

EVALUATION OF THE WEBSITES OF THE FIRST-CLASS RESTAURANTS IN TERMS OF DESIGN AND MARKETING ACTIVITIES

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Abstract

Websites having attractive, well-designed and sufficient content in terms of design and marketing characteristics influence sales, profitability and consumer satisfaction positively. Therefore it is vitally important for a restaurant to create the design and marketing characteristics of its own web site most efficiently. In this study, the focus is on the evaluation of the websites of first-class restaurants in terms of design and marketing facilities. Content analysis is carried out by using the encoding table consisting of four main themes/categories based on interaction, navigation, functionality (subheadings of 'design') and marketing characteristics in websites of 93 first-class restaurants designated as the research sample. In the research, the gathered data is analyzed via SPSS 23 package program. Percentage and frequency analysis which is also called descriptive statistics is used for data interpretation. Obtained findings indicate that the rate of owning a website is low among the restaurants included in the research sample. It has been found that although certain basic features are available in web sites, exclusive features that can affect customer experiences and preferences positively are insufficient in terms of design and marketing characteristics.

Key words: *Content analysis, first-class restaurants, Turkey, website, web sites design and marketing characteristics.*

JEL Classification: *M31, Z31, Z33.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Along with the influence of globalization since the 1990s, developments have reshaped competition conditions for all businesses in the service sector as well as in all industries. One of the business fields in which there is intense competition in the service sector is also the restaurant management. As a result of globalization, such elements as increase in work intensity and income levels, the spouses in households starting to work together, the increase in the number of single and lonely people, the differentiation of lifestyles and life expectancy, have increased the habit of eating at home. This has increased the number of restaurants operating on the market and forced restaurants to be consumer-oriented to get more share from the demand. In this context, restaurant establishments have started to give more importance to their marketing activities in recent years and have increased their initiatives for different marketing methods. One of the marketing areas that are meticulously addressed in this regard is the websites.

Websites that promote the produced product and services and allow activities such as reservation,

order, promotion etc. to be carried out directly have become inevitable for the success of marketing activities. For these reasons, the websites of the restaurant establishments must have design, content, convenience and presentation so that consumers can find answers to their questions about goods and services. The basic question to be answered in this direction is; "What should be the key characteristics of the websites of the restaurants for a successful website design and effective marketing opportunities?" The starting point of this study is the question. Therefore, the design and marketing characteristics of the websites of the first-class restaurants in Istanbul are examined and it is aimed to determine the current situation, identify the deficiencies and evaluate the factors that should be available in the websites for successful marketing activities.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Websites, which is also briefly called web and one of the most important elements of the Internet, is described as "a system that enables to transfer different data such as film, animation, sound, text, picture" (Yücel, 2007: 18). Websites are an Internet

service tool developed to facilitate operations such as information distribution, review, retrieval and transfer on the Internet (Çimenliler, 2008: 15).

Restaurants must design their websites to be accurate, understandable and useful in order to attract new consumers via the Internet and preserve their existing consumers (Cengiz and Akkuş, 2015: 444). In other words, an effective website should be designed in accordance with the needs and motivations of the target market (Benckendorff and Black, 2002: 14). Web site design is, in its simplest terms, "to determine the locations, dimensions, layout and properties of the visual elements in web pages" (Aydın, 2013: 35). The design of a website is one of the most important factors that increase the value of the restaurants in the eyes of consumer (İnan and Doğan, 2006: 192). The design of a website can be done in many different ways and it can be differently used in line with the target market profile or business objectives. However, it is possible to say that web site design is basically composed of text, colorful photos and graphics (Legohérel, Fischer-Lokou and Guéguen, 2000: 50). Web site design requires not only technical knowledge and competence but also abstract items such as aesthetics and creativity that can create a positive perception and image for users (Wan, 2002: 155). If the consumer experiences a problem caused by the design of the website, or if he does not like the web site design, he can immediately leave the site (Doğan, 2006: 22). Therefore, new web design systems are becoming increasingly user-friendly and offering users interactive opportunities in order to avoid such adverse effects (Wan, 2002: 155).

