



INTERNET TECHNOLOGIES IN THE TOURISM INDUSTRY

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Abstract

This article is aimed at increasing the effectiveness of the use of information technology in the development of tourism in the country, which addresses the issues of improvement through information and communication technologies and identifies the tasks and measures to be implemented on their basis.

Keywords: innovative technologies, tourism, online maps. Information technology in tourism, internet, booking systems, virtual travel, tourism products, Virtual 3D panorama.

Introduction

In the context of globalization, the tourism industry is one of the most actively developing and promising sectors of the economy. However, due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the global tourism industry remains in a state of economic crisis. Bringing the tourism industry out of the crisis was one of the first tasks. In this regard, Uzbekistan is taking drastic measures to reduce the negative impact of the pandemic on tourism in the country by presidential decree and government decree. The Internet is a widely used source of information around the world. The Internet is now widely used in the life of our society and in all spheres. Today, the role of the Internet in the development of tourism is invaluable. Organizations operating in all areas of tourism use the Internet directly. In addition to advertising their organizations through the Internet, they are delivering travel products to tourists online. The Internet allows tourism organizations to provide information about their organizations to partner organizations over long distances.





Any commercial relationship between subjects of production and consumption is established by specific communication technology. From oral transmission, through fairs, printing press, telephone to television and electronics, i.e. information technology, technology of the communication market has been changing, and consequently the market relations character has changed. Electronic technology has allowed for the first time in history for market participants to simultaneously communicate at a distance, which introduced a new era in the field of marketing communications.

The network of communication satellites has enabled the fastest information transfer among all parts of the world, i.e. the Internet. The Internet, as a set of networks around the world, represents the biggest computer system which allows receiving, process and exchange of information to millions of computer users. A huge amount of data can be accessed at any time and any place allowing the user of the Internet a global access. The Internet technology provides a new way of conducting business in all electronic sectors. The Internet technology has become an important source of information according to which various business strategies of subjects in tourism industry are formed. With the help of the Internet, a new possibility appeared for subjects in tourism industry to successfully promote and sell services and products to comply with demands, needs and desires of consumers.

Marketing is an integral part of conducting business in contemporary travel agencies, with the Internet becoming an essential part of media planning. The Internet provides readily available information to potential customers from around the world and it represents an important 'marketing and communication channel' that can effectively connect the subjects of offer and demand in contemporary tourism. The increasing competitiveness in the global tourism market demands of the tourist agency exceptional efforts and investments in promotion, resources, knowledge and quality in order to achieve satisfactory growth.

Therefore, it is extremely important for each travel agency to follow new technological trends and to have the knowledge required to effectively respond to challenges of global competition. In order to implement the marketing concept in business of travel agencies, it is necessary to meet certain requirements:

Firstly, it is necessary for marketing to be understood and accepted first by governing bodies of the agency, its individual organizational units and then all employees of the agency.

Secondly, marketing applied as a business concept operates through its functions. The content of these functions in the agency should be precisely defined before implementing marketing organizations and setting up marketing services.





Marketing activities of contemporary travel agencies, which greatly enhance business through the Internet, can be highlighted in the following areas:

1. Promotion of tourism services – current assets: TV, radio, newspapers, catalogues, pamphlets, posters, the screen technique; it is improved with promotional text, drawings, photographs and sound, 3D space, 3D photographs, media interaction.
2. Tourism services sales – unlimited database and unlimited capacity of digital media allows instant access to the tourist market free products to every potential tourist.
3. Tourist services booking – instantaneous communication between all participants of the sales process; it allows ‘booking on demand’, i.e. avoids excessive sales (overbooking).

