

**PLANNING MARKETING COMMUNICATION INSTRUMENTS  
AS A PRIORITOR OF EFFECTIVENESS FOR TOURISM  
(TOURIST) DESTINATIONS**

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**Abstract**

*A modern business environment is characterized by intensified market competition in the profit organizations. The same principle applies to the competitive position of tourist destinations, therefore their branding has become a key interest of both tourism organizations and competent state institutions. This paper represents the role of marketing communication as a predictor of the success of branding destinations. The aim of this paper is to gain insight into the methods of improving the competitive position of destinations and improving their image. Also, the paper presents terminological explanations of marketing activities, providing guidance for their implementation and practical operation. By mastering the presented concept, its characteristics and role, significant steps can be taken in improving the existing situation and assisting the development of tourism in Serbia. The paper also presents concrete guidelines for action in practice, which should be managed by competent institutions and tourist organizations in order to achieve better positioning results. The application of the case study methodology is highlighted in illustrating the manifest affirmations of individual instruments and strategies of marketing communication in tourism.*

**Key Words:** *marketing strategy, marketing communication instruments, branding, competitive position, tourist destinations*

**JEL classification:** *M3*

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## **Introduction**

Tourism represents one of the key factors for the development of tourist destinations, countries and the economy at global level. After the oil and automotive industry, the activities of the tourism industry are the leading branches of the world economy. Marketing in the field of tourism means activities that are carried out in order to promote localities, cities, regions or entire countries with the aim of encouraging development, positioning in the consciousness of the general public, attracting visitors and creating new business opportunities. The concept of destination marketing indicates that, as a result of global, political and economic changes, it faces numerous challenges, such as resource scarcity, rising competition, technological change, greater sophistication and the evolution of tourist needs, globalization, and more. Planning and implementation of marketing communication strategies allows destinations to respond to the various changes they face, to create an attractive offer and position themselves in relation to the competition by highlighting their key benefits. The process of positioning the destination itself aims at creating the identity and image of the destination, highlighting those characteristics that represent its essence and increasing its attractiveness for the target group. In Serbia, the need for marketing tourism is evident, given to its potential. In Europe, the trend of tourism development moves towards the modern concept of health tourism, which, in addition to the medical component, includes other components such as: wellness, sports, recreation, entertainment, healthy eating, etc., which can attract not only people with health problems and health insurance pays for treatment / rehabilitation and hospitality stay, but also those who are aware that it is necessary for their own health and they are willing to finance their holidays in spa and climatic cites or destinations of health tourism. This tourist category has the preconditions for expansionary growth in the next 10 years, thanks to the number of spas and the quality of the water on which they are built, Serbia has great potential in this respect. The precondition for this is an adequate segmentation of the market and creation of products that are tailored to the requirements of certain categories of tourists. It is also necessary to monitor global trends and engage experts in order to create a unique tourist product. In order to improve the tourist performance of destinations, it is necessary to apply the activities of modern marketing communication and to choose the most adequate communication tools for this purpose. Therefore, the possibilities of marketing communication implementation tools in strategies for branding destinations with the aim of improving their image

and attracting tourists are discussed below. The recommendations and conclusions presented in this paper can be used to improve the competitiveness of tourist destinations in Serbia.

### **Factors that influence the effectiveness of branding a tourist destination**

The most important factors influencing the development of a particular destination include: public perception, its positioning, differentiation and characteristics in relation to a similar destination. The destination perception includes a set of visual or mental impressions, ideas and beliefs that one has when it comes to a particular destination. The image that a tourist has about the destination plays an important role in their selection of the same and different from other tourist destinations and therefore are an integral part of the decision-making process. The destination perception has two components: organic and induced. Organic is formed on the basis of personal experience or other experiences or through information obtained from objective sources, such as: news, reportage, newspaper articles, documentary programs or books. An induced component is created based on received information from external sources such as advertising messages through various media or promotional campaigns. This component can be influenced by the planning and implementation of marketing communication strategies targeted at the target groups.

