

Features of the communication activities of tourism enterprises in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic

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Abstract

In the past few decades, tourism has been one of the fastest growing industries in the world. In this regard, studies of the nature and characteristics of the development of tourism, tourism activities and services began to attract increased attention of researchers. Marketing communication is an integral part of the tourism business, since the quality of tourism services and the effectiveness of the implementation of tourism activities largely depend on the effectiveness of its conduct. Recently, the ways and nature of communications in all industries have changed in the world, thanks to the dynamic development and spread of information technology (IT), and especially in tourism, since the industry itself is directly dependent on information technology. Also, the COVID-19 pandemic has a detrimental effect on the development of the tourism industry, so the role of marketing communications in ensuring the normal marketing activities of tourism enterprises is growing even more.

Keywords: communications, tourism, tourism, marketing, pandemic, communication tools.

1 Introduction

The tourism market is actively restructuring, besides, innovative changes are rapidly modernizing both travel technologies and the structure of demand and the content of the tourism product. The change in the target sales markets for tourism services occurs both according to the general principles of the evolution of markets, and according to factors specific to the tourism sector: changes in the technologies of operational content, mobile applications and online service booking platforms, package tourism offers and personalization in the organization of individual travel programs, program tourism in accordance with target market segments, and the like. Following the changes in sales markets, communication technologies in tourism are also changing.

2 Main part

Competition between the subjects of the tourism market requires the construction of such a sales system that will make the tourism product available to the modern consumer, facilitate access to the product at the destination. In the competition for the consumer, tour operators use various sales channels, both in the domestic and foreign markets. The marketing activities of enterprises in the tourism industry depend on various degrees of cooperation of the participants in the counterparty distribution network, in particular, outbound,

inbound, local tour operators, travel agencies, subagents and regional representatives.

The tourist market of Ukraine in 2019 consisted of 4664 entities, of which: 1867 legal entities and 2797 individuals who received a total income of 31,948,701.20 thousand UAH. (approximately 970 million euros). In 2020, amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the market of tour operators and travel agents in Ukraine suffered heavy losses. Among the experts, there are different indicators of the downward dynamics of tourism development. Thus, according to the data of the Ukrainian Association of Travel Agencies, the tourism market has decreased by 60 - 70% [6]; and according to UNWTO, the tourist flow in 2020 fell by 72% and returned the industry to the level of the nineties [4].

With regard to Ukraine in 2019, the situation was relatively stable thanks to open borders and relatively affordable trips to Turkey and Egypt. But, nevertheless, already by the end of 2020, the sales volume fell by 60-70%. According to preliminary estimates, losses in the tourism industry in the world amounted to about 730 billion US dollars [4].

Over the past three decades, the role of communications for the successful operation of a tourism enterprise and the effective promotion of goods and services has increased significantly, which has become a consequence of serious changes that have occurred not only in the world of marketing, but also in connection with the change in the way of life of people around the planet.

In this regard, traditional marketing communications tools have become less effective, and the role of communications using information technology has increased.

The development of information technologies and the increase in the number of digital communications have become the reasons for the transition from a post-industrial society to an information society, in which knowledge, data, telecommunications as a way of delivering and disseminating this information have become the main factors of success. Today, it is information and technology that are the main production forces, and the struggle for consumer attention occurs long before the purchase is made.

An important characteristic of the modern market is the general information space, in which marketing communications become crucial, since they act as one of the types of information consumed by people, but the increase in the amount of information has led to a decrease in the effectiveness of advertising and consumer attitudes towards it.

For example, if in 1965 the average buyer remembered 34% of commercials, in 1990 this figure decreased to 22%, then in 2007, according to the global survey of buyers conducted by AC Nielsen, on average from all ever seen people could name only 2.21% of commercials [3, p. 269]. In this regard, there is a need to diversify marketing communications to convey information to consumers using various means of communication, as well as to receive feedback.

New technologies are blurring geographic and intercultural boundaries, making it much easier to access and information about various goods and services, especially in the tourism industry. People are becoming more mobile, labor migration and specialization of certain regions of the world are gradually increasing.