The tourism sector is one of the most important business sectors in Greece. The term “online travel agency” refers to the transfer to the Internet of all or part of the tourism services offered by a real travel agency. The purpose of this study was to discuss the role of the Internet as an important tool in the tourism industry by presenting the ways it is used in customer service. The study focuses on an online travel agency. The methodology of the study was based on the collection of secondary data, which was collected through articles in journals as well as through official web sites. Specifically, the study discussed the use of the Internet and its importance in the field of tourism, and presented and analyzed the features and functions of an online travel agency, focusing on the basic services of an online travel agency, the subsystem of the customers, the provider’s subsystem and the subsystem of the intermediaries. In addition, a standardized online travel agency system was presented and finally an online travel guide was analyzed. The study concluded that tourism marketing is a necessary tool to be used in the management of all tourism businesses in order to achieve the planned marketing goals.

The tourism sector is one of the most important business sectors in Greece. One of the tourism service providers is the travel agency, which is also the main intermediary between the providers of basic tourism services and the final consumers. A travel agency, for example, is an intermediary agent acting on behalf of the client, making arrangements with tourism providers, airlines, hotels, travel guides, etc.

The term “online travel agency” refers to the transfer to the Internet of all or part of the tourism services offered by a real travel agency. The existence of a travel agency on the Internet does not necessarily imply the existence of a comprehensive and complete information system that will provide all the services that are available from the real agency. Many online travel agencies consist of a static website, which contains the name of the travel agency, its (actual) address and sometimes an e-mail address.





As can be seen from the architecture in the following Figure 4.1 (Ling et al., 2015), in order for an online travel agency system to support the above functions, it should be composed of three basic levels plus some interaction characteristics in terms of the booking service. This point entails the difficulty of the system, as bookings relating to providers of basic tourism services such as hotels, airlines, etc., should be passed on from consumers to providers via the travel agency. The problems that arise relate to proper synchronization, efficient booking management, availability check, etc.

Development environment. However, there is a set of basic technologies that are necessary for the implementation of an online travel agency system, such as:

- Web Server. It is a basic subsystem to derive tourist information registered in the online database. For this purpose, it is necessary to interconnect with the subsystem level and thus the database for dynamic information
- Web Forms. As with the electronic publishing system, the use of Web Forms is necessary for the development of electronic forms (e.g. search, registration, booking forms, etc.). In addition, the Secure Sockets Layer technology combined with Java can also be used to securely transfer data between customers and the travel agency. Through the Web Forms technology, the interface between the providers of tourism services and the travel agency can be implemented. In particular, providers will be able to update the system via e-forms, and also to monitor the reservations, customers etc.

It is a fact that modern times are difficult and even more the cost for tourism marketing is much higher than in the past. New technologies are definitely a solution to reduce the cost of tourism services, but also the quality of the provided services must be high and always the same. Now, the competition in the sector is more flexible and the contenders can offer low prices. Greece has to offer both natural beauty and history and a name but these are not enough on their own. In these difficult times only the mighty and proactive will survive. Internet technology is an important 'communication channel' between offer and demand in modern tourism. With the help of the Internet, there is an opportunity for all operators in tourism industry to successfully promote and sell services and products and to act in accordance with desires and needs of modern consumers. In modern travel agencies business, the Internet has proven to be an effective medium for tourism promotion and sales, so distribution of products and services no longer depends on the quantity of printed catalogues and brochures, but information on tourism products and services can reach millions of Internet users, and overbooking has become almost impossible because all communication problems have been removed. Marketing activities occupy an important place in the business strategies of modern travel agency, where the





Internet has recently become an essential part of media planning. It can be concluded that modern Internet technologies help travel agencies in creating a unique identity, increasing efficiency and developing value added services.

It is now a fact that in recent years both international tourism and domestic tourism have shown that they can resist vigorously the negative effects on tourism demand of the various external factors, such as inflation, wars in various parts of the world, the constantly rising unemployment, the unstable climatic conditions prevailing and especially in Greece in recent years, etc. Nevertheless, a very large percentage of people around the world have made tourism an integral part of their lives in order to satisfy their travel needs and desires, both for recreational purposes and to learn about unknown destinations, conditions of life and cultures, customs and attitudes, and it seems that they are not affected by the above situation. Nevertheless, if we had to integrate international tourism into a certain phase of life, we would have chosen the maturity phase, as tourism is continuous, and in no case has the same frequency as in earlier years, where it was unprecedented and not tested.

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