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COMMUNICATING TOURISM EVENTS

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Abstract

Preferences of contemporary tourists are oriented towards an integrated tourist product which will not only meet, but also exceed their expectations. The tourist offer anticipated these demands by offering tourism events whose basic purpose is to create a unique experience. The basic problem in the realization of an event is communication of the event to targeted demand. The objective of the paper is finding a potential model of successful communication of tourism events in tourist destinations. The subject of analysis in the paper are the most important elements which are framework of strategic decision-making in the forming of tourist offer, as well as benchmarking analysis of tourist destinations of Opatija and Tarragona. Proposal of optimal and effective communication channels on the tourism market is based on the conducted analyses. Scientific methods of analysis and synthesis, historical, statistical methods, methods of comparison and methods of induction and deduction are used in the paper.

Keywords: tourism of events, communication, destination product

1. INTRODUCTION

The primary aim of this research was to find a potential model of successful communication of tourism events in tourism destination. For the purpose of the paper two tourist destinations will be analyzed, Opatija and city of Tarragona. The focus of analyses will be their communication of tourism events with the tourist demand. Tourism is the fastest-growing global economic sector which develops much faster than other sectors, regardless of all the economic changes conditioned by the world economic crisis. Thanks to its complexity and permeation with many other economic branches, tourism needs to constantly adapt to the new trends in order to realize the most important motive of tourists' satisfaction, which is experience. Tourism of experience, as it is called by Getz (Getz, 1997, p.16) is described as planning, development and marketing of tourism events in the form of tourist attractions whose primary task is to maximize the number of tourists as a participant in tourism events as a form of primary or secondary tourists' motives. The basic problem in the realization of tourism events is communicating the events to the target demand. Russo and Borg (2002) point out that attraction of tourism events primarily depends on planning of the very event, but also on its promotion and interpretation, which point out the significance of the communication process which unfolds between tourism event management and the potential tourist demand. The process of communication and interaction with the visitors already starts at the origin of the travel (Russo and Borg, 2002, p. 634). This confirms the theory that good planned communication of tourism events is very important for a successful development of tourism destination.

2. COMMUNICATING TOURISM EVENTS IN A TOURIST DESTINATION

A precisely created communication plan of tourism events taking place in a tourist destination is the only true path to success considering the fact that one of the main tourists' reasons for travelling is fulfilling their need for experience. Destination management must overcome three key problems (Laws, 1995, p.123) in the communication system with the tourist market:

- Large spatial gap on the tourist market from the potential tourist supply to the tourists,
- Cultural differences among tourists, which are a relatively unknown concept to destination management,
- Insufficient focus on communication towards market segments with potential tourists in a tourist destination.

The solution to these problems may be found in different structures of communication- and distribution methods which will enable the right information to reach even the farthest target groups of tourists. It is important to make a distinction between the form of communication in which a tourist destination may influence tourists' decisions, and which segments may have an impact on their decisions (Chart 1).

