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MODERN TOURIST TRENDS-KEY TOOL FOR DEVELOPMENT AND PROGRESS OF TOURIST BUSINESS¹

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ABSTRACT

There is no doubt about the conclusion that the tourist business plays an important role in the economic policy making and it's a key link in contribution of economic growth and development. The development of tourism has contributed to a new way of functioning in the tourism market, both in terms of supply and demand. Despite numerous implications it has, tourism plays important role in national economies development. Its role is perceived by improving competition and ensuring sustainable and balanced tourism development at the regional and national levels. The contribution from information and communication technologies development is perceived through the appearance of new and modern trends who raised tourism to a higher level.

Key words: tourism business, modern trends, information and communication technologies.

INTRODUCTION

The nature of the development of tourist destinations and the continued evolution of tourism are aims which have been explored by many

¹ review scientific paper

authors over the past half century. In this paper discusses the trends and implication of ICT sector, in other hand the changes that has tourism because it became a global phenomenon. The modern tourism is result of revolutionary change and the future of tourism will be similar in many aspects to its present form.

MODERN TOURIST TRENDS IN TOURIST BUSINESS

In conditions when changes are the only constant in global processes, it is very difficult to predict future trends in tourism. All of this indicates the need for continuous adaptation of tourism to future dynamic changes. From current mega trends in tourism, I would like to point out the following:²

- tourism is increasingly based on interests and personal activities;
- polarization of travel tastes and costs of travel;
- it is included awareness of the sociological and environmental responsibility of tourism;
- increased competition, and at the same time, cooperation between destinations to attract foreign tourists;
- increased number of older tourists;
- there is a growing tendency demand for cultural, rural, active and wellness tourism;
- tourists in tourism instead of mass and vacation are looking more for: authenticity, activity, experience, excitement, ambience, etc. ;
- emphasis is placed on timely communication with tourists;
- there is a lack of human resources in the tourism sector.

Modern technologies allow the tourism holders to demand access to the information tourist offers and destinations in a variety of ways in addition to the traditional way of information: tourist guides, catalogs, postcards, fairs, etc. Nowadays, it is almost impossible for one tourist site to operate without a properly updated website with a wide range of information – about destinations, distance from one to another centers,

²Buhalis, D. & Laws, E., *Tourism Distribution Channels: Practices, Issues and Transformations*, Continuum International Publishing Group, London, 2001

airport proximity, tradition and culture of the local population and similar. Any of this information can be crucial when choosing a tourist destination. An important online source of information are the internet forums where opinions and experiences are exchanged about the tourist destinations. The increased number of individual trips is also a result of online systems that facilitate the purchase of tourist engagements. In addition to the range of positive effects that modern technologies bring to tourists, there are some negative effects that will decrease and disappear over time. The main problem is that there are some people who haven't skills to use the new information technology, the distrust in online systems and etc.³

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES IN TOURISM BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Today, in conditions of accelerated development not only of tourism, but also of all segments of social life, all activities take place using information and communication technologies. That indicates the need for modern and state-of-the-art technology through which tourism activities take place. According to Adobe Digital Insights, 41% of businesses and 60% of travel arrangements are made online⁴. In order to gain an advantage over their competitors, travel entities need to adjust their approach to the trends of new technologies and provide customers with a perfect and unique experience.

- Personalization - the highest priority among modern ICT trends in tourism

Personalization has become the first priority among modern trends in the tourism sector. Some progressive brands have already started to introduce customized offers and personalized services to their customers. To emphasize in the modern travel services market, one needs to be personal in dealing with customers and add inherent value to what is being offered. Personalization requires sophistication, enthusiasm, and technological solutions on the part of the service provider, which aims to keep up with the latest travel trends.

- Robots - useful machines in the field of tourism business.

³<https://www.revfine.com/tourism-trends/>

⁴<https://medium.com/swlh/top-10-travel-industry-trends-in-2019-d43d157de7b9>

Robotic technology allows machines to take a variety of forms and perform multiple operations from physical to cognitive functions. The introduction of robotic technology occurs as a result of changes in tourist habits. Passengers demonstrate increased demand for self-service opportunities. However, the best basis for robotic application is the hotel industry. Here they can meet and greet visitors, perform registration and check-out procedures, deliver luggage to rooms, show guests around, provide information assistance and have many other functions. Without a doubt, robots have certain advantages over human workers, such as greater consistency, accuracy and ability to work 24/7/365 without holidays, breaks and salary.