2.1. Website Design Characteristics in Restaurant Establishments

Restaurant establishments need to have certain design characteristics in their web sites and constantly develop them to meet changing consumer needs (Cengiz and Akkuş, 2015: 443). The research conducted has demonstrated that quality content on the website has a significant effect on consumer preferences (Bayram, 2008: 17). The website design characteristics are examined under three categories in this study. These categories are "interaction", "navigation" and "functionality" (Baloğlu and Pekcan, 2006: 172).

1. Interaction: The feature of interaction refers to "interactive and simultaneous two-way communication between source and target" (Aydın, 2013: 42). The most basic features of the interaction function are allowing visitors to provide feedback and request more information (Benckendorff and Black, 2002: 14). Websites having with interactive functionality provide customers with the opportunity to communicate with

each other and the business. Thus, customers are able to access to the business when they want and communication costs are reduced (Doğan, 2006: 31).

2. Navigation: The concept of navigation for websites can be described as "the website can direct consumers to find easily what they are looking for" (Bayram, 2008: 33). The website navigation helps visitors to find the information they need quickly and easily (Doğan, 2006: 27). Websites should be supported by navigational aids that allow users to move from one page to another. These are navigational aids; bridges, menus, icons, site maps, content pages, and search engines (Benckendorff and Black, 2002: 15-16).

3. Functionality: It is possible to define the concept of functionality, in its simplest terms, as "the state of being functional" (TDK, 2016). Functionality in a website design includes functions that provide ease of use, visual elements and aesthetic features. Visuality can ensure that design is carried out in a more aesthetic, understandable and sensible way (Ariker, 2012: 150). Moreover; website features such as multimedia, language support, download options, banner ads and information updates must be absolutely considered in design (Benckendorff and Black, 2002: 16).

2.2. Website Marketing Characteristics in Restaurant Establishments

The effectiveness and use of websites have also expanded, because restaurant establishments can communicate easily and quickly with the target groups, engage in the marketing of goods or services, and so on via the Internet (Turhan, 2010: 63).

Recent research has proven that websites can be one of the most effective marketing platforms when used as an advertising and marketing tool (Wan, 2002: 155). Websites can be accepted as a huge international exhibition area where potential buyers can freely enter and receive advice from sellers. Therefore, the behaviors of the visitors can be passive (e.g. exploring site) or active (such as conducting in-depth research about products, commercial research or contracting with a seller) (Legohérel, Fischer-Lokou and Guéguen, 2000: 51). Elements included in the scope of website marketing characteristics for the restaurant establishments are listed such as restaurant and kitchen photos, photo and text quality, promotional information, promotion of products and services, restaurant site location map, online reservation and payment, reservation via email, visitor information links, price information etc. (Baloğlu and Pekcan,

2006).

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this study, **content analysis method** was used to evaluate web sites of the first-class restaurants in Turkey in terms of their design features (interaction, navigation and functionality) and their marketing applications on the Internet. Content analysis is a proposal that "the researcher clearly sets forth for the structuring and classification of the significant meanings in terms of theory". The main purpose of the content analysis is to reach the concepts and relations that can be explained with the collected data (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2011: 227).

The universe of the study is consisted of the first-class restaurants in Turkey. However, it is necessary to select a sample due to the large number of these establishments. Therefore, the first-class restaurants in Istanbul were selected as sample in the study. The reason for choosing Istanbul is that the websites of the first-class restaurant establishments in this region have the appropriate qualities for the purpose of the research in terms of their design characteristics and marketing activities. The analysis unit of the study constitutes the web pages for the first class restaurants in Istanbul.

During the research process, it was initially communicated with the Republic of Turkey Ministry of Culture and Tourism to obtain the lists of 2015, including information on the first-class restaurant in Istanbul. It has been observed that the first-class restaurants certificated with 162 tourism operation licenses takes place in the mentioned lists. A total of 162 first-class restaurants were first scanned on search engines to determine whether they had an active website. As a result of the examinations, it has been determined that 69 first-class restaurants with tourism license do not have a web site, so these businesses were not included in the research. The study was carried out on 93 first class restaurants with tourism operation licenses in Istanbul.

