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MAPPING INDOOR CAMPING AS A TOURISM PRODUCT AND ITS UPGRADE ACCORDING TO YOUTH PREFERENCES

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Abstract

Less equipped than hostels, indoor camping provides shelter - which is what primarily differentiates it from classic, open-air camping. Beyond hospitality, it can be compared somewhat to squatting, but legally regulated for tourism purposes, since visitors sleep on the floor using their own sleeping bags. Unlike other solid tourism facilities, including second homes, the property is not only in function of holidaying but also in use for other purposes: it can be a gym, a local community club etc. This temporality and thus multifunctional use of the property is what makes indoor camping a unique model of hospitality. The attitudes of young generations regarding such a tourism product were investigated with the goal of forming a marketable model. The research was carried out on an intentional sample of students. The purpose of this paper is to raise awareness of sustainability as a prerequisite for youth festivals tourism destinations dealing with peak periods of visiting and to lobby for creating an adequate legal framework that would allow this model to take hold in practice. The originality of this paper is represented by conceptual mapping of indoor camping as an

innovative tourism accommodation in the broadest sense according to purpose and time dimension.

The potential of indoor camping might benefit all three basic entities of sustainability. It has the power to put into function vacant buildings or enrich already existing ones by adding hospitality as a new role, without, however, permanently modifying their primary purpose.

Keywords: indoor camping, temporary accommodation, youth tourism, sustainability, innovation

1. INTRODUCTION

Sustainability is a must when forming tourism strategies along with the imperative of development. Many destinations hosting festivals are reaching impressive tourism results, nevertheless, permanent modification of the landscape for a few overcrowded periods is not a logical solution. Indoor camping aspires to be one of the solutions to such a problem of insufficient accommodation capacity in peak festival periods.

Indoor camping is an innovative theoretical concept introduced by the authors in 2016. It basically consists of putting vacant or already existing buildings temporarily into function of tourism. The modification for tourism purposes is minimal since guests sleep on the floor using their own sleeping bags. Due to this peculiarity it is primarily intended to cater for younger generations.

The idea came out as a result of a real need: namely, in the municipality of Barban, Croatia, during a festival, the carrying capacity of the destination is insufficient to host all participants and the closest ground suitable for camping is a bit out of reach. In such situations usually nearby destinations benefit by hosting the excess demand. However, the old school building, owned by the municipality and now a social club and modest library, is ideally centrally located, thus it might be used as a camping spot inside. That way, earnings from accommodation would remain in the destination and could be reinvested in the local community.

The main intention of this research is to check its suitability for the youth tourism segment and to further develop it. Namely, the creation of travel needs and motifs of youth travellers has impact onto their continuous demand and makes them travellers for life. Destinations with diversified tourist products affect travellers' loyalty from the youth stage of travel to family travel and tourism to "grey" tourism. Besides, innovative and distinctive forms of accommodation provide "experience plus" where both sustainable and low budget lodging facilities impact guests' satisfaction and their future perception and arrivals.

This paper completes the authors' previous research and represents its final piece of puzzle in the conceptual development of a new model of tourism accommodation as well as a product which can be easily applied in practice. Up

to now, the opinions of all interested stakeholders were collected except those from the potential customers, which will be presented in the research part. These stakeholders had positive attitudes towards indoor camping as a low cost and sustainable answer to a few overcrowded days in their municipality (Kontošić, Slivar, Floričić, 2017).

The paper consists of five parts. In the theoretical review the tourism product and indoor camping followed by youth tourism with a focus on festival and events are presented. The mapping of indoor camping as a tourism product is graphically represented in chapter four, preceded by the research conducted using an intentional sample of students. The survey results are presented in the same chapter, while the fifth part contains concluding remarks.

2. THEORETICAL REVIEW

2.1. Tourism product and indoor camping

Tourists perceive tourism products from a horizontal perspective: as the sum of several elements provided by different tourism offer providers. On the other hand, the representatives of the tourism offer realize the vertical perspective of the product, taking as a reference point, the satisfaction of the visitors and their specific needs, while focusing on the manufacture and supply (Muhcina, 2008).

From a marketing perspective, a tourism product is defined as "a set, in a certain time, of functional, interactive units, related to real or experienced physical, service, economic and psycho-social elements which ensure satisfaction of users regarding the fulfilment of their tourism needs" (Mrnjavac, in 1992.:122).

