SLOVAK TOURISM ENTERPRISES AND DMOs: CHALLENGES OF ADDRESSING VISITORS[*]

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Abstract: *This paper focuses on use of electronic marketing and thus different tools of marketing communication in tourism. All (37) destination management organizations (DMOs) in Slovakia and selected tourism enterprises (35) represent research object, while marketing communication tools represent research subject. The scope of use of marketing communication tools is analyzed in a complex way as both - demand side and supply side are examined. We used interview and following we investigated Internet marketing communication to study the supply side. This research sample consisted of 35 enterprises from which 24 were Slovak tour operators, 3 hotels (*** and ****), 4 spas and 4 water parks and 37 DMOs divided into five categories. On demand side data were collected through questionnaires. The research sample consisted of 510 randomly selected visitors of above-mentioned enterprises. The survey was undertaken from 2015 to 2018. We assume that an effective marketing campaign enhances competitiveness of enterprises and DMOs, boost their development and thus the development of tourism regions in Slovakia. However, new trends of marketing communication are being used in a limited extent by tourism enterprises and only several DMOs actively profit thus from traditional tools of marketing communication as well as from online marketing communication.*

Keywords: *Destination management organizations (DMOs), tourism enterprises, Internet, marketing communication, Slovakia.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism in Slovakia is in the recent years (2016-2018) in a very good condition. It employs more than 300,000 people. Almost 5,376,000 visitors visited Slovakia in 2017. In the recent years revenues in all services that are generated by tourism in Slovakia have exceeded five billion euros a year. Providers of tourism services in Slovakia include producers (accommodation, hospitality, transport, spa and wellness, sports and recreational and cultural facilities) and service agents (travel agencies, tour operators, tourist information centers). More than 90% of businesses in tourism in Slovakia belong to the small and medium-sized enterprises. DMOs are the representatives of management and marketing in tourism destinations in Slovakia.

In October 2018 there was a total number of 37 local tourism organizations (DMOs), which started their functioning after the adoption of Act no. 91/2010 Coll. on tourism support (from December 1st 2011). According to the Slovak law DMOs can be set up by at least 5 municipalities which reached at least 50,000 overnight stays in the previous calendar year in the area of their competence, respectively by fewer municipalities if they reached at least 150,000 overnight stays.

Despite the current favorable situation, experts suggest that tourism services in Slovakia cease to be competitive. This may be caused by a lack of investment and a slow growth in the employment in the sector, which are delayed by rising costs. In order to maintain competitive services, it is also necessary to all stakeholders involved in tourism development to conduct marketing activities in accordance with current marketing trends.

Marketing communication, as an important tool of the marketing mix, significantly changes its character in the last period (especially after 2000) in Slovakia. In addition to the traditional communication tools, Internet marketing tools whose implementation in practice contributes to the development of sustainable tourism are more and more frequently being applied. They are also less financially and materially demanding. The article deals with the research of the used Internet marketing tools in selected tourism enterprises (35) and in the established DMOs in Slovakia.

2.   LITERATURE REVIEW

Marketing communication is a program of communication methods and tools by which the destination (and tourism enterprises) addresses both the visitors and the wider public. It has been a point of interest of many authors already in more decades [3], [4], [15], [16], [14] [20], [24], [27], [29], [31], [40] and others).

The aim of all tourism enterprises and DMOs is to systematically increase visit rate of the tourism destinations. This cannot be achieved without efficient and effective marketing communications, which is why the marketing communication is also a part of the destination marketing. Marketing on the level of destination is a point of interest of several authors [1], [6], [18], [21], [25], [32], [37], [35], [39] and others.

With the rapid development of modern technologies that positively stimulate tourism development, different ways of marketing communication of the stakeholders who act in the destinations have also been developed. Traditional communication is being increasingly replaced by electronic.

Various authors [5], [10], [22], [36] understand the Internet marketing communication as a trend based on the use of the information technologies. Most significant benefits include 24-hour possibility to communicate with customers, questioning, getting feedback, immediate response to updated content, and updated content at any time, the ability to reach customers without geographic limitations at any distance and so on.