3.1. Data Collection Process and Analysis of Data

In this study, the content of the websites were analyzed using "written and visual elements". Content analysis was carried out by applying the encoding table consisting of four main themes/categories for the design and marketing characteristics in the websites of 93 first class restaurants determined as the research sample. The encoding table used in this study was conducted as "coding in a general framework". In this kind of encoding, a general conceptual structure is formed before the analysis of the data and at the same time, the newly generated data is added to the previously code list as a result of the examination of the analysis units (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2011: 232). In the coding process, Baloğlu and Pekcan (2006) attempted to adapt a structured form developed to

evaluate the content of the hotel websites. The names of the main category/theme in the relevant form were used unchanged, but the sub-themes of these themes were edited to be suitable for the restaurants and the inappropriate sub-themes (5) were removed from the form and the new sub-themes (11) were added to the code list as a result of the examination of the data analysis.

The survey data were obtained from the analysis of the website marketing characteristics and the design characteristics of the web pages of 93 first class restaurants with tourism operation certificates between 01 August and 15 August 2016.

Two encoders were used in the content analysis of the websites of the first class restaurants. Except for the sub-themes included in the original scale of the encoders (Baloğlu and Pekcan, 2006), the codes were compared for the newly added categories and the necessary adjustments were made on the items which could not be agreed. Cohen's Kappa coefficient was calculated to numerically compare the encoding similarities and differences between encoders, in other words, in order to test the reliability between encoders. The reliability rate is 81.4% between encoders. Yıldırım and Şimşek (2011: 233) recommend that the reliability should be at least 70% between encoders. This is a reliable research depending on the consistency between the encoders. The encoding table contains a total of 51 sub-themes/categories under 4 main themes. The following table shows themes and sub-themes applied in the context of the research and used in content analysis:

Table 1. Code List

Themes	Subthemes
Interaction	Telephone Number Address E-mail Connection Online Information Form E-mail Franchise Options Events Branches Online Survey Online Feedback Form Human Resources/Career Working Hours
Navigation	Connection to Other Websites Connection to Other Departments Consistent Navigation Ease of Navigation Links (bridges) Index Page Search Function
Functionality	Corporate Identity Background color Background Image Video Sound Current Date Banner Ads Home Scroll Down Function

	<i>Download Options</i> <i>Ease of Download</i> <i>What's New</i> <i>Information Diversity</i> <i>Detailed Information</i> <i>Different Language Options</i> <i>Flash Animation</i> <i>Physical Accessibility to the Site</i>
Web Site Marketing Characteristics	<i>Restaurant Photo</i> <i>Kitchen Photo</i> <i>Photo Quality</i> <i>Text Quality</i> <i>Promotions on the website</i> <i>Menu</i> <i>Online Reservation Options</i> <i>Reservation by Phone</i> <i>Press / Press Release</i> <i>Reservation by E-mail</i> <i>Product and Service Promotion</i> <i>Restaurant Site Location Map</i> <i>360 Degree Virtual Tour</i> <i>Price Information</i> <i>Take-away</i> <i>Quality Documents</i>

The data collected in the study were analyzed using the SPSS 23 package program. "1" indicated the design and marketing features on the website, whereas the non-existent features were indicated as "0" during coding. The analysis of the data used percentage and frequency analyzes which were evaluated as descriptive statistics.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Findings for Interaction Theme

12 sub-categories have been dealt with in the evaluation of "interaction", one of the website design characteristics. The findings are listed in Table 2.