Marketing communication can significantly contribute to improving the competitiveness of the destination by positioning it in the awareness of the target groups. Positioning involves the development and improvement of the possibilities of tourist services provided within the specific tourist destination, in order to achieve high quality and satisfaction of visitors. The strategic goal is to position the destination, even the whole country, in international investment, political, cultural and tourist circles. Destination positioning can be achieved through one of the following approaches:

- Price leadership, meaning the control and reduction of prices while maintaining a certain level of quality;
- Focusing on a specific area of activities (local tourism and the development of adequate support content);
- Providing unique products, services and experiences that are different from the competition.

Differentiation of the destination implies the possibility for potential and current visitors to distinguish the destination from other competing destinations (Cvetkovski & Langović Milićević, 2018). It can be based on individual destination characteristics or on the overall image. In this context, as a focus of marketing communication, the precise characteristics of a destination should be placed, which can lead to its easier differentiation, whether it is a specific climate, natural resources, cultural and entertainment content, tradition and history, a unique plant or animal world, etc. Practice has shown that attractiveness and competitive advantages attract more tourists, increase the demand for products and services in the value chain and the volume of investments and consequently contribute to the increase in the living standard of the local population (Langović Milićević & Ognjanović, 2017).

The destination differentiation key is in the application of the so-called "a unique destination argument that contains a certain value for potential or existing visitors" (Qu et al., 2011). At the time of the expansion of a large number of new destinations, it is no longer sufficient to base its position on physical characteristics (climate, geographical location, natural resources, services, and infrastructure) in order to present the destination as a specific one and to position it accordingly. The focus is on focusing on one competitive advantage and its intensive promotion (Langović Milićević & Ognjanović, 2017). The unique destination argument is based on the essential and true values of the destination on the basis of which, for the purpose of positioning the tourist market must create an advantage that must be real, original and simple to communicate (for example, the unique argument of Egypt is the pyramid, seeing nowhere else in the world; Jerusalem is the main and unique in many ways a religious place of worship). If a destination can not establish a unique destination proposal on this basis, there is a possibility of grouping several related characteristics in order to create a special destination proposal (for example, Europe is unique in country dance of royal families).

In a large number of cases, under the influence of numerous market factors and a large number of competing destinations, there are not enough strong bases for differentiating tourist destinations on the basis of comparative advantages, so decisions regarding travel are increasingly encouraged by the emotional reasons of individuals, that are related to positive feelings in relation to the destination and its values (Langović Milićević & Ognjanović, 2017). The basis for the formulation and implementation of the concept of a unique emotional argument based on

the fact that emotions that distinguish tourism experiences represent a true benefit to tourists and are directly related to the positioning of the destination (for example, a trip to Paris connects a large number of tourists with love and romance). In this case, a single proposal represents an emotional "trigger", something that only a given destination has to offer in the right way and thus gives the desired emotional event to tourists (Campelo et al., 2014).

### **Planning marketing communication instruments for branding a tourist destination**

Integrated marketing communications represent a concept that carefully integrates and coordinates a number of communication tools to deliver a clear, consistent and appealing message of destination and products and services that are integral part of it. Using an optimal combination of instruments, clarity, consistency and maximum communication impact are achieved in order to position the destination in the consciousness of a wide audience (Kostić-Stanković et al., 2013). The specificity of the tourist offer influences the program of communication and the selection of adequate instruments.

The characteristics that the destination possesses which can be the basis for the development of marketing communication programs can be classified into the following groups (Wagner & Peters, 2009):

- **Elements of destination identity:** the name, symbol, logo, mascot or their combination, which are only specific to a particular destination and are clearly determined (Eiffel Tower is a symbol of Paris; New York Statue of Liberty; a kangaroo is a mascot of Australia, etc.)
- **Unique appearance** when it comes to architecture and decorating public spaces that are consistently used (Renaissance style of construction in Italy, Mediterranean style in Greece, etc.)
- **Natural resources** (pastures on the slopes of the Alps, the Great Canyon in America, Niagara Falls)
- **Socio-cultural elements:** way of life, culture and language of the population, local cuisine, folklore, tradition, historical sites (Cubans are known for the hospitality and spiritual values that nourish, the Germans in discipline and restraint, the Japanese for cultivating tradition and specific cuisine)

