

**THE MARKETING OF HUNTING TOURISM IN SOUTH-EAST HUNGARY****KÁROLY BODNÁR, KRISZTINA KÁLLAI, ERIKA SKOBRÁK BODNÁR**

University of Szeged Faculty of Agriculture  
Andrássy u. 15., H-6800 Hódmezővásárhely, Hungary  
bodnarkaroly.dr@gmail.com

**ABSTRACT**

The aim of this study was to highlight certain aspects concerning the hunting tourism activity in the Southern Great Plain Region in Hungary. The study is focused on the hunting tourism services provided both for domestic and foreign hunters (form of hunting, game species, guiding, accommodation, catering, etc.) by hunting associations and other enterprises and their appearance on the Internet. A SWOT analysis was carried out on the offers of hunting tourism activities and its marketing.

The developed marketing communication is not widespread at these regions, because only a few hunting lodges are advertised and can be found information on the Internet. It is more complicated to find websites about specifically the hunting lodges, and not just some words about them on the websites of hunting associations. On the other hand, some places have a well-managed website with adequate information, online booking, GPS coordination, and last but not least, an attracting design. A part of the hunting tourism providers still do not have any advertisements, their business is based on their previous partnership.

**Keywords:** hunting tourism, marketing, service providers, communication channels, South-East Hungary

**INTRODUCTION**

Rural tourism is a concept that treats the developed touristic activity in rural areas, organized and carried out by the local population and based on linkage of the natural, traditional and human environment. The classification of tourism of the accommodation units related to rural tourism, such as a coded form of the integration of the comfort level and of the scale of services, is based on reputation, a moral climate and a set of requirements, criteria and standards of services (FORIS, 2014).

As a segment of rural tourism, hunting-tourism is closely associated with a number of economic and non-economic activities, especially with forestry, agriculture, water management, sports, education, science, and others, because the hunting-tourism in the process of creating a 'product' relying on the rural resources. Segments of hunting-tourism offer are the non-economic activities provide the elements for completing the hunting-tourism by sports facilities, educational and cultural performances. Hunting-tourism is also correlated with industries such as lodging services, catering, transport, trade, crafts, and the supply of various essential items (vehicles, equipment), souvenirs and providing them with certain services (PRETOVIC ET AL., 2012).

Hunting tourism is one of the selective types of tourism that is based on the use of natural resources as the game and natural wildlife habitat are the main motive in hunting tourism trends. It is clear, that the hunting tourism is more developed in those areas where ecological, social and economic factors are favourable. In order to develop hunting tourism, it is necessary for the hunting ground to have attractive game species as well as the preserved natural environment. On the other hand, to invest in hunting, hunting is one of the most important sources of financing, because always a certain amount of funds generated through hunting tourism returns (MARKOVIC ET AL., 2012).

The main factors that contribute to the choice of tourism destinations identified by tourists are: the price, the quality of services, the offers hunting organisations or travel agencies, the reviews of friends, others (sites, specific publication) (TOADER ET AL., 2014).

The combination between „products” and services will determine the experience that the tourist will tell to his friends when he will return home. Therefore, the service provider is the one who needs to create the „story” of the hunting ground, containing the main elements they offer (CIOLAC ET AL., 2014).

In Hungary, the number of foreign guest hunters amounts to 23-25 thousand per year. Generally, they spend 3-5 days in the country, which is annually nearly 100 thousand nights. The majority of hunters arrive in the months of autumn and winter (hunting season), which is the low season from the point of view of tourism. Foreign hunters spend significant amounts of money on accommodation, meals, etc. apart from paying for the high-value trophy game. It is necessary to emphasise that receiving foreign guest hunters and providing them services could provide jobs for a lot of people (MARSELEK AND FABIAN, 2008).