Table 2. Evaluation of Restaurant Websites According to "Interaction" Design Characteristic and Their Distribution by Sub-Dimensions

INTERACTION	Available		Not Available		TOTAL	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Telephone Number	83	89,2	10	10,8	93	100
Address	83	89,2	10	10,8		
E-Mail Connection	46	49,5	47	50,5		
Online Information Form	58	62,4	35	37,6		
E-Mail	64	68,8	29	31,2		
Franchise Options	9	9,7	84	90,3		
Events	34	36,6	59	63,4		
Branches	30	32,3	63	67,7		
Online Survey	2	2,2	91	97,8		
Online Feedback Form	17	18,3	76	81,7		
Human Resources/Career	19	20,4	74	79,6		
Working Hours	8	8,6	85	91,4		

The most emphasized sub-categories related to the interaction which is one of the design characteristics in the websites of the restaurant establishments are 89.2% "phone number" and "address" information. 64 websites (68.8%) include "e-mail" information. It has been observed that 58 websites (62.4%) contain "online information form". The rate of websites that offer the opportunity of "e-mail connection" is 49.5%. Only 36.6% of the websites provide information about "activities" to be held in restaurants in the future. Some of the first-class restaurants included in the study are large establishments which have branches in different districts. In this context, the rate of the relevant restaurant websites that provide information about their other "branches" is 32.3%. "Human resources/career opportunities" in some websites within the scope of the analysis attract attention. These websites (20.4%) provide useful information to the site visitors who want to learn about the employment opportunities. This information includes *career opportunities in restaurants, recruitment processes, online application forms*, etc. It is noteworthy that the frequency of the "online comment form" information, where *the visitors can present their opinions, evaluations, complaints and suggestions about the restaurant management*, is low (18.3%). Information on "franchise" facilities of the large-scale restaurants is highlighted in only 9 (9.7%) websites. While the number of websites which include "working hours" information within the scope of the analysis is 8 (8.6%), only 2 (2.2%) websites have the opportunity of "online survey".

4.2. Findings for Navigation Theme

Websites were evaluated in terms of 7 sub-categories in the analysis for "navigation", one of the website design characteristics. The findings are listed in Table 3.

Table 3. Evaluation of Restaurant Websites According to "Navigation" Design Characteristic and Their Distribution by Sub-Dimensions

NAVIGATION	Available		Not Available		TOTAL	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Connection to Other Websites	67	72	26	28	93	100
Connection to Other Departments	13	14	80	86		
Consistent Navigation	83	89,2	10	10,8		
Ease of Navigation	79	84,9	14	15,1		
Links (Bridges)	69	74,2	24	25,8		
Index Page	90	96,8	3	3,2		
Search Function	8	8,6	85	91,4		

The most emphasized category in the first-class restaurant websites is 96.8% "index page" under the theme of "navigation". As is known, index pages are among the basic characteristics of the websites. It is not possible to mention the effectiveness of a website without an index page. When content analysis was analyzed, the feature that *appropriate information is placed under the right menus* was scored in the category of "consistent navigation" (89.2%). The application of "ease of navigation" was emphasized on 79 (84.9%) websites. 69 (74.2%) websites provide ease of navigation with "links/bridges". In particular, the rate of the subtheme of "connection to other sites", which restaurants allow the opportunity of *direct connection to social media accounts*, is 72%. The sub-theme "connection to other departments", which offers *direct connection to human resources, reservations and kitchen departments*, is located on websites with a rate of 14%. Only 8 (8.6%) websites provide "search function" within the scope of analysis.

4.3. Findings for Functionality

16 subthemes/subcategories were included in the analysis for the main theme/category of "functionality", the last one of the website design characteristics. The findings of the analysis are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Evaluation of Restaurant Websites According to "Functionality" Design Characteristic and Their Distribution by Sub-Dimensions

FUNCTIONALITY	Available		Not Available		TOTAL		
	n	%	n	%	n	%	
<i>Corporate Identity</i>	79	84,9	14	15,1	93	100	
<i>Background Color</i>	White	35	37,6	17			18,3
	Black	18	19,4				
	Grey	7	7,5				
	Brown	2	2,2				
	Claret Red	5	5,4				
	Cream	1	1,1				
	Pink	1	1,1				
	Green	4	4,3				
	Purple	2	2,2				
	Blue	1	1,1				
TOTAL	76	81,7					
<i>Background Image</i>	72	77,4	21	22,6			
<i>Video</i>	21	22,6	72	77,4			
<i>Sound</i>	15	16,1	78	83,9			
<i>Current Date</i>	14	15,1	79	84,9			
<i>Banner Ads</i>	1	1,1	92	98,9			
<i>Home Scroll Down Function</i>	64	68,8	29	31,2			
<i>Download Options</i>	25	26,9	68	73,1			
<i>Ease of Download</i>	24	25,8	69	74,2			
<i>What's New</i>	27	29	66	71			
<i>Information Diversity</i>	83	89,2	10	10,8			
<i>Detailed Information</i>	74	79,6	19	20,4			
<i>Different Language Options</i>	38	40,9	55	59,1			

