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## MARKETING KOMUNICIRANJE DOMAĆIH HOTELIJERSKIH ORGANIZACIJA<sup>4</sup>

### Апстракт

*У раду се истражују могућности, принципи и ефекти маркетинг комуникације у хотелијерству Србије. Сходно томе, у фокусу анализе су: трендови у хотелијерству и угоститељству Србије, правни оквир маркетинг комуникације, односи са јавношћу, директан маркетинг и промотивна продаја, као и менаџмент односа са корисницима услуга. Маркетинг комуникација у хотелијерству је посебна и прилагођена потребама туристичке делатности. У хотелима у којима је у потпуности примењен маркетинг концепт о корисницима услуга не брине само одељење за маркетинг већ сви запослени. Наиме, пословање хотела има за циљ успостављање односа са корисницима, повећање њиховог задовољења, промену структуре трошкова током времена, изградњу веће лојалности са корисницима, и на крају побољшање учинка тако што ће се повећати пословни приход хотела.*

**Кључне речи:** маркетинг, комуникација, хотелијерство, угоститељство, корисници услуга.

**JEL classification:** M31, Z30, Z32.

## MARKETING COMMUNICATION OF DOMESTIC HOTEL ORGANIZATIONS

### Abstract

*The paper examines the possibilities, principles and effects of marketing communication in the hotel industry in Serbia. Consequently, the focus on the analysis is: trends in hotel industry and catering for Serbia, legal framework for marketing communication, public relations, direct marketing and promotional sales, as well as*

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*management of relations with service users. Marketing communication with the hotel industry is special and adapted to the needs of the tourist industry. In hotels where the marketing concept of service users is fully implemented, not only is the marketing department concerned, but all employees. Namely, the hotel's business aims to establish relationships of between customers, increase their satisfaction, change the structure of costs of time, build greater loyalty to customers, and ultimately improve the performance by increasing the hotel's business income.*

*Key words: marketing, communication, hotel management, catering, service users.*

## Introduction

In the last decade of the last century, the tourist market has received extremely large dimensions and significance. It has become dominant in comparison with other markets of goods and services in the world. It includes domestic and international tourist movements, where international tourism is by its scale smaller in relation to domestic tourism. He, however, has a special significance, primarily because of the impact on the balance of payments of the country and the multiplier effects of the consumption of foreign tourists. Tourism today is at the turning point of its own development with the opening of completely new tendencies: health, religious, cultural tourism, shorter breaks in parts (Vukonjić, 1987). Observed from the perspective of consumers, the quality of services in tourism, i.e. its expectations, are growing and increasing every day (Stepanov et al, 2017).

From a marketing point of view, tourism is at a stage of maturity characterized by the saturation of the market with existing ways of meeting tourist needs (Cvijanović, 2014). Consequently, marketing is important to the hospitality industry, especially marketing communications. At present there is no institution that normally exists on a marketing department, and the importance of marketing is even growing day by day (Yurievna & Anatolyevna, 2017). In the literature there are numerous definitions according to which marketing is:

- Process of planning and executing the concept of prices, promotion and distribution of ideas, goods and services with the goal of achieving an exchange that meets individual and organizational goals (the definition of the American Marketing Association - AMA).
- A management process by which individuals and groups provide themselves with what they need and what they want through the creation and exchange of products and values with others (Kotler & Keller, 2006).
- A complete system of interconnected activities for planning, pricing, promotion and distribution of products and services that meet the needs of current and potential customers (Stenton, 1967).