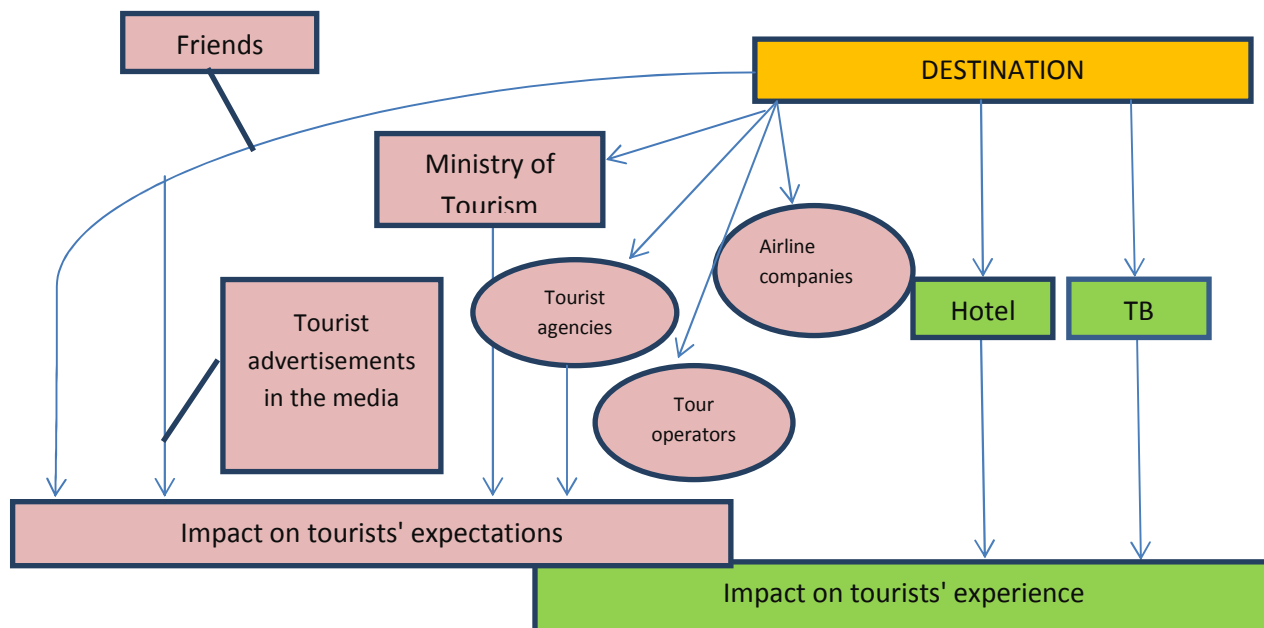


Chart 1. Graphic Display of Communication of a Tourist Destination and the Impact on Tourists' Expectations and Experience

Source: Adapted according to Laws, E., 1995., p. 123.

In the communication towards the tourist demand, a tourist destination covers two segments each tourist is interested in; expectation, a product of creating an idea of a tourist destination and the very experience of a tourist destination. Communication channels like tourist advertisements in the media, tourist agencies, tour operators, etc. have an impact on tourists' expectations, while tourists' experience is influenced through communication channels of hotels and tourist boards. The presentation and analysis of tourist trade in the town of Opatija and the Spanish town of Tarragona follow in the paper. A benchmarking analysis is also conducted, on the basis of which guidelines are adopted for organization of successful communication of tourism events in a destination.

3. ANALYSIS OF THE TOURIST DESTINATION OF OPATIJA

The tourist destination of Opatija has been recognized by tourists since 1844, when the first hotel was built. Opatija's tourist tradition is indisputable. All the elements of a modern tourist product were developed through its 170 years of continuous tourism activities. Opatija is one of the most renowned and oldest winter resorts, but also summer bathing resorts on the Mediterranean. Tourism development in Opatija as a tourist destination is based on the following preconditions:

- A long tourist tradition,
- Vicinity of emitive European countries,
- Exceptional natural characteristics of a Mediterranean destination,
- A great number of accommodation facilities,
- Significance of Mediterranean tourist destinations in world tourist developments,
- Predicting the growth of the tourist trade in the Republic of Croatia.

It is pointed out that Opatija's tourist reputation largely stems from successful communication which unfolds daily between Opatija's tourist supply and tourist demand. The

concept of modern tourists is complex and preoccupied with all the aspects of the tourist supply which tries to adapt to the latest trends. The question is posed: how successful, and in what manner. Research indicate that modern tourists are exceptionally sophisticated, self-confident, that they recognize „value for money“ and that they are in constant search for experience. However, the secret of any successful tourist destination is in the offer of special experience which the tourist will recognize as interesting and worth of his attention. Opatija, as a tourist destination, has so far attempted to successfully fulfill the demands of its tourists who are searching for historical and artistic programs and natural beauties, and it is now facing a new demand – provision of an extra experience. Tourism events are elements which add a note of recognisability to any destination, under the assumption that these tourism events are communicated to the target tourist group in a successful manner. As a town of rich tourism history, Opatija selected the best elements in the creation of the supply of tourism events which complete the image of a tourist destination with a rich tourist supply. Statistical indicators support the above-mentioned theory and indicate an important role of Opatija in total tourism of the Republic of Croatia. Indicators of the structure of arrivals and overnights in the town of Opatija are presented in the following table.

Table 1

Structure of Arrivals and Overnights in the Town of Opatija





































Year	Arrivals			Overnights		
	Total	Domestic in %	Foreign in %	Total	Domestic in %	Foreign in %
2005	288.852	23,4	76,6	1.034.552	18,2	81,8
2006	317.025	25,7	74,3	1.069.522	18,9	81,1
2007	329.045	24,0	76,0	1.069.303	18,1	81,9
2008	337.468	25,4	74,6	1.094.353	19,1	80,9
2009	323.545	22,2	77,8	991.055	17,3	82,7
2010	331.383	19,5	80,5	1.024.347	15,6	84,4
2011	340.385	17,8	82,2	1.055.539	13,7	86,3

Source: Project 365 DAYS OF THE RIVIERA, Cerović et al., 2011, CBS 2012

The data indicate recognisability of the town of Opatija as a tourist destination by foreign tourists who have been recording notable increase in tourist arrivals and overnights year after year. Taking into consideration exceptionally favorable tourism results, it may be concluded that Opatija, as a tourist destination, undoubtedly has a quality tourist product, and it is important to point out that elements of this tourist product are diverse and complex, comprised of a series of different elements which fulfill the sophisticated tourists' needs. Some of the tourist products which are the basis of Opatija's tourist supply are presented in the following table.

