

## MEDIA - THE MOST IMPORTANT MEANS OF COMMUNICATION IN TOURISM

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### **Abstract**

*The paper explains the importance of mass communication in tourism development, as well as the role of media advertisements, which are a form of marketing. The media produces cultural, social, political and economic benefits of tourism in any country, so everything is influenced by media means. As a result of these changes, the media also has the social responsibility to spread and enhance international, national and local cultural values, thus producing a society, politics and economy. The public communication strategy is based on quality information that leads to the development of new global tourism through partnership initiatives such as security, peace, developed tourism, technology transfer, conflict resolution, and ecological tourism. Also in this chapter are explained every means of communication in the media and the role that each has in the promotion of tourism, so that television, the internet, the radio, the press, the cinema, the magazines and the specialized publications are the ones that catch the better for the public, all be consumed by different masses of people.*

**Key words:** *media, communication, tourism*

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

To make sure the consumer chooses and makes a reservation for a particular tourist destination, it must be ensured by the credibility of the offer. There are three types of sources that can give the consumer the credibility he needs so that these sources can give him travel recommendations and opinions that give the person the certainty of being the right destination for traveling. One source is represented by journalists' editorials, as journals specialized in this field of tourism include editorials edited by journalists on journeys and discovered lands so that they help the consumer to see that these lands are accurate and the opinions expressed are considered to be trustworthy, especially if I come from a specialist. For example, the National Geographic magazine contains editorials available both in print and on the website, so they are reportable and target-based. These reports aim to achieve the portrait of a destination by presenting its main features: official language, geography, visa information, religions, population structure, as well as good times to visit that tourist destination. These travel magazines allow tourists to explore a trip through someone else's eyes, and the purpose of such editions is to be read, not to be considered a form of advertising. „The credibility associated with the reporter's assessments is excellent or at least better than that attributed to a commercial speech of official institutions.” (Petr, 2011)

### **II. MEDIA MEANS OF PROMOTING AND DEVELOPING TOURISM**

The information tours are also a source of attraction to a tourist destination. To encourage these reports about a particular tourist destination, people who are responsible for a particular destination organize these informative tours for journalists. These trips aim to inform the journalists about a particular tourist destination, and through this approach an editorial is obtained whose price will always be much smaller than buying an advertising space in the same magazine. Due to the fact that these editorials are not considered a form of advertising, but are simply considered a travel report, the impact on attention, trust and detention will be much better, but the responsibility of these destinations will not be control the content of the editorial. Therefore, if the journalist is not convinced by this trip and will make an assessment not very favorable to the destination, the purpose of organizing these tours will not be beneficial and satisfactory.

Another source of consumer conviction is given by the rankings that tour guides perform on some destinations. The publishers of tourist guides are other protagonists that should be taken into account. Nowadays, many publishers are involved in this tourism sector and each of them is trying to get a clearer position on the market. On the one hand, there are guides that emphasize the cultural promotion of a destination, such as: National Geographic, Guide Bleu, and on the other hand there are the guides that emphasize the most attractive tourist offerings. The

first, which emphasizes the cultural side of a destination, focuses on the places and the presentation of the specific places to visit, history, gastronomy, art and culture, and the accommodation information and recommendations in this regard are much more succinct. The guides that focus on the most interesting travel deals go on the category of trips beyond the trails, and examples of these guides are: Le Petit Futé, Lonely Planet and many more that focus on accommodation deals, cheaper list of restaurants, cheap accommodation or camping.

The third source that can provide consumers with confidence in their tourist destinations is represented by travelers' reviews and opinions. The Internet has been greatly advanced in this respect, so it complements conventional communication tools and the main objective is to encourage the phenomenon of consumer recommendations made on the internet or web pages. The use of the web proposes special computations, so they have to understand and know what bloggers are saying, who are practically ambassadors in this field. This activity is quite close to public relations and must be devoted to time. As far as the socializing and reviewing web site is concerned, it is important to constantly supervise websites for the exchange of views between travelers, sites such as: TripAdvisor or Travelistic and the purpose of exploiting them as new media communication. Within these sites, the tourists write their own comments regarding the quality of services proposed by different parts of the tourism sector, such as tour operators in this case. Tracking these comments on sites allows users to identify weaknesses about the brands offered by a tourist destination, but also allows them to discover new trends in the expectations and tastes of travelers.