According to these definitions, marketing is a set of activities that are used to guide the flow of products and services from the producer to the consumer (user, customer, and client) (Cvijanović et al, 2011). Marketing was created to solve the problems of production and producers when the supply was higher than demand, and the ultimate goal was the realization of the produced goods and the achievement of profit for the

company. Today, the essence of marketing consists in solving consumers' problems - faster and better than competition. Accordingly, it is rightly pointed out that “having a competitive advantage is the same as having a pistol in the fight against knives” (Kotler, 2003). How marketing has changed since its inception to date is also the fact that there is now two terms with the concept of marketing in the literature: 1. Business marketing relates to material goods, that is, products and services designed to solve some economic problem of man or organization; 2. Social marketing is focused on solving some non-economic problems of society related to the quality and safety of life (Kotler, 2003). According to the same source, in addition to some of the aforementioned, today are current: 1) Ecological marketing - which aims to preserve the environment, and then profit; 2) Intellectual marketing - involves the creation and sale of information. It does not apply to material goods, but to new values for people and societies; 3) Relational marketing - the central place takes the orientation to the relationships between the target groups i.e. the buyer / user is indirectly introduced into the organization, through a certain value chain.

Marketing is a process whose primary importance is reflected on the establishment of a communication flow between the producer and the buyer or consumer (Cvijanović et al, 2009). However, in the hospitality industry, the communication process is much more specific. Namely, communication refers not only to communication between partners but also within the hotel among staff, between staff and guests, between hotel companies and media, etc. Many hotel companies define the rules of conduct to the communication process so as not to make improvisation, which affects the entire process of communicating hotels and all stakeholders (Čerović, 2013).

## Trends in hotel industry and catering in Serbia

According to the ministry responsible for tourism, by the end of 2015, the number of categorized facilities for accommodation of types of hotels (including garni and apart hotels), motels, pensions, tourist and apartment settlements (no private houses, rooms, rural tourist households, hunting villas and camps) amounted to 358 (Table 1). The number of accommodation units in these facilities reached a figure of 18,244, and the number of beds was 30,417. (Strategija razvoja turizma Republike Srbije za period 2016 – 2025).

Table 1: Capacities of categorized catering facilities for accommodation

Serial number	Type of catering facility for accommodation	Number of objects	Number of accommodation units	Number of beds
1	Hotels	339	17.687	29.392
2	Motels	11	249	426
3	Pensions <sup>†</sup>	3	78	122
4	Tourist and holiday resorts	5	230	477
	In total	358	18.244	30.417

*Source: Tourism Development Strategy of the Republic of Serbia for the Period 2016-2025, Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications, Belgrade, Government of the Republic of Serbia, November, 2016.*

In a total number of catering facilities for accommodation in the Republic of Serbia, hotels have the largest share, both in number of facilities, and by number of accommodation units and beds. In the period from 2010 to 2015, the number of hotel accommodation facilities (including garners and apart hotels) increased from 251 to 339 (Table 2), or 36.1% (Strategija razvoja turizma Republike Srbije za period 2016 – 2025).

This growth was partly accompanied by an increase in the number of accommodation units, which in 2010 was 15,537, and in 2015, 17,687, which is an increase in 13.8%, while the number of beds in that period increased from 24,186 to 29,392, or 21.5%(Strategija razvoja turizma Republike Srbije za period 2016 – 2025).

Table 2: Number of hotels and accommodation capacities from 2010 to 2015

Years	Hotel number	Number of accommodation units	Number of beds
2010.	251	15.537	24.186
2011.	262	16.250	26.384
2012.	297	16.723	28.296
2013.	301	16.382	27.742
2014.	328	16.963	28.501
2015.	339	17.687	29.392

*Source: Tourism Development Strategy of the Republic of Serbia for the Period 2016-2025, Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications, Belgrade, Government of the Republic of Serbia, November, 2016, pp. 17;*

The hotel market of Belgrade is the leading in the Republic of Serbia according to the achieved performances, since the largest number of accommodation facilities is concentrated in the territory of the city of Belgrade, which currently operates 86 hotels, of which 51 hotels, 34 garni hotels and one apartment hotel. Of the 21 newly opened facilities that were first categorized in 2015 in the Republic of Serbia, eight are located in Belgrade (Strategija razvoja turizma Republike Srbije za period 2016 – 2025). The total turnover of catering to the Republic of Serbia in 2016, at current prices, amounted to 72,243 billion rsd (Table 3) and was by 7.3% higher than in the previous year, while the value of fixed-price turnover was higher by 7.5%. The structure of catering services in 2016, observed by type of services, shows that the highest share of food and beverages (51.1%), followed by alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages (26.8%), and overnight stays (19.6%) (Turizam i ugostiteljstvo, 2017). Chain indices of transport at constant prices ranged between 100.4 and 107.5 in the period 2013-2016 (Table 4).

