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The Link Between Digital Media and Making Travel Choices

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Abstract: The development of new information technologies, especially the Internet, has led to changes in the approaches of applying marketing in tourism in many ways. Under these circumstances, digital marketing is gradually taking the leading role in every modern tourism marketing strategy. As the world becomes increasingly interconnected, keeping up with new developments and trends and adapting to the online sphere is vital for all tourism companies and organizations that want to maintain their current success and attract new tourists. The digital revolution has forever changed the way the media operate, and the changes brought about are far from over. The aim of this paper is to show the role and importance of digital marketing in modern tourism. In order to reach the conclusion, the paper will show the results of the research on the degree that Serbian tourists rely on digital media while choosing a tourism destination and making additional travel choices. The data collected were analyzed using the statistical analysis software SPSS, version 23.

Key words: social media, web 2.0, web 3.0, travel 2.0.

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INTRODUCTION

Communication is an integral part of everyday life. People constantly communicate, send messages and interpret those they receive. However, modern business is the sphere where communication obtains a special significance. Within the process of exchange of information, which is typical for all the markets, every company inevitably sends information about itself and its products and services on a daily basis. The appropriate marketing strategy has always been the key success factor for every company and organization. The aim of any marketing activity has always been to exploit the reach of mass media by broadcasting a single message to a mass market (Scott, 2015; Gunter, 2015), while the advertiser has been able to control the placement, frequency and content of the message as well as the distribution channel (Oklobdžija, 2015). However, the growing popularity of the Internet has changed the way people gather news, communicate, buy and make decisions, which led to significant changes in marketing strategies as well (Sharma & Sheth, 2004). Therefore, modern marketing is much more than persuasive communication based on a one-way transmission of messages from the company to its customers, but it is based on a two-way communication which allows the companies to recognize and meet the needs of their customers more effectively (Kozinets, 1999; Peltier, Schibrowsky & Schultz, 2003; Voorveld, Van Noort & Duijn, 2013; Karjaluoto, Mustonen & Ulkuniemi, 2015; Levy & Gvili, 2015). In other words, the purpose of marketing is not just advertising and selling products, but, above all, developing long term relationships with customers and meeting their needs while making profit (Ravald & Grönroos, 1996; Christopher, Payne & Ballantyne, 2013). Digital marketing communication, the latest and most advanced technique of communication with the target market, is gradually taking an increasing role in every successful marketing strategy (Weinberg & Pehlivan, 2011; Tiago & Veríssimo, 2014). The Internet has no boundaries, nor working hours, which enabled its conversion from just another medium to the fastest growing one (Lagrosen, 2005). Since its use for business purposes has completely changed the global market, it has become one of the most important technologies in the tourism market as well.

1. THE INFLUENCE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES ON TOURISM

The development of new information technologies, especially the Internet, has led to changes in the approaches of applying marketing in tourism in many ways (Nelson, 1998; Popesku, 2016): First of all, mass marketing has evolved to data base marketing in order to precisely target customers interested in the product or service, while mass media have been replaced by interactive media; secondly, market share is no longer considered enough, it is the relationships with customers which are the most important indicators of successful marketing strategy; lastly, customer service has become more important than sales, whereas importance of technological sophistication has overcome the importance of creativity. In the information society we live in, new information technologies have revolutionized business operations throughout the world, causing radical organizational changes in the tourism sector as well (Buhalis & Law, 2008; Xiang, Magnini, & Fesenmaier, 2015), especially in the field of sales and distribution, as well as in the additional elements of tourist activities such as searching for information, booking and purchase of tourism products and services.

