

## STUDY REGARDING THE USE OF MULTIMEDIA TECHNOLOGIES IN TOURISM SECTOR OF SUCEAVA COUNTY

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### Abstract

*Through the study presented in this paper we wanted to point out some aspects that characterize the behavior of the administrators of tourist unities on the territory of Suceava County regarding the use of internet as an information and promotion instrument. The research objectives followed: the determination of the way in which the agents from the tourism sector regard the promotion activity; the determination of the way in which the companies from the tourism sector build their promotion strategy; the identification of the degree of the use of web environment within the promotion strategy; the determination of the degree in which the period of functionality and the setting category of the tourism structure influence the decision of using the web instruments in view of promotion; the identification of the degree in which the tourism agents are available to offer a technical support in order that an online application of tourism recommendation can be used from the inside of the tourism unity.*

**Key words:** *Statistics inquiry; Internet; Promotion; Tourism recommendation system; Suceava County.*

**JEL Classification:** *L83, C02, L86*

### INTRODUCTION

The tourism industry, as other commercial and financial sectors, needs to develop new working methods based on information. This thing involves also the development and the validation of new flux of information that can circulate among the producers, sellers, and customers of the "tourism chain".

The mediation plays a key role, considering the complexity and the fragmentation of the "tourism chain". The development of the technologies, the apparition of the online marketing and the explosion of the information on the internet revolutionize the tourism mediation, affecting the way in which the tourism will be distributed, reserved and sold. New actors appear in the rich (complex) market of the tourism mediation.

The tourism is an intangible product, it exists only as information in the moment when it is sold and it can be evaluated only after the purchasing decision.

A tool of communication, in permanent development, as the internet is, has a huge potential concerning the tourism products, seen from the perspective of the information that it contains. The information fluxes from different areas of tourism lead to a good integration in domains like: multimedia, communication technologies and informatics systems.

Besides knowing the tourists' behavior concerning the internet use as an information instrument, we have considered important to obtain answers through this paper concerning the way in which the administrators of the tourism unities from Suceava County regard the internet as a means of information and promotion.

Among all the tourism unities from Suceava County, considering the territorial dispersion, 20 unities were included in the analyzed sample.

### THE OBJECTIVES, THE HYPOTHESIS OF THE RESEARCH AND THE ANALYSIS METHOD OF THESE ONES

The main objectives fixed within this research were:

**Objective 1:** The determination of the way in which the agents from the tourism sector regard the promotion activity.

*Hypothesis 1: The economic agents from the tourism sector are aware of the importance and the necessity of a promotion activity in order to maintain the business under profitability criteria.*

**Objective 2:** The determination of the way in which the companies from the tourism sector build the promotion strategy.

*Hypothesis 2: The financial possibilities of the tourism agents allow the realization of a season activity of promotion, the variety of the promotion instruments is a reduced one, being limited to 2-3 instruments used simultaneously. Often, the promotion activity is influenced by the strategy followed by the concurrence and does not always takes into account of a differentiation on tourists' categories towards which we can set a personalized message.*

**Objective 3:** The identification of the degree of the use of web environment within the promotion strategy.

*Hypothesis 3: The tourism agents, especially the ones from the superior categories from the services quality point of view, have understood the importance and the necessity of the promotion activity through the internet.*

**Objective 4:** The determination of the degree in which the period of functionality and the setting category of the tourism structure influence the decision of using the web instruments in view of

promotion;

*Hypothesis 4: Both the tourism structures appeared recently and those which have already a formed history within the tourism market are being equally promoted. Also, the category of setting of the tourism structure does not represent a tie-break criterion concerning the owners' interest for the use of the internet as a promotion means.*

**Objective 5:** The identification of the degree in which the tourism agents are available to offer technical support in order that an online application of tourism recommendation can be used from the inside of the tourism unities.

*Hypothesis 5: I believe that most of the administrators of tourism unities will want to put to tourists' disposition such an information instrument.*

The objectives of this research were transposed within a quiz formed of 16 questions that have been addressed to the administrators of the tourism unities form Putna, Gura Humorului, Cacica, Vatra Dornei, Suceava and Sucevița.