Although different communication techniques are applied in relation to different target groups (tourists, investors, potential new residents), the

value of the destination itself and all that it represents should remain consistent and carry a unique message. The values to be promoted are the following (Cvetkovski & Langović Milićević, 2018):

- **Functionality** - For example, most tourists choose the coast as a summer destination, not a mountain or city, because they have functional characteristics such as the sea and beaches. Functionality presents various visible advantages, such as, for example, employment, industry, public transport, recreational activities and attractions.
- **Added value** - in the form of a diversity of content that the destination provides: cultural and historical sights, museums, theaters, restaurants, attractions, nightlife, etc.
- **The importance of the destination** - San Francisco, for example, represents the city of industry and technology. New York, on the other hand, is distinguished not only by its cultural offer, but also as a world financial center because it includes Wall Street, the New York Stock Exchange and the offices of international financial institutions.
- **Destruction of the destination** - location, physical characteristics, construction style, arrangement of public surfaces, cleanliness, etc.

In the case of branding a tourist organizations, advertising, sales improvement and market relations with the public are particularly effective as marketing instruments. When it comes to advertising tourist destinations, the most common and most effective strategy is a combination of information and emotions in order to achieve the goal of advertising in a secure way and to create a link between destinations and its characteristics in the consciousness of audiences. Advertising planning involves making a decision about the form in which advertising will be, or whether it will contain images, written messages, mental associations, themes, information, etc. It is necessary to set concrete, measurable, feasible, realistic and time-specific advertising goals for better controlling the effects achieved and possible corrections during the campaign (Maričić & Kostić-Stanković, 2018).

Topics on which advertising messages should be based when it comes to destination promotion (Cvetkovski & Langović Milićević, 2018):

- **Realizing relations and inner relationships** - messages emphasize the possibility of creating relationships between visitors and destinations. This is achieved through the use of terms such as "home", "belonging", "family" in order to develop a deeper emotional response. The messages of this type emphasize the security and the

possibility of meeting with the like-minded people and this creates a sense of involvement in a particular group. Advertising messages often show pictures of couples or parents with children who enjoy a shared vacation. This type of message also includes food and drink images, which emphasizes the "host" atmosphere and the social nature of catering services and provides the conviction that basic human needs will be met.

- **Adventure / escape from everyday life** - The emphasis is on traveling and staying away from the usual places and people or highlighting the possibility of experiencing an unforgettable adventure. This type of message contains pictures such as: lying on the beach, relaxing at the spa, as well as adventure activities such as hiking, diving, cruising, etc. These messages often contain associations to "escape" from routines that play a major role in marketing communication in tourism and hospitality. These types of messages involve the "persuasion" approach to certain benefits and encouraging deeply rooted motives and beliefs about the value of acquiring new experiences.
- **Safe variant** - these types of messages refer to the importance of advice and recommendations of influential personalities in the decision-making process. These types of messages are based on the fact that many tourists have limited time to explore options and consider alternatives that are almost endless. These messages are mostly transmitted by travel agents, chains of famous hotels or restaurants, public figures and the like.
- **Desires / aspirations** - this type of message is based on a psychological postulate that luxury, discretionary spending items are deeply linked to the sense of identity and self-actualization. The messages emphasize the phrases "once in a lifetime", "deepest desires" or "eternal memory" to justify the high financial investment that these tourist offers usually imply. This topic is suitable for the offer of marital travel arrangements, traveling to exotic destinations and staying in luxury hotels.
- **Favorable price** - messages include emphasizing a special price (with certain discounts) or low cost of travel or accommodation. This type of message is used to encourage members of the target audience to immediately respond to direct stimulation, increase demand during the off-season, and so on.