Table 2

Opatija's Tourist Product

PRODUCTS	AVAILABILITY	DEVELOPMENT	SIGNIFICANCE	P O T E N T I A L
THE SUN AND THE SEA ➤ Six beaches with the Blue Flag; ➤ Attractive beaches				
CONFERENCE/BUSINESS TOURISM ➤ Hotel's conference facilities; ➤ Founded Conference Office and planned building of a Conference Centre				
HEALTH TOURISM/WELLNESS ➤ Hotel wellness offer and thalasso-wellness centre; ➤ Doctor's /dentist's offices				
CULTURAL TOURISM ➤ Attractive architectural heritage; ➤ The first Museum of Tourism; ➤ Numerous cultural events; ➤ Popular events				
NAVIGATION ➤ ACI Marina Opatija (345 berths) and the Marina of the Hotel Admiral (200 berths); ➤ A few regattas				
HIKING AND WALKING ➤ Offer of the Učka Nature Park; ➤ 12 km long coastal walkway				
Legend:	Availability	Development	Significance	Potential
	 high  medium  low	 fully developed product  developed product  partially developed product	 primary attraction  secondary attraction  tertiary attraction	 high  medium  low

Source: Kvarner: Strategic Marketing Plan of Tourism 2009-2015, Kvarner Tourist Board, Institute for Tourism, Zagreb, 2008, p. 9

In the presented table, tourism events are mentioned in the segment of cultural tourism. According to the research, they are characterized as a form of a tourist product with a high degree of availability and with satisfactory development. They stand out as a primary attraction with a high degree of potential development.

The question is, if there are relatively favorable preconditions for the forming of a tourist product in the form of tourism events, why is this form of tourist supply not recognized by the majority of the tourists which choose the town of Opatija for their holiday destination? Tourism events in Opatija are not the primary motive of tourists' arrival to the destination, which could be a disadvantage at a time when the tourist demand surpassed the tourist product which consists only from „the sun and the sea“ offer.

In order to analyze tourism framework of the town of Opatija in more detail, basic tourist indicators will be analyzed with the purpose of a more integral collection of information which are the basis for the benchmarking analysis of the towns of Opatija and Tarragona. This will also be the foundation on which potential solutions will be proposed in the conclusion, as well as proposals for improvement of the current tourist supply of the town of Opatija.