**Table 1 - The conceptual elements of the quiz addressed to the tourists**

No.	Variable	Conceptual definition	Operative definition
1	Promotion	The assembly of techniques that present a product or service in a manner able to determine its purchase.	1. Do you consider important the activity of promotion for the services offered by your lodging unity? a) Yes b) No c) NK/NA
2	The periodicity	The interval of time between the moments in which the promotion is realized.	2. In which way do you realize the promotion of the offered services? a) permanently b) seasonally (during the important holidays, during the tourism season) c) I do not have a programmed promotion activity d) NK/NA
3	Promotion instruments	The variety of means identified by the tourism economic agent as being opportune for the promotion of his activity	3. Which are the most used promotion instruments? a) the publicity in newspapers b) the publicity on the radio and television c) fliers and other printed materials d) web site e) street banner
4	The concurrence	The market economy involves the realization of the activities within an environment of concurrence and this thing involves the study of the strategies applied by the other market participants	4. Do you take into account the promotion activity realized by the competitors from the tourism area where you perform you activity? a) Yes b) No
5	The differentiation of the promotion strategy	The assembly of criteria had in view by the companies when they establish the promotion strategy	5. The promotion strategy of your unity concerning the tourists is: a) Orientated towards a certain type (category) of tourists. Which one? ..... b) It is not differentiated; it is addressed to all categories of tourists. 6. The promotion activity is realized: a) exclusively by own resources b) exclusively through others c) by own resources and through others
6	Web site for promotion	Information application quartered by a server through which it is realized the	7. Do you have at the present a promotion web site for your activity?

No.	Variable	Conceptual definition	Operative definition
		presentation of the activities/products/services offered by a company	a) Yes b) No <b>8.</b> Do you plan to realize during the next period a web site for promotion or do you prefer to inscribe your unity within a web portal with tourism profile? a) Yes b) No c) NK/NA
7	The site structure	The site structure is given by the results obtained from the logic and hierarchical arrangement of the menus and the web pages that form the site	<b>9.</b> What kind of information do you have on your site? a) general presentation of the services b) tariffs c) photo gallery d) information concerning the location e) description of the tourism attraction from the area f) reservation section g) contact section h) other information
8	The influence of the promotion activity through the internet on the company's	The quantification of the results obtained from using a web site for a promotion activity	<b>10.</b> Do you consider that a web site brings important benefits for the image of your unity? a) Yes b) No <b>11.</b> Have you noticed an increase of the tourists' number after the moment of the realization of your site? a) Yes b) No c) I haven't made a comparison in this sense
9	Up-dating the information on the site	The activity of up-dating the information on the site is a compulsory condition to keep the user's interest for it	<b>12.</b> Since when do you realize the promotion through the web site? a) 1-2 years b) 2-4 years c) another period: ..... <b>13.</b> The up-dating of the information from your site is approximately realized at an interval of: a) a week b) a month c) 3months d) 6 months e) another period: ..... <b>14.</b> The up-dating of the information on the site is realized by a person from inside your company? a) Yes b) No
10	Recommendation system	Instrument that tries to present to the users, objects and notions of interest for them	<b>15.</b> Would you be interested in having inside your company an online application of recommendation system that the tourists could access? a) Yes b) No c) I don't know/I don't answer
11	Category of bordering	The Romanian economic legislation allows different ... of the tourism structures depending on the offered facilities, geographical position and their size	<b>16.</b> The category of ... of the tourism unity: a) Hotel b) Hotels for the youth c) Hostels d) Motels e) Tourism inns f) Tourism mansion g) Tourism chalets h) Campings i) Students and preschoolers camps j) Urban guesthouses k) Rural guesthouses l) Agro-tourism guesthouse m) Tourism halts

## THE METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH

### The questioned collectivity

The questions collectivity is represented by the assembly of tourism structures found on the territory of Suceava County during 2001 counting 245 unities (the County Direction of Statistics from Suceava).

### The unity of research

The unity of research is represented by the tourism unity registered on the territory of Suceava.

### The unity of survey

The unity of research is represented by the tourism unity from Suceava included in the analysis sample.

### The method concerning the gathering of information

A structured form of communication was used, more precisely, we applied a quiz to a number of tourism unities established through samples. The communication was directly realized, the subject (the administrator of the tourism unity) was solicited to express his opinion answering to the questions addressed by the operator.