Table 3: Basic indicators of Catering

	2013	2014	2015	2016
Turnover, in thousands of RSD	64,685,091	65,104,515	67,318,055	72,242,666
Beds	107,256	102,940	106,102	109,469
Turnover, in thousands of RSD <sup>1</sup>	55,249,090	55,166,002	56,198,655	60,430,695
Indexes, 2010 = 100				

Turnover	117.6	118.4	122.4	124.1
Beds	89.8	86.2	88.8	91.7
Turnover t <sup>1</sup>	100.4	100.3	102.2	109.9

<sup>1</sup>) in 2010 prices;

Source: *Tourism and Hospitality, Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Serbia 2017, RZS, Belgrade, p. 388;*

Table 4: Catering, 2013-2016

	Republic Serbia			
	Years	In total	Serbia – north	Serbia– south
Turnover, in thousands of RSD	2013	64,685,091	36,656,718	28,028,373
	2014	65,104,515	36,785,459	28,319,056
	2015	67,318,055	38,320,773	28,997,282
	2016	72,242,666	41,268,196	30,974,470
Chain indices traffic in current prices	2013	106.3	106.6	105.9
	2014	100.6	100.4	101.0
	2015	103.4	104.2	102.4
	2016	107.3	107.7	106.8
Turnover, in thousands of RSD <sup>1</sup>	2013	55,249,090	31,309,383	23,939,707
	2014	55,166,002	31,169,984	23,996,018
	2015	56,198,655	31,991,059	24,207,596
	2016	60,430,695	34,520,677	25,910,018
Chain indices traffic in current prices <sup>2</sup>	2013	100.4	100.7	100.0
	2014	99.8	99.6	100.2
	2015	101.9	102.6	100.9
	2016	107.5	107.9	107.0

<sup>1</sup>) in 2010 prices;

<sup>2</sup>) The calculation was made by deflating the turnover at current prices with the corresponding index of prices of catering services;

Source: *Tourism and Hospitality, Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Serbia 2017, RZS, Belgrade, p388;*

The tourism sector in the Republic of Serbia is still largely dependent on travel to the main administrative centers. In June 2017, 109,000 tourist arrivals and 218,400 overnight stays were registered in the main administrative centers in the Republic of Serbia (Table 5). Also, the Danube region and mountain resorts, such as Kopaonik, Stara Planina and Zlatibor, are also becoming an important nucleus of development - predominantly through public sector initiatives in building competitiveness and destination management.

Table 5: Number of tourist arrivals and overnight stays by types of tourist resorts – thousands

Period	Republic of Serbia									
	Arrivals					Nights				
	Main administrative centers	Spa resorts	Mountain resorts	Other tourist resorts	Other resort	Main administrative centers	Spa resorts	Mountain resorts	Other tourist resorts	Other resort
2016										
VI	94,3	47,1	45,3	56,0	10,0	178,5	209,4	166,0	113,9	24,0
VII	99,8	67,9	46,5	60,5	12,8	197,2	313,3	191,4	135,2	28,6
VIII	100,5	86,1	48,0	65,6	23,3	188,2	380,3	192,7	151,0	60,8
IX	106,3	45,6	34,6	57,3	10,0	200,9	245,9	99,8	108,9	22,6
X	101,5	35,6	39,1	59,9	8,9	202,5	163,1	107,3	105,5	21,6
XI	80,8	23,6	26,2	40,4	6,5	165,6	104,2	74,4	83,3	18,0
XII	85,0	27,0	40,4	42,6	7,2	167,6	84,7	133,7	78,6	17,1
2017										
I	51,6	19,8	54,4	27,7	5,1	107,9	71,7	242,3	55,5	13,4
II	56,5	18,9	53,8	30,6	4,9	112,9	71,1	254,0	65,0	12,1
III	83,9	28,0	42,0	41,0	7,3	173,3	104,5	171,6	86,9	16,8
IV	102,1	39,4	46,5	67,2	9,6	205,1	148,0	151,5	117,1	20,4
V	121,1	47,4	59,8	85,7	11,9	235,4	194,6	195,6	145,0	26,9
VI	109,0	56,7	47,7	69,5	11,5	218,4	244,2	180,3	139,3	27,6
I-VI 2017										
I-VI 2016	113,6	109,8	105,8	115,5	112,7	115,4	105,1	105,9	109,9	115,8