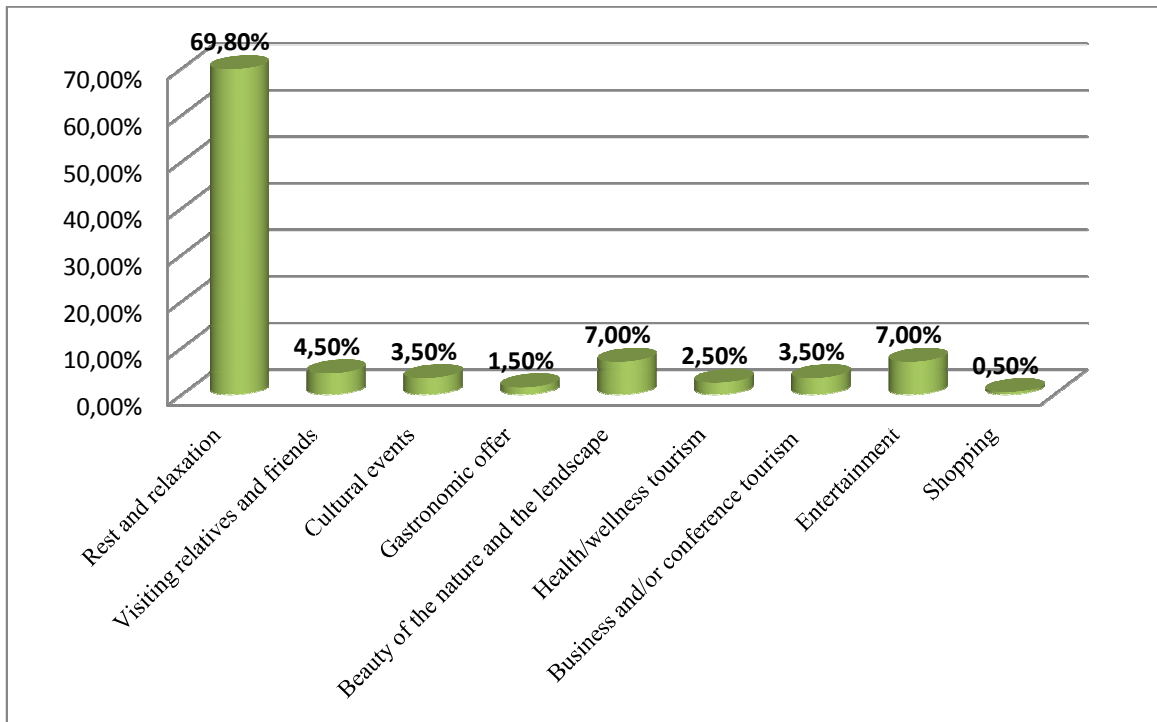


Figure 1 Analysis of the Motives of Tourists' Arrivals to the Town of Opatija

Source: *Project 365 DAYS OF THE RIVIERA*, Cerović et al., 2011

Analyzing the motives of tourists' arrivals to Opatija, it is evident that the predominant motive of tourists' arrivals is rest and relaxation (69,8%), and tourism events, especially cultural tourism events as a motive for tourists' arrivals, are ranked equally with business- and conference, and health/wellness motives. Opatija has numerous possibilities for branding these tourist segments through the promotion of communication with tourists, all with the objective to improve tourism results in the destination.

Analysis of the basic secondary motives of tourists' arrivals to Opatija indicated the conclusion that entertainment is on the fourth place, while cultural events take the fifth place on the scale of all the motives to visit Opatija, which is unsatisfactory. Over the long term, one of the most important tourism trends is ignored by Opatija's destination management. Opatija's destination management does not have a problem with lack of historical attractions or programs; the problem is rather insufficient and inadequate communication of the tourist supply of the town of Opatija to the tourist demand.

Analysis of the sources of information on the supply of cultural tourism events results in the indicators presented in Figure 2.

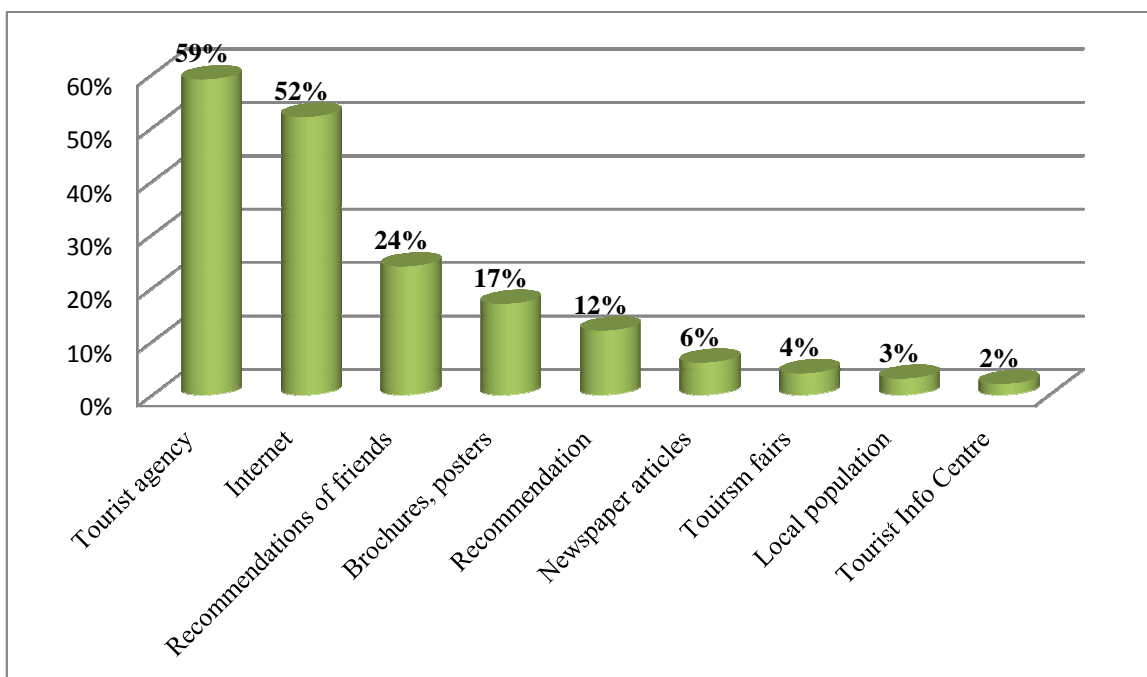


Figure 2 Sources of Information on Cultural Events in Opatija

Source: *Project 365 DAYS OF THE RIVIERA, Cerović et al., 2011.*

The analysis of the Figure implies the conclusion that a large percentage of communication between tourists and tourism events unfolds via tourist agencies, the Internet, through friends' recommendations, tourist brochures and posters. These communication channels are the source of creation of tourists' expectations. Tourists come to Opatija with the previously created image of the tourist destination, but it is questionable whether they by their arrival realized their desire for experiencing the destination. Statistical results for communication channels which should enable creation of tourists' experience are, according to this research, the lowest when it comes to the local population and tourist information centers (365 DAYS OF THE RIVIERA, Cerović et al., 2011). The question is whether this segment of communication, which was rated the lowest, is the key element because of which tourists do not consider Opatija a tourist destination which ensures the desired effect of stay in the destination through cultural tourism events, which constitutes experience.