This research is about to show those hunting lodges in the Southern Great Plain Region in Hungary, which appear on the Internet. The study covered Bács-Kiskun, Csongrád and Békés counties. It is very important for an accommodation to advertise itself on the Internet, because nowadays it is one of the biggest marketing surfaces, and if a place wants to increase its attendance, it is obvious to appear on the Internet too. Although there are plenty of hunting associations in these areas, just few of them have a website, and even less mention their accommodation facilities. If a foreign hunter wants to hunt in Hungary, and if he/she suffers from the lack of acquaintances in these regions, unfortunately it would be really difficult for him/her to find a website, where he/she can find information in foreign languages. The online marketing is essential because of not just the hunting guests, but a hunting lodge can reach wider audiences with the good kind of marketing, for example wedding ceremonies, conferences, professional developments, or just families who want to relax at a picturesque and peaceful place. Nowadays if a hunting lodge wants to be competitive, it has to extend its wide range of offers, but it can lure the mentioned guests with the appropriate developments. The aim of this research is to present the incidence of online marketing in these regions and make a SWOT analysis of the marketing of these hunting tourism facilities.

## **MATERIAL AND METHOD**

During the data collection the first step was the searching for the hunting associations in the Southern Great Plain Region, than to find their websites on the Internet. The following data were gained by questionnaires from the managers of the hunting lodges and were checked on the web pages:

- information about accommodation facilities (total capacity, number of rooms and beds, comfort category, private bath, cooking facilities),
- price of accommodation per night,
- the offered huntable game species,
- the spoken languages,
- the provided further services (professional guide, catering, wellness, etc.).

An interview was also carried out with the manager of the DALERD ZRT's hunting lodge. She also allowed us to make photos about the venue.

The data were aggregated by the counties and the type of services. The hunting associations were compared by their published offers. The recommendations were drafted

on the best practices which were found. The conclusions were summarized by SWOT analysis.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research started in Bács-Kiskun County, where hunting associations can be found in 82 cities, but only just a few have a website. The capacity number of beds, the number and type of rooms, the existence of bath in the room, the existence of kitchen and the prices were analysed (*Table 1*).

**Table 1. Accommodation facilities in Bács-Kiskun County**

Hunting lodge (firm)	Capacity number of beds	Number and type of rooms	Bath in the room	Kitchen	Price/day* (VAT included)
Bugaci hunting lodge (KEFAG) <a href="#">link</a>	15	1 triple room 6 double rooms	yes	yes	42 EUR/1 person 34 EUR/double + City tax
Kiskunfelegyhazi hunting lodge (Petöfi Vt.) <a href="#">link</a>	NA	NA	NA	NA	20 EUR
Saskalaposi hunting lodge (KEFAG) <a href="#">link</a>	10	5 double rooms	yes	NA	26 EUR/person + City tax
Panduri cabana (Gemenc Zrt.) <a href="#">link</a>	5	2 double rooms 1 single room	yes	yes	19 EUR/person
Porbolyi cabana (Gemenc Zrt.) <a href="#">link</a>	10	2 double rooms 2 triple rooms	yes	yes	19 EUR/person
Hajosszentgyorgyi cabana (Gemenc Zrt.) <a href="#">link</a>	10	5 double rooms	NA	yes	19 EUR/person
Lenesi hunting lodge (Gemenc Zrt.) <a href="#">link</a>	12 (+8 in another building)	2 apartments (double beds) 8 double rooms	yes	yes	NA

\* 1 EUR = 310 HUF

NA – Not available

Source: the authors

The Petöfi Hunting Association showed information about accommodation on its website, but it was the most incomplete, because only the price was mentioned, and there were pictures about it, but nothing else. It was easier to find hunting lodges on the Internet. The two biggest hunting associations with hunting lodges in this county were KEFAG and Gemenc Zrt.

KEFAG has hunting territory in Kerekegyháza, Nyíri forest, Császártöltés, Bugac, Mélykút (wild boar preserve) and Kelebia, but they have information about accommodations only about the one in Bugac and about the one which is called Sáskalaposi hunting lodge, and it can be found near to Kelebia. These hunting lodges did not have their own websites, but information about them can be found on the website of KEFAG.

Gemenc Zrt. is very famous in Hungary, they have an outstanding red deer population, and it is very popular amongst Hungarian and foreign hunters. That is why they have an advanced website with a lot of information about tourism, forest school, forest management and also wildlife management. They have hunting territory in Beda-Karapanca, Hajós-Homok, Lenes-Karasz and Gemenc, but only some of their hunting lodges can be found in Bács-Kiskun County. The Panduri and Pörbölyi cabana is located

near to Baja, the Hajósszentgyörgyi cabana is near to Érsekhalma and the Lenesi hunting lodge is next to Dusnok.