Source: Monthly Statistical Bulletin, Republic Statistical Office of RS, Belgrade, 6/2017

## Legal framework of marketing communication

Strategic decisions on marketing have far-reaching consequences of the company as a whole and for the management of specific functions, such as production, product development or financial control (Mihailović et al, 2008). Such decisions require a marketing research that aims to bring benefits to both the hotel and service users. However, despite these good intentions, there are four ethical dilemmas regarding marketing research: confronting privacy; Abuse of marketing research findings; compilation of competing information; using marketing research as an excuse for sale (Jobber & Fahy, 2006). The intricate nature of marketing research is detrimental to many consumers, whether people are asking questions about their age and income, stopping on the street where they are asked to participate in a personal test, or calling on the phone at an inconvenient time (Cvijanović & Mihailović, 2010).

Marketing ethics interests were formulated as marketing and advertising ethics, developed in 1937 by the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC). The content of these regulations is often changed and modified, gaining new and more powerful provisions (today the New Ethical Rules in Marketing Communications, adopted in 2006

in Paris). At the same time, efforts can also be made to develop and publish ethical rules in the field of marketing research, by the European Society for Marketing Research and Public Opinion (ESOMAR), 1948. The importance of marketing ethics has also led to the initiative of the American Marketing Society to adopt declarations relating to ethics in 2004, a declaration that relates to ethical rules and values that must be respected in the business, which at the same time serve as an instruction for the work of experts for marketing in their business and designing activities. According to this declaration, marketing professionals must adopt the highest ethical standards and values pertaining to professional practices, taking responsibility for consumers, employees, investors, media members, etc. It is about the standards of professional organizations and / or society, as well as the values that represent the collective attitude of the people on what is considered appropriate, desirable, important and just, from a moral point of view, and consequently serve as criteria for assessing the activities of others. The general rules contained in the declaration relate to the following aspects:

- *Workers in marketing should not harm anyone, which means that in practice they have to use what they know and what they have learned to bring added value of their organizations and consumers, by law and regulations, by adopting the highest ethical standards in the elections they make.*

- *Marketing workers must maintain confidence in the marketing system, which means they have to promote products so that they match the intended purpose of them. Communication with marketing should be formed so that products or services can not disappoint or deliberately deceive consumers.*

- *Marketing workers must transfer and practice in practice the basic ethical values that increase consumer confidence in the honesty of the marketing system.*

*These basic values are goals that weigh and must include:*

- *honesty (to be honest and correct in dealing with consumers, among which, among other things, are asked to offer products at the value expressed through marketing communications);*
- *responsibility (accept the consequences of marketing decisions and strategies, among other things, not abusing certain sensitive categories of markets, such as children, elderly or disabled people);*
- *equity (to provide a clear view of products during sales, as well as in commercials or other communications);*
- *respect (respect for the human dignity of all members of society);*
- *openness (transparency in marketing activities);*
- *respect for civic duties (meeting economic, legal, philanthropic and social responsibilities).*

In companies where the marketing concept of consumers is fully implemented, not only the marketing department but all employees are concerned, working with the awareness to work for consumers. Consumer commitment to these companies is particularly relevant to employees that are in direct contact with them (Mihailovic et al, 2011). In order to achieve this, the rules communicate simultaneously with consumers and advertisers, set clear standards that marketing communications must respect and a minimum level of consumer protection, so as to maximize confidence in the methods used.