Internet marketing communication is also intensively used by tourism enterprises, regional and local tourism organizations in Slovakia (DMOs), which may be set up in accordance with Act no. 91/2010 Coll. on tourism support from December 1st 2011.

The elemental scope of Internet marketing communication currently includes (a) the website, (b) the existence and communication of the subject on social networks, (c) e-mail communication (e-mail), and (d) various forms of mobile marketing [2], [14], [29].

Several authors focus on use of new trends in marketing communications, such as [38], who examine social media and use of digital marketing; [19], whose central interest is the product delivery via web site and [11], who point at mobile marketing and many others [28], [23], [12].

Thus, new trends, which are not costly in addressing, may augment communication effectiveness. These are guerrilla marketing, buzz marketing, event marketing and viral marketing [26], [33].

[13] underlines the importance and lack of new trends use in online marketing communication. This author emphasizes constantly growing number of Internet users and the ability of operators to increase their competitiveness in the market with a well-targeted and implemented marketing communication that uses innovation and creativity.

3.   METHODOLOGY

The aim of this paper is to examine use of marketing communication tools of selected tourism enterprises (35) and all 37 destination management organizations (DMOs) in Slovakia. These DMOs and selected tourism enterprises (35) represent research object, while marketing communication tools represent research subject. We analyze both - supply side (tourism enterprises and DMOs) and demand side (visitors' perception of marketing communication tools). This research is based on primary and secondary sources of information. Published data result from a quantitative research gathered during the years 2015 to 2018. The used techniques were interview (supply side - enterprises), questionnaire (demand side - visitors) and analysis of Internet marketing communication (supply side - DMOs).

We present division of the DMOs into five categories characterized further in this paper. Besides all existing DMOs, supply side of research sample consisted of 35 enterprises, from which 24 were Slovak tour operators, 3 hotels (*** and ****), 4 spas and 4 water parks. With regard to preserve their anonymity while using internal delicate information, we name these enterprises in alphabetical order (letters A – K) without explicitly showing their name. According to number of tour operators (24) we present results of undertaken research in relative terms without individual analysis of marketing communication for each enterprise. Demand side of research sample consisted of 510 randomly selected visitors of examined enterprises.

This research is based on recognition that an effective marketing campaign enhances competitiveness of enterprises and DMOs; boost their development and thus the development of tourism regions in Slovakia.

This paper tends to answer three important questions. Q 1: Which of the new trends are included into examined enterprises´ marketing communication? Q 2: Have any of these marketing communication new trends been identified by visitors? The answer to the second research question outlines effective use of marketing communication tools. Q3: How many of existing DMOs in Slovakia communicate effectively on the Internet?

Currently (October 2018) the Ministry of Transport and Construction of the Slovak Republic records 37 existing DMOs. The population of interest is represented by all local DMOs in Slovakia. The research sample is therefore identical to the population.

We use primary data sources in addition to secondary ones. We analyze the available channels of Internet marketing communication, which we evaluate according to established criteria (Table 1), formulated on the basis of information drawn from the literature.

The ways of the Internet marketing communication	Evaluation criteria	Evaluation scale
Internet website	SEO	0-5
	Design	0-3
	Intuitive navigation	0-3
	Photo gallery	0-3
	Responsive design	0/1
	Possibilities of the search on the website	0/1
	Search for accommodation	0/1
	Reservation of accommodation	0/1
	Reservation of other services	0/1
	Map	0/1
	Interactive map	0/1
	Calendar of events	0/1
	Possibility to download electronic brochures	0/1
	Webcam	0/1
	Weather report	0/1
	Link to other websites	0/1
	Connect to social networks	0/1
	"Send/Recommend to a friend" option	0/1
	Feedback from visitors option	0/1
	Live chat	0/1
Social networks	Number of active accounts	0-3
	Number of followers	0-3
	Speed of response	0-2
E-mail	Distribution of the information leaflet	0/1
Mobile application	Application existence	0/1
	Support of multiple operating systems	0/1
	Application functionality	0-2
	Application options	0-3
General criteria	Recentness of information	0/1
	Relevance of information	0/1
	Language mutations	0-3

Table 1: Evaluation criteria of the Internet marketing communication of DMOs
Source: Own elaboration, 2016.