4. ANALYSIS OF THE TOURIST DESTINATION OF TARRAGONA

The Mediterranean town of Tarragona is located in the Northeast coastal area of Spain in the county of Catalonia. The town of Tarragona has 134,000 inhabitants, pleasant climate with average temperature of 17 °C and 2,770 sunny hours yearly. Tarragona is one of the leading towns in the county of Catalonia in terms of economy, in the industrial and service sector. The most important characteristic of the town of Tarragona is its orientation to science and research which is manifested through numerous universities and institutes whose headquarters are located in this area.

According to the research which will later be presented in more detail, the rich university history will play the main role in the forming of the brand of this tourist destination. Also, contents of tourism events are adapted and significantly based on conference- and research facilities. The town's cultural segment should also be taken into consideration, because Tarragona was proclaimed the place of exceptional cultural heritage, because a large part of the town is under direct protection of the UNESCO. This proves Tarragona's uniqueness as a cultural destination

which is skillfully complemented with gastronomic and modern commercial facilities which guarantee great satisfaction of tourists.

In order to gain a better insight into tourism results of the town of Tarragona, several key tourist indicators are presented below. The structure and the number of accommodation facilities in the town of Tarragona are presented in the following table.

Table 3

The Structure of Accommodation Facilities in the Town of Tarragona (Number of Beds)

HOTELS/stars	2009.	2010.	2011.
1	119	119	106
2	280	280	224
3	954	954	954
4	1.497	1.097	1.097
5	0	26	0
TOTAL	2.850	2.476	2.381

Source: Data processing according to www.idescat.cat [03/12/2012]

The analysis of the number of beds according to hotel categories verifies the fact that the town of Tarragona's primary focus is on tourists of medium and high category of income, considering that, in the accommodation facilities structure, the predominant hotels are three-star and four-star hotels, while in 2011 there are no five-star hotels. Tarragona builds its target segment on the fact that it is a university science center, rather than on development of elite tourism. The number of tourists and overnights in Tarragona are presented below.

Table 4

The Number of Arrivals and Overnights of Tourists in Tarragona

	2009		2010		2011	
	Tourists	Overnights	Tourists	Overnights	Tourists	Overnights
Hotels	236.738	466.846	191.508	423.727	202.571	440.076
Camps	149.250	599.887	237.237	673.765	202.196	662.893
Total	430.988	1.046,733	428.745	1.097.492	404.767	1.102.969

Source: *Tarragona in figures, Tarragona City Hall, 2012*

In its statistical reports, the Town Administration of Tarragona systematically follows hotel occupancy, but also camp occupancy. Because of the particularities of the tourist offer, camps are especially significant in the structure of accommodation facilities. Tarragona realizes impressive tourism results, but it can still be pointed out that, because of the general situation, Spain is currently in a bad situation in national terms, i.e. in an extremely unfavorable economic situation, which resulted in the state of general discontent of the population, the sense of security has been significantly compromised, which probably reflected on somewhat poorer results in 2010. However, the proof that tourism is not affected by the global crisis, but rather the opposite, that it records progressive growth, is also indicated in the figure from which it is evident that, in 2011, Tarragona again recorded an increase in tourists' arrivals.

Analysis of the motives of tourists' arrivals to the destination of Tarragona identifies success of the communication with the tourist market. The following figure shows that the primary motive for tourists' arrivals to Tarragona is tourism, followed by travelers whose main motive for arrival is acquiring new knowledge and education.