Depending on its complexity, tourism products can be graded from simple to integrated tourism products, which implies the involvement of consumers in the final creation of the product with its active participation and experience (due to the inseparability of production and consumption in tourism). All gradations of the tourist product up to the integrated kind are called partial tourism products, and these are: (Krizman Pavlovic, 2008):

- A simple tourist product - services / goods that appear in tourism consumption
- Elemental or basic tourist product - for example, hospitality services (accommodation, food, entertainment, sports, trade etc.)
- Semi-integrated tourism product – e.g. travel packages offered by tourism intermediaries. They consists of at least two services (transport, accommodation or other tourist services) that form a whole and are provided for a period longer than 24 hours or include at least one night. These services must be charged in the total price in accordance with the

directives of the contract on organized travel as defined by obligations act (NN 35/05, 41/08, 125/11).

In regard to the relationships that are formed on the supply and demand side when creating a tourism product which becomes an object of exchange on the tourism market, it is possible to differentiate the tourist products created according the principle of "DIY - do it yourself", "package" and "networking" (Bencardino and Marotta, 2004). With the DIY concept customers independently combine a variety of simple and natural tourism products into a single unit where they contact with different tourism offer providers, unlike in the other two concepts. The tourism product created as a "package" corresponds to the semi integrated tourism products, which include a high level of standardization of the products, while the concept of networking is characterized by the interaction of companies specialized in the provision of different or the same tourism products, that cooperate to ensure the delivery of tourism products of a certain standard of quality and price.

According to **the reviewed** theory, indoor camping is an elementary or basic tourism product.

From the aspect of demand, tourists evaluate and grade different destination products and services uniformly, as a sum of several elements of different offer providers. This emanates the need to collaborate with other complementary offer providers in the destination, which is one of the basis of the indoor camping concept, given that it does not have its own tourist infrastructure. For its implementation it requires the collaboration of more tourism and non-tourism providers.

It is based in a non-tourism facility, e.g. a community building or a sports hall, which can be easily converted to tourism purposes. Housekeeping services must be provided, while front office services might be organised on call (Kontošić, Slivar, Floričić, 2016). It has the potential to spread fast, as minimal construction works are required.

It "blurs the boundaries between solid accommodation and campgrounds, tourists' and residents' amenities and opens up new possibilities for sustainable tourism".(Kontošić, Slivar, Floričić, 2016). Another plus of it, is that provides tourists to experience sleeping in unconventional places e.g. in a castle, in a fortress, in a stall etc. (Kontošić, Slivar, Floričić, 2016).

The concept of indoor camping is very simple and low budget featuring the following minimal requirements:

- be located within walking distance from the event venue,
- offer front office services on call,
- offer minimally 12sqm per indoor camping place (for three persons) and +3sqm per every additional person. Accommodation units have to be adequately marked as well as the passages among them,

- offer at least one electricity connection per person per one indoor camping place,
- provide a minimal number of toilets (one basin, shower and toilette for each sex every 15 persons).

The research part will provide an upgrade of services of this basic model in order to suite best young tourists' needs.

2.3. Youth tourism – a focus on festivals and event tourism

Youth tourism is a special form of tourism which encompasses the population of persons between 16 and 35 years of age who travel several times a year, mainly in company. It includes the placement of programs which are fundamentally less expensive (transport + accommodation), but which are more eventful in the destination itself. According to the research conducted by ICC/ESOMAR CODE and ESOMAR world heritage guidelines, youth tourism makes for over 20% of the international population (1.44 times a year).

Youth tourism in many aspects affects the culture of travel, as travellers acquire a habit of travelling earlier in life. That effect influences global tourism development and increases the amount of means spent per single person during the course of their lives (the average at the world level is between 40,000 and 120,000 US dollars). Furthermore, estimates indicate that by the year 2020 the number of the youth tourism travellers will be over 300 million and that the total market value will be over \$320 billion (Richard, Wilson, 2003).

In recent years, youth tourism trends are such that they benefit the speedy growth and development. (Richard, Wilson, 2003:2,6). The youth tourism traveller classification primarily includes students under the age of 26, with a high level of education, who, although having a low income level, because they are studying, show readiness to work and save money: while travelling and also before it, in order to increase their financial solvency. Over a half of them identifies themselves as travellers, a third as "backpackers" and around a fifth of them, as tourists.

The desire to acquaint new cultures, which is accompanied by the factor of excitement and entertainment, broadening knowledge, represents the main motivational factor. Young travellers, under the age of 26, generally demonstrate a greater desire for acquaintance with new cultures and socialisation, while in older travellers, the trend is to have holidays as individualised as possible. Also, long journeys lasting several months are represented as "once in a lifetime opportunities" and young people are prepared to spend an exceptional surplus of their energy, money and time in order to realise that to the full (Richard, Wilson, 2003:2) Considering from the aspect of traffic, the dominance of rail and road transport is evident, primarily due to the price accessibility. With the strengthening of low cost airlines, the plane, as a means of transport is playing an increasingly important role. Tourist expenditure is directed towards excursions

and entertainment, dynamic activities such as theme parks, bungee jumping, mountaineering, paragliding and other adventure sports.