We evaluate the part of the criteria quantitatively on the scale from 1 to 2, 3, resp. 5 (Table 1) and the other part depending on their use (0/1, where 0 = not used, 1 = used). By the criteria we undertake to the assessment scale, we focus on the subjectively determined characteristics presented in Table 2.

The ways of Internet marketing communication	Criteria characteristics	Evaluation explanation
Internet website	SEO	5 p. – 1. place in search 4 p. – 2. and 3. place in search 3 p. – 4. to 6. place in search 2 p. – 7. to 10. place in search 1 p. – 11 to 20. place in search 0 p. – 20. place in search and lower
	Design	3 p. – interesting modern design 2 p. – modern design 1 p. – basic design 0 p. – inappropriate design
	Intuitive navigation	1 p. – well-arranged 1 p. – suitable site structure 1 p. – simple movement on the site
	Photo gallery	1 p. – quality photographs 1 p. – actual photographs 1 p. – photographs characteristics
Social networks	Number of active accounts	1 p. for each active account on the social network (maximum 3 points, if there are more than 3 accounts)
	Number of followers	0 p. – from 0 to 500 followers 1 p. – from 501 to 1000 followers 2 p. – from 1001 to 3000 followers 3 p. – from 3001 followers (unlimited)
	Speed of response	2 p. – up to 1 hour 1 p. – up to 1 day 0 p. – more than 1 day
Mobile application	Application functionality	2 p. – fully functional application 1 p. – some functions limited 0 p. – non-functional application
	Application options	1 p. – relevant content 1 p. – intuitive handling 1 p. – functioning also without Internet connection
General criteria	Language mutation	1 p. for every language mutation of the website (maximum 3 points, if there are more than 3 mutations)

Table 2: Characteristics of the evaluation criteria
Source: Own elaboration, 2016.

The survey was undertaken between October 2017 and October 2018. Based on the number of points earned we divide DMOs into categories whose designation matches their general characteristics (Table 3).

Category name	Category characteristics	Reached number of points
Tigers	DMOs significantly active in electronic marketing communications. An easy-to-read and modern website uses most of the reviewed criteria. DMOs adequately active on social networks, developed mobile apps for visitors. They actively promote destinations.	35 and more points
Dolphins	DMOs appropriately active in electronic marketing communications. A high-quality and modern website. Active on social networks. They use many ways of Internet marketing communication, but not all are available. They still have something to learn, they want to learn and they are on the right way.	from 25 to 34 points
Turtles	DMOs less active in Internet marketing communications. Website at a lower level, but with basic information about the destination. They use some of the available ways of Internet marketing communication. Poor promotion of destinations.	from 15 to 24 points
Snails	DMOs significantly less active in electronic marketing communications. The website or social networks do not serve effectively to inform visitors about the destination, they have little or no value for a visitor. A radical change in access to electronic marketing communications and promotion of the destination is required.	from 5 to 14 points
Dead bugs	DMOs inactive in electronic marketing communications. There are no social network sites or accounts. No promotion of the destination. Also included are newly-formed DMOs that have not yet been able to implement a functional Internet marketing communication.	from 0 to 4 points

Table 3: DMOs categories
Source: Own elaboration, 2016.

The allocation of the DMOs corresponds to the state of Internet marketing communication at the time of the research.

We use theoretical methods of research, such as analysis and synthesis, induction and deduction, the method of comparison and the abstraction method. From mathematical statistical methods, we use methods of descriptive statistics (arithmetic average and median).

4. RESULTS

The paper results are divided in following manner. In chapter 4.1 we analyze marketing communication of tourism enterprises, in chapter 4.2 we focus on visitors' perception of examined enterprises' marketing communication and in chapter 4.3 we present the complex results of the DMOs primary survey and the most interesting findings on the number of DMOs with the result obtained.