One of the main sites where specific and targeted information is disseminated on specific offers is TripAdvisor. This website is the largest travel community in the world with 25 million visitors per month, 10 million registered members and 23 million critics and opinions. The main advantage of the site is given by the possibility for travelers to exchange views and advice through the dedicated destination forum. ([tripadvisor.mediaroom.com/us-about-us](http://tripadvisor.mediaroom.com/us-about-us)) An operational stage of promoting the tourist offer is to produce brochures both in print and in electronic format because the internet offers the possibility to design and disseminate electronic brochures. These online brochures allow significant savings to be made, eliminating printed edition expenses, production costs are much lower, and last but not least, spending on the distribution and re-supply of travel agencies is eliminated. In addition to these advantages, opting for an electronic brochure is also an organic one compared to the printed brochure.

To meet the flexibility needs of a consumer who wants to get an answer to his travel requests any time, most of the protagonists in tourism develop tools to help online buy. More complex than simple information portals, they allow both the final consumer

and professional intermediaries to search for available offers and buy them online. These consumer wishes require professionals in the tourism sector to adapt their opportunities and activities in the field of information and communication technology to diversify their ways to connect with their services through multi-channel strategies. The electronic tourism has become an increasing trend in tourism. For example, in 2009, tourism turnover reached 11 billion euros after online searches generated this amount, and 8 billion resulted only from online reservations.

When it comes to organizing a trip, the tourist or the travel agent needs to know the situation of the suppliers' inventories above all. This situation not only needs to be found in real time but also very precise information about the offers available to each supplier is also needed. In order for these available offers to be searchable at any time, the operators authorize external operators, but also end-users to make searches on this or to design their own travel package. In response to this need for inventory information and to facilitate an autonomous design of customized offers, the tour operators are constantly trying to improve their access to databases. This is done by connecting directly to suppliers' stocks through web sites for professionals, but also for individuals. In the case of a professional intermediary, a travel agency can ask suppliers with whom they work a site access code, whether it's a transport shipment, tour operators or accommodation. The main advantage of this operation provided by both the supplier and the travel agent is the reduction of the time of processing the data and the increase of the information rate in the actual bookings, as well as the automation of the purchase of simple package holidays. With regard to an individual consumer, you need to access the websites of the main brands, in order to make direct and concrete searches on the availability of the stays. Due to the fact that these sites can be accessed, access to information is a much simpler one, which helps to increase the demand for short stays due to the fragmentation of holidays over several short periods. At the same time, this system can respond to purchases made at a moment's momentum. As a result, 5% of package travel sales correspond to decisions taken shortly thereafter, at least 2 days before the departure date. However, implementing such a system may sometimes require far greater investment for individual operators.

The media contribute to the development of tourism and through tenders that are also organized online. This corresponds to the desire to attract the attention of shoppers who browse the Internet quite often. For example, for this reason, Cantal travel department committee "has proposed stays on the eBay auction site." (Petr, 2011) This action not only ensured a flow of tourists to all accommodation units with a deficit, but also increased the popularity and the media impact at national level, in press and television. Online auctions are a source and an online marketing tool designed to attract new customers, at least online.

The bids allow you to attract a large mass of customers on the site, and with this oasis, they will discover the brand, not just the products, which means that they can buy whatever they want using their favorite channel, including agencies. This online bidding strategy ensures a good position in the ranking of price comparison sites because the starting price is a fairly small one. This auction generates traffic on the operator's web site, taking on this opportunity not only to discover the products, but also the brand, but also other elements of the tourist offer.