The quizzes were filled-in by 8 operators of interview, students of "Ștefan cel Mare" University of Suceava, who went in territory. The operators' team received instructions concerning how to fill-in the quizzes and the security of the received information correctness.

### The sampling

The including of the statistics unities within the sample was realized through the method of the random choosing, simple and not repetitive.

Due to the financial, material, human, limited resources but also to the large territorial dispersion of the statistics unities in research, the analyzed sample couldn't be built in a way able to insure the representativeness from a statistics point of view.

The territorial location in Suceava County of the 245 tourism unities registered on the County Direction of Statistics from Suceava allowed the analysis of 20 unities and had in view to keep the percentage found to the level of general collectivity concerning the categories included in the tourism structures.

### The pilot inquiry

In order to check the methodology of research and its improvement where it is necessary, we realized a pilot inquiry with the following objectives:

To apply a number of 5 quizzes without taking into account the structure established in the sampling stage. The checking of the questions to find the ones which are not explicit enough or to which the questioned persons have various difficulties and the reformulation of these questions.

The checking of the time accorded to fill-in a quiz. This thing must not last more than 10 minutes.

## THE TREATMENT AND THE INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA

Depending on the typology of the tourism unities, we included in the sample the following forms:

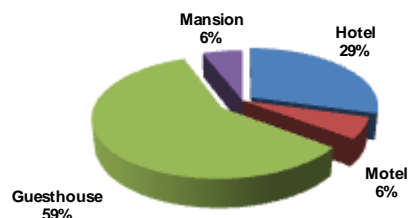


Figure 1 - The type of tourism unity

Regarding the emplacement of these unities 47% are located in the urban environment and 53 are located in the rural environment.

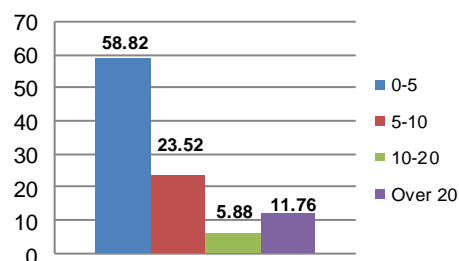


Figure 2 - The period of functionality

Another important aspect of the characterization of the analyzed sample is the period of functionality of the unities.

Regarding the answers received from the administrators of the tourism unities we can synthesize the following:

To the question "Do you consider important the promotion activity for the services offered by your tourism unity?" we have univocally received an affirmative answer. The administrators of the tourism unities try to realize this activity during all the year.

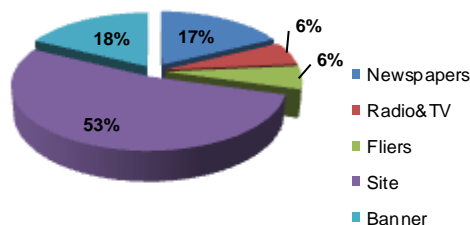
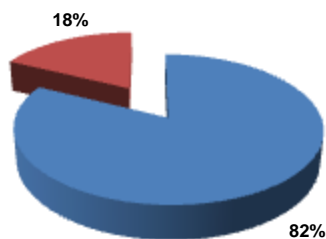


Figure 3 - Promotion instruments

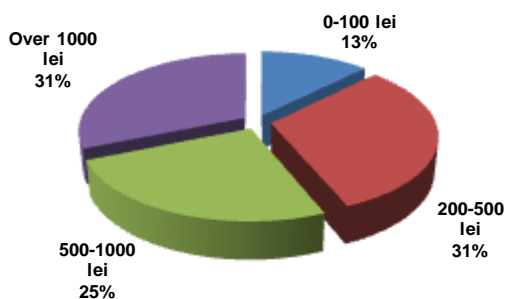
Through the question that tries to discover the used promotion instruments we could identify the fact that the administrators of the tourism unities give high importance to the online offered services.



**Figure 4 - Promotion activities realized by the competitors**

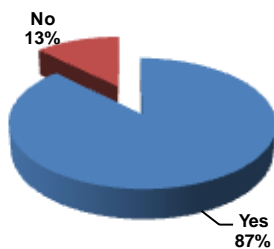
Concerning the applied promotion strategies we can observe that they are strongly influenced by the action of the competitors.