4.1. Marketing communication analysis of examined enterprises

35 tourism enterprises participated into the survey, from which 24 were tour operators, 3 hotels, 4 water parks and 4 spas. In first part of this chapter, we analyze marketing communication of tour operators. According to their total number, these are not analyzed individually but the research results are expressed in relative terms. Research sample in this case is represented by members of Slovak Association of Tour operators and Travel Agencies. The reason for their selection is the fact, that they sell most of the package tours in Slovakia within all existing subjects in the market.

Marketing communication of tour operators. We found out that most of the tour operators (83%) provide marketing activities alone and 17% profit from external enterprise´s services. Only 29% of tour operators prepared marketing communication plan in writing. Marketing communication budget differed significantly depending on the size of the enterprise. Regarding marketing communication, small tour operators (employing max. 3 person) spent in average 500 – 15 000 euros per year, medium-sized tour operators (employing 4-20 person) spent in average 15 000 - 100 000 euros per year and big tour operators (with a staff of 21 and more person) spent from 70 000 to 500 000 euros per year. It is evident that the amount of money spent on marketing communication increases with the size of the tour operator.

Yet, only 71% of tour operators regularly examine effectiveness of their marketing communication campaign and 50% monitor profitability of costs incurred in marketing communication. Many tour operators determine the budget as a part of the margin from sold package tours and do not further analyze their costs, as they find the process of monitoring and evaluation too challenging.

Selection of appropriate tools represents an important part of marketing communication. Examined tour operators use all traditional tools of marketing communication mix with predominance of advertising.

The most used means of advertising are enterprises´ online sites (96%), printed catalogues (92%), advertisements in newspapers and magazines (83%), brochures and leaflets (54%), billboards and posters (46%), additional advertising on the Internet (except for online sites of enterprises) (38%). In context of sales promotion, the most used means are discounts (71%), coupons (46%) and competitions (42%).

Addressed and unaddressed means of direct marketing are used by examined tour operators. These are predominantly consignment (83%) and direct electronic mail (96%), used for sending catalogues, actual offers and others. Intermediaries receive mostly business information through electronic mail. From unaddressed means the mostly used are unaddressed business mail (67%) (Distribution of leaflets, brochures and catalogues), passive telemarketing (36%) (Processing of incoming telephone calls from potential customers and through intermediaries through Infoline) and online communication (100 %).

Personal selling includes not only direct contact of employees and customers in premise (100%), attendance of fairs and exhibitions (46%) but as well visits of prospective clients/potential clients (4 %).

Examined tour operators maintain public relations through sponsorships (25%), organized events (29%) and articles and media interviews (4%). As proved by previous analysis, tour operators use predominantly Internet (100%) and press (79%) followed by outdoor advertising

(46%). Radio (25%) and television are less used (8%). It is obvious that use of each media is closely related to its affordability.

Use of marketing communication new trends by tour operators. Internet communication can be still considered as a new trend in Slovakia. 96% of examined tour operators has own web site. They use it mainly for the provision of product information (100%), active communication with customers (91%) (via online communication – chat or contact form). Most of examined tour operators (78%) use online web page as a selling platform with possibility of booking, reservation of a package tour directly online. The possibility to verify spare capacity directly on the site is provided by 33% of businesses that use online reservation system. Electronic version of the catalogue represents a new trend. It proposes further possibilities of package tours´ offer feasibility. Customer can download the catalogue into his/her personal computer, and then choose from the tour operator´s offer, without being bound to a location with an Internet connection (74% of tour operators offer such option). The reachability/accessibility of many destinations nowadays lies in possibility to check satellite images via Internet. 48% of examined tour operators use online view of the destination. In case of 17% of enterprises, it is possible to leave an online review. Almost every tour operator (96%) updates the web site regularly. Percentage share of selected functionalities use of online web sites and tour operators´ participation in social networks can be found in Table 4.