On the one hand, this strategy has the purpose and result the desire to win and opportunistic shopping behaviors. This allows actual sales prices sometimes close to a low sale price, but has the benefit of generating popularity with the brand of the operator or the promoted destination. This result is explained by the fact that in order to prevent too fast an increase price, each bidder tends to underestimate the price he declares he is prepared to pay. This behavior is tempered as the auction expiration date approaches. On auction sites there is a certain tendency of the users to expect in the first stages of the auction, then an acceleration of the offers in the final period. In addition, the last overloaders often have a significant price difference compared to the previous bid, as the last bidders want to discourage each other.

So, the media has evolved today as a multipurpose force and an integral part of our lives, influencing most of the activities we carry out and including the decisions we take. The media is not limited in any way from the point of view of communication, so we can communicate and interact with each other instantly no matter which part of the globe we find. Today, information is no longer a barrier, and this is due to its media and its means. UNWTO founder Francesco Frangialli says today's tourism is heavily influenced by the mass media and largely despises media. He said this because today most of the people's decisions about choosing a tourist destination are filtered first by searching for the destination in the media. Generally, the tourists choose a particular destination based on what they hear or see through the media. The media is not only represented by what TV means, but also includes magazines, radio, newspapers, the internet, the phone, the mail and the fax. Since Internet popularity has grown quite a bit by the emergence of sites such as Twitter or Facebook, social media is now an extremely important means of transmitting a fast message to an extremely large number of people. Tourism is one of the largest areas for GDP growth, and it is also a sector that has grown in the multitude of jobs. People need as much information as possible about destinations around the world and that is why the media acts as a link between destination development and tourism. Gradually, all these media have created a positive image of tourism in attitudes, perceptions, psychology, behavior, and of course in elections.

Newspapers are bought for their informative value. So they're good for announcing new products or

improving existing products or services. Due to the high frequency they occur, they are preferred for "business opportunity". In spite of their short life, newspapers have a great ability to capture attention. It is estimated that a 20cm wide advertisement with 3 columns is seen by a third of readers.

Most people read the press to get informed and to confirm their personal opinions about events. So, the press is seen as a credible source of information. With an extension, it can be said that the ads appearing in the newspapers enjoy this credibility. Local newspapers have limited coverage over limited areas, so a higher density of readers than the national press. Because they contain local news, they enjoy greater interest. Local newspapers are ideal for developing regional markets based on consumer preferences in that area. Their limited circulation makes them an ideal communication medium for testing advertising messages. Evening editions are usually read at home, which results in the possibility for many family members to read them.

With the enormous potential of the audience, the televisions are addressed to all socio-economic groups. The biggest advantage of television over other media (except cinema and the Internet) is the ability to combine sound, image and motion. This combination allows the creative to demonstrate the qualities of a product better than a static written or visual representation. The televisions operate seven days a week, especially in the evening. TV commercials have a variable duration from 7 second ad slots to a maximum of 2 minutes. However, most ads do not exceed 60 seconds. A big advantage of television is that it is generally watched at home, in a relaxed atmosphere, when the audience is more receptive than normal. Against this, it is argued that the introduction of advertising in the space of a program is disturbing and impertinent. While the focus is on a program, the first and last spot in a group is noted: first, because it stopped the program and the last, because it looks forward to restarting the program.

The internet has captured the communication media since its emergence, and many businesses have rushed to connect to the network. Businesses are hurrying to use the internet as a way of segmenting the markets and doing something that traditional means of communication can not: Interactive and demand-driven consumer conquest - all at a reasonable cost. Potential applications on the Internet have been expanded every day, and companies that exploit these opportunities will have colossal advantages over traditional "orientated" competitors. Even if the popularity of the internet grows rapidly among business people, there is still a confusing perception of it and what it can offer the world. The Internet is conceptually a way of access with new and high efficiency, organizing and transmitting information.