New information technologies improve the performance of all companies in the sector, as well as the way the variety of tourist services are offered (Law, Buhalis & Cobanoglu, 2014), and therefore they play the key role in the marketing activities of tourist companies. Modern tourists expect to get personalized access to tourism information at any time, from anywhere (Schwinger, Grün, Pröll, & Retschitzegger, 2009), and therefore they use the Internet in order to receive instant information, to have the possibility of developing or adapting tourist product to their own preferences, and finally, to pay it online. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development called „E-Tourism Initiative" emphasized the importance of the Internet and information technologies in the tourism sector more than a decade ago (UNCTAD, 2004). It was established at this conference that the Internet is one of the most important components of the rapid growth of tourism industry, primarily because it allows every potential tourist instantaneous and easy access to all the information they are interested about. In addition, it was noted that information technologies stimulate the rise of a new type of tourism called e-tourism, which is based on trips adapted to the wishes of individual tourists, i.e. „à la carte" trips.

1.1. Web 2.0, Web 3.0 and Tourism 2.0

The development of Internet brought numerous tools available for its users (Buhalis & Law, 2008), as well as new ways of searching for any information the users are interested in (Lagrosen, 2005). These tools are known as technologies and applications of Web 2.0. This term was first used in 2004 (O'Reilly, 2009) to describe a new way of using the World Wide Web by software developers and the end users characterized by user participation, openness and network effects (Musser & O'Reilly, 2007; Del Chiappa, 2011). At that moment, the World Wide Web began to be treated as a platform where the content is not created and published by the individuals, but it is continuously created and modified by all the users with the goal of cooperation (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Previous stage of the Web, known as Web 1.0, functioned only in one direction - the read-only format (Borges, 2009). Web 1.0 was characterized by strict and well-established internet sites that were just providing information about products and services, and served only as a presentation to the users without any possibility of interaction with them. However, in recent years another new concept arose in the world of software development, the concept of Web 3.0. One main problem with the clear definition of the concepts Web 1.0, Web 2.0 and Web 3.0 is that they do not reflect the actual technological transformation of the Internet (Finnemann, 2010; Barassi & Treré, 2012) and they do not imply replacement of one Internet platform with another one. Fuchs et al. (2010) highlights the importance of understanding the Internet as an integrated techno-social system in which different applications and Internet development phases coexist. The same group pf authors define the Web 1.0 as a Web of cognition, Web 2.0 as a Web of human communication, and Web 3.0 as a Web of co-operation (Barassi & Treré, 2012). The most important feature of Web 2.0 and Web 3.0, and the biggest difference between them and Web 1.0, is the active participation and mutual cooperation of all the users in production, use and further spread of information. Given the fact that the information is essential to tourism, the use and diffusion of Web 2.0 and Web 3.0 technologies have a substantial impact of both tourism demand and supply (Sigala, 2007).

The evolution of internet sites related to travel arising from the Web 2.0 and 3.0, i.e. the generations of Internet that encourage and initiate participation and collaboration among users, have led to the development of the concept of Travel 2.0 (Adam, Cobos & Liu, 2007; Schmallegger & Carson, 2008). This

concept is based on various internet sites that allow tourists to publicly express what they feel and experience every moment of their trip and to share this information with other users (Munoz-Leiva, Hernández-Méndez & Sánchez-Fernández, 2012). With the help of new applications and internet sites available within the Travel 2.0, tourists are able to find more useful and personalized information that is tailored to their tastes and preferences (Doolin, Burgess & Cooper, 2002), enabling them to quickly and easily find the desired destination or hotel (Brown & Chalmers, 2003). In addition, the web sites allow visitors to find information related to travel without the need for intermediaries (Sigala, Christou & Gretzel, 2012). Authors Gretzel and Yoo (2008) point out that the information created as a result of cooperation between users is playing an increasingly important role in the travel decision-making process, while Chang and Buhalis (2008) argue that the information created by the tourists themselves is the most important factor while choosing tourist destinations. O'Connor (2008) explains that the Internet has become a place where users can share their experience with others in order to help them make better decisions, and that an increasing amount of consumer-generated content available on the Internet affects greatly the decision-making process of other users.