Now researchers distinguish three main forms of communication, namely: mass communication and promotion, personal communication and propaganda, each of which is relevant for event activity.

The Internet greatly simplifies the process of analyzing data about a tourist product or service for buyers, speeds up and changes the buying process. The Internet is now a platform for business activity, a tool that is rapidly evolving to help promote services. The ways of providing services, that is, the rules of marketing are constantly changing, companies are increasingly resorting to using information technology to find ways to influence both existing customers and potential ones.

Today there are a large number of Internet communities where the activities of people with similar interests are carried out using Internet communications. The following Internet communities are distinguished: public on social networks, blogs, also author's diaries, forums, guest books, small chats on websites. Several of these communities can be used by travel agencies for effective marketing. For example, research by UNWTO [1] shows the effectiveness of using such media for the promotion of tourism services as social networks Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, online

advertising platforms with the help of bloggers.

Aggregator sites are also very popular, since they have a search system, filters, they provide collection and sorting of the necessary information.

"Aggregatorization" of travel occurs everywhere and the most popular aggregator sites are the following [5]:

- AirBnb - aggregator of rented houses and apartments;
- Uber and Lyft - aggregators of private taxi drivers and carriers;
- CruiseBe - aggregator of leisure activities during a cruise;
- Booking - aggregator of rented houses, car rental, ticket booking, transfer;
- Google Trips is a leisure aggregator for standard travel.

The key leader in the travel market now, oddly enough, is Google.

Also, social networks are used for analysis, monitoring and communication with clients in real time. They provide the environment, exploration and analysis of marketing data, sales strategy, advertising campaign and direct customer relationship.

Due to the fact that most companies now advertise their product precisely through social networks, it becomes necessary to take online marketing activities to promote a product or service through communication with representatives of the target audience in social resources. Tourism is one of these areas of activity.

Communication tools in tourism can be:

- –creation and further advertising of thematic products;
- –work to promote the existing product in social networks of the same subject;
- –product promotion through mobile applications;
- –integration of the company's website with social networks;
- –creation of unique links;
- –maintaining and promoting corporate blogs;
- –holding conferences and webinars online.

It is thanks to social networks that many travel companies have the opportunity to reach great profits from the sale of their product, a new level of doing business and form a certain reputation thanks to customer reviews on social networks. Services can be represented by the following works:

- -conducting the necessary research and developing a strategy;
- -creation of a brand platform and its high-quality content;
- -attracting an audience and working with it;
- -PR in social networks;
- -control of the effectiveness of promotion.

When using social networks in the activities of a travel company, it must be borne in mind that there are certain mistakes that should not be made. Such errors can be: long answers to customer questions, lack of your own style (uniqueness), description in one post of all the company's proposals at once, a large number of unnecessary elements in the text (stickers), broken links, lack of analysis of

It should be noted that for many enterprises in the tourism industry, financial opportunities are limited and do not contribute to the full use of the potential of marketing communications. In this regard, a promising direction for the functioning of tourist enterprises is the interaction and combination of efforts of tourist enterprises with public organizations and the authorities.

This will make it possible to effectively use both financial and labor resources in the complex of marketing communications, to ensure that the demand for the tourism product and services offered by the enterprises of the tourism industry is met.

3 Conclusions

Thus, we can conclude that tourism in the world today is more scalable, exercising a strong impact on the world economy. The effective development of the tourism

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business significantly increases the flow of foreign citizens to other countries, affects the growth of tax payments to the budget, helps the development of related sectors of the economy, increases the percentage of employment of the population, and also gives travelers the opportunity to get new impressions and positive emotions.

The effectiveness of the marketing activities of tourism products is influenced by various marketing communications tools, but studies show that the most effective, especially in a pandemic, are such as: aggregator sites, social networks, various thematic communities on the Internet, mobile applications.

In modern conditions of active development of tourism, marketing activities are becoming one of the most important for maintaining a stable position in the market and stimulating product sales. Each enterprise in the tourism industry, forming a marketing communications system, must focus its activities on profit and development, using various communication tools.

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