The development program of a tourism product on the national and international market requires the establishment of a complex marketing mix program and involves solving problems related to product definition,

assimilation of a distinct brand of the tourism product. It has been found that a brand-name product is preferred rather than one which, even if it is better quality, does not guarantee the recognition of the product. The product policy targets all the touristic elements that are available to tourists, satisfying a wider range of motivations, so that the tourist product is perceived globally as a conceived vision of product promotion. Thus, it has been decided to use a unitary promotional policy; brand building based on consumer understanding and communication with the goal of creating effective integrated communication programs. „Communication can create and facilitate a system that allows stakeholders to exchange opinions and arrive at consensual solutions. Effective use of communication tools can also link products to markets, and can contribute to visitors' safe and positive experiences.” (Grenna, Hilbruner)

The major media for advertising messages include conventional advertising (TV, press, radio, cinema, outdoor advertising, billboards, posters) and unconventional (public relations, events, sponsorships, internet, CD-ROMs, flyers, brochures, catalogs in sales places, establishment of a telephone contact).

A promotion campaign for a tourist product develops in two stages: pre-launching and launching and sustaining. The pre-release campaign of a travel product is meant to create a curiosity about the product, it prepares a presentation field and a status quo of the product and also informs the political and business environments about attracting new funds. The main ways to promote the product at this stage are unconventional advertising: new media, but also public relations, publishing articles in the press and in national and international magazines, reports about that tourist area and various information centers. In addition to unconventional advertising, it is also used conventional media advertising such as television, with advertising spots repeatedly broadcast at peak hours, both at national and international stations, but also the press is in the form of conventional advertising, consisting of publications and travel magazines, as well as announcements in the daily press.

The launching and sustaining campaign has as main objective the advertising of product information and as a secondary objective of reminders advertising - in order to keep the interest for this product. In this case, it also uses unconventional advertising made up of new media and especially from the Internet, websites and CDs with the promotion of that tourist product, travel agencies abroad, through new media will present documentary films, presenting area, guides, leaflets. Public relations also has a significant part in this type of advertising because it ensures communication control, increases the credibility of the message, builds the image and notoriety of the product, adds value to the product, and last but not least, shows lower costs. Promotional materials are used - CDs, packaging, greeting cards, pens, diaries, calendars, guides, maps, T-shirts, ceramic pots), discounts are offered: groups /

extended stay / extra season / holiday loyalty, facilities for families with children, including free shows, visits, museums, etc. in the service package. In this case, promotional events such as: exhibition participation (pavilions, stands at tourism fairs, photo exhibitions), sponsorships are also necessary.

In addition to these unconventional advertising, conventional advertising is also used at this stage of the product. Television is a component of conventional advertising because through the news, information and direct telephone lines are made available to the public, documentary films are made and, last but not least, advertising spots broadcast on national televisions at peak audience hours. Advertising spots are also produced in print media such as: daily newspapers, specialty magazines, tourist publications. Cinema is also a means of media that is used to broadcast documentaries or films related to a particular tourist destination.

### **III. THE ADVERTISING IN MASS-MEDIA - A FORM OF MARKETING**

The advertising message is a set of words of visual representations, dialogues, musical funds or scenarios that will communicate the concept of evocation with sufficient force to overcome the obstacles of consumer perception. Advertising codes embodying colors, character gestures have the words used are means to make the message understood and accepted. These codes aim to achieve a common language between audience and advertising. To facilitate the perception and understanding of his or her message, the advertiser must adhere to the traditional code of the target, or must innovate in relation to traditional codes by means of a visual or unusual message. Depending on the media channel or the retained media, an accurate ad must adhere to various elements such as: placing the message on a double page in the press that has an impact on its impact, the pages of the covers, and the central double page of a store have a higher alert value than other locations. the size of the typographic characters must also be taken into account. It is essential to avoid bold-italic or italic characters, and you also need to keep in mind a capitalized text that is much harder to read than if it is written with normal carcasses.