The Lenesi hunting lodge has the highest capacity number of beds because there are 2 buildings, and the worst one is Panduri cabana, because the hunting lodge in Kiskunfélegyháza did not show any data. Every accommodation has double rooms which mentioned it, but only the Panduri cabana has a single room. They all have bath in the room (if they mentioned it). The most expensive one is the hunting lodge in Bugac, and the cheapest ones are the Panduri, Pörbölyi and Hajósszentgyörgyi cabanas.

In Békés County can be found 18 hunting associations can be found and the biggest one is DALERD Zrt. (Table 2), which has hunting territory in Csongrád County too. The Bélmegyeri hunting castle is located in Bélmegyer, and there is the Landowner of Bélmegyer Wildlife Managing Hunting Association, but the Bélmegyeri hunting castle has an own website, and there is not mentioned this hunting association.

**Table 2. Accommodation facilities in Békés County**

Hunting lodge (firm)	Capacity number of beds	Number and type of rooms	Bath in the room	Kitchen	Price/day* (VAT included)
Belmegyeri hunting castle <a href="#">link</a>	36	17 rooms 2 apartments	yes	yes	29 EUR/single room 58 EUR/double room 81 EUR/apartment
Devaványai hunting lodge (Devaványa Vt.) <a href="#">link</a> , <a href="#">link</a>	22	3 four bedded rooms 3 double rooms	yes	yes	8 EUR/person/night
Sarkad-Remetei hunting lodge (DALERD Zrt.) <a href="#">link</a>	20	4 double bed rooms 6 double rooms	yes	yes	NA
Szanazugi hunting lodge (DALERD Zrt.) <a href="#">link</a>	18	4 four bedded houses 1 double bedded house	Houses with private baths	Houses with kitchenette	NA
Pósteleki hunting lodge <a href="#">link</a>	30	4 rooms	no	no	NA
Vadász guesthouse <a href="#">link</a>	NA	13 rooms	yes	yes	NA

\* 1 EUR = 310 HUF

NA – Not available

Source: the authors

The website is very advanced, there are English and German versions too, and people can book online. The Dévaványai hunting lodge do not have an own website, it can be found on the website of Dévaványa, and on other websites, and this accommodation is managed by Dévaványa hunting association.

The earlier mentioned DALERD Zrt. has two hunting lodges here. The Sarkad-Remetei one is located next to Sarkad, and the Szanazugi one can be found near Doboz. It does not have an own website. The Pósteleki hunting lodge is between Békéscsaba and Gyula, and it is not mentioned which hunting association can be found here. It does not have an own website, and it has just a few information. Finally the Vadász guesthouse is in Szabadkígyós, it has an own website with English and German versions.

The Bélmegyeri hunting castle has the most capacity number of beds, and the Szanazugi hunting lodge has the less of it. The Bélmegyeri, the Pósteleki and the Vadász guesthouse did not describe the types of rooms. Only the Pósteleki hunting lodge does not have baths

in the rooms, and kitchen. Only the BÉlme gyeri and Dévaványai hunting lodges featured the prices, so it cannot be compared to each other.

Csongrád County has 60 hunting associations, but only two hunting lodges can be found easily on the Internet (Table 3). The hunting lodge in Derekegyház does not have a website, but it is managed by DALERD Zrt., and they write about it on their website, and other booking sites too. The other one is the hunting house in Ásotthalom, it is also managed by DALERD Zrt, and does not have a website.

Derekegyház has higher capacity number of beds and has more types of rooms, both of them have bath in the room and kitchen, but only Derekegyház mentioned prices. They had notable improvement in their facilities in the last few years, if we compare our findings with the results of SKOBRÁK BODNÁR and BAJORHEGYI (2007).

