most important and most widely used skill in tourism, which particularly refers to first line tourism employees” (Garaca, Blazevic, and Bosnic 2010, 90).

Marketing communication (see in Duncan and Moriarty, 1997 and 1999), therefore, constitutes a process of transferring information, ideas and emotions from the sender to the recipient via the media with the purpose of attaining a certain effect. This definition encompasses all the key elements of marketing communication: the sender, the message, the medium, the recipient and the effect of communication. Kesic (1997) points out that marketing communication in tourism means to establish contact between the sender and the recipient of certain information and business messages. The sources of marketing information are all participants of the tourism product market, providers of supply and demand. They all communicate with one another for the purpose of selling or buying a tourism product. Berc Radisic (2009) concludes that the success of this exchange depends on the economic cycle of the tourism product and the purchasing power of potential tourists.

Sheth and Parvatiyar (1995) underline the fact that for the communication process it is very important to establish a satisfactory level of understanding between the participants of the communication process. Without this kind of understanding there is no real communication, i.e. in this case we cannot speak about a true communication process since the reaction of the other interlocutor is missing. In order to be able to say communication is taking place, i.e. that a communication link has been established, three basic factors have to be present: the sender of the message, the recipient of the message and the message, i.e. the information. Marketing theory builds its stance towards the communication system on the relatively simple observation that the message recipient in the communication process is rarely satisfied by merely passively receiving the message. The recipient aims to reach certain conclusions and, in accordance with them, assume a certain attitude.

However, the message recipient’s conclusions can be completely different from what the sender intended, expected or wanted. This difference between the meaning of the sent and of the received message, i.e. between what the message means to the sender and to the recipient, has also been noted in communication theory, which has provided a term and explanation for this phenomenon. Scientific literature states that decoding is the actual deciphering of the content and meaning of the message by the recipient. This phase of communication between the sender and the recipient of the message is important, because it releases their imagination, and by sending a psychological and correct message we can increase the efficiency of communication and dispel of hidden motives. The significance of the communication system in tourism marketing stems from the

previously known specifics and characteristics of tourism and the relationships on the tourism market.

Kesic (1997) points out that bearing in mind that marketing communication encompasses the exchange of information, a half of all tasks and efforts needed to establish a communication system lies with the provider of the tourism offer. Tourists should, on the other hand, be able to express their needs and wants as clearly as possible and also to adjust them somewhat to the possibilities of the tourism offer. Tourists should make their offer recognizable, i.e. provide appropriate information so that the seller can register this information and act accordingly, but within their actual possibilities. In marketing communication it is important to emphasize the influence of the source on the way the message is altered. The reliability of the source determines the efficiency of the message in terms of how the information is received and how attitudes are changed, as well as whether certain action needs to be undertaken. The common reference frame and the field of experience of the sender and the recipient constitute key determinants for the success of the communication process.

Communication with the market is possible in several effective ways. The most popular and most adequate communication system on the tourism market is definitely the so called promotional mix. Promotion is a communication process between the company and the consumer with the purpose of creating a positive attitude about products and services, which should result in the consumer preferring and buying these products and services according to Senecic (1997). The following text will elaborate on each element of the promotional mix. Tourism promotion includes any paid form of communication via the media, which present the product with a known sponsor. Media refers to travel guide books, newspapers, magazines, radio, television, direct mail, websites and tourism posters.

Cooper et al. (2008) emphasize that the direct mail is used in order to raise awareness of potential clients; TV is used for direct sales to buyers (tourists). Improving sales means including all activities that aim to encourage and motivate in order to attain the desired results from potential clients, commercial intermediaries or sales staff. Campaigns to improve sales provide an advantage for the product because motivation often does not accompany the product.

Public relations and publicity can be defined as a planned program for communicating with the market in order to influence the general public acceptance of the company and the “cooperation of persons outside the company management”. As with economic promotion, this activity also uses mass communication tools, but with a different approach. The need for public relations especially occurs in that phase of company development when there is discord between the public’s perception of the company and its actual place standing and importance on the market. “Personal sales is an attempt of bringing gains by having salespeople communicate face to face or via telephone with those willing to participate in this kind of communication (potential buyers)”.