## Public Relations

A more favorable market positioning of the hotel can also be achieved through public relations (PR). Namely, public relations actions are aimed at creating a certain opinion on the public about the hotel and its services. In order to have a positive effect on the public opinion, the messages must be in accordance with the existing value system in the company or in the specific part of the public to which the message is addressed (Cvijanović et al, 2009). According to the same source, the audience interested in public relations is not only made up of existing and potential buyers, but also employees, cooperators, suppliers and the society as a whole. The correct or congenial image of the hotel directs and shapes the behavior of people as a service user. It is necessary to identify the strong and weak sides of the image and take appropriate and timely measures in order to maintain and adapt the image. However, the other instrument used in marketing communication and the controversial area that relates to a lower degree of ethics is precisely the relationship to the public. The first ethical controversy associated with public relations activities is whether the correct positive image of a company sent by the PR to the world is correct. Namely, the created picture is an impression, and this impression is the result of working with the public relations.

The importance of respecting ethics in public relations is emphasized in the content of the International Ethical Rules in Public Relations, adopted by the International Society for Public Relations (IPRA) in 1965, which were amended and amended in 1968. These are the rules by which, among other obligations, members of the association must properly inform the public, without omission and transformation of the truth, taking into account the interests in all parties.

Among the aims at PR activities, we count on creating and maintaining a favorable image of companies in the public, their products, and minimizing the negative impact on the public or another component of the external market environment, which is manifested in the way the company is displayed or in its business strategy. One of the most commonly used public relations techniques used by public relations professionals depending on what image they want to achieve is cooperation with the media (through announcements, press conferences, etc.).

Under media advertising, we mean commercial propaganda in a narrow or original sense. It is a form of mass communication with the public and consumers through local, national or global media (Rakita, 1999). This relationship is intensified in cases of unpredictable and crisis situations. For this reason, the main ethical problem with which these experts face is the way in which the ideas are presented to the public and the degree of their correctness and accuracy. Regardless of the situation in which public relations techniques are used (crisis situations or related to certain events of a positive significance, etc.), the public should not be manipulated in relation to certain events and business activities.

## Direct marketing and promotional sales

Improving business performance of the company is impossible to achieve without knowing the market trends and activities expected from the marketing department (Mihailović et al, 2008). Marketing is not one promotion or appearance at a fair or sale -



it is already a process that lasts and encompasses marketing research, strategic marketing planning, defining goals, formulating a marketing strategy, developing a marketing mix, marketing analysis, controlling and auditing (Mihailović et al, 2011). The marketing program should contain an interactive marketing system that uses one or more media of propaganda in order to influence the market demand.

Specifically, it is about direct marketing, which is an effort to attract and maintain consumers based on a contact without an intermediary (Cvijanović et al, 2009). Due to the importance of communication, direct marketing and electronic communications are activities regulated internationally or in certain countries of the world (for example, European Direct Negotiated Rules of Directors, approved by the European Federation of Direct Sales Associations - FEDSA, 1995, Ethical Code of Conduct for sales activity in Romania, published by the Association for Direct Selling in Romania - RODSA, Code of Conduct in E-Commerce, etc.).

When marketing employees decides to organize a promotional sales campaign, they must take into account national standards of security, cultural differences, prejudices and suspicions, so as not to violate regulations in different countries. For example, in a campaign organized by a detergent manufacturer in Thailand, consumers were offered the chance to win a house if they found in the detergent boxes six gold coins. Rows were made in front of the detergent shop very quickly, and the customers spilled the contents of the boxes of the streets to find coins. Only five coins were found, but people continued to buy a detergent for a long time after the campaign ended, until the government intervened (Kotler et al, 1999).

The interest in achieving and maintaining high moral standards of marketing communications has led to the development and improvement in some declarations and rules, including ethical rules for marketing communications. Under these rules, marketing and marketing professionals need to devise their own activities in terms of expressing faith and respect for the public, responsibly and honestly, with care and consideration of the needs and characteristics of people, the environment and society.

