

## STRATEGIC MARKETING MANAGEMENT IN TOURISM

Associate Prof. Ph.D. **Karolina ILIESKA**,  
Faculty of Economics-Prilep, Macedonia

### Abstract

*This paper presents the relationship between the level of marketing organizing and program orientation of a tourist enterprise. The focus is on exploring marketing significance related to the selection of tourist enterprise's program orientation and competitive market position in the context of achieving planned goals. The role of marketing management and related new market concept supporting strategic tourist enterprise development in transition process of Balkan economies are of special importance.*

*Marketing concept is the base of market-oriented business. In competitive economy customers may choose from whom and how to buy, while services program is constantly evolving in accordance with their demands. In order to be successful, the tourist enterprise must always provide superior value, better than competitors, when it comes to quality, price and services. Marketing combination of management activities should find the best way to fulfill customer's needs and follow new organizational changes. New organizational changes denote new internal and external dimensions of marketing. Internal are related to teamwork and creation of data basis about customers and business partners, and external with developing partnership relations, not only with the customers, but with the suppliers and distributors.*

*In the wealthy process of the tourist and hotel management activities especially by the promotion, of the tourist offer, we face ourselves with lots of details which are details only at the first sight, in fact they are very important things from which resides that the very good reputation of the offer depends and it also influences the tourism development.*

*The contemporary market is characterized by very sensitive diversification and the complexity of the relationship in the sphere of the offer and other. That is why the promoted activities become more essential. This necessity is much emphasized in the tourist market.*

**Key words:** marketing, management, strategy, tourism.

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

The choice of program orientation is deeply related to the general orientation of a tourist enterprise and with the quality of organizing. The best orientation is the one that is focused on the creation of the values for the customers and it results with superiority in the target market. This orientation requests successful organizing and managing national economy and faster marketing progress in the tourism of Balkan countries, in order to succeed in the global market. Marketing activities are very important in scanning environment and in market researches, in order to create quality information basis for selection of prosperous tourism activities and programs.

### 2. ANALYSIS OF MARKETING ORGANIZING LEVEL AND IT'S INFLUENCE ON THE CHOICE OF PROGRAM ORIENTATION

In the current transition process in Balkan countries, one of the basic priorities is reformulation of program orientation. Internal values and standards mainly influenced the traditional approach to the market in most Balkan countries. The main characteristic was selling and persuasion of possible customers to buy service, without considering their actual needs. The problem of service program modernization and it's adaptation to current changes were neglected. Due to objective and subjective circumstances, tourist enterprises of Balkan countries were not followed sufficiently by adequate organizational actions in developing those activities that would systematically, in an organized and well-coordinated way, perform restructuring service program of a tourist enterprise, in accordance with market development and changes in demand.

Today, this has obviously become one of the main problems for the attainment of adequate position of Balkan tourist enterprises in the international markets. In the 1990's entire policy in the area of service consisted of orientating tourist enterprises to development of those services program and service which were in demand in the local market, and only exceptionally, with certain additions and modifications in the international market also.

This is confirmed by the situation that was characterized by irrational use of own natural resources and negligence of own knowledge. All these problems led to the critical point characterized by carelessness about implementation of marketing knowledge in development of services.

This appears to be one of the basic factors that are creating difficulties in the process of transition and faster adjustment to globalization process.

On the other hand, low level of services organizing has direct influence upon market freshness and relevance of tourism program and quality of services compared to developed countries. That is one of the restrictive development factors of a tourism enterprise and complete economy. Therefore, "Modern", organization and management of tourist enterprises represent important issue.

Determination of program orientation and service program means existence of a wide information basis of diverse content. Namely, service program shouldn't be made without establishing well-organized information system in the environment and market first. For, service results from demand and needs of future users for whom a service is being created. Creating values for the customers is base for width, length and depth of service. The successful combination is the one that results in continuous creation of real values for the customers.

Realistic recognition of indicators, connected to the existing program orientation and service program of tourist enterprises in the Balkan countries, prescribes the essence of the business orientation. It is reflected upon organizational form and the level of implementation of marketing concept. For analyzing present situation and the level of implementation of marketing in Balkan's tourist enterprises, we rely in some of the former statements upon literature of which Kotler's is the most important. According to Kotler, there are five rivaling concepts known in practice, which could be applied in business orientation of a tourist enterprise.

Production concept emphasizes priority of production itself. It's considered to be one of the oldest, but traditionally the most applied concept in enterprises of Balkan countries.

This concept is based on the assumption that customers will buy the offered product or service. Managers do not pay much attention to the width, depth and consistency of the service program, but concentrate on finding ways of increasing services. Volume of services is the main indicator of business success, but not invoiced sales and position of the service in the market. Managers proceed from their internal possibilities and resources, not caring about future development tendencies of needs and consumption.