A special type of advertising destination is Internet advertising that is becoming an increasingly important tool of marketing communication of

tourist destinations. Communication via Internet offers destinations the opportunity to present and promote via their website or some of the social networks or blogs. Today, for example, Facebook can find a profile page for almost every city in the world. The greatest benefits from social networks are increasing visibility and impact on reputation. Social networks are actually turning into a customer service, or a place where users can search, make a complaint and get all the necessary information about a particular destination. The main advantages that the Internet offers for a single destination include:

- Increase in the volume of work for destinations and local tourist agencies and catering facilities;
- Generating revenue through online reservations and other services thereby avoiding intermediary channels;
- Improving communication and relationships with individuals and target groups;
- Reduction of costs associated with printing, posting and distribution of leaflets, as well as lease of media space;
- Creating a good public presentation of destination and more.

Sales promotion methods can add some extra values that draw attention to the offer, which has something different and more interesting than a competitive one. The promotion of sales in tourism contains the following activities:

- Using price incentives to encourage tourists to choose a specific destination (lowering prices at the end of the season, discounts on family or group trips)
- Added value (when you can get free sightseeing with the main arrangement)
- Activities directed towards intermediaries and employees in order to achieve greater motivation (bonuses, free travel)

Sales promotion activities can be targeted at two target groups (Camilieri, 2018):

- According to visitors:
- Sales promotions aimed at visitors include: coupons, discounts, competitions, prize games, gift vouchers for booking hotel rooms and the purchase of products, etc. These include t-shirts with destination tags, pens, calendars, blocks, local food tasting, souvenirs, and so on.
- According to tourist organizations and catering facilities:

- In maintaining good business relationships with organizations and individuals who mediate between destination and potential visitors, it is possible to use the following activities: regular meetings with intermediaries, continuous brochures, catalogs and other promotional materials related to the destination, training programs, special courses, etc.

In such cyclical activities such as tourism, sales promotion can be a positive and regular aspect of doing business. Businesses in this sector rely on rising and falling demand during the year and accordingly activate different marketing activities. High revenues during the season mitigate the cost of trying to achieve a distributed demand cycle throughout the year. Costs of off-season employees can often not be covered, taking into account the relative decline in demand, together with other fixed and variable costs of discount development, advertising of these discounts and more, so it is necessary to perform a differentiation and diversification of the offer.

An example of successful implementation of sales promotion activities in the case of tourist destinations is the Priority Club Awards program. It is the largest and most widespread loyalty program of the hotel chain InterContinental. This program has 48 million members worldwide, and 300.000 new members are joining each month. In fact, 32% of the nights in this hotel chain are globally achieved by members of the Priority Club. This program is designed to reward guests for their loyalty by offering them a wide range of benefits, among which is the collection of points for free nights in one of the hotels in this chain or free airline tickets to different destinations in cooperation with over 40 airlines in the world. The program has three levels, and various discounts and benefits are obtained depending on the level itself. Points collected can be used by members at any time in any hotel in the chain.

Public market relations are planned to establish and maintain good will and mutual understanding between the organization and its target public (Kostić-Stanković et al., 2013). Market relations with the public of a destination as a primary task have the construction of a positive image of this destination. Some of the additional tasks of market relations with the public are:

- Providing positive publicity and space in the media by placing information that would be of interest to representatives of print and electronic media, as well as to the general public. The techniques one

destination can use to achieve this include press releases, themed articles, photos (these are mainly photographs of the destination itself and its advantages and what makes it special), tourist films (these may be documentaries about a destination or someone event related to the destination, or a presentation of the destination presented through the film).

- Creation of sales brochures, brochures, posters and postcards that contain the basic presentation of the destination and the offer of products and services that are related to it. Brochures have always been a vital means of communication in tourism as a source of information and assistance to tourists in making travel decisions. Brochures traditionally help to overcome the problems of the inviolability of travel services and enable the sending of effective destination messages in a portable format. Brochures must not be generalized and must accurately present a specific destination using a standard combination of images and text.
- Sponsoring an event or maintaining it on a particular destination. Four basic forms of sponsorship that can be used for this purpose: sponsorship of sports events, sponsorship of radio and TV programs, sponsorship of cultural events and sponsorship of business events. Sponsorship has a predisposition to attract the attention of a larger group of visitors, as well as media attention.

