Using Social Networks to Create and Share Experiences in Creative Tourism

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ABSTRACT

The presented chapter deals with creative tourism which is often considered marginal, however is a form of tourism with the great potential for future growth. The Slovak Republic has, thanks to the historical context, all necessary preconditions to exploit this potential. There is a large number of customs and traditions, which can be attractive to visitors by their nature, historical or cultural-religious value. There is also a big potential to create new experiences, spirituality, singing, dancing in customs and traditions. Religious and pilgrimage sites are also sites where visitors can experience strong emotions. Sharing these experiences on social networks is quite frequent during the last decades. This chapter therefore deals with the legal possibilities of sharing these experiences by using social networks that represent a powerful marketing communication tool.

INTRODUCTION

The desire to travel, explore, discover and experience something new has always belonged to basic human qualities (Pizam & Mansfeld, 2012). Travel and tourism are currently important parts of economic sector in almost every state and it is one of the sectors with the fastest growth. It makes up over a quarter of services in the world (Matias, Nijkamp, & Sarmento, 2011). Before reaching this level of significance, travel and tourism sector went through gradual development. Since the end of the World War II, its importance has been constantly increasing and its impact has been observable in almost every area of human society (Walton, 2005).

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Travel and tourism have grown in importance to such an extent that they currently account for an essential part not only at the level of national economies, but they also form a significant component of the economy at the European Union level (El-Agraa, 2011). Their development is influenced by several policies, such as foreign affairs policy, environmental policy and likewise. One of the important objectives of the European Union in the context of regional policy is the effort to gradually decrease differences among individual regions within the EU. To meet this objective, various programmes supporting the development of travel and tourism in the countries with less developed economies have been introduced (Milovčíková, 2008).

The development of travel and tourism is encouraged by many factors related to gradual increase in population, overall improvement of human health (thus prolonging life expectancy), as well as improvement of education (Rickly-Boyd, Knudsen, & Braverman, 2016). Improved education gradually helps to overcome language barriers and stimulates the desire for getting to know new places and cultures as well as for extraordinary experiences (Indrová et al., 2008).

Travel and tourism are nowadays global issues. Besides, it is a sector which has been developing in a quick and positive pace (Costa, Panyik, & Buhalis, 2013). At the present time, there are thousands of travel agencies in the world offering holidays, and stays and constantly making an effort to improve and innovate their offers (Ślusarczyk, Smolag, & Kot, 2016; Singh, 2008). Since tourism has been growing at a fast pace, possibilities of offers are increasing respectively, which consequently contributes significantly to the growth of economy. In addition to that, early detection of new trends seems to be a unique opportunity for potential investors interested in this sector to assert themselves in the market (Mariani, Czakon, Buhalis, & Vitouladiti, 2016).

**BACKGROUND**

**Creative Tourism**

Creative tourism could be ranked among the latest innovations of tourism itself. As the name suggests, it refers to something creative. That is exactly something that people have started to look for (Fernandes, 2011). A creative tourist differs from a common tourist by directly searching for and/or expecting a new experience. Moreover, they are willing to pay much more money for such a holiday (Wurzburger, Aageson, Pattakos, & Pratt, 2010). Since the majority of the hotels are insufficiently occupied, the question arises here why not to use their potential (Harssel, Jackson, & Hudman, 2014). There is a number of ideas and inspirations how to use this new trend in the sector. Schools, workshops and numerous crafts courses represent interesting factors with the potential for growth and an important role in the selection of destinations for short-term holidays, or stays, chosen by the tourists themselves (Walsh, 2011).

According to the Tourism Portal (2013), every tourist is welcome, especially the creative one. Although, this type of tourists is still in minority in terms of figures, according to the survey carried out by the Commission for Travel and Tourism of the European Union, it is the tourist with the highest potential for future growth (Nelson, 2013). The number of those who are not attracted to standard sightseeing or experiential tourism products any more is increasing (Gburová, Matušíková, & Benková, 2015). The creative tourist looks for interesting opportunities allowing them to learn something new and inspiring, for example, how various useful and nice things were created in the past as well as how to handmake...