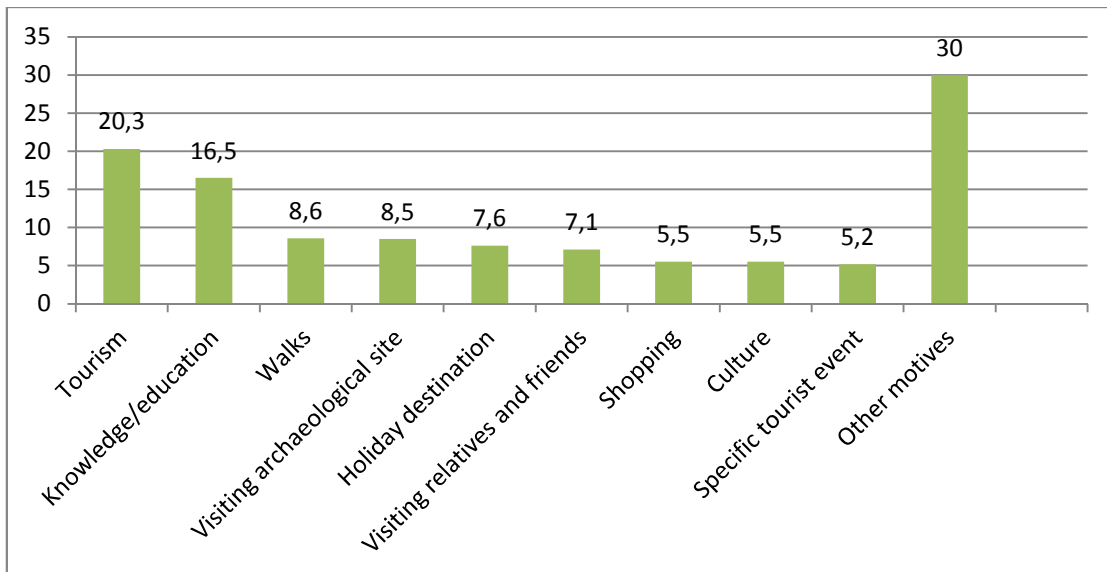


Figure 3 Analysis of the Motives for Tourists' Arrivals to Tarragona

Source: *Caracterització de la demanda turística, Marc – Setembre, 2011*

The most important thing to be pointed out in this tourist destination is the percentage of motives which are exclusively related to cultural and tourism events which, when they are summed up into a whole, amount to the high 11%. It may be concluded that the motive for arrival to the destination of Tarragona for a large number of visitors is visiting a tourist event, or another form of cultural events.

In accordance with the subject of the paper, some of the analyzed tourism indicators are conditioned by information sources by which tourists decided to visit Tarragona.

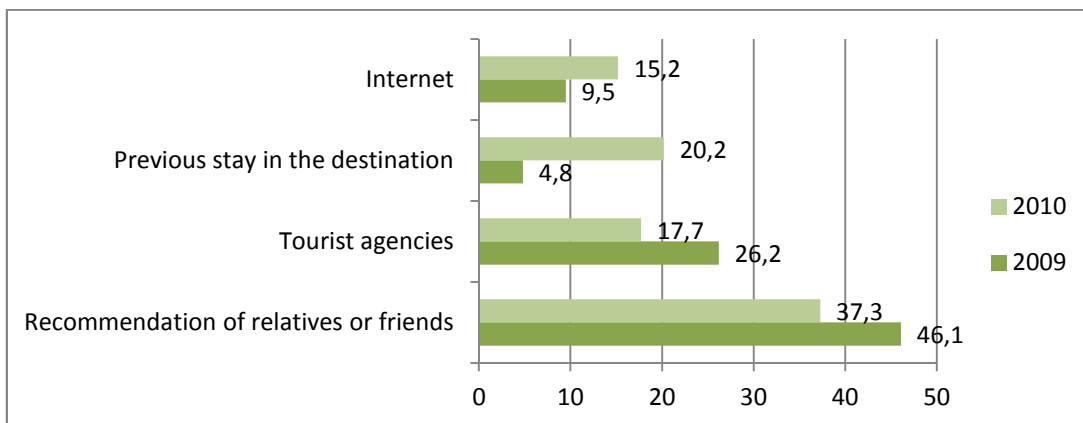


Figure 4 Figure 4. Sources of Tourist Information on Tarragona

Source: *Caracterització de la demanda turística, Marc 2010 - Febrer 2011*

The basic communication tools in the system of receiving information have drastically changed. Relatives and friends, or tourist agencies are no longer frequent sources of information;

the Internet and impressions the tourists had acquired during one of their previous stays in the destination have become more represented.

This very turning point in the trends of using communication channels may be significant for future tourism development in certain tourism segments. Communication forms which record growth are subject to manipulation and the tourist destination may define which elements of the tourist offer it will communicate more intensely to the tourist market, and which with less intensity.

According to all of the above, it should be pointed out that the tourist destination of Tarragona has been communicating its tourist advantages to the tourist market in a rather quality manner, placing the focus on its valuable cultural and historical heritage, and the long tradition of university town which still works on systematic promotion of its university values and quality.

5. BENCHMARKING ANALYSIS OF TOURIST DESTINATIONS OF OPATIJA AND TARRAGONA

According to the conducted research, some global common determinants of these tourist destinations may be set, which are:

- Characteristics of Mediterranean towns,
- Similar climate and natural conditions,
- Richness of historical and cultural heritage,
- Rich tourism tradition.

Particularities of tourist destinations of Opatija and Tarragona are defined in the following table in order to get a clearer idea of their possibilities for future tourism development.

