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Faculty of tourism and business logistics -  
Gevgelia**

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# **CHALLENGES OF TOURISM AND BUSINESS LOGISTICS IN THE 21ST CENTURY**



**Gevgelia, 24-25 October 2017 & Shtip, December 2017**



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## PREFACE

The Faculty of Tourism and Business Logistics in Gevgelija, at the Goce Delcev University - Stip, hosted the First International Scientific Conference, "Challenges of Tourism and Business Logistics in the 21st Century".

The conference was held on 24 and 25 October 2017 in Gevgelija with an optional visit to Dojran - Dojran Lake.

32 works of 60 authors from Serbia, Latvia, Turkey, Poland, Bulgaria, Kosovo and Macedonia were presented at the Conference.

The purpose of the Conference is exchange of ideas and experiences of the participants coming from Macedonia and abroad, and establishment of cooperation for further development of tourism and business logistics in Macedonia and beyond.

The results of the Conference are visible through publication in a collection of papers, which is presented to a wider scientific audience and the public.

In this way, we want to promote the Faculty of Tourism and Business Logistics, to promote Gevgelija and Dojran as the most visited settlements in the south-eastern part of Macedonia.

Gevgelija - Stip,  
December 2017

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## THE PROCESS OF ADAPTATION OF TOURIST DESTINATION OFFER TO THE CONTEMPORARY MARKET TENDENCIES

Snežana Milićević<sup>1</sup>; Nataša Đorđević<sup>2</sup>

### Abstract

*Modern tourism market is characterized by a large number of trends caused by frequent changes in the requirements of tourism demand. By adapting the tourism offer to the current trends on the tourism market, a destination can become more competitive. Since the tourist destination offer should be integrated, it is crucial to point out the importance of observing the changes in the environment at the level of a tourist destination. Driven by numerous stakeholders, the management of the tourist destination uses different strategies to make the tourist offer attractive and modern. The aim of this paper is to analyze management at the level of tourist destinations and to present possible marketing and strategic options for adapting the tourist destinations offer to modern market trends. The process of adapting and responding to changes and trends in the environment requires careful proactive action of the tourist destination key stakeholders.*

**Key Words:** *tourist destination, tourism trends, strategy, tourism market, marketing*

**JEL classification:** L83, Z32

### Introduction

Nowadays, tourism is one of the strongest world "industries", a significant importing product and employment generator for many countries. The world has become a "global village" in which the majority of tourist destinations have become available (Milićević, 2016). In 2016 only, there were 1.235 million international arrivals (UNWTO, 2017), while at the same time it is predicted that the world tourism will achieve 1.8 billion tourists by 2030 (UNWTO, 2015).

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Tourism, as a complex socio-economic notion has a very vivid market which is influenced by numerous factors. Changes in the economic, social, and commerce branch can further affect the creation of different trends in tourism. A great influence on the creation of important innovations and trends is made by the changes in needs, desires, and requests of demand. The success of travel agencies, i.e. tourism enterprises, as well as their survival on the market depends on the recognition of these changes and their capability to react to them.

Monitoring the changes and implementing strategies as a response to the former, represents the basis of strategic management of an enterprise. Due to the complexity of tourism product and dependability of consumers' satisfaction, it is important to point out to the significance of changes on a macro level, i.e. on the tourist destination level.

### **Tourist destination management**

Destination management is a coordination of all elements which make a tourist destination (attraction, benefits, access, marketing, and price). Destination management uses strategic approach in order to connect the, sometimes unconnectable entities for the sake of a better destination management (UNWTO, 2007).

Destination management plays a key role in directing numerous, and sometimes conflicting questions that appear in modern tourism (Milićević & Đorđević, 2017). Destinations offer a myriad of challenges for management and development in which assortment of tourist demand and works related to value chain is realized, as well as the demand of local community and local companies. Mechanisms for coordination and cooperation are becoming the main part in the development of every destination. Those are, above all, stakeholders' partnerships for development and management, mutual strategic planning, mutual planning of destination management, development projects and integral product promotion, gathering partners for mutual planning and project implementation.