<i>Flash Animation</i>	43	46,2	50	53,8		
<i>Physical Accessibility to the Site</i>	85	91,4	8	8,6		

The most important category related to the functionality in the websites of the restaurants is "physical accessibility to the site" with the rate of 91.4% under this main theme. When the physical accessibility to the site was analyzed, its properties such as *whether the restaurant website does not appear on the first page of the search engines and whether or not the website can instantly be accessed when it is clicked* had been taken into account. It was concluded that 83 websites (89.2%) were sufficient for "information diversity". It was detected that 79 websites (84.9%) emphasized "the corporate identity" of the restaurant. One of the most important elements evaluated under the main theme of functionality is "background color". It was seen that 81.7% of the websites have a clear background color. White and black are mostly preferred as the background color for the restaurants. The quantitative analysis of the information contained in the website was evaluated with the sub-theme of "detailed information" and 79.6% of the websites were determined to be sufficient from this point of view. Visuals in which the icon, text and menus are placed on a photo in the website background are evaluated as "background image". The number of websites that have a background image is 72 (77.4%). 68.8% of the websites included in the analysis use the "home scroll down function". The number of websites that have "flash animation" was 43 (46.2%), whereas 38 websites (40.9%) offer "different language options" to visitors. The subtheme of "innovations" which express *new services, activities and announcements* offered by the restaurants are included in 27 websites (29%). When the category of "download options" was evaluated; the ratio of the files with extensions in websites was calculated. Accordingly, the number of websites which offer the opportunity of downloading was 25 (26.9%), while the "ease of download" of these files was determined in 24 (25.8%) websites. Besides, other features related to functionality and the rate of the availability of these websites are as follows; "video" (22.6%), "sound" (16.1), "current date" (15.1), and "banner ads" (1.1%).

4.4. Findings for Marketing Characteristics

16 subcategories were examined in evaluating the website marketing characteristics. The findings are shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Evaluation of Restaurant Websites According to Marketing Characteristics and Their Distribution by Sub-Dimensions

WEB SITE MARKETING CHARACTERISTICS		Available		Not Available		TOTAL	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
Restaurant Photo		88	94,6	5	5,4	93	100
Kitchen Photo		31	33,3	62	66,7		
Photo Quality	Low	16	17,2				
	High	77	82,8				
Text Quality	Low	25	26,9				
	High	68	73,1				
Promotions on the website		17	18,3	76	81,7		
Menu		74	79,6	19	20,4		
Online Reservation Options		39	41,9	54	58,1		
Reservation by Phone		16	17,2	77	82,8		
Press / Press Release		10	10,8	83	89,2		
Reservation by E-mail		43	46,2	50	53,8		
Product and Service Promotion		72	77,4	21	22,6		
Restaurant Site Location Map		75	80,6	18	19,4		
360 Degree Virtual Tour		7	7,5	86	92,5		
Price Information		26	28	67	72		
Take-away		13	14	80	86		
Quality Documents		3	3,2	90	96,8		