Table 5

Particularities of Tourist Destinations of Opatija and Tarragona

OPATIJA	TARRAGONA
Rich tourism history History of development of health- and beach tourism Rich cultural resources (musicians, painters, poets, writers)	Rich scientific university history Significance of historical archaeological localities and buildings Possibility of development of sports resources (host of the Mediterranean Games 2017)

Source: Author's analysis

Regardless of all the similarities on the macro-level, tourism in these tourist destinations is not equally developed. The benchmarking analysis of the town of Opatija in comparison with its best competitor, the town of Tarragona, is presented below.

Table 6

The Benchmarking Analysis of Opatija and Tarragona

DESCRIPTION	Town of Opatija	Town of Tarragona
Number of inhabitants	11.659	134.000
Number of beds	5.609	2.381
Number of tourists	340.385	404.767
Number of overnights	1.055.539	1.102.969
Location	The Bay of Kvarner	Northeast coastal area of Spain, County of Catalonia

The most important characteristic of the destination	Long tourist tradition, cultural and health tourism	Cultural tourism (UNESCO), scientific research center
Motives of tourists' arrivals (according to rank)	1. Rest and relaxation 2. Cultural programs 3. Business and/or conference	1. Knowledge and schooling 2. Walks 3. Cultural facilities
Sources of tourist information (according to rank)	1. Tourist agencies 2. Internet 3. Recommendations of relatives and friends 4. Brochures and posters	1. Recommendations of relatives and friends 2. Tourist agencies 3. Previous stay in the destination 4. Internet

Source: Author's analysis

Taking into consideration the number of beds and the number of accommodation facilities in general, which is significantly higher in Opatija than in Tarragona (Opatija 5,609, and Tarragona 2,382 beds), Opatija is still in an unfavorable position. Maybe the problem lies in the disorganized destination management which is not synchronized with the possibilities and capacities of tourism development, or the problem of insufficient tourism development lies in inadequate communication on the tourist market. As stated above, successful communication is only the communication intended for the target segment of the tourist demand which reaches the end user at the right time and in the right manner.

The question is whether Opatija as a tourist destination recognizes the tourism segment and the target group it addresses through the communication channels. The tourist destination of Tarragona has skillfully combined its entire historical heritage in order to place the best elements of its tourist supply on the market, thanks to successful communication with the tourist market, by constantly developing all the accompanying facilities which support the basic elements of the supply. This implies building of infrastructure, transport links, availability of information. Tarragona became a branded and recognizable tourist- and scientific university center. Which are the particularities on which the tourist destination of Opatija should build its tourist offer?

The segment on which Opatija should base its future tourism activities could be the long, history-rooted tourism tradition. When World War I began, Opatija had about a dozen sanatoriums and some thirty physicians, with kings, emperors, composers and writers entered in the guest books, with a perfect infrastructure and a reputation as one of the most superior European health resorts (Mzur, 2000, p.15). The exquisite beauty of the current infrastructure should be only one of the elements which will be integrated into building of communication with the tourist market. The fact remains that destination management of Tarragona had recognized the possibilities and significance of quality communication with the tourist market long before Opatija, and used the communication for increasing tourist trade in its destination.

Also relevant is the fact that the tourist destination of Tarragona realizes a part of its communication with tourists through branded tourism events, which are a kind of a brand. On the basis of branded tourism events, through skillfully composed communication channels and tools, they also presented to the potential tourists all the other forms of Tarragona's tourist supply. Tarragona achieved its greatest communication success because of the use of historical resources under the protection of the UNESCO. In this way, they created a recognizable image of the tourist destination on the global tourist market.

Opatija, however, has significant advantages which may be of great importance for future tourism development provided that they are used in the right manner. Unlike Tarragona, Opatija needs relatively small investments to become an interesting „new“ destination to the target group of tourists, because insufficient communication, which was previously non-existent, may be transformed into a positive effect of „something new and yet unknown“, but provided that all future communication activities are implemented strategically, in a planned manner, and with a detailed, elaborated scenario for a longer period of time.

6. GUIDELINES FOR ORGANISATION OF SUCCESSFUL COMMUNICATION OF TOURISM EVENTS IN A DESTINATION

According to all the world trends, some of the most desirable tourist destinations are Mediterranean destinations which, because of their favorable climate- and landscape characteristics, correspond to the needs of modern tourists who want to combine favorable healthy elements and the beauty of nature. Because of the contemporary, stressful way of life, tourists want to devote attention to their health and healing during their travels, both psychological and physical. The new tourists', „explorers“ need to satisfy their „hunger“ for new knowledge in the segments of history, cultural heritage, and local customs should not be neglected.