- Internet booking - the service is growing steadily.

Already today, over 57% of all travel bookings are made online, whether for accommodation, flights, travel or other travel-related activities⁵. Travelers now have the perfect opportunity to browse many different options on the Internet and choose the ones that best meet their needs, preferences and expectations.

- Mobile applications - a revolution in modern technology.

A review of travel and tourism industry in recent years has shown that half of Internet booking operations are mobile. In fact, this digital trend is the easiest way to implement in tourism development. Mobile applications can not only facilitate booking procedures, but combined with IoT software applications for mobile phones can make them most relevant to the location and preferences of the individual.

- Voice technology - a digital innovation that encourages the development of tourism

Human voice is the best and most effective mean of communication and people want more convenience nowadays, regardless of whether they are related to getting some information, reservations, etc. The main reason why the growing number of hoteliers are starting to introduce voice-activated devices in their hotels is the opportunity for consumers to switch to voice interactions. Voice commands can be used to adjust the settings of hotel rooms according to the individual needs of the guest, for the most up-to-date information, for the purposes of customer service and similar.

⁵<https://www.cbi.eu/market-information/tourism/trends/>

- Chatbots and artificial intelligence - top digital trends

Artificial intelligence is not just about robotic technology. The other way refers to the widespread use of chatbots. Chatbots demonstrate the ability to be the top point of accurate and continuous data sorting and to react quickly to problems or searches. Artificial intelligence is able to draw conclusions based on feedbacks and customers' behavior.

- Increased and virtual reality - mainstream consumer technology of the present

Although virtual reality technology has gained a foothold in the entertainment market in recent years, tourism entities have realized that it is one of the most promising trends. It may allow the passenger to digitally enter the virtual environment at the destination. The main advantage of the new technology in tourism is relatively inexpensive, especially for users. This opportunity for information allows tourism professionals to enhance the experience of their customers.

- Other Internet means - smart devices that can communicate

IoT is an extremely exciting technology today. It allows everyday smart devices to communicate over the Internet and offers a wide range of opportunities, along with multiple benefits for travel-related activities. These technologies are also designed to facilitate check-out processes by sending electronic keys to guests' smart phones, and airports can install special baggage items for the passenger that can track the location of the luggage.

- Blockchain - a technological trend in future travel

Blockchain technology literally exploded in the digital world a few years ago and remains a vague notion for many individuals. The essence of blockchain lies in storing data and transmitting it through special clusters, where information is always secure. Therefore, the details are resistant to modification and unintentional intrusion. This makes the technology rank high in terms of security and stability. It is especially important for tourism because it relies on data transfer between several companies - travel agencies, airlines and hotels. With blockchain, a passenger's personal data is always securely stored. Although today it seems to be science fiction, blockchain technology may soon completely change the whole world of travel, so that it can handle all the necessary procedures completely through the Internet, combined with other modern trends in tourism.

OTHER CONTEMPORARY TRENDS IN TOURIST BUSINESS

In addition to the above mentioned modern trends in tourism, in this section I will address to the other modern trends in the development of the tourism business.

- Solo Travel- Research published on the website: Lonely Planet

has shown that the last few years have been years of solo travel⁶. This is becoming increasingly popular with individuals seeking wellness experiences, as well as the opportunity to immerse themselves fully in local culture. Today, the information about passengers are so readily available that it is easy for people to travel on their own. Many travel agencies offer arrangements for only one tourist.

- Eco-tourism – This type of tourism is increasingly popular

because more tourists become aware of the preservation of the environment. Eco-tourism means a trip to a relatively untouched environment with the intention of returning something to the society that is being visited. This type of travel gives visitors an overview of the effects that humans can have on the environment and travelers appreciate the planet more. Eco-tourism is one of the fastest growing sectors in the tourism business.

- Gastronomic tourism – National and traditional specialties and

beverages are another motive for the development of gastronomic tourism. The dynamic process of globalization has helped tourists quickly to find a number of international cuisines to their favorite flavors.