Considering accommodation units used by youth tourism, Richards (2003:18) analyses the ranking of accommodation structures: backpacker hostels, budget hotels, youth hostels, independent holiday homes, bed and breakfast facilities, campsites, self-catering apartments, camper vans and other structures.

The motivation of youth for staying at campsites, apart from favourable prices, also includes freedom, mobility, independence, stay in nature, involvement in various activities and already mentioned social dimension of intense socialising.

The Institute of Tourism study (Čorak, 2006:66) points that Europe is the most developed world's camping region, thus the share of young people in the use of campsite offers in Europe ranges between 5 and 7 %. The most inclined to camping are the Dutch, the Danes, the French, the Norwegians and the Germans. When talking about the emissive markets, the leading countries are Germany, France, The Netherlands, Great Britain and Italy. These five countries generate four fifths of all travels to campsites in Europe (Čorak, 2006:73). Furthermore, Countries of the European Union see youth tourism as a vital sector (Richards 2003:8). The European Commission's YOUTH Programme is active in stimulating youth and student travel through cultural and educational programmes such as SOCRATES and LEONARDO, which facilitate the mobility of more than 100,000 young people and students every year.

In the past, the tourism of youth and students was not sufficiently researched by the profession due to the fact that it was given a stigma of a low value and income, as well as due to the complexity of measurement of contributions of youth tourism. Today, however, there are an exceptionally large number of organisations, which deal with the growth and prosperity of youth and student tourism, as well as organisations and authors who study the problem area itself from a theoretical angle and from the economic positions (in the form of organised accommodation facilities for young people). Krešić and Miličević (2010) analyse the organised hostel offers, Richards (2007) and Daly (2013) study youth tourism modern trends, as well as the implementation of digital technologies, while Douglass (2013) analyses the trends of adaptation of budget hotels to the hostel segment of demand, as well as the accommodation options in privately owned facilities. The importance of organised campsites with offers adapted to the demand trends of young people should take a closer look to their needs during events of different types and sizes.

Event tourism is not usually recognised as a separate professional field; it is mostly seen as an application of, or specialty, within national tourism offices (NTOs) and destination marketing/management organisations (DMOs) (Getz, 2008:403)

However, what are the events that are growing so rapidly in recent years? A long time ago festivals and events were defined as formal periods or programmes of pleasurable activities, entertainment, or events having a festive character and publicly celebrating some concept, happening or fact (Janiskee, 1980: 98). They have been around for centuries and are part of the culture of many societies. Events are an important motivation factor in tourism and development of a tourism destination, producing a competitive advantage as compared to other holiday destinations. Lately, festivals and special events have become one of the fastest growing types of tourism attractions (Getz, 1997, Thrane, 2002). Moreover, events for a long time have been viewed as a tool for economic development, because visitors increase demand and stimulate output in the economy (Sayman et al, 2005).

In scientific literature, events can be classified into a few categories: mega events, hallmark events, special events and specific types of events (Getz, 2005). It is also possible to classify events on the basis of their “place of attachment” and the degree to which they are associated with, or institutionalised, in a particular community or destination. According to that, mega events are typically global in their orientation and require a competitive bid to ‘win’ them as a one-time event for a particular place.

Hallmark events cannot exist independently of their host community and local or regional events are by definition rooted in one place and appeal mostly to residents (Getz, 2008, Ispas, 2011). Respectively, there is a differentiation of events according to form and content: sport events, tourism industry of business travel (MICE segment of tourism: meetings, incentives, congresses and events) and festivals, claim Van der Wagen et al (2008).

Special events link young people and tourists by drawing attention to the attractions that a community has to offer and providing at the same time an enjoyable experience for local residents (Brunson, 2002).

Special event research emerged as an area of tourism management in the mid-1970s (Hede, 2007). It was during the 1980s that the study of events including youth tourism began to grow dramatically in academia (Getz, 2008). The 1990s were a landmark in the event management literature while in the 2000s the literature on events was frequent but, more importantly, it gave recognition to distinct specialisations and sustainable development.