Cooper et al. (2008) point out the drawbacks of such communication lie in the fact that it is relatively more expensive than other forms of communication.

Another problem is finding and selecting appropriate people to conduct this kind of communication. Personal sales is significant in tourism since the customer’s attitude about the quality of the purchased product, e.g. package tour that they purchase at the travel agency, is usually formed based on the quality of the relationship that the sales

staff has established with the customer (tourist) in question, i.e. the salesperson's kindness, patience, charm, knowledge – essentially it depends more on their communication skills than on the actual quality of the product or service itself. Researchers agree that the main problem with trade promotion is forward buying. Whenever a trade promotion is on offer, the retailer forward buys according to Donthu and Poddar (2013).

Chang (2015) highlights that due to tenses and stressful jobs, people today may seek release their work pressure through vacation travel. Thus, along with growing demand for travel, various travel activities involving higher quality products and services are being sought by consumers in the travel agency markets.

Mak (2015) emphasize that the traditional travel agencies still play an important role in packaging travel components into travel products for customers. These products include package tours that normally comprise transportation, accommodations, meals, and sightseeing as well as tailor-made travel arrangements for independent travelers. However, the role of traditional travel agencies is being challenged by online travel agencies, especially in the market of airline ticketing, hotel room booking, and simple packages that combine transportations with accommodations.

3. TRAVEL AGENCIES IN THE PROMOTION OF TOURIST DESTINATIONS

Effective promotion in travel agencies has to be the result of joint action of all promotional activities. Promotion never has and never can be its own purpose; it always serves the purpose of the marketing policy. The problem whether the promotion by a travel agency was effective is always present, and it is especially present due to modern changes of the tourism market. "Experiences in overcoming these obstacles have shown that effective promotion combined with other marketing activities is the key to the successful business of travel agencies" (Franciskovic and Tomljanovic 2001, 419). The travel agency has to respond to the changes and effects from the international tourism market, while accepting that marketing is the basis on which it will build its business. The competitiveness of a travel agency is transferred onto elements of the marketing mix, thus also to promotion. Travel agency promotion refers to activities that inform the market, create preferences, i.e. win over potential tourists.

By promoting certain package tours or the overall service offer creates conditions for forming a competitive service brand offered by the travel agency. Simply put, promotional activities are the aggregate of all actions that help sales according to Vukonic (1998). Of all the promotional activities used by the travel agency to promote its product (package tour), economic promotion is the most significant. This is why the following text elaborates on its most important promotional tools. Travel agencies use many different tools for its promotional work. A catalogue containing the package tour program and the trips organized in the current year.

At the same time this is both basic promotion, as well as the fundamental information and counselling publication of travel agencies, which is intended for the domestic and the international outgoing tourism market (if this is how the travel agency has organized its business). These publications are printed in several colors, on fine paper, are richly illustrated, with text that is intended to motivate, provide information and stimulate business (sales). Vukonic (1998) writes about the number of copies of such catalogues

depends on the planned turnover by the travel agency, i.e. the size of the potential market that the catalogues are intended for. The tourism brochure is a promotional tool in which travel agencies promote individual services, be it their own services or those provided by others.

Moreover, a brochure can contain additional programs, special or occasional packages, or additional general information. A promotional board can contain all static or dynamic visual tools used to promote a product on public spaces (streets, squares, parks), modes of transport (trams, cars, trains, etc.), or on walls and other public buildings. Tourism posters are used the same way as promotional boards. They differ from them in material, their artistic approach and distribution method. Travel agencies use posters in situations in which it would not be commonly used in economic promotion. That is to say, travel agencies use posters when they want to briefly present the annual package tour program to the public, so it contains a relatively large amount of text and very few illustrations.