The Internet has completely changed the way we distribute travel-related information, as well as the way tourists access information, plan and book their trips and share travel experiences (Senecal & Nantel, 2004; Buhalis & Law 2008; Xiang & Gretzel, 2010). Xiang and Gretzel (2010) claim that there are two megatrends on the Internet that significantly affect the tourism sector. One of them is the omnipresent Internet search while looking for travel-related information. Search engines have become a powerful link between tourists and travel-related information available on the Internet, as well as an important marketing channel through which destinations and tourist companies can make contact with potential tourists (Xiang, Wöber & Fesenmaier, 2008; Xiang & Gretzel, 2010). On the other hand, social media representing various forms of consumer-generated content shared on various internet sites have gained significant popularity in the use of the Internet by tourists (Gretzel, 2006; Pan, MacLaurin & Crotts, 2007; Xiang & Gretzel, 2010). With the growing use of social media, consumers gain significantly more power in product development and distribution of information on the Internet (Friedman, 2006; Xiang & Gretzel, 2010). In addition, Thevenot (2007) points to the fact that as the

popularity of social media continues to grow, the users are gaining more power, while the marketers and the companies are losing it. That way, tourist companies no longer have complete control over the image of tourism destinations, products or services.

The whole concept of Web 2.0 was developed precisely due to the rising use of social media and the possibility of sharing opinions and experiences with other users with similar interests through technology (Brake & Safko, 2009). As tourism is an „information rich business" (Gretzel, Yuan & Fesenmaier, 2000. p. 147) social media are extremely important for the tourism sector. Using social media enables tourists to access a wealth of information about their future travel, which helps them make the right decision about the tourism destination, accommodation, restaurants and attractions (Hays, Page & Buhalis, 2013), thus becoming an essential part of searching travel-related information (Leung, Law, Van Hoof & Buhalis, 2013). Tourists have always relied on recommendations of others while choosing tourist products, and nowadays the Internet and social media have become an inexhaustible source of referrals. Tourism products and services are intangible; therefore, the recommendations of other tourists significantly influence one's willingness to purchase (Litvin, Goldsmith & Pan, 2008). Online travel communities have become a source of credible information to potential tourists because they provide valuable criticisms and recommendations (Chung & Buhalis, 2008).

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The paper will show the results of the research conducted in order to investigate the degree that Serbian tourists rely on digital media while choosing a tourism destination and making additional travel choices. The study aims to demonstrate the importance of the use of digital media in modern tourism, as well as to identify the digital media the tourists in the Republic of Serbia mostly rely on. In order to determine the degree of use of digital media for the purposes of choosing a tourism destination and making additional travel choices, a questionnaire was used for data collection. All the questions were multiple-answer questions. The questionnaire was created using *Typeform* software that allows the creation of conditional questions, i.e. the possibility that the next displayed question depends on the answer to the previous one. As a result, the number of questions the respondents answered to depended on their previous answers. The

survey was conducted online on a random sample of the population of the Republic of Serbia and lasted from March 30, 2016 to April 15, 2016. The data collected were analyzed using the statistical analysis software SPSS, version 23. The questionnaire was answered by a total of 444 respondents. The research was based on the following hypotheses:

General hypothesis:
H0 – Tourists rely on digital media to a great extent while choosing a tourism destination.

Specific hypotheses:
H1 – Younger tourist are more prone to relying on digital media than the older ones.
H2 – Search engine results are the most important digital media used while choosing a tourism destination.
H3 – Tourists prefer organic search results over the sponsored ones.
H4 – After choosing tourism destinations, most of the tourists use the Internet in order to book or purchase additional elements of their trip.
H5 - Facebook is the social network most tourist use during and after their trip for sharing travel-related content.