Youth events impact on cultural exchange and experience and create networks between people and groups within communities. Some of the common goals of youth event tourism include creation of a favourable image for a destination and prolongation of the traditional tourist season. On the other side, it is recognised that youth events sometimes produce negative impact on local community in the mean of waste management, noise, etc. so the solution could be found in sustainability and in the „Zero Waste“ concept (Krstinić Nižić, Perić, 2015)

Youth tourism trends point to the fact that those customers, as a part of the Y and Z generations (Benckendorff, Moscardo, 2010) are looking for low budget accommodation with all safety and hygienic prerequisites and catering services, and all of that in the vicinity of the event venues. Given the dispersion of accommodation and catering facilities, this represents a limiting factor, as event venues can hardly meet the quantity of demand for adequate accommodation facilities. Solutions are proposed in traditional organised hostels, privately owned accommodation facilities and campsites, which represent organised permanent accommodation structures, as well as in the innovative model of temporarily organised hospitality, indoor camping.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS

The research was conducted in three days in September 2016 among 139 Croatian students of Juraj Dobrila University of Pula and 15 ERASMUS students coming from Spain, France, Poland and Czech Republic. The Croatian sample counted 89,9% of undergraduate students and 10,1% graduated students, while in Erasmus group, there were 53,3% of undergraduate students and 46,7% graduated students. Cumulatively 85,71% were undergraduate students and 14,3% graduate out of which, 35% of respondents were male and 64% were female.

An original questionnaire consisting of six questions was developed as the research instrument. The survey questions were regarding where they usually stay during travelling, way of travelling, usual type of accommodation used by students and questions about indoor camping and its features. Basic statistics have been used to process data in Microsoft Excel 2010.

Students mostly stays in private apartment/accommodation (47%), followed by hotels, resorts (24%), hostels (21%), on the last place are camping sites (42%). 87% of students didn't use Couch surfing and didn't travel as backpackers but they would try it, if they got the chance (56%). Students agree that indoor camping is a welcome accommodation model in a time of great events that they would use (44%), they agree with the size of the indoor camping accommodation unit: 12m² for 3 people and for each additional person 4m², which is sufficient for sleeping (39%). They consider important (agree) having wi-fi (51%), safe (31%), shared kitchen (53%), gathering room (40%). Most of them would use this type of accommodation for only 1 night (47%), 2-4 nights (45%) and more than 4 days only 0,07%. What is encouraging is that 58% students think that this type of accommodation provides new experiences for them as tourists.

Thus, this model is acceptable for youth during big events and it should be expanded by adding common/shared kitchen and wi-fi connection at least. Safety is very important for the surveyed population so adding a safe deposit box for them is not enough, some also recommend to hire a security. This model is

suitable for students and young populations. Its sustainability is enhanced by its temporariness that is in accordance with the collected answers.

4. MAPPING THE INDOOR CAMPING AS AN ACCOMMODATION MODEL

The authors suggests two classifications of tourism accommodation including marginal / hybrid products and map indoor camping accordingly.

Hybrid tourism models vary from on one continuum residential purposes to non- residential purposes on the other continuum. The overlapping circle parts form various hybrid models, whereas one is indoor camping (Figure 1.).

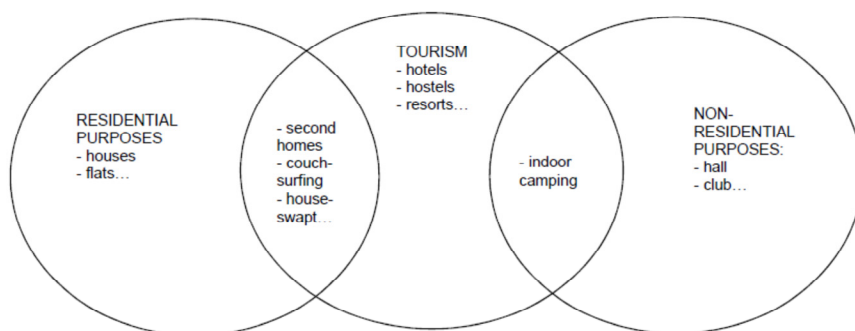


Figure 1 Tourism accommodation models in the broadest sense classified according to purpose

Source: Authors' contribution

Residential purpose solid facilities can be easily turned in function of tourism. Hybrid accommodation models crossing residential and tourism properties include: second homes, couch-surfing, house-swap, rent a spare room and similar. Indoor camping is a hybrid model used from time to time for tourism purposes although its primary purposes are non-residential. Along with indoor camping also classic, open-air camping (a tourism primarily tourism-purpose facility) can sometimes have a multifaceted role: when non-operating, they might be used for recreation of the local community (sport playgrounds, walking paths etc.).