This approach creates wrong structure of tourism and sales program either quantity or quality. Such orientation of managers contributes to downward tendency in the quality of organization and weakening of people responsibility in tourism, especially in choosing service program and service quality range, design, etc. This is because most of the tourist enterprises are concentrating on themselves alone, on the problems of disproportion between service and the needs of the market and environment. Quality of organization here drops on the level of the whole organization. Many activities that are performed in the business process of the tourist enterprise are not synchronized with tourist activities, which weaken communication and organization connection between business functions, management and employees. Inadequate structure of the service program and supply leads to wrong formation of consumption and channeling of income, which have reverse effect on channeling production. Namely, due to inadequate supply of the sales range of service, such structure of consumption is formed in the market that does not correspond to the needs of the most potential customers. Customers are not supplied from domestic resources. All these problems decrease chances for the survival of a tourist enterprise and it's connecting with the other partners.

Product concept proceeds from the assumption that customers will buy those services that are by quality and properties representing an achievement in an area. Tourist enterprise directs its potentials to the program with high quality services and continuously works on their improvement, not noticing often large changes that occur in the supply market. And the changes are often going in different direction of the strategic orientation of tourist enterprise. When a service, instead of a need, is the center of attention there is a risk of missing the wanted degree of capital turnover and utilization of the market, because sales of services depend on whether customers will be willing to buy the service and how many such customers there will be.

Quality of marketing organizing is evaluated based on annual success and the current efficiency and organization level by momentary profitability of the service. Those developing countries that are deprived of the clear competitive service positioning are not very familiar with this conception.

Sales concept is the most often applied in Balkan's tourist enterprises. The starting point is the so-called aggressive sales, i.e. putting maximum efforts into promotion and advertising of a service. It is clear, then that the aim is to sell what can be offered and what the program has planned long time ago, but not to change the service program and not to make large investments into development of new service. It should be pointed out here that today there are strong

tendencies in our practice for this concept of aggressive sales and commercial advertising to settle with the belief that it is a type of modern marketing. Therefore, there is a misunderstanding when it is said that marketing is not only sales.

Such business and program orientation is often cause of dissatisfactory quality of organizing and leads to disturbances in functioning of the business system elements influencing directly business results. In the first place, if the complete program is not sold, management in a tourist enterprise doesn't concentrate on problems of further improvement of organization quality, but on solving the actual problems. This means that the service program and sales possibilities in the market must be harmonized. Program orientation based on sales concept did not appear effective in practice and did not show visible results in increasing the quality of organization. Even the best organization of individual functions in the tourist enterprise- sales in the first place, cannot guarantee sufficient quality of organizing of the tourist enterprise on the whole, if service range of program orientation does not fulfill demands of the market.

Many tourist enterprises today are confronted with ever decreasing quality of organizing and danger of total disintegration, if problem of sales of service and service program is not approached from marketing aspect. They are forced to seek more efficient organization structures, and to reconsider assumptions of their business and program orientation in the first place, for creating conditions for complete business transformation. Balkan's tourist enterprises must not neglect instance environmental changes in the process of establishing the elements of service program.

### **3. CUSTOMER ORIENTED MARKETING CONCEPT**

In order to be successful it is necessary to realize that good reputation is based upon quality and attractive product/services and putting customers in the first place.

Today, it is obvious that customer focused concept of marketing is developing towards strategic marketing approach. The very essence of this concept means knowing customers, but the primary goal, instead of profit, is satisfying stakeholders' expectation. Stakeholders are known as the individuals or groups interested in company's activities, such as employees, managers, customers, suppliers, government etc. Furthermore, the focus is on the advantages of the environment. The environment, that is constantly changing, requires flexibility for which it is necessary to have strong marketing function. Combining marketing activities may neutralize some of the negative environmental influences. It is

necessary to be aware of all the current changes in order to achieve modern, marketing oriented organization.

Beside the importance of service capacities and marketing strategies, success depends also upon the effort of employees. Human resources are the key, integrative component for both internal and external factors and therefore they must be treated carefully.

Three basic processes, innovation, operations and customer creation and services, are the basis for competitive position.

Neither of these activities is related to marketing only. These three groups of mentioned activities are depending upon the effort of the entire organization and cooperation with other organization-external partners.

Nowadays, many companies are not service or sales oriented, but are focusing on financial resources. They believe that primary goal is to achieve the greatest possible financial result from the existing resources. These companies are developing marketing concept "one-on-one", which includes servicing known customers, creating strong brand and monitoring constant changes related to the market and technological environment.

Nevertheless, customer oriented marketing concept still is the most often used marketing approach today. Customer orientation requires organizational changes and increased level of service quality in order to gain competitive advantage.