This is contrary to the theoretical and practical stance and knowledge about the content and effectiveness of posters as promotional tools. Travel agencies should, therefore, avoid such use of posters. When talking about business partners, this generally refers to other companies with which there are different kinds of business relationships. For the sake of their sales, travel agencies establish a business relationship with their client either directly or via other agencies as intermediaries. The relationship between travel agencies and their business partners can be occasional and constant. Frequent connections are established when an agency has a certain amount of goods or tickets in stock. From the point of view of the supplier, the travel agency then enters a so called subagent relationship. When it comes to travel agency business, subagents are less independent travel agencies, which sell tickets on behalf of other travel agencies, which were authorized for this by the respective transport organization. For travel agencies, the most valuable business contacts in tourism are those with hotel and hospitality companies. Hospitality companies are the most important business partners of travel agencies, since without them the travel agencies would not be able to satisfy the tourists' basic needs for accommodation, food and other services provided by such organizations. This is why travel agencies focus on establishing the best possible business rapport with hospitality companies. On the other hand, hospitality companies also want to have the best possible relationship with travel agencies, because they can significantly contribute to their business results. The relationship between travel agencies and hospitality companies can be quite diverse, and sometimes even burdened by their contrasting nature.

Hospitality companies are especially interested in cooperating with travel agencies when their capacities have not been fully booked. However, during the high tourism season this is not the case, and this is when travel agencies are particularly eager to cooperate. Despite such exceptions, both business partners are interested in cooperating, since it provides a mutual benefit. All travel agencies, as well as other business partners of hospitality companies, have to establish a business relationship that will be characterized by mutual understanding and trust.

Vukonic (1998) concludes that in all developed tourism countries of the world, and Croatia is no exception, it is possible for individuals who are not hoteliers or caterers to provide hospitality services. The relationship between travel agencies and non-

professional hoteliers is in the Croatian legal system regulated by the Hospitality and Tourism Act and the Individual Economic Activity by Personal Work Act.

By considering the development of travel and the mutual influence of travelling and the development of means of transport, we have stressed the importance of this interdependence for the development of tourism as well as for the development of travel agencies. We emphasize that travelling is impossible without a mode of transport, just as tourism is unfathomable without travel or travel agencies without a business relationship with transport companies. According to data from the World Tourism Organization, tour operators now participate with a 25% share of global international traffic. This means that in 2001 there were approximately 174 million international tourist arrivals that took place thanks to the mediation of tour operators. The globalization of the global economy has led to an increase in integrations on the world tourism market. The temporal influence of tour operators on tourism demand consists of the fact that all tourism events are planned and take place in a certain period of time, and seasonality is an important characteristic of tourism. This is why we usually discuss summer and winter tourism, sun, sea and sand tourism, snow tourism, ski tourism. Travel agencies, by entering the tourism market, begin to invest a lot of time and money into marketing communication, so that potential clients can hear of it and, in the end, buy their product (package tour).

Promotion, as a form of mass communication with clients, makes sure that clients on the tourism market find out about a “new” travel agency and that they buy their product. Travel agencies have to take promotion of their products and of their company very seriously. That is to say, it is through their promotion that clients will find out about their package tour and if this particular package tour suits the client, they will buy it, and if they are satisfied with their travel and services, they will share their experiences with their family and friends. By developing the business of travel agencies we also develop the destination in which the travel agency is located. Promotion is an important component of the marketing mix. Promotional approaches include advertising, direct marketing, sales promotion, public relations and publicity, personal selling and sponsorship. The design of appropriate communication strategic involve number of considerations. According to Rowley (1998) it is necessary to measure the outcome of promotional endeavors in order to establish whether the investment in promotion has been worthwhile.

4. PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES OF TRAVEL AGENCIES IN THE PRIMORJE–GORSKI KOTAR COUNTY

Promotion is an indispensable element in the business of every travel agency. A well-executed promotion will be able to sell a product from any travel agency, as well as improve its image. However, reaching a high quality promotion is by no means an easy task. First of all, we have to select a target market to which we intend to transmit our message. Then we have to select highly qualified and professional staff who will create the message and define which element of the promotional mix is most appropriate for promoting a certain product. Furthermore, it is also extremely important to select media via which the message will be transferred to the recipient, i.e. the potential buyer.