The number of restaurants that have "restaurant photos" on their websites under the main theme of the website marketing characteristics is 88 (94.6%). The second most important category related to the marketing characteristics in the websites of the restaurants is "restaurant site location map" with a rate of 80.6%. 79.6% of the restaurants included in the analysis include "menu" on their websites. While analyzing the category of "product and service promotion" (77.4%), which refers to the promotion of refreshments and other services through the website, such properties as *refreshments*, *recipes*, *food and beverage photos* etc. had been considered. 43 websites (46.2%) have a "press/press release" link. 39 (41.9%) websites offer "online reservation option" to the restaurant visitors. The number of restaurants that have "kitchen photos" in their websites is 31 (33.3%). The number of restaurant websites that provide "price information" related to Sundays products and services is quite low (28%). Discounts offered by restaurant operators, special priced menus, discounted hours, etc. (18.3%) sub-theme of "promotions highlighted in the website". The number of restaurant websites that provide "price information" about their products and services is quite low (28%). The subtheme of "promotions on the website" which refers to *discounts*, *special price menu*, *discount hours* etc. offered by the restaurants is included in 17 (18.3%) websites. Only 16 websites (17.2%) have the opportunity of "reservation by phone", while 10 websites (10.8%) only include the option of "reservation by e-mail". Therefore, it can be said that restaurants prefer online reservation options rather

than reservation by e-mail and telephone on their websites. 14% of the websites that are included in the analysis use "package service" and these websites are used in their websites. Moreover, the number of websites, which provide "360 degree virtual tour" within the restaurant to the visitors, is 7 (7.5%); only 3 (3.2%) restaurants place their quality documents in their websites.

The sub-themes of "photo quality" and "text quality", which are among the most important elements evaluated under the main theme of website marketing characteristics, were considered as low and high quality. The quality of the photos in the website of 77 (82.8%) restaurants included in the analysis was assessed as high, whereas it was evaluated that 68 (73.1%) websites had the high quality of text.

V. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Restaurants have more difficulty in marketing activities compared to other businesses that offer industrial products, because restaurants have to commercialize not only their products but also their services. It is also necessary to use effective marketing channels so that both elements can be commercialized completely and correctly. One of these marketing channels is also the websites that have been increasingly used in recent years. According to the results obtained from the findings, 93 (57.4%) of 162 first-class restaurants in Istanbul have their own website. It can be said that this rate is very low when the structure and characteristics of the first-class restaurants are considered. Nowadays, the first-class restaurants that have very high business volume need to create websites containing elements such as photos, menus, contact information and so on that will definitely introduce products and services to consumers. When a website is considered to be online 7 days a week and 24 hour a day, the current and potential customers will be able to visit the website whenever they want to receive information. It is very difficult for a restaurant that does not have a website to compete with other restaurants that offer this opportunity.

According to the results obtained from the findings of "interactive", one of the design characteristics of the websites within the scope of the research; there are a high percentage of the first-class restaurants that offer phone number, address and e-mail information, online information form and mail connection in their websites. However, it was found that the rate of the subthemes such as events/announcements, online comment forms, working hours and online survey themes is quite low. According to these results, it is thought that more relevant elements should be placed in the websites. The most important data sources that can provide

information to potential visitors about restaurants are customers and their feedback. If a customer, who has been in the restaurant before and is satisfied with the offered products and services, expresses her/his satisfaction in the online comment forms, it will be able to positively influence the decision of a potential visitor while selecting the restaurant. Online surveys, which can also be used to determine customer satisfaction, are an important source of information to identify service elements that customers are not satisfied with. Moreover, it will be very useful that the names and e-mail addresses of participants are asked in these questionnaires in order to communicate with them.

“**Navigation**” is also one of the website design characteristics evaluated within the scope of the research. According to the results of this evaluation; it was found that there are high rate of the index page, consistent navigation, ease of navigation, links/bridges on the web pages and the feature of connection to other sites.

One of the elements to be emphasized here is also that the subtheme evaluated under the scope of “connection to other sites” includes “connection to social media sites”. It has been observed that most of the websites examined in the survey have social media accounts with the possibility of linking on their websites. However, it is not only sufficient that a restaurant has a social media account, but it is also important that these accounts should work in harmony with the website so that social media visitor can become a customer. Therefore, it is useful to use the consistent names, logos, colors and messages in all platforms; to include the number of social media followers in the website and add like buttons for social media accounts to the website. As a result of the analysis, it is noticed that the connection to other departments placed under the theme of navigation and the in-site search functions are ignored in websites. Especially, it will be useful for the large-scale institutional restaurants to have contact information and/or links that directly provide the connection to other departments such as human resources, reservations and kitchens etc. where customers can directly communicate their specific needs and demands. The in-site search function is very useful for websites that include intensive and detailed information, so that they can find the information they need in a short time, and it needs to be placed on the restaurant websites for effective navigation.