- Accommodation and flexibility when traveling -

The growth of business activities indicate the need to get acquainted with new investments that did not exist few years ago. Uber has become one of the most successful start-up businesses in recent years, operating in over 300 cities. It is the only taxi company known around the world. The flexibility it offers helps tourists navigate the new city very easily, especially if they are unsure of the established taxi

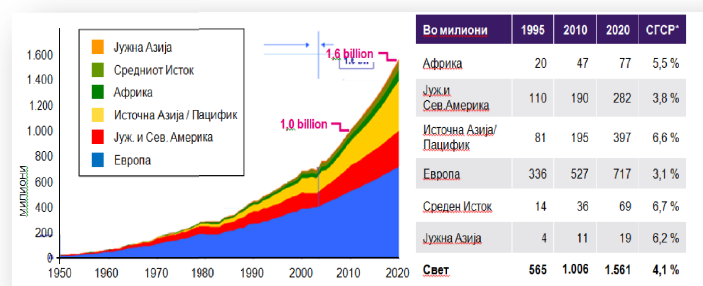
⁶<https://www.torontosom.ca/blog/modern-trends-in-the-travel-industry>

companies at their new location. The service can also be cheaper and faster⁷.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

In this part of paper we will point out the future prognosis in the tourist movements by the World Tourism Organization. As a result of ICT sector development and appearance of alternative types tourism has led to a rapid increase in tourist trips. The vision for tourism by 2020, the UN World Tourism Organization predicts that the number of international arrivals will reach about 1.6 billion by 2020. The following figure shows the global forecast for the expected number of international arrivals in 2020, for the first 20 years of the century.

Figure 1: International arrivals- WTO of UN Vision 2020

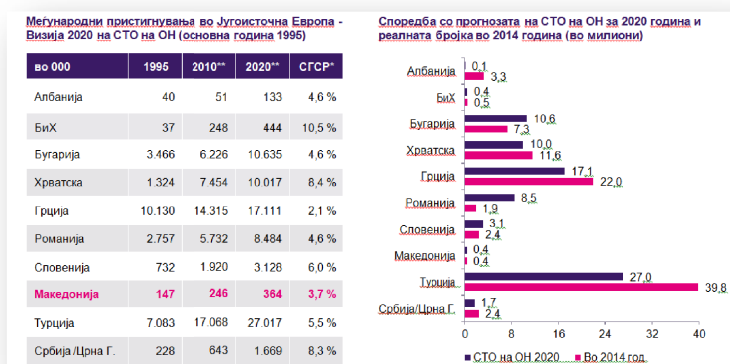


Source:[http://www.economy.gov.mk/Upload/Documents/BER_Tourism%20Strategy%20Macedonia_DRAFT_16%2001%2021_MK%20\(1\)%20\(3\).pdf](http://www.economy.gov.mk/Upload/Documents/BER_Tourism%20Strategy%20Macedonia_DRAFT_16%2001%2021_MK%20(1)%20(3).pdf)

⁷<https://btl-company.com/trends-business-tourism-2020/>

At the beginning of this century, the forecast was that the number of international arrivals would exceed 1 billion by 2020. The reality number of since 2020 is 950 million, while in 2011 the officially published number reached 1 billion with 995 million international arrivals. According to the latest data introduced by the World Tourism Organization, it is very likely that the projected 1.6 billion in 2020 will be achieved.

Figure 2: International arrivals in South- East Europe Vision 2020 and comparison with prognosis of WTO for 2020 and actual number for 2014



Source: [http://www.economy.gov.mk/Upload/Documents/BER_Tourism%20Strategy%20Macedonia_DRAFT_16%2001%2021_MK%20\(1\)%20\(3\).pdf](http://www.economy.gov.mk/Upload/Documents/BER_Tourism%20Strategy%20Macedonia_DRAFT_16%2001%2021_MK%20(1)%20(3).pdf)

CONCLUSION

Modern tourist trips are not a simple combination of transportation and accommodation, tourist needs become more and more complex, customers are more experienced and more picky, and the tasks of tourism entities must move to a much wider range of services. The needs of modern tourists are dominated by diversity, contrast, richness of content and forms, novelties and innovative products with an emphasis on high quality. Achieving these elements presupposes the achievement of new qualities in all aspects of the tourist offer. According to all this it follows that it is necessary to focus on other competencies and providing new services with added value that will attract and retain the consumers. The essential competence that distinguishes them from online competition is with advisory role. In order to build a business model based on this advantage, travel entities must count on the current weaknesses of Internet channels: information on the Internet is fragmented, it takes more time to find good information even for experienced travelers, and confidentiality and the reliability of many sources cannot always be proven. Before focusing on placing information as available, tourism business owners should focus on tailoring target information to consumers, first identifying their real needs. Information should not only be accurate, timely, confidential and complete, but also sufficiently rich to capture the user's imagination and thus provide his / her hidden information about the need for travel.

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