#### **Key stakeholders of a tourist destination**

A complete list of public and private enterprises participates in the tourist destination management. Public sector has to act as "development agent" and create conditions for overcoming all the limits - cultural, legal, and economic - for cooperation and creation of a network of participants. On the other hand, the private sector should contribute to the destination's preservation and development, and become a "market agent", while connecting demand and offer and making tourist product available on the market.

Key role in uniting the interests of all stakeholders, in the majority of tourist destinations, is in so-called destination management companies (DMC). Other than these companies there are also organizations for tourist destination management (DMO) which are responsible for overall management (planning, organization, control, and guidance) and for initiating actions with the goal of accomplishing the defined goals (Popesku, 2007).

One of the goals of the destination management is researching and monitoring of changes (Jegdić & Marković, 2011). Tourist enterprises, organizations, agencies of public as well as of private sector, participate in the accomplishment of this goal. However, during the implementation of new trends and reacting to changes in the environment, the circle of interest groups can be spread to tourists and local people.

Working in a turbulent environment has contributed in such a way that enterprises more and more practice the so-called change management. However, not all the enterprises and other stakeholders react to the changes the same way or synchronically. Therefore, it is important to set coordination between interest and activity of all stakeholders which participate in adaptation and innovation of the tourist offer of a destination.

#### Tendencies of modern development of tourism

A great number of quantitative and qualitative changes characterizes a modern tourist market. The growth of tourism in modern age is largely a result of the increasing globalization, which has strengthened a number of key drivers in international tourism (Richards, 2011):

- Rising income;
- New and cheaper means of transport;
- Intensive use of ICT.

As the World Travel Monitor results for the first eight months of 2016 made it clear, worldwide outbound travel remains on the growth path despite terror attacks and political unrest (ITB, 2016).

Modern tourism market is characterized by the constant innovation of tourism products, aspiration to authentic experiences and adventures (Milićević et al., 2016). Significant modern changes are created by an increased consciousness of the need for life environment protection. In tourism, this leads to creating of sustainable tourism development, appearance of a new form of tourists - ecotourists and ecotourism. Travelling for the sake of prevention and treatment of different diseases of a man is a trend which is on the rise, because of which, nowadays, more and more is heard about health tourism, and its subform - wellness tourism. Nature-based tourism becomes more popular and, as an emphasized part of it, agrotourism which is a form of rural tourism in which tourists see and participate in traditional agricultural practices without destroying the ecosystems. One more modern and newly introduced tourism form is adventure tourism that includes at least two of the following three elements: physical activity, natural environment, and cultural immersion (CREST, 2106).

The technological development made possible the creation of central reservation and distribution systems. Online reservation system affected the increase of independently created arrangements and the introduction of new companies like the company Airbnb which has disrupted the accommodation sector and is now expanding into new business areas (ITB, 2016).

When we speak about demand, it is noticeable that there is an increase in travelling of older people who make a significant part of European population and who spend more money on travel than the younger tourists. Also, the younger tourists or popularly called millennials (often defined as people born between 1980 and 2000) are seen by many in the international tourism industry as a new key market to generate much of the industry's targeted growth in the coming years (ITB, 2016).

#### Strategic choices for tourism offer adaptation to modern trends

Modern tendencies on the tourism market assert numerous challenges which destination management faces in its business environment (Milićević & Đorđević, 2016). In tourism, a continuous innovation of tourism offer is necessary, because tourists nowadays are more and more inclined towards new tourist products, new destinations, new adventures and experiences (Milovanović & Milićević, 2014).

Tourist destination should have a clearly defined vision, mission, and goals. In defining goals, it is important to make sure that they are clearly formulated and possible to accomplish. In determining vision, mission, and goals, a broader circle of interest groups, from DMO to local communities, should be included.

Formulating a strategy implies setting a congruence between tourist destination itself and the surrounding. Defining a strategy of tourist destination implies making decisions about the following (Popesku, 2011):

- concurrent positioning and branding of tourist destination;
- defining interest markets;
- defining portfolio of products, that is, adventures/experiences, and
- formulating crucial factors of success and needed skills for positioning and defining interest markets.

Management of changes implies planned and programmed effort in accepting ideas, innovations, and changes, and one global approach in application of changes on all levels of tourist destination, in order to develop and sustain concurrence in the market.