Selected functionalities/Social networks	Relative share of tour operators
Photo Gallery	91%
Video Gallery	39%
Blog	22%
Online Chat communication	35%
Skype	35%
Facebook	74%
Twitter	17%
Google+	22%
YouTube	26%
Mobile Aps	13%

Table 4: Use of selected functionalities of tour operators' web sites
and their activity on social forums
Source: Own elaboration, 2015.

One of the emerging trends includes writing and publishing texts in the form of blogging. This method of communication is still rarely used among Slovak enterprises. It is based largely on the personal interest of individuals who publicly spread their own ideas and insights. We examined tour operators´ awareness of selected trends and their use (Table 5).

Trend	Use (in %)	Knows, but does not use (in %)	Does not know and does not use (in %)
Guerrilla marketing	8	29	63
Viral marketing	25	38	37
Buzz marketing	29	33	38
Mobile marketing	25	63	12
Event marketing	29	63	8

Table 5: Use of selected marketing communication trends by Slovak tour operators
Source: Own elaboration, 2015.

Marketing communication analysis of hotels, water parks and spas. Analysis results of marketing communication mix together with general characteristics of examined hotels, water parks and spa enterprises may be found in Table 6.

Enterprise	Characteristics	Use of traditional tools and new trends of MC
Hotel A***	- congress hotel - accommodation capacity approx. 270 permanent beds	- marketing communication plan drawn up in writing - target segment- groups of travellers-collectives - use of all traditional MC mix tools - use of MC trends- WOM marketing, event marketing, viral marketing, mobile marketing
Hotel B***	- oriented to business travellers - accommodation capacity approx. 40 permanent beds	- does not have a marketing communication plan drawn up in writing - use of all traditional MC mix tools - use of MC trends- WOM marketing and mobile marketing
Hotel C****	- located in proximity of a winter tourist resort - accommodation capacity approx. 60 permanent beds	- does not have a marketing communication plan drawn up in writing - use of all traditional MC mix tools - use of MC trends- WOM marketing, event marketing, viral marketing, mobile marketing
Water park D	- offers stainless steel swimming pool, multifunctional relaxation pool - open all year round and children´s pool	- target segment- families with children - use of all traditional MC mix tools - use of MC trends- WOM marketing, event marketing, viral marketing, mobile marketing
Water park E	- use of thermal mineral water spring, - offers 14 swimming pools from which 9 all year round	- target segment- families with children, young people and seniors - use of all traditional MC mix tools - use of MC trends- event marketing and viral marketing
Water park F	- use of thermal mineral water springs in addition to service water -offers 16 pools	- target segment- families with children, young people and seniors, but wider public too - use of all traditional MC mix tools - use of MC trends- event marketing and viral marketing
Water park G	- offers 4 pools all year round and widens its offer during summer season	- target segment- primarily families with children - use of all traditional MC mix tools and recognition of potential customers abroad - use of MC trends- event marketing and viral marketing.

Spa enterprise H	- plays an important role in treatment of rheumatic diseases, musculoskeletal diseases, neurological diseases, gynecological diseases, occupational diseases, diseases of kidneys and urinary tract - total accommodation capacity approx. 840 beds	- use of all traditional MC mix tools - use of MC trends -WOM marketing, event marketing, viral marketing and mobile marketing
Spa enterprise I	- focuses on treatment of cancer, gynecological diseases, circulatory, digestive system disorders, metabolic disorders, respiratory diseases and others. - total accommodation capacity 410 beds	- use of all traditional MC mix tools - marketing department does not exist, MC budget is limited - use of MC trends -WOM marketing, event marketing
Spa enterprise J	- focuses on the treatment of rheumatic diseases, lifestyle diseases, occupational diseases, gynecological, skin disorders, and even post-traumatic conditions - total accommodation capacity 1016 beds	- use of all traditional MC mix tools - use of MC trends -WOM marketing, event marketing and mobile marketing
Spa enterprise K	- focuses on the treatment of musculoskeletal disorders, spinal injury conditions, rheumatic diseases, multiple sclerosis and others - total accommodation capacity almost 3000 beds	- use of all traditional MC mix tools - all activities within MC are divided into internal and external (using outsourcing) - use of MC trends -WOM marketing, event marketing and mobile marketing in largest extent from all examined enterprises

Table 6: Use of marketing communication tools (further MC) in examined enterprises
Source: Own elaboration, 2015.