In order to test the general and specific hypotheses, appropriate scientific methods were used. For collecting the relevant facts and data, the following scientific methods were used:

- Analysis of data collected using the foreign and domestic literature and electronic sources allowed the indication of the role and importance of digital marketing in modern tourism.
- Descriptive method was used to present the characteristics and features of digital marketing and its elements in general.
- Deductive method allowed drawing conclusions about the possibilities of using digital marketing in tourism sector based on the use of digital marketing in general.
- Synthetic and verification methods were used in order to verify the hypotheses of the research.
- Survey method was used in data collection with the aim of investigating the degree that Serbian tourists rely on digital media while choosing a tourism destination and making additional travel choices.
- Statistical methods include Chi-Square Test, Correlation Test and One-Sample Binominal Test.
- Descriptive statistics were used for the measurement and processing of data obtained from the research.
- Synthesis method was used to consolidate all the research results.
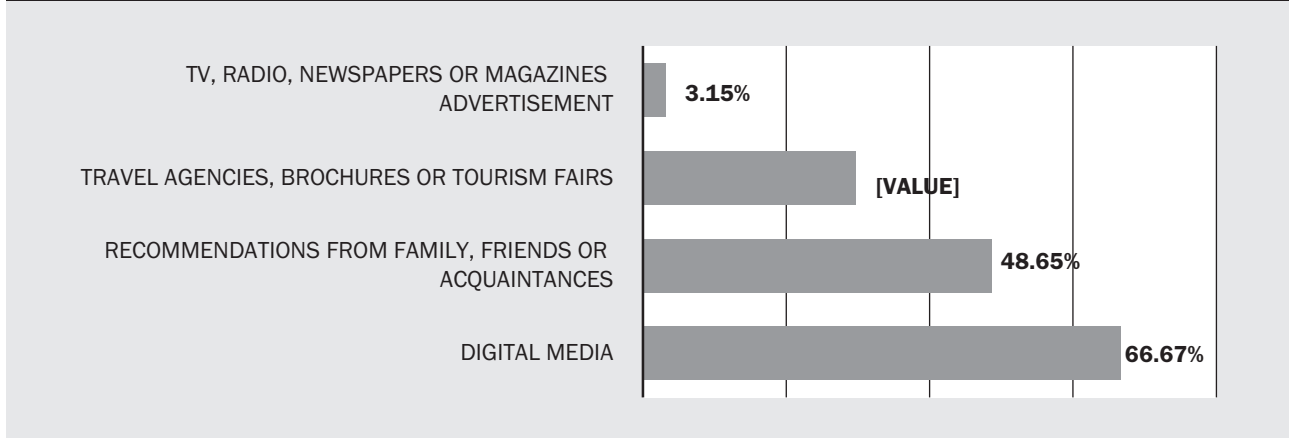
3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The beginning of the questionnaire provides an insight into the basic information about the respondents - their gender, age and level of education. There were more female respondents than the male ones - 58.6% were female while 41.4% were male. When it comes to their age, majority of the respondents was between 20

TABLE 1: Respondents according to their gender, age and level of education

P3 Level of education			Younger than 20	20 - 29	30 - 39	40 - 49	50 - 59	Older than 60	Total
High school	P1 Gender	Female	6	12	6	5	3	1	33
		Male	7	10	13	3	4	0	37
	Total		13	22	19	8	7	1	70
Associate degree	P1 Gender	Female	2	5	6	2	4		19
		Male	0	13	8	1	4		26
	Total		2	18	14	3	8		45
Bechelor's degree	P1 Gender	Female	1	66	27	7	7	2	110
		Male	0	23	21	2	7	3	56
	Total		1	89	48	9	14	5	166
Master's or PhD degree	P1 Gender	Female		34	35	22	4	3	98
		Male		18	28	8	7	4	65
	Total			52	63	30	11	7	163
Total	P1 Gender	Female	9	117	74	36	18	6	260
		Male	7	64	70	14	22	7	184
	Total		16	181	144	50	40	13	444

FIGURE 1: Main source of information while choosing tourism destination

- TV, RADIO, NEWSPAPERS OR MAGAZINES ADVERTISEMENT — 3.15%
- TRAVEL AGENCIES, BROCHURES OR TOURISM FAIRS — [VALUE]
- RECOMMENDATIONS FROM FAMILY, FRIENDS OR ACQUAINTANCES — 48.65%
- DIGITAL MEDIA — 66.67%

and 29 years old, that is, 40.8% of them; 32.4% of the respondents was between 30 and 39 years old, 11.3% of them was between 40 and 49 years old, 9% was between 50 and 59 years old, 3.6% of the respondents was younger than 20, while 2.9% of them were older than 60. When it comes to their level of education, the majority of the respondents hold the faculty degree - 37.4% of them hold the bachelor's degree, while 36.7% o the respondents hold the masters or PhD degree. 15.8% of the respondents have a high school degree, and 10.1% of them hold the associate degree. Table 1 represents cross tabulation of the respondents according to their gender, age and level of education.