The second classification of solid tourism accommodation including hybrid models takes in account the timeframe of use of the property for tourism purposes versus other purposes. Indoor camping is meant to be a solution that adds extra bedding in cases when a destination's capacity is insufficient; therefore

it is categorized as an asynchronous model meaning all the roles subsequently interchange. (Figure 2).

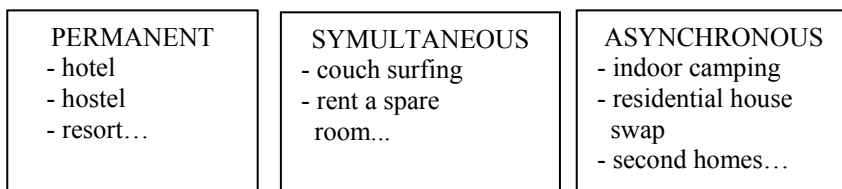


Figure 2 Solid tourism accommodation models in the broadest sense classified according to time dimension of use for tourism purposes

Source: Authors' contribution

Permanently modified properties for tourism purposes represent obviously the most complex tourism accommodation products grouping mainly classic, wide-known tourism accommodation types. Simultaneous models apply adding tourism to an already existing property purpose in a way to limit ordinary activities in case of sharing spaces / rooms or in putting in function spare rooms. Asynchronous products are those that cater for two or more different needs in a different time span.

5. CONCLUSION

The concept of indoor camping was developed as a sustainable alternative to the classical construction solution: building of new accommodation capacities or renovating and thus permanently changing the purpose of other residential or non-tourism buildings. Namely, in the case of a few overcrowded peak periods, indoor camping fits as a better solution, especially in case of youth festivals.

The main theoretical contributions of this paper are two tourism accommodation classifications:

- 1) According to the scope of use, indoor camping is categorised as a hybrid tourism and non-residential model, which exists as a fixed accommodation structure.
- 2) According to the time dimension, indoor camping is an asynchronous model meaning that the two above mentioned roles (non-residential and tourist one) do not overlap but take part in different periods.

The research of attitudes of potential consumers showed that almost half of the respondents (44%) expressed the interest in indoor camping stays. According to the survey results, the basic model of indoor camping has to be upgraded with the following amenities: kitchen (53) and Wi-Fi(51%), but a gathering room (40%) and safe deposit boxes (31%) could also be added.

Indoor camping should be supported by lobbying for creating an adequate legal framework that would allow this model to take hold in practice. (Kontošić, Slivar, Floričić, 2016)

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MAPIRANJE ZATVORENOG KAMPA KAO TURISTIČKOG PROIZVODA I NJEGOVO UNAPRJEĐIVANJE U SKLADU S PRIORITETIMA MLADIH

Sažetak

Slabije opremljen od hostela, zatvoreni kamp pruža zaklon – ono što ga prvenstveno razlikuje od klasičnog kampa na otvorenome. On nadilazi klasičnu uslugu turističkog smještaja, može se usporediti sa skvotiranjem, koje je zakonski regulirano u turističke svrhe, jer posjetitelji spavaju na podu u vlastitim vrećama za spavanje. Za razliku od drugih fiksnih turističkih objekata, nekretnina nije samo u funkciji turističkog smještaja, već se njome koristi i u druge svrhe: može biti teretana, klub za lokalno stanovništvo i slično. Ova privremenost i time multifunkcionalna upotreba nekretnine čini zatvoreni kamp jedinstvenim modelom pružanja usluge turističkog smještaja. Ispitani su stavovi mladih generacija o ovakvom turističkom proizvodu, s ciljem formiranja modela koji bi se mogao plasirati na tržište. Istraživanje je provedeno na slučajnom uzorku studenata. Svrha ovog rada je podići svijest o održivosti kao preduvjet za turističke destinacije festivala mladih koji imaju udarne dane posjeta, te lobirati za stvaranje adekvatnog zakonskog okvira koji bi omogućio primjenjivanje ovog modela u praksi. Izvornost ovog rada je u konceptualnom mapiraju zatvorenih kampova kao inovativnog turističkog smještaja u najširem smislu, ako se uzme u obzir svrha i vremenska dimenzija. Potencijal zatvorenog kampa može zadovoljiti sve tri osnovne pretpostavke održivosti. On može staviti u funkciju prazne zgrade ili obogatiti postojeće dajući im pritomnovu ulogu pružanja turističke usluge smještaja, dok istovremeno ne mijenja njihovu izvornu namjenu.

Ključne riječi: zatvoreni kamp, privremeni smještaj, turizam za mlade, održivost, inovacija.

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