One of possible organizational changes is based upon "team" approach, which consists of the following steps:

1. Identification of important opportunities and chances.
2. Gathering the adequate team for their implementation.
3. Making the most of all the opportunities and improving total quality of business.
4. Realization of every project in correspondence with the actual problem and environmental changes.

Marketing managers are supposed to be leaders of these teams. Basic conditions for the successful implementation of these changes are managers that are experts in marketing and are dedicated to fulfilling customer needs, but also familiar with techniques of marketing researches.

Generally speaking, the basic characteristic of tourist enterprises in Balkan countries is neglecting the marketing concept as business philosophy that involves various changes in entire organization. The managers believe that it is sufficient simply to form marketing department, applying propaganda activities or redesigning catalogues and brochures.

The implementation of marketing orientation includes having well-defined goals, long-termed

dedication to customers and participation of all employees in creation of the value for the market.

Today, activities of marketing management may be identified as three core assignments. First of them is identification of opportunities and threats, that are caused by the changes. Under opportunities we consider the possibilities for new services, providing the chances of penetration on the new markets. On the other hand, the meaning of threats denotes disability of predicting changes, losing markets and on the very end, the company itself.

The second assignment is developing support process that is going to provide realization of these opportunities. This requires forming project teams and partnerships in order to implement the new services.

The third assignment of marketing management is creation of the strong brands, which are impossible to imitate and focused in customers, thus providing their loyalty. Long-termed point of view requires organization focused on the customer, which is going to constantly seek for the new answer to his needs.

Top management must at first, clearly define the goals related to target groups, and then motivate employees for their realization. The goals must be in accordance with the goals and satisfaction of customers. Employees should realize that being the best results from customer's preferences, which are established by activities of marketing management, such as researching of customer's needs, forming teams for seeking quality solutions and distribution of product/ services better than competitors. In Balkan countries, the process of education in a field of marketing is necessary for implementation of market-oriented business.

#### 4. PROMOTIONAL TOURISM ACTIVITIES

In this work it is analyzed only one aspect of present conditions linked with the tourism, the organization and realization of propagated activities in our tourism.

The contemporary market is characterized by very sensitive diversification and the complexity of the relationship in the sphere of the offer and other. That is why the promoted activities become more essential. This necessity is much emphasized in the tourist market.

If analyzed from organizational aspect the success of some promotional forums is in the promotional degree of completed and subjective preparations. One should pay a lot of attention in the preparation of tourism and hotel management, because the business work is consisted of various moments and communication activities, so one should make an attempt to develop the process on time.

By managing a specific documentation, actions and the general techniques of work in the area of promotion, it is required to establish well preparations based on analysis and three dimensional respects of terms in the past, present and the foreseen future. In order to increase the business success the activities linked with guests' content are very important. Here an emphasis can be put on the tourist animation as join that can motivate activities and increase tourism consuming at time of tourists stay. The content of the stay (sports, recreation, entertainment, travel, etc) enables to complete two important goals:

-From one side, guests satisfied after the stay;

-On the other side, these activities directly or indirectly affect consuming especially outside the arrangement, and increase financial effects of work.

The tourist future of the Republic of Macedonia from aspects of possibility to humanize the tourism deserves attention due to the bad condition of the area.

Namely today the tourism depends from the general circumstances in the society, going from the development degree and from economical condition. The theories in the world state that tourism development in the future will be based on the following factors:

1. Population settlement;
2. Economical co-development;
3. Free time.

It is necessary in the tourist propaganda activities to direct the effect of some theses even though these theses are not short term as for tomorrow but are long term.

The first thesis is "**Human tourism**". This is because there is still orientation for economy increscent present, but sometimes it is hold back with the optimal satisfaction of the tourist needs.

The second thesis is "**Not to wait big changes**". The ideal society will not happen and because of this one cannot wait for big changes.

This is why one should not wait but should start with small steps in order to make changes.

The third thesis is "**Acceptance of massive character of tourism**". One should finally understand that tourists mustn't be "the other". Certain moments in the Macedonian tourism stated that is an illusion to consider that a certain tourist place can look for its tourist future through the forces of "elite tourism". Because the foreign guests will not be there for years in numbers which will enable dominant existential of our offer, we will not have an elite category of guests from foreign countries.

The fourth thesis is "**Time dimension of the vacation**". It will be necessary at least on domestic plan to insist to create flexible scale of annual vacations, and the tourism promotion should enable decentralization of object offers with time limitation.

The fifth thesis is “**Equal behavior**”. It understood concrete exchange or cooperation between the users of the tourist services and the representatives of the tourist offer. The following should be taken into consideration:

- ✓ To be a human and not intruder;
- ✓ To know to obey and not to listen;
- ✓ To meet and not to avoid meetings;
- ✓ To respect and not to despise;
- ✓ To smile and not to make fun off;
- ✓ To investigate and not only find.

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