The initial step of the research was to determine whether the respondents use digital media for choosing tourism destination and to what extent. The results presented in Figure 1 clearly show that most of the respondents do rely on digital media while choosing tourism destination for their next trip. Considering the fact that two-thirds of the respondents opted for digital media, the general hypothesis H0, claiming that tourists rely on digital media to a great extent while choosing a tourism destination, is retained. Since the purpose of the research was to determine the degree of use of digital media for the purposes of choosing a tourism destination and making additional travel choices, the following questions were all related to digital media. Due to the fact that the respondents who did not opt for digital media would not provide any relevant information while answering to the following questions, for them this was the final question they answered to. The remaining questions were answered by a total of 296 respondents.

As it can be concluded from the results presented, the degree of use of digital media for the purposes of choosing tourism destination is quite high. However,

TABLE 2: Chi-Square Test and Correlation Test – retaining hypothesis H1

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	21.324[a]	5	.001
Likelihood Ratio	20.604	5	.001
Linear-by-Linear Association	10.634	1	.001
N of Valid Cases	444		

		Value	Asymptotic Standardized Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Contingency Coefficient	.214			.001
Interval by Interval	Pearson's R	-.155	.050	-3.297	.001[c]
Ordinal by Ordinal	Spearman Correlation	-.137	.049	-2.911	.004[c]
N of Valid Cases		444			

Table 3: Respondents according to their age and use of digital media

			Age		Total
			Older than 40	Younger than 40	
Digital media (web pages, social media)	No	Count	45	103	148
		% of Total	10.1%	23.2%	33.3%
	Yes	Count	58	238	296
		% of Total	13.1%	53.6%	66.7%
Total		Count	103	341	444
		% of Total	23.2%	76.8%	100.0%

the question arises whether the use of digital media for choosing tourism destination is equal across all age groups, i.e. whether it depends on the age of the respondents. In order to test the specific hypothesis H1 claiming that younger tourists are more prone to relying on digital media than the older ones, Chi-Square Test was performed. The test results represented in Table 2 show that the significance value is very low, that is, 0.001, therefore it can be concluded that the degree of relying on digital media depends on the age of the respondents. In addition, the degree of correlation of -0.137, although a weak correlation, indicates that the degree of use of digital media increases as the age of the respondents decreases.

In order to further confirm this statement, the respondents were divided into two groups – younger than 40 and older than 40, since 40 years old was the mean value of the age groups offered in the questionnaire. Table 3 shows the number of respondents who use or do not use digital media depending on whether they are younger or older than 40, while Figure 2 shows the number of users younger than 40 and users older than 40 who rely on digital media.

The results show that as much as 80.41% of the respondents that rely on digital media are younger than 40, while only 19.59% of them are older than 40, leading to the conclusion that the hypothesis H2, claiming that younger tourists are more prone to relying on digital media than the older ones, is retained.

The following step was to establish the specific digital media the respondents mostly rely on while choosing a tourism destination. The data collected shows that the predominant choice of digital media used for choosing a tourism destination is tourists' own internet search. As it can be seen in the results presented in Figure 3, 75.7% of the respondents rely on the results of their own Internet search, therefore it can be concluded that the hypothesis H3, claiming that search engine results are the most important digital media used while choosing a tourism destination, is retained.