We conclude that many enterprises continue to use mainly traditional marketing communication tools. New trends are being applied into communication campaigns in a limited extent.

All examined enterprises indicated use of WOM marketing. However, based on research results none of these enterprises introduced emotional marketing communication campaign which would be disturbing and spread verbally. There we assume that it is not a real WOM marketing but preferably spontaneous spread of information emerging from customers´ satisfaction or dissatisfaction with provided services; this one existed in the market since ever.

Almost every enterprise creates a viral campaign which consists of information publishing about events and discounts on social networks. Discounts and competitions may be shared on visitor´s own profile. Even if the message is being spread as a virus it is questionable whether it can be considered as viral marketing. The reason is that it does not have a funny context, neither a creative idea. Theoretical background proves that the terminology is still in progress and does not indicate conditions under which such a campaign should or should not belong to viral marketing.

Mobile marketing is predominantly used by enterprises in a way of addressed text messages, mobile version of online site and use of QR codes on promotional materials.

We find event marketing as a frequently used trend in enterprises´ marketing communication. These are mostly sport events, entertainment events with TV celebrities' presence, theatre performance, music evenings, fashion shows, events for children audience, local gastronomy events and original crafts events.

4.2. Demand side analysis of examined enterprises marketing communication

510 visitors participated in the research on the demand side. These were guests who during the research time stayed in examined facilities. More women (69%) than men (31%) participated into the survey. Respondents were mostly younger active people (about 87% of visitors belonged to 18-50 age group). Fewer respondents were over the age of 50 (11%) and only 2% of respondents were seniors over the age of 65. Most respondents completed secondary education (54%), smaller part of them completed higher education (43%) and 3% of respondents did not indicate attended education.

We examined visitors´ knowledge/awareness of marketing communication trends and their ability to explain these trends. We assume that the best known is event marketing (known by 63% of respondents), followed by viral marketing (57% of respondents) and mobile marketing (54% of respondents). Relatively small percentage of respondents knows WOM marketing (24%), guerrilla marketing (21%) and buzz marketing (18%). About 21% of respondents do not know any of above-mentioned trends of marketing communication.

Majority of respondents (53%) think that a more intensive implementation of new trends into praxis would positively influence future visitation of tourism enterprises in examined regions and thus boost their development. In case of some enterprises, visitors propose improvement of online sites to keep them user-friendly with more attractive and organized content. Almost all respondents (94%) expressed positive expectations about new way of enterprises´ communication which should be unconventional, surprising and entertaining.

4.3. The Use of marketing communication tools in DMOs

We present the complex results of the primary survey and the most interesting findings on the number of DMOs with the results obtained (Table 7).

Social networks. We have preferentially researched the activity on Facebook (the most used social network world wide and also in Slovakia). The fan page was created by most of DMOs (26). There are 6 DMOs active on the Instagram social network, and only one DMO created its profile on Google+ and Twitter. From 23 DMOs which have created a social profile on Facebook, only 21 DMOs actively communicated during examined period. The Facebook pages ranged from 100 to almost 10,000 fans. The average number of fans was 3153. However, a more reliable marker is the median (1593). The number and type of the contributions added varied. The most often DMOs added photos (34.96%), contributions to organized events (32.25%) and external links to other media, recalling news from the region (27.31%). DMOs added pure text status to their sites at least (5.48%). We also followed the aggregate number of post interactions added to the DMOs fan pages. Most of the fans (54.12%) responded to the added photos from the destination.

Mobile applications. Mobile apps have the advantage of accessing information offline as well, without connecting to the Internet. The advantage of mobile phones is also GPS, which com-

bined with an offline map in the app can serve as a good navigation system. The possibility to download the mobile application is offered by 5 DMOs, while all of apps are available in versions for both Android and iOS operating systems (one for Windows). However, applications were not functional in all organizations.