If the promotion has been effective, then the sales of the package tours will increase, the image of the travel agency will be improved and thus their profit will also grow. This

research used the survey method to gather data to research the topic “Influence of promotional activities on improving the offer of travel agencies in Primorje–Gorski Kotar County”. The data were processed by using the statistical method, which generated the research results. The research was conducted in February of 2015 over the course of two weeks in the area of the Primorje–Gorski Kotar County, with a sample of 11 travel agencies that are members of the Association of Croatian Travel Agencies. The research generated the following results.

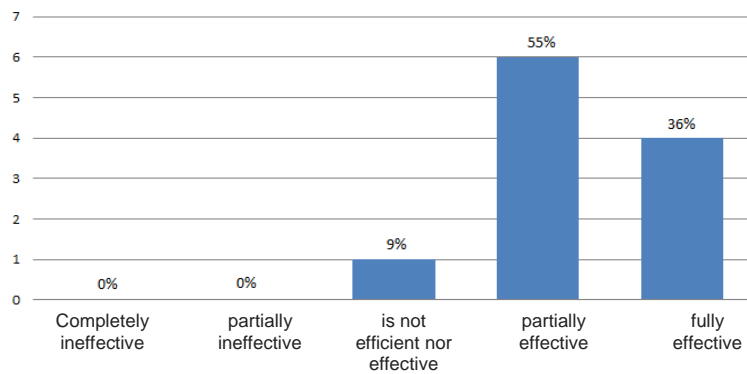


Figure 1. Effectiveness of the travel agency's promotion

The majority of respondents (55%) agree that the promotion of their travel agency is partially effective, while 36% think that it is completely effective and 9% believe that it is neither effective nor ineffective.

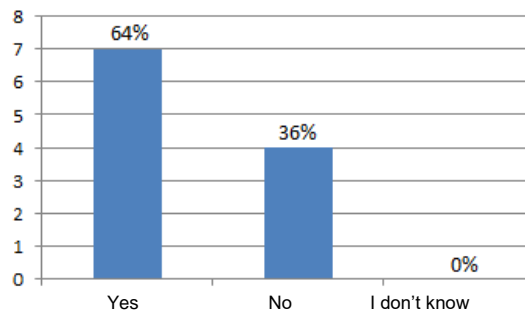


Figure 2. Promotion of package tours

According to the respondents' opinions, 82% consider investing in the promotion of the package tour and of the travel agency itself very important and that it causes an increase in the business result of the travel agency while 18% believes that promotion is important in order to maintain the level of the package tour.

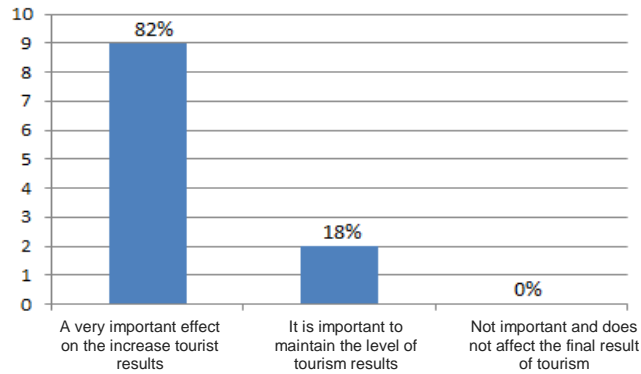


Figure 3. Investment in promotion

Regarding the question how they perceive promotion and whether it is a good investment or an unnecessary cost, all respondents agree that promotion is a good investment. The previous text showed the importance of promotion on the sales of package tours, and now we can see that even the travel agencies themselves know that promotion is an important element of the marketing mix in which a lot of effort, as well as financial means, should be invested.