The respondents who rely on search engine results were asked to determine whether it is important for them if the search engine results are organic or sponsored and if they prefer one of them. The results are the following: 25.89% of the respondents mostly choose organic results, 6.69% of them always choose organic results, and 4.02% of the respondents mostly choose sponsored results, while 0.45% of them claim to always choose sponsored results. However, somewhat surprisingly, for the vast majority of the respondents, i.e. for 62.95% of them, it does not matter whether the results are organic or sponsored; they choose the result that best answers to their search query. In order to

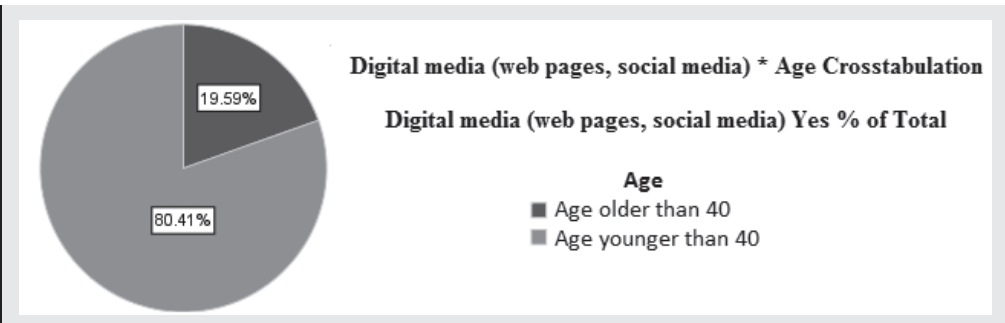**Figure 2:** The respondents who rely on digital media according to their age
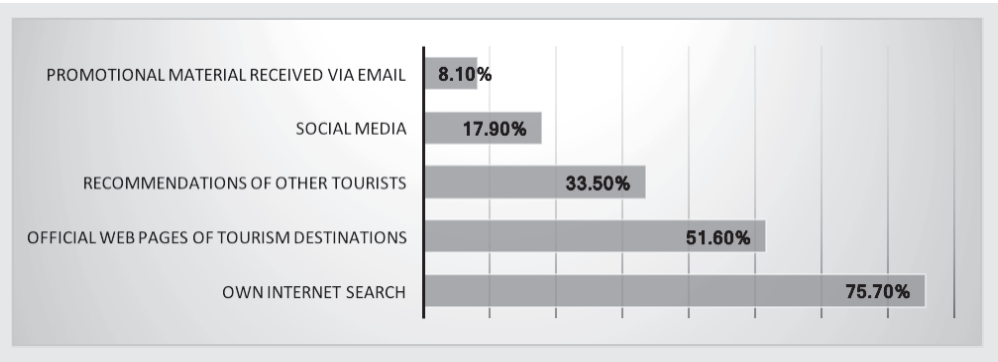
FIGURE 3: The specific digital media the respondents mostly rely on while choosing a tourism destination

PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL RECEIVED VIA EMAIL	8.10%
SOCIAL MEDIA	17.90%
RECOMMENDATIONS OF OTHER TOURISTS	33.50%
OFFICIAL WEB PAGES OF TOURISM DESTINATIONS	51.60%
OWN INTERNET SEARCH	75.70%

make an assumption on the basis of the sample about the percentage of tourists in general population that do not differentiate between the organic and sponsored search engine results, a new variable was created in SPSS called "Difference". The variable contains two values – "I differentiate" and "I do not differentiate". Therefore, the specific choice of the results the respondents prefer is disregarded; the only important information is whether they differentiate them or not. After performing the One-Sample Binominal Test and testing different proportions, we can draw a conclusion that the percentage of tourists that do not differentiate organic results from the sponsored ones is between 58% and 68%. Considering the results of the One-Sample Binominal Test shown in Table 4, the hypothesis H3, claiming that tourists prefer organic search results over the sponsored ones is rejected.