Evaluation criteria	Yes (in %)	No (v %)
Own webpage	91.9	8.1
SEO optimization to the 5th place	24.4	75.6
Responsive design	45.9	54.1
Number and quality of the photos	Average rating 1.61 points	Maximum rating 3.0 points
Searching	56.8	43.2
Booking	21.6	78.4
Electronic map	73.0	27.0
Interactive map	21.6	78.4
Events calendar	64.9	35.1
Weather report	45.9	54.1
Link to other webpages	64.9	35.1
Connect to social networks	56.8	43.2
Contact form	51.4	48.6
Live chat	0.0	100.0
Language mutations	48.6	51.4

Table 7: Possibilities on DMOs' web pages
Source: Own elaboration, 2018.

According to the specific activity of individual DMOs and the results achieved in Internet marketing communication, we divided DMOs into five groups (Table 8).

Category name	Destination management organizations
Tigers	Banská Štiavnica Tourism, REGION LIPTOV, Vysoké Tatry Region, Trnava Tourism, Bratislava Tourist Board, Central Slovakia Tourist Board
Dolphins	Kysuce tourist board, Rajecká dolina, SEVERNÝ SPIŠ - PIENINY, TATRY - SPIŠ - PIENINY, Slovenský Raj & Spiš, KOŠICE-Tourism
Turtles	Klaster Orava, REZORT PIEŠŤANY, Region Horná Nitra- Bojnice, Malá Fatra, Horný Zemplín a Horný Šariš, Dudince Tourism, Nitra tourist board, TURIEC - KREMNICKO, Regional Tourism Organization Záhorie, PODUNAJSKO, „The Small Carpathians", Regional Tourism Association Tekov
Snails	Senec Region, Žitný ostrov, Region Horehronie, Horné Považie Tourist Association, Region Gron, TOUR NOVOHRAD AND PODPOĽANIE, Vysoké Tatry - Foothills, Zemplínska, Trenčín-Country-Surrounding, Regional Tourism Organization Trenčianske Teplice
Dead bugs	„Šariš" - BARDEJOV, Šariš Region, Region Gemer

Table 8: DMOs allocation according to the research results
Source: Own elaboration, 2018.

5. DISCUSSION

When carrying out the survey, we did not face any similar examination that would cover the demand and supply side in use of marketing communication new trends. For such a reason it was impossible to compare the results of our research with other studies. We consider the research results as highly specific for Slovak tourism market and therefore address all recommendations and implications to examined tourism entities (tour operators, hotels, water parks, spa enterprises and DMOs). In fact, the tourism development potential in many Slovak regions seems to be underestimated mostly by marketing planners. Despite rapidly changing environment in tourism market, enterprises still prefer traditional tools of marketing communication. As visitors are more technologically educated, they tend to ignore these traditional tools and do not respond to them in attended manner.

New trends gradually used by Slovak tourism enterprises include mostly event marketing, WOM marketing, mobile marketing (advertising text messages, mobile version of web site and partially QR codes) and viral marketing (although this one is missing entertaining, shocking idea and story which should present leitmotif of further advertising spread). We do not consider them as typical viral messages. However, [7] distinguishes between passive and active viral marketing. According to this classification we can understand media campaigns providing discounts as a part of viral marketing if the only criterion is a rapid spread of message among customers. Another type of its use are enterprises´ fan pages on social networks, where customers publish own photographs from their package tours, comment it, add reviews and spread these among other Internet users.

We did not recognize use of guerrilla marketing, buzz marketing, etc., which offer possibility to create a creative campaign with surprisingly strong reaction and minimal investment of financial resources. The most decisive is moment of surprise, entertainment, joy and appropriate localization of the campaign. Social media offer one occasion (online wiki sites, online sites allowing sharing content and voting, social networks etc.); their advantage is to attend direct personal contact with potential visitors.