## **Relationship management with service users**

The very nature of the service in the first place emphasizes its quality. Hence, the issue of productivity growth appears to be very important to hotel management. It is necessary to achieve the goal of the business and at the same time to ensure the satisfaction from the guest. As known productivity is quantitatively expressed as a ratio derived from the relation between what has been achieved (the results) and what is invested. Although the tendency towards every business entity is to achieve as much productivity as possible, service equilibrium must strike a proper balance. This seems to be to ensure the satisfaction from guests. For example, if the same number of waiters serves a larger number of guests then productivity per employee is higher. However, the question is whether all the guests received the same quality of service, or whether they were satisfied went away from the restaurant. The quality of the service is of particular importance to the user and his decision to buy it. Therefore, the service firm must understand and determine what quality means for the service user (Cvijanović & Mihailović, 2010). In the twentieth century, a multidimensional character of service quality is often proposed (Parasumaran et al, 1991).

- The firm must first provide a reliable service, charge it accurately, store all purchase reports, and provide the service in a timely manner.
- *Healthiness* implies the willingness of employees to provide service. It refers to timelines, communication, quick response to user questions, quick appointment of a meeting, fast service, etc.
- *Expertise* depends on the possession of the necessary skills and knowledge in the provision of services, that is, the knowledge and skills of employees in the field of contact and those who work on technical support or research.
- *Accessibility* is reflected of accessibility and ease of contact.
- *Courtesy* is, above all, the attitude to employees towards the customers with respect, then their pronounced friendly attitude, smoothness, neat appearance, and with all this discreet smile that radiates confidence.
- *Communication* means that employees are informed on the subject of their interest in an understandable way and that they can listen to their remarks, comments, wishes, etc. It is especially important to identify communication barriers and define ways of overcoming them (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Communication barriers and ways of overcoming them

Barriers	Way of overcoming
Individual <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interpersonal dynamics</li> <li>• Channels and media</li> <li>• Semantics</li> <li>• Inconsistent mime</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active listening</li> <li>• Selection of adequate channels</li> <li>• Knowing others' views</li> <li>• Developing a formal contact</li> </ul>
Organizational <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Differences in status and power</li> <li>• Needs and goals of the department</li> <li>• Inadequacy of the task network communication</li> <li>• Lack of formal channels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating a climate of trust</li> <li>• Development and use of formal channels of communication</li> <li>• Adapting the organizational or structural group to the communication needs</li> <li>• Use of more formal and informal channels of communication</li> </ul>

Source: Daft, R., Marcic, D. (1998): *Understanding Management*, Dryden Press, p. 497.

- *Credibility* is the result of trust, perseverance, honesty and service to the best interests of the users.
- *Security* is viewed as a lack of danger, risk or suspicion, that is, it implies physical safety during service, financial security, and confidentiality.
- *Understanding* and knowledge of the user is important for acquiring its impressions and satisfying the offer. For such an effect, efforts must be made to understand the needs of the users, that is, they must understand and accept the specific requirements of the users.
- *Material aspect*, as an element of quality of service, refers to the physical appearance of the building, the impression that leaves the employee, the tool and the equipment used in the provision of services, the physical representation of the service, the appearance and behavior of other users in the facility, etc.

## Conclusion

Tourism today is one of the leading industries in many countries of the world. This is evidenced by statistical indicators, such as, for example, revenues earned by these countries on the basis of tourism, number of nights, etc. In the light of the rapid expansion of tourism, and especially in the second half of the twentieth century, the task and role of marketing should also be considered, and they must observe their mutual relationship. Perhaps the easiest thing to say is that marketing in tourism has the task of facilitating an easier process of exchanging with tourist demand and supply. In such conditions, the nature of the hotel services to emphasize its quality, and hence the issue of improving marketing communication appears to be very important to hotel management. Consequently, it is necessary to achieve the goal of the hotel business and at the same time to ensure the satisfaction from the users. Different factors such as scientific and technical progress, the development of transport means, the increase in the level of culture, education and the level of standards have led to various changes in tourism trends. The importance of hotel management is reflected on its close connection with a range of activities, such as: traffic, culture, health, politics... The size and structure of the population, economic potential, technological innovations, political and cultural movements are most often represented by factors influenced by the direction of the development of hotel industry in the following period. In such conditions the significance of marketing communication with the development of hotel industry in Serbia is enhanced.

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