„The press proposes diversified media. This diversity allows it to be embedded in a number of proportions by a large number of support planes.” (Sandu, 1998) The press as a support implies the consideration of certain specific criteria: the number of copies sold, the number of copies sold, the unpaid broadcasting, the ratio and frequency of use of the newspaper. Press is the oldest form of mass communication, so newspapers are often preferred as a means of promotion because: it is not necessary for a consumer to wait for peak audience hours as is the case in television for the message to be received by a large mass of people, and the cost of newspaper advertising

is lower than that of television. Radio is another means of mass communication and promotion, so it has the advantage of being omnipresent and allows for very diverse programs depending on hours, days, and geographical areas. Its main inconvenience is that it provides a passive communication that requires intensive repetition. In the last 20 years, the radio has lost popularity when television has entered the scene, but the radio has found its own place with success. Much of its success stems from the fact that it must neither be read nor viewed. The wide use of radios in the car has helped a lot because they work on FM frequencies, which means they have a high transmission quality. The benefits of using radio as a means of advertising are that it is possible to select certain types of listeners and geographic markets, it is a direct means that sells much better on this path and is relatively inexpensive because the sound has the ability to juggle with the image, and simple things can come up with some sound effects and little imagination.

TV allows audiences that are more and more suited to the target audience due to the multiplication of channels and programs, the increase in the number and the increasing viewing and listening time of recent times. In addition, television also has some inconveniences because it requires high costs and a real impact is more difficult to assess because of viewer behavior. In recent years, advertising has been diversified through television, so people spend much more time watching television than reading a book, newspapers or magazines. Generally, people watch TV a few hours a day, and the amounts paid for an ad outweigh any other expense to other forms of the media. In general, it is opted for TV commercials because it mixes the sound with the image and the movement, the message is immediate, and TV commercials have a certain credibility, and TV shows also have huge audiences because more people gather in the face of a television. Television is for many people a form of relaxation and fun, so there is a greater impact of the message transmitted through this form of communication.

Thus, tourism advertising is considered to be the most important tool in winning potential customers. "Advertising does not only intervene in influencing tourism behavior; it also acts in other phases of the purchasing decision. Later, the saddle will fill in the impersonal information given to the advertiser by addressing to an intermediary." (Sandu, 1998)

Promotion of tourism products represents a set of communication activities, carried out for the purpose of transmitting on different ways information, messages meant to make known the characteristics of the tourist product to potential tourists and also the elements of the services offered for commerce, to develop a positive attitude towards them the tourist product and the company that provides the services to determine the tourists to make the right decision when it comes to buying the tourist product. Public relations and advertising are closely interlinked and a major form

ensemble to promote a tourism product. The ad is one of the most powerful tools available to the marketing worker in the promotion of the travel product.

Tourism advertising is a piece of complex promotional actions that has the role of informing consumers about a well-designed tourist product offered by a travel agency in a certain time period and on a certain segment of people. At the same time, tourism advertising also has the role of convincing consumers about the tourist product and of creating a favorable opinion for consumers. Last but not least, advertising in tourism has the role of increasing sales and automatically gaining new customers, willing to embark on that tourist product offered.

The movies or video clips translate into visual and auditory effects or in movement the tourist, transporting it in a pleasant environment and whose viewing is constantly pursued. Also, radio advertising aims to transmit short messages, comments, or news related to certain destinations and travel products. Expositions and fairs offer the opportunity to make a well-known tourist offer for both the current and future business partners of travel agencies to expand their business contracts as well as for potential clients participating in such events.

Advertising in the press takes place in different forms: specialized publications dealing with tourism issues, and in Romania there are publications of this kind such as: „România pitorească”, „Vacanțe în România” or „Turism Club”. Also, editorial advertising is made up of reports, articles, interviews published in the press under the leadership of some opinion leaders or journalists of great prestige with a high impact promotional impact.