The centralization and the treatment of the data to the question regarding the differentiation of the promotion strategy of the tourism unity on types of tourists points out that for 93.7% of the administrators, the promotion strategy of the tourism unity is not differentiated, that is to say it addresses to all categories of tourists, meanwhile 6.3% sustain that the promotion strategy is differentiated depending on age, provenance, etc.



**Figure 5 - The cost of the promotion instruments**

Regarding the availability of considering the promotion costs, we can notice that the percents are relatively equally dispersed on all the 4 variation intervals, the administrators being disposed to accord large amounts of money when the efficiency of the instruments was proved.

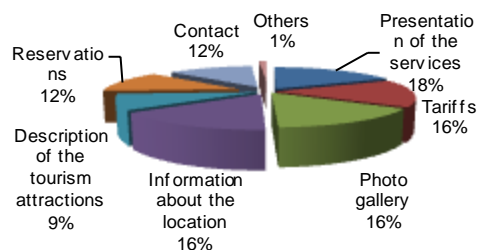


**Figure 6 - The effect of the site introduction**

95% of the questioned persons said that their unity has a presentation and promotion site for their unity.

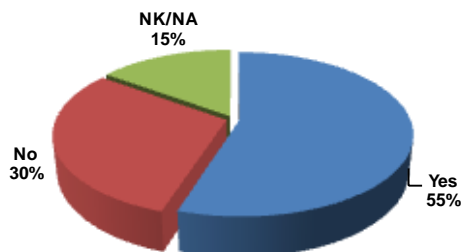
Regarding the efficiency of this instrument, 87% of the respondents sustain that they have remarked an increase of the number of tourists after the introduction of the presentation site. In approximately 60% of cases the presentation site was launched 1-4 years ago, so a short period of functionality.

60% of the respondents sustain that they update the information on their site once during 6 months and in 70% of cases is realized by an employee of the unity.



**Figure 7 - Information presented on the site**

Regarding the information offered through the site, the following results were registered: 17,97% use it for the general presentation of the services, 16% for the presentation of the tariffs, 16% for photo-gallery, 16% for the presentation of the information concerning the location, 9% for the description of the tourism attractions from the area, 12,35% also have included a reservation section.



**Figure 8 - The availability to offer access to a recommendation tourism system**

Within the quiz we have included the question: "Would you be interested that within your tourism unity we could access an online application of tourism recommendation?" to which in 55% of cases we had an affirmative answer which is encouraging regarding the implementation of a centralized recommendation tourism system. This could be coordinated by the centers of tourism information that performs its activity on the territory of Suceava County.

## CONCLUSIONS

The most important conclusion is that the representatives of the tourism unities use the online environment as a promotion instrument, therefore, they trust the possibilities offered by the online applications in order to increase their business potential.

Regarding the efficiency of this instrument, 87% of the respondents claim that they have remarked an increase of the tourists' number after the introduction of their own presentation site.

Another aspect that was pointed out as a consequence of the centralization of the offered answers is that 55% of the administrators of tourism unities offered their availability to put on the tourists' disposition inside their lodging unity, an access to a system in order to help them to locate the points of tourism interest from the area.

I consider important to realize an online recommendation system which should be put on tourists' disposition through a website, but also through info stands placed in the reception area of the tourism unities.

Such an instrument could lead to an increase of the lodging period in the area of the tourists because they will be able to easily get information about the opportunities of passing the free time available in the area.

More, from the answers received from the administrators of tourism unities, only in 9% of cases of those who have an own site make a detailed presentation of the alternatives concerning the ways of passing the free time, therefore, we feel the necessity for the implementation of such a tourism recommendation system.

I consider that in order to increase the degree of attractiveness of this system among the administrators of the tourism unities, it is important that the users can filter the tourism objectives according to the distance from the location of the lodging unity where they are, thus, a personal research is realized also according to the distance they have to walk from the lodging place.

Taking profit of the fact that, from what we have affirmed about the decisional personal of the tourism unity, they recognize that the promotion strategies applied are strongly influenced by the actions of the competitors, we could believe that the adoption of such a solution by a part of the tourism unities, will determine the others to implement it.

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