An alternative form to traditional communication tools is represented by mobile marketing. QR codes are widely useful in providing important information to customers and replace writing communication with customers. Their advantage lies in the fact that no special devices are needed to their decoding. An interesting way of communication is augmented reality which enables visitors´ orientation in the region. It is compatible with newer types of mobile phones and based on picture scan, it enables virtual visit of attractions, checking of cultural programmes in real time, localization of ATMs, restaurants, or it can serve as GPS navigator.

The main objectives of DMOs in Slovakia are to a large extent consistent with the objectives highlighted by the destination management theory [8], [9], [34] and others) and good practice of DMOs in countries with developed tourism. These include, in particular, the promotion of sustainable tourism development in the destination, an increase in the number of overnight stays, and an increase in the average length of visitors' stay, the creation of a recognizable brand and the identity of destination sites, targeted and effective promotion (the register of existing organizations available on the website of Ministry of Transport and Construction of the Slovak Republic and the websites of existing organizations, 2018).

The results of existing surveys in Slovakia show that marketing of DMOs is provided under their own direction (86%) or through an external organization (14%). Of the total expenditures of DMOs, marketing expenditures create 43.4% share in Slovakia [30].

Electronic marketing and, in particular, the dynamic and interactive website of the destination and its active presentation on social networks are one of the key prerequisites for success on the crowded destinations market. The Internet has an extraordinary importance in the tourism sector, as the visitor cannot test the services in advance, and the information gained from the Internet is crucial in the decision-making process.

DMOs should focus on the content and design of their website in their online marketing communication on the Internet. It should include up-to-date, relevant, and trusted information about the destination, calendar of organized events, high-quality and representative photos and videos, as well as webcam images that document real-life in the destination at a specific time including the weather. An indispensable part of the destination's website should be a map, ideally interactive, into which a visitor can interfere and choose the desired content. For the web site is an extremely important responsive design and mobile app that offers a scaled version of the website. For foreign visitors the website should be fully available in foreign language mutations.

6. CONCLUSION

The survey results are implementable on selected tourism enterprises (35) and all DMOs in Slovakia, covering the whole territory of the country and all tourism regions. Suggestions for better use of Internet marketing communication tools are applicable in Slovakia and in the countries with a similar level of tourism development. They expect to keep track of new information and apply current trends in marketing communication into practice.

The aim of the article was to examine the use of marketing communication tools of selected tourism enterprises (35) and all destination management organizations (DMOs) (37) in Slovakia.

We examined whether the enterprises use more frequently traditional or new marketing communication tools. Yet, we assume that many trends have not been applied in the Slovak tourism enterprises until today.

For those who create marketing communication campaigns in enterprises, it is necessary to come up with creative content which would evoke emotions and to step out of line, to be different and make step into unknown. In marketing, it is worth more to step into unknown than to run in a circle.

We have divided the organizations into five groups according to the results of the primary research. In the strongest group of Tigers, there are currently 6 DMOs (which is only 17% of the total number of DMOs in Slovakia). These DMOs do not need any interventions to their Internet marketing communication processes. The Dolphins group consists also of 6 DMOs (17% of the total number of DMOs in Slovakia). There are 12 DMOs (33%) in the Turtles group, 10 DMOs now belong to the group Snails (28%), and 3 organizations are included in the last group of Dead Bugs (5%), because they do not use Internet marketing communication at all. Nearly inactive

and completely inactive organizations need to develop the concept of Internet marketing communications from the start.

Overall, less than 20% of researched organizations use the available tools efficiently and effectively and up to 33% of the total number of organizations is almost or totally inactive in Internet marketing communication.

In the article we have outlined the failings that need to be removed in the case of more destination management organizations.

The advantage of the Internet and its impact in the field of marketing communication is its comparatively low price compared to traditional communication tools. In addition, it is a chance for all local destination management organizations to reach a particularly rapid development in this area. However, the awareness of all subjects who are trying to assert a competitive struggle is constantly growing and therefore, in the context of time, the situation (in the positive way) may be diametrically different.

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