According to the results obtained from the findings on "functionality", one of the design characteristics of the websites, within the scope of the research; there is a high rate of the first-class restaurants that offer accessibility to site, information diversity, corporate identity, background color, detailed information, background image, home scroll down function, flash animation on the websites. One

of the points to be emphasized here is that the background colors are predominantly preferred as white and black. As stated in the theoretical section, it is necessary to avoid the use of colors to distract visitors from web site design. White and black make easier to read the words and keep the attention on the website. The analysis showed that there are very low rate of different language options, innovations, download options and ease of download, video, sound, current date and banner ads. It is possible to say that the use of different language options will be effective in increasing the functionality when considering the kinds and quality elements that the first-class restaurants should have for their products and services. The first-class restaurants that want to attract visitors from different nations in the globalizing world should offer the different language options such as English and even other preferred foreign languages to the site visitors. Moreover, restaurants should include up-to-date information and announcements on new products and services and events in their websites, so that it will be able to attract the visitors and positively influence their preferences. If the restaurant introduces the products and services of both the companies themselves and other businesses within the scope of banner advertisements, which is one of the important sources of revenue for restaurants, it will increase the website traffic and affect the sales positively.

Another dimension of the research analysis is **website marketing characteristics**. According to these results, it was detected that there are a high rate of restaurant photos, restaurant site location map, menu information, product and service promotion, online reservation facility and the press releases at the web pages of restaurants. Moreover, the quality of photographs and texts was also considered to be high predominantly. As a result of the analysis, it was determined that the websites include low rates of kitchen photographs, price information, promotions on the website, phone and mail reservation, package service, virtual tour and documents under the theme of marketing characteristics. Restaurant photos are mostly sufficient for potential customers who are looking for information on restaurant management, but they also want to see the photos of the kitchen where the professional cooks prepares the food. The availability and quality of such photos in the website will motivate people to visit the restaurant. While it is normally expected that restaurant businesses which operate in a sector with intense competition don't include price information in their websites because of the concern for being imitated and/or losing customers to their competitors, it should not be neglected that promotions, discounts, offers for special occasions, different reservations, virtual tours that offer live presentation of the restaurant, quality documents etc. are placed in the websites for an important and effective web marketing for consumer preferences.

Given the results obtained from the findings, the following suggestions can be recommended to restaurant businesses as application-oriented information:

- The website must be compatible with mobile devices. It is important to be able to use articles, maps, links, etc. quickly and effectively on mobile devices.
- The website should include menu and price information of the restaurant, so that it will ensure customers to reach the most accurate information during their decision-making process.
- The website should have a separate page of photo gallery where users can experience the atmosphere of the restaurant from where they are.
- There should be videos including real restaurant experiences on the website, so that these will convince visitors in a short time,
- The website should include the up-to-date information about Changes in the restaurant, new food items added to the menu, organized events, etc. continuously.
- As far as it is considered that most of the research on restaurant business is done on the Internet, Google Adwords ads can be used to reach the right customer mass. Adwords is, in its simplest form, a paid advertising service belonging to Google that is used to place

your ads in the first place on the Internet searches.

- Another suggestion is to introduce the websites of the restaurants with blog posts. While the articles that will be published on the blog of the restaurant management will strengthen the ties with current customers, they will also provide potential customers to obtain information about the restaurant.
- It will be very effective to present 3-D virtual tours in the website of the restaurants. This feature gives the customers a real experience by providing them to feel like as if they were in restaurant. Thus, all the details of restaurant establishments and its beauty will become accessible on the Internet.

These research results are important for the first-class restaurants in Istanbul to provide general information about the design and marketing characteristics of their websites. It has been suggested that future research includes more extensive studies that will address restaurants, where are under different classifications and/or operate in different cities, and evaluate customers' opinions about their websites. In this context, it is thought that this study can be a source for future research. Therefore, it has been considered that this study can be a source for future studies.

VI. REFERENCES

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