It is necessary to point out that when creating an integral offer of a tourist destination which is in comply with modern tendencies on the market, individual tourist subjects bring different strategies, which is necessary to be directed to a mutual goal.

Organizations of tourist offer, accordingly, can change their processes, politics, product assortment, resources and technology. Reorganization can be implemented on a level of the whole organization or in certain parts of it. A plan for creating a new or changed offer of products and services is defined. With the help of functional strategies of enterprises, new products/services, process of production, and determining the resources and distinctive skills are created, necessary in order to keep up with the current trends in the market.

## Marketing choices for adjustment of tourist offer to modern trends

Marketing is the activity, asset of institutions and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offers that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large (AMA, 2017).

Main marketing activities, when it comes to tourist destination management involve the following (Popesku, 2008):

- development of marketing strategies of a destination
- creating and maintaining destination image and its trademark;
- progress of sale via reservation systems and promotions;
- information provision.

Development of strategy marketing is a highly complexed process. Creation and implementation of strategies are key activities of the process. Reviews of effects of implementation of selected marketing strategies show that it is necessary to keep the goals of different levels in accordance to subjects and that the problems are more noticeable in its implementation.

In order that existing subjects of tourism offer create a product and service in accordance to the trends in the market, they perform a transformation of marketing strategy. This process includes the following (Stanković & Đukić, 2009):

Identification of a need for change and readiness to accept new behaviour presupposes reevaluating of goals, review of existing marketing strategies and concurrent advantage. The concurrent advantage is a critical dimension not only for strategic theory but also for marketing strategy because it explains what makes an organization special. Simultaneously, it helps all of the involved subjects to evaluate how they can contribute to its success.

Management of changes - planning and communication, building of trust, and training of employees. Reevaluations show that in certain organizations it is possible to use more formal processes for the development of marketing strategies. In contrast, there are organizations in which such processes are limited. The success is significantly conditioned by the character of the market in which the companies concur, as well as the organization itself. Congruous strategy can be viewed as a possibility that leads towards a new strategy;

Sustaining a change - accepting and applying new forms of behavior are crucial for the success of a strategy. Successful destinations transform their strategies by a combination of different possibilities. Rarely is the success of a certain marketing strategy a result of using isolated approaches.

For the sake of creating a proactive approach of management of tourism branch and for the sake of adaptation of the offer to popular trends, destinations create marketing plans. Marketing plan represents a basic operational control document which points to what should be done, when and how it should be done and who should do it (Bakić, 2009).

Destination that wants to follow and actively participate in modern concepts of tourism development has to create an image and perform proper positioning on the

market with regards to global tourism market. Proper positioning of tourism destination to tourism consumers is, in fact, creating of an image with potential buyers. The created image of destinations has to be (Štetić, 2003):

- different from the concurrents;
- acceptable on the tourism market, satisfactory for the tourism clients;
- renowned with regards to demand.

The choice of a positioning strategy which would make a positive image and desire of tourist to stay at that destination is a precondition for a proper strategy of appearance on a certain market.

## **Conclusion**

Numerous modern tourism trends make the tourist market turbulent and they can appear as a chance for tourism destination management, but also a threat which comes from the surrounding areas. Findings on trends are important because the capability of tracking and reacting to changes in the surrounding areas can determine success, but also survival of tourism enterprises and tourist destinations only on the market. By adapting to trends, the destination management, which is formed by numerous stakeholders, defines and uses different strategies. The mutual goal of the stakeholders should be creating an integrated tourism offer which is in accordance with trending demand requests. Here, a significant role, in addition to tourism enterprises (hotels, travel agencies, etc.) is put on tourism organizations on national, regional, but also local level, like DMO. Their role, in order to successfully create tourism offers, should be similar to the one that top management has in one enterprise. The important goal that these types of organizations should achieve is related to creating and implementing marketing strategies. That moment when enterprises form their offer, organizations should know the way to successfully perform integration of tourism offer of a destination; and like such, to present it to tourists by taking care of its proper positioning. Although we cannot brag with solutions in literature on how to best manage tourism development there is awareness of the need that local communities should increasingly authorize destination management to manage tourism development.

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