
An analytical study to identify and determine the usage frequency of sales and marketing strategies for 5 star hotels in the Antalya region

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Abstract

Over the last 20 years, hotels in the Antalya province have made significant progress in terms of quality, service and maintenance services standards and have established a solid reputation in the global tourism industry. With increased investment, the rapidly growing number of hotel units and the increased bed capacity in Antalya, marketing has become highly important. This contrasts with the previous situation where there was lack of bed space compared with high demand, meaning that marketing was not an important factor. This research aims to determine which marketing activities and tools are used by hotels in Antalya province, where mass tourism is prevalent, in order to market their rooms to target groups, which constitutes a large proportion of their income. For research purposes, analysis of the structured research data, using the survey technique on 60 resorts determined by the Antalya Provincial Culture Tourism Offices to have 5 stars and over 800 bed capacity, was used and also, detailed discussions and conclusions were conducted with the sales & marketing executives. According to the findings, the vast majority of the hotels located in the Antalya province use the same marketing strategy and, due to this strategy, marketing factors were identified. Marketing factors are impacted by “recession, health and security challenges are liable to affect current travel movement with little warning and to a major extent”.

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Peer-review under responsibility of the scientific committee of the 9th International Conference on Theory and application of Soft Computing, Computing with Words and Perception.

Keywords: Marketing; marketing segmentation variable; resort hotels; Antalya; Turkey.

1. Introduction

As in many sectors, tourism potential is increasing on an annual basis around the world. According to the World
Tourism Organization (UNWTO), tourism revenues were estimated at $1 trillion, 159 billion in 2013. World tourism revenues in the previous year were $1 trillion, 78 billion, revealing a dynamic increase of 7.5% with respect to other sectors (UNWTO, 2014).

The situation in Turkey is increasing in a parallel manner to the growth in global tourism, and even exceeding this rate. It has been stated that the number of international tourists visiting Turkey reached 35 million in 2014 (Report by Tourism Federation of Turkey Hotels, 2014). According to the statistics produced by the Turkish Statistical Institute, the tourism revenue obtained in 2013 was approximately 32.3 billion dollars (Tuik.gov.tr 12.05.2014). Turkey's share of the tourism market has shown significant development in recent years. According to the latest UNWTO report, Turkey is the sixth most visited tourist destination in the world (UNWTO Tourism Highlights, 2014). Again, in the same statistical report, Turkey was revealed to be the fourth most visited destination in Europe. However, this increase in the number of tourists is not reflected in a comparable increase in tourism revenues. Tourism-related institutions and companies in Turkey are aware of this contradiction and are actively exploring solutions and innovative plans to increase tourism revenues. The most significant problem in tourism in Turkey is the seasonal concentration. As a consequence of this phenomenon, Turkey has been implementing various alternative strategies for many years and has been searching for new plans to implement in order to increase tourism levels throughout the year. Unfortunately, Turkey has been unsuccessful in increasing the number of tourists; efforts to diversify tourism and plans to increase tourism revenues have been ineffective.

If Turkey is able to take advantage of the economic benefits in terms of optimism and tourism, increasing tourism employment, increasing foreign currency entering the country, and tourism contributing to revenue of the companies indirectly serving the economy, tourism will be of significant importance to the overall economy. As the public authorities regard tourism not only as a long-term benefit but also as a source of income, this has provided facilities for accelerating investments and has resulted in a rapid increase in the hotel bed capacity in Turkey. Touristic facilities that that were previously unable to cope with the level of demand have begun to develop innovative marketing strategies to fill the increased bed capacity resulting from the acceleration of investments. Due to the extremely low budget they have allocated to marketing expenditures, such strategies have been directed towards wholesale, mass sales and collective purchasing methods, which are the easiest and most cost-effective marketing tools. Touristic facilities with limited marketing personnel and reduced marketing budgets are using these methods and have been successful in selling their room stock. From the outset, this method, which appears to be highly profitable and advantageous, has a similar effect to that witnessed in the agricultural sector, where the wholesalers who bought the product from the manufacturer were able to dictate the prices.

Business people investing in the tourism sector in Turkey are generally unwilling to accept the fact that, by applying the scientific methods of marketing more effectively, they will be able to achieve more efficient and longer term gains from the present situation, rather than perceiving marketing from a narrow and close-minded perspective. Through this research, the authors have attempted to determine the consequences of the use of the abovementioned methods by the touristic regions and facilities in the research population.

2. Literature review

In this section of the article, the accommodation enterprises, which are the subject of this scientific research, will be described. First, the literature on the classification of accommodation businesses will be reviewed.

Hotels are classified: Hotels are classified according to the number of rooms, level of service, star ratings and target markets (Stuts, 2016). Number of rooms: Classification by room numbers provides an indication of the overall size of the hotel. Level of service: Hotels can be categorized as luxury service, mid-range service or limited service. Star ratings: The quality of the services provided will determine the number of stars the hotel is awarded. Target Markets: Hotels target many markets and they can be classified according to the markets in which they attempt to attract their guests. Common types of markets include business, airport, suites, residential, resort, timeshare, casino, convention and conference hotels. For the purposes of this study, the market that will be investigated is resort style.

Definition of Marketing: A number of definitions have been provided for the concept of marketing. One of the best-known definitions was created by Philip Kotler (1967, p12), Professor of Marketing at Northwestern University in the United States. He stated that marketing consists of analyzing, organizing, planning and controlling the firm’s customer impinging resources, policies and activities with a view to satisfying the needs and wants of the selected
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