Organizing and participating in special events such as workshops, exhibitions and fairs, which become an increasingly important element of the marketing communication program in tourism. The main objectives of participation at fairs are: promotion of insufficiently known destinations; creating new contacts in order to develop cooperation with tourist organizations, associations and agencies; getting acquainted with the development program of competitive destinations and getting to know new trends in the market (Langović Milićević & Ognjanović, 2017).

Fairs can be the starting point for realizing relationships with potential visitors because more and more individuals are visiting events of this type (Vukmirović et al., 2017). Tourism organization "Zlatibor" presents the tourist offer of Zlatibor at a number of fairs: Tourism Fair in Belgrade, International Tourism Fair in Novi Sad, Tourism Fair in Nis and Kragujevac, International Brčko Tourism Fair, as well as Tourism Fair in London. At the fair of tourism in Belgrade was presented as a part of the region of Western Serbia and this successfully presented all natural and cultural beauties of the Zlatibor region. The tourist organization

"Zlatibor" presented the total offer of the tourist destination together with the Zlatibor hoteliers, who presented the fair discounts on accommodation services.

Active tourism was promoted at the stand of tourist organization "Zlatibor", and all visitors received all necessary information, redesigned catalogs, publications, and prices for the upcoming season. A special emphasis of this performance was on the gastronomic offer of the Zlatibor region, and for that occasion they provided a gastronomic counter with traditional products: dried raspberry products, forest blueberries, black currants, cherries and plums, homemade brandy and jelly, prepared directly at the stand, and the visitors had the opportunity to taste authentic dishes from the Zlatibor region. The fair was broadcast by a large number of media. A lot of reports and recordings from various presentations, concerts and lectures were made. During the fair, a stand was visited by a large number of guests from abroad, who became acquainted with the tourist offer of Zlatibor.

Tourist center Kopaonik performed at the International Tourism Fair in Novi Sad within the framework of the stand of the Tourist and Sports Organization "Raška". The main goal was to promote the winter tourist season at Kopaonik. This was an opportunity to present Kopaonik in the right way to a wider population. Kopaonik Tourism Center has received the award for the best tourist center in the region. At the International Tourism Fair in Belgrade, Kopaonik presented its summer tourism offer. Activities at the fair were focused on promotion of summer and autumn holidays at Kopaonik, as well as negotiations with business partners. Complete tour arrangements were presented, as well as summer camps that will be held on this mountain - basketball and tennis camp, as well as the camp of English language and discounts for the visitors of the fair.

National Park Tara performed at the International Tourism Fair in Novi Sad, at a joint stand of the national parks of Serbia. The visitors had the opportunity to get acquainted with the news, tourist offers and various educational programs within the protected area of Tara through the promotional material. The stand was visited by many journalists, as well as representatives of the republic authorities, representatives of ecological societies and educational institutions. The national park stand won a design award. The natural beauties of the National Park were interesting to individual visitors, as well as to associations that through excursions and hiking tours wanted to get to know this mountain. National Park Tara

also took part in the Plum Fair in Osečina, where besides the potential of this protected area, also presented brandy products from the Bajina Basta.

Tourist stocks are also significant for the presentation of one destination. The most famous tourist exchanges are in Berlin and London, where tourist products are sold in many countries. The World Travel Market is being held in London. This event is the world's leading event and the tourism industry. At this very important event, destinations all around the world are presented and have the possibility to create a unique opportunity for people from the tourism industry around the world to meet in one place, to do business and to cooperate (Garcia et al., 2012).

In communication with the target groups of one destination, the projection assets, which include tourist films, are very important. Tourist film is the most widespread and most important mean of tourist promotion. These include documentaries about a destination or an event related to that area or a presentation of the destination presented through the film. It consists of visual and audio elements. It can take about 15 minutes, although movies aimed at promoting destinations are often longer. Tourist films offer unique opportunities for influencing the target audience (Vukić et al., 2015).