„The tourist image is a result of tourism propaganda and advertising and it is obtained on the basis of landmarks such as: the tourist information received, the content of the tourist services and the reasoning of the tourist.” (Roșca, 2001) Online advertising is represented by the promotion of tourist services or products on the Internet. The Internet is a great benefit when it comes to promotion because it involves low costs in distributing information locally at a global level. Lately, most companies have focused their budgets on online advertising in the face of radio or TV advertising because, as Internet information has developed, the strategy of tourism companies around the world has grown. Through the internet, advertising costs are reduced, increased interactivity, flexibility, productivity, efficiency, but also the competitiveness of travel companies. „Travel products can not be inspected by customers at the time of sale, at least not before making the purchase act. The multimedia possibilities of the world wide web are used both in tourism and in culture. The virtual tourism means the possibility to visit the tourist attractions remotely.”(Nedelea, 2014)

Tourism is today a very important sector that succeeds in imposing itself both through dynamism and a spectacular development. Tourism belongs to the tertiary sector, which is one of the most important components of the economy of the countries, being at the same time a very good opportunity for development and for the poor developed countries. Most of the information about a particular tourist destination is currently provided by the media and, in particular, by the Internet. Information on accommodation, country policy, history, culture, landmarks or geography are available on the Internet, but the most secure information is available on the respective countries' websites, so that these pages are supported by the Ministry of Tourism. The average of online tourism is due to the fact that information has become more accessible, at least, information related to tourist attractions, destinations, maps, reviews of people who have gone through those places, thus creating the conditions of a stay safe and attractive for most internet users. In the field of services, but especially in the field of tourism, advertising is symbolic and less descriptive, with increasing appeal to the emotional aspect. In other words, advertising in tourism is necessary to convert into tourism people's dreams of seeing and experiencing new things. The advertising message used in the media is characterized by logical information, but also by psychological information, supporting a presentation of images, sounds and movements. „In tourism advertising (but not as an exception) the priority importance of psychological information compared to the logical, the latter is characterized in a series of rational arguments and precise data about the tourist offer.” (Nedelea, 2010)

The advertising message is related to the way people perceive content related to the product. The media use the psychological message very often in order to keep the consumer's growing interest in the promoted product. The ultimate goal of this type of message is to awaken the consumer's interest and emotion, ultimately leading to the purchase of that product. Media, through advertising, has the role of influencing the consumer, thereby affecting his / her cognitive aspect. When the psychological message is used, it appeals to people's emotions to demonstrate how consumers will feel after purchasing the product, and in this case, a tourist product. The main objective of tourism marketing is to promote this activity in different areas, resorts or places of interest for tourism in order to achieve the best economic and social efficiency. For this, it must be possible to offer the most suitable services to the target tourism markets at the right time. Ignoring tourists' preferences or slow adaptation to these requirements, leads to reduced competitiveness. Marketing activity aims to agree the different elements of the product with the requirements to stimulate sales.

Public relations is making a considerable effort to build stable relationships with the public by getting good publicity and building a positive public image.

People who are involved in public relations work on both the positive and the negative image of their destination, so they try to get people in the media to publish positive reports about the place, such as: the new tourist attractions, cultural events or educational, social or business presentations. In addition, public relations professionals are trying to prevent or mitigate the results of publishing negative news about the place, such as violence, criminality, or social issues that can make the destination perceived by the general public as dangerous and dirty, has been in a stagnation or crisis.

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS

The efforts put forward by public relations specialists in cities that display certain monuments or are coveted for excellent landscapes and destinations are especially important during a crisis such as waves of violence, terrorist acts or natural disasters. In these cases, tourist destinations face national media coverage

that can create the perception of a dangerous place by the national and international public. Even if decision-makers on a tourist destination are aware of the need for public relations and are willing to allocate the necessary resources they have, their efforts will not be successful if those responsible for implementing the decisions are not professionals. Over the last few years, there has been much more awareness and willingness to improve the professionalism of those involved in public relations at local level, resulting in a large number of publications where the authors give advice on how to create a positive image of cities in the media.

Promotion of the tourist product is a specific form of communication consisting of transmission on different ways of messages and information meant to inform tourists and tour operators about the characteristics of the tourist product and the elements of the tourist services offered for sale, a positive attitude towards the tourist services provider.

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