**Table 3. Accommodation in Csongrád County**

Hunting lodge (firm)	Capacity number of beds	Number and type of rooms	Bath in the room	Kitchen	Price/day* (VAT included)
Derekegyházi hunting lodge (DALERD Zrt.) <a href="#">link</a>	30	2 single rooms 9 double rooms 2 double bedded rooms 2 apartments	yes	yes	23 EUR/single room 45 EUR/double room 87 EUR/apartment (3 persons)
Ásotthalmi hunting lodge (DALERD Zrt.) <a href="#">link</a>	8	1 double bedded apartment 3 double rooms	yes	yes	NA

\* 1 EUR = 310 HUF

NA – Not available

Source: the authors

The provided services, huntable games and spoken languages were analysed too (Tables 4-6). Only 3 hunting lodges did not provide (or just not mentioned) services. This is a small game area, but Gemenc has an outstanding red deer population too. Wild boar can be found in these areas too. The ones which show the spoken languages promise English and German.

The BÉlme gyeri and Sarkad-Remetei hunting lodges have a lot of services, and the Dévaványai and Pósteleki do not show any options. This is also a small game area but fallow deer and wild boar can be found too. Only two places provide services in foreign languages, the BÉlme gyeri and the Vadász guesthouse.

Table 4. Services provided in Bács-Kiskun County

Hunting lodge (firm)	Services	Huntable games	Languages spoken
Bugaci hunting lodge (KEFAG) <a href="#">link</a>	sauna, clay tennis court, shotgun ground	red deer, fallow deer, roe deer, wild boar	NA
Kiskunfelegyhazi hunting lodge (Petofi v.t.) <a href="#">link</a>	NA	roe deer, hare, pheasant	English German
Saskalaposi hunting lodge (KEFAG) <a href="#">link</a>	NA	red deer, fallow deer, roe deer, wild boar	NA
Panduri cabana (Gemenc Zrt.) <a href="#">link</a>	events hall for rent professional guide	red deer, roebuck, wild boar, hare, pheasant, mallard, grey goose, Eurasian collared dove	English German
Porbölyi cabana (Gemenc Zrt.) <a href="#">link</a>	professional guide horse-drawn carriage	red deer, roebuck, wild boar, hare, pheasant, mallard, grey goose, Eurasian collared dove	English German
Hajosszentgyorgyi cabana (Gemenc Zrt.) <a href="#">link</a>	events hall for rent professional guide	red deer, roebuck, wild boar, hare, pheasant, mallard, grey goose, Eurasian collared dove	English German
Lenesi hunting lodge (Hajósi Forestry) <a href="#">link</a>	NA	pheasant	NA

NA – Not available

Source: the authors

Table 5. Services provided in Békés County

Hunting lodge (firm)	Services	Huntable games	Languages spoken
Belmegyeri hunting castle <a href="#">link</a>	wellness: wood-fired Finnish sauna, Jacuzzi	pheasant wild boar park	English German
Devavanyai hunting lodge (Devavanya Vt.) <a href="#">link</a> , <a href="#">link</a>	NA	NA	NA
Sarkad-Remetei hunting lodge (DALERD Zrt.) <a href="#">link</a>	Internet, meeting room, horse-drawn carriage, horse riding, cycling, excursion, photo safari	fallow deer	NA
Szanazugi hunting lodge (DALERD Zrt.) <a href="#">link</a>	campfire area	NA	NA
Posteleki hunting lodge <a href="#">link</a>	NA	NA	NA
Vadasz guesthouse <a href="#">link</a>	Internet	pheasant, hare, water fowl, roe deer	English German