For example, on the website of the Tara National Park there are several different tourist films through which the general public can get acquainted with this destination and its attractive locations (National park Tara, 2019). Promotional film of the Tourist Organization of Serbia "Soulfood Serbia - Food with Soul", which lasts 12 minutes, was named the best Serbian tourist film. "Soulfood Serbia" was also the name of the TOS marketing campaign for 2012, which has the main theme of gastronomy, which is an important part of Serbia's tourist offer. This campaign promotes authentic gastronomic products of Serbia, with a special accent on those who have or have yet to get a label of protected geographical origin.

### **The role of modern technologies in creating marketing communications in tourism**

One of the major changes in tourism created by the use of modern marketing technologies is bypassing the intermediaries, which significantly increased the revenues of direct service providers. This is particularly important for small and medium-sized enterprises. On the one

hand, there are a number of large companies in the tourism industry (large multinational airlines, tour operators, hotel chains and theme parks), but there are also many other companies dealing with retail arrangement, hotel management or catering for which the Internet is very practical for sales promotion. The Internet opens up the possibility for small and medium-sized enterprises to reach the world market with a relative small investment, although more investment is needed for the application and development of marketing in this context (Vukić et al., 2015).

Electronic distribution systems have increased competitiveness and productivity by automating processes and integrating new systems in order to improve business functions and reduce operational costs. So called CRS (customer reservation systems), established by airline companies and GDS (global distribution system) such as Amadeus, Galileo, Saber and Worldspan, have included sales channels Expedia, Travelocity and Orbitz in their business. The development of Global Distribution System (GDS), which initially served the airline industry, and later expanded and encompassed sectors such as hotels and other tourist services, made the travel industry global, as travel agents could sell their capacities electronically, in real time, everywhere in the world. This revolution of the relationship between companies was soon completed with the use of the Internet, which enabled users to do the same directly with the providers of passenger services. The requirement for a good positioning of a tourist organization or institution is to apply to search engines. Search engines are among the most visited web sites on the Internet and to be seen on one of them can represent a good marketing. Search engines are the key interface through which users access the entire Internet.

The application of modern instruments and technologies in tourism marketing offers significant advantages over traditional ways of communication: reducing information exchange costs, increasing data transfer rates, increasing user participation in the transaction process, increasing the flexibility of marketing mixes, significantly shortening the research and service development process, increasing customer satisfaction users, reducing transaction costs, reducing promotional costs and faster delivery. The use of the Internet as a medium has become an essential element of marketing planning in tourism. By denying Internet communications, one tourist destination can be considered as least unprofessional, which significantly jeopardizes its image, and thus the realization of profits. The reason for the necessity of adopting modern

technologies in tourism is based on facts from the environment, of which some are:

- The Internet is a medium that gets more and more users every day;
- The application of the Internet is particularly advantageous in the service sector;
- The world has great influence on the directions of tourism development;
- Tourism is a growing industry in the world, requiring the use of modern technologies;
- An increasing number of users of tourist services rely on the benefits of online tourism, which has a major impact on the way business operates in this industry;

The significance and role of the application of Internet technology in tourism can be illustrated by the example of the Reservation System VisitSerbia.org, which started in 2005 and which offered to the destinations and hotels free entry into the system, online presence. This system has enabled hotels to determine the conditions under which customers can reserve accommodation as well as payment methods. In this way, an equal race is created to attract the attention of potential guests among the old and new objects that appear on the market. This is especially important for new small private guesthouses and hotels that can equally be able to compete with larger hotel chains and hotels with tradition in this way. Increased transparency increases price comparability, so tourism facilities have the ability to quickly and easily adjust prices in relation to competition, demand, events, and so on. The VisitSerbia booking system allows you to create specific package arrangements by the hotel, providing additional services through the price rooms (such as weekend packages which also offer sightseeing and excursion services, etc.). Facilities offering such a special offers are specifically marked in the system and thus further promoted on the results search. In addition to the reservation system VisitSerbia.org is an important tourist portal that provides information about destinations in Serbia. While global reservation systems are mainly of interest in the positioning of destinations and big cities, the orientation of VisitSerbia.org is also towards smaller facilities and smaller towns in Serbia. VisitSerbia.org has paid advertising campaigns on Google, whose budget ranges between 500 and 1000 euro per month. What distinguishes the VisitSerbia site compared to competitive systems is the detailed knowledge of the promoted destination and the possibility of personal contact between the client and the operator (via telephone or Skype

account), which enables the conclusion that the destination and type of accommodation corresponds to the profile of the individual client, which enables better communication and realization of long-term relationships.