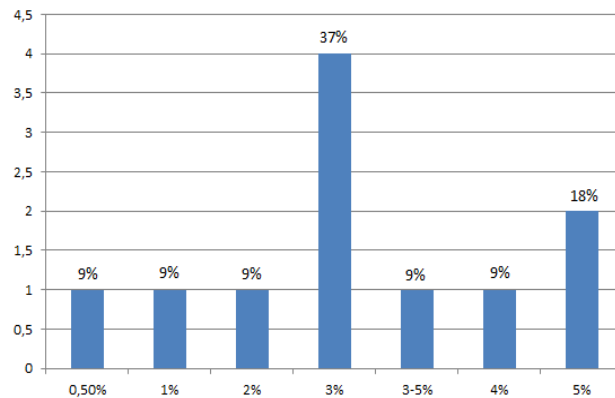


Figure 4. Yearly investment share (in %) in promotion

To the question “which annual income share do you invest in promotion” respondents provided the following responses: 0.5% (9% of respondents), 1% (9% of respondents), 2% (9% of respondents), 3% (37% of respondents), 3–5% (9% of respondents), 4% (9% of respondents), 5% (18% of respondents). As can be seen, the largest number of respondents (37%) invests 3% of their annual income in promotion, followed by 18% who invest 5% of their annual income, while others invest 0.5%, 1%, 2%, 3–5% and 4%.

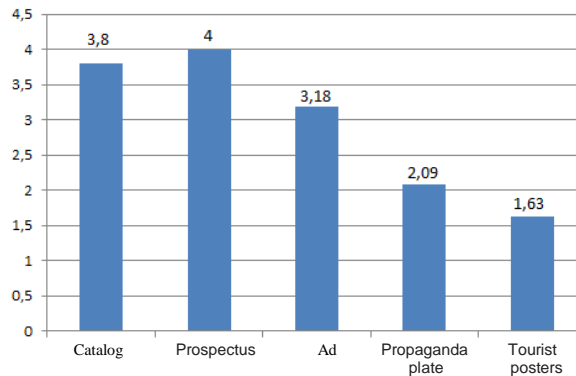


Figure 5. Most commonly used promotional tools

The final question asked respondents to rank the promotional tools that their travel agency invests in from 1 to 5. They responded that they invest the most in brochures (average score 4.0), catalogues (average score 3.8), advertisements (average score 3.2), promotional boards (average score 2.1), and that they invest the least in posters (average score 1.6).

CONCLUSION

Tourism is developing more and more each day, and it has become one of the most dynamic industries with a specific market which is constantly changing. In order for tourism products to be positioned on the tourism market in the best way possible, and in order for them to survive on this market, the needs and wants of tourists have to be constantly monitored. The positioning of a tourism product is greatly influenced by marketing, i.e. by its promotion. Promotion makes the package tour recognizable and appealing to tourism consumption and it goes to any lengths to make the consumer by a certain product. Of course, the more package tours are sold, the more the tourism result of the agency grows. Travel agencies that are successful in selling their products decide to expand their offer, so maybe they create new package tours, buy new company cars or develop new excursions in the destination. This is how travel agencies improve their offer. The abovementioned research shows that all travel agencies are aware of the importance of promotion, and that not all of them are satisfied with the promotion that they carry out. A surprising 36% of respondents believe their package tours are not well promoted and 9% is completely dissatisfied with their promotion so far, which tells us that travel agencies should invest more in promotion, or that they should change the way they promote their products.

The majority of travel agencies feel they should invest more in promotion, and almost all respondents think that additional investments in promotion would improve their business result. Based on all these results we can see that even the travel agencies themselves are aware how important promotion is for improving their offer, which also leads to increasing their profit. But, even though the majority agrees with this, some feel that they invest enough in promotion and are not willing to make new investments. One

should add that when travel agencies promote their package tours, as well as their company, they should know which tourist segment they should address, i.e. who to send their message to.

Furthermore, they have to know which element of the promotional mix is best suited for this segment, as well as which media to use to transfer this message. Travel agencies can make big investments in promotion, but if this promotion is ineffective and does not manage to attract the target tourist segment, it is an unnecessary waste of financial resources. Promotion is a complex element of the marketing mix which has to be carefully monitored and which requires many complex tasks. If the promotional tools for promoting a certain product which was designed for a certain segment of the population are carefully chosen, then there is no reason why the promotion should not be fruitful. However, we must not forget that promotion is part of the marketing mix and that it will do a good job if other elements do so, too.

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