The following step was to establish whether the respondents use the Internet in order to book or purchase additional elements of their trip. The overall results show that only 27.7% of the respondents do not use the Internet in order to book or purchase additional elements of their trip, while 72.3% of them do. Those who do use the Internet for booking or purchasing additional elements of their trip declared that they do it for the following reasons: 67.57% of the respondents book or purchase accommodation, 33.78% of them book or purchase ticket for different means

of transportation, while 20.5% of the respondents use the Internet in order to book or purchase tickets for the attractions in the tourism destination they are visiting. Before retaining the hypothesis H4, a new variable was created in SPSS called "PurchasingOverTheInternet", which contains two values – "Yes" and "No". Thus, the value „Yes" is assigned to the respondents who use the Internet in order to book or purchase any element of their trip, while the value „No" is assigned to the respondents who do not use the Internet to book or purchase any element of their trip. After performing the One-Sample Binominal Test and testing different proportions, we can draw a conclusion that the percentage of tourists that use the Internet in order to book or purchase additional elements of their trip is between 68% and 76%. Considering the results of the One-Sample Binominal Test shown in Table 5, the hypothesis H4, claiming that after choosing tourism destinations, most of the tourists use the Internet in order to book or purchase additional elements of their trip, is retained.

The respondents were also asked to select the travel-related content they are most likely to share on social media during or after their trip. Only 27.7% of the respondents declared that they do not share travel-related content on social media. The rest of the respondents answered in the following way: 60.5% share their travel photographs, 23.6% check-in on

TABLE 4: One-Sample Binominal Test – The difference between organic and sponsored search engine results

	Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig.	Decision		Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig.	Decision
1	The categories defined by Difference = I do not differentiate and I differentiate occur with probabilities 0.57 and 0.43.	One-Sample Binomial Test	.042	Reject the null hypothesis.	1	The categories defined by Difference = I do not differentiate and I differentiate occur with probabilities 0.58 and 0.42.	One-Sample Binomial Test	.076	Retain the null hypothesis.
	Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig.	Decision		Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig.	Decision
1	The categories defined by Difference = I do not differentiate and I differentiate occur with probabilities 0.68 and 0.32.	One-Sample Binomial Test	.061	Retain the null hypothesis.	1	The categories defined by Difference = I do not differentiate and I differentiate occur with probabilities 0.69 and 0.31.	One-Sample Binomial Test	.030	Reject the null hypothesis.

TABLE 5: One-Sample Binominal Test – Using the Internet for booking or purchasing additional elements of the trip

	Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig.	Decision		Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig.	Decision
1	The categories defined by PurchasingOverTheInternet = Yes and No occur with probabilities 0.67 and 0.33.	One-Sample Binomial Test	.030	Reject the null hypothesis.	1	The categories defined by PurchasingOverTheInternet = Yes and No occur with probabilities 0.68 and 0.32.	One-Sample Binomial Test	.064	Retain the null hypothesis.

	Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig.	Decision		Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig.	Decision
1	The categories defined by PurchasingOverTheInternet = Yes and No occur with probabilities 0.76 and 0.24.	One-Sample Binomial Test	.077	Retain the null hypothesis.	1	The categories defined by PurchasingOverTheInternet = Yes and No occur with probabilities 0.77 and 0.23.	One-Sample Binomial Test	.032	Reject the null hypothesis.

Facebook while travelling, 17.2% share travel-related statuses on Facebook, 12.5% share travel videos, 5.7% write in forums about their experience, 4.05% tweet about their trip and 2.4% write a travel-related blog. Only the respondents who share travel-related photographs or videos were asked to determine the social media website they are most likely to share them on. The majority of the respondents chose Facebook – 92.1% of them share photographs and 81.1% share videos on this social network. Facebook is followed by Instagram where 52.5% of the respondents share their travel-related photographs, and 70.3% of them share videos. The rest of the social media were selected by significantly fewer respondents and can therefore be disregarded in this paper. In order to further prove that tourists mostly use Facebook for sharing travel-related content, the respondents were divided into two groups, those who selected Facebook for sharing at least one type of travel-related content, and those who did not select Facebook at all. Table 6 shows that 61.8% of the respondents use Facebook for sharing their travel-related content, while 38.2% of them do not. Therefore, the hypothesis H5 claiming that Facebook is the social network most tourist use during and after their trip for sharing travel-related content is retained.