### **Application potential of Internet technology and social networks for branding a tourist destination**

The presence of an organization on the Internet primarily involves the development of an appropriate website. A tourist website should not be a brochure or flyer that the organization has put on the Internet to inform potential tourists about the destination and the prices of tourist arrangements. The site should represent a complete presentation of a particular destination, provide relevant information and provide the opportunity to answer any question that a potential tourist poses about the destination, its offer and contents. A creative, well-designed and visited tourist site should contain the following elements (Chan & Marafa, 2018):

- Useful and up-to-date content;
- Possibility of contact;
- Event Calendar;
- Frequently asked questions;
- Virtual tours through the destination;
- Special discounts on tourist arrangements;
- Recommendations and advice;
- Publication of tourist articles and reports;
- Experiences of others;
- A part dedicated to the gastronomy characteristic of the destination;
- A part dedicated to the media;
- Research and surveys.

When it comes to the use of social media, it is necessary to know all the opportunities that they provide, monitor trends, constantly interact and create their own image on the Internet, based on the knowledge gathered. In order to keep this kind of presentation and communication as successful, it is necessary to maintain two-way communication, as well as to respect and accept the proposals and suggestions that come from the interlocutor. Extreme importance in establishing interactive communication is provided by tourist forums that offer the possibility of developing a general discussion of travel, destinations and experiences. In fact, by sharing a variety of content related to your own travel adventures as well as reading the experiences of others, forum visitors come to

important information that can help them make future decisions. The sites of many travel agencies or online reservation systems contain forums and image galleries that visitors place precisely for the purpose of promoting specific destinations or travel arrangements.

"Telekom Srbija", in cooperation with the Tourist Organization of Novi Sad, has presented a unique application for mobile phones "Novi Sad Talks", which offers an unusual city tour through the smart phone. By surfing the web and by launching a mobile application, city visitors can easily get to know and discover historical data or anecdotes about its sights in an easy and fun way. It's just enough that the camera of the mobile phone takes it to the nearest location and at the same time a series of short texts opens and begins audio narration. The free application is a personal guide to visit the most important city locations, offering a completely new perception of the city with the help of old photos, texts and audio recordings. This application represents the desire of the city administration to encourage the use of new technologies and modern city content and tourist offer of the city. The project is designed to encourage and encourage the local self-governments of other cities in Serbia to encourage and modernize local communities supply through the use of Internet and mobile communications and innovative solutions.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the presented specifics for creating marketing communications for the needs of branding tourist destinations, the following factors are the key challenges of this process:

- Abstraction, or the difficulty in communication of common concepts in the field of tourism (eg "rest, recovery from stress and good sleep" is not something that can be guaranteed to visitors or presented in an adequate way);
- Difficulties in presenting differences between offers of similar destinations;
- Inability to give a guarantee that visitors will experience what they are looking for;
- Incompatibility of tourist services that result in the problem of visualizing promotional messages and therefore their understanding and proper interpretation.

According to the stated characteristics of the tourist destination branding process, it is necessary to provide an optimal mix of marketing

communication instruments so that the desired message can reach the members of the selected target in the right way and at the right time. Regardless of what the message has, it is necessary to include an element balance, a good structure, to be presented appropriately and credibly. Also, it is necessary to fulfill the condition of the authenticity of the message, which will then be consistently implemented through a series of activities planned within the destination branding strategy. Individual activities within the destination branding strategy should be mutually harmonized to form a single entity and to be continuously applied. In this way, a tourist destination can achieve recognition among increasingly intense competition in the market.

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