NA – Not available

Source: the authors

Table 6. Services provided in Csongrád County

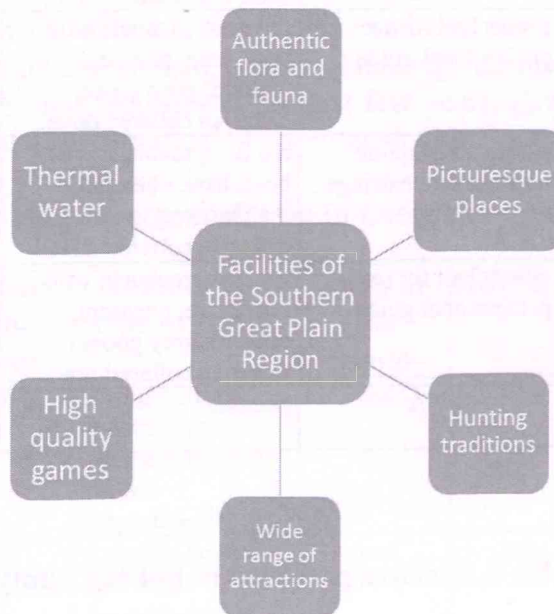
Hunting lodge (firm)	Service	Huntable games	Languages spoken
Derekegyhazi hunting lodge (DALERD Zrt.) <a href="#">link</a>	event house for 150 persons, sauna, wine bar	roe deer, pheasant, hare	English
Asotthalmi hunting lodge (DALERD Zrt.) <a href="#">link</a>	event house for 35 persons, excursion, horse-drawn carriage, photo safari	wild boar park with fallow deer	NA

NA – Not available

Source: the authors

Both of them provide different services, the Ásotthalmi hunting lodge has a wildlife park with wild boar and fallow deer, but both of them small game areas. Only the Derekegyházi hunting lodge provides services in English. Most of the firms establish a permanent place for the display of the hunting bag or have a Hubertus Mass ()

Most of the service providers do not emphasize their facilities although they are rich in them (Figure 1).



Source: the authors by Petroman, 2014

**Figure 1. The main facilities of the region**



Source: the authors

**Figure 2. The courtyard of the hunting lodge at Derekegyház**

The following SWOT analysis was carried out to identify the internal and external factors that are favourable and unfavourable to achieve the development of promotion in hunting tourism:

<b>STRENGTHS</b>	<b>WEAKNESSES</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• different type of rooms</li> <li>• most of them have private bath in the rooms</li> <li>• most of them have kitchen</li> <li>• wide range of services</li> <li>• wide range of offer of high quality huntable games</li> <li>• old hunting traditions</li> <li>• well prepared professional hunters</li> <li>• good traffic connection (Csongrád and Bács-Kiskun counties)</li> <li>• vicinity of outbound market</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the lack of websites</li> <li>• the lack of up-to-date information</li> <li>• the lack of online booking</li> <li>• not every place provides foreign languages</li> <li>• a lot of hunting associations, but just a few have hunting lodges</li> <li>• the lack of knowledge about online marketing</li> <li>• the printed materials (brochures and leaflets) are hardly used</li> <li>• no ads in TV or radio</li> </ul>
<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>THREATS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educating members of hunting alliances about tourism</li> <li>• Internet is available all over the region</li> <li>• a lot of firm create and maintain websites</li> <li>• the region is rich in natural resources, cultural heritage and attractions</li> <li>• the number of foreign hunters interested in Hungary</li> <li>• not only guest hunters are interested in hunting lodges but their services too</li> <li>• a lot of hunting associations exist</li> <li>• Strong engagement of inspection in protection from poaching</li> <li>• Connection of the offer of health, rural, and hunting tourism in a cluster</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• hard to find a good website with fascinating design as an example</li> <li>• the hunting tourism is seasonal</li> <li>• hunting tourism is not supported from sources of rural development</li> <li>• Strengthening of competition of the neighbouring countries</li> <li>• Societies for animal protection became stronger</li> </ul>

Source: the authors

## CONCLUSIONS

An integrated approach of marketing communication was not found in the region. The advertisements and online marketing are not widespread at these regions, because only a few hunting lodges can be found on the Internet. It is more complicated to find websites about specifically the hunting lodges, and not just some words about them on the websites of hunting associations. On the other hand, some places have a well-managed website with adequate information, online booking, GPS coordination, and last but not least, an



attracting design. These places can set a good example for those ones, who think that online marketing is not important, or they just do not pay attention to advertising. It is a problem that a lot of hunting associations do not have a hunting lodge either. It is more attractive for a guest if the accommodation offers meals, and they do not have to drive from the hunting territory to a hotel/restaurant every day, and they can find everything locally. The extra services are more and more important when a guest choose an accommodation. These regions have to be competitive because there are excellent hunting opportunities, and the neighbouring countries are rivals.

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