These are favorable incentives for development of the total tourist supply of Opatija, and also for defining a successful communication strategy which will take place on the tourist market. In its historical origins of tourism, Opatija started building an image of a health center tourist destination, which is an element on which Opatija can again build its tourism development. However, this form of development must be in accordance with the current trends and demands of the tourist market. Combining the offer of tourism events as a framework for culture and entertainment with the elements of history and tradition which will serve as an extension of the primary health motives, it works as a possible positive solution for the tourist destination of Opatija. It is important to point out that this form of tourism development fulfills all the necessary criteria, natural and climatic characteristics, infrastructure and adequate human resources. The basic problem is lack of professionally managed developmental strategy, its design, implementation and, ultimately, communication to the tourist market. These elements are definitely not the only ones necessary for development of a tourist destination; emphasis is again placed on the „extra experience“ which tourists seek, and which can be achieved only through additional elements of the tourist supply, i.e. through tourism events. According to the above-mentioned research, it is evident that, when tourists arrive to a tourist destination, regardless of their primary motive of arrival, they gladly attend tourism events in any form – cultural, entertaining, historical, sports, etc. From the aspect of communication, there is a significant influence of modern information technologies which have a great impact on tourists' decision-making in choosing their tourist destination. Adequate implementation of information technologies in the communication systems will also create, and point out a brand of a certain tourism event on the potential tourist market, or the brand of the tourist destination, which provides the possibility to realize favorable tourism results.

In the process of defining communication forms, it is important to include all the elements of the tourist destination which are necessary in the making of strategic decisions. These strategic decisions include market segmentation, selection of the target market, and positioning on the tourist market.

Local population is the most important link in the communication chain towards tourists, especially when it comes to tourism events. Local population, by participation in the traditional tourism events, has the role of a living catalyst of positive communication of an individual tourism event and the tourist destination.

The offer of cultural tourism events is one of the strategic objectives of the tourist supply of the town of Opatija. Therefore, it is desirable to follow best practice examples which have proven that tourist experience is especially noticeable through participation of the local population in such a form of the tourist supply. For successful positioning on the tourist market, it is necessary to continuously expand, diversify and qualitatively improve the offer adapted to any individual tourist on the basis of qualitative changes in the destination management and the new system of values based on knowledge and synergy in the building of an integral product of the destination.

7. CONCLUSION

The subject of this paper is significance of communicating tourism events for achieving success in tourist destinations. For the purpose of the paper, the research was conducted in which the subject of analysis were tourism indicators of two tourist destinations, towns of Opatija and Tarragona. The objective of the paper is to point out the significance of communication of tourism events as agents of success of a tourist destination. Also, guidelines are proposed for organization of more successful communication of tourism events in the destination.

Branding is stated as one of the possible forms of successful communication, since the conclusion may be derived from the conducted research that recognition of the brand is the key factor of selection of the destination.

The benchmarking analysis of Opatija and Tarragona is presented in the paper. The analysis of tourism indicators of the town of Tarragona indicates that the entire tourist supply is based on strategic decisions on communicating the town of Tarragona as a cultural-historical and scientific-educational center. Tourists recognize the town of Tarragona as a tourist destination which, by its rich tourist facilities, guarantees fulfillment of tourists' needs for experience.

The town of Opatija, despite its natural and climatic similarities to the town of Tarragona, cannot match this successful tourist destination in terms of tourism. Rich tourism history and strong resource base are not sufficient elements of development of a successful tourist offer in the town of Opatija. The problem may be identified in the lack of vision and in the undefined strategy for which is responsible destination management of the town of Opatija. According to the research, all the indicators imply that tourists consider Opatija a destination favorable for holiday and relaxation, but that this destination does not sufficiently provide the feeling that their needs are fully satisfied. It cannot be concluded that the problem lies in the insufficient number of additional facilities. According to the research of the tourist supply (365 DAYS OF THE RIVIERA, Cerović, 2011), Opatija has a rich offer of tourism events, but the problem seems to be inadequate communication of additional facilities to the tourist demand.

Research analysis indicates that the main differences are in the habits of tourists who visit the towns of Opatija and Tarragona, in the manners and forms of dissemination of information regarding the destination. Tourists mostly visit the destination of Tarragona because of recommendations by relatives and friends, while tourist agencies and the Internet are on the second and third place. Tourists who visit Opatija state that their first form of receiving information are tourist agencies, followed by the Internet, and recommendations and other communication channels. It is necessary to recognize the advantages which the town of Opatija can use in this segment. Global use of modern information technologies provides the possibility to improve communication of tourism events of the town of Opatija on the tourist market.

In order to achieve successful communication of tourism events, it is necessary to recognize the advantages of the tourist destination which make it more interesting than others. Elements should be selected which can, through communication of the brand, be communicated in a quality manner to the target segment of the tourist demand. An important factor for successful communication of tourism events is also co-operation of destination management with the local population, which contributes to more intense tourists' experience of the destination.

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