CONCLUSION

The Internet has become an indispensable part of modern life. Given the impact that it has had on our lives, it does not come as a surprise that it has become the core of every modern marketing strategy. Traditional media are losing the battle for the main source of information for tourists, while digital marketing activities are becoming more and more advanced and sophisticated every day. The possibilities of the Internet are growing every day. Various factors, such as easy and continuous access to the amplitude of information, reduction of costs of interaction, the ability of communication with anyone at any time, personalization of marketing activities and easily measured performance of commercial strategies, turned the Internet into the most important medium of the present. Modern tourists are extremely demanding and their needs are very specific, mainly due to the large amount of information available on the Internet that enables them to easily find the products that are best adapted to their budget and needs. In addition, as tourism activity is directly dependent on the amount of information available to the potential tourists, the Internet is an ideal place for advertising tourism products and services. Digital marketing has provided a variety of opportunities for progress to all companies and organizations in the tourism sector. Technological development of the Internet has created perfect conditions for tourist companies and organizations to

TABLE 6: Sharing travel-related content on Facebook

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	I do not share travel-related content on Facebook	113	38.2	38.2	38.2
	I share travel-related content on Facebook	183	61.8	61.8	100.0
	Total	296	100.0	100.0	

develop an intimate relationship with tourists and ensure their loyalty, something that was previously unimaginable at such low cost.

There are a number of conclusions that can be drawn from the data collected and presented in this paper. First of all, it can be concluded that the majority of tourists in the Republic of Serbia rely on digital media while choosing their tourism destination and making additional travel choices. However, not all generations rely on digital media equally – younger tourists are more prone to relying on digital media, while the older ones mostly rely on recommendations from friends and family while choosing a tourism destination. Search engine results are the most popular digital media used by tourists in order to choose tourism destination. In addition, as the respondents do not differentiate between sponsored and organic search engine results, the research indicates that it is necessary to equally invest in search engine optimization as well as in sponsored results. The research also pointed out that the respondents are prone to using the Internet to book or purchase additional elements of their trip. In addition, the research has clearly showed that Facebook is the leading social media used before, during and after the trip. Most of the respondents rely on this social network while choosing a tourism destination, as well as during or after the trip for sharing their travel-related content.

However, there are some limitations to the research presented. First of all, the respondents who did not choose digital media as their source of information while choosing for their next tourism destination were not asked why they do not rely on digital media. That question could have provided us with important information about respondents' opinions about digital media which could then be used as guidance for improving digital marketing activities of tourism related companies and organizations. Secondly, the number of respondents was fairly small. Finally, the background of the respondents was not versatile enough, that is, the number of male and female respondents was not the same, the age groups were not equally represented, as well as the level of education of the respondents. In conclusion, further research with mentioned additions and improvements is advised.

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Apstrakt:

Veza između digitalnih medija i donošenja odluka u vezi sa putovanjima

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Razvoj novih informacionih tehnologija, pre svega interneta, doveo je do brojnih promena načina primene marketinga u turizmu. Usled ovih okolnosti, digitalni marketing postepeno preuzima vodeću ulogu u svakoj modernoj marketing strategiji u turizmu. Kako svet postaje sve povezaniji, ići u korak sa novim dostignućima i trendovima i prilagođavanje *online* sferi poslovanja je od ključnog značaja za sva turistička preduzeća i organizacije koje žele da održe svoj trenutni uspeh i privuku nove turiste. Digitalna revolucija je zauvek promenila način na koji mediji funkcionišu, a promene koje je donela su konstantne i duboke. Cilj ovog rada je da predstavi ulogu i važnost primene digitalnog marketinga u modernom turizmu. U skladu sa tim, u radu će biti predstavljeni rezultati istraživanja o stepenu upotrebe digitalnih medija od strane turista u Republici Srbiji u svrhe izbora turističke destinacije i dodatnih elemenata putovanja. Prikupljeni podaci su analizirani korišćenjem softvera za statističku analizu SPSS, verzija 23.

Ključne reči: društveni mediji, Internet 2.0, Internet 3.0, Turizam 2.0.

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